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CHRIST IS GOD OVER ALL:  
ROMANS 9:5 IN THE CONTEXT OF ROMANS 9-11

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A Dissertation  
Presented to  
the Faculty of  
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Philosophy

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by  
George Warrington Carraway

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**APPROVAL SHEET**

CHRIST IS GOD OVER ALL:  
ROMANS 9:5 IN THE CONTEXT OF ROMANS 9-11

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To Jill

She is, but no one can say what

Think of all a wife should be and she is that

and

In memory of Cecil Ott Carraway, Sr.

1939 – 2008

Brother, Friend

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANF	The Ante-Nicene Fathers
<i>BDAG</i>	Walter Bauer, Frederick W. Danker, William F. Arndt and F. Wilber Gingrich, <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament</i>
<i>Bib Sac</i>	<i>Bibliotheca Sacra</i>
<i>BJRL</i>	<i>Bulletin of the John Rylands Library</i>
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
<i>ExpTim</i>	<i>Expository Times</i>
BDF	F. Blass, A. Debrunner, and R. W. Funk, <i>A Greek Grammar of the New Testament</i>
Byz	Byzantine Text of the Greek New Testament
<i>HBT</i>	<i>Horizons in Biblical Theology</i>
<i>ICC</i>	<i>International Critical Commentary</i>
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JETS</i>	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
<i>JSJ</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of Judaism</i>
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for Study of the New Testament</i>
<i>JSOT</i>	<i>Journal for Study of the Old Testament</i>
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
LXX	Septuagint
MT	Masoretic Text
NA	Nestle-Aland Text of the Greek New Testament
<i>Neot</i>	<i>Neotestimentica</i>

NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
NPNF <sup>1</sup>	A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church: First Series
NPNF <sup>2</sup>	A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church: Second Series
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
<i>Pro Eccl</i>	<i>Pro Ecclesia</i>
<i>PSB</i>	<i>Princeton Seminary Bulletin</i>
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
<i>SJT</i>	Scottish Journal of Literature
<i>TDNT</i>	Gerhard Kittel, Gerhard Friedrich and Geoffrey W. Bromiley, <i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i>
<i>TrinJ</i>	<i>Trinity Journal</i>
<i>TS</i>	<i>Theological Studies</i>
<i>TZ</i>	<i>Theologische Zeitschrift</i>
UBS	United Bible Societies
<i>VT</i>	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
<i>WTJ</i>	Westminster Theological Journal
<i>WUNT</i>	<i>Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum neuen Testament</i>
<i>ZNW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>

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## PREFACE

The work on this dissertation brings along with it a fair dose of humility for a variety of reasons, one of which is the full view of my limitations, with which I have been constantly confronted. That brings about the need for a lot of help from a lot of people, for which I am deeply grateful. My wife, Jill, comes to mind first. Aside from all the hard work she has done while I have studied, she worked as hard repairing the mistakes in this manuscript as I worked making them. Of course, I owe a great debt to Dr. Mark Seifrid, my supervisor, during this process. His guidance has been instrumental in bringing the work to a successful end. In addition, I have not only learned how to study the Scriptures under his guidance; he has taught me many more things, not the least of which is how to teach a Sunday School class. I am also thankful to Drs. William Cook and Brian Vickers, before whom I defended the draft and who made valuable suggestions for improvement. They have also been good and gracious friends to me during the course of my studies. I am also grateful to Marsha Omanson, whose patient guidance has helped keep this in the proper form, and to Dr. David Puckett and the staff in the Graduate Studies office of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary for shepherding the process. Finally, I extend my grateful acknowledgement of the hard work and dedication of the entire faculty of the seminary, who have given selflessly to my improvement. Of course, I am responsible for the final product as it appears, and the shortcomings should not be seen as the fault of any of these people. They did the best they could with me.

It is, in addition, a humbling experience to enter into the discussion about how we are to understand Jesus and his identity. The issue had been a matter of controversy for centuries before I had my first thought about it, and scholars careful and careless,

devout and profane, creative and mundane have stood on both sides of the issue. Fine thinkers and excellent students of the Scriptures have disagreed and continue to disagree. I find agreement for much of my argument from many of those thinkers and scholars whom I respect and admire, but I have found it necessary to disagree about this topic with other scholars who are leaders in the field and who command the respect of students everywhere and especially command respect from me. To be so bold as to disagree I hope will not be seen as impertinent. I have tried to treat fairly and to learn from those who disagree, but most of all to remember that I have surely not offered the last word in this discussion. If anything I have written here can be considered useful for contributing to the discussion at all, it is more than I should expect.

The thing that humbles me most, though, is the task of trying to speak of the identity of the Lord Jesus Christ. For me, this is no purely academic pursuit. While this work consists of analysis of what the apostle Paul thought about the identity of Jesus, the conclusions I draw about what he thought are also my conclusions about who Jesus is. I recognize that such a confession suggests bias that has the potential to color the analysis. I think, though, that it is best to acknowledge that at the beginning. After all, in matters such as this, who is the objective and disinterested observer? Yet I stand before the one by whom and through whom and for whom are all things with the intent of in some way describing him. Perhaps Martin Luther has captured best in his famous hymn the description of Jesus and the final acknowledgment of who I will argue Jesus really is:

Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing;  
Were not the right Man on our side, the Man of God's own choosing:  
Dost ask who that may be? Christ Jesus it is He;  
Lord Sabaoth His name, from age to age the same  
And he must win the battle.

George W. Carraway

Louisville, Kentucky

May 2012

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

When Paul wrote his letter to the Romans more than twenty centuries ago he began what is now chapter 9 with a lament over the condition of his countrymen, followed by a catalog of benefits of the Jew. Perhaps that catalog added to the grief and pain that led him almost to wish himself accursed over their condition (Rom 9:1-5). In verse 5b Paul crowned his list of benefits with the words ἐξ ὧν ὁ χριστὸς τὸ κατὰ σάρκα, ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων, θεὸς εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας· ἀμήν.<sup>1</sup> Those words, and the punctuation, have been the subject of some significant debate.<sup>2</sup> Paul's intent could be understood in several possible ways, depending on, among other things, where one puts the stops and how one understands the antecedent of the participle.<sup>3</sup> Because of the various possibilities, scholars ask whether Paul intended for the reader to understand that Christ is himself God overall, or whether Paul simply broke into a doxology to God the Father over the coming of Christ.

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<sup>1</sup>The punctuation of the Greek text is a significant issue for this dissertation. In this case the Greek text displayed is taken, including punctuation, from the Nestle-Aland Greek text. Ed. Kurt Aland, et al., *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 27<sup>th</sup> ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1993).

<sup>2</sup>As noted by many who comment on this verse, even in 1904 F. C. Burkitt commented that the punctuation of the verse has probably been more discussed “than any other sentence in literature.” F. C. Burkitt, “On Romans ix 5 and Mark xiv 61,” *JTS* 5 (1904): 451.

<sup>3</sup>The literature regarding the exegesis of Rom 9:5 is extensive, but for a fairly concise and easily accessible listing of the possible ways the verse can be read, see C. E. B. Cranfield, *Romans: A Shorter Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 1985), 222. For a more thorough treatment and argument regarding the exegesis of the verse, see Bruce Metzger, “The Punctuation of Rom. 9:5,” in *Christ and the Spirit in the New Testament*, ed. Barnabas Lindars and Stephen S. Smalley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), esp. 7-8.

Although Rudolph Bultmann asserted that “the Doxology in Rom. 9:5 is scarcely to be referred to Christ,”<sup>4</sup> scholarly opinions are more divided than he allowed. A review of various English translations illustrates the different possibilities. The RSV translates “. . . and of their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ. God who is over all be blessed forever. Amen.” The AV translates differently: “and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ *came*, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.” With only minor variations, the ASV follows the AV. The NIV is a bit more explicit: “from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen.” Similarly, the Revidierte Lutherbibel of 1984 translates: “aus denen Christus herkommt nach dem Fleisch, der da ist Gott über alles, gelobt in Ewigkeit. Amen.” The New American Standard (Updated) leaves some of the ambiguity of the Greek text: “and from whom is the Christ according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.” As I will seek to demonstrate, the syntax most naturally favors a reading that Christ is over all, God, blessed forever.

### **Thesis**

It is my proposal that in the Christological passages in Romans 9-11, Paul speaks of Christ in a manner that suggests the correct reading of 9:5b is that he asserted that Christ is God over all; that is, he is the God of Israel. I will also argue that Paul understood that the confession that Christ is God over all is the fundamental confession that must be made by Israel for salvation.

### **New Testament Christology Since 1913**

One would normally expect that a history of research regarding the thesis would begin with the history of how Romans 9:5 has been interpreted. Since, however,

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<sup>4</sup>Rudolf Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, trans. Kendrick Grobel (London: SCM Press, 1952), 1:129.

the language of Romans 9:5 is capable of more than one reading, other factors enter the discussion to influence how Paul's intent is understood. In the modern period those questions are debated within a larger set of questions about the development of Christology in the first century. The debate concerns whether a devout first century Jew such as Paul would ever call anyone on earth God. Scholars dispute whether such an appellation could originate in Palestine or whether it must have awaited the spread of the Christian faith into Hellenistic pagan culture. If the latter, the next issue is the length of time after the death of Christ such a development would require. Finally, if Paul did intend the reader to understand that Christ is God over all, given the fact that Paul does not elsewhere make such a direct statement, some scholars question whether he would do that here at the beginning of Romans 9-11.<sup>5</sup> For that reason it would be useful first to review the more general background of New Testament Christological thought in the past 100 years. The specific point to be addressed in this dissertation is whether there is good reason Paul would have called Christ God at the beginning of Romans 9. That issue cannot be addressed, however, outside the discussion set forth in this section, regarding what Paul might have been able to say. The position of many scholars regarding Romans 9:5 is as much a function of the larger Christological issue as it is a matter of the syntax of the verse. The review of scholarship will, then, move from general to specific.

### **Arguments Regarding Development of Christology in the First Century**

**Wilhelm Bousset.** Less than a year before the shot that killed Archduke Ferdinand and started World War I, Wilhelm Bousset published *Kyrios Christos*, his well-known discussion of the development of New Testament Christology. Although the

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<sup>5</sup>Vincent Taylor, *The Person of Christ in New Testament Teaching* (London: Macmillan, 1958), 56. H. W. Bartsch, "Röm 9,5 und 1. Clem 32,4: Eine notwendige Konjecture im Römerbrief," *TZ* 21 (1965): 402-03. "The decisive argument is that nowhere else does St. Paul call Christ God" (my translation). While I am for the moment acknowledging this as part of the argument, I will argue in chap. 4 that although the meaning of Titus 2:13 is also disputed, Paul does in fact refer to Jesus as God there.

result was not as serious as a world war, the book was a turning point in the history of New Testament theology and the influence of the book grew even more with its translation into English in 1970.<sup>6</sup> Much of the discussion of New Testament Christology, particularly its origins in first century Palestine, still concerns the questions raised by Bousset. That discussion has resulted in an environment that has had an important effect on how readers of the Scriptures understand most of the Christological texts that deal with the divinity of Jesus, including Romans 9:5, so some detailed consideration of Bousset's contribution and the aftermath is useful.

In his book Bousset addressed the question "How did the early church come to divinize and venerate Jesus of Nazareth?" His argument can be crystallized into three major points:<sup>7</sup> The first is that early Christianity can be divided into two pre-Pauline stages: Palestinian Jewish Christianity and Hellenistic Christianity. Second, the earliest form of Christology was Son of Man Christology, although Jesus himself did not use that self-designation. Instead, the title was developed by the Palestinian church. Third, the *kyrios* title was not possible in Palestine, but it was developed along with the infusion of Greek pagans into the church. For Bousset the decisive turning point in the development of Christianity was its transition to Gentile-Christian territory in its earliest beginnings. Whether that transition resulted in complete revision of the way Christ was understood or was a matter of simply taking over what was already developed among Jewish Christians is a big part of the debate since Bousset's book.

The fact that the expression *Maranatha*, a word that appears in 1 Corinthians 16:22, is in Aramaic suggests the title *Mar* was attributed to Jesus in Palestine in the earliest years. Bousset argued, however, that the attribution originated in Antioch, where

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<sup>6</sup>Wilhelm Bousset, *Kyrios Christos: A History of Belief in Christ from the Beginnings of Christianity to Irenaeus*, trans. John E. Steely (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1970).

<sup>7</sup>See also Larry W. Hurtado, "New Testament Christology: A Critique of Bousset's Influence," *TS* 40 (1979): 310. Hurtado reduces Bousset's arguments in the same manner.

the influence of Greek speakers was stronger, rather than in Palestine. Bousset suggests the term may even have been an Aramaic translation of an originally Greek invocation of Jesus.<sup>8</sup>

The debate following Bousset's book basically followed three paths, similar to the main points of his book. The first question is whether the way the first century church understood the person of Jesus was a developmental process that underwent fundamental changes under a later infusion of Hellenistic ideas. Included in that question is the argument advanced by some scholars that Hellenism had penetrated Palestinian Judaism enough to preclude any sharp distinction between the two. The second is whether the Son of Man title was a creation of the church and, if so, whether it was exclusively used by the Palestinian church. This issue does not require extensive attention for the purposes of the discussion at hand. The third is whether the title *Kyrios* was used only as a result of the influence of the emperor cult on the church or whether it originated in Palestine.

**Rudolf Bultmann.** Bousset's theories regarding the developmental understanding of Christ have been followed rather closely by other influential scholars, including Rudolf Bultmann.<sup>9</sup> Bultmann essentially took over Bousset's arguments about the two stage development and he also argued that none of the conceptions of Messiah, Son of David, Son of God and Son of Man were new. They were developed from the myth of a Gnostic redeemer who would come and explain the nature of things to all who have ears to hear.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Bousset, *Kyrios Christos*, 129. Hurtado rightly regards Bousset's suggestion as "desperate." Larry Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 2003), 111 n 76.

<sup>9</sup>Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, 1:33-175, esp. 124-28.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., 165-75. Bultmann, *Faith and Understanding*, ed. R. W. Funk, trans. Louise Pettibone Smith (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 264.

**H. E. Todt.** Todt thought Mark 8:38 is the only Son of Man saying that with a high degree of probability can be traced back to Jesus. Todt understood the Son of Man as always a transcendent figure at the parousia; that is, in Mark 8:38 and Luke 12:8 Jesus spoke of another coming Son of Man who does not belong to the existing world, but to the new age. The Christology of the Synoptic tradition does not conceive of a transcendent person, the Son of Man, in Jesus. All sayings that do identify Jesus with the Son of Man are creations of the church, but the Palestinian church, not the Hellenistic church.<sup>11</sup>

**Oscar Cullmann.** Cullmann presented a significant full response to Bousset. Cullmann also contributed significantly to the agenda to do Christology by way of titles. His most significant contribution in terms of titles is to argue that the titles of Jesus are functional rather than ontological.<sup>12</sup> More significant for present purposes, Cullmann argued against the suggestion by Bousset and Bultmann that there was a sharp division between Palestinian Judaism and Hellenistic Judaism. Cullmann asserted that there were Hellenists in the earliest church in Jerusalem, and in fact, that the Hellenists did not suddenly appear after Jesus' death, but were probably there in the time of Jesus.<sup>13</sup> Cullmann further suggested that the Hellenists and the group represented by the Gospel of John expressed their faith in Jesus by means of the Son of Man concept. He also argued that the Aramaic *Mar* was used in the absolute sense for God in the same way that *Adonai* and *Kyrios* were used, indicating that in the Palestinian church where *Mar* was used the worship of Jesus as Lord already existed. Thus, for Cullmann, both Bousset and

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<sup>11</sup>H. E. Todt, *The Son of Man in the Synoptic Tradition* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1965), 40-47.

<sup>12</sup>Oscar Cullmann, *The Christology of the New Testament*, trans. Shirley C. Guthrie and Charles A. M. Hall, rev. ed. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963), 3-9.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, 165.

Bultmann argue incorrectly for an immediate transition under Hellenistic influence to something completely new. Instead, according to Cullmann, there was simply development from the use of Son of Man to use of Lord and one cannot say that Jesus was first worshipped as *the* Lord in a Hellenistic environment.<sup>14</sup>

Bultmann had argued that the origin of the use of the title Son of God in the pagan idea of the god man applied to anyone who seemed to have divine power, such as ability to heal.<sup>15</sup> Cullmann countered that the idea could easily have developed from concepts from the Old Testament where the Son of God was one who enjoyed a substantial relationship with God by virtue of the idea of election to participate in divine work through the execution of a particular commission. Jesus' primary designation of himself was Son of Man, but that concept must include not only the servant of YHWH but also the Son of God.<sup>16</sup>

**Ferdinand Hahn.** Building on Bousset's work, Ferdinand Hahn added another layer of development to Bousset's theory.<sup>17</sup> He maintained the Palestinian Judaism layer, but divided the Hellenistic division into Hellenistic Jewish Christianity and pagan Greek Christianity.

In keeping with the trend toward title Christology, Hahn also understood the development of Christology in terms of the titles by which Jesus of Nazareth was known. Hahn agreed with Bousset that the earliest title assigned by the church was Son of Man. Like Bultmann, Hahn can find no reason to think the church initially had any thought of the Son of Man as the suffering and exalted one. For Hahn, if one is careful to understand

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., 184-203.

<sup>15</sup>Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, 128.

<sup>16</sup>Cullmann, *Christology*, 272-75.

<sup>17</sup>Ferdinand Hahn, *The Titles of Jesus in Christology: Their History in Early Christianity*, trans. Harold Knight and George Orr (London: Lutterworth Press, 1969), 12.

that the title Son of Man best fits the coming one then it cannot be disputed that some of the Son of Man sayings originated on the lips of Jesus (those having to do with the coming Son of Man).<sup>18</sup>

Hahn, like Bousset and Bultmann, argued that *Kyrios* had its importance in the mystery religions and in the cult of the emperor in the Hellenistic sphere, which Christianity must have taken into account in proclaiming Jesus as the *Kyrios*.<sup>19</sup> At the same time he argued that Bousset's theory that use of the title originated in Damascus or Antioch is untenable. Hahn also recognized the background of the word in the Old Testament as an appellation of YHWH and acknowledged the use of the term for Jesus in Palestinian Christianity. He denied, however, that there was any intent to use it as a predicate of deity. Hahn understood the term *Maranatha* to be associated with the parousia and addressed to the exalted one who was coming, not to the earthly Jesus. When directed at the earthly Jesus, the word *mara* is similar to teacher or rabbi. The new interpretation in the Hellenistic area resulted in the description of Jesus as the exalted one. At first *Kyrios* did not imply deity, but nonetheless, the exalted Jesus did now bear the name of God himself and in the sphere of Hellenistic Gentile Christianity the *Kyrios* title came to imply the divine nature and divine dignity of the exalted Lord.

**Werner Kramer.** While Hahn's work is based almost solely on the Gospels, Werner Kramer argued on the basis of pre-Pauline and Pauline material. His argument, however, regarding the development of the term *Kyrios* is little different from Hahn's. He found in the term a pre-Pauline development in the Hellenistic Gentile church. Kramer argued that the use of the name of God for Jesus in Philippians 2:6-11, even if it pre-dates Paul, makes no difference because such an attribution could take place only in a

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<sup>18</sup>Ibid., 28.

<sup>19</sup>For Hahn's argument described in this paragraph, see Hahn, *Titles of Jesus*, 73-103.

Hellenistic Gentile environment.<sup>20</sup> As will be noted below, part of the debate over Kramer's thesis has to do with whether such a pre-Pauline Gentile church existed that could influence the theology of the first Christians.

Kramer acknowledged that *Maranatha* originated in the early Aramaic church, but did not consider it possible that *mara* could be a translation for *Adonai*, since that would be blasphemy and the church would not have opened itself to that charge. Like Hahn, he found the term solely related to the parousia; that is, to the coming Son of Man. Kramer rightly wondered (against his own argument) why the early church would not simply have used the title Son of Man rather than develop another term, *mara*, since the Son of Man title refers to the coming one, but he was unable to provide an answer.<sup>21</sup>

**Martin Hengel.** Martin Hengel argued more fully the point made by Cullmann regarding the lack of sharp distinction between Jewish and Hellenistic Christianity. Hengel's rather extensive writing argues that Hellenism had infiltrated Palestine too much for any sharp distinction to be made between Palestinian Judaism and Hellenistic Judaism. Most importantly, he asserted that even from the earliest days there were Christian Hellenists in Jerusalem. He bases his case in large part on Acts chapter 6 and the reference there to Ἑλληνισταί in the assembly. Hengel rejects the argument that those were Gentile Christians. Instead, the word simply refers to people who spoke Greek.<sup>22</sup> Since before AD 70 Jerusalem as a holy city of the Jews was not attractive to Gentiles as a residence, the Ἑλληνισταί were Greek-speaking Jews who had likely come from the Diaspora for the sake of the Temple and the Law. The recently crucified Jesus could be

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<sup>20</sup>Werner Kramer, *Christ, Lord, Son of God*, trans. Brian Hardy (Naperville, IL: Allenson, 1966), 70ff.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

<sup>22</sup>Martin Hengel, *Between Jesus and Paul: Studies in the Earliest History of Christianity* (London: SCM Press, 1983), 4-10.

proclaimed among those Hellenists only if his sayings and activity could be proclaimed in Greek. Thus, the translation into Greek began not in Antioch, Ephesus or Rome, but in Jerusalem. The real bridge between Jesus and Paul were these Jewish-Christian-Hellenists in the Greek-speaking community of Jerusalem. Only that community in Jerusalem (Palestine) could be called the pre-Pauline Hellenistic community.<sup>23</sup>

Hengel further argued that Paul's conversion was between AD 32 and 34, two to four years after Jesus' crucifixion. He highlighted the brevity of the time in which Paul's Christology developed. The earliest letter to the Thessalonians was probably written about AD 50, so Paul's Christology was fully developed not later than the late 40s before his first missionary journey. The argument from Bousset that Antioch was a Gentile-Christian community ignores the short time span during which the community developed, which would not have allowed for the leadership to have passed from Jewish to Gentile Christians. As Hengel notes, the problem for Hahn is that he barely notes that the Hellenistic community had its origin in Palestine.<sup>24</sup>

Hengel concluded that the Aramaic and Hellenistic communities existed side by side much longer than the Aramaic community was in Jerusalem alone and that it is wrong to think of a productive Gentile-Christian community before Paul. Even the Syrian communities were at best mixed communities and one should not assume any direct massive pagan influence since the mission to the Gentiles in the decisive early period was the work of Jews. The confession *Kyrios* Jesus is not borrowed from a pagan cult, but is a necessary consequence in which Psalm 110:1 played a part. *Maranatha* represented a preliminary state in which the exalted Christ was called upon to return soon.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid., 29.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., 30-34.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., 39-44. See also Martin Hengel, *The Son of God: The Origin of Christology and History of Jewish Hellenistic Religion*, trans. John Bowden (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976; reprint, Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2007), 57-83.

**C. F. D. Moule.** Moule also offered an argument against the clear distinction between the Greek and Aramaic communities so that they called Jesus by different titles.<sup>26</sup> He argued against the premise that there was a disconnect between the way Jesus thought of himself and the way the early church came to understand him. Moule argued further that had Jesus not referred to himself as the Son of Man the church would not have created the title for him. In fact, the early church itself never addressed or invoked Jesus as the Son of Man. Jesus himself saw in Daniel 7:13-14 a picture of his own destiny, which was to include his own suffering and vindication. Neither was the title Lord an invention of the Gentile church. Rather, it was already a part of the meaning of the Aramaic *Mara*.

The key thought Moule advanced is that the understanding of Jesus was developmental, not evolutionary. It is not that new conceptions of Jesus were generated in an evolutionary succession of new species by the creative imagination of the Christian communities as they drew on pagan cults. Early Christians simply gained new insights into the meaning of what was there all along. Thus, New Testament conceptions are in various degrees true to the person of Jesus himself.<sup>27</sup> As will be noted below, however, Moule nonetheless did not think Paul capable of thinking of Jesus as God.

**I. H. Marshall.** Marshall's argument is similar to Hengel, but he more pointedly addresses the circular nature of the reasoning of the History-of-Religions School. The only knowledge of what the divisions of the church might have been comes from passages identified as developed by the various divisions, that is, the divisions are developed out of the very passages said to be developed out of those divisions. Marshall argues that all Judaism at the time of Christ was Hellenistic and he doubts that any pure

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<sup>26</sup>C. F. D. Moule, *The Origin of Christology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 2-43.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, 133.

Gentile churches existed in the period before the Pauline mission and even during the Pauline mission, the churches were mixed with Jews and Gentiles. For that reason Hahn's Hellenistic Gentile church must be dismissed from consideration. The roots of Christology actually lie in the application of categories from the Old Testament and first century Judaism to Jesus. In the early period the influence of paganism is minimal. Behind the development stands the figure of Jesus and the claims that he made for himself.<sup>28</sup>

**J. A. Fitzmyer and the LXX.** One of the questions that arises in the discussion of whether any Palestinian Jewish Christian could refer to Jesus as *κύριος* in an absolute sense, is whether that title was ever used as a translation of the Tetragrammaton. H. Conzelmann argued that the Christian use of *κύριος* could not have been derived from the Septuagint (LXX) for a number of reasons, the most pertinent of which are (1) outside the LXX it is unusual as a designation for God, and (2) it has been disputed that the LXX renders יהוה by *κύριος*. The latter occurs only in Christian manuscripts of the LXX. Conzelmann listed a number of manuscripts in which the Tetragrammaton, not *κύριος*, appears.<sup>29</sup>

Fitzmyer acknowledged the validity of Conzelmann's arguments, but he denied that Conzelmann had closed the question of whether Palestinian Jews called, or could call, יהוה by the title *κύριος*. The question remains: if Christians, either Palestinian or Hellenistic, did not get the title from the LXX, where did they get it? Since there are manuscripts that contain *κύριος* for יהוה that predate the earliest known Christian

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<sup>28</sup>I. Howard Marshall, *The Origins of New Testament Christology*, updated ed. (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1990), 32-41.

<sup>29</sup>Hans Conzelmann, *An Outline of Theology of the New Testament*, trans. John Bowden (New York: Harper and Row, 1969), 83-84. Similarly, George Howard, "The Tetragram and the New Testament." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 1 (1977): 63-83. We must return to discuss this issue in somewhat more detail in chap. 4.

manuscript of the LXX, Fitzmyer suggested that it is reasonable to think there were copies of the LXX in the first century that made the substitution for the Tetragrammaton.<sup>30</sup> Fitzmyer went on to argue from a review of Qumran documents that the Aramaic *Mar* (generally equivalent to κύριος) or the Hebrew יהוה were used in an absolute sense for God. He also noted instances in the Greek texts of Josephus, the letter of Aristeas, and in Philo, of the use of κύριος in an absolute sense for God. Although these instances are not direct translations of יהוה in Scripture, they are evidence that in the first century it was possible that a Palestinian Jew in the pre-Pauline church would refer to God by using κύριος absolutely.<sup>31</sup> Fitzmyer understands Philippians 2:5-11 as a pre-Pauline hymn, in which the Christian community did in fact apply the title to the exalted Jesus.<sup>32</sup>

**Maurice Casey.** Casey examined recent sociological studies on the nature of Jewish identity to offer light on how the understanding of Jesus moved from Jewish prophet to Gentile God, even with Jews present in the communities where the transition occurred. According to Casey's analysis of those recent studies, the identity of ethnic Jews becomes more Gentile when they abandon Jewish practices such as circumcision. Casey compares that to the Maccabean era when some Jews were assimilated to Greek culture while others maintained strict adherence to Jewish law and were called "the Jews." Casey asserts that the Gospel of John is the only New Testament document in which Jesus is directly referred to as God and concludes that the writer of John was a Jew

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<sup>30</sup>J. A. Fitzmyer, "The Semitic Background of the New Testament *Kyrios* Title," in *A Wandering Aramean: Collected Aramaic Essays* (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1979), 121.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., 124-26. Others have reviewed the manuscript evidence from the first century and arrived at a similar conclusion. For a brief survey of the scholarly findings in this area, see David Capes, "YHWH Texts and Monotheism in Paul's Christology," in *Early Jewish and Christian Monotheism*, ed. Loren T. Stuckenbruck and Wendy E. S. North (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 120-24.

<sup>32</sup>Fitzmyer, "The Semitic Background," 128.

who had taken on a Gentile self-identification, hence the constant disputes Jesus had with “the Jews.” John’s community consisted of Jews and Gentiles, but the Jews in the community had been thrown out of the synagogue after AD 70 and were assimilating to the Gentile culture, influenced by Hellenism. Thus, the Gospel, as a product of the community, became a Hellenistic document, even though produced by Jews.<sup>33</sup>

### **Arguments Regarding Preexistence**

**James D. G. Dunn.** One recent issue having to do with development of Christological ideas in the New Testament is the question of preexistence raised by James Dunn. One feature of Dunn’s argument denies that Christology could have developed as quickly as Hengel argues. His argument is that the Christology of incarnation or preexistent God becoming man began to emerge only in the last decades of the first century and appears in a clear form within the New Testament only in its latest writings. Such a Christology can by no means be traced back to Jesus himself with any degree of conviction.<sup>34</sup>

One of the issues Dunn addressed is the reading of Philippians 2:6-11, where it is often argued that the preexistence of Christ is suggested. Dunn suggested instead that the one who grasped at equality with God was Adam, not Jesus. Dunn creatively reads the passage so that everything having to do with preexistence has to do with Adam and not with Christ.<sup>35</sup> He acknowledged in a later dictionary article that few scholars have been willing to read that passage as he suggests.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup>Maurice Casey, *From Jewish Prophet to Gentile God: The Origins and Development of New Testament Christology* (Cambridge: James Clark and Co.; Louisville: Westminster, 1991), 11-41.

<sup>34</sup>James D. G. Dunn, *Christology in the Making: A New Testament Inquiry into the Origins of the Doctrine of the Incarnation*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 1996), 12-60.

<sup>35</sup>*Ibid.*, 98-125.

<sup>36</sup>James D. G. Dunn, “Christology,” in *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. Noel David Freeman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 983. See also the telling critique of Dunn’s argument in Lincoln D. Hurst,

Dunn also takes issue with the idea that Jesus' preexistence can be seen in Colossians 1:15-20. He argues that the emphasis there is on Wisdom Christology and Paul's fuller meaning is that Christ is intention, that is, he is the one predetermined by God to be the fullest expression of his wise ordering of the world and its history. The passage is not a statement about preexistence as much as a statement about the wisdom of God now defined in Christ.<sup>37</sup>

**R. G. Hamerton-Kelly.** Hamerton-Kelly argued for preexistence in terms of existence in the mind of God. Hamerton-Kelly argued that existence in the mind of God is real existence, not just thought. According to Hamerton-Kelly preexistence is implied in the Synoptic tradition, but never discussed explicitly. He also thinks Dunn's Adam Christology reading of Philippians 2:6-11 is incorrect. His conclusion is that preexistence, as he describes it, is deeply imbedded in the biblical traditions. As both protological preexistence and eschatological preexistence it describes the nature of entities like Wisdom, Torah, Christ, the Son of Man, and the Church as especially related to the nature of God.<sup>38</sup>

**Simon Gathercole.** Gathercole contributed to the discussion of preexistence by arguing that the understanding that Jesus was preexistent was widespread among various individuals and in various communities around the Mediterranean well before AD 70. He argued for a pre-70 date for Hebrews with its several incarnational texts and for an early date for Jude between 40 and 70. He then argued that in Jude 5 the correct

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"Christ, Adam and Preexistence Revisited," in *Where Christology Began: Essays on Philippians 2*, ed. Ralph P. Martin and Brian J. Dodd (Louisville: Westminster-John Knox, 1998), 84-95.

<sup>37</sup>Dunn, *Christology in the Making*, 176-95.

<sup>38</sup>R. G. Hamerton-Kelly, *Pre-Existence, Wisdom and the Son of Man: A Study of Pre-Existence in the New Testament* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 271-80.

textual reading is that Jesus brought Israel out of Egypt.<sup>39</sup> He further contended that the “I have come” statements in the Synoptic Gospels are evidence of preexistence. He argues against a full-blown Wisdom Christology, even in Matthew.<sup>40</sup>

### **Arguments Regarding Jewish Monotheism**

In general, much of the critical discussion revolves around assumptions of what was possible among Jewish people who became followers of Jesus. Would the strong monotheistic stance of the Jewish Christians allow for worship or veneration of Jesus, or of attributing traits or titles to him that would equate him or even associate him with God? One way to answer that question for some has been to argue that Judaism was not necessarily monotheistic at all. Some have argued for the veneration of angels and other intermediary figures such as Wisdom, Word, patriarchs and other exalted human figures, that paved the way for veneration of Jesus.<sup>41</sup> Others have maintained that those figures, although viewed in lofty ways, were not actually the objects of cult worship, and therefore not relevant to how the church viewed Jesus. Still others surveyed below question whether the modern concept of monotheism applied to second temple Judaism.

**James D. G. Dunn.** Dunn argued that figures such as exalted patriarchs or angels, and attributes such as word or wisdom could not be thought of as God. Christological formulations in the New Testament are consciously kept within the bounds of Jewish monotheism. Christ was both the one who prayed to God and the representation

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<sup>39</sup>Simon Gathercole, *The Preexistent Son: Recovering the Christologies of Matthew, Mark and Luke* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 23-42.

<sup>40</sup>*Ibid.*, 83-221.

<sup>41</sup>See, in addition to those listed below, William Horbury, “Jewish and Christian Monotheism in the Herodian Age,” in *Early Jewish and Christian Monotheism*, ed. Loren T. Stuckenbruck and Wendy E. S. North, JSNT Supplement Series, vol. 263 (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 19-21.

of God to humans. The New Testament writers were already working within monotheistic frameworks that constrained the later councils.<sup>42</sup>

**Margaret Barker.** Barker argued that monotheism was a Deuteronomic innovation imposed with only partial success just prior to the exile. In addition she argued that YHWH was understood as a younger god who existed along with Elohim. The Jews began to consolidate the two after the exile, but the process was not complete in the first century. The dual god tradition eventually became Gnosticism. She concluded that Judaism could not be considered monotheistic in the first century.<sup>43</sup>

**Charles Gieschen.** Charles Gieschen also argued that using the word monotheism to describe first century Judaism can be problematic. At least partially in response to Dunn, he argued that angelomorphic (not Angel Christology) traditions had a significant impact on the early expressions of Christology.<sup>44</sup> He defines Angelomorphic Christology as the identification of Christ with angelic form and functions, either before or during the incarnation. Gieschen suggests angels can sometimes be divine hypostases when they participate in the divine name, glory, wisdom, spirit and power. Humans, including patriarchs, kings, prophets, priests and apostles can be angelomorphic when they speak for God. Gieschen adduces evidence from most sections of the New

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<sup>42</sup>James D. G. Dunn, "Was Christianity a Monotheistic Faith from the Beginning?" *Scottish Journal of Theology* 35 (1982): 303-36. See also Richard Bauckham, "The 'Most High' God and the Nature of Jewish Monotheism," in *Israel's God and Rebecca's Children: Christology and Community in Early Judaism and Christianity*, ed. David B. Capes, et al. (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2007), 40. Bauckham argued that although Judaism and Christianity acknowledge spiritual beings other than God, they are all created beings and are no more a threat to "rigorous" or "exclusive" monotheism than created creatures on earth.

<sup>43</sup>Margaret Barker, *The Great Angel: A Study of Israel's Second God* (London: SPCK, 1992).

<sup>44</sup>Charles Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology: Antecedents and Early Evidence* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 1. Gieschen cites a statement from Dunn that "no NT writer thought of Christ as an angel, whether as a pre-existent divine being who had appeared in Israel's history as the angel of the Lord, or as an angel or spirit become man, or as a man who by exaltation after death had become an angel." Dunn, *Christology*, 158.

Testament to argue that angelomorphic features were attributed to Jesus. He also contended that some first century Jews privately venerated angels.<sup>45</sup>

**Larry Hurtado.** Hurtado argued that Jesus was actually worshipped as God from the earliest days of the church. He argued three main points.<sup>46</sup> The first is that noteworthy devotion to Jesus emerged in the earliest years in circles of his followers. It was not a secondary stage of religious development or explained by extraneous forces. Second, devotion to Jesus was exhibited in unparalleled intensity for which there is no true analogy in the religious environment of the time. Third, the intense devotion to Jesus was offered and articulated within a firm monotheism that helped establish what became mainstream Christianity. As part of that argument Hurtado asserted that Jesus as *Kyrios* was a part of the *Maranatha* formula and thus was a part of the Aramaic confession.<sup>47</sup> Hurtado approves Hengel's arguments regarding the short time within which the Christological thought was crystallized. An important argument for Hurtado is that Philippians 2:6-11 is a pre-Pauline hymn, perhaps dating to the earliest years after the death of Jesus. Hurtado sees in Paul's ascribing to Jesus the name to which every knee will bow as a direct attribution of the name YHWH to Jesus.<sup>48</sup> The significant thing for Hurtado is binitarian worship of Jesus. He regards the early readiness of Christians to participate in the veneration of Jesus as the most striking evidence that Christian devotion quickly constituted a significant innovation in Jewish exclusivist monotheism.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>45</sup>Ibid., 31-35.

<sup>46</sup>Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ*, 2.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., 108-18.

<sup>48</sup>Larry Hurtado, "A 'Case Study' in Early Christian Devotion to Jesus: Philippians 2:6-11," in *How on Earth Did Jesus Become a God? Questions about the Earliest Devotion to Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 83-110.

<sup>49</sup>Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ*, 134-52.

**Richard Bauckham.** Bauckham has also written about the worship of Jesus, but not in the sense of trying to define a system in which the nature of God is defined. Rather, Bauckham's emphasis is on the identity of God (who God is), without emphasis on his nature (what God is).<sup>50</sup> The argument he advances is that Christianity in its earliest form was monotheistic, but that the New Testament writers simply understood that the identity of God has the capacity to include Jesus. Bauckham identified two factors that distinguish God from all other reality: YHWH, the only true God, is sole Creator of all things and sole Ruler of all things. Thus, only the God of Israel is worthy of worship, but the identity of the God of Israel includes Jesus because Jesus is included in those two identifying features.<sup>51</sup>

Bauckham distinguishes the uniqueness of God from the unitariness of God. Thus, distinctions within the divine identity are not inconceivable. Other than Word and Wisdom, none of the intermediary figures can be thought to participate in creation. Word and Wisdom may be distinguished because they are intrinsic to the divine identity. In the same way, the intention of the New Testament throughout all its texts is to include Jesus in the divine sovereignty of all things and in the divine creation of all things. As a result they accorded him worship. For Bauckham, the essential thing in the argument is that this high Christology was entirely possible within the understanding of Jewish monotheism. The difference between early Christology and Second Temple Judaism is that Christians said something about Jesus that Second Temple Jewish literature was not interested in saying about anyone: that he participates in the divine identity. Bauckham argues that what Jewish monotheism could not tolerate was the addition of intermediary type figures.

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<sup>50</sup>Richard Bauckham, *God Crucified: Monotheism and Christology in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 8.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., 9-13.

The New Testament writers sought to include Jesus in the divine identity. They did not wish to add him as an intermediary. To do that would simply be to add another god.

### **History of Interpretation of Romans 9:5 in the Christological Debate**

A large body of literature exists on all sides of the argument regarding Paul's intent in Romans 9:5b. Most commentators comment on the issue, although in varying detail. In addition, writers focusing on the Christology of the New Testament comment on the verse as well. While the lines of battle cannot be strictly drawn according to the positions set forth regarding developmental Christology, the argument is conducted within the atmosphere that has been described. This section will contain only a brief review to delineate the issue.

#### **History-of-Religions School**

It is unlikely that there has ever been a lack of controversy regarding the proper reading of Romans 9:5. The variety in punctuation of early manuscripts, including the variety in the early translations, is enough evidence that the controversy existed even early in Christian history.<sup>52</sup> At the same time, the prevailing tendency among early commentators was to read the verse to identify Jesus as God.<sup>53</sup> In fact, Metzger notes that

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<sup>52</sup>See the survey of punctuation in Metzger, "The Punctuation of Rom. 9:5," in *Christ and the Spirit in the New Testament*, ed. Barnabas Lindars and Stephen S. Smalley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 97-102.

<sup>53</sup>See, e.g., Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, 2.16.3, trans. A. Roberts and W. H. Rambaut, ANF, American ed. (Buffalo: Christian Literature, 1885; reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981), 1:441; Tertullian, *Against Praxeas*, trans. P. Holmes, ANF, American ed. (Buffalo: Christian Literature, 1885; reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981), 3:608-11; Hippolytus, *Against the Heresy of One Noetus*, trans. J. H. McMahon, ANF, American ed. (Buffalo: Christian Literature, 1885; reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981), 1:224-25; Novatian, *Treatise Concerning the Trinity*, trans. Robert Earnest Wallis, ANF, American ed. (Buffalo: Christian Literature, 1885; reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981), 1:622-23, 642; Augustin, *Expositions on the Book of the Psalms*, trans. J. E. Tweed, NPNF<sup>1</sup>, American ed. (reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1956), 8:286, 319, 356; Ambrose, *Of the Christian Faith*, trans. H. DeTomestini, NPNF<sup>2</sup>, American ed. (reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 8:213; Gregory of Nyssa, *Against Eunomius* trans. William Moore and H. A. Wilson, NPNF<sup>2</sup>, American ed. (reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 8:117; Athanasius, *Four Discourses Against the Arians*, trans. Cardinal J. H. Newman, NPNF<sup>2</sup>, American ed.

among the orthodox Greek fathers, only Diodore of Tarsus and Photius read the verse as referring to God the Father.<sup>54</sup>

Under the more recent influence of the History-of-Religions School more scholars started to read Romans 9:5b as a doxology to God the Father. Bousset argued that Paul used the term Son of God to push Christ as close as possible to God the Father, but at the same time to particularly distinguish them.<sup>55</sup> Paul connects the Son of God to *Kyrios*, who stands close to the Father, but on the other hand is a being in his own right, separate from the Father. Paul's focus is on the exalted Son of God. He would not actually speak of the deity of Christ. He avoids the expression *θεός*, just as he keeps his distance from the idea of a deification of believers. Bousset calls for general acknowledgement that however Romans 9:5 is read, one should acknowledge that Paul does not intend to render a doxology to Christ.<sup>56</sup> As noted previously, Bultmann agreed. Cullmann disagreed, however. Based more on a grammatical analysis than on an analysis of what Paul would do, he concluded that Paul did intend to designate Christ as God.<sup>57</sup>

### **Grammatical Analysis Favoring the Thesis**

In 1881, Timothy Dwight produced a detailed and lengthy analysis of Romans 9:5 and concluded Paul intended to refer to Jesus as God.<sup>58</sup> Briefly considered, Dwight argued that τὸ κατὰ σάρκα suggests an antithesis, which is expressed in the verse. He also

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(reprint, Grand Rapids; Eerdmans, 1983), 8:311-12; Theodoret of Cyrus, *Commentary on the Letters of Paul*, vol. 1, trans. Robert Charles Hill (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2001), 99-100.

<sup>54</sup>Metzger, "The Punctuation of Rom. 9:5," 103.

<sup>55</sup>Bousset, *Kyrios Christos*, 207.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., 210. Cf. Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, 129. It appears that neither Bousset nor Bultmann bases his conclusions on a detailed analysis of the grammar of Rom 9:5. Instead, the conclusion is apparently based on the theory that such a doxology could originate only among Hellenists and never with a Jewish writer such as Paul.

<sup>57</sup>Cullmann, *Christology*, 312-13.

<sup>58</sup>Timothy Dwight, "On Romans ix.5," *JBL* 1 (1881): 22-55.

argued that the participle is most naturally connected with  $\delta$   $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{o}\varsigma$ , and that the word  $\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\lambda\omicron\gamma\eta\tau\acute{o}\varsigma$  occurs where one would expect, if it is descriptive of  $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{o}\varsigma$  but it is not in the normal order for a doxology to God.

In their commentary published in 1899, William Sanday and A. C. Headlam undertook a detailed analysis of the text and the possible ways to punctuate it.<sup>59</sup> They concluded that no argument is conclusive, but the grammar suggests the word  $\theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$  refers to Christ.<sup>60</sup> In an article published in 1965, Raymond Brown concluded that Paul meant to refer to Jesus as God, and although he did not demonstrate his exegesis, he asserted the only real objection is that Paul nowhere else calls Jesus God.<sup>61</sup> In 1992 Bruce Metzger undertook a more thorough analysis similar to Dwight and came generally to the same conclusion that Dwight reached.<sup>62</sup> In 2003 Hans-Christian Kammler analyzed the text in detail and concluded that Paul did mean to refer to Jesus as God.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>59</sup>While this list is not exhaustive, more modern commentators who argue that Paul did mean to call Jesus God include Charles Hodge, *Romans* (Philadelphia: William S. and Alfred Martien, 1864; reprint, Wheaton: Crossway, 1993), 274-75; Frederick Louis Godet, *Commentary on Romans* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1977), 342-46; Charles R. Erdman, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans: An Exposition* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1925), 103; Adolf Schlatter, *Romans, The Righteousness of God*, trans. Siegfried S. Schatzmann (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995), 201-03; Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 350; F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans: An Introduction and Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963), 186-87; Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1998), 489; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Romans: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, The Anchor Bible, vol. 33 (New York: Doubleday, 1993), 548-49; Anders Nygren, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. Carl C. Rasmussen (London: SCM, 1952), 359; C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, ICC (London: T & T Clark, 1979), 2:468-69.

<sup>60</sup>William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed, International Critical Commentary, vol. 31 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899), 233-38.

<sup>61</sup>Raymond E. Brown, "Does the New Testament Call Jesus God?" *TS* (1965): 559-60. See also Maurice Casey, "Chronology and the Development of Pauline Christology," in *Paul and Paulinism: Essays in Honor of C. K. Barrett*, ed. M. D. Hooker and S. G. Wilson (London: SPCK, 1982), 130. Casey, without explanation of the exegesis, concludes Paul did intend to refer to Jesus as  $\theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$ .

<sup>62</sup>Metzger, "The Punctuation of Rom 9:5," 112. Similarly, Murray Harris, *Jesus as God: The New Testament Use of Theos in Reference to Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992), 172.

<sup>63</sup>Hans-Christian Kammler, "Die Prädikation Jesus Christi as 'Gott' and die paulinische Christologie: Erwägungen zur Exegese von Röm 9,5b," *ZNW* 94 (2003): 164-80.

## Grammatical Objections to the Thesis

**Ezra Abbot.** One of perhaps the more thorough analyses of the text was published by Ezra Abbot in response to Dwight in 1881.<sup>64</sup> Abbot argued that a doxology to God was not out of place in Romans 9:1-5 and that the various aspects of 9:5 suggest it is proper. He argued that the participle can best be understood as starting a new sentence in which the participle serves as the subject and God is the antecedent. As support for that he denied that *κατὰ σάρκα* should require as an antithesis that Jesus is God, and, in addition he argued that a full stop is suggested following it. Abbot finally contends that *εὐλογητὸς* is never applied to Jesus in the New Testament and, in spite of suggestions that the word order is unnatural for a doxology, it is best applied to God. Abbot's assessment includes a thorough analysis of the meaning of the text; however, he ultimately realized that the reading that Christ is God is also a possible reading. He then fell back to contentions similar to others that Paul nowhere else refers to Jesus as God, and that it is unlikely that at the early time of Paul's writing he could have had that understanding.

**Gordon Fee.** Another more recent objection based on analysis of the grammar comes from Gordon Fee in his quite thorough exegetical analysis of Paul's Christology.<sup>65</sup> Fee argues that a reading that understands the messiah to be God is at best possible and not, in fact, the proper reading. His argument consists of numerous points that require some detailed analysis later in the dissertation, but here it can be generalized as: (1) In most of Paul's writing he makes a clear distinction between *θεός* and *κύριος* (the Son); (2) Paul's emphasis in Romans as a whole and in chapters 9-11 is so thoroughly theocentric

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<sup>64</sup>Ezra Abbot, "On the Construction of Romans ix. 5," *JBL* 1 (1881): 87-154.

<sup>65</sup>Gordon Fee, *Pauline Christology: An Exegetical-Theological Study* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2007), 272-77.

that one would need more than a grammatical option to overturn it; and (3) Fee proposes grammatical arguments that are essentially the same as those advanced by Abbott. Fee argues his position at some length, but a close look will show that he begins with the understanding that Paul could not here assert Jesus is God because that is not how he (Paul) views Christ in the larger context of his writing.<sup>66</sup>

### **Non-Exegetical Objections to the Thesis**

**Emendation.** A few scholars have suggested an emendation of the text that would reverse  $\acute{o} \tilde{\omega}\nu$  to  $\tilde{\omega}\nu \acute{o}$ , which would result in Paul, referring to Israel, writing “whose is the God over all amen.” That conjecture does not appear to have gained widespread support, and of course, being conjecture, it has no manuscript support. In support of the argument for conjecture, though, W. L. Lorimer argued that it is “well-nigh impossible” for Paul to call Christ God, and that the conjecture would clear up some of the problems with the sudden introduction of the doxology.<sup>67</sup> Karl Barth may be representative of the difficulty scholars find when he comments that  $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{o}\varsigma$  may be taken as the subject of the participial phrase, as supported by analogous constructions in Romans 1:25 and 2 Corinthians 11:31, but “I cannot, however bring myself to accept ‘so unparalleled an attribution’” (quoting Zahn).<sup>68</sup> Thus, he argues for the conjecture.

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<sup>66</sup>Commentators opposed to the thesis that Paul intended to call Jesus God include Peter Stuhlmacher, *Paul's Letter to the Romans: A Commentary*, trans. Scott J. Hafemann (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1994), 144; Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 260; James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 38a (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1988), 536; James Denney, *St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, in vol. 2 of *The Expositor's Greek Testament*, ed. W. Robertson Nicoll (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, Reprinted 1970), 659; C. H. Dodd, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1932), 152-53; Brendan Byrne, *Romans*, Sacra Pagina, vol. 6 (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1996), 288.

<sup>67</sup>W. L. Lorimer, “Romans 9. 3-5,” *New Testament Studies* 13 (1967): 385-86.

<sup>68</sup>Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans*, trans. Edwyn C. Hoskyns (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), 331-32n 4.

Similarly, H. W. Bartsch argued that the conjecture is necessary to understand the text.<sup>69</sup> After comparison with other doxologies in the Pauline letters he concluded that the issue of the one to whom the doxology was directed could not be decided on the basis of punctuation.<sup>70</sup> Either a period or a colon following either τὸ κατὰ σάρκα ἢ ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων, results in the doxology being disconnected from the rest of the verse, creating an independent doxology. Bartsch rightly notes based on his analysis of the other doxologies that Paul would not have created such a disconnected doxology. He also acknowledged that the exegesis of the doxology references Christ, but questioned whether Paul could have spoken in such a manner, especially here at the beginning of his argument about the significance of Israel and at the end of the list of the gifts of the people of Israel. Thus a doxology to Christ is not reasonable.<sup>71</sup> Since Bartsch finds it unreasonable that the text can be resolved by punctuation to show that the doxology was intended to be to God, and since it could not relate to Christ, especially at this point in the text, he resolved the dilemma by speculating that the correct original text included the conjecture.<sup>72</sup>

**Theological objections.** Although he stopped short of proposing an emendation, C. F. D. Moule agreed that the case for the grammatical analysis that results in the conclusion that Paul did intend to call Jesus God is “remarkably cogent,” yet he has an instinctive reluctance to allow that a Jew of Paul’s upbringing could have used θεός in

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<sup>69</sup>Bartsch, “Röm 9,5 und 1. Clem 32,4,” 401-09. Similarly, John Ziesler, *Paul’s Letter to the Romans* (London: SCM, 1989), 239; Dodd, *Romans*, 153.

<sup>70</sup>Other doxologies include Rom 1:25 and 11:36, 2 Cor 11:31, Gal 1:5, and Phil 4:20. Of those texts, Rom 11:36 might be argued to be independent, but even there the antecedent for αὐτῷ can connect the doxology to the previous phrase.

<sup>71</sup>Bartsch, “Rom 9,5,” 402-03.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid., 406-07. Bartsch went on to argue that 1 Clement 32:4 should be read as a paraphrase of Rom 9:5, and that it read the text with the conjecture.

quite that way.<sup>73</sup> Dunn concurs: “The argument on punctuation certainly favours a reference to Christ as ‘god.’ But Paul’s style is notably irregular and a doxology to Christ as god at this stage would be even more unusual within the context of thought than an unexpected twist in grammatical construction.”<sup>74</sup>

### **Present Contribution**

As noted above, the proposed thesis of this dissertation is that Paul did intend to call Christ God in Romans 9:5b. That argument will be made from a thorough exegesis of Romans 9:1-5; however, as can be seen from the brief history reported above, even if the evidence is convincing that the grammar supports such a conclusion, many are unconvinced. While it is reasonable to conclude that research and argumentation in the last thirty years has thrown into considerable doubt the theories advanced by Bousset that the title *κύριος* could not have been applied to Jesus in Palestine or even by Paul, there are still questions to be answered about the text at hand. In addition, one can reasonably think that an answer should be provided to the call from Bartsch for proof that Paul could even have spoken of Christ as he did in the doxology. Bartsch also articulated fairly clearly the question of why Paul would write a doxology to Jesus at the beginning of Romans 9-11 and at the end of a list of the benefits to the Jews. Similarly, Jochen Flebbe relies on his analysis of the connection between Romans 9:5b and 9:6a to conclude a reference to

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<sup>73</sup>Moule, *The Origin of Christology*, 137.

<sup>74</sup>Dunn, *Christology in the Making*, 45. See also Dunn’s *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 256. It appears Dunn would rather think that Paul would write a poor sentence that does not say what he meant, than to think Paul could identify Jesus as God. But see the critique of Dunn’s argument in C. E. B. Cranfield, “Some Comments on Professor J. D. G. Dunn’s *Christology in the Making with Special Reference to the Evidence of the Epistle to the Romans*,” in *The Glory of Christ in the New Testament: Studies in Christology in Memory of George Bradford Caird*, ed. L. D. Hurst and N. T. Wright (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 272-73. Cranfield understands the burden of proof to be on those who reject the reference of Rom 9:5 to Christ and his critique is essentially that Dunn has not considered the evidence sufficiently to comment as he has, since he devoted less than half a page to the issues contained in the verse. But those holding views similar to Dunn include C. H. Dodd, *Romans*, 152-53. Similarly Denney, *Romans*, 658-59; Käsemann, *Romans*, 259-60.

Christ as God would in no way fit into Paul's argumentation at this point.<sup>75</sup> Dunn's argument noted above that a doxology to Christ would be unusual in the context of Paul's thought also calls forth the analysis of the literary context of the sentence at issue. The objection that it is questionable that Paul would apply *θεός* to Christ at this point in the letter is the issue in dispute in this dissertation.

In addition to the exegesis of the passage in question, I will analyze the remainder of Romans 9-11 to determine whether evidence exists to suggest Paul had in mind his argument in those chapters when he penned 9:1-5. The analysis will focus on three other passages in chapters 9-11. The first to be considered is the issue of the stumbling block (Rom 9:30-33), where I will argue that the Jews stumbled over the person of Jesus. The second is the confession of Jesus in 10:9-13, where I will argue that to confess Jesus as Lord is to confess him as YHWH, God of Israel. I will further argue that the confession in 10:9-13 cannot be separated from the confession of Christ as God. I will then argue that this confession of Jesus as the God of Israel is what Israel must confess to be saved.<sup>76</sup>

Finally, I will argue that the deliverer from Zion in 11:25-26 in Paul's terminology may be an indication of who he means for us to understand Jesus to be. Paul's quotation in 11:25-27 raises questions, but I will argue that the wording itself points back to 9:5. There are many other issues to be developed within that framework of analysis, but I will refrain from a complete list here. The main purpose is to propose that Paul actually sets forth in Romans 9:5b his view of the person of Christ that he will exhibit throughout Romans 9-11, that is, that the basic confession of the faith for Jews as

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<sup>75</sup>Jochen Flebbe, *Solus Deus: Untersuchungen zur Rede von Gott im Brief des Paulus an die Römer* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 270-71.

<sup>76</sup>See also, Abbot, "Romans ix. 5," 124. Abbot understood that the confession of Jesus as Lord was the fundamental article of the Christian faith. He declined to enter into discussion of the meaning of that confession, but I will try to do that in the dissertation.

well as Gentiles is that Jesus is YHWH, in every sense God himself. In effect the purpose will be to address the question of why here at the beginning of Romans 9-11, Paul would refer to Jesus as God.

### **Method**

The method will be primarily exegetical. The exegesis will focus on chapters 9-11 of Romans to determine whether the mentioned texts can be found to contribute to an understanding of the person of Christ such that Paul would refer to Christ as if to God. The exegetical work will lay the groundwork for an analysis of Paul's Christology as set forth in the chapters. The nature of the resistance to the argument, however, will require some consideration of the nature of first century Jewish monotheism as well as some philosophical consideration of whether Paul could speak of Jesus as he did, yet not identify him as God. Finally, some consideration must be given to the conditions under which a Jew well trained in his religion could even make such an attribution as in Romans 9:5b at all. Many of those issues will be considered in two chapters regarding objections to the conclusions brought about by a grammatical analysis of 9:5b.

Chapter 2 will begin the discussion. It will consist of a detailed discussion of the exegesis of Romans 9:5b. I will set the verse in context of the entire letter to the Romans as well in the context of chapters 9-11. I will also consider in some detail the various grammatical possibilities, as well as the nature of doxological structures. I will argue there that the syntax points to Christ as God.

The next two chapters will seek to answer objections to my conclusions. While this dissertation does not have space for thorough analysis of all the developmental theories of Christological thought, some consideration needs to be given to them and whether they can be answered from the remaining exegetical considerations of Romans 9-11. In chapter 3 I will consider the objection that Paul as a Jewish monotheist could not speak of Christ in the way that my exegetical conclusions suggest he did. Chapter 4 will

argue that Paul spoke of Jesus in a way that requires the reader to understand that Paul either identified Jesus as God or he posits a second god, which would be a larger violation of his strict monotheism than simply to refer to Jesus as God himself.

Chapter 5 will consist of argument regarding the nature of the stumbling block and the question of what it is that caused the Jews to stumble. I will argue that although the problem of the Jewish attitude toward the Mosaic Law is part of the issue, the ultimate issue is the person of Jesus as Messiah and as Lord, in the sense that he is YHWH himself. Various other suggestions have been offered, but this chapter will argue that even if some of the other suggestions have reasonable validity, the ultimate place where the Jews stumbled was over the person of Christ. Evidence from other writings of Paul suggests the crucifixion of Christ is the place where the stumble occurs.

Chapter 6 will assess the confession of Jesus in 10:9-13, where I will ask what it means to confess Jesus as Lord and whether that meaning can be separated from the confession of Christ as God. That discussion will take into account Paul's further explanation of the confession in 10:13 and the universal lordship of Jesus. My argument will be that, as is often acknowledged, that passage contains what Paul regards as the basic confession of the Christian faith, and that this confession has to do with the fact that Jesus is YHWH, who Paul understands to be God himself.

Chapter 7 will consider the nature of Paul's use of Isaiah 59:20. I will argue that the deliverer from Zion in 11:25-26 in Paul's terminology is an indication of who he means for us to understand Jesus to be. Paul's quote in 11:25 raises questions, but I will ask whether his wording itself points back to 9:5. While the meaning of the rest of 11:25-26 is an intriguing question it will not be the purpose of the chapter to solve the question of the eschatological fate of Israel. The question at issue will be the nature of Paul's use of the quote from Isaiah, and how that might relate to the language he used in 9:5b. It is to those questions that we now must turn.

## CHAPTER 2

### CHRIST AS GOD IN ROMANS 9:5b

In chapter 1, I cataloged a number of scholars who objected to the thesis that in Romans 9:5 Paul intended to call Jesus God. Others, however, have done detailed analysis of the text and concluded that Paul did intend to call Jesus God. One early and thorough analysis was done by Timothy Dwight in 1881.<sup>1</sup> Soon after, William Sanday and A. C. Headlam undertook a detailed analysis of the text and the possible ways to punctuate it. They concluded that no argument is conclusive, but the grammar suggests the word *θεός* refers to Christ.<sup>2</sup> In 1973 Bruce Metzger drew a similar conclusion,<sup>3</sup> as did Murray J. Harris in 1992.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, in 2003 Hans-Christian Kammler analyzed the text and concluded that *θεός* refers to Christ.<sup>5</sup> This chapter will undertake a similar study.

#### **Some Preliminary Issues**

In his letter to the Romans Paul attributes titles to Christ Jesus in various ways, some of which imply a distinction between God and Christ. Those distinctions occur

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<sup>1</sup>Timothy Dwight, "On Rom ix. 5," *JBL* 1 (1881): 22-55.

<sup>2</sup>William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, The International Critical Commentary, vol. 31 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1902), 233-38.

<sup>3</sup>Bruce Metzger, "The Punctuation of Rom 9:5," in *Christ and the Spirit in the New Testament*, ed. Barnabas Lindars and Stephen S. Smalley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 112.

<sup>4</sup>Murray Harris, *Jesus as God: The New Testament Use of Theos in Reference to Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992), 172.

<sup>5</sup>Hans-Christian Kammler, "Die Prädikation Jesu Christi 'Gott' und die Paulinische Christologie: Erwägungen zur Exegese von Röm 9,5b," *ZNW* 94 (2003): 164-80.

from the earliest part of the letter. In 1:1-4, part of the introduction to the letter, Paul introduces Jesus as the Son of God. Given its place at the front of the letter, that title and the distinction it carries likely bears some prominence as a significant way of speaking for Paul. In 1:8 Paul's thanks are directed to God, but through Jesus Christ. In verse 9 Paul serves God in the gospel of his Son. Similarly, Paul refers to the Son as distinct from God in 8:3, 29, and 32. In each of those references the Son implies that God refers to the Father, but in 1:7b, the relationship is explicit with reference to the Father and without reference to the Son: "grace to you and peace from God our father and the Lord Jesus Christ."<sup>6</sup> In that verse there may also be a suggestion of the unity of the two, but that discussion must wait for chapter 4. In 1 Corinthians 15:24-28 Paul also calls attention to the distinction between the Father and Son in terms of submission by the Son to the Father and in Galatians 1:1, it is the Father who raised Jesus Christ from the dead.

Clearly, then, one must recognize that in Paul's mind the distinction between the Son and the Father exists. At the same time, the argument in this chapter will be that the syntax of Romans 9:5b suggests Paul could also refer to Jesus as God. The distinction will be addressed briefly later in the dissertation during discussion of Paul's use of *θεός*, but I do not propose that I will finally resolve how it is that Paul can see a distinction between Jesus and God the Father, and at the same time refer to Jesus as God. The best way forward at this time lies with the suggestion by Richard Bauckham:

Instead, I shall argue that high Christology was possible within a Jewish monotheistic context, not by applying to Jesus a Jewish category of semi-divine intermediary status, but by identifying Jesus directly with the one God of Israel, including Jesus in the unique identity of this one God.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> *χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ*. All translations are my own unless otherwise specified. Similarly, see Rom 15:6; 1 Cor 1:3; 8:6; 2 Cor 1:2-3; 11:31; Gal 1:3-4; Eph 1:2-3; 1:17; 5:20; 6:23; Phil 1:2; 2:11; Col 1:2-3; 3:17; 1 Thess 1:1, 3; 3:11, 13; 2 Thess 1:1-2; 2:16; 1 Tim 1:2; 2 Tim 1:2; Titus 1:4; Phlm 3.

<sup>7</sup> Richard Bauckham, *God Crucified: Monotheism and Christology in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 4. Idem, *Jesus and the God of Israel: God Crucified and Other Studies on the New Testament's Christology of Divine Identity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 3.

The question of how the divine and human natures could both exist in Jesus is not new, but as Bauckham points out, the question is really one of identity rather than nature.

The difference between identity and nature can be seen in Bauckham's further comments that, what in the Jewish understanding of God really could be understood as divine, is determined in modern scholarship by a variety of unexamined criteria for drawing the boundary between what is and is not God. As a result, according to Bauckham, it is unclear what the attribution of divinity to Jesus in early Christology really implied.<sup>8</sup> For Bauckham, "Identity concerns who God is: nature concerns what God is or what divinity is," and "if we wish to know in what Second Temple Judaism considered the uniqueness of God to consist . . . we must look not for a definition of divine nature, but for ways of characterizing the divine identity."<sup>9</sup>

With that in mind, a brief statement of how chapter 2 develops will be in order. After some consideration of how it fits in the near and larger context, I suggest that Paul's statement in 9:5b is not a statement of the nature of Jesus that will permit resolution of how he can speak of Jesus as both Son, distinct from God the Father, and at the same time understand him to be God. In other words, this is not a question of what it means to be divine. The issue is rather a question of identity. Any attempt to make this a question of divinity alone is hindered by the phrase *ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων, θεός*. Paul is speaking to the identity of this God, and surely he has in mind the God of Israel. No other God is over all. Paul simply understood Jesus to be identical with the God of Israel, and when he identified God he included Jesus. One of the important issues in this chapter will

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<sup>8</sup>Bauckham, *God Crucified*, 5.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., 8. But see Larry Hurtado's argument that early Christians had a binitarian understanding of Jesus as God. Larry Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 134-52. Although Hurtado has in common with Bauckham an emphasis on veneration of Jesus from the earliest period, his suggestion is less appealing because of his attempts to explain the *nature* of Jesus' divinity, which, as far as I have found, the NT does not attempt. Bauckham's model might also be seen as binitarian but he avoids explanation of the nature of Jesus.

be the use of the participle (ὁ ὢν), and perhaps at this point the participle could be formulated in a question “who is God over all?”

In addition to the objection that Paul often refers to Jesus as distinct from God, there is the argument that Paul nowhere else in his writings directly refers to Jesus as God.<sup>10</sup> I acknowledge this wider doctrinal problem at the outset and I will return to it in chapters 3 and 4 in which I will take up several objections to the possibility that Paul could refer to Jesus as God. While those wider objections exist, however (and others as well), and must be taken seriously, they should not be the place to begin. The place to begin is with a detailed study of the text in question. No one, of course, is free from the influence of theological presuppositions, but Timothy Dwight has perhaps best summarized the method for this chapter:

We should approach consideration of this question, as it seems to us, first as verbal and grammatical interpreters alone—asking, apart from all regard to St. Paul’s doctrinal teaching, what the words before us actually mean, in the connection in which they stand; and only afterwards should we take our view of them as looking from the general doctrine of the Apostle. This is the natural order of examination in all cases. The words of a particular passage have a right to be interpreted by the common rules of language, and to have their meaning determined in independence of anything beyond the limits of their own context. A writer may not have intended to bring out in a particular place, what he states as the substance of his teaching elsewhere.<sup>11</sup>

### **Romans 9:1-5 Generally**

That chapters 9-11 form a discrete section of Romans is not disputed. Some have argued in the past that the chapters are a diversion in Paul’s thought, perhaps even a sermon Paul had spoken.<sup>12</sup> Thomas Schreiner, however, notes that such ideas have all but

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<sup>10</sup>In chap. 4, I will argue that Titus 2:13 is the exception, and that Paul does there refer to Jesus as God. That conclusion would be disputed by many, and others would not accept Titus as actually authored by Paul. For purposes of this summary I will accept for the moment that Rom 9:5 is the only Scripture in which Paul directly refers to Jesus as God.

<sup>11</sup>Dwight, “On Romans ix. 5,” 23.

<sup>12</sup>C. H. Dodd, *The Epistle to the Romans* (London: Hodder and Stoughton), 148-49.

vanished today.<sup>13</sup> It also appears the present majority opinion is that the place of Israel is not the fundamental idea of the chapters. Instead, the issue is the righteousness or faithfulness of God.<sup>14</sup> That is a fair enough analysis, but many also rightly note that it is the question of the unbelief of Israel that calls forth Paul's struggle.<sup>15</sup> It is my position that the burning question concerns Israel's unbelief, and the answer is developed in the framework of the faithfulness of God.<sup>16</sup> As I will argue below, the question of Israel's

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<sup>13</sup>Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1998), 469; Brendan Byrne, *Romans*, Sacra Pagina, vol. 6 (Collegeville MN: Liturgical Press, 1996), 282.

<sup>14</sup>So, Johann D. Kim, *God, Israel, and the Gentiles: Rhetoric and Situation in Romans 9-11* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 1999), 6. Examples of those who understand the righteousness or faithfulness of God to be the central issue include Anders Nygren, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. Carl C. Rasmussen (London: SCM Press, 1952), 353-60; Robert Jewett, *Romans: A Commentary* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), 556; John B. Polhill, *Paul and His Letters* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1999), 294; Krister Stendahl, *Final Account: Paul's Letter to the Romans* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 5; Schreiner, *Romans*, 471; Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 226; Byrne, *Romans*, 282; E. Elizabeth Johnson, "Romans 9-11: The Faithfulness and Impartiality of God," in *Pauline Theology*, vol. 3: *Romans*, ed. David M. Hay and E. Elizabeth Johnson (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), 220.

<sup>15</sup>J. C. Beker, "The Faithfulness of God and the Priority of Israel in Paul's Letter to the Romans," *Harvard Theological Review* (1986): 10-16; Hans Hübner, *Gottes Ich und Israel: Zum Schriftgebrauch des Paulus in Römer 9-11* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1984), 14-15; Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 256; Ulrich Wilckens, *Der Brief an die Römer*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Zurich: Benzler Verlag and Neukirchener Verlag, 1993), 2:181; N. T. Wright, *The Letter to the Romans: Introduction, Commentary and Reflections*, in vol. 10 of *The Interpreter's Bible*, ed. Leander E. Keck (Nashville; Abingdon, 2002), 621; C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (London: T&T Clark, 1979), 2:446-47; James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 38B (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1988), 517-19; Douglas J. Moo, "The Theology of Romans 9-11: A Response to E. Elizabeth Johnson," in *Pauline Theology*, vol. 3 *Romans*, ed. David M. Hay and E. Elizabeth Johnson (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), 241; Otfried Hofius, "Zur Auslegung von Römer 9,30-33," in *Paulusstudien II* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 161. Contra E. E. Johnson, "Romans 9-11," 218-20. Johnson finds some reason to think the problem of Jewish unbelief prompts Rom 9-11, but denies the reasons are sufficient. At the same time, Johnson argues that the tension between God's faithfulness and impartiality is what brings Paul to the dilemma at the beginning of the chapters. She locates that question in the problem of how it is that God is remaining faithful to Israel if the church is full of Gentiles and the Jews are staying away in droves. So it seems even with her very strong emphasis on the faithfulness and impartiality of God, she acknowledges the issue that raises that question is Israel.

<sup>16</sup>Nygren is right to argue that there is no theodicy here. To try to defend God is beyond Paul's imagination. That is why, after the introductory paragraph, Paul begins the section in which he asserts the freedom of God as creator to choose whom he will. Nygren, *Romans*, 354-55. Cf. E. E. Johnson, "Romans 9-11," 218. Contra F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans: An Introduction and Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963), 183. Bruce describes the theodicy in terms of the unbelief of Israel calling into question the whole exposition of the gospel set out in the previous chapters.

unbelief confronts the reader in the first sentences of chapter 9.<sup>17</sup> Romans 9:1-5 stands as the introduction to chapters 9-11.<sup>18</sup> It introduces the issue Paul seeks to resolve in the chapters: the unbelief of Israel.<sup>19</sup> In these verses Paul sets forth his lament for his fellow Israelites. The passage follows directly on the heels of 8:31-39, where Paul bursts forth in his lofty proclamation of the love of God and his joy that nothing can separate the believer from that love. In that passage, believers are more than conquerors who do not succumb to the direst of circumstances and difficulties. The lament here, then, at first glance comes as somewhat of a surprise. In chapter 9 it seems that Paul has lost that unconquerable spirit, and perhaps lost the sense of the love of God that endures through all circumstances. In fact, as he says in verse 3, he could be willing to be separated from Christ on behalf of his kinspeople according to the flesh.

Beyond this introductory passage the reader gains a further clue from 9:6 where it can be inferred that Paul is concerned that the word of God may have failed. If so, it appears to be related to Israel, and whether the reader could rightfully expect that all of Israel should be saved. Paul picks up the lament<sup>20</sup> again in 10:1, where his concern over the unbelieving state of Israel becomes clear in his prayer for Israel that they be saved. Similarly in 11:1, 11:11 and 11:23 Paul expresses concern over Israel's stumbling and continuing unbelief, although some hope begins to develop in those verses. So within

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<sup>17</sup>As also noted in Martin Rese, "Die Rettung der Juden nach Römer 11," in *L'Apôtre Paul: Personnalité Style et Conception du Ministère*, ed. A. Vanhoye (Leuven: University Press, 1986), 422-23. Rese argues rightly that Paul was concerned throughout chaps. 9-11 with the pitiable fate of his people, although he goes on to argue that the unbelief of Israel brings into question the righteousness of God.

<sup>18</sup>So also Jewett, *Romans*, 556. Kim, *God, Israel and the Gentiles*, 121, terms the paragraph an exordium.

<sup>19</sup>Moo, *Romans*, 554.

<sup>20</sup>Although it is not within the scope of this work to decide the question, if 9:1-5 is lament, and if, as I will argue, v. 5 does not conclude with a doxology to God, perhaps one should think of all of chaps. 9-11 as lament. Some support for that could perhaps be developed by Paul's continuing anguish over the condition of Israel, and by the lack of any real resolution until one nears the end of the chapters beginning with 11:25 and culminating with the doxology in 11:33-36.

the chapters there is plenty to show the cause of Paul's anguish is the unbelief of Israel. It is logical to infer that the same is the cause of his pain in 9:1-3. Indeed, I will argue below that the reason can actually be inferred in the introduction itself.

This introductory paragraph, then, is called forth by the question of Israel. Since it stands as the introduction to all of chapters 9-11, and since Paul speaks of his concern throughout the chapters, that must be the issue that calls forth this whole discrete section of Romans. But that question did not first surface here. Paul has already begun introducing the question as early as in 1:16, with his assertion that the gospel is for everyone who believes, but for the Jew first and then the Greek (*δύναμις γὰρ θεοῦ ἐστὶν εἰς σωτηρίαν παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι, Ἰουδαίῳ τε πρῶτον καὶ Ἑλληνι*).<sup>21</sup> In the following section (1:18-3:20) Paul shows that all are under sin, whether Jew or Greek, and regardless of possession of the Mosaic Law. The argument concludes with 3:20 that no flesh is justified before God by works of the Law (*διότι ἐξ ἔργων νόμου οὐ δικαιωθήσεται πᾶσα σὰρξ ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ*). But in development of that section, Paul pauses in 3:1-8 in the face of his argument that Jew and Greek are equal, that all are under sin, and the possession of the Law is no advantage, to ask what advantage there is to being a Jew (3:1). Although Paul answers there is much advantage based on having had the oracles of God entrusted to them, the next verse (3:3) introduces the problem that he will take up again in chapters 9-11: if some of the Jews do not believe, does their unbelief nullify the faithfulness of God (*εἰ ἠπίστησάν τινες, μὴ ἡ ἀπιστία αὐτῶν τὴν πίστιν τοῦ θεοῦ καταργήσῃ*)? The answer is in verse 4: of course not (*μὴ γένοιτο*). Finally, in 3:10 Paul concludes that the Jews really do not have an advantage because, as he has already shown, all, both Jews and Greeks, are included under sin. Paul's brief discussion of the position of Israel here looks forward to chapters 9-11 and his more complete discussion

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<sup>21</sup>Cf. Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 520. Dunn thinks the letter revolves around the motif in 1:16; that is, that the Jews had put themselves behind the Gentiles by not accepting Christ.

of the problem of the faithfulness of God in the face of Israel's unbelief and the ultimate outcome for Israel.

Immediately after his conclusion to 1:18-3:20 in which Paul has shown that all are equally under sin, he proclaims the solution in 3:21-26. The righteousness of God, which has been witnessed by the Law and the prophets, has been revealed and demonstrated in Jesus Christ for all who believe. In 3:30-31, Paul makes the point that God is one, both God of the Jews and God of the Gentiles. When Paul returns to the question of the Jews and their ultimate salvation in chapters 9-11, he will resolve it in a similar manner. The Christ who is God over all is the key. It is he who has come from Zion and who will ultimately turn aside sin from Zion. Thus, in chapters 9-11 Paul will concern himself more at length with the question that has lurked behind his writing from the beginning of the letter.<sup>22</sup> What about Israel? The question is answered in the coming of the redeemer.

### **The Lament over Israel: 9:1-5**

Chapter 9, following closely after 8:31-39, where Paul confessed the unconquerable love of God in Christ, begins Paul's lament over the condition of Israel. The importance of that lament, which is the point of the analysis of 9:1-5a, is that in verse 4 Paul did not suddenly break into praise for the gifts to Israel, but instead treated the gifts as further reason to lament their unbelief. That will support my later argument that the final phrase is not a doxology.

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<sup>22</sup>While it may go too far, some have been willing to argue that chaps. 9-11 are the culmination of all Paul's thought up to that point in the letter, or that it is the prism through which Romans should be read. F. C. Baur saw the whole theology of the letter as nothing but a radical refutation of Judaism and Jewish Christianity. F. C. Baur, *The Apostle of Jesus Christ*, trans. Allan Menzies (London: Williams and Norgate, 1873; reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003), 349. Cf. N. T. Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 234; Krister Stendahl, "Paul among Jews and Gentiles," in *Paul among Jews and Gentiles and Other Essays* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976), 4. Moo, *Romans*, 551, thinks such an assertion goes beyond Paul's intent in Romans. For a history of modern views of the purpose of Rom 9-11, see Bruce Corley, "The Significance of Romans 9-11: A Study in Pauline Theology" (Ph.D. diss., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1975), 3-51.

The lack of any connecting particle or conjunction, together with the sudden change in tone, marks the shift in Paul's argument.<sup>23</sup> The paragraph contains Paul's strong emotion, requiring an affirmation in verse 1 of his truthfulness. That Paul speaks the truth in Christ is best taken as an affirmation of his truthfulness as one who is a follower of Christ.<sup>24</sup> The witness of the conscience does not carry as much weight in the modern world, but Paul mentions the conscience also in 2:15 concerning the Gentiles without the Law: *συμμαρτυρούσης αὐτῶν τῆς συνειδήσεως καὶ μεταξύ ἀλλήλων τῶν λογισμῶν κατηγορούντων ἢ καὶ ἀπολογουμένων.*<sup>25</sup> Paul seems to use the conscience as a sort of independent witness within or even standing over against himself.<sup>26</sup> In addition, Paul calls as his witness the Holy Spirit, in which his conscience bears witness. The Romans can be assured of Paul's truthfulness not because of the conscience as an infallible witness, but because his conscience is under the control of the Holy Spirit.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>F. Blass and A. Debrunner, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, trans. and rev. Robert W. Funk (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), 242. BDF points out the asyndeton, but they also note that with the differences in the sections, "a mere conjunction would still be a far cry from a real connection." Cf. Mark A. Seifrid, "Romans," in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 638; Moo, *Romans*, 555.

<sup>24</sup>Charles Hodge, *Romans* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1993), 269; Frederic Louis Godet, *Commentary on Romans* (Edinburgh: Messrs Clark, 1883; reprint, Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1977), 338; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Romans: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 543.

<sup>25</sup>The conscience is an important issue to Paul. The word appears 14 times in his undisputed writings and 6 times more in the remainder of his letters. He shows a great deal of concern for the conscience as guide, but see also 1 Cor 1:12, where Paul calls upon his conscience as affirmation of his integrity.

<sup>26</sup>Bruce, *Romans*, 91; Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 60; Schreiner, *Romans*, 479. Christian Maurer locates the etymology of *συνείδησις* in *σύννοια*, one who has knowledge along with another person as an eyewitness who can serve as a witness for the prosecution or the defense. Christian Maurer, "σύννοια, συνείδησις," in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1971), 7: 899-900. That seems to be the nature of Paul's usage here. Contra Byrne, *Romans*, 286, who argues the conscience is an internal witness to, not a witness along with.

<sup>27</sup>Schreiner, *Romans*, 479; Wilckens, *Römer*, 2:186.

## Paul's Anguish over His Kinspeople

The assertion to which Paul must bring such weight of witness is in verse 2. The content of the truth that Paul speaks is that he has great grief and unceasing pain in his heart. The cause of that grief and pain is developed in verse 3, although, as noted above, it is not directly stated.

The fact that Paul's great grief and unceasing pain has to do with his kinspeople according to the flesh (*κατὰ σάρκα*) is thought by some to account for his need to call witnesses to show that he could experience pain and grief on their behalf. Leander Keck somewhat speculatively suggests that if Paul endured the criticism that his ministry to the Gentiles was somehow partially the cause of the unbelieving status of the Jews of his day, or that by taking the gospel to the Gentiles he had abandoned his own kinspeople, that could account for his strong assertion of truth and the witnesses called to support the truth of the fact that he is actually in great grief and pain on their behalf.<sup>28</sup> While Keck's theory could well be correct regarding the reason for the need for the triple attestation of his truthfulness, his argument is unconvincing that chapters 9-11 are a result of such an accusation against Paul. Keck can find no reason for Paul to express concern about the Jews since that mission had been entrusted to Peter.<sup>29</sup> But even if Peter had been given responsibility for the Jewish mission, there is no reason to suggest Paul had given up his concern for Israel. Some of Paul's concern for the Jews was shown in his care for their well-being expressed in the collection from the Gentile churches for the Jews in Palestine (2 Cor 8-9.) In addition, as can be seen below, Paul not only reported his grief, he expressed a much deeper willingness to suffer loss on behalf of the Jews.

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<sup>28</sup>Leander E. Keck, *Romans* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2005), 224-25. Cf. Francis Watson, *Paul, Judaism and the Gentiles: Beyond the New Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 305-06. Watson follows Keck. See also Walter Schmithals, *Der Römerbrief: Ein Kommentar* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus-Gerd Mohn, 1988), 328.

<sup>29</sup>Keck, *Romans*, 224. Keck does go on to acknowledge the question of whether God had rejected Israel is a second reason that was perhaps more important than Paul's concerns for accusations against him (225).

The reason for Paul's concern is there: They are his kinspeople according to the flesh, and, as he implies here and states later, they are in unbelief. In addition, if Paul were writing to a primarily Gentile audience as suggested by Romans 1:13; 11:13 and 15:15-16 they would likely not be overly concerned about Jewish accusations against Paul.

While in verse 3 Paul does not make explicit what causes his grief and pain, the cause is nonetheless implicit. The wish that Paul had in mind, is that he become *ἀνάθεμα*. Paul was thinking of being accursed from Christ (*ἀπὸ τοῦ Χριστοῦ*), by which he meant separation from Christ, in a manner no doubt consistent with the understanding of being devoted for destruction.<sup>30</sup> But he stopped short of that wish. Instead, Paul means he could almost wish, or perhaps he considers his wish hardly attainable.<sup>31</sup> Even though Paul stopped short of the final wish to be accursed, it is difficult to understand what could bring him to such a brink, unless it is the unbelief of his kinspeople. For that reason, Paul's willingness to undergo accursedness is evidence enough that his concern is the plight of Israel based on their unbelief. Paul's willingness to suffer such a fate himself suggests that those for whom he was willing to make the sacrifice suffer the fate of being under the curse themselves.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>In this case *ἀπό* is used to denote separation. BDF, 211. The word *ἀνάθεμα* occurs 6 times in the New Testament, and other than in Acts 23:14, all instances are in the Pauline corpus (the verb form of the same word also appears 4 times in Acts, with the sense of being bound with an oath). In the passage in Acts, the word refers to an oath, as some of the men of Jerusalem had bound themselves with an oath not to eat until they killed Paul. In Paul's writings (1Cor 12:3; 16:22; Gal 1:8, 9) the word always has more the meaning of accursed. The word *ἀνάθεμα* also occurs 26 times in 19 verses in the Septuagint. Other than in the 3 uses in Jdt 16:19 and 2 Macc 2:13; 9:16, *ἀνάθεμα* translates the Hebrew *מקדש* which occurs more than 75 times and means a thing devoted or banished. The thing could be devoted to God, and thereby made holy, or it could be devoted to destruction. So Jackie A. Naude, "מקדש," in *The New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, ed. William A. VanGemeren, ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 2: 276-77. In the uses of *ἀνάθεμα* in the canonical books, it is used for devotion to God in Lev 27:28 only. In each of the other instances *ἀνάθεμα* is used of things devoted for destruction, implying they are accursed. Thus one sees the depth of Paul's concern for his people, and their condition.

<sup>31</sup>BDF, 182.

<sup>32</sup>So Moo, *Romans*, 557. Cf. Richard H. Bell, *The Irrevocable Call of God: An Inquiry into Paul's Theology* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 199; Schreiner, *Romans*, 481; Wilckens, *Römer*, 2:186.

Although Paul returns later to the issue, whether he understood the unbelief of the Jews permanently barred them from the kingdom is not specifically worked out in this passage.<sup>33</sup> Also, whether or not Paul understood that every Jew (vis-à-vis all Israel) would be ultimately saved, the necessary point here is that their condition of unbelief at the time was the cause of Paul's grief.

Paul's wish is on behalf (ὕπέρ) of his kinspeople according to the flesh.<sup>34</sup> The Greek ὕπέρ can mean "on behalf of," or "in the place of." The two meanings can be close and it is possible that in verse 3, the meanings have merged.<sup>35</sup> That Paul wished he could serve as a substitute for his kinspeople further solidifies the thought that he had concern for their ultimate fate. The language and motif of substitution suggest Paul saw himself as a parallel to Moses, who asked God in a similar way following the golden calf incident, to allow his name to be blotted out as a substitute for the punishment of the Israelites who had sinned (Exod 32:30-34).<sup>36</sup> As Johannes Munck suggests, the language of both Paul and Moses is similar in that both wished to suffer for people who had sinned

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Against Lloyd Gaston, "Israel's Enemies in Pauline Theology," *NTS* 28 (1982): 411-16. Gaston argues there is no evidence in chap. 9 that Israel was in a state of unbelief. This lays too great weight on Paul's silence and there is no other reason that makes sense of Paul's grief. So Heikki Räisänen, "Paul, God and Israel: Romans 9-11 in Recent Research," in *The Social World of Formative Christianity and Judaism*, ed. Jacob Neusner, et al. (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988), 180; idem, "Torn Between Two Loyalties: Romans 9-11 and Paul's Conflicting Convictions," in *The Nordic Paul: Finnish Approaches to Pauline Theology*, ed. Lars Aejmelaeus and Antti Mustakallio (London: T&T Clark, 2008), 25.

<sup>33</sup>Keck, *Romans*, 227, who argues it is unlikely Paul thought the Jews were already cut off. The strength of the language seems to work against Keck, as does Paul's use of the olive tree as illustration that Israel has been cut off, although capable of being re-grafted.

<sup>34</sup>κατὰ σάρκα. The use of that term suggests an antithesis, but I will reserve detailed comment about the phrase until the discussion of v. 5b.

<sup>35</sup>So Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, trans. and adapted by William F. Arndt, F. Wilbur Gingrich, rev. and ed. Frederick W. Danker, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), s.v. "ὕπέρ."

<sup>36</sup>See esp. Johannes Munck, *Christ and Israel: An Interpretation of Romans 9-11*, trans. Ingeborg Nixon (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1967), 29-30. Cf. Moo, *Romans*, 558; Schreiner, *Romans*, 480; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 544; Bruce, *Romans*, 185; Wilckens, *Römer*, 2:187. Contra Käsemann, *Romans*, 258.

unforgivably.<sup>37</sup> Somewhat similarly, Jewett argues that Paul used the imperfect (ἠὺχόμεν) in the customary sense: used to wish (or pray). That means Paul had made actual prayers to be separated from Christ on behalf of Israel at some time prior to the writing.<sup>38</sup> Jewett based his argument on the unlikelihood of a subjunctive construction (I could wish) with the intensive αὐτὸς ἐγώ. In addition, Paul would then better correspond with Moses (Exod 32:31-33), who actually did pray to be blotted out of the book of life instead of the Israelites.<sup>39</sup> It is wise, however, not to overemphasize Paul's place in atoning for Israel. It must be true that if Paul were aware of Moses' offer to serve as one figure to be punished for all of Israel, he was also aware of the failure of Moses' appeal and the response from God that he chooses whose name(s) will be blotted out (Exod 32:33). It is also evident that God chooses who will serve as atonement. Paul must have known he was not able or permitted to offer himself as such a sacrifice, for, as much as anything else, he himself was in need of atonement.<sup>40</sup> He recognized only the cross as the eschatological place where atonement could be made.<sup>41</sup> Finally, Paul would not have seen it as a possibility that he could be separated from Christ, given his statements in 8:31-

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<sup>37</sup>Munck, *Christ and Israel*, 30.

<sup>38</sup>Jewett, *Romans*, 560-61.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid.

<sup>40</sup>This statement is true notwithstanding Paul's statement in Col 1:24. It is most likely that in that passage Paul was expressing his understanding that his suffering was redemptive in that his suffering was necessary for spreading the gospel among the Gentiles (cf. Acts 9:15-16) and thus, by his suffering Paul hastens the end of the age. For a similar view, see Peter T. O'Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 44 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 75-80. Similarly, as suggested in Munck, *Christ and Israel*, 29, it is possible Paul could also have had in mind the suffering of those in the Maccabean tradition who saw themselves as suffering for the purification of Israel (see, e.g., 4 Macc 10:11; 6:28-30; 17:20-22). Paul's language here lacks the direct language (blood and atonement) used in the Maccabean text, and given Paul's own need of atonement, it is unlikely he saw himself as offering an atonement for Israel. Jarvis Williams has plausibly argued that the atonement mentioned in the Maccabean texts was in the background of Paul's thought about the atonement of Jesus, but he did not suggest that Paul could see himself as sacrificial in that way. Jarvis J. Williams, *Maccabean Martyr Traditions in Paul's Theology of Atonement* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010), 2-3.

<sup>41</sup>Wilckens, *Römer*, 2:187.

39.<sup>42</sup> The best conclusion is that the use of the imperfect ἠὲχόμεν was tendential. He could wish to be accursed, but he knew his appeal would not succeed. For Paul there is only one deliverer who will remove sin from Jacob. That deliverer is characterized in 11:25-26 as one who comes from Zion.

### “Who Are Israelites”

**The use of the relative clause.** Verse 4 links to verse 3 by the relative clause οἵτινές εἰσιν Ἰσραηλιῖται. The antecedent of the relative pronoun is Paul’s kinspeople according to the flesh mentioned in verse 3. The pronoun in this case could be understood as explicative (inasmuch as).<sup>43</sup> It is probably better, however, to read the relative as causal.<sup>44</sup> In either case Paul intends more than to simply further identify his kinspeople as Israelites. It is unlikely that Paul was simply identifying those kinspeople for the sake of listing privileges that accrued to them. It is better to take the relative pronoun as the basis of Paul’s foregoing statement that he would be willing to be separated from Christ.

While the relative clause is probably intended to ground his willingness to suffer being accursed from Christ, the structure of the passage suggests Paul ultimately wishes to establish the ground for his statement that his grief is great and his pain is unceasing (verse 2). In verse 3 the γάρ is explicative, so verse 3 provides the ground of the depth of his grief and pain.<sup>45</sup> Verses 4 and 5, introduced by the causal relative clause,

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<sup>42</sup>John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans: The English Text with Introduction, Exposition and Notes* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), 2:3.

<sup>43</sup>For arguments for the explicative, see Käsemann, *Romans*, 258; Jewett, *Romans*, 561; Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 526. BDF, 253, notes use of the relative to express the general quality.

<sup>44</sup>Hübner, *Gottes Ich und Israel*, 14; John Calvin, *The Epistle to the Romans*, trans. and ed. John Owen (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, n.d.; reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), 338; Moo, *Romans*, 559, following Calvin. For use of the relative as a causal clause see H. E. Dana and Julius R. Mantey, *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament* (New York: Macmillan, 1946), 272. The relative, οἵτινές, should most likely be read causally in Rom 1:25 and 2:15. In the broader NT, other examples are Matt 7:15; 21:41; Acts 10:47; 17:11.

<sup>45</sup>So also Schmithals, *Römerbrief*, 328.

are part of the same sentence begun by the explicative *γάρ* statement, further explaining why he would be willing to undergo separation from Christ on behalf of his kinspeople, so the whole sentence from the beginning of verse 3 to the end of verse 5 should be understood as an explanation of the reason for the depth of Paul's pain.<sup>46</sup>

If that analysis is correct, Paul's purpose is not to shift to a listing of gifts to Israel that results in either a shift in the status of the Israelites<sup>47</sup> or a doxology in praise of God for those gifts. It is surely correct that Paul understood the list of attributes that follows to be gifts of God, but his intent, at least in the listing of the gifts, is not laudative. As a continuation of his explanation of his anguish, the verses are the continuing basis of the lament.<sup>48</sup> It is in spite of all these privileges that Israel is in unbelief and, Paul's willingness to sacrifice himself is even more explainable given their identity as the elect people of God. It is not only a matter of substitution on behalf of his countrymen, but also a service to God himself, who had chosen them.<sup>49</sup> If it were Paul's purpose to show the even more remarkable depth of his lament, then "both logically and

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<sup>46</sup>Contra Ezra Abbot, "On the Construction of Romans ix.5," *Journal of Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis* 1 (1881): 92. "If we will let Paul be his own interpreter instead of reading unnatural thoughts between the lines," we will not take the view argued above. Abbot argued that Paul intended this to be a shift to a positive view of Israel based on 9:6. That argument can be faulted by the argument that if in 9:6 Paul really did view Israel as not being in unbelief, there would be no reason for his anguish. In addition, Abbot did not take note of the structure of the passage suggested here.

<sup>47</sup>John Piper, *The Justification of God: An Exegetical and Theological Study of Romans 9:1-23*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1993), 43.

<sup>48</sup>So also Dane C. Ortlund, "The Insanity of Faith: Paul's Theological Use of Isaiah in Romans 9:33," *TrinJ* 30 (2009): 280. Contra Keck, *Romans*, 227; Gordon Fee, *Pauline Christology: An Exegetical-Theological Study* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2007), 275.

<sup>49</sup>Calvin, *Romans*, 337, affirms that Paul could not have spoken the words only with regard to service to God. "I connect the love of men with a zeal for God's glory." Calvin is correct that service to God was not the only motivation, but Paul may have been similarly motivated for service in his extraordinary statement in Col 1:24 where he rejoiced in his sufferings for the Colossians' sake and he filled up what was lacking in the afflictions of Christ on behalf of his body. There Paul also may express a double service, one on behalf of the Colossians and one a service to Christ for the building up of his body. (Νῦν χαίρω ἐν τοῖς παθήμασιν ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν, καὶ ἀνταναπληρῶ τὰ ὑστερήματα τῶν θλίψεων τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐν τῇ σαρκί μου ὑπὲρ τοῦ σώματος αὐτοῦ, ὃ ἔστιν ἡ ἐκκλησία.)

emotionally such a doxology would interrupt the train of thought as well as be inconsistent with the mood of sadness that pervades the preceding verses.”<sup>50</sup>

**Use of the name “Israelites.”** In chapters 1 through 3 Paul used the word Ἰουδαῖος nine times to refer to his countrymen (1:16; 2:9, 10, 17, 28, 29; 3:1, 9, 29). In chapters 9-11 he used it to refer to them just twice (9:24; 10:12). In 9:4, he shifts rather abruptly, identifying them for the first time in the letter as Israelites. Although this marks the first time in the letter that Paul used either of the words Israel or Israelites, he used those words a total of 12 times in chapters 9-11. The importance in this instance is to show that Paul’s kinspeople are actually the elect people of God.<sup>51</sup> In the same general way, Paul uses the word Ἰσραηλίτης in Romans 11:1 and 2 Corinthians 11:22 to refer to himself as part of the people of God, once to show that God has not forsaken his people, and once to defend his own position among the people of Israel.<sup>52</sup> In Romans 9:4, the importance is that the people over whom he anguishes are not simply Jews, a people living in Judah. They are in fact descendants of Jacob, elect Israelites. That election is the underlying cause of the continuing lament. How could those who are elect now turn their back on the Messiah who has come for their redemption (as Paul notes in 11:26)?

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<sup>50</sup>Metzger, “Punctuation,” 108. Cf. Schreiner, *Romans*, 488; Jewett, *Romans*, 568; Kammler, “Die Prädikation,” 169. Against Otto Küss, “Zu Römer 9,5,” in *Rechtfertigung: Festschrift für Ernst Käsemann zum 7.0 Geburtstag*, ed. Johannes Friedrich, Wolfgang Pöhlmann and Peter Stuhlmacher (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck and Göttingen: Vandenhoech & Ruprecht, 1976), 303.

<sup>51</sup>H. G. Kuhn “Ἰσραήλ,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), 3:86-88. Cf. Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 545; Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:460-61. After the return from the exile to Babylon, the name יהודי (Ἰουδαῖος) was applied to those living in Judah by non-Jewish people of the area. The name ישראל (Ἰσραήλ) was used by the Israelites with an emphasis on the religious aspect, that is, to denote themselves as God’s chosen people.

<sup>52</sup>Dunn, *Romans, 9-16*, 526, notes that here Paul was speaking as an insider. But see also Gal 1:13-14 and 2:13-14, where Paul refers to Judaism and Jews. There, he is referring to himself as an outsider looking back to what he once was. So Mark A. Seifrid, *Christ Our Righteousness: Paul’s Theology of Justification* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2000), 26. Paul could speak of himself in both ways in relation to his kinspeople.

**List of Israel's privileges.** The list of privileges occurs in three sections, the first two beginning with the relative pronoun ὃν but the last, with the preposition attached to the relative: ἐξ ὃν. The first two sections list privileges that belong only to Israel as a people. The last is the Messiah, but even though he is the Messiah of Israel, he is substantively different from the other gifts and thus can be only from Israel. Unlike the first two sections of the list of privileges, both of which begin with the relative particle, this last section is preceded by καί. That signifies not only the last in the list, but also calls attention to the transition from possession to derivation. He is the Messiah of Israel, but as Messiah for Israel, not the Messiah belonging to Israel. As Godet notes regarding Christ's proceeding from among Israel as far as his flesh is concerned, "He proceeds from them as to origin, but He does not belong to them exclusively as to His destination."<sup>53</sup> (Godet apparently means human origin, which is the meaning endorsed here.) Paul has been careful in the first 8 chapters of Romans to make clear that all are under sin and all are justified by faith in Jesus Christ through the redemption that is in him (Rom 3:21-24). God is one, therefore God of both the Jew and the Gentiles, who justified both by faith (3:29-30). Paul's emphasis continues here; the Messiah belongs to both.

The gifts to Israel are noteworthy in that they further identify the privileged position of the people now in a state of unbelief. For that reason they serve to add intensity to the lament, rather than to create a thought of praise. There is some disagreement among scholars whether the gifts as evidence of God's graciousness to Israel belong only to the early times of Israel's history.<sup>54</sup> I side with those who prefer to see that Paul understood the gifts and privileges have not been forfeited by Israel.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>53</sup>Godet, *Romans*, 341.

<sup>54</sup>So Munck, *Christ and Israel*, 30-31.

<sup>55</sup>Piper, *Justification*, 30.

Rather, the fact that Israel is privileged in that way is part of the cause of Paul's lament. Most persuasive is the argument that if the gifts are in the past, there is really no need for Romans 9-11. To restate it, if the gifts have been withdrawn and belong only to history, then Paul's struggle with the unbelief of Israel would be unnecessary.<sup>56</sup> For the same reason, the privileges should not be regarded as passed on to the church.<sup>57</sup>

**“From whom is the Christ.”** From among Israelites comes the Christ. Here the word Χριστός appears with the article, standing alone, not qualified by the often connected Ἰησοῦς. Werner Kramer's careful study demonstrated that no hard conclusions can be drawn from that grammatical construction,<sup>58</sup> but it seems clear from the context that the reference in this case is to the Messiah. Since Paul has presented a list of benefits accorded to Israel, and the phrase under consideration appears at the end of that list, it is reasonable to conclude that Paul would speak of the Messiah.<sup>59</sup>

As noted above, the prepositional phrase (ἐξ ὧν) simply indicates derivation. The Messiah comes from Israel according to the flesh, which means that in human terms he is an Israelite; that is, the Messiah is a Jew. That fact is a further cause of the issue connected with the question of Jewish unbelief. We will return to the question of Israel's rejection of the Messiah in chapter 5, but first the matter for further consideration is the Messiah's true identity.

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<sup>56</sup>Bell, *Irrevocable Call*, 201-02.

<sup>57</sup>Piper, *Justification*, 24.

<sup>58</sup>Werner Kramer, *Christ, Lord, Son of God*, trans. Brian Hardy (Naperville, IL: Alec R. Allenson, 1966), 206-13.

<sup>59</sup>*Ibid.*, 210. Cf. N. T. Wright, *Climax* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991), 43; Käsemann, *Romans*, 259; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 546; Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:464; Jewett, *Romans*, 566.

### 9:5b: Who Is God over All?

The latter part of verse 5 is the *crux interpretum* of this passage and the focus of this chapter. It is hard to identify a single key issue in interpretation of verse 5b, but perhaps the key is the question of the antecedent of the participle ὁ ὢν. The participle could refer either to θεός or Χριστός, but once that is noted, it is only a statement of the overall problem. Does Paul mean to say that Christ is God over all? As noted earlier, the task for this chapter is to answer the question from the text itself. Nearly every point is disputed, but analysis of the text will lead to the conclusion that the weight falls most naturally and most heavily on the side of Jesus as the referent of the participle and therefore, as the one who is over all; that is, that he is God.

Gordon Fee's assertion that the reading suggested in this dissertation is only a possibility based on ambiguous grammar, and that there are other possibilities is not altogether reasonable.<sup>60</sup> The probability that Christ is the referent of the participle is decreased only if one starts the exegesis, as Fee does, with the assumption that for various reasons Paul would not use θεός as a predicate of Christ.<sup>61</sup> Because Paul does not do that anywhere else, that "far outweigh[s] what one might perceive as 'normal grammar.'" <sup>62</sup> Beginning with the premise, which is at the least open to question, that Paul

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<sup>60</sup>Similarly C. E. B. Cranfield, "Some Comments on Professor J. D. G. Dunn's *Christology in the Making with Special Reference to the Evidence of the Epistle to the Romans*," in *The Glory of Christ in the New Testament: Studies in Christology in Memory of George Bradford Caird*, ed. L. D. Hurst and N. T. Wright (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 273. Cranfield notes that the onus "rests squarely on the shoulders of those who reject the reference of v. 5b to Christ." For his argument, see Fee, *Pauline Christology*, 277.

<sup>61</sup>Fee, *Pauline Christology*, 273, where Fee notes "if there were no issue with regard to *what* is said, one probably would read the ὁ ὢν as modifying ὁ Χριστός. But the *what* in this case seems heavily to outweigh our grammatical expectation, hence another acceptable grammatical option is preferred by many." So it is clear that Fee is looking for an alternative because of premises drawn from outside the text.

<sup>62</sup>*Ibid.*, 274. Similarly, Küss begins his exegesis with the premise that Paul could not refer to Jesus as God because he always speaks of Jesus in a subordinate role. Küss, "Zu Römer 9:5," 295-97. See also Abbot, "On the Construction of Romans ix. 5." Abbot's article is a more detailed consideration of the exegetical arguments, and he begins with the assertion that he will argue from the grammatical considerations only. While Abbot does offer reasonable alternatives to the arguments that will be made below, they can be answered and in the end, Abbot also appealed to the broader theological problem of whether Paul would ever call Jesus God. In fact, he devotes at least 14 pages to the question, so even in Abbot one can reasonably suggest that his argument was influenced by an underlying premise.

could not call Jesus God because he does not elsewhere, will surely cause one to wish to find other possible alternatives to the “normal grammar” (quote marks are Fee’s).<sup>63</sup> If, however, one simply allows the text to stand without influences from outside the text, one should conclude the reading suggested below is not only possible, but the evidence to support it is so weighty as to be most probable. As Cranfield noted, to conclude that Paul could not refer to Christ as God because he did not elsewhere is “unjustifiable, in view of the stylistic considerations which strongly suggest that he has done so.”<sup>64</sup> As Metzger noted, however, the exegete is confronted with the decision as to “which kind of considerations (those internal to the text or those external) should be allowed the greater weight.”<sup>65</sup> As noted previously, the problem for this chapter is the grammar and syntax of the text. Whether external matters, as Fee suggests, far outweigh the most probable grammatical conclusion is an issue for chapters 3 and 4.

### **The Problem with Punctuation**

The analysis of the text often begins with punctuation. As is well known, the earliest Greek manuscripts did not use punctuation, so placement of the punctuation is dependent on the conclusions from exegesis.<sup>66</sup> The portion of the text at issue from Nestle-Aland is: ἐξ ὧν ὁ χριστὸς τὸ κατὰ σάρκα, ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων θεὸς εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς

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<sup>63</sup>It goes too far, however, to call the premise as presented by Fee or Abbot a dogmatic presupposition, as E. H. Gifford, *The Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans* (London: John Murray, 1886; reprint, Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1977), 179. The premise can rightly be regarded as based on impressions formed from observation of how Paul writes.

<sup>64</sup>Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:468.

<sup>65</sup>Metzger, “Punctuation,” 110.

<sup>66</sup>Sanday and Headlam, *Epistle to the Romans*, 233. Sanday and Headlam set forth examples of what might be considered punctuation in some non-NT manuscripts from the first century, but none contain any marks that approach being full or partial stops. Although Sanday and Headlam are now dated, nothing developed in my research to suggest additional evidence of first century punctuation in NT texts has been discovered. See also H. W. Bartsch, “Röm 9,5 und 1. Clem. 32.4: Eine notwendige Konjektur im Römerbrief,” *Theologische Zeitschrift* 21 (1965): 401-09. Bartsch, in suggesting the text should be emended, regards it as useless to try to resolve Rom 9:5 on the basis of punctuation since the text had no punctuation.

αἰῶνας· ἀμήν. Of course, the punctuation in that text is a function of the work of the editors and scribal punctuation in early texts is not conclusive.<sup>67</sup> The punctuation suggested by Nestle-Aland contains only two partial stops, one after *σάρκα* and one after *αἰῶνας*, but several other possibilities exist. Metzger, who has perhaps the most thorough list, included eight possible punctuations, as follows:<sup>68</sup>

1. The *Textus Receptus*, underlying the AV, punctuates only with a comma following *σάρκα* (ἐξ ὧν ὁ χριστὸς τὸ κατὰ σάρκα, ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων θεὸς εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας ἀμήν), yielding the AV “of whom as concerning the flesh Christ *came*, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.”
2. Westcott-Hort punctuated with a comma after *σάρκα*, but also after *πάντων* (ἐξ ὧν ὁ χριστὸς τὸ κατὰ σάρκα, ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων, θεὸς εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας ἀμήν), which could yield “who is over all, God blessed forever” (NEB margin and the Jerusalem Bible).
3. Placing a comma after *σάρκα* and after *θεός* (ἐξ ὧν ὁ χριστὸς τὸ κατὰ σάρκα, ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων θεός, εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας ἀμήν) yields the RSV marginal reading “Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever.”
4. A comma after *πάντων* and also after *θεός* (ἐξ ὧν ὁ χριστὸς τὸ κατὰ σάρκα, ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων, θεός, εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας ἀμήν) yields “God, who is over all blessed forever,” (RSV) once again not calling Jesus God.
5. A comma after *ὁ ὢν* and after *θεός* (ἐξ ὧν ὁ χριστὸς τὸ κατὰ σάρκα ὁ ὢν, ἐπὶ πάντων θεός, εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας ἀμήν) results in the translation “From whom is the one who is the Christ according to the flesh, God over all, blessed forever.”
6. With a colon or a full stop after *σάρκα* (ἐξ ὧν ὁ χριστὸς τὸ κατὰ σάρκα. ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων θεός εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας ἀμήν), suggested in a number of critical editions, one could translate “He who is over all is God, blessed forever.”
7. With a comma after *σάρκα* and a full stop after *πάντων* (ἐξ ὧν ὁ χριστὸς τὸ κατὰ σάρκα, ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων. θεός εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας ἀμήν), a translation could be “and from whom Christ according to the flesh, is over all. God be blessed forever.”

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<sup>67</sup>For an analysis of manuscript evidence of scribal punctuation, see Metzger, “The Punctuation of Rom. 9:5,” 97-99. Metzger points out the haphazard nature of the punctuation in the manuscripts, making it difficult to determine any consistent scribal practice, but he concludes that in a majority of uncial manuscripts scribes favored some sort of stop after *σάρκα*. One cannot, however, determine from those manuscripts “what kind of punctuation Paul in dictating the letter, or Tertius in transcribing it, would have regarded as appropriate.” See p. 99 of the article for a list of irregularities in Vaticanus and Alexandrinus that call into question the weight of the evidence based on punctuation of those texts. Cf. Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:466-67n 7, following Metzger.

<sup>68</sup>Metzger, “The Punctuation of Rom 9:5,” 95-96. Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:465, lists 6. Fee lists 3 in *Pauline Theology*, 273. Jewett, *Romans*, 567, reduces the number to just 2.

## The Doxology

**Grammatical form of doxologies.** Although the doxology occurs last in the verse, it is helpful to first consider the issues that surround it because how one understands this doxology has some impact on how decisions are made on other exegetical issues in the verse. The main issue is the form of the doxology, namely the asyndetic, independent doxology, if one places a full stop after *κατὰ σάρκα*, as is normally the case by those who wish to refer the doxology to God. Placing a full stop after *κατὰ σάρκα* leaves the latter part of the verse as an independent sentence: *ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων θεὸς εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας ἀμήν*, that is, there is no link to a word in the immediately preceding sentence. In the two passages (2 Cor 1:3 and Eph 1:3) where an asyndetic independent doxology occurs in Paul's writings, he places the word *εὐλογητός* in the sentence before the reference to the one to whom the doxology relates. In the other doxologies in Paul in which *εὐλογητός* appears later in the clause, the word for the one blessed occurs in the preceding clause, with a connecting word in the clause in which *εὐλογητός* appears, as does *ὁ Χριστός* in Romans 9:5 (Rom 1:25; 2 Cor 11:31).<sup>69</sup> In both of those occasions the structure is similar to Romans 9:5 in which the word serves as a predicate descriptive of the subject.<sup>70</sup> In none of those cases, or cases in which doxologies occur with words other than *εὐλογητός*, are the doxologies asyndetic.<sup>71</sup>

That practice is not limited to Paul. In the New Testament *εὐλογητός* appears in the initial position in an independent doxology in Luke 1:68 and 1 Peter 1:3. In addition,

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<sup>69</sup>See also Gal 1:5 where *εὐλογητός* does not appear, but a similar form of praise occurs, referring to a word in the previous clause (*ὃ ἡ δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων ἀμήν*). Similarly, see 2 Tim 4:18; Heb 13:21; and 1 Pet 4:11. In Rom 11:36; Eph 3:21; 1 Pet 5:11; and 2 Pet 3:18, the doxology is linked to the previous clause by *αὐτῷ*. In Phil 4:20 and 1 Tim 1:17, the link is made through *τῷ δε θεῷ*.

<sup>70</sup>Dwight, "On Romans ix. 5," 47-48.

<sup>71</sup>Metzger, "Punctuation," 106.

the word *εὐλογητός* appears 100 times in 92 verses in the LXX. On eight occasions *εὐλογητός* is used as a blessing to humans, but on every other occasion except one *εὐλογητός* appears first (blessed be. . .).<sup>72</sup> The lone exception occurs in Psalm 67:19 (English 68:18, MT 68:19). In that case there may be a translation issue because *εὐλογητός* appears twice in verses 19 and 20 (LXX) but *בָּרוּךְ* appears only once in the MT. The two verses from the MT and the LXX appear as follows:

עֲלִיתָ לַמָּרוֹם | שְׁבִיתָ סִתְנוֹת בְּאֶדְמַ וְאֵף סוֹרְרִים לְשֹׁכְנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים  
 בָּרוּךְ אֲדֹנָי יוֹם יַעֲמֹס-לָנוּ הָאֵל יִשׁוּעָתָנוּ סֵלָה

(You ascended on high; you took captivity captive; you received gifts among men, that YHWH [who is] God may dwell even among the rebellious. Blessed be Adonai, the God of our salvation. He daily bears a load for us. Selah. [Translations are mine.]

*ἀνέβης εἰς ὑψος ἡχμαλώτευσας αἰχμαλωσίαν ἔλαβες δόματα ἐν ἀνθρώπῳ καὶ γὰρ ἀπειθοῦντες τοῦ κατασκηνώσαι κύριος ὁ θεός εὐλογητός*

*εὐλογητός κύριος ἡμέραν κατευοδώσει ἡμῖν ὁ θεός τῶν σωτηρίων ἡμῶν διάψαλαμα*

(You ascended on high; you captured captives; you received gifts among men, for even the blessed Lord God to dwell among the disobedient. Blessed is the Lord. The God of our salvation gives prosperity to us daily. Selah.)

As can be seen, the placement of *εὐλογητός* is normal in verse 20 of both the LXX and the MT (*בָּרוּךְ*), but there is no doxological statement in verse 19 of the MT, although it does appear in the LXX, albeit in the reverse order. There have been a number of suggestions about the double use of *εὐλογητός*, but Dwight has done the most thorough analysis, concluding that the difference is not an exception at all and has no bearing on Romans 9:5.<sup>73</sup> He argued that the two sentences were constructed for emphasis by placing the same word at the end of one sentence and at the beginning of the next. Even

<sup>72</sup>In addition to the LXX references, Kammler asserts that in all the ancient Jewish literature an independent blessing stands at the beginning of the sentence. Kammler, “Die Prädikation,” 168.

<sup>73</sup>Kammler thinks the double use may be a result of a faulty Hebrew text. Kammler, “Die Prädikation,” 168). Metzger regards it as a translation error. Metzger, “Punctuation,” 107.

in this case, then, where there appears to be an exception, the verses actually strengthen the impression that εὐλογητός is given the strongest possible prominence, as it is given when it appears first in a sentence.<sup>74</sup> Abbot conceded in his reply to Dwight that because εὐλογητός appeared twice, it is not a proper parallel to Romans 9:5.<sup>75</sup>

G. B. Winer sought relief from the conclusion that εὐλογητός naturally occurs first in an independent doxology by arguing that it is “only by empirical commentators that this arrangement can be regarded as unalterably fixed.”<sup>76</sup> Abbot goes to some length as well to argue that there is no law of grammar bearing on the matter except the law that the predicate, when it is more prominent in the mind of the writer, precedes the subject.<sup>77</sup> One may reasonably ask here on what basis a rule of grammar for an ancient language would be formulated other than from observation of how the ancient writers used the language. Of course, as Dwight notes, language rises above rules at all times,<sup>78</sup> but if all writers pursue the same course, their unanimous action carries with it great weight.<sup>79</sup> While it may be correct that no rule requires the order of the blessing in Romans 9:5, the evidence of Paul’s usage, the usage in the greater New Testament and the usage in the LXX with only one exception (which is not actually an exception) suggests that Paul would surely have followed the normal usage. Of course, nothing requires that he do that, but arguments that he would not are unpersuasive in face of the evidence.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>74</sup>Dwight, “On Romans xi. 5,” 32-33. Also Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 549, who considers the first instance of εὐλογητός in 67:19 (LXX) a gloss and not applicable to the discussion.

<sup>75</sup>Abbot, “On the Construction of Romans ix. 5,” 107.

<sup>76</sup>G. B. Winer, *A Treatise on the Grammar of New Testament Greek Regarded as a Sure Basis of New Testament Exegesis*, trans. W. F. Moulton, 9<sup>th</sup> Eng. ed. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1882), 690.

<sup>77</sup>Abbot, “On the Construction of Romans ix. 5,” 103-11, esp. 104.

<sup>78</sup>Dwight, “On Romans ix. 5,” 31.

<sup>79</sup>*Ibid.*, 35.

<sup>80</sup>Cf. Wright, *Romans*, 630, who regards this as the strongest argument that Paul meant to call Jesus God in this passage. But contra James Denney, *St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans*, in vol. 2 of *The*

**Application of εὐλογητός to God alone.** Some have objected, and it must be freely acknowledged, that nowhere else does Paul apply the term εὐλογητός to Christ, nor is it applied to him in any other place in the New Testament.<sup>81</sup> There are, however, doxologies to Christ in the New Testament using other language. There is an arguable application of the words ᾧ ἡ δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων, ἀμήν to Christ in 2 Timothy 4:18, but not all would agree that ὁ κύριος in that text is meant to refer to Christ. Clearly the doxology is both to the Father and to the Lamb in Revelation 5:13 and to Christ alone in 2 Peter 3:18. Perhaps some would argue that these were all written later than Romans and no one should expect such a doxology as early as Romans, but there is really no reason that language of that sort could not be applied to Christ by Paul.<sup>82</sup> As I will argue in chapter 4, Paul surely speaks of Christ in lofty language that would suggest he is capable of such a doxology.

In all but eight instances in the LXX, εὐλογητός is applied to God, and the remainder to men blessed by God, or on whom the blessing of God is invoked. On the other hand, εὐλογήμενος appears seven times in the New Testament, all in the gospel accounts, and all but one are applied to Christ.<sup>83</sup> Similarly, εὐλογήμενος occurs 33 times

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*Expositor's Greek Testament*, ed. W. Robertson Nicoll (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970), 658, who acknowledges the position of εὐλογητός is “unparalleled in a doxology; it ought as in Eph 1:3 and the LXX to stand first in the sentence,” but he finds that and other arguments inconclusive based on arguments from outside the text. Similarly, Ulrich Luz, *Das Geschichtsverständnis des Paulus* (München: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1968), 27. Luz argues on the basis of the Tannaitic expression “blessed be he,” that Paul had available a liturgical background for the word order as it appears in Rom 9:5, so an uncomfortable reference to Christ can be avoided here.

<sup>81</sup>For instance, Abbot, “On the Construction of Romans ix. 5,” 95. It is fair to note here that Abbot concludes from only 5 uses of εὐλογητός in Paul that on that evidence weight can be given to predicting what Paul would write regarding the theology of who Christ is, which seems to me far less subject to rule forming than how he would use grammar, but Abbot is more reluctant to give weight to the evidence for the grammatical construction of the asyndetic doxologies.

<sup>82</sup>So Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 237-38.

<sup>83</sup>Matt 21:9; 23:39; Mark 11:9; Luke 1:42; 13:35; 19:38; John 12:13. Other forms of the participle occur in Matt 25:34; Mark 11:10; Luke 1:28, 42.

in the LXX, being applied to God only in 1 Kings 10:9; 1 Chronicles 16:36 and Daniel (Th) 3:53, 54, 55, 56. But it is possible that εὐλογητός may be applied to someone other than God (in the LXX see Gen 12:2; 24:31; 26:29; 43:28; Deut 7:14; 33:24; Judg 17:2; Ruth 2:20 and 1 Sam 15:13) and that εὐλογητός may be applied to God (see the LXX examples above); and even though Paul elsewhere applies εὐλογητός only to God the Father, there are only four other places where he uses the word, which hardly provides a basis for judgment.

The argument that Paul never otherwise used εὐλογητός for Christ is little different from the argument that Paul never calls Jesus God elsewhere. In fact it differs only in the sense that it is objectively more verifiable. The fact that Paul does not do something elsewhere, however, is no strong argument that he would not do it here. In assessing the weight of various arguments, Metzger rightly concluded that if one allows for the principle of the use of *hapax legomena* in an author's writings, "there seems to be no reason why it [the principle] should not also be allowed to operate with reference to *hapax legomena* among doctrinal statements."<sup>84</sup> Since the pattern for expressing doxologies is so consistent, almost without variation, "it appears to be altogether incredible that Paul, whose ear must have been perfectly familiar with this constantly recurring formula of praise should in this solitary instance have departed from the established usage."<sup>85</sup> Thus, the argument is strongest from usage that Paul meant to bless Christ.

In addition to the evidence from the form of the doxology, there is the problem of the fit of such a doxology in the overall thought of Romans 9:1-5. As I have argued above, Paul here should not be understood as offering the privileges and prerogatives as a reason for rejoicing or praise, but instead as further mourning that Israel

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<sup>84</sup>Metzger, "Punctuation," 110.

<sup>85</sup>Ibid., 107.

is in unbelief in spite of their privileges. It is true that in Romans 1:25 there is a doxology following a negative situation, but it is not clear there that Paul lamented that situation. The language of sorrow over the condition of Israel that exists in 9:1-3 is lacking in Romans 1. Instead, in 1:25 Paul made a statement that God's wrath was brought upon those who suppress the truth and who worship the creature rather than the creator. For him it may simply have been a statement of the natural effect of disobedience to God, and Paul could well be stating approval of God's right actions toward those people in connection with the vindication of his people.<sup>86</sup> In addition, that doxology was following the rabbinic practice of inserting a doxology following the mention of God, while in 9:5, no such mention has occurred.<sup>87</sup> Based on the strong evidence from the structure of the doxology and the argument that the doxology is out of place here, the passage should not be considered a doxology to God, but should be taken as a declaration referring to Christ, the one who is blessed.<sup>88</sup> As a result, one should not understand that there is a full stop following σάρκα (flesh), since it would create an asyndetic doxology to God.

### **The Christ According to the Flesh**

Romans 9:5b begins with the words ἐξ ὧν ὁ χριστὸς τὸ κατὰ σάρκα. As noted above, some sort of stop should be there, but a decision as to the punctuation can be deferred for the moment.

The phrase κατὰ σάρκα appears in that form in the Nestle-Aland<sup>27</sup> text of the New Testament 20 times. It occurs twice more as a variant reading (Acts 2:30, Rom 8:1). The phrase includes the article before σάρκα (κατὰ τὴν σάρκα) twice (John 8:15 and 1 Cor

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<sup>86</sup>Seifrid, *Christ Our Righteousness*, 47-51.

<sup>87</sup>Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 237.

<sup>88</sup>Whether the implied copula here is to be taken as optative or indicative is of some importance. Since the verb is only implied, it is not certain, but based on his survey of usage in the NT and LXX, Peter T. O'Brien concluded that it is best to understand the missing verb to be in the indicative. Peter T. O'Brien, *Introductory Thanksgivings in the Letters of Paul* (Leiden: Brill, 1977), 240.

11:18). Other than the variant reading at Acts 2:30 and the instance in John 8:15, all the uses of the phrase occur in the Pauline literature. The phrase is preceded by the neuter accusative article only in Romans 9:5 and in the variant reading in the text of Acts 2:30. Notably, the variant reading in Acts 2:30 is in reference to Christ according to the flesh as the offspring of David, which is similar to an appearance of *κατὰ σάρκα* in Romans 1:3 (but it appears in the latter without the article). The phrase occurs in Ephesians 6:5 and Colossians 3:22 (parallel statements) governed by the dative plural article. To summarize, including the text with the article appearing within the phrase, there are a total of 21 occurrences in the Nestle-Aland text,<sup>89</sup> plus two more variants in the text (Acts 2:30, Rom 8:1). All the occurrences are in the Pauline corpus except John 8:15 and the variant in the Acts texts. The phrase does not appear in the LXX with or without the article. Of course *κατά* with other objects, either genitive or accusative, occurs with some frequency in the New Testament, with and without an article.

### **Τὸ *κατὰ σάρκα* in Paul**

There is no consistent pattern of use of the phrase with or without the article. In the three uses of the article other than in Romans 9:5b, the use of the article appears to be consistent with other factors in the sentence in which it appears. In Romans 8:5 (*οἱ γὰρ κατὰ σάρκα ὄντες*), and Ephesians 6:5 (*Οἱ δοῦλοι, ὑπακούετε τοῖς κατὰ σάρκα κυρίοις*) which is paralleled in Colossians 3:22, the phrase *κατὰ σάρκα* is in the attributive position and modifies either a participle (*ὄντες*) or a noun.<sup>90</sup> In 9:5b, however, the article is neuter and the phrase is not in an attributive position. As Piper points out, the neuter article

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<sup>89</sup>John 8:15; Rom 1:3; 4:1; 8:4, 5, 12, 13; 9:3, 5; 1 Cor 1:26; 10:18; 2 Cor 1:17; 5:16 (twice); 10:2, 3; 11:18; Gal 4:23, 29; Eph 6:5; Col 3:22.

<sup>90</sup>In Romans 8:12 (*Ἄρα οὖν, ἀδελφοί, ὀφειλέται ἐσμέν, οὐ τῇ σαρκὶ τοῦ κατὰ σάρκα ζῆν*), the genitive article appears prior to *κατὰ σάρκα*, but the article actually goes with the infinitive to make it into an articular infinitive, so that doesn't inform the issue.

prevents taking *κατὰ σάρκα* as a modifier of the masculine *Χριστός*.<sup>91</sup> Rather, it serves an accusative of reference, limiting the verb.<sup>92</sup> Of course, in 9:5b the clause *ἐξ ὧν ὁ χριστός τὸ κατὰ σάρκα* does not contain a verb. Although it is possible to translate it without a verb (as in the ESV), English translations commonly supply either the verb “is” (NASB, updated; ASV; RSV), “came,” or “comes” (KJV, NKJV, NRSV). In any case, *κατὰ σάρκα* should be understood to modify the implied verb. The translation could loosely then be “from whom the Christ is (or comes), only with reference to the flesh,” the purpose of which is to limit reference to the coming or being of Christ; that is, his origin, only to the realm of his human existence alone. Paul also uses the *κατὰ σάρκα* to limit the verb of coming or being in Romans at 1:3 and 9:3.

**Antithesis of *κατὰ σάρκα*.** As has been often noted, it cannot definitely be said that the phrase *κατὰ σάρκα*, with or without the article, must have a stated antithesis.<sup>93</sup> No adversative such as *δέ* occurs and there is no formal opposite of *κατά*, such as *κατὰ πνεῦμα*. It is evident, however, that in every use of *κατὰ σάρκα* in the New Testament an antithesis is intended, even if it is often implied.<sup>94</sup> A survey of occasions of use of the phrase *κατὰ σάρκα* in the New Testament shows the antithesis is sometimes included in the passage (John 8:15; Rom 1:3; 8:4, 5, 12, 13; Gal 4:23, 29), but more often it is implied (Rom 4:1; 9:3; 1 Cor 1:26; 10:18; 2 Cor 1:17; 5:16 [twice]; 10:2; 11:18; Eph 6:5; Col 3:22). Küss asserted that the application of the idea of “Messiah” to Jesus was provocative enough to Jews without attributing deity to him, so Küss saw no antithesis to

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<sup>91</sup>Piper, *Justification*, 43.

<sup>92</sup>So Max Zerwick and Mary Grosvenor, *A Grammatical Analysis of the Greek New Testament*, rev. ed. (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1981), 479; BDF, 139, §266(2). Cf. C. F. D. Moule, *An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), 58.

<sup>93</sup>Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 235; Metzger, “Punctuation,” 104; Harris, *Jesus as God*, 155.

<sup>94</sup>So also Metzger, “Punctuation,” 104; Dwight, “On Romans ix. 5,” 26.

Christ in the flesh.<sup>95</sup> It is no doubt true that even referring to Jesus as Messiah was provocative to unbelieving Jews, but the degree of provocation is not the issue. In addition, Küss takes Romans 9-11 as written to Jews, which is by no means clear (Rom 11:13). Even if the letter (or chaps. 9-11) were written to Jews, there is no need to suggest that Paul would not write what he held to be true about the person of Jesus just in order to stay within the framework of Jewish thought. Finally, Küss did not address the evidence that an antithesis, implied or explicit, is called for each time *κατὰ σάρκα* is used.

In Romans, the phrase *κατὰ σάρκα* is used three times to limit the reference of the origin of someone to the flesh; that is, to human descent. In 1:3 Christ is descended from David but that genealogy is expressly limited to the flesh. In that case, Paul specifies the antithesis in 1:4: *κατὰ πνεῦμα ἀγιωσύνης*, so there Paul is specific about the sense in which Christ was not descended from David. In 9:3, it is Paul's kinship with the Israelites that is limited. Paul does not say what the antithesis is in that verse, but the phrase would be unnecessary unless there was a sense in which they are not his kinspeople, or seen differently, if there was no sense in which he had kinspeople in some way other than in the flesh. In 9:5b the antithesis may or may not be stated, but that an antithetical statement is called for can be seen in the same way as in 9:3. Unless there was another aspect of Christ's person to which the category of human descent is not applicable, there would be no reason for the phrase. Apart from an antithesis, there is no reason for Paul to have limited the coming of Christ to his humanity.<sup>96</sup>

The closest parallel, both conceptually and structurally, to Romans 9:5b is 1:3-4. As Hans-Christian Kammler has proposed, the parallel can be seen in Table 1.<sup>97</sup> In 1:3, the article does not appear with *κατά*, which may simply be a function of style, but if Paul

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<sup>95</sup>Küß, "Zu Römer 9:5," 30.

<sup>96</sup>Harris, *Jesus as God*, 156.

<sup>97</sup>Kammler, *Die Prädikation*, 167.

did use the article purposefully in 9:5b, it is likely that he intended it as an even more stark limitation in this case. The statement in 9:5b is a stronger statement of the person of Christ, and a stronger contrast is called for than the contrast between one who descended from David and declared Son of God.

Table 1. Comparison of Romans 1:3-4 and 9:5

Romans 1:3-4 Τοῦ γενομένου ἐκ σπέρματος Δαυιδ κατὰ σάρκα	Romans 9:5 ἐξ ὧν ὁ Χριστός τὸ κατὰ σάρκα
Τοῦ ὀρισθέντος υἱοῦ θεοῦ ἐν δυνάμει	ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων θεὸς
κατὰ πνεῦμα ἀγιωσύνης	εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας ἀμήν
ἐξ ἀναστάσεως νεκρῶν	

In any case, the strong conceptual and structural parallel between the two passages strongly suggests that there is an antithesis needed for the phrase *κατὰ σάρκα* in Romans 9:5, just as it exists in 1:3. As Metzger notes, the question is not so much whether an antithesis is required, but whether an antithesis is expressed, as it is in 1:3.<sup>98</sup> If the antithesis is not expressed, then the suggestion for the implied antithesis might be *κατὰ πνεῦμα*. In support of that suggestion, Abbot argued Paul did not intend to suggest that his kinspeople according to the flesh had a divine nature as well. According to Abbot, the issue is a matter of spiritual relationship. In the same manner, the Messiah, the Son of David, was from the Jews, but as Son of God and in his higher spiritual relations, he

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<sup>98</sup>Metzger, "Punctuation," 104; Dwight, "On Romans ix. 5," 26. But Käsemann, *Romans*, 259, argues that a "remembrance of the parallel in 1:3 is doubtful." His reasons seem to be largely that such a connection would lead to a deduction that there is a reference to the deity of Christ in Rom 9:5. In the face of such strong structural and conceptual connections, Käsemann's assertion is not persuasive. Also contra Küss, "Zu Römer 9:5," 303. Küss asserts that "die unkontionierte Parallelisierung von Röm 9,5b.c.d und Röm 1,3.4 is unzulässig." His assertion is based on the argument that Rom 9:5 in the context of chaps. 9-11 speaks of the new event of salvation from the aspect of Jewish thought processes, while in Rom 1:3-4, Paul deals with the community in Rome that believed in Jesus. The argument that in the same letter Paul was addressing different audiences is not within the scope of this paper, but I see no reason to expect such a shift in audience. Paul wrote his letter to the believers in Rome (Rom 1:7), which must have included Jewish (Rom 2:17-29) and Gentile (Rom 11:13) believers. Küss' argument here is strained.

belonged to all mankind.<sup>99</sup> Such an argument has some weight. It is unnecessary, however, to imply that part of any argument is that Paul meant his kinspeople had a divine nature as well. Rather, it is much more likely Paul had in mind a way in which the Israelites were not his kinspeople, or in which others were. In addition, it is not clear that the antithesis for *κατὰ σάρκα* in 9:3 must be *κατὰ πνεῦμα*. Perhaps it would be just as likely that the antithesis would be *ἐν Χριστῷ*.

But even if *κατὰ πνεῦμα* is the implied antithesis in 9:3, that does not preclude Paul's use of *κατὰ σάρκα* as antithetical to *θεός* when speaking of Jesus in 9:5b. It cannot be demonstrated from the New Testament that the antithesis of *κατὰ σάρκα* must always be *κατὰ πνεῦμα*.<sup>100</sup> *Θεός* is used as the antithesis in enough cases to make it entirely credible that here that contrast is intended.<sup>101</sup> The contrast in 1:3 has to do with something more than relationship, because Paul is interested there in the identity of Jesus; that is, the contrast is between the Son as descended from David humanly speaking and the Son declared to be the Son of God. Similarly, a contrast in relationship is not the best way to understand the antithesis in 9:5.

Perhaps the strongest argument against reading some other unstated antithesis is that if the phrase *ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων θεός* is not the antithesis, a stop is required after *σάρκα*, leaving an independent, asyndetic doxology, which as I have argued above is unlikely.<sup>102</sup> Gordon Fee argues the stop after *σάρκα* leaves the doxology to read in the normal Pauline way: "May God who is over all, be blessed forever." He argues that this

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<sup>99</sup>Abbot, "On the Construction of Romans ix 5," 101. Cf. Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 535. Dunn also understands the antithesis to be in terms of relationship.

<sup>100</sup>Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 235. Cf. Godet, *Romans*, 342. Godet understands the contrast to be a matter of origin.

<sup>101</sup>In Paul's writings see 1 Cor 1:29; Gal 1:16; Col 3:22; Phlm 16.

<sup>102</sup>Bartsch, "Röm. 9, 5 und 1.Clem 32,4," 402. Bartsch argued that any interpretation is impossible that leaves the doxology disconnected. Cf. Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:467-68.

sudden blessing is typically Pauline and connects to the listing of Jewish privileges.<sup>103</sup> While it is true that sudden doxologies are not unusual for Paul, Fee seems to overlook the unusual and abnormal feature of the independent, asyndetic doxology. In addition, Fee doesn't seem to appreciate the fact that Israel's privileges are part of Paul's lament and not offered as strong positives that lead to praise. The best conclusion here is that in addition to the problems with the independent doxology, a doxology would in any case be out of place since Paul laments Israel's separation from Christ in spite of having received divine privileges.<sup>104</sup> While it is true that a doxology can express faith in the face of a lament, in this case a doxology to God would make it appear that Jewish unbelief is pleasing to God.<sup>105</sup>

For all the reasons stated above, a full stop after *κατὰ σάρκα* is unlikely, and therefore, although not required grammatically or lexically, the antithesis is required for the sense of the clause. If an antithesis is expected it is not hard to see that it is expressed in the phrase *ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων*. While it is surely correct that, other than for the sense of the verse, there is no requirement that *κατὰ σάρκα* have as its antithesis the deity of Christ, it is natural to read that as the implied antithesis.<sup>106</sup>

### **The Participle**

As noted previously, the participle is the watershed point of interpretation of 9:5b. How one decides the referent of the participle is the basic issue of the discussion. That decision in itself determines whether Paul intended his doxology to be offered to

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<sup>103</sup>Fee, *Pauline Christology*, 277.

<sup>104</sup>So also Schreiner, *Romans*, 488; Wright, *Climax*, 237; Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 236.

<sup>105</sup>Jewett, *Romans*, 568.

<sup>106</sup>So Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 235; Dwight, "On Romans ix. 5," 29. Cf. Denney, *Romans*, 658. Even though Denney acknowledges that the antithesis is most naturally the deity of Christ he goes on to conclude that because Paul never elsewhere refers to Christ as God this doxology should be understood as to God and not Christ.

God or to Christ. Grammatically, there are three possibilities for the participle. It is syntactically possible for the participle to refer either to Χριστός or to θεός. Since either is possible, the decision is based on probabilities but, as I will argue below, the weight falls most naturally on a reference to Χριστός. In addition to the grammatical possibilities for interpreting the participle, there is the suggestion of an emendation to the text, although in the end it seems that those who support that solution do so more as a matter of convenience to explain a clear statement that they prefer to think could not be made.<sup>107</sup>

**The emendation.** Prior to considering the grammatical possibilities, perhaps the non-grammatical suggestion can be considered first, since it is the least likely possibility. The suggestion is to emend the text so that instead of the text as it appears in the current standard texts (ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων, θεὸς εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας· ἀμήν) the participle would be changed to a relative pronoun to match the series of relative pronouns in verses 4 and 5 and the article appears after the pronoun. In that construction the article modifies θεός: ὢν ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων θεὸς εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας.<sup>108</sup> The resulting translation would match those in the previous three sets of Israel’s prerogatives: “Theirs is the God over all, may he be blessed forever, amen.” The suggestion is based on the thought that the article and pronoun could easily have been transposed since (in modern script) the difference in the text would only be the difference between *ων* and *ωνο*. Since both

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<sup>107</sup>As in John Ziesler, *Paul’s Letter to the Romans* (London: SCM and Philadelphia: Trinity Press, 1989), 239. Ziesler poses a choice between a plausible emendation for which there is no manuscript evidence, a natural syntax with unusual Christology (nowhere else does Paul call Jesus God), and a reading that raises no theological issues but which involves a grammatically unusual change of subject. Ziesler opts for the emendation, which gives every appearance of being a choice of convenience.

<sup>108</sup>The Socinian Jonas Schlichting is usually given credit for originating the concept of the emendation, per Metzger, “Punctuation,” 99, and others. For a list of proponents of this alternative see chap. 1. In addition see W. L. Lorimer, “Romans 9 3-5,” *New Testament Studies* 13 (1967), 385-86. Lorimer suggests yet another emendation: ὢν ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων θεὸς ὁ ὢ εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας, ἀμήν. Lorimer thinks the transposition from ὢν ὁ to ὁ ὢν could have happened easily without further assistance, but the existence of the ὁ ὢν later in the text may have helped with the corruption of the text. This, of course, suffers from all the arguments I will suggest against the original emendation, plus Lorimer suggests yet another text for which there is no evidence.

vowels are ‘o’ sounds, and the difference between the rough and smooth breathing could be small, the transcription mistake could easily have been made, and most especially if the scribe were transcribing based on audible reading by another.

The suggestion of how the error could occur is plausible and one must admit that if the emendation were the correct alternative, it would ease some of the present tension. The suggestion is so fraught with difficulty, however, as to make it actually implausible. The first problem, as acknowledged by all, is that there is no manuscript evidence for such a reading,<sup>109</sup> although H. W. Bartsch suggested the text was read as emended in the first century. His argument is that 1 Clement 32:4 is a paraphrase of Romans 9:5: δι’ ἧς πάντας τοὺς ἀπ’ αἰῶνας ὁ παντοκράτωρ θεὸς ἐδικαίωσεν.<sup>110</sup> Bartsch argued that Clement changed the text from ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων, θεός to ὁ παντοκράτωρ θεός. As Donald Hagner notes, it is true there is a clear parallel of ideas between Romans 9:4 and 1 Clement 32:2, but Bartsch’s argument that 1 Clement 32:4 is a paraphrase of Romans 9:5 goes too far. The title *παντοκράτωρ* is common in 1 Clement and may be unrelated to Romans 9:5.<sup>111</sup>

In addition to the lack of external evidence for the emendation, other problems are raised by the emended text. The first is the problem of Israel’s ownership of God.<sup>112</sup> Paul has been at pains to show that the Messiah is only from Israel as to fleshly origin. He does not ascribe ownership to Israel, so there is no reason to think he would suggest

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<sup>109</sup>So Ziesler, *Romans*, 239; Küss, “Zu Römer 9.5,” 298.

<sup>110</sup>But see Clement of Rome, *I Clement* 32:4, trans. Kirsopp Lake, in *The Apostolic Fathers* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press and London: William Heinemann, 1913), 1:62. The editors of this text do not note this as a reference to Rom 9:5.

<sup>111</sup>Donald Alfred Hagner, *The Use of the Old and New Testaments in Clement of Rome* (Leiden: Brill, 1973), 216.

<sup>112</sup>So, Metzger, “Punctuation,” 100; Harris, *Jesus as God*, 147.

God is the possession of Israel.<sup>113</sup> In fact, as E. Stauffer points out, Paul has already asserted that God is the God of both Jew and Gentile (Rom 3:29).<sup>114</sup> In addition, the *καί* prior to *ἐξ ὧν ὁ χριστός* suggests Paul reached the end of his list and attaching the article to *θεός* also suggests *εὐλοητός* would also have the article.<sup>115</sup> Finally, the addition of *ἐκ* in 9:5 breaks up the rhythm of the lists which the argument for the emendation seeks to preserve. As the text stands it offers a completely readable and coherent sentence, so the emendation is introduced for little more than doctrinal reasons. In the end the suggestion looks like a concession to weakness, proposed due to inability on theological grounds to accept a normal reading of the text.

**The participle as otiose.** The suggestion that the participle is superfluous is also unlikely as a grammatical possibility. It can be considered a grammatical argument because it involves a grammatical suggestion, but a superfluous participle is really not possible in 9:5. The suggestion is that, since the participle is superfluous, the article can modify *θεός*, yielding a rough, more literal translation as “the overall God, blessed forever, amen.”

Fee seems to favor something akin to this reading of the participle asserting “the presence of the *ὧν* is irrelevant in terms of meaning but its occurrence is almost certainly responsible for the present word order.”<sup>116</sup> Fee argues that in the similar occurrence of the participle in a praise formula in 2 Corinthians 11:31 (*ὁ θεὸς καὶ*

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<sup>113</sup>Contra Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans*, trans. Edwyn C. Hoskyns (London: Oxford Press, 1933), 339. Barth asserts that God belongs to Israel, not the church.

<sup>114</sup>E. Stauffer, “*Θεός*,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), 105.

<sup>115</sup>So also Metzger, “Punctuation,” 100; Harris, *Jesus as God*, 147.

<sup>116</sup>Fee, *Pauline Christology*, 277.

πατήρ τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ οἶδεν, ὁ ὢν εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας) the participle is also unnecessary. He further argues that without the participle the reading would be the same and the participle is probably there to highlight that this interrupting phrase goes back to “God the Father” and not to “Our Lord Jesus Christ.”<sup>117</sup> Fee goes on to argue on that basis that the participle is superfluous in Romans 9:5 and that without it the phrase, which would read ἐξ ὧν ὁ χριστὸς τὸ κατὰ σάρκα, ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων, θεὸς εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας ἀμήν, would be just as clear, so the participle is intended to signal a change of subject.<sup>118</sup>

In response to Fee, however, it is not entirely clear that the participle in 2 Corinthians 11:31 is superfluous. Certainly without it the one to whom the doxology refers would be unclear, but the problem is bigger still. Without the participle, the reading of the text shifts, leaving a rather sudden and abrupt doxology without a clear connection to the previous phrase. As I have argued above it would be normal for εὐλογητός to appear first, and in that case there would be no one to whom the doxology is directed. In addition, there is no instance in the New Testament or the LXX where the article directly precedes εὐλογητός. In fact, 2 Corinthians 11:31 is the only instance other than Romans 9:5 of an article with εὐλογητός, and in that case it is preceded by a nominative participle, as in Romans 9:5. When it appears in first position, of course, there is no article at all with εὐλογητός.<sup>119</sup> In the same way, without the participle in Romans 9:5b, the words ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων θεὸς as suggested by Fee, would still stand in apposition to ὁ Χριστὸς τὸ κατὰ σάρκα because the position of the doxology would not have changed. But even if it does not, to conclude that the participle is there to signal a change in subject goes beyond the

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<sup>117</sup>Ibid., 276. Cf. Abbot, “On the Construction of Romans ix. 5,” 104. Abbot argues that the participle is not superfluous, but he goes on to suggest the article serves to make the substantive (θεός) definite as well as the participle. Grammatical arguments below make that argument unlikely.

<sup>118</sup>Fee, *Pauline Christology*, 277.

<sup>119</sup>There is one instance (Mark 14:61) where the article appears directly before the genitive form (ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ εὐλογητοῦ).

evidence. The participle clearly does not change the subject in 2 Corinthians 11:31, and, as I will argue in more detail below, in Romans 9:5 the preceding subject with the participle in apposition is the natural reading.

For Fee the clinching point is Paul's use of an "inclosed" (Fee's quote marks) word order where the prepositional phrase ἐπὶ πάντων occurs between the participle and its noun, θεός. Fee suggests the reason is for emphasis, and he suggests that if the wording were ὁ θεὸς ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων εὐλογητός no attempt would be made to ascribe the doxology to Christ.<sup>120</sup> That assertion may or may not be correct, but the wording Fee suggests is not the wording of the verse for a reason. Had his intention been to relate the participle to God, Paul surely had access to use of the wording Fee suggests. So perhaps Fee's suggestion works against his reading of the verse.

In addition, Fee's understanding of the participle as superfluous is problematic because the construction would be unusual at best. As Denney points out, the natural way to have the preposition and its object modify God would be to leave out the participle as in ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων θεός.<sup>121</sup> In fact, in Ephesians 4:6, the construction is similar: εἷς θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ πάντων, ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων καὶ διὰ πάντων καὶ ἐν πᾶσιν. In that case, the preposition and its object are in the attributive position and could just as easily stand before θεός; however, I have examined the New Testament occurrences of the article and the participle of εἰμί, followed by a preposition and its object and found no instance when that construction modifies the following noun. The same assertion is made by Ferdinand Pratt and Sanday and Headlam.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>120</sup>Fee, *Pauline Christology*, 277.

<sup>121</sup>Denney, *Romans*, 658.

<sup>122</sup>Ferdinand Prat, *The Theology of St. Paul*, trans. John L. Stoddard (Westminster, MD: Newman Press, 1950), 2:127; and Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 236. Cf. Murray, *Jesus as God*, 157, who followed Prat.

In addition, it would not be natural for the article to reach all the way to θεός. One could say ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων (as in Eph 4:6) or ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων θεός or even ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων, but not ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων θεός, at least not if one takes the article as modifying θεός. In argument to the contrary, L. G. Champion acknowledged that the separation of the article from θεός is unique among doxologies, but he argued that other examples with the unusual number of words between the article and the noun it modifies could be found. Champion listed a number of examples (Wis 8:3; 16:7; 2 Macc 3:22; 7:35; 12:6; 3 Macc 2:21; 5:28; 6:18; 7:9) in which there are several words between the article and the substantive it modifies, and he concludes that ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων θεός “belongs plainly to this style of expression.”<sup>123</sup> The examples adduced by Champion, however, all consist of one or more adjectives followed by the noun they modify or they include post positives (γάρ, μέν) between the noun and the substantive. None of them are similar to the construction of Romans 9:5b. The closest example is Isaiah 52d (ὁ ἐπισυνάγων ὑμᾶς κύριος ὁ θεός Ἰσραηλ), where there is an article followed by a participle and its object before the substantive the article modifies. In that case, though, the participle cannot be considered superfluous and it stands in attributive position to the substantive. The object just completes the modifying function of the participle and in any case, is not a preposition with its object.

Finally, as rightly noted by Sanday and Headlam, ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων θεός is correct if θεός is the subject of the sentence, but the addition of ὢν means God must be the predicate.<sup>124</sup> The article is most naturally connected to the substantive closest to it; in this case the participle serving as the substantive. The article makes the participle the more particularized substantive in the clause, leaving the anarthrous θεός as the predicate.

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<sup>123</sup>L. G. Champion, *Benedictions and Doxologies in the Epistles of Paul* (Oxford: Kemp Hall Press, 1934), 124-25.

<sup>124</sup>Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 236. Cf. Neil Richardson, *Paul's Language About God*, JSNT Supplement Series, vol. 99 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 293.

So the best conclusion is that Fee's suggested rearrangement of words would work grammatically, but it is not what Paul wrote, and the words that exist cannot be made to fit Fee's argument that the participle is not useful in its present construction. The argument that the participle is intended to shift the subject is possible if the participle starts a new sentence, which is grammatically possible but unlikely, since that would require the start of a new sentence and the aforementioned problems with the placement of the doxology.

**The participle as a relative clause beginning a new sentence.** The participle could be an attributive taken in the sense of a relative clause (*ὅς ἐστι*, 'he who is').<sup>125</sup> In that case it would serve as the beginning of a new sentence.<sup>126</sup> If the participle begins a new sentence, then it much more easily refers to God. Abbot argued that the participle as the subject of an independent sentence is far more common in the New Testament than its use as an attributive.<sup>127</sup> Such an assertion may be true, and serves as a good argument against one who denies the participle may serve to begin a sentence, but it is really of no effect for the argument here, since it is clear that regardless of which use has the largest count, both are legitimate uses of the participle.

The use of the participle, then, to start a new sentence is possible, as can be seen in Matthew 12:30; Luke 11:23 and John 3:31, among others, but the difference between Romans 9:5 and those and other such texts is that in the immediately preceding clause of 9:5 there is a noun to which the participle can be easily joined.<sup>128</sup> A weakness of the participle as starting a new sentence and signaling a new subject has been mentioned

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<sup>125</sup>BDF, 212, §412; Abbot, "On the Construction of Romans ix. 5," 97.

<sup>126</sup>As in Matt 12:30; Luke 6:3; John 3:31, among others.

<sup>127</sup>Abbot, "On the Construction of Romans ix. 5," 97.

<sup>128</sup>Dwight, "On Romans ix. 5," 24.

already. That use requires a hard stop after *κατὰ σάρκα* and that leaves the sentence as an independent, asyndetic doxology, which is not Paul's normal usage.<sup>129</sup>

**The participle in apposition to ὁ Χριστός.** This is the most natural reading of the sentence. While it is not impossible for the participle to have a reference to *θεός*, it is hard not to think that a reader coming to the text and seeing this clause would not naturally consider that the noun that has already occurred is the referent of the participle. It goes too far, however, to assert with Raymond Brown that the construction *ὁ ὢν* is normal only if there is an antecedent in the previous clause.<sup>130</sup> It is, in fact, possible for that construction and for other participles to begin a sentence or clause where no antecedent exists (see, e.g., Matt 12:30; John 3:31; 6:46; 8:47; 18:37). One must also take care not to overstate the argument for an anaphoric use of the article, but since that use is the most natural, there is really no reason inside the text to look for another explanation. As Dwight notes, “The peculiarity of Rom ix 5 as compared with such passages [where the participle begins the sentence], lies in the fact, that in the clause immediately preceding there is a prominent noun to which the phrase is most easily joined, and a noun, also, designating a person of whom a description in the way of praise might readily be expected.”<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>129</sup>Cf. Käsemann, *Romans*, 259. Although Käsemann translates the verse with the participle beginning a new sentence, he acknowledges the unusual form of the doxology. He finds it more unusual, however, that a doxology would be offered to Christ. It is not clear how he classifies the degree of usualness since if the doxology is to God, it is the only place in Paul or the NT where such a form exists, but his objection to the doxology to Christ is that it occurs only once in the NT. Since the choice is between two items occurring only once, his conclusion must be based on more than the degree to which one of them is unusual.

<sup>130</sup>Raymond Brown, *Jesus, God and Man: Modern Biblical Reflections* (Milwaukee, WI: Bruce Publishing, 1967), 20.

<sup>131</sup>So Dwight, “On Romans ix. 5,” 24.

Abbot objects to the assertion regarding the natural reading because the words τὸ κατὰ σάρκα appear between ὁ Χριστός and ὁ ὢν.<sup>132</sup> It is normal in Paul's writings, however, for κατὰ σάρκα to follow a substantive that it modifies (e.g., Rom 1:3; 4:1; 9:3; 1 Cor 1:26; 10:18; cf. also Acts 2:30). The exception is Colossians 3:22, but given the normal flow of Paul's writings, the placement of κατὰ σάρκα should not be taken to separate the participle in a way that would cause a reader not to naturally refer back to ὁ Χριστός.<sup>133</sup> The aforementioned 2 Corinthians 11:31 (ὁ θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ οἶδεν, ὁ ὢν εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας) can also be seen as an example of a construction in which the participle is separated from its referent by a whole clause, yet there is no doubt that it refers all the way back to the first word of the sentence.

The construction of 2 Corinthians 11:31 is, in fact, perhaps closer to that of Romans 9:5 than any other New Testament text. There is no possibility in the Corinthians passage that the participle could point forward to some other noun. The syntax is clear that it points back to ὁ θεός. But as Dwight astutely noted, if the construction of the verse were changed so that it read ὁ πατὴρ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ οἶδεν ὅτι οὐ ψεύδομαι ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων θεός εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας, the mind would naturally carry the participial phrase back to πατὴρ. It is unlikely that anyone would dispute that πατὴρ would be the natural referent.<sup>134</sup> There would be no reason not to read Romans 9:5 the same way were it not for premises from outside the text.

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<sup>132</sup>Abbot, "On the Construction of Romans ix. 5," 98.

<sup>133</sup>Murray, *Jesus as God*, 158, asserts that there is no instance in Paul's writings in which κατὰ σάρκα precedes a noun it modifies. That does not account for Col 3:22, but perhaps Murray refers only to Paul's undisputed letters.

<sup>134</sup>Dwight, "On Romans ix. 5," 24; Murray, *Jesus as God*, 159, following Dwight.

## ἐπὶ πάντων

While it is at this phrase that the throats of some readers may begin to tighten before the full gulp that occurs when they read the word θεός, the phrase does not present many significant exegetical issues. The one question is whether πάντων is neuter (over all things), most likely a reference to general sovereignty,<sup>135</sup> or masculine (over all human beings), in which case the emphasis is God over both Jew and Gentile.<sup>136</sup> The phrase ἐπὶ πάντων occurs again in the New Testament only at Ephesians 4:6 (εἶς θεός και πατήρ πάντων, ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων και διὰ πάντων και ἐν πᾶσιν). The word πᾶς, in its various declensions, occurs four times in the verse. There the subject is clearly the one God and Father of all, in which case the πάντων must be masculine (all people, perhaps on the same order as Rom 3:29-30), but the remaining uses are likely all neuter and refer to all things.<sup>137</sup> It is not my purpose to solve all the problems with that verse but one should note that in Ephesians the phrase ἐπὶ πάντων refers to the Father.<sup>138</sup> That fact, though, should not lead to the conclusion that Paul would never make the statement that Christ is over all things. Instead, the conclusion should be that if Paul attributes to Christ sovereignty over all things, he understands Christ as the sovereign God in the same way he understands the Father as the sovereign God.

While it is not necessary to resolve the issue entirely here, I side with those who understand the masculine sense in Romans 9:5, that is, God over all people. Paul

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<sup>135</sup>Barth, *Romans*, 339; Godet, *Romans*, 345; Murray, *Jesus as God*, 160; Hodge, *Romans*, 274.

<sup>136</sup>Wright, *Climax*, 237; Munck, *Christ and Israel*, 33.

<sup>137</sup>But see Peter T. O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, and Leicester: Apollos, 1999), 284-85. O'Brien argues that all 4 uses should be neuter.

<sup>138</sup>There is a textual variant that adds ἡμῖν to the end of the verse, which would make the final dative form masculine; that is "in us all." That might have been a result of some discomfort with the theology connected with the thought that God is in all things, but Metzger suggests the gloss was introduced to establish a personal reference to all Christians. Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (New York: United Bible Societies and Stuttgart: German Bible Society 1971), 536.

would surely agree that Christ is the sovereign God over all creation, but more specifically, he is concerned with Christ as the sovereign God, revealed first as the God of Israel, but in fact the God of all people. In addition, one should note that Ephesians 4:6 is in a passage addressing unity and there as well, the Father is the “one God and Father of all.” Even though *πάντων* is no doubt neuter, since to be masculine would simply repeat the previous phrase, it is as creator and ruler of all things that God is also the God of all people. So in fact, the point is similar in both passages and even though the construction in Romans 9:5b is similar to the neuter in Ephesians 4:6, the point is probably more similar to the masculine use of *πάντων*.

Support for interpreting *πάντων* and for understanding Paul’s concern as more to do with God as the God of all people in Romans 9:5 can be found first in Paul’s statement in Romans 3:29-30 that God is one and that he is therefore the God of both Jews and Gentiles. Following that statement Paul goes on to develop his argument in chapter 4 regarding Abraham, in which the point is arguable from 4:16 that Abraham is father to all who are of faith. Here in Romans 9-11, as I argued previously, Paul is concerned more with the unbelief of the Jew, but God is still the God of the Jews as well as the Gentiles. The point can be further supported from another use of *πάντων* in 10:13. There all who call upon the name of the Lord will be saved. Clearly that is a reference to God’s concern for all people.<sup>139</sup> Of course, being ruler of all things includes being ruler of all people, and no harm will be done to the exegetical argument if the reader understands the text in that way, but as I will argue further regarding Romans 10:9-13, *πάντων* is best taken as masculine.

While the issue must be taken up further in chapter 4, I briefly call attention here to the thought that Christ over all is a substantial reason for objection to the exegetical conclusion I propose in this chapter. Käsemann asserts that attributing that

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<sup>139</sup>Munck, *Christ and Israel*, 33.

idea to Christ is “hard to imagine in view of the subordinationism in 1 Corinthians 15:27.”<sup>140</sup> Although more can be said later, it is adequate here to note that there is no need to think that Christ over all implies that Christ rules over God the Father, any more than does Jesus’ own claim to have all authority over heaven and earth.<sup>141</sup> Since Käsemann’s objection comes from outside the text, to argue further regarding 1 Corinthians 15:27 now would require some straying from the task set for us by Dwight in the early part of the chapter to first examine how the passage itself speaks.

### **The Meaning of θεός**

What Paul means by the word θεός is important, because of the objection that Paul refers only to the Father as God. The argument here is that he intended to identify Christ as God, not God the Father, but neither as some being who is not in all ways God. As I will develop in later chapters of this dissertation, in Romans 9-11 Paul means to identify Jesus directly with YHWH of the Old Testament, so my argument is that to simply understand Paul’s intent was to identify Jesus as deity, though true, is not adequate. But first the grammatical possibilities should be considered.

In the phrase ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων θεὸς εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας there are several possibilities for how one might understand the placement of θεός and the syntactical relationship to the other words, but one of two is most likely. It could be construed with what goes before, so that the translation would be “the one who is God over all, blessed forever.” Or it could be construed with what follows, which would lend a translation “the one who is over all, God, blessed forever.” Harris points out that the phrase could also consist of three predicates, forming a statement something like, the one who is over all

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<sup>140</sup>Käsemann, *Romans*, 259.

<sup>141</sup>Matt 28:18. Even if one rejects these words as original to Jesus it is clear the author of the Gospel saw no conflict in such a statement. See also Denney, *Romans*, 658.

things, who is God, who is blessed forever.<sup>142</sup> Harris rightly rejects that possibility on the grounds that in Scripture θεός is so closely connected with εὐλογητός that such a construction would be irregular, especially without καί preceding εὐλογητός.

That leaves the possibility, though, of a double predicate, which is the best option.<sup>143</sup> Taken this way, the words ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων are associated with Christ. Standing in apposition to that is θεὸς εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας. The latter phrase is easily understood in apposition to the former because to say that Christ is ἐπὶ πάντων is precisely to say that he is θεός. The resulting translation, loosely written to emphasize the apposition, is “From whom is Christ according to the flesh, over all things; that is, God, blessed forever.”

But the implication of that for the meaning of θεός remains to be considered. Harris understands the anarthrous use to point not only to its appositional predicate function, but also to point to the noun as qualitative; that is, it points to sharing of the intrinsic nature of divinity.<sup>144</sup> Ernst Best argued that Paul did not mean to imply here that Jesus is to be identified with God, but only that he is divine. He comments: “this is not at variance with other statements Paul makes about him. Moreover it balances a statement about the human side of Jesus (natural descent) with one about his divine side as in 1:3-4 and gives a truly fitting climax to the list of the privileges which Israel has had – the divine *Messiah*” (emphasis original).<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>142</sup>Harris, *Jesus as God*, 165-66.

<sup>143</sup>Ibid., 166. Cf. Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:469; Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 238; Godet, *Romans*, 345.

<sup>144</sup>Harris, *Jesus as God*, 166.

<sup>145</sup>Ernst Best, *The Letter of Paul to the Romans* (Cambridge: University Press, 1967), 107. See somewhat similarly Thomas R. Schreiner, *Paul: Apostle of God's Glory in Christ: A Pauline Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 180. Schreiner argues that Paul does not say Christ is “God without remainder,” but that he shares the divine nature with the Father.

In many ways Best's (and Harris') suggestion seems as if it could be helpful. It is first of all recognition that 9:5b as it is written is to be attributed to Christ. Best recognizes the problem of understanding that Christ is God the Father and his resolution of that problem is to assert that Christ in some sense bears the nature of God. That argument, if true, could relieve some of that tension. And surely, it would be true that if Paul means that Jesus is God, he also means that Jesus is divine; that is, that he is deity. There are problems, though, and in the end it must be rejected because while it is true, it is not an adequate recognition of what Paul meant by this difficult statement.

The first consideration is the meaning of the word *θεός*. As it appears here, the word is a noun standing as a predicate in a sentence and not easily taken as the English adjective 'divine.' There are some instances of the use of *θεός* in which various English translations (rightly or wrongly) use the word divine to translate *θεός*, but all those instances are in the genitive or dative case and modify other words in the sentence.<sup>146</sup> In addition, if Paul wished, he could have used *θειότης*, as he did in Romans 1:20, a noun by which he meant divine nature. *Θειότης* is a *hapax legomenon* in the New Testament, but the adjective form, *θειός* appears three times, all in non-Pauline literature (2 Pet 1:3, 4; Acts 17:29). Both *θειότης* and *θειός* have the meaning of divinity, meaning all that bears the stamp of God, relating to nature or essence.<sup>147</sup> In addition, Paul also used the form *θεότητος* in Colossians 2:9, so one can see that Paul had the vocabulary available if he had meant Jesus was a divine being, or of a divine nature.

In the present case, to understand *θεός* as divine, would create a predicate adjective situation in which the reader must provide, at least in his mind, a noun to be modified. Best seems to take the noun as nature, but someone might also suggest 'divine

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<sup>146</sup>In Paul's writings see Rom 3:25 (ESV); 2 Cor 10:4 (ESV, NIV, RSV, NRSV); 2 Cor 11:2 (ESV, RSV, NRSV); Col 1:25 (RSV).

<sup>147</sup>Hermann Kleinknecht, "θειός" and "θειότης," in *TDNT*, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), 122-23.

being.’ To supply either word implies a being other than God who is divine, implying perhaps that Christ is a second order divinity. But as Bauckham has rightly pointed out, that is precisely what the New Testament writers would not say, because that means adding a god: “Paul is certainly not repudiating Jewish monotheism, whereas were he merely associating Jesus with the unique God, he certainly would be repudiating monotheism.”<sup>148</sup>

None of this is to say that Paul did not think of Christ as divine; only that to say that Christ is a sharer in the divine nature is inadequate. Paul’s point was not to describe Christ’s divine nature, but to identify who Christ is. The concept of divine or divinity is inadequate for that. If Paul’s audience was even in part Gentile, to think of Christ as divine could have left room for thinking of him in terms of how they might have described pagan divinities, or even perhaps, it could have left room to think of Christ as one of those deities.<sup>149</sup>

James D. G. Dunn asks the same question regarding the meaning of *θεός*. He proposes that if Paul did intend to “bless Christ as ‘god’ here” (and Dunn does not think so), it may be a title of exaltation as in Romans 1:3, or it may be a status and honor (a god over all) or it may be an echo of Psalm 45:2 and 6 where the king is addressed as god. For Dunn it is by no means clear that Paul thought of Christ as pre-existent god.<sup>150</sup> But Dunn’s suggestion doesn’t take into account the qualifiers in Romans 9:5. Paul is careful to identify Christ as over all, which could identify him only as the God of Israel, YHWH

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<sup>148</sup>Bauckham, *God Crucified*, 38-39.

<sup>149</sup>While it is not probative for the argument, the same problem exists for the English word divine. It can describe anything from angels, to trees, even including a beautiful day or some of the desserts my wife bakes.

<sup>150</sup>James D. G. Dunn, *Christology in the Making: A New Testament Inquiry in the Doctrine of the Incarnation*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 45. I have maintained Dunn’s use of the lower case “god.”

of the Old Testament himself.<sup>151</sup> Dunn's language suggests it may be possible to think of Jesus as some lesser exalted being who is over all, but it needs to be further demonstrated that Paul could think of any being as over all people (or over all things) other than the God of Israel. By attributing the words ἐπὶ πάντων to Christ, in the same manner that he attributed the words to the Father in Ephesians 4:6, Paul makes it easy to conclude that he identified Christ as the God of Israel.<sup>152</sup> As I will argue in chapters 3 and 4, to think this kind of language could be applied to Christ and yet not identify him as God would not be possible for a monotheist such as Paul.

The question, of course, remains as to why Paul would use the word θεός here rather than κύριος as he does more typically, and, similarly, why did he not use the θεός more often? To answer the latter question requires some speculation as to what Paul thought and intended, but perhaps we can suggest that the issue lay with the fact that many of his letters were, at least arguably, addressed to Gentiles. As I will argue in coming chapters, when Paul used the term κύριος, he often shifted the referent in Old Testament passages from YHWH to Jesus, thus identifying Jesus with YHWH, so it is likely his readers understood his use of κύριος for Jesus to refer to YHWH. If Paul had simply used θεός his Gentile readers may have done what I have cautioned against, that is, they may simply have understood Jesus to be a deity at the level they had encountered in Gentile culture. Thus, Paul used κύριος to identify Jesus as the Most High God of the Old Testament.

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<sup>151</sup>Contra Rudolph Bultmann, "The Christological Confession of the World Council of Churches," in *Essays Philosophical and Theological* (New York: Macmillan, 1955), 287. "The formula 'Christ is God' is false in every sense in which God is understood as an entity which can be objectivized."

<sup>152</sup>As I noted previously, I accept the full corpus of writings attributed to Paul, but even if one does not, few scholars see Ephesians as significantly different from Paul's thought and as written significantly later than Paul wrote. Certainly few would challenge the fact that Paul would have understood the Father as over all things or over all men.

The issue regarding why Paul would use the word *θεός* in Romans 9:5, rather than *κύριος* as he does more typically is the issue the dissertation will address. A brief suggestion can be made with deferral of exegetical support for later chapters. I will argue that the difference is semantic, not substantive, but the semantic issue is still important. I will suggest that in Romans 3:29-30, Paul had already established God as the God of the nations as well as God of the Jews. In 9:5 he identifies Jesus with the God of the nations, that is, God over all people, also including the Jews. In 10:9-13 Paul makes very nearly the same statement about Jesus as lord of all who saves all who call upon him; that is it is the same thing he says about God as the God of all who justifies all by faith. It is now the Jews who must join the Gentiles in this confession, so the use of *θεός* is appropriate at the beginning of the section dealing with the salvation of Israel.

### **Chapter Summary and Conclusion**

In this chapter I have defined the task as the effort to understand the text of Romans 9:5 without undue influence from premises from outside the text. It is natural that questions should arise based on what Paul said elsewhere, but the first task is to let the text as it stands speak. To do otherwise consists of simply submitting one Scripture to another rather than formulating theology that includes what is said in each text as it stands. The task then, is to understand Romans 9:5 as it stands within the paragraph in which it appears. I tried to briefly account for the first eight chapters, while at the same time recognizing Romans 9:1-5 as the introduction of a discrete section in which Paul's thought turns to a new question.

In analysis of the text, I have suggested that Paul's concern is for Israel and that is the driving question with which he deals in chapters 9-11. In 9:1-5 the strong implication is that Paul's concern for Israel is their unbelief as evidenced by his willingness, if it were possible, to suffer being accursed on their behalf. Based on the structure of the passage, I have argued that in listing the privileges of Israel Paul did not

mean to turn to an outburst of joy, but to explain further the depth of his grief over unbelieving Israel that caused him to wish he could make the ultimate sacrifice for them. Because of that, I argued that the passage would not appropriately end with a doxology. I also concluded after analysis of the form of the final phrase of verse 5 that Paul would not have offered a doxology to God in that form, and that the phrase is instead, a declaration of the blessedness of Christ.

The analysis of the remaining part of 9:5b supports that conclusion. That Christ was from Israel is limited to his human nature, which calls forth a further antithetical statement, which is provided in the immediately following portion of the verse: he is also over all, that is, God. The grammatical evidence presented in this chapter makes it far more than possible that Paul intended to call Christ God. In fact, based on the grammar, the probability is very strong that he did so intend. As it stands, suggestions for alternative readings really are a result of premises from outside the text.

But as I acknowledged in chapter 1, the grammar is not enough to convince everyone. Some reasonable questions remain: (1) Is it possible that Paul the apostle, the Jewish monotheist, would call Christ God? (2) Is it possible Paul would call Jesus God at the beginning of Romans 9-11 since he didn't do it anywhere else? (3) If Paul were to call Jesus God, why would he do it here, at the beginning of a section of the letter in which he is concerned for the unbelieving condition of Israel? Before we can continue the argument about Paul's purpose in Romans 9-11 as suggested by question 3, we must pause to address the first two questions in the next two chapters.

### CHAPTER 3

#### OBJECTIONS FROM OUTSIDE ROMANS 9:5: PAUL AND MONOTHEISM

At the beginning of chapter 2, I paused only long enough to acknowledge two general objections to the conclusions that I drew there, and while I occasionally mentioned those objections throughout the chapter, I did not address them at any length. In chapter 2 the task was to allow the text of Romans 9:1-5, and particularly verse 5b, to speak without consideration of objections from outside the text. I adopted Timothy Dwight's suggestion that the natural order of examination is to allow the words of a passage "to be interpreted by the common rules of language, and to have their meaning determined in independence of anything beyond the limits of their own context."<sup>1</sup>

At the same time, it must be acknowledged that every text must also be interpreted within the larger context of an author's known writings. In addition to theological questions from his writings, questions of a more psychological nature can be raised, such as whether Paul, the monotheistic Jew, could even be capable of such a statement as I have argued in chapter 2. Those are legitimate issues and it may be that Bruce Metzger is correct that the resolution of the matter depends upon whether the exegete will give the greatest weight to considerations from inside the text or whether external considerations will be the most influential.<sup>2</sup> As can be seen from the history of interpretation on pages 19-24 of chapter 1, scholars are ranged on both sides of the

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<sup>1</sup>Timothy Dwight, "On Roman ix. 5," *JBL* 1 (1881): 23.

<sup>2</sup>Bruce Metzger, "The Punctuation of Rom. 9:5," in *Christ and the Spirit in the New Testament*, ed. Barnabas Lindars and Stephen S. Smalley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 110.

question of where the weight should fall. Even many who recognize the likelihood of the correctness of the exegetical conclusion I have suggested, have been unwilling to draw the conclusion that Paul meant to make such a statement about Christ, or that he could possibly make such a statement. As Vincent Taylor noted, the question is not whether Jesus is divine, but whether he is actually described as *θεός* and whether we are today justified in speaking of him as God.<sup>3</sup> Of course, in chapter 2, I raised the question of whether divine is a title that can rightly be applied to Jesus. In this chapter and the next, some of the reasons will be advanced that divine is not the proper title.

Perhaps James Denney can be seen as representative of the struggle to reconcile the language of Romans 9:5b with the larger question it raises:

[The objection that Paul always distinguishes God from Christ] has a weight which it is impossible not to feel, and it becomes more decisive the more we realize Paul's whole habit of thought and speech. . . . If we ask ourselves point blank whether Paul, as we know his mind from his epistles, would express his sense of Christ's greatness by calling Him God blessed for ever, it seems to me almost impossible to answer in the affirmative. Such an assertion is not on the same plane with the conception of Christ which meets us everywhere in the Apostle's writings; and though there is some irregularity in the grammar, and perhaps some difficulty in seeing the point of a doxology, I agree with those who would put a colon or a period at *σάρκα*, and make the words that follow refer not to Christ, but to the Father.<sup>4</sup>

So the division between the weight of evidence from within the text and from outside it is clear. On the other hand, however, if I am correct in my conclusion that when

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<sup>3</sup>Vincent Taylor, "Does the New Testament Call Jesus God?" *Exp Tim* 73 (1962), 116-18.

<sup>4</sup>James Denney, *St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, in vol. 2 of *The Expositor's Greek Testament*, ed. W. Robertson Nicoll (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970), 658-59. Similarly, K. E. Kirk, *The Epistle to the Romans in the Revised Version with Introduction and Commentary* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1937), 104. "It is difficult to imagine that if he were content to speak so frankly here he should not have done so elsewhere in his epistles." Cf. James D. G. Dunn, *Christology in the Making: A New Testament Inquiry into the Origins of the Doctrine of the Incarnation*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 1996), 45. Dunn, even though agreeing the punctuation favors a reference to Christ as "god," finds Paul's style irregular enough that he is not troubled to find here an "unexpected twist in grammatical construction." Unlike Denney, he gives little weight to the exegetical conclusion. See also Jochen Flebbe, *Solus Deus: Untersuchungen zur Rede von Gott im Brief des Paulus an die Römer* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008). Flebbe similarly finds that Paul's distinction between God and Christ excludes any possibility that he means to identify Christ with God. So strongly is Jesus excluded from the identity of God, that Flebbe apparently sees no need to give attention to the exegetical arguments about the passage.

matters from inside the text are considered exegetically and independently, the very strong probability is that Paul intended to call Christ God, then it is reasonable to conclude those internal issues should carry the greater weight if reasonable answers can be given to objections from outside the text.

In the next two chapters, then, I will consider what appear to me to be the two most significant external objections. In this chapter the question to be answered is whether Paul, as a monotheistic Jew, could ever refer to Jesus as God. In the next chapter the question will be whether Paul would refer to Jesus as God in Romans 9:5, if he didn't do so anywhere else. The reader will recall that the primary objection I seek to answer in this dissertation is the problem of why Paul would refer to Christ as God in Romans 9:5b at the beginning of this discrete section of Romans. In the next two chapters my intent is simply to acknowledge the other objections and offer some possible answers. It is my suggestion that the objections can be answered sufficiently to allow the conclusion of chapter 2 to stand. I acknowledge, however, that the present chapter encapsulates a wide-ranging discussion of monotheism, parts of which will be brief. My hope is to establish a biblical understanding of monotheism and to show that within that biblical understanding, Paul was a monotheist who could understand Jesus as no less than as identified as God. To do less, but to make the kinds of statements he makes about Jesus, would be a most serious violation of his monotheism, more serious than to suggest Jesus is "divine" but somehow not God. To that task we may now turn.

### **Description of the Objection**

The objection that Paul's monotheism does not allow for the possibility that he would call Jesus God is worth consideration at the beginning because it presents an assumption that underlies much of the difficulty scholars present from outside the text. The basic argument is that Paul was a monotheistic Jew, which would make him unable to speak of Christ as God, although others more influenced by Greek culture could speak

that way. Such an argument regarding what thought is possible for someone is speculative and not really capable of refutation, since no one else knows what, beyond judging by what he wrote, was in Paul's mind. The best arguments, then, come from what he wrote, but perhaps some other reasons can be advanced to suggest Paul was capable of saying that Christ is God over all.

### **Monotheism and Paul's Psychology**

A. W. Wainwright, with perhaps good reason, refers to the argument that Paul could not refer to Jesus as God because of his monotheism, as the psychological argument.<sup>5</sup> The reason for that can be seen most clearly in comments by Charles A. Anderson Scott that, while Paul may have been urged by his convictions up to the verge of acknowledging that Christ is God, he was finally precluded from such an acknowledgment by his monotheism. According to Scott, if there is any uncertainty about whether Paul referred to Christ as God, that uncertainty "must give way before the very great improbability that one in whom the monotheistic faith of Judaism was so deeply ingrained could have taken this momentous step."<sup>6</sup> Similarly, C. H. Dodd, although acknowledging that Paul in places other than Romans 9:5 ascribes to Christ "functions and dignities which are consistent with nothing less than deity, yet he pointedly avoids calling him 'God.'"<sup>7</sup> For Dodd the reason Paul could not refer to Jesus as God "while the

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<sup>5</sup>A. W. Wainwright, "The Confession 'Jesus is God' in the New Testament," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 10 (1957): 275-76.

<sup>6</sup>Charles A. Anderson Scott, *Christianity According to St. Paul* (Cambridge: University Press, 1927), 274-75. See also Donald A. Hagner, "Paul's Christology and Jewish Monotheism," in *Perspectives on Christology: Essays in Honor of Paul K. Jewett*, ed. Marguerite Shuster and Richard Muller (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991), 27, "... Paul could have thought of Jesus as God, without yet being able comfortably to formulate the thought into the corresponding language."

<sup>7</sup>C. H. Dodd, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1932), 152.

theologians who followed him could, was not that they differed from him in their belief about the person of Christ, but that they were Greeks and he a Hebrew.”<sup>8</sup>

Dodd’s assertion illustrates part of the problem of this argument. He seems to regard it as true that Paul could think of Jesus as God, or at least as deity, as the Greeks could, but because he was a Hebrew he could not actually write it or say it. That Paul could think a certain thing to be true, yet be unable to say that thing is true surely requires a level of psychological analysis that renders it highly speculative. Did his background create thought processes that were too strong for him to break, in spite of his knowledge of what is true? Or was he conflicted in some way with the acknowledgment that Christ is some form of deity, yet less than God, and the implications that has for the idea that there is only one God? Dodd does not make clear how he analyzes Paul’s conflict, but as I will suggest below, it is possible Dodd and others who adopt this objection operate with an understanding of monotheism that may not be entirely biblical or fitting. R. W. L. Moberly perhaps makes that point more clearly:

My first suggestion, therefore, is that we need a kind of Socratic *aporia*, a recognition of not knowing as the context for fresh knowledge. Instead of our knowing what ‘monotheism’ is in the context of ancient Israel and early Judaism, and it then being a problem to know how the literary deposit of Israel’s religion can be correlated with it or how Jesus can be fitted into it, we should rather acknowledge that we may not have rightly understood Israel’s canonical religion because the preferred category of ‘monotheism’ may in important respects have impeded our grasping the nature of the Old Testament’s understanding of God in the first place.<sup>9</sup>

### **A Brief History of the Monotheism Objection**

The objection based on the problem of monotheism arises primarily from a History-of-Religions vantage, as can be seen from Dodd’s comments about the

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid., 152n 1.

<sup>9</sup>R. W. L. Moberly, “How Appropriate is ‘Monotheism’ as a Category for Biblical Interpretation?” in *Early Jewish and Christian Monotheism*, ed. Loren T. Stuckenbruck and Wendy E. S. North (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 233.

differences in the way Hebrews and Greeks could think about God. Wilhelm Bousset wrestled with the question of how Paul, who from his monotheistic past must have had sensitivities for the difficulties, could link so closely the figures of God and Christ in the eye of faith. Bousset's conclusion is that Paul had come under the influence of Hellenism and that he kept separate the idea of the Father (θεός) and Jesus as κύριος, recognizing a subordination in which he finally allows Christ to appear as a divine being at a level below God, "as a half-god if we wish to put it crudely."<sup>10</sup> In fact, Bousset's characterization is at least partly accurate. As I have suggested and will argue later, to think of Jesus as divine and not God puts him into a completely different class of being, a demi-god, as Bousset suggests. It is, of course, correct to raise the question of how Paul, the monotheistic Jew, could think of Jesus in the exalted terms in which he described him (e.g., Phil 2:6-11, Col 1:15-20). Whether the separation of θεός and κύριος as Bousset suggests is defensible will be considered later in the next chapter, but here I will simply suggest that his understanding of the Hellenistic influence on Paul might have kept Bousset from seeing Paul's application of κύριος in Old Testament texts to Christ. Similarly, Rudolph Bultmann allows Jesus to be "deity as κύριος, a divine figure, but certainly not God."<sup>11</sup> Of course, Bousset's contention that to make such an assertion would mean that Jesus would be a half-god is entirely accurate, but as I will suggest, to make Jesus a half-god would relegate him to a class of beings over which Paul asserts he is highly exalted. That, of course, makes it impossible for Bousset (and Bultmann) to think that Paul the monotheist could redefine monotheism to fit such an idea into his

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<sup>10</sup>Wilhelm Bousset, *Kyrios Christos: A History of Belief in Christ from the Beginnings of Christianity to Irenaeus*, trans. John E. Steely (Nashville: Abingdon, 1970), 205.

<sup>11</sup>Rudolph Bultmann, "The Christological Confession of the World Council of Churches," in *Essays Philosophical and Theological*, trans. James C. G. Greig (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1955), 278.

thought, so Bousset seeks relief in the argument that the use of *κύριος* as a divine figure could occur only within the Hellenistic church.<sup>12</sup>

Others have been influenced in a similar way to conclude that Paul could never refer to Jesus as God. Käsemann's conclusion about Romans 9:5 is instructive for our purposes. He finds that, as unusual as the form of the doxology in Romans 9:5b might be if it is a doxology to God the Father, it would be more unusual that a doxology would be offered to Christ.<sup>13</sup> In addition, as I noted in chapter 1, C. F. D. Moule agreed that the case for the grammatical analysis that results in the conclusion that Paul did intend to call Jesus God is "remarkably cogent," yet he has an instinctive reluctance to allow that a Jew of Paul's upbringing could have used *θεός* in quite that way.<sup>14</sup> In a similar fashion Vincent Taylor acknowledged that Paul "speaks of Christ as divine, applies to Him names and titles which give Him no less a status, assigns to Him soteriological functions such as no man or demi-god can exercise, gives Him a place in the creation of the universe, and all but identifies Him with the Spirit of God." Yet Taylor understands that for Paul, God is one God and Paul will not compromise that even for Christ.<sup>15</sup> A. E. Harvey states the issue perhaps most directly, that the monotheism of the early followers of Jesus constrained them so that when they attempted to declare who Jesus was they "stopped

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<sup>12</sup>I called attention to some of the problems with that argument by Bousset in chap. 1. As can be seen there, his argument regarding the Hellenistic origin of the use of *κύριος* has been followed by a number of scholars in the History-of-Religions school, but it has come under serious challenge by others such as Martin Hengel and Larry Hurtado who argue persuasively that the concept of Jesus as *κύριος* originated on Palestinian soil.

<sup>13</sup>Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 259-60.

<sup>14</sup>C. F. D. Moule, *The Origin of Christology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 137.

<sup>15</sup>Vincent Taylor, *The Person of Christ in New Testament Teaching* (London: Macmillan, 1958), 60.

well short of describing him as ‘divine.’”<sup>16</sup> Donald Hagner is right to comment that within full scope of the evidence of the New Testament, Harvey’s reductionism is inadequate.<sup>17</sup> Finally, Dunn observes that Paul retained his categories within the limits of current Jewish theology.<sup>18</sup>

In the rest of this chapter I will survey recent discussion on the meaning of monotheism and whether either the Israel of the Old Testament or Second Temple Judaism could rightfully be considered monotheistic. In recent years, the classical definitions of monotheism have come under some criticism, which could influence the way one would understand Paul as a monotheist. As I will develop below, the classical emphasis on monotheism as a matter of counting the number of gods and finding only one is not the best way to understand biblical monotheism. In fact, biblical monotheism may better be understood to recognize the existence of other gods while at the same time asserting the uniqueness of YHWH, so that monotheism is itself not threatened. I will also argue that to think Paul could assign to Christ some level of divinity, yet not to think of him as God, actually undermines the very monotheism that many seek to preserve by doubting that Paul could think of Jesus as God. I will also consider arguments made rightly by Richard Bauckham and others to explain how it is that Jesus could be called God within the monotheistic construct of the New Testament. I will consider some texts in which Paul alludes to the Shema‘ (Deut 6:4) to affirm his monotheism and to include

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<sup>16</sup>A. E. Harvey, *Jesus and the Constraints of History* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1982), 167. Harvey’s emphasis is on Jesus as the Son of God, who was completely obedient and gave an authoritative word about and from God. Perhaps some expansion into other things the NT said about Jesus would impact his conclusion.

<sup>17</sup>Hagner, “Paul’s Christology,” 33.

<sup>18</sup>James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 38B (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1988), 529. Similarly, Otto Küss, “Zu Römer 9,5,” in *Rechtfertigung; Festschrift für Ernst Käsemann, zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. Johannes Friedrich, Wolfgang Pöhlmann and Peter Stuhlmacher (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, and Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1976), 302. Küss argues that Paul directed Rom 9-11 to Jews and thus would have stayed within a Jewish understanding of God.

Jesus within that monotheism. In spite of the serious objections listed above, it will be my conclusion that Paul's monotheism did not prevent him from acknowledging that Jesus is God.

### **Classical Monotheism**

Much of the discussion of the history of monotheism has challenged the view that Israel was ever monotheistic prior to the sixth century BCE when the nation went into exile in Babylon, and when Isaiah, the so-called prophet of the exile, proclaimed YHWH as the only God.<sup>19</sup> In his detailed review of scholarship in the twentieth century, Robert Gnuse commented:

One must sense a general consensus in all of the authors thus far discussed. They sense an evolutionary process which moves through various stages of monolatrous or henotheistic intensity in the pre-exilic era to a form of pure monotheism which arose in the exilic era. Although they describe the process in a state of development, they often stress the radical or revolutionary nature of this trajectory. They see monotheism emerge in a series of conflicts or crises, wherein significant spokespersons articulate insights or undertake actions which advance the movement. These scholars also provide us with new concepts and terminology by which to describe this process. It appears that their views represent an emerging consensus which will manifest itself in scholarship and textbooks within the next generation.<sup>20</sup>

In general, the scholars within this consensus described by Gnuse do not credit the biblical narrative of the settlement of Canaan, instead thinking of the Israelite settlement as "peaceful and internal, having continuity with the predecessor societies of the late

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<sup>19</sup>This brief discussion is limited to biblical and historical arguments about the nature of the religion of Israel of the OT and of First Temple Judaism. There is a body of recent work that argues that monotheism is itself a dangerous idea that leads to violence and warfare. For an example even prior to the events of September 11, 2001, see Regina M. Schwartz, *The Curse of Cain: The Violent Legacy of Monotheism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997). Schwartz argues, based on her reading of the Bible, that monotheism leads to identity in groups, which results in conflict. Conflict is caused in large part when groups do not recognize plenitude, the belief that there is enough for everyone, but instead operate under the principle of scarcity, in which things are in short supply and must be competed for. For a cogent criticism of Schwartz' reading of the Scriptures, see R. W. L. Moberly, "Is Monotheism Bad for You?" in *The God of Israel*, ed. Robert P. Gordon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 99-111.

<sup>20</sup>Robert Gnuse, *No Other Gods: Emergent Monotheism in Israel* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic: 1997), 62-128.

Bronze Age.”<sup>21</sup> That understanding of the conquest was pivotal for those scholars in doing biblical theology because that affected how they envisioned the overall Israelite culture. “[U]se of the old Israelite conquest themes has become inappropriate for biblical theology and ethics.”<sup>22</sup> Thus, they understood that Israel was not a people monolithic in their worship of the one God who invaded and conquered a pantheistic culture. Instead, their conclusions are that during the pre-exilic period, Israel, which had gradually infiltrated Canaan, was in the process of evolving away from the polytheistic religions they inherited, but prior to the Babylonian exile Israelite religion was not monotheistic. That argument is based not only on recent archaeological discoveries suggesting worship of other gods and goddesses, especially Asherah, but also on biblical texts themselves that seem to suggest a recognition that other gods exist. Scholars point to texts such as Judges 11:24, where Chemosh, the god of Ammon, has power to give land to the Ammonites, or 2 Kings 3:27, where the gods have the power to cause the tide of battle to turn against Israel when the king of Moab offered his eldest son to his protector god.<sup>23</sup> In addition to biblical evidence scholars rely on archaeological finds to argue that the worship of other gods was widespread in Israel. That is especially true of Asherah, who, as argued by John Day, was considered by many in Israel to be the wife of YHWH.<sup>24</sup> As Gnuse reports:

[I]ncreasingly, it is suspected that an early pure Yahwism may never have existed except in the minds of the Deuteronomistic historians or among a very small minority of Yahweh devotees (whose religion may not have been really very pure,

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., 58.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

<sup>23</sup>So Ulrich Mauser, “One God Alone: A Pillar of Biblical Theology,” *Princeton Seminary Bulletin* 12 (1991): 258.

<sup>24</sup>John Day, *Yahweh and the Gods and Goddesses of Canaan*, JSOT Supplementary Series, vol. 265 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2000), 42-60. Day acknowledged that the “Yahweh-alone Party” that composed the OT rejects any notion of Asherah as the wife of Yahweh, but his argument is that in popular religion, Asherah was a most important deity.

either). Scholars are beginning to suspect that later Yahwism may have emerged out of a greater Canaanite religion or out of a Yahwism basically indistinguishable from the Canaanite religion. Hence, the artifacts are testimony not to some syncretistic cult, but rather to the normal *YHWH* religion for most people in the pre-exilic era.<sup>25</sup>

Gnuse further reports a general consensus among the scholars he surveyed that there was “an evolutionary process which moves through various stages of monolatrous or henotheistic intensity in the pre-exilic era to a form of pure monotheism which arises in the exilic era.”<sup>26</sup> Gnuse himself offers a model taken from modern biology by which he explains the emergence of monotheism as an evolutionary process which occurs in revolutionary fashion.<sup>27</sup> He refers to that process as Punctuated Equilibria, by which he means the process evolved slowly, but was aided by large fairly sudden insights that forwarded the process in larger, more punctuated jumps, such as during the “revolutionary breakthrough to monotheism” in Isaiah 40-66.<sup>28</sup> But Christopher Seitz argues that while in Isaiah 40-66 YHWH asserts his uniqueness and exclusivity, nowhere does that lead to practical elimination of polytheism. The message there is that in view of the gods of the other nations, YHWH demanded sole allegiance.<sup>29</sup> As I will note below, there have been other important challenges to the consensus.

Moberly lists five recurring emphases in modern literature concerning monotheism.<sup>30</sup> The first is that although the Bible presents a picture that is apparently monotheistic from the outset, monotheism actually emerged only late in Israel’s history. Second, it was probably not until the exile that monotheism proper was clearly

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<sup>25</sup>Gnuse, *No Other Gods*, 72.

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*, 105.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, 69.

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*, 207. “[I]n this prophet we have an aggressive monotheist with strident rhetoric.”

<sup>29</sup>Christopher Seitz, “The Divine Name in Christian Scripture,” in *Word Without End: The Old Testament as Abiding Theological Witness* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 255.

<sup>30</sup>Moberly, “How Appropriate is Monotheism?” 216-17.

formulated. Third, although the Bible presents a clear-cut contrast between YHWH and deities of other nations, Israelite religion for the most of the biblical period was actually in a symbiotic and syncretistic relationship with the religious beliefs of the surrounding peoples. Fourth, the formulation of monotheistic belief was a product of political events, particularly the confrontation of Judah and Babylon and Judah's need to have something to say in the face of Judah's defeat. Finally, the literature of the Old Testament may be more or less unrepresentative of the actual religion practiced by many of the people for much of the time. In this system, monotheism becomes a sort of intellectualizing idea that evolves and develops into "believing that in one God becomes assent to the proposition that the class of deity has only one member, a proposition of self evident philosophical significance, rather than a kind of transformative and demanding awareness of reality that is rooted in, and inseparable from, a range of moral disciplines and symbolic practices."<sup>31</sup>

### **An Alternate View of Monotheism**

Gnuse's conclusions and those of the scholars he represents as within the consensus, as summarized by Moberly, have not been unchallenged, particularly the conclusion that the religion of Israel became monotheistic in the late monarchy or during or following the Babylonian exile. One prominent challenge was posed by Peter Hayman in a paper presented in 1990 when he argued that Judaism did not become monotheistic until the Middle Ages.<sup>32</sup> Hayman argued that angels were understood in the same way that gods were in the religion of pre-exilic Israel. He argues also, however, that angels came to be understood as part of the class of divine beings of which YHWH was a member, distinguished from the angels not in terms of kind, but in terms of his kingship over them. Other figures, such as Enoch who ascended into heaven and metamorphosed

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<sup>31</sup>Ibid., 223.

<sup>32</sup>Peter Hayman, "Monotheism: A Misused Word in Jewish Studies?" *Journal of Jewish Studies* 42 (1991): 2.

into Metatron, came to be considered in the same way.<sup>33</sup> Bauckham also points out that “if ‘rigorous’ or ‘exclusive’ monotheism must deny the existence of any supernatural or heavenly beings besides God, then clearly such monotheism never existed until the modern period.”<sup>34</sup>

Other writers have suggested as well that Judaism was not completely monotheistic after the exile. Margaret Barker argues that YHWH was one of the sons of the High God who could be manifested on earth in human form as an angel. Barker’s argument is rooted in her reading of Deuteronomy 32:8 in which she understands YHWH to be one of the sons of God who was given Israel as an inheritance.<sup>35</sup> Similarly, William Horbury also argued that Judaism was not monotheistic in the Herodian period based on his understanding of the belief in the existence of a heavenly council as depicted in Psalm 82, the book of Job and various non-canonical writings.<sup>36</sup> More must be said later about those views, but for now, it is sufficient to note that under the model of emerging monotheism within which Gnuse works there is room to challenge whether Judaism was actually monotheistic, at least as defined in Gnuse’s model, after the exile. But it is possible that Gnuse and others may be applying a definition of monotheism that the Bible, whether in the Old Testament or the New, may never have applied.

Perhaps a larger question about Gnuse’s consensus conclusion is whether those scholars have rightly understood pre-exilic monotheism. The meaning of the word

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<sup>33</sup>Ibid., 4-6.

<sup>34</sup>Richard Bauckham, “The ‘Most High’ God and the Nature of Early Jewish Monotheism,” in *Israel’s God and Rebecca’s Children: Christology and Community in Early Judaism*, ed. David B. Capes, et al. (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2007), 40.

<sup>35</sup>Margaret Barker, *The Great Angel: A Study of Israel’s Second God* (London: SPCK, 1992), 3. Contra Day, *Yahweh*, 22, who argues from a reading of Deut 32:8 that as monotheism became absolute, the gods had become angels.

<sup>36</sup>William Horbury, “Jewish and Christian Monotheism in the Herodian Age,” in *Early Jewish and Christian Monotheism*, ed. Loren T. Stuckenbruck and Wendy E. S. North, JSNT Supplement Series, vol. 263 (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 19-21.

monotheism itself, at least the biblical meaning, may not in fact be as Gnuse takes it. In a paper published in 1998 regarding the monotheism of the first century Jews, Larry Hurtado commented “it is mistaken to assume that we can evaluate ancient Jewish texts and beliefs in terms of whether or how closely they meet our own preconceived idea of ‘pure’ monotheism.”<sup>37</sup> Hurtado goes on to argue that if we are to avoid imposing our own theological judgments we must accept monotheism as the religion of those who profess to be monotheists regardless of whether their religion is complicated with other beings in addition to the one God.<sup>38</sup>

Similarly, Nathan MacDonald calls attention to the problem of the modern idea of pure monotheism. MacDonald points out the Enlightenment origins of the present use of the term monotheism by showing that the word originated from a group known as the Cambridge Platonists, particularly from a publication by Henry More in 1660.<sup>39</sup> The term then became associated with the Enlightenment’s philosophical construction of a rational, ethical, and universally evident religion in which there is only one god and other deities are mythical, figments of the imagination.<sup>40</sup> MacDonald argues that the term monotheism reflects an agreement between the Cambridge Platonists and Descartes that the issue of monotheism-polytheism was philosophical, rather than theological, having to do with prioritizing the establishment of the number of deities.<sup>41</sup> Under this view, to affirm that

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<sup>37</sup>Larry Hurtado, “First Century Jewish Monotheism,” *JSNT* 71 (1998): 6.

<sup>38</sup>*Ibid.* Hayman also makes a similar assertion in his comment that he does not wish to set up a model definition of monotheism and then measure the Jewish tradition against that yardstick. Hayman, “Monotheism,” 2. Hurtado is critical of Hayman, though, for going on to establish *creatio ex nihilo* as a criterion for monotheism. Hurtado, “First Century Jewish Monotheism,” 6n 2.

<sup>39</sup>Nathan MacDonald, “The Origin of ‘Monotheism,’” in *Early Jewish and Christian Monotheism*, ed. Loren T. Stuckenbruck and Wendy E. S. North, JSNT Supplement Series, vol. 263 (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 205. His ideas are now also included in chap. 1 of his monograph. Nathan MacDonald, *Deuteronomy and the Meaning of “Monotheism”* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003). See esp. 6-7.

<sup>40</sup>MacDonald, *Deuteronomy*, 210.

<sup>41</sup>*Ibid.*, 15.

YHWH is one (as in the Shema' in Deut 6:4) is commonly understood as a declaration of monotheism in the sense that there is only one God. No other gods exist.<sup>42</sup> While his survey of scholarship is not nearly as thorough as that offered by Gnuse, MacDonald argues that the Enlightenment idea of monotheism has influenced major accounts of Israelite religion by scholars from Wellhausen on.<sup>43</sup>

### **Monotheism in Deuteronomy**

As argued by MacDonald, the classic definition of monotheism assumes a monotheism not found in Deuteronomy. In fact, Deuteronomy does not deny the existence of other gods. MacDonald builds his case on a number of passages in Deuteronomy, beginning with the Shema'. I cannot here deal with all the issues in the translation and interpretation of the Shema', but I side with those who translate it "YHWH our God, YHWH is one."<sup>44</sup> But within that statement, MacDonald argues that even Deuteronomy 6:4, often taken as a statement of classical monotheism, does not deny the existence of other gods.<sup>45</sup> The statement that YHWH is one is not a statement of numerical existence, but is a statement of uniqueness.<sup>46</sup> The fact that in Deuteronomy other gods exist can be seen in other passages such as 5:7, where translation issues also exist (לֹא יִהְיֶה לְךָ אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים עִלַּי), but the best translation is probably "you shall not have other gods against me." In this case עִלַּי is best taken as against, rather than

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid., 72.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., 21-43.

<sup>44</sup>R. W. L. Moberly, "'YHWH is One': The Translation of the Shema," in *From Eden to Golgotha: Essays in Biblical Theology* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), 76-81. See especially p. 80, where Moberly argues that the proper translation of אֶחָד in Deut 6:4 is "one," not "alone," rendering the translation "YHWH our God, YHWH is one." See also MacDonald, *Deuteronomy*, 70.

<sup>45</sup>MacDonald, *Deuteronomy*, 72.

<sup>46</sup>R. W. L. Moberly, "Toward an Interpretation of the Shema," in *Theological Exegesis: Essays in Honor of Brevard S. Childs*, ed. Christopher Seitz and Kathryn Greene-McCreight (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 132-33.

before, but even if the latter is taken as correct, as suggested by the LXX, the verse is taken against as a warning against an act of defiance by following other gods.<sup>47</sup> Similarly, 6:14, לֹא תִלְכוּן אַחֲרֵי אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים מֵאֱלֹהֵי הָעַמִּים אֲשֶׁר סְבִיבוֹתֵיכֶם, (“you shall not go after other gods from among the gods of the people who surround you”), is an indication of the existence of other gods. In fact, both these commands are given in recognition of Israel’s difficulty maintaining singular loyalty to YHWH when they entered the land and were tempted to follow the fertility deities under the influence of the surrounding cultures. The emphasis is not on monotheism, but on Israel’s relationship to the one, unique God.<sup>48</sup> In addition to passages listed earlier in this chapter, see also other passages such as Exodus 15:11; 20:3; Deuteronomy 12:2; Psalm 82:1; 89:6-7; 95:3 and 97:7, where the uniqueness of YHWH among the gods is emphasized. In general, Israel was to have no other gods beside YHWH, they were to venerate no image, to sacrifice to God alone, to serve him alone and to fear him alone.<sup>49</sup>

Deuteronomy 32:8-9 is also an important passage in relation to the meaning of monotheism (and as I will suggest later, for Paul’s understanding of the singularity of God in Rom 3:29-30). In those verses God is said to have divided the sons of Adam according to the number of the sons of Israel (יֵצֵב גְּבֻלַת עַמּוֹ לְמִסְפַּר בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל), but YHWH kept his people Jacob as his heritage (כִּי חֵלֶק יְהוָה עַמּוֹ יַעֲקֹב הַבֶּלְגִּי נִחְלָתוֹ). It is possible, however, that a part of the text in the first portion (בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל) might not be original. Instead of sons of Israel (בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל), the LXX reads angels of God (ἀγγέλων θεοῦ). Since some order of beings with access to heaven before God is known as sons of

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<sup>47</sup>MacDonald, *Deuteronomy*, 77.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., 77, 124; See also Peter C. Craigie, *The Book of Deuteronomy* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), 152-53.

<sup>49</sup>Wolfgang Schrage, *Unterwegs zur Einzigkeit und Einheit Gottes: zum “Monotheismus” des Paulus und seiner alttestamentlich fröjüdischen Tradition* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2002), 7.

God (בְּנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים) in Job 1:6; 2:1 and 38:7, and in each case the LXX translated בְּנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים as οἱ ἄγγελοι or as ἄγγελοί μου, it is possible that the translator of the LXX had a text of Deuteronomy 32:8-9 before him in which בְּנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים appeared.<sup>50</sup> In addition, Symmachus matches the LXX and 4QDeut<sup>i</sup> contains בְּנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים rather than בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל.<sup>51</sup> So it is possible that the Masoretic text appears as it presently does to remove a text that implies the existence of other gods.<sup>52</sup> If that analysis is correct, it adds further evidence that Deuteronomy accepts the existence of other beings in a ruling position subordinate to YHWH.

In the same way that passages above suggest the Israelites were to sacrifice to God alone and venerate only him, the Shema<sup>4</sup> is not a theoretical statement, but an expression of commitment, followed by the command for Israel to love YHWH with all their hearts.<sup>53</sup> J. F. A. Sawyer goes on to argue that the “most illuminating parallel” is found in the love song in Canticles 6:8-9. Out of all the poet’s female friends and acquaintances, the one is his favorite and is thus unique and to whom all love is directed. In the same way, YHWH is the one God above all others to whom total allegiance is owed.<sup>54</sup> Similarly, both MacDonald and Moberly agree that when the lover in Canticles

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<sup>50</sup>The thought of Deut 32:8-9 may be reflected in Dan 10:13, where the Prince of Persia is surely not a reference to any of the human rulers of the day. G. B. Caird, *Principalities and Powers: A Study in Pauline Theology* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956), 6.

<sup>51</sup>MacDonald, *Deuteronomy*, 90-91; Duane L. Christensen, *Deuteronomy 21:10-34:12*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 10 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2002), 791.

<sup>52</sup>MacDonald, *Deuteronomy*, 90; Christensen, *Deuteronomy*, 796; Craigie, *Deuteronomy*, 378-79; Day, *Yahweh and the Gods of Israel*, 22-24; Caird, *Principalities*, 5; Daniel I. Block, *The Gods of the Nations: Studies in Ancient Near Eastern National Theology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000), 27-32; Michael S. Heiser, “Deuteronomy and the Sons of God,” *Bib Sac* 158 (2001): 55, 74. With some variation on the content of the original text, Jan Joosten, “A Note on Deuteronomy XXXII 8,” *VT* 57 (2007): 548-55.

<sup>53</sup>John F. A. Sawyer, “Biblical Alternatives to Monotheism,” *Theology* 87 (1984): 175.

<sup>54</sup>*Ibid.* Sawyer concludes that the fact that YHWH is the only god Christians really know about and have experienced, calls for some sensitivity and understanding of gods worshipped by other people. As MacDonald points out, however, Sawyer’s method of biblical theology is flawed in that he weighs texts arithmetically and concludes monotheism was not important in early Israel because it occurs in “only” 25 passages. MacDonald, *Deuteronomy*, 55.

6:8-9 is referred to as “the one (אֶחָד) the only one of her mother,” the poet does not mean that she is the only daughter of her mother, but that she is the unique one because she has an unrivalled place for the poet. In the same way YHWH is unique for Israel.<sup>55</sup> Thus, the conclusion should not be that monotheism is an expression of abstract monotheism, an intellectual claim that consists of counting the gods and finding that only YHWH exists. The biblical question “is not the number of gods [one], but the practice and character of YHWH in an assumed world of contested polytheism, the ways in which this God (among others) is known, and the ways in which Israel is related to this God.”<sup>56</sup> The monotheism of the Old Testament had room for other gods, but understood YHWH as unique among them.

### **The Uniqueness of YHWH**

If the emphasis in Deuteronomy is on the uniqueness of YHWH, one must ask what it is that makes YHWH unique. It is clear that YHWH is the one God above all others who demands total allegiance. YHWH has allotted the worship of heavenly bodies to the other nations (Deut 4:19), but none of those other beings are like YHWH who have brought Israel out of Egypt, so there is no other who is properly “God.” The identification of God as the one who brought Israel out of Egypt stands at the beginning of the first commandment (Deut 5:6-7). It is this God whom Israel is to love and serve.<sup>57</sup> MacDonald concludes that the claim to uniqueness in Deuteronomy is based not on creation, but on YHWH’s faithfulness, mercy and jealousy as demonstrated in the election of Israel and in

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<sup>55</sup> MacDonald, *Deuteronomy*, 74; Moberly, “Toward an Interpretation,” 132.

<sup>56</sup> Walter Brueggemann, *Reverberations of Faith: A Theological Handbook of Old Testament Themes* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002), 137. Similarly, Mark A. Seifrid, “The Knowledge of the Creator and the Experience of Exile: The Contours of Paul’s Theo-logy” (paper presented to The Society for New Testament Studies NT Theology Seminar, Halle-Wittenberg, Germany, 2-7 August, 2005), 7; Moberly, “How Appropriate?” 223-31; N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 259.

<sup>57</sup> Seifrid, “The Knowledge of the Creator,” 8.

his particular actions for his people. Therefore, YHWH's claim to oneness is primarily soteriological, not ontological.<sup>58</sup>

In his mild critique of MacDonald, however, Richard Bauckham notes some lack of clarity in that statement, in that MacDonald could mean YHWH is ontologically unique, but *perceived* by Israel as unique only through what YHWH has done for Israel, but MacDonald might also mean YHWH *is* unique as a result of what he has done for Israel; i.e., only because of his saving activity.<sup>59</sup> Bauckham is probably right to suggest that the first is the proper understanding. YHWH is unique not just in the fact that he reveals himself to Israel as savior and deliverer, but is ontologically unique in himself. The fact that God has revealed himself as unique soteriologically should not be overlooked, however. The unique relationship with Israel that demands Israel's loving allegiance to the one unique God lies in his choosing of Israel, which makes them able to confess that not only is YHWH one, but he is "our God." That exclusive relationship is based on the saving act that no other deity could produce: deliverance from Egypt. But, as noted above, soteriology is the means by which Israel perceives the uniqueness of YHWH, but it is not ontologically what makes him unique. Further discussion of that issue is taken up regarding the nature of monotheism in Second Temple Judaism.

### **Monotheism in Second Temple Judaism**

The question of the nature of Jewish monotheism in early Judaism has received considerable attention in scholarly publication, but here I can offer only a brief summary. The issue is largely whether first century Judaism could be considered monotheistic if

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<sup>58</sup>MacDonald, *Deuteronomy*, 215. See also C. J. Labuschagne, *The Incomparability of Yahweh in the Old Testament* (Leiden: Brill, 1966), 72. Labuschagne argues that the mighty acts of YHWH were what made him incomparable among the gods.

<sup>59</sup>Richard Bauckham, "Biblical Theology and the Problems of Monotheism," in *Out of Egypt: Biblical Theology and Biblical Interpretation*, ed. Craig Bartholomew, et al. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004), 192.

there were indications in writings of the period that Jews believed other beings existed and perhaps even venerated them. William Horbury argues that describing early Judaism as a religion of exclusive monotheism in the sense that it denies the existence of other divine beings fails to do justice to the inclusive tendencies during the Herodian period when the supreme deity was seen as above, but also in association with, other spirits and powers.<sup>60</sup> The meaning of “divine beings” and the nature of their association with YHWH is the main issue. Could those divine beings be considered of such standing that YHWH was simply one of many, albeit the most powerful and perhaps even king of a similar class of beings? Horbury argues that was in fact the case.<sup>61</sup> In particular, specific beings such as angels and exalted patriarchs, and divine attributes<sup>62</sup> might be thought to challenge the idea of an exclusive monotheism. This matter may be of interest to a number of academic pursuits, but the issue here, of course, relates to the manner and circumstances in which Jesus came to be worshipped as a divine being by communities

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<sup>60</sup>Horbury, “Jewish and Christian Monotheism,” 17.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid. In addition, see Hayman, “Monotheism,” 4-12, esp. 11; Michael Mach, “Concepts of Jewish Monotheism during the Hellenistic Period,” in *The Jewish Roots of Christological Monotheism: Papers from the St. Andrews Conference on the Historical Origins of the Worship of Jesus*, ed. Carey C. Newman, James R. Davila and Gladys S. Lewis (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 21-42. As I will argue below based on consideration of several passage from Ephesians, Paul would not have endorsed the position argued by Horbury, even if it was widely held in the first century.

<sup>62</sup>Angels and exalted patriarchs, and divine attributes are the two categories suggested by Richard Bauckham, *God Crucified: Monotheism and Christology in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 17. Idem, “God Crucified,” in *Jesus and the God of Israel: God Crucified and Other Studies on the New Testament’s Christology of Divine Identity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 14. Larry Hurtado, *One God, One Lord: Early Christian Devotion and Ancient Jewish Monotheism*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London: T&T Clark, 1998), 8. Angels and exalted patriarchs or heroes may be considered together since the distinction between angels and men in some writings is so reduced that men may become angels as happened to Enoch in 2 Enoch 22. See Harold B. Kuhn, “The Angelology of the Non-Canonical Jewish Apocalypses,” *JBL* 67 (1948), 219. Cf. Loren Stuckenbruck, “‘Angels’ and ‘God:’ Exploring the Limits of Early Jewish Monotheism,” in *Early Jewish and Christian Monotheism*, ed. Loren T. Stuckenbruck and Wendy E. S. North, JSNT Supplement Series, vol. 263 (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 46. As Bauckham points out, divine attributes did take part in creation and sovereign rule, but they are not separate beings, but are intrinsic to God himself. Bauckham “God Crucified,” 16-17.

who nevertheless regarded themselves as monotheists.<sup>63</sup> Many who argue that early Jewish monotheism was not exclusive, do so with a view toward explaining how various views held by Jews with varying degrees of monotheism provided the soil out of which the doctrine of the deity of the man Jesus Christ could grow. Barker argues that Christian Trinitarian theology is rooted in pre-Christian ideas about angels, one of whom was YHWH, the Holy One of Israel. YHWH could be manifested as human and it was as a manifestation of YHWH, the Son of God, that Jesus was acknowledged as the Son of God.<sup>64</sup> Similarly, Sawyer finds it hard to see how the divinity of Christ and the doctrine of the Trinity could have developed if the biblical texts were exclusively monotheistic, but if the oneness and uniqueness of God were not stressed, then the Trinity is less a problem.<sup>65</sup> The cause that effected such assertions may well be Wilhelm Bousset's statement that the placing of Jesus as the center of the cult of a believing community could not occur in Palestine where Old Testament monotheism ruled unconditionally.<sup>66</sup> Efforts to show that early Judaism was not monotheistic can provide an answer to the problem of the early origin of the worship of Jesus, even on Palestinian soil. But perhaps the problem is in fact not so easily solvable in that manner if the Jews of the first century could be classified as monotheists.

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<sup>63</sup>In fact, that is the question posed by the editor at the beginning of a collection of essays regarding early Jewish monotheism. James R. Davila, "Of Methodology, Monotheism and Metatron," in *The Jewish Roots of Christological Monotheism: Papers from the St. Andrews Conference on the Historical Origins of the Worship of Jesus*, ed. Carey C. Newman, James R. Davila and Gladys S. Lewis (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 3. Similarly, see Hurtado, *One God*, 2.

<sup>64</sup>Margaret Barker, *The Great Angel*, 3.

<sup>65</sup>Sawyer, "Biblical Alternatives to Monotheism," 179.

<sup>66</sup>Bousset, *Kyrios Christos*, 148.

## The Ontological Uniqueness of YHWH

The question as to whether early Judaism was monotheistic largely has to do with the nature of the divine beings referenced earlier and their relationship to the one unique God. As has been argued, monotheism, at least as defined in Deuteronomy and the Old Testament in general, is not a denial of the existence of other gods or, perhaps better termed by the first century, of divine beings. Dunn characterizes angels as intermediary beings who execute God's will. He plausibly suggests that the gods of other nations were absorbed into Israel's monotheistic system by regarding them as members of YHWH's heavenly council, and thus finally as angels who have authority over various nations as well as over the forces of nature.<sup>67</sup> In a similar way, G. Kittel argued that belief in the overpowering uniqueness of YHWH reduced the beings of the heavenly court that had assisted YHWH in the governance of the nations to mere "super-luminaries" with no violation of the absolute transcendence of God.<sup>68</sup> The question is how these beings relate to the unique, or as Labuschagne terms it, the incomparable YHWH.<sup>69</sup> In this understanding of monotheism, YHWH is not simply the leader and most powerful among a class of the same kind, as was the place of the chief god in the polytheism that developed in the Ancient Near East and in later Roman and Hellenistic areas.<sup>70</sup> Instead, for early Judaism, although other divine beings existed, reality was not some gradient that "does not draw sharp ontological differences between the supreme

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<sup>67</sup>James D. G. Dunn, "Was Christianity a Monotheistic Faith from the Beginning?" *Scottish Journal of Theology* 35 (1982): 311.

<sup>68</sup>G. Kittel, "ἄγγελος," in *TDNT*, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), 78. Similarly, see Kuhn, "Angelology," 217-19.

<sup>69</sup>Labuschagne, *Incomparability*, 14.

<sup>70</sup>Bauckham, "The 'Most High' God," 40; Hurtado, *One God, One Lord*, 129n 1.

God and other gods or between gods and humans” but a binary reality in which YHWH is unique in terms of an absolute difference in kind from all other reality.<sup>71</sup>

As noted earlier, MacDonald suggested that the uniqueness of YHWH for Israel lay in his revelation of himself to them as the savior and deliverer. Bauckham argued that MacDonald’s suggestion did not adequately address the ontological uniqueness of YHWH and indeed, as Wright argues, Israel was committed to seeing her God as “ontologically (and not merely practically) superior to the gods of the nations.”<sup>72</sup> There are a number of views regarding the criteria that early Judaism and early Christians used to ontologically delineate YHWH from these other beings. Hurtado thinks the distinguishing issue is worship. He argues that none of the other beings were worshipped in early Judaism and that the worship of YHWH set him apart from the other beings.<sup>73</sup> Stuckenbruck’s point is that, whether or not a cult worship of angels existed, there was evidence of reverence and veneration of angels, even if the angels rejected such reverence (Jos. Asen. 15.11-12; Tob 11:14; Ps. Philo 13:6; 15:5). Stuckenbruck agrees with Hurtado that no cult was ever formed around angelic beings, but maintains nevertheless that there was some evidence for the worship of angels. In addition, he argues in a convincing fashion that even if there were no organized worship of angels, there is evidence of honorific reverence. Nevertheless, Stuckenbruck suggests that even in settings in which reverential language exists, the authors did not let it interfere with the

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<sup>71</sup>Bauckham, “The ‘Most High’ God,” 40. Against Andrew Chester, “Jewish Messianic Expectations and Mediatorial Figures and Pauline Christology,” in *Paulus und das antike Judentum*, ed. Martin Hengel and Ulrich Heckel (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1991), 65. Chester asserts the difference to be a matter of degree and not kind, based on the fact that some language used of God is used of mediatory figures. He does not assert, however, that any of those figures participated in creation or sovereign rule.

<sup>72</sup>Wright, *New Testament*, 249.

<sup>73</sup>Hurtado, *One God*, x.

assertion of the uniqueness of God.<sup>74</sup> Thus, based on that contention, the Jewish view of the uniqueness of God is not entirely centered on worship. Other beings such as angels might be worshipped, but that does not qualify them to be placed within the reality of the unique God. As I will expand below, if one thinks divinity is a matter of degree, then worship is also a matter of degree, but Hurtado's argument that Jesus was worshiped as deity must surely carry some weight in understanding that Jesus could be identified with YHWH.<sup>75</sup>

As Bauckham argues, however, the best approach to understanding the uniqueness of God for early Judaism is rather the fact that only YHWH can be considered the creator of all things and the sovereign ruler of all things.<sup>76</sup> While it is true that Bauckham also understands that the uniqueness of YHWH can be seen in his revelation of himself by name to Israel, the revelation of that name comes in the context of deliverance from Egypt and creation of a people for himself. I will argue later that God has revealed himself in Jesus as the unique God in his saving action for the whole world, but for the moment the focus will be on the uniqueness of God for all creation as seen in sovereign rule over all things and creation of all things.

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<sup>74</sup>Stuckenbruck, "Angels' and 'God,'" 68-70. Similarly, see Chester, "Jewish Messianic Expectation," 64. Chester argues worship should not be the decisive criterion of deity. The criterion could just as easily be attributes and function.

<sup>75</sup>Against Hurtado's argument that the early Christians worshiped Jesus, see James D. G. Dunn, *Did the First Christians Worship Jesus? The New Testament Evidence* (London: SPCK and Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 2010), 147. In his response to Hurtado, Dunn suggests that early Christians would not worship Jesus because such worship could deteriorate into "Jesus-olatry." According to Dunn, "the idol substitutes for God, takes the place of God. The worship due to God is absorbed by the idol." This of course is somewhat circular in its assumption that the early Christians would think that in worshipping Jesus they were not worshipping God. Perhaps the best response is from Gregory of Nyssa:

"For if the son were created, either [Paul] would not have worshipped Him or he would have refrained from classing those who worship the creature as idolaters lest he himself should appear to be an idolater, in offering adoration to the created. But he knew that He whom he adored was God over all, for so he terms the Son in his Epistle to the Romans."

Gregory of Nyssa, *Against Eunomius*, trans. H. A. Wilson, NPNF<sup>2</sup> (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 5:117.

<sup>76</sup>Bauckham, "God Crucified," 9.

While Bauckham acknowledges that only the God of Israel is worthy of worship, that worthiness is first because he is the sole creator and ruler of all things.<sup>77</sup> Bauckham roots his arguments about YHWH as sole creator in Isaiah 40-66, but especially in Isaiah 44:24: “Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, who formed you from the womb: ‘I am the LORD, who made all things, who alone stretched out the heavens, who spread out the earth by myself.’”<sup>78</sup> While Bauckham recognizes that other beings assisted God in carrying out his ruling authority, they were invariably portrayed as servants who do not share in God’s rule.<sup>79</sup> Since only God himself created all things and only he sovereignly rules, only he is the unique God over all. None of the variously conceived heroes, exalted patriarchs, or angels participated in either creation or rule.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>77</sup>Ibid., 12.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid., 10.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid., 10. See also Dunn, “Was Christianity Monotheistic?” 313; L. Joseph Kreitzer, *Jesus and God in Paul’s Eschatology*, JSNT, vol. 19 (Sheffield: Academic Press, 1987), 29-91. Kreitzer examined pseudepigraphal literature from the second century BCE through the first century CE and found a number of writings in which the messiah was identified with God, normally by participating in judgment on behalf of God, but in spite of the strong identification with God, the writings had sections in which they extolled the uniqueness of the one God, demonstrating strong monotheistic views. In spite of the identification, they maintained a separateness of God from all other beings.

<sup>80</sup>There are, of course, two problems that might be considered exceptions. The first is 3 Enoch 16:1-5, where Aher, upon seeing the angel Metatron sitting on the throne of God, declared there were two powers in heaven. While this is not the place to consider these issues in detail, it should be noted that the two powers issue was considered a threat to Jewish monotheism by the rabbis. Aside from problems of dating both 3 Enoch and the rabbinic polemical documents in response to the two powers, belief in two powers in heaven was clearly considered heretical. See Alan F. Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven: Early Rabbinic Reports About Christianity and Gnosticism* (Leiden: Brill, 1977), 17-24. Segal suggests that the heresy may have been earlier than the rabbinical writings and argued orally, but that suggestion needs evidential support. See also P. M. Casey, “Monotheism, Worship and Christological Development in the Pauline Churches,” in *The Jewish Roots of Christological Monotheism: Papers from the St. Andrews Conference on the Historical Origins of the Worship of Jesus*, ed. Carey C. Newman, James R. Davila and Gladys S. Lewis (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 215-18. Casey argues that holding the two powers theory involved leaving Judaism, as was the case with Aher, who became apostate upon his seeing Metatron crowned as the lesser YHWH. The Son of Man in the Similitudes sitting on the throne of God in 1 Enoch 69:27-29, is the second problem that could have been considered a threat to first century monotheism. Dating of the Similitudes is a matter of some debate, although the consensus seems to be that they were written between 100 BCE and 100 CE, but the main characters to which the rabbis reacted were alive between the end of the first century and the middle of the second. So Dunn, “Was Christianity Monotheistic?” 317. For arguments regarding dating of 1 Enoch, see Christopher L. Mearns, “Dating the Similitudes of Enoch,” *NTS* 25 (1978-79): 369. Mearns argues for a date around 40 CE. Idem, “The Parables of Enoch-Origin and Date,” *Exp.*

In response to Bauckham's argument that the uniqueness of the God of Israel is found in his being the sole creator and in his sole sovereign rule, Hurtado argues that Bauckham offers no explanation of the development of the theological view of uniqueness that Bauckham proposed. Hurtado also argues that if, in early Judaism, worship of a figure was essentially a logical consequence of holding certain theological beliefs about the figure, other examples should exist.<sup>81</sup> That does not necessarily follow if God alone was held worthy of worship, but regardless of that, Hurtado goes on to argue himself that Jesus was linked with God in devotional practice and attendant beliefs. This may be a chicken or egg argument, but unless one is willing to grant that Jews would worship human figures who were not God, then the theological linking must have preceded the devotional practice. That is, to worship a figure, the Jews must already have drawn the theological conclusion that the figure is indeed God. Bauckham rightly notes this issue and argues against Hurtado but similarly to Stuckenbruck, that the typical Hellenistic view was that worship was a matter of degree because divinity was a matter of degree. Even philosophical monotheists among Hellenists who held that all other being is derived from God, still held the derived divinity of lesser beings to be appropriately acknowledged in cultic worship.<sup>82</sup> Since that is true, and given the fact that even within Hurtado's argument, the theological recognition is necessary to worship, Bauckham's

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*Tim.* 89 (1978): 119. There Mearns argues the eschatology of the Similitudes fits into the pattern of NT eschatology about the time of the Thessalonian correspondence. See also Maurice Casey, *Son of Man: The Interpretation and Influence of Daniel 7* (London: SPCK, 1979), 99. Casey dates the Similitudes between 100 BCE and 70 CE. M. A. Knibb, "The Date of the Parables of Enoch: A Critical Review," *NTS* 25 (1978-79): 358, argues for a date at the end of the first century CE. J. C. Hindley argues for a date in the early second century J. C. Hindley, "Towards a Date for The Similitudes of Enoch," *NTS* 14 (1968), 553. Chrys Caragounis, *The Son of Man: Vision and Interpretation* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1986), 89, finds no compelling evidence for a date in the Christian era. Bauckham argues that the Son of Man is given only partial participation in the divine identity and then only at the last judgment. His inclusion here is the only example of such an inclusion and points to the absence of any similar language for any other being. Bauckham, "God Crucified," 16.

<sup>81</sup>Larry Hurtado, *How on Earth Did Jesus become a God? Historical Questions about the Earliest Devotion to Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 22-26.

<sup>82</sup>Bauckham, "God Crucified," 12.

argument about the uniqueness of God located in sovereign rule and creation is the best way forward.

### **Jesus in the Uniqueness of God**

How on earth did Jesus become a God? Those words form the title of one of Larry Hurtado's books and they aptly describe the Christological problem that has become somewhat of a focal point in scholarly discussion.<sup>83</sup> The relationship between Jewish monotheism and early Christology, particularly the person and deity of Christ, is the gnawing problem that leads to the objections I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. The classical objections I noted are primarily concerned with the problem of how a strict monotheist could use the word *θεός* with reference to Jesus.

One of the important lines of scholarly writings suggests that the way of Jesus' elevation to deity was smoothed by the history of Jewish fascination and even veneration for intermediary figures that may have somehow participated in divinity.<sup>84</sup> Such an existing category would surely provide an inviting way toward the solution of how Jesus could have been considered God by monotheists. Yet, none of those beings were ever thought of as God if the uniqueness of Israel's God can rightly be seen in his creation of and sovereign rule over all things. Since all other beings are in fact less than God, associating Jesus with those beings produces "something much more like an Arian Christ, a demigod who is neither truly divine nor truly human."<sup>85</sup> As noted above, Bousset recognized in his comment that seeing Jesus as a divine being but yet not God results in the picture of a half-god. But, as Bauckham points out, the New Testament writers did

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<sup>83</sup>As an example, see the survey of literature in Larry Hurtado, "What Do We Mean by First Century Jewish Monotheism?" *Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers* (1993): 348-60.

<sup>84</sup>See, e.g., Barker, *The Great Angel*; Charles A. Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology: Antecedents and Early Evidence* (Leiden: Brill, 1998).

<sup>85</sup>Bauckham, "God Crucified," 4.

not think of Jesus as a half-god. Bauckham argues that rather than identifying Jesus with semi-divine intermediary status, the New Testament identifies Jesus directly with the one God of Israel by including him in the identity of the one God as Jewish monotheism understood it.<sup>86</sup>

Bauckham further argues that the exalted Jesus participates in the sovereign rule of God by virtue of sitting on God's throne.<sup>87</sup> As part of the argument, Bauckham demonstrates the uniqueness of the early Christian reading of Psalm 110:1 over against that of the early Jewish literature by showing that while Christians read this passage to mean Jesus was placed on the throne of God itself, exercising God's rule over all things, Jews did not associate that passage with the messiah, or with any patriarch or angel. Further, Christians used the text to say something about Jesus that Second Temple Judaism would not say about any human.<sup>88</sup> In fact, the New Testament demonstrates four aspects of the way texts envision the exaltation of Jesus: (1) He is sovereign over all things (Eph 4:10); (2) He is exalted over all angelic powers (Eph 1:21-22; Heb 1:1-14); (3) The exalted Jesus has been given the divine name (arguably Heb 1:4; surely Phil 2:9; cf. Rom 10:9-13 and Acts 2:17-21, among others); and (4) Universal worship is accorded to Jesus (Phil 2:9-11; Rev 5).<sup>89</sup>

In addition, the New Testament includes the preexistent Christ in God's unique activity of creation (John 1:1-5; 1 Cor 8:6; Col 1:15-16; Heb 1:2-3, 10-12; Rev 3:14). As Bauckham notes, including Christ in the creation activity is the most direct way of

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<sup>86</sup>Ibid., 7-20. Bauckham differentiates between identity and nature. Identity concerns who God is, while nature has to do with what God or divinity is. Nature has to do with philosophical descriptions and definitions, often having to do with attributes such as ingenerateness, immutability, etc. Bauckham's path is to search for ways that early Judaism characterized who the unique God of Israel is.

<sup>87</sup>Ibid., 20-21.

<sup>88</sup>Ibid.

<sup>89</sup>Ibid., 23-25.

excluding any threat to monotheism while refining the description of the identity of God in a way that includes Jesus. “By including Jesus in this unique identity [as in 1 Cor 8:6] Paul is certainly not repudiating Jewish monotheism, whereas were he merely associating Jesus with the unique God he *would* be repudiating monotheism” (emphasis original).<sup>90</sup>

In the above portion of the argument, Bauckham’s emphasis is on the aspects of God’s uniqueness that are more transcendent. The inclusion of Christ in the identity in that portion of the argument has to do with protological identity with God (the preexistent Christ participating in creation) and the eschatological identity (the exalted Christ participating in sovereign rule). Bauckham argues further, however, that the incarnate Christ is the revelation of the divine identity. He bases his argument on the early Christian reading of Isaiah 40-55, which, as is well known, contains some of the strongest overt statements of monotheism in the Old Testament. Bauckham argues here that in the humiliation, death and exaltation of the Servant of the Lord, God reveals his glory and demonstrates his deity to the world.<sup>91</sup> While Bauckham reviews several New Testament passages (the Gospel of John and the I am statements, and the alpha and omega statements in Revelation), perhaps the point most pertinent to this discussion is from Philippians 2:6-11. In brief, it is in the exaltation of Jesus, including his identification as YHWH in YHWH’s universal sovereignty “that the unique deity of the God of Israel comes to be acknowledged by all creation”<sup>92</sup> (Phil 2:9-10, with reference to Is 45:23). The monotheism of Isaiah 40-55 is fulfilled in Jesus’ participation in the divine identity. Thus, for Bauckham, “[e]schatological monotheism proves to be christological monotheism.”<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>90</sup>Ibid., 26-28.

<sup>91</sup>Ibid., 35.

<sup>92</sup>Ibid., 38.

<sup>93</sup>Ibid.

## **Paul and Monotheism**

There is no reason to think Paul, both pre-conversion and post conversion, was anything other than a monotheist consistent with the monotheism described above. In the same way as for the Old Testament, exclusive devotion to the one God was for Paul not identical to the Enlightenment definition of monotheism. He was not concerned for counting and thereby finding divinity was singular.<sup>94</sup> While he was aware of the existence of spiritual beings that in some way were associated with God, he also understood the uniqueness of God in a way that viewed God as separate from all other existence. In this section I will argue that Paul came to understand Jesus to be identified with the unique God of Israel, while he also retained the same Jewish monotheism as before he came to that understanding. Paul's thought can be examined briefly in three texts in which he mentions the one God, alluding to the Shema<sup>6</sup>, two of which speak to how Paul understood the identity of God and one of which speaks directly to Paul's inclusion of Jesus in that identity. It is perhaps first reasonable, however, to ask how it is that a Pharisee of the Pharisees could come to understand that Christ could be a part of the identity of the one God.

### **Paul's Conversion**

Paul's conversion experience and his revelatory experience is the basis of an understanding of how a strict Jewish monotheist could come to adjust his understanding of the implications of that monotheism. The events before and after his conversion are the effects that are important here, because the radical change in his view of reality can be seen in his account. Paul makes clear that the gospel he preached was not something he was taught by human agency, but he received it directly by revelation from Jesus Christ.

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<sup>94</sup>Ulrich Mauser, "One God and Trinitarian Language in the Letters of Paul," *HBT* 20 (1998): 99.

As a result, Saul, persecutor of the church, became Paul, preacher of God's Son among the Gentiles. The Son of God as content of his gospel was thus formed without consultation with any human beings, including the apostolic leadership in Jerusalem, at least for the first three years of his ministry.<sup>95</sup>

While Paul did not himself report the actual conversion event, the Book of Acts contains three accounts (9:1-19; 22:3-21 and 26:12-18), all of which include reference to a startling visual and auditory experience of the exalted Christ that resulted in Paul's blindness. As argued by Seyoon Kim, the Damascus event was the ground for both his apostleship and his gospel.<sup>96</sup> Hurtado built on Kim's thesis to argue that religious experience is valid as an explanation of religious innovations, and he particularly applied the revelatory experiences of the early church as factors in the veneration of Jesus.<sup>97</sup> Of course, Paul's experience was an experience with content, since there was actual revelation involved. Paul's comments in 2 Corinthians 3:18 regarding the beholding of the glory of the Lord with unveiled face, and in 4:6 that the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ has shone in his and their hearts, can easily fit within the description of revelatory experience. The impact and value of that revelatory experience for the shaping of Paul's theology should not be overlooked.

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<sup>95</sup>Martin Hengel, *The Son of God: The Origin of Christology and the History of Jewish Hellenistic Religion*, trans. John Bowden (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976; reprint, Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2007), 59.

<sup>96</sup>Seyoon Kim, *Origin of Paul's Gospel* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1981), esp. 32.

<sup>97</sup>Hurtado, *How on Earth? 192-200*. See also Heikki Räisänen, "Paul, God and Israel: Romans 9-11 in Recent Research," in *The Social World of Formative Christianity and Judaism*, ed. Jacob Neusner, Ernest S. Frerichs, Peder Borgen and Richard Horsley (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988), 178-206. While it is not necessary to agree with Räisänen's argument for inconsistency in Paul's thought, Räisänen's recognition of the tension between Paul's tradition and his experience could just as easily point toward the kind of radical changes in Paul's thought that can be seen after his Damascus Road experience. Räisänen likely had in mind Paul's experience in seeing the gospel rejected by Jews and received by Gentiles, but that also has connection to his experience on the Damascus Road.

It is not the purpose here to argue that Paul's theology was completely formed from the Damascus experience. It is likely, however, that the essential content of Paul's gospel was formed in that experience. In fact, it is hard to avoid the thought that for Paul, the essential change that occurred in that experience was in his understanding of the person of Jesus.<sup>98</sup> Dunn argues that the thrust of the impact of Paul's conversion experience was the commissioning to become apostle to the Gentiles.<sup>99</sup> While that emphasis is correct, at least in part, it doesn't place enough weight on the importance of Paul's recognition of the identity of Jesus. Indeed, as Hagner notes, Paul's encounter with the risen Christ fundamentally altered his estimate of Jesus and formed the basis of his taking on the role of the Apostle to the Gentiles.<sup>100</sup> As Kim concludes:

Paul accepted not only the Christian confession of the crucified Jesus as Messiah, the Lord and the Son of God, but also the ideas contained in the confessions. This meant Paul's abandoning the Jewish conception of the Messiah and taking what Jesus of Nazareth was and did as the true characteristics of the Messiah. Paul saw Jesus as the Lord exalted by God and enthroned at his right hand in fulfillment of Ps 110.1, being ready to return to earth for judgment and redemption, so that he came to know that now salvation depends on entering into the sphere of Jesus' Lordship by confessing 'Jesus is Lord.' Paul also saw confirmed at the Christophany the primitive confession of Jesus as Son of God. But at the same time he realized Jesus was the Son of God not just in the sense of the Davidic Messiah who was confessed by the Christians as having been installed as God's Son through his resurrection, but more profoundly in the sense of the being who stood in an intimate relationship with God from the beginning, acted as his agent in creation and was sent forth by God into the world to redeem us from sin and the law.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>98</sup>See also C. Kavin Rowe, "Romans 10:13: What is the Name of the Lord?" *HBT* 22 (2000): 171. "Put crudely, Saul's reading of the OT and his immersion in the theology of the Second Temple period does not add up to Paul. The only feasible explanation is the one that is always so unsettling and quite frustrating to historians of Christian origins – the appearance of the risen Christ to Paul (Gal 1; Acts 9)."

<sup>99</sup>James D. G. Dunn, "A Light to the Gentiles," in *The Glory of Christ in the New Testament: Studies in Christology*, ed. L. D. Hurst and N. T. Wright (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987), 255.

<sup>100</sup>Hagner, "Paul's Christology," 32.

<sup>101</sup>Kim, *Origins*, 330-31.

Thus it was that on the basis of his experience with the resurrected and exalted Christ, Paul could shift from his view of Jesus as pretender to Jesus as the appointed Son of God by the resurrection from the dead.<sup>102</sup>

The point here, however, is not that Paul reached some new Christianized understanding of monotheism. Rather, as Ulrich Mauser noted,

The advocate of the emergence of a people of God made up of Jews and non-Jews in a single community would never consider realizing his aim by abolishing the exclusionary claims of one distinct God in favor of the adoption of a religious syncretism which was there for the taking in the form of the theocracy dominating Greco-Roman religion. The *κύριος εἷς* of the Shema<sup>6</sup> echoes unmistakably in his letters.<sup>103</sup>

As attractive as it may be, the solution to the question of what Paul could or could not write about Jesus does not lie in reformulation of his monotheistic thought. The evidence of his letters is against that.<sup>104</sup> In fact, as can be seen from a brief look at three texts, Paul sets forth what he accepts as a basic biblical confession: God is one and there is no God, but one.<sup>105</sup>

### **Romans 3:29-30**

In verse 29 Paul makes a statement about the oneness of God, in what must be an allusion to the statement in the Shema<sup>6</sup> that YHWH is one. Paul asks and answers his own question: God is the God of the Gentiles as well as God of the Jews. He grounds the

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<sup>102</sup>Hengel, *The Son of God*, 65.

<sup>103</sup>Mauser, "One God and Trinitarian Language," 100. See similarly, J. D. G. Dunn, "Christology as an Aspect of Theology," in *The Future of Christology: Essays in Honor of Leander E. Keck*, ed. Abraham J. Malherbe and Wayne A. Meeks (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), 203. Dunn goes too far, perhaps, in his insistence that to emphasize Christ in the divine identity runs the risk of leaving God in the background. My earlier comments about Dunn's tendency to understand God only as God the Father apply here as well.

<sup>104</sup>Seifrid, "The Knowledge of the Creator," 10. See also E. Rodhe, "Gottesglaube und Kyriosglaube bei Paulus," *ZNW* 22 (1923): 43-57.

<sup>105</sup>Charles H. Giblin, "Three Monotheistic Texts in Paul," *CBQ* 37 (1975), 528.

fact that God is the God of all people in the fact that God, who justifies by faith, is one.<sup>106</sup> “Paul here interprets the oneness of God confessed in the Shema‘ as God’s universal saving rule over all peoples.”<sup>107</sup> As noted above, MacDonald argued that YHWH revealed himself to Israel as the one God in a soteriological manner by his election and acts on behalf of his people. Seifrid points out here that the identity of the one God for Paul is thus found in the word of promise as seen in Romans 4 in the discussion of Abraham, with the emphasis on the fact that through his encounter with Abraham, God effects salvation for the whole world.<sup>108</sup>

In addition to the Shema‘, there are two noteworthy texts that may lie in the background of Paul’s statement of the oneness of God. In reverse order of their appearance in the Scripture, the first is Zechariah 14:9, an explicit quotation of Deuteronomy 6:4.<sup>109</sup> The prophet speaks of a day when YHWH will be king of all the earth and YHWH will be one as will his name be one.<sup>110</sup> The day spoken of by the prophet must be taken as the day of the Lord in continuation of 14:1, and the context is a series of cataclysmic events when YHWH gathers the nations to Jerusalem to battle, with the result that the city is initially taken, but living waters will flow from the city and YHWH strikes the armies of the nations so that everyone who survives becomes worshippers of the aforementioned king of the whole earth. In that day God alone reigns

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<sup>106</sup>Εἴτεπ is concessive. BDF, 237 §454(2).

<sup>107</sup>Seifrid, “Knowledge of the Creator,” 7.

<sup>108</sup>Ibid.

<sup>109</sup>MacDonald, *Deuteronomy*, 66; Moberly, “How Appropriate is Monotheism?” 227; Barry Webb, *The Message of Zechariah: Your Kingdom Come* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003), 180.

<sup>110</sup>וְהָיָה יְהוָה לְמֶלֶךְ עַל כָּל הָאָרֶץ בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יְהִיָּה יְהוָה אֶחָד וְשֵׁמוֹ אֶחָד

with no rivals contending with him.<sup>111</sup> The confession of the Shema<sup>6</sup> will finally be recognized by all: The God of Israel is the one and only creator and ruler of the universe.<sup>112</sup> Paul calls on the Shema<sup>6</sup> to proclaim what Zechariah saw. God is the God of both Jews and Gentiles, the God over all. As Mauser notes:

Paul has in Rom 3:30 neither abrogated nor modified Zechariah's vision of the ultimate oneness of God's being and name, but he has claimed the time for the realization of the vision has arrived. God's act in Christ is, for him, a signal of time, the hour in history has come at which the vision of the universality of the one God of Israel must rightfully be implemented in concrete missionary activity that spans the whole world.<sup>113</sup>

In addition to the connection to Zechariah 14:9, there is also the similar connection to Deuteronomy 32:8-9. As noted earlier, a possible reading evidenced by the LXX and the text found at Qumran suggests that in Paul's time there was at least the strong possibility that Deuteronomy 32:8-9 may have referenced sons of God who were given authority over the nations. Deuteronomy 32:8-9 may in part explain the passage in Zechariah at least to the extent that YHWH's final victory over the nations in connection with the day when he and his name will be one could be connected with the vindication of his rule in the face of the nations and of their gods. It must be well noted, however, that although the victory results in destruction, the destruction is not total, and many, but

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<sup>111</sup>Thomas Edward Comiskey, "Zechariah," in *The Minor Prophets: An Exegetical and Expository Commentary*, ed. Thomas Edward Comiskey (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), 3:1234.

<sup>112</sup>Webb, *Message of Zechariah*, 180.

<sup>113</sup>Mauser, "One God and Trinitarian Language," 102. But see Schrage, *Unterwegs zur Einzigkeit und Einheit Gottes*, 1-15. See especially p. 15 where Schrage argues that Zech 14:9 points even now to the future. Schrage's argument leading to that comment seems to be that God will not truly be the only God until all people acknowledge him, and until then the other gods still have influence and oppose God. Under that description, monotheism is not yet a term that could apply for Paul. Schrage agrees that the OT accepts the existence of other gods and for that reason he does not think God could then be regarded as completely the only one, preferring instead to use the words monolatry or henotheism. I have argued contrary to that, and there is no reason to think that God becoming one is dependent upon every person acknowledging him as supreme. Zechariah does not say such will be the case, even "on that day." The better understanding is that God's name is one as he has become the God of all people through his saving work as described by Paul in Rom 3:29-30, not by means of his judging work at the last day.

not all, of the ones who remain from the nations are converted and subsequently worship YHWH (Zech 14:16-19).

The difference between Israel as God's inheritance and the other nations and their gods is captured in other texts as well. According to Deuteronomy 4:19-20, God has allotted to all the peoples the worship of the heavenly host, but God's relationship to Israel and his claim of their sole worship is uniquely based in his delivering them from Egypt. Jubilees 15:30-32 echoes Deuteronomy 32:8-9, but adds the notation that although all the nations belong to God, he appointed spirits over the other nations so that the spirits would lead those nations away from him. As is often mentioned by the commentators, that thought is expressed in the rabbinic teaching "I am God over all that came into the world but I have joined my name only with you; I am not called the God of the idolaters, but the God of Israel."<sup>114</sup> This rabbinical quote likely came about a century after Paul, but given the other background and the question Paul poses, there is reason to expect that thought to have been strong in Paul's day.<sup>115</sup>

It is against this background that Paul poses the question by the interlocutor. Is God the God of the Gentiles? Care must be taken with Paul's answer. It is clear that the answer is yes, God is the God of the Gentiles. The ground of that fact should not, however, be taken as the fact that God justifies by faith. The relative clause is descriptive and simply identifies God as one who justifies by faith. The oneness of God, now known

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<sup>114</sup>Rabbi Simeon Ben Jochai, quoted in Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 103 and with some slight variation in the translation in C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on The Epistle to the Romans* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1975), 1:222n 1. But see also Nils Alstrup Dahl, "The One God of Jews and Gentiles (Romans 3:29-30)," in *Studies in Paul: Theology for the Early Christian Mission* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1977), 182-91. Dahl argues from several midrashic passages that the rabbis were wrestling with the issue of how God could be God of all the world, but uniquely the God of Israel alone. Dahl argues that while the rabbis saw a distinction, they would not deny that God is the God of both Jew and Gentile.

<sup>115</sup>So also Robert Jewett, *Romans: A Commentary* (Minneapolis, Fortress, 2007), 299.

to be the one who justifies by faith, is the reason he is God of the Gentiles.<sup>116</sup> It is because he is one that he acts in the same way toward both, that is, he justifies both by faith.<sup>117</sup> So as in Zechariah 14:9, YHWH is king over the whole earth, in spite of subordinate gods that may lay claim to rule over the Gentiles.

So for Paul, the implication of monotheism is that YHWH is creator and God of all people, but also that he acts to save all. To be the God of a people is rooted in the concept of a God who acts on behalf of his people to save. To have chosen Israel in no way suggests that God is not God of all people. But neither should the fact that God is the God of all people be thought to affect God's promises to Israel. God is, after all, the God of the Jews.<sup>118</sup> While one cannot see from here the full argument that Paul will make in Romans 9-11, one can see from the vantage point of those chapters that the argument begins in 3:29-30. God, who is God over all, is savior of both Jew and Gentile by faith in the work of the one who has always delivered Israel, but that one is identified in Romans 9:5 as Christ, who is God over all, and it is he who delivers Gentiles by faith. As I will argue in a subsequent chapter, it is also he who will remove sin from Zion.<sup>119</sup> We must return to the thought in later chapters, but in 3:29-30, focus is on YHWH as God of the Gentiles, while in 9:5 the focus is on God over all, meaning Jesus is also God of the Jews.

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<sup>116</sup>Richard W. Thompson, "The Inclusion of the Gentiles in Rom 3, 27-30," *Biblica* 69 (1988): 546.

<sup>117</sup>Jewett, *Romans*, 301.

<sup>118</sup>Dahl, "The One God," 191.

<sup>119</sup>I am indebted for the development of the thought in that paragraph to Professor Mark Seifrid who graciously made available to me a manuscript that was to become his "Romans," in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007). Alas, the portion to which I refer was not a part of the final publication.

YHWH, already seen as having become king, is acknowledged by every person when every knee bows and every tongue (Jew and Gentile) confesses that Jesus is Lord.<sup>120</sup>

### **Ephesians 4:4-6**

Ephesians 4:4-6 is also a declaration of the oneness of God, again a reference to the Shema'.<sup>121</sup> The statement in this passage that there is one God is in a string of statements of unity in the context of Paul's call to the Ephesians to live worthy of their calling by maintaining unity. In this case, Paul refers to God as the one God and Father of all. Since the passage occurs in the context of unity within the church, unlike Romans 3:29-30, the emphasis is not on the one God of all people on the earth, but on the one God and father, who with the one Lord, rules over all opponents. In Romans 3:29-30 the uniqueness of God is in his saving power for all people. In Ephesians 4:5-6 the uniqueness of God lies in his rule over all principalities and powers. Paul's thought here is that it is not only true that there is one God, but there is one Lord, who has been exalted above all other beings who might themselves, as we will examine later in relation to 1 Corinthians 8, be considered lords. While the exaltation implies sovereign rule, it is still true that in Ephesians the exaltation also has implications that God has the power to save.

While we should not be delayed for a full exegesis of the passage, it is important to note that Paul begins Ephesians 4 with a call to the readers to walk worthy of their calling, which he defines in terms of humility that leads to their keeping the bond of peace. In verse 4 he begins the list of evidences of their singularity. Notable in the list is the existence of only one Spirit, one Lord and one God and Father of all. In verse 6

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<sup>120</sup>Bauckham, "God Crucified," 38; D. R. DeLacy, "'One Lord' in Pauline Christology," in *Christ the Lord: Studies in Christology Presented to Donald Guthrie*, ed. Harold H. Rowdon (Leicester: InterVarsity, 1982), 202.

<sup>121</sup>So also Clinton E. Arnold, *Ephesians*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, vol. 10 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 234. As Arnold notes, for Diaspora Jews, the confession of one Lord would echo their daily confession of the Shema'.

there is the appearance of *πᾶς*, but the gender has been a matter of some discussion.<sup>122</sup>

The Greek text of the verse is εἷς θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ πάντων, ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων καὶ διὰ πάντων καὶ ἐν πᾶσιν (one God and father of all, who is over all and through all and in all). As I pointed out in chapter 2, if *πᾶς* is masculine it probably refers to all Christians, Jew and Gentile, since the reference is to God the Father, rather than all Jews and Gentiles, including unbelievers. If it is neuter it probably refers to the whole universe. Perhaps, however, it is not necessary to argue that the same decision must be made for all four instances of *πᾶς* in that verse. The words “one God and Father of all” (εἷς θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ πάντων) are modified by the relative clause, by which may simply be intended that the one God and father of all people (masculine gender) is also over all things.

**Ephesians 1:20-22.** The importance of the statement that there is one Lord and one God is seen best in context of the whole letter, especially in context of the emphasis on powers and principalities. Clinton E. Arnold argues that in Ephesians there is a higher concentration of power language than in any other Pauline epistle, and that only 1 Corinthians exceeds the total number of references.<sup>123</sup> J. Christian Beker reads Paul as having demythologized the references to the powers so that they represent death, sin, law and the flesh.<sup>124</sup> As shown by Arnold, however, Paul often uses opposing spirits in ethical statements and as entities who can destroy (1 Cor 5:4-5), deceive (2 Cor 11:14) and have

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<sup>122</sup>For an explanation of the various views on the gender see Peter T. O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans and Leicester: Apollos, 1999), 284-86.

<sup>123</sup>Clinton E. Arnold, *Ephesians: Power and Magic: The Concept of Power in Ephesians in Light of its Historical Setting* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989; reprint Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992), 1.

<sup>124</sup>J. Christiaan Beker, *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), 189-92. See also Walter Wink, *Naming the Powers: The Language of Power in the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 61-63. Wink follows Beker closely. Perhaps Beker was anticipated somewhat by Caird in his argument that the law duplicates those adversarial and enforcement functions that are elsewhere attributed to Satan. Caird, *Principalities*, 40-53. For a review of how various scholars have viewed the powers see Arnold, *Ephesians: Power and Magic*, 42-51.

the potential to entice Christians into partnership with them by participating in pagan sacrifice (1 Cor 10:19-21). Arnold further notes that the categories other than flesh noted by Beker seldom appear in Ephesians, and flesh appears in Ephesians 2:2-3 as one form of influence while the prince of the power of the air appears as another.<sup>125</sup> In addition, a similar distinction between flesh and blood and rulers, authorities and powers occurs in 6:12.

Thus the important reference to “every rule and authority and power and lordship” in Ephesians 1:21 must refer to actual beings whose existence Paul affirmed, and best understood as beings hostile to the rule of God.<sup>126</sup> The demonstration of the power of God is in his raising Christ to sit at his right hand “far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and every name that is named not only in this age, but in the one to come” (ὑπεράνω πάσης ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐξουσίας καὶ δυνάμεως καὶ κυριότητος καὶ παντὸς ὀνόματος ὀνομαζομένου οὐ μόνον ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι τούτῳ ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν τῷ μέλλοντι). When Paul describes Jesus as high above every other being, he was not concerned with spatial categories. To be above is associated with a position of power. To be above all the

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<sup>125</sup>Arnold, *Ephesians: Power and Magic*, 129-34.

<sup>126</sup>T. K. Abbott, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1897), 32-34 (although Abbott does not think it matters whether they exist or not, Christ is above them); Rudolph Schnackenburg, *Ephesians: A Commentary*, trans. Helen Herron (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991), 77-78; Peter T. O’Brien, “Principalities and Powers: Opponents of the Church,” in *Biblical Interpretation and the Church: The Problem of Contextualization*, ed. D. A. Carson (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1984), 133-35; idem, *Ephesians*, 144; Arnold, *Ephesians: Power and Magic*, 134; Ernest Best, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Ephesians* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), 172-73; Margaret Y. MacDonald, *Colossians, Ephesians*, Sacra Pagina (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press), 225. See also Matthew Black, “Πᾶσαι ἐξουσίαι αὐτῷ ὑποταγῆσονται,” in *Paul and Paulinism: Essays in Honor of C. K. Barrett*, ed. M. D. Hooker and S. G. Wilson (London: SPCK, 1982), 76. Against Wesley Carr, *Angels and Principalities: The Background, Meaning and Development of the Pauline Phrase Hai Archikai Kai Hai Exousiai* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 43. Carr concludes that when the language of ἀρχαὶ ἐξουσία and δυνάμεις occur in Jewish literature they are confined to angels and archangels of YHWH and never refer to demonic forces. O’Brien formulated a persuasive response in which he criticizes Carr’s exegesis, but the most telling is the problem of Eph 6:12, which Carr solves by suggesting it is a second century interpolation, for which there is no evidence. O’Brien, “Principalities and Powers,” 125-28.

other beings is to have power over them.<sup>127</sup> Thus, the uniqueness and power of the one God in this instance lies in his power and rule over all other beings. But the importance of this is the reference to Psalm 110:1, which gives this a Christological turn, and strengthens the assertion of the power and victory over the other opposing beings, by which Paul identifies the powers of verse 21 with the enemies of Psalm 110.<sup>128</sup>

**Ephesians 2:1-7.** In this passage those to whom Paul refers in verse 3 as “children of wrath by nature” (τέκνα φύσει ὀργῆς), are in that position because they lived according to the age of this world, according to the ruler of the authority of the air who is the spirit who works in the sons of disobedience (2:2, ἐν αἷς ποτε περιεπατήσατε κατὰ τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ κόσμου τούτου, κατὰ τὸν ἄρχοντα τῆς ἐξουσίας τοῦ ἀέρος, τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ νῦν ἐνεργοῦντος ἐν τοῖς υἱοῖς τῆς ἀπειθείας). Paul describes this situation as death (verse 5) and the saving action here is raising the children of wrath together with Christ. The implication here is that the ruler of the authority of the air holds them in death, but that hold is overcome by the power of God through the work of Christ. Thus, the sovereign rule of God includes his ability to rescue people who are under the authority of powers that oppose him.

**One Lord.** In Ephesians 4:5 Paul mentions one Lord, one faith and one baptism. Whether faith is meant as objective or subjective, and whether or not this was a baptismal formula, it is still true that there is only one faith for both Jew and Gentile. The

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<sup>127</sup>Best, *Ephesians*, 172; Schnackenburg, *Ephesians*, 77.

<sup>128</sup>O’Brien, *Ephesians*, 142. Markus Barth, *Ephesians: Introduction, Translation and Commentary on Chapters 1-3* (New York: Doubleday, 1974), 171; Black “Πᾶσαι ἐξουσίαι,” 74-76. Contra Carr, *Angels*, 89-90. Carr argues that Ps 110:1 is used only to refer to the exaltation of Christ as the ground of God’s acceptance of man. His argument, however, is dependent on his faulty thesis that the beings in this passage are only angels of YHWH. Certainly, the exaltation of Christ is for the benefit of man, but the problem is his use of the word ‘only.’ If Christ is exalted above every power, that must include the powers mentioned in Eph 2:1-3, who clearly work against God by working in the sons of disobedience. See also Arnold, *Ephesians: Power and Magic*, 114-15, who understands Paul referred to Ps 8, particularly 8:6-7.

thought here is not so far from that in Romans 3:29-30, where we learn that because God is one, he justifies both Jew and Gentile by faith. In Ephesians 4:5, the thought is that because there is one Lord, there is only one faith and one baptism.<sup>129</sup> In the same sense, baptism makes all subject to the same Lord. The reference here must surely be to the Lord Jesus as is consistent with Pauline thought (Rom 10:8-9; 12-13). The Lord here must also be no other than the YHWH of the Shema<sup>ע</sup>.<sup>130</sup> As I will argue below is the case in 1 Corinthians 8:6, Paul here has stated the Shema<sup>ע</sup> in such a way to understand there is one God (the Father) and one Lord (Jesus Christ), both of whom are included in the unique identity of the one God of Israel.

Finally, we should note that in this monotheistic statement it is possible to see the inclusion of Jesus Christ in the identity of the God of the Old Testament, but there is no exclusion of the existence other beings that might in some sense be considered divine. Paul takes seriously the existence of those beings, but he is clear that Christ is far above them in authority, surely more in the category of the one God than of the lesser powers, demi-gods, so to speak.

### **1 Corinthians 8:6**

The two texts mentioned previously can be argued to at least have the Shema<sup>ע</sup> in their background. It is my position that in 1 Corinthians 8:6, Paul once again directly alludes to the Shema<sup>ע</sup>.<sup>131</sup> Dieter Zeller, however, argues that Deuteronomy 6:4 is not in

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<sup>129</sup>So also O'Brien, *Ephesians*, 281-82.

<sup>130</sup>*Ibid.*, 283.

<sup>131</sup>So also Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, The Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 341; Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel: God Crucified and Other Studies on the New Testament's Christology of Divine Identity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 210-12; David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 375; Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians: A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, trans. James W. Leitch (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), 142-44. Conzelmann argues that the confession that there is one God was inherited from the Jews, an important concept given the argument by Zeller below.

the background of 1 Corinthians 8:6.<sup>132</sup> He argues instead from a History-of-Religions viewpoint that the “εἰς acclamations” in non-Greek pagan religions in which the followers of certain other beings proclaimed them as one, are more the background. Zeller is probably right to suggest κύριος in verse 6 is in contrast with the many lords in verse 5, but it is not necessary on that basis to conclude with him that κύριος is not in reference to YHWH.<sup>133</sup> In fact, that juxtaposition may be evidence that the κύριος in verse 6 is YHWH, intended to contrast the unique creator Lord with those other lords with no real claim to uniqueness. Zeller concludes that the one Lord is not included in the one God, although he acknowledges that in verse 5, κύριος is an equivalent of θεός.<sup>134</sup> In general, Zeller’s argument is built, at least in part, on an understanding that Paul’s readers would not have been familiar with Deuteronomy 6:4, but such an assumption may not be well founded if Paul’s converts were largely God-fearers in the synagogue who had heard Paul’s teaching for an extended period.

In a response at least partially to Zeller, Otfried Hofius constructed a persuasive grammatical argument for the translation of 8:6 with εἰς as subject in the parallel phrases: “Only one is God: the father, from whom all things are and we are to him; and only one is Lord: Jesus Christ, through whom all things are and we are through

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<sup>132</sup>Dieter Zeller, “New Testament Christology in its Hellenistic Reception,” *NTS* 47 (2001): 320. For development of the pagan background of the “εἰς acclamations” see, idem “Der eine Gott und der ene Herr Jesus Christus: Religionsgeschichtliche Überlegungen,” in *Der Lebendige Gott: Studien zur Theologie des neuen Testaments. Festschrift für Wilhelm Thüsing zum 75 Geburtstag*, ed. Thomas Söding (Münster: Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1996), esp. 34, 47-48.

<sup>133</sup>Similar to Zeller is the argument in C. K Barrett, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, Black’s New Testament Commentaries (London: A. & C. Black, 1968; reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, n.d.), 193.

<sup>134</sup>In contrast to Zeller see Werner Foerster, “Κύριος,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), 3:1091. Foerster recognizes that there are many lords and many gods that are real powers, but Paul “does not make any distinction between θεός and κύριος as though κύριος were an intermediary god.”

him”<sup>135</sup> (my translation from Hofius’ German text, which is reproduced in the footnote). Zeller acknowledged the weight of Hofius’ argument, but did not respond.<sup>136</sup> The speculative nature of Zeller’s claim that the Corinthians would not have known the Shema<sup>4</sup>, compared with the rather straightforward syntactical analysis by Hofius tends to support the contention that Paul here was likely thinking of the Shema<sup>4</sup>.

Regardless, the monotheistic statement in 1 Corinthians 8:6 is clear that there is one God, but of course, there is more to the statement. The context of the confession lies in what is best understood as a response to questions put to Paul by the Corinthians, to which he responds with agreement in three sentences that are affirmations that seem to indicate an understanding among the Corinthians.<sup>137</sup> The first is “all of us have knowledge” (8:1). The second and third are in 8:4, “an idol is nothing” (has no real existence) and “there is no God but one.”<sup>138</sup> As in the passage in Ephesians, Paul here makes a clear monotheistic statement, but also here the oneness of God lies in his

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<sup>135</sup>Otfried Hofius, “Einer ist Gott – Einer ist Herr: Erwägungen zu Struktur und Aussage des Bekenntnisses 1 Kor 8:6,” in *Paulusstudien II*, WUNT, vol. 143 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 175. The German text is: “Einer nur ist Gott: der Vater, von dem her alles ist und wir auf ihn hin; und einer nur ist Herr: Jesus Christus, durch den alles ist und wir durch ihn.” See also idem, “Christus als Schöpfungsmittler und Erlösungsmittler: Das Bekenntnis 1 Kor 8,6 im Kontext der paulinischen Theologie,” in *Paulusstudien II*, WUNT, vol. 143 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 182-83.

<sup>136</sup>Zeller, “New Testament Christology,” 320n 44. The discussion continues, I suppose, first, regarding whether one understands that Paul was primarily influenced by his reading of the OT, or whether he was influenced by Hellenistic Judaism, and second whether one gives primary weight to the grammatical structure of the text, or to other outside factors.

<sup>137</sup>Mauser, “One God Alone,” 259; Seifrid, “Knowledge of the Creator,” 18. Giblin, “Monotheistic Texts,” 530; Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 141-42. Gordon Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 362, 365. In fact, Thiselton comments that “few doubt that Paul is quoting a Corinthian slogan or maxim.” Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 620. Thiselton refers to a list of 25 commentators who agree compiled in 1965, and lists 10 more since that time.

<sup>138</sup>Whether οὐδέν εἶδωλον ἐν κόσμῳ should be taken as a predicate (an idol is nothing in the world, or, better, has no real existence) or attributively (there is no idol, or no idol exists) is a matter of some dispute. It is not conclusive to argue that it should be translated attributively because it is in parallel with οὐδεὶς θεός εἰ μὴ εἷς (there is no God, but one). Read in the light of v. 5, however, the attributive use is probably best. So also Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 371. See also the detailed discussion of the issue in Thiselton, *First Corinthians*, 630.

uniqueness, not in the absence of other gods. According to 1 Corinthians 10:19-20, Paul understands the other gods to be meaningless: “Therefore what do I say? That food offered to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything?” (τί οὖν φῆμι; ὅτι εἰδωλόθυτόν τι ἐστίν, ἢ ὅτι εἰδωλόν τι ἐστίν;) Yet, Paul goes on to say demonic powers underlie pagan worship.<sup>139</sup> Indeed in 8:5 Paul asserts the existence of “so-called” gods whether in heaven or earth. That they are so-called should not be pressed to mean they are said to exist, but do not.<sup>140</sup> They are “so-called,” because he calls these beings gods and lords in comparison with the true unique and only creator, God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who “for us” is the only God and the only Lord.<sup>141</sup> The confession of verse 6, then, disempowered the other divine characters and asserted the one actual Lord and God. Despite the concession that there are many gods and lords, they are powerless and meaningless and no hint of monolatry should be seen here. There is simply one actual, unique God and one actual, unique Lord who may be worshipped.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>139</sup>Giblin, “Monotheistic Texts,” 532. For an older, but still useful explanation of Paul’s view here, see Charles Hodge, *An Exposition of the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (New York: Robert Carter and Brothers, 1857; reprint, Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1995), 104. For Hodge, Paul understood the gods; that is, Jupiter or Mars, to be non-existent, but the supernatural beings did exist, albeit they are creatures and not gods. Contra F. W. Grosheide, *Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians: The English Text with Introduction, Exposition and Notes* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1953), 192.

<sup>140</sup>Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 143; Barrett, *1 Corinthians*, 192.

<sup>141</sup>Giblin, “Monotheistic Texts,” 533. Although Giblin argues only that by “so-called” Paul does not question existence. Similarly, Mauser, “One God Alone,” 259; Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 144-45. See also Zeller, “Der eine Gott,” 47-49. Zeller could well be correct to see the one Lord in v. 6 in contrast to the many lords in v. 5, which he understands to be the many gods who would likely receive acclamation as the one God or the one Lord. His conclusion does not follow, however, that such an assertion precludes the identification of the one Lord, who is Jesus Christ, with the one God, who is the father.

<sup>142</sup>Traugott Holtz, “Theo-logie und Christologie bei Paulus,” in *Glaube und Eschatologie: Festschrift für Werner Georg Kümmel zum 80. Geburtstag*, ed. Erich Gräßer und Otto Merk (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1985), 106. Contra Zeller, “Der eine Gott,” 47. Zeller understands Paul to have been monotheistic in relation to God the Father, but henotheistic in reference to Christ, but goes on to assert that the monotheism is not philosophical-theoretical since the so-called gods of v. 5 claim a certain reality. See also idem, “New Testament Christology,” 333. “In confronting the One Lord with many pagan κύριοι (1 Cor 8:5-6), Paul indirectly elevates the Jewish Messiah to the level of these saviour-gods.” As James D. G. Dunn points out, although Paul was clearly aware of the many lords, it is clear that Paul could not have derived attribution of Lordship to Jesus from the cults because, as seen from 1 Cor 16:22, Jesus had already

The assertion that Paul could think of those beings as in actual existence should not be thought strange if my analysis of Ephesians 4:4-6 is correct and if I am correct that Deuteronomy 32:8, in the form that I have proposed, is in the background of Romans 3:29-30.<sup>143</sup> Whether, however, one agrees with that reading of verse 5, there is another feature of Paul's monotheism in this allusion to the Shema'. The number one is attached both to God the Father and to the Lord Jesus Christ, by which Paul "unites in singleness the being and act of God as Father and the being and act of Jesus Christ as Lord."<sup>144</sup> Both are linked in their involvement in creation. Paul recognizes many lords and many gods, but the oneness of God, within whose identity as creator the Lord Jesus Christ is included, is found in his uniqueness as creator.<sup>145</sup> In this passage there is the hint of distinguishing Christ from God, but also of identifying Christ with God. Seifrid has perhaps most clearly stated it:

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been designated Lord in Aramaic. James D. G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 247-48.

<sup>143</sup>Against Hofius, "Einer ist Gott," 172. Hofius appears to argue on the basis of his exegesis of 1 Cor 8:6, that if there is only one God, that precludes the existence of other gods. Based on 1 Cor 10:19f, he acknowledges the demonic aspect of the worship of these gods, but asserts these so-called gods do not exist "in themselves," that is, not apart from and independent of the humans who venerate them. Nonetheless, they are not merely superstitious mind-creations which basically can be overcome through better understanding, but once conceived and created, they are a demonic reality, which rule over humans and to whose power and fascination rule is handed over. Their existence is solely based on their creation and acknowledgement by humans. Hofius apparently understands that the existence of only one God and only one Lord precludes the existence of other gods, but as I have suggested, that is not actually the biblical view of monotheism. See also Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 144; Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians*, 342; Fee, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 370, for assertions similar to Hofius that the gods exist only in the subjective experience of the idol worshippers.

<sup>144</sup>Mauser, "One God and Trinitarian Language," 103. See also p. 105, where Mauser affirms that the Lord Jesus Christ shares God's place and strength in the creation act.

<sup>145</sup>It should be noted here that Paul uses the formulation in Rom 11:36 that he uses in 1 Cor 8:6, but in the Romans passage he applies the whole formula to God alone. In both passages Paul uses three prepositions (ἐκ, εἰς, and διὰ) but in Rom 11:36 he applies all to God. In 1 Cor 8:6 Paul applies διὰ to Christ, but the other two to God. The application of the prepositions in that way is simply evidence that Christ is included in identity of God as the instrumental cause of creation. See Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 214-15. It is also evidence of fluidity of thought that Paul exhibits when he writes of God the father and of Jesus. See chap. 4 for further discussion and examples.

Paul thus *identifies* God as the Creator who saves. The parallel description of the Lord, Jesus Christ, *through* whom the Father's creating and saving work takes place *both distinguishes him from and identifies him with God in a manner that defies the prioritization of distinction over identity, and vice versa*. If the "Lord" were simply defined by the statement that "all things come from God" one might conclude (with Arius) that the Lord had a temporal origin. But "all things" likewise come through the Lord, so that the Lord is simultaneously and without qualification set apart from all created things. Here distinction and identity cannot be played off against one another. Without in any way setting aside the distinction, then, we may recognize that in so far as this confession echoes the Shema', Jesus is identified with Yahweh.<sup>146</sup> (Emphasis original.)

### **Paul's Monotheism**

The nature of Paul's monotheism has been a matter of some debate. The History-of-Religions School argues for a gradual development of Christological thought so that Christ could come to be thought of as God only among Gentile believers. P. M. Casey is a fairly recent representative of such an argument.<sup>147</sup> After his analysis of Philippians 2:6-11 Casey concluded that the passage, whether it is a hymn or drafted by Paul, should be read to say Jesus is on the verge of deity, but the hymn does not say Jesus is God. Such a conclusion could be drawn only in Gentile perception.<sup>148</sup> Monotheism was such an important boundary marker of Jews, that a Jewish writer could breach that boundary only on purpose. Paul and Timothy were able to do that because in their Gentile mission they had become assimilated into the Gentile world.<sup>149</sup> In general, Casey's argument asserts Jesus became a full god, only when the church became primarily Gentile. Only then could another god be added to Jewish monotheism.

In his critique of Casey, Carl Judson Davis correctly pointed out four implications of Casey's analysis and conclusions regarding Philippians 2:6-11: (1) The

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<sup>146</sup>Seifrid, "Knowledge of the Creator," 22.

<sup>147</sup>See generally, Maurice Casey, *From Jewish Prophet to Gentile God: The Origins and Development of New Testament Christology* (Cambridge: James Clark and Co. and Louisville: Westminster/John Knox), 1991.

<sup>148</sup>Ibid., 114-15.

<sup>149</sup>Ibid., 116-17. See also 136-38.

one God of monotheism for Paul is exclusively God the Father, (2) Jesus cannot be deity or God, (3) For Jesus to be divine, Paul would explicitly have to renounce monotheism, and (4) Paul did not renounce monotheism, therefore Jesus is not deity.<sup>150</sup> As Davis notes, Casey would be correct that, if by claims that Jesus is deity one would be adding another God to the already worshipped God the Father, then that would represent polytheism.<sup>151</sup> Surely Paul would not do that. Davis argues, however, that Casey misses the point in that the addition of a second divine figure is not what modern exegetes mean when they refer to Jesus as “divine” (Davis’ word). Instead, for Paul there exists a “shared divinity between Jesus and the Father resulting from a redefinition of monotheism.”<sup>152</sup> Davis later refers again to a redefinition of monotheism and appears to define that redefinition as a reinterpretation of the one God to include both God the Father and the one Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>153</sup>

Davis’ response to Casey is correct to the degree that Paul would not consider adding another god to the one God, and that Casey’s assumption is incorrect that understanding Jesus as God would require Paul to abandon monotheism. In addition, I have argued in this chapter that on three occasions Paul made comments about God with the Shema’ clearly in the background of his thought. On two of those occasions Paul included Jesus as Lord as part of his statement of the Shema’. Such a use of the Shema’ is

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<sup>150</sup>Carl Judson Davis, *The Name and Way of the Lord: Old Testament Themes, New Testament Theology*, JSNT Supplement Series vol. 129 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 169-70. For an additional critique of Casey’s thesis see James D. G. Dunn, “The Making of Christology – Evolution or Unfolding?” in *Jesus of Nazareth: Lord and Christ: Essays on the Historical Jesus and New Testament Christology*, ed. Joel B. Green and Max Turner (Grand Rapids; Eerdmans and Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 1994), 437-52. Dunn argues that Casey works with a “too simplified concept of Judaism and Jewish identity” and that he does not sufficiently explain the impact of Jesus and his teaching and resurrection nor the impact of the Holy Spirit, the power of religious experience.

<sup>151</sup>Davis, *Name and Way of the Lord*, 169-70.

<sup>152</sup>Ibid., 161. See also N. T. Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991), 121. Wright understands Paul’s monotheism as a redefinition of the Shema’.

<sup>153</sup>Davis, *Name and Way of the Lord*, 170.

more likely to indicate Paul maintained his Jewish identity rather than that he was assimilated into Gentile culture, since Paul's statement of monotheism in those cases was a purely Jewish statement. Since that is true, I cannot agree with Davis that Paul's interpretation of the Shema' was a redefinition of it.<sup>154</sup> It is rather more likely that in Paul's vision on the road to Damascus he came to realize that the one God as expressed in the Shema' had always included the Lord. Thus Bauckham's argument that the New Testament writers understood that the identity of the one God included Christ the Lord is the best way to understand Paul's monotheism. We must return in the next chapter to the identification of Jesus with YHWH, but for now we can simply note that if Paul were adding the one Lord to the one God of the Shema', "from the perspective of monotheism, he would be producing, not christological monotheism, but outright ditheism. The addition of a unique Lord to the unique God of the Shema' would flatly contradict the uniqueness of the latter."<sup>155</sup> Paul simply identified them both as one.

### **Summary and Conclusion**

When delivering the Manson Lectures at the University of Manchester in 1966, G. H. Boobyer asked a series of questions that are pertinent here:

So orthodox christology in confessing Jesus as truly God is not asserting that Jesus is God without qualification, or God absolutely. But will this line of argument do? . . . For does it not evoke the query, What kind of God is it, then, who is only God *with* qualification, who is not God absolutely? On any legitimate Christian use of terms is any being who is only God with qualification, not God absolutely, any longer truly God?<sup>156</sup> (Emphasis original.)

Leaving aside Boobyer's estimate of orthodox Christology, his question is on point. How can one be almost God? Boobyer goes on to supply the answer in his

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<sup>154</sup>So also Seifrid, "Knowledge of the Creator," 10. Seifrid maintains that nowhere would Paul have spoken of his interpretation as a redefinition of it.

<sup>155</sup>Bauckham, "God Crucified," 28.

<sup>156</sup>G. H. Boobyer, "Jesus as 'Theos' in the New Testament," *BJRL* 50 (1967-68): 249-50.

conclusion: The New Testament writers did not mean to assign Jesus equality with God “and certainly did not intend to say that ontologically, he *was* truly God. They meant he was God functionally.” (Emphasis original.)<sup>157</sup> But Boobyer’s solution does not help much. How can one act as God if the one acting is not God, if being God includes creation and sovereign rule? Boobyer should not be faulted especially. The problem is difficult. He does, at least, ask the right question of those who, with Casey, would argue that Paul saw Jesus in some elevated level, even on the verge of being God, but yet not quite God.

In this chapter, I have considered the question of how a monotheist could think of Jesus as God and in so doing I have responded to one of the arguments from outside of Romans 9:5 that Paul as a good monotheist would not refer to Jesus as God. I began by summarizing the history of the objection and then suggested that biblical monotheism, unlike classical monotheism that began with the Enlightenment, never excluded the existence of other gods. I have also argued that neither did First Century Judaism maintain such an exclusive view. I argued that God is distinguished as the only unique one in his class, not as the highest of a class of divine beings as might exist in Greek and other cultures. The uniqueness of God is in his identity as creator of all things, including the divine beings whom some might see as in competition with him. In addition, God’s uniqueness is identifiable in his sovereign rule over all things, including all such other beings. Finally, God is seen as unique in his saving power. This unique God is identified as YHWH, God of Israel.

Paul’s monotheism can be described in the same way. I summarized two passages of Scripture in which Paul showed that he recognized other divine beings, but none were involved in creation and none were involved in sovereign rule. Only Jesus Christ is in that category. He has been exalted far above all things (Eph 6:4), and he was

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<sup>157</sup>Ibid., 260.

present with God and involved in creation (1 Cor 8:6). In addition, God's ultimate saving work is bound up in Jesus (Rom 3:29-30). Thus, for Paul, to the extent human beings are willing to become dependent upon these created beings, they can lay claim to the title lord. Yet they are not lords as Jesus is Lord, just as they are not gods as God himself is God. It is only in creation and absolute sovereignty over all other beings that one can claim he is God. Bauckham's summary is correct. All existence is binary; there exists the one true God, in whose identity Jesus Christ is included, and as a second reality, all other beings regardless of their status, because all other beings are part of the created order.

So, on its face, the objection regarding Paul's monotheism fails as an assumption because scholars who acknowledge that Paul in some way thought of Jesus as divine, but not as God, have themselves endangered the very monotheism they try to protect. Many acknowledge that Paul's language so closely associated Christ with God that they must explain the close association in terms of divinity, but not in terms of actually being God. To say that Christ is less than God requires that Paul thought of Christ as above every other divine power, yet that he was one of the lesser divine powers himself, and therefore a created being. To say that such a being could be exalted in the manner that Paul describes should be considered unthinkable, and would consist of adding this other being to the confession of the one God, which is by definition not possible. The better approach is simply to acknowledge that his lofty language indicates Paul identified Jesus as *θεός*, whether or not we can close all the loops that Paul did not close.

## CHAPTER 4

### OBJECTIONS FROM OUTSIDE THE TEXT: IDENTIFYING JESUS WITH GOD

In chapter 3, I commented on the first of two major objections to the thesis that Paul meant to apply θεός to Jesus in Romans 9:5. That objection was that Paul the monotheist could never think of Jesus as God. A second objection must now be considered as well, that is, that Paul never refers to Jesus as θεός anywhere else in his letters so it is unlikely that he would do so in Romans 9:5.<sup>1</sup> The premise that if Paul does not speak of Jesus as God elsewhere he would not do so in Romans 9:5 is an assumption; however, that does not necessarily stand. It can be stated briefly that the thrust of the question in this objection is whether a *hapax legomenon*, so to speak, in Paul's usage should disqualify use of the word in that one instance. As Metzger argues, if one can allow a *hapax legomenon* in a lexical matter, there is no reason to think it should not be allowed in doctrinal matters.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>So, among others, Gordon D. Fee, *Pauline Christology: An Exegetical-Theological Study* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2007), 274. Fee's argument is that Paul clearly differentiates between God as Father and Jesus as Lord. See also, among others, Neil Richardson, *Paul's Language About God*, JSNT Supplement Series, vol. 99 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 30; James Denney, *St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, in vol. 2 of *The Expositor's Greek Testament*, ed. W. Robertson Nicoll (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970), 658; K. E. Kirk, *The Epistle to the Romans in the Revised Version with Introduction and Commentary* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1937), 104; Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 258; Ezra Abbot, "On the Construction of Romans ix. 5," *Journal of Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis* 1 (1881): 113; C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, (New York: Harper and Row, 1957), 179; Luke Timothy Johnson, *Reading Romans: A Literary and Theological Commentary* (New York: Crossroad, 1997), 147. Cf. Raymond E. Brown, "Does the New Testament Call Jesus God?" *TS* 26 (1965): 560. Brown asserts the only real objection to the interpretation of Rom 9:5 that Paul refers to Jesus as God, is that nowhere else does Paul speak of Jesus as God.

<sup>2</sup>So, Bruce M. Metzger, "The Punctuation of Rom. 9:5." In *Christ and the Spirit in the New Testament*, ed. Barnabas Lindars and Stephen S. Smalley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 110. See also Murray J. Harris, *Jesus as God: The New Testament Use of Theos in Reference to Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992), 176-77. For a little different twist, see Maurice Casey, *From Jewish Prophet*

In this chapter, however, the objection that Paul did not refer to Jesus as God can be addressed on other fronts. The first is whether it can even be granted that Paul never called Jesus God outside Romans 9:5. Titus 2:13, although disputed, will be considered in this chapter to point out the likelihood that Paul did indeed use *θεός* to refer to Jesus in at least one text other than Romans 9:5. It must be acknowledged that Titus 2:13 contains some ambiguities in grammar and the authorship of the letter is disputed, but it can be fairly argued that Paul spoke of Jesus as God there.

The objection considered in this chapter can also be addressed from the standpoint of whether Paul uses terms for Jesus, such as *κύριος*, that are not substantively different from *θεός*. In this chapter we will examine some passages and arguments that suggest that when Paul spoke of Jesus as *κύριος* he was identifying Jesus as YHWH, that is, as God. Yet, even if Paul identified Jesus as God, there is still the weighty and difficult semantic issue. Why does Paul use the word *θεός* in Romans 9:5 when his more normal term is *κύριος*? Of course, an underlying question exists as well: Why did Paul at this place in his letter think it necessary to make any kind of Christological statement at all, whether he used *κύριος*, as he might more normally do, or *θεός*, as is the case? The remaining chapters after this one will address that question. The purpose here is to suggest that Paul did refer to Jesus as God in another text and to argue that Paul used language that suggests he identified Jesus as God.

### **Titus 2:13**

Two disputed issues exist in consideration of Titus 2:13. The first is the issue of whether Paul even wrote that letter. It is not within the scope of this chapter to

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*to Gentile God: The Origins and Development of New Testament Christology* (Cambridge: James Clark & Co. and Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1991), 135. Casey argues that Rom 9:5 is indeed best read to say that Jesus is God, but since Paul says that about Christ in only that one place, it is important to recognize he doesn't do that anywhere else. Casey apparently recognizes that it is possible for Paul to make a statement in one place that he doesn't make elsewhere, but apparently weight should not be given to it.

undertake a detailed review of the evidence regarding authorship, but I side with those who accept Pauline authorship of the letter.<sup>3</sup> The letter says it is from Paul (Titus 1:1) and the arguments that the early church would not have accepted a letter falsely attributed to an apostle are convincing in my view.<sup>4</sup> Reasonable answers can be posed for the objections to Pauline authorship so the weight of the argument that the church would not accept pseudonymous writing tips the argument in favor of the claim of the letter that it was from the Apostle Paul.<sup>5</sup> Perhaps most convincing are Paul's comments in his letters, especially in 2 Thessalonians 3:17 that suggest he was careful to authenticate his letters and that he expected his readers to distinguish his letters from those falsely claiming to be from him. It is not likely the church would have become unconcerned about that after Paul's death.<sup>6</sup> At the same time, even if Titus was authored by someone in the Pauline school, the letter apparently read Romans 9:5 as speaking of Jesus as God. The question of the syntax of Titus 2:13 is also contested and, while that issue also cannot be covered

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<sup>3</sup>See, e.g., George A. F. Knight, III, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans and Carlisle: Paternoster, 1992), 52; E. E. Ellis, "The Pastoral Letters," in *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, ed. Gerald F. Hawthorne and Ralph P. Martin (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 658-66; Donald F. Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1970), 620-21. Contra Jouette M. Bassler, *1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1996), 21; Jerome D. Quinn, *The Letter to Titus: A New Translation with Notes and Commentary and an Introduction to Titus, I and II Timothy, the Pastoral Epistles*, The Anchor Bible, vol. 35 (New York: Doubleday, 1990), 19-21; Martin Dibelius and Hans Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles*, trans. Phillip Buttolph and Adela Yarbro, ed. Helmut Koester (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1972), 1-4.

<sup>4</sup>For a detailed review of the argument, with the conclusion that the church would not have accepted pseudonymous letters, see Ellis, "The Pastoral Letters," 658-66; Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, 671-84; D. A. Carson and Douglas J. Moo, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 337-50. But see contra, James D. G. Dunn, "Pseudepigraphy," in *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, ed. Gerald F. Hawthorne and Ralph P. Martin (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 982. Dunn argues that associates or disciples of Paul could legitimately write in Paul's name and that "the literary device could be accepted without demur."

<sup>5</sup>For a detailed analysis see Carson and Moo, *Introduction*, 555-68; Everett F. Harrison, *Introduction to the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971), 351-63.

<sup>6</sup>So also, Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 46-47.

in detail, the problem deserves some mention and perhaps a brief case can be made that Paul did in fact mean to call Jesus God in that text.<sup>7</sup>

The text of the verse at issue is: *προσδεχόμενοι τὴν μακαρίαν ἐλπίδα καὶ ἐπιφάνειαν τῆς δόξης τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ*. Two possible translations of the verse can be suggested here: (1) Awaiting the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and our savior Jesus Christ, or (2) Awaiting the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and savior, Jesus Christ. In the second translation the attribution of Jesus as God is most direct, but it also allows for two ways to read the verse, as noted in the discussion below.

Titus 2:13 is part of a sentence in the original Greek that begins in 2:11 and ends in 2:14.<sup>8</sup> Briefly, the main clause is “The grace of God has been manifested,” in which, of course, grace is the subject. The verb “manifested” is modified by a participle so that the grace of God appeared for the purpose of training us to live in the manner described. Verse 13 begins with a participle, (*προσδεχόμενοι* = awaiting) which modifies *Ζήσωμεν* (we live) either temporally or causally. Verse 14 further modifies Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.

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<sup>7</sup>The issue is difficult enough that A. E. Harvey regards the commentator’s conclusion on this issue as a matter of presupposition. A. E. Harvey, *Jesus and the Constraints of History* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1982), 176. As an example that might support Harvey’s assertion, see G. B. Winer’s rather remarkable comment that because of doctrinal conviction that Paul would not call Christ the great God, he was induced to find evidence that there is “no grammatical obstacle to taking *σωτ . . . χριστοῦ* as a second subject.” G. B. Winer, *A Grammar of the Idiom of the New Testament Prepared as a Solid Basis for the Interpretation of the New Testament*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed., trans. J. Henry Thayer (Andover, MA: Draper, 1872), 130n 2. See his similar statement in idem, *A Treatise on the Grammar of New Testament Greek Regarded as Sure Basis for Exegesis*, trans. W. F. Moulton, 3<sup>rd</sup> rev. ed. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1882), 162.

<sup>8</sup>**11** Ἐπεφάνη γὰρ ἡ χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ σωτήριος πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις **12** παιδεύουσα ἡμᾶς, ἵνα ἀρνησάμενοι τὴν ἀσέβειαν καὶ τὰς κοσμικὰς ἐπιθυμίας σωφρόνως καὶ δικαίως καὶ εὐσεβῶς ζήσωμεν ἐν τῷ νῦν αἰῶνι, **13** προσδεχόμενοι τὴν μακαρίαν ἐλπίδα καὶ ἐπιφάνειαν τῆς δόξης τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἃς ἔδωκεν ἑαυτὸν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἵνα λυτρώσῃται ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ πάσης ἀνομίας καὶ καθάρσῃ ἑαυτῶν λαὸν περιούσιον, ζηλωτὴν καλῶν ἔργων. (For the grace of God has been manifested, bringing salvation to all men, training us in order that denying ungodliness and material desires, we might live righteously and in a godly manner, showing self control in the present age, awaiting the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us in order that he might redeem us from all lawlessness and cleanse for himself a particular people who are zealous for good works.)

As with Romans 9:5, much of the discussion of Titus 2:13 has to do with theological issues.<sup>9</sup> Since they are not dissimilar to the objections regarding Romans 9:5, I will ignore the theological arguments for the present to concentrate on exegetical concerns. The basic issue is the function of the words Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. The words are surely in apposition to something in the sentence, and Fee suggests three possible nouns to which they could be in apposition:<sup>10</sup> (1) to “our savior” only, (2) to the words “our great God and Savior,” and (3) to the word “glory.” Fee notes the second is the current majority view, but he argues for the third.<sup>11</sup> I will argue here that the majority is correct.

The first translation suggested above, “Awaiting the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and our savior Jesus Christ” can be considered first. A basic issue is whether the “Great God and our Savior” have a single referent or whether the reference is to two different persons. The Granville Sharp Rule applies in this case, and the referent should be taken as to one person.<sup>12</sup> According to that rule when two

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<sup>9</sup>See, e.g., Michael R. Austin, “Salvation and the Divinity of Jesus,” *ExpTim* 96 (1985): esp. 274. Austin argues there is no identification of Christ with God as Christ is the hope of our salvation by God. Christ is savior only because God is savior. See also Ezra Abbot, “On the Construction of Titus ii.13,” *JBL* 1 (1881): 10, where he argues that Paul nowhere else refers to Jesus as God; Fee, *Pauline Christology*, 445, where he argues that it would be an anomaly to call Jesus God.

<sup>10</sup>Fee, *Pauline Christology*, 441.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid. See also Harris, *Jesus as God*, 185, who notes that although there are some dissenting voices, “it seems highly probable that in Titus 2:13 Jesus Christ is called “our great God and Savior,” a verdict shared, with varying degrees of assurance, by almost all grammarians and lexicographers, many commentators and many writers on NT theology or Christology.” See the literature listed there in support of Harris’ contention.

<sup>12</sup>Fee, *Pauline Christology*, 443. See also Knight, *Pastoral Epistles*, 322-25; Kevin Smith and Arthur Song, “Some Christological Implications in Titus 2:13,” *Neot* 40 (2006): 290; Bassler, *Titus*, 200-01; F. F. Bruce, ““Our God and Saviour:’ A Recurring Biblical Pattern,” in *The Saviour God: Comparative Studies in the Concept of Salvation Presented to Edwin Oliver James*, ed. S. G. F. Brandon (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1963), 51. Bruce prefers, however, to see the construction as a reference to the savior God. Contra Dibelius and Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 143; Ezra Abbot, “On the Construction,” 13-16. Abbot relies largely on the previously mentioned quote from Winer, *A Grammar of the Idiom*, 130n 2 to refute the Granville Sharp Rule, but Daniel Wallace correctly notes that Winer adduces no evidence in favor of his argument other than his belief that Paul could not have intended to refer to Jesus as the Great God. The evidence Winer presents goes beyond the requirements of Sharp’s Rule. See also C. F. D. Moule, *An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), 109-10. Moule, without citing evidence, says the article need not be required to govern both nouns,

nouns or participles are connected by *καί* and the first is preceded by the article and the article is not repeated before the second noun or participle, then the latter noun or participle always refers to the same person that is expressed or described by the first noun or participle if neither noun is impersonal, neither noun is plural and neither is a proper noun.<sup>13</sup> Unless one wishes to argue that *θεός* is a proper noun, there is no immediately evident grammatical reason to deny the rule applies to Titus 2:13.<sup>14</sup> In addition, there is the argument suggested by Harris that the phrase *θεός καὶ σωτήρ* was used formulaically in first century religion terminology and was used by Jews in both the Diaspora and in Palestine in reference to YHWH.<sup>15</sup> That also suggests the words are a reference to one deity, not two.<sup>16</sup> For those reasons the first translation “awaiting the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and our savior Jesus Christ” should be rejected on grammatical and usage grounds since it points to two different persons.<sup>17</sup>

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but he goes on to conclude that it does. Wallace demonstrates effectively that in the NT the Granville Sharp Rule always applies in cases that meet Sharp’s requirements, including Titus 2:13, if one does not simply on doctrinal grounds reject those passages with Christological import. For a detailed statement of the rule and its requirements and the argument that the rule always applies in the NT, see Daniel Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 270-90. See also F. Blass, A. Debrunner, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, trans. and ed. R. W. Funk (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), 144-45; Harris, *Jesus as God*, 179-80, in his more extended discussion of the article at 302-13.

<sup>13</sup>Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 271-72.

<sup>14</sup>For some of the reasons *θεός* should not be understood as a proper noun, see, *ibid.*, 272n 42.

<sup>15</sup>Harris, *Jesus as God*, 178-79, following Dibelius and Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 100-03.

<sup>16</sup>Harris, *Jesus as God*, 179.

<sup>17</sup>Contra Abbot, “Construction of Titus ii:13,” 11. In addition to his argument that the Granville Sharp Rule does not apply, Abbot also argues from the parallelism of Titus 2:11 and 2:13 that since *θεός* refers to the Father in v. 11 it must refer to the same in v. 14. Harris replies that other parallels exist in the passage and that such reasoning would also allow one to argue that since *σωτήρ* is identified as Jesus in 2:13, in 2:11 *ἡ χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ σωτήριος* should be equated with the salvific grace of Christ (Christ = *τοῦ θεοῦ*). Similarly, Quinn, *Titus*, 156, following Harris.

The proper understanding of the second translation “awaiting the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and savior, Jesus Christ” depends upon the understanding of the appositional relationship of the genitive Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. If those words are in apposition with τῆς δόξης (the glory) the translation would be understood as “Awaiting the blessed hope and appearing of [him who is] the glory of the great God and our savior, [which (glory) is] Jesus Christ.”<sup>18</sup> Fee suggests that reading of the text based on a number of arguments, but they are all a bit weak.<sup>19</sup> He first argues somewhat inexplicably that no one would ever have read “Jesus Christ” in apposition to “our God and savior” were it not for the modifiers. But the modifiers exist, which, apparently, Fee recognizes as at least a partial reason to read the words in just the way he is arguing against.<sup>20</sup> But given the possibility that such a construction as Fee suggests is possible, why would one assume that a reader would not connect Jesus Christ with God? Fee does not explain, but it seems likely that he is already presupposing his theological argument made later that it would be anomalous for Paul to refer to Jesus as God.<sup>21</sup>

In favor of understanding the words “Jesus Christ” in apposition to glory, Fee suggests first that Paul understood Christ as God’s glory on the basis of 2 Corinthians

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<sup>18</sup>Suggested by Harris, *Jesus as God*, 178.

<sup>19</sup>Fee, *Pauline Christology*, 444-46. While space and the focus of this dissertation dictate only a brief interaction with Fee, for a detailed response to Fee’s arguments see Robert M. Bowman, “Jesus Christ, God Manifest: Titus 2:13 Revisited,” *JETS* 51 (2008): 733-52.

<sup>20</sup>Fee, *Pauline Christology*, 444. See my comments in chap. 2 regarding Fee’s similar argument that if the wording of Rom 9:5b were different it would be read differently. In this case Fee suggests Col 2:2 (εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν τοῦ μυστηρίου τοῦ θεοῦ, Χριστοῦ) as an example. He is surely correct that there Christ is in apposition with the mystery of God, but the difference is not only that there are no modifiers, but the words appear in sequence. One of the objections to Fee’s suggestion is the distance between the words he wishes to see in apposition in Titus 2:13. Fee’s only response to that objection is that Paul may not have recognized the difficulty he was creating for the readers. In addition, Bowman points out that even if Col 2:2 were similarly worded to Titus 2:13 and even if Fee’s argument is correct that many would not make the connection between Jesus and God, the two passages would still be different because to speak of the manifestation of the glory of God as anything other than God manifesting himself in his own glory would be unnatural, while the knowledge of the mystery of God naturally conveys the idea of knowing, not of God himself. Bowman, “Jesus Christ,” 743.

<sup>21</sup>As pointed out by Bowman, “Jesus Christ,” 742.

3:7-4:6. Fee acknowledges that Paul refers to Christ as God's image there, not as his glory, but Fee asserts that the fact that Christ is God's image makes it clear that he is the manifestation of God's glory. Perhaps, but that is not abundantly clear and Fee does nothing to support the idea. Secondly, Fee falls back on the familiar argument that "[n]either Paul ([n]or a pseudepigrapher) [would have] created the anomaly of referring to Christ as θεός." The argument then, for Fee's position, at least the exegetical argument, is a bit thin.<sup>22</sup>

Finally, the genitive Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ can be taken in apposition to "our great God and savior." The only real objection to this is the doctrinal problem that Paul would not actually refer to Jesus that way. In addition to that reading as the most natural reading, it is also very likely that the savior here speaks of Jesus. Titus 2:14, immediately following, which begins with a relative whose antecedent is Jesus Christ, describes in more detail the work of Christ as savior. It is hard to imagine that with the extended description of Christ as savior in 2:14, Paul had someone else in mind in 2:13. To mitigate this argument Fee mentions the appearance of God as savior in 2:10 and 3:4.<sup>23</sup> The connection, however, between Jesus Christ and the description in 2:14 is quite strong and the fact that God appears as savior in the other passages is not so convincing. As

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<sup>22</sup>One argument critical to Fee's position is his rejection of the possibility of τῆς δόξης as attributive (glorious appearing). If that is the correct translation then, of course, Jesus Christ could not be in apposition to τῆς δόξης since the latter would be serving adjectivally. Given Fee's agreement that the Granville Sharp Rule applies, the apposition relationship must then be with "our God and Savior," so his argument would not stand. Fee rejects the reading of the genitive as attributive because "there is hardly a thing in favor of this view and nearly everything against it." He argues that the attributive is out of sync with Paul's usage elsewhere, but he offers nothing to support that. Fee, *Pauline Christology*, 443. Bowman has demonstrated, however, that in 12 of the 18 occasions of Paul's use of τῆς δόξης the words either could or should be taken attributively. Bowman, "Jesus Christ," 736-37. Bowman lists Rom 8:21; 9:23; 1 Cor 2:8; 2 Cor 4:4; Eph 1:17, 18; Eph 3:16; Phil 3:21; Col 1:11; Col 1:27 and 1 Tim 1:11 (in addition to Titus 2:13). He lists versions that translate the genitive as attributive in each case. So if the translation of Titus 2:13 offered by the KJV, NKJV and NIV is correct, as it may well be, since it is both grammatically possible and demonstrated to be within Paul's usage, Fee's argument cannot stand. But in agreement with Fee that the genitive is not attributive, see Knight, *Pastoral Epistles*, 322 and Harris, *Jesus as God*, 175-76.

<sup>23</sup>Fee, *Pauline Christology*, 446.

Bowman points out, the true pattern in Titus begins in 1:3 and includes 2:10, 13-14; 3:4 and 3:6. In 1:3 Paul refers to God our savior and in 1:4, to Christ Jesus our savior. In 2:10 and 2:13, and in 3:4 and 3:6 the pattern continues. Each time, Paul follows a reference to God as savior with a reference in the same sentence to Jesus Christ our savior.<sup>24</sup>

In conclusion, while it is fair to say that one can find some ambiguity in Titus 2:13, it is also fair to say the evidence that Paul did indeed mean to refer to Jesus as God is exegetically more convincing than the alternatives. If my argument here is correct that in Titus 2:13 Paul meant to call Jesus God, the objection that he never identifies Jesus as God must at the least be modified to say he infrequently makes that identification. The only real objection to that is that Paul would not refer to Jesus as God. Since on the basis of that supposition many will remain unconvinced, however, the objection can be further considered.

## **Jesus Identified As God**

### **Whether Paul Pointedly Avoided Use of Θεός for Jesus**

It is useful at the beginning to consider comments by C. H. Dodd, since Dodd refers to two passages (Phil 2:6-11 and 1 Cor 8:6) as evidence that Paul would not call Jesus God. In each passage Dodd would expect that if Paul would have spoken anywhere of Jesus as God he would have done so in those passages. Dodd asserts that “[e]ven though he ascribes to Christ functions and dignities which are consistent with nothing less than deity, yet he pointedly avoids calling him ‘God.’”<sup>25</sup> It is first of all not clear how such a statement could be consistent with a strict monotheistic view of Paul’s theology as

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<sup>24</sup>Bowman, “Jesus Christ,” 749. Bowman engages in a more extended analysis of the pattern, but the pattern here is sufficient to show that Fee’s argument will not erase the close connection between the saving work described in 2:14 and the name Jesus Christ in 2:13.

<sup>25</sup>C. H. Dodd, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans* (New York: Hodder and Stoughton, 1932), 152. Others, of course, have argued similarly.

I have argued it in chapter 3. To think someone speaks of a being in ways that clearly point to the being as deity, yet not God, must surely suggest two deities of some sort, even if one is subordinate to the other. Such a statement, in fact, threatens to destroy the very monotheism it apparently seeks to protect. This is essentially Richard Bauckham's argument in support of his thesis that the NT writers included Jesus in the identity of God. As Bauckham notes, "If [Paul] were understood as *adding* the one Lord to the one God of whom the Shema' speaks, then, from the perspective of Jewish Monotheism, he would be certainly producing, not christological monotheism, but outright ditheism"<sup>26</sup> (emphasis original). As Rowe also rightly notes "without the Christian theological confession that YHWH, the one God of Israel, unable to be imaged, was indeed in Christ (2 Cor 5:19), the unity of Paul's writing with the OT falls apart, for Paul has introduced *another god*, an image of YHWH"<sup>27</sup> (emphasis original).

We must also consider whether Dodd went too far with his assertion of pointedness.<sup>28</sup> Such a statement of pointedness would be true only if Paul were intentionally addressing the person of Christ and came to a point where θεός would be called for and deliberately chose another word. Such a case is not demonstrable in either of the two passages he suggests as examples. So the question to be addressed briefly here is whether, even though Paul made lofty Christological statements, his intent was to address the person of Christ.

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<sup>26</sup>Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel: God Crucified and Other Studies on the New Testament's Christology of Divine Identity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 212.

<sup>27</sup>C. Kavin Rowe, "Romans 10:13: What is the Name of the Lord?" *HBT* 22 (2000): 170. For a more complete development of his thought about the connection of the Trinity with the OT, see idem, "Biblical Pressure and Trinitarian Hermeneutics," *Pro Eccl* 11 (2002): 295-312. The criticism that I offer of Dodd's comment can also include others. See, e.g., Johnson, *Reading Romans*, 147, who argues that Paul would not use ὁ θεός for Jesus but acknowledges that Paul thought of him in some sense as deity.

<sup>28</sup>So Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Leicester: Apollos and Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 350.

In answer to Dodd's point, two things may be adduced. The first is that the context of Philippians 2:6-11 is not solely Christological in the context in which Paul uses or writes it, although it is true that Paul makes important Christological statements there.<sup>29</sup> It is, rather, a part of a paragraph in which the emphasis is ethical and in which verses 6-11 are exemplary, picking up the thought of verse 1, where Paul also treats Christ as the example of all the exhorted behavior.<sup>30</sup> Paul then calls upon the Philippians for unity, which was finally based on each one not watching out for their own things, but the things of others. The exhortation is to have the same attitude as Christ Jesus. Then, in 2:12, the inference (ὥσπερ) of 2:5-11 is that the Philippians should remain obedient. Since

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<sup>29</sup>Indeed, Moo comments that Paul's Christology in his earlier letters is a bit of a paradox. Paul often makes important Christological statements, yet not once is Christology the central topic of any passage in the letters. Douglas J. Moo, "The Christology of the Early Pauline Letters." In *Contours of Christology in the New Testament*, ed. Richard N. Longenecker (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 169. I do not intend here to enter the discussion of whether Paul composed Phil 2:6-11 or whether he took over a pre-existing hymn. If it is a hymn, the fact that Paul used it in this context must surely be evidence that he did not find anything in it contrary to his thought. At the same time, if the passage is a hymn that Paul took over, then whether or not the word θεός appears for Jesus should not be important for deciding whether Paul himself would make such an ascription. For a detailed analysis of the issue and an argument that Paul used an existing hymn, see Peter T. O'Brien, *The Epistle to the Philippians: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Carlisle: Paternoster, and Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 186-202. See also O'Brien's thorough bibliography regarding the passage on pp 186-88.

<sup>30</sup>For a survey of the various arguments against the view that the passage is ethical, see Ralph P. Martin, *Carmen Christi: Philippians ii: 5-11 in Recent Interpretation and in the Setting of Early Christian Worship* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1967; reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 84-88. Martin affirms the argument put forth by Ernst Käsemann, "A Critical Analysis of Philippians 2:5-11," trans. Alice F. Carse, *Journal for Theology and Church* 5 (1968): 45-88. Käsemann argues that the passage is soteriological and not ethical in that the soteriological explanation effectively unites v. 5 with vv. 9-11. He further argues that under the ethical view, vv. 9-11 could be only an appendix, since Paul would not exhort believers to be exalted as Christ is. That argument misses the emphasis on humiliation and exaltation in the letter, however. The emphasis in vv. 9-11, as many readily point out, is on what God has done. Readers are surely not exhorted to do what God has done, but it is easy to see that having humbled themselves they will benefit as Christ did. Regardless of the strength of Käsemann's argument, I should note that even if one adopts his view of the passage, that view would still not present this passage as a primarily Christological statement. For a detailed analysis and critique of the argument by Käsemann and Martin, see O'Brien, *Philippians*, 253-62. O'Brien argues that Paul's intent is ethical. So also, J. B. Lightfoot, *St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians: A Revised Text with Introduction, Notes and Dissertations* (London: Macmillan, 1913; reprint, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1953), 110; C. F. D. Moule, "Further Reflexions on Philippians 2:5-11," in *Apostolic History and the Gospel: Biblical Essays Presented to F. F. Bruce on his 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday*, ed. W. Ward Gasque and Ralph P. Martin (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970), 269; Morna Hooker, "Philippians 2:6-11," in *Jesus und Paulus: Festschrift für Werner Georg Kümmel zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. E. Earle Ellis und Erich Gräber (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1975), 153-55.

Paul's larger purpose is to exhort his readers rather than to make a thorough Christological statement, there is no reason to expect him to apply the word *θεός* to Jesus. We must return to discussion of the passage below, but the purpose here is to show that Paul was concerned for making Christological statements in this passage in the context of exhortation of the believers. The context is surely the most reliable indicator of Paul's intent for the passage.<sup>31</sup>

In a similar way, it should be noted that 1 Corinthians 8:6, although also making an explicitly Christological statement, appears in a passage that is instead intended to answer an ethical question about eating food offered to idols.<sup>32</sup> Verse 1 begins with the conjunction and preposition *Περὶ δὲ τῶν εἰδωλοθύτων* (Now concerning food offered to idols), which introduces a new topic and suggests what the topic will be.<sup>33</sup> Paul makes a significant Christological statement here as argued in the last chapter. He is certain that although there are many so-called gods, there is still only one God, with whom he identifies the one Lord. Paul seems almost to take that as a given that would be well known to the Corinthian believers.<sup>34</sup> Since, however, the issue he is addressing is more than Christological, contrary to Dodd's statement above, there is no requirement that Paul must make all of his Christology explicit.

In summary, while the argument that Paul doesn't refer to Jesus as *θεός* other than in Romans 9:5 needs yet further attention, it seems to me that the above arguments

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<sup>31</sup>Hooker, "Philippians 2:6-11," 153-55.

<sup>32</sup>So also, David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), 375.

<sup>33</sup>Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans and Carlisle: Paternoster, 2000), 616-17; C. K. Barrett, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, Black's New Testament Commentaries (London: A. & C. Black, 1968; reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, n.d), 188; Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 364.

<sup>34</sup>Similarly, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, The Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 333. Fitzmyer understands that Paul made reference to the basic Christian confession, with which they were familiar.

suggest Paul did not find particular need within the contexts in which he made statements about Jesus, including the most lofty statements, to make such an ascription. In fact, if I am correct that neither of the passages are explicitly Christological, that is, that Paul never set out to make all of his Christology clear, the weight of the argument is at least diminished. When one considers the limited volume of Paul's writings that remain extant, the expectation that Paul would make a complete Christological statement within that limited material is diminished further.

The core of this part of the response to the objection is whether it is probative that Paul does not actually use the word *θεός* to describe Jesus. If Paul used other language that is equally lofty, or if even that points to the identity of Jesus as *θεός*, then the argument may not do what it is employed to do. Whether Paul does use such language must be decided by the reader, but I would suggest that while Paul does not use the word *θεός* in Philippians 2:5-11 and 1 Corinthians 8:6, his language does identify Jesus as God. In Philippians 2:10 Paul applied to Jesus a text from Isaiah 45:23 that was surely originally intended to refer to YHWH. In addition, the name given to Jesus that is above every other name must be the name of God. As I suggested in chapter 3, in 1 Corinthians 8:6 Paul applies the language similar to the Shema' to Jesus and he includes Jesus in the act of creation. In both passages, one can reasonably conclude that Paul identified Jesus as YHWH. I will argue later in this chapter that these and other passages where Paul uses such lofty language at least lessen the weight of the objection and perhaps negate it altogether.

In addition, there are passages in which Paul speaks of Christ and God using the same language and passages in which he mixes references to Christ and God in such a way that he does not clearly distinguish between them. I will mention only a selection of

such texts.<sup>35</sup> Before taking up that argument, though, I should point out that it is striking that in Dodd's comment mentioned above, one can read his recognition that Paul spoke of Jesus in the passages in a way that suggests Jesus is deity, yet without the direct ascription. If my argument is accepted that there is no strong reason to expect Paul to have referred to Jesus as God, then perhaps Dodd's statement actually works in favor of an argument that Paul did in fact identify Jesus as God. Dodd thought that Paul "ascribes to Christ functions and dignities which are consistent with nothing less than deity." If that is true, perhaps, as I suggested in chapter 3, to think of Jesus as less than God assigns him to the realm of created half-gods that the Scriptures seem to recognize. That is an unlikely ascription, however, given Paul's recognition of Jesus' involvement in creation (1 Cor 8:6).<sup>36</sup>

At the outset, though, the point should be made clear that Paul also speaks of Jesus Christ in ways that point to a distinction between Christ and God. Many have pointed to that distinction as objection to an argument that Paul would identify Christ with God. Jochen Flebbe makes the point rather sharply that he has surveyed all the authentic Pauline letters and found it is characteristic that for Paul there is not only a distinction between Christ and God, but also there is programmatic subordination of Christ to God. He adduces as evidence 1 Corinthians 15:28; 8:6 and 12:6.<sup>37</sup> For Flebbe, any identification of Christ with God is excluded by that evidence.<sup>38</sup> Flebbe is correct to

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<sup>35</sup>For a more complete list see Hans-Christian Kammler, "Die Prädikation Jesus Christi 'Gott' und die Paulinische Christologie: Erwägungen zur Exegese von Röm 9,5b," *ZNW* 94 (2003): 164-80. See also Walter Elwell, "The Deity of Christ in the Writings of Paul," in *Current Issues in Biblical and Patristic Interpretation: Studies in Honor of Merrill C. Tenney Presented by His Former Students*, ed. Gerald F. Hawthorne (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), 300-05.

<sup>36</sup>Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 183.

<sup>37</sup>Of course, as I argued in chap. 3, I disagree that 1 Cor 8:6 is only an example of subordination. It is also a rather strong example of identification.

<sup>38</sup>Jochen Flebbe, *Solus Deus: Untersuchungen zur Rede von Gott im Brief des Paulus an die Römer* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 270-71.

draw attention to the distinction and subordination. One could even add Philippians 2:11 as support for his argument. There, even in this highest of exalting statements Paul distinguishes between Jesus and God. But Flebbe is not correct in his assessment that the evidence excludes the possibility that Paul would identify Christ as God. His statement does not give enough weight to substantial evidence that in spite of the passages where Paul distinguishes Jesus from God, Paul in other ways in his letters does identify Jesus with God. Ernst Käsemann for similar reasons objected to identification of Jesus with God in 9:5b, but even in his objection Käsemann acknowledges some fluidity in Paul's thought in his comment that Paul "obviously sees in Christ the pre-existent heavenly being to whom the ἴσα θεῷ of Phil 2:6 applies."<sup>39</sup> Flebbe does not ignore this argument, of course. Arguing against H.- C. Kammler, he asserts that even if Paul does in some places speak of Christ in a way that is parallel with God, that in no way overrides the axiomatic distinction that Paul makes between the two.<sup>40</sup> No argument to the contrary is made here. Paul's references to Jesus in ways that identify him with God do not override the subordinating passages. But one must also argue that neither do the passages where a distinction is made override those passages where Christ is identified as God. To do so betrays exegesis driven by doctrinal presupposition. The argument here, then, is that even in the face of the distinction, Paul nonetheless identifies Christ with God. Whether that works well in modern theological thought or not, Paul both distinguishes and identifies Christ and God in a way that cannot be said to exclude the possibility, as Flebbe asserts it does, that Paul would identify Jesus as God in Romans 9:5b. I do not propose to answer how Paul could hold the thoughts in tension that Christ could both be equal with God and

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<sup>39</sup>Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 259.

<sup>40</sup>Flebbe, *Solus Deus*, 271n 1. Flebbe supports his assertion with arguments that glory is ascribed only to God but his argument is quite thin. Flebbe was responding to Kammler, "Prädikation," 164-80.

subordinate. The church has long struggled with resolution of that issue and I am not likely to have the final word. There is evidence that can be offered, however, that he did hold that tension, and that he meant to speak of Jesus as God.

### **Paul's Use of Κύριος for Christ**

It will not be my purpose to enter at length the debate about whether κύριος was used as a surrogate for the Tetragram in pre-Christian texts, particularly the LXX. I should point out at the beginning of this section, however, that George Howard has offered an argument that the Tetragram appeared in such texts rather than κύριος.<sup>41</sup> If his suggestions are accurate, it would have significant implications for the argument in this chapter, or, for that matter, any discussion of what Paul meant when he referred to Jesus as κύριος. Based on his data, Howard goes on to suggest somewhat more speculatively that only after the beginning of the second century did Gentile writers begin to replace the Tetragram with the surrogate κύριος, and as a result, only then did they begin to confuse the κύριος representing the Tetragram with the κύριος that had always referred to Christ, with the result that the surrogate came to apply to Christ.<sup>42</sup> Howard suggests some of the textual variants in places like Romans 10:16-17; 14:10-11; 1 Corinthians 2:16 and 10:9 were caused by confusion about whether the original reference was to God or to Christ. We will have occasion to comment briefly and engage his argument regarding Romans 14:10-11.

But in spite of Howard's evidence for the Tetragram in pre-Christian copies of the LXX, J. A. Fitzmyer points out that the use of מרַא occurs in Qumran literature as an absolute use of the word Lord. The same is true of the Targum of Job and a manuscript of

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<sup>41</sup>George Howard, "The Tetragram and the New Testament," *JBL* 96 (1977), 63-83.

<sup>42</sup>*Ibid.*, 76-83.

Enoch.<sup>43</sup> Similarly, Larry Hurtado comments that Howard did not “account for the very early date by which the cultic invocation of Jesus as ‘Lord’ had become a conventional and uncontroversial practice among Christians both in Greek-speaking and Aramaic-speaking circles.”<sup>44</sup> In addition, C. F. D. Moule points out evidence that non-Christian Greek-speaking Jews had already substituted κύριος for the Tetragram.<sup>45</sup> He points to Aquila’s version of the LXX, instances in Philo’s writings and Josephus’ note that Jews refused to call the emperor κύριος. It can be reasonably suggested that refusal was caused by their use of that term for God. In addition, others have argued that regardless of what may have been written, the evidence is clear that in reading the text aloud in the synagogue and otherwise, the Jewish readers must have used κύριος when they came to the Tetragram, as evidenced by Philo in *De Mutatione Nominum* §§ 20, 21, 23.<sup>46</sup>

The second part of Howard’s argument, in which he suggests κύριος was not used for the Tetragram until the beginning of the second century, is perhaps even more

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<sup>43</sup>J. A. Fitzmyer, “The Semitic Background of the New Testament *Kyrios* Title,” in *A Wandering Aramean: Collected Aramaic Essays* (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1979), 121-25. See also

Albert Pietersma, “Kyrios or Tetragram: A Renewed Quest for the Original Septuagint,” in *De Septuaginta: Studies in Honor of John William Wevers on his 65 Birthday*, ed. Albert Pietersma and Claude Cox (Mississauga, ON: Benben Publications, 1984), 85-101. Pietersma argues that the texts of the Greek Pentateuch do not offer convincing proof of an original Tetragram in the LXX.

<sup>44</sup>Larry Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 183.

<sup>45</sup>C. F. D. Moule, *The Origin of Christology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 40.

<sup>46</sup>Petr Pokorný, *The Genesis of Christology: Foundations for a Theology of the New Testament*, trans. Marcus Lefébure (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1987), 76n 32; D. R. deLacy, “‘One Lord’ in Pauline Christology,” in *Christ the Lord: Studies in Christology Presented to Donald Guthrie*, ed. Harold H. Rowdon (Leicester: Inter-Varsity, 1982), 193-94; N. A. Dahl and Alan F. Segal, “Philo and the Rabbis on the Names of God,” *JSJ* 9 (1978), 1n 2. See also Moule, *Origin*, 40; Richardson, *Paul’s Language*, 283 (following Pokorný); L. Joseph Kreitzer, *Jesus and God in Paul’s Eschatology*, JSNT Supplement Series, vol. 19 (Sheffield: Academic Press, 1987), 109; Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 190. See also, Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ*, 183. In addition, see Fee, *Pauline Christology*, 22, although Fee does not rely on Philo to argue that κύριος was spoken.

open to question, since it is based more on speculation than evidence.<sup>47</sup> Joseph Kreitzer rightly wonders whether Howard's assignment of 100 CE as the date for the process of confusion is not rather arbitrary, since the process could have occurred much earlier.<sup>48</sup> Similarly, Pokorný calls attention to the way κύριος was used in pre-Pauline texts such as Acts 2:21.<sup>49</sup> In addition, Paul used κύριος to refer to Jesus in unambiguous fashion in places where he was obviously citing an Old Testament Scripture.<sup>50</sup> It is hard to understand confusion arising when Paul is citing an Old Testament text, as argued below, that originally applied to YHWH, when he applies the text to Jesus. The phrase "day of the Lord," when applied to Christ, as developed by Kreitzer, is an example.<sup>51</sup> Moule also notes that it is hard to imagine a "distinctively Christian motive, when copying the Greek Scriptures, for substituting *kurios* for some other designation of God."<sup>52</sup> Finally, David Capes points out that although Josephus used the word κύριος to replace the Tetragram only once, preferring δεσπότης, that may have been for practical reasons having to do with his association with Caesar. It is significant that later Christian translators did not change the word Josephus used, so Capes questions the conclusion that they would nevertheless have changed the LXX, which they no doubt regarded as Scripture.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>47</sup>Howard himself offers his conclusions as exploratory in nature. Howard, "The Tetragram," 82.

<sup>48</sup>Kreitzer, *Jesus and God*, 109.

<sup>49</sup>Pokorný, *Genesis of Christology*, 76n 32.

<sup>50</sup>Fee, *Pauline Christology*, 22.

<sup>51</sup>Kreitzer, *Jesus and God*, 109.

<sup>52</sup>Moule, *Origin*, 40. See also Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ*, 184, where he concludes it is in fact likely that the practice of writing for YHWH in Greek biblical manuscripts "reflects a prior Christian interpretation of key biblical passages that mention YHWH as referring to Jesus."

<sup>53</sup>David B. Capes, *Old Testament Yahweh Texts in Paul's Christology* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1992), 42.

Regardless of how one decides the issue argued by Howard, the important argument for our purposes ought to be how Paul used *κύριος* in Romans.<sup>54</sup> Regardless of how the text of LXX appeared that he had before him, he wrote the word *κύριος* in Old Testament citations that clearly referred to YHWH, so the best conclusion is that Paul himself understood *κύριος* to refer to YHWH, and I will agree below with those who understand that Paul applied the word *κύριος* in Old Testament quotations to Jesus in a way that identified Jesus with YHWH, God of Old Testament Israel.

**The Day of the Lord.** In his monograph, *Jesus and God in Paul's Eschatology*, Kreitzer developed the argument that Paul identified Jesus with God, but in a way that cannot be fully comprehended by human categories alone. Jesus is not simply another of the intermediary figures that appeared in Jewish apocalyptic literature of Paul's time. Instead, he transcends such categories without "entirely usurping the position of God himself."<sup>55</sup> Kreitzer's argument is that an outright substitution of christocentrism for theocentrism occurred in Paul's writing within many of the Old Testament quotations, and in particular Paul transposed the Old Testament concept of the Day of the Lord from YHWH to the New Testament concept of the Day of the Lord Christ.<sup>56</sup> Kreitzer's conclusion is that in Paul's eschatological thought there is a remarkable amount of overlap between God and Christ in such a way that Christ is identified with God, although Paul qualifies the nature of that identification by subordinating Christ to God in several key places.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>54</sup>So also Rowe, "Romans 13," 157n 66.

<sup>55</sup>Kreitzer, *Jesus and God*, 16.

<sup>56</sup>*Ibid.*, 18.

<sup>57</sup>*Ibid.*, 165.

Kreitzer's argument is, first, that in Jewish pseudepigraphal writing of the period there was considerable overlap between God and his messianic agent.<sup>58</sup> In pseudepigraphal books such as 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch a temporary messianic kingdom was placed alongside passages that emphasized God's eternal kingdom in such a manner that there was an occasional "residual referential confusion of the two."<sup>59</sup> In fact, within the documents that speak directly of a Messiah, the functional overlap in terms of judgment is so complete that it slides into identification between God and the Messiah so that boundaries between them are breached.<sup>60</sup> This identification exists in spite of the fact that many of those documents contain strongly monotheistic passages in which they extol the transcendence of God, yet hold in tension the identification of the Messiah with God in his judgment activities.<sup>61</sup>

In Kreitzer's account, that literature and the emphases therein must be taken into account in order to understand Paul's eschatological viewpoint and the conceptual overlap between Christ and God in his epistles. Kreitzer's argument is centered on the Old Testament concept of the Day of the Lord, which he argues works harmoniously with doctrinal development of the pseudepigraphal literature to illuminate Paul's New Testament hope. Any differences between Paul's use of the Day of the Lord and the pseudepigraphal literature are to be explained by Paul's two-staged concept of the Christ event, and not by a different conception of the relationship between the Messiah and

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<sup>58</sup>Ibid., 29-91. Kreitzer spends considerable time developing the content of the pseudepigraphal literature with respect to the existence or non-existence of a temporary messianic kingdom on earth in which the messianic agent would reign and judge in the same way that God will ultimately do in the final judgment. Much of the conceptual overlap Kreitzer discovers is in relationship to the Messiah's function in that kingdom.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., 80.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., 89-90.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid., 60-61.

God.<sup>62</sup> Kreitzer finds the same conceptual overlap between God and Christ regarding the final judgment in Paul's writings that he finds in the pseudepigraphal literature.<sup>63</sup> Kreitzer cites examples of texts where the Day of the Lord references shift to Christ. Examples include, among others, Joel 2:32; Rom 10:13; Is 45:23; Phil 2:10-11; Zech 14:5; 1 Thess 4:14 and 2 Thess 1:7-10.<sup>64</sup>

While Kreitzer's argument regarding the identification of Jesus with YHWH in the Day of the Lord is surely correct, his argument that Paul was dependent on the pseudepigraphic literature goes beyond the evidence. Some of the thought in the pseudepigrapha may have been current in common teaching in Paul's day, and while the pseudepigrapha was no doubt dependent on the same Old Testament Scriptures on which Paul relied, the differences between Paul's understanding and that of pseudepigraphic literature was more likely a matter of his vantage point following the Christ event and his experience on the road to Damascus.

**Other YHWH texts applied to Jesus.** It is well known, of course, that Paul cited a number of Old Testament YHWH texts in which he shifted the referent from God to Jesus. The use of those texts in that manner makes it nearly certain that Paul somehow identified the two. While Kreitzer focused on the texts that contain eschatological themes, especially as related to the Day of the Lord, David Capes considered a broader range of texts.<sup>65</sup> Perhaps the most well known of the texts is Philippians 2:10-11 where Paul alludes to Isaiah 45:23, in which clearly it is YHWH who is speaking (Isa 45:18, 21), claiming to be a righteous God and a Savior, and there is no God beside him (45:21-22).

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<sup>62</sup>Ibid., 102.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., 111.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., 117-128.

<sup>65</sup>Capes, *Yahweh Texts*, 90-159.

In 45:23, then, it is YHWH to whom every knee shall bow and every tongue will swear. The Isaiah passage is an important statement of monotheism and although Paul (or the hymn, as one may prefer) altered the text somewhat, certainly a Jewish reader would not miss the reference to YHWH. Yet Paul now applies the passage to the Lord Jesus and by so doing identifies Jesus with YHWH.<sup>66</sup> As Capes notes this is to say Jesus reigned with God “not as a second God, but as one who shares full equality and divinity with God.”<sup>67</sup> The confession in Philippians 2:11 that Jesus is Lord means, then, that Jesus is confessed as YHWH, the one God of all the earth.

Similarly, Capes argued that Paul, on a number of other occasions in his writings, transferred Old Testament language about YHWH to Christ Jesus. One important text is Romans 10:13. I will argue in a later chapter that Paul transfers the *κύριος* title to Jesus from Joel 3:5 (LXX, Eng. 2:32) in Romans 10:9-13 in a manner similar to Philippians 2:9-11.<sup>68</sup> Capes also includes Romans 14:11 based on the

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<sup>66</sup>Ibid., 159; see also Kreitzer, “Jesus and God,” 116; Fee, *Pauline Christology*, 398; Charles A. Gieschen, “The Divine Name in Ante-Nicene Christology,” *Vigiliae Christianae* 57 (2003): 130. Against Neil Richardson, *Paul’s Language about God*, JSNT Supplement Series, vol. 99 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 285. Richardson’s argument here is puzzling. He argues that Jesus is not to be identified with YHWH, but that bending the knee at the name of Jesus is now the new way of acknowledging that YHWH is God. As Fee notes, the argument seems to miss altogether the point that the

name; that is, the *κύριος* of the OT, has been given to Christ and that every knee will bow before him. Fee, *Pauline Christology*, 398 n 98.

<sup>67</sup>Capes, *Yahweh Texts*, 159. Against Dieter Zeller, “New Testament Christology in its Hellenistic Reception,” *NTS* 47 (2001): 316. Zeller asserts “Paul certainly does not intend to identify Jesus simply with Jahwe; nevertheless Jesus receives a godlike status” as the allusion to Isa 45:23 makes clear. If my argument regarding Paul’s monotheism in chap. 3 is correct, Zeller’s assertion here regarding Jesus as a godlike being cannot stand. Also, in another light, this argument is against Casey, *Jewish Prophet to Gentile God*, 176. Casey understands the argument of Gentile orthodoxy to be that Jesus as a second being has become God. See in general Carl Judson Davis, *The Name and Way of the Lord: Old Testament Themes, New Testament Christology*, JSNT Supplement Series, vol. 129 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1996), esp. 16-17. Davis’ book critically interacts fairly often with Casey’s idea that Jesus was in some way a second god.

<sup>68</sup>Capes, *Yahweh Texts*, 116-23; Kreitzer, *Jesus and God*, 114.

background of Christ ruling as Lord (but I will mildly disagree later in this chapter).<sup>69</sup> He lists 2 Corinthians 3:16 as an allusion based on several factors, but he primarily understands the referent as Christ because of the parallel to 3:14 in which it was noted that in Christ the veil is removed.<sup>70</sup> Another example includes 1 Corinthians 1:31 (ἵνα καθὼς γέγραπται· Ὁ καυχώμενος ἐν κυρίῳ καυχάσθῳ) where Paul quotes Jeremiah 9:23 (LXX, Eng. 9:24).<sup>71</sup> Similarly he refers to 1 Corinthians 2:16, where Paul uses an almost exact quote of the Septuagint text of Isaiah 40:13, in which the referent is YHWH, and it is likely that Paul again means to use this Old Testament YHWH language to refer to Christ.<sup>72</sup> What is perhaps most noteworthy about this text is that Paul uses the same text from Isaiah in Romans 11:34 where he clearly refers to God. That suggests some ambiguity in delineating strictly between Jesus and God.<sup>73</sup> Thus, this passage is an example of the way theocentrism and christocentrism are interwoven among many Old Testament quotes.<sup>74</sup>

In addition to direct quotes or allusions, Walter Elwell pointed out that Paul can speak of Christ in other ways that are the same way the Old Testament speaks of God. Among others, he considers that Christ is our sanctification (1 Cor 1:30; cf. Exod 31:13); Christ is our peace (Eph 2:14; cf. Judg 6:24); and Christ is our righteousness (1 Cor 1:30; cf. Jer 23:6).<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>69</sup>Capes, *Yahweh Texts*, 123-25. Similarly, Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 186 and 192; Fee, *Pauline Christology*, 264-66.

<sup>70</sup>Capes, *Yahweh Texts*, 155-57.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., 132-34. See also Richardson, *Paul's Language*, 284.

<sup>72</sup>So Capes, *Yahweh Texts*, 139. See also Kreitzer, *Jesus and God*, 19; Fee, *Pauline Christology*, 131.

<sup>73</sup>So Capes, *Yahweh Texts*, 140.

<sup>74</sup>Kreitzer, *Jesus and God*, 19.

<sup>75</sup>Elwell, "The Deity of Christ," 299.

Based on those texts, the argument is strong that Paul can apply Old Testament YHWH texts to Christ Jesus.<sup>76</sup> At the same time it is also noteworthy that Paul can apply those texts to God. Already mentioned is the text from Isaiah 40:13, which Paul applies to God and, arguably, to Jesus. In addition, I will argue below that although Paul applies Isaiah 45:23 to Jesus in Philippians 2:9-11, he applies the same text to God in Romans 14:11. Paul also applies other YHWH texts to God (Rom 4:7-8; 9:27-29; 15:9-11; 1 Cor 3:20 and 2 Cor 6:18).<sup>77</sup> The fact that some of the YHWH texts refer to Christ, while some refer to God, while yet others may not be clear, is an indication of the fluidity of Paul's thought between Christ and God. Applying those texts both to Jesus and to God could suggest that Paul could ascribe, at the least, divine functions and attributes to Jesus Christ.<sup>78</sup> Since it is not clear how one can function as God who is not God, that suggests Paul's understanding was that Jesus is God.

### **Fluidity in Attributions to Christ and to God**

**Romans 14:1-12.** Romans 14:10 addressed believers in Rome who might judge another and warned that all will stand before the judgment seat of God (τοῦ θεοῦ).<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>76</sup>In addition, see Hurtado's discussion of a similar phenomenon in Acts, which suggests Paul's understanding was consistent with the practice of the Church as a whole. Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ*, 179-81.

<sup>77</sup>Capes, *Yahweh Texts*, 90-114.

<sup>78</sup>D. R. de Lacy, "'One Lord' in Pauline Christology," 198.

<sup>79</sup>There is a variant reading in some manuscripts in which θεοῦ was supplanted by Χριστοῦ. The external evidence is stronger for θεοῦ and it is likely that the variant entered because of influence from 2 Cor 5:10. So Bruce Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: American Bible Society, and Stuttgart: German Bible Society, 1994), 468-69. So also William Sanday and Arthur Headlam, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899), 389. To the contrary, Howard argues that the Tetragram stood in the LXX of Isa 49:18 and on that basis presumes it also stood in the Greek copy of the text relied upon by Paul. Howard suggests further that if that is the case, then the Tetragram likely stood in the original of Rom 14:11, leading to confusion over the person to whom the indefinite κύριος represented once it replaced the Tetragram, resulting in a shift to Χριστοῦ in some texts. Howard ultimately agrees with Metzger, but thinks Metzger's reasoning is incorrect. Howard's burden is to demonstrate that confusion existed, but aside from the arguments presented earlier, his point here is not really demonstrated. To assume that Paul

The theme of judgment and giving an account of oneself continues in verse 12, suggesting that the one to whom every knee will bow in this case is God.<sup>80</sup> That attribution is in spite of the fact that the emphasis is on the lordship of Christ in 14:4-9.<sup>81</sup> It is to his own Lord that one stands, and the Lord is able to cause one to stand (14:4). It is to the Lord that one cares for or does not care for the day and to the Lord that one eats or does not eat (14:6). It is also to the Lord that one lives or dies (14:9), and whether we live or die we are the Lord's. In 14:9, it becomes clear that the Lord is meant to refer to Christ (εἰς τοῦτο γὰρ Χριστὸς ἀπέθανεν καὶ ἔζησεν ἵνα καὶ νεκρῶν καὶ ζώντων κυριεύσῃ).

It may seem somewhat surprising, given the emphasis on the Lordship of Christ, that Paul could attribute a passage to God in this context that he attributes to Christ in another. It might rather appear that this would be an ideal place again to attribute the Old Testament name YHWH to Christ. Yet, there is mention of both God and the Lord throughout the chapter. In 14:3 it is God who receives the one who eats or does not eat. In 14:6, it is God to whom thanks is given, and, as mentioned above, it is before the judgment seat of God that all will stand. So there is in a sense a distinction between the two, but there is also some merging in Paul's thought. It is God who receives, but it is the Lord who causes one to stand. Both are concerned for maintenance of the believer whether he eats all things, or only vegetables. It is to the Lord that one eats or does not eat, but he gives thanks to God.

The closeness of God and the Lord in Paul's thought can be seen in Paul's reference in 14:10 to the judgment seat of God, compared to 2 Corinthians 5:10 where it

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would not have referred to the judgment seat of Christ doesn't account for the appearance in 2 Cor 5:10, where the reference to Christ is clear. See also Kreitzer, *Jesus and God*, 109. At any rate, θεός is in all likelihood the correct reading.

<sup>80</sup>Jewett, *Romans*, 581; Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 809; Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1998), 722; Elwell, "The Deity of Christ," 299.

<sup>81</sup>So also Schreiner, *Romans*, 722.

is clear that it is before the judgment seat of Christ all must stand. The closeness can also be seen in 14:11 in the quote from Isaiah 49:18. It is sometimes argued that *κύριος* here should refer to Christ. Capes lists reasons, including the clear reference in 14:9 to Jesus, the linkage between *ζῶ* in 14:11 and *ἐζήσεν* in verse 9, application to Christ in Philippians 2:10-11, the importance of the passage, and the association of the passage with resurrection and judgment.<sup>82</sup> While there is a definite shift in referent, however, it may not be as difficult as it seems to understand the reference to be to God because Romans 14:11 is intended to support verse 10(b) (*πάντες γὰρ παραστησόμεθα τῷ βήματι τοῦ θεοῦ*).<sup>83</sup> If one does not accept the variant reading (see note above) *θεοῦ* is naturally antecedent to *κύριος*. That is not inconsistent with Isaiah 45 where in the midst of a passage regarding the messianic features of Cyrus (Isa 45:1) God himself (*יְהוָה* in 45:15 and *יְהוָה* in 45:21) is referred to as the Savior of Israel.<sup>84</sup> In addition, the parallelism makes it difficult to separate *ἐμοί* and *κύριος* from *τῷ θεῷ* at the end of the quote. For those reasons, it is best to understand *κύριος* as referring to God in this case, in spite of the referential shift from verse 9.<sup>85</sup>

The point of the argument that in Romans 14:11 *κύριος* refers to God is to show that there is significant fluidity in Paul's thought between Jesus and God. He can refer to

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<sup>82</sup>Capes, *Yahweh Texts*, 130. Cf. Fee, *Pauline Christology*, 265. Fee adds that this interpretation explains the lack of a direct object in that everyone will bow to Christ and to God and give an account of himself only and not for what he ate or drank. That, however, could be true if one made a confession only to God.

<sup>83</sup>C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (London: T & T Clark, 1979), 2:710.

<sup>84</sup>So Kreitzer, *Jesus and God*, 108.

<sup>85</sup>Kreitzer, *Jesus and God*, 108; Schreiner, *Romans*, 722; Käsemann, *Romans*, 373; Richardson, *Paul's Language*, 192; Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 810. Dunn's comment that the argument for Christ as the referent of *κύριος* is based on importation of exegesis of Phil 2:10-11 and 2 Cor 5:10 is not entirely fair given the arguments made by Capes and Fee. There is evidence that the arguments are influenced by those other texts, as in Fee, *Pauline Christology*, 264, where he lists as one reason for his conclusion that Paul applies the text in Phil 2:10-11 to Christ. There are, however, other reasons for their position.

the judgment seat of Christ in one place, but the judgment seat of God in another. He can refer to Jesus as YHWH in one place, but apply the term YHWH to God in another with reference to the same Old Testament passage. But we need not press this point. If the reader is persuaded that *κύριος* refers to Christ, then this is simply one more incidence of an Old Testament YHWH text applied to Christ. The remaining fluidity in language in the passage applied to Christ and to God still stands. As Schreiner notes, Paul is not confused here. Instead, the language of the passages as a whole suggests the very close relationship between Christ and God.<sup>86</sup> Perhaps the closeness of the relationship is the cause of the difficulty in deciding the referent in 14:11. Richardson, while acknowledging this closeness of language for *κυρίῳ* and *θεῷ*, argues that this parallel language “doesn’t permit us to say that *κύριος* is God. But it certainly suggests that the *κύριος* is, in some sense, *in loca Dei*.”<sup>87</sup> But once again, attention must be drawn, as with the comments by Dodd above, to the problematic nature of attributing such an idea to Paul the monotheist. As Sanday and Headlam note:

[B]ut it is important to notice how easily St. Paul passes from *Χριστός* to *θεός*. The Father and the Son were in [Paul’s] mind so united in function that They (sic) may often be interchanged. God, or Christ, or God through Christ, will judge the world. Our life is in God, or in Christ, or with Christ in God. The union of man with God depends upon the intimate union of the Father and the Son.<sup>88</sup>

It may be correct that the closeness of the language is not enough alone to conclude that *κύριος* is God, but it is enough to suggest that Paul could think of Jesus and God in much the same way, which, arguably, counters some of the concern raised by Flebbe and Käsemann about the distinctions Paul makes between Jesus and God.

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<sup>86</sup>Schreiner, *Romans*, 722.

<sup>87</sup>Richardson, *Paul’s Language*, 190.

<sup>88</sup>Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 389.

Finally, Elwell points to other passages where Paul's thought is so fluid as to make it nearly impossible to distinguish between Christ and God, including especially Colossians 1:19-20 (ὅτι ἐναυτῶ εὐδόκησεν πᾶν τὸ πλήρωμα κατοικῆσαι καὶ δι' αὐτοῦ ἀποκαταλλάξαι τὰ πάντα εἰς αὐτόν) where the language surely shifts from Christ to God to Christ in the middle of the sentence, each without clarification of the antecedent of the pronoun.<sup>89</sup> Elwell points out similar instances in Colossians 2:8-15 where Paul begins with Jesus as the subject but shifts to God in verse 12(b), then surely to Christ in 14(a). Similarly see, among others, 1 Thessalonians 3:11 where there is no distinction at all.

**Other language and function associations.** In his greetings, Paul often associates Christ with God as in Romans 1:7(b): χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. The same formula appears in the openings of other letters as well (1 Cor 1:3; 2 Cor 1:2; Gal 1:3; Eph 1:2; Phil 1:2; Col 1:2; 1 Thess 1:1; 2 Thess 1:2 and Phlm 3). Since both God and Christ are governed by the same preposition there is reason to think there is close association between the two, but it should also be noted that in each of those instances, there is distinction between them. It is also notable that in the passages listed above where there is both distinction and equality, θεός is always qualified by πατήρ. So, there is an identity suggested by the fact that grace and peace come from both.<sup>90</sup> As C. F. D. Moule aptly points out:

Far more impressive than any single passage are two implicit Christological 'pointers.' The first is the fact that, in the greetings of the Pauline Epistles, God and Christ are brought into a single formula. It requires an effort of imagination to grasp the enormity that this must have seemed to a non-Christian Jew. It must have administered a shock comparable (if the analogy may be allowed without

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<sup>89</sup>Elwell, "Deity of Christ," 304-05.

<sup>90</sup>Against Donald A. Hagner, "Paul's Christology and Jewish Monotheism," in *Perspectives on Christology: Essays in Honor of Paul K. Jewett*, ed. Marguerite Shuster and Richard Muller (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991), 22. Hagner argues that Jesus Christ is associated with God as the agent, but there is really nothing there to suggest agency. Instead there is dual origin equally from the two.

irreverence) to our finding a religious Cuban to-day (sic) inditing a message from God-and-‘Che’ Guevara.<sup>91</sup>

In Romans 8:9, Paul refers both to the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ (Ἰμεῖς δὲ οὐκ ἐστὲ ἐν σαρκὶ ἀλλὰ ἐν πνεύματι, εἶπερ πνεῦμα θεοῦ οἰκεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν. εἰ δέ τις πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ οὐκ ἔχει, οὗτος οὐκ ἔστιν αὐτοῦ). There is no reason to think Paul has in mind different Spirits, and he even speaks of Christ himself indwelling the believer in 8:10, but returns to the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead which indwells the believer in verse 11. That ease of movement of expression is further indication of the closeness between God and Christ.<sup>92</sup>

Finally, Paul can speak of the Kingdom of God (Rom 14:17 and 1 Cor 4:20, among others) and the Kingdom of His Son (Col 1:13). It is unlikely that the Kingdom of the Son is a separate kingdom because in 1:12, it is equated with the inheritance of the saints in the same manner that Paul speaks of inheriting the Kingdom of God, or in this case, behaving in a way such as not to inherit it (Gal 5:21). Likewise, Paul can speak of the church or churches of God (1 Cor 1:2; 10:32; and 11:16, among others) and the churches of Christ (Rom 16:16). So I would suggest that although in some way Paul distinguished between God and Christ, it was not in such a way that prohibited him from connecting the two so closely as to make them virtually identical.<sup>93</sup>

### Summary and Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter has been to consider the objection that nowhere else in his writing did Paul refer to Jesus as God. I have not conceded the accuracy of that

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<sup>91</sup>C. F. D. Moule, “The New Testament and the Doctrine of the Trinity: A Short Report on an Old Theme,” *Expository Times* 88 (1976-77): 17.

<sup>92</sup>Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:388; Richardson, *Paul’s Language*, 289. See also Schreiner, *Romans*, 413-14, “Texts like these provided the raw materials from which the church later hammered out the doctrine of the Trinity.”

<sup>93</sup>For further indications of the closeness, or even the identification, of Christ and God, see Elwell, “The Deity of Christ,” 300-06.

statement since the evidence points to the conclusion that Paul did in fact refer to Jesus as God in Titus 2:13. Arguments to the contrary have not been convincing and even those who argue that Paul did not mean to refer to Jesus as God acknowledge that the argument made in this paper regarding Titus 2:13 is the majority opinion.

Such an argument, however, does not convince everyone, partly because of the dispute over the authorship of Titus. I have also argued, however, that there are many other passages where Paul closely associates Christ with God by applying texts from the Old Testament to Christ in a way to suggest that Paul sees no distinction between Christ and YHWH. It is important to note here with C. Kavin Rowe that among both systematic theologians and exegetes there is a tendency to assume that “YHWH, the God of the Old Testament is the Father *only*” (emphasis original).<sup>94</sup> But as Rowe notes, this assumption does not properly represent the New Testament texts, which, while they never identify the Father with the Son, they do give the divine name to both.<sup>95</sup> It is more than fair to find that tendency in Paul’s writings.

In addition, Paul mixed his references between Christ and God so that sometimes it is difficult to determine to whom he actually refers and in other ways joins the two in things like greetings that come from both. Thus, while I am happy to acknowledge it is also true that Paul often speaks of Christ in a way that distinguishes him from God, I would suggest from this survey, that there is at the same time no substantive difference between the two in Paul’s writing. Thus I conclude with Joseph Fitzmyer speaking of Philippians 2:6-11 that it is “understandable how Paul may well call

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<sup>94</sup>Rowe, “Biblical Pressure and Trinitarian Hermeneutics,” 302-03.

<sup>95</sup>Ibid., 303. As an example of the sort of thing Rowe critiques, see James D. G. Dunn, *Did the First Christians Worship Jesus? The New Testament Evidence* (London: SPCK and Louisville, Westminster John Knox, 2010), 142. Dunn comments that “Jesus is not the Father. He is not Yahweh.” Apparently Dunn understands to negate one is to negate the other, but there is no reason to make that claim since it is fairly certain that Paul does identify Jesus with YHWH by shifting the referent in the OT citations. It is, of course, certain that Paul differentiates between Jesus and the Father.

Christ Jesus even *theos*, ‘God’ (Rom 9:5b). For, after all, he affirms in using this hymn that he regards Christ Jesus as worthy of the same adoration that Isaiah 45:23 accorded to YHWH in the Old Testament.”<sup>96</sup>

In spite of the arguments above, however, the weighty question remains regarding the reasons Paul would use the word *θεός* to refer to Jesus in Romans 9:5 if he doesn’t apply it that way anywhere else in his undisputed letters (except see above regarding Titus 2:13). That question includes the problem of why, at this point in Romans, at the beginning of a discrete section that some would assert is centered on God, not Christ, Paul would speak of Christ in such an exalted manner at all, whether as *κύριος* or *θεός*.<sup>97</sup> As Flebbe argues, Romans 9:6, immediately following, begins a discussion that centers on God and he finds it difficult to draw a connection between 9:5b and 9:6 since a doxology to Christ here has no place in Paul’s argument at all.<sup>98</sup> Whether those are reasonable statements will be addressed in the remaining chapters. It is true that nowhere else in 9:6-29 does Paul say more about the person of Christ, so why would he use the term in Romans 9:5 to refer to Jesus? Unless his use was a slip of the tongue in a moment of ecstasy as suggested by A. W. Wainwright, it must have to do with his argument in Romans 9-11.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>96</sup>Joseph Fitzmyer, “The Christological Hymn of Philippians 2:6-11,” in *According to Paul: Studies in the Theology of the Apostle* (New York: Paulist Press, 1993), 104.

<sup>97</sup>See, e.g., Fee, *Pauline Christology*, 275.

<sup>98</sup>Flebbe, *Solus Deus*, 271.

<sup>99</sup>Arthur W. Wainwright, *The Trinity in the New Testament* (London: SPCK, 1962; reprint, Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2001), 57-58. Wainwright suggested that Paul would identify Jesus as *θεός* here, but nowhere else in his letters, because of his innate monotheism which he held in conflict with his belief that Jesus really is God. Thus, for Wainwright, the answer lies in Paul’s emotions. Paul’s deep feelings regarding the rejection of Christ by Israel led him to give Christ the full honors of deity. Rom 9:5b is not part of the sequence of thought in the paragraph. It is an interjection. Wainwright was arguing against what he described as the psychological argument about what Paul was capable or not capable of writing. But Wainwright has himself constructed an argument about Paul’s psychology. While his argument is a simple explanation of the phenomenon, like the other psychological arguments about what Paul was capable of writing, it simply cannot be tested.

## CHAPTER 5

### THE STUMBLING BLOCK

In the last two chapters I addressed a number of objections from outside the text of Romans 9:5 that argue that Paul would not apply *θεός* to Christ. There may be other objections that could be raised, but one important issue remains: If Paul wished to apply *θεός* to Christ, why here at the beginning of Romans 9-11? That objection is stated clearly by Gordon Fee: “Pauline emphases both in Romans as a whole and in the present passage in particular (chs. 9-11) are so thoroughly theocentric that one would seem to need more than simply a single grammatical option to overturn that emphasis in this letter.”<sup>1</sup> Fee is, of course, referring to what he regards as simply an optional way of reading Romans 9:5b when he refers to the single grammatical option. For him the theocentric emphasis of Romans 9-11 is simply too strong for that option to be correct. Similarly, Jochen Flebbe raises the objection that Romans 9:5b must not have been meant to refer to Christ since that would provide no connection to 9:6-29, which is God centered and where there is no mention of Christ at all.<sup>2</sup> In this chapter we turn first to the problem of how Paul’s use of *θεός* for Christ in Romans 9:5 may be connected to the remainder of chapters 9-11 and then to consideration of how Paul understood Christ as the stumbling block in 9:30-33.

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<sup>1</sup>Gordon D. Fee, *Pauline Christology: An Exegetical-Theological Study* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2007), 275.

<sup>2</sup>Jochen Flebbe, *Solus Deus: Untersuchungen zur Rede von Gott im Brief des Paulus an die Römer* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 207-72. Flebbe is comfortable with a caesura after 9:5a, but not after 5b.

## Christ in Romans 9-11

I will be detained here only briefly to consider whether Romans 9:5b, as I have suggested it should be read, has any connections with 9:6a and then with any of the rest of chapters 9-11. As noted above, Flebbe suggests it does not. But the question must be asked: To what does the conjunction ( $\delta\epsilon$ ) in 9:6a connect? If the connection is to 9:5b only, perhaps Flebbe is justified in denying Paul would assign the word  $\theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$  to Christ since the following section (9:6-29) appears to concern God the Father's right as creator to choose as he wishes. It is much more likely, however, that 9:6 is connected to the entire thought that covers all of 9:1-5, most particularly Paul's anguish over the condition of his countrymen.<sup>3</sup> That condition is the cause of Paul's wish to become anathema on their behalf. The cause of his extreme anguish begins in verse 4. The privileges given to Israel, including most recently the Messiah, enlarge the grief Paul feels. Thus "it is to the apostle's grief that the reservation of verse 6 is to be attached."<sup>4</sup> Verse 6, then, is connected by the conjunction to the whole thought of 9:1-5, and a direct connection between 9:5b need not be established, except that 9:5b completes the thought of 9:1-5.

A bigger question, as raised by Fee, is whether a Christological statement in 9:5 can be connected at all to chapters 9-11. Fee is correct that there is a strong theocentric emphasis in Romans 9-11. In fact, one might note briefly that in all Romans God is mentioned more than in any of the other Pauline letters.<sup>5</sup> But Fee's assumption

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<sup>3</sup>So also John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans: The English Text with Introduction, Exposition and Notes* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), 2:8. In addition to the above argument see Christopher G. Whitsett, "Son of God, Seed of David: Paul's Messianic Exegesis in Romans 1:3-4," *JBL* 119 (2000), 666-69. Whitsett suggests that Christ is the connection between the fathers in 9:5 and the patriarchs in 9:6-13. According to his argument, the sequence of Israel's privileges in 9:5 and the recurrence of the elements of promise and of the patriarchs in 9:6-13 suggest Christ is the unstated element in the argument of vv. 6-13 as the type for which the patriarchs are the antitype.

<sup>4</sup>Murray, *Romans*, 2:9.

<sup>5</sup>Among others see Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Leicester: Apollos and Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 20. Morris concludes that Romans is fundamentally a book about God because the word God appears 153 times in the letter, an average of once every 46 words. That is more than any other book in the NT. Morris acknowledges that statistics must be used with caution, but in this case, he is

that such an emphasis in chapters 9-11 precludes a Christological reference here is a bit of a jump. In fact, that statement overlooks the fact that “the character and content of Israel’s disobedience to the gospel are in fact *Christological*” (emphasis original).<sup>6</sup> In fact, as noted by Rowe, to set theocentrism over against christocentrism misunderstands Paul’s view of God and Jesus Christ.<sup>7</sup> Theocentrism is an appropriate term to describe Romans 9-11 only insofar as it includes the Christological emphasis of 9:30-11:26. Rowe further notes that Christ is the stumbling block and he is the *κύριος* Paul mentions more than once. In fact, there are 17 references to Christ in 9:30-10:21, but only 13 to God.<sup>8</sup>

In addition, there is ample evidence of the importance of Christ in the letter as a whole. After all, it is Christ who is the subject of the gospel itself (1:3).<sup>9</sup> Since arguably

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comfortable concluding from the statistics that the one great theme is God. Similarly, Robert Jewett, *Romans: A Commentary* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), 102.

<sup>6</sup>C. Kavin Rowe, “Romans 10:13: What is the Name of the Lord?” *HBT* 22 (2000): 138. Rowe lists as support Rom 9:32-33; 10:4, 6-7, 9, 11, 12-14, 16, 17. See, similarly, Markus Barth, “One God, One Christ, One People,” *Ex Auditu* 4 (1988): 9. Barth argues that Christ is the center of Paul’s thought in Rom 9-11. Also, Edith M. Humphrey, “Why Bring the Word Down? The Rhetoric of Demonstration and Disclosure in Romans 9:30-10:21,” in *Romans and the People of God: Essays in Honor of Gordon D. Fee on the Occasion of His 65<sup>th</sup> Birthday*, ed. Sven K. Soderlund and N. T. Wright (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 139. Contra James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 38b (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1988), 605, who see the section as soteriological and salvation-historical. See also Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989), 84-87, esp. 85 where Hays asserts that Romans does not carry through with Christological exegesis of the OT. Instead it is the church that interests Paul in his OT citations. Perhaps Hays tempers that somewhat in Richard B. Hays “On the Rebound: A Response to Critiques of *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, in *Paul and the Scriptures of Israel*,” ed. Craig A. Evans and James A. Sanders, JSOT Supplement Series vol. 83 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 76-78. Hays acknowledges there that it might be best to think of Paul as theocentric, although he wishes to coin a new word ‘ecclesiotelic.’

<sup>7</sup>Rowe “Romans 10:13,” 138. For an example of the kind of reading Rowe criticizes see E. Elizabeth Johnson, *The Function of Apocalyptic and Wisdom Traditions in Romans 9-11* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989), 204.

<sup>8</sup>Rowe, “Romans 10:13,” 138n 9. See also E. P. Sanders, *Paul, the Law and the Jewish People* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), 41. Sanders agrees that Rom 9:30-10:21 is Christocentric and that it would “be a mistake, however, to play against one another ‘theocentric’ and ‘christocentric’ interpretations of Paul.”

<sup>9</sup>In Rom 1:3 Paul writes that the gospel is concerning his (God’s) son (περὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ) which I understand to mean that Christ is the subject of the gospel. Thomas Schreiner understands the genitive (εὐαγγέλιον θεοῦ) to be both genitive of source and objective genitive so that the gospel is both from God and about God. Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1998), 37. The

the theme is the gospel received by faith (Rom 1:16-17), and if the gospel concerns Christ, then in some sense he must be central to the message of the letter.<sup>10</sup> In addition, it is Christ whose sacrifice makes it possible that those who have faith in him can be justified (3:21-26). It is Christ in whom the believer must have faith to be saved (3:22; 26). In fact, it is arguably true that in Romans a shift occurs in chapter 5 from an emphasis on God and the work that he did in Christ (see, e.g., 3:21-26) to the work of Christ which he himself has done. It is notable that chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8 all end with an emphasis on Christ. It is Christ who as the second Adam (5:12-21) makes it possible for grace to reign in life (6:1-4). It is the death of Christ that is effective for dealing with sin (6:1-11). It is Christ who delivers from death, which is the effect of the law (7:25). It is in Christ Jesus that the love of God exists from which the believer cannot be separated (8:39).

As I will argue in this chapter, it is Christ over whom Israel stumbles. It is he who is the end (τέλος) of the law and he is the subject of the confession of 10:9-13. Finally, it is Christ on whom they must call and on whom they must believe (10:14) and it is the word of Christ that is preached (10:17). I will argue later that in 11:25-27, it is Christ who will deliver Israel and remove sin from Israel.

### **Context and Limits of the Passage**

Some commentators argue that Romans 9:30-33 concludes 9:6-29,<sup>11</sup> but the arguments are not convincing, and, as suggested by James D. G. Dunn, they may be

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genitive is more likely simply a genitive of source. Paul understood the gospel to have its source in God, but the prepositional phrase makes it clear that the gospel concerns Christ. So also Jewett, *Romans*, 102.

<sup>10</sup>So also Humphrey, “Why Bring the Word Down?” 139.

<sup>11</sup>Jan Lambrecht, “The Caesura Between Romans 9:30-3 and 10:1-4,” *NTS* 45 (1999), 142-44; Folker Siegert, *Argumentation bei Paulus* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1985), 141. See also p. 148 where Lambrecht asserts that 10:1-11:32 is syntactically and pragmatically a single complex. Cf. Flebbe, *Solus Deus*, 274, 336.

mainly a result of the existing chapter divisions.<sup>12</sup> As argued by numerous commentators, the passage is better taken with chapter 10 for several reasons.<sup>13</sup> The passage begins with the words *τὶ οὖν ἐροῦμεν*, which occur five other times in Romans (4:1, 6:1, 7:7, 8:31, and 9:14) and always signal the beginning of a new line of thought for Paul.<sup>14</sup> That is not to say that 9:30-33 has no connection with the previous section, but there is a new beginning in 9:30. That also does not necessarily demonstrate that yet another section does not begin at 10:1, but, as Dunn notes, the chief reason for arguing that a new section begins at 10:1 is the opening *ἀδελφοί*. That is not conclusive, however, as Paul uses the term in 1:13, 7:4 and 8:12 without signaling a shift in subject.<sup>15</sup> In 8:12 there may be a slight shift in emphasis, but that verse begins with an inferential conjunction (*ἄρα οὖν*) while in 10:1 the verse is asyndetic.

At least as important, perhaps, is the continuity of citation, concept and lexica in 9:30-33 with 10:1-13 rather than with 9:6-29. It is true that the citation in 9:33 has some connection with the catena in 9:25-29, but the most direct connection is with 10:11, where part of the Isaiah passages quoted in 9:33 is reproduced. In addition, the word righteousness (*δικαιοσύνη*) provides a strong lexical connection between 9:30-31 and 10:1-4, providing a conceptual connection between both passages having to do with Israel's failure to find what it sought. The lexical connection can be seen in *πίστις*,

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<sup>12</sup>Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 579.

<sup>13</sup>Among others, see Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 579; William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899), 278; Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 276; Jewett, *Romans*, 534; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Romans: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, The Anchor Bible, vol. 33 (New York: Doubleday, 1993), 576; Richard H. Bell, *The Irrevocable Call of God: An Inquiry into Paul's Theology of Israel* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), n 38.

<sup>14</sup>Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 579.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*

δικαιοσύνη, Χριστός, κύριος, and πᾶς.<sup>16</sup> The fact that the Gentiles obtained righteousness and Israel did not also forms a bit of an inclusio with the thought in 10:18-21, where the words have gone out to the ends of the earth, Israel is made jealous with a non-people by whom God was found although they were not seeking him, but Israel yet remains disobedient and obstinate.

Most important, though is the shift in topic. In 9:6 Paul began with Οὐχ οἶον δὲ ὅτι ἐκπέπτωκεν ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ. Taking the main idea of the chapters as the faithfulness of God, commentators see the statement that the word of God has not fallen as the thesis of chapters 9-11.<sup>17</sup> Paul then sets forth in 9:6-29 an argument for the freedom of God as creator to choose whom he will. Not everyone born of Israel is Israel, but it is in Isaac that Abraham's descendants will be called. Although neither had done anything good or bad, it is Jacob, not Esau, whom God loves. God chooses the one to whom he will extend mercy, a reference to Exodus 33:19 where God revealed his glory to Moses. It is the potter who chooses the purpose for the vessel. The emphasis on the sovereignty of God to choose continues throughout the passage and the place of Israel as God's chosen remains in doubt, although Paul has asserted that God is not unrighteous (9:14), suggesting God will deal rightly with Israel. Yet, Paul's lament over Israel in 9:1-5 continues to ring in the reader's mind as he moves to Paul's thought in 9:30-33.

Many commentators notice the shift in topic at verse 9:30 and suggest there is a shift from the freedom and sovereignty of God to the responsibility of Israel.<sup>18</sup> In fact,

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<sup>16</sup>So also Rowe, "The Name of the Lord," 139.

<sup>17</sup>Jewett, *Romans*, 571; Schreiner, *Romans*, 492. Johann Kim labels verse 6a the propositio, a term in rhetoric for a sentence or clause that concisely makes clear the point in dispute. Johann Kim, *God, Israel and the Gentiles: Rhetoric and Situation in Romans 9-11*, SBL Dissertation Series, vol. 176 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000), 123-24.

<sup>18</sup>Schreiner, *Romans*, 531; Käsemann, *Romans*, 276; Mark A. Seifrid, "Romans" in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 650; C. H. Dodd, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1932), 161; Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 278; C. K. Barrett, "Romans 9.30-10.21: Fall and

C. K. Barrett labels that as the majority opinion.<sup>19</sup> The majority opinion is not without its detractors, though. Johannes Munck argued that 9:30-10:21 does not analyze the guilt of the Jews, it “just catches us up on details of what has happened to the Jews, details not supplied us at the beginning of chapter 9 (or since then, for that matter).”<sup>20</sup> The detail that Munck finds described in 9:30-10:21 is the Jews’ unbelief toward Christ. According to Munck, the core of the passage, however, is God’s way of salvation by faith.

In yet another vein, E. Elizabeth Johnson understands that in 9:30-10:21 Paul explains “the current imbalance of Gentile faithfulness and Jewish unbelief is a function of God’s impartiality.”<sup>21</sup> There are, of course, reasons to think of God’s impartiality, most of all the apex of the passage in 10:13 “all who call on the name of the Lord will be saved.” But the difficulty is that after 9:30 the Gentiles disappear from the text and don’t return again until 10:12. There, the statement is that there is no difference between Jew and Gentile, but as I will argue in chapter 6, the emphasis is on the need for Israel to call upon the name of the Lord. The Gentiles appear again in 10:19-21, but again, the focus there is on the unbelief of Israel, not on the salvation of the Gentiles. The reference to the Gentiles in those verses is similar to that in 9:30-32. Just as the Gentiles were not pursuing righteousness in 9:30 but found it, in 10:20 God has been found by those who did not seek him. In both places, the point is not so much that God chose the Gentiles as that Israel is in unbelief, as the point is made finally in 10:21: “All day long I have held

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Responsibility of Israel,” in *Essays in Paul* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1982), 133-36; C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1979), 2:505.

<sup>19</sup>Barrett, “Romans 9.30-10.21,” 132.

<sup>20</sup>Johannes Munck, *Christ and Israel: An Interpretation of Romans 9-11*, trans. Ingeborg Nixon (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967), 77. So also, following Munck, John Ziesler, *Paul’s Letter to the Romans* (London: SCM and Philadelphia: Trinity, 1989), 250.

<sup>21</sup>Johnson, *Apocalyptic and Wisdom Traditions*, 147. Similarly N. T. Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991), 240.

out my hands to a people who are disobedient and rebellious.” The mention of the Gentiles in 11:11 is similar.

While Johnson’s proposal is less useful, Munck is correct, of course, that God’s way of salvation by faith is an important part of the passage. It is best stated, however, that in 9:30-10:21 Paul’s concern is the subject of Israel’s responsibility in the face of their rejection of Christ. The issue in 9:30-10:21 is Christ and who he is, and the implications of that for Israel. Perhaps, then, we can show that Paul’s thought here connects to his calling Jesus God in 9:5b. As noted by Seifrid, “The earlier identification of Christ as God in 9:5 now becomes central to Paul’s argument. In Christ we meet our Creator, who has come near to us and saves all who call upon him.”<sup>22</sup> Therefore, Paul has purpose in making the center third of Romans 9-11 Christological.<sup>23</sup>

#### **Romans 9:30-10:4: Righteousness and Law**

Romans 9:30-10:4 presents a number of exegetical questions that contribute to discussion of the text. While these difficulties are fascinating and tempt one to delve into the controversy about Paul’s use of law and righteousness, it will not be necessary to resolve them all in this chapter. The primary interest here will be the stumbling block over which Israel stumbled. I will offer a reading of the passage, including a suggestion for some of the difficulties, but those issues, other than the nature of the stumbling block, need not detract us from the main issue.

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<sup>22</sup>Seifrid, “Romans,” 650. Cf. Wright, *Climax*, 240, where Wright notes that Rom 9:5 is the real foundation stone of the whole section. Wright’s argument is significantly different, though, as ultimately he sees the thrust of 9:30-10:13 as the way in which “through the preaching of the Messiah and the preaching which heralds him, Israel is transformed from being an ethnic people into a worldwide family....” That view is not sustainable given Paul’s understanding of Israel in 11:1-26 where Paul is clear about the difference between Israel and the Gentiles. See chap. 7 of this dissertation.

<sup>23</sup>So also Neil Richardson, *Paul’s Language About God*, JSNT Supplement Series, vol. 99 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 66. Contra Hays, *Echoes of Scripture*, 75. Hays seems to take 9:30-10:21 as a parenthesis in that Paul “pauses in midcourse to describe how Israel has temporarily swerved off the track during an anomalous interval preceding the consummation of God’s plan.”

### **What Shall We Say Then?**

The section of Scripture under consideration here begins in 9:30 with the words “what shall we say then?” (Τὴ οὖν ἐροῦμεν;). The same words appear at the beginning of 9:14 followed up with the question “There is no unrighteousness with God is there?” The question in 9:14 derives from the discussion of God’s freedom to choose Isaac (the younger) instead of Esau, as part of Paul’s overall argument about who Israel is. Paul’s answer to the question about unrighteousness with God is forthcoming after 9:14, only in his adamant denial that God is unrighteous. Instead of explaining his answer, however, he simply reasserts God’s sovereignty as shown in his choice of Pharaoh to make known his power. The phrase in 9:19 is similar (“You will say to me”), this time posing the problem of how it is that anyone can be liable if God has chosen. Once again, Paul simply asserts the right of the creator, as represented in the metaphor of the potter and clay, to make and choose vessels for honor and for destruction in order to make known both his wrath and the riches of his glory (9:20-23).

It is basic to the discussion of chapters 9-11 to recognize that God is free to choose whom he wishes, but it is in 9:24-29 that Paul moves toward the real problem that occupies him in these chapters. In verse 24 he asserts that God, in his freedom, calls believers from both the Jews and Gentiles. Paul takes the quotes from Hosea 1:10 and 2:23 to point to the situation of a people who had not called upon God becoming his people and then relies on Isaiah to make the point that Israel has always been a remnant. It is this problem of Gentiles becoming a part of the people while only a remnant of Israel remains that brings forth the question in 9:30. One expects that Paul will address that issue and he does in 9:30-10:21. If God is sovereign and he wishes to select a remnant to become “vessels of mercy,” then righteousness is not a matter of human effort (running or pursuing).<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>Jewett, *Romans*, 608.

## Pursuing and Not Obtaining

One of the initial issues that arises is found in the syntax of verses 30-31, in the words ὅτι ἔθνη τὰ μὴ διώκοντα δικαιοσύνην κατέλαβεν δικαιοσύνην, δικαιοσύνην δὲ τὴν ἐκ πίστεως· Ἰσραὴλ δὲ διώκων νόμον δικαιοσύνης εἰς νόμον οὐκ ἔφθασεν. J. A. Fitzmyer understands those words to form a question following the previous question (What shall we say? That the Gentiles who were not pursuing righteousness attained it, but the righteousness by faith, but Israel, although pursuing a law of righteousness did not attain to the law?).<sup>25</sup> That reading is, of course, grammatically possible. In fact, in 6:1, 7:7, 8:31, and 9:14 Paul follows the words Τὶ οὖν ἐροῦμεν; with another question. In this case, under Fitzmyer's proposal, one would understand that in response to the question "what shall we say," he asks in effect "is this what we shall say?" In spite of that, the words most likely form a statement serving as the answer to the initial rhetorical question. The beginning words of verse 32 (διὰ τί) which are no doubt a question (why?) would at the least be awkward following another question.<sup>26</sup>

Verses 30-31 form an antithesis. The δέ should be understood as a mild adversative so that verse 31 is in contrast to verse 30. The Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness, attained it (κατέλαβεν), that is, the Gentiles reached the goal for which they were not striving. But Israel, though striving for the goal all along, did not reach it (οὐκ ἔφθασεν).<sup>27</sup> In verses 32-33, Paul offers reasons for the failure of Israel to reach the

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<sup>25</sup>Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 577.

<sup>26</sup>Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 279; Schreiner, *Romans*, 535. Schreiner adds the objections that the question would be "insufferably long," which may be a reasonable objection, but not conclusive given the length of some of Paul's sentences (e.g., Rom 1:1-7). Fitzmyer acknowledges the problem of the awkwardness and allows the alternative that the words could be taken as answer to the initial rhetorical question.

<sup>27</sup>The participle διώκων is best taken as concessive. So also Steven Richard Bechtler, "Christ the Τέλος of the Law: The Goal of Romans 10:4," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 56 (1994): 292. Contra Käsemann, *Romans*, 277, who understands the participle to be adversative; and Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 581, who takes the participle as descriptive. Both Dunn and Käsemann make their comments in reaction against taking the participles as causal, about which they are correct. The words κατέλαβεν and ἔφθασεν are most likely synonymous here and the usage is most likely a matter of style. Φθάνω can have some meanings a bit

goal, and he develops those reasons in 10:1-4. The Gentiles are not mentioned again in this section since Paul's primary interest is Israel.<sup>28</sup> The race course language has been well noted by commentators and need not be rehearsed in detail here.<sup>29</sup>

One of the problems of the text is the nature of the antithesis. What the Gentiles were not pursuing was righteousness. One might expect Paul then to offer the antithesis that the Jews did pursue righteousness but did not attain it, but his response is a bit surprising.<sup>30</sup> It is, therefore, one of the problems of the text to determine exactly what it was that Paul meant Israel was pursuing. Paul says Israel was pursuing the law, but did not attain it. The words "law of righteousness" (νόμον δικαιοσύνης) occur in that form only here in the New Testament and scholars have offered various suggestions as to what Paul means. Barrett suggests the genitive is attributive, an attractive solution since it is well within Paul's thought to call the law righteous.<sup>31</sup> That is not so helpful with the resolution within the context of Paul's argument here, however, where he is primarily concerned with Israel's attempt at righteousness (10:1-4) or with Gentiles being in right relationship with God (9:30), both of which suggest the genitive has more to do with the standing of those involved than with a description of the law. Others suggest a sort of hypallage so that Paul really meant righteousness of the law (δικαιοσύνη νόμου), but there

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different from καταλαμβανω, but Paul uses it in Phil 3:16 in much the same manner as in Rom 9:31. Schreiner points out that Paul even uses the same words in Phil 3 that he uses in Rom 9:30-31. Schreiner, *Romans*, 536n 6.

<sup>28</sup>Schreiner, *Romans*, 535; C. E. B. Cranfield, "Some Notes on Romans 9:30-33," in *Jesus and Paulus: Festschrift für Werner Georg Kümmel zum 70 Geburtstag*, ed. E. Earle Ellis and Erich Grässer (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1975)139. Cranfield rightly notes that after their brief mention in 9:30, the Gentiles drop from consideration.

<sup>29</sup>See, e.g., Robert Badenas, *Christ the End of the Law: Romans 10:4 in Pauline Perspective*, JSOT Supplement Series, vol. 10 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1985), 101-04.

<sup>30</sup>Morna D. Hooker, "Christ: the 'End' of the Law," *Neotestamentica et Philonica: Studies in Honor of Peder Borgen*, ed. David E. Aune, Torrey Seland and Jarl Henning Ulrichsen (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 127.

<sup>31</sup>Barrett, "Romans 9:30-10:21," 140. So also, Luke Timothy Johnson, *Reading Romans: A Literary and Theological Commentary* (New York: Crossroad, 1997), 155.

is no textual evidence for that reading.<sup>32</sup> John Murray suggests νόμος as principle, but that is not consistent with the meaning in 10:4 where Paul is surely concerned with Christ as the τέλος of the Mosaic law.<sup>33</sup> The best solution here is to take δικαιοσύνης as a genitive of result, similar to ἀνάστασιν ζωῆς and ἀνάστασιν κρίσεως in John 5:29.<sup>34</sup> As noted by more than one commentator, Käsemann's suggestion that the phrase means "the righteousness the law demands or promises" overloads the sense.<sup>35</sup>

To what then, did Israel fail to attain? Clearly, they failed to attain to the law that leads to or results in righteousness. Dunn rightly asserts that in verse 31 the emphasis is on the νόμος, since that is the word that is repeated.<sup>36</sup> At the same time, though, δικαιοσύνης is no doubt to be supplied in the second instance, meaning that at least the

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<sup>32</sup>For an argument for the hypallage see Walter Schmithals, *Der Römerbrief: Ein Kommentar* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus-Gerd Mohn, 1988), 363. Schmithals bases his suggestion on the possibility of scribal error. See also John Calvin, *Commentary on the Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians*, trans. and ed. John Owen. Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, n.d.; reprint (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003); Otfried, Hofius, "All Israel Will be Saved: Divine Salvation and Israel's Deliverance in Romans 9-11," *PSB* 11, Supplementary Issue 1 (1990): 24-25. Idem, "Zur Auslegung von Römer 9,30-33" in *Paulusstudien II* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 162. Hofius understands the meaning to be the same as in Rom 10:5 and in Phil 3:9; that is, a righteousness from the law. The RSV also translate the hypallage.

<sup>33</sup>For the argument for principle, see Murray, *Romans*, 2:43. Similarly Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 279, refer to νόμος as a rule of life.

<sup>34</sup>See F. Blass and A. Debrunner, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, trans. and rev. by Robert W. Funk. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1961, 92, §166. See also, Bechtler, "Christ the Τέλος," 293. Similarly, Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 279. They say the phrase is a "rule of life which would produce righteousness." Seeing νόμος as a rule of life is not correct, but their language rightly suggests the genitive serves as result. Schreiner, *Romans*, 537, takes the genitive as objective which works out similarly "law for righteousness." Also J. Ross Wagner, "Faithfulness and Fear, Stumbling and Salvation: Receptions of LXX of Isaiah 8:11-18 in the New Testament," in *The Word Leaps the Gap: Essays on Scripture and Theology in Honor of Richard B. Hays*, ed. J. Ross Wagner, C. Kavin Rowe and A. Katherine Gried (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 90. According to Wagner, this is a "law that leads to righteousness," also similar to result.

<sup>35</sup>See, e.g., Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 581; Schreiner, *Romans*, 537. For his suggestion, see Käsemann, *Romans*, 277. But in agreement with Käsemann, see Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 627-28; C. Thomas Rhyne, "Nomos Dikaioσynēs and the Meaning of Romans 10:4," *CBQ* 47 (1985): 492; Cranfield "Romans 9:30-10:21" 37.

<sup>36</sup>Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 582. Similarly, Käsemann, *Romans*, 277.

sense of righteousness is repeated.<sup>37</sup> That many early scribes understood the text in that manner is evidenced by the variant reading *εἰς νόμον δικαιοσύνης* in a number of texts, including the Byzantine and a corrector of the Sinaiticus text. In addition, as Morna Hooker points out, the goal of keeping the law is righteousness. Since Israel did not attain to the law, it would be repetitive (but perhaps it could be emphatic) to point out that they also did not attain to righteousness.<sup>38</sup> Finally, Paul's concern with righteousness in 10:3, where Israel sought to establish their own righteousness while ignorant of the righteousness of God, and his comment about Christ as the goal of the law for righteousness makes it apparent that he is as much concerned with righteousness as with law in 9:30.<sup>39</sup>

In verse 32 Paul asks the rhetorical question why? (*διὰ τί*). This verse is elliptical, lacking the verb, so it is normal to supply some form or synonym of *διώκω* from verse 31 and to take verse 32b as a new sentence. For many the verb is an Indicative.<sup>40</sup> Some commentators in the past, however, have suggested a participle.<sup>41</sup> In the latter case verse 32 would all be the same sentence with the participle perhaps indicating the manner in which the stumbling occurred. The indicative is the more likely since verse 32a is best understood as providing the reason for Israel's failure to attain to the law of righteousness. Verses 32b-33 form an asyndeton with verse 32a, but it is

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<sup>37</sup>Cranfield, *Romans* 2:507. See also Schreiner, *Romans*, 538. Schreiner suggests *δικαιοσύνην* is the object of *ἔφθασεν* and *εἰς νόμον* is a predicate accusative.

<sup>38</sup>Hooker, "Christ," 127-28.

<sup>39</sup>Bechtler, "Christ the Τέλος of the Law," 294. See also John Paul Heil, "Christ the Termination of the Law (Romans 9:30-10:8), *CBQ* 63 (2001): 488.

<sup>40</sup>ASV, AV, NASB (updated), NIV, NRSV, RSV. Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:509; Schreiner, *Romans*, 538; Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 582; Jewett, *Romans*, 610; Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 280; Morris, *Romans*, 375.

<sup>41</sup>E. H. Gifford, *The Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans with Note and Introduction* (John Murray: London, 1886; reprint, Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1977), 177; Frederic Louis Godet, *Commentary on Romans* (Edinburgh: Messrs Clark, 1883; reprint, Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1977), 368.

possible to understand an implicit “therefore” joining the two halves of verse 32, so Paul means Israel stumbled on the stone because they pursued righteousness as from works and not through faith in Christ.<sup>42</sup> Verses 32(b)-33 are the result of their insistence on the righteousness by the law, which has caused them to stumble on the stone of salvation.<sup>43</sup> We must return to identify that stone, but first some further consideration of Israel’s attempt at righteousness is in order.

### **The Τέλος of the Law**

Paul begins what is now chapter 10 of Romans with an outcry similar to the one in 9:1-2 regarding his anguish over the condition of Israel. This time the reason is clear: he is concerned about their salvation.<sup>44</sup> In verses 2 and 3 Paul explains why they need salvation. It is not zeal for God that Israel lacks. They are surely zealous, but they lack knowledge. Verse 2 is the first in a series of verses beginning with γάρ, all serving to ground or explain another thought, and altogether serving to ground the fact that the Jews need to be saved. The zeal of verse 2 is continuous with pursuit of the law in 9:31.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>42</sup>Schreiner, *Romans*, 540; Jason C. Meyer, *The End of the Law: Mosaic Covenant in Pauline Theology* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2009), 211. See also Francis Watson, *Paul, Judaism and the Gentiles: Beyond the New Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 324. Watson asserts that works here refers exclusively to the practice of the Jewish law, which causes Israel to stumble over the stone of stumbling.

<sup>43</sup>Jewett, *Romans*, 611.

<sup>44</sup>The thought that the Jews need to be saved is not endorsed by all. See, e.g. Lloyd Gaston, *Paul and the Torah* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1987), 116-34. It is generally Gaston’s argument that it is an anti-semitic attitude on behalf of Christians to think that Jews must be saved in the same way Christians are saved. Instead, God has two peoples, the Jews saved by the Torah, and Christians by faith in Christ. In general response to a two covenant theory, see Wright, *Climax*, 253-54. Wright argues that the two covenant theory “says precisely what Paul here forbids the church to say, namely that Christianity is for non-Jews.” Wright appears to surrender his point, however, when he concludes that the Jews will not ultimately experience Christian salvation, although it is not entirely clear what he means by Christian salvation if it is not the salvation Paul writes about in Romans.

<sup>45</sup>So also Thomas R. Schreiner, *The Law and its Fulfillment* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1993), 106. Zeal has a long tradition in Israel. In the OT several people serve as examples for later zeal. Simeon and Levi, who were zealous to avenge their sister Dinah, were an example to be followed in Judith 9 when the Assyrians were resolved to desecrate the sanctuary. Perhaps most often remembered as an example is Phinehas, who turned away the wrath of God by his zeal to root out the sin of an Israelite man

Verse 3 also begins with *γάρ*, which is explanatory. It explains the lack of knowledge and develops the effects of a zeal without knowledge, thereby explaining that the Jews were not subject to the righteousness of God because they were unaware of it and the result of being unaware of the righteousness of God, was that they went about seeking to establish their own.<sup>46</sup> By the phrase ‘righteousness of God,’ Paul likely means here the righteousness that has its source in God, or the righteousness that God provides. Israel simply failed to understand that God had provided righteousness apart from works (9:32) through faith in Jesus Christ.<sup>47</sup> Because they were trying to establish their own

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and a Midianite woman (Num 25:1-9. See Ps 106:30-31, Sir 45:23 and 1 Macc 2:26). In Acts 21:20 mention is made of thousands of Jews who had become believers, who were zealous for the law and here in Romans, Paul may have had in mind his own zeal as mentioned in Gal 1:14 and Phil 3:6. Worth note is that the Jews’ zeal was for God (or as in Acts 20:21 for the law, probably meaning the same thing). James D. G. Dunn, *The Parting of the Ways between Christianity and Judaism and their Significance for the Character of Christianity* (Philadelphia: Trinity Press, 1991), 121. Dunn argues that Israel’s zeal was for maintaining boundaries to keep Gentiles out. Similarly, see Carolyn J. Sharp “Phinehas’ Zeal and Rhetorical Strategy in 4QMMT.” *Revue de Qumran* 18 (1997): 207-22. Sharp argues that there is an allusion to Phinehas in the phrase “it was accounted to you for righteousness in your deeds of uprightness and good...” (my translation of her Hebrew text). Sharp finds here an example of zeal that was dedicated to keeping the camp pure by preventing mixing with those who were not part of the community. In contrast to Dunn, see Vincent M. Smiles, “The Concept of ‘Zeal’ in Second-Temple Judaism and Paul’s Critique of it in Romans 10:2,” *CBQ* 64 (2002): 288. In response to Dunn, Smiles argues that all the incidences of zeal noted by Dunn can be seen as zeal for the law rather than for separatism. In addition, there is really no evidence in this passage to understand Paul as Dunn suggests. To understand the zeal to relate to boundary violations, one must, it seems, view *τέλος* as a temporal end, but more must be said below. How one views this is likely a matter of how one understands the law in all of Romans, and at risk of creating a completely separate issue here, it can be noted that most often when Paul provides an example of the law in Romans he references one of the Ten Commandments (e.g., Rom 2:21-23; 7:7).

<sup>46</sup>But see Walter, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, rev. and ed. Frederick W. Danker, trans. and ed. William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), s.v. “*ἀγνοέω*,” where the meaning of *ἀγνοέω* in 10:3 is suggested as disregard. They also cite 1 Cor 14:38, where ‘recognize’ is probably the best translation, but disregard could apply.

<sup>47</sup>Moo, *Romans*, 633. Contra George E. Howard, “Christ the End of the Law: The Meaning of Romans 10:4 ff,” *JBL* 88 (1969), 336. Howard suggests the Jews were ignorant that God’s righteousness included all nations. The problem with that view is that Paul understands the righteousness of God to have been revealed in putting forth Jesus as *ἰλαστήριον*. See Moo, *Romans*, 70-78, for a summary of the various views of Paul’s use of the righteousness of God. In 10:3 the righteousness of God is likely God’s provision of righteousness. Arguably, Paul makes a similar statement in Phil 3:9 applied to himself, not Israel, but there he uses a preposition that makes it almost certain he speaks of the righteousness of God as righteousness that has its source with God. The righteousness that God provides, however, could be said to be God’s vindication as well (cf. 3:4, 3:26), as argued by Sam K. Williams, “The ‘Righteousness of God’ in Romans,” *JBL* 99 (1980), 283.

righteousness they did not submit to the righteousness that God provides. In fact, as Paul says in 9:32, they stumbled over it.

Verse 4 is introduced by γάρ as the ground of verse 3, but it cannot follow directly on the words of verse 3 without adding an implied supposition that not only were the Jews not subject to the righteousness of God, they were wrong not to be so subjected.<sup>48</sup> They were wrong to try to establish their own righteousness by the law, because Christ is the τέλος of the law for righteousness for all who believe.

Perhaps the most difficult issue in this verse is the meaning of τέλος. The meaning could be teleological (goal, purpose, result) but within Paul's usage it could also be temporal end.<sup>49</sup> The arguments for both meanings have been presented by others in detail and it is not necessary for the purposes of this chapter to resolve the issue completely. I side, however, with those who understand goal as the meaning. At the same time, there is a sense in which the law has met its purpose and comes to an end for righteousness.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>48</sup>Williams, "‘Righteousness of God’ in Romans," 284; Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 284; Schreiner, *Romans*, 547.

<sup>49</sup>For perhaps the most detailed defense of the telic meaning see generally, Badenas, *Christ the End of the Law*. See also, among others, Cranfield, *Romans*, 2 :516-19; Frank Thielman, *Paul and the Law: A Contextual Approach* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1994), 205-08; Jewett, *Romans*, 619-20; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 584; Bechtler, "Christ the Τέλος of the Law," 298 and 302; N. T., "The Letter to the Romans: Introduction, Commentary and Reflections," in vol. 10 of *The New Interpreter's Bible*, ed. Leander E. Keck (Nashville: Abingdon, 2002), 654-58; Howard, "Christ the End of the Law," 336, also takes this as goal, but sees the goal as the unification of the nations. For support of the temporal argument, see Brice L. Martin, *Christ and the Law in Paul* (Leiden: Brill, 1989), 129-44; Schreiner, *Romans*, 544-46; Käsemann, *Romans*, 282-83; Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 589; Moo, *Romans*, 639; Heil, "Christ the Termination of the Law," 484-98.

<sup>50</sup>Similarly, see David K. Lowery, "Christ, the End of the Law in Romans 10:4," in *Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church: The Search of Definition*, ed. Craig A. Blaising and Darrell L. Bock (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 236. Lowery, however, argues that Paul's primary purpose is the temporal end of the law. See also Ira Jolivet, "Christ the TELOS in Romans 10:4 as Both Fulfillment and Termination," *Restoration Quarterly* 51 (2009), esp. p. 3. Jolivet's argument is that Paul was deliberately ambiguous in his use of τέλος. It is more likely Paul simply used a word whose meaning may simply encapsulate at once all the possible English meanings.

The qualification that Paul adds should not be overlooked. Christ is the τέλος of the law for righteousness for all who believe.<sup>51</sup> In that way, the connection to Romans 9:30-33 is maintained. In fact, the point here is similar to that in 9:33. Israel has rejected the one who is their hope for salvation. As Cranfield comments:

This is the inward meaning of Israel's failure to come to grips with the law; this is the inward meaning of its obstinate pursuit of the law on the basis of works instead of on the basis of faith. Israel has failed to recognize Him as the meaning and the goal of the law, and has rejected Him. How could it really come to grips with the law if it was not ready to believe in Him who is the law's innermost meaning? But how could it believe in Him, if it was determined to rely on its own works? So they have stumbled over Christ (cf. I Cor 1.23 - Ἰουδαίοις μὲν σκάνδαλον). He who was given for their salvation has thus, because of their perverseness, actually proved to be the occasion of their fall.<sup>52</sup>

Israel's misuse of the law became evident only in God's placing in Zion the stone of stumbling.<sup>53</sup>

So, in 9:30-33 and in 10:1-4, Paul actually makes two relatively parallel arguments. In 9:30-33 the argument is that Israel, although pursuing righteousness, did so in the wrong way; that is, not by faith, and thus stumbled on the stone of stumbling.<sup>54</sup> In 10:1-4, Israel, though having zeal for God, did not recognize the righteousness God has provided and misunderstood that Christ is the goal of the law. As J. Ross Wagner points out:

The juxtaposition of Romans 9:30-33 with 10:1-4 makes clear that Israel has been attempting to establish 'their own righteousness' precisely by pursuing the Law as if it were ἐξ ἔργων. In contrast, 'God's righteousness,' the "righteousness ἐκ πίστεως,"

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<sup>51</sup>As demonstrated by Mark Seifrid, "Paul's Approach to the Old Testament," *TrinJ* 6 (1985): 9n 29, the "Pauline uses of εἰς in instances where εἶναι is present or understood (without influence from another verb) indicates that the telic or ecbatic sense" is more likely than the accusative of reference. Seifrid reasonably concludes the meaning should be advantage, similar to the dative of advantage. Contra Schreiner, *Romans*, 547, who understands this as accusative of reference. Schreiner notes that Seifrid's research makes it likely, but not assured, that εἰς is telic, and argues that in this case it is not.

<sup>52</sup>Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:511-12.

<sup>53</sup>Seifrid, "Romans," 650.

<sup>54</sup>Hofius is likely correct to suggest that for Paul, Israel's misunderstanding that keeping of the law, that is, by works, was Israel's crucial problem. Hofius, "Zur Auslegung Römer 9, 30-33," 163.

has been revealed to be none other than Christ, the τέλος to which the Law, pursued ἐκ πίστεως, has been leading all the time.<sup>55</sup>

The parallelism suggests that in 9:33 and 10:4 Paul is speaking of the stumbling stone in the same way as the goal of the law.<sup>56</sup> If so, then they must refer to the same person.

Examination of verse 9:33 will bear that out.

## The Stone of Stumbling

### The Origin and Makeup of Romans 9:33

**Origin of the conflation.** It is widely agreed that Romans 9:33 is a conflation of the texts of Isaiah 28:16 and Isaiah 8:14. Paul apparently inserted a portion of 8:14 as the center of the material he took from 28:16, but a number of questions exist regarding Paul's conflation of the text and whether he was the first to merge the two passages as he did. The same two passages from Isaiah are also quoted in 1 Peter 2:6-8, although the two passages are quoted separately there, rather than conflated, and the two passages from Isaiah are separated by a quote from Psalm 118:22. As a result of the similarity 1 Peter 2:18 and Romans 9:33, many scholars have proposed the existence of a stone *testimonia*.<sup>57</sup> Whether the *testimonia* was written or simply tradition on which both Peter

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<sup>55</sup>J. Ross Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News: Isaiah and Paul in Concert in the Letter to the Romans* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 125.

<sup>56</sup>Similarly see Florian Wilk, *Die Bedeutung des Jesajabuches für Paulus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998), 166.

<sup>57</sup>See, e.g., Klyne R. Snodgrass, "I Peter II. 1-10: Its Formation and Literary Affinities," *NTS* 24 (1977): 100. One piece of evidence raised in favor of an early Jewish stone tradition lies in the Targum of Isa 28:16 in which the Targum translator personalizes the stone, perhaps already connecting the two passages in Isaiah. The Targum of 28:16 follows: "Therefore thus saith the Lord Elohim, Behold I will appoint in Zion a King, a strong king, powerful and terrible. I will make him strong and terrible, saith the prophet; but the righteous who have believed in these things shall not be dismayed when distress cometh." While the dating of the Targum is difficult, Snodgrass suggests the tradition may pre-date Christian writing because the Dead Sea Scroll IQS viii. 8 is probably dependent on the Targum. In addition, as Snodgrass suggests, the Jews would not likely introduce a concept already in use apologetically by the Christians. Similarly, Douglas A. Oss, "The Interpretation of the 'Stone' Passages by Peter and Paul: A Comparative Study," *JETS* 32 (1989): 186; E. Earle Ellis, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1957), 89; C. H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures: The Substructure of New Testament Theology* (London: Fontana Books, 1952), 57-60. Indeed, Wagner suggests a connection between Isa 8:14 and 28:16 had already been made by the LXX. Wagner, *Heralds*, 145-51.

and Paul relied, and that perhaps existed even earlier in pre-Christian Jewish interpretation is a matter of debate. It is possible, however, that Peter was influenced by Paul and by a gospel tradition rather than by a written *testimonia*.<sup>58</sup> While it is not necessary for the purposes of this discussion to resolve all the issues regarding the background of Paul's use of the Isaiah passages, it is of some note that there is no evidence of the conflation of the two prior to his use in Romans 9:33. If Paul is the originator of the conflation, then the way he conflated the passages is likely important to his purpose. It is evident from Table 2 that follows later in this chapter that Paul's mixed quotation is not exactly from either the MT or the LXX. Although it may be true that Paul was working from a translation other than the presently recognized text of the LXX there are some significant modifications to the present text that we will consider.<sup>59</sup> The importance of this discussion lies in the degree to which Paul was responsible for the changes to the text, which impacts how much one understands the theology related to those changes to be Paul's.

**The original context of the Isaiah passages.** The contexts of both Isaiah 8:14 and 28:16 are similar in that both address Judah during crises caused by external military threats. The context of 8:14 begins in chapter 7 with the account of the Syro-Ephraimite alliance that threatened Judah during the reign of Ahaz. YHWH promised deliverance

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<sup>58</sup>So, Seifrid, "Romans," 652. See also Oss, "Interpretation of Stone Passages," 183. Oss argues Jesus himself is the source of the NT stone tradition, although he apparently thinks that tradition which formed Jesus' teaching became a common source of Paul and Peter. Contra C. H. Dodd, who argued that it is not likely that Peter was dependent on Paul since Peter would have had to disentangle Isa 8:14 from 28:16 and then supplemented them with the parts of 28:16 that Paul did not include. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures*, 42-43.

<sup>59</sup>"For the argument that Paul was working from a translation, see Wilk, *Die Bedeutung des Jesajabuches*, 23-24. Wilk suggests there is substantial enough agreement between Paul's wording and that of the hexaplaric tradition, both grammatically and lexically, to conclude Paul was working from a text translated from the MT rather than from his own translation. But see Wagner, *Heralds*, 130. Wagner agrees that Paul was working from a text of the LXX, but that Paul reworked that text to bring it closer to the MT. It is difficult with information presently available to know for certain how Paul's text came into existence.

and promised the sign of Immanuel (7:14) as confirmation. Ahaz, however, was reluctant to trust in the promise and instead sought an alliance with Assyria. In 8:5-10, “this people,” who refuse the counsel and deliverance offered by YHWH are addressed. Because they prefer to trust their own resources and ally with the Assyrian king the word of judgment comes to them that the Lord will bring the king of Assyria against these people and that the king of Assyria with his armies will overflow them. In 8:11-13 Isaiah is warned not to walk in the ways of “this people” and not to call conspiracy what they call conspiracy. Thus, Isaiah is set in opposition to “this people,” who are most likely the majority of the residents of Judah.<sup>60</sup> As Wagner points out, “this people” has already been characterized in Isaiah 6:9-10 as blind, deaf and without understanding.<sup>61</sup>

In 8:14 the stone of stumbling is introduced as both a sanctuary (מִקְדָּשׁ) and a stone of striking and a rock of stumbling (for both the MT and the LXX for 8:14, see Table 2 below). Thus there is a note of judgment for “these people” who choose to put their trust in human resources rather than the deliverance offered by YHWH. At the same time there is a note of salvation as well for those who repent and place their trust for deliverance in YHWH.<sup>62</sup> The identity of the stone is almost certainly YHWH. As verse 13 makes clear, YHWH is the antecedent of the pronoun in “he will be.”<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>60</sup>Otto Kaiser, *Isaiah 1-12: A Commentary*, trans. R. A. Wilson (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1972), 117.

<sup>61</sup>Wagner, *Heralds*, 139.

<sup>62</sup>Kaiser, *Isaiah 1-12*, 118; J. Alec Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction and Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1993), 95; Seifrid, “Romans,” 652; Dane C. Ortlund, “The Insanity of Faith: Paul’s Theological Use of Isaiah in Romans 9:33,” *TrinJ* 30 (2009): 272-73; John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 1-39* NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 234. Others see only judgment in v. 14. See Walter Brueggemann, *Isaiah 1-39* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1998), 78; John D. W. Watts, *Isaiah 1-33* Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 24 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1985), 119-21. Both Brueggemann and Watts see YHWH only as the conspirator against Judah. Watt reads YHWH as conspirator based on an emendation of the text to read קִשָּׁר for תִּקְדִּישׁוּ in v. 13 and for מִקְדָּשׁ in v. 14. But see Brevard S. Childs, *Isaiah* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 75. Childs rightly offers 3 arguments against the emendation: (1) There is no textual support for the emendation; (2) The reference to YHWH as conspirator is a modern anachronistic concept that has no warrant from the Hebrew

As Oswalt notes, it is not hard to see “the way of this people” as the unifying theme of 8:11-23.<sup>64</sup> The sound of judgment coming to them can be heard in the language of the stone for striking and rock of stumbling, and as noted in 8:15, many will stumble upon it, will be broken and will be snared and captured. Yet, there is more than the word of judgment. There is also the promise of sanctuary for those who believe. God, while intervening for the salvation of some, becomes the stumbling block for Israel.<sup>65</sup>

The context of Isaiah 28:16 is similar to that of 8:14, but with what is arguably a stronger tone of judgment pronounced upon Ephraim. There also, God is working through foreign nations to bring judgment and deliverance to his people.<sup>66</sup> “This people” is once again an important part of the context (28:11, 14; 29:13, 14), most often in connection with judgment-laden language. The immediate segment of the text surrounding 28:16 begins in 28:14, but the previous segment of judging language ends verse 13 with words similar to those in 8:15. They will fall backward and be broken and snared and captured. For Paul the link between 8:14 and 28:16 is both conceptual and lexical, with the stone as the connecting thread. But the similarity of other similar language between 28:13 and 8:15 ties the passages together as well.<sup>67</sup> Yet, as in 8:14, Isaiah 28:16 is a promise of salvation along with the judgment. The one who believes will not be in haste.

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Bible; and (3) The contrast between the false fear of conspiracy and the true fear of God is consistent with Isaiah’s larger message.

<sup>63</sup>That God is the stumbling block doesn’t seem to be a widely contested conclusion. See, e.g., Kaiser, *Isaiah 1-12*, 118; Stuart A. Irvine, *Isaiah, Ahaz, and the Syro-Ephraimitic Crisis*, SBL Dissertation Series, vol. 123 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990), 202; Brueggemann, *Isaiah 1-39*, 78; Oswalt, *Isaiah 1-39*, 234; Motyer, *Isaiah*, 95; Childs, *Isaiah*, 75.

<sup>64</sup>Oswalt, *Isaiah 1-39*, 232.

<sup>65</sup>Seifrid, “Romans,” 651.

<sup>66</sup>Wagner, *Heralds*, 142.

<sup>67</sup>*Ibid.*, 143; Childs, *Isaiah*, 207.

In the Hebrew text, the identity of the stone is not as clear in 28:16 as in 8:14 and many suggestions have been offered.<sup>68</sup> It is noteworthy, though, that the translator of the LXX also made the connection of the stone to a person with the inclusion of the language “ἐπ’ αὐτῷ” in the phrase ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ’ αὐτῷ οὐ μὴ καταισχύνθῃ (the one who believes in him will never be ashamed). The antecedent of the pronoun “him” is no doubt the stone in the previous passage, which represents God, since no one else is mentioned and trust in the stone characterizes those who will be delivered by God.<sup>69</sup>

**Composition of the text.** Table 2 presents the various texts to help us see how Paul may have arranged the text to make his point. The most obvious and important feature of Paul’s citation of the two texts lies in what he did not include from Isaiah 28:16 and replaced with material from 8:14. The citation begins from 28:16 “ἰδοὺ τίθημι ἐν Ζιων λίθον” (behold I place in Zion a stone).<sup>70</sup> Isaiah 28:16 characterizes the stone as a “stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone of a firm foundation,” but Paul replaces that description of the stone with a portion of 8:14, “a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense” (λίθον προσκόμματος καὶ πέτραν σκανδάλου).

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<sup>68</sup>See the rather lengthy list of suggestions and supporting literature in Otto Kaiser, *Isaiah 13-39: A Commentary*, trans. R. A. Wilson (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1974), 253. Kaiser lists the law of Moses, the Temple, the Davidic monarchy, the city of Jerusalem, the saving work begun by YHWH, YHWH’s relationship to his people, the true community of believers, the Messiah as the foundation stone of a temple not made with hands, the remnant of believers, or the one who believes and is not in haste.

<sup>69</sup>Wagner, *Heralds*, 144. On pages 128-48 Wagner argues plausibly that the LXX translator had already made the connection between Isa 8:14 and 28:16 in the same way that Paul did when he conflated the two. In fact, Wagner suggests that already even the author/editor of Isaiah had already drawn the connection between the two passages. The similarity of language in 8:15 and 28:13 already highlighted above is part of his argument, as is the obvious thread of the stone metaphor in both.

<sup>70</sup>Paul here replaces the LXX ἐγὼ ἐμβαλῶ εἰς τὰ θεμέλια Ζιων (behold I cast into the foundation of Zion) with the simpler τίθημι ἐν Ζιῶν (I lay in Zion). There is probably little of significance in the change for the point under consideration here. Seifrid suggests Paul’s usage may be a result of his joining the two texts or it may represent an alternative LXX rendering since τίθημι already appears in the context (Isa 28:15, 17). Seifrid, “Romans,” 650. It is also possible it was just a matter of an alternative way to translate the MT.

Table 2. Comparison of Romans 9:33, Isaiah 8:14 and Isaiah 28:16

Romans 9:33	Isaiah 8:14 (a), Masoretic Text	Isaiah 8:14 LXX	Isaiah 28:16, Masoretic Text	Isaiah 28:16, LXX
<p>Ἴδου τίθημι ἐν Ζιων λίθον (Behold, I place in Zion a stone)</p>			<p>לְכֵן כֹּה אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה הִנְנִי יֹסֵד בְּצִיּוֹן אֶבֶן (Thus says the Lord YHWH: I establish in Zion a stone)</p>	<p>διὰ τοῦτο οὕτως λέγει κύριος ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἐμβαλῶ εἰς τὰ θεμέλια Ζιων λίθον (Because of this says the Lord, “Behold, I lay into the foundation of Zion, a stone...”)</p>
<p>Προσκόμματος καὶ πέτραν σκανάλου (of stumbling and a rock of offense)</p>	<p>וְהָיָה לְמִקְדָּשׁ וּלְאֶבֶן נֶגֶף וּלְצוּר מִכְשׁוֹל לְשֵׁנֵי בְּתֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְפָה וּלְמוֹקֵשׁ לְיוֹשְׁבֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם (And he will be a sanctuary and a stone for striking and a rock for stumbling and a trap and a snare for the two houses of Israel and a snare for the inhabitants of Jerusalem.)</p>	<p>καὶ ἐὰν ἐπ’ αὐτῷ πεποισθῶς ἦς ἔσται σοι εἰς ἀγίασμα καὶ οὐχ ὡς λίθου προσκόμματι (The following is elided by Paul) Συναντήσεσθε αὐτῷ οὐδε ὡς πέτρας πτώματι ὁ δὲ οἶκος Ιακωβ ἐν παγίδι καὶ ἐν κοιλάσματι εγκαθήμενοι ἐν Ἱερουσαλημ (And if you trust in him, he will be for you a sanctuary and you will not encounter him as a stone of stumbling or as a rock for a fallen one, but the house of Jacob is sitting in a snare and in a hollow place)</p>	<p>(The following is elided from Romans 9:33) אֶבֶן בְּהֵן פְּנֵת יִקְרָת מוֹסֵד מוֹסֵד (a stone of testing, a precious cornerstone founded [or firmly placed])</p>	<p>Πολυτελῆ ἐκλεκτὸν ἀκρογωνιαῖον ἔντιμον εἰς τὰ θεμέλια (A costly chosen precious cornerstone for its [Zion’s] foundation)</p>

Table 2—Continued. Comparison of Romans 9:33, Isaiah 8:14 and Isaiah 28:16

Romans 9:33	Isaiah 8:14 (a), Masoretic Text	Isaiah 8:14 LXX	Isaiah 28:16, Masoretic Text	Isaiah 28:16, LXX
<p>πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ’ αὐτῷ οὐ καταισχυνθήσεται αι (Everyone who believes in him will not be ashamed.)</p>			<p>שׂיִתֵּי אֵל יִמְנָתֵהוּ  (The one who trusts will not make haste.)</p>	<p>ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ’ αὐτῷ οὐ μὴ καταισχυθῆ (The one who believes in him will not be ashamed.)</p>

In Romans 9:33 Paul eliminates from the LXX version, the negative (you will not encounter him), which is an erroneous reading of the MT by the LXX, so Paul’s usage brings him closer to the MT than to the LXX.<sup>71</sup> Then he returns to the last portion of 28:16 where he retains the LXX reading, including “in him,” (not included in the MT) in “ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ’ αὐτῷ οὐ καταισχυθήσεται” (the one who believes on him will not be ashamed).<sup>72</sup> Paul follows the LXX with the use of καταισχυθήσεται (be ashamed) rather than a close rendition of שׂיִתֵּי (be in haste). This recalls Paul’s language of Romans 1:16, and should be taken not as psychological shame, but in the forensic sense of being vindicated, that is, declared right.<sup>73</sup> There is, perhaps, not such a difference between shame and make haste, however, if there is a connection between frantically seeking refuge from Assyria in Egypt and the shame that will result when Assyria overruns

<sup>71</sup>Jewett, *Romans*, 613. Dietrich-Alex Koch’s comment here that the LXX translation is a “völlig freien Paraphrase” is generous. Dietrich-Alex Koch, *Die Schrift als Zeuge des Evangeliums: Untersuchungen zur Verwendung and zum Verständnis der Schrift bei Paulus* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1986), 59. Koch goes on to note that the Hebrew text has a completely opposite meaning.

<sup>72</sup>There is a variant reading in the latter portion of Rom 9:33 in which the word πᾶς (all) appears, creating the clause beginning “all who believe . . .” The external evidence against the variant is strong and it could be that the variant is a result of influence of Paul’s language in Rom 10:10. So Bruce Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: American Bible Society and Stuttgart: German Bible Society, 1994), 463.

<sup>73</sup>Seifrid, “Romans,” 652; Schreiner, *Romans*, 541; Käsemann, *Romans*, 279; Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 252, but Dunn thinks this is a present, rather than an eschatological, vindication.

Judah.<sup>74</sup> In that case, there will be no vindication for Israel, since they are not proved right in their decision not to trust in YHWH.

With his insertion of the phrase from Isaiah 8:14, which is more closely aligned with the Hebrew text, into the text of 28:16, Paul strengthens the thought of judgment. While the LXX removes the threat of judgment from 8:14, Paul emphasized it.<sup>75</sup> This strengthens the impression of judgment in Romans 9:33 as Paul uses it, but the possibility of salvation remains in the statement that the one who believes in him will not be ashamed. Paul returns to that thought in his great statement of the basic Christian confession in Romans 10:9-13. In the threat of judgment, deliverance remains available for the one who believes.

It is apparent that in his connection of Isaiah 28:16 with 8:14, the common thread is the stone, which suggests Paul intended the stone to refer to the same person throughout the whole conflated quotation.

### Identification of the Stone

The stumbling block has traditionally been identified as Christ.<sup>76</sup> More recently, however, some scholars have identified the stumbling block differently. E.

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<sup>74</sup>Ortlund, "The Insanity of Faith," 283.

<sup>75</sup>Koch, *Die Schrift*, 60.

<sup>76</sup>Among others, see Theodor Zahn, *Der Brief des Paulus an die Römer* (Leipzig: A. Deichert'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1910), 472; Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 276; James Denney, *St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, in vol. 2 of *The Expositor's Greek Testament*, ed. W. Robertson Nicoll (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1903; reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970), 668; Käsemann, *Romans*, 278-79; Murray, *Romans*, 2:44; David B. Capes, "YHWH and His Messiah: Pauline Exegesis and the Divine Christ," *HBT* 16 (1994): 123-24; Badenas, *Christ the End of the Law*, 106; Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 583-84; Schreiner, *Romans*, 530; Seifrid, "Romans," 651; Jewett, *Romans*, 611; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 580; Bechtler, "Christ the Τέλος of the Law," 295; Heikki Räisänen, "Torn Between Two Loyalties: Romans 9-11 and Paul's Conflicting Convictions," in *The Nordic Paul: Finnish Approaches to Pauline Theology*, ed. Lars Aejmelaeus and Antti Mustakallio (London: T&T Clark, 2008), 29; Wilk, *Die Bedeutung des Jesajabuches*, 166; Heil, "Christ," 489; Richard H. Bell, *Provoked to Jealousy: The Origin and Purpose of the Jealousy Motif in Romans 9-11* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1994), 278; Hans Hubner, *Gottes Ich und Israel Zum Schriftgebrauch des Paulus in Römer 9-11* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1984), 69;

Elizabeth Johnson identifies the stone of stumbling as the gospel.<sup>77</sup> Lloyd Gaston understands the stone to be the gospel contained in the Torah, which is the gospel of the inclusion of the Gentiles.<sup>78</sup> Some identify the stone as the Torah.<sup>79</sup> The last suggestion seems to bear some promise at first, especially when one considers Paul's assertion in Romans 9:32 that Israel stumbled because of their failure to pursue the law by faith. There are several serious objections to the latter suggestion, however. The first is the expectation of a personal antecedent for ἐπ' αὐτῶ, especially since the personal antecedent is nearly certain in the similar quotation in 10:11.<sup>80</sup> In addition, as Wagner points out, identifying the stone as the law misses Paul's metaphor. Israel has been chasing the law, not tripping over it. They had not caught up with it when they

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Sanders, *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People*, 37; Richard N. Longenecker, *Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), 203.

<sup>77</sup>Johnson, *Apocalypse and Wisdom Traditions*, 154. Similarly, Watson, *Paul, Judaism, and the Gentiles: Beyond the New Perspective*, 329. This suggestion is not without some merit if one understands that the gospel is the proclamation of Jesus as the Christ crucified as in 1 Cor 1:23. See also Wagner, "Faithfulness and Fear," 88. Wagner allows for a polyvalent meaning that includes both Christ and the message preached. Similarly, see Idem, *Heralds*, 157. There Wagner sees Paul identifying the stone as Christ, but not at the expense of pushing God off center, so it refers to both.

<sup>78</sup>Gaston, *Paul and the Torah*, 129. Gaston builds his argument on Isa 51:8, where he rightly notes the middle stanza proclaims a salvation for the peoples. The argument is a bit weak since the passage in Romans does not reference Isa 51 and Gaston does not demonstrate any connection to that passage. The only stone mentioned in Isa 51 is Abraham, the stone from which Israel was hewn, but Gaston admits Abraham is not the stumbling stone.

<sup>79</sup>See, e.g., Paul W. Myer, "Romans 10:4 and the 'End' of the Law" in *The Divine Helmsman: Studies on God's Control of Human Events, Presented to Lou Silberman*, ed. James L. Crenshaw and Samuel Sandmel (New York: KTAV Publishing, 1980), 64; Barrett, "Romans 9.30-10.21," 144; Glenn N. Davies, *Faith and Obedience in Romans*, JSNT Supplement Series, vol. 39 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990), 182; John E. Toews, "The Law in Paul's Letter to the Romans: A Study of Rom. 9.30-10.13" (Ph.D. diss., Northwestern University, 1977), 146-204. Also see Wright, *Climax*, 240, where he concludes that in one sense the stone is clearly the Messiah, but in another sense it is clearly the law. For an argument that the stumbling block consists of the Gentiles see Stephan K. Davis, *The Antithesis of the Ages: Paul's Reconfiguration of Torah*, CBQ Monograph Series, vol. 33 (Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 2002), 133.

<sup>80</sup>Schreiner, *Romans*, 541; idem, "Israel's Failure to Attain Righteousness in Romans 9:30-10:3," *TrinJ* 12 (1991): 214; Wagner, *Heralds*, 156; Jewett, *Romans*, 613; Heil, "Christ the Termination of the Law," 489; Capes, "YHWH and His Messiah," 123-24.

stumbled.<sup>81</sup> In a similar passage Paul relates that his preaching of Christ is a stumbling block to unbelieving Jews (κηρύσσομεν Χριστὸν ἑσταθρωμένον, Ἰουδαίοις μὲν σκάνδαλον, = we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to the Jews). Paul uses the same word there (σκάνδαλον) as in Romans 9:33 and both passages have to do with the gospel proclamation of Christ crucified as an offense to Jews so it is likely the reference is the same.<sup>82</sup> Finally, the Christological understanding of the stone in Romans 9:33 fits the overall context of Paul's argument that Israel is not attaining righteousness because they fail to put faith in Jesus as Messiah and Lord.<sup>83</sup>

Given this argument regarding the context of Romans 9:30-10:4 above, it is time now to develop further the connection between Paul's point overall in 9:30-10:4 and the conflated quotations. Wagner notes the similarity between Paul's point and the Isaiah passages in that the leaders of Israel forsook YHWH in the face of serious threats to Israel's national security, instead placing their hopes for deliverance in the gods and rulers of foreign nations. As Wagner notes, the thing that separates the two groups of Israelites in Isaiah 8 and Isaiah 28 is their trust, or lack thereof, in God's power and faithfulness to deliver them from the present crisis.<sup>84</sup> Further, "the motif of faith/trust is

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<sup>81</sup>Wagner, *Heralds*, 156.

<sup>82</sup>Capes, "YHWH and His Messiah," 123-24. Contra Johnson, *Wisdom and Apocalypse*, 155. As part of her argument that the stumbling stone is the gospel for all and not just for Jews, Johnson asserts the cause of offense in 1 Cor 1:23 is the gospel. The grammar suggests otherwise. Ἰουδαίοις μὲν σκάνδαλον Ἔθνεσιν δὲ μωρίαν is surely an explanation of Χριστὸν ἑσταυρωμένον, rather than κηρύσσομεν. It is much more likely that it is the person of Christ and his crucifixion on which the Jews stumble. In addition, Paul is clear that the Greeks also stumble at this proclamation and there is no reason to think the Gentiles would stumble over the fact that the gospel makes salvation available to all. It is true that the message is an offense, not because of its universal call, but because of the offense of a crucified Messiah and the foolishness of a crucified savior. The message is offensive because of its subject, not because of its universal call.

<sup>83</sup>Capes, "YHWH and His Messiah," 123-24.

<sup>84</sup>Wagner, *Heralds*, 151.

central to Paul's criticism of Israel in Romans 9:30-10:4 and, indeed, throughout Romans 10.<sup>85</sup>

As noted above, Paul's argument is not that Israel was wrong to pursue the law, but that it was wrong for Israel to pursue it by works rather than by faith. By pursuing in that manner they had failed to recognize and submit to God's means of delivering his people in a manner similar to the way "these people" of Isaiah chapters 8 and 28 had failed to recognize and submit to the only one who could actually deliver them from the military forces they faced. In both cases Israel chose to ally themselves not with the deliverance provided by YHWH, but with their own attempts at salvation. Paul's criticism of Israel of his day is that they were not pursuing the law by faith because they had not believed in the one to whom the law pointed, Christ himself.

It is quite clear, as argued above, that the stone in Isaiah 8 is God. It is likely that Paul had the same understanding of the stone in Isaiah 28. Yet in Romans 9, he applies the imagery to Jesus. Wagner's argument that the stone in Romans 9 is ambiguous, applying both to Jesus and to God in a sense true.<sup>86</sup> Wagner is correct that for Paul to identify the stone with Christ is not to push God off center stage and he is also correct that to press for a strong distinction between a Christological and a theological reading is unfaithful to the structure of Paul's thought. But this is not necessarily, as Wagner asserts, a polyvalent reading; that is, it is not certain or perhaps even likely, that Paul thought the stone in Romans 9:32-33 represented both Christ and God the Father. As demonstrated in chapter 4, Paul was not reluctant to apply texts to Jesus alone that in the Old Testament applied to YHWH. There is no reason to think he did not do that here.<sup>87</sup> Thus, the stumbling block here should be identified as Christ.

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<sup>85</sup>Ibid.

<sup>86</sup>Ibid., 157.

<sup>87</sup>Capes, "YHWH and His Messiah," 123-24.

The specific item over which Israel stumbled is most likely located in the person of Christ. Paul's argument here is in part soteriological, and the direction of his concern that Israel stumbled because they did not recognize that Christ was actually the one who could deliver them could point to their rejection of the proclamation of the resurrection of Christ as the point of stumbling.<sup>88</sup> It is more likely, however, that Paul intended to convey that Israel had stumbled over Paul's assertion regarding who Jesus actually is. As Cranfield notes, in 9:32-33, Paul has added an "explicitly Christological dimension to the definition of the disobedience of Israel and of the obedience of some Gentiles.... That disobedience and that obedience are essentially a matter of relationship to Christ."<sup>89</sup> The very act of using these passages from Isaiah to apply to Jesus would itself be a stumbling block. More of a stumbling block would be the identification of Jesus as God in Romans 9:5.<sup>90</sup> While it is still up to the reader to determine whether Paul made such identification, the evidence is strong that he did and the fact that he refers to Christ as a stumbling block here suggests such an identification in his proclamation.

That the cause of stumbling must have to do with the person of Jesus is supported by Paul's statements about the stumbling block in 1 Corinthians 1:18-31. Paul's message was Christ crucified, a matter of stumbling for both Jews and Gentiles. But merely the fact that Jesus was crucified would not need extensive explanation were it

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<sup>88</sup>As suggested by Seifrid, "Romans," 651. Seifrid's argument is based in the heavenly dimension in Paul's understanding of Zion, particularly in Rom 11:26 where Paul means for Isa 59:20 to speak of the Lord coming from heavenly Zion. In a later chapter I will suggest a different reading of Paul's intent in Rom 11:26, however.

<sup>89</sup>Cranfield, "Some Notes on Romans 9:30-33," 42.

<sup>90</sup>If this line of argument is correct, the thought that Paul would not call Jesus God in Rom 9:5 because he wished to stay within standard acceptable Jewish theology falters. Paul is willing, apparently, to make proclamations over which Israel stumbles. But see Otto Küss, "Zu Römer 9,5," in *Rechtfertigung: Festschrift für Ernst Käsemann zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. Johannes Friedrich, Wolfgang Pöhlmann and Peter Stuhlmacher (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck and Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1976), 303. Küss argues that the preaching of Christ as Messiah would be offensive enough without any assertion that he is deity. It seems, though, that Paul's identification of Jesus as the stone in the same manner that YHWH was identified as the stone suggests a more pointed proclamation of Jesus as the one who is able to deliver as only YHWH could.

not for the claims of who he is. Many in Jesus' time must have been crucified without giving an offense. There is no direct statement in that passage about the deity of Christ, but the crucifixion as the cause of stumbling must be rooted in the person of the one proclaimed as crucified.

Finally, in Romans 10:9-13 Paul makes what is arguably the most direct statement of what is the basic confession of the Christian faith. In that passage Paul makes perhaps an even more direct connection between Jesus and YHWH by identifying Jesus as the one who must be confessed and called upon for salvation, just as God was the one who must be believed by Israel in the circumstance surrounding Isaiah 8 and 28. The confession in Romans 10:9 has to do with the identity of Jesus. We must put off until the next chapter the exegesis of that passage, but it is hardly disputed that Paul meant for the confession that Jesus is lord in that passage to say that Jesus is YHWH. When considered along with the second reference to Isaiah 28:16 (whoever believes in him will not be ashamed) in Romans 10:11, evidence mounts that the stumbling occurs at the place of belief and confession regarding the identification of Jesus. So the problem for Israel is the same as for "these people" in the Isaiah passages. They have refused to put their trust in the only one who could deliver them and who has always delivered them. But the particular issue over which Israel stumbled in Paul's day is his rather direct association of Jesus with YHWH in Romans 10:13. The saving name in its original context was YHWH, but now the saving name is Jesus.<sup>91</sup> But more must be said of that in the next chapter. It remains to be noted here, however, that Israel was in pursuit of a law given by God. But pursuing that law given by God nevertheless leads to stumbling at Christ (in Romans) or at God (in Isaiah). It would seem that only Christ, who is God, and therefore the lawgiver, could so transcend the law as to become a stumbling stone. Paul's thought, then, in Romans 9:30-33 is consistent with what he has written in 9:5.

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<sup>91</sup>Rowe, "What is the Name of the Lord" 160.

## CHAPTER 6

### THE SAME LORD OF ALL

The passage of particular interest for this chapter is Romans 10:9-13, but it fits within the overall passage of 10:5-13, which is, of course, part of the larger section of Romans 9-11 that covers 9:30-10:13. I will argue that in 10:9-13, when Paul refers to Jesus as Lord, he means for the reader to understand that Jesus is YHWH, the God of Israel, but now known to be the God of both Jews and Gentiles. The early part of the passage, 10:5-8, is part of the referential shift that occurs in 10:5-13 in which Old Testament references to YHWH are applied to Jesus.<sup>1</sup> It is in 10:5-13 that Paul brings to a climax his point that God is the God of all and over all as he began it in Romans 3:29-30, and as he wove it through Romans 9:5 to apply to Christ. There is no distinction between Jew and Gentile, because there is one Lord of all, and since he is God over all, both Jew and Gentile, anyone who calls upon him will be saved.

#### **Romans 10:5-8**

The passage is part of the larger section that consists of Romans 9:30-10:21, the content and purpose of which was discussed briefly in the last chapter. The division between 10:4 and 10:5 is not strong, but it is adequate enough to see a break in the larger passage. The *γάρ* at the beginning of verse 5 ties it closely to the argument being made in verses 1-4. Romans 10:5 is also tied to the previous argument by contrast between the *τὴν δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐκ τοῦ νόμου* in verse 5 and *τῆ δικαιοσύνη τοῦ θεοῦ* in verse 3. In addition, *ὁ ποιήσας αὐτὰ ἄνθρωπος* in 10:5 is reminiscent of the pursuit of righteousness by works

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<sup>1</sup>L. Joseph Kreitzer, *Jesus and God in Paul's Eschatology* JSNT Supplement Series, vol. 19 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1987), 114.

in 9:32, which contrasts with ὁ πιστεύων in 9:33. Those contrasts in the context suggest that, just as in the previous sections, Paul means that between 10:5 and 10:6-8 there is a contrast between believing and doing and between faith righteousness and works righteousness.

Verse 5 is one of a series of γάρ clauses and Paul here grounds his statement made in verse 4 by his references to Old Testament Scripture.<sup>2</sup> The γάρ in verse 5 introduces not just verse 5, but all of verses 5-8, so it is not just verse 5 that Paul uses to ground verse 4, but the whole series of quotations in verses 5-8.<sup>3</sup> It is possible to see, then, that all of 10:5-8 explains all of 10:1-4,<sup>4</sup> and, if my argument in chapter 5 is correct that 9:30-33 and 10:1-4 make parallel points, then all of 9:30-10:4 is grounded by 10:5-8.

In spite of the structural, conceptual and linguistic connections between 10:5-13 and 9:30-10:4, the flow and structure of Paul's argument suggests that it is best to understand a division after verse 4. It is clear that 10:5-13 "provides a scriptural continuation of the theme of righteousness mentioned in 9:30-10:4."<sup>5</sup> In fact, the passage

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<sup>2</sup>There are two rather important variants in this verse. The placement of ὅτι is at issue and αὐτῆ appears in some manuscripts for αὐτοῖς. It is possible that the reading adopted in the present UBS and NA texts was a scribal assimilation to the LXX and to Gal 3:12, but the external manuscript evidence is stronger for the NA/UBS reading than for the variants. For detailed discussion see, among others, Mark A. Seifrid, "Paul's Approach to the Old Testament in Roman 10:6-8," *TrinJ* 6 (1985): 12-13 and Douglas Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 643. The placement of ὅτι is significant because if it is placed after the γράφει, then δικαιοσύνη would become the object of ὁ ποιήσας, which would then read, 'the person who does the righteousness of the law will live by it' (substituting αὐτῆ for αὐτοῖς). If the change in the position of ὅτι was a later change, the difference in the pronouns was probably a correction to agree with it.

<sup>3</sup>Seifrid, "Paul's Approach to the Old Testament," 13. Seifrid rightly argues that since all three verses together ground v. 4, it is not a contradiction for v. 5 to oppose v. 6. Cf. Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1998), 550; Moo, *Romans*, 647; N. T. Wright, *The Letter to the Romans: Introduction, Commentary and Reflections*, in vol. 10 of *The New Interpreter's Bible*, ed. Leander E. Keck (Nashville: Abingdon, 2002), 662. Similarly, Edith M. Humphrey, "Why Bring the Word Down? The Rhetoric of Demonstration and Disclosure in Romans 9:30-10:21," in *Romans and the People of God: Essays in Honor of Gordon D. Fee on the Occasion of His 65<sup>th</sup> Birthday* ed. Sven K. Soderlund and N. T. Wright (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 142, but Humphrey sees only vv. 5-7 grounding Rom 10:4.

<sup>4</sup>So also, Richard H. Bell, *Provoked to Jealousy: The Origin and Purpose of the Jealousy Motif in Romans 9-11* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1994), 190.

<sup>5</sup>Robert Jewett, *Romans: A Commentary* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), 622.

makes essentially the same argument made first in 9:30-33, then again in a similar fashion in 10:1-4. Israel had not attained righteousness because they had sought it by works. Seeking a law that results in righteousness, they stumbled over the one who alone can provide that righteousness for them. In seeking to establish their own righteousness by the law, they are ignorant of the one who is the goal of the law. The point Paul makes in 10:5-13 is similar, suggesting a break since Paul examines further what he has argued thus far. This section clarifies what Paul means by Christ as the end of the law.<sup>6</sup> As will be seen below, 10:5-13 culminates in the promise of salvation not to all who obey the law, but to all who call upon the name of Lord, that is, upon Jesus himself.

### **Paul's Method of Reading of Scripture**

While it is beyond the scope and necessity of this chapter to resolve all the questions surrounding Paul's use of the Old Testament quotes in 10:5-8, it is important to briefly consider Paul's method, particularly how his reading of the Old Testament is driven. It is sometimes argued in discussion of that issue that Paul's use of quotes from the Old Testament should be understood in terms of rabbinic technique, often identified as midrash. Philip Alexander is critical, however, of New Testament scholars who make uncritical assumptions about the dependence of New Testament writers on Jewish methods and rabbinic sources. In particular he criticizes "parallelomania," which he describes as a detection of supposed similarities between Judaism and Christianity, which leads to the conclusion that Christianity borrowed from or was influenced by Judaism. He argues such an approach is invalid unless one can show that whatever parallel is suggested is found exclusively in Jewish midrash and not drawn upon independently by, for instance, Hillel and Paul.<sup>7</sup> As Richard Hays notes in a similar critique, if by midrash,

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<sup>6</sup>Mark A. Seifrid, "Romans," in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (Leicester: Apollos and Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 654.

<sup>7</sup>Philip S. Alexander, "Rabbinic Judaism and the New Testament," *ZNW* 74 (1983): 237-46, esp. 245-46. For an apparent instance of such interpretation based on a suggestion of parallelism, see

scholars mean “Paul writes as a Jew seeking to interpret Scripture in such a way as to make it applicable to his own time and circumstances, surely everyone would assent: the claim is true, but trivial.”<sup>8</sup> N. A. Dahl correctly concluded after his discussion of the use of Leviticus 18 in Galatians 3:12 that if it is true that those baptized into Christ and have received the Spirit are not under the law, “the necessity for a halakic interpretation of individual commandments disappears.”<sup>9</sup> All this suggests that Paul’s view of the radical change that the Christian faith brought makes it less likely that he read the Old Testament in a traditional Jewish fashion.

Others have seen Paul’s system of argument in Romans 10:5-8 as a *peshet* style of argument found in documents from Qumran.<sup>10</sup> That argument is normally based on the structure of the quote, particularly the existence of the explanatory phrase “that is.” To assert here though, that Paul engaged in a method specifically tied to Qumran may suffer from the “parallelomania” suggested by Alexander. Indeed, Seifrid points out that

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Wayne A. Meeks, “‘And Rose up to Play’ Midrash and Paraenesis in 1 Corinthians 10:1-22,” *JSNT* 16 (1982): 64-67. Similarly, William Richard Stegner, “Romans 9.6-29 – a Midrash,” *JSNT* 22 (1984): 37-38. Stegner argues Rom 9:6-29 is a midrash both in content and form, at least in part because the form can also be found in Tannaitic and Amoraic Midrashim. See also Anthony Tyrrell Hanson, *Studies in Paul’s Technique and Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 126-35. Hanson argues that Paul uses traditional rabbinic material in Rom 12:9-13:10, since a similar passage exists in the Mishnah. Similarly, arguments that Paul was reading Deut 30:12-14 as a wisdom text and that he had in mind arguments based on a sort of wisdom Christology are subject to the same criticism leveled by Alexander. The fact that the writer of Baruch used the Deuteronomy text in a wisdom discourse is not sufficient to suggest that Paul did. As an example of such an argument see M. Jack Suggs, “‘The Word is Near You’: Romans 10:6-10 within the Purpose of the Letter,” in *Christian History and Interpretation: Studies Presented to John Knox*, ed. W. R. Farmer, C. F. D. Moule and R. R. Neibuhr (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 304-12. Such an argument assumes a monolithic understanding of the OT, an assumption also criticized by Alexander, “Rabbinic Judaism, 243. See also Moo, *Romans*, 652-53, who argues that Paul’s reliance on Baruch is not clear and the association of Christ with wisdom is not so important or widespread in Paul’s theology as some imagine.

<sup>8</sup>Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letter of Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 10-11.

<sup>9</sup>Nils Alstrup Dahl, “‘Contradictions’ in Scripture,” in *Studies in Paul: Theology for the Early Christian Mission* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1977), 175.

<sup>10</sup>See, e.g., Hays, *Echoes*, 81-82; Humphrey, “Why Bring the Word Down?” 58; E. Earle Ellis, *Prophecy and Hermeneutic in Early Christianity: New Testament Essays* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 173-81; Alan F. Segal, “Paul’s Experience and Romans 9-11,” *PSB* 11, Supplementary Issue #1 (1990): 59.

the same phrase can be found in Hellenistic rhetorical writing, which could just as easily have influenced Paul's method.<sup>11</sup> But, as I argued earlier, Paul's experience on the Damascus Road forever altered his view of all of Scripture and gave it a Christ perspective, or, as Dahl understands it, "[f]aith in the crucified Christ altered Paul's understanding of both the Law and of the promises."<sup>12</sup> To argue that Paul was driven by any rabbinic method is to miss the Christological center of his thought. As Hays notes:

[E]ven when Paul does occasionally use such tropes in ways that bear a certain formal affinity to rabbinic practice, as, for example, in Romans 4, the material uses to which he puts Scripture differ fundamentally from those of the rabbis; his hermeneutic is materially informed by his Christian convictions much more than by some list of approved hermeneutical procedures. The message that Paul finds in the Old Testament is the gospel of Jesus Christ proleptically figured, a gospel proclaiming the inclusion of the Gentiles among the people of God; his exegesis of Scripture hammers relentlessly on this theme, a theme hardly central in rabbinic hermeneutics.<sup>13</sup>

While it is reasonable to conclude that Paul was using some sort of *peshar* technique, there is every reason to argue here that Paul's use of the Old Testament passages is Christologically driven.<sup>14</sup> In fact, the center of his use of Deuteronomy 30:12-14 is heavily Christological in its orientation.

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<sup>11</sup>Seifrid, "Romans," 654. So also James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 38<sub>a</sub> (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1988), 603; Moo, *Romans*, 654. See also Jewett, *Romans*, 624, who understands Paul to be engaged in Rhetorical argument, but still argues that the method of referring to the OT is *peshar*. For examples of use of the phrase "that is" in Greek literature, see Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon the New Testament*, trans. by William F. Arndt, F. Wilbur Gingrich. rev. and ed. Frederick W. Danker, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), s.v. "εἶμι," 2.c.

<sup>12</sup>Dahl, "Contradictions," 176.

<sup>13</sup>Hays, *Echoes*, 13. It is not necessary to agree completely with Hays' estimation of the content of the gospel to acknowledge his point. See also, Seifrid "Romans," 654; Schreiner, *Romans*, 557. Contra Ernst Käsemann, "The Spirit and the Letter," in *Perspectives on Paul*, trans. Margaret Kohl (London: SCM, 1971), 164-66. Käsemann understands Paul's reading of the OT to be driven by the theme justification by faith, but he acknowledges that for Paul, soteriology is anchored in Christology.

<sup>14</sup>Contra Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 605. Dunn understands the thought is soteriological rather than Christological. Of course it is true that Paul is concerned for how one is saved, but that does not mean his thought is not centrally Christological. The saving confession is surely a Christological statement.

## The Antithesis in 10:5-8

There is some disagreement about the relationship between Leviticus 18:5 as quoted in Romans 10:5 and Deuteronomy 30:12-14, as quoted in Romans 10:6-8. I side with those who understand that Leviticus 18:5 is some way set in an antithetical relationship to Deuteronomy 30:12-14.<sup>15</sup> That the quotes are antithetical here is supported by the overall adversative relationship between believing and doing in 9:30-10:13.<sup>16</sup> Leviticus 18:5 in its original setting is in the context of Israel's preparation for entry into the Land of Canaan. Leviticus 18 is a series of expressions of sexual prohibitions and regulations, the violation of which, according to verse 29, caused the violator to be cut off from among the people. In its original setting 18:5 most likely was meant to promise good life in the land, not eternal life.<sup>17</sup> In contrast, Paul surely refers to

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<sup>15</sup>This view of the text can be seen at least as early as John Calvin, *Commentary on the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans*, trans. and ed. John Owen (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, n.d.; reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), 385-87. See also Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 285-85; idem, "The Spirit and the Letter," 157; Schreiner, *Romans*, 551-54; Peter Stuhlmacher, *Paul's Letter to the Romans: A Commentary*, trans. Scott J. Hafemann (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1994), 156; Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 600-01; Moo, *Romans*, 646 and 650; Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Leicester: Apollos and Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 382; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Romans: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Bible, vol. 33 (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 587-88; J. Christiaan Beker, *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), 246. Contra C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, ICC, vol. 11 (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1979), 2:521-22. Cranfield argues that the one who does these things should be read to refer to Christ. Christ, as the one who fulfills the law and who is the goal of the law, has alone obeyed perfectly. For a bit more detailed development of the argument see Robert Badenas, *Christ the End of the Law: Romans 10:4 in Pauline Perspective*, JSNT Supplement Series, vol. 10 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1985), 118-28. Cranfield's argument is attractive for purposes of this chapter, but it cannot be viewed as persuasive. As Seifrid notes, Paul never speaks of Christ attaining life by doing those things. Seifrid, "Paul's Approach to the Old Testament in Rom 10:6-8," 14; idem, "Romans," 655; Schreiner, *Romans*, 552-53. For arguments that the relationship between Rom 10:5 and 10:6-8 is complimentary, see Humphrey, "Why Bring the Word Down?" 143; George F. Howard, "Christ the End of the Law: The Meaning of Romans 10:4 ff," *JBL* 88 (1969): 337; Walter C. Kaiser, "Leviticus 18:5 and Paul: Do This and You Shall Live (Eternally?)" *JETS* 14 (1971): 27; N. T. Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991; reprint Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 245.

<sup>16</sup>Schreiner, *Romans*, 552. Cf. Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 602; C. Thomas Rhyne, "Nomos Dikaiosynes and the Meaning of Romans 10:4," *CBQ* 47 (1985): 494-95; Moo, *Romans*, 646.

<sup>17</sup>So Gordon J. Wenham, *The Book of Leviticus*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979), 253. Wenham thinks life means more than mere existence. It means the blessing of the good life when lived

eschatological life, but that is not the point of his use of Leviticus 18:5. The point is to demonstrate the difference between pursuing righteousness that results from law and the righteousness of another kind that he explains later in the passage. The contrast is similar to that in Romans 9:30-33 and in 10:1-4. The problem with Israel's pursuit of the law is that they pursued it by works and not by faith, by which true righteousness comes. The burden of the argument in 10:5-13 is simply to expand on the earlier parallel arguments by showing that Israel, while pursuing the righteousness that results from the law, had not recognized the one to whom the law points and on whom they must call in order to be saved.

Paul used Leviticus 18:5 as a summary of the law, in that it offers life and righteousness on the basis of performance, that is, doing the whole law (Rom 2:25-29).<sup>18</sup> Paul uses the same quotation in Galatians 3:12 where he sets up a clear distinction between the righteousness that comes by faith and the righteousness that comes by works of the law. In the Galatians passage he made an argument similar to that in the passage at hand, but in Galatians he makes it clear that trying to attain righteousness by works of the law actually results in being placed under a curse. There is no reason to think that Paul would see the argument differently here, since the point of discussion is essentially the same, that is, whether righteousness is available by the law.<sup>19</sup> In Galatians 3, he refers to

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by the law. Similarly, Moo, *Romans*, 648; Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 601. But see also Seifrid, "Romans," 656, who suggests the hope of life in the land is anticipation of a resurrection from the dead.

<sup>18</sup>Seifrid, "Romans," 656; Moo, *Romans*, 647-48. See, similarly, Thomas R. Schreiner, "Paul's View of the Law in Romans 10:4-5," *WTJ* 55 (1993): 131. For an argument regarding the impossibility of keeping the law perfectly, see idem, "Is Perfect Obedience to the Law Possible? A Re-examination of Galatians 3:10," *JETS* 27 (1984): 151-60. But see Kaiser, "Leviticus 18:5 and Paul," 22. Kaiser argues that keeping the law was not expected since sacrifices were provided for those who failed. See also Rhyne, "The Meaning of Romans 10:4," 498. Rhyne argues that Paul excludes those who are of the works of the law, not because of the individual's inability to keep the law, but because the readily accessible word of faith forbids evasive excuses for not attaining salvation. He prefers to emphasize vv. 6-8 rather than v. 5. It appears, however, that both parts of Paul's argument have equal weight.

<sup>19</sup>So Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 602; Schreiner, *Romans*, 554. Similarly, Elizabeth Johnson, *The Function of Apocalyptic and Wisdom Traditions in Romans 9-11* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989), 156. See however, Jewett, *Romans*, 624; Hays, *Echoes*, 208n 87, both of whom argue Paul's argument in Galatians

Christ as redeemer of those who are under the curse of the law and, as I have argued previously, Paul understands Israel in some sense to be under curse, even here in Romans 9-11, as suggested by his willingness to become accursed for them, that is, in their stead (9:3).

That Paul sees the righteousness that comes from the law as inadequate is evident also from Philippians 3:9 where Paul uses the same phrase that appears in Romans 10:5 (τὴν δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐκ τοῦ νόμου). In Philippians 3:9 he expresses a desire for the righteousness that comes from faith in Christ *rather than* his own righteousness, which comes from the law, suggesting he understood his own righteousness to be inadequate. Since that is the only other place in Paul's writings that the righteousness from the law and the righteousness from faith appear together, and they are set in contrast there, there is reason to think Paul intended the same contrast in Romans 10:5-8.<sup>20</sup>

But one should be careful to note that Paul does not juxtapose these two Scriptures to argue that keeping the law was the means of attaining righteousness prior to Christ.<sup>21</sup> To the contrary, he argues from Deuteronomy in this passage that righteousness is a matter of faith. For Paul, righteousness has always been by faith and the law has always served to bring all under condemnation (Gal 3:22; Rom 3:19-20). That feature of the law has not been terminated, but continues with the same goal (Rom 10:4).

The perplexing question, however, is how verse 5 can be set in contrast to verses 6-8, since Leviticus 18:5 offers a reward for obedience to the law and Deuteronomy 30:12-14 makes it clear that the requirements of the law are not too

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differs from his argument in Romans and that he uses Lev 18:5 differently, although neither explains how it is different.

<sup>20</sup>Moo, *Romans*, 646.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., 648.

difficult for Israel, both apparently encouraging Israel to keep the law.<sup>22</sup> The answer is best found in the whole context of Paul's argument in 9:30-10:13.<sup>23</sup> The contrast throughout is between the effort to gain righteousness by works of the law and the effort to gain it by the confession of the lordship of the one to whom the law points. Whereas in verse 5 it was Moses who wrote, here the righteousness by faith has been personified and speaks.<sup>24</sup> It is not, however, so much the righteousness of faith that is contrasted with Leviticus 18:5. It is rather that the contrast with Leviticus 18:5 is the word that Paul will define in Romans 10:9 as the word spoken by the righteousness of faith, that is, that salvation lies close at hand in the confession of the risen Lord.<sup>25</sup> In 10:6, when the righteousness of faith is made to speak thusly (οὐτως), it is not altogether a matter of what is said by the righteousness of faith, as much as the manner in which it speaks, the same

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<sup>22</sup>Dunn suggests that if Paul's opponents were using Lev 18:5, Paul's approach would be to provide his own quote of a different text to offset their use of 18:5. Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 602. See also Schreiner, *Romans*, 555. Kaiser, however, argues that Paul would not pit Scripture against Scripture, Kaiser, "Leviticus 18:5," 27. See also Werner Führer, "'Herr ist Jesus': Die Rezeption der urchristlichen Kyrios-Akklamation durch Paulus Römer 10,9," *Kerygma and Dogma* 33 (1987): 138. Werner thought Paul saw the difference between faith righteousness and works righteousness as the hidden meaning in Deut 30:14.

<sup>23</sup>So Frank Thielman, *Paul and the Law: A Contextual Approach* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1994), 209. Similarly, Moo, *Romans*, 653-54, although Moo does not really address the context of Deut 30, instead suggesting that Paul's use of that chapter was not entirely exegetical. Moo prefers a more general statement that Paul saw in Deut 30 a statement of God's grace in establishing a relationship with his people.

<sup>24</sup>For a discussion of the issues and the arguments regarding the verbal differences between the Deuteronomy passages and Paul's quotations of them, see James D. G. Dunn, "'Righteousness from the Law' and 'Righteousness from Faith': Paul's Interpretation of Scripture in Rom 10:1-10," in *Tradition and Interpretation in the New Testament*, ed. Gerald F. Hawthorne with Otto Betz (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 217-18. See also Johnson, *Apocalyptic and Wisdom*, 133-39 for the argument that Paul was dependent on Baruch for his translation. For the argument for yet a third layer of influence from Sirach, see Humphrey, "Why Bring the Word Down?" 134. The latter two arguments fail because of the large differences between Paul and Baruch, and because it is hard to imagine Paul quoting from Baruch or Sirach if he had Deuteronomy available. The differences in the wording should not be taken to mean this is only an allusion to the text. With the understanding of Paul's system of comment on the passage it can be taken as a citation. So Seifrid, "Paul's Approach to the Old Testament," 17-23. Contra William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, ICC, vol. 31 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1902), 289; James Denney, *St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, in *The Expositors Greek Commentary*, ed. W. Robertson Nicoll (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1903; reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970), 670.

<sup>25</sup>Thielman, *Paul and the Law*, 208.

manner in which Deuteronomy speaks.<sup>26</sup> The manner of the speech is to point to the one upon whom Israel must believe for righteousness.

Romans 10:6-8 consist of a series of references to Deuteronomy 9:4 (do not say in your heart) and Deuteronomy 30:12-14. The righteousness of faith, like the passages in Deuteronomy, speaks of the lack of difficulty in pursuing righteousness.<sup>27</sup> Deuteronomy 30 begins with the discussion of the blessings and curses that come upon Israel when they are in the lands into which Israel had been driven by the Lord (v. 1). Verse 5 carries the promise that God will bring them into the land he had promised to the patriarchs, and verse 6 contains the promise that the Lord will circumcise their hearts with the result that they will love him with all their hearts and that they will again obey his commandments (30:6-8).<sup>28</sup> That will bring about a new prosperity from the Lord, when they turn to him with all their hearts (30:9-10). The text that Paul cites follows up that passage. The commandment is not too hard for them (vs. 11) and they are not to think of sending someone to heaven or to the other side of the sea to bring the commandment back so they will hear and obey. The word is in their mouth and their

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<sup>26</sup>Seifrid, "Romans," 654. Ulrich Wilckens, *Der Brief an die Römer* (Zürich: Benziger Verlag and Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1993), 2:226.

<sup>27</sup>Regarding Moses' writing and the righteousness of faith speaking, it is probably over interpretation to press too much of a difference. The words are probably a literary device. See Wilckens, *Der Brief an die Römer*, 226. Wilckens points out that in Rom 9:17 the Scripture speaks to Pharaoh. Likewise, in 10:11 and 10:16 the Scripture (and Isaiah) says, but in 10:15 it is written (compare 1:17 where that the righteous will live by faith is written.) To create too much of a contrast on the basis of the difference in saying and speaking may be a result of seeing the righteousness of faith as a recent thought for Paul, but to the contrary, the text of Deuteronomy has always contained the message the righteousness from faith speaks and the righteousness from faith has always spoken that message. In other words, both what Moses wrote and what the righteousness from faith speaks are contained in Scripture.

<sup>28</sup>The circumcision of the heart is an important motif in Deuteronomy. In Deut 10:16, unlike in the instant passage, the Israelites are commanded to circumcise their hearts. An idea similar to that occurs in Jer 31:33 where God promises to put his law in the hearts of Israel. That passage, describing the new covenant, also occurs in the context of restoration of Israel to the land (Jer 30:3). The metaphor appears also in Lev 26:41-42; Deut 30:6; Jer 4:3-4; 6:10; 9:24-25; Ezek 44:6-9. For an analysis of those texts with the argument that the metaphor of circumcision of the heart was a matter of trajectory of thought in the religion of Israel, see Werner E. Lemke, "Circumcision of the Heart: the Journey of a Biblical Metaphor," in *A God so Near: Essays on Old Testament Theology in Honor of Patrick D. Miller*, ed. Brent A. Strawn and Nancy R. Bowen (Winona Lake, IL: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 299-312.

hearts, where God has promised he would put it (30:6-8; cf. Jer 31:33). The force of this passage is that Israel will prosper when they believe in the one who delivers them, rather than in their own ability to perform the law. Paul has simply chosen another passage that makes a point similar to the one he made in Romans 9:32-33 with his conflation of Isaiah 8:14 and Isaiah 28:16. In both cases, it is trust in the redeemer that Israel needs.

Paul's point is, of course, the same as in Romans 9:32-33. He enjoins the same things as the Deuteronomy text, but with comments. In verse 7 Paul contrasts the descent into the abyss with the ascent into heaven.<sup>29</sup> In the ascent into heaven Paul sees an attempt to bring Christ down from heaven and in the descent to the abyss to bring him back from the dead. Rhyne suggests neither of those is any more necessary for the Christian than it was for the Israelite to travel to heaven or across the sea to attain to the law.<sup>30</sup> It is likely, however, that Paul's point is more that the efforts of Israel to establish their own righteousness amount to an effort to bring in the Messiah.<sup>31</sup> By his use of Scripture, Paul shows through the character personified as righteousness by faith that such efforts to bring in the Messiah were misguided. God has always made his

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<sup>29</sup>Paul's wording here varies from both the MT and the LXX. Dunn calls attention to Targum Neofiti "who would descend into the depths of the Great Sea" to suggest Paul's use of abyss here might not have been unusual. Dunn, "Righteousness from the Law," 217. Similarly, see Martin McNamara, *The New Testament and the Palestinian Targum to the Pentateuch* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1966), 71-78. McNamara argues for a first century tradition for the Targum based on similarity of thought regarding the possibility of another Moses who would again ascend to bring the law down. However, Seifrid notes the late dating of that Targum (as late as 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> century) and concludes that although the tradition may substantially precede that date, the connection to the NT is tenuous. Seifrid, "Paul's Approach to the Old Testament," 24. Since there is no way to determine how long the tradition actually existed prior to reduction to writing in the Targum, the argument that Paul was influenced by the Targum or its earlier tradition is hard to defend. It is more likely that the abyss and the sea were so closely related in OT thought that Paul felt free to make the connection. See Schreiner, *Romans*, 557-58, with the examples he lists in n18 where the two words are closely related, and Seifrid, "Romans," 657, also with a list of examples.

<sup>30</sup>Rhyne, "The Meaning of Romans 10:4," 496.

<sup>31</sup>See Jewett, *Romans*, 627. Jewett points out instances from Jewish literature where one finds the thought that keeping the Sabbath properly would bring the Messiah. Contra Suggs, "The Word is Near You," 310. Suggs argues that 'heaven' and 'abyss' were wisdom motifs, symbolic of the inaccessibility of Wisdom. The point of this passage, however, is about accessibility, not inaccessibility.

righteousness available and accessible. The word remains in their mouth and in their heart (Rom 10:8), whether they are willing to recognize it there or not.

The point Paul makes in this passage regarding the futility of trying to demonstrate one's righteousness is, then, consistent with emphases in Deuteronomy.<sup>32</sup> Deuteronomy 9:4-6 notably begins with what Israel should not say in its heart (as in Rom 10:6). By his use of that passage, Paul must have intended that his readers understand the point of the context of Deuteronomy 9. There, Moses admonished Israel not to think that God had thrown Israel's enemies out because of Israel's own righteousness. Israel was, in fact, a stubborn people. The wickedness of the peoples already in the land was a better explanation for God's driving them out before Israel than the explanation that Israel was itself righteous (see also Deut 8:17-20). Paul's use of the opening words of Deuteronomy 9:4 to begin his reference to Deuteronomy 30:12-14 would surely call attention to this concept in 9:4-6, and "the resonance of this citation would have been unmistakable for those acquainted with Deuteronomy."<sup>33</sup> As Hays notes, "The message [of Deut 9:4-6] is so apt for Paul's argument in Romans that we are left wondering why he did not go ahead and quote these words rather than delving into his problematical exegesis of Deut 30:12-14."<sup>34</sup> Thus, even if he does it in an oblique way, Paul calls attention from Scripture itself to oppose Israel's rejection of Jesus as the Messiah while they went about trying to establish their own righteousness.<sup>35</sup>

Regardless of how one understands Paul's use of Leviticus 18:5 and the passages from Deuteronomy, the Christological emphasis is clear. Dunn argues correctly that there is no attempt here to identify Christ with the commandment since "the word" is

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<sup>32</sup>Jewett, *Romans*, 626.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid. Similarly, Moo, *Romans*, 650-51; Dunn, "Righteousness from the Law," 224.

<sup>34</sup>Hays, *Echoes*, 79.

<sup>35</sup>Jewett, *Romans*, 626.

subsequently identified as the word of faith, but he goes from there incorrectly to deny that the incarnation is in view, preferring to see that Christ's coming again is what would make "the word" easier to believe.<sup>36</sup> The words of Romans 10:6-7, however, more naturally "refer to the sending of the Son to earth at his incarnation."<sup>37</sup> There is nothing in the passage to suggest Paul has in mind the return of Christ, but, as pointed out above, there is evidence that the Jews thought that by keeping the law perfectly they could bring in the Messiah. Paul's point is consistent with his points in both 9:30-33 and 10:1-4. In addition, the incarnation satisfies the logic that God's act brings Christ near in the incarnation.<sup>38</sup> For Paul, the Messiah has come, but Israel has failed to recognize him, and still trying to establish their own righteousness they wish to bring in another Messiah.

In verse 8 Paul continues the citation from Deuteronomy. The verse begins with a strong adversative to contrast the search for righteousness in distant places with its actual nearness. This is in contrast to verse 3 where the Jews were seeking righteousness, and to Paul's language in 9:30-33 where they were running the race for righteousness when it was so near they stumbled on it, but failed to perceive it even then. The subject of the verb λέγει is ἐκ πίστεως δικαιοσύνη brought forward from its position in verse 6 as the subject of the same verb there. The word of faith is the content of the gospel message that is believed.<sup>39</sup> It is that message, and its definition, with which Paul is ultimately

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<sup>36</sup>Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 605, 614-15. See generally, idem, *Christology in the Making: A New Testament Inquiry into the Origins of the Doctrine of the Incarnation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996). Indeed, in his commentary, Dunn refers to this work as his argument against a Pauline doctrine of the incarnation.

<sup>37</sup>Schreiner, *Romans*, 558. See also, Moo, *Romans*, 655; Seifrid, "Paul's Approach to the Old Testament," 26; idem, "Romans," 657; Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:525; Morris, *Romans*, 383; Wright, *Romans*, 663; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 590. Similarly, Jewett, *Romans*, 628. According to Jewett, the questions pursued by some in Judaism about bringing Christ down had already been answered in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

<sup>38</sup>So David B. Capes, "YHWH and His Messiah: Pauline Exegesis and The Divine Christ," *HBT* 16 (1994): 131.

<sup>39</sup>So Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 2:526; C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*. (New York: Harper and Row, 1957), 199; Moo, *Romans*, 656, among others. Contra Sanday

concerned, and as can be seen from the discussion to follow, the message was heavily Christological.<sup>40</sup>

### **Romans 10:9-13**

In this section the structure is marked in two ways. The first is by a series of five  $\gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho$  clauses to pull the reader along to the conclusion. The progression is (1) for in the heart is believed... (2) for the Scripture says... (3) for there is no distinction...(4) for the same Lord is Lord of all, and (5) for all who call on the name of the Lord will be saved.<sup>41</sup> The second structural issue is the fourfold use of  $\pi\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$  (all). The universal emphasis comes from the fact that there is only one Lord (compare 3:30 where there is one God) and the same richness of salvation is available to all who call on him. This universal emphasis is important not only because of the number of uses, but because in his citation of Isaiah 28:16 Paul includes  $\pi\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$ , even though it does not appear in either the LXX or the Masoretic Text. We will see that in this passage lies the content of the gospel, that which one must believe for righteousness.<sup>42</sup>

### **Exegetical Comments: 10:9-10**

Verse 9 begins with the connective  $\delta\tau\iota$ , which could be either continuative (that) or causal, but it seems best to take it as continuative, introducing the final verses in

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and Headlam, *Romans*, 288, who see faith as the act of trusting, but that does not account for the fact that Paul speaks specifically of the word of faith which he preaches. Schreiner, *Romans*, 559, and Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 606, think Paul meant both things.

<sup>40</sup>To argue as Dunn does that the passage is soteriological rather than Christological creates an unnecessary division. It is true that the passage speaks of how one may be saved, but the focus of that method of salvation is the confession of the one who saves. Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 605.

<sup>41</sup>C. Kavin Rowe, "Romans 10:13: What is the Name of the Lord?" *Horizons in Biblical Theology* 22 (2000): 141.

<sup>42</sup>For Dunn the thing that Israel had failed to believe was that only God can establish the covenant and that he does so on the basis of faith, which Gentiles as well as Jews could exercise. Dunn, "Righteousness from the Law," 224. Similarly, Johnson, *Apocalyptic and Wisdom Traditions*, 154. Of course it is correct that God justifies both by faith, but the fact that God justifies both by faith is not the confession and belief that Paul asserts is necessary.

this passage as an explanation of all of verse 8, rather than as causal for the final clause of the verse.<sup>43</sup> That verse 9 is connected to and further explains 10:6-8 can be seen from the use of the phrases “in your mouth” and “in your heart.”<sup>44</sup> As a continuative, it points to the content of the word of faith that is in the mouth and in the heart. That statement of content is arguably the clearest and most basic statement of Christian faith that exists in Scripture.<sup>45</sup> What this basic confession of the Christian faith includes must be considered in more detail later, but for now it is sufficient to note that this is Paul’s specific statement that one becomes beneficiary of the righteousness of God through confession of the lordship of Jesus and faith in the heart that God raised Jesus from the dead. It is common for commentators to notice the surprising order of confession and belief in verse 9, but it may be that Paul is following the order of the quote of Deuteronomy 30:14 in verse 8.<sup>46</sup> Of course the order is reversed in verse 10, creating a chiasmic structure. Paul’s concern in Romans has most to do with the heart (Rom 2:29), so the confession he has in mind is a result of “heartfelt conviction.”<sup>47</sup> The confession may have been a confession before other believers but it is best understood as the confession of Christ in the world.<sup>48</sup> The verb σωθήσῃ could be taken as a logical future, just meaning salvation is a result of

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<sup>43</sup>So Schreiner, *Romans*, 559; John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 2 vols. in 1 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), 55. Contra Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 2:526; Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 657. See also David B. Capes, *Old Testament Yahweh Texts in Paul’s Christology* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr Siebeck, 1992), 116-17. Capes denies ὅτι can be classified either way.

<sup>44</sup>Capes, *Yahweh Texts*, 116-17.

<sup>45</sup>N. T. Wright, *Romans*, 664.

<sup>46</sup>Moo, *Romans*, 655.

<sup>47</sup>Schreiner, *Romans*, 560; Moo, *Romans*, 655.

<sup>48</sup>So Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 607; Käsemann, *Romans*, 291; Führer, “Herr ist Jesus,” 143; Wilckens, *Römer*, 227; Christian Müller *Gottes Gerechtigkeit und Gottes Volk: Eine Untersuchung zu Römer 9-11* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1964), 35. All suggest that the confession was creedal, used in baptism, but perhaps also in worship.

confessing,<sup>49</sup> but it is likely better taken as a genuine future. Paul likely has in mind salvation in the new age that comes with the eschatological day of the Lord. That day is referenced in Joel 2:32, as quoted in Romans 10:13, and Paul was likely already thinking forward to that point. Verse 10 grounds verse 9 and righteousness there should be understood as synonymous with salvation, suggesting confession and believing as essentially closely knit acts.

The object of faith in this basic and essential confession is the resurrection of Jesus. Just as the confession that Jesus is Lord is the basic confession of the Christian faith, so the resurrection is the essential fact that must be believed. Paul has already connected the resurrection and lordship of Jesus in Romans 1:4, and it is again the risen Lord who must be confessed.

### **Exegetical Comments Regarding 10:11-13**

The assertion of verses 9-10 is grounded in the effectiveness of faith as over against works as has been the case throughout 9:30-10:13. Contrary to Israel's attempt to gain righteousness by pursuing it through works, and the attempt to establish their own righteousness, it is the one who believes on him who will not be ashamed. As with the future tense of *σωθήσῃ* in verse 9, the verb *καταισχυνθήσεται* is a true future and refers to vindication on the day of judgment, not psychological shame. As E. E. Johnson points out, six of the twelve uses of the *αἰσχύνομαι* and related words in Paul's refer to eschatological shame.<sup>50</sup>

Verse 11 is from Isaiah 28:16, to which Paul also referred in conflation with Isaiah 8:16 in Romans 9:33. Issues in the composition and use of those two passages

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<sup>49</sup>So Moo, *Romans*, 657n 61.

<sup>50</sup>Johnson, *Apocalyptic and Wisdom Traditions*, 127-28. See also R. Bultmann, "αἰσχύνω," *TDNT*, Gerhard Kittel, ed., trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), 190. Bultmann understands the sense in Rom 9:33, as that of doing something bad. See also Schreiner, *Romans*, 561; Capes, *Yahweh Texts*, 122; Rowe, "What is the Name of the Lord?" 145; Capes, "YHWH and His Messiah," 133.

together were discussed briefly earlier (see chap. 5). It is noteworthy here that Paul has added the word “all” (πᾶς) to the Isaiah text. Since Paul did not make that addition in 9:33, there is little doubt that the use in 10:11 is intentional to emphasize that salvation by faith is available to everyone. That addition, and his comment in verse 12 that there is no distinction, is probably a result of his use of Joel 2:32 in verse 13 and both are ultimately grounded by verse 13.<sup>51</sup> As Rowe notes, the impact of the verse is to show that “where the Scripture says ‘the one believing in/upon him will not be put to shame’ it means *everyone* who believes in him” (emphasis original).<sup>52</sup>

The referent of ἐπ’ αὐτῷ in this case is Jesus.<sup>53</sup> In chapter 5 I argued that Christ was the stumbling block and that Romans 9:33 is an example of a referential shift from YHWH in the Old Testament text to Jesus in Paul’s thought. The same thing occurs in 10:11. It is possible to argue that ἐπ’ αὐτῷ actually refers to the stone, but that requires that Paul intended the reader to believe in the stone. It is more likely that his intention was that the readers believe in someone, not something.<sup>54</sup> But, although he takes Jesus as the antecedent, Cranfield notes the mention of God in 10:9.<sup>55</sup> Cranfield doesn’t develop the thought any further, but it is possible that God could be the antecedent since it is really God who performs the act that must be believed in the heart. Rowe lists four reasons, however, that the antecedent is Jesus.<sup>56</sup> First, αὐτόν in 10:9, whose antecedent is surely Jesus, is the clearest antecedent to αὐτῷ in 10:11. Second, Jesus and God are

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<sup>51</sup>Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 609.

<sup>52</sup>Rowe, “What is the Name of the Lord?” 142.

<sup>53</sup>Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:531; Stuhlmacher, *Romans*, 157; Capes, *Yahweh Texts*, 119; Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 610; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 592; Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 211; Shiu-Lun Shum, *Paul’s Use of Isaiah in Romans: A Comparative Study of Paul’s Letter to the Romans and the Sibylline and Qumran Sectarian Texts* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 221.

<sup>54</sup>Rowe, “What is the Name of the Lord?” 143.

<sup>55</sup>Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:531.

<sup>56</sup>Rowe, “What is the Name of the Lord?” 143-44.

inseparable in 10:9. Jesus is Lord because God raised him from the dead. Third, as noted above, in 9:33 Paul uses Jesus as the antecedent. Fourth, the identification of Jesus as Lord in the other three instances in 10:9-13 makes it fairly clear that Paul would mean the same thing in 10:11. That Jesus is the referent of Lord in 10:9 is fairly clear, and I will develop further below the argument that he is referent in 10:12 and 10:13. On that basis, it can be argued that Paul once again takes the words of Isaiah that originally referred to YHWH and applies them to Jesus.

Verse 12 follows closely upon verse 11. The universal availability of lack of shame through belief in Jesus is grounded by two statements in verse 12. The first is that there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, which is itself grounded in the fact the same Lord is Lord of all. The second is that the same Lord is Lord of all. The verse is best read against the background of 3:21-30, especially 3:22 and 3:29-30.<sup>57</sup>

The first part of verse 12, “for there is no distinction between Jew and Greek,” is a positive statement of the more negative statement in 3:22. In 3:21-23 the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus has been witnessed by the law and the prophets, “unto all who believe, for there is no distinction, for all have sinned and lack the glory of God.” While the distinction is not specifically said to be between Jew and Greek, the preceding context makes that clear. There is a difference in the distinctions that are made in 3:22 and 10:12, but they are not altogether unrelated. The problem of universal sin is addressed in 3:21-26 by the propitiatory sacrifice of Jesus, by which God declares the guilty to be righteous. In 10:12, there is similarly no distinction, in that all, both Jew and Greek, may (and must) call upon the one Lord. I covered 3:29-30 in some detail in chapter 3 so for the moment I will mention only that the fact that there is only one God makes him the God of both Jew and Gentile (God of all people). Being God of

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<sup>57</sup>But Wilckens also calls attention to the connection between *εἰς σωτηρίαν* in 10:10 and *εἰς δικαιοσύνην* in 10:4, and the rhetorical parallelism between faith and confession. He also sees the connection between “anyone” in 10:12 and 10:4 and understands v. 12 as a further explanation of v. 4. Wilckens, *Römer*, 2:227-28. Wilckens also recognizes, of course, the connection to 3:22 and 3:29-30.

all people, he justifies all by faith. So, here in 10:12 there is no distinction. The one Lord is rich toward those who call upon him. Since calling upon him in verse 13 results in salvation, it is apparent that the riches here refer to salvation as well.

The Lord here, as in 10:9, is surely Jesus.<sup>58</sup> The confession that Jesus is Lord is clarified now to be that he is “Lord of all.”<sup>59</sup> Being rich to all who call on him must refer to his gracious act of salvation for those who call upon him, and in verse 9 Paul has already made confession of Jesus as Lord a condition of salvation. In this verse and in verse 13, “calling upon” is a matter of salvation. Paul elsewhere speaks of the riches of the grace of both Christ and of God in the salvation act. In Ephesians 1:7 the riches are Christ’s, connected to the redemption through his blood. In 2:7, it is God who shows forth the riches of his grace in Christ Jesus. In 3:8 Paul received grace to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to the Gentiles. In two of those three occasions it is Christ whose riches are in view, as in Romans 10:12. The fact that Paul can refer to the riches of both Christ and of God is just one more instance of the fluidity in the way Paul speaks of Jesus and of God. We must return to the connection between Romans 10:12 and 3:29-30, with some consideration of whether a connection to 9:5 exists, but it would be wise first to complete the reading of the passage, which needs still a brief discussion of Romans 10:13.

The fact that the Lord is rich toward all leads to the statement in verse 13 where Paul almost exactly quotes the LXX of Joel 3:5 (English, 2:32). The lone difference in Paul’s quotation from the LXX of Joel 3:5 (itself an accurate translation of

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<sup>58</sup>So Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 617; idem, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998), 250; Käsemann, *Romans*, 292; Morris, *Romans*, 387; Schreiner, *Romans*, 561; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 592; Jewett, *Romans* 632; Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:531; Wilckens, *Römer*, 2:228; Capes, “YHWH and His Messiah,” 133. Contra Stuhlmacher, *Romans*, 157; Luke Timothy Johnson, *Reading Romans: A Literary and Theological Commentary* (New York: Crossroad, 1997), 161.

<sup>59</sup>The genitive πάντων here is masculine, not neuter. The universality of the passage requires that Jesus be Lord over all people. So Wilckens, *Römer*, 228. See also my argument in chap. 2 regarding Rom 9:5b and chap. 4 regarding Eph 4:6. Contra Käsemann, *Romans*, 290.

the MT) is his substitution of the γάρ for καὶ ἔσται (and it will be) in Joel, which is a proper translation of יהוה in the MT. It may be that Paul understood that in some part the day of the Lord had already begun and he no longer needed to refer to this verse as a possibility in the future.<sup>60</sup> That does not, however, account for the future tenses of σωθήσῃ and καταισχυθήσεται, both of which point to a future event.<sup>61</sup> It is more likely that the γάρ is a literary tool providing the ground of the previous verse and actually brings Paul's thought in all of 9:30-10:13 to a climax.<sup>62</sup> Here, apart from the efforts to establish that a righteousness based on the law, is the means of salvation, which, unlike the righteousness sought from works, is available to anyone who calls on the name of the Lord.

Calling on the name of the Lord should be understood as a similar action to the confession that Jesus is Lord in Romans 10:9. Romans 10:13, of course, makes calling upon the name of the Lord the means of salvation, just as the confession and belief of 10:9 result in salvation. Those who call upon the name of the Lord, then, become a part of the community of the redeemed who will be saved in the eschatological judgment.

In Romans 10:13 κύριος is a translation of יהוה, which is, of course, the name of the God of Israel of the Old Testament and it is on that name now upon which all, including Israel, may and must call to be saved. But one might ask whether the referent of κύριος there is actually Jesus. For John Ziesler the answer is that Jesus is not the referent. Ziesler argues that because the theme since 9:1 has been God's sovereign freedom in calling a people, the balance is tipped in the favor of seeing κύριος as a reference to God.<sup>63</sup> That overlooks the strong Christological theme of the near context, however, and

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<sup>60</sup>So Capes, *Yahweh Texts*, 121.

<sup>61</sup>Noted also by Rowe, "What is the Name of the Lord?" 152n 2.

<sup>62</sup>*Ibid.*, 140.

<sup>63</sup>John Ziesler, *Paul's Letter to the Romans* (London: SCM and Philadelphia: Trinity, 1989), 262. Similarly, John E. Toews, "The Law in Paul's Letter to the Romans: A Study of Rom. 9.30-10.13." (Ph.D. Diss., Northwestern University, August 1977), 330.

it is open to question whether God's sovereign freedom is the point beyond 9:6-29.<sup>64</sup> Carl Judson Davis argues that the most important reason for seeing Jesus as the referent is:

v. 14, which asks 'but how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard?' Since chs 9-11 explain Israel's failure to attain a righteous standing before God, 'they' in 10.14 includes those Jews who have failed in God's plan (see too 10.12). The Jews had heard of Yahweh. Since 10.11 and 9.33 connect belief with Jesus, he is the one on whom the Jews have not believed and called. Also, Paul explicitly states that confession 'Jesus is Lord' is an essential element in one's salvation, and v. 12 further connects *κύριος*, belief, invocation and calling on the name of the Lord.<sup>65</sup>

In addition to the above, Davis argues that Paul would not understand "the name" and Lord as a reference to God, since where Paul elsewhere uses the phrase "calling on the name of the Lord," he explains *κύριος* with *Ἰησοῦς* (1 Cor 1:2) and there is little evidence that Paul understood "the name" as a separate Christological title.<sup>66</sup>

### **Summary and Conclusions from Romans 10:9-13**

The key in Romans 10:9-13 for purposes of the argument of this dissertation is the identity of the *κύριος*. In 10:6-8 Paul had already rather radically reinterpreted Deuteronomy 30:12-14 in a Christological manner. I argued in chapter 4 that the title *κύριος*, used of YHWH in the Old Testament, has in more than one place been applied to Jesus in the New Testament and I have argued here that this is exactly what occurs in Romans 10:9-13. The argument in this section is that in all three instances when Paul uses the term he refers to Jesus and that he means to identify Jesus as YHWH, the God of Israel in the Old Testament. In addition, I have argued that the antecedent of *ἐπ' αὐτῷ* in verse 12 is Jesus as well. In 10:9-13 there is evidence that, as in other cases mentioned in

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<sup>64</sup>Capes, "YHWH and His Messiah," 136.

<sup>65</sup>Carl Judson Davis, *The Name and Way of the Lord: Old Testament Themes, New Testament Christology*, JSNT Supplement Series, vol. 129 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 129-30.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., 130. Similarly, see Capes, "YHWH and His Messiah," 136. Among other reasons for understanding Jesus as the Lord, Capes cites the clear references to the resurrection and the relationship of these verses to eschatological salvation, as well as the confession in Rom 10:9.

chapter 4, Paul intended to transfer to Jesus the referent of Old Testament texts that applied to YHWH. Confession of Jesus as Lord almost surely meant identifying him as YHWH.<sup>67</sup> If I am correct that Romans 10:9 is the basic confession of the Christian faith, then the reasonable implication is that, for Paul, the recognition of who Jesus is becomes the saving factor in the confession.

This is, of course, not uncontested. Dunn acknowledges only that Paul has no “qualms about transferring God’s role in eschatological salvation to the risen Jesus.” At the same time, Dunn thinks *κύριος* is not so much a way of identifying Jesus with God as distinguishing him from God because Jesus’ lordship is granted to him by God. Thus Christ is God’s representative.<sup>68</sup> Fitzmeyer may be willing to recognize a little more identity because he is certain that Paul, along with the rest of the early church, saw the risen Jesus as “on a par” with YHWH, but apparently not identical to YHWH.<sup>69</sup> The evidence, however, points to the complete identity of Jesus with YHWH of the Old Testament. As I have pointed out before, it is not clear how one could be on a par with the incomparable one of the Old Testament and not be that one. It is much more likely that Paul did intend to identify Jesus with YHWH.<sup>70</sup>

### **God/Lord of All in Romans**

In chapter 3, I considered Paul’s words in Romans 3:29-30 as part of the argument that Paul was a monotheist, consistent with a biblical and first century understanding of what that term meant. Part of the discussion there concerned the

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<sup>67</sup>So also Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:529.

<sup>68</sup>Dunn, *Theology of Paul*, 250-54.

<sup>69</sup>Joseph A. Fitzmeyer, “The Christology of the Epistle to the Romans,” in *The Future of Christology*, ed. Abraham J. Malherbe and Wayne A. Meeks (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 84. Idem, *Romans*, 113.

<sup>70</sup>Cf. Capes, *Yahweh Texts*, 121-23, 164; Rowe, “What is the Name of the Lord?” 160; Shum, *Paul’s Use of Isaiah*, 223.

expectation from Zechariah 14:9 that God's name would become one and that he would become king of the whole earth. I suggested that to be God of a people meant that he acts to save his people. The implication of Paul's monotheism is that God is creator of all people and that God acts to save all people. God justifies both Jew and Gentile by faith because he alone is God of both. If I am correct that the saving grace of God and of the Lord is the richness toward all that Paul has in view in 10:12, it could perhaps be said also that in 3:29-30 God is rich toward all in that he justifies all by faith.<sup>71</sup> Of course, the one God in this text can be none other than YHWH, God of the Old Testament, whose name Zechariah proclaims will be one.

I have also argued that Romans 3:30 can be seen as a statement of the Shema<sup>ϛ</sup>, that is, that God is one (εἷς ὁ θεὸς). Perhaps also, as Rowe notes, it is not "too fanciful to suggest that in ὁ αὐτὸς κύριος we can hear a foundational theological resonance with the Shema<sup>ϛ</sup>, as we almost certainly would in εἷς ὁ θεὸς in 3:30."<sup>72</sup> In 10:12, the emphasis of oneness is similar to that of 3:29-30. There is no distinction between Jew and Greek because the one Lord is Lord of all,<sup>73</sup> in the same way that God justifies both Jew and Gentile by faith because he is one God. In a way similar to 3:29-30, the implication of the fact that the Lord is Lord of all is that he acts to save all; indeed, anyone who calls upon him will be saved (10:13). Of course, what can be astonishing to some is that the Lord here is none other than Jesus. It is he who is confessed as Lord; it is he who is Lord of all,

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<sup>71</sup>See Shum, *Paul's Use of Isaiah*, 222. Shum notes even more directly "it is clear enough that Rom. 10:12 intratextually echoes Rom 3:29-30." Shum sees 3:29-30 as more closely connected to Isa 45:21-22, finding on that basis an allusive relationship between Rom 10:12 and Isa 45:21-22 as well. Shum acknowledges that the verbal similarity is not strong, but he argues on a conceptual basis that Isaiah's monotheistic emphasis is what exerts the influence on Paul. While I have seen Zech 14:9 as in the background of Paul's thought, either passage is capable of informing Paul's expectation of a God who becomes king of the whole earth by virtue of his saving action.

<sup>72</sup>Rowe, "What is the Name of the Lord?" 148.

<sup>73</sup>Rom 10:12b acts as the ground of 10:12a. So also Rowe, "What is the Name of the Lord?" 147.

it is he who will save those who call upon him. Virtually the same things said of God in 3:29-30 are said of Jesus in 10:12-13.

Dunn makes the interesting comment that the confession of 10:9 is similar to the Shema<sup>4</sup>, in that the one who recites the Shema<sup>4</sup> identifies himself as belonging to Israel and the one who says Jesus is Lord identifies himself as belonging to Jesus.<sup>74</sup> That comment can perhaps be better applied to 10:13, since Paul uses the phrase “the ones who call on the name of the Lord” (τοῖς ἐπικαλοθμένοις τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου) in 1 Corinthians 1:2 to identify the Corinthians as part of the larger group who call upon the name of Lord in every place. The similarity, however, lies in more than the identification of a people. It lies in the singular one in both cases who is able to save all who call upon him, justifying both by faith.

But that brings the discussion to Romans 9:5b where Paul has arguably also identified Jesus as God over all. So there are three texts now in Romans in which Paul refers to a God/Lord of all or over all. In two cases, the oneness of the God/Lord is clearly emphasized (3:29-30 and 10:12), but that oneness is also implied in 9:5b, by the fact that to be the God of all is to be one God. The connection between 10:12-13 and 3:29-30 is strong, implying no substantive difference between κύριος and θεός. The connection between 10:12-13 and 9:5 is also strong. In fact, 10:12-13 looks back to 9:5. Jesus the Messiah is God over all and is Lord of all.<sup>75</sup> Yet it remains true that Paul did not use the word θεός to refer to Jesus in 10:12. It might be sufficient to simply say there was no need. His meaning was clear. In addition, so much of the thought in 10:9-13 is grounded in Joel 2:32 that perhaps it was simply consistent to speak of the κύριος throughout the passage. But perhaps one further suggestion can be made with some

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<sup>74</sup>Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 607.

<sup>75</sup>N. T. Wright, *Romans*, 690. Idem, *Climax*, 237.

further consideration of the ultimate question Paul set out to answer in Romans 9-11: what about the unbelief on the part of so many Jews?

### **Concluding Comments**

It has been asserted that the original author of Joel 2:32 would have shuddered at the thought of Paul's use of the verse as he applies it.<sup>76</sup> The original context of Joel 2:32, however, may not have been far from Paul's thought. The latter portion of the verse refers to a number in Jerusalem who will escape the day of the Lord (vs. 30). They are the ones whom the Lord calls. It is true that the passage in Joel applies to Israel, and Paul has universalized it, but perhaps there is some remaining tie to Israel that Paul has in mind. After all, as I have argued, the question that drives Romans 9-11 is Israel, not the Gentiles. He has already mentioned a remnant of Israel that will be saved (Rom 9:27). I have noted that Romans 9-11 deals with the question regarding the problem of Israel's unbelief, and in 9:30-10:21 the problem of Israel's unbelief is even more at the center of the discussion, with a strong emphasis on the one in whom they have not believed. By seeking to establish their own righteousness from a law of works, they have not come to recognition of the righteousness from God in the one who is the goal and purpose of the law. This is no real surprise because Israel has stumbled over the stone in Zion, just as Israel has done historically. In this case, they have failed to believe on Jesus, as Paul defines that belief in 10:9-13.

While I will not spend time and space here in a full consideration of Romans 10:14-21, Paul makes several important statements there that locate Israel's present unbelief well within the history of unbelief. In 10:14 the question is how they are to call on one for salvation on whom they have not believed, and how are they to believe if they

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<sup>76</sup>John Merlin, et al., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Micah, Zephaniah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Obadiah and Joel*, International Critical Commentary (New York; Scribner's Sons, 1911), 125.

have not heard.<sup>77</sup> But they have heard (10:18), and they have known (10:19).<sup>78</sup> The history of unbelief, indeed the whole paradoxical situation described in 9:30-10:21, is summed up in 10:20-21: God has been found by ones not seeking him, but Israel is disobedient and obstinate, even though God has held out his hands all day to them. So, it can rightly be said, based on Paul's point of 9:30-10:21, that in addition to the startling identification of Jesus with YHWH, there is also a startling reversal of the people who appear to be on the outside. It is not so much the Gentiles who must join Israel in calling upon YHWH, as it is that Israel must join the Gentiles in calling upon the name of Jesus.<sup>79</sup> In Romans 3:29-30, the point is that because God is one he is God of the Gentiles. In 10:9-13, it is Jesus who, because he is the one Lord of all, is Lord of the Jews as well. So, while Paul universalized the Joel passage to include all people, not just Israel, perhaps he has in mind the problem that he introduced in rather agonizing fashion in 9:3 and 10:1; how may Israel, though now estranged from Christ, still be redeemed? As I will argue in the next chapter, it will be by the one who has always been their redeemer. It is YHWH, God over all, and Lord of all, rich to all who call upon him. But calling upon the Lord is defined as the confession of who he is. Lord of all, God over all, the one God who justifies Gentiles and Jews by faith. Thus, Paul's use of *θεός* in 9:5 is particularly appropriate in this section where the concern is for Israel to recognize its redeemer.

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<sup>77</sup>It is true that Israel is not directly mentioned as the subject of Rom 10:14-18. Given the overall context of 9:30-10:21 and the emphasis on the unbelief of Israel, it is reasonable to conclude that 10:14-18, which is so concerned with hearing but not believing, would also apply to Israel. Since in v. 19 Paul does identify Israel as the ones who do not know, it is further reasonable to suggest he has Israel in mind in 1:14-18. See the extended defense of Israel as subject in Schreiner, *Romans*, 570-72.

<sup>78</sup>Paul's questions in Rom 10:18 and 10:19 both anticipate a positive response. See BDF, § 427.2.

<sup>79</sup>So Rowe, "What is the Name of the Lord?" 149.

## CHAPTER 7

### THE REDEEMER FROM ZION

It will come as no surprise to find that the discussion of the passage at hand in this chapter is filled with controversy. Paul has again here, as in Romans 9:33, conjoined two passages from Isaiah (with perhaps one from Psalm 14:7) that leave room for much discussion of how an understanding of his purpose is informed by the use of those two passages in their context. In addition, he has altered the text slightly, either by joining yet another Old Testament text to the Isaiah passages, by following another Greek text not presently known to us, by simple mistake, or through purposeful reinterpretation. He has also made the stark statement that all Israel will be saved, raising questions of how that might be and when. Of course there is the question of what he means by “all Israel.” In addition, there is discussion of whether the salvation of Israel even has to do with conversion to Christianity. Those questions and others have caused much thought resulting in many pages of discussion. I do not propose to try to solve all the problems, although I must, of course, offer an overall reading of the text. The primary issue will be whether the text can shed any further light on how Paul identifies Jesus in Romans 9-11. The question important for this dissertation will finally become what Paul means when he says a deliverer will come “from Zion.” I will propose that Paul purposefully used the phrase to say the same thing he said in Romans 9:5 and that he referred to the redeemer who had already come and who would in some way and at some time remove sin from Israel, resulting in the future salvation of Israel when it calls upon that redeemer.

## The Manner of the Salvation of Israel

The arguments advanced by Krister Stendahl, who argues there is a way for salvation for Israel other than through conversion to faith in Jesus, have been influential but have also generated some resistance. In fact, some devote whole articles to interaction with Stendahl.<sup>1</sup> Others, who don't devote entire articles, often find themselves in critical interaction in which they disagree with Stendahl's thought on the passage.<sup>2</sup> It will be necessary here also to acknowledge and briefly address Stendahl's argument since it intersects in several places with the approach I am following to establish the thesis of this dissertation. The most important thing in his argument for our purpose is Stendahl's statement as follows:

It should be noted that Paul does not say that when the time of God's kingdom, the consummation, comes, Israel will accept Jesus as the Messiah. He says only that the time will come when "all Israel will be saved" (11:26). It is stunning to note that Paul writes this whole section of Romans (10:17-11:36) without using the name of Jesus Christ. This includes the final doxology (11:33-36), the only such doxology in his writings without any christological element.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Reidar Hvalvik, "A 'Sonderweg' for Israel: A Critical Examination of a Current Interpretation of Romans 11.25-27," *JSNT* 38 (1990): 87-107; Scott Hafemann, "The Salvation of Israel in Romans 11:25-32: A Response to Krister Stendahl," *Ex Auditu* 4 (1998): 38-58; E. P. Sanders, "Paul's Attitude Toward the Jewish People," *USQR* 33 (1978): 175-8.

<sup>2</sup>See, e.g., Alan F. Segal, "Paul's Experience and Romans 9-11," *PSB* 11, Supplementary Issue #1 (1990): 61-70; Otfried Hofius, "'All Israel Will be Saved': Divine Salvation and Israel's Deliverance in Romans 9-11," *PSB* 11, Supplementary Issue #1 (1990): 37. See also Heikki Räisänen, "Torn Between Two Loyalties: Romans 9-11 and Paul's Conflicting Convictions," in *The Nordic Paul: Finnish Approaches to Pauline Theology*, ed. Lars Aejmelaeus and Antti Mustakallio (London: T&T Clark, 2008), esp. 32-33; W. D. Davies, "Paul and the People of Israel," in *Jewish and Pauline Studies* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 142-52, esp. 143. Davies' essay is primarily concerned with the issue of anti-Semitism, however.

<sup>3</sup>Krister Stendahl, "Paul Among Jews and Gentiles," in *Paul Among Jews and Gentiles and Other Essays* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976), 4. See also, idem, "Judaism and Christianity: Then and Now," *HDB* 28 (1963): 1-9, in which Stendahl argued that Israel would be converted to faith in Jesus Christ (7). The essay later appeared as idem, "Judaism and Christianity I: Then and Now," in *Meanings: The Bible as Document and Guide* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 205-15. Stendahl began that essay with an introductory note (205) in which he stated that much has happened since the writing of the article in *HDB*. Hence he followed the essay with idem "Judaism and Christianity II: A Plea for a Relationship," in *Meanings: The Bible as Document and Guide* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 217-32. In the latter Stendahl makes a plea for dialogue not only between Jews and Christians, but with Muslims as well. While the plea is moving and one would hope for such dialogue, Stendahl's reading of Rom 11 cannot stand exegetically. Others have agreed with Stendahl in principle, if with some variation. See, e.g., Mary Ann Getty, "Paul and

The two important implications here, although not stated directly, but which become clearer in the essay, are that Paul doesn't say that Israel will be saved by accepting Jesus as Messiah, and that Paul doesn't even mention Jesus in this passage.<sup>4</sup> Both issues are important to the discussion of the issue in this chapter and in the argument of this whole work.

While a complete survey of the literature is more than should be undertaken here, responses to Stendahl fall broadly into two categories.<sup>5</sup> The first is perhaps represented most clearly by Otfried Hofius, who argues that Paul means to say that all Israel will be saved, but in a way that is different from the way Gentiles are saved, that is, Israel is not saved through evangelistic preaching of the church. In fact, "all Israel" is not saved by believing in the gospel, which it has heard preached. Hofius, though, does not intend to communicate that Israel will be saved apart from Christ:

But that means that [Israel] is *not* saved without Christ, *not* without the gospel and *not* without faith in Christ. If, therefore, Israel gets the gospel through a direct

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the Salvation of Israel: a Perspective on Romans 9-11," *CBQ* 50 (1988): 456-69; John G. Gager, *The Origins of Anti-Semitism: Attitudes Toward Judaism in Pagan and Christian Antiquity* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 261-64; Lloyd Gaston, *Paul and the Torah* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1987), 247-64. See the brief but telling critique of Gager in Heikki Räisänen, "Paul, God and Israel: Romans 9-11 in Recent Research," in *The Social World of Formative Christianity and Judaism: Essays in Tribute to Howard Clark Kee*, ed. Jacob Neusner, et al. (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988), 189-91. See also the extended critique of Gaston in Elizabeth E. Johnson, *The Function of Apocalyptic and Wisdom Tradition in Romans 9-11* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989), 176-205. Cf. Christophey Zocalli, "'And So All Israel Will be Saved': Competing Interpretations of Romans 11:26 in Pauline Scholarship." *JSNT* 30 (2008): 297-303, for a similar critique of Gaston. Similarly, Terence Donaldson, "Jewish Christianity, Israel's Stumbling and the *Sonderweg* Reading of Paul," *JSNT* 29 (2006): 27-44. Donaldson is critical of all the arguments for a two covenant reading of Paul because it cannot account for Jewish Christians like Paul and those who followed his example.

<sup>4</sup>It is fair to note here that Stendahl later denied that it was his intent to "teach two ways of salvation, one for Jews and one for Christians." As Stendahl rather strongly answered "I do no such thing," but he did not offer clarification of what he did mean, simply arguing that what will happen is a mystery. Krister Stendahl, *Final Account: Paul's Letter to the Romans* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), 7. It is true that Stendahl does not specifically say there will be another way, but he does leave that open by his comment and there is not a shortage of those who do argue that as I have noted above.

<sup>5</sup>But for a broader survey, see Shiu-Lun Shum, *Paul's Use of Isaiah in Romans: A Comparative Study of Paul's Letter to the Romans and the Sibylline and Qumran Sectarian Texts* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 241-42n 192. Shum understands the categories in a way broadly similar to that suggested here and he provides a number of other sources in the two categories, with some of which we will have occasion to interact in this chapter.

encounter with Christ himself, confesses Christ as the Kyrios, and comes to faith in him unto salvation, then *Israel comes to faith in the same way as Paul himself*. (Emphasis original.)<sup>6</sup>

Hofius, therefore, denies that he endorses a special way of salvation for Israel (a “*Sonderweg*”) that “bypasses the gospel and faith in Christ. Rather, Israel will hear the gospel from the mouth of Christ himself at his return.”<sup>7</sup> Franz Mussner, however, argues similarly to Hofius that all Israel will be saved at the parousia without a preceding conversion of the Jews to the gospel, but Mussner asserts that this view is a “special path” to salvation for Israel.<sup>8</sup>

N. T. Wright, however, rejects any notion of any argument that supposes there might be a way for Israel to be saved apart from conversion to the gospel. In his view, “God will save all Israel – that is, the whole family of Abraham, Jew and Gentile alike; this will take place during the course of present history; it will happen through their coming to Christian faith.”<sup>9</sup> Wright understands any view that allows for all or part of Israel to come to salvation at the end of time “with or without Christian faith” is both

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<sup>6</sup>Hofius, “All Israel,” 37. Similarly, Günter Wagner, “The Future of Israel: Reflections on Romans 9-11,” in *Eschatology and the New Testament: Essays in Honor of George Raymond Beasley-Murray*, ed. Hulitt Gloer (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1998), 105-09. See esp. 109, where Wagner asserts that there will be a self-revelation of Jesus Christ to Israel at the parousia. Also Mark A. Seifrid, “Romans,” in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 673; Richard H. Bell, *Provoked to Jealousy: The Origin and Purpose of the Jealousy Motif in Romans 9-11* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1994), 144; Paul Jewett, *Romans: A Commentary* (Minneapolis, Fortress, 2007), 704.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>Franz Mussner, *Tractate on the Jews: The Significance of Judaism for the Christian Faith*, trans. Leonard Swidler (Philadelphia; Fortress, and London: SPCK, 1984), 34. Unlike Hofius, Mussner does not allow for any sort of conversion of Israel. See also Florian Wilk, *Die Bedeutung des Jesajabuches für Paulus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998), 199-203. Donaldson denies that there is a *Sonderweg*, choosing instead the term *Sonderplatz*. Donaldson, “Jewish Christianity,” 44-52.

<sup>9</sup>N. T. Wright, *The Letter to the Romans: Introduction, Commentary and Reflections*, in vol. 10 of *The New Interpreter's Bible*. Edited by Leander E. Keck (Nashville: Abingdon, 2002), 689. Similarly, William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1899), 336. Sanday and Headlam see no path for salvation for Israel other than by becoming part of the church.

exegetically out of step with the passage and with Romans as a whole and is to be regarded as a “special kind of salvation.”<sup>10</sup>

### **A Brief Response to Stendahl**

Perhaps it is time now for some attention to the claims pertinent to the thesis of this dissertation. The first is Stendahl’s contention that Paul never says Israel will be saved by conversion to the gospel. While Stendahl’s assertion about Romans 11:25-27 is technically correct, the passage cannot be read apart from all that Paul has argued thus far in Romans. Stendahl’s argument is likely based in his understanding of Romans 1-8 as a preface to Romans 9-11 in which justification by faith is not understood soteriologically, but as part of Paul’s reflection on the relation between Jews and Gentiles, particularly how the Gentile can be added to the kingdom; that is, Paul argues that justification by faith makes it equally possible for Jews and Gentiles to come to Christ.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>N. T. Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 246- 51, but esp. 249, where Wright argues that the Gentiles coming in to the people of God is how God is saving all Israel. Wright’s general argument is that Paul has redefined all Israel so that in Rom 11:25-27 it includes both Jews and Gentiles so the salvation of this newly defined Israel is taking place currently as Paul and others preached the gospel. His argument does not account for the distinctions Paul makes in Rom 11 between Israel and the Gentiles, such as in the difference between Gentiles and Jews being grafted in, but perhaps, as Wagner suggests, the most telling critique is that Wright’s view does not account for the “rest” of Israel who have been temporarily hardened. In Wright’s view, those Jews “can expect only judgment.” J. Ross Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News: Isaiah and Paul in Concert in the Letter to the Romans* (Leiden: Brill Academic, 2003), 279n 194. Of course, Wright’s view that the rest of the Jews face only judgment is in conflict with Paul’s contention that Israel has not stumbled so as to fall (Rom 11:11) and more particularly, that God has not rejected his people (Rom 11:1). To think of Paul meaning that “his people” is the redefined Israel would render 11:1 essentially meaningless. See also Wagner’s more extended critique of Wright in the reference noted above in this note. But see also Dan G. Johnson, “The Structure and Meaning of Romans 11” *CBQ* 46 (1984): 102. Johnson, in an argument similar to Wright, denies there is a difference between the remnant and the rest of Israel who will be saved, and argues that to think differently destroys Paul’s argument in Rom 11. Johnson does not say why and it seems rather that there would be no point in referral to all Israel and future salvation if it were nothing different from the remnant that was being saved in Paul’s day and continuing today. Perhaps one telling critique of the argument advanced by Wright and by Johnson is Paul’s usage of Israel in Rom 11:28. There it is clear that the Israel of 11:26 is ethnic Israel, because it is ethnic Israel that are enemies for the Gentiles’ sake, but beloved because of the fathers. So, Hafemann, “The Salvation of Israel,” 53-54. Cf. Charles M. Horne, “The Meaning of the Phrase ‘And Thus All Israel Will be Saved,’ (Romans 11:26,” *JETS* 21 (1978): 332.

<sup>11</sup>Stendahl, “Paul Among the Jews,” 26-29, esp. 26 and 28.

There is, of course, truth in the argument that justification by faith makes it possible for all to come to Christ, but, as Sanders points out, coming to Christ and becoming part of the kingdom are themselves soteriological statements.<sup>12</sup> In addition, a significant problem in Stendahl's thought is the fact that not only are both Jews and Gentiles able to be justified by faith, both are equally under sin (Rom 3:22-23, and generally, 1:18-3:20). That this status includes all, including Israel, is made clear in Romans 3:11-12. That Israel is not exempted can be seen further from 3:22. When Paul says all have sinned, he has already said there is no distinction. Such a distinction can only refer to Jew and Gentile, as Paul's preceding discussion makes clear, and as is also indicated by Paul's use of the same words in 10:12 where he is specific that he has Jew and Gentile in mind. As Hofius points out, "God came to the aid of [the] human being lost in sin by intervening redemptively in Jesus Christ and so proved himself to be 'the one who gives salvation to the *ungodly*.'" <sup>13</sup> (Emphasis original.) There is, then, no reason to think Paul exempts Jews; rather, he condemns both Jews and Gentiles equally.<sup>14</sup>

In addition, a complete reading of Romans shows that Paul never understood any possibility of being justified apart from God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ (3:21, 24, 26; 4:11-12, 16-17. See also Gal 2:16-17).<sup>15</sup> That Israel cannot claim a special way of salvation apart from Christ can also be understood in Romans 9-11 itself. I have already argued that in 9:30-10:4 Paul has contended against the possibility of any justification through the law. In fact, Paul made it clear that by pursuing their own righteousness by the law as if by works, Israel has not only missed, but stumbles over, the very one who is the goal of the law and who in fact provides righteousness to all who

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<sup>12</sup>Sanders, "Paul's Attitude," 181.

<sup>13</sup>Hofius, "All Israel," 20-21.

<sup>14</sup>Segal, "Paul's Experience," 64.

<sup>15</sup>So also Sanders, "Paul's Attitude," 181.

*believe*. It is those who believe and confess who are saved. This means that one can be saved only through Jesus Christ because for Paul faith is not a general attitude, but is always faith in Jesus Christ.<sup>16</sup> This requirement for faith continues all the way through 11:23 where Paul maintains that even yet Israel can be grafted in, but only if they do not continue in unbelief. As Hvalvik notes, “against this background, it is hard to imagine that Paul in Rom. 11.26 should speak about salvation apart from faith in Christ.”<sup>17</sup>

While I will later engage whether in fact Paul’s statement in 11:25-27 is Christological, Stendahl’s statement that Paul does not mention Jesus Christ by name in the section from 10:17-11:36 deserves some brief attention. It is first of all to be acknowledged that Stendahl is technically accurate. Whether it means anything that Paul does not mention Jesus by name is another matter, however. In fact, as Hvalvik points out, Stendahl’s argument should not be given much weight since it is an argument from silence.<sup>18</sup> In addition, even to speak of belief (and unbelief) as Paul does in 11:20 and 23 implies Christ, since there is no other that one can readily identify in Paul’s thought who would qualify as one in whom Israel did not believe and now in whom they must believe to be regrafted.<sup>19</sup> In addition, I will first of all simply state and leave for exegetical discussion in the next sections, that Paul does in fact refer to Jesus in the very passage (11:25-27) in which he says all Israel will be saved. The redeemer from Zion must surely be Jesus. The fact that he doesn’t mention Jesus by name is, for those reasons, inconsequential.

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid., 182.

<sup>17</sup>Hvalvik, “*Sonderweg*” for Israel,” 90. See also Sanders, “Paul’s Attitude,” 181. Sanders rightly considers Stendahl’s proposal to require a great change of mind for Paul.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., 91.

<sup>19</sup>Similarly, Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), 612.

In summary, Sanders offers three reasons that the condition of faith in Christ is not dropped when Paul turns to Romans 11:25-27:<sup>20</sup> (1) the requirement of faith in Christ is repeated much closer to 11:25-27 than Stendahl allows. In fact, it appears all the way to 11:20 and 23. (2) If Stendahl's argument is correct that Paul's thought on justification was not soteriological, Stendahl's argument is stronger. That is not the case, however, as in fact, Paul consistently maintains that salvation is only through Christ. (3) Romans 11:28-32 counts against Stendahl's argument since Paul continues to contrast Israel with his Gentile readers. They (Israel) are enemies for your (Gentiles') sake (11:28). The same contrast between you and they appears in 11:30 and 31. The "all" in verse 32 can only mean both Jews and Gentiles who are consigned to disobedience so he may have mercy on all.<sup>21</sup> Unless one wishes to suggest mercy will be applied to Gentiles on some basis other than faith in Jesus, there is no reason to think it will be applied in some other manner to Israel. With that background of the issues in mind, it is time now to consider the passage as it applies to the person of Jesus.

I will not try to resolve here the question of whether Israel will be saved through preaching of the gospel or by a direct self-revelation of Jesus Christ to Israel. The important point is that for Paul there is no means of salvation for Israel apart from Christ. Perhaps in the end it is best to acknowledge that Paul did not intend to provide enough detailed information in Romans 11:25-27 to decide the question of how Israel will be saved.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>Sanders, "Paul's Attitude," 183.

<sup>21</sup>Similarly, see E. P. Sanders, *Paul, the Law and the Jewish People* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 194-95. Sanders primarily focuses there on his third point. In addition, he adds the argument that Paul could not think of Jesus apart from God, or the reverse, so it doesn't matter whether Stendahl is correct that the deliverer is God. It does matter to the present discussion, however, and we will return to the question shortly.

<sup>22</sup>Similarly, Christopher Bryan, *A Preface to Romans: Notes on the Epistle in Its Literary and Cultural Setting* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 191-92. Bryan asserts that salvation for Israel cannot be apart from Jesus Christ, but finds little upon which to base further judgment. Cf. Nils A. Dahl,

### **The Context of 11:25-27**

Although in Romans 9:30-10:21 Paul painted a rather bleak picture of the unbelief of Israel, with a bit of a tragic flavor in their rejection of the Messiah, that is not the end of the story for Paul. Indeed in 11:1 he sternly rejects the possibility that God has rejected his people. After a brief return to comments about the remnant and the hardening of the remainder of Israel in 11:2-10, Paul again sternly rejects the idea of permanent unbelief. Israel did not stumble (reminding the reader of 9:33) in order that they might fall. Rather, in somewhat surprising fashion, Paul asserts that their trespass is what makes salvation possible for Gentiles (11:11). But, through illustrations of dough, first fruits and the olive tree Paul asserts that Israel itself can be saved as well (11:12-24). In fact, this partial hardening has occurred only until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

The primary issue in the discussion of 11:25-27 here is whether there is a Christological emphasis that will help with the issue of whether Paul could identify Jesus as God. For that reason the focus of this discussion is on verse 26. In Romans 3:29ff the emphasis on the oneness of God was to demonstrate that he justifies all by faith, with an argument from Abraham that the blessing of forgiveness is available to both Jew and Gentile (4:9). There the instruction was most likely to show that Gentiles may be justified. In 11:25-27, the emphasis is on the statement that Israel will be redeemed by the same redeemer.

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“The Future of Israel.” In *Studies in Paul: Theology for the Early Christian Mission* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1977), 155; Segal, “Paul’s Experience and Romans 9-11,” 66. If a resolution of the question is necessary I would side with those who see that Israel will believe in Christ through a direct self-revelation.

## Exegetical Comments: 11:25-27

### Hardening and Salvation of Israel

There is a mystery about which Paul does not want the readers to be ignorant.<sup>23</sup> It is best here simply to take the mystery as his next statement, that a hardening has partially come upon Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in and thus all Israel will be saved (ὅτι πᾶρωσις ἀπὸ μέρους τῶ Ἰσραὴλ γέγονεν ἄχρι οὗ τὸ πλήρωμα τῶν ἐθνῶν εἰσέλθῃ, καὶ οὕτως πᾶς Ἰσραὴλ σωθήσεται). The mystery is best taken as the full statement but the core of the mystery, that is, the part of the statement that is new revelation, is the order in which the salvation of the Jews and Gentiles occurs.<sup>24</sup> It includes both the time (ἄχρι οὗ) and the order of the salvation of the Gentiles and Jews, including the fact that all Israel will be saved.<sup>25</sup> It is reasonable to note, however, in this discussion of the salvation of Israel, that Paul's purpose in making this mystery known to the Gentiles is not simply a matter of general interest, or to allow for the thought that there need now be no interest or compassion for Israel. The purpose is the opposite: that the Gentiles would not be wise in themselves, that is, that they not be arrogant.

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<sup>23</sup>It is likely that Paul is speaking here to Gentiles. He addressed the Gentiles in Rom 11:13 and in 11:28-32, so he surely had in mind the same audience in this section between those two passages.

<sup>24</sup>Douglas Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 715-16; Wagner, *Heralds*, 277; Schreiner, *Romans*, 621; Davies, "Paul and the People of Israel," 142-43; Getty, "Paul and the Salvation of Israel," 459. Getty adds a third part of the mystery, that the Gentiles represent universality, but that cannot easily be read from the passage or the context since Paul maintains a distinction between Israel and the Gentiles. Seifrid, "Romans," 672, understands the mystery to be the hardening of Israel. Johnson offers several possibilities, but denies that it has to do with the order of the salvation of Israel and the Gentiles. Johnson, "Structure and Meaning," 101. But see also Bell, *Provoked to Jealousy*, 128. Bell understands the mystery to be all of 11:25-27. That is not an unreasonable view, but the OT citation is best understood as the ground of the fact that all Israel will be saved. Similarly, Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 334. Sanday and Headlam understood the mystery to be the whole plan of redemption as revealed to Paul. Similarly, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Romans: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, The Anchor Bible, vol. 33 (New York: Doubleday, 1993), 621. That seems a bit overly broad, however, for Paul's point in 11:25-27. Dunn understands the mystery to simply be God's purpose from the beginning to include the Gentiles with Israel as his people. James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 38<sub>b</sub> (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1988), 678. Jewett sees the mystery as a statement that "only a portion of Israel remains blind and that this malady will be overcome." Jewett, *Romans*, 700.

<sup>25</sup>Hvalvik, "A Sonderweg," 99; Hofius, "All Israel," 34; C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1979), 2:572.

The hardening of Israel is limited temporally, as evidenced by the word “until.”<sup>26</sup> In addition, the prepositional phrase ἀπὸ μέρους could be translated partial or partially, depending on whether it is understood to modify πώρωσις (hardening), or γέγονεν. The views of commentators vary on this issue, but Paul is best understood to mean that hardening has come upon Israel for a while.<sup>27</sup> He has already pointed out the existence of the remnant of believers in Israel (Rom 9:7, 27; 11:1-6) of which Paul himself is a part, so it would be reasonable to conclude that he meant that a hardening had come upon a part of Israel, but the near context suggests the intent is temporal.<sup>28</sup> The time of the hardening will end when the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:575; Schreiner, *Romans*, 618.

<sup>27</sup>Those who understand the prepositional phrase to modify πώρωσις include Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 334; John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans: The English Text with Introduction, Exposition and Notes* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), 2:93; Käsemann, *Romans*, 313; Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 679; Bell, *Provoked to Jealousy*, 128; Wagner, *Heralds*, 278; Jewett, *Romans*, 700; Otfried Hofius, “Das Evangelium und Israel: Erwägungen zu Römer 9-11,” in *Paulusstudien* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1989), 190; Ben L. Merkle, “Romans 11 and the Future of Ethnic Israel,” *JETS* 43 (2000):715. Some who understand it temporally include Seifrid, “Romans,” 672; Peter Stuhlmacher, *Paul’s Letter to the Romans: A Commentary* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1994), 172; Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:575.

<sup>28</sup>Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:575.

<sup>29</sup>Moo, *Romans*, 718. See Moo’s discussion of the meaning of fullness, but, as he notes the intent is probably to say that God will save a certain number of Gentiles and when that is complete all Israel will be saved. Similarly, Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:575. Contra, Merkle, “Romans 11,” 715, argues that ἄχρι οὗ is terminative as in 1 Cor 11:26 and 15:25, implying the end of something; that is that the hardening is eschatologically fulfilled. He uses that partly as his basis for arguing against a “special salvation era for Israel in the future.” His argument is that the importance lies not with “what will take place *after* the event, but *that* the event is eschatologically fulfilled” (emphasis original). In 1 Cor 11:26; however, the thought is not that the Lord’s Supper will be engaged in until the Lord comes, but that his death will be proclaimed (via the Lord’s Supper) until he comes. The proclamation will no longer be necessary when the risen Lord is present. In the same way, the hardening will no longer continue when the redeemer comes. Similarly, in 1 Cor 15:25, the emphasis carries over from v. 24 in which the temporal idea of the coming of the end when Christ delivers the kingdom to God after destroying every rule and authority. Something changes then. Christ must reign until he has destroyed every rule and authority, the last of which is death. So there is a sense in which the reign of Christ, at least in that manner, will end and he will turn the kingdom over to God. Once again, the end of an event is actually envisioned with the use of ἄχρι οὗ and Paul understands that a situation that existed will change in both 1 Cor 11:26 and in 15:25. That is what Paul means in Rom 11:25. The hardening that exists until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in, will come to an end. There is nothing to suggest, then, that he would not see a salvation of Israel at that time. But following Merkle, Zocalli, “And So All Israel Will be Saved,” 306.

Verse 26 begins with the statement “and thus all Israel will be saved (καὶ οὕτως πᾶς Ἰσραὴλ σωθήσεται). In this sentence καὶ οὕτως should be understood to point to the means by which Israel will be saved.<sup>30</sup> It is common for commentators to understand that οὕτως points backward to the temporary hardening of the hearts until the time of the Gentiles has come in, as the means by which Israel will be saved.<sup>31</sup> As Morris acknowledges, however, οὕτως could just as easily point forward to the coming of the redeemer. Although he opts to understand οὕτως points backward, he offers little other than the likelihood that it must.<sup>32</sup> While it is surely true that Paul understood that his ministry to the Gentiles could make Israel jealous and thereby save *some* (11:13-14), it is not clear that he understood that would result in the salvation of *all* Israel. While it is correct for commentators to deny any temporal meaning for οὕτως,<sup>33</sup> it does appear that the words ἄχρι οὗ are best understood to introduce a temporal element, pointing forward

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<sup>30</sup>Jewett, *Romans*, 701; Wright, *Romans*, 691.

<sup>31</sup>So, Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans and Leicester: Apollos, 1988), 420; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 623; Murray, *Romans*, 2:96; Jewett, *Romans*, 701; Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:576; Schreiner, *Romans*, 620-21; Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 681; Mark A. Seifrid, “For the Jew First: Paul’s *Nota Bene* for his Gentile Readers,” in *To the Jew First: The Case for Jewish Evangelism in Scripture and History*, ed. Darrell L. Bock and Mitch Glaser (Grand Rapids; Kregel, 2008), 30.

<sup>32</sup>Morris, *Romans*, 420. Similarly, Wright, *Romans*, 691.

<sup>33</sup>But see Jewett, *Romans*, 701, who points out a number of incidences in the larger Greek literature where οὕτως does have a temporal meaning. He cautions against placing too much emphasis on a step by step divine plan. Cf. Horne “And Thus All Israel Will be Saved,” 332. Among those who reject any temporal meaning are Zoccali, “And So All Israel will be Saved,” 309; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 622; Schreiner, *Romans*, 620; Wilckens, *Römer*, 255; Wright, *Romans*, 691; Moo, *Romans*, 719-20. Contra Hofius, “All Israel,” 34; idem, *Das Evangelium und Israel*, 192-93. Hofius argues for a temporal meaning “and then.” Käsemann, *Romans*, 313, argues on the basis of Acts 17:33 and 20:11 that οὕτως has a temporal meaning here. But see BDF, 219, §425.6. They argue that the usage in 20:11 is an example of the classical use of οὕτως to “summarize the content of a preceding participial construction.” The same appears to be true in 17:33. See also Walter C. Kaiser, “Jewish Evangelism in the New Millennium in Light of Israel’s Future (Romans 9-11)” in *To the Jew First: The Case for Jewish Evangelism in Scripture and History*, ed. Darrell L. Bock and Mitch Glaser (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2008), 49-50. Kaiser follows and quotes the argument in favor of temporal use of Mark Nanos, *The Mystery of Romans: The Jewish Context of Paul’s Letter* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996), 239-74.

to the time following a sequence of events after which Israel will be saved.<sup>34</sup> The hardening occurs until the time of the Gentiles is complete.

While it is too much to see this sequence of events surrounding the salvation of the Gentiles as having no part in the cause of the salvation of Israel, it is likely that Paul meant to point forward (I mean here syntactically, not temporally) to the coming of the redeemer as the means of the salvation of all Israel. That is first of all true because Paul would not likely recognize any means of salvation other than calling on the name of the Lord (10:13). In addition, the pairing of οὕτως with καθὼς γέγραπται tends to throw the meaning forward. The paraphrase might be “In this way (the way that it is written), all Israel will be saved.” Against this suggestion, Hvalvik argues that Paul “never uses οὕτως correlatively to καθὼς γέγραπται.”<sup>35</sup> Hvalvik is correct as to καθὼς γέγραπται, but, as Wagner points out, Paul did use οὕτως with καθὼς in Philippians 3:17, where οὕτως more clearly points forward to the clause introduced by καθὼς.<sup>36</sup> The fact that γέγραπται is missing should not harm the argument. The way that Israel will be saved, then, is the redeemer who will remove ungodliness from Jacob.

I will not attempt here to resolve the questions regarding how Romans 11 fits with Paul’s statements in 9:6-29.<sup>37</sup> I side with the majority view among present scholarship that in 11:25-27 Paul refers to ethnic Israel.<sup>38</sup> According to that view, the

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<sup>34</sup>Käsemann, *Romans*, 313; Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 680; Hofius, “Das Evangelium und Israel,” 191-92.

<sup>35</sup>Hvalvik, “A Sonderweg,” 97; Moo, *Romans*, 720.

<sup>36</sup>Wagner, “*Heralds*, 279-80n 195. Wagner also calls attention to Luke 24:24 and in the LXX, Gen 18:5; Neh 5:12; Jer 19:11, where the usage points forward in the same manner. But see Bell, *Provoked to Jealousy*, 135, where he argues against the usage pointing forward as Phil 3:17 is the only place Paul does that. Still, the fact that Paul does use the combination this way in that instance is adequate to show that he can so use it.

<sup>37</sup>For a summary of the various views see Frank Thielman, “Unexpected Mercy: Echoes of a Biblical Motif in Romans 9-11,” *SJT* 47 (1994): 169-74. See also, more briefly, Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:576.

<sup>38</sup>For a reasonably thorough summary of the various suggestions for what is meant by “all Israel,” see Zoccali, “And So All Israel Will be Saved,” 290-303.

nation as a whole will believe.<sup>39</sup> If Paul has the salvation of every member of Israel in mind here, his laments in 9:3 and 10:1 would be out of place, and if he knew they would all eventually be saved he would surely not have been willing to be accursed himself for them.<sup>40</sup> In addition, if he had in mind only the elect remnant who would believe throughout history, the question of the salvation of Israel need not proceed beyond Romans 10:21.<sup>41</sup> Those in unbelief were simply not of spiritual Israel and were similar to the rebellious people to whom God had always held his hands out. Romans 11 would not then be necessary, so it seems he must be answering a question about a group different from the believing remnant of his day and who would continue to believe throughout history. The likelihood is that “the rest” who are hardened (Rom 11:7) are in view in 11:25-26.

### The Quoted Material

The remainder of verse 26 and all of verse 27 consists of quoted Scripture. As is often the case, there are some issues to resolve. Romans 11:26-27 is a conflation of

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<sup>39</sup>See, e.g., Seifrid, “Romans,” 673; idem, “For the Jew First,” 31; Hvalvik, “A ‘Sonderweg,’” 100; Schreiner, *Romans*, 615-16; Murray, *Romans*, 2:98; Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 681; Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 335; Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:577; Morris, *Romans*, 420; Moo, *Romans*, 722-23; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 623; Stuhlmacher, *Romans*, 172; Johannes Munck, *Christ and Israel: An Interpretation of Romans 9-11*, trans. by Ingeborg Nixon (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1967), 136; J. Lanier Burns, “The Future of Ethnic Israel in Romans 11, in *Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church: The Search for Definition*, ed. Craig A. Blaising and Darrell L. Bock (Grand Rapid: Zondervan, 1992), 212-13. As noted in Jewett, *Romans*, 701-02, however, the word  $\pi\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$  means all, or “any and every entity within a whole,” so Paul means all members of the house of Israel, without exception will be saved. “All Israel” is best understood, though, in the same way as fullness of the Gentiles, which does not suggest each and every Gentile. See also Hofius, “All Israel,” 35. Hofius’s argument is that all Israel is in contrast with the remnant, and must therefore mean every Israelite. Wright argues Paul means all the family of Abraham, both Jew and Gentile who are among the elect. Wright, *Romans*, 689. Wright’s solution is attractive in many ways, but in the end it says no more than that God will save all the elect, which hardly seems worth Paul’s trouble here. In addition, Wright’s argument doesn’t account well for the fairly clear distinction Paul makes in v. 25 between the salvation of the Gentiles and that of the Jews. In addition, as Schreiner notes, the failure of ethnic Israel to obtain salvation is what caused Rom 9-11 in the first place. Schreiner, *Romans*, 615.

<sup>40</sup>Similarly, Seifrid, “Romans,” 673.

<sup>41</sup>For the argument that only the remnant will be saved, see Zoccali, “And so All Israel will be Saved,” 303-07; Horne, “And Thus All Israel will be Saved,” 333-34; Merkle “Romans 11,” 711-21.

more than one passage, perhaps as many as three. The first three lines come largely from Isaiah 59:20 and the final line comes from Isaiah 27:9, with perhaps a reference to Jeremiah 31:33-34. There is a variation in the first line of the quote, however, that suggests Paul may also have had in mind Psalm 14:7, but more must be said about that.<sup>42</sup> There are variations, however, in the way the passages appear in the MT, the LXX and in Paul's quote. Table 3 offers a comparison of Romans 11:26-27 and Isaiah 59:20 and a portion of Isaiah 27:9 in both the LXX and the MT. The pertinent portions of Isaiah 27:9 are marked in italics:

Table 3. Comparison of Romans 11:26-27 and Isaiah 27:9

Romans 11:26-27	Isaiah 59:20 and 27:9 (LXX)	Isaiah 59:20 and 27:9 (MT)
<p>Ἡξει ἐκ Σιῶν ὁ ῥυόμενος, ἀποστρέψει ἀσεβείας ἀπὸ Ἰακώβ καὶ αὕτη αὐτοῖς ἡ παρ' ἐμοῦ διαθήκη, ὅταν ἀφέλωμαι τὰς ἀμαρτίας αὐτῶν</p> <p>The redeemer will come from Zion, he will remove wickedness from Jacob. And this is the covenant from me with them, <i>when I will take away their sins.</i></p>	<p>Isaiah 59:20: καὶ ἥξει ἕνεκεν Ζιῶν ὁ ῥυόμενος καὶ ἀποστρέψει ἀσεβείας ἀπὸ Ἰακωβ</p> <p>Isaiah 27:9: διὰ τοῦτο ἀφαιρεθήσεται ἡ ἀνομία Ἰακωβ καὶ τοῦτο ἐστὶν ἡ εὐλογία αὐτοῦ ὅταν ἀφέλωμαι αὐτοῦ τὴν ἀμαρτίαν</p> <p>And the redeemer will come for the sake of Zion and he will remove wickedness from Jacob (27:9) <i>when I take away his sin.</i></p>	<p>Isaiah 59:20 וּבָא לְצִיּוֹן גּוֹאֵל וְלִשְׁבֵי פָשַׁע בְּיַעֲקֹב נָאִם יְהוָה</p> <p>Isaiah 27:9 לְכֹן בְּזֹאת יִכְפֹּר עוֹן יַעֲקֹב</p> <p>And the redeemer will come to (or for) Zion, who will turn back transgression in Jacob (27:9) and <i>in this will the sin of Jacob be atoned.</i></p>

<sup>42</sup>The words “ἐκ Ζιων” occur in 12 places in the LXX, with two other places that are similar, but the two words are separated by too much to really qualify as similar to the usage in Rom 11:25 (1 Kgs 8:1 and 2 Chr 5:2). If Paul's use of the words are a matter of conflation from another text, Ps 14:7 (LXX 13:7) is the most likely place from which he took them, although 53:6 (LXX 52:7) may serve as well. The full thought of both words contain the emphasis on salvation from Israel coming from Zion with the resulting restoration of the fortunes of Israel. For an argument that Isa 2:3 is a more likely candidate see Christopher R. Bruno, “The Deliverer from Zion: The Source(s) and Function of Paul's Citation in Romans 11:26-27,” *TynBul* 59 (2008): 119-34.

As can be seen from Table 3, Paul is closest to the Septuagint version of the passages. The most important difference in all three is whether the redeemer comes from Zion, for the sake of Zion, or to Zion. The closest agreement is probably between the LXX and the MT, so it is reasonable to conclude that either Paul altered the text or that he was in possession of an earlier alteration, either written or oral tradition.<sup>43</sup> Arguing for the latter, Berndt Schaller constructed an argument that there had already been a textual alteration in the LXX. His argument is that the original translation in the LXX was εἰς (to or into), but an error occurred in the transmission resulting in replacement of εἰς by ἐκ (out of or from).<sup>44</sup> That theory is hypothetical of course, as admitted by Schaller.<sup>45</sup> Nonetheless, his argument is followed in part by Florian Wilk, who also argues that there are texts of the LXX extant with the phrase ἐκ Ζιῶν.<sup>46</sup> Against that argument is the fact that there is no compelling evidence for such an error in the transmission of the text, and the LXX witnesses to ἐκ are most likely influenced by Paul's use here.<sup>47</sup>

Although he admits there is no manuscript evidence to support his claim, Christopher Stanley concluded that Paul must have had access to oral tradition that already had conflated the text as he used it:<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>43</sup>The Hebrew לְצִיּוֹן may mean either 'to Zion' or 'for Zion.' While the preposition is most often translated 'to' (spatial), it can appear as 'for' (advantage). See Bruce K. Waltke and M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 205-12.

<sup>44</sup>Berndt Schaller, "HÆI EK ZION O PYOMENOS: Zur Textgestalt von Jes 59:20f. in Röm 11:26f," in *De Septuaginta: Studies in Honour of John William Wevers on his Sixty-fifth Birthday*, ed. Albert Pietersma and Claude Cox (Mississauga, ON: Benben Publications, 1984), 203-05.

<sup>45</sup>*Ibid.*, 204.

<sup>46</sup>Florian Wilk, *Die Bedeutung des Jesajabuches für Paulus*, 39-40. Similarly, see Christopher D. Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture: Citation Technique in the Pauline Epistles and Contemporary Literature* (Cambridge: University Press, 1992), 166-68.

<sup>47</sup>Seifrid, "Romans," 674. See also Jewett, *Romans*, 703n 87, who views such a transmission error as unlikely. See also Wilckens, *Römer*, 256n 1153, who concludes that even if the origin of the change can be said to be pre-Pauline, it can just as well be thought to have been composed by Paul.

<sup>48</sup>Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture*, 167, where he admits that assimilation to the Romans text was the most likely explanation of the later manuscript evidence in the LXX.

Thus it seems likely Paul has drawn his quotation in Rom. 11:25-26 [actually 26-27] not directly from the Jewish Scriptures, but rather from a Jewish oral tradition in which Isa. 59:20 and Isa. 27:9 had already been conflated and adapted to give voice to a particular interpretation of Yahweh's coming on behalf of his oppressed people Israel.<sup>49</sup>

In support of his statement, Stanley suggested several reasons to conclude that Paul had possession of an earlier alteration of the LXX that appeared as he quoted it.<sup>50</sup> The most important reason for this discussion is his argument that Paul would not have used ἐκ instead of ἔνεκεν Ζιῶν as it appears in the LXX of Isaiah 59:20. More must be said later to show that Paul did have good reason to use ἐκ, but Stanley also argues against Pauline origin that there is nothing distinctively Christian or Pauline in the conflation. That argument is really of not much weight since it requires that Paul not be Jewish or that he be distinctively Pauline every time he uses a quote.<sup>51</sup> Stanley also argues that the stress placed on the word διαθήκη is the primary hindrance to Pauline origin for the conflated quote.<sup>52</sup> It seems a bit odd to make that a primary argument since it is by no means clear that the stress in the quote should be seen there.<sup>53</sup> The stress of the quote is rather on the appearance of the deliverer to take away the sins. The fact that Paul does not often use the word διαθήκη is true of course, but of little value since whether Paul conflated the text or took it over, the word is there.<sup>54</sup> Stanley's argument that Paul would not use the plural sins (ἁμαρτίας) has some weight, but it cannot finally be convincing since Paul does use

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<sup>49</sup>Christopher Stanley, "The Redeemer Will Come 'Εκ Ζιῶν," in *Paul and the Scriptures of Israel*, JSNT Supplement Series, vol. 83, ed. Craig A. Evans and James A. Sanders (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1993), 126.

<sup>50</sup>Stanley, "The Redeemer Will Come," 121-26. Idem, *Paul and the Language of Scripture*, 165-71.

<sup>51</sup>Wagner, *Heralds*, 280n 196.

<sup>52</sup>Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture*, 169.

<sup>53</sup>Shum, *Paul's Use of Isaiah*, See Shum's extended critique, esp. 236-37 regarding the lack of emphasis on διαθήκη.

<sup>54</sup>Wagner, *Heralds*, 281n 196.

the plural on some occasions.<sup>55</sup> Stanley's argument that had Paul known the full context of Isaiah 59:20 he would not have missed the opportunity to connect the covenant with Spirit is also not strong. It first of all requires that we be sure of what Paul would have done, which, of course, is not possible, given the fact that he surprises us on occasion. But as has been noted from Stanley's argument above, Paul does not often mention covenant, so there is no reason to expect him necessarily to have been concerned with it here.<sup>56</sup> I conclude that Stanley's arguments are not persuasive and given the lack of any physical manuscript evidence to support his position, it is better simply to suppose that Paul created the conflation himself.<sup>57</sup>

### **Paul's Purpose in the Conflation**

The importance of the discussion about whether Paul created this conflation is, at least for the present paper, whether Paul had any purpose in the use of ἐκ Ζιῶν rather than ἐνεκεν Ζιῶν as it appears in the LXX. Would Paul really prefer to say the redeemer comes from Zion, rather than that he comes for the sake of Zion? Schaller answers that Paul would not, and that in fact, the reading from the LXX would better fit Paul's argument in Romans 9-11, so there is no reason to think that Paul would have deliberately altered the text in that manner.<sup>58</sup> Schaller's argument is reasonable, since it does seem that Paul was at pains to show that the savior had come on behalf of Israel, and because of that coming Israel would eventually be saved. But there is more to see in Paul's argument than that, and perhaps one can even find a point here consistent with

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<sup>55</sup>See, e.g., 1 Thess 2:16; Rom 4:7; 7:5; 1 Cor 15:3; Gal 1:4; Col 1:14 and 1 Tim 5:24. It should be noted that Rom 4:7 is also part of a quote. The rest of the instances can fairly be ascribed to Paul.

<sup>56</sup>So also Wagner, *Heralds*, 281n 196; Shum, *Paul's Use of Isaiah*, 238.

<sup>57</sup>Wagner, *Heralds*, 281. Similarly, Shum, *Paul's Use of Isaiah*, 239; Seifrid, "Romans," 673-74.

<sup>58</sup>Schaller, "ἩΕΙ ΕΚ ΖΙΩΝ Ο ΠΥΟΜΕΝΟΣ," 203. Schaller is followed by Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture*, 166-67.

what I have argued regarding the theme of Romans 9:30-10:21. In fact, the change from ἔνεκεν Ζιῶν to ἐκ Ζιῶν can be shown to be a rather important part of Paul's argument.<sup>59</sup>

Isaiah 59:20 appears in a discrete section of Isaiah (chapters 56-66) in which I would suggest the theme is the restoration of Israel, particularly why that restoration would not occur immediately upon the return of the portion of the Jews from Babylon. Isaiah 59 begins with the assertion that YHWH is not unable to save, but that the sins of the people have made a separation from their God. Since the issue that exists in Romans 9-11 is the separation of Israel from the love of God, Isaiah 59, with its problem of the separation of Israel from God is an ideal place for Paul to cite to argue that their sins (plural, as in Isa 59:2), which had separated them from God, would be forgiven.<sup>60</sup> The restoration of Israel would be tied to this forgiveness, but in Isaiah 56-66 there is also substantial reference to the bringing in of the Gentiles in connection with Israel's restoration. Indeed the section begins with reference to the foreigners joined to YHWH (Isa 56:1-8) and ends with reference to the Israelites being brought in by Gentiles, (Isa 66:18-21). So, for Paul, Israel has been stuck in Isaiah 59:1-15 while the nations are streaming in to embrace Israel's God while his own people are not.<sup>61</sup> Israel's redemption will occur in connection with the removal of their sins when the redeemer comes (59:20). The restoration of Israel, the overcoming of their sins and the redemption of the Gentiles is similarly the focus of Isaiah 24-27. The focus of Isaiah 27 is the removal of Israel's sin

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<sup>59</sup>Similarly, Munck, *Christ and Israel*, 137; E. Earle Ellis, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1957), 123 n 5. Ellis understands Paul's use of ἐκ Ζιῶν to be a result of his contrast of true Israel with national Israel and Ellis' view is that the church is the body of Christ and the people of God is the locus from which the redeemer goes forth. As with Wright, this view does not take full account of the differentiation between Israel and the Gentiles in Rom 11, and there is really nothing that I can see in Paul's writing to suggest the church as Zion.

<sup>60</sup>Wagner, *Heralds*, 289-90.

<sup>61</sup>*Ibid.*, 292.

through the eradication of idolatry.<sup>62</sup> It can be seen then, that Paul's purpose in this passage is theologically significant, in answer to the question of the unbelief of Israel. For this paper, though, the most significant question remains why the change to ἐκ Ζιῶν?

### Christological Implications

The redeemer in Romans 11:26 is Jesus.<sup>63</sup> Paul uses the term ῥύομαι similarly in 1 Thessalonians 1:10, where it surely refers to Christ.<sup>64</sup> Furthermore, in a Christian reading of Isaiah 59:20 it is surely correct to expect that the redeemer would be understood Christologically.<sup>65</sup> In fact, Wilckens notes Isaiah 59:20 was already interpreted by the rabbis messianically,<sup>66</sup> although it must be noted that no written evidence exists for such an interpretation in the first century.<sup>67</sup> In addition, as Bell points out, ἐκ Ζιῶν would be hard to understand if the redeemer were God, but would make perfect sense if it referred to Christ, and the change from the third person (ἤξει ἐκ Ζιῶν ὁ ῥυόμενος) to the first person (αὕτη αὐτοῖς ἢ παρ' ἐμοῦ διαθήκη) shows that Paul did not

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<sup>62</sup>Ibid., 296.

<sup>63</sup>This is the view of the majority, as best I can tell. See Wilckens, *Römer*, 256; Moo, *Romans*, 728; Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:578; Stuhlmacher, *Romans*, 172; Schreiner, *Romans*, 616; Burns, "The Future of Ethnic Israel," 213-14; David B. Capes, *Old Testament Yahweh Texts in Paul's Christology* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1992), 102. But contra Johnson, "Structure and Meaning," 102. Johnson asserts there is no clear way of knowing and appeals to Davies "Paul and the People of Israel," 143 as support for the uncertainty, but Davies was speaking to the overall certainty of the details regarding the salvation of Israel, not the identity of the redeemer. In fact, Davies offers an argument on pp. 141-42 that the redeemer is Christ. Getty argues that God is the deliverer based on the original concept in Isaiah and because Paul in other places uses ῥύομαι with God as the subject, based on Rom 7:24; 15:31 and 2 Cor 1:10, but she does not take note of the instances listed above where Christ is the subject. Based on Paul's propensity to shift the referent from YHWH to Jesus, as I will argue he does in this case, the argument that Isa 59:20 refers to YHWH as the deliverer does not carry weight. In addition, Getty is likely incorrect that the subject in Rom 7:24 is not Jesus. Getty, "Paul and the Salvation of Israel," 461.

<sup>64</sup>Schreiner, *Romans*, 620; Jewett, *Romans*, 704; Dieter Zeller, *Juden and Heiden in der Mission des Paulus: Studien zum Römerbrief* (Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1973), 259.

<sup>65</sup>So Hvalvik, "A 'Sonderweg,'" 92; Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 682.

<sup>66</sup>Wilckens, *Romer*, 257.

<sup>67</sup>Hvalvik, "A 'Sonderweg,'" 103; Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 682.

mean for the redeemer to be God.<sup>68</sup> The same shift in referent that has been observed in much of Paul's writings, especially in Romans 9:33, 10:5-8 and 10:13, can be seen in 11:26 as well. The deliverer in Isaiah 59:20 must surely be YHWH, but in Romans 11:26 it is Jesus. The first Christological implication of 11:25-27, then, is that the identification of Jesus with YHWH has been consistent throughout Romans 9-11, and Paul does the same thing here.<sup>69</sup>

While the argument is strong that for Paul the redeemer is Jesus, the question of what it means to come from Zion is another matter. Schaller thinks the substitution plays no role<sup>70</sup> and Stanley asserts that no one has ever attempted to explain why Paul would substitute ἐκ Ζιὼν for ἐνεκεν Ζιὼν.<sup>71</sup> As Stanley points out, the word Zion appears otherwise in Paul, only in Romans 9:33 and it is a quote in that instance, causing Stanley to question whether Paul would have any intent in making the alteration.<sup>72</sup> Stanley's point is well taken in one way: the absence of any Zion theme in Paul does make it a bit more difficult to determine why he would alter the text in the manner that he did, since it is hard to know what Paul means by Zion.

Some who do see it as possible that Paul altered the text argue that "from Zion" should be understood as a reference to the return of the exalted Christ from

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<sup>68</sup>Bell, *Provoked to Jealousy*, 142.

<sup>69</sup>Similarly, Wright, *Romans*, 692; Bruno, "The Deliverer from Zion," 124. Capes, however, mentions Rom 11:26 only in passing and does not mention this as an instance of the use of a Yahweh text. Capes, *Yahweh Texts*, 102.

<sup>70</sup>Schaller, "ΗΕΕΙ ΕΚ ΖΙΩΝ Ο ΠΥΟΜΕΝΟΣ," 203. Similarly, Dietrich-Alex Koch, *Die Schrift als Zeuge des Evangeliums: Untersuchungen zur Verwendung and zum Verständnis der Schrift bei Paulus* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1986), 177. Koch similarly views ἐκ Ζιὼν as functionless.

<sup>71</sup>Stanley, "The Redeemer Will Come," 122.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid., 122-23.

heavenly Jerusalem.<sup>73</sup> This view, of course, understands Paul to be speaking of the parousia.<sup>74</sup> In favor of seeing this as referring to the parousia, Paul must have had in mind the salvation of all Israel as a future event, as evidenced by the temporal markers (ἄχρι οὗ) and the future tense of saved (σωθήσεται), so it is only sensible to understand that future event as the parousia.<sup>75</sup> In addition, at first glance, it may seem that the fact that the redeemer will come (future tense ἔξει) would support that the coming would be at the parousia.<sup>76</sup> The future tense in that case, however, is more likely a function of the quote and it is not certain that Paul understood it as a prophetic future.<sup>77</sup> In Romans 15:12 Paul similarly uses a future tense from a quote from Isaiah 11:10 when it is highly likely he understood the future in the quote to have already occurred.<sup>78</sup> In the same way it is likely

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<sup>73</sup>Käsemann, *Romans*, 314; Seifrid, “Romans,” 673; Jewett, *Romans*, 704; Schreiner, *Romans*, 619; Davies, “Paul and the People of Israel,” 141. Davies, however, seems to identify the heavenly Jerusalem as the church in heaven and on earth.

<sup>74</sup>Those specifically so stating include Wilckens, *Römer*, 257; Käsemann, *Romans*, 314; Hans Hübner, *Gottes Ich und Israel: Zum Schriftgebrauch des Paulus in Römer 9-11* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck Ruprecht, 1984), 114; Bell, *Provoked to Jealousy*, 143; Davies, “Paul and the People of Israel,” 142; Hofius, “All Israel Will be Saved,” 37; Moo, *Romans*, 724, 728; Cranfield, *Romans*, 2:578; Schreiner, *Romans*, 619-20; Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 682.

<sup>75</sup>See, e.g. Hafemann, “The Salvation of Israel,” 53, where he asserts that the “until” of 11:25 is enough to posit the future salvation of ethnic Israel.

<sup>76</sup>As asserted by Hübner, *Gottes Ich und Israel*, 114; Mussner, *Tractate*, 33; Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 682.

<sup>77</sup>Hvalvik, “A ‘Sonderweg,’” 93. In general, Hvalvik argues against viewing salvation as an event at the parousia (pp. 92-93). While Hvalvik is correct in understanding Paul to mean the redeemer has come, that is not sufficient to deny that salvation for all Israel will occur at the parousia. See also Bruno, “The Deliver from Zion,” 129. It seems to me that the argument against seeing the salvation of Israel as occurring at the parousia must ultimately fall back onto Wright’s argument that the conversion of Israel is an ongoing process and therefore that all Israel differs in no degree from the remnant. As I have argued above, that argument fails. Bruno appeals to the fact that in Isaiah Zion always refers to an earthly location, but even though Paul also seems to agree that Zion is earthly that doesn’t mean the origin of the redeemer from an earthly Zion prohibits a salvation at the parousia. As my argument here shows, Paul understood both that the redeemer comes from Israel, but that salvation for Israel remains future. That ἔξει is a genuine future linked with the parousia is so understood by Schreiner, *Romans*, 618; Wilckens, *Römer*, 257; Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 682; Jewett, *Romans*, 704.

<sup>78</sup>Zeller, *Juden and Heiden*, 260-61.

true that in 11:26 Paul understood the redeemer to have come, even though the salvation of Israel remained future.

In support of the latter idea, perhaps a train of thought can be traced through Romans 9-11 that could suggest Paul had in mind the coming of Christ at the incarnation.<sup>79</sup> It is first noteworthy that Stanley is correct that Paul refers to Zion only once other than in 11:25-27, and then only in a quote (9:33). That does, of course, make it difficult to understand what Paul means by Zion, but perhaps Paul means something by it that makes it possible to see the same idea in other texts. What is first notable, however, is that the quote in 9:33 is also a conflation of sources from Isaiah, which itself speaks of the sin of Israel in relation to the person of Jesus, and there is in that text a clear shift in the referent from YHWH to Jesus.<sup>80</sup> As I argued in chapter 5, the stone that Israel stumbled upon was the person of Christ. The placement in Zion was likely simply the coming of Christ from Israel, even though Israel rejected him. In fact, though, the reference to the deliverer from Zion also points to the earlier reference in Romans 9:5.<sup>81</sup> The coming of the redeemer from Zion in 11:26 and the coming of Christ from Israel in 9:5 must be the same thing.<sup>82</sup> As Burns rightly notes, the shift is from advent to lineage.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>79</sup>Contra Schreiner, *Romans*, 618. Schreiner, in arguing that “from Zion” refers to the heavenly Jerusalem, denies that Paul intended any reference here to the descent from David, or Jesus’ death and resurrection in Jerusalem. Similarly, Käsemann, *Romans*, 314. It would be odd, however, for Paul here to abandon all that he has said about the origin of Jesus in the flesh, especially given the lack of reference to the parousia in Romans.

<sup>80</sup>So also Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, 682.

<sup>81</sup>Murray, *Romans*, 99n 54; Jewett, *Romans*, 703; Zeller, *Juden and Heiden*, 260-61. Similarly, Stuhlmacher, *Romans*, 172.

<sup>82</sup>Similarly, Hvalvik, “A ‘*Sonderweg*,’” 94-95; Getty, “Paul and Israel in Romans 9-11,” 460. I would suggest that can best be seen in association of Rom 9:5 and the emphasis on lineage there. But see Wagner, *Heralds*, 284. Wagner understands Paul’s alteration to mean that rather than coming to Zion, the Lord will come from a restored Zion to bring deliverance to his people who are scattered among the nations. While it is surely true that the Lord will redeem his people scattered among the nations, the fact that the people are scattered is not an emphasis in Rom 11.

<sup>83</sup>Burns, “The Future of Ethnic Israel,” 214.

One can see that the lineage of Christ from Israel in Romans 9:5 continues in 11:25-27 as the deliverer from Zion. If that is true, then Paul starts and finishes Romans 9-11 with a reference to the relationship of Israel to Christ.<sup>84</sup> If my argument in chapter 2 is correct, as it seems it is, in 9:5 Paul made a clear identification of Christ with God. If my argument in chapter 6 is correct that Paul intended to make clear that it is now Israel who must join the Gentiles in the confession of the identity of Jesus, then it makes perfect sense that Paul would here emphasize that Christ, who is God over all, is also the redeemer, also from Zion. In other words, Paul's emphasis is that Israel will recognize that:

Jesus was and is not only the savior of the Gentiles, but also, and above all, was and is the shoot of the root of Jesse sent by God as a confirmation of his promises to the people of God (Is. 11:10), that is, Jesus is the promised messiah (Rom. 15:8, 12). He is the one who frees Israel from the guilt of its sin!<sup>85</sup>

That is to say that Paul is calling attention to the identity of the redeemer as he has from the beginning of Romans 9-11 and he makes clear that the manner in which Israel will be saved is the deliverance from their sins by recognition of the identity of the redeemer as Christ from Israel, God over all. As Murray has well noted regarding Paul's alteration of the text:

There should not be any great difficulty. The preposition involved in Hebrew is capable of both renderings [to Zion or for Zion] and Paul was at liberty to use the one he did. Both significations are true, that the Redeemer came out of Zion and for its deliverance. The accent on Paul's teaching in this passage is on what the Redeemer will do *for* Zion. But in the first clause the thought is focused on the relation of the Redeemer to Zion after the pattern of 9:5. This is germane to the total emphasis of this context and underscores the relevance of the Redeemer's saving work to Israel as a people. [Emphasis original.]<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>84</sup>See also Wright, *Romans*, 625. Wright correctly asserts that Rom 9:5 stands at the head of Rom 9-11 and that everything else must be understood in that light.

<sup>85</sup>Stuhlmacher, *Romans*, 172. See also Zeller, *Juden and Heiden*, 261. "[Paulus] bezieht aus der eingelösten Zusage ἐξ ὧν ὁ χριστὸς τὸ κατὰ σάρκα (9,5) die Zuversicht, dass seine Volksgenossen durch eben diesen Christus tatsächlich gerettet werden." (Paul correlated from the redeeming promise ἐξ ὧν ὁ χριστὸς τὸ κατὰ σάρκα the confidence that his kinsmen are actually redeemed through just this Christ.)

<sup>86</sup>Murray, *Romans*, 2:99.

## **Summary and Conclusion**

In my argument, Zion is the people of Israel, from whom is the Christ, among whom the stumbling block was laid, and from whom the redeemer has come on Israel's behalf. That Israel's salvation remains future is likely, but at whatever time, their salvation cannot be understood apart from the one who has already come for the removal of sin. While the redeemer has come for the salvation of the Gentiles as well, there remains a time in the future when all Israel will be saved. That final salvation will occur at the parousia, but even then, Israel's salvation will occur on the basis of the deliverer who has come. Paul's identification of Jesus as the redeemer, with the logical understanding that he has shifted the referent of the redeemer from YHWH, is a continuation of the same emphasis that has occurred throughout Romans 9-11, but even further, it is a statement that Israel can be redeemed by none other than the one who has always redeemed Israel. If Israel has been unable to recognize the nature of the work (1 Cor 1:18-24) of the one who has always redeemed them and has stumbled over his identity (Rom 9:33), that stumbling is not final or complete (Rom 11:11).

In support of that argument I have in this chapter considered whether in Paul's thought as expressed in Romans 11:25-27 there is a possibility of salvation for Israel apart from Christ. I conclude that there is not. But I would also suggest that Paul has more to say than just that. This Christological emphasis must be seen against the question of the unbelief of Israel. I have argued in this chapter that even in 11:1-27 where, as Stendahl points out, Jesus is not mentioned by name, the Christological emphasis can be seen in the continued emphasis on the unbelief of Israel, as Paul presents it in those verses. Israel may be regrafted into the olive tree only if it does not remain in unbelief. The unbelief must surely remind us of the unbelief of Israel regarding Christ as Paul made it so clear in Romans 9:30-10:21. There is really no other object of their faith that in Paul's mind would be sufficient for them to be saved. The statement in 11:25-27 when viewed in that light surely points to the need for Israel to recognize their redeemer from

Zion, who is Christ, God over all. Thus, I conclude that Romans 11:1-27 has a strong Christological foundation, even without the mention of Christ by name.

In chapters 5-7 of this dissertation I have traced Paul's thought in Romans 9:30-11:27 and I have suggested that the whole section is more heavily Christological than many have been willing to see or perhaps acknowledge. I have argued that Israel has stumbled over the identity of the very one whose identity they must confess. That confession of the identity of that person is crucial to their salvation. With that in mind it is time to summarize the argument and consider some final reflections.

## CHAPTER 8

### CONCLUSION AND REFLECTIONS

In this dissertation I have suggested that Paul deliberately used the word θεός in Romans 9:5 to apply to Jesus. In chapter 2 I conducted an extended exegetical analysis of that verse, which I would suggest leads to the conclusion that, on the basis of grammar, syntax, usage and lexica, Paul did intend there to identify Jesus as θεός. At the same time, I have pursued the investigation against the background of the history of scholarly thought about New Testament theology since Wilhelm Bousset's *Kyrios Christos*.<sup>1</sup> In general, Bousset contended that Christ could not be identified as Lord, and surely not as God, among Palestinian Jewish Christians, and that such an ascription was possible only after the Christian faith spread into Hellenistic areas. Bousset's contention has generated considerable discussion, but he has been followed by a significant portion of the New Testament scholarship, especially, but not always limited to, the History-of-Religions School. The implication of Bousset's work is that Paul, a Palestinian monotheistic Jew, would not identify Jesus as God and therefore he did not in Romans 9:5. For that reason, the conclusion that Paul meant to identify Jesus as God must be rejected and alternative explanations sought. In fact, it was my position that scholars who argued on exegetical bases that Paul did not mean to say that Jesus is God, did so because they began with the supposition that Paul would not refer to Jesus that way.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Wilhelm Bousset, *Kyrios Christos: A History of Belief in Christ from the Beginnings of Christianity to Irenaeus*, trans. John E. Steely (Nashville: Abingdon, 1970).

<sup>2</sup>E. g., Gordon Fee, *Pauline Christology: An Exegetical-Theological Study* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2007), 273, 277. Otto Küss, "Zu Römer 9,5," in *Rechtfertigung: Festschrift für Ernst Käsemann zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. Johannes Friedrich, Wolfgang Pöhlmann and Peter Stuhlmacher (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck and Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1976), 295-97; Ezra Abbot, "On the Construction of Romans ix. 5," *JBL* 1 (1881): 87-154. In each of these cases the exegesis begins with an assumption that Paul would not refer to Jesus as God, or that since he does not do so in other places he

In addition, to the History-of-Religions scholars, others have contended that Paul did not identify Jesus as God in Romans 9:5 on the basis of the argument that he did not in other places in his known writings do so. That leads scholars to question why Paul would identify Jesus as God at the beginning of such a God-centered section of Romans as chapters 9-11. As a result of those questions, I acknowledged that the exegetical argument, as strongly as I presented it, would not always be convincing in the present climate of scholarship, and while I paused to respond to the objections noted above, the thrust of the issue for this dissertation has been whether Paul had reason at the beginning of Romans 9-11 to refer to Jesus as God. While I did not at length directly challenge the premise that Romans 9-11 is primarily God-centered, I did suggest that the chapters have significant Christological implication and, in fact, that 9:30-11:27 is more Christologically oriented than is sometimes recognized. Against that background, the thrust of my dissertation has been to suggest that Paul used *θεός* in Romans 9:5 because of the need for Israel to join the Gentiles in confessing the identity of Christ.

### **Summary and Conclusions of Chapters 3 and 4**

It was necessary along the way to respond in some degree to objections other than the primary question for this dissertation, however, and some summary and reemphasis of my response is worthwhile here. The first objection I dealt with is what I understand to be the most important argument advanced by the History-of-Religions scholars, that is, that Paul was a good Palestinian monotheist and that his monotheism would not allow him to refer to Jesus as God. My response to that argument developed in two ways. The first was my contention that the Old Testament (and first century Judaism), counter to much modern thought, did not insist on only one deity. In fact, I maintained that the Old Testament recognizes the existence of other beings to whom the

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would not in Rom 9:5. See my comments regarding all these authors' starting points in chap. 2 of this volume.

worship of other nations was given and I further claimed that the primary thrust of monotheism is the recognition that YHWH is unique among the deities in that he alone is creator and sovereign, and all things, including these other powers, are both created by him and subject to him. Part of the argument is that reality is essentially binary, including all that is God on the one hand, and all that is not God on the other. If that is true, then Jesus is in only one of those categories. Even though one must think of him in one sense as both creator and creature, there is no sense in which he is on a par with the other created beings who occupy the heavenlies. To create identifies him with God.

In chapter 3 I also argued from three texts in Paul's writing that it is surely correct to insist that Paul was a monotheist, within the biblical definition of monotheism. In Romans 3:29-30, with its similarity to the Shema<sup>4</sup> in Deuteronomy 6:4, Paul asserts that God is one, which means he is the God of all people and therefore the justifier of all people by faith. I maintained that Ephesians 4 and 1 Corinthians 8:6 are both passages in which Paul was also emphatically monotheistic. I suggested that, similar to the statement in 1 Corinthians 8:6, Paul also made a statement in Ephesians 4:5 where he speaks of one God, the father, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, both of whom he identified as God within the confines of Shema<sup>4</sup>-like statements. Paul makes that statement even though he recognizes the existence of other gods, lords, powers and principalities. In fact, in Ephesians 1:15-23 Paul asserted that God has exalted Jesus far above all those beings. So Paul is monotheistic, within the biblical definition of the term. As Paul speaks of Jesus, his intent must be, then, to identify Jesus with YHWH, since to do less would come dangerously close to suggesting the existence of another god who is able to create. In fact, it seems to me that it is a bigger threat to Paul's monotheism to agree that Paul speaks of Jesus in such lofty terms as creator and sovereign ruler above all created spiritual forces, yet to

deny that Paul would refer to him as God, than it would be to acknowledge that Paul did identify Jesus as God.<sup>3</sup>

In chapter 4 I replied to the contention that because he did not refer to him that way in any of his other writings Paul would not refer to Jesus as God in Romans 9:5. In that chapter I paused to suggest that Paul did in fact refer to Jesus as God in Titus 2:11-14, but the thrust of the argument in chapter 4 was that Paul referred to Jesus in such lofty terms that he could have meant nothing other than that Jesus is to be identified as YHWH. I began with a statement by C. H. Dodd as a foil. Dodd suggested that if Paul wished to refer to Jesus as God he would have done so in Philippians 2:6-11 and 1 Corinthians 8:6. I drew attention to Dodd's statement that "[e]ven though he ascribes to Christ functions and dignities which are consistent with nothing less than deity, yet he pointedly avoids calling him 'God.'"<sup>4</sup> My response there was that it goes too far to say that Paul pointedly avoided calling Jesus God in those passages since, unlike Romans 9:5, those passages had a thrust that did not require Paul to speak of Jesus that way.

Nonetheless, I maintained that in those passages and in others, the language that Paul used about Jesus was unmistakably language that applies to God. I noted a number of places in which Paul applies texts to Jesus from the Old Testament, in which the referent in the Old Testament was YHWH. By making Jesus the referent of those

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<sup>3</sup>In a recent contribution to the discussion of whether early Christians worshipped Jesus, James D. G. Dunn seems to acknowledge this danger, although as best I can understand him, he does go on to deny that Paul meant to identify Jesus as God. His argument is based on an understanding that to identify Jesus as God is partial identity, which, I suggest, would be to suggest polytheism. He prefers to see function or agency, but as I suggest in chap. 4, it is hard to understand how one who is not God could function as God, and agency seems to miss the strength of the things Paul says about Jesus. James D. G. Dunn, *Did the First Christians Worship Jesus? The New Testament Evidence* (London: SPCK and Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2010), 132. The difficulty with Dunn's argument is that it seems to be somewhat inconsistent when he shows that Phil 2:5-11 is an indication that early Christians clearly affirmed that the Lord Jesus was on the divine side of the act of worshipping God alone (107).

<sup>4</sup>C. H. Dodd, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1932), 152.

texts, Paul surely meant to identify Jesus as YHWH.<sup>5</sup> I also called attention to texts where Paul's thought was fluid enough to say the same things about Jesus that he said about God and to texts where he seemed to say that both God and Jesus were acting together, such as texts in which grace and/or peace came from both. My conclusion in chapter 4 was similar to chapter 3. To conclude that these things meant that Jesus was deity, yet somehow not God, would be to posit the need for a second god, which, for Paul, would not be possible.

So, in response to the two main objections to my position that Paul intended to refer to Jesus as God in Romans 9:5, I conclude that while those are strong objections, they fail because they themselves understand Paul to say things about Jesus that he could only say about God. That suggests he identified Jesus as God, and in fact, no other explanation adequately protects Paul's monotheism. At the same time, I recognize the strength of the argument that Paul also clearly differentiated and even subjected Jesus to God (e.g., 1 Cor 15:28). But to assert that because Paul so differentiated and subjected Christ to God he could not also identify Jesus as God does not take into account the full evidence in Paul's writings. Whether one agrees that Paul is consistent or not, it is true that he could refer to Jesus in both ways, which, when considered fully, need not be thought contradictory. As I pointed out in the conclusion to chapter 4, it is wrong to conclude that New Testament writers would refer to YHWH as God the Father only.<sup>6</sup> To identify Jesus as YHWH is not to identify him as the Father, but it is to identify him as the God of the Old Testament, as the Father is also identified.

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<sup>5</sup>One of the features of Dunn's position noted above is his contention that Jesus is the agent of God. That misses, or denies, the strength of the argument here, that by transferring the referent in these texts from YHWH in the OT to Jesus in the NT, Paul identified Jesus as YHWH. Dunn, *Did the First Christians Worship Jesus?* 132.

<sup>6</sup>Following C. Kavin Rowe, "Biblical Pressure and Trinitarian Hermeneutics," *Pro Ecccl* 11 (2002): 302-03.

## Summary and Conclusions of Chapters 5-7

The question that actually prompted this dissertation had to do with Paul's use of *θεός* at the beginning of Romans 9-11, which is normally understood to be a heavily theocentric portion of Romans. The pressing question is why Paul would refer to Jesus as God there if he never did otherwise. While I sought to answer that question as stated, and I did not take the space to argue the assumptions that underlie that question, I have not conceded that Paul did not refer to Jesus as God in other places, and I have not agreed that Romans 9-11 is so thoroughly theocentric as to make such a lofty Christological statement out of place in Romans 9:5. In fact, I have treated 9:30-11:27 as significantly Christocentric.

I have found the answer to the question at hand in Paul's statements about Jesus all the way through Romans 9-11. In fact, in every one of those passages where Paul makes the statements treated in this dissertation, Paul refers to Jesus with citations from the Old Testament in which the referent in the citations is YHWH, yet Paul shifted the referent in each case to Jesus. Moreover, in each instance, Paul was making a soteriological argument regarding the salvation of Israel. In doing so, he did not wander from the question of Israel's unbelief; an issue that I proposed underlies all of chapters 9-11. In 9:30-10:4, Paul used a conflated citation from Isaiah to speak of Jesus as the stumbling block laid in Zion over which Israel stumbled. Israel stumbles, not knowing that in their efforts to establish their own righteousness by the law, they had rejected the very one who as the goal of the law is the true means to righteousness. The shift in referent from YHWH in the passages in Isaiah, to Jesus in 9:30-33 is important since, as I concluded in chapter 5, only the lawgiver could so transcend the law to become the stumbling block to those pursuing the law.

In Romans 10:5-13 Paul again shifted the referent from YHWH to Jesus. The shift is not so strong in 10:5-8, although it is there, but in 10:9-13 it is nearly certain that Paul understands that to call upon the name of the Lord in Joel 2:32 is the same as calling

upon the name of Jesus. The confession that Jesus is Lord in Romans 10:9-10 is surely what is meant by calling on the name of the Lord and that confession must then be the confession that Jesus is YHWH. I proposed that this confession is the most basic confession of the Christian faith and I would suggest it is the most direct statement in the New Testament of how one may be saved.

While Paul universalized Joel 2:32 to include all people, it is evident from the context of the issue that underlies Romans 9-11 and from the near context beginning in 9:33 that Israel is the real issue. In fact, although in 3:29-30, where Paul made a similar point, the pressing problem is the inclusion of Gentiles by faith, in 10:9-13 it is Israel who must join the Gentiles in the universal confession that Jesus is Lord (YHWH). The oneness of God as God of both Jews and Gentiles is at stake in 3:29-30, and similarly in 10:9-13, the issue is that Jesus, the Lord, is the same Lord over all, both Jews and Gentiles. As in 3:29-30 the oneness of God is the anchor of justification by faith for all, in 10:9-13 the sameness of Jesus as Lord of all is the anchor of the availability of salvation to all who call on him. Thus, Paul says the same thing about Jesus that he says about God. Israel, like the Gentiles, will be saved by calling on the same Lord/God by faith, rather than on the basis of their own works of the law.

Thus, the matter has come now to the issue of Israel's recognition of its deliverer. In Romans 11:25-27 Paul directly confronts how it is that Israel may be saved. His answer comes from another conflated Old Testament citation in which he once again shifted the referent. When Paul identifies Jesus as the one who is Israel's redeemer, we can see that the redeemer is the one who has always redeemed Israel. If all this is true, then Jesus has come from Zion as in Romans 9:5, but on Zion's behalf as well, to do what YHWH had promised to do.<sup>7</sup> I suggest then that the thrust of all this argument in 9:30-11:27 is to establish that Jesus is the one whom Israel, although stumbling upon him now,

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<sup>7</sup>See, similarly, N. T. Wright, "Jesus and the Identity of God," *Ex Auditu* 14 (1998): 51-53.

must ultimately recognize as YHWH their redeemer. In that way; that is, in that confession, all Israel will be saved. In what is arguably the most Jewish of all of Paul's writings, it was necessary here to make the acclamation that Jesus is indeed God over all, including Israel.

### **Concluding Reflections**

It would perhaps be wise here for me to follow the psalmist by not occupying myself with things too great and marvelous for me (Psa 131:1). To try to explain exactly how Paul viewed Jesus as God falls into that category of marvelous things because we find ourselves trying to go beyond what Paul actually wrote. Since he did not explain himself, it is unlikely that I will adequately explain how it is that Paul could identify Jesus, a human who was visible on earth, as "the blessed and only sovereign, the king of kings and lord of lords, the only one having immortality dwelling in inapproachable light, whom no man has seen or is able to see" (1 Tim 6:15b-16). In spite of the danger of speaking of things of which I am unqualified to speak, and at risk of being like Peter, who, not knowing what to say, spoke anyway (Mark 9:6), the need to offer some comment draws me forward, if only briefly. I cannot, of course, treat properly or in any way extensively this issue of how Paul, and by extension, we, should understand the relationship of the Son and the Father. At best I can endorse a proposal and briefly consider a few ideas.

In chapter 3 I suggested the best way forward in the quest to understand the Christology of the New Testament is to adopt Richard Bauckham's proposal that the New Testament writers simply identified Jesus with YHWH, God of the Old Testament, without reference to any explanation of essence.<sup>8</sup> That explanation of essence was taken

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<sup>8</sup>As explained in Richard Bauckham, *God Crucified: Monotheism and Christology in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), which is now included in idem, *Jesus and the God of Israel:*

up by the councils, and the rest of the Church has wrestled with the problem for the past two millennia. The important point, however, is that the New Testament writers included Jesus in the creative activity and sovereignty of YHWH, thus identifying Jesus with YHWH, since the only unique God alone creates and rules in complete sovereignty. Bauckham's proposal is the best way forward since, as he demonstrates, his proposal can be read from Paul without pressing too much past what he wrote.

That proposal is not without its critics, though, as scholars press forward with trying to explain what they themselves think of Jesus and how they think Paul viewed him. In a recent offering, J. D. G. Dunn argues against Bauckham that talk of sharing divine identity does not do justice to the history of Jesus and to the divine roles attributed to Jesus that are distinguished from God's. Dunn thinks Bauckham's suggestion obscures the "both-and paradox" that is necessary in understanding Jesus as having both divine and human nature.<sup>9</sup> Dunn's alternative proposal is to think of Jesus as equal, but not identical, to God. That proposal of how Paul and the New Testament writers understood Jesus falters on the issue that those who argue for function (as Dunn also proposes) must face, and which has been raised often enough in the dissertation. How is it that one can be equal to God, or function as God, yet not be God? In fact, the only resolution that is apparent to me in favor of Dunn's proposal leads directly to the understanding that there is more than one god. Of course, the argument here has been that monotheism is not about counting gods, but it is about recognizing the God of the Old Testament as the one and only unique God, who alone is creator and sovereign. God cannot be unique, yet have another equal to him at the same time.<sup>10</sup> I cannot imagine that Dunn intends to suggest

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*God Crucified and Other Studies on the New Testament's Christology of Divine Identity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans: 2008), 1-59.

<sup>9</sup>Dunn, *Did the First Christians Worship Jesus?* 142-43.

<sup>10</sup>At risk of going on too long about this, I would note that Dunn's appeal to the mathematical concepts of identity and equality is not particularly helpful. Dunn, *Did the First Christians Worship Jesus?* 144. Aside from the problem that we are not here dealing with a concept that can be reduced to

such an outcome, but it seems to me that the only way out of the difficulty is to endorse the force of the argument that YHWH, the only unique God, possesses an identity that includes the Father and the Son who became human.

I am aware that the proposal I have endorsed here does raise issues regarding how Paul can understand that YHWH has become flesh when the first two commandments of the Decalogue establish that no image of YHWH can be made. Particularly, YHWH cannot be thought of as a man or an image of a man. Paul's monotheism must surely have stood in the way of such a possibility.<sup>11</sup> Rowe argues that nowhere in second temple literature is there a warrant for identifying YHWH with a man born of a woman (that is, as a creature), so no Jewish theologians thought that because they could not in principle think it.<sup>12</sup> Rowe suggests that a path toward solution is to realize that Yahweh identifying himself with humans is not unheard of in the Old Testament. God has always been self-humbling and he has always identified himself with human history. Anthropomorphisms abound and even perhaps theophanies where God appears as a man.<sup>13</sup>

Rowe's suggestion is helpful in some ways, but is ultimately insufficient, since it doesn't really provide a clear resolution to the problem, which of course can

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mathematical certainty, this argument does not solve the problem of equality between two beings and how both can be God. The better approach is to consult the dictionary, where identity is "sameness of essential or generic character in different instances." Frederick C. Mish, ed. *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 10<sup>th</sup> ed. (Springfield, MA: Merriam Webster, 1998), s.v. "Identity." Of course, Dunn is correct to note the difficulty of discussing identity without thinking of essence, but the argument here does not claim essence is unimportant, only that the NT writers were not primarily concerned with it.

<sup>11</sup>C. Kavin Rowe, "Romans 10:13: What is the Name of the Lord?" *HBT* 22 (2000): 161. David B. Capes, *Old Testament Yahweh Texts in Paul's Christology* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1992), 167.

<sup>12</sup>Rowe, "What is the Name of the Lord?" 167. See also Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, 1-20. Contra Wright, "Jesus and the Identity of God," 42-46. Wright argues that it would be wrong to argue that it is impossible for a first century Jewish thinker to think of a human being as divine. I presume by divine he means to think of a human being as the one unique God of the OT, as he went on to argue that Jesus thought of himself that way.

<sup>13</sup>Rowe, "What is the Name of the Lord," 170.

perhaps be said of all the suggested solutions. Metaphorical language clouds things a bit when one thinks of anthropomorphisms, and the confusion that we must face about issues such as the appearance of the Angel of the Lord make for a less than clear solution. In the end, however, perhaps all such suggestions, while contributing to the solution, fall short, and in fact, perhaps it is not necessary to seek a solution beyond what is written in the New Testament. Perhaps the best solution is grounded in Paul's conversion and the appearance to him of the risen Christ seated at the right hand of the Father. That experience is likely the only thing that could cause Paul to come to think of Jesus as God. But even if all the suggestions err regarding how Paul's thought came about, I would suggest it is nevertheless true that he identified Jesus, the Christ who came from Israel, as God over all, blessed forever.

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## ABSTRACT

### CHRIST IS GOD OVER ALL: ROMANS 9:5 IN THE CONTEXT OF ROMANS 9-11

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This dissertation examines Paul's statement in Romans 9:5(b) within the context of Romans 9-11. The thesis of the dissertation is that in the Christological passages in Romans 9-11, Paul spoke of Jesus in a manner that suggests that in Romans 9:5(b) he meant that Christ is God over all, that is, the God of Israel. In addition, the dissertation argues that the confession that Jesus is the God over all is the fundamental confession that must be made by Israel for salvation. Chapter 1 considers the history of the discussion of New Testament Christology during the last century, and suggests that the question of whether any Palestinian Jew could refer to Jesus as God or even as Lord is the proper background against which the discussion of Paul's intent in Romans 9:5(b) must be undertaken.

Chapter 2 undertakes an in-depth exegetical study of the syntax of Romans 9:5(b) and argues that the syntax is best understood as identifying Jesus as God. Chapter 3 acknowledges and answers objections from outside the biblical text that Paul as a monotheistic Jew would not identify Jesus as God. Similarly, chapter 4 answers objections that Paul would not refer to Jesus as God in Romans 9:5(b) because he does not so identify Jesus elsewhere.

Chapter 5 considers the importance of Paul's identification of Christ as the stone of stumbling and the end of the law in Romans 9:30-10:4, especially for how he understood Jesus. Chapter 6 argues that in Romans 10:5-13, Paul understood Jesus as the

referent of the one on whom all call for salvation, assigning to Jesus an Old Testament reference to YHWH as the one who could save. Chapter 7 argues there is no separate way of salvation for Israel and that Jesus is YHWH, the redeemer from Zion, which Israel must join Gentiles in recognizing.

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