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Andrew John Spallek

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, ir_spalleka@csl.edu

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ST. PAUL'S USE OF EK ΠΙΣΤΕΩΣ IN ROMANS AND GALATIANS:
THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PAUL'S CHOICE OF PREPOSITIONS
WITH ΠΙΣΤΙΣ AS OBJECT AND ITS BEARING UPON
JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

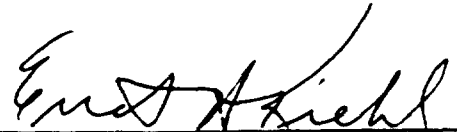
A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
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in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirement of the Degree of
Master of Sacred Theology

By

Andrew John Spallek

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Approved by:



Advisor

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE PROBLEM

Perhaps the most pressing issue in the current Romans debate is the question of whether Jews are to be included in the new covenant or whether they are to attain salvation by means of faithfulness to the covenant of Abraham. This question has deep significance today as it touches upon Jewish-Christian relations and especially the motivation or lack thereof for the evangelization of those individuals today who profess faithfulness to the Abrahamic covenant but do not acknowledge the gospel of Jesus Christ to be relevant to their own lives.

The most prevalent method of granting Jews a salvation apart from the gospel of Christ is for the commentator to propose a "parallel covenant" theory. Instead of a new covenant in Christ's blood which serves as a propitiation for all people, many scholars today are postulating the presence of two parallel covenants. One of these covenants, in Christ's blood, is for gentiles only. The other is the covenant of Abraham, that is, faithfulness to the Torah, with circumcision as its outward sign, and is for Jews only. Under this approach, Paul's criticism of reliance upon "works of law" is explained away as being

for Jews only. Under this approach, Paul's criticism of reliance upon "works of law" is explained away as being directed toward unfaithful Jews only, as being directed toward legalistic gentiles, or simply as Paul's error. Leading the charge in this recent reinterpretation of Paul is Lloyd Gaston,¹ followed by others, such as John Gager.²

In 1989, Stanley K. Stowers sought justification of the parallel covenant theory in an examination of Romans 3:30.³ Stowers' thesis is that by shifting prepositions from ἐκ to διὰ Paul differentiates between the faith "by means of which" -- διὰ -- gentiles are justified by God (the faith "of Christ") and the faith "out of which" -- ἐκ -- both Jews and gentiles are justified (the vicarious benefits of both Abraham's and Jesus' faithfulness before God).⁴

Obviously, Stowers' thesis is dependent upon his assertion that Paul's shift in prepositions is intentional

¹See Lloyd Gaston, "Paul and the Torah," in *Anti-Semitism and the Foundations of Christianity*, ed. Alan T. Davies, 48-71 (New York: Paulist Press, 1979). Gaston takes the approach that Paul's criticism is directed toward legalistic gentiles.

²See John Gager, *The Origins of Anti-Semitism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983).

³Stanley K. Stowers, "ΕΚ ΠΙΣΤΕΩΣ and ΔΙΑ ΤΗΣ ΠΙΣΤΕΩΣ in Romans 3:30," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 108 (1989): 665-674.

⁴*Ibid.*, 670.

and meaningful and not merely stylistic. It is also dependent upon the meaning of διὰ τῆς πίστεως and ἐκ πίστεως. The meaning of ἐκ πίστεως is especially important because of its close ties with the Septuagint translation of Habakkuk 2:4, a key proof text to Paul's arguments in Romans and Galatians concerning justification by faith. In addressing the current debate concerning Paul's explanation of justification by faith as it pertains to Jews and to gentiles, the present study will examine the meaning of ἐκ πίστεως in Paul and its bearing on justification by faith. The approach to this examination will be rather complex. In order to arrive at a precise meaning for ἐκ πίστεως, it is essential that the word πίστις be thoroughly examined, especially its connection to the Old Testament concept of faith (יִשְׁרָאֵל). In order to differentiate between ἐκ πίστεως and other prepositional phrases with πίστις it will be necessary to examine the differences in nuance among them by noting Paul's choice of prepositions with πίστις and arriving at a determination as to whether such changes within the same context are meaningful or merely stylistic.

Also, key ἐκ πίστεως passages will be examined in detail. These key passages consist of two pairs. Romans 1:17 and Galatians 3:11 contain Paul's citation of Habakkuk 2:4b, the origin of ἐκ πίστεως in Paul. Naturally, it will also be necessary to examine the Habakkuk passage in its

context as cited in Romans and Galatians. The second pair of key ἐκ πίστεως passages is Romans 3:30 and Galatians 2:16. In these passages, Paul alternates between ἐκ πίστεως and διὰ [τῆς] πίστεως in the same context. These passages will be analyzed to determine whether the change in prepositions is meaningful or purely stylistic.

The present study will demonstrate that Paul's emphasis is not solely upon man's faith in God, but that ἐκ πίστεως and its synonymous phrases can also refer to the faithfulness of God and that of His Messiah. When attention is turned to this aspect of πίστις it becomes clear that God's faithfulness is for Paul a singular concept, focused on Christ and on the cross. There are not two "faithfulnesses" of God, one for the Jew and the other for the Gentile. Nor are there two salvific manifestations of God's faithfulness. Romans 3:21-31 especially melds the concepts of justification, God's righteousness, God's faithfulness and man's faith, and Christ's propitiating sacrifice on the cross. For Paul, these concepts come together in the phrase ἐκ πίστεως.

CHAPTER 2

THE NEW TESTAMENT CONCEPT OF ΠΙΣΤΙΣ

Old Testament Roots

In the New Testament, πίστις has become a technical term for the reliance upon God that results in salvation. This saving reliance was described in the Old Testament by the term אָמַן, based upon the root אָמַן, "to confirm or support." In the qal, the verb means "to support or nourish." The niphil carries the meaning "to make firm, lasting" or to be "confirmed, established," or to be "verified, reliable, faithful" (in the sense of "trustworthy.") It is, however, the use of אָמַן in the hiphil that bears most directly on the New Testament *terminus technicus* in question. The hiphil of אָמַן has the common meaning "to trust, believe."⁵ This important Hebrew term, which came to describe the relationship between the faithful and their God appears to have originated in the Hebrew mind. There are no prior traces in Akkadian, Ugaritic, or Canaanite-Phoenician. Later, the hiphil form

⁵Francis Brown, S.R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, *The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon* (N.p.: Christian Copyrights, Inc., 1983), s.v. אָמַן.

was taken over in Syriac and Arabic and possibly Ethiopic, but the meaning more closely approximates the Hebrew niphal, "to be faithful, reliable."¹

One can easily see the connection between the niphal and hiphil meanings. To make a man trustworthy is to rely on him, to have faith in him. William Gesenius takes a somewhat different approach to the hiphil of אָמַן , including it in "stems which express in [hiphil] the entering into a certain condition and, further, the being in the same (sic)."² The hiphil, אָמַנְתָּ , is used frequently in the historical narratives and Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament. It is used less often in the Prophets and the Psalms.³

In the Wisdom Literature, אָמַנְתָּ is used in a secular sense, most often with a certain air of skepticism, for example, Proverbs 14:15 and 26:25, which caution against

¹Alfred Jepsen, " אָמַן , κ. τ. λ." in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, 7 vols., ed. G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren, trans. John T. Willis and David E. Green (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1974-1995), 1:292.

²William Gesenius, *Hebrew Grammar*, ed. E. Kautzsch, revised by A. E. Cowley in accordance with the 28th German ed. (1909), 2d English ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1910), § 53e.

³Jepsen, 300, gives the following "very rough" distribution: "24 times in narrative contexts as well as in four Psalms passages; 7 times in prophetic oracles; 4 times in other Psalms; and 11 times in the Wisdom Literature."

being too easily trusting of another man. The book of Job also employs this negative ring. This negative or skeptical impression is also conveyed in other passages in which **יָאֵמֵן** is used in a secular sense, for example, Jeremiah 12:6 and Micah 7:5. Often these passages are constructed with **לֵ** and refer to believing a message, for example, Isaiah 53:1. In these passages as well, the connotation is always negative: "Who has believed. . . ?" Often **יָאֵמֵן** stands in parallel to **אָמַן**, which means "to trust" and is also often used of false security.⁴

The theological use of **יָאֵמֵן** speaks of man's trust in God, his consideration of the Word of Yahweh to be true⁵ and trustworthy. Here the skepticism and negativism is reversed. It is folly to be too easily trusting in man, but it is apostasy⁶ to fail to trust in Yahweh. In Exodus 4:1-17 Moses wonders how the people will not be skeptical of the announcement of his message. The answer lies in the signs and deeds Yahweh will perform.⁷ The people respond by

⁴Ibid., 300-303.

⁵**אָמַן**, "truth," is a derivative of **אָמַן** and is rendered ἀλήθεια in the Septuagint.

⁶Rudolph Bultmann and Artur Weiser, "πιστεύω, κ.τ.λ.," in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 10 vols., ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964-1976), 6:188.

⁷Similarly, the signs and wonders enacted by Jesus

believing when Yahweh demonstrates His trustworthiness. When their faith begins to waver at the shore of the Red Sea, they once again gain confidence in Yahweh (Exodus 14:31), after He has delivered them. When the Lord reveals Himself through such signs and deeds, it is a sin not to believe in Him. The Old Testament refers to Israel's lack of trust in the wilderness as a sign of their unbelief, for example, Deuteronomy. 1:32; 9:23; Psalm 78:32; 106:24.⁸

Yet there are those who respond in faith without having seen the signs. Abraham believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness (Genesis 15:6). He believed because he received God's covenant by direct revelation. Signs and wonders were not necessary. Even more surprising is the response of Nineveh in Jonah 3, who believed the prophet's message without seeing signs and wonders. One wonders whether the Ninevites were astute students of history who had seen the signs and wonders of Yahweh through eyes into the past.

Among the prophets, only Isaiah employs אָמַן in his preaching, and then only sparingly (7:9; 28:16; 43:10). In the first two passages the verb is used absolutely. Isaiah can speak of having faith, confidence, or trust and his

should have produced faith in those who saw Him. For the most part, faith is produced only in the "crowds," not among the learned.

⁸Jepsen, 303-304.

hearers know that he refers to trust in Yahweh, because only Yahweh can deliver. Israel knows this, or should, from her covenant history. In the final passage, Yahweh identifies Himself as the object of Israel's faith. Alfred Jepsen rightly concludes, "what Israel is to understand is that Yahweh alone is God, and what she is to know is that He alone is to be trusted."⁹

When **הֶאֱמִין** is used as a technical term for faith in Yahweh, more than an inward feeling is meant. The same can be said of the abstract noun **אֱמוּנָה**. While **הֶאֱמִין** is not statistically the most common term to describe man's proper trust relation to God, its qualitative importance must not be overlooked. **הֶאֱמִין** implies a conduct that is in accordance with that inner quality of trustworthiness. A man who displays **אֱמוּנָה** responds with conduct that shows him to be **אֱמִינִי**. The same can be said of God, who displays His **אֱמוּנָה** by conduct that shows Him to be **אֱמִינִי**.¹⁰ This duality is a hallmark of the Old Testament concept of **אֱמִינִי**. Artur Weiser defines **הֶאֱמִין** as "to say Amen with all the consequences for both obj[ect] and subj[ect]."¹¹ The response of **אֱמוּנָה** to God's command is acknowledgement and

⁹Ibid., 307.

¹⁰Ibid., 318-319.

¹¹Bultmann and Weiser, 186.

obedience (Deuteronomy 9:23; Psalm 119:66). The response to God's promise is acknowledgement of God's power to fulfill it (Genesis 15:6; Psalm 106:12) as well as implied worship of Him as the holy, almighty Lord (Numbers 20:12).¹² These responses make up the conduct of one who has אָמַן. Yet it is not the responsive conduct that saves; it is the saving power which Yahweh faithfully employs and which is received in faith.

The Transition to Greek

Introduction

It is striking that אָמַן is almost always translated in the Septuagint by πιστεύειν. It is perhaps more striking that although there are other Hebrew terms in the Old Testament that describe faith, and some of these are more common than words of the אָמַן group, πιστεύειν and πίστις in the Septuagint virtually always translate אָמַן-words.¹³ There is no doubt concerning the almost one-to-one correspondence in the Septuagint between these Greek and Hebrew terms. There is, however, some uncertainty concerning how such a term of relatively minor importance in secular Greek became worthy of carrying the

¹²Ibid., 187.

¹³The only exception being Jer. 25:8, where ἐπιστεύουτε renders אָמַן, preserving the association between faith and obedience.

great weight of the Old Testament concept of יְשׁוּעָה .

Classical Greek

At one time it was generally agreed that Classical Greek usage had little bearing on the origin of πίστις as a religious technical term in Judaism and the New Testament. Bultmann has shown that πίστις and πιστεύειν do have the nuance of trust and confidence.¹⁴ Yet he also strongly maintains that "in no sense is πιστός used for the true religious relationship to God or for the basic religious attitude of man. Nor did πίστις become a religious term."¹⁵ Bultmann admits only the "first beginnings" of religious use of πιστεύειν in Classical Greek.¹⁶ Building primarily on the work of Gerhard Barth¹⁷ and Dieter Lührmann,¹⁸ Dennis Lindsay has recently challenged Rudolph Bultmann's assertion.¹⁹ According to Lindsay "it is precisely here at

¹⁴Bultmann and Weiser, 175-178.

¹⁵Ibid., 179.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Gerhard Barth, "Pistis in hellenistischer Religiosität," *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 73 (1982): 110-126.

¹⁸Dieter Lührmann, "Pistis im Judentum," *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 64 (1973): 19-38.

¹⁹Dennis R. Lindsay, "The Roots and Development of the πιστ- Word Group as Faith Terminology," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 49 (1993): 103-118.

these 'first beginnings of religious use' where a very important development in the use of πιστεύειν as a theological term becomes visible."²⁰

Without question πίστις was used in the sense of "trust, confidence" in the gentile Greek-speaking world. Walter Bauer,²¹ along with Bultmann,²² recognizes a religious use here. One must distinguish, however, between the questions of whether a religious use of πίστις exists in non-Jewish Greek and whether πίστις became a central theological concept in this literature, describing a right relationship to God.²³

Lindsay concedes that in Classical Greek πίστις is not a technical term, as he can cite only one reference to the contrary, where πίστις parallels the Old Testament concept of אֱמוּנָה.²⁴ Lindsay, however, does see a development

²⁰Ibid, 106.

²¹Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, trans. and adapt. William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, rev. and augm. F. Wilbur Gingrich and Frederick W. Danker, 2d. ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), s.v. πίστις.

²²Bultmann and Weiser, 179.

²³G. Barth, 113 n. 12.

²⁴Lindsay, 105. The exceptional citation is Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus* 1.1445: καὶ γὰρ σὺ νῦν τᾶν τῶ θεῶ πιστὶν φέροις ("for even you would now put trust in [the] god." Lindsay's translation).

in the use of the verb πιστεύειν in this period. Indebted to the work of Kurt Latte,²⁵ Lindsay identifies seven passages in which πιστεύειν parallels יָדַן: Aeschylus, *Persians* 1.800; Sophocles, *Philoctetes* 1373-75; Plato, *Epinomis* 980c; Xenophon, *Apomnemoneumata* 1.1.5 and *Apology of Socrates* 15; Thucydides, *Historia* 4.92.7; Aeschines, *Ctesiphont* 1. This finding establishes a precedent in Classical Greek for the use of πιστεύειν within a religious context, although not as a central concept.²⁶

Non-Jewish Hellenism

The development of πιστεύειν into a religious concept continued in non-Jewish Hellenism. The noun πίστις now also undergoes this development. Although examples can be found in Polybius, Dio Chrysostom, Lucian of Samosata,²⁷ and Dionysius of Halicarnassus,²⁸ it is Plutarch who provides the richest religious use of πιστεύειν. Striking similarities can be seen between Plutarch's use of the πιστ- word group and the concept denoted by the root יָדַן in the Old Testament, for example, the connection between

²⁵Kurt Latte, "Inscriptiones Epidauri," *Gnomon* 7 (1931): 120; quoted in Lindsay, 106 n. 15.

²⁶Lindsay, 106-109.

²⁷See G. Barth, 114-115, 118-120.

²⁸Lindsay, 155 n. 51.

faith and signs or wonders and that between faith and honoring the gods (or worshiping God).²⁹ It is sometimes argued that Plutarch may have been influenced by Diaspora Judaism in his use of πίστις and πιστεύειν. Barth argues convincingly that, although he must have known Judaism and could possibly have been influenced by it, how much more likely it is that Plutarch was more greatly influenced by his own cultus, which he surely knew better than the religion of Israel.³⁰

Jewish Hellenism

As πίστις/πιστεύειν developed into a religious technical term in non-Jewish Greek, a parallel development took place within Jewish Hellenism. The Septuagint translators were quick to utilize the term to describe the right relationship between man and God. Lührmann describes the πιστ- words as used in the Septuagint to translate derivatives of יָצַח as *Bedeutungslehnwörter*, that is, "semantic loan-words."³¹ Lindsay, however, contends that something weightier than "semantic loan-words" were required by the Septuagint translators. Rather, these translators made use of a development of the πιστ- word

²⁹G. Barth, 115-118.

³⁰Ibid., 118.

³¹Lührmann, 24.

group into religious technical terms that was already under way in non-Jewish Hellenism, begun already in Classical Greek.³²

There is already a precedent in Classical Greek for the use of πιστεύειν within a religious context. This is a precedent by which πιστεύειν, indicating a *trust which has direct implications upon personal action*, was (1) capable of being understood by a Greek audience in reference to God, and (2) capable of being developed into a religious *terminus technicus* for "faith, belief. . . ." ³³

Adding to the likelihood of the Septuagint translators' adoption of an already existing use of πίστις/πιστεύειν is its use with the dative case to translate -בְּה' אֱלֹהִים or -לְה' אֱלֹהִים as indicating trust in God. This construction is quite common in non-Jewish Hellenism, often combining πιστεύειν with τῷ θεῷ or τοῖς θεοῖς. When the Septuagint therefore translates, for example, Genesis 15:6: καὶ ἐπίστευσεν Ἀβραὰμ τῷ θεῷ. . . , it is not creating a *new* religious form of speech, but rather is using an already established Greek expression.³⁴ It is also worthy of note that in both non-Jewish Hellenism and in the Septuagint the profane use of πιστεύειν has a negative tone to it. Trusting in man is not encouraged.³⁵

³²Lindsay, 104.

³³Ibid., 109 (emphasis in original).

³⁴G. Barth, 120-121.

³⁵Ibid., 124.

The Septuagint use of πίστις/πιστεύειν corresponds exactly to אֱמוּנָה and its derivatives. One must πιστεύει in Yahweh's miraculous signs and mighty acts (Exodus 4 passim; 14:31). Πίστις and πιστεύειν are connected with man's righteousness at Genesis 15:6 and Habakkuk 2:4, a connection that Paul emphasizes in both Romans and Galatians. Clearly, πίστις is the same life-giving, behavior-modifying relationship between God and man as that denoted by אֱמוּנָה. If there is a distinction between πίστις in the Septuagint and אֱמוּנָה it is that while אֱמוּנָה is used freely of either man or of God, with πίστις the emphasis is definitely upon man. Although πίστις is used occasionally to translate אֱמוּנָה when describing God's faithfulness (e.g., Hosea 2:22; Lamentations 3:23), it is very frequent (especially in the Psalms)³⁶ that אֱמוּנָה is translated by ἀλήθεια when speaking of God. This suggests that God's faithfulness (אֱמוּנָה = πίστις) and His trustworthiness (אֱמוּנָה = ἀλήθεια) are parallel, if not interchangeable concepts.

Josephus also uses πίστις extensively, mostly in the sense of "loyalty" or "pledge," but also "trust," "evidence," and "belief."³⁷ Although Josephus most often

³⁶E.g., Psalms 39:11; 91:3; 87:12; 88:2,3,6,9,25,34, 50. All numbering is according to the Septuagint.

³⁷David M. Hay, "Pistis as 'Ground for Faith' in

uses the term in a secular sense,³⁸ leading many scholars to neglect the significance of his use of πίστις, he also employs it in the technical religious sense meaning faith in God (e.g., *Contra Apionem* 2, 163-171). It is important to understand that Josephus is writing for a non-Jewish audience³⁹ and yet when he uses πίστις in this technical religious sense, he does so not as if he were introducing a new concept. On the contrary, Josephus' use of πίστις in this sense is one that is meaningful to a reader of non-Jewish Greek.⁴⁰

Philo most often uses πίστις to mean "evidence," or "ground for faith." However, he also uses it frequently to refer to man's faith in God.⁴¹ For Philo, faith and trust in God are combined in the religious use of πίστις. But

Hellenized Judaism and Paul," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 108 (1989): 463. See also Lührmann, 26-27.

³⁸E.g., for Josephus, ἔχειν πίστιν is to be trusted, not to have faith or trust in someone else. See Karl Heinrich Rengsdorf, *A Complete Concordance to Flavius Josephus*, 5 vols. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1968-1983), s.v. πίστις.

³⁹Lührmann, 32, reminds that Josephus "nur behutsam die Sprache der LXX aufnimmt, soweit sie griechischen Ohren verständlich ist. . . ."

⁴⁰Ibid., 27-28.

⁴¹Hay, 463-464, 464 n. 11. Lührmann, 29, also notes this and asserts "doch erhalten πιστεύειν τῷ θεῷ und πίστις πρὸς θεόν nun einen zentralen Rang in der Darstellung der 'mosaischen Philosophie.'" "

although the linguistic ties to the Old Testament concept of אֱמוּנָה are preserved by Philo, his understanding of faith is quite different. For Philo, faith in God is neither based upon His Word nor His actions. It is not even based in the history of His people. Rather, for Philo, faith is the "logical" consequence of turning from the corruptible world to the incorruptible, who is Yahweh.⁴²

New Testament Usage

New Testament Usage in General

If it is true that πίστις/πιστεύειν undergoes development from an almost exclusively secular concept in Classical Greek to a religious technical term in non-Jewish Hellenism and then to a central theological concept that is the equivalent of אֱמוּנָה in the Septuagint and other Jewish Hellenism, then it is also true that in the New Testament this term becomes the central theological concept. Whereas in the Septuagint πίστις and πιστεύειν were used very frequently in a secular sense,⁴³ in the New Testament the religious sense of "faith in God" is by far the predominant use. So common and set had the term become in the New

⁴²Bultmann and Weiser, 201-202.

⁴³This is also the case with אֱמוּנָה in the Old Testament. The significance of the theological sense of πίστις/πιστεύειν in the Septuagint and אֱמוּנָה in the Old Testament has been demonstrated above. It is a significance that outweighs its statistical frequency.

Testament church that it could be used (most often by Paul) in an absolute sense, a usage never employed by the Septuagint, Philo, or Josephus.⁴⁴ Πίστις has come to denote in the New Testament, not only the act of believing, but also that which is believed, that is, the gospel of Christ Jesus (e.g., Ephesians 4:5).

Such a development of πίστις in the Greek literature is important because it gave the New Testament writers an established, understandable, and uniform term⁴⁵ to express the Hebrew concept of יִשְׁרָאֵל. Had this development not taken place, the New Testament might be filled with various synonyms to express "faith."⁴⁶ It is often said that the Semitic New Testament writers thought in Hebrew (or Aramaic), translating into Greek as they wrote. If this were true, one might find a variation of terms used to express יִשְׁרָאֵל. It is more likely that if these writers were truly bilingual, they were used to thinking in whichever language they were currently using.⁴⁷ If these writers

⁴⁴G. Barth, 122. Barth does cite a few passages from Plutarch in which πίστις is used absolutely.

⁴⁵This approximates Lührman's "bedeutungslehneort."

⁴⁶It must be admitted that variations do exist. At Luke 16:29,31 we might expect (ἀ)πιστεύειν, but we have instead (οὐκ) ἀκούειν. This echoes אָזַן of the Hebrew Old Testament and emphasizes the response of obedience.

⁴⁷D. H. van Daalen, "'Faith' According to Paul," *The Expository Times* 87 (1975-1976): 84. Van Daalen is

indeed were thinking in Greek, they had an established equivalent in that language to which to turn.

Although there is some variance among individual authors, there is a great deal of symmetry in the New Testament usage of πίστις/πιστεύειν. The Septuagint favors the noun over the verb by nearly two-to-one (92 to 57). The New Testament, however, uses πίστις 243 times to 241 for πιστεύειν. Strikingly, John makes no use of πίστις in his gospel and only uses it once in his epistles (although four times in Revelation), but he uses πιστεύειν not less than 99 times in his gospel and nine times in his epistles. Paul, on the other hand, prefers the noun, but makes extensive use of the verb as well (the ratio being about three-to-one).

In the New Testament, πιστεύειν bears the same meanings as in Classical and non-Jewish Hellenistic Greek, as well as in the Septuagint, namely "to believe," "to trust." Bultmann writes: "From a purely formal standpoint there is nothing very distinctive in the usage of the NT and early Christian writings as compared with [Greek]

speaking specifically of Paul, for whom this is especially true, but the same is true to a greater or lesser degree of other New Testament Semitic writers. Residents of Galilee had to interact with Jews and gentiles who passed through on trade routes from many lands. Even craftsmen and fishermen had to function in at least Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek. Latin would have been helpful also. The same linguistic ability is probably true also of the Septuagint translators. This is part of Lindsay's point, 117-118.

usage."⁴⁸ The difference lies not in formal use, but in emphasis. While Classical and Hellenistic usage focus primarily on trust in man, and even the Septuagint favors this usage statistically, the New Testament focuses almost exclusively on trust in God.

The foregoing is evident in the continuation of the Old Testament themes of believing God's Word, obedience and faithfulness, trust, and hope. The sense of believing God's Word, similar to the Septuagint use of πιστεύειν at Genesis 15:6, is found, for example, at John 2:22; 5:46-47; Luke 24:25; Acts 24:14. This holds true also of believing Jesus' words (John 5:38), or the words of an angel (Luke 1:20; Acts 27:25), or those of John the Baptist (Matthew 21:32; Mark 11:31) because these all speak God's word. Πίστις is also the proper response to seeing miraculous signs and wonders (John 4:48), just as in the Old Testament (e.g., Exodus 4). But, as with ~~יִשְׁרָאֵל~~ in the Old Testament, obedience and faithfulness are important components of πίστις in the New Testament. This is particularly emphasized in Hebrews 11 (explicitly in verses 8, 30-31, but implicitly throughout). Also for Paul, faith includes obedience (e.g., Romans 1:5, also compare Romans 1:8 and 1 Thessalonians 1:8 with Romans 15:18 and 16:19). The sense of "to trust" is closely tied to belief in God's Word.

⁴⁸Bultmann and Weiser, 203.

There is in the New Testament also some specific emphasis on trusting in God's miraculous power (e.g., Mark 4:40; 9:23-24; Romans 4:17-20) denoted by πιστεύειν. This trust is also linked to prayer (James 1:6; 5:15). Closely related to trust is the concept of hope⁴⁹ (e.g., Romans 4:18; 5:1-2; 1 Peter 1:21).⁵⁰ All of these uses of πίστις show continuation of the Old Testament themes.

In the Old Testament, the righteous believed in God largely on the basis of His acts, either as witnessed or as revealed in the Scriptural history of Israel. It is not the acts themselves which are the object of faith, but the fact that Yahweh is at work through them. In the New Testament this belief becomes focused on one saving act, the sacrifice of Christ Jesus. Now this saving act must be the basis of faith.⁵¹ Now Christ must be the object of faith. Therefore, πίστις also has a distinctive New Testament sense. This can be expressed as acceptance of the gospel or kerygma of Christ (e.g., Mark 1:15; Acts 8:12; Romans 10:14-17; 1 Corinthians 2:4-5; 15:11; Ephesians 1:13). It can also be expressed as faith in (πίστις εἰς. . .) Christ, for this indicates the acceptance

⁴⁹That is, ἐλπίς understood in the New Testament sense of "confidence."

⁵⁰Bultmann and Weiser, 205-208.

⁵¹Ibid., 215.

of the kerygma about Him.⁵² This belief in God's saving act in Christ can also be expressed simply as πίστις in the absolute (e.g., Romans 10:8; Galatians 1:23; Ephesians 4:5; 1 Timothy 2:7), so great has the focus of faith become fixed on Christ.⁵³

Specifically Pauline Usage

To describe the relationship between God, who justifies, and His people, who are justified, Paul required a word that would be understandable to the Greek ear, yet be capable of carrying the full weight of the Hebrew concept, אֱמוּנָה. For this use, Paul had a ready-made term in πίστις. Although πίστις had had a history of use in a mainly secular sense in Classical Greek, by Paul's time Greek authors had begun to use the term with a religious connotation. Paul would have received education in these writings at so eminent an educational setting as his home, Tarsus.⁵⁴ Added to this is the practice begun in Hellenistic Judaism of using πίστις in the sense of the Old Testament

⁵²Bultmann notes that the formula πιστεύειν εἰς occurs neither in the Septuagint nor in secular Greek. It is a unique New Testament formula expressing faith and trust in God's saving act accomplished in the person of Christ [Bultmann and Weiser, 203].

⁵³Ibid., 208-214.

⁵⁴F. F. Bruce, *Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1977), 34-35.

concept of אֱמוּנָה , culminated by its use by the Septuagint translators to represent that Hebrew word. For Paul, the development was not yet complete; πίστις would become the central theological concept.

Paul makes greater use of the noun than of the verb (142 to 54).⁵⁵ If, however, one approaches his writings with no preconception as to his meaning of πίστις , confusion will be the result. Of Paul's 142 usages of πίστις , at least 116⁵⁶ are used in the absolute sense. This is especially apparent in Romans and Galatians where Paul uses πίστις absolutely 33 of 40 and 18 of 22 times, respectively. Clearly Paul expects his readers to understand what he means by πίστις , even when no further explanation is given.

Modern scholars agree that πίστις represents a relationship between God and His people that results in justification and salvation. Confusion arises, however, as to when Paul is speaking of the believer's faith in God, and when God's faithfulness in keeping His covenant is meant. Adding to the confusion is the debate over whether

⁵⁵For the purposes of this study, Paul's works include the canonical New Testament books from Romans through Philemon, including the Pastoral Epistles.

⁵⁶There are some subjective decisions to be made, e.g., Gal. 3:26. Is $\text{πίστεως ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ}$ an unusual (but not unparalleled) way of expressing faith in Christ Jesus (as object) or is ἐν used instrumentally, "faith by means of Christ Jesus?" The figure given represents a very conservative approach, excluding such ambiguous passages.

a subjective or objective genitive is to be read in such passages as Romans 3:22, 26; Galatians 2:16, 20; 3:22.⁵⁷ The significance of the last issue has been greatly over emphasized. It is established *a priori* that Paul at times uses πίστις to refer to God's faithfulness. This is unquestionably the case in Romans 3:3. Such a use of πίστις is also in accordance with the Old Testament concept of אֱמוּנָה, the term being used about equally of God and man.⁵⁸ Little is ultimately to be gained by assigning the aforementioned passages to the category of God's faithfulness, or even to the faithfulness (i.e., perfect obedience) of His Messiah.⁵⁹ It is still true that the kerygma must be believed. Herein lies the meaning of Paul's absolute use of πίστις.

The validity of seeking to determine Paul's meaning in his absolute uses of πίστις by appealing to those instances when πίστις is identified is surely to be questioned when it is realized that greater than 75 percent of the instances of the noun in Paul's writings are

⁵⁷See below, Chapter 3.

⁵⁸Jepsen, 319.

⁵⁹Clearly, the faithfulness of the Messiah and the faithfulness of God are equivalents to those who accept a divine Messiah.

absolute. At times context can be revealing,⁶⁰ but more often the term stands alone. An appeal to the Old Testament cannot distinguish between the senses of God's faithfulness and man's faith in God, as both are common (although the Septuagint favors man's faith in God). When Philo and Josephus use πίστις in the religious sense it is also of man's faith in God.

There is, however, a more certain way to determine the meaning of Paul's absolute use of πίστις. Rather than resorting to the small minority of instances when πίστις is identified, one can turn to the abundant Pauline use of the verb πιστεύειν. If the assumption can be made that Paul would not use noun and verb with radically different meanings, especially in the same context, then the matter is greatly clarified. Of the 54 Pauline instances of πιστεύειν, 18 are used in the true absolute sense, that is, with no explanation. When Paul uses πιστεύειν with an explanation either in the text or in the immediate context, the most common reference is to man's faith in God. This is the case in 19 of the remaining 36 occurrences. Nine times the reference is to trusting in the Word of God (the gospel or a specific component, the Truth) or the works of God. Of the remainder, Paul does speak of being entrusted

⁶⁰E.g., in Galatians 3:2, 5, it seems quite clear that faith in the "report" of Christ (the kerygma or gospel) is meant.

works-righteousness was built. Paul is thus attacking the Hellenistic Judaism of his time, which tended toward works of law rather than toward the true concept of אֱמוּנָה.⁶⁴ "Faith in the Torah" originally meant faith in the God of the Torah, that is, in His saving Words and deeds. This concept, however, became confused among the rabbis and became equated with man's faithfulness in keeping the Torah. Paul points out the folly of this, since all have disobeyed God's law (e.g., Romans 3:9-20).

Paul also returns to the Old Testament concept of faith in his emphasis on obedience to the law on the part of those who believe, for example, Romans 6. We obey the law because *we believe* (6:8) that we have been raised with Christ, having been put to death with Him through baptism. *We believe* God's saving word, that we have died to sin and been raised to a new life in Christ in which sin (disobedience) is quite out of place. Therefore our faith is manifested in the desire to obey His law. This is reminiscent of Weiser's definition of אֱמוּנָה, "to say Amen with all the consequences for both object and

⁶⁴H. J. Schoeps, *Paul: The Theology of the Apostle in the Light of Jewish Religious Study*, trans. Harold Knight (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961), 202-206. Schoeps, 204, is incorrect when he asserts that "the Pauline faith is not faith in the Biblical God, but is faith in the sacred event. . . of Christ. . . ." Faith in the "sacred event. . . of Christ" is faith in Yahweh's saving deed and as such is indeed faith in the Biblical God, just as was the case with Abraham's saving faith in God's Word.

subject]."⁶⁵ Thus Paul returns to the Old Testament concept of faith by emphasizing both trust in Yahweh's saving Word and deed, which justifies the sinner, and the resultant obedience that stems from the acknowledgement of this newness of life.

Conclusion

The Old Testament concept of אֱמוּנָה , when used in a religious sense, can refer to either God's faithfulness to his people or to man's trust in God. The latter sense implies trust in God's signs and saving deeds as well as in His covenant promise of salvation. The proper response of this faith is willing obedience to His law.

A development of πίστις into a religious technical term begun in Classical Greek but taken further in Jewish and non-Jewish Hellenism paved the way for the Septuagint translators and New Testament writers to use that term to express the Old Testament concept of faith. The Classical, Hellenistic, Septuagint, and New Testament uses of πίστις in this sense all strongly favor the expression of man's trust in God, although the Septuagint and New Testament also express God's faithfulness by means of πίστις at times.

In the New Testament, especially by Paul, the focus

⁶⁵Bultmann and Weiser, 186. See above, p. 9.

of man's πίστις is narrowed to Jesus' saving work on the cross, the propitiating blood-sacrifice offered by God on behalf of His people. Paul frequently uses πίστις in the absolute sense (about 75 percent of the occurrences of the noun). In these cases it is most accurate to refer to Paul's use of the verb πιστεύειν to reveal his meaning of πίστις. When he uses the verb, Paul strongly favors man's trust in God, His saving works, or His gospel, which reveals His salvation. Therefore, Paul's use of πίστις is to be interpreted in light of this when it is used absolutely or ambiguously. Paul has taken up the Old Testament sense of אֱמוּנָה with all its implications for both God and man, including salvation on God's part and trust in that saving act as well as willing obedience to God on man's part.

CHAPTER 3

ΠΙΣΤΙΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ AND THE QUESTION OF OBJECTIVE OR SUBJECTIVE GENITIVE

Introduction

The near universal acceptance of the objective genitive in phrases such as διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (Romans 3:22) until the latter half of the twentieth century is instructive. Some would cite the powerful influence of the Reformational emphasis on justification by faith (in Christ) alone as an impediment to frank examination of the subject.¹ Others would perhaps place more weight on the testimony of history.

An Overview of Major Commentators

Older Commentators

Paul uses πίστις with a genitive referring to Christ seven times: Romans 3:22, 26; Galatians 2:16 (*bis*); 3:22; Ephesians 3:12; Philippians 3:9. Of the most relevance to the present study are the passages from Romans and Galatians. Commentators have been reluctant to discuss the

¹E.g., Douglas A. Campbell, "Romans 1:17 -- A *Crux Interpretum* for the ΠΙΣΤΙΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ Debate," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 113 (1994): 266 n. 6.

question at length and have virtually all favored the objective genitive. Karl Barth is the lone prominent proponent, among commentators, of the subjective genitive. Proposing the translation "the faithfulness of God in Jesus Christ" at Romans 3:22, Barth correctly interprets the Pauline concept of πίστις even to the point of including man's response of faith² toward God, although he thinks of this response more in terms of "knowledge" and "encounter."³ Although he identifies a Pauline concept, Barth does not exegetically support his translation of the text in question.

Several commentators writing before the current debate escalated (pre-1950) simply dismiss the idea of a subjective genitive in these passages. F. Godet assumes that the matter is settled by the "parallel" in Romans 1:17. Presumably, Godet is referring to Paul's quotation of Habakkuk 2:4, which he takes as a reference to faith in Christ.⁴ C. H. Dodd dismisses the matter with the statement

²This is the dual concept of אֱמוּנָה from the Old Testament.

³Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans*, trans. Edwin C. Hoskyns (Oxford: Oxford University Press; London: Humphrey Milford, 1933), 96-97. Richard N. Longenecker, *Galatians*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 41, (Dallas: Word Books, 1990), 87, also notes this duality inherent in אֱמוּנָה.

⁴F. Godet, *Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, trans. A. Cusin, translation revised and ed. Talbot W. Chambers, 2d ed. (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1885), 147.

that "faith is always for [Paul] faith in God through Christ."⁵ William Sanday and Arthur Headlam give context as support for their acceptance of the objective genitive, countering those who base their preference for the subjective genitive at 3:22 on the example of Romans 3:3 with the reply that 3:22 is in a different context and is thus to be understood in a different light.⁶ Ernest Burton, treating Galatians 2:16, also asserts that the matter is decided by context.⁷ In an appendix, however, Burton gives some grammatical support by stating that, in the New Testament, with the subjective genitive involving πίστις, the article is "almost always present."⁸

⁵C. H. Dodd, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans*, The Moffatt New Testament Commentary (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1932), 56. Dodd fails to note here that Romans 3:3 clearly refers to God's "faithfulness" and that Paul uses the verb πιστεύειν in different senses, such as his having been "entrusted" by God with the gospel. Although it is true that the majority of instances refer to faith in God.

⁶William Sanday and Arthur Headlam, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, The International Critical Commentary (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1895), 83-84.

⁷Ernest de Witt Burton, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1921), 121.

⁸Ibid., 482. But the many examples he cites are of πίστις used with a pronoun, not another noun.

Recent Commentators

Some of the more recent commentators are just as unwilling to discuss the subjective genitive. C. E. B. Cranfield states that "it is not to be doubted" that the genitive is objective and that the suggestion of a subjective genitive (at Romans 3:22) is "altogether unconvincing."⁹ As did some earlier commentators, Donald Guthrie¹⁰ and Hans Betz¹¹ rely on context, having abandoned all hope of definitive grammatical solution. Others retain some grammatical support for their view. F. F. Bruce¹² and Joseph Fitzmyer¹³ both make the observation that while the subjective genitive with πίστις ("the faith/faithfulness of Christ") is grammatically possible, that meaning here is unlikely because Paul never uses the verb πιστεύειν with

⁹C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, The International Critical Commentary, 2 vols. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1975-1979), 1:203 n. 2.

¹⁰Donald Guthrie, *Galatians*, New Century Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co.; London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1973), 87-88.

¹¹Hans Dieter Betz, *Galatians*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 117-118.

¹²F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Exeter, England: Paternoster; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1982), 138-139.

¹³Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Romans*, The Anchor Bible, vol. 33 (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1993), 346.

Christ as the subject.¹⁴ Douglas Moo points out many examples of genitives of a divine name following πίστις in the New Testament that are objective. Relying on this and on the immediate context, Moo argues for the objective genitive.¹⁵ Ernst Käsemann argues for the objective genitive based upon his understanding of faith as "basically human receptivity, as actively as it may express itself in obedience."¹⁶

Mediating Positions

Several commentators have been influenced by persuasive argumentation for the subjective genitive and have taken somewhat mediating positions. In a surprisingly early example, Joseph Beet assumes the objective genitive but asserts that this "faith in Christ" is "an assurance that the words of Christ are true, and will come true."¹⁷

¹⁴Admittedly, God is the subject in passages such as 1 Timothy 1:11 and Titus 1:3. God is also the implied subject of Galatians 2:7, though perhaps not 1 Thessalonians 2:4.

¹⁵Douglas Moo, *Romans 1-8, The Wycliffe Exegetical Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991), 223-225.

¹⁶Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1980), 94. Käsemann also speculates that in other Pauline ἐκ πίστεως and διὰ πίστεως sayings the name Ἰησοῦ has dropped out and this eliminates the possibility of the subjective genitive. It is difficult to understand Käsemann's reasoning. If ἐκ πίστεως can mean "faith in Christ," then it is also linguistically able to mean "faith of Christ."

¹⁷Joseph Agar Beet, *A Commentary on St. Paul's*

Much more recently, John Murray has also taken a somewhat mediating view in a refutation to some of the arguments for the subjective genitive put forward in the literature.¹⁸

Leon Morris has also taken a middle position, settling on the objective genitive but also admitting that the sense of the subjective genitive, "the faithfulness of Christ" or "God's faithfulness shown in Christ" is also present.¹⁹

Morris speculates: "It is even possible that the distinction [between objective and subjective genitive] that seems so obvious to us with our quite different constructions did not loom so large to a Greek speaker."²⁰

Indeed, Morris' understanding of the objective genitive in Romans 3:22 is "not describing Christ, but outlining what Christ has done."²¹ The distinction between objective and

Epistle to the Romans, 6th ed. (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1887), 114. Demonstrating a clear understanding of the concept of אֱמוּנָה, Beet, 145, indicates that to have faith in someone is to believe that he can and will do what he has promised.

¹⁸John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans*, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament*, 2 vols. in 1 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1959-1965), 1:363-374. Although found in his commentary, Murray's argument will be discussed below since it is an extended treatment.

¹⁹Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co.; Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1988), 174-175.

²⁰Ibid., 95.

²¹Ibid., 93.

subjective genitives is quite blurred by this statement.

The Question as Discussed
in the Literature

Early Addressers of the Question

In his "Brief History of the Question," Richard Hays begins with the matter as taken up in the German scholarship near the turn of the century.²² Godet, however, in his commentary which predates the scholarship first cited by Hays, already argues against the subjective genitive.²³ The first major study advocating the subjective genitive was undertaken by Johannes Haussleiter in 1891. Haussleiter believed that Paul used Χριστός to signify "the glorified Lord" and therefore as the object of the Christian's faith. Paul used Ἰησοῦς, according to Haussleiter, for "the historical Jesus." Placing heavy emphasis on the distinction between these names and the order in which they appear in Pauline formulations,

²²Richard B. Hays, *The Faith of Jesus Christ: An Investigation of the Narrative Substance of Galatians 3:1-4:11*, The Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series, vol. 56 (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1983), 158-162.

²³Godet, 159. Godet argues against two theories of subjective genitive: Jesus' faith in God (Benecke) and His fidelity to us (Lange). Presumably, by "fidelity to us" Godet refers to Christ's faithful obedience to God's plan of salvation. George Howard, "On the 'Faith of Christ,'" *Harvard Theological Review* 60 (1967): 461, mentions the view of Macknight (1810), who believes "that πίστις Χριστοῦ is the faith which Jesus Christ demands from man." Clearly the issue had been debated to some extent in the nineteenth century.

Haussleiter argues that ἐκ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ in Romans 3:26 and διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ in 3:22 can both only refer to Jesus' faith.²⁴ In 1906, Gerhard Kittel also argued for the subjective genitive, but overstated his case, arguing that Paul did not regard Christ as an object of religious faith.²⁵

Shortly after these early investigations into the question and their initial replies, a new line of argumentation was undertaken. Adolph Deissmann argued that it is incorrect to insist upon either the objective or subjective genitive, but that a distinct genitival use is employed by Paul. This genitival use Deissmann calls the "genitive of fellowship" or the "mystical genitive" and equates it with Paul's use of "in Christ."²⁶ Deissmann

²⁴Hays, *Faith of Jesus Christ*, 158-159. Hays is one of only a very few who consider Haussleiter's article seriously. Hays, 158, believes that "in spite of this overschematization of Paul's usage, and in spite of occasional lapses into melodramatic prose and the tendency to inquire into 'das Seelenleben Jesu,' Haussleiter's argument is actually conducted with considerable exegetical sophistication. . . ." Haussleiter's article is "Der Glaube Jesu Christi und der christliche Glaube," *Neue Kirchliche Zeitschrift* 2 (1891): 109-145, 205-230.

²⁵Hays, *Faith of Jesus Christ*, 159. Hays also here notes that Kittel's argument failed to win much support because of this "overstated" position. Kittel's article is, "Πίστις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ bei Paulus," *Theologische Studien und Kritiken* 79 (1906): 419-436.

²⁶Adolf Deissmann, *Paul: A Study in Social and Religious History*, trans. William E. Wilson, 2d ed. (New York: George H. Doran, 1926), 162-163. Deissmann, 163 n. 1, acknowledges the "merry irony" with which his critics

makes extensive use of parallel genitives regarding Christ: ἡ ἐλπίς τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, (1 Thessalonians 1:3), ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ Χριστοῦ (2 Corinthians 5:14; Ephesians 3:19; Romans 8:35), ἡ εἰρήνη τοῦ Χριστοῦ (Colossians 3:15), and so forth. These should all, according to Deissmann, be treated as compound substantives: "Christ-hope," "Christ-love," "Christ-peace," and "Christ-faith."²⁷

At about this same time A. T. Robertson takes a very similar position: "Thus in Mk. 11:22, ἔχετε πίστιν θεοῦ, we rightly translate 'have faith in God,' though the genitive does not mean 'in,' but only the God kind of faith. Cf. Romans 3:22."²⁸ At this point the discussion seems to have dwindled to the extent that Rudolph Bultmann does not even consider the problem in his portion of the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* article on "πιστεύω, κ. τ. λ." ²⁹

have rejected his proposed name for this genitival use. Actually, future scholars would take up Deissmann's concept, though not the designation "mystical genitive."

²⁷Ibid., 163-164. The German language allows better for this, e.g., "Christusglauben," etc.

²⁸A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1934), 500 (emphasis added). Robertson's position is not quite as strong as Deissmann's. Robertson, 499, includes this genitival use under the objective genitive.

²⁹Hays, *Faith of Jesus Christ*, 160. Hays here does identify Hatch, Schmitz, Wissmann, and Mundle as having also contributed, but he considers their contributions to be relatively minor.

Recent Scholarship

Hebert and Torrence

The debate once again resumed during the 1950s, with contributions by Gabriel Hebert³⁰ and Thomas Torrence.³¹ Rather than arguing their cases on grammatical grounds, these authors seek the solution in Paul's meaning of πίστις, specifically emphasizing its relationship to the Hebrew concept of אֱמוּנָה. Torrence considers significant the meaning of אָמֵן (qal) as applied to a nursing mother or other guardian of a child. This figure appears in Isaiah 49:15 in relation to God's remembering His people.³² At 49:7, God is described as "faithful" (Septuagint: πιστός) in His election of Israel. At Deuteronomy 7:9, the concept of אֱמוּנָה is bound up with that of אֱמֶת. God is faithful in keeping His covenant. By this Israel is to know that Yahweh, her God, is God over all.³³ Without stating it as

³⁰Gabriel Hebert, "Faithfulness and 'Faith,'" *Theology* 58 (1955): 373-379.

³¹Thomas Torrence, "One Aspect of the Biblical Conception of Faith," *The Expository Times* 68 (1957): 111-114.

³²Although it is to be remembered that even the nursing mother may forget, but God will not (Isaiah 49:15). God's אֱמוּנָה is perfect.

³³Ibid., 111. From these two passages (Isaiah 49:7-15 and Deuteronomy 7:9) it is seen that the "faithfulness" of humans (even the nursing mother toward her sucking child) and that of other gods is imperfect.

such, Torrence has arrived at the conclusion that the theological weight of אֱמוּנָה outweighs its statistical use. But Torrence notes that אֱמוּנָה also denotes man's trust in God, citing Genesis 15:8 and 1 Chronicles 20:20.³⁴ Adopting both of these meanings of אֱמוּנָה (and so πίστις), Torrence describes the term πίστις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ as "a polarized expression denoting the faithfulness of Christ as its main ingredient but also involving. . . the answering faithfulness of man. . . ." ³⁵

Torrence was met by immediate criticism.³⁶ In Volume One of his commentary on Romans, Murray adds an appendix on "From Faith to Faith."³⁷ Murray shows that in Paul the vast majority of πίστις passages refer to the faithfulness of man either explicitly or clearly by context (mainly by contrast with works). Yet Murray admits that Paul does use

³⁴Ibid., 111-113. Hebert comes to a similar conclusion, but his presentation is less thorough.

³⁵Ibid., 113.

³⁶In the same volume of *The Expository Times* that carried Torrence's article, there appears a critical response by Moule, in the form of a letter to the editor: C. F. D. Moule, "The Biblical Conception of 'Faith,'" *The Expository Times* 68 (1957): 157. Moule sees elements of God's faithfulness inherent in πίστις, but to make these into the main thrust would reduce the necessary reference to man's faith or trust in God. This argument is similar to one proposed by Dunn (see below, pp. 51-52).

³⁷Murray, 363-374. Although appreciative of Torrence's work, Murray seeks to fill in that which Torrence's article lacks in New Testament research.

πίστις in reference to God's faithfulness (e.g., Romans 3:3), therefore the subjective genitive is a possible understanding of ἐκ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ and similar expressions.³⁸ Although plagued by assertions not wholly substantiated,³⁹ Murray compiles an impressive body of evidence to show that Paul uses πίστις most often to refer to man's faith in God.

In his conclusion, Murray agrees with Torrence that πίστις includes both God's faithfulness and man's faith. But he differs with Torrence in that while Torrence draws the conclusion that expressions of the type ἐκ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ are "polarized expressions," Murray prefers to think of πίστις as a "polarized situation." Murray does not see that "polarization" reflected in the genitives in question.⁴⁰

In another criticism of Hebert and Torrence, James Barr argues that the Greek word πίστις could not possibly carry all the theological concepts attributed to it by

³⁸Ibid., 364-368.

³⁹E.g., that the "faith" mentioned in Romans 5:2 is "undoubtedly our faith in Christ" [page 370]. Murray has proven no such thing at this point! His reasoning is in danger of becoming circular.

⁴⁰Ibid., 373-374. Again, Murray has not proven his point. He has only shown that Paul statistically favors man's faith in God as the meaning of πίστις, not that it is impossible for Paul to include both meanings in one statement.

Hebert and Torrence.⁴¹ It has been shown in the previous chapter of the present study, however, that πίστις had indeed developed into a central theological concept in Jewish Hellenistic Greek.⁴²

Recent Studies

Offering a completely different alternative, Greer Taylor proposes that by πίστις Paul is referring to the *fidei commissum* of Roman law. The *fidei commissum* was a device of law whereby a non-citizen could inherit property, a situation initially prohibited by Roman law. Taylor points out that the great majority of instances of πίστις in Paul occur in juridical contexts. This is explicitly true in Galatians. Furthermore, the Latin *fidei commissum* was translated in the Greek-speaking world by πίστις. The "διδασκῆν language" of Galatians 2-3 is especially conducive to this connection. Only by *fidei commissum* could a testator name two successive heirs, the second heir becoming an heir through the heirship of the first. This idea is closely related to that of adoption, another key

⁴¹James Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), 161-205. Barr argues that ΠΙΣΤΙΣ has a fundamentally different meaning from that of πίστις, except perhaps at Habakkuk 2:4 (page 201). Thus he contends there is no "polarized expression."

⁴²This is a preview of the debate between Lührmann and Lindsay concerning "semantic loan words." See above, pp. 14-15.

concept in Galatians. Furthermore, Taylor shows that both Paul and his readers would have been familiar with the concept of *fidei commissum* and with its representation by $\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$.⁴³ Taylor contends that Paul has selected $\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$ because of its Septuagint usage, but that he also finds in it the useful illustration of the *fidei commissum*.⁴⁴

Taylor's theory has been largely ignored. Although he has made a valid discovery, it cannot be demonstrated that Paul had the *fidei commissum* in mind when writing any of his epistles. While this is possible, it is also quite possible to make very good sense out of Paul's use of $\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$ without turning to this Roman concept.

George Howard examined the question from a more grammatical perspective in a pair of articles.⁴⁵ Howard asserts that $\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$ followed by a genitive noun of person is always subjective in Paul, for example, Romans 3:3; 4:12.⁴⁶ Also seen as significant is Paul's change of prepositions in Galatians 2:16. The switch from $\delta\acute{\iota}\alpha/\acute{\epsilon}\kappa$ to

⁴³Greer M. Taylor, "The Function of $\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$ $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\upsilon$ in Galatians," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 75 (1966): 58-76. Taylor is arguing for the subjective genitive, but on very unique grounds.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, 69.

⁴⁵George Howard, "Faith of Christ," 459-484; *idem*, "Romans 3:21-31 and the Inclusion of the Gentiles," *Harvard Theological Review* 63 (1970): 223-233.

⁴⁶Howard, "Romans 3:21-32," 229; *idem*, "Faith of Christ," 459-460.

ἐῖς is taken as evidence that Paul has two different meanings for πίστις in mind: "We believed in Christ in order that we might be justified by the faith of Christ."⁴⁷ Howard also believes that the Syriac Peshitta understands the genitive to be subjective.⁴⁸ Finally, Howard notes that πίστις in Hellenistic Greek usually means "faithfulness" rather than "trust."⁴⁹ In pointing out that πίστις with the personal genitive is subjective elsewhere in Paul, Howard also notes that this construction represents the faith of Christians at least 20 of 24 times.⁵⁰ One could also argue for the objective genitive in the πίστις Χριστοῦ sayings based upon Paul's use of the genitive to refer to the faith of Christians. While it is true that πίστις in Hellenistic Greek usually represents "faithfulness" rather than

⁴⁷Howard, "Faith of Christ," 460 (emphasis in original). See also idem, "Romans 3:21-31," 229.

⁴⁸Howard, "Faith of Christ," 460; idem, "Romans 3:21-31," 229. Actually the Peshitta merely translates the literal genitive, leaving the reader to decide between objective and subjective. This in contrast to Luther, for example, who explicitly translated in the objective genitive. See idem, "Faith of Christ," 461.

⁴⁹Howard, "Romans 3:21-31," 230.

⁵⁰Howard, "Faith of Christ," 459. Howard, *ibid.*, states that the construction refers "20 times to the faith of Christians, . . . one time to the faith(fulness) of God (Rom. 3:3), two times to the faith of Abraham (Rom. 4:12; 16), and one time to anyone who has faith reckoned to him for righteousness (Rom. 4:5)." Actually one could consider the final case (Romans 4:5) along with the faith of Christians.

"trust," the present study has shown that πίστις was becoming a technical term for "faith in God" before and during Paul's time.

Markus Barth examined the question in terms of Christ's representation of Israel. Where Israel was unfaithful, Christ is faithful. As the last Adam, Christ is the true representative of all men. Since man has been unfaithful, he needed one who would be faithful on his behalf. Christ is the faithful servant whose faithfulness makes up for man's unfaithfulness.⁵¹ Barth fixes Paul's emphasis upon Christ's obedience in the genitives under consideration, but he also admits that faith in Christ is at the very center of the matter.⁵²

Arland Hultgren continued the examination from a grammatical standpoint, noting that when Paul uses πίστις with a clearly subjective genitive the article is "always present" before πίστις (e.g., Romans 3:3; 4:12; and several instances of ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν).⁵³ Hultgren also notes that one cannot argue for the subjective genitive based upon the assertion that had Paul meant the objective sense he would have used a preposition, for example, πίστις ἐν Χριστῷ.

⁵¹Markus Barth, "The Faith of the Messiah," *Heythrop Journal* 10 (1969): 363-370.

⁵²Ibid., 367, 369.

⁵³Arland J. Hultgren, "The PISTIS CHRISTOU Formulation in Paul," *Novum Testamentum* 22 (1980): 253.

While this idiom is used by other New Testament writers, it is not Pauline.⁵⁴ Hultgren demonstrates the ambiguity of Galatians 2:16 by drawing the opposite conclusion from that of Howard. For Hultgren, "the parenthetical clause (containing πιστεύειν εἰς Χριστόν) provides a means of interpreting the πίστις Χριστοῦ formulation preceding and following it."⁵⁵ Handling the "exception" of Romans 4:16, where Paul certainly means the "faith of Abraham," Hultgren argues from Semitic syntax that a "compound idea" is formed: Abrahamic faith. This he applies to πίστις Χριστοῦ in a way similar to that of Deissmann: "Christic faith."⁵⁶

Luke Johnson is perhaps the first major author to admit that Paul can use πίστις with different meanings, and that the genitives in question can fall into different categories, for example: confession, response to God, and obedience. On the basis of an overlap of "faith-language" with "obedience-language" in Paul, Johnson favors the subjective genitive (at least with respect to Romans 3:21-26) with emphasis upon the faithful obedience of Christ.⁵⁷

⁵⁴Ibid., 253-254.

⁵⁵Ibid., 255. Howard had argued that the πιστεύειν εἰς Χριστόν formulation *distinguished* this use of πιστεύειν from the surrounding occurrences of πίστις.

⁵⁶Ibid., 256-257.

⁵⁷Luke Timothy Johnson, "Romans 3:21-26 and the Faith of Jesus," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 44 (1982):

In a major study on the role of πίστις in Galatians, Hays argues for the subjective genitive. He maintains that Christ's faithfulness is the fulfillment of a Messianic interpretation of Habakkuk 2:4,⁵⁸ and therefore the subjective genitive is a far more likely understanding than the objective (though he does not rule out the latter possibility entirely).⁵⁹

Sam Williams addressed the grammatical and syntactical observations of Hultgren. He dismisses Hultgren's argument from the lack of an article with πίστις on the basis of valid observations concerning differing practices between nouns and pronouns with the genitive. The ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν passages fall under a different rule, requiring the article before the governing noun, as does Romans 4:12. Therefore, these passages cannot be used to insist that πίστις Ἰησοῦ (anarthrous) must be objective.⁶⁰

77-90. Interestingly, Johnson does not argue from the semantic field of πίστις, but from the way in which Paul speaks of faith and obedience in the same terms. The approaches are actually complementary.

⁵⁸Hays, *Faith of Jesus Christ*, 151-154. This issue will be discussed below in the exegesis of Romans 1:17 and Galatians 3:11. See Chapter 4.

⁵⁹Ibid., 175. See also idem, "ΠΙΣΤΙΣ and Pauline Christology: What is at Stake?" in *The Society of Biblical Literature 1991 Seminar Papers* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991), 721-722.

⁶⁰Sam K. Williams, "Again Pistis Christou," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 49 (1987): 431-432.

Williams further surmises that Paul avoids prepositional phrases such as πίστις ἐν Χριστοῦ because, for Williams, "Paul was not accustomed to thinking of Christ as the 'object' of faith. . . . The person of Christ is [for Paul] not faith's object. God is."⁶¹ Williams believes that statements such as ἡμεῖς εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐπιστεύσαμεν (Galatians 2:16) are really Paul's way of saying not "we have believed in Christ," but "we have believed in the gospel of God's redemptive work in and through Christ."⁶²

Although he argues for the subjective genitive, because πίστις Χριστοῦ is sometimes used in the same way as πίστις in the absolute sense, Williams does not believe that πίστις Χριστοῦ can refer to Christ's own personal faith.⁶³ Rather, it must refer to His "unwavering obedience" as the "eschatological actualizer and exemplar" of the Christian's faith.⁶⁴

Abandoning all hope of a solution based on grammatical construction alone, Morna Hooker turns to an exegesis based upon Pauline Christology. She argues much

⁶¹Ibid., 434 (emphasis in original).

⁶²Ibid., 442. But does this not also presuppose believing in the person of Christ? Williams cites Bultmann, "πιστεύω, κ.τ.λ.," 203. Bultmann, however, does not here make such a distinction between faith in the person of Christ and faith in the gospel.

⁶³Ibid., 437.

⁶⁴Ibid., 446.

along the lines of Deissmann (see above) in calling for an interpretation which includes both the believer's faith in Christ and Christ's faithful obedience, but lacks textual support for her view. Hooker prefers the term "concentric expression" to Torrence's "polarized expression."⁶⁵ Their concepts are quite similar: πίστις Χριστοῦ is neither exclusively objective or subjective, but includes both meanings in the one term, which Deissmann called "Christusglauben."

James Dunn argues for the objective genitive, although he admits that the "theology" of the subjective genitive reading is "powerful, important, and attractive."⁶⁶ Dunn gives ample evidence that the objective genitive is present in the New Testament,⁶⁷ and that "faith in Christ" is a natural reading of the objective genitive πίστις Χριστοῦ. Dunn is less convincing, however, in dealing with the exceptions to his general observations concerning the subjective genitive. He dismisses the important exceptions

⁶⁵Morna Hooker, "ΠΙΣΤΙΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ," *New Testament Studies* 35 (1989): 321-342. Hooker, 340-341, commends Deissmann's "out of fashion" view of the "mystical genitive." See above, pp. 39-40, for Deissmann's view.

⁶⁶James D. G. Dunn, "Once More, ΠΙΣΤΙΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ," in *The Society of Biblical Literature 1991 Seminar Papers* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991), 744 (emphasis in original).

⁶⁷See also the numerous examples given by Turner, *Syntax*, 211-212.

of Romans 4:16 and Ephesians 3:12 to the "rule" that the definite article is almost always present with the subjective genitive (and that the objective genitive is anarthrous) in a trivial manner.⁶⁸ The strength of Dunn's argument lies in his discussion of Hays and Hooker. Dunn shows how Hays has overstated his case by mustering up almost every instance of πίστις in Galatians to support the subjective genitive. This leaves Paul with no noun to speak of the Christian's faith, a proposition which Dunn considers "astonishing" considering the subject of the epistle. Dunn also shows that there is no agreement among scholars as to the meaning of the proposed subjective genitive.⁶⁹ When Dunn's statement about the importance and attractiveness of the subjective genitive is compared to his somewhat passionate argument in favor of the objective, one may wonder whether this scholar unconsciously advocates, to a certain extent, a reading of πίστις Χριστοῦ that also takes into account the dual meaning of ἰσθλ.⁷⁰

In a short study, Bruce Longenecker begins with

⁶⁸Dunn, "ΠΙΣΤΙΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ," 733-734. The argument that at Romans 4:16 Paul "unconsciously slipped into the anarthrous use" because this is his "principal prepositional phrase in this letter" is particularly unconvincing.

⁶⁹Ibid., 735-737. Hooker is dealt with in a similar manner.

⁷⁰See *ibid.*, 742.

Romans 3:25, assuming it to be part of an early Christian formula. Concluding that Paul would not have introduced a reference to the believer's faith in such an awkward manner (διὰ [τῆς] πίστεως interrupts the flow from ὃν προέθετο ὁ θεὸς ἰλαστήριον τοῦ ἐν τῷ αἵματι), Longenecker insists that διὰ [τῆς] πίστεως must refer to Christ's faithfulness. From this he reasons that πίστις Χριστοῦ must also include the subjective sense since it is somewhat of a parallel expression. Longenecker concludes that this is covenantal language, Christ fulfilling unfaithful Israel's part of the covenant with His faithfulness.⁷¹

Most recently, Douglas Campbell addresses the issue from the starting point of Romans 1:17. Arguing for a "cosmic eschatological" reading of that passage, Campbell concludes that ἐκ πίστεως in this passage cannot refer to man's faith.⁷² If ἐκ πίστεως cannot here refer to man's faith, neither can it do so, Campbell reasons, in the ἐκ πίστεως Χριστοῦ passages.⁷³

⁷¹Bruce W. Longenecker, "ΠΙΣΤΙΣ in Romans 3:25: Neglected Evidence for the 'Faithfulness of Christ'?" *New Testament Studies* 39 (1993): 478-480. Longenecker's covenantal emphasis is interesting when compared to Taylor's *fidei commissum*.

⁷²Campbell, "Romans 1:17," 270-273. By "cosmic eschatological" reading, Campbell refers to an adverbial sense of ἐν αὐτῷ, modifying ἀποκαλύπτεται rather than δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ, the latter alternative being the "anthropocentric" reading.

⁷³Campbell makes a good case for the theocentric reading of ἐκ πίστεως in Romans 1:17a, but he does not show

Conclusions Regarding the Question and
Implications for Understanding
ἐκ πίστεως in Paul

The investigation into the question of whether sayings of the type πίστις Χριστοῦ are objective or subjective genitives has in a sense come full circle. The earliest debaters in the modern debate (Hausleiter and Kittel) argued for the subjective genitive, as do most of the notable recent writers. Deissmann ushered in a rather new line of argument⁷⁴ in allowing for some sense of a genitive that has characteristics of both the object and subject. Most subsequent writers have agreed that there are aspects of both objective and subjective genitive in Paul's πίστις Χριστοῦ sayings.

The comfort of so many modern authors with the subjective genitive compared to the preference of many commentators for the objective should lead one to strongly

that ἐκ πίστεως there must function in the same way as in the ἐκ πίστεως Χριστοῦ passages. Indeed, he has not shown Romans 1:17 to be the *crux interpretum* for the πίστις Χριστοῦ debate. It may well be that the ἐκ πίστεως Χριστοῦ passages are the *crux interpretum* for the understanding of Romans 1:17 and ἐκ πίστεως in general. See Brian Dodd, "Romans 1:17 -- A *Crux Interpretum* for the Πίστις Χριστοῦ Debate?", *Journal of Biblical Literature* 114 (1995): 470-473, who argues that Campbell has taken his conclusions too far. Dodd argues that Campbell has shown that the subjective genitive is a possible, perhaps even likely, reading for some of the πίστις Χριστοῦ passages, but that Paul's emphasis when using πίστ- words is on man's faith in God/Christ.

⁷⁴Although, Beet seemed to be hinting at this in the nineteenth century. See above, p. 36.

consider the possibility that both may be in view. Indeed, there is justification for this in the dual meaning of יִשְׁרָאֵל in the Old Testament. יִשְׁרָאֵל is both man's faith in God and God's faithfulness to His promise.⁷⁵ The same is true of πίστις in the Septuagint and other Greek religious usage. Therefore, when Paul speaks of πίστις Χριστοῦ , it is possible that he writes with both man's faith in Christ and Christ's faithfulness to God's will, including His plan of salvation, in mind. Such a dual implication would be quite compatible with a Jewish exegete's attempt to get as much meaning out of a text such as Habakkuk 2:4⁷⁶ as possible.

The implications of such a dual meaning of πίστις Χριστοῦ and similar expressions to the meaning of ἐκ πίστεως and διὰ πίστεως are clear. Longenecker draws a connection between διὰ [τῆς] πίστεως in Romans 3:25 and Paul's πίστις Χριστοῦ formulation.⁷⁷ Campbell explicitly makes the tie between πίστις Χριστοῦ and ἐκ πίστεως .⁷⁸ If there is a reference to the faithfulness of Christ in the πίστις Χριστοῦ formulation, then there is also a possible reference to the same in the ἐκ/διὰ πίστεως sayings of

⁷⁵It is also a response of obedience to God's faithfulness, which may strengthen the subjective genitive interpretation of πίστις Χριστοῦ .

⁷⁶See below, Chapter 5.

⁷⁷B. Longenecker, 479.

⁷⁸Campbell, "Romans 1:17," 268.

Paul. This is not to say that a reference to Christ's faithfulness is necessarily the primary focus of either of these sets of formulations. It is, however, a very possible secondary reference. Therefore, any investigation into the meaning of ἐκ πίστεως must also take into account the possible subjective nature of πίστις Χριστοῦ.

CHAPTER 4
EXEGESIS OF ROMANS 1:17 AND
GALATIANS 3:11-12¹

Introduction

In seeking to determine the precise meaning of the Pauline phrase ἐκ πίστεως, one must both trace the origin of this phrase and compare its use with that of similar, juxtaposed phrases. To this end it will be necessary to examine two classes of Pauline Scriptural passages: those pertaining to Paul's quotation of Habakkuk 2:4, the origin of Paul's ἐκ πίστεως, and those in which ἐκ πίστεως is juxtaposed with another prepositional phrase having πίστις as its object. Of the former class, Romans 1:17 and Galatians 3:11-12 are to be found in the Pauline corpus. Of the latter, the most important are those which juxtapose ἐκ πίστεως with διὰ πίστεως, forming a potential contrast or difference in emphasis between these two prepositional phrases. These passages are Romans 3:30 and Galatians 2:16, which will be examined in Chapter 7.

¹The role of the Habakkuk 2:4 quotation in these passages will be examined in the following chapter.

Romans 1:17 and Galatians 3:11-12

The Uniqueness of ἐκ πίστεως

There can be no doubt as to the origin of Paul's phrase ἐκ πίστεως. In the Septuagint, ἐκ πίστεως occurs only at Habakkuk 2:4, translating בְּאֵמוּנָה .² The uniqueness of this expression is highlighted by the fact that elsewhere in the Septuagint בְּאֵמוּנָה is rendered ἐν πίστει. Paul uses ἐκ πίστεως, an expression virtually unknown other than in the Septuagint translation of Habakkuk 2:4, extensively in the two epistles in which he quotes the Habakkuk verse and not at all in other epistles. The logical conclusion is that by using ἐκ πίστεως, Paul is consciously alluding to Habakkuk 2:4.³ It is therefore necessary to examine in detail the manner in which Paul

²The preference of Aquila and 8HevXIIgr for ἐν πίστει and that of Symmachus for τῇ ἐαυτὸν πίστει at this passage add to the uniqueness of the ἐκ πίστεως reading.

³See Richard B. Hays, "ΠΙΣΤΙΣ and Pauline Christology: What Is at Stake?" in *The Society of Biblical Literature 1991 Seminar Papers* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991), 718-720. The argument of Stanley K. Stowers, "EK ΠΙΣΤΕΩΣ and ΔΙΑ ΠΙΣΤΕΩΣ in Romans 3:30," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 108 (1989): 672 n. 37, that Paul does not always link ἐκ πίστεως to Habakkuk 2:4 is not convincing. Stowers criticizes Hays' Christological interpretation of Habakkuk 2:4 by pointing out that Paul also applies ἐκ πίστεως to Abraham. However, in rejecting such a Christological interpretation, Stowers ignores the strong linguistic evidence connecting Habakkuk 2:4 to Paul's use of ἐκ πίστεως. The key to understanding the strength of this connection is the appreciation of the uniqueness of ἐκ πίστεως both in the Septuagint as well as the New Testament. Most commentators miss this point.

cites Habakkuk 2:4.

Exegesis of Romans 1:17

Context

After his initial greeting and opening salutation, Paul begins to speak to his Roman readers about the connection between faith and the gospel of Christ. In thanking God for them, Paul remarks that their faith is spoken about throughout the whole world (1:8). They themselves can encourage Paul by their faith as also vice versa (1:12). Paul looks forward to being able to come to Rome to proclaim the gospel to those there who already believe, whether Jew or Gentile, wise or foolish (1:14).

At Romans 1:16-17, Paul makes the first connection in this epistle between righteousness, faith, and the gospel. The connecting particle γὰρ reveals the reason for Paul's eagerness to proclaim the gospel: it is God's power (δύναμις) to bring about salvation to all who believe (παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι) it. If it is the gospel (of Christ, see 1:9 and also D^c Ψ ™ at 1:16) that is the power unto salvation, then it is faith in that gospel that receives this salvific power. This is true because there is a righteousness from God, God's righteousness (δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ), that is revealed in that gospel, a righteousness that is completely bound up in faith (ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν). As his proof text for this and, arguably, for the entirety of chapters 1-6, Paul uses Habakkuk 2:4, ὁ δὲ

δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται (1:17).

In Romans 1:17 Paul gives the reason he can call the gospel "the power of God for salvation. . . ." In this gospel, or perhaps even, "by means of it" (ἐν αὐτῷ), God's righteousness (δικαιοσύνη) is being constantly revealed ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν. It is significant here that Paul uses the present tense (ἀποκαλύπτεται).⁴ For Paul, the proclamation of the gospel is an ongoing process. While the sacrifice that brings about justification is spoken of in the aorist tense (e.g., Romans 3:25), by continuing proclamation of the gospel the righteousness of God continues to be revealed.

EXCURSUS: THE PAULINE CONCEPT OF JUSTIFICATION

The object of ἐκ πίστεως for Paul is the justification of the sinner before God. This Paul represents by using the terms δικαιοσύνη, δικαιόω, and δίκαιος. Crucial, therefore, to the understanding of ἐκ πίστεως is an appreciation for the Pauline use of δικαιοσύνη, κ.τ.λ. A comprehensive study of this word lies beyond the scope of the present study, but a brief examination will be necessary.

Linguistically, it has been argued that because

⁴See C. H. Dodd, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans*, *The Moffatt New Testament Commentary* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1932), 13.

verbs that end in -όω are often causative, δικαιόω must mean "to make righteous." However, verbs in -όω do not always have the full causative idea, for example, ἀξιόω, not "to make worthy," but "to deem worthy."⁵ Therefore, linguistically, δικαιόω can mean either "to make righteous," or "to deem righteous." However, as Morris notes,

the meaning of a word is to be determined in the last resort by the way people used it. We cannot say that, since a verb is formed in such and such a fashion, therefore the Greeks must have understood it so and so.⁶

Therefore it is usage, not formation, that determines meaning. In secular Greek, δικαιόω means "to deem right," "to claim or demand as a right," "to do a man justice."⁷

⁵A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1934), 149. Robertson in this section cites δικαιόω, defined as "deem righteous," as justification for his assertion that verbs in -όω are not always causative. Therefore, if the argument of Leon Morris, *The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross*, 3d ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1965), 252, is based upon Robertson, it is to a degree circular. Morris does also list ὁμοιόω and ὁσιόω as other examples of non-causative -όω verbs, however. F. Godet, *Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, trans. A. Cusin, translation revised and ed. Talbot W. Chambers, 2d ed. (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1885), 95, also adds ζημιόω, μισθόω, λουτρόω, and μαστιγόω as further examples.

⁶Morris, *Apostolic Preaching*, 252.

⁷Ibid. Gottfried Quell and Gottlob Schrenk, "δίκη, κ.τ.λ." in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 10 vols., ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing

In the Septuagint the concept of righteousness is based upon the root צדק. In the hiphil, צדק means "to do justice" or "to declare righteous,"⁸ or "to acquit someone."⁹ In the gal, it means simply "to be just or righteous."¹⁰ Yahweh is righteous because He can be depended upon to act according to His own law. The capriciousness that so marked pagan deities was not evident in the righteous God of Israel. And because He is righteous, He can require of His people that they also live in accordance with that law. If they have not, there must be punishment from the righteous Yahweh. This is the anticipated objection with which Paul deals in Romans 3:21-26. If God is righteous, then why has He left sin unpunished? How can He justify (acquit) those who are guilty? Paul's answer is that God's righteousness is demonstrated in the blood-sacrifice of Christ.¹¹ This sacrifice of atonement

Co., 1964-1976), 2:211 [hereafter T.D.N.T.], indicates that the basic meaning of δικαιόω is "to make righteous." However, when one looks at his examples, he is actually speaking in declarative terms.

⁸Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, Charles A. Briggs, *The New Brown -- Driver -- Briggs -- Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon* (N.p.: Christian Copyrights, Inc., 1983), s.v. צדק.

⁹Quell and Schrenk, 212. See Deut. 25:1, where the meaning must be "acquit."

¹⁰Brown, Driver, Briggs, s.v. צדק.

¹¹See the comment of Morris, *Apostolic Preaching*,

meets God's righteous requirements on behalf of all mankind, so that all who believe are freely justified by His grace. This is the "righteousness of God" that is being revealed in the gospel proclaimed by Paul (Romans 1:17).

For Paul, man's righteousness is the result of being declared righteous by God. In the words of Gottlob Schrenk, "righteousness is forensically ascribed to the believer."¹² However, God only makes this declaration of righteousness as a result of the ἰλαστήριον that He Himself offered in Christ Jesus (Romans 3:25). This righteousness comes from God both ἐκ πίστεως and διὰ πίστεως (Romans 3:30). It is not to be found ἐξ ἔργων (Romans 9:32), as some Jews attempted to do.

Man's righteousness was, for the Jews, a different matter. Although the concept of justification by faith is not spelled out as clearly in the Old Testament as in the New, the concept of man's righteousness being dependent upon God's mercy, and that such mercy is abundant, is clearly enunciated. Passages such as Isaiah 55:1-7; Micah 7:18-19; Psalm 130:3-5; and Daniel 9:9 show that God is

278: "The fact that God had not always punished sin with full severity in the past, but had 'passed over' such sin, gave rise to the danger that He might not appear to men to be completely righteous. But now, in the cross, He has forever removed that danger."

¹²Quell and Schrenk, 204.

merciful and forgiving, capable of justifying man before His throne. This concept became for the Jews of later centuries a confused doctrine. The rabbis concentrated on the forensic aspect of justification to the point that it is "everywhere assumed that being righteous means being accepted with God because acquitted (*sic*) by His judgment."¹³ Normally the one who is acquitted in a legal proceeding is the innocent party. But, according to the Jewish concept of "righteousness," he is not righteous because of his actual innocence, but because he is *acknowledged* to be innocent by the judge.¹⁴

In the rabbinic period, a man's righteousness was thought to depend upon a thoroughgoing examination and measurement of his good and evil works. It was taught that

every year on New Year's Day God weighs the merits and demerits of men, assigning rewards and punishments, but that He gives them until the Day of Atonement to repent. . . before His decree becomes unalterable.¹⁵

¹³Morris, *Apostolic Preaching*, 266.

¹⁴Rudolph Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, 2 vols., trans. Kendrick Grobel (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951-1955), 1:272. This point was lost on the Jews, who saw man's only hope of righteousness as actual innocence (obedience to the Torah). They failed to recognize that God's mercy and grace (see Bultmann, 281-285) could provide that status of righteousness for man. They failed to perceive the *ἰλαστήριον* of the Messiah, and so missed the revelation of the righteousness of God in it.

¹⁵Morris, *Apostolic Preaching*, 266.

The means for justification, according to the rabbis, was works of the law. Where the Old Testament often uses the term צדיק to refer to a man of upright moral character, the rabbis used the term of him who is favorably judged before God's tribunal. This forensic usage, although not in the context of a system of merit-justification, is utilized by Paul. Each work of law was assigned, according to the rabbis, a different value of merit. If the merits of a man's good deeds outweighed the demerits of his bad deeds, then that man could be said to be "righteous."¹⁶ Faith did play a role in this system of merits, but only as one of many meritorious good works. Since man does not know the relative weights of each merit and demerit, there can be no assurance of such righteousness or, consequently, of eternal destiny.¹⁷

¹⁶Ibid., 267; Quell and Schrenk, 196-197. Schrenk, 197, identifies "alms, works of charity, and the merit of the fathers" as "helpful" in amassing merits. Schrenk also cites here an exceptional passage, 4 Esdras 8:36: "For thereby are thy righteousness and goodness manifested, that thou mightest have pity on those who have no treasure of good works." Clearly, there were some strands of Judaism that associated God's righteousness with His mercy. Although we note that this is said to be God's righteousness, not the righteousness of man before God. See the discussion below concerning the righteousness of God, pp. 73-80.

¹⁷Morris, *Apostolic Preaching*, 268. Morris here cites Hillel's dictum: "trust not in thyself until the day of thy death" (*Aboth* ii.5.). Also related is the story of an aged rabbi "who, although a good man, was facing death with alarm, not knowing whether he was bound for Paradise or Gehenna" (*Berakhoth* 28b).

Such was the Jewish milieu in which Paul found himself.¹⁸ Paul's task was to communicate to Jewish Christians, as well as to gentile Christians who had been affected by Judaizing influences, that man's righteousness before God did not consist in merits derived from works of law, but rather in God's declaration of righteousness on the basis of Christ's sacrifice, a righteousness that is by faith.¹⁹

Revelation of the "Righteousness of God"

Revelation and Eschatology

Romans 1:17 can be conveniently broken down into two segments. Verse 17a picks up the thought of verse 16a: Paul is not ashamed of the gospel because of its saving power to all who believe. Furthermore (17a), it is the revelation of God's righteousness "from faith to faith." Verse 17b then provides the justification for this emphasis on faith with respect to salvation and revelation of God's righteousness: "Just as it is written. . . ."

The connection between verse 17a and 16 is made

¹⁸In which he also had formerly participated before the resurrected Christ personally called him.

¹⁹The term "righteousness of God" will be discussed below.

explicit by the appearance of γάρ.²⁰ Yet the position of prominence and resulting emphasis in this sentence is held by δικαιοσύνη.²¹ Clearly there is a parallel construction between δύναμις γάρ Θεοῦ in verse 16 and δικαιοσύνη γάρ Θεοῦ in verse 17a.²² As the gospel is the salvific power of God, so also is it the revelation of His righteousness. As Anders Nygren indicates: "In the beginning of verse 17 Paul brings together four extraordinarily important concepts: the gospel, the righteousness of God, revelation, and faith."²³ Note that these themes also come together in Psalm

²⁰Although modern readers tend to pass over particles such as γάρ, these played a very important role for Greek writers. A. T. Robertson, 443, notes:

The Greeks, especially in literary style, felt the propriety of indicating the inner relation of the various independent sentences that composed a paragraph. This was not merely an artistic device, but a logical expression of coherence of thought.

²¹It should be noted that when Paul speaks of the "righteousness of God," he often emphasizes δικαιοσύνη (as here, δικαιοσύνη . . . Θεοῦ; also 2 Corinthians 5:21). Sometimes, however, Paul writes Θεοῦ δικαιοσύνη (the "of God" righteousness), when he wishes to contrast the righteousness that comes from God with the failed attempts of men (Jews) to justify themselves before God by means of works of the law (Romans 10:3; Philippians 3:9, but note Romans 3:21).

²²R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans* (N.p.: Lutheran Book Concern, 1936; reprint, Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1961), 78.

²³Anders Nygren, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. Carl C. Rasmussen (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1949), 77. John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans*, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament*, 2 vols. in 1 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1959-1965), 1:29, also makes this point.

98:2-3:

The Lord has made his *salvation* known and *revealed* his *righteousness* to the nations. He has remembered his love and his *faithfulness* to the house of Israel; all the ends of the earth have seen the *salvation* of our God (NIV, emphasis added).²⁴

There has been some question as to whether ἐν αὐτῷ in verse 17a is adjectival or adverbial, that is, whether it modifies δικαιοσύνη or ἀποκαλύπτεται. Is Paul saying that the righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel?²⁵ Or is he saying that the righteousness of God, already contained in the gospel, is being revealed?²⁶ Virtually all commentators ignore this question, but Douglas Campbell has recently called attention to it.²⁷ Campbell shows that

²⁴The Masoretic text reads 'תְּיָדָעַי at Psalm 98:3, the equivalent of the Habakkuk 2:4 reading, 'תְּיָדָעַי. Yet where the Septuagint reads ἐκ πίστεως at Habakkuk 2:4, the same reads καὶ ἀληθείας at Psalm 97:3. See the discussion below on the interpretation of Habakkuk 2:4.

²⁵Clearly, εὐαγγέλιον is the antecedent of αὐτῷ. See e.g., C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, The International Critical Commentary, 2 vols. (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1975-1979), 1:91; Douglas Moo, *Romans 1-8*, The Wycliffe Exegetical Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991), 64.

²⁶The answer to this question depends, to an extent, upon the meaning of "righteousness of God" as used by Paul. The question also has ramifications for understanding ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν. These issues will be discussed below.

²⁷Douglas A. Campbell, "Romans 1:17 -- A *Crux Interpretum* for the ΠΙΣΤΟΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ Debate," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 113 (1994): 271-273. Campbell sets up a bit of a "straw man." Virtually all commentators *implicitly* agree that the phrase is adverbial. They may not, however, agree with the remainder of Campbell's conclusions

taking ἐν αὐτῷ adjectivally results in a rather weak statement which assumes as fact that God's righteousness is contained in the gospel. The adverbial reading, however, results in a more dynamic, vibrant expression: "the disclosure of a previously unseen righteousness of God to the world. . . ." ²⁸ Such an expression is the logical complementary counterpart to verse 16. In anticipating the question, "Where is God's righteousness?" (since it cannot be obtained by works of the law and since God is said to justify the sinner), Paul answers that the righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel. This is also part of Habakkuk's complaint, "How long will the unrighteous go unpunished?" Significantly, Paul's answer to the question "Where is righteousness?" comes in the form of Habakkuk's gospel: "The righteous by faith shall live."

Often overlooked is the significance of the verb ἀποκαλύπτεται in determining the meaning of δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ. Before turning to the latter phrase, it will be profitable to consider the concept of "revelation."

The verb ἀποκαλύπτω signifies an eschatological context. ²⁹ In the Septuagint "'to be revealed,' means much

regarding implications for the πίστις Χριστοῦ debate.

²⁸Ibid., 272.

²⁹Albrecht Oepke, "καλύπτω, κ.τ.λ.," in *T.D.N.T.*, 3: 576-577 and passim. Also Campbell, "Romans 1:17," 275-276; James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, Word Biblical Commentary,

the same as 'to appear,'"³⁰ but in the eschatological sense of the Messianic age of salvation (e.g., Isaiah 40-66). When used for the impartation of knowledge, it is not intellectual knowledge, but "intuitive contact with what is concealed in transcendence."³¹ In the intertestamental period and beyond, Judaism does not expect direct revelation from God in its own day. Prophecy is over (1 Maccabees 4:46; 9:27; 14:41). The Torah is Israel's revelation, which is valid for all time. But new revelation is expected in the last time. However, this new revelation is expected to be a Messianic reinterpretation of the law or gift of a new Torah by the Messiah.³² Qumran applied this understanding of Messianic revelation to the Teacher of Righteousness, who would guarantee "the correct exposition and proclamation" of the law.³³

vol. 38A (Dallas: Word Books, 1988), 43; Joseph Fitzmyer, *Romans*, The Anchor Bible, vol. 33 (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1993), 257; Moo, 64. A surprising number of commentators give this little or no consideration, e.g., Cranfield, C. H. Dodd, Godet, Lenski, Morris, Murray, and Sanday and Headlam.

³⁰Oepke, "καλύπτω, κ.τ.λ.," 577.

³¹Ibid.

³²Ibid.

³³Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1980), 31.

In the New Testament that Messiah is revealed, yet also concealed. He is revealed because He "tabernacles" with human flesh and blood and they "behold His glory" (John 1:14). Yet He is concealed in that His glory is not fully visible in this time, but requires revelation. Jesus indicates that His Messianic glory will be revealed at the *parousia* (Luke 17:30). But even now one can perceive that Messiahship in Him, if it is revealed to him (Matthew 16:17).³⁴

Jewish thought came to view the righteousness of God in this eschatological framework. Rudolph Bultmann remarks:

The more Jewish piety came to be determined by eschatology -- i.e. the more the pious expected God's rightwising verdict to come from His eschatological judgment -- the more *the forensic term "righteousness" became an eschatological term.*³⁵

Paul, however, sees this eschatological acquittal called the "righteousness of God" as "*already imputed to man in the present.*"³⁶ This is the true process of revelation.³⁷

³⁴Oepke, "καλύπτω, κ.τ.λ.," 580. Peter's confession, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16, NIV) is indeed the core of the gospel which Paul calls the "power of God for salvation" and in which is being revealed the righteousness of God. See Romans 1:2-4.

³⁵Bultmann, 1:273 (emphasis in original).

³⁶Ibid., 1:274 (emphasis in original). See also Quell and Schrenk, 207-208.

³⁷The comments of Oepke, "καλύπτω, κ.τ.λ.," 591, summarizing "revelation in the narrow sense" are

Although the "righteousness of God" is an eschatological concept, it is being revealed right now in the gospel.

Bultmann writes:

For [Romans 1:17] does not mean that the preached gospel expounds some teaching about righteousness, but that through it righteousness becomes a possibility (which in faith becomes a reality) for the hearer of the gospel.³⁸

instructive for understanding the "now-not yet" nature of the "righteousness of God:"

[Revelation in the narrow sense] is the turning of the holy and gracious God to men who are lost in sin and death. This is prepared in the salvation history of the OT and actualized in the incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It now awaits its consummation in the *parousia*. By derivation, however, revelation is also the message which transmits this content. It is the effective transmission to the hearer. This does not imply that revelation does not become revelation until this takes place, until it is received as such. It thereby becomes revelation for individuals. . . . In brief, revelation in the NT is the self-offering of the Father of Jesus Christ for fellowship.

This last sentence of Oepke's is somewhat convoluted (at least in translation) and weakened by his choice of "fellowship" as the object of Christ's sacrifice. Obviously Oepke is referring to the Father's presentation of Christ as *ἱλαστήριον*. But the result of this sacrifice Bultmann would call the "rightwising" of man. Of course, this "rightwising" results in fellowship and peace (reconciliation) with God.

³⁸Bultmann, 1:274-275. Bultmann, 1:276, further speaks of the paradox of the "now-not yet" nature of the righteousness of God:

The paradoxicality of his assertion is this: God already pronounces His eschatological verdict (over the man of faith) in the present; the eschatological event is already present reality. . . . Therefore, the righteousness which God adjudicates to the man (the man of faith) is not "sinlessness" in the sense of ethical perfection, but is "sinlessness" in the sense that God does not "count" man's sins against him (II Cor 5:19).

The "Righteousness of God"

Revelation must have content to give it such saving power. This content is "the righteousness of God."³⁹ Understanding the "righteousness of God" in this eschatological framework greatly assists in dealing with the debate over whether this phrase refers to God's gift of the declared status of righteousness imputed to man, or to God's action in making man righteous. The status of God-given righteousness, man's acquittal before the judgment-seat of God, is the eschatological component to the "righteousness of God." God's saving action is the present component. Thus neither alternative in the debate should be held to the exclusion of the other.

The phrase δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ is absent from the Septuagint, although δικαιοσύνη is modified by a personal pronoun (such as αὐτοῦ) the antecedent of which is θεός 48 times, mostly in the Psalms and Isaiah. Δικαιοσύνη κυρίου also occurs twice. In these phrases, δικαιοσύνη usually translates צְדָקָה (32 times) or צְדָקָה (12 times). But it can also translate חֶסֶד (Exodus 15:13 and Isaiah 63:7) and אֱמֶת (Isaiah 38:19 and Daniel 9:13^{LXX}). When the δικαιοσύνη/צְדָקָה of God is considered in the Old Testament,

³⁹Martin H. Franzmann, *Romans*, Concordia Commentary (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1968), 35; Morris, *Apostolic Preaching*, 277.

a close connection with the saving activity of God (σωτηρία) can be seen (e.g., Psalm 51:14 [50:16 LXX], Isaiah 46:13).⁴⁰ Dunn also notes:

Particularly in the Psalms and Second Isaiah the logic of covenant grace is followed through with the result that righteousness and salvation become virtually synonymous."⁴¹

This salvific nature of God's righteousness can be seen as support for interpreting δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ as a subjective genitive. But it should be remembered that, when seen from the perspective of the recipient of this salvific activity, there is included also an objective aspect of the status of righteousness now enjoyed by the redeemed man, the status conferred upon him by God.⁴²

But there is also a judgmental aspect to God's

⁴⁰Moo, 77.

⁴¹Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 41. See also Matthew Black, *Romans*, New Century Bible Commentary, 2d ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co.; London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1989), 33.

⁴²Moo, 77-78. Moo, 78, includes 16 other Old Testament instances of God's righteousness as His "saving intervention." He also identifies, 78-79, a related meaning of God's righteousness in the Old Testament that is not God's salvific activity *per se*, but rather the "basis" or "motivation" for it. Moo lists 16 passages, mostly from the Psalms and Isaiah, that fit this description. Among these are the passages alluded to earlier in which δικαιοσύνη translates צדק and מִצְדִּיק, and which are paralleled by ἔλεος and ἀλήθεια. Moo admits that it is not always easy to distinguish between this use and the "salvific activity" of God mentioned above.

righteousness in the Old Testament. God sits in judgment as He rules over unbelieving Israel (e.g., Psalm 50:4-6; 67:4; 89:14; 94:15; 97:2). But even this judgment is to be considered God's salvific activity. God rules in such a way as to deliver Israel from her unbelieving enemies. These enemies may be gentiles or they may be unfaithful Israel, the enemy of the true (believing) Israel.⁴³

By way of analysis of the Pauline expression δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ, Moo presents the various alternative interpretations in the clearest manner. It will be helpful to outline these alternatives:

- I. An attribute of God
 - A. God's justice
 - B. God's faithfulness
- II. A status given by God (genitive of source or objective genitive)
- III. An activity of God (subjective genitive)⁴⁴

From the preceding discussion it is evident that the two categories for describing δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ as an attribute of God, God's justice and God's faithfulness, are related. There have, however, been differing stresses in interpretation. Understanding the "righteousness of God" as God's distributive justice led to works-righteousness in early Christendom, just as had occurred earlier in Judaism.

⁴³Ibid., 79-80.

⁴⁴Ibid., 65-68. Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 259-263, lays out the various alternatives in a similar manner, though he lacks the clarity of Moo.

This was the backdrop against which Martin Luther first struggled with the concept.⁴⁵ The "righteousness of God" can also be taken to refer to God's faithfulness in keeping His promises. Such a connection is clearly seen in Psalm 98:2-3, as well as in the general connection between God's δικαιοσύνη and His σωτηρία.⁴⁶ This view is traced back to Ambrosiaster, who used it repeatedly in describing God's mercy.⁴⁷

Luther finally settled on the objective genitive understanding of δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ. In so doing, Luther departed from the Scholastic idea of God's righteousness being an attribute and followed Augustine in identifying it objectively as the status of righteousness given by God by means of which man has access to salvation.⁴⁸ Luther departed from Augustine and other medieval theologians in viewing this righteousness as purely forensic, a matter of status, rather than as internal renewal or moral

⁴⁵Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 259-260. Fitzmyer identifies this emphasis on distributive justice with Pelagianism. He then outlines briefly the later modifications to this concept which, when combined, determined the milieu in which Luther grappled with Romans 1:17. See also Moo, 65.

⁴⁶See above, pp. 73-74.

⁴⁷Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 259; Moo, 66 n. 15.

⁴⁸Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 261.

transformation.⁴⁹ For Luther:

God's righteousness is that by which we become worthy of His great salvation, or through which alone we are (accounted) righteous before Him. . . . This righteousness is not, however, that according to which God Himself is righteous as God, but that by which we are justified by Him through faith in the Gospel. It is called the righteousness of God in contradistinction to man's ⁵⁰ [supposed] righteousness which comes from works.

In favor of this objective genitival understanding the following points have been given: (1) God's δικαιοσύνη in Romans 10:3 and Philippians 3:9 seem to require this understanding, as does Romans 5:17 with respect to δικαιοσύνη in the absolute. (2) The emphasis on faith in Romans 1:17 (ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν) seems to favor the idea of a status conferred by "faith to faith." (3) The Habakkuk quotation focuses attention on the justified status of ὁ δίκαιος. (4) Some have noted that Habakkuk 2:4 outlines the first eight chapters of Romans, chapters 1-4 answering the question of how man can be righteous before God, while chapters 4-8 show how the justified will live. According to this understanding, God's righteousness is said to be better understood as the status of righteousness given to

⁴⁹Moo, 66. The Augustinian understanding of God's righteousness as moral transformation still persists in Roman dogma today.

⁵⁰Martin Luther, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. J. Theodore Mueller (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1954; reprint, Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1976), 40-41.

man whereby he may stand justified before God.⁵¹ While all of these points are accurate, it is difficult to see how any of them, except perhaps the first, would tend to exclude a subjective genitival interpretation.⁵²

Most modern commentators favor at least inclusion of the subjective genitival interpretation of the "righteousness of God" alongside that of the objective genitive. In favor of the subjective genitive are: (1) In Romans 3:5, θεοῦ δικαιοσύνην must be a subjective genitive. (2) Δύναμις . . . θεοῦ (Romans 1:16) and ὄργη θεοῦ (Romans 1:18) are certainly subjective genitives, referring to God's actions rather than to statuses conferred. (3) God's יְרֵקָה in the Old Testament refers at least in part to His salvific activity (see above). (4) The expression "the righteousness of God" may have been a technical term in late Jewish apocalyptic for God's "saving justice."⁵³ While these points do not necessarily exclude the objective genitival interpretation, they do give convincing evidence to support the subjective genitival interpretation.

Of late, however, the question has been asked, "Must we make this choice between objective and subjective

⁵¹Cranfield, 1:97-98.

⁵²See Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 262.

⁵³Cranfield, 1:96. On (4), see also Käsemann, 27-28.

genitive?"⁵⁴ Increasingly, the answer has been, "No."⁵⁵ Instead of an "either status or activity" dichotomy, the "righteousness of God" should be viewed as "a relational concept, bringing the aspects of activity and status together."⁵⁶ It is "a relationship in which God acts even for the defective partner. . . ,"⁵⁷ "an action by which God brings people into right relationship with Himself."⁵⁸ Here Paul bridges the gap between the Jewish eschatological concept of a *future* revelation of God's righteous judgment and/or vindication and the purely present, ethical

⁵⁴Moo, 69. A. T. Robertson, 499, indicates that "in itself the genitive is neither subjective nor objective. . . ." Although stopping short of saying that it can be *both*, Robertson reminds that strict divisions in this matter may be arbitrary. Käsemann, 28, finds it "comical" that rules of language can serve as a screen behind which "everyone conceals his own opinion."

⁵⁵Most commentators who hold the subjective genitival view will also allow for the objective, e.g., Dunn, *Romans* 1-8, 41-43; Käsemann, 28; Moo, 69-73. Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 263, who argues for a strictly subjective interpretation, is an exception.

⁵⁶Moo, 70. See also Peter Stuhlmacher, *Paul's Letter to the Romans*, trans. Scott J. Hafemann (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1994), 32. Even Cranfield, 1:98-99 n. 1, who argues for the objective sense, admits that "a direct reference to [either objective or subjective genitival reading of the text] carries with it an indirect reference to the other."

⁵⁷Dunn, *Romans* 1-8, 41.

⁵⁸Moo, 70.

Hellenistic understanding of righteousness.⁵⁹ Paul proclaims this righteousness "revealed" now in the gospel of Christ.⁶⁰ Douglas Moo summarizes concerning the advantages of "this more comprehensive interpretation of [δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ]:"

First, it is built on the most frequent meaning of the phrase in the OT. . . . Second, it does justice to the nuances of both divine activity and human receptivity that occur in [Romans 1:17]. Third, it enables us to relate the phrase to Paul's broader use of [δικαιοσύνη], where he frequently highlights the end result of. . . justification in the believer's status of righteousness.⁶¹

EXCURSUS: "RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD" AND "KINGDOM OF GOD"

This present yet eschatological, objective yet subjective, nature of the "righteousness of God" is reminiscent of another powerful New Testament genitive: the "kingdom of God."⁶² The concept of God's kingdom is tied to

⁵⁹Herman Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology*, trans. John Richard De Witt (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1975), 164.

⁶⁰Käsemann, 29, points out that Qumran could speak of a present justification. But this, of course, was without Christ. It was spoken of in terms of a renewal of the old covenant -- once again, a relational concept of God's righteousness. It remains a possibility that Paul had in Qumran a functioning vocabulary for expressing the present saving aspect of God's righteousness.

⁶¹Moo, 70.

⁶²Käsemann, 29, notes this in passing with respect to the present yet eschatological nature of each. But he fails to develop the thought. Nygren, 76, also touches on this: "[The righteousness of God] is the universal mark of the new age, of God's kingdom which has come through Christ."

His righteousness already in the Old Testament, for example, at Jeremiah 23:5-6 where Yahweh will raise up a righteous king for Israel. Finally, Paul himself makes the connection in Romans 14:17. The above descriptions by Moo and James Dunn of God's righteousness are similar to Martin Scharlemann's noted paraphrase of the "kingdom of God:" "when God is active redemptively in order to reestablish His rule over and among men. . . ." ⁶³ One might similarly paraphrase the "righteousness of God" as "when God is active redemptively in order to reestablish His justice over and among men." It is not that His justice is absent today, any more than that God's rule is absent. But both must be revealed. ⁶⁴ They are being revealed in the gospel. ⁶⁵

Peter Stuhlmacher also speaks of the concept of God's righteousness in the Old Testament and early Judaism

⁶³Martin H. Scharlemann, *Proclaiming the Parables*, The Witnessing Church Series (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1963), 45.

⁶⁴The synoptics report Jesus' words to His disciples: Ἰμῖν δέδοται γνῶναι τὰ μυστήρια τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ (Luke 8:10, the wording of Matthew and Mark does not differ materially). While the word ἀποκαλύπτω is not used, clearly the concept of revelation is present.

⁶⁵Here there is great irony. God's justice and His rule are not manifested only in His law, as one would expect. This would result only in condemnation for man's unfaithfulness and disobedience. Rather God's justice and rule are manifested in the gospel, which shows that Christ is the ἰλαστήριον that satisfies God's justice and the king triumphant over the enemies of His people.

in strikingly similar words:

God's righteousness thus means the activity of God through which he creates well-being and salvation in history. . . , in creation, and in the situation of the earthly or eschatological judgment.⁶⁶

Again one is reminded of Scharlemann's "when God is active. . . ." C. H. Dodd speaks of the ". . . eschatological power of God at work in the world. In other words, the 'eschatological' Kingdom of God is proclaimed as a present fact."⁶⁷ One could substitute "righteousness of God" for Dodd's "kingdom of God" and thus capture the eschatological essence of God's righteousness.⁶⁸ One could also loosely apply Dodd's "realized eschatology"⁶⁹ to the "righteousness of God."

It is not surprising then that the "kingdom of God," like the "righteousness of God," is closely connected to

⁶⁶Stuhlmacher, 30.

⁶⁷C. H. Dodd, *The Parables of the Kingdom*, 2d ed. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1961), 29.

⁶⁸See Dodd's discussion, *Romans*, 12-13, where he himself speaks of the righteousness of God in very similar eschatological terms to those he would later use to describe the kingdom of God. *Parables* was based on 1935 lectures; the preface to Dodd's *Romans* is dated 1932.

⁶⁹C. H. Dodd, *Parables*, 35. One would apply it only "loosely" because Dodd speaks of the impact of the "powers of the world to come" on this world in "a series of events. . . now in actual process." This was true with respect to Jesus' ministry. For Paul, these events (which comprise the "gospel") are accomplished historical fact.

faith. At Matthew 8:10-13 Jesus commends the centurion for his great faith, greater than that of Israel. He then implies that gentiles who have faith will replace Israelites who do not believe in the kingdom. This is similar to Paul's argument in Romans and Galatians. At Matthew 21:31-32 Jesus again indicates that faithful "sinners" will enter the kingdom of Heaven before the self-righteous priests and Pharisees. Furthermore, John came to show them the way of righteousness but they *did not believe* (v.32).

"From faith to faith"

In Romans 1:17 Paul proclaims that the righteousness of God is being revealed ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν. Here is actually the first instance of ἐκ πίστεως in this epistle. Grammatically, it is possible to take this phrase with either ἀποκαλύπτεται or with δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ, that is, either adverbially or adjectivally. The adjectival reading, however, would result in an awkward construction. It is far more likely that ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν modifies ἀποκαλύπτεται, which immediately precedes it.⁷⁰

⁷⁰Murray, 1:32. Käsemann, 31, believes that the phrase can refer neither to the subject nor to the verb. Instead, he believes it to be only "loosely" related to the preceding statement. Käsemann here has adopted some of the thought and language of Albrecht Oepke, "εἰς" in *T.D.N.T.*, 2:430: "In R. 1:17 ἐκ πίστεως is a loose addition, like διὰ πίστεως in R. 3:22, to define the phrase δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ." In his discussion, however, Käsemann, does apply ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν to the verb, but only indirectly by way

The phrase ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν has been variously understood. It has been held to mean, "from the faith of the Old Testament to the faith of the New Testament" (Tertullian, Origen), "from the faith of the preachers to the faith of the hearers" (Augustine), "from faith in one article to faith in another" (mentioned by Aquinas), "from present faith to future" (also mentioned by Aquinas), "from the faith of words to the faith of things" (again, Augustine), "from God's faithfulness to man's faith" (Ambrosiaster, followed by some modern commentators).⁷¹

Luther understood these words as referring to growth in the individual's faith:

These words evidently mean: The righteousness of God comes altogether from faith, but in such a way that there appear constant growth and constant greater clarity. . . .⁷²

of v. 16: "The revelation of God's righteousness, because it is bound to the gospel, takes place always only in the sphere of faith." Cranfield, 1:100, wants to connect the phrase to δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ in Paul's thought, although he admits that structurally it is connected to ἀποκαλύπτεται.

⁷¹Cranfield 1:99.

⁷²Luther, 41. Godet, 97, indicates that this "growth" view was also held by Melancthon and Calvin. So also William Sanday and Arthur Headlam, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, The International Critical Commentary (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1895), 28: "The phrase means 'starting from a smaller quantity of faith to produce a larger quantity.'" The difficulty with this view is that it ignores the connection to Habakkuk 2:4 (Godet, 97).

Matthew Black summarizes five ways that the phrase has been understood in modern times: (1) "from God's faithfulness to man's faith," (2) "through faith and nothing but faith," (3) "from the faith of a believer to the faith of others," (4) "through the deepening of the faith of the individual" (see above), (5) as a scribal error of vertical dittography with respect to ἐκ πίστεως in the Habakkuk 2:4 quotation, so as to be read simply ". . . ἀποκαλύπτεται εἰς πίστιν." These various readings result in an identical number of interpretations: (1) "from God's faithfulness to our faith," (2) "through faith and faith alone," (3) "through the spread of faith," (4) "through the deepening of the faith of the individual," (5) simply "to faith."⁷³

The first alternative, "from God's faithfulness to man's faith" has Karl Barth as its major proponent.⁷⁴ This concept has the advantage of incorporating both sides of the dual nature of πίστις/πίστηξ. This could aid in understanding Paul's reason for refusing to choose between the Masoretic reading of Habakkuk 2:4 ("his faith") and the corresponding Septuagintal reading ("my faithfulness"): he

⁷³Black, 34-35.

⁷⁴Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans*, trans. Edwin C. Hoskyns (Oxford: Oxford University Press; London: Humphrey Milford, 1933), 41.

may have intended both.⁷⁵ The theory's major detractor is the seeming awkwardness of understanding πίστις in differing senses in the same immediate context.⁷⁶ This, however, is overcome by the understanding that the Greeks considered it good form in rhetoric to lay on such ambiguities.⁷⁷ Thus Barth's hypothesis remains a viable possibility, although a rather complicated one for Paul's readers, ancient and modern, to follow.

The majority of interpreters take ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν as an intensifying rhetorical expression meaning "through faith alone."⁷⁸ Ernst Käsemann notes the "character of Semitic rhetoric" from parallels such as Jeremiah 9:2: ἐκ κακῶν εἰς κακά and Psalm 83:8: ἐκ θανάτου εἰς θάνατον.⁷⁹

⁷⁵See the discussion on Habakkuk 2:4 below.

⁷⁶Black, 34.

⁷⁷Dunn, *Romans* 1-8, 34.

⁷⁸E.g., Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, trans. and adapt. William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, rev. and augm. F. Wilbur Gingrich and Frederick W. Danker, 2d ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), s.v. ἐκ, 6d; Cranfield, 1:100; C. H. Dodd, *Romans*, 13-14; Käsemann, 31; Moo, 71; Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co.; Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1988), 70; Nygren, 78. Not surprisingly, we also see this emphasis in Luther's commentary. See the above quote in which Luther speaks about personal growth in faith, but also highlights the sola fide aspect, p. 84.

⁷⁹Käsemann also cites 2 Corinthians 2:16; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 2 Corinthians 4:17; John 1:16 and the

Producing the meaning "through faith and faith alone," this interpretation yields the plainest and most easily understandable sense of the text.

The quotation from Habakkuk 2:4 in the context of Romans 1:17 will be discussed below in Chapter 5 along with its context as quoted in Galatians 3:11.

Exegesis of Galatians 3:11-12

Context

Unlike the context of Romans 1:17, where Paul cites Habakkuk 2:4 by way of introduction to his main argument in that epistle, in Galatians 3:11 the Apostle cites this passage as support for his contention that gentiles (as well as Jews) are justified by having the same faith that Abraham had. This argument occurs in the approximate center of Galatians amid a barrage of Old Testament citations, and is supportive of Paul's main thesis that man's righteousness before God stems from faith rather than works.

In the latter portion of Galatians 2, Paul recounts

burial inscription ἐκ γῆς εἰς γῆν ὁ βίος οὗτος cited in *B. A. G. D.* s. v. κίοντις, 2d. Perhaps Käsemann has pushed his evidence too far, however. While the Septuagintal citations are likely Semitisms, the passages from 2 Corinthians may well not be. John 1:16 clearly does not belong in this context. The grave inscription does not seem to have a Semitic flavoring at all. Yet there is in expressions of the type ἐκ . . . εἰς an echo of the Hebrew idiom יָצָא . . . בָּרָא.

his conflict with Peter at Antioch regarding the latter's withdrawal from table fellowship with gentile Christians at the arrival of some "men from James" (2:12). Paul carefully lays down his premise in 2:16 that no man is justified by works of law, but rather we who have believed are justified by faith.⁸⁰

In Galatians 3, Paul severely criticizes⁸¹ his readers for falling back into works-righteousness. They should know better because the Scriptures have told them that they are justified as was Abraham, by faith. To this end Paul cites Genesis 15:6: [Ἀβραάμ] ἐπίστευσεν τῷ θεῷ, καὶ ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην. This, along with Habakkuk 2:4 becomes the foundation for Paul's argument. The Apostle reasons from Genesis 15:6 that those who have the same faith in God that Abraham displayed are "sons of Abraham"⁸² (v. 7). This includes also believing gentiles,

⁸⁰Whether Galatians' 2:15-21, or any portion thereof, was originally addressed to Peter presents an interesting question. The outcome of this question, however, does not affect the relevant points of the present discussion.

⁸¹See Galatians 3:1, ὦ ἀνόητοι Γαλάται, and the tone of 3:1-5.

⁸²This statement calls to mind Jesus' discourse in John 8:33-47 with those who claimed to be σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ (apparently the Pharisees of v. 13). Jesus tells these Jews that they are not τέκνα τοῦ Ἀβραάμ because they have not done what Abraham did (τὰ ἔργα τοῦ Ἀβραάμ). In this case ἔργα actually denotes Abraham's trust in God's Word. This the Pharisees did not do. Rather, they sought to kill the One (Jesus) who was speaking God's Word to them. This is an act of unbelief. It is the work of the devil, whose

as Paul cites Genesis 12:3: Ἐνευλογηθήσονται ἐν σοὶ πάντα τὰ ἔθνη.

Furthermore, Paul continues in Galatians 3:10, whoever is ἐξ ἔργων νόμου is under a curse. To support this Paul cites Deuteronomy 26:27, which indicates that those who fail to observe the entire law are under a curse. This is the result of trying to "have life in the law" rather than in faith (v. 11-12, contrasting Habakkuk 2:4 with Leviticus 18:5). But Paul goes on to show how Jesus has removed that curse by becoming a curse for us. For support of this reasoning Paul cites Deuteronomy 21:23: ἐπικατάρατος πᾶς ὁ κρεμᾶμενος ἐπὶ ξύλου.⁸³ Paul's conclusion to this section of Galatians then is contained in verse 14: εἰς τὰ ἔθνη ἡ εὐλογία τοῦ Ἀβραὰμ γένηται ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, ἵνα τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν⁸⁴ τοῦ πνεύματος λάβωμεν διὰ τῆς πίστεως.

children they really are (v. 44). Although the vocabulary is different, Jesus here makes the same argument as Paul in Galatians 3: he who "does" as Abraham did, namely, believes God's promise (and displays his faith in his deeds), is a true son of Abraham. He who rejects this promise of God, even though he may be a Jew, is not a true son of Abraham.

⁸³See Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "Crucifixion in Ancient Palestine, Qumran Literature, and the New Testament," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 40 (1978): 493-513 for a thorough discussion of the relationship of Deuteronomy 21:23 to the practice of crucifixion.

⁸⁴εὐλογίαν is read by p⁴⁶, D*, F^{9r}, G, 88*, it^{d,e,g,t}, Marcion, Ambrosiaster, Ephraem, Vigilus.

"By Law Is No One Justified Before God"

Paul's use of prepositions in this first clause of verse 11 is rather unusual. Instead of his customary ἐξ ἔργων νόμου, Paul here uses ἐν νόμῳ. Ἐν νόμῳ here corresponds to the fuller expression ἐξ ἔργων νόμου in verse 10, expressing the same idea.⁸⁵ Perhaps ἐν νόμῳ also represents somewhat of a generalization. It is not by specific works of the law, nor is it by any law at all, but rather by faith that man is justified before God. This idea fits well with Paul's use of δῆλον. The thrust then of Paul's statement in verses 10-11 is this: "those who are 'of works of law' are under a curse because indeed it is clear that by no type of law is anyone justified before God."⁸⁶

⁸⁵F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Exeter, England: Paternoster; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1982), 161. Richard N. Longenecker, *Galatians*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 41 (Dallas: Word Books, 1990), 118, argues for an "antithesis" between the two verses, taking δὲ as adversive. While his argument is difficult to follow, he appears to be taking δὲ with the whole of v. 11 and stating that the conclusion to this verse (Habakkuk 2:4) is antithetical to v. 10. Perhaps a better word than "antithesis" would have been "complementary." J. B. Lightfoot, *The Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1957 [reprint; Lightfoot's first edition, 1865]), 138, interprets δὲ as indicating "the same proposition proved in another way." So also Hans Dieter Betz, *Galatians*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 146.

⁸⁶R. Longenecker, 118, correctly cautions against seeing a "change of reference from the Mosaic law to 'law' in some universal sense." But the fact that such an idea presents itself is further evidence of a broadening in focus from v. 10 to v. 11.

Παρά τῷ θεῷ is perhaps somewhat unexpected. One might have expected a preposition expressing agency: "by law no one is justified by God." Using παρά in the spatial sense here highlights the efforts of the works-righteous Jews to *justify themselves* before God. In spite of their efforts at self-justification, they stand unjustified, cursed, before God because they have not kept the whole law.⁸⁷ The phrase παρά τῷ θεῷ indicates God's attitude or estimation.⁸⁸ God's attitude toward those who would seek to justify themselves by works of law is one of condemnation.

As evidence of Paul's assertion that "by law no one is justified," he cites Habakkuk 2:4 which indicates that righteousness and (eternal) life come ἐκ πίστεως. A detailed examination of this passage and its context as cited here and in Romans 1:17 follows in Chapter 5.

Paul draws a strict distinction between ὁ νόμος and that which is ἐκ πίστεως. After drawing the connection between righteousness, life, and faith from Habakkuk 2:4, Paul asserts in v. 12: ὁ δὲ νόμος οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκ πίστεως. Rather, Ὁ ποιήσας αὐτὰ ζήσεται ἐν αὐτοῖς. This last phrase

⁸⁷Donald Guthrie, *Galatians*, New Century Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co.; London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1973), 97, states: "the addition of the words 'before God'. . . focuses attention on justification as seen in the eyes of God, and is contrasted with any human interpretation of justification."

⁸⁸Burton, 165; R. Longenecker, 118.

is a reference to Leviticus 18:5. The Septuagint actually reads ὁ ποιήσας ἄνθρωπος ζήσεται ἐν αὐτοῖς, where ἄ, like Paul's αὐτὰ, properly refers to προστάγματα. . . καὶ. . . κρίματα in the preceding clause of Leviticus 18:5. Paul's readers, however, would have naturally connected it with the citation from Deuteronomy 27:26 at Galatians 3:10 (ποιῆσαι αὐτὰ).⁸⁹ Rather than actually offering life, Leviticus 18:5 pronounces judgment by virtue of its connection to Deuteronomy 27:26 (Galatians 3:10) on those who are not ἐκ πίστεως. This is quite a different perspective from that which the legalistic Judaizer would have gleaned. For the legalistic Jew, Leviticus 18:5 affirms the centrality of the Torah and the significance of "doing" it.⁹⁰ But Paul here shows that the end result of remaining in the law is to be under God's curse rather than to have life. The implication is that man is disqualified from receiving life from the law due to his inability to keep it perfectly. Paul's solution is to point to Christ, who has delivered man from this curse by "becoming a curse for us" (Galatians 3:13). Thus (eternal) life is not found in doing works of law, but rather it is διὰ/ἐκ πίστεως [Ἰησοῦ] Χριστοῦ (Galatians 2:16).

⁸⁹Bruce, *Galatians*, 162. This is seemingly the reason Paul made the slight modification in quoting Leviticus 18:5.

⁹⁰Betz, 148.

CHAPTER 5
EXAMINATION OF HABAKKUK 2:4 AS CITED BY PAUL
IN ROMANS 1:17 AND GALATIANS 3:11

Context in Habakkuk

Introduction

The prophet's complaint in Habakkuk concerns his questioning of God's justice/righteousness. His complaint is that Yahweh does not seem to answer his prayer for justice and that Yahweh seems indifferent to the injustices committed against Israel by the proud and haughty Chaldeans. The first chapter records Habakkuk's complaints and the Lord's answer to the first of these: that the Chaldeans are His tools to punish unfaithful Judah. In the next chapter, Habakkuk announces that he will go to his watchtower and wait for God's reply (2:1). The remainder of the chapter then is in the form of an oracle of response. Yahweh answers and tells Habakkuk to write the response down on tablets so that it may be revealed. The prophet is to wait patiently for this revelation and fulfillment, although it may seem to be delayed. The answer comes in 2:4-5, the arrogant Chaldeans will not

survive, but the righteous will live by his faith.¹

Syntax

The syntax of Habakkuk 2:4a is not entirely clear. It is indeed clear that a contrast exists between verse 4a and verse 4b, a contrast between the arrogant and the righteous. A "missing subject" has been conjectured as one looks in vain for a noun-form to coincide with וְצַדִּיק in v. 4b.² The form וְשָׁפָה ("puffed-up") is a pual perfect third person feminine singular, implying נַפְשָׁהּ as the subject. This yields the sense, "His soul is puffed-up and not upright within him." The question is, "Whose soul?" C. F. Keil believes that it can be inferred from 1:12-17: the Chaldeans'.³ It has also been conjectured that וְשָׁפָה be amended to וְשָׁפָה (masculine) so that the sense is: "He is

¹Ralph L. Smith, *Micah-Malachi*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 32 (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1984), 105.

²George J. Zemek, "Interpretive Challenges Relating to Habakkuk 2:4b," *Grace Theological Journal* 1 (1980): 57.

³C. F. Keil, *Minor Prophets*, Commentary on the Old Testament by C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, vol. 10 [2 vols. in 1], trans. James Martin (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., n.d.; reprint 1985), 2:72. So also Theodore Laetsch, *Minor Prophets*, Concordia Classic Commentary Series (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1956), 332; O. Palmer Robertson, *Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1990), 174-175.

puffed-up whose soul is not right within him."⁴ The Targum supplies "the wicked" as the "missing subject."⁵ The Greek translations show much confusion as well: Aquila substitutes *νωχελευομένου* ("heedless one") for *הַלְּפָנַי*; the Septuagint translates very freely, *ἐὰν ὑποστείλεται, οὐκ εὐδοκεῖ ἡ ψυχὴ μου ἐν αὐτῷ*.⁶ In any case, the reference is to the Chaldeans.⁷

Not to be lost in the confusion regarding Habakkuk 2:4a is the element of judgment that is inherent. The words *הַלְּפָנַי-אֵל* have in them more than merely an ethical or moral sense. Used often in the Wisdom Literature, *יָשָׁר* means to be upright in the sense of not being subject to God's destructive punishment (see Job 4:7). Therefore, for

⁴E.g., BHS apparatus; F. F. Bruce, "Habakkuk," in *The Minor Prophets*, ed. Thomas Edward McComiskey, 2 vols., (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1993), 2:860.

⁵Zemek, 57-58. See Kevin J. Cathcart, Michael Maher, and Martin McNamara, eds., *The Aramaic Bible*, vol. 14, *The Targum of the Minor Prophets* by Kevin J. Cathcart and Robert W. Gordon (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1989), 151 n. 17:

MT being obscure, Tg. introduces a general comment on the attitude of "the wicked" to the statements in the preceding two verses -- "the wicked" in contrast to "the righteous" mentioned in the second colon.

⁶See Bruce, "Habakkuk," 2:860 for a discussion of the variations in the Greek versions.

⁷Zemek, 57-61, reviews several attempts to clarify v. 4a. All are highly speculative. It is also possible to take *יָשָׁר* as the subject of both *הַלְּפָנַי* and *הַלְּפָנַי-אֵל*. None of these variations affect the conclusion that the Chaldeans are the object of the reference.

the soul to be לֹא-יִשָׁדָה "brings into view the annihilation of the whole of a person's existence, in that the word [נִשְׁמָה]. . . describes the vital being of a living person."⁸

The antithesis,⁹ however, of him who is subject to God's destructive wrath because he is arrogant and his soul is not upright is ó δίκαιος, the one who is צַדִּיק. Rather than facing God's destructive punishment, the one who is righteous receives life. In Hebrew thought, "life" is more than just "existence." One truly is alive when he is in a right relationship with God, that is, when he is צַדִּיק.¹⁰ Life itself is a blessing and death is a curse.¹¹ "Only by oneness with God, the source of life, may Israel expect to

⁸Mária Eszenyei Széles, *Wrath and Mercy: A Commentary on the Books of Habakkuk and Zephaniah*, International Theological Commentary, trans. George A. F. Knight (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co.; Edinburgh: Handsel Press, 1987), 31. See also O. P. Robertson, 175.

⁹Keil, 2:73, notes that the clause beginning וְצַדִּיק "is attached adversatively."

¹⁰H[elmer] Ringgren, "חַיָּה, κ.τ.λ.," in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, 7 vols., ed. G. J. Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren, trans. John T. Willis and David E. Green (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1974-1995), 4:334 [hereafter *T.D.O.T.*], cites Numbers 21:8-9 where the Israelites, having been bitten by serpents, "looked on the brazen serpent and 'lived.'" They "lived" because they put their trust in God's Word, His promise to give them life, though they were deserving of death.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 333-334. Ringgren cites Deuteronomy 30:16,19. O. P. Robertson, 183, continues by citing 30:20, ". . . for He is your life."

live."¹² So the righteous one shall "live in the full sense of the word, live in communion with God whose word he has trusted."¹³ The prophet wrestles with the eschatological nature of God's revelation to him. On the one hand, he knows that "we will not die" (Habakkuk 1:12), but on the other hand God's first revelation seems to predict destruction for Judah at the hands of the Chaldeans. Yet here in 2:4 is Yahweh's eschatological answer: The truly righteous (as opposed to the puffed-up ones) will live indeed!¹⁴ This is the eschatological vision, which may seem to be delayed, but which will indeed be fulfilled.¹⁵

The Righteous One

It is the צַדִּיק, the righteous one, who will have

¹²O. P. Robertson, 183. See also Zemek, 48-49.

¹³Martin H. Franzmann, *Romans*, Concordia Commentary (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1968), 37.

¹⁴O. P. Robertson, 183.

¹⁵R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans* (N.p.: Lutheran Book Concern, 1936; reprint, Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1961), 87-88, notes that the "life" promised in Habakkuk 2:4 should not be taken as strictly a future "heavenly" life. Life eternal is the possession even now of those who have been reborn in faith. This struggling of Habakkuk with the tension between death and life is perhaps brought out also in Jesus' words at John 11:25, where there is an affirmation of physical death, but also a promise of "life" beyond that death. See Laetsch, 332, "Even death cannot deprive them of their life and salvation." In John 3:15-16, Jesus indicates that this "life" is a present reality for the believer.

this gift of "life." The concept of righteousness in the Old Testament is bound inseparably to the idea of judicial standing.¹⁶ O.P. Robertson writes:

[Israel] was profoundly conscious of the fact that it was a covenant people, bound by solemn oath with life-and-death consequences centering on the law solemnly dictated by the Lord of the covenant. Everything hinged on the legal decision of the God of the covenant. . . . Therefore, in its OT context righteousness should be regarded first of all as a religious rather than an ethical term.¹⁷

The righteous one then is he who is declared to be innocent in terms of the covenant between Yahweh and His people.¹⁸

There is also an ethical component to צדיק. The צדיק is "he who goes back to the prescriptions of the Law that conform to the expressed will of God and who accepts its binding validity and submits to it wholly."¹⁹ The righteous one has indeed submitted himself to the binding

¹⁶O. P. Robertson, 175. See also the above excursus on δικαιοσύνη, pp. 60-66.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Thus James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 38A (Dallas: Word Books, 1983), 45, is incorrect when he equates the צדיק in Habakkuk 2:4 with "the faithful member of the covenant who fulfills the obligations laid upon him by the law of the covenant as a loyal Jew." While this may have been a common misunderstanding of the term in later Judaism, clearly "obedience" is not the major component in righteousness in the Old Testament. See the above excursus on δικαιοσύνη, pp. 57-62.

¹⁹Széles, 31.

authority of God's covenant. He returns to that covenant even though God's declaration of righteousness is already his. He returns to it in order to live a life fitting for a צדיק in Yahweh's eyes. In this sense, צדיק is contrasted to the condition of the "puffed-up," whose "soul is not upright within him."²⁰ Nevertheless, it is Yahweh's declaration that has made him צדיק, not his attempted obedience.²¹

Faith and Righteousness

O. P. Robertson enquires:

But the question then arises, "How does a person come to be declared righteous?" Does a human being actually exist who can stand before the scrutiny of God's judgment seat and be found absolutely guiltless?²²

The answer to Robertson's query is found in the word בְּאֵמוּנָהוּ. Yahweh tells the prophet by what means the righteous one is to be declared righteous and have this

²⁰O. P. Robertson, 176.

²¹The Qumran commentary on Habakkuk equates the "righteous" with "all those who observe the Law in the House of Judah" [1QpHab 8:1-3, translation: G. Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 2d ed. (Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1975), 239]. This would appear to be a legalistic understanding of righteousness. It is, however, somewhat tempered by a reference to "their faith in the Teacher of Righteousness" (ibid.).

²²O. P. Robertson, 176.

blessing of "life." It comes בְּאֵמוּנָתוֹ, "by his faith."²³ Keil indicates that בְּאֵמוּנָתוֹ belongs to יִהְיֶה, not to צְדִיק:"²⁴ "the righteous one, by his faith will he live," not "the one who is righteous by his faith, he will live." O. P.

Robertson notes:

Understanding by his steadfast trust to connect grammatically with *he shall live* rather than with the *justified* may appear to leave open the question of *how* a person becomes righteous. But the resulting emphasis only reinforces the fact that the source of righteousness always remains outside the person. If continuing life is a gift received by faith, then the righteousness that is the basis of life must have the same source.²⁵

Robertson continues:

The judicially righteous of Hab. 2:4b therefore are those justified precisely as was Abraham. He *believed* God and it was *reckoned* to him as righteousness. The *justified* of Hab. 2:4 therefore are the "justified by faith." Although the phrase *by his steadfast trust* relates to the gift of life rather than to the way of justification, the echo of Gen. 15:6 in Hab. 2:4 indicates that justification is by faith for Habakkuk even as it was for Abraham.²⁶

"Faith" here has a two-fold sense. This is the dual

²³See Chapter 2 for a detailed study of אֵמוּן/πίστις.

²⁴Keil, 2:73. Keil further notes that the *tiphchah* under בְּאֵמוּנָתוֹ simply indicates that it has the leading emphasis of the sentence, having been placed before the verb. See also O. P. Robertson, 176-177.

²⁵O. P. Robertson, 178 (emphasis in original).

²⁶Ibid. (emphasis in original). One should not miss the linguistic tie between Habakkuk 2:4 and Genesis 15:6: both speak of a righteousness connected to faith.

meaning that was identified in Chapter 2 above. Mária Széles describes this two-fold sense as "passive" and "active," passive in that it is a condition of steadfastness and perseverance; active in that it includes a response of commitment and obedience.²⁷ אמונה includes both inner attitude and outward conduct, but the emphasis is on the former.²⁸

There seems to have been some confusion in later Judaism about the nature of this "faith."²⁹ The Qumran Habakkuk *peshar* indicates that the righteous ("all those who observe the Law in the House of Judah") are delivered by God "because of their suffering and because of their faith in the Teacher of Righteousness."³⁰ If "suffering" in this sense can be interpreted as "labor over the Torah,"³¹ then the scroll is indeed an example of the type of synergistic works-righteousness that Paul was attempting to forestall in Romans and Galatians.³²

²⁷Széles, 32.

²⁸Alfred Jepsen, "אמונה, κ.τ.λ." in T.D.O.T., 1:317.

²⁹See above pp. 63-66 on works-righteousness and the emphasis upon "merits" of later Judaism.

³⁰Vermes, 239.

³¹Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1980), 31. Käsemann translates "toil" rather than "suffering."

³²It may in fact be purely works-righteousness.

Paul's Citation of Habakkuk 2:4 in Context

Introduction

If Paul's use of ἐκ πίστεως is indeed a conscious allusion to Habakkuk 2:4 as seems certain due to the uniqueness of that phrase at the passage in question within the Septuagint and its corresponding uniqueness in Paul to the two epistles in which Paul quotes Habakkuk 2:4,³³ then an understanding of his quotation of the aforementioned verse is vital to understanding that Pauline phrase.³⁴

Käsemann, 31, notes that the role Teacher of Righteousness was to correctly reveal (exposit, proclaim) the law. Although the scroll is speaking of personal faith in the Teacher of Righteousness, it is not faith in the vicarious "doer" of salvation. Käsemann concludes: "The relationship to him. . . stands under the sign of the law."

³³Richard B. Hays, "ΠΙΣΤΙΣ and Pauline Christology: What Is at Stake?" in *The Society of Biblical Literature 1991 Seminar Papers* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991), 718, calls ἐκ πίστεως an "exegetical catchphrase that alludes to the Habakkuk text." As have most commentators, Hays has observed the uniqueness of Paul's use of the phrase to the two epistles in which he quotes Habakkuk 2:4. But he, like his fellow commentators, has not appreciated the uniqueness of ἐκ πίστεως in the Septuagint (occurring only at Habakkuk 2:4). This further strengthens the "exegetical catchphrase" argument. The contention of Stanley K. Stowers, "ΕΚ ΠΙΣΤΕΩΣ and ΔΙΑ ΠΙΣΤΕΩΣ in Romans 3:30," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 108 (1989): 672 n. 37, that Paul does not allude to Habakkuk 2:4 each time he uses ἐκ πίστεως is highly questionable. Ἐκ πίστεως is not a usual expression in either the remainder of the New Testament (outside of Romans and Galatians) or the Septuagint.

³⁴See D[ouglas] A. Campbell, "The Meaning of ΠΙΣΤΙΣ and ΝΟΜΟΣ in Paul: A Linguistic and Structural Perspective," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 111 (1992): 101-102. Campbell also maintains that, by association, Habakkuk 2:4 is the key to understanding Paul's διὰ πίστεως and ἐκ/διὰ (ἔργων) νόμου.

Thus far Romans 1:17 and Galatians 3:11-12 have been examined. Habakkuk 2:4 has also been examined in its original context. It remains, however, to carefully study the manner in which Paul inserts this passage into his arguments.

In Romans 1:17 Paul's point is that the righteousness of God is being revealed in the gospel by faith. Paul finds in Habakkuk 2:4 a passage that links the concepts of righteousness and faith. To this is added the broader context of revelation in Habakkuk 2:4. Thus the passage in question supports Paul's point about the righteousness of God, while serving also as a proof text for his argumentation in subsequent chapters regarding justification by faith rather than works of the law.

Form of Text Quoted

The form of the text which Paul cites is neither the original reading of the Septuagint nor that of the Masoretic text, the main difference being one of personal possessive pronouns. While the Hebrew text has בְּאִמּוֹנֹתָיו (third person singular possessive),³⁵ the Septuagint reads

³⁵The Qumran text is corrupt at this point, but as William H. Brownlee, *The Text of Habakkuk in the Ancient Commentary from Qumran, Journal of Biblical Literature Monograph Series*, vol. 11 (Philadelphia: Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis, 1959), 44-45, notes, this is "no loss" because it would be impossible to distinguish the ך from the ך in this scroll's script. The interpretation אִמּוֹנֹתָיו later in the scroll confirms the third person suffix, however.

ἐκ πίστεώς μου (first person singular possessive).³⁶ The reading **נְאֻמֵי יְהוָה** most naturally refers to the faith of the believer who trusts in Yahweh.³⁷ But ἐκ πίστεως μου can refer either to Yahweh's faithfulness or to the believer's

³⁶Christopher D. Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture: Citation Technique in the Pauline Epistles and Contemporary Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), enumerates three variant readings of the Greek versions of this text. The first and most prevalent reading is ἐκ πίστεως μου (including a few manuscripts of Hebrews 10:38 and Romans 1:17). The second reading, δίκαιος μου ἐκ πίστεως, is that of Hebrews 10:38 and uncial A of the Septuagint. The third reading omits μου altogether. This is the nearly unanimous reading of Romans 1:17 and Galatians 3:11, but appears in the Septuagint tradition in only late minuscules and some versions and church fathers. Dietrich-Alex Koch, "Der Text von Hab 2:4b in der Septuaginta und im Neuen Testament," *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 76 (1985): 68-85, shows that the first reading is probably the original form of the Septuagint, the other two readings being assimilations to Hebrews and Paul. Koch, 72-73, theorizes that the Septuagint translator mistook the statement in 2:4a to be conditional, mistaking **יִהְיֶה** for **יְהוָה** and "guessing" at the meaning of **יִפְּלֵג**, which he took to mean **ὑποστείληται** ("shrink back"). To make sense out of this he translated **ἐὰν ὑποστείληται οὐκ ἔδδοκεῖ ἡ ψυχὴ μου ἐν αὐτῷ**. Correspondingly, the translator took 2:4b to represent a rejection of this "shrinking back" and inserted μου after πίστεως to correspond to ἡ ψυχὴ μου above it. A much simpler explanation is that the translator mistook the Hebrew scribe's **י** for a **י**. See, e.g., O. P. Robertson, 181 n. 13.

³⁷Hays, *The Faith of Jesus Christ: An Investigation of the Narrative Substance of Galatians 3:1-4:11*, The Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series, vol. 56 (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1983), 151-157, argues for a Messianic understanding referring to the faith of the Messiah. Although Hays' argument is the most comprehensive, he is joined by several others. See Douglas A. Campbell, "Romans 1:17 -- A *Crux Interpretum* for the ΠΙΣΤΙΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ Debate," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 113 (1994): 281 n. 47.

faith in Yahweh.³⁸ Paul, however, drops the possessive completely and writes ὁ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται.³⁹

Such variances from both the Septuagint and the Hebrew texts on Paul's part have been attributed to his employment of *peshar*-style exegesis. In such exegesis, it was accepted practice to alter the quotation of a given text to bring out the intended meaning of that text more clearly.⁴⁰ Therefore, Paul could drop the possessive pronoun to emphasize the point he desired to make -- that the righteous man receives the promised blessing of eternal life by faith, both God's faithfulness and man's faith in God's promise.⁴¹

Context in Paul

It has been argued that Paul takes the words of

³⁸C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, The International Critical Commentary, 2 vols. (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1975-1979), 1:100.

³⁹C* does insert μου at Romans 1:17.

⁴⁰E. Earle Ellis, "A Note on Pauline Hermeneutics," *New Testament Studies* 2 (1955-1956): 127-133.

⁴¹Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 48. By this understanding, ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν in Romans 1:17 is quite naturally understood as "from God's faithfulness to man's faith in His promise of salvation."

Habakkuk 2:4 out of their original context and uses them in quite a different sense.⁴² In response to this claim two truths must be balanced. First, the rabbinic practice in which Paul was eminently trained featured the thought that a text of Scripture has many levels of meaning. Paul would have no difficulty reaching beyond the historical setting of Habakkuk to find a deeper general truth about the righteousness of God and faith.⁴³

This feature of rabbinic exegesis should not be allowed to overshadow the second truth, that the context of Habakkuk and the context of Romans/Galatians were not completely different. Richard Hays notes:

. . . in view of the theodicy theme evoked in these verses by Paul's apocalyptic announcement of God's justice and by his allusions to the lament psalms, the aptness of the Habakkuk citation [to the context of Romans] immediately stands forth; in its original context, Hab. 2:4 speaks directly to the theological problem of God's faithfulness to Israel.⁴⁴

In Romans Paul also faces the issue of God's faithfulness to Israel, and thus also the issue of God's righteousness: "Can God be righteous if He justifies the gentiles while

⁴²E.g., Douglas Moo, *Romans 1-8*, The Wycliffe Exegetical Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991), 72.

⁴³Anders Nygren, *Commentary on Romans*, translated by Carl C. Rasmussen (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1949), 83.

⁴⁴Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 41.

letting some Jews (unfaithful Israel) stand condemned?" This question is much related to Habakkuk's complaint: "How can a righteous God allow gentiles (the Chaldeans) to prevail over His covenant people?" The answer lies in the revelation of the true nature of God's righteousness, for Habakkuk a revelation yet to fully be seen, but for Paul and his readers a righteousness that is even now being revealed in the gospel.⁴⁵

Syntactical Concerns: What
Does ἐκ πίστεως Modify?

Another matter that has been debated by commentators is the issue of whether ἐκ πίστεως modifies ζήσεται or ὁ δίκαιος. As shown above, it is clear that in the Hebrew text of Habakkuk, הַיָּשָׁרִים modifies יִחְיֶה rather than וְצַדִּיק.⁴⁶ The question then is whether Paul has changed the emphasis of the original text of Habakkuk to "he who is righteous by faith shall live" rather than "he who is righteous shall live by faith."

⁴⁵Ibid., 39-41. See also R. M. Moody, "The Habakkuk Quotation in Romans 1:17," *The Expository Times* 92 (1980-1981): 208: ". . . here is the problem of Habakkuk laid alive on [Paul's] very doorstep."; William Hendricksen, *Exposition of Galatians, New Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1968), 129: "The passage [Habakkuk 2:4] fits the situation [in Galatians] exactly!"; Ernest de Witt Burton, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians, The International Critical Commentary* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1921), 166-167; Franzmann, 36-38.

⁴⁶See above, p. 100.

Commentators are fairly evenly divided on this issue.⁴⁷ The arguments for taking ἐκ πίστεως with ὁ δίκαιος usually center around context. It is argued that since the context of Romans and Galatians is Paul's contention that justification is by faith rather than works, then it is most natural for Paul to write "he who is justified by faith. . . ." ⁴⁸ Furthermore, it is argued that the structure of Romans is such that chapters one to eight expound the meaning of justification by faith while chapters five to 16 explain how the justified one is to live.⁴⁹ However, the collective weight of arguments on the side of taking ἐκ

⁴⁷In favor of ἐκ πίστεως modifying ὁ δίκαιος are, e.g.: Matthew Black, *Romans*, New Century Bible Commentary, 2d ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co.; London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1989), 36; Cranfield, 1:101-102; Moo, 72-73; Nygren, 85-90. In favor of ἐκ πίστεως modifying ζήσεται are, e.g.: Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Romans*, The Anchor Bible, vol. 33 (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1993), 265; F. Godet, *Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, trans. A. Cusin, translation rev. and ed. Talbot W. Chambers, 2d ed. (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1885), 98; Lenski, *Romans*, 86-87, Moody, 208; Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co.; Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1988), 72; John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament, 2 vols. in 1 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1959-1965), 1:33; William Sanday and Arthur Headlam, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, The International Critical Commentary (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1895), 28.

⁴⁸E.g., Cranfield, 1:102; Moo, 72.

⁴⁹Nygren, 85-87. Nygren, 86, explains: "The very structure of Romans and the letter as a whole are proof that in its theme ἐκ πίστεως is connected with ὁ δίκαιος and not with ζήσεται" (emphasis in original).

πίστεως with ζήσεται is also very strong.⁵⁰ That this is the original context in Habakkuk is significant. Had Paul wished to change Habakkuk's emphasis, he could have written ὁ δε ἐκ πίστεως δίκαιος ζήσεται (see Romans 10:6). Although some counter that Paul was not free to make such a change since he was quoting from Habakkuk,⁵¹ the pesher-style exegesis employed by Paul would allow him to make such a modification had he desired to place ἐκ πίστεως with ὁ δίκαιος.⁵² Perhaps the most weighty argument in favor of taking ἐκ πίστεως with ζήσεται is the context of Galatians 3:11. Here it is clear that "shall live by faith" is parallel to "live by (doing) them" in the quotation of Leviticus 18:5 at Galatians 3:12.⁵³

There is yet another alternative. It is possible that Paul takes ἐκ πίστεως with both ὁ δίκαιος and ζήσεται. This understanding would be quite consistent with the

⁵⁰See J. B. Lightfoot, *Notes on the Epistles of St. Paul*, 3d ed. (London: MacMillan & Co., 1904), 250-251. Lightfoot's basis for taking ἐκ πίστεως to modify ζήσεται is fourfold: (1) It is the intent of the original Habakkuk text. (2) Ἐκ πίστεως here (Romans 1:17) corresponds to the same phrase in v. 16, where it belongs to the subject, not the predicate (actually a debatable point, depending upon what ἐν αὐτῷ is taken to modify). (3) Ὁ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως is not a natural phrase in the Pauline corpus. (4) The other alternative takes the exegesis off of "faith."

⁵¹E.g., Nygren, 87-88.

⁵²See above, p. 105. Note that Paul has indeed altered the original text by deleting the possessive pronoun.

⁵³Hendricksen, 127 n. 95; Moody, 207.

pesher exegesis employed here by Paul which extends and broadens the original meaning "to include the sense he was most concerned to bring out."⁵⁴ The thought therefore states, "the righteous shall live." Ἐκ πίστεως qualifies or modifies this whole statement.⁵⁵ One lives by faith because he has been made righteous by faith. "Life" here is equivalent to salvation, and no one has salvation unless he is justified.⁵⁶ Leon Morris summarizes by indicating that "however we translate his words, he is speaking of an attitude of lowly dependence on God."⁵⁷ Clearly the emphasis is upon justification ἐκ πίστεως in either case.

In utilizing Habakkuk 2:4, Paul centers upon the key element in "life." In Habakkuk's view, "life" referred to deliverance from enemies and enjoyment of the promised land. Paul "spiritualizes" these two concepts to mean deliverance from God's wrath and the possession of eternal life (salvation). Thus the theme of salvation in Romans 1:16 is carried through here.⁵⁸ The gospel is God's power unto salvation for all who believe, that is, for all who

⁵⁴Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 45.

⁵⁵Moody, 206.

⁵⁶Godet, 98.

⁵⁷Morris, *Romans*, 72.

⁵⁸Godet, 98.

have received that life and salvation ἐκ πίστεως. But since they have "life" ἐκ πίστεως they also are justified ἐκ πίστεως. Since "life" and justification are linked together, the one is derived from the same source as the other. Therefore, Habakkuk 2:4 can also be a proof text for Paul in his contention that justification comes ἐκ πίστεως.

Possible Messianic Interpretations

New Testament in General

It has also been asked whether Habakkuk 2:4 contains any Messianic reference, and whether Paul interprets it in this way. The eschatological context of both Habakkuk 2:4 and Romans 1:17 places the Habakkuk quotation at least loosely in the Messianic sphere, insofar as the Messiah is an eschatological concept. Perhaps there was also a Messianic interpretation among Jewish-Christians. This interpretation could have been taken over by Paul from the Jewish-Christian mission.⁵⁹ C. H. Dodd notes:

It is much more likely that Paul drew upon a tradition which already recognized the passage from Habakkuk as a testimonium to the coming of Christ, and this tradition may well have been formed even before Paul wrote to the Galatians; for his argument. . . would be far more effective with his Jewish-Christian antagonists if it was already common ground between them that when the Coming One should come, ὁ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται.⁶⁰

⁵⁹Käsemann, 31.

⁶⁰C. H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures* (N.p.: Fontana Books, 1965), 51.

Dodd's point is well made with respect to there perhaps being some Jewish-Christian interpretation of Habakkuk 2:4 which Paul could use as common ground. But such an interpretation would not have to be Messianic. The Qumran interpretation of this passage does, however, have a Messianic flavor as Habakkuk 2:4 finds its fulfillment in faith placed in the Teacher of Righteousness.⁶¹ If this was Qumran's understanding of the text, it is indeed quite possible that a Messianic interpretation also existed among Jewish Christians.

Recently, the Messianic interpretation of Habakkuk 2:4 has been gaining in popularity.⁶² Richard Hays centers on the question, "Who is ὁ δίκαιος?" Although most commentators assume that ὁ δίκαιος is used in a generic sense, that is, "anyone who is righteous," Hays notes Anthony Hanson's suggestion that "ὁ δίκαιος is read by Paul as a designation, if not a formal title, for the Messiah."⁶³

⁶¹See above, p. 101. But Qumran does not understand ὁ δίκαιος as a Messianic title.

⁶²See Hays, *Faith of Jesus Christ*, 151-157; Campbell, "Romans 1:17," 281-295, these being the most thorough discussions of the matter. This view was earlier advocated by Anthony T. Hanson, *Studies in Paul's Technique and Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1974), 39-45 and, of course, C. H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures*, 51 (see above). Hays, 183 n. 59, notes that Haussleiter had made this suggestion "more than seventy years" before Hanson.

⁶³Hays, *Faith of Jesus Christ*, 151, referring to Hanson, 42-45.

In support of this suggestion is the fact that many New Testament texts seemingly apply this title to Jesus: Acts 3:14 (although the title here is τὸν ἅγιον καὶ δίκαιον); 7:52 (τοῦ δικαίου); 22:14 (τὸν δίκαιον); 1 Peter 3:18 (it can be debated whether δίκιος is here a title or simply an adjective⁶⁴); 1 John 2:1 (δίκαιον).⁶⁵ It should be noted, however, that none of these other New Testament citations is an exact match to Habakkuk 2:4. In 1 Peter 3:18 and 1 John 2:1, the "title" is anarthrous. In the citations from Acts, ὁ δίκαιος is never used as the subject of a sentence or clause. Thus the New Testament precedent that does exist is not without significant weaknesses.⁶⁶

Hays argues that, while the Septuagint translators may or may not have intended it, "they produced a text

⁶⁴It would much more naturally be taken as simply an adjective since it is contrasted to ἀδίκων, which can hardly be a title for "sinners." Yet it is not impossible to take δίκαιος as a title here.

⁶⁵Campbell, "Romans 1:17," 282 n. 50, also includes James 5:6; 1 John 2:29; 3:7 (followed by a "?") and "possibly" 2 Timothy 4:8. James 5:6 is obviously not a Christological reference, as the context clearly points to a generic reading. 1 John 2:29 and 3:7 are quite obviously (predicate) adjectives. 2 Timothy 4:8 may be a title but (1) it is not specifically Christological and (2) δίκαιος here modifies κριτῆς and therefore is not an absolute title. Campbell has overstated his evidence for a New Testament precedent.

⁶⁶Hays, "ΠΙΣΤΙΣ and Pauline Christology," 719, also cites some support from the Similitudes of Enoch (1 Enoch 38:2; 53:6) which speak of an eschatological figure called "The Righteous One."

which is readily susceptible to Messianic interpretation."⁶⁷ In context, it is possible to understand αὐτόν in Habakkuk 2:3 as a Messianic reference since it cannot grammatically refer to ὄρασις, which is feminine. Likewise, ἐρχόμενος cannot refer to ὄρασις for the same reason (this is perhaps clarified by Hebrews 10:37, which translates ὁ ἐρχόμενος). Therefore Dietrich-Alex Koch believes that "der LXX-Übersetzer hat v. 3b personal verstanden, d.h. messianisch interpretiert."⁶⁸ It is also possible, however, to understand the Septuagint translation here as awkward and somewhat inept.⁶⁹ Clearly, the translators did have difficulty with this passage as can be seen from the many variants and deviations from the sense of the Masoretic text. But Hays' point is that the translators created a text capable of Messianic interpretation, even if they did not intend to do so.⁷⁰

Paul

Although the New Testament evidence for taking ὁ

⁶⁷Hays, *Faith of Jesus Christ*, 152.

⁶⁸Koch, 73 n. 25.

⁶⁹Perhaps not so much inept as overly literalistic. In the Hebrew text, אָוֹן, a masculine noun, is followed by a masculine pronoun and participle. The Greek translators substituted a feminine noun, ὄρασις, but left the gender of the pronoun and participle as in the Hebrew.

⁷⁰Hays, *Faith of Jesus Christ*, 152.

δίκαιος as a Messianic title has been overstated by some, it is nevertheless true that the Septuagint text of Habakkuk 2:4 is capable of a Messianic interpretation. The pertinent question now becomes whether Paul intended such an interpretation in his quotation of this passage in Romans and Galatians. Obviously, this bears on Paul's intended meaning of ἐκ πίστεως.

Hays makes a strong argument in favor of Paul's having taken ὁ δίκαιος as Messianic/Christological. Pointing to Galatians 3:14-16, Hays connects the one σπέρμα of Abraham who receives the promise to the one ὁ δίκαιος, the tie being strengthened by the Septuagint translation of Isaiah 53:10b-12a. Hays even "imagines" that Paul could say: οὐ λέγει· οἱ δίκαιοι, ὡς ἐπὶ πολλῶν, ἀλλ' ὡς ἐφ' ἑνός· ὁ δίκαιος, ὅς ἐστιν χριστός.⁷¹ If Paul does indeed take Habakkuk 2:4 in a Messianic sense, then his argument in Galatians becomes somewhat two-fold: (1) Believing Jews and gentiles both are truly Abraham's sons because of the One Seed who is Christ, The Righteous One. (2) Because The Righteous One, the Seed of Abraham, was ἐκ πίστεως, believing Jews and gentiles are now also οἱ ἐκ πίστεως (and therefore sons of Abraham) and share in the "life" of The Righteous One. Thus Paul's opening premise of Galatians 3:7, Γινώσκετε ἄρα ὅτι οἱ ἐκ πίστεως, οὗτοι υἱοὶ εἰσιν

⁷¹Ibid., 153.

Ἄβρααμ, is proven.

With respect to the context of Romans 1:17, Douglas Campbell argues that a Messianic interpretation of Habakkuk 2:4 by Paul is necessary to correspond to his use of ἐκ πίστεως in verse 17a. If the phrase in verse 17a refers to the faith of Christ, then Habakkuk 2:4 must also be taken Christologically. Campbell contends that the eschatological nature of verse 17a requires such a Christological interpretation.⁷² Although he has overstated its necessity, Campbell has indeed shown that a Messianic/Christological interpretation of Habakkuk 2:4 can fit well into the context of Romans 1:17.

The weakness to this view is that a Messianic interpretation of Habakkuk 2:4 would imply a vicarious nature to the faithfulness of the Messiah. However, both in Romans (3:21-26) and Galatians (3:13) it is the sacrifice of Christ that is granted vicarious status rather than His obedience or faithfulness. Yet one might possibly reconcile this by applying the "faithfulness" of the Messiah to His obedience to His Father's plan of salvation, which included His sacrifice. However, this understanding requires some stretching of Habakkuk 2:4. If "life" is indeed taken in the eschatological sense, then it is difficult to see a reference to the Messiah's faithfulness

⁷²Campbell, "Romans 1:17," 270-285.

to His Father's plan of salvation as gaining such "life" for Himself.

Summary

Habakkuk 2:4 speaks of the way in which those who have been made righteous shall receive the gift of eschatological life by faith. By extension, it is easily seen that this very righteousness is received by faith, as righteousness and life in the covenant are inextricably connected.

In Habakkuk 2:4, Paul finds a text that suits his contexts in Romans and Galatians. In Romans 1, Paul writes of the gospel's revelation of the righteousness of God. This gospel is received in faith, faith by which the believer is made righteous and by which he receives eschatological life. Habakkuk 2:4 also fits Paul's context in Galatians 3, in which he contrasts attempts at righteousness by works of law to righteousness that is by faith. Here Paul uses Habakkuk to support the claim being made on the basis of Scripture that such righteousness is possible only through faith. Later Judaism misunderstood Habakkuk's emphasis on faith, understanding such faith as in itself a meritorious work. While Paul must have been aware of such interpretations, he clearly distances himself from them in stressing the distinction between faith and works.

There is a possible Messianic interpretation to

Habakkuk 2:4, taking *ὁ δίκαιος* as a Messianic title. Although there is some precedent in the New Testament for such a title in reference to Christ, such evidence has generally been overstated by proponents of this theory. Nevertheless, it is ultimately true that it is by virtue of Christ's obedience (faithfulness) to His Father's will, even unto the cross, that the believer has the eschatological life to which this text speaks. This "faithfulness" of Christ is therefore in the background of any text speaking of the justification of the sinner "by faith." While seemingly not Paul's intended context, the Messianic interpretation does fit into his general theme of "righteousness by faith."

CHAPTER 6

PAUL'S CHOICE OF PREPOSITIONS WITH ΠΙΣΤΙΣ

Introduction

When examining Paul's choice of prepositions with πίστις, an interesting pattern soon becomes apparent. In prepositional phrases with πίστις as object, Paul favors strongly the preposition ἐκ in Romans and Galatians. In other non-pastoral epistles διὰ is strongly favored. In the Pastoral Epistles, Paul's favorite preposition with πίστις by far is ἐν. While one must heed the caveat of constructing a "theology of prepositions,"¹ one must also take note of such a dramatic change in style within the work of a single author. This chapter will examine the pattern of Paul's choice of prepositions with πίστις, as well as analyze the meanings of those prepositions most relevant to the present study.

¹J. H. Moulton, ed., *Grammar of New Testament Greek*, vol. 3, *Syntax*, by Nigel Turner (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1963), 3. Note that Turner modified himself somewhat in his *Grammatical Insights into the New Testament* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1965), 107.

The Pattern of Prepositions

Paul's Use of Prepositions in General

Paul makes greater use of prepositions than any New Testament writer except Peter, who only slightly surpasses him, far greater use proportionately than the entire New Testament as a whole. Almost 9 percent of all words penned by Paul are prepositions.² Of these prepositions, Paul uses ἐν most frequently, more than one third of the time. ἔτι is also a common preposition for Paul, used 14.6 percent of the time. διὰ is used about 10 percent of the time, while ἐκ is employed about 7 percent of the time. In the New Testament in general, 7.5 percent of all words are prepositions. Ἐν is most common (26.5 percent of all prepositions), ἔτι next (17 percent), then ἐκ (8.8 percent), ἐπι (8.6 percent) and διὰ (6.5 percent). Although Paul makes greater use of prepositions than the New Testament as a whole, the distribution is fairly typical. Paul tends to use διὰ more frequently than it is used in the rest of the New Testament, and makes less use of ἐπι.

Paul's Choice of Prepositions with
πίστις in Romans and Galatians

With πίστις as object, Paul makes use of the

²Of 32,440 words, 2,908 are prepositions (8.96 percent). 1 Peter and 2 Peter combined contain just slightly more than 9 percent prepositions.

following prepositions: ἐκ (20 times), διὰ (15), ἐν (12), περί (three), μετά (two), εἰς (two), ἐπί, ὑπέρ, ἀπό, and κατὰ (one each). Of the 20 occurrences of ἐκ with πίστις, all occur within Romans (11) and Galatians (nine). Nowhere else in the Pauline corpus is the preposition ἐκ used with πίστις as its object. The only other preposition used with πίστις with any regularity in these two epistles is διὰ, the phrase appearing four times in Romans and three in Galatians.³

Of the seven instances of διὰ πίστεως⁴ in Romans and Galatians, all occur in proximity and close context with ἐκ πίστεως. The first such occurrences of διὰ πίστεως appear at Romans 3:22 and 25, both in the immediate context of Paul's argument which is resolved with the statement that God is both "just" and the "One who justifies" him who is ἐκ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ. The next two διὰ πίστεως phrases appear at Romans 3:30 and 31. The phrase διὰ τῆς πίστεως in verse 30, spoken concerning God's justification of gentiles (ἀκροβυστίων), is used in very close connection with ἐκ πίστεως, Paul's description of God's justification of the Jews (περιτομήν). διὰ τῆς πίστεως in verse 31 relates back

³Εἰς appears twice with πίστις in Romans and Galatians, ἐν once.

⁴Unless otherwise specified, citation of a prepositional phrase such as διὰ πίστεως or ἐκ πίστεως will not exclude the inclusion of other words between the preposition and its object, e.g., διὰ τῆς πίστεως.

to that phrase in the previous verse, and is thus also related to ἐκ πίστεως of verse 30.

In Galatians, διὰ πίστεως, is also in close proximity to and close context with ἐκ πίστεως. In 2:16, the two phrases are used in relation to justifying faith. In Galatians 3:14, "the promise of the Spirit" (salvation) is received διὰ τῆς πίστεως, contrasted to the law which is not ἐκ πίστεως (v. 12). In 3:26, Paul maintains that his readers are "sons of God" διὰ πίστεως ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ. Only two verses prior, Paul states that by being brought to Christ we are justified ἐκ πίστεως. Clearly there is a close connection between ἐκ πίστεως and διὰ πίστεως in Romans and Galatians. This connection will be explored below in an exegesis of Romans 3:30.

Paul's Use of ἐκ and διὰ

ἐκ

Although ἐκ is an important word for Paul in Romans and Galatians by its association with πίστις, in modern Greek ἐκ has been replaced by ἀπό. The latest usage of ἐκ was with the accusative in late Greek (eighth century A.D.),⁵ but in the New Testament this preposition is always used with the genitive. The basic meaning of ἐκ is "from,

⁵A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1934), 598.

out of, away from,"⁶ but sometimes a different translation is required, as when used in the causal sense: "by (means of)." Ἐκ expresses a "point of departure," whether in connection to place (e.g., ἐκ τοῦ ὀφθαλμοῦ, Luke 6:42) or time (e.g., ἐξ ἄρχῆς, John 6:64). There is also expressed with ἐκ the idea of separation (e.g., σῶσον με ἐκ τῆς ὥρας ταύτης, John 12:27). Somewhat related to this is the use of ἐκ with the partitive genitive (e.g., ἐκ τῶν μαθητῶν, John 16:17).⁷

Significant to Paul's use of ἐκ πίστεως is the causal use of ἐκ, which A. T. Robertson identifies as closely allied to the use of ἐκ to identify origin or source.⁸ Walter Bauer also links these two uses of ἐκ, and includes with them "motive, reason."⁹ Adolph Deissmann shows that ἐκ διαταγῆς, "by order of," another causal example, was a common formula in the papyri.¹⁰ Bauer notes a special use

⁶Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, trans. and adapt. William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, rev. and augm. F. Wilbur Gingrich and Frederick W. Danker, 2d ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), s.v. ἐκ [hereafter *B. A. G. D.*].

⁷A. T. Robertson, 596-599.

⁸*Ibid.*, 598.

⁹*B. A. G. D.*, s.v. ἐκ, 3.

¹⁰Adolph Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East*, trans. Lionel R. M. Strachan (New York: George H. Doran, 1927), 90 n. 6.

of ἐκ as "of the reason which is a presupposition for something."¹¹ Although this use is related to the causal, there is a shade of difference between "presupposition" and "cause."

Paul uses ἐκ most frequently to designate origin.¹² An additional application of this use is Paul's use of ἐκ to designate association, for example, τοῖς οὐκ ἐκ περιτομῆς μόνον (Rom. 4:12). Clearly, some of Paul's ἐκ πίστεως sayings fall into this category, for example, Galatians 3:7, 9: οἱ ἐκ πίστεως. See also Romans 3:26; 4:16.

Paul uses ἐκ in the causal sense in Romans and Galatians, rarely so in other epistles. When ἐκ is used in this way by Paul, the context is regularly justification. Most often the phrases are ἐκ πίστεως, ἐξ ἔργων (νόμου), or ἐκ νόμου. Often ἐκ πίστεως is contrasted with ἐξ ἔργων or ἐκ νόμου, for example, Romans 9:32; 10:5-6; Galatians 2:16; 3:2-24. One can see a blending here of "means" with "origin." Paul speaks about a justification that is received "by means of faith," but also one that has its

1927), 90 n. 6.

¹¹B. A. G. D., s. v. ἐκ, 3f.

¹²The specific examples are too numerous and subjective to list. Such examples often include such phrases as: ἐκ νεκρῶν (e.g., Romans 6 passim), ἐξ ἀνθρώπων (e.g., Rom. 2:29), ἐκ θεοῦ (e.g., 1 Cor. 2:12; 7:7, 11:12).

origin in the faithfulness of God. Therefore, Paul, who often chooses to use ἐν with the dative or διὰ with the genitive in the causal sense (agent or means), will also often choose ἐκ when that causal sense has the deep-seated connotation of the "means out of which" justification occurs (God's faithfulness) or is received (man's faith).

It is true that, for Paul, the objective cause of justification is Christ's sacrifice. But this sacrifice (ἀναστήριον) was offered by God (προέθετο ὁ θεός) διὰ [τῆς] πίστεως (Romans 3:25). Furthermore, justification is received by man ἐκ πίστεως and διὰ τῆς πίστεως (Romans 3:30), and ἡ πίστις is ἐξ ἀκοῆς. . . διὰ ῥήματος Χριστοῦ (Romans 10:17). There indeed seems to be a blending of means and origin in Paul's use of ἐκ πίστεως. Justification has its origin in God's faithful act of offering the sacrifice of Christ, and it is by means of faith in this gospel message that such justification is received.

διὰ

In Koine Greek, διὰ occurs with the genitive and accusative cases. With the genitive, the sense of passage through time and space are prominent. With the accusative διὰ generally indicates "the reason."¹³ Although use with

¹³B. A. G. D., s. v. διὰ.

the genitive predominates in the New Testament (genitive: 382; accusative: 279), the accusative becomes dominant later.¹⁴

The root idea of *διὰ* is that of "interval." Etymologically, *διὰ* is derived from *δύο*, and thus came to signify the interval between two points in space or in time. Even the idiom "*δί ἡμερῶν*" (Mark 2:1), "after some days," reflects this derivation. *Δί ἡμερῶν* literally refers to an interval of days, signifying the time between two distinct days: the day on which the previous event(s) occurred and the day on which the event(s) now in question occurred. From the idea of interval between two points also came the expression of the spatial concept of travelling through a region, that is, between two points (e.g., *διὰ μέσον Σαμαρίας*, Luke 17:11, see also 4:30). *Διὰ* can also be used with the genitive to signify agency or "means." In this sense it usually applies to personal agency, although *διὰ* in this sense need not take an animate object.¹⁵ The use of *διὰ* with the accusative case in the New

¹⁴A. T. Robertson, 581.

¹⁵Ibid., 580-582. It is interesting that Robertson does not address Paul's *διὰ πίστεως*. His treatment of *διὰ* as "agent" is limited to that of personal agency. *Διὰ* as signifying "means" or "reason" is reserved, in Robertson's discussion, for the accusative use, (583-584). This is instructive for the present consideration of the meaning of *διὰ* with the genitive. The concept of "interval" between two points governs this usage.

Testament signifies the reason why something happens. It is often used in direct questions, for example, "διὸ τί;".¹⁶

Albrecht Oepke elaborates on the instrumental and causal uses of διὰ with the genitive case. It is in the instrumental, not causal, category that he places Paul's διὰ πίστῶς. The instrumental use indicates "by means of" (impersonal) or "through the mediation of" (personal), while the causal use indicates "in consequence of" or "on the basis of." Oepke admits that these senses tend to blur.¹⁷

Paul uses the preposition διὰ 291 times. Of these occurrences, 201 are used with the genitive (69 percent). In Romans and Galatians the ratio is much higher. In Romans, 69 of 91 uses of διὰ are genitive (76 percent) and in Galatians the count is a striking 17 of 19 uses of διὰ with the genitive (89 percent). It would appear from this that Paul is leaning more toward the sense of instrumentality or agency in his use of διὰ in these two epistles than toward the pure sense of "cause." Much of Paul's debate here centers around the means by which God justifies. "Is it by law," asks Paul, "or faith?" Once

¹⁶B. A. G. D., s. v. διὰ, II.

¹⁷Albrecht Oepke, "διὰ" in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 10 vols., ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964-1976), 2:66-68.

again, there is some tendency to blur here the distinction between cause and instrument. Romans 3:21-25 illustrates this point well. God justifies by (cause) His grace (τῆ αὐτοῦ χάριτι), but by means of (instrument) the redemption by Christ Jesus (διὰ τῆς ἀπολυτρώσεως τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ) and through faith (διὰ πίστεως). The same distinction between grace as the cause and faith as the means of salvation is made by Paul in Ephesians 2:8: Τῇ γὰρ χάριτί ἐστε σεσωσμένοι διὰ πίστεως.

The fundamental difference between the causal use of ἐκ and the instrumental use of διὰ with the genitive is essentially one of time and space. Ἐκ denotes "origin from which," from which it derives its causal sense. Διὰ denotes an interval between two points in a spatial or temporal sense. From this association, it also takes its instrumental meaning as the instrument or agent which causes movement from one point to another.

It is important to note that the concepts of "cause" and "instrument" are not mutually exclusive with respect to agency. Therefore, Paul can use ἐκ to identify πίστις as the means of receiving justification and διὰ to identify πίστις as the instrument or agent of justification. By varying his choice of preposition with πίστις in this way, Paul places varying emphasis upon either the cause or the instrument by which one receives justification. By placing the phrases ἐκ πίστεως and διὰ πίστεως in close proximity,

Paul is able to place slightly different shades of emphasis on the role of faith in the justification. Heeding Nigel Turner's caveat,¹⁸ it is important not to attempt to construct Paul's theology of justification upon merely these two prepositions. Rather Paul's skilled use of prepositions communicates the role of faith as the cause and the instrument of justification, as spelled out in the Pauline concept of *πίστις*.

EXCURSUS: SEMITIC AMBIGUITY OF PREPOSITIONS

It has been recognized since at least the tenth century that there is some ambiguity in biblical Hebrew between the prepositions *-ב* and *-בְּ*.¹⁹ This ambiguity may have some relevance with respect to the choice of Greek prepositions by a Semitic author. Although it has been argued that Paul was fluent in Greek and thought in that language while employing it,²⁰ it is also possible that his choice of prepositions was influenced by this Hebrew ambiguity.

Nahum Sarna has argued that Semitic languages have a

¹⁸Turner, *Syntax*, 3. See above, p. 112.

¹⁹This was noted by Hebrew grammarian Saadia in the tenth century. See Ziony Zevit, "The So-Called Interchangeability of the Prepositions *b*, *l*, and *m(n)* in Northwest Semitic," *Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society* 7 (1975): 103.

²⁰See above, p. 19.

tendency to use one preposition to represent both "from" and "in(to)."²¹ Mitchell Dahood has also made the claim that "frequently in Ugaritic-Phoenician-Hebrew, [-ב] denotes 'from.'"²² In his refutation and analysis of this idea, Ziony Zevit locates the ambiguity not in the Semitic languages themselves, but rather in translation, that is, in the relationship between the language of origin and the target language.²³ Zevit believes that the function of prepositions is very precise within a language, but that it can be confusing to others who are not as familiar with that language.²⁴ Mark Futato sees the key as "verb-preposition idioms," therefore -ב can indeed sometimes mean "from" depending upon with which verb it is associated.²⁵

²¹Nahum N. Sarna, "The Interchange of the Prepositions *Beth* and *Min* in Biblical Hebrew," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 78 (1959): 310-316.

²²Mitchell Dahood, *Psalms I*, The Anchor Bible, vol. 16 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., 1965), 107. See also idem, "Hebrew-Ugaritic Lexicography V," *Biblica* 48 (1967): 427.

²³Zevit, 104.

²⁴Ibid., 111 n. 56. Zevit cites the following English examples: "Turn off the lights." "Turn off the road." "Turn off." These various uses of the preposition "off" do not make that preposition ambiguous. Each statement is precise and cannot easily be misunderstood. But this varied usage may be confusing to a new student of English.

²⁵Mark D. Futato, "The Preposition 'Beth' in the

This pattern of verb-preposition idioms can be quite perplexing to the translator of Semitic languages. As a result, subtle differences in aspect can occur when translating prepositional phrases.²⁶ If these aspect differences occur naturally in the translation process, then presumably they can also be intentionally introduced to make a particular point. It is entirely possible therefore, for Paul to reflect the natural or potential²⁷ ambiguity in the phrase בְּאִמּוֹתָיִךְ (Habakkuk 2:4) with differing Greek prepositions, in order subtly to change his emphasis.

The phrase בְּאִמּוֹתָיִךְ is regularly translated in the Septuagint as ἐν πίστει. Paul translates this phrase (in his quotation of Habakkuk 2:4) as ἐκ πίστεως in both Romans 1:17 and Galatians 3:11. By shifting prepositions from ἐν to ἐκ, Paul may be taking advantage of an inherent Semitic ambiguity, imbedded in his thought process, between the

Hebrew Psalter," *Westminster Theological Journal* 41 (1978): 80-81. Zevit, 111-112, suggests a study along similar lines, i.e., varying prepositions with the same verb.

²⁶Georg Schmuttermayr, "Ambivalenz und Aspektendifferenz: Bemerkungen zu den hebräischen Präpositionen ב, ל, und ׀," *Bibische Zeitschrift* 15 (1971): 48-49.

²⁷Commentators may differ on whether the ambiguity is inherent in the Hebrew or exists only in the process of translation (see Zevit, 111 n. 56; Schmuttermayr, 49), but the applicability for the present discussion persists in either case.

prepositions $\text{-}\epsilon\upsilon$ and $\text{-}\epsilon\kappa$. This ambiguity, or "aspect difference" allows Paul to clarify the role of $\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$ in justification in terms of origin. The use of $\epsilon\kappa$ rather than $\epsilon\upsilon$ would reflect a shift in Paul's mind from $\text{-}\epsilon\upsilon$, which is more instrumental, to $\text{-}\epsilon\kappa$, which emphasizes origin.

CHAPTER 7
PASSAGES IN WHICH PAUL USES BOTH EK AND ΔΙΑ
WITH ΠΙΣΤΕΩΣ IN THE SAME CONTEXT:
ROMANS 3:30 AND GALATIANS 2:16

Introduction

There are two instances in the Pauline corpus in which the phrases ἐκ πίστεως and διὰ πίστεως occur in the same verse: Romans 3:30 and Galatians 2:16. Any investigation of the meaning of ἐκ πίστεως must seriously take such contrasts into account. The present chapter therefore will examine these two verses with the aim at determining whether the change from ἐκ to διὰ is significant with respect to the meaning of ἐκ/διὰ πίστεως.¹

Romans 3:30

Identification of the Question:
Is the Change in Prepositions
Meaningful or Stylistic?

Between Romans 3:30 and Galatians 2:16, the former

¹D[ouglas] A. Campbell, "The Meaning of ΠΙΣΤΙΣ and ΝΟΜΟΣ in Paul: A Linguistic and Structural Perspective," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 111 (1992): 94-96, also includes Galatians 3:22-26 and Romans 3:21-26. It is true that both ἐκ πίστεως and διὰ πίστεως are used in these contexts, but they are not presented in the tight proximity in which Romans 3:30 and Galatians 2:16 feature these phrases.

has received more attention with respect to the present question. Here Paul uses a striking variation of prepositions when he writes: εἶπερ εἰς ὁ θεός, ὅς δικαιώσει περιτομὴν ἐκ πίστεως καὶ ἀκροβυστίαν διὰ τῆς πίστεως. The relevant question is whether Paul intends some difference between ἐκ πίστεως and διὰ τῆς πίστεως.

Most modern commentators agree that Paul's shift of prepositions in Romans 3:30 is rhetorical or stylistic.² One may, however, go back to the interpretations of Origen and Theodore of Mopsuestia to see evidence of a different interpretation. Stanley Stowers places much reliance on these two "ancient native speakers of Greek who may have caught a subtlety of grammar that eludes modern exegetes."³ Theodore's comment is somewhat cryptic and seemingly contradictory, but clearly he distinguishes between Paul's

²There are, however, notable exceptions, e.g., F. Godet, *Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, trans., A. Cusin, translation rev. and ed. Talbot W. Chambers, 2d ed. (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1885), 165; Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1980), 104 (Käsemann calls the change "rhetorical" but does see significance in it); R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans* (N.p.: Lutheran Book Concern, 1936; reprint, Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1961), 275-276; William Sanday and Arthur Headlam, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, *The International Critical Commentary* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1895), 96; Nigel Turner, *Grammatical Insights into the New Testament* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1965), 107.

³Stanley K. Stowers, "EK ΠΙΣΤΕΩΣ and ΔΙΑ ΠΙΣΤΕΩΣ in Romans 3:30," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 108 (1989): 666.

use of ἐκ and διὰ:

Concerning the Jews, he has written ἐκ πίστεως as if, on the one hand, they had other opportunities (ἄφορμάς) in regard to justification but, on the other hand, they were not able to share in it except ἐκ πίστεως. But concerning the Greeks he has written διὰ τῆς πίστεως.⁴

Theodore thus sees a distinction in meaning between ἐκ πίστεως and διὰ τῆς πίστεως in this verse. Although the text of Origen is corrupt, it is clear that he also makes a distinction between ἐκ πίστεως and διὰ τῆς πίστεως:

It would appear to indicate that, if they believe in Jesus, both the circumcised and the uncircumcised are saved, the former when they do the law of Moses according to their ability, the latter when they live as citizens according to the freedom of Christ.

It is certain that Paul chose his first preposition (ἐκ) purposefully. Ἐκ πίστεως is a profoundly Pauline expression, occurring 12 times in Romans, nine times in Galatians, and nowhere else in his corpus. Elsewhere in the New Testament the phrase occurs only at Hebrews 10:38

⁴The translation belongs to Stowers, 666. Greek words and phrases have been inserted by the present author for clarification. See J.-P. Migne, ed., *Patrologia Graeca*, (Paris, 1864), 66:col. 796 for the Greek text (also provided in Stowers, 666).

⁵Stowers' translation, 666. Origen bases this conclusion on the change in prepositions. See Jean Scherer, *Le Commentaire d'Origène sur Rom. iii. 5 - v. 7 d'après les Extraits du Papyrus no. 88748 du Musée du Caire et les Fragments de la Philocalie et du Vaticanus gr. 762: Essai de Reconstitution du Texte et de la Pensée des Tomes V et VI du 'Commentaire sur l'épître aux Romains'* (Institut français d'Archéologie Orientale, Bibliothèque d'Etude, xxvii; Cairo, 1957) for the Greek text (also provided in Stowers, 666).

(the quotation of Habakkuk 2:4) and James 2:24.⁶ As previously noted, ἐκ πίστεως is for Paul an exegetical catchphrase, referring to Habakkuk 2:4.⁷ Thus it may safely be concluded that Paul's choice of ἐκ in Romans 3:30 was made carefully and purposefully.

The question remains as to whether Paul's choice of διὰ in this verse is purposeful or merely stylistic. Paul is fond of varying his prepositions in this manner, using the same object for each preposition, for example, Romans 1:17a (ἐκ . . . εἰς), 3:20 (ἐκ . . . διὰ), 11:36 (ἐκ . . . διὰ . . . εἰς). C. F. D. Moule believes that "credulity is strained" by attempts to distinguish between ἐκ and διὰ in this context, but gives absolutely no rationale for such a contention.⁸ Moule places this variation of prepositions in the category of "Rhetorical Antithesis or Parallelism," which he defines as:

. . . passages which, judged by their *words* rather than their *ideas*, contain antitheses or parallelisms, but which, judged by their *ideas*, appear less obviously balanced in structure; and it is possible that, in such cases, the antitheses or parallelisms may be for nothing more than rhetorical effect.⁹

⁶In a most decidedly un-Pauline manner, linguistically speaking.

⁷See above, p. 102 n. 33.

⁸C. F. D. Moule, *An Idiom Book of New Testament Grammar*, 2d ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), 195.

⁹*Ibid.*, 194 (emphasis in original).

The caveat of Douglas Moo is noted, however:

While rhetorical variations of ἐκ and ἀπό and of ἐν and διό are quite common in the NT, there is no clear example of such a variation between ἐκ and διό. In only two other verses do ἐκ and διό take the same object, and the prepositions have different meanings in both (Rom. 11:36; 2 Pet. 3:5).¹⁰

It should be maintained that rhetoric is not always without significance. By definition, rhetoric is "the art of speaking or writing *effectively*."¹¹ Therefore, if Paul's variation of prepositions in Romans 3:30 is determined to be rhetorical, it is by definition determined to be *effective*, and not without significance. To reject the change in prepositions as merely "stylistic" and therefore meaningless as does James Dunn¹² is an oversimplification which does not stand up well to serious examination. Even more naive is Dunn's use of the statement of Maillot, "it is the faith that counts, not the preposition."¹³ Obviously "faith" is the key concept in the sentence. To dismiss the choice of prepositions as meaningless, however, is not warranted in careful exegesis.

¹⁰Douglas Moo, *Romans 1-8, The Wycliffe Exegetical Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991), 255 n. 19.

¹¹Frederick C. Mish, ed., *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary* (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 1989), s.v. "rhetoric" (emphasis added).

¹²James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 1-8, Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 38A (Dallas: Word Books, 1988), 189.

¹³Ibid. Dunn fails to cite his reference.

Nigel Turner, who cautioned against "constructing a theology of prepositions,"¹⁴ later modified his warning with respect to Romans 3:30, seeing a change in prepositions within the same context as important. Turner now cautions that we must not assume that the New Testament writers "have nothing significant in mind when they vary a phrase from one verse to the next, even if the difference does not seem significant to us."¹⁵ F. Godet expressed a similar respect for Pauline word selection: "Experience has convinced us that Paul's style is not at the mercy of chance, even in the most secondary elements."¹⁶

One may anticipate the objection, however, that Paul had to change his prepositions in order to avoid a clumsy repetition of ἐκ in this phrase, and therefore, that the change is without significance. In fact, Paul is not bothered by such repetition. Paired uses of ἐκ abound in the Pauline corpus: Romans 2:29; 4:16; 9:24, 32; 1 Corinthians 11:8, 28; 13:9; 2 Corinthians 9:7; Galatians 2:16; 3:2, 5; 4:22; 1 Thessalonians 2:3. Paul could easily have chosen to repeat ἐκ at Romans 3:30, but he deliberately chose a different preposition. In view of

¹⁴J. H. Moulton, *Grammar of New Testament Greek*, vol. 3, *Syntax*, by Nigel Turner (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1963), 3.

¹⁵Idem, *Grammatical Insights*, 107.

¹⁶Godet, 165.

these observations we may conclude that Paul did not arbitrarily change prepositions in this verse, but chose them for some rhetorical, not purely stylistic or aesthetic, purpose. Such rhetoric bears at least some secondary significance.

The Significance of the
Change in Prepositions

Stowers

Although he is most probably correct in his view that Paul's variation of prepositions in Romans 3:30 is meaningful and not merely stylistic, Stowers has taken this observation too far. Here Turner's caveat concerning the construction of a "theology of prepositions" must be heeded. To be sure, Paul's theology is expressed most clearly in his choice of main parts of speech, not prepositions. If there is to be found meaning or emphasis in such choice of prepositions it must always be interpreted in light of the verbs and nouns that govern them.

Stowers believes that Origen and Theodore of Mopsuestia were correct in their intuitions about Paul's language in Romans 3:30, but that their "particular economies of salvation prevented them from drawing fully Pauline implications."¹⁷ The "Pauline implications" of which Stowers speaks amount to a Pauline theology which speaks of

¹⁷Stowers, 674.

Christ only in relation to the gentiles, never in relation to the Jews. Stowers states as much: "The phrase διὰ πίστεως refers specifically to Jesus' atoning life and death for the redemption of the gentiles. . . . How Jews relate to this, Paul never says."¹⁸ Paul's variation of prepositions is claimed as evidence for this understanding.

Crucial to Stowers' argument is his assertion that Paul never uses διὰ πίστεως in describing the relationship of justification to the Jews, although he can use ἐκ πίστεως of gentiles. Here is seen the distinguishing factor. For Stowers, διὰ πίστεως "points directly to the cross and its meaning for Gentiles, whereas ἐκ πίστεως is broader and also describes Abraham's behavior."¹⁹ Therefore, according to his thesis, the Jews are not in need of the cross with its atonement. This has been provided as a propitiation for gentiles only.

Stowers' assertion is incorrect. Paul does indeed use διὰ πίστεως when speaking of Jews as well as gentiles. Campbell notes: ". . . we find both phrases occurring in the same discussions and, more importantly, διὰ πίστεως occurring in contexts characterized by Jewish concerns."²⁰

¹⁸Ibid. But note that even Stowers, 670, must admit that Paul assumes that Jews also have some relationship to Jesus.

¹⁹Ibid., 672 (emphasis added).

²⁰Campbell, "ΠΙΣΤΙΣ and ΝΟΜΟΣ in Paul," 94 n. 9.

In Romans 3:9-31, Paul takes great pains to emphasize that Jews and gentiles are alike in sin and in justification. After showing through Scripture that Jews and gentiles both stand under the curse of the law (3:9-20), Paul states that a righteousness has been made manifest διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ to all who believe (v. 22a). Διὰ πίστεως here is clearly not restricted to gentiles. The foregoing verses actually emphasize the sinfulness of Israel (Jews) in particular, especially with respect to the Old Testament quotations. Following verse 22a, Paul proceeds to state emphatically that there is no distinction between Jew and gentile; all have sinned and (all) are being justified freely by God's grace.

In verse 25, Paul continues by saying that Christ was put forth as a propitiation διὰ [τῆς] πίστεως. Once again, this cannot apply to gentiles alone, as Stowers contends.²¹ Paul has just made the point that in the present context of sin and justification there is no distinction between Jew and Gentile. Therefore, Jews are certainly to be included in Paul's thought as also those who are justified διὰ πίστεως. Thus Stowers' conclusion that Paul nowhere states the relationship between Christ and the Jews is incorrect. Paul states exactly that relationship when he proclaims that there is no difference, all have sinned and all are justified through faith in Christ Jesus.

²¹Ibid., 669.

Other Commentators

There have been few other commentators who have seen significance in Paul's change of prepositions in Romans 3:30. While the majority of modern commentators see no particular significance, those who do generally take their conclusions too far.²² William Sanday and Arthur Headlam believe that ἐκ indicates that the Jews are justified out of faith by means of circumcision while the gentiles are justified ἐκ πίστεως and διὰ πίστεως, with no special channel.²³ Not only does this view overemphasize the role of circumcision for believing Jews, it fails to recognize baptism as a channel of justification for both believing Jews and believing gentiles.²⁴ R. C. H. Lenski believes the answer lies in "supposed source." The Jews supposed their source of righteousness to be circumcision, but Paul shows them that the source is ἐκ πίστεως. To the gentiles, who had no "supposed source," Paul speaks only of means.²⁵

²²Käsemann, 104, is an exception. Käsemann sees significance in the change in that, although Jews and gentiles are alike in that both are "called to faith alone," distinctions in how each came to faith still exist.

²³Sanday and Headlam, 96.

²⁴Michael Paul Middendorf, "Paul's Portrayal of Judaism: St. Paul's Critique of Judaism in Romans 3:19-31 and Evidence from Judaism which Vindicates His Assessment," (Master of Sacred Theology thesis, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, 1989), 51 n. 58.

²⁵Lenski, *Romans*, 276.

Similarly, Godet claims that the Jews believed that their source of righteousness was works of law. Thus Paul contrasts ἐξ ἔργων νόμου with ἐκ πίστεως in reference to the Jews, but not for the gentiles who had been "destitute. . . of every means of reaching any righteousness whatever. . ." ²⁶ Turner sees the variation as anticipatory of Romans 11: the gentiles are saved through the faith of the Jews. ²⁷

A New Perspective on Romans 3:30

One of the major themes in Romans is the tension between the "old" and the "new." This tension manifests itself in Romans 3 in the issue of Jewish priority. Is the "old way" abrogated by the "new?" Have the Jews somehow lost something that they have had since long ago now that the gentiles are to be justified in what must have seemed to the Jews as a "new" arrangement? The situation must have been quite analogous to that of a firstborn child observing his loss of exclusivity at the birth of a sibling.

Paul assumes the role of a consoling parent. To be sure, the Jews are still πρῶτον in salvation's "birth order" (1:16), but they cannot boast (3:27). Furthermore, there are certain advantages to this priority (3:1-2). Yet

²⁶Godet, 166.

²⁷Turner, *Grammatical Insights*, 109.

feelings of resentment can easily arise at the appearance of a new, gentile brother in righteousness. Romans 3 is Paul's way of telling Jewish Christians that although there is a new "family member" nothing has really changed, and God has not broken His promise. Jews are sinners; gentiles are sinners. Jews are justified by God through faith; gentiles are justified by God through faith (3:23-24). Such justification takes place for both as a result of Christ Jesus, whom God put forth as a propitiation (3:25).

Now, what of the law, which represents the "old?" Is that changed now also? In no way! The law, properly understood,²⁸ is still valid and is to be upheld (3:31). The old does indeed co-exist with the new. The only bit of "old" that cannot co-exist with the new is the erroneous idea that the law has the power to justify. This must categorically be denied (3:19-20). God has two "children," one Jew and one gentile (3:29), yet He is still the "old" יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ (3:30). He will justify them both through faith (3:30). Seen in this light, Paul is not, in Romans 3, the harshly scolding gentile sympathizer, nor is he an ancient segregationist, bearing tidings of "separate but equal"

²⁸That is, understood not to be a means to righteousness.

covenants²⁹ as a sort of "soteriological dualist."³⁰ Paul is here the vehicle of the Fatherly love-speak of God: two sons, equal love for both, one justification for all who believe.

Although it departs slightly from the model of a *new* sibling, one can see a parallel here to the father's words to his elder son in Jesus' parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:31-32): "My son (faithful Jews), you are always with me and everything I have is yours (the "old" still remains), but we had to celebrate and be glad (the "new") because this brother of yours (faithful gentiles) was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found" (NIV).

Paul's variation of prepositions in Romans 3:30 fits well into this proposed "old-new" tension. Paul's choice of ἐκ and διὰ has been shown to be purposeful. One may call it rhetorical if it is understood that "rhetoric" implies the purpose of improving the effectiveness of the thought, and not merely style. Ἐκ properly denotes origin or source.³¹ Thus Paul, in explaining that the Jews

²⁹This is essentially Stowers' position. Other proponents of the view that the Jews are entitled to a separate means of salvation include Lloyd Gaston and John Gager (see above, p. 2, nn. 1, 2).

³⁰Campbell, "ΝΙΣΤΙΣ and ΝΟΜΟΣ in Paul," 94 n. 9.

³¹Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, trans. and adapt. William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, rev. and augm. F. Wilbur Gingrich and Frederick W. Danker, 2d ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), s.v. ἐκ 3c,

are justified by means of faith, puts that statement in a way (using ἐκ) that emphasizes the nature of that faith as the origin or source of their justification.³² This is not to say that faith cannot also be the origin of the justification of the gentiles. The prepositions are not exclusive.³³ Paul simply chooses to emphasize a different point when speaking about the gentiles. By writing ἐκ πίστεως Paul hearkens back to the Old Testament, specifically to Habakkuk 2:4. Paul here subtly reaffirms that the "old" remains in force.

If ἐκ πίστεως reinforces the continuity of the "old," then διὰ τῆς πίστεως alludes to something "new." The root meaning of διά relates to passage of time. Although Paul is clearly using διά here in the sense of "means, instrument, agency,"³⁴ his choice of that particular preposition points the reader in the direction of the future. With the justification of the gentiles, something

e; [hereafter *B.A.G.D.*]; A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1934), 598.

³²This is true whether Paul is speaking about "faith in Christ" (proximate source of subjective justification) or "the faithfulness of Christ" (causative source of objective justification). The argument stands whether either, or both, senses of "faith" is employed.

³³Lenski, *Romans*, 275, notes that "either preposition can be used with Jews or gentiles."

³⁴*B.A.G.D.*, s.v. διά III.

"new" is taking place. In a sense it is not new, for God had planned it from eternity and even revealed it in the Old Testament, the law and the prophets bearing witness (3:21). But it is new in the awareness of the Jews, for only now is it being clearly revealed in the eschatological sense (1:17a; 3:21). While ἐκ is the more appropriate preposition to use in speaking of the "old" order of things, διὰ is appropriate to point out the "newness" of gentile justification. This is also maintained in 3:31. Paul asks rhetorically, "Do we nullify the law through (διὰ) the faith?" The answer is, "No." Even though there is a newness, that newness does not nullify the law. The old is maintained while the new is introduced.

Galatians 2:16

Context

In Galatians 2:15-16 Paul presents the propositional statement of his epistle, which he "unpacks" in the arguments that follow. Although these words may or may not be a part of the narrative between Paul and Peter, they are not merely a continuation of his rebuke to Peter. It is Paul's major premise: No man is justified by works of law, but rather justification is by faith.³⁵ After rebuking Peter

³⁵Richard N. Longenecker, *Galatians*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 41 (Dallas: Word Books, 1990), 82-83; Hans Dieter Betz, *Galatians*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 114-115.

for lapsing into a dependence upon Jewish customs, Paul makes the point that even Jews³⁶ know that man is not justified by works, despite the efforts of many Judaizers to do just that. Paul includes his Galatian readers when he asserts that "we" have believed so that we might be justified ἐκ πίστεως.

The Change in Prepositions

Commentators' Opinions

As in Romans 3:30, in Galatians 2:16 Paul varies his choice of prepositions with πίστις from ἐκ to διὰ. Paul writes that no man is justified³⁷ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου, but rather (ἐὰν μὴ) διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. However, later in the same verse Paul indicates that "we" have believed so that (ἵνα, a Semitic blending of result with purpose) "we" might be justified ἐκ πίστεως Χριστοῦ καὶ οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου. Once again, as in the case of Romans 3:30, the question becomes whether this change in prepositions is meaningful or stylistic.

Commentators regularly see little or no significance in this change of prepositions. Richard Longenecker sees no difference whatsoever: "the prepositions ἐκ and διὰ are

³⁶Indeed, especially Jews, who have the Scriptures which bear witness to the sinfulness of all flesh.

³⁷Literally, "a man is not justified. . . ."

used interchangeably throughout v. 16."³⁸ So also F. F. Bruce, who asserts that the change is "purely stylistic."³⁹ Others, however, have stated that Paul is careful not to indicate that faith is the cause of justification, but rather the means. J. B. Lightfoot believes that this effort underlies Paul's choice here of διὰ in the first instance, where "very great precision is aimed at."⁴⁰ Hans Betz draws a similar conclusion, that Paul chooses διὰ to indicate means rather than cause. But Betz also concedes that ἐκ πίστεως as used in this verse means "out of, on the basis of faith."⁴¹ Thus while commentators have speculated

³⁸R. Longenecker, 88.

³⁹F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Exeter, England: Paternoster; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1982), 139-140.

⁴⁰J. B. Lightfoot, *The Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1957), 115. Lightfoot admits, however, that it seems "altogether impossible to trace the subtle process which has led to the change of prepositions here." Therefore, while Lightfoot sees justification for διὰ, he cannot explain the change.

⁴¹Betz, 117. See also Donald Guthrie, *Galatians*, New Century Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co.; London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1973), 87-88. Still others have argued that διὰ does actually imply some manner of cause, and therefore is not to be distinguished from ἐκ: Ernest de Witt Burton, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1921), 122 ("the conditioning clause"); R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Galatians, to the Ephesians, and to the Philippians* (N.p.: Lutheran Book Concern, 1937; reprint, Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1961), 107.

that διὰ was chosen to emphasize means rather than source, they are hesitant to explain the change to ἐκ other than as being purely stylistic.

Other Possible Explanations

It must be remembered that Galatians 2:16 falls into a different category from that of Romans 3:30. While both passages emphasize Paul's doctrine of justification by faith as opposed to works of law, there is an important difference. At Romans 3:30 the phrases ἐκ πίστεως and διὰ τῆς πίστεως are in close proximity and are contrasted to one another in that ἐκ πίστεως refers to Jews, while διὰ τῆς πίστεως refers to gentiles. At Galatians 2:16, however, διὰ πίστεως and ἐκ πίστεως are not in close proximity and Paul's statement applies to all, Jews and gentiles alike.⁴²

Since the immediate context is different, it is not surprising that the proposed significance of the change in prepositions in Romans 3:30 does not apply to Galatians 2:16. At Galatians 2:16, διὰ πίστεως does not refer to the "new" in the same sense as it does at Romans 3:30. Paul implies that justification διὰ πίστεως is something that "we native Jews" already know. There might, however, be a bit of intended irony here. While this knowledge should already be known, because it was born witness to by the law

⁴²See Campbell, "ΠΙΣΤΙΣ and ΝΟΜΟΣ in Paul," 94-95.

and the prophets (Romans 3:21), it is apparent from Peter's behavior at Antioch and from the behavior of Paul's "Judaizing" opponents that perhaps this knowledge of justification διὰ πίστεως is something that must be re-learned. In this sense it may be "new" also at Galatians 2:16.

It is more likely, however, that the "old-new" distinction of Romans 3:30 does not apply to Galatians 2:16. Perhaps the distinction made in Romans was a later development in Paul's thought. Galatians 2:16 does not fit this paradigm. It is likely that the διὰ - ἐκ shift in the latter example is a true stylistic choice. The use of διὰ in the first instance contrasts πίστις as a means for justification with ἐξ ἔργων νόμου. Later in that sentence Paul shifts to his more usual ἐκ πίστεως.

CHAPTER 8 CONCLUSIONS

Summary

The Hebrew concept of **יְמוּנָה** refers both to man's trust in God's saving action and to God's faithfulness and trustworthiness in carrying out that salvation. Also included is the appropriate response to God's faithfulness on the part of man, faithful obedience to God's law. When Paul required a Greek word to convey this relationship of trust and trustworthiness, he found such a term in **πίστις**.

In the Septuagint, **πιστεύειν** was used to represent both God's faithfulness and man's trust in Him, but the emphasis was upon the latter. This development of **πίστις/πιστεύειν** into a religious technical term for "trust in (the/a) god(s)" had already begun in Classical Greek and continued in non-Jewish Hellenism. In Jewish Hellenism **πίστις/πιστεύειν** began to evolve into a central theological concept. So close was the connection between **πίστις** and justification that the Septuagint could use this term to translate Genesis 15:6 and Habakkuk 2:4. These were key passages for Paul in which are linked the concepts of faith and justification.

For Paul, faith takes on a position of utmost importance. It is ἐκ πίστεως and διὰ πίστεως that man is justified. This includes both God's faithfulness in carrying out His salvation, offering Christ as a blood-sacrifice for man's sins (Romans 3:25), and man's faith in that saving act of God (Ephesians 2:8-9). This duality echoes the Old Testament concept of יְשׁוּעָה. Paul finds in πιστεύειν/πίστις terminology which communicates this same duality to Greek readers. Therefore, it is natural for Paul to use πιστεύειν/πίστις to refer to both aspects of יְשׁוּעָה. God is faithful in executing His promise of salvation; man apprehends this salvation through faith. Thus Paul leaves no room for the works-righteousness of contemporary Judaism.

It would not be surprising therefore if Paul were to occasionally use πίστις ambiguously, referring to both man's trust in God and to God's faithfulness to His promise of salvation. Both concepts are important to Paul; both can be expressed by πίστις.

In the century or so of heated debate on the question of whether Paul's πίστις Χριστοῦ statements are objective or subjective genitives, persuasive arguments have been made on both sides. While most have been reluctant to "sit on the fence," a few scholars have recently suggested that Paul could be deliberately

ambiguous in the use of these genitives.¹ Such a usage would be entirely consistent with contemporary rabbinic exegesis, which sought to draw as much meaning as possible out of a word or phrase. Therefore, when Paul writes in Galatians 2:16, for example, that man is justified ἐκ πίστεως Χριστοῦ, it is quite plausible to conclude that Paul is employing neither the objective or subjective genitives exclusively, but that he includes both.²

The same ambiguity which Paul applies to the πίστις Χριστοῦ statements can also be seen in Paul's use of ἐκ πίστεως and similar prepositional phrases using πίστις. This can be seen from Paul's application of Habakkuk 2:4, a passage with a varied history of interpretation that includes perceived references to man's faith, God's faithfulness, and the faithfulness of the Messiah.

¹See especially Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co.; Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1988), 174-175. Also Adolph Deissmann, *Paul: A Study in Social and Religious History*, trans. William E. Wilson, 2d ed. (New York: George H. Doran, 1926), 162-163 (where he argues for a unique "mystical genitive" which is really a combination of objective-subjective elements); Gabriel Hebert, "Faithfulness and 'Faith,'" *Theology* 58 (1955): 373-379; Thomas Torrance, "One Aspect of the Biblical Conception of Faith," *The Expository Times* 68 (1957): 111-114; John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans*, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament*, 2 vols. in 1 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1959-1965), 1:363-374; Morna Hooker, "ΠΙΣΤΙΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ," *New Testament Studies* 35 (1989): 321-342.

²Or, conversely, a distinct genitive that includes aspects of both.

Once it has been established that Paul's use of ἐκ πίστεως stems from Habakkuk 2:4, it is a short step to applying the ambiguity of that passage to ἐκ πίστεως in general. Habakkuk 2:4 is the common link between the dual nature of יְשׁוּעָה in the Old Testament and the ambiguity of ἐκ πίστεως Χριστοῦ (or merely πίστις Χριστοῦ) in Paul.

The Hebrew text of Habakkuk 2:4 indicates that the one who is righteous shall live by "his faith."³ This is most naturally a reference to the believer's own faith in Yahweh. The Septuagint took it differently, translating "the righteous one shall live by my faith," a reference to God's faithfulness. In his citations of this passage in Romans 1:17 and Galatians 3:11, Paul has omitted the pronoun altogether: "the righteous shall live by faith." To whose faith does Paul's citation refer?

Remembering that it is consistent with *peshet* exegesis to make slight alterations in the original text to emphasize the interpreter's point, Paul's omission of the pronoun could reflect his desire to incorporate both understandings of Habakkuk 2:4: "the righteous shall live by his faith in Yahweh and by Yahweh's faithfulness in sacrificing His Messiah for man's sins."⁴ It is perhaps

³This is true of the Qumran scroll as well as the Masoretic text.

⁴Possible Messianic interpretations from Judaism of Habakkuk 2:4 highlight this understanding of the text.

from this understanding of ἐκ πίστεως that Paul generalizes to an ambiguous use of πίστις Χριστοῦ, having both objective and subjective aspects.

In Romans 1:17, Paul ties the Habakkuk passage, with its inclusion of ἐκ πίστεως, to the concept of the righteousness of God. It has also been disputed whether "the righteousness of God" should be taken as an objective or subjective genitive. It is not surprising that the same rabbinic exegetical techniques that allowed Paul to take ἐκ πίστεως in a deliberately ambiguous way, emphasizing both man's faith and God's faithfulness, also allowed him to construct a deliberately ambiguous genitive in δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ.

The objective status of "righteousness" is inherent in δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ. But this declarative status cannot be separated from God's salvific activity. Thus God's righteousness is also His faithfulness to His own promise of salvation, that is, His fulfillment of that promise in Christ. These points all come together in Romans, particularly in Romans 1:17 with Habakkuk 2:4 (slightly altered by the omission of the personal pronoun with πίστεως) as its focal point.

The evidence for this dual nature of ἐκ πίστεως as both man's faith and God's faithfulness is not as strong in Galatians as it is in Romans. While Paul's use of πίστις Χριστοῦ in Galatians has indeed been interpreted as either

objective or subjective, or *both* objective and subjective, ἐκ πίστεως here seems to be used more to contrast ἐκ (ἔργων) νόμου. The deliberate ambiguity is still somewhat implied in Paul's citation of Habakkuk 2:4 once again without the personal pronoun. Although the contrast between ἐκ πίστεως and ἐκ (ἔργων) νόμου receives the greater emphasis in Galatians by virtue of that epistle's occasion and objective, the dual nature of πίστις/πίστις still comes through in the phrase ἐκ πίστεως.

It may seem as if this perceived intentional ambiguity on Paul's part is a refusal to wrestle with the issue of decisiveness between objective and subjective genitives. When one examines the grammatical evidence, however, it is noted that Greek speakers and writers may not have made such a clear distinction. It is also noted that rabbinic *peshar* exegesis tended to avoid such "either/or" declarations and opt for a reading that gleaned as much meaning as possible from textual ambiguity, even if that included slight alterations in the quotation of a text. Taken together, these factors warn against artificial categorization of terms into such exclusive categories as "objective" or "subjective." Rather, the full significance of Pauline soteriology is brought out by an understanding of ἐκ πίστεως that takes into account both man's faith in God (the greater emphasis by Paul) and God's faithfulness, in Christ, to His promise of salvation.

Although ἐκ πίστεως is the phrase that links the dual nature of πίστις via Paul's quotation of Habakkuk 2:4, Paul is not bound to that preposition. Frequently in Romans and Galatians, Paul uses the phrase διὰ πίστεως. There is no difference in meaning between these two phrases. There may, however, at times be a difference in emphasis.

In Romans 3:30, Paul abruptly switches from ἐκ πίστεως to διὰ τῆς πίστεως when moving in his thought from the justification of Jews to that of gentiles. There may be significance in this shifting of prepositions. Whereas ἐκ implies "origin, source," that is, something "old," διὰ implies movement through space or time, that is, something "new." Here the "newness" of the inclusion of the gentiles can subtly be brought out by the use of διὰ rather than ἐκ.

Paul speaks about this inclusion as a "mystery" in Romans 11:25 (also Ephesians 3:2-6). This mystery is made known through the proclamation of the gospel (Romans 16:25-26), in which the righteousness of God is revealed ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν (Romans 1:17). Thus the "trail" of Paul's logical arguments leads back to Habakkuk 2:4 as interpreted ambiguously, without the personal pronoun attached to πίστεως. God therefore can be faithful and righteous even as He justifies those gentiles who have faith in Him. He is still faithful and righteous because He is actually carrying out His original plan of salvation,

now being revealed through the gospel of Christ.

Implications

The Reformation emphasis on Paul's doctrine of justification by faith in Christ Jesus alone apart from works of law is altogether proper. This is the special emphasis of Paul's letter to the Galatians. In view of the abuses of their time, Luther and other reformers did well to emphasize this aspect of justification ἐκ πίστεως.

However, in the centuries of emphasizing justification by man's faith in God that have followed the Reformation, the emphasis on God's faithfulness has diminished. This Pauline emphasis, very much a part especially of Romans, is not to be neglected. The fact remains that although man may be unfaithful in terms of living out his faith in obedience, God's faithfulness to His promise of salvation still stands.

Man's faith is ever dependent upon God's faithfulness. Man trusts in God because God has always proven Himself faithful and trustworthy. God kept His promise of forgiveness, pardon, and reconciliation. His Messiah remained faithful to His salvific mission. These Paul shows to be "given." Now man can continue to live ἐκ πίστεως, trusting that accomplished salvation and focusing his faith on Christ and His sacrifice.

Paul's concept of ἐκ πίστεως also has implications

for evangelism. God is faithful to His promise to send a personal Savior. The focal point is Christ Jesus. God's promise is fulfilled in Christ for Jew and gentile alike. The faithful Jews and gentiles believe this and trust in God's fulfillment in Christ for their salvation. Paul's change of preposition from ἐκ to διὰ in Romans 3:30 or elsewhere may change the emphasis of his point somewhat, but it does not alter the meaning of the phrase. There is no implication in διὰ πίστεως of a covenant or means of salvation for gentiles separate from that covenant God had made in the Old Testament, and which He fulfilled in Christ. Therefore Jews and gentiles alike, in Paul's time and at present, must receive the gospel message of Christ. In this message is revealed the righteousness of God. In this message both are justified by faith.

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