Paul's Philonic Opponent: Unveiling the One Who Calls Himself a Jew in Romans 2:17

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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of Doctor
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ABSTRACT

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Abstract

This dissertation offers a solution to several interpretive problems arising at the beginning of Paul's letter to the Romans, particularly from Rom 1:18–3:20. Why do these chapters evince a distinct account of the knowledge of God, of the natural law, of sin and human capacity, and of salvation by works of Law. And why do they define a "true" Jew differently from what is found in the rest of the letter? Building on the earlier work of scholars who recognize key dialogical features in Romans that signal the presence of an authorially constructed interlocutor, I analyze these problems in light of the ancient rhetorical conventions for speech-in-character. I argue that the conceptual tensions generated by this text over against what Paul says elsewhere—extending at times to the level of contradictions—were categorized by ancient readers as διαφωνία prompting them to seek a "solution from the character" (λύσις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου). The reader resolves the tensions, that is, by determining which material was appropriate for each character in a dialogue. This analysis results in (1) a coherent dialogical script for 1:18–3:20 that conforms to the criteria and conventions of ancient dialogues and that resolves the besetting tensions scholars have long wrestled with in this text; and (2) a more reliable body of evidence for the identification of Paul's interlocutor, the one who "calls [him]self a Jew" (2:17), as a distinctively Philonic Jewish teacher who may also be a proselyte. Numerous Philonic details are recognizable within the argument, and these function in support of the dialogical script proposed.

To my mother, Linda, who first taught me to read the Bible and question old paradigms.

Contents

1. Introduction

Thanks to Stanley Stowers's work,[1] who was building upon the initial insights from Rudolf Bultmann,[2] it is now widely recognized that Paul made use of Greco-Roman dialogical features in his letters and especially in Romans.[3] In particular, Stowers's contention that the portion of text in Rom 3:1–9 ought to be understood as a dialogue between Paul and a (constructed) interlocutor is now universally accepted by commentators on Romans.[4] However, there is still deep disagreement over who is speaking when.[5]

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[1] Esp. Stanley K. Stowers, *The Diatribe and Paul's Letter to the Romans*, SBLDS 57 (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1981). This is the published version of his 1979 dissertation, "A Critical Reassessment of Paul and the Diatribe: The Dialogical Element in Paul's Letter to the Romans" (PhD diss., Yale University, 1979).

[2] Rudolf Bultmann, *Der Stil der paulinischen Predigt und die kynisch-stoisch Diatribe* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1910).

[3] E.g., Abraham Malherbe, "MH ΓΕΝΟΙΤΟ in the Diatribe and in Paul," *HTR* 73 (1980): 231–40; Thomas Schmeller, *Paulus und die „Diatribe": eine vergleichende Stilinterpretation*, NTAbh 19 (Münster: Aschendorff, 1987); Thomas H. Tobin, *Paul's Rhetoric in Its Contexts: The Argument of Romans* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2004); Neil Elliott, *The Rhetoric of Romans: Argumentative Constraint and Strategy and Paul's Dialogue with Judaism*, JSNTSup 45 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990); Runar M. Thorsteinsson, *Paul's Interlocutor in Romans 2: Function and Identity in the Context of Ancient Epistolography*, ConBNT 40 (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 2003); Calvin L. Porter, "Romans 1.18-32: The Role in the Developing Argument," *NTS* 40 (1994): 210–28; Changwon Song, *Reading Romans as a Diatribe*, StBibLit 59 (New York: Lang, 2004); Douglas A. Campbell, *The Deliverance of God: An Apocalyptic Rereading of Justification in Paul* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009); Justin King, *Speech-in-Character, Diatribe, and Romans 3:1-9: Who's Speaking When and Why It Matters*, BibInt 163 (Leiden: Brill, 2018).

Since a thorough overview of the history of scholarly engagement on "diatribe" (a caveat on this term below) in Paul has very recently been completed by King (*Speech-in-Character*, 103–28), presenting one here would be otiose since, at the time of writing, this current project is the most recent scholarly development on this topic. It remains only for me to highlight salient points when relevant and necessary.

[4] Stanley K. Stowers, "Paul's Dialogue with a Fellow Jew in Romans 3:1–9," *CBQ* 46 (1984): 707–22; Stanley K. Stowers, *A Rereading of Romans: Justice, Jews, and Gentiles* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 159–75. Exemplars of Romans commentators will be treated below.

[5] For an overview on the scholarship in Rom 3:1–9 see King, *Speech-in-Character,* 165–218. I will summarize the key differences in the scripts for 3:1–9 below.

I will return just below to how scholars script the dialogue in Rom 3:1–9 differently, but from the outset it is worthwhile quickly summarizing the key reasons why scholars all now follow Stowers and recognize that Romans evinces key textual "diatribe markers."[6] Changwon Song has categorized these into four main groups and provides examples from both Epictetus and Romans: (1) vivid dialogues with fictitious interlocutors,[7] (2) the emergence of an imaginary second-person singular, (3) characteristic rejection phrases such as μη γένοιτο, and (4) the use of apostrophic vocatives.[8] Similarly, Thomas H. Tobin lists these dialogical makers as appearing in Romans: "rhetorical questions, apostrophes (addresses to imaginary interlocutors), dialogues with imaginary interlocutors,[9] refutations of objections and false conclusions, speeches-in-character,…. the frequent use of phrases such as 'What then?'…'What then shall we say?'…'Certainly not!'…and 'O man!'"[10] Although both Song and Tobin list "dialogue" prematurely—they are begging the question, because the presence of dialogue is precisely what needs to be established—the presence of these other features in Roman are themselves the textual signals that Paul is constructing a dialogue.

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[6] Song, *Reading Romans*, 16. The genre "diatribe" will be critiqued below in favor of the actual rhetorical skill known as "speech-in-character."

[7] Naming "vivid dialogues" as the first "marker" is question begging. Nevertheless, the latter three markers establish the fact that a "vivid dialogue" is taking place.

[8] Song, *Reading Romans*, 16–53.

[9] Again, listing "dialogues" (and "speeches-in-character" further down the list) is technically question begging when trying to establish that such a thing is in fact present in Romans, but these other markers provide the evidential warrants for concluding that dialogues occur in Romans.

[10] Tobin, *Paul's Rhetoric*, 84–85. See Tobin's footnotes for citations in Romans for each characteristic.

It follows from this that there is a sense in which Rom 3:1–9 passes the proverbial "if it looks like a duck" test. Meaning, if it looks like a dialogue, and we all basically know what a dialogue is like because we engage in them all the time, then it is probably a dialogue. As Stowers quipped in response to some initial skepticism regarding the presence of dialogue in Rom 3:1–4:2, "When something that looks exactly like a dialogue follows the apostrophe of the Jewish teacher of gentiles in 2:17-29 and certain words make excellent sense as words of that character, in light of the previous discourse, then it probably is a dialogue."[11]

1.1 Setting the Stage

Even though Romans scholars now widely agree that 3:1–9 is a dialogue, this is as far as the agreement seems to extend. Not only is there is little agreement on who is speaking when; there is also disagreement as to why Paul's text ought to be scripted in a certain way. In order to properly set the stage for this project then, I will outline the various scripts suggested for Rom 3:1–9. We need to find some way of adjudicating between these scripts decisively, and then apply those adjudications to the broader argument in Romans.

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[11] Stanley K. Stowers, "Apostrophe, Προσωποποιια, and Paul's Rhetorical Education," in *Early Christianity and Classical Culture : Comparative Studies in Honor of Abraham J. Malherbe*, ed. John T. Fitzgerald, Thomas H. Olbricht, and L. Michael White, NovTSup 105 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 362–67, here 365. One of the most important contributions from Stowers's research was proving that there are unmistakable dialogical aspects in the text of Romans 1–3. For this reason, exegesis of these parts of Romans that do not analyze the text against the background of ancient conventions for dialogues are necessarily historically deficient.

1.1.1 Summarizing the Different Scholarly Scripts for Rom 3:1–9

The text in question reads:[12]

(3:1) Therefore, what advantage does the Jew have, or what is the benefit of circumcision?
(3:2) Much in every way. For, first of all, they were entrusted with the oracles of God.
(3:3) What then? If some Jews were untrustworthy, will not their untrustworthiness abolish God's trustworthiness?
(3:4) May it never be! But let God be truthful, and every person a liar, just as it is written: "In order that you might be justified in your words and prevail when you judge."
(3:5a) And if our injustice exhibits God's justice, what will we say? Isn't God unjust, the one who brings about wrath?
(3:5b) (I am speaking in a human manner.)
(3:6) May it never be! Because how will God judge the world?
(3:7) But if by my lie, the truth of God is caused to abound unto his glory, why also am I still being condemned as a sinner?
(3:8a) And (just as we are being slandered and just as some are saying about us), why not say, "Let us do evil, so that good might come?"
(3:8b) Their judgment is just!
(3:9a) What then? Are we better/worse[13] off?
(3:9b) Not at all.
(3:9c) For we publicly-charge[14] both Jews and Greeks, all are under Sin
(3:10) just as it is written…

Surveying the literature, in the most common and "traditional" script, the interlocutor asks questions in vv. 1, 3, 5a, 7–8a, 9a and Paul responds in vv. 2, 4, 6, 8b, 9b.[15] Thus (interlocutor in italics):

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[12] All translations from the NT are my own unless otherwise noted.

[13] The translation of προεχόμεθα is contested. There are good arguments for either meaning. It will be discussed in the final chapter detailing the final script for this portion.

[14] The translation of προῃτιασάμεθα will be discussed in the final chapter as well.

[15] E.g., N. T. Wright, *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*, Christian Origins and the Question of God 4 (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013), 836–39; James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, WBC 38A (Dallas: Word, 1988), 128–44; Robert Jewett, *Romans: A Commentary*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2007), 238–52; Rafael Rodríguez, *If You Call Yourself a Jew: Reappraising Paul's Letter to the Romans* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2014), 61–67; John M. G. Barclay, *Paul and the Gift* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), 471–74; Fitzmyer calls this a "diatribe," but never says if the "rhetorical questions" are posed by the interlocutor or

(3:1) *Therefore, what advantage does the Jew have, or what is the benefit of circumcision?*
(3:2) Much in every way. For, first of all, they were entrusted with the oracles of God.
(3:3) *What then? If some Jews were untrustworthy, will not their untrustworthiness abolish God's trustworthiness?*
(3:4) May it never be! But let God be truthful, and every person a liar, just as it is written: "In order that you might be justified in your words and prevail when you judge."
(3:5a) *And if our injustice exhibits God's justice, what will we say? Isn't God unjust, the one who brings about wrath?*
(3:5b) (I am speaking in a human manner.)
(3:6) May it never be! Because how will God judge the world?
(3:7) *But if by my lie, the truth of God is caused to abound unto his glory, why also am I still being condemned as a sinner?*
(3:8a) And (just as we are being slandered and just as some are saying about us), *why not say, "Let us do evil, so that good might come?"*
(3:8b) Their judgment is just!
(3:9a) *What then? Are we better/worse off?*
(3:9b) Not at all.
(3:9c) For we publicly-charge both Jews and Greeks, all are under Sin
(3:10) just as it is written…

Stowers, on the other hand, rescripted the dialogue to align more with the conventions of Socratic dialogue. On this reading, the main speaker, here Paul, asks questions to censure and/or to convert his interlocutor. According to Stowers, the interlocutor still poses the opening and closing questions in vv. 1, and 9a and Paul responds in vv. 2, and 9b, but Stowers inverts the middle sections so that Paul is asking the questions in vv. 3, 5, 7–8 with the interlocutor responding in vv. 4, and 6.[16] Thus (interlocutor in italics):

Paul just anticipates that this is something the interlocutor might ask. Nevertheless, Fitzmyer thinks the responses to the questions are Paul's. Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Romans: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1993), 324–31, here 325.

[16] Stowers, "Paul's Dialogue," 707–22; idem., *Rereading*, 159–75.

(3:1) *Therefore, what advantage does the Jew have, or what is the benefit of circumcision?*
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(3:9b) Not at all.
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(3:10) just as it is written…

Going even further than Stowers's argument, Neil Elliott completely reversed the traditional assignations. He argued on the basis of Stowers's primary source research that Paul is the Socratic questioner throughout (vv. 1, 3, 5, 7–8a, and 9a) and that the interlocutor is responding to the leading questions in vv. 2, 4, 6, 8b, and 9b.[17] Douglas Campbell[18] and Justin King[19] have since taken up Elliott's rescripted reading without change. Thus (interlocutor in italics):

(3:1) Therefore, what advantage does the Jew have, or what is the benefit of circumcision?

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[17] Elliott, *The Rhetoric of Romans: Argumentative Constraint and Strategy and Paul's Dialogue with Judaism*, 132–41.
[18] Campbell, *Deliverance*, 572–74, 1088n117.
[19] King, *Speech-in-Character*, 252–93.

(3:2) *Much in every way. For, first of all, they were entrusted with the oracles of God.*
(3:3) What then? If some Jews were untrustworthy, will not their untrustworthiness abolish God's trustworthiness?
(3:4) *May it never be! But let God be truthful, and every person a liar, just as it is written: "In order that you might be justified in your words and prevail when you judge."*
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(3:9a) What then? Are we better/worse off?
(3:9b) *Not at all.*
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(3:10) just as it is written…

1.1.2 Extending and Critiquing Justin King

Although a consensus script for Rom 3:1–9 has been reached among those who are building directly upon Stowers's groundbreaking work, that is a small group of scholars. And King has identified the key cause of this: "One of the primary problems plaguing treatments of Rom 3:1–9… is one and the same for *both* traditional and rescriptive readings;" namely, there is insufficient engagement with the primary sources for first century Greco-Roman rhetorical conventions for speech-in-character by scholars from all parts of the spectrum with respect to Rom 3:1–9.[20] Since "the primary sources for diatribe display a remarkable degree of diversity," "relying solely on diatribal

[20] King, *Speech-in-Character*, 6, his emphasis.

literature as evidence for explicating Rom 3:1–9's dialogue is unable to produce a consistent or persuasive reading."[21] Thus, there is a pressing need for some sort of methodological control over the assignment of speakers within the conversation. King went on to argue that the practice of "speech-in-character"[22] can provide just such controls. This "rhetorical practice of attributing speech to speakers other than oneself" proves to be a "more stable…body of evidence" for determining the script of Romans 3:1-9.[23] Indeed, every instance of a dialogue between the primary speaker and their interlocutor "necessarily engages in speech-in-character."[24] Quintilian observes as well, "For one is not able to invent a conversation and not invent a person to speak it" (*nam certe sermo fingi non potest ut non personae sermo fingatur*, *Inst*. 9.2.32).[25] Thus, King's monograph sought to fill in the lack of sufficient primary source engagement and thereby to better substantiate Elliot and Campbell's rescriptive analysis of Rom 3:1–9.

While I will be utilizing and building on King's overall method and analysis, however, a critical qualification regarding "diatribe" must be introduced at this point.

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[21] King, *Speech-in-Character*, 8.

[22] Both King and I are aware that in the broader rhetorical tradition the practice of attributed speech is sometimes sub-divided into three genres (*Speech-in-Character*, 8n26): attributing speech to an inanimate object (προσωποποιία), attributing speech to someone living (ἠθοποιία), and attributing speech to a dead person (εἰδολοποιία) (Robert J. Penella, "The *Progymnasmata* and Progymnasmatic Theory in Imperial Greek Education," in *A Companion to Ancient Education*, ed. W. Martin Bloomer [New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2015], 163). But these subdivisions are not always used (e.g., Theon only uses προσωποποιία for all attributed speech). In any case, as King says, the term "'speech-in-character,' conveys most accurately the core elements of the concept, namely, writing or giving a speech that coheres with the character of another speaker" whether or not a particular sub-genre is in view (King, *Speech-in-Character*, 15; his emphasis; cf. 15n1).

[23] King, *Speech-in-Character*, 8.

[24] King, *Speech-in-Character*, 8; similarly, Stowers, "Apostrophe," 358–60.

[25] Translation from Stowers, "Apostrophe," 358; Latin from Quintilian, *The Orator's Education, Volume IV: Books 9-10*, trans. Donald A. Russell, LCL 127 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001).

With regard to Rom 3:1-9a, King's emphasis on speech-in-character over against the utilization of "diatribe" sources is more appropriate than he himself knows. NT scholarship has yet to catch up with the realization in Classics that the "diatribe" is not actually a genre that ancient writers would recognize. As Classicist Malcom Schofield wrote in 2004, "the hypothesis of a discrete *genre* of diatribe has long been abandoned."[26] And still earlier, in 1982, H. D. Jocelyn argued that "the notion that…the word διατριβή could denote a type of philosophical discourse or writing with definable characteristics was summarily rejected [in 1979]."[27] Jocelyn goes on to note that "Most Hellenists now either avoid the word…or apologize for using it" although, he adds, "[t]heologians…and Latinists…are less careful"[28] (presumably meaning by "theologians" New Testament scholars). Thus, it is a modern scholarly construct imposed artificially upon certain the ancient texts. The reason it seems as if, according to King, "the primary sources for diatribe display a remarkable degree of diversity,"[29] is precisely because "diatribe" is not actually an ancient genre. Problematically, it is something into which modern scholars can introduce almost any ancient instructive and polemical content they deem suitable.

Some of the difficulties NT scholars have had finding clear guidelines to assign voice within the "diatribe" of Rom 3:1–9 are consequently not surprising. Without an identifiable ancient practice of diatribe to guide analysis, NT scholars have been left up to

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[26] Malcom Schofield, "Epictetus: Socratic, Cynic, Stoic," *The Philosophical Quarterly* 54 (2004): 449.

[27] H. D. Jocelyn, "Diatribes and Sermons," *Liverpool Classical Monthly* 7 (1982): 3.

[28] Jocelyn, "Diatribes," 3.

[29] King, *Speech-in-Character*, 8.

their own scholarly categories, which may or may not map ancient realities accurately. In contrast to "diatribe," speech-in-character is a valid ancient compositional technique with "definable characteristics" that Jocelyn notes are necessary.[30] In fact, speech-in-character is the primary genre that should be analyzed and discussed when examining an ancient dialogue like Rom 3:1–9. This follows necessarily from the conversation between Paul's constructed interlocutor and Paul himself—the task the King has already undertaken.

Fortunately, there are sufficient primary sources extant to define the characteristics of speech-in-character. It is a recognized compositional skill observed by the grammarians in several Homeric *scholia* and taught by both rhetorical handbooks (e.g., Rhetorica ad Herennium and Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria*) and the *Progymnasmata* of Theon and Pseudo-Hermogenes. Indeed—to anticipate some of the conclusions that will be developed in more detail in the next chapter—the conventions for identifying speech-in-character as articulated in these sources are both unanimous and simple: (a) the interlocutor is clearly identified in some way, although the exact method varies; (b) s/he is characterized (e.g., as a coward, philosopher, hypocrite, fool, etc.); (c) any attributed speech is then appropriate to the character of the interlocutor; and (d) ancient readers then also expected this material to be performed appropriately. Most importantly for my present purpose, the speech of an interlocutor often enters a dialogue *without* "verbs of speech, introductory formulas, or other overt means."[31] This is clearly the case in the dialogue of Rom 3:1–9, which lacks verbs of speech when transitioning

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[30] Jocelyn, "Diatribes," 3.
[31] King, *Speech-in-Character*, 8.

from one speaker to another. In these cases of verbless transitions to speech-in-character, King correctly notes that "speech-in-character's complementary conventions of characterization and appropriateness to that characterization can help identify which lines in a discourse belong to which speaker."[32] Apart from adequate characterizations of both the author and the interlocutor, proposing a script for 3:1–9 will necessarily rest on unsubstantiated and even anachronistic assumptions.[33]

In sum, it is apparent that certain features of the ancient rhetorical conventions have neither been adequately noted by Pauline scholars, nor have they been applied to the entire text of Romans. More than previous attempts, my research, building upon King, is sufficiently disciplined by the ancient rhetorical conventions for attributed speech. Even more, I will press the significance of these conventions further by analyzing the broader data of Romans 1:18–2:29, especially the apostrophes in 2:1, 3, and 17–24. What will result is a thicker description of the identity and character of the interlocutor than King himself was able to offer.[34] By assessing what kind of speech is "appropriate" to whom, I

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[32] King, *Speech-in-Character*, 8.

[33] Further, although many of the commentators that follow the "traditional" script of 3:1–9 do so without reference to the ancient rhetorical conventions for dialogue in written texts, this project is going to show how even the analyses of Rom 3:1–9 from Stowers through to King that were aware of the ancient rhetorical conventions have not sufficiently attended to the data in Rom 1–2 in order to effectively discern the character and teaching of Paul's interlocutor.

[34] In due course, I am going to use King's method to counter some of his own specific exegetical claims, especially as they pertain to his understanding of Rom 1–2. Although I think King has the best methodology for understanding the dialogue in Rom 3:1–9 and I will end up agreeing with his rescriptive reading of Rom 3:1–9, I think he deploys his methodology deficiently. Specifically, as I will lay out in subsequent chapters, I think King fails to develop a historically plausible and exegetically convincing identification for the interlocutor because he has not adequately identified and characterized Paul's interlocutor from Rom 2. Consequently, he is hamstrung in his assessment of who is speaking in Rom 3:1-9 in relation to the criterion of appropriateness. Indeed—and somewhat ironically—his conclusions about who is speaking where in Rom 3:1–9 are ultimately problematic—even though I think he is correct—since they have an insecure basis (i.e., inadequate characterization).

establish a more stable basis upon which to understand 3:1–9. Critically, this will also shows how 1:18–32 can plausibly be identified with the teaching of Paul's interlocutor who fancies himself a "teacher" (cf. 2:20–21) and engages with Paul in a more conversational manner in 3:1–9.

1.1.3 Extending and Critiquing Douglas Campbell

Since 3:1–9 is agreed by all to be scripted dialogue of some sort—setting aside the divergent scripts for the moment—a further question is immediately raised: Is this the first time Paul attributes speech to his interlocutor, or does the interlocutor "speak" prior to 3:1–9? How would we know? What signals in the text are we to look for? Thankfully, we are not left in the dark on how to adequately answer these related queries. It is by studying the ancient rhetorical conventions for attributed speech in written texts and analyzing relevant comparanda with respect to Romans 1–2 that an answer can be definitively given. In other words, by analyzing Rom 3:1–9 in light of the ancient rhetorical conventions for attributed speech, we will be led to rethink the script of who is speaking throughout Paul's first major argumentative section in the letter: Rom 1:18–2:29. Other important interpretative realizations will then follow from this analysis. Attending to the rhetorical conventions for speech-in-character not only requires a rescripting of the traditional reading of 3:1–9 (in line with Elliot, Campbell, and King), but it also calls for a rescripting of 1:18–2:29 as a whole.

It is at this point where this project more directly intersects with the work of Campbell who argues that 1:18–32 and large portions of chapters 2–3 are actually assigned to an interlocutor, whom he calls "the Teacher," and whom Paul is aiming to

refute.[35] More specifically, he argued that the interlocutor first begins speaking in 1:18–32 and makes some cameo appearances throughout 2:1–29.[36] Nevertheless, though not without followers,[37] many NT scholars have not been convinced by Campbell's argument regarding Rom 1:18–32 as speech-in-character. Although Beverly Gaventa simply dismisses Campbell's thesis,[38] there are, as far as I can discern, five main substantive criticisms raised against Campbell's thesis regarding speech-in-character in 1:18–32.[39] Some of these I agree with, but some turn out to be invalid after further investigation of the ancient evidence, which will be detailed in the following chapters.

(1) Insufficient evidence. Grant Macaskill notes that there is "inadequate engagement with primary sources" with respect to speech-in-character.[40] Macaskill notes

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[35] Campbell, *Deliverance*; idem, *The Quest for Paul's Gospel: A Suggested Strategy*, JSNTSup 274 (London: T&T Clark, 2005), 233–61. I will continue to refer to the interlocutor as "the Teacher" as well throughout to highlight the pedagogical emphasis in view in Rom 2:19–21 ("guide to the blind…teacher of infants…[you] who teaches another"), although my own usage mainly appears in chapter 7 when investigating the apostrophe in 2:17–24. Campbell derived the term from J. Louis Martyn to denominate Paul's opponents in Galatians (*Galatians*, AB 33A [London: Doubleday, 1997]). A steady accumulation of evidence will end up supporting and aligning with much of Campbell's hypothesis that the teachers in Galatians are represented in the Teacher of Rom 2:17–24 (*Deliverance*, 495–518), though this is not the point of the project.

[36] Also, it seems to be relatively unknown that Campbell was actually not the first to propose 1:18–32 as the speech of Paul's interlocutor: Schmeller, *Paulus*, 279–80; Porter, "Romans 1.18-32"; Roy Bowen Ward, "Why Unnatural? The Tradition behind Romans 1:26-27," *HTR* 90.3 (1997): 278, 278n98.

[37] Sigve K. Tonstad, *The Letter to the Romans: Paul among the Ecologists*, The Earth Bible Commentary Series 7 (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2016), 87–114; Daniel Rodriguez, "On Γαρ'd: Dialogue in LXX Isaiah and Romans" (presented at the Paul and Judaism, Houston Baptist University, 2014), https://map.bloomfire.com/posts/2237610-on-d.

[38] "Even if we grant Campbell his scenario, how were the Romans, to most of whom Paul was unknown, to identify which lines were the Teachers' and which were Paul's?" (Beverly Roberts Gaventa, "Rescue Mission," *ChrCent* 127 [2010]: 36). It needs to be noted that Campbell answers this question directly (*Deliverance*, 530–41). Now, one may say the evidence Campbell offered was not convincing or too thin (in fact, I think Campbell's primary source evidence is too thin), but it is problematic to write as if Campbell was so audacious as to simply assert a thesis without attempting to answer such a basic question as to how readers are to know who is speaking.

[39] I am not going to engage any criticisms relating to Campbell's *Deliverance* as a whole because they are not relevant to my thesis, but only to those pertaining to speech-in-character in Rom 1:18–32.

[40] Grant Macaskill, "Review Article: *The Deliverance of God*," *JSNT* 34 (2011): 158–59, here 158.

that Campbell's lone citation of Quintilian (*Inst.* 9.2.30–33)[41] "does not [adequately] support his case for a thoroughgoing, extended use of speech-in-character in Rom. 1.18–3.20."[42] This same critique with respect to Quintilian is offered by King.[43] I agree with these criticisms, but I will demonstrate how further examination of the relevant primary sources turns out in the end to vindicate Campbell's thesis regarding Rom 1:18–32 as speech-in-character.

Additionally, Michael J. Gorman offers a similar critique:

> Campbell is unable to provide credible formal evidence for this thesis from the immediate context or from Paul's letters more generally. Then, especially in his treatment of Rom 2:12–16 (p. 559), Campbell's assigning of parts—this to the teacher, that to Paul—is torturous in the extreme, with insufficient evidence or argument.[44]

While it is true that Campbell does not spend a lot of time analyzing speech-in-character according to the ancient rhetorical conventions,[45] he did detail evidence from the cues within the text of Romans itself (and many of these will be noted throughout the project). But I agree with Gorman here insofar as I think the internal evidence can be strengthened not only in Romans but from Paul's whole corpus as well.

In short, Macaskill, Gorman, and King raise the issue of insufficient primary source evidence and I think this is the greatest liability for Campbell's thesis. It is from here in fact that all other criticisms can either be sufficiently addressed and mitigated, or

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[41] Campbell, *Deliverance*, 533.

[42] Macaskill, "Review Article," 158–59.

[43] King, *Speech-in-Character*, 213, 216–17.

[44] Michael J. Gorman, "Douglas Campbell's *The Deliverance of God*: A Review by a Friendly Critic," *Journal for the Study of Paul and His Letters* 1 (2011): 102.

[45] Campbell deals with προσωποποιία (along with διαφωνία) only here: *Deliverance*, 532–34; and briefly with parody (παρῳδία) in a few sentences on p. 547.

summarily dismissed as irrelevant. That is, we will see that the primary source evidence once it has been investigated fully ends up confirming Campbell's thesis regarding Rom 1:18–32.

(2) No introduction of a new speaker. As Robin Griffith-Jones asks, "The challenge [to Campbell] might be bluntly phrased: would Paul—and *why* would Paul—have launched into speech-in-character [in 1:18–32] without introducing and identifying the speaker?"[46] King seems to be reproducing a similar critique when he asks, "If Paul intends 1:18–32 as speech-in-character and knows he is going to address the speaker in ch. 2, why not clarify the argument by moving the identifying and characterizing materials in Rom 2 to precede the imaginary speech for Rom 1?"[47] Brittany E. Wilson asks as well, "If this is an instance of *prosōpopoeia*, why is it unmarked?…. Or even better, why does Paul not mention them [false teachers] directly before assuming 'the Teacher's' voice in 1:18? Once again, we return to the question of why Paul would have left such an important point unmarked."[48] This criticism consequently links hand with the aforementioned critique that Campbell did not adequately engage the relevant primary source evidence to establish his claim. Hence, once again, this objection will be shown to be ultimately immaterial after we have surveyed the primary source evidence more carefully than either Campbell or his critics.

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[46] Robin Griffith-Jones, "Beyond Reasonable Hope of Recognition? *Prosōpopoeia* in Romans 1:18-3:8," in *Beyond Old and New Perspectives on Paul: Reflections on the Work of Douglas Campbell*, ed. Chris Tilling (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2014), 162; his emphasis.

[47] King, *Speech-in-Character*, 216.

[48] Brittany E. Wilson, "Rereading Romans 1-3 Apocalyptically: A Response to Douglas Campbell's 'Rereading Romans 1-3,'" in *Beyond Old and New Perspectives on Paul: Reflections on the Work of Douglas Campbell*, ed. Chris Tilling (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2014), 184.

(3) The γάρ in 1:18. Related to the critique above, many assume that an interlocutor's speech could not be introduced with a γάρ (as there is in 1:18) because it necessarily serves to provide the explanatory or rational basis for what immediately precedes it in 1:16–17. Griffith-Jones is exemplary of this concern: "Why, we will ask, did Paul not do what one would expect any orator to do? He could simply introduce the change of direction and tone with an adversative ἀλλά (instead of the quite misleading γάρ), [and thereby] flag up the change of speaker" with a verb of saying such as "λέγει τις."[49] John Barclay also writes in a footnote, "Campbell's thesis…that 1:18–32 represents the views of an opponent, not of Paul, runs counter to the signals of the text," by which Barclay means, as he stated earlier, "The particle γάρ in 1:18."[50] Similarly, Sarah H. Casson, says that γάρ "threatens to undermine his [Douglas Campbell's] entire rereading of the argument of Romans [1:18–32 as speech-in-character]" and that the γάρ "points in precisely the opposite direction from Campbell's interpretation" as it "undermines Campbell's construal at this crucial point to the extent that his whole edifice is in danger of coming crashing down."[51]

Although this critique has been addressed by others,[52] in chapters 2 and 3 I will offer a rebuttal based on the most comprehensive and up to date evidence collated from the primary sources. This will show how the use of γάρ in Rom 1:18 proposed by the

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[49] Griffith-Jones, "Beyond Reasonable Hope," 170.

[50] Barclay, *Paul*, 462n29.

[51] Sarah H. Casson, *Textual Signposts in the Argument of Romans: A Relevance-Theory Approach*, ECL 25 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2019), 14, 225, 227.

[52] Tonstad, *Letter to the Romans*, 103, 105–6; Rodriguez, "On Γαρ'd," 1–11.

speech-in-character thesis actually coheres exactly to ancient Greek usage of γάρ in dialogical contexts.

(4) Novelty. This criticism has been repeated by a few scholars, but it basically reduces to the question asked by Nijay K. Gupta, "How did so many interpreters throughout history miss this?"[53] I will address the criticism of novelty in chapter 3, and the meta-level problems associated with it, but I think this misunderstands what exactly is novel about Campbell's thesis and what has gone unnoticed by interpreters. As it turns out, much of the pertinent data that actually supports his thesis has been regularly observed by readers of Romans since Origen.

(5) Other Pauline texts on God's judgment and wrath. Campbell's identification of an interlocutor rests, in part, on the contradictory nature of divine judgement evidenced in 1:18–32 and 2:6–13 and the rest of Paul's theology. Some scholars, taking issue with this claim, see a consistent theme of wrath and judgement across Paul's letters. This is the primary objection raised by Joshua W. Jipp in response to Campbell's argument in *Deliverance*.[54] He writes that while "one cannot naively and simply point to judgment texts in Paul and expect to have overthrown his entire argument, for one of them function in the foundational manner that one finds in Rom. 1:18-32," nonetheless "the many similarities between Rom. 1:18-32 and other Pauline texts… need to be

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[53] Nijay K. Gupta, "Douglas Campbell's Startling Alternative to Traditional Paradigms of Pauline Soteriology," *Reviews in Religion & Theology* 17 (2010): 252; N. T. Wright, *Paul and His Recent Interpreters: Some Contemporary Debates* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2015), 197; Griffith-Jones, "Beyond Reasonable Hope," 162, 171.

[54] Joshua W. Jipp, "Douglas Campbell's Apocalyptic, Rhetorical Paul: Review Article," *HBT* 32 (2010): 193–96. This is one of two critiques Jipp raises and I will discusses the second (regarding πίστις) below.

explained by Campbell in more detail in order to fully convince."[55] Again, "in order for Campbell's thesis to convince, he must explain how the other similar Pauline claims regarding pagan accountability, their epistemic darkness, and God's wrath can belong to the voice of Paul while what is said in Rom. 1:18-32 does not."[56] Jipp is right that Campbell's argument on this point needs to be strengthened and explained in more depth to be fully convincing. Nijay K. Gupta made a similar critique writing, "Sometimes it seems that Campbell simply does not like a Paul or any figure who believes in divine judgment, which may tell us more about Campbell than about Paul."[57]

Of all the criticisms of Campbell's thesis, I think this is the most pressing and substantive. The others are more or less easily mitigated after a closer inspection of the relevant primary sources, but this concern gets at the heart of the debate concerning Paul's gospel of salvation, how he conceptualizes divine justice, and what Paul thinks about the place of obedience and the Law in Christian life. In short, this concern engages Pauline theology. But Paul's theology was the animating concern of Campbell's project. Since this is such an important issue it will be tackled thoroughly in chapter 5. And using ancient conventions for the detection of speech-in-character will once again prove helpful

As King strengthened the evidential basis for Elliot and Campbell's rescripting of Rom 3:1–9, I will answer these criticisms by providing robust warrants based on a plethora of primary source evidence. In the final analysis, the plausibility that Rom 1:18–

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[55] Jipp, "Douglas Campbell's," 193.
[56] Jipp, "Douglas Campbell's," 194.
[57] Gupta, "Startling Alternative," 254.

32 is a speech-in-character and is the first time we "hear" from Paul's interlocutor will be strengthened.

All of this, moreover, will result in greater clarity concerning the contingent occasion of Paul's epistle to the Romans. Though this thesis is not primarily about the occasion of Romans, applying a more thorough dialogical analysis to Rom 1–3 ends up illuminating the historical situation of the letter. While not directly intervening into the so-called "Romans debate," the conclusions of this project will have implications for that discussion.[58] In particular, my analysis will provide the evidence necessary to make convincing suggestions (albeit still tentative) about the ethnicity and spirituality of the interlocutor (e.g., Is Paul arguing with a Jew or gentile? Is this person a Jesus-follower or not?). These questions are in turn relevant to ongoing discussions regarding Paul's relationship to Judaism.[59] The traditional position has not only been that the person whom Paul addresses in Rom 2 is a born Jew, but that he[60] is the paradigmatic Jew ("The Jew"). Paul is opposing Judaism *per se* in Rom 2–3.[61] However, if Paul was opposing a specific

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[58] E.g., Karl P. Donfried, ed., *The Romans Debate*, rev. and exp. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991); F. F. Bruce, "The Romans Debate—Continued," *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 64.2 (1982): 334–59; A. Andrew Das, *Solving the Romans Debate* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007); Campbell, *Deliverance*, 474–518.

[59] E.g., Mark D. Nanos and Magnus Zetterholm, eds., *Paul within Judaism: Restoring the First-Century Context to the Apostle* (Fortress, 2015); Matthew V. Novenson, "Whither the Paul within Judaism *Schule*?," *JJMJS* 5 (2018): 79–88; idem, "Paul's Former Occupation in *Ioudaismos*," in *Galatians and Christian Theology: Justification, the Gospel, and Ethics in Paul's Letter*, ed. Mark Elliott et al. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014), 24–39; Reimund Bieringer and Didier Pollefeyt, eds., *Paul and Judaism: Crosscurrents in Pauline Exegesis and the Study of Jewish-Christian Relations*, LNTS 463 (London: T&T Clark, 2012); Thomas G. Casey and Taylor, eds., *Paul's Jewish Matrix* (Rome: Gregorian & Biblical Press, 2011).

[60]When engaging a figure with Jewish features, the grammar of Paul's discussion focuses on a male individual.

[61] E.g., Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 20; Brendan Byrne, *Romans*, SP 6 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1996), 80; Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 126.

type of Jewish teacher who espouses teachings remarkably similar to Philo's otherwise peculiar theology, then scholars need to be more nuanced when articulating Paul's criticisms of certain Jewish views. Paul can no longer be said to be an opponent of Judaism *per se* on the basis of this text.[62]

Ultimately my analysis will provide a detailed profile of Paul's interlocutor—who most likely represents a group of teachers rather just a single figure. And I suspect that this profile could then be corroborated in turn by the evidence in Galatians and Philippians. Indeed, Paul's interlocutor(s) will turn out to look like a highly specific set of opponents who are proclaiming their own particular and sophisticated program of gentile proselytism. But there will be insufficient space here to develop this explanatory trajectory. It must remain largely a suggestion for future research.

In the final analysis, I will avoid reading Romans as some sort of Pauline proto-systematic theology—though my conclusions will inevitably contain significant ramifications for the study of Paul's theology. Instead, my reading, departing from defending, deepening, and correcting Campbell, will be able to offer an interpretation that takes account of the letter's occasional nature, providing a thoroughgoing contingent reading of some of the letter's most troublesome passages. But my project also intersects with another strand of dialogical interpreters of Rom 1–3 that I must address here at the outset as it will come into play as I move beyond Campbell's particular speech-in-character thesis.

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[62] Not to mention that Paul's other comments regarding Jews (baptized or not) should already be sufficient to warrant cautioned nuance (e.g., 1 Cor 7:18; 9:20; 10:32; Gal 2:7–9; Rom 11).

In 2003, Runar M. Thorsteinsson published his doctoral dissertation, *Paul's Interlocutor in Romans 2: Function and Identity in the Context of Ancient Epistolography*, wherein he argues that Paul's interlocutor in Rom 2 is a gentile proselyte to Judaism.[63] Unfortunately, this work did not initially seem to make so much as a ripple across Pauline scholarship. It was not the case that scholars debunked Thorsteinsson's claims; they simply did not seem to be aware of its existence. Recently, however, a sizeable group of Pauline scholars have awakened the once-dormant work of Thorsteinsson and have expanded constructively upon his original thesis.[64] My project will also extend the valuable contribution of Thorsteinsson's work in the field of Pauline studies (even if critiquing some of his claims and that of his followers along the way). I will suggest two closely related claims: (1) that the specific set of opponents represented by Paul's interlocutor who are proclaiming their own particular program of gentile proselytism including male circumcision and (2) these opponents are most plausibly proselytes themselves who are much influenced by the tradition surrounding Philo. I think the speech-in-character thesis offered for 1:18–32 corroborates this proselyte-interlocutor thesis helpfully.

The present work takes up the streams of thought represented in Campbell and Thorsteinsson. Taken together, we see that the interlocutor first introduced through speech-in-character in 1:18-32 is the proselyte in question. As opposed to previous

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[63] Thorsteinsson, *Paul's Interlocutor*.

[64] Rafael Rodríguez and Matthew Thiessen, eds., *The So-Called Jew in Paul's Letter to the Romans* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2016); Matthew Thiessen, "Paul's Argument against Gentile Circumcision in Romans 2:17-29," *NovT* 56 (2014): 373–91; Rodríguez, *If You Call*.

attempts at identifying the person "who calls [him]self a Jew" in 2:17, I suspect that this person is neither a generic Jew representing "the Jew" or Judaism *per se* (as is conventional),[65] nor a messianic Jew (as Campbell thinks),[66] nor is he simply a generic proselyte (as Thorsteinsson and the contributors to *The So-Called Jew* maintain). Rather, I will argue that the interlocutor can be best described as a *Philonic* proselyte. This identification will emerge from the beliefs and practices mentioned within the material in Rom 1:18–3:20 that clash with Paul's statements elsewhere in Romans and his other letters. This material, I will argue, belongs to Paul's interlocutor on account of the ancient reading criterion of appropriateness.[67] Before moving on though, I need to immediately qualify what I mean by Philonic.

I do not intend to make the ambitious claim that Paul's proselyte interlocutor was a gentile disciple of Philo of Alexandria as that seems beyond the horizon of what is provable. I seek only to show that the theological profile that emerges from Rom 1:18–2:29 best, and perhaps only, matches the unique set of beliefs found comprehensively in Philo's corpus. Amongst all the extant Jewish sources, the teaching of Paul's interlocutor

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[65] Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 20, 108; Byrne, *Romans*, 80; Moo, *Romans*, 126; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 297; Elliott, *The Rhetoric of Romans: Argumentative Constraint and Strategy and Paul's Dialogue with Judaism*, 127; Stowers, *Rereading*, 143–45; Elliott and Stowers actually think there are two interlocutors addressed in Rom 2 (a generic person in 2:1–16 and then a Jew in 2:17–29). But postulating two separate interlocutors rather than a single interlocutor is implausible. See Thorsteinsson, *Paul's Interlocutor*, 159–64; cf. Runar M. Thorsteinsson, Matthew Thiessen, and Rafael Rodríguez, "Paul's Interlocutor in Romans: The Problem of Identification," in *The So-Called Jew in Paul's Letter to the Romans*, ed. Rafael Rodríguez and Matthew Thiessen (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2016), 1–37, esp. 24–25.

[66] This opinion can be found throughout *Deliverance*, but see especially 495–511, 545, 560.

[67] Personally, I hold to a ten letter Pauline corpus (i.e., the three pastorals I consider pseudepigraphical) as argued in Douglas A. Campbell, *Framing Paul: An Epistolary Biography* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014). For the sake of this project, however, I will assume a seven letter corpus and treat 2 Thessalonians, Ephesians, and Colossians as disputed.

finds its closes analogue in the distinctive teachings of Philo (down to certain rather peculiar words). Admittedly, there is no way to prove that the interlocutor is representing Philo let alone is a direct disciple of his. However, interlocutor seems to have been shaped significantly by that distinct Alexandrian philosophical Jewish tradition (cf. Philo, *Contempl.* 29; *Migr.* 89–90). So by *Philonic* I only mean that it matches well with the unique material that makes Philo "Philo."

Having traced the argument as well as the key scholarly conversations in which this project is situated, a summary of the chapters to follow should prove helpful.

1.2 Project Overview

Chapter 2. This chapter, building on King's earlier work, will survey the basic conventions for writing attributed speech in the rhetorical handbooks of Rhetorica ad Herennium and Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria,* and the *Progymnasmata* of Theon and Pseudo-Hermogenes. These ancient sources serve to show how unanimous and ubiquitous the conventions for speech-in-character were. More importantly, they finely articulate how a change in speaker was primarily identified through criteria of appropriateness—i.e., not through overt introductions of a new speaker or through verbs of saying, but rather by figuring out which statements were appropriate either for the main author or the character of the constructed interlocutor.

This analysis leads into a discussion of the performance cues present in a written text meant for public performance. This argument segues in turn into an analysis of relevant primary sources (especially from the Homeric *scholia*) in order to see how ancient readers were trained to detect changes in speaker by studying a text when the

original performance instructions given to the initial lector have been lost due to time or distance. That is, while a text's public performance instructions might be given orally to the public lector by its author, authors were supposed to craft their actual text with performance signals (i.e., to indicate humor, seriousness, sarcasm, or even a change in speaker) so that subsequent readers would be able to perform them accurately outside of their original settings. Finally, I will discuss a series of examples of speech-in-character that are particularly relevant for analyzing Rom 1–3. This all will provide the much-needed primary source engagement that was largely missing from Campbell's work.

Chapter 3. This chapter will offer a preliminary (re)script of Rom 1:18–32 in light of the accumulated evidence from chapter 2 and the surface cues of key textual observations from the apostrophes in 2:1, 3. These cues set up expectations for ancient readers concerning the content and style of what follows in 2:1–29. Here I will also directly address the criticisms of novelty, the verbless transition to attributed speech, and the use of γάρ in Rom 1:18.

Chapters 4–5. Chapters 2 and 3 served to situate us within the ancient rhetorical context of reading so that we can begin applying the ancient criterion of appropriateness with rigor. Chapters 4 and 5 will focus on the contents of Rom 1:18–2:29 and what does not satisfy the criterion of appropriateness with respect to Paul's voice, chapter 4 focusing on 1:18–32 and chapter 5 on 2:1–29.

Chapters 6–7. If I have successfully separated out the interlocutor's speech and views from those of Paul in chapters 4 and 5, what are we to make of this material? Is Paul arguing with an actual person (or a person who represents a school of thought), or is

this a straw man—a speech-in-caricature? In these chapters I will demonstrate that we can corroborate our findings from the previous chapters 3–5 historically. Everything argued in those chapters as contradicting Paul's thought has a fascinating correspondence with Philo's writings. Again, these views that form the other side of the constructed debate are largely unique to Philo's theology in early Judaism.

I will break this argument up by focusing on 1:18–32 in chapter 6 and then 2:1–29 in chapter 7. Thus, my procedure for chapters 4–7 is cyclical. I will go over Rom 1–2 twice in order to apply the criterion of appropriateness with respect to Paul and then with respect to Philo. To restrict repetitiveness, however, I will postpone highlighting some tensions in chapters 4 and 5 and reserve them for chapters 6 and 7 since they are better analyzed in relation with Philo (e.g., the discussion of same-sex activity is best examined at this point).

This is also where I address the question why I am appealing to Philo. I address both the concern for "parallelomania"[68] and why I am exploring Philo in depth rather than to the Wisdom of Solomon as many scholars have done previously. Romans scholars usually (and rightly) highlight the resonances between the early argument of Romans and the Wisdom of Solomon (esp. Wis 12–15).[69] And while there are similarities to be sure, there are significant differences between Romans and Wisdom of Solomon. Critically, we find these same differences between Wisdom of Solomon and Philo too where Philo

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[68] Samuel Sandmel, "Parallelomania," *JBL* 81 (1962): 1–13.
[69] Campbell helpfully catalogues these along with the secondary literature in *Deliverance*, 360–62.

"agrees" with the positions espoused in Rom 1:18–32 over against Wisdom of Solomon.[70] In the end, Philo proves to be the more "appropriate" conversation partner. I am by no means the first to observe a strong correspondence between Rom 1:18–3:8 and Philo's corpus. Commentators on these sections regularly cross-reference parallels to Philo or to other Stoic texts, especially from 1:18–32.[71] That being so, they tend not to note the full extent of the Philonic correspondences. To my knowledge the most extensive list of parallels between Romans and Philo comes from the 1996 article by Henry Chadwick, "St. Paul and Philo of Alexandria."[72] Chadwick finds so many "close Philonic parallels" in Rom 1–2 that this is the first set of examples he provides "of the more important instances" of congruence between the two writers. He states "First, the central arguments of Romans i-ii are to be found in scattered passages in Philo."[73] Hence it seems plausible to suggest that Rom 1–2 articulates major aspects of Philonic theology *in nuce.* However, I will note here one final further detail in this particular stage of argument.

An important apostrophe characterizes the interlocutor in 2:17–24. The final portion of chapter 7 will make a preliminary case for why Rom 2:17 is best understood to

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[70] For a summary of past scholarship and a nuanced interpretation see Jonathan A Linebaugh, "Announcing the Human: Rethinking the Relationship between Wisdom of Solomon 13-15 and Romans 1.18-2.11," *NTS* 57 [2011]: 214–37.). To be discussed in due course, Linebaugh rightly notes the differences between Rom 1:18–2:11 and Wis 13–15 (contra Campbell, *Deliverance*, 360), but he does not realize that these differences are exactly what we find in Philo (i.e., Philo and Rom 1:18–2:29 agree with each other against Wisdom of Solomon) and this is very significant. That is to say, the correspondence between Rom 1–3 and Wisdom of Solomon is not as tight as between Rom 1–3 and Philo.

[71] E.g., Dunn, *Romans 1–8*, ad loc.; Jewett, *Romans*, ad loc.; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, ad loc.

[72] Henry Chadwick, "St. Paul and Philo of Alexandria," *BJRL* 48 (1966): 286–307.

[73] Chadwick, "St. Paul and Philo," 292.

be addressing a proselyte. This proposal is partly dependent on the corroborating evidence set forth in my Appendix ("Two Types of Circumcision and Why This Matters for Identifying Paul's Opponents in Galatians and Philippians"). While a plausible case for the hypothesis of a proselyte interlocutor in Romans can be made on internal grounds, in Romans alone, it is further strengthened when considering the evidence regarding Paul's opponents in Galatians and Philippians. Conspicuously, these are the only other letters that share the same cluster of themes and vocabulary (i.e., circumcision, justification, Law, faith, works [of the Law], righteousness, etc.). But analyzing those two letters too at this moment would take us too far afield. My overall scripting of Rom 1–3 is not dependent upon a firm conclusion on the claim that the opponents in Galatians and Phil 3 are themselves proselytes, but I will tentatively suggest that this hypothesis allows us to make the best sense of the unique circumcision material that arises in Rom 2:25–29 and would thereby allow us to script that particular section with more confidence and precision.

Chapter 8. Once all this analysis has been completed, we will have a sufficiently accurate historical reconstruction of Paul's interlocutor and his attendant beliefs to be able to offer a final script for Romans 1:16–3:20 in this brief concluding chapter. (This concluding phase of argument will also tie up some loose ends and offer an annotated rescripting of Rom 1:16–3:20 based on the preceding analyses.)[74]

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[74]Although certain disagreements with scholars will be made clear throughout the course of this project, in the end I am defending a contingent reading of Rom 1–3 that can function constructively alongside the positions of many scholars from different Pauline "schools" so to speak: Paul's interlocutor is a proselyte (Thorsteinsson *et al.*); Paul is deeply committed to the covenant faithfulness of God (N. T.

Wright); Paul sees this commitment displayed in the faithfulness of Jesus Christ (Richard Hays); Paul thinks people sin because they are enslaved to Sin and that ethnic Israel will be saved (i.e., the Church is not a new "second," or "spiritual" Israel) (Susan Eastman, Ross Wagner, Campbell, Gaventa); there are a lot of dialogical features in Rom 1–3 that have often gone unnoticed (Stowers, Campbell, King); Rom 1:18–32 is speech-in-character (and other bits in Rom 2) (Schmeller, Porter, Campbell); Paul charges his interlocutor with transgressing the law of circumcision in the very act of getting circumcised (Rom 2:27) (Matthew Thiessen); there is a lot of non- and even anti-Pauline content in Rom 1:18–2:29 (E. P. Sanders, J. C. O'Neill, William O. Walker); there is a lot of Philonic looking content in Rom 1–3 (Henry Chadwick, Gregory Sterling). I think these theses are best coordinated such that they become mutually reinforcing.

2. Ancient Conventions and Examples of Speech-in-Character

This chapter, building at first on the analysis of King, will survey the basic conventions for identifying attributed speech (dialogues) as noted by the rhetorical handbooks of Rhetorica ad Herennium and Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria*, and the *Progymnasmata* of Theon and Pseudo-Hermogenes. But since all these texts discuss the necessity of accurate performance of speech-in-character when reading a text that contains attributed speech, going beyond what King has surveyed I will go on to discuss some evidence from ancient authors, especially from Pliny the Younger and Cicero, who emphasize the importance of performance cues in their texts that were composed for public performance. We will then also turn to an analysis of the relevant primary sources, especially from the Homeric *scholia,* in order to see how ancient readers were trained to detect certain performance features, such as a change in speaker, by simply studying a text when the original performance instructions given to the initial lector had been lost due to distance in time or space. That is, while a text's public performance instructions might be given orally to the public lector by the author, authors were supposed to encode their texts with performance signals (such as signaling a change in speaker) so that subsequent readers would be able to perform them outside of their original settings. Finally, I will discuss a series of examples of subtle instances of speech-in-character that are particularly relevant for analyzing Rom 1–3 as they demonstrate concretely many of the key performance cues for attributed speech that were identified by the more generic analyses discussed earlier.

2.1 Speech-in-Character in the Rhetorical Handbooks and Progymnasmata

Since King has already provided a thorough analysis of the relevant material in the rhetorical handbooks, Rhetorica ad Herennium and Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria*, and in the *Progymnasmata* of Theon and Pseudo-Hermogenes, reproducing his analysis here in full would be otiose.[1] We need only to appreciate the key features of speech-in-character that King documents that are present in the ancient sources consistently. I will proceed in chronological order and thus begin with the rhetorical manuals.[2]

2.1.1 Rhetorica ad Herennium (ca. 86 BCE–80 BCE)[3]

Although the author of the Rhetorica ad Herennium distinguishes between *sermocinatio* and *conformatio*, both practices apply to attributed speech.[4] When discussing *sermocinatio* the author states a crucial convention of speech-in-character no less than three times: "Dialogue [*Sermocinatio*]…consists in putting in the mouth of

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[1] For the rhetorical handbooks see King, *Speech-in-Character*, 19–37; for the *Progymnasmata* of Theon and Pseudo-Hermogenes see pp. 38–53.

[2] One might begin an analysis with the elementary *Progymnasmata* and then proceed on to the more advanced rhetorical handbooks, but the point here is not to trace the development in the curriculum, but rather to simply show how utterly ubiquitous the conventions were across several centuries and putative skill levels (e.g., "elementary" or "advanced"). The later sources corroborate that the conventions attested in the source that predates Paul (*Rhetorica ad Herennium*) were extraordinarily stable and pervasive from well before Paul's time to several centuries afterwards.

[3] Regarding the unknown authorship and date range see [Cicero], *Rhetorica Ad Herennium*, trans. Harry Caplan, LCL 403 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), vii–xiv, xxvi. All translations will come from Caplan.

[4] "[T]hough *sermocinatio* and *conformatio* overlap to a considerable degree in *ad Herennium's* presentation of speech-in-character, three differences emerge. First, both *sermocinatio* and *conformatio* involve the attribution of language, but only *conformatio* allows the attribution of behavior. Second, both *sermocinatio* and *conformatio* can attribute speech to a person, but *conformatio* further stipulates that this person, though absent, is imagined as if he or she were present. Third, only *conformatio* envisions attributing speech or behavior to non-person, inanimate, mute, or abstract things. Said otherwise, every element of *sermocinatio* can appear in *conformatio*, but *conformatio* can include elements that lie outside the scope of *sermocinatio*" (King, *Speech-in-Character*, 24).

some person language in keeping with his character" (4.55). Further, "Dialogue [*Sermocinatio*] consists in assigning to some person language which as set forth conforms with his character" (4.65). After giving a narrative example of different characters saying things to each other, the author says again, "I think that in this example the language assigned to each person was appropriate to his character—a precaution necessary to maintain in Dialogue" (4.65). Discussing *conformatio* the author writes similarly, "Personification [*conformatio*] consists in representing an absent person as present, or in making a mute thing or one lacking form articulate, and attributing to it a definite form and a language or a certain behaviour appropriate to its character" (4.66).

I will call this in what follows "the criterion of appropriateness." "Appropriateness" denotes that all attributed speech needs to be appropriate to the identity and characterization of the person (or personified object) speaking. However, this criterion implies the presence in context of some description of the character of the person or thing speaking, a phenomenon the examples given in ad Herennium demonstrate. There the author speaks of "the wise man" [4.55], "the boastful man…the envious or pompous man, or the miser, the climber, the lover, the voluptuary, the thief, the public informer" [4.65], "all the citizens, oppressed by fear" [4.65], and even of a "city of renown" [4.66]. The author elaborates—indicating the stereotyping that often resulted—that "by such delineation any one's ruling passion [or, virtue if the characterization is positive] can be brought into the open" (4.65). We can summarize the convention of appropriateness thus: if an ancient author wished to attribute speech to another person (or thing) then the author needed to identify this other speaker through

characterization and the attributed speech needed to cohere with this characterization appropriately. Beyond this, however, no formal identifying rules for speech-in-character are mentioned in ad Herennium. There are no rules about which of these things must come first or claims that attributed speech needed to be introduced by other written signals like a verb of speech or some such. One further convention is important, however.

The author of Rhetorica ad Herennium writes that voice inflection is an additional means by which to signal a change in speaker for an audience. When writing on "vocal flexibility," that is, on the various uses of "tone," the author says, "[I]f in the Statement of Facts there occur any declarations, demands, replies, or exclamations of astonishment concerning the facts we are narrating, we shall give careful attention to expressing with the voice the feelings and thoughts of each personage" (3.14). Within the criterion of appropriateness then we must also be aware of the assumed presence of the correct performance of the text in question, a practice addressed in more detail shortly.

2.1.2 Quintilian: The Orator's Education (*Institutio Oratoria*) (ca. 95-96 CE)[5]

Speech-in-character, which Quintilian calls *fictiones personarum* and προσωποποιίαι (*Inst*. 9.2.29), has three main functions:

> These both vary and animate a speech to a remarkable degree. We use them (1) to display the inner thoughts of our opponents as though they were talking to themselves (but they are credible only if we imagine them saying what it is not absurd for them to have thought!), (2) to introduce conversations between

[5] Quintilian, *The Orator's Education, Volume I: Books 1-2*, trans. Donald A. Russell, LCL 124 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 1–3. All translations will be from Russell's LCL volumes.

> ourselves and others, or of others among themselves, in a credible manner, and (3) to provide appropriate characters for words of advice, reproach, complaint, praise, or pity. (9.2.30)

Once again, we should note the emphasis on the criterion of appropriateness across all three functions. And in fact Quintilian emphasizes the importance of the criterion of appropriateness repeatedly in other contexts as well (cf. 3.8.49–51; 6.1.25–27; 11.1.39). For example, he writes that "Caesar, Cicero, and Cato will have to be assigned different ways of giving the same advice" (3.8.49). Of particular note given our interest in Paul's letter to the Romans is the primacy given to speech-in-character as a way to engage one's opponents in their absence before a third party audience ("to display the inner thoughts of our opponents," 9.2.30).

King's analysis points out further that "though Quintilian claims that speech-in-character can occur without any distinct identification of the speaker, his example fails to demonstrate the rule."[6] For at one point Quintilian states "One can even have speech without any person: 'Here camped the Dolopes, fierce Achilles here'" (9.2.37, quoting from Vergil's *Aeneid* 2.29). And it is true that the words "Here camped the Dolopes, fierce Achilles here" are not spoken by a specific individual person. But it is clear from the context in *Aen.* 2.25–28 that these otherwise anonymous quotes must be spoken by a Trojan coming out from the city to take in the devastation. So while Quintilian says attributed speech can happen "without any person" his own example is clearly a speech spoken by a person—albeit an anonymous Trojan. King therefore remarks, "the example

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[6] King, *Speech-in-Character*, 33.

[given by Quintilian] suggests that speech-in-character includes an identification of the speaker (i.e., unspecified Trojans), but it may omit a clear indication that another speaker is in fact speaking at a particular time."[7] That is, "Quintilian's example actually demonstrates another rule" than the one he said he would ostensibly demonstrate: "Quintilian references Virgil as an example of speech-in-character without any identification of the speaker" but what he actually demonstrated was that "speech-in-character can occur without any overt indication that another identified character actually begins to speak."[8] It is apparent then that speakers can be present, with discernable identities, even if their speech lacks a written introduction with a verb of saying.

Moreover, as in the Rhetorica ad Herennium, we find instructions concerning tone and inflection when reading:

> Reading remains to be discussed. In this, it is impossible, except by actual practice, to make it clear how a boy is to learn when to take a fresh breath, where to make a pause in a verse, where the sense ends or begins, when the voice is to be raised or lowered, what inflection should be given to each phrase, and what should be spoken slowly or quickly, excitedly or calmly…. Nor do I think that Prosopopoeiae, as some advise, should be pronounced in the manner of the comic stage, though there should be some inflection of the voice to distinguish them from passages in which the poet speaks in his own person. (1.8.1–2)

2.1.3 Summarizing Speech-in-Character in the Rhetorical Handbooks

Hence, although they use different terminology, and Quintilian offers further nuances, both the Rhetorica ad Herennium and he agree on the core conventions for speech-in-character: another speaker distinct from the author or main protagonist is

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[7] King, *Speech-in-Character*, 33.
[8] King, *Speech-in-Character*, 270.

identified in some way (although this might be subtle as in the quotation from *The Aenead*, which relies on an intertextual cue); the speaker is characterized (e.g., hero, coward, philosopher, etc.); and all attributed speech is then appropriate to the character of the one speaking. In essence, the determination of who is speaking is based primarily upon the specific content of what seems to be spoken by a certain distinct character applying the criterion of appropriateness. Furthermore, ancient readers of the text in question, when applying this rule, would know that they needed to vary their inflection and tone when performing the text to an audience so that the audience could hear the changes in speaker both easily and effectively. Beyond this simple set of rules, no other formal instructions concerning the order or arrangement of speech-in-character are evident. Somewhat surprisingly for modern readers, it even seems that introductory verbs of speech, which could be used to signal the presence of another character, were omitted often enough, although perhaps this should be unsurprising. Like most compositional techniques assimilated by sophisticated ancient authors, speech-in-character was not a skill they applied slavishly and rigidly in the exact manner in which they had been taught it in school. Clumsy signals of its usage were to be avoided.

We turn now to a summary of the evidence in the later *progymnasmata*.

2.1.4 Theon: *Progymnasmata* (ca. mid- to late-first century CE)[9]

There were three main stages in the ancient Greco-Roman literary-rhetorical curriculum:

> The first or elementary stage had as its goal the acquisition of basic reading and writing skills along with some arithmetic. The second or intermediate stage, typically and traditionally thought of as the province of the *grammatikos* or grammarian, focused on the close reading and explication of classical poetic texts, especially Homer, Hesiod, Euripides, and Menander…. [The] third stage focused predominantly on education in rhetoric…. [P]rose composition was the central task and, ideally, the compositions were to be orally delivered…. The most advanced compositional exercise that students engaged in at the third educational stage was declamation.[10]

The *progymnasmatic* exercises were designed to prepare the ancient student for an education in rhetoric ultimately to deliver a sophisticated declamation. Hence they "were a bridge between the second and third levels of education as well as an entrée, at level three, to declamation."[11] Since declamations "were full deliberative or forensic orations on imaginary themes, in which the speaker impersonated a specific character,"[12] it is no surprise that training in speech-in-character, along with the appropriate exercises, are found in the *Progymnasmata*. The school speeches were really nothing but speech-in-character.

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[9] George A. Kennedy, trans., *Progymnasmata: Greek Textbooks of Prose Composition and Rhetoric*, WGRW 10 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), 1; James R. Butts, "The Progymnasmata of Theon: A New Text with Translation and Commentary" (PhD diss., The Claremont Graduate School, 1987), 2–6; King, *Speech-in-Character*, 39. Some have raised objections, however, and date this to the fifth century, but I am not yet convinced. For a survey of the literature on the dating of Theon see King, *Speech-in-Character*, 38–39.

[10] Penella, "The *Progymnasmata*," 160.

[11] Penella, "The *Progymnasmata*," 161.

[12] Penella, "The *Progymnasmata*," 160–61.

Theon writes that "Speech-in-character [προσωποποιΐα] is the introduction of a person who puts forth words that are indisputably appropriate [οἰκείους] both to himself and [appropriate] to the circumstances under discussion" (115.12–14).[13] He then notes that speech-in-character is useful for consolations, exhortations, and epistles (115.20–22), and subsequently devotes a considerable amount of space (115.22–116.9) to the importance of a careful reflection on "the personality of [the] speaker" (τό... τοῦ λέγοντος πρόσωπον ὁποῖόν; 115.23). Theon also advises that the students consider various factors when crafting appropriate speaking such as the speaker's age and status, the occasion of the speech, the place of the speech, and the subject under discussion (115.24–27). "Thereafter one is ready to attempt to speak appropriate [ἁρμόττοντας] words" (115.27–28). Once again then we see here the operation of the criterion of appropriateness. Theon circles back to the same point later:

> What is more, the subjects themselves all also have a fitting expression. We may master this expression if we do not speak casually about significant subjects, nor loftily about insignificant ones, nor solemnly about paltry ones, nor faintly about fearful ones, nor boldly about shameful ones, nor extravagantly about pitiful ones. Rather, let us assign what is fitting to each subject, *aiming at the same time also at what is appropriate* [ἁρμόττοντος] *to the* [*person* {προσώπῳ}], the place, the time, the status, and each of the previously mentioned elements. (116.13–22)[14]

Although the Greek version of Theon's *Progymnasmata* cuts off suddenly in a section on law, the Armenian version preserves Theon's advice on teaching appropriate reading that

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[13] My translations throughout unless otherwise noted. Greek text from Leonhardi Spengel, ed., *Rhetores Graeci*, vol. 2 (Leipzig: Teubner, 1854). I follow the scholarly convention of referring to the Greek text of Theon's *Progymnasmata* by the page and line numbers in Spengel's edition. For another edition of the Greek with an English translation see Butts, "Progymnasmata," 444–64.

[14] Translation from Butts, "Progymnasmata," 449; emphasis mine.

coheres with his earlier advice on the appropriateness of the content in any speech-in-character:

> The teacher will describe the subject…. He will instruct him [the student] about character types; for example, a sycophant as portrayed by Demosthenes, and will point out the uses of ethos and pathos, digressions, amplifications, diminutions, and other treatments, as well as styles of expression and uses of ornaments of style.
>
> Above all, we shall accustom the student to fit voice and gestures to the subject of the speech. It is this that actualizes the art of the speech. We shall present and imagine with the greatest care all that concerns an orator: his actions, credibility, age, and status; the place where the speech was delivered, the subject it treats, and everything that contributes to the feeling that the speech actually concerns us as we read it aloud. (102P–103P)[15]

Hence, while Theon expands the criterion of appropriateness to include things like suitability to the topic being discussed and suitability to the occasion, he clearly operates with the same basic rule detected in the rhetorical manuals above. Moreover, as in the rhetorical handbooks, there are no formal structures of organization mentioned or stipulations present that introductory verbs of speaking were necessary to signal the presence of speech-in-character. But there is one further interesting detail that is worth mentioning.

In the last section of his *Progrymnasmata*, Theon comments on "contradiction" (ἀντίρρησις), namely, a "discourse that attacks the credibility of another discourse" (111P) by various means:[16]

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[15] The translations from these Armenian sections come from Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, here 67. The reference system for these sections refers to the page number in Michel Patillon and Giancarlo Bolognesi, eds., *Aelius Théon: Progymnasmata* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2002).

[16] Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, 72.

> Try to show that the other discourse is obscure, impossible, incredible, deceitful, or inadequate in thought or expression; or, conversely, redundant or lacking vigor, or confused; or that the discourse is contradictory, or departs from what is legal, or is unseemly or inexpedient or inopportune; or that the speaker spoke as much against as for himself—what some call turning his argument against himself—or, that the rules of good arrangement are violated, or that the speech was ineffectively delivered. (111P–112P)[17]

The argumentative tactic described here that will turn out to be relevant for my later suggested reading of Romans 1–3 is the recommendation to "turn [the speaker's] argument against himself." The potential usefulness of the practice of speech-in-character within this tactic hardly needs to be pointed out.

2.1.5 Pseudo-Hermogenes: *Progymnasmata* (second–fourth century CE)[18]

Hermogenes' *Progymnasmata*[19] demonstrates how stable the core conventions for speech-in-character were over the centuries.[20] Even though Hermogenes distinguishes between three types of attributed speech—ἠθοποιία is speech attributed to a living person, προσωποποιία is speech attributed to a personified object, and εἰδωλοποιία is speech attributed to a dead person—the criterion of appropriateness is applied to each type (20.7–18).[21] In every case there ought to be "an imitation [μίμησις] of the character [ἤθους] of the person set forth" (20.7–8). And again: "everywhere you will safeguard

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[17] Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, 72.

[18] Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, 73.

[19] Although the authorship is unknown (Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, 73), I will refer to the author as Hermogenes for convenience.

[20] The later *Progymnasmata* of Aphthonius (ca. fourth–fifth century CE) (see Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, 115–17) and Nicolaus (ca. late fifth century CE) (*Progymnasmata*, 164–66) continue to display this stability.

[21] The citations of Hermogenes will follow the page and line number in Hugo Rabe, ed., *Hermogenis Opera*, Rhetores Graeci VI (Leipzig: Teubner, 1913) Translations are mine unless otherwise noted.

[σώσεις] what is obviously fitting and appropriate [τό οἰχεῖον πρέπον] for the persons and occasions set forth" (21.6–7). This remains the case when speech is being attributed to one or more persons or to objects at the same time, and even when someone is speaking to themselves and thus speaking from two different points of view or "characters" so to speak (20.24–21.5). Hermogenes is explicit that the identity and character of the speaker needed to be clear so that speech could be attributed to that person's character in an obvious and appropriate manner. He does not talk about reading so any discussion of performative cues is understandably absent. More usefully, as with the rhetorical handbooks, there are no formal structures of organization mentioned or stipulations that introductory verbs of speaking were necessary to signal the presence of the technique.

Thus, the *Progymnasmata* essentially prescribe the same advice and techniques for speech-in-character. And they all boil down to the criterion of appropriateness-characterization and then the attribution of speech that is appropriate to that character.

2.2 Performance

The sources are unanimous that the author of any instance of speech-in-character needs to observe the criterion of appropriateness. This means that the new speaker needs to be identified in some way, characterized, and the attributed speech needs to be appropriate to the character and occasion of that speaker. Further, any readers of this text were supposed to cue their audiences that there had been a change in speaker by changing their voices to reflect this different character (e.g., changing their inflection and tone;

Rhet. Her. 3.14; Quintilian, *Inst.* 9.2.34; Theon, *Progymnasmata*, 102P–103P).[22] Indeed, being duly sensitive to a change in speaker as either a performer of a text or a listener was simply a part of a basic ancient "elementary education."[23]

Stowers notes how on account of the fact that speech-in-character often occurs without an overt introductory formula (e.g. a verb of speaking), part of "the basic education of boys in reading and writing" was to be "trained to 'read' for—meaning to listen for—speech according to character, and they composing their writings accordingly."[24] This sensitivity is explicitly evidenced in various ancient authors like Justin Martyr, for instance, who takes it for granted that his audience can discern transitions to speeches from another character (ἀπὸ προσώπου) (e.g., *1 Apol.* 36.1–2, 38; 38.1–6). It will be instructive then to introduce a more detailed account of ancient performative practices before we turn to the analysis of Paul's letter to the Romans bearing in mind that it too would have been publicly performed by ancient readers for ancient listeners. The realization that performative cues would have been present during this letter's reception in Rome will greatly assist our later consideration of the possible presence in Paul's text of speech-in-character, along with the question of its precise extent.[25]

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[22] Cf. Stowers, "Apostrophe," 356; Stanley K. Stowers, *A Rereading of Romans: Justice, Jews, and Gentiles* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 18.

[23] "The identification of the speaking voice and characters formed another aspect of this elementary education in reading. In every passage the student had to ask, 'Who is speaking?'" (Stowers, *Rereading*, 18; cf. 19). Cf. "These readers or better, hearers, were equipped with the largely oral/aural skills to make sense of the ancient texts" (idem, "Apostrophe," 356).

[24] Stowers, "Apostrophe," 354.

[25] Once we keep in mind that epistles such as Romans were meant to be performed to an audience, it is no longer surprising to consider that changes in speaker within the text would be signaled to its

2.2.1 The Oral Performance of Paul's Epistles

The fact of orality in Paul's time and hence the reality of the oral performance of Paul's epistles probably needs to be taken more seriously by Pauline exegetes than it often is.[26] Pieter J. J. Botha comments:

> While many scholars have turned to Graeco-Roman rhetoric for help in interpreting Paul's letter (with worthwhile results), the oral, *performative* aspect of ancient communication, and specifically ancient rhetoric, has been neglected. Speech and rhetoric cannot be separated in Hellenistic culture. Their rhetorical principles aimed specifically at the delivery of speech, at oral performance, and, consequently, *also* at creating successful communication through bodily presence.[27]

Epistles, especially those addressed to more than one addressee, were considered to be scripts for a public speech (cf. Cicero, *Att*. 8.14.1; 9.10.1; 12.53; Seneca *Ep.* 75.1). Thus, when examining Romans, Paul's longest letter, which arguably "has more oratorical

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audiences in part through changes in vocal inflection, tone, and gestures by its lectors. Indeed, detecting speech-in-character by the original audience would be mediated through the letter readers who would be inflecting their voices so that the audience could quite easily hear the shift from one speaker to another. "The problem," as Stowers highlights, "is with later and modern readers" since "Ancient readers were accustomed…to read/hear προσωποποιία and related techniques, but…we are not" ("Apostrophe," 356). I would nuance this point. Although many NT scholars are not trained to detect (let alone look for) "προσωποποιία and related techniques" when reading the NT, at least for those within a modern Western cultural context, we do this intuitively in our own cultural context. For example, when watching stand-up comedians the practice of speech-in-character can be observed repeatedly where the comedian attributes speech to another person or thing without explicit introduction or constantly repeating verbs of speech ("then they said….then I said….then they said…"), but rather signals speech-in-character purely through inflection. NT scholars only need to be aware that the same phenomenon took place in ancient times and that certain texts were scripted speeches meant to be performed orally. Thus, the concept that verbs of speech are often missing or another speaker begins to speak before they are explicitly introduced is actually not all that foreign to modern NT scholars. That said, the case for speech-in-character that I will argue for does not depend on these types of cues. The necessary and sufficient signals for its detection are in the text itself. I am providing this discussion to give a more fully rounded historical context for this sort of ancient textual phenomenon and to allay certain criticisms made against Campbell's thesis.

[26] Pieter J. J. Botha, "The Verbal Art of the Pauline Letters: Rhetoric, Performance and Presence," in *Rhetoric and the New Testament: Essays from the 1992 Heidelberg Conference*, ed. Stanley E. Porter and Thomas H. Olbricht, JSNTSup 90 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 409–28; E. Randolph Richards, *Paul and First-Century Letter Writing : Secretaries, Composition, and Collection* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 202; Stowers, "Apostrophe," 352–56.

[27] Botha, "Verbal Art," 415; his emphasis.

rhetoric than Paul's other letters,"[28] historical critical interpretation essentially requires us to understand ancient performative conventions.

Botha's essay succinctly captures and summarizes why this is necessary:

> The point of highlighting this side of ancient rhetoric is to emphasize the performative, dynamic essence of the ancient communication…. We should imagine the experience of participating in the *event* of performing that 'text'. [Appreciating that] questions of meaning in orally based communicative events cannot be settled in terms of composition alone. The performance of a text, or its potential performance must be kept in mind.[29]

Taking this context of oral performance seriously means that we realize in turn that "Paul's dictation of his letters was, in all probability, also a coaching of the letter carriers" who may have "also participated in the reading and performing of these writings."[30] (And even if the letter carrier did not actually read (i.e. perform) the letter, as Botha notes, "[t]he carrier of the letter would most likely have seen to it that it be read like Paul wanted it to be read."[31])

2.2.2 Preparing a Text and Its Reader for Public Performance

In a little more detail—and as noted previously in specific relation to the articulation of speech-in-character—we should now simply appreciate that ancient lectors were trained to make shifts in subject or speaker more easily discernable through vocal inflection and gestures (*Rhet. Her*. 3.14; Quintilian, *Inst.* 9.2.34; Theon, *Progymnasmata*,

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[28] Richards, *Paul*, 205, cf. 206.
[29] Botha, "Verbal Art," 419; his emphasis.
[30] Botha, "Verbal Art," 419.
[31] Botha, "Verbal Art," 417; cf. J. Ross Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News: Isaiah and Paul in Concert in the Letter to the Romans* (Boston: Brill, 2003), 38; Peter M. Head, "Named Letter-Carriers among the Oxyrhynchus Papyri," *JSNT* 31 (2009): 279–99.

102P–103P).[32] This is why ancient readers "literally recited, with vocal and bodily gestures, the text which they usually memorized beforehand."[33]

We learn from Pliny the Younger just how important readers were.[34] Lamenting the recent illness that effected his reader's ability to speak, Pliny writes:

> I had an easy journey, apart from the fact that some of my people were taken ill in the intense heat. Indeed, my reader Encolpius (the one who is our joy for work or play) found the dust so irritating to his throat that he spat blood, and it will be a sad blow to him and a great loss to me if this makes him unfit for his services to literature when they are his main recommendation. Who else will read and appreciate my efforts or hold my attention as he does? (*Ep*. 8.1.1–3)[35]

Pliny spends an entire letter to Socius Sencio talking about the important role of reading in the public square, bemoaning the fact that many people do not join the audience, or come late, or leave early (*Ep.* 1.13). Equally significantly, in a letter to Voconius Romanus, he asks for help in editing a speech partly so that the appointed lector will be able to perform it effectively:

> To Voconius Romanus
>
> I am sending at your request the text of the speech in which I recently expressed my thanks to our noble Emperor for my consulship;…. I should like you to bear in mind that the nobility of the theme brings its own difficulties. In other speeches there is novelty, if nothing else, to hold the attention of the reader, but here everything is common knowledge and has been said before; consequently the reader has time and freedom to concentrate on the delivery without distractions, and if he forms his opinion by this alone he is not easily satisfied. I would prefer him to give equal attention to the arrangement, the transitions and figures of speech, for, although a powerful imagination and the gift of forceful expression

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[32] Cf. Stowers, "Apostrophe," 356; Stowers, *Rereading*, 18.

[33] Botha, "Verbal Art," 413.

[34] The standard treatment on reading culture in antiquity is William A. Johnson, *Readers and Reading Culture in the High Roman Empire: A Study of Elite Communities* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), see esp. 32–73 on Pliny.

[35] Translations from books 8–10 throughout from Pliny the Younger, *Letters, Volume II: Books 8-10. Panegyricus*, trans. Betty Radice, LCL 59 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969).

> are sometimes to be found in the uneducated, no one can display skill in arrangement and variety of figures except the trained expert. Nor should one always be searching for the elevated and the sublime, for a speech needs to lower as well as to raise its tone: just as in a picture, light is best shown up by shadow. But there is no need for me to say this to anyone of your attainments. I ought rather to ask you to mark any alterations you think should be made, for, if I know your criticisms of some points, I shall be more ready to believe that you like the rest of the speech. (*Ep*. 3.12)[36]

In another letter Pliny admits that he is not a good reader of poetry but does well with speeches (*Ep.* 9.34). So he asks Suetonius Tranquillus if it would be better for him to just go through with the reading "however badly," or "use... one of my freedman," another sub-par reader (but slightly better than he is) to perform it for him, or have the freedman read while he (Pliny) mimes "his [the freedman's] words with low voice, eye, and gesture" even though he says "I don't believe I am any better at mime than at reading aloud" (9.34.2). We learn from this material just how important the role of the reader was for the effective performance and consequent reception and evaluation of a text, not to mention, the importance of the non-verbal communication cues associated with all performances such as facial expressions and gestures.

It is utterly unsurprisingly to learn from several other letters that whenever Pliny was supposed to perform a speech he first delivered practice performances of his texts, in part to contribute to the editing and revision process (*Ep.* 7.17; 5.3.8–11; 8.21; 9.28.3–5; cf. 9.1; 5.12; 2.19). It is worth noting in passing, moreover, that in one instance he utilizes speech-in-character to represent the views of a small group of critics (*Ep.* 7.17.5,

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[36] Translations from books 1–7 throughout from Pliny the Younger, *Letters, Volume I: Books 1-7*, trans. Betty Radice, LCL 55 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969). Cf. *Ep.* 2.5, wherein Pliny solicits written feedback again.

6).[37] They criticize his practice as a sort of attention-seeking behavior. Pliny responds to these critics by saying he does not keep publicly performing his texts but only performs readings to a close circle of specially-invited friends whom he trusts to give him honest feedback for amendments for the final public (and publishable) version, and he takes this to be the standard and common-sense practice of serious writers (cf. 7.17.13–15). None of the speeches by his critics are signaled, however, by the presence of an introductory verb or announcement or some such. The criterion of appropriateness alone is sufficient to detect the various shifts in voice.

We know that Cicero emphasized performance simply on editorial grounds in the same way. In fact, he changed the entire structure of *De republica* on account of the feedback he was given after a lector performed his first two completed books in the presence of his friend Gnaeus Sallustius (*Quint. fratr.* 25.1).[38] And we can detect just the same revision process at work when people expected their letters to be read out to a group audience (e.g., the Roman Senate, which was common, e.g., Cicero, *Fam*. 369; 370; 377.1, 3; 387.1; 390; 404).

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[37] These are set off in LCL by quotation marks: "'But it is unnecessary to read a speech already delivered.' It would be if the audience and the speech were exactly the same, and you read the speech immediately after delivery; but if you make many additions and alterations, if you invite new people along with those who heard you before, and after a certain interval, why should it be less suitable to read a speech than to publish it? 'It is difficult for a reading of a speech to be satisfactory.' That depends on the efforts of the reader and is no reason for not reading at all" (*Ep.* 7.17.5–7). Cf. *Ep.* 4.14; 5.3; 7.9.9–14.

[38] It went from being an extended dialogue taking place over nine days (each book being a day) between statesmen in earlier generations to being a conversation between himself and his brother Quintus after Sallustius's feedback (*Quint. fratr.* 25.2) to going back to a modified version of the original plan (three-day conversation, two books per day). See Cicero, *On the Republic. On the Laws.*, trans. Clinton W. Keyes, LCL 213 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1928), 2–3.

For example, Cicero received a letter from Brutus asking: "Will you be good enough to read beforehand [*prius perlegas*] the dispatch [*litteras*] I am sending to the Senate and make any alterations you think proper?" (*Fam*. 399.1).[39] We learn from Cicero, in addition, that even private letters were often read aloud (*Quint. fratr.* 1.45), hence we can safely surmise that Cicero had Brutus's letter read aloud so that he could offer any suggestions accordingly. In a similar vein, Trebatius asked Cicero to tear up a certain letter of his (i.e., Trebatius's) because he did not feel it was worthy to be "read out at a public meeting" (*Fam.* 37.4).[40] Cicero informed Trebatius that he disagreed and thought it was worthy, but nevertheless complied and tore it up.

It is clear, then, that letters intended for public performance and publication are best understood in certain respects as "scripts" analogous to the scripts of our modern dramas, plays, and shows (cf. Cicero, *Att*. 8.14.1; 9.10.1; 12.53; Seneca *Ep.* 75.1), that have been carefully crafted, like ancient speeches, often going through several revisions and drafts, along with practice performances (readings), before being approved by the author for final publication and performance. It is indubitable, moreover, that these scripts were to be orally performed and hence with all the concomitant body language and prosody necessary for the audience to follow any transitions (e.g., of subject or different "persons" speaking). And this performance had itself been carefully considered

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[39] Translation from Cicero, *Letters to Friends, Volume III: Letters 281-435*, trans. D. R. Shackleton Bailey, LCL 230 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001). Cf. *Fam.* 387.1 where it appears Cassius wants Cicero to read his (Cassius's) letter first before it is delivered to the Senate.

[40] Translation from Cicero, *Letters to Friends, Volume I: Letters 1-113*, trans. D. R. Shackleton Bailey, LCL 205 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001).

and either practiced or coached by the author, or even by those better than the author at this particular skill. (Not everyone is a good actor [e.g., Pliny, *Ep.* 9.34].)

This data accords with Randolph Richards's conclusions about the process of crafting a letter in consultation with co-authors, friends, and a secretary. Richards is "confident" that each of Paul's letters went through an initial draft and "at least one revision" before a final draft.[41] Furthermore, what happened between these initial drafts and their revision must have included various practice performances among Paul's close associates, or perhaps even the gathered church in the location where Paul was writing from.[42] These performances would then have informed the letter's bearers. So, Richards notes, since Paul "fully expected his letters to be read publicly" (1 Thess 5:27; cf. Col 4:16)[43] he probably "chose carriers who could read his letter effectively."[44] "An informed carrier provided additional information and could comment and expound upon the letter. It was advantageous to both Paul and his recipients to have an informed carrier read the letter so as to provide the proper inflections and nuances."[45] Whether Paul's letter-

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[41] Richards, *Paul*, 164. There were "a minimum of four drafts" which were "the initial draft…prepared from notes…at least one revision, the polished draft [that] was prepared for dispatch on quality papyrus and a copy written in Paul's notebook" (ibid., 164). For detail on the consultation with co-authors and the secretary and the making of initial drafts see ibid., 32–46, 59–93.

[42] Cf. Rom 16:21-23.

[43] Public forums, government proceedings (trials, senate gatherings, etc.) are obvious places for reading performances to take place, but Pliny also informs us that his uncle, Pliny the Elder, regularly had a lector during his meals (*Ep.* 3.5.12) and he himself does the same (9.36.4) (cf. Johnson, *Readers*, 43). Although Pliny is commenting on the daily habits of Roman elites, it seems to be common enough that meals were seen as a fitting setting for reading. Accordingly, since Paul's letters were for public consumption when Christians gathered together and they gathered for meals, specifically the Lord's Supper (e.g., 1 Cor 11:18–34; 10:16–17; 5:7–8, 11; cf. 2 Thess 3:10), it seems likely that the particular "public" setting for Paul's letters was while everyone was seated during or after the common meal.

[44] Richards, *Paul*, 202.

[45] Richards, *Paul*, 202.

carriers were the actual readers is difficult to judge.[46] But even if the letter carrier did not read (i.e. perform) the letter, as Botha notes, "The carrier of the letter would most likely have seen to it that it be read like Paul wanted it to be read."[47] Hence Cicero comments on the many interactions that took place between letter writers and their couriers (e.g., *Quint. fratr.* 27.6; cf. *Fam*. 213.2; 214.1–2). It does appear that some pieces of mail were somewhat trivial and the carriers are relatively unknown to the authors (e.g., *Quint. fratr.* 21.8; *Fam*. 92.2; 214.1–2). But when wishing to send a document of great importance (in this case a portion of "the epic of Caesar"), Cicero tells his brother Quintus that he is waiting to send it because "I am looking for a trustworthy courier [*locupletem tabellarium*]" (*Quint. fratr.* 27.6; cf. *Fam.* 144.2).[48]

Accordingly, Paul would at least have been able to entrust his letter carriers, if they were not suitably trained for public reading or performance, with the responsibility of coaching the lector, if this person was among the recipients of the letter, with the proper inflections, intonations, gestures, and changes of voice, to memorize before delivering and performing the letter publicly to its intended audience. This is especially the case for Romans, which is Paul's longest and most ornate letter. Moreover, this letter contains a named letter carrier, Phoebe, along with her personal recommendation from Paul (Rom 16:1–2), all of which indicates her important communicative role as Peter

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[46] Head, "Named Letter-Carriers," 297.

[47] Botha, "Verbal Art," 417.

[48] Translation and Latin from Cicero, *Letters to Quintus and Brutus. Letter Fragments. Letter to Octavian. Invectives.*, trans. D. R. Shackleton Bailey, LCL 462 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002). This point on the necessity of a trustworthy letter carrier is further corroborated by the evidence in the Oxyrhynchus Papyri curated in Head, "Named Letter-Carriers," 283–84.

Head has demonstrated.[49] The most likely function for Phoebe is that she would "have an important role in the communication process, in supplementing verbally material that appears in written form in the letter, [and] continuing or extending the conversation of the letter."[50]

This is not to make the simplistic judgment that Romans is the most important letter because it is the longest we have preserved from Paul, but it is to claim that its sheer verbosity necessarily means that Paul thought that it was a significant piece of writing and would have entailed careful performative coaching. The logistics itself make it his most time-consuming and costly letter.[51] By way of comparison, Cicero's longest letter is 2,530 words and his average number of words per letter is 295. Seneca's longest letter is 4,134 words and his average 995. Paul's longest letter, namely, Romans is 7,114 words,[52] and his average word count is 2,495—so his average is almost the length of Cicero's longest letter. We therefore have no reason to doubt that Romans, Paul's costliest, longest, and most rhetorically florid letter, was crafted and sent with the utmost care and consideration. It was doubtless dispatched with detailed reading instructions for Phoebe (Rom 16:1–2) at the very least to instruct the various lectors at each house church in Rome for their performance (16:3–16).[53] Regardless of who actually performed the

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[49] Head, "Named Letter-Carriers," 285–87, 296–98.
[50] Head, "Named Letter-Carriers," 288–89; cf. 296.
[51] It would have cost about $2,275 in modern terms (Richards, *Paul*, 169).
[52] Richards, *Paul*, 163.
[53] Head is dubious about the letter-carrier being the reader (Head, "Named Letter-Carriers," 297), but whether Phoebe actually performed the letter is immaterial to this point. Given all the evidence I have presented and what he has collected from Oxyrhynchus, the bare minimum that we can establish with as much certainty as anything else is that the carrier, as part of their "important role in continuing or supplementing the…written letter" (ibid., 296), would have been entrusted and equipped with the necessary

letter, Phoebe would have functioned as the "personal mediator of Paul's authoritative instruction…and as the earliest interpreter of the individual letter."[54]

In short, any suspicion that the initial recipients of Romans would have been incapable of detecting instances of speech-in-character that were not overtly introduced in the text by a verb of speaking or some such is misplaced.[55] By all accounts Paul's original audience for Romans would have been prepared in general for such a phenomenon culturally speaking, since this was a basic practice within their education and their aural culture. And they would have been cued specifically by Phoebe and the chosen lector for this specific occasion to pick up on any cues of this nature suggesting the presence of speech-in-character.

2.3 Performance Cues: The Challenge of Subtly-Signaled Instances of Speech-in-Character

But precisely because *later* readers of a text were *not* directly cued by an author-coached lector to detect speech-in-character, rather understandable challenges could arise. This is certainly the case for Paul, whose occasional letters were collected and published in circulation well after their composition—and probably after his death—and then made their way into the church's canon. There they have been read repeatedly for

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performative information to pass on to the lector since they (the currier) were entrusted with a letter that is to be publicly read and distributed.

[54] Head, "Named Letter-Carriers," 298. The original quote had the plural "mediators" and "interpreters," but I made them singular since I was only referring to Phoebe while Head is referring to all of Paul's letter-carriers.

[55] E.g., "Even if we grant Campbell his scenario, how were the Romans, to most of whom Paul was unknown, to identify which lines were the Teachers' and which were Paul's?" Beverly Roberts Gaventa, "Rescue Mission," *ChrCent* 127 (2010): 36; cf. Robin Griffith-Jones, "Beyond Reasonable Hope of Recognition? *Prosōpopoeia* in Romans 1:18-3:8," in *Beyond Old and New Perspectives on Paul: Reflections on the Work of Douglas Campbell*, ed. Chris Tilling (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2014), 162.

centuries with little to no reference to their original circumstances and certainly having long lost any performative instructions or cues from the original carriers and lectors. Instances of speech-in-character could thereby have slipped undetected into their interpretative history—these oversights then perhaps being intertwined with doctrinal positions and so defended vociferously.

But ancient authors faced very similar challenges in relation to texts that had lost their original performative and situational cues. We see this as ancient grammarians wrestled with and taught from the texts of Homer (although not just in that corpus). Homer's style was thought to be the gold standard for ancient writing and his technique of on occasion suddenly and subtly gliding into a verbless transition to speech-in-character was considered "sublime" technique that ought to be imitated (cf. Ps-Longinus, [*Subl.*] 27.1). But this could create challenges for later readers. Hence ancient grammarians developed a range of techniques for detecting speech-in-character in Homer.

2.3.1 Homeric *Scholia*: Detecting Verbless Transitions to Speech-in-Character

The insights of learned ancient readers of Homer are preserved in the *scholia,*[56] which detail two major textual signals suggesting the presence of speech-in-character in the absence of an overt verbal announcement and the still more obvious absence of original performative cues: (a) διαφωνία (contradiction), which is solved by the

[56] The Homeric *scholia* refers to the marginal comments (often explanatory) on manuscripts of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. The word "scholia" comes from σχόλιον, "interpretation," "comment" (LSJ, s.v. "σχόλιον").

interpretive principle of λύσις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου (i.e., the application of the key criterion of appropriateness to the text's suggestion that another voice is present); and (b) the presence of a capping formula, which marks the end, not the beginning, of a verbless transition to speech-in-character. Both of these signals will prove critical for the later analysis of Romans.

In a little more detail: although it is not possible to identify with precision who created each of the comments, René Nünlist argues that Aristarchus of Samothrace, the renowned Homeric scholar and grammarian (216 BCE–144 BCE),[57] is most probably responsible "for the origin of these notes" and hence for the origin of the genre more broadly.[58] Nünlist's study of the scholia includes a set of instances when "the beginning of the speech is not expressly marked[59] by a speech introduction"[60] (and it is interesting to note immediately that these examples from the Homeric Scholia precede the handbooks and *Progymnasmata* examined above and so prove that speech-in-character was already widely recognized by ancient readers). Some of the scholia note that even

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[57] Francesca Schironi, *The Best of the Grammarians: Aristarchus of Samothrace on the* Iliad (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2018), 5.

[58] René Nünlist, *The Ancient Critic at Work: Terms and Concepts of Literary Criticism in Greek Scholia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 103–4, here 103.

[59] Rather than stating that these are "unmarked" as Nünlist writes, I prefer to use the term "verbless" or the phrase "without a verb of saying" because it will be my contention throughout that these transitions are in fact signaled and thus marked. But they are signaled by rhetorical features other than verbs of saying or another kind of speech introduction. The term "unmarked" may leave the impression that there are no signals in the text, but that is to mistake a verb of saying as the only way to "mark" a transition to attributed speech. What the *scholia* and the following examples demonstrate are that these transitions are actually marked and signaled by other rhetorical features present in the text itself.

[60] Nünlist, *Ancient Critic*, 103. "There are in total seven passages in the *Iliad* which are explicitly interpreted in these terms as transition from narrator-text to speech" (ibid., 102): schol. bT *Il*. 1.17 *ex*., bT *Il*. 4.303*b ex*., bT *Il*. 6.45–6 *ex*., A *Il*. 15.346 *Nic*., T *Il.* 15.425–6 *ex*., A *Il*. 23.855*a Ariston*., bT *Il.* 23.855*b ex*. (ibid., 102n38).

though the verb λέγω is not used to introduce a transition to speech-in-character, this has nevertheless occurred (e.g., schol. bT *Il*. 23.855*b ex.*, bT *Il.* 15.347*a ex*.). "Ancient commentators single them [i.e., "sudden transitions"] out and explain them by means of the phrase μεταβαίνειν ἀπὸ τοῦ διηγηματικοῦ ἐπὶ τὸ μιμητικόν."[61] The phrase technically means "to go over from narrative to imitation [of speech]" and seems to have developed because the transition typically occurs in Homer between narrative and speech. "But," Nünlist highlights, "the phrase seems to have acquired the meaning 'unmarked transition to speech' independent of the narrative level at which it occurs" since it is also used when the transition occurs from one speaker to another without any intervening narrative or verb of saying (e.g., schol. Hes. *Th*. 75; schol. A *Il.* 16.203*a Ariston*).[62]

It is worth noting in passing that Pseudo-Longinus confirms these theoretical observations on this particular type of transition to speech-in-character in his treatise *De sublimitate*:

> Again sometimes a writer, while speaking about a person suddenly [ἐξαίφνης] turns and changes into the person himself. A figure of this kind is a sort of outbreak of emotion:
>
> > Hector lifted his voice and cried afar to the Trojans
> > To rush back now to the galleys and leave the blood-spattered booty.
> > Whomsoever I see of his own will afar from the galleys,
> > Death for him there will I plan. [*Il*. 15.346–349]
>
> There the poet has assigned the narrative to himself as his proper share, and then suddenly [ἐξαίφνης] without any warning [οὐδὲν προδηλώσας] attached the abrupt [ἀπότομον] threat to the angry champion. To insert "Hector said so and so"

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[61] Nünlist, *Ancient Critic*, 103.

[62] Nünlist, *Ancient Critic*, 105–6, here 106. Cf. Dionysius of Halicarnassus who, when commenting on Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War*, 5.86–87, highlights the verbless transition between speeches (*Thuc*. 38).

> would have been frigid [ἐψύχετο]. As it is, the change of construction [ἡ τοῦ λόγου μετάβασις] has suddenly [ἄφνω] run ahead of the change of speaker [μεταβαίνοντα]. ([*Subl.*] 27.1)[63]

Pseudo-Longinus offers another example of "immediate change from character to character" (εὐθὺς…μεταβαίνειν ἐκ προσώπων εἰς πρόσωπα, [*Subl.*] 27.2; my translation) from Hecataeus.[64] This serves to show how "Ps-Longinus understands this [i.e., a sudden verbless change in speaker] as a recognized figure of speech that makes the writing more sublime, i.e., stylistically superior."[65] The ancient author's comments confirm for us that μεταβαίνειν and its associated clause is the technical phrase ancient grammarians often used to name these sudden verbless changes in speaker, but he adds the information that the rationale for these shifts was a sense of stylistic superiority that would have been disrupted by a more overt signal. To put things from the other end of the phenomenon; the inclusion of a verb or a more explicit introduction of a speaker is sometimes gauche or clumsy.

This "solution" now links hands directly with the key criterion for the composition and performance of speech-in-character detected above in reliance on King's research. The rhetorical handbooks and *Progymnasmata* state that appropriateness is the

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[63] Greek and translation from W. Hamilton Fyfe, trans., "Longinus, On the Sublime," in *Aristotle, Longinus, Demetrius. Poetics. Longinus: On the Sublime. Demetrius: On Style*, LCL 199 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995).

[64] "As it is, the change of construction has suddenly run ahead of the change of speaker. So this figure is useful, when a sudden crisis will not let the writer wait, and forces him to change at once from one character to another. There is an instance in Hecataeus: 'Ceyx took this ill and immediately bade the descendants be gone. For I cannot help you. So to prevent perishing yourselves and hurting me, away with you to some other people'" ([*Subl.*] 27.2).

[65] Stowers, "Apostrophe," 355.

critical criterion. The speech should be written in a consistent, identifiable character that is obviously going to be different from the author's point of view. The detection of "contradictions in a text," then, complements this criterion exactly by showing how these tensions are present "only because the speakers are not identical."[66] That is, when reading a text that has a dialogical context, whether embedded in a narrative or otherwise, such contradictions signal to the later reader that a transition in speaker has taken place at some point regardless of whether a verb of saying is present or not. The voice of a new character is present which generates these tensions.

Porphyry (ca. third century CE) refers to this principle "by the expression λύσις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου (lit. 'solution from the character')."[67] But even though "[t]he expression seems to originate with Porphyry... the principle is at least as old as Aristotle (e.g., fr. 146 Rose)."[68] It is "found in the [rest of the] Homeric scholia and elsewhere" and is probably present in Aristarchus.[69] (The evidence that this principle is utilized by Aristarchus is helpfully collected by Schironi.[70]) Aristarchus does not use the word λύσις but he uses the rest of the phrase (ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου) when he discusses detecting changes in speaker. And his scholia constantly appeal to what is being said from the poet's

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[66] Nünlist, *Ancient Critic*, 116.

[67] Nünlist, *Ancient Critic*, 116.; For Porphyry's use of the expression λύσις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου see Hermannus Schrader, ed., *Porphyrii, Quastionum Homericarum ad Iliadem pertinentium reliquias*, 2 vols. (Leipzig: Teubner, 1880), index s.v. "solutio ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου."

[68] Nünlist, *Ancient Critic*, 116n2.

[69] James J. O'Hara, *Death and the Optimistic Prophecy in Vergil's* Aeneid (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 123.

[70] Schironi, *Best*, 510–18.

persona (ἐκ τοῦ ἰδίου/ποιητικοῦ προσώπου) as against what is distinctly different and so said from a character's ("hero's") persona (ἐκ τοῦ ἡρωϊκοῦ προσώπου).

Porphyry provides a concise explanation of this principle of detection:

> No wonder [there are seeming contradictions] when in Homer different things [ἐναντία] are said by different voices [ὑπὸ διαφόρων φωνῶν]. Whatever is said by the poet from his own character [ἐξ ἰδίου προσώπου] should be consistent and not contradictory [μὴ ἐναντία]. All the words/ideas he attributes to the characters are not his, but are understood as being said by the speakers. This often leads to an (apparent) contradiction [διαφωνίαν], as in the present case. (*Quaest. hom.* 6.265)[71]

In short, Porphyry views speech-in-character as the solution (λύσις) to detected contradictions (διαφωνία) in a text. We have no way of knowing whether Porphyry was the first person to use the full phrase λύσις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου, but regardless, it is clear that this technique was widespread and well-known as far back as Aristarchus if not as Aristotle.

Stowers summarizes this material well:

> One solution to contradictions and anomalies in the text was by character (λύσις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου)…. Instances in which the poet or speaker seems to contradict himself or speak out of character may mean that the words have been attributed to the wrong person. Thus the grammarians speak much about the appropriateness of words to the person (ἁρμόζειν τῷ προσώπῳ). The reader and critic determine who is speaking by criteria of appropriateness. Do the words fit the moral habits and inner dispositions (*ēthē, ēthos*) of a person or type of person? Do the words reflect the individual's peculiar history (*idiōma*)? Are the words worthy of a particular situation in life (*axion*)? Does the subject matter fit the person? Above all, the reader must look carefully for changes of speaker (*enallagē/metabolē*), which are often signaled by dissonance in relation to preceding *speech* (*diaphōnia*). The discussions of the grammarians reveal not only the use of a powerful analytical tool but also the degree to which an understanding of *prosōpopoiia* [speech-in-

[71] Slightly modified translation from Nünlist, *Ancient Critic*, 116; Greek text from Schrader, *Porphyrii*, 100 (lines 4-9).

> character] was essential to ancient reading and why it had such a basic place in the schools.[72]

These discernment skills were in fact especially important for those engaged in reading and performing dramas since, as we now might expect, the changes in speaker were not always accompanied with verbs of saying.[73] Nünlist notes,

> Ancient dramatic texts were extremely laconic when it came to providing the reader with crucial information such as the identification of the various speakers, stage directions of all sorts, descriptions of the scene, etc. At an early stage readers were given little more than the bare text and were apparently expected to supply all the other pieces of information themselves by inferring them from the text.[74]

It is this paucity that led to the development of scholia in the first place. Understandably, as time went on, "readers started… to identify the speakers in the margins and between the lines" of the manuscripts.[75]

It follows that thematic "tensions" or "contradictions" (διαφωνία as Porphyry calls it) in dialogical contexts are important signals marking that a change (μεταβαίνειν) in speaker is occurring and that the contradictions are consequently to be "understood as being said by the [different] speakers" who have "different voices" (Porphyry, *Quaest. hom.* 6.265). Hence the principle of λύσις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου can be applied to distinguish the voices and speeches of "the poet[/author] on the one hand and the characters on the

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[72] Stowers, *Rereading*, 19.

[73] Nünlist, *Ancient Critic*, 338–43. I am thankful to Madison N. Pierce for directing me to this evidence and Nünlist.

[74] Nünlist, *Ancient Critic*, 338.

[75] Nünlist, *Ancient Critic*, 338.

other" (e.g., schol. A *Il.* 17.588*a Ariston*; A *Il*. 2.570*a Ariston*) and as a solution "to apparent contradictions when only characters are involved: schol. A *Il*. 6.265 *Ariston*."[76]

The scholia also add a second important tool to the interpretative challenge of detecting unperformed speech-in-character, however. In addition to applying the principle of λύσις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου, which resolves any emerging contradiction (διαφωνία), some scholia note what Nünlist calls "capping formulae" at the end of a speech.[77] This technique signals the existence of an earlier verbless transition to a new speaker (bearing in mind that ancient readers would reflect on, discuss, and read their texts many times over). Hence a scholion on Hesiod states:

> 'This is what the Muses sang': he [sc. Hesiod] made a transition from narrator-text to the speech of a character [ἀπὸ τοῦ διηγηματικοῦ μετέβη εἰς τὸ πρὸσωπον μιμητικῶς] in the style of Homer [*Il.* 4.310]: 'Thus the old man [sc. Nestor] wise in fighting from of old encouraged them.' So Hesiod too: 'This is what the Muses sang.' (schol. Hes. *Theog.* 75)[78]

(Note, the μεταβαίνειν phrase here refers not to the capping formula itself but to the fact that a capping formula signals that a verbless transition [μεταβαίνειν] to speech-in-character [τὸ πρὸσωπον μιμητικῶς] has just occurred earlier in the text.)

It is critical to appreciate that the two phrases "This is what the Muses sang" and "Thus the old man…encouraged them" in their original contexts do not introduce speeches but "are actually capping formulae, that is, they mark the end of the speech."[79]

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[76] Nünlist, *Ancient Critic*, 117, 117n6 respectively; for several examples in both the Homeric scholia and the scholia to other authors see (ibid., 116–34) and idem, "The Homeric Scholia on Focalization," *Mnemosyne* 56 (2003): 61–71.

[77] Nünlist, *Ancient Critic*, 106.

[78] Translation and Greek text from Nünlist, *Ancient Critic*, 105.

[79] Nünlist, *Ancient Critic*, 106.

In the *Iliad*, we read "he [Agamemnon] found Nestor, the clear-voiced orator of the Pylians, arraying his comrades and urging them to fight" (*Il*. 4.293–294).[80] After a section of narrative summarizing how Nestor was arranging his army (4.295–302) the text makes a subtle verbless transition to a speech by Nestor (4.303–309).[81] This transition is only absolutely explicit retrospectively, however, as it is signaled by the capping formula that immediately follows in 4.310 ("So was the old man urging them on"):

> "Neither let any man, trusting in his horsemanship and his valor, be eager to fight with the Trojans alone in front of the rest, nor yet let him draw back; for so will you be the feebler. But whatever man from his own chariot can come at a chariot of the foe, let him thrust with his spear, since it is far better so. Thus also did men of olden time lay waste cities and walls, having in their breasts intent and heart like this."
>
> So was the old man urging them on [Ὣς ὁ γέρων ὄτρυνε], having knowledge of battles from long ago. (4.303–309)

Similarly, in Hesiod's *Theogony*, the capping formula "These things, then, the Muses sang" (αὖτ' ἄρα Μοῦσαι ἄειδον, *Theog*. 75)[82] is the explicit textual signal that the previous content in §71–74 is what the Muses sang, even though the transition to this earlier material lacks any verb of speaking (or strictly speaking, in this case, a verb of singing): "He is king in the sky, holding the thunder and the blazing thunderbolt himself, since he gained victory in supremacy over his father Cronus; and he distributed well all

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[80] This and the following translations and Greek come from Homer, *Iliad, Volume I: Books 1-12.*, trans. A. T. Murray, revised by William F. Wyatt., LCL 170 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1924).

[81] LCL signals this with quotation marks, which the Greek obviously lacked.

[82] Translations and Greek text from Hesiod, *Theogony. Works and Days. Testimonia*, trans. Glenn W. Most, LCL 57 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018).

things alike to the immortals and devised their honors" (§71–74). So Nünlist offers this paraphrase of the scholion on Hesiod's *Theogony* at this point (i.e., all the clarifying glosses are his as well): "'Hesiod made an [unmarked] transition from narrator-text to speech [sc. a few lines before] <and now adds a capping formula> just as Homer…'"[83]

It might be worth noting further in this relation that quotations from other known texts can be capped as well as against announced in advance. For example, Cicero writes once: "If ever I do strike out anything worthy of my reputation, I groan to think that 'On a feathered, not on an armored body I shoot these spears [or, "arrows," "weapons"], glory is cast aside,' as Philoctetes says in Accius" (*Fam.* 192.1).[84] And Paul does much the same in Rom 2:24, delaying his reference to Scripture until the text itself has been cited: "'For the Name of God is being blasphemed among the nations because of you,' just as it has been written."

Of particular importance in this vein is the fact that the technique of apostrophe can function both to cap the end of a speech and to introduce its speaker. The term ἀποστροφή simply means to "turn away" and in ancient grammatical contexts it can refer to at least eight different phenomena.[85] But as Nünlist points out "Ps.Plutarch makes it clear that, in antiquity…the most common meaning of the term" refers to instances when

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[83] Nünlist, *Ancient Critic*, 106. And, as noted earlier, this unintroduced and verbless transition to speech-in-character is not only thought to normal, but "sublime" and less "frigid" because it imitates Homeric style (Pseudo-Longinus, [*Subl.*] 27.1–2).

[84] Modified translation from Cicero, *Letters to Friends, Volume II: Letters 114-280*, trans. D. R. Shackleton Bailey, LCL 216 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001). Latin: si quando aliquid dignum nostro nomine emisimus, ingemiscamus quod haec 'pinnigero, non armigero in corpore tela exerceantur,' ut ait Philoctetes apud Accium, 'abiecta gloria.'

[85] Nünlist, *Ancient Critic*, 114.

"the narrator/speaker apostrophises [i.e., addresses] a character/person" (i.e., "apostrophe proper;" henceforth simply "apostrophe"), who can then speak in his or her own voice—or who perhaps already has.[86] Schironi provides an example of when apostrophe is noted as a capping signal by a scholiast after two different instances of speech-in-character in the *Iliad*:

> [Hrd.] *Fig*. § 7: ἡ δὲ τῶν προσώπων μετάβασις ποιεῖ τὴν καλουμένην ἀποστοφήν, οἷον ʽτὸν δ᾽ἀπαμειβόμενος προσέφης Πατρόκλεις ἱππεῦ·᾽(cf. *Il*. 16.20) και, ʽἔνθα κέ τοι Μενέλαε φάνη βοιτοῖο τελεθτή᾽ (*Il*. 7.104). τὸν γὰρ περὶ αὐτοῦ λόγον ἀγεὶς εἰς τὸν πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐτράπη, τουτέστιν ἀπὸ τοῦ τρίτου προσώπου την μετάβασιν ἐπὶ τὸ δεύτερον ἐποιήσατο [The change of person produces the so-called apostrophe, for example 'answering to him you said, horseman Patroclus' (cf. *Il.* 16.20) and 'and then, Menelaus, the end of life would have appeared to you' (*Il.* 7.104). For, leaving the speech about him, he turned directly to him, that is, he made a change from the third person to the second person].[87]

In the first example from the *Iliad*, Achilles is speaking to Patroclus (*Il*.16.5–19) and Homer caps Achilles's speech by apostrophizing Patroclus in 16.20 (quoted above by the scholiast) before Patroclus responds to Achilles (16.21–45). In the second example, Homer's apostrophe addressing Menelaus (7.104, this is what the scholiast quotes) intervenes between the end of Menelaus's speech (7.96–103) and Agamemnon's response (7.109–119). While these exchanges are saturated with other types of capping formulas (some form of "thus he/they said/spoke" etc.; cf. 7.91, 92, 104, 120; 16.46, 104), the scholiast is honing in on the use of apostrophe itself as a particular type of capping signal, which makes perfect sense given the phenomenon in question. When a

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[86] Nünlist, *Ancient Critic*, 114.
[87] Schironi, *Best*, 516n73.

new speaker or speakers "speak/s" in a text, the author, or another speaker, will frequently address them directly immediately afterward.

It is worth lingering here for a moment to consider the ubiquitous presence of capping formula even for speeches that are overtly introduced and/or have a verb of saying. For example, although not an apostrophe, a capping formula signals the end of Patroclus's response to Achilles ("So he spoke in prayer" [Ὣς φάτο λισσόμενος], *Il*.16.46). These types of examples can be multiplied (cf. 16.104 when the exchanges between Achilles and Patroclus end: "Thus they spoke to one another" [Ὣς οἱ μὲν τοιαῦτα πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἀγόρευον]; cf. 7.54, 91, 92, 104, 120, which surround the example from Menelaus cited above as others finish their speeches).

It is important to note this data because it provides largely uncontestable evidence of the practice of capping a speech. And the scholiasts sometimes then go on to appeal to the presence of a capping formula (be it in this vein or as an apostrophe) to detect when a transition to speech-in-character that lacks an overt introduction or verb of speaking has occurred, as in the case of Nestor's speech in *Iliad* 4.303–309 (capping formula in 4.310).[88]

To summarize our discoveries thus far: the scholia attest to the detection of a verbless change in speaker in a text by either or both of two significant textual signals: (a) the detection of διαφωνία or contradiction (which in a certain sense is just the careful

[88] Just before Nestor's speech Homer caps a speech by Agamemnon ("So saying [Ὣς εἰπὼν], he left them," *Il*. 4. 292), which was already introduced with a verb of speaking ("At sight of these lord Agamemnon rejoiced, and he spoke and addressed them with winged words," 4.383–384).

application of the criterion of appropriateness), a puzzle resolved by the interpretive solution of detecting different voices in the text—the λύσις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου; and (b) the presence of a capping formula signaling the end of a speech, a signal that can utilize apostrophe.

2.4 Speech-in-Character—Subtle Cases

An important step forward for some modern interpreters in view of the preceding analysis of the ancient sources might be the realization that speech-in-character requires no introductory signal in terms of an explicit statement by an author that a new speaker is about to enter the discussion to say something by announcing that fact directly with a verb of speaking or some such. Although this is possible, and did often occur, an overt signal of this type—and especially if it was used too frequently—could be viewed as clumsy and inept (e.g., Ps-Longinus, [*Subl.*] 27.1–2).

So ancient authors were quite comfortable in crafting what we might call subtle transitions in speaker by a skillful use of characterization, which would provide the basis for discerning διαφωνία, and sometimes a capping formula. They could rely on performative cues to deliver this information clearly in many original settings, especially of circumstantial texts. Moreover, ancient readers were trained to detect the presence of a new speaker, even in texts that had long lost their original performative cues, by attending carefully to characterization, to any changes in tone and content that could constitute διαφωνία, and by detecting capping formulae.

Ultimately I am concerned here with the detection of subtle instances of speech-in-character in Romans 1:18–3:20. So it will be most helpful moving forward to look at

some subtle examples of ancient speech-in-character that are not overtly introduced with an introductory formula or verb of speech and so concretely exemplify the principles surveyed above. We find several clear examples of this type of "subtle" speech-in-character in the works of Teles, Epictetus, Philo and Josephus.[89]

Moreover, we should also bear a useful caveat in mind from this point onward—what classicist Craig A. Gibson calls "skills transference."[90] Gibson observes:

> although prosopopoiia begins as an exercise with certain formal characteristics and no real rhetorical context, students take away from it a skill to be applied elsewhere…. In the hands of accomplished writers, both ancient and modern, simpler compositional forms either become identifiable component parts of more advanced forms, or are abandoned as forms, leaving behind only particular skills…. it is clear that the artificial context of the original exercise drops away in actual practice.[91]

This means, at bottom, that there is not a single way in which this phenomenon occurs. As Stowers points out, "The power of the case lies in the evidence from actual practice. So-called rhetorical theorists like Quintilian can be very helpful, but for several reasons, chiefly their focus on forensic speeches, the prescriptions of the theorist do not correspond well to the range of actual practice in extant literature."[92] Therefore, when we observe speech-in-character actually being used, there will be significant variations in form and structure in each author, and from the exact stipulations of the teaching

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[89] The examples from Teles and Epictetus come from King, *Speech-in-Character*, 132–59, but I provide my own commentary in conversation with King's.

[90] Craig A. Gibson, "*Prosopopoeia* in the New Testament: Where Should We Look, and What Should We Expect to Find?" (paper presented at the XXX at the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, Philadelphia, PA, 2005), 11.

[91] Gibson, "*Prosopopoeia*," 9; his emphasis.

[92] Stanley K. Stowers, "Apostrophe, Προσωποποιια, and Paul's Rhetorical Education," in *Early Christianity and Classical Culture : Comparative Studies in Honor of Abraham J. Malherbe*, ed. John T. Fitzgerald, Thomas H. Olbricht, and L. Michael White, NovTSup 105 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 362.

manuals. The presence of the technique will not be slavish but may well exhibit its own particular variations, as the application of all school learning tends to do.

2.4.1 Teles

In Fragment I, "On Seeming and Being" (ca. 242 BCE), the Cynic Teles[93] constructs a dialogue to argue that it is better to possess some virtue than merely to appear to have it (that is, it is better to be just than to seem to be just). But his interlocutor is never introduced in so many words and "the words Teles attributes to the interlocutor are [also] never introduced with verbs of speech."[94] So how can we be sure that this *is* a dialogue? "The clinching pieces of evidence that an interlocutor is on the scene are Teles's references to the interlocutor in the second person and the interlocutor's references to himself in the first person."[95] That is, even though the speeches of the interlocutor are not signaled at their outset with verbs of speech, the other dialogical aspects of the texts send the signals that an interlocutor is undoubtedly present.

The form of the dialogue is very simple. Teles poses a question and the interlocutor answers. For example, the dialogue begins with Teles saying, "People say that seeming to be just is better than being so. Seeming to be good isn't better than being so, is it?" (I.1–3).[96] Then the interlocutor simply responds with "Certainly not" (I.4). Three more question-and-answer sections follow (I.5–13) where the interlocutor affirms

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[93] *Teles (the Cynic Teacher)*, trans. Edward O'Neil, SBLTT 11 (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1977), xii.

[94] King, *Speech-in-Character*, 134.

[95] King, *Speech-in-Character*, 134.

[96] Translations from O'Neil, *Teles (the Cynic Teacher)*.

that “being” is better than “seeming” (I.5–13). For instance, Teles asks, “And, generally speaking, do men prosper in all other matters because they seem to be good or because they are?” (I.11–12) and the interlocutor responds with “Because they are” (I.13). To be clear, in each of these dialogical sections the answer follows immediately after the question and there are no verbs of speech. In terms of content, it appears then that the interlocutor agrees thus far with Teles and would disagree with those referred to in I.1–2 who say that “seeming” is better than “being.” But then the dialogue takes an interesting turn. Teles’s text continues:

> Therefore, being good would appear better than seeming so, for the just man is good, not the one who seems to be just. And what, then, in the case of other things which men consider goods? Would *you* rather [μᾶλλον ἄν βούλοιο] be engaged in their pursuit or seem to be, and to possess them rather than seem to possess them? For example, would *you* rather [<μᾶλλον> / ἄν βούλοιο] see or seem to see? To be healthy rather than to seem so? To be wealthy, to have friends rather than to seem so? Again, in the matter of the goods of the soul, to be intelligent rather than to seem so? To have peace of mind rather than to seem so? To be confident, to be fearless, to be courageous rather than seem so? Yet in the matter of justice, no longer to be just rather than to seem so?
>
> Well, *I* would rather [ἄν μᾶλλον βουλοίμην] seem courageous than to be so. (I.15–30; my emphasis)

The first thing to highlight is that the optative second person singular βούλοιο and the first person singular βουλοίμην make it unmistakable that an an interlocutor is being addressed and then speaking even though introductory verbs of speech (e.g., something like “and you will say…”) are absent. This allows us to retrospectively confirm the script of the preceding series of questions and answers. Teles is asking the questions and the interlocutor is responding. But now the interlocutor has just done an about-face from his

response in I.1–2 and admits that he would rather "seem courageous than to be so" (I.29–30). So Teles presses him to explain.

"Isn't the courageous man also fearless and undisturbed, not the one who seems so? Why do you want [βούλει] to seem courageous?" (I.31–32). Once more there are no verbs of speech yet the interlocutor's response follows immediately: "People will honor me" (I.33). This is the final statement from the interlocutor and Teles concludes the dialogue by informing the interlocutor that this will only result in utter misery (I.34–47). The military will put him in the fiercest points of battle, thinking that he is courageous, or even force him into one-on-one combat. Teles goes on to ask, "Then what do you think you'll experience, since you are a coward [δειλὸς] and in danger?" (I.37). Teles points out that if he is captured, the captors will think he is courageous and thus will make him suffer miserable tortures and will not believe him even if he tells the truth (i.e., admits his cowardice) because they will perceive him to simply be mocking them (I.38–45). He concludes by saying "See how many things you will receive by seeming to be courageous and capable of endurance? But you put that up as a front, and conceal these things, like the politicians" (I.45–47).

Several features of this short dialogue are especially useful as we prepare to analyze Rom 1–3. First, the interlocutor is never introduced explicitly. He just starts speaking. Second, Teles never uses verbs of speech to introduce either his own questions or statements or the interlocutor's statements. Third, the character of the interlocutor is only revealed after the interlocutor's last words. Thus, we can only apply the criterion of appropriateness retrospectively (after an initial reading that is). Moreover, it is only after

learning then that the interlocutor is a "coward" (δειλός) (I.37) that it makes sense why he would at first pretend that he agrees with Teles only to cave in when pressed further and ultimately reveal that he would actually prefer to only seem to be courageous rather than actually be so. This is how we would expect a stereotypical coward to talk. His earlier speech is therefore exactly apropos. An ancient reader, having detected this texture in the text, would go on to perform it appropriately.

This dialogue thus illustrates all of the core features of ancient speech-in-character as described previously when there are no explicit introductory textual signals like a verb of speech. Although interlocutor is not introduced, he is identified and characterized (as a coward). The attributed speech is, moreover, manifestly appropriate to the cowardly and self-contradictory character of the interlocutor. On account of these cues, a reader of "On Seeming and Being" would be able to detect the changes in speaker and would go on to inflect their voice accordingly and to perform appropriately in general—as a coward—to indicate a change in speaker for any listening audience.

2.4.2 Epictetus

Epictetus's "Against Epicureans and Academics" (*Diatr.* 2.20) features several dialogical exchanges. The analysis here will focus on the second (2.20.6–20), third (2.20.21–27), and fourth (2.20.28–37). In these dialogues Epictetus is attacking, as Oldfather notes, "The essential position of the philosophers of the New or Middle

Academy," which is "the denial of the possibility of knowledge, or of the existence of any positive proof, and the maintenance of an attitude of suspended judgement."[97]

In the second exchange Epictetus constructs a dialogue between himself and Epicurus. He accuses Epicurus of making "use of the very principle that he is doing away with;" namely "the natural fellowship [φυσικὴν κοινωνίαν] of men with one another" (*Diatr*. 2.20.6). He then creates a speech-in-character to prove his point. He introduces "Epicurus" with a verb of saying:

> For what does he say? [τί γὰρ λέγει;] "Be not deceived, men, nor led astray, nor mistaken; there is no natural fellowship [οὐκ ἔστι φυσικὴ κοινωνία] with one another among rational beings; believe me. Those who say the contrary are deceiving you and leading you astray with false reasons." (2.20.7)

When Epictetus responds, however, he does not introduce his rejoinder with a verb of saying (e.g., "But I say to you…"); he just poses a series of questions:

> Why do *you* care, then? [τί οὖν σοι μέλει;] Allow us to be deceived. Will you fare any the worse, if all the rest of us are persuaded that we do have a natural fellowship with one another, and that we ought by all means to guard it? Nay, your position will be much better and safer. Man, why do you worry about us, why keep vigil on our account, why light your lamp, why rise betimes, why write such big books? Is it to keep one or another of us from being deceived into the belief that the gods care for men, or is it to keep one or another of us from supposing that the nature of the good is other than pleasure? For if this is so, off to your couch and sleep, and lead the life of a worm, of which you have judged yourself worthy; eat and drink and copulate and defecate and snore. What do you care how the rest of mankind will think about these matters, or whether their ideas be sound or not? (2.20.8–11; Oldfather's emphasis)

Epictetus continues in the same vein for some length (up through 2.20.14). His basic point is that Epicurus ought not to care about what other people do or think since his core

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[97] Epictetus, *Discourses, Books 1-2*, trans. W.A. Oldfather, LCL 131 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1925), 361n95. Greek text and translations will come from here unless otherwise noted.

doctrine is that there is no natural fellowship with other rational beings. The very fact that Epicurus takes the trouble to write to persuade and to convince others consequently proves that he does not hold to this doctrine consistently.

Turning back to his audience, Epictetus then asks, "What, then, was it that roused Epicurus from his slumbers and compelled him to write what he did? What else but that which is the strongest thing in men—nature [ἡ φύσις], which draws a man to do her will though he groans and is reluctant?" (2.20.15). What comes next in the text can then either be in Epictetus's own voice or it can be a speech-in-character by Nature (φύσις). The text reads:

> ὅτι γὰρ δοκεῖ σοι ταῦτα τὰ ἀκοινώνητα, γράψον αὐτὰ καὶ ἄλλοις ἀπόλιπε καὶ ἀγρύπνησον δι᾽ αὐτὰ καὶ αὐτὸς ἔργῳ κατήγορος γενοῦ τῶν σαυτοῦ δογμάτων.
>
> Now, because these anti-fellowship doctrines are your belief, write them and leave them for others and lie awake because of them and, in practice, become the accuser of your own doctrines yourself. (2.20.16; my translation)

As King notes, since Epictetus "does not introduce these words with a verb of speech indicating the presence of an interlocutor, nor do any grammatical aspects of the text strictly require Nature to be the subject speaking," this proves to be "a prime example by which to test the proposed method of allowing the conventions of speech-in-character to inform the dialogical script of a diatribal text."[98] Oldfather himself placed quotation marks around these words in the Greek text as well as in his English translation to make it clear that he takes this to be personified Nature speaking, not Epictetus. He even adds the gloss "says she" to make this reading unmistakable ("'For,' says she, 'since

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[98] King, *Speech-in-Character*, 143.

you hold these anti-social opinions…'"). King thinks Oldfather is justified in these moves but wants to demonstrate why this is the case according to the conventions of speech-in-character:

> As it turns out, 2.20.16 is altogether better suited for the voice of personified Nature. Epictetus implicitly characterizes himself as one who has no power to compel Epicurus to act one way or another; this power is largely within the sphere of Nature (2.20.15). The combination of four imperatives addressed to Epicurus in the second person (γράψον, ἀπόλιπε, ἀγρύπνησον, γενοῦ; 2.20.16), therefore, would have no effect on Epicurus's decisions if they are to be heard in Epictetus's voice. Contrastingly, Nature, as the strongest force which characteristically draws unwilling and begrudging participants to do her will, could altogether appropriately command Epicurus to act in this way or that. Thus, personified Nature can most appropriately speak 2.20.16, not Epictetus.[99]

Another indication that 2.20.16 is not in Epictetus's own voice is that when he resumes speaking he uses the first person plural subjunctive φῶμεν ("shall we speak") in the sentence that follows: "Shall we speak of Orestes as being pursued by the Furies and roused from his slumbers?" (*Diatr.*. 2.20.17).

Two important implications for our later analysis of Romans 1–3 are now worth noting: (1) the core features of speech-in-character are sufficient to establish the script of the dialogue even though there are no introductory verbs of speech for either Nature or Epictetus (i.e., characterization and the speech's appropriateness); and (2) nature's speech begins with a γάρ that, because it is the beginning of a new speech, is clearly not serving as the ground for what preceded, inferentially (and neither can it be used as the basis for

[99] King, *Speech-in-Character*, 144.

what follows because that is clearly the function of the ὅτι), an observation that will become important enough in what follows to warrant a brief explanation here.[100]

When a key instance of speech-in-character in Romans is posited—in 1:18–32—the objection is frequently made that the pericope in question begins with γάρ, which must in turn be read inferentially. It follows, so the objection goes, that Romans 1:18–32 must then be supplying the rational ground for the statements that precede it in Romans (i.e., 1:16–17) and so cannot be functioning as the beginning of a paragraph of speech-in-character. The presence of γάρ in 1:18 is, in short, said to be definitive evidence that speech-in-character cannot be present from that verse onward.[101]

In view of this widespread objection to the possible presence of speech-in-character presumably here or anywhere else in Paul when the posited instances begins with γάρ, it will be useful to note the accumulating evidence as we analyze various examples that this is simply not the case.[102] Γάρ not infrequently initiates instances of speech-in-character and so this objection should be dismissed from further discussion. Rather, as I will show repeatedly in instances below, γάρ has a lot more flexibility in meaning in these settings than merely providing the reason for what precedes the statements it occurs in. Most importantly, it can begin a statement within a conversation

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[100] I will provide further examples of this use of γάρ from Philo and Josephus below.

[101] This objection is made by Sarah H. Casson, *Textual Signposts in the Argument of Romans: A Relevance-Theory Approach*, ECL 25 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2019), 14, 225–27; Barclay, *Paul and the Gift*, 462n29; Robin Griffith-Jones, "Beyond Reasonable Hope of Recognition? *Prosōpopoeia* in Romans 1:18-3:8," in *Beyond Old and New Perspectives on Paul: Reflections on the Work of Douglas Campbell*, ed. Chris Tilling (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2014), 170.

[102] This will culminate in a focused discussion on γάρ in the NT in chapter 3.

or discussion in roughly the same way that English speakers can begin to speak by using a typically inferential word in a non-inferential way.

For example, someone might say, "So, I was at the store the other day and…." The statement about being at the store is almost certainly not being inferred from what precedes it since nothing precedes it. "So" is a conversational marker of transition and nothing more. Similarly, English speakers often begin to speak with "well" or "now" without their usual denotations. Indeed, as linguist John H. McWhorter observes, Old English would use "what" for this function that we now use "so," "now," and "well" for.[103] In these statements the signifiers are functioning as transition particles and every language uses them. BDAG states that "in many instances γάρ appears to be used adverbially like our 'now' (in which the temporal sense gives way to signal an important point or transition), 'well, then', 'you see.'"[104] Johannes Louw and Eugene A. Nida confirm this in their lexicon under "Markers of Transition" §91.1. Speaking about καί and γάρ they write that these signifiers can be used as "markers of a new sentence, but [are] often best left untranslated or reflected in the use of 'and' or the conjunctive adverb 'then.'"[105] They add, "in a number of contexts, the following markers of transition are

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[103] John H. McWhorter, "So … Let's Talk About So: How Long Have We Been Starting Our Sentences with So?," 10 January 2020, https://slate.com/human-interest/2018/10/john-mcwhorter-on-starting-sentences-with-so.html.

[104] BDAG, s.v., "γάρ," 2.

[105] Johannes Louw and Eugene A. Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains*, 2 vols. (New York: United Bible Societies, 1988), 1:811. The example they provide comes from Matt 27:23: "ὁ δὲ ἔφη, Τί γὰρ κακὸν ἐποίησεν; 'and he said, What bad thing has he done?' Mt 27:23. It is possible that in Mt 27:23 the conjunction γάρ reflects Pilate's attempt to reason with the crowd demanding Jesus' crucifixion, but γάρ serves primarily to highlight the significance of the question rather than to provide a reason" (ibid.).

perhaps best left untranslated, since they serve more to indicate merely a new sentence or a new paragraph rather than to carry significant features of coordinate or subordinate relations."[106] Hence, Herbert Weir Smyth lists "prefatory" among the many functions of γάρ where "it introduces a new fact" or occurs "at the beginning of a new point in the discussion."[107] Smyth also notes an "anticipatory" use of γάρ that "states the cause, justifies the utterance, or gives the explanation, of something set forth in the main clause which *follows*."[108] Similarly, J. D. Denniston comments how the prefatory or anticipatory use of γάρ at times indicates disagreement with what preceded (i.e., a contrasting and corrective sense).[109]

In view of all this, it is worth emphasizing that Epictetus's use of γάρ at the beginning of speech-in-character in his second exchange corroborates these grammatical claims. He demonstrates that γάρ could function as a transition particle that is not providing support for what preceded but may introduce a new fact or development to follow, and frequently did so in dialogical texts.

A third exchange follows the second immediately (*Diatr*. 2.20.21–27), in which Epictetus dialogues with a skeptical "philosopher" (φιλόσοφε; 2.20.22). Epictetus is providing an example of the incoherence of ignoring the role of the faculties supplied by

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[106] Louw and Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 1:813n2.

[107] Herbert Weir Smyth, *A Greek Grammar for Colleges* (New York: American Book Company, 1920), 639.

[108] Smyth, *Greek Grammar*, 639–40, here 639; his emphasis.

[109] J.D. Denniston, *The Greek Particles*, 2nd ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), 68–76; cf. 81–85, 95.

Nature in any knowledge of the truth (2.20.21–22). But neither speaker's speech is introduced with a verb of speaking.

The dialogue begins with Epictetus addressing a philosopher and asking what his opinion is of "piety and sanctity" (2.20.22). What immediately follows then has to be the response from the philosopher: "If you wish, I shall prove that it is good" (2.20.22).[110] (This hardly makes sense in context as Epictetus's own offer to prove the goodness of piety and sanctity to the philosopher.) But after a couple of exchanges, rather than proving that piety and sanctity are good, the philosopher says he will endorse "the contrary" (2.20.23), namely, "The gods do not exist, and even if they do, they pay no attention to men, nor have we any fellowship with them, and hence this piety and sanctity which the multitude talk about is a lie told by impostors and sophists, or, I swear, by legislators to frighten and restrain evildoers" (2.20.23). Epictetus responds sarcastically, "Well done, philosopher! You have conferred a service upon our citizens, you have recovered our young men who were already inclining to despise things divine" (2.20.24). The philosopher then reiterates his position in his final appearance within the dialogue, "What then? Does not all this satisfy you? Learn now how righteousness is nothing, how reverence is folly, how a father is nothing, how a son is nothing" (2.20.25–26). Epictetus responds with a sarcastic parody once more:[111]

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[110] Oldfather has quotes around these and all other places where the philosopher speaks. King confirms this script (*Speech-in-Character*, 145–49).

[111] "Sarcastic" might be used differently by different people. I mean here by "sarcastic" or "sarcastically" that authors script for themselves content that they themselves actually do not hold to. They are thus speaking in a manner technically inappropriate to their own beliefs, but in imitation of another's views. This is what Quintilian calls "parody" (*Inst.* 6.3.98 [παρῳδία]; 9.2.34–35 [παρῳδή]) and Epictetus uses this technique within a Socratic *elenchus*. We know this is sarcastic parody if not by a general

> Well done, philosopher! Keep at it; persuade the young men, that we may have more who feel and speak as you do. It is from principles like these that our well-governed states have grown great! Principles like these have made Sparta what it was! These are the convictions which Lycurgus wrought into the Spartans by his laws and his system of education, namely that neither is slavery base rather than noble, nor freedom noble rather than base! Those who died at Thermopylae died because of these judgements regarding slavery and freedom! And for what principles but these did the men of Athens give up their city? And then those who talk thus marry and beget children and fulfil the duties of citizens and get themselves appointed priests and prophets! Priests and prophets of whom? Of gods that do not exist! And they themselves consult the Pythian priestess—in order to hear lies and to interpret the oracles to others! Oh what monstrous shamelessness and imposture! (2.20.26–27)

Epictetus then turns to address a generic person who holds to extremely skeptical views of knowledge (i.e., someone who thinks "nothing is knowable, but that everything is uncertain;" 2.20.4) that he typically associates with the Academics (cf. 2.20.20):

> Man, what are you doing? You are confuting your own self every day, and are you unwilling to give up these frigid attempts of yours? When you eat, where do you bring your hand? To your mouth, or to your eye? When you take a bath, into what do you step? When did you ever call the pot a plate, or the ladle a spit? (2.20.28)

In another display of sarcastic parody, Epictetus goes on to create a dialogue depicting what he would do if he were a slave to one of these skeptics:

> If I were slave to one of these men, even if I had to be soundly flogged by him every day, I would torment him. "Boy, throw a little oil into the bath." I would have thrown a little fish sauce in, and as I left would pour it down on his head. "What does this mean?" "I had an external impression that could not be distinguished from olive oil; indeed, it was altogether like it. I swear by your fortune." "Here, give me the gruel." I would have filled a side dish with vinegar and fish sauce and brought it to him. "Did I not ask for the gruel?" "Yes, master; this is gruel." "Is not this vinegar and fish sauce?" "How so, any more than gruel." "Take and smell it, take and taste it." "Well, how do you know, if the senses deceive us?" If I had had three or four fellow-slaves who felt as I did, I would have made him burst with rage and hang himself, or else change his

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knowledge that Epictetus would never agree with the above statements, then by the specific context of these dialogues, which makes it clear that he is wanting to argue against these sorts of statements (e.g., 2.20.4, 20). See also his closing comments of this section in 2.20.28–37 discussed below.

> opinion. But as it is, such men are toying with us; they use all the gifts of nature, while in theory doing away with them. (2.20.28–31)

I have left Oldfather's quotation marks in this dialogue since by this point it has become more than apparent that a change in speaker is often not introduced with verbs of speaking or any other introductory formula. As important as this observation is, however, what is especially noteworthy for our purposes is Epictetus's use of sarcastic "parody" (cf. Quintilian, *Inst*. 6.3.98 [παρῳδία]; 9.2.34–35 [παρῳδή]). Here we have Epictetus scripting for himself content that is technically not appropriate for him to be speaking. That is, the positions on Epictetus's lips are not things he actually believes but, rather, are the sorts of things that would be appropriate for an extreme skeptic to say. But here Epictetus is extending his opponent's position to its logical end by humorously showing how such skepticism is unlivable. He does this by constructing a dialogue between himself, cast as a slave, and a skeptic, cast as his master, within which he (Epictetus) takes on the views and beliefs of the skeptic who does not think his senses can be trusted and thus has no way of knowing one thing from another (*Diatr*. 2.20.30; cf. 2.20.4, 20). His goal to either to get this skeptic-master to be so frustrated that he commits suicide or else to change his mind and to recognize the absurdity of his position (2.20.31).

This demonstrates a further important dimension within speech-in-character that will be relevant to the later analysis of Romans 1–3. The authors of dialogical texts can script for themselves certain statements that they themselves do not really hold to. Rather, the function of this kind of sarcastic parody is to take the view of the interlocutor to its logical end in order to demonstrate the internal incoherence of the interlocutor's position (with the ultimate goal of getting them to change their minds; e.g., Epictetus, *Diatr*.

2.20.31, 37). We can know whether something is meant sarcastically—or perhaps better, "parodically"—by juxtaposing the statement in question with what is known about the author more generally through their writings. When we do this, we easily see that what Epictetus is scripting for himself in these parts is technically διαφωνία with respect to his own views. We know from Epictetus's writings more generally and the heuristic context more specifically that he really does not hold to these skeptical views. But script the dialogue of 2.20.28–31 requires that the διαφωνία is spoken by Epictetus even though this has him saying things that are only appropriate for a skeptic to say, not for him to be saying. When we look at the heuristic context of the dialogue, however, we can ascertain that the presence of the διαφωνία is due to his use of sarcastic parody. That is, since we can see how the dialogue functions as a whole as a strategy precisely to combat these skeptical ideas then we can reasonably account for the presence of διαφωνία on Epictetus's lips. He is speaking in this way to expose the absurdity of these very views.[112]

Overall, these examples in Epictetus corroborate several important features of dialogical texts just demonstrated by Teles and add one or two more that will be important for our analysis of Romans. First, as King notes, "introductory formulas and

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[112] Though I will return to this point, I will flag here that I think Paul is doing something similar at times in Rom 2 because this subject addresses certain critiques about the viability of Campbell's thesis. I will argue that Paul will ultimately be combating certain views of the interlocutor, but one of the strategies he will employ is sarcastic parody in dialogue. He will take on certain views of his interlocutor in order to push them to their logical end and thereby demonstrate their internal incoherence. The reason we are able to know that these are only in Paul's mouth parodically is similar to how we know these are sarcastic comments by Epictetus: a knowledge of the main author's views through their writings and the immediate contextual cues. This is an application of the criterion of appropriateness. This mitigates Gupta's criticism of Campbell who wonders how we can adequately discern the interlocutor's "material" from Paul's own views ("Startling Alternative," 252; similarly, Macaskill, "Review Article," 159). For more on parody in Paul, see Stowers, *Rereading*, 145–50 (though I will differ in the details, we agree that Paul uses parody in Rom 2).

common phrases do not and cannot consistently (i.e., reliably) indicate which speaker in a discourse is responsible for this or that line."[113] This is because, as we just observed, verbless transitions to speech-in-character occur often enough.[114] Relatedly, second, γάρ can be used at the beginning of a speech in a non-inferential manner similar to the English use of "so" to start a speech. Third, characterization and the criterion of appropriateness remain the key indicators. In places where identifying the speaker is not in doubt (e.g., 2.20.21–27), a particular characterization can be established that can then be utilized as a trustworthy guide and "reliably account for the [rest of the] exchanges within the script."[115] In places where the speaker is in doubt (e.g., Nature's speech in 2.20.16), the criterion of appropriateness can then be relied upon to settle the matter with sufficient confidence. King summarizes: "the way a reader or auditor should be able to distinguish a speech-in-character from the voice of the primary speaker [is] by considering the established conventions of characterization and appropriateness."[116] Fourth, Epictetus tends to pose the questions. This is in keeping with the general Socratic function of dialogues where "the teacher asks the questions or guides the discussion."[117]

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[113] King, *Speech-in-Character*, 158.

[114] For yet another example of verbless transitions to speech-in-character in Epictetus see *Diatr*. 2.23.1–26. Here Epictetus uses an Epicurean interlocutor and constructs a dialogue in which he (Epictetus) brings the Epicurean into agreement with him through a Socratic question and answer format. For analysis see King, *Speech-in-Character*, 149–57. This is similar to how King scripts the dialogue in Rom 3:1–9 where the interlocutor ends up changing his mind and agreeing with Paul's perspective by the end. Further, Stowers points to the dialogue in *Diatr.*. 2.6.16–22 in which "Neither the apostrophe nor any of the five instances of speech-in-character have any sort of 'formal introduction' whatsoever, and yet the figures [of who is speaking when] are clear" (Stowers, "Apostrophe," 364). Stowers also mentions *Diatr*. 3.2.4–10, whose question and answer format parallels Rom 3:1–9 (Stowers, "Apostrophe," 364–65).

[115] King, *Speech-in-Character*, 157.

[116] King, *Speech-in-Character*, 157.

[117] Stowers, *Rereading*, 166.

Fifth, Epictetus uses sarcastic parody, scripting for himself speech that is technically not appropriate for him, but rather for his interlocutor as one strategy for persuading his audience (and/or the interlocutor) of the internal incoherence of the interlocutor's position (thereby effecting a Socratic *elenchus*).

2.4.3 Philo

2.4.3.1 That the Worse Attacks the Better

In *Quod deterius potiori insidari soleat* ("That the Worse Attacks the Better") Philo engages in a dialogue with Cain when explaining Gen 4:14: "'If you cast me out,' he says, 'today from the face of the earth, then from your face I will also be hidden" (*Det*. 150; my translation).[118] Philo wants to discuss here what it does and does not mean to be cast out from the earth and be hidden from God. As he addresses these concerns he suddenly makes a transition into a dialogue with Cain.

Immediately after quoting from Gen 4:14, Philo turns to address Cain directly in an instance of apostrophe and asks, "What are you saying, good sir? If you shall have been cast out of all the earth, will you still hide yourself? How? Could you live?" (150–151). Philo here and throughout §152 asks Cain if this means that being cast out from the earth (i.e., land) means that he (Cain) is claiming he will now live in the sea or the air, for example. This is clearly meant to be overtly absurd (i.e., not even Cain could be meaning this by what he said in Gen 4:14). Then, while still addressing Cain, Philo makes a

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[118] Unless otherwise noted Greek text and translations for all citations from Philo are from F. H. Colson, G. H. Whitaker, and Ralph Marcus, trans., *Philo of Alexandria in Ten Volumes (and Two Supplementary Volumes)*, LCL (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1929).

transition to the second part of Gen 4:14 about the possibility of being hidden from God (*Det.* 153–154). Philo asks, "But could you, being a man, or any other created thing, hide yourself from God? Where?.... And can this surprise you, that no created thing can manage to hide itself from that which IS?" (153). Once again, Philo's questions are aimed at exposing the absurdity of a literalistic interpretation. He makes this plain after an apostrophe and a further turn back to his readers.[119]

> Seeing then that it is in all cases out of the question to escape beyond the handiwork of God, must it not be still more impossible to flee from its Maker and Ruler? Let no one therefore accept without examining it the way of understanding the language that first suggests itself, and by so doing make the Law guilty of his own foolishness. Let him carefully note the sense which it conveys in a figure through deeper meanings underlying the expressions employed, and so attain to certain knowledge. (155)

After disabusing his readers of these absurd understandings of Cain's words, Philo then turns to what Gen 4:14 is more likely to mean, but suddenly shifts into a first-person monologue that is undoubtedly supposed to be Cain speaking and expounding on his words from Gen 4:14. The speech extends from §156–157. This speech-in-character is not introduced with a verb of saying (i.e., "Cain says"), but simply begins:

> Probably, then, what is [indicated] [ἐμφαίνεται] by the words through the words [of Gen 4:14]…is this; "if Thou art ceasing to supply me with the good things of earth, neither do I accept those of heaven; and if I am being cut off from the experience and enjoyment of pleasure, I decline virtue also; and if Thou art giving me no part in what is human, keep back also what is divine. For the good things that are, in our judgement, necessary and of value and really genuine are these, eating, drinking; delighting in variety of colours by the use of sight; being charmed through hearing by all kinds of melodious sounds, and through the joy of fragrant scents which our nostrils inhale; indulging to the full in all the pleasures

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[119] In §154 Philo answers his own question posed to Cain by saying what God would have done had he wanted to make "a new kind of creature capable of living in all elements" (i.e., land, air, water, fire). The turn to his readers at §155 is signaled by the hermeneutical lesson to be learned from the apostrophe.

> arising from digestive and other organs; unceasing attention to the acquisition of gold and silver; being adorned with honours and public offices, and all else that tends to make us distinguished. But let us have nothing to do with sound sense, or hardy endurance, or righteousness with her stern disposition filling life with labour and travail. But if these prove to be a necessary part of our experience, they must be treated not as good things to be sought for their own sake, but as means to and productive of good." (156–157; my emendation)

In this temper tantrum, Philo has Cain speak "as an Epicurean."[120] Although it was inappropriate for Cain to be speaking in what Philo considered to be rigidly literal terms, it is appropriate to associate Cain with those whom Philo considers to be pseudo-philosophers and virtue-less hedonists. The titular figure of the treatise is after all the "worse" brother who attacked and murdered his "better" brother Abel. This sudden transition to a speech characteristic of Epicurean philosophy is detectable as speech-in-character wholly inappropriate for Philo but completely appropriate for Cain. What is particularly noteworthy in this example, however, is how Philo signals that Cain's tirade has ended. He indicates the conclusion of Cain's Epicurean speech by introducing another apostrophe with no intervening narrative or exposition:

> Oh! Ridiculous man! Do you assert that, when stript of bodily and outward advantages, you will be out of sight of God? I tell you that, if you be stripped of them, you will be more than ever in sight of Him: for when set free from bonds that cannot be broken, imposed by the body and bodily requirements, you will have a clear vision of the Uncreated.
>
> [159] Do you not see that Abraham, when he had "forsaken land and kindred and his father's house," i.e. the body, sense, and speech (Gen. xii. 1), begins to meet with the powers of Him that is? For when he has gone out from all his house, the Law says that "God appeared to him" (Gen. xii. 7), showing that He clearly manifests Himself to him that escapes from things mortal and mounts up into a soul free from the encumbrance of this body of ours. [160] So Moses "taking his tent sets it up outside the camp" (Exod. xxxiii. 7), and places its abode far from

[120] Stowers, "Apostrophe," 364.

> the bodily encampment, expecting that only thus might he become a perfect suppliant and worshipper of God. (158–160)

The apostrophe continues through §164. In §165 Philo makes a broader pedagogical point ("Let Cain and any other wicked person know"), then transitions into another apostrophe directed toward Cain through §166.

This particular example shows how διαφωνία and the criterion of appropriateness can work closely together with apostrophe to signal a shift in speaker, and can also demarcate when a speech-in-character ends (that is, with an instance of apostrophe functioning as a capping formula). Moreover, the "solution from the character" (λύσις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου) allows us to make sense of how all these sections flow together. We can see that the heuristic function of Cain's speech in §§156–157 is correcting the obvious misinterpretations of Gen 4:14 (identified in Philo's first apostrophe in §§153–154 and the pedagogical aside in §155) that understand Cain's words there to be flatly literal ("from your face I will also be hidden"). The "correct" interpretation of Gen 4:14 that Philo puts into Cain's mouth in §§156–157 is then not because Philo agrees with the content of Cain's speech in §§156–157, but rather because Philo was simply wanting to attribute an interpretation of Cain's words in Gen 4:14 to Cain that is more suitably appropriate to Epicurean hedonists. The literalistic interpretation of Gen 4:14 outlined in §§153–155 is "wrong" not because it is absurd according to Philo that any creature would ever really be able to be hidden from God's presence, but rather because Philo wants to criticize Epicureanism and no Epicurean would say something like that. Thus, by scripting a speech in Cain's mouth to explain the comment in Gen 4:14 ("from your face

I will also be hidden") in a manner apropos of an Epicurean, Philo is able to criticize Epicureanism through Cain.

In other words, the διαφωνία present between the content of §§156–157 and Philo's larger pedagogical agenda in this treatise, and especially in the apostrophe that follows the speech immediately in §§158–164, signals to the reader that the content in §§156–157 was a speech-in-character and, more specifically, the speech of Cain-as-Epicurean. This speech contains content Philo himself would not endorse even if he thinks this is the "correct" interpretation of Gen 4:14. It is "correct" because it avoids what Philo considers an absurd literal meaning of Gen 4:14 that would not be appropriate even for Cain to think. Philo has thus crafted a speech that he sees as being more "appropriate" to Cain-as-Epicurean's character. Further, the apostrophe beginning in §158 functions as a capping signal so that the reader is aware that an instance of speech-in-character has just ended.

Significantly for the technique's modern readers, none of these changes in speaker—from Philo to Cain and from Cain to Philo—was introduced with a verb of saying. Philo could have easily chosen to exposit Gen 4.14 in the third person (i.e., "Rather than thinking Cain thought he could abandon terrestrial life and live in some other element and that he could be hidden from God, we ought to understand that Cain means he is going to give up on all virtue if he cannot indulge in the pleasures life on earth affords him" or some such). But Philo instead chose to script attributed speech but he did not to introduce this with a verb of saying or introduce his own response to Cain with a verb of saying either. The presence of apostrophe, characterization, and

consequent διαφωνία alone, suffices to indicate both the presence of the figure of speech-in-character and its extent.

2.4.3.2 Every Good Person Is Free

Near the beginning of the treatise *Quod omnis probus liber sit* ("Every Good Person Is Free") Philo crafts a long speech-in-character as a way of setting up the very notions he seeks to dismantle through the rest of treatise. That is, the attributed speech represents someone who holds to the antithesis of Philo's thesis as argued in the essay. However, it is not introduced with a verb of saying. Philo relies once more on characterization and διαφωνία to signal the presence of the speech.

Philo begins his treatise by informing the addressee, Theodotus, that he intends the work to function as a companion to a previous treatise arguing that "every wicked person is a slave" since he will now "demonstrate that every good person is free" (*Prob*. 1). He goes on to say that "all those who have genuinely welcomed philosophy" will by definition not be following the "opinions" of the "herd" (ἀγελαῖος) (3). He calls the members of the herd "unclean" (μὴ καθαρῷ) (3), which he goes on to explain:

> By unclean [μὴ καθαρούς] I mean all those who without ever tasting education at all, or else having received it in a crooked and distorted form, have changed the stamp of wisdom's beauty into the ugliness of sophistry. These, unable to discern the conceptual light through the weakness of the soul's eye, which cannot but be beclouded by the flashing rays, as dwellers in perpetual night disbelieve those who live in the daylight, and think that all their tales of what they have seen around them, shown clearly by the unalloyed radiance of the sunbeams, are wild phantom-like inventions no better than the illusions of the puppet show [θαύμασιν]. (4–5)

This judgment is then followed by a question:

> πῶς γὰρ οὐκ ἐκτόπια καὶ θαύματ᾽ ὄντως, φυγάδας μὲν καλεῖν τοὺς μὴ μόνον ἐν μέσῃ τῇ πόλει διατρίβοντας, ἀλλὰ καὶ βουλεύοντας καὶ δικάζοντας καὶ ἐκκλησιάζοντας ἔστι δ᾽ ὅτε καὶ ἀγορανομίας καὶ γυμνασιαρχίας καὶ τὰς ἄλλας λειτουργίας ὑπομένοντας. πολίτας δὲ τοὺς ἢ μὴ ἐγγραφέντας τὸ παράπαν ἢ ὧν ἀτιμία καὶ φυγὴ κατέγνωσται…;
>
> But, how is it not outlandish and actually trickery [θαῦμα] on the one hand to call "exiles" those who not only reside in the middle of the city, but also who are participants in councils, juries, and town assemblies and at times serve as the market clerk and leader of the gymnasium and the other remaining public offices, but on the other hand to call "citizens" those who have not actually been registered or have been condemned to dishonor and exile…? (6–7; my translation)

Without reading further a careful reader can already doubt that these words are intended to be Philo's own opinions. Knowing already that Philo thinks that "every wicked person is a slave" who has not experienced the illumination and discipline of philosophy (1), a person who thinks it is "outlandish" and an act of "trickery" to call someone who has all the outward accolades of a citizen an "exile" is unlikely to be Philo. If this person is wicked, then it would be *entirely* appropriate for Philo to say someone living a full life in the midst of the city is actually an "exile." Thus, we can postulate right away that the statement in *Prob*. 6 is more appropriate for someone "unclean" from the "herd" to say (3–5) and less appropriate for Philo himself.

This is especially the case when we observe the use of θαῦμα that links sections 5 and 6. Philo has just characterized the "unclean" as being so intellectually dull that they think the wisdom of the philosophers is akin to the deceptions of a showman (θαύματα) (5). Hence when the text goes on to say immediately that the philosophical (Stoic) paradoxes are θαύματα (6), the reader can attribute this view to the "unclean" from the "herd" as a preliminary postulate. And indeed this judgment concerning the presence of speech-in-character is confirmed by the rest of the section:

[7] …and, on the other hand, to call those men citizens who have either never been enrolled as such at all, or else have had sentences of infamy or of banishment pronounced against them; men who have been driven beyond the boundaries of the land, and who are unable, not only to set foot upon the country, but even to behold their native soil from a distance, unless they are urged on by some insane frenzy to rush upon certain death; for there are innumerable persons to detect and to punish all those who return from banishment, being both sharpened by their own feelings, and acting in obedience to the commands of the laws. [8] Again, how can it be anything but a most unreasonable assertion, one full of complete shamelessness of insanity (or I really know not what to call it, for the preposterousness of such a saying is so great that it is not easy to find a proper name for it) to call those men rich who are in a state of complete indigence, and destitute of even necessaries, living hardily? and miserably, scarcely procuring enough for their daily subsistence, exposed to famine, as their own peculiar lot among the general plenty and abundance of others, feeding only on the breath of virtue, as they say that grasshoppers feed on air; [9] and then, on the other hand, to call those men poor who are surrounded on all sides by silver and gold, and abundance of possessions and revenues, and an inexhaustible supply of endless good things of every sort, the wealth of which has not only advantaged all their relations and friends, but has even proceeded beyond the family, and been of benefit to great crowds of persons of the same borough, or of the same tribe as the owners; aye, and going further still, it even supplies the city itself with everything which is needful in either peace or war. [10] Moreover, those who speak thus have, in obedience to the same dream, ventured to speak of slavery as the real condition of men of the greatest importance and genuine nobility of birth, men who can refer not only to their immediate parents, but to their grandfathers and remote ancestors up to the very first founders of their race, as having been in the highest esteem both among men and women; while, on the other hand, they speak of men, whose last three generations have been branded as slaves, born of slaves, who have never been anything but slaves, as free.

[11] But all these things are, as I have said before, the inventions of men whose intellects are obscured, and who are slaves to opinions utterly under the influence of the outward senses, whose judgment is continually corrupted by those who are brought before its tribunal, and as such is unstable. (7–11 [Yonge[121]])

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[121] I present Yonge's translation here because he does not make use of quotation marks or explanatory glosses as LCL does to explicitly alert the reader that 6–10 is an extended speech-in-character. Also, the Greek of these parts is not as significant to the forthcoming analysis as it is for the transition between sections 5 and 6. Philo, *The Works of Philo*, trans. C. D. Yonge, new updated ed. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1993).

Since §10 is essentially the inverse of what Philo said in section one about what he has argued ("every wicked person is a slave") and will argue ("every good person is free"), this material is unlikely to represent his own position and hence be in his voice as it violates the criterion of appropriateness. There is instead a clear instance of διαφωνία, which needs to be resolved by the interpretive principle of λύσις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου. A speech-in-character seems to be present. And, if this is not enough, in §11 Philo states that all these previous comments (τὰ τοιαῦτα) are "the inventions of men whose intellects are obscured." Hence even if modern readers did not catch at first that §6 began an extended speech-in-character because it was not introduced by a verb of speaking, and they failed to detect the διαφωνία, by the time they come to §11 it is more than clear that the intervening material is attributed speech because §11 functions as a capping formula ("But all these things are…the inventions of men" [Yonge]).[122] Philo explicitly labels all who hold such opinions as expressed in sections 6–10 "slaves" (δοῦλοι) (11) thereby providing an example of his maxim "every wicked person is a slave" from §1.

In sum, even if readers did not catch initially that Philo had launched into an extended speech-in-character beginning in section 6, by the time they got to §11 they would retrospectively make sense of what they had just read. By then they would understand that they were hearing an interlocutor's opinions and that the whole point of this treatise is precisely to argue against such opinions, and this realization would then inform all subsequent readings and performances. This is precisely the reasoning Colson

[122] The attributed speech consists of 239 words in Greek.

notes in his translational comment on § 6 and no Philonic scholar has disagreed with his conclusion that "the sense requires beyond all question that the next four sections [i.e., 6–10] represent the views of the unphilosophical common man."[123]

This example again demonstrates many important features of speech-in-character. First, characterization and the criterion of appropriateness are essential once again when a change in speaker appears without a verb of saying overtly determining that a character is speaking. Second and related, the speech of §§ 6–10 is altogether unfitting for Philo, generating διαφωνία, but completely appropriate for his characterization of those from the "herd." This suggests introducing the "solution from the character" (λύσις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου) and positing the presence of speech-in-character. Third, not only can the transition to speech in character be verbless, but the beginning of the speech begins with a γάρ that is used in a non-inferential, transitional manner as was the case in Epictetus *Diatr*. 2.20.16. Indeed, this appears to be an example of using γάρ to express dissent and incredulity of what preceded, as we learned was one of the functions of γάρ (hence my translation above with "but").[124] A dialogical context seems especially suitable for this usage.

2.4.4 Josephus

In book three of his *Jewish War* (specifically 3.362–82), Josephus presents himself making a speech to other soldiers who have hidden themselves in order to defend

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[123] F. H. Colson, trans., *Philo, Every Good Man Is Free. On the Contemplative Life. On the Eternity of the World. Against Flaccus. Apology for the Jews. On Providence*, LCL 363 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1941), 13ne.

[124] Cf. Denniston, *The Greek Particles,* 68–76; cf. 81–85, 95.

his decision to surrender to Vespasian rather than to commit suicide with them when they are discovered. The specific setting is as follows: Josephus was the commander of Jotapata, and as the city fell to the Romans (3.323–37) "many of Josephus's picked men [committed] suicide" (3.331).[125] Josephus, however, went into hiding in a cave with about forty others (3.338–43). On the third day a woman who was captured told the Romans where the hideout was (3.344). Although the Romans promised Josephus's safety, it took some time for Josephus to be convinced (3.345–50) until "suddenly there came back into his mind those nightly dreams, in which God had foretold to him the impending fate of the Jews and the destinies of the Roman sovereigns" (3.351). He resolved at that moment to surrender (3.353) and justified this in a prayer that he was doing so in order that he might live "to announce the things that are to come" (i.e., the success of the Romans over the Jewish revolt) (3.354). But once the forty fugitives understood that Josephus was yielding, they gave him an ultimatum: surrender was not an option so either he must kill himself and die honorably or they would kill him as a traitor (3.355–60). This speech is worth quoting in full:

> "Ah! well might the laws of our fathers groan aloud and God Himself hide His face for grief—God who implanted in Jewish breasts souls that scorn death! Is life so dear to you, Josephus, that you can endure to see the light in slavery [καὶ φῶς ὑπομένεις ὁρᾶν δοῦλον]? How soon have you forgotten yourself! How many have you persuaded to die for liberty [πόσους ὑπὲρ ἐλευθερίας ἀποθνήσκειν ἔπεισας]! False, then, was that reputation for bravery [ψευδῆ μὲν ἄρα δόξαν ἀνδρείας], false that fame for sagacity, if you can hope for pardon from those whom you have

[125] Greek text and translation are from Josephus, *The Jewish War, Volume II: Books 3-4*, trans. H. St J. Thackeray, LCL 487 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1927). I am remaining with Thackeray's translation throughout this section because I want to show how the examples of speech-in-character here and the (non)translation of several key instances of γάρ are not the result of my own idiosyncratic translation.

> fought so bitterly, or, supposing that they grant it, can deign to accept your life at their hands. Nay, if the fortune of the Romans has cast over you some strange forgetfulness of yourself, the care of our country's honour devolves on us. We will lend you a right hand and a sword. If you meet death willingly, you will have died as general of the Jews; if unwillingly, as a traitor." (3.356–59)

Given our present purposes it is necessary only to quote the first part of Josephus's response here. In this section we will find several transitions to speech-in-character, some of which are signaled by verbs of saying and some of which are verbless. Several transitional instances of γάρ occur as well. Verbless transitions where Thackeray has noted a change in speaker and supplied a verb in translation though absent in Greek are italicized, and the three transitional uses of γάρ are bolded.[126]

> [362] "Why, comrades," said he ["τί **γὰρ** τοσοῦτον", ἔφη,], "this thirst for our own blood? Why set asunder such fond companions as soul and body? [363] One says that I am changed [ἠλλάχθαι τις ἐμέ φησιν]: well, the Romans know the truth about that. *Another says*, 'It is honourable to die in war': yes, but according to the law of war, that is to say by the hand of the conqueror [καλὸν ἐν πολέμῳ θνήσκειν, ἀλλὰ πολέμου νόμῳ, τουτέστιν ὑπὸ τῶν κρατούντων]. [364] Were I now flinching from the sword of the Romans, I should assuredly deserve to perish by my own sword and my own hand; but if they are moved to spare an enemy, how much stronger reason have we to spare ourselves? It would surely be folly to inflict on ourselves treatment which we seek to avoid by our quarrel with them. [365] 'It is honourable to die for liberty,' *says another* [καλὸν **γὰρ** ὑπὲρ τῆς ἐλευθερίας ἀποθνήσκειν]: I concur, but on condition that one dies fighting [φημὶ κἀγώ, μαχομένους μέντοι], by the hands of those who would rob us of it. But now they are neither coming to fight us nor to take our lives. It is equally cowardly not to wish to die when one ought to do so, and to wish to die when one ought not. [366] What is it we fear that prevents us from surrendering to the Romans? Is it not death? [367] And shall we then inflict upon ourselves certain death, to avoid an uncertain death, which we fear, at the hands of our foes? 'No, it is slavery we

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[126] Although there are instances of a change in speaker signaled by a verb of saying, Thackeray has identified three instances of verbless transitions to a change in speaker. Whether Thackeray did this intuitively or whether he was consciously applying the ancient rhetorical conventions for a change in speaker is hard to say. Thackeray nevertheless identifies these instances of verbless transitions with additional translational glosses (e.g., "Another says," "says another," "I retort") that all cohere with the criterion of appropriateness. Two involve brief statements by Josephus's critics, and one is a rejoinder from Josephus himself.

> fear,' I shall be told [ἀλλὰ δουλείαν, ἐρεῖ τις]. Much liberty we enjoy at present! [πάνυ γοῦν νῦν ἐσμὲν ἐλεύθεροι.][127] [368] 'It is noble to destroy oneself,' another will say [γενναῖον **γὰρ** ἀνελεῖν ἑαυτόν, φήσει τις]. Not so, *I retort*, but most ignoble [οὐ μὲν οὖν, ἀλλ᾽ ἀγενέστατον]; in my opinion there could be no more arrant coward than the pilot who, for fear of a tempest, deliberately sinks his ship before the storm. [369] No; suicide is alike repugnant to that nature which all creatures share, and an act of impiety towards God who created us." (3.362–369)

Josephus defends his surrender here by responding to five objections. The voicing of three of these objections is marked with verbs of saying (3.362 [τις…φησιν], 367 [ἐρεῖ τις], 368 [φήσει τις]) but two are verbless transitions in the Greek (3.363, 365), although Thackeray has supplied the clarifying glosses italicized above.

In the first of these verbless transitions (technically the second objection in the sequence of five total), the statement "It is honourable to die in war" (καλὸν ἐν πολέμῳ θνήσκειν) (3.363) is rightly seen by Thackeray as the second objection that Josephus's fellow fugitives make because it fits perfectly with the fugitives' speech urging Josephus to join them in committing suicide since this would be seen as dying in war honorably as others have already done as noted above (cf. 3.331).

What follows immediately after καλὸν ἐν πολέμῳ θνήσκειν is then judged by Thackeray to be Josephus's subtle reorientation of this maxim (the ἀλλὰ signals that this is a rejoinder) to say that death in war is only honorable if it comes from the conquering enemy themselves rather than by suicide (ἀλλὰ πολέμου νόμῳ, τουτέστιν ὑπὸ τῶν κρατούντων; 3.363; cf. 3.368–369)—another instance of a verbless transition to a change

[127] This is surely meant to be ironic: "Oh ya, you fear being slaves? Look around. We are hiding in a cave. Is this your idea of freedom!?"

in speaker. Thackeray does not supply a gloss for Josephus as he resumes his own speech, but the use of quotation marks suffices for this indication in his translation.

The next and third objection of the five Josephus addresses is a similar maxim ("It is honourable to die for liberty" [καλὸν γὰρ ὑπὲρ τῆς ἐλευθερίας ἀποθνήσκειν], 3.365) and also lacks a verb of speaking. This is thus a second verbless transition to speech-in-character in a row in his speech, which Thackeray has conveyed through quotation marks and a gloss. This objection fits perfectly with the fugitives' speech where they remind Josephus that he has persuaded many to die for liberty (πόσους ὑπὲρ ἐλευθερίας ἀποθνήσκειν ἔπεισας; 3.357). Against this, Josephus insists (φημὶ κἀγώ) that this is only true if one literally dies by falling in battle with the enemy (φημὶ κἀγώ, μαχομένους μέντοι, καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν ἀφαιρουμένων αὐτήν; 3.365).

Therefore, the criterion of appropriateness confirms Thackeray's identifications of a change in speaker. This is corroborated in light of the other three objections that are marked by verb-clauses of saying (3.362 [τις…φησιν], 367 [ἐρεῖ τις], 368 [φήσει τις]).[128] The two remaining objections in 3.363, 365 are sandwiched between the above. These are almost certainly instances of verbless transitions to speech-in-character whereby Josephus is continuing to bring up objections held by his interlocutors that he needs to respond to. Also, out of the five objections raised, the only one in which Josephus's own

[128] It is worth noting that the three objections that have marked changes in speaker also satisfy the criterion of appropriateness. The objection that Josephus has changed (3.362) fits with the fugitives' speech about Josephus forgetting himself (3.357, 359). The objection that they fear slavery (3.367) explicitly echoes their speech (3.357). Finally, the objection that it is noble to kill oneself (3.368) fits the rhetoric of their speech about the virtue of being "manly"/"brave" (ἀνδρεία; 3.358) and that God has created the Jews as a people who do not flinch in the face of death (3.356).

response is marked by a verb of saying is the third one (3.365). In every other case, whether or not the objection is verbless, the transition back to Josephus's response is verbless. This once again highlights the fact that changes in speaker do not require a verb of saying.

Now we turn to another major conclusion about speech-in-character that we can draw from Josephus's speech. Similar to the examples in Epictetus and Philo above, Josephus uses γάρ in a transitional way, although here three times to begin a new thought and an accompanying change in speaker (3.362, 365, 368), one of which is also an instance of a verbless transition to speech-in-character (3.365). All three of these uses of γάρ are left untranslated by Thackeray.[129] Hence, as the lexicons and grammars cited above recommend (BDAG, Louw and Nida, Smyth, Denniston), γάρ is often best left untranslated when it is functioning as a transitional particle (or it can be translated with "now," "well," "so," since these are equivalent English transition particles). Once again then we see—and perhaps here most decisively—how the mere presence of a γάρ cannot be used as evidence against the presence of speech-in-character as some scholars have argued when debating different readings of parts of Romans 1–3. On the contrary, what we have observed thus far from Epictetus, Philo, and Josephus has shown that this non-

[129] I opted to reproduce Thackeray's translation here as noted earlier. If I was to offer my own translation of Josephus's speech I would leave the first γάρ untranslated, but I would translate the instances introducing objections with "yet" or "but": καλὸν γὰρ ὑπὲρ τῆς ἐλευθερίας ἀποθνήσκειν= "But/yet, it is good to die for freedom" (*B.J.* 3.365) and γενναῖον γὰρ ἀνελεῖν ἑαυτόν = "But/yet, it is noble to kill oneself" (3.368). This is because the content they are introducing is meant to be read as an objection or dissent and "but"/"yet" conveys this nuance better than either leaving the word untranslated, or opting for one of the usual colloquial English transition particles as I did for Philo, *Prob*. 6 above. This is similar to how the NRSV translates certain uses of γάρ with "yet" or something similar that will be discussed in the next chapter (e.g., Matt 15:27; Rom 5:7b).

causal, prefatory, anticipatory use of γάρ to begin a speech appears in dialogical contexts in particular (and this is confirmed by other dialogical Greek literature, e.g., Demosthenes, *Chers*. 68[130]).[131] Indeed, one wonders if this transitional usage in these settings is almost to be expected.

2.5 Conclusion

This overview of the rhetorical insights of the Rhetorica ad Herennium and Quintilian, and of the pedagogical instructions of the *Progymnasmata* of Theon and [Hermogenes], has shown that although introductory verbs of speech are often omitted by the author, the criteria outlined in these texts are sufficient to discern who is speaking when in instances of verbless transitions to speech-in-character. Another speaker needs to be identified in some way. That speaker is characterized (e.g., as a hero, coward, philosopher, etc.). And all attributed speech is then appropriate to the character of the person or entity who is speaking. Further, by applying these conventions, ancient readers knew when and how to vary their inflection and tone when performing the text to an audience so that the audience "heard" (and in fact saw) the change in speaker. They knew, in short, when and how to act these speeches out.

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[130] Εἶτά φησιν ὃς ἂν τύχῃ παρελθών, "οὐ **γὰρ** ἐθέλεις γράφειν, οὐδὲ κινδυνεύειν, ἀλλ᾽ ἄτολμος εἶ καὶ μαλακός." "Then some irresponsible person comes forward and says, "Of course, you decline to make a definite proposal or to run any such risk. You are a coward and a milksop." From, Demosthenes, *Orations, Volume I: Orations 1-17 and 20: Olynthiacs 1-3. Philippic 1. On the Peace. Philippic 2. On Halonnesus. On the Chersonese. Philippics 3 and 4. Answer to Philip's Letter. Philip's Letter. On Organization. On the Navy-Boards. For the Liberty of the Rhodians. For the People of Megalopolis. On the Treaty with Alexander. Against Leptines.*, trans. J. H. Vince, LCL 238 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1930).

[131] The cited lexicons and grammars above also provide several examples.

In the light of what was learned from the process of writing a text for public reading, we can also safely assume that Paul would have given specific reading instructions in terms of changes in voice (both for emphasis and for a change in speaker) and facial and hand gestures to Phoebe, which she would either perform herself or to pass on to the lector in each location as she traveled to each house church in Rome. Regardless of the figure who read, Phoebe would then "have [had] an important role in the communication process, in supplementing verbally material that appears in written form in the letter, continuing or extending the conversation of the letter."[132] Consuming literature and speeches in this fashion was ubiquitous, so it almost goes without saying that the audience was expected to watch and to listen for these signals from the reader (performer) and that hearing someone slip in and out of different voices was nothing unusual. Ancient Hellenistic culture in Paul's day was imbued with drama and with dramatic practices.

But the identification of attributed speech was still not always easy, especially when the performance of a text had been lost to time after the original circumstances surrounding a text's production had long fallen away. So ancient readers developed further ways of detecting speech-in-character. They suggested that instances of contradiction (διαφωνία), when texts are not stating positions or arguments consistent with the character of the author, could be solved through a "solution from the character" (λύσις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου), i.e., the positing of a speech-in-character. And this simply

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[132] Head, "Named Letter-Carriers," 288–89; cf. 296.

follows from the foregoing: if speech-in-character was not detected when it was in play then a discourse would unfold in a strangely inconsistent and dislocated way; an argument would not feel appropriate. The positions of more than one speaker would be in play, jostling incoherently against one another. Moreover, capping formulae were often helpful. They marked the end of a speech and readers then knew that they had read a speech or a quote and could now understand an unfolding dialogue appropriately.

Epictetus's texts make a further helpful contribution to this developing picture. Given the employment of a fundamentally Socratic argument designed to reveal the foolishness and self-refuting nature of an interlocutor's views, speech-in-character is to be expected. But such arguments made by the author against an opponent might not reflect the views of the author in a such a setting. We say how Epictetus employed sarcastic parody whereby he scripts for himself speech that is inappropriate for him to be saying, but fits rather well with the views of his interlocutor. In such arguments the point was to demonstrate internal inconsistency of one's interlocutor, and hence a position could be adopted, as the saying goes, simply "for the sake of argument."

It is worth noting finally that we observed repeatedly how γάρ is used in these dialogical contexts as a transitional marker in a manner similar to "now," "so," and "well" in English (although it is arguably translated best with "but" or "yet" in a few instances to convey the adversative nature of the subsequent speech to what preceded). Indeed, while the start of speech-in-character could and (not infrequently) did lack a verb of saying, speech-in-character could begin with an instance of γάρ. These further insights will prove to be critical when we consider the appropriate interpretation of Romans 1:18–

3:20 because failures to appreciate these ancient compositional practices have impeded an accurate analysis of all the options for the construal of Paul's argumentation in this text. In spite of these clarifications, however, we need to accumulate a little more evidence of speech-in-character and related practices in other ancient sources before we consider the specific question of the presence of speech-in-character at various points in Romans 1:18–3:9.

3. Preliminary Script of Rom 1:18–32 and Responding to Objections

In the same way we adjudicated who was speaking when in the examples set forth in chapter 2, we will ultimately have to determine the script of Rom 1:18–3:20. We have to apply the criterion of appropriateness to each portion and to discern whether a given phrase or paragraph is either out-of-character for Paul and appropriate for the interlocutor or vice versa. This requires figuring out the nature ("characterization") of the interlocutor involved in the dialogue as well as probing for διαφωνία from what we know of Paul elsewhere in Romans and his other writings—and this process has been going on for some time. It is clear from Pelagius's comments on the dialogical back-and-forth in 3:1–9 that he sought to organize the script according to the principle of διαφωνία.[1] Commenting on Rom 3:1–2 he writes,

> Now, [as though] he asks what advantage a Jew has, he receives a reply in the person of a Jew: 'Much in every way.' For if the expressions 'Much in every way' and 'Everyone is a liar' are Paul's (Rom. 3:4), in what sense does he later on argue to the *contrary* by saying: 'But if our wickedness sets off God's righteousness, what shall we say? That God is wicked? Certainly not!' and so on (Rom 3:5)? In what sense does he finally assert that the Jews have no advantage, if here he reminds us that they have much (cf. Rom 3:9)?[2]

Pelagius notices contradictions between what is asserted in 3:2 and v. 4 and what is implied in the question in v. 5 and affirmed in v. 9. This is διαφωνία. And, as I will

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[1] I am thankful for Tom McGlothlin sharing with me a manuscript of his paper, "Patristic Rhetorical Analyses of Romans 3:1-8/9" (presented at the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, Atlanta, GA., 2010).

[2] Theodore de Bruyn, trans., *Pelagius's Commentary on St Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, OECS (Oxford: Carendon, 1993), 77. Brackets and parentheses are de Bruyn's; italics are mine.

eventually argue and establish, I think Pelagius is right to think Paul is asking the first question in Rom 3:1, but there is no way to confirm or deny this apart from already establishing the characterization of the interlocutor and tracing the dialogue up to this point. All these contradictions (διαφωνία) in 3:1–9 simply make it clear that we are hearing two different sides to a conversation, but they do not settle who is asking and who is responding to questions. Moreover, given that there are overt rhetorical signals of dialogue earlier (e.g., the apostrophes in 2:1, 3, and 17–24), it will be helpful to introduce any clues from those apostrophes and other preceding material before we assign the brief exchanges in 3:1–9 to different voices definitively.[3]

Hence the main goal of this chapter is to show how right from Paul's first apostrophe in 2:1 the surface cues of the grammar and characterizations therein suggest a preliminary script for 1:18–32 and thus set up expectations for what follows. The data in 1:18–32 will be relevant for a proper characterization of the interlocutor addressed in 2:1 and then elsewhere in Rom 2 and 3, including in 3:1-9a.

This chapter will proceed in four parts. First, I address one major objection right away in order to establish the mere viability of the thesis of speech-in-character occurring throughout Rom 1–3 beginning with 1:18–32: the criticism of novelty. Pointedly, why has no one else noticed this before Douglas Campbell?[4] (To reply, several scholars have

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[3] This is the main shortcoming of King's rescripting of 3:1–9; he did not sufficiently attend to the previous material in the dialogue and therefore was not working with an adequate characterization by which to more accurately apply the criterion of appropriateness.

[4] Douglas A. Campbell, *The Deliverance of God: An Apocalyptic Rereading of Justification in Paul* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009); idem, *The Quest for Paul's Gospel: A Suggested Strategy*, JSNTSup 274 (London: T&T Clark, 2005), 233–61.

noticed the key observations necessary for this thesis, although none have realized that they are observing the important rhetorical signal of διαφωνία.) Second, I will then set forth the reasons for discerning a provisional script that suggests Paul's interlocutor is speaking Rom 1:18–32. However, once this script has been proposed, I will need to address in the third section two more immediate objections, since these also have been used to foreclose on the idea that Paul is using speech-in-character in 1:18–32 namely, that (a) no change in speaker is introduced with a verb of saying in v. 18, and (b) the γάρ in 1:18 has to be a continuation of Paul's thought in 1:16–17 because, it is thought, γάρ can only function as supplying the basis for what preceded. After these objections have been addressed (the second objection here in more detail than in the preceding chapter), a concluding, fourth section will show how the preliminary script of the interlocutor speaking 1:18–32 and Paul's response in 2:1 sets up certain expectations for the reader for what is to follow in Rom 2–3 as a whole. Thus, after dealing with the objections usually made to the detection of speech-in-character in 1:18–32, this fourth section will begin to lay the groundwork for the more detailed analysis of διαφωνία in the rest of Rom 2–3 in subsequent chapters.

3.1 Responding to Criticisms of Ostensible Novelty

Campbell's articulation of the position that Rom 1:18–32 is to be assigned to an interlocutor that Paul is aiming to refute is not as new as often supposed.[5] Key

[5] Campbell, *Deliverance*; idem, *The Quest for Paul's Gospel*, 233–61.

components of Campbell's thesis can be found in the 1987 work of Thomas Schmeller, *Paulus und die „Diatribe": Eine vergleichende Stilinterpretation*, wherein he argues:

> Da ein solches Richten in 1,18-32 stattfindet und im Zusammenhang damit die Subjekte von 1,32 in 1,20 für unentschuldbar erklärt werden, ist die Deutung unausweichlich, daß 1,18-32 eine Schilderung der richtenden Aktivität des in 2,1ff Angesprochenen ist, die ihm selbst den Vorwurf der Unentschuldbarkeit eintragt....Oder anders ausgedrückt: das als „Hörer" gedachte Gegenüber in 2,1–5 ist identisch mit dem gedachten „Sprecher" von 1,18–32.[6]

Further, in his article published in 1994, Calvin L. Porter takes up Schmeller's thesis and expands upon it by showing how the oldest Latin rhetoric handbook, *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, is useful for not only identifying Rom 1:18–32 as a self-contained epideictic speech, but also for understanding "that in 2.1–16, as well as through Romans as a whole, Paul…challenges, argues against, and refutes both the content of the discourse [of 1:18–32] and the practice of using such discourses."[7] Even though from the index of *Deliverance*, it appears that Campbell himself was largely unfamiliar with the theses of both Schmeller and Porter at the time of writing, this demonstrates that the broad contours of Campbell's thesis are not as idiosyncratic as claimed by other scholars.

For instance, N.T. Wright asserts against Campbell's reading that "Nobody up to now has suggested" this way of reading Rom 1–3 and then "But that is what Campbell now does" as if the novelty automatically makes it untenable.[8] Additionally, Robin Griffith-Jones writes, "If Campbell is right, every other reader in nearly two thousand

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[6] Thomas Schmeller, *Paulus und die „Diatribe": Eine vergleichende Stilinterpretation*, NTAbh 19 (Münster: Aschendorff, 1987), 279, 280.

[7] Calvin L. Porter, "Romans 1.18-32: The Role in the Developing Argument," *NTS* 40 (1994): 210–28, here 215.

[8] N. T. Wright, *Paul and His Recent Interpreters: Some Contemporary Debates* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2015), 197, cf. 198.

years has missed the whole point of the passage."[9] Similarly, Nijay K. Gupta asks, "How did so many interpreters throughout history miss this?.... how is he [Campbell] the first to recover it?"[10]

It is interesting to note, then, that Wright himself elsewhere rejects this type of charge.[11] Wright is specifically responding to "objections to the return-from-exile theme," which he uses to interpret many of Jesus's parables in novel ways (e.g., the prodigal son in Luke 15:11–32 and the sower in Mark 4:1–20).[12] Wright's own rejoinder to the criticism is worth quoting in full:

> [I]t is no proper objection to a historical proposal to say, "If this were true, why has nobody thought of it before?" Quite apart from the fact that if that objection were ever to be allowed, all historical work (other than that involving fresh evidence) would wither on the vine; do we really want to tell our doctoral students (as Oscar Cullmann was reportedly told as a postgraduate) that all the problems are now solved and that they had better study something else? Or does our discipline not recognize (not least because of the rapid spread of early Christianity beyond the cultural, as well as the geographical, borders of Judaism) that many things in the New Testament were actually opaque to, say, the second-century church—things that we, with a cautious use of the excellent Jewish materials now available to us, are able to see in a fresh and arguably probable historical light? It is not only possible but highly likely that things which were extremely clear to first-century authors were rapidly forgotten in the very different subsequent circumstances and also that we have to reconstruct them with labor and great care.[13]

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[9] Robin Griffith-Jones, "Beyond Reasonable Hope of Recognition? Prosōpopoeia in Romans 1:18-3:8," in *Beyond Old and New Perspectives on Paul: Reflections on the Work of Douglas Campbell*, ed. Chris Tilling (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2014), 162; cf. a similar comment on p. 171.

[10] Nijay K. Gupta, "Douglas Campbell's Startling Alternative to Traditional Paradigms of Pauline Soteriology," *Reviews in Religion & Theology* 17 (2010): 252.

[11] N. T. Wright, "In Grateful Dialogue: A Response," in *Jesus & the Restoration of Israel: A Critical Assessment of N. T. Wright's* Jesus and the Victory of God, ed. Carey C. Newman (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 247.

[12] For Wright's interpretation of the parables such as the prodigal son and the sower see N. T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1996), 125–44, 164–82, 230–43.

[13] Wright, "Grateful," 247. Wright continues on:

In short, as Wright himself is well aware, these kinds of objections in terms of interpretative novelty have no place in academic discussions employing historical critical methods, and so any specific charge in these terms against Campbell's suggested reading can safely be set to one side.

In any case, there is also evidence that Campbell's thesis regarding speech-in-character is not as idiosyncratic and novel as Wright and others have asserted. The rhetorical signals underlying the thesis have been regularly and consistently observed, but apart from the knowledge of the ancient rhetorical conventions concerning speech-in-character, these observations about inconsistency and contradictions have not been perceived as the signals of διαφωνία that they are. In other words, while the specific solution that Schmeller, Porter, and Campbell offer might be relatively novel, the relevant supporting evidence that buttresses their conclusions is not.

Many scholars have detected manifold tensions if not outright contradictions between Rom 1–2 and the rest of Romans and Paul's other letters,[14] and have gone on to

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> This relates, of course, to certain features in particular, not least the objections to the return-from-exile theme…. Do I detect here, thinking in terms of Thomas Kuhn's famous analysis, the faint smell of burning paradigms? And do I sense the alarmed reaction of those who had invested heavily in them and who still prefer them even though these paradigms have less explanatory power, and indeed a higher degree of combustibility, than originally supposed? Of course, all new paradigms face the charge of being mere shallow innovations. Their worth has to be proved. But their defenders never have an easy time of it; and the reasons for this have at least as much to do with nonacademic human factors…. On we go around the old circle—of course, just because you're criticizing it doesn't mean the paradigm is correct; likewise (fair's fair), just because it's new doesn't mean it's wrong. What counts is argument, not assertion (a distinction New Testament scholars are often surprisingly loath to make, both in analyzing the New Testament itself and in commenting on each other's work). (ibid.)

[14] E.g., E. P. Sanders, *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 123–35; Heikki Räisänen, *Paul and the Law*, 2nd ed., WUNT 29 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1987), 97–101, 106–9; cf. xi–xxi, 9–15.

suggest on this basis, for example, that Rom 1:18–32 and parts or all of 2:1–29 are later interpolations.[15] These perceived tensions will be laid out at length in chapters four and five so it can suffice for now to note that they further undermine the objection from novelty.

Supplying the correct ancient rhetorical and ultimately historical context will enable us to make coherent sense out of the many dissonances and tensions between 1:18–3:9 and the rest of Romans and Paul's corpus that are regularly observed by scholars of all stripes (i.e., not just by scholars of one particular *Schule*). Since we are within an explicitly marked dialogical text in Rom 1–3, these tensions are best understood as signals of διαφωνία and we thus simply need to apply the conventions for speech-in-character and find the "solution from the character" (λύσις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου). With the objection of novelty out of the way, we can proceed to a preliminary (re)scripting of Rom 1:18–32 in context.

3.2 Preliminary Script of Rom 1:18–32

The shift from second person plural verbs in 1:1–17 to third person plural verbs in 1:18–32 and then back to second person singular forms in 2:1 brackets off 1:18–32 as a pericope.[16] Moreover, in terms of ancient reading conventions, the apostrophe that begins in 2:1 marks off 1:18–32 as a self-contained speech, which is to say that the apostrophe

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[15] J. C. O'Neill, *Paul's Letter to the Romans* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1975), 40–56; William O. Walker, "Romans 1.18-2.29: A Non-Pauline Interpolation?," *NTS* 45 (1999): 533–52.

[16] Cf. "Romans 1:18-32 is a carefully constructed text in its own right. It begins with what amounts to a thesis statement in v. 18 and concludes with a definite summation in v. 32. Moreover, these boundaries are offset almost exactly in stylistic terms by an emphatic alliteration" (Campbell, *Deliverance*, 356).

functions as a capping formula. The apostrophe signals that Paul is not the speaker of what precedes, but rather the person he now addresses directly is.

In more detail: The speech in Rom 1:18–32 says that every human being is "without excuse" (ἀναπολόγητος) (1:20) for any act of impiety or injustice (1:18) because everything about God and God's[17] ordinances is universally known (1:19–21, 25, 28, 32). Hence every human being is culpable for any deviant act. So the speech concludes by stating that although everyone "knows the righteous decree of God that those who practice such things [i.e., anything considered impious or unjust, v. 18] are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also join in approving those practicing [them] [αὐτὰ ποιοῦσιν ἀλλὰ καὶ συνευδοκοῦσιν τοῖς πράσσουσιν]" (1:32).

So far, then, we have a condemning speech declaring "those who practice such things" as "without excuse" and "worthy of death." As Porter notes, the epideictic speech of 1:18–32 "judges and calls upon the hearers to judge as well."[18] Similarly, Wiard Popkes argues that 1:18–32 is a self-contained, juridical, condemning speech.[19] Although he believes the speaker is Paul, it is significant that Popkes says Paul speaks as a prosecuting attorney or as the representative of the divine tribunal ("er redet wie ein

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[17] I will avoid gender pronouns in relation to God. Thus, I will use wording like "God's" or "God's self" when referring to God. If the text refers to the Father, then I will use masculine pronouns. And, when the Holy Spirit is referred to, although the Greek is neuter, in order to convey the personhood of the Spirit (since Paul definitely thinks the Spirit is a person who wills, speaks, and acts; e.g., 1 Cor 12:3, 11), I will use masculine pronouns because Paul explicitly associates the Spirit with Jesus's Spirit (Rom 8:9; Gal 4:6; 2 Cor 3:17). How this all coheres (or does not) with traditional Nicene-Constantinopolitan Trinitarian theology is beyond the scope of this project.

[18] Porter, "Romans 1.18–32," 219.

[19] Wiard Popkes, "Zum Aufbau Und Charakter von Römer 1:18-32," *NTS* 28 (1982): 490–501.

Staatsanwalt oder Gerichtsbevollmächtigter Gottes").[20] That is, 1:18–32 is composed "im Stil einer Gerichtsrede" and so has a "juridische Charakter."[21]

But then we immediately encounter a marked transition with a διό in 2:1:

> [1] Διὸ ἀναπολόγητος εἶ, ὦ ἄνθρωπε πᾶς ὁ κρίνων· ἐν ᾧ γὰρ κρίνεις τὸν ἕτερον, σεαυτὸν κατακρίνεις, τὰ γὰρ αὐτὰ πράσσεις ὁ κρίνων. [2] οἴδαμεν δὲ ὅτι τὸ κρίμα τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστιν κατὰ ἀλήθειαν ἐπὶ τοὺς τὰ τοιαῦτα πράσσοντας. [3] λογίζῃ δὲ τοῦτο, ὦ ἄνθρωπε ὁ κρίνων τοὺς τὰ τοιαῦτα πράσσοντας καὶ ποιῶν αὐτά, ὅτι σὺ ἐκφεύξῃ τὸ κρίμα τοῦ θεοῦ;
>
> [1] Therefore, you are without excuse, oh man, every one judging; for in that which you are judging another, you are condemning yourself, for you, the one judging, are practicing the same things. [2] "But, we know that the judgment of God is according to the truth on those practicing such things."[22] [3] And do you suppose this, oh man who judges those practicing such things and doing the same—that you will escape the judgment of God? (2:1–3)

The most important thing we learn in 2:1–3 is that the person Paul is addressing here is explicitly characterized as someone who "judges those practicing such things," namely, those things just mentioned in 1:18–32. The near verbatim repetition of "those practicing such things" from 1:32–2:3 links these texts together. For Rom 2:1–3, if we asked "What would it look like to judge those practicing such things?" the answer is someone who regularly says something like what is found in 1:18–32, a speech which explicitly condemns "those who practice such things" (1:32) as "without excuse" (1:20) and "worthy of death" (1:32). This linkage is similar to Philo's use of θαῦμα in *Prob.* 5–6 discussed in chapter 2. There, we observed how he clued his readers into the presence of

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[20] Popkes, "Zum Aufbau," 494; cf. 498.

[21] Popkes, "Zum Aufbau," 498, 500 respectively.

[22] For reasons that will be argued later, I agree with the NRSV that v. 2 represents the response from the interlocutor Paul just addressed.

speech-in-character by making it clear that the speech about philosophical "trickery" in §§6–10 is appropriate for those who think philosophy is "trickery" (§5). By repeating a key word between the characterization and a speech, Philo provides an explicit verbal clue for who this speech is appropriate for. Paul's repetition of "those practicing such things" from 1:32–2:3 functions similarly.

Philo's implementation of speech-in-character in *Prob*. 6–11 contains even more instructive similarities with Rom 1:18–32 and 2:1–3. To recall some of our other findings in chapter 2 here, we observed that Philo does not transition to speech-in-character with a verb of saying—in fact, the speech begins with a γάρ. We determined, however, that §§6–10 must be a speech-in-character (as indeed, the LCL translation makes explicit[23]) for the following reaons: (a) there is a clear capping formula used in §11 ("But all these things are…the inventions of men" [Yonge]); (b) the speech does not cohere with Philo's expressed views later in the treatise or elsewhere (i.e., this is διαφωνία); and (c) the further characterization, in addition to the verbal link with θαῦμα, of those who hold such views as "slaves" (11) makes it incredible that Philo himself would hold to views he thinks are slavish. Similarly, then, on the basis of ancient conventions for discerning attributed speech, we may doubt that Paul intends the audience to think he is the speaker of (or that he agrees with) the judging speech that precedes his apostrophe since the features in 1:18–2:3 meet the criteria by which such determinations are to made.

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[23] F. H. Colson, trans., *Philo, Every Good Man Is Free. On the Contemplative Life. On the Eternity of the World. Against Flaccus. Apology for the Jews. On Providence*, LCL 363 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1941), 13, note *e*.

Just as with Philo's comment in *Prob*. 11—that those who hold the preceding views as expressed in the speech of §§6–10 are dull and slavish—would mean that Philo is liable to the same judgment if he also holds these views, so too with Paul. If Paul is the speaker of Rom 1:18–32, then he was also just judging "those practicing such things" (2:1, 3). His statement that anyone juding in this way condemns himself (2:1) makes Paul liable for self-condemnation as well. Simply put, if 1:18–32 is in Paul's voice, then the apostrophe of 2:1 is Paul criticizing himself. As Schmeller observes,

> Da ein solches Richten in 1,18-32 stattfindet und im Zusammenhang damit die Subjekte von 1,32 in 1,20 für unentschuldbar erklärt werden, ist die Deutung unausweichlich, daß 1,18-32 eine Schilderung der richtenden Aktivität des in 2,1ff Angesprochenen ist, die ihm selbst den Vorwurf der Unentschuldbarkeit eintragt.[24]

In other words, the judging speaker of 1:18–32, a prosecuting attorney or divine tribunal representative according to Popkes, is the one addressed in 2:1–3.[25]

This conclusion that the one being addressed in 2:1 is the speaker of 1:18–32 was also tentatively suggested by Roy Bowen Ward, who suspected this might be the case in an article published in 1997. His article was particularly concerned with the unique critique of same-sex intercourse in 1:26–27 and how this aligned with certain Platonic traditions absent from Paul's other discourses on sexual morality (this material will be discussed further in chapter 5). But because of the unique language and argument in 1:18–32, Ward suspected that this speech might be that of Paul's interlocutor. He

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[24] Schmeller, *Paulus*, 279.

[25] Cf. Schmeller: "Oder anders ausgedrückt: das als „Hörer" gedachte Gegenüber in 2,1–5 ist identisch mit dem gedachten „Sprecher" von 1,18–32" (*Paulus*, 280).

commented, "it is still open to question whether these… verses represent Paul's voice or the voice of a rhetorical spokesperson in Rom 1:18–32, whom the apostle criticizes beginning in Rom 2:1."[26]

I agree with Richard B. Hays, then, that "Romans 1:18–32 sets up a homiletical sting operation… [and] in Romans 2:1, the sting strikes….The reader who gleefully joins in the condemnation of the unrighteous is 'without excuse' (*anapologētos*) before God (2:1)."[27] Similarly, Beverly Gaventa observes, "At 2:1, Paul springs the trap on just such a reader [who would "nod their heads"], noting that the willingness to condemn others also constitutes a form of the denial of God."[28] The main problem to be reckoned with here is that if Paul is the speaker of the speech of 1:18–32 (as it stands[29]), then the rhetorical trap he has set for "you, the one judging" has caught his own leg as well.

3.2.1 The Διό Transition in 2:1

Paul's use of διό to begin the apostrophe in 2:1 further supports the position that he is not the true speaker of 1:18–32, for if he was it would require a reading that Paul is

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[26] Roy Bowen Ward, "Why Unnatural? The Tradition behind Romans 1:26-27," *HTR* 90.3 (1997): 278. He then comments in the footnote to this sentence: "To my mind, this is a serious question, similar to the question of whether 1 Cor 7:1b is Paul's voice or that of some of the Corinthians. Both questions, however, are beyond the scope of this study" (ibid., 278n98).

[27] Richard B. Hays, *The Moral Vision of the New Testament: Community, Cross, New Creation: A Contemporary Introduction to New Testament Ethics* (San Francisco: HarperOne, 1996), 389.

[28] Beverly Roberts Gaventa, "The Cosmic Power of Sin in Paul's Letter to the Romans: Toward a Widescreen Edition," *Int* 53 (1994): 233.

[29] I will clarify more in due course, but here I want to note that Paul most definitely believes that idolatry and the vices named in Rom 1:18–32 are sins. That is not the point. Paul is disputing someone who claims to be a Jew (2:17) so there is going to be some overlap theologically, but Paul is going to disagree with certain points that might seem like "hair splitting" to outsiders much like interdenominational disputes among Christians today (e.g., between Calvinists and Arminians). The point is how these sins are framed and comprehended within a certain perspective ensconced in the speech as a whole.

self-condemning. This is because in 2:1 and 3, Paul accosts anyone who meets the following two criteria as "therefore" (διό, 2:1) condemning themselves:

(1) they agree with the speech in 1:18–32 that judged those who "practice such things";

(2) they themselves "do the same things" (i.e., they are sinners guilty of injustice and impiety [1:18] in some fashion).

Paul meets both of these criteria if he is the speaker of the judging speech in 1:18–32. Automatically, as the speaker he already meets criterion 1. For criterion 2, Paul frequently admits that he is a sinner guilty of "injustice" and "impiety" (3:9, 10, 23; 4:5; 5:6, 8). "Therefore" (διό, 2:1), it appears inescapable that Paul accosts and condemns himself.

3.2.1.1 Letting Paul Off His Own Hook: Solutions for Διό

Though often left unstated, this exact problem has often bothered Romans commentators when they get to 2:1. They regularly say how impenetrable Paul's logic is because of his use of διό for this transition.[30] But the use of διό is only difficult to

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[30] E.g., Joseph A. Fitzmyer, calls it the "the problematic *dio*" (*Romans: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB [Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1993], 299). Douglas Moo admits that the διό "creates a problem," but his solution is to connect 2:1 back to 1:18–19 and to ignore vv.20–32 (*The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996], 129–30, here 129. But this is untenable because Paul specifically links the apostrophes in 2:1, 3 to the language of both 1:20 (ἀναπολόγητος) and 1:32 (τὰ τοιαῦτα πράσσοντες). Leander Keck fails to mention διό at all (*Romans*, ANTC [Nashville: Abingdon, 2005], 74–75. Brendan Byrne admits "The actual logic of the transition [in 2:1] from what precedes is not all that clear" and that Paul uses the διό "as if this were an inference ('Wherefore...') from what has gone before—whereas the true inference would seem to go in the opposite direction" (*Romans*, SP 6 [Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1996], 80, 83. For a further catalog of scholars who admit the difficulty the διό causes see Porter, "Romans 1.18-32," 213n16; Runar M. Thorsteinsson, *Paul's Interlocutor in Romans 2: Function and Identity in the Context of Ancient Epistolography*, ConBNT 40 (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 2003), 178–88.

understand on the presumption that Paul is also the speaker of 1:18–32. If Paul is not the speaker, then he fails to meet the first criteria from 2:1 (and v. 3), and there is no problem to be solved. Some scholars have recognized the additional irony that Paul would be caught in his own trap and have offered instructive, though ultimately uncompelling solutions.

One option is to the assert along with "some commentators (Althaus, Lietzmann, Michel, Schlier)" that the διό must have "no inferential force."[31] But this solution seems to have fallen out of favor because it creates another significant problem. No evidence has been produced for the claim that διό can lack an inferential force in extant ancient Greek literature. It is simply asserted to have no inferential force here in 2:1 because of the problem this would pose for Paul outlined above.

Scholars who are uneasy with making διό meaningless offer other solutions. These putative solutions, however, further expose the problems posed by the διό. For example, Fitzmyer refuses to accept that διό is meaningless and has "no inferential force" and so maintains "that force is to be recognized here."[32] But then he seems to not realize the heart of the problem the scholars opting for a meaningless διό were trying to solve. He concludes that Paul "accosts the imaginary interlocutor who applauds what he has

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[31] Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 299. Fitzmyer dismisses this option.

[32] Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 299; similarly, Robert Jewett, *Romans: A Commentary*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2007), 196.

been saying about the pagan in 1:18–32."[33] So he never addresses the problem of Paul accosting himself.

Although not commenting on the διό, Jonathan A. Linebaugh reaches the same conclusion "that Paul's argument assumes that the judge of 2.1–5 endorses his [Paul's] critique of false-religion in 1.18–32."[34] Linebaugh and Fitzmyer are correct to note how the material in 2:1–5 necessitates that the interlocutor holds to the content in 1:18–32. But, again, if Paul also agrees with the speech set forth in 1:18–32, then he is "applauding" his own speech "about the pagan" while also being a sinner who "falls short of the glory of God" (3:23). And therefore, Paul is ironically opening himself up to the charge of self-condemnation while he is trying to construct his own trap against the judgers who judge others and who thereby condemn themselves.

The only way out of this conundrum for the conventional reading—that both Paul and the judgmental interlocutor of 2:1 agree with and endorse the contents of 1:18–32—is to say that Paul is only intending to trap those who *lack self-awareness* of their own sinfulness. It is fine to "judge those who practice such things" (2:3) so long as you know you are a sinner too. Again, although he does not spell the logic of this position out, this is the solution Fitzmyer finds when he says that Paul is only actually trapping the "self-

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[33] Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 299. Cf. "He turns to an imaginary listener or interlocutor, who loudly applauds his description of the pagan's moral failure" (ibid., 296).

[34] Jonathan A. Linebaugh, "Announcing the Human: Rethinking the Relationship between Wisdom of Solomon 13-15 and Romans 1.18-2.11," *NTS* 57.2 (2011): 221.

righteous,"[35] which essentially means those who lack self-awareness of their own sinfulness.

The biggest problem with this fine distinction between the "self-aware" judger and the "self-righteous" judger is that it is nowhere found in the text. Instead, one must introduce a hidden third criterion, and this criterion of self-awareness must be brought in from outside the text. It is only necessary in order to produce a solution to Paul's problematic rhetorical trap. This requires an exegetical sleight of hand by inserting a third criterion so that the Paul who speaks 1:18–32 and turns in 2:1 to "force the Jewish interlocutor to pass judgment on himself"[36] is not self-condemned for his previous judging by his own sinfulness (3:9, 10, 23; 4:5; 5:6, 8).

Put another way, according to this solution, Paul's ostensible "homiletical sting operation"[37] would only apply to those who agree with 1:18–32 and simultaneously lack self-awareness of their own sins. The "sting" of self-condemnation only applies now if three criteria are met. The logic of the three criteria work like this: (1) the person has to agree with 1:18–32; (2) the person has to fall short the moral claims therein ("do the same things"); and somehow (3) this person has to also lack self-awareness of criterion 2.

Not only is this a problematic solution, however, because it is asking us to supply a criterion that is not stated anywhere in the text, but it also generates further exegetical problems. Campbell makes clear how insufficient this trap in 2:1would be rhetorically if

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[35] Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 299.
[36] Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 297.
[37] Hays, *Moral Vision*, 389.

Paul was really only targeting those characterized by this third criterion of self-awareness. His way of penetrating to the heart of the issues is worth reproducing here:

> Paul — on the conventional reading — *agrees* with this judge in ultimate theological terms. Most importantly, both figures endorse the basicality of the retributive justice of God: "those who practice such [reprehensible] things deserve to die" (1:32a). So it must be this judger's *lack of self-awareness* with which Paul disagrees. It is in fact fine to think such things but not simply to direct them towards outsiders and leave things at that. One ought to be aware that one is in the same boat, so to speak; the judge is also a sinner and ought to acknowledge this. Hence, this turn is designed to jolt the figure into a healthier level of self-knowledge — one that might elicit repentance and salvation, rather than hard-heartedness and condemnation of others (see esp. 2:3-5)….
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> Moreover, so fashioned, it follows as well that *this argumentative turn will catch only such stupid judgmental hypocrites*. Those who are *not* hypocritical in this sense will be immune…. So the question arises, why is Paul doing this in contingent terms? What is the actual point of this rhetorical maneuver? Whom is he trying to sting?[38]

As Campbell observes, if the rhetorical trap is only for a specific un-self aware person, who is this person? Those who hold to a tradition reading, like Fitzmyer, thinks he is a Jew (cf. "if you call yourself a Jew" in 2:17).[39] What is more, this person is supposed to represent all Jews.[40] According to this traditional reading, Paul "is beginning a reasonably overt attack on Judaism, so this figure is not merely a Jew but *the* Jew."[41]

But there are profound problems with this view, as Campbell also highlights:

> If Paul is beginning to trap the Jews from 2:1 onward, then his argument works only if hypocrisy is *intrinsic* to the definition of Judaism! Otherwise, Jews simply reject his description and in effect walk away from his contentions — doubtless

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[38] Campbell, *Deliverance*, 363; his bracket and emphasis.

[39] Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 297.

[40] E.g., Byrne essentializes Judaism in the terms set forth in 2:1 when he writes, "The principle target from the start is the Jewish audience, seen as sitting in habitual judgment upon the behavior of the surrounding Gentile world" (*Romans*, 80). Similarly, Fitzmyer says that "vv 1–16 constitute an implicit indictment of Jews, which becomes overt in v 17" (Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 296–99, here 297).

[41] Campbell, *Deliverance*, 363.

> either puzzled or offended, and certainly unmoved. They would not identify with this figure.[42]

Not only is this view of Judaism wrong historically speaking,[43] but it does not cohere with Paul's own views of Judaism expressed elsewhere.[44] For instance, in Rom 9–11 Paul does not critique disobedient Jews for being hypocritical and judgmental or for lacking self-awareness of their moral shortcomings, but rather for being disobedient to the gospel (10:16). In fact, he does not even criticize them for being law-breakers. He instead implies they are following the Law quite well (10:2–3; cf. Phil 3:6, 9). Thus, it is implausible that Paul is springing a rhetorical attack on "the Jew," as a stand-in for Judaism *per se*. For Paul to do so would mean that he defines Judaism as "*innately judgmental and hypocritical*."[45] That is, Paul would be saying that all Jews *qua* Jew necessarily "promulgate a system that, to a man, they do not live up to themselves, but they nevertheless attack others on ethical grounds *and are unaware of their own ethical shortcomings*."[46] Even if we granted that Judaism was indeed fundamentally a religion about works righteousness, given the sacrificial system and the many Psalms confessing sins, it is quite apparent that Jews *qua* Jews would actually possess quite the level of self-awareness. It is embedded in their own Scriptures and liturgical practices. Only a rogue

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[42] Campbell, *Deliverance*, 364; his emphasis.

[43] Cf. E. P. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief: 63 BCE-66 CE* (London: SCM, 1992).

[44] That is, Paul provides no warrant in his writings that he thinks "Judaism is…*innately judgmental and hypocritical*" (Campbell, *Deliverance*, 364; his emphasis). Also, whithout having to endorse Sanders's positive argument fully, I think his negative argument that Paul does not at all evince this Lutheran-like definition of Judaism is unimpeachable (Sanders, *Paul, the Law*, 123–35; cf. idem, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977]).

[45] Campbell, *Deliverance*, 364; his emphasis.

[46] Campbell, *Deliverance*, 364–65; his emphasis.

Jew might possibly lack awareness of their own moral shortcomings. So, back to the logic of the criteria, since Paul himself has this self-awareness, as too would most other Jews of his time, then he along with the majority of Jews would again be able to escape the charge of self-condemnation.

So the question remains: Who, then, is Paul trying to trap? Even on a debunked view of Judaism (defining it as a system of works righteousness) and when adding in a third unstated criterion, Paul's trap would hardly catch anyone. Paul is then either attacking a straw man or has someone very specific in mind. Ultimately, I will argue that the latter option is preferrable. But straw man or not, adding a putative third criterion is implausible because (a) it is not in the text and (b) it generates a significant rhetorical problem for the traditional reading.

Given the problems the διό poses, still another option is to argue for some form of interpolation in 2:1. O'Neill puts his finger on the main issue when he claims that the only way for διό not to be "'a colourless transitional particle which appears quite illogical'" is "if the references to judging others be removed from vv. 1 and 3 as [interpolated] glosses."[47] Only if this is the case and we remove the references to judging, O'Neill says, are we "left with a perfectly logical *therefore:* the man who does these things is without excuse, because he could have known the Creator and could have acted morally."[48] O'Neill is right to observe how difficult this apostrophe is with its use of διό if the person speaking the apostrophe just spoke 1:18–32, but he offers a solution—that

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[47] O'Neill, *Paul's Letter*, 49.
[48] O'Neill, *Paul's Letter*, 49; his emphasis.

there must have been a scribal interpolation in 2:1—without any manuscript evidence. Similarly, Ernst Käsemann combines two of the above solutions and asserts that "διό does not have an inferential sense" in the text as it stands and that we actually need to "accept v. 1 as an interpolation."[49]

These scholars who argue for either of these solutions (that either the διό is meaningless and/or there must have been an interpolation somewhere in 2:1) highlight an important textual insight: the διό, taken at face value, makes it logically unlikely—near inconceivable—that an author speaking 1:18–32 would flow into speaking 2:1 as well. These scholars pay close attention to the logic of the text as it stands and thus notice the fundamental incompatibility of 1:18–32 with 2:1. The only way out of this conundrum that these scholars see is either the διό must be meaningless or some part of the passage has been interpolated. Being familiar with the conventions for speech-in-character, however, provides another solution that these scholars did not perceive. The speech-in-character hypothesis for 1:18–32 entails that there is no problem to be solved because Paul is not the speaker of 1:18–32.

3.2.1.2 What, Exactly, Is the Interlocutor Doing?

But this segues into another set of problems 2:1 poses the traditional readings. That is, there are not only problems with the διό transition itself if Paul is the speaker of 1:18–32, but also with the way scholars talk about the relationship of the interlocutor vis-

[49] Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 54.

à-vis 1:18–32. For instance, why, according to Fitzmyer, is the interlocutor said to be merely "applauding" the contents of 1:18–32?[50] The interlocutor is not simply applauding or nodding his head;[51] from the text itself in 2:1, 3, we know that he actually speaks the same kind of judging speech we just read in 1:18–32. As Justin King perceives, "the interlocutor actively judges those who do evil (1:18–2:4)."[52] Specifically, they are explicitly said to be "judging" (κρίνων) those practicing the things mentioned in 1:18–32 (cf. τὰ τοιαῦτα πράσσοντες in 1:32 and 2:3, cf. τὰ…αὐτὰ πράσσεις in 2:1 and τὰ τοιαῦτα πράσσοντας in 2:2).

It is not usually sufficiently appreciated that by repeating this phrase at the end of the speech in four successive verses, the text strongly affirms that the interlocutor engages in the judging activity described in 1:18–32. And Paul's only expressed opinion on that kind of activity in the text is that it results in a self-condemnation (2:1, 3). That is, the text never says Paul himself "judges those who practice such things"; it only ever says the interlocutor does. There is no warrant in the text at this point then to think that Paul agrees with the content of the judging speech. And there is important evidence to the contrary. Chapter 4 (and then again chapter 6) will demonstrate that a great deal of evidence makes it doubtful that Paul would agree with the judging interlocutor's speech as it stands. For the same reasons, there is also no evidence to warrant the notion that

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[50] Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 296, 299.
[51] Gaventa, "Cosmic Power," 233.
[52] Justin King, *Speech-in-Character, Diatribe, and Romans 3:1-9: Who's Speaking When and Why It Matters*, BibInt 163 (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 263.

Paul agrees with judging "those who practice such things" but is simply taking issue with the judging interlocutor's lack of self-awareness.

3.2.1.3 Speech-in-Character Explains the Data So Far

So then, since all of these proposed solutions to the διό in 2:1 themselves generate more problems, our initial suspicion has been corroborated that Paul is not the speaker of 1:18–32. Speech-in-character is actually the most economical explanation of the situation. Moreover, it is implausible to suggest that Paul constructs a text with dialogical features, but yet has no dialogue, as Dunn argues.[53] As Porter maintains, "It is not necessary to argue that with 2.1 Paul is addressing a reader whose views must be reconstructed or remain hidden. They are set forth in 1.18–32."[54] And the fact that speech-in-character solves rather than generates more problems further strengthens the case.

In short, since the apostrophe in 2:1 explicitly alerts the reader to the presence of an interlocutor and thus a dialogue, the solution to the apparent incoherence between the two sections of 1:18–32 and 2:1 is to read the argument in light of the conventions of speech-in-character and find the "solution from the character" (λύσις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου). The apostrophe in 2:1 characterizes the interlocutor as the sort of person who would say the precise things that were just said in 1:18–32. It is this very characterization of the interlocutor as a judger "of those who practice such things" (τὰ τοιαῦτα πράσσοντες, 2:3;

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[53] See: "Who is this hidden interlocutor who provides a foil for Paul's argument but seems to say nothing?" (Dunn, *Romans 1–8*, 89).

[54] Porter, "Romans 1.18–32," 223n43.

cf. τὰ…αὐτὰ πράσσεις in v. 1 and τὰ τοιαῦτα πράσσοντας in v. 2) that is the criterion by which the audience is supposed to determine *who* is speaking *when* according to the criterion of appropriateness. In this way, the apostrophe in which this characterization takes place also serves as a rhetorical capping signal that marks it as the end of a judgmental speech.[55] Understanding that the judging speech of 1:18–32 is spoken by the person addressed in the apostrophes of 2:1, 3 is the key to the entire rhetorical flow and function of the text. As Schmeller concludes, "Diese Wechsel der Redesituation ist das entscheidende dialogische Textmerkmal."[56]

3.3 Addressing Objections concerning the Verbless Γάρ Transition in 1:18

If διό in 2:1 remains the major impediment to all traditional readings, the solution we just put forward as resolving that particular difficulty immediately runs into its own problem at the other end of the speech: the beginning in 1:18. A primary challenge to reading 1:18–32 as the speech of the interlocutor is the ostensibly unintroduced and verbless transition to attributed speech in 1:18 that also begins with a γάρ. As Robin

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[55] The use of apostrophe as a capping singal was discussed in chapter 2 (e.g., Philo's use of the apostrophe to cap the end of Cain's speech in *Det.* 158). Also, in addition to the similarities between Rom 1–2 and Philo in *Prob.* 1–11 above as it pertained to the details of detecting verbless transitions to attributed speech, now we can yet another noteworthy point of correspondence: they both employ the technique of speech-in-character with the same *rhetorical flow*. In both Romans and Philo, the author's thesis is stated up front (Rom 1:16–17; *Prob*. 1–5). Then a prefatory transitional γάρ is used in a verbless transition to speech-in-character of a counter-thesis (Rom 1:18–32; *Prob*. 6–10). Then the author pivots with a capping formula to address the problems of the preceding speech-in-character (Rom 2:1–3; *Prob*. 11). Paul uses an apostrophe as a capping signal in 2:1 and Philo uses the capping formula "But these things are, as I said, pretexts of men" (*Prob*. 11; my translation). As another interesting point of comparison, Philo's attributed speech in *Prob.* 6–10 is 239 words in Greek and Rom 1:18–32 consists of 270 words in Greek. This shows that speech-in-character is not limited to quick one liners.

[56] Schmeller, *Paulus*, 282.

Griffith-Jones asks, "The challenge might be bluntly phrased: would Paul—and *why* would Paul—have launched into speech-in-character without introducing and identifying the speaker?"[57] Or again, "Why, we will ask, did Paul not do what one would expect any orator to do? He could simply introduce the change of direction and tone with an adversative ἀλλά (instead of the quite misleading γάρ), [and thereby] flag up the change of speaker" with a verb of saying such as "λέγει τις."[58] There are two related objections here—unintroduced verbless transitions to attributed speech and the use to do so of γάρ—although the second of these two objections has already been largely dealt with.

3.3.1 Verbless Transitions to Speech-in-Character in the OT and in Paul

As laid out in the previous chapter, the ancient sources prove that a change in speaker does not have to be introduced with a verb of saying nor identified immediately. Therefore, the fact that there is no verb of saying marking a transition from Rom 1:17 to v. 18 is not a cogent criticism of the presence of speech-in-character in 1:18-32. Indeed, we noted in chapter 1 how Pseudo-Longinus says introducing changes in speaker with verbs of saying is sometimes "frigid," which is to say, "clunky," and lacking in sublimity ([*Subl*.] 27.1).

Griffith-Jones's critique demonstrates his lack of awareness of the examples of verbless transitions to speech-in-character (as well as the many uses of γάρ occurring in verbless transitions to a change in speaker) in the ancient evidence. On Griffith-Jones's

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[57] Griffith-Jones, "Beyond Reasonable Hope," 162 (his emphasis).
[58] Griffith-Jones, "Beyond Reasonable Hope," 170.

reasoning, Philo's change in speaker in *Prob.* 6–10, which also happens to begin with a γάρ, would necessarily be "beyond reasonable hope of recognition,"[59] which is false. One might wish to critique Campbell for not supplying examples of γάρ and of verbless transitions to attributed speech to better support his thesis, but to object to his thesis for these reasons and to write as if they settle the matter should now be avoided. These objections are not probative in the light of the ancient core conventions of speech-in-character and the use of γάρ in these dialogical contexts.[60]

Of course, the change in speaker needs to be signaled (and the criteria for detecting these signals were set forth in the previous chapter), but the primary overt signals concerning Rom 1:18–32 are the apostrophes in 2:1 and 3 which are linked to the preceding section with a διό and a near verbatim fourfold repetition of τὰ τοιαῦτα πράσσοντες (1:32: 2:2, 3; τὰ…αὐτὰ πράσσεις in 2:1). Hence, the change in speaker does not need to be overtly introduced with a verb of saying because these other signals suffice. As Stanley Stowers makes evident, ancient readers knew that "In every passage [they] had to ask, 'Who is speaking?'" precisely because the change in speaker was not always overtly introduced.[61] In order to identify such changes they had to notice the other rhetorical signals such as change in tone which was "often signaled by dissonance in relation to preceding speech (*diaphōnia*)" and "by criteria of appropriateness" as laid out

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[59] Griffith-Jones, "Beyond Reasonable Hope," 170.

[60] I will reserve further comments on γάρ for its own section below.

[61] Stanley K. Stowers, *A Rereading of Romans: Justice, Jews, and Gentiles* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 18.

in chapter 1.[62] If all changes in speakers were overtly introduced with verbs of saying then there would be no need for the ancient elementary curriculum to teach young readers the various means by which to ascertain "the identification of characters and persons" in texts.[63]

In fact, Origen refers to the phenomenon of sudden subtle transitions to attributed speech in his Romans commentary: "As we have observed in the writings of the prophets, not only has the person speaking been suddenly changed without notice, but also the person of those to whom or about whom the discourse is addressed…. It seems to me that the Epistle to the Romans has been written in this way too. At various times the role of the one who is speaking is changed" (*Comm. Rom.* 2.11.2).[64] He continues, "So then, as in the prophetic writings, the person who wants to understand what is written must direct his attention carefully in order to ascertain the *personae*, i.e., who is speaking, to whom the words are addressed, or about whom the discourse is being made" (2.11.3).[65] Justin Martyr also assumes his readers will be familiar with these sudden verbless transitions to attributed speech within the LXX and consequently will be able to follow his interpretation of certain OT texts in terms of changes in speech "from a character" (ἀπὸ

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[62] Stowers, *Rereading*, 19.

[63] Stowers, *Rereading*, 17.

[64] All translations come from Thomas P. Scheck, trans., *Origen: Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans: Books 1-5*, The Fathers of the Church 103 (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2001). See also, "the person who wants to understand what is written must direct his attention carefully in order to ascertain the *personae*, i.e., who is speaking, to whom the words are addressed, or about whom the discourse is being made" (*Comm. Rom.* 2.11.3; cf. 2.11.2).

[65] I will discuss Origen's reading of Rom 1:18–3:20 in subsequent chapters as well as provide an explanation for why he did not read 1:18–32 as the speech of another speaker in the final chapter, although I think Origen gets the "message" of that speech essentially correct.

προσώπου) (e.g., *1 Apol.* 36.1–2, 38; 38.1–6). If Justin and Origen could assume that readers should always be on the lookout for sudden changes in speaker when reading the OT, and especially since Origen believed this to be a technique Paul himself used in Romans, then there is no sound reason to postulate *a priori* that Paul could not have employed the technique of speech-in-character.[66]

Since I have already provided several examples of verbless transitions to speech-in-character in Greco-Roman literature in chapter 1, it is now worth briefly noting here as a final response to Griffith-Jones's objection, and to those who think similarly to him, that verbless transitions from one speaker to another regularly occur in the Hebrew Bible and are retained in the LXX.[67] This phenomenon occurs incontrovertibly in 1 Corinthians at several places as well.[68]

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[66] I cannot address fully here the question of why Origen did not script Rom 1–3 the way I am since he was a native Greek speaker and trained in these rhetorical conventions. It will have to suffice to say that Origen's expressed polemical agena against Marcion and the predestinarians in his preface and through the commentary prevented him from reading Romans as a historical text. He was reading for theological ammunition against heresies of his time. Nevertheless, he points out several contraditions in the text, many of which center on the role of works and human volition (e.g., *Comm. Rom.* 2.14.16; 3.1.3; 3.6.1; 3.7.3–4; 4.4.2, 5, 7, 8), which those reading historically would label διαφωνία. Due to Origen's own polemical agenda, he wants to assign to Paul Rom 1–2, because it is material that helps him refute certain heresies. But then he later admits when getting past Rom 3:20 that now only "by bending these words, so to speak" is it possible that "we shall attempt to fit them into their context" and salvage coherence (2.14.16).

[67] Cf. Stanley K. Stowers, "Apostrophe, Προσωποποιια, and Paul's Rhetorical Education," in *Early Christianity and Classical Culture : Comparative Studies in Honor of Abraham J. Malherbe*, ed. John T. Fitzgerald, Thomas H. Olbricht, and L. Michael White, NovTSup 105 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 369.

[68] It will not be necessary to do an in-depth analysis of these texts or get too involved in the scholarly quarrels over certain details since these are largely immaterial for the primary and noncontroversial main point of these subsections: that Paul and his audience were no strangers to the phenomenon of speech-in-character.

3.3.1.1 Examples of Verbless Transitions to Speech-in-Character in the OT

Two examples will serve to make this point here (although they could be greatly multiplied—e.g., Pss 52:9 [v. 7 in English]; 75:2–5; 95:9–11; 132:14–18; 137:3; Prov 23:35; and Isa 1:14–27; and 28:9–10).

1. In Ps 91 (90 LXX), shifts occur from third person address ("He who dwells," v. 1) to first person address ("I will say," v. 2), to second person address ("Because he will deliver you…," vv. 3–13), and then back to the first person (vv.14–16). Unless one pauses to read the psalm carefully, this breakdown might lead one to expect that the first person speaker is the same in both instances.[69] But the two speakers are different. The speech in v. 2 is a prayer by a petitioner ("I will say to the LORD, 'My shelter and my stronghold, my God in whom I trust."), and the first person speech in vv.14–16 is divine speech in response to the prayer ("Because he loved me, I will deliver him…. He will call to me and I will answer him…"). Neither the MT nor the LXX introduce this change in speaker with a verb of saying. The content of the speech and the changes in grammatical person are the only signals that the reader is assumed to need in order to discern who the speaker is in each instance—and this further demonstrates how the criterion of appropriateness often operates intuitively to the culture in question.

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[69] Interestingly, the LXX changes the first person singular אמר in v.2 to the third person singular ἐρεῖ so that it is clear that the speech of v.2 is the speech of the person referred to in v.1. The NRSV similarly fudges the Hebrew third singular יתלונן ("abide") in v.1 and the first person singular אמר in v.2 to the second person singular so that it reads: "[v. 1] You who live in the shelter of the Most High, / who abide in the shadow of the Almighty / [v. 2] will say to the LORD, "My refuge and my fortress." The NASB sticks rigidly to the Hebrew: "[v. 1] He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High / Will abide in the shadow of the Almighty./ [v. 2] I will say to the LORD, "My refuge and my fortress, / My God, in whom I trust!"

2. In Ps 109 (108 LXX), the psalmist asks God to vindicate him against his accusers. The psalm then suddenly makes a transition into a section of sustained imprecatory speech. The Psalmist resumes a prayer in vv. 19–29 and concludes the psalm in vv. 30–31. The NRSV adds "They say" in v. 6 prior to the speech and puts quotation marks around vv. 6–19 to make it clear that this material is best read as a citation of the accusers' criticisms. Leslie C. Allen, who scripts vv. 6–19 as the NRSV does, notes an objection that, "The quotation theory is often dismissed as moralistic evasion of the imprecatory content."[70] But this objection amounts to an *ad hominem* rebuttal. That is, Allen is responding to anyone who would assert something like: "The only people who think this is a quote are those who are too pious to accept that a nice psalmist would say this." But there are two good exegetical reasons for following the NRSV, as Allen points out. First, there "is the change to a singular throughout… in differentiation from the plural references in vv 1–5, 20–31."[71] Second, Allen detects "a framework of repeated terms" that are "the psalmist's own signal that first he is about to quote the words of accusation and then has finished quoting them"[72]: "(ה)רע, 'evil,' in vv 5, 20" as well as "the terms from the root דבר, 'speak,' in vv 3, 20, and the repeated verb ,שׂטן 'accuse,' in vv 4, 20."[73]

Some of the challenges facing the assignment of speech-in-character cross-culturally emerge into view in the debate over where the reproduction of the accusers's

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[70] Leslie C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150: Revised*, 2nd ed., WBC (Nashville: Nelson, 2002), 102.
[71] Allen, *Psalms*, 102.
[72] Allen, *Psalms*, 103.
[73] Allen, *Psalms*, 103.

attacks should end.[74] But there are other signals besides overt verbs of saying that suggest ending the quote at v. 15. First, the psalmist is characterized as a "needy man" (אביון) (v. 31) and the "he" in v. 16 is said to "persecute" a "needy man" (אביון). This seems to suggest that the "he" in v. 16 is in voice of the psalmist's accuser, who is persecuting him, a "needy man." Second, all the imperatives throughout vv. 6–15 are curses and thus "he also loved cursing" (v. 17) and "he wore cursing as his measuring garment [מד][75]" (v. 18) are most appropriate as describing and characterizing the speaker of the cursing imperatives in vv. 6–15. Finally, the jussive תהי that cursing be "as a garment [כבגד] with which he covers [יעטה] himself " (v. 19) coheres with the psalmist's later declaration that his accusers "will be clothed with disgrace and covered [ויעטו] with their own shame like a robe" (v. 29). Admittedly, vv. 16–19 could be downright lies the accuser is further accusing the psalmist of (v. 20). But it makes slightly more sense to suggest that the psalmist speaks these words as part of his prayer. They accurately characterize the accuser and the psalmist thus essentially saying, rather wittily, "Since my accuser loves cursing so much (vv. 6–15) and is so enveloped by it, may he be judged with the same measure/garment (מד) with which he clothes himself." Fortunately, the conclusion that is

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[74] As Allen is well aware, "It is possible that the quotation extends only to v 15, as Jacquet (3:188) and NJB interpret, and that in vv 16–20 the psalmist retorts indignantly and reminds his adversaries that curses have a habit of coming home to roost" (*Psalms*, 103). Confusingly, Allen rejects this because "the text gives no signal of a change of speaker at v 16" even though this statement comes at the end of a paragraph in which he was just responding to the question, "Would not v 6 have been introduced more obviously as a quotation if it were that?" by noting how "in the Psalter and in prophetic sayings quotations need not have a specific introduction" (ibid.). That is, his argument for why a introductory signal was unnecessary for v. 6 necessarily ought to apply to v. 16! The cases for changes in speaker need to be adjudicated on other grounds.

[75] This word can mean "measure" or "garment" (BDB, s.v. מד, 551) and I think the double entrendre is purposeful here.

useful to this project does not depend on a definitive judgment on where the speech-in-character ends. The salient point is that this psalm evinces a verbless transition to speech-in-character in v. 6 whether one chooses to end the quote at either v. 15 or v. 19.

Again, there are many other such examples of verbless transitions to speech-in-character in the OT,[76] but these two serve to establish the point. Verbless transitions to speech-in-character are a feature of the Scriptures Paul inherited and learned from. Ancient Jewish readers of the OT like Paul and gentile readers of the OT like Origen, Justin Martyr, and their auditors (and thus many of Paul's own auditors at Rome), would have been familiar with this phenomenon along with the needed techniques for its detection and suitable performance.

3.3.1.2 Examples of Verbless Transitions to Speech-in-Character in 1 Corinthians

Griffith-Jones's admittedly "bluntly phrased" criticism that it strains credulity to suppose that Paul "would…have launched into speech-in-character without introducing and identifying the speaker"[77] ignores the fact that the dialogical nature of Rom 3:1–9 is taken for granted and that none of its transitions have an introduction or a verb of saying; the only debate is the script itself (who is asking and responding to the questions?). Moreover, elsewhere Paul quotes from others without explicitly marking off the quote with either a verb of saying or an explicit textual introduction of another speaker. The most obvious examples of verbless transitions to speech-in-character in Paul outside of

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[76] E.g., Pss 52:9 [v. 7 in English]; 75:2–5; 95:9–11; 132:14–18; 137:3; Prov 23:35; and Isa 1:14–27; and 28:9–10.

[77] Griffith-Jones, "Beyond Reasonable Hope," 162.

Romans come from 1 Corinthians.[78] Although some of the suggested instances are debated,[79] along with their extent, most if not all scholars agree that Paul is quoting (someone from) the Corinthian churches in the following passages, and not one of these instances is introduced with a verb of saying:[80]

1. "All things are lawful for me." (2x 6:12)
2. "Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food, and God will destroy both one and the other." (6:13)
3. "It is well for a man not to touch a woman." (7:1)
4. "All of us possess knowledge." (8:1)
5. "No idol in the world really exists." (8:4)
6. "There is no God but one." (8:5)
7. "There are many gods and many lords." (8:5)
8. "Food will not bring us close to God. We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do." (8:8)
9. "All things are lawful." (2x 10:23)

Although arguments could be made for more instances than these (especially within 1 Cor 11:2–16 and 14:20–39; cf. 11:19 [begins with a γάρ]; and 2 Cor 10:1 [cf. v. 10]),[81] this particular sample will suffice for our present purposes because one would be

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[78] Paul uses the technique of speech-in-character in other letters as well (see King, *Speech-in-Character*, 58–97), but 1 Corinthians has a high frequency and many of them are verbless transitions.

[79] E.g.,. Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 460–61 (esp. 461n192); Campbell, *Deliverance*, 540–41.

[80] For the debates about the length of these quotes see, ad loc., Thiselton, *Corinthians*.

[81] More below on important debated instances in 1 Cor 11:1–16 and 14:20–39.

hard pressed to find any scholar who does not think the above are quotations. Moreover, given the examples discussed in the previous chapter, the many verbless transitions to speech-in-character should not be surprising. Because it has seemed to hamstring the imaginations of certain critics of such a phenomenon occurring in Romans, however, it bears emphasizing.

First Corinthians 1:12 also illustrates how the conventions of speech-in-character like διαφωνία can be applied to adjudicate who is speaking when. Paul writes:

> λέγω δὲ τοῦτο ὅτι ἕκαστος ὑμῶν λέγει, ἐγὼ μέν εἰμι Παύλου, ἐγὼ δὲ Ἀπολλῶ, ἐγὼ δὲ Κηφᾶ, ἐγὼ δὲ Χριστοῦ.

While the previous examples were instances of verbless transitions to attributed speech, this instance begins with a verb of saying (ἕκαστος ὑμῶν λέγει). But debate occurs over whether the final phrase, ἐγὼ δὲ Χριστοῦ, is from a fourth group among the Corinthians or is a sudden verbless transition to Paul's own voice.[82]

To discern between these options using διαφωνία and the λύσις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου, we first need to note Paul's characterization of the Corinthians as fractious. They are characterized as having σχίσματα ("divisions," 1:10) and ἔριδες ("quarrels," 1:11). The Corinthians are thus not united, although, according to Paul, to be "in Christ" means to *be*

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[82] There is also another debate about whether Paul is quoting actual slogans from the Corinthians or constructing his own phrases that characterize the attitudes from the fractious Corinthians. L. L. Welborn argues for the former and Margaret Mitchell for the latter. See L. L. Welborn, "On the Discord in Corinth: 1 Corinthians 1-4 and Ancient Politics," *JBL* 106 (1987): 90–93; Margaret M. Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation: An Exegetical Investigation of the Language and Composition of 1 Corinthians* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1992), 83–86. For our purposes, this debate is immaterial. I would only add that if Mitchell is correct (and I think she is), then this still coheres with the function of speech-in-character, according to Quintilian (*Inst*. 9.2.30): "to display the inner thoughts of our opponents" (cf. King, *Speech-in-Character*, 77).

united (cf. 1 Cor 3:22–23; 12:13–14; cf. Gal 3:27–28). Therefore, the phrase ἐγὼ δὲ Χριστοῦ "does not appropriately fit Paul's characterization of the Corinthian speakers."[83] That is, this is διαφωνία with respect to his characterization of the Corinthians. Thus, on the basis of the criterion of appropriateness, and seeking the λύσις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου, we ought to postulate that this phrase is Paul's own meant as a counter and partial remedy to the divisiveness of the Corinthians and see if all the other evidence cooraborates or problematizes this "solution."

Following Margaret Mitchell, King summarizes well the other contextual evidence that confirms what the criterion of appropriateness leads us to suspect: "(1) Paul does not name the 'Christ group' when he names the others elsewhere (3:4, 22); and (2) he uses the phrase 'you are of Christ' (ὑμεῖς δὲ Χριστοῦ; 3:23) as a corrective to the three parties listed in 3:22."[84] Therefore, as King concludes,

> the fourth phrase's out-of-character quality serves as an additional signifier that the Corinthian factions are no longer speaking. Thus, despite the grammatical parallelism between the four phrases and the absence of any overt switch back into Paul's voice (for example, a verb of speech or strong adversative), evidence and argument favor the fourth phrase to be spoken in Paul's voice and not representative of a fourth party.[85]

Another example of the role of διαφωνία in the determination of speech-in-character comes from Lucy Peppiatt's recent argument regarding 1 Cor 11:2–16 and 14:20–39.[86] Peppiatt is the latest scholar to argue that some of the content in these

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[83] King, *Speech-in-Character*, 75.

[84] King, *Speech-in-Character*, 75; cf. Mitchell, *Rhetoric of Reconciliation*, 82n101. Note, Mitchell and King make a third argument that seems less decisive and has been omitted here.

[85] King, *Speech-in-Character*, 75–6.

[86] Lucy Peppiatt, *Women and Worship at Corinth: Paul's Rhetorical Arguments in 1 Corinthians* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2015).

passages is Paul quoting the Corinthians whom he wishes to correct. In particular, certain Corinthians are advocating for women wearing a head covering and for their silence in the gathering, and Peppiatt holds that Paul ultimately opposes and argues against these practices.[87] There is no need to summarize Peppiatt's (and others') detailed arguments here regarding the proposed scripts.[88] The mere fact that Peppiatt and others are coming to similar conclusions is evidence enough that Paul can use speech-in-character throughout his letters.

For our purposes, it is worth noting two specific insights from these other works. First, these scholars are coming to these conclusions by capitalizing on what Peppiatt calls "the fundamental inconsistency" that occurs not only in these passages in 1 Cor 11 and 14 themselves, but with the rest of 1 Corinthians as a whole.[89] Scholars of every stripe—meaning, even those who do not argue for attributed speech or interpolation in these passages—have long noticed these contradictions and this has produced "a

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[87] E.g., Thomas P. Shoemaker, "Unveiling of Equality: 1 Corinthians 11:2-16," *BTB* 17 (1987): 60–63; Thomas Schirrmacher, *Paul in Conflict with the Veil: An Alternative Interpretation of 1 Corinthians 11:2-16*, trans. Cambron Teupe (Nürnberg: Verlag für Theologie und Religionswissenschaft, 2002). Also, Schirrmacher provides a chronological list of sixteen scholars, with whom he agrees, who believe 1 Cor 14:34–36 contains Corinthian quotations (rather than this being a later scribal interpolation) (ibid., 101n350).

[88] Shoemaker's scripts 1 Cor 11:2–16 thus: Paul (11:2), Corinthians (11:3–9), Paul's response (11:10–16) ("Unveiling," 62). Schirrmacher's script is: Paul (11:2–3), Corinthians (11:4–9), Paul's response (11:10–16) (*Paul in Conflict*, 15 and passim). Peppiatt's script is: Paul (11:2–3), Corinthians (11:4–5), Paul's interjection (11:6), Corinthians (11:7–10), Paul's final response (11:11–16) (*Women and Worship*, 139–40). The script for 1 Cor 14:33–35 is almost the same for Peppiatt and Schirrmacher: Paul (14:33), Corinthians (14:34–35), Paul's rebuttal (14:36) (Peppiatt, *Women and Worship*, 141–42; Schirrmacher, *Paul in Conflict*, 100). But Peppiatt assigns 33b, "as in all the congregations of the saints" to the Corinthians's speech in v. 34. I think Schirrmacher has the better script on this point.

[89] Peppiatt, *Women and Worship*, 69.

spectacular array of contradictory commentary."[90] Although Peppiatt, Shoemaker, and Schirrmacher do not cite or engage with the ancient theorizing and examples of speech-in-character set forth in the previous chapter, what they are observing about "inconsistency" and "contradictions" in these texts actually constitutes διαφωνία according to the conventions discussed above. Unknowingly, their proposed solutions are thus attempts at finding the λύσις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου.

Relatedly, second, this scholarly hypothesis reinforces the fact that διαφωνία is a powerful signal. These scholars are either unaware of the details of rhetorical conventions discussed previously or choose not to incorporate them. But their findings showcase that a scholar not does not necessarily need to be aware of these exact rhetorical conventions in order to detect διαφωνία. This is what they are discerning in the text even if they do not call it by that name. And, they are making arguments for a solution that coheres with the λύσις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου. So these are not "unmarked" or "unsignaled" transitions to attributed speech. The διαφωνία is palpable enough to signal the change in speaker, and this is why it was a key ancient signal for transitions to speech-in-character.

The argumentative contributions of this evidence in 1 Corinthians is limited but useful: Paul was familiar with and comfortable with employing speech-in-character. It is possible to not be convinced on all the particulars to nevertheless concede that Paul regularly deploys speech-in-character and often does so with verbless transitions. It

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[90] Peppiatt, *Women and Worship*, 67; Shoemaker, "Unveiling," 61–63; Schirrmacher, *Paul in Conflict*, 35n88, 39n102, 59, 61, 62, 63, 66n233, 102, 103.

seems clear, in short, that 1 Corinthians evidences the methods and techniques that I am arguing are also present in Romans 1–3.

And at this moment we will need to briefly revisit the other principal objection made to the suggestion that Rom 1:18–32 is speech-in-character.

3.3.2 The γάρ in Romans 1:18

3.3.2.1 Examples of γάρ Beginning a New Speech

As the examples in Epictetus, Philo, and Josephus in chapter 1 demonstrated, the use of γάρ in 1:18 cannot be used as cogent evidence that there is no change in speaker. We also saw how all the lexicons and grammars agree on this point. Campbell himself noted this and it appears by the relatively brief amount of space he spent on this point that he expected this datum to be trivial.[91] It comes as something of a surprise, then, to find that this part of Griffith-Jones's critique continues to be repeated in the subsequent scholarly literature as if this settles the matter.[92] This unfounded resistance based on the presence of γάρ in 1:18 generates the need to revisit this claim one final time.

It is worth noting at this point in my argument that there are several instances of speeches beginning with γάρ in the NT. Some of these come after being introduced with a verb of saying and some are verbless transitions. Either way, γάρ is often used in the NT as a transition particle that provides no inferential basis for what preceded. It simply signals that people are beginning to speak and so it is often left untranslated in English

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[91] Campbell, *Deliverance*, 340, 1021n6, 1082n61.

[92] Quoted in chapter 1. Griffith-Jones, "Beyond Reasonable Hope," 170; Casson, *Textual Signposts*, 14, 225, 227. Barclay, *Paul and the Gift*, 462n29.

translations.[93] (An untranslated γάρ is an instance of the particle that has been deemed by translators to be doing no inferential work.)

The traditional confession quoted in 2 Tim 2:11 begins with a γάρ and the NRSV leaves it untranslated.[94] Similarly, in Acts 8:31 the Eunuch's response begins with a γάρ and it goes untranslated by the NRSV. The NRSV also leaves γάρ untranslated when the town clerk of Ephesus begins to speak in Acts 19:35. Again, in John 9:30, when the former blind man responds to his questioners and begins with a γάρ the NRSV leaves it untranslated. When Pilate begins to speak in Matt 27:23 with a γάρ it goes untranslated by the NRSV.

The NRSV leaves the γάρ in 2 Pet 3:5 untranslated because it is being used to make a transition to a new point rather than to strengthen the immediately preceding comment: "the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and indulging their own lusts [v. 4] and saying [λέγοντες], 'Where is the promise of his coming? For [γάρ] ever since our ancestors died, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation!' [v. 5] They deliberately ignore this fact [λανθάνει γὰρ αὐτοὺς τοῦτο θέλοντας], that by the word of God heavens existed long ago and an earth was formed out of water and by means of water" (3:3–5, NRSV). Interestingly, the γάρ in 3:5 follows a γάρ in v. 4, but v. 4 is an instance of explicitly marked speech-in-character (λέγοντες) from the "scoffers"

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[93] For examples from Euripides and LXX Isaiah see Daniel Rodriguez, "On Γαρ'd: Dialogue in LXX Isaiah and Romans" (presented at the Paul and Judaism, Houston Baptist University, 2014), 1–11, https://map.bloomfire.com/posts/2237610-on-d.

[94] A similar phenomenon of a quoted confession appears in 1 Tim 2:5–6. The γάρ in v. 5 appears to be part of the quote and would thus not be functioning to provide an inferential basis for anything antecedent (because that would just be how the quote begins), but it may have been inserted to established the claims in vv. 3–4.

in v. 3. Given the consecutive instances of γάρ in Rom 1:16–18, this example in 2 Peter 3:4–5 is especially instructive. It demonstrates clearly that consecutive instances of γάρ do not require the subsequent occurrences to be invariably providing the basis for what precedes.[95]

We may note further in this relation that John records that some people were saying "This one is truly the Prophet" (John 7:40) and "others were saying, 'This one is the Christ'" (7:41). And when the author introduces the speech of those who disagree he uses a γάρ: οἱ δὲ ἔλεγον· μὴ γὰρ ἐκ τῆς Γαλιλαίας ὁ χριστὸς ἔρχεται; οὐχ ἡ γραφὴ εἶπεν ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ σπέρματος Δαυὶδ καὶ ἀπὸ Βηθλέεμ τῆς κώμης ὅπου ἦν Δαυὶδ ἔρχεται ὁ χριστός; (7:41–42). The NRSV once again leaves it untranslated. Here, then, we have a clear instance of Smyth's "prefatory" use of γάρ, in which "it introduces a new fact."[96] The γάρ here is not supplying the reason or cause for either of the previous statements about Jesus; rather, it introduces a "fact" that attempts to contradict the pervious statement that Jesus is the Christ. This is also, then, an example of a γάρ that is expressing "dissent" from what preceded.[97] Hence, as in the example immediately following, it might be best to translate this γάρ with "yet" or "but." Its speakers are

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[95] Contra N. T. Wright, who assumes use of γάρ successively in Rom 1:16–18 means an unbroken unified sequence of thought (*Paul and the Faithfulness of God*, Christian Origins and the Question of God 4 [Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013], 2:765).

[96] Herbert Weir Smyth, *A Greek Grammar for Colleges* (New York: American Book Company, 1920), 639–40; cf. J.D. Denniston, *The Greek Particles*, 2nd ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), 68–72.

[97] Cf. Denniston, *The Greek Particles*, 74–75.

responding negatively to the claim that Jesus is the Christ: "But [γάρ] certainly the Christ is not coming from Galilee, is he?" (John 7:41).[98]

Similarly, when the "Canaanite" woman (Matt 15:22) responds to Jesus's comment that "it is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs" (15:26) we read: ἡ δὲ εἶπεν· ναὶ κύριε, καὶ γὰρ τὰ κυνάρια ἐσθίει ἀπὸ τῶν ψιχίων τῶν πιπτόντων ἀπὸ τῆς τραπέζης τῶν κυρίων αὐτῶν (15:27).[99] After ostensibly agreeing with Jesus (ναὶ κύριε), we have another clear instance of Smyth's "prefatory" or "anticipatory" use of γάρ, in which "it introduces a new fact" since it does not supply the reason or cause for either Jesus's statement or her putative (qualified) agreement.[100] That is, while the Canaanite mother agrees with Jesus's comment, she disagrees with what Jesus seems to think this means vis-à-vis her demonized daughter and γάρ is used to express her disagreement (i.e., she offers "dissent" or "qualified agreement").[101] Just as Matthew's use of "Canaanite" instead of Mark's "Syrophoenician" (Mark 7:26) is deliberate, his use of γάρ here 15:27 is his own since Mark's version of the story does not have it (cf. Mark 7:28). Whether this was a conscious addition or an unconscious one is hard to say but it

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[98] Similarly, even though it is not at the beginning of a new speech, the γάρ in John 20:9 would be best translated with a "but" or a "yet": "then the other disciple who came first to the tomb also entered and he saw and believed; γὰρ they had not yet understood the scripture that it is necessary for him to rise from the dead" (20:8–9). The phrase that follows the γάρ is the not reason or explanation for "the other disciple's" belief. In fact, v. 9 seems to be contrasting the belief of "the other disciple" with the lack of belief from "they" (Peter and Mary Magdalene). Thus, "he saw and believed; *but* they [Peter and Mary] had not yet understood the scripture that it is necessary for him to rise from the dead [and so did not believe yet]."

[99] My thanks to Christopher Redmon for sharing this example with me.

[100] Smyth, *Greek Grammar*, 639–40.

[101] Denniston, *The Greek Particles*, 74–76. The new fact γάρ instroduces in Matt 15:27 actually dissents from Jesus's previous comment and this is why the NRSV translates γάρ here as "yet" ("Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table") and the NASB uses "but").

does attest to how intuitive this non-explanatory, and even mildly oppositional, use of γάρ is in dialogical contexts.[102]

These examples from John 7:41–42 and Matt 5:27 demonstrate how in a dialogical context γάρ could be used not only to simply begin a speech by a new speaker, but also to begin a statement that is dissenting from what someone else just said; that is, it is used to introduce an objection.

Hopefully, it has now been established that the use of γάρ is not to be reduced to a single function whereby it provides a reason for affirming something that was stated prior, as Sarah H. Casson asserts.[103] Indeed, we have found this to be an especially problematic contention in dialogical contexts.[104] Rather, as demonstrated, γάρ can be used to introduce speech and to introduce objections in attributed speech. In sum, γάρ is not the silver bullet against speech-in-character beginning in 1:18 that scholars like Griffith-Jones, Barclay, and Casson assume it to be. Γάρ does not prove that 1:18 begins

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[102] Mark 7:28: ἡ δὲ ἀπεκρίθη καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ, κύριε καὶ τὰ κυνάρια ὑποκάτω τῆς τραπέζης ἐσθίουσιν ἀπὸ τῶν ψιχίων τῶν παιδίων.

Matt 15:27: ἡ δὲ εἶπεν, ναὶ κύριε, καὶ <u>γὰρ</u> τὰ κυνάρια ἐσθίει ἀπὸ τῶν ψιχίων τῶν πιπτόντων ἀπὸ τῆς τραπέζης τῶν κυρίων αὐτῶν.

[103] Sarah H. Casson, *Textual Signposts in the Argument of Romans: A Relevance-Theory Approach*, ECL 25 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2019), 22, 37, 61, 68.

[104] For examples of γάρ being used purely as a transition particle with no causal meaning but not necessarily at the beginning of a new speech see, e.g., Josephus, *Ant.* 1.68; *B.J.* 1.3, 38, 138, 143; Rom 14:15; 16:19; 1 Cor 10:1; 2 Cor 1:11; 10:12; 11:5; Gal 2:6; 4:24; 5:13. There are also some instances where γάρ is used by the same speaker, but in order to express "although" or "even though" (e.g., Rom 5:7; 1 Cor 15:41; Exod 34:9 LXX). Again, these are not controversial. For example, David A. deSilva comments that the γάρ in Gal 4:24 "appears to introduce a rationale, but in fact begins to unfold the allegorical interpretation of the story of Sarah and Hagar" (*Galatians: A Handbook on the Greek Text* [Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2014], 96. Then, commenting on the γάρ in 5:13, "It is not clear how this statement is intended to provide support for the preceding material. It may be best to take this as a marker of clarification (see BDAG, 189.2), particularly introducing clarifications" (Ibid., 114). Notice, "begins" and "introducing" in these two quotes. This aligns with Smyth's "prefatory" use outlined above. These instances need to be kept in mind in order to expose just how fallacious the γάρ rejoinder actually is.

a speech in character, but it is certainly not dispositive against such a thesis.[105] The argument must be adjudicated by broader concerns regarding the conventions of speech-in-character.

3.3.2.2 Γάρ Is a Problem for Traditional Readings

In broader indirect support of this contention it is also worth noting that many scholars have not translated γάρ in 1:18 with causal or inferential force, further complicating the contention that it must carry inferential force and that this must render the hypothesis of speech-in-character untenable.

For instance, not seeing how what follows 1:1–17 in 1:18–32 establishes the basis for what preceded, James D. G. Dunn argues "the causal force of the conjunction need not be pressed, and it may function here simply as a linking word ('indeed'), so that some listeners could well hear it simply as introducing the first stage of the larger argument."[106] This "introducing the first stage" of an argument is actually the prefatory use of γάρ discussed above. Also, Fitzmyer says "*gar* here…is better understood as expressing contrast."[107] Again, C. H. Dodd says the γάρ is to be understood as the "adversative conjunction *but* in 1.18."[108] Indeed, the REB, NIV, and CEB all leave the γάρ in 1:18

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[105] Given the evidence gathered, the presence of γάρ cannot even rise to the level of being probative evidence against speech-in-character.

[106] James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, WBC 38A (Dallas: Word, 1988), 70; cf. 54: "But the ὀργὴ θεοῦ ἐπὶ ἀδικίαν as against the δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ εἰς πίστιν (v 17) strongly suggests that the connection is…contrast."

[107] Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 277.

[108] C. H. Dodd, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans*, MNTC (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1932), 18.

untranslated, doubtless to "imply that Paul begins an unrelated topic" to what preceded, as Leander Keck puts it.[109]

The most economical explanation for the contrast that Dunn, Fitzmyer, and Dodd note is that Paul is setting up "two competing claims":[110] Paul's Gospel of God's saving-δικαιοσύνη (as God is faithful to God's covenant promises, 1:1–4; 11:26–29; 15:8) that is for all who have faith (not any type of merit/works) (1:16–17) versus a message about God's retributive-δικαιοσύνη that takes no account of God's covenant promises and "pays back" wrath and death for ungodliness and injustice and eschatological life for all who persevere in good works (and faith is conspicuously absent) (1:18–32; 2:2, 6–13; 3:5–6, 8). Interestingly, though he does not take 1:18–32 to be speech-in-character, on account the abrupt contrast between 1:16–17 and 1:18–32, Rafael Rodríguez nevertheless says that 1:18–32 constitutes "a *dysangelion* ["anti-gospel"]."[111] I agree, and I think speech-in-character best explains why there is an "anti-gospel" present immediately after a statement of Paul's gospel in 1:16–17. The γάρ in 1:18 seems to be used to express dissent from what preceded, which would mark 1:18–32 as a *dysangelion* from a Pauline perspective.

3.4 Conclusion

Now that the objections of unacceptable novelty, a verbless and hence ostensibly unsignaled transition, and the presence of a necessarily explanatory γάρ in 1:18, no

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[109] Keck, *Romans*, 57.
[110] Porter, "Romans 1.18–32," 217; cf. 212–13.
[111] Rafael Rodríguez, *If You Call Yourself a Jew: Reappraising Paul's Letter to the Romans* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2014), 27.

longer stand as barriers to the hypothesis of speech-in-character, we can explore what happens when we apply the ancient conventions of attributed speech to this text in its broader setting. In addition to recognizing the apostrophe in 2:1 as a capping signal, showing where a speech has ended, the characterization of the interlocutor as a judger of "those who do such things" is crucial. This immediately suggests that the condemning, judgmental speech of 1:18–32 is appropriate for this interlocutor because the apostrophe has provided sufficient characterization of the interlocutor for the letter's readers to identify the text of 1:18-32 as the voice of the interlocutor. And this preliminary supposition also coheres with the διό used to make the transition from 1:32 to 2:1. It is precisely on account of this person's condemning character that they "therefore" (διό) ironically condemn themselves to be "without excuse" (as they just condemned these "others" in 1:20), guilty of impiety and injustice (1:18), that is, "practicing the same things" (2:1).

This preliminary rescripting of 1:18–32 now sets up expectations for what follows that can be tested according to the ancient rhetorical conventions as well. Paul's claim developed from 2:1 that the judging interlocutor "condemns himself" on the basis (διό) of what he (the interlocutor) has just uttered in judgment over those "practicing the such things" (1:32; 2:2–3) leads us to expect an exposition of how this interlocutor's judging speech and beliefs are self-refuting. That is, we can expect a type of Socratic *elenchus*. Paul is saying, in effect, "If this judging speech is what you proclaim, then it follows (διό) that this kind of belief would ironically serve to condemn yourself as ἀναπολόγητος (cf. 1:20) as well. Now I will start unpacking how this is the case."

This means the διό-plus-apostrophe is not only a capping signal, but it also marks the future use by Paul of the Socratic method. He has used a speech from his interlocutor in order to have the interlocutor's own words provide the evidence that this kind of speech is ultimately self-condemning.[112] It is precisely in this way that Paul eludes the charge that he is judging the judger and is thus liable to his own self-condemning polemic. That is, Paul is not building a case against his interlocutor on his (Paul's) own terms; rather, he is merely bringing to light the fact that the case his interlocutor constructs against "them" (these unjust and impious anonymous masses) actually functions as a case against himself (the interlocutor).

The expectations cued in 2:1 and 3, then, cohere with the purposes of constructing dialogical exchanges. One of the functions of dialogues, as Stowers demonstrates with examples from Epictetus and Dio Chrysostom, was to follow "the Socratic technique of critical questioning (*elenchein*) whereby a person was led to a realization of his ignorance, lack of virtue, and need to learn wisdom."[113] The assumption underlying this technique is the view that "the interlocutor himself provides the evidence or conclusion" in order to "bring to light contradictions in his beliefs, and that lead him to the right conclusion."[114] Thus, "the Socratic censure (*elenchein*)…indicts the person by exposing ignorance and moral inconsistency."[115] As Campbell puts it, when an author constructs a

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[112] On the Socratic method of *elenchus* see Stowers, *Rereading*, 163–64; Campbell, *Deliverance*, 535–38.

[113] Stowers, *Rereading*, 162; cf. 163–65.

[114] Stowers, *Rereading*, 163.

[115] Stowers, *Rereading*, 163.

Socratic figure, "that figure will be addressed and ultimately corrected *in terms of his or her own assumptions*."[116] Further, this "dialogical or Socratic component" of "trying to point out some failing or misunderstanding on the part of these interlocutors" was for the purpose of addressing the author's actual readers only "indirectly."[117] That is, the actual readers are positioned as onlookers who overhear this dialogue between the author and the interlocutor. The ultimate goal in Romans would be, then, for Paul's audience who are overhearing this debate to not be persuaded by any well-spoken and persuasive speech (cf. 16:18) in terms that this interlocutor represents (16:17–20).[118]

By digging into the observations from a variety of scholars about the tensions within Rom 1:18–2:29 in the next two chapters, I will argue that these sufficiently establish the fact of διαφωνία and are then plausibly explained as the voice of Paul's interlocutor. In the next chapter, we turn to focus on 1:18–32 in particular (and we will return to this portion of Romans in conversation with Philo in chapter 6).

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[116] Campbell, *Deliverance*, 537.

[117] Thomas H. Tobin, *Paul's Rhetoric in Its Contexts: The Argument of Romans* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2004), 91, 93.

[118] Sigve K. Tonstad, *The Letter to the Romans: Paul among the Ecologists*, The Earth Bible Commentary Series 7 (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2016), 98.

4. Tensions Generated by Rom 1:18–32

I will now begin to detail, as J. C. O'Neill states, that "at every point there is tension, as all commentators have perceived" in Rom 1:18–3:20.[1] In this chapter, I will document some of the tensions apparent between 1:18–32 and the rest of the letter. I will analyze how some scholars have attempted to address these tensions, arguing that their synthetic explanations do not fully convince. An ancient "solution from character" (λύσις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου) will ultimately prove more plausible.

4.1 Some Tensions Flowing from Rom 1:18–32

4.1.1 Redeploying Evidence for Interpolation

Here we need to set forth the reasons why some scholars have argued that 1:18–32 is distinctive.[2]

O'Neill has observed that, "The language in which the argument [of 1:18–32] is expressed is unlike Paul's usual language in both vocabulary and style, and I doubt very much whether Paul wrote these verses. Language apart, it is very hard to see how the argument would fit into the train of thought so strikingly begun in 1.1–17."[3] Walker takes up these claims and provides a more robust substantiation of ONeill's conclusions, which are important enough to list in full:

> Regarding Rom 1.18–32…[t]he basic data regarding vocabulary are the following: the passage contains 109 different nouns, adjectives, and verbs; of these 109, fifteen (13.76 per cent) are found nowhere else in the NT, ten (8.26 per

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[1] J. C. O'Neill, *Paul's Letter to the Romans* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1975), 54.

[2] In chapter 3, I made the point that Rom 1:18–32 is a self-contained speech. See also, Calvin L. Porter, "Romans 1.18-32: The Role in the Developing Argument," *NTS* 40 (1994): 215–21.

[3] O'Neill, *Paul's Letter*, 41.

> cent) appear elsewhere in the NT but not in the Pauline corpus, four (3.67 per cent) are shared only with pseudo-Pauline and other non-Pauline NT writings, and five (4.59 per cent) are shared only with pseudo-Pauline writings. In short, almost a third of the nouns, adjectives, and verbs in Rom 1.18–32 – a total of 34 words or 31.19 per cent – appear nowhere else in the authentic Pauline letters (particularly noteworthy is the vocabulary beginning with the last two words of v. 29 and continuing through v. 31: here, twelve of the fifteen words are not otherwise attested in the authentic letters of Paul). In addition, Rom 1.18–32 contains sixteen words that appear elsewhere in the authentic Pauline writings only once; of the sixteen, four occur only in quotations from the OT, two appear only in Gal 3.28 (often regarded as a pre-Pauline baptismal formula), and two are found only in Rom 2 which, as part of the larger passage under consideration, may well be non-Pauline. Thus, at least 50 (45.87 per cent) of the 109 nouns, adjectives, and verbs in Rom 1.18–32 appear not to represent typically Pauline vocabulary…. In my judgement, these data regarding vocabulary suggest that Pauline authorship of Rom 1.18–32 is highly unlikely.[4]

After demonstrating how idiosyncratic the vocabulary is for Rom 1:18–32, and how "distinctively non-Pauline" compared to the rest of Paul's corpus,[5] Walker turns to peculiar features of the text in order to rebut the criticism that "[o]ne might argue…that the distinctive vocabulary of Rom 1.18–32 results from its distinctive subject matter."[6] Once again, the data needs to be presented in full:

> This argument founders, however, on the fact that the *vocabulary* of the passage is *most* distinctive at precisely the point where the *subject matter* is *least* distinctive: the 'vice' list in 1.29–31. The authentic Pauline letters contain five other such lists, and a comparison of the vocabulary in these lists with that in Rom 1.29–31 indicates relatively little overlap. Rom 1.29–31 lists a total of 21 vices; of the 21, however, only six (28.57 per cent) appear in one or more of the other lists. Alternatively, the other five lists enumerate a total of 28 vices; of the 28 however, only six (21.43 per cent) appear in Rom 1.29–31. At the same time, however, there is significantly more overlap *among* the other five lists: all of the six vices in 1 Cor 5.10–11 (100 per cent) appear in one or more of the other lists, as do five of the six (83.33 per cent) in Rom 13.13, nine of the eleven (81.82 per cent) in 2 Cor 12.20–1, eleven of the fifteen (73.33 per cent) in Gal 5.19–21, and seven of the

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[4] William O. Walker, "Romans 1.18-2.29: A Non-Pauline Interpolation?," *NTS* 45 (1999): 535–36.
[5] Walker, "Romans 1.18–2.29," 535.
[6] Walker, "Romans 1.18-2.29," 536.

> eleven (63.64 per cent) in 1 Cor 6.9–10. In short, although the vocabularies of the other vice lists in the authentic Pauline letters exhibit a significant degree of overlap, the vocabulary of Rom 1.29–31 is distinctively different…. In short, not only is the vocabulary of Rom 1.18–32 distinctively non-Pauline, it is also most non-Pauline precisely at the point where one would expect it to be most Pauline: in the vice list in 1.29–31.[7]

These observations are significant. As Douglas Campbell concludes, "the impressive evidence of an unusual style in Romans 1:18-32 that these scholars have collated has never been adequately explained otherwise."[8] Though Walker's (and O'Neill's) proposed solution to these tensions needs to be rejected—especially given that there is no manuscript evidence for interpolation—they are nevertheless offering a solution to a real problem. Why is this material so unique in terms of terminology and syntax in relation to the rest of Paul's corpus?[9]

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[7] Walker, "Romans 1.18-2.29," 536–37, his emphasis.

[8] Douglas A. Campbell, *The Deliverance of God: An Apocalyptic Rereading of Justification in Paul* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 534, cf. 356–58.

[9] It might be helpful to clarify at this point what I am and am not arguing with respect to Paul and the contents of 1:18–32. I am not arguing that Paul disagrees with every jot and tittle of 1:18–32. There is probably a lot of material that he would agree with, at least in general terms, such as the claim that idolatry is wrong and that this seems to characterize gentiles as such, that same-sex intercourse is wrong, and that all the vices listed in 1:29–31 are indeed vices. But Paul's agreement on the points in Rom 1:18–32 is more of a "Yes, but…" That is, his agreement would probably have come with qualifications because this is a non-Pauline way of speaking about idolatry, injustice, impiety, and vice (evidenced by the peculiarity of this section, let alone vice list, among other comparable undisputedly Pauline texts). In other words, this is not how Paul would otherwise talk about these matters. I will discuss this specifically in chapter 6 in relation to how Paul elsewhere talks about same-sex intercourse in a way deeply at odds with the framing of this same issue in Rom 1:18–32. This speech has a very particular sense about how God is responding to these sins and about why people commit acts of impiety and injustice and therefore what it means to speak "the truth" (cf. 2:2) to those who commit these acts. So then, what I am arguing is that Paul disagrees with the speech of 1:18–32 as it stands. He cannot endorse certain particulars without qualification (and he will at times straightforwardly disagree with certain essential particulars as well). Indeed, as argued in chapter 3, the διό in the apostrophe in 2:1 makes this evident and rhetorically necessary.

4.1.2 Strengthening the Case: More Tensions Flowing from Rom 1:18–32

But there are more issues that contribute to a perception of tension. As Rafael Rodríguez comments, "the change in tone ["between vv. 14–17 and 18–32"] should surprise us."[10] This "change in tone" not only further supports the contrastive reading of the γάρ in 1:18, but Rodríguez's comment demonstrates that even someone unfamiliar with the rhetorical signals that we outlined earlier[11] can detect signals of διαφωνία, a change in tone in this case, which signals for ancient readers a change in speaker (μεταβαίνειν).[12] Walker also notes the change in tone: "At 1.18… there is an abrupt shift both of subject matter and of tone."[13] With respect to tone, Walker observes:

> everything in the letter up to this point has been decidedly 'upbeat'…. [Paul's] tone is warm and intimate. Then, at v. 18, abruptly and without warning, both the subject matter and the tone become shockingly different: what in 1.1–17 has been a personal communication to 'you' becomes in 1.18–32 a stinging castigation of human wickedness focusing upon a 'they' that is never explicitly identified, followed in chap. 2 by a similarly scathing critique of a 'you' that is hypocritically guilty of judging 'them'. This has nothing whatever to do with Rom 1.1–17.[14]

Walker also comments on the change in subject matter: "Suddenly and without explanation, the subject is no longer *the gospel as the revelation of God's saving righteousness*; now, it is *the wrath of God* that is revealed against wicked people."[15]

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[10] Rafael Rodríguez, *If You Call Yourself a Jew: Reappraising Paul's Letter to the Romans* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2014), 27.

[11] At least it seems to me Rodríguez is unware of these since he does not bring these up in his monograph at all.

[12] Stowers, *Rereading*, 19.

[13] Walker, "Romans 1.18-2.29," 540

[14] Walker, "Romans 1.18-2.29," 541.

[15] Walker, "Romans 1.18-2.29," 540; his emphasis. He continues:

Similarly, Sigve K. Tonstad has detected a fundamental contrast between Paul's programmatic statement in 1:16–17, which features a key quote from Habakkuk, with what follows in 1:18–32:

> Habakkuk is not unaware of human sin, but his complaint is directed at God and not against human beings (Hab. 1.2-4). In fact, Habakkuk's concern makes God seem at fault. In his paradigm, trust in God is neither a given nor a duty simply by the fact of God's existence and power, as the speaker in Rom. 1:18-32 implies. Instead, as Habakkuk expects (Hab. 1.2-4) and as God affirms (Hab. 2.2-4), it is on the evidence of God's faithfulness and not by claims of God's mere existence that trust will rise. On the logic of Paul's programmatic statement in Romans (Rom. 1.16–17), Paul will travel to Rome and then to Spain to make known what God has done to set things right—this rather than the implied logic of sin and retribution in Rom. 1.1-32.[16]

Without having to agree fully with Tonstad, he nevertheless raises the important issue of what, according to Paul, grounds human trust in God. Paul quotes from a prophet who thinks the problem of human sin (and especially sin in Israel) is God's problem and raises the question of God's faithfulness to God's promises. This raises a question about the meaning and function of Paul's quote in the context of an immediate pivot into a speech

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Any direct ideational link between 1.16–17 and 1.18–2.29 would appear to require that δικαιοσύνη in 1.17 be translated as 'justice' (i.e., 'righteousness judgment' or even 'just punishment'), not as '[saving] righteousness'." With such a translation, ἀποκαλύπτεται γὰρ ὀργὴ θεοῦ ('for God's wrath is revealed') in v. 18 would be virtually synonymous with δικαιοσύνη γὰρ θεοῦ… ἀποκαλύπτεται ('for God's righteousness is revealed') in v. 17, and 1.18–32 would represent an elaboration of the causes for and nature of this 'wrath'. It is surely clear, however, that δικαιοσύνη in v. 17 does not mean 'justice' in this sense. As Fitzmyer has cogently argued, Paul here (and elsewhere) uses δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ to denote 'the quality whereby God actively acquits his sinful people, manifesting toward them his power and gracious activity in a just judgment'. The phrase refers, in other words, to God's (saving) righteousness. Thus, the possible ideational link between 1.17 and 1.18.32 disappears. (Walker, "Romans 1.18-2.29," 541, his brackets).

[16] Sigve K. Tonstad, *The Letter to the Romans: Paul among the Ecologists*, The Earth Bible Commentary Series 7 (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2016), 98–99.

about the inexcusability of humanity[17] who ought to trust God simply because God exists. Elsewhere Paul appears to ground human faith and trust in God as Habakkuk does, namely, on the particular evidence of God's trustworthiness to God's specific promises (e.g., 1:2; 3:21–26; 15:8–9), which is why saving faith (10:8–11, 17) requires an emissary to witness to the good news of these instances of God's faithfulness to God's promises (10:14; cf. 15:18–22; 1:13–15).

Turning to more specific details, every human being is said to "know God" in Rom 1:21 and "know the requirement of God" in 1:32 (cf. 1:25) only because they exist in the world (1:19–20).[18] That is, God and God's laws can be known simply by meditating on the created order and this levels any distinction between Jews and gentiles as far as culpability because both have access to one and the same divine natural law and thus either willfully obey or disobey it (2:6–13). Since, as Paul A. Vander Waerdt comments, "the term 'natural law'…designates a law, discernible by reason, which determines what is right and wrong by nature, and which is therefore valid everywhere, always and for everyone, independently of circumstance or local custom," it is apparent that the concept of "natural law" is indeed being deployed in Rom 1:18–32 (and I will argue in subsequent chapters that it is deployed in 2:6–15 as well).[19] Hence Gregory E. Sterling concludes correctly, "While New Testament scholars have debated whether there

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[17] This point only grows stronger in light of the fact that Paul will later provide a robust apology for human sinfulness and put all the blame on personified Sin—rather than the person—in Rom 7 (esp. vv. 17, 20), which I will return to in due course.

[18] O'Neill, *Paul's Letter*, 44, 46, 49.

[19] Paul A. Vander Waerdt, "The Original Theory of Natural Law," *SPhiloA* 15 (2003): 17.

is any natural theology in the argument, statements like 1,20… appear to require some form of natural theology."[20] And he notes similarly, "the place of natural law in both texts [Rom 1:18–32 and 2:14–15] is required for the argument to be cogent."[21]

Elsewhere, however, it appears Paul contradicts this view of natural law repeatedly. Whereas in 1:18–32 every human being knows and is able to obey the requirements of God, Paul later declares that the normal pattern of reasoning of any human (τὸ φρόνημα τῆς σαρκὸς) is unable both to understand and to submit to God's law (8:7–8; cf. 1 Cor 2:14). Moreover, in his other letters Paul explicitly denies that gentiles knew God let alone that they consciously chose to reject that knowledge as Rom 1:18–32 maintains. He states that gentiles simply "do not know God" (1 Thess 4:5; Gal 4:8–9; cf. 1 Cor 1:21; 12:2)—not that they know God (or even are inherently equipped with the necessary resources with which to be able to know God, cf. Rom 8:7), but actively choose to suppress such natural knowledge. As Campbell has observed, the natural law position of Rom 1:18–32 is "contradicted by some of Paul's statements elsewhere, most notably his attack in 1 Corinthians on the capacity of the wisdom of the world to know anything useful about God ([1 Cor] 1.18–29)" (see especially 1 Cor 1:21: "the world did not know God through its wisdom").[22]

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[20] Gregory E. Sterling, "'A Law to Themselves': Limited Universalism in Philo and Paul," *ZNW* 107 (2016): 38.

[21] Sterling, "'A Law to Themselves,'" 39. More on this below.

[22] Douglas A. Campbell, *The Quest for Paul's Gospel: A Suggested Strategy*, JSNTSup 274 (London: T&T Clark, 2005), 239. See also, E. P. Sanders: "When one compares the section [Rom 1:18–2:29] with other passages which Bussmann regards as reflecting Paul's missionary preaching, the difference is blatant: the other passages, such as 1 Thess. 1:9f., are Christocentric. 1 Cor. 1:21–24, which Bussmann cites as the inner-Pauline parallel to Rom. 1:18–3:20, in fact helps us see more clearly how distinctive Rom. 1:18–2:29 is" (*Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983], 128).

Furthermore, according to Rom 1:18–32, one can know what sin is by looking to the creation and thus learning the divine ordinances (v. 32), the natural law, which is clearly discernible and embedded in creation. This follows from the fact that the speech says that a person can know God and his invisible and eternal attributes, the truth of God, and the requirements of God (and thus what is both right and wrong) because this is all perceptible and knowable by what was made (1:19–21, 25, 32). But Paul twice after this says that the knowledge of sin is a matter of the particular revelation of Scripture and cannot be known otherwise. He says that "knowledge of sin [happens] through the Torah" (διὰ γὰρ νόμου ἐπίγνωσις ἁμαρτίας) (3:20) and "sin is not known except through Torah" (τὴν ἁμαρτίαν οὐκ ἔγνων εἰ μὴ διὰ νόμου) (7:7). (That Paul means "Torah" and not "natural law" with νόμος in this verse is plain from what follows where he quotes the tenth commandment: τήν τε γὰρ ἐπιθυμίαν οὐκ ᾔδειν εἰ μὴ ὁ νόμος ἔλεγεν· *οὐκ ἐπιθυμήσεις*; 7:7; cf. 3:21.) Hence Paul's comments in this regard disagree with the claim in Rom 1:32, but cohere exactly with Ps 147:8–9 (LXX; 147:20 MT):

> By God declaring God's word to Jacob,
> And God's righteous decrees [δικαιώματα] and judgments to Israel,
> God did not do in this way for all nations
> And God's judgments God did not reveal [ἐδήλωσεν] to them. (Ps 147:8–9 LXX)

The psalmist says that only Jacob (a metonymy here for Israel) knows God's δικαιώματα (which are in a synonymous parallelism with God's word [λόγος] and judgments [κρίματα]) because God revealed these specially and specifically to Israel, but that the

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Similarly, Walker, "Romans 1.18–2.29," 547. Ernst Käsemann also notices the contradiction (*Commentary on Romans*, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980], 42).

nations did not have these revealed to them and are thus ignorant of them. What we encounter in Rom 1:32 ("they who know τὸ δικαίωμα of God"), however, is a good summary of the sentiment present in some Jewish literature, such as Philo and Wis 12–15, that everyone, simply by virtue of existing in this world, either knows (cf. Philo, *Spec.* 1.32–35; 2.165; *Virt.* 65, 212–216; *Decal.* 62, 68) or at least has the inherent capacity to know (cf. Wis 13:1, 9) God and God's δικαίωματα. I am not claiming that Paul bases his comments on the nations' lack of knowledge of God or of God's laws in 1 Thess 4:5; Gal 4:8–9; 1 Cor 1:21; 12:2; Rom 8:6 on Ps 147 in particular; I am merely pointing out that there is precedent in Jewish Scripture for the view that nations do not have an inherent "natural" access to God and God's laws since these are understood as particular historical gifts to the single nation of Israel. Not everyone endorsed a natural law theology like the Wisdom of Solomon and Philo.

Additionally, according to Rom 1:18, God's wrath is currently being poured out upon the sins of the wicked.[23] This is then explicitly spelled out in the threefold παραδίδωμι sections (1:24, 26, 28).[24] Paul, however, later asserts that God has actually

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[23] It is doubtful that the present tense ἀποκαλύπτεται in v. 18 is being used with a future connotation because: (a) the three παραδίδωμι sections explicate the claim in v. 18 (see Walker, "Romans 1.18–2.29," 542n57), (b) the sense of ἀποκαλύπτεται with reference to the gospel in v. 17 is clearly a true present and v. 18 is obviously meant to parallel the syntax in v.17 no matter if there is a change in speaker or not, and (c) when the interlocutor responds to Paul in 2:2 he again asserts the present tense of divine judgment with ἐστιν. The fact that this present divine judgment will climax in a final judgment still future in 2:6–11, 16 (cf. 1:32 and 2:12 where a final death is expected) does not mean that there are no present proleptic wrathful judgments (no matter who is determined to be speaking 1:18–32). To think that just because there's a clear expectation of a future final judgment means there can be no sense of a present judgment is a non sequitur.

[24] These παραδίδωμι sections are how God's wrath is currently being poured out in response (cf. the διό in v. 24) to the idolatry in 1:21–23. On the importance of the present tense of ἀποκαλύπτεται in 1:18 and how that relates to what follows, see Leander E. Keck, *Romans*, ANTC (Nashville: Abingdon, 2005), 57–58.

been overlooking previously committed sins (τὴν πάρεσιν τῶν προγεγονότων ἁμαρτημάτων) in his divine forbearance (ἀνοχή) (3:25–26; cf. 2:4). But God cannot both be exercising ἀνοχή and the ὀργή of 1:18 at the same time. As Porter observes, "In these texts [3:25–26; cf. 2:4] Paul asserts that God holds back and delays wrath rather than 'handing over' and 'turning loose.'"[25] Likewise, Jonathan Linebaugh notes that "world history prior to the gospel event is not characterised as an era of wrath; rather, for Paul, the time before the revelation of divine righteousness is the period of patience (Rom 3.25–26; cf. 2.4)."[26] Similarly, Ernst Käsemann observes that since 1:18 and following

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[25] Porter, "Romans 1.18-32," 213; similarly, Ernst Käsemann, "Zum Verständnis von Röm 3,24–26," in *Exegetische Versuche und Besinnungen* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1960), 97.

[26] Jonathan A Linebaugh, "Announcing the Human: Rethinking the Relationship between Wisdom of Solomon 13-15 and Romans 1.18-2.11," *NTS* 57 (2011): 225. As I am arguing presently, Linebaugh's "solution" to this tension is not ultimately convincing or tenable. He wants to maintain that the two revelations of righteousness (Rom 1:16–17) and wrath (v. 18) are "dual revelations…tied to a single reality" and that "the apocalypse of divine wrath…is the dark side of the one event which reveals both" (ibid., 226). However, since we are in an explicitly dialogical context given the apostrophes in 2:1, 3, 17–24, the contradiction and tension Linebaugh rightly notices between 1:18–32 and 2:4, 3:25–26 are best read as signaling the two sides of the debate taking place in the dialogue. Most importantly, however, it is hard to see how it is the revelation of righteousness in the gospel that makes the revelation of wrath in 1:18–32 "a *novum*—something heretofore concealed but now unveiled" (ibid., 226) if, as Linebaugh himself is well aware, the contents of 1:18–32 are *already known* by the author of Wisdom of Solomon (and Philo). That is, how was 1:18–32 "concealed but now unveiled" by the gospel if this is something people (i.e., Wisdom of Solomon and Philo) who have no knowledge of the gospel of Jesus Christ have clearly already said (let alone centuries prior to Jesus in Wisdom of Solomon's case)? Furthermore, the gospel according to Paul's comments elsewhere does not reveal that humanity knew God all along (1:21), but has actively suppressed that knowledge (1:18); rather, according to Paul later in Romans itself, it reveals that humanity was unwittingly and unwillingly (cf. 7:14–20) enslaved to sin and death and that gentiles have been ignorant of God this whole time (Rom 5–8; 9:24–26, 30; 15:21; cf. Gal 4:8–9; 1 Thess 4:5; 1 Cor 1:21). These constitute a diametrically opposed set of statements about the putative "natural knowledge" of God by human than what is found in Rom 1:18–32. Linebaugh, however, says "[the statement] 'For although they knew God…' (1.21)…. for Paul, is the problem—not that humanity is ignorant of God, but that humanity knew God" ("Announcing the Human," 228). Linebaugh rightly notes the nuance between ignorance and knowledge and that Rom 1:18–32 is clearly making the stronger point that every human person knows God (not just that they *could* have known God), but he does not seem to realize that his comment contradicts Paul's comments elsewhere about gentile ignorance of God just cited. Moreover, Linebaugh's reading here also suffers from forgetting his own insight about the rhetorical function of the apostrophe in 2:1, which will sound very similar to what I argued for in chapter 3: "Paul's argument assumes that the judge of 2.1–5 endorses his critique of false-religion in 1.18–32" (ibid., 221). This is a true statement so long as we substitute in "the" for "his" in that sentence. And this means Paul has real problems with the speech in

"sets the past under the theme of the revelation of wrath, not of the clemency which practices patience…. The motivation present here [in 3:25–26] simply contradicts Paul's theology."[27] I agree with Käsemann's point about the contradiction, but we should reverse on which side of the tension Paul's theology lies. That is, there is good reason to think that 3:25–26 properly summarizes a key aspect of Paul's fundamental beliefs, contra Käsemann, who believes this to be a pre-Pauline tradition that Paul clumsily incorporated into his (contradictory) proclamation at 1:18 and following.[28] Paul's comment about God's overlooking forbearance in Rom 3:25–26 is very similar to Paul's comment in 2 Cor 5:19 that God was "not counting their [the world's] trespasses against them" (μὴ λογιζόμενος αὐτοῖς τὰ παραπτώματα αὐτῶν) (cf. μακάριος ἀνὴρ οὗ οὐ μὴ λογίσηται κύριος ἁμαρτίαν in Rom 4:8 [quoting Ps 32:2]).

Perhaps most suggestively, while Rom 1:24, 26, and 28 all say God "delivers people over" (παραδίδωμι) when God is confronted with human sinfulness, Paul elsewhere says that God only "delivers Jesus over" (παραδίδωμι) precisely in the context of expressing God's benevolent and non-condemning posture towards all the rest of humanity, which is entirely made up of sinful people (4:25, 8:32). This is why Paul says that God is "for" (ungodly and sinful) people (8:31). It is crucial to note that Paul states

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1:18–32; it is not "the dark side of the one event" of the gospel (ibid., 226); it is an antithetical belief about what God is revealing at the present time (is it wrath, or righteousness characterized by patience and forbearance?). If we do not substitute "the" for "his," then again, as highlighted in the previous chapter, we run into the conundrum of Paul condemning himself.

[27] Käsemann, *Commentary*, 99; cf. Käsemann, "Zum Verständnis," 96–97.

[28] Käsemann, "Zum Verständnis," 96–100; see also Campbell's critique of the form critical analysis in Douglas A. Campbell, *The Rhetoric of Righteousness in Romans 3.21-26*, JSNTSup 65 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992), 2, 37–57.

here that God is "for us" (8:31) in love especially when humans are in a state of ungodliness (ἀσεβής) (5:6). This viewpoint stands opposed to the position in Rom 1:18–32 where God is wrathful specifically towards the ungodly (ἀσέβεια, 1:18; see also 4:5, 11:26, which likewise opposes 1:18–32).[29] That is, Paul believes that when God confronts sinful and ungodly people at enmity with him, God (a) demonstrates God's own love (not wrath) towards them (5:6–11; cf. 4:5), (b) does not count their sins against them (3:25–26; 4:8; cf. 2 Cor 5:19), and (c) reconciles God's self to them (5:11; 11:15; 2 Cor 5:19). These seem to be mutually exclusive portrayals of God's posture towards sinful humanity. (Note, a notion of divine wrath is still be present elsewhere in Paul, but this functions differently from its basic theological location and retributive nature in Rom 1, a question addressed in the next chapter.)

4.2 Scholars Addressing the Tensions in Rom 1:18–32

4.2.1 Scholars Who Note Tensions, but Offer No (Synthetic) Solution

Although some scholars fail to be concerned about some of the particular contradictions discussed up to this point,[30] other scholars who want to read 1:18–32 as an authentic expression of Paul's theology express their bewilderment with some of these tensions, especially in relation to the two accounts of sin that Romans seems to articulate. Their concerns serve to validate the claim that these tensions are indeed present. So Susan Eastman, Thomas Tobin, E. P. Sanders, and the late-nineteenth century scholar

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[29] "The Teacher's God justifies *the godly*; God (according to the Teacher) declares righteous, on the day of judgment, those who are in fact righteous" (Campbell, *Deliverance*, 668; his emphasis).

[30] E.g., James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, WBC 38A (Dallas: Word, 1988), 51–76.

Hermann Lüdemann, all observe deep tensions traversing Romans 1. Eastman succinctly outlines the contrasts between the accounts of sin and evil found in Rom 1 and later chapters:

> Now sin as an agent performs actions previously accomplished by human beings: whereas in chapters 1–3, evil is what humans do, in 7:19-21 evil is what sin does, counter to the wishes of the self. The falsehood and violence previously attributed to human beings now become the province of sin itself (7:11). In the first account, human beings are sinners, but now sin itself is the surpassing "sinner" (7:13). And whereas in 1:30 human beings are "inventors of evil," now indwelling sin itself accomplishes evil through its unwilling human minions (7:14-20). I want to do the good, serving it with "the law of my mind." But sin wrests the law of God to its own purpose of death, making it "the law of sin and death" (7:22-25; 8:2). The human actor recedes curiously into the background here, particularly in regard to the performance of evil.[31]

Tobin similarly maintains, "In these chapters [i.e., Rom 5–7] Paul significantly rethinks and revises how he understands the relationship between Christian living and righteousness through faith apart from observance of the law."[32] In *Paul, the Law, and Jewish People*, Sanders argues that "it [Rom 1:18–2:29] is internally inconsistent and it reflects a point of view different from Paul's 'own.'"[33] Nevertheless, Sanders comes to the conclusion: "I find, in short, no distinctively Pauline imprint in 1:18–2:29, apart from the tag in 2:16."[34] He continues: "at no point do we find a convincing argument that Paul

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[31] Susan Eastman, "Double Participation and the Responsible Self in Romans 5-8," in *Apocalyptic Paul: Cosmos and Anthropos in Romans 5-8*, ed. Beverly Roberts Gaventa (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2013), 101.

[32] Thomas H. Tobin, *Paul's Rhetoric in Its Contexts: The Argument of Romans* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2004), 157.

[33] E. P. Sanders, *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 123–35, here 131.

[34] Sanders, *Paul, the Law*, 129.

has shaped the material to his 'own' point of view.'"[35] Earlier, in *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, he states one cause of these difficulties:

> One could observe… that sin in Rom. 1–3 is conceived of as consisting of man's transgressions, while, in chapter 6, sin suddenly becomes exclusively singular and is conceived more in terms of a power which controls man (or does not control those who die with Christ)…. It is tempting to see the second formulation (death to sin as a power and life in Christ Jesus) as Paul's 'real' view.[36]

But the rift between the earlier and later portions of Romans, especially as they explain sin, has been noted as far back (at least) as the late nineteenth-century, with Hermann Lüdemann. In his 1872 *Die Anthropologie des Apostels Paulus und ihre Stellung innerhalb seiner Heilslehre*, Lüdemann argued that there are two contradictory (*Widerspruch*) anthropologies (which also lead to two different corresponding soteriologies) between Rom 1–4 on the one hand and Rom 5–8 on the other.[37] As he sums up:

> Diese Ueberschau über die 8 ersten Capitel des Römerbriefes offenbart uns also ein bemerkenswerthes Factum. Nach Wahrnehmung der Thatsache, dass die von uns früher dargestellte Anthropologie sich auf die Ausführungen der 4 ersten Capitel nicht anwenden lasse, haben wir gefunden, dass sich bei Paulus auf zwei verschiedenen anthropologischen Grundlagen, die sich in verschiedenen Begriffen der σάρξ characteristisch ausprägen, zwei Gedankenreihen erheben, welche durch ihre ganze Länge hin von einander abweichen.[38]

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[35] Sanders, *Paul, the Law*, 131; cf. 123–35. I will return to Sander's proposed (non)solution to these tensions below.

[36] E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977), 486–87.

[37] Hermann Lüdemann, *Die Anthropologie des Apostels Paulus und ihre Stellung innerhalb seiner Heilslehre: nach den vier Hauptbriefen* (Kiel: Universitäts-Buchhandlung, 1872), 153–73, 198–217, here 173.

[38] Lüdemann, *Die Anthropologie*, 171.

On the one side is the "Jewish-religious" view ("jüdischreligiösen") and the other is Greek ("hellenistisch").[39] Lüdemann's argument is based on the evident tensions in Romans, which he says, "Vollständig zerspalten, von oben bis unten zerklüftet liegt der Paulinische Gedankenbau vor uns."[40] This fissure, he argues, results in two different and ultimately incompatible systems of thought ("dass sie ineinander nicht aufzugehen vermögen") that constitute a real contradiction and contrast ("Widerspruch" and "Gegensatz").[41] According to Lüdemann, the Jewish-religious view is embedded in Rom 1–3, and (among other things) it includes human innate knowledge of the Law, the inherent possibility of doing the Law, the freedom of the will, and the origin of sin in willful acts of disobedience (and thus culpability for sin). In Rom 5–8, however, Paul talks about the natural necessity of sin (because of Adam) and claims that sin happens quite apart from human knowledge and the will to act (the Greek view).[42]

4.2.2.1 Pressing into Key Tensions via Rom 5–8

Before addressing some key scholars who try to offer solutions to this conundrum, it will be helpful to press a little more deeply into the tensions in question, especially as these are generated by Rom 5–8, although the discussion here is meant to be merely suggestive. A quick overview will lay bare the main problems that the scholars above notice and the scholars shortly to be surveyed will try to synthesize coherently together.

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[39] Lüdemann, *Die Anthropologie*, 173.
[40] Lüdemann, *Die Anthropologie*, 173.
[41] Lüdemann, *Die Anthropologie*, 173.
[42] Lüdemann, *Die Anthropologie*, 171–72.

In Rom 1:18–32 the problem of sin is deliberate disobedience to what anyone and everyone already knows as a matter of course about God, God's truth, and God's requirements (i.e., they are transgressions against known decrees).[43] But in 5:12–21 it appears Paul offers an opposing view.[44] According to Paul, people sin because death reigns, but it is *not* like Adam because they do not have a law to break (5:13–14). Only those who break a known law or decree can be said to have committed a παράβασις (5:13; 4:15; cf. 2:23).[45] Another difference between Rom 1 and Rom 5 is death as future punishment for sin as a transgression of a divine ordinance (1:32; 2:12)—and wrath in the meantime (1:18; 2:8–9)—versus Death[46] as ruler and thus a present cause of humans' sinning even when there is no (known) divine law to transgress (5:12).[47]

Furthermore, in 5:13–14, Paul makes the point that the Law cannot be abstracted and universalized in order to condemn humanity as a whole. Paul's argument runs thus:

Premise: "sin is not charged where there is no law" (5:13b; also stated in 4:15 and in a somewhat different fashion in 7:17).

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[43] Though not following him exactly, this is the main point made by Lüdemann, *Die Anthropologie*, 153–60, 171–73.

[44] Cf. Lüdemann, *Die Anthropologie*, 161–73.

[45] These are three of the four uses of παράβασις by Paul. The other is in Gal 3:19 where again it is intimately tethered to a known law. There is one use of παράβασις in the deutero-Pauline literature (1 Tim 2:14) and it confirms my present argument because it is associated with Adam and Eve, who, like Israel, received a specific divine command (and disobeyed it).

[46] I will capitalize "Death" and "Sin" when they are being personified (i.e., when they are the subject of active verbs).

[47] I agree with Fitzmyer that the phrase ἐφ᾽ ᾧ πάντες ἥμαρτον in 5:12 ought to be rendered "with the result that" (see the extended discussion in Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 413–17). Thus: "For this reason, just as through one human-being sin entered into the cosmos and through sin, death, even so in this way death penetrated into all human-beings, with the result that all sin" (Rom 5:12). Essentially, Paul says that all humans sin because all humans are born mortal (i.e., ruled by death and sin [vv. 14, 17, 21 further support this]).

Fact: The Law only came at a certain point in time and only to a certain group of people (cf. 5:13–14, 20; 7:1; 9:4).

Conclusions:

(a) Therefore, there are many people who are not transgressors because they are not committing a παράβασις of a divine law like Adam had done (5:14).

(b) Thus the Law cannot be universalized into a "natural law" because then every single human would be transgressors just like Adam was (and it is precisely this point that Paul is explicitly denying).

(c) Nevertheless, these people are nonetheless sinners because Death reigns over all (5:12).[48]

Hence one point of Rom 5 seems to be a historicizing and de-universalizing of the Law. It came at a certain point in time and to a certain people. I used "de-universalizing" because the Law is universalized in Rom 1:18–2:16 and Paul is now negating that universalization. No matter who is speaking when in Rom 1:18–2:16, Paul seems later to be undoing the view of the Law as the putative universal moral code inherently knowable by all human beings and as the standard of divine judgment. Critically, Paul uses the idea that "sin is not charged where there is no law" (5:13b) as a premise in his argument. It is only because of this dictum that he can assert the existence of a whole group of people

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[48] Paul uses παράπτωμα ("misstep") to name sins that anyone and everyone commits (e.g., 5:16, 20). But as shown above, Paul reserves παράβασις for sins that are of a particular sort; namely, transgressions of known divine laws. Interestingly, παράπτωμα is used eleven times in the undisputed Pauline texts and nine of those times occur in Romans (the two other occurrences are in 2 Cor 5:19 and Gal 6:1). Of those nine, six occur in Rom 5:15–20 (the other three are in 4:25; 11:11, and 12). This suggests that it is precisely in this context of Rom 5:12–21 that Paul is constructing his own lexicon for how to understand his use of παράπτωμα verses παράβασις.

who are locked under Sin and Death and yet have not committed any transgression like Adam (5:14).[49]

This is more firmly established when we observe the complicated set of causes in 5:12. Adam's sin causes death to enter the world and death's entrance into the world in turn causes all others to sin. This same point is repeated throughout 5:12–21. For example, in v. 15 "all die" not because they all sin, but because of the "one transgression." Similarly, in v. 17 Death's reign comes "by the transgression of the one" and "through the one." The fact that all die and Death is reigning is consistently attributed to Adam and Adam alone. In fact, Paul repeatedly denies that all die because they all sin. Throughout Rom 5–7 there is a noticeable effort of uncoupling the fact that everyone sins and the fact that all die. Everyone dies because Death came into the world because of Adam (5:12) and everyone sins because Death reigns over all (vv. 14, 17). Verse 19 corroborates this: "the many were made sinners through the disobedience of the one." From this verse we know that the ultimate result of Adam's transgression is that everybody sins. The idea connotes some sort of compulsion to sin because Sin and Death are "reigning" (vv. 14, 17, 21). That is, Paul is talking about sin as acts of sinfulness, but he also wants to say that these are on some level involuntary or compulsory acts.[50] This is

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[49] My argument here obtains whether it turns out that Paul conceives of Sin and Death as actual nefarious spiritual powers/agents (so Gaventa, "The Cosmic Power of Sin in Paul's Letter to the Romans: Toward a Widescreen Edition," *Int* 53 [1994]: 229–40), or whether Sin and Death are literary personifications to refer to the inner passions and desires of the human soul (so Wasserman, "Paul among the Philosophers: The Case of Sin in Romans 6-8," *JSNT* 30 (2008): 387–415; idem, "The Death of the Soul in Romans 7: Revisiting Paul's Anthropology in Light of Hellenistic Moral Psychology," *JBL* 126 (2007): 793–816; and Joseph Longarino, "The Weight of Mortality: Pauline Theology and the Problem of Death" [PhD diss., Duke University, 2019]).

[50] Similarly, Lüdemann, *Die Anthropologie*, 171–72; Eastman, "Double Participation."

why he personifies Sin and Death.[51] Since the repeated point thus far is how Adam's transgression first resulted in death spreading to all (i.e., everyone is born mortal) (vv. 12, 15, 17), then this must mean that death is the penultimate result since it is the cause of another (ultimate) result; namely, making people sinners. Therefore, v. 19 confirms Fitzmyer's argument that ἐφ᾽ ᾧ in v. 12 is causal:[52] death's entrance into the world (caused by Adam) caused people to be sinners. Death is the first result of Adam's sin, and that (penultimate) result produced another (ultimate) result: universal sinfulness.[53]

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[51] Although the point being made here is not contingent on this claim, I take these to be literal (literary) personifications. That is, one does not "personify" something that is already a personal agent. Personification is done to inherently non-personal things as a literary device. Thus, *pace* Gaventa ("The Cosmic Power of Sin"), as far as I can tell, Paul does not think sin and death are actual beings existing in the cosmos. Rather, it seems to me that he is personifying mortality and sinful deeds for heuristic reasons. This is in line with Emma Wasserman's thesis that this sort of personification is typical of philosophical discourse (cf. "Paul among the Philosophers"; idem, "The Death of the Soul in Romans 7"). Wasserman's thesis would actually corroborate my thesis that Paul is debating a Philonic teacher steeped in Greek philosophical traditions, but this would be going too far beyond the bounds of this study. But it can suffice here to show how the point that Sin and Death are literary personifications is borne out by a couple of textual observations (my thanks to Joe Longarino for pointing this out to me; cf. Longarino, "Apocalyptic and the Passions: Overcoming a False Dichotomy in Pauline Studies," *NTS* [forthcoming]): (a) Paul repeatedly talks about Adam's act throughout this pericope as either a sin, transgression, or disobedience (vv. 14, 15, 17, 18, 19). (b) Paul is interested here in how one can keep count of discrete sinful acts (vv. 13–14, 20). He says that sins can only be accounted or reckoned if there is a law (v. 13; cf. 4:15) and that the Law came so that the tally of sins thereby increased (5:20). This clearly means he is referring to sin as discrete actions that are done. He is not talking about a cosmic being that is or is not "reckoned." The personification of Sin and Death "reigning," "enslaving," "paying wages" throughout Rom 5–7 is used by Paul to talk about the inherent compulsion to sin within every human being and from which they need a divine deliverance (cf. 7:17, 20, 24–25). That is, Paul uses it to talk about a sort of force (perhaps an impulse) that is separate from the will, the mind, and the inner human, and antecedent to any discrete sinful act (this is especially the scenario set forth in vv. 5, 8–9, 11, 13–25). It is "Sin" that causes the "I" to commit sin. Personification of Sin and Death is thus a way for Paul to exculpate Adam's descendants without denying their dire need of salvation. This point is uncontroversial by virtually all commentators at 7:17 and 20 and this excusable "I" knows the written Law (vv. 1, 7–11). If this "I" is excused (although the "I" still needs salvation, cf. vv. 24–25), then how much more excusable are all the gentiles, who are not under the Law and whose sins are therefore not tallied and who therefore do not even know they are sinners (5:13–14; 4:15)? This exculpation of humanity that Paul is at pains to express is directly at odds with the speech in 1:18–32 that seeks to prove the inexcusability of all sinful acts (esp. v. 20).

[52] Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 413–17.

[53] Cf. Longarino, "The Weight of Mortality," 120–24.

Moreover, the κατάκριμα in vv. 16, 18 seems to be another way of talking about death (i.e., everyone born is assured to die; all are born under the condemnation of the death sentence),[54] and this, again, is blamed on Adam. Thus, "death" and "condemnation" might be best understood as ways of talking about the fact that everybody dies (universal mortality) (cf. 6:9; 8:11). The flow of thought is that Adam's sin results in universal death/condemnation (i.e., universal mortality) and, Paul says, it is because humans are condemned to die (i.e., are mortal flesh—cf. 6:9; 7:24; 8:11) that this attends to the fact that everyone sins.

Nevertheless, no matter how we construe "death" (as simply mortality, a cosmic agent, eschatological exclusion from eschatological life, etc.), "death" and the fact that every person sins is always blamed ultimately on Adam throughout 5:12–21. But in 1:32, each person's death is blamed on each individual sinner. In Rom 5, every person commits acts of sin because all die (5:12). This can mean because all are born mortal (cf. 8:11) and/or all are born under the condemnation of the reign of Death. In either case, "death" is not the consequence of an individual's discrete acts of sinfulness, but the other way around. "Death," brought about by Adam (5:12, 17), brings about discrete acts of sinfulness from "the many" (5:19).[55]

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[54] *Pace* Longarino, "The Weight of Mortality," 144n108.

[55] The view that wishes to construe the argument for 5:12–21 and the syntax in v. 13b to be such that all die "because all [have] sin[ned]" (NASB, NRSV in brackets) suffers from another profound problem besides what has already been discussed: Paul maintains Jesus's sinlessness (cf. 2 Cor 5:21) and obedience (5:19), but not only did he die, he was "in the likeness of sinful flesh" (Rom 8:3). If "because all sin" is the right translation, then death should not have "spread" to Jesus because he never sinned. Put more strongly, it should have been ontologically impossible for Jesus to die in this ostensible Pauline construal of sin and death. But, if we take Paul to be saying that people are "too weak to avoid the decay of sin" because they are born under the reign of death (i.e., render Rom 5:12 as "death spread to all people because of

And for all the debate over who the "I" is in Rom 7, a common denominator between the various views is that whatever or whoever else this "I" is, they are not (yet) a Christ-believer (although they become one in 7:24–25).[56] "This is one of the instances in which New Testament exegesis seems to me to have made decisive and irrefutable progress," according to Sanders.[57] This is significant because Paul's understanding of the non-Christ-believer-sinful-transgressor-under-the-Law in Rom 7 is actually both sympathetic and exculpatory ("not I, but sin in me"—7:17, 20). As Wright contends, "The result of this argument [in Rom 7] is that in fact not only the Torah [in vv. 7–13], but also the ἐγώ, is exonerated [in vv. 14–20]."[58] He goes on to proclaim that Rom 7 is "The vindication of the ἐγώ."[59] Similarly, Dunn argues that Rom 7 "exempts *both* [the Law and the "I"] from blame and explains how both are used by the real culprit, sin."[60]

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which all sin"), then the fact that Paul considers Jesus's obedience (5:18–19) while indwelling a body under the lordship of Death (6:9; i.e., Jesus's body was "mortal" 8:11) as having a salvific effect upon mortal human beings makes profound sense. Paul is saying, "Even though at first everyone sinned because death entered the world (5:12) and we all have mortal bodies under the lordship of Sin and Death (5:17, 21; 6:9, 12, 14), participation in Christ (who was fully obedient even though having a mortal body) through his Spirit enables us to serve another Lord even while still existing in these bodies that are still going to die (8:9–13)." That is, living under the condemnation of death (i.e., having mortal bodies) causes all people to sin (5:12), but now because of Christ and his Spirit, having mortal bodies does not necessarily mean people will sin because through the Spirit of the risen Jesus they can put to death the deeds of the flesh (8:9–13). This is what it would mean for our "body of sin to be rendered powerless [καταργηθῇ]" (6:6) (following the translation of καταργέω by Fitzmyer [*Romans*, 436] and Longarino's ["The Weight of Mortality," 137n98]). As Longarino explains, in this way, "Sin is no longer the owner or master over the person and the body, as it once was (cf. οὐ κυριεύσει, 6:14)" (ibid., 137).

[56] There used to be debate on this, but scholars since Sanders all seem to agree on this point. Cf. the discussions in Sanders, *Paul*, 478; Byrne, *Romans*, 226; Keck, *Romans*, 180; Moo, *Romans*, 447–49; Jewett, *Romans*, 443–45; Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 382, 399.

[57] Sanders, *Paul*, 478.

[58] N. T. Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology* (London: T&T Clark, 1991), 197.

[59] Wright, *Climax*, 198.

[60] Dunn, *Romans 1–8*, 377; his emphasis; cf. 378.

I agree with Wright and Dunn here, but this appears to me to be incommensurate with Rom 1:18–32. The people in 1:18–32 who do not have the special revelation of the Law have no excuse (ἀναπολόγητος) (1:20), but the person in Rom 7 who has the Law has a very good excuse. They sin, not willingly, but because they are captives to Sin (7:14, 23). Thus it is Sin who is acting wickedly, not they themselves, and this is why it is Sin (not any sinful person) who is condemned by God in the flesh of Jesus Christ (8:3).[61]

This is not to say that Paul thinks having a good excuse means no salvation or deliverance is necessary. Rather, it means that Paul comprehends the human problem differently from what is articulated in 1:18–32. According to Paul in Rom 7, humanity is in desperate need of salvation and deliverance. He says human beings are dead and thus they need a resurrection; they need a new body; they are enslaved and they need deliverance (7:24; cf. 8:11, 23; 6:1–13). These are not the premises of Rom 1.[62]

These programmatic observations corroborate what scholars like Eastman, Tobin, Sanders, and Lüdemann have already observed. But how do scholars try to resolve these tensions coherently?

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[61] This is similar to the conclusions reached by Eastman, "Double Participation."

[62] It is noteworthy that whoever wrote Ephesians, they managed to give an account of gentile sinfulness consonant with Rom 5:12–21 and not with 1:18–32. The nations sin because they are "dead" (Eph 2:1–10) and *they* hand *themselves* over (ἑαυτοὺς παρέδωκαν) to sensuality (4:19) rather than God handing them over per Rom 1:24, 26, 28. Additionally, the sins in Ephesians are characterized as missteps (παράπτωμα, 2:1, 5) rather than transgressions of known laws (παράβασις). Moreover, the gentile problem and solution matches up with Rom 11: gentiles are at first "wild" or estranged, but then being grafted into the covenants of promise of Israel while remaining foreskinned in Romans lines up with Eph 2:11–22 where gentiles are at first "far" and "estranged" from the commonwealth (πολιτεία, 2:12) of Israel, but nevertheless being "brought near" to become fellow-citizens of the commonwealth (συμπολίτης, 2:19) while remaining foreskinned.

4.2.2 Beverly Roberts Gaventa

Beverly Roberts Gaventa acknowledges the "tension between what Paul affirms in this passage [1:18–32] about human refusal to acknowledge God" and "humanity's willful choice to deny God" with "later sections of the letter that speak of Sin as a power," but she does not articulate in this essay either how to resolve this tension (i.e., that these are not contradictory after all, but fit coherently into Paul's theology), or why Paul holds to two fundamentally incompatible views of the knowledge of God and sin simultaneously.[63] In another work, Gaventa notices how disjointed 1:18–32 and the catena of Scripture citations in 3:10–18 are (the catena seem rather to be anticipating the account of sin developed in detail in Rom 5–7). She writes, "[t]he catena does not explicitly make the logical connection apparent in chapter 1" and it follows that "the catena would not readily lend itself to the argumentative move of chapter 1."[64] I agree. Whereas the argument of 1:18–32 "suggests that the withholding of worship… prompts God to hand humanity over, with the result that it falls into the behavior Paul castigates"[65] thereby implying that a turn to monotheism would fix everything, the catena, on the other hand, spares no one. It establishes for Paul that "all are under sin" (3:9) and that "all sin and are failing to attain the glory of God" (3:23), both monotheists and pagans (3:9). But these comments again restate the tension rather than resolving it.

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[63] Beverly Roberts Gaventa, "The Cosmic Power of Sin in Paul's Letter to the Romans: Toward a Widescreen Edition," *Int* 53 (1994): 133.

[64] Beverly Roberts Gaventa, *When in Romans: An Invitation to Linger with the Gospel According to Paul* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2016), 87–88.

[65] Gaventa, *When in Romans*, 87.

In yet another work, Gaventa attempts to synthesize 1:18–32 and the rest of the letter where there is a difference "between sin as a transgression, and individual action that occurs in a context of free choice, and Sin as an external force that holds humanity in its grasp."[66] Her solution argues, "[w]hen, three times in Romans 1, God is said to have 'handed over' humanity to the powers of uncleanness, dishonourable passions and a deformed mind, that action places humankind in the power of Sin."[67] But this is unconvincing.

God is not positively related to Sin in any way in Rom 5–7. God is not the agent handing people over to Sin to Rom 5–7; rather, Sin, is depicted as an independent, oppositional agent, and is said to be deceiving and killing (7:11) its own slaves (6:6, 14). The "wages" this enslaver gives out are "death" (6:23). Like a slave master Sin doles out death, but God freely gives eschatological life (6:23). Two agents—Sin and God—and what they provide are being contrasted in 6:23. If Paul will not even associate the Torah with Sin (7:7, 12, 14), then how much less so God? But God is explicitly the agent of death in 1:18–32. The key points in 1:18–32 are that God is justly pouring out divine wrath on sinners and allowing them to sin more by handing them over to their passions and desires, while a key claim of Rom 5–8 is to compare and contrast the agencies of God and Sin. Indeed, arguably in Rom 5–8 Paul assigns to Sin everything that was assigned to God in 1:18–32. Paul in Rom 5–8 negates the claims made about God's

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[66] Beverly Roberts Gaventa, "God Handed Them over: Reading Romans 1:18-32 Apocalyptically," *ABR* 53 (2005): 51.

[67] Gaventa, "God Handed," 51–2.

agency in 1:18–32 and instead applies these claims to Sin. Hence these seem to be antithetical understandings of God and of the reasons why human beings are drawn to their passions and desires (e.g., 1:26–27 versus 7:5, 7–8, 13, 17, 20).

Relatedly, it needs to be observed that it is people's willful idolatry in 1:21, 25 that leads to God handing them over to their "lusts/desires" (Διὸ παρέδωκεν αὐτοὺς ὁ θεὸς ἐν ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις τῶν καρδιῶν αὐτῶν) (1:24). But Paul opposes this view of human volition later on. In Rom 7:7–8, Paul says it is not idolatry and/or God's handing over, but rather Sin, as an independent agent, that "produces every lust/desire" in the person (ἡ ἁμαρτία…κατειργάσατο ἐν ἐμοὶ πᾶσαν ἐπιθυμίαν) (7:8) even when the person knows and worships the One God (7:22, 24–25) and is unwilling to sin (7:15–25). But since, as Gaventa is well aware, the premises of 1:18–32 (esp. vv. 21, 23, 28) "suggests that the withholding of worship"[68] is the problem, then the "I" in Rom 7 should be safeguarded from ἐπιθυμία (cf. 1:24; 7:7, 8; cf. πάθη in 1:26) because the "I" knows and worships God and positively wants to honor God (7:15–16, 18–19, 21–22, 25). Put another way, in 1:18–32 we can observe this sequence: willful idolatry (sin committed) results in God's present wrath being manifested in handing over in a vicious spiral of increasing depravity to lusts and desires, which in turn finally results in God sentencing these inexcusable idolaters to death. But in Rom 7 we observe this sequence: The "I" worships God and only knows "the good" by receiving the written Law (apart from the written letter, the "I" would have no knowledge that desiring is wrong; 7:7). And it is the very reception of the

[68] Gaventa, *When in Romans*, 87.

Law which then leads to Sin, as an independent agent and taking advantage of the opportunity in the written Law, producing lusts and desires in the "I," such that it is no longer the "I," but Sin who is doing evil. Then Sin deceives and kills the "I." These appear to be mutually exclusive accounts of human sinfulness and who is responsible for the death of human beings, as Lüdemann similarly observes.[69] Gaventa's synthesis is only possible if we overlook these relevant details and observations in the text.[70]

It is also simply perplexing that Gaventa can hold together the belief that Rom 1:18–32 is part of Paul's own "elaborate statement of the human problem" with the claims that this "does not mean that he [Paul] had earlier in his life, prior to his calling, thought of the world in these quite negative terms," but rather it is "more likely that his thinking moved from the gospel backward, from 'solution' to 'plight,' as Sanders famously put it."[71] What is the warrant for Gaventa believing Rom 1:18–32 to be Paul's

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[69] One of the key differences between these two account boils down to human volition and (lack of) knowledge and thus culpability (Lüdemann, *Die Anthropologie*, 153–73).

[70] There are other observations that reinforce this case, but these need to be presented tentatively because there is no space to work all this out vis-à-vis the secondary literature. Here I can only point out in addition to the observations made above that the narrative in the speech of the "I" in Rom 7 is hard to comprehend if the premises of 1:18–32 are thought to be true. If Paul was reasoning from the premises of 1:18–32, then the "I," whoever it is, should be conceived of as already and inherently knowing God and God's commands. The giving of the command at Sinai (7:7, 9) should not be mentioned because it ought to make no difference; written or unwritten, the natural divine law is the same and equally accessible, knowable, and doable according to 1:18–32 and 2:6–15. There seems to be no way around this conclusion because this is the essential claim in the speech that warrants the condemnation of being "without excuse" (1:20). According to 1:18–32, this "I" (along with every single human being that has ever existed or will exist) already knows what God decrees merely by existing in the world. There can be no previous state before the command came (7:9). And, by merely existing all people are already "without excuse" according to 1:20. But yet the entire point of discourse of the "I" in Rom 7, as I discussed briefly above in agreement with Wright and Dunn, is precisely to claim that knowledge of God's requirements and of sin only comes with the giving of the written Law (7:7; cf. 3:20) and to excuse not only the written Law (7:8–13), but also the "I" for sinning by putting all the blame squarely upon Sin ("not I, but Sin in me," 7:17, 20). Suspiciously, this seems like a one-for-one negation of key points made in 1:18–32.

[71] Gaventa, *When in Romans*, 33, 33n20.

own retrospective account, after his apostolic call, if it is manifestly obvious that one does not need to be Christian to think and speak this way?[72]

It is worth noting here, as I discussed briefly above, that we do find evidence of what a retrospective account of the human condition would be thinking backwards from the gospel of Jesus Christ, namely, Paul's novel Adam-Christ theology (Rom 5:12–21; 1 Cor 15:20–22, 45–49). No other Second Temple Jews told the Adam story the way Paul does because they (obviously) were not telling the story retrospectively from a Christological point of view, let alone from the point of view where the promised Christ dies and is then raised. But 1:18–32 presents itself as a view that is not dependent upon the revelation of Jesus Christ. One can only maintain, logically then, as Gaventa and Sanders do, that Paul "characteristically" thinks from "solution" to "plight" if Rom 1:18–32 does not represent Paul's own view.[73] Thus, Gaventa's claims of synthesis lack warranted bases.

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[72] See Walker: "Finally, there is nothing specifically 'Christian' in Rom 1.18–32. A devout non-Christian Jew and, indeed, many non-Christian Gentiles could, without any difficulty [as there are plenty of Greek philosophers decrying the foolishness of idolatry and immorality of giving into the passions and one's desires], subscribe to everything in the passage" ("Romans 1.18–2.29," 548). Similarly, Sanders writes: "I find, in short, no distinctively Pauline imprint in 1:18–2:29, apart from the tag in 2:16. Christians are not in mind, the Christian viewpoint plays no role, and the entire chapter is written from a Jewish perspective" (*Paul, the Law*, 129; cf. 128). Indeed, Romans 1:18–32 reads like what an ambitious reader of the Wisdom of Solomon would conclude (i.e., a reader who takes key positions of Wisdom of Solomon even further, as Philo does). So if Rom 1:18–32 is supposed to Paul's retrospective account of the human problem in light of the gospel, why does it look like the Wisdom of Solomon and/or Philo *in nuce*? Has Paul's encounter with the risen Jesus and the gospel changed nothing about his notions of human sinfulness? Does Paul go on believing what any other Hellenistic Jew might have already believed as evidenced by Wisdom of Solomon and Philo?

[73] Otherwise, one can only say that Paul "sometimes" gives a retrospective account of the human condition (and that these retrospective accounts, as the scholars above express, are in deep tension with the view set forth in 1:18–32, which sounds a like an Alexandrian Hellenistic Jewish perspective).

4.2.3 Stanley Stowers

Stowers notices that "it is striking that chapter 1 says nothing about Adam…. [Rom 1:18–32] does not describe or even allude to an initial act of disobedience as chapter 5 does."[74] From Paul's comments in Rom 5:12–21 and 1 Cor 15:21–22, it appears that Adam is Paul's principal explanation for death and thus sin (as these are typically a dyad in Paul's writings; cf. e.g., 15:56; Rom 5:12–21; 8:2). Hence Stowers argues that it is quite extraordinary if 1:18–32 is supposed to be "Paul's magisterial diagnosis of the human predicament" of universal sinfulness, and he fails to mention Adam or even allude to him.[75]

To be sure, scholars following Morna D. Hooker have tried to argue that "Adam [is] in Romans 1."[76] Nevertheless, this proposal is tenuous. As Joseph A. Fitzmyer notes in response, "this interpretation [to think that Paul is referring to the Adam narratives of Genesis 2–3] reads too much of Genesis into the text."[77] The Adam and Eve narrative is missing the key elements that are present in Rom 1:18–32; namely, idolatry, same-sex acts, and violence towards others. Adam did none of these things (neither did Eve). And too little of that narrative is present. (As I will discuss in chapter 6, however, I do think

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[74] Stowers, *Rereading*, 90.

[75] Stowers, *Rereading*, 86. This is contra James D. G. Dunn, who thinks 1:18–32 outlines "the plight of man in terms of Adam's abandonment of the truth of God" (*Romans 1–8,* 53).

[76] Morna D. Hooker, "Adam in Romans 1," *NTS* 6.4 (1960): 297–306; Morna D. Hooker, "Further Note on Romans 1," *NTS* 13.2 (1967): 181–83; Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 53.

[77] Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 274.

there is an allusion in Rom 1:26–27 to "male and female" reproduction in Gen 1:26–28, but this is not an allusion to the narrative of Adam in Gen 2–3.[78])

Moreover, as Stowers notes,

> Adam did not have to deduce God's existence from the creation. He did not lose or pervert his knowledge of God and thereby succumb to sin, and God did not punish him by imposing servitude to passions and desires. Genesis depicts Adam as having a good relationship with God after leaving the garden (4:1, 3-7; cf. 16, 25-26; 5:1-5), and the Jewish sources take their cues from the text in their positive accounts of the first man. Adam and Eve did not fashion images of gods.[79]

Therefore, Fitzmyer's judgment seems right that "[t]he alleged echoes of the Adam stories in Genesis are simply nonexistent."[80] It is unlikely that Rom 1:18–32 is Paul's depiction of "humanity's primal rebellion," as Richard B. Hays says.[81]

Consequently, Stowers offers a different attempt at synthesis. He concludes:

> The shape of 1:18–32 compared with that of 5:12–17 shows that the past turning away from God in 1:20–31 alludes to the gentiles, primarily in the period before the law. Chapter 5 maintains that all those who have lived after the Mosaic law share with Adam the distinction of transgressing God's specific commandments…. Paul's basic assumption here is that God punished people before the law only in this life, whereas after the law the scales of justice will not be balanced until the last judgment.[82]

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[78] Similarly Fitzmyer: "What allusions are alleged to be there are to Genesis 1, not the Genesis 2–3" (*Romans*, 274).

[79] Stowers, *Rereading*, 91

[80] Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 274.

[81] Hays, *The Moral Vision of the New Testament*, 385; also contra Hooker, "Adam," 300–301. Importantly, another reason to doubt that Rom 1:18–32 is "humanity's primal rebellion" (Hays) is because it is only Paul's account later in Romans that can really count as a narrative of universal human sinfulness (5:12, 19) whereas the one in 1:18–32 is, as Jean Noël Aletti and Origen recognize, not about "all humanity," but about "all ungodliness and injustice" (1:18), and the twice mentioned presence of righteous gentiles corroborates this (2:14–15, 26–27) (Jean Noël Aletti, "Rm 1,18-3:20: Incohérence Ou Cohérence de l'argumentation Paulinienne," *Bib* 69.1 (1988): 50; Origen, *Comm. Rom.* 1.16.1.). Not all people are gentiles and idolators and not all Jews are guilty of the things listed in 2:21–22 (more on this in subsequent chapters).

[82] Stowers, *Rereading*, 91.

But this attempt at a synthesis struggles to convince for various reasons. First, the present tense ἀποκαλύπτεται in 1:18 is a major hurdle for the suggestion that this section refers to a time period deep in the past. Second, the arrival of the Law only affected Israel, not the gentiles, according to Paul: "And we know that whatever the Law says it speaks to those in the Law" (3:19). Moreover, the data from Rom 5 onward again causes difficulties. The giving of the Law is particular to Israel in 9:4 (cf. 1 Cor 9:21). Indeed, Paul believes that only a small fraction of gentiles have a working knowledge of the Law (Rom 7:1) so the claim that Paul can imagine a just and fair scenario whereby those ignorant of the Law will nevertheless be judged by it seems far-fetched. And although Paul says all people are under some sort of condemnation until they are in Christ (5:16; 8:1), this is not because all are "in the Law," but rather because all are "in Adam" (5:12–21). As observed above, it is the very fact that not all people are under the Law that although they sin, they do not sin as transgressors like Adam (and Israel) (5:13–14). Thus, all these reasons cumulatively suggest that taking 1:18–32 to refer only to a time before the Law causes more problems than it solves.

4.2.4 Joseph Fitzmyer

Fitzmyer grants that Rom 1:18–20 "admits that in some sense such pagans have a vague, unformulated knowledge or experience of God—despite what… Paul himself seems to say in 1 Cor 1:21."[83] He offers a subtle harmonization of the natural knowledge

[83] Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 281.

of God and sin articulated in Rom 1:18–32 with the apocalyptic knowledge of God and sin Paul expresses elsewhere:

> Paul does *not* mean that "only by an act of revelation from above—God 'making it known'—can people understand God as He is." For precisely this reason he uses a different verb, *phaneroun*, "make evident," for example, in and through material creation itself, as distinct from *apokalyptein*, "reveal," namely, through the gospel. It is important to note this distinction. Paul admits that "God's uprightness" is *revealed* in the gospel, but he also maintains that people can perceive or come to a certain awareness of God's "eternal power and divinity" from reflection on what he has *made evident* in material creation.[84]

But this attempted solution also fails to convince.

Fitzmyer is correct that the position of 1:18–32 cannot be harmonized with Paul's later apocalyptic statements. Käsemann agrees, saying, "a natural theology…could scarcely be reconciled with his [Paul's] eschatology and christology."[85] Not only can these two paradigms not be harmonized, but evidence elsewhere in Paul's writings suggests that discerning right from wrong comes from one of three places: (a) the Scriptures (e.g., 1 Cor 4:6: "so that in us you might learn not go beyond what has been

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[84] Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 273; his emphasis; cf. 279–80.

[85] Käsemann, *Commentary*, 41. Driven by this premise along with the assumption that Paul is writing down his own beliefs in 1:18–32, this forces Käsemann to find something other than natural law/theology here. He simply asserts that this "is not natural theology in the Hellenistic or modern sense…. It is an eschatological illumination of existence and the world" (43). As mentioned with Gaventa above, it is perplexing that 1:18–32 can be construed as "an eschatological illumination of existence and the world" if these same views are found in Philo and Wisdom of Solomon. Nevertheless, because of what the text actually says, Käsemann admits that "one can become aware of his dependence on his Creator…not by rational deduction but existentially and immediately" (42). This distinction between "rationally" and "existentially" seems rather forced and brittle. He still ultimately understands that the claim of 1:19–20 (cf. esp. νοούμενα καθορᾶται in v. 20) means that every person has this knowledge of God and God's decrees simply by existing in the world—but this is exactly what Paul elsewhere denies in no uncertain terms. Käsemann is obviously very aware of the problem this text poses for understanding Paul because if this is indeed Paul's own voice, then it stands in sharp contradiction to what we otherwise know of Paul. In other words, Käsemann knows that natural law theology is at odds with and contradictory with Paul's theology expressed elsewhere. The problem is generated because the text itself makes it very difficult to avoid natural theology as Sterling made plain (Sterling, "'A Law to Themselves,'" 38–9). (My thanks to Ethan Taylor for pointing out Käsemann's view on this.)

written;" 10:11: "these things were written down for our instruction;" Rom 15:4: "for all that was written beforehand, was written for our instruction"); (b) from Spirit/God-inspired wisdom and discernment (e.g., 1 Cor 2:10–16; 12:8, 10; Rom 8:5–11; Gal 5:22–23, 25; Phil 1:9–10); or, most prominently, (c) from the cruciform pattern of Jesus's life and death (e.g., Phil 2:5–11; Rom 15:7; 1 Cor 11:1). Hence, rather than appealing to what is ostensibly "(un)natural" or "easily discernable" from creation when arguing against deviant sexual practices and idolatry in 1 Corinthians, Paul reasons from his union-with-Christ motif (1 Cor 6; 8–11:1; esp. 6:15, 17; 10:16–17, 21).[86] None of this evidence recognizes, or allows any room for, the distinction Fitzmyer attempts to make between—essentially—a proper knowledge of God and a partial knowledge of God. Only Rom 1, when it is harmonized with Paul's claims elsewhere, could suggest this, and Rom 1:18–32 does not itself really suggest that its revelation of God is deficient, quite the contrary

[86] More on the implications of Paul's sexual ethics here will be discussed in chapter 5. But the only possible exception to my claim that Paul does not reason from what is "natural" is Paul's appeal to "nature" regarding hairstyles in 1 Cor 11:14. Suffice to say here that I agree with Lucy Peppiatt's thesis that "Paul is referring to one of their [the troublesome Corinthians] own ideas about hairstyles and nature, but using the idea slightly tongue in cheek as a final coup de grace" (*Women and Worship at Corinth: Paul's Rhetorical Arguments in 1 Corinthians* [Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2015], 106). This is not only because of the likely speech-in-character cues in 1 Cor 11:1–16 discussed in chapter 3, but this is also corroborated by the data in Acts, which says Paul was under a long-term Nazirite vow when he was in Corinth (Acts 18:18). If this happened, "the Paul would have been growing his hair for eighteen months, meaning *he would have had long hair while in Corinth!* He certainly would not have had short hair. He only cut it, or shaved it off, when he left them" (ibid.). This would support the idea, which the rhetorical cues within 1 Cor 11:1–16 already independently suggested, that Paul was being facetious in 1 Cor 11:14 in a brilliant use of rhetorical sarcasm. Thus, this mutually corroborating evidence from Acts and 1 Corinthians means this lone and rhetorically unique and specific appeal to "nature" by Paul in 1 Cor 11:14 cannot be used as evidence that "nature" plays a central role in Paul's ethics. Nevertheless, even if one did not want to accept the above and maintained that Paul's is reasoning from nature in 1 Cor 11:14, this is a matter of decorum, not morality. Fitzmyer makes the same argument (*Romans*, 287).

(1:20–21, 25, 32). So Fitzmyer's solution lacks textual warrant and ultimately begs the question.

We can note, finally, that Sanders's solution also fails, although its radicality is indicative.

4.2.5 E. P. Sanders

Sanders's solution accepts that fundamental differences are in play. So he posits bracketing off the opening portion of Romans from a discussion of Paul's actual beliefs and leaves it dangling as a useless though interesting appendage. This view is fittingly embodied in his book as he deals with Rom 1:18–29 in an Appendix, even though verses 1:18–2:29 are arguably where the topics of "the Law" and "the Jewish people" are dealt with in as direct a way as Rom 7, 9–11 or Galatians 2–3. He suggests that Paul clumsily incorporated what must have been foreign material—probably a diaspora synagogue sermon. Sanders "anticipate[s] the objection that I have separated 1:18–2:29… too sharply from the rest of Paul's thought," and to this his response is: "I can only reply that I think that emphasizing the difference in viewpoint is essential."[87] Hence the solution itself is clearly unworkable, but it does express the problem neatly. We should excise Rom 1:18–2:29 from Paul's thinking, even in Romans, even if we do not know how to do this persuasively.

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[87] Sanders, *Paul, the Law,* 131.

4.3 Conclusion

Hopefully it is apparent by now that what is undoubtedly Pauline is not only distinctive from the positions of 1:18–32 at almost "every point,"[88] but even opposed directly by many of the key claims Paul makes elsewhere in Romans and in his other letters. But we could rephrase these tensions and say that the premise and argument in 1:18–32 fail to satisfy the criterion of appropriateness for Paul. And whenever "tensions" and "change in tone" like these are encountered in a dialogical context, then methodologically these can be analyzed according to the ancient conventions for attributed speech since "tensions" and "change in tone" establish διαφωνία and these are the very signals that lead us to suspect that 1:18–32 is to be assigned to Paul's interlocutor who is apostrophized in 2:1, 3 (and 2:17–24). This strengthens the validity of our preliminary scripting of 1:18–32 as speech-in-character that was made on other grounds in the previous chapter. In chapter 6 I will add more evidence of διαφωνία, which is best detailed there in conversation with Philo's corpus. Here it is simply interesting to note how διαφωνία has in effect already been widely recognized in 1:18–32 by scholars even if it has not been labeled as such. And this can strengthen our confidence that a thoroughly dialogical scripting of Rom 1–3 is on the right track. For, just as a "solution from the character" (λύσις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου) resolves the problems caused by the διό in the first apostrophe in 2:1, so too a "solution from the character" would resolve the tensions documented here without generating more problems.

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[88] O'Neill, *Paul's Letter*, 54.

So then, this dialogical solution not only has greater explanatory power for data encountered across Romans, but it is the type of solution historical scholars should be seeking given the overt dialogical markers in the text itself.

5. Tensions Generated by Rom 2:1–29

Given the comments of prominent scholars over the years, it appears fair to say that if Rom 2 did not exist then Paul's theology of the Law, Israel, and final judgment would not be so confusing. N. T. Wright admits that "Romans 2 is the joker in the pack" and "the Achilles heel of schemes on Paul and the Law."[1] Sanders concludes that "Romans 2 [differs] ... sharply from the rest of Paul's thought."[2] "Romans 2 still stands out," he continues, "because it deals directly with salvation and makes salvation dependent on obedience to the law. What is said about the law in Romans 2 cannot be fitted into a category otherwise known from Paul's letters."[3] Sanders even holds that "in Romans 2 we are dealing with a point of view which at no point reflects specifically Christian thinking."[4] John Barclay confesses that the reference to the final judgment scenario in 2:6–10 is "the greatest stumbling block for interpreters of Paul."[5]

This chapter will focus on the three major problems that scholars have previously identified in Rom 2 as generating these difficulties: (1) the presence of righteous gentiles who get saved by doing works prescribed by the (natural) law; (2) meritorious soteriology (which is closely related to the preceding issue); and (3) the disinheritance of historical and ethnic Israel. The role of [dis]obedience is an essential component of all of these topics so it will be discussed repeatedly, from these three different angles. My

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[1] N. T. Wright, "The Law in Romans 2," in *Paul and the Mosaic Law*, ed. James D. G. Dunn, WUNT 89 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1996), 131, 132.

[2] E. P. Sanders, *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 131.

[3] Sanders, *Paul, the Law*, 132.

[4] Sanders, *Paul, the Law*, 131–32.

[5] John M. G. Barclay, *Paul and the Gift* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), 466.

principal goal throughout is to demonstrate that scholars have rightly put their fingers on major interpretive tensions generated by Rom 2, although their solutions to these problems, which tend to trade on some variation of the Christian solution—the notion that the righteous Jews or Gentiles in Rom saved by works are Christians—invariably face significant difficulties. These tensions are more plausibly explained as instances of διαφωνία, as were those noted in the previous chapter in relation to Rom 1, which is to say that they have been caused by the presence of an interlocutor's viewpoint.

5.1 Gentiles as Righteous Doers of the (Natural) Law

5.1.1 Rom 2:14–15 and the Natural Law in 1:18–32

It was noted in chapter 4 that the position of inexcusable disobedience in Rom 1:18–32 presupposes that the natural law can be obeyed. This is confirmed and repeated in 2:6–7, 10, 12–15, 26–27 where, as Sanders states, the text plainly affirms "that some [gentiles] obey the law perfectly well."[6] Hence, Gregory E. Sterling observes, "Those who object to the presence of the natural law in [Romans] chapter 1 will also react to the argument here [in Rom 2]; however, the place of natural law in both texts is required for the argument to be cogent."[7] Craig S. Keener similarly coordinates Rom 1:18–32 with 2:14–15. He comments, "in 2:14–15 Paul probably focuses more generally on a natural law innate in humanity."[8]

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[6] Sanders, *Paul, the Law*, 125.

[7] Gregory E. Sterling, "'A Law to Themselves': Limited Universalism in Philo and Paul," *ZNW* 107 (2016): 39.

[8] Craig S. Keener, *Romans*, New Covenant Commentary Series (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2009), 45–46. Also, "apart from Christ, the natural law of conscience innate in human beings functions like the external law of Moses" (ibid., 44).

Further, it is important to see that this group of obedient gentiles does not seem to be hypothetical. As Sanders observes, there is nothing in the text that would "make one think the offer is hypothetical or that the goal is impossible to achieve."[9] Indeed, the rhetorical function of Rom 2only works if someone (whether Paul or the interlocutor) thinks there really are gentiles who are able to live righteously according to the natural law apart from the written Law here in 2:14–15. Otherwise, the turn in 2:25–29 will not work. How will this Teacher who calls himself a Jew (2:17–24) be bothered by righteous gentiles who "keep the requirements of the Law" (2:26) and judge the Teacher (2:27) if these gentiles mentioned in 2:10–11, 14–15 and 26–27 are supposed to be merely hypothetical?

Additionally, Origen does not believe the category of obedient gentiles in Rom 2 is hypothetical. And he immediately relates this obedience to the "natural law" spoken of in Rom 1:18–32, which is not surprising given his Alexandrian education where the Philonic tradition was preserved and revered. He understands the phrase ὅταν γὰρ ἔθνη τὰ μὴ νόμον ἔχοντα φύσει τὰ τοῦ νόμου ποιῶσιν (2:14) as "for when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do naturally the things of the law" (*Comm. Rom.* 2.9.1; cf. 2.8.2; 2.14.2; 3.2.9).[10] Origen goes on to explain "It is certain that the Gentiles who do not have the law are not being said to do naturally the things of the law in respect to the Sabbath days, the

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[9] Sanders, *Paul, the Law*, 129. Further, the is little evidence from Paul that he thinks obedience to the Torah is impossible, let alone a more basic natural law. In fact, he thinks he at least was able to obey the Torah blamelessly (Phil 3:5–6; cf. Gal 1:14).

[10] All translations of Origen's commentary on Romans come from Thomas P. Scheck, trans., *Origen: Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans: Books 1-5*, The Fathers of the Church 103 (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2001). Translator's emphasis here.

new moon celebrations, or the sacrifices written about in the law. For it was not *that* law which is said to be written in the hearts of the Gentiles. The reference is instead to what they are able to perceive by nature" (2.9.1).[11] It is worth noting in passing that Origen does not think these obedient gentiles are Christians either for he plainly says "As far as I am able to understand, he speaks of the Jews and Gentiles, each of whom are not yet believers" (2.7.5; cf. 2.7.6). But we will revisit this interpretative option—the Christian solution as it pertains to Rom 2:14–15—in more detail momentarily.

What Origen means by the natural law being "written in the hearts of the Gentiles" is that "there is no one who does not have experience of this law, which is naturally innate within men, both Jews and Gentiles" (3.6.1); that is, "God…has ingrafted the natural law into them all [both Jews and gentiles]" (3.6.6).[12] Although I agree with Origen that the text here is speaking about the natural law being universally available and discernable to all, it is important to note that the syntax of Rom 2:15 (τὸ ἔργον τοῦ νόμου γραπτὸν ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις αὐτῶν) does not say that the νόμος is written on the heart, but rather that the "work" (ἔργον) of the νόμος is. The accusative neuter singular adjective γραπτὸν is modifying the accusative neuter singular noun τὸ ἔργον, not the genitive masculine noun τοῦ νόμου. The genitive τοῦ νόμου is specifying that this "work" is all of "the things" required by the natural law (τὰ τοῦ νόμου, v. 14), all of which are by definition in accordance with the written Law. This entails, at least at this stage in our

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[11] Cf. *Comm. Rom.* 1.16–17 for Origen's comments on Rom 1:18–32 with regards to natural law in that passage.

[12] A similar argument is made by Sterling, "'A Law to Themselves,'" 41.

discussion, that any presumption 2:15 is necessarily evoking Jeremiah's promise of the new covenant—where it says that the Law itself will be written on people's hearts (Jer 31:33 [38:33 LXX])—and so is referring to Christians is premature.[13] This claim is frequently made in explanation of this text and so we need to spend a little time addressing its shortcomings.

There are comments in the Hebrew scriptures about the Law being in someone's "heart" that are not about the new covenant, but simply a way of talking about the character of the righteous (e.g., Pss 37:31; 40:9; Isa 51:7 cf. Ps 119:11). Moreover, and as will be shown in more detail in chapter 7, it is possible for a Jewish teacher of Paul's time to evoke this language and not be evoking "covenantal," let alone new covenant overtones. Philo uses this language of the (natural and written) law written on the heart (even of gentiles), but ignores all notions of covenant theology in his writings and even redacts it out when he is quoting from "covenantal" passages. And not only do we have Origen contradicting this view (*Comm. Rom.* 2.9.1; cf. 2.8.2; 2.14.2; 3.2.9), but the Apocalypse of Sedrach does so as well.

The dating of this text is difficult (ca. 150–500 AD), and although "the apocalypse itself originated in Jewish circles" there are a few Jewish-Christian interpolations.[14] Among these Christian insertions, the redactor quotes directly from Rom 2:14a (ὅταν γὰρ ἔθνη τὰ μὴ νόμον ἔχοντα φύσει τὰ τοῦ νόμου ποιῶσιν) in two places (ὅτι

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[13] Contra Wright, "The Law," 147–48, cf. 138–39.

[14] S. Agourides, "Apocalypse of Sedrach: A New Translation and Introduction," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments*, ed. James H Charlesworth (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1983), 606–7, here 607.

εἰσὶν ἔθνη τὰ μὴ νόμον ἔχοντα <καὶ τὰ> τοῦ νόμου ποιῶσιν in 14:5; τὰ ἔθνη ἃ μὴ νόμον ἔχοντα τὰ τοῦ νόμου ποιῶσιν in 15:4).[15] Significantly for our purposes here, the redactor clarifies that these figures "not having the law… are" specifically "non-baptized" (εἰσιν ἀβάπτιστοι; 14:5) from the nations, who also nevertheless have "the divine Spirit" (ἐνέβη τὸ θεῖόν μου πνεῦμα, 14:5; 15:4[16]). Hence this reception of the divine Spirit is clearly not the same filling of the Spirit that is supposed to attend Christian baptism. And in accordance with Rom 2:13, which says only the "doers of the law will be declared righteous" (οἱ ποιηταὶ νόμου δικαιωθήσονται), the redactor says that because these unbaptized non-Christians "do the things of the law" (τὰ τοῦ νόμου ποιῶσιν, Apoc. Sedr. 14:5; 15:4; Rom 2:14), they are "received with the righteous [μετὰ τῶν δικαίων]" (Apoc. Sedr. 14:5). This is further evidence that a Jewish-Christian reader of Rom 2 would not automatically equate Rom 2:14 with either the themes of "new covenant" or with gentile Christians.[17]

I would suggest, rather, that Rom 2:14–15 makes the best sense within its context if the "law" it is referring to is the "natural law" that a sufficient number of gentiles clearly live by and are thus righteous figures who will be declared righteous on the day of judgment (2:5, 16) since they were "doers of the [natural] law" (2:13). On this, I follow

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[15] Greek text comes from *Apocrypha Anecdota: A Collection of Thirteen Apocryphal Books and Fragments*, vol. 2 of *TS* 3 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1893), 136. My translations to follow.

[16] The verb ἐνέβη comes at the end in 15:4.

[17] Contra Wright, who assumes that the mere mention of πνεῦμα in Rom 2:29 is sufficient evidence that the text is about gentile Christians ("The Law," 134–39). Also, Rom 2:14–15 only refers to those among the nations who live in according with a divine law even though they have no knowledge of the written Law (which gentile Christians would have even if they are not following *kashrut*, for instance).

Sterling, Sanders, Keener, and Origen.[18] Origen's understanding of the syntax of Rom 2:14 is especially accurate. That is, contra Wright, in the phrase ὅταν γὰρ ἔθνη τὰ μὴ νόμον ἔχοντα φύσει τὰ τοῦ νόμου ποιῶσιν, the dative φύσει modifies the verb ποιῶσιν rather than the participle ἔχοντα (which is a rather tendentious possibility as Wright admits).[19] As Fitzmyer notes, if Paul intended φύσει to modify ἔχοντα "Paul would have put *physei* within the participial phrase *ta mē nomon echonta*…(compare 2:27; Gal 2:15)."[20] The point of Rom 2:14 is that there are some gentiles who follow the precepts of the law that are in line with or according to nature; i.e., the natural law. Thus, this verse references "Gentiles who without the [L]aw keep its requirements by following a form of natural law."[21] As Origen pointed out, while not all of the written Law's requirements are knowable through nature, all the requirements knowable and accessible by nature (cf. 1:32) are also contained within the Law (2:20). Fitzmyer articulates this well: "Following the guidance of *physis* Gentiles frame rules of conduct for themselves and know at least

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[18] Although Sterling does not attribute the beliefs in Rom 2 to Paul's interlocutor, he does not think Paul actually holds these beliefs and for that reason considers these statements about natural law and righteous gentiles to be merely "rhetorical arguments" that Paul wants to "undercut" beginning in 3:10 ("'A Law to Themselves,'" 42). He says that "It does not appear that Paul accepted the validity of the arguments in the final analysis" ("'A Law to Themselves,'" 46). Therefore, we are almost in complete agreement. As we are steadily building towards, the theology laid out in Rom 2 (and 1:18–32) is foreign to Paul's actual theology. I will show why it is best to script this as sarcastic parody—Paul's mirroring his interlocutor's own views back to them—in order to completely, as Sterling puts it, "undercut" it with his (Paul's) actual theology. Paul reproduces an alternative position here that he is about to undercut because he is dealing with a "Teacher" (cf. 2:20–21) that actually holds this theology. Paul might be speaking these bits in the script, but since they are part of a Socratic *elenchus* (which 2:1, 3 led one to expect and the final change of mind by the interlocutor in 3:1–9 will confirm), this sets up the expectation that what follows is sarcastic parody of the Teacher's own views.

[19] Wright concedes that the "word-order" of 2:14 is "the most forceful objection" to his reading and that "the latter [taking φύσει with ποιῶσιν] feels more natural" ("The Law in Romans 2," 145).

[20] Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 310; cf. Sterling, "'A Law to Themselves,'" 39–40; Dunn, *Romans 1–8*, 98.

[21] Sterling, "'A Law to Themselves,'" 39.

some of the prescriptions of the Mosaic Torah. They have *physis* as a guide for their conduct.[22] This is plainly how the Jewish-Christian redactor of the Apocalypse of Sedrach understands this verse (14:5; 15:4).

Romans 2:14 is consequently the other side of the coin first introduced in 1:26. While there are some gentiles who live "against nature" (τὴν παρὰ φύσιν in1:26–27; cf. τὴν παρὰ φύσιν in Philo, *Spec.* 3.39 also in the context of same-sex activity), there are also some who live "[in line] with nature" (φύσει) (Rom 2:14; cf. vv. 26–27). My expanded translation of 2:14 would be, "For whenever gentiles, those not having the Law, do the things of the law[23] [in line] with nature [i.e., they follow the natural law which is contained within Law, but also accessible apart from the written Law per 1:18–32], these ones not having the Law are a law for themselves." Although his covenantal reading is misguided, Wright is correct to conclude that the group of obedient gentiles present in Rom 2 "is not a hypothetical category, soon to be proved empty. It is alive and well."[24]

But the conclusion about natural law in Rom 2 rests more than just on the dative φύσει in 2:14. As Campbell observes, in 2:12–15, 26–27 the gentiles that are obeying the law do "so independently of adopting the various badges and specific practices of

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[22] Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 309.

[23] Cf. τὰ δικαιώματα τοῦ νόμου in 2:26.

[24] Wright, "The Law in Romans 2," 136. Wright takes these to be gentile Christians and I will show why I think this is doubtful in due course. Douglas Campbell also argues against the hypothesis that the righteous gentiles are hypothetical (*The Deliverance of God: An Apocalyptic Rereading of Justification in Paul* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009], 373–74).

Judaism."[25] This means the gentiles are obeying some law that is not exactly equal to the written Law (because they are not circumcised according to 2:26–29). And this is consistent with what is being disobeyed in 1:18–32, namely, the natural law. Again, in this way 2:14–15 is the other side of the same coin as 1:18–32; there are some who live "against" the natural law (esp. 1:26–27) and there are also some who live "in line with" the natural law (2:14–15, 26–27). As a block, Rom 1:18–2:29 establishes that "there is no partiality with God" (2:11) because, (a) the natural law exists, (b) it can be known (esp. 1:20–21, 25, 32; 2:14), and (c) it can be obeyed (this is implicit in 1:18–32 and explicit in 2:14–15, 26–27; cf. vv. 6–7, 10).[26] And this is sufficient both (d) to convict those who do not obey it (1:18–32; esp. "without excuse" in v. 20; 2:12–13), and (e) to justify those who obey the natural law in their hearts (2:13–15).

5.1.2 Διαφωνία in Rom 2:14–15

But this generates a significant conundrum. No matter how we want to organize 1:18–3:8, it is clear to all scholars of Romans that the statements made in 3:9, 20, 23—that all are under sin and no flesh will be justified before God by the works of the law—are the conclusions towards which Paul aiming in some sense. (These are also substantiated by the massed Scriptural catena of 3:10–18.) And the existence of the group

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[25] Douglas A. Campbell, *The Quest for Paul's Gospel: A Suggested Strategy*, JSNTSup 274 (London: T&T Clark, 2005), 242.

[26] Cf. "Verses [2:]12–16 show that a knowledge of divine legal prescriptions is not the exclusive possession of the Jew; some prescriptions of the Mosaic law are known even to pagans" (Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 297).

of righteous pagans saved by works in Rom 2 is now a major problem.[27] Sanders makes this especially apparent:

> Chapter 2… does not really argue that all are condemned. All are judged on the same basis, but the results are by no means in accord with the universal character of the conclusions in chapter 3. The offer of salvation on the basis of fulfillment of the law is held out repeatedly, and not in terms which make one think the offer is hypothetical or that the goal is impossible to achieve: [Sanders quotes 2:7, 10, 13, 14–16, 25–28] All this is much further from the conclusion in 3:9, 20 than is generally realized.[28]

Sanders is thus correct to conclude that "Paul's case for universal sinfulness, as it is stated in Rom. 1:18–2:29, is not convincing: it is internally inconsistent...."[29] Instead of laying the groundwork for an argument of universal sinfulness, "The conclusion which would naturally follow from chapter 2 is 'repent and obey the law from the bottom of your heart, so that you will be a true Jew'"[30] and this is clearly the opposite of what Paul concludes.

We should now note the concomitants of this issue: people elsewhere in Paul do not become righteous simply by acting in accordance with the law, and neither do they get saved in this way.

Paul is very pessimistic elsewhere about the idea of anyone—let alone gentiles—being able to become obedient from the heart (cf. "obey" in 2:8 and "heart" in v. 15). Obedience certainly matters, but becoming "obedient from the heart" (6:17) happens only

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[27] Granted, Wright's exegesis of Rom 2 argues against this construal as well ("The Law in Romans 2," 131, 149–50), but as it will become more clear, his solution is ultimately untenable not least because he does not notice and therefore does not attempt to address the numerous tensions set forth above and presently.

[28] Sanders, *Paul, the Law*, 128–29.

[29] Sanders, *Paul, the Law*, 125.

[30] Sanders, *Paul, the Law*, 129.

through co-crucifixion with Jesus (6:5–6); and it is obedience, not to "law" (natural or written; cf. 6:14), but to "that pattern of teaching" (6:17)—i.e., "obeying the gospel" (10:16)—which denotes being conformed to the cruciform image of Jesus (6:3–11; 8:29, 35, 37; cf. 5:8). This is made possible by the Spirit of Jesus dwelling within people (8:1–17) who pours forth God's love within their hearts (5:5, 8; 8:39), which enables them in turn to "love [all others] without hypocrisy" (12:9). Moreover, Paul repeatedly contrasts this form of obedience with obedience informed by "law" and "works" (cf. 3:20–21, 27–28; 4:4–6, 13–14; 6:14–15; 9:30–32). That is, the obedience Paul is concerned about in 6:17 (cf. 1:5; 15:18; 16:26) is quite different from the obedience described in 2:6–15 (esp. v. 8)—an obedience oriented by "work[s]" (2:6, 7, 15; cf. vv. 9–10), "working/doing the good" (2:7, 10) in accordance with "law" (2:14–15), and thus simply being "doers of the law" (2:13).

This opposition by Paul elsewhere to an obedience based on works and law is further evidenced in Paul's use of πίστις to qualify his account of obedience in the phrase ὑπακοὴν πίστεως (1:5; 16:26).[31] Ὑπακοὴν πίστεως is clearly rather different from the obedience of "works" and "law" described in Rom 2:6–15, wherein, significantly, πίστις is absent.[32] This absence of πίστις is all the more relevant when we note that πίστις arises

[31] Paul operates in this letter with a strict dichotomy between "faith" and "works"/"law" (e.g., 3:20, 27–28; 4:4–6, 13–14; 6:14–15; 9:30–32; cf. 11:6; Gal 2:16; 3:11–12; 5:4–5).

[32] True, Paul believes that love "fulfills" the Law (πληρόω in Rom 13:8 and πλήρωμα in v. 10), but fulfillment is quite different than "doing" (ποιητής in 2:13; ποιέω in v. 14), "practicing" (πράσσω in v. 25), "keeping" (φυλάσσω in v. 26), and "performing" (τελέω in v. 27) the Law. For Paul, gentiles who are no longer "conformed to this age" (12:2) but rather are "conformed to the image of God's Son" (8:29) and thus live a life of love on account of the divine love dwelling within them (5:5, cf. 5:8; 8:35, 37, 39) are able to "love without hypocrisy" (12:9) and thereby "fulfill the Law" (13:8, 10) *apart from* doing, practicing, keeping, and performing the works of the Law.

only and specifically from the gospel in Romans (see esp. Rom 10:16–17) and this is why the obedience Paul is trying to elicit from Israel and the nations alike (cf. 11:13–14) is specifically the ὑπακοὴν πίστεως (1:5; 16:26). It is the πίστις (10:17) and obedience (ὑπακούω, 10:16) that arise from the proclamation of the gospel of Christ (10:16–17).

In short, Paul's comments from the opening section of Romans and then throughout its later sections regarding obedience and faith simply seem to be fundamentally different from the notions of obedience and sin set forth in 1:18–2:29. The obedience that matters in Rom 1:18–2:16 is only of "works" and "law" and not of πίστις. It is also an obedience that arises from outside of the gospel (contra 10:16–17; cf. vv. 13–15) since it is an obedience to ordinances that are clearly discernable from creation itself (1:20, 32; 2:14). Two quite different systems of obedience are in play.

Another detail in 2:14–15 ought to be highlighted quickly here (although it will be discussed in greater depth when we turn to Philo and this section of Romans in chapter 7). While 2:15 champions the role of "conscience" as a "witness" for judgment, again, nothing else in the Pauline corpus reproduces this sentiment. Although Paul does think the conscience has an important, yet minor, role in other texts—especially in the Corinthian correspondence where Paul is keen to advocate for those who have "weak" consciences—he explicitly denies the effective power of the conscience (even his own) to be a reliable witness or judge and defers to the judgment of Christ in 1 Cor 4:3–4. (This deferral to Christ is in line with the tell-tale comment in Rom 2:16b that will be discussed

in the next subsection.[33]) Although we do not yet have a sufficiently detailed profile of the interlocutor to ascertain whether the role of the conscience in Rom 2:15 in these terms is appropriate for him, it can be claimed that its function here is at odds with Paul's only other direct comment on the matter and is thus best categorized as yet another instance of διαφωνία. The righteous pagans saved by doing the works prescribed in nature can be guided by their consciences; but elsewhere in Paul this is not the case.

I labor this general point because it leads to an important interpretative judgment. These differences demonstrate why the attempt to solve the problem of righteous gentiles saved by works in Rom 2:14–15 and 26–27 by means of the Christian solution fails to convince.[34] Not only does this reading tend to rest on the questionable assumption that the new covenant is being evoked in 2:15,[35] but it also does not recognize the deep incompatibility between the two notions of obedience just outlined. When Paul elaborates Christian obedience everywhere else in Romans, not to mention in the rest of his writings, it is intrinsically related to faith, submission, baptism, the Spirit, and participation in Christ. But this is not the simple obedience by works that is described in Rom 2.

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[33] Cf. Sterling, "'A Law to Themselves,'" 41.

[34] E.g., Barclay, *Paul*, 465–74, 518–19; Wright, "The Law," 135–38, 147–48. Below I devote a subsection addressing Barclay's articulation of the Christian solution since his project is the most comprehensive argument to date of this position.

[35] For example, Wright comments, "I find it next to impossible that Paul could have written this phrase [in 2:15], with its overtones of Jeremiah's new covenant promise, simply to refer to pagans who happen by accident to share some of Israel's moral teaching" (Wright, "The Law in Romans 2," 147). But as I will demonstrate in the following two chapters, Philo does just this (and does so repeatedly).

5.2 Salvation according to Works

5.2.1 Two Competing Ways to Receive Eschatological Goods

Here we can press further into the problematic meritocracy established by Rom 2. Keener is correct to note that part of the point in 2:1–16 is "the principle of God's ethnic impartiality,"[36] but overlooks the fact that this entails "the basic principle of soteriological meritocracy."[37] And this arguably creates an unbridgeable chasm between this position and Paul's statements about salvation elsewhere. If Paul is championing anything in Romans, salvation is the freely given and gracious gift of God in Jesus Christ through the Spirit. It is not earned. We can grasp the tension quickly by noting two texts alongside one another. Whereas in Rom 2:6–7 eschatological life (ζωὴ αἰώνιος)[38] is the reward or wage for persevering in good works (ὃς *ἀποδώσει ἑκάστῳ κατὰ τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ·* τοῖς μὲν καθ᾽ ὑπομονὴν ἔργου ἀγαθοῦ δόξαν καὶ τιμὴν καὶ ἀφθαρσίαν ζητοῦσιν ζωὴν αἰώνιον), and consequently places God under an obligation, in 6:23 eschatological life is

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[36] Keener, *Romans*, 44; cf. 45. Keener is advocating that Paul's focus is on this principle of God's ethnic impartiality against those who think Rom 2 discusses righteous gentile Christians. I agree Keener on this point, but his inattention to the principle of soteriological merit is notable.

[37] Campbell, *Quest*, 242.

[38] To avoid confusion later, I will typically translate αἰώνιος as "eschatological" rather than "eternal." For one, αἰώνιος never means "eternal" or "unending infinite time" in the LXX unless it refers to God (and this has to do with the fact that it is referring to God, not the semantic range of αἰώνιος). This is the same for all of ancient Greek literature. The Greek word for "eternal" in the sense of "interminable extended time" is ἀΐδιος. The adjective αἰώνιος simply means something that is defined by the age that is being referenced. Thus, ζωὴ αἰώνιος is the life that is characterized by a certain age or aeon. In context, the age being referred to is the "age to come" or the eschaton; hence, "eschatological life." Paul no doubt thinks that eschatological life will persist "forever," but this is an inference from the God who sustains it; it is not inherent to the word αἰώνιος. On the differences between αἰώνιος and ἀΐδιος in ancient Greek literature see David Bentley Hart, *The New Testament: A Translation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017), 537–43; Ilaria L. E. Ramelli, *A Larger Hope? Universal Salvation from Christian Beginnings to Julian of Norwich* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2019), 28–29, 48–50, 62, 67, 74, 91, 103, 105–9, 119, 125, 132, 144–45, 215–21; Ilaria L. E. Ramelli and David Konstan, *Terms for Eternity* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2013).

the unconditional and gracious gift of God (τὸ δὲ χάρισμα τοῦ θεοῦ ζωὴ αἰώνιος ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν).

It is necessary to realize that Paul himself sets out clear criteria for determining whether something is a gift: "the recompense for the one who works [is] not counted according to grace but according to what is owed (ὀφείλημα)" (4:4, cf. 4:6–8) hence he says later that "if by grace, then not from works, otherwise the grace is no longer grace" (11:6). Using these two sentences, we can determine that the soteriology of Rom 2 is meritorious according to Paul's own terms, and see in turn just as plainly that Paul counters the meritorious soteriology in Rom 2 with his own unconditional and gracious soteriology elsewhere.

In Rom 2, God's "just judgment" (δικαιοκρισία, 2:5) is a strict commitment to a soteriological judgment *κατὰ τὰ ἔργα* (2:6). This means, as the text states, that "eschatological life" (ζωὴ αἰώνιος) is what God is under obligation to give back (ἀποδίδωμι) (2:6) to those who "persevere in good work" (2:7) and to the one who "does the good [τῷ ἐργαζομένῳ τὸ ἀγαθόν], to the Jew first and also to the Greek" (2:10).[39] Therefore, according to this soteriology, eschatological life is "not counted according to

[39] It is significant that ἀποδίδωμι means paying out what is owed ("to render what is due," LSJ, s.v., αποδιδωμι, 1; "to meet a[n]…obligation," BDAG, s.v., ἀποδίδωμι, 2). But Paul explicitly denies that this is how God's justification of the ungodly operates (τῷ δὲ **ἐργαζομένῳ** ὁ μισθὸς οὐ λογίζεται κατὰ χάριν ἀλλὰ κατὰ **ὀφείλημα**, τῷ δὲ **μὴ ἐργαζομένῳ** πιστεύοντι δὲ ἐπὶ τὸν δικαιοῦντα τὸν ἀσεβῆ λογίζεται ἡ πίστις αὐτοῦ εἰς δικαιοσύνην· καθάπερ καὶ Δαυὶδ λέγει τὸν μακαρισμὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ᾧ ὁ θεὸς λογίζεται δικαιοσύνην **χωρὶς ἔργων**) (4:4–6; my emphasis). But yet this is also explicitly how salvation and God's justificaiton is articulated in 2:6–13. In 2:6–13, both eschatological life and justification come to those who "work" and "do." For more on the notion of obligation, see Campbell, *Deliverance*, 731.

grace, but according to what is owed" (4:4). This contrasts with Rom 6:23 where "eschatological life" is called a gracious gift (χάρισμα).

Some scholars appeal to the Christian solution here again. That is, think they can resolve these problems by appealing to a divinely empowered transformation into righteousness for those in Christ. For instance, Keener says that "it is believers in Jesus who are able to fulfill the role of the righteous [in 2:7, 10]."[40] Thus, "while it [2:1–16] focuses on the potential righteousness of any person, Paul would only aver that those transformed by Christ would live thus."[41] Taking up Keener's proposals, Michael J. Gorman notes in his critique of Campbell's *Deliverance* that because "the language of Rom 2—about seeking (or doing) good, glory, honor, immortality, righteousness, peace, and so on…—has parallels throughout Rom 5–15 in Paul's descriptions of the lives of believers" that this means "believers actually do what Rom 2 says people need to do to be considered among the justified and to have eternal life."[42] Gorman goes on to assert that "God really does judge on the basis of performance because God really has delivered those in Christ from the realm of Sin and really has empowered them with the Spirit to embody the demands of the covenant."[43]

While Keener and Gorman are correct to observe certain parallels between the terms used in Rom 2:7–10 and elsewhere in Romans, I will suggest shortly that these

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[40] Keener, *Romans*, 45.
[41] Keener, *Romans*, 44.
[42] Michael J. Gorman, "Douglas Campbell's T*he Deliverance of God*: A Review by a Friendly Critic," *Journal for the Study of Paul and His Letters* 1 (2011): 104.
[43] Gorman, "Douglas Campbell's," 105.

parallels serve to intensify the tensions and thereby critically call into question the viability of the Christian solution for this interpretive problem. The key point to be grasped here meanwhile is that if those in Christ receive "eschatological life" (2:7) as payment (ἀποδίδωμι, 2:6) for their "performance"[44] of "what Rom 2 says people need to do,"[45] then this means eschatological life is "not counted according to grace, but according to what is owed" (4:4). That is, the idea that "God really has…empowered them [Christians] with the Spirit to embody the demands of the covenant"[46] and "actually do what Rom 2 says people need to do to be considered among the justified and to have eternal life"[47] goes against Paul's own criteria for what makes something a gift and necessarily means that salvation ultimately functions according to the basic principle of desert as set forth in Rom 2. That this ostensibly transformed living in righteousness is "empowered" by the Spirit makes no difference to the fact that according to Gorman (and presumably to Keener) only those who "actually do what Rom 2 says people need to" are those who "have eternal life."[48] And this is undeniably salvation by desert. We have already noted how according to Paul's own criteria (cf. 4:4; 11:6), the rubric and terms of Rom 2:6–10 are contradicted (and thus rejected) by Paul's claims regarding eschatological life in 6:23. Rather than solving the tension then, Keener and Gorman's

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[44] Gorman, "Douglas Campbell's," 105.
[45] Gorman, "Douglas Campbell's," 104.
[46] Gorman, "Douglas Campbell's," 105.
[47] Gorman, "Douglas Campbell's," 104.
[48] Gorman, "Douglas Campbell's," 104.

proposal for the Christian solution ignores it by effectively erasing Paul's gift language and asserting that eschatological life is meritorious in Paul after all.

Gorman and Keener are correct to note Paul's emphasis on transformation for those in Christ, but they are mistaken as to how Paul incorporates this into his soteriological framework. As I will soon demonstrate, Paul certainly believes and hopes for present transformation into righteousness, but this is never made the condition and basis for receiving eschatological life. Rather, it is consistently construed elsewhere as the consequence of God's gracious deliverance that might not become "actual" in the person until the eschaton itself (cf. Gal 5:5; Phil 3:12–14, 20–21). Hence in other texts Paul explicitly talks about the salvation of some who are persistently disobedient, unrepentant, and have no good "works" (e.g., 1 Cor 3:13–15; 5:1–5; Rom 10:16; 11:28–29, 32).

But we should now return for the moment to Keener and Gorman's observations about the parallels between key terms in Rom 2 and the rest of Romans. Again, these parallels serve to increase, not to decrease, the tensions. The same contrast between "eschatological life" (ζωὴ αἰώνιος) being a payment for good work in 2:6–7 as opposed to a gracious gift in 6:23 is observable for other eschatological goods such as "peace" (εἰρήνη, 2:10) and "glory" (δόξα, 2:7, 10). In Rom 2, these are eschatological rewards "paid back" (2:6) to those who "persevere in good work" (2:7) and to the one who "does the good" (2:10). But later in the letter Paul says "we have peace" because we have been "justified from faith[fulness]" (ἐκ πίστεως, 5:1). For the present point to hold, it does not matter whether ἐκ πίστεως refers here to Jesus's own faithfulness or to a believer's faith

in Jesus (or in the Father for that matter). The point is that "peace" (εἰρήνη) is the result of πίστις, not of works. In other words, whatever "faith" is in 5:1, it is not "works" or "working."[49] But, according to Rom 2:6–10, good works are ultimately what secure the payment of "peace" to the righteous (2:10). Moreover, if πίστις is what gives rise to εἰρήνη (5:1), then it is important to note further that πίστις arises specifically from the proclamation of Christ (10:16–17).[50] For Paul there is no εἰρήνη apart from the specific revelation of the gospel (the gospel gives rise to πίστις, which in turn gives rise to εἰρήνη). But this is divergent from the schema in Rom 2:6–10 since εἰρήνη is said to be secured specifically by obeying the (natural) law, doing its work. These two distinct accounts of εἰρήνη are incompatible.[51]

Similarly, while "glory" (δόξα) in 2:7, 10 is the eschatological reward for good works in 2:7, 10, in 5:2 it is another result of πίστις and God's gracious gift (χάρις). In 8:29–30 Paul says glorification results from God's foreknowledge, predetermination, and calling (καλέω); and if something is by God's "calling" (καλέω) then it cannot be "from works" (ἐξ ἔργων, 9:12 [v. 11 in English]). Further, in 11:29 Paul makes clear that the "calling" (κλῆσις) of God is an irrevocable "gift" (χάρισμα; cf. χάρις in 5:2). Therefore, by Paul's own criteria and definitions of what constitutes a "gift" and a "calling," this

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[49] I noted above the contrasts between "faith" and "works" and "law" that Paul repeatedly makes throughout Romans (and Galatians), but for convenience place them here again: Rom 3:20, 27–28; 4:4–6, 13–14; 6:14–15; 9:30–32; Gal 2:16; 3:11–12; 5:4–5; cf. Rom 11:6.

[50] Cf. Gal 5:22 where πίστις is fruit of the Spirit, not a condition for receiving the Spirit.

[51] So πίστις (not "works" or "law") results in both εἰρήνη and ὑπακοή in a manner incompatible with the way these two things arise in Rom 2.

eschatological "glory" (cf. 8:18, 21) cannot be the result of any "works," as explained above.

As I will elaborate in greater detail in subsection 5.3, it is because these eschatological goods are unmerited divine gifts that Israel's promise of "glory" (9:4) will not be revoked (11:29) even though they, for the most part,[52] are disobedient (11:30–32; 10:16). Israel's promise of the eschatological hope of glory and of divine sonship (9:4; cf. 5:2; 8:15, 18, 21, 23, 28–30; 15:7) is not based on works (9:12 [v. 11 in English]) and neither is it based on the Jews' "willing" nor "running" (9:17) and thus it cannot be disinherited on account of their disobedience, Paul says (11:28–32).[53] If Paul held to the meritorious soteriological schema set forth in 2:6–13, then his confidence here regarding disobedient Israel is misplaced and confused. Why does Israel now not have to worry about works (9:12) or willing and striving (9:17; cf. the "enduring" striving in "good work" in 2:7)? In fact Paul is not confident that Israel will become obedient and thereby merit their glory and divine sonship. Paul is confident in God's own faithfulness to uphold God's own promises to Israel in spite of its disobedience (11:26–29; 15:8–9).

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[52] "For the most part" is quite literally the case according to Paul since there is only a small remnant now (11:5) and the hardening is only partial (11:25). But, as I will discuss in section 5.3, this remnant is a harbinger the future fullness that awaits on account of God's irrevocable promise (cf. 11:12, 26). The remnant is like the first bit of leavened dough that leavens the entire lump and thus the holy remnant sanctifies the whole lump of Israel; and holy remnant root sanctifies all the branches (11:16).

[53] See Susan Eastman, "Whose Apocalypse?: The Identity of the Sons of God in Romans 8:19," *JBL* 121.2 (2002): 263–77; idem, "Israel and the Mercy of God: A Re-Reading of Galatians 6.16 and Romans 9-11," *NTS* 56 (2010): 367–95; J. Ross Wagner, "'Enemies' and Yet 'Beloved' Still: Election and the Love of God in Romans 9-11," in *God and Israel: Providence and Purpose in Romans 9-11*, ed. Todd D. Still (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2017), 95–113; idem, "'Not from the Jews Only, But Also from the Gentiles': Mercy to the Nations in Romans 9-11," in *Between Gospel and Election: Explorations in the Interpretation of Romans 9-11*, ed. Florian Wilk and J. Ross Wagner, WUNT 257 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 417–31.

What Paul thinks God will do for Israel in Rom 9–11 compromises the strict meritorious soteriological judgment articulated in 2:5–13.

In like manner, it is significant that Paul characterizes the gentiles in Rom 9 as "those not pursuing righteousness" (τὰ μὴ διώκοντα δικαιοσύνην, 9:30). But these are the very people who "received righteousness [δικαιοσύνην], that is, a righteousness that is from faith" (9:30). This again contrasts with the soteriology set forth in 2:7–10 because there those who are μὴ διώκοντα δικαιοσύνην (9:30) should fall under the condemnation of what befalls those who "do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness [τῇ ἀδικίᾳ]" (2:8). Moreover, those "not pursuing righteousness" (9:30) must be characterized as implicitly involved in the very "unrighteousness" described in 1:18. As Ross Wagner has observed, "Paul interprets the negatively framed identity-markers in Isaiah, 'those not seeking / those not inquiring after me,' as references to Gentiles."[54] And yet Paul repeatedly says later in Romans that these are the sort of people who receive δικαιοσύνη (9:30; cf. 4:5, 11; 5:6–7). Hence the saving inclusion of the gentiles is the result of God's revealing of God's self (10:20) and call (9:24). "There exists not the slightest opening here for human self-congratulation."[55] This contradicts the scenario set forth in 1:18–32 and the soteriological judgment rubric in 2:6–10.

At bottom in the later chapters of Romans it is not those who are "those seeking [ζητοῦσιν] glory and honor and incorruptibility, by persevering in good work" (2:7) and "everyone who does good" (2:10) who receive saving δικαιοσύνη or eschatological life.

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[54] Wagner, "Not from the Jews Only," 423.
[55] Wagner, "Not from the Jews Only," 424.

Rather, just the opposite is the case: "those who are not seeking [*μὴ ζητοῦσιν*] Me [God]" (10:20), the "ungodly" (ἀσεβής, 4:5 [cf. v. 11]; 5:6), the unrighteous (5:7; 9:30; contra πειθομένοις…τῇ ἀδικίᾳ in 2:8), the morally weak (5:6) and the sinful (5:8) enemies of God (5:10) who are not "good" (5:7)—all these are the people receiving saving δικαιοσύνη and eschatological life.

In the context of marveling at God's unconditional and merciful judgment of deliverance for all the disobedient in Rom 11, Paul contradicts another key premise of the soteriological judgment in 2:6–13. According to Rom 2, God is obligated to "pay back" (ἀποδίδωμι, 2:6) those who persevere in good work with eschatological life, glory, and peace (2:7–10). But in 11:35 Paul asks, "Who has first given to him [God] [*προέδωκεν αὐτῷ*] and it will be paid back [*ἀνταποδοθήσεται*] to them?" The rhetorical question expects the answer "no one!"[56] As Leander Keck points out, "verse [11:]35 reminds the reader of what Paul had said in 4:4, 'Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something that is due' (AT). Verse 35, in other words, reasserts Paul's insistence that everyone depends on God's inexplicable grace; no one makes a deal with God."[57] Paul's criterion in 4:4 can consequently be seen here consistently informing the statement of 11:35: no one has done anything so that God is obligated to "pay them back" (ἀνταποδίδωμι) with anything (11:35). It is hard to understand then how people are nevertheless paid back by God (ἀποδίδωμι, 2:6) with eschatological life for their

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[56] Leander E. Keck, *Romans*, ANTC (Nashville: Abingdon, 2005), 287.

[57] Keck, *Romans*, 288; similarly, Brendan Byrne, *Romans*, SP 6 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1996), 359.

righteous perseverance in good works (2:7) in the argument of Rom 2:6–13. Simply put, the premise in Paul's thinking found in 4:4 and 11:25 contradict the premise of 2:6–13.

The presence of an intertextual echo in 11:25 would increase this tension. Although scholars disagree over whether Paul is evoking either the Hebrew of Job 41:3 (MT [v. 11 in English])[58] or 35:7[59] (or perhaps some amalgam of both),[60] Paul's Greek in Rom 11:35 appears to be closer to the Greek of LXX Job 35:7. As Robert Jewett comments on Job 35:7 LXX, "'what will you give him [τί δώσεις αὐτῷ], or what shall he receive from your hand'…comes closer [than Job 41:3 MT] to providing a basis for the distinctive verbs προδίδωμι or ἀνταποδίδωμι [used by Paul in Rom 11:35]. Paul's opening ἢ τίς…matches the LXX of Job 41:3, but there are no correspondences thereafter.[61] And the larger context in which Job 35:7 is embedded resonates quite well

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[58] "Who has preceded me that I should repay?" (מי הקדימני ואשלם). The LXX here changes this substantially: "Or who will take a stand against me and remain?" (ἢ τίς ἀντιστήσεταί μοι καὶ ὑπομενεῖ).

[59] MT: "If you are righteous, what will you give to him [God], or what does he [God] receive from your hand?" (אם צדקת מה תתן לו או מה מידך יקח). LXX: "But, therefore, insofar as you are righteous, what will you give to him [God]? Or what will he [God] receive from your hand?" (ἐπεὶ δὲ οὖν δίκαιος εἶ, τί δώσεις αὐτῷ; ἢ τί ἐκ χειρός σου λήμψεται;).

[60] J. Ross Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News: Isaiah and Paul in Concert in the Letter to the Romans* (Boston: Brill, 2003), 302; Robert Jewett, *Romans: A Commentary*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2007), 719–20; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Romans: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1993), 635.

[61] Jewett, *Romans*, 720. Berndt Schaller has argued that "Paul employs a text of Job LXX that has been revised toward the text now represented by MT" (Wagner, *Heralds*, 302n245; citing Schaller, "Zum Textcharakter der Hiobzitate im paulinischen Schrifttum," ZNW 71 [1980] 23–26). If so, then Paul's ἀνταποδίδωμι clause ("that it will be paid back to them") in Rom 11:35b might be alluding to the version of LXX Job 41:3b ("that I should repay"). However, as Jewett notes, there are three major obstacles for this view. First, "there is no parallel for προδίδόναι ("give in advance, first") as a translation of the rare Hebrew verb קדם, which occurs only in Job 41:3 and Amos 9:10." Second, "in the other textually clear passages in the LXX (4 Kgs 6:11; 2 Macc 7:37; 4 Macc 4:1), προδίδόναι occurs with the alternative definition of "betray" or "turn over" rather than "give in advance.'" Third, "no evidence has yet appeared of this hypothetical pre-Christian correction of the Job text" and therefore "it is more plausible to conclude that Paul himself is responsible for the corrected translation" (all three of these reasons come from Jewett, *Romans*, 720). In any case, the explicit mention of God's "judgments" (κρίματα, 11:33) to lead off this section resonates most with the context of God's justice and judgment in Job 35.

with context of God's "judgments" (κρίματα, Rom 11:33) that immediately precedes Paul's quotations from Scripture in vv. 34–35 (cf. κρίσις in Job 35:2 and κρίνω in v. 14 LXX).[62] As Keck notes, "The 'For' with which the three questions in verses 34–35 begin shows that they function as the warrant for verse 33,"[63] and since the context of Job 35 best aligns with Paul's aims in this climactic moment in Rom 11, then it warrants further investigation.

Job 35 is concerned with problematizing meriting God's gifts and being righteous enough to merit anything before God and God's judgment. The character Elihu asks Job, "Who are you that you said, 'I am righteous [δίκαιος] before the Lord?'.... But, therefore, insofar as you are righteous, what will you give to him [God]? Or what will he [God] receive from your hand? Your impiety is for a man like yourself and your righteousness is for a son of man" (Job 35:2, 7–8; LXX, my translation). In other words, Elihu's point is, "You are merely a human being, a creature, so what possible effect can your deeds—righteous or impious—have on God, the Creator? Your righteousness or impiety may be something that you do with respect to other human beings that has an impact on them, but they are nothing before God. So what good is it proclaiming your righteousness before the Lord?"

In the larger context of Job, this speech by Elihu seems to work from this premise towards a more pessimistic anthropology; humans are too small and insignificant in the

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[62] There is also the further correspondence of the ἀσέβεια of Jacob in Rom 11:26 (quoting from Isa 59:20 LXX) and Job's ἀσέβεια in Job 35:8 LXX.

[63] Keck, *Romans*, 287.

face of God Almighty, the Creator, to be considered righteous and thus need to accept all their suffering as the inevitable and just result of their pitiful state (cf. Job 35:2, 7). However, Paul articulates what seems to be a bleak outlook at first glance—that all humans are in fact unrighteous (Rom 3:10), sinful (3:23), and trapped in disobedience ("God has shut up all in disobedience," 11:32a)—in order to argue, not for the universal damnation of all (which would have to be the case if the soteriological rubric in 2:5–13 was indeed "the truth" [2:2] of the matter), but for the profligate and gracious mercy of God's ultimate deliverance of the disobedient ("so that God might show mercy to all," 11:32b). In other words, Paul evokes this section of Job 35 to support his claim that the scandalous mercy of God cannot compromise God's just "judgments" (Rom 11:33; cf. "in order that God might be just" 3:26) because no one is capable of obligating God to pay them back anything for anything they do or have done (11:35; cf. 3:23–24), no matter how ostensibly "righteous" they are. As Fitzmyer concludes, "God's goodness is not a payment for services rendered."[64]

To summarize this point: Paul's claim in Rom 11 is that no one, from either Israel or the nations, has any righteousness to offer to God that he might pay them back with eschatological goods. In fact, Israel, like the nations, is disobedient (10:16, 30–32) and impious (11:26). Paul capitalizes on this to proclaim the universal riches of God's mercy on all (11:32; cf. 3:23–24; 5:18–20). But this is the opposite of what a God committed to the soteriological rubric of 2:5–12 would do. It is by persevering in righteous works in

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[64] Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 635.

with the light of the law that obedient people are paid back by God with eschatological life, glory, and peace.[65]

In summation of my broader claim here: the meritorious soteriological rubric of 2:5–12 seems be repeatedly opposed point by point later in the letter. From Rom 3:23 onward no one, Jew or Gentile, receives divine eschatological goods by meriting them in any way through their own righteous deeds (an exclusion apparent from even earlier: it is summarized in 3:20 and implicit from 3:9b–18).[66]

5.2.2 Διαφωνία in Rom 2:13

If 2:6–12 generated significant tensions on account of the soteriological function of "works" in general, then the statement in 2:13 seems to stretch these to the breaking point: "the doers of the Law will be justified." Paul soon reverses this statement when he declares "For this reason from the works of Law no flesh will be justified before God"

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[65] Arguably, then, it is exactly in the face of these views of putative "justice" that Paul wants to clearly state that he is "unashamed" of his announcement of the gospel (1:16), which reveals the actual truth of God's justice (1:17) as a justice of mercy for the disobedient (10:16; 11:30–32), the unjust (9:30; 5:7, 19), the impious (4:5; 5:6), sinners (3:23; 5:8, 19) and the morally weak (5:6). According to "[Paul's] gospel" (16:25; 2:16b), God loves God's enemies (5:10; 11:28) and is faithful to God's own promises of deliverance (11:26; 15:8; 9:6; 1:2), even if those whom he called and promised are not faithful and do not obey the gospel (10:16; 11:30–32). And, Paul says, these promises to Israel in particular include all the nations as well (4:13–17; 9:24; 15:7–8), although this inclusion is not to the exclusion of those originally called (9:4–5; 11:1–2, 11–12, 15, 24, 26, 28–29).

[66] Paul's announcement of God's merciful justice from 3:23 onward through Rom climaxing in 11:32 is really an affront to the ostensible "truth" of retributive meritorious justice (2:2, 5; 3:4). If God's judgments are in accordance with works (2:2, 6–16), then God's judgments are perfectly rational and understandable. In other words, because God judges strictly meritoriously, God's judgments are not mysterious in any way. Everything makes sense and everyone gets exactly what they deserve according to their own works. But, as we just saw, Paul says in Rom 11 that God's judgments are unexpected because of God's scandalous grace and mercy (11:33). That is, Paul believes that God's judgments are surprising and inscrutable because God will not, in the end, meet disobedience with damnation, but rather with mercy (11:32), as Gaventa similarly highlights (*When in Romans*, 121–28, 61–71). Nor has anyone done anything so that God is obligated to "pay them back" (ἀνταποδίδωμι) with anything (11:35; contra ἀποδίδωμι in 2:6).

(3:20) and shortly thereafter again "for we conclude that a person is justified by faith apart from works of the Law" (3:28), although this is not all. Paul directly opposes the statement in 2:13 in various way elsewhere in Romans (4:2, 4–5, 13) and Galatians (2:16; 3:11–12; 5:4–5). The very words used and structure of all of these sentences in Rom 2:13 and 3:20, 28 make "tension" too understated to describe what is really observable here. This is an outright contradiction.

Scholars have not infrequently recognized this and tried to resolve it. For instance, Jean Noël Aletti readily concedes "Que Rm 2,6-16 et 3,20 ne semblent pas matériellement compatibles, c'est un fait."[67] Aletti maneuvers around the incoherence of these two sets of propositions alongside one another by asserting that "les situations du juif et du grec restent du domaine de l'éventuel."[68] But, as shown above, this solution is not viable because (a) there is nothing in the text that warrants the notion that the presence of righteous gentiles is hypothetical and (b) the rhetorical turn in 2:25–29 requires the presence of righteous gentiles to be actual, not hypothetical.[69] The Christian solution consequently tends to be reintroduced at this moment.

We earlier noted how Keener and Gorman made this the basis of their critique of Campbell, and how this concern itself struggles. Here we can note further how the Christian solution is articulated specifically with respect to 2:13 by three other scholars.

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[67] Jean Noël Aletti, "Rm 1,18-3:20: Incohérence ou cohérence de l'argumentation paulinienne," *Bib* 69 (1988): 56.

[68] Aletti, "Rm 1:18–3:20," 56.

[69] Further, see Campbell, *Deliverance*, 373–74.

Jewett concedes that "this [text, i.e., Rom 2:13] appears to contradict the main argument of Romans, that no flesh will be set right by works of the law and that salvation comes only through faith in God's grace (3:20–24)."[70] His solution that Paul must have "in mind *a different kind of 'doing the law'*…. [so that] Paul is here describing the status of converted Gentiles" is rather forced, however.[71] It amounts to saying that Paul must have meant something other than what is written otherwise it would not simply "appear to contradict the main argument of Romans," but would in fact actually contradict it.

Fitzmyer seems initially to offer a more plausible solution, that "[i]n this verse [2:13] Paul argues *dato, non concesso*, for the sake of his argument."[72] Otherwise, he says, "If one were to take the Pauline statement in this part of the verse out of its context, it might seem like a contradiction of what Paul says in 3:20."[73] Therefore, "Paul adopts [this dictum]" simply "for the sake of his argument."[74] So here Fitzmyer solves the inconsistency by essentially saying that Paul does not actually hold this view. Paul is only incorporating this dictum "because he wants to undermine the smugness of the Jewish interlocutor."[75] As it turns out, I think this is correct, although for different reasons.[76]

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[70] Jewett, *Romans*, 212.
[71] Jewett, *Romans*, 212, 213 respectively; his emphasis.
[72] Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 308.
[73] Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 308.
[74] Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 308.
[75] Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 307.
[76] I.e., as my final script will bear out, I think these words are on Paul's lips, but "its context" is that they are a recasting of the interlocutor's views via sarcastic parody as we saw from Epictetus in chapter 2. But I do not think the interlocutor is a representative of Judaism *per se* as Fitzmyer thinks, but rather a particular form of Jewish teaching.

But Fitzmyer appears to hold two views at once. He appeals to the Christian solution prior to these above comments and this turns out to merely highlight the contradiction even more. When discussing the "doing good" from 2:7 and 10 he says, "It is not that Paul is inconsistent. Nor is it that he is arguing hypothetically…. Rather, when in [Rom 2] vv 7 and 10 he speaks of 'doing good' as the basis on which one will be judged, he is implicitly referring to Christians, whose conduct (good deeds) is to be understood as the fruit of their faith."[77] But if this is the case, and deeds do serve as the basis for the soteriological judgment model in 2:6–12, then why does Fitzmyer have a problem with justification by works in 2:13 and say that Paul does not actually hold that view? In any case, if it can be shown that Paul is not referring to Christians, then Fitzmyer would have to concede that there is an inconsistency here.

Justin King handles the problem similarly. First he asks, "Does 2:12–16 contradict or square with Paul's later comments about no one being justified by works of νόμος (ἐξ ἔργων νόμου; 3:20)?"[78] To begin his answer he states, "[i]t would surely seem strange for Paul to suggest an alternative view in 2:12–16"—and by "alternative" King means in relation to "Paul's other comments in Romans (or Galatians), such as 3:19–31."[79] He goes on to say, "Any responsible reading of 2:12–16 must explain what Paul means by δίκαιοι and δικαιωθήσονται in 2:13, especially if it opposes Paul's use at all

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[77] Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 297. Also, although he does not acknowledge the incongruity between Rom 2:13 and 3:20, Wright similarly believes these passages in Rom 2 not to be hypothetical and to be about Christians ("The Law in Romans 2," 136, 144–48).

[78] Justin King, *Speech-in-Character, Diatribe, and Romans 3:1-9: Who's Speaking When and Why It Matters*, BibInt 163 (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 243.

[79] King, *Speech-in-Character*, 244.

other points in Romans."[80] Here, then, King admits the inherent opposition between these uses of these words. But his solution is simply to say that although these stand in contradiction, self-contradiction is an untennable view of Paul and so "justification" in 2:13 must mean justification by faith—"δίκαιος on the basis of πίστις" from 1:16–17 and 3:19–31—only because "[i]t would surely seem strange for Paul to suggest an alternative view in 2:12–16."[81] However, reading 1:16–17 and 3:19–31 into 2:13 means ignoring that the text of 2:13 actually says "doing" and "Law" (cf. "works" and "working" in 2:6, 7, 9, 10), the things Paul later repeatedly puts in opposition to "faith" (e.g., 3:20, 27–28; 4:4–6, 13–14; 6:14–15; 9:30–32; cf. 11:6; Gal 2:16; 3:8–12; 5:4–5). Thus King, seeing the contradiction, ignores what the text actually says in 2:13 and asserts that at the end of the day Paul meant to write in 2:13 what he did at 3:28 and 1:16–17 because he would not contradict himself; and so, he must not have.[82] But this solution is especially curious coming from King. He well knows that in a dialogical context these types of contradictions are instances of διαφωνία and thereby signal the two sides of a debate being argued.

Moreover, as Campbell has explained, all iterations of the Christian solution for any part of Rom 2 create another significant problem:

> Christians have just been defined in a way that diametrically opposes the entire (ostensible) progression of the argument in terms of the need for justification through faith alone because of the universality of sin. Christians must now be defined in terms of perfect works as well. Indeed, Christians have now ended up on both sides of Paul's argument in 1:18–3:20 [both universally unrighteous and

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[80] King, *Speech-in-Character*, 244.
[81] King, *Speech-in-Character*, 244.
[82] King, *Speech-in-Character*, 243.

> sinful and in need of justification by faith, and justified by works and saved through desert]! And this seems patently absurd.[83]

As I will show in the final script, the presence of righteous gentiles are not in tension with the flow of the text internally from 1:18–2:29 as it stands. The tensions generated by 1:18–29 arise from what Paul says externally to this passage in Romans (and in other letters) regarding how eschatological goods are secured and who receives them. Moreover, the supposition that the righteous in Rom 2 (Jew or gentile) must be Christians despite the problems that move creates is because the tension between what Paul says regarding justification in 2:13 and 3:20 (cf. 3:28; 4:2, 4–5, 13; Gal 2:16; 3:11–12; 5:4–5) cannot be satisfactorily solved otherwise (e.g., there is a general agreement that saying the righteous in Rom 2 are hypothetical is implausible by all indications).

For this reason, the Christian solution serves to expose that the words on the page actually do suggest that Paul is self-contradictory if he is indeed saying both things at once. "Doing" and "law" in 2:13 gets transformed into "faith," as Fitzmyer and King say explicitly, despite the fact that Paul repeatedly essentializes a dichotomy between these things both in Romans and elsewhere as already discussed.[84]

When the tension between Rom 2:13 and 3:20, 28 is recognized as διαφωνία, then the ostensible problem between these statement dissolves as well as the newly generated problems inherent to the Christian solution. On this reading Paul is responding directly to the notion that "the doers of the Law will be justified" (2:13) with the rebuttals: "no flesh

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[83] Campbell, *Deliverance*, 374.
[84] E.g., Rom 3:20, 27–28; 4:4–6, 13–14; 6:14–15; 9:30–32; cf. 11:6; Gal 2:16; 3:11–12; 5:4–5.

will be justified before God from the works of Law" (3:20); and "for we conclude that a person is justified by faith apart from works of the Law" (3:28).

But a very important Pauline interpreter has recently tried to make a virtue out of necessity. His articulation of the Christian solution is the most robust to date as he wants to show how both the previous tensions just described—the presence of righteous gentiles saved by works and the presence of salvation itself in terms of works—can be comprehended within a single gracious explanation of Paul. Does John Barclay's proposal succeed in explaining these tensions coherently, thereby vitiating my claim of διαφωνία in Rom 2?

5.2.3 Are Only the Morally Congruous Saved?

Barclay writes, "If we can show that this eternal life is, for Paul, *both* an incongruous gift (6:23) *and* the fitting completion of a life of good work (2:6–7), we will have solved a conundrum that renders the early chapters of Romans the greatest stumbling block for interpreters of Paul."[85] We will have explained the presence of righteous gentiles saved by works, the presence of a meritocratic dimension in Paul's soteriology, and his thought coherently as a whole.

Barclay later clarifies his position by saying,

> Paul certainly expects that the *moral* incongruity at the start of the Christian life will be reduced over time, as the believers' slavery to righteousness draws them toward holiness (6:19). In that sense, what began as a morally incongruous gift will be completed as a morally congruous gift. When believers come before the judgment seat of God and give an account of themselves (14:10–12), Paul expects that they will be able to evidence a life lived in light, not darkness (13:12; cf. 2:6–

[85] Barclay, *Paul*, 466; his emphasis.

> 16)…. The gift is entirely undeserved but strongly obliging: it creates agents who are newly alive, required to live the life they have been given. This obedience is not instrumental (it does not acquire the gift of Christ, nor any additional gift from God), but it is integral to the gift itself, as God wills newly competent agents who expresses in practice their freedom from sin and slavery to righteousness…. Without this obedience, grace is ineffective and unfulfilled.[86]

Although my response here cannot do full justice to Barclay's robust and well-argued position, nevertheless I venture a few observations to provide sufficient warrant for doubting that his version of the Christian solution is tenable. First, as Susan Eastman notes, Barclay's construal of the gift in these terms "nevertheless comes with a *quid pro quo*."[87] That is, when all is said and done, according to Barclay, eschatological life is predicated on a moral quality, namely, congruity with the gift. According to Barclay's framework, a person starts off "morally incongruous," but then needs "to evidence a life lived in light," a life of "obedience," a life "morally congruous" with the gift otherwise face ultimate rejection.[88] To offer an analogy, Barclay seems to construe God's gift as functioning like a free gym membership allowing the opportunity for someone to get into shape enough to subsequently gain access to a competition, into which only those who have achieved some measure of muscular development are allowed to enter. But there is no guarantee that the membership will result in succeeding in the competition—and competitors must succeed in that competition or face ultimate exclusion. That is, God's gift is one step (or several steps if we are talking about progress towards moral congruity)

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[86] Barclay, *Paul*, 518–19; his emphasis.

[87] Susan Grove Eastman, "Love and Reciprocity," *Syndicate*, 24 October 2018, https://syndicate.network/symposia/theology/paul-and-the-gift/.

[88] Barclay, *Paul*, 518–19.

removed from eschatological salvation. Everyone still needs to "work out" and to get into shape in order to qualify for eschatological life. The reason for all this, though, as Barclay says, is that he is trying to stick faithfully to the soteriological parameters set up in 2:6–13,[89] but his way of trying to hold eschatological life as the fitting reward for a life of good work together with the notion of eschatological life as a gift flounders because it contradicts the parameters and terms of "gift" that Paul himself sets up that I have already detailed (cf. 4:4–5; 11:6). Already it seems better to seek another reason to explain why these two separate soteriological models co-exist in Romans.

Second, the judgment scenario in Rom 14:10–12 is manifestly not the same as in 2:6–13 (and we will have to come back to this point more thoroughly below when wrath is evaluated in more detail). As Eastman observes again in response to Barclay, "while Barclay rightly insists that Paul's letters are full of warnings of eschatological judgment, it is not always clear that those warnings function in a conditional way."[90] It suffices presently to note that the judgment in 2:6–13 is both soteriological and conditional (it concerns how and who is paid back with eschatological life). And the judgment in 14:10–12 is not (all are expected to "stand" and not "fall," 14:4). Moreover, the scenario in Rom 14 is most similar to the scenario of those judged by fire in 1 Cor 3:13–15. That is, the ultimate salvation of the person is not in doubt even if every "work" of theirs is burned up because the judgment is a purgation (cf. 1 Cor 5:5).

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[89] Barclay, *Paul*, 466.
[90] Eastman, "Love and Reciprocity."

Third, while Barclay is certainly correct that Paul values obedience, it was shown above how this functions within Paul's thinking in a manner fundamentally incompatible with the terms and premises in Rom 2. Obedience for Paul is never again said to be a soteriological (pre)condition. To those earlier observations we can add here that "righteousness" elsewhere is identified by Paul as an eschatological gift (Gal 5:5; Phil 3:9; see also vv. 12–14), not a prerequisite for entry into the eschatological life. Attaining to that righteousness remains an eschatological "hope" (Gal 5:5; Phil 3:12–14; Rom 5:2, 4–5), not a condition. "All sinned and failed to obtain the glory of God" (Rom 3:23) and even after having been justified by God (5:1; cf. 3:24), gaining "the glory of God" remains a "hope" (5:2, 4–5; cf. Phil 3:12–14). This means, in Paul's own terms, even baptized believers remain short of the glory of God.[91]

This reality becomes quite explicit in Rom 7:24–25. Again, without taking a position who the "I" is exactly or suggesting how to interpret the whole of Rom 7,[92] it is plain that the "I" encounters Christ in v. 25a. What is significant is that subsequent to this Christ encounter the "I" is still nevertheless "serving the law of Sin in the flesh" while simultaneously "serving the Law of God in the mind" (v. 25b). What all this means is that

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[91] It seems to be the case, then, that Paul fully expects that "what began as amorally incongruous gift will be completed as a morally [in]congruous gift" (Barclay, *Paul*, 518).

[92] I am quite persuaded by Emma Wasserman's interpretation in her articles "The Death of the Soul in Romans 7: Revisiting Paul's Anthropology in Light of Hellenistic Moral Psychology," *JBL* 126 (2007): 793–816; idem, "Paul among the Philosophers: The Case of Sin in Romans 6-8," *JSNT* 30 (2008): 387–415.

eschatological sharing in the life of the glory of God cannot be predicated on anyone's moral quality.[93]

In short, according to Paul, becoming actually righteous is only possible in the eschaton. Therefore, any measure of righteousness experienced now is always an imperfect groping towards the eschatologically perfected reality (Gal 5:5; cf. 1 Cor 13:9–12). Paul's mode of current ethics is straining towards what lays ahead (Phil 3:12–14). An understanding of oneself as dead to Sin and alive to God (Rom 6) is Paul's way of acknowledging the real impact that that eschatological reality has on the present. But this is never used as the basis for entry into that promised future. Just because Paul thinks this foretaste of the eschatological future is a real present possibility by the Spirit does not entail that it is somehow a condition or criterion for sharing in it when it comes in its fullness (cf. Rom 5:5; Gal 5:22–23; 2 Cor 1:22; 3:17–18; 4:4, 6; 5:5; cf. Eph 1:14).[94] This eschatological foretaste functioning as a present possibility is simply Paul thinking through the eschatological reverberations of God's act in the resurrected Jesus.[95]

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[93] Cf. Eastman, "In this fleshly existence anyone might lose evidence of a transformed life—faith, love, the fruits of the Spirit—at any time. That loss does not gainsay the reality of the transformation Paul envisions, because it is enacted through the relationships that uphold each member of the community. But it does gainsay any conditionality imposed on individual believers, whose judgment is finally in God's hands" ("Love and Reciprocity").

[94] In a footnote, Barclay points to Gal 6:8–10 and says Paul's comments about "the 'reaping' of eternal life by those who 'sow to the Spirit'…should give us pause before we consider the eschatological scenario of Romans 2 incompatible with the strongest emphasis on the incongruity of grace" (*Paul*, 466n44). Again, as I have discussed and will continue to demonstrate, I have no argument against the notion that Paul cares about "obedience" (e.g., "doing good to all people" in Gal 6:10). The question to be answered is how obedience and/or doing good functions in Paul's soteriological framework. In any case, Gal 6:8–10 still evinces the peculiarity of "the eschatological scenario in Romans 2" (Barclay, *Paul*, 466n44) because "Spirit" and "faith" are conspicuously absent from Rom 2:5–13. This taste of the Spirit's fruit is a gifted proleptic experience of what is to come; not a criterion for entrance into eschatological life.

[95] This is the type of reasoning that we find when Paul counsels the Corinthians to "clean out the old leaven so you may be a new lump of dough" on the basis of the fact that they already "are unleavened"

Fourth, Barclay's notion that only the obedient—only those who are "able to evidence a life lived in light"[96]—are saved stands opposed to what Paul says in Rom 11:24–32 (and 1 Cor 3:13–15; 5:5). Even those Jews who are explicitly "enemies with respect to the Gospel" (Rom 11:28), who have "not obeyed the Gospel" (10:16), will "be saved" (11:26) and "shown mercy" (11:30–32); not because they finally achieved righteousness but because God is the one who delivers God's people as God promised and unilaterally forgives them and turns away their "ungodliness" and takes away their "sins" (11:26–27).[97] Paul expresses here his hope for unilateral and unconditional divine deliverance of, salvation for, and mercy for just the sort of people Barclay thinks are ultimately rejected because they never overcame their ungodliness and unrighteousness—a people for whom by Barclay's own definitions "grace is ineffective and unfulfilled" because they are "without this obedience."[98]

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on account of Christ's sacrifice as a paschal lamb (1 Cor 5:7). Here, Paul's ethics reverberate from an understanding of the eschatological fullness of Christ's accomplishment. Christ's sacrifice has made them unleavened (eschatologically speaking) and thus Paul can say "you are unleavened." But they are also clearly presently full of the "leaven of evil and wickedness" (5:8), and not just because of the immoral man in 5:1 (see 3:1, 3). It is because of what Christ has accomplished then that they can experience being "unleavened" in the sense of presently possessing "sincerity and truth" (5:8). But being "unleavened" in the present is again not a condition or basis from which to partake of Christ's eschatological paschal benefits. The immoral man is the source of the "leaven" problem and yet Paul is convinced he will nevertheless be saved (5:5). Thinking that being "unleavened" in the present is the condition by which entry into the eschaton is achieved therefore flows in the opposite direction of the logic of Paul's reasoning. Paul reasons from the eschatological fullness of Christ's accomplishments (the Corinthians have and will share in Christ's paschal sacrifice) and uses that as the basis for ethical exhortation.

[96] Barclay, *Paul*, 518.

[97] Wagner, "'Not from the Jews Only,'" 428. See also: "Israel's 'full acceptance' (πλήρωμα, v. 12; πρόσλημψις, v. 15) is effected by God alone" (Ibid., 425). I will go into detail substantiating this reading of Rom 9–11 below.

[98] Barclay, *Paul*, 519.

Importantly, we can see here that much that Barclay concludes is correct, but only if complete congruity is postponed into the eschaton (because this is, in fact, what Paul himself does in places like Phil 3:9, 12–14; Gal 5:5; Rom 5:2–5; cf. 1 Cor 13:12).[99] But to confuse a real experience and foretaste now of that promised "hope" as the condition for entry into that future—that is, to say that ultimately, per Rom 2:6–13, if one is not sufficiently "able to evidence a life" that is morally congruous (obedient), then they will be denied eschatological life[100]—is to stumble over the scandalous character of God's wisdom expressed in mercy as Paul says Israel had done (9:30–33; 11:32–36).

Arguably, keeping morality in its proper location soteriologically is the point of Paul's debate with an interlocutor in Romans. Neither is debating whether or not people are unrighteous or whether being righteous is "right" or even "better." They agree on these claims. Rather, the debate is how unrighteousness and righteousness factor into the divine economy of God's ultimate salvation and judgment of humanity. The interlocutor fuses these things together; Paul sees the one flowing from its basis in the other—a critical difference.

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[99] Similarly, Eastman: "I would even contend that the divine gift will, *in the end*, effect such transformation" ("Love and Reciprocity;" my emphasis). Again:

> [U]nilateral giving is necessary, not as the goal or perfection of the gift, but as its sustaining power in the face of non-reciprocity. That's the story of God's dealings with Israel, and God's dealings with all Adamic humanity *short of the eschaton*…. Of course one hopes for reciprocity, but the extension of love is not dependent on reciprocity. Otherwise it would be very short-lived indeed; love, to the contrary, is patient, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things, and never ends (2 Cor 13:4, 7-8)….This side of the eschaton it [non-reciprocity]…may be the form grace takes in an imperfect world. (Ibid.; my emphasis)

[100] Barclay, *Paul*, 518–19.

5.2.4 God's Wrath and Judgment elsewhere in Paul's Theology

However, at this point I need to address an obvious objection, namely, that this putative chasm between different conceptions of securing eschatological goods that I have pressed into is exaggerated because there are other Pauline texts that speak about a judgment according to works. Barclay puts the concern in his distinctive terms: "If one perfects the singularity of grace (God is nothing but gracious), the notion of God's just punishment of sin must on principle be considered non-Pauline."[101] Voicing the same concern in different words, Joshua Jipp, in his review of Campbell, comments that "if Paul rejected divine retributive justice then he fits incredibly awkwardly within his own Jewish context and is at odds with his own Scriptures."[102] The principal concern here is with how Paul talks about judgment and wrath elsewhere, and it clearly needs to be addressed in more detail for my overarching thesis, let alone my more specific claim of διαφωνία here in Rom 2, to be plausible.[103]

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[101] Barclay, *Paul*, 465; cf. the footnote attached to this sentence: "Campbell's claim that the language of divine wrath and divine deliverance represent 'fundamentally different conceptions of God'…is a product of his perfection of grace as 'singular.' At such points his viewpoint is strongly reminiscent of Marcion" (ibid., 465n41). But this fundamentally misrepresents Campbell, who actually does have an account for God's judgment of a person's works in the very book Barclay uses to make his criticism (cf. *Deliverance*, 92–3, 369, 662–65, 668, 692–93).

[102] Jipp, "Douglas Campbell's," 195. Jipp then cites the following: Isa 10:4; 13:13; Ezek 7:19; Zephh 1:15, 18; 2:2, 3; Joel 2:2; Wis 5:17–23, Pss. Sol. 14:9; 15:10; 1 En. 1:7–9; 22:1–13; 91:11–17. Nijay Gupta makes a similar critique saying, "Campbell feels uncomfortable with the theology of Romans 1.18–32 insofar as it seems to proclaim God's judgment on the world…. I simply do not see, even if this figure comes across as 'judgmental', how this is out-of-line with the Jewish prophets when they were called by God – sometimes to give a message of hope and sometimes to pronounce the impending wrath and judgment of God" ("Douglas Campbell's Startling Alternative to Traditional Paradigms of Pauline Soteriology," *Reviews in Religion & Theology* 17 (2010): 254). Gupta seems to overlook the fact that the prophetic messages of hope and wrathful judgment are not symmetrical, but rather correlatives wherein judgment and wrath are penultimate and hope is ultimate, which I discuss immediately below.

[103] Cf. Jipp: "yet I maintain that in order for Campbell's thesis to convince, he must explain how the other similar Pauline claims regarding pagan accountability…and God's wrath can belong to the voice of Paul while what is said in Rom. 1:18-32 does not" ("Douglas Campbell's," 194; cf. 193–96). Similarly,

One basic problem, however, is apparent immediately in this objection: both Barclay's and Jipp's comments are *non sequiturs* (at least without much further argumentation). It is simply not true that to perfect the singularity of grace or to reject retributive justice means that any notions of God's wrath or punishment for sin are therefore being rejected as well rendering the broader proposals of those interpreters advocating this position untenable. Our understandings of just what divine judgment looks like, along with how any anger operates in relation to its actions, are crucial. Is the picture across Paul uniform, or does the data contain tensions, and especially in relation to the distinctive and arguably anomalous retributive position articulated in Rom 2? For Barclay's and Jipp's objection to hold, the picture must be uniform, and a brief survey of the data suggests that it is not.

Underlying this whole criticism from Jipp and Barclay, it seems, is the mistaken notion that judgment and salvation are necessarily mutually exclusive, symmetrical possibilities for Paul. To be fair, in Rom 2:5–13 eschatological life (2:7) and wrath and destruction (2:8, 12; cf. 1:32) are symmetrical eschatological destinations: it is one or the other. But elsewhere Paul explicitly views divine wrath and salvation as asymmetrical realities where salvation is ultimate and follows upon penultimate wrath (e.g., 1 Cor 3:13–15; 5:5; Rom 11:32). 1 Corinthians 3:11–15 makes this explicit: "if the work [ἔργον] of anyone is burned up, they will suffer loss, but they will be saved [αὐτὸς δὲ σωθήσεται] in this manner: as through fire" (3:15). This arrangement violates the

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"Sometimes it seems that Campbell simply does not like a Paul or any figure who believes in divine judgment, which may tell us more about Campbell than about Paul" (Gupta, "Startling Alternative," 254).

soteriological terms of Rom 2:5–13 where a steady perseverance in good works is the criterion of eschatological life and those who have done poor work will perish (2:12).

To be clear: the problem I am detecting in Rom 2:6–13 is not that God judges sin and/or that all people will be judged on the basis of their own deeds. Paul believes in God's judgment of human works, but we must be careful to specify how this judgment functions within Paul's own thinking. Simply put: a judgment of works is not the same thing as salvation according to works. In Rom 2 judgment directly affects imperishable (ἀφθαρσία) eschatological life (ζωὴ αἰώνιος) (2:7); but in the other judgment passages, these eschatological goods are not at stake. As Sanders notes, "Rom. 2:13 is entirely unlike Rom. 14:10, 2 Cor. 5:10, and other passages in which Paul mentions judgment according to deeds, for the other passages refer to Christians; Rom. 2:13 refers to all humanity: all, whether Jew or Greek, are judged by one standard, the law. Those who have done the law will be considered righteous."[104] He adds, "the expectation that, to be righteous, Gentiles must fulfill the entire law (the implication of 2:13 and 2:27) is not a standard Jewish view."[105] This notion of "law" as the standard of judgment is only present in 2:12–13; never again in Paul's judgment texts is it mentioned as the standard.[106]

My claims are that these works which are assessed are never (outside Rom 2) the basis for salvation and eschatological life, and that judgment in terms of a negative

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[104] Sanders, *Paul, the Law*, 126.
[105] Sanders, *Paul, the Law*, 130.
[106] In fact, 2:16b gives a different standard of judgment (Jesus rather than law), which will be discussed further below.

evaluation is never the final word for Paul. It is penultimate, restorative, and finally gives way to salvation. Concomitantly, in Paul there is plenty of room for the anger and wrath of God. But I think Paul would say that this too is always penultimate and fundamentally compassionate—and so, for example, the vessels of wrath in Rom 9:22 will ultimately be shown mercy in Rom 11:30–32.

Moreover, arguably in all this Paul is simply being a careful reader of Israel's Scriptures where judgment and wrath are rarely the last word: restoration is usually the last word—and even for notorious enemies of Israel (e.g., Egypt and Assyria in Isa 19:22–25; Sodom in Ezek 16:53–55). As Abraham Joshua Heschel observes, according the Hebrew prophets, "beyond justice and anger lies the mystery of compassion."[107] This is because in the prophets "[a]nger and mercy are not opposites but correlatives" (e.g., Hab 3:2; Isa 19:22; Hos 6:1).[108] Hence God's wrath and judgment are repeatedly said to be a temporary state of affairs and will finally give way to mercy and restoration (e.g., Mic 7:7–9, 18–20; Isa 1:24–26; 4:4–6; 12:1–2; 19:22–25; 26:20; 28:21–29; 51:17–23; 54:7–8; 57:16–19; 60:10; Jer 3:5 with v. 12; 12:15; 31:20; 33:26; Lam 2:2 with 3:25–26, 31–32; 4:22; Hos 13:14; 14:1–7; Pss 30:6 [English 30:5]; 103:8–14). This is why Heschel concludes his discussion on divine wrath that the prophetic witness makes clear that "His [God's] mercy is greater than His justice."[109]

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[107] Abraham. J. Heschel, *The Prophets* (New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2001), 368.
[108] Heschel, *The Prophets*, 364.
[109] Heschel, *The Prophets*, 382.

Thomas P. Dixon has recently taken up these points in relation specifically to Paul, arguing "that restorative wrath is central to the divine pathos that lies at the heart of prophetic theology."[110] Dixon shows how, "[w]ith his own scriptural reasoning, Paul considers that divine wrath is often provisional, and Rom 9–11 describes restorative wrath on Israel that leads to mercy on those judged."[111] In other words, what can be seen in the prophets is that "wrath is often temporary and directed towards mercy" and Paul continues to believe that this is how God's judgment functions in relation to Israel.[112] It is also worth noting Paul's explicit universalization of this principle of mercy right there in Rom 11:30–36. Paul applies this same prophetic logic—that judgment is penultimate and mercy is ultimate—to all humanity, because in Paul's words, "there is no distinction between Jew and Greek" (10:12; cf. 3:22, 29).[113]

There is nevertheless additional evidence beyond the data adduced by Dixon that suggests a prophetic pattern of penultimate wrath that Paul may well have absorbed. Of particular significance are the places in the prophets where Samaria, Sodom, Egypt, and Assyria are restored since this makes it clear that this prophetic pattern does not just

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[110] Thomas P. Dixon, "Judgement for Israel: The Marriage of Wrath and Mercy in Romans 9–11," *NTS* 66 (2020): 570.

[111] Dixon, "Judgement for Israel," 566.

[112] Dixon, "Judgement for Israel," 570.

[113] Similarly, from Justin King, "what Paul believes God will do for Israel, Paul declares that God will do the same for non-Israel…. Is God going to show mercy to Israel? Yes, but he will show mercy equally to *all*" (*Speech-in-Character, Diatribe, and Romans 3:1-9: Who's Speaking When and Why It Matters*, BibInt 163 [Leiden: Brill, 2018], 298; his emphasis). Note also that Paul quotes from Hos 13:14 in 1 Cor 15:55 and universalizes what is originally about Israel's ultimate restoration after the experiencing God's judgment of wrath and death (cf. 1 Cor 15:22, 25–28). As Richard B. Hays comments, Paul "may be thinking not just of the immediate context of Hosea 13:14 but of that prophetic book's larger message of God's ultimate mercy (see, e.g., Hos. 11:8–9; 14:4–8)" (Richard B. Hays, *First Corinthians*, IBC [Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2011], 276).

apply to those who belong to Israel (Ezek 16:53–55; Isa 19:19–25). If Sodom will be restored, the paradigm for putative "eternal destruction" (Zeph 2:9), then anybody can be restored.[114] The prophetic pattern is summarized nicely in Zeph 3:8–11 where God's wrath and judgment of fire on all nations ultimately results in the purification of all nations to worship the LORD shoulder to shoulder. Notably, this comes after issuing damning oracles such as "desolation" lasting עד־עולם (2:9; LXX: εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα) against Moab and Ammon, explicitly likening their destruction to Sodom and Gomorra respectively. Moab and Ammon's judgment will be עולם/αἰώνιος, but it will not be permanent because at a certain point, after experiencing an עולם/αἰώνιος judgment, God will restore them along with all the nations (3:8–11).[115]

Did Paul believe that the wicked will be destroyed? Yes, absolutely (e.g., ἀπώλεια in Phil 1:28 and 3:19; φθείρω in 1 Cor 3:17; ὄλεθρος in 1 Thess 5:3; cf. ὄλεθρος in 2 Thess 1:9). But how can we be so sure that he did not think of this as a penultimate state of affairs as it most clearly is for the "destruction" (ὄλεθρος, 1 Cor 5:5) of the unrepentant Corinthian man involved with πορνεία (5:1; cf. 6:9)?[116] Given Paul's explicit

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[114] Note also that resurrection of the dead in Ezek 37 is not a resurrection of the righteous dead. It is a resurrection of the cursed dead—the dead who because of their disobedience brought the curses of the covenant upon the whole community (land and people). The valley of dry bones is a visionary portrayal of Israel in exile. And exile is the culmination of the curses of the covenant (cf. Deut 28:15–68 and Lev 26:14–43).

[115] Jeremiah's oracles regarding Moab and Ammon evince the same penultimate pattern of judgment with restoration as the final word (Moab: Jer 48:1–47; Ammon: 49:1–6; cf. the ultimate restoration of Elam in 49:39).

[116] The following commentators agree that the purpose of the judgment of "destruction" on the immoral man in 1 Cor 5:1–5 is the person's eschatological salvation: Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians: A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, trans. James W. Leitch, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), 95, 97–98, 102, 106; Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 395–400, 447; Hays, *First Corinthians*, 84–85, 93.

statements about the "super-abounding" reach of Jesus as "gift" that more than outpaces the effects of Adam's "trespass" (Rom 5:12–21; 1 Cor 15:21–22, 28; 2 Cor 5:14–15, 19; cf. Rom 3:23–24; cf. Phil 2:10–11), and his statement about the influence of God's mercy on all the disobedient (Rom 11:32), even those who have disobeyed and are enemies of the gospel (10:16; 11:28), then a strongly universalist thrust in his theology does not seem all that far-fetched. In fact, this seems to be exactly what the earliest interpreters of Paul and promulgators of the Pauline teaching understood him to be saying (Col 1:20; Eph 1:10; 1 Tim 2:4, 6; 4:10; Titus 2:11).

Paul's universalist comments have scandalized some but by no means all his interpreters. Like Gaventa, "I am inclined to hear Romans as an elaboration of the conclusion of the Philippians hymn—"Every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord"—and to think that 'all' indeed means all."[117] However, the point I am making here does not require Paul to be an explicit and self-conscious universalist (although that would certainly sharpen the point and is worth exploring). Even if those who receive eschatological life are less than the sum total of human beings that ever existed, it is plain from Paul's writings that he believes there are some—probably "many"—who will "be saved" (1 Cor 3:15) though they have no good "work" to speak of (see ἔργον throughout vv.13–15). And this scenario—even if it is for just the lone, unrepentant, sexually immoral Corinthian in 1 Cor 5:1–5 that Paul is confident will

[117] Gaventa, *When in Romans*, 123.

ultimately be saved—contradicts the retributive and wrathful judgment set forth in Rom 2:5–13.

Just like the Hebrew prophets, then, Paul announces destruction upon the wicked and disobedient (e.g., Phil 1:28; 3:19; 1 Thess 5:3; 1 Cor 3:17), but he also repeatedly makes explicitly "universalist" statements (Rom 3:23–24; 5:12–21; 11:28–32; 1 Cor 15:22, 28; 2 Cor 5:14–15; Phil 2:10–11; cf. Col 1:20; 3:11; Eph 1:10, 23; 1 Tim 2:4, 6; 4:10; Titus 2:11) and writes about people being saved through and after eschatological judgment (e.g., 1 Cor 3:15; 5:5; cf. Rom 14:4, 10–12). One possible explanation of all these comments is that Paul holds to the prophetic pattern of penultimate and purifying judgment. And this extension of the prophetic pattern of penultimate judgment into the eschaton such that post-mortem salvation is possible for those subject to eschatological fiery judgment would not be unique to Paul. It can be found in several early Jewish (including Jewish-Christian) texts: the Apocalypse of Zephaniah (esp. B6; 10:1–11:6; 2:8–9; 7:8–9; 9:1); the Testament of Isaac (esp. 5:10–32); Sib. Or. 2.330–339, and the Apocalypse of Peter (3:3–4; and the Greek text of the Rainer fragment at ch. 14, which is most likely the original version).[118] There is also a Rabbinic tradition credited to the first century Rabbi Akiba that "the judgment of the unrighteous in Gehenna shall endure twelve months" (m. 'Ed. 2:10; cf. b. Šabb. 33b).

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[118] M. R. James, "The Rainer Fragment of the Apocalypse of Peter," *JTS* 32 (1931): 270–79; Richard Bauckham, *The Fate of the Dead: Studies on the Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, NovTSup 93 (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 145. Bauckham also names several more examples of post-mortem eschatological restoration in Early Jewish and Christian texts in ibid., 136–48, and specifically more on the ultimate salvation of all the wicked from eschatological punishments in the Apocalypse of Peter in 194–235.

Therefore, the idea that Paul continues within this prophetic tradition does not entail unacceptable perfection of God's singular grace or a fundamental misreading of the Jewish scriptures and both Barclay and Jipp claim. Wickedness and evil can and will be judged fully on this view. Paul says that those who "live according to the flesh are going to die" (Rom 8:13). But he also says that "the one who died has been justified/delivered [δεδικαίωται] from Sin" (6:7; cf. 1 Pet 4:1 for a similar understanding). Hence it might be that after God has burned away everyone's evil deeds (cf. 1 Cor 3:13–15) God will restore all to the life of the Age to Come in which wickedness and evil will be no more.[119] This view runs counter to the soteriological terms set forth in Rom 2:6–12 where eschatological life does not follow after a purgative judgment, but rather is the earned

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[119] If anyone disagrees with this because of philosophical considerations such as free will (i.e., "God cannot or will not save anyone against their will"), they can argue with Paul for the way he wrote what he wrote. He is the one who repeatedly makes these universalist claims. I am not attempting a systematic theology, nor even a NT theology. I am only trying to provide an explanation for why Paul wrote the things he wrote as he wrote them that is historically plausible. Thus, in elucidating an interpretation of Paul, I am simply unwilling to put qualifications where Paul provides none himself (similarly, Gaventa, *When in Romans*, 123) when there is a plausible reason for how and why a first century Jew would make the types of unqualified comments Paul makes regarding judgment and salvation; namely, he is committed to the pattern he and many others have observed themselves in the Hebrew prophets. As mentioned above, this extension of the prophetic pattern of penultimate judgment into the eschaton such that post-mortem salvation is possible for those subject to eschatological fiery judgment would not be unique to Paul (T. Isaac 5:32; Apoc. Zeph. B6; 10:1–11:6; 2:8–9; 7:8–9; 9:1; Sib. Or. 2.330–339; Apoc. Pet. 3:3–4; 13–14; m. 'Ed. 2:10; cf. b. Šabb. 33b). Thus, there is no textual or historical warrant to doubt that Paul cannot mean what he wrote given his repeated unqualified universalistic comments. Only an *a priori* ideological disagreement with universalism stands in the way of accepting Paul's unqualified comments. The issue here with Paul is not just one Pauline passage where there are no qualifications provided. If this were the case and Paul offered qualifications elsewhere, then there would be a warrant for qualifying Paul's universalistic claims. But this is not the case. Universalistic comments are a recurring theme across Paul's writings and Paul never provides a limiting nuance. In fact, if he was not the author of Colossians, Ephesians, 1 Timothy, or Titus, then this universalism was thought to be so Pauline that the pseudepigraphal authors chose to incorporate these universalistic ideas in order to give it a sufficient quality of verisimilitude and hopefully pass as an authentic letter from the Apostle himself (Col 1:20; Eph 1:10; 1 Tim 2:4, 6; 4:10; Titus 2:11).

reward for persevering is good works. This view nevertheless still leaves plenty of room for divine anger and judgment.[120]

It seems that some people, like the immoral man in Corinth, might have to "go through hell" to get saved (3:13–15; 5:5). But here we see that Paul does not equate moral congruity with Christlikeness to be the basis for receiving eschatological life. Paul believes that those who "live according to the flesh are going to die" (8:13), but he also informs us that "the one who died has been justified/delivered [δεδικαίωται] from Sin" (6:7). This (i.e., dying and subsequently passing through a purgative judgment), it seems, is what Paul thinks it will take for the immoral Corinthian man to be saved.

But Paul does seem to think that someone might be able to avoid wrath, unlike the immoral Corinthian man, at least to some degree (Rom 5:9; cf. 1 Thess 1:10). Given the dialogical context of Romans, however, I think a case can be made that the particular mention of "wrath" in Rom 5:9 is not Paul saying we are saved from God's wrath.[121]

Some English translations gloss this as "the wrath *of God*" (NRSV/NASB), but this is not in the text (σωθησόμεθα δι᾽ αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τῆς ὀργῆς) and I am not sure "of God" is implied, especially given the context. (If we were to provide any gloss, I think it should

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[120] It is also worth reiterating that the prophets sometimes extend this ultimate salvation to Israel's most egregious of enemies and paragons of עולם/αἰώνιος judgment (i.e., Sodom, Gomorrah, Egypt, Assyria). Paul also says that the restoration of the disobedient (Rom 10:16; 11:28–32) and broken Israelite branches will be "life from the dead" in Rom 11:15. Perhaps like Ezekiel 37, then, this is a resurrection of the disobedient to a new life unilaterally granted by the God who resurrects (Rom 4:17; 11:15) the "ungodly" (4:5; 11:26) and the (temporarily) rejected (11:15) according to God's irrevocable covenant promises (9:4–5; 11:26–29; 15:8).

[121] Even if this is wrong though, the above discussion provides the necessary Pauline context for a sensible reading. That is, although Paul thinks God's wrath is penultimate for those who need it for their transformation, he also thinks people can escape this to the degree that they embody now, the righteousness of the Age to Come.

be "putative wrath" or "supposed wrath.") Paul has just finished saying that if God did not demonstrate divine wrath towards us while we were sinners, ungodly, weak, and helpless, in the manner described in 1:18–32, but rather demonstrated God's own love towards us (5:5, 8) by reconciling us to God's self (5:10–11),[122] then how can anyone go on believing that God is pouring out wrath on sinners in the manner described in 1:18–32 after we have already been justified (δικαιωθέντες) by Jesus's blood (5:1, 9) along with all other sinners (3:23–24)? Paul is expounding God's love (not wrath) in this section and this is why I do not think "of God" is a warranted gloss.

5.2.5 Judgment "through Christ Jesus" in Romans 2:16b Rather Than "through the Law" in 2:12

With this larger frame in place—of the tension between a soteriological judgment according to works as against a penultimate evaluative judgment of works, which can involve anger and wrath, but not in a final, exclusive sense—the full significance of a small textual detail in Rom 2 will now emerge clearly into view.

In Rom 2:16b Paul notes that judgment will be κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιόν μου διὰ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ. Hence, whereas judgment takes place διὰ νόμου in 2:12, this is replaced with διὰ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ in 2:16b. (The opposing parallelism is best understood as judgment "through the Law" [2:12] versus judgment "through Christ Jesus" rather than

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[122] This is consistent with Paul's comment about God's overlooking forbearance in Rom 3:25–26. This is also very similar with Paul's comment in 2 Corinthians: "God was in Christ reconciling the world to God's self, not counting their trespasses against them" (μὴ λογιζόμενος αὐτοῖς τὰ παραπτώματα αὐτῶν) (2 Cor 5:19; cf. *μακάριος ἀνὴρ οὗ οὐ μὴ λογίσηται κύριος ἁμαρτίαν* in Rom 4:8 [quoting Ps 32:2]). Again, this contrasts sharply with the portrayal of God in Rom 1:18–32.

versus "according to my gospel" on account of the διά phrases with κρίνω as the main verb.[123]) So which is it? Will God's judgment take place "through the Law" (2:12; cf. v. 13: "the doers of the Law will be justified"), or "through Christ Jesus" (v. 16b)? Dunn comes very close to recognizing this difference when he observes, "it is probably significant that 'the gospel' here replaces 'the law' as the measure of judgment (for the idea of the law as measure of judgment see on 2:12)."[124] He nevertheless simply asserts that "The introduction of the gospel as criterion is not at odds with the preceding argument."[125] But this is hard to square with the antithesis between attempted justification through works of law versus justification by faith that Paul elaborates everywhere else.

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[123] While I will focus on the διά construction in 2:16b contrasting with the διά construction in 2:12, Campbell has also noted how the κατά construction in 2:16b contrasts with the κατά construction in 2:5–6 (*Deliverance*, 368–70, 558–59). This serves to strengthen the overall point I am making at this stage. Campbell observes:

> It [the κατά construction in 2:16b] recalls the important κατά construction in v. 6 that announced the axiom of desert. Indeed, vv. 7–10 are little more than an articulation of the criterion of works— "according to" which, vv. 5–6 announce, God will judge the world on a day of wrath and just judgment. The criterion articulated in v. 16b, however, is now suddenly and explicitly— "according to [Paul's] gospel"— by means of Jesus Christ (*Deliverance*, 368).
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> Not all judgment texts are soteriological (i.e. matters of life and death), some appearing to be merely evaluative (i.e. matters of limited accountability). Christ tends to appear in relation to the latter rather than the former…. Romans itself portrays Christ in a process of evaluation that seems explicitly oriented toward Christians and is non-soteriological (Rom. 14:4, 10b-12), while it also offers a great deal of information concerning his *salvific* roles (3:25; 5:6, 8; and so on). In short, Romans *itself* offers no way of integrating Christ coherently into the theses of 2:6-10, the question that v. 16b asks in terms of its parallel criterial κατά construction. So the contradiction evident here seems to remain" (*Deliverance*, 369–70; his emphasis)
>
> The κατά construction in v. 16b recalls the similar construction in v. 6, which announced the criterion of judgment it the Teacher's gospel of desert. But in v. 16b that criterion now — "according to my [i.e., Paul's] gospel" — by means of Jesus Christ, an incommensurable criterion, and Paul marks *this* canon explicitly as "his." (*Deliverance*, 558; his emphasis and brackets).

[124] Dunn, *Romans 1–8*, 103.

[125] Dunn, *Romans 1–8*, 103; cf. 106.

English translations can obscure the fact that κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιόν μου διὰ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ is a tag appended in the Greek to the end of a complete sentence: ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ὅτε κρίνει ὁ θεὸς τὰ κρυπτὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιόν μου διὰ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ.[126] The sentence was already finished with "on the day when God will judge the secret things of humanity," so why does Paul add to it?[127] Even more importantly, why does he say this if he has been laying out his gospel throughout the argument? Moreover, why does this new manner of judgment differ from the manner of judgment laid out earlier in 2:12? (And why does the Law never come into view after 2:12–13 as the standard of judgment?)

Against the view that God will judge "through the Law" (2:12), Paul says here that according to the gospel he preaches God will judge "through Christ Jesus" (2:16b). When Paul later picks up this prolepsis about what God's judgment through Jesus is, he explains that this mode of judgment is one of forbearance and love, and it is delivering rather than condemning (3:25–26; 4:5; 5:5–11; 7:24–25; 8:1, 31–35).

In further support of the anomaly coming to light in 2:16b we should recall the prominence of Jesus elsewhere in Paul's accounts of a future judgment, along with the

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[126] E.g., NRSV: "on the day when, according to my gospel, God, through Jesus Christ, will judge the secret thoughts of all. NASB: "on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus."

[127] Sterling observers almost in passing that "This final statement [i.e., 2:16b] appears to be a Christianization of an argument that Paul has co-opted" ("'A Law to Themselves,'" 41). "An argument that Paul has co-opted" is very close to what I have been arguing. That is, Paul may be speaking these bits, but he is doing so Socratically, scripting for himself the beliefs and views of his opponent in order to use their premises against them. Sterling was able to discern that the tag in 2:16b is a textual signal that Paul has been "co-opting" the views of his interlocutor (and thus, that what came before are not Paul's own views). And, to his credit, Sterling was able to detect this apart from making mention of the ancient rhetorical conventions. This is another instance that the dialogical markers are actually quite intuitive. Knowing the ancient rhetorical conventions merely confirm these observations as signaling διαφωνία.

different apparent nature of those judgments. But up to 2:16b Jesus has been conspicuously absent from 1:18–2:16a—and he now disappears until 3:21-22. There is not a single other instance where Paul is talking about salvation or eschatological life where Jesus is not present (e.g., 3:24; 6:23; 7:24–25; 10:9; 14:8–12). If Rom 2 was Paul's soteriology then we would expect to see a description of those who get eschatological life as having something to do with believing/having faith in Jesus Christ (10:9–10; cf. 1:16–17; 3:22b).[128] Therefore, it is not insignificant that both "faith" and "Jesus Christ" are missing from 2:7, 10.[129] Once again, statements that assert something akin to "What Paul really means by 'doing good' in Rom 2:7, 10 is 'having faith in Jesus'"[130] will not do because nowhere else does Paul prevaricate on this central issue.[131]

These anomalies are nicely explained if we read Rom 2:16b in a dialogical fashion. Here Paul agrees with an interlocutor that God will judge, but he cannot help but interject his own qualification here in anticipation of his argument that follows shortly. Moreover, this is a well-known rhetorical device (prolepsis, προαναφώνηςίς).[132] Prolepsis

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[128] Cf. Colossians 1:23 where the point is about remaining (ἐπιμένω) in "faith" (πίστις); not works.

[129] Ironically, the second and final criticism of Campbell's argument in *Deliverance* raised by Jipp is that he thinks Campbell "has underestimated the extent to which Paul describes the human response to God's salvation in terms of πίστις" (Jipp, "Douglas Campbell's," 195–97, here 196). This is ironic because knowing just how emphatic πίστις is within Paul's thinking—putting aside how Campbell himself talks about πίστις (which is the target of Jipp's critique[129])—renders its absence is Rom 2 all the more palpable and problematic.

[130] E.g., King, *Speech-in-Character*, 243–44.

[131] Not to mention that this would turn "faith" into a "work" rather than a "gift" (12:3, 6; cf. Phil 1:29). This would still end up affirming a meritorious soteriological schema, but instead lowers the bar from having to do all these good works to merit eschatological life (2:7) to simply having faith. But the meritorious rubric remains in place with "faith" being construed now as the sole "good work" that matters after all.

[132] Sometimes the Scholia call the proleptic feature ἀναφώνησις (René Nünlist, *The Ancient Critic at Work: Terms and Concepts of Literary Criticism in Greek Scholia* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011], 43–45) even though προαναφώνηςίς is technically a particular type of ἀναφώνησις (Francesca

also serves as a type of "capping formula…[that] indicates that the speaker's [i.e., not the main author] expectations will be thwarted."[133] This is arguably exactly what we can see happening in Rom 2:16.[134]

5.2.6 Conclusion on Salvation and Judgment in Paul

There are certain ideas that cannot be held simultaneously together by someone without being self-contradictory and there are others that can be a "both/and."

Eschatological life cannot both be something merited ("paid back") for good works by doing the law (Rom 2:6–13)—salvation according to works—and at the same time be a "gift" as Paul defines "gift" given to those who do not merit it but are ungodly (because Paul does so in terms that are explicitly and intentionally mutually exclusive to this; see 6:23; 4:4–5; 11:6).[135]

But God can judge sinners for their sins—a judgment according to works—and ultimately have mercy on all if we understand judgment in terms of the prophetic pattern of penultimate and purifying judgment to which Paul regularly appeals. This would also explain why resurrection is the ultimate deliverance after suffering the death of sin (cf. 7:24; 8:11, 23) and why it is Jesus's resurrection that bears the soteriological weight in Paul (4:25; 5:10; 8:34; 1 Cor 15:17, 22).

Schironi, *The Best of the Grammarians: Aristarchus of Samothrace on the* Iliad [Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2018], 512–15).

[133] Nünlist, *Ancient Critic*, 43–44.

[134] Generally speaking it is an interjection—when the author "speaks up" (ἀναφωνεῖ)—but more specifically it is an instance of prolepsis, namely, an interjection whereby the author speaks up in anticipation of what is to come (προαναφωνεῖ). See Schironi, *Best*, 512–15; Nünlist, *Ancient Critic*, 35–45. Chapter 8 will disclose how this works out in detail in a script.

[135] Barclay quite explicitly does just this: "eternal life is, for Paul, *both* an incongruous gift (6:23) *and* the fitting completion of a life of good work (2:6–7)" (*Paul*, 466; his emphasis).

As we saw, Rom 2:6–13 holds to good works as the basis for eschatological life. And this soteriology cannot plausibly be harmonized with Paul's later comments in Romans, let alone in the rest of his letters. Apart from an explicitly marked dialogical rhetorical context, we would be forced to conclude that Paul is simply incoherent and contradictory on judgment and salvation; he says very different things in different places. But, since Paul has alerted his readers that he is engaged in a debate with an interlocutor via two extended apostrophes (Rom 2:1–3, 17–24), not to mention a paragraph of speech-in-character in 1:18–32 identified by a capping formula in 2:1 (as argued for in chapter 3 and strengthened in chapter 4), interpreters have a way to make sense of all these tensions. The reason why there are two separate soteriological models co-existing in Romans is because Paul is engaging in a debate between himself and a "teacher" (2:20) who endorses a soteriology of merit through works (2:6–12) done in the light of the Law (2:13–15) and a judgment according to the standard of the Law (2:12–13), whether written or natural (cf. 2:14–15, 20). Paul stands against this position, which he regards as deeply mistaken, and attacks it by directly opposing it in its own terms (e.g., 3:20, 28), and then by expressing an alternative soteriology of gift through faith (e.g., 3:23–24; 6:23), along with an alternative judgment scenario "according to his gospel through Jesus Christ" (2:16b; cf. 14:4, 8–12). But there is one further important reason for suspecting that this is the best reading of the evidence.

5.3 Disinheriting Historical and Ethnic Israel

In Rom 2, disobedient Jews face certain damnation at the judgment (2:9–11; cf. v. 27). This is to be expected for, as just discussed, the soteriological judgment in Rom 2 is

based on merit. But this means that the election of Jews makes no difference. As Campbell observes regarding 2:25–29, "the traditional badge of the covenant, circumcision… will not actually count for much if the criterion of judgment in accordance with works [set forth in 2:5–13] is to hold. The latter criterion overrules and effectively redefines the former sign."[136] This means in turn that "in argumentative terms, [2:25–29] reasserts [the] original premise of judgment by desert pointing out that *if it is accepted consistently* it will invalidate the mere possession of circumcision" since "good deeds must be *done!*"[137] Therefore, according to Rom 2:28–29, Jews *qua* Jews end up being defined out of any real benefit. Hence 2:25 says that disobedient Jews are considered foreskinned (ἀκροβυστία), i.e., pagans. All that matters in Rom 2 is the successful navigation in life of the "soteriological meritocracy, independently of Judaism,… simply through the performance of good deeds."[138] As Fitzmyer honestly and bluntly states, "In effect, he [Paul] denies the name ['Jew'] to those who may outwardly be Jews, but are not so inwardly. The consequences of his indictment would seem to indicate that Paul regards Jews as cut off from the promises of Israel."[139]

But when Paul later in Romans turns to discuss disobedient Jews who do not acknowledge God's righteousness, he never says that they are cut off from the promises of Israel and that "they are not Jews after all since they are actually considered to be foreskinned." In fact, he says the opposite: "they are Israelites" (9:4), they are still "the

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[136] Campbell, *Deliverance*, 321.
[137] Campbell, *Deliverance*, 321; his emphasis.
[138] Campbell, *Quest*, 242.
[139] Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 320–21.

circumcision" (15:8), and as such they are beneficiaries of the "promises" of mercy and blessing attendant to the covenants of Israel (15:8; 11:26, 28; 9:4–5). Paul insists in 11:28 that nothing can revoke these gifts, not even disobedience to the gospel (10:16).[140] "Jewishness" is not construed in these later texts as something purely internal and meritocratic whereby "Jew" simply names the generic obedience of the person. Romans 2:18–29 stands out in sharp relief against these later observations.[141]

It is commonly thought that Paul aims to "level the playing field" in Romans between Jews and gentiles (hence, "there is no distinction between Jew and Greek" in 10:12; cf. 3:22), and in a certain sense he does. To level the playing field elsewhere, however, Paul includes gentiles within Israel's benefits (e.g., Rom 4 and 11).[142] He does not disinherit Jews from the (irrevocable) gifts of their election, however disobedient they may be. Israel is the playing field, so to speak, on which gentiles are allowed to play as well.

Correspondingly, Paul never again calls gentile Christians "Jews" as they ostensibly ought to be denominated if Rom 2:18–29 is what Paul thinks a real "Jew" is.[143]

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[140] Similarly, Wagner, "'Enemies,'" 103, 108.
[141] Cf. Campbell, *Deliverance*, 85–87, 376.
[142] Similarly, King, *Speech-in-Character*, 298.
[143] Campbell makes the same point thus:

> To my knowledge, Paul *never* elsewhere in his writings defines a Christian — whom he would usually call a "brother" — as a "Jew," as v. 29 must suggest on a Christian reading of this figure. *This is unparalleled*. Nor, I would argue, can it be decisively proved that he ever *displaces* Israel with the church — a common misunderstanding. When he uses broad ethnic distinctives like "Jew" and "Greek," he invariably respects this difference but overcomes it *in Christ*, applying *new* metaphors from that point onward — usually familial (as Gal. 3:28 illustrates most famously). Elsewhere, then, the pagan convert never becomes a "true" Jew. So the easy claim that this "true Jew" in Romans 2 is in fact a Christian makes an unparalleled supersessionist assertion — and one without much wider supporting evidence from the rest of Paul. It flies in the face of the overt

For instance, he does not say elsewhere, "foreskin is nothing, for you all are now the true circumcision, you are all inner Jews, through Christ and the Spirit" (cf. Gal 6:15).[144] Paul consistently states that baptized Jews and gentiles remain distinct socio-political and ethnic groups, albeit now reconciled and unified in Jesus Christ (Rom 3:29–30; 11:13; 15:8–9; 1 Cor 7:18–19; Gal 5:6; 6:15).[145]

To fully establish the incongruence and διαφωνία between Rom 2:28–29 with chapters 9–11, however, we need to analyze those later chapters a little more closely.

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textual coding of these figures, and it courts a charge of rather appalling salvation-historical insensitivity as well. (*Deliverance*, 375; his emphasis)

[144] I do not think that the phrase "we are the circumcision" in Phil 3:3 applies to the gentile Philippians, but rather refers to Paul and Timothy (the named authors in 1:1) (contra Wright, "The Law," 135). Paul counts himself among those from "the circumcision" since this seems to be a common phrase used in church to refer to Jewish people—perhaps even especially Jewish believers in Jesus Christ—who were distinguished from gentile believers in the church (cf. Rom 4:12; Gal 2:12; Col 4:11; 3:11; Acts 11:2; Eph 2:11–12). Saying "we are the circumcision," then, simply means they are actually Jewish, not that they are the only or "true" Jews (let alone that gentiles are all of sudden considered part of "the circumcision"). This is borne out in Philippians because in Phil 3:2–17 there are three groups: "them" (i.e., the "dogs," "evil workers," and the "mutilation"), "you" (i.e., the Philippians), and "we/me" (Paul and Timothy). The phrase "we are the circumcision" is referring Paul and Timothy as an apostolic band over against "them," a certain group of opponents, who are (or perhaps at the very least "will eventually," Paul fears) vying for the allegiance of "you," the Philippians. See Markus Müller, *Vom Schluss zum Ganzen: zur Bedeutung des paulinschen Briefkorpusabschlusses* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1997), 194; Wolfgang Harnisch, "Die paulinische Selbtsempfehlung als Plädozer für den Gekreuzigten. Rhetorisch-hermeneutische Erwägungen zu Phil 3," in *Das Urchristentum in seiner literarschen Geschichte*, ed. Ulrich Mell and Ulrich B. Müller (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1999), 139. I am grateful for Nicholas J. Schaser, who alerted me to these observations and these sources after his conference presentation, "Circumcision, Not Supersession: The Limited Apostolic Focus of Philippians 3:3" (presented at the SBL Annual Meeting, Pauline Epistles Section, San Diego, CA, 2019). I discuss the historical contingencies of Paul's polemics against these opponents in the Appendix. In short, I think Paul is doubting their status as belonging to "the circumcision" because they are proselytes whom he thinks underwent an illegitimate circumcision procedure (because it cut off too much preputial skin). Paul can boast in his eighth-day circumcision as something he has "more" (Phil 3:4) than what they can boast about in their "flesh" because they themselves were circumcised much later than the eighth-day.

[145] Cf. Andrew Remington Rillera, "*Tertium Genus* or Dyadic Unity? Investigating Sociopolitical Salvation in Ephesians," *BR* 66 (2021): forthcoming.

5.3.1 There Are not Two "Israels" in Rom 9–11

Paul makes clear in Rom 9–11 that it is the disobedient Jews (10:16) that "are enemies with respect to the gospel" (11:28) whom Paul is confident will finally be embraced with salvation and mercy. Here, Paul is explicit, moreover, that the covenant promises operative originally through election make all the difference: "The Deliverer will…remove ungodliness from Jacob" (11:26) and God will have mercy on the disobedient (11:31–32) because of the patriarchs (11:28) and since "the gracious-gifts and calling of God are irrevocable" (11:29).[146] This description stands opposed to the individuated retributive notion of judgment and salvation expressed in Rom 2, and to its definition of the true Jew.

It is telling, then, that Wright appeals to Rom 2:4–5 in order to rub against the grain of Rom 11 that Israel's "hardening"[147] finally gives way to God's merciful embrace (11:15, 25–32). He notes that in 2:4–5 "the 'hardening' was the prelude, not to a sudden mercy…but to judgment."[148] But by appealing to 2:4–5 in order to undermine the pattern set forth in Rom 11 (the journey from obtuseness to salvation, and disobedience to mercy), Wright betrays that the pattern Paul develops in Rom 9–11 actually conflicts with what is said in Rom 2. Although Wright opts for Rom 2 to be the norming principle by

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[146] Similarly, Wagner, "'Enemies,'" 101, 103, 108–9.

[147] Although Wright uses this term, what happens to Israel is better worded as "obtuseness" (πώρωσις–11:25; cf. πωρόω in 11:7) since "hardening" is more appropriate for σκληρύνω in 9:18.

[148] N. T. Wright, *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*, Christian Origins and the Question of God 4 (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013), 2:1237.

which to press Rom 11 into coherence, it is enough for now to note their dissimilarity, which again evinces διαφωνία.[149]

However, someone may still object, as Wright's comments would indicate, that the positive features I highlighted thus far about Israel in Rom 9–11 actually cohere with the so-called "internal Jew" of Rom 2:28–29 because Paul has been arguing for the existence of a "second 'Israel'" since 9:6.[150] That is, the irrevocable gifts of God to Israel are only irrevocable to this second "Israel" that is made up of anyone who believes in the Gospel. (Hence the Christian solution manifests itself yet again to deal with the interpretive problem.)

But to get this notion of a second, true, Israel, from 2:28–29 we have to strain the translation of Paul's Greek in the key verses in Rom 9. Paul writes οὐ γὰρ πάντες οἱ ἐξ Ἰσραὴλ οὗτοι Ἰσραήλ in 9:6b. This can be fairly translated: "For it is not [the case that] all those from Israel—these—are Israel."[151] If Paul was wanting to convey that those from the outside who did not initially belonging to ethnic Israel actually now belong to a new "second 'Israel,'" then he would more likely have written: οὐ γὰρ πάντες οἱ Ἰσραὴλ οὗτοι ἐξ Ἰσραήλ ("For it is not [the case that] all those who are Israel are themselves from Israel"). This would mean that there are some who belong to "Israel" although they

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[149] For a detailed critique of Wright's reading of Rom 9–11 and an alternative see Tommy Givens, *We the People: Israel and the Catholicity of Jesus* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2014), 345–411.

[150] Cf. Wright, *Paul*, 1223, 1225, 1230, 1236n658.

[151] Similarly, the translation from Givens is: "for not all who are of Israel are themselves Israel" (*We the People*, 349). And Jewett: "For not all who [are] from Israel these [are] Israel" (*Romans*, 570; his brackets). And Charles Lee Irons: "not all who are descended from Israel are Israel" (*A Syntax Guide for Readers of the Greek New Testament* [Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2016], 353).

themselves are not technically ἐξ Ἰσραήλ because they came from outside originally. But this is not what Paul wrote.

One way of construing Paul's claim here in 9:6b is in terms of the idea that mere biological decent from Israel—being ἐξ Ἰσραήλ—does not guarantee over time that one's descendants will not have assimilated into the surrounding gentile nations and thus ceased to be an inheritor of the promises made to Israel since they have become gentiles.[152] That is, God's election over time, and especially over the time of God's covenant electing judgment upon Israel through gentile domination and exile, leaves some biological descendants of Israel no longer with a memory of their lineage from Israel because they have become fully incorporated into the gentile nations. As Tommy Givens puts it, some biological descendants of Israel "came in time not to know the God of Israel as [their] own…. [and] served other gods."[153] On this reading, Paul is saying that mere biological descent from those Israelites who went into the Assyrian exile or Judahites into the Babylonian exile is insufficient for being of Israel because certain of these Israelite branches have withered over the generations. The biological descendants of these wandering branches are now gentiles whose Israelite biological stock generations ago is no longer material on account of their full gentile assimilation.

Irrespective of the exact reading, fundamental to Paul's argument in Rom 9 is the fact that remaining within Israel is a matter of God's election over time. Belonging to Israel (οὗτοι Ἰσραήλ, 9:6b) is neither reducible to biology (being ἐξ Ἰσραήλ) nor, much

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[152] For a similar argument on Rom 9:6 see Givens, *We the People*, 349–63.
[153] Givens, *We the People*, 353–54.

more importantly for our purposes, to a matter of internal disposition or outward (dis)obedience of the individual person, as Paul goes on to say explicitly in 9:12 (v. 11 in English) and 16. Here Paul says it is all a matter of God's calling, election, and mercy. And this is really an opposite account of Jewish identity in 2:25–29; especially from the odd claim in Rom 2:25 that someone is "considered foreskinned" even though they might still be a Torah-observant Jew and circumcised—although not perfectly righteous in terms of works.

The examples Paul gives in Rom 9 make this tension still clearer. Although biological descendants of Abraham, Ishmael and Esau became the patriarchal heads of gentile nations, as Givens contends, "The root distinction that is material here is between one child of Abraham's body and another, and it is independent of how each lived."[154] Paul's argument, according to Givens, is that similarly, there are surely biological descendants of Jacob who are now no longer a part of Israel because they have integrated and allied themselves over time with families and gods of other nations. "What happened in the initial three key generations from Abraham to Isaac to Jacob anticipated what happened throughout the subsequent generations of the children of Israel."[155] Hence, Givens maintains, "what is crucial here in Romans 9 is that since the future of some children born into the people was weaved out of Israel and into that of other, gentile peoples… the formation of the people of promise has unfolded as the future of some of

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[154] Givens, *We the People*, 350.
[155] Givens, *We the People*, 356.

its children and not others."[156] It follows that Israel bequeaths the name "Israel" only to some of his biological descendants (and this is attributed to God's electing activity), "leaving others [of his biological descendants] with names like Edom," or, we might add, Roman, Scythian, Greek, or even Samaritan.[157] Because of this fact of assimilation over generations, Paul can make the claim that whoever is still an Israelite after all this time is only there by God's electing mercy (9:12, 16), their disobedience notwithstanding (11:28–29), because "being Israel" was never related fundamentally to (dis)obedience in the first place (9:12, 16; cf. 11:6).[158]

Gaventa articulates a similar notion:

> Paul's discussion has to do with bringing Israel into being in each generation, not with a "spiritual" versus a "physical" Israel…. God repeatedly calls into being (that is, God creates) offspring for Abraham. These are biological children… but Paul's concern is with divine creation rather than with biology…. *Israel exists not by virtue of its own faithfulness or goodness but by God's creative act*. That is to say: for Paul, Israel is God's.[159]

Therefore, Paul's kin in 9:3–5 belong to the group οὗτοι Ἰσραήλ (9:6b) because Paul affirms clearly at the outset that οἵτινές εἰσιν Ἰσραηλῖται (9:4). Paul is saying that God has made them to be Israel. In other words, the fact that they are Israelite right now, in this time and place, and not gentile, confirms for Paul their divine election as children of promise (and this reading is also confirmed by what Paul says in 11:28–32). God has

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[156] Givens, *We the People*, 351.

[157] Givens, *We the People*, 355.

[158] See also, "God's free and gracious election of Abraham and his descendants…has repeatedly upset human notions of merit and desert…. Paul contends that election has nothing whatsoever to do with human deeds, whether good or bad. It rests solely on God's reality-creating calling (9:12; cf. 4:17)" (Wagner, "'Enemies,'" 106; cf. 108).

[159] Gaventa, *When in Romans*, 64–65; her emphasis.

made them to be Israel despite their disobedience and enmity to the gospel (10:16; 11:28) simply because God has called them to be Israel and this calling cannot be revoked by their works/(dis)obedience (11:29; 9:12, 16). In light of the sprawling and torturous history of Jacob's descendants, "Those who have found themselves part of the people named Israel and have thus continued as Israel, then, are the twisting life of God's promise in the flesh, the people who are οὗτοι Ἰσραήλ according to 9:6–13."[160]

This brings us to our second reason for resisting the idea that Paul has any notion of "two Israels" in play. Whoever 9:6b is trying to exclude from Israel—if indeed it is trying to exclude anyone, as against include people—then it cannot be Paul's kin in 9:4–5 because he writes in 9:4 that οἵτινές εἰσιν Ἰσραηλῖται just like he himself is: **καὶ** γὰρ ἐγὼ Ἰσραηλίτης εἰμί (For I myself am also Israelite [i.e., just like my kin in 9:4]) (11:1; my emphasis).[161] Paul is saying that "the promises [in 9:4–5] belong precisely to those unfaithful relatives for whom he is sorrowful and distressed."[162] All these gifts belong to them because they are Israelites, and Paul says that all of these gifts irrevocably belong to all Israelites, even if they are disobedient to the gospel (11:28–29; 10:16), which some of them apparently are. In this way, as Givens argues, "The distinction between οἱ ἐξ

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[160] Givens, *We the People*, 357n20.

[161] So although not all who are ἐξ Ἰσραήλ are themselves Ἰσραήλ, Paul's kin in 9:3–4 are οὗτοι Ἰσραήλ because they are not simply οὗτοι ἐξ Ἰσραήλ but rather οἵτινές εἰσιν Ἰσραηλῖται. And, if Paul thought believing gentiles all of a sudden count as οὗτοι Ἰσραήλ, then why does he only point to himself, a born-Israelite, and not to his entire Roman audience as proof of his point? Moreover, why does he still refer to believing gentiles as "you who are gentiles" in 11:13? This is because Paul thinks the being of Israel happens through the election of God through Jacob's actual descendants ("of the tribe of Benjamin") (even though it cannot be reducible to all biological descendants as discussed above) and the remnant of which he is a part heralds the future "acceptance" (11:15) and "fulfillment" (11:12) of "the rest" who "were made obtuse" (11:7) (11:25–32).

[162] Givens, *We the People*, 351n11.

Ἰσραήλ and οὗτοι Ἰσραήλ is precisely what has made Paul's relatives according to the flesh in view [in Rom 9:3–5] figure *among* οὗτοι Ἰσραήλ and thus the children of God and children of promise."[163] And this seems to be Paul's point in 9:6a: "the word *of God* has not withered because that is not up to Israel," it is up to God.[164] Rom 9–11 as whole, moreover, as Gaventa summarizes, "establishes that Israel exists as and only as God's creation" and therefore "not by virtue of its own faithfulness or goodness but by God's creative act."[165] Hence these chapters suggest only that there is one Israel—those descending from the biological stock of Israel (11:1, 16; 9:5) though not reducible to such descent (9:6b)—called into existence by God, and they are sustained by God (9:6a), not by their own works (9:12, 16; 11:6).

5.3.2 The Unconditional and Ultimate Salvation of Israel

In the end Paul declares, on the basis of prophecies from Isaiah and Jeremiah, that Israel's unfaithfulness will be remedied not by their mustering up enough faithfulness, but rather by the Deliverer who will remove ungodliness from Jacob and take away their sins (11:26–27). That is, "God promises to do for the hardened rest what they have proven unable to do for themselves."[166] And this ultimate salvation of Israel is the goal of

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[163] Givens, *We the People*, 349–50; his emphasis.
[164] Givens, *We the People*, 359; his emphasis.
[165] Gaventa, *When in Romans*, 63, 65; her emphasis.
[166] Wagner, "'Enemies,'" 110. See also, "The apostle's expectation that God himself will act to transform faithless Israel into a faithful people corresponds to the hope voiced repeatedly by the prophets (e.g., Hos 2:14–23; 14:4–7; Isa 63:7–64:12; Jer 31:31–34; Ezek 36:26). Deuteronomy 30:6 provides the classic statement" (ibid., 110n42). To emphasize, this faithfulness is not a condition for salvation, but a consequence of God's unilateral deliverance of "the rest" of Israel. Just like eschatological life, faith is a gift from God (cf. 12:3, 6; Phil 1:29; Eph 2:8); a fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22). Gaventa makes this same point about the giftedness of faith (*When in Romans*, 124). In any case, Israel's faithfulness is not the basis for their salvation; rather, God's transformation of Israel into a faithful people *is* their salvation.

Paul's logic throughout this section. Wagner's careful explaination of "Paul's *qal vaḥomer* rhetoric in 11:24" where Paul "appeal[s] to the 'mystery' of the salvation of 'all Israel'" is worth reproducing in full here:

> [Paul] assumes that his hearers will acknowledge the force of his logic…. For if God now calls the "not-loved" Gentiles – the children of "Esau [whom God has] hated" (9:13*b*) – "beloved" (9:25), how much more will he embrace as beloved "the rest" of Israel, who, though hardened for a time, remain the children of "Jacob [whom God has] loved" (9:13*a*)? If God chooses to be "found" by Gentiles who were not even seeking or inquiring after him (10:20), how much more will he determine to be found by those to whom he has been stretching out his hands all day long (10:21)? If God can graft wild olive branches onto the root of the cultivated olive, how much more will he be able to graft the broken natural branches back in (11:23–24)? And if Gentile enemies receive "the Spirit of adoption" (πνεῦμα υἱοθεσίας, 8:15, 23), how much more will Israel – who, though they have now become enemies for the sake of the Gentiles, remain ever and unalterably beloved on account of the patriarchs – enjoy at last the full blessing of the adoption that remains theirs as God's irrevocable gift (11:29; cf. 9:4)? In the end, the entire weight of Paul's argument in Rom 9–11 comes to rest on just this point: that God alone determines the identity and destiny of Israel and the Gentiles alike.[167]

The saving agency is on the divine side (and this recalls 7:24 as well). Salvation has always been a divine gracious-gift, not achieved by works (11:6), and not gained by human willing or running (9:12, 16).[168] And all of this runs counter to the meritorious soteriology of Rom 2:6–13, as Wright perceived as we noted above.

But not only this: that meritorious soteriological model is also individualized in a manner that grates against the soteriological reasoning in Rom 9–11, which is fundamentally corporate, historical (i.e., concerns Israel's election over generations), and

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[167] Wagner, "'Not from the Jews Only,'" 429.

[168] For further discussion about the unconditionality of God's saving gift see Gaventa, *When in Romans*, 121–28.

explicitly covenantal. Even the salvation of the nations is said to include them into this corporate "tree" (11:17–24)—while they remain gentiles, i.e., they do not become Jews—so that they become co-beneficiaries of Israel's unconditional promises of ultimate mercy (11:32). That is, the problem created by the individualized soteriology in 2:6–13 (and the redefinition of the Jew in 2:28–29) that I want to note here is not that individuals are going to be judged retributively (as already discussed), although this is a problem, but rather that this individualism erases the corporate, historical, and covenantal belonging that Paul thinks makes all difference in Rom 9–11 (esp. 9:4–5 and 11:28–29; cf. 15:8). The soteriology in Rom 2 grounds each individual's eschatological destiny in her/his own efforts and this is simply different from the presupposition throughout Rom 9–11 where Israel is a corporate, historical, and elect category.[169] These two constructions are fundamentally different, although we can again explain the anomaly in terms of διαφωνία.

5.4 Conclusion

Similar to issues noted in chapter 4, the interpretive problems plaguing Rom 2 are well known. So this survey of the key issues has confirmed O'Neill's conclusion that "at every point there is tension, as all commentators have perceived."[170] In the scholarly literature, we have seen that there are four options to resolving these: (a) an admission

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[169] For two different approaches that nevertheless argue for the same conclusion that the "Israel" in Rom 11:26 is ethnic, currently disobedient, Israel that will receive God's mercy see Susan Grove Eastman, "Israel and the Mercy of God: A Re-Reading of Galatians 6.16 and Romans 9-11," *NTS* 56 (2010): 367–95; idem, "Whose Apocalypse?: The Identity of the Sons of God in Romans 8:19," *JBL* 121 (2002): 263–77.

[170] O'Neill, *Romans*, 54.

that Paul is fundamentally incoherent; (b) an attempted synthesis; (c) interpolation; or (d) the assignment of one of these mutually exclusive perspectives to an interlocutor.

The interpolation option (c) is the least viable given the lack of manuscript evidence. Scholars advocating option (a) note these tensions but do not resolve them—so, e.g., Sanders at times; and most prominently, Räisänen.[171] Most scholars balk at suggesting major contradictions in Paul's thinking, so the most common solution an attempted synthesis—option (b). We have found that the most frequent form of this, moreover, is to postulate some form of the Christian solution for each interpretive problem (e.g., Wright, Gorman, and most robustly, Barclay). But we have also shown here how this solution breaks down at every point in Rom 2, and generates multiple new problems in its own right.

Since option (b) is no longer viable, and before settling for incoherence with Sanders and Räisänen, a version of option (d) ought to be explored, especially given our findings regarding how speech-in-character can be coded in an ancient text (as laid out in earlier chapters). Once we recognize the dialogical texture of Rom 2, these tensions become intelligible as διαφωνία and prompt us to supply a script that solves them by assigning the discordant material to an interlocutor—this is the λύσις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου. Hence it follows that a "solution from the character" seems not only plausible on account of the interpretive pressure from dialogical signals in the text itself (chapter 3), but likely in view of the acute conceptual tensions it resolves, tensions that are widely recognized.

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[171] Heikki Räisänen, *Paul and the Law*, 2nd ed., WUNT 29 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1987), esp. xi–xxi, 9–15, 97–101, 106–09.

Moreover, it does so without creating new problems as the Christian solution did. On this reading, the tensions are present in Romans 2 because Paul has constructed a person and his position in the text to debate the very points producing the tensions—the (natural) Law, works and obedience, salvation, judgment, sin, and what it means to be a Jew.

But this solution would be further validated if it could be demonstrated that each side of the debate forms a coherent position on these matters (though being at odds with the other person's perspective). And as a result of the process of cataloguing the tensions between Rom 1–2 and the rest of the Pauline data over the last two chapters we are now in a position to do this. We can now discern two different models of how God relates to humanity, why people sin, and what the nature of those sins are (transgressions or missteps), along with their putative solutions.

On one model: God is knowable and so are God's ordinances apart from Scripture through creation (1:18–20). And God consequently relates to people based on individual merit. It follows that Jews have no benefit *qua* Jews because there are no covenant promises mentioned nor do they matter for eschatological life (2:6–16a). But no one else is able to plead ignorance (1:20) because, again, everything is clearly manifested through the created order (1:20–21). Most importantly, everyone has the inherent capacity for obedience (2:6–7, 10, 13–15, 26–27). Thus, although some have lived in accordance with God's (natural) law (2:14–15) and can expect to be paid back with eschatological life (2:7, 10), many have deliberately rejected their innate knowledge of God (1:21, 23, 25, 28) and God's ordinances (1:32). These people are worthy of wrath, tribulation, distress, and ultimately, of death (1:18, 32; 2:8–9). Indeed, when people sin they do so willfully,

and their sins are transgressions of known ordinances which spiral down into ever greater acts of vice (1:21, 23, 25, 32). But people are also capable of not sinning if they stay focused on the divine ordinances (1:32; 2:14–15, 26–29). So God relates to the godly and just by rewarding them with glory, honor, immortality, which is to say, with eschatological life (2:7, 10). People who want to merit eschatological life (2:6–7), then, need to roll up their sleeves and to start obeying God's law (2:13–15) manifested through the created order (1:19–20, 32), although the written Law and circumcision will aid this endeavor (2:20, 25). Those who live according to the righteous requirements of the Law are the true Jews (2:25–29). In this model, then, in essence, God relates to humanity retributively: those who do the good get paid back with eschatological goods; those who do bad things get paid back with eschatological bad things.

Over against this model that is found in Rom 1–2, and arguably nowhere else in Paul, we find an alternative account: God and God's ordinances are knowable only through the special revelation of Scripture (3:20–22; 7:7) or the gospel of Jesus Christ to which the Scriptures testify (1:1–3, 16–17; 10:8, 14, 17).[172] Clear knowledge of God's ordinances and consequently of sin is only possible through direct commands from God or Scripture (Rom 3:20; 7:7). People need salvation in the form of deliverance, not reward, because all people are enslaved to and imprisoned by Sin and Death (5:12–7:25). People do not necessarily sin willfully; rather, they sin because they are born in a deadly state as a result of Adam's primal transgression (5:12–21). And even though gentiles do

[172] Apart from this, no one can know God according to Paul in 1 Cor 1:21; Gal 4:8; 1 Thess 4:5 (cf. 1 Cor 12:2).

not transgress God's commands explicitly because they are not under God's Law (5:12–14; cf. 4:15), they nevertheless live under the lordship of Sin and Death and sin as well (5:14, 17, 21). Israel, however, has God's commands and therefore when they sin, they transgress like Adam did (5:20; 7:7–10). But those under the Law, while in need of salvation and deliverance, are not to be blamed in strong terms for their transgressions, because it is Sin which dwells in them that is to blame (7:17, 20). All humanity is fundamentally incapacitated and cannot overcome their enslavement to Sin, and their ensuing fate of Death (6:16, 19; 7:14). Due to this enslavement, it is not "them" doing evil, but rather "Sin," which dwells in them doing it (7:17, 20). Death remains a judgment on sin and the sinful flesh (5:12–21; 8:13), but it operates to terminate that situation, not to inflict harm on the person retributively (6:7). Similarly, God is angry with people for sinning, but this anger or wrath, as anticipated by the Prophets, powers a penultimate and frequently painful process of pedagogical and purgative judgment, which finally ends in mercy (11:32).

It follows that everyone, Jew and gentile alike, needs to be delivered from their body of Death (7:24; cf. 6:4–5, 7; 8:10–11, 23; 11:15). But thankfully God demonstrates a fundamentally loving disposition by being reconciled to these sinful enemies through Jesus, Israel's promised Messiah (5:6–11; 9:5). God is revealed as loving and merciful in Jesus as the one who thereby justifies the ungodly (4:5; 3:25–26; 5:6–11; 8:31–39; 9:15; 11:26–32).[173] In this way, moreover, God has fulfilled his promises to Abraham to bless

[173] Though it cannot be spelled out in detail, it is worth noting that there is participatory logic to how Paul is thinking about the saving function of Jesus's own obedience (5:19). Jesus has taken on a body

not only his descendants but many nations as well (4:13–17; 15:8–12). This fulfillment includes even those from Israel who are currently enemies of this story of Good News (11:26–31). In the end, God will have mercy upon the disobedient because this is what he promised Israel's ancestors and Jesus has come to confirm and to fulfill these promises (15:8).

Therefore, in this model God relates to all people based on God's covenant promises of mercy, benevolently and not retributively (9:4–5; 11:28–29), and includes the ungodly gentiles within Israel's promises (9:24, 30; 11:17, 24; 4:16–17; 8:29–30), again, not as they deserve but simply because God is an inclusive, loving God. Moreover, the gifts and calling of God to Israel are irrevocable because God is always faithful to the promises and to the fathers and mothers of Israel (11:29; 15:8; 4:21). Hence merit has no place in this story (4:4–8; 9:12, 16, 30–32; 11:6).

The first model apparent in Rom 1–2 is what many scholars besides myself have demonstrated to be deeply at odds with Pauline thought elsewhere. But the fact that it comprises its own more or less coherent perspective on God, humanity, and judgment further warrants moving the thesis of providing a "solution from the character" forward. If what was detached as διαφωνία in Rom 1–2 was a mishmash of disjointed views, then

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of sinful flesh himself (8:3), yet remained completely obedient (5:18–19). So because of Jesus's obedience in a body of sinful flesh, Sin is now powerless where it once had dominion; namely, in the flesh (6:7–10, 16, 19; 7:14, 18, 25). Jesus identifies with and participates in humanity in order that humanity can identify with and participate in Jesus's death and resurrected life (6:3–6, 11). Human beings are thus free and enabled by the Spirit of Jesus living in them to obey just as Jesus obeyed (6:12–23; 8:9–13, 23). That is, anyone who is co-crucified with Jesus has crucified their body of Death (6:3–11) and is thereby enabled to walk in the newness of life (6:4) through the Spirit of Jesus which now dwells in them (8:9–13). Put another way, God restores the person's agency and capacity and thereby enabled to become "slaves to God" (6:22) resulting in "obedience" (6:16) and "righteousness" (6:19) rather than slaves to Sin.

the likelihood that these represent the viewpoint of an interlocutor opposing Paul—here a certain teacher (2:20–21)—would be less tenable. But since two coherent yet incompatible models emerge from the text, then what seems most likely is that, as O'Neill says, "[w]e have before us the work of two different minds working with a different understanding of the issues at stake."[174] The following chapters will undertake an investigative process that will take this insight one significant step further.

They will document how this material maps with strange accuracy onto the distinctive thought of Philo. Consequently, this process will enable us to put some historical flesh on a merely dialogical skeleton, although, some additional as yet unexplored aspects of διαφωνία in Rom 1–2 will thereby also come to light. And all this accumulating data will help us come to firmer conclusions regarding scripting decisions and a clear comprehension of the rhetorical flow of 2:1–3:20.

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[174] O'Neill, *Romans*, 54; his emphasis. Though to be clear, O'Neill thinks the other "mind" is an interpolator, not an interlocutor Paul himself constructed in the text to debate.

6. Philo and Romans 1:18–32

Having documented the διαφωνία caused in Paul, and especially in Romans, by the position articulated in Rom 1:18–2:29, we turn now to strengthen the case for a "solution from character" by documenting how the διαφωνία fits with Philo of Alexandria's distinctive teachings. Hence although Paul could have constructed a generic figure or even a straw man to argue with in his opening dialogue in Romans, it turns out that one side of the διαφωνία detected matches quite exactly the distinctive teaching and language of another influential first century Jewish teacher. This realization adds considerable plausibility to the script of Rom 1–3 I am ultimately arguing for.

Following the analytic sequence just used in chapter 4 and 5, this chapter will document how key words and concepts that appear in Rom 1:18–32 are either rare or *hapax legomena* in the rest of the Pauline corpus but are commonplace in Philo because they are used to express his core theological convictions. The following chapter will then document the common elements between Philo and Rom 2.

In this chapter, however, we will need to discuss briefly, first, why Philo provides a better comparison with Romans 1 than the Wisdom of Solomon (although Wisdom of Solomon will not be entirely ignored) and to address the methodological pitfall of "parallelomania." Next, second, we should note Philo's influence and intended audience. After these preliminary discussions we can proceed, third, to a consideration of the similarities between Philo and Rom 1:18–32, uncovering data that also provides further evidence of just how dissimilar this material is from Paul as he writes elsewhere.

6.1 A Philonic influence

6.1.1 Why Philo rather than Wisdom of Solomon?

Romans scholars usually—and understandably—highlight the resonances between the early argument of the letter and the Wisdom of Solomon (esp. Wis 12–15).[1] Jonathan A. Linebaugh, however, rightly notes the differences between Rom 1:18–2:11 and Wis 13–15.[2] In fact, it is precisely due to these differences that Linebaugh takes issue with Campbell's thesis "that the affinities between Rom 1.18–32 and Wisdom of Solomon 13–14 are so close that Rom 1.18–32 is properly read as an un-Pauline summary of Wisdom of Solomon's polemic."[3] Linebaugh argues that Campbell's "thesis [regarding speech-in-character in 1:18–32] is seriously called into question by the numerous and significant differences between Rom 1.18–32 and Wis 13–14."[4] But Linebaugh does not appear to realize that these differences are exactly what we find in Philo and this is very significant. Philo and Rom 1:18–2:29 sometimes agree with each other over against Wisdom of Solomon.

Other instances will come to the surface as we work through the material, but a couple of key examples here will suffice to show why a direct comparison with Philo rather than with Wisdom is warranted.

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[1] Campbell helpfully catalogues these along with the secondary literature in *Deliverance*, 360–62.

[2] Jonathan A. Linebaugh, "Announcing the Human: Rethinking the Relationship between Wisdom of Solomon 13-15 and Romans 1.18-2.11," *NTS* 57 (2011): 214–37.

[3] Linebaugh, "Announcing," 215.

[4] Linebaugh, "Announcing," 225n36.

Wisdom 13 says that the gentiles did not know God (ἀγνωσία in 13:1). They ought to have been able to reason to his existence and nature from what was created (13:1–9) and are therefore not "pardonable" (συγγνωστός) (13:8). But this is a much softer statement than what we find in Rom 1:18–32. Romans 1:18–32 says explicitly and forcefully that gentiles do, in fact, know God and his requirements (esp. vv. 20–21, 25, 32), but actively choose to suppress this knowledge and this is why they are ἀναπολόγητος (v. 20). As Linebaugh notes, "in contrast to Wisdom of Solomon's charge that people are 'without excuse' because they failed to exercise their epistemic potential and therefore know God, Paul insists that humanity is 'without excuse' because the self-revealing God is known."[5] I would replace "Paul" in this claim with "the speech in 1:18–32" and qualify the overall argument of Linebaugh concerning 1:18–32 by observing that here God reveals God's nature and God's requirements through our created natures, whereas Paul thinks God reveals God's nature and requirements through revelation—specifically through Scripture and supremely through Jesus (3:20–26; 7:7). Nevertheless, it is clear that Rom 1:18–32 "go[es] beyond the teaching in Wisdom," as Joseph A. Fitzmyer also observes.[6] Significantly, however (and as we will see in more detail shortly), Philo teaches exactly the same thing as Rom 1:18–32 on this matter (e.g., *Spec.* 1.32–35; . 2.165; *Decal.* 62, 68; *Virt.* 211–214).

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[5] Linebaugh, "Announcing," 228

[6] Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Romans: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1993), 273; Similarly, Morna D. Hooker, "Adam in Romans 1," *NTS* 6.4 (1960): 299.

Another principal instance of a disagreement between Philo and Rom 2 on the one hand and Wisdom of Solomon on the other is that Jews have a soteriological advantage when facing God's judgment according to Wisdom of Solomon and can "expect mercy" (12:22; cf. 15:1–3). This possibility is rather bluntly dismissed in Rom 2 as has just been shown in more detail in chapter 5. Both Jews and gentiles can only expect an inflexible soteriological system based on merit in Rom 2. And Philo teaches the same things (e.g., *Spec.* 1.54; cf. 55–59; 4.182; *Virt*. 197). But the fact that Israel can "expect mercy" is affirmed by Paul in Rom 11:26–32 and Gal 6:16, as argued by Susan Eastman.[7] So Paul elsewhere in Romans actually agrees with the Wisdom of Solomon, although the earlier claims in Rom 1–2 disagree with Wisdom but align with Philo.

Hence it seems that Philo's corpus will serve as a better comparative reservoir for our ongoing analysis of this portion of Romans since (a) both of these claims found in Romans 1–2 that differ with Wisdom are expressed explicitly in Philo's works (to be further detailed here and in the next chapter), and (b) Philo's life and writing career are contemporary with Romans.[8] It seems better to think of Wisdom of Solomon as the tradition out of which Philo's own thoughts emerged as he took several conclusions from that work further.

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[7] Susan Grove Eastman, "Israel and the Mercy of God: A Re-Reading of Galatians 6.16 and Romans 9-11," *NTS* 56 (2010): 367–95.

[8] I will saw more below about Philo's influence as well as the influence of the philosophical interpretive tradition of which he was a part. In any case, Philo was born around 20 BCE and died around 49 CE. See, Maren R. Niehoff, *Philo of Alexandria: An Intellectual Biography*, AYBRL (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018), 245–46; Paul wrote Romans no earlier than 52 CE, though some date it even later. See, Douglas A. Campbell, *Framing Paul: An Epistolary Biography* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), 412–14, 182–89.

6.1.2 Addressing Parallelomania

This comparative analysis, however, raises the concern that Samuel Sandmel called "parallelomania."[9] Sandmel defines this "as that extravagance among scholars which first overdoes the supposed similarity in passages and then proceeds to describe source and derivation as if implying literary connection flowing in an inevitable or predetermined direction."[10] This is not, Sandmel emphasizes, "to discourage the study of these parallels, but … to encourage them" so long as they proceed with due "caution."[11] "Detailed study is the criterion [for this caution], and the detailed study ought to respect the context and not be limited to juxtaposing mere excerpts."[12] Once this is done then "there can emerge persuasive bases for judgment" that "rests on inherent probabilities which emerge from close study."[13]

The following analysis proceeds in a manner that adheres to the warning of caution Sandmel sounds and the detailed study he recommends. So I am not "implying [a] literary connection" between Paul and Philo.[14] And the conclusions that will be reached do not require that Paul is even engaging specific teachings mediated orally from either Philo himself or a student of his—and hence my caveat concerning the word "Philonic" in chapter 1. By Philonic I mean only that the distinct material matches well with the distinct material that makes Philo "Philo."

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[9] Samuel Sandmel, "Parallelomania," *JBL* 81 (1962): 1–13.
[10] Sandmel, "Parallelomania," 1.
[11] Sandmel, "Parallelomania," 1.
[12] Sandmel, "Parallelomania," 2.
[13] Sandmel, "Parallelomania," 2.
[14] Sandmel, "Parallelomania," 1.

This brings up a related point from Sandmel, which in turn highlights how the present study avoids parallelomania. One of the pitfalls of rushing into "juxtaposing mere excerpts"[15] is what E. P. Sanders has called "common Judaism."[16] In Sandmel's words, "since all this literature is Jewish, it should reasonably reflect Judaism. Paul and the rabbis should overlap, and Paul and Philo and the Qumran writings and the rabbis should overlap."[17] What frequently matters most, however, is "a restricted area which makes each of these groups distinctive within the totality of Judaisms; it is the distinctive which is significant for identifying the particular, and not the broad areas in common with other Judaisms."[18] This is where the previous analysis of Rom 1–2 and the forthcoming analysis of Rom 1–2 in relation to Philo meet, and why this correspondence between them is meaningful rather than happenstance. For what we have labeled διαφωνία with respect to Paul matches the "distinctiveness"[19] that makes Philo "Philo" usually over against his Jewish contemporaries.

Having said this, Philo is not utterly unique. He himself recognizes a certain lack of distinctiveness in some of his teaching. Rather, he says that many of his teachings along with a philosophical and allegorical mode of exegesis both predated him and extended beyond him with other teachers writing other exegetical books (cf. *Contempl.* 28–29; *Migr.* 89–90; *Spec.* 1.8). So, for instance, when talking about the Therapeutae—a

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[15] Sandmel, "Parallelomania," 2.

[16] E. P. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief: 63 BCE-66 CE* (London: SCM, 1992), esp. 45–314.

[17] Sandmel, "Parallelomania," 3.

[18] Sandmel, "Parallelomania," 3.

[19] Sandmel, "Parallelomania," 4; cf. 3.

group of ascetic mystics devoted to the philosophical and allegorical interpretation of Scripture located in Alexandria at Lake Mareotis/Mariout, *Contempl*. 22–23[20]—Philo says:

> They read the Holy Scriptures and seek wisdom from their ancestral philosophy by taking it as an allegory, since they think that the words of the literal text are symbols of something whose hidden nature is revealed by studying the underlying meaning.
>
> They have also writings of men of old, the founders of their way of thinking, who left many memorials of the form used in allegorical interpretation and these they take as a kind of archetype and imitate the method in which this principle is carried out. (*Contempl*. 29)

These "writings of men of old" cannot be referring to the Scriptures, which were distinguished just above, but rather something like the writings Philo himself produced—exercises in philosophical and allegorical exegesis.[21] Hence it may turn out upon further discovery that many of Philo's teachings and the vocabulary that we consider unique to him were shared by these other Alexandrian teachers and authors (who perhaps were not just limited to Alexandria for all we know). But we only have Philo's writings attesting to these traditions at present so I will continue to use the rubric "Philonic" to describe it, bearing this caveat in mind.

Perhaps ironically, there is a possible instance of "parallelomonia" with respect to Paul in Rom 1 that emerges from my close study, which further reinforces the need for reading Romans and Philo together. The condemnation of same-sex intercourse in Rom

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[20] For more on the Therapeutae see, Joan E. Taylor, *Jewish Women Philosophers of First-Century Alexandria: Philo's "Therapeutae" Reconsidered* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), esp. 3–170.

[21] Taylor observes, "the philosophical school of Jewish exegesis in first-century Alexandria…. had been strong for over 150 years" (*Jewish Women*, 342).

1:24–27 is routinely juxtaposed with 1 Cor 6:9 and 1 Tim 1:10.[22] As I detail below, however, a closer study will indicate that the similarities against same-sex intercourse are only on the surface because underpinning each teaching is a different framework of reasoning and moral discourse. That is, to use Sandmel's phrasing, the similarity between them is a view that is "common with other Judaisms" (i.e., that same-sex acts are sins), but "when seen in context" these parallels "reflect difference rather than similarity."[23] At the same time, there is reason to think the parallels between Rom 1:24–27 and Philo on this issue are tighter because they share in common what makes Rom 1:24–27 distinct from 1 Cor 6:9 (and 1 Tim 1:10); namely, they both arise from a similar underlying philosophical ontology and ethic concerning "natural sex."

It is these types of findings that emerge from the close study Sandmel recommends that not only warrant the forthcoming analysis of Rom 1–2 and Philo, but also demonstrate that I am avoiding parallelomania, which would be "juxtaposing mere excerpts" and thereby not allowing key "difference" to arise and/or "implying literary connection."[24] But before we get into the Philonic details of Rom 1:18–32, it will nevertheless be helpful to briefly note Philo's intended audience and influence. This is not to support any suggestion of a direct dependence by Paul's interlocutor on Philo, but simply to facilitate our appropriate interpretation of Philo's teachings in his own terms.

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[22] Cf. Richard B. Hays, *First Corinthians*, IBC (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2011), 97.
[23] Sandmel, "Parallelomania," 3, 2 respectively.
[24] Sandmel, "Parallelomania," 2, 1 respectively.

6.2 Philo's Influence and Intended Audience

Even though Philo has a robust theology of natural law, and a rather optimistic attitude that living in accordance with it is attainable even by those who do not know about the Law of Moses, he nevertheless admits that only small number of people actually end up acquiring perfect virtue by their own accord (see also *Praem.* 26: "This kind is few in number"). This is apparently why he takes it to be his mission to instruct the nations in the Law of Moses (*Mos.* 2.43–44). Hence, it is now widely accepted by Philonic scholars that Philo is primarily intending to address a gentile audience in his treatises that comprise his *Exposition of the Laws* (i.e., the ostensibly non-allegorical works even though he makes use of allegory throughout the *Exposition*):[25] *De opificio mundi* (*On the Creation of the World*), *De Abrahamo* (*On the Life of Abraham*),[26] *De Iosepho* (*On the Life of Joseph*), *De decalogo* (*On the Decalogue*), *De specialibus legibus* (*On the Special Laws*), *De virtutibus* (*On the Virtues*), and *De praemiis et poenis* (*On Rewards and Punishments*). Erwin Goodenough has argued that *De vita Mosis* (*On the Life of Moses*) also belongs to the *Exposition* as a sort of extended introduction;[27] and

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[25] Erwin R. Goodenough, "Philo's Exposition of the Law and His De Vita Mosis," *HTR* 26.2 (1933): 109–25 esp. p. 124; Maren R. Niehoff, *Jewish Exegesis and Homeric Scholarship in Alexandria* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 174–75, 184; Maren R. Niehoff, *Philo of Alexandria: An Intellectual Biography*, AYBRL (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018), 70, 125, 128, 130, 149–51, 163–65, 169–70; Gregory E. Sterling, "'The School of Sacred Laws': The Social Setting of Philo's Treatises," *VC* 53 (1999): 148–64; idem, "'Philo Has Not Been Used Half Enough': The Significance of Philo of Alexandria for the Study of the New Testament," *PRSt* 30 (2003): 251–69; idem, "Philo of Alexandria's *Life of Moses*: An Introduction to the Exposition of the Law," *SPhiloA* 30 (2018): 43–45; Trent A. Rogers, "Philo's Universalization of Sinai in *De decalogo* 32-49," *SPhiloA* 24 (2012): 86–87.

[26] We know Philo also wrote works on Isaac and Jacob, but they are missing as well as a work on the four passions (Sterling, "Philo Has Not Been Used," 259).

[27] Goodenough, "Philo's Exposition."

Gregory Sterling has argued for the same conclusion from a different angle.[28] Whether it belonged to the *Exposition* or not, however, Philonic scholars accept that it was written with an implied gentile audience and so it will also receive considered attention here.[29]

Sterling has shown, in addition, how Philo's writings, and the allegorical commentaries in particular, make the most sense "in a school setting" because the closest analogies we have to the type of writing Philo produces "are the commentaries in the philosophical schools that were intended to assist students' understand[ing] of the treatises of the central figures in the tradition."[30] Sterling postulates that Philo's corpus was inherited by someone "who continued his [Philo's] private school" and subsequently that these "materials came into Christian hands" because "they came from a library attached to Philo's school."[31]

Sterling argues that Philo "was not an isolated intellectual, but an active member of the Jewish community" who more than likely, on the basis of relevant comparanda, "operated a private but well known school in Alexandria where leaders of the Jewish community learned Torah and philosophy. Some of his works were written for them, but other parts of his corpus were intended for a much wider audience."[32] Thus, even if Philo primarily taught fellow philosophically-minded Jews, he wrote treatises, especially the texts in the *Exposition*, as if they were going to be textbooks for non-Jews, who needed

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[28] Sterling, "Philo of Alexandria's."
[29] See note 25.
[30] Sterling, "'The School of Sacred Laws,'" 255.
[31] Sterling, "'The School of Sacred Laws,'" 256.
[32] Sterling, "'The School of Sacred Laws,'" 260.

things explained like the basic features of synagogues, Sabbaths, calendar, and food laws explained. Moreover, he was creating textbooks for his Jewish students who would go on to train and to instruct non-Jews. As H. Gregory Snyder observes:

> Philo recommends that a teacher should go out to the student and pour instruction into his ears (*Spec. Leg.* 4.140). He can hardly be recommending that teachers comb the highways and hedges, looking for shy students to indoctrinate. I suggest that Philo saw his writings as fulfilling this role, and that his written treatises would serve as teachers, filling the ears of readers with a 'continuous flood of instruction.' For Philo, a written text can serve this function; indeed, Philo himself testifies to this out of his own experience [with reading the text of Jeremiah in *Cher.* 49]…. For Philo, a text can be a teacher.[33]

And it seems that Philo's goals were met. Evidence exists that, like Josephus, Philo was read and preserved by non-Jews, and later by both proto-orthodox and Gnostic Christians, as well as by pagans.[34]

6.3 Philo and Rom 1:18–32

Here I will discuss Philo in relation to Rom 1:18–32 in terms of the following five topics: (1) the natural knowledge of God, (2) idolatry, passion, and vices in general, (3) sexual immorality in particular, and, finally, (4) the use of καθήκοντα in Rom 1:28.

6.3.1 Natural Knowledge of God

In a direct line with Rom 1:18–32, "Philo frequently argues that God may be known in some degree from the contemplation of the world he has made, from its beauty and its order," as Chadwick observes (e.g., *Leg.* 3.97–99; *Somn.* 1.203–204; *Spec.* 1.32–

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[33] H. Gregory Snyder, *Teachers and Texts in the Ancient World: Philosophers, Jews and Christians* (London: Routledge, 2000), 132–33.

[34] Cf. Pseudo-Longinus cites Philo's *Ebr.* 198 in *De sublimitate* 44.1–5; Heliodorus cites Philo's *Mos.* 2.195 in *Aethiopica* 9.9; from Sterling, "'The School of Sacred Laws,'" 255–56, 261, 263.

35; *Praem.* 40–43; *Mos.* 1.212; 2.171; *Virt.* 65, 212–216; *QG* 2.34).[35] Philo's argument in *Spec.* 1.32–35 is representative:

> We see then that any piece of work always involves the knowledge of a workman. Who can look upon statutes or painting without thinking at once of a sculptor or painter? Who can see clothes or ships or houses without getting the idea of a weaver and a shipwright and a house-builder? And when one enters a well-ordered city in which the arrangements for civil life are very admirably managed, what else will he suppose but that this city is directed by good rulers? So then he who comes to the truly Great City, this world, and beholds hills and plains teeming with animals and plants, the rivers, spring-fed or winter torrents, streaming along, the seas with their expanses, the air with its happily tempered phases, the yearly seasons passing into each other, and then the sun and moon ruling the day and night, and the other heavenly bodies fixed or planetary and the whole firmament revolving in rhythmic order, must he not naturally or rather necessarily gain the conception of the Maker and Father and Ruler also? For none of the works of human art is self-made, and the highest art and knowledge is shewn in this universe, so that surely it has been wrought by one of excellent knowledge and absolute perfection. In this way we have gained the conception of the existence of God.

Indeed, Philo says it is because Abraham contemplated creation in this very manner that he not only came to a knowledge of the One God (*Virt.* 212–218), but by virtue of this, is also "the standard of nobility for all proselytes" (219). Philo frames this first in terms of Abraham's Chaldean birth and how Chaldean astrology represents a "grievous…total absence of nobility in the soul" (212):

> The most ancient member of the Jewish nation was a Chaldaean [sic] by birth, the son of an astrologer, one of those who study the lore of that science, and think that the stars and the whole heaven and universe are gods, the authors, they say, of the events which befall each man for good or for ill, and hold that there is no originating cause outside the things we perceive by our senses. What could be more grievous or more capable of proving the total absence of nobility in the soul than this, that its knowledge of the many, the secondary, the created, only leads it to ignore the One, the Primal, the Uncreated and Maker of all, whose supreme

[35] Chadwick, "St. Paul and Philo," 292.

> excellence is established by these and countless other attributes of such magnitude that no human reason can contain them? (*Virt*. 211–213)

Philo's point in this section of the *De virtutibus* (187–227) is that someone's genealogy does not matter. It follows that if people descend from a line of wicked people, they can still attain virtue and merit "nobility" (εὐγένεια). Likewise, there can be "evil children of good parents, who gained no profit from the virtues of their fathers, but suffered countless injuries from the vices of their minds" (*Virt*. 211). And so, "those who have no true excellence of character should not pride themselves on the greatness of their race [γένος]" (206). What Abraham provides for Philo is an example and proof of the former category noted here—that people can come from the most impious genealogy and culture and nevertheless rationalize their way to the knowledge of God and virtue. Thus, Philo says that rather than stay in Chaldea, Abraham left to seek the One God:

> Perception of these truths and divine inspiration induced him to leave his native country, his race and paternal home, knowing that if he stayed the delusions of the polytheistic creed would stay within him and render it impossible for him to discover the One, who alone is eternal [ἀίδιος] and the Father of all things, conceptual and sensible, whereas if he removed, the delusion would also remove from his mind and its false creed be replaced by the truth. (214)

It is because of this that Philo concludes about Abraham:

> He is the standard of nobility for all proselytes, who, abandoning the ignobility of strange laws and monstrous customs which assigned divine honours to stocks and stones and soulless things in general, have come to settle in a better land, in a commonwealth full of true life and vitality, with truth as its director and president. (*Virt*. 219)

Interestingly, it is in this context that Philo alludes to Gen 15:6 and says, "therefore, he is the first person spoken of as believing in God [πιστεῦσαι…τῷ θεῷ], since he first grasped a firm and unswerving conception of the truth that there is one Cause above all, and that

it provides for the world and all that there is therein" (216). This "faith" (πίστις), moreover, is "the most sure and certain of the virtues" and it is something Abraham "acquired" or "procured for [him]self" (κτάομαι),[36] although with πίστις Abraham "gained with it [συνεκτᾶτο] all the other virtues" (216). This contrasts with Paul, who says πίστις is a divine gift, not something acquired by a person's own efforts (Rom 12:3, 6; cf. Gal 5:22), let alone by their ostensible rationality (cf. 1 Cor 1:18–21; Gal 4:8; Rom 8:7).[37]

Just as striking is the consonance of the language used in Rom 1:19–20 and Philo that rarely, if ever, is used by Paul outside of this passage. Rom 1:20 says that God's "invisible qualities" (τὰ ἀόρατα) and "eternal power" (ἀΐδιος αὐτοῦ δύναμις) can be known from what has been made. The adjective ἀΐδιος is never again used in the Pauline corpus (cf. Philo, *Virt*. 214 quoted above). And, ἀόρατος is not used in the undisputed Pauline corpus (and in the disputed Paulines, only Col 1:15 and 1 Tim 1:17 use ἀόρατος

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[36] LSJ, s.v. "κτάομαι," I.1.

[37] This also raises other interesting comparisons between Paul's quote of Gen 15:6 in Rom 4:3, but this is beyond the scope of this project. But see: Orrey McFarland, "Whose Abraham, Which Promise? Genesis 15.6 in Philo's *De Virtutibus* and Romans 4," *JSNT* 35 (2012): 107–29; idem, "Philo of Alexandria and Romans 9:1-29: Grace, Mercy, and Reason," in *Reading Romans in Context: Paul and Second Temple Judaism*, ed. Ben C. Blackwell, John K. Goodrich, and Jason Maston (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2015), 115–21; Jonathan Worthington, "Philo of Alexandria and Romans 5:12-21: Adam, Death, and Grace," in *Reading Romans in Context: Paul and Second Temple Judaism*, ed. Ben C. Blackwell, John K. Goodrich, and Jason Maston (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2015), 80–86. McFarland and Worthington's discussions largely serve to corroborate my main thesis that Paul is engaging (and opposing) distinctive Philonic teachings throughout Romans. They both demonstrate how Paul and Philo use words like "faith" and "grace" distinctly such that they cannot be harmonized, but also that Paul's discourse on these topic gain a certain clarity when read against Philo's teachings. Another worthwhile note is that Paul only quotes from Gen 15:6 again in Galatians (3:6) and Paul is arguably opposing a similar type of Philonic teaching and (circumcision) practice there as well (see the Appendix, chapter 7, and Ernest P. Clark, "Enslaved Under the Elements of the Cosmos" [PhD diss., University of St Andrews, 2017]). Paul's recourse to Abraham only in Romans and Galatians reinforces the idea that the Philonic context best explains all these peculiar details.

with reference to God). Yet ἀόρατος appears 113 times and ἀΐδιος 62 times in Philo, often with reference to God.[38] For instance, Philo chides the Chaldeans who ought to have been able to attain the knowledge of God given their obsession with astronomy, and says that instead they chose to glorify the visible (τὴν ὁρατὴν) instead of attending to the invisible essence that is perceptible to the mind (τῆς ἀοράτου καὶ νοητῆς οὐ λαβόντες ἔννοιαν) (*Abr.* 69), something Abraham was able to accomplish (70–71). Elsewhere Philo states that God's "nature is invisible" (τὴν φύσιν ἀόρατον) (*Spec.* 2.165; cf. *Spec.* 1.20; *Abr.* 75; *Opif.* 31) and that he is "the Eternal One" (τοῦ ἀιδίου) (*Spec.* 1.20; cf. *Spec.* 2.166; *Opif.* 171; *Mut.* 140; cf. ὅς ἐστιν ἀίδιος μόνος in *Virt.* 214); indeed, God's "eternality" (ἀιδιότητα) is God's "essential attribute" (*Virt.* 65; cf. 214).

There are many other instances where Philo directly asserts or assumes that every person already innately possesses the necessary knowledge of God (e.g., *Spec.* 2.165; *Decal.* 62, 68), but these are best discussed in the context of idolatry below.

6.3.2 Idolatry, the Passions, and Vices

In Rom 1, idolatry is characterized as the deliberate "exchanging" (ἀλλάσσω) of "the glory of the incorruptible [ἀφθάρτου] God with the likeness of the image of corruptible [φθαρτοῦ] humanity and birds [πετεινῶν] and quadrupeds and reptiles [ἑρπετῶν]" (1:23).[39] It is also described as "exchanging" (μεταλλάσσω) "the truth [τὴν

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[38] Peder Borgen, Kåre Fuglseth, and Roald Skarsten, *The Philo Index: A Complete Greek Word Index to the Writings of Philo of Alexandria* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 37, 9.

[39] Out of three instances in Paul (once in the Pastorals–1 Tim 1:17), ἄφθαρτος is only used here to characterize God. Compare that to Philo where it is used 120 times, many again are used to refer to God (Borgen, Fuglseth, and Skarsten, *Philo Index*, 60).

ἀλήθειαν] of God with the lie [ἐν τῷ ψεύδει] and worship[ing] [ἐσεβάσθησαν] and serv[ing] the creature rather than the creator" (1:25), a rejection of the knowledge of God's "invisible attributes" (ἀόρατα) and "eternal power" (ἀΐδιος αὐτοῦ δύναμις) that are "understood" (καθορᾶται) from creation (1:20) so that by "not glorify[ing] [God] as God nor giv[ing] thanks, [they] were made futile in their reasonings [τοῖς διαλογισμοῖς] and their senseless [ἀσύνετος] heart was darkened [ἐσκοτίσθη]" (1:21). As a result, idolatry, the suppression of "the truth" (τὴν ἀλήθειαν), is the expression of their "ungodliness and injustice" (ἀσέβειαν καὶ ἀδικίαν, 1:18).

Again, we were unable to find this exact progression, with its tight logic, in any other passage in Paul's writings, but Philo expresses it numerous times. For instance, *Legum allegoriae* states:[40]

> For why, O mind, do you store and treasure up within yourself depraved opinions, that God is a being of such and such qualities, (he who has no distinctive qualities) like a carved work; or that he who is imperishable [ἄφθαρτος] is perishable [φθαρτὸς] like images that are cast in the foundry; and why do you not rather bring them forward openly that you may learn what is right from men who practise the truth [τῶν ἀσκητῶν τῆς ἀληθείας]? For you think that you are endowed with some great skill because you have devised absurd opinions imposing upon you by an appearance of probability, in opposition to the truth [ἀληθείας]: but in reality you are proved to be destitute of skill, in as much as you are unwilling [οὐκ ἐθέλουσα] to be healed of that terrible disease of the soul, ignorance. (*Leg.* 3.36 [Yonge]; cf. *Mos.* 2.171 for similar vocabulary)[41]

When narrating Israel's turn to idolatry with the golden calf Philo says:

> When he [Moses] arrived at the middle of the camp, and marvelled at the sudden apostasy of the multitude and their delusion [ψεῦδος], so strongly contrasting with

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[40] I will flag the Greek to bring attention to the similarities with Romans.

[41] Yonge offers a more eloquent English translation than LCL here. Philo, *The Works of Philo*, trans. C. D. Yonge, new updated ed. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1993).

> the truth [ἀληθείας] which they had [exchanged] [ὑπηλλάξαντο[42]] for it, he observed that the contagion had not extended to all and there were still some sound at heart and cherishing a feeling of hatred of evil. (*Mos.* 2.167).[43]

Speaking of Egypt's idolatry he observes:

> Egyptians are rightly charged not only on the count to which every country is liable, but also on another peculiar to themselves. *For in addition to wooden and other images*, they have advanced to divine honours irrational animals, bulls and rams and goats…. *But actually the Egyptians have gone to a further excess* and chosen the fiercest and most savage of wild animals, lions and crocodiles and among reptiles [ἑρπετῶν] the venomous asp, all of which they dignify with temples, sacred precincts, sacrifices, assemblies, processions and the like…. Many other animals too they have deified, dogs, cats, wolves and among the birds [πτηνὰ], ibises and hawks; fishes too, either their whole bodies or particular parts. (*Decal.* 76, 78, 79; my emphasis; cf. *Contempl.* 8–9)

Of special significance here, unlike the Wisdom of Solomon that also attacks Egyptian idolatry but only in the general terms of "accepting as gods…animals" (ζῷον) (12:24 NRSV; cf. 13:10), Philo details the idols of Egyptians in the exact categories found in Rom 1:23: "birds and quadrupeds and reptiles" (πετεινῶν καὶ τετραπόδων καὶ ἑρπετῶν). This is in addition to the common idolatry "to which every country is liable" (*Decal.* 76), which carves idols in the likeness of human beings (66–75; cf. ἐν ὁμοιώματι εἰκόνος φθαρτοῦ ἀνθρώπου in Rom 1:23), or "all who give worship and service to sun and moon and the whole heaven and universe or their chief parts as gods" (*Decal.* 66).

The mention of Egyptian idolatry, with images of non-human creatures, seems to be characteristic of Jewish sources based in Egypt (or perhaps in Alexandria more

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[42] LSJ, s.v. "ὑπαλλάσσω."

[43] This parallels Rom 1:25 (cf. 1:23), which is also noticed by Robert Jewett: "The same antithesis, along with a form of the word "exchange," is found in Philo *Mos* 2.167, which describes Moses's consternation at seeing the golden calf that represented 'indeed how great a lie they had traded for so great a truth'(καί ὅσαν ψεῦδας ἀνδ' ὅσης ἀληθείας)" (*Romans: A Commentary*, Hermeneia [Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2007], 170n56).

specifically) (Philo; Wis 12:24; 13:10; Let. Aris. 138; Sib. Or. 3:30–31; 5:278–280; Sib. Or. Frag. 3:22, 27–30). But, while these Jewish polemics against Egyptian idolatry might include reference to animals, the unique and rare common denominator between Rom 1:23, Philo, and the Apocalypse of Peter is the mention of reptilian idolatry. Indeed, the specific mention of reptilian idolatry is so rare and instructive that its mention in the Apocalypse of Peter is used as a key datum to locate its provenance to Egypt.[44] The text reads: "...every idol the work of human hands and which resembles the image of a cat and lion, the form of reptiles, and the form of animals" (Apoc. Pet. 10.5).[45] And so Tigchelar argues that "the sin of making idols 'which resemble cats, lions and reptiles' (ApPt 10.5) strongly points to an origin of the text in Egypt."[46] This highlights the fact that the specifically Egyptian type of idolatry mentioned in Rom 1:23 that refers to the worship of reptiles (ἑρπετόν, same word in Philo, *Decal.* 76), seems likewise to "strongly" suggest that the speech of Rom 1:18–32 is Philonic.[47]

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[44] Eibert Tigchelaar, "Is the Liar Bar Kokhba? Considering the Date and Provenance of the Greek (Ethiopic) *Apocalypse of Peter*," in *Apocalypse of Peter*, ed. Jan N. Bremmer and Istvàn Czachesz (Leuven: Peters, 2003), 63, 71, 75; C. Detlef G. Müller, "Apocalypse of Peter," in *New Testament Apocrypha: Volume Two: Writings Relating to the Apostles; Apocalypses and Related Subjects*, ed. Wilhelm Schneemelcher, rev. ed. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003), 622. Even though Richard Bauckham argues for a Palestinian provenance of the Apocalypse of Peter written during the Bar Kochba revolt (132–135 AD), he recognizes the importance of the Egyptian-style animal idolatry datum, which "could support a suggestion that it originated among Jewish Christians in Egypt during the revolt of 115–117" (*The Fate of the Dead: Studies on the Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, NovTSup 93 [Leiden: Brill, 1998], 186, cf. 187). Bauckham is thus willing to concede at the least that "it is possible that the reference to idols in the form of animals is a later gloss introduced into the text of the Apocalypse of Peter in Egypt" (ibid., 186).

[45] Translation from Dennis D. Buchholz, *Your Eyes Will Be Opened: A Study of the Greek (Ethiopic) Apocalypse of Peter*, SBLDS 97 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 215.

[46] Tigchelaar, "Is the Liar," 71; cf. 63, 75.

[47] Interestingly, Rom 1:23 is one of the reasons Bauckham questions whether the mention of animal idolatry in the Apoc. Pet. 10.5 necessarily requires an Egyptian provenance since Paul is obviously not a Jew from Egypt (*The Fate*, 187). But, if Paul is scripting a speech-in-character that is appropriate for a Jewish teacher from Egypt in Rom 1:18–32 as I am providing the cumulative evidence for, then Bauckham's observation about Rom 1:23 is immaterial for the provenance of the Apocalypse of Peter.

Turning back to Philo's discourse on idolatry more generally, it is important to note his argument that although "all Greek and barbarians unanimously acknowledge the supreme Father of gods and men and the Maker of the whole universe, whose nature is invisible" (*Spec.* 2.165), by choosing idolatry "they went wrong in what was the most vital matter of all" (i.e., monotheism) (2.166). In *De decalogo* Philo says that idolatry is the result of "a forgetfulness deliberately practised [ἑκούσιον λήθην]" and that this leads "to their lasting misery" (*Decal.* 62). He goes on to reiterate the notion that idolatry is always committed by "deliberate purpose" (ἑκουσίῳ γνώμῃ, 68).[48] Again, in *De virtutibus* Philo says that those who "embrace truth [ἀληθείας]" (*Virtues* 178; cf. Rom 1:25; 2:8; 3:7) are repenting (see μετάνοια and μετανοέω in *Virt.* 180; cf. μετάνοια and ἀμετανόητος in Rom 2:4, 5) of their former forgetting (ἐκλανθάνω in *Virt.* 179) whereby they "did not at first acknowledge their duty to reverence [σέβειν] the Founder and Father of all" (cf. Rom 1:28) at the time when "they…assigned to those who were no gods and glorified them beyond measure in their senseless folly" (*Virt.* 179). And this repentance from idolatry to the truth is a move "from injustice to justice" (ἐξ ἀδικίας εἰς δικαιοσύνην) (180).

Instead, it actually serves to confirm the association of specifically singling out Egyptian-style reptilian idolatry with Jewish teachers in Egypt like Philo (*Decal.* 76). If this is a trope that is so well known, then it functions as one way for Paul to signal that this is a speech appropriate for a Jewish teacher from Egypt. Bauckham also notes two references to animal idols in texts commonly believed to be by Palestinian Jews [T. Mos. 2:9 and LAB 44:5], but the mere reference to "animals" in T. Mos. 2:9 might simply refer to the Israelite calf idols; LAB 44:5 refers to boys, calves, a lion, eagle, dragon and dove and this may be of more relevance [*The Fate*, 187]. What unites Rom 1:23, Philo, and the Apocalypse of Peter is rare and unique mention of reptilian idolatry.

[48] Philo's idea that all sins (esp. idolatry) are the result of a willful and deliberate free choice will be discussed further in the next chapter (cf. *Deus*. 47–48).

If repentance from idolatry to monolatry is to move "from injustice to justice," then this can also be categorized as a movement from vice to virtue in general. So in *Spec*. 4.135 Philo discusses three of the four cardinal virtues (φρόνησις, σωφροσύνη, δικαιοσύνη) and adds in εὐσέβεια as a fourth. It is noteworthy that Philo not only replaces ἀνδρεία with εὐσέβεια to maintain four virtues, but he also claims that εὐσέβεια—which also equates with ὁσιότης[49]—is the "hegemon of the virtues" (my translation),[50] meaning that the other three cardinal virtues flow from εὐσέβεια/ὁσιότης. And this position is essentially the inverse of Rom 1:18–32, where ἀσέβεια and ἀδικία in v. 18 frame the whole descent into wickedness and vice. That is, if εὐσέβεια leads to the other virtues, then ἀσέβεια necessarily leads to vice.

In light of this—εὐσέβεια as the ruler of the virtues—it is no surprise that Philo likewise says that the failure to worship and to serve the Invisible and Eternal One constitutes "the highest degree" "of impiety" (ἀσέβεια):

> Therefore carrying our thoughts beyond all the realm of visible existence let us proceed to give honour to the Immaterial, the Invisible [ἀοράτου], the Apprehended by the understanding alone, who is not only God of gods, whether perceived by sense or by mind, but also the Maker of all. And if anyone renders the worship due to the Eternal [ἀιδίου], the Creator, to a created being and one later in time, he must stand recorded as infatuated and guilty of impiety in the highest degree [καὶ ἔνοχος ἀσεβείᾳ τῇ μεγίστῃ]. (*Spec.* 1.20)

Not only is idolatry the height of ἀσέβεια and ἀδικία according to Philo, but ἀσέβεια is worthy of severe punishment. He says that anyone who "betray[s] the honour due to the

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[49] "Piety," "devoutness," "holiness" (BDAG, s.v. "ὁσιότης"); "*disposition to observe divine law, piety*" (LSJ, s.v. "ὁσιότης").

[50] "Concerning the queen of the virtues, piety, which is devoutness to divine law" (περὶ…τῆς ἡγεμονίδος τῶν ἀρετῶν, εὐσεβείας καὶ ὁσιότητος, *Spec.* 4.135).

One ... should suffer the utmost penalties" (1.54) and that there is "punishment without mercy [ἀπαραιτήτους κολάσεις] on the impious [ἀσεβῶν]" (1.55). This punishment is warranted because "They have abandoned their most vital duty, their service in the ranks of piety [εὐσεβείας] and holiness [ὁσιότητος], have chosen [αἱρούμενοι] darkness [σκότος] in preference to the brightest light and blindfolded [τυφλὴν ἀπεργαζόμενοι] the mind [διάνοιαν] which had the power of keen vision [ὀξὺ καθορᾶν δυναμένην]" (1.54; cf. Rom 1:20–21). In other words, the punishment is deserved and fair because ἀσέβεια is a matter of conscious volition (they "have chosen darkness"). Similarly, in *De decalogo* Philo maintains that

> anyone who pays the same tribute to the creatures as to their Maker may be assured that he is the most senseless [ἀβουλότατος] and unjust [ἀδικώτατος] of men in that he gives equal measure to those who are not equal, though he does not thereby honour [τιμῇ] the meaner many but deposes the one superior. And there are some who in a further excess of impiety [ἀσεβείᾳ] do not even give this equal payment, but bestow on those others all that can tend to honour [τιμῇ], while to Him they refuse even the commonest of all tributes, that of remembering Him. Whom duty bids them remember, if nothing more, Him they forget, a forgetfulness deliberately practised [ἑκούσιον λήθην] to their lasting misery. (*Decal.* 61–62)

Ultimately, then, Philo thinks that ἀσέβεια ought to be punished with "eternal death" (*Post.* 39; cf. Rom 1:32). In *Det*. 178 he uses the fact that the Law never records Cain's death as meaning that the foolish (178) and sexually immoral (176) suffer from an eternal death in the sense that they never experience total destruction but eternally experiencing dying: "never experiencing the end that consists in having died, but subject to all eternity to that which consists in ever dying" (τὴν μὲν κατὰ τὸ τεθνάναι τελευτὴν οὐχ ὑπομένουσα, τὴν δὲ κατὰ τὸ ἀποθνῄσκειν πάντα ἐνδεχομένη τὸν αἰῶνα) (178). Philo calls this an "immortal disease" (ἀθάνατος νόσος, 178) and this unending dying is

understood as a "just" (δίκη) and "appropriate" (εἰκότως) "punishment" (τιμωρία) (176; my translations).

Moreover, similar to the frequency of ἀόρατος and ἀΐδιος in Philo, but their infrequency in Paul, ἀσέβεια occurs 93 times in Philo, but only twice in Paul (Rom 1:18; 11:26).[51] Ἀσεβής also only appears twice in Paul and only in Romans (4:5 and 5:6). The rarity of ἀσέβεια in Paul was enough to warrant mention by Dunn although he does not make much of the observation in the end.[52] Similarly, Jewett observes that "this term [ἀσέβεια]…is... uncharacteristic of Paul."[53] Interestingly, in Philo ἀσέβεια is often paired with ἀδικία as it is in Rom 1:18 (e.g., *Decal.* 61–62; *Praem.* 105; *Spec.* 1.215; *Mos.* 2.47 [δίκαιος is used here, but Philo is contrasting the punishment of the ἀσεβῶν with the honor of the δικαίων]; *Deus* 112; *Conf.* 152; *Prov.* 2.39). Likewise, their opposites, εὐσέβεια and δικαιοσύνη, are also often paired (e.g., *Praem.* 162; *Virt.* 175). Although Paul, as is well known, uses the δικ- word group quite often, he never, apart from its occurrence in Rom 1:18, pairs ἀδικία with either ἀσέβεια or εὐσέβεια (and outside of the Pastorals, εὐσέβεια does not occur in the Pauline corpus), whereas Philo frequently pairs these together. It is also noteworthy that Philo associates ἀσέβεια with punishment (*Spec.* 1.54; *Mos.* 2.47, 197; *Praem.* 105) and even with "eternal death" (*Post.* 39), while Rom 1:18–32 associates it with God's wrath and the impending death of the ungodly (cf. 2:8–9; 'eternal death' is probably implied here and in 2:12 given "eternal life" in 2:7).

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[51] Borgen, Fuglseth, and Skarsten, *Philo Index*, 51.
[52] Dunn, *Romans 1–8*, 55.
[53] Jewett, *Romans*, 152.

It seems most striking that Paul's only other uses of ἀσέβεια and ἀσεβής seem to directly counter all these meritocratic notions. Whereas Philo and the speech of Rom 1:18–32 talk about the punishment that rightly falls upon πᾶσαν ἀσέβειαν, Paul proclaims that God "makes the ἀσεβῆ just" (4:5) and that he demonstrates his own love towards the ἀσεβῶν (5:5–6, 8). And later in the letter he states that when "the Deliverer will come from Zion, he will turn away ἀσεβείας from Jacob" (11:26). Once again then, the terms only occur in Romans and only in comments that seem to contradict how these words are used in the speech of 1:18–32—arguably further instances of διαφωνία.

6.3.3 Sexual Immorality and Same-Sex Intercourse

In general for Philo the impiety of idolatry leads to all manner of vices akin to Rom 1:28–32: "Refusal to reverence [μὴ σέβειν] God implies refusal to honour parents [cf. Rom 1:30] and country and benefactors. And, if so, what depths of depravity remain for him to reach who besides refusing reverence dares also to revile Him?" (*Mos.* 2.198; cf. *Decal.* 106–120). "According to Philo, it is the gravest of charges against the devotee of vice that he not only does wrong himself but actually co-operates with others in doing it," which finds a notable similarity with Rom 1:32, as Chadwick observes.[54] In *De ebrietate* Philo asserts:

> There is another charge, and that the greatest, which could be brought against the provider of the contributions. He purposes not only to wrong, but to join with others in wrongdoing. He consents to initiate evil himself, and also to comply with what others initiate, that thus he may leave himself no ray of hope that may serve for his redemption. (*Ebr.* 25)

[54] Chadwick, "St. Paul and Philo," 294.

Moreover, just as idolatry in Rom 1 (1:21–23, 25) leads to God handing idolaters over to their "desires" (ἐπιθυμίαι, 1:24; ὄρεξις, 1:27) and "passions" (πάθη, 1:26), which manifest sexually, and these in turn result in even more depravity (vv. 28–31) finally resulting in death (θάνατος, 1:32), we find this same cause and effect chain in Philo. Having already noted how idolatry leads to desire and passion in Philo, it is necessary to highlight how he then thinks that sexual desire for pleasure is the fountainhead of all other ἀδικία and law-breaking.

The language is again similar to Rom 1:18–32: "And this desire [πόθος] also caused bodily pleasure [τὴν τῶν σωμάτων ἡδονὴν], which is the beginning of injustices [ἀδικημάτων] and violations of law [παρανομημάτων], on account of which they exchange for themselves [ὑπαλλάττονται] the life of mortality [θνητὸν] and miserableness instead of immortality [ἀθανάτου] and blissful life [εὐδαίμονος]" (*Opif.* 152, my translation). In another text Philo offers a long vice list that pours forth from pleasure. It is worth quoting in full just to see how Philo makes this point by the sheer immensity of the list:

> Know, then, my good friend, that if you become a [lover] of pleasure [φιλήδονος] you will be all these things: a bold, cunning, audacious, unsociable, uncourteous, inhuman, lawless, savage, ill-tempered, unrestrainable, worthless man; deaf to advice, foolish, full of evil acts, unteachable, unjust [ἄδικος], unfair, one who has no participation with others, one who cannot be trusted in his agreements, one with whom there is no peace, covetous, most lawless, unfriendly, homeless, city-less, seditious, faithless, disorderly, impious [ἀσεβὴς], unholy, unsettled, unstable, uninitiated, profane, polluted, indecent, destructive, murderous, illiberal, abrupt, brutal, slavish, cowardly, intemperate, irregular, disgraceful, shameful, doing and suffering all infamy, colourless, immoderate, unsatiable, insolent, conceited, self-willed, mean, envious, calumnious, quarrelsome, slanderous, greedy, deceitful, cheating, rash, ignorant, stupid, inharmonious, dishonest, disobedient [ἀπειθής], obstinate, tricky, swindling, insincere, suspicious, hated, absurd, difficult to detect, difficult to avoid, destructive, evil-minded, disproportionate, an

> unreasonable chatterer, a proser, a gossip, a vain babbler, a flatterer, a fool, full of heavy sorrow, weak in bearing grief, trembling at every sound, inclined to delay, inconsiderate, improvident, impudent, neglectful of good, unprepared, ignorant of virtue, always in the wrong, erring, stumbling, ill-managed, ill-governed, a glutton, a captive, a [squanderer], easily yielding, most crafty, double-minded, double-tongued, perfidious, treacherous, unscrupulous, always unsuccessful, always in want, infirm of purpose, fickle, a wanderer, a follower of others, yielding to impulses, open to the attacks of enemies, mad, easily satisfied, fond of life, fond of vain glory, passionate, ill-tempered, lazy, a procrastinator, [suspicious], [incredulous], incurable, full of evil jealousies, despairing, full of tears, rejoicing in evil, frantic, beside yourself, without any steady character, contriving evil, eager for disgraceful gain, selfish, a willing slave, an eager enemy, a demagogue, a bad steward, stiffnecked, effeminate [θηλυδρίας], outcast, confused, discarded, mocking, injurious, vain, full of unmitigated unalloyed misery. (*Sacr*. 32 [Yonge]; slightly modified)[55]

Most importantly, just as idolatry leads to sexual immorality, and same-sex acts are the nadir of immorality in Rom 1:18–32, Philo considers same-sex intercourse as "the greatest of evils" (τῶν μεγίστων κακῶν, *Spec.* 3.39; my translation). As Chadwick observes, Philo maintains that "The consequence of idolatry…is a sexual derangement of which the affluent Sodomites are the pre-eminent example" (cf. Rom 1:26–27).[56] Speaking of Sodom, Philo says,

> they threw off from their necks the law of nature [ἀπαυχενίζουσι τὸν τῆς φύσεως νόμον] and applied themselves to deep drinking of strong liquor and dainty feeding and forbidden forms of intercourse. Not only in their mad lust for women did they violate the marriages of their neighbours, but also men mounted males without respect for the [common] nature [τὴν κοινὴν…φύσιν οὐκ αἰδούμενοι] which the active partner shares with the passive; and so when they tried to beget children they were discovered to be incapable of any but a sterile seed. Yet the discovery availed them not, so much stronger was the force of the lust [ἐπιθυμίας] which mastered them. (*Abr.* 135)

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[55] It might also be worth observing that 40 percent of the words used in this vice list are alpha-primitives (63/151 words), which is a marked feature both of Rom 1:18–32 as a whole and the final section containing a vice list in 1:29–31 (see, Campbell, *Deliverance*, 356–58).

[56] Chadwick, "St. Paul and Philo," 293.

Later on, Philo calls Sodom's same-sex acts "unnatural [ἐκφύλους] and forbidden [ἐκθέσμους] intercourse" (137; cf. τὴν παρὰ φύσιν in *Spec.* 3.39 and Rom 1:26), whereas heterosexual activity, even when morally inappropriate, is nevertheless at least "paying tribute to the law of nature" (ὑποτελοῦσι γὰρ αἱ ἐπιθυμίαι αὗται νόμοις φύσεως, *Contempl.* 59; cf. τὸν τῆς φύσεως νόμον and τὴν κοινὴν… φύσιν, *Abr.* 135; cf. τὰς μὲν κατὰ φύσιν ἀνδρῶν καὶ γυναικῶν συνόδους, *Abr.* 137; cf. ἡ κατὰ φύσιν ἡδονὴ, *Spec.* 3.9; cf. τὴν φυσικὴν χρῆσιν in Rom 1:26 and 27). Hence Lot was spared even though "he did not reach the summit of wisdom, nor was it because of the perfection of his nature… but because he alone did not fall in with the multitude, when they turned aside to licentious living and fed every pleasure and every lust [ἐπιθυμίας] with lavish supplies of fuel like a flame when the brushwood is piled upon it" (*Mos.* 2.58). Philo's derision of same-sex acts is not confined to Sodom, however, although Sodom's "punishments not of the usual kind but startling and extraordinary" (*Abr.* 137) render it an apt prototype. Elsewhere Philo stereotypes the generic wicked person as someone who engages in this kind of "unlawful" (ἔκνομος) same-sex behavior (among other vices of course) and thus "violates the natural male character" (βιαζόμενος τὸν ἄρρενα τῆς φύσεως χαρακτῆρα) (*Spec.* 2.50; my translation; cf. *Contempl.* 59–62). In *De specialibus legibus* he bemoans that same-sex intercourse seems to have gained popularity in his day (3.37, 40) as opposed to times past when "Greeks and barbarians" had not "joined together in affecting such unions" otherwise "city after city would have become a desert" due to lack of procreation (*Abr.* 136).

It seems significant that reference to lesbian intercourse first occurs in ancient Jewish sources in Philo and Rom 1:26. It is altogether absent from the OT, is only infrequently mentioned in Greco-Roman literature, and briefly appears in later Rabbinic literature.[57] There is also a reference in the Hellenistic Jewish work Pseudo-Phocylides (Ps.-Phoc. 192), but its date is unknown (between 50 BC and 100 AD).[58] Philo talks about the "harlot" (πόρνη), who "infects the souls [ψυχὰς] both of men and women with licentiousness" because "she…has corrupted the graces bestowed by nature [τὰς τῆς φύσεως διαφθείρασα χάριτας]" (*Spec.* 3.51). This appears to be the only reference to "female same-sex acts" in Philo "and it seems to have gone unnoticed in the scholarly literature."[59] While it is no surprise that Philo also frames this act of sexual immorality as a corruption of φύσις, it is perhaps surprising to note that the only other time lesbian intercourse is mentioned in a Jewish text up to this point in the first century is in a dialogical letter written by Paul (and embedded there within a speech that happens to fail the criterion of appropriateness for Paul while sharing a remarkable number of other similarities with Philo's language and worldview).[60] These connections with respect to

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[57] For a list of references see Robert Jewett, *Romans: A Commentary*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2007), 174n108; for a larger discussion of these primary sources see Mark D. Smith, "Ancient Bisexuality and the Interpretation of Romans 1:26-27," *JAAR* 64 (1996): 238–43.

[58] Pieter W. van der Horst, "Pseudo-Phocylides: A New Translation and Introduction," *OTP* 2, 1985, 567–68; idem, "Pseudo-Phocylides Revisited," *JSP* 3 (1988): 15.

[59] Roy Bowen Ward, "Why Unnatural? The Tradition behind Romans 1:26-27," *HTR* 90.3 (1997): 272; cf. Jewett, *Romans*, 174n108.

[60] If Pseudo-Phocylides does predate Philo, it is noteworthy that Alexandria is widely considered to be its most likely provenance (van der Horst, "Pseudo-Phocylides," 567–68; idem, "Revisited," 15; Walter T. Wilson, *The Sentences of Pseudo-Phocylides*, CEJL [Berlin: de Gruyter, 2005], 12–13). Whichever way we date this text, the connection is between Rom 1 and Alexandrian Judaism.

the peculiar language about sexual ethics in Rom 1 and Philo will be further strengthened in the rest of the chapter.

Philo believes further that the one who "pursues [this] unnatural [τὴν παρὰ φύσιν] pleasure" (*Spec.* 3.39; cf. τὴν παρὰ φύσιν in Rom 1:26), which is "the greatest of evils" (τῶν μεγίστων κακῶν, *Spec.* 3.39; my translation), is "rightly judged worthy [ἄξιον] of a bloody death [φονᾶν]" and "should be put to death with impunity [νηποινεὶ τεθνάναι]" (*Spec.* 3.38; my translation; cf. 3.39; *Hypoth.* 7.1; cf. Rom 1:32). But not only is death an appropriate punishment; those who commit same-sex intercourse are currently being punished as their bodies and souls are wasting away (τε ψυχὰς καὶ τὰ σώματα διαρρέουσι) by what Philo calls "the disease of effemination" (*Spec.* 3.37; cf. 39; *Contempl.* 60–61; *Abr.* 136; cf. Rom 1:24, 27). This is caused by their "artful devotion to change [μεταβάλλειν] the male nature [τὴν ἄρρενα φύσιν] into the female [εἰς θήλειαν]" (*Spec.* 3.37; my translation; cf. 40–41; *Contempl.* 60; see: μεταλλάσσω, φύσις, θῆλυς, and ἄρσην in Rom 1:26–27).

6.3.3.1 Sex and the *Scala Naturae*

In order to understand why Philo frames same-sex acts as the pinnacle of impiety and injustice, and how same-sex intercourse damages the body, soul, and mind, it is necessary to appreciate how Philo adopts the Stoic fourfold *scala naturae* (the "ladder" or "chain of being") that classified all bodies as "inorganic, plant, animal, [and]

reasoning."[61] The upper echelons participate in the attributes of the lower ones (*Leg.* 2.22–24), but transcend them.

In a little more detail: on the lowest rung of the ladder, inorganic matter represented by stones and chopped off wood possesses "cohesion" (ἕξις) (*Deus*. 35–36); then on the next rung, plants (φυτόν) represent "nature" (φύσις) (37–40), which is responsible for "Growth…taking nourishment…undergoing change and…increasing" (37), especially reproduction (σπείρειν καὶ γεννᾶν, 40); animal life on the third rung (ζῷον) possesses "life" (ψυχή) (41), which differs from φύσις in "sensation, 'presentation,' [and] impulse" (41–44, here 41); finally, human beings (ἄνθρωπος) are "superior to other animals" in that they have "mind" (διάνοια), which is able "to apprehend the natures both of all material objects and of things in general" (45). It is the possession of διάνοια that grants human beings both "free-will" (47; cf. "deliberate choice" and "volition" in 48) and therefore inexcusability for all acts of impiety (see "may justly be charged with guilt" and "will rightly pay the inexorable penalty" in 48). Also, Philo introduces this discussion on the *scala naturae* earlier in §34 in order to ground his theology of culpability: "Those of His creatures who do not leave their appointed places [on the *scala naturae*], He praises for their obedience. Those who depart from it He visits with the punishment which is the doom of deserters" (34). By doing this,

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[61] Mary E. Andrews, "Paul, Philo, and the Intellectuals," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 53 (1934): 158; Philo, *On the Creation. Allegorical Interpretation of Genesis 2 and 3*, trans. F. H. Colson and G. H. Whitaker, LCL 226 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1929), 480 (the note to *Leg*. 2.22).

Philo brackets his discussion of the *scala naturae* in §§34 and 48 with a theology of human inexcusability (cf. ἀναπολόγητος in Rom 1:20).

The *scala naturae* frames same-sex acts as a descent down the chain of being to the status of stones—objects below φύσις and unable to reproduce. First, using their διάνοια to "leave their appointed place" (*Leg.* 2.34; cf. 47–48) to descend to the level of ψυχή, people participate in the irrational lusts and sense pleasures of animals (θρέμματα) as they have "mad lust for women" (θηλυμανοῦντες) (*Abr.* 135; cf. *Spec.* 3.9; cf. ἐπιθυμία in Rom 1:24). But, not being satisfied as they engage in adulterous heterosexual acts (*Abr*, 135), "also men mounted males without respect for the [common] nature [τὴν κοινὴν… φύσιν]" (135). As a consequence of this disregard for φύσις, which is responsible for reproduction (σπείρειν καὶ γεννᾶν, *Leg.* 2.40), Philo says they are unable to reproduce: "when they tried to beget children, they only proved to sow sterile seed" (*Abr*. 135, my translation).[62] That is, the result of abandoning "nature" means that even when they try to engage in "natural" heterosexual acts for the purpose of reproduction, it will not be successful. They have become no more than stones and wood on the *scala naturae*.

It is important to note that in *Abr.* 135–136 Philo is discussing Sodom, but the text of Genesis makes no mention of the community's fecundity. Thus, Philo has added in this detail because he thinks this has to have been the case given the inherent consequences of descending down the *scala naturae*. Accordingly, when Philo next says "Certainly, had

[62] παιδοσποροῦντες ἠλέγχοντο μὲν ἀτελῆ γονὴν σπείροντες.

Greeks and barbarians joined together in affecting such [same-sex] unions, city after city would have become a desert" (136), he does not mean that this is because they would only be engaging in same-sex intercourse. Rather, the act of disregarding φύσις via same-sex activity (135) necessarily corrupts a person's σῶμα and ψυχή (136) such that s/he automatically descends the *scala naturae* and become less than plants, the paragons of reproductive φύσις, and incapable of reproduction even when they attempt "natural" intercourse again.

Philo reiterates this same declension down the *scala naturae* elsewhere, in *De animalibus,* from married heterosexual procreative intercourse within marriage, to excessive marital sex, to heterosexual prostitution, to adultery, and finally to same-sex intercourse:

> (48) Some [animals] copulate in the spring, others in the fall, and some abstain altogether for a year. The females succumb to mounting only for the purpose of impregnation; then they run away from the males, fulfilling **the law of nature** which has found out the corruption that results from the male joining the female in sexual indulgence. (49) Is it not then proper that men should blush at their unleashed sexual indulgence when it is compared with the chastity of these *animals?* For at what season of the year do we cease from venereal pleasures and from practicing our customary and constant vices? There are those who are not satisfied with their wives alone but look elsewhere and stray to prostitutes, who do not keep their part unblemished but exchange their honor for such things *as* disgrace and misery.[63] Some young men even defy death by choosing lust over life. They infringe on the marital rights of others and do not *even* blush during trial before the magistrates. They fear neither the present laws concerning adultery nor the raging and inexorable wrath of husbands threatening with death, having the freedom to kill, unhindered by inexperience in evil. Some resolve to wickedness and fall into such violent passion for unlawful sexual indulgence that they commit sodomy. They disturb not only communities but also the very **order of nature**. However truth herself convicts them for transgressing unalterable law,

[63] Note the strong parallels with the language in Rom 1:21–27 (e.g., "(dis)honor," "exchange," "disgrace").

> for committing immoral acts, for giving the seed to the immature, and for wasting and destroying the seed. (*Anim*. 48–49)[64]

Thus, as Maren R. Niehoff summarizes, "Philo identifies every sexual act not aimed at legitimate procreation as 'contrary to nature.' He vehemently rejects adultery, prostitution, homosexuality, and intercourse with menstruating or sterile women."[65] It follows that the person who commits same-sex acts "is subject to the same penalty" (*Spec.* 3.39)—"worthy of death" (38)—because "He pursues an unnatural pleasure [τὴν παρὰ φύσιν ἡδονὴν] and… render[s] cities desolate and uninhabited by destroying the means of procreation [διαφθείρων τὰς γονάς]" (39; cf. *Contempl.* 62). Hence from Philo's perspective in terms of the *scala naturae* it is no wonder same-sex intercourse represents "the greatest of evils" (τῶν μεγίστων κακῶν) (*Spec*. 3.39; cf. μεῖζον…κακόν, *Contempl.* 62); it reduces a human being, which is supposed to be at the top of the material creatures, to less than a plant. Consequently, he likens the person who engages in same-sex intercourse to a bad farmer who "lets fruitful fields lie sterile… while he spends his labour night and day on soil from which no growth at all can be expected" (*Spec.* 3.39; cf. *Contempl.* 62). Same-sex intercourse fundamentally damages the soul (ψυχή) and body (σῶμα) (*Abr*. 136), although in another text he adds a third aspect that is "punished" (ζημιόω); namely a person's "being"/"essence": σῶμα καὶ ψυχὴν καὶ οὐσίαν (*Contempl.* 61). Here he notes also that the "mind" (νοῦς) (61) deviates from its appointed station (cf.

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[64] Translation from Abraham Terian, *Philonis Alexandrini De Animalibus: The Armenian Text*, Supplements to Studia Philonica 1 (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1981), 89. Terian's italics, my bold emphasis.

[65] Niehoff, *Philo of Alexandria*, 159.

Leg. 2.34; cf. 47–48) by pursuing a desire (ἐπιθυμία) contrary to φύσις (*Contempl.* 59). This damage to the body, soul, and being of the person means that they actually become like stones and wood at the bottom of the *scala naturae* and hence incapable of reproduction even when heterosexual intercourse is resumed (*Abr.* 135). Same-sex activity "destroys the [bodily] means of procreation [τὰς γονάς]" (*Spec*. 3.39); it results in "sterility and infertility" (στείρωσιν καὶ ἀγονίαν, *Contempl.* 62; my translation).[66]

The consequences of impiety and injustice tabulated in Rom 1:18–32 make sense within the *scala naturae* as well.[67] God hands idolaters over to a "degraded mind [νοῦν]" with the result that they cannot complete basic moral duties (καθήκοντα) (v. 28) that are discernable through creation (v. 20). They engage in "desires" (ἐπιθυμίαι) that "dishonor their bodies [σώματα]" (v. 24). This corresponds to a slide down the *scala* to the level of animalistic impulses and desires (ψυχή). But they do not stop there. They descend to the bottom of the *scala naturae* when they obey the "dishonoring passions [πάθη]" of same-sex intercourse (vv. 26–27) that violate the reproductive level of φύσις since it is τὴν παρὰ φύσιν (v. 26). Moreover, the *scala naturae* provides a conceptual framework that makes sense of the claim that people engaging in same-sex activity "are receiving in

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[66] It is also worth noting that the *scala naturae* also frames Philo's discussion of the prohibition on heterosexual intercourse when the woman in menstruating (*Spec*. 3.32–33). Philo believes that the only way to "respect the law of nature" (νόμον φύσεως αἰδούμενος) (3.32) is to engage in intercourse only for the purposes of procreation. This is also why Philo next berates anyone who knowingly marries a barren woman (3.34–36). Any sexual intercourse that is not a legitimate attempt at procreation violates the νόμος φύσεως. Sexual activity for "pleasure" (ἡδονή) violates φύσις because φύσις is all about reproduction according to the *scala naturae*. Same-sex activity is a particularly egregious instance of this violation according to Philo (3.37), but he is consistent in his application of the νόμος φύσεως across all types of sexual intercourse that are not done solely for the purposes of φύσις: reproduction.

[67] I need to thank my friend and colleague, Heather Griffin, for alerting me of this point when I was a TA for, and she was a student in, Susan Eastman's Romans Exegesis course in the spring of 2019.

themselves the recompense that is necessary for their error" (v. 27; cf. the comment in v. 24 about their "bodies" being "dishonored"). This could denote the resulting inability to procreate.

That this is likely the case is supported by the reference to lesbian same-sex intercourse in the text (v. 26), which, as we noted earlier, is unknown in Jewish texts apart from Philo (*Spec.* 3.51) and Pseudo-Phocylides (175–194, esp. 189–190, 192). The only other times appeal to "nature" is mentioned alongside female same-sex intercourse are in Greco-Roman denigrations of lesbian acts as they relate to (non)procreation—in Plato (*Tim*. 30a–b, 41a–d, 90e, 91a–d; *Leg.* 636b–c, 835c, 836a–837a, 838c–839a, 841d), Lucian (*Dial. meretr.* 5.289), Vettius Valens (*Anth*. 2.17.66–68), and Ovid (*Metam*. 9.733–34, 745–59).[68] The other feature that links these texts together is the denunciation of sex merely for pleasure, which is also referenced in Rom 1:18–32 in terms of "desires" (ἐπιθυμίαι, 1:24), "appetency" (ὄρεξις,[69] 1:27), and "passions" (πάθη, 1:26).[70] The only sort of sexual intercourse in these texts that is κατὰ φύσιν ("according to nature") is when it takes place solely for the purpose of procreation, within a legitimate marriage, and so pleasure is to be minimized. Everything outside of this practice is "contrary to nature." Abraham Terian summarizes:

> The begetting of children and the perpetuity of the race is fulfilment of the law of nature (Praem 108; Abr 248–249; Jos 43; Vita Mos I 28; Spec Leg II 233; Quaes Gen IV 86; Quaes Ex II 19); however, the bodily pleasure engendered by the

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[68] Ward, "Why Unnatural?," 263–84, esp. 277–78; Wilson, *Sentences of Pseudo-Phocylides*, 196–97; cf. Bernadette J. Brooten, *Love Between Women: Early Christian Responses to Female Homoeroticism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 41–54.

[69] LSJ, s.v. "ὄρεξις."

[70] Ward, "Why Unnatural?," 263–84, here 284.

> union of man and woman is 'the beginning of wrongs and violation of the law" (Op 152; cf. Leg All II 74 and 1 Cor 7:1–7, 28). Even beholding the nakedness of the opposite sex is "disregarding the statues of nature" (ἀλογοῦσαι φύσεως θεσμῶν, Spec Leg III 176)….
>
> In the case of animals, see Plu[tarch] *Mor*. 988F–991D, a passage showing the inferiority of men to animals in self-restraint. Note especially 990D–F: "Neither does the female continue to receive the male after she has conceived, nor does the male attempt her," adding that beasts have a better claim to "non-violation of nature"; whereas "men do such deeds as wantonly outrage nature, upset her order, and confuse her distinctions" (cf. 493E; Porph[yry] *Abst*. Iii. 10). Plutarch adds to the better claim of animals in this respect by citing a Chrysippian observation that among animals mating is free and more in keeping with nature (*Mor*. 1044F [*SVF*[71] III 753]; cf. D. L. vii. 188 [*SVF* III 744] and Zeno's views on marriage in D. L. vii. 131 [*SVF* III 728]). Note also Opp. *C.* i. 236–238: "horses honor nature, and it is utter unheard of that they should indulge unlawful passion." Cf. Pliny *NH* viii. 112 (on hinds).[72]

This is why we can observe in Philo that anyone who pursues sexual intercourse purely for the enjoyment "are pleasure-lovers when they mate with their wives, not to procreate children and perpetuate the race, but like pigs and goats in quest of the enjoyment which such intercourse gives" (*Spec.* 3.113). In this way "they are breaking the laws of Nature [νόμους φύσεως καταλύοντες] and stand self-condemned on the gravest charges, love of pleasure, [and] hatred of [humanity] [μισανθρωπίαν]" (3.112; cf. *Anim.* 48–49).[73]

Without recognizing the presence of the Stoic *scala*, Douglas Moo nevertheless detects the relationship between natural sex and procreation in Rom 1. The "use of the antonyms θῆλυς/ἄρσην (v. 27) rather than, e.g., γυνή/ἀνήρ, stresses the element of sexual

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[71] *SVF=Stoicorum veterum fragmenta*, ed. J. von Arnim (4 vols.; Leipzig, 1903–1924).

[72] Terian, *Philonis Alexandrini*, 161.

[73] Richard A. Baer makes a similar point in *Philo's Use of the Categories Male and Female*, ALGHJ 3 (Leiden: Brill, 1970), 94–95.

distinctiveness."[74] This pairing of θῆλυς/ἄρσην is rare in the NT but when it is used it is consistently associated with Gen 1:27–28 (Matt. 19:4; Mark 10:6; Gal 3:28).[75] But the creation of humanity as "male and female" is immediately followed by a command to procreate ("be fruitful and multiply," Gen 1:28). Therefore, since the sex distinction is necessary for procreation, the use of ἄρσην and θῆλυς in Rom 1:26–27 is plausibly used to highlight the *non*-procreation happening. The fact that ἄρσην and θῆλυς appear together with φύσις and φυσικός only strengthens this point since (non-)procreation is specifically what the Greco-Roman literature is addressing when these words are used together.[76]

In view of all these distinctive correlations, Moo rather understates the situation: "Paul's use of the word 'nature' in [Rom 1:26–27] probably owes much to…particularly Philo, who included sexual morality as part of 'natural law' and therefore as a divine mandate applicable to all people."[77] I think the distinctiveness of the evidence involved plausibly indicates that Paul is indeed in conversation on some level with the great Alexandrian exegete at this point.[78] These distinctives become especially noteworthy for our purposes when we compare this text on same-sex intercourse with the two other instances in the Pauline corpus (one in an undisputed text and the other in a disputed letter).

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[74] Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 114n114.

[75] The allusion to Genesis in Gal 3:28 is shown in how Paul pairs the first two groups with οὐδὲ (Ἰουδαῖος οὐδὲ Ἕλλην…δοῦλος οὐδὲ ἐλεύθερος), but switches to καί for the male and female pair (ἄρσεν καὶ θῆλυ), which is how it appears in Gen 1:27 (LXX).

[76] Ward, "Why Unnatural?," 267, 267n23, 276, 276n89.

[77] Moo, *Romans*, 114–15; Similarly, Jewett, *Romans*, 175–76.

[78] Or perhaps with Pseudo-Phocylides as well as noted above.

6.3.3.2 Even When Paul Agrees, He Disagrees: Paul On Same-Sex Intercourse

I am not going to suggest here that Paul disagrees with every jot and tittle of Rom 1:18–32. There is a lot he would probably agree with—that idolatry is sin that seems to characterize gentiles as such, and that all the vices listed in 1:29–31 are indeed vices.[79] But agreement on general points can always come with significant qualifications on matters of detail. (Church history is filled with examples of bitter disputes and divisions over details within broadly shared positions.) With respect to same-sex intercourse, Paul would agree that it is a sin. But in 1 Cor 6:9 it is neither placed in a framework of deliberate disobedience to God and the consequence of idolatry, nor treated as a transgression of "natural law" that represents a slide down into the nadir of the *scala naturae* as it seems to be in Rom 1:26–27. In 1 Cor 6:9 Paul does not characterize same-sex activity as "unnatural" but as "unscriptural" (i.e., as a violation of a specific written command). This is evident in the vocabulary Paul uses to name those who commit unacceptable same-sex acts in 1 Cor 6:9, specifically, μαλακοί and ἀρσενοκοῖται[80]: Richard Hays succinctly summarizes the key issues:

> The word *malakoi* is not a technical term meaning "homosexuals" (no such term existed either in Greek or in Hebrew), but it appears often in Hellenistic Greek as pejorative slang to describe the "passive" partners—often young boys—in homosexual activity. The other word, *arsenokoitai*, is not found in any extant Greek text earlier than 1 Corinthians. Some scholars have suggested that its meaning is uncertain, but Robin Scroggs has shown that the world is a translation of the Hebew *mishkav zakur* ("lying with a male"), derived directly from Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 and used in rabbinic texts to refer to homosexual

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[79] As discussed in chapter 3, see how peculiar this vice list in Rom 1:19–31 is compared to Paul's other vice lists which share a whole lot more in common with each other than with Rom 1:29-31 (William O. Walker, "Romans 1.18-2.29: A Non-Pauline Interpolation?," *NTS* 45 [1999]: 536).

[80] See also 1 Tim 1:10.

> intercourse. The Septuagint…of Leviticus 20:13 read, "Whoever lies with a man as with a woman [*meta arsenos koitēn gynaikos*], they have both done an abomination"…. This is almost certainly the idiom from which the noun *arsenokoitai* was coined. Thus, Paul's use of the term presupposes and reaffirms the holiness code's condemnation of homosexual acts.[81]

It is clear then that Paul wants to characterize same-sex activity by the language of Scripture. Put another way, when Paul discusses same-sex acts, he appeals not to nature, but to what is written in Leviticus (18:22; 20:13) by using the unique word ἀρσενοκοῖται (1 Cor 6:9).[82] But Rom 1:18–32 depicts aberrant sexual activity in terms of the philosophical frame of natural law and therefore as a violation of nature—an account of nature that is self-evident from contemplation of the cosmos. Hence the vocabulary and the overarching narrative frame are different as well as being, strictly speaking, incommensurate.

Moreover, Rom 1:26–27 subtly implies that only procreative sexual intercourse is proper. That is, heterosexual intercourse within marriage purely for pleasure is unseemly as well as unnatural given its philosophical register. But Paul is happy for sexual intercourse to happen for pleasure in 1 Cor 7:1–9. Paul asserts this position in a context where some are holding to the belief that sexual activity is wrong: "It is good for a man not to touch a woman" (1 Cor 7:1).[83] However, Paul only advises a temporary

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[81] Richard B. Hays, *The Moral Vision of the New Testament: Community, Cross, New Creation: A Contemporary Introduction to New Testament Ethics* (San Francisco: HarperOne, 1996), 382; cf. idem, *First Corinthians*, IBC (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2011), 97.

[82] The word ἀρσενοκοῖται is also used in 1 Tim 1:10, and, whether written by Paul or an impersonator, it is telling that same-sex activity here is likewise characterized scripturally rather than within a "natural law" and *scala naturae* point of view.

[83] This is one of those instances of a verbless transition to speech-in-character highlighted in chapter two. See Hays, *First Corinthians*, 108–9; Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 497–501.

abstinence from sex for the purpose of prayer (7:5),[84] and insists that marriage is the context in which to satisfy one's sexual desires (7:9; cf. vv. 2, 3, 5)—without any mention of procreation[85]—and this is to be considered a "gift from God" (7:7).[86] Paul's only stated purpose for marriage in this text (though it would be premature and fallacious to say that this is Paul's only actual rationale for marriage) is to come together sexually so that one partner does not burn with passion. That is, sex (in marriage) is simply the proper means of satisfying erotic desires. This contrasts with Rom 1:26–27 (cf. v. 24) if its philosophical ethos has been correctly identified, which presumes that non-pleasure-seeking procreative heterosexual intercourse is the only way to have sex "according to nature."

It follows that even where Paul would agree with the claim within the speech of 1:18–32 that same-sex acts are sins, this is only because it features an aspect of "common Judaism."[87] It emerges from closer study that Paul's view elsewhere seems at odds with the way this particular behavior is framed and presented in 1:24–27. Moreover, Paul operates with a broad sexual ethic that the type of people who speak about sex in the manner of 1:24–27 (i.e., Philo and those who thought like him) would find vicious, since

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[84] This is one of those instances of a verbless transition to speech-in-character highlighted in chapter 3. See Hays, *First Corinthians*, 110; Thiselton, *Corinthians*, 510–11; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 275, 281–82.

[85] This absence of childbearing is specifically flagged by Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 116 (cf. n18); Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians*, 276.

[86] Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians*, 282; Hays, *First Corinthians*, 111; Thiselton, *Corinthians*, 513; contra Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians: A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, trans. James W. Leitch, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), 118.

[87] Sanders, *Judaism*, 45–314; Sandmel, "Parallelomania," 3.

his counsel in 1 Cor 7 encourages "unnatural" heterosexual sex from that point of view. Analyzing this passage in this context of Hellenistic philosophical thought on sex is in fact the reason Roy Bowen Ward suspected "these…verses represent Paul's voice or the voice of a rhetorical spokesperson in Rom 1:18–32, whom the apostle criticizes beginning in Rom 2:1."[88]

We turn now to a peculiar detail, easily overlooked, that strengthens the case for Philonic connections with Rom 1:18–32.

6.3.4 Καθήκοντα in Rom 1:28

Romans 1:28 says that God handed idolaters over to "a degraded mind [ἀδόκιμον νοῦν] to do the things not appropriate [ποιεῖν τὰ μὴ καθήκοντα]."

The word καθήκοντα is a technical term used by philosophers, and appearing in the form of a substantive participle, as here, is a *hapax legomena* in the NT.[89] Indeed, this is such a peculiar word that Philo feels compelled to acknowledge it as such: "These are the several particular virtues, and the corresponding activities, and the complete moral victories [κατορθώματα], and what philosophers call *καθήκοντα* or common duties" (*Leg.* 1.56;[90] cf. 3.18, 165; *Cher.* 14–15; *Mut.* 47–48).

Commentators on Romans generally recognize the philosophical use of this term, but this is usually as far as they take the conversation. For example, Dunn remarks, "τὸ

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[88] Ward, "Why Unnatural?" 278.

[89] The verb form καθήκω is used in Acts 22:22 ("for he should not live" [οὐ γὰρ καθῆκεν αὐτὸν ζῆν]), but the substantive participle only appears in Rom 1:28.

[90] LCL translators Colson and Whitaker first transcribe καθήκοντα to flag its technical meaning and then provide the gloss "common duties."

καθῆκον/τὰ καθήκοντα… is certainly a Stoic phrase…. Within Stoic thought the positive phrase denotes what is fitting, what is one's duty, what is in harmony with nature."[91] But he leaves it at that. When we dig deeper here, the use of καθήκοντα corroborates the case being made so far, namely, that 1:18–32 sounds like a Philonic philosopher.

Paul A. Vander Waerdt defines καθήκοντα in Stoic ethics thus:

> *Kathēkonta* are actions which reason prevails upon us to do in accordance with nature's arrangements and which, once done, admit of a rational defense. They promote what is 'appropriate' to a being's natural constitution or 'consistent' with its life, beginning with its initial impulse towards self-preservation and expanding, in the case of rational beings, to encompass the wide range of activities suitable to his social and rational nature.[92]

Hence there is "a technical distinction in Stoic ethics between appropriate acts (*kathēkonta*) and virtuous acts (*katorthōmata*)."[93] The difference is in the agent's "rational disposition" towards the appropriate acts (καθήκοντα) themselves. If the person performs καθήκοντα unintentionally then from the Stoic point of view these do not count as "virtuous" acts (κατορθώματα).[94] "*Katorthōmata* thus represent a restricted class of *kathēkonta*; they are 'perfect *kathēkonta*' and include all the virtues and indeed 'everything done according to right reason.'"[95] Consequently, καθήκοντα are moral "basics" or "common duties" and more mature and virtuous persons advance into κατορθώματα when they intentionally perform the καθήκοντα for the proper reasons.

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[91] Dunn, *Romans 1–8*, 66.
[92] Paul A. Vander Waerdt, "The Original Theory of Natural Law," *SPhiloA* 15 (2003): 25.
[93] Vander Waerdt, "Original Theory," 25.
[94] Vander Waerdt, "Original Theory," 26.
[95] Vander Waerdt, "Original Theory," 26.

Philo appears to be aware of this technical difference because he writes in *QG* 4.211: "Both the good person and the bad person often accomplish the same καθήκοντα, but not from the same intention" (my translation of the Greek fragment).[96] The former performs the καθήκοντα for "good" (καλός) while the latter does so for "greediness" (πλεονεξία). Further, in *Deus.* 100, Philo writes: "Those, too, who perform any other right action without the assent of their judgement or will, but by doing violence to their inclination, do not achieve [virtue] [μὴ κατορθοῦν], but are wounded and chased by their inward feelings." However, in *Leg.* 1.56 cited above, he appears to equate the two by saying that "the complete moral victories [κατορθώματα]" are "what philosophers call *καθήκοντα.*"

Turning back to Romans, the claim in Rom 1:28 seems to be that these people are so vicious and of such a depraved mind (ἀδόκιμος νοῦς) that they are unable even to perform the elementary "common duties" (καθήκοντα) even for disingenuous reasons (e.g., avaricious ends). This use conforms exactly to the philosophical usage and meaning as it relates to natural law. The occurrence of καθήκοντα in Rom 1:28 seems to mean, then, "appropriate moral acts in accordance with nature" or perhaps, "morally-congruent-with-nature." But this word is both technical and rare. Hence, it constitutes yet more evidence that 1:18–32 imitates a Philonic discourse. Once again, what appears to be an odd detail in Romans is right at home in Philo's writings and denotes some sort of conversation with that tradition.

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[96] τὰ αὐτὰ καθήκοντα πολλάκις ἐνεργοῦσιν ὅ τε ἀστεῖος καὶ ὁ φαῦλος, ἀλλ᾽ οὐκ ἀπὸ τῆς αὐτῆς διανοίας· ὁ μὲν γὰρ κρίνων ὅτι καλόν, ὁ δὲ μοχθηρὸς μνώμενός τι τῶν εἰς πλεονεξίαν.

6.4 Conclusion

Needless to say by this point, we can now see if we did not before that many of the ideas, words, and motifs found in the text of Rom 1:18–32 are both remarkably distinctive for Paul (and hence the not infrequent arguments for interpolation or the equivalent) but remarkably similar to material found in Philo.

The following summary of the argument of Rom 1:18–32 is matched at every point by statements in Philo: (a) God's divine invisible attributes (e.g., eternality) are (b) clearly perceptible from creation, therefore, (c) a natural law exists that is known to all humans universally, (d) that is able to be obeyed, and thus (e) all disobedience is deliberate transgression of a known divine decree and "without excuse." (f) Ungodliness begins with the turn to idolatry, which is a willful rejection of monotheism; (g) idolatry then leads to a whole host of other vices, in particular, to (h) sexual immorality, and to (i) dishonorable same-sex activity, which violates the natural law of procreative intercourse only, so that (j) those who engage in same-sex intercourse already receive a just punishment in their bodies—effeminization and a loss of procreative power. (k) Vast lists of further unfitting sins can then be tabulated. In conclusion, then, (l) every person who commits impiety and injustice, rejecting the invisible God, embracing idolatry, engaging in inappropriate sex and in other shameful activities, is without excuse and deserves stern punishment, namely, death. ([m] And some people are so depraved that despite knowing all this they enthusiastically promote it.)

We have no way at the moment of knowing whether Paul's interlocutor learned to think and speak in this manner from Philo himself. But since we only find these

distinctive views and language taught all together in one system by Philo (and not, contra the opinion of many, in Wisdom of Solomon), it seems fair to identify Paul's interlocutor as Philonic. Moreover, this data adds credibility to our "solution from the character" because we can now locate this character firmly within the teaching of an influential Jewish intellectual and proselytizer roughly contemporary to Paul. Having said this, the striking parallels between Romans and Philo will continue to emerge as we turn to consider Rom 2.

7. Philo and Romans 2

As we turn our attention to the material Rom 2 shares distinctively with Philo, we will be able to see how Philo essentially tells the same story about God and humans that we find presupposed throughout Rom 1:18–2:29 but that generates such tensions when it is viewed alongside Paul's thinking as it is expressed elsewhere. We will also find that there is a key logical weakness in this story as it relates to gentiles and the written Law that is also present in Rom 2 and that Paul arguably exploits there. I will discuss Philo in relation to Rom 2 in terms of the following three specific topics—(1) people "being a law unto themselves" (2:14) and the function of the conscience (2:15), (2) individuated, non-covenantal, meritorious soteriology (2:2–16a), and (3) the characterization of the Teacher in 2:17–2:29. Clearly topics 1 and 2 here overlap significantly with the evidence of διαφωνία collated earlier in ch. 5.

7.1 Philo and Rom 2:14–15: A Law unto Themselves and the Function of Conscience

Although it has already been noted above how Philo believes that a person can reason themselves to a knowledge of God's invisible attributes and eternality and of his laws by contemplating nature in a process echoed by Rom 1:18-32, that process returns in Rom 2. A congruence between Romans (esp. Rom 2:14–15) and Philo is again clear. For instance, Philo says that Moses sets forth the lives of certain men who before the giving of the laws at Sinai "lived good and blameless lives" who "gladly accepted conformity with nature, holding that nature itself was, as indeed it is, the most venerable of statutes." This was "to shew that the enacted ordinances are not inconsistent with nature; and

secondly that those who wish to live in accordance with the laws as they stand have no difficult task, seeing the first generations before any at all of the particular statues was set in writing followed the unwritten law with perfect ease" (*Abr.* 4–6). Given Abraham's Chaldean heritage, he becomes Philo's example *par excellence* of just how easy it is for anyone, no matter what their polytheistic or atheistic background, to reason to knowledge of the one true God and of God's laws. Philo calls Abraham "the standard of nobility for all proselytes" (οὗτος ἅπασιν ἐπηλύταις εὐγενείας ἐστὶ κανών) (*Virt.* 219). Not only was "Abraham… filled with zeal for piety [εὐσεβείας], the highest and greatest of virtues" and "eager to follow God and to be obedient to His commands; understanding by commands… those made manifest by nature [τὰς διὰ τῆς φύσεως] with clearer signs, and apprehended by the sense" (*Abr.* 60), but also "anyone who contemplates the order in nature [θεώμενος γάρ τις τὴν ἐν τῇ φύσει τάξιν] and the constitution enjoyed by the world-city whose excellence no words can describe, needs no speaker to teach him to practise a law-abiding and peaceful life and to aim at assimilating himself to its beauties" (61). Similarly, in *Decal.* 81 he writes: "so that following nature they might win the best of goals [ἵν᾽ ἑπόμενον τῇ φύσει τὸ ἄριστον εὕρηται τέλος], knowledge of Him that truly is, Who is the primal and most perfect good, from Whom as from a fountain is showered the water of each particular good upon the world and them that dwell therein." This all sounds remarkably similar to the claims in Rom 1:19–21, 28, 32 that knowledge of God and basic ethical norms are easily discernable through creation, a claim explicitly developed in 2:14–15. The implication is that while plenty of impious and unrighteous

people exist, there are also going to be those who, like Abraham, live pious and righteous lives.

Indeed, Philo does not think this is a hypothetical category.

> [P]eople often ask "who have there been in the past, and who are there living now of the kind that you imagine?" An excellent answer is that in the past there have been those who surpassed their contemporaries in virtue, who took God for their sole guide and lived according to a law of nature's right reason [καὶ κατὰ νόμον, τὸν ὀρθὸν φύσεως λόγον, ζῶντες], not only free themselves, but communicating to their neighbours the spirit of freedom: also in our own time there are still men formed as it were in the likeness of the original picture supplied by the high excellence of sages. (*Prob.* 62)

Therefore, Philo contends that there are those down to his day who live according to the natural law and he goes on to mention people from Greece, Persia and India (73–74). In *De virtutibus* Philo maintains there are "disciples of the most excellent philosophy" who "gain from its teaching" what "the Jews gain from their customs and laws" (*Virt.* 65). And again, in *De specialibus legibus,* he contends there are gentiles "who practice wisdom, either in Grecian or barbarian lands, and live a blameless and irreproachable life" (*Spec.* 2.44). "[T]he blameless life of righteous men" is due to the fact that they "follow nature and her ordinances" (ὁσίων ἀνθρώπων ἑπομένων τῇ φύσει καὶ τοῖς ταύτης διατάγμασι) (2.42). Because these righteous gentiles "are the closest observers of nature and all that it contains" (θεωροὶ τῆς φύσεως καὶ τῶν ἐν αὐτῇ πάντων ἄριστοι) (2.45), they have "become what nature intended them to be, all of them blameless and guiltless [ἐγένοντο, οἵους βούλεται εἶναι ἡ φύσις, ἀνεπίληπτοι καὶ ἀνυπαίτιοι πάντες] and lovers of sound sense, rejoicing in moral excellence just because it is what it is" (2.48). Philo

grants that this is a minority within the general human population, but it is a sizeable minority as it exists in every city (*Spec.* 2.47; cf. *Prob.* 72–74).[1]

In view of this, even if we are disinclined to accept the argument made in chapter 5 that the dative φύσει modifies the verb ποιῶσιν rather than the participle ἔχοντα in Rom 2:14, the last clause of 2:14 (οὗτοι νόμον μὴ ἔχοντες ἑαυτοῖς εἰσιν νόμος) is strikingly similar to what Philo says of those who did not have the Law of Moses but rather followed the natural law.[2] Paul speaks here of "those who are a law to themselves," a concept that never again appears in any of Paul's writings.

Unsurprisingly in view of what has just been tabulated, Philo makes this claim at much greater length. He states "these men have been living and rational laws [οἱ γὰρ ἔμψυχοι καὶ λογικοὶ νόμοι ἄνδρες ἐκεῖνοι γεγόνασιν]*"* (*Abr.* 5 [Yonge]; cf. *Mos.* 1.162; 2.4). Elsewhere he states that they are "a law unto themselves and self-taught" (αὐτήκοοι δὲ καὶ αὐτομαθεῖς; my translation) (*Abr.* 6; my translation; cf. *Plant.* 168).[3] Allegorically, Philo often says that Isaac is the representative of the virtuous who are αὐτήκοος καὶ αὐτομαθής ("a law unto themselves and self-taught"—my translation) (*Ebr.* 94; *Sobr.* 65; *Somn.* 1.160, 168; cf. *Abr.* 52; *Ios.* 1; *Praem.* 27, 31, 50).[4] This is because the virtuous

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[1] Gregory E. Sterling, "'A Law to Themselves': Limited Universalism in Philo and Paul," *ZNW* 107 (2016): 43–4.

[2] Cf. Sterling, "'A Law to Themselves,'" 44.

[3] LSJ, s.v. "αὐτήκοος" II.

[4] Philo adds the third descriptor αὐτοδίδακτος in *Somn.* 1.160 and *Praem.* 27. Also, Philo usually allegorizes Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as three distinct models to attain virtue and perfection: "For the holy word seems to be searching into types of soul, all of them of high worth, one which pursues the good through teaching [ἐκ διδασκαλίας], one through nature [ἐκ φύσεως] and one through practice [ἐξ ἀσκήσεως]. The first called Abraham, the second Isaac and the third Jacob, are symbols of virtue acquired respectively by teaching, nature and practice. But indeed we must not fail to note that each possesses the three qualities, but gets his name from that which chiefly predominates in him; for teaching cannot be consummated without nature or practice, nor is nature capable of reaching its zenith without learning and

have become so "by the innate goodness of his natural dispositions [κατ᾽ εὐμοιρίαν φύσεως]" (*Praem.* 27, 50 [Yonge]). Similarly, Philo can use Jacob as an allegory for those who are "self-taught by nature" (αὐτοδιδάκτῳ τῇ φύσει, *Plant.* 110; my translation). And at the end of his biography of Abraham, Philo declares that because he obeyed the natural law he was "himself a law" (νόμος αὐτὸς ὢν, *Abr.* 276; cf. *Decal.* 1). Given the way Philo uses both the three patriarchs and all righteous people living before the Laws as archetypes for the virtuous who live according to the natural law afterwards (cf. *Abr.* 4–6; *Virt.* 119; *Somn.* 1.160–161, 168), this necessarily means that, using Philo's phrases quoted above, those who follow the natural law "by the innate good of their natural disposition" (κατ᾽ εὐμοιρίαν φύσεως) are also "living laws" (ἔμψυχοι νόμοι), "a law unto themselves" (αὐτήκοος; cf. αὐτομαθὴς, αὐτοδίδακτος), and a "law oneself" (νόμος αὐτὸς ὢν) as well. As Philo says, "the lives of those who have earnestly followed virtue may be called unwritten laws [νόμοι ἄγραφοι]" *(Virt.* 194; cf. νόμος ἄγραφος in *Decal*. 1).

In addition, Philo constantly quotes or alludes to Deut 30:11–14 (esp. vv. 11 and 14): "this commandment… is not too hard for you, nor is it too far away…. [T]he word is very near to you; it is in your mouth and in your heart for you to observe."[5] But this is

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practising, nor practice either unless the foundation of nature and teaching has first been laid. Very properly, then, Moses thus associated these three together, nominally men, but really, as I have said, virtues—teaching, nature, practice" (*Abr.* 52–54; cf. *Congr.* 34–38). But as I demonstrated, sometimes they are all conflated because "each [Patriarch] possesses the three qualities" (*Abr*. 53), but they serve as heuristic allegorical models for Philo's teaching on virtue through allegorical exegesis.

[5] NRSV: Surely, this commandment that I am commanding you today is not too hard for you, nor is it too far away. It is not in heaven, that you should say, "Who will go up to heaven for us, and get it for us so that we may hear it and observe it?" Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, "Who will cross

stripped of all specific historical and covenantal references and collapsed into a universally available natural law—the concept of virtue or the good (*Somn.* 2.180; *Virt*. 183; *Praem*. 79–82; *Prob*. 67–68; *Mut.* 236–238).[6] This proves both (a) that "the acquisition of the good [ἡ ἀγαθοῦ κτῆσις][7] is neither impossible nor hard to pursue" (*Mut.* 236) and (b) that reason "achieving righteousness" (*Mut.* 236) is a real possibility because the divine commandments are "firmly set in three of the parts of which each of us is constituted, mouth and heart and hand" (*Praem*. 80).[8] Thus, the presence of divine laws within the heart (cf. Rom 2:15, 29) for Philo has nothing to do with the covenant (let

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to the other side of the sea for us, and get it for us so that we may hear it and observe it?" No, the word is very near to you; it is in your mouth and in your heart for you to observe.

[6] *Praem*. 79–82 is representative:

> If, he says, you keep the divine commandment in obedience to his ordinances and accept his precepts, not merely to hear them but to carry them out by your life and conduct, the first boon you will have is victory over your enemies. For the commandments are not too huge and heavy for the strength of those to whom they will apply, nor is the good far away either beyond the sea or at the end of the earth, so that it requires of you a lingering and wearisome exile, nor has it suddenly left this earth to settle in Heaven, so that one can scarce reach them though he soar on high and wing his way thither. No, it is close by, very near, firmly set in three of the parts of which each of us is constituted, mouth and heart and hand, representing in a figure respectively speech and thought and action. For if our words correspond with our thoughts and intentions and our actions with our words and the three mutually follow each other, bound together with indissoluble bonds of harmony, happiness prevails and happiness is wisdom pure of all falsehood, the higher and the lower wisdom, the higher for the worship of God, the lower for the regulation of human life. Now while the commandments of the laws are only on our lips our acceptance of them is little or none, but when we add thereto deeds which follow in their company, deeds shown in the whole conduct of our lives, the commandments will be as it were brought up out of the deep darkness into the light and surrounded with the brightness of good fame and good report.

[7] Cf. Rom 2:7 (ὑπομονὴν ἔργου ἀγαθοῦ) and 2:10 (τῷ ἐργαζομένῳ τὸ ἀγαθόν).

[8] Though I cannot delve into Paul's use of Deut 30:11–14 in Rom 10:1–13, the fact that Paul offers an interpretation of Deut 30:11–14 that not only directly contradicts something like Philo's (which teaches obedience to divine laws and works), but also interprets the "word" to which Deuteronomy refers to mean the contingent word of the gospel of Christ (Rom 10:8) that cannot be known apart from specific emissaries (10:14–17)—and thus is diametrically opposed to Philo's interpretation of the ubiquitous knowledge of divine commands within everyone's heart—coheres and thereby strengthens my contention that Paul is arguing with a Philonic teacher throughout Romans.

alone the new covenant[9]) and everything to do with the ubiquity and nearness of the natural law. This creates the real possibility of obedience, and thereby the inherent culpability of disobedience. In one passage Philo explicitly coordinates learning about and avoiding the wrath of God, with Deut 30 as providing the solution to avoiding that wrath:

> So then, my mind, having learned how great an evil is the wrath of God, and how great a good is the gladness of God, stir not up to thine own destruction aught that deserves His anger, but practise those things only by which thou shalt make God glad. And these thou shalt not find by traversing long roads where no foot has trodden, or by crossing seas where no ship has sailed, nor by pressing without a pause to the boundaries of land and ocean. For they do not dwell apart in the far distance, nor are they banished from the habitable world, but, as Moses says (Deut. xxx. 12–14), the good is stationed just beside thee and shares thy nature, close bound with the three most essential parts, heart, mouth and hands, that is mind, speech, actions. (*Somn.* 2.179–180)

This passage corresponds to the flow of argument in Rom 1:18–2:15, which progresses from learning about God's wrath to learning about how avoiding it is not impossible, because of the ubiquitous presence and knowledge of the natural law that is implanted within every heart and can be obeyed as evidenced by those righteous gentiles who actually do this.

Additionally, Rom 2 speaks of how the "conscience" (συνείδησις) "witnesses" (συμμαρτυρέω) to a person's thoughts either "accusing" (κατηγορέω) or "excusing" (ἀπολογέομαι) (Rom 2:15) and is thereby a proof that those who do not have the written Law "are a law for themselves" (ἑαυτοῖς εἰσιν νόμος) (2:14). Philo likewise "thought of

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[9] On this point, see Trent A. Rogers, "Philo's Universalization of Sinai in *De decalogo* 32-49," *SPhiloA* 24 (2012): 85–105. I will return to this below.

the conscience as a retrospective judge of past action, and brings the notion of natural law into connection with moral awareness" (cf. *Decal.* 87; *Deus* 126; *Post.* 59; *Fug.* 131, 203–206; *Det.* 23).[10] These all bear striking resemblances with Rom 2:15.

One particularly remarkable similarity is found in *Quod deterius potiori insidari soleat.* Philo proclaims that "the reins of conscience" (ταῖς τοῦ συνειδότος ἡνίαις) are like a "'man,' dwelling in the soul of each of us" that acts "as judge [δικαστὴς] and umpire [βραβευτὴς] of life's contests" and also "assumes the part of witness [μάρτυρος] or accuser [κατηγόρου], and, all unseen, convicts [ἐλέγχει] us from within" (*Det.* 23). Elsewhere Philo says "that the mind is a witness [μάρτυς] to each individual of the determinations which he comes to in secret; and conscience [συνειδὸς]… is the most incorruptible and truth-telling witness [μάρτυς] of all" (*Post.* 59 [Yonge]). This viewpoint permeates Philo's writings:

> For every soul has for its birth-fellow and house-mate a monitor whose way is to admit nothing that calls for censure, whose nature is ever to hate evil and love virtue, who is its accuser and its judge in one. If he be once roused as accuser he censures, accuses and puts the soul to shame, and again as judge, he instructs, admonishes and exhorts it to change its ways. And if he has the strength to persuade it, he rejoices and makes peace. But if he cannot, he makes war to the bitter end, never leaving it alone by day or night, but plying it with stabs and deadly wounds until he breaks the thread of its miserable and ill-starred life. (*Decal.* 87)

> When this Conviction comes to the surface it makes a record of all the soul's transgressions, and rebukes and reproaches and calls shame upon it almost without ceasing. And the soul thus convicted sees in their true light its practices each and all, which were contrary to right reason, and then perceives that it is foolish and intemperate and unjust and infected with pollution. (*Deus* 126)

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[10] Chadwick, "St. Paul and Philo," 294.

> Conscience [συνειδότος], established in the soul like a judge [δικαστὴς], is never abashed in administering reproofs, sometimes employing sharper threats, sometimes gentler admonitions; threats, where the wrongdoing appeared to be deliberate; admonitions, to guard against a like lapse in the future, when the misconduct seemed unintentional and the result of want of caution. (*Opif.* 128)

Although Sterling notes the parallels between Rom 2:15 and Philo on this topic, he thinks there is a slight difference between the two because he maintains that Philo primarily used the conscience "with a form of rebuke" whereas in Rom 2:15 "it could commend or condemn."[11] But these examples show that Philo thinks the conscience is more than just "a form of rebuke" and "condemn" might be putting too much meaning into κατηγορέω (2:15). Also, Sterling only cites *Conf.* 121. But, even this seems to cohere well with Rom 2:15 specifically and the message of 1:18–2:15 more broadly regarding "those who practice [τὰ πράσσοντες]" ἀδικία and ἀσέβεια (a distinctive dyad that only appears here in Romans, but frequently in Philo as discussed previously):

> But it is the conscience [συνειδὸς] within which convicts them and pricks them in spite of the exceeding godlessness [ἀθεότης] of their lives, thus drawing them on reluctantly to assent to the truth that all human doings are surveyed by a superior [nature {φύσεως}] and that there awaits them an [impartial {ἀδέκαστος}] avenger, even justice [δίκην], who hates the unjust [ἀδίκους] deeds [πράξεις] of the impious [ἀσεβῶν] and the arguments which advocate [συνηγόρους] those deeds. (*Conf.* 121)

As we can see, this is remarkably similar to the message and language not only of the conscience in Rom 2:15 in particular,[12] but also to 1:18–2:15 as a whole. Here in *Conf.* 121 Philo relates the conscience to "nature" (φύσις) just as it is in Rom 2:14–15. It

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[11] Sterling, "'A Law to Themselves,'" 45.

[12] In Rom 2:15 the "conscience" (συνείδησις) "witnesses" (συμμαρτυρέω) to a person's thoughts either "accusing" (κατηγορέω) or "excusing" (ἀπολογέομαι).

resides “within,” but it is “a superior nature” equated with “justice,” which is an “impartial avenger.” Further, Philo says the conscience is an “avenger” (τιμωρός) on the “unjust” (ἄδικος) “practice” (πρᾶξις) of the impious (ἀσεβής) (cf. Rom 2:15 and ἀδικία and ἀσέβεια in 1:18 and πράσσω in 1:32) and on “arguments which advocate [συνηγόρους] those deeds” (cf. συνευδοκοῦσιν τοῖς πράσσουσιν in Rom 1:32). The “avenging” (τιμωρός) function actually sounds close to, if not more severe than, the “accusing” (κατηγορέω) function in Rom 2:15 Sterling says is lacking in Philo.

Nevertheless, as all of these examples show, Rom 2:15 coheres quite well with Philo’s statements on the conscience. But crucially, all these views of conscience contrasts with what we know of Paul elsewhere since nothing else in the Pauline corpus is exactly like the position articulated in Rom 2:15. Although Paul has a limited role for the conscience elsewhere (e.g., he is sensitive not to bother it in matters of food and drink), he defers to the judgment of Christ in 1 Cor 4:3–4. More importantly, Paul never elsewhere links the function of the conscience to the presence of a (natural) law within each person.

In sum, the ideas presented in Rom 2:14–15—the possibility of being a law unto oneself, doing the law in accordance with nature, the work of the law upon one’s heart, and the particular function of the conscience—are repeatedly emphasized by Philo. Conversely, these ideas are almost entirely absent from the rest of Romans and the rest of the Pauline corpus.

7.2 Philo and Rom 2:2–16a: Individuated Soteriological Judgment according to Merit

As discussed in chapter 5, the judgment described in Rom 2 is soteriological, individuated, and meritorious. It is soteriological because it involves receiving eschatological life or not (2:7–10). It is individuated because salvation depends on what "each person" does (2:6).[13] And it is meritorious because eschatological salvation is earned by persevering in good deeds. Eschatological life is, then, what God is under obligation to give back (ἀποδίδωμι) (2:6) to the one who "perseveres in good work" (2:7) and "does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek" (2:10).

This kind of judgment is only intelligible on the premise of a universal natural law; otherwise it would be a monumental miscarriage of justice for God to judge people according to a standard they had no access to apart from special revelation. Hence, this is precisely the case being made in Rom 1:18–32 and 2:11–16a. The disobedient in 1:18–32 knew better. They knew God, the truth, and his ordinances, but they chose to reject all this and to sin. Thus, "the judgment of God is according to the truth on those practicing such things" (2:2). Similarly, another reason why their condemnation is just is evinced by the fact that there are righteous gentiles who are obedient to the natural law; they are a law unto themselves (2:14–15). Therefore, all who sin, whether a Jew or a Greek, will not be granted immortality because everyone knows what they ought to do (2:8–9, 11–12) and because everyone has the ability to obey, as the presence of righteous gentiles attests.

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[13] This also erases covenantal belonging and the promises attendant to Israel's election as discussed in chapter 5. This will be another point of correspondence between Rom 2 and Philo, which we will get to below.

Hence the scenario is just, in essence, because of universal capacity—capacity to know God's nature and demands, and capacity to act on that knowledge.

We considered above how this construal of divine judgment is absent from the rest of Romans and from Paul's writings as a whole. Paul definitely believed in a future judgment in terms of deeds, but this judgment is not in a soteriological register (e.g., 1 Cor 3:15). Soteriology for Paul is never on the basis of any deeds; it is always an unmerited and unconditional gift (e.g., Rom 6:23). We also noted how Sanders has demonstrated that meritorious soteriology is largely absent from the various branches of Palestinian Judaism.[14] But there is a remarkable congruence between the meritorious individualist soteriology in Rom 2 and Philo's views.

A caveat is necessary at this point, however. As Ronald R. Cox cautions, "it is worth asking whether 'soteriology' or 'salvation' really are appropriate terms to use when discussing Philo's understanding of the soul."[15] Philo is indebted to Hellenistic philosophy and the philosophers do not really have a concept of eschatological salvation in the way that many Christians and Jews did. Rather they are concerned about "the soul's achieving its fulfillment."[16] That said, there is explicit soteriological language in Philo (e.g., Philo speaks about "full salvation [σωτηρίαν παντελῆ]" in *Migr.* 2; cf.

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[14] E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977), esp. 4–12, 426–28, 549–52. Though Sanders identified 4 Ezra as a possible, even probable, exception (ibid., 409–18). And Philo, of course, was outside the scope of his study on "Palestinian Judaism."

[15] Ronald R. Cox, "Traveling the Royal Road: The Soteriology of Philo of Alexandria," in *This World and the World to Come: Soteriology in Early Judaism*, ed. Daniel M. Gurtner, LSTS 74 (London: T&T Clark, 2011), 170.

[16] Cox, "Traveling," 170.

σώζεσθαι in *QG* 3.52). Philo thinks that vice is a major problem that will prevent one's soul from attaining to immortality; consequently, to merit salvation it is necessary to free oneself from enslavement to the passions. So it is appropriate to speak of Philo's soteriology in terms of the immortality of the soul, which is to say, "the journey of the soul heavenward" into incorruptibility and immortality by virtue of leaving the passions behind (note the language of ἀφθαρσία and ψυχή in Rom 2:7, 9).[17] This journey without a doubt "is demonstrably his primary concern" and can justifiably be discussed under the notion of "salvation" or "soteriology" at least for our present purposes.[18]

In the discussion of ἀσέβεια and ἀδικία in the previous chapter, it was shown how Philo says that these orientations merit punishments in no uncertain terms ("eternal death" in *Post.* 39). That is, these do not merit immortality. And the opposite holds as well.

Philo succinctly states that the Law of Moses deals "with the punishment of the impious" as well as "with the honouring of the just" (τὸ μὲν περὶ κολάσεως ἀσεβῶν, τὸ δ' αὖ περὶ τιμῆς δικαίων) (*Mos.* 2.46–47). He goes to say that these just ones are those who "observe the laws" and "accept gladly the duty of following nature [ἀκολουθίαν φύσεως] and live in accordance with the ordering of the universe" (2.48). Moreover, just like in Rom 2:13, here and in *Praem.* 79–84 Philo emphasizes doing the law, not only hearing it (see esp. "keep the divine commandment in obedience to his ordinances and accept his precepts, not merely to hear them but to carry them out by your life and conduct"–*Praem.*

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[17] Cox, "Traveling," 169.
[18] Cox, "Traveling," 169.

79; cf. 82). Regarding eternal life, Philo asks, "And is it not life eternal [ἀλλ᾽ οὐ ζωὴ μέν ἐστιν αἰώνιος] to take refuge with Him that IS, and death to flee away from Him" (*Fug.* 78; cf. *QE* 2.40). This is why Philo says that idolaters justly deserve punishment, namely, because they are deliberately 'fleeing away from God':

> Idolaters cut away the most excellent support of the soul, the rightful conception of the Ever-living God. Like boats without ballast they are for ever [sic] tossed and carried about hither and thither, never able to come to harbour or to rest securely in the roadstead of truth [ἀληθείᾳ], blind [τυφλώττοντες] to the one thing worthy of contemplation, which alone demands keen-sighted vision. To my mind they live a more miserable life than those who have lost the sight of the body, for those have been disabled through no wish of their own but either through suffering from some grievous disease of the eyes or through the malice of their enemies, but these others have of deliberate purpose [ἑκουσίῳ γνώμῃ] not only dimmed but without scruple cast away entirely the eye of the soul. And therefore pity for their misfortune waits upon the former [i.e., the physically blind], punishment for their depravity quite justly on the latter [τοῖς δὲ κόλασις ὡς μοχθηροῖς ἕπεται δικαίως]." (*Decal.* 67–69)

He goes on to say that "justice, who surveys human affairs, is inflexible and implacable towards such grave misdeeds, and when she thinks well to refrain from immediate chastisement, be sure that she does but put out her penalties to loan at high interest, only to exact them when the time comes to the common benefit of all" (95; cf. Rom 2:5). Using the flood and Sodom as paradigmatic examples of punishment, Philo comments:

> Therefore all those to whom God thought fit to grant abundance of the good gifts of bodily well-being and of good fortune in the shape of wealth and other externals—who then rebelled against virtue, and, freely and intentionally [ἑκουσίῳ] under no compulsion, practised knavery, injustice [ἀδικίαν] and the other vices [κακίας], thinking to gain much by losing all, were counted, Moses tells us, as enemies not of men but of the whole heaven and universe, and suffered not the ordinary, but strange and unexampled punishments wrought by the might of justice, the hater of evil and assessor of God. For the most forceful elements of the universe, fire and water, fell upon them, so that, as the times revolved, some perished by deluge, others were consumed by conflagration. (*Mos.* 2.53)

Philo provides a caveat to this, however, saying that "while in these disasters the impious [ἀσεβεῖς] were chastised with the said punishments, it was also the case that those who stood out in excellence of conduct fared well and received the rewards [ἄθλων] which their virtue deserved [ἐπαξίων]" (2.57).

Hence, for Philo, eternal death and eternal life or immortality are based on the choice of the individual[19] in the thick sense of how someone chooses to act.[20] Simply put, Philo believes that "wickedness is a willful malady of the soul" (*Sacr.* 48).

Cox points out that "salvation is not simply a human work for Philo; it is a result of God's providence that salvation, or the fulfillment of the human soul, is possible and occurs."[21] Cox's key text is *Abr*. 52–54 where the three patriarchs "are symbols of virtue acquired respectively by teaching, nature and practice" (52) and these then are said to be called according to others, not virtues, but "Graces [Χάριτας]…either because these values are a gift of God's grace [κεχαρίσθαι] to our kind for perfecting its life, or because they have given [δεδώρηνται] themselves to the reasonable soul as a perfect and most excellent gift [δώρημα τέλειον καὶ κάλλιστον]" (54). But in the latter sense they are more like "rewards" merited through living rationally (i.e., these χάριτες are congruous with

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[19] What exactly Philo means by "immortality" or "eternal life/death" can be confusing, but what is not confusing is its meritorious and incorporeal nature. It is significant that resurrection is not mentioned in Rom 2:5–10, but merely immortality and eschatological Life. As Paul goes on to refute the meritorious schema of earning immortality, Paul's emphasis on bodily resurrection in Rom 6–8 is likewise probably best read as a corrective of incorporeal immortality or Eternal Life. For a detailed examination of these concepts in Philo see Erwin R. Goodenough, "Philo on Immortality," *HTR* 39 (1946): 85–108; Fred W. Burnett, "Philo on Immortality: A Thematic Study of Philo's Concept of Παλιγγενεσία," *CBQ* 46 (1984): 447–70.

[20] Cf. Cox, "Traveling," 171–72, 176.

[21] Cox, "Traveling," 176–77.

the recipient). More importantly, in the former sense these are more like "capacities" that humans can choose to exercise or not (cf. *Leg*. 1.34). In fact, Philo sees God's χάριτες as the precondition for rewards and punishments (*Leg.* 1.35).[22]

To this end, it is worth quoting a rather lengthy discussion by Philo that shows that if God has any role in the soul's ascent it is merely providing it with the capacity for free will and that this provision is precisely the grounds for just rewards and punishments:

> For it is mind alone which the Father who begat it judged worthy of freedom, and loosening the fetters of necessity, suffered it to range as it listed, and of that *free-will* which is His most peculiar possession and most worthy of His majesty gave it such portion as it was capable of receiving. For the other living creatures in whose souls the mind, the element set apart for liberty, has no place, have been committed under yoke and bridle to the service of men, as slaves to a master. But man, possessed of a spontaneous and self-determined will, whose activities for the most part rest on *deliberate choice*, is with reason *blamed* for what he does wrong with intent, *praised* when he acts rightly of his own will. In the others, the plants and animals, no praise is due if they bear well, nor blame if they fare ill: for their movements and changes in either direction come to them from no deliberate choice or volition of their own. But the soul of man alone has received from God the faculty of *voluntary movement*, and in this way especially is made like to Him, and thus being liberated, as far as might be, from that hard and ruthless mistress, necessity, *may justly be charged with guilt, in that it does not honour its Liberator. And therefore it will rightly pay the inexorable penalty which is meted to ungrateful freedmen*. (*Deus* 47–48; my emphases; cf. *Leg*. 1.34–35, 45–52).

Thus, God indeed provides the tools for the task of salvation, but it is nevertheless up to the individual human to choose virtue. That is, Philo does not perfect the notion of "efficacy," contra Barclay,[23] because there are some who will not make any use of God's

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[22] Philo does have a few comments that seem to suggest he also has a notion of what theologians have called "common grace" (e.g., rain and springs, rationality, etc.) (see *Leg.* 1.34; *Sacr*. 124; *Migr*. 186).

[23] Barclay, *Paul*, 73, 225, 237. This is based on one fragmentary section in *Leg.* 4 that says "[Moses ascribes the powers and causes of all things to God, leaving no work for a created being but

good gifts; indeed, the practice of virtue is "to some impossible" (*Leg.* 1.34). Hence, "those who strive after low and base and earthly things shall die in respect of true life—the soul, wandering about in the manner of the dead. But those who desire heavenly things and are borne on high shall be saved [σωθήσονται] alone, exchanging mortal for immortal life." (*QG* 4.46; cf. 66; cf. *Ios*. 264). Again, "For while it is the portion of the wise to dwell in the heavenly region of Olympus, since they have ever learned to make the heights their resort, ... the depths of Hades are the abode allotted to the bad [κακοὶ], who from first to last have made dying their occupation, and from the cradle to old age are accustomed to corruption [φθορᾶς]" (*Somn.* 1.151).

In addition to the emphasis on individual volition, there are other notable correspondences. There is the constant use of the language of penalty and/or reward. And Rom 2:9 also says that it is "the soul of a person" (ψυχὴν ἀνθρώπου) that either receives "incorruptibility" and "eternal life" (ἀφθαρσίαν…ζωὴν αἰώνιον, 2:7) or "death" (θάνατος, 1:32) and "destruction" (ἀπόλλυμι, 2:12)—which are presumably also "eternal" given the parallel rewards and punishments in 2:6–12. This use of ψυχή, however, is peculiar for Paul. It is never again the object of judgment in any of the other judgment texts that bear his name.

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showing it to be inactive and passive" (quoted in *Paul*, 225). Given how incongruous this is with vast swaths of Philo's other statements, it is rather likely that Philo is using hyperbole in this text. Or, since Philo goes on, as Barclay acknowledges, "to speak of the 'worth' of the recipient" (*Paul*, 225), Philo could simply be making a subtle distinction between *cause* and *condition*. That is, immortal ascent to God is solely *caused* by God, but that gift is *conditioned* by the worth of the recipient (cf. *Paul*, 378n71). In any case, Barclay is violating his own method for analyzing Philo's thought by giving so much weight to a demonstrably unusual comment, but he says his analysis will highlight "the signs of maximum emphasis" in Philo's corpus (*Paul*, 213). What finds maximal emphasis in Philo is the notion that some people make no use of God's graces as shown forth above.

But we can observe the same language unique to Rom 2 in Philo. He too says that is "the soul of a person" (ἡ ἀνθρώπου ψυχὴ) that must the "rightly pay the inexorable penalty" (*Deus* 48). Moreover, this penalty (τιμωρία) he says in another place is "living while always dying—a certain manner of death which endures deathless and unending" (*Praem.* 70; my translation)[24] and in still another "eternal banishment":

> He who is cast forth by God is subject to eternal banishment [τὴν ἀίδιον φυγὴν]. For to him who is not as yet firmly in the grip of wickedness [κακίας] it is open to repent [μετανοήσαντι] and return to the virtue from which he was driven, as an exile returns to his fatherland. But to him that is weighed down and enslaved by that fierce and incurable malady, the horrors of the future must needs be undying and eternal [τοῦ παντὸς αἰῶνος]: he is thrust forth to the place of the impious [ἀσεβῶν], there to endure misery continuous and unrelieved. (*Cher.* 2; cf. 4, 9; *Leg.* 1.105–108; *Post.* 39)

The righteous, however, are rewarded with incorporeal immortality and eternal life (e.g., *Fug.* 78; cf. *Spec.* 1.303; *Cher.* 113–115). They "find eternal life as their reward instead of death" (ἀντὶ θανάτου ζωὴν ἀίδιον ἆθλον εὕρηται) (*Fug*. 97), like Abraham, who "inherited incorruption [ἀφθαρσίαν] and became equal to the angels, for angels—those unbodied and blessed souls…. those who have dispensed with the instruction of men and have become apt pupils of God receive the free unlaboured knowledge … are translated into the genus of the imperishable and fully perfect [εἰς τὸ ἄφθαρτον καὶ τελεώτατον γένος μετανίστανται]" (*Sacr.* 5–7; cf. 8).[25] The righteous are saved as "the souls [ψυχαὶ]

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[24] ζῆν ἀποθνήσκοντα ἀεὶ καὶ τρόπον τινὰ θάνατον ἀθάνατον ὑπομένειν καὶ ἀτελεύτητον. Cf. *Praem*. 69–71; *Spec.* 1.304.

[25] Technically, though both Abraham and Jacob as well as Isaac merit immortality, Philo makes a subtle distinction between Abraham and Jacob on the one hand and Isaac on the other on account of the different descriptions of what happens to them at death in Genesis. Cox observes that "Genesis 35.29 says that when he breathed his last Isaac was added not to 'his people' (ὁ λαὸς αὐτοῦ), like his father and grandfather, but to 'his race' (or 'his genus', ὁ γένος αὐτοῦ)" and this is interpreted to mean that Isaac was awarded a "higher ascent" ("Traveling," 175). For our purposes, the fact that Isaac merits a "higher ascent"

of those who have given themselves to genuine philosophy, who from first to last study to die to the life in the body, that a higher existence immortal [ἀφθάρτου] and incorporeal, in the presence of Him who is Himself immortal [ἀφθάρτῳ] and uncreate, may be their portion" (*Gig.* 14; cf. 31, 61). As Fred W. Burnett sums up, "Incorporeal existence in the presence of God… is only for virtuous souls. Souls which did not allow God to free them from the world of sense-perception are doomed to perish with it" (cf. *Gig*. 15).[26]

It needs to be appreciated that Philo seems to be rather optimistic about people attaining to immortality so the fact that it is meritorious ought not to be construed as a pessimistic outlook. Quite obviously, Philo is not setting up an unattainable ideal. We have already laid out how Philo is particularly confident about the existence of righteous gentiles—philosophers in particular (e.g., *Prob.* 62–74; *Virt.* 65; *Spec.* 2.42–47; cf. *Opif.* 8). Philo even effectively lowers the bar to attaining to immortality or eternal life from being perfectly virtuous as the patriarchs were (as well as the virtuous gentile sages and philosophers throughout the ages) to something more manageable. Those one step below them are called "the practiser[s]" (ὁ ἀσκητής, οἱ ἀσκηταί) (*Mut.* 84; *Somn.* 1.150–152).[27] They are "midway between those extremes [of 'the wise' and 'the bad']" and thus they "are often stepping up and down as upon a stairway, either being drawn upwards by the better portion or dragged in the opposite direction by the worse, until God, the umpire of

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is superfluous. Indeed, Philo goes on to say that Moses ascends even higher (*Sacr.* 8; quoting Deut 5:31). The point here is that Philo believes that meritorious incorruption and immortality awaits the virtuous even if there is a spectrum of ascent (cf. Cox, "Traveling," 175–76).

[26] Burnett, "Philo on Immortality," 470.

[27] Cf. Michael L. Satlow, "Philo on Human Perfection," *JTS* 59 (2008): 500–519, esp. 515–18.

this strife and conflict, bestows the prizes on the better order, and brings its opposite to perdition" (*Somn.* 1.152). As Goodenough comments, "the 'practisers,'… are doing the best they can and seem [to be] going now up, now down, the great ladder [of virtue]" and thus will ultimately be saved as "God finally settles the strife by dividing the bad in them from the good, by which we infer again that God separates the body from the soul or mind; he rewards the one while he sends the other to perdition."[28] Philo discusses this same idea at length in *De migratione Abahami* in the figure of Joseph (*Migr.* 17–24). Goodenough succinctly captures the significance of this rather lengthy digression thus:

> Joseph represents an ordinary man who is honestly trying to save his soul (or "mind"). Such a man makes occasional sorties from the body in mystical flight, but really spends his life in "Egypt," the world of bodily things. When he dies he is buried in Egypt, where everything but the "bones" decay. But in the great migration led by Moses from Egypt the bones of that man are carried out to the Promised Land. In plain terms. Joseph is saved…. Through this salvation man, or at least his spiritual "mind" as represented by the bones in the story, may hope after death to return to the divine source.[29]

In another place Philo distinguishes "the beginners, those making progress, and those who have reached perfection" (*Agr*. 159). While the philosophers "have reached perfection" the ἀσκηταί seem to be both "the beginners" and "those making progress," as Michael L. Satlow concludes.[30] Both the beginners and those progressing are consciously trying to attain virtue and perfection. But Philo further distinguishes these people who are "half-way…to virtue" (i.e., the ἀσκηταί) from "the perfect man" (philosophers) and from

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[28] Goodenough, "Philo on Immortality," 94.
[29] Goodenough, "Philo on Immortality," 98–100.
[30] Satlow, "Philo on Human Perfection," 516.

the person Philo calls "the hoper" (ὁ ἐλπίζων, *Abr.* 47).[31] The "hoper…is defective inasmuch as he always desired the excellent, he has not yet been able to attain it, but resembles sailors eager to put into port, who yet remain at sea unable to reach their haven" (*Abr*. 47). These are people who are "slow-souled dullards [who] labour fruitlessly in the study of any branch of knowledge" (*Deus* 93). But Philo says:

> Let none then of the lowly or obscure in repute shrink through despair of the higher hope from thankful supplication to God, but even if he no longer expects any greater boon, give thanks according to his power for the gifts which he has already received. Vast is the number of such gifts, birth, life, nurture, soul, sense-perception, mental picturing, impulse, reasoning…. We should indeed pray that our course may lie amid the collected body of the many virtues. But if this be too great for human nature, let us be content whenever it be granted to consort with one of the specific virtues, with temperance, or courage, or justice or humanity. Let the soul carry in its womb and bring to the birth one good thing at least and not be unfruitful and barren of them all. (*Mut.* 222, 225)

This means, as Satlow observes, that "even for the ungifted hopers, all is not hopeless" because "[a]lthough some can never achieve perfection, they nevertheless can acquire virtue. Everybody by nature is capable of acquiring something of at least some cardinal virtue, and for some, that is the most that they are able to achieve."[32] And this is exactly where the written Law can aid both the ἀσκητής and the ἐλπίζων so that they can "follow the philosophy of Moses, a faithful impress of the divine image" (*Mut.* 223).

I will return to the Law as an aid in acquiring virtue, but here we only want to highlight that Philo's optimism about the capacity of many to acquire virtue and thereby to merit immortality and eternal life through their own efforts is consonant with Rom

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[31] This and the following examples come from Satlow, "Philo on Human Perfection," 516–17.
[32] Satlow, "Philo on Human Perfection," 516, 517 respectively.

2:6–10. Moreover, Philo customarily uses ψυχή as the object of judgment and recipient of things such as incorruptibility, immortality, eternal life, or eternal death, whereas ψυχή only occurs here in relation to these things in all of Paul's writings. Neither Rom 2:6–10 nor Philo demands perfection but both require a consistent and well-intentioned effort or striving—a "persevering in doing the good" (Rom 2:7; cf. 2:10) rather than "the bad [τὸ κακόν]" (2:9). Both the ἀσκητής and the ἐλπίζων as Philo defines them would seem to meet this criterion.

In short, Philo believes in salvation through works. This is both necessary and possible. It is also clear that Philo is entirely comfortable with the existence of righteous gentiles who are saved by works apart from following the specific written laws of Moses. These are not a hypothetical construct in his thinking; they are necessary, acceptable, and actual (*Prob.* 62–74; *Virt.* 65; *Spec.* 2.42–47; cf. *Opif.* 8) as they are in Rom 2, which we observed in chapter 5. However, elsewhere Paul does not think anyone can be saved if merit is the basis and works the criterion. Paul says the Scriptures testify *en masse* against this optimism (Rom 3:9–20, 23; cf. Gal 3:22). "No one will be declared righteous [and thereby saved] by doing works of Law" (Rom 3:20, 28; Gal 2:16). We saw in chapter 5, moreover, that the presence of righteous gentiles apart from the written Law is only a problem to be solved for traditional readings of Rom 1–3. The text as its stands from 1:18–2:29 not only allows for the possibility of righteous gentiles (for the same conceptual reasons in Philo's teaching regarding natural law and knowledge of God), but depends on their actual existence for the rhetorical points being made therein regarding a hypocritical law-breaking Jew in 2:25–29 (regardless of who is speaking when). This is

why a lot of commentors are dubious about the arguments that the presence of righteous gentiles in Rom 2 are merely hypothetical. If they do not really exist, then this part of the argument, which is hard to escape from in the text itself, simply does not work, and whence comes the Christian solution. But we already saw how iterations of the Christian solution in relation to the presence of righteous gentiles in Rom 2 generate significant problems in turn. A dialogical "solution from the character" is preferable.

7.2.1 Philo's Deliberate De-Covenantal Nomism

Having already discussed the surprising absence of Israel's covenants, election, and attendant promises in Rom 2 compared to 9–11 (esp. αἱ διαθῆκαι … αἱ ἐπαγγελίαι in 9:4; ἐκλογή in 9:11; 11:5, 7, 28; cf. 15:8) in chapter 5, we turn now to note how Rom 2 nevertheless fits Philo's distinctive teachings about the Jews and Judaism precisely.

Philo avoids nearly all mention of God's covenant with Israel as Philonic scholars have often noted. Ellen Birnbaum has observed that what is "[e]specially noteworthy is that despite the centrality of the covenant to the relationship between God and Israel in the Bible, Philo mentions this covenant only four times (*Sacr*. 57; *Det*. 67; *QE* 2.34, 106). In the two passages in which he expounds upon the term (*Sacr*. 57 and *QE* 2.106), he interprets it symbolically."[33] This is a loud silence in Philo and one of the key features that distinguishes his teachings from "the broad areas in common with other Judaisms."[34] Similarly, Mireille Hadas-Lebel comments:

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[33] Ellen Birnbaum, *The Place of Judaism in Philo's Thought: Israel, Jews, and Proselytes*, BJS 290 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 132.

[34] Samuel Sandmel, "Parallelomania," *JBL* 81 (1962): 3.

> The absence of the notion of "Covenant" from his commentary has, until now, been insufficiently underlined. Whenever it might have been invoked as a justification for observance, he seems to have systematically avoided this, no doubt, by design. Thus Philo eludes the notion of Covenant with regard to circumcision even when he comes to comment directly on the verse: "And my covenant shall be in your flesh" (Genesis 17.13). In his commentary, the term covenant is to be read as divine word, as if this goes without saying. The explanation is situated at two allegorical levels: circumcision of the soul and circumcision of the body. In other words, domination of the instincts produced by the senses. A similar observation concerning the Sabbath may be detected in the verse: "It is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever" (Ex. 31.17), which has no place in the extrapolations that Philo devotes to the Sabbath.[35]

Therefore, "the fact that he understands the term [διαθήκη] in a variety of ways in his other writings and that he never affirms the Biblical sense of the covenant suggests that he may indeed not consider it central to the relationship between God and Israel."[36]

Trent A. Rogers has catalogued how Philo systematically redacts covenantal overtones from *De decalogo* as well as silently adding new descriptions to the LXX in key places so that "the Mosaic Law is [understood as] the very same Law as the law of nature (evidenced through creation and the patriarchs) and thus open to non-Jews."[37] In addition to the fact that the word διαθήκη itself is absent from *De decalogo*, Rogers analyzes other important omissions and concludes that "[t]he fact that Philo omits from the Sinai narrative 'Sinai,' ethnic descriptions of the people, Jewish descriptions of God, and cultic and covenantal elements suggest that Philo's reworking of the narrative is a deliberate muting of especially Jewish elements."[38] The result of Philo's "removal of the

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[35] Mireille Hadas-Lebel, *Philo of Alexandria: A Thinker in the Jewish Diaspora*, trans. Robyn Fréchet, SPhA 7 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 113.

[36] Birnbaum, *Philo's Thought*, 133.

[37] Rogers, "Philo's Universalization," 91–104, here 101.

[38] Rogers, "Philo's Universalization," 91.

covenantal context of the Law" is to "advance a positive argument that the people, or more properly persons [because here Rogers is highlighting Philo's highly individualized thinking], addressed at Sinai are not Jews but everyone who obeys the Law; obedience to the Law is a viable possibility even for those with the Law if they live in accord with nature and reason as the patriarchs demonstrate."[39]

Philo uses this same kind of evasion when treating the notion of Israel's election. As Birnbaum summarizes:

> Philo provides the basis for a relationship with God other than through the covenant and, while retaining the notion that God chooses, he redefines who or what is chosen….[P]assages…suggest that one earns special standing with God through merit. Philo emphasizes, for example, that God responds to the devoted worshipper (*Sacr*. 87) and to those who draw near to Him—i.e., all wise and understanding people (*Migr*. 57–59). Redefining "Israel" as "the one that sees God," he also explains that the one that sees belongs to the one who is seen. This "chosen race of Israel," moreover, is virtue (*Post*. 91–92).[40]

This position is observable elsewhere as well. For instance, when dealing with a Scripture that deals explicitly with Israel's election., Deut 26:17–18, in *Virt.* 184–185,

> Philo does not acknowledge the literal sense of the Biblical verses that God and the people of Israel choose each other, and he omits reference to the nation's agreement to obey God's commandments. Instead, he changes the sense of a passage that describes the exclusive relationship between God and the historical nation to give the impression that such a relationship can be achieved by any genuine suppliant, a wise man, who seeks to please God and to serve Him.[41]

Philo makes a similar move when discussing Deut 30:9–11 in *Spec.* 1.299–303. He substitutes "Israel" used in Deuteronomy for "mind" (1.299) and thus God chooses not

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[39] Rogers, "Philo's Universalization," 96. This is markedly divergent from how Paul understands the Law (as chapter 4 and 5 discussed; cf. Rom 5:13–14; 7:1; 9:4; Gal 3:19–25).

[40] Birnbaum, *Philo's Thought*, 143.

[41] Birnbaum, *Philo's Thought*, 152; cf. 151.

Israel but rather "He chose as of special merit and judged worthy of pre-eminence over all, those who are in a true sense men" (1.303). In this way, "Philo eliminates the seeming arbitrariness of God's selection of Israel's ancestors as Scripture presents it. Retaining the notion that God chooses a select group, he redefines this group and attributes God's choice to their merit."[42]

Correspondingly, Philo explicitly and, as we shall see, at times vehemently opposes all notions that those born Jews inherit any sort of soteriological privilege. This, as noted above, differs pointedly not only with Paul in Rom 11:26–32 (cf. Gal 5:16),[43] but also with the Wisdom of Solomon, which unambiguously affirms Israel's privilege of expecting a merciful judgment (12:22; 15:1–3; 16:2). For example, Philo says, "But if any members of the nation betray the honour due to the One they should suffer the utmost penalties. They have abandoned their most vital duty, their service in the ranks of piety [εὐσεβείας]" (*Spec.* 1.54; cf. 55–59). Indeed, Philo suggests that if anything, those born Jews will incur a more severe punishment. In one text Philo personifies "noble-birth" (εὐγένεια) who says:

> With these things before my eyes, I count now as enemies and hereafter shall hold as such, those who have kindled the fuel of enmity into a flame, and I shall frown on them, *more than* on those whose reproach is their ignoble birth [δυσγένειαν]. They may plead in defence that they have no pattern of high excellence for their own, but you stand accused [ὑπόδικοι], you who spring from great houses, which boast and glory in the splendour of their race. For though you have good models at your side, almost, indeed, your birth fellows, you have never been minded to reproduce any of their excellence. (*Virt.* 197; my emphasis)

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[42] Birnbaum, *Philo's Thought*, 146.

[43] Cf. Susan Grove Eastman, "Israel and the Mercy of God: A Re-Reading of Galatians 6.16 and Romans 9-11," *NTS* 56 (2010): 367–95.

In another passage Philo writes:

> Yet let no one think that good lineage [εὐγένεια] is a perfect blessing and then neglect noble actions, but reflect that *greater [wrath]* [μείζονος ὀργῆς] *is due* to one who while his parentage is of the best brings shame upon his parents by the wickedness [κακίαν] of his ways. Guilty is he who, having for his own models of true excellence to copy, reproduces nothing that serves to direct his life aright and keep it sound and healthy. (*Spec.* 4.182; my emphasis)

Again:

> The proselyte exalted aloft by his happy lot will be gazed at from all sides, marvelled at and held blessed by all for two things of highest excellence, that he came over to the camp of God and that he has won a prize best suited to his merits [τῷ γέρας λαβεῖν οἰκειότατον], a place in heaven firmly fixed, greater than words dare describe, while the nobly born [εὐπατρίδης] who has falsified the sterling of his high lineage [εὐγενείας] will be dragged right down and carried into Tartarus itself and profound darkness. Thus may all men seeing these examples be brought to a wiser mind and learn that God welcomes the virtue which springs from ignoble birth, that He takes no account of the roots [ῥίζας] but accepts the full-grown stem, because it has been changed from a weed into fruitfulness. (*Praem.* 152)[44]

Philo goes so far as to say, "We ought to rebuke in no measured language those who celebrate nobility of birth [εὐγένεια] as the greatest of all blessings, and the cause also of great blessings" (*Virt.* 187). Therefore, "Since then nobility is the peculiar portion of a mind purged clean of every spot [ἡ εὐγένεια κεκαθαρμένης διανοίας καθαρσίοις τελείοις κλῆρος οἰκεῖος], we must give the name of noble [εὐγενεῖς] only to the temperate and just [δικαίους], even though their parents were slaves, homebred or purchased; but to the evil

[44] The above passages are similar to the claims found in Rom 2:6–12 and 25–27. Also, if my thesis is accepted, then it might not be coincidence that Paul makes precisely the opposite claim in Rom 11 than *Praem*. 152 that God looks upon disobedient Israelite branches mercifully (11:30–32) and acceptingly (11:15) precisely because of their holy "root" (ῥίζα) (11:16; cf. 11:28–29).

children of good parents that portion [of nobleness {τὸ εὐγενείας χωρίον}] must be closed ground" (189; cf. 198).

Given these three positions—no covenant relationship between God and Israel, thus no election, and also no mercy for Jews at the final judgment simply as Jews—it is no wonder that Philo also effectively renders Israel's sacrificial cult null and void:[45]

> For, if the worshipper is without kindly feeling or justice [ἄδικος], *the sacrifices are no sacrifices*, the consecrated oblation is desecrated, the prayers are words of ill omen with utter destruction waiting upon them. For, when to outward appearance they are offered, it is not a remission but a reminder of past sins which they effect. But, *if he is pure of heart and just* [δίκαιος], the sacrifice stands firm, though the flesh is consumed, or rather, *even if no victim at all is brought to the altar*. For the *true oblation, what else can it be but the devotion of a soul which is dear to God?* The thank-offering of such a soul receives immortality [ἀθανατίζεται], and is inscribed in the records of God, sharing the eternal life [συνδιαιωνίζον] of the sun and moon and the whole universe. (*Mos.* 2.107–108; my emphasis)

That is, there is no atonement for sins other than living rightly. Sacrifices have no expiatory effect for the sinful. Only the "pure of heart and just" can offer sacrifices (cf. *Deus* 9), but they need not offer any actual sacrifice at all since they themselves are "the true oblation" and will receive "immortality" and "eternal life" (cf. *Plant*. 108).

Philo's final paragraph in *De virtutibus* provides a succinct summary of his meritorious soteriology that rules out all Jewish covenantal privilege:[46]

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[45] Although Philo technically recognizes the importance of the Jerusalem temple (e.g., *Migr.* 92), as Joan E. Taylor observes, "he can at times move into the 'no-sacrifice-necessary' camp" (*Jewish Women Philosophers of First-Century Alexandria: Philo's "Therapeutae" Reconsidered* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003], 144).

[46] At first glance, the final portion of *De praemiis et poenis* (163–172) might seem to suggest that Philo after all does believe in a collective salvation of Israel based on the return from exile motif alluded to therein. But as Hadas-Lebel concludes, "Nothing suggests that this is so" (*Philo*, 198). Indeed, the final sentences bear this out. Philo writes that the enemies of the exiles will all of a sudden realize that they were tormenting

> *I doubt indeed if any more mischievous doctrine could be propounded than this*, that avenging justice will not follow the children of good parents if they turn to wickedness, and that honour [τιμή] will not be the reward of the good children of the wicked, thus contradicting the law, *which assesses each person on his own merits* and does not take into account the virtues or vices of his kinsmen in awarding praise or punishment. (*Virt.* 227; my emphasis)

7.2.2 Conclusions concerning Philo's Soteriology

Philo's soteriology is at odds with the Wisdom of Solomon and Rom 9–11 since both of these texts expect mercy for Israel—though in Wisdom this is a privileged and special mercy that does not apply to the nations (Wis 12:22; 15:1–3), while Paul expects mercy for all the disobedient, Israel and the nations alike (Rom 11:25–32). But Philo's soteriology coheres remarkably with that of Rom 2:1–16a. In addition to the similar vocabulary that I flagged in brackets (e.g., "honor," "immortality," "eternal life," "obey the truth," "injustice," "wrath," "the good," "the bad," etc.), both are explicitly meritorious. Both believe the meritorious standard can be (and has been) kept by both Jews and gentiles alike (with recourse to natural law theology). Hence, both of these

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> men of high lineage retaining sparks of their noble birth, which have to be but fanned into a flame [ἀλλ᾽ εἰς εὐπατρίδας ἔχοντας ἐναύσματα τῆς εὐγενείας], and from them shines out the glory which for a little while was quenched. For just as when the stalks of plants are cut away, if the roots are left undestroyed, new growths shoot up which supersede the old, so too *if in the soul a tiny seed be left of the qualities which promote virtue, though other things have been stripped away, still from that little seed spring forth the fairest and most precious things in human life*, by which states are constituted manned with good citizens, and nations grow into a great population. (*Praem.* 171–172; my emphasis)

Thus, the "return from exile" theme (see esp. 164–165), far from being a hope of covenant fulfillment in the course of history, actually becomes a metaphor for an individual's repentance that is grounded in the fact that all humans *qua* human have a 'spark of nobility' implanted within them by God that they have the power to (re)kindle at any moment (cf. *Virt.* 188; *Deus* 46; *Opif.* 146; *Leg.* 3.161; *Mut.* 223; *Det.* 90). For exile as a metaphor for a "foolish" person being "utterly an exile [φυγάς]" outside "the city of God" in contrast to the "wise" who is a "sojourner in the city of God" see *Cher.* 121 (cf. 2, 4, 9; *Prob*. 1–11).

meritorious schemas erase a covenantal framework of election and irrevocable promises, perhaps ultimately combined with special privileges and/or merciful judgment. God's covenant with Israel has no relevance whatsoever and can have no such relevance without entirely disrupting the meritocratic, self-evident, and universal schema in place.

7.3 Philo and Romans 2:17–2:29

7.3.1 A Teacher of Infants

I will focus on the peculiar phrase in Rom 2:17 "if you call yourself [ἐπονομάζῃ] a Jew" in the next main subsection, but will point out here that in this apostrophe Paul characterizes his interlocutor as someone who fancies themselves to be a teacher (2:19–21). This Teacher "boasts in" (2:23) and instructs from the Law since it is characterized as "the form of knowledge and truth" (2:20), the very same "truth" the fools in darkness described in Rom 1 have exchanged and suppressed (1:25, 18) albeit in its unwritten form.[47] Hence, it is important to note that whatever we make specifically of the implications of Paul's question "if you call yourself a Jew" (2:17) he is not characterizing any generic Jew *qua* Jew.[48]

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[47] That is, the Teacher seems to think their "students" are precisely those mentioned in Rom 1:18–32 (compare: "a light to those in darkness" in 2:19 and "corrector of fools" in 2:20 with "their senseless heart was darkened" in 1:21 and "professing to be wise they were shown to be foolish" in 1:22).

[48] Contra, e.g., Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 297, 315; Dunn, *Romans 1–8*, 108. Given that the Teacher boasts in the Law (Rom 2:17) it is not surprising that their self-designations echo some Israel's Scriptures (e.g., the light and darkness motif in Isaiah 9:2; 42:6–7l; 49:6) (cf. Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 317; Jewett, *Romans*, 225), but this does not mean that Paul is depicting Jews in general or a generic Jewish teacher. Rather, he is depicting a very specific sort of person with characterizations that cannot apply to just anyone. Since characterization is an important convention for speech-in-character, we ought to attend closely whenever we encounter explicit characterizations by an author.

This person has, Paul says, convinced themselves (πέποιθάς τε σεαυτὸν–2:19) that they are educators. They are guides, lights, correctors, and teachers; their students are (at least starting out as) blind, in darkness, fools, and infants (2:19–20). Jewett concludes that this text is not meant to characterize all Jews but rather "an insufferably arrogant bigot."[49] Although I am not so sure that "bigot" is the most apt label, Jewett is nevertheless picking up accurately on the fact that Paul has a very particular sort of person in mind. To highlight the pedagogical emphasis in view in Rom 2:19–21, I will continue to refer to the interlocutor as "the Teacher."[50] And it is now worth grasping here that Philo's conception of himself and his work—and thereby, of anyone who takes up his pedagogical agenda (as highlighted in chapter 6)—fits Paul's apostrophe very well.

For instance, just as the Teacher "relies on the Law" (Rom 2:17) and "boasts in the Law" (2:23) and can thereby "approve the superior things by being taught from the Law" (2:18), according to Philo, the one who has the Law as their "boast" (καύχημα) and is "always relying upon [ἐπερειδόμενος] and supporting [themselves] [σκηριπτόμενος] in the sacred laws… shall acquire the most excellent things [τὰ πάντων ἄριστα]" (*Spec.* 4.164–165 [Yonge]).[51] Hence, just as the Teacher "approves [δοκιμάζεις] the superior things [τὰ διαφέροντα] by being taught from the Law" (Rom 2:18), Philo says, "For the lawgiver wishes the virtuous man to be…a judge [κριτὴν] of the superior things

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[49] Jewett, *Romans*, 221. He refers to the interlocutor as "the bigot" throughout his section on Rom 2:17–29.

[50] Following the lead from Campbell in *Deliverance* throughout, who was drawing this term in turn from J. Louis Martyn.

[51] Strictly speaking this passage is about Israel's ideal king in Deut 17:19–20, but the tone of Philo's entire pericope is that everyone should strive to live like Israel's ideal king because he is casted as a philosopher-king. All ought to boast in, rely upon, and support themselves by the laws.

[διαφερόντων], distinguishing and separating things [διακρίνοντα καὶ διαστέλλοντα]" (*Somn.* 2.24; my translation; cf. δύνασθαι διακρίνειν in 2.22).

Philo definitely sees his vocation as corresponding to and extending the mission of the LXX translators (as he understands their motivations) to allow the Law to "shine out" (ἀναλάμπω) into all "the human race" (τοῦ γένους ἀνθρώπων) (*Mos.* 2.27, 36). Just as the LXX translators were divinely inspired (2.34), Philo thinks he is as well. He says, "On other occasions, I have approached my work empty and suddenly become full, the ideas falling in a shower from above and being sown invisibly, so that under the influence of the Divine possession I have been filled with corybantic frenzy and been unconscious of anything, place, persons present, myself, words spoken, lines written" (*Migr.* 35). Elsewhere he says that he has "a soul possessed by some God-sent inspiration [ἐπιθειασμὸν]" (*Spec.* 3.1) to "not only to read the sacred messages of Moses, but also in my love of knowledge to peer into each of them and unfold and reveal what is not known to the multitude" (3.6). This sentiment appears in *Cher*. 27 as well (θεοληπτέομαι). This is why, as Terence L. Donaldson remarks, there can be "no doubt" that "Philo would have seen his own interpretive enterprise as contributing in no small way to this grand purpose [initiated by the LXX translators]."[52] Thus, Philo consciously takes it upon himself to be the Teacher of those who, as he characterizes them, need ἄσκησις.

Hence, intriguingly, just as the Teacher in Rom 2 considers himself to be a "Teacher of infants" (διδάσκαλον νηπίων) (2:20), Philo likens those who need ἄσκησις as

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[52] Terence L. Donaldson, *Judaism and the Gentiles: Jewish Patterns of Universalism (to 135 CE)* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2007), 231.

νηπίων (ὅτι ἕτερος *νηπίων* καὶ ἕτερος τελείων χῶρός ἐστιν, ὁ μὲν ὀνομαζόμενος *ἄσκησις*, ὁ δὲ καλούμενος σοφία) (*Migr.* 46; my emphasis; cf. *Spec.* 2.209). Similarly, while the perfectly wise are in no need of instruction, those who do need "exhortation and teaching" (παραινέσεως καὶ διδασκαλίας) are the νήπιος (*Leg.* 1.92–94, here 94). Philo says further in another echo of Rom 2:19–20 that proselytes "have shown the godliness of heart which above all leads up to friendship and affinity, and we must rejoice with them, as if, though blind [τυφλοὶ] at the first they had recovered their sight and had come from the deepest darkness [ἐκ βαθυτάτου σκότους] to behold the most radiant light [αὐγοειδέστατον φῶς]" (*Virt.* 178). "They have taken the journey to a better home, from idle fables to the clear vision of truth [ἀληθείας] and the worship of the one and truly existing God" (102; cf. *Spec.* 1.51). Using Tamar as another model proselyte alongside Abraham, Philo says she emerged "out of profound darkness [σκότους βαθέος], was able to see a slight beam of truth [ἀληθείας], she then, at the risk of her life, exerted all her energies to arrive at piety [εὐσέβειαν]" (*Virt.* 221). Similarly, Philo frequently describes those who do not live virtuously as ἄφρων (e.g., *Leg.* 2.18; *Sacr.* 51; *Cher.* 121). Even though "wickedness [κακία]…is established in the souls of foolish people [ἀφρόνων]…the just one [ὁ δίκαιος] discovers the panacea [πανακείας] by attaining righteousness (τυχὼν δικαιοσύνης) (*Det.* 123; my translation).

7.3.2 A Teacher of The Law as a Copy of the Truth

Although the idea that "knowledge and truth were revealed in the Torah was widely assumed" across the spectrum of early Judaism,[53] something more is being stated in Rom 2:20. The claim is that the Torah is the written and manifest "form of knowledge and the truth" (ἔχοντα τὴν μόρφωσιν τῆς γνώσεως καὶ τῆς ἀληθείας ἐν τῷ νόμῳ), and Philo's view of the Torah coheres with this more distinctive, distantly Platonic claim.[54]

Philo says that God is "a Lawgiver in [accordance with] the Truth [ἀληθείᾳ νομοθέτην]" (*Mos.* 2.48; my translation) and that "the laws which are established in accordance with truth are at once everlasting; since right reason, which is law, is not perishable" (τὸ πρὸς ἀλήθειαν νόμιμον εὐθύς ἐστιν αἰώνιον, ἐπεὶ καὶ ὁ ὀρθὸς λόγος, ὃς δὴ νόμος ἐστίν, οὐ φθαρτός) (*Ebr.* 142; Yonge). This means that "whoever will carefully examine the nature of the particular enactments will find that they seek to attain to the harmony of the universe and are in agreement with the principles of eternal nature" (*Mos.* 2.52). Thus, "he who would observe the laws will accept gladly the duty of following nature [ἀκολουθίαν φύσεως] and live in accordance with the ordering of the universe, so that his deeds are attuned to harmony with his words and his words with his deeds" (2.48). Similarly, Philo says that "the world is in harmony with the Law, and the Law with the world, and that the man who observes the law is constituted thereby a loyal citizen of the world [κοσμοπολίτου], regulating his doings by the purpose and will of Nature, in accordance with which the entire world itself also is administered" (*Opif.* 3).

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[53] Jewett, *Romans*, 227.
[54] Rogers, "Philo's Universalization."

Proselytes who are not "rebels from the holy laws" are thereby "truth-lovers" (ἀληθείας ἐρασταί) (*Virt.* 182). "Moses [gathers together] [συνάγων] such people…exhorting them to practise [ἀσκεῖν] sincerity and reject vanity, to embrace truth [ἀληθείας] and simplicity as vital necessaries and the sources of happiness….in their search for the knowledge of the best [τῆς τοῦ ἀρίστου γνώσεως]" (178).

Although Philo does not use the word μόρφωσις in relation to the Law (which is used in Rom 2:20), we can see from the foregoing that "the Law's uniqueness" is that "it can perfectly transmit the law of nature in a written form."[55] Or, to put it the other way around, "for Philo, the written Law is not an imperfect representation of the natural law, but the natural law is a prewritten form of the written Law."[56] Furthermore, Philo uses analogous words such as εἰκών and ἐκμαγεῖον to describe the written laws. So, as Cox observes with respect to *De Abrahamo*, "[f]or Philo, the Torah facilitates the virtuous life only secondarily through the prescriptions of the laws" since "Torah's particular laws are only copies (εἰκόνες)" (*Abr.* 3) of the natural law.[57] Similarly, when explaining why Moses would begin the Law with a story about creation, Philo says Moses did this because "he considered the laws to be the most accurate image/copy [τοὺς νόμους ἐμφερεστάτην εἰκόνα] of the cosmic-polity" (*Mos*. 2.51; my translation).[58] And in the context of discussing the ἀσκητής and the ἐλπίζων, he directs them to "follow the

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[55] Rogers, "Philo's Universalization," 102.
[56] Rogers, "Philo's Universalization," 89.
[57] Cox, "Traveling," 173.
[58] Cf. *Prob.* 62, cited above, where Philo uses εἰκών in relation to νόμος when talking about the reality of virtuous people both ancient and contemporary to him.

philosophy of Moses, a faithful impress [ἐκμαγεῖον ἐμφερές] of the divine image [εἰκόνος θείας]" (*Mut*. 223).

Hence Paul's distinctive characterization of the Teacher's view of the Law in Rom 2:20 coordinates neatly with Philo's distinctively Platonic characterization of the written Law.

7.3.3 A Teacher of the Ethical Benefits of Circumcision

Even though we will treat the details of this exchange in the subsequent chapter, it is clear that Paul is debating with the Teacher about any supposed "benefit" (ὠφέλεια) of circumcision in the later parts of the dialogue in Rom 1–2 (Rom 2:25; 3:1–2). Given our previous observations, it will not be surprising that although Philo does think circumcision is of immense benefit, this is not at all related to or anchored in a covenantal framework. And circumcision also lacks any covenantal framework in Rom 2:25–3:9.[59] According to Philo, there are six benefits of circumcision. Three are physical and three are moral. The physical benefits are: (1) protection from a disease in the prepuce (*Spec.* 1.4), (2) cleanliness and purity akin to priests (*Spec.* 1.5), and (3) increased fertility (*Spec.* 1.7). But these need not occupy us since Philo himself is more interested in the moral benefits and these benefits will prove to be most illuminating for Romans. The three

[59] This is contra N. T. Wright who assumes the *per se* presence of a covenantal framework due to the mere mention of "circumcision" and "spirit" in Rom 2:25–29. He says this automatically means that "Paul is ascribing what is essential *covenant* language" about "the renewal of the covenant" ("The Law in Romans 2," 135; his emphasis). But this is a fallacious assumption on account of the fact that, as I will return to below, Philo, a massive figure in Second Temple Judaism slightly older than Paul, uses these very same words and intentionally strips away any connotation of a covenant framework (either past covenants or a covenant renewal) as was also shown above. Indeed, I think the sudden presence of covenant "promise" that appears alongside circumcision later in Romans (4:9–21; 9:4; 15:8) makes best sense if it is seen as Paul's corrective to the non-covenantal circumcision being debated in Rom 2:25–3:1.

moral benefits play on the physical benefits. So, (4) just as circumcision makes a man physically fertile, it also makes him spiritually fertile (that is, they are enabled to have proper thoughts) (*Spec.* 1.6). Likewise, (5) just as circumcision excises the prepuce to prevent physical disease, it also is "the excision of excessive and superfluous pleasure" (*Spec.* 1.9). Similarly, (6) just as circumcision removes the "superfluous" prepuce (*QG* 3.48) so that there is no longer "some substances which need to be cleared away" (*Spec.* 1.5); "the grievous malady of conceit" which might arise because of the increased fertility circumcision affords is likewise "banish[ed] from the soul" (1.10; cf. *QG* 3.48 where Philo repeats all six of these reasons).

It is necessary to linger here a little over Philo's view that circumcision confers ethical benefits.

First, there is an intriguing similarity between the wording of Rom 2:28–29 and *Spec.* 1.6 (bold to show correspondence):

> Rom 2:28–29: οὐ γὰρ ὁ ἐν τῷ **φανερῷ** Ἰουδαῖός ἐστιν οὐδὲ ἡ ἐν τῷ **φανερῷ** ἐν σαρκὶ **περιτομή**, ἀλλ᾽ ὁ ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ Ἰουδαῖος, καὶ **περιτομὴ καρδίας** ἐν **πνεύματι** οὐ γράμματι.
>
> For it is not the Jew in the **visible** nor the **circumcision** that is **visible** in flesh, but the Jew in the **hidden**, and the **circumcision** of the **heart** in the **spirit** not in the letter.
>
> *Spec.* 1.6: τρίτον δὲ τὴν πρὸς **καρδίαν** ὁμοιότητα τοῦ **περιτμηθέντος** μέρους· πρὸς γὰρ γένεσιν ἄμφω παρεσκεύασται, τὸ μὲν **ἐγκάρδιον πνεῦμα** νοημάτων, τὸ δὲ γόνιμον ὄργανον ζῴων· ἐδικαίωσαν γὰρ οἱ πρῶτοι τῷ **ἀφανεῖ** καὶ κρείττονι, δι᾽ οὗ τὰ νοητὰ συνίσταται, τὸ **ἐμφανὲς** καὶ **ὁρατόν**, ᾧ τὰ αἰσθητὰ γεννᾶσθαι πέφυκεν, ἐξομοιῶσαι.
>
> Thirdly, it assimilates **the circumcised member** to the **heart**. For as both are framed to serve for generation, thought being generated by the **spirit** force in the **heart**, living creatures by the reproductive organ, the earliest men held that the **unseen** and superior element to which the concepts of the mind owe their

> existence should have assimilated to it the **visible** and **apparent**, the natural parent of the things perceived by sense.

In view of this tight correspondence Daniel Boyarin rightly observes, "Paul's thought and mode of expression at this point [in Rom 2:28–29] are nearly identical to Philo's."[60] Similarly, Sanders comments "the discussions of circumcision in Philo…[are] very close to the position on circumcision taken in Rom. 2:25–29" and adds that "[t]his position is not rabbinic" and "is at least not Pauline."[61]

Second, it is crucial to understand how the ethical benefits are necessarily linked with the physical act according to Philo. This view cannot be found anywhere else in the known Jewish literature of the time. It is distinctive to Philo and it is not until the twelfth century with Maimonides that this view resurfaces in Judaism.[62] Although other Jewish sources discuss the circumcision of the heart spoken of in various biblical passages (e.g., Lev 26:41; Deut 10:16; Jer 4:4; 9:26; Ezek 44:7, 9), none actually thinks that the physical act of circumcision has anything to do with making circumcision of the heart a reality; they are simply analogous (e.g., 1QS 5:4–5; 1 Qp Hab. 11:12–14). Similarly, many Second Temple Jewish sources talk about the presence and/or removal/control of the so-

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[60] Though when making this statement Boyarin is comparing Rom 2:28–29 with Philo in *Migr*. 92 (Daniel Boyarin, *A Radical Jew: Paul and the Politics of Identity* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994], 78–81, 93–97, here 80; *pace* John M. G. Barclay, "Paul and Philo on Circumcision: Romans 2:25-9 in Social and Cultural Context," *NTS* 44 (1998): 536–56. I think comparing Rom 2:28–29 with *Spec.* 1.6 shows and even greater semblance than what Boyarin noticed.

[61] E. P. Sanders, *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 131.

[62] Shaye J. D. Cohen, *Why Aren't Jewish Women Circumcised? Gender and Covenant in Judaism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 143–73; Peder Borgen, "Observations on the Theme 'Paul and Philo': Paul's Preaching of Circumcision in Galatia (5:11) and Debates on Circumcision in Philo," in *Die Paulinische Literatur Und Theologie: The Pauline Literature and Theology* (Århus: Forlaget Aros, 1980), 96–97.

called "evil inclination" but, again, none of them relate this to the physical act of circumcision.[63] As Nina E. Livesey points out, however, Philo explicitly says that "circumcision creates a likeness (ὁμοιότητα) between the reproductive organ and the heart" in *Spec.* 1.6.[64] Moreover, Philo unambiguously talks about circumcision as "a guarantee of two of the most indispensable things" (σύμβολον ἡγοῦμαι τὴν περιτομὴν δυοῖν εἶναι τοῖν ἀναγκαιοτάτοιν) (*Spec.* 1.8; my translation), the first of which is the "the excision of the pleasures" (1.9). And it is important to note as we move forward that understanding the meaning of the word σύμβολον in Philo is not helped by the meaning of "symbol" in English. Whereas the English "symbol" might convey a metaphor or allegory, σύμβολον is a much stronger term, which is why I used "guarantee."[65]

For Philo, "the excision [ἐκτομῆς] of the pleasures which bewitch the mind" and "the excision of excessive [περιτομὴν περιττῆς ἐκτομὴν] and abounding pleasure" takes places precisely by "maim[ing] [ἀκρωτηριάζειν[66]] the organ serving such instances-of-sexual-intercourse" (1.9; my translation). Livesey highlights that "Philo's play on the Greek words used to describe the excision of excessive pleasure (περιτομὴν περιττῆς ἐκτομὴν) calls to mind the cutting involved in this rite. Hence, in the physical act of

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[63] For exegesis of the primary sources that discuss the "evil inclination" see Joel Marcus, "The Evil Inclination in the Epistle of James," *CBQ* 44 (1982): 606–21.

[64] Nina E. Livesey, *Circumcision as a Malleable Symbol*, WUNT 295 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 51.

[65] According to LSJ, a σύμβολον is a "proof" or "guarantee" of something (s.v. "σύμβολον" A.2–3.

[66] LSJ, s.v. "ακρωτηριαζω" A.I.4.

cutting away the foreskin, excessive sexual pleasures are 'removed' from the mind, pleasures that interfere with mental and emotional well-being."[67]

This is evidenced when Philo refutes extreme allegorizers in *Migr*. 89–93. Philo says that because laws such as circumcision and Sabbath are σύμβολα (93), then they cannot be "taken away" or "destroyed" (ἀναιρέω) (92), but, rather, "one must take care of the stated laws" (τῶν ῥητῶν νόμων ἐπιμελητέον) (93). It is specifically "by keeping these [φυλαττομένων…τούτων] [i.e., the "stated laws"]" that "those [referring back to "the deeper sense {ὑπόνοια}" of the laws in 92] will be more clearly made known" (93).[68] That is, actually keeping the literal laws allows a person to truly know and experience the "deeper sense." This is what Philo means when he says that the laws are σύμβολα. The fact that Philo thinks it is the actual "keeping" (φυλάσσω) of the laws that makes possible the true knowledge "of which these are σύμβολα" (93) means that we need to think of σύμβολον more in terms of something that accomplishes that which it signifies (akin to a "treaty" or a "contract").[69] In fact, we see the nuance Philo is advocating when we look at how he characterizes the allegorical exegesis of the Therapeutae in *Contempl*. 28 (cf. *Prob.* 75–91) with a near verbatim description of the allegorical exegesis he criticizes in *Migr*. 89–93.[70] Both Philo and the Therapeutae agree that there is a "deeper sense" (ὑπόνοια) to the laws and that this means the laws are σύμβολα (*Contempl.* 28; *Migr*. 89,

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[67] Livesey, *Circumcision*, 53.

[68] Greek: φυλαττομένων γὰρ τούτων ἀριδηλότερον κἀκεῖνα γνωρισθήσεται, ὧν εἰσιν οὗτοι σύμβολα (*Migr*. 93).

[69] LSJ, s.v. "σύμβολον" A.II.3, 4.

[70] Taylor catalogues all the similarities and argues that the Therapeutae are the "extreme allegorizers" that Philo targets in *Migr*. 89–93 (even if there are other extreme allegorizers beyond the Therapeutae as well) (*Jewish Women*, 136–53, 342).

92). But whereas the Therapeutae think the expressed words (ῥητός) of the "holy texts" (ἱεροί γράμματα) are the "other half" of the σύμβολα (*Contempl*. 28),[71] Philo thinks it is the "keeping" (φυλάσσω, *Migr.* 93), i.e., the doing and practicing of the laws, that are the "other half." The Therapeutae are content to simply meditate on the text itself and in this way to discern its deeper meaning, but Philo thinks that it is only in the doing and keeping of the laws that the deeper meaning "will be more easily made known" (ἀριδηλότερον…γνωρισθήσεται) (*Migr*. 93; my translation).

Thus, when Philo says "being circumcised makes visible [ἐμφαίνει, "displays"] the excision of pleasure and all the passions [ἡδονῆς καὶ παθῶν πάντων ἐκτομὴν] and the taking away of that impious opinion according to which the mind supposes itself to be able to beget by itself" (*Migr*. 92; my translation), he means that physically being circumcised—"keeping" that law (93)—actually brings about "the excision of pleasure and all the passions" along with any conceit. For Philo, then, the law of circumcision is not metaphorical; it is physically effective as it "suppresses the undue impulses of the male," which is why only males are circumcised (*QG* 3.47).[72]

And although it is true that here "The type of pleasure to which Philo refers is primarily sexual,"[73] he makes it clear that this excision is "not only of one [pleasure], but

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[71] The first definition given for σύμβολον in LSJ is a "*tally*, i.e. *each of two halves* or *corresponding pieces* of an ἀστράγαλος or other object, which two ξένοι, or any two contracting parties, broke between them, each party keeping one piece, in order to have proof of the identity of the presenter of the other" (s.v. "σύμβολον" A; italics in original).

[72] As we have already observed, Philo does not think everyone with a foreskin is inherently *unable* to excise the passions (hence, the righteous gentiles/philosophers). One can think that circumcision is ontologically effective without thinking it is the *only* effective means to an end.

[73] Livesey, *Circumcision*, 53.

through the strongest one also of all the others" (*Spec.*1.9; my translation). Hence, whereas at the beginning of *De specialibus legibus* Philo talks about the likeness (ὁμοιότης) between the circumcised prepuce and the heart (1.6), later on he will explicitly connect the command to "circumcise the hardness of your hearts!" (περιτέμνεσθε τὴν σκληροκαρδίαν) from Deut 10:16 with "prun[ing] away from the ruling mind the superfluous overgrowths sown and raised by the immoderate appetites of the passions and planted by folly, the evil husbandman of the soul" (1.305). This command, Philo says is specifically given to the "uncircumcised in heart" (ἀπερίτμητοι τὴν καρδίαν) from Lev 26:41 who "through their hardness of temper [are] disobedient to the rein, plunging in unruly fashion and fighting against the yoke" (1.304). This same collocation of "the circumcision of the heart" and "the cutting off…of excessive desires" occurs in *QG* 3.48 as well (cf. 3.46–47). There Philo goes on to assert that "the mind which is not circumcised and purified and sanctified of the body and the passions which come through the body will be corrupted and cannot be saved" (3.52; see also how salvation and circumcision are similarly brought together in *QE* 3.62).

Indeed, for Philo, controlling the passions is functionally equivalent to obeying the Decalogue and thereby all the special laws, and this is why circumcision leads to salvation. Since circumcision is a physical act that has a real and tangible impact on living virtuously because it mutilates (ἀκρωτηριάζω) the sexual pleasure of the male sex organ, it enables a person to avoid the passions and to merit salvation. As Livesey says, "the excision of excessive and superfluous pleasure ...resonates with Philo's interpretation of the tenth commandment" (cf. *Decal.* 142–143). Not only this, but "the

banishment of conceit [*Spec.* 1.10–11] refers back to the first commandment [*Decal.* 52–80]."[74] And this too is significant. As Joel Marcus has observed, Philo's extended treatment of the tenth commandment against coveting (ἐπιθυμέω, "desire") in *Spec.* 4.78–95 describes "the list of evils to which desire leads" in a fashion that amounts to "a summary of the things prohibited in the ten commandments."[75] This is supported by that fact that Philo calls ἐπιθυμία "the fountain of all evils [κακῶν]" (4.84) and "originator of passion [ἀρχέκακον πάθος]" (4.85; my translation). Moreover, the tenth commandment prohibits "every 'inordinate and excessive impulse'" (4.79) which is similar to what circumcision excises in 1.9 (cf. *QG* 3.48). Furthermore, Livesey observes how "The type of conceit that circumcision figuratively removes pertains to the false belief that humans themselves cause the generation of life," which is what Philo discusses in relation to the first commandment.[76] Philo discusses the first commandment in *Decal.* 52–81 in relation to those who worship the four elements or some other aspect of creation (e.g., stars, the sun, etc.) and those who worship what they make. Livesey further explains how this matters in relation to circumcision:

> In this passage [*Decal.* 52–53], Philo's complaint is that some have not acknowledged the one true God and have instead worshipped something else. It is a mistaken notion to confuse God with any of the natural elements. Philo reserves special criticism for those who worship the work of their own hands. Those who participate in this practice clearly do not honor God. [cf. *Decal.* 72]….
>
> Hence, according to Philo, the ultimate act of impiety is to worship the work of one's hands. Such an act is sinful because it shifts the honor due to God onto some form of creation and ignores that God is the source of life and power. Thus,

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[74] Livesey, *Circumcision*, 53.
[75] Marcus, "Evil Inclination," 613.
[76] Livesey, *Circumcision*, 55.

> circumcision as the symbol of the excision of conceit helps the Jewish male to recognize and remember his place as a creature within the cosmos…. When Philo states that one should know oneself (*Spec.* 1.10), he means that one should consider oneself less than God.[77]

Thus Philo articulates the benefits of circumcision at the beginning of his treatise on the special laws, which organizes the particular laws under the ten commandments, and these benefits correlate specifically to the first and tenth commandments. Philo's way of relating circumcision with his teaching on the ten commandments consequently suggests that the person who is circumcised obeys all the commandments. The ultimate benefit of circumcision for Philo is that it functions as a critical means for the attainment of salvation because the person who is circumcised is enabled to control their passions. This surgery literally dulls the senses of the organ most responsible for the pleasures (*Spec.* 1.9).[78] As Ernest P. Clark concludes, for Philo "circumcision is more than just figurative; it is operative."[79] Circumcision is therefore the perfect moral aid for a "practicer" (ἀσκητής) and a "hoper" (ἐλπίζων) (*Mut*. 84, 222–225; *Somn.* 1.150–152; *Abr*. 47; *Agr.* 159), who is not naturally "self-taught" (e.g., *Plant.* 110; 168; *Abr.* 6) like the philosophers who are already "perfect" (*Agr.* 159; cf. *Prob.* 62–74; *Virt.* 65; *Spec.* 2.42–47).

As was stated earlier, the Teacher thinks his students are at the least similar to those mentioned in Rom 1:18–32 (compare, "a light to those in darkness" in 2:19 and

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[77] Livesey, *Circumcision*, 55, 56.

[78] And this is reinforced by his discussion of circumcision in *QG* 3.46–52, which adds the additional element of "salvation."

[79] Ernest P. Clark, "Enslaved Under the Elements of the Cosmos" (PhD diss., University of St Andrews, 2017), 108.

"corrector of fools, a teacher of infants" in 2:20 with "their senseless heart was darkened" in 1:21 and "professing to be wise they were shown to be foolish" in 1:22). Some further implications of this will be explored more below. For now it suffices to highlight that (a) the ethical benefits of circumcision that Philo teaches are the perfect remedy for the ungodly, unjust, and passionate individuals mentioned in 1:18–32, and those in darkness, who are blind, foolish infants in 2:19–20; and (b) circumcising gentiles seems to be a key aim of the interlocutor (2:25; 3:1–2, 30; 4:9–16). In the context of Rom 1:18–2:29 the only "benefit" of circumcision (2:25; 3:1) that seems to be in play is a moral one since all notions of covenant and election are absent. But the highly distinctive Philonic benefits of circumcision match neatly the argument over the putative benefits of circumcision that arises in Rom 2.

7.3.3.1 Is Circumcision Necessary for Proselytes according to Philo?

We come now to a crucial aspect of Philo's theology of circumcision that Paul will arguably exploit in Rom 2. We have already noted how Philo believes certain gentiles (most likely philosophers) have lived godly and just lives by living in accordance with the natural law and thus adherence to the special laws of Torah is not necessarily essential to the attainment of salvation (e.g., *Prob.* 62–74; *Virt.* 65; *Spec.* 2.42–47). It follows that Philo does not think physical circumcision is necessary for salvation. But this is not simply a logical deduction since Philo explicitly says that "the proselyte[80] is one

[80] Marcus's translation in LCL uses "sojourner," but I will use "proselyte" since he notes that the Greek fragments have προσήλυτος throughout.

who circumcises not his foreskin[81] but his desires and sensual pleasures and the other passions of the soul" (*QE* 2.2). Philo's proof for this is that "in Egypt the Hebrew nation was not circumcised" and yet they were called "proselytes" and "Therefore (Scripture) adds, 'Ye yourselves know the soul of the proselyte" (2.2). What is peculiar is that there no need for Philo to talk about circumcision at all at this moment since the question to which he is responding is: "(Ex. Xxii.21) Why does (Scripture) in admonishing, 'Thou shalt not oppress a proselyte,' add, 'For ye were proselytes in the land of the Egyptians'?" (2.2). It is not clear from Exodus that the Hebrew nation is uncircumcised. Philo simply could have expanded on the idea that the Hebrew nation knows what it is like to be strangers that experience "mistreatment" and "hatred" (2.2) and so they must do the opposite. The only way the notion that the Hebrew nation was not circumcised at the time becomes apparent is if one has Josh 5:2–7[82] in mind and/or if Philo thinks that προσήλυτος necessarily implies a person with a foreskin. That is, the fact that Exod 23:9 calls the Hebrews "proselytes" might be sufficient in Philo's mind to indicate that this means they were not circumcised yet (and if he knows Josh 5:2–7, this would corroborate his suspicion). But it seems the only reason for wanting to highlight this point is if one has the agenda that Philo expresses in *QE* 2.2, namely, that the status of προσήλυτος

[81] Marcus has "uncircumcision," but the Greek fragment reads ἀκροβυστίαν. Keeping to a more literal translation will help with the discussion in subsequent sections.

[82] Cf. Josh 5:5, 7: "Although all the people who came out had been circumcised, yet all the people born on the journey through the wilderness after they had come out of Egypt had not been circumcised [v. 7] So it was their children, whom he raised up in their place, that Joshua circumcised; for they were uncircumcised, because they had not been circumcised on the way" (NRSV).

ought to belong to anyone who abandons polytheism, embraces monotheism, and lives virtuously without any requirement of physical circumcision. For,

> (Scripture)…makes it clearly apparent and demonstrable that in reality the proselyte is one who circumcises not his foreskin but his desires and sensual pleasures and the other passions of the soul" and "what is the mind of the proselyte if not alienation from belief in many gods and familiarity with honouring the one God and Father of all? (2.2)

Philo's comments here in *QE* 2.2 have long bothered scholars because he also champions the benefits of physical circumcision in *Spec.* 1.4–11 and *QG* 3.46–52 as was outlined above. Indeed, Philo even lambasts those who would opt merely to follow circumcision allegorically and focus only on "the excision of pleasure and all passions" and ignore the physical procedure in *Migr.* 89–93 (see esp. 92). This has caused Donaldson to conclude "*QE* 2.2 provides no evidence that Philo would countenance the possibility of uncircumcised proselytes."[83] But this ignores what Philo in fact says in *QE* 2.2. And Philo seems to suggest in another text that proselytes only need "circumcise the hardness of [their] hearts" (*Spec.* 1.305), which suggests that he means just what he says in *QE* 2.2. In *Spec.*1.304–309 Philo associates the "proselytes" (ἐπηλύτων) (*Spec.* 1.309)[84] with those just mentioned earlier who have only "circumcise[d] the hardness of [their] hearts!... [And] prune[d] away from the ruling mind the superfluous overgrowths sown and raised by the immoderate appetites of the passions and planted by folly, the evil

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[83] Donaldson, *Judaism and the Gentiles*, 272.

[84] I glossed ἐπήλυτος ("incomer") as "proselyte" because it is clear from the context that Philo is described what we would call a proselyte: "they have crossed over to piety in whole-hearted love of simplicity and truth, and render[ed] to Him that truly exists the supplication and service which are His right" (1.308).

husbandman of the soul" (1.305). These figures are contrasted with those who "are uncircumcised in heart" (1.304). Physical circumcision is noticeably absent here, as Donaldson is aware, but he does not appear to grasp how all the evidence can fit together.[85]

Asha K. Moorthy has a more accurate explanation of Philo's views on proselyte circumcision: "Though not an initial entry requirement, circumcision should eventually be performed by the proselyte."[86] I do think, however, that even this view should be nuanced. That circumcision is not an entry rite for Philo might confuse scholars who are used to automatically associating circumcision with a Jewish covenantal framework. Granted, this association seems to be automatic for all other forms of Judaism at the time. But Philo consistently ignores the notion of covenant and purposefully disassociates circumcision from any covenantal context whatsoever, as was earlier observed. Hence Philo's definition of a proselyte is yet another distinctive feature of his thinking. God does not relate to Israel, let alone to the world, through covenant promises, according to Philo. God relates to them through natural law and merit. Moreover, in all other passages about proselytes in the Pentateuch, besides these instances in *QE* 2.2 and *Spec.* 304–309, Philo fails "to mention [physical] circumcision or any other Torah-based markers that normally differentiated Jew from Gentile."[87] This suggests that Philo seems well aware that the default position for Jewish proselytism is to require circumcision as an entry rite

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[85] Donaldson, *Judaism and the Gentiles,* 238.

[86] Asha Moorthy, "A Seal of Faith: Rereading Paul on Circumcision, Torah, and the Gentiles" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2013), 80, https://academiccommons.columbia.edu/catalog/ac:166824.

[87] Donaldson, *Judaism and the Gentiles,* 238.

(perhaps alongside other rituals such as baptism) and that we ought to read his passages on proselytes, especially *QE* 2.2, as changing the focus of this requirement.[88] Goodenough summarized his view accurately:

> [T]he traditional Jewish idea that circumcision is an acceptance of the Mosaic code, assumption of the obligation and heritage of the Jewish people, is not hinted for the gentile in Philo's presentation. Philo did not require circumcision, as a matter of fact, from gentile proselytes at all.[89]

Philo had every opportunity to make these requirements clear but never did. But, as it ought to be clear from our previous discussion, this makes sense given his soteriology and its link with natural law—literal observance of the special laws is, strictly speaking, unnecessary. Philo wants to mitigate the distinctions between Jew and gentile while maintaining a sharp distinction between the godly, just and wise, and the ungodly, unjust and foolish.

But does this mean that "Philo would exempt these incomers [i.e., proselytes] from the more specific aspects of the [special laws]"? Donaldson says correctly that "there is no reason to believe that," but his earlier use of the word "exempt" is misleading.[90] Philo is not offering exemptions. He is changing the definition of what constitutes a proselyte. And he holds the special laws to be pedagogical aids for most proselytes rather than commands they must abide by in order to maintain their proselyte status (cf. "laws which incite to every virtue" in *Spec.* 1.314; cf. 4.134). Hence, it seems

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[88] See, Donaldson: "there is no explicit reference to any of the 'special laws' that differentiate Jew from Gentile" when talking about proselytes (*Judaism and the Gentiles*, 237).

[89] Erwin R. Goodenough, *An Introduction to Philo Judaeus*, 2nd. ed. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1962), 156–57.

[90] Donaldson, *Judaism and the Gentiles*, 239.

that Philo would only encourage proselytes who need "practice" (ἄσκησις) in virtue—the ἀσκητής and the ἐλπίζων (cf. *Somn.* 1.150–152; *Migr.* 46; *Spec.* 2.209; 4.99, 101; *Praem.* 51, 65)—to undergo physical circumcision because it would aid that person in cutting of the passions, and thereby assist him in fulfilling the whole Decalogue according to natural law.[91] But a philosopher who has already achieved virtuous perfection would have no need for such an aid (cf. *Agr*. 159; *Prob.* 62–74; *Virt.* 65; *Spec.* 2.42–47).

In further support of this reading we can return to Philo's discussion of Abraham. If Abraham is the "standard of nobility for all proselytes" (ἅπασιν ἐπηλύταις εὐγενείας ἐστὶ κανών) (*Virt.* 219; cf. Tamar in 221–223), but he only followed the natural law (*Abr.* 4–6, 275–276), then proselytes *per se* do not need to follow all the special laws either. A philosopher who has attained the "summit" of philosophical virtue did not follow the special laws (cf. *Opif.* 8) but would be a "proselyte" on Philo's definition in *QE* 2.2 because this person is "self-taught by nature" (αὐτοδιδάκτῳ τῇ φύσει) (*Plant.* 110; my translation; cf. 168; *Abr.* 6).

Philo seems thereby to have been a clever bridge builder between cultures. To the philosophers he depicts the figureheads of Judaism as attaining "the very summit of philosophy" (*Opif.* 8), and to the Jews he portrays all righteous gentiles as proselytes and wants them to accept these ethical, monotheistic "proselytes… [as having] equal rank…to the native-born" (*Spec.* 1.51–52; cf. 1.53) even if they follow none of the special laws (*Prob.* 62–74; *Virt.* 65; *Spec.* 2.42–47). Philo says that "nobility" (εὐγένεια) (*Virt.* 198) is

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[91] Cf. Goodenough, *Introduction*, 157.

the proselyte's well-earned reward. People from degenerate lineages can become συγγενής with the native-born if they become righteous (103). From the proselytes' perspective, they are now members of an ethereal "God-loving commonwealth" (φιλοθέῳ πολιτείᾳ) (*Spec.* 1.52; my translation) that is "full of true life and vitality" (ἔμψυχον τῷ ὄντι καὶ ζῶσαν πολιτείαν) (*Virt.* 219).[92]

All of this results in something somewhat astonishing for a Jew, and that will become significant for our analysis of Romans. Inherent in Philo's system is the implication that both circumcision and adherence to the other written special laws are, strictly speaking, unnecessary, even if Philo would insist that they are practically necessary for the the ἀσκητής and the ἐλπίζων, that is, for a person who needs pedagogical "practice" in acquiring virtue. As Donaldson concludes, "In addition to the idea that the law was just a means to a higher end, Philo also seems to argue that this higher end could be pursued, and even attained, without reference to the written law at all."[93] Additionally,

> If philosophy and the Mosaic Law represent two routes to the same destination, it would seem to follow that one could reach this destination by means of philosophy alone, without following the route provided by the law, that is, without becoming a proselyte. Indeed… Philo adduces actual instances of people

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[92] I say "ethereal" to make clear that Philo is not talking about incorporation into the historical people of Israel according to the flesh across time and space. Also, "ethereal" is apt given Philo's emphasis that the virtuous live "above" in the ethereal heavenly realm (e.g., *Gig.* 61; *Spec.* 2.45) and because Philo says anyone who obeys the natural law (including those who obey the special laws because they are the written expressions of the natural law) is a "citizen of the cosmos" (κοσμοπολίτης) (*Opif.* 3; cf. 142, 143; *Gig.* 61; *Conf.* 106; *Migr.* 59; *Mos.* 1.157; *Spec.* 2.45). Also, the commonwealth proselytes left is not a physical one; rather, it was "the very worst of evil commonwealths" (τῆς φαυλοτάτης τῶν κακοπολιτειῶν) wherein the vices of "ignorance" and "injustice" are practiced (*Virt.* 180) so that the citizens are "incontinent, shameless, unjust, frivolous, pretty-minded, quarrelsome, friends of falsehood and perjury…thus ministering to the delights of the belly and the organs below it—delights which end in the gravest injuries both to body and soul" (182).

[93] Donaldson, *Judaism and the Gentiles*, 274.

> who have done just that; the possibility of an alternative route is not simply hypothetical for him.[94]

So Samuel Sandmel notes, "No matter how much Philo exalts the Law of Moses, no matter how consistent he proves it to be with the Law of nature, the Law of Moses is at best a copy, and thereby inescapably secondary…. Philo admits that there is something more basic than the Law of Moses, something antecedent to the Law."[95] Hence "He [Philo] will defend the Law of Moses to the best of his abilities, but what he is defending against the allegorists is the body of Scripture, the second best, and he is defending it against, as it were, the soul, which he must concede is the 'first best.'"[96] And these very same distinctive logical tensions that are present in Philo are present in the material in Rom 1:18–2:29 as well.

This brings to us to a related issue that needs to be considered before a script of Rom 1–2 is offered in the next chapter: that the Teacher addressed in Romans is arguably best understood as a Philonic proselyte himself.

7.3.3.2 Could the Teacher in Rom 2 Be a Philonic Proselyte?

As noted in chapter 1, Thorsteinsson's thesis that Paul's interlocutor is a proselyte has only recently gained momentum in Pauline scholarship. As Thorsteinsson, Thiessen, and Rodríguez have shown, the traditional view that Paul's interlocutor is a Jew is often

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[94] Donaldson, *Judaism and the Gentiles*, 274.

[95] Samuel Sandmel, *Philo's Place in Judaism: A Study of Conceptions of Abraham in Jewish Literature* (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1971), 197.

[96] Sandmel, *Philo's Place*, 198.

merely assumed and asserted rather than argued.[97] Although I do not follow all the specific arguments for this idea advanced by Thorsteinsson *et al.*, a reasonable case can be made that the interlocutor is likely being encoded as a proselyte in Rom 2:17–29. Moreover, this would allow new interpretive possibilities especially for 2:25–29 that can account for peculiar details found there. More unique Philonic evidence can be mobilized at key points that will allow us to bring everything full circle and to appreciate the potential interpretive payoff this hypothesis not only of a proselyte but of a Philonic proselyte in particular can have for our understanding of Rom 2.

As a preliminary point we should note, contra Stowers, and to a limited extent Rodríguez as well, the apostrophes in 2:1, 3 and 2:17–24 are meant to characterize the same interlocutor.[98] This is uncontroversial even to those holding to the traditional interpretation that Paul is addressing a Jew in both passages.[99] The emphatic σύ in 2:17 is "meant to point back to the σύ in 2:1–5 (see esp. the emphatic σύ in v. 3)."[100] Hence we need to coordinate the identifying information in both apostrophes to gain the fullest profile of the Teacher, although here we will focus on the second apostrophe in 2:17–24.

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[97] Runar M. Thorsteinsson, Matthew Thiessen, and Rafael Rodríguez, "Paul's Interlocutor in Romans: The Problem of Identification," in *The So-Called Jew in Paul's Letter to the Romans*, ed. Rafael Rodríguez and Matthew Thiessen (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2016), 1–37.

[98] Stowers sees a gentile moralist in 2:1–16 and a pretentious Jewish teacher in 2:17–29 (*Rereading*, 100–09, 126–58) and Rodríguez sees a gentile moralist in 2:1–16 and a proselyte in 2:17–29 (*If You Call*, 32–61). This bifurcation resulting in two interlocutors stems from the observation that the ethnic characterization Ἰουδαῖος in 2:17 is lacking in 2:1–3. There the interlocutor is addressed in a non-ethic way as ὦ ἄνθρωπε and more specifically in terms of a specific juridical activity as "the judging one" or perhaps "the judgmental one" (ὁ κρίνων). But these are not incommensurate characterizations; rather, they serve to fill out the character of the interlocutor as key shifts in the rhetorical flow of the dialogue.

[99] E.g., Dunn, *Romans 1–8*, 108; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 297; Campbell, *Deliverance*, 344.

[100] Thorsteinsson, Thiessen, and Rodríguez, "Paul's Interlocutor," 25; Runar M. Thorsteinsson, *Paul's Interlocutor in Romans 2: Function and Identity in the Context of Ancient Epistolography*, ConBNT 40 (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 2003), 163–64.

7.3.3.2.1 "If You Call Yourself a Jew"

I think Thorsteinsson's best reason for suspecting that the Teacher is a proselyte is this observation: "What is important to note is the fact that Paul does not say that the person addressed *is* a Ἰουδαῖος. He does not say εἰ δὲ σὺ Ἰουδαῖος εἶ, or the like. Rather, the interlocutor in 2:17 is depicted as someone who calls himself, or wants to call himself, a Ἰουδαῖος."[101] To strengthen this, he also notes how the apostrophe in Rom 2:17–24, wherein Paul is accusing his interlocutor of hypocrisy (esp. in 2:21–24), is very similar to a passage in Epictetus who criticizes hypocrisy.[102] Epictetus writes:

> Why, then, do you call [λέγεις] yourself a Stoic, why do you deceive the multitude, why do you act the part [ὑποκρίνῃ] of a Jew, when you are a Greek? Do you not see in what sense men are severally called [λέγεται] Jew, Syrian, or Egyptian? For example, whenever we see a man halting between two faiths, we are in the habit of saying, "He is not a Jew, he is only acting the part [ὑποκρίνεται]." But when he adopts the attitude of mind of the man who has been baptized and has made his choice, then he both is a Jew in fact and is also called one [τότε καὶ ἔστι τῷ ὄντι καὶ καλεῖται Ἰουδαῖος]. So we also are [impostors {παραβαπτισταί}],[103] ostensibly Jews, but in reality something else, not in sympathy with our own reason, far from applying the principles which we profess, yet priding ourselves upon them as being men who know them. (*Diatr.* 2.9.19–21; Cf. 2.16.5–11)[104]

This passage is fascinating for many reasons.

First, it "raise[s] the possibility that earning and exhibiting the epithet 'Jew' was an issue for gentile converts to Judaism."[105]

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[101] Thorsteinsson, *Paul's Interlocutor*, 198; his emphasis. It may be worth observing that when Paul is addressing Peter he says Peter "is" a Jew (σὺ Ἰουδαῖος ὑπάρχων, Gal 2:14).

[102] Thorsteinsson, *Paul's Interlocutor*, 200–201.

[103] My emendation based on LSJ, ad loc.

[104] Greek and English translation comes from Epictetus, *Discourses, Books 1-2*, trans. W.A. Oldfather, LCL 131 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1925).

[105] Rafael Rodríguez, *If You Call Yourself a Jew: Reappraising Paul's Letter to the Romans* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2014), 52.

Second, as Donaldson maintains, "It is important to note that this comparison with the 'play-acting Jew' is not simply Epictetus's own analogy; rather, he introduces it as a commonplace saying: 'Whenever [ὅταν] we see someone half-way in between, we are in the habit [εἰώθαμεν] of saying, 'He is not a Jew, but is just playing the part.'"[106] By the time Epictetus writes this then (c. 105–13 C.E.), "The phenomenon of Gentile attraction to Judaism had become sufficiently widespread that the saying could be used as a way of describing any situation where a person was hesitating between two options or commitments. The fact that Epictetus taught both in Rome and Greece suggests that the phenomenon was commonly known in both places."[107]

Third, the person Epictetus apostrophizes is possibly not simply a generic "vacillating 'half-Jew'" proselyte as Donaldson assumes.[108] Rather, this person is a born Greek claiming to be both a Stoic and a Jew but who, according to Epictetus, does not seem to live out all of the particulars that normally differentiate a person as a Jew rather than a Greek. Given Philo's rather obvious Stoic influences and our discussion of Philo's view of proselytes, the target of Epictetus's criticism could be a Philonic proselyte who fancies himself either to have progressed beyond the point of needing "practice" (ἄσκησις), or as never having needed it in the first place by counting himself among the naturally perfect. That is, it might be that the reason Epictetus highlights this kind of hypocrite is because he thinks that by his conversion to a Philonic form of Judaism ("act

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[106] Donaldson, *Judaism and the Gentiles*, 390.
[107] Donaldson, *Judaism and the Gentiles*, 390.
[108] Donaldson, *Judaism and the Gentiles*, 390.

the part [ὑποκρίνῃ] of a Jew, when you are a Greek") they have become a Stoic at the same time ("you call [λέγεις] yourself a Stoic" and "deceive the multitude"). Recall that Philo thinks proselytes merit εὐγένεια (*Virt.* 198) and become συγγενής with the native-born (103). For a Philonic proselyte this might be taken to mean that they can claim συγγενής both to Jews (the kin of whoever converted them) and Stoics (their philosophical kin of the "self-taught" and "perfect," cf. e.g., *Plant.* 110; 168; *Abr.* 6; *Agr.* 159; cf. *Prob.* 62–74; *Virt.* 65; *Spec.* 2.42–47). Whoever the target of Epictetus's critique is, he annoys Epictetus because from his perspective he does not think this person is really a Stoic or a Jew, but the way a Philonic proselyte could fit this profile is striking.

In any case, fourth, Rom 2:17–29 displays the same "topos of claiming cultural identity that one does not sincerely follow" that is evident in this section of Epictetus (*Diatr.* 2.9.19–21).[109] And since this hypocritical person in Epictetus is obviously a proselyte (τί ὑποκρίνῃ Ἰουδαῖον ὢν Ἕλλην) (2.9.19), the similarity between the one who "names themselves a Jew" (Rom 2:17) and the one who "calls themselves" a Jew and a Stoic (*Diatr.* 2.9.19) indicates that Paul could be likewise addressing a proselyte, who is hypocritical in a certain way that causes Paul to question the legitimacy of their proselyte status.

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[109] Jewett, *Romans*, 221.

From the proselyte's perspective, because he transferred over to ethical monotheism,[110] he earned not only εὐγένεια (*Virt.* 198), but he became συγγενής with Jews as well (103; cf. *Spec.* 1.52–53) and is to be considered "equal rank…to the native-born" (*Spec.* 1.51–52).[111] Therefore, he has earned the right "to call [him]self a Jew" (Rom 2:17). But Paul is dubious about his claim to be a Jew[112] and twice links this doubt to the Teacher's own circumcision (2:25, 27).

In 2:25 Paul tells the interlocutor that if they transgress the Law, then "your circumcision has become foreskin" (2:25)—i.e., "you are no longer Jewish." But not only does Paul never call any disobedient Jew "foreskinned" anywhere else; we saw in chapter 5 that Paul never explicitly or implicitly disinherits disobedient Jews. He even continues to call them "the circumcision" (e.g., 4:12; 15:8, cf. Gal 2:7, 8, 9, 12). [113] No matter how sinful or disobedient Jews are, even if they are disobedient to the gospel itself (Rom 10:16), they are still Jews, the circumcision, and, as such, inheritors of the covenant promises (9:3–5, 24; 10:12; 11:28–29; 15:8). This all therefore suggests that if Paul is calling into question a person's putative Jewishness, they probably are not someone who was born a Jew, but rather a proselyte who thinks they are a Jew and Paul is attacking

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[110] "Ethical monotheism" is taken from Donaldson's categories of Jewish patterns of universalism (*Judaism and the Gentiles*, 11, 493–98, and throughout).

[111] As Birnbaum expresses, "Philo depicts proselytes as people who abandon their backgrounds of false beliefs, false worship, family, and friends to adopt honor of the one God, laws, and a new polity. As such, they most certainly fulfill what seems to be required for becoming a Jew" (Birnbaum, *Philo's Thought*, 219).

[112] Indeed, Paul's characterizing of the Teacher as someone who "names [him]self" (ἐπονομάζῃ) (2:17) rather who "is" a Jew already suggests that Paul is doubting the claim and the connection to Epictetus only reinforces the case.

[113] And see the Appendix for further evidence from Galatians and Philippians.

that claim for a certain reason. So then, the charge in 2:25 serves to strengthen the case that the person who "call [him]self a Jew" in 2:17 is just that: not a born-Jew, but someone who views themselves as a proselyte who has earned the name "Jew."

What is more, this charge in 2:25 also fits Philo's views of the possibility of a person losing their εὐγένεια if they sin (*Spec.* 4.182; *Virt.* 187–189, 197, 226–227; *Praem*. 152) and thus Rom 2:25 might also be an instance of Paul employing sarcastic parody. As he might say, "Based on your own views, you would have to concede that if I prove to you that you transgressed the Law then this means you are no longer considered 'circumcised' and a 'Jew' but rather 'foreskinned.'" Additionally, the comment in 2:26 ("if the foreskinned one keeps the requirements of the law, will his foreskin not be considered as circumcision?") similarly fits well with the unique Philonic view of proselyte circumcision in particular. We should recall *QE* 2.2: "the proselyte is one who circumcises not his foreskin but his desires and sensual pleasures and the other passions of the soul." And in another place we already saw that Philo associates "proselytes" (*Spec.* 1.309) with those who have only "circumcise[d] the hardness of [their] hearts!... [And] prune[d] away from the ruling mind the superfluous overgrowths sown and raised by the immoderate appetites of the passions and planted by folly, the evil husbandman of the soul" (1.305); these figures contrasted with those who "are uncircumcised in heart" (1.304). Hence both Philo and Rom 2:26 attest to the same distinctive view with respect to other Judaisms of the time as discussed above—that those with physical foreskins can be considered circumcised and thus proselytes. It appears, then, that the type of comments we observe in Rom 2:25–26 belong to a discourse on proselytes, and a

uniquely Philonic one at that.[114] They are part of a discourse about what makes proselytes legitimate and what can make them lose that status. This would support the notion that Paul is engaging a proselyte over their own legitimacy because Paul is not discussing this in the abstract, but directly talking to someone about their own circumcision (2:25; cf. 2:27). And since these are views about proselytes that are distinctive to Philo, this further supports the idea that Paul is debating a Philonic proselyte in particular.

In short, the syntactical ("you name yourself a Jew") and contextual links of 2:17–24 with Epictetus in *Diatr.* 2.9.19–21 suggest that Paul is addressing a proselyte. And, in further support, I have already provided sufficient reasons to doubt that Paul would deny Jewishness to a person born a Jew. So this raises the questions: Why Paul is questioning this legitimacy of this proselyte's status? And, How did they transgress the Law?

Investigating these questions will bring us to the second instance where Paul links his doubt of the Teacher's claim to be a Jew to their circumcision in 2:27. And the Philonic evidence will once again prove illuminating.

7.3.3.2.2 "A Transgressor of the Law διὰ γράμματος καὶ περιτομῆς"

Matthew Thiessen has supplemented Thorsteinsson's proselyte thesis by arguing that the hypothesis that Paul is addressing a proselyte can also make better sense out of what is said in Rom 2:27.[115]

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[114] Cf. Sanders, *Paul, the Law*, 131.

[115] Matthew Thiessen, "Paul's Argument against Gentile Circumcision in Romans 2:17-29," *NovT* 56 (2014): 373–91; cf. idem, "Paul's So-Called Jew and Lawless Lawkeeping," in *The So-Called Jew in Paul's Letter to the Romans*, ed. Rafael Rodríguez and Matthew Thiessen (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2016), 59–83.

Paul accuses an interlocutor here of being "a transgressor of the Law διὰ γράμματος καὶ περιτομῆς." But because "it is difficult to see how γράμμα καὶ περιτομή can constitute the means by which the interlocutor transgresses the Law," many scholars, including Thorsteinsson, have taken this prepositional phrase as denoting attendant circumstance.[116] This is despite the fact that, as Thiessen points out, "of the 197 occurrences in Paul of the preposition διά when it takes the genitive, the vast majority indisputably mean 'through,' whether in the sense of agency, means, or movement through space or time."[117] Thiessen goes on to observe that those who argue for attendant circumstance "point to BDF (223.3) as evidence that διά with the genitive can have this meaning." But BDF only provides two places where this can be the case (Rom 14:20 and Gal 4:13), "the latter of which provides no evidence of this usage since the preposition διά takes here an object in the accusative (δι᾽ ἀσθένειαν). Thus, on the basis of Rom 14:20 alone, BDF suggests that the διά construction of Rom 2:27 should be understood as signifying attendant circumstance."[118]

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[116] Thorsteinsson, *Paul's Interlocutor*, 228n232; Campbell, *Deliverance*, 565; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 322; Jewett, *Romans*, 219.

[117] Thiessen, "Paul's Argument," 385.

[118] Thiessen, "Paul's Argument," 386. But even in Rom 14:20 an instrumental reading of the διά with the genitive may work reasonably well there too: "Indeed, all things are clean, but [it is] evil to the person who eats through a stumbling block" (πάντα μὲν καθαρά, ἀλλὰ κακὸν τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ τῷ διὰ προσκόμματος ἐσθίοντι, 14:20). Earlier, Paul used πρόσκομμα when he said "do not place a stumbling block [πρόσκομμα] for a brother" (14:13) and this πρόσκομμα is the act of eating, which does not simply cause this other to be offended, but causes them to eat it as well (14:20) and thereby feel guilty by what they ate in bad conscience because they considered it to be common (14:14). Thus, 14:20 is saying that although no food is intrinsically unclean it can become evil for the person who eats of it by means of another person who is eating that same food (14:15). This fits the instrumental meaning of διά with the genitive and does not require attendant circumstance. This person in 14:20 is not eating "while" stumbling, but it partaking in food they think is unclean (14:14) by means of the fact that someone else is eating it (this is the πρόσκομμα) and this is causing them to eat it too. For more on Paul's argument in this chapter on food see, David Rudolph, "Paul and the Food Laws: A Reassessment of Romans 14:14, 20," in *Paul the*

In addition, if the point of the phrase in 2:27 is, as Jewett contends, to argue that "despite the possession of a written law and circumcision, he [the interlocutor] nevertheless fails to obey," then, as Thiessen notes, this "requires the addition of the phrase 'you have'" to the translation:[119] "you who, although/because you have the letter and circumcision are a transgressor of the Law." But this makes "γράμματος καὶ περιτομῆς the direct object of this paraphrastic addition ['you have']."[120] So Thiessen asks:

> Such a translation might be permissible, but again, would it not be preferable to translate it in a way that adds as little as possible to the Greek while still making sense? Additionally, if we can provide an interpretation of this passage that makes sense of this phrase functioning instrumentally, we should prefer it to the attendant circumstance interpretation, since the vast majority of such phrases mean "through."[121]

Although we will return to the accusations of 2:21–22 in the following chapter, it suffices for now to observe that "Paul's point is to create *the pattern* of someone who preaches one thing but does the opposite."[122] Thus, the person who preaches not to steal steals, not to commit adultery commits adultery, and abhorrence of idols robs temples. This accords with our earlier observation about the general topos of the dialogical apostrophe, namely, to address a hypocrite. "All of this sets up the trap Paul intends to spring upon his gentile interlocutor, who boasts in and preaches circumcision, but does

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Jew: Rereading the Apostle as a Figure of Second Temple Judaism, ed. Gabriele Boccaccini and Carlos A. Segovia (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2016), 151–81.

[119] Jewett, *Romans*, 234; Thiessen, "Paul's Argument," 386.

[120] Thiessen, "Paul's Argument," 386.

[121] Thiessen, "Paul's Argument," 386. Following Schlatter, Dunn does take an instrumental translation of διά, but takes the transgression to mean ethnocentric boasting in the written code of the law and circumcision (Dunn, *Romans 1–8,* 123).

[122] Thiessen, "Paul's Argument," 382; his emphasis.

not actually keep the law of circumcision."[123] This is as far as my agreement with Thiessen extends, however.

7.3.3.2.3 Critiquing Matthew Thiessen: Rom 2:27 Is Not against Proselyte Circumcision Itself

Thiessen analyzes the significance of eighth-day circumcision in Gen 17:12, 14 in his book *Contesting Conversion: Genealogy, Circumcision and Identity in Ancient Judaism and Christianity,* published in 2011.[124] Based on his argument in *Contesting*, Thiessens later argues that Paul thinks the proselyte interlocutor breaks the law of circumcision because "Any adult gentile male undergoing circumcision fails to keep the law because he does not do so on the eighth day after he was born, and because he is not Abraham's son or slave."[125] That is, according to Thiessen, Paul believes proselyte circumcision violates the commandment of circumcision because the proselyte would be getting circumcised well past their eighth day of life.[126] But this claim has been challenged.

There is no evidence that eighth-day circumcision was ever used to exclude the possibly of proselyte conversion *a priori.* As Shaye J. D. Cohen remarks in his review of *Contesting Conversion*, "not a single ancient Jewish text says that a gentile cannot convert to Judaism because of missing eighth-day circumcision."[127] Indeed, as Thiessen

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[123] Thieseen, "Paul's Argument," 384.

[124] Matthew Thiessen, *Contesting Conversion: Genealogy, Circumcision, and Identity in Ancient Judaism and Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

[125] Thiessen, "Paul's Argument," 387; Thiessen, *Contesting Conversion*.

[126] Rodríguez follows Thiessen's argument both regarding the syntax of 2:27 and that it is attacking post-eighth-day circumcision (*If You Call*, 57–61).

[127] Shaye J. D. Cohen, "Review of Matthew Thiessen, *Contesting Conversion: Genealogy, Circumcision, and Identity in Ancient Judaism and Christianity*," *CBQ* 75.2 (2013): 380.

is well aware, the Samaritans are strict on eighth-day circumcision when compared with the Mishnah, but this did not prevent them from accepting proselytes. He notes, moreover, that "*M. Shabbat* 19:5 permits the circumcision of an infant to take place anywhere from the eighth to the twelfth day, depending on the circumstances." But the early twentieth-century Samaritan High priest Jacob ben Aaron was stricter than this:

> The Samaritans believe that if the entire eighth day should pass without circumcision, the killing of the babe would become obligatory. The uncircumcised child shall not be called a Hebrew; and purification shall never be lawful unto him. Therefore nothing hinders the Samaritans from circumcising the male child; no excuse is valid on that day, whether it be sickness or accident, or the absence of his father; nor must the rite be postponed even should the day fall on the Sabbath or a festival day. None of these is to be taken into account…. In this matter there is a wide difference between the Samaritans and the Jews.[128]

The Samaritans were inflexible about eighth-day circumcision especially because their version of Gen 17:14 ("And the circumcised male, who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin on the eighth day, that soul shall be cut off from his people, for he has broken my covenant") includes the words "on the eighth day" which the MT lacks. (The LXX agrees with the Samaritan Pentateuch [SP].)[129] Thus, Jacob ben Aaron accuses the Jews of deliberately omitting "on the eighth day" in order to take "license… for postponing circumcision."[130] This has been a standard accusation by the Samaritans as far back as the sources extend.[131]

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[128] Matthew Thiessen, *Contesting Conversion: Genealogy, Circumcision, and Identity in Ancient Judaism and Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 27; Jacob ben Aaron, "Circumcision Among the Samaritans," trans. Abdullah ben Kori, *BSac* 65 (1908): 696. Thiessen quotes most of this passage in *Contesting Conversion*, 157n37.

[129] Thiessen, *Contesting Conversion*, 20–1.

[130] ben Aaron, "Circumcision," 696.

[131] For an overview of the primary sources see Reinhard Pummer, "Samaritan Rituals and Customs," in *The Samaritans*, ed. Alan D. Crown (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1989), 655–57; cf. John Mills,

And yet, despite this stringency, Samaritans still welcomed proselytes and would circumcise them upon conversion. Hence "[I]n his book *De Mensuris et Ponderibus*, Epiphanius of Salamis relates that both the Samaritans who converted to Judaism and the Jews who became Samaritans were, respectively, required to undergo a second circumcision, thus attesting to the mutual negation of the other group's practice."[132] But Thiessen does not acknowledge this fact and it deals a significant blow to the key premise of his thesis.

Nevertheless, on ostensible analogy to the strict eighth-day practice of Samaritan circumcision, he argues that what Paul is accusing the interlocutor of in Rom 2 is violating proselyte circumcision because it necessarily falls beyond the eighth day. However, the Samaritan willingness to accept proselytes and to circumcise them well past the eighth day suggests, to use Sanders' famous phrasing, that the eighth-day ordinance in Gen 17:12, 14 is about "staying in" rather than "getting in." That is, even granting the SP/LXX rendering of Gen 17:14, eighth-day circumcision concerns males who were born "in"—they are already in "his [parents'] people" (Gen 17:14)—but who subsequently get "cut off away from his people" if they are not circumcised on the eighth-day. As Jacob ben Aaron says, "if circumcision is postponed later than the eighth day, the boy is not to be looked upon as an Israelite in this world."[133] While this seems to

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Three Months' Residence at Nablus, and an Account of the Modern Samaritans (London: Murray, 1864), 190.

[132] Nissan Rubin, "*Brit Milah*: A Study of Change in Custom," in *The Covenant of Circumcision: New Perspectives on an Ancient Jewish Rite*, ed. Elizabeth Wyner Mark (Hanover, NH: Brandeis University Press, 2003), 95; Pummer, "Samaritan Rituals," 658–59.

[133] Jacob ben Aaron, "Circumcision Among the Samaritans," 696.

maintain the strict need not to forego infant circumcision of born-Israelites—as might be tempting in the reign of Antiochus (1 Macc 1:60–61; Josephus, *Ant*. 12.254) or simply due to illness or a threat to the baby's life—it does not preclude adoption from outside of the people into them.

In short, since it is unlikely that Paul thought a male proselyte transgressed the commandment of circumcision simply due to the fact that he was circumcised after the eighth-day, we need to seek another plausible reading in which a proselyte can transgress the commandment of circumcision by the act of getting circumcised itself as the syntax of Rom 2:27 suggests on Thiessen's reading.

7.3.3.2.4 Paul Opposes Periah Circumcision

Thiessen has suggested fairly that the syntax of Rom 2:27 indicates that the interlocutor is a transgressor of the Law specifically by violating the particular command of circumcision. A more plausible construal of the argument than his, however, may lie in the observation that there were two types of circumcision practiced in antiquity, each removing significantly different amounts of the prepuce. Paul provides evidence that he is only familiar with the procedure that removes a small amount of preputial skin, suggesting that a procedure removing all the preputial skin would be a violation of the circumcision commandment in Gen 17 because it is removing an excessive extent of skin and therefore amounts to a mutilation. The Appendix "Two Types of Circumcision and Why This Matters for Identifying Paul's Opponents in Galatians and Philippians" lays out the evidence for these two different practices of circumcision in more detail. It also provides the reasons for suspecting that the opponents being addressed in Galatians and

Philippians are Philonic proselytes who underwent a form of circumcision that severed more skin than was the norm at that time in order to cut off their passions. Here it will suffice to abridge the key points detailed there to indicate how this scenario could illumine the seemingly opaque accusation made in Rom 2:27:

> As Frederick M. Hodges observes:
>
> The Greeks understood the prepuce to be composed of two distinct structures: the *posthē*… and the *akroposthion*.… Rufus of Ephesus, a physician under Trajan (98–117 c.e.), describes the penis accordingly:
>
> The tip of the shaft is called the glans [*balonos*], and the skin around the glans [is called the] prepuce [*posthē*], and the extremity of the prepuce is called the *akroposthion*.[134]

This can help us better understand the significant differences between two types of Jewish circumcision—between circumcision known as *milah* and circumcision in terms of *periah. Milah* only excises the ἀκροπόσθιον, namely, the foreskin proper (a small ring of skin extending past the glans), but *periah* excises the ἀκροπόσθιον and the πόσθη (that is, the entire prepuce, which rests atop the glans): "peeling back…the mucosal membrane lining the [inner]foreskin, thus fully uncovering the glans."[135] Greco-Roman doctors considered *milah* circumcision to be medically equivalent to *lipodermos* (having a "short [fore]skin") and prescribed the same remedies for foreskin regeneration for both, should

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[134] Frederick M. Hodges, "The Ideal Prepuce in Ancient Greece and Rome: Male Genital Aesthetics and Their Relation to *Lipodermos,* Circumcision, Foreskin Restoration, and the *Kynodesmē," Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 75.3 (2001): 377-78; cf. 395.

[135] Rubin, "*Brit Milah*," 88. While *milah* derives from the Hebrew verb "to circumcise" מול [Gen 17], *periah* is a rabbinic term meaning "opening" (indicating the full uncovering of the glans down past the corona) and is thus technically anachronistic when talking about the time of Paul. But it will be used heuristically to refer to the same type of circumcision that eventually became the rabbinic standard and referred to as *periah*.

that be desired. That is, this type of circumcision was assumed to leave enough preputial skin (the πόσθη) for epidermal tissue expansion to take place. Tension and stretching could literally re-grow preputial skin sufficient to extend it beyond the glans to form a new foreskin proper. *Periah* circumcision, however, makes foreskin regeneration effectively impossible because it does not leave any preputial skin for tension to stretch back over the glans. (And this seems to have been done on purpose, according to Nissan Rubin to *prevent* the possibility of foreskin regeneration.)[136]

Given the substantial evidence we have of Jewish males undergoing foreskin regeneration ("they made foreskins for themselves," 1 Macc 1:15; cf. Jub 15:33–34; T. Mos. 8:3; Gen. Rab. 46.13; Josephus, *Ant.* 12.241; Celsus, *On Medicine* 7.25; Martial, *Epigrams* 7.35, 82), we can infer that the norm for circumcision during the Second Temple period was *milah.* In support of this, the Samaritans did not and still do not practice *periah* and this suggests that *milah* is the earliest type of Israelite circumcision.[137] In addition, Paul's comments on the possibility of foreskin regeneration through skin tension in 1 Cor 7:18 (where he uses the word ἐπισπάω[138]) means that he was accustomed to *milah*. If Paul thought *periah* was the norm, then the physical process of foreskin regeneration was not something he could have advised against because it would not have been possible.

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[136] Rubin, "*Brit Milah*," 88, 92.

[137] Rubin, "*Brit Milah*," 94–5; Thiessen, *Contesting Conversion*, 55.

[138]Paul and Soranus are the only ones to use this verb as a "technical term" for lengthening the prepuce (πόσθη/ποσθία) by applying sustained tension to preputial skin (Frederick M. Hodges, "The Ideal Prepuce in Ancient Greece and Rome: Male Genital Aesthetics and Their Relation to *Lipodermos*, Circumcision, Foreskin Restoration, and the *Kynodesmē*," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 75.3 [2001]: 73).

There is reason to suspect, however, that Philo taught something more like *periah* circumcision, which removed the entire prepuce, for the following reasons: (a) In *Spec.* 1.3–11, especially in light of the "precise terminology" of the Greeks noted above,[139] Philo's repeated use of ποσθία makes it likely that he thinks circumcision involved the removal of both the ἀκροποσθία as well as the ποσθία. Moreover, (b) he talks about circumcision involving "severe pains" and describes it as a mutilation: "all these thousands in every generation [are mutilated {ἀποτέμνεσθαι}] and suffer severe pains in [maiming {ἀκρωτηριαζούσας}] the bodies of themselves…. [T]he legislators thought good to [maim {ἀκρωτηριάζειν}] the organ which ministers to such intercourse" (*Spec.* 1.3, 9). And it is noteworthy in this relation to read how Diodorus uses ἀποτέμνω ("mutilate") to contrast a severe form of male genital cutting from what he calls "circumcision."[140] Therefore, it appears that Philo intentionally speaks about "severe pains," "mutilating" (ἀποτέμνω), and "maiming" (ἀκρωτηριάζω) because he is talking

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[139] Hodges, "Ideal Prepuce," 377.

[140] Diodorus Siculus (ca. 90 B.C.–30 BCE) differentiates between circumcision and mutilation and Philo's vocabulary indicates that he is aware of this: "all the Trogodytes are circumcised [περιτέμνονται] like the Egyptians with the exception of those who, because of what they have experienced, are called "colobi" [i.e., "mutilated ones"]; for these alone of all who live inside the Straits have in infancy all that part cut completely off with the razor which among other peoples merely suffers circumcision [ἐκ νηπίου ξυροῖς ἀποτέμνονται πᾶν τὸ τοῖς ἄλλοις μέρος περιτομῆς τυγχάνον]" (*Library of History* 3.32.4 [LCL]). Rather than "all that part" (πᾶν τὸ μέρος) referring to "the penis" or "the glans," I think it more than likely refers to the entire "foreskin-structure" (i.e., foreskin proper plus prepuce) because it is referring to what in other peoples is "circumcised" and it is the foreskin of the *preputial skin*, not the penis or the glans, that is cut in circumcision. Those who are circumcised cut the *fore*skin, but retain the prepuce. Diodorus is thus saying the "colobi" have their "entire foreskin-structure" removed, the thing that is "merely" circumcised in others, leaving them without a prepuce and a permanently exposed glans.

about an extreme form of genital surgery known to Diodorus (and Strabo[141]), which removed the entire preputial structure rather than just the foreskin proper.

Hence I suggest, along with other scholars,[142] that Paul encounters opponents in Galatians and Philippians who shared Philo's ideas about the moral efficacy of circumcision, i.e., as a surgically engineered way of controlling the passions (cf. Gal 3:3; 5:16; Phil 3:19). Paul's polemics regarding the type of circumcision being practiced by the opponents in Galatians (esp. 5:12) and Philippians (esp. 3:2, 19) make better sense if these opponents were practicing a form of circumcision much like *periah* whereby they cut off a significant amount of preputial skin exposing the glans, which was known colloquially as a "dog."[143]

But *milah* appears to be the norm outside of Paul. And so Paul himself writes under the assumption that circumcision when it takes place legitimately should be in the form prescribed by *milah*. He also has a vested opposition to proselyte circumcision among his gentile converts. Hence it is reasonable to suggest that Paul would consider *periah* to be a violation of the command of circumcision due to the significant amount of extra preputial skin cut off; it would be a "mutilation" (Phil 3:2), coming very close to a genital amputation (Gal 5:12). A violation of the commandment is explicitly raised in Gal 5:3 and 6:13, and this coheres with the charge made in Rom 2:27 (cf. 2:25). It turns out,

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[141] Strabo talks about the "Troglodytes" some of whom have "mutilate[d] [κολοβοὶ] their bodies," and "some of them [who] are circumcised [περιτετμημένοι], like the Aegyptians" (*Geogr.* 16.4.17; cf. 16.4.5 [LCL]). Although he mistakenly thinks Jews practice female circumcision too (16.4.9), he nevertheless views the Jews as circumcisers (cf. αἱ περιτομαί in 16.2.37), not κολοβοί like the Troglodytes.

[142] Borgen, "Observations"; Clark, "Enslaved."

[143] Ryan D. Collman, "Beware the Dogs! The Phallic Epithet in Phil 3.2," *NTS* 67 (2021): 105–20.

moreover, that this same halakhic reasoning is common among Samaritans, who maintain to this day that the novel practice of *periah* (which became the standard Jewish form of circumcision some time after Hadrian)[144] is a violation of the law of circumcision in Gen 17.[145] (In further support of this I would suggest that the opponents are characterized as proselytes to Philonic Judaism in both Galatians and Philippians.[146])

If this argument is correct—that Paul is combating Philonic (moral) circumcision in Galatians and Philippians 3, and that something akin to *periah* was being practiced by the proselyte opponents in view there—then this could prove illuminating for the polemics in Rom 2.[147] We could lay to rest the assumption that the διά in the phrase τὸν διὰ γράμματος καὶ περιτομῆς παραβάτην νόμου (Rom 2:27) has to be read as denoting attendant circumstance, but offer a construal that mitigates the shortcomings of Thiessen's view that Paul is troubled here by a violation of eighth-day circumcision. An instrumental reading is perfectly intelligible in Paul's context if he is combating radical

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[144] Rubin, "*Brit Milah*," 88; cf. Cohen, "Jewish Women," 25–6, 232n69.

[145] "But circumcision with us means only the cutting off of the foreskin. The Jews make an addition to what God has commanded; for their *hacham,* 'doctors,' make necessary the removal of a larger portion of the skin than the prepuce, sometimes denuding the phallus, which they call *perih,* which does not correspond with the circumcision known in the Hebrew language as *nemileh.* We do not practise this as the Jews do, for we think theirs is an addition to the divine command, and has not been revealed as such." (ben Aaron, "Circumcision," 697)

[146] E.g., in Galatians, the present participle περιτεμνόμενοι in 6:13 suggests they are recently circumcised ones. And in Phil 3, Paul's "boast" in an eighth-day circumcision in 3:5 is framed as boast the "dogs" in v. 2 would not be able to match because it is what Paul has "far more" [v. 4] than them, which would only be the case if they are proselytes who were circumcised, but not circumcised on the eighth-day like a born-Jew. More on these observations in the Appendix.

[147] Especially since it is only in these three letters where certain a certain cluster of themes emerge all together (e.g, faith, works [of the Law], justification, circumcision, righteousness). And Abraham only appears in Paul's writings in Romans and Galatians.

Philonic circumcision in terms of *periah* in which the whole preputial structure is being removed to achieve the greatest moral benefits.

Paul accuses the Teacher of being "a transgressor of the Law διὰ γράμματος καὶ περιτομῆς" (2:27) and the force of γράμμα here is "the 'detail' or 'prescription' of the law."[148] Thus the καί is either epexegetical or emphatic yielding the sense "a transgressor of the Law through the prescription of the law, namely, the law of circumcision," or "a transgressor of the Law through the letter-of-the-law of circumcision." On my reading, Paul is asserting that gentiles who proselytize and submit to *periah* circumcision ironically "are transgressors of the very law that they are trying to keep."[149] In their zeal, they mutilate themselves (cf. κατατομή in Phil 3:2) and disobey God as they accept and then advocate this extreme form of circumcision.

This reading arguably sheds light in turn on two passages surrounding Rom 2:27. First, returning to 2:25, we can understand why Paul is wanting to cast doubt on the Teacher's claim to be a "Jew" (2:17), by linking this status to circumcision. In 2:25 Paul says, as Joel Marcus translates, "If you break the Law, your circumcised glans becomes a foreskin."[150] As Marcus remarks, "becomes a foreskin" in 2:25 means that "the sign of the covenant (Gen 17.11; cf. Rom 4.11) is not there."[151] I think Marcus's argument makes

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[148] Thiessen, "Paul's Argument," 388.

[149] Thiessen, "Paul's Argument," 390; again, while I agree with Thiessen that this is the charge, I disagree with the specifics of how it is that the law of circumcision is being transgressed. Pace Thiessen, as the Samaritans prove, being obstinately fixated on eighth-day circumcision only applies to those born to covenant members and in no way is a hindrance to the conversion of outsiders.

[150] Translation taken from Joel Marcus, "The Circumcision and the Uncircumcision in Rome," *NTS* 35.1 (1989): 75.

[151] Marcus, "The Circumcsion," 75.

the most sense when we understand that Paul takes the sign of the covenant to be *milah* circumcision as instructed by Gen 17:11 since *milah* is quite evidently the standard during the first-century, but then postulate—given the pressure from all the accumulated Philonic evidence—that this ostensible proselyte has undergone *periah*, namely, the much more "severe [circumcision] regimen" which leaves the entire glans exposed.[152] He has thereby transgressed the letter of the law of *milah*. The proselyte from Paul's perspective would thus quite ironically still be lacking the actual sign of the covenant as he was while foreskinned. On this reading, the Teacher is walking around without the covenantal sign (*milah*) (Rom 4:11) and by transgressing the Law in this way he has forfeited his ostensible circumcision because he might as well be foreskinned. Both the foreskinned and the ones who "mutilate" or "cut down" (cf. κατατομή in Phil 3:2) so far that their entire glans ("dog" 3:2) is permanently exposed would lack the covenant sign of *milah*.

Second, stepping back a little and reading Rom 2:27 in light of its specific dialogical context then further illuminates what we find in 2:28–29. As noted in chapter 5, these claims in 2:28–29 generate significant διαφωνία if they are attributed to Paul but, as demonstrated above, the statements fit perfectly with Philo's idiosyncratic teaching on circumcision, especially as we see it articulated in *Spec*. 1.3–11, and even down to specific words like φανερός, καρδία, πνεῦμα and κρυπτός (cf. ἀφανής in *Spec.* 1.6). I will detail this further in the final script of the text that I offer in the next chapter. It suffices

[152] Cohen, *Jewish Women*, 25.

here to note how my suggested interpretation regarding Philonic *periah* circumcision would bring clarity to the transition between v. 27 and vv. 28–29.

The charge in 2:27 is in Paul's voice since he is still addressing the interlocutor ("you"). He is accusing the Teacher of violating the letter of the law of circumcision (διὰ γράμματος) through his own radical circumcision (cf. "your circumcision" in 2:25). The statements made in 2:28–29 then work quite well as a defense to such an accusation. Verses 28–29 say that circumcision is not fundamentally concerned with the discrete letter of the law (οὐ γράμματι, 2:29). It is a matter ultimately of the heart. Therefore, since these claims are (a) in a dialogical context, (b) they are διαφωνία for Paul, (c) on their own they seem to contradict the accusation that was just made vis-à-vis the γράμμα of the Law, and (d) they satisfy the criterion of appropriateness of a Philonic interlocutor, then we can reasonably propose that these are the Teacher's words and see what reading this produces.

This reading views the Teacher as responding to Paul's accusation in 2:27 that he has violated the letter of the law of circumcision (because he did another procedure Paul does not recognize) with the counter-claim: "Who cares if the physicality of my circumcision bothers you, Paul, and that it is not exactly following the letter of the law? Real circumcision is inward, not in outward conformity to the specific letter of the law; real circumcision is a circumcision of the heart in our spirit." From here Paul can launch his final attack in 3:1: "If you, the Teacher, confess that outward circumcision does not really matter—because you want to elude my charge that you are transgressing the letter

of the law of circumcision—then why fuss about physical circumcision at all? What is the benefit of circumcision?"

Admittedly, my suggested reading here rests on several claims coordinating together simultaneously. It is not certain, but it is based on inferences that are sufficiently warranted by the available evidence to be somewhat plausible. And Philo is once again the common denominator that is able to unite all these odd details in a single interpretive tradition, details that have perennially troubled Romans commentors. In light of the exegetical problems the notion of Philonic ethical *periah* circumcision solves in 2:27, then, as well as the clarity it can bring to its immediately surrounding dialogical context, I suggest that it possesses greater historical and exegetical evidential warrants than either the conventional interpretation of Rom 2:27 in terms of attendant circumstance or Thiessen's alternative reading. But my broader claims about a Philonic interlocutor in Rom 1–3 does not stand or fall on this particular set of claims.

7.4 Conclusion: Summarizing Philo and Rom 1:18–2:29

I concluded chapter 5 by providing two contrasting narratives about how God relates to humanity that came from the process of discerning διαφωνία in the text. The contrasting voices of Paul and an interlocutor—the Teacher—emerged clearly into view. We can now see how Philo essentially tells the same story about God and humans that we found in Rom 1:18–2:29 but which we distinguished there from Paul's own voice. But we can also now deepen our description of this opposing position given the key roles that Philo gives to following the written laws in general and to circumcision in particular for those who need pedagogical aides in acquiring righteousness.

(a) God relates to human beings based on individual merit (Jews have no benefit *qua* Jews because there is no covenant let alone covenant promises). (b) God's divine invisible attributes (e.g., God's eternality) are clearly perceptible from creation, (c) thus, ungodliness and injustice, epitomized in idolatry, are a willful rejection of monotheism and deserve punishment (even death). (d) Idolatry leads to a whole host of other vices and passions like (e) same-sex intercourse, which violates natural law, although those who engage in it already receive a just punishment in their bodies, namely, the inability to procreate. (f) Although some by virtue of being "self-taught through nature" (*Plant.* 110) have lived in accordance with God's (natural) law, have circumcised their hearts, and can therefore expect to be paid back with immortality, (g) many have deliberately rejected their innate knowledge of God and God's ordinances. These people, regardless of any ostensible benefits of "noble birth" (*Spec.* 4.182*; Virt.* 227) are worthy of wrath, tribulation, distress, and ultimately, death. So God relates to the godly and just by rewarding them with glory, honor, and immortality, but to the ungodly and unjust who do evil, God punishes with wrath, rage, and eternal destruction. (h) If someone wants to merit immortality, then s/he needs to put in the effort and practice (ἄσκησις) and start obeying God's law in accordance with nature to acquire righteousness.

(i) "But here is hope!" says the Teacher. "I, the Teacher, can help anyone who wants to live in accordance with God's law, for that is my mission. I am a guide to the blind, a light to those in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, and a teacher of infants (νηπίων, *Migr*. 46). In fact, (j) what can help most in an effort to curb your passions, you 'hoper' (ἐλπίζων) and 'practicer' (ἀσκητής), is to follow the written Law, and in

particular, to get circumcised. By mutilating the organ responsible for 'the most imperious' of the passions the circumcised person is able to control all other passions (*Spec.* 1.9). By getting physically circumcised, the person will have a circumcised heart in their spirit (1.4–11 and *QG* 3.46–52). But there are some caveats: e.g., (k) some people, like the philosophers, can be considered circumcised even without circumcising their foreskin since they have overcome their passions (*QE* 2.2). Also, (l) some who were circumcised as literal infants can forfeit their physical circumcision by choosing to indulge their passions (*Spec.* 4.182; *Virt.* 187–189, 197, 226–227). These are uncircumcised of heart (*Spec.* 1.304) and they will perish with the rest of the impious and unjust. (m) Circumcision of the heart in the human spirit matters most (*Spec.* 1.4–11; 1.305; *QG* 3.46–52)."

Moreover, we also observed earlier how Philo's distinct theological views, especially as they relate to proselytes and circumcision, generate certain logical tensions within his framework. On the one hand, Philo vehemently wants to preserve the actual practice of the special laws—even, or especially, of circumcision—(cf. *Migr*. 86–96), but, on the other, he is unwilling to suggest that philosophers who have acquired perfect virtue are somehow impious for lack of circumcision and following the special laws (cf. *Prob.* 62–74; *Virt.* 65; *Spec.* 2.42–47). His natural theology requires him to affirm and to recognize the latter, but his personal adherence to his Jewish customs as well as his view that the Law serves to guide the νήπιος, the ἐλπίζων, and the ἀσκητής into acquiring at least some measure of virtue (*Mut*. 84, 222–22; *Somn.* 1.150–152; *Abr*. 47; *Agr.* 159) makes him refuse to go the way of the "extreme allegorizers," who were Jews who had

entirely abandoned the literal keeping of the laws in favor of only attending to the inner allegorical meaning and practice (*Migr*. 86–96). This produces a tension in theory although not necessarily in practice. Circumcision and the special laws are not necessary *per se*, but for all practical purposes they are because most people are ἀσκηταί at best. Hence these views are coherent from within Philo's perspective. Hence, affirming the importance of the special laws and circumcision does not force Philo to turn them into "requirements" *per se*. Furthermore, Philo can hold that circumcision is ontologically effective for a person's heart and spirit, giving them control of their passions and desires, without arguing that it is the only effective means to that end.

What is especially important to affirm here in closing then is that just the same distinctively Philonic tensions appear in Rom 1:18–2:29. Further, Philo's unique, non-covenantal view of Judaism, which requires a strict, individuated, meritorious soteriology entailing it is possible for a person to forfeit their εὐγένεια based on their wicked deeds, coheres well not only with the meritorious soteriology according works articulated in Rom 2:6–12, but with the notions that a circumcision can be forfeited argued in 2:25, 27 and the claim that keeping the requirements of the natural law equals true circumcision (2:26; cf. 28–29, 14–15).

In the next chapter I will conclude this line of argument by showing how the dialogical features in Rom 1–3 plotted in earlier chapters combine with our more detailed Philonic evidence to indicate that Paul is exploiting these distinct Philonic tensions. His argument in Rom 1–3 tries to turn all these claims and emphases into logical and missiological weaknesses for the Teacher, who is pushing moral circumcision onto Paul's

gentile converts. Hence Paul's argument, read in these thoroughgoing dialogical terms, results in a coherent script for Rom 1:16–3:20 and resolves the tensions that have bedeviled so many scholars and readings in the past.

8. Paul's Opposition to a Philonic Proselyte: A Script for Rom 1:16–3:20

We have finally reached a vantage point from which to discern the function of the dialogical cues in the text of Rom 1:18–3:20. To rehearse my findings thus far: large swaths of Rom 1:18–3:9 have proven to be not only anomalous in Paul, but oftentimes in tension with his comments in the rest of Romans and his epistolary corpus as a whole. Fortified with ancient dialogical conventions, I have categorized these tensions as διαφωνία. Additionally, the claims causing διαφωνία have been found to match Philo's distinctive teachings (especially as these relate to individuated, non-covenantal, soteriological concerns, an overly optimistic analysis of gentile natural knowledge of God and their ability to obey natural law, and peculiar views on proselytes and circumcision).[1] Moreover, we saw how Paul's second apostrophe in 2:17–24 describes a teacher with similar descriptors to those Philo used of himself and other teachers of virtue (e.g., δοκιμάζεις τὰ διαφέροντα κατηχούμενος, διδάσκαλον νηπίων–2:18, 20). Since the rest of the material surrounding this apostrophe also resonates with unique Philonic views, I inferred further that Paul is dialoging with a teacher deeply formed by Philo's teaching.

I also confirmed the suggestion that this Philonic Teacher was likely a proselyte. This is supported by—in addition to the evidence set out in the Appendix—the fact that the Teacher is characterized as someone who merely "calls himself a Jew" (2:17) as

[1] Philo and Rom 1:18–2:29 are the only Jewish texts of this time that share these ideas on soteriology and natural law together. Wisdom of Solomon is not as confident that gentiles actually know God (it says they were "ignorant [ἀγνωσία] of God," 13:1), but says that they ought to have been able to know God (13:9).

opposed to "being a Jew" (cf. Gal 2:14), and that the ensuing discussion about circumcision in 2:25–27 matches the idiosyncratic teachings of Philo concerning proselytes and circumcision. It engages a type of circumcision that violated the literal law (γράμμα) of circumcision (2:27), which the proselyte would have undergone at some point in their conversion to a Philonic type of Judaism.

Equipped with all the preceding evidence then we do not have to ask, like Dunn, "Who is this hidden interlocutor who provides a foil for Paul's argument but seems to say nothing?"[2] When applying this evidence to 3:1–9, for example, where everyone agrees a dialogue is taking place, we quickly find that the research gathered above serves to confirm the rescriptive readings of Elliot, Campbell, and King. In fact, the interlocutor speaks quite a bit. But now we have a more robust evidential warrant for supplying a script of Rom 1:18–3:20 that includes his voice, in particular utilizing that critical ancient clue, characterization, which underpins the criterion of appropriateness, now supplemented with detailed historical information about Philo. This will become clear as we work through the entirety of 1:18–3:20, also noting Paul's overt presence in 1:16-17.

8.1 The Rhetorical Flow of Rom 1:16–3:20

Once we recognize that the speech in 1:18–32 is articulating the core views of the interlocutor who is addressed and characterized in the apostrophe in 2:1–3,[3] then this

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[2] Dunn, *Romans 1–8*, 89.

[3] We found that at least the following four reasons support this claim: (a) We documented how this speech constitutes διαφωνία with respect to Paul. (b) The διό transition in 2:1 creates a conundrum for Paul himself and opens him up to his own charge of self-condemnation. (c) The speech in 1:18–32 that condemns to death οἱ τὰ τοιαῦτα πράσσοντες (v. 32) fits with the characterization of the interlocutor as ὁ κρίνων τοὺς τὰ τοιαῦτα πράσσοντας (2:3; cf. 2:1). (d) Apostrophes are regularly used as "capping

recognition becomes part of the criterion by which we can analyze the rest of the dialogical exchange. The correspondence with Philo that was catalogued in chapters 5–6 then serves as corroborative evidence that this διαφωνία is an historically attested although very distinctive type of Jewish teaching that it is being used to convince gentiles to be circumcised: the best pathway to earning immortality is by cutting off the passions, and circumcision surgically accomplishes this moral *telos*.

To summarize the larger picture: Paul is going to contrast his gospel, which "is the power of God for salvation for all who are faithful" and of which he is "not ashamed" "for the righteousness of God is revealed in it [i.e., the Gospel]" (1:16–17) with another message from the Teacher (2:20, 21) about God's righteousness (cf. 3:5), which is said to be revealed in God's "righteous judgment" (2:5) in terms of retributive justice. In the Teacher's account, wrath and death are "paid back" to the ungodly and unjust, and eschatological life is "paid back" to those who persevere in good works (2:6–13, 3:8; 1:18–32). Additionally, the Teacher proclaiming this alternative message (about what reveals God's righteousness) thinks that circumcision will afford an ethical (not a covenantal) advantage (2:25; 3:1–2; cf. 3:29–30; 4:9–16[4]) before the coming "revelation of God's righteous judgment" (2:5). The advantage is not covenantal because (a) the covenant is not mentioned here and (b) it is being presented as having an ostensible

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formulas" to mark the end of a quoted speech. And, scholars' attempts to resolve points (a) and (b) have generated their own problems. Speech-in-character has the most evidential warrant and explanatory power to make sense of the flow of the text from 1:18–32 to 2:1–3.

[4] This section on Abraham and circumcision in Rom 4:9–16 would make sense as a rebuttal to the Philonic moral view of circumcision in favor of a historical and covenantal one that Paul prefers (and he shows how the foreskinned are nevertheless included in the historical and covenantal promises made to Abraham *qua* foreskinned).

"benefit" (2:25; 3:1) in a context where the only conceivable benefit is the ethical control of the passions ravaging the impious (1:18–32) and leading them to ultimate death (1:32; 2:12). This accords with Philo's view of circumcision where it effects the circumcision of a person's heart and spirit because it cuts off the passions from their physical source (*Spec.* 1.6–11, 304–305; *QG* 3.47–48; cf. Rom 2:25–29; 1:21, 24). Physical circumcision brings the darkened and dull mind into the light of truth, according to Philo (*Spec.*1.9; 305, 309; *QG* 3.47, 52; Rom 1:28; 2:19–20). Hence physical circumcision results in a person being able to control the passions and thereby to escape God's wrath (Rom 1:18, 24, 26, 28), if he does not already do so, and thereby to merit eschatological life (2:6–7, 10).

Paul's rhetorical strategy as a whole is to exploit the logical implications of the Teacher's soteriological and theological positions in order to undermine his goal of persuading gentiles to undergo circumcision and to convert to his (i.e., the Teacher's) gospel. Paul capitalizes on the notion that a person can gain immortality as a gentile apart from the Law of Moses. (This is implicit in 1:18–32 and explicit in 2:6–15.) He can thereby show that the interlocutor's ultimate agenda—to convince gentiles to be circumcised—is otiose. The one thing gentiles do not need to do if the premises set forth in 1:18–32 and 2:6–15 hold (cf. vv. 26–27) is get circumcised (and thereby become Jews, 3:28–29); they just need to live in accordance with the natural law of the cosmos, which, as these texts convey, they already inherently have the knowledge of and capacity for. But Paul will go even further and claim that not only is it logically unnecessary to become a proselyte given the Teacher's own premises of natural law and possibility of

righteousness apart from the written Law. He will also eventually show how, if one takes the scriptural witness seriously (3:10–18), then no one can be saved through this individuated meritorious soteriology even if they did become a circumcised proselyte because "all are under sin" and "no one is righteous, not even one" (3:9, 10).

In this way, the flow of the argument follows the strategy of an *elenchus*: by the time Paul gets to 3:20 he has thoroughly exposed the interlocutor's "ignorance and moral inconsistency" and brought "to light contradictions in his beliefs."[5] The fundamental positions of the interlocutor have ended up being self-refuting, which is exactly what Paul told us to expect in 2:1 ("you condemn yourself"). It is in the dialogue in 3:1–9 that the interlocutor finally concedes that Jews/circumcised proselytes have no advantage after all according to his own theological and soteriological premises (3:9; contra the Teacher's claim that Paul quotes in 2:25 that "circumcision is beneficial"). In 3:2 the interlocutor says the opposite—that circumcision has every possible advantage and benefit (cf. 2:25). The point of the dialogue in 3:1–9 then is to get the interlocutor to change their mind from what they said in 3:2, acknowledging the logical absurdity of his own assumptions, which is what happens in 3:9.[6] Paul crushes the interlocutor entirely with a scriptural catena asserting universal deep sinfulness in 3:9b–19. Paul then proceeds with his own more direct exposition of the saving δικαιοσύνη of God from 3:21 (which was signaled in

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[5] Stanley K. Stowers, *A Rereading of Romans: Justice, Jews, and Gentiles* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 163.

[6] This change of mind is what Pelagius observed in his commentary noted at the beginning of chapter 3 (*Rom*. 3:1–2). And, as noted in the introduction, this is part of why Elliott, Campbell, and King all script the 3:1–9 with the interlocutor responding to all the questions and ultimately changing his mind.

1:16–17) because it is "Only after this negative process [of *elenchus*]" that "the positive teaching or exhortation [can] occur."[7]

One important qualification needs to be noted here, however, before getting to the details of the (re)script. Just because the author scripts for himself a certain speech it does not follow within a broadly Socratic argument that he actually holds to these positions. This is the frequently sarcastic—or better, "parodic"—strategy employed by Epictetus and analyzed in chapter 2 (e.g., *Disc.* 2.20.26–31). Epictetus imitates the views of another, which is what Quintilian calls "parody" (*Inst.* 6.3.98 [παρῳδία]; 9.2.34–35 [παρῳδή]), and he uses this within a Socratic *elenchus*. By using sarcastic parody, Epictetus scripts for himself things he does not himself hold to in order to lead his interlocutor into agreement with certain positions (because they are, after all, the propositions and beliefs the interlocutor believes himself). But he then suddenly turns and traps the interlocutor in an *aporia* or absurdity so that either he is forced to admit these propositions are indeed false, or the reader is left scoffing at the stupidity of the intransigent interlocutor. So then, the criterion of appropriateness—detecting διαφωνία—not only helps us to know when someone else is speaking; it helps us to identify if the main speaker is constructing a Socratic *elenchus* by means of sarcastic parody, impersonating and mirroring back the interlocutor's own views in order to lure them into

[7] Stowers, *Rereading*, 163.

admitting self-defeat on his or her own terms. I will show shortly why it is plausible to suspect that a lot of the material in Rom 2 is Paul using sarcastic parody.[8]

I reproduce the text of Rom 1:16–3:20 that makes this script of the argument clear at the end of this chapter. Here I will provide an annotated reading through the specific exchanges that comprise this dialogue with further clarifying evidence where necessary.

8.2. An Annotated Reading of Rom 1:18–3:20

8.2.1 Rom 1:18–2:4

Chapters 3 and 4 argued both that the surface cues of the text (e.g., the διό and apostrophe in 2:1) suggest that 1:18–32 represents a characteristic judging speech of the judging person addressed in 2:1, and that a lot of the material in 1:18–32 generated significant διαφωνία with respect to Paul. Then, in chapter 6, I demonstrated how all of this material matches Philo's teaching down to peculiar details such as the innate and inherent knowledge of God and the natural law, a unique, Egyptian-oriented polemic against idolatry (e.g.,"reptiles"),[9] a peculiar *scala naturae* attack on same-sex intercourse

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[8] Stowers also detects parody in Rom 2 (esp. vv. 17–29), but whereas he thinks "does not represent a teacher from some Hellenistic philosophy," I have provided sufficient evidence to suspect, on the contrary, that Paul is indeed addressing someone quite like a Philonic (Jewish) Hellenistic philosopher teacher (*Rereading*, 147–50, here 147). And, it is worth noting that Stowers seems to back off a bit from that statement almost immediately: "Nevertheless, a combination of rhetorical forms and thematic motifs makes it clear that 2:17–29 parodies the philosophical teacher's admonishing censure of a pretentious would-be philosopher. Paul has created an interlocutor who is a fellow Jew and with whom he will conduct a diatribal dialogue. Although the particularity of the characterization in 2:17–29 stands out sharply, the echoes of philosopher-talk and of the pretentious would-be philosopher still break through" (ibid., 147–48).

[9] Animal idolatry in general is a feature of Alexandrian Jewish polemics, but the mention of reptilian idolatry only appears outside of Rom 1:23, to my knowledge, in Philo and the Apocalypse of Peter as documented in chapter 6. This is such a peculiar detail that it leads scholars to safely conclude that at least this portion of the Apocalypse of Peter (10.5) is from Alexandria. This is strong evidence that Rom 1:18–32 is meant to mimic a characteristic Alexandrian Jewish speech.

with a unique emphasis on lesbian sex, and the use of a specific technical Stoic word καθήκοντα.[10]

After this, Paul uses an apostrophe in 2:1 both as a capping formula to mark the end of the Teacher's speech but also as a way to characterize his interlocutor. In the apostrophe Paul informs the Philonic Teacher that his judging speech (1:18–32) is actually a self-condemning speech (2:1). The Teacher responds with, "But we know that the judgment of God is according to the truth on those practicing such things" (2:2).[11] That is, "Paul, if God is going to exercise retributive justice on such people, then am I not right to announce that God's wrath rests on them? What is wrong with telling the truth?" The reason we can fairly confidently script this as the response of the Teacher is because the apostrophe that follows immediately in 2:3 is functioning as a capping formula, as in 2:1, singling that 2:2 was another speech-in-character.

Paul then retorts in this next apostrophe: "And do you consider this, oh man who judges those practicing such things and doing the same, that you will escape the judgment of God" (2:3). In other words, "If you think this is how God judges sinners, then watch out! For the same measure of judgment you use will be used against you as well. You

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[10] All of these unique correspondences between Rom 1:18–32 and Philo are why this judging speech in 1:18–32 looks more like a summary of Philo than it does the Wisdom of Solomon as detailed earlier. E.g., Romans 1:18–32 and Philo agree over against Wisdom of Solomon that gentiles have actual inherent knowledge of God and any actions to the contrary evince an active suppression of that innately perceived truth (cf. Wis 13:1, 9); Romans 2:6–13 and Philo agree over against Wisdom that born-Jews will not receive a special mercy in judgment (cf. Wis 12:22; 15:1–2).

[11] Also, the NRSV notes that Rom 2:2 is the response of the interlocutor Paul addresses in 2:1 by adding the phrase "You say" at the beginning and quotes around the rest of v. 2 to make this clear for English readers even though the Greek text has no such mark of a change in speaker with a verb of saying. The NRSV's gloss is warranted, however, because even though the change in speaker is not marked by a verb of saying, it is signaled via the rhetorical marker of apostrophe in 2:1.

will find yourself condemned by this same standard of judgment." Paul goes on to ask, "Or are you disregarding the wealth of his kindness and forbearance [ἀνοχῆς; cf. 3:26] and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God is leading you to repentance?" (2:4). This is when Paul begins to reveal his own view—that he does not agree with the Teacher's assessment that God's wrath is presently being revealed upon the ungodly (1:18). Instead, Paul says that God has demonstrated a wealth of kindness, forbearance and patience. Paul will reiterate this in 3:25–26. God is not being wrathful towards humanity; rather, God has beeh forbearing as God is "deliberately disregarding [πάρεσις] previously committed sins" (3:25).[12] (This also accords with what Paul says in 2 Cor 5:19 that God is "reconciling the world to God's self, not counting their trespasses against them.")

8.2.2 Rom 2:5–16a

In 2:5, Paul is still speaking, but he begins to show how the Teacher's "stubbornness and unrepentant heart" will spell disaster for him if his meritorious soteriology is really the way God judges. That is, due to the criterion of appropriateness, we know that the individuated meritorious soteriology expressed in 2:5–16a is incongruous with Paul's soteriology, but we also have no other dialogical markers besides this to warrant a change in speaker. The most plausible option given these points and the dialogical context, therefore, is to understand this section as an instance of Paul

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[12] Cf. Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 99; Ernst Käsemann, "Zum Verständnis von Röm 3,24–26," in *Exegetische Versuche und Besinnungen* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1960), 96–97.

speaking in sarcastic parody. If this can make sense of the text as we have it, then this suspicion is greatly supported. If Paul is using sarcastic parody, then he is going to set forth the meritorious soteriology of the Teacher precisely in order to prove his point in 2:1 and 2:3 that the Teacher's own judging ends up condemning him. In this way Paul, like Epictetus, would be using parody in order to perform a Socratic *elenchus.*

What we encounter in 2:5–16a on this reading, then, is a straightforward expression of individuated meritorious soteriology (now understood as the Teacher's own soteriology parroted back to him): those who do bad are condemned; those who do good works earn eternal life and immortality.[13] This soteriology is Philonic at every turn as demonstrated above. And, in its immediate setting the claim that it is only "the doers of the Law who will be justified" (2:13) "on the day when God will judge the secret things of humanity" (2:16a) is warranted by a parenthesis that explains how gentiles are not at an unfair advantage because they do not have the written Law (2:14–15). In line with the negative account in 1:18–32 that left the disobedient "without excuse" because they had access to and knew the natural law, the parenthesis in 2:14–15 says that there are gentiles who in fact do live in line with the natural law though having no knowledge or awareness of the written Law—a pronounced motif in Philo too.

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[13] I switched to "eternal life" here rather than "eschatological life" as I was using earlier because we saw that immortality for Philo is about the ascent of the (disembodied) soul into the eternal life of God, rather than as an inheritance in the eschatological "age to come" to arrive within the course of history (as Paul likely understood ζωή αἰώνιος to be).

8.2.3 Rom 2:16b–27

This apostrophe in 2:17–24 is where Paul turns back to address the Teacher directly in order to exploit a logical hole in his hortatory appeal to gain circumcised converts. As mentioned in chapter 7, Philonic scholars have long noticed the tension present in Philo's beliefs at this point. Inherent to the premises of both Philo's system and Rom 1:18–2:16a is the conclusion that both circumcision and adherence to the special laws are logically unnecessary—and this even if Philo would insist that they are practically necessary for the ἀσκητής and the ἐλπίζων.[14] According to Paul's apostrophe in Rom 2:17–24, the Teacher affirms: the Law is the "semblance" (μόρφωσις)[15] of the truth (2:20). It is merely a copy of what can otherwise be known and discerned from creation (1:18–32) and there are gentiles who live in accordance with the natural law (2:14–15, 26–27; cf. Philo, *Mut.* 223; *Abr.* 3; *Opif.* 3; *Mos*. 2.51).[16] Therefore, among other challenges, Paul exploits precisely this logical opening, using it to embarrass the Teacher who is advocating circumcision for Paul's gentile converts, but whom Paul thinks is not a legitimate proselyte himself on account of his own (invalid) circumcision.

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[14] Cf. "If philosophy and the Mosaic Law represent two routes to the same destination, it would seem to follow that one could reach this destination by means of philosophy alone, without following the route provided by the law, that is, without becoming a proselyte. Indeed… Philo adduces actual instances of people who have done just that; the possibility of an alternative route in not simply hypothetical for him" (Terence L. Donaldson, *Judaism and the Gentiles: Jewish Patterns of Universalism (to 135 CE)* [Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2007], 274).

[15] LSJ, s.v. "μόρφωσις."

[16] Cf. "Philo admits that there is something more basic than the Law of Moses, something antecedent to the Law" Samuel Sandmel, *Philo's Place in Judaism: A Study of Conceptions of Abraham in Jewish Literature* (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1971), 197.

As mentioned in chapter 5, and just as in 2:4, Paul cannot help but nod ahead to his own account of how things are between God and humanity, which explains the tag that seemingly comes out of nowhere unless we recognize the Socratic method at work in 2:5–16a. Just before turning to exploit the logical weaknesses of the Teacher's meritorious soteriology in relation to the gentiles and their possession of a natural law, Paul comments at the end of his parody of the Teacher's account of divine judgment that "according to my Gospel [God judges] through Jesus Christ [not through the Law in v. 12]" (2:16b). If Paul was speaking about his own soteriology through this whole argument we must explain why he inserts this superfluous tag here and why so late in the discourse. But in a Socratic argument this is to be expected; it is a small anticipation of Paul's own position that will come later.[17]

The apostrophe in 2:17–24 turns directly on the Teacher once more, and suggests that he is more than likely a Philonic type of proselyte. As detailed, the way Paul expresses how this Teacher characterizes himself suits a Philonic teacher quite well (e.g., they can approve the superior things [δοκιμάζεις τὰ διαφέροντα]; they are a teacher of infants [νηπίων], etc. cf. Philo, *Migr.* 46; *Spec.* 2.209) and the weight of the cumulative Philonic evidence for the preceding sections only reinforces these connections.

Now, however, we can understand the full rhetorical function of the accusations in 2:21–22. Earlier, we simply noted that Paul created a pattern of hypocrisy so that he can charge the proselyte Teacher with being a hypocrite who ironically transgressed the

[17] This use of prolepsis here in 2:16b was discussed in chapter 5.

law of circumcision precisely on account of the kind of circumcision he received. But now we can explain rather better the apparently outrageous charges that Paul makes of theft, adultery, and temple robbery.

If the purpose here was for Paul to catch all Jews "under sin" (3:9) then he failed miserably. As Thiessen puts it, "presumably the majority of Jews were not guilty of such misdeeds."[18] But I suggest that one of two things might be going on, both of which end up amounting to the same rhetorical effect.

Paul is wanting to say in more general terms, "You think circumcision surgically ensures morality? What about all these well-known instances of born Jews being caught up in some pretty scandalous affairs!? Circumcision could not curb their appetites for sex and loot!" In terms of specifics, one option is, as Campbell states, that "[t]he three charges evoke the famous incident that, Josephus suggests, caused the expulsion of the Jewish community from the Roman capital by Tiberius in 19 CE." He is referring to what Josephus writes in *Ant.* 18.81–84 and although I would prefer to add a "might" before "evoke," here is Campbell's reasoning:

> Josephus recounts how certain Jewish figures, posing as sages, had cheated a prominent Roman noblewoman of a large donation to the Jerusalem temple…. These ostensible sages had clearly robbed someone and simultaneously defrauded their own temple, and the association of this story with sexual immorality would have been stereotypical and widely believed…. This incident was then associated with the trauma of the expulsion itself and was doubtless long remembered (and Paul's letter was written only thirty to thirty-five years after it).[19]

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[18] Thiessen, "Paul's Argument," 379–80.
[19] Campbell, *Deliverance*, 561.

Thus, when Paul levels charges about stealing, adultery, and robbing temples, to a Roman audience, Campbell concludes "This story explains Paul's inferences in Romans 2:21b–22 perfectly."[20]

While I do not doubt that Paul's three charges might elicit memories of that incident in Rome, the charge of ἱεροσυλέω would break the parallelism of the passage if it was referring to the Jerusalem temple.[21] The "one who loathes idols" is then charged with "temple robbery" (2:22). How is it that stealing some money dedicated to the Jerusalem temple is associated with an abhorrence of idolatry within a pattern of hypocrisy?

A better possibility then is to suppose, second, that Paul is simply naming three high-profile sins that he knows some Jews are guilty of in order to establish the pattern of hypocrisy.[22] Josephus gives indirect evidence that he is worried that Jews are commonly charged with robbing temples. Putatively summing up some of Moses's commands he writes, "Let none blaspheme the gods which other cities revere, nor rob foreign temples [μηδὲ συλᾶν ἱερὰ ξενικά], nor take treasure that has been dedicated in the name of any god" (*Ant.* 4.207).[23] The author of Acts reflects a similar worry. He tells a story in Acts 19 where Gaius and Aristarchus, there part of Paul's missionary band, as well as a certain Alexander are brought before the town clerk of Ephesus. The town clerk is said to

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[20] Campbell, *Deliverance*, 561.

[21] Many thanks to my colleague, Ian Mills, for pointing this out to me and for providing the subsequent primary source references.

[22] This is Matthew Thiessen's view in, "Paul's Argument against Gentile Circumcision in Romans 2:17-29," *NovT* 56 (2014): 373–91.

[23] Translation and Greek text from Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities, Volume II: Books 4-6*, trans. H. St J. Thackeray, LCL 490 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1930).

respond to the assembly gathered, "you have brought these men here who are neither temple robbers [ἱεροσύλους], nor blasphemers of our goddess" (19:37). As it happens, the Mishnah actually permits taking "coins, clothing, or [other] objects…found on its head" (the head of the likeness of Hermes), but not food items "offered on the Altar" (m. Abod. Zar. 4:2). It goes on to say "An idol whose worshippers have abandoned it in time of peace is permitted, but if in time of war it is forbidden. The idol-pedestals… are permitted since they set up the images on them" (4:6). Even if only a few Jews had been accused of robbing temples in this manner, then Paul's accusation of robbing temples and its association with despising idolatry makes a little more sense.

But in my reading Paul is not trying to indict all, or even the majority, of Jews. When Paul wants to demonstrate universal sinfulness he does so quite clearly (e.g., 3:10–19, 23; 5:12, 14, 19), but the sins listed in 2:21–22 are so specific that it strains credulity to think that by these Paul is trying to "catch" all Jews. Paul rather has a much more limited and focused, but more powerful, rhetorical goal in this specific dialogical context. Here in 2:21–22, he is pointing out that some Jews who are circumcised have committed heinous sins. This is a strong point in his favor if he is simply disproving the notion that morality can be surgically engineered through circumcision.

Hence, I take the rhetorical thrust of 2:17–27 to be thus:

> Oh, you think you can call yourself a Jew now that you are circumcised? You fancy yourself a Teacher of infants and as one who can discern the superior things like a philosopher through your instruction in the Torah? You think getting circumcised and becoming a Jew has made you morally superior to others? What about all these Jews circumcised on the eighth-day who sin? Need I remind you of the cause for the Jewish expulsion under Tiberius? What about all the Jews charged as temple robbers? Becoming a Jew is not going to automatically make you or anyone else ethical. But if you want to teach the Torah, then you ought to

> first make sure you are following it yourself. But you are in fact transgressing the very command you purport to teach and promote; namely, circumcision. And thus is Isaiah's prophecy fulfilled once more in you because you dishonor God among all the nations through your transgression of the Law. You say, "Circumcision is beneficial!"[24] but what happens if you did not actually perform the law? If you are a transgressor of the law of circumcision; the circumcision you underwent is invalid. You are still lacking the sign of the covenant (*milah*) and thus you are not a valid proselyte. You remain as if you were still foreskinned no matter how much prepuce you cut off. If, therefore, according to your own (Philonic) teachings, a gentile with a foreskin keeps the requirements of the natural law, then will not this be taken as circumcision of the heart and his passions (cf. Philo, *QE* 2.2; *Spec.*1.6; 304–305)? And then will he not judge you (as you have been judging other ostensible transgressors in 1:18–32) as someone who has literally transgressed the letter of the law through your invalid *periah* circumcision when *milah* is supposed to be done (cf. Philo, *Praem*. 152; *Spec.* 4.182; *Virt.* 227)?

8.2.4 Rom 2:28–3:9

Paul does not expect the Teacher to concede just yet. But, if the argument in chapter 7 and in the Appendix are on target, he now uses the technical distinction between *milah* versus *periah* circumcision according to the letter of the law for his rhetorical advantage. Having said this, Philonic theology has an obvious way out of the corner Paul has just pushed the Teacher into (as both Donaldson and Sandmel observe as cited above). Paul has charged the Teacher of violating the specific law of physical circumcision in 2:27 (so Thiessen), but the teacher can perform a Philonic pivot, namely, appeal to Philo's broader teaching that the literal laws are not as important as the higher, more basic, natural law and the more specific teaching that what really matters is not physical circumcision according to the letter of the law but circumcision of the heart and

[24] Given the dialogical context and the conclusion reached in 3:9 vis-à-vis the putative "benefit" of circumcision in 3:1–2, it seems reasonable to take this comment in Rom 2:25 to be Paul quoting a slogan from the Teacher (akin to the Corinthian slogans) or quickly summarizing the Teacher's agenda.

one's inner spirit. So long as you excise the passions from your heart and sprit, God accepts you as a legitimate proselyte (e.g., *QE* 2.2; *Spec.*1.6, 9; 304–305; *QG* 3.46–48, 52, 62; *Somn*. 2.24–25). But, as the Teacher will soon discover, he will have leaped out of frying pan and into the fire if he makes this distinctive Philonic defense.

In a little more detail: A coordination of elements combines to show that the text of Rom 2:28–29 is arguably best understood as the Teacher's response to Paul's charge in 2:27.[25] First, we determined in chapter 5 how unlike this material is in comparison with any other Pauline texts. Hence these comments in 2:28–29 fail to meet the criterion of appropriateness for Paul, are "out of character" and are best categorized as διαφωνία. The λύσις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου then tells us to see if these comments are appropriate ("in character") for the interlocutor. And this is what we have already established. In chapter 7, we demonstrated how similar this passage is to Philo's comments on circumcision, although it bears reiterating in brief.[26] The peculiar way of talking about circumcision in 2:28–29 fits perfectly with Philo's teaching, which is distinctive to him at this time. Boyarin compares 2:28–29 with Philo *Migr*. 92, but the comparison of vocabulary is even better with *Spec.* 1.6.[27] Whatever the specific echo (e.g., cf. *Spec.* 1.304–305 on "(un)circumcision of the heart" and *QG* 3.46–52), the coherence with Philo is strong.

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[25] The following corrects Campbell's script here in significant ways (*Deliverance*, 563–69, 589). While he also notes some echoes to Philo's teachings here, he posits a much more complex splitting up of the dialogue here and sees much of 2:28–29 as a parenthetical aside.

[26] Daniel Boyarin, *A Radical Jew: Paul and the Politics of Identity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 78–81, 93–97; so also E. P. Sanders, *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 131.

[27] Both *Migr.* 92 and *Spec.* 1.3–11 are discussed in chapter 7. For convenience (bold to highlight correspondence):

Second, Paul's charge is that the Teacher breaks the law "through letter of the law of circumcision," or "through the prescription even of circumcision" (διὰ γράμματος καὶ περιτομῆς, 2:27).[28] We determined that given all the other corroborating evidence, the circumcision a Philonic proselyte would submit to would likely be *periah*, but that this would have been a fairly novel practice for the first century (by all indications, *periah* only became customary well after the time of Hadrian).[29] If Paul encountered this practice, all signs indicate that he would think this violates the letter of the law of circumcision. Not only do his comments on the possibility of foreskin regeneration through skin tension (ἐπισπάω)[30] indicate that he only knows of *milah* (1 Cor 7:18), but it would also be in his own interest—as one who vehemently opposes any form of gentile circumcision—to capitalize on this new halakhic deviation for his own polemical purposes. The supposition, then, that Paul is addressing a proselyte with a *periah* circumcision would render the syntax of his accusation in Rom 2:27 more

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Rom 2:28–29: οὐ γὰρ ὁ ἐν τῷ **φανερῷ** Ἰουδαῖός ἐστιν οὐδὲ ἡ ἐν τῷ **φανερῷ** ἐν σαρκὶ **περιτομή**, ἀλλ᾽ ὁ ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ Ἰουδαῖος, καὶ **περιτομὴ καρδίας** ἐν **πνεύματι** οὐ γράμματι.

Philo, *Spec.* 1.6: τρίτον δὲ τὴν πρὸς **καρδίαν** ὁμοιότητα τοῦ **περιτμηθέντος** μέρους· πρὸς γὰρ γένεσιν ἄμφω παρεσκεύασται, τὸ μὲν **ἐγκάρδιον πνεῦμα** νοημάτων, τὸ δὲ γόνιμον ὄργανον ζῴων· ἐδικαίωσαν γὰρ οἱ πρῶτοι τῷ **ἀφανεῖ** καὶ κρείττονι, δι᾽ οὗ τὰ νοητὰ συνίσταται, τὸ **ἐμφανὲς** καὶ **ὁρατόν**, ᾧ τὰ αἰσθητὰ γεννᾶσθαι πέφυκεν, ἐξομοιῶσαι.

[28] For γράμμα as "prescription of the law" see Thiessen, "Paul's Argument," 388 (as well as footnote 45 there). He cites this use in, e.g., Philo, *Spec.* 3.8; Plato, *Pol*. 293a; 302e; Thucydides, *Hist*. 5.29.3.

[29] Nissan Rubin, "Brit Milah: A Study of Change in Custom," in *The Covenant of Circumcision: New Perspectives on an Ancient Jewish Rite*, ed. Elizabeth Wyner Mark (Hanover, NH: Brandeis University Press, 2003), 87–97, 223–28; Shaye J. D. Cohen, *Why Aren't Jewish Women Circumcised? Gender and Covenant in Judaism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 25–6, 232n69.

[30] Paul and Soranus are the only ones to use this verb as a "technical term" for lengthening the prepuce by applying sustained tension to preputial skin (Frederick M. Hodges, "The Ideal Prepuce in Ancient Greece and Rome: Male Genital Aesthetics and Their Relation to *Lipodermos*, Circumcision, Foreskin Restoration, and the *Kynodesmē*," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 75.3 [2001]: 73).

understandable.[31] Paul is accusing the Teacher of having a halakhically invalid circumcision.

After the charge of breaking the letter of the law (γράμμα) (2:27), we read: "For it is not the Jew in the visible [τῷ φανερῷ] nor the circumcision that is visible [τῷ φανερῷ] in flesh, but the Jew in the hidden [τῷ κρυπτῷ], and the circumcision of the heart [καρδίας] in the spirit [πνεύματι] not in the letter [οὐ γράμματι], whose praise is not from people but from God" (2:28–29). This reads like an exculpatory response to the charge that the Teacher breaks the letter of the law of circumcision in 2:27. The response is: "Who cares if I am not following the letter of the law for *milah* and I went with the more radical *periah*? What actually matters to God is not the letter of the law, but the circumcision of the heart in our spirit and *periah* circumcision is a great aid to that end." The point of 2:28–29 is that the letter of the law does not matter all that much in comparison to the circumcision of the heart.[32] But if this is the case, then how can Paul be the person who says this and also be the person who utters the charge against the Teacher of transgressing the letter of the law in 2:27? In other words, why would Paul undermine the basis for his charge in 2:27 that the Teacher is a transgressor of the letter of law regarding circumcision by immediately conceding that the letter of the law does not matter in v. 29?

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[31] Following Thiessen's syntactical argument in his article "Paul's Argument," though identifying how the law of circumcision was violated differently as detailed in chapter 7.

[32] I am unaware of any Romans commentor that would disagree with this.

It is now important to note, no matter who is speaking when, that the γάρ in 2:28 cannot be taken as the basis for what preceded in 2:27 as this would be nonsense. How would it make sense for Paul be charging the Teacher with breaking the letter of the law because God does not care about the letter, but only the heart? The more likely scenario is that this is another instance of a prefatory γάρ that introduces a new fact—in this case, that the letter of the law does not matter when compared with the heart in order to "dissent" from the previous statement (and we should recall that this use of γάρ was discussed in chapters 2 and 3 with many other examples).[33] Paul alleges that the Teacher breaks the letter of the law of circumcision, but to express dissent, the Teacher asserts the letter of the law is not what God cares about because God only wants to make sure a person's heart is circumcised in their spirit.

This all coheres with Philonic teaching as already noted, but we can emphasize a few more important points here. Philo explicitly says that "the proselyte[34] is one who circumcises not his foreskin[35] but his desires and sensual pleasures and the other passions of the soul" (*QE* 2.2). Again in *Spec.*1.305–309 Philo associates "proselytes" (1.309) with those who have only "circumcise[d] the hardness of [their] hearts" (305). "For the

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[33] J.D. Denniston, *The Greek Particles*, 2nd ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), 74–75; Herbert Weir Smyth, *A Greek Grammar for Colleges* (New York: American Book Company, 1920), 639–40. Tellingly, since the γάρ in 2:28 is not obviously strengthening what preceded, Sarah H. Casson categorizes this γάρ as "somewhat complex" (*Textual Signposts in the Argument of Romans: A Relevance-Theory Approach*, ECL 25 [Atlanta: SBL Press, 2019], 289). This is γάρ is only complex if we do not bear in mind γάρ's use in dialogical contexts where is it can be used to open up a response from an interlocutor, which can also be used to preface dissent from what preceded.

[34] Marcus's translation in LCL uses "sojourner," but I will use "proselyte" since he notes that the Greek fragments have προσήλυτος throughout.

[35] Marcus has "uncircumcision," but the Greek fragment reads ἀκροβυστίαν.

mind which is not circumcised and purified and sanctified of the body and the passions which come through the body will be corrupted and cannot be saved" (*QG* 3.52). In various places (e.g., *Praem.* 152; *Virt.* 187, 189, 192, 195–198, 208, 211, 226–227; *Spec.* 1.51–59; 4.182) Philo teaches, correspondingly, that born Jews who are not virtuous will be condemned and stripped of their εὐγένεια while proselytes will be praised for meriting εὐγένεια—which sounds very similar to people who are able to "call [themselves] a Jew" as in Rom 2:17—and in these passages Philo stands in mocking judgment over those born Jews who end up vicious and condemned—which sounds a lot like the scenario set forth in Rom 2:26–27, where the foreskinned person judges the law-breaker who is circumcised. It is apparent then that 2:26–29 is speech characteristic of a Philonic teacher and the peculiar phrases "the Jew in the hidden" versus "the Jew in the visible" in 2:28–29 encapsulate Philonic notions quite well.[36]

Consequently, while all of Rom 2:26–29 failed to pass the criterion of appropriateness for Paul as demonstrated earlier, it does pass the criterion of appropriateness for a Philonic teacher. And now we have the rhetorical categories necessary to track the dialogue in detail. Paul is speaking in 2:26–27, but this has to be sarcastic parody of the Teacher's views because it is out of character for Paul (διαφωνία). It sounds a lot like what a Philonic teacher would teach—indeed, Philo explicitly teaches

[36] It may also be worth noting how, similar to Rom 2:29, Philo talks about receiving praise from God for obedience (as punishment for disobedience) (*Deus*. 34; *Mut.* 47–48; *Virt.* 208; *Spec.* 1.57). However, Paul also says similar things about receiving praise from God (cf. 1 Cor 4:5; Phil 1:11). This means the bit about praise in Rom 2:29 is not distinct enough to make a decision about appropriateness. The assessment needs to be made on other grounds. If it happened to clash with respect to Philo, then that would be a problem for my script, but it does not.

these very things. It seems then that Paul is using the Teacher's views against his (the Teacher's) agenda of persuading gentiles to get circumcised. Paul does this by saying that the very scenario in 2:25–27 would obtain in the Teacher's case because his *periah* circumcision violates the letter of the law and thus renders him a law-breaker destined to be condemned. In order to escape this rhetorical trap, in 2:28–29 the Teacher appeals to another more fundamental Philonic teaching regarding the priority of heart circumcision, which all but makes physical circumcision irrelevant ("So who cares if they or I did not follow the letter of the law exactly," the Teacher responds).

A third reason why Rom 2:28–29 is best scripted in the Teacher's voice is because the question posed immediately afterwards—"What, therefore, makes the Jew extraordinary or what is the benefit of circumcision?" (3:1)—seems to make the most sense as Paul's response back to the Teacher. This is because the Teacher champions the benefits of circumcision (2:25; cf. 3:2), but has just conceded physical circumcision according to the letter of the law is not that important after all since it apparently has not stopped all those circumcised Jews from sinning in those particular ways in 2:21–22, and because the Teacher would have to admit to be a law-breaker given his abnormal circumcision for the time (2:25, 27). Therefore, I think the questions in 3:1 are the first of Paul's three key clinching moments in the course of 3:1–9 as a whole. And this is when the Teacher leaps out of the frying pan and directly into the fire.

Whether one accepts my earlier suggestion that "circumcision is of benefit" in 2:25 is the Teacher's own slogan or Paul's summary of the Teacher's philosophy (in either case, it is being spoken by Paul in 2:25 and so spoken parodically), it is universally

accepted that Paul is adamantly discouraging circumcision of gentiles in these chapters. Romans 3:20, 29–20 and 4:9–16 alone make this point clear (and the Appendix on circumcision offers corroborating evidence that Romans is embedded in the specific contingent circumstances of Paul fending off opponents who are encouraging gentiles to get circumcised). I also propose that the dialogical structure of Rom 2–3 itself shows how Paul carries out this aim of Socratically discouraging gentiles from getting circumcised, whereby "the interlocutor himself provides the evidence" "that brings to light contradictions in his beliefs."[37] Paul is showing, specifically, how the core beliefs of the Teacher actually expose how unnecessary gentile circumcision is. On the basis of the Teacher's own views, it possesses no inherent benefits and there is a perfectly viable alternative route to the immortality he (the Teacher) proclaims.[38]

To carry out the Socratic *elenchus*, Paul charges the Teacher with transgressing the letter of the law in 2:27b precisely in order to draw out from the Teacher a distinct Philonic belief that the letter of the law is not as important as circumcising one's heart. Paul has paved the way for this move by recasting the Teacher's soteriology and theology through sarcastic parody with respect to (a) righteous gentiles who follow the natural law but will also (b) judge those native-born who transgress the law (2:6–15 and 2:26–27a). But now in 2:28–29, Paul has forced the Teacher himself to saw off the branch he is resting on in order to escape the charge of himself being a law-breaker (2:27b) and thus

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[37] Stowers, *Rereading*, 163.

[38] But then Paul will ultimately go on to conclude in 3:10–20 that this alternative route of obedience to the natural law has already been foreclosed upon by Scripture and thus the entire program of the Teacher is false by all accounts!

liable to a shameful judgment from all the righteous fore-skinned pagans he knows are out there (2:26–27; cf. 2:14–15). After luring the admission from the Teacher that outward physical circumcision is not as important as circumcision of the heart in 2:28–29, Paul essentially asks in 3:1, "But if circumcision is really only about the heart, then why get physically circumcised at all? Just focus on the heart like all those virtuous gentiles you speak of (cf. 2:14–15, 26–27)—and in this way you will not be liable to breaking the letter of the law." In this manner, Paul has succeeded in getting the Teacher himself to undermine his own agenda of gentile circumcision. This is a remarkable Socratic achievement.

We can corroborate, fourth, that 3:1 is best read as Paul's question by approaching this text from another angle, namely, the nature and structure of Socratic discourse in general. Speaking on this dialogue in 3:1–9, Stowers notes that "Many commentators recognize the style of the diatribe in 3:1–9, but their readings make little sense because they understand the questions in vv. 1, 3, 5, and sometimes 7 and 8 as objections from the interlocutor. Read in this way, the dialogue simply does not work." This is because "the [Socratic] teacher asks the questions or guides the discussion" in "dialogue in the diatribe."[39] Stowers backs away from this insight himself when he assumes Paul is the speaker of 2:18–29, and hence he needs the interlocutor to be the figure who asks the first question in 3:1. But Stowers quickly gets back to Paul being the questioner by scripting Paul as the speaker of 3:2–3. As noted in chapter 1, those who

[39] Stowers, *Rereading*, 166.

have built upon Stower's work (Neil Elliot, Douglas Campbell, and Justin King)[40] "place Paul in the role of Socratic questioner who guides the interlocutor to affirm a particular view" throughout.[41] However, though the Socratic pattern is generally supportive of the idea that Paul is asking the questions in 3:1–9, it is not sufficient to settle the matter.

In addition to noting the Socratic technique whereby the instructor controls the questions we can also work backwards from the question posed in 3:5: "And if our injustice demonstrates God's righteousness, what will we say? Is God, the one who brings wrath, unjust? (I am speaking in a human manner [κατὰ ἄνθρωπον λέγω])." This aside, κατὰ ἄνθρωπον λέγω, explicitly tells the audience that Paul is the person asking this question and hence, by implication, all the questions prior given the quick back-and-forth question-and-response format of the dialogue in 3:1–9. The aside "I am speaking in a human manner" means just what it says: "I, Paul, am speaking this part in the script." The purpose of flagging this as merely "human" speech seems to be so that the audience overhearing the dialogue does not think that Paul himself actually reasons in manner of the question asked in 3:5. It essentially means, "I am asking this for the sake of the argument to expose the inner inconsistency of the Teacher. This is only a valid question if the Teacher's premises are accepted, but otherwise it is nonsense to suppose God might

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[40] Neil Elliott, *The Rhetoric of Romans: Argumentative Constraint and Strategy and Paul's Dialogue with Judaism*, JSNTSup 45 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990), 132–41; Douglas A. Campbell, *The Deliverance of God: An Apocalyptic Rereading of Justification in Paul* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 572–74, 1088n117; Justin King, *Speech-in-Character, Diatribe, and Romans 3:1-9: Who's Speaking When and Why It Matters*, BibInt 163 (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 252–93.

[41] King, *Speech-in-Character*, 252.

be unjust."[42] Those who reverse the identification of the speakers in the dialogue struggle to make sense of this tag, as Stowers notes.[43] For instance, Rodríguez does exactly what Stowers warns against although, to his credit, he offers this footnote: "I left out a phrase from the end of Rom 3:5 in my portrayal of Paul's dialogue. Despite my judgment that most of v. 5 represents the interlocutor's response to Paul's citation of Ps 51:4, I think Paul breaks out of speech-in-character in an aside to his Roman readers."[44] The most plausible scenario, however, is that Paul is the questioner in 3:5. This same rationale then holds for Paul's other authorial aside in 3:8 ("just as we are being slandered and just as some are saying about us"). In traditional scripts, which all admit that this is an aside from Paul, it follows that we would "need to presume that Paul awkwardly interjects his authorial commentary in the middle of the interlocutor's objection."[45] But this is rather incredible, as King observes, and so the best course of action is to "omit any [such] need" by reversing the identification of the speakers.[46]

Fifth and finally, this scripting is greatly reinforced when we read the question of 3:1 together with the response in 3:2: "What, therefore, makes the Jew advantaged, or

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[42] Paul uses the a similar phrase in 6:19 (ἀνθρώπινον λέγω) for a similar purpose and this indicates that Paul uses this phrase to indicate that he is speaking (not someone else), but that he does not want to be misunderstood about the point he is making. The misunderstanding in 6:19 is pushing the metaphor of slavery too far (i.e., "I realize what I am saying can be misunderstood, so please take my meaning and do not push the imagery too far."). The misunderstanding in 3:5 would be that Paul categorically rejects the possibility of God's wrath on human injustice because, as the Teacher thinks given 3:4, human injustice is necessary to showcase God's justice. Paul himself would reject the Teacher's conclusion drawn from David and Ps 51 (cf. Paul's own use of David that corrects the view put forth in 3:4 in 4:5–9), but he accepts it "for the sake of argument" in his questions back to the Teacher in 3:5 and 3:7–8 in order to finally falsify the Teacher's views.

[43] Stowers, *Rereading*, 166.

[44] Rodríguez, *If You Call*, 66n63.

[45] King, *Speech-in-Character*, 263.

[46] King, *Speech-in-Character*, 263.

what is the benefit of circumcision?" "Much according to every way. For first of all, they were entrusted with the oracles [λόγια] of God." Significantly, λόγια is used only here in all of the thirteen letters bearing Paul's name, but 107 times in Philo.[47] Hence the use of λόγια is uncharacteristic of Paul, but this is Philo's standard phrase to denominate the contents of the Pentateuch: "The oracles [λογίων] delivered through the prophet Moses are of three kinds. The first deals with the creation of the world, the second with history and the third with legislation" (*Praem.* 1). Additionally, "The ark itself is the coffer of the laws [νόμων], for in it are deposited the oracles [λόγια] which have been delivered" (*Mos.* 2.97). Also, the ten commandments are referred as τῶν δέκα λογίων *(Decal.* 36, 175; *Spec.* 3.7; 4.78, 132; *Her.* 168; cf. *Decal.* 41, 48, 50, 52). These δέκα λογίων inculcate "justice" (δίκαια) towards God and people as well as "piety" (εὐσέβειαν) (*Her* 169–173). Since Rom 3:2 fails the criterion of appropriateness for Paul, but fits perfectly with what is expected from a Philonic teacher, we can therefore reliably determine from yet another datum that 3:2 is the Teacher and Paul is the person posing the first question in 3:1.[48] (This is also useful additional evidence that the Teacher is Philonic.)

For all of these reasons, then, it is reasonable to read the rhetorical flow from 2:27–3:1 in this way:[49]

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[47] Peder Borgen, Kåre Fuglseth, and Roald Skarsten, *The Philo Index: A Complete Greek Word Index to the Writings of Philo of Alexandria* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 207.

[48] It is also possibly relevant—given that the topic is the "benefit" (ὠφέλεια) of being circumcised and a Jew (cf. 2:25)—that Philo remarks that God "assented to their prayers [the LXX translators], to the end that the greater part, or even the whole, of the human race might be profited [ὠφεληθῇ] and led to a better life by continuing to observe such wise and truly admirable ordinances" (*Mos.* 2.36).

[49] Presuming with scholars of all stripes that the interlocutor is preaching circumcision for gentiles (cf. 2:25; 3:1–2, 3:20, 28–30).

- Paul accuses the Teacher of breaking the letter of the law of circumcision who will thus be judged by the righteous gentiles inherent to the Teacher's own theological system (2:27).
- The Teacher then retorts that God does not care as much about circumcision according to the letter of law, as about circumcision of the heart in the spirit thereby avoiding Paul's accusation (2:28–29).
- Paul seizes upon this admission and asks the Teacher to provide the warrant for why he maintains that physical circumcision has any real benefit (3:1).

Paul is thus Socratically guiding the discussion by causing the most useful evidence come from the Teacher's own mouth. He now engages in a rapid exchange as he is about to come to his final two Socratic clinching moments, and the structure of the diatribe of 3:1–9 ends up looking like this (with the Teacher's voice in *italics*, and underlined material denoting sarcastic parody on Paul's part):[50]

- (Paul) Therefore, what <u>advantage does the Jew have</u>, or what is <u>the benefit of circumcision</u>? (3:1)
- *(Teacher) Much in every way. For, first of all, they were entrusted with the oracles of God.* (3:2)
- (Paul) What then? If some [Jews] were untrustworthy, will not their untrustworthiness abolish God's trustworthiness? (3:3)

[50] And here we confirm the same script that Elliot, Campbell, and King hold and the foregoing has supplied even more reasons for holding to this script. Pelagius does not follow this script exactly, but does have Paul asking the question in 3:1 and the interlocutor (which he thinks a Jew) responds in 3:2–4 and Paul ends the dialogue in 3:5–9. Theodore de Bruyn, trans., *Pelagius's Commentary on St Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, OECS (Oxford: Carendon, 1993), 77–79.

- *(Teacher) May it never be! But let God be truthful,*[51] *and every person a liar, just as it is written: "In order that you might be justified in your words and will prevail when you judge."* (3:4)[52]
- (Paul) And if our [the Jewish people, represented by David] injustice exhibits God's justice,[53] what will we say? Isn't God unjust, the one who brings about wrath? (I am speaking in a human manner). (3:5)
- *(Teacher) May it never be! Because how will God judge the world [non-Jews]?* (3:6)
- (Paul) But if by my lie [as a Jew], the truth of God is caused to abound unto his glory,[54] why also am I still being condemned as a sinner? And (just as we [my missionary team] are being slandered and just as some are saying about us), why not say, "Let us do evil, so that good might come?" (3:7–8a)[55]
- *(Teacher) Their judgment is just!* (3:8b)

Scenario A:

- (Paul) What then? Are we [Jews] better off/at an advantage? (3:9a)
- *Not at all* (3:9b)
- (Paul) For we publicly-charge both Jews and Greeks, all are under Sin (3:9c)

Scenario B:

- (Paul) What then? Are we [Jews] worse off/at a disadvantage? (3:9a)
- *(Teacher) Not at all.* (3:9b)

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[51] God's "being true" (γινέσθω…ὁ θεὸς ἀληθής), as the quoted Psalm (51:4) makes plain, here is referring back to the soteriological judgment model in 2:6–12, which is said to be "according to the truth" (κατὰ ἀλήθειαν, 2:2) and thereby represents "the just condemnation by God" (δικαιοκρισίας τοῦ θεοῦ, 2:5). This association with "truth" and God's retributive condemnation on sinners continues in 3:7.

[52] I think Pelagius is right that the interlocutor is being portrayed as someone who cites Ps 51:4 "as if David had said, 'For this reason have I sinned, so that you might appear just in judging me.'" (de Bruyn, *Pelagius's Commentary*, 78). The recasting of the point of 3:4 (regardless of who is speaking when) by "if our injustice exhibits God's justice" in 3:5 and "if by my lie, the truth of God is caused to abound unto God's glory" in 3:7 supports this. Moreover, the reemergence of David in Rom 4:6–8 (but now from Ps 32) in order to make the case that God's justifies the ungodly (4:5) apart from works (4:6)—the opposite of what 3:4 and 2:13 require—is instructive. The interlocutor appeals to David's sin in Ps 51 and Paul corrects this view of God vis-à-vis David (and thus the rest of sinful humanity) shortly thereafter in 4:6–8.

[53] This is how Paul takes the meaning of the Teacher's claim in 3:4.

[54] This is recasting the same point in 3:5 (based on the Teacher's claim in 3:4).

[55] As with 3:4, the "truth of God" (ἡ ἀλήθεια τοῦ θεοῦ) here is linked with divine condemnation and so the phrase ὡς ἁμαρτωλὸς κρίνομαι ("condemned as a sinner") refers back to the "just condemnation by God" (δικαιοκρισίας τοῦ θεοῦ, 2:5), which is "according to the truth" (κατὰ ἀλήθειαν, 2:2) of strict meritocracy: wrath (cf. 3:5) and destruction for those who do evil in 2:6–11 and those who "sin" in 2:12–13. Paul's question is: Based on the premise you just set with David in 3:4, how is this strict meritocracy fair and just (δικαιοσύνη) if God can only be shown to "true" and "just" if he has sinners to condemn? Would it not make sense to sin more in order to amplify God's glory since it allows God to show forth the "truth" of God's "condemning justice"?

- (Paul) For we publicly-charge both Jews and Greeks, all are under Sin (3:9b–c)

Scenarios A and B result from the debate over how to translate προεχόμεθα in 3:9a. The issue is worth pursuing so far as we are able to find useful evidence that bears on it, although in the end, as King comments, "how one takes the verb matters little. The summary makes painfully clear that neither Jew nor non-Jews are advantaged, [or] disadvantaged."[56] If προεχόμεθα is a middle with an active meaning (scenario A), then it means "advantage," hence: "Are we better off?" In this scenario Paul would be asking the Teacher after he has just admitted that unfaithful, lying, and unjust Jews deserve judgment if "we (Jews)" have an advantage after all? That is, the Teacher began by insisting that being circumcised has benefits in every respect (πολὺ κατὰ πάντα τρόπον) (3:2) and now Paul has led him Socratically to the opposite conclusion: οὐ πάντως (3:9b). Jewett notes that most commentators go with this rendering, but "it is difficult to explain why Paul did not simply use the proper active form προέχομεν if this were intended."[57] At the same time, however, it is difficult to discern how the passive voice (meaning "worse off") would work in the dialogue. Nothing has been presented that would lead to a question (on any script) about whether Jews are at a disadvantage relative to anyone else. Another reason sometimes offered for avoiding the active meaning is that it "poses the serious problem of having Paul restate the question of 3:1 in 3:9 and yet give the opposite answer."[58] But this problem is immediately solved if Paul is the one asking the question

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[56] King, *Speech-in-Character*, 266–67.

[57] Jewett, *Romans*, 256–57; here 257; this reading is taken by Stowers, *Rereading*, 173–75; and Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 331

[58] Stowers, *Rereading*, 174.

in 3:1. King contends that "the middle with active force makes the most sense of the dialogue, as it creates an *inclusio* between 3:1 and 9 and, in diatribal fashion, allows the interlocutor to reconsider his initial thoughts in view of Paul's guidance."[59]

> In keeping with the Socratic tendency to reveal a conversation partner's errors (censure) and guide him/her to the correct view (protreptic), the interlocutor recognizes his inconsistency and undergoes development. Though he originally endorses Jewish advantage over non-Jews as characterized, by the end of the discourse Paul's leading questions guide him to forego such advantage, agree with Paul, and make Paul's concluding point for him—"Jews have no salvific advantage over non-Jews; all are equal."[60]

This makes good sense, and I would favor it if we could not supply a plausible reason for προεχόμεθα as a true middle. But we have one if we carry through its possible Philonic content.

A Philonic and meritocratic approach to Judaism by the Teacher would make a reflexive sense rather appropriate. The force of the question would be something like: "Do we Jews advantage ourselves by being Jewish—i.e., by working away at it through ἄσκησις as you suppose?" The Teacher's emphatic response, "not at all" (οὐ πάντως, 3:9b) is then Paul's second clinching moment—the Teacher has just admitted defeat on his own terms and reversed what he (equally emphatically) affirmed earlier that the benefits and advantages of being a Jew and being circumcised (cf. 3:1) are "much in every possible way" (πολὺ κατὰ πάντα τρόπον, 3:2).

If God will condemn lying (3:4) and unjust (3:5) Jews, with no special mercy for them *qua* Jews, then there really is no advantage to being a Jew, especially if

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[59] King, *Speech-in-Character*, 267.
[60] King, *Speech-in-Character*, 267–68.

circumcision turns out not to be a moral safeguard against the passions (2:21–22). Further, if this is how God actually judges salvation (retributively and according to merit per 2:5–12), then, strictly speaking, the Teacher will also end up being condemned along with the lying and unjust Jew since he is a law breaker too on account of his abnormal circumcision that violates the law of circumcision (2:27; cf. 2:25). This means the Teacher's proselytizing mission turns out to be ultimately useless and ineffective—and all this on the Teacher's own terms—and it also finally ends up condemning the Teacher himself—this again on the Teacher's own terms. And this is all exactly what Paul said he was going to demonstrate back in 2:1.

8.2.5 Rom 3:10–20

But Paul does not stop here. Paul's third and final moment of Socratic capture in this dialogue comes in 3:10–20. This Scriptural catena puts the final nail in the coffin of the Teacher's message about God's righteous judgment according to merit (2:5–16a) and his corresponding agenda of persuading gentiles to be circumcised (2:25; 3:1, 30; 4:10–16).[61]

Paul follows up προῃτιασάμεθα γὰρ Ἰουδαίους τε καὶ Ἕλληνας πάντας ὑφ' ἁμαρτίαν εἶναι (3:9c) with καθὼς γέγραπται (3:10) and thereby introduces a fresh claim

[61] There are quite a few debates and discussions concerning the catena here. But we do not need to enter into these debates for the purposes of this project. It suffices to show how this is functionally rhetorically in its immediate dialogical context no matter of its compositional origin, or if Paul is attending or deliberately bending the textual context of what he is quoting, or if he is accurately quoting his source text. See, Campbell, *Deliverance*, 579–83; Robert Jewett, *Romans: A Commentary*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2007), 253–67; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Romans: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1993), 334–37.

in the rhetorical discourse as a whole. This is made in very different terms. As we observed earlier, nothing in the text prior to this point establishes universal sinfulness (and Origen makes this point emphatically throughout his commentary on these portions of the text; cf. *Comm. Rom.* 1.16.1; 2.7.5–6). Only some people have been accused of sins thus far. In 1:18–32—presumably principally from the nations, but that is immaterial—only idolators, the sexually deviant, and anyone caught in the vice list in vv. 29–31, would stand accused of "impiety" and "injustice" (1:18).[62] Then, in 2:21–22, "he has only accused *some* Jews of sinfulness — precisely the thieving, adulterous, sacrilegious ones."[63] Therefore, the Scriptural catena of 3:10–18 is the only warrant for Paul's claim that "all are under sin" in 3:9.

Translators and commentators have rendered προῃτιασάμεθα in 3:9 as "we have already charged" (e.g., NRSV, NASB). But given the observations above, this means, "the conventional reading of προῃτιασάμεθα…[3:9]— that Paul has previously charged all of sin — is not strictly speaking true."[64] But the verb is a *hapax legomenon* in all Greek literature according to BDAG and LSJ, and the πρό prefix can mean, as Walker comments, "'before' in terms of either time or place" (in terms of "place" meaning "'publicly'").[65] Moreover "the *aorist* tense of the verb may well be an 'epistolary' aorist, in which case it has a *present*, not a past, reference. Thus, προῃτιασάμεθα in Rom 3.9

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[62] Jean Noël Aletti, "Rm 1,18-3:20: Incohérence ou cohérence de l'argumentation paulinienne," *Bib* 69 (1988): 50.

[63] Campbell, *Deliverance*, 580; his emphasis.

[64] Campbell, *Deliverance*, 580–81.

[65] Walker, "Romans 1.18–2.29," 545.

may mean nothing more than 'we [now] charge publicly' or 'we [now] charge openly'."[66] This is a difficult syntactical issue especially because "we lack any extant evidence either way [i.e., spatial or temporal] and must rely completely on the immediate context at this point."[67] Campbell therefore opts for spatial register like Walker: "we publicly accuse *everyone* — Jews as well as non-Jews — of being under sin, in accordance with what it written: 'There is *no one* righteous — *not even one*.'"[68] And this reading makes the best sense of what follows from 3:10 with καθὼς γέγραπται as noted above. Paul bases this public charge on the testimony of the Scriptures, "not some empirical description of human behaviour."[69]

In short, the rhetorical function of this catena in 3:10–18 is to prove that the Teacher's meritorious soteriological schema is false because if it was true then no one would ever receive eschatological life. According to the amassed testimony of the Scriptures, "there is no one just, not even one" (3:10; cf. vv. 19–20). While the Teacher's soteriology claims that "those who persevere in good work" (2:7) and "do the good" (2:10) will be "paid back" with "eternal life" (2:7), Paul quotes LXX Ps 13:3 (14:3 MT) in rebuttal: "no one does good" (*οὐκ ἔστιν ὁ ποιῶν χρηστότητα*) (3:12). Contrary to the Teacher's claim that "the doers of the Law will be rectified [δικαιωθήσονται]" (2:13),

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[66] Walker, "Romans 1.18–2.29," 545.
[67] Campbell, *Deliverance*, 580.
[68] Campbell, *Deliverance*, 581.
[69] Walker, "Romans 1.18–2.29," 545.

Paul claims that this catena of Scriptures proves otherwise: "by the works of the Law no flesh will be rectified [δικαιωθήσεται] before him" (3:20; cf. 3:28: Gal 2:16).[70]

This adds a significant additional argument from Paul that undermines the Teacher's agenda. Paul has argued up to 3:9a that being circumcised and adopting the Law convey no ultimate advantages according to the Teacher's Philonic soteriology; hence the Teacher's proselytizing efforts are pointless in their own terms. But now Paul goes one step further and says that no one can receive eschatological life if the Teacher's soteriology is the way God relates to humanity because the Scriptures say that no one will ever satisfy the meritorious criteria for salvation set forth in 2:6–12. In the end, the Teacher's message is impotent to save even the Teacher himself, given the fact of universal sinfulness, as the Scriptures attest.[71]

8.3 Conclusion

Thus concludes the rhetorical flow from 1:16–3:20. It lies beyond the scope of this project to explore in depth what Paul's alternative account will be after 3:20—where Paul picks up his thesis about the power of God's salvation and the revelation of God's justice through Jesus that was first stated in 1:16–17. But to adumbrate Paul's message: contrary to the Teacher who teaches that God's justice is manifested in God's retributive

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[70] I am translating δικαιόω as "rectify" (cf. "set right," LSJ, s.v. "δικαιόω" 1) because I think it best captures the Philonic view discussed in chapter 7 that following the written laws is an aide in acquire virtue. The Law is the thing that "straightens you out" into a just, pious, and virtous person.

[71] In this way, my reading has some significant points of contact with iterations of the traditional construal of Rom 1–3, but the rhetorical purpose of the catena (i.e., how universal sinfulness relates to the soteriological model in 2:6–12) has been re-contextualized as it functions in the dialogical script for a contingent opponent. As set forth in chapter 5, Paul does not retain the meritorious soteriology model and squeeze Jesus into it. He dispenses with it and unfolds a completely alternative framework for understanding God, universal sinfulness, salvation, judgment, and obedience.

justice (2:5), or in contradistinction with human injustice (3:5), Paul says that God's justice is manifested in "the faith[fulness] of Jesus Christ" (3:22).[72] God's just judgment is "through Christ Jesus" (2:16b) and this judgment is revealed to be, not retributive or meritorious (as it is in 2:5–16a), but non-condemning, reconciling, and loving, not to mention merciful, forbearing and patient (3:25–26; 5:6–11; 8:31–39)—a judgment that enables each person to "stand" (14:4; cf. 9–12). This means, Paul teaches, that God is not currently pouring out wrath on the ungodly as the Teacher preaches (1:18); rather, God is demonstrating merciful forbearance (3:25–26) and rectifying and reconciling with these same ungodly people (4:5; 5:6–11) that the Teacher is judging (2:1, 3). And, if this is what God is doing for the ungodly apart from the Law (3:21), then this means that it is not the Law that rectifies a person (3:20; contra 2:13) but rather "faith" (3:28), namely, the faithfulness of Jesus (3:22). It is receiving "word" of this "faith" that Paul is preaching (10:8) that elicits a divinely gifted human response of "faith" (10:14, 17; 12:3). In this way, the contingent message of "the gospel" (1:16), the news of this "word of faith" (10:8), is "the power of God for salvation…for in it the justice of God is revealed from [Jesus's] faith resulting in [people's] faith" (1:16–17). In short, it is the preaching of this specific message (10:8–17) of God's merciful faithfulness to the covenantal promises (15:8–9) as revealed and demonstrated in Jesus's own faithfulness (3:22) that rectifies

[72] I take πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ as a subjective genitive. See Richard B. Hays, *The Faith of Jesus Christ: The Narrative Substructure of Galatians 3:1-4:11*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans ; Dove Booksellers, 2002), esp. 156-60.

people as they learn through this proclamation that God was actually always, already, and still for them, even when they were ungodly, unjust, and weak sinners (5:6–11; 8:31–39).

It is worth noting as I draw this particular discussion to a close that although I have proposed that the one who "calls [him]self a Jew" (2:17) is a Philonic proselyte, I remain agnostic as to this Teacher's relationship to the churches in Christ (bearing in mind the Teacher likely represents a group of teachers). I believe there is insufficient evidence to decide this question either way. The warnings in Rom 16:18, if these are the people the Teacher represents, can be read in support of both main positions: Paul says that they are not servants of Jesus because they in fact are not, or Paul is denying them that identity even though they would consider themselves servants of Jesus. Perhaps the scales tip in favor of the view that the Teacher does not preach Jesus because elsewhere Paul seems to have no problem acknowledging when his opponents are preachers of Jesus (cf. Phil 1:15–18; 2 Cor 11:23) or claim to be part of the church (e.g., Gal 2:4). But this contention is uncertain because those opponents whom Paul acknowledges are "slaves of Christ" (2 Cor 11:23) are earlier called "false apostles" in the same letter (11:13; cf. 11:4). So it seems that Paul could deny someone's legitimacy as a preacher of Christ though Paul's opponent would obviously have considered her/himself a preacher of Christ. Perhaps all we can say is that *Paul* did not consider the Teacher to be a brother in Christ.

And if the dialogical script we have outlined is correct, then this might suggest that Paul is hopeful that he will "gain" (κερδαίνω, 1 Cor 9:20–22) the Teacher for Christ. Rather than leaving the Teacher as an intransigent fool (as Epictetus sometimes did), Paul

scripts the Teacher to change his mind and to acknowledge the truth of his gospel (3:9, cf. v. 27). While there is still more for Paul and the Teacher to discuss after this part of the script, as noted above, if this Teacher is the "I" in Rom 7 too, and if they have not been "gained" for Christ in Rom 3, then they emphatically embrace Jesus by the end of Rom 7 (vv. 24–25). And Paul would no doubt join with him then in praising: "Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ out Lord" (7:25). More than this is impossible to say, and even this is clearly somewhat speculative.

Script for Rom 1:16–3:20.[73]

Script Key:
Interlocutor
Paul
<u>Paul recasting the Interlocutor's teaching in sarcastic parody</u>

Rom 1:16 For, I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation for all who are faithful, both for the Jew first and for the Greek. **17** For the rectification of God is being revealed in it from faithfulness resulting in faithfulness, just as it has been written: "and the Righteous One will live from faithfulness."

18 *Well, the wrath of God is being revealed from heaven upon all the ungodliness and injustice of human beings, who are restraining the truth in injustice,* ***19*** *because what can be known about God is manifest in them; for God manifested [it] to them.* ***20*** *For [God's] invisible (qualities) since the creation of the cosmos are clearly perceived—being understood in the things made—both [God's] eternal power and divinity, so that they are without excuse,* ***21*** *Therefore, knowing God, they did not give [God] glory or thanks, but were made futile in their reasonings and their senseless heart was darkened.* ***22*** *Professing to be wise they were made foolish* ***23*** *and they exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God with the likeness of the image of corruptible humanity and birds and quadrupeds and reptiles.* ***24*** *Therefore, God handed them over in the desires of their hearts to impurity to the degrading of their bodies among themselves—****25*** *They who exchanged the truth of God with the lie and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed unto the ages, amen.* ***26*** *For this reason, God handed*

[73] My translation. I will continue my practice of using "God" when masculine pronouns are used for God (or, e.g., "God's"), but I will put it in brackets to indicate that θεός is not in the text.

them over to degrading passions, for both their females exchanged natural intercourse for that which is against nature, ***27*** *as well as, in the same way, also the males, abandoning the natural intercourse of females, were inflamed in their desire for one another, males producing disgrace with males and they are receiving in themselves the recompense which was necessary for their error.* ***28*** *And just as they did not think it fit to acknowledge God, God handed them over to an unfit mind, to do things that are not morally-congruent-with-nature,*[74] ***29*** *having been filled with all injustice, immorality, greed, evil, full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice, gossipers,* ***30*** *slanderers, God-haters, violent ones, arrogant ones, braggarts, inventors of evil, those disobedient to parents,* ***31*** *senseless ones, untrustworthy ones, cold hearted ones, unmerciful ones.****32*** *They who know the requirement of God, that those practicing such things are worthy of death, not only do them but also join in approving those practicing [them].*

2:1 Therefore, you are without excuse, oh man, everyone judging, for in that which you are judging another, you are condemning yourself, for you, the judge, are practicing the same things.

2 *But we know that the judgment of God is according to the truth on those practicing such things.*

3 And do you suppose this—oh man who judges those practicing such things and doing the same—that you will escape the judgment of God? **4** Or are you disregarding the wealth of [God's] kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God is leading you to repentance?

5 But <u>according to your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are</u> [as you preach] <u>storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath and revelation of God's just condemnation of God</u> **6** "who will give to each one according to their works": **7** <u>On the one hand, to those seeking glory and honor and incorruptibility, by perseverance in good work—eternal life.</u> **8** <u>On the other, to those of selfish ambition who are disobeying the truth and obeying injustice—wrath and rage.</u> **9** <u>Affliction and distress upon the soul of every human being who produces bad deeds—the Jew first and also the Greek.</u> **10** <u>But glory and honor and peace to everyone who does the Good—for the Jew first and also the Greek.</u>**11** <u>For there is no partiality with God.</u> **12** <u>For however many sinned without the Law, will also perish without the Law, and however many sinned within the Law, will be judged through Law.</u> **13** <u>For it is not the hearers of Law who are righteous before God, but the doers of Law will be rectified—</u>**14** <u>For whenever the nations, those not having the Law, would do the things of the Law in accordance with nature, these not having the Law are a law unto themselves:</u> **15** <u>they who show the work of the of the law written in their hearts, when their conscience is testifying and their thoughts between one another are</u>

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[74] Translating the philosophical technical term τὰ καθήκοντα as discussed in chapter 7.

accusing or even excusing—**16** on the day when God will judge the secret things of human beings. (According to my gospel [God will judge] through Christ Jesus.)

17 But if you name yourself "Jew" and rely on the Law and boast in God, **18** and you know the [divine] will and you approve the superior things by being taught from the Law, **19** and you have convinced yourself that you are a guide of the blind, a light of those in darkness, **20** a corrector of fools, a teacher of infants, having the form of knowledge and truth in the Law—**21 t**herefore, Teacher of another, are you not teaching yourself? [You], the one preaching not to steal, are you stealing? **22** [You], the one saying not to commit adultery, do you commit adultery? [You], the one loathing idols, are you robbing temples? **23** You who boasts in the Law, through the transgression of the Law you are dishonoring God. **24** For "the Name of God is being blasphemed among the nations because of you," just as it has been written. **25** For, on the one hand, circumcision is beneficial if you actually carry out the law [of circumcision]; but if, on the other hand, you are a transgressor of the law [of circumcision], your circumcision has essentially become a foreskin. **26** If, therefore, the one with a foreskin keeps the requirements of the [natural] law, will not his foreskin be considered as circumcision? **27** And the one with a foreskin by nature who fulfills the law will judge you, the transgressor of the Law through the letter-of-the-law of circumcision.[75]

28 *Well, "the Jew" is not in the visible, neither is "circumcision" in the visible—in flesh.* **29** *But "the Jew" is in the hidden—and "circumcision" is of the heart in the spirit, not in the letter-of-the-law*[76]*—whose praise is not from people but from God.*

3:1 Therefore, what advantage does the Jew have, or what is the benefit of circumcision?

2 *Much in every way. For, first of all, they were entrusted with the oracles of God.*

3What then? If some [Jews] were untrustworthy, will not their untrustworthiness abolish God's trustworthiness?

4 *May it never be! But let God be truthful, and every person a liar, just as it is written: "In order that you might be justified in your words and will prevail when you judge."*

5 And if our [the Jewish people, represented by David] injustice exhibits God's justice, what will we say? Isn't God unjust, the one who brings about wrath? (I am speaking in a human manner).

6 *May it never be! Because how will God judge the world [non-Jews]?*

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[75] Or perhaps, "through what is written/prescribed even of circumcision" (διὰ γράμματος καὶ περιτομῆς).

[76] Or, again, perhaps "not what is written/prescribed."

7 But <u>if by my lie</u> [as a Jew], <u>the truth of God is caused to abound unto his glory</u>, why also am I still being condemned as a sinner? **8** And (just as we [my missionary team] are being slandered and just as some are saying about us), why not say, "Let us do evil, so that good might come?"

Their judgment is just!

9 What then? Are we [Jews] advantaging ourselves?

Not at all

For we publicly-charge both Jews and Greeks, all are under Sin **10** just as it has been written:

"There is no one righteous, not even one; **11** there is no one who understands, there is no one who seeks God. **12** All turned aside, together they became worthless; there is no one who shows kindness, there is not even one." **13** "Their throat is an opened grave, their tongues were deceiving, the venom of asps is under their lips;" **14 "**whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness." **15** "Their feet are quick to shed blood, **16** ruin and misery are on their paths, **17** and they do not know the path of peace." **18** "The fear of God is not before their eyes."

19 And we know that the Law, all that it says, it speaks to those in the Law, so that every mouth may be shut and all the cosmos become accountable to God; **20** for this reason, from the works of Torah no flesh will be rectified before Him, for knowledge of Sin [happens] through the Law.

9. Conclusion

In this project I have offered a solution to several interpretive problems and tensions arising at the beginning of Paul's letter to the Romans, notably from Rom 1:18–3:20.

Because of the marked dialogical features in the text (building here particularly on the work of Stowers, Campbell, and King), I first argued in chapters 1 and 2 that the methodological parameters needed to investigate these tensions initially should arise from the ancient conventions taught in the gymnasia and by tutors of rhetoric enabling the recognition of dialogues and attributed speech. The historical investigation of these conventions revealed certain signals to look for in a dialogical context that indicate transitions in speaker (chapter 2). Recovering these cues is especially necessary since such transitions could and not infrequently did occur subtly, that is, without the explicit introduction of a new speaker at the outset or the presence of a verb of saying indicating a transition to quoted speech. Through an investigation of the ancient rhetorical handbooks Rhetorica ad Herennium and Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria*, and of the *Progymnasmata* of Theon and Pseudo-Hermogenes—and here following in the footsteps of some of King's analysis—I confirmed that the following features will be present if an ancient author has constructed a speech-in-character: (a) an interlocutor will be clearly identified in some way, although the exact method varies; (b) s/he will be characterized (e.g., as a coward, philosopher, hypocrite, fool, etc.); and (c) any attributed speech will then be appropriate to the character of the interlocutor. These signals can be summed up together as "the criterion of appropriateness." In addition, ancient readers expected this material

(d) to be performed appropriately when read publicly, assuming that any transitions in speaker had been detected through the criterion of appropriateness and/or through accompanying oral information from the author or the author's agents.

The Homeric *scholia* demonstrated further how ancient readers were trained to detect changes in speaker in the absence of original audible and paralinguistic performance cues, information from the author, or from overt verbal announcement—something ancient texts were vulnerable to after their original contexts had been left behind, as was the case for Homeric poetry. This examination produced two additional textual signals: (a) evidence of διαφωνία (contradiction), which is solved by the interpretive principle of λύσις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου ("solution from the character"), that is, the application of the key criterion of appropriateness to the text's suggestion that another competing position and hence voice is present; and (b) the presence of a capping formula which marks the end, not the beginning, of a verbless transition to speech-in-character. I investigated several examples of verbless transitions to quoted speech and noted further how the dialogical technique of apostrophe often functioned as a capping formula. In these texts the author subtly introduces a text in the voice of another figure, whether long or short, and then turns at its conclusion to address the speaker directly utilizing second person grammar. This construction alerted ancient readers to the presence of a speech-in-character, and the appropriate performance would be expected to follow. In certain dialogical examples, moreover, we noted the use of γάρ as a typical way in which a new speaker in a discourse could begin their statement by expressing dissent from what preceded.

Throughout the rest of the project, I demonstrated how these interpretive tools provide a powerful explanatory apparatus for comprehending the unique features we encounter in Rom 1:18–3:20, and ultimately for dealing with its notorious tensions. In chapter 3 we saw first how recognizing the function of the apostrophe in 2:1 as a capping formula—i.e., as a typical ancient signal that a subtle transition to speech-in-character has just ended—and attending to the clearly-stated characterization of this interlocutor—as a judgmental person who would speak the harsh things just uttered in the preceding paragraph—can resolve the long-standing interpretive questions surrounding this paragraph in its context. In particular, commentators have stumbled over the presence of διό in 2:1 and the broader function of the argument. Paul seems here, on the usual reading of the passage, to fall into his own rhetorical trap, and the presence of διό with its marked inferential force is also hard to explain. But these problems dissolve when we apply the criterion of appropriateness and find a "solution from the character," and also recognize the presence of an apostrophic capping formula. Romans 1:18–32 is in the voice of a judgmental interlocutor, as Schmeller, Porter, and Campbell have suggested. And this figure falls into *his* own trap from 2:1 onward, as Paul says will happen (2:3).

Here I also laid to rest the mistaken notion that the presence of γάρ in 1:18, which frequently possesses inferential force, eliminates the possibility that the following paragraph could be speech-in-character—a much-repeated objection to Campbell's proposal. (Read inferentially γάρ suggests that Paul's obvious claims about the gospel in 1:16–17 rest on the claims of 1:18–32 and hence these too must logically be part of his own thinking.) But we found that the presence of a γάρ in 1:18 is immaterial to the

plausibility of discerning a subtle transition to speech-in-character because this happens regularly throughout Greek literature. A γάρ need not signal an inferential connection, but in a dialogical context can frequently signal the voice of a new speaker and their opposition to what precedes (and as all the standard dictionaries and grammars in fact note).

With these realizations in place I turned in chapters 4 and 5 to document the well-known interpretive problems plaguing Rom 1:18–32 and Rom 2 respectively. I catalogued the numerous conceptual tensions that the arguments in these passages, when they are read in the usual fashion, as Paul's own theological claims, create in relation to his thought as it is expressed elsewhere in Romans and in his other writings—tensions sometimes best described candidly as contradictions. We noted in chapter 4 how scholars identify tensions centering on the following topics in 1:18–32: (1) peculiar style, language, and tone; (2) the (natural) knowledge of God and the (natural) Law; and (3) distinctive accounts of (the knowledge of) sin and of human capacity. In chapter 5 we grouped together widely-recognized tensions concerning: (4) the presence of righteous gentiles saved by works in accordance with the (natural) Law; (5) of a meritocratic account of salvation; and (6) the reduction of ethnic and covenantal Israel into irrelevance, displaced by a generic, rational, individual defined as the "true" Jew.

Scholars have, by way of response: (a) simply noted these tensions and opted not to resolve them, while some have concluded—not unfairly—that Paul is fundamentally inconsistent (e.g., Sanders and Räisänen); (b) offered a synthetic solution to try to salvage Paul's consistency (e.g., Gaventa, Wright, Stowers, King and Barclay); (c) concluded

these discordant views must be interpolations (O'Neill, Walker and, to a degree, Sanders); or (d) assigned these conflicting views to Paul's interlocutor (e.g., Schmeller, Porter, and Campbell). Moreover, we saw that the most common form of the synthetic option (b) generally postulates some form of what I called the Christian solution for the identity of the mysterious righteous gentiles saved by works in Rom 2 (e.g., Wright, Gorman, and most robustly, Barclay)—that these figures are in fact Christians. But I showed how solution (b) breaks down in relation to each tension it is trying to solve, and generates new problems in its own right. Option (a), should clearly only be a last resort, while option (c) is insufficiently supported by any relevant evidence (e.g., evidence of major insertions or gaps in the manuscript tradition). Only a variation of (d) can resolve these tensions and render the text as we have it coherent, and yet it does so with relative ease.

The ancient interpretive tools already canvassed resolve these tensions by suggesting a "solution from the character." In a dialogical context, these tensions and contradictions are most intelligible as διαφωνία. Διαφωνία signals to the ancient interpreter that certain contradictory views in the text are not the author's own.

These signals begin in 1:18–32 but, independently of the shifts in style and terminology that are sometimes noticed here by commentators (e.g., Walker and Rodríguez highlight the marked shift in style and tone), Paul signals clearly to his audience from 2:1 through apostrophe that he is debating another person, a teacher (2:19–21). Moreover, this figure is explicitly coded as a judgmental pedagogue of some sort. The hypothesis that the views of this interlocutor are in play then resolves the perceived

tensions generated by the text. Two positions are present, and Paul is strongly and directly opposed to one of them. Noting just a few examples: Paul's teaching in 3:20 and 28 opposes the teaching on justification by works in 2:13; Paul's teaching in 6:23; 3:23–24; 4:4–5; 11:6, 25–32, and 35 opposes the meritocratic, unmerciful teaching on salvation in 2:6–12; and Paul's teaching in chapters 9–11 opposes the reduction of Jewish identity in 2:25–29 to irrelevance, as well as the individuated account of judgment in 2:6–12.

In chapter 5 I go on to address the remaining critiques of the hypothesis of speech-in-character in 1:18–32 and the presence of a judgmental teacher in the rest of the passage that depart from notions of judgment and wrath in Paul. I argued that the account of retributive wrath in 1:18–32 and 2:6–13 is incompatible with Paul's other writings on this topic not because sinners are said in Rom 1–2 to be judged by God, but rather because a judgment by works in Rom 2 is uniquely the basis for salvation—getting paid back with eschatological life for persevering in good works—and a retributive, punitive judgment, fueled by divine wrath, is the final destiny for those who do bad works. In short, in Rom 2 salvation and ultimate damnation are predicated on the person's moral quality. But all of Paul's other final judgment texts are not in a soteriological register and judgment of works is a penultimate evaluation, with ultimate reconciliation lying just on the other side of this process (1 Cor 3:15). Salvation is never predicated elsewhere in Paul on a person's moral congruity with godliness/Christlikeness. In brief, salvation through a judgment by works (2:6–13) is different from and fundamentally incompatible with an evaluative judgment of works that continues irrespective of those works into salvation and eschatological transformation (1 Cor 3:13–15; 4:5; 5:5; Rom 14:4, 9–12; 2 Cor 5:10).

It is the critics of the hypothesis of speech-in-character in Rom 1–3 who have arguably not read the data in Paul concerning judgment that occurs outside Rom 2 with sufficient accuracy. A close reading finds further evidence of διαφωνία.

There is no need to rehearse in detail here the two different accounts of salvation that emerged from this extended analysis (see the conclusions to chapters 5 and 7), but it is significant that the side of the διαφωνία assigned to the interlocutor formed a coherent account of how God relates to humanity, of sin, and of judgment and salvation. This increases the plausibility of the "solution from the character" because the διαφωνία is not a disconnected assortment of views or a straw man, but rather evinces a unified set of contentions. Furthermore, and most importantly, it is recognizable as a rather distinctive Jewish position against the broader backdrop of Second Temple Judaism. So I turned in the remaining substantive chapters, 6 and 7, to investigate how the voice of the interlocutor matches the distinctive teachings surrounding a well-known and very influential Alexandrian teacher of the early first century, Philo of Alexandria.

The teaching of the interlocutor in Rom 1–2 that Paul opposes matches both with broader Philonic views such as the natural knowledge of God and the presence of a natural law, and also with certain details peculiar to his tradition. For example, Philo's disdain for reptilian idolatry and lesbian intercourse, his preferred description of the Jewish Scriptures and laws as τὰ λόγια, his frequent use of the technical philosophical term τὰ καθήκοντα, and his pairing of ἀσέβεια and ἀδικία. As a result, the "solution from the character" was able to gain more historical specificity as the "character" in question began to come into focus as a distinctively Philonic Teacher—and this in opposition to

the widespread but less accurate view that the key dialogue partner in Rom 1–2 is the Wisdom of Solomon.

The Philonic hypothesis proved especially useful for explaining both the unique circumcision material and the unusual notion of Jewish identity found in 2:25–29. I connected the διαφωνία in this section with Paul's characterization of the Teacher "who calls [him]self a Jew" (2:17) in the second apostrophe. This also lent support to Thorsteinsson's claim that here Paul is not doubting a born Jew's Jewishness but a particular Philonic proselyte's claim to legitimacy. This proposal makes Paul's peculiar discussion of circumcision and of a negative judgment by righteous gentiles living according to the natural law comprehensible. Paul here uses sarcastic parody to doubt the legitimacy of the Teacher's Jewishness on the basis of the Teacher's own Philonic assumptions about Jewish identity, proselytes, and circumcision. Here Paul forces the Teacher to admit given the premises of his own teaching that physical circumcision is unnecessary and possesses no inherent benefit or advantage for a person. (Note, even if the proselyte aspect of the Philonic solution remains tentative, the explanatory power of the broader Philonic solution is still apparent here.) But the Philonic hypothesis is even able to resolve seemingly minor exegetical annoyances such as the grammatical voice of προεχόμεθα in 3:9. If Paul is engaging with a particularly Philonic inflection of Judaism then a true middle actually makes good sense.

In sum, this research has resulted in a coherent dialogical script for 1:18–3:20 that conforms to the criteria and conventions of ancient dialogues and that resolves the besetting tensions scholars have long wrestled with in this text.

The ultimate viability of my Philonic solution to Rom 1:18–3:20 will rest upon further research into the next portions of Romans after 3:20. I made brief forays into these later sections of Romans (especially in chapters 4 and 5), but only to a degree sufficient to establish my limited aims in those chapters. More thorough research will need to be done to see if the Philonic solution continues to maintain its explanatory power across all of Romans, although that investigation clearly lies outside the limits of this investigation. The Philonic solution will nevertheless be strengthened if it can be demonstrated that the subjects Paul turns to in the later parts of the letter make the most sense if he discusses them vis-à-vis Philonic teachings on the same subjects—especially the ostensible power of the Law to rectify a person's struggle with the passions, the narratives concerning Abraham in Rom 4 and Adam in Rom 5, the emphatic use of a slavery metaphor in Rom 6–7, the resurrection and liberation of all creation in Rom 8, the discussion of Israel and the nations in Rom 9–11 and in particular, why Isaac and Jacob were elected as heirs of Abraham, and so on. (The dialogical features stop after Rom 11 so it appears Paul turns to matters more particular to Rome or to Corinth if his exhortations have a certain Corinthian inflection as *Nebenadressaten*.[1])[2] And in fact some of this research has already begun in some of these later portions of Romans, and in my

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[1] Douglas A. Campbell, *Framing Paul: An Epistolary Biography* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), 52–55.

[2] The presence of an interlocutor continues to be signaled in the questions and responses in 3:27–4:10, again in 6:1, and again in 9:14, 19, 30–33, for instance, and I am inclined to think that this remains the Teacher unless we can demonstrate that there is a new and incompatible characterization. And this might come in 7:1, when Paul directly addresses the Roman "brothers [and sisters] who know the Law" (cf. 7:4). Has Paul stopped the dialogue with the Teacher and now the remaining dialogical signals take place between Paul and these "brothers" who know the Law? In any case, this is why more research needs to be done.

estimation, the results thus far generally support the Philonic solution.[3] Moreover, we should note briefly in closing that this resolution also opens up a fruitful line of further investigation, namely, a contingent rationale for the interpretation of Romans.

All scholars in the modern period admit that Paul is not setting forth a proto-systematic theology in Romans. Paul's theology is expressed in this letter, of course, but he is doing so vis-à-vis a particular form of Jewish teaching, for local contingent reasons. His theology is mediated through a practical text although scholars have struggled to grasp the exact dynamics. However, the possible presence of Philonic missionaries and teachers in Paul's communities and ultimately in Rome would allow modern scholars to read the body of the letter in a focused, practical way—as Paul's engagement with these figures in the presence of Jesus followers at Rome who do not, as least as a whole, know Paul or his teaching well. A contingent reading of Romans beckons.

But these are conversations for other studies. For now it must suffice to claim that detecting the presence of a Philonic proselyte interlocutor in Rom 1:18–3:20 according to the ancient conventions for the detection of speech-in-character can resolve the interpretive problems identified by scholars of every stripe throughout the foregoing

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[3] To provide a few examples: Orrey McFarland, "Whose Abraham, Which Promise? Genesis 15.6 in Philo's *De Virtutibus* and Romans 4," *JSNT* 35 (2012): 107–29; idem, "Philo of Alexandria and Romans 9:1-29: Grace, Mercy, and Reason," in *Reading Romans in Context: Paul and Second Temple Judaism*, ed. Ben C. Blackwell, John K. Goodrich, and Jason Maston (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2015), 115–21; David Lincicum, "Philo of Alexandria and Romans 9:30-10:21: The Commandment and the Quest for the Good Life," in *Reading Romans in Context: Paul and Second Temple Judaism*, ed. Ben C. Blackwell, John K. Goodrich, and Jason Maston (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2015), 122–28; Emma Wasserman, "Paul among the Philosophers: The Case of Sin in Romans 6-8," *JSNT* 30 (2008): 387–415; Emma Wasserman, "The Death of the Soul in Romans 7: Revisiting Paul's Anthropology in Light of Hellenistic Moral Psychology," *JBL* 126 (2007): 793–816.

project. The Philonic solution proposed here turns out to resolve the presence of these tensions. And two final significant implications result.

First, this determination means, contrary to many interpretations of Romans, that Paul is not attempting to debunk Judaism *per se* self-evidently, in its own terms, in Rom 1–3 as inherently negative. Paul is not attacking "the Jew." Paul is not even attempting to dismiss Philonic Judaism *per se*, as if he is attempting to undermine every facet of Philo's teaching. Rather, all we can say on the basis of this dialogue, insofar as it is on target, is that Paul is opposing the particular way that this distinctive Philonic teaching is being wielded to persuade his gentile converts to get circumcised (cf. 2:25; 3–2). This is an important step forward in the interpretation of Romans in a post-Holocaust era.

Second, and finally, this contingent theological controversy with the Philonic Teacher serves to clarify key notions in Paul's theology. Part of the Teacher's persuasive power seems to have been his capacity to convince people that they are ungodly and unjust sinners and therefore fundamentally unacceptable by God unless they set themselves straight (through the Law). To convince someone to be circumcised in this manner is to get them to doubt that God already loves and accepts them as they are. Observing this debate unfold now allows us to realize that Paul's theology, at its base, is a theology of the triumph of the love of God (5:5, 8) manifested in the love of God's own Son (8:35, 37, 39) for all people, especially ungodly sinners (5:5–11). This love of God in Jesus Christ knows no bounds according to Paul (8:31–39). It will not stop until all those who are ensnared and enslaved to Sin and disobedience by forces beyond their power to control are rescued, delivered, and ultimately resurrected in a gracious cosmic act of

super-abounding and redeeming mercy, which "God promised beforehand through God's prophets in the holy Scriptures" (1:2; 15:8–9; 5:12–21; 8:18–30; 11:26–32). A quotation of Paul's own doxology in 11:33–36 in response to this universal declaration of God's unfathomable mercy is therefore a fitting way to conclude this study:

> Ὦ βάθος πλούτου
> καὶ σοφίας καὶ γνώσεως θεοῦ·
> ὡς ἀνεξεραύνητα τὰ κρίματα αὐτοῦ
> καὶ ἀνεξιχνίαστοι αἱ ὁδοὶ αὐτοῦ.
> *τίς γὰρ ἔγνω νοῦν κυρίου;*
> *ἢ τίς σύμβουλος αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο;*
> *ἢ τίς προέδωκεν αὐτῷ,*
> *καὶ ἀνταποδοθήσεται αὐτῷ;*
> ὅτι ἐξ αὐτοῦ καὶ δι' αὐτοῦ καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν τὰ πάντα·
> αὐτῷ ἡ δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας, ἀμήν.

Appendix: Two Types of Circumcision and Why This Matters for Identifying Paul's Opponents in Galatians and Philippians

As Asha Moorthy observes, "there has, historically, been little if any real attention in New Testament studies to the question of how circumcision was physically carried out in Paul's time."[4] This is unfortunate because almost no NT scholars seem to even be aware that there are different types of circumcision and that there are significant differences between them.[5] Being aware of these types of circumcision and their relative popularity or rarity has the potential to cast much needed light on Paul's polemics in Galatians and Philippians. Although there are a few different styles of circumcision that will be discussed here, the main ones this essay will be concerned with I will name *milah* and *periah.*[6] First, I will set forth the differences between these two circumcisions and show why *milah* is the customary practice among Jews of Paul's time. I will also argue that Philo likely endorses a type of cut that is very similar to *periah* and that this is probably due to his unique belief that circumcision is morally operative—it surgically

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[4] Asha Moorthy, "A Seal of Faith: Rereading Paul on Circumcision, Torah, and the Gentiles" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2013), 52, https://academiccommons.columbia.edu/catalog/ac:166824.

[5] Besides Moorthy, Matthew Thiessen is the only NT scholar I have come across that seems aware of *milah* and *periah* circumcisions, but he does not entertain the possibility that this has something to do with Paul's polemics in Galatians, and Philippians (Thiessen, *Contesting Conversion: Genealogy, Circumcision, and Identity in Ancient Judaism and Christianity* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011], 54–5).

[6] While *milah* derives from the Hebrew verb "to circumcise" מול (Gen 17), *periah* is a rabbinic term meaning "opening" (indicating the full uncovering of the glans down past the corona) and is thus technically anachronistic when talking about the time of Paul and before. But it will be used here heuristically to refer to the same type of circumcision that eventually become the rabbinic standard that was also practiced really limitedly before the Tannaitic period.

engineers morality. Then I will argue that Paul encounters opponents in Galatians and Philippians who share these notions and that knowing the Philonic background as well as the differences between *milah* and *periah* can radically illuminate Paul's polemics. That is, his polemics in Galatians in Philippians are not aimed at Jews or circumcision *per se*, but rather at proselytes who practice *periah*, a novel and more "severe [circumcision] regimen" than *milah*.[7]

I. Penile Anatomy, Lipodermos*, and Foreskin Regeneration*

In order to be able to determine what kind of circumcision is envisioned by an ancient text and thus to grasp the physical differences between *milah* and *periah*, it is necessary to get an elementary handle on some penile anatomy and vocabulary.[8] The penis consists of a shaft and the glans penis or simply glans (i.e., the head). The rim around the glans that meets the shaft is called the corona or coronal ridge. The point at which the shaft meets the corona is the sulcus. The preputial skin is a complex structure consisting in: (a) outer skin coterminous with the shaft skin and it lays atop the glans; (b) the inner skin or mucosal membrane that is the underside of the outer skin and thus is the skin touching the glans; (c) the junction or boundary between the outer skin and inner mucosal skin is called the ridged band and it is the opening or tip of the preputial skin

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[7] Shaye J. D. Cohen, *Why Aren't Jewish Women Circumcised? Gender and Covenant in Judaism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 25.

[8] Sorrells Morris L. et al., "Fine-Touch Pressure Thresholds in the Adult Penis," *BJU International* 99.4 (2007): 864–69; R. K. Winkelmann, "The Cutaneous Innervation of Human Newborn Prepuce," *Journal of Investigative Dermatology* 26.1 (1956): 53–67; R. K. Winkelmann, "The Erogenous Zones: Their Nerve Supply and Its Significance," *Proceedings of the Staff Meetings. Mayo Clinic* 34.3 (1959): 39–47; Nissan Rubin, "Brit Milah: A Study of Change in Custom," in *The Covenant of Circumcision: New Perspectives on an Ancient Jewish Rite*, ed. Elizabeth Wyner Mark (Hanover, NH: Brandeis University Press, 2003), 87–97, 223–28.

that protrudes beyond the glans in infancy (and usually still for most intact adults); and (d) the frenulum on the ventral (under) side pulls and keeps the entire foreskin structure covering the glans when flaccid (it is a band between the meatus [urethral opening] and the ridged band). The frenulum and ridged band work together to keep the entire foreskin covering the glans while flaccid so that the preputial skin does not retract easily/automatically and thus expose the glans. I will use "entire foreskin" or "foreskin-structure" to refer to all the component parts of the preputial skin just listed, but these parts will be important for what follows.

For our purposes, it also necessary to see how the Greeks used their terminology. Frederick M. Hodges observes:

> The Greeks understood the prepuce to be composed of two distinct structures: the *posthē* (πόσθη[9]) and the *akroposthion* (ακροπόσθιον[10])…. Rufus of Ephesus, a physician under Trajan (98–117 C.E.), describes the penis accordingly:
>
> The tip of the shaft is called the glans [*balonos*], and the skin around the glans [is called the] prepuce [*posthē*], and the extremity of the prepuce is called the *akroposthion*.[11]

Thus, I will use "prepuce" to refer to what the Greeks called the πόσθη and "foreskin" to refer only to the skin that hangs over *beyond* the glans (hence the ἄκρος- prefix: ἀκροπόσθιον—term favored by the Greeks—ἀκροβυστία—term favored by the LXX/NT).[12]

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[9] Along with its variations, such as πόσθιον or ποσθία.

[10] Along with its variations, such as ἀκροποσθία and ἀκροποσθίη.

[11] Frederick M. Hodges, "The Ideal Prepuce in Ancient Greece and Rome: Male Genital Aesthetics and Their Relation to *Lipodermos,* Circumcision, Foreskin Restoration, and the *Kynodesmē," Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 75.3 (2001): 377-78; brackets original; cf. 395.

[12] According to LSJ (ad loc.), -βυστία might have derived from the Babylonian root *buśtu* ("pudenda") and the Hebrew *bōsheth* ("shame"). As Moorthy keenly observes, "If ἄκρος is taken to mean

Due to variations in human biology, some males have a short foreskin-structure so that the ridged band does not hang over the glans, but rather rests somewhere along the glans itself leaving part of the glans exposed. The Greeks called this *lipodermos*, "lacking skin," because there was no *fore*skin.[13] Although Greeks and Romans exercised nude, exposing the glans in any fashion in public was shameful.[14] Thus, there were various "treatments designed to lengthen defectively short foreskins."[15]

For example, Soranus[16] advises:

> If the infant is male and it looks as though it has [*lipodermos* {λειπόδερμον}] gently draw [ἐπισπάσθω] the tip of the foreskin forward or even hold it together with a stand of wool to fasten it. For if gradually stretched and continuously drawn forward [ἐπισπωμένη], it easily stretches and assumes its normal length and covers the glans [βάλανον] and becomes accustomed to keep the natural good shape. (*Gynecology* 2.34)[17]

Galen (ca. 129–210 CE) similarly recommends tensioning the skin of the prepuce in order to create a foreskin, but he outlines directions for fashioning a device rather than manually tensioning the prepuce (*De methodo medendi* 14.16). Martial, in 92 CE,[18] specifically talks about a Jewish slave who hangs weights to tension his prepuce to recreate a foreskin (*Epigrams* 7.35). These versions of foreskin restoration work because

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'highest' or 'farthest point' then ἀκροβυστία might signify…the 'height (in metaphorical sense) of shame'" represented in the physical ἀκροπόσθιον ("Seal," 56n40).

[13] Hodges, "Ideal Prepuce," 394–95.

[14] Ibid., 392–93, 405.

[15] Robert G. Hall, "Epispasm and the Dating of Ancient Jewish Writings," *JSP* 2 (1988): 71.

[16] Soranus "practiced during the reigns of Trajan and Hadrian" (Hall, "Epispasm," 71).

[17] Soranus, *Soranus' Gynecology*, trans. Owsei Temkin (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991); Greek from Soranus, *Sorani Gynaeciorum Libri IV: De Signis Fracturarum, De Fasciis, Vita Hippocratis Secundum Soranum*, ed. Ioannes Ilberg, Corpus Medicorum Graecorum 4 (Leipzig: Teubner, 1927).

[18] E. Mary Smallwood, *The Jews under Roman Rule: From Pompey to Diocletian*, SJLA 20 (Leiden: Brill, 1976), 377.

constant tensioning of the skin induces mitosis and new skin cells grow thus expanding the surface area of the skin.[19]

Another solution was a κυνοδέσμη ("dog leash"). The κυνοδέσμη was "a thin leather thong wound around the *akroposthion* that pulled the penis upward and was tied in a bow, tied around the waist, or secured by some other means."[20] It served to ensure that the glans did not get exposed during athletic performance (i.e., it was worn for modesty insurance). It was also used to lengthen the foreskin of those with *lipodermos* by drawing the prepuce beyond the glans and thus providing sufficient tension to induce mitosis and grow a foreskin.

Still another remedy is infibulation (Celsus, *On Medicine* 7.25.2; Martial, *Epigrams* 7.82).[21] This is where the short prepuce would be stretched past the glans and then secured with "a pin called a fibula" that is pierced through the left and right sides of the prepuce. The fibula prevents the prepuce from retracting and exposing part or all of the glans (i.e., the glans is stopped from protruding past the fibula).

Finally, Celsus (before 90 CE)[22] gives directions for how to surgically restore a foreskin for both those who were born with *lipodermos* or who have been circumcised (*On Medicine* 7.25.1).

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[19] There is plethora of research in medical journals under "tissue expansion." Cf. Hodges, "Ideal Prepuce," 397.

[20] Hodges, "Ideal Prepuce," 381-84 [here 381]; For more details on *epispasm*, infibulation, and the κυνοδέσμη see Andreas Blaschke, *Beschneidung: Zeugnisse Der Bibel Und Verwandter Texte*, TANZ 28 (Tübingen: Francke, 1998), 139–44.

[21] Hall, "Epispasm," 72; cf. Hodges, "Ideal Prepuce," 381.

[22] Smallwood, *Jews*, 376.

II. Milah *and* Periah

Whereas *milah* circumcision only excises the ακροπόσθιον, *periah* excises the ακροπόσθιον *and* the πόσθη "peeling back…the mucosal membrane lining the [inner]foreskin, thus fully uncovering the glans."[23] Thus, *milah* circumcision leaves the πόσθη intact. This is enough prepuce to cover the length of the glans, but without a ridged band and a severed frenulum it would not stay in place on its own and would inevitably retract back off the glans somewhat (hence the need for a fibula if one wanted to literally "cover up" their circumcision). That is, *milah* circumcision is medically equivalent to *lipodermos* from the Greco-Roman perspective.

This is evident because Jewish males regularly partook in the above remedies for *lipodermos*. If a Jewish male wanted to participate in the gymnasium they could either use a fibula or a κυνοδέσμη to ensure that their glans would not be exposed and/or engage in *epispasm*—they could continually tension their πόσθη down past the glans (either manually or with a device) and this would induce tissue expansion and soon enough they would have sufficient πόσθη hanging *beyond* the glans again thus regenerating an ακροπόσθιον. Or, they might opt to undergo a surgery like the one described by Celsus. But it is important to emphasize that Celsus assumes the presence of the prepuce even in one who has been circumcised (i.e., he cannot be talking about

[23] Rubin, "*Brit Milah*," 88.

periah). He says that the surgery requires for "the adjacent skin [to the glans—i.e., the prepuce—to be] rather ample" (*On Medicine* 7.25.1), which rules out *periah*.[24]

Therefore, if the entire πόσθη is removed, as it is with *periah*, then there is physically no prepuce to draw down to cover the glans and secure with a fibula or a κυνοδέσμη or to surgically repair.[25] This indicates that Celsus and the other medical advocates for foreskin restoration techniques were not aware of *periah*, but only of something like *milah*. In fact, Nissan Rubin argues that "the requirement of *periah*…was instituted by the Rabbis following the Bar Kokhba Revolt for the purpose of…. mak[ing] decircumcision no longer a feasible undertaking for Hellenizing Jews."[26] With *periah*, not only is the glans exposed, but any remaining prepuce is cut off as well since it is drawn down past the corona and sulcus. As Rubin makes clear, after this process of "a radical circumcision that removes the maximum outer skin and rolls back completely the inner membrane, the stretching of a sufficient amount of skin from the shaft of the penis to create a pseudo-foreskin would take years, according to reports from [modern] foreskin restoration groups" and this renders "the drawing down of the foreskin…no longer feasible" for the ancient Jew.[27]

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[24] Translation from Celsus, *On Medicine, Volume III: Books 7-8*, trans. W. G. Spencer, LCL 336 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1938).

[25] See Blaschke, "Die פריעה machte das Anlegen einer κυνοδέσμη unmöglich und erschwerte den Epispasmos" (*Beschneidung*, 144; cf. 143).

[26] Rubin, "*Brit Milah*," 88; cf. Cohen, "Jewish Women," 25–6, 232n69. Thus, Blaschke is mistaken when he thinks *periah* was instituted after the Maccabean rebellion (*Beschneidung*, 141, 144). All the evidence points to the supposition that *periah* was instituted after Hadrian since *epispasm* was especially popular again during Hadrian's reign (Gen. Rab. 46.13), which would have been basically impossible if these men underwent *periah*.

[27] Rubin, "*Brit Milah*," 88, 92; It is important to note that modern Western circumcision gives the same result as *periah* (Leonard B. Glick, *Marked in Your Flesh: Circumcision from Ancient Judea to Modern America* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005], 5–6).

Without a prepuce, all the medical remedies for *lipodermos* could not physically work. These types of foreskin restoration are only possible for the ancient Jewish male if they have a πόσθη. Although Andreas Blaschke knows that *periah* renders non-surgical *epispasm* "considerably difficult" ("da die פריעה den Vollzug eines nichtchirurgischen Epispasmos zumindest erheblich erschwert"),[28] he assumes that *epispasm* after the Maccabean period refers to surgical ("*chirurgische*") foreskin re-creation as prescribed by Celsus above.[29] But this assumption profoundly misunderstands how much skin from the foreskin-structure is removed with *periah*. There is simply not enough skin to do what Celsus prescribes as he requires having "rather ample" preputial skin for the operation (*On Medicine* 7.25.1). So much skin is removed with *periah* that such a large portion of the remaining skin on the penile shaft would have be cut from the pubic base and pulled over the glans leaving an equivalent portion of the penile shaft as an entirely open wound.[30] Celsus, however, imagines that the patient only needs a "small ring" of additional skin to grow (7.25.1), which is exactly what one would expect for a patient that has a prepuce (πόσθη), but is just missing the foreskin. This is why *periah* had to come

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[28] Blaschke, *Beschneidung*, 141.

[29] Ibid., 141; his emphasis.

[30] While *milah* only removed a thin ring of skin, *periah* removes a lot of surface area. To calculate the amount of skin removed, think of the lateral surface area of a cylinder (i.e., a cylinder without the top or bottom circles). Thus, the radius of the corona needs to be multiplied by 2π and by at least the length of the glans–more if it hangs over the glans. This would only account for the surface area of the outer skin, however. Thus, the total needs to be multiplied by two to account for the fact that the prepuce has an outer layer of skin covering the length of the glans as well as an inner layer of mucosal skin covering the length of the glans.

much later than Blaschke supposes.[31] That is, so long as some form of foreskin regeneration is considered viable, then this means *milah* was the norm.[32]

Therefore, the vast amount of evidence there is for Jewish males undergoing some form of foreskin restoration from the Maccabean era up to Hadrian means that *milah* was standard in this period (1 Macc 1:11–15; Jub 15:33–34; Josephus, *Ant.* 12.241; T. Mos. 8:3; 1 Cor 7:18; Gen. Rab. 46.13; Celsus, *On Medicine* 7.25; Martial, *Epigrams* 7.35, 82). Also, that Paul refers to *epispasm* explicitly in 1 Cor 7:18 (μὴ ἐπισπάσθω)—he and Soranus are the only ones to use this verb as a "technical term" for lengthening the prepuce by applying sustained tension to preputial skin[33]—means that Paul understands circumcision as *milah*.[34] Moreover, the Samaritans did not and do not practice *periah* and this also attests that *milah* is the earliest type of Israelite circumcision.[35] Thus, "*periah* was an innovation instituted over the course of time, most likely in response to the drawing down of the foreskin…practiced during the of the Hadrianic persecutions."[36] Therefore, "until the middle of the second century C.E. the sanctioned method of circumcision [*milah*] allowed for the possibility of stretching and drawing down remaining foreskin tissue and thereby 'crossing the border' of Jewish society."[37] One of the reasons foreskin restoration gained popularity in late first century was likely due to

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[31] Rubin, "*Brit Milah*," 95–6.
[32] Ibid., 92.
[33] Hall, "Epispasm," 73.
[34] Cf. Moorthy, "Seal," 58.
[35] Rubin, "*Brit Milah*," 94–5; Thiessen, *Contesting Conversion*, 55.
[36] Rubin, "*Brit Milah*," 92–3.
[37] Ibid., 88.

the *fiscus Judaicus* instituted by Vespasian.[38] *Periah* was likely reactionary to this trend, gaining popularity among concerned Jews, as Cohen says, "because the procedure renders epispasm extremely difficult."[39] I would only add that knowing the anatomical realities means that *periah* renders foreskin regeneration not just "extremely difficult," but essentially impossible for ancient Jews.

III. Philo and Periah

Even though the surgical procedures for *periah* are outlined in the Mishnah, the Rabbis likely did not invent this new type of circumcision. It seems that it might have been practiced by a minority of Jews prior.[40] For instance, it appears that it may have been practiced by those who wrote/received Jubilees:[41]

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[38] Smallwood, *Jews*, 376–77; Hall, "Epispasm," 78.

[39] Shaye J. D. Cohen, "Judaism to the Mishnah: 135-220 C.E.," in *Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism: A Parallel History of Their Origins and Early Development*, ed. Hershel Shanks (Washington, DC: Biblical Archaeology Society, 1992), 200.

[40] One example Moorthy points to needs to be dismissed immediately, however. Referring to the archeological work of Philip King who "points out that the Assyrian reliefs depicting naked and impaled Israelites at the battle of Lachish seem to present figures with the "entire glans" exposed," she concludes along with King that "Since the Lachish reliefs were carved in the 8th century BCE, this would seem to suggest that periah was introduced at a much earlier date than posited by Rubin" ("Seal," 54). But the mere fact of an exposed glans does not automatically mean that *periah* was practiced at the time. That is a fallacious assumption due to not understanding the foreskin anatomy and function of its component parts. A *milah* circumcision would also expose the glans because the circumcision excised the ridged band and severed the frenulum. Without these two pulling and keeping the prepuce over the glans, the prepuce easily retracts back to the corona and stays that way unless held in place with some sort of device (like a fibula or κυνοδέσμη). Also, as will be highlighted below, the Egyptians practiced a type of circumcision that was very much like *milah* and it also exposed the glans (see Guy Cox and Brian J. Morris, "Why Circumcision: From Prehistory to the Twenty-First Century," in *Surgical Guide to Circumcision*, ed. David A. Bolnick, Martin Koyle, and Assaf Yosha [Dordrecht: Springer, 2012], 246, 251–52). Therefore, an exposed glans is hardly evidence for *periah* circumcision. (Moorthy is referring to Philip J. King, "Gezer and Circumcision," in *Confronting the Past Archaeological and Historical Essays on Ancient Israel in Honor of William G. Dever* [ed. Seymour Gitin, J. Edward Wright, and J.P. Dessel; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2006], 333–40.)

[41] Translations of Jubilees come from O. S. Wintermute, "Jubilees: A New Translation and Introduction," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Volume Two: Expansions of the "Old Testament"*

> And now I shall announce to you that the sons of Israel will deny this ordinance and they will not circumcise their sons according to all of this law because some of the flesh of their circumcision they will leave in the circumcision of their sons. (Jub. 15:33)

Moorthy notes that "It may be suggested that 'the flesh of their circumcision' which 'they will leave' is equivalent to the 'shreds of the foreskin' which 'remain' referred to in Mishnah (*Shabbat* 19.6)."[42] But as Rubin brings out, "not all scholars agree about the translation of the Ethiopian text….E.g., Charles translates: '…for in the flesh of their children they will omit this circumcision of their sons'….Therefore it is not clear whether 15:33 talks about leaving flesh."[43] Because of this difficulty, we ought not base anything substantial on this evidence even if it has to be noted for the sake of comprehensiveness. Nevertheless, if "because they have made themselves like the gentiles" (Jub. 15:34) refers to foreskin restoration (even though it could mean simply that parents are not circumcising their sons per Charles), then this again would indicate that *milah* was the *norm* when Jubilees was written since foreskin restoration is basically physically impossible after *periah*.

The best evidence that *periah* was practiced by some Jews while *milah* was the norm comes from Philo (and then Paul's polemics in Galatians and Philippians).[44] This comes out especially in *Spec.* 1.3–11 when he discusses the physical and moral benefits

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and Legends, Wisdom and Philosophical Literature, Prayers, Psalms and Odes, Fragments of Lost Judeo-Hellenistic Works, ed. James H. Charlesworth (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1983), 35–142.

[42] Moorthy, "Seal," 55; Thiessen likewise thinks Jubilees "advocates *periah*" (*Contesting Conversion*, 172n52).

[43] Rubin, "*Brit Milah*," 224n18.

[44] Cf. Moorthy who also thinks Philo advocated for *periah* ("Seal," 58–60), but here I give unique reasons as to why this is the case.

of circumcision and seems to be corroborated by what he says about a "two-fold circumcision" in *Somn.* 2:24–25. From Philo's vocabulary, it is clear that he thinks circumcision involves the removal of both the ἀκροποσθία as well as the ποσθία (he uses ἀκροποσθία only once in his writings in *Spec*. 1.4, but he uses a version of ποσθία three times: ποσθένης in *Spec*. 1.4, ποσθίαις in *Spec*. 1.5 [the plural here likely indicates prepuce plus foreskin], and ποσθίας in *Spec.* 1.7).

Just as significant, Philo talks about circumcision involving "severe pains" and describes it as a mutilation: "so many myriads in each generation are mutilated [ἀποτέμνεσθαι], with miserable pains in maiming [ἀκρωτηριαζούσας] the bodies of themselves…. it seemed necessary to the legislators to maim [ἀκρωτηριάζειν] the organ serving such instances-of-sexual-intercourse" (1.3, 9).[45] The removal of the entire foreskin-structure (ποσθία plus ἀκροποσθία) was a radically invasive procedure involving the removal of a significant amount of skin and Philo's use of "mutilate" and "maim" suggests that he is aware that his contemporaries would view what he is describing as a kind of genital mutilation.

Diodorus Siculus (ca. 90 B.C.–30 BCE) and Strabo (ca. 63 B.C.–23 CE) differentiate between circumcision and mutilation and Philo's vocabulary indicates that he is aware of this. Diodorus writes:

> all the Trogodytes are circumcised [περιτέμνονται] like the Egyptians with the exception of those who, because of what they have experienced, are called "colobi" [κολοβῶν i.e., "mutilated ones"]; for these alone of all who live inside the Straits have in infancy all that part cut completely off with the razor which

[45] Translations of Philo are mine unless otherwise noted.

> among other peoples merely suffers circumcision [ἐκ νηπίου ξυροῖς ἀποτέμνονται πᾶν τὸ τοῖς ἄλλοις μέρος περιτομῆς τυγχάνον]. (*Library of History* 3.32.4)[46]

It is unlikely that "all that part" (πᾶν τὸ…μέρος) refers to "the penis" or "the glans" (i.e., that the κολοβοί amputated their penis or the glans). It more likely refers to the entire "foreskin-structure" (foreskin plus prepuce) because it is referring to what in other peoples is "circumcised" and it is the foreskin of the *preputial skin*, not the penis or the glans, that is cut in circumcision. Those who are circumcised cut the *fore*skin, but retain the prepuce. Diodorus is thus saying the κολοβοί have their entire foreskin-structure removed, the thing that is "merely" circumcised in others, leaving them without a prepuce and thus with a permanently exposed glans. Speaking about κολοβός more broadly, Pierre Cordier agrees that it does not have to do with amputating the glans, but with missing the foreskin-structure.[47]

Similarly, Strabo talks about the "Troglodytes" some of whom have "mutilate[d] [κολοβοὶ] their bodies," and "some of them [who] are circumcised [περιτετμημένοι], like the Aegyptians" (*Geogr.* 16.4.17; cf. 16.4.5).[48] Although he mistakenly thinks Jews practice female circumcision too (16.4.9), he nevertheless views the Jews as circumcisers (cf. αἱ περιτομαί in 16.2.37), not κολοβοί like the Troglodytes.

This is corroborated by the fact that the type of circumcision the Egyptians practiced, which both Diodorus and Strabo use as their referent, was very similar to *milah*

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[46] Translation and Greek text come from Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History, Volume II: Books 2.35-4.58*, trans. C. H. Oldfather, LCL 303 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1935).

[47] Pierre Cordier, "Les Romains et la circoncision," *REJ* 160 (2001): 337–55, here 343; see also, Moorthy, "Seal," 57.

[48] Translation and Greek text come from Strabo, *Geography, Volume VII: Books 15-16*, trans. Horace Leonard Jones, LCL 241 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1930).

in that the prepuce remained afterwards. While *milah* excised the circular ridged band (the very tip of preputial orifice), "The Egyptian procedure involved either the excision of a triangular section from the dorsal [upper] face of the foreskin or simply a longitudinal incision along the median line of the dorsal face allowing retraction of the foreskin and exposure of the glans."[49] Egyptians practiced a form of circumcision that is basically identical to modern day preputioplasty. That is, in order to facilitate easier retraction of the foreskin past the corona, a perpendicular cut is made to the ridged band on the dorsal side so that it can no longer contract and cinch down past the glans. Significantly, when looking at two different preputial cuts, Diodorus names the one that removes less skin "circumcision" and the more serve kind as "mutilating" (ἀποτέμνω). This is the same word (ἀποτέμνω) Philo uses in *Spec.* 1.3 (cf. ἀκρωτηριάζω in 1.3, 9). The simplest reason for why Philo speaks about "miserable pains," "mutilating" (ἀποτέμνω) and "maiming" (ἀκρωτηριάζω) is because he is intentionally talking about a similar severe form of surgery known to Diodorus and Strabo. Again, this is supported by the fact that, especially in light of the "precise terminology" of the Greeks,[50] Philo repeatedly uses ποσθία thereby implying that circumcision removes the entire ποσθία rather than just the ἀκροποσθία.

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[49] Richard C. Steiner, "Incomplete Circumcision in Egypt and Edom: Jeremiah (9:24-25) in the Light of Josephus and Jonckheere," *JBL* 118.3 (1999): 503; Although Cox and Morris do not identify Egyptian circumcision with preputioplasty (I think mistakenly), they nevertheless classify it with what we are calling *milah* (their "Type 1a") in contrast to other forms such as *periah* (their "Type 1b") ("Why Circumcision," 246, 251–52).

[50] Hodges, "Ideal Prepuce," 377.

Furthermore, when one considers the extensive measures involved in "ensuring that no tissue remained that might facilitate the successful accomplishment of *meshikhat orlah* [i.e., epispasm]," then Philo's wording was not an exaggeration if he was talking about *periah*.[51] The Mishnah says that after "excision" (*milah*) "tearing" (*periah*) follows (m. Shabb. 19:2).[52] There are thus two cuts in a *periah* circumcision: the "excision" of the ridged band and the "tearing" of the prepuce. According to the Mishnah, "the inner lining" of the prepuce needs to be "torn" because if "flesh…covers the greater part of the corona" (i.e., if there is enough prepuce to crest the corona), then "these shreds" would "render the circumcision invalid" (m. Shabb. 19:6). For infants, the prepuce is fused to the glans (it is not able to begin to retract usually until puberty). Thus, as Rubin highlights, this means the *mohel* has "to force the removal of as much tissue as possible, both foreskin and mucosal tissue, so as to preclude the stretching of vestigial tissue in a process of decircumcision."[53] This process of removing the entire prepuce obviously involves a lot more pain than a mere single excision that removes the overhanging ridged band. When describing Samaritan circumcision John Mills notes, "The most painful part of the ceremony as performed by the Jews—the rent [i.e., the rending of the entire prepuce and inner mucosal skin in *periah*]—is never done by the Samaritans….they…call it a superfluous cruelty."[54] Moreover, *periah* also involves a

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[51] Rubin, "*Brit Milah*," 95.

[52] Translation from Herbert Danby, trans., *The Mishnah: Translated from the Hebrew with Introduction and Brief Explanatory Notes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1933).

[53] Rubin, "*Brit Milah*," 94.

[54] Mills, *Three Months'*, 190.

longer and more arduous recovery time as is evidenced by comparing the recovery times between modern day circumcisions, which remove the entire prepuce like *periah*, and preputioplasty, which appears to be exactly what the Egyptians practiced and is very similar to *milah*.[55] It is thus most probable that Philo has in mind a severe kind of circumcision.

In contrast to the Rabbis who, as argued above, advocate for *periah* to make foreskin regeneration impossible so that the covenant cannot be broken, Philo seems to have advocated for this severe circumcision for moral-ethical reasons (which the Rabbis never mention) and never mentions anything remotely having to do with covenant concerns. In *Spec.* 1.1–11 it is clear that removing the ποσθία "guarantees… the excision of the pleasures, which bewitch the intellect… the excision of excessive and abounding pleasure" (1.8–9).[56] That is, for Philo, circumcision is not merely metaphorical, it is

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[55] For the tissues removed in modern day Western neonatal or adult circumcisions see Sorrells Morris L. et al., "Fine-Touch Pressure"; Glick, *Marked*, 5–6, 149–214.

[56] Philo talks about circumcision as "a guarantee of two of the most indispensable things" (σύμβολον ἡγοῦμαι τὴν περιτομὴν δυοῖν εἶναι τοῖν ἀναγκαιοτάτοιν) (*Spec.* 1.8), the first of which is the "the castration of the pleasures" (1.9). It is important to note that the word σύμβολον is potentially a false cognate in English. "Symbol" does not quite capture what σύμβολον conveys. According to LSJ (ad. loc.), a σύμβολον is a "guarantee" or "proof" of something. Whereas the English "symbol" conveys a metaphor, σύμβολον is a much stronger term. This is evidenced when Philo refutes extreme allegorizers in *Migr*. 92–93, where he again calls the laws σύμβολα. If σύμβολον meant "metaphorical," then the literal keeping of the laws would be otiose. This is precisely what Philo is arguing against; namely, a *metaphorical* understanding of the laws! Philo is not merely asserting that the literal laws must still be kept for no other reason than that he says so. Rather, Philo is mounting a vigorous counter argument by urging a different view of the laws that is more robust than a mere metaphor that attends only to an "inner meaning." Philo is in effect saying, "Do not be like those who think these are 'metaphors' or 'symbols.' No, these are σύμβολα. And precisely *because* they are σύμβολα the literal keeping of them cannot be neglected." The fact that Philo thinks it is the actual "keeping" (φυλάσσω) of the laws that makes possible the true knowledge "of which these are σύμβολα" (93) means that we we need to think of σύμβολον more in terms of something that *accomplishes* that which it signifies (akin to a "treaty" or a "contract" [LSJ]). Philo's entire polemic against the extreme allegorizers depends upon an *inseparable connection* between literally keeping the law and the inner meaning and significance of the law. The word σύμβολον seems especially equipped to convey such a connection. The first definition given for σύμβολον in LSJ is a "*tally*, i.e. *each*

physically effective as it "suppresses the undue impulses of the male," which is why only males are circumcised (*QG* 3.47).[57]

Philo's insistence "that morality could be surgically engineered" through circumcision coupled with the fact that the Greeks and Romans fetishized the foreskin and prepuce further suggests that Philo promotes *periah*.[58] As Hodges demonstrates, "In the domain of pleasures…the longer prepuce often serves as the object of erotic interest and as a signifier of the sexually attractive male."[59] But it was not simply the protruding prepuce (i.e., the foreskin) that was a symbol of erotic pleasure, the prepuce was as well. Hodges relates:

> The eroticization of the prepuce is also evident in the *Thesophoriazusae* of Aristophanes, where the lusty father-in-law, pressing to his face a garment owned by the young and handsome poet Agathon, exclaims: 'By Aphrodite, this has the pleasant smell of [a little] prepuce [πόσθιον]!' The diminutive *posthion* (πόσθιον), as opposed to the standard word *posthē* (πόσθη), is most likely used here as a term of endearment.[60]

Given the fetishizing of the prepuce and foreskin, Hodges believes Philo's "dismissal of opposition to circumcision as 'childish mockery' [*Spec.* 1.3] betrays his failure to understand the philosophical and aesthetic underpinnings of the Greeks' high regard for

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of two halves or *corresponding pieces* of an ἀστράγαλος or other object, which two ξένοι, or any two contracting parties, broke between them, each party keeping one piece, in order to have proof of the identity of the presenter of the other." It is thus likely that Philo chooses σύμβολον because he wants to communicate that one cannot have "one half" (i.e., the "deeper sense") *without* the "other half" (literally keeping the law).

[57] Translation from Philo, *Questions on Genesis*, trans. Ralph Marcus, LCL 380 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953).

[58] Hodges, "Ideal Prepuce," 388.

[59] Ibid., 379.

[60] Ibid., 379; his brackets.

the cultivation of physical health and beauty."[61] I think the precise opposite is going on, however. Philo well understands and the Greco-Roman eroticization of the prepuce and foreskin and this is exactly why he promotes a severe circumcision that removes the ποσθία. In Greco-Roman society the prepuce and foreskin symbolized the pleasures *and Philo agrees*. He says "all the other [pleasures]" are embedded in erotic pleasure, which is "the most forcible" (*Spec.* 1.9; cf. *QG* 3.46–48; *Migr.* 92–93) and that "the flesh of the foreskin, symboliz[es] those sense-pleasures and impulses" (*QG* 3.52 [Marcus]). The Greeks may have been aware of this only intuitively for obvious reasons, but modern scientific studies show that the ridged band and the prepuce are the most innervated, erogenous, and sensitive tissues of the penis.[62] Thus, *periah* "circumcision ablates the most sensitive parts of the penis."[63] Also, since *periah* exposes the mucosal inner skin as it gets rolled down, this skin undergoes keratinization or "epitheliazation, eventually taking on the character of an outer skin covering."[64] The body produces a build up of keratin to desensitize the mucosal tissue so that what was once inner skin can now tolerate being on the outside indefinitely.

Therefore, not only does Philo use the right vocabulary, but he also has a motive. It appears Philo wants to excise the embodied representation and source of Greco-Roman pleasure by removing the entire prepuce. To make his point explicit he says that

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[61] Ibid., 387.

[62] Winkelmann, "The Erogenous Zones," 40–41, 46; Winkelmann, "The Cutaneous Innervation"; Sorrells Morris L. et al., "Fine-Touch Pressure."

[63] Sorrells Morris L. et al., "Fine-Touch Pressure," 864.

[64] Rubin, "*Brit Milah*," 88.

circumcision "is the excision [ἐκτομῆς] of pleasures, which bewitch the intellect…the excision [ἐκτομὴν] of excessive and abounding pleasure, not only of one [pleasure], but through the most forcible one also of all the others" (*Spec.* 1.9) precisely because the ποσθία/ποσθένη (1.4, 5, 7) is "excised," "mutilated," and "maimed" (ἐκτομή, ἀποτέμνω, ἀκρωτηριάζω) (*Spec.* 1.3–5, 7, 9). As repugnant as a typical Greek would find circumcision of any type, Philo feels about Greek sexuality. Thus, not only does the foreskin need to be removed, but the "excessive and abounding" remaining skin of the prepuce also needs to be severed. This is why Hodges concludes, "Circumcision for Philo was a surgical means of obtaining moral objectives through a deliberate numbing, desexualization, disinvigoration, and uglification of the body."[65]

In fact, although Philo usually allegorically interprets eunuchs as barren of virtue, he explicitly endorses castration (i.e., literal eunuchs) who do so to curb their passions.[66] He writes that "it is surely better to be made a eunuch [ἐξευνουχισθῆναί] than to be raging after illicit sexual unions" (*Det*. 176). Again, "to become a eunuch would be the best thing, if our soul, by thus escaping wickedness, will be able to unlearn passion" (*Leg.* 3.236). Therefore, it appears safe to suspect that Philo errors on the side of removing as much prepuce as possible given his vocabulary surrounding circumcision and endorsement of literal castration.

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[65] Hodges, "Ideal Prepuce," 387–88.

[66] Ra'anan Abusch, "Circumcision and Castration under Roman Law in the Early Empire," in *The Covenant of Circumcision: New Perspectives on an Ancient Jewish Rite*, ed. Elizabeth Wyner Mark (Hanover, NH: Brandeis University Press, 2003), 80–82.

Finally, Diodorus and Strabo thus also provide further evidence for Rubin's argument that *milah* was by far the most common practice of Jews until the second century AD, for if the Jews were known for *periah*, then these writers would not have hesitated to call them mutilators as they both do with the Troglodytes. Indeed, that (a) Strabo views Jewish and Egyptian circumcision in the same category versus more severe types of circumcision that both Strabo and Diodorus consider to be mutilation and (b) that Egyptian circumcision was very similar to *milah*, indicates that Philo is advancing a very minority view for Jews at the time.

IV. Paul Opposing Philonic Beliefs and Practices

Paul's opponents in Galatians are advocating for circumcision in order to "perfect themselves in the flesh" (σαρκὶ ἐπιτελεῖσθε) (Gal 3:3). Also, this 'perfection' is specifically about mastery over the "desires" (ἐπιθυμίαι) and "passions" (παθήματα) of "the flesh" (5:16, 24) and they think circumcision is effective to those ends. This is because receiving circumcision is the subject of 5:1–15 and then Paul turns to say that walking in the Spirt (5:16) and belonging to Christ crucifies the passions and desires (5:24; cf. 5:16–26) suggesting that the crux of the disagreement is over how best to remedy the passions and desires—through circumcision or Christ and the Spirit. That is, Paul is countering what Peder Borgen calls Philo's view of "ethical circumcision."[67] Thinking that circumcision has an effect on ἐπιθυμίαι and παθήματα is peculiar to Philo

[67] Peder Borgen, "Observations on the Theme 'Paul and Philo': Paul's Preaching of Circumcision in Galatia (5:11) and Debates on Circumcision in Philo," in *Die Paulinische Literatur Und Theologie: The Pauline Literature and Theology* (Århus: Forlaget Aros, 1980), 88, 91, 92, 101.

(indeed, it is not until the twelfth century with Maimonides that this view resurfaces in Judaism).[68] And, while there is insufficient space to get into it here, just about every bit of Paul's argument in Galatians can be read as a point for point rebuttal of views only found *together* in Philo (e.g., circumcision as moral surgery, enslavement to the στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου, Law as a παιδαγωγὸς, allegoresis of Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Hagar, and Ishmael, etc.).[69] It is worth pausing, however, to observe that Philo explicitly links becoming δίκαιος and possessing δικαιοσύνη by doing "works" (*Det.* 18) and that one merits blessings by doing the "works" of the Law (*Praem*. 126)—the very issues at stake in Gal 3. Philo comments that the command in Deut 16:20 "to pursue justice justly" (δικαίως τὸ δίκαιον διώκειν [LXX uses διώξῃ]) is "so that we might follow after justice [δικαιοσύνη] and every virtue by means of [doing] the works akin to it [τοῖς συγγενέσιν ἔργοις αὐτῆς]" (*Det.* 18). Concluding his comments on the blessings in Deuteronomy, Philo offers this summary: "These are the blessings invoked in behalf of good people, who fulfill the laws by works" (αὗται μὲν αἱ ὑπὲρ τῶν ἀνθρώπων τῶν ἀγαθῶν εἰσιν εὐχαὶ καὶ τοὺς νόμους ἔργοις ἐπιτελούντων) (Praem. 126; see ἐπιτελέω in Gal 3:3; for other instances of "works" and "Law[s]" see *Praem.* 82, 119; *Mos*. 2.48; *Abr*. 5).

On account of these observations, what I mean by *Philonic* is that the opponents referenced in Galatia evince a curious similarity with the beliefs and practices that are only preserved in Philo's corpus: e.g., surgically engineered morality via circumcision

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[68] Cohen, *Jewish Women*, 143–73; Borgen, "Observations," 96–97.

[69] Ernest P. Clark, "Enslaved Under the Elements of the Cosmos" (PhD diss., University of St Andrews, 2017).

and calendar observance in order to become δικαιοσύνη and merit blessings rather than curses.[70] Moreover, Philo is also our best witness that *periah* was practiced by a minority of Jews in Paul's time when *milah* was the norm. This background enables one to discern from Paul's polemics that he is arguing specifically against the Philonic belief in the ethical efficaciousness of circumcision as well as the concomitant practice of *periah*.

Even though the "passions and desires" only appear in Galatians the other commonalities between Galatians and Philippians 3 suggest that the "dogs" in Phil 3:2 are likewise concerned with the passions. In fact, the accusation that their "belly" (κοιλία) is their god in Phil 3:19 may very well be an ironic rebuke about their obsession to curb their bodily appetites. Paul takes this obsession to be a form of idolatry. Philo says that we find "pleasure" (ἡδονή) "in the breast and belly [κοιλίᾳ], where anger and desire [ὁ θυμὸς καὶ ἡ ἐπιθυμία] are, portions of the irrational: for in the irrational is to be found alike our faculty of decision and the passions [ἡ κρίσις ἡ ἡμετέρα καὶ τὰ πάθη]" (*Leg.* 3.116; cf. Plato, *Rep.* 9.588c–591b). Paul is saying that his opponents are so obsessed with their bodily appetites that they are effectively worshipping them even while trying to dull them. (This is corroborated when we look at what kind of circumcision they promote below.)

If Paul is dealing with Philonic opponents, it makes sense that he would find this new type of circumcision baffling, not only for its attendant belief in surgically

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[70] On Philo's general view that the Law is aimed at controlling the passions, desires, and pleasures see, e.g., *Spec.* 2.163; *Praem.* 119–124; *Migr*. 93. That the Jewish calendar is effective to this end see *Spec*. 2.39–214 (esp. 2.39, 145, 150, 160, 195). On Sabbath see *Spec.* 2.60–64; *Mos*. 2.210–216; *Decal.* 98–101; *Migr*. 91. On the food laws see *Spec.* 4.91, 96–97, 100, 118.

engineered morality, but also because it goes beyond the law of circumcision in Genesis 17 in the large amount of flesh removed. Modern day Samaritans critique *periah* precisely on this latter point. Samaritan high priest Jacob ben Aaron writes:

> But circumcision with us means only the cutting off of the foreskin. The Jews make an addition to what God has commanded; for their *hacham,* 'doctors,' make necessary the removal of a larger portion of the skin than the prepuce, sometimes denuding the phallus, which they call *perih,* which does not correspond with the circumcision known in the Hebrew language as *nemileh.* We do not practise this as the Jews do, for we think theirs is an addition to the divine command, and has not been revealed as such.[71]

Coordinating our insights thus far with some of Paul's statements in Galatians and Philippians will reveal that Paul possesses a similar attitude.

A. Proselyte Opponents

Scholarship has long been aware of the similarities across Romans, Galatians, and Philippians 3:1–21 due to the concentration of similar themes (e.g, works, faith[fullness], justification, righteousness, Law, circumcision, athletic metaphors, etc.). No matter how one identifies Paul's opponents in these epistles (e.g., Jewish, Jewish-Christian), scholars tend to identify these opponents, if not as the same people, then as espousing the same set of beliefs and practices.[72] Here it suffices to highlight a few key observations in Galatians and Philippians as an exercise demonstrating how knowledge of *milah* and *periah* illumines Paul's polemics.

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[71] Jacob ben Aaron, "Circumcision Among the Samaritans," trans. Abdullah ben Kori, *BSac* 65 (1908): 697.

[72] Cf. Douglas A. Campbell, *Framing Paul: An Epistolary Biography* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), 133–46, 156–57; idem, *The Deliverance of God: An Apocalyptic Rereading of Justification in Paul* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 495–518, 883–99; B. J. Oropeza, *Jews, Gentiles, and the Opponents of Paul: Apostasy in the New Testament Communities* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2012), 136, 208–11.

The idea that Paul is opposing proselytes rather than born-Jews or Jews *qua* Jew in Phil 3 and Galatians can be observed from a few angles. Beginning with Philippians, there is a marked difference between Paul's polemics against fellow Christ-evangelists. For instance, Paul acknowledges he has some animosity with other evangelists in Phil 1:15–18. Paul says while some preach Christ from "goodwill" and "love," others are doing it from "jealousy," "strife" and "selfishness," "not sincerely," but "expecting to cause affliction" for him (1:15–17). Despite this Paul emphatically says: "whether by pretense or by integrity, Christ is proclaimed, and I am rejoicing in this. Yes, and I will continue rejoicing" (1:18). These cannot be the same people he mentions in Phil 3:18–19 who he says are "enemies of the cross of Christ" that he "weeps" over. The former preach Christ so Paul can rejoice even though they are personal enemies of his, but the latter are enemies of Christ and this is why Paul weeps.

The likelihood that the opponents in Phil 3 are proselytes of some kind comes into sharp relief when juxtaposing Paul's comparison of himself to them and how he compares himself to the "super-" or "pseudo-" "Apostles" in 2 Cor 11 (vv. 5, 13).[73] With respect to the super-Apostles Paul is equal to them in being a Hebrew, an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, and a servant of Christ (11:22–23). What distinguishes Paul, however, is the amount of suffering he has endured as a servant of Christ (11:23–33) thereby embodying Christ-Crucified (12:9–10; cf. 4:7–12; 6:4–10). The problem Paul is

[73] For other arguments on why the opponents in 2 Corinthians are the not the same as the opponents in Phil 3, Romans, and Galatians, see Campbell, *Framing*, 142–46.

facing in 2 Corinthians is over apostolic style and authority, not circumcision and justification as he is dealing with in Phil 3.

The similarities between 2 Cor 11 and Phil 3 serve to accentuate the differences. In Philippians, the opponents are similarly "putting confidence in the flesh" (Phil 3:3; cf. 2 Cor 11:18). But whereas as in 2 Cor 11 Paul is simply matching the boasts of the super-Apostles only managing to surpass them in sufferings, here in Phil 3 Paul is outpacing his opponents with everything he lists. He fronts his list with the assertion that what he is about to name constitutes "more" (μᾶλλον) reasons "to put confidence in the flesh" (3:4). That is, Paul thinks his being *born* a Jew, circumcised on the eighth-day, of the biological stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews, and a Pharisee puts him far above whoever it is he has a problem with (3:5). The point of Paul's list is that these "dogs" (3:2) cannot make similar claims. They cannot claim an eighth-day circumcision. They cannot claim to come from one of the twelve tribes of Israel. That is, they are proselytes, or, as Karl Barth humorously threw out in his commentary on Philippians, they are "zealous fresh-baked Jews."[74]

If Paul was trying to outdo other Christ-evangelists, then we can reasonably expect him to list all of the suffering that went along with Christ-service like he did in 2 Cor 11 (cf. 2 Cor 4–6; Phil 1:12–20, 29–30). He also likely would have acknowledged that they claim to be servants and preachers of Christ (cf. 2 Cor 11:13, 23; Phil 1:15, 17);

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[74] Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Philippians: 40th Anniversary Edition*, trans. James W. Leitch (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002), 96; similarly Kenneth Grayston, "The Opponents in Philippians 3," *ExpTim* 97.6 (1986): 171.

but instead, he calls them "enemies of the cross of Christ" (3:18) which Paul uses as an epithet for outsiders (Rom 5:10; 11:28; cf. Col 1:21; 2 Thess 3:15).

With respect to Galatians, the evidence that Paul is dealing with proselytes can be seen in the precise way he distinguishes between the noun περιτομή and the verbal forms of περιτέμνω. The crucial text is the present participle περιτεμνόμενοι found in 6:13a. A form of περιτέμνω is used in 2:3; 5:2, 3; 6:12, 13b and it clearly refers to (potential) proselytes there. The noun περιτομή, however, is used in 2:7, 8, 9, 12 and undoubtedly refers to born-Jews. The use of περιτομή in 5:6 and 6:15 is also referring to a sociological group vis-à-vis another: the foreskinned (ἀκροβυστία).[75] When Paul wants to refer to born-Jews or baptized-born-Jews he uses περιτομή. When he wants to talk about proselytes receiving circumcision he uses a verb form. So the use of the present participle in 6:13b is likely the same. It refers to non-Jews who are undergoing proselyte circumcision and are trying to pressure others to do the same. The participle is in the present to emphasize that these are not born Jews, but relatively recent "fresh baked" proselytes.[76]

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[75] Gal 5:11 also has περιτομή, but here it refers to the rite of circumcision itself as the object of proclamation.

[76] For a similar arguments about the present participle περιτεμνόμενοι in Gal 6:13 see Johannes Munck, *Paulus Und Die Heilsgeschichte* (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1954), 79–81; Matthew Thiessen, *Paul and the Gentile Problem* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 96; A. E. Harvey, "The Opposition to Paul," in *Studia Evangelica: Papers Presented to the Third International Congress on New Testament Studies Held at Christ Church, Oxford, 1975: Part I: The New Testament Scriptures*, ed. F. L. Cross, vol. 4 of *TUGAL* 102 (Berlin: Akademie, 1968), 321–32; more cautiously, Peter Richardson, *Israel in the Apostolic Church*, SNTSMS 10 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 85, 87–88, 97.

B. Paul Opposing *Periah*

Since these opponents are in all likelihood proselytes attracted to circumcision for moral reasons and because Philo is our only witness to this view "that morality could be surgically engineered" through circumcision,[77] then they have likely had significant influence from somewhere that at least shares this Philonic belief. And, if what was argued earlier about Philo and *periah* is taken into account, then these proselytes likely underwent *periah* and thus we should expect this to be acknowledged in Paul's polemics. And this is in fact what we find.

Paul's wish that "those who are troubling you" "will also amputate themselves [καὶ ἀποκόψονται]" (5:12) likely "expresses a polemic against the practice of *periah*."[78] From Paul's perspective where *milah* is normative, *periah* would be novel and since it is quite severe in the amount of skin removed, Paul would understandably be shocked (just as the Samaritans still are). Paul is thus saying "They are taking off so much flesh already so I wish they would cut all the way down and amputate their penis." Paul is perhaps aware of the Philonic endorsement of making oneself a literal eunuch in order to curb one's passions and so he is taunting his opponents to keep going and amputate themselves if they are so obsessed with dulling their sexual desires. In any case, in their zeal to cut off "the flesh with its passions and desires" (Gal 5:24; cf. 5:16), the proselytes have submitted to a severe form of circumcision that removes the entire flesh of the (fetishized) foreskin-structure, but in doing so they have "mutilated" and "maimed"

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[77] Hodges, "Ideal Prepuce," 388.
[78] Moorthy, "Seal," 221.

themselves (to use Philo's words ἀποτέμνω and ἀκρωτηριάζω in *Spec.* 1.3, 9) and are thus in danger of being counted among the ἀποκεκομμένος who are not allowed into the covenant assembly (Deut 23:1 LXX; cf ἀποκόπτω in Gal 5:12).

Turning to Phil 3, although Paul's description of the opponents as τὴν κατατομήν (Phil 3:2) is often taken as an ironic rebuke of Jews and Judaism in general and "refusing to allow the name circumcision to the Jewish rite,"[79] this may actually be a rather simple way of describing the procedure of *periah* at a time when it was not normative and thus lacked a specific designation. As noted above, Diodorus and Philo use ἀποτέμνω (Philo also uses ἀκρωτηριάζω) to describe the more severe cutting involved, but Paul is clearly drawn to using a wordplay between κατατομή and περιτομή. Paul's wordplay, however, is not meant to disinherit all unbaptized born-Jews from belonging to "the circumcision," whom he explicitly says cannot be disinherited (Rom 11:28–29; cf. 15:8). Also, the fact that κατατομή is missing in all of Paul's other references to unbaptized Jews, esp. Rom 9–11, and that he consistently refers only to born-Jews as "the circumcision" (e.g., throughout Galatians and Rom 15:8; cf. Col 4:11) makes this doubtful. Knowing about *milah* and *periah* makes the notion that Phil 3:2–3 is meant to contrast two types of circumcision that map onto *milah* and *periah* the simplest explanation. *Milah* cuts "around" (περί) the ridged band and removes a circular ring of skin, the foreskin proper (ακροπόσθιον). On the other hand, *periah* tears down (κατά) the inner mucosal skin so that the corona is fully exposed and all remaining "shreds" of the inner skin need to be

[79] Grayston, "The Opponents," 170 (Grayston does not hold to this view, but this is a fair summary of the view of the majority of NT scholars).

cut down (m. Shabb. 19:6, 2). Paul is simply making clear the type of surgery being performed. Paul thinks the opponents are advocating for a form of circumcision that cuts too far down; hence *κατα*τομή, which would remove the entire ποσθία.[80] Paul may intend κατατομή to have the connotation of "mutilation" as the NRSV takes it ("those who mutilate the flesh") especially if Philo and Diodorus's vocabulary and Gal 5:12 are kept in view.

And given the cumulative evidence discussed to this point, the primary reason for this word choice is probably to describe a group of people who "cut down" instead of "cut around." More specifically, it refers to a particular set of opponents, who are ostensibly proselytes, by giving them an epithet that poetically describes their unique surgical practice as something distinct from what he considers to be the proper mode of circumcision since it cuts "down" instead of "around." Since Philo is the only one we have evidence for who advances this form of circumcision at this time for moral and ethical reasons, then it is likely that those who "cut down" are doing so for similar reasons. Again, this would explain Paul's charge in 3:19 that this obsession over curbing their appetites is akin to worshipping their bellies; and it would explain why he talks about an alternative route to being "perfected" (Phil 3:12) as he did in Gal 3:3 and that perfection is only possible in the eschaton (cf. Gal 5:5), not now, let alone through a genital surgery.

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[80] Moorthy likewise understands κατατομή "to suggest that which is cut *down*" ("Seal," 222; her emphasis).

I also suspect there is something more going on with the epithet "dogs" (Phil 3:2).[81] This is because the Greeks used "dog" (κύων) as a euphemism for the penis and also for the sexually aroused, erect, penis with an exposed glans (hence the word κυνοδέσμη ["dog leash"] for the leash around the foreskin that ties up the "dog" from being exposed).[82] In the context of speaking about a genital surgery, this meaning of κύων would be unmistakable to a Greco-Roman audience. The context makes the association basically inescapable. This is precisely what would happen when Paul used κύων in Phil 3.

It is also important to realize that the Greek word for "having an erection," ψωλός, is also regularly used simply for an exposed glans whether or not an erection is present. This is why an exposed glans is the source of ridicule and shame.[83] That is, a male can be rendered ψωλός through *lipodermos* or through circumcision if they do not make use of a fibula or a κυνοδέσμη, or if these malfunction as in the case of Menophilus (Martial, *Epigrams* 7.82).[84] Thus, no matter if a male is literally aroused, when they have an exposed glans for whatever reason they can be talked about as if they were aroused.[85]

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[81] See also, Ryan D. Collman, "Beware the Dogs! The Phallic Epithet in Phil 3.2," *NTS* 67 (2021): 105–20.

[82] Hodges, "Ideal Prepuce," 382. He quotes from the second century grammarian Phrynichus Arabius who writes that "the people of Attica…call the penis *kyon* [dog]." Cf. "*κύων*, dog, usually stands for the male member (Hsch.). In Pl Com 174.16 *κυνί τε καὶ κυνηγέταιν*, dog and dog-drivers, refer to the phallus and the testicles, and the *vox κυνέπασαν* (*κύν'ἀνέσπασαν*?) = *ἀναστῦψσαι*, cause to be erect (Poll. 2.176), at CA 1057 is a pun glossed by Hsch. as meaning *ἐξέδειραν*, that is, excite oneself into having an erection" (Jeffrey Henderson, *The Maculate Muse: Obscene Language in Attic Comedy*, 2nd ed. [New York: Oxford University Press, 1991], 127).

[83] Hodges, "Ideal Prepuce," 392–93, 405.

[84] Ibid., 392–94.

[85] Troy W. Martin, "Whose Flesh? What Temptation? (Galatians 4.13-14)," *JSNT* 21 (1999): 65–91, here 88–89.

Although with *milah* one has enough slack prepuce to cover up the glans if they so desired through infibulation or a κυνοδέσμη, this is physically impossible with *periah*. From a Greco-Roman perspective, therefore, *periah* is equivalent to a permanently aroused state (ψωλός) because their "dog" (glans) can never be "leashed." Therefore, I take it to mean that "dogs" in Phil 3:2 is more than a simple pejorative (i.e., Paul is saying more than "these folks are unclean animals"). It is Paul using sexually-vulgar language purposefully and ironically. The best way, then, to translate the vulgarity in Paul's expression would be to render κύων into an equivalent modern slang with an explanatory gloss: "Beware of the aroused cocks." (And scholars thought Paul's use of σκύβαλον in v. 8 was vulgar!)

This use of "dog" would again further explain Paul's polemic in 3:19. From the (Philonic) perspective of these opponents, undergoing *periah* has an upright purpose: to control one's passions and desires by maiming the organ that serves the most enslaving desire of all: sexual lust. But, because of what this physically does to the penis in permanently exposing the glans, Paul can use the notion of ψωλός to ironically shame them. Martial makes a connection with lustfulness and Jewish circumcision (*Epigrams* 7.55; 11.94) and Tacitus also stereotypes the Jews as lustful (*Hist*. 5.5).[86] Tacitus is likely basing this on their being circumcised (which he mentions immediately after their lustfulness and says is the distinguishing feature of Jews), which results in an exposed glans even for *milah* (absent something like infibulation or a κυνοδέσμη) because the

[86] For more on how the Romans conceptualized the Jews as chronically aroused on account of circumcision see Cordier, "Les Romains," 347–50, 352, 354.

physical mechanisms to keep the remaining prepuce covering the glans (the ridged band and frenulum) are cut. Therefore, turning back to Philippians, by the κατατομή attempting to curb their passions in *this* manner of cutting-down, Paul is playing up the reality that their genitals will *always* look as if they are aroused by capitalizing on κύων's association with ψωλός. This is why he says their "glory is their shame" (Phil 3:19). Their very attempt to curb their desires (what they see as their glory) is the source of their shame because they will look perpetually aroused, especially since they have removed the entire prepuce and thus any means to "re-leash" their "dog" with a κυνοδέσμη.[87]

Furthermore, I agree with Thiessen that when Paul says "every person who undergoes circumcision is obligated to do the entire Law [ὅλον τὸν νόμον]" (Gal 5:3) that Paul is likely intending "the phrase ὅλον τὸν νόμον to refer to the entirety of the law of circumcision, not the entirety of the Jewish law."[88] This is because Jubilees uses a similar phrase precisely with reference to the law of circumcision in 15:33: "the sons of Israel will deny this ordinance and they will not circumcise their sons according to *all of this law*" (my emphasis).[89] Thiessen also observes that a synonymous phrase appears in Deut 24:8 (LXX) "where it means the entirety of the one specific commandment" being discussed (i.e., leprosy).[90] It says that Israel "shall be very watchful to do according to all the law [ποιεῖν κατὰ πάντα τὸν νόμον]" (NETS). Thus, in Gal 5:3 Paul is likely saying

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[87] This is not to say that Paul agreed with the Greco-Roman perspective that any showing of the glans equates to arousal. It is only to say that Paul is capitalizing on this idea for his own polemical agenda against these Greco-Roman proselytes.

[88] Thiessen, *Gentile Problem*, 93.

[89] Cf. Ibid.

[90] Ibid.

"unless one performs the entirety of the law of circumcision, one has in fact not kept that law."[91] Although I disagree with Thiessen that Paul thinks any circumcision post eighth-day is invalid,[92] I think Paul thinks *periah* is in violation of the law of *milah* circumcision in Gen 17 akin to the Samaritan point of view cited earlier.

This would also explain another curious statement that "those who are undergoing circumcision [οἱ περιτεμνόμενοι] do not keep the Law themselves" (Gal 6:13).[93] If Paul was intending to say that born-Jews do not keep the Torah (because it is too hard or it is just an ontological impossibility), then his comments about his own blamelessness with respect to the Torah pre-Christ make no sense (Phil 3:6) as well as the fact that he assumes his peers kept to the Jewish ancestral traditions even if he was more zealous than they were (Gal 1:13–14). Rather, Paul is likely saying that these proselytes are not even keeping the law of circumcision because they cut off too much flesh and this violates the law of circumcision in his view.

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[91] Ibid.

[92] Ibid., 92. The Samaritans were inflexible about eighth-day circumcision and yet, despite this stringency, Samaritans still welcome proselytes and would circumcise them upon conversion! In fact, "In his book *De Mensuris et Ponderibus*, Epiphanius of Salamis relates that both the Samaritans who converted to Judaism and the Jews who became Samaritans were, respectively, required to undergo a second circumcision, thus attesting to the mutual negation of the other group's practice" (Rubin, "*Brit Milah*," 95; cf. Pummer, "Samaritan Rituals," 658–59). But Thiessen does not even acknowledge this fact. The Samaritan willingness to accept proselytes and circumcise them well past the eighth-day suggests, to use E. P. Sanders' famous phrasing, that the eighth-day ordinance in Gen 17:12, 14 is about "staying in" rather than "getting in." The Samaritans prove that being obstinately fixated on eighth-day circumcision only applies to those born to covenant members and in no way is a hindrance to conversion and circumcision of outsiders.

[93] Cf. Thiessen, *Gentile Problem*, 95–6.

V. Conclusion

This discussion has shown how knowledge of *milah* and *periah* is significant for illuminating both Philo's view of circumcision as well as Paul's polemics against circumcision in Galatians and Philippians. Paul's context in these letters is one of combating Philonic (moral) circumcision and there is evidence that *periah* was also involved. This reframes Paul's polemics from being against Jews or circumcision *per se* to being a more contingent and occasional polemic against a distinctive Philonic belief and practice.

According to Paul, the position of the opponents in Galatians and Philippians cannot be any more ironic. They are trying to be Law observant, but by undergoing *periah* they are breaking the law of circumcision. They are trying to control their passions, but by undergoing *periah* they will always look as if they are permanently aroused, destined to serve their appetites in shame.

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