No More Walls!

The Creation of One New Man In Christ Ephesians 2:11-22

Academic Edition



Dr. James B. Joseph
"Brother James"

No More Walls! **provides an in-depth exegesis of Eph 2:11-22 shedding new light on God's desired unity among all who commit to following Jesus Christ. The research laid out in this book will bring *new* understanding to the meaning of two enigmatic aorist participial clauses contained within Eph 2:14–15.**

The difficult grammatical structure of both clauses will be discussed within the historical-cultural context of the first-century Greco-Roman world shedding more accurate light on their intended meaning within the larger literary context of the passage. When Paul said that Christ had made the cultural and purity ordinances of the Mosaic Law optional as part of His redeeming work on a cross helping to reconcile man to one another and to God, he used a well known architectural metaphorical image of his day depicting Christ as a master builder who had destroyed the *mesotoichon*, "dividing party-wall," between their contiguous residences placing Jewish and Gentile Believers into the single family of God.



Dr. Joseph, a retired seminary professor, minister for over 40 years, and writer for over 30 has earned graduate degrees from Wake Forest University, Hood Theological Seminary, and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

His earlier books are: *Victory in Jesus: Being a Child of God; Experiencing Jesus' Joy; Experiencing Jesus' Joy through Obedient Discipleship; Unity and Obedient Discipleship in The Gospel of John.;* and *The Ultimate Victory: Becoming a Follower of Jesus.*

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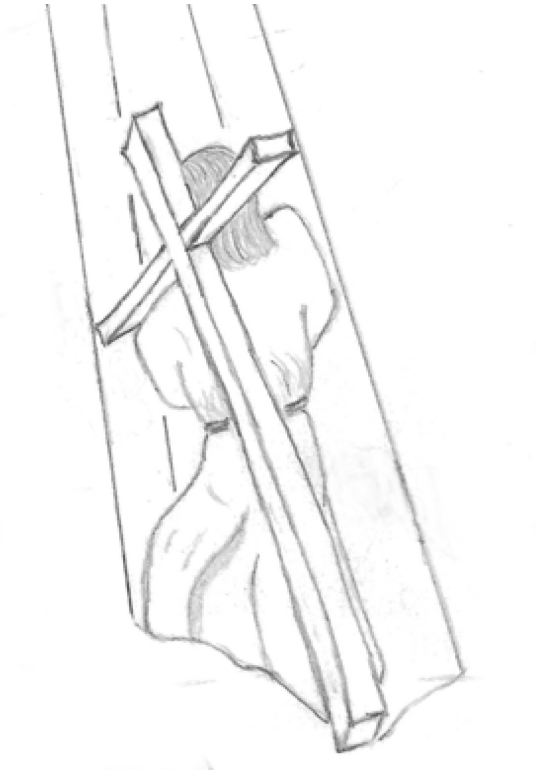

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Original Title (2004, Reprint 2015): ***No More Walls! The Nonobligatory Ordinances Contained in the Law and the Creation of One New Man in Christ: Ephesians 2:11-22*****.**

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Hardcover ISBN: 978-1-971496-13-9
Library of Congress Control Number: 2026911264

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Foreword

No More Walls! provides an in-depth exegesis of Eph 2:11-22 shedding new light on God's desired unity among all who commit to following Jesus Christ. The research laid out in this book will bring *new* understanding to the meaning of two enigmatic aorist participial clauses contained within Eph 2:14–15. In the last twenty years since my doctoral research on this subject was completed, there have been some sound advances with more scholars correctly placing τὴν ἔχθραν in apposition with τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ and dropping the dividing wall between Jew and Gentile at the Temple as the subject of this metaphor. Yet, there is still too much confusion regarding the actual meaning of τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ. This present work, which is based primarily on my earlier research, is being published in order to help bring more clarity to Paul's use of this metaphorical image and to add detail to Paul's proclamation that the cultural and purity ordinances contained with the Mosaic Law had become optional, which helped to bring about godly unity between Gentile and Jewish Believers.

The difficult grammatical structure of both clauses will be discussed within the historical-cultural context of the first-century Greco-Roman world shedding more accurate light on their intended meaning within the larger literary context of the passage. When Paul said that Christ had made the cultural and purity ordinances of the Mosaic Law optional as part of His redeeming work on a cross helping to reconcile man to one another and to God, he used a well known architectural metaphorical image of his day depicting Christ, who had made Jewish and Gentile Believer one "new man" destroying their mutual hostility, as a master builder of his day having destroyed a *mesotoichon*, "dividing middle-wall," between two contiguous residences within an apartment building making an enlarged space for a newly combined family, which in this case was the united family of God.

The second clause helps Paul's addressees realize that part of the process in Jesus' removal of generational mutual hostility for His followers included making the ordinances contained within the Mosaic Law optional. This helped them realize that through Jesus' atoning death the purity and cultural ordinances of the Mosaic Law no longer had to be observed in order to be part of God's eternal holy family. Without having tight constraints on acceptable cultural behavior within the family of God, it was easier for Jewish and Gentile Believers to be reconciled

together as equal members of God's close-knit family with all having direct access to speak to the Creator of everything. These truths helped the world understand that God truly loved all people equally.

The idea that God loved all people equally whether Jew or Gentile was new to some who thought that God favored the Jews. This misunderstanding was still propagated by some as late as the fourth century including their Emperor, Julian (Flavius Claudius Julianus). In his work, *Against the Galileans*, Julius, who had grown up in a Christian household wrote that the god of Judaism favored the Jews, and therefore, the Greeks should still follow their ancestral gods.

Paul's message of unity within the opening portion of Ephesians declaring world-wide reconciliation with God paralleled well with the Apostle John's Gospel message that proclaimed God's love for all people (the world) was so great that He sent Jesus into the world to teach truth (John 18:37) and to die an atoning death on a wooden cross for all (John 3:14-17, 36). Jesus' atoning death on a cross provided the entire world (Jew and Gentile) potential purification and an eternal life of joy and peace with God and one another in the upcoming New Heavens and New Earth (1 Peter 2:24; 2 Peter 3:10-13; cf. Rev. 21:1-7). This fantastic finalization of God's creation would be realized by all who learned to receive God into their lives through returned love and corresponding trust and obedience (John 1:11-13, 3:15-16, 36; Rom 8:28-30; James 1:12; 2:5; Rev 21:7-8); et al.).

In his "Good News" proclamation, John also gave the world an account of Jesus' prayer the night before He was beaten and crucified, which helps everyone of all time understand that God's creation would culminate in bringing all who learned to love, trust, and obey Him into a relationship with Himself and one another that would be as close as Jesus' relationship with Him. All of God's children would be perfected εἰς ἕν, "into one" in the same way that Jesus was and is ἕν, "one" with His Heavenly Father (John 17:20-23). This close family unity places God's created loving obedient children closer to Him than the angels (Heb 1:1-14); they have same close godly unity with the Father as Jesus.

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To God be the glory!

All translations within this work have been made by the author, Rev. Dr. James B. Joseph.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

General Overview

This work provides an in-depth exegesis of Eph 2:11–22 providing a new and clearer understanding of the meaning of two aorist participial clauses within this passage. In this passage of Scripture, Paul stressed the fact that Christ's followers needed to understand more fully God's desired unity for His children who together comprise *one* family, His eternal holy family. God's children must resist living their lives based on their learned cultural norms and live according to His Word.

In this passage, Paul used three metaphorical images to teach his predominately Gentile addressees how close-knit God wants their unity to be with Him and one another, which included dropping their culturally learned hostility against their newly acquired Jewish brothers and sisters in Christ. Paul started this section of his letter by using metaphorical imagery depicting Christ as having done away with the Jewish and Gentiles Believers' mutual hostility the same as if He had been a master builder physically removing a solid "middle-wall" that had existed between Gentiles and Jews for generations. And at the same time, Paul declared that Jewish cultural laws had become optional for Jesus' followers allowing them to keep their basic cultural traditions as long as they followed God's moral laws.

Paul then proceeded with additional metaphorical imagery teaching the importance of *all* Believers existing together as part of the same body, in which every part was important for the health of the whole. He concluded this section by adding a third metaphorical image showing that Christ's followers collectively make up the very building that God lives in with Jesus Christ being the cornerstone of its foundation. In Ephesians, Paul shared crucial truths with this predominately Gentile audience giving them in-depth reasoning to strive for unity with their Jewish brothers and sisters in Christ, who had been the first called in the Messianic Age (1:3-12).

In addition to teaching on unity, morality, and spiritual warfare, Paul pointed to his own suffering as an indicator of how important it was to know the truth of the Gospel, which had been hid from previous generations but now had been revealed showing how God made the believing Gentiles co-citizens and co-heirs with believing Jews (2:14-19; 3:1-9). Paul was a suffering servant on their behalf (3:1-13). Knowing the truth of the Gospel with its good news regarding the Messiah's death on everyone's behalf and how much Paul was willing to suffer for them should motivate them to examine their present behavior and make any necessary adjustments in order to realize the unity that God desired.

Through Christ, they were now united in one Body; they had been created into "one new man," and were therefore living in close association with the Messiah who was presently guiding the Church during this portion of His messianic reign (4:1-6; 2:13-18). In this letter– above all else – Paul taught this predominately Gentile group of Believers the reality of God's desired unity for *both* Jew and Gentile, who were all part of the *same* family through Jesus and therefore should learn to live accordingly.

The Logical Structure of This Exegetical Work

In order to study Eph 2:11–22 without breaking up Paul's flow of thought, it seems appropriate to evaluate the meaning of its two most controversial participial clauses, τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ λύσας, τὴν ἔχθραν and τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν καταργήσας, prior to looking at this passage as a whole. These aorist participial clauses will be evaluated in depth within chapters 2 and 3 respectively thus allowing one to consider in depth the actual meaning of both prior to evaluating the passage as a whole. The main points from chapters 2 and 3 will be added into the overall exegetical discussion of Eph 2:11–22 within chapter 4.

When one examines the various ways that biblical translation teams have translated these clauses and the various writings on this section of scripture, one sees that there is a need for further clarification. After developing a more comprehensive understanding of these participial clauses, the exegesis of Eph 2:11–22 within chapter 4 will

show clearly Paul's intended meaning of this part of his illuminating theological introduction, which was penned to help his predominately Gentile believing addressees overcome their present hostility toward Jewish Believers and thereby live out their lives in a holy fashion before God. As Christ's followers, they were to live out God's desired unity for them within His holy family. Paul's writing sent a clear message letting all Believers know that there should not be any divisional walls within family of God.

Today, many have come to realize that Eph 2:11-22 is the heart of Paul's illuminating theological introduction for this letter, which he penned in order to help them change their traditional Greco-Roman world-view to God's world-view and change their life style accordingly. This section coupled with 2:1-10 challenged the Gentile Believers as a distinct group of people: (1) to consider the reality of the quality of their life before and after becoming followers of Christ, (2) to consider the price that God had paid to make possible a true reconciliation of Jew and Gentile reconciling them together to Himself, and (3) finally to live out their lives according to God's desired unity and morality in practical ways. Paul was asking his addressees to adjust their thinking and lifestyle to match what God had made possible through Jesus' atoning death for all and thereby live out their physical lives accordingly.

Knowing what God had done for them intellectually should motivate this predominately Gentile audience emotionally to follow Paul's exhortation to be united with Jewish Believers and live out their lives following God's holy ways. Paul laid out a little of what that would look like in the second half of his letter (4:1-6:20). Godly living included both a *realized* unity and a godly moral life style.

God's desired unity for those who are following Christ is just as important today as it was in the Early Church. Jesus made it clear in His recorded prayer in John 17 that His followers should live out their daily lives in godly unity, which helps the world *see* God's love in action for all humanity and *know* that God sent His Son to be its savior.[1]

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[1] For illumination regarding Jesus' prayer for godly unity within God's holy family, see James B. Joseph, *Unity and Obedient Discipleship in the Gospel of John,* 2d ed. (Pfafftown, NC: IJSP, 2025), 27-56.

The converse of what Jesus' prayed for regarding realized unity among His followers is that if Christ's followers do not strive for God's desired unity, Satan will continually encourage disunity and the world will have a much harder time understanding the depth of God's love for them and knowing that He truly sent His Son to be its savior. Today, many of Christ's followers are *not* striving to follow God's desired unity for the Body of Christ, and the world suffers accordingly because of a weakened proclamation of the Gospel. Proper proclamation of the Gospel requires appropriate action as well as words.

The Historical Setting of Ephesians

In the opening lines of Ephesians, the author declared that he was Παῦλος, ἀπόστολος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ, "Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus."[2] In his article, "The Letter to the Ephesians," Clinton Arnold noted that there had been three basic arguments used against Pauline authorship: (1) the language contains many words used by the apostolic fathers giving the letter a post-apostolic atmosphere and the style of the letter is elevated above Paul's normal straightforward prose with long sentences consisting of repeated prepositional phrases, abundant participles, numerous relative clauses, and genitive upon genitive, (2) the attention to cosmic-christology, realized eschatology, and advanced ecclesiology appear to be significant theological divergences from Paul's eight recognized letters, and (3) the description of the apostles and prophets as "holy" seems to indicate a later time when the apostles and prophets were receiving increasing veneration.[3]

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[2] Ernest Best, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Ephesians*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1998), 14, noted that the earliest known external attributions of Pauline authorship for Ephesians comes from Irenaeus (*Haer.*1.8.5; 5.2.3; 5.8.1; 5.14.3; 5.24.4), Marcion, and Tertullian (*Adv. Marcion* 5.17); cf. Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 4, who cited another place where Tertullian stated that Paul was the author of the letters that went to Corinth, Philippi, Thessalonica, Rome, and Ephesus (*de Praescriptionibus*, 36).

[3] Clinton E. Arnold, "Letter to the Ephesians," in *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, ed. Gerald F. Hawthorne, Ralph P. Martin, and Daniel G. Reid (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1993), 240-41.

Arnold wrote that these arguments against Pauline authorship can be answered by noting that: (1) the apostolic fathers knew and quoted Ephesians, and therefore, their vocabulary could easily have been influenced by Paul and not the other way around. Regarding style, the introductory portion of Ephesians benefitted from the author's use of an elevated style of prose versus a straightforward style. The second half of Ephesians compares favorably to the way Paul normally wrote when giving exhortation, and when one considers that Paul used an elevated style of writing in some of his other letters such as Romans (8:38-39; 11:33-36), it makes sense that he would use an elevated style when writing the introductory material in Ephesians because he was writing on such a lofty idea; he was writing regarding the interrelationship between God, Christ, and the Church, (2) Paul's theological statements would normally vary in scope depending on the circumstances that he was addressing, and (3) Paul typically denoted Believers as ἅγιοι, "saints," and therefore, his description of the apostles and prophets as ἅγιος, "holy," was perfectly natural.[4]

Donald Guthrie wrote that Ephesians, which was considered to be one of Paul's letters from the earliest known sources, appears to have been in wide circulation by mid-second century among both orthodox Christians and heretics such as Marcion; it was not until nineteenth-century criticism that Pauline authorship came under attack.[5] In his work, *The Authenticity of Ephesians*, A. van Roon aptly demonstrated that there was nothing that had been written in this letter theologically, historically, nor stylistically that would lead one to consider this letter as pseudonymous.[6] Peter O'Brien concurred with much of Roon's

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[4] Ibid.

[5] Donald Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, 4th rev. ed. (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1990), 497.

[6] A. van Roon, *The Authenticity of Ephesians*, ed. W. C. van Unnik et al., Supplements to Novum Testamentum, no. 39 (Leiden: Brill, 1974), 100, noted that it would not be reasonable to expect the style, grammar, and vocabulary of Paul's letters to be the same when one takes into account the fact that Paul's letters were written at different times addressing diverse concrete historical circumstances under the influence of various coauthors and amanuenses. Yet, Roon's research led him to

conclusions, and when comparing Paul's apparent high Christology in Ephesians to his earlier work, he stated that those who argue for a high Christological framework are simply incorrect.[7]

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conclude that although one should not expect perfect similarity, there are various components of style in Ephesians that are common with Paul's other letters (p. 439). Ephesians has identical style with 1 Cor 1:1-9 and Rom 1:1-10, close affinity with many passages in Romans, and similar likenesses in a number of passages in 2 Corinthians and Philippians (p. 439). Earlier, Roon had stated that Ephesians followed an epistolary tradition consisting of a *praescript* followed by an eucharistic formulation succeeded by a section containing the sender's request and/or instructions, which was all concluded with a greeting. This form matches closely Colossians, Romans, and Philemon and a to a lesser degree the forms of Galatians, 1 & 2 Corinthians, and Philippians (p. 70). Roon stated that when one compared the structure and elements of Ephesians against the other Pauline epistles, these characteristics point in favor or Pauline authenticity (p. 70). In his conclusion, Roon stated that the structure of Ephesians is so typically Pauline and so close to Romans that one has no alternative but to assume that the author of Ephesians was closely involved in the creation of the other Pauline epistles (p. 438). Regarding theology, Roon concluded that the *paraenesis* of Ephesians bears a distinct resemblance to the equivalent sections in other Pauline letters. He went on to say that like the other letters, his *paraenesis* displayed Jewish, Greek, and Hellenistic aspects using a complex of traditions that were peculiar to late Judaism (p. 440). In addition, there were a fair number of some of Paul's idiosyncratic expressions giving additional weight to a probable Pauline authorship (p. 440).

[7] Peter T. O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, Pillar New Testament Commentary, no. 10 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 21-22, stated that those who argue that Ephesians is written in a high Christological framework versus Paul's earlier work are incorrect. O'Brien made two points regarding this issue: (1) Ephesians is not alone in placing emphasis on Christ's resurrection, exaltation, and enthronement when considering the New Testament as a whole or even when looking at Paul's works in particular such as Rom 8:34, 1 Cor 15:3-28, and Phil 2:9-11, and (2) the death of Christ is not neglected as Paul used terminology for Christ's death such as "His blood" (1:7; 2:13), "the cross" (2:16), "flesh=death" (2:15), "sacrifice" (5:2), and "gave Himself up" (5:25). For those who see a lack of teaching on justification in Ephesians, O'Brien noted that because of Paul's emphasis in this letter on Christ's destiny becoming the believers' destiny, he used the concept of salvation, which in reality is referring to the same thing. Regarding the Law, O'Brien did not see Paul's teaching in Ephesians as something at

Harold Hoehner reminded his readers that Paul's letters should not look identical because he was writing to various addressees addressing distinct problems at various times.[8] Having studied the practice of writing pseudonymously during Paul's era, Terry Wilder stated that although it was a Greco-Roman practice for students to write at that time under the name of their deceased teachers, it was not a Jewish practice. For Jews, the only form of pseudonymous writing came in the form of Jewish apocalyptic writings where some of the authors

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odds with his teachings in Romans and Galatians (pp. 23-24). Regarding the ecclesiology of Ephesians, O'Brien stated that although there is a concentration on the universal church both in heaven and on earth, a high ecclesiology, there is no discontinuity in thought from Paul's earlier works where local congregations were visible expressions of that new relationship that believers have with the Lord Jesus (pp. 25-26), which includes such metaphorical developments as Christ being the head of the Body (p. 27). The fourth major argument against Pauline authorship by some is that Ephesians displayed a greater realized eschatology than Paul's other letters. O'Brien acknowledged this and stated that Paul is doing this in order to strengthen the Christians' walk in the here-and-now (pp. 30-31). He continued by saying that this present salvation has not swallowed up the future expectations of Christ's return when all things will be "summed up" (pp. 31-33).

[8] Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 60-61, stated that variations in the letters can be accounted for due to differences in content, which is written to meet the character and needs of the various recipients. Furthermore, one should not expect a genius such as Paul to express himself exactly the same every time that he wrote. Hoehner went on to say that Ephesians, as well as Paul's other letters, followed the normal pattern of Hellenistic letters with their three main sections: opening, body, and closing (pp. 70-72). Regarding Paul's theology, Hoehner saw Ephesians as a letter in which many of Paul's theological thoughts were refined and developed to new heights, the quintessence of his thinking (p. 106); cf. Markus Barth, *Ephesians: Introduction, Translation, and Commentary on Chapters 1-3*, Anchor Bible, no. 34 (Garden City: Doubleday, 1974), 31, who stated that it is not difficult to discover that the same message and exhortations in the body of Ephesians can be found in Paul's other letters.

wrote under the name of former prophets.[9] Wilder went on to say that although there were some pseudonymous letters written during the first few centuries of the Church such as *Letters of Christ and Abgarus, Letter of Lentulus, Correspondence of Paul and Seneca,* and *Epistle of Titus,* the Church did not receive these letters into its authoritative canon as it did those that were actually written by the apostles or someone directly under their supervision.[10]

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[9] Terry L. Wilder, "Pseudonymity and the New Testament," in *Interpreting The New Testament: Essays on Methods and Issues* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2001), 298-300; and cf. Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 60, who stated that the early attestations of Pauline authorship is highly significant, because not only was the Early Church closer to the situation, they were very astute in their judgment of genuine and fraudulent compositions; cf. O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, 15, who posed the question of whether or not someone writing pseudonymously would follow a letter like Colossians so closely and then take the risk of rejection by departing from its structure so radically at times. As he considered parts of the two letters such as the vice list of Col 3:5 and Eph 5:3, 5, O'Brien noted that there are enough differences between them that it did not seem that parts of one were copied from the other; it seems more probable that both authors depended on earlier Pauline material or that Paul actually wrote both (pp. 16-17).

[10] Wilder, "Pseudonymity and the New Testament," 301, stated that Christians were widely committed to truth as a moral ideal, and, therefore, it follows that pseudonymous letters purporting to be works of the apostles were not well received (p. 301). He stated that within the New Testament itself, there are warnings about accepting false teachings which applies to pseudonymous letters (2 Thess 2:2; Rev 22:18-19; p. 302). The idea of the Holy Spirit being the Spirit of Truth (John 14:17; 16:3) presents the idea that being truthful and above board were important to the early Church in all matters (p. 303). Wilder concluded by giving several reasons why one should not expect any of the New Testament writings to be pseudonymous: (1) the internal evidence of the writings themselves, (2) the external evidence showing that the early Church did not look at pseudonymous writings with the same authority as the New Testament writings, (3) the ethical dilemma of writing pseudonymically in a Church committed to truth, and (4) the Church's requirement that all New Testament Scripture had to be written by an apostle or under the close supervision of an apostles (p. 323). Wilder had noted that even though Hebrews was anonymous, most of the Early Church considered it to be written by one of the apostles (p. 324); and *contra*, Best, *Ephesians*, 10-13, 260, argued that it would have been

Regarding the addressees, this letter has some ambiguity. The oldest texts that are currently available do not contain the words ἐν Ἐφεσῳ leaving the original addressees as somewhat of a mystery.[11] There is substantial evidence that the original addressees were not the Saints who were living in Ephesus. Early in the letter, Paul indicated that he had never met the addressees when he said that after ἀκούσας τὴν καθ' ὑμᾶς πίστιν ἐν τῷ κυρίῳ Ἰησοῦ καὶ τὴν ἀγάπην τὴς εἰς πάντας τοὺς ἁγίους, "having heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all Saints," and that he had not stopped praying for them during his prayers, praying that they may know God more fully.[12]

Later in this letter, Paul stressed his calling to bring Gentiles into God's kingdom through Christ in a way somewhat similar to the way that he addressed the Saints living in Rome, whom he had also not seen nor taught at the time of writing to them.[13] In addition, he wanted this group

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acceptable for someone to write for the Church under someone else's name. He does not think that pseudonymity was considered dishonest during this era, and therefore, Best stated that it would have received by the Early Church. Best made no definitive decision on the authorship of Ephesians other than that the author was probably a Jewish male who was not Paul. In his book, Best designated the author of Ephesians simple as "AE."

[11] Some of the oldest sources that we currently posses, P^{46}, **א**, and B, do not show an addressee.

[12] Eph 1:15-16.

[13] Cf. Rom 1:1-11 to Eph 1:15-17; 3:1-7. One of the few significant difference in the two letters is that Paul was not planning on visiting those in Asia in the near future compared to his plans to visit the Saints in Rome; Colossians is another city that Paul has not personally visited (Col 2:1), but he probably wrote to them on behalf of himself and Timothy knowing that he had sent Timothy to minster to this group while he was teaching and preaching in Ephesus. Luke informed us that Timothy was in Ephesus with Paul (Acts 19:22). A second dissimilarity between Ephesians and Colossians is that Paul also mentioned sending Onesimus, who was from Colossae (4:9), back with Tychicus to Colossae, but not to the addressees of the letter called "Ephesians" showing a different group of Gentiles other than those living in the region

of Gentile Believers to know something of the depth of what God did in bringing Jew and Gentile into a *joint*-participation in Christ. This is something that he would have probably covered thoroughly while living with them, if he had already personally lived with them several years as he had done with those living in Ephesus.[14]

After surveying Ephesians, it appears that although Paul had not taught the addressees in person, he had expected them to have already heard and accepted the Gospel message and to be aware of his special ministry to the Gentiles. This indicates Paul's awareness of known missionaries having been sent out from Ephesus to his addressees. This thought will be developed further below under the section setting the

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consisting of Colossae, Laodicea, and Hierapolis. It appears from Paul's letter to the Colossians that if a person lived in one of these cities as Epaphras did, he was probably known in all three (Col 4:12-13); cf. Roon, *The Authentcity of Ephesians*, 86, who while researching the authenticity of Ephesians said that Paul only used his own name by itself in the salutation of Ephesians and Romans, both of which he had never personally ministered to. In his conclusion, Roon reiterated that the reason that only Paul's name was given as the sender is similar to Romans: the apostle is most likely making his first direct contact with this particular group of addressees (p. 438); cf. Barth, *Ephesians*, vol. 1, 10-11, who pointed to Eph 1:15, 3:2-3, and 4:20-21 as texts that indicate that Paul did not know the addressees. In addition, he noted further indicators within the overall text such as: (1) there are no references to specific conditions or events regarding the city or church of Ephesus, (2) only Gentile Christians were addressed [Ephesus has a synagogue and should have Jewish believers], (3) there were no personal greeting from Paul or one of his associates, and (4) according to a few early important manuscripts, the words "in Ephesus" did not belong.

[14] Eph 3:1-7; Acts 19:1-20:1; and cf. O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, 5, who noted that Paul appeared to have only a general knowledge of his readers (1:13, 15, 16) and questioned whether they had heard of his administration of God's grace in ministering to Gentiles (3:2). O'Brien went on to state that Paul questioned their reception of the instruction they had received (4:21), and then he asked why would Paul, who first arrived in Ephesus at the end of his second missionary trip in the autumn of A.D. 52, had ministered to them for two and one-half years on his third missionary journey leaving them in the spring of A.D. 56, and then visiting the elders for a short time on his return to Jerusalem, knew so little about his addressees and treated them so impersonally, if he had spent so much time with them.

date of Ephesians. There is a high probability that the addressees of this letter were located east of Ephesus somewhere in close proximity to or within the Meander River Valley.

Considering the approximate time that Paul wrote this letter and additional information regarding the identity of his original addressees, it is helpful to consider the chronology of Paul's travels as depicted by Luke in Acts in relationship with Paul's other letters to approximate the time of writing and more fully identify the original addressees. On the return trip of his second missionary trip from Antioch, Paul stopped in Ephesus briefly and taught in the Jewish synagogue located there (Acts 18:18-22). Prior to coming to Ephesus on his way home to Antioch, Paul had left Corinth during the time that Gallio was proconsul of Achaia (Acts 18:12), which was from A.D. 51-52. On Paul's third missionary trip, Paul visited Ephesus early in the trip and spent at least two and one-half years proclaiming the Gospel there. Historically, it is known that Paul was held in prison in Caesarea from approximately A.D. 58-60 and then in Rome from approximately A.D. 60-62 placing his time in Ephesus on his third missionary trip from approximately A.D. 53 to 56.[15]

During this time, while teaching first out of the synagogue and later out of the school of Tyrannus, it would seem likely that Paul would have sent out missionaries to the surrounding areas, which would have included cities such as Colossae, Laodicea, and Hierapolis. Geographically, Ephesus, Laodicea, Colossae, and Hierapolis were tied together by a main Roman road that paralleled the general path of the Meander River.

It is easy to envision Paul having sent out individuals such as Tychicus, who were originally from this area, on missionary trips along the Meander River while he remained teaching in Ephesus. It is also known that individuals from this area such as Philemon came to Ephesus to hear Paul preach and teach and became followers of Christ through his

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[15] Felix's imprisonment was followed by a brief imprisonment under the new procurator, Porcius Festus around A.D. 59-60 (Acts 24:27), and then Paul was sent to Rome under Roman guard and subsequent house arrest that lasted for at least two additional years (Acts 28:30).

teaching (Phlm 19).[16] It is also likely that Paul stayed in contact with those living in this area through missionaries such as Tychicus who continually ministered with him and were already known and trusted by its citizens.

Therefore knowing that the carrier of this letter was Tychicus (Eph 6:21), that it was written at approximately the same time of Colossians, that the addressees of Ephesians were a group of Christians that Paul had never met, and that eventually it ended up with the name Ephesians, it is a reasonable conclusion to consider that Tychicus had been sent to a specific group of addressees who lived in a reasonable traveling distance from Ephesus.

It appears that the letters, Ephesians and Colossians, were sent out during the same time period. The saints living in this general area would definitely fit the profile of the addressees of Ephesians. In addition to being delivered by the same messenger, there is a similarity of structure and phraseology especially in their openings and closings.[17]

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[16] Luke told his readers that during this time in Paul's ministry, all of the Jews and Gentiles living in Asia heard the word of the Lord (Acts 19:10). When Paul left Ephesus, one of his new students from this area, Tychicus, joined him and his group of co-ministers as they headed for Macedonia and later to Achaia (Acts 20:4). While Luke along with others stayed with Paul during a portion of his imprisonment in Rome, Paul sent Tychicus and Onesimus to Colossae and the surrounding area including Laodicea (Col 4:7-14). This fact coupled with the fact that neither Timothy nor Onesimus were mentioned in Ephesians leads one to think that the original addressees of this letter did not live in the close-knit area east of Ephesus consisting of Colossae, Laodicea, and Hierapolis—otherwise Paul would have mentioned Timothy and Onesimus, who was one of their own (Col 4:9), to them.

[17] Cf. Roon, *The Authenticity of Ephesians*, 192, who stated that the style of Colossians corresponds closely to Ephesians. He went on to say that there is very little to differentiate between the grammatical detail and vocabulary of these epistles and the slight differences in style (p. 194); and cf. Lincoln, *Ephesians*, xlviii, who stated that out of the 2,411 words used in the composition of Ephesians, 26.5% of them are used in Colossians. Lincoln went on to say that such statistics do not in and of themselves reveal the great extent of the similarity between the two letters. Colossians comes the closest of all of Paul's letters to the distinctive style of Ephesians including its long sentences, frequent

And in both Eph 1:16-17 and Col 1:9, Paul said that he was not ceasing to pray for them in order that they may have additional spiritual wisdom and revelation.

Out of all of Paul's letters, it was only in Ephesians and Colossians that Paul used the metaphor of Jesus being the Head of the Body to show Jesus' headship of the Church.[18] In both Ephesians and Colossians, Paul used the same wording, τὴν οἰκονομίαν (τῆς χάριτος) τοῦ θεοῦ τῆς δοθείσης μοι, "the household plan of God, which was given to me," to describe God's plan of salvation.[19] In the closing of both letters, it is Tychicus whom Paul sent Ἵνα δὲ εἰδῆτε καὶ ὑμεῖς τὰ κατ' ἐμέ, τί πράσσω, πάντα γνωρίσει ὑμῖν Τυχικὸς ὁ ἀγαπητὸς ἀδελφὸς καὶ πιστὸς διάκονος ἐν κυρίῳ, "in order that you (pl.) may know how things are going for me, what I am doing, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful servant in the Lord shall make all things known to you."[20] Because the messenger was the same, and the time of writing, style, and phraseology are similar, it appears that the two letters, Ephesians and Colossians, were written about the same time by Paul as he attended to the individual needs of some of the local churches in Asia Minor.

Due to the fact that Paul was in prison while writing these letters and that Onesimus came to know Paul and received the Gospel while he was in prison (Phlm 10), it is highly probable that Paul wrote this letter during his Roman imprisonment around A.D. 62.[21] It is harder to imagine

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relative clauses, genitive constructions, and prepositional phrases beginning with ἐν. Even the overall structure and sequence of the letters are similar.

[18] Eph 1:22-23; 5:23, 29-30; Col 1:18, 24.

[19] Eph 3:2 and Col 1:25.

[20] Eph 6:21; cf. Col 4:7.

[21] Cf. Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 96, who along with the majority of the scholars who support Pauline authorship, conclude that the traditional view that Paul wrote this letter during his imprisonment in Rome has the best biblical support.

a runaway slave like Onesimus running away from his master in Asia Minor and going to Caesarea rather than Rome in order to start a new life.

The Difficult Grammatical Arrangement of Ephesians 2:13-18

One of the biggest difficulties of interpreting Eph 2:13-18 correctly is deciding how the various parts of 2:14-16 are grammatically interconnected. Specialized translating teams and individual scholars alike are not in agreement on how the various parts interrelate to one another. Eph 2:14-16 is a complex sentence that is closely coupled to 2:13 and 2:17-18.

Part of the problem in placing the various parts of this section together comes from misunderstanding Paul's metaphorical image in 2:14b and the intended meaning of the participial clause τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν καταργήσας of 2:15a in context within this section, the rest of the letter, and Paul's other letters. Eph 2:13 is the transitional sentence that holds two keys to understanding 2:13-18 as a whole.

Firstly, as Paul spoke to his addressees, he was talking about the immediate present versus the past. After asking his predominately Gentile audience to reflect on what their life was like in the past without God, Paul used transitional markers to change the time frame from the past to the immediate present, νυνὶ δέ, "but now." Secondly, Paul introduced this section using the prepositional phrase, ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησου, in order to emphasize the fact that everything that God had done had been done "in" and "through" Christ Jesus. As he transitioned through his argument in this section, Paul emphasized the fact that God's desired unity for them had come at a great price through Jesus by using six more prepositional phrases that were used instrumentally and/or locatively to show the importance of Christ and His redeeming work. This act of mercy and grace on God's part was to bring about His desired reconciliation and resulting unity among all of of His redeemed children bringing them together as one group of family members to Himself.

Regarding Eph 2:14b-15a, if one allows the sequential grammatical flow to indicate how the parts are to work together as written versus altering the flow to match some preconceived theological framework, the two aorist participial clauses, which were written together, τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ λύσας, τὴν ἔχθραν ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ, τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν καταργήσας, can be subdivided and rewritten as such: (1) λύσας τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ, τὴν ἔχθραν, ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ, and (2) καταργήσας τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν. The instrumental prepositional phrase ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ, "through His flesh," is a good grammatical point of division, which divides the two clauses naturally.

Although modern critical editions of the Greek text do not place a comma after τὴν ἔχθραν, the mutual hostility between the Jew and the Gentile would not have come about through the death of Christ nor would it come about for any who were in close association with Christ. Therefore, it is more logical to place a comma after τὴν ἔχθραν, which places τὴν ἔχθραν grammatically in apposition with τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμου. This grammatical understanding of what is written makes destroying τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ, which existed between the Jew and Gentile, a metaphorical image comparable to Christ's actual destruction of the ongoing mutual ἔχθραν, "hostility," through His flesh, His death on a cross.

The disadvantage for those who want to grammatically shift τὴν ἔχθραν across the prepositional phrase and place it alongside τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν is that "the hostility" either has to be considered a metaphorical or literal description of all or part of the Law. Either consideration will not work without grammatically altering the literal sentence. It is best to allow the two aorist participial clauses to remain as written and translate them according to the grammatical sequence in which they were written.

The Meaning of Christ's τὸ Μεσότοιχον τοῦ Φραγμοῦ Λύσας, τὴν Ἔχθραν

In Ephesians 2:14, when Paul said that Jesus' redeeming death and modification of the requirements of the Law destroyed the mutual ongoing hostility between the Jew and Gentile who committed to following Him, he was saying that the family of God was not divided into two families. Although there was still an ongoing mutual hostility between those Jews and Gentiles who were not following Christ, there was no place in the Messianic Age for any hostility among the members of the Body of Christ. Paul was stating clearly that all Jewish and Gentile Believers were equal members of God's one and only household. What has perplexed scholars for many years is Paul's metaphorical referent, the μεσότοιχον. What did Paul mean when he compared Christ's destruction of the Jew-Gentile mutual hostility to the metaphorical destruction of τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ?

In the last century, the predominate view is that Paul was using a literal physical example. This group understood Paul to be speaking of a two-fold destruction, the ongoing mutual hostility between Jew and Gentile and the wall in Herod's Temple, which was used to isolate the Gentiles from the Jews. The problem with this line of thought was that when Paul wrote this letter, this particular wall was still standing, and therefore, Paul would not have been speaking of its literal destruction. He could have used it as a referent in the sense that it was a "dividing-wall" that was still separating Jews from Gentiles, but Paul was not talking about abolishing the mutual hostility of Jew and Gentile in general. In reality, Paul was speaking about removing any residual mutual hostility from the past for those who were a new man in Christ, the Jewish and Gentile Believers.

In either case, this theory runs into a problem of familiarity. A metaphor is only good if the addressees are fairly familiar with it. There is a high probability that Paul's predominately Gentile audience would not have had a clear understanding of this wall, which was located in a distant land, and therefore, they would not have known how to mentally apply its ongoing Jewish function of keeping the Gentiles out of the

Temple's holy area. When Paul wrote this letter, it is important to remember that he was addressing a predominately Gentile audience in Asia Minor. He was asking them to discard their traditional Greco-Roman hostility toward their new Jewish brothers and sisters in Christ, not the other way around.

A second view with considerably less supporters was that Paul was speaking of an invisible wall that humanity had created when it sinned against God, an invisible wall between the earthly and heavenly spheres when he spoke of Christ's redeeming work having destroyed τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ, τὴν ἔχθραν. This group ignored Paul's emphasis in Eph 2:14-16, which was directed toward his predominately Gentile addressees letting them know that God was reconciling *both* Jew and Gentile into "one Body" to Himself and instead focused solely on the reconciliation of the "one body" to God addressed in 2:16. In reality, this way of thinking ignores the overall emphasis of 2:13-22, which is helping Gentiles understand why they needed to put aside their generational hostility toward Jews and live in unity with all who were in the Body of Christ as God desired.

Harold Hoehner represents a third view that understands τὸ μεσότοιχον to represent some type of metaphorical wall of separation, but does not have enough information to pin down a possible referent beyond the idea that Paul was referring at the very least to some type of a wall in general knowing that the function of a wall was normally to isolate one side from the other.

Representing a fourth view, Ernest Best learned from his friend, Professor Richardson, that the term μεσότοιχον had been used seven times in a temple inscription in Asia Minor to denote some type of dividing wall used in conjunction with the construction of stairs in a temple construction. Understanding that it would be normal for Paul to have used a well-known term for his metaphor, Best concluded that μεσότοιχον must have been a well-known architectural term for Paul's era.

The research laid out in chapter 2 below proposes a fifth scenario. This theory will go *beyond* Hoehner's idea of the dividing nature of walls in general and Best's proposed referent of an ordinary

architectural term relating to dividing-walls used in temple constructions. When one looks at the Greek and Latin literary evidence from this era coupled with archeological evidence, it is clear that this term was used to describe more than just some type of wall used in temple constructions. It will be demonstrated that Paul used a term that was a common architectural term of his day that normally denoted the *solid* walls that were used to separate multi-occupancy buildings into individual areas used for separate residences, businesses, and shops. In the Mediterranean world of Paul's day, multi-occupancy building were very common.[22]

Keeping the letter's context in mind and popular uses of μεσότοιχον during this time period, it becomes clear that Paul used this particular metaphorical image to place a picture in his addressees' heads of Christ's destruction of the ongoing mutual hostility between Jew and Gentile as being similar in some respects to a master builder of his day destroying a solid dividing middle-wall that had been separating two individual residences turning the enlarged space into one large residence. In reality, through His redeeming death on the cross, Christ had removed any reason for them to maintain their old mutual hostility when they became children of God. Now, they, Jew and Gentile Believer, were an intimate part of the *same* holy family.

God's family was not to be divided for any reason, traditional or otherwise; for those who are in Christ, there is only *one* family, not two. With the destruction of the metaphorical τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ, "the *dividing* middle-wall," Jewish and Gentile Believers

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[22] In the last twenty years since my doctoral research on this subject was completed, there have been some sound advances with more scholars correctly placing τὴν ἔχθραν in apposition with τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ and dropping the dividing wall between Jew and Gentile at the Temple as the subject of this metaphor. Yet, there is still too much confusion regarding the actual meaning of τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ. This present work, which is primarily based on my earlier research, is being published in order to help bring more clarity to Paul's use of this metaphorical image and add detail to Paul's proclamation that the cultural and purity ordinances contained with the Mosaic Law had become optional, which helped to bring about godly unity between Gentile and Jewish Believers.

were to live together in the larger social space that God had provided as one big family at peace with one another. In the next breath, Paul stated that they *both* had become "one new man" being reconciled *together* to God and now *collectively* being built into God's holy temple, His home. All of the imagery in this section shows that Jesus' atoning death and resulting peace for His followers was to be taken personally. There should be no dividing walls within God's eternal holy family.

The Meaning of Christ's τὸν Νόμον τῶν Ἐντολῶν ἐν Δόγμασιν Καταργήσας

This clause has been considered controversial on two fronts. One of the differences in interpretation stems from the fact that there are two possible ways to interpret Paul's use of the phrase τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν. Only context can guide one to Paul's intended meaning.

Most agree that τὸν νόμον with its descriptive gentitive τῶν ἐντολῶν refers specifically to the commanding or legal portion of the Torah, which is sometimes denoted as the Mosaic Law or its collective parts as *halakhah*, versus the non-legal portion of the Torah, which is sometimes designated as *haggadah*. The difficulty for those of us who are so distant in time from first-century Judaism is deciding how to interpret the prepositional phrase ἐν δόγμασιν. In the immediate context, ἐν δόγμασιν can either function to restrict or limit the action of the participle καταργήσας on τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν, "the commandments of the Law," to a specific subset, or it can be used to emphasize or even clarify God personally "decreeing" that this refers to all of the commandments of the Law.

In chapters 3-4, the context of Ephesians guides one to understand that Paul wanted the prepositional phrase ἐν δόγμασιν to be understood as restrictive. This is solidified by the fact that in the last part of his letter, Eph 4:25-6:20, Paul used fifty-one combinations of imperatives, jussives, and participles, to exhort his predominately Gentile addressees to live out their lives according to God's desired unity

following specific moral directives of the Mosaic Law.

In Eph 6:1-3, Paul specifically exhorted the children of those following Christ to obey and honor their parents and stated that this is the first commandment with promise. This commandment with promise matches closely the first commandment with promise given to Moses for God's people at Mt. Sinai. In addition to teaching one of the key commandments given on Mount Sinai, thirty-six of the fifty-one exhortations given by Paul in Eph 4:25-6:20 have close affinities to some of the moral commandments contained within the Mosaic Law.

Knowing that Paul still relied heavily on the authority of the moral aspect of the Mosaic Law leads one to realize that Paul was not teaching an abrogation nor a "making ineffective" of the total Law. Therefore, in the context of Ephesians, the prepositional phrase, ἐν δόγμασιν, must be considered as a restrictive prepositional phrase pointing to some specific ordinances contained within the commandments of the Mosaic Law.

A second point of uncertainty is over the interpretation of the Greek verb καταργέω. If one were to evaluate the standard lexicons for referents, the primary referent for καταργέω is "to make something ineffective." It can also mean to "hinder, render idle, make inactive, make idle or unemployed, nullify, cancel, destroy, abolish, and do away with."

Paul's teachings in Ephesians and other letters including Rom 2:11-15 and 3:23-31 clearly show that the Law as a whole is not to be put aside but instead established. Believers are not making the Law ineffective, but instead establishing the Law. In Ephesians, Paul was teaching that the cultural and purity regulations contained within the commandments of the Law had become optional. This is discussed fully in chapter 3 along with an overview of modern thought regarding the place of "works of the Law" in the Messianic Age.

In addition to looking at the meaning of ὁ νόμος and ἔργα νόμου, the research in chapter 3 will carefully look at the Old Testament for possible subdivisions of the Law, which at that time might have been used to consider the various commandments and ordinances that had been established to regulate the cultural, purity, and moral aspects of the

life of God's chosen people. The evidence will show a normal breakdown of the תּוֹרָה, "Law," into three categories: (1) מִצְוֹת, "commandments," that normally make up a code of moral and civil law, (2) חֻקִּים, "statues or ordinances," that normally deal with religious practices including religious purity, and (3) מִשְׁפָּטִים, "ordinances or customs," that deal with the manner or way of life of a specific people group. In addition, some of the authors thought of the Law in terms of two subgroups, מִצְוֹת, "commandments," paired with either חֻקִּים, "statutes/ordinances," and מִשְׁפָּטִים, "ordinances/ customs."

When compared to Old Testament teachings of his day, evidence indicates that Paul would *not* have been breaking new ground when he chose to consider the Law as subdivided into two parts, the moral commandments versus the cultural and purity ordinances. In addition, the possible referents for the word δόγματα were studied in order to find its semantic range, which ranges from laws, official decrees, teachings, to proposals. Taking into consideration the context of Ephesians and the rest of his letters, Paul's intended meaning of Christ τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν καταργήσας is "having made ineffective the *cultural and purity* ordinances contained within the commandments of the Law."

Looking Ahead

The finalized exegesis of Eph 2:11-22, which is shown in chapter 4, will bring out Paul's main point of spiritual enlightenment that he has been praying for his addressees to understand. He wanted his predominately Gentile believing audience to come to know and understand God's desired plan for their lives so that they would strive more fully to live out their lives in step with God's will. After asking these Gentile Believers to remember their empty past without God compared to their full life now with Him, Paul wanted them to realize that God's redemptive work through Jesus' atoning death on a cross *demanded changes* in their lives including their inherited attitude toward Jewish Believers.

It does not matter how deep their ongoing mutual hostility had been in the past, now it was time for a radical change because God had stepped into His creation and performed a radical, merciful, and gracious act to bring εἰρήνη, "peace," to those who would learn to love, trust, and obey Him based on His great love for all. God's plan did not allow His obedient children to return His love and not learn to love one another.

Christ died on a cross for the redemption of all from all ages who learn to trust and obey God out of a growing returned love. In Ephesians, Paul elaborated telling his addressees that Jesus died an atoning death on a cross in order that He may create ἕνα καινὸν ἄνθρωπον, "one new man," bringing about peace for them in order that He may reconcile τοὺς ἀμφοτέρους, "both," into ἑνὶ σώματι, "one body," τῷ θεῷ, "to God," bringing about peace between that one Body and God. Because of what Jesus did for them, Gentile Believers must strive to walk in unity with their Jewish brothers and sisters as God intended (Eph 4:1-6).

Paul's proclamation of peace and unity matches well the apostle John's proclamation that if one was walking in the light as God walks in the light, that one had fellowship with other Saints and Jesus' death on a cross provided καθαρίζει, "continually cleansing," from all sin (1 John 1:7). The apostle John continued this line of thought by stating that if one was truly obedient to God, God's love would be perfected in him, and he would love his brother as he walked in His light (2:3-10; cf. 4:10-21).

In addition to providing an overview of the primary points made in this work, the Conclusion will look at the significance of Paul's godly unity message given to first century addressees for our present day Church with all of its various moving parts including denominations and para-Church organizations. One thing is clear from Paul's letters, whether to the Galatians, Corinthians, Romans, or to those living in fairly close proximity to Ephesus, God did not then and still does not want divisional walls within His Church.

When New Testament letters are examined collectively regarding unity among Jesus' followers, they clearly teach the Church of all ages that God does not approve of any divisional walls being built up within the Church whether doctrinal, social, ethnic, or anything else.

Therefore, the Believers of the twenty-first century must decide if they want to live out their lives doing the will of God *striving* to walk in a manner worthy of their calling as the *one and only* family of God through Jesus' leadership, or do they want to continue doing things that splinter and isolate many parts of Christ's Body in direct defiance to God and His known will.

Chapter 2: A First-Century Meaning of TO ΜΕΣΟΤΟΙΧΟΝ ΤΟΥ ΦΡΑΓΜΟΥ

Laying the Foundation: Contemporary Misunderstanding Regarding Paul's Use of This Metaphorical Image

In Eph 2:14b, Paul used a metaphorical aorist participial clause to help the Gentiles understand the intimate unity that Christ's death on the cross had made possible for all who learn to love, trust, and obey Him, both Jew and Gentile. This clause is followed by another aorist participial clause in 2:15a that explains a change in the Law for the Messianic Age that helps *both* Jew and Gentile to realize God's desired unity as *one* family. The meaning of Eph 2:15a will be developed in the next chapter. In this chapter, the meaning of τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ will be investigated within the context of Ephesians and the first-century Mediterranean world.

The word μεσότοιχον was used only one time in the New Testament by Paul or one of his amanuenses[23] and never in the Greek Septuagint; in addition, none of the authors of the New Testament nor the Septuagint used any form of the compound of the neuter μεσότοιχον, which is the masculine μέσος τοῖχος. This forces one to look outside the Bible for possible first-century Mediterranean referents.

An important consideration in understanding Paul's intended meaning of the word μεσότοιχον is that Paul used this word as part of a metaphorical clause to help his addressees understand what it meant for God to destroy the hostility between those Jews and Gentiles who

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[23] It is generally understood that although Paul is the actual writer and author of his letters, he may have at various times used an amanuensis due to illness, imprisonment, or for whatever other reason that he may have had. Therefore, with this being understood, the word amanuensis or secretary will not be used throughout this work in reference to someone else possibly writing parts or all of his letters.

became part of His family. Therefore, the word μεσότοιχον should have been easily understood by Paul's Gentile addressees in the first century.

A metaphor is *only effective if* the addressees are familiar with the meaning of the term that is used metaphorically to help them understand something less familiar. When Paul compared breaking down a μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ, "a middle-wall of partition," or "dividing middle-wall" to destroying the mutual "hostility" that existed between believing Jews and believing individuals from the other nations of the world (Gentiles), his predominately Gentile audience knew the possible referents for μεσότοιχον, and therefore, they would have readily understood how to apply the appropriate attributes from Paul's metaphorical participial clause to Christ's destruction of the ongoing mutual hostility between Jew and Gentile.

Today, a couple thousand years later, scholars are no longer familiar with Paul's intended primary first-century referent for μεσότοιχον. Therefore, in order to understand more fully the associated imagery of this term so that its attributes may be applied correctly within the framework of the clause, τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ λύσας, to the primary subject of the metaphor, ἔχθρα, which is part of an appositional clause, λύσας τὴν ἔχθραν, "having destroyed the hostility," a thorough investigation is needed.

Contemporary Thought Regarding the Meaning of Μεσότοιχον

Before anyone can develop an understanding of Paul's intended meaning of the clause λύσας τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ, one needs to correctly understand the first-century Mediterranean range of meaning for the term μεσότοιχον. The meaning of μεσότοιχον has been widely debated throughout the twentieth century. This can be clearly seen through the variety of interpretations given by modern commentators and through the various interpretations given by some of the best literal contemporary Bible translators regarding Eph 2:14b-15a.

Some scholars such as John Eadie, Markus Barth, and Ernest Best have stated that there is much dispute over the meaning of

μεσότοιχον without any credible theory that would promote an endorsement from the majority of the scholars.[24] Many recognize the fact that Paul is using the term μεσότοιχον metaphorically and realize that Paul would not have used a term that would not have been easily recognizable by his predominately Asia Minor addressees, but the actual referent has remained elusive to contemporary scholars.

Yet, even if one does not understand what the referent is, many modern scholars know that at the very least, it is some type of wall and that a common sense of all walls is where some land. Best comes the closest to uncovering the referent by realizing that Paul was probably using the term purely in a metaphorical construction without special religious referents. With his understanding of the common application of metaphors and based on a temple inscription in Asia Minor in which a writer used the term μεσότοιχον seven times to denote a dividing wall as part of the construction of stairs in this particular temple, he decided that this term was probably an ordinary architectural term for Paul's era.[25]

Some such as Andrew Lincoln understand μεσότοιχον to refer to a spiritual wall which was incorporated into Ephesians as part of an earlier hymn,[26] while others before him such as Nils Dahl understand the referents to be possibly both a spiritual wall between God and humanity and the physical wall in the Jerusalem Temple separating the Gentiles

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[24] John Eadie, *A Commentary on the Greek Text of the Epistle of Paul to The Ephesians* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1883; reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979), 172-73; Markus Barth, *Ephesians,* The Anchor Bible, no. 34 (New York: Doubleday, 1974), 285-86; and Ernest Best, *A Critical Commentary on Ephesians,* International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1998), 253-57.

[25] Best, *A Critical Commentary on Ephesians*, 257.

[26] Andrew T. Lincoln, *Ephesians*, Word Biblical Commentary, no. 42 (Dallas: Word, 1991), 128-30.

from the Jews.[27] Klyne Snodgrass did not take a definitive stand, but instead allowed the reader to assume that the referent for μεσότοιχον follows the thinking of older commentators, who predominately set the referent as the barrier on the Temple grounds that prohibited the Gentiles from entering the area reserved only for Israelites.[28]

Rudolph Schnackenburgh asked why the author of Ephesians might have used such an unusual metaphor. After describing several of the various ways that some have interpreted its referents in the past, he went on to bypass the metaphorical aspect of μεσότοιχον altogether and decided that the term somehow pointed directly to the Law.[29]

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[27] Nils A. Dahl, "Bibelstudie über den Epheserbrief," in *Kurz Auslegung des Epheserbriefes* (Gottingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1965), 35, states, "Das Bild dürfte vom Tempel in Jerusalem genommen sein, in dem eine Mauer den Hof der Heiden von den inneren geheiligten Bereichen abtrennte. . . . Nach einer anderen Deutung erinnert das Bild der Mauer an den Gedanken einer kosmischen Mauer, durch die die jenseitigen himmlischen Wohnplätze Gottes und seiner dienenden Engel von der Menschenwelt getrennt wurden. Die beiden Bilder schließen sich nicht gegenseitig aus, da Gottes jenseitiger Wohnort als ein himmlischer Tempel angesehen wurde, und umgekehrt die Tempelarchitektur die Struktur des Universums symbolisierte: The image may be taken from the Temple in Jerusalem, in which a wall separated the courtyard of the Heathens from the inner sacred area. . . . According to another explanation, the image of the wall reminds (us) of the thought of a cosmic wall, through which the distant heavenly living place of God and His serving angels has been divided from the human world. The two images do not rule each other out mutually, because God's transcendent dwelling place has been considered as a heavenly temple and conversely the architect of the Temple [has been considered] symbolically the structure of the Universe"; and side-note: this theory probably derived its initial impulse from the long version of Ignatius' "Letter to the Trallins," 2.9.4, in which the author used the words τὸ μεσότοιχον to represent metaphorically a wall separating heaven from earth. Jesus destroyed this dividing wall for all Saints when He died on the cross.

[28] Klyne Snodgrass, *Ephesians*, NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 131-33.

[29] Rudolf Schackenburg, *Ephesians: A Commentary*, trans. Helen Heron (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1991), 113-14.

Peter O'Brien said that Paul's usage was of "an unusual metaphor," and yet does not offer any options on possible referents other than to say that whatever this metaphor means is elucidated by the clause that follows.[30] At this juncture, O'Brien considers τὴν ἔχθρα to be in apposition with τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν instead of in apposition with τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ and equates the abolition of the enmity as equal to the abolition of the whole Law.[31]

John Muddiman, recognized a problem with our contemporary understanding of Paul's metaphorical usage of μεσότοιχον. He decided that perhaps Paul was referring to "all expressions of social enmity, familiar to any Jew or Gentile in the Hellenistic world."[32]

After teaching at Dallas Theological Seminary for over thirty years, Harold Hoehner published *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary*, which is truly a *magnus opus*.[33] His work concentrated on correctly understanding the meaning of Paul's words in Ephesians and took into account their proper literary and historical contexts.

When he discussed the word μεσότοιχον, Hoehner stated that the word was rarely used in classical literature, not used at all in the Septuagint, and occurs only once in the New Testament.[34] As he analyzed possible referents, Hoehner dismissed the most popular one, the wall in the Temple that separated the Gentile court from the rest of Jewish Temple area because: (1) there were no references to the Jerusalem wall in this context, (2) this Temple wall was never designated in any writings by this particular Greek term, (3) this wall was still

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[30] Peter T. O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 195.

[31] Ibid., 195-96.

[32] John Muddiman, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians* (London: Continuum, 2001), 127-28.

[33] Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002).

[34] Ibid., 368.

standing when Paul wrote this letter, and (4) this wall was probably unfamiliar to Paul's predominately Gentile addressees.[35] Not finding a specific reference, Hoehner said that the phrase τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ was referring to a metaphorical wall of separation and allowed the dividing nature of "any wall" to give meaning to the term.[36]

Taking into consideration that his intended addressees were predominately Gentiles living in Asia Minor, the best theories regarding Paul's intended referent for the word μεσότοιχον have been: (1) the wall in Herod's Temple that separated the Jews from the Gentiles, which as stated above as the most dominant theory,[37] (2) a wall that divides the

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[35] Ibid., 369.

[36] Ibid., 371.

[37] Eadie, *Commentary of the Epistle of Paul to The Ephesians,* 172, stated that this was the popular view of his era; Brooke Westcott, *Saint Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians* (London; New York: MacMillan, 1906), 37, states that μεσότοιχον "is probably suggested by the Chel (חֵיל) or 'partition which separated the Court of the Gentiles from the Temple proper'"; Edgar J. Goodspeed, *The Meaning of Ephesians* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1933), 37, stated that this letter is late and that it was the actual destruction of the barrier in the Temple which shut the Gentiles out of the rest of the Temple that was being referred to in Ephesians; F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Ephesians* (London: Pickering & Inglis, 1961), 54, noted that frequently the wall in the Temple area dividing the Jews from the Gentiles is suggested for Paul's use of "middle-wall"; Theodore O. Wedel, *The Epistle to the Ephesians*, Interpreter's Bible, no. 10 (Nashville: Abingdon, 1953; reprint, 1995), 655, stated in his mid-twentieth century commentary on Ephesians, "the middle wall of partition" is a reference to the wall that divided the Gentiles from the inner court with a threat of death for those who went past it; Larry J. Kreitzer, *The Epistle to the Ephesians* (London: Epworth, 1997), 86, stated that "As a symbol of division and separation it is hard to imagine a better ancient example than this temple barrier in Jerusalem"; and in a recent publication, David J. Williams, *Paul's Metaphors: Their Context and Character* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1999), 246, stated that Paul might be speaking of the Temple wall that divided the Jews and Gentiles in Eph 2:14.

supernatural realm from the earthly,[38] (3) no particular referent, just the dividing nature of any wall,[39] and (4) an architectural term denoting some type of wall used in temple constructions that would be understood by those living in Asia Minor.[40] These theories do not provide an adequate referent for Paul's metaphorical usage of τὸ μεσότοιχον and how the attributes from this metaphor should be placed along side τὴν ἔχθραν to help his predominately Gentile audience understand more fully God's desired unity for the Jewish and Gentile Believers that now make up the Body of Christ, which is His family.

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[38] Barth, *Ephesians,* 285-86, while considering Gnostic influences, presented a brief discussion using Schlier as a sounding board and looked at the possibility of the term μεσότοιχον depicting a cosmic barrier; cf. Best, *A Critical Commentary on Ephesians,* 254-55, who discussed those who look at the Long Recension of Ignatius' letter to the Trillians and noted that the author of Ephesians never discussed a separation between heaven and earth. Lincoln's and Dahl's positions are stated above.

[39] Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 371.

[40] Eadie, *Commentary of the Epistle of Paul to The Ephesians,* 172-73, along with many nineteenth-century expositors were inclined to think that Paul had some graphically intelligible figure in mind when using this phrase, but they were not sure what it was; e.g. Charles Hodge, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians* (New York: Hodder & Stoughton, 1856), 131-33, worked backwards using the rest of the text to figure out that "the ambiguous phrase middle wall of partition" was pointing to the "mutual hatred" that was dividing the Jews and Gentiles. He did not state what the ambiguous phrase might have meant but knew that it was connected to the mutual hatred, which is better than many of his successors; cf. Barth, *Ephesians,* 286, who discussed the fact that at the present time, there is no explanation of the term μεσότοιχον that completely rules out alternatives. He went on to say that the sources and scholarly methods available at present permit more skepticism about some than about others, but that they are not sufficient for a final decision; and cf. Best, *A Critical Commentary on Ephesians*, 256-57, who stated that it is possible that the term μεσότοιχον was simply being used metaphorically without going beyond ordinary understanding. He says that it was a well known architectural term, being used seven times in Asia Minor in the instructions for the erection of the temple at Didyma and then, considering Paul's usage, noted that Athenaeus used the term metaphorically in a secular context.

Metaphors in General

As Gregory Dawes looked at the functioning of metaphors in their relationship with the literal counterparts that they illuminate, he pointed to the part of Max Black's theory that stated that a metaphor projects a set of associated implications [attributes] onto the subject needing illumination.[41] Black noted that a metaphor, which he classified as a secondary subject, did not have to cause a mental picture; for a term to be used as a metaphor, its only requirements were that the intended addressees would be familiar with its properties [attributes].[42]

This becomes the crux of the problem for modern scholars. Contemporary scholars no longer have a firm idea of the associated attributes or imagery of the first-century Greek phrase τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ or its core term τὸ μεσότοιχον. Without a proper understanding of the literal meaning of the word μεσότοιχον, one cannot apply the attributes of destroying a τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ to destroying τὴν ἔχθραν that still existed between the first-century Jew and Gentile Believers.

Without this understanding, one cannot truly understand what Paul was saying to his addressees when he taught them that just as someone might destroy a μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ, Christ had broken down the ongoing mutual ἔχθραν for both Jew and Gentile Believers. He had done this through His redeeming death on a cross and through His declaration as the sent Lawgiver from the Father that certain ordinances contained within the commandments of the Law had been made "ineffective"; they were now optional. This aspect regarding making part of the Law optional, ordinances pertaining to cultural and purity practices, will be discussed more fully in the next chapter.

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[41] Gregory W. Dawes, *The Body in Question: Metaphor and Meaning in the Interpretation of Ephesians 5:21-33* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 32-33.

[42] Dawes, *The Body in Question*, 34-35.

In his discussion of Paul's usage of body imagery in Eph 5:21-33, Gregory Dawes noted that one needs to recognize and understand the key terms used metaphorically in order to come to a proper understanding of the primary subject of the metaphor.[43] Philip Wheelwright separates metaphors into two categories: the "epiphor" and the "diaphor" with "-phora" denoting "motion/ movement," "epi-" denoting "over on to," and "dia-" denoting "through."[44] When one considers the work of a metaphor through an epiphorical lens, which has been attributed to originating in Aristotle's work *Poetics*, one considers how the metaphor transfers information and imagery associated with its own literal meaning to a second literal term needing greater elucidation, the primary subject.[45] The reader automatically transfers the attributes from the metaphor onto the term needing elucidation.

For example, when Paul told the Church that there were many members, but only one body (1 Cor 12:20), he had used a physical body metaphorically to apply to the actual Body of Christ, the primary subject (12:27). Believers could visualize more effectively how all of the members of the Church form one organizational body with Christ, who is the head, as they transfer some of the attributes of a physical body to the literal meaning of "the Church." Wheelwright basically follows Black's methodology at this juncture.

When looking through diaphorical lenses, one looks at how the metaphorical term or phrase would alter the literal term or phrase being affected, producing a new meaning simply by their close proximity on the page. It changes the meaning of the term or phrase by juxtaposition without having anything else in common.[46] This type of metaphor is less common than an epiphore. Earl Mac Cormac stated that all metaphors possess both epiphoric and diaphoric elements that arise from similarities

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[43] Ibid., 1.

[44] Philip Wheelwright, *Metaphor & Reality* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1962), 72, 79.

[45] Ibid., 72.

[46] Ibid., 72, 78.

and disparities among the attributes of the metaphor and its targeted term or phrase.[47]

It is clear that in order to understand how an ancient term was used as an metaphor, one must understand the properties of that metaphor as they would have been understood in their own day. In his work, *A Cognitive Theory of Metaphor*, Mac Cormac reminded his readers that language is constantly changing with some words going through transformation and others remaining stable during any time period.[48] This is an important consideration for contemporary scholars who are trying to understand Paul's intended meaning when he transferred imagery from "destroying the τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ" to "destroying the hostility" that remained between the Jew and Gentile Believers. What was clear in Paul's day regarding this clause is not as clear today.

The other consideration in evaluating metaphors is evaluating how the addressees' cultural experiences including emotions might be effect the "sense" of the metaphor.[49] Because current readers have not experienced Paul's culture, they may have a hard time understanding the emotional aspects associated with some of his metaphors and their primary subjects. It is now time to seek evidence regarding the meaning of Christ's τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμου λύσας more fully in order to understand the meaning of Christ's λύσας τὴν ἔχθραν between Jew and Gentile Believers more fully.

Paul's Metaphors in Ephesians 2:11-22

In order to understand Eph 2:14b-15a more fully, one must develop an understanding of Paul's usage of the metaphorical clause τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ λύσας. He penned this letter while

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[47] Earl R. Mac Cormac, *A Cognitive Theory of Metaphor,* 1985 (Cambridge: Bradford Books, 1988), 40.

[48] Mac Cormac, *A Cognitive Theory of Metaphor*, 181.

[49] Ibid., 189, 203, 227, 229.

addressing a predominately Gentiles audience living in Asia Minor. It is important that Paul's metaphorical clause be properly understood so that its attributes may be associated correctly with its targeted appositional clause λύσας, τὴν ἔχθραν, "having destroyed the hostility."

It is important to understand the literal aspects of the metaphorical imagery in order to transfer properly the attributes of a first-century Mediterranean "middle-wall" to Christ having destroyed the mutual hostility between Jewish and Gentile Believers so that they may live together as *one* family. As the following research will show, in reality, the "middle-walls" of the first-century Mediterranean world equate to our modern day Western world "party-walls."

In addition to this one metaphorical usage, Paul used two more metaphorical images in Eph 2:11-22: one in 2:16 and another in 2:20-22. In Eph 2:20-22, Paul used a second architectural metaphorical image as he compared the Gentile addition to the household of God as being similar to each Believer, Jew and Gentile, being appropriate pieces of the wall of God's temple. They would have related this temple, a ναός, to the numerous ναοί, temples, which were at that time understood to be houses for many of the gods. These temples or houses of the gods were scattered throughout their lands. Paul was teaching his addressees that being in close association with Christ meant that they along with the Jewish Believers were collectively, the *house* that the one true God lived in through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (1:13-14; 2:18, 22).

Placed in between these two metaphorical images was an other metaphorical image depicting God's desired unity, a biological image of a body. This well understood image helped the Gentiles understand God's desired unity from the perspective of the desired unity of all of the body parts, which allows the body to function properly. If some of the parts are missing, inoperable, or even weak, the whole body suffers.

Paul and Architectural Metaphors

Paul Was Not Alone in Using Architectural Metaphors

It was not uncommon for first-century Mediterranean writers to use architectural terms as metaphorical images in order to bring greater

understanding to complex and/or unfamiliar ideas. After giving an example of a third-century B.C. writer, Ariston, who used the dividing nature of a μεσότοιχον metaphorically to show mentally that an individual cannot live a live of pleasure and virtue simultaneously, additional examples will be given from two first-century writers, Philo and Epictetus. They are given as examples to demonstrate that Paul was not alone in his usage of architectural metaphors to help convey complex ideas to his audience. Philo was a Hellenistic Jew from Alexandria, and Epictetus was a Stoic philosopher who was banished from Rome in A.D. 89 along with other philosophers during Domitian's reign.[50] This section concludes with a few examples taken from one of Paul's letters to the Corinthians and his letter titled today as "Ephesians."

Ariston: Third-Century B.C. Philosopher

Ariston, a Chiosian philosopher of the third-century B.C., was quoted by Athenaeus, a philosopher from the late second-century of the Christian Era. Athenaeus quoted Ariston saying,

> Ἀρίστωνος τοῦ Χίου, ὃς ἦν εἷς τῶν ἀπὸ τῆς στοᾶς, ἐν τῷ ἐπιγραφομένῳ Ἀρίστωνι παρεμφαίνει τὸν διδάσκαλον ὡς ὕστερον ὁρμήσαντα ἐπὶ τρυφήν, λέγων ὧδε· "ἤδη δέ ποτε καὶ τοῦτον πεφώρακα <u>τὸν</u> τῆς ἡδονῆς καὶ ἀρετῆς <u>μεσότοιχον</u> διορύττοντα καὶ ἀναφαινόμενον παρὰ τῇ ἡδονῇ.[51]

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[50] Brad Inwood, "Epictetus," in *OCD: Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 3d ed., ed. Simon Hornblower and Antony Spawforth (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 532.

[51] Athenaeus, *The Deipnosophists*, in *TLG: Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*, CD-ROM, vers. E (Irvine: University of California, 1999), 7.14.18-22; an alternate source for this text is Athenaeus, *The Deipnosophists*, trans. by Charles B. Gulick, vol. 3, LCL (New York: Putnam's Sons, 1929), § 281, 262; the author's translation follows: Regarding Ariston of Chios, who was a Stoic—in the work written about Ariston—he (the writer) shows the teacher (Ariston) as one coming to the end (of his life), having started out against indulgence, saying here (at the latter point in his life), "But now and then, I have searched out the

As shown above, Ariston, as quoted by Athenaeus, used the architectural term μεσότοιχον, "middle-wall," metaphorically to transfer imagery of a divisional wall existing between virtue and pleasure. It is easy to see from his metaphoric picture that one can *not* easily live in both worlds. One most choose as he did to live a life of virtue or a life of pleasure.

Ariston's work illuminates two relevant points regarding the word μεσότοιχον: (1) the basic meaning of μεσότοιχον when used metaphorically in this text implies a solid "dividing-wall," and (2) whether Athenaeus put words into Ariston's mouth or Ariston actually used this metaphor, the time fits Paul's era and this secular metaphorical usage of μεσότοιχον is similar to Paul's religious use recorded in Ephesians 2:14.

Philo Judaeus: First-Century Jewish Writer

In the following three passages, Philo used architectural terms as metaphors to help illuminate his teachings: *On the Cherubim* 2.101-02, *On The Giants* 2.266.30, and *On Dreams* 5.660.19-21. The architectural terms are underlined in the text below.

In the first example, Philo applied the metaphorical imagery of a house as a dwelling place for God with his primary subject being the human soul. God can live in a worthy soul as people live in worthy houses. Then, Philo applied the imagery of a well laid foundation of a house being comparable to having a "good natural disposition" and receiving "instruction," which are the primary subjects of the metaphor. He proceeded to build the imagery of the edifice being constructed out of "virtues" and "good works" with its ornamentation consisting of a "good secondary education" as shown:

> ἀξιόχρεως μέντοι γε <u>οἶκος</u> ψυχὴ ἐπιτήδειος. <u>οἶκον</u> οὖν ἐπίγειον τὴν ἀόρατον ψυχὴν τοῦ ἀοράτου θεοῦ λέγοντες ἐνδίκως καὶ κατὰ νόμον φήσομεν.

<u>middle-wall</u> (dividing-wall) of pleasure and virtue, and having dug through, I have been seen on the side of pleasure."

> ἵνα δὲ βέβαιος καὶ περικαλλέστατος εἴη ὁ οἶκος, θεμέλιοι μὲν ὑποβεβλήσθωσαν εὐφυΐα καὶ διδασκαλία, ἀρεταὶ δὲ μετὰ καλῶν πράξεων ἐποικοδομείσθωσαν αὐτῷ, τὰ δὲ προκοσμήματα ἔστω 102 ἡ ἀνάληψις τῶν ἐγκυκλίων προπαιδευμάτων.[52]

In a second example from his work, *On the Giants*, 2.266.30, Philo applied the metaphorical imagery of having ἀγνοίας, "a lack of knowledge, ignorance," and ἀμαθίας, "a lack of learning," as having a poor θεμέλιος πρῶτος, "main foundation," which is normally associated with the foundation of a building. This lack of building a good foundation from which to build one's house is compared to not building a good foundation of divine wisdom from which to guide one's life, which is the primary subject of the metaphor. Philo stated that it was humanities' fleshly nature that crippled the development of wisdom. Yet, even if one had a good foundation, they would still need to live out their lives correctly before God, because whenever a bad house was constructed upon a good foundation, the end product is still a bad house.

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[52] Philo, *Cherubim*, in *TLG*, 101-02; an alternate source for this text is *Philo*, vol. two, trans. by F.H. Colson and G.H. Whitaker, LCL (New York: Putnam's Sons, 1929), 69-70; and H.I. Marrou, *A History of Education In Antiquity* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1956), 176-77, discussed ἐγκύκλιος παιδεία, "general education," and προπαιδεύματα, "secondary education," showing that προπαιδεύματα prepared the mind for more advanced stages of education that would normally come out of philosophical schools following a particular philosophical view such as Stoicism or Cynicism. Therefore, a good definition for ἐγκύκλιος προπαιδεύματα is an "all-around/general secondary education": the author's translation follows: Nevertheless, a worthy soul is a suitable house/dwelling place (for God). Therefore, we are right in saying that the earthly house of the invisible God is the invisible (worthy) soul, and this we are saying according to the Law. And in order that the house might be durable and exceedingly beautiful, having let the foundations be laid with good natural disposition and instruction, let virtues along with good works be built upon it, and let the ornaments (of the house) be 102 the acquirement of an all-around preparatory (secondary) education.

In a third example taken from *Dreams* 2.8.1-3, Philo again applied the metaphorical imagery of architectural θεμελίων, "foundations," to a primary subject, one's past instructions, and then told his audience that ἐποικοδομῶμεν, "we should build-upon," what we have learned as we follow the pattern that the σοφῆς ἀρχιτέκτονος, "wise master-builder," known as Allegory has set. Here, it is noted that Philo again used architectural terms transferring images to his various primary subjects: "one's past instructions," "the next set of instructions," and "Allegory" respectively.

As Philo wrote in Greek in order to express Judaic principles to a Greco-Roman world, he metaphorically: (1) compared a worthy soul with a house that God could live in, (2) discussed the cause of a soul's corruption using architectural terminology, and (3) discussed the interpretation of dreams by defining the type of dreams, laying a foundation, and then preparing to follow the instructions of a personified allegory, who was a master-builder, to guide them in "building-up" a correct technique of interpretation.

Epictetus: Late First-Century Stoic Philosopher

Likewise, Epictetus, a mid first-to-second-century Stoic philosopher from Hierapolis, which is located near Ephesus,[53] used architectural terms as metaphors to help his readers understand his teaching. Following is an example:

> οὐ θέλεις τὴν ἀρχὴν στῆσαι καὶ τὸν θεμέλιον, τὸ κρίμα σκέψασθαι πότερον ὑγιὲς ἢ οὐχ ὑγιές, καὶ οὕτως λοιπὸν
> 2.15.9 ἐποικοδομεῖν αὐτῷ τὴν εὐτονίαν, τὴν ἀσφάλειαν;[54]

[53] Brad Inwood, "Epictetus," in *OCD*, 532.

[54] Epictetus, *Discourses*, in *TLG*, 2.15.8-9; the author's translation follows: Indeed, do you not wish to establish the beginning, indeed the foundation, to examine carefully your κρίμα, "judgement/ decision," whether it is sound or unsound, and then, finally, to build upon it (the foundation) determinately, confidently?

Epictetus' point was that one must consider carefully one's decisions in life and then stand by them so that one may go forward and make new decisions based on one's past decisions. He applied the metaphorical imagery of a θεμέλιον, "foundation," to his primary subject, "first-decisions." Using architectural terms, he proceeded to tell his students that after reflecting on their earlier decisions, which form the foundation for future decisions, they are ἐποικοδομεῖν, "to build upon," the foundation of older decisions with new decisions. The above examples provide insight on how architectural terms were used metaphorically to elucidate hard concepts.

Paul of Tarsus: A First-Century Christian Leader

In 1 Corinthians 3, Paul used architectural terms metaphorically in a similar fashion to Philo and Epictetus as discussed above. In 1 Cor 3:9-10, he compared himself metaphorically to a wise ἀρχιτέκτων, "master-builder," of a house as he compared the Corinthian Believers to one of his houses.[55] Paul said that according to the grace of God he had set the θεμέλιον, "foundation," as a σοφὸς ἀρχιτέκτων, "a wise master-builder," but, another ἐποικοδομεῖ, "shall build upon" that foundation that he had laid, which was the teaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Jay Shanor discussed the master-builder's role in supervising the other tradesmen (subcontractors) as they each worked in their areas of expertise. His job was to guide the project daily insuring the desired final

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[55] Alison Burford, *The Greek Temple Builders at Epidauros: A Social and Ecomonic study of Building in the Asklepian Sanctuary, during the Fourth and Early Third Centuries B.C.* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), 138-39. According to our contemporary usage, architects normally design and check on building progress. But, during Paul's era, the ἀρχιτέκτων, "architecton, master-builder," was basically the master-builder and advisor regarding the practical aspects of implementation, not the designer.

product.[56] Alison Burford discussed the type of case where an ἀρχιτέκτων worked under the guidance and direction of a city's building commission, a group of elected men who represent their city's interest in building projects.[57] From Burford's discussion, a parallel can be drawn between God and the city commissioners and Paul, the master-builder, who was directing the rest of the sub-contractors, who represented metaphorically the various teachers at Corinth including Apollos, Timothy, and Stephanas. Paul emphasized the point that his work would stand because he had laid down a secure θεμέλιος, "foundation."

After saying that Gentile Believers were fellow citizens with all saints and household members of God, Paul taught his audience that God lived in those who were following Christ (Eph 2:20-22). Then, Paul reminded the Gentiles that they as well as the Jews had been built upon the θεμέλιος, "foundation," of the apostles and prophets with Jesus Christ being the ἀκρογωνιαῖος, "cornerstone" of that foundation; they were now part of the Holy Temple of God. In saying this, Paul used a variety of architectural terms to paint his picture as he said that πᾶσα οἰκοδομή, "each construction," συναρμολογουμένη αὔξει, "that is being fitted together is growing," into a holy ναόν, "temple," through Jesus including the Gentiles who are also συνοικοδομεῖσθε, "being built up together (with the Jews)," to form a κατοικητήριον, "a dwelling place," for God through the Spirit.[58]

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[56] Jay Shanor, "Paul as Master Builder: Construction Terms in First Corinthians," *New Testament Studies* 34, no. 3 (1988): 465.

[57] Burford, *The Greek Temple Builders at Epidaurous*, 127-30, stated that the city elects their building commission, designs the building, hires the master-builder, and reports to the citizens. He said that with the citizens being involved, there is indication that the technical terminology for temple building had to be understandable to the general public.

[58] At this juncture, Paul's metaphorical language had some similarities to Peter's in 1 Pet 2:4-7.

In Ephesians 3:17, Paul used architectural terms metaphorically when he stated that κατοικῆσαι τὸν Χριστὸν διὰ τῆς πίστεως ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ὑμῶν, "Christ is dwelling through faith in your hearts," you (pl.) having been rooted and τεθεμελιωμένοι, "having your foundation laid," through love. Here, Paul used architectural verbs to denote "dwelling" and "laying a foundation." Both verbs relate to a house or building. The first presented the idea of occupancy, and the second brought an image of a well laid foundation from which to build the rest of the structure. Christ is dwelling in Believers as one dwells in a house, and Christ with His great love is building a foundation under the lives of His followers that is similar to an ἀρχιτέκτων, "master-builder," building a good foundation under a house so that the house may stand for many years.

In Ephesians 4:12-16, Paul continued to use architectural terms metaphorically. In 4:12, he stated that Christ had given apostles, prophets, preachers, shepherds, and teachers to prepare the Saints for a work of service εἰς οἰκοδομὴν τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστου, "for the construction of the Body of Christ." In 4:16, Paul stated that through Christ πᾶν τὸ σῶμα συναρμολογούμενον, "all of the Body was being fit together," and being united. He went on to state that through the proper working of each part, the Body ποιεῖται εἰς οἰκοδομὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἐν ἀγάπῃ, "is building itself up into an edifice through love." Again, Paul transferred attributes from the architectural world (secondary subject) to the relational image (primary subject) that exists between Christ and His Followers.

In 4:29, Paul presented his last relational image in Ephesians using an architectural metaphor. He stated that Believers should not say any words that cause destruction, but instead they should let good words come forth πρὸς οἰκοδομὴν τῆς χρείας, "for the edification of a need," in order that the good words will bring grace to those listening. Paul used the noun οἰκοδομή, "a construction, an edifice," to paint a picture of someone speaking edifying words that would build up and fill a void in someone else's life. Believers' words should be a blessing to those listening.

Primary Extra-Biblical Literary Evidence for the Meaning of Μεσότοιχον

Early Greek Lexicons

Two ancient lexicons help illuminate the proper technical category and give clues to the possible meaning of the term μεσότοιχον, "middle-wall." They do so by showing that this word belongs to an architectural categorization, and that a "middle-wall" was used in association with either a roof or upper level structure of a building. Hesychius, a fifth-century Greek lexicographer, includes μεσότοιχον as one of several words and phrases used to define the Greek term κατῆλιψ. Following is a list of words that Hesychius wrote in his lexicon to help define the word κατῆλιψ:

> μεσόδμη, "a tie beam," μεσότοιχον, "a middle-wall," δοκός, "a main roof or floor beam," ἢ ὑπότονος βαστάζουσα τὸν ὄροφον, "or a rope that is used in securing the roofing," οἱ δὲ ἰκίωμα τὸ ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ, ὃ καὶ βέλτιον, "and the joists in the house, indeed that which is stronger."[59]

The general definition that LSJ gives for κατῆλιψ is a "ladder, roof-beam, or upper story." It would appear from Hesychius' lexicon that κατῆλιψ was a term that was used primarily to describe the upper part of a building consisting of main μεσόδμαι, "tie beams," that may cross and possibly be supported by μεσότοιχα, "middle-walls," and end walls. There may be additional ceiling beams that may rest across the tie beams to support the roof or upper levels of a building. It appears that rope was somehow used to secure part of this upper level construction.

Photius' ninth-century Greek Lexicon, *Photii Patriarchae Lexicon*,[60] used the term μεσότοιχον with the article to help define the

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[59] Hesychius, *Hesychii Alexandrini Lexicon*, ed. Ejnar Munksgaard, vol. 2 (Munich: Beck, 1966), 444.

[60] Photius, *Photii Patriarchae Lexicon*, ed. Christos Theoodridis, vols. E-M (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1998), 311.

word θυραίαν. Photius said that a θυραίαν was equivalent to τὴν τοῦ μεσοτοίχου δακοπήν, "the cutout of the middle-wall." Photius' next entry is θυραία, which uses the phrase τὸ ἄνιογμα τῆς θύρας, "the opening of the door," to define a θυραία. Photius' lexicon produces an idea that if a μεσότοιχον was cut through for a doorway, the cutout would be technically called a θυραίαν and the door itself a θύρας. This definition brings to mind Solomon's cutout in the solid wall at the back of the Temple that was used to separate the Holy of Holies from the Holy area as described by Josephus (*A.J.* 8.71).

Three key points emerge from studying these two *lexica*: (1) the term μεσότοιχον, "middle-wall," was used to give meaning to other architectural terms thus showing that it was a common architectural term, (2) μεσότοιχον was not defined in either lexicon, and yet it was used in both to aid individuals in understanding other architectural terms again implying that it must have been well understood by its intended readers—there was no need to define it and at the same time it could help clarify the meaning of other architectural words, and (3) the information gathered from the two lexicons tell their readers that a μεσότοιχον, "a middle-wall," could have a cutout made in it, and that it was associated with load-bearing tie beams while the other sources from this era showed that a μεσότοιχον could support a roof system or an additional level(s) above the main level.

In addition to the ancient lexicons, contemporary classical Greek dictionaries, such as Liddell & Scott, show that the classical world differentiated between a τοῖχος, a wall associated with house or business construction,[61] versus a τεῖχος, which denoted a wall used to subdivide

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[61] In their research for some of the common usages for Greek words, James H. Moulton and George Milligan, *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1930; reprint, Peabody: Hendrickson, 1997), 400, noted that there was a good probability that the word μεσοτύχων was an alternate form of μεσοτοίχων, a term used as part of the language regarding the sale of house property at Hermopolis around the turn of the second century of this era—the text may be examined in volume 2, papyrus 98, line 9 of *Amherst Papyri*, ed. William Tyssen-Amherst, Bernard P. Grenfell and

sections of a city or to surround the city for protection.[62] The type of "middle-wall" that Paul was talking about denoted dividing walls used inside buildings to separate the total space, it was not the type of wall that was used in some cities to separate the living areas of different nationalities.

Greek Literature Regarding Architectural and Boundary Walls

A First-Century Architect, Vitruvius

In his book, *Ten Books on Architecture*, Vitruvius, a contemporary of Emperor Augustus, elaborated on the range of building styles from single level family rural and urban houses to multi-level apartment complexes within highly populated areas and gave insight into some of the ways to build outer, inner-partition, and inner subdividing-partition walls.[63] Vitruvius explained that the outer walls for a building built in Rome needed to be strong because of the necessity for multiple stories. There was not enough land for this highly populated area, and therefore, it was important to build multi-storied buildings for many of

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Arthur S. Hunt, 2 vols. (London: H. Frowed, 1900-01; reprint, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977).

[62] LSJ, 1802a and 1767a respectively; cf. Joseph H. Thayer's listings for τοῖχος and τεῖχος from *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, corrected ed. (New York: American Book, 1889), 627, 617, respecively; and Everett Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*, 2d ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 41, stated that Greek cities in the east were often subdivided into self-governing divisions, *politeumata*, based on nationality.

[63] Vitruvius, *The Ten Books on Architecture*, trans. Morris H. Morgan, illustrated by Herbert L. Warren (New York: Dover Publications, 1960), iv. Vitruvius was an architect who was considered to be a contemporary of Emperor Augustus; & a Latin source for Vitruvius' work is *Vitruvii De Architectura* (Lipsiae: B. G. Teubneri, 1899).

those living in Rome.[64]

Through his research of this era including his reading of Vitruvius' work, John McRay noted that the Romans had developed a strong concrete by the second century B.C. allowing them to build multiple floored buildings up to six stories high. Vitruvius' work showed that there were different wall constructions depending on purpose including strong burnt brick walls and party-walls constructed from rubble with rubble walls being constructed out of small stones embedded in mortar.[65] In addition, there were less expensive wall constructions that were more hazardous and broke down faster than concrete, stone, and brick. These walls were normally built using wooden frames and were covered with various materials such as stucco.[66]

McRay said that it was normal for the ground floor of these multi-level buildings to be subdivided into shops and the upper levels to be subdivided into living areas with each upper level having its own access via inside or outside staircases leading directly to the street below.[67] Jo-Ann Shelton stated that in Rome, apartments might be located in apartment buildings, in specified sections of private homes, or above shops and factories; these apartments were normally small and residents normally shared cooking and bathroom facilities.[68]

Flavius Josephus: First-Century Jewish Priest

Josephus and Lucianus the Philosopher were two Greek writers writing in the first and second century respectively who used the term

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[64] Ibid., 2.8.17, 57-58; cf. John E. Stambaugh, *The Ancient Roman City* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1988), 175, who stated that multistory *insulae*, "large apartments," were the most common type of residences in Rome and Ostia.

[65] John McRay, *Archaeology & The New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1991; reprint, 1997), 83.

[66] Vitruvius, *The Ten Books on Architecture*, 2.8.20, 57-58.

[67] McRay, *Archaeology & The New Testament*, 82-83.

[68] Jo-Ann Shelton, *As the Romans Did: A Sourcebook in Roman Social History*, 2d ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 63.

μεσότοιχον to denote a physical wall used in the construction of buildings. In his work, *Antiquitates Judaicae*, 8.67-68, Josephus used a plural form of μεσότοιχον one time and a singular form another as he described Solomon's construction of the Temple in Jerusalem. Regarding the plural form, he wrote,

> καὶ τοῖς μὲν οἴκοις ἴδιος ἦν οὗτος ἑκάστῳ πρὸς τοὺς πλησίον οὐ συνάπτων, τοῖς δ' ἄλλοις ὑπῆρχεν ἡ στέγη κοινὴ δι' ἀλλήλων δεδομημένη μηκίσταις δοκοῖς καὶ διηκούσαις ἁπάντων, ὡς τοὺς μέσους τοίχους ὑπὸ τῶν αὐτῶν συγκρατουμένους ξύλων ἐρρωμενεστέρους 8.68 διὰ τοῦτο γίνεσθαι.[69]

Although Josephus' context does not give an exact understanding of the function of μέσους τοίχους, "middle-walls," it is seen that they were used in conjunction with load-bearing wooden beams to support common-roof structures of contiguous houses. In this type of construction, the tops of the μέσοι τοίχοι, "middle-walls," were stabilized by the crossing wooden beams and the long wooden beams were strengthened by resting on "middle-walls" at various points. It should be noted that Josephus differed from Paul in that he used a compound version of μεσότοιχον, μέσος τοῖχος. The main point is that Josephus used τοὺς μέσους τοίχους as an architectural term describing walls that must be able to support the load bearing beams of a roof-ceiling structure or an upper level structure of some sort.

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[69] Flavius Josephus, *Antiquitates Judaicae*, in *TLG*, 8.67-68; an alternate source is Flavius Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities: Books 5-8*, trans. H. St. J. Thackeray and Ralph Marcus, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1934; reprint, 1977); the author's translation follows: And regarding (some of) their houses/chambers, each of these was not joined to the neighboring houses, but regarding others, the roof was common throughout each other's (houses) having been constructed with the longest load bearing beams, which are extending through all, as the middle-walls are being strengthened collectively by the wooden beams, which are (also) being made stronger 8.68 on account of this (type) of construction.

Josephus went on to discuss Solomon's division of the ναός, "Temple," of Jerusalem into two parts, the ἄδυτον meaning "that which is not to be entered," which was also called the Holy of Holies, and the ἅγιον ναον, "holy temple," which was also called the Holy Place. Solomon accomplished this by building a μέσος τοῖχος, "middle-wall," from one of the side walls to the opposite wall. Josephus wrote,

> ἐκτεμών δὲ τὸν μέσον τοῖχον θύρας ἐπέστησε κεδρίνας χρυσὸν αὐταῖς πολύν ἐνεργασάμενος καὶ τορείαν ποικίλην.[70]

Here, Josephus discussed a "middle-wall" being constructed with the purpose of *dividing* a large temple area into two smaller isolated areas. The smaller area was not to be entered by anyone except the High Priest, and he could enter only once a year. Josephus classified this smaller area as τὸν ἔνδοθεν οἶκον, "the inner house."[71] In the second case, Josephus made it clear that a particular type wall, a μέσος τοῖχος—not just a τοῖχος—was used to separate the Temple into two smaller spaces.

Solomon's temple construction was unique in that its "middle-wall" had a cutout. Many temples of other areas that had a back room during this era did not have an access opening cut through the "middle-wall." Dividing "middle-walls" were normally solid. It was interesting to note that Josephus used the term "middle-wall" once for construction within a temple and once as part of the construction of the οἴκων, "houses, chambers," that surrounded the same temple. This demonstrates some flexibility in usage of this term going beyond construction of only a temple and included houses around the temple that probably housed supplies as well as priests.

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[70] Josephus, *Antiquitates Judaicae*, in *TLG*, 8.71; the author's translation follows: And having cut out the middle-wall, he (Solomon) set doors of cedar with much gold and carving having been worked into them.

[71] Ibid., 8.71-72.

Most temples other than those of the Near Middle East housed their gods in the larger temple area separated from the smaller back area by a solid "middle-wall." The people did not expect their gods to live in a small inaccessible area such as in Solomon's temple. Lucian's description of eight paintings within an Athenian temple below illustrates a Temple with a solid "middle-wall."

Lucian of Samosata: Second-Century Philosopher

In his work, *The Hall*, Lucian used the words τοὺ μέσον τοῖχον to describe the back wall of an Athenian temple as he described the interior. In this temple were various paintings painted into the walls, and there was a statue of Athena centered on the back wall of the temple accessible to the people. According to Lucian's writing, as people entered the temple though the main front doors, they would see four pictures painted on the wall to their right and four pictures painted on the wall to their left. They would also see a white stone statue of Athena that had been raised up and located along the back wall directly across from the entrance.

In his descriptive tour of the Athenian temple, one would have started the tour on the right side of the hall entrance after entering. One would initially see four pictures along the right τοῖχος, "wall."[72] Lucian described the four pictures on the right and then described the location and statue of Athena, which was located directly in front of τὸν μέσον τοῖχον, "the middle-wall," which is the Hall's back wall,

> Κατὰ δὲ τὸν μέσον τοῖχον ἄνω τῆς ἀντιθύρου Ἀθηνᾶς ναὸς πεποίηται, ἡ θεὸς λίθου λευκοῦ, τὸ σχῆμα οὐ

[72] Lucian, *De Domo*, in *TLG*, 21; an alternate source is *Lucian*, trans. A. M. Harmon, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979), § 21, 198; the author's translation follows: And in front of the middle-wall (the back-wall), raised up and opposite the doorway, a shrine for Athene has been constructed. The goddess is (made) of white stone, her appearance is not as a warrior, but as such a one as a young goddess of war might appear during peace.

πολεμιστήριον, ἀλλ' οιον ἂν γένοιτο εἰρήνην ἀγούσης θεοῦ πολεμικῆς.[73]

Therefore, when Lucian used the words τὸν μέσον τοῖχον to refer to the back wall of an Athenian temple, it gives one a clue to its style of construction; one would expect this temple to have had a room behind the main sanctuary. It was normal to extend the sides of the temples past the back wall of each main temple area in order to form a back porch or in some cases a back room. These back walls did not normally have a doorway cut into them; they were solid walls.[74] Lucian used the same term as Josephus, μέσος τοῖχος, to describe a wall used within a temple to subdivide its interior into two parts.

Physical Boundary Walls: A First-Century Fable, The Lives of Aesop

The anonymous writings about Aesop, who was depicted as a wise man whose life was full of witty sayings and adventures, date back as early as the sixth century B.C. with its final form manifesting itself in the final form of *The Lives of Aesop*, which came into existence in the first-century of the Christian Era.[75] In its final form, this fable used the compound term τὸ μεσότοιχον, "middle-wall," to express the thought of someone crossing over a "boundary or divisional-wall" along the property line of adjoining neighbors. The writers put these words into the mouth of Aesop's master's wife as she spoke to Aesop about fulfilling a promise that he was breaking,

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[73] Ibid., § 26.

[74] J. A. North, "Temple," in *OCD*, 1482.

[75] Jeffrey S. Rusten, "Aesop," in *OCD*, 29. There are legends of Aesop dating back to the sixth-century B.C. with an accompanying biography as early as the fifth. It included a large repository of slave anecdotes about Aesop and his hapless Samian master; and *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae: Canon of Greek Authors and Works*, comp. Luci Berkowitz and Karl A. Squitier, 2d ed. (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 398. Berkowitz and Squitier date the final form of *Vitae Aesopi* to the first-century of the Christians era.

ἐγὼ εἰς τὸν ἐμόν σε ἐμισθωσάμην ἀγρὸν σκάπτειν· σὺ δὲ ὑπερβὰς τὸ μεσότοιχον εἰς τὰ τοῦ γείτονος ἔσκαψας. ἀπόδος οὖν, καὶ λάβε τὴν στολήν.[76]

In this document that reached its final form around the first century, the term τὸ μεσότοιχον was used to represent a boundary or divisional wall between neighbors. In Lloyd Daly's translation of this term, he simply translates τὸ μεσότοιχον as "the property line."[77]

Latin Law and Literature Regarding Architectural and Boundary Walls

It is clear even from the limited number of Greek sources discussed above that the architectural term, μεσότοιχον, which is a contracted form of μέσος τοῖχος, had been used by others prior to and contemporaneously with Paul to describe walls that were designed to separated one area from another within buildings and between adjoining properties. Metaphorically, Athenaeus used the architectural term μεσότοιχον to describe an invisible barrier between a life of virtue and a life of indulgence. One cannot live in both worlds.

What is missing from this Greek research is an abundance of evidence to sustain the idea that the word μεσότοιχον or its compound equivalent, μέσος τοῖχος, was commonly used by those living in the first-century Mediterranean world to denote the actual physical solid "party-walls" used in construction to divide a multi-dwelling building into individual residences. Although Josephus used the term μέσος

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[76] *Vita Aesopi Westermanniana*, in *TLG*, 75.14-16; the author's translation follows: I have hired you to dig (plow) my field, but you have gone over the boundary wall to the neighbor plowing his fields (τα). Therefore, fulfill (your promise) and receive the cloak (that I promised in return).

[77] *Aesop Without Morals*, trans. Lloyd W. Daly (New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1961), 67.

τοῖχος in such as way as to show that "middle-walls" were used in the construction of contiguous οἴκοι, "houses," these houses were associated with a specific temple construction.

In their research of the Greek language, James Moulton and George Milligan stated that there was a high probability that the word μεσότυχων was an alternate form of μεσότοιχων, and this term was used to describe a part of a house that was up for sale in Hermopolis around the turn of the second century of this era; this again indicates that "middle-walls" were associated with οἴκοι, "houses," in addition to ναοί, "temples."[78] Therefore, from the existing Greek evidence given above, there is still some question as to how common it would have been to use the word μεσότοιχα to denote solid "party-walls" for homes and shops in the first-century Mediterranean world.

Although Greek was the predominate language of the Eastern Mediterranean World and known throughout all of it, the West used Latin alongside Greek. Therefore, it is important to research some of the surviving Latin texts looking for additional clues to the meaning and general usage of "middle-walls."

Starting with references to the New Testament, Tertullian writing in late second century and early third century discussed the letter of Ephesians in his work *Adversus Marcionem*, "Against Marcion." In this work, Tertullian stated that Christ was our peace having made the Jew who was near to God and the Gentile who was distant into one entity and then went on to say that this happened because the *soluto medio pariete*

[78] Moulton and Milligan, *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament*, 400, found this evidence in volume 2, of *Amherst Papyri*, papyrus 98, line 9.

inimicitiae,[79] *in carne sua*,[80] "middle-wall of hostility having been destroyed through His own flesh."[81]

A couple centuries later, Eusebius Hieronymus Jerome was asked by Pope Damasus to review the many versions of the Bible in Latin and compile a uniform version that could become the standard; it has become known as the Vulgate, "Common," Latin Bible.[82] In Jerome's final Latin version, Eph 2:14 reads *ipse est enim pax nostra qui fecit utraque unum et medium parietem maceriae solvens inimicitiam in carne sua*, "Namely, He Himself is our peace who has made out of both one entity—indeed breaking down the solid middle-wall, the hostility, through His own flesh."[83] In both cases stated above, Tertullian and Jerome chose to use the words *medius paries*, to express either the Greek word μεσότοιχον or its compound equivalent, μέσος τοῖχος, as its direct equivalent.

Because *medius* can mean either "middle" or "common" in Latin, it is best to search Latin texts from this era for both *medius* and *communis* paired with various noun cases of *paries*. In reality, both terms, "middle-wall" and "common-wall" often denoted the same object, a modern day solid "party-wall."

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[79] Tertullian used an ablative absolute, *soluto medio pariete inimicitiae*, to translate Paul's aorist participial clause τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ λύσας, τὴν ἔχθραν dropping τοῦ φραγμοῦ as the genitive of quality and replacing it with *inimicitiae* as a substitute for Paul's apposition τὴν ἔχθραν; Tertullian then added the prepositional phrase *in carne sua* to match Paul's Greek ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ.

[80] The Latin text was taken from Tertullian's work recorded in *Tertullian Adversus Marcionem: Books 4 and 5*, ed. and trans. Ernest Evans (Oxford: Clarendon, 1972), 620.

[81] The Latin translations shown in this work are the author's unless noted otherwise.

[82] *ODCC: The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, ed. F.L. Cross and E.A. Livingstone, 3d ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 867, 1710.

[83] The Vulgate Latin text was taken from the *Biblia Sacra Vulgata*, (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1969).

Although Henrico Stephano defined a μεσότοχον using both the words *paries medius* and *paries intergerinus*,[84] there was no first or second-century evidence of the use of the phrase *intergeries paries*. Following are some Latin sources, which are listed primarily in chronological order, that clearly show that the general population was familiar with the idea of "middle-walls" as specifically being those walls that were used by contractors to subdivide multi-space buildings into individual residences and businesses.

Titus Maccius Plautus: Late Second-century B.C. Comic Playwright

From the introduction of Titus Maccius Plautus' play, *Miles Gloriosus*, "The Boastful Soldier or Captain,"[85] which was written around the turn of the second century B.C.,[86] one was placed in the middle of the lives of two Athenian youths whose lives had been disrupted when a captain stole the young man's companion and whisked her off to Ephesus. In the play the young man's servant followed the young lady and wrote his master telling him where they were. It just so happened that the captain lived beside a friend of the Athenian youth's family in residences separated only by a "middle-wall." The servant had made a hole through their common *medium parietem*, which in turn allowed the two Athenian youths to communicate and figure out a plan to convince the captain that he needed to send the young Athenian lady away. This particular "middle-wall" was a solid wall isolating the two residences. Plautus' usage of the words *medius paries* matches well the Greek usages of the word μεσότοιχον as discussed above.

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[84] *Thesaurus Graecae Linguea*, comp. Henrico Stephano, ed. Carolus B. Hase, 2d ed. (Paris: Royal Academy of Inscriptions and Human Literature, 1829; reprint, Graz: Druck, 1954), 829.

[85] Titus Maccius Plautus, *Miles Gloriosus*, "*Argumentum II*," in *PHI: Latin and Christian Texts*, CD-ROM, ver. 5.3 (Los Altos, CA: Packard Humanities Institute, 1991). The words *medium parietem* were used as described above by T. Maccius Plautus in his work *Miles Gloriosus* in the second recorded introduction titled "*Argumentum* II" to denote the "dividing-wall" between two houses.

[86] Peter G. Brown, "Titus Maccius Pautus," in *OCD*, 1194-96. Plautus wrote his comic plays during the years 205-184 B.C.

L. Annaeus Seneca Senior: Late First-Century B.C. Early First-Century Roman Reciter

In his work titled *Controversiae*, Seneca wrote about one case where a five-year old had witnessed the killing of his father by his mother's lover. Part of the circumstances surrounding the killing included the murderer digging through a *communis paries* that had separated this family's residence from the residence of their eldest son who was living next door.[87] Seneca wrote this work around the turn of the first century having been born around 50 B.C.[88]

Plinius Caecilius Secundus: Late First-Century Roman Senator

In his letter to Clusinius Gallus, Pliny the Younger wrote about one of his houses that was located approximately seventeen miles from Rome on the seafront.[89] In his letter, Pliny used the words *parietem medium*[90] and *communi pariete*[91] to denote walls that were in his house and on his property respectively: (1) it appears from context that Pliny used the term *communis paries*, "common wall," to express the idea of a

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[87] Seneca, *Controversiae*, 7.5.0.9, in *PHI*; an additional source is Seneca, *The Elder Seneca*, vol. 2, trans. M. Winterbottom (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), 100f.

[88] Christian J. Fordyce and Michael Winterbottom, "Lucius Annaeus Seneca," in *OCD*, 95-96.

[89] Roger A. Mynors, "Pliny the Younger," in *OCD*, 1198. Pliny lived from A.D. 61-112, studied in Rome, and later became a senator with duties to include governing Bithynia from A.D. 112 until he apparently died within that same year.

[90] Plinius Caecilius Secundus, *Epistulae*, 2.17.21.1, in *PHI*. Pliny only used a form of *medius paries* once in this letter; it was in the accusative case.

[91] Pliny the Younger, *Letters*, vol. 1. trans. Betty Radice, Loeb Classical Library, no. 55 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969), 2.17.10.6-7, 136. Pliny only used a form of *communis paries* once in this letter, while the word *paries*, "wall," was used many times.

"shared or dividing wall" within the house. It is hard from context of the letter to know whether Pliny was talking about two rooms that were sharing a common wall as might be the case of two adjoining rooms one leading into the other with one long wall or whether he was stating that this particular *communis paries* was used to separate two adjoining rooms from one another. Betty Radice understood Pliny to be indicating a common wall that was used to divide two adjacent rooms,[92] and (2) Pliny used the term *paries medius* to denote a wall at the end of a garden, which had been built to separate the garden from some additional living quarters. Therefore, although the context is not totally clear, it appears that Pliny used a form of the phrase *commonis paries* to denote an interior dividing-wall and a form of the phrase *medius paries* to denoted an exterior boundary-wall.

Digesta Iustiniani Augusti: First to Third-Century Digest of Roman Law

It was noted above at the beginning of this Latin section that the direct Latin equivalent to the Greek word μέσος τοῖχος was *medius paries*, "middle-wall," and that another equivalent for μέσος τοῖχος or its contracted equivalent μεσότοιχον was *communis paries*, "common-wall." Some of the strongest evidence giving clear meaning to both sets of words, *medius paries* and *communis paries*, comes from a digest of Roman law, the *Digesta Iustiniani Augusti*, which was written by jurists during the first three centuries of the Christian Era and later compiled, condensed, and edited by a group commissioned by Emperor Justinian.

This group started their work in A.D. 530 and completed and published it in 533.[93] In section 33.3.4 of the Roman law code, *Digesta*

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[92] Ibid., 137.

[93] A. Arthur Schiller, *Roman Law: Mechanisms of Development* (New York: Moulton, 1978), 33-35, stated that the *Digesta Iustiniani* consisted of extracts from the writings of jurists of the *first to third* centuries of our era; it was compiled by a commission appointed by Emperor Justinian & started in A.D. 530 & completed/published in 533.

Iusiniani,[94] it becomes clear that *medii parietes*, "middle-walls," were used as solid "dividing-walls" between adjoining houses and were considered as common property to the adjoining neighbors. In one particular case, the commissioned group cited the jurist Jauolen, who had ruled on a case where an individual had bequeathed two adjoining houses to different individuals. Jauolen stated that they would own the *medius paries* together as common property. *Digesta Iustiniani* 33.3.4 reads,

> *Si is qui duas aedes habebat unas mihi, alteras tibi legauit et medius paries, qui utrasque aedes distinguat, interuenit, eo iure eum communem nobis esse existimo, quo, si paries tantum duobus nobis communiter esset legatus, ideoque neque me neque te agere posse ius non esse alteri ita immissas habere: nam quod communiter socius habet, et in iure eum habere constitit: itaque de ea re arbiter communi diuidundo sumendus est.*[95]

In this particular case, Jauolen's ruling meant that neither owner could restrict the other from using the dividing-wall to support the necessary support beams that they each might need for their individual contiguous homes. The support beams under discussion were normally inserted through or rested on the middle-wall of adjoining houses or shops in order to support either a roof system or additional rooms above each of the main levels.

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[94] *Digesta Iustiniani*, 33.3.4, in *PHI*; a couple of additional sources are: *Digesta Iustiniani Augusti*, vol. 2, edited by Theodor Mommsen and Paul Krueger (Berlin: Weidmannos, 1963), 114-15, and *The Digest of Justinian*, vol. 3, Latin text edited by Theodor Mommsen and Paul Krueger, English translation by Alan Watson (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), 114-15.

[95] The author's translation follows: If he who has two houses has legated/bequeathed one to me and the other to you and (there is) a middle-wall that divides each of the households; having come between us, I consider it by law to be common to us, that it is as if the wall had been bequeathed as such to the two of us in common; therefore neither I nor you are able to urge/force the right of the other to not allow insertions (through the middle-wall; probably referring to support beams as discussed by Papinian in section 8.2.36); on the other hand, that which has a common association, and by rights it (the association) might become inflexible, and therefore, regarding that issue, an arbitrator will have to be summoned for the dividing of the common property.

In an earlier section of the *Digesta*, 8.2.36, the jurist Papinian had given insight into the rights of an adjacent property owner to insert support beams into another person's property. He described a case where two houses were under a common roof, which meant that the two residences were separated by a common wall. In this particular case, Papinian ruled that either owner of contiguous residences had the right to insert *foretigna*, "wooden timbers, beams," into the other's *regio*, "space." These timbers would have normally been inserted through a shared "middle-wall." Each owner was responsible for maintaining the roof structure that was located directly above their respective dwellings.[96]

Regarding the cost of repairing a "common-wall," Ulpian said that the repair cost of restoring a "common-wall" was normally divided evenly between the co-owners,

> *Si aedes communes sint aut paries communis et eum reficere uel demolire uel in eum im(m)ittere quid opus sit, communi diuidundo iudicio erit agendum, aut interdicto uti possidetis experimur.*[97]

In section 8.2.19.0-2 of the *Digesta*, the jurist Paul covered three different scenarios: (1) one may have a bath house, a bathing room, next to a *parietem communem* as long as the water from the bath does not hurt the common-wall, (2) one may have a tiled vault against their side of a *parietis communis* as long as it can stand alone if the common-wall needs

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[96] In section 8.2.13.0-1 of the *Digesta Iustiniani*, the jurist Procul covered two cases that show that owners could not do activities on their side of a *paries communis* that might hurt the integrity of their shared wall, and in the event that a common wall was damaged, neither owner could expect the adjoining owner to reimburse them for any overly expensive ornamentation that they may have added to their side of the wall. This is comparable to the jurist Pomponi's ruling as stated in section 39.2.39. Similarly, in sections 39.2.37, the jurist Ulpian discussed who was responsible for rebuilding a *communis paries* and said that the responsibility was to be shared equally unless one of the owners had demolished and rebuilt the wall without a legitimate reason to do so.

[97] *Digesta Iustiniani* 10.1.12; the author's translation follows: If common houses exist or rather a common-wall, and it (the common-wall) is to be repaired or demolished or some work is to be completed on it, a common dividing (of expenses) will be urged as a judgment, or else by an official verdict, we will experience you (pl.) taking possession (of it).

to be repaired, and (3) steps can be placed against a *parietem communem* as long as they can be removed; they must not be permanently attached to the wall. In section 8.2.40, Paul gave additional information regarding "common-walls," when he ruled that the law did not allow individuals to cutout an opening in a *pariete communi*, "common-wall," so that they would not emit light into the other side; they may not by law insert *fenestras*, "openings," into the *pariete communi*. According to the law, it appears that "common-walls," which were also called "middle-walls," were to remain solid.

Regarding walls built along property lines in this era, those writing in Latin similarly to those using Greek also used words such as "middle-wall" or "common-wall" to denote the walls that were built to separate adjoining properties. In law section 8.2.25, Pomponi had ruled regarding an apparent boundary wall, which he called a *paries communis*. He stated that if there were two houses built side by side on sloping ground, the owner of the lower house had the right to raise the height of the *parietis communis*, "common-wall," which was between their houses, to a level higher than the owner of the upper house might have wanted presumably not wanting his view obscured of what laid below him. In law section 8.5.14, Pomponi addressed a different situation involving damage to an external *paries communis*. In this ruling, Pomponi stated that if one of the owners of the common-wall between their properties did something to cause the wall to sag toward the house of the other, he was responsible to fix the wall at his own expense.

Ovid: Late First-Century B.C. Early First-Century Poet

Ovid, a popular and leading Roman poet who wrote toward the end of first century B.C. and into the early part of the first century of the Christian Era,[98] wrote about two young lovers, Pyramius and Thisbe, who lived in adjoining houses that were separated by a "middle-wall" in a foreign land. This poem is ideal to complete this picture of the dividing nature of "common/middle-walls" as perceived by the general public. His poem titled "Minyeides: Pyramius and Thisbe" was contained in one

[98] Stephen E. Hinds, "Publius Ovidus Naso," in *OCD*, 1084-87.

of his larger works called *Metamorphoses*. In this poem Ovid stated that the young lovers lived in *contiguas domos*, "contiguous houses,"[99] of which both sets of parents forbid them to date or ever consider marriage. Ovid wrote of their ability to communicate from within their respective homes,

> *Fissus erat tenui rima, quam duxerat olim,*
> *cum fieret paries domui communis utrique.*
> *Id vitium nulli per saecula longa notatum*
> *(quid non sentit amor?) primi vidistis amantes,*
> *et vocis fecistis iter; tutaeque per illud*
> *murmure blanditiae minimo transire solebant.*[100]

The lovers had found a safe way to communicate through a crack in their dividing "common-wall," but when they set up a secret meeting so that they could meet in person, Pyramus was deceived into thinking that a lioness had killed Thisbe; therefore, he killed himself and when Thisbe found him dead, she killed herself. The lovers ended up tragically dying because of the parents' unwillingness to allow them to associate. What becomes clear from this poem, which was written around the turn of the first century by a poet who was well known and liked by the public, is that many people around the turn of the first century were familiar with the dividing function of what some called "common-walls," which were also commonly called "middle-walls."

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[99] Ovid, *Die Metamorphosendes P. Ovidius*, ed. Hugo Maguns (Gotha, Germany: F. A. Perthes, 1892), 4.65-71, <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?lookup=ov.+met.+1.1> (Accessed January 25, 2004). The publisher of this site is Tufts University, Somerville, MA.

[100] Ibid., 4.57; the author's translation follows: A little crack had been developed, which had been considered previously, as a common-wall for each side was made for a house. That defect has been observed by no one for a long time (what does love not sense?) Being first (of this age), you lovers have seen (it), and by voice you (pl.) make a path, which has been protected through it by the faintest whispering of flatteries, they were accustomed to cross over (to each other).

Summary

It becomes clear when looking at the Greek sources containing the various noun cases of the words μεσότοιχον and μέσος τοῖχος and the Latin sources containing the various noun cases of the words *medius paries* and *communis paries* discussed above that "middle-walls" and "common-walls" were synonymous words denoting walls that were used to separate residences, shops, factories, and even properties. When considering buildings, these architectural terms were commonly used to denote the solid divisional walls used to subdivide multi-use buildings into individual shops and residences.

In our Western world today, these types of solid walls are typically called "party-walls." These "dividing-walls" were similar to outer walls in the sense that they were load-bearing walls and thereby helped support either a common roof-structure or additional levels above the ground level. It is interesting to note from Roman law of the first three centuries of the Christian era that these "middle-walls" were not to have openings in them so that light from one side could not bother those living on the other side.

These walls were considered to be the common property of the two adjoining households. Any repair or total rebuilding costs were normally divided evenly between the co-owners of their "common-walls" as long as the replacement cost was reasonable. It was not reasonable to expect one of the co-owners to pay one-half of the cost of replacing their adjoining co-owner's frescoes or other ornamentation if that individual had purchased overly expensive ornamentation.

Supporting Archeological Evidence

General Background

From the literary evidence given above, it is apparent that "middle-walls," which were also called "common-walls," were commonly used to isolate contiguous residences, shops, factories, and even properties from one another in the Mediterranean world during Paul's lifetime. Archeological evidence even from times much earlier in the Near Ancient East parallels this literary evidence going back centuries showing similar usage over time. From Claire Epstein's

excavations of a village, Rasm Harbush, in the Golen Heights, which exhibits features similar to numerous other Chalcolithic villages of fourth millennium B.C., it is apparent that it was not uncommon for houses to be built adjacent to one another sharing a "common cross-wall."[101]

In his article, "Did the Patriarchs Live at Givat Sharett," Dan Bahat developed a theory showing that Abraham probably lived during the eighteenth century B.C. in small villages such as Givat Sharett; these smaller unwalled villages were normally located close to more heavily populated towns. From his previous excavations and his excavation work at Givat Sharett, Bahal noted that many of the houses in this village were constructed side-by-side and that sharing "'party' walls" was customary.[102]

When William Dever searched the archeological ruins of the early Iron Age, 1200-1000 B.C., he noted that the heartland of ancient Israel had approximately 300 small unwalled agricultural villages that had sprung-up during this period.[103] Dever noted that many of these villages that have been excavated were characterized by four-room courtyard houses clustered in groups of two to four with many of these houses sharing "common walls."[104]

Lawrence Stager's work concurred with Dever's findings. Stager stated that the early Israelite villages were rarely, if ever, fortified, and they normally consisted of contiguous houses using the outer houses' back walls for the perimeter of the village. These outer houses used "common walls" to preserve privacy for adjacent home owners.[105]

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[101] Claire Epstein, "Before History: The Golen's Chalcolithic Heritage," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 21, no. 6 (1995): 54, 58-59. Epstein dated this Stone-Copper Age village between 4500-3500 B.C.

[102] Dan Bahat, "Did the Patriarchs Live at Givat Sharett?" *Biblical Archaeology Review* 4, no. 3 (1978): 8-11.

[103] William G. Dever, "The Search for History in the Bible: Save Us from Postmodern Malarkey," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 26, no. 2 (2000): 32.

[104] Ibid., 33.

[105] Lawrence E. Stager, "The Song of Deborah: Why Some Tribes Answered the Call and Others Did Not," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 15, no. 1 (1989): 55, 58.

When evaluating the excavation work completed at Tel Megiddo, Israel Finkelstein and David Ussishkin revisited an old argument over how some of the long contiguous buildings had been used. They debated whether these buildings were used originally to house troops, horses, and/or supplies.[106] They note that the majority of contemporary archeological scholars dated the origin of these buildings to the ninth century B.C.

Many of these contiguous buildings each contained three long subdivided rooms with "common walls" connecting each building with identical adjacent buildings unless a particular building was an end building.[107] In this particular case, archeological evidence indicates that even large contiguous buildings were constructed with "middle-walls" and were possibly used for housing troops, livestock, and/or supplies.

From just a few examples taken from earlier eras of the Middle East, it becomes clear that there was a fairly early practice to use "common/middle-walls" when building contiguous houses and buildings. Presumably, this was to minimize the use of building materials and land needed for living areas or for village protection utilizing outer houses to build a solid outer wall with "middle-walls" dividing each of the perimeter homes one from another.

Let's look at some of the archaeological evidence that existed for the rest of the ancient Mediterranean world to support a widespread use of "middle-walls" over centuries to divide multi-residence and multi-use buildings into individual residences and shops. The brief survey below will start in the West and work eastward to Asia.

Rome

In an excavation at Ostia, which is located directly southwest of Rome at the mouth of the Tiber River, a large *insula*, "large multi-story

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[106] Israel Finkelstein and David Ussishkin, "Back to Megiddo: A New Expedition Will Explore the Jewel in the Crown of Canaan/Israel," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 20, no. 1 (1994): 26-33, 36-43.

[107] Ibid., 39.

building with apartments," called "the House of Diana" was uncovered. John Stambaugh noted that the "House of Diana" is a good representative of typical *insula* located in Ostia and Rome during this era under investigation.[108] This building originally housed both shops and residences and was shown to have one main entrance corridor for several rooms including some in the north-west corner of the first floor. A large portion of its lower level was divided using "middle-walls" into *tabernae*, "shops," With entrances opening to the street. The second level was reached by three different sets of stairs and divided using "middle-walls" into apartments.[109]

Greece

Farther east in Greece, the dwellings may have changed shape somewhat, but those who lived in cities or urban areas such as Athens, Delos, Olynthus, Ephesus, and Sardis normally lived in multi-family dwellings. Michael Jameson said that the Greek houses were contiguous in nature sharing "party-walls"; in this close proximity environment, Jameson stated that privacy was an important concern.[110]

The excavation work on the island of Delos provides a good Greek example of a residential layout. Delos was sacked in 88 B.C. by Archelaus, Mithradates VI's general, and again in 66 B.C. by pirates.[111] A.W. Lawrence showed how two contiguous houses—that were located on the island of Delos—looked after they had been remodeled after their partial destruction in 88 B.C. Lawrence said that this type of configuration was common in other Greek communities including

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[108] John E. Stambaugh, *The Ancient Roman City*, 175; and Nicholas Purcell, "Ostia," in *OCD*, 1081, stated that Ostia was abandoned in the fifth century of the Christian era, and the area was only sparsely populated until the twentieth century due to malaria.

[109] Ibid., 175.

[110] Michael H. Jameson, "Greek Houses," in *OCD*, 731.

[111] Richard W. Catling, "Delos," in *OCD*, 443.

Olynthus as far back as the fifth century B.C.[112] He noted that although there were only a few houses that had been excavated dating back to the first century, the older Greek houses provided an idea of the houses built during the early Christian era because most of them adhered to the older type.[113] He noted that a house that he had labeled as "E," which was not an end house, had two "middle-walls" that separated it from its adjacent neighbors. Lawrence's work led him to believe that the remodeling of 88 B.C. did not alter the original "middle-walls," which had been constructed during the fifth century B.C.[114]

Eastern Europe

Olynthus, formally Bottiaean, which was located on the mainland of the Chalcidic peninsula,[115] was constructed around 430 and destroyed around 348 B.C.[116] The Chalcidic peninsula is located in Eastern Europe. Due to Olynthus' initial construction date and its destruction in 348 B.C. by Philip of Macedonia, it provides a window in time from which to examine additional building sites. The houses in Olynthus were laid out in an orthogonal pattern. Each block consisted of ten houses, five on each side of a shared *stenopos*, "drainage alley."[117]

Lawrence said that each block was approximately 100 yards long by 40 yards wide allowing each house to occupy approximately four

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[112] Arnold W. Lawrence, *Greek Architecture*, 3d ed. (Middlesex, England: Penguin, 1973), 247.

[113] Ibid., 249.

[114] Ibid., 247.

[115] Nicholas G. Hammond, "Olynthus," in *OCD*, 1067.

[116] Lisa G. Nevett, *House and Society in the Ancient Greek World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 53, discussed briefly the destruction and cites *Demosthenes* 9.26 as a source of information.

[117] Ibid., 56.

hundred square yards.[118] Each row is subdivided into individual residences by means of "middle-walls." Nevett stated that it is also known that at least some of the houses had upper stories because of the existing stone bases found that had been set to support wooden staircases.[119] In her research, Nevett discovered that although most of the houses were fairly consistent in overall size, there was a large degree of diversity regarding the design of the internal arrangement for each dwelling.[120]

Asia Minor

Ephesus

McKay discussed how excavations at Ephesus had uncovered extensive remains of two large *insulae* that were constructed during the first century of the Christian Era.[121] The *insulae* were located on a three-level terraced hillside across from the Temple of Hadrian. These large building complexes confirm the use of multi-story buildings in Asia for residential, business, and some type of public forum. Their construction and use was similar to *insulae* in Rome and other areas of the Roman Empire. McKay stated that these large multi-story building complexes with their residence and business spaces were separated by "middle-walls," originated in the east and moved with architects and immigrants to the west.[122]

Sardis

This last archeological example involves an excavation covering buildings at a slightly later time, around A.D. 400, which allows one to

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[118] Lawrence, *Greek Architecture*, 241.

[119] Nevett, *Ancient Greek World*, 56.

[120] Ibid., 64.

[121] Alexander G. McKay, *Houses, Villas, and Palaces in the Roman World* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1975), 212-13.

[122] Ibid., 214-17.

see a continuation in the trend to build many shops and residences in larger buildings and separate them using "middle-walls." This excavated area in Sardis contained a large Christian church, the largest known excavated Jewish synagogue, bath houses, and courts with many business shops and residences around the colonnaded perimeter.[123] It shows contiguous businesses and residences still using "middle-walls" right up to the time that Sardis was destroyed by a fire around A.D. 640, which may have been caused by either invaders or an earthquake.[124] In the construction along one of the streets, there was a large straight colonnaded structure divided into individual shops and residences by "middle-walls." These shops and residences were sixteen feet high providing its occupants with a ground floor for business and an upper floor for their residence.[125]

The Meaning of Τὸ Μεσότοιχον Τοῦ Φραγμοῦ

Out of the many contemporary proposals giving meaning to the word μεσότοιχον, four of the possibilities that were discussed above are listed below for convenience in order of their increasing probability. This probability is based on the theory that these individuals were fairly familiar with the term μεσότοιχον and therefore knew how to apply its destruction to the destruction of Christ's desired destruction of their generational mutual hostility.

The four leading theories listed in order of increasing probability theorize that the possible meaning of the word μεσότοιχον; (1) another metaphorical image, a wall separating the natural from the

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[123] John S. Crawford, "Multiculturalism at Sardis," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 22, no. 5 (1996): 39-40.

[124] Ibid., 39-40.

[125] Ibid., 40.

supernatural,[126] (2) the actual wall in the Temple in Jerusalem that separated the Gentiles from Jews assuming that a Gentile audience in Asia Minor would have an understanding of the physical Temple and its courtyard construction, (3) the sense of a wall in general knowing that the function of a wall is normally to isolate one side from the other, and (4) an ordinary architectural term that was known in Asia Minor to denote some type of dividing wall(s) used in temple constructions.

From the research outlined above, a fifth scenario emerges. When Paul used the thought of destroying a μεσότοιχον compared to destroying the ongoing hostility that still existed between Jew and Gentile Believer, he was transferring attributes from a well known Greek architectural term to a socially difficult concept in order to help his predominately Greek addressees understand more fully what he was saying. In the context of Ephesians, it becomes clear that Paul used the word μεσότοιχον, "middle-wall," to denote a type of wall that was commonly used in all types of construction throughout the Greco-Roman world to partition-off individual dwellings and business that were under a common roof as part of multiple occupancy buildings. Some of the time, this term was even used to denote the type of wall used to isolate one area of a temple from another and at other times to denote fences between adjoining properties to isolate one from another. Within the context of Ephesians, it is clear that Paul was referencing solid "middle-walls" between contiguous residences.

When Paul's total metaphorical clause is considered, it is noted that he added the genitive τοῦ φραγμοῦ to the words τὸ μεσότοιχον. Why did he do so?

Archibald Robertson translates τοῦ φραγμοῦ as "of partition" noting that φραγμός normally denoted some type of fence originating from the word φράσσω, therefore he translated τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ

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[126] This theory might have derived initially from the long version of Ignatius' "Letter to the Trallins," 2.9.4, in which the author used the words τὸ μεσότοιχον to represent metaphorically a wall separating heaven from earth. Jesus destroyed this dividing wall for all Saints when He died on the cross.

φραγμοῦ as "the middle wall of partition," which is a good literal rendering.[127] The form of the word φραγμός had been used in only three other texts of the New Testament: (1) Matt 21:33, (2) Mark 12:1, and (3) Luke 14:23. In each of these occurrences, φραγμός denoted a wall that provided protection: (1) in Matt 21:33 and Mark 12:1 the writers told a parable in which this "wall," was used to keep animals out of a vineyard, and (2) in Luke 14:23, the author used the word φραγμούς to denote "hedges," "walls made of bushes," that were normally located for privacy around houses in the country.[128]

Because φραγμός relates closely to a fence, some have understood Paul to be picturing the μεσότοιχον as a fence, which then allows them to associate the "middle-wall" with the destruction of the Law. Hoehner said that this same Law that had been described in some later rabbinic writings as a fence surrounding and protecting Israel had also made Israel at times appear antisocial to the Gentiles.[129] This is true, and when one considers the idea of God's people appearing as antisocial due to the requirements of the Law combined with later rabbinic teachings that the Law itself could be understood as a fence that surrounded and protected Israel, one might think that Paul added τοῦ φραγμοῦ to τὸ μεσότοιχον to refer to "the Law that divides."

There are two main problems with this theory. Firstly, there is no literary evidence that equates the Law to a fence that protects Israel prior to later rabbinic writings, which means that it is anachronistic to impose those thoughts and writings onto first-century writers. Secondly, if τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ actually means "the Law that divides," then

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[127] Archibald T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament: The Epistles of Paul*, vol. 4 (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1931), 526-27.

[128] Moulton and Milligan, *Vocabulary of the Greek Testament*, 675, stated that φραγμός normally denoted a "fencing in," a "fence" in the New Testament; and cf. BDAG, 1064.

[129] Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 370-71.

Paul has equated either literally or metaphorically "the Law that divides" with ἔχθρα, "hatred," which theologically goes against everything that Paul teaches regarding the Law in his other writings, which can be summarized from Rom 7:12: "the Law is holy, righteous, and good."

When Paul attached τοῦ φραγμοῦ as a genitive of description, which is sometimes called the genitive of quality, to τὸ μεσότοιχον, he was doing so to bring clarity and emphasis to the word μεσότοιχον.[130] Paul was emphasizing the *dividing nature* of the "middle-wall," which therefore should be translated as the "*dividing* middle-wall." In order that twenty-first century English readers may understand this phrase accurately, it would be best if our translators would translate τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ as "the *dividing* middle-wall" or "the *dividing* party-wall."

When Paul attached the definite article to μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ, he was *pointing* to a particular *dividing* "middle-wall," the present ongoing inherited mutual hostility that Christ's followers brought with them from their pre-Christian days.[131] Paul was placing a picture in his addressees' heads of Christ's destruction of the ongoing mutual hostility between Jew and Gentile Believer being similar in some respects to a master builder of their day destroying a solid *dividing* middle-wall that had been separating two individual residences and thereby turning the enlarged space into one large residence. He was placing an image in their heads of Christ destroying the *dividing* middle-wall of generational hostility between two distinct families, Jew and Gentile Believers, bringing them *both* into the single family of God.

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[130] See Archibald T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light f Historical Research*, 3d ed. (New York: Hodder & Staughton, 1919; reprint, Nashville: Broadman, 1934), 496-97, for a discussion on "genitives of quality," "descriptive genitive," "attributive genitive," which all denote the same thing: the genitive used in the attributive position acts like an adjective, but it produces more sharpness and distinctiveness than a regular adjective; and cf. BDF, § 165, 91-92.

[131] For a brief discussion regarding the ongoing mutual hostility between Jew and Gentile, see subsection "The Meaning of Ἔχθρα between Jew and Gentile" located in chapter 3.

Jewish and Gentile Believer were now collectively "one new man." Paul was teaching them that God's family should not be divided for any reason, culturally or otherwise. For those who were in a close relationship with Christ, there was only one family, God's eternal holy family.

In addition, when the second aorist clause within this sentence was considered, Paul's predominately Gentile believing addressees could understood more fully how Christ's atoning death and the proclamation of making Israel's cultural ordinances optional for all would help them drop their generational mutual hostility. Jesus' atoning and reconciling death should help all of Jesus' followers work together without past cultural and religious barriers hindering their common fellowship. The second clause will be discussed more fully in the next chapter.

In the next breath, Paul stated that *both* had become "one new man" being reconciled *together* to God and now were *collectively* being built into God's holy ναός, "temple," "house" (Eph 2:20-22). The predominate Gentile addressees would have been more inclined to think of the ναός of Eph 2:21 in light of the many temples scattered throughout their cities and lands where their many gods lived rather than the Temple located in Jerusalem. A ναός was a common term that simply denoted a home where one or more of the many gods of their cities or nation resided whenever staying on earth. The transition from the architectural metaphorical imagery of Eph 2:14 to the architectural metaphorical imagery of Eph 2:20-22 would have been seamless in their minds.

In reality, Paul was telling them in a very direct way that Jesus' atoning death on a cross should remove all walls that might divide His followers, and in this case, he was pointing clearly to a specific "dividing-wall" that had been created by an ongoing generational mutual hostility that had existed between the Jew and the Gentile for centuries. Therefore, when Christ brought about peace through His atoning death it should lead to the destruction of their "*dividing* middle-wall" from the past. With some generational hostility against Jews still partially affecting his addressees, Paul taught his addressees that when one became one of Christ's followers, they were part of His family first and

foremost over any relationships that they may have had in the past. They were no longer primarily Jew or Gentile, they were in reality "one new man" who collectively made up the family of God. The two additional metaphorical images used by Paul in Eph 2:16 and 2:20-22 to help his addressees understand this more fully will be discussed further in chapter 4.

Chapter 3: The Meaning of ΤΟΝ ΝΟΜΟΝ ΤΩΝ ᾽ΕΝΤΟΛΩΝ ᾽ΕΝ ΔΟΓΜΑΣΙΝ ΚΑΤΑΡΓΗΣΑΣ

Laying the Foundation: An Overview of Modern Thought Regarding Paul's Teachings on the Salvific Efficacy of "Works of the Law"

In this chapter, Paul's use of the word νόμος and a corresponding phrase, ἔργα νόμου, will be examined in order to illuminate more fully the meaning of Paul's statement in Eph 2:15a that the Messiah either made ineffective or abolished τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν, which helped break down the mutual hostility that had been ongoing for a long time between the Jew and Gentile for all *who were now trusting Him*. This clause, τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν καταργήσας, and its proposed meaning will be discussed in the last major subsection below titled, A Proposed Meaning for τὸν Νόμον τῶν ᾽Εντολῶν ἐν Δόγμασιν Καταργήσας.

It is important to note in advance that this clause can be understood grammatically and linguistically in several different ways. Because this clause can be understood to mean that either the *whole* or *part* of the Mosaic Law had been either "abolished" or "made ineffective," it would be good to look at this text's literary and historical context to determine its actual meaning.

Paul had been raised in both Diaspora and Judean milieus. Born in the city of Tarsus in Cilicia, he later moved to Jerusalem and studied under Rabbi Gamaliel, a well known religious leader of his day. Paul remained in Jerusalem and served the Jewish community as a Pharisee, an individual professionally trained in the Mosaic Law.

After Jesus' death on a cross, Paul actively persecuted Jesus' followers considering them to be proclaiming a false gospel as they proclaimed Jesus as the atoning prophesied Messiah of Scripture. After a revelatory experience with the risen Jesus, Paul adjusted his understanding of Scripture to match his experience with the risen Christ.

With this special revelation from God altering his educational training, he recognized the identity and mission of Jesus started teaching that through one's close association with Jesus one became justified before God.[132] At times, Paul used the phrase being ἐν Χριστῷ, "in Christ," to denote this close association with Jesus.

From his training as a well educated Pharisee coupled with his personal encounter with the risen Messiah, Paul came to realized how Scripture worked together prophesying accurately about Him. He immediately started following Jesus (Acts 23:6). Due to his extensive education, his encounter with the risen Christ, and his devotion to serving God, Paul's writings *more than anyone else's of that period* provide a solid literary, historical, and theological framework helping contemporary readers understand the place of "works of the Law" in the newly inaugurated Messianic Age. Paul's letters are collectively the best primary source available today to understand God's teaching on how the Mosaic Law should be applied in the Messianic Age.

Nevertheless, Paul's teachings have become controversial today due in part to contemporary scholars putting too much weight on their different perceived historical frameworks without having a written theological treatise from Paul to clarify his thoughts on the place of the Mosaic Law within the Messianic Age. It is important to keep in mind that Paul's letters were normally written to address specific concerns of local congregations living in specific cities or regions. None of them contained a complete treatise on the place of the Law in the Messianic Age.

Klyne Snodgrass said that New Testament scholars are not wholly to blame for disagreeing over Paul's view of the Law, because

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[132] Stephen Westerholm, *Israel's Law and the Church's Faith: Paul and His Recent Interpreters* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 76, 152, stated that after Paul encountered the risen Christ, he was forced to reassess the nature, reason, and efficacy of doing "works of the Law," and realized that the demands of the Law were valid for *all* people placing all under condemnation through sin. He went on to say that for Paul, he came to realize that the atoning death of Christ shows that there is a major dilemma for all people, and at the same time, it demonstrates the righteousness of God (p. 80).

Paul's views are often enigmatic and at times appear contradictory.[133] Similarly, Douglas Moo said that there were no real consensus among contemporary scholars regarding Paul's teaching in respect to the place and efficacy of "works of the Law" in the Messianic Age. He continued by saying that there is still a need to find an integrating model that will handle accurately Paul's diverse material on the subject.[134] The research and findings within this book should move us toward an integrated model.

From the time of the Reformation to the present there have been many scholars such as Gerhard von Rad who saw first-century Judaism struggling within a theological milieu that was placing too much emphasis on doing "works of the Law."[135] There are others such as Krister Stendahl, E. P. Sanders, and James Dunn, who think that mainline first-century Judaism did not overemphasize the actual doing of "works of the Law." They think that the Reformers anachronistically

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[133] Klyne R. Snodgrass, "Spheres of Influence: A Possible Solution to the Problem of Paul and the Law," in *The Best in Theology*, vol. 3, ed. James I. Packer and Harold Smith (Carol Stream, IL: Christianity Today, 1989), 81.

[134] Douglas J. Moo, "Paul and the Law in the Last Ten Years," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 40, no. 2 (1987): 305-07.

[135] Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, vol. 1, *The Theology of Israel's Historical Traditions*, trans. D. M. G. Stalker (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1962), 90-92, 201, stated that initially in Israel's history there was flexibility in interpreting Jahweh's revelation, which included the Mosaic Law. This flexibility was eventually lost. Up to a certain point in time, the commandments had served the people of Israel, but later Israel ended up serving the commandments instead of the One who gave them the commandments. Von Rad went on to say that when Israel started serving the letter of the Law instead of the intent, she became hated by the people groups that she encountered and became known by the reproach ἀμιξία, which refers to those who refuse to have fellowship with other people.

transferred their own milieu back onto first-century Judaism.[136] For this group, one has to decide how Paul and his teachings fit into their own perceived socio-historical contextual setting that theorizes that Jews were focusing on their "faith" in God and not on doing the "works" that He commanded.

Some such as Sanders have decided that Paul was not really part of mainstream Judaism, and therefore, his teaching against those who place too much emphasis on doing "works of the Law" must arise out of a minority-sect mind set. Others such as Dunn state that Paul was definitely part of mainstream Judaism and acting accordingly. He understands Paul not to be teaching against "works of the Law" nor against "works righteousness," but instead, he sees Paul as using a literary technique to exhort his fellow Jews to agree on an existing common understanding of grace and works. According to Dunn, this common understanding matches Sanders' theory called "covenantal nomism."

Others such as Heikki Räisänen look at Paul's writings, which were difficult even for some of those who were part of the early Church,[137] and decided that Paul did not write with consistency and is in

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[136] Krister Stendahl, "The Apostle Paul and the Introspective Conscience of the West," *Harvard Theological Review* 56 (1963), 86f. For Stendahl, the main reason for Paul not wanting the Gentiles to be under the Law was to allow them an acceptable access into a mutual relationship with God. Stendahl did not understand Paul to be applying self-evaluation to his own sinfulness even in Romans 7. Stendahl stated that the Reformers went too far when they applied Paul's teachings regarding the Law to the Western World's introspective evaluation of self. He continued by saying that although it is true that Paul was aware of a struggle between the flesh and spiritual desires of his own body (Rom 7:19; 8:3), that did not mean that his conscience was plagued by such struggles. Stendhal then argued that in reality Paul seemed to be fairly confident before and after his conversion that he was in an acceptable relationship with God (pp. 90-92). Therefore, in this particular setting, Romans 7 appeared to Stendahl as a defense for the holiness and goodness of the Law because it is a good gift from God (pp. 92-93).

[137] 2 Pet 3:14-16.

reality contradicting himself at various places within his letters.[138] In his book *Paul and the Law*, Räisänen stated that Paul just concocted an timely argument to explain a view that he had come to believe after his Damascus Road experience. According to Räisänen, Paul's revised view understood that "faith" and the "Spirit" belonged together while the "Law" and the "Spirit" did not.[139] Räisänen concluded that Paul was not able to join the more conservative Christians such as Peter and Barnabas, and therefore, he developed his own more radical position.[140]

Paul and "Works of the Law," in Its Historical Context

"The Mosaic Law" and "Works of the Law" in the Maccabean Era

Earlier in Israel's history, God's people had centered their lives around their faith in Him, which manifested itself in their obedience to the Law, as they waited for the coming Messianic King, who was to appear in the "last days."[141] Over time, it appears that Israel's desire to follow the commandments contained in the Mosaic Law waned up to

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[138] Heikki Räisänen, *Paul and the Law* (Tubingen: Mohr, 1983; reprint, Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986), 268.

[139] Ibid., 189. Later, Räisänen stated that Paul is portraying a distorted view of the Judaism of his day because O. T. Scripture did not agree with what Paul was saying (pp. 268-69).

[140] Heikki Räisänen, "Legalism and Salvation by the Law: Paul's Portrayal of the Jewish Religion as a Historical and Theological Problem," in *Die Paulinische Literatur und Theologie*, Teologiske Studier, no. 7 (Århus: Forlaget Aros, 1980), 81; and cf. E. P. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief 63 BCE-66 CE* (Philadelphia: Trinity, 1992), 519, who stated that as he understood first-century Judaism, there would not have been a problem in declaring that one is saved by grace, it was Paul who made the original contribution of developing the antithetical formulation of "by faith and not works of the Law."

[141] John H. Sailhamer, "The Messiah and the Hebrew Bible," *Journal of Evangelical Theological Society* 44, no. 1 (2001): 20.

their capture and deportation by the Babylonians in 586 B.C. Following the return of some of the exiles in the fifth century, there is Inter-testamental evidence showing a renewed interest in Torah obedience.

Frank Thielman noted that after some of the exiles returned to Jerusalem, they looked back on their calamity and considered it to be a direct response of God due to their disobedience to His commandments. Therefore, they started placing more emphasis on obedience to ensure against future punishment.[142] It appears that the letter of the Law started taking precedence over the intent of the Law. During this period, obeying the Mosaic Laws became such an important part of their daily lives that God's grace appears to have been minimized.

There are a few such as David Mapes who saw their emphasis on obedience as stemming from a lack of direct communication with God compared to their ancestors who heard from the prophets on a regular basis. In earlier generations, the prophets had repeatedly reminded the people of God's desire for a genuine personal and national covenantal relationship with them.[143]

A few centuries later during the reign of some of Alexander the Great's successors, written works such as Tobit and Sirach show a trend that elevated the importance of doing "good works" including "works of the Law" that address moral and social concerns. Simon Gathercole's study of Tobit and Sirach brought him to the conclusion that almsgiving was an important part of doing righteous works, which had by then

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[142] Frank Thielman, *Paul and the Law: A Contextual Approach* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1994), 57, stated that when some of Israel returned from its exile in Babylon, their leaders made following the Law a high priority to ensure against future punishment; those who returned had to divorce their wives and children if they had married foreigners (Neh 13:23-29; cf. 10:30; Ezra 9:1-10:44). They also banned foreigners from the Temple (Neh 13:4-9), enforced the laws of tithe (Neh 10:37-39; 13:10-14), and mandated Sabbath observance (Neh 10:31; 13:15-22).

[143] David L. Mapes, "A Covenantal Basis for Paul's Paradigm of Law in Galatians and Romans" (Ph.D. diss., Mid-American Baptist Theological Seminary, 2001), 93-94.

become part of the atonement process.[144] Gathercole noted that Baruch was concerned with offerings that took place at the Temple (1.5-14) and pushed for harsh exclusivity (4.3-4).[145] Through a study of some of the literature of this era, Thielman noted that there had been a major political

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[144] Simon J. Gathercole, *Where Is Boasting? Early Jewish Soteriology and Paul’s Response in Romans 1-5* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 37-40. Gathercole stated that Sirach and Tobit were both written at a similar time and have very similar theological concerns. On a national level, these writings are focused around the temple, but there is also considerable emphasis on personal piety, with almsgiving, endogamy, and honoring parents. Both texts could be described as being expressions of a similar symbolic universe: one sapiential and one narrative (p. 37). Gathercole stated that Sirach in particular has a prominent conception of recompense according to deeds, and uses variations of the phrase frequently (11.26; 17.23; 35.193, 22). He noted that these writers are not concerned with a future life and, therefore, focused on rewarding actions in varying degrees of immediacy: sickness or health or disaster (e.g., 28.1; 30.14-20), a good wife (25.8), a long life (3.1,6), or one’s reward can even be delayed right up to the day of death (11.26). Honoring one’s mother is like collecting treasure, and almsgiving remains for eternity (40.17). Therefore, even though there is no personal afterlife (14.16), actions still have everlasting consequences effecting the life of their children (16.1-4; 44.12-13; 51. 30). Reward even comes sevenfold (35.13) following the same pattern that God used dealing with the patriarchs (44.19ff.) (p. 38). Regarding both works, Gathercole stated that obedience to Torah is *defined not primarily in terms of ritual identity markers* but as almsgiving. Sayings about alms come mostly in the testamentary passages in Tobit such as in 4.7-9, and similarly in Sirach storing up almsgiving in one’s personal treasury can rescue that one in a time of disaster (29.12). Almsgiving is better than spear and shield against the enemy and profits more than gold (29.13; 29.11). Gathercole noted that in Tobit, alms are likened to sacrificial offerings because they can deliver from death (4.10-11); similarly the author of Sirach wrote that the one who returns a kindness offers choice flour, and one who gives alms sacrifices a thank offering (35.2-3; cf. 35.1). This can be taken a stage further where alms deliver from death and shall purge away all sin; yes, those who give alms and do righteousness will be filled with life (Tob 12.9), which is similar to Sirach 3.30. According to Tobit, being merciful meant that it will go well with you (14.8-11), and according to Sirach, good cannot come to those who do not give alms (Sir 12.1-3) (pp. 39-40).

[145] Ibid., 40-41.

movement by Antiochus IV to Hellenize the people living in Judea so that by removing their peculiar Judaic religious beliefs, they might become better subjects.[146] This polarized the Jews into two main groups: those who wanted to accept the Hellenistic way of life and others who wanted to continue faithfully following YHWH through obedience to His written Torah.

First and Second Maccabees, Judith, and *Jubilees* among others are excellent sources that were written anywhere from the mid-second century B.C. up to the time that Pompey gained control of Jerusalem in 63 B.C. These writings provide a view from different perspectives of individual groups who were striving to remain faithful to the Mosaic Covenant and corresponding Law, and therefore, in their own way were opposing the push for a more Hellenistic culture in Judea. It is clear from these writings that obedience to the precepts of the Mosaic Law during this period was of great importance.[147] Some such as Dunn see the Jews striving to save their *identity* more than worrying about God's wrath for

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[146] Thielman, *Paul and the Law*, 59, stated that when Antiochus IV decided to weaken Jewish control within their occupied land, he attacked their religious beliefs by forbidding worship of Israel's God in the Jerusalem Temple (2 Macc 6.1-5), made the observance of the Sabbath and Jewish festivals illegal (2 Macc 6.6, 11), forbade circumcision (2 Macc 6.10), and embarked on a cruel campaign to force Jews to violate the Jewish dietary regulations of the Law (2 Macc 6.18-7.41). Thielman went on to say that during the same approximate time of Antiochus IV's decrees, *Jubilees* was probably written, which is a piece of popular literature urging Jews to be especially careful about the observance of the Sabbath (2.17-33; 50.1- 13), Jewish festivals (6.17-31; 17.28-31), circumcision (16.25-34), and eating meat whose blood had not been properly drained (6.4-16; 7.28-33; 21.18). Violating these laws is tantamount to apostasy (2.27; 6.12; 7.28; 16.26, 34; 50.8, 13).

[147] Gathercole, *Where Is Boasting?*, 49-54, noted that although 1 & 2 Maccabees where written at different times representing different groups and 2 Maccabees marked a significant development. from 1 Maccabees in its stricter Sabbatarianism and its doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, which the first was lacking, 2 Maccabees was scarcely less focused on matters regarding the Temple and Torah obedience. Gathercole noted that *Jubilees* explicitly stated that those who do righteousness are friends of God and those who do not will have their names deleted from the Book of Life (30.17-23).

disobedience.[148]

Frank Thielman saw enough agreement among these writings to indicate that there was a common mind set warning Jews that a curse of the Law would come upon them if they were disobedient to it.[149] There were some writings from this era including the early first century B.C.

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[148] James D. G. Dunn, "The New Perspective on Paul: Paul and the Law," in *The Romans Debate*, ed. Karl P. Donfried (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1991), 302-03, did not believe that "works of the Law" had been turned into "works righteousness" in this era. He stated that a trend initiated with the return of the exiles from under Persian rule promoted national and cultic separation from the rest of the world and was massively reinforced by the Maccabean crisis; he stated that it was precisely Israel's identity as the covenant people, the people of the law that was at stake (1 Macc 1.57; 2.27, 50; 2 Macc 1.2-4; 2.21-22; 5.15; 13.14) and at which time when "zeal fo the law" became the watchword of national resistance (1 Macc 2.26-27, 50, 58; 2 Macc 4.2; 7.2, 9, 11, 37; 8.21; 13.14). Dunn continued by saying that in the period following the Maccabean crisis the tie-in between election, covenant, and law remained a fundamental and persistent theme of Jewish self-understanding, as illustrated by ben Sira (Sir 17.11-17; 24.23; 28.7; 39.8; 42.2; 44.19-20; 45.5, 7, 15, 17, 24-25), (*Jub*. 1.4-5, 9-10, 12, 14, 29; 2.21; 6.4-16; 14.17-20; 15.4-16, 19-21, 25-29, 34; 16.14; 19.29; 20.3, etc.), the Damascus document (CD 1.4-5, 15-18, 20: 3.2-4, 10-16; 4.7-10; 6.2-5; etc.), and Pseudo-Philo (*L.A.B.* 4.5, 11; 7.4; 8.3; 9.3-4, 7-8, 13, 15; 10.2; 11.1-5; etc.).

[149] Thielman, *Paul and the Law*, 50-51, noted that 2 Maccabees had been written some time after the death of John Hyrcanus and represented a voice of protest against the Hasmoneans. Even so, Thielman noted that the thesis that God punishes his people when they sin against him is as strong in this book as it was in Judith. The author believed that the sack of Jerusalem in 169 B.C. by Antiochus IV Epiphanes of Syria was a direct result of the high priest's encouragement of Greek customs within Jerusalem several years earlier (4.16-17; cf. 6.12-17; 7.18, 32; 10.4). Theilman also noted that God fights for the Jews when they are obedient to His Laws; Judas Maccabeus punctiliously observed the law and went from victory to victory over the impious generals and kings of the Syrians despite the small numbers who fight with him (8.27; 12.31, 38; cf 12.39-45; 13.7). The Syrian general Nicanor ended up with a scattered army because he refused to recognize that the Jews had a Champion, which made them invincible as long as they followed the laws laid down by Him (8:36).

that already show that for some, "works of the Law" had become a form of "works righteousness."[150]

"The Mosaic Law" and "Works of the Law" in the Roman Era Up to A.D. 70

In his work, *Torah in the Messianic Age and/or in the Age to Come*, W. D. Davies stated that there was no clear indication that the Old Testament nor Intertestamental writings spoke of an abrogation of the Law during the Messianic Age nor the Age to Come. Even in Jeremiah 31:31-34, there is no mention of a new Torah being instituted with the New Covenant; on the contrary it appears that the existing Law will be written on the hearts of God's people.[151] From his research on Israel's

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[150] Richard Bauckham, "Apocalypses," in *Justification and Variegated Nomism*, vol. 1, *The Complexities of Second Temple Judaism*, ed. D. A. Carson, Peter T. O'Brien, and Mark A. Seifrid (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 153, stated that *1 En.* 41.1; 68.8 and *Apoc. Zeph.* 8:5 already showed a motif in Jewish apocalypses of weighing people or their deeds in the scales of justice with reference to the coming eschatological judgment.

[151] W. D. Davies, *Torah in the Messianic Age and/or the Age to Come*, Journal of Biblical Literature Monograph, no. 7 (Philadelphia: Society of Biblical Literature, 1952), 13. Continuing this line of thought, Davies stated that during this era, there was not so much an expected change in Torah as an expected increase in understanding it (29f, 42). After evaluating a first-century B.C. document, the *Psalms of Solomon*, Davies noted that there is nothing in its context suggesting that the Messiah will bring a new Law, but merely that he will establish a condition where righteousness according to the Torah will prevail (p. 43). In 1 Macc 4.46 and 14.41, Davies found that difficult passages of Torah were expected to be made clear through a prophet of God at some future date (p. 44). In *Damascus,* the *Zadokite Fragment*, 8.6-10, there was a future teacher, the Teacher of Righteousness, who was expected to arise and impart additional insight for the existing Torah (pp. 45-46). The Old Testament, Apocrypha, and Pseudepigrapha all point to a common belief that in the coming Messianic Age the Law would not only remain in force, but it would be better studied and understood than previously (p. 48). In addition, obedience to the Torah would be a dominating mark of the Messianic Age (p. 84); cf. Walter Gutbrod, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967; reprint 1995), 1041-42, who stated that in Jeremiah, God will

covenants, Mapes concluded that although the Sinaitic and the New Covenant were independent agreements between God and Israel affecting all humanity, they were in reality further expressions of the Abrahamic Covenant.[152] God’s nature was not changing over time, and therefore, when God gave the Law to Moses on Mt. Sinai, Paul taught in Romans that the principles contained in the Law are valid for *both* Jew and Gentile; both are condemned for not doing its requirements.[153]

Starting with the era in which Rome took control of Jerusalem in 63 B.C. under Pompey’s direction and working up to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 under Titus’ leadership, the literature of this period shows a greater diversity of religious views compared to previous eras

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create the whole man anew by “putting the Law in his heart”; and Peter Stuhlmacher, *Paul’s Letter to the Romans: A Commentary*, trans. Scott J. Hafemann (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1994), 126. This book was originally published as *Der Brief on die Römer* by Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht in 1989. Stuhlmacher stated that according to Matt 5:17, Jesus countered the suspicion that He wants to nullify the Law with the claim that He did not come to abolish the Law, but to fulfill it and through His teaching to complete it. Stuhlmacher stated that Paul’s point in Rom 3:31 was similar; Jesus appeared as the messianic perfecter of the Torah, which is expressed by Paul when he proclaimed “the Law/Torah of Christ” in Gal 6:2. Stuhlmacher stated that in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5:21-48), Jesus was contrasting His own messianic interpretation of the will of God to the preaching of the Law as it was given to Moses, and in so doing, Jesus both deepened the meaning of the Law (5:2f., 43f.), and Stuhlmacker stated, in some parts contradicted it (5:33f., 38f).

[152] Mapes, “A Covenantal Basis for Paul’s Paradigm of Law in Galatians and Romans,” 186-87, stated that although the covenants of God with Israel are independent agreements, they are all part of a single desired relationship between God and man based on God’s corresponding promise to Abraham that his seed *and* the seed of the Gentiles would be blessed through his faithfulness. Mapes went on to say that the Abrahamic Covenant found further expression in the Sinaitic and the New Covenants.

[153] Ibid., 158-61, 190-91. In his conclusion, Mapes noted the fact that in Rom 1-3 Paul taught that the Law given at Mt. Sinai contained law principles that apply to Gentiles as well as Jews; *both* are condemned due to violation of the principles taught by the Law given to Moses.

regarding the practical ways that one should live and carry out the ordinances of the Law. There is a general consensus among scholars that although this was a time of increasing diversity, which was minimized after the messianic revolts that took place between A.D. 66-135, it can be demonstrated through this era's literature that a solid commonality existed among mainstream Jews worldwide.

Jacob Neusner stated that first-century Jews found structure and meaning in the covenant between God and Israel as revealed by God to Moses at Mount Sinai.[154] The Chosen People of God showed their commonality through their common maintenance of the Temple, their obedience to the Law including resting on the Sabbath, and their desire to go to Jerusalem during some of God's constituted festivals to celebrate God's interaction in their lives. Individuals such as Emil Schürer, George F. Moore, E. P. Sanders, and Shaye Cohen have noted that despite some differences in thinking most Jews living in the Diaspora and in Judea believed that they were bound together through their common desire to obey the God of their forefathers.[155]

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[154] Jacob Neusner, *Judaic Law from Jesus to the Mishnah: A Systematic Reply to Professor E. P. Sanders*, South Florida Studies in the History of Judaism, no. 84 (Atlanta: Scholar's Press, 1993), 74-76, said that simply stated, the life of Israel in its land in the first century found structure and meaning in the covenant between God and Israel as contained in the Torah revealed by God to Moses at Mount Sinai (p. 74). Neusner went on to say that the third aspect of the piety of Israel in its land entailed pilgrimages to the Temple on festivals in celebration of nature and in commemoration of historical events. Specifically, the encounter with God and the yearning for salvation at the end of time came to a climax in the coincidence of those turning in the natural year, spring and fall, identified as the natural year's beginning and end, which were explained in all forms of Judaism as celebrations of great events in the life of historical Israel (p. 75). In his conclusion to this section, Neusner stated that all of the radical claims of the various holiness sects, such as Pharisees and Essenes, of professions such as the scribes, and of followers of various messiahs, each in its own way, gave expression to an aspect or emphasis of the common piety of the nation (p. 76).

[155] Shaye J. D. Cohen, *From the Maccabees to the Mishnah*, Library of Early Christianity, ed. Wayne A. Meeks (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1987), 25-26, stated that the Judaism of the land of Israel was striated not only by numerous sects but also by numerous teachers

and holy men, each with his band of supporters. Cohen went on to say that the most potent force unifying the Jews was their self-perception or self-definition. The Jews saw themselves as the heirs and continuators of the people of pre-exilic Israel and also felt an affinity for their fellow Jews throughout the world, in spite of differences in language, practice, ideology, and political loyalty. Cohen stated that Israel was like a bumblebee which continues to fly, unaware that the laws of aerodynamics declare its flight to be impossible; the Jews of antiquity saw themselves as citizens of one nation and one religion, unaware of, or oblivious to, the fact that they were separated from each other by their diverse languages, practices, ideologies, and political loyalties; cf. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief 63 BCE-66 CE*, 236-38, who stated that in many large areas of life, Jews all over the world did much the same things: (1) worshiped God daily and weekly, (2) kept the Sabbath, (3) males were circumcised, (4) observed purity laws, and (5) supported the Temple, and even when they disagreed on the meaning of the Law, they were all zealous in keeping it; cf. George F. Moore, *Judaism: In the First Centuries of the Christian Era, the Age of Tannaim*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1927; reprint, Peabody: Hendrickson, 1997), 224-25, 232-33, who stated that even after generations of being disbursed and seeing the collapse of the national state, the diaspora Jews still saw themselves as the one nation of Israel belonging to One God. Under the rule of Herod, the Jews secured extraordinary privileges and exemptions allowing them to maintain their religious and national beliefs. If individuals wanted to take part in the covenants of God, they must also follow all of Israel's obligations to God (p. 232). The Jewish synagogues were the centers from which the Jews could teach their ways and bring in converts from those living around them (p. 233); and cf. Emil Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.- A.D. 135),* 1885, rev. and ed. Geza Vermes and Fergus Millar, vol. 2 (Edinburgh: T.& T. Clark, 1979; reprint, 1995), 419, 421, 425-32, 464-68, who stated that all Jews were disciples of the LORD. They were expected to know the precepts and commandments of the Torah and to do them. There were all priests of a holy nation even if dispersed among other nations (p. 464). The Jew knew that he would be recompensed for obedience and punished for disobedience during his life and that full retribution would be delayed until העולם הבא, "the Age to Come" (pp. 465-68). The Sabbath Day provided one day of each week that Jews from all around the world could put aside their occupational work and come together in their local synagogues to study the Torah (pp. 425-27, 467-68). Children started learning the Torah as early as six and by the time they reached thirteen, they were to fulfill fully its obligations (p. 421). The Jews' strong belief in being a disciple of God produced a world-wide religious community,

After researching Philo's works, David Hay concluded that although Philo lived in Alexandria, he wrote with the understanding that he belonged to a worldwide Jewish community.[156] Hay said following the Mosaic Law was not optional for Philo. The Law was intended to be followed without additions or subtractions.[157]

It is important to note that even with evidence that shows that "works of the Law" had been elevated above the grace of God, there are many such as Sanders who state that first-century Jews remembered well how God had demonstrated His grace to Israel prior to delivering them from the Egyptians. Therefore, he stated that they were performing "works of the Law" only to maintain their covenantal position with God,

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which in many areas was self ruling unless someone within their community violated the civil laws of the land in which they were sojourning (pp. 427-32).

[156] David Hay, "Philo of Alexandria," in *Justification and Variegated Nomism*: *The Complexities of Second Temple Judaism*, 378. A point of interest is that Hay discovered that Philo did not use the terms "Israel" and "the Jews" as identical terms. Normally, "Israel" seemed to denote the community of all who "see God," and Philo did not claim that all Jews were inside that circle or that all Gentiles were outside. That closeness was based on their possession of and devotion to the Mosaic revelation. Hay also noted his research revealed that Philo used the language of διαθήκη, "covenant" only occasionally, but he regularly implied that "the Jews" had a unique relation to God established through Moses at Sinai. They serve as priestly intercessors on behalf of all humanity (*Abr.* 98; *Mos.* l.l49; *Spec.* 1.97; 2.162-67) (p. 369).

[157] Ibid., 375. Hay stated that for Philo all the laws of Moses were intended to be obeyed, with no additions or subtractions (*Spec.* 4.143). Hay went on to say that Philo often used allegory to explain Jewish religious rationale; but he regularly interpreted the laws on a literal level indicating that they were to be obeyed in the realm of the external world. In a famous passage (*Migr.* 89-93), Philo criticized a group of allegorists who understood ritual laws such as circumcision, observance of the Sabbath, and other holy days symbolically but disregarded their literal meaning. Although Philo agreed with their symbolic interpretations, allegory was not a substitute for literal observance.

not as part of the salvation process.[158]

Many scholars have noted that this basic consensus among first-century Jews meant that a faithful Jew was obligated to obey God’s commandments, ordinances, and decrees. Davies said that it was not until after the return of the exiles from Babylon that the term Torah started more and more to represent the “law” aspect.[159] By the first century, the movement which had received its greatest impulse from Ezra to make the Jews a people of Torah had come to full fruition, with the result that the Torah had become the cornerstone of Jewish life.[160] In later research, Davies came to the conclusion that although “doing the commandments of the Law” had moved to such a prominence that Israel’s covenantal grounding in the grace of God had been muted, God’s grace was not totally forgotten.[161]

Joseph Klausner, a Jewish scholar, said that during this era, the chief idea bound up with the coming messiah was that knowledge of God

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[158] Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief*, 277-78.

[159] Davies, *Torah in the Messianic Age and/or the Age to Come*, 37; and cf. Gutbrod, *TDNT*, vol. 4, 1043-44, stated that after the exile, Israel in general had an increasingly more independent view toward the Law: obedience to the Law became the primary way to establish a relationship with God for the whole community.

[160] Davies, *Torah in the Messianic Age and/or the Age to Come*, 50, research led him to the conclusion that both the Apocalyptic and Pharisaic circles promoted a strict adherence to the Law (p. 40). Cf. Gutbrod, *TDNT*, vol. 4, 1047-50, who stated that although the apocryphal and pseudepigraphical writings did not form a material or linguistic unity, they all showed the importance of the Law (p. 1047). There is a general consensus that there is a divine validity of the Law. The Pharisaic group stressed that everyone should know and adhere to the Law (p. 1048). Much of the literature of this era showed an increasing stress on the importance of observance of the Law for the well-being of the individual as well as for the people as a whole (p. 1049). The Law is a timeless expression of God’s will (p. 1050).

[161] W. D. Davies, “Paul and the Law: Reflections on Pitfalls in Interpretation,” in *Paul and Paulinism: Essays in Honour of C. K. Barrett*, ed. Morna D. Hooker and Stephen G. Wilson (London: SPCK, 1982), 5.

would spread throughout the world and the people of Israel and its Torah would become eternal; all nations would come to the Temple in Jerusalem.[162] From his research, Hay noted that Philo considered the Mosaic Law as eternally valid.[163] Sanders' research of this literature prior to and including the Roman era looked forward to a full restoration of Israel that included the reassembling of the Twelve Tribes. Israel would become pure and righteous in her worship and morals, which points to obedience to Torah. *Sib. Or.* 3.756-81 stated that throughout the whole earth people will worship God and follow a common law.[164]

Writing to summarize the sentiment at the Third Durham-Tübingen Symposium of 1994, Dunn stated that many present-day scholars had come to recognize a stronger line of continuity between the role of the law in the Old Testament and the Second Temple Judaism and its continuing role in the newly inaugurated age of the Messiah. He stated that this is evident through the Law's ongoing role in making people conscious of sin through condemnation of transgression and pointing to a final judgment, in providing continuing guidance for conduct, and in expressing requirements [and the will] of God, which need to be fulfilled.[165]

Peter Stuhlmacher's study of Paul's letters led him to the conclusion that Paul and the Early Church never spoke of an actual separation between the Law and the Gospel. It was not until the mid-

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[162] Joseph Klausner, "The Messianic Idea in the Apocryphal Literature," in *The World History of the Jewish People*, vol. 8, *Society and Religion in the Second Temple Period*, ed. Michael Avi-Yonah and Zvi Baras (Jerusalem: Massada, 1977), 154.

[163] Hay, "Philo of Alexandria," 373, stated that Philo was persuaded that all of the specific commandments of Moses had permanent validity although through his treatise *On the Special Laws*, he showed that he was aware of problems in applying all of them in his own time.

[164] Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief 63 BCE-66CE*, 289-95.

[165] James D. G. Dunn, "In Search of Common Ground," in *Paul and the Mosaic Law*, ed. James D. G. Dunn, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 334.

second century that the heretic Marcion attempted to radically pervert earlier teachings.[166]

Some of the literature of this period lacks any real promotion of ideas related to covenant, yet other literature promotes God's grace. Richard Bauckham said that some literature of this period such as *2 Enoch* and the *Testament of Abraham* did not bring out ideas of "election" and "covenant," but instead emphasized rewards for proper "works" and punishment for a lack of them.[167]

Phil Spilsbury's research of Josephus' work provides evidence that first-century Jews still considered their disobedience to the Mosaic Laws as detrimental to their nation, and saw themselves as having privileged access to God over Gentiles as long as they faithfully obeyed the Law.[168] Spilsbury stated that Josephus, a Jew living in Judea,

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[166] Stuhlmacher, *Paul's Letter to the Romans*, 123. See Tertullian, *Adv. Marc.* 1.19, went on to say that Paul's understanding of the Law stood in dialectical continuity to the Old Testament and early Pharisaism as it stood within the movement of God's will within salvation history unfolding from Sinai to Zion. The Law was decisively influenced by Jesus' teachings, death on the cross, resurrection, and through the Gospel proclamation, which showed the righteousness of God working through Christ (Rom 1:16f.). The grace and law/instruction of God were in perfect unity (p. 128).

[167] Bauckham, "Apocalypses," 152-56, stated that there were no covenantal features in 2 *Enoch,* no election or covenantal promises, only God's commandments and rewards and punishments for observance or neglect of them. He went on to say that *2 Enoch* coupled the image of "weighing" with the idea of "requiting each according to his or her deeds," which became a standard way of describing the justice of the eschatological judgement in early Jewish literature. Bauckham noted that in verse 44.5, each person would be weighed in the balance, and each would stand in the market, and each would find out his own measurement and in accordance with that measurement each would receive his reward. He noted further that there was an overall division into two categories, one destined for paradise and the other for hell. In a second writing that was probably from this era, the *Testament of Abraham,* it is clear that people were assigned their destinies according to whether or not their sins outnumber their righteous deeds (A12-14; B9).

[168] Spilsbury, "Josephus," 253-55, 259.

understood Moses to have received the Law because of his great piety. This is a critical reversal of the order of grace and obedience when one considers that Israel's early teachers taught that God *first* delivered Israel from its slavery in Egypt *and then* gave them the gift of the Law to help them stay in a right relationship with Him.[169] As Spilsbury brought his study to a conclusion, he concluded that it was clear throughout Josephus' work that a beneficial divine-human was predicated upon obedience to the Law of Moses.[170]

Gathercole's work shows that there is other literature of this period, which was probably written mid-first century B.C., such as the *Psalms of Solomon*, that shows evidence of the writer being aware of God's mercy for those who call upon Him and mixes that thought with elevation of "works of the Law" to the point that the righteousness of individuals depends on their obedience to the demands of Torah.[171] In his evaluation of Philo, Hay decided that Philo's work showed a lack of emphasis on Israel's covenantal status with God but instead proclaimed Jews as the θεοφιλής, "beloved of God," which indicates that Israel's covenantal status was being proclaimed.[172] In addition, Philo had stated

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[169] Ibid., 258-59.

[170] Ibid., 259.

[171] Gathercole, *Where Is Boasting?*, 63-66, stated that although it was not the dominant feature of the eschatology within the *Psalms of Solomon,* there was nevertheless a fairly consistent picture of a definite period or day of judgment at which the righteous would be vindicated with resurrection to eternal life, and the wicked would be consigned to eternal death. In 2.34-36, when the righteous and the sinners are separated out, God would repay sinners with an everlasting punishment according to their deeds. Gathercole went on to say that the righteous were equated with "those who walk in the righteousness of his commandments, in the Torah (14:2)." Regarding the idea of eternal life, Gathercole noted that in a later writing contemporaneous with Paul, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, the author promoted a clear theology of reward and punishment to be administered to every individual after death (p. 67).

[172] Hay, "Philo of Alexandria," 369-70, stated that Sanders admitted that Philo did not emphasize 'nomism' or offer clear ideas about the nation's future redemption or life after death. Sanders also recognized Philo's great concern with the individual's search for God. Hay added two additional qualifications to Philo's work: (1) Philo said very little

that people should be thankful for what God was doing and dependent on His grace.[173]

In the writings of this era, there was a clear division between a soteriology based on "grace" and "works of the Law." Stuhlmacher's research led him to take note of the fact that some written documents from this era reflect opposing soteriological principles of "election" and "retribution" within themselves.[174]

Regarding the isolated community of Qumran, Robert Eisenman and Michael Wise state that the Qumran community was not against Temple operation or the nation, but against a perceived impiety in the

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about God's covenant(s) with Israel, and (2) his framework of religious thought was not soteriological despite his frequent references to God as 'savior.' When he looked at the total picture, Hays stated that it was not very useful to speak of Philo as a representative of "covenantal nomism." Philo often wrote as though every Jew in the world was dedicated to studying and living by the law of Moses (*Mos.* 2.216; *Somn.* 2.123-27; *Deus.* 148-51; *Legat.* 210-11). In speaking of "the Jews," Philo did not directly mention the covenant but said that the people are θεοφιλής, beloved by God, or God-loving," and a special object of God's providential protection; Paul Spilsbury, "Josephus," in *Justification and Variegated Nomism: The Complexities of Second Temple Judaism*, 235, found in his research of Josephus' work that Josephus had used this same terminology to represent the Jewish people; they are θεοφιλής (*J.W.* 5.381).

[173] Ibid., 378.

[174] Peter Stuhlmacher, *Revisiting Paul's Doctrine of Justification: A Challenge to the New Perspective* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2001), 16, 41-42, showed that within writings such as: (1) *4 Ezra (2 Esdras)* 7.33-38, 70-74, 127-31 (judgment by works) and 8.35-36 (salvation by grace) (p. 16), (2) *2 Bar.* 14:12-13; 51:7-14, (3) 1QS 3.9-11; 4.2-8; 8.1-10; 9.3-5 (juxtapositioning between claims for perfect and blameless obedience to the law a penitential doxology expressed in 11.2-15, (4) 1QpHab 8.1-2 (Habakkuk 2:4 is related to the observance of the law *and* faithfulness to the teachings of the teacher of righteousness, and (5) 4Q398 (4QMMT) frg. 14, col. 11.2-7 clearly testified that obedience to (priestly), works of the law would be reckoned as righteousness to the obedient in the end times (pp. 41-42).

way that Temple worship was carried out and in the way Jews lived.[175] When Roland Deines evaluated 4QMMT, one of his observations showed that the Qumran community was as concerned about violating God's commandments as Ezra and Nehemiah were when they reestablished Jerusalem after their Babylonian and Persian exile. Deines said that within this document Israel represented the ideal entity while the term העם, "the people," represented those who: (1) were offering sacrifices in the Temple in an improper manner ($B_{13, 27}$), (2) had entered into illegitimate marriages ($B_{46, 75}$), and/or (3) were bringing self-condemnation due to defiling actions and temple sacrilege (C_{27}).[176]

Johann Maier's research of the Dead Sea Scrolls led him to believe that those at Qumran had a heightened desire to do everything as perfectly as possible with the understanding that everything done affects both the cosmic and the human realm.[177] Studying the sectarian Qumran literature, Markus Bockmuehl came to the conclusion that the community at Qumran balanced their belief in God's grace within an uneasy tension based on a belief in the efficacy of individual works that

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[175] Robert Eisenman and Michael Wise, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Uncovered* (Great Britain: Element Books, 1992), 185, stated that the idea that the literature at Qumran was anti-Temple, which developed in the early days of Qumran research from considering only the Community Rule and misunderstanding its splendid imagery, was just not accurate. They went on to say that the "zeal" shown for the Temple in these letters and other works was pivotal throughout with emphasis on *purifying* all polluted works.

[176] Roland Deines, "The Pharisees between 'Judaisms' and 'Common Judaism," in *Justification and Variegated Nomism*, vol. 1, *The Complexities of Second Temple Judaism*, ed. D. A. Carson, Peter T. O'Brien, and Mark A. Seifrid (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 463-65. Deines went on to say that it seems clear to him that the priests (B 11-13, 16-17, 25-27, 46, 82), or possibly the individually addressed recipients (C 27), were made responsible, at least partially, for this culpable behavior although there was explicit criticism only of the people. Deines went on further to say that this culpable behavior also applied implicitly to the priests who permitted or facilitated the people's involvement in proscribed practices.

[177] Johann Maier, "The Judaic System of the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Judaism in Late Antiquity: Historical Synthesis* (New York: Brill, 1995), 99.

resulted in an exclusivistic preoccupation with "works of the Law."[178] Alongside this preoccupation with doing "works of the Law, Bockmuehl noted a tension in the Qumran texts—similar to Stuhlmacher's observations, which were noted above, about other writings of this era—that individuals needed God's help due to their inadequacy to establish their own righteousness.[179] Regarding actual atonement, Timo Eskola noted that the Qumran community replaced the Old Testament

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[178] Markus Bockmuehl, "1QS and Salvation at Qumran," in *Justification and Variegated Nomism: The Complexities of Second Temple Judaism*, 413-14, stated that membership in the covenant of God was characterized both by a sustained individual voluntarism and by an all-embracing doctrine of divine predestination. With the community's combined strong sense of the sinfulness of all humanity and their belief in divine grace for those trusting God, the texts manifest an uneasy co-existence of belief in atonement for sins depended solely on an act of God and the belief that somehow their priestly leaders were instrumental in that atonement. Bockmuehl's redactional analysis led him to see the community of Qumran as one who was exclusivistic and preoccupied with "works of the Law."

[179] Bockmuehl, "1QS and Salvation at Qumran," 397-99, discussing God's righteousness as perceived by the Qumran community, stated that the righteous deeds of God (צדקות) were His saving actions in Israel's past (1QS 1.21; 10.23; cf. 1QH 4.17), but the manifestation of His righteousness also characterized the eschaton. Bockmuehl said that God's eschatological victory brought about by His "righteous acts" past and future were the key to the sect's understanding of salvation. Man cannot establish his own steps, for judgement and perfection of way belong to God (1QS 9.10; cf. 1QH 7[=15].16), and no one is righteous in your judgement, or innocent at your trial (1QH 17[=9].14f.). Bockmuehl said that this appeal to the human condition was not employed in order to excuse the believer's sin but rather to underscore the exclusively divine constitution of righteousness and forgiveness. In fact, it was specifically through God's righteous character and righteous acts that sins can be forgiven. One writer stated, ". . . if I stumble, the mercies of God are my salvation for ever (תסדי אל ישׁוצתי לצד), and if I fall in guilt of the flesh, my judgement is by the righteousness of God (בצדקת אל) which endures eternally (1QS 11.12; cf. 11.2-5)." This is a notion which finds an explicit parallel in the apocryphal psalms appended to the biblical Psalter of Cave 11 (11QPs^{3} 19.5, 7, 11; 11QPs^{b} frag. a 6) and which recurs in a variety of different forms elsewhere.

sacrifices with the righteous actions and suffering of its leaders, who were perceived to atone on behalf of all of its members (1QS 2.2f; cf. 8.5; 9.6).[180]

When Moo investigated the first-century Synoptic Gospels looking for clues among Jesus' disciples regarding Jesus' teachings on the importance of the Law for the Messianic Age, he came to understand that Matthew, Mark, and Luke similarly taught that Jesus did not abolish the Law but instead upheld its validity and considered Himself to have authority over it.[181] As recorded in Matt 5:17, Jesus declared that He did *not* come to καταλῦσαι τὸν νόμον ἢ τοὺς προφήτας, but instead He came to πληρῶσαι the Law and the prophets.

After evaluating Jesus' teachings in light of the Old Testament including Jesus' teaching on loving ones' neighbor (Matt 5:43-44; Lev 19:34),[182] and comparing Matthew's writing with the other evangelists, Moo came to the conclusion that the evangelists were showing that Jesus' teachings support an ongoing validity of the Law. When Jesus said that nothing would be removed from the Law until πάντα γένηται, Jesus was saying that nothing could be removed from the Law until everything had occurred within God's divine purpose.[183]

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[180] Timo Eskola, "Paul, Predestination and 'Covenantal Nomism': Reassessing Paul and Palestinian Judaism," *Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period* 28 (1997): 405-06.

[181] Douglas J. Moo, "Jesus and the Authority of the Mosaic Law," J*ournal for the Study of the New Testament* 20 (1984), 29; and cf. Gutbrod, *TDNT*, vol. 4, 1061-64, stated that Jesus Himself kept the Law and accepted the Law as the revealed will of God (p. 1062). Gutbrod went on to say that true obedience to the Law was rendered in discipleship (p. 1063) to the One who validated the Law through His death to overcome sin, who in turn provided a pardon for those who follow Him (pp. 1061-62).

[182] Ibid., 22.

[183] Ibid., 26-27. Moo stated that although Jesus upheld the continuing validity of the entire Old Testament, He asserted that this validity must be understood in light of its fulfillment through Him (p. 28).

D.A. Carson’s research and study regarding Matthew 5 brought him to the conclusion that one must not consider Jesus’ fulfilling of the Law too narrowly.[184] He stated that not even a single item of the Law or Prophets would fail until everything was accomplished and went on to say, “Thus, the Law and the Prophets, far from being abolished, find their valid continuity in terms of their outworking in Jesus.”[185]

Paul and “Works of the Law” in Its Theological Context

The Place of the “Mosaic Law” in the Messianic Age

Regarding Paul’s credentials, Thomas Schreiner reminded his readers that: (1) Paul was a Jew who viewed his own theology as a fulfillment of the Old Testament (Rom 1:2), (2) Paul’s critique of Judaism and even his own past was in line with that of the prophets (Gal 1:13-14; Phil 3:2-11), (3) Paul was part of an intra-Jewish debate on the meaning of the Scriptures—he was not an outsider, and (4) Paul was not attacking Judaism *per se* but a fundamentally human problem.[186]

Jesus had authority over the Law and the whole Law came to culmination in Him. Christ has the ultimate authority over the Messianic community and He determines what is enduring from within its contents. Therefore, it may be inaccurate to speak of a “new law.” In addition, one cannot deny that Jesus’ commandments go beyond the basic requirements of the love commandment; Jesus used His unique intuitive knowledge of God’s will to interpret and apply the Law (pp. 29-30).

[184] D. A. Carson, *Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount and His Confrontation with the World: An Exposition of Matthew 5-10* (Grand Rapids: Global Christian Publishers, 1999, reprint 2001), 39.

[185] Ibid., 39-40. Carson went on to say that the Law that Jesus was talking about was a combination of the Old Testament laws and those that Jesus gave and warned his readers that Christ demanded a righteousness from His followers that surpassed that of the Pharisees and teachers of the Law.

[186] Schreiner, *The Law and Its Fulfillment*, 120.

In his work, *The Theology of Paul*, Dunn said that when one reflects on what Paul wrote allowing for a diversity of circumstances and a variety of expressions, *there seems to be a remarkable continuity and homogeneity binding all Paul's letters into a coherent whole*. He went on to say that although there may be different emphases, it is doubtful that anyone should speak of any significant development.[187] Dunn concluded that at most one can probably envisage a number of events and experiences that changed the emphases and prompted certain elaborations, but did not alter the main elements or overall character of his theology in a significant way.[188]

Moo said that modern scholars have divided into four main camps regarding Paul's theology in respect to his apparent opposition to "works righteousness": (1) the dogmatic explanation saying that Paul rejected the Law simply because nothing must compete with Christ, (2) the nationalistic explanation which says that the Law fosters Jewish exclusivity, (3) the quantitative explanation saying human beings are incapable of doing the Law perfectly, and (4) the qualitative explanation saying that doing the Law in and of itself is *not* wrong.[189] Moo concluded

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[187] James D. G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 730-31.

[188] Ibid., 731.

[189] Moo, "Paul and the Law in the Last Ten Years," 297-98; and cf. Snodgrass, "Spheres of Influence: A Possible Solution to the Problem of Paul and the Law," 81-83, who broke down a search for understanding Paul's teachings on the Law into nine separate approaches or camps: (1) a distinction between ὁ νόμος as the law of Moses and νόμος as the qualitative idea of law (J. B. Lightfoot, Ernest De Witt Burton, Richard Longenecker, and Edward Grafe), (2) two ways of salvation, the Law or faith in Christ (Heikki Räisänen), (3) the ritual and civil/cultic elements had been annulled leaving the moral commandments in place, (4) a new law replaced the Mosaic Law in the present Messianic Age (H. J. Schoeps and Albert Schweitzer), (5) the Law of God included more than the Old Testament Torah because it now includes the instruction of Christ (C. H. Dodd), (6) Paul only argued against a misunderstanding of the Law, not against the Law itself (C. E. B. Cranfield and James Dunn), (7) Paul's view of the Law changed from one that was less negative as depicted in Galatians to a more moderate one depicted in Romans (Hans

this thought by stating that most scholars follow one or both of the first two choices.[190] The first thought is completely incorrect.

There are individuals who have theories that do not fit into these categories that should be mentioned. As discussed above in the introduction, there are some such as Räisänen who consider Paul’s teachings to be contradictory, and therefore, they do not think that there is a valid underlying theology in them regarding the place of “works of the Law” in the Messianic Age.[191] There are other individuals, who theorize somewhat differently accepting Sander’s “covenantal nomism” theory but do not accept his theory that Paul had totally rejected the Law in order to participate with Christ nor Dunn’s theory that Paul was simply arguing against national exclusivity.

There are others such as N. T. Wright who accepted Sanders’ “covenantal nomism” theory, but took a different route than “identity badges” and “two covenants.” Looking on a national level versus an individual level, Wright taught that Paul’s message about Christ’s atoning work was *the renewing* of a failed covenant. He stated that the Messiah had come to take on the curse of the Law as Israel’s representative due to the fact that the nation as a whole had failed to keep the Torah of the Covenant. Therefore Christ’s redeeming work is the *climax of the Covenant*.[192]

Hübner and John Drane), (8) Paul preached a law-free Gospel to the Gentiles but did not encourage Jews to abandon the Torah (Lloyd Gaston and Alan Davies), and (9) Paul was inconsistent and illogical (Heikki Räisanen and E. P. Sanders).

[190] Moo, “Paul and the Law in the Last Ten Years,” 298.

[191] Räisänen, *Paul and the Law*, 268-69.

[192] N. T. Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1991; reprint, Minneapolis: Fortress,1993), 146, 151-53, 243, looked at sin and Israel staying in the covenant at the national level versus the individual level. He stated that the whole nation of Israel had failed to keep the Torah (Rom 3:1f.), and as a result, that Torah could not be the means through which she either retained her membership in the covenant of blessings or

Sanders is one of the leading advocates of those who see Paul as teaching that he had to give up his Judaic roots in order to follow Christ. Sanders' writings reflects the idea that Paul had redefined what it meant to be righteous before God. He evaluated how Paul's teachings compared to others in the first century based on his socio-historical contextual theory called "covenantal nomism"[193] and came to the conclusion that Paul could not have been addressing an actual problem of "works righteousness" among main-stream Jews. His research led him to believe that first-century Jews understood God's grace to be working hand-in-hand with doing "works of the Law." With this understanding, Sanders concluded that Paul must have abandoned his "covenant agreement" with God in exchange for a radically different relationship,[194] a "participatory

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become the means of blessing the world in accordance with the promises of God to Abraham (Rom 3:10-14). Therefore, Wright concluded that the King of the Jews took the brunt of the exile on Himself (p. 146). Wright stated that the crucifixion of the Messiah is the *quintessence* of the curse of exile and its climactic act. The Messiah came when Israel was under the curse of the Law in order to be Israel's *redeeming* representative (pp. 151, 243). Wright went on to say that the death of Jesus was therefore to be understood in terms of covenant-*renewing*: the death of the King, who was hanged on a tree in the midst of His own land was not an arbitrary piece of theology for Paul. For Paul, Christ dying on a Cross as Israel's redeeming representative by becoming the curse of the Law for them (Gal 3:13) represented the climax of the covenant through God's righteousness (p. 153).

[193] Regarding "covenantal nomism," E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1977), 422, said that the pattern of religion for Judaism was about covenantal nomism, which were actions regarding the law based on God's covenants with Israel, and could be summarized thus: (1) God has chosen Israel, (2) God has given the Law, (3) God promises to maintain the election and (4) the requirements are to be obeyed, (5) God rewards obedience and punishes transgression, (6) the Law provides a means of atonement, (7) atonement results in maintenance or re-establishment of the covenantal relationship, and 8) all those who are maintained in the covenant by obedience, atonement, and God's mercy belong to the group which will be saved.

[194] Thomas Schreiner, *The Law and Its Fulfillment: A Pauline Theology of Law* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993), 114-15, noted that even if "covenantal nomism" was the declared practice of Paul's day, that would

union" with Christ.[195] In his book, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*,

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not stop the possibility that many would attempt to be justified before God through their own efforts. Schreiner went on to say that throughout the history of the Christian Church, it could be amply demonstrated that Christians' overall knowledge of God's grace had not stopped "legalism" from becoming common practice at various times.

[195] Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 514, 517-18, stated that at the heart of Paul's thought it is not that one ratified and agreed to a covenant offered by God, becoming a member of a group with a covenantal relation with God and remaining in it on the condition of proper behavior, but instead, one formed an association with Christ, which gave them a new life that leads to the resurrection and ultimate transformation of that individual; that individual is a member of the body of Christ and in one Spirit with Him and remains so unless he or she breaks *the participatory union* (p. 514). In *Judaism: Practice and Belief 63 BCE-66 CE*, 191, Sanders stated that Judaism *required* obedience to the Law; obedience is a hallmark of Judaism. Sanders went on to say that the Law was a gift to Israel and God expected obedience to it (p. 267). An authorial excursus: what is important to remember at this point is that Paul never said that all "works of the Law" were abolished with the coming of the Messiah; in fact he said that through Christ and the leading of the Holy Spirit, Christ's followers would obey the commandments and fulfill the Law (Rom 2:13, 26; 3:28-31; 8:4; 10:4 (fulfill); 1 Cor 7:19; etc.). Paul did not actually move away from Judaism, but in actuality entered the Messianic Age with Christ. Although Sanders said that first-century Jews did not perceive "works of the Law" as righteousness that *gains* salvation, but instead, they saw "works of the Law" as righteousness that was required to stay *in* the covenant, that is not what Paul taught. It is similar in the sense that righteousness derived from "works of the Law" would not justify anyone regarding salvation, because no perfectly obeyed the Law. Instead, salvation was solely dependent on faith in God through what He had done through Christ's atoning death on a Cross. That being the case, God still expects Christ's followers to obey the commandments of the Law (1 Cor 7:19; Rom 2:13). Christ's followers will fulfill the Law through His atoning work and ongoing leadership through the Holy Spirit (Rom 3:31; 8:1-4; 13:8; Gal 5:14). In *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 517-18, Sanders stated that those who were in close association with Christ were punished and rewarded just as those who were in the Mosaic covenant; and in *Judaism: Practice and Belief 63 BCE-66 CE*, 272-73, Sanders said that a typical Christian scholarly error was thinking of reward and punishment in the Judaic world in "soteriological" terms; normally punishment and reward were considered as consequences that affected the living.

Sanders saw this close association with Christ as a new religion.[196] In a later work, Sanders' statements shift slightly allowing for some continuity as he readjusted his thinking to see this close association with Christ as a simultaneous appropriation and rejection of Judaism.[197]

It is important to note that Sanders did not think that there was adequate literature from Paul's own era to substantiate his "covenantal nomism" theory and therefore based most of his conclusions on documents that were separated in time by approximately four hundred years, which he personally calls his "gap theory."[198] Because Sanders

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[196] Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 550, stated that Paul taught in Rom 10:2-4 that Christ had put an end to the Law and provided a different righteousness from that provided by Torah obedience (p. 550). Sanders went on to say that when Paul denied "works of the Law" as a form of being righteous, he was in fact denying the Jewish covenant as a means for salvation, which effectively denied the basis of Judaism (p. 551). At that point, Sanders understood Paul to be saying that righteousness derived from "works of the Law" could not provide salvation negating the Jews understanding that doing "works of the Law" kept one in good standing with God; for Paul salvation could only be derived through faith in Christ, and therefore, Paul was breaking with Judaism. Paul's problem with Judaism was that it was not Christianity (pp. 551-52); and in a later publication, *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1983), Sanders stated that it appeared to be a Christian innovation to claim that the people of God are, in effect, a third party that must be entered into by Jew and Christian alike on the same ground (trust in Jesus Christ) (pp. 29f). He went on to say that there was two ways in which the Messianic Age had changed from earlier perceptions: (1) Jews were not automatically in, they had to trust in Jesus Christ, and (2) Gentiles were not subservient to Jews, but instead Jews and Gentiles were on equal footing with each other (pp. 172f.)

[197] Sanders, *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People*, 208f.

[198] Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 330-31, 426, stated that because of the consistency with which covenantal nomism was maintained from early in the second century B.C. to late in the second century C.E., it must be hypothesized that covenantal nomism was *pervasive* in Palestine before 70. Sanders continues by saying that "covenantal nomism" must have been the basic *type* of religion known by Jesus and presumably by Paul (p. 426). Earlier, Sanders had developed an argument to show that Ben Sirach's work [which was originally written around 180 B.C.] had recognized that the Law was given especially to Israel and that those who obeyed the Law were worthy of honor and

went well beyond the first-century of the Christian Era looking at early third-century rabbinic writings for clues to the first century, his work should be suspect to anachronistic blending to include reaction against the growing Christian movement.

After having done extensive research into the early rabbinic writings of the third century, Jacob Neusner, a Jewish scholar, concluded that these rabbinic writings were not accurate sources for reflecting first-century thought due to the fact that the authors of works such as the Mishnah were writing for audiences that had undergone major socio-religious changes after the failure of several messianic revolts against Rome.[199] Neusner's research led him to conclude that these later rabbinic writers left out important information and reshaped other information to promote their own agenda.[200]

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those who did not were unworthy of honor. Sanders went on to say that we may conclude that Ben Sirach, like the Rabbis after him, presupposed the biblical view of the election of Israel and wrote within the context of the doctrine of the covenant (pp. 330-31).

[199] Neusner, *Judaic Law from Jesus to the Mishnah*, 263, 82-83, a contemporary Jewish scholar, said that he was a devout Jew, and after critically examining the Mishnah states that he had found very little material in the Mishnah that refers to individuals and their teachings prior to A.D. 70. Neusner went on to say that even the little material that was incorporated into the Mishnah was not historically or theologically accurate; and cf. Neusner, "Judaism and Christianity: Different People Talking about Different Things to Different People," in *Jews and Christians: The Myth of a Common Tradition* (London: SCM Press, 1991), 14, who in an earlier publication had made a point to tell his readers that he had come to the conclusion that these early third century and later documents do not accurately reproduce the earlier sayings of Jews prior to the destruction Jerusalem.

[200] Neusner, "Judaism and Christianity," 14, had voiced this opinion in a similar article published a year earlier: "The Jewish-Christian Argument in the First Century: Different People Talking about Different Things to Different People, " in *The Law in the Bible and in Its Environment*, ed. Timo Veijola, The Finnish Exegetical Society in Helsinki, ed. Anne-Marit Enroth-Voitila (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1990), 185-86.

James Dunn is one of the leading advocates of the theory that Paul is rejecting the Law because it had led to national exclusivity. Dunn like Wright along with a group of scholars who met in 1994 for the Durham-Tübingen Research Symposium accepted Sander's "covenantal nomism" theory.[201] Therefore, when he looked for a theory of Paul's understanding of the Law that made sense through the filter of "covenantal nomism," Dunn stated that although Paul might look as if he is condemning "works righteousness" in his letters, he was not.[202] He

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[201] Dunn, "In Search of Common Ground," 309-12. When reading Dunn's summary of the group, one can see that Dunn assumed that Sanders' theory of "covenantal nomism" was the norm for the group as he used Sanders' thoughts of "getting in" and "staying in" the covenant as a basis to express his and the groups' thinking about Paul and the Law. This group of scholars met to discuss Paul and the Law at the Third Durham-Tübingen Research Symposium on Earliest Christianity and Judaism in September of 1994; cf. Brendan Byrne, "Interpreting Romans Theologically in a Post-'New Perspective' Perspective," *Harvard Theological Review* 94, no. 3 (2001), 227, who stated that it is now a truism that the publication in 1977 of Sanders' *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* marked a watershed in Pauline interpretation. Sanders outlawed once and forever from Christian scholarship the old legalistic caricature of Judaism that generations of Christians had derived from Paul. Byrne went on to say that this caricature stemmed largely from Martin Luther's identification of the battle in which he saw himself engaged in the sixteenth century with what he believed to be Paul's struggle in the mid-first century: namely, that both were confronting a religion of works-righteousness, exemplified in the one case by certain tendencies of late-medieval Catholicism and in the other by Judaism.

[202] Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*, 354, stated that Paul had set some key texts, which affirm justification through faith, against justification "from works of the law." The traditional understanding of the phrase within Protestant theology is that "from works of the law" denoted "good works" done as an attempt to gain or achieve righteousness. The interpretation is wholly understandable, particularly in the light of Rom 4:4-5, where the "works" in view (4:2) seem to be explained as "working for reward" and set in antithesis to "not working but [simply] believing." Dunn went on to say that the post-Pauline Eph 2:8-9 looked very much like a confirmation of this when the author stated that "by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is a gift of God; not from works, lest anyone should boast" (cf. 2 Tim 1:9 and Tit 3:5). Then Dunn expressed the problem with this traditional interpretation by saying that the problem with the

decided from his own research that Paul had not been teaching against doing “works of the Law” but instead was addressing a problem of national exclusivism.[203] It is interesting to note that even as Dunn interpreted Paul’s letters through the filter of “covenantal nomism,” maintaining that Paul was solely dealing with Jewish exclusivism, there were times that Dunn also said that Paul was addressing a general problem of “works righteousness.” For example, after evaluating Rom 9:30-10:8; 4:18-21; and 3:31, Dunn said, “To require more than that trust, to insist on a particular outworking of that faith, *would repeat the old failure with regard to the law, to transpose the law of faith into the*

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traditional view emerges from its conflict with “the new perspective.” Dunn went on to explain by saying that those following “the new perspective” understood the idea that first-century Judaism typically taught that righteousness had to be *achieved* by law-keeping was a fundamental misunderstanding. Dunn stated that their investigation of Paul’s perspective on his own pre-Christian attitudes and practice had only strengthened the view that Paul, the Pharisee, enjoyed a sense of participating in Israel’s covenant righteousness as attested and maintained (not earned) by his devoutness and faithfulness. Presumably, the resolution to the debate between the old perspective and the new laid in clarification of the distinction between *achieving* righteousness and *maintaining* righteousness, but that resolution is still some distance away; there are individuals such as Hans Hübner, “Was heißt bei Paulus ‘Werke des Gesetzes?’” in *Glaube und Eschatologie: W.G. Kümmel FS*, ed. E. Grasser (Tübingen: Mohr, 1985, 131-32, who understand Paul to be clearly saying that no one can be justified by *any* works of the Law, and therefore, he strongly opposes those such as Stendahl, Sanders, and Dunn who think that Paul did not see an antithesis between “justification by works of the Law” and “justification by faith.”

[203] Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*, 361-65, argued that in Galatians and Romans, Paul was equating “works of the Law” with works that set Jews apart from the rest of the world, not “good works.” He noted that the Law had provided atonement for the sins of those faithful to God, which meant for Dunn that the Law was not understood to have required perfect obedience. After evaluating some of the passages in Galatians and Romans, Dunn concluded that it was clear that the removal of “works of the Law” was in effect a removal of that which could prevent the Gospel from extending beyond the ethnic boundaries of the Jews.

law of works [italics added]."[204] Dunn and those following in his footsteps *did not* follow Sanders in thinking that Paul had given up Judaism for a different religious system;[205] Christianity was Judaism moving into the Messianic Age.[206]

Deviating slightly from Moo's four primary divisions for modern scholars studying Paul and the Law, it is better to combine his third and

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[204] Ibid., 641-42. Prior to the quotation above, Dunn stated that Romans 4 is obviously set up to illustrate faith-establishing law, "the law of faith" (3:31). Dunn understood that faith for Paul meant complete trust in God, like Abraham's, total reliance on God's enabling. He stated that for Paul faith was the root of obedience. Unless obedience sprang from faith, it was misdirected. The "obedience of faith" was that obedience that Abraham demonstrated through trust and reliance in God.

[205] Dunn, "In Search of Common Ground," 310, stated that the scholars who came together for the Third Durham-Tübingen Research Symposium on Earliest Christianity and Judaism in September of 1994 were in general in agreement that Paul understood his gospel to be thoroughly consistent with and continuous from his heritage as a Jew as he taught [the fulfillment of] Scripture; Dunn, "The New Perspective on Paul: Paul and the Law," 300, stated that although Sanders did an excellent job showing that God's chosen people were to be observing the law, which was given by God, to maintain their status as His people, he did not portray Paul correctly when teaching that Paul had exchanged one system for another after his Damascus Road experience. In an earlier work, Dunn, "The New Perspective on Paul," *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 65, no. 2 (1983), 119-21, stated that the normal exegesis of "works of the law" was equivalent to "doing law" in general; this has led to the false conclusion that in disparaging "works of the law" Paul was disparaging the law as such and had broken off with Judaism as a whole. He went on to say that Paul never disparaged "works of the Law," but emphatically taught that no one other than Christ Jesus had done "works of the Law" flawlessly.

[206] Martin Hengel, "Early Christianity as a Jewish-Messianic Universalistic Movement," in *Conflicts and Challenges in Early Christianity*, ed. Donald A. Hagner (Harrisburg: Trinity, 1999), 6, stated that it was a long and complicated process for the enthusiastic-messianic movement known as C*hristianismos* to separate from their roots within Judaism. He went on to say that it was not until A.D. 114 that the Gentile martyr Ignatius used the word with frequency and distinguished for the first time between C*hristianismos*, "Christianity," and *Ioudaismos*, "Judaism."

fourth classifications together due to the fact that many of the same scholars who understand Paul to be teaching that no one can do the righteous works of the Law perfectly also understand Paul to be saying that there is nothing wrong with the Law *per se*, because in reality, *the commandments* of the Law are holy, righteous, and good.[207] Many of these scholars understand Paul to be teaching that due to imperfect obedience to the commandments of the Law all people need to acknowledge God’s grace, which He is working through His redemptive work in Christ (Rom 1:14-17).

Snodgrass placed more emphasis on the continuity of the Law in Messianic Age. He stated that not only did Scriptures function authoritatively for Paul even when he was making a negative statement about the Law, but that he never advocated antinomianism nor did he undermine obedience to the will of God as revealed in the Law (Rom 3:8; 6:15). Paul expected Christians to obey the Law (1 Cor 7:19; Rom 8:4).[208]

Some such as Davies and Stephen Davis understood Paul’s teachings and others’ from the Early Church such as Matthew’s as showing how the living Christ is in fact the “Eternal Torah.”[209] In his

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[207] Rom 7:12.

[208] Snodgrass, “Spheres of Influence,” 83.

[209] W. D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism: Some Rabbinic Elements in Pauline Theology*, 2d ed. (London: SPCK, 1955; reprint, 1958), 149-50, stated that many scholars agreed that Paul had replaced the Torah with Jesus as the center of his life. Davies said that the importance of this fact is often overlooked and resulted in not expecting that Paul’s understanding of Jesus would be directly related to his understanding of Torah and the Law. Davies went on to state that understanding Jesus in light of the Law was not unique to Paul and used the Gospel of Matthew as an example. He stated that Matthew showed that Jesus was the new Law-giver who was greater than Moses with the Sermon on the Mount being the counterpart of the Sermon on Sinai; cf. Stephen K. Davis, *The Antithesis of the Ages: Paul’s Reconfiguration of Torah*, The Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series, no. 33, ed. Mark S. Smith (Washington: The Catholic Biblical Association of America, 2002), 3-4, stated that many have failed to understand Paul’s

book *Paul Apostle of God's Glory in Christ*, Thomas Schreiner discussed the fact that although there is a putting aside of what Dunn calls the "ethnic boundary markers" from the Mosaic Law, there is a strong sense in Paul's letters that Christ's followers "fulfill" the Law.[210] Schreiner

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teachings on the Law for the Messianic Age because they have followed theories that expect changes made between the Old Testament and Paul's day, which would have added a new idea of a Messianic Torah substantially different than earlier teachings. Davis stated that that type of thinking is erroneous, because Paul's thinking was derived from logical thinking rather than evolutionary (p. 25). In his conclusion, Davis wrote that Paul taught that Christ is the eternal Torah. He said that Paul's depreciation of Torah was set in motion by Paul's reconfiguration of the Torah image to recognize that Christ filled the same theological space as the eternal Torah; Christ, not Torah, was Wisdom, the agent of creation (p. 216). Davis went on to say that Rom 9:33 is an example of Pauline counter-textuality with its language mimicking assertions about Torah in Sirach 24 and 32. Now it is Christ who rescues his believers from eschatological shame. This counterpoint to Sirach's identification of Wisdom with Torah is reinforced in Rom 10:6-9 when Paul restated Deut 30:14 and Bar 3:29 as an affirmation of Christ rather than Torah (p. 216); and cf. Moo, "The Law of Moses or the Law of Christ?," 217, who in his conclusion of this article, stated that Christians are not bound to the Mosaic Law, but instead, to Christ Himself, the fulfiller of the Law.

[210] Thomas Schreiner, *Paul Apostle of God's Glory in Christ* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2001), 308-10, went on to say that if one described Paul's view of the Law merely in terms of abolition, this was unsatisfactory because there was a motif of fulfillment in Paul's letters. Schreiner noted that Paul's teachings show: (1) the whole Mosaic law is fulfilled in terms of love (Rom 13:8-10; Gal 5:14), which includes the prohibitions against adultery, murder, stealing and coveting as part of the law of love (Rom 13:8-10). Schreiner also noted that all of these commands were part of the Ten Commandments (Exod 20:13-17; Deut 5:17-21), (2) one must love one's neighbor as oneself (Lev 19:18), and (3) elsewhere there were commandments against murder (Rom 1:29), adultery (1 Cor 6:9), stealing (1 Cor 5:10-11; 6:10; Eph 4:28), with coveting receiving extended treatment in Rom 7:7-25, which can be compared to 1 Cor 10:6; 2 Cor 9:5; Eph 4:19; 5:3; Col 3:5) (p. 325). Schreiner went on to say that when Paul taught that the Law was fulfilled for those "who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit (Rom 8:4)," the plain sense of this statement was that those walking in the Spirit would fulfill concrete workings of the Law. Schreiner saw Rom 8:7 as strengthening such a view when Paul stated that those who are in the flesh did not and could not submit to God's law.

stated that this same Paul, who celebrated life in the Spirit, freedom in Christ, and the centrality of love, also filled his letters with commands and exhortations apparently not believing that exhorting Believers to follow Scripture contradicted the reality of the Spirit leading their lives in order that they might fulfilled the requirements of the Law (Gal 5:13-15; Rom 8:4; 13:8-10; cf. Rom 2:26-29).[211] Snodgrass promoted a possible solution to the diversity of views by asking everyone to consider how the Law functions under the “sphere of influence of sin and the flesh” versus how it functions for those under the “sphere of influence of faith and participation with Christ, the sphere of the Spirit” (Rom 8:1; Gal 2:17).[212] Under the first sphere of influence, the Law brings about death due to the tyranny of sin, and yet it does not belong under this sphere of influence because it is good, just, holy, and spiritual (Rom 7:12-14).[213] When one lives out his or her life under the influence of the sphere created by being *in* Christ, the Law is placed within the Sphere of the Spirit (Rom 8:4) where it ultimately belongs (Rom 7:14); the Law in the correct sphere frees Christ’s followers from the tyranny of sin.[214]

This view of Rom 8:4 also fits with Romans 7, in which Paul proclaimed human beings’ inability to keep God’s law [perfectly] in the flesh, which is in contradistinction to those who are being empowered to fulfill God’s Law through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (p. 327); cf. Stuhlmacher, *Paul’s Letter to the Romans*, 124, who stated that Christians were to fulfill the will of God, which found paradigmatic expression in the Decalogue (Rom 13:8f.) and could be summarized most concisely in the love command (Gal 5:14; Rom 13:8). The will of God will be the criterion of the final judgment, which God has given over to His Christ (2 Cor 5:10; Rom 2:12-16).

[211] Ibid.

[212] Snodgrass, “Spheres of Influence,” 85.

[213] Ibid., 85-86.

[214] Ibid., 92.

The Place of "Works of the Law" in the Messianic Age

Although many such as Martin Hengel and Seyoon Kim understood the Early Church and Paul to be teaching that God had just completed a work through Jesus Christ that provided justification and resulting salvation for all who would trust Him,[215] they were divided over the place of doing "works of the Law" in the newly inaugurated Messianic Age. Ajit Das understood Paul to be addressing a real problem of "works righteousness," and even with Paul teaching against justification based on doing "works of the Law," he stated that Paul would not have considered Moses' teaching as wrong, but instead that there was still a need to do the "works of the Law." Justification, which is acquired through faith, does not rule out the need to do the righteous works commanded by the Law.[216] Schreiner noted that the first-century

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[215] Martin Hengel, "[Paul,] the Persecutor," in *The Pre-Christian Paul*, trans. John Bowden (Philadelphia: Trinity, 1991), 80-83, stated that in Paul's theology of the cross, the question of how justification and salvation and their relationship to the Law was not something later worked out in response to early Christian conflicts among various communities, but was from the beginning directed by the teachings of Jesus and then spread through the Early Church. Hengel said that after Paul's conversion, he still would have remembered his own error as a Pharisee in not originally recognizing the crucified Messiah; and Seyoon Kim, *Paul and the New Perspective: Second Thoughts on The Origin of Paul's Gospel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 5-6, 10-13, 19, 34, stated that Paul received both his missionary commission to the Gentiles and his basic understanding of God's grace bestowed through Jesus during his Damascus Road Conversion. Kim went on to say that Paul informed the Galatians that the gospel that he had received through revelation from Jesus Christ was the same gospel that he preached to them (1:11-17) (p. 46).

[216] Ajit Andrew Das, "Beyond Covenantal Nomism: A 'Newer Perspective' on Paul and the Law," (Ph.D. diss., Presbyterian School of Christian Education, 1999), 383, 392-94. Similar to Sanders, Das differentiated between the righteousness originating from faith and the righteousness that stems from doing "works of the Law." But, *contra* Sanders, Das' main thesis was that when Paul realized the truth of the Gospel message, he realized that he had to move beyond "covenantal nomism" and accept God's gift of grace because God actually required

Judaic soteriology that Paul was immersed in included the *synergism* of God's grace and human works.[217] Davies' research led him to conclude that Torah was not expected to change in the Messianic Age; instead God would send a prophet who would make the Law clearer.[218]

Ulrich Wilckens understood Paul to be saying that God requires a synergistic approach for Christ's followers. Although Believers are saved by God's grace through faith, Wilckens understood there to be a real demand made by the Mosaic Law requiring Christians to be actively obedient to His commandments in order *to maintain* salvation,[219] which is incorrect thinking regarding maintaining salvation. Wilckens went on to say that Paul was in no way against "works" and said, "Das Evangelium fordert keinen Verzicht auf eigenes Handeln; es provoziert zu keinerlei Resignation, die sich als Passivität gegenüber Gott, dem Handeln allein zustehe, auslegt: the Evangelist is not requiring the abandonment of one's actions; it is not a provocation in any way to a resignation, which in itself is being interpreted as passivity before God to whom alone action belongs."

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perfect obedience, which no one was able to do on his or her own. Das' "newer perspective" understood Paul to have accepted God's grace and thereby to have moved beyond "covenantal nomism" and into a close association with Christ, who provided justification for his transgressions against God as revealed through the Law (pp. 389-90).

[217] Schreiner, *The Law and Its Fulfillment*, 93-96, stated that his thesis was that Paul detected legalism in Judaism because its soteriology was synergistic: salvation was by God's grace and human works. Jews believed that through their free will they could cooperate with God.

[218] Davies, *Torah in the Messianic Age and/or the Age to Come*, 44-46. A couple references for Davies conclusions came from 1 Macc 4.46; 14.41 and CD 8.6-10, which proclaimed a Teacher of Righteousness who would arise in the future and impart additional insight for the existing Torah.

[219] Ulrich Wilckens, *Der Brief an Die Römer: Röm 1-5*, Evangelisch-Katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament, no. 6, pt. 1 (Zürich: Benziger-Neukirchener, 1978), 143-45.

After balancing Paul's statement in Rom 3:20, 28, in which Paul declared that no one would be justified by "Gesetzeswerken: works of the Law,"[220] with Rom 2:13, in which Paul stated that only the doers of the Law would be justified, Wilkins challenged contemporary interpreters to understand how these scriptures fit together contextually. Wilckens correctly pointed out that if one understands what Paul was saying with the understanding that both thoughts were valid, they would truly understand how doing "works of the Law" fit into Paul's teachings on justification. He stated, "An der Antwort auf diese Frage hängt entscheidend das Verständnis der paulinischen Rechtfertigungslehre im ganzen: Deciding the answer to this question is directly related to understanding the Pauline doctrine of justification in its totality."[221]

Wright's overall writings are in agreement with individuals such as Wilckens who claim that Paul is not in any way opposed to doing "works of the Law" in and of themselves and stated that it made no sense in the proper historical and covenantal context of Paul's theology for Paul to be attacking "works of the Law." Paul was teaching the importance of faith within the Renewed Covenant.[222]

Considering Rom 2:13 as the highpoint of 2:12-16, Stuhlmacher stated that it was a known Jewish teaching that God would in fact judge the world according to the criterion set by the Law (cf. Ezra 7:37; 70-73; 2 Bar. 48.27, 38-40, 46f.).[223] When considering Rom 3:31, he went on to say that Paul had taken an emphatic stance regarding the Law and its commandments stating that Christ's work did *not* nullify the Law (2:12-16), but fulfilled it (5:18). Paul was teaching that the Law witnessed to the righteousness of God (3:21; 4:3) and continued to teach righteousness for those who were led by the Spirit (8:3f.).[224]

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[220] Ibid., 142-43.

[221] Ibid., 143.

[222] Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant*, 155-56.

[223] Stuhlmacher, *Paul's Letter to the Romans*, 41-42.

[224] Ibid., 68.

After evaluating Paul’s writings regarding Rom 3:27-4:8, Schreiner concluded that Paul was affirming that when Torah is understood as a law that teaches faith rather than works and that boasting is not an option for those who follow God, the best solution is to recognize both the individual and national implications of his teaching, which clearly show that Jews practiced exclusivism in general and that some Jews were attempting to be right before God on the basis of works.[225] Schreiner understood Paul’s writing in Rom 9:30-10:8 as leaving little doubt that there was a real on-going problem among many Jews. Many were pursuing a perceived righteousness that was derived from “works” leaving faith out of the picture and thereby rejecting God’s plan of salvation.[226] Therefore, Believers were not to fall into the same mind set as some of Paul’s contemporaries who misunderstood Torah. Justification was possible only though God’s grace, and in that light Believers would fulfill the requirements of the Law through the leading of the Spirit (Gal 5:13-15; Rom 8:4; 13:8-10; cf. Rom 2:26-29).[227]

Paul and “Works of the Law” in Key Literary Contexts

The first issue to address in understanding the literary-grammatical context of Paul’s teaching regarding “works of the Law” is to understand how “works of the Law” fit into Paul’s understanding of the “righteousness of God” and the means by which God justifies sinners. Stuhlmacher stated that the expression ἡ δικαιοσύνη θεου', “the righteousness of God,” occurs repeatedly in Paul’s letters (2 Cor 5:21; Rom 1:17; 3:21, 22, 25, 26; 10:3). Stuhlmacher went on to say that in Phil 3:9 Paul spoke moreover of ἡ ἐκ θεου δικαιοσύνη, “the

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[225] Schreiner, *Paul Apostle of God’s Glory in Christ*, 121; and in an earlier work, *The Law and Its Fulfillment*, 106, had stated that the Jews felt superior to Gentiles because of their birth and their obedience to the Torah.

[226] Schreiner, *The Law and Its Fulfillment*, 104.

[227] Schreiner, *Paul Apostle of God’s Glory in Christ*, 308-10.

righteousness from God," stating that these constructions go back to the Old Testament and early Judaism. According to Judg 5:11; 1 Sam 12:7; Ps 103:6; Dan 9:16, and Mic 6:56, the history of Israel is filled with צְדָקוֹת יהוה, "the righteous acts of YHWH." Stuhlmacher noted that the Community at Qumran held these same ideas as they considered God's righteousness as being the key activity in creating salvation and well being for His children. This thought is demonstrated in texts such as 1QS 10.23; cf. Isa 45:8, 23-24; 51:6, 8 Ps 71:19; 89:17; 96:13; 98:9; and 111:3. Stuhlmacher continued by saying that the righteousness of God is also active in judgment, giving security and hope to those without legal rights (Isa 1:26-27) and denouncing the wicked (Ps 50:6-7). In the penitential prayers of the Old Testament, God's righteousness is appealed to as his saving mercy (1QS 11.10-15; Dan 9:16, 18; 4 Ezra 8.31-36).[228]

Stuhlmacher said that by evaluating Romans, it was clear that Paul's discourse about justification arose from the Old Testament and early Jewish sources and had a forensic ring to it. When the verb δικαιοῦν, "to justify," was used in the active voice, it designated God's act of justification (Gal 3:8; Rom 3:26, 30; 4:5; 8:30, 33). For Paul, the passive δικαιοῦσθαι, "to be justified," usually meant the acceptance that God extended or withheld from humans in the judgment (Gal 2:16-17; 3:11, 24; Rom 2:13; 3:20, 24, 28). Stuhlmacher continued by saying that Paul, in a typical Jewish manner, spoke about the righteousness of God "synthetically" to designate God's own creative and saving activity (Rom 3:5, 25-26) as well as the gracious gift of righteousness that Believers share (Rom 3:22; 2 Cor 5:21).[229]

Later, Stuhlmacher tied Paul's teachings of God's righteousness and justification to atonement and reconciliation by saying that as 2 Cor 5:16-21 and Rom 3:24-26; 4:25; 5:1-11 show, justification, atonement, reconciliation, and the new creation have the most intimate connection for Paul. Through the Old Testament, it can be seen that these motifs are beginning to overlap in Isa 43:3-4, 18-19; 50:8; 53:10-12; and 65:17, and

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[228] Stuhlmacher, *A Challenge to the New Perspective*, 18-19.

[229] Ibid., 19-20.

the same thing occurs in the Qumran texts such as 1QS 11.11-15. These texts function like a prelude to Rom 5:1-11, which state that God demonstrates His righteousness and mercy by delivering sinners from their sins and by granting them access to Himself through His grace.[230]

Das stated that throughout Romans 9-11, ἔργα refered to human activity just as it does in Galatians and Romans 2-4.[231] From his investigation, Das said that whenever ἔργα was used in relation with the νόμος, there was nothing to indicate that Paul had only ethnic boundary markers in mind. Paul used the wording ἔργα νόμου to indicate the general “deeds or works” that the Mosaic Law requires.[232] In his conclusion on the subject, Das stated that the language and imagery of Rom 9:30-32 within the context of Romans 9-11 required that ἔργα νόμου, “works of law” be understood in general terms as “doing the Law.”[233]

When Schreiner evaluated Rom. 3:20, 28, and Gal. 2:16; 3:2, 5, 10, he noted that Paul was obviously addressing “works of the law” in such a way that opposed some who were considering those works as a pathway to being justified before God. He then said that “legalism” was present by definition when one believes that “good works” play a part in meriting or earning salvation. Schreiner went on to show that when Galatians was read in context, the letter clearly showed that Paul was writing in response to proponents of “works righteousness” who had made significant inroads into the Galatian community. Even in Rom 3:20, 28, Schreiner said that it was doubtful that Paul was articulating a theological axiom that was unrelated to a real problem that he was facing.[234]

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[230] Ibid., 57.

[231] Das, “Beyond Covenantal Nomism: A ‘Newer Perspective’ on Paul and the Law,” 339.

[232] Ibid.

[233] Ibid., 344.

[234] Schreiner, *The Law and Its Fulfillment*, 94-95.

When Schreiner evaluated Paul's argument in Rom 9:30-10:8, he concluded that the reason that some of the Gentiles had obtained right-standing with God while many of the Jews had fallen short could be explained through verses 31-32, which stated that the Jews "pursued the law *for* righteousness," but they did not attain right-standing with God because "they did not pursue the law from [a perspective of] faith, but as from works." Schreiner said that Paul's argument showed that he considered pursuing the Law as neither a mistake nor as evil. The Jews only fault was that they were pursuing the Law from a perspective of "works." If they had pursued the same Law from a perspective of faith, they would have obtained a right-standing with God.[235]

Paul, ῎Εργα Νόμου, and the Relevance of ῎Εργα Νόμου for Those Who Are ἐν Χριστῷ

In Eph 2:8-10, Paul told his addressees that they were not saved by any works that they might do but instead they were saved by grace and that salvation was a gift from God on their behalf that was received through faith. Then he proceeded to tell them that both Gentile and Jews had been created to do ἔργοις ἀγαθοῖς, "good works," which God had already planned out ahead of time for them. From this point in his message, it should be clear that when penning Eph 2:15a., Paul was not talking about abolishing any of the Law but instead was talking about making ineffective or optional part of the Law. Although there is a general consensus among scholars that Paul had been teaching that no one would be justified by doing ἔργα νόμου, "works of the Law," it was demonstrated above that there is good reason to think that many first-century Jews understood the Law itself was eternal. They were expecting the Law to be placed in the hearts of those following God through Christ in the finalized days of the creation.

Therefore, in this next section, the author will interact with Scripture and the voices of some of our contemporary scholars who have done *primary-source research* in search for a first-century understanding

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[235] Ibid., 104.

of the meaning of ἔργα νόμου and how these works were looked at in regard to the Law operating within the Messianic Age. This information will then be applied in the last major subsection of this chapter to derive Paul's intended meaning of the aorist participial clause καταργήσας τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν.

A Closer Look at the Meaning of Νόμος and "Εργα Νόμου

Νόμος

Hay noted that Philo used the term νόμος consistently to denote the commandments of the Mosaic Law and occasionally the entire Pentateuch.[236] In a somewhat similar manner, Paul consistently used νόμος to refer to the Mosaic Law as a whole or its individual parts, its commandments, ordinances, or customs, but he never used νόμος to refer to the entire Pentateuch except for one time when he used the word νόμος to denote "Scripture."[237] Paul also used a form of the word ἀνόμοι

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[236] Hay, "Philo of Alexandria," 373, said that the new *Philo Index* lists 536 occurrences of the term νόμος for the Philonic corpus with this term being Philo's standard term for the Mosaic legislation along with his use of it to refer many times to the Pentateuch as a whole (narratives as well as statutes). Philo called the Ten Commandments the ten λόγοι, "words," and says that they summarize the Special Laws (*Spec.* 1:1).

[237] 1 Cor 14:21 is an exception to Paul's use of νόμος. In this passage, Paul used νόμος, to refer to "Scripture" as Paul quoted from the prophet Isaiah. In other places such as 2 Tim 3:16, Paul used the word γραφή to denote "Scripture." When looking through Paul's letters as a whole, the context shows that Paul normally was speaking about a specific law, the Mosaic Law. There are a few places that show more fully what Paul was referring to such as: (1) Gal 3:10 where the Law is referred to as τὸ βιβλίον τοῦ νόμου, (2) 1 Cor 9:8-11 where ὁ νόμος was directly equated with ὁ Μωϋσέως νόμος, and (3) Rom 9:4 where ἡ νομοθεσία, "the giving of the Law" was to Israel. Cf. Westerhom, *Israel's Law and the Church's Faith*, 110-11, 139, who stated that

including the adverb ἀνόμως to refer to those who did not have or did not follow the requirements of the Mosaic Law, which was God's Law (1 Cor 9:21, 21, 21, 21; 2 Thess 2:8; Rom 2:12, 12).

According to Josephus, the prize for those who live and die according to the Law was a future renewed existence with a corresponding better way of life (*Ag. Ap.* 2.217-19). Josephus along with many of his contemporaries understood the Law to have been given by God to promote piety, mutual fellowship, a general love for all humanity, and justice (*Ag. Ap.* 2.146-47).[238]

When addressing the daily theological and ethical issues of the newly established churches throughout the eastern Mediterranean World, Paul used the Mosaic Law in conjunction with Christ's extended teachings to emphasize the intent of the Law over its literal meaning. In the overall scheme of things, Paul's teachings line up with Christ's teachings as recorded in Matt 22:37-40. In Rom 13:8-10, Paul taught that the act of loving one's neighbor was the πλήρωμα νόμου, "the fulfillment of the Law."[239] Knowing that no one is made righteous before God through their own actions, Paul stated in 1 Cor 9:21 that those who follow Christ are ἔννομος Χριστοῦ, "upright through Christ."[240]

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according to Paul's most frequent usage of *nomos*, the term refered to the sum of specific divine requirements given to Israel through Moses. They were intended to be *poiein, prassein*, "done," or *phylassein, telein*, "kept," though concrete demands, which also provided opportunity to commit *parabasis*, "transgression" of the Law (pp. 110-11). Later, Westerholm said that in the Deuteronomistic literature, the Torah of Moses contained the sum of the commandments imposed upon Israel at Mount Sinai, which were accompanied by sanctions, and therefore, the translation of νόμος as "law" was the most adequate rendering (p. 139).

[238] Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*, 232, showed through Josephus' work, *Ag. Ap.* 2.210; *Ant.* 13.245 and Aristeas' letter, *Letter of Aristeas* 139, that Gentiles who wanted to associate closely with Jews must abide by the Law.

[239] Cf. Gal 5:14.

[240] BDAG, 337-38. The general idea, the sense, that is associated with the word ἔννομος was that of someone or something being lawful, legal, true to the law, and upright.

Paul normally used the word νόμος with the article to emphasize the entire Law and νόμος without the article to emphasize τὰ δικαιώματα τοῦ νόμου, “the righteous requirements of the Law,”[241] but there are a few exceptions to the norm: one occurs in Rom 7:23-8:11 where Paul taught about two ἕτερον νόμους, “different laws.” They represented two distinct attitudes within every individual: ὁ νόμος τοῦ νοός, “the law of the mind,” and ὁ νόμος τῆς ἁμαρτίας καὶ τοῦ θανάτου, “the law of sin and death.”[242] In Gal 3:21; 5:22; Rom 3:27, and 4:15, νόμος refers to the role of any general law, and in 1 Tim 1:9, ἀνομοῖς is used to refer to the general unrighteousness of humanity and its need for God’s Law.

For example, in Romans 7-8, Paul consistently used ὁ νόμος and νόμος in such a way as to show clearly that ὁ νόμος normally referred to the entire Mosaic Law and νόμος to “the righteous requirements of the Mosaic Law.” In this text, Paul used the concept of how the regulations of the Law no longer applied to a married women whose spouse had died; he used this to illustrate the inapplicability of the

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[241] Paul’s contextual style shows that the quality of the word νόμος can best be described by the phrase τὰ δικαιώματα τοῦ νόμου, which is found in Rom 2:26. Note that this general concept was used by Paul even when he placed νόμος into a prepositional phrases.

[242] Snodgrass, “Spheres of Influence: A Possible Solution to the Problem of Paul and the Law,” 91-92, has a different understanding of the “Law of the Mind” and the “Law of Sin and Death.” He stated that all occurrences of the use of νόμος are referring to Torah and that there are others such as Moule, Osten-Sacken, and Wilckens who agreed with him. Snodgrass said that it was clear that Paul’s usages of the term νόμος in Rom 7:22, 25b; 8:3, 4, 7 were clear references to Old Testament law, but the references to “the law of sin” and “the law of sin and death” in 7:23c, 25; and 8:2 referred to God’s Law which had been commandeered by sin to bring about death. This law referred to the Law after it was in the hands of sin as described by 7:5, 13; it was the Law abducted into the *sphere* of sin. Snodgrass went on to say that the “law of my mind,” which delights in God’s Law (7:23b), was the Law operating in the *sphere* of the Spirit (pp. 91-92).”

Law's sentencing of anyone to death for violations of the Law after that person had come into a close relationship with Christ, because once someone started following Christ, God used Christ's substitutionary death to satisfy the requirements for disobeying His righteous laws (Rom 7:1-6).

At the beginning of this letter, Paul had already stated that he was not ashamed to proclaim this Good News because its message had the power to transform lives by allowing God's righteous act through Christ to renew sinful humanity (Rom 1:16-17).[243] Jesus' followers had technically died with Christ upon confession of Jesus as their lord and savior. This salvation had been demonstrated through God raising His Son, Jesus (Rom 10:9-13; cf. Eph 1:13-14). From that point onward they fulfilled the righteous requirements of the Law by walking according to God's righteousness through the Spirit's leading (Rom 8:4).

In Paul's letters, three thoughts become apparent regarding the character and role of the Mosaic Law within the Messianic Age: (1) there is nothing wrong with the Law nor its commandments; in fact, they are holy, righteous, and good, (2) due to sin, no one will be justified by doing the righteous requirements of the Law, but Christ's followers are justified because He has taken on the curse (judgment) of the Law for everyone who follows Him, and (3) although no one is justified by doing what is expected by God as shown through His righteous commandments, His commandments have not been abolished. Instead, Christ's followers are continually fulfilling the righteous moral requirements of the Law and the will of God for their lives as they follow obediently the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Looking at the three aspects regarding the relationship between the Law and Grace as denoted above: (1) Paul made it clear through

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[243] Walter Brueggemann, *Theology of the Old Testament* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 132, stated that Israel's rhetorical world has God and His driving power at its center. The righteousness of God can be demonstrated through God's actions on behalf of those whom He has chosen. He said that the Old Testament revealed this God who characteristically acted in powerless Israel's behalf, who dominated Israel's speech, who was the one who acted in life-permitting צְדָקוֹת, "righteous acts," and therefore, He was the only thinkable subject of Israel's thanks and praise.

passages such as Rom 7:7, 12, 14; 8:2 that the Law and its commandments are holy, righteous, and good—it is spiritual—and the Law is still the embodiment of knowledge and truth from which Christ's followers continue to learn God's will and essential instruction for daily living (Rom 2:17, 20),[244] (2) Paul was emphatic that no one would be fully justified ἐξ ἔργων νόμου or ἐκ νόμου, "out of works of the Law," or διὰ νόμου, "through (works of) the Law," but instead χωρὶς ἔργων νόμου, "apart from works of the Law," through faith.[245] Justification had become available to those following Christ through His substitutionary death: Christ had become cursed (judged) in their place (Gal 3:10-13; Col 2:13-14),[246] and (3) in Rom 10:4, Paul declared that Christ is the τέλος νόμου, "the fulfillment of the Law," in the sense that He has completed the requirements of the Law for all who learned to trust and obey God.[247]

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[244] Earlier in this chapter under the subheading "Laying the Foundation," it was noted that there are those such as O'Brien, *Ephesians*, 199, who understood the whole Law to have been ineffective or abrogated and that in reality Christ's followers were to operate under the authority of the Law of Christ. It is interesting to note that many of the known commandments of the Lord correspond to existing commandments from the Mosaic Law.

[245] Regarding justification by faith and not works of the law: (1) for ἐξ ἔργων νόμου, ἐκ νόμου, and διὰ νόμου, see Gal 2:16, 21; 3:2, 5, 10, 11, 17, 18, 21, 24; Rom 3:20, 28; 4:13, 14; 16; Phil 3:9; cf. Gal 5:3-4; Rom 2:12; 6:4-11; 7:1-6; 8:10-14, and (2) for χωρὶς ἔργων νόμου, see Rom 3:21, 28.

[246] God has made those who follow Christ righteous through Christ's atoning death and His personal righteousness (Rom 3:21-26; 5:1, 9-11; 8:10, 32-33; 2 Cor 5:21; cf. Isa 53:11-12)

[247] In Rom 2:27, Paul stated that if an uncircumcised individual was τελοῦσα, "fulfilling/completing" the Law, God would consider him as being circumcised. Six major translating teams interpreted the meaning of τελοῦσα as "fulfilling" (HCS, NKJ, KJ), "keeping" (NASB, OAB), or "obeying" (NIV). In context, the use of the word τέλος in Rom 10:4

Christ had been judged on everyone's behalf from all time for all who learned to love, trust, and obey God,[248] and He continually helps His followers to fulfill the righteous requirements of the Law as they strive to fulfill the ethical portion of the Mosaic Law as illuminated by Christ under the guidance of the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:4). The Law had not been abolished. The Mosaic Law still had a continuing role throughout the Messianic Age, which is clear through passages such as 1 Cor 7:19b and Rom 2:13 through which Paul declared that neither circumcision nor lack of circumcision was key, but instead what was really important was "*keeping* the commandments of God," and then just a little later in the same letter, he quoted a commandment from the Mosaic Law as an authoritative instruction for Christ's followers in the Messianic Age (1 Cor 9:8-10).[249]

Ἔργα Νόμου

Our quest to understand Paul's meaning of Christ's atoning death and His making ineffective τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν is tied directly to a proper understanding of what it means to do the righteous requirements of the Law. The section directly above shows the importance of doing the requirements of the Law in the Messianic Age, therefore this section will be relatively short and focus mainly on the phrases ἔργον or ἔργα νόμου, "work or works of the Law." When Paul used the word ἔργον or ἔργα by themselves, he was normally using a shorthand code for "works of the Law," or when he

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matches a similar statement made in 1 Tim 1:5 where τέλος represents the desired outcome, the fulfillment, of godly instruction, which is love from a pure heart, a good conscience, and sincere faith. In Rom 10:4, the desired output of God's righteous actions (Rom 1:16-17) is that Christ would fulfill the righteous requirements of the Law for those who were learning to love, trust, and obey God. There are several additional usages of various forms of the verb τελέω used in John 19:28, James 2:8 and Rev 17:17 and a form of the verb τελειόω used in Luke 13:32 and John 17:23 where a completing or fulfilling action is being described.

[248] All time: Heb 10:4-18; love, trust, and obedience: Rom 8:28-30; John 3:14-17; 14:15, 21, 23; et al.

[249] Cf. Rom 2:11-16.

directly referenced the Law, he was normally speaking of doing the righteous requirements of the Law. The “works” that find favor with God are works that compliment the righteous requirements of the Law. Paul said it this way in Rom 13:10, “Love does not work evil against one’s neighbor, therefore, love is the πλήρωμα νόμου, “fulfillment of the Law.”

The meaning of ἔργα and ἔργα ἀγαθά is fairly clear in their contextual settings, but some have questioned whether or not ἔργα νόμου is a technical phrase that had a special meaning for its time. Paul used the phrase ἐξ ἔργων νόμου and a short-hand version, ἐκ νόμου, to indicate “by doing the righteous requirements of the Law,” which most translate simply as “through works of the Law.”[250]

In Rom 3:21, 28, Paul used a similar phrase, χωρὶς ἔργων νόμου, to indicate that justification comes separate from doing the righteous requirements of the Law; justification comes through faith. Most scholars agree that the phrase “works of the Law” refers to the requirements of the Mosaic Law, the Torah. Dunn stated that one is correct to say that “works of the Law” are what the Law requires of God’s people and are expected because of God’s grace.[251] Unless the context directs otherwise, when Paul used the phrase “works of the Law,” he is referring to *all* required works of the Law. Other than Paul’s usage of forms of ἔργα νόμου, “works of the Law,” there were no other New Testament writers, who used this phraseology.

Gathercole’s research in this area led him to agree with those who concluded that the phrase ἔργα νόμου or its Hebrew equivalent had normally been used to indicate “doing” the requirements of the Law *in general* instead of pointing to some particular area of the Law. *Context had to be the determining factor*. In one of his later works, *Where Is*

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[250] See the write-up regarding ἔργα νόμου in this chapter under the subheading “Paul and ‘Works of the Law,’” in Key Literary Contexts.”

[251] Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*, 358.

Boasting? Early Jewish Soteriology and Paul's Response in Romans 1-5, Gathercole examined the Old Testament to see if it could have been used as the background for Paul and others to use ἔργα νόμου in Greek or some form of מעשׂי התורה in Hebrew or Aramaic to represent "doing" in relationship with the Law.[252]

Gathercole's study brought him to the conclusion that there was a direct corollary between Paul's usage of a form of ἔργα νόμου and the Old Testament writings such as: (1) Deut 27:26, which reads that an individual is cursed if he or she does not uphold the words that are written in the Law by "doing" them, (2) Deut 31:10-12, which states that the people—men, women, children, and aliens among them—are to be assembled every seven years to hear the words of the Law in order that they may continually "do" them, (3) Deut 28:58; 29:28 [Eng: 29:29]; 32:46, which demonstrate that the idea of "doing all of the words of Torah" is frequently restated, (4) Josh 1:7-8 and 23:6; cf. Josh 22:5, which instruct God's children to observe *all* of the Law, (5) 2 Chr 33:8; 2 Kgs 17:34, 37; 21:8; Ezra 10:3; Neh 10:30, in which "doing the requirements of the Law" is clearly in view, and (6) 2 Chr 14:3, Neh 9:34; Ezra 7:10, in which "doing" is placed directly in front of "Torah" producing an explicit meaning of "doing the Law."[253]

There is no Hebrew wording in the Old Testament nor Greek wording within the Septuagint[254] or New Testament other than Paul's writingss matching some form of the phrase ἔργα νόμου, "works of the Law." Therefore, it would be good to examine some extra-biblical writings from 63 B.C. to A.D. 70 for additional information.

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[252] Gathercole, *Where Is Boasting?,* 92-93.

[253] Ibid., 92-93. Gathercole said that there were much closer parallels between Paul's use of the phrase "works of the Law" and the Old Testament's usage of similar ideas than most scholars gave credit; he stated that both Paul and the Qumran texts were showing a natural development of an idea firmly established in the Old Testament.

[254] Searching the Septuagint in the *TLG* for any form of εργ. . . to be found within two word spacings of νομου did not produce any matches.

J. C. O'Neill stated that prior to discovering the Dead Sea Scrolls, there was only a handful of sources that even came close to paralleling Paul's use of the phrase ἔργα νόμου such as: (1) *2 Bar*. 57.2, "the works of the commandments"; cf. *2 Bar*. 48.22, 24; 51.2-3, 7; 61.6; 63.3; 74:1,[255] (2) Sir 19.20, "in all wisdom there is ποίησις νόμου," (3) 1 Macc 2.67, "You shall rally to you all doers of the Law," and (4) 1 Macc 13.48, "those who do the Law."[256]

Looking beyond the Old Testament, Gathercole examined 4QMMT from Qumran and divided its text into a halakic section (B_1-C_7) and a parenetic section (C_7-end) and concluded that the emphasis was on "doing" what was good and righteous in God's eyes so that they may rejoice at the end of time as they face God's judgment.[257] Regarding other texts from Qumran, Gathercole stated that texts such as 4Q*Florilegium* (4Q174.6-7) show a close Hebrew parallel to Paul's usage of ἔργα νόμου through a community's sending up a pleasing incense to God through their מעשׂי התורה, "works of the Torah."[258] In the texts such as

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[255] Markus Barth, *Ephesians: Introduction, Translation, and Commentary on Chapters 1-3*, Anchor Bible, no. 34 (Garden City: Doubleday, 1974), 245, and cf. *2 Bar*. 48.15; 67.6; 85.15

[256] J. C. O'Neil, "Did You Receive the Spirit by the Works of the Law?: The Works of the Law in Judaism and the Pauline Corpus," *Australian Biblical Review* 46 (1998), 71. See *2 Bar*. 57.2 in the Syriac version.

[257] Gathercole, 93-94. His research uncovered an interesting parallel to the coming Judgment by the author(s) of the text of CD 3.14-16 in which they rewrote Lev 18:5 in such a way as to apply Torah obedience explicitly to a reward of eternal life instead of just allowing the text to state that those who obey the laws of God will live. There are wisdom works such as 4Q416 2.1.6-7 and 4Q417 2.i.11-16 that also show a future reward of eternal life for those who obey Torah (p. 106).

[258] Ibid., 95, 104. Gathercole said that there were some scholars who thought that התורה was really התודה and therefore translated this text as "the works of praise." Gathercole paralleled this concept with the text of *2 Bar.* 67.6 in which there was a word picture of the righteousness of those doing the Law going up as smoke of incense to God (p. 95). This

1QS 5.21; 6.18, 5.23-24; and 1QpHab 8.1, *doing* the requirements of Torah is important for both entering and maintaining oneself in their community.[259] In fact, texts such as 1Q22 2.7-10 and 4Q171 2.13-14, 20-21 show that doing the requirements of the Law was also considered important to preserve the community as a whole.[260]

When Dunn studied 4QMMT (*Miqsat Ma 'ase ha-Torah*), he noted that the Hebrew phrase, *ma 'ase hatorah*, "works of the Law," was used similarly to Paul's usage of the phrase in Gal 2:16 to sum up his case against those who were insisting on Gentiles following Judaic practices. Dunn said that the authors of 4QMMT used this phrase to make their case that the addressees should conduct their lives according to Torah.[261] He went on to say that within the context of the letter, 4QMMT, it is seen that this type of *halakhah* was mainly being used to address the "works of the Law" that relate to the Temple, the priesthood, sacrifices, and purity.[262]

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concept can be found in texts such as 4Q542 1.i.11-13 where obeying Torah was likened to pleasing sacrifices to God (p. 104).

[259] Ibid., 95-96. Gathercole noted that in 11QPs 22.10, each person is repaid at the Judgment according to his or her deeds.

[260] Ibid., 104.

[261] James D. G. Dunn, "Noch Einmal 'Works of the Law': The Dialogue Continues," in *Fair Play: Diversity and Conflicts in Early Christianity*, ed. Ismo Dunderberg, Christopher Tuckett, and Kari Syreeni, Supplements to the Novum Testamentum, no. 103 (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 281. In this section, Dunn paralleled the idea of walking in God's statutes and instructions with the text of Exod 18:20 in which Moses was instructed by his father-in-law, Jethro, to instruct the people in God's statutes and instructions, so that they would know how to conduct their lives. It is important to note that Exod 18:20, which Dunn considered a contextual parallel with 4QMMT, it was not referring to any one type of regulation, it applied to *all* of God's statutes and instructions for all aspects of their day-to-day lives. This was contrary to Dunn's general argument that identified "works of the Law" to those particular works of the Law that helped Jews maintain their distinct identity compared to the rest of the world.

[262] Dunn, "Noch Einmal 'Works of the Law,'" 280.

When looking at additional Qumran texts, Joseph Fitzmyer found Hebrew equivalents to Paul’s use of the phrase ἔργα νόμου in such writings as 4QFlor. 1.7, 1QS 6.18 (see also 5.21, 23; 6.14), CD 13.11, 1QpHab 7.11, 8.1; 12.4, 4QpPs^{a} 1-2.ii.14, 22, 4QMMT, and 11QTemple 56.3, which contained a significant variant of the phrase.[263] Fitzmyer’s research in these documents led him to conclude that the phrase “works of the law” *could not* be restricted to include only those works that separated Israel from the rest of the world such as dietary laws, but instead the texts included regulations regarding: (1) sacrifices, (2) impurity of members, (3) tithes, and (4) other things.[264] Stuhlmacher’s research led him to the same conclusion. His research showed that the extra-biblical sources and Paul’s own work did not allow one to restrict the meaning of “works of the Law” to any one area of the Law *without specific contextual influence* directing one to do so.[265]

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[263] Fitzmyer, “Paul’s Jewish Background and the Deeds of the Law,” 20-21.

[264] Ibid., 23; and cf. Kim, *Paul and the New Perspective*, 59, 68, who came to the same conclusion. Kim found it difficult to see how individuals such as Dunn were able to limit the meaning of the phrase “works of the Law” to cultural laws in texts such as Rom 9:11b [cf. Rom 2:17-24; 3:9-18, 27-28] when the text refers to works as “doing something good or bad” as in the foregoing clause (v. 11a), which can be contrasted with God’s election through grace (p. 59). Kim’s research led him to see Paul’s usage of the phrase “works of the Law” as similar to some of the writers of the Qumran community through texts such as 4QFlor 1.7; 4QMMT 3.29; 1QS 5.12; 6.18. Kim concluded by stating that this phrase appears to be a shorthand version referencing “the keeping of the religious and ethical commandments of the Law” (p. 68).

[265] Stuhlmacher, *Revisiting Paul’s Doctrine of Justification*, 43-44, said that: (1) in 4Q398 (=4QMMT^{e}) frg. 14, col. 11.3 the keeping of special cultic regulations was designated as “works *of* the Torah,” (2) texts such as 1QS 5.21 and 6.18 speak of “works *in* the Torah” and others such 1QS 5.23, 24 as simply of “works,” and (3) other texts such as CD 20.6-7 speak of “works performed in accordance with the Torah.” Looking at the overall usage of phrases that are similar to “works of the Law,” Stuhlmacher concluded that this expression normally was referring to the behavior of the members of the community in conformity with the Law. Therefore, he drew the overall conclusion that the usage of “works”

The Relevance of "Εργα Νόμου Τοῖς while Being ἐν Χριστῷ in Paul's Letters

Through their research, many such as Gathercole have shown that the majority of the sources examined use a form of the word ἔργα or מעשׂי in relation to νόμος or תורה to indicate the "doing" of the righteousness requirements of the Law. Doing the righteous works of the Law was normal, expected, and applied normally to all of the requirements of the Law as these requirements were understood along the various points of time by individual groups.[266]

When Rapa finished his evaluation of Paul's usage of the phrase ἔργα νόμου in Gal 2:16 and Rom 3:20, he said that Paul was simply stating that "being Jewish in a practical sense" did not automatically mean that one was justified.[267] Rapa went on to say that Paul's argument in Rom 3:20 was not against the Law *per se* but instead against justification through "works of the Law." Paul's argument was broad enough to embrace the soteriological implications of the Judaizers' argument as shown through Gal 2:14-16; 3:2, 5, and 10 of which "works of the Law" referred to practices of law necessary to fulfill God's salvific requirements even for Christians.[268]

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and "works of the Law"among the inhabitants of Qumran were similar to Paul's usage in his letters.

[266] As O'Neill, "Did You Receive the Spirit by the Works of the Law?," 71-72, evaluated some of the Qumran texts such as 4QFlor 1:7; 1QS 5:21; 6:18; cf. 1QS 5:8; and 4QMMT (4Q394 1-2; 4Q397-99, lines 30, 33; he understood all of the references to "works of the Law" as works commanded by God and considered good.

[267] Rapa, *The Meaning of "Works of the Law" in Galatians and Romans*, 244, used Rom 3:27-31 to show that Paul was affirming that no Jew was able to boast about a presumed soteriology based on "covenantal privileges" (p. 249).

[268] Ibid., 244. Rapa went on to say that Paul's argument included the idea that the Law was revelatory (cf. Rom 5:20; Gal 3:19-29), restraining, and provided knowledge of sin. From his own

Moises Silva said that the thrust of the argument in Gal 3:7, 29 as well as Rom 4:9-17 was that the Judaizers wanted the Gentiles to participate in the Abrahamic inheritance, and the only way that they understood them to be able to do so was for the Gentiles to become Jews through circumcision and total Torah observance (cf. Acts 15:1, 5).[269] Silva went on to say that although the Judaizers probably understood Paul to be guilty of pitting two covenants against each other, the Abrahamic and the Mosaic, they were missing the point because Paul was actually teaching that inheritance could not come by *both* Law and promise.[270] Silva finished this line of thought by saying that Paul had many positive statements about the Law, and therefore, there was no reason to think that Paul would have set Lev 18:5 in direct antithesis to Hab 2:4 but instead was showing that although the Law leads one to life it cannot in itself justify.[271]

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evaluation, Rapa said that one must assume that Paul was stating the unspoken in this argument and implying that "works of the Law" cannot be done sufficiently to justify anyone.

[269] Moises Silva, "The Function of the Law," in *Interpreting Galatians: Explorations in Exegetical Method*, 2d ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996; reprint, 2001), 191.

[270] Ibid., 192. Pitting the Law against God's promise to Abraham is equivalent to pitting Lev 18:5 against Hab 2:4. Silva opposed those who interpret Gal 3:11-12 in such a way.

[271] Ibid., 192-94; and cf. Vos, J. S. "Die hermeneutische Antinomie bei Paulus (Galater 3:11-12, Römer 10:5-10)," *New Testament Studies* 38, no. 2 (1992), 254-68. Even today, Old Testament scholars such as J. S. Vos question how Paul might have put Scripture such as Lev 18:5 (obedience to the Law produces life) and Hab 2:4 (the righteous live by faith) together in agreement with one another. Vos theorized that Paul might have used common Rabbinic or Hellenistic rhetorical techniques to show the validity of the two statements. Vos stated that individuals such as Dahl who followed Hillel in their rabbinic pattern of analysis involving difficult texts approached the texts in such a way as to figure out how both texts could be correct (p. 262). When Vos considered how the Hellenistic rhetoricians might have handled what appeared to some as contradictory thought, he stated that the Greeks would have reached their goal "wenn man gezeigt hat, daß bei der eigenen Interpretation beide Texte 'aufgerichtet' werden (p. 263)."

It is also clear for others such as Rapa and Wilckens that Paul was not ever disparaging "works of the Law" *per se*. Wilckens stated that God requires a synergistic approach for Christ's followers in that they are saved by grace and that there is a real demand that they are actively obedient to His will and laws.[272] It is good to reiterate what has been noted earlier in this work: Wilckens told his readers that in order to understand Paul they had to make sense contextually of Paul's statement in Rom 3:20, 28, in which Paul stated that no one would be justified by *works of the Law*, and his earlier statement in Rom 2:13 stating that *only the doers of the Law* would be justified.[273]

Galatians

As he wrote from Antioch to those living in Galatia around A.D. 48, Paul told his new converts that even the Judaic-Christians had come to realize that no one, not even Jews, could be made righteous before God ἐξ ἔργων νόμοῦ ἐὰν μὴ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, "through the works of the Law except through faith in Jesus Christ."[274] Paul made it clear that Jesus' atoning death was the only path for justification before God for all people including Jews. Doing the works of the Law without trusting God in what He had done through the Christ's substitutionary death for all transgressors was insufficient for eternal salvation.[275]

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[272] Wilckens, *Der Brief an Die Römer*, 143-45.

[273] Ibid., 142-43.

[274] Gal 2:16a.

[275] In Gal 2:21, Paul brings additional clarity to his argument by telling the Galatians that God' grace given through Christ's death would have been needless if righteousness could have come διὰ νόμου alone (cf. 3:21). The writer of Hebrews illuminated more fully what Paul was teaching when he stated that the sacrifices for sins that were required by the Law prior to the Messianic Age were never able in and of themselves to atone for the transgressions of people (10:3-4), but Christ's single substitutionary death atoned for the sins of those who trust God from all ages (10:10-13).

Now in the Messianic Age, Paul taught that even the Jews must believe εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν ἵνα δικαιωθῶμεν ἐκ πίστεως Χριστοῦ καὶ οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου, “in Christ Jesus in order that we may be made righteous through faith in Christ and not through the works of the Law [Gal 2:16b].” In Gal 3:2, 5, Paul proceeded to ask them to evaluate whether or not their present life in the Spirit, which includes God working miracles among them, came about through faith in Christ or by “doing works of the Law.” He went on to say that if one was seeking justification by “doing the works of the Law” without having faith in the Messiah, they would fall under the curse (judgment) of God because God’s righteousness required them to do *everything* written ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τοῦ νόμου,“in the Book of the Law [3:10; cf. 5:3].”

In his letter to the Galatians, Paul was clear that those who were trusting God and His righteous acts on their behalf were also automatically in a close association with Christ, which Paul normally denoted by the phrase being ἐν Χριστῷ, “in Christ.”[276] Paul said that those who were “in Christ” including the Gentiles (3:14) were in such close association with Him that it was like putting Christ on as one would put on clothing (3:27). Being in close association with Christ meant that no dividing barriers were allowed among His followers. All of Christ’s followers, Jew and Gentile, would receive the promise made by God to Abraham and his descendants (3:18, 28-29; 5:6). Christ’s followers would be justified before God through His atoning death and were fulfilling the righteous requirements of the Law through Christ by learning to love their neighbor as they love themselves.[277] The true

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[276] See Gal 1:22; 2:4; 3:14, 26-29; 5:6. Grammatically, Paul used the preposition ἐν as a marker of close association; this follows common New Testament practices. See BDAG, § 4, 327-28, for details. An exhaustive listing of usages of ἐν Χριστῷ is given by John R. Kohlenberger, Edward W. Goodrick, and James A. Swanson, *The Exhaustive Concordance to the Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 1878.

[277] Gal 5:14-18; 6:12. This teaching parallels Matthew’s recorded words of Christ giving a summary of the fulfilling the Law (Matt 22:37-40).

People of God were those who through faith were learning to bear one another's burdens through the leading of the Holy Spirit.[278]

1 & 2 Thessalonians and 1 & 2 Corinthians

In his letters to the Thessalonians written approximately A.D. 51-52 from Corinth, Paul was not dealing with a false understanding of the place of the Law in the Messianic Age, but instead, he was primarily dealing with how Christ's followers should live as they waited for the Second Coming of the Messiah. In both letters, Christ's followers were to do ἔργον πίστεως, "work of faith." These works were associated with κόπος τῆς ἀγάπης, "a labor of love," and πᾶν ἔργον ἀγαθόν, "every good work."[279] Christ's followers were ἐν Χριστῷ and although they had been suffering in much the same manner as Christ's followers who were living in Judea, they were to continue to give God thanks and await the resurrection from the dead knowing that even those who died before Christ returned would be awakened from the dead to rise and meet Christ with them.[280]

In his two letters written to the Corinthians approximately A.D. 56-57 written from Ephesus and the province of Macedonia respectively, Paul dealt with some fairly self-centered followers of Christ. Therefore, fairly early in his first letter to the Corinthians, Paul told them that their ἔργα, "works" were going to be judged by Christ Himself.[281] This message was repeated in 2 Cor 5:10. In 1 Cor 7:19, Paul stated explicitly that neither being a Jew or Gentile was important to God, but what was important was keeping His commandments. A little later in the same letter, Paul admonished the Saints at Corinth, who were predominately

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[278] Gal 5:16; 6:15-16. In addition see Gal 5:6, 14; 6:2, 9-10.

[279] The phrase ἔργον πίστεως is in 1 Thess 1:3 and 2 Thess 1:11. A form of κόπος τῆς ἀγάπης is in 1 Thess 1:3 and a form of πᾶν ἔργον ἀγαθόν is located in 2 Thess 2:17.

[280] 1 Thess 2:14-16; 4:14-18; 5:14-22.

[281] 1 Cor 3:12-15; 2 Cor 5:9-10; cf. Rom 14:9-12.

Gentile Believers, about their failure to support ministers financially, an act that was absurd even by the world’s standards.

Paul turned to the Old Testament Scriptures and pointed out that ministers of the Gospel should be paid just as it was written τῷ Μωϋσέως νόμῳ, “in the Law of Moses.” The Mosaic Law was the final authority. Paul used the fact that the Law declared that even animals were to be rewarded for their work and told them that God was more concerned with His ministers than animals.[282] In this passage, it is perfectly clear that Paul was not teaching an abrogation of the Mosaic Law, but instead, he continually used it authoritatively to teach God’s principles to both Jew and Gentile who follow Christ in the Messianic Age. All who are ἐν Χριστῷ are Christ’s followers and they must accordingly live out their lives in holy living,[283] which includes godly unity.[284]

Romans

In his letter to the Romans written around A.D. 57 from Corinth, Paul said that τὸ ἔργον τοῦ νόμου, “the work of the Law,” was accepted and practiced even by some Gentiles although they did not have

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[282] 1 Cor 9:8-11. There is a second example where Paul used the Law as his point of authority when some of the women were apparently causing disturbances during their worship services. Paul used the Law as his source of authority to bring order back to their worship services (1 Cor 14:34).

[283] 1 Cor 3:1. Paul wanted them to grow beyond infancy in Christ so that they could realize more fully what God desired in their lives; regarding maturity see 1 Cor 1:30 and 2 Cor 5:17 in which Paul said that those who are ἐν Χριστῷ, “in Christ,” are a καινὴ κτίσις, “new or renewed creation.”

[284] In 1 Cor 1:10-13, Paul exhorted his addressees to remove any divisions among them, and shortly thereafter, he challenged them to act as Followers of Christ and start taking care of their own house cleaning internally (1 Cor 6:1-7). He made it clear that Christ’s followers are all part of the same body (1 Cor 12:4-27).

the written Law in their possession (2:11-16). Although Paul clearly taught that no one would be justified by doing "works of the Law," he expected Christ's followers to follow the Mosaic Law proclaiming that the Law was good, holy, and righteous.[285] In Rom 3:23, Paul gave his addressees the reason that everyone, both Jew and Gentile, needed God's grace through faith for justification when he stated πάντες γὰρ ἥμαρτον καὶ ὑστεροῦνται τῆς δόξης τοῦ θεοῦ, "For all have sinned and are continually falling short of the glory of God." Whether Jew or Gentile, one needs a way to be forgiven for transgressing the righteous requirements of the Law (2:12).

In the newly inaugurated Messianic Age, sacrificing an animal coupled with a repentant heart is no longer adequate because God opened this era by allowing the Jewish religious leaders to sacrifice the Messiah for the sins of *all* who are repentant and place their trust in Him.[286] Christ is the τέλος νόμου, "fulfillment, completion, of the Law" (10:4). The Messiah's followers will be fulfilling the Law as they accept through faith the redemptive work of God. Through His own sacrificial death, the Messiah provided justification for as many as learn to love, trust, and obey Him.[287]

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[285] See Rom 7:12, 16; 8:4; 9:31; 10:5. Paul's teaching on the goodness of the Law can be seen in his personalization of the effects of sin steering a person away from the righteousness of the Law (Rom 7:1-8:11).

[286] Rom 3:23-25; cf. 1:1-5, 16-17; 4:7; 5:8-10; 8:13; cf. Gal 6:12-16; 1 Cor 1:13-18, 30; Col 1:19-20; 2:9-15; Eph 1:3-12; 2:13-16. In Rom 6:14, Paul told the Believers at Rome that due to God's righteous action on their behalf, sin was no longer their master because they were no longer ὑπὸ νόμον, "under the curse (judgement) of the Law," but instead living ὑπὸ χάριν, "under grace." A little later, Paul taught them that it was because of ὁ νόμος τοῦ πνεύματος τῆς ζωῆς ἐν Χριστῳ, "the Law of the Spirit of Life *in* Christ," that they were now free ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου τῆς ἁμαρτίας καὶ τοῦ θανάτου, "from the Law of Sin and Death" (8:2).

[287] Rom 3:24-25; 8:28-30; cf. Eph 2:8-9; cf. John 3:14-17; 14:15, 21, 23.

The acceptance of God’s gift of life through faith includes being obedient to the will and commandments of God.[288] Regarding being obedient to the Law, Paul clearly made this point when he wrote, οὐ γὰρ οἱ ἀκροαταὶ νόμου δίκαιοι παρὰ θεῷ, ἀλλ’ οἱ ποιηταὶ νόμου δικαιωθήσονται, “For the hearers of the Law are not the righteous ones before God, but the doers of the Law shall be made righteous.”[289] In fact all will give an account to God for their actions.[290] For Paul, the doers of the Law were no longer doing the same things that they would have been doing if they had not entered the Messianic Age. They were no longer required to sacrifice nor do the cultural and purity ordinances of the Law being ἐν Χριστῷ, “in Christ,”[291] but they were required to be obedient following the moral commandments of the Law, and they were required to follow the will of God by doing good toward one another knowing that Christ provided justification for them through His substitutionary death. In fact, those who were “in Christ” would be glorified at the end of this age with Jesus as sons of God.[292]

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[288] Rom 2:5-6, 13; 3:31; 15:18; 1 Cor 7:19; Gal 5:6; Jas 1:22; 2:21-24. This teaching, which originated from Jesus’ personal teachings, was well known and practiced by the early Church as shown through such texts as Matt 5:16-22, 27-28, 31-35, 38-39, 43-48; 7:21; 11:27; 12:8, 50; 25:31-46; 28:18-20, John 1:1-4, 12; 3:35-36; 5:21-23, 26-30; 14:21, 23-24, and 1 John 2:3-6, 29; 3:10, 23-24.

[289] Rom 2:13; cf. 3:31.

[290] Rom 14:9-12; cf. 1 Cor 3:12-15; 2 Cor 5:9-10.

[291] Paul used the phrase being ἐν Χριστῷ frequently in his letters to indicate those who had accepted God’s redemptive gift of salvation through Christ’s substitutionary death for transgressors of the Law. In Romans, Paul used this phrase to indicate that Believers were in a “spiritually close association with Christ,” which meant that they were now free of the bondage due to sin due to their close association to God as His sons through their close association with Christ (Rom 3:24-26; 6:11, 23; 8:1-2, 14-17, 39).

[292] Rom 8:1, 14-17; cf. John 17:22 regarding the coming glory of those who follow Christ faithfully.

As he started bringing his letter to a close in Rom 13:8, Paul put it this way, Μηδενὶ μηδὲν ὀφείλετε εἰ μὴ τὸ ἀλλήλους ἀγαπᾶν· ὁ γὰρ ἀγαπῶν τὸν ἕτερον νόμον πεπλήρωκεν, "And you (pl.) *do not* owe anything to anyone except that you are to love one another; for the one who is loving another has fulfilled the Law." Immediately in the next verse, Paul exhorted the Romans to follow moral guidelines that were identical to some of the Ten Commandments given on Mount Sinai. Then Paul concluded this section by saying in Rom 13:10, ἡ ἀγάπη τῷ πλησιαν κακὸν οὐκ ἐργάζεται· πλήρωμα οὖν νόμου ἡ ἀγάπη, "Love is not working evil toward the one who is near (your neighbor); therefore, love is the fulfillment of the Law."[293]

Philippians, Colossians, Ephesians, and Philemon

As he wrote from his imprisonment in Rome around A.D. 62,[294] Paul taught the Believers at Philippi to do their work "in Christ" with great humility considering how Christ humbled Himself in order to serve humanity.[295] In Phil 2:1-2, Paul used the phrase ἐν Χριστῷ and gave some of the desired attributes of those who are in close association with Christ. He asked the Philippians to fulfill his joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, and being united in life. In this letter, Paul told his addressees that although he formerly walked as a Pharisee κατὰ δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐν νόμῳ, "according to the righteousness that is in the Law," he gladly gave it all up μὴ ἔχων αὐτοῦ δικαιοσύνην ἐκ νόνου, "not holding onto his righteousness derived from (works of) the Law," counting it all as rubbish in order that he might gain the righteousness that comes from God, which is ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει, "based on faith [Phil 3:2-11]."

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[293] Cf. Matt 22:34-40; 1 John 4:7-21.

[294] Phil 1:12-14; 4:22.

[295] Phil 2:5-8, 12-16; 3:20-21. Paul used the phrase ἐν Χριστῷ frequently in this letter (1:1, 13, 26; 2:1, 5; 3:3, 14; 4:7, 19, 21).

In another prison letter written approximately the same time as Philippians, Paul wrote to Christ’s followers in Colossae encouraging them that it was in Christ that redemption was available, the forgiveness of sins. Paul along with others proclaimed the Gospel in order to present as many as possible τέλειον ἐν Χριστῷ, “complete in Christ.”[296] Instead of doing works that were against God and man,[297] Christ’s followers were to do ἔργα ἀγαθά in the name of the Lord Jesus in a heartily manner (Col 1:10; 3:17, 23).

In addition to stating that Christ’s followers were to do good works, Paul’s letter to the Colossians gives possible insight into the meaning of Eph 2:15 because Paul used a deponent verb, δόγματίζομαι, “to obey rules and regulations,” in Col 2:20. In the context of this letter Paul was asking his addressees why they were listening to some who wanted them to engage in self-abasement, worship of angels, or to follow regulations that pertained to: (1) food or drink, (2) festivals and new moons, and (3) the Sabbath, which were all mere foreshadows of what was to come.[298] Here, Paul was relating specific δόγματα that related directly to some regulations within the Law that Christ’s followers no longer needed to follow. Regarding the Sabbath, it is known historically that the Early Church moved their day of rest and worship to the first day of the week in honor of their Lord’s resurrection following the intent but not the letter of the Law.

In yet another prison letter, Ephesians, written approximately the same time, Paul addressed some of Christ’s followers in Asia Minor using the same terminology, ἐν Χριστῷ, to denote their close association with Christ.[299] The mystery of God had been revealed through

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[296] Col 1:13-14, 28.

[297] Col 1:21. Paul told the Colossians that they were now following Christ and no longer to be engaged ἐν τοῖς ἔργοις τοῖς πονηροῖς, “in evil works/deeds.”

[298] Col 2:16-17; cf. 1 Tim 4:1-5.

[299] Eph 1:1, 3, 10, 12, 20; 2:6, 7, 10, 13; 3:6, 4:32.

God's redeeming work through Christ. Everyone in close association with Jesus, *both* Jew and Gentile, were joint heirs of God's promise to Abraham.[300] For those in Christ, Jesus' death on a cross effectively made it possible to remove the generational hostility that still existed between the Jew and Gentile Believer (Eph 2:13-16).

In the coming ages, the surpassing richness of God's grace would be shown to those who are "in Christ [2:7]." God Himself is also in a very close relationship with Christ. With this in mind, Christ's followers are to be kind, tender hearted, and forgiving toward one another (4:32). Christ's followers are God's ποίημα, "workmanship," κτισθέντες ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ ἐπὶ ἔργοις ἀγαθοῖς, "having been created *in Christ Jesus* for good works."[301] Although "good works" are expected, no one will be saved by them because salvation is a gift of God (2:8-9). Christ's followers are definitely not to participate in τοῖς ἔργοις τοῖς ἀκάρποις τοῦ σκότους, "the unfruitful works of the dark."[302]

In his letter to Philemon, Paul reminded him of his close association and ministerial position "in Christ,"[303] and then asked him to treat Onesimus, his runaway slave, as his ἀδελφὸν ἀγαπητόν, "beloved brother," because of their mutual close relationship with Christ (16). This is a good example where Philemon was asked by Paul to think beyond his traditional view of slaves and realize that they were all part of the same family, they brothers in Christ (cf. Gal 3:26-29).

The Pastoral Letters

In Titus, Paul did not use the phrase ἐν Χριστῷ, but it is clear that Christ gave Himself on the Cross to redeem those who were zealous

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[300] Eph 3:6. This is made possible by being ἐν Χριστῷ.

[301] Eph 2:10.

[302] Eph 5:11.

[303] Phlm 8, 20.

to do καλὰ ἔργα, “good works.”[304] This letter shows that although “good works” are to be performed by Christ’s followers, no one ἔσωσεν, “has been saved,” ἐξ ἔργων, “out of works,” but instead according to God’s mercy (Titus 3:5).

In his two letters to Timothy, Paul made it clear that salvation and eternal glory had been made possible through Christ for those who were “in Christ.”[305] For those who are ἐν Χριστῷ, the Mosaic Law is good and still being taught.[306] In fact πᾶσα γραφή, “all Scripture,”[307] is θεόπνευστος, “God breathed,” and profitable for the Saints to study and live their lives by so that they may be prepared for πᾶν ἔργον ἀγαθόν, “every good work,” that God has prepared for them.[308] No one has been called κατὰ τὰ ἔργα, “according to works,”[309] but all are to be prepared to do πᾶν ἔργον ἀγαθόν, “every good work.”[310]

A Proposed Meaning for τὸν Νόμον τῶν ’Εντολῶν ἐν Δόγμασιν Καταργήσας

The research laid out above shows that Paul normally used the word νόμος to denote the commandments of the Mosaic Law. In addition, the research also shows that throughout his letters, Paul consistently used phrases such as ἐξ ἔργων νόμου, “out of works of the Law,” ἐκ νόμου, a shorthand version for “out of works of the Law,” or

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[304] Titus 2:7, 14; 3:1, 7-8, 14.

[305] 1 Tim 1:14-15; 2 Tim 1:8-9; 2:8-10; 3:14-17.

[306] 1 Tim 1:5-8.

[307] Keep in mind that Scripture for Jesus and Paul was solely the “Old Testament.”

[308] 2 Tim 3:16-17.

[309] 2 Tim 1:9.

[310] 1 Tim 6:18; 2 Tim 2:21; 3:17.

διὰ νόμου, "through (works of) the Law," to denote *any* works that God required through His good, holy, and righteous Law. This Law contained commandments, statutes, and ordinances given to Israel by God through His communication with Moses on Mount Sinai. These phrases in and of themselves *were not* denoting any specific subgroup of the Law such as the cultural regulations for Israel unless context directed otherwise.

So, knowing from a careful study of Paul's letters and extra-biblical sources that Paul was not saying that Christ had abrogated the Law of Moses, what did he mean when he said that Christ had made the τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν ineffective or optional? If Paul had limited the wording to τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν, it would have been fairly clear that Paul was using τῶν ἐντολῶν as a descriptive genitive with τὸν νόμον to remove any doubt that he was talking specifically about the commandments of the Mosaic Law,[311] but why did he add the prepositional phrase ἐν δόγμασιν?

Understanding why this prepositional phrase was added becomes an important key in properly understanding Paul's teachings regarding the authority of the Mosaic Law in the Messianic Age. The meaning of τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν has been long disputed as

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[311] In BDF, 89, under the heading of "Genitive," the authors said that the basic function of the genitive case in Greek was to act as an adjective. The idea behind the concept of the genitive of content, § 167, is appropriate in this case (e.g. John 21:8: τὸ δίκτυον τῶν ἰχθύων, "the net containing fish"; and cf. A. T. Robertson, *A Greek Grammar of The New Testament: In Light of Historical Research*, 3d ed. (New York: Hodder & Stoughton, 1934), 497-98, who stated that the function of the genitive case is largely adjectival. The meaning of word in the genitive case follows its technical root idea and varies in meaning according to the words that it modifies within the context of the text. Robertson's § 4 on "Genitive of Definition or Apposition" shows that it was appropriate for Paul's usage here and uses Paul's usage of the phrase τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ, "the center-wall, the partition wall which had the task of keeping things separate, the *dividing* middle-wall," as an example of this type of genitive, which was discussed in chapter 2. In context, this portion of the phrase, τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν, "the Law of commandments," can be translated simply as "the Law, the part consisting of commandments" or "the commandments of the Law."

shown by the current range of ideas on its meaning and prior statements made by individuals such as John Eadie, who wrote over a hundred years ago saying that its meaning had already been disputed for a long time.[312]

Grammatically, it is possible to use this prepositional phrase, ἐν δόγμασιν, to restrict the action of the participle to a specific subsection of the commandments of the Law instead of making all of the commandments ineffective or non-authoritative,[313] or it is possible to use ἐν δόγμασιν similar to the usage of a synonymous apposition to emphasize the fact that all the commandments of the Law had been declared ineffective by the Messiah, which our research has already ruled out. Because our research clearly shows that Paul would not have used the prepositional phrase, ἐν δόγμασιν in Ephesians 2:15a, to emphasize

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[312] John Eadie, *A Commentary on the Greek Text of the Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians*. 2d ed. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1883; reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979), 175, said that this as a translation option for those translating in the nineteenth century. Cf. Andrew T. Lincoln, *Ephesians*, Word Biblical Commentary, no. 42 (Dallas: Word, 1990), 142.

[313] Some such as Eadie, *A Commentary on the Greek Text of the Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians*, 175, 177, understood the phrase τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασι to be a graphic description of the ceremonial law, but acknowledged that many have disputed its meaning in the past (p. 175). Eadie said that the prepositional phrase ἐν δόγμασι defined the nature of the commandments, which were given under Divine sanction. In a special sense, the ceremonial institute seemed good to God, that which He δοκεῖ, and that became δόγμα. It was not the moral law, which had its origin and basis in the Divine nature, and therefore, unchanged and unchangeable (p. 177); cf. Barth, *Ephesians*, 287, who stated that Paul was specifying specific commandments. The prepositional phrase “in statutes” was used in such a way as to limit what was being abrogated to a specific number/type of commandments; and in BDAG, 330, § 12, the authors discussed the use of the preposition ἐν as a “marker of specification or substance” listing this phrase as an example. In context, the prepositional phrase ἐν δόγμασιν can act as marker of specification to restrict the Law, that portion that contains commandments that dealt with or consist of δόγματα.

that the whole Law had become ineffective, what specific subgroup or subgroups of the Law was Paul saying had become optional for Christ's followers. In Ephesians, since Paul had not specifically declared which ordinances were optional within the Messianic Age, it would be good to look at some of his other letters for answers after looking at some of the common subgroups with the Mosaic Law knowing that making these ordinances optional would help Jew and Gentile Believer become one new man as part of the Family of God in and through Christ.

Existing Ἔχθρα between Jew and Gentile

What did Paul mean by the words ἡ ἔχθρα, "the hostility," which he placed in apposition with τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμου, "the *dividing* middle-wall"? Paul used the words ἡ ἔχθρα twice in his sentence containing the clause τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν καταργήσας (2:14-16).

Paul stated clearly that through the Messiah's atoning death that the ongoing mutual "hostility" between the Jew and Gentile had been destroyed for those who were following Him and that included making the "ordinances contained within the commandments of the Law" ineffective or optional. Therefore, understanding the background of this ongoing mutual hostility helps one understand what part of the Law was made optional.

Werner Foerster said that ἔχθρα and its cognate ἐχθρός normally mean "hostility," and that in the New Testament, ἔχθρα normally denoted an inner disposition against nations, groups, and/or individuals.[314] The translators for the Septuagint normally translated the Hebrew word אוֹיֵב, "one who is hating," as ἐχθρός.

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[314] Werner Foerster, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964; reprint 1995), 811, 815. In secular Greek starting as early as Homer, a few general meanings for ἔχθρα and ἐχθρός included "the hater," "the enemy," and "the opponent."

Although the Hebrew can denote both national and personal ἐχθραι (enemies), it normally denoted personal hostility.[315] Moulton and Milligan list Luke's account of Herod and Pilate being enemies up until the time that they both questioned and ultimately condemned Jesus, the King of the Jews, as an example of ἰδίας ἔκθρας, "a personal enemy."[316] After condoning and authorizing Jesus' crucifixion, they became friends.

In the ancient Near East, Israel's peculiar way of life caused hostility between her and the surrounding nations. After returning from their Babylonian exile, many of the Jews showed a general steadfastness in following the Law, which helped them maintain their national unity and gave them a unique identity among their neighbors.[317] As history bears witness,[318] Wright said that Jews were regarded as atheists and

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[315] *TDNT,* 811-12.

[316] James H. Moulton and George Milligan, *Vocabulary of the Greek Testament* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1930; reprint, Peabody: Hendrickson,1997), § 2189, 26; and BDAG, 419, noted that ἔκθρας could denote "enmity" toward God (Rom 8:7; Jas 4:4) or enmity toward an individual such as a neighbor (Luke 23:12). In addition see LS, 748a.

[317] In his apologetic work *Against Apion*, Josephus stated that Israelites: (1) would die to uphold Torah (1.43), (2) would not follow the decrees of any world power who went directly against God and His Law (1.192-94), (3) were a single and unified race (2.66-67), (4) were faithful to Rome (2.132-34), and (5) had followed the Law faithfully since the time of Moses just as one might follow faithfully a father and master (2.173-75).

[318] In his *Roman History*, 6.52.36, Dio Cassius told those who wanted to be loyal to the traditions of their Roman fathers that they must abhor and punish those who try to distort their religion with strange rites bringing in foreign practices—it is from these that divisions and conspiracies arise. In his work *Epitome*, 67.14.1-3, which can be found in *The New Testament Background: Writings from Ancient Greece and the Roman Empire That Illuminate Christian Origins,* ed. C. K. Barrett, rev. ed. (San Francisco: Harper, 1989), 21, Dio stated that Emperor Domitian slew his cousin Flavius Clemens, a consul, because he had become an atheist as part of accepting the Jewish ways; In his *Roman History*, 68.1.2, Dio said that after Nerva became emperor (A.D. 96), he did not let

considered a potential threat to society due to their ancestral customs.[319] Yes, from the Gentile perspective, the Jews were atheists, antisocial, and hostile to the rest of humanity,[320] and from the Jewish perspective, the Gentiles were anti-Law, and therefore, at enmity with God and them.[321]

The New Testament writers are witnesses to the same type of hostility as the newly converted Christians interacted with the non-believers of their own world.[322] Pliny the Younger, acting as the Roman

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individuals accuse anybody of adopting the Jewish mode of life.

[319] N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*, Christian Origins and the Question of God, no. 1 (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 156.

[320] Collins, *Between Athens and Jerusalem*, 10-11, used sources such as Diodorus Siculus (2.148) and Josephus (*Ag. Ap.* 1.304-11; 2.92-96, 148) to make a point that many Gentiles looked at the Jewish lifestyle as representing a misanthropic, hostile attitude toward humanity; cf. Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 371.

[321] Gerald Abraham, *The Jewish Mind* (London: Constable, 1961), 315-16, 327-29, speaking as a Jew said that Jews were not hated because they had evil qualities, Gentiles assigned evil qualities to Jews because they hated them. He said that this phenomenon existed before Christianity emerged: the Jews had been the object of hate dwelling within haters (pp. 315-16). Abraham went on to say later that general Gentile hatred toward Jews was the same psychologically as putting the Jews in prison. The Jews did not have free-developing minds; they remain small minded. Under oppression, a Jew's life was made narrow by resentment and fear *resulting in overemphasis on rules and minor details* (pp. 327-29), Paul stated in Rom 8:7 that anyone who was walking in the flesh and not subjecting themselves to the Law of God were at the same time ἔχθρα εἰς θεόν, "hostile toward God."

[322] Acts 19:23-41. A good case in point is when a large group of people in Ephesus gathered together against the Christians including Paul accusing them of trying to destroy their way of life including blaspheming their goddess, Artimus, and god, Zeus. In 1 Peter 2:12, Peter told his readers that they should continue to do good deeds so that those who slander them as evildoers would glorify God on the Judgement Day; cf. Abraham J. Malherbe, *Paul and the Thessalonians* (Philadelphia, Fortress Press, 1987), 46-49, who discussed the Thessalonian converts' θλῖψις, "affliction," and attributed it predominately to psychological

governor of Bithynia during the years A.D. 104-07, wrote to the Emperor Trajan regarding the punishment of Christians whom he regarded as part of a degenerate cult, who among other things honored Christ in their daily living and would not worship the local gods nor the emperor.[323] In Eph 2:14, Paul declared that the ongoing mutual ἔχθρα had been removed for all who were following Christ as He led them through the Messianic Age.

Possible Categorical Divisions within τὸν Νόμος

Before looking at the possible referents for the word δόγματα, which is contained within the phrase τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν, it is important to know how the Law might have been considered in terms of subdivisions. Searching to see how Old Testament writers may have considered the Law in terms of subgroups will provide an understanding of possible divisions within the Law and show that Paul was not out-of-line with existing Scripture as he penned his own letters. From the research shown below, it is noted that some Old Testament writers did indeed think of the Law in terms of two, three, and at times even four different subgroups.

Special attention will be given to the grouping of the Law into three subgroups: (1) the moral commandments, (2) the purity ordinances dealing mostly with ritual rules and purity, and (3) the cultural ordinances dealing with social behavior peculiar to Israel. These three categories seem to be the dominant ways in which Old Testament

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affliction caused by the cultural friction of their new way of life. His understanding was based on such Scriptures as: 1 Thess 2:14 (persecution at the hands of their own countrymen), 1 Thess 4:9-12 (Paul called their pagan countrymen "outsiders," Luke 12:51-53 (divided households), Mark 10:29-30 (rewards for leaving natural families), and other texts.

[323] Pliny the Younger, *Letters*, trans. by Betty Radice, Loeb Classical Library, no. 59 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969), 10.96, 285-91. For the dating of Pliny's governorship, see *OCD*, 1198.

writers expressed the Law when not expressing it as a whole. There will also be a short paragraph at the end of this section pointing out that there are twelve occurrences in the Old Testament where one of the writers spoke of the Law in terms of two categories, the moral commandments and ordinances, which seem similar to Paul's usage in Eph 2:15a. Paul was not being innovative when he considered the Law as being subdivided into the moral commandments and other decrees called δόγματα, "ordinances."

Starting with Brown-Driver-Briggs' research looking for meaning and usage of Hebrew words used in the Old Testament that relate to the commandments and ordinances of the Law,[324] one notes that the masculine noun חֹק and its synonymous feminine counterpart, חֻקָּה, which are Hebrew parallels to the Greek word δόγμα, can have multiple referents depending on context such as "something prescribed," "a statue," or "something due." The "something prescribed" category includes prescribed "portions," "actions," "allocations," and "boundary limits." The "statue" category includes "enactments/statutes," "decrees," "ordinances," or the "law" in general, which can be enacted by either God or man.[325]

Examining usages of חֹק, חֻקָּה, or one of their plural forms with combinations of a form of מִצְוָה or תּוֹרָה including plural forms looking for subgroups within the Law, one notes that a form of חֹק or חֻקָּה is

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[324] Francis Brown, S. R Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, *The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew-English Lexicon* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1979), 349a-350a, 436a, and 846.

[325] Helmer Ringgren, *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, ed. G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringren, vol. 5, trans. David E. Green (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 139-47, stated that two solid referents for this noun were "statute" and "ordinance" (pp. 139, 141-43, 45). Ringgren noted that the verb חָקָק referred to cutting into something, inscribing, which in this context denoted a written ordinance or statute (p. 141). Ringgren said that it was difficult to distinguish this group of nouns from others associated with the Law because they were often used in a series with other nouns or used alone to represent the legal corpus as a whole (pp. 142, 145).

used in combination: (1) with a singular form of מִצְוָה, a commandment or a complete or partial code of law, in Deut 5:28; 6:1-2;[326] 7:11; 1 Kgs 8:58; Neh 1:7, (2) with a singular form of תּוֹרָה, instruction or law, in Num 19:2; 31:21 (statutes of the Torah—construct);[327] 2 Chr 33:8;[328] Mal 3:22,[329] (3) with a singular form of both מִצְוָה and תּוֹרָה in 2 Kgs 17:34,

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[326] All Hebrew and Aramaic translations are the author's unless otherwise noted; Deut 6:1-2 is an example that includes both a singular and plural form of מִצְוָה. Deut 6:1-2, "And this is הַמִּצְוָה, 'the commandment, the law,' the הַחֻקִּים, 'the statutes,' and הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים, 'the ordinances/ judgments/customs,' which the Lord your God has commanded (me) to teach you (pl.) to do (them) in the land where you are going over there to possess it, 6:2 in order that you (sing.) might fear YHWH, your God, to keep כָּל־חֻקֹּתָיו, 'all of His statutes,' and מִצְוֹתָיו, 'His commandments,' that I have commanded you, your son, and your grandson all the days of your life, indeed that your days may be prolonged." Regarding the translation of the term הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים, some translating teams such as those for the NASB, KJV, NKJ chose "judgments," while others such as those for the HCSB and the NOAB chose "ordinances."

[327] Num 19:2 and 31:21 provide two examples where the חֻקַּת of the Torah refers to statutes that refer to the religious rites of cleansing, purifying.

[328] 2 Chr 33:8, "And I will not gather (them) in order to turn (away) the foot of Israel from the land which I appointed for your fathers if only they will keep in order to *do* all which has been commanded according to all הַתּוֹרָה, 'the Law,' and הַחֻקִּים, 'the statutes,' and הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים, 'the ordinances/judgments/ customs,' given through the hand of Moses." The NASB, KJV, NKJV, and the NOAB translators translated the above as "the Law," "the statutes," and "the ordinances." The HCSB translators translated הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים as "the judgments."

[329] Mal 3:22 BH shows that both חֻקִּים וּמִשְׁפָּטִים, "statutes and ordinances/customs," are considered part of a greater whole called the תּוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה, "Instruction/Law of Moses"; cf. 2 Kgs 17:13.

37;[330] 2 Chr 19:10, (4) with a plural form of מִצְוָה, possibly indicating multiple commands, in Exod 15:26; Lev 26:3, 15; Deut 4:40; 6:2; 8:11; 10:13; 11:1; 26:17; 28:15, 45; 30:10, 16; 1 Kgs 2:3; 6:12; 8:58; 9:6; 11:34, 38; 2 Chr 7:19; Ezra 7:11; 43:18; Neh 1:7; 10:20, 30, (5) with a plural form of תּוֹרָה, possibly indicating multiple commandments, in Lev 26:46;[331] Neh 9:13, along with both מִצְוֹת and תּוֹרוֹת in Gen 26:5; Neh 9:13, and (6) with plural forms of מִצְוָה and a singular form of תּוֹרָה in Neh 9:14.

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[330] 2 Kgs 17:33-37 is an excellent example of an Old Testament text that illuminates the meaning of מִשְׁפַּט with the contextual meaning that plainly denotes "customs, manner, the way people live" in context with statutes, commandments, and Torah. 2 Kgs 17:33, "They were living fearing YHWH *and* they were living serving their own gods כְּמִשְׁפַּט, 'according to the custom,' of the nations who caused them to be exiled from there (their homeland). 17:34 Up until this day they had been doing כַּמִּשְׁפָּטִים הָרִאשֹׁנִים, 'according to the former customs,' without fearing YHWH and without doing כְּחֻקָּתָם, 'according to their (prescribed) statutes,' וּכְמִשְׁפָּטָם, 'nor according to their ordinances/customs/way of life,' וְכַתּוֹרָה, 'nor according to the instruction, וְכַמִּצְוָה, 'nor according to the law,' that YHWH had commanded the sons of Jacob, on whom He set His name, Israel. 17:35 Indeed, (in the past) YHWH had made a covenant with them and commanded them saying 'do not fear other gods, nor bow down to them, nor serve them, nor sacrifice to them.' 17:36 If it is YHWH who took you (pl.) up out of the land of Egypt in great power and outstretched arm, He is the one whom you should reverence, and to Him you should bow-down, and to Him you should sacrifice. 17:37 And הַחֻקִּים, 'the statutes,' and הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים, 'the ordinances/customs,' and הַתּוֹרָה, 'the instruction,' and הַמִּצְוָה, 'the Law," that He wrote for you, keep and do (them) all your days and do not reverence other gods." Cf. the four subgroups of Neh 9:13. In some instances where four subgroups were given, מִשְׁפָּטִים was associated with ideas such as דְּרָכָיו, 'His ways,' e.g. 1 Kgs 2:3.

[331] The parts of the Law according to the Covenant given to Israel by God through Moses are expressed in (Lev 26:46) as חֻקִּים, "the statutes," and מִשְׁפָּטִים, "ordinances/customs/lifestyle," and תּוֹרֹת, "laws."

When these Scriptures are evaluated, it shows that the overall תּוֹרָה, the νόμος of the New Testament, could be thought of at various times in terms of at least three major subgroups that appear in the Old Testament:[332] (1) מִצְוֹת, "commandments," that normally make up a code of moral and civil law, which includes loving God and neighbor,[333] (2) חֻקִּים, "statues or ordinances," that normally deal with religious practices including religious purity,[334] and (3) מִשְׁפָּטִים, "ordinances or customs,"

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[332] Note that in Gen 26:2-6; Lev 26:45-46; and Neh 9:13, Moses used תּוֹרוֹת to represent the "commandment" portion of the total Torah of God. Deut 6:1-2; 7:11; 10:22-11:2; 26:17; 30:15-16; 1 Kgs 2:1-4; 2 Chr 19:10; Mal 3:22 BH, 4:4 Eng. Neh 10:30 start by specifying that what follows wa associated with בְּתוֹרַת הָאֱלֹהִים לָלֶכֶת, "walking in the Torah, the instruction, of God." There are other places where Old Testament writing such as Deut 26:17 and 30:16 that show those who follow God's instructions are walking in His ways. There are also places where מִצְוֹת, commandments, in its plural sense encompasses all Torah such as in Lev 22:31; 26:14; 27:34; 2 Kgs 18:6; 2 Chr 24:20; Isa 48:18.

[333] See Exod 20:6f.; Deut 11:1-13-16; 1 Kgs 14:8-9; 18:18; 2 Kgs 17:16; cf. Helmer Ringgren and Baruch A. Levine, *TDOT*, vol. 8, 505-14, who stated that מִצְוָה is one of the expressions for God's will and authority and as such normally referred to His "order" or "commandment" (p. 505). Levine noted that מִצְוָה belongs to a group of words that together express the various aspects of authority, which normally included משפט, חוק, and תורה (p. 506). Levine stated that מִצְוָה was not used until the Deuteronomistic writings to denote an "order" or a "commandment" expressing the divine will of God in the Law (p. 510). From this time onward, the מִצְוֹת represented the totality of laws in the sense that the laws had become commandments, orders from God (p. 513). Levine went on to say that the Qumran writings continue along this line of thought understanding מִצְוָה as law (pp. 513-14).

[334] See Exod 12:14, 17; 13:10; 27:21 28:43; 29:9; Lev 3:17 (tied with both religious rites and customs); 7:36; 10:9; 16:29-34; 17:7; 23:9-44; 24:3; Num 10:8; 15:15; 18:23; 19:1-22; 31:21; and cf. Ringgren, *TDOT*, vol. 5, 143-47, who stated that during the later stages of writing in the Old Testament, those associated with the Holiness Codes and Priestly writings showed the best evidence for חֹק and חֻקָּה being technical terms denoting cultic regulations or ordinances. These terms appear primarily in

that deal with the manner or way of life of a specific people group.[335] Old Testament writers regularly thought of the Torah, the Law, through a classification of its commandments into subgroups.

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subscriptions at the end of individual cultic regulations or minor collections of cultic ordinances (Exod 12:14, 17; 27:21; 28:43; 29:9; 30:21; Lev 7:36; 10:9; 16:31, 34; 24:3; Lev 17:7: 23:14, 21, 31, 41; Num 10:8; 18:23; 19:21; 27:11; 30:17; 35:29; cf. Exod 12:43; Lev 3:17; 16:29; Num 9:12, 14; 19:2, 10; 31:21 (pp. 143—44). Ringgren noted that in Ezek 18:9 and other places in Ezekiel, the covenant legislature is subdivided into two major domains, the חֻקֹּת and מִשְׁפָּטִים, "cultic ordinances and civil laws" (pp. 145-46). Regarding the Dead Sea Scrolls, Ringgren said that in 1QpHab 8:10, 17, חֻקִּים refers to the cultic regulations and in other Qumran writings it can refer similarly to cultic regulation or to the Law in general (p. 147).

[335] See Deut 8:11; 11:1; 26:17; 28:16; 1 Kgs 2:3; 6:12; 8:58; 2 Kgs 17:33-37; Neh 1:7. See BDB, 1049, § 6b, shows that מִשְׁפָּט can signify such ideas as "custom, manner of life" such as: (1)1 Sam 2:13, "custom of the priests," (2) 1 Sam 27:11, "David's customs/manner of life, (3) 2 Kgs 17:33, "custom of the nations," (4) Gen 40:13, Exod 21:9, Judg 18:7, 1 Kgs 18:28, 2 Kgs 11:14; 17:34, 1 Chr 6:17 (BH; 6:32 Eng.), Ps 119:132, "according to a custom/way of life of a specific type of person or people group," and (5) 2 Kgs 1:7, "a way of life, manner of a boy." Cf. Bo Johnson, *TDOT*, vol. 9, 86-98, who stated that most occurrences of מִשְׁפָּט are associated with justice and law where one aspect is "customary law," which led to referents such as "custom" and "manner" (p. 87). Johnson said that many scholars state that מִשְׁפָּט denotes authority in general and should not be limited to a judicial sense. He also noted that there were some such as Fahlgren, Osborne Booth, and Eliezer Berkovits who preferred to understand its basic sense as "manner, characteristic" (p. 88). But still, Johnson noted that in many texts the word מִשְׁפָּט was related to "justice" (p. 89), what was right (p. 93). In some contexts, מִשְׁפָּטִים were a collection of individual commandments or it could point to the entire Law (p. 94). Johnson said that תורה, חוק, and מצוה were closely related to משפט in regard to God's commandments and ordinances and at times may be strung together to emphasize the totality of the commandments (pp. 94-95). Johnson went on to say that in other contexts such as Gen 40:13; Josh 6:15; Judg 13:12; 18:7; 1 Sam 27:11; 30:25; 1 Kgs 18:28; 2 Kgs 11:14; 17:26f; Isa 28:26; Ezek 16:38; 23:45, and Eccl 8:6, מִשְׁפָּטִים clearly could mean "procedures, customs, traditions, manners" (p. 96).

There are several places in the Old Testament, where the writers used two terms to denote the Law as an entity similar to Paul's usage in Eph 2:15a instead of three or more. Deut 6:1-2 illustrates the Law being described first in terms of three parts, מִצְוֹת, "commandments," חֻקִּים, "statutes/ordinances," and מִשְׁפָּטִים, "ordinances/customs," and then in close succession two parts, מִצְוֹת, "commandments," and חֻקִּים, "statutes/ordinances." In this text, חֻקִּים and מִשְׁפָּטִים have been represented by the single word חֻקּוֹת. The writer of 1 Kgs 8:61 also set "statutes" and "commandments of the Law" beside each other similar to Paul's usage in Eph 2:15a. In 1 Kgs 8:61, God's people are מִצְוֹתָיו לָלֶכֶת בְּחֻקָּיו וְלִשְׁמֹר, "to walk in His statutes and keep His commandments."[336]

Although it is not expressed explicitly in his letters, Paul's teachings show that the moral commandments are considered differently than the purity regulations and the customs contained within the Mosaic Law. When Paul used the word νόμος in his letters in connection with ἔργα νόμου, he was normally speaking about all of the commandments of Mosaic Law.

Yet, through the context of some of his letters, it is clear that at times Paul separates the moral commandments from the ordinances pertaining to purity and culture. It is clear from his letters that all of the commandments, statutes, and ordinances/customs of the Law do not have the same authority and efficacy in the Messianic Age as they had prior to the coming of the Messiah. It also clear from Paul's letters that some of the ordinances contained within the commandments of the Law had become optional but not abolished.

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[336] Cf. Exod15:26; Deut 4:5; 27:10; 28:45; 30:10; 1Kgs 3:14; 11:34, 38; 2 Kgs 17:13; 2 Chr 7:19. Num 36:13 and 1 Chron 28:7 are texts within the Old Testament where מצות was paired with משפטים instead of with חקות to denote the Law.

Possible Referents for Δόγματα

Knowing that the Old Testament and Paul's writings can support the idea of thinking about the commandments of the Law in terms of its individual areas of influence depending on context, what were the possible referents for the word δόγματα? Paul's use of a verbal form of δόγματα in his letter to the Colossians compliments his statement in Eph 2:15. In Col 2:20, Paul asks Εἰ ἀπεθάνετε σὺν Χριστῷ ἀπὸ τῶν στοιχείων τοῦ κόσμου, τί ὡς ζῶντες ἐν κόσμῳ δογματίζεσθε; "If you have died together with Christ from the elementary principles of the world, why as if living in the world are you subjecting yourselves to its regulations?" Paul had already discussed a self-abasement category of elementary principles (2:8, 18, 23) and a set of biblical elementary principles that contain the regulations for the cultural aspect of the Law: (1) food and drink, (2) festivals and new moons, and (3) the Sabbath (2:16-17). Here Paul was relating specific δόγματα from the Mosaic Law to regulations that Christ's followers were no longer required to follow; they had become optional for the people of God.

Regarding the Sabbath, it is known historically that the Early Church moved their day of rest and worship to the first day of the week in honor of their Lord's resurrection; they followed the intent of the Law and in reality had not discarded this commandment. In his letter to the Colossians, Paul made it perfectly clear that the Gentiles who followed the Messiah were not required to submit to a specialized set of decrees that had regulated the cultural lifestyle of Israel prior to Jesus' coming. In addition, Paul used the word δόγματα in Col 2:14 to denote official "decrees/judgments" for His followers' sins to be nailed to the Messiah's cross representing His sanctifying and atoning work.[337]

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[337] Moulton and Milligan, *Vocabulary of the Greek Testament*, § 1378, 166, said that the word δόγματα was commonly used to express legally binding declarations of the Roman Senate. They note that Luke used this word for the legally binding declarations of the Emperor (Luke 2:1; Acts 17:7); and cf. BDAG, 254, and said that the word δόγμα could

The only other New Testament writer to use a form of the word δόγμα was Luke. He used δόγματα to express the Roman Emperor's legal declarations in Luke 2:1 and Acts 17:7, and he used a form of the word δόγμα in Acts 16:4 to denote the authoritative declarations of the Jerusalem Council of A.D. 49 regarding the requirements of Gentile Believers within the Body of Christ.

Regarding the usage of the word δόγμα in the Septuagint, note the following: (1) in Ezra 3:9, Hamon requested that the king write a decree to have those who would not follow the laws of the land to be executed; Hamon's request is in the form of a hortatory: let it be written (a decree) [BH; יִכָּתֵב; LXX; δογματισάτω]; the decree carries an authority that is equal with any law of the land. In this passage in the Masoretic text, the king's decrees were designated using an Aramaic word, דָּתֵי, which is the plural construct form of דָּת, (2) in Dan 6:12, the translators of the Septuagint translated the Aramaic phrase דָּת־מָדַי וּפָרַס as τοῖς Μήδων καὶ Περσῶν δόγμασιν, "the decrees of the Medes and Persians," and in Dan 6:9 they had just translated the king's דָּת as ὁρισμόν; "a decree."[338] Here in the same text is an example where ὁρισμός and δόγμα were both used to denote the Aramaic word דָּת, (3) in the the Apocrypha text of 1 Esdras 6:33, the perfect past tense of δογματίζομαι, δεδογμάτικα, was used by the Septuagint translators to state that King Darius had made an official request, a decree. This decree carried the weight of his office, which was equal in authority to any law

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be used to denote: (1) a formal statement concerning rules or regulations that were to be observed by a certain group of people, or (2) something that was taught as an established tenant or statement of belief.

[338] LS, 1251b. The word ὁρισμός can denote such ideas as "boundaries," "limits," "decrees," and "vows." In in Dan 6:9-10 and 6:13 the Masoretic text shows that the דָּת or טְעֵם, "a decree," is an אֱסָר, a binding obligation, that is יַצִּיב, "certain/true"; it is not apt לְהַשְׁנָיָה, Haphel infin. of שָׁנָא, "to change," and לָא תֶעְדֵּא, it will not pass away. This text illuminates the permanent nature of a king's decree in the Middle East

of the land, (4) in 3 Macc 1.3, the translators used the phrase τῶν πατρίων δογμάτων to refer to the ancient *traditions* of the people, (5) in 4 Macc 4.23-26,[339] a form of δόγμα was used three different times to indicate an order, a decree, given by Antiochus to force the Jews of Jerusalem to give up the observance of τῷ πατρίῳ πολιτευόμενοι νόμῳ, "the ancestral Law by which they were being governed," and (6) 4 Macc 8-10 portrayed a pious Jewish family who would rather die than be coerced to disobey τὰς πατρίους ἡμῶν ἐντολάς, "our ancestral laws," which God had given through their, συμβούλῳ Μωυσεῖ, "counselor Moses."[340] After his father and two older brothers had been tortured and murdered, the third eldest son declared that he would also rather die than turn against τοῖς αὐτοῖς ἀνετράφην δόγμασιν, "the same ordinances (*teachings*) that I was raised on."[341] Therefore, it is noted that in the few places that the translators of the Septuagint chose to use the word δόγματα, it was normally used to denote "authoritative decrees" but at times "ancient traditions & teachings."

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[339] 4 Maccabees is an important mid-first century document paralleling the writing of the New Testament. Therefore, it is helpful in developing an understanding of the meaning of some Greek words that still may seem elusive to later generations. Some individuals such as H. Anderson, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha,* ed. James H. Charlesworth, vol. 2 (New York: Doubleday, 1983), 533, dated this work somewhere between 63 B.C.E. -70 C.E.; but others such as Emil Schürer edited by Vermes, Millar, and Black, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.- A.D. 135)*, rev. and ed. Geza Vermes & Fergus Millar, vol. 4 (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark in 1987), 589-91, understand the time of writing in its final form to be mid-first century C.E.; and more recently, individuals such as Donald Gowan, *Justification and Variegated Nomism*, vol. 1, *The Complexities of Second Temple Judaism*, ed. D. A. Carson, Peter T. O'Brien, and Mark A. Seifrid (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 231, set the limits of this work from 19-54 C.E. David A. deSilva, *Introducing the Apocrypha: Message, Context, and Significance* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 355-56, sets the date of this document around mid-first century C.E.

[340] 4 Macc 9.1-2.

[341] In context, ἀνάτρεφει, indicates the idea of raising a child to eventually become an adult.

A first-century translation of a Hebrew text, which was fairly similar to the Masoretic text,[342] made by Theodotion and probably several earlier translators, provides another first-century source that used the word δόγμα to denote an official order, decree, of a king. The decrees of the kings were equal in authority to any of the laws of the land and were not likely to be abrogated. The translator(s) of the Theodotion text used: (1) δόγμα and ῥῆμα to denote a דָּת, "a decree," made by the Babylonian king in the Aramaic text of Dan 2:13 and 15, (2) the words ἔθηκας δόγμα, "having set/made a decree," to express the Hebrew idea of שַׂמְתָּ טְעֵם, "you set/made a decree" when translating Dan 3:10 and 3:12,[343] (3) a form of δόγμα in Dan 3:96 to express in the first person,

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[342] Karen H. Jobes and Moisés Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2000), 41-42, state that according to the traditional view, Theodotion lived in the late second century. His translation of the Book of Daniel supplanted the Septuagint's translation. The problem with this tradition is that it can now be shown that certain renderings– that were once thought to be distinctive to Theodotion –are now known to have existed a century or two before he lived. Jobes and Silva went on to say that recent discoveries confirm that there were Hebrew Bible translations similar to Theodotion's already in the first century B.C. Therefore, Theodotion's work can be viewed as a later update to an earlier translation of the BH; it is mentioned in *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, ed. F.L. Cross and E.A. Livingstone, 3d ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 1602, that others such as D. Barthélemy, *Les Devanciers d'Aquila*, (Leiden, 1963), 144-67, understand Theodotion to have translated his version from the Hebrew in the first century. In either case, the work of Theodotion is later than the Septuagint and appears to have been based on an existing translation from the first-century B.C.

[343] The translators of the Septuagint used the words προστάσσω καὶ κρίνω in verse 3:10 in the aorist tense to represent the idea of the "ingressive action" of the king who had set forth a decree and consequently continued indefinitely to judge offenders. This translation appears to have come from a different Hebrew text other than Theodotions's Hebrew or the current Masoretic text. In verse 3:12, it appears that the translators of the Septuagint translated the Hebrew idea of טְעֵם with the Greek word ἐντολή. The later translators, who lived closer to the time of Jesus and Paul translated the Hebrew concept of

ἐγὼ ἐκτίθεμαι δόγμα, "I personally am setting forth a decree," denoting an official decree by King Nebuchadnezzar,[344] (4) δόγμα in Dan 4:6 to represent the Aramaic/Hebrew idea of טְעֵם to denote "a command, an order,"[345] (5) the word δόγμα in Dan 6:9-10 and 6:13 to denote both דָּת and טְעֵם, which appear to be synonymous for the king's "decree." From this text, one learns that a king's decree is an אֱסָר, "a binding obligation," that is יַצִּיב, "certain/true"; it is not apt לְהַשְׁנָיָה, "to change,"[346] and לָא תֶעְדֵּא, "it will not pass away," and (6) δόγμα in Dan 6:27 to translate the word טְעֵם, which in this case refers to a "decree" of King Darius. In summary, the Theodotion translators as their predecessors, the translators for the Septuagint, used the word δόγμα to denote an "authoritative decree or order."

Philo used a form of the word δόγμα in several places in his works that is also helpful in understanding possible first-century referents. There are four places in his work where a form of δόγμα was used in close proximity with νόμος. In all of these cases, *Sacrifices of Abel and Cain*, 19; *The Worse Attacks the Better*, 135; *Who Is the Heir of Divine Things*, 292, *Special Laws*, 4.149, δόγμα was used to indicate "a teaching, a doctrine." In *Special Laws*, 4.149, Philo used δόγμα to denote that fathers ought to be teaching τὰ ἀρχαία ἔθη, "the ancient

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טְעֵם with a form of the Greek word δόγμα.

[344] The translators of the Septuagint simply translate the Hebrew as ἐγὼ κρίνω, which can be interpreted as "I am making a decision" in the sense of an official decree. LS, 996ab, shows that κρίνω could signify a fairly large range of thoughts regarding "separation," "choice," "decision," or "judgment"; and in Dan 3:95-96, it appears that both groups of translators, the Septuagint and Theodotion, were using the same text and chose alternative words in their respective translations.

[345] BDB, 1094b, shows that טְעֵם can signify "taste," "judgment," or "commands."

[346] Haphel infinitive of שְׁנָא.

customs," which are οἱ ἄγραφοι νόμοι, "the unwritten laws," of the people. Another first century writer, Josephus, used the word δόγμα to denote the decrees of King Herod in *Antiquities of the Jews*, 17.159.3. He stated that the people would not follow King Herod's δόγματα, "decrees," when they would cause them to violate the Laws of Moses.

Two non-Jewish first-century writers, Dio Chrysostomus of Prusa, a Greek orator and philosopher working in Rome,[347] and Mestrius Plutarchus of Chaeronea, a writer and government official,[348] provides additional insight to possible referents for δόγμα in the first-century. In one of his works, *Orations* 3.44.1, Dio stated that ὁ νόμος βασιλέως δόγμα, "a decree of the king is the law." Plutarch used the word δόγματα to refer to: (1) "philosophical *teachings*" in *On the Delays of the Divine Will Regarding Vengeance/Vindication*, 562.B.8-9 [349] and in *Men in Power with Principles of Philosophy To Be Discussed,* 779.B.14. In *Men in Power*, Plutarch was hoping that these particular philosophical *teachings* would eventually become νόμοι, "laws," as the teachings were incorporated into everyday life by the leaders of the land, (2) "*teachings*" of two philosophers that were considered the same as the "laws" of the ancient Greeks in *The Eating of Flesh II*, 998.A.6, (3) "decrees" of the

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[347] *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, ed. Simon Hornblower and Antony Spawforth, 3d ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 470. Dio Chrysostomus, Dio Cocceianus, was a Greek orator and popular philosopher who was born sometime between A.D. 40-50 and died after A.D. 110. Dio was born into a wealthy family in Prusa, which is in Bithynia and began his career as a rhetorician in Rome.

[348] Ibid., 1200f. Mestrius Plutarchus was a notable writer and government official from Chaeronea who was born prior to A.D. 50 and died after A.D. 120.

[349] Plutarch used three terms together, ἔθη, δόγματα, καὶ νόμους, to signify "customs," "doctrines/maybe philosophical teachings," and "laws" or νόμους could mean "codes of conduct" in this context as Delacy understands it. See Mestrius Plutarchus, *Plutarch's Moralia*, vol. 7, trans. Phillip H. DeLacy (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959), 263.

leaders in *Caesar* 6.3.2-3, *On Exile*, 607.D.11, (4) "decrees or possibly decisions" versus νόμοις, συνθηκαις, καὶ ὁμολογίαις, "laws," "contracts," and "agreements," in *Table Talk IX*, 742.D.7, (5) "individual laws" that had been passed within the whole corpus of νόμος in *The Lives of Ten Orators*, 833.F.12, and (6) "a proposal" put forth to those attending a symposium by two individuals, Κράτωνα and Θέωνα, in *Table Talk I*, 620.B.5.

Taken together, Dio and Plutarch used the word δόγματα to denote "authoritative decrees," "laws," "teachings, doctrine," and "proposals." From the evidence shown, it is clear that Jewish and Gentiles authors alike use the word δόγματα to point to a similar set of references. From Jewish and Gentile sources, it has been demonstrated that δόγματα had a range of meaning in Paul's era from (1) "laws" in general, (2) "decrees" that were made by individuals in authority to govern some aspect of everyday life," (3) "teachings, doctrine," to (4) general "proposals."

The Meaning

In the study of usage of δόγματα, "decrees, ordinances," in several writings contemporaneous with Paul, there was not much help in identifying a specific portion of the Law that Paul might have been referencing within the clause τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν καταργήσας. It was noted above that Paul used the prepositional phrase ἐν δόγμασιν as a grammatical tool to limit the Messiah's declaration that the commandments of the Law had been made ineffective to a specific set of ordinances. This assertion is based on the fact that in this same letter Paul exhorted his addressees to obey a large number of the moral commandments of the Mosaic Law showing that many of the commandments had not been abolished nor made ineffective. The sources studied above did help confirm that many times when the word δόγματα was used in relationship to laws, it denoted individual decrees versus the whole law.

Our study above searching for possible classifications of the various commandments of the Law from the Old Testament showed that the commandments of the Law were often considered in three categories and sometimes in two: (1) מִצְוֹת, "commandments," that normally make up a code of moral and civil law, (2) חֻקִּים, "statutes," that normally deal with religious practices regarding purity, and (3) מִשְׁפָּטִים, "ordinances/ customs," that normally deal with the manner or customs of everyday life. When thinking of two categories the second and third category would be combined as one. This being the case, and considering the context of all of Paul's letters, we can conclude that Paul was not being a radical thinker by considering the whole Law as the sum of two or three parts.

Yet, in general, it was radical for the apostles of the Early Church to proclaim that the Messiah had made a portion of the commandments of the Law ineffective or optional, which in turn allowed Non-Jewish Believer and Jewish Believers to live in peace with one another during His Messianic reign with everyone keeping their own individual cultural norms as long as they did not violate the moral commandments within the Mosaic Law. It would also seem that many of the Jewish scholars of Paul's day would not have expected any portion of the Law to be declared optional during the Messianic Age. This is part of God's plan that Paul had written about being hidden from earlier generations.[350] From here, the context of Ephesians and the rest of Paul's letters will be used to solidify the the intended meaning of τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν καταργήσας.

Within the Literary Context of Ephesians

The literary context of Ephesians reveals that the Messiah, Jesus Christ, the peacemaker, is God's redeeming gift of eternal life. This free gift of life is available to all humanity redeeming those who respond properly to Jesus' salvific death on a cross through faith in the God who

[350] Eph 3:1-7.

has shown so much grace and patience toward His creation (2:8-10; cf. 1:3-2:7).[351] Paul wants Christ's followers, *both* Jew and Gentile, to know that prior to the foundation of the world, God had pre-planned and kept hidden the fact that He was going to allow His Son to be crucified by His creation in order to reconcile all willing participants of His creation into one unified body to Himself (1:3-5, 9; 2:14-18; 3:1-12). In addition, the Messiah proclaimed that some parts of the Law no longer required obedience in order to facilitate unity among the Jewish and Gentile Believers.

The phrase τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν is contained in the first part of a compound sentence consisting of two sentences contained in verses 2:14-16 and 2:17-18 respectively. A more thorough breakdown and discussion of this compound sentence is presented in the next chapter. The first sentence, which is contained within verses 2:14-16 follows,

> Αὐτὸς γάρ ἐστιν ἡ εἰρήνη ἡμῶν, ὁ ποιήσας τὰ ἀμφότερα ἓν καὶ τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ λύσας, τὴν ἔχθραν ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ, τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν καταργήσας, ἵνα τοὺς δύο κτίσῃ ἐν αὐτῷ εἰς ἕνα καινὸν ἄνθρωπον ποιῶν εἰρήνην, καὶ ἀποκαταλλάξῃ τοὺς ἀμφοτέρους ἐν ἑνὶ σώματι τῷ θεῷ διὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ, ἀποκτείνας τὴν ἔχθραν ἐν αὐτῷ·

The main clause of the first sentence is elaborated on through an aorist participial clause, ὁ ποιήσας τὰ ἀμφότερα ἓν, which is further developed by three additional epexegetical aorist participial clauses that are marked linguistically by a leading epexegetical καί as shown in the

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[351] Ernest Best, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Ephesians*, The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1998), 226, regarding Eph 2:8-9, stated that the author of Ephesians was saying that believers are not the source of their own salvation. There salvation is not ἐξ ὑμων, but is God's gift. He went on to say that this emphasis is already present in the Old Testament in such passages as Isa 31:1; 42:5f.; 43:3, 11; Hos 1:7; and Ps 33.

corresponding grammatical layout in chapter 4. This καί should be translated as something like "indeed."

All of the participial clauses are aorist, which in this context stress the ingressive aspect of Christ's redeeming action and commands for all present and future followers. Christ has brought peace to the Jews *and* Gentiles who choose to follow Him. Yet the overall punctiliar action of the aorist participles of 2:14-15 is constative in nature when considering the overall theology of Paul's letters and the New Testament as a whole portraying Jesus' atoning death on a cross as a single action completed *once for all time* (past, present, and future).[352]

The second of the three aorist participial clauses that follow the epexegetical καί is the point of emphasis with the first and the third stating clearly that the ongoing mutual hostility between Jew and Gentile has been abolished for those who are *in* Christ. These two participial phrases emphasize the fact that Christ has personally destroyed the

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[352] Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, 858-60, 891, stated that the aorist participle in and of itself is depicting punctiliar action that can be described as ingressive, effective, or constative. The idea of tenses are secondary to aspect and determined by context. When an aorist participle is used in a circumstantial participial clause, it normally shows either prior or present action in conjunction with its finite verb (pp. 858-60). In contrast to the aorist participle, which has an aspect of punctiliar action, the present participle has an aspect of durative time. Regarding tense, similar to the aorist participle, the present participle may show antecedent and present time relative to the finite verb, but differently, it may also indicate future time in the sense of purpose, which is also shown through context (pp. 891-92); cf. BDF, § 339, 174-75. Blass, DeBrunner, and Funk state that originally participles had no temporal function but instead only portrayed the type of action. Although relative past time eventually became associated to some degree with the aorist participle, the context must determine whether its "type of action" occurred in the past in relation to the finite verb or is occurring simultaneously with the action of the finite verb. They give an example from Acts 1:24 where an aorist participle is showing simultaneous action with the controlling finite verb, προσευξάμενοι εἶπαν and a second example where a present participle is showing its aspect of duration along with action that occurred prior to that of the finite verb that it is illuminating, πωλοῦντες ἔθερον, as written in Acts 4:34.

ongoing mutual hostility between those Jews and Gentiles who submit their will to His. Grammatically, the first clause introduces the second and the third clause closes this epexegetical section forming an inclusio.

Following is an overview. After saying that Jesus is our peace, the One having made it possible for both Jew and Gentile to become one united man thereby producing peace, Paul developed this important doctrine using a three-part epexegetical participial section, καὶ λύσας τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ, τὴν ἔχθραν ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ, "indeed, having broken down the *dividing* middle-wall, the hostility, through (the sacrificing of) His own flesh,"[353] τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν καταργήσας, ἵνα τοὺς δύο κτίσῃ ἐν αὐτῷ εἰς ἕνα καινὸν ἄνθρωπον ποιῶν εἰρήνην καὶ ἀποκαταλλάξῃ τοὺς ἀμφοτέρους ἐν ἑνὶ σώματι τῷ θεῷ διὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ, "having made ineffective (optional) the Law consisting of commandments specifically pertaining to ordinances/decrees, in order that He may create the two in Himself into *one new man* producing peace, and in order that He may reconcile *both* into one body to God through the Cross," and thereby ἀποκτείνας τὴν ἔχθραν ἐν αὐτῳ, "having destroyed the (ongoing mutual) hostility through His own actions." How does this sentence fit into the context of the whole letter?

Considering the entire letter and his other letters, it is clear that Paul was not saying that the Messiah had made all of the commandments of the Law ineffective nor had He abolished them. In Eph 6:1-3, Paul commands children to obey their parents and then told them to honor their father and mother stating that this ἐστὶν ἐντολὴ πρώτη ἐν ἐπαγγελίᾳ, ἵνα εὖ σοι γένηται καὶ ἔσῃ μακροχρόνιος ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, "this is the first commandment with a promise, that it may be well for you and that you may live a long time on the earth."

This imperative given by Paul to the children of those following Christ shows the ongoing validity of a least one of the major moral commandments of the Mosaic Law. By looking at the both the Masoretic

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[353] See chapter 2 for a development of the meaning of the phrase τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ.

Hebrew and the Septuagint referencing Exod 20:12, again, it is noted that Paul is directly quoting one of the Ten Commandments. Not only was this moral commandment still valid, it appears to have the *same efficacy* that it had when God gave it to Israel at Mount Sinai: honoring one's parents normally gives one a long life in return. This imperative with promise shows that this commandment contained within the Mosaic Law had not become ineffective nor abrogated. In addition, as noted earlier in this work, when one examines Paul's fifty-one combinations of second-person imperatives and third-person jussives coupled with the present active participles to help move his predominately Gentile addressees from their past life style to a manner of living that is pleasing to God, at least thirty-six of his exhortations are similar to some of the moral commandments of the Mosaic Law.[354]

Knowing that Paul was speaking about a specific set of ordinances contained within the commandments of the Law, it would be good to remember within context why they had become optional. Firstly, Christ died on the Cross to make reconciliation possible between God and man and between man and man. Secondly, by making this particular set of ordinances optional, Christ had made it possible for both groups, Jew and Gentile, to be reconciled *on earth* during His messianic reign into ἑνὶ σώματι, "one body," the family of God without divisions.

Because Paul's letter shows that the moral commandments had not become optional, and it shows that some ordinances were declared optional, which made it possible for the Jew and Gentile Believers to be reconciled on earth into the single family of God, Paul was saying that Jesus' atoning death make it possible for Jewish and Gentile Believers to live together in an ongoing mutual state of peace instead of an ongoing mutual state of hostility. With the study above, it is clear that Paul was naturally thinking of the Law as being made up of two parts and was declaring that Jesus' atoning death made a group of ordinances optional, which in turn helped facilitate uniting the Jew and Gentile into "one new man" bringing about peace among God's children.

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[354] The fifty-one exhortations and the thirty-six parallels are shown in chapter 4.

Within the Literary Context of Paul's World

From the study above regarding Paul and the Law, it becomes clear that although no one was justified through doing "works of the Law,"[355] Christ's followers were to be οἱ ποιηταὶ νόμου, "doers of the Law";[356] Christ's followers were to be continually doing the ἐντολῶν θεοῦ, "the commandments of God."[357]

This doctrine, which is advocated in several of Paul's letters, *matches his teaching in Ephesians* in which Paul demonstrated the validity of the moral commandments contained within the Law through his exhortations to fulfill them. Paul taught that *both* Jew and Gentile were equally required to work toward the fulfilling of the moral laws.[358]

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[355] Rom 3:20, 28; Gal 2:16; 3:2, 5, 10-11; cf. Eph 2:8-9.

[356] Rom 2:13; cf. Rom 3:31; 8:4; Jas 2:24. See work above for more detail.

[357] 1 Cor 7:19.

[358] O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, 198, stated that early Judaic literature stressed the moral law while the cultic law receded into the background; In his article "Interpreting Romans Theologically in a Post-'New Perspective' Perspective," 238, Brendan looked at Romans 8 and said that Paul had answered the question of God's righteousness and faithfulness. God was both faithful and righteous, and this was demonstrated in how God dealt with sin and its destructive, death-dealing captivity. In the face of human incapacity to live other than selfishly, God created the possibility for humans to live righteously through the Spirit and thereby to fulfill the covenant requirements in accordance with the vision of Ezekiel 36 and Jeremiah 31. Cf. Knox Chamblin, "The Law of Moses and the Law of Christ," in *Continuity and Discontinuity: Perspectives on the Relationship between the Old and New Testaments: Essays in Honor of S. Lewis Johnson, Jr.*, ed. S. Lewis Johnson and John S. Feinberg (Westchester: Crossway, 1988), 181, 187, 194, who said that grace was not antithetical to God's laws (p. 181) and went on to say that the "New Covenant" of Jer 31:31-34 actually achieves the forgiveness of sins, and it did not entail creating a new law but a new and more personal administration of the Mosaic Law; this accomplishes the deepest mutual knowledge between Yahweh and his people (p. 187). Chamblin reminds his readers that the Mosaic Law is an expression of God's grace and

Thielman stated that obedience to the justifying gracious God of the Mosaic Law led to the destruction of the barrier between Jew and Gentile and on to proper love for one’s neighbor (Gal 2:15-21; 3:28; Eph 2:11-22; Col 3:11; Phlm 2:13).[359] Although he considered Paul to be teaching total abrogation of the Law, he recognized the fact that Paul’s exhortations intersect the Mosaic Law many times within his letters,[360] and he admitted that some of the greatest theologians of all time such as John Calvin taught that the moral commandments given at Mount Sinai were eternal.[361] Even with his total abrogation theory, he knew that God

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when one considers the Law and the Gospel they are considering two manifestations of God’s grace (p. 194).

[359] Thielman, *Paul and the Law*, 240.

[360] Thielman, *The Law and the New Testament*, 169, said that Paul referred to his ethical teachings variously as “ways in Christ Jesus,” “the law of Christ,” the “tradition,” “the fruit of the Spirit,” and the received “pattern of teaching” (2 Thess 2:15; 3:6; 1 Cor 4:17; 9:21; 11:2; Gal 5:22-23; 6:2; Rom 6:17). Thielman went on to say that these commands intersect the Mosaic Law at several places, most notably at the Decalogue and the love commandment (Gal 5:14; Rom 13:8-10).

[361] Ibid., 20-21. Thielman referred to John Calvin’s work noting that Calvin had taught that the moral law was still active as it reflected God’s unchanging will (*Inst.* 4.20.15; cf. 2.7.1). Calvin taught that the moral law serves three functions: (1) the law makes sin explicit leading people to seek God’s grace (*Inst*. 2.7.6-9), (2) the law serves as a check on unbelievers serving to restrain them form doing evil on the basis of partial knowledge (*Inst.* 2.7.10-11), and (3) the law serves believers as a guide to God’s will. Thielman understood Calvin to have vigorously opposed anyone who claimed that believers were not obligated in any sense to its commandments (*Inst*. 2.7.12-17). Cf. Bruce W. Longenecker, *The Triumph of Abraham’s God: The Transformation of Identity in Galatians* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clarke, 1998; reprint, Nashville: Abingdon, 1998), 118-19, who said that in Early Judaism, it would have been inconceivable to restrict the Mosaic Law within temporal time boundaries, because the Law was known to be eternal in its glory and function (p. 118). The immanent power of God was said to have resided with Israel and was embodied within Torah (p. 118). Longenecker went on to say that in a real sense, Torah requirements were built into the very structure of the world and the heavenly realms (*Jub.* 15; cf. 15.9, 11, 13, 28), and the Law itself was for all generations (p. 118). Paul came to

still required those who want to participate in His New Covenant to be holy making them His "treasured possession" and appropriate dwelling place.[362]

Stephen Davis stated that many had failed to understand Paul's teachings on the Law for the Messianic Age because they had followed theories that expect substantial changes in the Law between the Old and New Testament basically producing a different Torah.[363] Schreiner stated that Paul simultaneously celebrated life in the Spirit with its freedom in Christ and gave exhortations based on the Mosaic Law.[364] Schreiner went on to say that if one described Paul's views of the Law merely in terms of abolition, that would be unsatisfactory because Paul's letters contain a motif of fulfillment, which included ongoing prohibitions against adultery, murder, stealing, and coveting.[365] Indeed, the plain sense of

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understand Jesus Christ as the embodiment of wisdom (1 Cor 1:24; Col 1:15-20) and found in Him all the attributes of wisdom previously associated with Torah (p. 119).

[362] Ibid., 240-41. After reviewing what Paul had written regarding the Law and the Gospel in his letters, Thielman stated that the function [outcome] of obedience to the Law in the Old Testament and in Paul was identical. The Israelites' obedience to the Mosaic law marked them off from the other nations as God's 'treasured possession' (Ex 19:5; Lev 18:1-5; 19:24-26) and made them an appropriate dwelling place for God's presence (Lev 15:31).

[363] Davis, *The Antithesis of the Ages*, 3-4, 25.

[364] Schreiner, *Paul Apostle of God's Glory in Christ*, 308-10.

[365] Ibid., 325. Schreiner noted that Paul's teachings show: (1) the whole Mosaic law is fulfilled in terms of love (Rom 13:8-10; Gal 5:14), which includes the prohibitions against adultery, murder, stealing and coveting as part of the law of love (Rom 13:8-10). He said that all of these commands are part of the Ten Commandments (Exod 20:13-17; Deut 5:17-21), (2) one must love one's neighbor as oneself (Lev 19:18), and (3) elsewhere there are commandments against murder (Rom 1:29), adultery (1 Cor 6:9), stealing (1 Cor 5:10-11; 6:10; Eph 4:28), with coveting receiving extended treatment in Rom 7:7-25, which can be compared to 1 Cor 10:6; 2 Cor 9:5; Eph 4:19; 5:3; Col 3:5). Cf. Stuhlmacher, *Paul's Letter to the Romans*, 124, who said that Christians were to fulfill the will of God, which finds paradigmatic expression in the Decalogue (Rom 13:8f.) and can be summarized most concisely in the

Paul's teaching in Rom 8:4 was that the Mosaic Law was being concretely fulfilled by those who were not walking according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.[366]

Regarding Eph 2:14-18, Markus Barth stated that it would not make sense for Paul to teach that all of the Law had been abrogated knowing that at times he had stated that the Law had not been abrogated but was to be upheld and established.[367] Peter O'Brien's work shows that he understood Christ's redeeming work as that which removed the threat of death from the written Law but not as something that would do away with the revelatory aspect of the Law that reveals the character and will of God.[368]

If Paul understood Christ's redeeming work to be a fulfilling of the Law—and he did—what did he mean when he proclaimed that Jesus, who has full authority over the Law as the sent and appointed Messiah, had rendered ineffective τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν, "the ordinances contained in the commandments of the Law"? It is known

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love command (Gal 5:14; Rom 13:8). The will of God will be the criterion of the final judgment, which God has given over to his Christ (2 Cor 5:10; Rom 2:12-16).

[366] Schreiner, *Paul Apostle of God's Glory in Christ*, 327. Schreiner looked at Rom 8:7 as strengthening such a view when Paul said that those who are in the flesh did not and could not submit to God's law. This view of Rom 8:4 also fits with Romans 7, in which Paul proclaimed human beings' inability to keep God's law in the flesh, which is in contradistinction to those who are being empowered to fulfill God's Law through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Considering Jesus' recorded teaching regarding the Law, Moo, "The Law of Moses or the Law of Christ?" 203-05, said that it was likely that the fulfillment referred to in Matt 5:17 meant that Jesus' new eschatological demands did not constitute an abandonment of the Law but instead expressed that which the Law was all along intended to anticipate. Moo went on to say that Jesus' teaching clearly stressed an "anticipation-realization" continuity within the scheme of salvation-history. Within this context, the Law as stated in Matt 5:18-19 is understood to possess enduring validity.

[367] Barth, *Ephesians*, 287. Barth references Rom 3:31; 7:22; and 13:8-10.

[368] O'Brien, *Letter to the Ephesians*, 198-99.

from letters such as Hebrews, that at least *one set of ordinances* from the Law was no longer efficacious in the New Covenant; it was those ordinances that had dealt with sacrifices for individual and national sins. Prior to the Messiah's sacrificial death during the rule of the Old Covenant, animal sacrifices were required as a temporary substitute and as a reminder of the terrible price that the Messiah was going to pay personally at some time in the future for those who would learn to trust God. Hebrews explicitly stated that after the Messiah died for the sins of the faithful, sacrificing animals for sins, which pointed to the sacrificial death of the coming Messiah, was no longer required nor advantages.[369]

A couple of Paul's letters help expand the set of ordinances that had been declared ineffective by the Messiah. As discussed above, Paul's letter to the Colossians contains good insight into understanding Ephesians because it uses the word δόγματα in conjunction with his statement that Gentiles were not required to follow such cultural and cultic ordinances of the Law as: (1) food or drink, (2) festivals and new moons, and (3) the Sabbath.[370] Additional clues come from his letter to the Galatians, in which Paul tells his addressees that Gentile males are not obligated to follow the dietary regulations of the Mosaic Law in order to be considered full members of the Church. Everyone could follow the cultural norms that they had been previously following before becoming a member of the Body of Christ in the Messianic Age.[371]

Dunn and Thielman are just two of many who understand Paul to be clearly saying that the ordinances dealing with purity and culture have lost their authority in the Messianic Age.[372] Yet, as discussed above, at

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[369] Heb 10:1-14.

[370] Col 2:16-17.

[371] 1 Cor 7:19-20; cf. Gal 2:3-14; 5:1-6; 6:15-16; Rom 2:28-29.

[372] Dunn, "Noch Einmal 'Works of the Law,'" 275-76, stated that the issues in both cases, circumcision and food laws at Jerusalem and Antioch, focused on what Law abiding Jews had regarded as fundamental and essential to the practice of their faith at least since the Maccabean resistance (1 Macc 1:60-63). Thielman, *The Law and the New Testament*, 28-35, 169, 181, stated that Paul had excluding circumcision, traditional

the same time that Paul was teaching that Believers were not required to obey a specific group of ordinances, he was also teaching that Christ's followers should obey the moral requirements of the Law through obedience to God through the leadership of the Holy Spirit. Through obedience to God coupled with Christ's atoning death, they would fulfill the righteous requirements of the Law.

In reality, Paul was teaching that during the Messianic Age, those who decided to follow Christ and His teachings, whether Jew or Gentile, would not have any divisional walls between them including generational hostility. They would have the same outlook on morality and work ethics as they celebrated a new life following Jesus Christ, who had allowed Himself to be sacrificed for the sins of all who learned to love, trust, and obey God. His sacrificial death ended all sacrifices for atonement of sin. Other than moral law, this only left one area for potential friction between the Jewish and Gentile Believer: their distinctly different cultural and purity practices.

Therefore, when Paul said that Christ had made τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν "ineffective," he was saying that Christ "had made the *cultural and purity* ordinances contained within the commandments of the Law optional." From Jesus' atoning death forward, there was nothing left in their common religious unity as the "one new man" that should cause division within God's holy family.

Sabbath keeping, and dietary observance from the life of Gentile converts (1 Cor 7:19; Gal. 5:6; 6:15; Rom 14:5-6, 14) and also noted the abrogation of the cultic and civic elements of the Law within Paul's spiritualizing of the Temple and sacrificial cult (1 Cor 3:9-17; 6:19; Phil 2:17; 4:18; 2 Cor 6:14-7:1; Rom 12:1); he also noted that Paul believed that Jesus' death atoned for all past human sin (Rom 3:25-26).

Chapter 4: Ephesians 2:11-22: The Demolition of the *Dividing* Middle-Wall

Introduction

In this chapter, the exegetical work of Eph 2:11-22 will be finalized. Chapters 2 and 3 provide the in-depth research and analysis to understand the meaning of the two enigmatic aorist participial phrases contained in Eph 2:14-15: τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ λύσας, τὴν ἔχθραν and τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν καταργήσας.

As noted earlier, these participial phrases have perplexed many contemporary scholars and, therefore, have created a fair amount of scholarly debate up to the present. Within this research due to the time gap of original first-century writing versus contemporary understanding, there has been an extra effort made to research possible range of meaning of several key words and phrases to help determine the best English contemporary expression to represent the meaning of the overall text within its proper literary and socio-historical context.

The appropriate exegetical work from chapters 2 and 3 has been imported into this chapter where needed eliminating major excursions, which help keep Paul's line of thought flowing smoothly. The meaning of the remaining portions of this passage are agreed upon by most scholars and are explained minimally. Wherever there has been any significant discussion in the past regarding grammar, variants, and/or meaning of any part of Paul's writing, that text will be discussed briefly and a solution offered.

An Overview of Ephesians

Considering letters in antiquity, Ephesians can be classified predominately as a letter of exhortation. In Ephesians, Paul skillfully

mixed a long illuminating theological introduction with the second half of his letter consisting mainly of moral exhortations encouraging Christians to walk morally sound in proper *unity* according to the will of God.[373] In the first part of his letter, Paul addressed a specific problematic attitude that existed in the cultural milieu of his time. As discussed earlier in chapter 3, there was an ongoing mutual hostility between Jew and Gentile that had originated centuries earlier from a distinctive difference in religious beliefs and corresponding lifestyles.[374]

As he addressed a predominately Gentile Christian audience, Paul started by focusing on how God had made a way for Gentiles to have equal and direct access with Israel to Himself. His theological introduction informs contemporary readers that the Gentiles whom Paul addressed needed to understand and act more fully according to God's grace,[375] which centers on His desired collective godly unity for *all* who learn to love, trust, and obey Him.

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[373] Abraham J. Malherbe, *Moral Exhortation, A Greco-Roman Sourcebook*, ed. Wayne A. Meeks, Library of Early Christianity, no. 4 (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986), 122-29, has a short section in this book defining and giving ancient examples of two well known literary styles that Paul used in this letter, protrepsis and paraenesis. Protrepsis being argumentation to encourage someone to change any part of one's lifestyle and paraenesis being exhortation toward living at a higher moral standard.

[374] Best, *Ephesians*, 238, made a simple yet astute observation regarding the author and addressees. He could tell that this letter has been written and constructed from a Jewish mindset because a Gentile would never think of dividing the world into Jew and Gentile categories; Jews would be one of many races or nations.

[375] Cf. Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 104-06, who in addition to recognizing that unity was a "very prominent theme" in Ephesians, noted that Paul had used a form of the Greek word ἀγαπάω considerably more in this letter than in any of his other letters. These occurrences were centered around God and Christ's love for individuals and God's desire to see believers learn to love one another. Therefore, Hoehner concluded that the purpose of Ephesians was to promote love for one another based on God's love.

The Gentile Believers needed to act appropriately knowing that they should now interact with their Jewish counterparts as a single body functioning as part of the holy family of God. Therefore, Paul used an enlightening theological introduction to encourage his addressees to live together in godly unity and willingly obey God's moral commandments. His introduction was designed to help them understand God's love and power shown through Jesus' atoning death and ongoing leadership helping them realize God's impartiality toward all, which should motivate them to move them away from their conditioned hostility toward their Jewish believing brothers and sisters and toward God's desired unity for all of His children.[376] God wanted Jewish and Gentile Believers to drop their past and live *together in godly unity* according to and exceeding the written moral commandments of the Mosaic Law.

In addition to knowing what the text itself can offer (literary context), it is also important to understand the historical and social context in order to understand the text correctly. Yet, it is the text itself that must be allowed to give the *greatest* weight to the actual meaning. In his article, "Discourse Analysis," George Guthrie stated that words and sentences only have meaning as they are grouped appropriately and given their proper place in the contextual whole.[377] And, in this author's

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[376] Andrew T. Lincoln, *Ephesians*, Word Biblical Commentary, no. 42 (Dallas: Word, 1990), xxxvii, stated that Paul's argument in this letter started by bringing the Gentiles to remember where they had been and then progressed by helping shape their present attitudes and actions. He went on to show that the first section, a tightly organized theological section formed with thanksgiving (1:3-3:21) compliments the second section that consists of exhortations (4:1-6:20) (pp. xxxviii-ix). As he focused on the rhetorical aspects of the letter, Lincoln noted that the first part reinforces the addressees sense of Christian identity and then proceeded to indicate that his audience was not as aware as they should be of some of the dimensions of their Christian identity (lxxv). Lincoln went on to say that Paul's closing exhortation to clad oneself in God's armor and to depend on Christ's power brought his addressees to the point of wanting to appropriate their identity and position in Christ as they strove to practice a distinctive Christian lifestyle (lxxv).

[377] George H. Guthrie, "Discourse Analysis," in *Interpreting the New Testament: Essays on Methods and Issues*, ed. David A. Black and

opinion, that within this process, understanding the full range of meaning of key words and phrases within the original language is key in helping select the most appropriate modern wording to match the original intent.

In order to help one understand more fully the rational of a particular discourse, which includes understanding the way that an author might emphasize certain points, Peter Cotterell and Max Turner suggest looking at how an author might change certain aspects of his writing to help his addressees properly follow his thinking. They point out several ways that an author might indicate a change of emphasis or direction in his text to get the addressees attention such as: (1) the changing of the grammatical "person,"between the first, second, and third, (2) the changing of the social indicators that are used to address individuals such as "sir," "teacher," or "lord," (3) the changing of the frame of time, (4) the changing of the narrative location, and (5) the use of standard discourse conjunctive markers such as διό, οὖν, "therefore," τούτου χάριν, "for this reason," or δέ, "but."[378]

In Ephesians, the categories that one should be most sensitive to are the grammatical person, time references, and careful observation of Paul's use of standard discourse markers. The body of Ephesians can be subdivided into two main sections: the first primarily being an illuminating theological section designed to inform, convince, and encourage the predominately Gentile addressees to put aside their old cultural bias against Jews and move forward toward a godly unity and general holy life style as part of belonging to the holy family of God (1:3-3:21), and the second, which is introduced by a standard discourse marker, οὖν, is primarily a strong exhortation to live a godly life according to God's laws in their marriages, families, and society (4:1-6:20).

Within Ephesians, all godly unity originates from Christ's followers having a proper relationship with Christ and one another. Believers are to submit themselves to one another due to their great

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David S. Dockery (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2001), 254.

[378] Peter Cotterell and Max Turner, *Linguistics & Biblical Interpretation* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1989), 236ff.

respect for Christ in whom they are *all* united to Him even as a godly couple is united and becomes μὶαν σάρκα, "one flesh."[379]

The first main subsection can be broken down into six smaller linguistic subgroups: 1:3-12; 1:13-23; 2:1-10; 2:11-22; 3:1-13; 3:14-20. In this first main subsection, Paul continuously switches between the first, second, and third grammatical persons moving between God, His grace, and *we* Jewish Believers (1:3-12); God, His grace, and *you* Gentile Believers, *we* Jewish Believers, and *all* Believers (1:13-23); God, His grace, sin, and God's interaction with *you* Gentiles, *we* Jews, and *we* Believers (2:1-10); and God's intention for *you* Gentiles to join the Jewish Believers in becoming an intimate part of His household (2:11-22). As part of God's intended plan, Paul had been called by God to invite *the* Gentiles to join believing Jews in fulfilling His plan of of a perfected creation (salvation) for those who learned to listen to Him out of a growing love for Him and others; this included a realized present godly unity. The Messiah's atoning work had not been fully disclosed to any former generations (3:1-13). Because of God's plan of grace toward the Gentiles and because Paul had been called to proclaim God's message of grace to the Gentiles, he was praying that God would make known to *them* the surpassing richness of His grace (3:14-20).

The second major subsection, 4:1-6:20, takes on a different tone as Paul changed his style of writing from shifting back and forth between *us* Jews, *you* Gentiles, and *all* Believers, who were now part of the ἕνα καινὸν ἄνθρωπον, "one new man," the reconciled family of God,[380] and settled into instructive exhortation for unity and godly morality directed directly at his Gentile addressees. Having been brought into the family of God through their faith in God and His atoning work on everyone's behalf, they needed to alter their life style accordingly and walk in the ways and will of the One who so graciously saved them. This second

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[379] Eph 5:21, 31-32; in addition, see James B. Joseph, *The Ultimate Victory: Becoming a Follower of Jesus*, 3rd ed. (Pfafftown: IJSP, 2026), 101, regarding becoming "one flesh."

[380] Eph 2:15b.

subsection looks back on the illuminating theological introduction that should now encourage them to live out their lives in holy living and points to the future looking for a real change in the Gentile's attitude toward their Jewish brothers and sisters in Christ.[381]

The second main subsection can be divided into four smaller linguistics units: 4:1-24; 4:25-5:16; 5:17-6:9; 6:10-18. This second main subsection made it clear that Christian unity and life style was of great importance when Paul immediately started exhorting his predominately Gentile addressees περιπατῆσαι ἀξίως, "to live out their lives in a worthy fashion," τῆς κλήσεως ἧς ἐκλήθητε, "of the calling of which they have been called."[382] Paul continued by telling the Gentile Believers that they needed to be σπουδάζαντες τηρεῖν τὴν ἑνότητα τοῦ πνεύματος ἐν τῷ συνδέσμῳ τῆς εἰρήνης, "striving to keep the unity of the Spirit in the common bond of peace," as they conduct their lives in an attitude of humility, gentleness, and long suffering, which originates from a godly love for one another.[383]

This opening to the second part shows Paul's desire for his addressees to apply God's ways to their lives being encouraged by what he had already taught them in his theological introduction. Within the high point of that introduction, Eph 2:11-22, Paul stressed God's desire for *both* the Jew and the Gentile to have an intimate close relationship with Him *and one another*.

In Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, he had told them παρακαλῶ ὑμᾶς ἀδελφοί, διὰ τοῦ ὀνόματος τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν

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[381] Cf. Peter T. O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 66, who said that although Paul divided his letter basically into two sections, 1-3 and 4-6, there was still an interplay between them. Earlier, O'Brien had noted in Paul's exhortation toward unity given in 4:4-6 that this exhortation was an essential element in living according to their calling (4:1). O'Brien went on to say that God had done the impossible: He had brought together the irreconcilable Jew and Gentile and united them in one body, the Lord Jesus Christ (p. 64).

[382] Eph 4:1.

[383] Eph 4:2-3.

Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἵνα τὸ αὐτὸ λέγητε πάντες καὶ μὴ ᾖ ἐν ὑμῖν σχίσματα, ἦτε δὲ κατηρτισμένοι ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ νοΐ καὶ ἐν αὐτῇ γνώμῃ, "I am exhorting you brothers, through the name of our lord, Jesus Christ, that you all may be saying the same things and not letting there be divisions among you, but instead that you be made complete in the same mind and the same knowledge."[384] Similar regarding unity but distinct regarding the situation for the Ephesians, Paul had exhorted a predominately Gentile Christian group in Corinth *to move away from following the norm of their culture*, which would have encouraged them to be more loyal to their chosen individual teachers rather than the Church's master teacher, Jesus Christ.

Now that they were all following Christ, Paul told his predominately Gentile audience within Ephesians that all who followed Christ were part of ἓν σῶμα καὶ ἓν πνεῦμα, "one Body and one Spirit."[385] In the calling of the one true God, those Jews and Gentiles who personally committed to following the sent Messiah were part of the *same* family, the reconciled family of God. After using much of the letter up to this point to arrive at this truth, Paul expected this truth to sink in and convince his Gentile addressees to change their way of living to match God's desire for the "new man" within a close association with Christ and their new Jewish brothers and sisters.

Gentiles must *not* continue to conduct their lives as they formerly had at a time when they were ignorant of the one true God and His ways. Paul told them, μηκέτι ὑμᾶς περιπατεῖν, καθὼς καὶ τὰ ἔθνη περιπατεῖ ἐν ματαιότητι τοῦ νοὸς αὐτῶν, "you are no longer to be conducting your lives as even the Gentiles who are living in the futility of their mind."[386] In reality, they were now reconciled children of God first and foremost; they were no longer simply "Gentiles."

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[384] 1 Cor 1:10.

[385] Eph 4:4-6.

[386] Eph 4:17-24.

From this point to the conclusion of the second major subsection, 4:25-6:20, Paul used fifty-one combinations of second person imperatives and third person jussives coupled with present active participles to move the Gentiles from their past acceptable life style to a manner of living that is pleasing to God. As noted in chapter 3, thirty-six of the fifty-one exhortations either compared directly or indirectly to commandments recorded in the Mosaic Law.

For the "one new man," all are to be: (1) ἀποθέμενοι τὸ ψεῦδος, casting away deception, 4:25,[387] (2) μὴ ἁμαρτάνετε, not sinning, 4:26a,[388] (3) ὁ ἥλιος μὴ ἐπιδυέτω ἐπὶ [τῷ] παροργισμῷ ὑμῶν, not allowing the sun to go down on their anger, 4:26b, (4) μηδὲ δίδοτε τόπον τῷ διαβόλῳ, not giving the Devil any place in their lives, 4:27, (5) μηκέτι κλεπτέτω, not stealing, 4:28,[389] (6) κοπιάτω, working (for a living),[390] 4:28b, (7) πᾶς λόγος σαπρὸς ἐκ τοῦ στόματος ὑμῶν μὴ ἐκπορευέσθω, not allowing any rotten words to go forth from their mouth, 4:29a,[391] (8) ἀλλὰ εἴ τις ἀγαθὸς πρὸς οἰκοδομὴν τῆς χρείας speaking edification to a particular need, 4:29b, (9) μὴ λυπεῖτε τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον τοῦ θεου, not grieving the Holy Spirit of God, 4:30a,[392] (10) πᾶσα πικρία καὶ θυμὸς καὶ ὀργὴ καὶ κραυγὴ καὶ βλασφημία ἀρθήτω ἀφ' ὑμῶν σὺν πάσῃ κακία, removing every form of evil such as bitterness, fury, retribution, outbursts, and blaspheme, 4:31,[393] (11) γίνεσθε εἰς ἀλλήλους

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[387] Cf. Exod 20:16; Lev 6:1-7.

[388] Cf. Exod 20:20; 34:6-7; Lev 6:1-7; cf. a NT thought: 1 John 3:1-11.

[389] Cf. Lev 19:31; 20:6, 27; Deut 18:10-12; 32:17-20.

[390] Cf. Exod 20:8-11.

[391] Cf. Exod 20:16; Lev 19:16.

[392] Cf. Exod 20:1-7.

[393] Cf. Deut 19:18-20; 21:21; 22:20-24; 24:7.

χρηστοί, kind to one another, 4:32a,[394] (12) χαριζόμενοι ἑαυτοῖς, full of grace for one another, 4:32b, (13) γίνεσθε μιμηταὶ τοῦ θεου, imitators of God, 5:1, (14) περιπατεῖτε ἐν ἀγάπη, conducting your lives in love, 5:2a,[395] (15) πορνεία καὶ ἀκαθαρσία πᾶσα ἢ πλεονεξία μηδὲ ὀνομαζέσθω ἐν ὑμῖν, not letting any sexual impurity, uncleanness, nor any excess be named among you, 5:3,[396] (16) ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον εὐχαριστία, (living in such a way that) thanksgiving to God is seen among them, 5:4b,[397] (17) ἴστε . . ., knowing that those who live out their lives in uncleanness do not have an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God, 5:5,[398] (18) μηδεὶς ὑμᾶς ἀπατάτω κενοῖς λόγοις, not being deceived by empty words, 5:6a,[399] (19) μὴ γίνεσθε συμμέτοχοι αὐτῶν, not participating with those who are disobedient toward God, 5:7,[400] (20) ὡς τέκνα φωτὸς περιπατεῖτε, walking as Children of Light, 5:8c,[401] (21) δοκιμάζοντες τί ἐστιν εὐάρεστον τῷ κυρίῳ, considering what is well pleasing to the Lord, 5:10,[402] (22) μὴ συγκοινωνεῖτε τοῖς ἔργοις τοῖς ἀκάρποις τοῦ

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394 Cf. Exod 34:5-7; Lev 19:2, 18, 34. These same scriptures apply to §§ 12, 13, 14.

395 Deut 6:5; Lev 19:18, 34; Matt 22:37-40.

396 Cf. Exod 20:14; Lev 20:10-21.

397 Cf. Lev 7:11-13.

398 Cf. Deut 32:17-26.

399 Cf. § 1.

400 Cf. Lev 15:31.

401 Cf. Lev 11:45; 19:2; 20:26.

402 Cf. Deut 21:9.

σκότους, not taking part in the unfruitful works of Darkness, 5:11a,[403] (23) ἐλέγχετε, be rebuking the works of Darkness, 5:11b,[404] (24) βλέπετε ἀκριβῶς πῶς περιπατεῖτε, looking carefully at how you are conducting your lives, 5:15a,[405] (25) μὴ γίνεσθε ἄφρονες, not being foolish, 5:17a,[406] (26) συνίετε τί τὸ θέλημα τοῦ κυρίου, considering the will of the Lord, 5:17b,[407] (27) μὴ μεθύσκεσθε οἴνῳ, not being drunk with wine, 5:18a,[408] (28) πληροῦσθε ἐν πνεύματι, being filled with the Spirit, 5:18b,[409] (29) λαλοῦντες ἑαυτοῖς [ἐν] ψαλμοῖς καὶ ὕμνοις καὶ ᾠδαῖς πνευματικαῖς, speaking to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, 5:19a, (30) εὐχαριστοῦντες πάντοτε ὑπὲρ πάντων . . ., giving thanks to God at all times regarding all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, 5:20,[410] (31) ὑποτασσόμενοι ἀλλήλοις ἐν φόβῳ Χριστου, submitting to one another in the fear of Christ, 5:21,[411] (32) αἱ γυναῖκες (ὑποτασσόμενοι) τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν ὡς τῷ κυρίω, the wives are to be submitting to their husbands as unto the Lord, 5:22, (33) οἱ ἄνδρες, ἀγαπᾶτε τὰς γυναῖκας . . ., the husbands are to be loving their wives as Christ loves the Church, 5:25a-b,[412] (34) ἕκαστος

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[403] Cf. § 4.

[404] Ibid.

[405] Cf. Deut 23:9; 28:20.

[406] Cf. Num 12:11.

[407] Cf. Exod 20:3.

[408] Cf. Lev 10:9; Deut 29:6.

[409] Cf. Num 11:17.

[410] Cf. Exod 15:2; Lev 19:2.

[411] Cf. § 11.

[412] Cf. Deut 22:13-18.

τὴν ἑαυτοῦ γυναῖκα οὕτως ἀγαπάτω ὡς ἑαυτόν, (the husbands) are to be loving their wives as they love themselves, 5:b, (35) τὰ τέκνα, ὑπακούετε τοῖς γονεῦσιν ὑμῶν, the children are to be obeying their parents, 6:1,[413] (36) τίμα τὸν πατέρα σου καὶ τὴν μητέρα, (the children) are to be honoring their father and mother, 6:2a,[414] (37) οἱ πατέρες, μὴ παροργίζετε τὰ τέκνα ὑμῶν, the fathers are not to be (deliberately) bringing their children to anger, 6:4a, (38) ἐκτρέφετε αὐτὰ ἐν παιδείᾳ καὶ νουθεσίᾳ κυρίου, (the fathers) are to be raising their children in the training and instruction of the Lord, 6:4b,[415] (39) οἱ δοῦλοι, ὑπακούετε τοῖς κατὰ σάρκα κυρίοις, the servants are to be obeying their earthly lords, 6:5a, (40) μετ' εὐνοίας δουλεύοντες ὡς τῷ κυρίῳ, (the servants) are to be serving with good intentions as to the Lord, 6:7a, (41) οἱ κύριοι, τὰ αὐτὰ ποιεῖτε πρὸς αὐτούς, ἀνιέντες τὴν ἀπειλήν, (the lords) are to be acting before their servants without threatenings, 6:9a, (42) and all are to be ἐνδυναμοῦσθε ἐν κυρίω, strengthening themselves in the Lord, 6:10,[416] (43) ἐνδύσασθε τὴν πανοπλίαν τοῦ θεου, clothing themselves in the whole armor of God, 6:13, (44) ἀναλάβετε τὴν πανοπλίαν τοῦ θεοῦ, taking up the whole armor of God, 6:13a,[417] (45) περιζωσάμενοι τὴν ὀσφὺν ὑμῶν ἐν ἀληθείᾳ, wrapping your (pl.) waist in truth, 6:14, (46) ἐνδυσάμενοι τὸν θώρακα τῆς δικαιοσύνης, putting on the breastplate of righteousness, 6:14b, (47) ὑποδησάμενοι τοὺς πόδας ἐν ἑτοιμασίᾳ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τῆς εἰρήνης, putting on shoes in preparation of the Good News of peace,

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413 Cf. Deut 21:18-21.

414 Cf. Exod 20:12; Lev 19:2.

415 Cf. Deut 31:10-12.

416 Cf. Deut 30:19-20.

417 Cf. Deut 33:29.

6:15, (48) ἐν πᾶσιν ἀναλαβόντες τὸν θυρεὸν τῆς πίστεως, in everything lifting up the shield of faith, 6:16, (49) τὴν περικεφαλαίαν τοῦ σωτηρίου δέξασθε καὶ τὴν μάχαιραν τοῦ πνεύματος . . ., receiving the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, 6:17, (50) προσευχόμενοι ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ ἐν πνεύματι, praying in every instance in the Spirit, 6:18a,[418] and (51) εἰς αὐτὸ ἀγρυπνοῦντες, being alert in Him, the Spirit, 6:18b.[419]

Ephesians 2:1-10: Saved by Grace

In Eph 2:1-10, Paul transitioned into what God was doing for both the Jew and the Gentile through His abundant grace, which he clarified further in the next part of his letter (2:11-22).[420] Paul reminded his addressees that God's desire for everyone's reconciliation came with great cost, and therefore, Christ's followers needed to make every effort to keep God's desired unity remembering that they all were now part of His family.

Paul started this subsection by pointing directly at his Gentile addressees and telling them that ὑμᾶς ὄντας νεκροὺς τοῖς παραπτώμασιν καὶ ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις ὑμῶν, "*you* being dead due to

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[418] Cf. Deut 4:28-30.

[419] Cf. Deut 11:16.

[420] Cf. O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, 155, who said that there was a dramatic contrast portrayed in this passage between the addressees' past and present. This contrast was meant to appeal to both their minds and emotions as Paul impressed on them just how much they owe God for what He had done through Christ. Cf. Best, *Ephesians*, 198, who said that Eph 2:1-10 reminded the Gentile believers how they moved from paganism to Christianity while the next section 2:11-22 told them about how they were able to be incorporated into the people of God. And Lincoln similarly *Ephesians*, 88, 91, said that the knowledge that Paul was developing would, in turn, lay the foundation for the paraenesis that followed and persuade the addressees to reflect on their past and present in order to understand how much they owed to God for what He had done through Christ preparing them for the exhortations that followed.

your transgressions and sins." He then softened this blow by going on to say that even though Jews had not been transgressing on the same level as the Gentiles in the past, they had also been controlled by the desires of the flesh: we were also ποιοῦντες τὰ θελήματα τῆς σαρκὸς καὶ τῶν διανοιῶν, "doing the desires of the flesh and our thoughts."[421] But God in His infinite ἐλέει, διὰ τὴν πολλὴν ἀγάπην αὐτοῦ, "mercy according to His abundant love,"[422] has made both the Jew and Gentile Believer συνεζωοποίησεν τῷ Χριστῷ, "alive together in the Christ (the long awaited Messiah)."[423]

Yes, both Jew and Gentile can experience God's grace. Those from among the Jew and Gentile who are following Christ have already been spiritually συνήγειρεν καὶ συνεκάθισεν ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησου, "raised together and seated together in the heavens with Christ Jesus."[424] At this point Paul again pointed his finger at the Gentiles and reminded them that χάριτί ἐστε σεσῳσμένοι, "by grace *you* have been saved," which he repeated for emphasis saying τῇ γὰρ χάριτί ἐστε σεσῳσμένοι διὰ πίστεως· καὶ τοῦτο οὐκ ἐξ ὑμῶν, θεοῦ τὸ δῶρον· οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων, ἵνα μή τις καυχήσηται, "For it is through grace that *you* have been saved through faith; this (salvation) does not originate from *you*, it is a gift from God—it is not derived from works with the result that no one may boast."[425]

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[421] Eph 2:3b.

[422] Eph 2:4.

[423] Eph 2:5b.

[424] Eph 2:6.

[425] Eph 2:5c, 8-9. Grammatically, ἵνα may be used to introduce a "result clause" as well as its primary role in introducing "purpose

This line of thought is apparent in all of Paul's writings as discussed in the previous chapter. Paul consistently taught that no one can be justified by their actions due to the fact that no one conducted his or her life perfectly before God. But, just as he had previously explicitly told the Romans and Corinthians that no one would be justified by their works,[426] but they would be justified by God if they would submit to Him trying to obey His commandments and following His will for their lives.[427] Here again, Paul spoke saying that justification came about only through Gods grace. Then he went on to exhort both Jew and Gentile to conduct one's life doing God's will; he said that we, "the one new man," αὐτοῦ ἐσμεν ποίημα, κτισθέντες ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ ἐπὶ ἔργοις ἀγαθοῖς οἷς προητοίμασεν ὁ θεὸς, ἵνα ἐν αὐτοῖς περιπατήσωμεν, "are being built-up by Him, having been created through Christ Jesus, for good works that God has arranged beforehand in order that we may be living out our lives doing them."

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clauses." See BDF, § 391, looking at the concept of "the infinitive of result" along with the idea that ἵνα can replace such a construction. An example cited dealt with 1 John 1:9 where Jesus' faithfulness and righteousness existed either for the purpose of allowing Him to forgive sins or with the result that He was able to forgive sins; Robertson, *A Greek Grammar of The New Testament*, 981-99, shed additional light on the subject and showed that ἵνα can function to show purpose (pure final clauses), result (consecutive clauses), or something in between (sub-final clauses). He gave many biblical examples showing that ἵνα can indicate result citing 1 John 3:1and noted the present force of the result clause: ἴδετε ποταπὴν ἀγάπην δέδωκεν ἡμῖν ὁ πατήρ, ἵνα τέκνα θεοῦ κληθῶμεν, καὶ ἐσμέν, "Behold the special love that the Father has given us, with the result that we are being called the sons of God, and indeed, we are (sons)." Regarding boasting, Best, *Ephesians*, 227, stated that there is legitimate boasting in God and what He has done (Rom 5:2, 11; 1 Cor 7:14; 9:2) including successful conversions (2 Cor 7:14; 9:2), but one should not boast in their own activities (Rom 4:2; 2 Cor 11:16; Gal 6:13).

[426] Rom 3:27-28; cf. Gal 2:16, 21; see chapter 3 for a full discussion of this topic.

[427] Rom 2:11-16; 1 Cor 7:19; cf. Matt 7:21-23; Jas 2:14-20, 24.

This section closed with an exhortation for the addressees to seek God's will and then to live out their lives according to what God had already worked out beforehand for them. God has foreknowledge of all, and those whom He knew who were willing to learn to return His love and obey Him would be the ones whom He would place in close association with Christ.[428]

Ephesians 2:11-22

Eph 2:11-22 is the climax of Paul's illuminating theological introduction and in it, he made it clear to his predominately Gentile addressees *how* God had made it possible for them to unite fully with their Jewish brothers and sisters as part of God's "one new man." From this more fully understood perspective, the Gentiles should respond correctly by dropping their old ways and living as faithful followers of Christ putting aside any residual hostility that they had toward Jews, especially their Jewish brothers and sisters in the Lord.

Eph 2:11-22 can be divided into three sections, 2:11-12; 2:13-18; 2:19-22, which will be discussed individually below. In the grand scheme of things, section 2:11-12 introduces this section by calling the addressees to a remembrance of their *past* life without God. The next section, 2:13-18, teaches the addressees more fully about their *present* situation by explaining God's part in bringing about His desired reconciliation for *both*, Jew and Gentile, to be reconciled together into one Body to Himself. In this section, Paul partially achieves this enlightening of the eyes of their heart (Eph 1: 18-19) through the use of two metaphorical images, one architectural and one biological in Eph 2:14 and 16 respectively. The final section, 2:19-22, forms a

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[428] Cf. Rom 8:28-30. Kenneth S. Wuest, *Ephesians and Colossians in the Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1953), 70, said that God creates anew those who follow Him in Christ Jesus unto good works. He went on to emphasis that this new creation is *in Christ* and that without this close association with Christ, the new creation would not have taken place (Eph 2:15; 4:24; 2 Cor 5:17; Gal 6:15; Col 3;10).

summarization that strengthens what Paul had just taught as he developed further what God's reconciliation and unity should look like through a second architectural metaphorical image of Jewish and Gentile Believers being fashioned together to form one temple, the very house that God indwells.

Ephesians 2:11-12: You Gentiles Were without God

After reminding his predominately Gentile audience that God had saved them through His own grace, not through anything that they had done, Paul started this subsection by asking the Gentiles to consider what their relationship with the people of the One True God was actually like prior to deciding to follow the one true Messiah. Everyone who decided to follow the Jesus was now reconciled to God and one another through His redeeming work.

Grammatical Construction and Textual Variants

There are no significant textual variants in the text of Eph 2:11-12. This text should be considered as one sentence in which Paul asked his addressees to look back to 2:1-10 through the inferential conjunction διό and then immediately asked his predominately Gentile audience to reflect on their past using a second person present active imperative, μνημονεύετε. The imperative is followed by two subordinating clauses, which were both introduced by the discourse marker ὅτι producing the imperative "remember that"as he looked at their past. The two subordinating ὅτι clauses were juxtaposed without a copulative marker. Both clauses were reinforced with supporting participial clauses as shown below. Note that each of these supporting participial clauses in the second clause were strengthened with an epexegetical καί, which were both followed by explanatory information. Here, each explicative καί can be translated as "indeed being." A linguistic-grammatical layout follows:

Διὸ
μνημονεύετε
ὅτι ποτὲ ὑμεῖς τὰ ἔθνη ἐν σαρκί,
οἱ λεγόμενοι ἀκροβυστία ὑπὸ τῆς λεγομένης
περιτομῆς
ἐν σαρκὶ χειροποιήτου,
ὅτι ἦτε τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ χωρὶς Χριστοῦ,
ἀπηλλοτριωμένοι τῆς πολιτείας τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ,
καὶ ξένοι τῶν διαθηκῶν τῆς ἐπαγγελίας,
ἐλπίδα μὴ ἔχοντες,
καὶ ἄθεοι ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ.

Therefore,
remember
that at one time you, the Gentiles in the flesh,
the ones being called "Uncircumcised" by the group,
which is being called "Circumcised"
having been circumcised by human hands in the
flesh,
that at that time, you were without Christ,
having been estranged from the citizenship of Israel,
and indeed were strangers of the covenants given
by the promise,
not having hope,
indeed without God in the world.[429]

Meaning and Context

Contextually, Paul used the conjunction διό and the immediate imperative μνημονεύετε to remind his predominately Gentile audience

[429] See the Appendix at the back of the Greek and author's English translation in normal formatting.

of their past lack of a good relationship with God and to compel them to consider what he had just taught them about God's grace (2:1-10). He coupled this imperative with two corresponding ὅτι clauses, asking them to remember the fact that they were τὰ ἔθνη ἐν σαρκί, "the Gentiles in the flesh,"[430] and thus at one pont in not-to-distant past, they had been labeled as "the Uncircumcision" by the Jews, and secondly, during that time, they had been estranged from God and His Israel with the result that they were not able to share in the hope and inheritance of God's people.[431] After all, the Gentiles had *not* been waiting for the Messiah, they had been alienated from τῆς πολιτείας τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ, "the commonwealth of Israel,"[432] and correspondingly they had been

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[430] John Eadie, *A Commentary of the Greek Text of the Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians*, ed. W. Young (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1883; reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979), 161, said that the article before ἔθνη signified a class of people known as גּוֹיִם, which from the Jewish perspective denoted outsiders who were ignorant of God and therefore irreligious. Cf. Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 353-54, who parallels this idea and stated that the word ἔθνη denoted the whole class of people who were not Jews.

[431] Abbott, *The Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians*, 58-59, said that the verb ἀπαλλοτριόω always means "estrange" and gave a few references, Eph 4:18; Col 1:21; Ezek 14:5, 7; Eccl 11:34; and 3 Macc 1.4. Abbott went on to say that because ἐλπίδα did not have the article, the author was not so much pointing at the hope that one would have in the coming Messiah, but instead was indicating a general absence of hope because they did not know God.

[432] Origen, *The Commentaries of Origen and Jerome on St Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians*, Edited and trans. by Ronald E. Heine, The Oxford Early Christian Studies, ed. Gillian Clark and Andrew Louth, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 132-33, stated that this Scripture silenced those who think that believers had formed a new commonwealth different from the commonwealth of Israel. Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 355-56, said that this estrangement placed the Gentiles in a position that they did not share with Israel the national hope of the coming messiah. He went on to say that the participle derived from ἀπαλλοτριόω was used only two other times in the New Testament and in both cases was used to mean "excluded" or "alienated."

separated from covenants of promise. Therefore, they had not had any real substantial hope not knowing and following the one true God.

Through this section of Scripture, Paul wanted the Gentiles to remember their past empty lives without God, which they had just recently exchanged for a full life with God through Christ, and to remember that their new life in Christ consisted of a close fellowship with God and *all* fellow Believers including Jewish Believers.

Ephesians 2:13-18: Christ Provides Reconciliation for Both Jew and Gentile

What God had presently done had been hidden from all previous generations (Eph 3:1-12). God was now bringing obedient Gentiles into His family on an equal basis with all obedient Jews without full adherence to the Law. In this section, Paul taught that Christ's death on a cross had made it possible for both Jew and Gentile alike to have reconciled fellowship with God and one another. In addition, Jesus had declared that the ordinances contained within the commandments of the Law pertaining to cultural and purity issues were now "ineffective/ optional," in order that they would not become a stumbling block for the Gentiles causing some to reject the Gospel. It was God's desire to unite the Jew and the Gentile into one close-knit Body reconciling them together to Himself.

Grammatical Construction and Textual Variants

Eph 2:13-18 is the main subsection of a larger subsection 2:11-22, and it consists of two sentences, 2:13 and 2:14-18. Although many commentators have chosen to place 2:13 with 2:11-12, its wording was used by Paul as a temporal marker to show how things had changed for the Gentiles from ποτέ, "then," to νυνί, "now," and therefore, this transitional sentence makes a natural opening for 2:14-18, which

describes the "now," rather than bringing closure to 2:11-12.[433]

The closing of this subsection (2:19-22) was used by Paul to bring his predominately Gentile audience to a greater realization of their joint citizenship with Jewish Believers who together made up the household of God. All of this is leading to Paul's exhortation for greater unity in the Body of Christ (4:1-6).

The first sentence begins with the strong adversative conjunction, δέ, accompanied by an adverb of time, νυνί. The core of the sentence is simply ὑμεῖς ἐγενήθητε ἐγγὺς. This basic thought is accompanied by a clarifying participial clause, οἵ ποτε ὄντες μακράν, and two clarifying prepositional phrases. The first, ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, emphasizes the point that those who were far are now near because of their close relationship with Christ and the second, ἐν τῷ αἵματι τοῦ Χριστοῦ, functions instrumentally telling the addressees that it was through Christ's death that it had become possible for them– just as the Jews –to be near to God.[434]

There are no significant variants in this sentence, but it should be noted that P^{46}, a late second century or early third century proto-Alexandrian papyrus, along with **B**, a middle fourth century Alexandrian document,[435] dropped the article within the genitive of description, τοῦ Χριστοῦ, in the last prepositional phrase of this sentence. If the article whether deliberately or on purpose was dropped, it would have changed

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[433] There are many such as Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 131, who place Eh 2:13 in the first subsection of 2:11-22. The layout changes slightly to: (1) 2:11-13, which lays the foundation, (2) 2:14-18, which provides further illumination, and (3) 2:19-22, which takes up the contrast of past and present time in a summarizing form.

[434] Best, *Ephesians*, 246-47.

[435] The textual variant was noted in *Novum Testamentum Graece*, ed. Eberhard and son, Erwin Nestle, 27th ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1995); for dating and classification, see Bruce Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*, 2d ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968; reprint, 1980), 216, 252, 47 respectively.

the sense of the prepositional phrase slightly from *pointing* at the Messiah as the redeemer to noting the fact that it *was* the Messiah who gave His life for all.

The second sentence is fairly complex grammatically and theologically.[436] Therefore, there is the expected controversy over its intended grammatical construction, which correspondingly affects its meaning, and controversy regarding the intended meaning of two of its aorist participial clauses, τὸ μεσόοτοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ λύσας, τὴν ἔχθραν and τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν καταργήσας, which were fully discussed in chapter 2 and 3 respectively.

Regarding textual integrity, there are two mildly significant variants for this sentence, and they will be discussed below with their corresponding texts. In addition, there are a couple minor variants where some of the copyists of various manuscripts had written the reflexive pronoun ἑαυτῷ in place of the pronoun αὐτῷ, which they probably did in an attempt to bring attention to the subject, the one responsible for everyone's redemption, the Messiah Jesus.[437]

After studying the discourse markers and the layout of Paul's argument, which includes noting the use of the introductory marker γάρ to tell the addressees that this subsection clarifies the immediate preceding statement, the best option is to divide this long sentence as follows. The two core sentences that comprise this compound sentence are separated by the copulative marker καί, which is coupled with the circumstantial participle ἐλθών. Because of the narrative distance between the two independent sentences, it may be better to separate them with a semicolon in the actual text.

If viewed side-by-side, the core independent clauses within the compound sentence read Αὐτὸς ἐστιν ἡ εἰρήνη ἡμῶν, καὶ ἐλθὼν,

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[436] Muddiman, *The Epistle to the Ephesians*, 131, said that the grammar of this section in its present form was so loose and ambiguous that it allowed for several constructions.

[437] *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 506. In both cases, the prepositional phrase ἐν αὐτῷ was modified.

εὐηγγελίσατο εἰρήνην ὑμῖν τοῖς μακρὰν καὶ εἰρήνην τοῖς ἐγγύς, "He is our peace, and having come, He proclaimed peace to you who were distant and peace to those who were near." The second sentence is augmented with a standard ὅτι clause explaining why peace is possible; this clause contains two prepositional phrases that give further elucidation.

The main clause of the first sentence is elaborated on through an aorist participial clause, ὁ ποιήσας τὰ ἀμφότερα ἓν, which is developed more fully by three additional epexegetical aorist participial clauses that are marked linguistically by a leading epexegetical καί as shown in a linguistic-grammatical layout below.[438] The second epexegetical aorist participial clause is the point of emphasis with the first, λύσας τὴν ἔχθραν ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ, and the third, ἀποκτείνας τὴν ἔχθραν ἐν αὐτῷ, stating clearly that the ongoing mutual hostility between Jew and Gentile had been abolished for those who were in Christ; they both have one prepositional phrase functioning to clarify the point that it is through Jesus that this ongoing "hostility" has been removed.

Grammatically, the first participial clause introduces the second and the third clause closes this epexegetical section forming an inclusio.[439] The opening clause of this inclusio contains a metaphorical

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[438] Abbott, *The Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians*, 61, said that this was an epexegetical καί and translated it as "inasmuch." There are many who do not consider the fourth aorist participial clause in this section, ἀποκτείνας τὴν ἔχθραν ἐν αὐτῷ to be in parallel with the second and third aorist participial clauses. In that case, they set the fourth participial clause as subordinate to the second ἵνα clause without placing it as part of an inclusio; e.g. O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, 192-93.

[439] Cf. Muddiman, *The Epistle to the Ephesians*, 136, who said that this participial clause, ἀποκτείνας τὴν ἔχθραν ἓν αὐτῷ was looking back to the participial clause in Eph 2:14, λύσας τὴν ἔχθραν, and highlighting it; most exegetes do not place the third aorist participial clause, ἀποκτείνας τὴν ἔχθραν ἓν αὐτῷ, on an equal basis with

image of destroying a *dividing* middle-wall, which is placed appositionally alongside a clear statement that Christ had destroyed the ongoing mutual hostility between Jew and Gentile for all of His followers; grammatically, the participle can be moved to the front of the clause for clarity resulting in τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ.

In his apology against Marcion, Tertullian translated this clause simply as an ablative absolute clause, *soluto medio pariete inimicitiae*,[440] "the middle-wall of hostility having been destroyed," in Christ's flesh. Tertullian placed *inimicitia* in the genitive thereby forcing his addressees to see hostility as the real essence of the *dividing* middle-wall.

A good rendering of τὸ μεσόοτοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ λύσας, τὴν ἔχθραν is "having broken down the *dividing* middle-wall, the (mutual generational) hostility." Chapter 2 presents an in-depth study of Paul's intended meaning of τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ.

As stated above, the linguistic-grammatical layout places emphasis on the middle clause, τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν καταργήσας.[441] This participial clause contains a textual

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the two preceding aorist participial clauses. But, when looking at Paul's argument, this participial clause helps to complete his thought on the entire subsection. Although it is not normally considered as such because of its sequential position behind the second ἵνα clause; *contra* to many, Best, *Ephesians*, 266, placed this aorist participial clause in the total flow of the presentation and stated that this clause was pointing back to the enmity between Jew and Gentile laid out in verse 14, not the enmity between God and man discussed directly preceding it.

[440] Tertullian, *Tertullian Adversus Marcionem: Books 4 and 5*, ed. and trans. Ernest Evans (Oxford: Clarendon, 1972), 620.

[441] Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 375, said that this participle was probably a participle of means indicating the means by which the hostility was destroyed. Regarding the meaning of the verb καταργέω, he stated that in Paul's writings this verb was used twenty six times, and it was always meant "to render inoperative, nullify, invalidate" and never meant "destroyed" (Rom 3:3, 31; 4:14; 6:6; 7:2, 6; etc.). Hoehner noted that the translators of the LXX chose to use a form of this verb, καταργέω, to translate the Aramaic word בְּטֵל, which normally means

variant: P^{46} is missing the prepositional phrase, ἐν δόγμασιν. But, according to the Nestle-Aland translation team, that is the only known early Greek source that is missing this prepositional phrase.[442] Tertullian's mid-second century Latin apology against Marcion contains evidence of the existence of this prepositional phrase and thereby shows early evidence that this phrase was considered part of the text from a very early date.[443]

This participial clause is augmented by two ἵνα clauses that are tied together by the connective marker καί denoting a close coupling, which through context is showing a sequence from "purpose" to "purpose-outcome." The first clause shows the purpose or reason that Christ declared the cultural and purity ordinances "ineffective/ optional," and the second ἵνα clause shows the desired outcome behind the purpose: God wants both the Jew and Gentile to be reconciled to Him in *one* Body, not in two separate groups.[444]

"to cease." It was used in conjunction with rebuilding the Temple and meant to "hinder" or "to cease" from building.

[442] *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 506.

[443] In his Latin apologetical work from the mid-second century against Marcion, *Tertullian Adversus Marcionem*, 620, Tertullian referenced this particular clause saying *legem praeceptorum sententiis vacuam fecit*, "He has made empty/ineffective the Law consisting of precepts/commandments pertaining to sentences/judgements/decrees." In the late fourth century, Jerome's translation of the best Greek of his day into Latin does not exactly match Tertullian's, but it is similar in many respects. Jerome's translation recorded in the Latin Vulgate says *legem mandatorum decretis evacuans*, "making empty the Law consisting of commandments pertaining to the decrees/ordinances." The work of these two Latin writers tell modern readers that they were familiar with three interconnected nouns, *not two*, from their Greek and/or Latin sources, which demonstrates that they both recaptured the essence of the Greek prepositional phrase ἐν δόγμασιν choosing different words in Latin with similar referents and placing them in the ablative case to recreate the grammatical function of the Greek prepositional phrase. These early Latin witnesses give modern scholars a high degree of confidence that Paul's original letter contained this particular prepositional phrase.

[444] The conjunction ὅτι, which is used in discourse much of the time to mark direct or indirect speech, sensation, or explanatory or causal

Therefore, the interconnecting καί between the two clauses can be translated in this case to show their interconnection and desired output by using words such as "and thereby."

The first ἵνα clause contains a mildly significant variant in that P^{46}, **F**, and **G** have recorded κοινὸν ἄνθρωπον, "common man," instead of καινὸν ἄνθρωπον, "new man." Contextually it could work, but all of the other early sources including Tertullian understood the original Greek to read καινον.[445] This idea of a "new man" is not a new thought for Paul; in an earlier letter to the Corinthians, Paul had expressed this very thought stating that all who are in Christ are a καινὴ κτίσις, "new creation."[446]

The second ἵνα clause is attached to the first by the copulative conjunction καί that serves more than just as a parallel thought, but it also includes a nuance of purpose and shows the desired outcome of reconciling the Gentile to the Jew; now they *both* can be reconciled as "one new man" to God in one Body through the Messiah's atoning death on a cross.[447]

Finally, both ἵνα clauses contain prepositional phrases that help bring further clarity. Through the first ἵνα clause, the reader notes that

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clauses, may also be used to mark result clauses; see BDAG, § 5c, 732b.

[445] Tertullian, *Tertullian Adversus Marcionem*, 620, quoted the Greek phrase ἕνα καινὸν ἄνθρωπον as *unum novum hominem*, "one new man."

[446] 2 Cor 5:17, ὥστε εἴ τις ἐν Χριστῷ, καινὴ κτίσις· τὰ ἀρχαῖα παρῆλθεν, ἰδοὺ γέγονεν καινά, "with the result that if anyone is in Christ, he is a *new* creation; the old things have passed from (him), (and) behold he has become new."

[447] Abbott, *Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians*, 65-66, said that this καί was not a mere copula, but instead indicates a logical sequence. Abbott suggested translating this conjunction as something like "and consequently."

Christ is creating ἕνα καινὸν ἄνθρωπον, "one new man," ἐν αὐτῷ, through His own actions. This clause has an epexegetical present participial clause attached to it giving the reason for making these ordinance ineffective: in order that God through the Messiah may create "one new man" in order to produce peace. The prepositional phrase διὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ, "through the cross," which is attached to the second ἵνα clause, shows that reconciling *both* Jew and Gentile into "one Body" to God came with the great cost of the substitutionary death of the Messiah through an agonizing death on a cross. Following is a linguistic-grammatical layout of Eph 2:13-18:

νυνὶ δὲ
ἐν *Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ*
ὑμεῖς ἐγενήθητε ἐγγὺς
οἳ ποτε ὄντες μακρὰν
ἐν τῷ αἵματι τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

But now
in Christ Jesus,
you have been made near,
who at one time were distant,
through the blood of Christ.

γάρ[448]
Αὐτὸς ἐστιν ἡ εἰρήνη ἡμῶν,
ὁ ποιήσας τὰ ἀμφότερα ἓν

For (you see),
He is our peace,
the One having made both (Jew & Gentile Believer) one entity,

(καὶ) (1) τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ λύσας, τὴν ἔχθραν
ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ,

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[448] At this point in the discourse, γάρ is being used as a marker of clarification such as "for, you see." See BDAG, § 2, 189.

indeed (1) having broken down the *dividing* middle-wall,
the hostility,
through His flesh,

(2) *τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν*
καταργήσας,
ἵνα τοὺς δύο κτίσῃ εἰς ἕνα καινὸν
ἄνθρωπον
ἐν αὐτῷ
ποιῶν εἰρήνην
καὶ ἀποκαταλλάξῃ τοὺς ἀμφοτέρους
ἐν ἑνὶ σώματι τῷ θεῷ
διὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ,

(2) having made ineffective the (cultural and purity) ordinances of the commandments of
the Law,
in order that He may create the two into
one new man
in Himself
producing peace,
and (thereby), that He may reconcile *both*
in one body to God
through the Cross,

(3) ἀποκτείνας τὴν ἔχθραν
ἐν αὐτῷ·
(3) having destroyed the hostility
through His own actions;

καὶ ἐλθὼν,
εὐηγγελίσατο εἰρήνην ὑμῖν τοῖς μακρὰν καὶ εἰρήνην
τοῖς ἐγγύς,
ὅτι ἔχομεν τὴν προσαγωγὴν οἱ ἀμφότεροι πρὸς
τὸν πατέρα
δι' αὐτοῦ
ἐν ἑνὶ πνεύματι.

indeed, having come,
He proclaimed good news of peace to you who are distant and
peace to those who are near
because we *both* have access to the Father
through Him
through one Spirit.[449]

Meaning and Context

The meaning of Ephesians 2:13-14 is clear. Our current understanding of the socio-historical context and literary context behind this text and its linguistic-grammatical arrangement lend themselves to a clear understanding. As discussed above, the first sentence provides a transition with what immediately proceeds it and what follows placing it at the center of Eph 2:11-22.

This sentence begins with the strong adversative conjunction, δέ, accompanied by an adverb of time, νυνί. Paul continued to address his audience directly in the second person as he told them that *now*, through Jesus' actions and due to their close association with Him, they, who were at one time distant from God and His earthly household, had become near through Christ's sacrificial sacrifice.[450] The positioning of the prepositional phrase ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ at the beginning of this whole section immediately points to the fact that none of what follows would have been possible

[449] See the Appendix at the back for the Greek and author's English translation in normal formatting.

[450] Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 362, pointed out that there were references in the Old Testament stating that Gentiles were distant from God (Deut 28:49; 29:22; 1 Kgs 8:41; Isa 5:16; Jer 5:15) and a place where Israel was said to be near (Ps 148:14).

except by means of Christ's atoning work and by virtue of being in close fellowship with Him. The cost of their reconciliation to God and one another was very high and had been paid by God Himself.[451] Speaking to the Gentile addressees, Paul stated that "you all" have ἐγενήθητε ἐγγύς, "been made near," by means of τῷ αἵματι τοῦ Χριστοῦ, "blood of Christ."

As discussed earlier in this work, the second sentence is long and grammatically complex, which has caused problems in deciding how the parts make up the whole and what was the true range of meaning for some key words and phrases, which was discussed in-depth in chapters 2-3 along with a few of the grammatical points.

Some look at this long sentence and conclude that Paul did not write this because of his emphasis on the unification of the Jew and Gentile. In addition, there are two places within this text that modern scholars are still having a difficult time agreeing on implied meaning. The first place in the text that still causes contemporary confusion is the meaning of the word, μεσότοιχον, "middle-wall." Our generation has lost the word's intended referent, and therefore, many modern scholars have bypassed historical context and tried to determine it meaning simply from the literary context attempting to make an educated guess at meaning.

In chapter 2, the referent for Paul's use of the words μεσότοιχον and μέσος τοῖχος along with their Latin counterparts, *medius paries* and *communis paries* was investigated within the first-century Mediterranean world in order to find Paul's intended meaning of the phrase τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ. It has been shown above in chapter 2 that the word μεσότοιχον was a common architectural term used in Paul's day to denote a common solid partitioning-wall, which today in our Western world is commonly called a "party-wall."

As shown in chapter 2, this term normally denoted a solid wall

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[451] Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 363, saying that the cost of redemption and the resulting reconciliation that brought the Gentiles near was very costly in order to propitiate God's demand for holiness and referenced several texts (Eph 1:7; Rom 3:25; 5:9; 1 Cor 10:16, 11:25, 27; cf. Heb 9:12, 14; 10:19, 29; 13:12, 20; 1 Pet 1:2, 19; 1 John 1:7).

that was commonly used in buildings to isolate spaces from one another. These buildings could house business, residents, or combinations of both. If one was considering multi-residence buildings, it normally referred to the solid walls that were shared by contiguous dwellers in order to provide privacy for each.

In his letter, Paul was not asking his addressees to think about walls in general, τοῖχοι, "building walls in general," nor τεῖχα, "city-walls in general," but instead he was making this very personal for each of his addressees by painting a metaphorical picture using a very specific type of wall, a μεσότοιχον, "a middle-wall," which was a solid party-wall.

His addressees were very familiar with "middle-walls" and knew that their function was to separate one family from another in their common multi-residence buildings as discussed in chapter 2. This metaphorical imagery was well known and brought a clear picture of how they were supposed to live on a daily basis: they were supposed to live as *one* family not two. There should not be a family divisional wall between Gentile and Jewish Believers.

This is an idea that they could each relate to from their everyday living experiences. Paul was asking them to understand and act on the fact that Christ had demolish the dividing wall of mutual hostility[452] through His atoning death, which had existed between Gentile and Jew for generations. His followers were now part of a single family of Believers, the family of God. To restate, Paul had placed an image in their minds of Jesus' and His atoning death destroying a long standing mutual hostility just as a master builder (general contractor) of their day

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[452] Tertullian, a late second- century writer, in his work titled *Tertullian Adversus Marcionem*, translated Paul's τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ λύσας, τὴν ἔχθραν into Latin, *soluto medio pariete inimicitiae*, "the middle wall of enmity has been broken down," dropping τοῦ φραγμοῦ as the genitive of quality and replacing it with *inimicitiae* as a substitute for Paul's apposition τὴν ἔχθραν. In Jerome's Vulgate Latin version around A.D. 405, Eph 2:14 reads *ipse est enim pax nostra qui fecit utraque unum et medium parietem maceriae solvens inimicitiam in carne sua*, "Namely, He Himself is our peace who has made out of both one entity—indeed breaking down the solid middle-wall, the hostility, through His own flesh."

might have destroyed a residential "*dividing* middle-wall" between adjoining residences.

They were now reconciled into the Body of Christ; they were collectively "one new man," the reconciled family of God. The prepositional phrase ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ was added to this participial clause to illuminate the fact that the primary means that Christ used to reconcile man to man and man to God was through His redeeming death on a cross.

To restate further what was written in chapter 2, when Paul attached the definite article to μεσότοιχον, Paul was pointing to a particular "middle-wall," the present ongoing inherited mutual hostility that Christ's followers brought with them from their pre-Christian days. Now, with the use of this familiar architectural term used as a metaphor, Paul wanted all of his addressees, Gentile and Jewish Believers, to understand that Christ did not want the family of God divided over anything, traditions or otherwise. For those who are in Christ, there was only one family, one new man. With the destruction of τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ, "the *dividing* middle-wall," which was their traditional ongoing mutual hostility, they should all strive to live as the one holy family of God.

A second point of confusion in this text is Paul's statement that Christ's redeeming death on the cross was accompanied by His making ineffective/optional τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν, "the ordinances contained within the commandments of the Law." Modern scholars have been divided over whether or not Paul was teaching a total abolishment or making ineffective the entire set of commandments within the Law or only a certain portion designated as δόγματα, "ordinances or decrees."

A full study of the possible referents for the word δόγματα was made in chapter 3 along with other variables including possible categorizations within the Law and Paul's overall theology regarding the place of "works of the Law" and the Law itself in the Messianic Age. The research within chapter 3 shows that grammatically there are two possible ways to interpret the way that the prepositional phrase ἐν

δόγμασιν was used. The phrase could either be used as a modifier to reinforce the idea that Paul was referring to the whole Law, or it could have been used as a clarifying modifier restricting the clause to a specific group of ordinances contained within the Law. It was shown that Paul was specifically speaking of a specific group of ordinances contained within the Law

Within the context of Ephesians as demonstrated in chapter 3 under the subheading titled "An Overview of Ephesians," Paul used fifty-one combinations of second person imperatives and third person jussives coupled with present active participles to help direct the moral behavior of his addressees (Eph 4:25-6:20). Out of the fifty-one moral exhortations, thirty-six had either direct or indirect affinities to the moral commandments recorded in the Mosaic Law showing clearly that Paul was not stating that the moral commandments of the Law had been abrogated or made "ineffective."

As in Eph 2:15, Paul used a form of the same Greek verb καταργέω in Rom 3:31 to tell his addressees that Christ's followers were not making the Law as a whole ineffective nor abrogating it, but instead they were establishing it as they live out their lives in faith. One may look at chapter 3 for a much more in-depth look at the place of the Law within the Messianic Age.

Taking into account that the Old Testament and Intertestamental writers wrote as if Torah was eternal, Paul's letters– when taken as a whole –seem to match earlier Judaic writings and indicate similarly that the Mosaic Law had not been abrogated and that all of the Old Testament was inspired and highly profitable for teaching, training, correction, and reproof for Christ's followers during the Messianic Age (2 Tim 3:16-17; et al.).[453]

Therefore, as shown in chapter 3, it seems highly probable that Paul's intended meaning at this point in his letter was, "having made ineffective/optional the *cultural and purity* ordinances contained within

[453] Keep in mind that for Paul, Scripture consisted solely of the Old Testament; the New Testament was in the formative stage.

the commandments of the Law."[454] In reality, the Messiah's death on a cross made it possible for both Jew and Gentile to be reconciled to God and one another.[455] His declaration that the Jewish cultural and purity ordinances were no longer mandatory but instead optional made it possible that Jewish and Gentile Believers could ignore each other's cultural preferences and could therefore be *reconciled on earth* to one another immediately as ἕνα καινὸν ἄνθρωπον, "one new man."

It is at this point that Paul makes it crystal clear that it is only *in Christ* ποιῶν εἰρήνην, "who is making peace," that the new man became reality.[456] Paul went on to say, ἵνα καί ἀποκαταλλάξῃ τοὺς ἀμφοτέρους ἐν ἑνὶ σώματι τῷ θεῷ διὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ, "and thereby, that He may reconcile both in one body to God through the cross."[457]

This is the second metaphorical image used in this section that would help the Gentiles understand God's desired unity. This time Paul used a metaphorical image, a biological image of a living body to show the closeness of God's desired unity for Christ's followers. The Gentile Believers would understand that they and their Jewish brothers and sisters should all be working together even as the individual separate parts of a body work together as a healthy whole. When some of the parts are missing, inoperable, or even weak, the whole body suffers. And

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[454] One known exception to this generalization regarding making all purity and cleanliness laws optional was recorded in Acts 15:28-29 when the Gentiles were told that they should abstain from consuming blood or eating things that have been strangled, which assumes that blood had not been drained sufficiently.

[455] Cf. Heb 10:1-14 to Eph 2:14-18.

[456] Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 380, considered the present participial clause ποιῶν εἰρήνην to be expressing result and therefore translated this clause as "so making peace" explaining "He is our peace" from verse 14.

[457] Abbott, *Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians*, 65-66, noted that this καί is not a mere copula, but indicates a logical sequence. Abbott suggested something like "and consequently . . . ."

as Paul had used this metaphorical image earlier in his first letter to the Corinthians when facing divisions over divided loyalty to their various teachers,[458] they could also visualize how individuals with different gifts and talents would all contribute to God's economy just as the different parts of the body functioned to make the body complete.

The last of the series of aorist participial clauses ἀποκτείνας τὴν ἔχθραν ἐν αὐτῷ brought this series of three elucidating clauses to a summarizing close restating that Christ's redeeming death on a cross had removed the ongoing ἔχθραν between Jew and Gentile. It is clear from what immediately preceded this participial clause that the reconciliation went beyond bringing two estranged groups together. In addition to removing the ongoing mutual hostility between believing Jews and Gentiles, the second ἵνα clause reiterated for reinforcement the fact that Christ's redeeming death on a cross had removed all ongoing hostility between all who follow God's sent Messiah. Now, man's hostility toward one another and God could be turned into love and trust because of God's great love for humanity.

Paul closed this section by summarizing the outcome of Christ's coming and atoning death, which he had just laid out. He closed by saying that Christ, ἐλθών, "having come," through His actions and words, had declared the good news of peace to *both*,[459] you Gentiles who had been distant from God being ξένοι καὶ πάροικοι, "strangers and resident aliens,"[460] and you Jews who are close to God. That Good News

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[458] 1 Cor 1:11-13; 12:1-27.

[459] Best, *Ephesians*, 270-74, noted that although the exact Gospel message was not revealed in this text, it followed the line of thinking of Isa 57:19 in the sense that God was seeking humanity's well being. Best concluded by saying that whatever the exact Gospel is, it was preached to both those who were close to God and to those who were distant.

[460] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 150, noted that in the LXX, the Hebrew word גר was translated at various times using both Greek words ξένοι and πάροικοι. He also notes that πάροικοι was used in the LXX to translate both גוי, "Gentile," and תוֹשָׁב, "resident alien," indicating that

of peace declared that οἱ ἀμφότεροι, "both groups," who have been reconciled together, have the one and same προσαγωγή, "access," to the Father through Christ through the same Spirit.[461] This proclamation of direct access to the Creator through Jesus whether from the Gentiles' perception of approaching someone greater than their emperor or from the Jewish perception of approaching God directly bypassing the curtain of separation in front of the Holy of Holies would have been exhilarating.

Regarding exhorting Christians to live in godly unity, this message is similar to a few of Paul's earlier letters. Within his letter to the Galatians, Paul opposed forcing Gentile Believers to follow the cultural and purity ordinances of Israel. In his first letter to the Corinthians, he exhorted his addressees to avoid dividing over which teachers they were following. In a later letter to Christians living in Rome, Paul warned his predominately Gentile addressees against divisions due to their Gentile origins versus Jewish Believers reminding them to whom they had been grafted in, Israel. Here in Ephesians, approximately five years after writing to the predominately Gentile churches in Rome, Paul again addressed an apparent problem of division within the Body of Christ because Gentiles seem to have forgotten that they were united through Christ's atoning death to those within the Commonwealth of Israel who were following Jesus as they now took their place alongside them within the true Israel.

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the terms were used to emphasize more the idea of being an "outsider" than the fact that they were "strangers" or "resident aliens." He went on to say that this was also the case for this passage in Ephesians.

[461] Cf. Rom 5:1; and Schnackenburg, *Der Brief an die Epheser*, 118-19, who said that the author put special emphasis on *den gleichen Zugang zum Vater*, "the equal access to the Father." This matched Paul's teachings (Gal 3:28; 1 Cor 12:13; Rom 3:21-24; 10:12) and those in the "Urkirche: Early Church" (Col 3:11; Titus 2:14; 1 Pet 2:4-10; Rev 5:9; 7:9).

Ephesians 2:19-22:
Jewish and Gentile Believers Are the Household of God

As he closed Eph 2:11-22, Paul reinforced the idea of God's desired unity between Jew and Gentile by developing a metaphorical image of the unity of the Body of Christ as consisting of a building under construction in which God was dwelling with *both* the Jew and the Gentile Believers who were now collectively forming a common dwelling place through the Holy Spirit. Although this unity represented "one new man," Paul reminded the Gentiles that this great unity made them συμπολῖται τῶν ἁγίων, "fellow citizens of the Saints," who he had reminded them at the beginning of his letter consisted initially solely of Jews.[462]

Grammatical Construction and Textual Variants

Ephesians 2:19-22 is grammatically one sentence that consists of two main clauses separated by the adversative conjunction ἀλλα with the second main clause being supported by a participial phrase, a genitive absolute clause, and two prepositional clauses as shown below. The sentence starts with a pair of inferential markers, ἄρα οὖν, that work together to emphasize the importance of what had just been said and connect to what immediately follows.[463] Together, ἄρα οὖν can be expressed to depict strong emphasis using words such as "therefore, as a

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[462] Eph 1:4 within the context of 1:3-12. At the close of this section, Paul again spoke of the Gentiles as having been fit together with the Jewish Believers whom God had chosen to be the first of the Saints.

[463] Westcott, *Saint Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians*, 40, said that Paul was the only New Testament author to use this pair of conjunctions, ἄρα οὖν (Rom 5:18; 7:3, 25; 8:12; 9:16, 18; 14:12, 19; Gal 6:10; 1 Thess 5:6; 2 Thess 2:15); cf. Best, *Ephesians*, 276; and cf. Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 391, who said that the combination of ἄρα οὖν was not used in classical literature except in the interrogative form ἆρα οὖν. He noted that Paul used it twelve times in the New Testament, and said that Paul did so to reinforce the conclusion of the preceding section and introduce the logical consequence to follow. See also BDAG, § 2b, 127.

result."[464] The adversative main clause started off with the second person plural indicative of εἰμί followed by two predicate nominatives each followed by a genitive of quality.[465]

After Paul told his predominately Gentile addressees that they were currently members of the household of God, he used an aorist passive participle to build metaphorically an image of how the Gentile Believers might consider themselves fitting together with the early Jewish Believers in forming God's residence.[466] Paul then proceeded to use a genitive absolute clause, ὄντος ἀκρογωνιαίου αὐτοῦ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ, "Christ Jesus being its cornerstone," to introduce the position of someone who had not yet been named in this sentence:[467] Jesus Christ was the metaphorical building's foundational cornerstone.

There is a mildly significant variant regarding this genitive absolute clause: the copyists for **D**, **F**, and **G** chose to insert the word λίθου after ἀκρογωνιαίου changing ἀκρογωνιαίου from a substantive to an adjective modifying λίθου in order to make it even clearer that

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[464] BDAG, § 2b, 127. The discourse marker ἄρα οὖν is a combination of ἄρα used to mark a consecutive thought with indicators such as "as a result," or "consequently,"and οὖν expressing the logical transition with indicators such as "therefore." This dual marker can be expressed lightly using words such as "so then" or as strongly as "therefore, as a result."

[465] See BDF, 89, under the heading of "Genitive," the authors note that the basic function of the genitive case in Greek is to act as an adjective. Cf. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, 496-97, for a discussion on "genitives of quality," "descriptive genitive," and "attributive genitive," which all denote the same thing: the genitive used in the attributive position acts like an adjective, but it produces more sharpness and distinctiveness than a regular adjective; cf. BDF, § 165, 91-92.

[466] Abbott, *Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians*, 70, noted that the author chose to use an aorist passive participle to show that the action of being built-up starts at the moment of becoming a Christian.

[467] See BDF, § 423, 218.

Christ was the corner "stone."[468]

Paul finished this sentence with two prepositional clauses bringing further clarity to the impact of Christ's redeeming work toward Gentiles. In the first of the two prepositional clauses, there is one additional variant that merits mentioning: the earliest corrector of **א**, Sinaiticus, an early fourth-century Alexandrian text,[469] decided to change slightly its original meaning. The corrector along with later copyists inserted a definite article between πᾶσα and οἰκοδομή, which changed the meaning from "every construction," which refers to each individual Believer, to "the whole construction" speaking of the building as a whole.[470] The second prepositional clause is emphatically engaging its

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[468] BDAG, 39, shows that ἀκρογωνιαῖος in general denotes something lying at an extreme corner; by qualifying the adjective, which had been used as a substantive, with the word λίθος the copyists did not allow for any questions; for information on texts, see Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament*, 49-51, and *The Greek New Testament*, ed. Barbara Aland, Kurt Aland, et al., 4th rev. ed., United Bible Societies (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994), 904. **D** is a fifth to sixth century Western text and **F** a ninth-century Western text; **G** is a ninth-century Byzantine text.

[469] Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament*, 42-46.

[470] BDAG, 782-84, shows that it was common to use a form of πᾶς with an article in the singular to denote "the whole." The normal thought behind the use of any of the forms of the word πᾶς used with a noun that did not have a definite article was "each, every." Some of the later texts that contained the definite article were **A**, **C**, and **P**. For more detail see *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 507, and *The Greek New Testament*, 4th rev. ed., 659. For information regarding the origination and dating of the texts, see Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament*, 42-51, and *The Greek New Testament*, 4th rev. ed., 904-06; Abbott, *Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians*, 75-76, said that the πᾶσα located prior to οἰκοδομή looks forward to the συν- in συναρμολογουμένη. Abbott was pointing out that the emphasis was on the *individual* parts being joined together. Robinson, *St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians*, 165, noted that many Greek commentators read πᾶσα οἰκοδομή as the "whole edifice." Westcott, *Saint Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians*, 41, said that all of the individual believers were equally part of the Sanctuary in the new Temple, which has its harmonious development in Christ Jesus.

predominately Gentile addressees as Paul starts off ἐν ᾧ καὶ ὑμεῖς, "in whom even *you* (Gentiles) . . ." The earliest texts bear witness that Paul wrote this clause without the definite article preceding οἰκοδομή, which fits the context of the text surrounding this clause. At this point in the text, Paul was making a point that the Gentiles were individually being fit together, συν-, with each other and Jewish Believers as God grew them together into His Holy Temple, His κατοικητήριον, "dwelling place." A linguistic-grammatical layout follows:

ἄρα οὖν
οὐκέτι ἐστὲ ξένοι καὶ πάροικοι
ἀλλὰ ἐστὲ συμπολῖται τῶν ἁγίων καὶ οἰκεῖοι τοῦ θεοῦ,[471]
ἐποικοδομηθέντες ἐπὶ τῷ θεμελίῳ τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ προφητῶν,
ὄντος ἀκρογωνιαίου αὐτοῦ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ,
ἐν ᾧ πᾶσα οἰκοδομὴ συναρμολογουμένη
αὔξει εἰς ναὸν ἅγιον
ἐν κυρίῳ,

Therefore, consequently,
you are no longer strangers and sojourners,
but instead you are fellow citizens of the Saints and members of the household of the (one true) God,
having been built up upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets,
Jesus Christ Himself being the cornerstone,
in whom every construction is being fitted together
is growing (as one) into a holy temple
through (the) Lord,

This is a present and continuous process.

[471] BDAG, 694. The word οἰκεῖος denotes belonging to a certain household.

ἐν ᾧ καὶ ὑμεῖς συνοικοδομεῖσθε εἰς κατοικητήριον
τοῦ θεοῦ
ἐν πνεύματι.
in whom even *you* are being built up together into the
dwelling place of the (one true) God
through the Spirit.[472]

Meaning and Context

The contextual meaning of this section is fairly straightforward. Paul used three ideas to help convey the meaning of turning one's life over to God and His way of life.[473]

Firstly, at one time all Gentiles who had not fully converted to Judaism were strangers and sojourners regarding Israel, but now those who made an affirmative decision to follow the Messiah Jesus had become συμπολῖται τῶν ἁγίων, "fellow-citizens of the Saints."[474] Secondly, these addressees who were at one time distant, who now follow Christ, had become οἰκεῖοι τοῦ θεοῦ, "household members of

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[472] See the Appendix at the back of the Greek and author's English translation in normal formatting.

[473] Barth, *Ephesians*, vol. 1, 276, said that all of the metaphors compiled in 2:19-22 served to describe diverse aspects of a social event: these Gentile believer were now essential members of that community which God had chosen for His residence, the Church.

[474] Eph 2:12 shows that at one time Gentiles were not part of the citizenship of Israel, and then proceeds to teach that those Gentiles along with the Jews who were part of the citizenship of Israel that they together *now* form "one new man." This does not mean that Israel is no longer a term that refers to God's people. The Old Testament prophets and Paul teach otherwise. In Gal 3:13-14, Paul made it clear that in this present age the Messiah had come and removed the curse of the Law through His own substitutionary death for Gentiles as well as Jews, and therefore, it is not a matter of whether or not one formerly followed Judaism, but in reality, the Israel of God now consisted of those who were a καινὴ κτίσις, "a new creation." Those who walk according to this rule (of the Gospel) constitute the Israel of God (Gal 6:15-16).

God." [475] This matched Paul's "*dividing* middle-wall" metaphor discussed above reiterating that they were now part of one family, God's family. And thirdly, Paul used a second architectural metaphorical image as he compared the Gentile addition to the household of God as being similar to adding the appropriate pieces needed for construction of God's house in order to complete the structure just as one adds the various stones or other materials to build the walls and structure of a building.

The first-century predominately Gentile addressees would have been more inclined to think of the ναός of Eph 2:21 in terms of the many temples scattered throughout their cities and lands where their many gods lived rather than the Temple located in Jerusalem. In the mind of a first-century Gentile who did not know the one true living God, a ναός was simply a term that denoted a dwelling place for one or more of his gods.

When Paul used the words πᾶσα οἰκοδομή instead of πᾶσα ἡ οἰκοδομή, he was emphasizing the fact that the Body of Christ was made up of *individual* Believers who were being shaped to take their assigned places as part of the νάος ἅγιος, "the holy house," that God desires as He creates His eternal family through Christ.[476] From this point, the section was closed with a summary stating that the individual

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[475] Muddiman, *The Epistle to the Ephesians*, 139, said that these two phrases, συμπολῖται, "fellow citizens," and οἰκεῖοι, "household members," compliment each other having different but interrelated meanings in this context. A citizen was one who has voting rights [and obligations] within a certain city or community and a household member included clients of a patron as well as biological members.

[476] Best, *Ephesians*, 280, 286-87, said that the metaphor of building was used in two distinct ways, statically, in depicting a group of people as an edifice, and dynamically, of the maturing of people in their faith. He went on to say that the dynamic usage was by far more frequent in the Pauline corpus and probably was derived directly from the Old Testament. In reference to the dynamic building of individual believers, Best cited Eph 4:12, 16, 29 and compared them to 1 Cor 10:23; 14:4-20; 2 Cor 10:8; 12:19; 13:10; and 1 Thess 5:11 (p. 280). *Contra,* there are some such as Eadie, *The Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians*, 201, and Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 407-08, 410, who interpreted πᾶσα αἰκοδομή without the article as "whole" or "all."

parts make up a ἅγιος ναός, "holy temple," a single dwelling place for God that included all of Christ's followers, Jew and Gentile.[477]

The metaphorical image in this section is the last of a three-fold set where Paul was developing his addressees' understanding of God's desired unity by moving them mentally from his initial image of a *single* united family sharing a common residence due to the fact that Christ had destroyed their "*dividing* middle-wall," their generational mutual hatred, to a final metaphorical image in which Christ and all of His followers form the *very* house in which God dwells. Its foundation had already been lain, it consisted of the ἀποστόλων καὶ προφητῶν, "apostles and prophets,"[478] with Jesus Christ Himself being its ἀκρογωνιαῖος, "cornerstone."

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[477] Dahl, "Bibelstudie über den Ephesebrief," 38-39, stated that reconciliation with God "schließt die Versöhnung der Heiden und Juden, die in der Kirche zusammengebracht wurden, in eine Versöhnung ein, in der Gottes Plan, das All zu einer Einheit in Christo zu bringen," which was already being realized (cf. 1:10; Col 1:20) (p. 38).

[478] Origen, *The Commentaries of Origen and Jerome on St Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians*, 138-39, stated that the whole contrast with near and far and not belonging to and then belonging to the commonwealth of Israel lends itself pointed to considering the prophets as Old Testament prophets; cf. Abbott, *Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians*, 72, who pointed out that there were at least a couple more parallels in Ephesians such as 3:5 and 4:11in addition to other New Testament texts such as 1 Cor [12:28] that showed the idea of apostles and prophets working together in the Early Church. Prophecy was an active spiritual ministry in the Early Church (1 Cor 14:1ff.) (p. 72). Schlier, *Der Brief an Die Epheser*, 142, said that Paul was speaking of New Testament prophets and then gave some references including one from one of the writings of the Apostolic Fathers: Acts 8, 1ff.; 11:27; 13:1; 15:32; 21:10; 1 Cor 12:28; 14; Rev 16:6; 18:20, 24; 22:6, 9; *Did*. 11:3ff.; 13:1; 15:1f. Barth, *Ephesians*, vol. 1, 315-16, said that in the final analysis, the very essence of the Church rested upon the foundation of the inspired proclamation made by apostles and prophets. Considering further, one notes that in Eph 4:7-13, it is presupposed that the apostles and prophets were personally alive and active in Paul's day. It was their proclamation, witness, and confession that is the foundation of the Church.

Jesus is the very person on whom the rest of the parts of the house of God depend for direction and stability. Christ's followers are all needed individually to assume their specific part of God's home, His ναὸς ἅγιος, "holy house/temple." Paul's three metaphors strung together helped his addressees understand clearly that God did not want any divisions within His eternal holy family.

Summary

It is clear that Paul wanted the Gentiles who were following Jesus to understand a great truth about God's will for all humanity, which had been hidden from all prior generations but now was being declared through the Gospel that focused on the redeeming death of the Messiah for *both* Jew and Gentile. In addition to Christ's death on a cross making a way for all humanity to be purified (total sin removal),[479] it made it possible for all non-Jews (Gentiles) to join the household of God without being obligated to follow Israel's cultural and purity regulations. God did not abolish any of the Law, but for those living in the Messianic Age, the cultural and purity ordinances of God became optional. This allowed the Gentiles to enter into God's household through faith following His moral commandments without needing to discard any of their own traditional cultural norms as long as they did not violate God's standards of holy living.

The Gentile Believers were expected to follow God's moral commandments, which God had always made known to all people of all time through direct communication and through nature (Rom 1:18-32; 2:11-16). Paul made it clear from his exhortations in the last part of Ephesians that the moral commandments contained within the Mosaic Law were still very much a practical guide for the Gentile as well as for the Jewish Believer.

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[479] At the Cross, Jesus personally took on and removed all sin from all who learn to love, trust, and obey God from all time (Isa 53; Heb 10:4-14; Gal 3:13-14; Col 2:13-14; 2 Cor 5:21; 1 Peter 2:24; et al.).

The Jewish Believers continued to follow the commandments including the cultural and purity ordinances of the Law. The differences in life styles due to differences in cultural practices for Jewish and Gentile Believer was not to lead to division within the Body of Christ. This whole section led Paul's predominate Gentile addressees to understand more fully what God expected of them after being reconciled to Him and all of Jesus' followers, and it was clear that there was no room in God's family for divisions.

This exegetical work leads to a comprehensive statement regarding Christ's destruction of the ongoing mutual hostility that had long existed between the Jew and Gentile for all who decided to obediently follow Him: Within Eph 2:14-16, Paul stated that Jesus Christ had made the *cultural and purity* ordinances of the Mosaic Law optional as part of His atoning and redeeming death on a cross thereby encouraging His predominately Gentile believing addressees to live out their lives with fellow Jewish Believers as part of the single Family of God; he made this clear by using a well known metaphorical image of his day, a μεσότοιχον, "middle-wall," stating that Christ had destroyed their generational mutual hostility just as a master builder (general contractor) of his day would destroy a solid *dividing "*middle-wall," when combining two physical residential spaces into one for an enlarged family.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

The Ongoing Function of the Law

It was noted in the subsection "'The Mosaic Law' and 'Works of the Law' in the Roman Era Up to A.D. 70" of chapter 3 that many who had studied the Old Testament prophets and Intertestamental writings such as W. D. Davies in his work *Torah in the Messianic Age and/or in the Age to Come* had come to the conclusion that there was no clear view that spoke of an abrogation of the Law during the Messianic Age. Davies pointed out that even in Jer 31:31-34, there was no mention of a new Torah being instituted with the New Covenant, but instead, it appeared that the existing Law would be written on the hearts of God's people. Joseph Klausner's research as a Jewish scholar led him to understand that when the coming messiah came to take his rightful place in the world, Torah would function eternally and all nations would come to the Temple in Jerusalem to worship God. David Hay's research of Philo uncovered the fact that Philo taught that the Mosaic Law was eternal.

As recorded in Matt 5:17-20,[480] Jesus, the sent Messiah of God, taught that He had *not* come καταλῦσαι, "to abolish," or "destroy," τὸν νόμον, "the Law," or to contradict what God's prophets had prophesied, but instead, He came πληρῶσαι, "to fulfill," the Law and that which was spoken by the prophets. Jesus emphasized that the Law was not going to be changed during the Messianic Age by saying that God would not allow even the smallest part of the Law to be removed until the final renewing of the Creation. Jesus continued by warning that whoever broke one of the least of the commandments and taught others to do similarly would be called "least" in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Paul's teachings were in alignment with the Messiah Jesus' teachings. In the subsections titled "The Place of the 'Mosaic Law' in the

[480] Cf. Luke 16:16-17.

Messianic Age" and "The Place of 'Works of the Law' in the Messianic Age" of chapter 3, it was noted that Stuhlmacher's study of Romans led him to consider Rom 2:13 to be the highpoint of 2:12-16, which in-turn led him to understand this verse in light of known Jewish teachings that stated that God would in fact judge the world according to the criterion set by the Law (cf. Ezra 7:37; 70-73; 2 Bar. 48.27, 38-40, 46f.). When he evaluated Rom 3:31, in which Paul had stated that the faithful would not abolish nor make ineffective the Law but instead would establish it, Stuhlmacher went on to say that Paul had taken an emphatic stance regarding the Law and its commandments when he taught that Christ's work did *not* nullify the Law (2:12-16), but fulfilled it (5:18; [10:4]). It is the Law that witnesses to the righteousness of God (3:21; 4:3) and continues to teach righteousness for those who are led by the Spirit (8:3f.).

Gathercole stated that in Rom 8:3-4 Paul was teaching that individuals had the ability to fulfill the Law through the power of the indwelling Spirit. Snodgrass, who placed emphasis on the continuity of the Law in the Messianic Age, understood Paul's teaching in 1 Cor 7:19 and Rom 8:4 to mean that Christians would obey the Law during this era. In 1 Cor 9:8-10, Paul explicitly used a teaching from the Mosaic Law by name as an authoritative voice for Christ's followers.

In his book *Paul Apostle of God's Glory in Christ*, Thomas Schreiner discussed the fact that although there was a putting aside of what Dunn called the "ethnic boundary markers" from the Mosaic Law, there was a strong sense in Paul's letters that Christ's followers "fulfill" the Law. Schreiner stated that this same Paul, who celebrated life in the Spirit, freedom in Christ, and the centrality of love, also filled his letters with commands and exhortations from the Mosaic Law apparently not believing those exhortations contradicted the reality of the Spirit leading their lives helping them to fulfill the requirements of the Law (Gal 5:13-15; Rom 8:4; 13:8-10; cf. Rom 2:26-29).

It has been shown from the context of Ephesians and Paul's other letters that he was not teaching that Christ had abrogated the Mosaic Law nor make the moral portion ineffective. After writing that Christ is ὁ ποιήσας τὰ ἀμφότερα ἕν, "the one having made both one," and teaching that Christ had destroyed the ongoing mutual hostility

between Jew and Gentile for those following Him just as a general contractor might have destroyed a "*dividing* middle-wall" that had been separating them, Paul wrote that Christ had made the τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν, "the commandments of the Law *regarding cultural and cleanliness ordinances*," ineffective/optional.

This meant that for Gentiles as well as Jews, those ordinances contained within the commandments of the Law relating to cultural and purity were *optional* within the Messianic Age. This letter, like his others, shows that Paul never taught that the whole Law nor any part of it had been removed, but he was proclaiming that some of its ordinances had become optional in the Messianic Age.

By making these ordinances optional, Christ made it possible for those who had been reconciled to God and one another through His atoning death to have true peace *on earth* as they learned to serve together and take the Gospel to all people. All Believers had been made into "one new man" being reconciled to one another into "one Body," God's family, to God. From the context of the letter itself, it is clear that Paul was not teaching that the Mosaic Law had been abrogated nor made ineffective as a whole (cf. Rom 3:28-31; 2:11-16).

After considering carefully God's desired holy unity among all of His obedient children and what He has done to make it possible, all Christians should change their day-to-day life style to match God's expectations. Knowing what God had done for all people should motivate everyone both emotionally and intellectually to follow God's exhortation to godly living, which includes godly unity.

This godly living and unity includes both a *realized* unity and a godly moral life style. God's desired unity for those who are following Christ is just as important today as it was in the Early Church. Jesus made it clear in His recorded prayer in John 17, which He made to the Father publically just before going to the cross for all humanity, that when His followers lived out their day-to-day lives striving for God's desired unity, the world would see God's love for all humanity and know that God had sent His Son to be its savior. The converse of that truth is that if Christ's followers do not strive for God's desired unity, the world has a harder time seeing through Satan's many deceptions and its own self-centeredness how much God truly loves everyone and recognized

the fact that He sent Son to teach reality and atone for everyone's sin, which is applied to all learn to love, trust, and obey Him.

The Church's Responsibility To Be the "One New Man"

What significance does Paul's teachings regarding God's desire unity for the Body of Christ have today for all of the local congregations that are scattered around the world? It is appropriate at this point to listen afresh to the teachings of Jesus Christ, who is God's sent Son whom He sent to teach and then die an atoning death on everyone's behalf. Just before His death, the apostle John stated that Jesus prayed that all who followed Him would personally experience His joy, which was now full because He was at the point of providing salvation resulting in full sin removal for all who would learn to trust God (John 17:13).

The climatic truth in His prayer came when Jesus turned His attention from His immediate disciples and added all future disciples who would learn to trust God out of a growing love for Him and one another through the hearing of the truth of the Gospel, which His immediate and future disciples would be proclaiming (John 17:20). Eventually, a few of their Gospel messages would be written down for future generations helping many to understand and become followers of Jesus thereby also becoming part of God's eternal holy family.

What followed in Jesus' prayer was not a metaphorical image of unity but a direct and clear statement made within His prayer to His Heavenly Father, which informs all present and future Believers within the Messianic Age that He, Jesus, in addition to providing an atoning death was also sharing His personal glory with them and by doing so was insuring that they would possess God's desired reconciliation and unity within His family.

For those who are following Christ, there is absolutely no reason to feel inferior because all Believers become part of God's intimate holy family and are loved by our Heavenly Father just the same as He loves Jesus. This is the same Jesus who worked by His side and physically created all humanity and the surrounding universe (John 1:1-3; Heb 1:2). After saying that He desired all of His disciples of all ages to have and be part of the same perfect unity that He had always had with the Father,

Jesus said,

> ‹17:22› κἀγὼ τὴν δόξαν ἣν δέδωκάς μοι δέδωκα αὐτοῖς, ἵνα ὦσιν ἓν καθὼς ἡμεῖς ἕν· ‹17:23› ἐγὼ ἐν αὐτοῖς καὶ σὺ ἐν ἐμοί, ἵνα ὦσιν τετελειωμένοι εἰς ἕν, ἵνα γινώσκῃ ὁ κόσμος ὅτι σύ με ἀπέστειλας καὶ ἠγάπησας αὐτοὺς καθὼς ἐμὲ ἠγάπησας, "and I have given to them the glory that you have give to me in order that they may be one just as we are one: I in them and you in me in order that they may be completed into one with the result that the world will know that you sent me and that you love them just as you love me."[481]

In the context of John's description of Jesus' glory recorded in John 1:14, one knows that Jesus' glory was based on His unique father-only son relationship *and* His personal holy nature. Jesus' personality was such that His immediate disciples came to see Him as one who was full of χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας, "grace and truth." As Jesus shares His personal glory with all who learn to follow Him out of love and trust, He also shares His unique sonship position with the Father removing any possible form of divisional walls within God's immediate family.

In addition to total sin removal, Jesus' attributes of grace and truth will be developed in the very nature of every Believer resulting in eternal perfection. Paul stated in his letter to the Romans that all who learn to return God's love had already been predestined to be conformed into the moral image of Jesus, to be justified, and to be glorified in order that Jesus may be the πρωτότοκον, "first," of many brothers (8:28-30). Jesus made it clear that the Church's visible unity, which is to be demonstrated through its actions as well as its words, would help those who are rebelling against God understand that there was a loving creator who sent His eternal son, Jesus, to be the saving messiah for all.

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[481] John 17:22-23; Greek taken from The Greek New Testament, UBS, 3rd ed. For further detail on Jesus' prayer for godly unity within God's eternal holy family, see Joseph, *Unity and Obedient Discipleship in the Gospel of John,* 27-56.

How should Christ's followers respond today to God's powerful message of love and unity? During the height of the Reformation struggle, some of the most difficult times occurred when some of the reformers started dividing over their different understandings of various teachings contained within Scripture. In his research on the Reformation, James Prayton noted that Martin Bucer used *Jesus'* words from John 17 at the Marburg conference in 1529, which had been called by some of the reformers to discuss some of their differences in scriptural understanding. Bucer used Jesus' words to remind his fellow reformers of Jesus' sacrificial death on the cross in order to provide reconciliation and godly unity for those who follow Him. Furthermore, since no one other than God was omniscient and since Christ died for the reconciliation of the lost, shouldn't they be striving for God's desired unity even if they were not thinking exactly the same on every doctrinal point?[482]

Bucer's point in using Jesus' words from this prayer stemmed from the fact that *it was the Lord who was talking* and expressing concern for the well being of His followers at the very time that He was going to die such a horrendous death for the sake of all. If the lord of the Church cares so much for His followers and died so that they would be reconciled to God and one another, shouldn't those same Believers make every effort to live according to their Lord's wishes?

Today, five centuries later, the Church has seen even further erosion of its visible unity. As during the Reformation, one of the major causes of division today is that Christ's followers are not placing enough emphasis on Jesus' ongoing leadership. In reality, there is only one lord and master teacher, the Lord Jesus Christ (Matt 23:8; cf. 1 Cor 3:1-9). But despite what God is saying through Scripture, many are giving their primary allegiance to individuals such as John Wesley, Martin Luther, John Calvin, and the many institutions that have sprung up in their place at the expense of realizing the type of real and visible unity that God desires.

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[482] James R. Prayton, "On Unity and Truth: Martin Bucer's Sermon on John 17," *Calvin Theological Journal* 27, no. 1 (1992), 26-38.

Although the various denominations represent a rich tapestry of the Church's struggle against wicked spiritual forces (Eph 6:10-12), Christ's followers must not allow the individual parts of this tapestry to divide the Body. With division comes reduced joy and a weaker witness for all. Those who are following Christ must allow God to renew their minds continually (Rom 12:2) in order that they may see the overall Creation from God's perspective. Paul's teaching in Ephesians and elsewhere makes it clear that Christ died so that His followers could be "one Body," the united holy family of God, now and forever. Nothing is to divide the Church, not denominations, race, social standing, age, or gender. Anything that causes divisions among those who are truly trying to follow Christ according to the entirety of God's inspired Scripture and the leading of the Holy Spirit is contrary to the very Gospel message itself (2 Tim 3:14-17; Rom 8:1-4, 14-17).

In an article, which was written in honor of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's resolve to stand true to the Word of God during difficult times and his resulting martyrdom under Hitler's suppression of certain people groups and types, Preman Niles used Eph 2:12-22 as a springboard to discuss the "one new man" who was created through Christ and His atoning death on a cross.[483] Niles basic theme was that Believers' differences, [socially, ethnically, generationally, and denominationally] should never be the cause of hostility or any type of estrangement, but instead Christ's followers should be aware that the differences among the Reconciled help the Body to work as designed and are not intended to divide the Body.[484]

As Nils looked at the different ethnic groups around the world, he reminded Believers that they cannot conform to the expectations and standards of the world, but instead, they must live out their mission of proclaiming God's grace and peace to the world through actions and words that are in alignment with God's will [which is primarily expressed through His written Word and the leading of the Spirit].[485]

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[483] D. Preman Niles, "Channels of God's Peace: Remembering Dietrich Bonhoeffer," *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* 56, nos. 3-4 (2002), 1-2.

[484] Ibid., 6.

[485] Ibid., 9-10.

Christ's commission to all Believers to proclaim the reality of the Gospel through actions as well as words should be at the center of Christ's followers' thoughts at all times.

In his article, "Removing the Wall: Eph 2:1-22," Charles Ray stated that the answer to fragmentation within the Church is regeneration, and recognizing such should move Christ's followers to pray to God asking Him to soften their hearts so that they will start obeying Him more fully than ever before.[486] True joy comes as God's people learn to obey their true father and sustainer more fully. The current problem of disunity in the Church would begin to dissipate if Christ's followers listened to what God has already spoken to them through His ministers such as Paul. In Eph 2:14, Paul made it clear that Jesus and His redeeming death on a cross is humanity's one and only source of "peace." Without Christ and the redeeming work that God did through Him, all people would be relationally bankrupt with God and one another. In reality, Christ's followers' joy and witness to the world are contingent on their genuine level of commitment to follow God's sent Son, the sent Messiah, Jesus.

Stephen Wellum said that one of the main problems in the Church today is that many fail to evaluate their everyday lives in light of Scripture.[487] Wellum said that it is sad that instead of carrying out Paul's examples and exhortations consistently, Christ's followers attempt to correlate the teachings of Scripture with contemporary thought, and in doing so normally place the authority of Scripture behind current secular thought, which is constantly changing with the times.[488] It is Scripture that gives the most accurate picture of reality as it describes individuals' problems in terms of sin and the effects of sin on their relationship with God and one another.[489]

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[486] Charles A. Ray, "Removing the Wall: Eph 2:1-22," *The Theological Educator* 54 (1996), 59.

[487] Stephen J. Wellum, "Taking Every Thought Captive to Christ," *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology*, 7, no. 4 (2003), 2.

[488] Ibid.

[489] Ibid., 2-3.

From a practical perspective, part of Jesus' prayer recorded in John 17:20-23, and Paul's exhortations for unity can be met when like-minded leaders from their own respective local churches strive to find ways to work with other local church leaders in their respective areas. Paul's letters and other New Testament writings show that Christ's followers worked together through councils of elders in their respective areas. There is no reason that this type of arrangement cannot work today.

If Church leadership and general members entreat God to rekindle their passion for serving Christ and one another, local church leaders will experience greater joy as they learn to work together more fully to serve their congregations and all who live in their areas of influence. Not only will para-church support increase significantly, but special city-wide, area-wide, and world-wide ministries will grow as they are empowered more fully by God, who will call some to minster collectively in ways that are impossible unless approached from a united front within the Church.

Each area striving for God's desired unity can form a council of elders and learn to do some of their ministry from that platform supporting their area's existing para-church organizations that are carrying out their ministries in a manner worthy of God's calling. In addition, they can discuss and vote on the pressing needs of those living in their areas that are not being met by para-church or local church ministries and then help organize and supply both personnel and material resources to make those combined ministries a success.

In turn, the community will see God's love at work through His people's actions as well as their words. There is no need for large entrenched organizations to be formed. It is actually advantageous to maintain loosely held councils of elders so that the councils are not bound to maintain some specific organizational status quo. Leadership within the councils can be rotated as circumstances dictate. Ministry projects can be renewed or removed easily through Jesus' leadership through the work of the Holy Spirit. Like-minded local churches may at any time join in or remove themselves from any or all of the projects as they feel led by the Lord.

God's great love for all, which has been manifested clearly through His Son's teachings, atoning death, resurrection, and ongoing leadership should be all the motivation needed for Christ's followers to strive for God's desired godly unity. Christ died a horrendous death on a cross in order to provide the removal of sin (2 Cor 5:21; 1 Peter 2:24; cf. Gal 3;13-14; Col 2:13-14) for all who learn to receive Him through a growing love, trust, and obedience (John 1:11-13; 3:14-17; 14:15, 21, 23, 31; et al.; cf. Rom 8:28-30), which places them in God's eternal righteous family fully reconciled to God and one another. Therefore, Jesus' followers should interactively follow Jesus knowing that such will produce great joy and unity as members of Christ's Body. As God's obedient children strive to faithfully follow Jesus walking in God's light, they *will have* fellowship with one another (1 John 1:7), divisional walls will come down, and they will be a great witness to many living in darkness throughout their communities around the world!

Appendix

Greek Text and the Author's Translation of Ephesians 2:11-22

Ephesians 2:11-12

‹2:11› Διὸ μνημονεύετε ὅτι ποτὲ ὑμεῖς τὰ ἔθνη ἐν σαρκί, οἱ λεγόμενοι ἀκροβυστία ὑπὸ τῆς λεγομένης περιτομῆς ἐν σαρκὶ χειροποιήτου,

‹2:12› ὅτι ἦτε τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ χωρὶς Χριστοῦ, ἀπηλλοτριωμένοι τῆς πολιτείας τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ καὶ ξένοι τῶν διαθηκῶν τῆς ἐπαγγελίας, ἐλπίδα μὴ ἔχοντες καὶ ἄθεοι ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ.

2:11 Therefore, remember that at one time (in the past) you, the Gentiles in the flesh, the ones being called "Uncircumcised" by the group, which is being called "Circumcised" having been circumcised by human hands in the flesh, 2:12 that at that time, you were without Christ, having been estranged from the citizenship of Israel, and were indeed strangers of the covenants given by the promise, not having hope, indeed without God in the world.

Ephesians 2:13-18

‹2:13› νυνὶ δὲ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ ὑμεῖς οἵ ποτε ὄντες μακρὰν ἐγενήθητε ἐγγὺς ἐν τῷ αἵματι τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

2:13 But now in Christ Jesus, you who at one time were distant (from God), have been made near through the blood of Christ.

‹2:14› Αὐτὸς γάρ ἐστιν ἡ εἰρήνη ἡμῶν, ὁ ποιήσας τὰ ἀμφότερα ἓν καὶ τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ λύσας, τὴν ἔχθραν ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ, ‹2:15› τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν καταργήσας, ἵνα τοὺς δύο κτίσῃ ἐν αὐτῷ εἰς ἕνα καινὸν ἄνθρωπον ποιῶν εἰρήνην

2:14 For you see, He is our peace, the One having made both (Jew & Gentile Believer) one entity, indeed having broken down the *dividing* middle-wall, (which has been) the (ongoing generational mutual) hostility, through His flesh (atoning death), 2:15 having made ineffective the (cultural and purity) ordinances of the commandments of the Law, in order that He may create the two into one new man in Himself making peace.

‹2:16› καὶ ἀποκαταλλάξῃ τοὺς ἀμφοτέρους ἐν ἑνὶ σώματι τῷ θεῷ διὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ, ἀποκτείνας τὴν ἔχθραν ἐν αὐτῷ. ‹2:17› καὶ ἐλθὼν εὐηγγελίσατο εἰρήνην ὑμῖν τοῖς μακρὰν καὶ εἰρήνην τοῖς ἐγγύς· ‹2:18› ὅτι δι’ αὐτοῦ ἔχομεν τὴν προσαγωγὴν οἱ ἀμφότεροι ἐν ἑνὶ πνεύματι πρὸς τὸν πατέρα.

2:16 and thereby, that He may reconcile *both* in one body to God through the Cross, having destroyed the (ongoing mutual) hostility through His own actions; 2:17 indeed, having come, He proclaimed good news of peace to you who are distant and peace to those who are near 2:18 because through Him we *both* have access to the Father through one Spirit.

Ephesians 2:19-22

‹2:19› ἄρα οὖν οὐκέτι ἐστὲ ξένοι καὶ πάροικοι ἀλλὰ ἐστὲ συμπολῖται τῶν ἁγίων καὶ οἰκεῖοι τοῦ θεοῦ, ‹2:20› ἐποικοδομηθέντες ἐπὶ τῷ θεμελίῳ τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ προφητῶν, ὄντος ἀκρογωνιαίου αὐτοῦ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ, ‹2:21› ἐν ᾧ πᾶσα οἰκοδομὴ συναρμολογουμένη αὔξει εἰς ναὸν ἅγιον ἐν κυρίῳ, ‹2:22› ἐν ᾧ καὶ ὑμεῖς συνοικοδομεῖσθε εἰς κατοικητήριον τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν πνεύματι.

2:19 Therefore, consequently, you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but instead you are fellow citizens of the Saints and members of the household of the (one true) God, 2:20 having been built up upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the cornerstone, 2:21 in whom every (part of the) construction, which is being fitted together, is growing (as one) into a Holy Temple through the Lord, 2:22 in whom even *you* (Gentile Believers) are being built up together (with us Jewish Believers) into the dwelling place of the God through (the) Spirit.

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