

ROMANS

THOMAS R. SCHREINER



Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament

B Baker Academic
Grand Rapids, Michigan

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Published by Baker Academic
a division of Baker Publishing Group
P.O. Box 6287, Grand Rapids, MI 49516-6287
www.bakeracademic.com

Fifth printing, December 2006

Printed in the United States of America

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Schreiner, Thomas R.

Romans / Thomas R. Schreiner.

p. cm. — (Baker exegetical commentary on the New Testament ; 6)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 10: 0-8010-2149-9

ISBN 978-0-8010-2149-7

1. Bible. N.T. Romans—Commentaries. I. Title. II. Series.

BS2665.3.S36 1998

227.1077—dc21

98-18200

To John Piper, who has proclaimed to me
the supremacy of God

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Series Preface

The chief concern of the Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (to be known as BECNT) is to provide, within the framework of informed evangelical thought, commentaries that blend scholarly depth with readability, exegetical detail with sensitivity to the whole, attention to critical problems with theological awareness. We hope thereby to attract the interest of a fairly wide audience, from the scholar who is looking for a thoughtful and independent examination of the text to the motivated lay Christian who craves a solid but accessible exposition.

Nevertheless, a major purpose is to address the needs of pastors and others involved in the preaching and exposition of the Scriptures as the uniquely inspired Word of God. This consideration affects directly the parameters of the series. For example, serious biblical expositors cannot afford to depend on a superficial treatment that avoids the difficult questions, but neither are they interested in encyclopedic commentaries that seek to cover every conceivable issue that may arise. Our aim, therefore, is to focus on those problems that have a direct bearing on the meaning of the text (although selected technical details are treated in the additional notes).

Similarly, a special effort is made to avoid treating exegetical questions for their own sake, that is, in relative isolation from the thrust of the argument as a whole. This effort may involve (at the discretion of the individual contributors) abandoning the verse-by-verse approach in favor of an exposition that focuses on the paragraph as the main unit of thought. In all cases, however, the commentaries will stress the development of the argument and explicitly relate each passage to what precedes and follows it so as to identify its function in context as clearly as possible.

We believe, moreover, that a responsible exegetical commentary must take fully into account the latest scholarly research, regardless of its source. The attempt to do this in the context of a conservative theological tradition presents certain challenges, and in the past the results have not always been commendable. In some cases, evangelicals appear to make use of critical scholarship not for the purpose of genuine interaction but only to dismiss it. In other cases, the interaction glides over into assimilation, theological distinc-

tives are ignored or suppressed, and the end product cannot be differentiated from works that arise from a fundamentally different starting point.

The contributors to this series attempt to avoid these pitfalls. On the one hand, they do not consider traditional opinions to be sacrosanct, and they are certainly committed to do justice to the biblical text whether or not it supports such opinions. On the other hand, they will not quickly abandon a long-standing view, if there is persuasive evidence in its favor, for the sake of fashionable theories. What is more important, the contributors share a belief in the trustworthiness and essential unity of Scripture. They also consider that the historic formulations of Christian doctrine, such as the ecumenical creeds and many of the documents originating in the sixteenth-century Reformation, arose from a legitimate reading of Scripture, thus providing a proper framework for its further interpretation. No doubt, the use of such a starting point sometimes results in the imposition of a foreign construct on the text, but we deny that it must necessarily do so or that the writers who claim to approach the text without prejudices are invulnerable to the same danger.

Accordingly, we do not consider theological assumptions—from which, in any case, no commentator is free—to be obstacles to biblical interpretation. On the contrary, an exegete who hopes to understand the apostle Paul in a theological vacuum might just as easily try to interpret Aristotle without regard for the philosophical framework of his whole work or without having recourse to those subsequent philosophical categories that make possible a meaningful contextualization of his thought. It must be emphasized, however, that the contributors to the present series come from a variety of theological traditions and that they do not all have identical views with regard to the proper implementation of these general principles. In the end, all that really matters is whether the series succeeds in representing the original text accurately, clearly, and meaningfully to the contemporary reader.

Shading has been used to assist the reader in locating salient sections of the treatment of each passage: the introductory comments and the discussion of structure. Textual variants in the Greek text are signaled in the author's translation by means of half-brackets around the relevant word or phrase (e.g., 「Gerasenes」), thereby alerting the reader to turn to the additional notes at the end of each exegetical unit for a discussion of the textual problem. The documentation uses the author-date method, in which the basic reference consists of author's surname + year + page num-

ber(s): Fitzmyer 1981: 297. The only exceptions to this system are well-known reference works (e.g., BAGD, LSJ, *TDNT*). Full publication data and a complete set of indexes can be found at the end of the volume.

Moisés Silva

Author's Preface

What is the purpose of another commentary on Romans since a number of excellent commentaries have been produced? I asked myself this question when the request to contribute to this series arrived. I am in no position to judge whether I have made an original contribution. I have tried to write a scholarly commentary that fulfills the goals of brevity and lucidity that Calvin praised in commentators. The excessive length of many commentaries today suggests that they are mainly written for other scholars. Two- and three-volume commentaries are now rather common. I hope scholars profit from my commentary, but I have restricted it to one volume to help laypersons and busy pastors in their exegesis of the text. At the same time, I hope the commentary is meaty enough to avoid superficiality. One of my goals has been to trace the flow of thought in the letter so that the reader can understand how the argument unfolds. I have also tried to wrestle with the meaning of Romans theologically, and this task is not always in vogue today. In particular, I have attempted to demonstrate inductively that the glory of God is the central theme that permeates the letter. All of Paul's letters, including Romans, were written to specific situations. Yet his advice was not merely ad hoc. He had a worldview from which he tackled particular situations. We must beware of abstracting his theology so that it floats free of the circumstances that precipitated his writings. We must also guard against the tendency to avoid synthesis in formulating Paul's thought.

I have read representatively from commentaries, monographs, and journal articles on Romans. My intention was not to produce the kind of exhaustive commentary that Cranfield and Dunn have written. I am grateful to the many learned and godly scholars whose exegesis of the epistle deepened my understanding. I am particularly grateful to Ardel Caneday, who carefully read the entire manuscript, corrected errors, and whose queries caused me to rethink a number of my conclusions. My teaching assistant, Philemon Yong, also checked my bibliography and saved me from a number of errors, for which I am extremely grateful. Randall Tan, also my teaching assistant, deserves a special word of thanks for helping me proof the entire manuscript under a tight deadline. Of course, I take responsibility for any errors that remain. Thanks are

also due to the editor of the Baker Exegetical Commentaries on the New Testament, Moisés Silva, for inviting me to contribute to the series, and to Jim Weaver and Wells Turner at Baker Book House for their editorial assistance. The joy that predominates in our household gave me strength when I entered the study, and so I am grateful to my wife, Diane, and our four children, Daniel, Patrick, John, and Anna. Finally, this book is dedicated to John Piper. As my pastor he has taught me more than anyone about the glory of God, and how stunning it is. Words cannot express what he means to me.

Thomas R. Schreiner

Abbreviations

Bibliographic and General

- ABD** *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, edited by D. N. Freedman et al., 6 vols. (New York: Doubleday, 1992)
- BAGD** *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, by W. Bauer, W. F. Arndt, F. W. Gingrich, and F. W. Danker, 2d ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979)
- BDF** *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, by F. Blass, A. Debrunner, and R. W. Funk (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961)
- DPL** *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, edited by G. F. Hawthorne and R. P. Martin (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1993)
- EDNT** *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, edited by H. Balz and G. Schneider, 3 vols. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990–93)
- IDBSup** *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, supplementary vol., edited by K. Crim et al. (Nashville: Abingdon, 1976)
- ISBE** *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, edited by G. W. Bromiley et al., 4 vols. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979–88)
- KJV** King James Version
- LXX** Septuagint
- MM** *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament: Illustrated from the Papyri and Other Non-literary Sources*, by J. H. Moulton and G. Milligan (repr., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976)
- MT** Masoretic Text
- NA²⁵** *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 25th ed., edited by [E. Nestle], E. Nestle, and K. Aland (Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1963)
- NA²⁷** *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 27th rev. ed., edited by [E. and E. Nestle], B. and K. Aland, J. Karavidopoulos, C. M. Martini, and B. M. Metzger (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1993)
- NASB** New American Standard Bible
- NEB** New English Bible
- NIDNTT** *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, edited by L. Coenen, E. Beyreuther, and H. Bietenhard; English translation edited by C. Brown, 4 vols. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975–86)
- NIV** New International Version
- NJB** New Jerusalem Bible
- NKJV** New King James Version
- NRSV** New Revised Standard Version
- NT** New Testament
- OT** Old Testament
- OTP** *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, edited by J. H. Charlesworth, 2 vols. (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1983–85)

PL	<i>Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Latina</i> , edited by J.-P. Migne, 221 vols. (Paris, 1844–55)
RSV	Revised Standard Version
RV	Revised Version
TDNT	<i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> , edited by G. Kittel and G. Friedrich; translated and edited by G. W. Bromiley, 10 vols. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–76)
TDOT	<i>Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament</i> , edited by G. J. Botterweck, H. Ringgren, and H.-J. Fabry; translated by J. T. Willis, G. W. Bromiley, D. E. Green, and D. W. Stott, 8 vols. to date (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974–)
UBS ³	<i>The Greek New Testament</i> , 3d corrected ed., edited by K. Aland, M. Black, C. M. Martini, B. M. Metzger, and A. Wikgren (New York: United Bible Societies, 1983)
UBS ⁴	<i>The Greek New Testament</i> , 4th rev. ed., edited by B. Aland, K. Aland, J. Karavidopoulos, C. M. Martini, and B. M. Metzger (New York: United Bible Societies, 1993)

Hebrew Bible

Gen.	Genesis	2 Chron.	2 Chronicles	Dan.	Daniel
Exod.	Exodus	Ezra	Ezra	Hos.	Hosea
Lev.	Leviticus	Neh.	Nehemiah	Joel	Joel
Num.	Numbers	Esth.	Esther	Amos	Amos
Deut.	Deuteronomy	Job	Job	Obad.	Obadiah
Josh.	Joshua	Ps.	Psalms	Jon.	Jonah
Judg.	Judges	Prov.	Proverbs	Mic.	Micah
Ruth	Ruth	Eccles.	Ecclesiastes	Nah.	Nahum
1 Sam.	1 Samuel	Song	Song of Songs	Hab.	Habakkuk
2 Sam.	2 Samuel	Isa.	Isaiah	Zeph.	Zephaniah
1 Kings	1 Kings	Jer.	Jeremiah	Hag.	Haggai
2 Kings	2 Kings	Lam.	Lamentations	Zech.	Zechariah
1 Chron.	1 Chronicles	Ezek.	Ezekiel	Mal.	Malachi

Greek Testament

Matt.	Matthew	Eph.	Ephesians	Heb.	Hebrews
Mark	Mark	Phil.	Philippians	James	James
Luke	Luke	Col.	Colossians	1 Pet.	1 Peter
John	John	1 Thess.	1 Thessalonians	2 Pet.	2 Peter
Acts	Acts	2 Thess.	2 Thessalonians	1 John	1 John
Rom.	Romans	1 Tim.	1 Timothy	2 John	2 John
1 Cor.	1 Corinthians	2 Tim.	2 Timothy	3 John	3 John
2 Cor.	2 Corinthians	Titus	Titus	Jude	Jude
Gal.	Galatians	Philem.	Philemon	Rev.	Revelation

Other Jewish and Christian Writings

Add. Esth.	Additions to Esther	3 Bar.	3 (Greek Apocalypse of) Baruch
Apoc. Abr.	Apocalypse of Abraham	Barn.	Barnabas
Apoc. Mos.	Apocalypse of Moses	Bel	Bel and the Dragon
Apoc. Zeph.	Apocalypse of Zephaniah	<i>Bib. Ant.</i>	<i>Biblical Antiquities</i>
Bar.	Baruch	1–2 Clem.	1–2 Clement
2 Bar.	2 (Syriac Apocalypse of) Baruch	Did.	Didache

Diogn.	Diognetus	Pol. <i>Phil.</i>	Polycarp, <i>Letter to the Philippians</i>
<i>Ecc. Hist.</i>	<i>Ecclesiastical History</i>	Pr. Azar.	Prayer of Azariah
1 Enoch	1 (Ethiopic) Enoch	Pr. Man.	Prayer of Manasseh
2 Enoch	2 (Slavonic) Enoch	Ps. Sol.	Psalms of Solomon
1 Esdr.	1 Esdras	Sib. Or.	Sibylline Oracles
2 Esdr.	2 Esdras	Sir.	Sirach (Ecclesiasticus)
Herm. <i>Man.</i>	Shepherd of Hermas, <i>Mandate(s)</i>	Sus.	Susanna
Herm. <i>Sim.</i>	Shepherd of Hermas, <i>Similitude(s)</i>	T. Abr.	Testament of Abraham
Herm. <i>Vis.</i>	Shepherd of Hermas, <i>Vision(s)</i>	T. Asher	Testament of Asher
Ign. <i>Eph.</i>	Ignatius, <i>Letter to the Ephesians</i>	T. Ben.	Testament of Benjamin
Ign. <i>Magn.</i>	Ignatius, <i>Letter to the Magnesians</i>	T. Dan	Testament of Dan
Ign. <i>Phld.</i>	Ignatius, <i>Letter to the Philadelphians</i>	T. Gad	Testament of Gad
Ign. <i>Rom.</i>	Ignatius, <i>Letter to the Romans</i>	T. Iss.	Testament of Issachar
Jdt.	Judith	T. Job	Testament of Job
Jos. As.	Joseph and Asenath	T. Jos.	Testament of Joseph
Jub.	Jubilees	T. Judah	Testament of Judah
Let. Arist.	Letter of Aristeas	T. Levi	Testament of Levi
Let. Jer.	Letter of Jeremiah	T. Moses	Testament of Moses
1–4 Macc.	1–4 Maccabees	T. Naph.	Testament of Naphtali
Mart. Pol.	Martyrdom of Polycarp	T. Reub.	Testament of Reuben
Odes Sol.	Odes of Solomon	T. Sim.	Testament of Simeon
		T. Sol.	Testament of Solomon
		T. Zeb.	Testament of Zebulun
		Tob.	Tobit
		Wis.	Wisdom of Solomon

Josephus and Philo

<i>Abr.</i>	<i>On Abraham</i>	<i>J. W.</i>	<i>The Jewish War</i>
<i>Ag. Ap.</i>	<i>Against Apion</i>	<i>Life</i>	<i>The Life of Josephus</i>
<i>Alleg. Interp.</i>	<i>Allegorical Interpretation</i>	<i>Migr. Abr.</i>	<i>On the Migration of Abraham</i>
<i>Anim.</i>	<i>On Animals</i>	<i>Mos.</i>	<i>On the Life of Moses</i>
<i>Ant.</i>	<i>Jewish Antiquities</i>	<i>Plant.</i>	<i>On Noah's Work as a Planter</i>
<i>Chang. Nam.</i>	<i>On the Change of Names</i>	<i>Post. Cain</i>	<i>On the Posterity and Exile of Cain</i>
<i>Cher.</i>	<i>On the Cherubim</i>	<i>Prelim. Stud.</i>	<i>On the Preliminary Studies</i>
<i>Conf. Tong.</i>	<i>On the Confusion of Tongues</i>	<i>Prov.</i>	<i>On Providence</i>
<i>Cont. Life</i>	<i>On the Contemplative Life</i>	<i>Quest. Exod.</i>	<i>Questions and Answers on Exodus</i>
<i>Creat.</i>	<i>On the Creation</i>	<i>Quest. Gen.</i>	<i>Questions and Answers on Genesis</i>
<i>Decal.</i>	<i>On the Decalogue</i>	<i>Rewards</i>	<i>On Rewards and Punishments/On Curses</i>
<i>Dreams</i>	<i>On Dreams</i>	<i>Sacr.</i>	<i>On the Sacrifices of Abel and Cain</i>
<i>Drunk.</i>	<i>On Drunkenness</i>	<i>Sobr.</i>	<i>On Sobriety</i>
<i>Etern. World</i>	<i>On the Eternity of the World</i>	<i>Spec. Laws</i>	<i>On the Special Laws</i>
<i>Flacc.</i>	<i>Flaccus</i>	<i>Unchang.</i>	<i>On the Unchangeableness of God</i>
<i>Flight</i>	<i>On Flight and Finding</i>	<i>Virt.</i>	<i>On the Virtues</i>
<i>Gaius</i>	<i>On the Embassy to Gaius</i>	<i>Worse Att. Bet.</i>	<i>The Worse Attacks the Better</i>
<i>Giants</i>	<i>On the Giants</i>		
<i>Good Free</i>	<i>Every Good Man Is Free</i>		
<i>Heir</i>	<i>Who Is the Heir of Divine Things</i>		
<i>Husb.</i>	<i>On Husbandry</i>		
<i>Hypoth.</i>	<i>Hypothetica/Apology for the Jews</i>		
<i>Jos.</i>	<i>On Joseph</i>		

Rabbinic Tractates

The abbreviations below are used for the names of tractates in the Babylonian Talmud (indicated by a prefixed *b.*), Palestinian or Jerusalem Talmud (*y.*), Mishnah (*m.*), and Tosephta (*t.*). The last column gives the numbers of the order and tractate in the Mishnah.

<i>ʿAbod. Zar.</i>	<i>ʿAboda Zara</i>	4.8	<i>Nazir</i>	<i>Nazir</i>	3.4
<i>ʿAbot</i>	<i>ʿAbot</i>	4.9	<i>Ned.</i>	<i>Nedarim</i>	3.3
<i>ʿArak.</i>	<i>ʿArakin</i>	5.5	<i>Neg.</i>	<i>Negaʿim</i>	6.3
<i>B. Bat.</i>	<i>Babaʾ Batraʾ</i>	4.3	<i>Nid.</i>	<i>Nidda</i>	6.7
<i>B. Meṣ.</i>	<i>Babaʾ Meṣiʿaʾ</i>	4.2	<i>ʾOhol.</i>	<i>ʾOholot</i>	6.2
<i>B. Qam.</i>	<i>Babaʾ Qammaʾ</i>	4.1	<i>ʾOr.</i>	<i>ʾOrla</i>	1.10
<i>Bek.</i>	<i>Bekorot</i>	5.4	<i>Para</i>	<i>Para</i>	6.4
<i>Ber.</i>	<i>Berakot</i>	1.1	<i>Peʾa</i>	<i>Peʾa</i>	1.2
<i>Beṣa</i>	<i>Beṣa</i>	2.7	<i>Pesaḥ.</i>	<i>Pesaḥim</i>	2.3
<i>Bik.</i>	<i>Bikkurim</i>	1.11	<i>Qid.</i>	<i>Qidduṣin</i>	3.7
<i>Dem.</i>	<i>Demaʾi</i>	1.3	<i>Qin.</i>	<i>Qinnim</i>	5.11
<i>ʿEd.</i>	<i>ʿEduyyot</i>	4.7	<i>Roʾš Haš.</i>	<i>Roʾš Haššana</i>	2.8
<i>ʿErub.</i>	<i>ʿErubin</i>	2.2	<i>Šab.</i>	<i>Šabbat</i>	2.1
<i>Giṭ.</i>	<i>Giṭṭin</i>	3.6	<i>Sanh.</i>	<i>Sanhedrin</i>	4.4
<i>Ḥag.</i>	<i>Ḥagiga</i>	2.12	<i>Šeb.</i>	<i>Šebiʿit</i>	1.5
<i>Ḥal.</i>	<i>Ḥalla</i>	1.9	<i>Šebu.</i>	<i>Šebuʾot</i>	4.6
<i>Hor.</i>	<i>Horayot</i>	4.10	<i>Šeqal.</i>	<i>Šeqalim</i>	2.4
<i>Ḥul.</i>	<i>Ḥullin</i>	5.3	<i>Soṭa</i>	<i>Soṭa</i>	3.5
<i>Kel.</i>	<i>Kelim</i>	6.1	<i>Suk.</i>	<i>Sukka</i>	2.6
<i>Ker.</i>	<i>Keritot</i>	5.7	<i>Ṭ. Yom</i>	<i>Ṭebul Yom</i>	6.10
<i>Ketub.</i>	<i>Ketubot</i>	3.2	<i>Taʿan.</i>	<i>Taʿanit</i>	2.9
<i>Kil.</i>	<i>Kilʿayim</i>	1.4	<i>Tamid</i>	<i>Tamid</i>	5.9
<i>Maʿaś.</i>	<i>Maʿaśerot</i>	1.7	<i>Tem.</i>	<i>Temura</i>	5.6
<i>Maʿaś. Š.</i>	<i>Maʿaśer Šeni</i>	1.8	<i>Ter.</i>	<i>Terumot</i>	1.6
<i>Mak.</i>	<i>Makkot</i>	4.5	<i>Ṭohar.</i>	<i>Ṭoharot</i>	6.5
<i>Makš.</i>	<i>Makširin</i>	6.8	<i>ʿUq.</i>	<i>ʿUqṣin</i>	6.12
<i>Meg.</i>	<i>Megilla</i>	2.10	<i>Yad.</i>	<i>Yadayim</i>	6.11
<i>Meʿil.</i>	<i>Meʿila</i>	5.8	<i>Yeb.</i>	<i>Yebamot</i>	3.1
<i>Menaḥ.</i>	<i>Menaḥot</i>	5.2	<i>Yomaʾ</i>	<i>Yomaʾ</i>	2.5
<i>Mid.</i>	<i>Middot</i>	5.10	<i>Zab.</i>	<i>Zabim</i>	6.9
<i>Miqw.</i>	<i>Miqwaʾot</i>	6.6	<i>Zebaḥ.</i>	<i>Zebaḥim</i>	5.1
<i>Moʿed Qaṭ.</i>	<i>Moʿed Qaṭan</i>	2.11			

Midrashim

Midrashim on the biblical books are indicated by the abbreviation *Midr.* appended in front of the usual abbreviation for the biblical book (see the above list). The names of other midrashim (e.g., *Sipra*, *Mekilta de Rabbi Ishmael*, *Pesiqta Rabbati*) are spelled in full.

Targumim

Targumim on the Writings and Prophets are indicated by the abbreviation *Tg.* appended in front of the usual abbreviation for the biblical book (see the above list). In the place of *Tg.*, targumim on the Pentateuch use one of the following abbreviations:

<i>Frg. Tg.</i>	Fragmentary Targum
<i>Tg. Neof. 1</i>	Targum Neofiti 1
<i>Tg. Onq.</i>	Targum Onqelos
<i>Tg. Ps.-J.</i>	Targum Pseudo-Jonathan

Qumran / Dead Sea Scrolls

References follow the numbering system found in Florentino García Martínez, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated: The Qumran Texts in English*, 2d ed., translated by Wilfred G. E. Watson (Leiden: Brill/Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996).

1QH	Thanksgiving Hymns/Psalms (<i>Hôdāyôt</i>); reference numbers in parentheses reflect the older, eighteen-column division
1QM	War Scroll (<i>Milḥāmā</i>)
1QpHab	Commentary (<i>Pesher</i>) on Habakkuk
1QS	Manual of Discipline (<i>Serek Hayyahad</i> , Rule/Order of the Community)
1QSa	Rule of the Congregation (1Q28a, appendix A to 1QS)
4QFlor	Florilegium (4Q174)
4QMMT	Halakhic Letter (<i>Miqsāt Ma'āšê Tôrâ</i>)
4QpGen ^a	Commentary (<i>Pesher</i>) on Genesis (4Q252)
4QpPs ^a	Commentary (<i>Pesher</i>) on Psalms (A) (4Q171; formerly 4QpPs37)
4QŠirŠabb ^a	Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice (<i>Serek Širôt 'Ôlat Haššabbāt</i>)
11QMelch	11Q13 Melchizedek text
11QTemple ^a	11Q19 Temple Scroll
CD	Damascus Document

Greek Manuscripts

Sigla for Greek manuscripts and other text-critical abbreviations basically follow the pattern in UBS⁴, pages 4*–52*, and NA²⁷, pages 50*–76*. The original hand of a manuscript is indicated by an asterisk (N*), successive correctors by superscript numbers (N¹, N², etc.). Nonbiblical papyri are abbreviated according to the following list (see BAGD xxxi–xxxii for bibliographic information):

P. Fay.	Papyrus Fayûm
P. Lond.	Papyrus London
P. Oxy.	Papyrus Oxyrhynchus
P. Tebt.	Papyrus Tebtunis

Greek Transliteration

α	a	ζ	z	λ	l	π	p	φ	ph
β	b	η	ē	μ	m	ρ	r	χ	ch
γ	g (n)	θ	th	ν	n	σ ζ	s	ψ	ps
δ	d	ι	i	ξ	x	τ	t	ω	ō
ε	e	κ	k	ο	o	υ	y (u)	·	h

Notes on the transliteration of Greek

1. Accents, lenis (smooth breathing), and *iota* subscript are not shown in transliteration.
2. The transliteration of asper (rough breathing) precedes a vowel or diphthong (e.g., $\acute{\alpha}$ = *ha*; $\acute{\alpha}\iota$ = *hai*) and follows ρ (i.e., $\acute{\rho}$ = *rh*).
3. *Gamma* is transliterated *n* only when it precedes γ, κ, ξ, or χ.
4. *Upsilon* is transliterated *u* only when it is part of a diphthong (e.g., αυ, ευ, ου, υι).

Hebrew Transliteration

א	ʾ	א	ā	qāmeṣ
ב	b	ב	a	pataḥ
ג	g	ג	a	furtive pataḥ
ד	d	ד	e	səgól
ה	h	ה	ē	šērê
ו	w	ו	i	short ḥîreq
ז	z	ז	ī	long ḥîreq written defectively
ח	ḥ	ח	o	qāmeṣ ḥāṭûp
ט	ṭ	ט	ô	ḥôlem written fully
י	y	י	ō	ḥôlem written defectively
כ	k	כ	û	šûreq
ל	l	ל	u	short qibbûṣ
מ	m	מ	ū	long qibbûṣ written defectively
נ	n	נ	â	final qāmeṣ hē ^o (נָ = āh)
ס	s	ס	ê	səgól yôd (סָ = êy)
ע	ʿ	ע	ê	šērê yôd (עָ = êy)
פ	p	פ	î	ḥîreq yôd (פָ = îy)
צ	ṣ	צ	ă	ḥāṭēp pataḥ
ק	q	ק	ě	ḥāṭēp səgól
ר	r	ר	ô	ḥāṭēp qāmeṣ
שׁ	ś	שׁ	ě	vocal šěwā ^o
שׂ	š	שׂ	–	silent šěwā ^o
ת	t	ת		

Notes on the transliteration of Hebrew

1. Accents are not shown in transliteration.
2. Silent šěwā^o is not indicated in transliteration.
3. The unaspirated forms of א ב ג ד ה ו פ ק ר are not specially indicated in transliteration.
4. *Dāgeš forte* is indicated by doubling the consonant. *Dāgeš* present for euphonious reasons is not indicated in transliteration.
5. *Maqqēp* is represented by a hyphen.

Introduction to Romans

Significance

The magisterial character of Romans is apparent to any careful reader, and its importance is magnified when one reflects on the history of exegesis. Even though Augustine never wrote a full-length commentary on Romans, his theology—which has probably exerted more influence on the church worldwide than any theologian in the history of the church—was significantly indebted to Romans. The impact of Romans on Martin Luther’s theology is well known. He formulated his understanding of sin, law and gospel, faith, salvation, and the righteousness of God by conducting an intensive exegesis of this letter. In his preface to the epistle he says, “This epistle is really the chief part of the New Testament, and is truly the purest gospel. It is worthy not only that every Christian should know it word for word, by heart, but also that he should occupy himself with it every day, as the daily bread of the soul” (Luther 1972: 365). Luther’s understanding of Romans and Pauline theology constituted the most significant shift in exegesis and theology since Augustine. Indeed, Luther’s pastoral and theological wrestling with the letter continue to influence us to this very day.

One should not reflect on the significance of the letter without mentioning John Calvin. Calvin’s exegesis of the letter is characterized by the “lucid brevity” (1960: 1) that he considers the chief virtue of the interpreter. Thereby the meaning of the author is not muffled by the verbosity of the commentator. The seriousness with which he applied himself is evident. “It is, therefore, presumptuous and almost blasphemous to turn the meaning of Scripture around without due care, as though it were some game that we were playing” (1960: 4). He identifies the theme of Romans as follows: “Man’s only righteousness is the mercy of God in Christ, when it is offered by the Gospel and received by faith” (1960: 5). He also remarks (1960: 5) that “if we have gained a true understanding of this Epistle, we have an open door to all the most profound treasures of Scripture.” Calvin admirably succeeded in his desire to write a commentary marked by clarity and brevity, and scholars still read his commentary today as a model of theological and historical exegesis.

The impact of Romans lives on in our century. Karl Barth’s 1919 commentary on Romans is not consulted for its exegetical mastery,

but he jolted his contemporaries awake by listening to the theology of the apostle Paul. Our first goal as interpreters is to do the same. Exegesis begins with a patient and humble listening to the text, with the willingness to hear an alien word. We are all prone to read our own conceptions into the text. Thus our first task is simply to see what the text actually says. Those who interpreted the text before us are an immense help in this endeavor, although we must also strive to hear the text afresh so that the Word of God will speak to our generation as it did to those who journeyed before us.

Authorship and Date

No serious scholar today doubts that Paul wrote Romans. A few scholars in the history of interpretation, especially at the end of the nineteenth century, have doubted its authenticity. Cranfield (1979: 2) remarks rightly that this opinion can be estimated as “among the curiosities of NT scholarship.” Pauline authorship is one of the assured results of NT scholarship, and thus further discussion on this issue is unnecessary.

What is more interesting is the role that Tertius played as Paul’s amanuensis (Rom. 16:22). How much freedom was he given in the composition of the letter? Three different possibilities have been suggested (see Cranfield 1975: 2–5):¹ (1) Paul communicated the general themes of the letter to Tertius, who wrote the letter according to Paul’s instructions but was responsible for its composition. In this scenario the specific features of the letter should be attributed to Tertius, while the general themes derive from Paul. (2) Tertius took down Paul’s dictation in shorthand and later wrote it out in longhand. (3) Paul dictated the letter word for word, and Tertius wrote it out in longhand. If one of the last two options is judged most probable, it is impossible to know for certain which course was taken. A decision between them is not crucial because in the final analysis they amount to the same thing: the letter represents word for word what Paul dictated. The first option is the least likely of the three. There is evidence that secretaries wrote both in longhand and shorthand in Paul’s time (see Cranfield 1979: 3–4). It is intrinsically unlikely that Paul would surrender the specific contents of Romans to Tertius. The letter was of great import to Paul, and its careful structure suggests that he fussed over the details. Indeed, the ever present γάρ (*gar*, for) suggests a dictated text (Fitzmyer 1993c: 42). The style of Romans fits with Paul’s other letters that are

1. E. Richards (1991: 23–24) suggests four possibilities. His dissertation is the most recent and thorough study of the role of the amanuensis in Paul’s letters. Cranfield’s three categories depend on Roller 1933, a work that was not available to me.

accepted as authentic, and there is no evidence that Tertius composed those. In conclusion, Romans should be accepted as the product of Paul's dictation to Tertius, and the question whether it was first composed in shorthand or longhand should be left open.

One distinctive of this commentary should be mentioned at this juncture. One's judgment on the authenticity of the other Pauline letters plays a role in how one interprets Romans. We must beware of the danger of reading other Pauline letters into Romans, a practice that can have the effect of muting the unique characteristics of Romans. The letter to the Romans itself should always be the primary evidence in adjudicating interpretive options. Nonetheless, it is naive to think that our understanding of other Pauline letters has no effect on our interpretation of Romans. Thus even though Betz (1979: xv–xvi) attempts to interpret Galatians on its own terms in theory, in practice he often resorts to Romans to explain Galatians. This is only inappropriate if Romans is being imposed on Galatians. When we have two or more writings by the same individual, our knowledge of the overall worldview of that person increases as we read more of his or her writings. Our interpretive hunches in difficult texts are more plausible if they are based on the larger panorama of the Pauline corpus as a whole. We must steer between the Scylla of imposing other Pauline writings upon Romans and the Charybdis of refusing any insight from his other letters in interpreting this letter. In this commentary I work from the assumption that all thirteen of the Pauline letters are authentic. Thus I draw on parallels from the other twelve letters when appropriate. The first letters that many scholars dismiss as inauthentic are the Pastorals. This is not the place to defend their authenticity in detail. In my judgment, however, convincing arguments have been marshaled to support their authenticity (see Kelly 1981: 3–34; Fee 1988: 1–26; L. Johnson 1986: 381–92; Guthrie 1990: 607–49; Carson, Moo, and Morris 1992: 359–71; Ellis 1992). Of course, the primary evidence for interpreting a text is the document itself, and the skilled interpreter should demonstrate why his or her interpretation is the most plausible in the existing context.

Dating ancient letters is notoriously difficult, but in the case of Romans we can safely locate the letter between A.D. 55 and 58. Paul informs the Romans that he is finished with his missionary endeavors in the east (Rom. 15:19–23) and that he plans to visit Rome after completing his proposed visit to Jerusalem (15:24–32). When we compare Romans with Acts, the time period when Romans was composed can be narrowed down more specifically.² Paul's inten-

2. The historical accuracy of Acts is the subject of intense debate as well. For defenses of the historical reliability of the work see Sherwin-White 1963; Hengel 1979; Gasque 1989; Hemer 1989.

tion to go to Rome crystallized after his two plus years in Ephesus (Acts 19:10, 21–22). Before traveling to Rome, however, he was intent upon going to Jerusalem (19:21), and he also planned to visit Macedonia and Achaia before traveling to Jerusalem (19:21). From 20:1–6 it is clear that Paul reached both Macedonia and Achaia, spending three months in Achaia (20:2–3). An interesting correspondence emerges between Acts and Romans here, for in Rom. 15:26 Paul only mentions Macedonia and Achaia as having contributed to the collection for the poor saints in Jerusalem. It is unlikely that no collection was taken from the churches in Galatia and Asia, for some of the persons mentioned in Acts 20:4 came from Galatia and Asia. Thus Paul likely mentions the contribution from Macedonia and Achaia because they were the most recent contributors. Indeed, he likely wrote Romans during the three-month interval in which he was in Greece (Acts 20:2–3). We can be even more specific: he probably wrote the letter from Corinth. This provenance is supported by two early subscriptions to the letter in the manuscripts B¹ and D¹. Internal evidence from Rom. 16 also favors this conclusion.³ (1) Paul commends Phoebe, who was probably the bearer of the letter and was from Cenchreae (16:1–2). Cenchreae was one of the port cities for Corinth, and thus lends plausibility to a Corinthian origin. (2) Gaius is said to be Paul’s host (Rom. 16:23), and it is likely that this is the same Gaius who resided in Corinth (1 Cor. 1:14). (3) The city manager Erastus (see exegesis and exposition of Rom. 16:21–23) may be the same person who served as an aedile in Corinth (cf. 2 Tim. 4:20: “Erastus remained in Corinth”).⁴ The most plausible place of origin, therefore, is Corinth in the period specified in Acts 20:2–3.

All of this information does not provide the exact date of Romans. The Archimedean point for Pauline chronology is the accession of Gallio as proconsul of Corinth. Fitzmyer (1993c: 87) locates it in A.D. 52, whereas Cranfield (1979: 13) opts for A.D. 51. Paul was brought before Gallio, therefore, in the fall of either 51 or 52 (Acts 18:12–17). When we add the two plus years in Ephesus (Acts 19:10), then the earliest possible date appears to be A.D. 54.⁵ Barrett (1957:

3. Of course, these arguments depend on Romans 16 being originally sent to Rome, and I will argue below that Rom. 16 was an integral part of the letter sent to Rome.

4. It is debated, though, whether the Erastus of 2 Tim. 4:20 is the same person as the Erastus mentioned in Rom. 16.

5. This would rule out Luedemann’s (1984: 263) proposal that the letter was possibly written in A.D. 51–52 (although 54–55 is also suggested), or Buck and Taylor’s (1969: 170–71) suggestion of A.D. 47. J. Richards (1966–67: 14–30) opts for 52–54. It should be noted that the reliability of Acts as a historical source is not granted in these proposals.

5) and Morris (1988: 6–7) suggest the first three months of 55. Others prefer the winter or spring of 55–56 or 56–57 (Kümmel 1975: 311; J. Robinson 1976: 55; Bruce 1977: 324; Cranfield 1979: 12–16; Hemer 1980: 9–12; Drane 1980: 209; Dunn 1988b: xlii; Bornkamm 1991: 16; Moo 1991: 3; Stuhlmacher 1994: 8; Mounce 1995: 26 suggests A.D. 56). Still others believe that 57–58 is the most likely (Sanday and Headlam 1902: xiii; M. Black 1973: 20; Fitzmyer 1993c: 87; Byrne 1996: 9). Certainty on this issue is impossible, but we should confine the date to the period between 55 and 58 (although C. Dodd [1932: xxvi] opts for A.D. 59).

Unity, Text, and Integrity

Most scholars assume the unity of Romans without argumentation. Schmithals (1975 and 1988) argues that the current letter stitches together two letters: letter A (1:1–4:25; 5:12–11:36; 15:8–13) written from Ephesus, and letter B (12:1–21; 13:8–10; 14:1–15:4a, 7, 5–6; 15:14–32; 16:21–23; 15:33), which was written subsequently. Kinoshita (1965) maintains that a later editor combined three of Paul's writings together in Romans: (1) Rom. 16; (2) the writings to the Jews (2:1–5; 2:17–3:20; 3:27–4:5; 5:12–7:25; 9:1–11:36; 14:1–15:3; 15:4–13); and (3) a sermon on the Gentile mission (1:1–32; 2:6–16; 3:21–26; 5:1–11; 8:1–39; 12:1–13:14; 15:14–33). O'Neill (1975) charts his own course by postulating numerous glosses in the letter. These theories are quite arbitrary and have persuaded scarcely anyone.⁶ Hays (1995: 76) remarks incisively, "Such theories belong in a museum of exegetical curiosities rather than in a serious discussion of the theological coherence of Romans. These hypotheses demonstrate nothing more than the inability of their authors to tolerate dialectical complexity." No textual evidence exists for these hypotheses, and it is hard to imagine any later redactor weaving the letter together in the ways proposed.

Three textual issues come to the forefront in Romans: (1) Is the Roman destination (ἐν Ῥώμῃ, *en Rhōmē*, in Rome, 1:7; τοῖς ἐν Ῥώμῃ, *tois en Rhōmē*, to those in Rome, 1:15) original or was it added later by scribes? (2) Was Rom. 16 originally part of the letter to the Romans, or is there a more plausible explanation for its placement? These first two issues will be addressed below in discussing the integrity of Romans and the place of chapter 16. (3) Is the doxology (16:25–27) authentically Pauline and rightly located at the conclusion of the letter, or was it added at some point by a later redactor?

6. Cf. Keck (1995: 6–16), who suggests that these theories should be considered seriously. For criticisms of Schmithals's proposal see Wedderburn 1988: 25–29; cf. also Wilckens 1978: 28–29.

In the additional notes to 16:25–27 I argue that the verses are authentically Pauline and are rightly located at the conclusion of the letter.

Issues of the original text and the integrity of Romans coalesce with respect to chapter 16. T. Manson's theory (1991; cf. Munck 1959: 197–200) that Paul composed two versions of Romans, one in which chapters 1–15 were sent to Rome and another in which chapter 16 was added to chapters 1–15 for the church in Ephesus, has provoked the most interest. Scholars have often questioned whether chapter 16 was originally sent to Rome, since Paul greets twenty-six people and it seems doubtful that Paul would know so many people in distant Rome (cf. J. McDonald 1969–70). Some argue that Rom. 16 was added by a later redactor.⁷ Others raise questions about the function of chapters 15–16. Lightfoot (1893: 311–20) believes that all sixteen chapters were sent to Rome, but that chapters 15–16 were deleted later to make the letter a circular, and that the doxology (16:25–27) was added to the shorter recension. Others (e.g., Lake 1914: 362–65) argue that Paul originally composed fourteen chapters. Later he added 1:7, 15 and chapter 15 to specify a Roman destination, and chapter 16 was also appended.

Before examining the viability of the above theories, I will summarize the textual evidence supporting the idea that Romans circulated with only the first 14 chapters (for a detailed examination of the evidence see Gamble 1977: 16–33). (1) An early Vulgate manuscript (Codex Amiatinus), which contains short summaries (called *breves*) of the various sections of the letter, lists 14:13–23 as the fiftieth summary and 16:25–27 as the fifty-first. The omission of 15:1–16:23 suggests that the author of the summaries did not have those verses before him.⁸ (2) In a number of manuscripts the doxology (16:25–27) follows 14:23, intimating that the latter verse may have functioned as the conclusion of the letter (following only 14:23 in Ψ, 0209^{vid}, 1881, Majority text, sy^h, Or^{lat mss}; following both 14:23 and 16:25 in A, P, 33, 104, *pc*). (3) The Marcionite prologue says that Romans was written from Athens, whereas a more natural reading of Rom. 15–16 locates its origin in Corinth (see “Authorship and Date” above). (4) In discussing Rom. 14 Tertullian refers to it as “the conclusion of the letter” (*clausula epistolae*; for the text see Gamble 1977: 21). It appears, therefore, that he did

7. For this view see, e.g., Goodspeed 1937: 85–86; Leenhardt 1961: 21. Ollrog (1980) argues that the greetings in Rom. 16 are sent to Rome, but that 16:17–20 and 16:25–27 are later interpolations.

8. The same conclusion could be drawn from Codex Fuldensis in the Vulgate and other Vulgate manuscripts (see Gamble 1977: 17–19; T. Manson 1991: 8–9).

not know of chapters 15–16. This idea is strengthened by the fact that he never cites chapters 15–16. Perhaps Irenaeus and Cyprian did not have a version with the last two chapters either, for they never cite it in their writings. (5) Origen says that Marcion removed the doxology (for the text see Gamble 1977: 22). He then proceeds to say that “he cut away” (*dissecuit*) everything that follows 14:23. The verb *dissecuit* could be interpreted to say that he altered the contents of chapters 15 and 16 substantially, but most scholars understand it as saying that Marcion deleted chapters 15 and 16.⁹ (6) A few manuscripts omit ἐν Ῥώμῃ in 1:7 (G, *pc*, Or, 1739^{mg}) and τοῖς ἐν Ῥώμῃ in 1:15 (G). Such omissions are reasonable if those words were later insertions when chapters 15 and 16 were added, for chapter 15 suggests that the Roman community is being addressed.

An argument can also be made that Romans originally had fifteen chapters. In \mathfrak{P}^{46} the doxology follows chapter 15, evidence that could be interpreted to support the theory that the letter concluded with chapter 15 (see esp. T. Manson 1991: 7–12).

The evidence adduced above is impressive enough to support the thesis that a fourteen-chapter version of Romans circulated. But the external evidence falls far short of the conclusion that the fourteen-chapter version constituted the original text. The manuscript evidence overwhelmingly supports the theory that the sixteen-chapter version of Romans was the original text.¹⁰ The omission of “Rome” in a few Western manuscripts in 1:7 and 1:15 is almost certainly a deliberate deletion by those who circulated an abbreviated edition of the letter, for the best textual witnesses (and the majority) contain the references to Rome. It should also be noted that the theory that Paul originally wrote chapters 1–14 and then added chapter 15 later (see Lightfoot 1893: 311–20; Lake 1914: 362–65) is almost universally dismissed today. The discussion relative to the weak and the strong does not end in chapter 14 but continues to 15:6 or 15:13. It is difficult to believe that a later appendix would carry on the dialogue with the strong and the weak.

What must be explained is how a fourteen-chapter version of Romans came into circulation. Scholars have suggested that a shorter version was produced for liturgical reasons, at the behest of Marcion or his disciples (e.g., Sanday and Headlam 1902: xcvi–xcvii;

9. Of course, this piece of evidence could support the idea that Marcion abbreviated Romans, which was originally fifteen or sixteen chapters.

10. Gamble’s work (1977) has been especially formative in convincing scholars. For a defense of the view that the original text of Romans contained 1:1–16:24 see P. Lampe 1985b. See also Wedderburn 1988: 13–18; Jervis 1991: 137–38; Seifrid 1992: 249–54.

Leenhardt 1961: 26; Zuntz 1953: 227), accidentally, or to make the contents of the letter accessible to a wider audience (Gamble 1977: 115–24). Certainty is impossible, but the Marcionite hypothesis seems the most probable.¹¹

It is remarkable that although some textual evidence supports a fourteen-chapter edition of Romans (but we have seen that it is certainly secondary), the only evidence for a fifteen-chapter version is \mathfrak{P}^{46} , to which T. Manson appeals to support his theory that chapter 16 was sent to Ephesus. But even in \mathfrak{P}^{46} chapter 16 *follows* the doxology (16:25–27). There is no extant textual evidence, therefore, that Rom. 15 ever circulated apart from chapter 16. The chief reason for the hypothesis that Rom. 16 was sent to Ephesus is the content of the chapter. Scholars who favor the Ephesian hypothesis doubt that Paul would have known the twenty-six people in Rome who are greeted in chapter 16. Knowing twenty-six people in Ephesus, however, is easily understandable given Paul's ministry there. An Ephesian destination is strengthened by the reference to Prisca and Aquila (16:3–5), for they traveled with Paul to Ephesus (Acts 18:18), established a church in the city (1 Cor. 16:19), and resided there when Paul wrote his last letter (2 Tim. 4:19). If Rom. 16 was sent to Rome, then we have to postulate that Prisca and Aquila left Rome, established a residence in Ephesus, proceeded back to Rome and established a church there, and then returned again to Ephesus. Similarly, Epaenetus is said (Rom. 16:5) to be from the province of Asia, which is fitting if the greetings are sent to Ephesus. The separability of Rom. 16 is also defended by the reference to Phoebe in 16:1–2, for the chapter could be classified as a letter of recommendation for Phoebe. The warning in 16:17–20 also seems jarring if sent to Rome, because the warning is distinctive and there is no evidence that false teachers had infiltrated the Roman churches.

The arguments for an Ephesian destination carry some plausibility, but they should ultimately be rejected. Decisive reasons exist for accepting the theory that Rom. 16 was an integral part of the letter and was originally sent to Rome.

1. I have already noted that the textual evidence supports a Roman destination. No extant textual evidence exists for the detachment of Rom. 16 from chapter 15 (see esp. P. Lampe 1991: 217).

11. Against Gamble, it seems that the contents of chapter 15 are suitable for catholic purposes, and we are again faced with trying to explain why the first part of chapter 15 would be deleted when it constitutes the conclusion to the argument of chapter 14 (so Morris 1988: 23).

2. If Rom. 16 was sent to Ephesus, then 15:33 would constitute the end of the letter. But nowhere else does Paul conclude his letters with a wish of peace (Gamble 1977: 54, 84; Ollrog 1980: 226; P. Lampe 1991: 217). It is possible that Paul departs from his normal pattern, but it seems unlikely, especially when we realize that Romans has the longest introduction (1:1–7) of any of the Pauline letters. It seems quite improbable, then, that the conclusion would be the shortest.
3. It is not at all improbable that Paul would know twenty-six persons in Rome. Travel in the Greco-Roman world was remarkably common (cf. La Piana 1927; Donfried 1991b: 49–50; P. Lampe 1991: 219). The shifts in location of Prisca and Aquila, therefore, are not as astonishing as they might appear on first glance. They left Rome because of the decree of Claudius (Acts 18:2) and probably returned when Nero (A.D. 54) became emperor. A later residence in Ephesus is not surprising given their business interests (contra P. Lampe 1991: 221). Nor is it necessary to conclude that Paul personally knew every single person greeted in Rom. 16.¹² He may have heard about some of them and desired to send greetings to those well-known in the community.
4. The argument from the number of persons greeted can be reversed (so Gamble 1977: 48; P. Lampe 1991: 216). Nowhere does Paul send an extensive list of greetings in his letters to churches that he established. Why would he alter his usual pattern when writing to Ephesus? By doing so he would inevitably fail to greet many believers whom he knew. The extensive greetings in Romans, though, are quite credible because Paul greets the only people he knew or had heard of in the community.
5. The function of such greetings also makes better sense if addressed to Rome. By greeting respected persons in the churches Paul indirectly commends his ministry to the Romans (P. Lampe 1991: 218). The validity of his gospel is attested by well-known persons in Rome.
6. A letter of recommendation for Phoebe within Romans is not a difficulty. Subforms of various genres are present within Paul's letters, and he appends a commendation of Timothy to 1 Corinthians (1 Cor. 16:10–11).¹³

12. See the exegesis and exposition of 16:3–16; Gamble 1977: 47–48; Ollrog 1980: 236; Brown and Meier 1983: 109 (only those involved in the troubles); P. Lampe 1991: 220.

13. Gamble (1977: 85–87) shows that recommendations are found at the conclusions of Cicero's letters and are attested elsewhere in Paul.

7. Neither is the sudden warning in Rom. 16:17–20 a compelling objection (cf. Gamble 1977: 52; Donfried 1991b: 51–52). No evidence exists that false teachers had actually invaded the Roman churches; Paul warns them about a potential danger. Further, sudden disruptions appear elsewhere in Paul’s letters (cf. Phil. 3:1–4:1).
8. Some scholars argue that chapter 16 constituted a separate letter. But a letter consisting of commendations and greetings seems unlikely. It is often retorted that letters of commendation are common. But it is hard to imagine *Paul* writing a letter of recommendation that contains the material in Rom. 16 since no other Pauline letter is so prosaic (so Morris 1988: 24; P. Lampe 1991: 216).
9. The ecumenical greeting (“all the churches of Christ greet you”) is fitting in Romans, for Paul sends greetings from the eastern churches as he contemplates starting a new work in the west (P. Lampe 1991: 218).
10. Gamble (1977: 58–83) carefully analyzes the conclusions in Hellenistic and Pauline letters. He shows that the elements that make up Rom. 16 (Gamble 1977: 84–95) are found only in the conclusions of other Pauline letters: hortatory remarks, wish of peace, greetings, and the grace benediction. In Rom. 16 we have greetings (16:3–15), the kiss of peace (16:16), an admonition (16:17–20), and the grace benediction (16:20). Naturally, the concluding elements vary in Pauline letters, and it would be a mistake to demand a rigid form. Gamble has convincingly demonstrated, however, that—despite some variation in Rom. 16—it reads like other Pauline conclusions.¹⁴

Destination and Purpose

I have argued that all sixteen chapters of the letter to the Romans were written to Rome. The origin of the Roman church is uncertain. Obviously, Paul did not establish it, for the letter makes abundantly clear that Paul had never been to Rome and yet churches existed in the city (cf. Rom. 16). Few contemporary scholars espouse the theory that Peter established the church when he went into hiding, after his escape from prison (Acts 12:17).¹⁵ Eusebius places Peter in Rome in A.D. 42 (*Eccles. Hist.* 2.14.6), but this is not cred-

14. His argument has convinced Morris 1988: 29–30, and Fitzmyer (1993c: 63–64) has changed his mind on the destination of Rom. 16 on the basis of Gamble’s study, concluding now that it was sent to Rome.

15. Rightly Brown and Meier 1983: 97–98, 102–3; Fitzmyer 1993c: 29. Supporting the minority view (and listing others who share the same opinion) is J. Wenham 1992: 146–72.

ible.¹⁶ Peter resides in Jerusalem in Acts 15, and if he traveled anywhere after his escape from prison (Acts 12:17) it was probably to Antioch (cf. Gal. 2:11–14). Further, Luke, who has a significant interest in Rome, would not have omitted a Petrine visit (so Brown and Meier 1983: 103). It is also difficult to believe that Paul would consider the Roman church under his sphere of influence if the church had already been founded by Peter. Moreover, Paul gives no indication whatsoever in Romans that Peter had been to Rome before him. Irenaeus calls Peter and Paul “founders” of the Roman church (*Against Heresies* 3.1.1; 3.3.2; cf. Ign., *Rom.* 4.3). He probably does not mean that they both established the church in Rome, since it is obvious from Romans that Paul had no role in the church’s founding. Irenaeus likely refers to the fact that Peter and Paul both ministered and were martyred in Rome (Fitzmyer 1993c: 30).

We can safely assume that the church was not planted by an apostle. Unfortunately, secure knowledge about the origin of the Roman church eludes us. Perhaps the visitors to Jerusalem from Rome (Acts 2:10) returned to the city and founded a church. If so, the church was established by Jewish Christians.¹⁷ Alternatively, Christian slaves, merchants, and artisans who traveled to Rome may have established the church. Ambrosiaster (*PL* 17.48), whose specific information may or may not be accurate, confirms the idea that the Roman church lacked an apostolic foundation. He locates the origin of Christianity in the Jewish community and says that they in turn passed it on to Gentiles. Ambrosiaster is probably right in saying that Christianity in Rome began with the Jews (so Donfried 1991b: 47), and it seems feasible to conclude that this evangelization occurred in synagogues (Dunn 1988b: xlvii–xlvi; Wiefel 1991: 92; Reasoner, *DPL* 853; for a brief summary of the history of the Jews in Rome see Wiefel 1991: 86–92). God-fearing Gentiles from the synagogues also began to embrace the gospel. Stuhlmacher’s claim (1991b: 238) that Gentile missionaries from Jerusalem

16. The early dating postulated would require a visit to Rome after his release from prison in Acts 12:17.

17. Reasoner (*DPL* 852) concludes from Acts 2:10 and other evidence “that Christianity was brought to Rome by Jewish Christians from Palestine.” Brown and Meier (1983: 104) float the interesting hypothesis that the church was established by “Christians who kept up some Jewish observances and remained faithful to part of the heritage of the Jewish Law and cult, without insisting on circumcision.” This hypothesis would fit with the theory that Christianity had its origins in Roman synagogues. The further claim that Paul invoked Rome’s support for the collection because the Christians in Rome were influenced by Peter and James (Brown and Meier 1983: 110) is improbable, since it is doubtful that Roman Christianity was predominantly Jewish by the time Paul wrote. See Wedderburn (1988: 59–65), although he presses slightly too hard the idea that the Jews were Judaizers.

or Antioch brought the gospel to Rome is doubtful (rightly Fitzmyer 1993c: 33).¹⁸ We must finally admit, however, that we lack definite information about the establishment of the Roman church. It is likely that a church existed by the late 30s or early 40s, but we cannot trace its origin definitively.

Ambrosiaster's tradition is reliable insofar as the Roman community was composed of Jews and Gentiles. Scholars debate, however, whether the Roman community addressed by Paul was mainly Jewish or Gentile. A fascinating remark by the Roman historian Suetonius, writing about A.D. 120, has a bearing here. Claudius deported from Rome Jews who were involved in local disruptions at the behest of "*Chresto*" (*Claudius* 25.4). Most scholars agree that Suetonius confused the name *Christo* (i.e., "Christ") with the name *Chresto* because the latter was a common Greek name.¹⁹ Suetonius did not know about the "Christ," and thus the reason for the mistake is easily comprehensible. We can infer from Suetonius's testimony that in the late 40s conflict between Jews and Jewish Christians over the identity of the "Christ" was a constant problem in Rome. As a result of these disturbances Claudius banished the Jews from Rome. The most likely date for this eviction is A.D. 49, for this matches the testimony of Acts 18:2 (where Prisca's and Aquila's expulsion from Rome is attributed to an order from Claudius that all Jews should leave Rome) and of the Christian historian Orosius (*History against Pagans* 7.6).²⁰ It is doubtful that "every" Jew left Rome (cf. Walters 1993: 51; Mason 1994: 263–66; W. Campbell 1995: 264), but the majority had to exit the city.²¹ As suggested

18. The debate over whether "God-fearers" is a technical term may detract from the substantive issue. The term may not always refer to uncircumcised Gentiles who were attracted to the synagogue. But there is little doubt that a group of Gentiles interested in Judaism but not yet circumcised existed. The literature on the issue is enormous. For a brief discussion and bibliography see Gempf 1989; cf. also Scott 1995: 153.

19. So, e.g., Cranfield 1979: 16; Smallwood 1976: 211; Brown and Meier 1983: 100–101; P. Lampe 1989: 6; Dunn 1988b: xlviii–xlix; Donfried 1991b: 47; Bruce 1991: 178–79; Stuhlmacher 1991b: 235; Wiefel 1991: 92–93; Fitzmyer 1993c: 31.

20. The citation here is from Defarrari's 1964 translation. Some (e.g., Luedemann 1984: 164–71) have dated the decree in A.D. 41 since Dio Cassius (*Roman History* 60.6.6) says that Claudius banned Jewish meetings then. But this date is much less probable, especially given the evidence of Acts 18:2, which only fits with A.D. 49. Naturally, this argument is inconclusive if one does not deem Acts to be a trustworthy historical source. It is more likely that Claudius banned Jews from meeting in A.D. 41 and expelled them from Rome in A.D. 49. So Smallwood 1976: 211–16; Jewett 1979: 36–38; Howard 1981: 175–77; F. Watson 1986: 93; P. Lampe 1989: 4–8; Wedderburn 1988: 57; Dunn 1988b: xlix; Wiefel 1991: 93; Bruce 1991: 179; Stuhlmacher 1991b: 235; Fitzmyer 1993c: 31–32; Walters 1993: 50–52.

21. Mason (1994: 263–66) cautions against placing too much weight on the expulsion of the Jews, remarking that perhaps only the militants were expelled from Rome. Nonetheless, he underestimates the strength of the evidence for the expul-

above, the gospel was initially embraced in the synagogues by some Jews and God-fearing Gentiles. The number of Jewish converts must have been significant enough to lead to the strife between Jews attested by the Suetonius reference.

The dismissal of the Jews from Rome in A.D. 49 had a significant effect on Roman churches. With the ejection of the Jews the churches in Rome became mainly Gentile. These Gentile house churches developed for a number of years apart from Jewish influence.²² Some Jews probably filtered slowly back to Rome in the last years of Claudius's reign (A.D. 49–54), and with the accession of Nero (A.D. 54) many Jews would have returned to Rome because the decree of Claudius expired upon his death. It is not hard to imagine that tensions would arise between Jews and Gentiles since the latter would not be as devoted to the law and had evolved in new directions with the eviction of the Jews. These tensions between Jews and Gentiles seem to be confirmed by Rom. 9–11 and 14–15. Paul's primary exhortation in both of these sections, as the exegesis of the chapters demonstrates, is directed to the Gentiles.²³ They are to desist from pride, even though they have been joined to the olive tree of God's people and the Jews have largely been cast aside (11:17–24). They are to accept Jewish believers who have scruples in regard to food and drink and the observance of various days (14:1–15:13).²⁴ The expulsion of the Jews from Rome and their gradual return suggests that the Roman churches were mainly composed of Gentile Christians.²⁵ This conclusion receives confirmatory support from the observation that Gentile Christians are the primary objects of Paul's exhortations when he directs his attention to the relationship between Jews and Gentiles.²⁶ This latter point, though,

sion, which is attested in both Acts 18:2 and Suetonius. Nanos (1996: 372–87) also challenges the interpretation of the Claudius expulsion that is defended here.

22. Walters (1993: 58–64) argues that some Gentiles were evicted as well because those attached to the synagogue would be considered Jews. Nonetheless, he agrees that Gentile influence over the churches increased after the expulsion.

23. Haacker (1990) suggests that the letter is written to plead for peace between various groups.

24. I argue in the exegesis of 14:1–15:13 that “the weak” are primarily composed of Jewish believers.

25. This is the view of most scholars. See Sanday and Headlam 1902: xxxiii–xxxiv; Barrett 1991: 6–7, 23; Morris 1988: 5 (probably); Dunn 1988b: xlv; Moo 1991: 10–13; Seifrid 1992: 201–3; Fitzmyer 1993c: 33. Munck (1959: 200–201) and Stowers (1994) conclude wrongly that the church is only Gentile Christian.

26. But contrary to Nanos (1996, *passim*) one should not conclude that Romans is addressed solely to Gentile Christians, nor is it probable (see pp. 68–75) that the Gentile Christians remained within the synagogue in Rome. If Christianity remained within the confines of the synagogue, then it is much more likely that the exhortations in Romans would be addressed primarily to Jewish Christians, plead-

is hardly decisive. What tilts the scales in favor of a Gentile majority is other internal evidence in Romans. In Rom. 1:5–6 Paul addresses the readers, identifying his commission as the apostle to the Gentiles, and he specifically includes the Roman readers within the orbit of this Gentile commission. The language should not be pressed to exclude the Jews, but it implies that the majority of the readers were Gentiles. Similarly, in 1:13 Paul informs the readers that he often desired to visit them in order to reap some fruit among them “just as among the rest of the Gentiles.” When he reflects on the composition of the Roman church, he apparently conceives of it mainly as Gentile. This is confirmed by Rom. 11:13, which specifically addresses the Gentiles, and by 15:15–16, where Paul justifies his boldness in the letter since he has a particular calling as a “minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles.”²⁷

By contrast, some interpreters have identified the Jews as the majority in the Roman church (Baur 1873: 346–47; Zahn 1909: 1.422; W. Manson 1951: 172–84; Fahy 1959; Mason 1994). The letter, especially chapters 1–11, can be conceived of as a dialogue with the Jews, who are specifically addressed in 2:17. The constant appeal to the OT and the discussion of the Mosaic law are also set forth as evidence of a Jewish readership. This evidence, though, should not be construed in support of a Jewish majority.²⁸ The church in Rome was likely raised on Jewish roots through the preaching of the gospel in the synagogues (so Dunn 1988b: l). Thus Gentile Christians would have had a keen knowledge of the OT Scriptures. From the very beginning Jews would have debated Jewish Christians and Gentiles over their interpretation of the Scriptures. Paul needed to demonstrate in Romans that his gospel fulfilled what was written in the Scriptures. His gospel was probably under suspicion in Rome precisely because both Jews and Jewish Christians hotly disputed his interpretation of the Mosaic law and

ing with them to accept Gentile Christians. It seems historically incredible that Gentile Christians were the dominant group (per Nanos’s reconstruction) in a Jewish synagogue. Indeed, the presence of house churches in Rom. 16 indicates that the churches were not still part of the synagogue.

27. Cranfield (1979: 20–21; cf. also Lightfoot 1893: 312–15; Klijn 1967: 76; Guerra 1995: 26, 32), who thinks that the church is rather evenly divided between Jews and Gentiles, contends that these verses simply mean that the gospel has been planted in the Gentile world and should not be pressed to specify the composition of the Roman church.

28. The extant evidence suggests that the Christian community in Rome was quite large (so Brown and Meier 1983: 99; Dunn 1988b: lii; Fitzmyer 1993c: 35). In Rom. 16 (see the exegesis and exposition of 16:3–16) at least five house churches are greeted, and there were probably more with which Paul was unacquainted (see Dunn 1988b: lii).

the OT Scriptures. Paul's teaching on the law had already precipitated disputes in Galatia and Corinth. These debates were not confined to these localities, and before Paul could use Rome as a bridgehead for bringing the gospel to Spain, he needed to show them why the objections to his gospel, which had certainly reached Rome also, were unfounded.²⁹ I conclude that the exposition of the OT Scriptures and the attention rendered to the Jews does not mean that Romans was primarily addressed to the Jewish Christians in Rome, for the issues raised by the OT and the place of the Jews in God's plan were crucial for the entire community.³⁰

What was the purpose of Romans? This has been the subject of intense debate in NT studies recently.³¹ Romans has traditionally been understood as an exposition and summary of Paul's theology.³² Identifying Romans as a synopsis for Paul's theology is attractive since the letter is more comprehensive than other Pauline letters. Moreover, it is not immediately obvious that Romans is addressed to a specific occasion. For instance, readers grasp promptly that circumstances in Galatia and Corinth provoked Paul to write Galatians and 1 Corinthians, respectively. Scholars would not have argued that Romans is a Pauline treatise if it did not have a character that separated it from the other Pauline letters, and if it did not plumb the depths of Pauline theology in a distinctive way. Nonetheless, classifying Romans as a summary of Paul's theology is unpersuasive. Central Pauline teachings are missing or only spoken of in a glancing way. For instance, nothing at all is said

29. Brown and Meier (1983: 111–22) rightly discern that Paul writes because his theology is questioned in Rome. But they wrongly conclude that Roman Christianity is dominated by a Jewish Christianity under the influence of Peter and James. This conclusion sits awkwardly with Rom. 14–15, where Gentile Christians are the majority and do not observe food laws and the Sabbath. Brown (1990: 106) argues that Paul primarily addresses the Gentiles since as the apostle of the Gentiles the latter are under his charge, even though the conservative Jewish position is the dominant one in Rome. But this position seems like special pleading (see exegesis and exposition of 14:1–15:13).

30. Beker (1980: 75–76, 91) observes correctly that the congregations in Rome were mixed, but the "primary" group in the churches is God-fearing Gentiles (cf. also Wilckens 1978: 37–39).

31. Byrne (1996: 2–4) despairs of finding a plausible historical occasion for Romans and analyzes the text via the implied author and readers. Byrne is correct in emphasizing that the text of Romans must remain primary for the interpretation of the letter, and any historical reconstruction will always remain tentative. Nonetheless, we should not abandon the attempt to discern historical circumstances in interpreting letters, for the text itself was written in history and addresses the Roman situation. I am unpersuaded by those who contend that the text has no referent outside itself.

32. This view is common in the history of interpretation. See Jervis (1991: 15–17; cf., e.g., Lightfoot 1893: 315) for a survey. Among modern commentators Nygren (1949: 4) espouses this view.

about the Lord's Supper, and it is difficult to believe that this was not central to Paul's thought since it was celebrated often in the early church (cf. 1 Cor. 11:17–34). One would also be hard pressed to derive Paul's thinking about the church from Romans. His few comments on the church (e.g., Rom. 12:3–8) scarcely constitute an in-depth treatment of the subject, especially when we compare Romans to 1 Corinthians and Ephesians. Similarly, Paul's eschatology is undeveloped in Romans. The imminent parousia is not given up (Rom. 13:11–14), and other statements about the resurrection appear occasionally (e.g., Rom. 8:11). Yet no detailed discussion or explanation of the resurrection occurs, such as we see in 1 Cor. 15 or 1 Thess. 4:13–5:11. Finally, a well-articulated Christology is not present in Romans. This is not to deny that one could by implication derive a high Christology from Romans (cf. Rom. 1:3–4). What is missing, though, is a compact theological exposition such as exists in Phil. 2:6–11 or Col. 1:15–20. It seems unsatisfactory, therefore, to describe Romans as a summary of Paul's theology, since it is not a comprehensive treatment. We need to investigate why the particular contents of the letter, which contains a fuller exposition of Paul's theology than is found in other letters, have been sent to Rome.

A number of scholars who reject the theory that Romans is a dogmatic handbook of Paul's theology emphasize nonetheless its theological character. For example, T. Manson (1991) maintains that Romans represents a manifesto of Paul's theology. Paul sums up, says Manson, the controversies that occupied him in Galatia, Corinth, and Philippi. Bornkamm (1991) differs from Manson in some respects, but his general estimation of the letter is quite similar.³³ Romans is Paul's "last will and testament" in which he summarizes his theology. Karris (1991b) advocates a comparable position, arguing from the contents of Rom. 14:1–15:13 that the parenthesis addressed to the strong and the weak reworks and generalizes Paul's teaching regarding food offered to idols in 1 Cor. 8–10.³⁴ If Karris is correct, then the thesis that Romans is a summary of some of Paul's previous controversies, in which he steps back and reflects more calmly on the issues, gains support. The thesis that Paul summarizes his past thinking is certainly correct. The question, though, is whether that is all Paul does in Romans. Some

33. For example, he emphasizes Paul's concern about the collection's reception in Jerusalem more than Manson does. For a somewhat similar view see Drane (1980), although he stresses that Paul had to rethink his own theology after his experiences at Corinth and Galatia.

34. Morris (1988: 14) concurs with Karris, concluding, "I do not see how his argument can be resisted." So also Drane (1980: 221).

of the argumentation in Romans is fresh and new (Rom. 9–11), and none of it is a mere recapitulation of other letters. It is also doubtful that Rom. 14–15 can be adequately described as a general restatement of 1 Cor. 8–10 (see below).³⁵ Even though this view rightly detects the theological character of Romans and its relationship to his previous letters, it does not provide an adequate rationale for the sending of the letter to Rome.

Jervell (1991) concurs that Paul summarizes his thinking on controversial issues in a more reflective way, but he adds a surprising twist: The primary recipient in mind is not Rome but Jerusalem. Paul considers what he will say to the Jerusalem church when he brings the collection. The contents of the letter are fitting for the Jerusalem church, for these are the very issues on which Paul was criticized. If Jervell is correct, then why did Paul write to Rome at all? He argues that the letter was sent to Rome because Paul viewed the Romans as under his influence and as the center of the Gentile world. As the apostle of the Gentiles he desired “to represent the entire Gentile world in Jerusalem” (1991: 64), so that their solidarity behind Paul will be evident. Jervell’s stimulating proposal reminds us that some of the contents of Romans would be suitable for Jerusalem. His theory falters, however, because he does not provide a convincing reason why the letter was sent to Rome. To see Jerusalem as the primary recipient of the letter when it was actually sent to Rome is a curious position. A Roman destination also fits better with the content of 14:1–15:13. There Paul primarily addresses Gentile Christians, and it is difficult to see how his admonitions would relate to Jews in Jerusalem (so Wedderburn 1988: 20; Keck 1995: 17; cf. also Seifrid 1992: 195–97).

G. Klein (1991) also advocates a novel position. He inquires why Paul wants to visit Rome when his aim is to plant churches only where Christ is not named. Relying on Rom. 15:20, Klein contends that Paul did not consider the Roman church as an authentic church since it lacked an apostolic foundation. This accounts, says Klein, for the absence of the word ἐκκλησία (*ekklesia*, church) in chapters 1–15.³⁶ A church lacking an apostolic foundation cannot be considered a genuine church. According to Klein, by preaching the gospel in Rome the Roman church would become a genuine church with an apostolic basis. Klein’s thesis explains why Paul still wants to evangelize in Rome (1:13–15)—he preaches the gospel only where Christ has not been named (15:20). His exegesis of these

35. Moreover, Romans is hardly Paul’s last testament if one believes, as I do, that Paul wrote other letters after Romans.

36. Judge and Thomas (1966) also argue, though on different grounds from Klein, that the Roman church was not formally a church when Paul wrote his epistle.

texts, however, is unpersuasive (see the exegesis and exposition of 1:8–15 and 15:14–21, respectively). Paul’s laudatory comments about the Roman church (1:8; 15:14–15) make it quite unlikely that he deemed the church to be lacking anything essential. Klein forces Paul’s general principle about preaching in virgin areas into an absolute rule. Paul enunciates his *usual* practice and aim; he does not intend to say that he refuses to preach the gospel where churches already existed.³⁷

Jervis’s work (1991) is reminiscent of Klein’s in that she emphasizes apostolic authority. She does not, however, argue that the Romans lack an apostolic foundation. She investigates the formal features of Paul’s letter to discern its purpose: the opening, thanksgiving, apostolic parousia, and the closing sections. She concludes from her comparative epistolary analysis that Paul’s fundamental aim was to exercise his authority over the churches. Jervis’s conclusion suffers from reductionism here; although Paul’s authority as the apostle of the Gentiles is evident in the letter, it hardly follows that this is the only purpose of the letter.³⁸ The specific contents of the letter must be adequately accounted for in discerning the purpose of the letter as a whole.

Others have maintained that Romans was written to counteract problems with the Jews in Rome. This view extends all the way back to Augustine (Landes 1982: 53), who said that Paul wanted to counteract the Jewish belief that justification was obtained through the meritorious works of the law rather than through faith.³⁹ A modern variant of the view that Romans is directed to the Jews is expressed by F. Watson (1986; 1991: 203–15): The problem in Rome was that Jews and Gentiles did not worship together. Paul’s aim was to bring Jews and Gentiles together in common worship. Watson claims that Paul did not address Jews and Gentiles equally to attain this goal. The Jews were the primary addressees in Romans, for Paul wanted to persuade them to embrace his position regarding freedom from the law. In doing so they would abandon the Jewish community and attach themselves to the Pauline perspective. Paul certainly takes issue with some Jewish beliefs in Rom. 1–8. There is no evidence, however, that the theology attacked represents the opinions of Jewish Christians in Rome. Paul engages certain Jewish positions, but it does not follow that Jews in Rome were advocating

37. Wedderburn (1988: 48–49) remarks rightly that the omission of the word ἐκκλησία is insignificant and should not be pressed unduly.

38. Weima (1995: 366) also overemphasizes the theme of apostolic authority, contending that this is Paul’s “overriding concern” in the letter.

39. For similar views see Baur 1873: 346–63 (he believes that the Jews held an Ebionite view); M. Black 1973: 23; Kümmel 1975: 312–14.

righteousness through works of law or submission to circumcision. Indeed, the manner in which these questions are discussed indicates that Paul does not oppose Jewish Christians in Rome. He gives no indication that he is countering a Jewish Christian position in Rome when he broaches these issues. Another reason must be sought, therefore, for the inclusion of these themes in the letter. Watson is probably right in saying that there were tensions between Jews and Gentiles in Rome. But it is doubtful that Paul primarily addresses the Jews and exhorts them to depart from the law. Indeed, Rom. 14:1–15:13 (see the exegesis and exposition) principally admonishes the strong (who were mainly Gentiles). Paul does not require the weak to give up their scruples in order to worship with the strong. Similarly, in Rom. 9–11 Paul is more concerned about Gentile pride and exclusion of the Jews (11:18–24) than he is about Jewish allegiance to the law. Nor is the evidence sufficient to support Watson's claim that Jews and Gentiles worshiped separately.⁴⁰ There were probably several congregations in Rome, but the instructions in Rom. 14–15 imply significant contact among the various groups, and this association would likely have taken place during worship.

We have seen that all of the above suggestions have merit, yet none of them adequately delineates the purpose for Romans. I would like to suggest that there are various purposes in Romans, and only by interpreting the various sections of the letter can we discern which purpose is ultimate.⁴¹ One reason Paul wrote was to resolve the conflict between Jews and Gentiles in Rome.⁴² I have mentioned that this conflict is socially explicable in that the Jewish Christians were expelled from Rome in A.D. 49 and they returned to Rome in significant numbers in A.D. 54. By then the social distance between Jews and Gentiles had increased, and the latter were much

40. C. Anderson (1993: 29) concurs with Watson.

41. Many scholars concur that Romans had more than one purpose. It is not my intention, when listing scholars as supporting one option or another, to deny that they may also argue that there are other purposes in the letter. For a sample of those who argue for more than one purpose see Cranfield 1979: 815; Beker 1980: 71; Käsemann 1980: 404–6; Williams 1980: 245–55; Wedderburn 1988; Bruce 1991: 175–94; Stuhlmacher 1991b; Moo 1991: 16–22; Walters 1993: 93–94; Mounce 1995: 26–27.

42. The majority position is now that Paul wrote to resolve the disunity between Jews and Gentiles. So, e.g., Marxsen 1968: 95–109; Minear 1971; Bartsch 1972; W. Campbell 1973–74 (see now his 1992 work); Käsemann 1980: 405–6; Dunn 1988b: lvi–lviii; Russell 1988; Wedderburn 1988: 44–65; Crafton 1990: 320–25; Reasoner 1990; Wiefel 1991: 85–101; Donfried 1991a; Bruce 1991: 177–86; P. Lampe 1991: 216–30; Stuhlmacher 1991b; Walters 1993: 84–92; Wright 1995: 35; Guerra 1995: 32–39. Naturally there are various shades of opinion among so many. Most agree, for example, that Minear's identification of five different groups is too specific.

less inclined to adhere to segments of the law that the Jews still practiced (viz., food laws and observance of the Sabbath).⁴³ The differences of opinion between Jews and Gentiles are reflected in 14:1–15:13. We have seen that Karris (1991b) believes that this is just conventional parenthesis unrelated to the specific situation at Rome. But the significant differences between Rom. 14–15 and 1 Cor. 8–10 (see the exegesis and exposition of Rom. 14:1–15:13 for the evidence) demonstrate that the conclusion that Rom. 14–15 generalizes 1 Cor. 8–10 is unpersuasive.⁴⁴ Indeed, a close analysis of the two texts (again see the exegesis and exposition of Rom. 14:1–15:13) reveals that in Rome the weak adhere to Jewish food laws and the Sabbath because of their devotion to the Mosaic law. In Corinth, by contrast, the weak hail from pagan backgrounds and fear eating food offered to idols because it will defile them. Thus the internal evidence of the text lends support to Donfried's (1991a: 103–4) methodological principle that the burden of proof is on those who think that Romans was not written to a specific situation in Rome, since the remaining Pauline letters address concrete circumstances in the churches.⁴⁵ Another piece of evidence supporting this thesis is the integrity of Rom. 16 (as argued in "Unity, Text, and Integrity" above). Paul's knowledge of so many people in Rom. 16 demonstrates that he was well informed about the situation in the Roman congregations, providing further evidence for the theory that he addresses a real situation in Rome. The tensions in Rome should not be exaggerated; Paul is pleased with the state of the Roman church (1:8–12; 15:14–15; 16:19), although these commendatory words should not become the sole paradigm by which Romans is read either (contra Drane 1980: 211). Paul commended churches, even those that were struggling (cf. 1 Cor. 1:4–9), in the thanksgiving section of his letters. It is fair to conclude, then, that difficulties arose between the strong and the weak in Rome.⁴⁶

The conflict between Jewish and Gentile Christians in Rome was rather typical of the kind of debates that occurred as the gospel spread throughout the Greco-Roman world. Paul could not arbi-

43. This is not to deny that some Jews were "liberal" and some Gentiles "conservative." As a generalization, though, the "weak" were probably mainly Jewish and the "strong" primarily Gentile.

44. See especially Donfried's response (1991a) with Karris's reply (1991a).

45. Donfried (1991a: 103) maintains that there are no exceptions, but I think a good argument can be made that Ephesians is exceptional.

46. One objection to this thesis is that Rom. 5–8 seems to leave behind issues relating to Jews and Gentiles. Thielman (1995) shows, however, that the story of Israel is not abandoned in Rom. 5–8. He probably presses the thesis too far at some points, but overall he is persuasive. Cousar (1995) objects that Thielman does not pay sufficient attention to apocalyptic in Paul. But contra Cousar apocalyptic and salvation history are not necessarily at loggerheads.

trate the debate simply by declaring his opinion. He needed to summarize the basic content of the gospel he preached, especially as it pertained to issues relating to Jews and Gentiles. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Mosaic law and the place of Israel in salvation history are at the forefront of the discussion in Romans. Paul also needed to explicate his gospel thoroughly because he was the object of constant attacks, especially by other Jewish Christians.⁴⁷ If he merely communicated his judgments on the controverted issues without providing a full exposition of his gospel, some would have rejected his advice immediately, knowing that Paul was under suspicion by some in Jerusalem (cf. Acts 21:20–21). Stuhlmacher (1991b: 236) observes rightly that Paul would have learned from Prisca, Aquila, and his other friends that doubts existed in Rome about his gospel. Stuhlmacher (1991b: 239), however, goes beyond the evidence in maintaining that Jewish Christian opponents of Paul were already in Rome spewing out criticism against the Pauline gospel (Rom. 3:8; 16:17–20).⁴⁸ These latter verses do not relate to actual opponents in Rome but to the enemies Paul faced in the east and whom he feared might reach Rome. He knew that doubts and questions had surfaced in the Roman congregations about his gospel, but he did not yet face full-fledged opponents. These apprehensions about Paul's teaching in Rome could perhaps be alleviated if his gospel were thoroughly explained, particularly on issues relating to Jews and Gentiles. He must satisfy both Jewish and Gentile Christians that his stance on the Mosaic law, circumcision, and the place of Israel accords with the OT Scriptures. We can see, therefore, why some scholars have said that Romans contains a dialogue with the Jews (see esp. Beker 1980: 74–91; Stuhlmacher 1991b: 239–40). Such a thesis is acceptable as long as the Gentile wing in the church is not excluded from any part of Romans. Paul's intention is to show them that his gospel constitutes the true fulfillment of what the OT Scriptures teach about the Mosaic law, circumcision, and the role of Israel (and Gentiles) in salvation history. Paul's particular advice to the strong and the weak in Rom. 14–15 would never be accepted if fundamental disagreement existed over his conception of the role of Jews and Gentiles in God's plan. Thus one of Paul's primary aims was to unify the church in Rome, so that Jews and Gentiles together would worship God in harmony, under-

47. Perhaps he even feared that Jewish Christians would soon arrive in Rome and counter his gospel, though D. A. Campbell (1995) is far too confident that the letter is specifically written to counter such opponents.

48. Beker (1980: 70) is on target in saying that Paul does not deal with Judaizing adversaries or even "organized" opponents in Romans. Wilckens (1978: 33–42) maintains that Paul arbitrates a genuine situation in Rome and is in dialogue with the synagogue.

standing that their unified worship fulfilled what the OT Scriptures taught (cf. 15:7–13).

We have seen thus far that friction existed between Jews and Gentiles in Rome. Paul wrote to unify the church so that they would function harmoniously. Such unity could only be obtained by a thorough explication of Paul's gospel, for Paul's advice would be heeded only if the Romans were persuaded that his understanding of the gospel was on target, especially in relationship to the Mosaic law and the place of Israel in salvation history. In other words, the Pauline gospel was to be the basis of unity for the Roman congregations. Unity was not the only reason why Paul wrote Romans. He hoped that the unified congregations would rally together to support his mission to Spain (15:22–24).⁴⁹ Paul presumably wanted Rome to be his supporting base for his mission to the west. Rome could scarcely be a sending base if the churches were torn apart by strife. Nor would they wholeheartedly champion Paul's mission if they were uncertain about or disagreed with his theology. Thus, just as Paul had to set forth his teaching to resolve the disputes between Jews and Gentiles, so too his teaching had to be embraced for them to support his mission. Hence it is clear that Romans so thoroughly treats the Mosaic law and Israel's role in salvation history because the question about Paul's theology was whether it was in accord with God's promises in the OT. Full discussions of Christology, ecclesiology, eschatology, and the Lord's Supper were not needed, for no one disputed Paul's teaching in these areas. It is also true, then, that Romans was a letter of self-introduction for Paul that he wrote to expand his mission.

Too many studies consider the purposes of Romans only at the sociological or horizontal level. They emphasize that Paul wanted a unified church and he desired to expand his mission. These insights are surely on target, but we must also inquire whether these were his ultimate goals. Why did Paul want the church in Rome to be unified? Was unity the ultimate goal? Romans 15:7–13 indicates (see the exegesis and exposition) that Paul wanted the church to be unified so that they would praise God harmoniously together. Thus Seifrid (1992: 182–210) is correct in saying that the manifold purposes of the letter are subsumed under Paul's desire to unite the

49. Many scholars have concurred that Paul wrote to advance his mission. See, e.g., Zeller 1973: 38–77; Cranfield 1979: 815, 817; Käsemann 1980: 404–5; Williams 1980; Aune 1987: 219; Russell 1988; Dunn 1988b: lv–lvi; Jewett 1982; Jewett 1988; Jewett 1995. Jewett goes beyond the evidence, however, in postulating that Phoebe would function as the patron for the Spanish mission and in overemphasizing the primacy of mission in the letter (so also Zeller 1973; for criticisms see Seifrid 1992: 194 [although he minimizes unduly the importance of the Spanish mission]; Sampley 1995a: 111).

church under his gospel. Further, 15:7–13 reveals that this unity is ultimately prized for God’s sake. Unity is to be pursued so that the church worships God together in harmony. A harmonious church would bring honor and praise to God’s name.

I would contend that Paul also explains in Romans why he wanted the gospel to be spread to Spain. The bringing in of more worshipers redounds to the praise and glory of God. The salvation of many from both Jews and Gentiles brings honor to God’s name. The desire to induce Gentiles to the obedience of faith is for the sake of the name of Jesus Christ (Rom. 1:5). God has planned history with the same goal in mind (Rom. 9–11). First he chose Israel to be his people, but now he has largely set them aside and a great number of Gentiles are entering into the people of God. God is faithful to his promises, however, and “all Israel will be saved” (11:26) in the future. The fluctuations in history are all designed to bring praise to God’s name, as the conclusion to Rom. 9–11 demonstrates (11:33–36). Human beings will reflect on the wisdom of his plan and honor him. Paul ultimately wrote Romans as a servant of God to honor his Lord. I have endeavored to show inductively in my exegesis of the letter that God’s glory is indeed ultimate, and the credibility of my hypothesis stands or falls with my exegesis of the letter.

Literary Structure

Various attempts have been made to identify the literary character or genre of the letter. Depending on Stirewalt’s study (1991), Donfried (1991a: 121–25) describes it as a “letter-essay” written to specific readers and yet also intended to be read by others (Fitzmyer 1993c: 69 prefers the term “essay-letter”). Such letter-essays supplemented what the author had written elsewhere. In general the designation “letter-essay” seems appropriate, but does Stirewalt’s specific definition of “letter-essays” really describe Romans? What evidence is there that the letter was to be read by others or that it supplemented other Pauline writings (cf. Wedderburn 1988: 9–10)? Stirewalt’s category seems to be imposed on Romans instead of growing out of a careful analysis of its contents.

Scholars who are persuaded that Paul used Greco-Roman rhetoric classify Romans in various ways. Some label Romans as epideictic, a genre in which the author celebrates common values with the readers.⁵⁰ Others classify the letter as protreptic, a genre that attempts to persuade the readers.⁵¹ There is also general agreement that Paul uses a diatribal style in Romans.⁵² No one doubts that identifying the genre of a piece of literature is an immense help in interpretation. Nonetheless, classifying the letter as

epideictic or protreptic has not yet been vindicated through a careful exegetical analysis of the letter.⁵³ Such categories seem to be forced upon the data of the letter, and in any case the standards of oral rhetoric were not necessarily applied to epistolary material (Byrne 1996: 4–5). Doubtless such analyses will be forthcoming, and it may be that a consensus will emerge on the rhetorical category of the letter. Nothing can replace, however, a thorough inductive study of the contents of the letter. Classifying the letter generically may distract some from engaging in the intensive exegesis necessary to interpret Paul. For even if Paul uses a certain rhetorical category, he does not follow the form rigidly.⁵⁴ Those who are enraptured with Greco-Roman rhetoric in analyzing Pauline letters are also in danger of neglecting Paul's Jewish background in interpreting the letter. I should also say that identifying epistolary conventions in the Pauline letters is useful in interpretation. These conventions are particularly helpful in analyzing the openings and closings of letters.⁵⁵ In my estimation neither rhetorical nor epistolary studies have shed much light on the body of the epistle to the Romans. As Dunn (1988b: lix) remarks, "The key fact here is that the distinctiveness of the letter far outweighs the significance of its conformity with current literary or rhetorical custom."⁵⁶ The task of the interpreter, therefore, is to trace the ar-

50. So Kennedy 1984: 152–56; Wuellner 1991; Jewett 1991 (Jewett more specifically thinks it is an "ambassadorial" letter; see Jewett 1982); Reid 1992: 261; Lincoln 1995: 134; Byrne 1996: 15–18. Aletti's (1990) analysis of the letter is impressive, but I am unpersuaded that his categories accurately describe the contours of the epistle. Cf. also Reid's (1992) analysis of Rom. 1–5.

51. See Stowers 1986: 114; Stowers 1994: 326; Aune 1991: 278–96; and especially Guerra 1995. The strength and weaknesses of Guerra's hypothesis can be judged only by a detailed analysis. Despite some impressive insights, his study seems to force the evidence to sustain his theory.

52. Bultmann (1910) points out to scholars the diatribal influence of Romans. Stowers (1981) emphasizes that the diatribe is a style, not a genre. D. A. Campbell (1995: 325–27) argues convincingly, however, that a diatribal style does not exclude the presence of genuine opponents.

53. So also Dunn 1988b: lix; Moo 1991: 15–16. Fitzmyer (1993c: 69), for instance, doubts that classifying the letter as ambassadorial is of much help in interpretation. Guerra's work (1995) is the most ambitious attempt to identify the genre of the letter. For some comments on why unanimity is lacking in classifying letters like Romans see Reid 1995: 185–86. Particularly vexing is the omission of parenthesis in the rhetorical handbooks.

54. Du Toit (1989: 194) is correct, however, in observing that even if Paul was not instructed in Greco-Roman rhetoric he would still possess a basic knowledge of it.

55. Nonetheless, Dunn (1988b: lix) cautions rightly, "Certainly any attempt to determine the letter's character solely in terms of literary parallels to introduction and conclusion is self-evidently defective."

56. Smiga (1991) proposes that the letter is structured in accord with the thanksgiving (1:8–15) and the two exhortation sections in 12:1–2 and 15:30–32. Paul hopes that he and the Roman Christians will mutually encourage one another (1:12) and

gument of the letter itself, paying careful attention to the unfolding argument of the author.

My understanding of the structure of Romans is contained in the outline below. I acknowledge the influence of scholars who have preceded me, but I also examined the structure of the argument firsthand, and carefully traced the flow of the argument throughout Romans.

- I. The gospel as the revelation of God's righteousness (1:1–17)**
 - A. Salutation: the gospel concerning his Son (1:1–7)
 - B. Thanksgiving: prayer for an apostolic visit (1:8–15)
 - C. Theme: the gospel of God's righteousness (1:16–17)
- II. God's righteousness in his wrath against sinners (1:18–3:20)**
 - A. The unrighteousness of Gentiles (1:18–32)
 - 1. Their rejection of God (1:18–23)
 - 2. The consequences of their rejection (1:24–32)
 - B. The unrighteousness of Jews (2:1–3:8)
 - 1. God's impartial judgment (2:1–16)
 - a. Condemnation for the unrepentant (2:1–5)
 - b. Judgment according to works (2:6–11)
 - c. Judgment by a fair standard (2:12–16)
 - 2. Jewish failure to honor God (2:17–29)
 - a. Transgression of law (2:17–24)
 - b. The conditional value of circumcision (2:25–29)
 - 3. God's righteousness and Israel (3:1–8)
 - C. The unrighteousness of all people (3:9–20)
- III. The saving righteousness of God (3:21–4:25)**
 - A. God's righteousness in the death of Jesus (3:21–26)
 - B. Righteousness by faith for Jews and Gentiles (3:27–31)
 - C. Abraham as the father of Jews and Gentiles (4:1–25)
 - 1. The exclusion of works (4:1–8)
 - 2. Abraham, the father of all peoples (4:9–16)
 - 3. The nature of Abraham's faith (4:17–22)
 - 4. Application to readers (4:23–25)

that he can preach the gospel to them (1:15). The proclamation of the gospel, according to Smiga, is found in 1:16–11:36 and the mutual encouragement in 12:1–16:27. This is certainly an intriguing suggestion, but it is not persuasive to sunder the parenthetic section of Romans from the gospel Paul preached. Nor is it clear that the mutual encouragement spoken of in 1:12 occurs in 12:1–16:27. Indeed, the flow of thought in 1:10–13 suggests that mutual encouragement would occur when Paul visited the Romans personally.

- IV. Hope as a result of righteousness by faith (5:1–8:39)**
 - A. Assurance of hope (5:1–11)
 - 1. Hope in sufferings (5:1–5)
 - 2. The ground of hope (5:6–11)
 - B. Hope in Christ's triumph over Adam's sin (5:12–21)
 - 1. The incursion of sin and death into the world through Adam (5:12–14)
 - 2. The comparison between Adam and Christ (5:15–19)
 - 3. The role of the law (5:20–21)
 - C. The triumph of grace over the power of sin (6:1–23)
 - 1. Freedom from sin's tyranny (6:1–14)
 - 2. Freedom from sin's slavery (6:15–23)
 - D. The triumph of grace over the power of the law (7:1–8:17)
 - 1. Freedom from the law's tyranny (7:1–6)
 - 2. The goodness and impotence of the law (7:7–25)
 - a. Death due to sin (7:7–12)
 - b. In bondage under the law (7:13–25)
 - 3. Fulfillment of the law by the Spirit (8:1–17)
 - a. Christ's death as the basis for deliverance (8:1–4)
 - b. Contrast between the flesh and the Spirit (8:5–11)
 - c. Obedience as the hallmark of the Spirit (8:12–17)
 - E. Assurance of hope (8:18–39)
 - 1. The hope of a new creation (8:18–25)
 - 2. Hope in prayer (8:26–27)
 - 3. Hope of glorification (8:28–30)
 - 4. Certainty of hope in suffering (8:31–39)
- V. God's righteousness to Israel and the Gentiles (9:1–11:36)**
 - A. God's saving promise to Israel (9:1–29)
 - 1. Israel's separation from Christ (9:1–5)
 - 2. God's promise to Israel (9:6–13)
 - 3. God's sovereign righteousness (9:14–18)
 - 4. A defense of God's sovereign righteousness (9:19–23)
 - 5. The calling of both the Gentiles and a remnant from Israel (9:24–29)
 - B. Israel's rejection of God's saving righteousness (9:30–11:10)
 - 1. Israel's unbelief in Christ (9:30–10:13)
 - a. Israel's failure to obtain righteousness (9:30–10:4)
 - b. The contrast between the righteousness of the law and the righteousness of faith (10:5–13)
 - 2. Israel's opportunity to believe (10:14–21)
 - 3. The election of a remnant from Israel (11:1–6)
 - 4. The majority of Israel hardened (11:7–10)

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- C. God's righteousness in his plan for Jews and Gentiles (11:11–32)
 - 1. Israel's hardening for the inclusion of the Gentiles (11:11–16)
 - 2. The warning against Gentile boasting (11:17–22)
 - 3. The promise of Israel's salvation (11:23–27)
 - 4. Insight into God's plan (11:28–32)
 - D. Concluding doxology (11:33–36)
 - VI. God's righteousness in everyday life (12:1–15:13)**
 - A. Paradigm for exhortations: total dedication to God (12:1–2)
 - B. Marks of the Christian community (12:3–13:14)
 - 1. The exercise of spiritual gifts (12:3–8)
 - 2. Devotion to love and goodness (12:9–16)
 - 3. Nonretaliation toward enemies (12:17–21)
 - 4. Submission to governing authority (13:1–7)
 - 5. The fulfillment of the law through love (13:8–10)
 - 6. Moral urgency in light of the *eschaton* (13:11–14)
 - C. A call for mutual acceptance between the strong and the weak (14:1–15:13)
 - 1. Refrain from judging (14:1–12)
 - 2. Do not cause a brother or sister to stumble (14:13–23)
 - 3. Help the weak (15:1–6)
 - 4. Imitate Christ's acceptance of Jews and Gentiles (15:7–13)
 - VII. The extension of God's righteousness through the Pauline mission (15:14–16:23)**
 - A. The establishment of churches among the Gentiles (15:14–33)
 - 1. The goal of Paul's mission (15:14–21)
 - 2. The reason for Paul's desire to visit Rome (15:22–29)
 - 3. The context for prayer regarding Paul's Jerusalem visit (15:30–33)
 - B. Coworkers in the gospel (16:1–23)
 - 1. Commendation of Phoebe (16:1–2)
 - 2. Greeting of coworkers in Rome (16:3–16)
 - 3. Warning against those who are not coworkers (16:17–20)
 - 4. Greetings from coworkers in Corinth (16:21–23)
 - VIII. Final summary of the gospel of God's righteousness (16:25–27)**

- I. The Gospel as the Revelation of God's Righteousness (1:1–17)
- II. God's Righteousness in His Wrath against Sinners (1:18–3:20)
- III. The Saving Righteousness of God (3:21–4:25)

I. The Gospel as the Revelation of God's Righteousness (1:1–17)

The opening section of Romans is fascinating because it is the only introduction we have that was written to a church not planted by Paul or by one of his coworkers. When we add to this Paul's desire to use Rome as a bridgehead for his Spanish mission, the importance of the opening is even more evident. From the inception of the letter Paul wants to persuade the Romans that his gospel is orthodox and worth supporting. His goal is to unify the Roman church and rally them around his gospel so that they will help him to bring the gospel to Spain. The introduction of the letter can be divided into three sections: (1) the opening (1:1–7); (2) thanksgiving and prayer (1:8–15); and (3) the theme of the letter (1:16–17).

The opening (1:1–7) is the longest of all the Pauline letters. Paul introduces himself as an apostle and informs the readers that he was specially called by God as an authoritative messenger. Paul particularly emphasizes that his apostleship is in service to the gospel. The gospel that Paul proclaims is no novelty, for it is a gospel proclaiming what God has done and it stands in continuity with the OT Scriptures. Indeed, the gospel constitutes the fulfillment of the saving promises found in the OT. God promised to bless the world through Abraham (Gen. 12:3), and now that worldwide blessing has become a reality through the Pauline mission. Paul is quick to remind his readers, however, that the gospel is centered on God's Son, who is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ. In the OT Israel as God's son (Exod. 4:22) was called to be a light for the nations, and the promises for Israel would be fulfilled through a Davidic king. Paul maintains, in this tightly packed section, that the true Israel and the genuine Davidic king is Jesus the Messiah. God's saving promises for Israel and the Gentiles have become a reality in him. We know that God's saving promises are now being realized because God has raised Jesus from the dead and appointed him as the messianic king. The reference to the resurrection indicates that the new age has come, and that God has begun to fulfill his promises to his people. Since God through Jesus Christ is now fulfilling his promises for worldwide blessing, it is hardly surprising that Paul's mission is to bring about the obedience that stems from faith among all peoples. In doing so he brings the honor to God that hu-

man beings have failed to give him through most of history. Paul writes to the Romans because they are part of the universal mission, and he extends to them his usual greeting of grace and peace.

The thanksgiving and prayer (1:8–15) are not as meaty as the opening, though they explain further why Paul desires to come to Rome. He is grateful to God for the gospel's advance to Rome and prays that God will grant him the privilege as an apostle to visit the Romans and strengthen them in the faith. Paul has desired to come to Rome for many years because he has a special call as the apostle to the Gentiles to proclaim the gospel to all peoples.

In the theme of the letter (1:16–17) Paul explains why he is so eager to preach the gospel everywhere. The gospel does not heap shame upon him, for it is a message with power that brings people to salvation. This saving message is both for the Jew first and also for Gentiles. In verse 17 Paul explains further. In the gospel God's saving righteousness is now being revealed. The promises of worldwide blessing first made to Abraham are now a reality. The new exodus that Isaiah predicted in which God reveals his righteousness has arrived. This saving righteousness of God is received by faith and is available for all, both Jews and Gentiles, by faith.

A. Salutation: The Gospel concerning His Son (1:1–7)

The letter to the Romans is framed by the opening salutation (1:1–7) and the closing doxology (16:25–27). The authenticity and placement of 16:25–27 are questionable, but I will argue (see 16:25–27) for its authenticity and that it properly belongs at the end of the letter. These two texts frame the entire letter inasmuch as they call attention to the same themes. The focus in both is on the gospel: “the gospel of God” (1:1), “according to my gospel” (16:25). The gospel that is preached centers on Jesus Christ: the gospel is “concerning his Son” (1:3), and it is described as the “proclamation of Jesus Christ” (16:25).¹ The gospel Paul preaches is in fulfillment of the Scriptures: it “was promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures” (1:2), and it “has been manifested now through the prophetic Scriptures” (16:26). Paul has been called as an apostle to preach this gospel (1:1, 5); thus he designates it as “my gospel” (16:25) in the sense that God willed to reveal it to him and through him (16:25–26) as the apostle of the Gentiles. He preaches the gospel in order to gain converts from among the Gentiles: both 1:5 and 16:26 say that his goal is to bring about “the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles.”² The ultimate goal, however, is not the inclusion of Gentiles into the people of God. Paul calls all peoples to the obedience of faith “for the sake of his name” (1:5). Romans 16:27 has a slightly different emphasis but the same idea is present. He closes the letter with the words, “To the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, may there be glory forever.” The motivation undergirding the Pauline mission is that Jesus Christ and God the Father will be glorified through his proclamation of the gospel to all peoples.

Exegesis and Exposition

¹[This letter is from] Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, called by God to be an apostle, having been set apart for the gospel of God. ²God promised the gos-

1. The centrality of the gospel in Romans suggests that Paul shared common ground with the readers here (contra Mason 1994: 277–87).

2. The term ἔθνη here does not include Jews (see Zeller 1973: 13–14).

pel beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures. ³And this gospel is about his Son, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, ⁴and who was “appointed” to be the powerful Son of God according to the Spirit of holiness at the resurrection from the dead. [The Son is] Jesus Christ our Lord. ⁵Through him we have received this gracious apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for the sake of his name. ⁶You are also among the Gentiles called by Jesus Christ. ⁷[I am writing] to all of you who are “in Rome”, “who are loved by God” and called to be saints. May grace and peace be yours from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The typical opening of letters in the Hellenistic period consisted of the name of the person sending the letter, the addressees, and a greeting. All three of those elements are present here: the sender is Paul, the addressees are the saints in Rome, and Paul greets them. In Hellenistic letters the standard greeting was *χαίρειν* (*chairein*, greetings; cf. Acts 15:23; 23:26; James 1:1), but Paul reshaped the greeting in all of his letters to convey his gospel. Instead of *χαίρειν* he used *χάρις* (*charis*, grace), which was a distinctive emphasis of his gospel. He also added *εἰρήνη* (*eirēnē*, peace), which was common in Jewish greetings (e.g., 2 Macc. 1:1; 2 Bar. 78.3) and signified in a holistic sense the well-being that belongs to those under God’s favor.³ Most significantly, this grace and peace are available through God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.⁴ The collocation of God the Father and Messiah Jesus here is an indication of Paul’s high Christology. Wright (1991: 41–55) is correct in arguing that *Χριστοῦ* (*Christou*, Christ) should be understood as a title, not a proper name. The fulfillment of the OT, elaborated in verses 2–4, is already noted here in the messiahship of Jesus.

The significance of the salutation of Romans is immediately apparent when it is compared to salutations in the other Pauline letters. This is easily the longest and most theologically complex of all the Pauline openings. This is best accounted for by the particular situation that informed the writing of the letter. All the other Pauline letters were directed to churches that either he or one of his associates established.⁵ In Romans Paul attempts to explain and defend his gospel to churches that he did not plant and that were suffering from tensions between Jews and Gentiles (see the intro-

3. In 1 Tim. 1:2 and 2 Tim. 1:2 Paul also adds the word *ἔλεος* (*eleos*, mercy) to *χάρις* and *εἰρήνη*. Cf. also 2 Bar. 78.3. Fitzmyer (1993c: 232) says the greeting may be modeled on the priestly benediction in Num. 6:24–26.

4. The only deviations from this pattern are in Col. 1:2, which mentions “God our Father” but not Jesus Christ, and in 1 Thess. 1:1, which omits both the Father and Jesus Christ.

5. Paul had never seen the Colossians (Col. 2:1), but the church was probably established and overseen by Paul’s fellow worker Epaphras (Col. 1:7–8; 4:12–13).

duction). By convincing them of the truth of his gospel, he could use the Roman churches as his outpost for the mission to Spain (Rom. 15:24, 28). Support from the Roman churches would be gained only if Paul could demonstrate to them the truth of his gospel. The attempt to rally both Jewish and Gentile believers in Rome to the Pauline gospel begins in this weighty theological salutation.

It is particularly important to discern the distinctive emphases found in the salutation. Two major themes dominate this section. First, Paul stresses his apostolic authority and mission. Second, Paul sketches in briefly but pregnantly the gospel that he preaches. The first verse highlights the apostolic authority of Paul. This is suggested by the omission of any cosender(s), who are often named in Paul's other letters (1 Cor. 1:1; 2 Cor. 1:1; Gal. 1:1–2; Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:1; 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:1).⁶ We know from Rom. 16:21 that Timothy was with Paul when Romans was composed, and yet Paul did not include him in the greeting, presumably to highlight his distinctive authority as the apostle to the Gentiles. Paul is also described as a δούλος (*doulos*, slave) of Christ. The term δούλος is probably rooted in the OT use of עֶבֶד יְהוָה (*ebed yhw*, servant of the Lord; cf. M. Sass 1941). It conveys the idea of an office that was formerly possessed by outstanding persons in the OT such as Moses, Joshua, Abraham, David, and the prophets (Josh. 14:7; 24:29; 2 Kings 17:23; Ps. 89:4, 21; Rengstorf, *TDNT* 2:268, 276–77). The focus of the term, though, is not on possessing a privileged office but on service to a greater authority (Moo 1991: 35). By using the word δούλος before mentioning his apostleship Paul emphasizes that the authority he exercises is a derived authority.⁷ He is a humble servant of Christ, whose will he endeavors to fulfill.

The apostolic office of Paul is attributed to God's gracious will. "Calling" (κλητός, *klētos*) in Paul (cf. Rom. 8:28, 30; 9:7, 12, 24, 25, 26; 1 Cor. 1:9, 24, 26; Gal. 1:6, 15) refers to the effective work of God by which he calls people to salvation and office.⁸ Here the emphasis is on Paul's call to apostleship.⁹ His divine commission is hammered home with the words ἀφορισμένος εἰς εὐαγγέλιον θεοῦ (*aph-*

6. Rightly Dunn 1988a: 7; Jervis 1991: 70, 79; Weima 1995: 340. The only other letter to a church in which a cosender is not named is Ephesians.

7. Pelagius (de Bruyn 1993: 59) mistakenly concludes here that Paul merited the apostolic office.

8. Three different Greek words are used, namely, κλητός, καλεῖν, and κλήσις. 1 Cor. 1:9, 24, 26–28 indicates that all three terms refer to the effective work of God. On "calling" in Paul see K. Schmidt, *TDNT* 3:488–89, 491–92, 494.

9. The parallel text in Gal. 1:13–16; the accounts of Paul's conversion-call in Acts 9, 22, and 26; and his discussion of his former life in Phil. 3:4–11 indicate that it is a false dichotomy to separate Paul's call from his conversion (contra Stendahl 1976: 7–23; Dunn 1992a: 5–6). In defense of the paradigm of conversion in reference to Paul see the fine work of Segal 1990.

ōrismenos eis euangelion theou, having been separated for the gospel of God). Again, the spotlight is on God's work in setting Paul apart for apostolic ministry. The two words "calling" (καλεῖν) and "separate" (ἀφορίζειν) are also used of Paul's call to preach the gospel to the Gentiles in Gal. 1:15. There Paul describes it in terms of the "God who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through his grace." Both in Romans and in Galatians the descriptions of Paul's apostolic call are reminiscent of the calling to the prophetic ministry in the OT (Isa. 49:1; Jer. 1:5).¹⁰ Paul doubtless believed firmly that his authority as an apostle was similar to that of the prophets of old, but it was even superior because he was proclaiming the fulfillment of what was prophesied in the OT (Rom. 1:2; 16:26). His apostolic authority was on a par with the "pillars" (Gal. 2:9) from Jerusalem because he received his gospel through a revelation of Jesus Christ (Gal. 1:1, 11; cf. 1 Cor. 9:1), and they recognized the validity of his gospel (Gal. 2:1–10). Paul's apostolic authority and legitimacy were confirmed by the establishing of churches (2 Cor. 3:1–3; 10:12–18) where the gospel had not been proclaimed previously (Rom. 15:15–21).

Paul's apostolic call was in service to the gospel, and he elaborates on the content of this gospel in verses 2–4. I shall return to these verses, but at this juncture I devote attention to verses 5–7, which delineate the specific task of Paul's apostleship. Again there is a remark on the gracious nature of the apostolic ministry that Paul exercises. The text reads literally "through him we have received grace and apostleship." The words "grace" (χάρτιν, *charin*) and "apostleship" (ἀποστολήν, *apostolēn*) should not be separated into two concepts here. The two words should be combined to refer to "the gracious apostolate" (cf. Calvin 1960: 17) that Paul received. Two reasons support this interpretation. First, to detach Paul's commission as an apostle from his conversion is mistaken (see n. 9). The two are inextricably bound together, and thus we should not isolate the grace given in conversion from the grace that installed Paul as an apostle. Second, in this context the focus is on Paul's apostolic ministry and his commission as the apostle to the Gentiles. Any reference to his conversion apart from his call would fit awkwardly with the flow of thought in this paragraph.

The Pauline apostleship is due to divine favor and power, as the words "gracious apostleship" demonstrate.¹¹ The statement that this apostolic ministry was "received" through Jesus Christ also tes-

10. So, e.g., Käsemann 1980: 6; Weima 1995: 341. For a sustained defense of the view that Paul framed his call in prophetic terms see Sandnes 1991.

11. For a defense of the understanding that the word *χάρις* involves the idea of "power" see Nolland 1986.

tifies to its gracious character. The plural "we received" (ἐλάβομεν, *elabomen*) is occasionally understood to include other apostles besides Paul (Dunn 1988a: 16). Most commentators rightly take the plural as epistolary (contra Schlatter 1995: 10; Weima 1995: 343). Four pieces of evidence support the claim that Paul is referring only to himself. First, we have already noted that Paul omits the mention of any cosenders in the letter even though Timothy was with him. Second, Paul was keenly aware that he had a unique ministry as an apostle to the Gentiles, and verse 5 confirms that this ministry to the Gentiles is particularly in his mind. Third, and more decisive, the steady repetition of the first person singular in verses 8–16 suggests that Paul was thinking of his own apostolic ministry in verse 5. Finally, the first person plural in the Pauline writings is often an apostolic plural that designates Paul alone.¹²

The distinctive character of Paul's apostleship was that it was especially directed to the Gentiles (cf. Gal. 1:16; 2:7, 9; Acts 9:15; 22:21).¹³ Romans 1:5 says that Paul's ministry was for "all the Gentiles" (πᾶσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, *pasin tois ethnesin*).¹⁴ Particular emphasis lies on the word "all" (πᾶσιν), for thereby Paul signaled the universal dimensions of his ministry. No people group or ethnic entity was to be excluded. One of the major themes of Romans is here anticipated inasmuch as the inclusion of the Gentiles into the people of God on the same terms as the Jews is often proclaimed in this letter (e.g., 3:22, 31; 4:11–12, 16–17; 10:11–13; 16:26). The inclusion of all nations also functions as an indication that the covenantal promises of the OT were being fulfilled (e.g., Gen. 12:3; Isa. 19:18–25; 49:6; Dan. 7:14, 27), and that the promise to Abraham of a worldwide family is now being realized.

The words εἰς ὑπακοὴν πίστεως (*eis hypakoēn pisteōs*, for the obedience of faith) convey the missionary thrust of Paul's call to the

12. See, e.g., Hafemann 1986: 13–18.

13. Scott (1995: 57–134) conducts an extensive study of the term ἔθνος (*ethnos*) in Jewish literature and Paul. He maintains that the term focuses on "nations" instead of "Gentiles." Scott defends this thesis by arguing that the table of nations tradition of Gen. 10 stands behind Jewish and Pauline usage of ἔθνος. Scott's argument is impressive, and he may well be right that the table of nations tradition influenced Paul's conception of his mission. Even he agrees, however, that Paul uses ἔθνος occasionally to designate foreigners, i.e., Gentiles. I would suggest that the ambiguity between the terms "nations" and "Gentiles" is inevitable since all the "nations" apart from Israel were separated from the people of God (cf. Eph. 2:11–13). Other nations, therefore, were "foreigners." In this commentary I will use the term "Gentiles" to refer to these "nations," but the use of this term does not mean that I am jettisoning the idea of "nation."

14. Garlington (1991: 234) understands ἔθνεσιν to include the Jews, but this is unlikely since the term is self-consciously and regularly used to denote the Gentiles over against the Jews (e.g., Rom. 2:14; 3:29; 9:24; 11:13, 25; 15:8–12; Gal. 2:8–9).

Gentiles. The goal of Paul’s preaching was to bring Gentiles to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The gospel that focuses on the Son (vv. 3–4) was designed to bring all nations to the obedience of faith. The precise significance of the genitive πίστewος is disputed. The two most likely options are that it is a subjective genitive or an appositional construction. In the former case, the sense would be the obedience that springs from or flows from faith. In the latter instance the phrase could be translated as “the obedience that is faith.” Of course, Paul may have intended both ideas, and this is the most likely solution (Garlington 1991: 1–2; Garlington 1994: 10–31; Stott 1994: 52). Acceptance of the gospel in faith can be described as an act of obedience.¹⁵ For example, Rom. 10:16 says, “But not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah said, ‘Lord, who has believed our report?’” The parallelism of the two lines reveals that disobedience consists in failure to believe (cf. also 1:8 and 16:19; 11:23 and 11:30–31). It is unlikely, though, that “the obedience of faith” should be confined to a single act of obedience that occurred when the gospel was first believed. Nor should faith and obedience be sundered as if Christians could have the former without the latter. When Paul reflects on his mission in Rom. 15:18, he remarks on the “obedience of the Gentiles” (ὕπακοὴν ἔθνων, *hypakoēn ethnōn*), showing that a changed life occurs for those who embrace the gospel. Paul also argues in Rom. 6 and 8 that the grace that is given in Christ invariably involves a transformation of one’s everyday life (cf. also 12:1–13:14; Nanos 1996: 226). The belief first exercised upon conversion is validated as one continues to believe and obey (11:20–22). Such belief can never be separated from obedience (cf. G. Davies 1990: 27–29; Gundry Volf 1990), and all obedience is rooted in and flows from faith.¹⁶

Inducing Gentiles to submit in faith to Jesus Christ was not the ultimate purpose of the Pauline mission. The undergirding motivation sustaining his ministry is expressed in verse 5. Paul endeavored to bring Gentiles to the obedience of faith “for the sake of his name.” The word ὑπέρ (*hyper*, for the sake of) indicates the reason Paul engages in mission. The “name” (ὄνομα, *onoma*) is clearly a reference to Jesus Christ, as the antecedents in verses 4–5 corroborate. “Name” signifies the character and being of a person. The ultimate reason for a mission to the Gentiles was not the salvation of

15. Garlington’s (1991: 3, 254–55) claim that the phrase is polemical is not convincing (see Nanos 1996: 220). Nor is Jewett’s (1995: 94) assertion that the phrase was coined to emphasize unity between Jews and Gentiles.

16. For the role that works play in justification see Rom. 2. For an in-depth treatment of the phrase “the obedience of faith” in Judaism and Paul see Garlington 1991.

the Gentiles but the proclamation of the name of Jesus Christ.¹⁷ What was fundamental for Paul was the glory and praise of Jesus Christ.¹⁸ This aim was accomplished through the preaching of his gospel to both Jews and Gentiles.

In verse 5 Paul referred to his apostolic commission to the Gentiles in general terms. Now in verses 6–7 he sets forth the place of Roman Christians in this scheme. They are among the Gentiles who have been called by Jesus Christ. The “calling” (κλητοί, *klētoi*, v. 6; κλητοῖς, *klētois*, v. 7) of the Roman believers in verses 6–7 is the same word used to describe Paul’s calling to apostleship in verse 1. Here it denotes the effective call accompanying the preaching of the gospel. Those who are called exercise faith in Christ (see 8:28–30). To say that Roman believers are “beloved by God” and “called to be saints” applies language to the church that was used for Israel as God’s elect people (Dunn 1988a: 19–20; Garlington 1991: 238–42; Byrne 1996: 46).¹⁹ Since Jesus is the true Israel (see below), those who belong to him constitute the people of God. We observe here Paul’s interpretation of the OT, in that the promises focusing on Israel as a nation are now extended to both Jews and Gentiles who believe in Jesus as Messiah.

Since Paul received a call to preach to the Gentiles (v. 5), he included the Roman Christians under his apostolic oversight. This explains why he wrote to them and solicited their support, even though he had not established the churches there. Verse 6 probably indicates that the Roman community was predominantly Gentile, clarifying why Paul felt he had authority over them as the apostle to the Gentiles. In verse 5 Paul spoke of his call to preach the gospel “among all the Gentiles.” Now in verse 6 he says “among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ.” The words ἐν οἷς (*en hois*, among whom) support the idea that the Roman Christians were primarily Gentile (contra Cranfield 1975: 68; Mason 1994: 269) inasmuch as they were “among” the other Gentiles described in verse 5. That the majority of believers in Rome were Gentiles is also supported by 1:13 and by the fact that more pointed exhortations are given to Gentiles in Rom. 11, 14–15 (see “Destination and Purpose” in the introduction).

17. Stott (1994: 53) says rightly: “The highest of missionary motives is neither obedience to the Great Commission (important as that is), nor love for sinners who are alienated and perishing (strong as that incentive is, especially when we contemplate the wrath of God, verse 18), but rather zeal—burning and passionate zeal—for the glory of Jesus Christ.”

18. So also Byrne (1996: 40), though he sees God’s name as the subject here.

19. Jewett (1995: 95–96) is guilty of reading too much into the text when he postulates that the “called of Jesus Christ” refers to Gentile Christians, “called to be saints” to Jewish Christians, and “beloved of God” to both groups.

The Gentile makeup of the Roman church should not be overstated since verse 7 says that Paul writes “to all those in Rome.” This phrase would certainly include Jewish Christians. The words ἐν Ῥώμῃ (*en Rhōmē*, in Rome) are lacking in a few manuscripts, but were likely omitted to make Romans a catholic letter (see “Unity, Text, and Integrity” in the introduction), and thus ἐν Ῥώμῃ is probably original. The omission of the word ἐκκλησία (*ekklēsia*, church) has often been given undue significance. The word ἐκκλησία is lacking in the salutations of Philippians, Colossians, and Ephesians as well, and this can scarcely be ascribed to defects in the churches. In fact, Paul uses the word ἐκκλησία later in Philippians (4:15) in an almost casual way, indicating that failure to mention the term earlier is not significant. G. Klein’s (1991) theory that the term ἐκκλησία is omitted in Romans because the church lacks an apostolic foundation and is thereby not an authentic church in Paul’s eyes is flawed. Rather, the church is praised as having a worldwide impact (Rom. 1:8), and Paul apologizes for writing so boldly, since the Romans were knowledgeable enough to instruct one another (15:14–15). Neither is it persuasive to speculate that the omission of ἐκκλησία is explained by the numerous house churches in which the Romans gathered (Dunn 1988a: 19). The letter to the Galatians is also written to a number of churches, and there Paul simply uses the plural ἐκκλησίων (Gal. 1:2). Presumably he could have done the same in Romans. Finally, disunity of the church does not explain the omission of the term ἐκκλησία (P. Lampe 1991: 229; F. Watson 1986: 104). The Corinthian church, by all appearances, experienced even more serious divisions, yet it is still designated as a “church of God” (1 Cor. 1:2).

The second dominant theme in the salutation relates to the gospel that Paul preached. His apostolic ministry was in service to “the gospel of God” (εὐαγγέλιον θεοῦ, *euangelion theou*, v. 1). In other words, Paul’s mission was to preach the gospel. The addition of the word θεοῦ is significant, and contrary to most commentators, it should be understood both as a genitive of source and as an objective genitive. The gospel Paul preaches is both from God and about him.²⁰ Just as I observed earlier that the ultimate aim of the gospel was to proclaim the name of Christ, so here it should be noted that the gospel is first and last about God, and particularly, as the subsequent verses show, how God has revealed himself in his Son.

20. N. Turner (1963: 210) says rightly, “Often a gen. might equally well be subjective or objective; it is moreover important not to sacrifice fullness of interpretation to an over precise analysis of syntax. There is no reason why a gen. in the author’s mind may not have been both subjective and objective.” Despite this he proceeds to identify (211) the genitive here as a subjective one. For the view that both the objective genitive and genitive of source are intended see Stuhlmacher 1991a: 153. Stuhlmacher (1991a: 156–66) also provides a brief discussion of the traditional antecedents to the term εὐαγγέλιον.

The reference to the gospel in verse 1 leads into a further elaboration of its content in verses 2–4. Paul affirms in verse 2 that the gospel he preaches is a fulfillment (cf. 3:21) of what was promised in the OT Scriptures.²¹ This anticipates Paul's insistence that his gospel establishes and fulfills the law (3:31; 8:4), and this is confirmed in the case of Abraham (Rom. 4). Paul never conceived of his gospel as antithetical to or contradictory of the OT. He understood it to fulfill the OT in a way that surpassed the expectations of both Jews and Gentiles (see esp. Rom. 9–11). Indeed, Paul was thinking in particular of the OT promises of a glorious future for Israel. The verb εὐαγγελίζεῖν (*euangelizein*, to proclaim the good news) is used, particularly in the LXX of Isaiah (Isa. 40:9; 52:7; 60:6; 61:1; cf. Nah. 2:1 LXX) to denote deliverance from Babylon and return from exile. Paul believes that the salvific promises made to Israel in the OT are now being fulfilled in his gospel.

Verses 3–4 introduce the reader to the substance of the gospel that Paul preached. The gospel that is from God and about him is centered on his Son, and this Son fulfills what the Scriptures promised (so C. Anderson 1993: 32). The Son is then described through two participial clauses in verses 3–4 that are usually understood to be a pre-Pauline hymn or creedal formulation.²² The reference to Jesus as the Son recalls Israel's status as God's son (see below). Nonetheless, most scholars see a reference to Jesus' preexistence in the words περὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ (*peri tou huiou autou*, concerning his Son).²³ Dunn's objections to reading preexistence out of this phrase (1988a: 11–12; 1980: 33–35) are not decisive. Jesus is the true Israel, but he is also the preexistent Son whom God sent into the world (Rom. 8:3). In other words, the term "Son" works at more than one level; it designates Jesus as the true Israel *and* as the Son who existed before his incarnation. The placement of the words τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ before the two participles suggests that the one who became the seed of David and was appointed God's Son in power at the resurrection was already the Son before these events (Cranfield 1975: 58; Wilckens 1978: 64–65).²⁴ The one who existed eternally as the Son was appointed the Son of God in power as the Son of David.

21. Διὰ τῶν προφητῶν αὐτοῦ (*dia tōn prophētōn autou*, through his prophets) here should not be limited to only a portion of the OT Scriptures. The intention here is to designate all of the OT as prophetic in nature.

22. So, e.g., Bultmann 1951: 49–50; Barrett 1991: 20; Hahn 1969: 246–51; Linnemann 1971; Wengst 1972: 112–17; Dunn 1973; Stuhlmacher 1967; Jewett 1985: 100–102. For a useful survey see Jewett 1985: 103–13.

23. For example, Hengel 1976: 60; Stuhlmacher 1967: 382–83; Stuhlmacher 1992: 187–88; Wilckens 1978: 56–61; Keck 1989: 449; Fitzmyer 1993c: 233–34.

24. See also under Rom. 8:3 and 9:5 for discussions that relate to the preexistence of the Son.

The new dimension was not his sonship but his heavenly installation as God’s Son by virtue of his Davidic sonship. In other words, the Son reigned with the Father from all eternity, but as a result of his incarnation and atoning work he was appointed to be the Son of God as one who was now both God and man. We do not have the precision here of the later christological formulas in the history of the church, but verses like these were the raw materials from which later Christology was developed.²⁵

Most important, by calling Jesus the Son, Paul now assigns to Jesus the designation for Israel as God’s son (Exod. 4:22–23; Jer. 31:9; Hos. 11:1; Wis. 18:13; Jub. 1.24–25; Ps. Sol. 18.4; T. Moses 10.3; Sib. Or. 3.702). This does not mean that there is no significance in being a member of ethnic Israel (Rom. 9–11). But if Jesus is God’s true Son, then membership in the people of God depends on being rightly related to Jesus. As Paul says elsewhere, he is the singular seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:16), and thus the blessing of Abraham (Gal. 3:14) is available only to those who belong to the Messiah Jesus.

In order to understand what verses 3–4 say about the Son it is helpful to depict their structure (so Moo 1991: 38).

τοῦ γενομένου (<i>tou genomenou</i> , who has come)	τοῦ ὀρισθέντος (<i>tou horisthentos</i> , who was appointed)
ἐκ σπέρματος Δαβίδ (<i>ek spermatos David</i> , from the seed of David)	υἱοῦ θεοῦ ἐν δυνάμει (<i>huiou theou en dynamei</i> , Son of God in power)
κατὰ σάρκα (<i>kata sarka</i> , according to the flesh)	κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης (<i>kata pneuma hagiōsynēs</i> , according to the Spirit of holiness)
	ἐξ ἀναστάσεως νεκρῶν (<i>ex anastaseōs nekrōn</i> , from the resurrection of the dead)

Both lines begin with a participial construction and share a *κατά* phrase in common. The second line is more expansive than the first, adding the words *ἐν δυνάμει* to *υἱοῦ θεοῦ*, *ἁγιωσύνης* to *κατὰ πνεῦμα*, and *ἐξ ἀναστάσεως νεκρῶν* has no parallel in the first column. Most scholars, as we have noted, think that a pre-Pauline hymn or creed is being cited in here. Among the reasons for this are the participial constructions, the parallelism of the two clauses, the

25. Preexistence is also suggested from wisdom Christology, on which Paul drew (cf. Isa. 11:2–3; 1 Enoch 49.1–4), and from other messianic traditions (Mic. 5:2; 1 Enoch 48.3, 6; 62.7).

utilization of hapax legomena (ὀρίζειν, πνεῦμα ἀγιοσύνης), and theological themes that are uncommon in Paul, such as the reference to the Davidic sonship of Jesus (cf., e.g., P. Beasley-Murray 1980: 147–48). Paul may be drawing on pre-Pauline tradition, though Scott (1992: 229–36) and Poythress (1975–76) contend plausibly that the material here comes from Paul himself. In any case, what is decisive for interpreting these verses is the present context and form of the verses (Dunn 1973: 42–43; du Toit 1992: 251). It is speculative to base one's interpretation on alleged Pauline additions to or subtractions from traditional material, for there is insufficient evidence to verify such hypotheses. To interpret the text in light of its existing context is methodologically wiser than appealing to an earlier form of the tradition to which we have no access.²⁶

The bipartite structure of verses 3–4 is evident from the outline of the structure provided above. In verse 3 the focus is on the Davidic origin of the Son, which accords with the Jewish expectation that a ruler would come from David's line (2 Sam. 7:12–16; Isa. 11:1–5, 10; Jer. 23:5–6; 33:14–17; Ezek. 34:23–24; 37:24–25; Ps. Sol. 17.21–18.9; 4QFlor 1.11–13; 4QpGen^a 5.1–7 [on Gen. 49:10]). The NT writings often ascribe Davidic sonship to Jesus (e.g., Matt. 1:1; 20:30–31; 21:9, 15; Luke 1:27, 32, 69; 2:4; 3:23–31; Acts 2:30; 13:22–23, 32–34; 2 Tim. 2:8; Rev. 5:5; 22:16). The connection between Rom. 1:2 and 3 should not be missed here. Jesus as the Son of David fulfilled the promise made in the OT regarding a future ruler from David's line. There is no suggestion here of embarrassment over Jesus' Davidic origin (contra Dunn 1988a: 13; rightly Fitzmyer 1993c: 234; Fee 1994: 480–81). Instead, his Davidic sonship is a necessary qualification for the Messiah. Scholars often remark that Paul downplayed Jesus' Davidic origins, but such a conclusion is overstated. Paul probably emphasized that Jesus was David's Son in his evangelistic preaching in which he attempted to convince hearers that his gospel fulfilled the OT promises. The Lucan account of Paul's preaching confirms this (Acts 13:22–23, 32–34; cf. 2 Tim. 2:8).²⁷ To rehearse this theme again in writing letters to churches he established would be superfluous. Significantly, Paul affirms the Davidic sonship of Jesus in the introduction of the letter to the Romans since Paul had not planted the Roman church. Whatever one thinks of the reliability of Acts, Romans itself testifies that Paul did not brush aside his roots. The Messiah came from the

26. Jewett's (1985: 99; 1995: 97–104) thesis that tradition was employed to pacify both the Jewish and Gentile wings of the church is not demonstrable. Cf. the criticisms of Sampley (1995a: 116–17).

27. For a recent defense of the historical reliability of Acts see Hemer 1989.

Jews (Rom. 9:5), the gospel is for the Jew first (1:16; 2:9–10), the promises made to the Jewish people will be fulfilled (chaps. 9–11), and Gentiles should remember the Jewish root of the olive tree (11:15–18). Most important, 15:12 implies that Jesus was from the line of David. Thus we should reject any notion that Jesus' Davidic sonship was trivial or embarrassing to Paul. By stressing Jesus' Davidic origins Paul shows that his gospel is in continuity with the Palestinian church and reminds Gentiles of their debt to the Jews (cf. 15:27).

What is predicated of the Son in verse 4, despite the endorsement of his Davidic origins, is clearly a step up from what is said in verse 3. The nature of the contrast between verses 3 and 4 is the matter of some debate that I will sketch in briefly. First, some understand the contrast to be between the human and divine natures of Christ.²⁸ Jesus was a Son of David insofar as his human nature was concerned (v. 3), but he is the eternal Son of God with reference to his divine nature (v. 4). In this interpretation *κατὰ σάρκα* refers to the human nature of Jesus Christ, while *κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγίωσύνης* refers to his divine nature. The participle *ὀρισθέντος* in verse 4 is interpreted to mean “declare” or “show” (cf. Luther 1972: 148). The resurrection of Jesus did not “make” him the Son of God; it declared and revealed in a powerful way that he was and had always been God's Son. As a descendant of David Jesus was a human being, but his resurrection from the dead declared to all that he was also the eternal Son of God.

The second interpretation posits that *κατὰ σάρκα* and *κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγίωσύνης* are parallel, and since the former refers to Christ the latter must refer to what is inherent in him (e.g., Sanday and Headlam 1902: 9; Dunn 1973: 49–57). The contrast is between the outward and the inward, the external and the internal. Outwardly Jesus was descended from the seed of David. Of greater significance was his internal life, which was perfected in the spirit (or by the Spirit), fitting him to be the Son of God with power. Du Toit (1992: 253–56) takes a somewhat similar tack and understands “flesh” to refer to Jesus' preresurrection physical “mode of existence” and “spirit” to his postresurrection “mode of existence,” but he qualifies this and maintains that the usage is fundamentally ambiguous so that a reference to both the spirit of Jesus and the Holy Spirit are intended.

A third interpretation is preferable to both of the above. I will attempt to set forth this interpretation by arguing for it over against

28. This interpretation goes at least as far back as Chrysostom *Homilies on Romans* 1 (on Rom. 1:3–4). See also Calvin 1960: 16; Hodge 1972: 18–21; Warfield 1950: 71–90; Mounce 1995: 61.

the previous two interpretations. The first interpretation is almost universally rejected today. The assigning of an improbable meaning to the word ὀρίξειν shows its inadequacy. This word does not mean "to declare" or "to show." In the NT it consistently means "appoint," "determine," or "fix" (Luke 22:22; Acts 2:23; 10:42; 11:29; 17:26, 31; Heb. 4:7).²⁹ L. Allen (1970–71) has demonstrated that the OT background for Christ's appointment is Ps. 2:7, where the Davidic son is "decreed" to be the anointed king (cf. Acts 10:42; 17:31). The idea here, then, is not that Jesus was "declared" or "shown to be" at the resurrection what he was all along, namely, the eternal Son of God. Rather, the point is that Jesus was "appointed" to be God's Son in power at the resurrection of the dead. He was exalted to a level of power and authority that he did not have previously.

This conclusion does not suggest an adoptionistic Christology in verse 4. The appointment of Jesus as the Son of God should not be understood as a reference to his exaltation to deity. It is crucial to recall that the one who is exalted as Son of God in power was already the Son. The appointment of Jesus being described here is his appointment as the messianic king. In order to make this point clear an explanation of the phrase υἱοῦ θεοῦ ἐν δυνάμει is necessary. The title υἱοῦ θεοῦ in verse 3 is a reference not to Jesus' deity but to his messianic kingship as the descendant of David (cf. 2 Sam. 7:14; Ps. 2:7; 1QSa 2.11–12; 4QFlor 1.10–13; Wilckens 1978: 59). In addition, most commentators rightly argue that the words ἐν δυνάμει modify υἱοῦ θεοῦ. The joining of the words ἐν δυνάμει to υἱοῦ θεοῦ signals that Jesus did not become the Son of God or the Messiah at his resurrection. When he lived on earth, he was the Son of God as the seed of David (v. 3). Upon his resurrection, however, he was enthroned as the messianic king.³⁰ The idea that Jesus entered a higher rank of sonship upon his resurrection is also found in Acts. Peter concludes from Jesus' resurrection from the dead that "God has made him both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36). Paul connects the resurrection of Jesus with his installation as God's Son by citing Ps. 2:7 in Acts 13:33: "God has fulfilled the promise to us their children by raising Jesus, as also it is written in the second Psalm, 'You are

29. Evidence for the meaning "declare" is also lacking in the LXX (K. Schmidt, *TDNT* 5:452).

30. There is debate whether the preposition ἐξ in ἐξ ἀναστάσεως νεκρῶν is causal (Morris 1988: 47; Fee 1994: 481) or temporal (Hahn 1969: 250; Barrett 1991: 21; Cranfield 1975: 62; Scott 1992: 240). Those who identify it as temporal are probably correct. Acts 17:31 seems to support this, for the resurrection functions as "proof" (πίστιν, *pistin*) that Jesus has been "appointed" (ὤρῳσεν, *hōrisen*) as judge of all people (cf. Acts 10:40–42). Jesus' appointment as judge is not because of his resurrection. His resurrection functions as evidence that he has been appointed to be the judge.

my son, today I have begotten you.” While Jesus was on this earth, he was the Messiah and the Son of God, but his death and resurrection inaugurated a stage in his messianic existence that was not formerly his. Now he reigns in heaven as Lord and Christ.

Another weakness in the first interpretation is the understanding of πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης. Nowhere does this phrase denote the divine nature of Jesus. It is much more likely that we have a reference here to the Holy Spirit (Byrne 1996: 45). The expression is difficult because it is nowhere else used in the NT to refer to the Holy Spirit. The unusual form is sometimes ascribed to the citation of tradition, and the rendering reflects a literal translation of רִּוּחַ קֹדֶשׁ (*rûah qōdēš*, Spirit of holiness; cf. Ps. 51:13; Isa. 63:10–11; T. Levi 18.11; Wilckens 1978: 57; Moo 1991: 42–43). The difficulty can be overemphasized, however, for the noun ἁγιωσύνης is probably a qualitative genitive, which is not at all unusual in Paul.³¹ The contrast then is not between the two natures of Jesus but between the flesh and the Holy Spirit.

The central weakness of the second interpretation is an inadequate understanding of the contrast between the flesh and the Spirit in this text. The disjunction between the flesh and the Spirit is common in Paul (e.g., Rom. 7:5–6; 8:2–13; Gal. 3:3; 4:29; 5:16–18, 19–24; 6:8; Phil. 3:4). It is probable that the flesh-Spirit antithesis should be interpreted in redemptive historical terms, the former being the product of the old age and the latter a gift of the new age inaugurated by Jesus Christ (Ridderbos 1975: 64–68; Gaffin 1978: 107–11). In most of the texts in which there is a contrast between the flesh and the Spirit the flesh is closely allied with the power of sin. To see Paul as making a similar claim in Rom. 1:3–4 would be to press analogous texts too far. Dunn (1973) argues rightly, however, that even the more neutral uses of the word σάρξ (e.g., Rom. 3:20; 4:1; 9:3, 5; 11:14; 1 Cor. 1:26, 29) always carry a nuance of weakness. The reason for this is that the flesh participates in the old age of sin and death. Thus even Jesus was born “in the likeness of sinful flesh” (ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας, *en homoiōmati sarkos hamartias*, Rom. 8:3; cf. 1 Tim. 3:16). Dunn (1973: 49) correctly detects a note of weakness in that Christ was descended from David, but he wrongly concludes that this is also a pejorative comment (for a criticism of Dunn’s view see du Toit 1992: 252; Fee 1994: 480–81).

31. In Rom. 6:12 we find ἐν τῷ θνητῷ ὑμῶν σώματι, while the same idea is communicated with a qualitative genitive in Rom. 7:24, ἐκ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ θανάτου τοῦτου. So too, τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον and πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης could function as synonyms, with the latter being a qualitative genitive. Schlatter (1995: 9) and Fee (1994: 483–84) understand the phrase to mean that the Spirit supplies or gives holiness, but this overinterprets the phrase.

Instead, Jesus had to take on flesh and enter into the old age in order to inaugurate the new age that is characterized by the Holy Spirit. The contrast between the flesh and the Spirit is quite similar conceptually to Paul's remarks about the humiliation and exaltation of Christ in Phil. 2:6–11. Paul does not disdain the humiliation of Christ. It is a stage that is, however, left behind upon his exaltation. The age dominated by the flesh is one of weakness, while the age of the Spirit is one of power.

Since Paul typically uses the flesh-Spirit contrast to denote a salvation-historical disjunction, it is unwarranted to see a contrast between Jesus' outward qualifications and his inward perfection of spirit. Neither is Dunn (1973: 54) correct in seeing an overlapping of ages in this text in the sense that Jesus' experience with the Spirit on earth becomes the paradigm for believers who have received the firstfruits of the Spirit while living in the old age. Dunn is correct in discerning the overlapping of ages in that the Spirit now inhabits believers. He also rightly apprizes the salvation-historical thrust of the flesh-Spirit antithesis. But it is crucial to discern precisely the relationship of the flesh-Spirit antithesis in Rom. 1:3–4 to the same contrast elsewhere. I would argue that the specific point of contrast is the redemptive-historical disjunction of the old age and the new age. Nothing indicates that Paul speaks of the overlapping of the ages with reference to Jesus' life on earth, as he does when he speaks of the Spirit in the lives of the believers. Substantial evidence exists that he refers to successive stages in the life of Jesus. The appointment of Jesus as Son of God occurred ἐξ ἀναστάσεως νεκρῶν (*ex anastaseōs nekron*, at the resurrection from the dead). The reference to the resurrection demonstrates that Jesus' experience with the Spirit on earth is excluded here. The resurrection of Christ inaugurates the new age. When Jesus lived on earth as the Son of David, he lived his life in the old age of the flesh that was characterized by weakness, sin, and death. At his resurrection, however, Jesus left the old age behind and inaugurated the new age of the Spirit.³² Since the spotlight is on the new age, the phrase ἀναστάσεως νεκρῶν probably indicates that the resurrection of Jesus inaugurates the general resurrection and commences the new era (cf. 1 Cor. 15:20–23). His resurrection signals that the new age has begun.³³ Wright (1992: 320–34) has also convincingly demonstrated that the resurrection of the dead in Judaism was linked with

32. The preposition ἐκ is probably temporal (Fitzmyer 1993c: 236; Byrne 1996: 45).

33. So D. Stanley 1961: 165; Schneider 1967: 365; Bartsch 1967: 330–35; Hooke 1962–63; Wilckens 1978: 65; Käsemann 1980: 12; Dunn 1988a: 15–16; Jewett 1985: 115; Jewett 1995: 99.

the return from exile and the fulfillment of God's covenantal promises (cf. Isa. 26:19; Ezek. 37:1–14). The resurrection of Jesus indicates, therefore, that God has begun to fulfill his promises to Israel. The saving promises made to the nation have become a reality in and through the true Israel, Jesus the Messiah.

Paul's explication of the gospel in verses 3–4 concludes with the words Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν (*Iēsou Christou tou kyriou hēmōn*, Jesus Christ our Lord). The lordship of Jesus as Messiah flows naturally from what Paul has just written. He who was born as the seed of David has been exalted by God to reign over all. He is the Lord of all nations, and in his name Paul endeavored to fulfill his missionary call to bring about the obedience of faith among the Gentiles.

At the conclusion of this section it is appropriate to summarize the theological implications of the opening.³⁴ Paul implicitly redraws the lines of what constitutes the true people of God. Israel as Yahweh's elect was God's son through whom he had promised to bless the world. The Qumran community thought that the rest of Israel had forfeited God's favor by disobedience, and they perceived themselves as the genuine people of God, identifying themselves as God's "sons of truth" (1QM 17.8; 1QH 15[7].29–30; 17[9].35; 18[10].27; 19[11].11). Paul contends that Jesus is the true Son of God. He is the true Israel. The OT promises regarding the vindication of Israel have been fulfilled through him. The promise of a Davidic king and a Messiah also apply to Jesus. Thus the expectation that God would vindicate his people through a Davidic ruler has also become a reality (Ps. 2:7–12; 89; Isa. 11; Jer. 23:5–6; 33:14–18; Ezek. 34:23–31; 37:24–28; Ps. Sol. 17.21–46). Jesus reigns from heaven as the messianic king. God's promise to bring in a new world order through the resurrection of Israel has dawned as well (Ezek. 37). Jesus as the Son of God is the true Israel who has been resurrected from the dead.³⁵ God has fulfilled his promises made to Israel through and in the Messiah Jesus. One becomes a recipient of the blessings of Israel, therefore, by incorporation into the Messiah (cf. Gal. 3:16). Since the Messiah and true Israel (i.e., the Son of God) has come, the OT promises that speak of blessing the whole world through Abraham (e.g., Gen. 12:3) are now being fulfilled (cf. C. Anderson 1993: 37–38). Paul as an apostle of the Messiah has received a commission to bring the good news of the fulfillment of

34. My comments here depend on the view of Judaism that Wright (1992: 147–338) summarizes in his brilliant and largely convincing work.

35. In 1 Cor. 15:20–28 Paul makes plain that those who belong to Jesus the Messiah will participate in the resurrection because of his resurrection, but their resurrection will occur in the future.

God's saving promises to the whole world, in order to bring about the obedience of faith among all nations. The fulfillment of this mission is for the sake of the name of Jesus Christ. It brings honor and glory to him.

Additional Notes

1:1. There is significant textual evidence (Ɑ²⁶, Ɱ, A, etc.) for the reading Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. But solid evidence also exists for the reading as it appears in the text (Ɑ¹⁰, B, etc.). Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ is probably original. A scribe could have easily reversed the order here since Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ occurs in Rom. 1:4, 7, 8. In addition, in his introductions (Moo 1991: 47) Paul typically uses the phrase Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ to modify ἀπόστολος (1 Cor. 1:1; 2 Cor. 1:1; Eph. 1:1; Col. 1:1; 1 Tim. 1:1; but see Titus 1:1).

1:4. The variant προορισθέντος (latt, I^{lat vid}) is secondary since the manuscript support in favor of the variant is negligible (cf. Cranfield 1979: 61).

1:7. A few manuscripts omit ἐν Ῥώμῃ in 1:7 (G, pc, Or, 1739^{mg}). This omission and the similar omission in 1:15 (see the additional notes under 1:8–15) play a role in whether a copy of Romans was originally sent to Ephesus or whether some early “catholic” versions of the letter were circulated (see “Unity, Text, and Integrity” in the introduction). The meager textual evidence for the omission demonstrates that the address to Rome was certainly part of the original text.

1:7. Some scribes substituted ἐν ἀγάπῃ θεοῦ (G, it, vg^{mss}, Ambst). This reading is likely linked with the omission of ἐν Ῥώμῃ in the verse and represents an attempt to generalize the address. The textual support for the variant is Western, and it is clearly not original.