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Paul's Designations of God in Romans

by

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis, containing 99,997 words, has been composed by myself and is the work of my own. The work in this thesis has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

(Wing Yi Au)

Abstract

This thesis investigates one aspect of Paul's God-languages, namely, Paul's divine designations of θεός in his letter to the Romans. By comparing and contrasting Paul's designations with his Jewish and pagan contemporaries, this thesis argues that Paul creatively reinterprets and adapts the socio-linguistic resources of divine epithets to justify for the incorporation of Gentiles in God's salvation. Despite a presumed or neglected "preconceived understanding" of Paul's God in Pauline scholarship, this study begins with an observation that Paul's divine designations are neither ordinary nor preceded in Jewish tradition. Inspired by a systemic-functional linguist, Jay Lemke's model of thematic meaning, divine designations are taken as sociolinguistic phenomenon. The meanings of Paul's designations are first studied in the respective arguments in Romans. Then, they are compared to the recurrent linguistic patterns of divine epithets found in the OT, early Jewish, and pagan texts.

Although exact parallels of Paul's designations are absent in Jewish tradition, striking linguistic resemblance is found between Greco-Roman texts and Romans. Paul does not make up these epithets out of nothing, nevertheless, their thematic meanings divert from its pagan usage. Paul's designations in Romans trace God's essential salvific activities that allows for the incorporation of Gentiles.

While God is the Father of Davidic kings in the OT, God's Fatherhood (Rom 1:7; 6:4; 8:15; 15:6) is reinterpreted in terms of his redeeming acts on the cross. Yet, the Father's promise concerning Israel's blessing of adoption is not redirected but expanded to the Gentiles. As for εἷς ὁ θεός (3:30), Paul contends the impartiality of the one God who justifies Jews and Gentiles alike on the same basis of faith. Besides the scope of God's justifying activities, four interconnected designations in 4:5, 17b, 24 are employed to justify the place of the ἔθνη in Abraham's family, Paul's mission as well as God's eschatological kingdom. In Romans 9: 12, 16, the designations highlight God's incongruous call and mercy are what constitute, create, and sustain Israel from the beginning. In Romans, the same divine call and mercy incorporate Gentiles into God's community of salvation in the same way. In 15:5, the theological vision of divine ὑπομονῆς and παρακλήσεως illustrates a transformation from judgmental divisive minds into one conformed mind. The result of unified worship is confirmed in "the God of hope", configuring God's eschatological hope for the

Gentiles (15:13). In the last two designations ὁ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης (15:33; 16:20a), Paul reassures that any threats to the community of God's people will be ultimately "pacified" by the conquering warrior God.

For Paul, the God of Israel, especially in the OT and Romans, never falters in fulfilling his role as the Father, redeemer, justifier, reviver, mercy-giver, and warrior to create, rescue, and restore his people. However, compared with his Jewish and pagan contemporaries, Paul's designations put special emphasis on the inclusion of ἔθνη in God's universal salvation community.

Lay summary

This study investigates Paul's different ways of characterizing "God" in his letter to the Romans. By comparing and contrasting Paul's designations with his Jewish and pagan contemporaries, this thesis argues that Paul creatively reinterprets and adapts the socio-linguistic resources of divine epithets to justify for the incorporation of Gentiles in God's salvation. Although Paul's understanding of God is often presumed or neglected in Pauline scholarship, this study begins with an observation that Paul's divine designations are neither ordinary nor preceded in the OT or Jewish tradition. Although exact parallels of Paul's designations are absent in Jewish tradition, striking linguistic resemblance is found between Greco-Roman texts and Romans. Paul does not make up these epithets out of nothing, nevertheless, Paul's meanings and usages divert from its pagan counterpart. It is found that Paul's designations, One (3:30) Father (1:7; 6:4; 8:15; 15:6) God, the Life Giving God (4:5, 17b, 24), the God who calls and has mercy (9:12, 16), and the God of "virtues" (15:5, 13, 33; 16:20a), trace God's essential salvific activities that allows for the incorporation of Gentiles. For Paul, the God of Israel, especially in the OT and Romans, never falters in fulfilling his role as the Father, redeemer, justifier, reviver, mercy-giver, and warrior to create, rescue, and restore his people. However, compared with Jewish tradition, Paul's designations put special emphasis on the inclusion of Gentiles in God's plan of salvation.

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List of Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible
ANRW	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i>
ATR	<i>Anglican Theological Review</i>
BECNT	Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
BDAG	<i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . Edited by W. Bauer and F. W. Danker. (Chicago; London: University of Chicago, 1979).
BNZW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
BSac	<i>Bibliotheca Sacra</i>
BThZ	Berliner Theologische Zeitschrift
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CBQMS	Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
DNTB	<i>Dictionary of New Testament Background</i>
DPL	<i>Dictionary of Paul and His Letters</i> . Edited by Gerald F. Hawthorne and Ralph P. Martin. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1993).
ExpT	<i>Expository Times</i>
HNTC	Harper's New Testament Commentaries
HTR	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
ICC	International Critical Commentary
JBL	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
JECS	<i>Journal of Early Christian Studies</i>
JETS	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
JETS	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
JSNT	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament—Supplement Series
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament—Supplement Series
JSJSup	Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism
JTI	<i>Journal of Theological Interpretation</i>
JTS	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LNTS	Library of New Testament Studies
LSTS	Library of Second Temple Studies
Neot	<i>Neotestamentica</i>
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
NovT	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NovTSup	Novum Testamentum: Supplements Series
NTL	New Testament Library
NTS	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
OTL	Old Testament Library
SBL	<i>Society of Biblical Literature</i>
SBLMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SBLSP	<i>Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers</i>
SBTh	<i>Studia Biblica et Theologica</i>
SEG	<i>Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum</i>
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SJT	<i>Scottish Journal of Theology</i>

SPS	Sacra Pagina Series
ST	<i>Studia Theologica</i>
SVTP	Studia in Veteris Testamenti Pseudepigrapha
TDNT	<i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> . Edited by Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. 10 volumes. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–1976).
TDOT	<i>Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament</i> . Edited by G.J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren. Translated by J.T. Willis, G.W. Bromiley, and D.E. Green. 8 volumes. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974–).
TynBul	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>
VT	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZNW	<i>Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche</i>

Bible Versions and Translations

ESV	English Standard Version
KJV	The King James Version
LXX	The Septuagint
MT	Masoretic text
NA28	Nestle-Aland, 28th edition
NAB	The New American Bible
NIV	New International Version
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
REB	Revised English Bible

Part I

Chapter 1

Introduction

“I am [in your world].” said Aslan. “But there I have another name. You must learn to know me by that name.”

C. S. Lewis, *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*¹

Paul’s understanding of God is one of the aspects of his theology that is always “taken-for-granted” because of a “preconceived general understanding.”² Accordingly, there is nothing noteworthy or distinctive in Paul’s presentation of God, in short, it is suggested that Paul’s God is “Jewish through and through”.³ “For more than a generation, direct references to God in the NT are overlooked by a majority of New Testament scholars. What is more, detailed and comprehensive investigations of statements about God in the NT are in the same way neglected. Whereas a number of major works and monographs deal with Christology (or ecclesiology, eschatology, etc.) of the NT, it is hard to find any comprehensive or penetrating study of the theme “God in the NT.”⁴ Although written more than four decades ago, Dahl’s statement is still valid and not over exaggerated as far as Paul’s divine designations in Romans are concerned. Despite the proposed assumption, how “Jewish” are Paul’s ways of designating God? In his letters, nowhere does Paul refer to God in some of the conventional ways in the LXX, such as “the God of Israel” (e.g. Matt 15:31; Luke 1:68), or the “God of Abraham” or the “God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob” (e.g. Mark 12:26; Acts 3:13; 7:32) or the “God of our fathers” (e.g. Acts 3:13; 7:32).⁵ What is

¹ Lewis (1987: 216).

² Lindemann (1979: 358) summarises the tendency of presuppositions about God in New Testament scholarship, “the idea that one cannot in the end provide a distinctively Christian understanding of God, but that Christian language about God must, basically, be concentrated on inscribing specifically Christian features on to a preconceived general understanding of God.”

³ Dunn (1998: 29).

⁴ Dahl (1991: 154).

⁵ Gaventa (2010: 256 n. 9) makes this perceptive observation and gives a list of references from the LXX illustrating the frequent designation of “God of Israel” and other related epithets. God of Israel appears frequently in the LXX (e. g., Exod 24:10; Josh 7:13; Ezra 1:3; Jud 4:12; 6:21; 10:1; Tob 13:17; 2 Macc 9:5; Sir 47:18; Isa 41:17; 45:3; Jer 16:9; Bar 2:11) and also in early Jewish and Christian texts (e. g., 4Q502 610; 4Q512 16 XII, 2; 1QM VI, 6; XV, 13; 4Q491 810 I, 2; 4Q492 1 I, 12; Prot. Jas. 6.2; 14.2; 16.2; 4 Bar. 6.20; *JosAs.* 7.5.2). God of Abraham (or God of Jacob or of Isaac) also appears regularly in the LXX (e. g., Gen 28:13; 32:10; Ps 23:6; 45:7, 12; 74:10; 83:9; Isa 2:3).

more, how “ordinary” it is when God is characterised as τὸν δικαιούντα τὸν ἀσεβῆ “the one justifying the ungodly” in Rom 4:5 and τὸν ἐγείραντα Ἰησοῦν τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν ἐκ νεκρῶν “the one who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead” in Rom 4:24? Besides, abstract nouns which are seldom associated with God in the LXX such as ἀγάπη, ἐλπίς, and εἰρήνη are used repeatedly by Paul as genitive modifiers characterising θεός in Romans. For instance, in the letter’s concluding sections, ὁ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης “the God of peace” (Rom 15:33; 16:20; cf. Phil 4:9; 1 Thess 5:23) and ὁ δὲ θεὸς τῆς ἐλπίδος “the God of hope” (Rom 15:15 cf. 2 Cor 13:11) are used. Thus, hardly are Paul’s enticing divine designations “nothing special”. Instead of starting with an assumption that Paul’s concept of God is conventional, this study specifically looks into Paul’s divine designations with the following guiding questions in mind. What are the function and purpose of these designations in Romans? Are these designations Paul’s innovations or his appropriations? How do Paul’s designations for God align with or divert from his Jewish and pagan contemporaries?

The following introduction provides an overview of the subject under investigation and clarifies methodological considerations. This study attempts to fill the lacuna of a neglected aspect of Paul’s theo-logy, namely, Paul’s divine designations in his letter to the Romans. First, the science of onomastics will be briefly explained to pave the way for further discussion. It will be clarified that Paul’s divine designations will be studied as linguistic phenomenon rather than theological concepts. The methodology employed is generally historical-critical, with a particular focus on philology and sociolinguistics. A modern sociolinguistic insight from Jay Lemke’s intertextual thematic theory will then be introduced and used in complementary to traditional biblical exegesis. The thematic meaning of Paul’s designations in Romans will be studied with reference to the intertextual background of recurring linguistic pattern of similar divine designations in Jewish and pagan texts. Also, the purpose and function of Paul’s designations will be discussed. This study attempts to contribute to the discussion of Gentile problem by examining the connections between Paul’s divine designations and the themes of salvation-historical or eschatological fulfilment, and the inclusion of Gentiles. An outline of this research will conclude the chapter.

1.1 Onomastics and divine designations

“What is in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet...”⁶

In the famous Shakespeare play about two young lovers caught in between their feuding families, the Capulets and the Montagues, Juliet reflects on the absurdity of names— a rose retains the same aroma regardless of how it is named, and so does Romeo. Although Juliet renders the connection between a verbal designation and its corresponding reality inconsequential in the romance, what the lovers dismissed is retained and greatly valued in antiquity regarding the names of deities.

Onomastic science has pursued the psychology of naming from expected areas such as family-names, ethnonyms, toponyms to the unexpected like naming of pleasure boats, pharmacies, and race-horses.⁷ From the anthropological perceptive, names communicate ideas of the self and the relationship between self and others.⁸ For instance, the naming of newborns and children ensures “their very existence as well as their identity.”⁹ A name was not merely “any convenient collocation of sounds would function as well as any other to identify a person, place or thing”, rather in the Bible, names often carry enormous significance. Names can provide insights into a person’s character, social location, or future, or the way in which other perceive the person, in short, they ‘connote’ the very essence of a person.¹⁰ The profound connection between the name and the personality of its bearer is exemplified in the tales of Nabal (1 Sam 25:25), Esau and Jacob (Gen 27: 36, 32:28), the many names of Jesus’ disciple Simon, Bar Yonah, Peter, Cephas (e.g. Mark 3:18; 6:3; cf. 14:3; 15:21, etc).¹¹ The same applies to divine names.¹²

The question of the meaning of “names” has also been a long standing philosophical and linguistic problem. In Plato’s dialogue *Cratylus*, naming functions as a craft comparable to cutting or weaving, where “things” are divided according to

⁶ Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, act. II, sc. ii.

⁷ E.g., Hough and Izdebska (2016).

⁸ Goodenough (1965: 275).

⁹ Sawyer (2006: 2672).

¹⁰ Bohmbach (2000: 33); Byrne (2009: 334–49). For instance, in the OT, the name “Isaiah” would have been fully understandable to Israelites as “the Lord saves.” Therefore, examination of the linguistic derivation and etymology is well founded.

¹¹ Bockmuehl (2004: 58–80).

¹² Mettinger (1988: 11–13).

their natures (388b-c). Plato's Socrates goes on to elaborate on etymology¹³ by various examples such as the names of Greek gods. For example, "Hermes" is an appropriate and beautified name originates from "Eiremes". It means a god "who contrived speech εἶρειν ἐμήσατο" because εἶρειν denotes "the use of speech" and ἐμήσατο means "contrive".¹⁴ Philo likewise applies Plato's theory in his description of Adam's naming the creatures in the Garden of Eden.¹⁵ Adam's appellations are "correct" as they bring out "clearly the traits of the creatures who bore them" corresponding to God's ideas for them. The name giving narrative illustrates the interrelatedness between naming and reality in ancient Semitic culture. It is further complicated regarding names of God. Plato's Socrates expresses the difficulty of "naming the unnameable":

By Zeus, Hermogenes, we, if we are sensible, must recognize that there is one most excellent kind, since of the gods we know nothing, neither of them nor of their names, whatever they may be, by which they call themselves, for it is clear that they use the true names.¹⁶

It is apparently beyond the scope of this study to discuss the epistemological issue of knowing God, yet investigation of divine designations is not impeded.

1.2 *Gottesbild* and *Gottesvorstellung*

Although God-language is a common term in constructive theology and philosophical discourse,¹⁷ it is less frequently used in biblical studies.¹⁸ It is thus important to first clarify a fundamental issue in this study, what does it mean to study the "God-language" contained in Paul's writings? Tryggve Mettinger, who investigates divine names and epithets in the OT philologically and historically, begins his discussion with the following statement: "the study of the *Gottesbild* of Ancient Israel or of the Old Testament is a more difficult undertaking than is often realised."¹⁹

¹³ The Etymology of the *Cratylus* is distinct from etymology in the modern sense which offers non-evaluative, largely evolutionary accounts of the origins of words. See commentary of Sedley (2003: 3, 68). Ancient etymology in the *Cratylus* evidently amounted to a proof of the correctness of a name (Barney, 2001: 49).

¹⁴ Plato, *Cratylus*, 408A–B.

¹⁵ Philo, *De opificio mundi*, 149, "So Moses says that God brought all the animals to Adam, wishing to see what appellation he would assign to them..."

¹⁶ Plato, *Cratylus*, 400D.

¹⁷ E.g., Gilkey (1969).

¹⁸ Although Richardson (1994) uses the term "God-language" in the title, the term itself is not clearly defined. Probably, the word "language" is chosen because of his grammatical and linguistic approach.

¹⁹ Mettinger (1989: 135).

According to Mettinger, *inter alia*, the difficulty could be attributed to a conglomeration between *Gottesvorstellung* and *Gottesbild*.²⁰ Borrowing these terms from Tord Olsson, a scholar of comparative religion, Mettinger draws a distinction between *Gottesvorstellung* — “the mental concept, what was thought about the deity”, and *Gottesbild* — “the express form in which the concept is communicated in texts (language), rites (gesture and body language), and iconography (art).”²¹ The latter (*Gottesbild*) is a more concrete object for a philological study whereas the former (*Gottesvorstellung*) involves higher level of abstraction looking into one’s various conceptions of God. As a result, to study the *Gottesbild* rather than the *Gottesvorstellung* is to study the concrete form and language of a text, which represents individual’s attempt to communicate one’s ideas and thoughts of God, or to achieve and construct new experience of God. Paul’s *Gottesbild*, here limited to the God-language of divine names and epithets in the letter of Romans, is the subject of this study.

This distinction between the actual text and the conceptions of God is helpful and necessary for this study.²² “The divine names are symbols” communicating God in terms of categories drawn from the world of human experience.²³ Following Mettinger’s lead, this study looks into the text’s own formulation of each name instead of imposing theological abstractions and categorisations upon the text. On top of that, the broad, historical, cultural system of commonplaces linked with each designation will be studied.

“Theology is God-language, and within this special territory of language vocabulary has a function, his names have their peculiar connotations and interpretive power.”²⁴ In this thesis, the way Paul names God is chosen as a vantage point from

²⁰ Olsson (1985: 42): 42–63; Mettinger (1988: xi, 204) explains his epistemological assumption. It is likened to a two-story house. The first floor consists of what was understood by the original tradents (historical grammatical study of texts), and the second floor consists of God’s overarching intentions, which conceivably go beyond what the original prophet intended in the historical situation. His study resides on the first floor. Studying God’s divine name is Mettinger’s way to seek to know who God is.

²¹ Mettinger (1989: 135–36).

²² Although Klingbeil (1999:23–24) also uses Mettinger’s categories in his study about God’s warrior imagery, he cautiously raised a concern about whether the relationship between *Gottesbild* and *Gottesvorstellung* is so clear-cut and whether it is possible to understand the *Gottesbild* without activating the *Gottesvorstellung*.

²³ Mettinger (1988: 1–2).

²⁴ Macquarrie (1974: 90), “Theologie ist Gott–Rede, und innerhalb dieses besonderen Gebiets der Rede hat das theologische Vokabular eine Funktion, haben seine Namen ihre eigentümlichen Konnotationen und interpretative Kraft.”

which we make our observations. It should be noted that the exclusivity of divine designations is not assumed. Rather, it is supplementary to other perspectives in view of a comprehensive Pauline theology. However, by exploring the basic but indispensable question of Paul's designations of God, this study dedicates to an aspect of Paul's "*theo*-logy" in his God-language. With the help of a focused and comprehensive analysis of Paul's divine designations, our grasp of Paul's understanding of God in Romans could be sharpened.

1.3 A social dialect of early Christianity

"Let us inquire what thought men had in giving them their names; for in that there is no impiety."²⁵ In spite of the unknowability of God and the epistemological limit of human understanding, the possibility of studying divine designations is affirmed. As Socrates continues the conversation in *Cratylus*, "but there is a second kind of correctness, that we call them, as is customary in prayers, by whatever names and patronymics are pleasing to them, since we know no other (400e)." The ways of invoking God in the customs of prayers is not only epistemological or philosophical, it belongs to the "social dialect"²⁶ or "shared repertoire"²⁷ of language of a group.

The divine names are indeed symbols. The inventory of symbols changed from time to time in continuous dialogue with the challenges of experience and early Christians' social existence.²⁸ The ways of invoking God's names in the custom of prayers is one aspect of this shared repertoire. Language in the sociolinguistic sense not only expresses beliefs, it plays a critical role in shaping and constituting the picture of reality which the group inhabited.²⁹ These sociolinguistic concepts have been applied to the NT in recent years to argue that early Christian communities created and developed a social dialect:

²⁵ Plato, *Cratylus*, 400 d—e.

²⁶ A social dialect is a dialect – a configuration of phonetic, phonological, grammatical and lexical features – that is associated with, and stands as a symbol for, some more roles objectively definable social group (Halliday, 1978: 159).

²⁷ Wenger (1998:82) explicates the concept with the example of medical terms for claim processing in insurance groups, "the repertoire includes routines, words, tools, ways of login things, stories, gestures, symbols, genres, actions or concepts that the community has produced or adopted in the course of its existence, and which have become part of its practice."

²⁸ Mettinger (1988: 203–4) suggests that the situation of exilic captivity no doubt contributed to the prophet of Consolation's choice of "the Redeemer".

²⁹ Halliday (1978: 1, 154–92).

The very earliest Christians developed their own “in-house” language patterns, partly on the basis of Scripture, especially the Septuagint, partly in the light of their distinctive Christian convictions, but partly by way of modifying contemporary “street” language. In this way they developed their own ‘social dialect’, and in turn this was very influential on their self-understanding and their worldview. They did not, however, develop a wholly new language. If they had done so, obviously evangelism would have been impossible.³⁰

Stanton succinctly summarises the linguistic innovation of early Christian “in-house” language in his study of the term τὸ εὐαγγέλιον (eg. Phil 1:5, 7, 12, 16, 27) and its “shorthand” terms such as ὁ λόγος (eg. 1 Thess 1:6, 8; 2:13), ἡ ἀγγελία (eg. 1 John 1:5). The peculiarity is less the coining of neologism, but more frequently examples of unusual grammar, strange idioms, or novel ways in the use of standard terms. A new “convert” entering into the Christian community would then need to learn the language, because some familiar words are used in different or perhaps puzzling ways shaping one’s worldview.³¹ Meeks likewise notes “the language of belonging” for Pauline churches was inherited from Judaism and the “translate Greek” of the Septuagint, but that very quickly the Pauline Christians developed their own slogans and patterns of speech that distinguished them from other Jewish groups as well as from the general environment.³² Meeks acknowledges not just the shared *context* of beliefs “but also shared *forms* by which the beliefs are expressed are important in promoting cohesiveness.”³³ Once again, the importance of the textual form (*Gottesbild*) is underscored from the perspective of sociolinguistic repertoire of early Christianity. Pursuing the interests of Stanton and Meek’s interests in early Christian language, one limited but important dimension of this social dialect will be investigated, namely, Paul’s designations of God in the letter of Romans. What are the meanings and functions of different designations in Paul’s argument in Romans? Drawing upon the sociolinguistic inventory of divine epithets, how does Paul adopt or adapt the tradition or background in response to his situation and purpose? How do

³⁰ Stanton (2002: 51–52); Mitchell (1994: 63–88); Barclay (2011: 205–15).

³¹ Decades ago in Betz’s (1979: 27–28) commentary on Galatians, he identifies thirty five phrases, mostly prepositional phrases, as “theological abbreviations”. For instance, compact phrases like as κατὰ ἀνθρώπου (Gal 1:11; 3:15), ἐξ ἐργων νόμου (Gal 2:16; 3:2, 5, 10) and ἐν χάριτι (Gal 1:6) need some explanation could be seen as part of Pauline Christianity’s social dialect. See also Trebilco (2011: 11).

³² Meeks (1983: 94).

³³ Meeks (1983: 93).

Paul's divine designations shape or being shaped by the conceptual worlds of Jewish and pagan religions?

1.4 Designations of God: a working definition

While a range of terminologies can be used regarding this subject, for instances, “names”, “designations”, “characterisations”, “epithets”, “references”. etc., it is necessary to first clarify the subject matter and working definition before analysing.

Despite the wide range of designations Paul used, all designations selected for our discussion are mono-referential,³⁴ in other words, they are descriptions of “the Jewish/ Christian God”. However, the phenomenon of divine designations at least in the letter to the Romans and that of human proper names are poles apart. The central term θεός is a generic term and the majority of divine designations are collocations or compounds that carry meaning through juxtaposition. Crépin described these collocations as “galactic” systems:

Therefore, references to God are not confined to a few substantives; rather, they are centres of galactic systems. The centre may concentrate the semantic load of a whole clause; it may attract important notions, and these notions, in their turn, may form new centres.³⁵

Linguistic insights on person reference might explicate our definition of Paul's “designations of God”. Searle explains how *names* work differently from *descriptions*. He says, “Suppose we ask, ‘Why do we have proper names at all?’ Obviously, to refer to individuals. ‘Yes, but descriptions could do that for us.’ But only at the cost of specifying identity conditions every time reference is made.”³⁶ A functional difference is drawn between *names* and *descriptions* by Sacks and Schegloff.³⁷ Simply put, *names* are a relatively “absolute” frame of reference because once it is given, whether they connote particular attributes of the individual or not, they are stable and they are generally taken to be doing nothing other than “referring”. On the contrary, *descriptions* are “relative” frame of reference. “When speakers make use of a novel description (e.g. the girl who wears orange) or identify the individual through a

³⁴ The disputed reference in Rom 9:5 ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων θεός will be excluded from our selection. Thus, this study is situated at a different field from other studies about divine designations shared by God and Jesus Christ in Paul's writings. See Capes (1992) for an analysis of Paul's quotation of scriptures about YHWH texts with reference to Jesus Christ in Rom 10:13; 1 Cor 1:31; 10:21, 22, (26); 2 Cor 3:16; 3:18; 10:17.

³⁵ Crépin (1992: 107).

³⁶ Searle (1963: 154–61).

³⁷ Schegloff (1996: 439).

possessed kin relation (e.g. my aunt) or other sort of triangulation (e.g. Roger's lawyer), they are openly choosing some attributes to pick out, or one of the possible attributes or kin relations to explicitly associate the individual with."³⁸ The category of *descriptions*, instead of *names*, are our concern.

Regarding person or participant reference, the linguistic phenomenon of *descriptions* is not uncommon in the NT. Runge refers to them as overspecifications (e.g. Eph 3:9 "God who created all things" τῷ θεῷ τῷ τὰ πάντα κτίσαντι, Matt 6:6 "the father of you who [is] in secret and the father of you who sees in secret" τῷ πατρί σου τῷ ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ· καὶ ὁ πατήρ σου ὁ βλέπων ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ).³⁹ Overspecifications go beyond just trying to identify "who is doing what to whom". It attempts to provide more information than it is needed for identification. Reiterating this known information moves the reader to think about the particular participant in a particular way at that particular point in the discourse.⁴⁰ The question of why these overspecified designations are formulated in such ways should not be neglected. Although a range of lexical terms are involved in Paul's divine designations in Roman, it does not aim at discovering the meaning of the generic term θεός nor looking into all possible lexical meanings of the words Paul used in his designations. Instead, Paul's reasons for characterising God at certain point of his argument will be the focus. In other words, what does Paul contend with the designations?

The meaning of a word or designation does not come from something inherent in itself, but from its relation to other words surrounding it and its sociolinguistic environment.⁴¹ It is this linguistic co-text that determines how that word is being used.⁴² Therefore, understanding the "context" then includes not just investigating a particular passage in which a term is used, but also the ways in which such a term is currently understood by both the author, the author's and the addressees' community or communities.⁴³ Thus, both the immediate context in the letter and the wider co-text of Paul's sociolinguistic convention of designating God will be studied. Research will

³⁸ Stivers, Enfield, and Levinson (2007: 17).

³⁹ Runge (2010: 256) further identifies some examples of overspecifications from other Greek texts like 1 Clement in the Apostolic Fathers (1 Clement 59:3; 64:1).

⁴⁰ Runge (2010: 254).

⁴¹ Hasan and Cloran (1990: 66–99).

⁴² Louw and Nida (1989: xvii); Dyer (2017: 64).

⁴³ Morgan (2015: 31–34).

be limited to linguistic resources from the first century or earlier to avoid anachronistic findings. By surveying different ways of designating God or deities, one can compare and contrast the semantic specificities (Paul's ways of divine designations in Romans) with the wider patterns of thought and praxis (divine designations of Paul's contemporaries): *l'histoire des mentalités*.

1.5 Methodologies

This study addresses three questions, simply put,

- 1) What do Paul's designations mean?
- 2) How special or conventional are Paul's ways of characterising God?
- 3) What theological outlook is Paul presenting with his designations in Romans?

The approach adopted in this study is rather conventional to the disciplines of biblical studies and Jewish studies. It will be historical-critical, philological, and literary with particular linguistic concern, namely, the linguistic phenomenon of divine designations. Contrary to other similar treatments of our subject, it should be underscored that our perspective belongs to the category of Paul's God-language instead of Pauline theology. Studies about individual titles or Paul's overall "ideas" or theology are familiar to students of Paul, the linguistic phenomenon of divine designations, however, is generally neglected.⁴⁴ For example, many have engaged in the complex discussion of "monotheism", with reference to all "monotheistic" statements in the NT,⁴⁵ however, a careful analysis of the ancient linguistic pattern of the predicate construction εἷς ὁ θεός (Rom 3:30) remains an unfulfilled task. Also, instead of tracing the grand concept of divine fatherhood, the linguistic pattern of modifying ὁ θεός with the appositional title πατήρ (Rom 1:7; 6:4; 8:15; 15:6) has not been analysed. Likewise, numerous proposals have been suggested for meta-concepts of the Pauline doctrine of δικαιοσύνη,⁴⁶ but an investigation of the linguistic pattern of δικαιόω τινά "God justifying someone" (Rom 4:5) has not been undertaken. Indebted to nineteenth-century German idealism, *inter alia*, the fact that Paul's God-

⁴⁴ See chapter 2.

⁴⁵ E.g. Nicholson (2011); Klumbies (1992); Hays (2005: 36–7); Hofius (1989: 177–80); Hurtado (1988: 97); idem. (2003: 114); McGrath (2009: 38–44).

⁴⁶ See chapter 4.

language as linguistic phenomenon is widely missed by interpreters.⁴⁷ Our particular interest in the linguistic pattern used to characterise (ὁ) θεός, and the “intertextual” nature of our subject matter demands a method with more linguistic inputs.⁴⁸ The linguistic phenomenon of divine designations will be situated within the sociolinguistic orientation of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). A useful insight from a modern systemic-functional linguist, namely, Jay Lemke’s sociolinguistic analysis will be used as a guiding principle in addition to historical critical exegetical methods commonly used in the discipline of biblical studies.

Lemke’s model of intertextual thematic analysis has been used recently in NT biblical studies and generated productively results,⁴⁹ nevertheless, given our subject of investigation, several concepts instead of the entire model will be employed. First, the concept of “thematic meaning” is useful. For Lemke, no utterance, no text means in isolation: all meaning is intertextual. Intertextuality is defined as “the recurrent discourse and activity patterns of the community and how they are constituted by, instanced in, and interconnected or disjoined through particular texts”.⁵⁰ Thus, as he explains, “lexical choices are always made against the background of their history of use in the community, they carry the “freight” of their associations with them.”⁵¹ He then explains “lexical” and “use” meanings, the former refers to the meaning-potential of a word and meanings, and the latter refers to the far richer and more complex nuances of fully contextualised meaning. Yet, he underscores “thematic meaning”, which is the meaning the word realizes in a recurrent discourse pattern that is familiar in many texts.⁵² Lemke explains this phenomenon within a social meaning-making system, which is contextualized by the particular practices of a community.⁵³ To put

⁴⁷ See further (Novenson 2012: 12–33). Although Novenson’s subject is Christ language, the influence of German idealism in biblical studies is indeed sweeping (Frei, 1980: 202–32).

⁴⁸ See below for Lemke’s (1995: 85–114) broader definition of “intertextuality”. To anticipate the conclusion, Lemke theory has a different concern than the analysis of linear adoption of one text in another nor the post-modern concept of intertextuality, which are commonly found recently in New Testament studies (Xue, 2015: 26–40).

⁴⁹ Xue (2015: 25–45); idem (2016: 277–308).

⁵⁰ Lemke (1995a: 86).

⁵¹ Lemke (1992: 85).

⁵² Lemke (1995a: 89).

⁵³ The theoretical assumption of Lemke’s model relies on Mikhail Bakhtin’s (1981: 289–90; 1986: 91) social theory of discourse, in particular the concepts of “heteroglossia” and “dialogism”. The former refers to the multitude of other ‘voices’ in the world that express different ideological points of view, and the latter explains that when language users speak or write, their words mean against this

it in his own words, “each community ... has its own system of intertextuality: its own habits of deciding which texts should be read in the context of which others, and why, and how.”⁵⁴ In other words, thematic meaning is realised in the recurrent discourse pattern that is familiar in many cothematically related texts.⁵⁵ For instance, “warm/cool” are antonyms lexical-wise, however, they are not necessarily in contrasting sense when they are in different thematic formations or discursive formations as in “a warm/cool day” vs. “a warm/cool look”.⁵⁶ Recurrent patterns in a text, in our case the linguistic patterns used to designate God in Romans, can be brought into dialogue with recurrent patterns in the culture (similar patterns of divine designations in Jewish and pagan religious texts). Thus, comparing and contrasting to his Jewish and pagan counterparts are essential to understanding the thematic meanings of Paul’s designations.

Apart from “thematic meanings” and “recurrent linguistic patterns”, Lemke’s theory also looks for the social purpose reflected in these elements of grammatical resources.⁵⁷ “The primary function of language, and of all semiosis, is to create, sustain and change social reality.”⁵⁸ The intertextual thematic formation “abstracts from a set of thematically related texts their common semantic patterns insofar as these mattered to a particular community for a particular set of social purpose.”⁵⁹ Recurring linguistic patterns entail “social dynamics with diverse social interests and points-of-view [which] speak with distinct voices that proclaim different thematic propositions, assign differing valuations...”⁶⁰ The social purpose of common semantic patterns are organised into two categories according to how they become oriented to social stances and values; they function either ally with or oppose them.⁶¹ It illustrates how recurrent patterns of texts used commonly in a community function to clarify meaning and promote social values. As a result, these concepts explain how Paul uses the recurring

heteroglossic backdrop, and their utterances are a reaction to them, taking them into account to affirm, refute or otherwise engage them in some way.

⁵⁴ Lemke (1995b: 9).

⁵⁵ Lemke (1995a: 89) illustrates this point with the example of “cashiered”, when it is used in a text talking a familiar language of military discipline, that we know that cashiered is related to dismissal from armed forces instead of the handling of payment.

⁵⁶ Lemke (1983): 161.

⁵⁷ Lemke (1995b: 42).

⁵⁸ Lemke (1992: 86); Cf. Fairclough (1992:96–99).

⁵⁹ Lemke (2000: 223).

⁶⁰ Lemke (1988:32).

⁶¹ See Lemke (1989: 40–45); idem (1995a: 99); idem (1988: 48); Xue (2016: 282–308).

linguistic pattern of divine designations in Romans to orient his audience toward adopting certain values. Not only do Lemke's concept provides a methodological control to understanding not only the lexical, but also thematic meaning of Paul's divine designations; they also consider the sociolinguistic background of Paul's Jewish and pagan contemporaries. The value orientation and social purpose of Paul's designations are also addressed.

The last reason brings to the front another pressing question highly relevant to this study. What is Paul's social purpose with the divine designations? What social value is Paul promoting with the recurring linguistic pattern of divine designations in Romans? Is Paul aligning with or opposing the social values attached to Jewish or pagans' intertextual thematic formations of divine designations?

1.6 The Gentile question

"Paul is not a philosopher seeking to articulate general truths about God's character; rather, he is a missionary timelessly telling the story of the one God's astounding specific acts of self-giving grace."⁶² This study about Paul's God-language is not interested in investigating God's immanent attributes or dispositions.⁶³ Instead, our socio-linguistic interest lies in what God does, and specifically, what God does to his people. Paul's divine designations show how God is in relation to His world and His people.

To anticipate our conclusion, this study contends that Paul's divine designations are used to justify his mission to Gentiles. By characterising God in specific ways, the pagans' apostle is orienting his audience to adopting the value of inclusion of Gentiles.⁶⁴ Before analysing Paul's purpose of divine designations, it will be helpful first to identify the Gentile problem briefly in Paul's scholarship.

In response to the landmark study of Sanders, Donaldson points out that there is a need for a detail analysis of Paul's justification and approach to his Gentile mission. In his own words, "I propose, then, to investigate Paul's statements about the Gentiles in order to determine the nature of his basic convictions about their salvation, the place of these convictions within his basic system of conventions, and the origin of this

⁶² Hays (2002: 124).

⁶³ Watson (2000: 105).

⁶⁴ Fredriksen (2017).

conviction in the trajectory of his life experience from Pharisee to apostle.”⁶⁵ Donaldson identifies six elements in Paul’s convictional system contributing to our understanding of Paul’s Gentile mission, namely, God, generic humanity, the Torah, Christ, Israel, and Paul’s apostolic call.⁶⁶ The first element is most relevant to our concern. Paul’s conviction of God is elaborated in terms of oneness, impartiality, righteousness, and potential scriptural basis with reference to the Gentile mission.⁶⁷ Donaldson’s contribution is significant and inspiring as he pioneers to explore how Paul’s conception of God relates to the apostle’s mission to the Gentiles. Insufficient though Donaldson’s answer might be, a new course into uncharted seas is opened. Fredriksen asks a similar question, “where are Gentiles in God’s plan of salvation?” Fredriksen concludes they are found in lots of places in early Jewish apocalyptic eschatology.⁶⁸ Especially in the exilic and postexilic prophets, Gentiles, far from being destroyed by God, actually participate in the blessedness of the age to come, not as proselytes but as Gentiles. Fredriksen argues Paul understands himself to be living at the dawn of the new age inaugurated on the resurrection of Jesus. Thus, his Gentile mission is his effort to bring about “the double redemption: Israel (both the living and the dead) returns from exile, and the Gentiles turn from idolatry.... [But] the nations do not thereby become Jews.”⁶⁹ Novenson later engages in the discussion and suggests the possibility of looking beyond a limit set of eschatological pilgrimage texts. Paul’s citation of Isa 11:10 (in relation to Psalm 18 [17 LXX]) in Rom 15:12 is discussed as with reference the Gentile question. As one of the royal-ideology texts, it is envisioned that the Davidic messiah will rule over the pagan nations in addition to the imagery of Gentiles streaming to Zion worship YHWH. “The Gentiles are to be neither converted nor destroyed; rather they share in the blessedness of the age to come by virtue of their

⁶⁵ Donaldson (1997: 47).

⁶⁶ Donaldson (1997: 79–260).

⁶⁷ Donaldson (1997:81–106) argues that God, in Christ, provided a means for Gentiles to share equal status with Israel apart from Torah observance (by the “pre-Christian” Paul with Torah as the marker, by the “Christian” Paul with Christ as the boundary marker into the family of Abraham).

⁶⁸ Fredriksen (2017: 34). Cf. Donaldson also mentions the eschatological pilgrimage motif (e.g., Isa 2:2–4/ Mic 4:1–4, Isa 25:6–10a, 56: 6–8; Zech 8:20–23), where pagans will give up idol worship, stream to Zion to worship God and share in Israel’s eschatological blessings, as the precedent and justification for Paul’s mission. However, the motif is dismissed since Paul does not refer to it. According to Donaldson (1997: 101, 194), there is a “virtual absence of eschatological pilgrimage texts” in Paul’s writings.

⁶⁹ Fredriksen (1988: 83–86, citing Isa 2:2–4; 25:6; Zech 2:11; 8:20–23); see also Moxnes (1980: 78–102). Sanders (1983: 171–206).

obedience to the Davidic king of Israel.”⁷⁰ In addition to the eschatological pilgrimage texts, it is found that the messiah tradition could also be a source of answer. The review of discussion shows that a full answer to the Gentile question in Paul’s writing is pending. This study attempts to contribute to the discussion by examining the connection between Paul’s divine designations and the crucial themes of salvation-historical/ eschatological fulfilment, and the inclusion of Gentiles.⁷¹

This “radical new perspective” highlights Jewish apocalyptic eschatology to our understanding of Paul and his theo-logy. In our sociolinguistic inquiry of the meaning of various divine designations in Romans, this study also asks what purpose does Paul’s employment of these expressions serve. It should be reminded that Paul’s divine designations represent just one voice in the polyvalent beliefs about inclusion of Gentiles in Jewish apocalyptic eschatology. Why and how does Paul incorporate, develop or even create his designations of God in response to his Gentile-including gospel? How does Paul engage in the pre-existing conversation with his innovative and yet conventional divine epithets? Given the widely acknowledged prevalence of pagan deities in not only religious, social, and political life in Mediterranean cities,⁷² Greco-Roman ways of characterising deities should also be an indispensable conversation partner in reading Paul’s divine designations.⁷³ All these questions will be discussed in conjunction with the motif of the inclusion of Gentiles. The contention of this study is that by examining the sociolinguistic phenomenon of divine designations in Romans, more light will be shed on how Paul’s understanding of God converges with as well as diverges from his contemporaries.

⁷⁰ Novenson (2009: 373).

⁷¹ In this study, Yarbrough’s (2004: 297) definition of salvation history will be followed: “We may say at the outset that ‘salvation history’ denotes the personal redemptive activity of God within human history to effect his eternal saving intentions. This activity finds fulfilment in the ministry of Jesus foreshadowed in various Old Testament writings and institutions and culminating in the New Testament message of his death, resurrection, and eventual return.”

⁷² Fredriksen (2017: 33–35) states, “It was impossible to live in a Greco–Roman city without living with its gods.”

⁷³ This does not presuppose a clear separation or polarised dichotomy between the two. Instead, by comparing Paul’s designations with his Jewish and non–Jewish contemporaries, we might be able to sketch a clearer picture about Paul’s synthesis and usage of divine designations drawn from these traditions.

1.7 An overview of designations for God in Romans

The word θεός is used 430 times in Paul's seven undisputed letters,⁷⁴ and 118 times in the "contested" letters. This figure leaves out other grammatical references to "God", such as personal pronouns and implied subject of so-called "divine passive" verbs (ex. 1 Cor 15).⁷⁵ Moreover, other titles such as κύριος (e.g. Rom 4:8; 9:28; 10:12, 13, 16, 9:3, 34, 12:19, 14:11, 15:11; 1 Cor 3:20; 10:26, 28; 14:21; 2 Cor 6:18), πατήρ (e.g. Rom 6:4; 8:15; 2 Cor 6:18; Gal 4:6; 1 Thess 1:1, 3; 3:11, 13) and various participial constructions (e.g. τὸν δικαιοῦντα τὸν ἄσεβῃ, Rom 4:5) also denote "God" in contexts where the word θεός is not used. Despite the overwhelming preponderance of Paul's use of θεός, attempts to explore the meaning of Paul's use of this term have remained "a stepchild" in scholarship.⁷⁶ While there have been numerous studies about the titles and designations of Christ in the NT,⁷⁷ the designations of God, in particular Paul's language of God, have not been explored fully.

Paul's letter to the Romans is a good test case for investigation. This study follows the consensus that the letter was probably written in the mid-to late 50s by Paul from Corinth.⁷⁸ Although the purpose of the letter is contested, for some Paul's journey to Spain is the main concern,⁷⁹ whereas for others it is defending Paul's gospel to the Gentiles in Jerusalem,⁸⁰ the majority agrees the Roman congregation itself is Paul's first focus.⁸¹ Rome, in mid-first century, is an ancient city "thickly inhabited" with god(s).⁸² Therefore, it is not surprising to witness "the contestations, permutations, and combinations generated within or between any particular tradition" of ancient religions.⁸³

⁷⁴ This study follows the convention that Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians, and Philemon are the seven undisputed letters of Paul.

⁷⁵ Against Jeremias who coined the term "divine passive" verbs, Macholz (1990: 149–62) has shown that the use of the passive as a way of avoid mentioning God as the subject of actions is widely found in later of the OT (Gen 42:22, 28; Num 4:20, 26, 31, 35; 5:6, 10, 13, 16, 18, 26; 2 Kgs 18:30 Isa 36:15; Ps 18:4 2 Sam 22:4; Ps 130:4; Dan 9:9; Neh and in early Jewish literature as well (Sir 44:16, 18; 45:24; 46:8; 49:7). See also Wilson's (1921:393) article for an exhaustive table of common designation of God, Jesus Christ and the Spirit.

⁷⁶ Böttrich (1999: 59).

⁷⁷ For example, see the classic works of Cullmann (1963); Hahn (1969); Malina and Neyrey (1988).

⁷⁸ Barclay (2001: 287–308); Gaventa (2011a:93).

⁷⁹ E.g., Jewett (2007: 80–91).

⁸⁰ E.g., Jervell (1991).

⁸¹ E.g., Tobin (2004: 76–78); Watson (2007: 163–91).

⁸² The term "thickly inhabited" is borrowed from Fredriksen (2017: 33).

⁸³ Smith (2003: 21–36, here 35).

As for divine designations, out of 430 occurrences of θεός in Paul's undisputed letters, 153 (35.6%, with an average 21.51 hits per 1000 words) of them are in Romans.⁸⁴ It also has the greatest number, let alone variety, of designations for God, out of the total 71 designations, 23 (32.4%) are in Romans (See Appendix 1 for a table of all designations in Paul's undisputed writings). A variety of divine designations functions as qualifiers modifying θεός can be divided formally in terms of grammatical constructions:

1. appositional constructions (1:7, 8:6, 15:6);
2. copulative constructions (3:30);
3. participial constructions (1:25; 4:5, 17, 24; 8:11, 27, 33, 37, 9:11, 16, 26; 16:25);
4. adjectival constructions (1:23; 26, 27); and
5. genitival constructions (15:5, 13, 33, 16:20).

In accordance with their own immediate context in Paul's argument, these divine designations will be categorised into four groups and studied from chapters three to six in part II of this study. It should be noted that equal attention cannot be given to every designation. This is an unavoidable limit since every categorisation system stresses certain important significance while overlooks other details. However, the grouping is not entirely arbitrary as the designations are grouped mainly in terms of their positions in the letter and the sequence of our analysis will follow the arrangement in the letter. This study attempts to strike a reasonable balance between understanding the designations in their own contexts and thoroughly investigating the wide variety of designations used by Paul in Romans.

1.8 Outline

Part I of this study lays the groundwork for later exegetical studies of Paul's divine designations in Romans. After stating the subject of investigation and clarifying some methodological concerns in chapter 1, chapter 2 traces the history of the research

⁸⁴ Paul's frequent use of θεός in Romans is evident when compared with his undisputed letters:

<u>Letters</u>	<u>Total hits</u>	<u>Hits per 1000 words</u>
Romans	153	21.51
1Corinthians	106	15.49
2Corinthians	79	17.60
Galatians	31	13.88
Philippians	23	14.10
1Thessalonians	36	24.29
Philemon	2	5.97

question. Previous scholarly discussion about Paul's God-language in general and that particularly in Romans will be reviewed. Apart from revealing the general neglect of Paul's theo-logy as well as his divine designations, the unique approach of this study will be highlighted. Instead of starting with a more generic theological framework or focusing on certain biblical theological theme(s), this study focuses on Paul's designations of God in its own terms.

Part II comprises of four chapters. The analysis procedures are as follows: First, "thematic meaning" of each designation will be illuminated with reference to the context of Paul's argument in Romans. Next, Paul's usage will be compared and contrasted with pagan and Jewish ways of designating deities. By identifying and investigating the "recurring linguistic patterns" between Paul and his contemporaries, it will finally be shown how Paul adopts as well as adapts the sociolinguistic resource to justify his Gentile inclusive mission.

In chapter three, the designations of πατήρ (Rom 1:7; 6:4; 8:15; 15:6) and εἷς (3:30) will be analysed. The chapter will discuss whether Paul understands God as the "One universal Father" with the epithets "God the Father" and the predicate "One".⁸⁵ They will be used as test cases to see whether Paul contends for the absoluteness of God. Then, three divine designations in Romans 4:5, 17, 24 will be studied in chapter four. Situated in the narrative of the patriarch in Rom 4, the relationship between God's "operative principle" reflected in Abrahamic narrative and the Gentile problem will be explored. By identifying God as the divine one who justifies, gives life, calls, and raised, the problem of whether and how Paul's theo-logy is different from the tradition will be addressed. Two divine designations in Rom 9, namely τοῦ καλοῦντος (9:12) and τοῦ ἐλεῶντος θεοῦ (9:16), will be discussed in chapter five. The question of the selection of God's people, be it Jews or Gentiles, will be investigated. By comparing and contrasting Paul's linguistic pattern of divine καλέω and ἐλέω/ἔλεος with his contemporaries, the problem of how Paul connects God's creative actions in fashioning and refashioning God's people and divine incongruous call and mercy will be illuminated. In chapter six, various abstract nouns used in the ending sections of the letters will be examined. While some of the designations (e.g., 15:5, 13) can only be found in Romans, the designation ὁ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης (15:33; 16:20a) is usually

⁸⁵ Baur and Zeller (1873: 238) cite 1 Cor 1:8, Rom 9:5 for reference.

conceived as a regular Pauline letter ending. Paul's meaning and purpose of these divine predicates in relation to his argument, in particular the theo-logical justification for his Gentile mission, will be inspected. In the conclusion, a synthetic account will be put forth explicating Paul's overall purpose and function of his divine designations in relation to the Gentile problem in Romans.

Chapter 2

History of research

Dahl's landmark essay written more than four decades ago underscored a vital but neglect factor in NT theology, namely, God.⁸⁶ As far as studies on NT's names of God is concerned, Dahl's statement is still not over exaggerated. While there have been numerous studies about the titles and designations of Christ in the NT, the designations of God, in particular Paul's language of God, have not been explored fully. Despite the limited attention paid to Paul's divine designations,⁸⁷ various attempts have been made by scholars to approach Paul's God-language. The following section will review the past investigations in three categories: 1. a general neglect of the "God-factor"; 2. a springboard for biblical theological questions; and 3. background investigation. Without invalidating the concerns in the other two categories, this thesis employs an approach closer to the third category.

2.1 A general neglect of the "God-factor"

There is a striking neglect of the "God-factor" in the overall treatment of Pauline theology in some older NT theology textbooks.⁸⁸ Discussions about God receive marginal attention not only in terms of biblical passage covered, the topic of God is also frequently subordinated to Christology.⁸⁹ Cullman rightly comments, "early

⁸⁶ Dahl (1991: 157–60, here 154), "For more than a generation, the majority of New Testament scholars have not only eliminated direct references to God from their works but have also neglected detailed and comprehensive investigation of statements about God. Whereas a number of major works and monographs deal with Christology (or ecclesiology, eschatology, etc.) of the New Testament, it is hard to find any comprehensive or penetrating study of the theme "God in the New Testament."

⁸⁷ There are some exceptional studies concerning God's different names, predicates or titles in the NT as a whole. See Böttrich (1999) and a more recent massive study by Zimmermann (2007).

⁸⁸ For example, Kümmel (1974) devotes less than six pages to the idea of God out of three-hundred and thirty-three pages of text, which deal more with proclamation about God than with consideration of God himself. See also Ladd (1975).

⁸⁹ For example, Conzelmann (1969: 199–212, 220, 239–41) discussed only "δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ" in the anthropological context as God's gift (cf. Phil. 3:9) and "God's Saving Action in Christ." Cf. Kümmel (1974: 151–72, 196–98).

Christian theology is in reality almost exclusively Christology”.⁹⁰ Being a child of his time, Bultmann’s treatment of Paul’s theology likewise subsumes theo-logy under the category of anthropology. Against the background of metaphysical theology in the twentieth century,⁹¹ Bultmann argues “every assertion about God is simultaneously an assertion about man and vice versa. For this reason and in this sense Paul’s theology is . . . anthropology.”⁹² However, Dahl is cautious against this over-emphasis on Christology or anthropology over theo-logy. He correctly points out that Cullmann’s statement “might also be formulated the other way around.”⁹³ The prominence of God’s actions and purposes is overlooked in these Christological statements (e.g. God sending Jesus, Gal. 4:4-5; raising Jesus from death and exalting him, Acts 2: 36; 4:10; Phil 2:9-11). Hurtado shares similar vigilance, “every Christological statement is at the same time a profoundly *theological* statement as well.”⁹⁴

Apart from overplaying the importance of Christology, theo-logy is generally neglected because of an unexplained assumption that NT takes-for-granted a “continued” understanding of God from the OT. The problem of continuity in the biblical understanding of God can be traced back to the beginning of the last century. Church historian Holl proposes “I have never understood how anyone could doubt that Jesus taught a new idea of God as compared with the Old Testament.”⁹⁵ Bultmann, however, criticises Holl and argues that “Jesus’ idea of God does not essentially differ from that of the Old Testament and of Judaism...God had retreated far off into the distance as the transcendent heavenly king, and His sway over the present could barely still be made out. For Jesus, God again became *a God at hand*.”⁹⁶

⁹⁰ For Cullmann (1963: 2–3), the oldest confessional expressions in the New Testament (e.g., “Jesus is Lord”, Rom 10:9–10; 1 Cor 12:3; Phil 2:11) focused narrowly on Christ, from which the theological thinking proceeds, not from God.

⁹¹ Dahl (1991: 155–56).

⁹² Bultmann (1951: 191). It should also be noted that Bultmann also understood Christology in “anthropological” terms, Paul’s Christology is simultaneously soteriology.

⁹³ Dahl (1991: 155).

⁹⁴ Hurtado (2010: 3).

⁹⁵ Holl (1937: 17, 19), “The old idea of love was to strive to the highest good (to love as God loves), but the new idea of love is: God loves a sinner, like me, and in so doing destroys me in order to make a new creature. When Paul addresses the Romans, he assumed that Christ is already in them, in order words, Spirit infuses caritas (Rom 8:8).”

⁹⁶ Bultmann’s (1951: 22–26) five-page passage on “Jesus’ concept of God” argues for a continuity between the New Testament and Jewish concept of God. While the discussion is again not considered in its own theological categories but in terms of Jesus’ proclamation or Gospel statements of the kingdom of God, *theo-logy* is reckoned only as “prerequisites.”

Likewise, Roetzel devotes only one paragraph on God as creator, redeemer and judge. He explains away the need for explicating Paul's theologies, "like the grammar and syntax of the language he spoke they were simply taken for granted."⁹⁷ Barrett also skips the discussion of God and categorises his book with the following headings: "Reign of Evil, Law and Covenant, Grace and Righteousness, Christ Crucified, The Church, and The Holy Spirit and Ethics."⁹⁸ In *Paul and his Theology*, Fitzmyer asserts that Paul's experience near Damascus 'did not alter his fundamental commitment to the "one God", but whilst his "basic *theology* did not change, his Christology did."⁹⁹ A similar over-emphasis on the continuity can also be founded in Sanders's landmark study *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*. In order to advance his argument about shared "patterns of religion" between first century Judaism and Paul, Sanders comments on Paul's the-ology, "from him we learn nothing new or remarkable about God. God is a God of wrath and mercy, who seeks to save rather than to condemn, but rejection of whom leads to death. One could, to be sure, list further statements by Paul about God, but Paul did not spend his time reflecting on the nature of the deity."¹⁰⁰

The uncritical assumption of God is highlighted in Dunn's *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*, which identifies Romans as the best access to Paul's theology.¹⁰¹ In his words, "the problem for us, however, is that Paul's convictions about God are all too axiomatic. Because they were axioms, Paul never made much effort to expound them. They belong to the foundations of his theology and so are largely hidden from view."¹⁰² Schnelle elaborates this "axiomatic" nature and claims "Paul never reflects or asks about the existence of God, the knowledge of God belongs to his natural experience of life and shapes his understanding of reality."¹⁰³ Although Dunn opens his discussion of Paul's theology with a chapter of twenty-three pages on God, Paul's understanding of God is expressed as "taken-for-granted." Schnelle describes God as

⁹⁷ Roetzel (1999: 94).

⁹⁸ Barrett (1994: 55–142).

⁹⁹ Fitzmyer (1987: 30, 42).

¹⁰⁰ Sanders (1977: 509).

¹⁰¹ Dunn (1998: 25–26). See the critique by Kraftchick (1997:116–39).

¹⁰² Dahl argues that the problem occurs throughout all of NT scholarship, not just in Pauline studies. In his words, "When considering treatments of New Testament Christology, we note that most pay astonishingly little attention to the relationship between faith in Christ and faith in God, to the transfer of divine names, attributes, and predicates to Jesus, or to the emergence of 'trinitarian' formulations" (1991: 155).

¹⁰³ Schnelle (2005: 327).

the Lord who bring his creative purpose to completion while Dunn explicates God as sovereign, judge, and faithful to Israel.¹⁰⁴ Yet, it is asserted repeatedly that Paul's "conversion had not changed his belief in and about God," the inherited "fundamental belief of his own tradition, the belief in which he himself had been instructed from his youth, and out of which he had lived his life for as long as he could remember" is not abandoned. It is suggested that although Paul never spelled out his convictions about God, they were still "Jewish through and through" and "his most fundamental taken-for-granted remained intact."¹⁰⁵

In spite of the general neglect and uncritical assumption of Paul's theology, as far as Paul's divine designations are concerned, nowhere does Paul refer to God in typical terms such as "the God of Israel" (e.g. Matt 15:31; Luke 1:68), or the "God of Abraham" or "God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob" (e.g. Mark 12:26; Acts 3:13; 7:32) or the "God of our fathers" (e.g. Acts 3:13; 7:32).¹⁰⁶ Thus, it is necessary to put the presupposition under careful scrutiny. In the last chapter of *Our Mother Saint Paul* entitled "The God Who Will Not Be Taken for Granted", Gaventa raises incisive questions concerning Dunn's "taken-for-granted" understanding:

Yet surely these descriptors [of God] are strained when Paul speaks of the Gentiles of Thessalonica as God's beloved (1 Thess 1:4) ... or when he identifies God as the one "who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead" (Rom 4:24). How can a "taken-for-granted" God possibly justify the ungodly (Rom 4:5)? Dunn's "taken-for-granted" God provides us with scant means of understanding the repeated "now" of Paul's letter to the Romans (e.g., 3:21; 5:9, 11; 6:22; 8:1; 13:11).¹⁰⁷

The examples Gaventa cited illustrate the need to subject the assumption to more critical observation. While it might be true to say Paul was moving "within the lines already laid down by the tradition in which he stood,"¹⁰⁸ the crux of the question lies in the continuity and discontinuity of the Paul's presentation of God with the OT and Jewish texts. A comprehensive answer to the problem of continuity requires a full study of and comparison between the understandings of God in Paul's writings, the OT, and other Jewish writings, which is beyond the scope of the present study. Instead, our focus is limited but significant. Gaventa's observation highlights a nuanced but

¹⁰⁴ Schnelle (2005: 327); Dunn (1998: 31–50).

¹⁰⁵ Dunn (1998: 29).

¹⁰⁶ See chapter 1.

¹⁰⁷ Gaventa (2007: 151).

¹⁰⁸ Lindemann (1979: 359) explains it is "a new attitude to God, not a new teaching about God."

not unimportant aspect of Paul's God-language, namely, Paul's ways of characterizing θεός. To what extent are these names or epithets congruent or inconsistent with their Jewish and pagan contemporaries? It should be noted that the complexity of Paul's God-statements cannot be captured by a closed-ended "either-or" question, instead, an open-ended "to what extent" question should be asked.

2.2 A springboard for biblical theological questions

There has been a modest but gradually increasing new awareness of the theme of God in the New Testament since the 1970s.¹⁰⁹ Recently, scholars have taken heed of the "neglected God factor" and responded to Dahl's challenge of investigating the NT discourse about God. Several works have been written regarding Paul's *theo*-logy. Also, some approach Paul's God-language from various biblical theological perspectives. Examples such as Trinitarian theology, the problem of monotheism will be briefly reviewed in the following.

One of the frequently discussed questions is whether a Trinitarian theology, proto-Trinitarian theology or no Trinitarian theology could be constructed from Paul's writings. By examining all of Paul's writings,¹¹⁰ or a single text,¹¹¹ or certain passages,¹¹² various studies have been conducted to investigate the relationship between God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit in Paul's view. For instance, in Fee's massive study, *God's Empowering Presence*, he examines Paul's references to the Spirit of God and concludes Paul held a thoroughly Trinitarian understanding at the heart of his theological enterprise:

Salvation is God's activity...God the Father initiated it, in that it belongs to God's eternal purposes (1 Cor 2:6-9)...[and] ultimate goal (1 Cor 8:6), and was set in motion by his having sent both the Son and the Spirit (Gal 4:4-7). Christ to Son effected eschatological salvation for the people of God through his death and resurrection, the central feature of all Pauline theology. The effectual realisation and appropriation of the love of God...is singularly the work of the Spirit...There is no salvation in Christ which is not fully Trinitarian in this sense.¹¹³

¹⁰⁹ Hurtado (2010: 9).

¹¹⁰ Fee (2001: 218–39), and Watson (2000: 99–124).

¹¹¹ E.g., Cowan (2006: 115–35).

¹¹² E.g., Fay (2006).

¹¹³ Fee (1994: 898).

In contrast, Dunn does not go so far to assert a Trinitarian reading. Apart from his “taken-for-granted” concept of God, he acknowledges that convictions about God must have been changed by the revelation of Christ Paul received, “Paul’s belief in Christ impacted on his theology of God.”¹¹⁴ Dunn curiously speaks of several “levels” of stories, while the story of Jesus is a second story superimposed on a more fundamental story—the story of the one God of Israel—by whose contours the features of the underlying story of Israel’s God are to some degree reshaped.¹¹⁵ Watson challenges Dunn for creating this distance between Paul’s talk of God, Christ and the Spirit. He then explains the impossibility of speaking of God in Paul’s thought apart from reference to Christ and the Spirit and vice versa.¹¹⁶ Recently, Hill further develops Watson’s position. Building upon the well-known feature of the juxtaposition in Paul’s God-language and Christ-language,¹¹⁷ Hill seeks to better explain its *theological import* by arguing that the binary categories of “high” and “low” Christology are inappropriate for understanding Paul.¹¹⁸ With a focus on several frequently discussed passages about God in relation to Jesus (Rom 4:24; 8:11; Gal 1:1), Jesus in relation to God (Phil 2:5-11; 1 Cor 8:6; 15:24-28) and the Spirit (1 Cor 12:3; Gal 4:4-6; 2 Cor 3:17; Rom 1:4; 8:9-11) from Paul’s undisputed letters, Hill argues that the modern theological relational understanding of the Trinity is a better hermeneutic perspective for interpreting Paul’s theology.¹¹⁹

Apart from the vexed question of Paul’s Trinitarian theology, another similar debate relating to Paul’s God-language is located in the questions of monotheism as well as the divinity of Christ. Building upon Giblin’s article “Three Monotheistic Texts in Paul,”¹²⁰ Nicholson picks three explicit monotheistic passages in Paul’s writings (1 Cor. 8:4-6, Gal. 3:20 and Rom. 3:30) and argues that the divinity of Christ in a non-hierarchical relation to God.¹²¹ It is certain that the validity and importance of these biblical theological questions like monotheism and Trinity, cannot be denied.

¹¹⁴ Dunn (1998: 30).

¹¹⁵ Dunn (1998: 18, 713–16).

¹¹⁶ Watson (2000: 99–124).

¹¹⁷ Fee (2007: 25–27); Richardson (1994: 256–73).

¹¹⁸ Hill (2015: 51).

¹¹⁹ Hill (2015: 18–23). However, the social model for Trinity is not without problem in systematic theology.

¹²⁰ Giblin (1975: 528–47).

¹²¹ Nicholson (2011: 9).

Nevertheless, this study does not follow their leads. This investigation about Paul's divine designations does not intend to solve at once these debates about Paul's God-language. Strictly speaking, their studies are *related to* but not *fundamentally about* Paul's *Gottesbild*. In other words, they concern more about the *Gottesvorstellung* but less about the *Gottesbild*. In fact, they are significant studies about "theology" but not essential "*theo*-logy" studies. According to Hurtado's comment on Nicholson's work, the range of the question, namely monotheism, is wider than the chosen passages, thus, Nicholson does not "engage adequately" with several other crucial "monotheistic" texts (e.g., Phil 2:9-11).¹²² A similar problem is found in Hill's treatment of the trinitarian problem.¹²³ These limitation illustrate the need to first study Paul's *Gottesbild* before engaging in discussion of Paul's *Gottesvorstellung*. Instead of using God-language as springboard for tackling biblical theological questions, or trying to unpack Paul's *Gottesvorstellung*,¹²⁴ this thesis focuses particularly on Paul's divine designations.

2.3 Background investigation

Apart from the two approaches discussed above, other studies limit themselves to analyse fundamentally the *Gottesbild* of Paul. This thesis stands closer to this approach. As explained, Paul's divine designations will be taken as a linguistic phenomenon. Banal though it might sound, Dahl indeed calls for greater scholarly attention on this "elementary, but all too neglected task".¹²⁵ One of the difficulties of

¹²² Hurtado (2015: 402–4).

¹²³ The list of passages selected because they are mostly discussed Pauline texts by scholars concerning trinitarian theology. However, ranging wider than the chosen foci which form Hill's study, the issue of Trinity could be more comprehensively treated if obvious passages were not left out (e.g., Rom 5:1–11; 2 Cor 13:14).

¹²⁴ To do so, it would be indispensable to take into account all "words and phrases" concerning θεός beyond the limit of designations of God. For examples, sentences where God is used as the subject of verb(s) will need to be thoroughly analysed. Also, a large group of subjective genitive, such as gospel of God (e.g. Rom 1:1; 1 Thess 2:2), the will of God (e.g. Rom 1:10; Gal 1:4; 1 Thess 4:3), power of God (e.g. Rom 1:16), righteousness of God (Rom 10:3), wrath of God (Rom 1:18; cf. Col 3:6), peace of God (Phil 4:7), attributing certain qualities to God need to be included.

¹²⁵ Dahl (1991: 153) challenges scholars to pay attention to this "elementary, but all too neglected task by making a careful, analytical description of words and phrases and of their use within sentences and larger units of speech (e.g., narratives, kerygmatic, credal and hymnic texts, maxims, doctrinal and paraenetic topoi, etc)."

analysing the *Gottesbild* is categorisation.¹²⁶ Traditional treatment often superimposes an “inherited” Jewish framework onto the biblical evidence.¹²⁷ In response, Hurtado correctly points out it results in “the unfortunate effect of suppressing somewhat the contours and main features of Paul’s view of God”.¹²⁸ Keck’s approach provides a way out for the dilemma. Although he addresses the problem of Christology, his approach is still applicable for investigating Paul’s theo-logy. “New Testament scholars have reduced Christology to history of ideas in the early church, and, even more, to a cataloguing of the history of Christological titles, which, in the case of St. Paul, takes us past his Christology.”¹²⁹ Applying Keck’s insight to our problem, the analysis of the *Gottesbild* of Paul’s divine designations helps avoid the pitfall of the “history of ideas”.

2.3.1 Studies about Paul’s God-language in general

This study is not the sole pioneer to approach Paul’s God-language with greater linguistic respect. In the early 90s, Wire¹³⁰ and Klumbies¹³¹ explore how Paul’s ideas about God are related to the Jewish traditions and how Paul appropriates and alters them. After surveying references to God in Second Temple literatures (e.g., 4 Ezra, 2 Baruch, Qumran texts, texts of Josephus and Philo, etc.), Klumbies emphasises Paul’s God-statements are characterised by divine redemptive actions and purposes. As a result, the soteriological and Christological implications fill Paul’s inherited statements about God with new content.¹³² Klumbies thus stresses the distinctiveness of Paul’s God-statements.

¹²⁶ As Boers (1979: 18) succinctly puts, one of the most serious dilemmas in Christian thought was the Bible’s inability to provide “the formal categories of thoughts on which a theological system could be built.” Hence when a system categorises in terms of abstract ideas is built, its categories are alien to the Bible.

¹²⁷ E.g., Thrasher (2001:1–14) describes God in Paul based solely upon Paul’s descriptive terms for God. Guthrie and Martin’s entry on “God” (Hawthorne and Martin, 1993: 354–69), is categorised into “basic assumptions”, “God as Creator, Father, King,” God’s “attributes” (God’s glory, wisdom and knowledge, holiness, righteousness and justice, love and mercy, goodness and faithfulness, uniqueness) and God’s “Unity”.

¹²⁸ Hurtado (2010: 17).

¹²⁹ Keck (1986: 369).

¹³⁰ Wire (1974).

¹³¹ Klumbies (1992).

¹³² Klumbies (1992: 244, 252).

Richardson's monograph *Paul's Language of about God*¹³³ covers selective Pauline passages (Rom 9–11; 12:1–15:7; 1 Cor 1:18–3:23; 2 Cor 2:14–4:6) and addresses the question of whether Paul's language and understanding of God are affected and changed by his Christian experience. He argues that there are both continuities and discontinuities in Paul's reworking of statements about God from the Jewish tradition. "Paul's thought and writings are *both* theocentric and Christocentric."¹³⁴ The cross and resurrection of Christ constitute the primary source for Paul's reworking according to Richardson. Paul's God-language *universalised* and *radicalized* the traditional understanding of God.¹³⁵ God is no longer the exclusive Israel God, all nations are now included because of Paul's gospel to the Gentiles. To put it in his words, "God is now defined, so to speak, not as the God who brought Israel up out of Egypt, although that remained true, but as the God who raised Jesus from the dead."¹³⁶ It is thus a burden for interpreters to clarify the interplay between the paradoxical nature of continuity and discontinuity. Undoubtedly Richardson's study lays a solid foundation on which analysis of Paul's God-language should be built, however, his restrictive selection of key passages generates limited result. For example, given his observation of Paul's connection of ἀγάπη with God, the designation ὁ θεὸς τῆς ἀγάπης καὶ εἰρήνης (2 Cor 13:11) is neglected. Indeed, various similar genitival constructions (which will be discussed in chapter six) are overlooked. Also, the principle for selection of certain passages of Paul's letters is not clear. Yet, Richardson asks a good question. This study therefore selects a focused but neglected aspect of God-language, namely, divine designations in one of Paul's letters for a thorough investigation.¹³⁷

Although the above studies directly address the question of (dis)continuity, most of them did not concentrate on the way Paul designates God. This study attempts to fill the lacuna by studying Paul's ways of modifying, describing, and designating God in light of their respective backgrounds. In addition to the general concern for the OT and Second Temple Jewish texts¹³⁸, this study will expand the scope to include

¹³³ Richardson (1994: 307).

¹³⁴ Richardson (1994: 312–15).

¹³⁵ Richardson (1994: 272, 307, 313).

¹³⁶ Richardson (1999).

¹³⁷ Richardson (1994: 313).

¹³⁸ Noted that Richardson (1994: 323–39) includes an appendix on religion in Greco–Roman World.

relevant Greco Roman religious texts. Although Paul's Jewish context is part and parcel of understanding the concept of God, an investigation into Greco Roman background of ἔθνη should not be too hastily dismissed.

2.3.2 Studies about God-language in Romans

Regarding the book of Romans, Moxnes¹³⁹ and more recently Flebbe¹⁴⁰ have studied the function of Paul's God statements. They both focus on the *theo*-logy of Romans on the whole. Moxnes's monograph addresses the function of God-statements (with a particular focus on God's promise to Abraham in chapter 4) in the literary and historical contexts of Romans. Moxnes concludes that Paul's God-statements illustrate God's fidelity to both Jews and Gentiles. Moxnes is right and probably the first to see the importance of Paul's insistence on unity between Jews and Gentiles, however, his analysis overly focuses on Abraham's narrative that he spends more than two-third of his book on that chapter.

A more recent study by Flebbe, with a particular focus on Romans, argues that Paul, as a Jewish scriptural interpreter, perceives God's actions (through Jesus Christ) in continuity with the Jewish traditions. Flebbe takes seriously the significance of a theocentric reading of Paul and makes a strong case for continuity with the Jewish concept of God in Paul's *theo*-logy. Flebbe's careful exegesis makes a significant contribution by demonstrating the centrality of God in Paul's letter. His conclusion stresses the continuity of Paul's *theo*-logy with the Jewish tradition. He concludes that "as he has always been, the God of the Old Testament reveals himself in Jesus Christ".¹⁴¹

Given the valuable observations made by both Moxnes and Flebbe, this study will use Paul's divine epithets in Romans as a test case and try to engage in the conversation. The question how divine designations relate to Paul's *theo*-logical concern of unity between Jews and Gentiles as suggested by Moxnes will be inquired. The relationship between Paul's divine designations and the Jewish understanding of God will also be investigated.

¹³⁹ Moxnes (1980).

¹⁴⁰ Flebbe (2008).

¹⁴¹ Flebbe (2008: 445).

2.3.3 Studies about divine epithets in the NT and in Paul

Apart from Romans, Böttrich's short but incisive article highlights the importance of studying various epithets for God in the NT. Several designations of God (e.g. "Father", "one", "most High", "Lord of heaven and earth", "God raising Jesus from death") are studied with a view to determine more precisely the degree of NT's appropriation of the Jewish tradition. An "unbroken continuity" is found between the NT and the faith tradition in Israel, despite God reveals himself or becomes tangible above all in Jesus Christ, he does not completely withdraw behind the Son.¹⁴² While he categorises all NT divine designations into five categories, namely "Voraussetzung", "Übernahme", "Akzentuierung", "Anknüpfung", "Vorbild", "Neubildung" (the categories are arranged according to their level of continuity, from the greatest to the least), interestingly, it should be noted that most of Paul's designations in Romans are found near the discontinuing end.¹⁴³ Zimmermann has recently produced a voluminous study about titles of God in the NT.¹⁴⁴ While noting some distinctive feature in the NT, Zimmermann's comprehensive study succeeds in showing the continuity between Christian, Jewish and even certain Greco-Roman designations. While these two studies are significant in the study of divine designation on the NT, a distinct focus on the subject in a single work as Romans is still lacking.

Besides a comprehensive treatment of all divine designations, some studies focus on individual designation and conduct in-depth investigations into titles such as "living God", "one God", etc.¹⁴⁵ Although relevant material will be drawn up in later discussion, two studies will be introduced because of their relevance to the Gentile

¹⁴² Böttrich (1999: 75, 77–78) summaries "Gemeinsamer Nenner bleibt: Gott zeigt sich bzw. wird erfahrbar vor allem in Jesus Christus—aber er tritt nicht völlig hinter den Sohn zurück." The translation "unbroken unity" is taken from Hurtado (2010: 23).

¹⁴³ See Böttrich (1999: 64–73), for explanations of his categories. Distribution of Pauline designations in Romans in terms of Böttrich's categories is as follows:

1. "Voraussetzung": nil;
2. "Übernahme": one (3:30);
3. "Akzentuierung": father (1:7, 15:6), living (9:26);
4. "Anknüpfung": immortal (1:23), creator (1:25), the one calling into existence the things that do not exist (4:27), eternal (16:26), only wise (16:27);
5. "Vorbild": the one raised from the dead Jesus our Lord (4:24, 8:11);
6. "Neubildung": the God of endurance and encouragement (15:5), the God of hope (15:13), the God of peace (15:33, 16:20).

¹⁴⁴ Zimmermann (2007).

¹⁴⁵ E.g. Goodwin (2001); Khobnya (2014); Bruno (2013); Thüsing (1995: 87–99); Delling (1975: 76–84).

question. In his study of the epithet “living God”, Goodwin rightly observes that the epithet “living God” has covenantal associations, expressing God’s fundamental identity as the covenantal God of Israel.¹⁴⁶ Although his examination into the LXX and Hellenistic Jewish background of the epithet is thorough, he over-synthesises the particular and diversified uses of the epithet in individual texts.¹⁴⁷ For instance, in his reading of Jub. 1:24–25, Goodwin argues that it connects with the theme of Israel’s eschatological sonship and Israel’s restoration with the allusion to Hos. 2:1 LXX and 2 Sam 7:14.¹⁴⁸ However, he overlooks the *Jubilees*’ insistence on the exclusiveness of Israel’s ethnic boundary.¹⁴⁹ Worse still, a more fundamental flaw in his synthetic analysis lies in the failure to notice individual text’s respective stance towards Gentiles. As Thiessen demonstrated, although *Jubilees* is a minority in rejecting the notion of Gentile “conversion” and insisting on boundary between Jews and Gentiles, the Gentile question is still an indispensable methodological control in context of Jewish apocalyptic eschatology. Besides, while Goodwin justifies the cohesiveness of 2 Cor by suggesting the two occurrences of “living God” (2 Cor 3:3 and 6:16b) illustrate an inclusion arrangement in 2 Cor 2: 14–3:6 and 6:14–7:1,¹⁵⁰ the analysis of Romans 9:26 is less satisfactory.

A recent study has been written on Paul’s use of “God is one” in Rom 3:20 and Gal 2:20 by Christopher Bruno.¹⁵¹ This book illuminates how this one epithet in particular can helpfully contribute to the larger conversation on monotheism, Gentile inclusion, and justification by faith. Bruno also argues for the intertextual relevance of Zech 14:9 in shaping Paul’s eschatological understanding of the Shema. However, Bruno does not develop a solid ground methodologically for his intertextual reading of the allusion of Rom 3:20 and Gal 2:20 to Deut 6:4.¹⁵² Our study partly shares Bruno’s interest and direction in reading Paul’s designations of God in relation to the Gentile question. Despite Bruno’s limitation of his discussion to this one phrase, he

¹⁴⁶ Goodwin (2001:15).

¹⁴⁷ Hicks–Keeton (2018: 116, 121–24, here 124), “The epithet in [Jub] 1:24 signifies, then, both the (anticipated) restoration of Israel’s covenant and the hoped-for separation of Israel from gentile gods, gentile practices, and gentile power.”

¹⁴⁸ Goodwin (2001: 46–50).

¹⁴⁹ On *Jubilees*’ concept of election as emphatically applied to “all Israel” (and only Israel), see Hanneken (2012: 97–104).

¹⁵⁰ Goodwin (2001:161–230).

¹⁵¹ Bruno (2013).

¹⁵² Foster (2014: 555–56).

helpfully suggests that similar phrases could be studied in light of the Gentile question. This study will partly be a response to this call.

Part II

Chapter 3

One (3:30) Father (1:7; 6:4; 8:15; 15:6) God

The divine epithet *πατήρ* and the predicate *εἷς* will be studied in this chapter. F. C. Baur once argues, *inter alia*, Paul understands God as “*One universal Father*”.¹⁵³ The assumed absoluteness of God is evident when Paul “seeks to remove from the idea of God everything particular, limited and finite and to retain nothing but the pure idea of the absolute.”¹⁵⁴ As illustrated by “God the Father” and “God is One”, it is suggested “Christianity is, in fact, nothing other than the negation of all particularism to the end that the pure and absolute idea of God may be realized in humanity.”¹⁵⁵

Without attempting to solve ambitiously the far-ranging problems of “particularism” and “universalism” between Judaism and Christianity,¹⁵⁶ this chapter contributes to the discussion from a limited, yet significant perspective. Since the epithets “God the Father” and predicate construction “God is One” can both be found in Romans, it is appropriate to use them as test cases to see whether Paul contends for the absoluteness of God with these designations at least in one of his letters. Does “God the Father” denote that God is the father of all mankind? Does “One God” refer to God as the only absolute being throughout the universe? The following study will first investigate context of Romans in order to comprehend Paul’s usage on his own terms. Then, Paul’s meaning will be compared to and contrast with his Jewish and pagan contemporaries so as to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the “One, Father” God in Romans.

¹⁵³ Baur and Zeller (1873: 238) cite 1 Cor 1:8, Rom 9:5 for reference.

¹⁵⁴ Baur and Zeller (1873: 237).

¹⁵⁵ Baur and Zeller (1873: 238); Schnelle (2005: 329–33, here 333) similarly stresses the incompatibility between “Jewish particularism (jüdischer Heilspartikularismus) and early Christian universalism (frühchristlicher Heilsuniversalismus) when drawing a conclusion for his analysis of Paul’s “God, the Father of Jesus Christ”.

¹⁵⁶ Buell (2002: 432–41) repudiates and rethinks traditional interpretations in which the understanding of ethnicity or race as “given” operates as a foil for a non-ethnic, all-inclusive Christianity. Buell denies the perception that early Christian inclusiveness is regarded as an improvement on the suggested ethnoracial particularity of Judaism. See also Buell (2001: 451–53, 457–58, 471–72); Buell and Hodge (2004: 235–51). Park (2003: 80) rejects “the once-traditional christian notion that Judaism represented particularism whereas christianity embodied universalism.” Besides, the terms “universalism” and “particularism” will be avoided because they are not always clearly defined in scholarly discussions (see discussion in Levenson, 1996: 143–69). Instead, this study highlights whether and how is Paul’s meaning (in) compatible with various meanings of divine epithet *πατήρ*.

It will be argued that neither Paul's πατήρ nor εἷς divine designations suggest God is a universal sovereign. Rather, πατήρ and εἷς are used to characterise and highlight God's plan of salvation for believers. What is more, it will be demonstrated that the designations are used to justify the inclusion of Gentiles according to Paul's gospel and mission. An investigation of the linguistic background of the epithets will illuminate on the one hand, Paul does not make up these epithets out of nothing; on the other, Paul's emphasis on the One, the Father God's justifying action for Gentiles is distinctive.

3.1 Πατήρ in Romans

3.1.1 Introduction

The designation πατήρ is the subject of the first section. With reference to the four references of πατήρ in Rom 1:7; 6:4; 8:15 and 15:6, it will be argued that Paul is not portraying God as an absolute divine father or the divine progenitor of the universe. Nevertheless, Paul argues that “God the Father” is particularly related to Jesus Christ and the community of believers. In short, it is loaded with soteriological significance. God’s Fatherhood is defined in terms of divine action of raising the Messiah from the cross, one of the most important events in God’s salvation plan not only for Israel but also for ἔθνη (Rom 1:7; 6:4; 15:6). Besides, the believers’ Spirit-evoked αββα ὁ πατήρ cry (Rom 8:15) in eschatological time signifies the inclusion of Gentiles into the divine human kinship that was vouchsafed to Israel. An investigation into the linguistic background of πατήρ as divine designation will follow. It will be shown that the recurrent appositional constructions of πατήρ and θεός in Romans bears linguistic similarities with the commonly used Διὸς πατρός in some pagan texts. Yet, Paul is different as he is not describing “God the Father” as the ultimate epistemological source of life. As for the Father epithet in the OT and early Jewish literature, the Father is defined in specific relationship with Israel, who is elected, preserved and restored by the divine covenant Father. Also, God is more often characterised as πατήρ ἡμῶν showing greater intimacy between the divine Father and Israel in the early Jewish texts. Sometimes the epithet even draws a boundary excluding the nations and simultaneously reinforcing Israel’s uniqueness. Paul’s usage of divine Father epithet stands closer to the Jewish tradition as both connote divine soteriological actions especially for God’s people. Analogously, God is the Father of individual Davidic Kings and the Father who adopts Israel as sons in the OT, whereas in Romans, God is also the Father of the Messiah Jesus Christ and the Father who adopts the spirit-filled believers. However, Paul radically reinterprets the Father’s role in terms of his activity of raising the Messiah from the dead. Corporately, the Father epithets reconfigure the scope and ways of becoming part of the divine human kinship by including not only the Jews but also Gentiles on the basis of union with Christ.

3.1.2 Πατήρ in Romans

Four designations of divine Father in Romans will be discussed first. Πατρός is qualified by ἡμῶν and used as an apposition of θεοῦ in the letter opening (1:7). Also, πατέρα is used appositionally with the arthrous τὸν θεόν in the letter end (15:6) to describe God as the Father of τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. Two other absolute forms of ὁ πατήρ are found in 6:4 and 8:15 where the latter follows the vocative ἄββᾶ. It will first be illustrated that Paul's purpose of characterizing God as the father of Jesus Christ (1:7; 15:6; cf. 6:4), in the letter's beginning and ending, highlights God's salvation plan for both Jews and Gentiles. Then, the cry of ἄββα ὁ πατήρ (8:15) will be discussed in order to understand how believers, in particular Gentiles, are redeemed and adopted as sons. Thus, the soteriological significance of Paul's πατήρ epithet will be illuminated with particular emphasis on Gentile inclusion.

A. Πατήρ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ

Paul repeatedly defines πατήρ in relation to Jesus Christ in Romans. Surprising it may seem, God is addressed as πατέρα τοῦ κυρίου (ἡμῶν) Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ only three times in all Paul's undisputed writings (2 Cor 1:3; 11:31).¹⁵⁷ Thus, the frequent collocation between God the father and Jesus Christ in Romans is not insignificant. In Romans, both θεοῦ πατρός ἡμῶν and κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ are qualified by ἀπό identifying them both as the source of grace and peace in 1:7 in the end of the "prescript" (1:1–7).¹⁵⁸ It is not necessary to restate the thorough discussions on the "high Christology" reflected.¹⁵⁹ Besides "Christology", Paul's description of the Father is more relevant to our purpose. In addition to his insightful argument about "binatarian devotion" to Jesus, Hurtado helpfully notes that the juxtaposition of πατήρ and Jesus Christ affirms "the connection between Jesus' death and divine purposes."¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁷ Richardson (1994: 271); Zimmerman (2007: 137).

¹⁵⁸ Jewett (2007: 116); Richardson (1994: 260–63) also observes Paul's pattern of θεός and Χριστός sharing a preposition; Godet (1977: 85) similarly comments, "the conviction of Christ's divine nature can alone explain this construction, according to which His person and that of the Father are made alike dependent on one and the same preposition". See Novenson (2012:110–11, esp. n. 60) for Paul's different syntactical ways of relating God and Christ (e.g., Rom 1:7; 1 Cor 1:3; 2 Cor 1:2; Gal 1:3; Phil 1:2; Phlm 3; cf. Eph 1:2; 2 Thess 1:2; 1 Cor 8:6). See Weima (2016: 14–19) for the letter sectioning.

¹⁵⁹ The copulative καί indicates that Jesus "is not revered as another deity of any independent origin or significance; instead, his divine significance is characteristically expressed in terms of his relationship to the one God (Hurtado, 2003: 52)."

¹⁶⁰ Hurtado (1999: 229).

God's fatherhood is implied in the action when the Son of God is "appointed" with power by virtue of his resurrection from the dead (1:3–4; cf. Ps. 2:7).¹⁶¹ The Father is the one who raised (cf. ἠγέρθη) Jesus from the dead and exalted him in 6:4. Thus, "the idea of God's fatherhood is linked with what has happened on the cross; and it is illuminated through Christ's resurrection."¹⁶² Apart from 1:7, it should be noted that a Father reference is found in the doxology of 15:6 πατέρα τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.¹⁶³ These two Father references are very close to two Davidic Messiah-identifications in the letter. Among all Paul's undisputed letters, Christ is only explicitly identified as a Davidic descent τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ τοῦ γενομένου ἐκ σπέρματος Δαυὶδ κατὰ σάρκα (Rom 1:3) and ἡ ῥίζα τοῦ Ἰεσσαί (Rom 15:12), forming an *inclusio* (1:3–4 and 15:9–12) around the body of the letter.¹⁶⁴ Furthermore, Paul's messianism is connected to his Gentiles mission because the Father's promises (1:2; 15:8) of salvation for both Israel and ἔθνη is accentuated through the Messiah.¹⁶⁵ Thus, in the context where Paul characterises God as the Father of Jesus Christ the Son of God, the gospel's purpose—to bring about ὑπακοὴν πίστεως ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν (1:5; cf. 15:18; 16:26) is reiterated.¹⁶⁶

B. Πατήρ ἡμῶν

Besides relating individually with Jesus, Paul's Father epithet is also communal oriented, particularly related to believers' community. The first-person plural subject "we" is evident in the address our Father πατὴρ ἡμῶν (1:7) and the verb κράζομεν who call God αββα ὁ πατήρ (8:15). Paul's greeting addresses "God's beloved ones" and "those called holy ones" in Rome, the believers are called to belong to Jesus Christ (1:6). In other words, the Father "had claimed them for himself."¹⁶⁷ Paul's vocative αββα ὁ πατήρ in 8:15 (see also Gal 4:6) undoubtedly recalls Jesus' own prayer in Mark 14:36. Regardless of whether the Aramaic address is a form of "baby-talk"¹⁶⁸ or a

¹⁶¹ Jewett (2007: 116); Moo (1996: 48).

¹⁶² Khobnya (2014: 47).

¹⁶³ Hurtado (2003: 134–53); Richardson (1994: 240–307).

¹⁶⁴ Whitsett (2000: 664).

¹⁶⁵ Studying the citation of Isa 10:11 LXX in Rom 15:12, Novenson (2009: 357–73) argues that Paul's messianism could be connected to his Gentile mission in Rom 15:9–12.

¹⁶⁶ Novenson (2009: 369–70).

¹⁶⁷ Greathouse (2008: 45).

¹⁶⁸ Joachim Jeremias (1967: 11–65).

typical address to a father,¹⁶⁹ the emphasis on reverence and intimacy still stands.¹⁷⁰ God's fatherhood redefines his children of his Abba-family in Rom 8. While the divine sonship of believers is derivative of Jesus' sonship,¹⁷¹ Paul's discussion in Rom 8:14–17 has a clear theocentric tone.¹⁷² Believers are those in enmity with God (8:7), who are unable to please God (8:8), and living according to the flesh (8:6–8, 12–13) before becoming the sons of God (8:14).¹⁷³ The reality of belonging to God's family is brought about through Christ by the Spirit of adoption πνεῦμα υιοθεσίας (8:15, 23).¹⁷⁴ The context of adoption is important as it indicates the Father is not the universal divine progenitor, rather, this believer-and-Father kinship is defined in terms of adoption.

Although the Exodus imagery will be further discussed later in the use of πατήρ in the OT, how Paul situates divine Fatherhood within “the unfolding story of God's covenant with Israel” in Rom 8 should not be too hastily overlooked.¹⁷⁵ Paul's contrast of the spirit of slavery with adoption (Rom 8:15a; cf. 8:20–21) echoes the Exodus theme. While God responds to Israelites' call because of their slavery (Exo 2:23), the Father's redemption is an “emancipation and restoration of the enslaved to wholeness in relation to God” in Romans.¹⁷⁶ The Father who redeems is also the Father who adopts in both Romans and Exodus. The concept of υιοθεσίας is constitutional to the birth of Israel as a nation and its unique sonship, it is also used by Paul to characterise “us” as God's sons (Rom 8:15–16).¹⁷⁷ As Israel is first referred to as God's firstborn son υἱός πρωτότοκός μου in Exo 4:22 (LXX), in Rom 8:16, believers are not only released from bondage but adopted as God's children τέκνα θεοῦ (cf. Hos 11:1

¹⁶⁹ Barr (1988: 28–47).

¹⁷⁰ For a more comprehensive bibliography on the significance of Abba, see (Fee, 1994: 401 n. 150, 411).

¹⁷¹ “[D]ie Sohnschaft Jesu ist die unüberbrückbare Voraussetzung der Sohnschaft der Glaubenden.” (Zimmerman, 2007: 129); Thompson (1999: 205).

¹⁷² Hurtado (1999: 231–32); Zimmerman, (2007: 129); contra. Wright (2002: 583–4) stresses that Paul uses various titles for Jesus in Rom 8 in order to stress different aspects of Jesus' function and person.

¹⁷³ Fay (2006: 126–127).

¹⁷⁴ Campbell (2005: 200) states, “The Spirit enables Christian participation in the mind of Christ, and hence a new relationship with God the Father.”

¹⁷⁵ Wagner (2014: 246–47).

¹⁷⁶ Green (2003: 69); Khobnya (2014: 61–62).

¹⁷⁷ Scott (1992: 174–80) categorises Paul's adaptation as “new exodus”.

LXX).¹⁷⁸ The image ἄγειν “led by God’s Spirit” (Rom 8:14) also recalls the Exodus imagery of God leading Israel out of Egypt (e.g. ἐξάγειν, εισάγειν, ὀδηγεῖν in Exo 13:21–22; 15:13 LXX).¹⁷⁹

Recognising the Exodus conceptual background is critical because it supports our argument Paul is not trying “to remove any particularity” of the Father God.¹⁸⁰ In other words, Paul’s divine Father designation is hardly universalistic as Levenson correctly puts, “Whether one is heir to Abraham’s promise or not still means everything to Paul”.¹⁸¹ The Spirit-evoked αββα cry of ὁ πατήρ “reveals that God has now poured out on Gentiles, too, the blessing of adoption vouchsafed to Israel (Rom 9:4)—a blessing that yet remains Israel’s by God’s irrevocable gift (Rom 11:29).”¹⁸² Nevertheless, Paul’s discussion of believers’ divine sonship is surrounded by two references to God’s sending of his own Son in Rom 8:3, 29, which are explicit soteriological application of Jesus’ divine sonship.¹⁸³ Seeing believers as sons or children of God just as Israelites see themselves, Paul makes it clear this new relationship rests on the premise “dass sie Christus als denjenigen anerkennen, dessen Miterbe in Leid und Verherrlichung sie antreten (Röm 8,17).”¹⁸⁴ On the one hand, Paul reaffirms scriptural tradition of “being” Abraham’s offspring, on the other, he reconfigures the ways of “becoming” Abraham’s offspring with particular reference to union with and conformity to Christ (Rom 8:29), Abraham’s singular “offspring” the Messiah (Gal 3:16, 26, 29).¹⁸⁵

In sum, a recurrent linguistic pattern is observed as Paul identifies God as πατήρ of certain individual or groups. In Romans, Paul does not understand the thematic meaning of πατήρ is the absolute “Father of mankind”,¹⁸⁶ rather, he specifically

¹⁷⁸ According to Keesmaat (1999: 61), Israel is called God’s children τέκνα (Deut 32:5) and sons (Deut 32:19–20) while God is identified as the Father πατήρ (Deut 32:6) led ἦγεν and cared for them in the wilderness (Deut 32:12).

¹⁷⁹ Khobnya (2014: 55–59).

¹⁸⁰ Baur and Zeller (1873: 237).

¹⁸¹ Levenson (1996: 166). It should also be noted Paul does not link God’s Abba–family to Adam (Rom 5), rather, Abraham is regarded as the father (4:11; 16; cf. 11:16–24) of all believers, whether Gentile or Jew.

¹⁸² Wagner (2014: 247–48).

¹⁸³ Hurtado (1999: 30).

¹⁸⁴ Zimmerman (2007: 128); Feldmeier et al. (2013: 70) comment Paul’s adaptation of “inheritance” language is a “bold theologoumenon”.

¹⁸⁵ Wagner (2014: 243–244, 247); Zimmerman (2007: 128).

¹⁸⁶ Contra. Eph 4:6.

emphasises he is Father of his Son Jesus Christ.¹⁸⁷ Meanwhile, the sonship of believers presupposes the Fatherhood of God in relation to the Messiah. Believers have now found a new place among the people whom God calls “beloved” through participating in sonship of Christ by the Holy Spirit. “Paul has not forgotten the promise to Abraham”, yet, it “must await the full glorification of the children of God at the resurrection before experiencing the renewal for which it longs.”¹⁸⁸ There is a difference between saying Paul understands God as “a Universal Father” and saying that Paul’s use of the divine designation is “universal” in the sense Paul is using the epithet in similar ways with his pagan and Jewish contemporaries. The former has been refuted in the above analysis, now we will turn to examine the latter. Given Paul’s soteriological concern, the following investigation of the recurrent linguistic pattern of divine epithet *πατήρ* will also focus on examples relating to salvation of certain individual or groups.

3.1.3 Divine epithet *πατήρ* in pagan literature

In Greco-Roman literature, *Διός* and *πατήρ* are collocated frequently as divine universal father. The following section will survey its usage in Homeric literature, pre-Stoic and Stoic philosophy writings.

A. Homeric literature

In Homeric literature, the divine epithet *πατήρ* is used frequently characterising Zeus. Out of the 300 times where Homer speaks of Zeus, Zeus is referred to as *πατήρ* more than 100 times.¹⁸⁹ Besides the common appositional constructions, *Διὸς πατρός* or *πατρὸς Διὸς*¹⁹⁰, and *πατήρ Ζεύς* or *Ζεὺς πατήρ*¹⁹¹, Zeus is also referred to as *πατήρ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε* the prime deity of the pantheon.¹⁹² Zeus is conceived patriarchally

¹⁸⁷ Wenham (1995: 121) helpfully notes that Paul “does not see Jesus just as Saviour of the world in general, but also as the Messiah of Israel in particular (‘to the Jews first’ ,Rom 1:16), as is clear from all his letters, especially Rom 9–11.”

¹⁸⁸ Yates (2008: 153–54); Wagner (2014: 253).

¹⁸⁹ Zimmerman (2007: 64).

¹⁹⁰ E.g., *Iliad* (ca. 800–600BC) 2.145; 5.457; 8.459–60; 11.66, etc.; *Odyssey* (ca. 800–600BC) 7.316; 12.63.

¹⁹¹ E.g., *Iliad* 3.276; 4.235; 4.285; 12.164; 13.6312; 16.251 (*Ζεύς* and *πατήρ* are not in appositional), etc.; *Odyssey* 5.7; 12.277; 21.200; 7.311, etc.

¹⁹² E.g., *Iliad* 1.544; 4.68; 5.426; 8.49, 132; 11.182; 15.12, 47; 16.458; 20.56; 22.167; 24.103; *Odyssey* 1.28; 12.445; 18.137.

as the ruling father and the hierarchical order is emphasised in the divine *pater familia*.¹⁹³ Whereas important gods, younger gods, or individual heroes belong to Zeus' family, human do not belong.¹⁹⁴

B. Philosophy writings

Besides Homeric gods, the cosmological understanding the divine Father as universal creator is found in Plato. Plato's *Timaeus* 28C is one of the key passages in antiquity concerning ποιητὴν καὶ πατέρα τοῦ δε τοῦ παντός.¹⁹⁵ Cosmological creation, and precisely speaking, the ontological Cause αἴτιον (28A) of the universe are attributed to the Father god. Plato's designations ὁ γεννήσας πατήρ (37C) and ὁ τότε τὸ πᾶν γεννήσας (41A) clearly capture this idea. Middle-platonists Plutarch of Chaeronea (c.a. 50–120 C.E.) suggests the epithet ποιητής is associated with inanimate world and irrational beings (ποιητὴς τῶν ἀλόγων καὶ ἀψύχων), whereas πατήρ with animate world of gods and humans (τὸν αἴτιον πατέρα τοῦ κόσμου κέκληκεν).¹⁹⁶ Diogenes Laertius elucidates that the names Δία and Ζῆνα are given to the God for he is τὸν μὲν δημιουργὸν τῶν ὅλων and πατέρα πάντων.¹⁹⁷ The similar idea of ultimate principle is found in Epictetus' (c.a. AD 55–135) writing as God is characterised as the one ἀπ' ἐκείνου τὰ σπέρματα καταπέπτωκεν (from Him have descended the seeds of being) and ζῶον ἀθάνατον, λογικόν, τέλειον ἢ νοερὸν ἐν εὐδαιμονίᾳ (immortal, rational, perfect or intelligent in happiness).¹⁹⁸ Apart from the epistemological understanding as discussed, Hellenistic philosophers also highlight the providential and moral nature of divine Fatherhood. In his exegesis of Plato's *Timaeus*, Plutarch asserts the moral goodness of father god, who is “the father of everything honourable.”¹⁹⁹ Epictetus, a prolific Stoic writers,²⁰⁰ argues that human being shares

¹⁹³ Zeus asserts his authority in Lucian's *The Double Indictment* (ca.100–200AD) 2, “ἐγὼ δὲ αὐτὸς ὁ πάντων βασιλεὺς καὶ πατήρ.” His authority is considered cruel sometimes (*Iliad* 3. 365 Ζεὺς πάτερ, οὗ τις σεῖο θεῶν ὀλοώτερος ἄλλος; see also *Odyssey* 20.201).

¹⁹⁴ Zimmerman (2007: 65).

¹⁹⁵ For its reception: see e.g., Ps.-Clement, *Homiliae* 4.13.3; Justin Martyr, 2. *Apol.* 10.6; Clement of Alexandria, *Protr.* 6.68.1; Origen, *Cels.* 7.42–44. For detail analysis, see Ferrari (2014: 57–72).

¹⁹⁶ Plutarch, *Quaest. plat.* (ca. 1–100AD) 1000E–F; Van Kooten (2014: 302). However, Numenius emphasises the transcendence of the “Father” (Ferrari, 2014: 61–62).

¹⁹⁷ Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* (ca. 200–300AD) 7.1. Zeno 147.

¹⁹⁸ Epictetus, *Discourse* (ca. 1–100AD) I.9.4.

¹⁹⁹ Plutarch, *Moralia. That Epicurus Actually Makes a Pleasant Life Impossible* (ca. 1–100AD) 1002D, “...ὥς πάντων μὲν ἡγεμὼν ἀγαθῶν πάντων δὲ πατήρ καλῶν ἐκείνός ἐστι...”

²⁰⁰ Long and Sedley (1987: 10–17).

kinship with god τοῦ συγγενεῖς ἡμᾶς εἶναι τῷ θεῷ (*Discourse* I.9) and God's true nature of good τὴν οὐσίαν τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ (*Discourse* II.8.9).²⁰¹

Characterising God as ὁ θεὸς πατήρ τῶν ἀνθρώπων καὶ τῶν θεῶν (*Discourse* I.3.1), τὸν θεὸν ποιητὴν, πατέρα and κηδεμόνα (I.9.7), Epictetus explains this kinship between human and god is not only superior than being adopted by the Roman Caesar (I.3.2), it is also the basis for one to live securely and free from griefs and fears as a citizen of κόσμιον.²⁰³ In another discourse entitled, “Πῶς ἕκαστα ἔστιν ποιεῖν ἀρεστῶς θεοῖς” (I.13), Epictetus argues for respectful relationship between masters and slaves because both are ἀδελφῶν and συγγενῶν, ὅτι τοῦ Διὸς ἀπογόνων (I.13.4–5). The Fatherhood of Zeus governs social relationships such as children–father, and brother–brother, for Zeus is “the God of kindred” (III.11.6).²⁰⁴ The intimacy of divine Fatherhood is highlighted in Epictetus' moralised account of Heracles.²⁰⁵ Heracles' philanthropy of fathering countless orphans is expounded as imitating Zeus, ὁ πατήρ ἐστὶν ὁ κηδόμενος who never leaves ones as orphans because ὅτι πατήρ ἐστὶν ὁ Ζεὺς τῶν ἀνθρώπων (III.24.15–16). Despite being the God of all men, philosophers do not use the epithet without particularities. According to Plutarch's biography of Alexander the Great, Alexander's divination and uniqueness is affirmed. “...[A]lthough God was indeed a common father of all mankind (κοινὸν ἀνθρώπων πατέρα τὸν θεόν), still, He made peculiarly His own the noblest and best of them (Plutarch, *Alexander* 27.6).”²⁰⁶ The Greeks, represented by Alexander, are regarded as God's noblest and best progeny contrary to the barbarians (Plutarch, *Alexander* 28.1).²⁰⁷

The survey above illustrates the popularity of Father designations in Hellenistic religious and philosophical writings. It is also striking to see that the highest god, Zeus, is often characterised with appositional constructions such as Ζεύς/θεός πατήρ and

²⁰¹ Epictetus, *Discourse* II. 8. 9–12.

²⁰³ Epictetus, *Discourse* I.9.7; Zimmerman (2007: 67).

²⁰⁴ A similar idea is found in Plato's *Laws* (500–300BC), a correspondence is established between the worship paid to the gods τοὺς ἐμπύχους θεοὺς and the honours paid to one's mortal fathers and mothers (931A). Van Kooten (2014: 299–300).

²⁰⁵ Van Kooten (2010: 25–29).

²⁰⁶ Cf. Ps. Plutarch, *Moralia. Sayings of Kings and Commanders* (ca. 1–100AD)180D, “In the shrine of Ammon he was hailed by the prophetic priest as the son of Zeus. “That is nothing surprising,” said he; “for Zeus is by nature the father of all, and he makes the noblest his own.”

²⁰⁷ Van Kooten (2014: 306).

qualified by genitives like ἀνθρώπων or πάντων.²⁰⁸ Although Paul’s usage shows close linguistic resemblance, thematic meanings like the ultimate epistemological source of all lives or the highest among other deities are absent in Romans. While both the Father God in Paul and pagan’s usage relate divine fatherhood to kinship with humanity, Paul does not stress the Father’s providence or moral goodness in Romans.

3.1.4 Divine epithet πατήρ in the OT

Statistically, the use of Father as divine designation in the OT is less prevalent than that in pagan literature. Yet, the small number of references do not obscure the idea’s prominence.²⁰⁹ In general, God is the Father of the Davidic kings in pre-exilic time and that of the people of Israel in post-exilic time.²¹⁰ It will be demonstrated that the Father epithets are soteriological in nature, relating to the establishment, election, renewal and restoration of Israel in particular.

A. Father of Davidic Kings

Divine Fatherhood relates to royal ideology. God establishes the father and son relationships with individuals such as King David and his offspring, with similar self-declaration statements, καὶ γὰρ ἔσομαι αὐτῷ εἰς πατέρα (2 Sam 7:14; 1 Chr 17:13; 22:10; 28:6). Serving as the heads, representatives and embodiment of God’s covenant people, the Davidic kings are called God’s son and firstborn (cf. Ps 2:6–7; 88:26–27 LXX) through divine adoption.²¹¹ Although God is qualified with reference to certain individuals, the idea of God’s Fatherhood of Israel is implied because God continues to take care of and involve in the covenant relationships with all Israel through their kings.²¹²

²⁰⁸ Zimmerman (2007: 73).

²⁰⁹ Khobnya (2014: 20). There are 18 instances (Deut 32:5; 2 Sam 7:14; 1 Chr 17:13; 22:10; 28:6; 29:10; Ps 68:5; 89:26; 103:13; Prov 3:12; Jer 3:4–5, 7–8; 31:9; Isa 63:16 (2x); 64:8; Mal 1:6; 2:10) in the OT. However, it is undeniable that “die Vorstellung von Gott als „Vater“ ist „kein Haupt-, sondern ein Nebenthema der alttestamentlichen Theologie!” (Zimmerman, 2007: 49).

²¹⁰ Zimmerman (2007: 49–50); Feldmeier et al. (2013: 56–59).

²¹¹ Thompson (2000: 47); For Roman emperors as *pater patriae*, see Mengestu (2013: 57–74).

²¹² C. Wright (2007: 92) assumes in this regard that the king of Israel is not “a *super-Israelite*” but “a *model Israelite*” who sets an example of what it means to be an obedient son of God. Khobnya (2014: 26–28).

B. Divine “founding” Father of Israel

The Babylonian destruction of the Davidic dynasty along with Jerusalem temple, city and kingdom of Judah in 587—586 BC. provides a new context for divine Fatherhood. “Ganz Israel ist nun Sohn Gottes, nicht mehr nur der König.”²¹³ Kinship language is used to identify Israel and God, in the song of Moses, πατήρ is qualified by a personal pronoun σου in a rhetorical question in Deut 32:6.²¹⁴ The epithet is elaborated by three subsequent verbs followed by second person pronouns, קנך/ἐκτίσας, עשׂך/ἐποίησεν and כנך/ἔκτισεν. The theme creation is manifested as the second colon in the Hebrew contains the words “to make” and “to establish”.²¹⁵ Also, another implicit “Father” reference in the context points similarly to creation. Although the LXX has θεός instead of the epithet צור (32:18; cf. v.4), God’s fatherly image is expressed in creative terms (τὸν γεννήσαντά σε, τοῦ τρέφοντός σε). Yet, Tigay is right that 32:6 does not actually state the time Israel was created, it is a reference to Sinai and the exodus.²¹⁶ The epithets צור and its parallels in the LXX, namely θεὸν τὸν ποιήσαντα αὐτόν and θεοῦ σωτήρος αὐτοῦ (32:15), θεὸν τὸν γεννήσαντά and θεοῦ τοῦ τρέφοντός σε (32:18) carry “God’s generative actions more graphically than any other biblical text.”²¹⁷ Furthermore, the epithet “The Rock” connotes the “Meribah” incident (Exo 17:6) where God saves his people from extinction by giving them water (cf. Deut 33:8; Ps 94:1 LXX).²¹⁸ Also, God is also described as an עשׂר/ἄετός (eagle) who sustains Israel from a howling wilderness, provides protection, and leads them out (Deut 32:10–12).²¹⁹ Interestingly, the noun עשׂר is only used to characterizing God in Exo 19:4, providing the background for this metaphorical language.²²⁰ Reading divine paternity in terms of Israel’s history, God becomes Israel’s father by bring Israel into existence, preserving them in the wilderness, and initiating the kinship with them.

²¹³ Zimmerman (2007: 50); Feldmeier et al. (2013: 58).

²¹⁴ On the relationship between the Song of Moses and the prophetic writings, see Sanders (1996: 58—64).

²¹⁵ See Tigay’s (1996: 402 n. 37) argument for translating the verb as “to create” (e.g., Gen 14:22) rather than “to acquire” (e.g., Gen 25:10; Lev 25:15; Prov 16:16).

²¹⁶ Tigay (1996: 302); Craigie (1976: 379).

²¹⁷ See Knowles (1989: 110) for comparative references e.g., Job 38:8, 28–29; Ps 89:27 [26 LXX]; Isa 45:10.

²¹⁸ Harriman (2005: 155).

²¹⁹ Khobnya (2014: 21–22); Tasker (2004: 83, 86).

²²⁰ See e.g., Tigay (1996: 304); Miller (1990: 228); Knight (1995: 50).

Similar ideas appear in Psalms 67:6 and 102:13 LXX when God is designated as τοῦ πατρὸς τῶν ὀρφανῶν and a compassionate Father, who provides and defences the needy. Invoking the language of exodus again (e.g., נצִי/ ἐξάγω; יְיָ/ τὴν ἔρημον in 67:4–8 LXX), God’s Fatherhood is connected with rescuing the Israelites who are in need. The basis of paternal compassionate is based on God knowing and remembering how Israel was made יצֵר/ τὸ πλάσμα (102:14). In the prophets, the Father and creator correlation is also established with reference to the foundational election story of Israel (Mal 1:6; cf. 2:10). Besides the affectionate divine Father who saves and establishes Israel as sons (e.g., Deut 32:5, 8, 19, 20), a contrast is drawn between the righteous Father and the perverted, blemished, and disobedient sons (32:5–6). The disturbing side of divine paternity is also mentioned as God can be provoked (32:19) and hide his face from his sons (32:20) by stating “you are not my sons” (e.g., בְּנֵי נִלֵּי/ οὐκ αὐτῶ τέκνα in 32:5).²²¹ While the Father epithets are described in creational terms, “God is not progenitor but the establisher of Israel as a nation and their liberator.”²²²

C. The Father who restores Israel

Apart from being a Father who establishes and redeems Israel, divine paternity is invoked as a basis for restoration. God is directly addressed as יצֵר/πατήρ ἡμῶν twice in Isa 63:16 and once in 64:8[7 LXX]. Recounting God’s ἔλεος and τὸ πλῆθος τῆς δικαιοσύνης (63:7) in the past ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς, God’s Fatherhood is again defined by the redemption from Egypt and the founding history of Israel (63:7–14). All three Father references appear after the historical recount יִזְכֹּר/ ἐμνήσθην (63:7), in the contexts of confession and request for divine help. Israel asks their redeemer (נִלְוֵנוּ/ ῥῦσαι ἡμᾶς in 63:16) to “look down from heaven” and “turn back” (63:15, 17) on the basis that God is their Father (63:16) and they are his κληρονομίας (63:17). These self-identifications, such as “Your holy people” (63:18), those “called by your name” (63:19), remind God of the special kinship relationship they have with God. After a confession of their sins, God is addressed again as “our Father” followed by the potter and clay metaphor that evokes the formation of Israel (64:8). Although Israel suffers

²²¹ Tigay (1996: 308); Feldmeier et al. (2013: 59).

²²² Khobnya (2014: 23).

from the experience of divine remoteness because of their iniquities (64:7), the intimate father epithet transforms lament into a new experience of divine proximity.²²³ The prayer climaxes with *vōv* (64:7, 8), illustrating how the present sinned generation try to pick up the kinship theme “from the sermon on the age of salvation...to claim identity with the chosen and saved people” of ancient Israel.²²⁴ Besides Isaiah’s request for forgiveness of sins and salvation, similar themes are exhibited in the use of Father designations in Jeremiah. The prophet criticized Judah’s apostasy (Jer 2:1–4:4) for they did not honour their election or inheritance. Instead of calling God Father who established them and redeemed them out of Egypt (cf. Deut 32), they turned from God and mischievously called and worshiped objects or idols (3:19–20).²²⁵ In spite of God’s disappointment, the faithful Father’s desire to restore relationship with his disobedient children is also described (3:15–18, 19). As Bruggemann nicely puts it, Jeremiah “portrays for us a parent who has labored and dreamed for a glorious day when the child would be old enough, responsible enough to receive all that has been saved for the child from the beginning. The father wants to give the child . . . (but) the child neither knows nor cares.”²²⁶ The theme of God’s restoration is peaked at the next Father reference in Jer 31:9. The new covenant in Jeremiah’s book of consolation (Jer 30–33) envisages a restored familial relationship between Israel as God’s “firstborn” (31:9), “my dear son”, “the child I delight in” (31:20), “faithless daughter” and God as τῷ Ἰσραὴλ εἰς πατέρα (31:9).²²⁷ Also, the new covenant is also understood as another glorious exodus as the Father promises to “lead them back” and “let them walk by brooks of water, in a straight path”, resembling the return from Babylonian captivity in Deutero–Isaiah.²²⁸

The recurrent pattern of divine epithet πατήρ in the OT is characterized by the “Gott–als–Vater—Israel–als–Sohn–Vorstellung”.²²⁹ Although the divine Father is described in creational terms, being different from its usage in pagan literature, he is not described as the source of all lives but the Father who elects, preserves and restores

²²³ Feldmeier et al. (2013: 65).

²²⁴ Watts (2000: 333–36).

²²⁵ Khobnya (2014: 30).

²²⁶ Bruggemann (1988: 44).

²²⁷ McCarthy (1965: 45–46) sees Deut 32 as “immediate stimulus” for Jeremiah’s image of father and son.

²²⁸ Thompson (1980:569–70).

²²⁹ Zimmerman (2007: 51).

his chosen people Israel. “Die Vorstellung von Gott, dem Vater, ist im Alten Testament keine ontologische Aussage, sondern umschreibt nur die eine Seite des Rollenverhältnisses, zu dem die Anerkennung durch die Söhne notwendig hinzugehört.”²³⁰ The thematic meanings of πατήρ in Romans and the OT are close not only because God is the “founding” Father who redeems believers, the common Exodus theme with soteriological significance is also striking. Meanwhile, the comparison with the OT illustrates Paul’s remark on the believer’s, especially Gentiles’, shared sonship with Jesus is distinctive in Romans.

3.1.5 Divine epithet πατήρ in early Jewish writings

Although there are little affinities between the OT and pagan texts, how did Diaspora Jews engage with mainstream “Hellenistic” culture with the divine epithet Father? Spieckermann and Feldmeier rightly comment that in the Second Temple Period, the idea the Father God “cancels discipline and suffering in his mercy and gives great hope” to Israel.²³¹ God’s chastising pedagogy and merciful delivery is emphasised and intensified in divine fatherhood. Meanwhile, Israel’s unique position is underscored frequently.

A. Father who rebukes and rescues

Although God’s providential care for creation is praised in Wisdom 14:3 and God is characterised in “universalistic” terms such as θεῶ τῷ πάντων πατρί (Father of all) in *Ant.* 1:230; 2:152 or universal Father (*Ant.* 1:19–20; 4:262), the above analysis shows that divine Fatherhood is described more often in salvific or redeeming terms, in particular with the people of Israel.²³² In Tobit’s “apocalyptic psalm”,²³³ God is praised as πατήρ ἡμῶν (13:4) of οἱ υἱοὶ Ἰσραὴλ (13:3). It is acknowledged that the divine Father both chastises and has mercy, exiles and gathers Israel (13:3–5). Israel is also exhorted to repent and turn to God, and hope for his mercy (13:6). The Fatherhood of God is manifested in the dual aspects of “pedagogy” and God’s “unfailing faithfulness”.²³⁴ Similar ideas are exhibited in 4Q369 as Israel is referred to

²³⁰ Zimmerman, (2007: 51).

²³¹ Feldmeier et al. (2013: 65).

²³² Khobnya (2014: 42).

²³³ Fitzmyer (2003: 43).

²³⁴ Strotmann (1991: 56–58).

as God's firstborn son (frag.1 II 6) and God is "like a father" כאב to his son (line 10). God's fatherly discipline (משפטיכה הטובים; line 5) is juxtaposed with the gift of God's love, including giving Israel the Torah in the prayer.²³⁵ Besides a statement of comparison, God is also invoked directly in 4Q372. In the name of Joseph, the exile cries to God in repentance seeking rescue and addresses God as אבי ואלהי (frag.1 16). The appositional construction between "Father" and "God" modified by first person singular suffixes "my" (cf. אלהי in lines 25, 26), illustrates linguistic resemblance to Paul's usage. Moreover, God is praised as "the Most High" (עליון ; line 4), "mighty God" (אל גבור ; line 16), and a "God [who] is great, holy, mighty, and majestic, awesome and marvelous" (אל גדול קדוש גבור ואדיר נורא ונפלא ; line 29). In the context of these epithets, God's greatness is the basis for the speaker to beseech God not to abandon him into the hands of the nations (אל תעזבני ביד הגוים ; line 16), and do justice to him (עשה אתה בי משפט ; line 17).²³⁶ Thus, the soteriological implication of the epithets "my Father and my God" is highlighted (see also 4Q460 frag.5 I 5).²³⁷ A close parallel is found in Ben Sira 51:1, 10 where the Hebrew text reads אלהי אבי...אלהי ישעי and אבי respectively (see also Ps 88:26 LXX).²³⁸ Despite some textual variants between the Hebrew and the grandson's Greek version, Ben Sira testifies to the use of the title "my Father".²³⁹ It should also be noted that similar to 4Q372, the speaker supplicates that God abandon him not, the father God is clearly identified as ישעי my salvation (51:10), τὸν σωτήρά μου (my saviour; 51:1) who can rescue because of his mercy (51:8). While the speaker in Sirach is in time of need, the designation πάτερ is invoked in a life-threatening situation in 3 Macc 5:51. Eleazae uses various vocatives, such as Βασιλεῦ μεγαλοκράτωρ, ὕψιστε παντοκράτωρ θεὲ τὴν πᾶσαν διακυβερνῶν ἐν οἰκτιρμοῖς κτίσιν (6:2), δέσποτα (6:5, 10) to underscore God's sovereign in his prayer (see also ἐλεήμονα θεὸν καὶ πατέρα in 5:7). Although God's rule over all creature and also secular rulers is mentioned, God is addressed as πάτερ (6:3, 8) who grants protection to his children. The personal relationship between divine Father and children is important because they are identified as Αβρααμ σπέρμα, τέκνα Ιακωβ, ἡγιασμένης σου λαόν (6:3). In view of God's redeeming activity, Israel's prosecutor,

²³⁵ Kugel (1998: 119–148); Khobnya (2014: 36).

²³⁶ Doering (2014: 127); Mengestu (2013: 142).

²³⁷ Schuller (1992: 72–75).

²³⁸ Schuller (1992: 70).

²³⁹ Corley (2002: 35); Strotmann (1991: 84); Doering (2014: 127–128).

the pagan king Ptolomy Philopator concedes that God defends the Jews as a father cares for his sons (7:6).²⁴⁰ Identifying themselves with Israel's founding patriarchs is significant as it brings our focus to the "particularity" in Father epithets in Hellenistic Jewish literature.

B. The exclusive Father to Israel

Divine fatherhood is taken in a restrictive sense. Ben Sira connects God's Fatherhood to righteous Jews (see also Sir 23:1, 4; Wis 2:12, 16, 18; Ps. Sol 13:8–10).²⁴¹ The frequent idea of seeking the Father's delivery from the hands of the nations in these prayers shows that the Father-son relationship serves "as a demarcation vis-à-vis the nations among which the Northern tribes have been dispersed."²⁴² Also in 1QH^a XVII 35, God is referred to as אב לכול בני אמתכה "Father to all sons of truth". While God's fatherly rebuke as well as redemption are again praised, the psalm clearly restricts God's fatherhood in particular to members of the *yahad*.²⁴³ After praising God for his knowledge and care for the psalmist which surpass that of one's natural biological parents (lines 34b–35a; cf. Ps 26:10 LXX; Isa 63:16), God is first identified as Father אב to "all the [son]s of your truth" and then as foster-father אומן to "all your creatures" (lines 35b–36). Although God's sustenance and providence for all creature is affirmed, Fatherhood is used in conjunction with the selected in Israel. In 4Q504 (4QDibHam^a) frag.1—2 III, a sharp contrast is drawn between the nations and Israel. Although God is not explicitly referred to as Father, allusions to OT's language of God being Father of Israel could be observed. In lines 5 and 6, it reads "...you have established us as your sons (בנים) in the sight of all the peoples (לעיני כול הגוים). For you called [I]srael 'my son, my firstborn' בני בכורי ..." (cf. Deut 32:6, 9; Exo 4:22).²⁴⁴ Similar to OT's language as discussed above, the sonship of Israel is distinctive as it is constituted by God the Father. In contrast, the nations are הגוים [כא]ין "considered nothing by God" (line 3). Israel's unique position is taken up by the writer of *Jubilees* with the father-son

²⁴⁰ Zimmerman (2007: 56).

²⁴¹ Khobnya (2014: 38–39).

²⁴² Doering (2014: 126).

²⁴³ Strotmann (1991: 346–57). Our study will follow Martínez's (2000) translation of the Dead Sea Scrolls unless specified.

²⁴⁴ Khobnya (2014: 40).

constellation. In God's description to Moses about Israel's eschatological repentance and restoration, God is self identified as "the God of Israel, the father of all Jacob's children" (1:28). Given the "return" of the people of Israel, God says "I will become their father and they will become my children" (1:24). The Gentiles are enemies for the Jews (1:19), meanwhile, God's fatherhood is deliberately anchored to Israel's primordial election, as represented in Abraham's blessing to Jacob as God's first-born (19:29; see also 2:20).

Despite the particularity of Israel in the Fatherhood concept, God is described as a father to the Gentiles in *Joseph and Aseneth*. Aseneth's "conversion" to Judaism causes her own father and mother to abandon her, yet she pleads God's mercy saying "I am now an orphan and desolate...you are the father of the orphans, and a protector of the persecuted and a helper of the afflicted...you, Lord, are a sweet and good and gentle father..." (12:13–14). These statements of identifications are found in context where Aseneth's repentance is repeatedly emphasised (11:7–14; 12:8). The former idol worshipping Egyptian Aseneth later identifies God as "father of Repentance" (15:7). *JosAs* illustrates God's adoption of repented Gentiles not as a substitution but complement to God's mercy to Jews. As Burchard summarizes, "Gentile's conversion is welcomed but not sought."²⁴⁵

Compared with the less frequent father epithets in the OT, the more common "our father" designations in early Jewish texts show greater similarity with the recurrent linguistic pattern in Romans. Although similar soteriological overtones can be heard in both texts, thematic meaning of πατήρ in Romans diverts from early Jewish texts as the sharp contrast between Israel and the nations is not upheld. Also, Paul's πατήρ epithet does not underscore the uniqueness of Israel, instead, both Jews and Gentiles are adopted by the Father alike on the basis of the Father's salvific action in Christ on the cross.

3.1.6 Synthesis

Compared with the pagan texts, there are more substantial affinities between Paul's use of πατήρ in Romans and the Jewish tradition. Despite Paul's appositional constructions θεός/ἄββα and πατήρ bears linguistic resemblance to the Greek

²⁴⁵ Burchard (1985: 188–94).

Ζεὺς/θεὸς πατήρ, Paul's thematic meaning is closer to his Jewish counterpart. Instead of emphasising the Father's role as source of life or progenitor, the recurrent pattern of identifying God as father of individuals or communities in Paul and Jewish traditions underscore the soteriological significance of the Father epithets. While God is understood as Father of Davidic kings in the OT, Paul also links God's Fatherhood to the Davidic Messiah Jesus Christ. Corporately, divine Fatherhood is intimately related to the adoption or constitution of Israel as son of God in both Jewish traditions and Romans. Nevertheless, Paul diverts especially from early Jewish texts. Paul radically reinterprets the Father's role by stressing the Father's redeeming activity of raising Jesus the Messiah from the dead. While divine human kinship is exclusive for the elected Israel, for Paul, "God has now sent the holy spirit, the spirit of his son, into the hearts of all, Jew or Gentile" who are adopted as fellow heirs of God with Christ.²⁴⁶

²⁴⁶ Wagner (2014: 253).

3.2 Εἷς ὁ θεός in Romans

3.2.1 Introduction

In order to understand whether Paul's God is the "One universal Father", it is necessary to look into εἷς ὁ θεός (Rom 3:30) as well. Although much scholarly discussion has been focused on investigating the relationship between Christology and the "monotheistic" God of Israel, it is not the focus here.²⁴⁷ In fact, the predicate construction εἷς ὁ θεός is also used to define or redefine the member of the community of God's people, a theme which has not been thoroughly studied.²⁴⁸ Instead of engaging in the complex "monotheism" discussion, or studying all "monotheistic" statements in the NT,²⁴⁹ the linguistic phenomenon of predicating ὁ θεός in terms of εἷς will be the driving question here. With a particular focus on 3:30, Paul's εἷς ὁ θεός will be first studied in its own context in the letter of Romans. It will first be argued that the predicate εἷς is used to argue that God is the God of Gentiles in 3:27–30. Also, Paul does not contend that the one God is the universal creator, rather, the emphasis of εἷς ὁ θεός lies on the impartiality of the one God who justifies Jews and Gentiles alike on the same basis of faith. Then, a comparative study between Paul's one-God language and his Jewish and pagan contemporaries will be carried out.

3.2.2 Εἷς ὁ θεός in its context (Rom 3:27–30)

In his study about Paul's God-language, Richardson comments Rom 3:29–30 is "one of the most important statements Paul makes about God in this letter".²⁵⁰ Although surprisingly Richardson does not elaborate on his sweeping statement nor analyses 3:27–31, Rom 3:29 is read as an explicit universal statement, illustrating how Christ "*universalised and radicalised* the Old Testament understanding of the grace, and love of God" in Paul's God's language.²⁵¹ Reaching a similar universalistic

²⁴⁷ E.g., Nicholson (2011); Klumbies (1992); Hays (2005: 36–7); Hofius (1989: 177–80); Hurtado (1988: 97); idem (2003: 114); McGrath (2009: 38–44).

²⁴⁸ According to Tan's (2008: 184) recent survey on the two major functions of the *Shema* in the NT, Tan rightly concludes that 1) the *Shema* is used to identify Christ with the one God of Israel; and 2) it is used to define or redefine the member of the community of God's people. Bruno (2013: 4–5) correctly points out that Tan has identified but not satisfactorily filled this lacuna.

²⁴⁹ For other discussions of the *Shema* or relevant expressions in the Gospels, see e.g., Tan (2008); Foster (2003); Marcus (1994).

²⁵⁰ Richardson (1994: 195).

²⁵¹ Richardson (1994: 314–15, emphasis original).

conclusion, Cranfield explains that Paul understands God as “the God of all men in the sense of being their Creator and Ruler and Judge”.²⁵² Some commentators further argue that God as the one Creator God of all is the basis of the universality of salvation for Jews and Gentiles. It is epitomised in Fitzmyer’s words, “no Jew would have denied that YHWH was the God of all human beings”, therefore Paul uses this understanding to insinuate the equal standing of Jew and Gentile.²⁵³ Nevertheless, does Paul take εἷς ὁ θεός in the universal sense, which characterizes God as the creator of all things? Does Paul ground justification for Jews and Gentiles on divine oneness? How does one-God relate to justification?

According to the suggested reading, Paul “grounds the universality of justification for Jews and Gentiles by referring to Deut 6:4.”²⁵⁴ First, in 3:30, the descriptive relative pronoun ὅς is erroneously taken as causal. Without a copulative verb, εἷς is used as a predicate of the articular noun ὁ θεός. In 3:30, a conditional connective εἴπερ governs the designation and followed by the relative pronoun clause with ὅς. It is proposed that v. 30a εἴπερ εἷς ὁ θεός provides the “rationale” for Paul’s universal argument in both v. 29 (the conclusion) and v. 30b (the restatement of the conclusion).²⁵⁵ It is argued that v. 30a is the protasis and vv. 29–30b the apotaxis. In other words, it is proposed that the Jewish “monotheistic” formula in Deut 6:4 grounds the universality of justification for Jews and Gentiles. However, v. 30b ὅς δικαιώσει περιτομὴν ἐκ πίστεως καὶ ἀκροβυστίαν διὰ τῆς πίστεως is not grammatically independent as it is introduced by a relative pronoun ὅς.²⁵⁶ Instead of an independent causal statement, the ὅς-clause (v. 30b) is descriptive. Divine oneness is elaborated in terms of God’s justifying activity. Thompson’s critique is precise, “To think that the oneness of God in v. 30a in any way causes or grounds the justifying activity of God in v. 30b is to impute more to the relative clause here than is acceptable and to

²⁵² Cranfield (1975:221).

²⁵³ Fitzmyer (1993: 364–65); Dodd (1932: 63).

²⁵⁴ Stuhlmacher (1994: 66), for example, argues that Paul “grounds the universality of justification for Jews and Gentiles by referring to Deut. 6:4.” See also Bassler (1984: 55); Michel (1978: 156); Käsemann (1980: 104); Fitzmyer (1993: 355–56).

²⁵⁵ Some commentators render εἴπερ “since” influenced by the textual variant ἐπείπερ, see Stowers (1981: 165); *contra*. Longenecker (2016: 388–89) regards ἐπείπερ as a less likely reading. RSV transforms the (dependent) relative clause into an (independent) main clause, rendering v. 30 “since God is one; and he will justify the circumcised on the ground of their faith and the uncircumcised through their faith”.

²⁵⁶ Wallance (1996: 336, 684).

misunderstand the logic of the verse.”²⁵⁷ Besides the relative pronoun ὅς, the structure and argument are not read appropriately. Since both vv. 30a and 30b are governed by εἴτερ, the first-class conditional sentence is made up of the apodosis in v. 29 and the protasis in v. 30.²⁵⁸ Paul is not providing reason for explaining why God justifies both Jews and Gentiles. Rather, showing God is ναὶ καὶ ἐθνῶν (also the God of Gentiles) is his concern (v. 29). In other words, in order to explain why God is also the God of Gentiles (v. 29), Paul states that God is the one, who will justify the circumcised and the uncircumcised (v. 30).²⁵⁹ This is further supported by the structural parallel between vv. 27–28 and vv. 29–30. In vv. 27–28, in order to argue ἡ καύχησις (boasting) is excluded (v. 27), a convictional statement provides the reason (v. 28)—one is justified by faith apart from works of the law. “The convictional statement of v. 28 grounds v. 27. In vv. 29–30 a very similar conviction is used to make clear that God is also the God of the Gentiles.”²⁶⁰

Apart from the structural parallel, how does the argument for God as God of Gentile (vv. 29–30) relate to the argument against boasting (vv. 27–28)? It is important to read the logic of progression appropriately from the first to the second pair of verses. By affirming God is also the God of Gentiles (v. 29), Paul’s conviction in v. 28 is advanced. Before elaborating on our reading, it might be helpful to “know right from wrong” by contrasting with an inaccurate reading. Based on his suggested reading concerning boasting is “the *national* pride” that separates ethnic Israel from the Gentiles,²⁶¹ Wright argues Paul is “declaring that there is no road into covenant membership on the grounds of Jewish racial privilege” in vv. 29–30.²⁶² Accordingly, Paul is simply repeating himself because both pairs of verses deal *not* with work righteousness but deal with Jewish exclusivism. However, this reading understates the distinction between the two pairs of verses. The conditional sentence (vv. 29–30) just

²⁵⁷ Thompson (1988: 546).

²⁵⁸ Wallace (1996: 694) uses Rom 3:29–30 as an example for first class conditional sentence. He explains that the protasis is assumed to be true, and “it is not the protasis that is in doubt, but the apodosis.”

²⁵⁹ Nicholson (2011: 207–8). Lembrecht’s (2000: 527) reconstruction is helpful, “If indeed God is one, the God who will justify Jews and Gentiles alike [protasis, v. 30ab], then this God is also the God of Gentiles [apodosis, v. 29c].”

²⁶⁰ Lembrecht (2000: 527).

²⁶¹ E.g. Wright (2005: 117) argues that boasting is not here talking about every individual Jew, as is regularly supposed, but about the *national* boast which declares that ethnic Israel as a whole remains inviolate.” Dunn (1988a: 159, 185; 1992: 109) similarly marks it as Jewish “boundary marker”.

²⁶² Wright (2002: 482).

discussed is linked to vv. 27–28 with the connective ἤ, indeed, the argument in vv. 29–30 is embedded within the larger argument of vv. 27–30.²⁶³ Gathercole rightly notes that vv. 27–28 and vv. 29–30 should not be collapsed together, because “the *content* of the doctrine of justification by faith should be distinguished from its *scope*.” Also, 3:29 “has the character of a *reductio ad absurdum*...it provides the opportunity, again, for a statement about his [Paul’s] doctrine of justification by faith.”²⁶⁴ Although Gathercole correctly notes 3:29–30 advances Paul’s argument in 3:27–28, he fails to elaborate on the theme of Gentile inclusion and its relation to the doctrine of justification.²⁶⁵ Also, Gathercole is tipping the scale too far. Isn’t it necessary to explain how vv. 29–30 *further develops* vv. 27–28 if one wants to prove that the latter argument is different from the precedent?

If God’s saving act of justification (vv. 27–28) is taken seriously, it is not surprising and indeed natural that it is followed by a discussion about God’s character (vv. 29–30). The basic insight “that was reached by the lengthy exposition of Rom 1:16–3:26 and more particularly 3:21–26” is reiterated in v. 28. Regardless of whether boasting should be taken as ethnic privilege or personal achievement,²⁶⁶ Paul’s point in vv. 27–28 is blatant: the reason for the exclusion of boasting lies in the fact γάρ no one can be justified apart from faith in Christ (v. 28).²⁶⁷ The arguments about exclusion

²⁶³ Donaldson (1997: 82–83).

²⁶⁴ Gathercole (2002: 231; 2004: 155). Gathercole cites Rom 2:3–4 as evidence illustrating Paul uses the particle ἤ with questions to “force the point he made” (2:2) and “get to the answer he wants to explore” (2:5); see also Bruno’s (2013: 128 n. 57) discussion on different nuances of ἤ in Paul’s writings.

²⁶⁵ Gathercole (2002: 231; 2004: 156) argues, Although Gathercole also affirms that Gentile inclusion is a prominent theme in vv. 29–30, he too quickly concludes that further investigation of the theme will “minimize the anthropological content of the doctrine of justification in 3:27–28.” In his words, “Even if Paul mentions the justification of Jew and gentile alike in 3.30, that does not mean that the inclusion of the gentiles has been in view all along (even in 3.27–28).”

²⁶⁶ The meaning of boasting has been disputed. The so-called New Perspective (e.g., Dunn, 1988a: 185; Wright, 2005: 117) proposes that it is “about the *national* pride” that separates ethnic Israel from the Gentiles; whereas traditional approaches (e.g. Barrett, 1975: 82; Fitzmyer, 1993: 359) view that boasting refers to one’s reliance on human ability or accomplishment to please God. The dispute is not entirely between New and Old Perspective, for instance, Moo (1996: 246) argues that Paul’s ongoing dialogue with a “Jewish interlocutor” indicates Jewish boasting is in view; contrarily, Jewett (2007: 296) does not think it should be restricted to an ethnic group. Gathercole’s understanding is somehow less diametrical (2002: 226), “Fundamentally, the boast in 3.27 is tied up with two things, which in the Jewish mindset are really a unity. First, Israel’s election and gift of the Torah are (rightly) emphasised by the New Perspective. Second is the conviction that God would vindicate his people at the eschaton on the basis of their obedience.”

²⁶⁷ Nicholson (2011: 205). In fact, the contrast between universality of sin πάντες ἡμάρτον, ὅστεροῦνται and God’s justifying act, δικαιούμενοι, has been drawn in vv. 23–24, “Es haben alle gesündigt und

of boasting and no justification apart from faith are not merely anthropological but also theological— God justifies only on the basis of faith.²⁶⁸ It follows if God is only the God of Jews (v. 29a), what is convicted in v. 28 (even in chs. 1–3) cannot stand. Therefore, Paul makes it clear that God cannot be the God of Jews *only*, the double ἔθνων in v. 29b underscores that God is also the God of Gentiles. Klumbies explains that logic clearly,

Wäre Gott nur Gott der Juden, könnte von einer Rechtfertigung aller Menschen einzig aufgrund der πίστις nicht die Rede sein. Indem Paulus die zweite Frage οὐχὶ καὶ ἔθνων hinzufügt und mit Ja beantwortet, bestätigt er den Ertrag von V. 28. Gottes an das Christusgeschehen gebundenes Rechtfertigungshandeln entnimmt ihn nationaler Einbindung und läßt ihn Gott der Juden wie der Heiden sein. Er ist der, zu dem Zugang einzig der Glaube χωρὶς ἔργων νόμου gewährt.²⁶⁹

Therefore, the inclusion of Gentile is an implication of justification of faith in this new Messianic era “apart from law” when God’s righteousness is manifested (v. 21). To argue that God is also the God of Gentiles (v. 29), Paul puts forward a conviction of God’s character—God is one who will justify the circumcised and the uncircumcised (v. 30).

3.2.3 Εἷς ὁ θεός and the rest of Romans

Having overviewed the argument context (vv. 27–30), the question how does εἷς ὁ θεός contribute to the argument will guide the following discussion. Apart from misreading the syntax, interpreters often ground the universal justification on εἷς ὁ θεός because it is assumed that Paul’s God is the universal sovereign. For example, as Käsemann puts it, “As Creator and Judge God is also the God of the Gentiles and therefore the salvation of the ungodly. As merely the God of the Jews he would cease to be the only God.”²⁷⁰ True though God’s oneness could mean divine universal sovereignty in Paul’s letters, it is not the case in Rom 3:30.

entbehren der Herrlichkeit Gottes, damit sie umsonst durch Gottes Gnade gerechtfertigt werden.” (Flebbe, 2008: 88).

²⁶⁸ Flebbe (2008: 131) comments “Ein kapitaler Fehlschluss wäre es nun, V.28 als anthropologische Grundaussage zu verstehen...” As the divine justifying action is always expressed with the passivum divinum δικαιωθῆναι, “...nicht als eine losgelöste, absolute Aussage präsentiert worden, sondern dem Handeln Gottes zugeordnet war (Flebbe, 2008: 132).” Klumbies similarly comments “Der Gegenstand des paulinischen Nachdenkens in Röm 3,22–26 und 3,27–31 ist der Mensch vor Gott” (1992: 194).

²⁶⁹ Klumbies (1992: 203).

²⁷⁰ Käsemann (1971:104); Kirk (2008: 65, 70).

As discussed, the formula εἰς ὁ θεός collocates with the following relative clause, ὃς δικαιώσει περιτομὴν ἐκ πίστεως καὶ ἀκροβυστίαν διὰ τῆς πίστεως. Divine oneness is realised in God's act of justifying the circumcised and the uncircumcised on the same basis of faith.²⁷¹ Die bisher geltenden Voraussetzungen einer Beziehung zu Gott seitens des Menschen sind aufgehoben, bestehende Barrieren zwischen den diversen Menschengruppen eingeebnet.²⁷² Instead of being a universal sovereign, God's oneness is elaborated in terms of his action of establishing relationship with men.²⁷³ All who have faith in Christ are included in this justified relationship with the One God. God's impartiality rather than universal sovereignty is highlighted. Paul illustrates this point with the inferential connective οὖν (v.27) which connects vv. 27–31 to the important argument in vv. 21–26 which is known as “the centre and heart of the whole of Rom. 1.16b–15.13.”²⁷⁴

In spite of various complex and controversial concepts involved in vv. 21–26, it is crucial here to see how Paul establishes that Jews and Gentiles are equally under sin and God's wrath in 1:18–3:20.²⁷⁵ Two deficits, all have sinned and lack the glory of God, unite all humans, Jews and Greeks alike (3:9).²⁷⁶ Addressing this dire situation, Paul provides the solution grounded in the eschatological revelation of God's righteousness in 3:21–26.²⁷⁷ Temporal references νυνί (v. 21) and ἐν τῷ νῦν καιρῷ (v. 23) highlight the new reality inaugurated in the Christ event. Followed by v. 24, the two parts of the sentence “all sinned...being justified” underscore the nature of God's gift, δωρεάν, by his [God's] favour τῇ αὐτοῦ χάριτι—“God's action in Christ is no calibrated reward for the godly...but a gift of utter incongruity, showing no

²⁷¹ Moo (1996: 222) notes that the difference of prepositions are just stylistic variation.

²⁷² Klumbies (1992: 204).

²⁷³ Klumbies (1992: 203); MacDonald (2003: 78–85) also helpfully points out that Paul's “monotheism” should not be taken ontologically but covenantally.

²⁷⁴ Cranfield (1975:199), Bruno (2013: 124 n. 43); As for the scope of inference of οὖν, Moo (1996: 246), Seifrid (1992: 223) and Longenecker (2016: 441) relate it to vv. 21–26; Wright (2002: 480) sees a connection to 2.17–24; Thompson (1986: 521) connects it to 2.17–3.26.

²⁷⁵ Talbert (2002: 55); Bruno (2013:119); Nicholson (2011: 203); contra. Kaylor (1988: 50) who argues that placing Jews and Gentiles on the same footing is Paul's message. Yet, universality of sin and equal footing are not mutually exclusive, but complementary. Also, Barclay (2015: 466) notes the problematic assumption of treating the section as “a unit whose single theme is the sinfulness of all humanity...one the contrary, several tasks are here interwoven.”

²⁷⁶ Klumbies (1992: 194).

²⁷⁷ Moo (1996: 218) notes that both the importance and the preparatory or forward pointing nature of 1:18–3:20.

correspondence with the worth of its recipients.”²⁷⁸ Despite human unrighteousness, the revelation of God’s righteousness (vv. 21, 25, 26) comes in an unexpected way: apart from the Law.²⁷⁹ Moo’s summary is fitting for the incongruity, “The revelation of God’s righteousness ‘apart from the Law’ (v. 21) has now opened up this possibility in a way that was not the case before.”²⁸⁰ It has been commonly noted 3:21–26 is “now” the confirmation of the promise in 1:16–17,²⁸¹ as all πάντι Jews and Gentiles who believe, are participating equally in God’s revealed righteousness.

Paul returns to the question of distinction, regarding Jews and Gentiles, in vv. 27–31 with the diatribal questions and answers. All human capital is disregarded, including that defined by works (of the Law), it becomes clear that a person is justified through faith (vv. 27–28).²⁸² Flebbe rightly notes that καύχησις refers to sociological attribute that differentiates, “ein Wert, der mit menschlicher Differenzierung verbunden ist.”²⁸³ In the eschatological era characterised by faith in Christ, different anthropological, national, ethnical conditions are shown to be soteriologically irrelevant. Since faith is the fundamental similarity between Jews and Gentiles, in vv. 29–30, Paul ties “the oneness of God to his character as one who impartially judges Jew and Gentile alike.”²⁸⁴ Therefore, Paul is not only arguing for the One God related to the Gentiles as a distant sovereign over them, rather, the thematic meaning of the predicate εἷς lies in Paul’s argument that the God who has special meaningful relationship with the Jews is the same “One” God who has special meaningful relationship for the Gentiles. “Paul sees that in the Christ-event the Gentiles are not quietly slipped into heaven through the back door of faith, but rather they are given full and equal access to the blessings of the One God, and this without Torah.”²⁸⁵ In fact, Paul intentionally chooses the words, περιτομήν and ἀκροβυστίαν, instead of Jews and Gentiles to reinforce his argument against the relevance of circumcision (or the Torah) for justification. Up to this point of the argument, it would be easy for Jews

²⁷⁸ Barclay (2015: 474).

²⁷⁹ See Flebbe (2008: 71–76); Nicholson (2011: 195–205) for the complexity of scholars’ discussion about God’s righteousness.

²⁸⁰ Moo (1996: 244); Nicholson (2011: 204).

²⁸¹ Flebbe (2008: 67–68).

²⁸² Barclay (2015: 482).

²⁸³ Flebbe, (2008: 125–26 n. 239).

²⁸⁴ Nicholson (2011: 208).

²⁸⁵ Nicholson (2011: 208–9); also Moo (1996: 251).

to see that Paul is wiping out Jewish privilege. Paul then refutes the objection “do we then nullify the law through faith?” (v.31) with the following section on Abrahamic faith in ch. 4. As a result, the logic of Paul’s argument can now be better understood as Paul’s one God language is used in relation to God’s impartiality granting equal access for Gentiles into salvation.

This thematic meaning of linking God’s oneness with his impartiality is further confirmed in Rom 4. Since the four divine designations will be analysed later, discussion here will be limited. Moo has identified “an impressive degree of parallelism” between 3:27–30 and 4:1–25. Themes such as “boasting” (3:27a; 4:1–2), “justified by faith, not works of the law” (3:27b–28; 4:3–8) and “union of circumcised and uncircumcised through faith” (3:29–30; 4:9–17), are elucidated and elaborated.²⁸⁶ Thus, 3:27–30 is a thematic introduction to ch. 4 where Paul demonstrates from the beginning, both God’s oneness and the Abrahamic blessing “was blind to every token of differential worth”.²⁸⁷ Paul is not saying the election of Israel and the Jewish privilege of the Torah are obsolete, for they were not even created when the story of Abraham happened. Abraham is not only *μόνον* the Father of the circumcised (4:12), those who are of the Law (4:16), but also *καί* those who follow his faith (4:12, 16). The “not only...but also” construction is again employed to make the same point in 3:29–30, for the One God is not only *Ἰουδαίων ὁ θεὸς μόνον*, but also of the Gentiles *καὶ ἔθνων*. The inclusive significance of *καί* for the Gentiles is echoed in the preceding chapters beside 3:30. For example in 1:16, arguably the touchstone of Paul’s message, Paul’s gospel is first *Ἰουδαίῳ πρῶτον* and *also καὶ Ἑλλήνι* (see also 2:9–11).²⁸⁸ As a result, the theological underpinning of Paul’s one God language does not base primarily on the conviction of God as a universal creator or sovereign, rather, God’s impartiality is emphasised. It should be noted that the rationale for “Jews first and also Gentiles” is neither a social goal nor exegetical conclusion, it resides in Paul’s discovery of the Christ-generated eschatological revelation *νυνί*.²⁸⁹ “Because the one God is of unimpeachable character, and because it would be unfair to judge equal people (i.e., sinners, both Jews and Gentiles) with an unequal standard, then God must

²⁸⁶ Moo (1996: 244–45).

²⁸⁷ Barclay (2015: 487).

²⁸⁸ Nano (1996: 184, 189); Donaldson (1997: 88–93).

²⁸⁹ Barclay (2015: 487).

have a single standard for all people. As a result, Paul is able to argue that YHWH must therefore be the God of the Gentiles.”²⁹⁰

3.2.4 Background

After illustrating what purpose is the one God language serving in Romans, we will then compare Paul’s thematic meaning with his Pagan and Jewish contemporaries. The following background investigation is not only an investigation for its own sake. Given Paul’s designation is used in soteriological relation to Gentile inclusion, it will be illuminating to know how special or common is Paul’s meaning of εἷς compared to the recurrent pattern in similar religious texts? How would Paul’s audience receive the “one God”? Given there is no exact parallel of the predicate construction εἷς ὁ θεός in the OT,²⁹¹ how does Paul appropriate the one God language for his purpose? Although a thorough research on the “one God” concept should include various “monotheistic” expressions such as ὁ θεὸς μόνος, οὐκ ἔστιν πλὴν θεοῦ, or οὐκ ἐγένετο ἄλλος θεός, this does not answer the question of the linguistic pattern. In order to gain a focused understanding of Paul’s appropriation of the one God language, the following investigation will focus on the numerical εἷς used to designate God. Also, given interrelatedness of Ἰουδαίων/ἐθνῶν ὁ θεός and εἷς ὁ θεός in the context of Romans, special attention will also be paid to designations relating deities to ethnic groups.

A. Εἷς θεός and the polytheistic Greco-Roman literature

It might seem paradoxical to talk about εἷς θεός in Greek polytheistic world of gods which has been known for its “scattered and heterogeneous pantheon”,²⁹² yet discussion about both the language εἷς and the concept monotheism enjoy particular currency in the studies of ancient religion.²⁹³ Before looking into examples relevant to Paul’s usage, it is helpful to call to mind Durkheim’s problematisation of polysemy,

²⁹⁰ Nicholson (2011: 209–11).

²⁹¹ It is common in the NT (e.g., Mk 2:7; 10, 18; Lk 18:19; James 2:19). Some close examples might be found in the LXX in second person predicate constructions: σὺ εἷς ὁ θεὸς μόνος ὁ μέγας (e.g., Ps 85:10 LXX; Isa 37:20); or in appositional construction κύριος εἷς or πατήρ εἷς (e.g., Zech 14:9; Mal 2:10). For Pagan texts, see Trombley’s (1995: vol. 2, 313–15) and Marksches (2010: 104–8) for the Christian use of εἷς ὁ θεός formula, without article, in inscriptions in late antiquities.

²⁹² Vernant (1991:269–89); Burkert (1985: 119).

²⁹³ Pagan monotheism has enjoyed particular currency in discussions of ancient religion since Athanassiadi and Frede (1999); Versnel (1990); Mitchell and Nuffelen (2010).

“Words (....) do not have ‘meanings’ in the sort of way that children have parents. They have *uses*, identifiable in particular places and periods.”²⁹⁴ Therefore, it is not sufficient just to address the question of the deities’ identities, but in what context or discourse is εἷς used.

A1. Εἷς θεός in Greco-roman philosophy texts

One of the most astounding one-God proclamations is espoused by the sixth century BC Ionian philosopher Xenophanes of Kolophon. Xenophanes explains his one-god theology, “εἷς θεός, ἔν τε θεοῖσι καὶ ἀνθρώποισι μέγιστος, οὔτε δέμας θνητοῖσιν ὁμοίος οὔτε νόημα (B23).”²⁹⁵ Xenophanes postulates one Supreme deity in a transcending realm beyond the sensible world. Anthropomorphic beliefs about deities in Homeric epic, such as deities characterised by passions (B11) or who have tangible bodies (B15), are rejected by Xenophanes’ “monotheistic” theology. Rather, this one god is completely immovable (B26),²⁹⁶ omniscient (B24),²⁹⁷ and predominantly characterized as (being or having) a Great Mind νοῦς (B25) to create the universe through thought alone.²⁹⁸ Xenophanes’ statement is considered a revolutionary religious innovation in the polytheist Greek world.²⁹⁹ Nevertheless, Xenophanes’ view does not exclude the existence of other deities as he asserts the εἷς θεός’s greatness “among gods and humans” ἔν θεοῖσι καὶ ἀνθρώποισι μέγιστος. Burkert precisely illustrates the paradox, “What sounds like monotheism is nevertheless drawing on entirely customary formulae: one is the greatest and for that very reason is not alone.”³⁰⁰ Although some attempt to explain away the inconsistency by suggesting that the mention of “gods” is only rhetorical or there is a superlative use of εἷς,³⁰¹ ancient philosophers such as Theophrastus and Aristotle confirm Xenophanes’ unequivocal one-god unbelief. Aristotle calls Xenophanes the first “monist” πρῶτος ἐνίσας, because “regarding the whole material universe he stated that

²⁹⁴ Durkheim and Swain (1976: 436).

²⁹⁵ Xenophanes, *Testimonia: Doctrine* (ca. 600–400 BC), B23; see Versnel (2011: 246 n. 25) for debates on the authenticity of these lines.

²⁹⁶ “αἰεὶ δ’ ἐν ταῦτῳ μῖμνει κινούμενος οὐδέν, οὐδὲ μετέρχεσθαι μιν ἐπιτρέπει ἄλλοτε ἄλλη.”

²⁹⁷ “οὐλος ὄρᾱ, οὐλος δὲ νοεῖ, οὐλος δέ τ’ ἀκούει.”

²⁹⁸ “ἀλλ’ ἀπάνευθε πόνοιο νόου φρενὶ πάντα κραδαίνει.”

²⁹⁹ Versnel (2011: 245).

³⁰⁰ Burkert (1985: 308).

³⁰¹ Leshner (1992: 96–100).

the Unity is God ἀλλ' εἰς τὸν ὅλον οὐρανὸν ἀποβλέψας τὸ ἓν εἶναι φησι τὸν θεόν".³⁰² Also, as just discussed, other all-embracing epithets in the context suggest that Xenophanes is not just emphasising a divine being greater than, but *fundamentally different* from, others deities.³⁰³ Divine oneness is not understood quantitatively but qualitatively as Chaniotis rightly puts, "not every attestation of the formula *heis theos* refers to a *single* god; sometimes it designates a deity as *unique* within a polytheistic system."³⁰⁴ Xenophanes' idea of divine oneness related to cosmological unity is often compared to the later Stoic theology. For example, Aristotle parallels τοῦ ἐνός with ὁ θεός to assert that god is ungenerated in the ordered universe (*Metaphysics* III. 1000a).³⁰⁵ Zeno uses the expression Ἐν τ' εἶναι θεὸν (135–36) and identifies the one god with Reason νοῦν and Zeus Δία which originate the universe.³⁰⁶ Although philosophers regard God as divine power θείας δυνάμεως which holds everything together συνέχει τὸ πᾶν (Aristotle, *Politics* VII. IV. 32), they could accommodate gods in the plural form. Long summarises Epictetus's theology, "the Stoic divinity is everywhere... They even applied the divine names... to the elements earth, air, fire, and water, and especially to the heavenly bodies. Strictly, though, these gods are only symbolical ways of referring to the world's most powerful constituents all of which owe their existence to the single 'active principle' named God in the singular or Zeus."³⁰⁷ It should be noted that the exact term εἷς is not used, however, Zimmerman suggests a possible mythological parallel from the Derveni papyrus, which is an old Greek literary papyrus dated to 340–20 BC at the end of the classical period. Zeus, after swallowing the Phallos of Uranus, becomes the "only god" to whom all other gods and goddesses "grow" so that he becomes the only one αὐτὸς δ' ἄρα μούνοος ἔγεντο (Col.16,6). Interestingly, reflections on the one divine world principle could be found in very early source.³⁰⁸ The expression εἷς θεός is use with reference to an immaterial, abstract, transcending cosmological principle from the examples from

³⁰² Aristotle, *Metaphysics* (ca. 400–300BC) IV. 986b.

³⁰³ Versnel (2011: 247 n. 26).

³⁰⁴ Chaniotis (2010: 119); Peterson (1926: 268–70).

³⁰⁵ "τοῦτο γεννᾷν ἔξω τοῦ ἐνός· ἅπαντα γὰρ ἐκ τούτου τᾶλλα ἐστι πλὴν ὁ θεός" (Aristotle, *Metaphysics* IV. 1000a).

³⁰⁶ Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* 7.1. Zeno.

³⁰⁷ Long (2002: 144). E.g., Epictetus, *Discourses* 1.3.1 "ὁ θεὸς πατήρ ἐστι τῶν τ' ἀνθρώπων καὶ τῶν θεῶν" (cf. Aristotle *Metaphysics* 1074b3).

³⁰⁸ Zimmerman (2007: 535–36).

Xenophanes to Epictetus, however, the concern is not numerical singularity but qualitative uniqueness. Many gods beside the one god are not excluded. Meyer captures this inconsistency between one and many well, “In Griechenland vollends hat die Frage, ob ein Gott oder viele Götter, kaum eine Rolle gespielt; ob die göttliche Macht als Einheit oder als Vielheit gedacht wird, ist irrelevant...”³⁰⁹

A2. Εἷς θεός in Greco-roman religious texts

Apart from the philosophical use of one god, illuminating examples can also be found in religious texts. An earlier attestation is found in a 3rd century BC Gurob papyrus, where the expression εἷς Διόνυσος is used as a “password” in a Dionysiac initiation.³¹⁰ Zimmerman notes that the henotheistic (the elevation of one deity above all others) traits in Greek religion are initially concentrated on the worship of Isis, Sarapis and Dionysus, “die aus Ägypten stammenden Götter”, but later become more popular for other deities.³¹¹ Besides Dionysus, a 1st century hymn of Isidoros in Narmouthis praised the goddess Isis as μούνη εἷ σὺ ἅπασαι αἱ ὑπὸ τῶν ἐθνῶν ὀνομαζόμεναι θεαὶ ἄλλαι after listing eleven other goddesses of Greece, Asia Minor, Syria and Egypt.³¹² The term θεαὶ ἄλλαι might seem corresponding to the philosophical, all-encompass world principle, however, further investigation into the aretologies of Isis suggests a more complicated picture.³¹³ In the most complete aretology from Kyme, the hymn ends with a climax (lines 55-56) “I overcome Fate, Fate harkens to me.” A goddess triumphs over Fate was unique in Greece thoughts, as Herodotus remarks “None may escape his destined lot, not even a god (*Histories* 1.91).”³¹⁴ The Hymn of Isidorus (second or first BC) praised Isis’ omnipotence in exemplary soteriological formulas, her *aretoi* are manifested in terms of saving believers from shipwrecks or wars, more importantly, from “the fatal destiny of death”

³⁰⁹ Meyer (1937: 706).

³¹⁰ Versnel (1990: 205); Chaniotis (2010: 128); On the Gurob papyrus see Graf and Johnston (2007: 150–5).

³¹¹ Zimmerman (2007: 540).

³¹² Zimmerman, (2007: 540); Delling (1970: 394).

³¹³ They are dated from second century BC to second century AD; see Kockelmann (2008) for the collection. The translation is taken from Grant (1953: 131).

³¹⁴ During the Imperial period, Isis was glorified for having the power to shift the boundaries of determined time of life, in other words, her divine victory over Fate or Predestination is realised in ransoming mortal from death (Versnel 2011: 286).

ἐμ μοίραις θανάτου.³¹⁵ Given the extraordinary victory over death, Isis thus claimed, “I, Isis, am the one and only sovereign of this era” ἐγὼ τύραννος Εἷσις αἰῶνος μόνη in the aretalogy of Cyrene.³¹⁶ The title reappears in *P.Oxy 1380* 1.6 as Isis is called “the One” τὴν μίαν.³¹⁷ The hyperbolic ego-proclamations illustrate Isis “is the great champion in a divine competition for omnipotence.”³¹⁸ This is reflected in one of the famous Epheisan cheers μεγίστη θεά (e.g. Xenophon of Ephesus, V. 13.4; cf. Acts 19:28) as Versnel rightly argues that both εἷς and μέγας are used in a similar elative sense in agonistic contexts. While μέγας is a common acclamatory epithet, it is often found in miracle narratives. The same applies to εἷς. The narrative of Zeus’s miracle at Panamara best illustrates the usage. In response to an attack on the Zeus’s sanctuary by the troops of Labienus (ca. 40 BC), Zeus’s fire burned the weapons of the enemy, and a sudden storm terrified the assailants. The attackers then begged for forgiveness and cried with a loud voice Μέγαν εἶναι Δία Πανάμαρον.³¹⁹ In another miracle of Zeus Sarapis (an aretalogy copied in the second century AD), those experienced the god’s power exclaimed οἱ παρόντες εἶπατε “εἷς Ζεὺς Σάραπις.”³²⁰ Miraculous divine intervention adduces as proof of the greatness and “oneness” of gods are typical in Hellenistic and later Roman religiosity.³²¹ In Aelius Aristides’s report of his vision of Asclepius (ca. 117–181AD) Aelius expresses his gratitude for Asclepius’ healing (4.51) and addresses Asclepius as “[You the] One” ...ἐξεβόησα, ‘εἷς’, λέγων δὴ τὸν θεόν...(Hierio logoi 4.50). Versnel rightly remarks that the acclamation “god is one” is connected with the deities’ outstanding soteriological qualities.³²²

Neither philosophical nor religious use of εἷς suggests an exclusion of other deities, instead, their thematic meanings are agonistic in nature emphasising exceptional divine powers. While the same idea of demonstrating God’s soteriological justification power is manifested in Rom 3:30, Paul is less concerned with comparing

³¹⁵ Versnel (1990: 46).

³¹⁶ Aretalogy of Cyrene, *SEG* 9.192.

³¹⁷ Totti (1985: 35 no. 21); Vanderlip (1972: 55); Versnel (2011: 289).

³¹⁸ Versnel (1990: 194, 234–37; 2011: 288).

³¹⁹ See Chaniotis (1998: 408–10).

³²⁰ Totti (1985: 32–3 no. 13).

³²¹ Versnel (2011: 290); see Chaniotis (2010: 129–134) for rich evidence of superlative language and especially *meas* in cheers and acclamations.

³²² Versnel (1990: 50); Steger (2016: 142). A third century AD healing amulet gives similar evidence: εἷς θεὸς ὁ θεραπεύων πᾶσαν νόσον “One is the god who heals every sickness.” published in Wortmann (1968: 105).

his one God with other deities. The epithets Ἰουδαίων/ἔθνῳν ὁ θεός (3:29) in Romans illustrate the need to investigate epithets beyond the numerical εἷς.

A3. Greco-roman divine ethnonyms or toponyms

While Paul's designations relate the divine and mortals in terms of ethnonyms, ancient greek gods have domiciles not only on Mount Olympus but cities as reflected in various divine eponyms deriving from place names, by implication the community. According to Apollodorus (*The Library* 3.14.1, ca. 1–100AD) in the time of Kekrops,

...the gods resolved to take possession of cities in which each of them should receive his own peculiar worship. ἐπὶ τούτου, φασίν, ἔδοξε τοῖς θεοῖς πόλεις καταλαβέσθαι, ἐν αἷς ἔμελλον ἔχειν τιμὰς ἰδίας ἕκαστος.³²³

A few examples from tragedies in the classical period will serve our purpose. In Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes*, the inhabitants of Thebes call on θεοὶ πολῖται for help (253). Parker explains the expression suggests not only "god of the city" but also "citizen gods". For the gods are urged to "hold protection over" the city (214) and show they are φιλοπόλεις "city-loving" (175–76).³²⁴ In another 5th century BC play, Euripides' *Phoenician Women*, when the exiled brother Polyneikes launches an attack at his brother Eteokles to reclaim his throne, he invokes the gods of Thebes for support but Eteokles denies him of this right: Μυκῆναις, μὴ ᾽νθάδ' ἀνακάλει θεοὺς "Invoke the gods at Mykenai, not here" (608).³²⁵ In Sophocles' account of Polyneikes' determination "to burn to the ground his native city and the gods of his race", the local gods are called θεοὺς τοὺς ἐγγενεῖς (199). Polyneikes' tragedy also reflects the inter-statal religious code when local deities interact. When launching an attack, an enemy city invokes the local gods for support by swearing that they themselves are not guilty of initiating acts of aggression.³²⁶ In Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War* IV.87.2, the Spartan general Barsidas makes the gods (θεοὺς τοὺς ἐγγωρίους; cf. θεοὺς τοὺς ὀρκίους γενομένους in II.71.4) and heroes of Akantians' country to witness his good intent for the Akantians and threatens to destroy them if they do not comply (cf. II.74). The common expression "the gods depart when a city is taken" θεοὺς τοὺς τῆς

³²³ It is probably written in the first to second century AD.

³²⁴ Parker (1997: 150–51).

³²⁵ Versnel (2011: 97 n. 276) explains the implication: your home and your gods, to whom you can appeal, are at Argos, not here.

³²⁶ Versnel (2011: 99).

ἀλούσης πόλεος ἐκλείπειν (Aeschylus, *Thebes* 218) illustrates the conviction that the polis is a sacred universe.³²⁷ Interactions between deities are not limited to conflicts. An inscription discovered in Xanthos contains a long text of an appeal from the city Kytenion in Doris to the city of Xanthos in Lykia for financial support.

They request us, recalling the kinship that exists between them and us from gods and heroes (συγγενεία τῶν θεῶν), not to allow the walls of their city to remain demolished. Leto [they say], the goddess who presides over our city (τὴν τῆς πόλεως ἀρχηγέτιν τῆς ἡμετέρας), gave birth to Artemis and Apollo amongst us, from Apollo and Coronis the daughter of Phlegyas, who was descended from Doros, Asclepios was born in Doris.³²⁸

The Kytenians derive their genealogical link συγγενεία with the Xanthians from the cross-identification of gods. Beyond the border of the polis, syncretic connections between greek and foreign deities could also be observed. A bilingual inscription from Malta in the third/second century BC dedicated to “Melqart, Lord of Tyre” in Phoenician and to “Heracles ἀρχηγέτε” in Greek clearly identifies the two deities, and thus fosters link between the newly found colony and its motherland.³²⁹ The idea of Ἑλληνικὸν defined by sharing gods is evident in the celebrated Herodotean passage.³³⁰ Yet, Polinskaya correctly notes the difference between ὅμοιος and κοινός in the passage and argues “having common κοινὰ shrine and sacrifices” does not mean typological, abstract sameness. Rather, it has a concrete, or exclusive meaning referring to specific shared festival like celebration at the panhellenic sanctuaries.³³¹ Polinskaya also demonstrates the expression τοῖς θεοῖς τῶν Ἑλληνῶν are not only extremely rare but always used in contrastive or patriotic contexts where there is opposition to foreign hostility in Herodotus’ writings.³³² A limited number of

³²⁷ Parker (1997: 151); Versnel (2011: 101).

³²⁸ SEG 38.1476 (206/205 BC). For discussion of this text, see Jones (1999: 61–62); Patterson (2010: 118–123); Stavrianopoulou (2013: 177–205); Erskine (2002: 101–2).

³²⁹ Miles (2010: 103–6).

³³⁰ *The Persian Wars* (ca. 500–400BC) VIII 144, “τὸ Ἑλληνικὸν ἐὼν ὁμαῖμόν τε καὶ ὁμόγλωσσον καὶ θεῶν ἰδρύματά τε κοινὰ καὶ θυσίαι ἡθεὰ τε ὁμότροπα.” See also Fredriksen’s (2018: 194–97) discussion of “divine ethnicity”.

³³¹ Polinskaya (2010: 69); Versnel (2011: 103–4).

³³² Instead, Greek used the expression πάντες θεοί to refer to the totality of their gods, it is still the common Greek gods but not the gods of different Greek *poleis*. Polinskaya (2010: 43–50); Versnel (2011: 103–4, 501–7).

expressions, such as *θυοὶ [θεοὶ] Ἑλλήνων καὶ Περσῶν*³³³, *Ῥωμαίων θεοῦς*³³⁴ are found in imprecations against desecrators of graves, however the gods evoked are neighbouring deities, not local deities of the tomb occupants. Such eponyms discussed demonstrate close relationship between local deities and cities, gods are “honorary citizen”—the ultimate expression of local inclusion in the Greek world.

The local pantheon represented by gods worshipped by each *polis* are place or community specific. Meanwhile, boundaries of divine topography are not impermeable as shown in the synthetic eponyms. “The Greeks were far from thinking that their gods belonged to them alone, least of all Zeus, the father of gods and men, whose protection...applied throughout the world. He could be recognised under the mask of the supreme god of barbarians such as the Persians or ...the Jews.”³³⁵ Nevertheless, neither the expressions *εἷς θεός* nor the very rare *θυοὶ Ἑλλήνων* suggests a united, universal, exclusive pantheon for all Greek poleis.³³⁶ “In sum, there is no unity, there are *unities*, creating at a different level a new diversity, even a new type of ‘potential chaos’, that of the multiplicity of classifications.”³³⁷ Compared with the ambiguity in the pagan polytheistic world, it is clear that for Paul, the thematic meaning of *εἷς θεός* refers to the one who justifies different ethnic-groups in the same soteriological terms (Rom 3:30). Meanwhile, it is wrong to call Paul, or any ancient pagan, “monotheist” because the one God is never the “only” God. Paul’s one God is described in ethnic specific and soteriological oriented terms: *Ἰουδαίων* and *ἐθνῶν ὁ θεός* (3:29).³³⁸ Yet, it is peculiar to its religious culture: “Israel’s god is *also* and ultimately the god of all other ethnic groups”, concurrently his gospel is the eschatological realisation of “the Jewish god’s ultimate act of cross-ethnic outreach.”³³⁹

³³³ It is a curse in East Karia invokes the wrath of the Pisidian gods (Strubbe, 1997: 127).

³³⁴ Strubbe (1997: no. 50): *ἐχέτω τοὺς δήμου Ῥωμαίων θε[οὺς κεχολ]ωμένους πάντα καὶ πάσας* (first century CE). It is unnecessary to assume that the occupant of this grave was of Roman origin (Chaniotis, 2012: 118).

³³⁵ Jones (1999: 65).

³³⁶ Versnel (2011: 116–19, 142–49).

³³⁷ Versnel (2011: 146).

³³⁸ Fredriksen (2018: 211, 212) explains how Paul’s gospel is ethnically specific to Jews as well as Gentiles in different ways.

³³⁹ Fredriksen (2018: 203).

B. Εἷς θεός in the OT

As for the linguistic pattern of one God in the OT, the numerical adjective εἷς designating God can be found in only four places in the OT, whereby twice יהיה אחד / once יהוה אחד (LXX εἷς κύριος/ εἷς κύριος, Deut 6:4; Dan 3:17; Zech 14:9) and once אחד אל (LXX θεός εἷς, Mal 2:10).³⁴⁰ Expressions like εἷς θεός/ κύριος εἷς are used more frequently in Hellenistic Jewish writings in the Second Temple era compared with the OT in the situation of Diaspora Judaism.³⁴¹ Instead of studying all “monotheistic” language,³⁴² this study will be limited to divine designation εἷς used in relation to God’s covenant people Israel. Given Paul’s usage and the analysis above, particular focus will be paid to examine whether or to what extent is εἷς used with reference to the interaction with, even inclusion of ἔθνη (the nations) as, God’s people.³⁴³

B1. Deuteronomy

It is not an overstatement to say that Deut 6:4 יהוה אחד is “das Grundbekenntnis des Alten Testaments”.³⁴⁴ Following the summon to Israel, two nominal causes, “YHWH our God” and “YHWH is one”,³⁴⁵ stand side by side showing equal importance. Covenant keeping plays a major role in the context of Deut 4—6.³⁴⁶ Deut 4:1 begins with a שמע summon to Israel to listen to YHWH’s statutes (הקיים) and laws (משפטים).³⁴⁷ Moses’ second שמע ישראל (5:1) restates the Decalogue (5:1–21). In between these summons, demand on exclusive worship and loyalty to YHWH is explicit in the first three commands of the Decalogue (5:6–11), as well as 4:15–19 and 6:10–15.³⁴⁸ The stipulations of putting no other gods in honour ahead of YHWH expresses the essence of exclusive covenantal relationship between

³⁴⁰ It might seem surprising given the liturgical importance of the Shema as a reminder of YHWH’s uniqueness is recited twice a day by devout Jews in around the first century. Bruno (2013: 42).

³⁴¹ For a general review of Jewish religious history during the last centuries BC and the 1st century, see, among others, Grabbe (2000: 37–126); Elliott (2000). For discussion of monotheism in the era, see Horbury (2004: 16–44); Hurtado (2003: 29–50); Bauckham (2008).

³⁴² The adjective μόνος is used more frequently than εἷς as a translation of בודד denoting God’s uniqueness in the OT. Zimmerman (2007: 544).

³⁴³ This section shares a common goal with Bruno’s (2013:24–113) study, however, his argument for establishing Zech 14:9 (as well as Deut 6:4) as an allusion to Gal 3:20 and Rom 3:30 is not taken uncritically (see Foster 2014: 555–56). Also, Bruno overlooks LXX Dan 3:17.

³⁴⁴ Mauser (1986: 71–87).

³⁴⁵ See Bruno (2013: 35–38) for translation dispute. The translation adopted here, like the LXX and the Nash Papyrus, takes the first clause as a pendant nominative followed by a simple predication with the predicate אחד (MacDonald, 2003: 66).

³⁴⁶ The word ברית appears five times 4:13, 23, 31; 5:2, 3.

³⁴⁷ Nine out of seventeen collocations of משפטים and חקים in Deuteronomy are found in chs. 4–6.

³⁴⁸ Bruno (2013: 25–27).

one God and Israel.³⁴⁹ Although both Deut 6.4 and the first commandment assume the existence of other deities and they present a genuine temptation to Israel, the declaration YHWH is one stresses the relational import: “YHWH is the only god for Israel, they are to have no others.”³⁵⁰ Beside the covenantal background, Feldmeier takes the historical context into account and notes the importance of one God for the constitution or newly constitution of Israel. In view of the destruction of the Northern Kingdom in 722—702 BC and the forced symbiosis of the former inhabitants in the North and the Judean, the intent of unity of the people of the one God is apparent. The one God “unifies the former, predominantly hostile, fraternal nations into one nation of brothers.”³⁵¹ Divine εἷς is not only an ontological abstract, but a historical reality. The One savior transforms Israelite slaves into a liberated people (6:20–23) and promises them life in a liberated land (6:10–19).³⁵² “YHWH is to be experienced and recognised as the One for his people in unity of his will to save and to promise, to nurture and to preserve.”³⁵³

B2. The Prophets

The use of εἷς in the Prophets “erweitern das Grundgebot [Deut 6:4] rückwärts in die Zeit der Schöpfung und vorwärts in die Zeit des eschatologischen Königtums JHWHs.”³⁵⁴ References to YHWH’s role as creator can be found in Dan 3:17 and Mal 2:10. The former is found in confrontation context when the three Jews answered King Nebuchadnezzar’s rhetorical question and stressed deliverance from the one God in heaven, “our Lord” θεὸς ἐν οὐρανοῖς εἷς κύριος ἡμῶν. The prayer found not in the MT also relates God’s sovereign over the world to his help (μόνος κύριος ὁ θεὸς...ἐφ’ ὅλην τὴν οἰκουμένην, LXX Dan 3:45). God’s oneness is linked to his creative power as well as his fatherhood. The two rhetorical questions Οὐχὶ θεὸς εἷς ἔκτισεν ὑμᾶς and οὐχὶ πατὴρ εἷς πάντων ὑμῶν (Mal 2:10a) not only ties the one God with the origin of Israel, Israel’s failure to uphold covenantal obligation is rebuked (2:10b). “YHWH

³⁴⁹ Donaldson (1997: 75–76) rightly points out that the YHWH’s “monotheistic” nature hinges on the interpretation of על-פני (e.g., Deut 5:7).

³⁵⁰ Donaldson (1997: 95).

³⁵¹ Feldmeier (2013: 98).

³⁵² The preponderance of Exodus themes in chs. 4–5 also emphasizes the soteriological significance of the covenant between YHWH and Israel (see Deut. 4.20, 34, 37–38, 45; 5.6, 15).

³⁵³ Feldmeier (2013: 99).

³⁵⁴ Zimmerman (2007: 543).

holds claim over Israel as Creator and Father...and the covenant relationship between the ‘One ’God and his ‘one ’elect people is characterized by faithfulness.”³⁵⁵ Several similar themes could be observed up to this point, the one God is understood generally in terms of the covenant with his people, namely, Israel. However, the last reference in Zechariah takes it to the eschatological time. Zech 14 is a vision about Jerusalem on “the day of YHWH” illustrating, in a broad sense, divine apocalyptic intervention in the course of history.³⁵⁶ Theophany on the Mount Olive (14:1–5) “will usher in a new age for Jerusalem and Judah in which the city will be cleansed, its society renewed under true leadership...and made everlasting secure [14:11], its enemies of every kind, external and internal, destroyed.”³⁵⁷ Dramatic changes in natural orders, such as patterns of light, day and night, topography and climate, are brought about by the final victory of God (14:6–10).³⁵⁸ The alteration of dark and light, day and night and elimination of dark and frost (14:6–8) might allude to the Noachic Covenant (Gen 8:22) where the conglomeration of summer קיץ and winter חורף is found.³⁵⁹ Besides, the images of the unceasing “living waters” מים־חיים recalls the tradition of Ezek 47:12. In Ezekiel, the living waters only flow east from the temple into the city, representing blessing and salvation of Jerusalem and the surrounding area.³⁶⁰ Mason pushes even further to suggest an echo with the Paradise motif: “by virtue of the divine deliverance of Jerusalem all the earth will return to the conditions of Paradise before the fall.”³⁶¹ It is probable that divine providence of water symbolises universal salvation.³⁶² Also, the elevated Jerusalem (Zech 14:10) illustrates an “obvious and striking” parallel, in Blenkinsopp’s words, with Isa 2:2–4 because Zion the mountain of YHWH, Jerusalem and its temple are depicted as the center of the world. Isa 2:2–4 also contains “a collage of Zion themes” in Isaiah, the nations ἔθνη will stream to Zion as observers, participants (e.g., Isa 25:6–8; 60:1–7; 66:18–19), or pilgrims (e.g. Isa 45:14–23; 60:1–

³⁵⁵ Hill (2008: 255).

³⁵⁶ Tigchelaar (1996: 222).

³⁵⁷ Mason (2003: 183–84).

³⁵⁸ Meyers and Meyers (2009: 432–42).

³⁵⁹ Mason (2003: 184–85).

³⁶⁰ see Terblanche (2004:125–29). Bruno (2013: 50). Although we should not press too hard the interrelatedness of visions, symbolism is common in apocalyptic texts.

³⁶¹ Mason (2003: 188–89).

³⁶² Schaefer’s comment: “The point is that YHWH from his holy city provides water in abundance, symbolizing that ingredient (God’s law) which affords universal salvation” (1993: 197); see also Petersen (1995: 147); Jones (1962:175).

18), worshipping YHWH, κύριος εἰς βασιλέα ἐπὶ πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν (Zech 14:9a). The confession of divine oneness on “the day of YHWH” ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ ἔσται κύριος εἷς καὶ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ ἓν (Zech 14:9b) “acquires new significance as the conscious conclusion to prophecy” and becomes the climax of salvation for both a renewed Jerusalem and the nations years after the Shema.³⁶³

Two different thematic meanings can be observed in the use of εἷς in the OT. Although God’s role as universal creator is mentioned, the one God means more than that. On the one hand, the one God is identified specifically as the God of Israel, relating specifically with the origin and unity of the people of Israel. On the other hand, the confession of divine oneness in Zech 14:9 incorporates the nations into God’s community of salvation. Although the exact parallel of Paul’s εἷς ὁ θεός is not found in Zechariah, the common theme of Gentile inclusion in eschatological time is a striking similarity. Compared with Paul’s emphasis on absolute equality between Jews and Gentiles in terms of God’s justification of faith in Roman 3:30, Gentiles or the nations is auxiliary, but Jerusalem is central in Zechariah’s description.

C. Εἷς θεός in Early Jewish Literature

In the situation of the Diaspora against the polytheistic Hellenistic world, the idea of divine oneness is used more often than that in the OT. While the thematic meaning of εἷς in the OT emphasizes God’s is the unique God for *Israel*, it relates closer to God’s *Creator* role in the Pseudepigrapha. Also, instead of always addressing God as one in prayers and calling him “our God or Father” in the OT, more “absolute Er-ist-Aussage” in third person are used in the Early Jewish writings for asserting divine uniqueness before people with different faiths.³⁶⁴

C1. Jewish Pseudepigrapha

Several variations of “God is one” relevant to this section’s interest are found in Book 3 of *The Sibylline Oracles*. Despite some dispute, most scholars date *Sib. Or.* 3:1–92 to the first century CE and *Sib. Or.* 3:93–829 earlier to the first and soon

³⁶³ Feldmeier (2013: 104).

³⁶⁴ Zimmerman (2007: 551–52).

century BC.³⁶⁵ It is generally considered a Jewish work written probably outside Palestine.³⁶⁶ Two references of one God are found in fragment one. A contrast between the mortals and immortals is drawn in the beginning, God's uniqueness is stressed with a list of divine attributes: εἷς θεός, ὃς μόνος ἄρχει, ὑπερμεγέθης, ἀγέννητος (i 7). Divine splendour is depicted in creational terms in the context (i 7–18), thus, the creature is summoned to “Revere him, who is the only one (μόνον ὄντα), the ruler of the world” (i 15; cf. iii 3 θεὸς μόνος εἷς πανυπέρτατος).³⁶⁷ The Creator will also “administer judgement upon all mortals in common light” (i 17), and the readers are reproached for making “sacrifices to the demons in Hades” (i 22). A reassertion with the predicate εἷς θεός ἐστι (i 32) concludes the section with a warning from the sole Creator to the idolatrous impious (cf. iii 21–33, 38–45).³⁶⁸ God is repeatedly attributed as the only transcendent Creator, and by implication idol worshipping is condemned for he alone should be worshipped.³⁶⁹ In the lengthiest section near the end, references to divine oneness is found in the prophecy about the nations' confession (3:710–31). In Sibyl's admonition (3:624–51) against the idolators, God's oneness is the reason for “turning” στρέψας to God (3:625), αὐτὸς γὰρ μόνος ἐστὶ θεὸς οὐκ ἔστιν ἕτ' ἄλλος (3:629; cf. Deut 4:35).³⁷⁰ Although μόνος is used instead of εἷς,³⁷¹ the construction is again a predicate with the emphatic pronoun αὐτός. After describing how the kings of the earth conspire and attack Jews and their temple (3:652–68), and God's divine victorious intervention (669–709), line 705 reports God's protection for “only μόνος God defends the Jews and brings about divine peace among the Jews (3:707–9; cf. Zech 14:11)”.³⁷² Having witnessed God's majestic power, a monologue attributed to νῆσοι πᾶσαι πόλεις “all Islands and cities”, which refers to the nations, is presented in 3:710–23.

³⁶⁵ For the history of research on the Sibylline Oracles from the sixteenth century until the present with a special emphasis on the third book, see Buitenwerf (2003:5–64); see also Collins (2004: 4–19). Buitenwerf (2003: 126–30) argues for a date between 80 and 40 BC. Collins, however, argues that Buitenwerf's arguments for the date of the third book are ‘blatant non-sequiturs’ (2004: 5).

³⁶⁶ In spite of the dominance of the Egyptian hypothesis, Buitenwerf (2003: 131–33) recently argued that the evidence for an Egyptian provenance is “extremely meager”. He argues for topographical references in Asian provenance. Regardless of the place of origin, it is probably safe to assume that Sibylline Oracles 3 was composed by a Jew outside of Palestine, or, at the least, a Jew with interests outside of Palestine.

³⁶⁷ Buitenwerf (2003: 145). Bruno (2013: 77).

³⁶⁸ Buitenwerf (2003: 159–64).

³⁶⁹ Bruno (2013: 78).

³⁷⁰ Bruno (2013: 79).

³⁷¹ Zimmerman (2007: 545–46) explains μόνος is used more in connection with defence against idols.

³⁷² Buitenwerf (2003: 236–37).

The confession expresses astonishment at what God has done for his people (3:711–13) and represents their sorrow about their sinful past and their hope to “convert” (3:716–23).³⁷³ Besides addressing God with epithets such as ἀθάνατον βασιλῆα, θεὸν μέγαν (3:717), ὑψίστοιο θεοῦ (3:718), the nations worship God “because he is the only Ruler” ἐπεὶ μόνος ἐστὶ δυνάστης (3:718). The predicate with ἐστὶ and the adjective μόνος for God links the text to its preceding contexts. Shum rightly establishes parallels between the Sibylline passages and the Isaianic tradition. The figurative term νῆσοι (islands) is also employed in Isa 49:1, 51:5 to refer to the nations. Thematically, the nations make pilgrimage to the Temple at Jerusalem and embraces the Jewish Law (νόμον ὑψίστοιο θεοῦ, *Sib. Or.* 3:718–19; νόμος καὶ λόγος κυρίου Isa 2:3). Also, a peaceful world is being looked forward to (*Sib. Or.* 3:727–31; Isa 2:4).³⁷⁴ Themes like the worldwide worship of Israel’s God and the whole earth being at peace form a linguistic pattern associated with the oneness of God. A similar conviction “foreign nations will in the last days share with Jewish people God’s blessing” is reflected in Isaianic, Zecharian, and Sibyl’s language of One God.³⁷⁵

C2. Writings of Philo and Josephus

Beside Jewish Pseudepigrapha, εἷς θεός is used with a particular Jewish focus in writings of Philo and Josephus. After presenting his understand of the creation account, Philo emphasises the God is the eternal creator of the world and presents his creedal statement θεὸς εἷς ἐστὶ (*Opif* 172; cf. *Spec* 1:30) in a simple predicate (cf. θεὸς εἷς ὢν, *Opif* 100). It should be noted that Philo underlines the knowledge of God’s uniqueness is Moses’ teaching and thus belongs only to the Jews (*Opif* 170–72).³⁷⁶ Two references to One God are found in Philo’s discussion of proselytes in *De Specialibus Legibus* 1:51–70, a context of interest to our purpose. Philo reflect on the existence and essence of God in *Spec* 1:32–50, the knowledge of God’s transcendent essence and capacity is beyond human capacity and can only be known by the purest mind (1:46). Moses’s desire to know and worship the one invisible God is cited to conclude (1:50). To follow in Moses’s footsteps, one must either be born Jews, born

³⁷³ Shum (2002: 67).

³⁷⁴ Shum (2002: 68–9); Bruno (2013: 80–1).

³⁷⁵ Shum (2002: 76).

³⁷⁶ Bruno (2013: 88–89).

into the beloved city (φιλοθέῳ πολιτείᾳ) or “those who spurn idle fables and embrace truth in its purity” (1:51).³⁷⁷ In short, if proselytes affiliate with Jewish faith, they are to be welcomed into the community which gives honour to the one God (ἡ τοῦ ἐνὸς θεοῦ τιμή; 1:52). Guerra is right that “the One God is the effective guarantor of the unity between proselyte and native-born Jews.”³⁷⁸ In the next admonition for the proselytes not to abandon the ethical demands (1:54–55), the community is warned of the danger of forsaking τὴν τοῦ ἐνὸς [God] τιμήν (1:54). Philo’s later warning against idolatry is expressed in similar terms in 1:65, as proper worship to τοῦ ἐνὸς θεοῦ καὶ ὄντως ὄντος ἐννοίας (the one truly existing God) is expected.³⁷⁹ For Philo, because God is the unique transcendent Creator of the universe, all other forms of worship should be refuted. Therefore, in 1:67, “ἐπειδὴ εἷς ἐστὶν ὁ θεός, καὶ ἱερὸν ἔναι μόνον.” While Philo’s one God language is related to proper worship of one true God by the Jewish community, it should be noted that it is not a “universalistic claim” as proselytes are expected to fully incorporate into Jewish community of native Jews.³⁸⁰ The one God functions to guarantee unity among believers as well as to distance the community from non-believers.³⁸¹

In *Antiquitates judaicae*,³⁸² divine designation εἷς is employed in some critical moment of Jewish history in Josephus’s recapitulation. Similar to examples analysed above, θεὸν ἓνα is δημιουργὸν τῶν ὅλων (the creator of all universes) in *Ant* 1:155. Nevertheless, it is not an argument for creational universalism. Situated in the context of Josephus’s account of Abraham, the virtuous and highly intelligent Abraham is the first to boldly acknowledge the one God in contrast with the Mesopotamian polytheistic religious culture (1:154–57). Although his neighbour’s hostility against his “monotheistic” claim, Abraham worshipped the one God once he settled in. Beside the patriarch, the predicate θεός ἐστὶν εἷς (3:91) is used in Josephus’s discussion of the first commandment. The one God, who deserves τοῦτον σέβεσθαι μόνον (exclusive worship), is also the covenant God of Israel as illustrated in Josephus’s discussion of

³⁷⁷ Seland (1995: 103).

³⁷⁸ Guerra (1990: 155).

³⁷⁹ Bruno (2013: 91–92).

³⁸⁰ Donaldson (2007: 238).

³⁸¹ Guerra (1995: 81).

³⁸² *Antiquitates judaicae* is composed in the Second Temple era until the first century CE. For more on these dates, see Feldman (2000: xvii). References to the only God with the adjective μόνος also appear in *Ant* 1.156; 8.335, 343, 350; 10.263.

the Mosaic Law. The cultic significance of the one God appears again in 4:201 as θεός εἷς is the reason for (γάρ) one temple. Josephus makes explicit what is only implicit in Philo's discussion (*Spec* 1:67): the one temple for the one God implies τὸ Ἑβραίων γένος ἓν (one "Hebrew race").³⁸³ The next reference to one is found in Joshua's admonition to the two and a half tribes that chose to settle east of the Jordan River. The common bond between all tribes on the basis of θεός εἷς, who brought our forefathers and yours into existence is stressed (5:97): ὁς τοὺς ἡμετέρους προγόνους καὶ τοὺς ὑμῶν αὐτῶν παρήγαγεν εἰς τὸν βίον. They are thus urged to worship and keep the law of the same one God (5:98). In a similar context, in the eastern tribe's defence of their innocence of idolatry, they confessed and acknowledge the one God common to all the Hebrews: θεόν ἓνα γινώσκειν τὸν Ἑβραίοις ἅπασι κοινόν (5:112). The last reference to one reflects the above consistent pattern. The one God is found in a cultic context as Josephus recounts the victory of the prophet Elijah (8:343) and says that the Israelites saw the might of God and "fell upon the earth and worshipped the ἓνα θεόν." The knowledge and worship of the one God is "the exclusive property of Israel".³⁸⁴

Therefore, the one God denotes a specific, almost exclusive, relationship with Israel or the "Hebrew" race in early Jewish literature. It is also used to draw a boundary between the "one-true God worshipping" Jewish community and other "idolatrous" non-Jewish ones. Given Paul's emphasis on the one God's impartial justifying action for both Jews and Gentiles, a sharp contrast is drawn between the thematic meanings of εἷς in early Jewish literature and Paul's εἷς ὁ θεός (Rom 3:30).

3.2.5 Synthesis

Compared with philosophical and religious divine designations of εἷς in the pagan literature, neither pagan nor Paul asserts that εἷς denotes "only" with the exclusion of other deities. "Pagan monotheism, (like its Jewish and Christian inflections), attests to heaven's hierarchical organisation, not to its absolute population."³⁸⁵ While pagan texts often use εἷς agonistically emphasising exceptional divine powers or miracles, Paul similarly elaborates εἷς ὁ θεός in terms of God's

³⁸³ Bruno (2013: 99).

³⁸⁴ Bruno (2013: 102). For discussion of Gentiles and proselytism in Josephus, see Cohen (1987: 409–30).

³⁸⁵ Fredriksen (2018: 211 n. 33).

justifying action in Rom 3:30. Yet, Paul's predicate εἷς and Ἰουδαίων/ἐθνῶν ὁ θεός are less concerned with other deities in Romans 3 than divine and human relationship. Although the discussion above with selective examples does not fully explore the problem of pagan and Jewish "monotheism", the more limited task has been undertaken to compare and contrast Paul's εἷς ὁ θεός with the recurrent linguistic pattern in contemporary pagan and Jewish counterparts. It has been illustrated, in the pagan texts, ancient gods are local, both in the particular sense of the *polis* and of the peoples. The multiplicity of the Greek pantheon for many poleis implies that there is no unity or universal "one God" for all. Similarly, the "one" God is also the "ethnic" God of Israel in the OT. Exclusive worship to YHWH and specific election of Israel is emphasised between Israel and one God. Similar ethnic particularity is found in early Jewish literature, especially in Philo and Josephus's writings. Nevertheless, Zech 14:9 and *Sib. Or.* 3:710–23 paint a slightly different picture. Although the one God is still described in soteriological and ethnic specific terms, Gentiles are incorporated in God's eschatological renewal. "He is the nations' god qua Jewish god who dwells in Jerusalem... but the nations (and their gods) by and large will know this only at the end-time."³⁸⁶ The usage about the Jewish god's ultimate act of "cross ethnic outreach" is developed in Paul's appropriation of εἷς as divine designation in Rom 3:30. Paul's εἷς ὁ θεός is elaborated as God of Jews and also of Gentiles Ἰουδαίων/ ἐθνῶν ὁ θεός (Rom 3:29). Paul is designating God in terms similar as well as peculiar to his religious culture, "Israel's god is *also* and ultimately the god of all other ethnic groups as well" because he is the "one" God who impartially justifies Jews and Gentiles alike.³⁸⁷

³⁸⁶ Fredriksen (2018: 203).

³⁸⁷ Fredriksen (2018: 203).

3.3 Concluding remarks

All in all, neither πατήρ nor εἷς suggests God is a universal sovereign in Romans. God is not only repeatedly defined as father of Jesus Christ πατήρ τοῦ κυρίου (ἡμῶν) Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (1:7; 15:6), his kinship with the believers' community πατήρ ἡμῶν (6:4; 8:15) is also stressed. Divine fatherhood is related to Gentile inclusion in terms of God's salvific action on the cross of Jesus Christ and the blessing of adoption granted to the community of believers. Although Paul's designation is similar linguistically to the popular Greco-Roman appositional construction Ζεὺς πατήρ, Paul's divine father is not the ultimate epistemological source of all lives. Paul shares with the Jewish tradition the idea of divine-human kinship as God the father is the one who adopts, constitutes or establishes his people as son of God. Yet, Paul's inclusion of Gentiles as co-heirs of God through Christ is distinctive.

As for the formula εἷς ὁ θεός (3:30), it has been demonstrated that Paul contends the impartiality of the one God who justifies Jews and Gentiles alike on the same basis of faith (3:27–30). Our background investigation shows that neither pagan nor Paul asserts that εἷς denotes “only” with the exclusion of other deities. Thematic meaning of εἷς in pagan texts is agonistic emphasising exceptional divine powers or miracles, whereas Paul elaborates εἷς ὁ θεός in terms of God's justifying action in 3:30. Similar to the Greco-Roman's concept of local, “ethnic” deities, the “one” God is also the “ethnic” God of Israel in the OT. Different from other “one” God texts in the Jewish tradition, Paul's elaborated the predicate εἷς in terms of God of Jews and also of Gentiles Ἰουδαίων/ ἔθνῶν ὁ θεός (3:29). This thematic meaning is closer to the idea reflected in Zech 14:9 and *Sib. Or.* 3:710–23, where the Jewish God outreaches for the Gentiles. Israel's god is *also* and ultimately the god of all other ethnic groups as well because he is the “one” God who impartially justifies Jews and Gentiles alike. In short, Paul not only knows the traditions of πατήρ and εἷς, his appropriation of the recurrent linguistic pattern also distinctive in emphasising the One Father God's justifying action for the Gentiles.

Chapter 4

The Life Giving God (4:5, 17b, 24)

Paul uses four divine designations in Romans 4 interconnectedly to justify the place of the ἔθνη in his mission as well as God's eschatological kingdom. The first τὸν δικαιοῦντα τὸν ἀσεβῆ (4:5) connotes God's forgiveness for "the ungodly", both rebellious Israel and idolatrous Gentiles. In 4:17, the correlation of divine ζωοποιεῖν and καλεῖν signifies not only salvation, but incorporation of Gentiles into God's people in particular. In "the capstone of Paul's argument" (4:24–25),³⁸⁸ the predication τὸν ἐγείραντα Ἰησοῦν ἐκ νεκρῶν inaugurates the new world promised to Abraham's decedents, Jews and Gentiles alike.

³⁸⁸ Schreiner (1998: 242); Kirk (2008: 74–81).

4.1 Τὸν δικαιοῦντα τὸν ἄσεβῃ (4:5)

Not only does the enticing description of God — τὸν δικαιοῦντα τὸν ἄσεβῃ — capture a fundamental but neglected aspect of God’s identity, it is also, for Paul, a central feature of δικαιοσύνη.³⁸⁹ The verb δικαίω is often simply rendered “justify”, which means to be thought, or adjudged righteous (in the sense of “in the right”, “proper”, or “innocent”).³⁹⁰ As this verb is used for socially attributed recognition,³⁹¹ many exegetes of Paul classify it as “forensic”, which denotes “acquitting” or “vindicating” (an innocent person).³⁹²

Instead of arguing about what ideas does the doctrine of justification entail, we swim against the tide to ask what does the act of justifying mean when predicated of God? With a focus on the divine designation in Rom 4:5, this study starts with the verb δικαίω but not the abstract noun. While some qualify or redefine the forensic reading, does the God justifying the ungodly deviate from its “forensic” recurring pattern? Does he change or create a new meaning of δικαίω when compared with other texts? Or is Paul only picking up or appropriating an already-defined conception of God from his forebears or contemporaries?³⁹³ After a short review of scholars’ proposals for various meta-concepts for δικαιοσύνη, Paul’s divine designation in Rom 4:5 will first be analysed in its own context to show it is used in the forensic sense to highlight God’s unilaterally forgiveness. Then, Paul’s meaning will be illuminated by comparing and contrasting the recurrent linguistic pattern of “God justifying someone” with Paul’s contemporaries.

4.1.1 Δικαίω in scholarship

The traditional forensic view is set basically in a judicial criminal trial scene and δικαίω is taken philologically to be a declarative verb for God’s verdict, an “explicit locution” that someone is δίκαιος.³⁹⁴ Paul’s usage of the passive voice δικαιοῦσθαι means to receive the judge’s decision in one’s favour, either to be declared in court to

³⁸⁹ Watson (2000:104–107); Gathercole, (2004:165–68).

³⁹⁰ Barclay (2015: 375–76); Ziesler (1972: 47–85); Westerholm (2004: 261–84).

³⁹¹ Barclay (2015: 376).

³⁹² While Ziesler’s (1972: 17–127) account is generally followed, not everyone’s interpretation is the same (e.g., Fitzmyer, 2006: 77–94; Blocher, 2001: 491).

³⁹³ Prothros (2018: 41).

³⁹⁴ E.g. Westerholm (2013); du Toit (2005: 213–46); Materna (2012:103).

be “in the right” or to be “cleared of an accusation”.³⁹⁵ Forensic δικαιοσύνη is not about personal quality or ethics but a relation — where or how one stands in a given matter relative to the norm or someone — in this case, God.³⁹⁶ Ziesler insists that it is a declaratory (but not transformative) verb giving the legal treatment which “ought to be” given to the δίκαιος.³⁹⁷ Rom 2:13 best epitomises this sense of “ordinary righteousness”.³⁹⁸ However, is it appropriate to explain δικαιοῦντα (Rom 4:5) in this forensic, vindicatory sense?³⁹⁹ If δικαίω is to treat appropriately (cf. δίκαιος), to justify the ungodly will be treating the ungodly in a way they ought *not* to be treated. In the LXX, as many commentators had pointed out, the wrongfulness and injustice involved when one δικαιοῦντα τὸν ἄσεβῃ is repeatedly condemned (Exod 23:7; Deut 25:1; Isa 5:23; Prov 17:15 cf. Sir. 9:12).⁴⁰⁰

Among Paul’s commentators, the forensic reading is not taken over uncritically in the wake of the “New Perspective”. Wright qualifies or even subsumes the judicial context under his main argument about covenant membership. Wright insists that “‘to be justified’ here does not mean ‘to be granted free forgiveness of your sin,’ ‘to come into a right relationship with God’ or some other near synonym of ‘to be reckoned in the right’ before God, but rather, ‘to be reckoned by God to be a true member of his family, and hence with the right to share table fellowship.’”⁴⁰¹ In his interpretation of Romans 4, “the one who justifies the ungodly” is the covenant “God who has made this promise to him [Abraham] about his ‘ungodly’ descendants.”⁴⁰²

³⁹⁵ E.g. LXX Exod 23:7; Deut 25:1; 1 Kgs 8:32; Mic 7:9.

³⁹⁶ Bultmann (1938: 646–54) states, “δικαιοσύνη ein forensischer Begriff. Er meint nicht die ethische Qualität, überhaupt nicht eine Qualität der Person, sondern eine Relation.”

³⁹⁷ Ziesler (1972: 48).

³⁹⁸ Westerholm (2004: 263–73).

³⁹⁹ BDAG, s.v. δικαίω. Many exegetes clearly understand Paul’s δικ(αιο)-language, especially those in Rom 3:24–26, as acquittal or vindication. E.g., Moo (1996: 74); Dunn (1988a: 179–80).

⁴⁰⁰ Dunn (1998: 367).

⁴⁰¹ Wright (2013a: 856, 965, 968–69) did not think that the declaration of righteousness address guilt, instead, it redefines covenant membership. “...at a stroke, Paul has told us what it means to be “declared righteous”. It means to have God himself acknowledge that you are a member of Israel, a Jew, one of the covenant family, the righteous in that sense...*the whole sentence, in its context, indicates that the question about two ways of being declared righteous must be a question about which community, which table fellowship, you belong to.*”

⁴⁰² Wright (2013b: 218) answers the possible objection that Paul deliberately avoids the use of “covenant” by arguing it was substituted with “righteousness.” Wright (2002: 491; *pace* 2009: 63, 133–34; 2011: 49–63) spent quite a lot of passage in justifying his claim that righteousness means covenant faithfulness.

Beside Wright, δικαιόω is redefined as some glossed it “making right”, “rectifying” or “liberating”. For Martyn, justification signifies liberation by the victor who triumphs over anti-God powers.⁴⁰³ With reference to Romans 5:12–6:23, de Boer sees Paul expands the term’s meaning, “for him justification cannot mean only ‘to accept’ sinners, but also ‘to rectify’ them, that is, to make them righteous, by freeing them from the powers of Sin and Death.”⁴⁰⁴ Campbell similarly states Paul “reclaims the verb δικαιόω for his own system” by re-reading it as “forensic liberative”—pronouncing an edict that one be set free from bondage.⁴⁰⁵

Thoroughly investigating Paul’s broader doctrine of justification or even justification in Romans 4 is overly ambitious for a project like this. However, it is not impossible to engage in or even contribute to the discussion by focussing on the divine predication — τὸν δικαιοῦντα τὸν ἄσεβῃ. This short review illustrates that many discussions begin with a meta-concept or the lexicogrammmatical meaning of δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ, be it covenantal or liberating.⁴⁰⁶ Watson rightly notes that “the nouns ‘justification’ and ‘resurrection’ refer us back to verbs, that is, to actions and so to a divine agent.”⁴⁰⁷ Therefore, without watering down the obvious forensic background of δικαιόω, this study will show that the designation τὸν δικαιοῦντα τὸν ἄσεβῃ is used in a forensic context of divine judgement. Yet, God, the one who justifies the ungodly, does not condemn but forgive the one who does not worth-forgiving in Paul’s argument.

4.1.2 Τὸν δικαιοῦντα τὸν ἄσεβῃ (4:5) in its context

The predication in 4:5 belongs to the argument in 4:1–8. Two verbal verbs, ἐροῦμεν (v.1) and λέγει (v.3) are used to introduce two contrasting discourses concerning two types of λογίζεσθαι: one from the human perspective and the other from the divine.

⁴⁰³ Martyn (1997: 143–45, 152–55).

⁴⁰⁴ De Boer (2005: 210).

⁴⁰⁵ Campbell (2014: 211); (2009: 656–65).

⁴⁰⁶ Stuhlmacher (2016: 368) summarised that “our view about the righteousness of God ultimately determines our understanding of the apostle’s statements regarding justification.”

⁴⁰⁷ Watson (2000: 104).

A. The first discourse from the ἡμεῖς perspective

The first discourse begins with a verbal clause τί οὖν ἐροῦμεν (v.1a) and we expect to be told something that has been said by ἡμεῖς. The idea presented by the hypothetical “we”, illustrating human fleshly perspective, is found in v.1b and further elaborated in vv. 2 and 4.

Despite the difficult syntax and translation problem of v.1,⁴⁰⁸ this study follows Schliesser to read κατὰ σάρκα in negative terms referring back to ἐροῦμεν.⁴⁰⁹ Although a great majority of commentators consider κατὰ σάρκα to be something positive,⁴¹⁰ Schliesser’s proposal makes more sense by taking into account the logical relation of vv.1–3a. He helpfully paraphrases: “What will we say that Abraham our forefather has found?”⁴¹¹ Will we say according to human standards: ‘For if Abraham has been justified by works, he has something to boast.’ But we will not say this (with regard) to God! For what does the Scripture say?”⁴¹² Although this reading does not solve the problem of who is this “we” (whether they are Jews or Gentiles) or the imaginary interlocutor,⁴¹³ it illustrates the emphasis on the fleshly perspective. A stark

⁴⁰⁸ It has long been noted that this text is “hopelessly corrupted” as Bultmann (1938:649) put it. Worse still, for the syntactic question, “no solution hitherto proposed is without serious difficulties (Black, 1973: 75).” There are several textual variations concerning the actual appearance of εὐρηκέναι, and its position, whether it is placed before κατὰ σάρκα or before Ἀβραάμ. The subject of εὐρηκέναι is also disputed. Reacting against the Lutheran reading, the “new perspective reading” goes to great length to prove that the chapter concerns Abraham’s universal fatherhood. Hays (1985: 61–84) proposes “we” instead of “Abraham” should be the subject of εὐρηκέναι. Thus, Hays suggested, later modified by Wright (2013b: 207–41), this translation: “What shall we say, then? Have we found Abraham to be our ancestor in a human, fleshly sense?” However, this translation is flawed because if Ἀβραάμ and προπάτορα were in predicate, προπάτορα would have no definite article. See Barclay for further reasons to refute Hays’ translation (2015: 483 n. 88).

⁴⁰⁹ Schliesser (2007: 325 n. 781) finds similar expressions in Rom 3:5, Gal 3:15, Rom 8:4, 2 Cor 10:2, and 1 Cor 3:3. Interpreters are still disputed whether κατὰ σάρκα modifies εὐρηκέναι or τὸν προπάτορα ἡμῶν. Most translations render it (e.g., RSV, NRSV, REB) “what then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, has discovered?” (Metzger, 1994: 450; Moo, 1996: 257–58; Jewett, 2007:304).

⁴¹⁰ Michel (1978: 161); Käsemann (1980: 100). Cf. Cranfield’s (1975: 227) position is more neutral as he explained “[W]hile we (e.g., the Jews) are Abraham’s children κατὰ σάρκα, Abraham has other children who are his in a different way (cf. vv. 11, 16ff).”

⁴¹¹ The meaning of εὐρίσκειν here is best presented by Moo (1996: 259 n. 13), “Paul asks his readers to contemplate with him what Abraham has found to be the case with respect to the matters he is discussing”.

⁴¹² Schliesser (2007: 325). The reiteration of the subject Ἀβραάμ (v.2) is now reasonable as κατὰ σάρκα has the subject “we”.

⁴¹³ Many suggestions have been made regarding the problem of the identity of this imaginary interlocutor: for example Hays (1985: 86) thought that they are Jews; Stowers (1994: 232) thought they are alleged Jewish interlocutor, Gaston (1987: 124–25) thought that they are all Christians.

contrast is made between κατὰ σάρκα and πρὸς θεόν (v.2).⁴¹⁴ The contrasting conjunction ἀλλά (v.2) reveals the first discourse is at odd with God.

The discourse from human perspective is made up of vv. 2 and 4 with repetitive cognates of ἔργον. The sentence structure “Abraham” has “boast” (v.2) corresponds to “worker” has “wages” (v.4). Also, two prepositional phrases of similar nature are found describing two identifying verbs δικαιόω and λογίζεσθαι: ἐξ ἔργων qualifies Abraham’s justification whereas κατὰ ὀφείλημα qualifies the worker’s pay. The circumstantial clause οὐ...κατὰ χάριν ἀλλὰ κατὰ ὀφείλημα highlights that due payment ὀφείλημα is contractual, obligatory, corresponding, and expected by those who work. Thus, in the human discourse, λογίζεσθαι is understood in terms of “book-keeping”, repayment,⁴¹⁵ and “numerical calculation... of strictly rational thought.”⁴¹⁶ However, “what is real from a human perspective is not realistic from God’s perceptive as far as justification is concerned.”⁴¹⁷ The clause ἀλλ’ οὐ πρὸς θεόν qualifies the entire conditional clause and expresses the human perspective should be refuted “as far as God is concerned, with reference to God.”⁴¹⁸ The γάρ-question further explains the reason to do so by appealing to scripture (v.3).

B. The second discourse: scripture’s divine perspective

The second λέγω introduces scripture’s voice with a quotation from Gen. 15:6 countering the “ἡμεῖς” discourse. Unlike the human discourse, the speaking subject and its authority is clearly identified — ἡ γραφή (v.3). The interplay between the themes δικαιόω and λογίζεσθαι is significant because it reappears in the predication in v.5 and later in v.6 and v.10. The correlation between “believing (πιστεύειν)”, “reckoning righteous (λογίζεσθαι)” and “justifying (δικαιεῖν)” illustrates the forensic nature of this discourse.

⁴¹⁴ The lack of article before θεόν poses a problem to read the prepositional phrase too quickly as “before” God (as influenced by Rom 2:13 and 1 Cor 1:29). Schliesser (2007: 328) was right to note that although similar context is found in 1 Cor 1:29, Paul writes καυχᾶσθαι ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ instead of πρὸς θεόν.

⁴¹⁵ Dunn (1988a:204; 1998: 377); Keck (2005:121).

⁴¹⁶ Cranfield (1975: 230 n.6).

⁴¹⁷ Schliesser (2007: 330).

⁴¹⁸ Moo (1996: 260).

Contrary to the fleshly view of λογίζεσθαι,⁴¹⁹ the divine role is emphasised in the divine sense of λογίζεσθαι in the scripture discourse (vv. 3, 5–8). Throughout the whole passage, interaction occurs between various human participants and God.⁴²⁰ The consistent use of passive⁴²¹ in vv. 1–4, which mainly belong to the human discourse, places human (the recipients) rather than God (the agent) as the focus.⁴²² However, the pattern is disrupted in vv.5–8. Although there are three verbs in passive voice λογίζεται (v.5), ἀφέθησαν (v.7) and ἐπεκαλύφθησαν (v.7) in vv.5–7, God’s active role is more prominent because there are three verbs in active or middle voice: δικαιούντα (v.5), λογίζεται (v.6), λογίσσεται (v.8). Also, God is clearly identified as the actor, ὁ θεός and κύριος, not to mention the divine predication in v.5. This alternation between passive and active/middle voice illustrates the prominence of God in the scriptural discourse.

The correspondence between 4:3 and 4:5 elaborates the divine sense of λογίζομαι in terms of faith. The repeated juxtaposition of πιστεύω and λογίζομαι in both verses reiterate the pattern “someone *believes in* God, and it *is reckoned* to him righteousness”. More importantly, 4:5 specifies whom Abraham or the believer believed.⁴²³ The divine predication qualified by πιστεύοντι (v.5) creates a stark contrast ideationally and syntactically. The meaning of ἐπίστευσεν (v.3) is drawn out by the ἐπί–clause (v.5), giving the content and direction of faith by qualifying πιστεύοντι with a description of God but not believer. The rare use of πιστεύειν ἐπί with accusative⁴²⁴ correlates with the aorist ἐπίστευσεν. The aorist is understood as inchoative or ingressive⁴²⁵ to stress the beginning of the entrance into a state. On the one hand, the “divine” λογίζεσθαι does not work in terms of work–pay–due calculation in v.4. On the other, the change of status is attributed by God contrary to one’s original

⁴¹⁹ In this sense, λογίζεσθαι means allocation, counting or evaluating one thing in terms of εἰς another (Prothro, 2018: 177 n. 80, 81; Jewett, 2007: 312).

⁴²⁰ In vv. 4–8, there are three references to God and nine references to general human and David.

⁴²¹ See ἐδικαιώθη (v.2), ἐλογίσθη (v.3), λογίζεται (v.4).

⁴²² See εὐρηκέναι (v.1), ἔχει (v.2), ἐπίστευσεν (v.3), ἐργαζομένῳ (vv.4, 5), πιστεύοντι (v.5). Our reading is different from Lee’s (2010: 243) as he thinks that “Paul pays more attention to human act or attitude” and he considers the three active voice verbs for God are exceptions.

⁴²³ Cf. Cranfield (1975: 230–32) thinks the whole argument hinges on faith instead of λογίζεσθαι, however, the binary is not necessary as reckoning is qualified by faith.

⁴²⁴ Schliesser (2007: 349 n. 941) notes that the only Pauline occurrence is in Rom 4:24 (cf. Acts 22:19).

⁴²⁵ Schliesser (2007: 348); Wallace (1996: 558–59). Other occurrences of inchoative or ingressive aorist can both be found in Paul’s letters (Rom 10:14; 13:11; 1 Cor 3:5).

situation. This qualitative–authoritative or performative-creative “reckoning” is evident in the Genesis context of Paul’s quotation.⁴²⁶ It has been found that the syntax **חשב** with accusative and **ל** of recipient (**יחשבה לו צדקה** in Gen 15:6) is used in the context of divine judgement.⁴²⁷ Also, uses of **חשב** with double accusative denote a fundamental change of status before God (e.g. Job 13:24; 19:11; 33:10; 2 Sam 19:20; Ps. 32:2).⁴²⁸ Not only is Abraham the recipient, the divine designation further identifies the object shockingly with **τὸν ἄσεβῃ**.⁴²⁹

C. Divine λογίζεσθαι and the non-reckoning of sins

The divine judgement scene is further reinforced in vv.6–8. The conjunctive **καθάπερ** introduces vv.6–8 a positive comparative enhancement with quotation from Ps 31:1–2 LXX (vv.7–8). The Davidic citation spells out the other side of the same coin, the negative correlate of divine λογίζεσθαι is the non-reckoning of sins (v.8). Four subsequent relative pronoun clauses expend on God’s way of “justifying the ungodly”.⁴³⁰ The repeating pattern is marked, the iniquities are being forgiven, the sins are being covered, and one’s sins are not being reckoned.⁴³¹ Although some commentators go to great length to ignore or reject that forgiveness of sins is connected with justification,⁴³² many see that Paul indeed intends to establish a strong connection between the two.⁴³³ “Paul simply did not ‘have to’ quote Psalm 32:1,”⁴³⁴ out of the potential parallel uses of λογίζομαι in the creative act sense with God as the implied subject,⁴³⁵ only this verse (apart from Gen 15:6) fits with Paul’s argument: neither

⁴²⁶ Schliesser (2007: 120).

⁴²⁷ Moberly (1990: 121–22) establishes this category as “religious reckoning” including God’s reckoning of either **צדקה** or **עין** to someone; Moo (1996: 262 n. 35).

⁴²⁸ Moberly (1990: 108).

⁴²⁹ Fitzmyer (1993: 375), Sanday and Headlam (1902: 101) do not think **τὸν ἄσεβῃ** is a description of Abraham.

⁴³⁰ While commentators (e.g., Jeremias, 1966: 271–72) note that Paul uses *gezera shawah* with λογίζομαι when citing Ps 31:1–2 LXX, it does not render the passage arbitrary or dispensable hinging only on a catchword.

⁴³¹ The double negative emphasises the that the Lord will not act otherwise (Jewett, 2007: 317).

⁴³² E.g., In order to justify his argument that justification is distanced from forgiveness, Stendahl explains that “poor Paul could not avoid” explicit reference to forgiveness “because he had to quote Psalm 32:1 in which it occurs (1977: 23)”. Likewise, Wright holds that in Romans 4, “reckon righteousness” *solely* means “establish a covenant” to the exclusion of forgiveness (2013b: 219).

⁴³³ E.g., Cranfield (1975: 233); Moo (1996: 266); Schlatter (1995: 111).

⁴³⁴ Gathercole (2004: 159 n. 46).

⁴³⁵ Schliesser (2007: 350–51). As noted above, the notions of forgiveness and grace in 2 Sam 19:20 stand closely with Gen 15:6, but it is about human affairs instead of divine.

human works, nor negative human works (sins)⁴³⁶ can be the decisive factor of God's act in accordance with the circumstance grace κατὰ χάριν.⁴³⁷ Logically, God's act of justifying or "reckoning righteousness" does not necessarily imply forgiveness, however, Paul's use here closely equates them. In other words, the forensic context of δικαιώω is evident here. The divine designation (4:5; cf. 3:9–10, 23–24, 5:9–10)⁴³⁸ hammers home the dramatically contradictory idea: to talk of God as the one who justifies the ungodly is to speak of divine reckoning which is wholly at odds with worth, antithetical to just reward.

D. Collocation of δικαιώω and ἀσεβῆ in the rest of Romans

Apart from Rom 4, what do δικαιώω and ἀσεβῆ mean in the wider context of Romans should not be ignored. Beside bearing negative connotations (e.g., ἀνομία, ἁμαρτία in 4:7–8), ἀσεβῆ brings Paul argument back to the beginning of the letter (1:18–3:20) and connects the designation with the rebellious Gentiles who are in contention with God.

The paradoxical collocation of δικαιώω and ἀσεβῆς calls to mind the pairing of ἀσέβεια and ἀδικία in 1:18.⁴³⁹ The textual parallels connect Abraham with the rebellious Gentiles, placing them in the sphere of ungodliness (1:18–3:20), disputing the truth of God's words (ἀπιστία, 3:3) and standing guilty before God (ἀδικία, 3:5).⁴⁴⁰ Not only is the ungodly against righteous, they are indeed the target of God's wrath ὀργή (1:18). Rom 1:18a also occupies a vital position forming a contrast with the thematic statement 1:17a. While the ἀποκάλυψις of God's righteousness reflects God's positive verdict, the revelation of God's wrath indicates the negative heavenly judgment.⁴⁴¹ Besides, 1:18 marks the beginning of a section (1:18–3:20) sketching humanity's common guilt, including both the Gentiles' (1:18–32) and the Jews' (2:17–

⁴³⁶ The Psalm refers to David's sin (Ps 31:1, 2, 5, 10 LXX) of committing adultery with Bathsheba and murder of her husband (2 Sam 11).

⁴³⁷ Neither Abraham, the uncircumcised who are not yet under the law, nor David, who are under the law, have anything to present that can bridge their distance to God.

⁴³⁸ Prothro (2018: 180).

⁴³⁹ Adams (1997: 51–55).

⁴⁴⁰ Gaventa (2016: 35). "Ungodliness" is not a tepid term as if we are addressing someone as an agnostic or an atheist in the modern world, it stands in opposition to righteous (as in Gen 18:23, 25, Exod 9:27, Ps 1:6).

⁴⁴¹ Du Toit (2005: 232).

3:20; see also ἀσέβεια in 11:26) before God.⁴⁴² God's wrath is not mere emotion but strong negative forensic action (2:5) as the section on Gentiles starts with ὀργή θεοῦ (v.18) and ends with ἄξιοι θανάτου (v.32). The two descriptions ἀσέβεια and ἀδικία summarise the reason for God's punishment. In 1:18–23, ἀσέβεια refers to human basic offence against God because they do not glorify the Creator despite their knowledge of God.⁴⁴³ In 1:24–32, ἀδικία characterises one's guilt as God "handed them over" (vv.24, 26, 32) resulting in subsequent sinful sexual practice (vv.29–31).⁴⁴⁴ Thus, by identifying Abraham as ἀσεβῆς in the divine designation (4:5), Paul puts more emphasis on the ἀσεβῆς as the one who is in contention with God than denoting him as "sinner".⁴⁴⁵ Indeed, ungodliness recalls the scripture quotations in 3:10–18,⁴⁴⁶ epitomises the depiction of humanity as God's enemies (5:10), being in conflict with God.

The participle δικαιοῦντα is more complicated. However, discussion will be limited to the essentials to the inquiry. As discussed above, Romans 1–2 put great emphasis on punitive judgement, "righteousness" and Paul's use of δικ-terms has a retributive dimension.⁴⁴⁷ Those who are guilty of wrongdoing are expected to be treated in accordance with the idea of adequate retribution (2:5–6, 13; 3:20),⁴⁴⁸ yet, from 3:21 onwards, δικαιοῦω is taken in the sense of acquitting the guilty one freely out of grace δωρεάν τῇ αὐτοῦ χάριτι (3:24).⁴⁴⁹ Despite their failure to give glory to God, the judge takes painful measure to side with the sinners. He vouchsafes mercy unconditionally to those who should have been punished severely. It is apparent the unexpected judgement, the idea of free χάρις apart from works echoes (4:4–5). By taking into account the wider context, it becomes clearer that Romans 4:5–8 elaborates

⁴⁴² Schliesser (2007: 255–56, 347).

⁴⁴³ Du Toit (2005: 228).

⁴⁴⁴ For the significance of "handing over", see Gaventa (2007: 113–23).

⁴⁴⁵ This echoes with the later comment about Abraham that he gave glory to God in 4:20.

⁴⁴⁶ Gaventa (2008: 392–408).

⁴⁴⁷ Paul's use of δικ-terms are associated with the idea of retribution, and they are not only limited to Romans, ex. δικαιοκρισίας (Rom 2:5), ἔνδικόν (Rom 3:8), ἐκδικος (1 Thess 4:6; Rom 13:4), ἐκδίκησιν (2 Thess 1:8), δίκην (2 Thess 1:9).

⁴⁴⁸ Du Toit (2005: 242).

⁴⁴⁹ The use of πεφανέρωται, and the emphasis on πίστις (3:22, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30) as the means of appropriating God's acquittal reintroduce and agree with 1:16–17, the theme statements of Romans (Du Toit, 2005: 231).

justifying the ungodly in the forensic sense in terms of “the forgiveness of sins”.⁴⁵⁰ Instead of reading it in the covenantal context, the forensic sense can be traced back to the first three chapters of Romans. However, the surprising turn Paul takes is that God acts against judicial retribution and grace reigns in the gospel court room. The divine predication denotes the unilateral, unmerited act of new creation depending solely on the contention of the justifier. “Abraham’s experience is both the basis for, and an example of, Paul’s conviction that God’s acceptance is not an *appropriate description* of human existence; rather it comes to human existence as *creative word*... God’s verdict of justification as initial acceptance is never *commentary*, but rather brings about a new reality.”⁴⁵¹

4.1.3 Background

According to Paul, the designation is used in a forensic conflict but taken in a positive sense in association with forgiveness. However, is Paul’s usage a total innovation? Can similar precedents be found? As Lemke pointed out, “lexical choices are always made against the background of their history of use in the community.”⁴⁵² Thus, it is important to look into the recurrent pattern of the predication τὸν δικαιοῦντα τὸν ἁσεβῆ.

A. Divine δικαιοῦν τινά in Greco-Roman literature

The Greco-Roman background of δικαιοῦν mainly in early Imperial period will be investigated. Given the vastness of the data, the analysis will select expressions that are most relevant — δικαιοῦν τινά. Particular attention will be paid to the use of δικαιοῦν with reference to deities as subjects.

The usual sense of δικαιοῦν τινά is predominantly negative, referring to judicial punishment or even death penalty for the guilty in the retributive forensic sense. In Book 52 of Dio Cassius’ *Roman History*, senators are told to justify δικαιούτων

⁴⁵⁰ *Contra* Wright (2005: 286), “*dikaioō* is after all declarative word, declaring that something is the case, rather than a word for making something happen or changing the way something is....” Barclay also highlights that “acquittal here means that one is shown to be in the right, not that one is forgiven or absolved of guilt (2015: 376).” Although Barclay is right to note that forgiveness or absolution is described in other terms generally, here in Paul’s scriptural discourse, δικαιοῦν and forgiveness of sin are closely or even synonymously associated.

⁴⁵¹ Gathercole (2004: 157). Emphasis original.

⁴⁵² Lemke (1992: 85).

soldiers, which means having power to put wrongdoer to death θανατοῦν τοὺς ἀδικοῦντας and exercising jurisdiction “both to punish and to honor” them καὶ κολάσαι καὶ τιμῆσαι (52.24.3–4). Dio Cassius closely aligns δικάιω with the death penalty: “Augustus executed some other man...he wished to kill...” ὁ Αὐγουστος ἄλλους μὲν τινας ἐδικαίωσε...ἀποκτεῖναι ἠθέλησεν (54.15.4) and “he ἐδικαίωσεν (executed) and... κατέκασεν (killed) ...” (72.28.3). Similarly, it is used in judicial conviction. For instance, when describing Pompey’s judicial reforms (40.54.1), “many were convicted (ἐδικαίωθησαν) on various charges, and others for the murder of Clodius (τῷ τοῦ Κλωδίου φόνῳ) ...”. The sense of “punish” or “condemn” is prevalent as δικάιω stands synonymously with παραδίδωμι πρὸς τιμωρία (43.24.4).⁴⁵³ Dio Cassius also used ἀφίημι as an antonym of δικάιω in a fragment (16.57.47).⁴⁵⁴ To punish is in opposition with to forgive. When Octavian overthrown Lepidus, the cities voluntarily surrendered received pardon (συγγνώμης) and those resisted Caesar were punished (αἱ δ’ ἀντάρασαι ἐδικαίωθησαν). In 54.19.2, Augustus “inflicted punishments” δικάων ἐλύπει on those disobeyed, meanwhile spearing (φειδόμενος) many others.

Nevertheless, a few examples of δικάιω τινά are used in the positive sense. Quite often in cases of conflict, δικάιω means deciding the right cause for one’s action. Making excuse for his cause by ἐγκαλῶν (blaming) Caesar, Sexus spread the rumour that Antony also did not justify him [Caesar] μὴ δικαιούντος τοῦ Ἀντωνίου αὐτόν.⁴⁵⁵ Besides, δικάιω means doing what is thought to be right. Augustus thought it was ἐδικαίου (best) to rule with existing customs (54.9.1) and he did not feel that was right οὐκ ἐδικαίωσε to take Lepidus’ priesthood (54.15.8).⁴⁵⁶ When Archidamus was about to ravage Plataeans, he was warned μὴ ἀδικεῖν (not to wrong) the land Plataeans and violate the oaths μηδὲ παραβαίνειν τοὺς ὅρκους (made before their

⁴⁵³ Dio Cassius, *Roman History* (ca. 100–200 AD) 43.24.4, “...καὶ οὐ πρότερόν γε ἐπαύσαντο ταραπτόμενοι πρὶν τὸν Καίσαρα ἄφνω τε αὐτοῖς ἐπελθεῖν καὶ κρατήσαντά τινα αὐτοχειρία πρὸς τιμωρίαν παραδοῦναι. οὗτος μὲν οὖν διὰ ταῦτα ἐδικαίωθη...”; see also 7.35.2 “καὶ διὰ τοῦτό σε δικαίωσω, ἵνα ὥσπερ τὸ τῆς ἀριστείας ἄθλον, οὕτω καὶ τὸ τῆς ἀνηκουστίας τίμημα ἀπολάβῃς.”

⁴⁵⁴ Dio Cassius, *Roman History* 16.57.47, “πάντες ἀποθανεῖν ἔστε ἄξιοι, οὐ μέντοι καὶ ἐγὼ πάντας ὑμᾶς θανατώσω, ἀλλ’ ὀλίγους μὲν, οὓς καὶ συνείληφα ἤδη, δικαίωσω, τοὺς δὲ ἄλλους ἀφίημι.”

⁴⁵⁵ Dio Cassius, *Roman History* 48.46.1.

⁴⁵⁶ The verb is followed by an infinitive in these two examples. Dio Cassius, *Roman History* 54.9.1, “... ὁ δὲ Αὐγουστος τὸ μὲν ὑπήκοον κατὰ τὰ τῶν Ῥωμαίων ἔθνη διώκει... ἀλλ’ ἀκριβῶς ἀρκεῖσθαι τοῖς ὑπάρχουσιν ἐδικαίου, καὶ τοῦτο καὶ τῇ βουλῇ ἐπέστειλεν”; 54.15.8, “οὐκέτ’ οὐδεμίαν ὀργὴν ἐποίησατο· πολλάκις γὰρ καὶ ἰδίᾳ καὶ κοινῇ τῆς ἱερωσύνης ταύτης ἀξιούμενος οὐκ ἐδικαίωσε ζῶντος τοῦ Λεπίδου λαβεῖν αὐτήν.”

ancestral gods).⁴⁵⁷ Despite the few exceptions, the negative retributive forensic sense prevails.⁴⁵⁸

As for religious texts, although the syntax is not exactly the same, δικαίω can still be found in context of divine chastisement. The Goddesses Justice τὴν Δίκην and Right τὴν Θέμιν seated by the side of Zeus and they were considered to be the reason why every act of the king is just and righteous according to Plutarch. He writes without Justice not even Zeus can rule well (ἄνευ Δίκης ἄρχειν μηδὲ τοῦ Διὸς καλῶς δυναμένου).⁴⁵⁹ In the discussion of “why is the divine sometimes so slow to punish the wrongdoer?”,⁴⁶⁰ Plutarch provides an answer in Aridaeus’ afterlife journey. Aridaeus, who led a dissolute and dishonorable life, fell unconscious, renamed Thespesios, and ascended to heaven to see the fate of souls (564d–565e). Plutarch gives great emphasis on retaliatory providence in this work and understood punishment as corrective and preventative measures, in other words, divine therapy for the soul.⁴⁶¹ Thespesios discovered that for the wicked, three different forms of “punishment” (τῶν δικαιοῦσεων, 565A) are envisaged (respectively exercised by three deities): Ποινή inflicts punishment on the living who can still be cured, Δίκη brings justice to the more problematic cases after death (μετὰ τὴν τελευτήν, 564F), and Ἑρμῆς haunts the worst cases and pursues them into utter oblivion (564E–565A).⁴⁶² The divine act of δικαίω is taken in retributive, punitive sense paralleling κολάζω.⁴⁶³ In 565B concerning Dike’s punishment, “...while if they [parents and ancestors] are wicked, he sees them punished (κολαζομένους) and is seen by them; he then undergoes prolonged chastisement (δικαιοῦται πολλὸν χρόνον), each of his passions (τῶν παθῶν) being removed with pains and torments (ἀλγηδόσι καὶ πόνοις)...”. Not only did Plutarch say that wicked souls must have their passions purged, he also insisted on the transferral of punishment from ancestors to their offspring. He defended that city and

⁴⁵⁷ Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War* (ca. 500–400 BC) 2.71.2–4.

⁴⁵⁸ E.g. Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, “was punished” (37.12.2); “they were convicted” (37.41.2); “they were brought to justice” (41.28.4); “he was executed” (43.24.4); “they were punished” (49.12.5); “the punishment of those who are brought to justice” (55.14.3).

⁴⁵⁹ Plutarch, *Moralia. To an Uneducated Ruler* (ca. 1–200 AD), 781B, 60–61.

⁴⁶⁰ Plutarch’s “On the Delay of the Divine Vengeance” was written at the beginning of the second century (Griffiths, 1990: 77).

⁴⁶¹ Griffiths (1990: 83).

⁴⁶² Wallace (2011: 59–60).

⁴⁶³ The parallel of δικαίω and κολάζω is found in Aelian’s *On the Characteristics of Animals*, “...καὶ ὑπὲρ μὲν τούτων τοὺς γόητάς τε καὶ φαρμακείας Ἄρει φίλῳ κολάζειν καὶ δικαιοῦν (to punish and judge) καταλείπωμεν (15.11).”

family have the same kind of continued and collective moral obligation as individuals, evil deeds enacted in the past must be penalised (558F–559F), even after death or over generations.⁴⁶⁴ A similar idea of divine retribution is found in Diodorus Siculus’ *The Library of History*: “For it was a higher power (δαιμόνιον), apparently, that exacted (ἐδικαίωσεν) from them this retribution (ἀμοιβήν) for their impious deeds (τῶν ἀσεβημάτων αὐτοῖς).”⁴⁶⁵ What is referred to here is the Mercenary War, the mercenaries and their allies were driven by famine to eat each other (ἐσθίειν ἀλλήλων) when surrounded by Hamilcar Barca’s forces. Polybius commented that the famine-driven cannibalism was divine retribution (ἀμοιβήν τοῦ δαιμονίου) for their impiety and lawlessness (ἀσεβεία καὶ παρανομία) in their treatment of neighbours.⁴⁶⁶ In a later document by Aelian, *On the Characteristics of Animals* 12.7.21, those who committed perjury (τοὺς ἐπίορκον) are the object of God’s righteous wrath (τοῦ θεοῦ τὴν ὀργὴν τὴν δικαίαν) and punished immediately (οὐκ ἐξ ἀναβολὰς ἀλλὰ ἤδη δικαιοῦσι).

The pattern of δικαίω τινά usually means “punish” and “condemn” in forensic contexts in the above Greco-Roman examples. It is in correlation with θανατόω, κολάζω, ἀποκτείνω, and simultaneously antonymous to ἀφίημι and συγγνώμης τυγχάνω. Thus, the verb is not used for the benefit of the “convicted”.⁴⁶⁷ As for the divine act of δικαίω, ancient Greek writers like Plutarch insists on the retributive and inescapable nature of divine punishment on individuals as well as their descendants. Meanwhile, the targets of divine wrath are described as ἀσέβεια and παρανομία. Although Paul’s forensic thematic meaning of δικαίω is in similar semantic field, τὸν ἀσεβῆ is forgiven (Rom. 4:5–8). The blessing but not the guilt is extended to “future generations” (Rom 4:11) in Abraham’s case.

B. Divine δικαίω τινά in Hellenistic Jewish literature

We now turn to see how Hellenistic Jewish tradition uses δικαίω to designate God. Although Josephus seldom uses God as the subject of δικαίω, a general forensic retributive sense can be observed. For instance, those who destroyed the golden eagle from the temple had been “condemned” (δεδικαιωμένων) to death (ἀπο θανόντας) by

⁴⁶⁴ Griffiths (1990: 85).

⁴⁶⁵ Diodorus Siculus, *The Library of History* (ca. 100BC–1AD), 25.5.1.

⁴⁶⁶ Polybius, *The Histories* (ca.300–200BC) 1. 84. 10. See also Gibson (2013: 167).

⁴⁶⁷ Prothro (2016: 56).

Herod (*Ant.* 17:206).⁴⁶⁸ Besides, proportionate punitive retribution— *lex talionis* δικαιούντος τοῦ νόμου “a life for a life” (*Ant.* 4.278, *Exo* 21:22–23) is emphasised. Besides, it is not “justified” οὐκ ἐδικαίουν to punish those who had done no wrong τοὺς οὐδὲν ἐξαμαρτόντας (*Ant.* 12:124) and to punish κολάζειν the children for their fathers’ sins διὰ πατέρων ἁμαρτίας (*Ant.* 9:187, 16:368). Although presented in negative terms, the logic is still clear that this punitive understanding of δικαιόω stands in opposition with sins. Philo also uses δικαιόω as verb for the divine Law. The holy word condemns ὁ ἱερὸς λόγος δικαιοῖ the disobedient and contentious man τὸν ἀπειθῆ καὶ ἐρεθιστὴν to be stoned to death καταλεύειν (*Ebr.* 95). While several examples of δικαιόω refers to what is deemed right by God’s Law,⁴⁶⁹ in *Spec. Leg* 1:215, the use of δικαιόω is again in opposition to sins, unrighteousness and ungodliness. The holy law ἐδικαίωσεν that the altar of God should not be approached by the vessel in association with τὴν ἀδικίας καὶ ἀσεβείας (the unrighteous and the ungodly) because the βωμός (altar) is where πάντων ἁμαρτημάτων καὶ παρανομημάτων ἀπολύσεις γίνονται καὶ παντελεῖς ἀφέσεις. Indirectly linked with the verb δικαιούν, here divine ἄφεσις (forgiveness) is at odd with ἀσεβείας (ungodliness). Hardly is this review comprehensive, yet, these examples illustrate in the accounts of Josephus and Philo, δικαιόω are used negatively against the favour of the personal objects.⁴⁷⁰

C. Divine δικαιόω τινά in the OT

Nevertheless, the Septuagintal pattern of δικαιόω τινά draws a stark contrast with both its Greco-Roman and Hellenistic Jewish counterparts. In judicial context of dispute, δικαιόω always denotes action in favour of a personal object.⁴⁷¹ *Deut* 25:1–2 is one of the prototypical examples, “if a dispute (רִיב/ ἀντιλογία) occurs between people and they come to judgement (שָׁפַט/ κρίσις), and the judges judge (שָׁפַט/ κρίνω) and justify (קָדַשׁ/ δικαιόω) the righteous (קָדִישׁ/ δίκαιος) and condemn (עָשָׂר/ καταγινώσκω) the ungodly (עָשָׂר/ ἀσεβής)...they [the judges] shall whip him [the

⁴⁶⁸ Similarly in Josephus, *Ant.* 17: 257 and 18:178, prisoners are condemned δικαιωθείσι to death θανάτω.

⁴⁶⁹ E.g., *Somn.* 1:214, *Vit. Mos.* 2:130; *Spec. Leg.* 1:180, 298; *Praem. Poen.* 120.

⁴⁷⁰ Seifrid (2004: 46) notes although the forensic sense is present, examples of retributive righteousness represent only one dimension of Josephus’ usage and certainly cannot be said to comprehend the whole of his understanding.

⁴⁷¹ Prothro (2016: 56–57).

ungodly (עשׂר/ ἄσεβέω)] in their presence according to the measure of his ungodliness (רשׁע/ ἄσεβεια).” The LXX denounces miscarriage of justice by rebuking the one justifies (צדק/ δικαιοώ) the ungodly (עשׂר/ ἄσεβής) for bribery (Exo. 23:7, cf. 2 Sam 15:2b–4). Not only is δικαιοώ used for judges or kings, God is the subject. David supplicated to God (6:17) for repaying (נָתַן/ ἀποδίδωμι) the lawless (עשׂר/ ἄνομος) and giving (נָתַן/ ἀποδίδωμι) his ways back on his head whereas justifying (צדק/ δικαιοώ) the righteous (צדיק/ δίκαιος) and repaying (נָתַן/ ἀποδίδωμι) him according to his righteousness (צדיק/ δικαιοσύνη) in 2 Chr 6:23 (cf. 1 Kgs. 8:23).⁴⁷² Proportionate treatment is emphasised as δικαιοώ is qualified by “according to one’s righteousness/ ungodliness”. In legal disputes, the sovereign (king, judge or God) simultaneously hears, pronounces as well as executes justice δικαιοώ by intervening “in defence of” the one who is right against the one who is wrong.⁴⁷³ By bracketing δικαιοώ with the godly and κρίνω the ungodly, an antonymous relationship is constructed.

Some forensic uses of δικαιοώ are found in contexts of contentions between God and his covenant people. This is reflected in a “covenant lawsuit” scene between God and Israel in Mic. 6:1–12.⁴⁷⁴ Summoning his people for disputing (διελέγχω) against himself (6:2), God recounted his commitment to Israel, whom is addressed as λαός μου “my people” (6:3–5). After denying the efficacy of their extravagant sacrifices (6:6–8), God made his charge of guilt with a series of interrogative questions (6:9–12).⁴⁷⁵ The accusatory rhetorical question in v. 11 asks εἰ δικαιοθήσεται ἐν ζυγῷ ἄνομος καὶ ἐν μαρσίππῳ στάθμια δόλου “will a lawless person be justified on the basis of his scales, or in his sack of deceitful weight?” The negative answer illustrated with the particle εἰ is obvious because the personal object is characterised with ἄνομος (vv. 10–11) thrice, which is an adjective only used here in Micah. The people’s ill-gotten treasures are described in terms of ἀδικία (v.10b) and ἀσεβείας (v.12). God will destroy, ἀφανίζω, the people’s sins (ταῖς ἀμαρτίαις σου, v.13). A familiar pattern is

⁴⁷² The co-occurrence of the δίκη-words including the verb (δικαιοώ), adjective (δίκαιος) and noun (δικαιοσύνη) constitutes the “right” side whereas some characteristic vocabularies such as criticising (κρίνω) the lawless (ἄνομος) add up to the “wrong” side in 1 Kgs. 8:23. Seifrid (2001: 427) says the hip’il stem of verb קָדַשׁ signified an act of vindication.

⁴⁷³ Prothro (2018: 56); Bovati (1994: 202).

⁴⁷⁴ Glenny (2015: 141, 146). See Seifrid (2001: 417) for other examples of “covenant lawsuits” (e.g., Isa 1:2–31; Hos 2:1–13). Ungern–Sternberg calls it “eine Auseinandersetzung zwischen zwei Parteien (1979: 135).”

⁴⁷⁵ Glenny (2015: 149–157, 171, 177).

observed in God's contention with his people, God's act of *δικαιόω* is contrary to human *ἀνομία*, *ἁμαρτία* and *ἀσέβεια*. Thus, it reaffirms *δικαιόω* is something beneficial for a sinful person.⁴⁷⁶

In the prophetic scenes of contention with God, a different usage of *δικαιόω* is found. Although the exact designation “justifying the ungodly” is absent, Isaiah 40–55 is peppered with the verb *δικαιόω*.⁴⁷⁷ Recent researchers agreed that righteousness takes on a new sense in Deutero-Isaiah. Without totally abandoning the moral meaning of divinely approved behaviour (e.g., 48:18; 51:1; 51:7), the parallel between *δικαιοσύνη* and *σωτηρία* reflects the soteriological implication of righteousness.⁴⁷⁸ Among several uses of *δικαιόω* in context of divine confrontations with Israel (e.g. 42:18–25; 50:1–3)⁴⁷⁹, Isa 43:22–28 is instructive to this analysis. In God's contention against the exiled Israel, Israel's sins (*תּאֲשׁוּמִי*/ *ἁμαρτία*; see also 43:25, 27; 44:22) and iniquities (*יְעוֹלֵי*/ *ἀδικία*) are displayed in vv.22–24. The charge parallels 42:18–20, 24–25 where exiled Israel were accused of turning a blind eye and a deaf ear to their guilt⁴⁸⁰ and thus being punished in exile.⁴⁸¹ The trial ends with a pronouncement of punishment in 43:27–28. However, verses 25 and 26 shift to a prominent proclamation of God's readiness to forgive and thus to “justify”. The two verbs, *נָחַם* (*ἐξάλειφω*) and *אֵל זָכַר* (*οὐ μνησκόμαι*), reflect God's constant acts of eliminating their rebellion (*עָשׂוּ*/ *ἀνομία*; cf. v.26). God's not remembering is contrasted with summoning the people to remember and be judged (*κρινθῶμεν*) in v.26. It should be noted that while the MT text challenges the people to give an account *דָּפַן* that they might be right, the LXX adds *τὰς ἀνομίας σου πρῶτος* as an object of *λέγε*. Israel's sins are made explicit, also, God's demand for confession of sin results in immediate submission. The purpose and result of confession is *ἵνα δικαιωθῇς*, in other words, “what the legal

⁴⁷⁶ Prothro (2018: 69–74). For example, in Sir 23:11, “A man of many oaths will be full of lawlessness (*ἀνομίας*)...if he errs, his sin is upon him (*ἁμαρτία αὐτοῦ ἐπ’ αὐτῷ*) ... he will not be justified (*οὐ δικαιωθήσεται*)....” Since Sirach's examples are in sapiential forms, the concept of divine contention is not that apparent. However, the positive connotation of *δικαιόω* can still be observed (Sir 9:12; 18:22; 31:5; 26:29).

⁴⁷⁷ Isa. 42:21; 43:9, 26; 45:25; 50:8; 53:11.

⁴⁷⁸ Oswalt (2014: 67). E.g. Isa. 45:8; 46:13; 51:5, 6, 8.

⁴⁷⁹ Sprinkle (2013: 159); Scheuer (2008: 54).

⁴⁸⁰ The rhetorical question in 42:24 *οὐχὶ ὁ θεὸς ὃς ἡμάρτοσαν αὐτῷ* affirms that God is the one the people sinned against.

⁴⁸¹ Goldingay and Payne (2006: 312); Scheuer (2008: 34); see also Isa 40:27–31 for God's defence and explanation of his punishment confirming the blindness and the deafness of the present generation for their own sins.

conceptualization of God justifying a guilty Israel communicates is forgiveness and reconciliation.”⁴⁸²

Although characteristic vocabularies for transgressions, like ἀνομία, ἁμαρτία are found in Isaiah’s use of δικαιόω, and δικαιόω also means something beneficial instead of punitive for the persons, a different pattern becomes patent because God’s justifying act stands in line with the lawless sinners. “Though Israel’s sins were a ‘burden’ on God, its depravity is met with a divine pardon.”⁴⁸³ VanLandingham maintains that Isa 43:26 LXX “has nothing to do with forgiveness” because “Israel had sinned and thus cannot be proved righteous.”⁴⁸⁴ However, Isaiah, in fact in other prophetic texts as well,⁴⁸⁵ repeatedly accentuates God’s unilateral pardon with δικαιόω despite Israel’s incontestable culpability (e.g. 46:12–13).⁴⁸⁶ Thus, understanding justifying as “proving right by evidence” is inadequate. It is impossible for God’s justifying act to base on some witnesses or proofs for Israel’s righteousness, instead, the emphatic repetition of אֲנִי אֲנִי (ἐγὼ εἰμι ἐγὼ εἰμι) in 43:25 (cf. 43:10–13; 51:12) illustrates God being the sole actor of justifying and thus forgiving.⁴⁸⁷ God’s forgiveness has already been asserted in v.25 before Israel confesses in exile, at which point she is justified.⁴⁸⁸ Also, God’s righteousness in Isaiah 40–55 comprises of both his “painful” adherence

⁴⁸² Prothro (2018: 78).

⁴⁸³ Sprinkle (2013: 50).

⁴⁸⁴ VanLandingham’s (2006: 263) view has some accompanies (e.g., Westerholm 2004: 261–84; Ziesler 1972: 47–85) since the verb δικαιόω has declaratory force lexically speaking: shown to be right but not that the one is absolved of guilt. Although forgiveness or absolution is described in other terms (Barclay 2015: 376), the association of δικαιόω and divine unilateral pardon is clear here in Isaiah.

⁴⁸⁵ Hofius is one of the few pioneers to understand Rom 4:5 in relation to the prophetic texts including Hosea, Jeremiah, and Isaiah. “Wenn nach der Botschaft Deuterjesajas »Israel keinerlei eigene Gerechtigkeit ... vorzuweisen hat« und es »allein die souveräne freie Gnadentat Jahwes« ist, die das abtrünnige Volk in einem Akt neuschaffender Vergebung von seiner Schuld befreit und ihm so »neue Zukunft« gewährt, dann ist auch bei diesem Propheten – wie bei Hosea und Jeremia – in aller Deutlichkeit von der iustificatio impiorum die Rede (1989: 141).” See also Gathercole (2004: 166–67); Watson (2004).

⁴⁸⁶ Boda lists many other examples Isa 6:7; 30:18–21; 57:14–21; 59:15–21; 60:1–62:12 (Boda, 2009: 203–12).

⁴⁸⁷ Muraoka (1985: 72) states that, standing between the subject and the predicate of a sentence, the copula emphasises the subject “which is singled out and contrasted with other possible or actual alternative(s).”

⁴⁸⁸ Sprinkle (2013: 50) elaborated that “God’s eschatological redemption is the *ground for*, and not the *response to*, Israel’s repentance “I have swept away your transgressions like a cloud, and your sins like mist; return to me, *for I have redeemed you* (Is 44:22).

to the covenant and the irrevocable promise of restoration (e.g. Isa 46:12–13).⁴⁸⁹ Deutero–Isaiah also sees the Gentiles included in this miraculous divine δικαιοῶ. God calls in 45:18–25 those from “all the ends of the earth” (45:22), including the non–Israelite nations who turned to idols for help in Babylonian turmoil, to turn (שוב/ἐπιστρέφω) to him and be justified (צדק/δικαιωθήσονται). A point of contact between the use of δικαιοῶ in Isaiah and in Paul can be observed, the themes God justifying the sinners, divine forgiveness and Gentile deliverance are closely connected in both accounts.

One might argue that Paul is still not in good company despite the striking linguistic and conceptual similarities between τὸν δικαιοῦντα τὸν ἄσεβῃ and Isaiah’s divine unilateral pardon. Paul’s usage might not be major, but he is definitely not alone. In the *Damascus Document*, Qumran’s abhorrence of miscarriage of justice is reflected in the phrase “acquitted the guilty and sentenced the just (ויצדיקו רשע וירשיעו) (צדיק)” in CD 1:19 (cf. 4:7; Exo 23:7).⁴⁹⁰ Regarding God’s act of justifying, one fragment reads “with a judgement of righteousness (מש[פט צדק] He will [judge]” (4Q418 frag. 214).⁴⁹¹ In 1QH 9:22–23, the psalmist acknowledges that men’s sinfulness is like “an oven of iniquity and a building of sin” (כור העוון ומבנה החטאה) and confesses that he is terrified “by [God’s] righteous judgement” (במשפטי צדק). Thus, justifying is taken in this retributive judicial sense, when the members demonstrate obedience to the law (the “hidden matters”), God will atone for those repent from sin (לכפר בעד שבי פשע) in response; otherwise, punishment (“great wrath with flames of fire”) will fall upon those “turn aside from the path and abhor the precept” (CD 2:3–7; 4QMMT C 26–32).⁴⁹² However, towards the end of the *Rule of the Community* (1QS), it is clear that the only source of justification is God but not human merit:

...and if I fall in the sin of the flesh (בעוון בשר), in the justice of God, which endures eternally, shall my judgment be... he will draw me near in his mercies, and by kindnesses set in motion my judgment; he will judge me in the justice of his truth

⁴⁸⁹ Isa 46:12–13 clearly expresses this concept: “hearken to me, you stubborn of heart, you who are far from righteousness; I bring near my righteousness, it is not far off, and my salvation will not tarry; I will put salvation in Zion, for Israel my glory” (cf. Deut 30:1–7; Judg 2:1; Ps 89:30–34).

⁴⁹⁰ See also CD 3:18; 4:6–7, 9–10.

⁴⁹¹ Parry and Emanuel (2003: 194–195).

⁴⁹² Sprinkle (2013: 162–63) referred to CD 2 as one of the strongest predestinarian passages in CD. Also, Abraham is an exception to the ungodly condition of humanity according to CD 3:2–3 (cf. Sir 44:19–20; 1 Macc 2:52; *Jub.* 19:8–9; cf. 23:9–10; *JosAn.* 1.233–4) and he was “counted as a friend for keeping God’s precepts.”

(משפטי בצדקת אמתו שפטני), and in his plentiful goodness always atone for all my sins (יכפר בעד כול עוונותי); in his justice he will cleanse me from the uncleanness of the human being and from the sin of the sons of man (ובצדקתו יטהרני מגדל אנוש וחטאת בני אדם), so that I can give God thanks for his justice and The Highest for his majesty. (1QS 11:12–15).⁴⁹³

The divine justifying act שפט is paralleled with God's atoning or purifying act כפר/טהר. Similar sentiment about divine unilateral "justification" despite man's incurable guilt is expressed in the *Hodayot*. In 1QH^a 5:22–23, people who act wickedly (ואם ירשע) are acquitted by God's goodness (בטובך יצדק איש). In 17:33–34, God's just rebuke (תוכחת צדקה) is explicated because there is "abundance of forgiveness and a multitude of [compas]sion" (מים בהשפטכה בירח[רה] רוב סליחות והמון) when God judges the sinner (cf. 12:36–37). In 1QH^a 15:30 (cf. 19:8–9), the poet praises God for "your truth /you bring/ to forgiveness (תביא בסליחות) in your presence..." According to these evidence from the DSS, God's justifying act does not only link to sinners who are not capable of rescuing themselves from iniquities, but also God's unconditional pardon, goodness, compassion, and forgiveness. Righteousness and forgiveness are ascribed by God alone given human sinfulness and inadequacy as confessed in 1QS 9:10; 1QH 7(=15):16.⁴⁹⁴ Bockmuehl rightly concludes that צדק, משפט and צדקה are employed repeatedly as forensic terminologies for characterising God's justice and righteousness (though with different nuances). And the notion of "the righteousness of god" is "exclusively constituted by him, and comes to be revealed in his historic and eschatological acts of salvation."⁴⁹⁵

In short, two contrasting usages are observed in the LXX. On one hand, the verb δικάιῳ is antonymous to καταγινώσκω because the former is linked to "righteous" and the latter "ungodly". On the other, δικάιῳ is synonyms to divine unilateral pardoning acts like "not remembering", "atoning", and "cleansing" for the benefit of the "ungodly", "unrighteous" and "sinner". Paul's designation τὸν δικαιοῦντα τὸν ἁσεβῆ is in line with the latter.

⁴⁹³ Martínez's (2000: 98–99).

⁴⁹⁴ 1QS 9:10; 1QH 7(=15):16 "Man cannot establish his own steps, for to God belong judgement (משפט) and perfection of way"; cf. 1QH 17 (=9):14 "no one is righteous in your judgement, or innocent at your trial."

⁴⁹⁵ Bockmuehl (2011: 245) further defines צדק here best viewed as the quality of that which is right and pleasing to god, while צדקה is an action in keeping with that quality. See also Bockmuehl (2001): 381–414; Pate (2000: 155–95)

4.1.4 Synthesis

Looking into the background of δικαιόω, it is clear that Paul is not creating the epithet out of nothing. Our overview of how Paul’s contemporaries use δικαιόω for deities’ action portrays a picture more than monotonous. The thematic meanings of δικαιόω τινά in Greco-Roman and Hellenistic Jewish religious texts are closely aligned. The verb δικαιόω means something negative, such as punishment or condemnation, against the “ungodly” personal objects. Although the punitive sense is found in some Septuagintal usages, the prophetic texts (Deutero-Isaiah in particular) take δικαιόω in a positive sense in favour of the personal object just as Paul does. When δικαιόω τινά is used to predicate God, it does not mean a performative verdict of acquittal. Instead, it is a divine refusal of punishment or unilateral forgiveness of the confessed sinners (cf. 2 Sam 19:23).⁴⁹⁶ It is simply an exercise of divine royal prerogative, for God is free (cf. Rom 9:15, citing Exod. 33), free to leave the guilty unpunished, to forgive unilaterally.⁴⁹⁷ Not only so, the recurrent patterns in Romans and Deutero-Isaiah of God δικαιόω τινά are the same— the personal objects are the ungodly ones. While Gentiles are included in divine forgiveness mainly for Israel in Isaiah’s account, Paul extends divine justification to Gentiles with the soteriologically-loaded designation τὸν δικαιοῦντα τὸν ἄσεβῃ in Rom 4:5.

⁴⁹⁶ Downing (2012: 306).

⁴⁹⁷ Eastman (2010: 376–80).

4.2 Θεοῦ τοῦ ζωοποιοῦντος τοὺς νεκρούς (4:17b)

After Rom 4:5, Paul uses two consecutive participial phrases describing God in 4:17b, θεοῦ τοῦ ζωοποιοῦντος τοὺς νεκρούς and καλοῦντος τὰ μὴ ὄντα ὡς ὄντα. While some scholars regard these designations simply as Paul’s appealing to traditional Jewish liturgical formulas in the “Eighteen Benedictions”,⁴⁹⁸ others argue that they are exclusively related to Abraham’s fatherhood. Instead of starting with overarching themes such as “faith”, “fatherhood” or “covenant”, this section attempts to first read the predication in coherence with its contexts. It will be demonstrated that the thematic meaning of Rom 4:17b is closely tied with God-reckoning faith (4:9–12), God’s miraculous realisation of his promise (4:13–22), and thus Paul’s justification for his Gentile mission. Then, the recurrent linguistic pattern of characterizing God in terms of ζωοποιεῖν and καλεῖν will be studied. It will be demonstrated that Paul is engaging in the ongoing dialogue with his near contemporaries.

4.2.1 Rom 4:17b in scholarship

Although this section does not set out to engage fully in the discussion of the theme of Romans 4 in scholarship,⁴⁹⁹ the alternatives between “faith” and “fatherhood” inevitably affect one’s understanding of the divine predication. Wright’s covenantal reading is an example, as the consecutive designations about God (4:17b) are regarded as the “repeated double statement about Jewish and Gentile members in Abraham’s faith-family” (πάντων ἀκροβυστίας and περιτομῆς in 4:11–12; τῷ ἐκ τοῦ νόμου and τῷ ἐκ πίστεως Ἀβραάμ in 4:16).⁵⁰⁰ On the one hand, God is bringing life to Jews who are under the threat of being cut off (2:25–29; 11:11–16) and on the other hand, he is creating membership for Gentiles who originally do not belong

⁴⁹⁸ E.g., Longenecker (2016: 518); Moo (1996: 280); Jewett (2007: 332–34); Käsemann (1980: 121–22); Dunn (1988a: 217–18). According to Dunn, similar language is used in the second of the Eighteen Benedictions: “you make the dead alive” (cf. Ps 71 [LXX 70]:20; Tob 13:2; Wis. Sol. 16:13; *JosAs* 20.7; T. Gad 4.6).

⁴⁹⁹ Recent scholarship could be briefly, if not oversimplified, divided between the “alternatives”—“faith” or “fatherhood”. Regarding this Abraham–chapter, the former reading insists that Paul is contrasting two soteriologies while the latter claims that it is about two competing construals of Abrahamic family. See Schliesser (2007: 222–36), Barclay (2015: 479–81) for a detail review.

⁵⁰⁰ The first description of God answers Abraham’s request for “an actual physical offspring” and refers to the birth of Isaac from Abraham and Sarah’s dead bodies (cf. Gen 15, 17). Whereas the second phrase refers to the inclusion of Gentiles into Abrahamic covenantal family, a family of many nations like the stars of heaven in Gen 15:5 (Wright 2013b: 213–14).

to the covenantal family.⁵⁰¹ Thus, the double divine predication put the “only” theme, namely covenant membership, neatly in a nutshell.

Apparently, Wright’s position does not convince many. One of the greatest counter arguments against his covenant-driven reading is that Paul quite deliberately omits reference to the “covenant” when he names σημείωσις διαθήκης in Gen 17:11 LXX σημεῖον περιτομῆς “the sign of circumcision” and σφραγὶς τῆς δικαιοσύνης “the seal of righteousness” in Rom 4:11.⁵⁰² Also, Wright has not taken the *whole* section into account. Wright finds that the main theme about unity and equality of Jews and Gentiles is completed in the middle section (4:9–17), particularly in vv.1, 16, 17 because they “encapsulate and frame the theme perfectly.” He finds “the rest of the chapter (4:18–25) relates to everything from 1:8 onwards, but less specifically to 4:1–17.”⁵⁰³ Instead of bracketing out 4:2–8, 18–25 and diminishing the relevance of “faith”, we argue that the designations could be read coherently with 4:13–22, and Paul’s names for God are not so neatly concerning Jews and Gentiles respectively. Instead, both predication point to Gentile inclusion.

4.2.2 Divine designations (4:17b) and God-reckoning faith (4:9–12)

We have argued that the first designation (4:5) reveals that “God’s acceptance of the ungodly Abraham is principally equivalent to his mercy with the sinner David.”⁵⁰⁴ In 4:9–12, Paul deals with the beneficiaries of such blessing of forgiveness. In response to the question πῶς οὖν ἐλογίσθη (4:10), Paul argues that faith rather than circumcision is the basis for God-reckoning righteousness in vv.9–12. The cognates of περιτομή and ἀκροβυστίαν, used twelve times in these four verses,⁵⁰⁵ make it obvious that (un)circumcision is the issue at hand (cf. 3:29–30). Although

⁵⁰¹ Wright (2002: 498).

⁵⁰² Schliesser (2007: 357). Paul’s adaptation is obvious as ἀκροβυστία, περιτομή and σημεῖον all derive from Gen 17. This makes the omission of διαθήκη more unnatural. Regarding the omission of διαθήκη, Wright claims that because for Paul the meaning of “righteousness” was “covenant membership”...the omission “can hardly mean this as a radical alternation or correction, but rather as an explanation (Wright 2002: 494)”.

⁵⁰³ “Faith, grace and promise...are vital...but they are not its main subjects...The overall subject of the larger section is indeed the revelation of God’s covenant faithfulness and the creation of a Jew-plus-Gentile family (Wright 2002: 487, 491, 497–99).” Nevertheless, Wright later slightly modifies his view and says that it is “the *whole* chapter that has this theme (Wright, 2013b: 230–31)”.

⁵⁰⁴ Schliesser (2007: 356).

⁵⁰⁵ The cognates of circumcision περιτομή is used six times and that of uncircumcision ἀκροβυστία is also used six times.

circumcision is considered the epitome of being Jewish, Paul exploits the chronological and narrative sequence of Genesis 15 and 17 to accentuate σφραγίδα τῆς δικαιοσύνης τῆς πίστεως (4:11) over circumcision. The original reference to the “covenant” in Genesis is avoided,⁵⁰⁶ and God’s purpose is specified in 4:11b–12—the divine intended universal fatherhood of Abraham πατέρα πάντων τῶν πιστευόντων δι’ ἀκροβυστίας...καὶ πατέρα περιτομῆς (cf. τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν in 4:12; πᾶς in 4:16; 1:16).⁵⁰⁷ Meanwhile, the importance of God-reckoning faith is illustrated in the next εἰς τό purpose clause λογισθῆναι καὶ αὐτοῖς τὴν δικαιοσύνην.⁵⁰⁸

4.2.3 Divine designations (4:17b) and ἐπαγγελία (4:13–22)

In the next subsection (vv. 13–16), the theme ἐπαγγελία is introduced and Paul argues faith instead of the law is the basis of God’s promise.⁵⁰⁹ The third εἰς τό purpose clause redefines the beneficiaries of the promise and the identity of the σπέρμα. The theme Jews and Gentiles alike (cf. vv. 11–12) is recapitulated in the explanatory relative clause οὐ τῷ ἐκ τοῦ νόμου μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ τῷ ἐκ πίστεως Ἀβραάμ.⁵¹⁰ The universality and totality of Abraham’s seed is confirmed by παντί in v.16.⁵¹¹ Neither circumcision (vv. 10, 12) nor the law (vv. 14–16), two of the most significant Jewish

⁵⁰⁶ The term διαθήκη is frequently found in the two Genesis chapters relevant to this context: Gen 15:18; 17:2, 4, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 19, 21, but not once in the whole chapter of Romans 4 (cf. διαθήκην περιτομῆς in Acts 7:8). The comparison highlights Paul’s intentional omission and thus weakens the claims of the interpreters who found the covenant motif so central here (Schliesser, 2007: 358).

⁵⁰⁷ The two first person plural references, λέγομεν (v.9) and ἡμῶν (v.12), bracketing this section illustrate Paul is now involving his readers in his exegesis. These are the second and third use of first person plural since v.1 (Lee, 2010: 251).

⁵⁰⁸ Moo (1996: 267).

⁵⁰⁹ “If it is the case that the inheritance is to be based on adherence to the law, then there will be no heirs, because no fallen human being can adequately adhere to the law...and the promise will never be fulfilled (Moo, 1996: 275–76).” The law here should be taken as Mosaic Law (Rom 2:1–29; 3:9–19) instead of universal law.

⁵¹⁰ Schliesser helpfully discovers a parallel line of thought between 4:16 and the thematic statement 1:16, illustrating “both gospel as power of God and the promise in its unconditional validity benefit all those Jews and Gentiles who believe” (Schliesser, 2002: 374–75):

Rom 1:16	Rom 4:16
τό εὐαγγέλιον	ἐπαγγελίαν
δύναμις θεοῦ	βεβαίαν
παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι	παντὶ τῷ σπέρματι
Ἰουδαίῳ τε πρῶτον	οὐ τῷ ἐκ τοῦ νόμου μόνον
καὶ Ἑλλήνι.	ἀλλὰ καὶ τῷ ἐκ πίστεως Ἀβραάμ.

⁵¹¹ Moo explains the connective διὰ τοῦτο in v. 16 should be taken to be forward pointing because in the NT it often “looks ahead to a following clause” (1996: 277). But it is not necessary to limit v. 16 to its latter context because Paul is creating an antithesis regarding the way in which God’s promise is realised: vv. 13–15 present a negative argument repudiating the law, whereas in vv. 16–25 Paul explicates the promise is realised through Abraham’s faith.

identity markers, contributes to the status of heirs. Instead, it is defined by God's promise.⁵¹²

A. Genesis 15

Many commentators have noted the relevance of the promised seed in Gen 15 (LXX),⁵¹³ as illustrated by the common verbal link σπέρμα (Gen 15:3, 5, 13, 18; Rom 4:13, 16) and κληρονόμος (Gen 15:3, 4, 7, 8; Rom 4:13, 14).⁵¹⁴ However, what Paul takes up from Gen 15 is not “covenant”. In his in-depth study on Rom 4 and Gen 15:6, Schliesser rightly concludes that not only does Paul *redefine* the notion of “covenant” (cf. Rom 4:11) in light of God's “Heilssetzung”, he also takes up the promise of the seed from the context of Gen 15 and *extends* it to a universal, global manner.⁵¹⁵ In Gen 15:2, 3, 8, Abraham challenges the validity of God's promise by asking three questions introduced by appellatives אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה. Then the dialogical narrative is broken by “two accentuated statements” in 15:6, 18, leaving the actual narrative. Apparently, Paul takes up the first statement concerning God-reckoning faith in Rom 4, but chooses not to mention the second statement about God establishing the covenant with Abraham (Gen 15:18). Looking past the encompassing concept “covenant”, Paul elaborates on the *content* of the covenant— the “seed” (Rom 4:13, 16, 18) and puts his focus on God, God's promise and Abraham's faith.⁵¹⁶

B. Coherency

The descendant-promise binds vv. 13–22 in unity as it is supported lexically by the reappearing ἐπαγγελία (4:13, 14, 16, 20, 21), which appears first time here in the letter.⁵¹⁷ Syntactically, v. 17 also breaks up the two ὅς-*relative* clauses regarding Abraham's fatherhood (vv. 16b, 18a). Stylistically, the sentences are long, comprised

⁵¹² Schliesser (2002: 371, n. 1091).

⁵¹³ Wright writes (2013b: 214), “Paul has, as so often, comprised many complex ideas here into a tight space...in Rom. 4 at least he is reading the promise of Gen. 15.5 as a promise about a *family*, a ‘seed’. This consists of ‘heirs’, ‘inheritance’ starting with Abraham's own son Issac but then going well beyond the boundaries of his subsequent physical family into the many nations of 4.17 (quoting Gen. 17.5)”.

⁵¹⁴ Schliesser (2002: 365–67) notes that unlike Gal 3, Paul attributes no Christological meaning to the seed (cf. Gal 3:16, 19).

⁵¹⁵ Schliesser (2002: 367).

⁵¹⁶ Schliesser (2002: 92–94, 141, 366–68) argues the importance of “descendants” (Gen 12:2; 13:16; 15:5; 17:2, 6; 18:18; 22:17; 26:3, 4) weighs heavier than that of “covenant” (15:18; 17:2, 4, 7) in Gen. 12–26.

⁵¹⁷ The verb ἐπαγγέλλομαι instead of the noun is used in v. 21 (Moo, 1996: 272).

of more embedded clauses in vv. 17–22 (eg. καθώς-comparative clause, ὃς-relative clause, εἰς τό-infinitive clause) whereas sentences in vv. 13–16 are made up of short primary clauses. Thus, commentators often put a break after v. 16 or v. 17 and the topic is considered shifted from the antithesis between law and faith to the portrayal of Abraham’s faith.⁵¹⁸ However, God’s promise is the connecting theme. Semantically, vv.13–15 confirms the universal beneficiaries of the promise, and vv. 16–22 reflects from the perspective of God and highlights the promise-making God creates an impossible multiethnic family.⁵¹⁹

Besides, ἐπαγγελία and various πίστ-words are the most frequent lexical item concentrated in vv. 13–25. Interestingly, the four uses of πίστ-words in vv. 13–16 are in normative or genitive forms, whereas three uses of πίστ-words in vv.17–25 are in verb forms (vv.17, 18, 24) and the other three are dative nouns (vv.19, 20). It indicates a stronger emphasis on the act of believing in vv.17–25.⁵²⁰ Also, Moxnes helpfully observes that the truncated quotation ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην in v.22 stylistically proves Paul’s argument does not end in v.17. It is a typical feature of Romans 4 that Paul “brings sections or sub-sections to completion by quoting or alluding to Gen 15:6 (4:6, 11, 22, 24).⁵²¹ The two cohesive ties in vv.13–22 — God’s promised family and Abrahamic faith are not mutually exclusive but two sides of the same coin. “Romans 4 shows that Abraham is father of both Jews and Gentiles only because of the way in which he [Abraham] was justified: by sole dependence on the unconditional grace and power of God.”⁵²²

C. The promise—realising God

Given the importance of the act of believing (ἐπίστευσεν), the core of faith is not only the promise but the crucial question of whom to believe— namely, θεοῦ τοῦ

⁵¹⁸ Eg. Cranfield (1975: 224–25); Byrne (1996: 153); Wright (2002: 497–99).

⁵¹⁹ Barclay (2015: 488 n. 105) also finds “[P]lacing a division at the beginning, middle or end of 4:17 would violate the grammatical flow of Paul’s sentence”. Moxnes arrives at similar conclusion and states that “vv. 13–22 addresses the same question about the children of Abraham, but has its particular motif God’s promise to Abraham and his descendants (Moxnes, 1980: 113–15).”

⁵²⁰ Lee (2010: 261).

⁵²¹ Moxnes (1980: 113).

⁵²² Barclay (2015: 488) contradicts Hays (2005: 83) who states that “[T]he crucial issue in the chapter is not how Abraham got himself justified but rather whose father he is and in what way his children are related to him.”

ζωοποιοῦντος τοὺς νεκροὺς καὶ καλοῦντος τὰ μὴ ὄντα ὡς ὄντα (cf. Rom 4:5).⁵²³ God's "promise" is substantiated with the quotation πατέρα πολλῶν ἐθνῶν τέθεικά σε (Gen 17:5) in v. 17a. Continuing the fatherhood theme (πατὴρ πάντων ἡμῶν in v. 16 and πατέρα πολλῶν ἐθνῶν in vv. 17–18), Paul draws our attention to God. In Rom 4:17, the double designations of God belong to a relative clause governed by the adverb "in sight of (God)" κατέναντι (cf. 2 Cor 2:17, 12:19),⁵²⁴ attaching weight to God in the presence of whom the promise is realised. The perfect form τέθεικά (from Gen 17:5, cf. יָהָיָה from Gen 15:18) is a performative perfect in which the action concurs with the realisation of the promise.⁵²⁵ Thus, the most obvious reason of characterising God is to ensure that the promise will actually be materialised.

The difficulty of promise realisation is marked in 4:18–21 as well as its original context, especially in Gen 17 and 18. Paul quotes an earlier promise to Abraham from Gen 15:5 at the end of 4:18. After inviting Abraham to contemplate the star strewn desert sky, God promises him "Thus shall your descendants be". The "many nations" of which Abraham is the father are equivalent to the spiritual "seed" made up of believing Jews and Gentiles (see 4:16).⁵²⁶ The tension escalates because of the greatness of the promise and the age of Abraham and Sarah (Gen 17). Abraham's hopelessness of having no son to inherit his land (Gen 15:2–3) and Sarah's barrenness (Gen 17:1, 17; 18:12–13; cf. Rom 4:19) contribute to the growing despair of an unfulfilled promise.⁵²⁷ Yet, the divine designation offers a way out. God's power to "make alive the dead" is manifested in particular in Sarah and Abraham's bodily "deadness". The adjective νέκρωσις as well as the participle in perfect tense νεκρωμένον (v.19) are not the normal words for woman's barrenness.⁵²⁸ How can a

⁵²³ Lee (2010: 263).

⁵²⁴ Paul's only two other uses of κατέναντι are similarly associated with God. Longenecker (2016: 516–17) comments that the κατέναντι is "exceedingly difficult to translate and to relate to its immediate context". Moo (1996: 280) notes the peculiarity of the elliptical κατέναντι clause because it does not naturally follow verbs in the preceding clauses, however, he rightly argues that neither the confirmation of the seed (v. 16a) nor the spiritual fatherhood of Abraham exists κατέναντι "in the sight of God", it should be linked to the most immediate clause, the quotation of the promise. This reading fits best with the context because the focus is on God, the promise giver in v. 17 (*pace* Cranfield, 1975: 243; Longenecker 2016:518), thus, κατέναντι should be linked to ὅς ἐστιν πατὴρ πάντων ἡμῶν in v.16b. Also, an interesting parallel is set up with the earlier use of οὐ πρὸς θεόν in 4:2 negating the reasons for Abraham's boast.

⁵²⁵ Schliesser (2002: 376 n. 1124).

⁵²⁶ Moo (1996: 282–83).

⁵²⁷ Schliesser (2002: 379).

⁵²⁸ Moo (1996: 284).

dead σῶμα and a dead μήτρα reproduce σπέρμα and make Abraham “father of many nations”? Yet, Abraham’s faith does not waver and God is also able to fulfil the promise (vv. 20–21). Abraham’s faith (see the five πιστ-words in vv. 17–20) and the reassurance “nothing is too hard for God” (μὴ ἀδυνατεῖ in Gen 18:14; cf. Rom δυνατός in 4:21 and βεβαίαν in Rom 4:16) result in the realisation of the divine purpose — εἰς τὸ γενέσθαι αὐτὸν πατέρα πολλῶν ἐθνῶν κατὰ τὸ εἰρημένον (4:18). Given the greatness of the promise and the hindrance in reality, it is therefore crucial to know who is this God in whom Abraham believes παρ’ ἐλπίδα ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι (v.18) and who is this God who brings such a promise to reality? In Rom 4:17, we are clearly told that He is the God who “gives life to the dead” and “calls into existence the things that do not exist”.

4.2.4 Divine designations (4:17b) and Gentile inclusion

Situating the divine designations in the context of God’s miraculous power to accomplish his promise, we are going to illustrate how *both* designations are closely related to inclusion of Gentiles. Our reading is different from Wright’s because he thinks the God who “gives life to the dead” refers to Isaac’s birth whereas the God who “calls into existence the things that do not exist” refers to Abraham’s seed from “many nations” respectively.⁵²⁹ Wright’s conclusion somehow assumes the Abrahamic family is the “overarching” purpose of the chapter, however, we prefer to look for clues in Paul’s own words. There are four εἰς τό clauses with infinitives (vv.11, 16, 18) indicating either purpose or result in Paul’s argument. If we put together all of them:

1. εἰς τὸ εἶναι αὐτὸν πατέρα πάντων τῶν πιστευόντων δι’ ἀκροβυστίας (v.11)
2. εἰς τὸ λογισθῆναι αὐτοῖς δικαιοσύνην (v.11)
3. εἰς τὸ εἶναι βεβαίαν τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν παντὶ τῷ σπέρματι (v.16)
4. εἰς τὸ γενέσθαι αὐτὸν πατέρα πολλῶν ἐθνῶν κατὰ τὸ εἰρημένον (v.18)

we get a unified picture underscoring Gentile inclusion. In v.11, righteousness is λογισθῆναι to the ἀκροβυστία; in v.18 Abraham as the promised father ἐθνῶν is reaffirmed. Strictly speaking, even if v.16 is left out because of the reference to *both*

⁵²⁹ Wright (2013b: 214).

Jews and Gentiles,⁵³⁰ at least in three out of these four clauses the importance of inclusion of Gentiles is accentuated. Indeed, the designations are “bracketed” by two citations (Gen 17:5; 15:5) of direct speech from God to Abraham (A and A’).⁵³¹ While the promise πατέρα πολλῶν ἐθνῶν is the main theme, one should not overlook the conjunctions καθὼς and οὕτως because it is emphasised that the thrust of promise’s realisation lies in God’s word (κατὰ τὸ εἰρημένον). Thus, while the verb πιστεύω is used twice (B and B’) to highlight Abraham’s act of believing, Paul underscores that the inclusion of ἔθνη as Abraham’s σπέρμα is God’s word, intention and purpose.⁵³²

The divine designations are inevitable because the promise which qualifies ἔθνη as promised descendants deserves justification. The two predication explicate God’s power over ungodliness (4:5), death⁵³³ and nothingness and turn them into justification, life and creation. After the first reference to Abrahamic story in v.9, the argument is opened with a question πῶς οὖν ἐλογίσθη. Though many noted faith is crucial in the chapter, λογίζεσθαι is the “stitchword” between the question and the answer (Gen 15:6). Paul does not ask what is Abraham’s faith, or what has Abraham done, instead, the issue under discussion is on God’s side (cf. Rom 4:11, 22).⁵³⁴ God does more than λογίζεσθαι, He also “does the impossible” as spelled out in the designations in v.17b. Being conscious of the context of Gen 15:6, Paul illustrates clearly Abraham trusted in the promise of σπέρμα “*at a time when bearing children was impossible*” (4:18–22). Paul describes how God operates in his Gentile mission: neither by circumcision, submission to the Law, nor ethnicity. God’s “*creatio ex nihilo*” in Abrahamic story places Israel, Gentiles and indeed the entire world on a common trajectory of incompetence — only total dependence on the competence of

⁵³⁰ Gentiles is also included in the collective noun σπέρματι in v.16.

⁵³¹ A chiasmic pattern can be observed:

A καθὼς γέγραπται ὅτι πατέρα πολλῶν ἐθνῶν τέθεικά σε

B κατέναντι οὗ ἐπίστευσεν

C θεοῦ τοῦ ζῳοποιούντος τοὺς νεκροὺς καὶ καλοῦντος τὰ μὴ ὄντα ὡς ὄντα

B’ Ὅς παρ’ ἐλπίδα ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι ἐπίστευσεν

A’ εἰς τὸ γενέσθαι αὐτὸν πατέρα πολλῶν ἐθνῶν κατὰ τὸ εἰρημένον· οὕτως ἔσται τὸ σπέρμα σου

⁵³² This does not necessarily mean Paul excludes the Jews in God’s salvation (cf. 4:11–12).

⁵³³ Cf. Rom 1:4 with 4:17. Schliesser (2002: 377).

⁵³⁴ “Dabei wird durch die Frage nach dem Stichwort λογίζεσθαι – und eben nicht nach dem πίστις/πιστεύειν – erneut bestätigt, dass die Diskussion über die Seite Gottes und sein ihn grundsätzlich bestimmendes Handeln geht und nicht über das Tun und Lassen des Menschen (Flebbe, 2008: 226).”

God, in other word, faith matters.⁵³⁵ The fact that God is a God who can do the impossible to save Gentiles is the same God justifying the ungodly in Rom 4:5.⁵³⁶

4.2.5 Divine designations (4:17b) and the rest of Romans

The designations are connected to the rest of the letter. God as the one who calls into existence that which has no existence, recalls the creator motif in Romans 1:20, 25. However, the creator motif is invoked to illustrate God's wrath (1:18, cf. 4:15) against all the ungodly, idolatrous and unrighteous men *πᾶσαν ἀσέβειαν καὶ ἀδικίαν ἀνθρώπων* in Rom 1.⁵³⁷ Despite God's creative power *δύναμις* which is easily perceived (1:20), the rebellious Gentiles failed to give glory *ἐδόξασαν* (1:21, cf. 1:23) to the creator God.⁵³⁸ Gentiles' "sophisticated" (*φάσκοντες εἶναι σοφοί*, 1:22) but ironically futile reasoning (*διαλογισμός*, 1:21), which rejects the creator's revelation, is in contrast with Abraham's simple trust illustrated with the two consecutive finite verbs (*κατανοέω*, *διακρίνω*) concerning mental judgement in 4:19–20.⁵³⁹ Abraham's faith is described with two contrasting verbs (*μὴ ἀσθενήσας*, *ἐνεδυναμώθη*), at the end of 4:20, Abraham *δοὺς δόξαν τῷ θεῷ* gives glory to God and acknowledge God's *δυνατός ἐστιν ποιῆσαι* power to do the promise. Abraham has fulfilled the goal which God has in view in creating humanity (1:21, 23; cf. 3:23) because Abrahamic faith implies rendering the most basic creaturely submission to the creator.⁵⁴⁰ Abraham is "the remedy to the problem of 1.18–32 (and 1.18–3.20 as a whole)", "the antitype of Gentile disobedience" because he "reverses the Gentile folly" as he trusts the life-giving and creator god by giving him his due glory.⁵⁴¹ Doxology is significant because the corruptive act of speech, in other words, humanity's refusal to worship God and

⁵³⁵ Barclay (2015:489); Flebbe writes "...weil Gott, so wie er durch sein Wirken Isaak zum Nachkommen konstituiert hat, auch die in ebenso auswegloser Lage befindlichen Heiden zu Nachkommen und Erben, zu Mitgliedern der Heilsgemeinschaft machen kann – wie es in der Tradition für das Wunder der Bekehrung von Proselyten mit der Gottes Schöpfungsmacht rekapitulierenden und reformulierenden Sprache ausgedrückt wird (2008:245–46)."

⁵³⁶ Eg., Käsemann, (1971: 92); Byrne (1996: 156); Kirk (2008: 63).

⁵³⁷ As noted above, the first divine predication (4:5) is associated with 1:18.

⁵³⁸ Adams (1997: 52–53, 63).

⁵³⁹ It is interesting to note that both *διακρίνω* (domain 30.99) and *διαλογισμός* (domain 30.10) belong to semantic domain 30 "Think" in Louw and Nida's Lexicon (1989).

⁵⁴⁰ Adams (1997: 65). Byrne's comments (1996:154–55) on the connection between the divine designations in 4:5 and 4:17 and suggests that the "inner logic" of Abraham's faith reduces it to faith in God as creator.

⁵⁴¹ Adams (1997: 63, 66).

determination to be God, is at the root of human entrapment in the power of Sin (cf. 1:30; 3:4, 10–18).⁵⁴²

Just as God's power brings salvation not only to Jews *but also to Gentiles* (1:16), Paul's exegesis of Abraham legitimates God's acceptance of Gentiles *while they remain Gentiles*.⁵⁴³ Beside the connection between the designations (4:17b) and Gentile inclusion, the links between Abraham and rebellious Gentiles of 1:18–25 give “added force to Paul's presentation of Abraham as the model of justifying faith not only for Jews *but also for Gentiles*.”⁵⁴⁴ Therefore, in Paul's soteriological scheme, the affinities between Romans 1:18–32 and 4:17–21 exemplify God's saving activity especially for Gentiles.

4.2.6 Background

In spite of what we have argued so far, one might still argue that it does not necessarily mean that the use of the double divine predications in v.17b reflect similar concern for Gentiles. Could the thematic meanings of the designations be something different in the conception of Paul's contemporaries? A background investigation is needed. Interestingly, an oxymoronic relationship can be observed in each predication. Semantically, the verb ζωοποιέω contrasts with the substantival adjective τοὺς νεκρούς in the first predication, whereas the articular substantival neuter participle with negative particle τὰ μὴ ὄντα is in contrast with the anarthrous substantive participle ὄντα. In short, these designations characterise God with two polar qualities. Instead of limiting to exact parallel phrases, we should also ask how and why do Paul's Jewish and pagan contemporaries use the recurrent oxymoronic patterns or polar terms to characterise deities? What do Paul's contemporaries mean when deities are characterised as life-giving and creating? Could similar soteriological implication be found?

A. Divine designations with “polar values” in Greco Roman background

Instead of surveying the lexical meanings of ζωοποιέω or καλέω, we will discover something interesting when we first look for divine designations which

⁵⁴² Gaventa (2008: 404–5).

⁵⁴³ Adams (1997: 63).

⁵⁴⁴ Adams (1997: 62).

contain oxymoronic or polar values. Many “polar” expressions can be found in Greek aretology⁵⁴⁵ concerning divine omnipotence or miraculous powers (*arete*). In the longest and one of the best known aretalogies, the Isis aretology of Kume,⁵⁴⁶ expressions like “I soothe the sea and make it turbulent (line 43)” and “I make the navigable unnavigable whenever it pleases me (line 50)” are found. Not only are the deities described in terms of abstract force, their unrestricted power also “manipulates” human lives. A very early Hellenistic source, Homer’s *Iliad*, has already noted “[B]ut as for valour, it is Zeus who increases it for men or diminishes it, just as he is minded, for he is mightiest of all.”⁵⁴⁷ Divine interference into human lives is not entirely “arbitrary”, on the other hand, polar expressions about deities’ absolute power bear soteriological connotations. The opening lines of Hesiod’s *Erga* glorify Zeus, “[F]or easily he strengthens, and easily he crushes the strong, easily he diminishes the conspicuous and increases the inconspicuous...(5–6).”⁵⁴⁸ While it is typical in hymnic poetry to praise deities for their powers to do either two opposite things “easily” (ῥέα μὲν...ῥεῖα δέ),⁵⁴⁹ line 7 of *Erga*: ῥεῖα δέ τ’ ἰθύνει σκολιὸν καὶ ἀγήνορα κάρφει (easily he straightens the crooked and withers the proud) illustrates Hesiod’s personal appeal to divine justice. Zeus’ power to reverse human circumstances is exploited for Hesiod’s petition for retribution. Therefore, expressions of divine power are sometimes not descriptions about power for the sake of power, but also “benevolent omnipotence of divine protection”.⁵⁵⁰

⁵⁴⁵ An aretology is a laudatory description of the miraculous power (*arete*) of a god (Versnel, 2011: 283).

⁵⁴⁶ It is believed that the authors of Isiac aretology are probably Greco–Egyptian priests of Isis from the third century BC onwards (Versnel, 1990:88). And Versnel (1993: 386–88) confirms that the origin of these concepts should be Greek rather than Egypt. A translation of the text can be found in Grant (1980: 133).

⁵⁴⁷ Homer, *Iliad* 20. 242: Ζεὺς δ’ ἀρετὴν ἀνδρεσσιν ὀφέλλει τε μινύθει τε, ὅπως κεν ἐθέλῃσιν· ὁ γὰρ κάρτιστος ἀπάντων. Penelope’s words by Homer also express a common observation about gods, “μάργην σε θεοὶ θέσαν, οἳ τε δύνανται ἄφρονα ποιῆσαι καὶ ἐπίφρονά περ μάλ’ ἐόντα, καὶ τε χαλιφρονέοντα σαοφροσύνης ἐπέβησαν” (Homer, *Odyssey*. 23.11–13). Similar idea resounds in the fourth century in Xenophon’s words (*Hellenica*, VI. 24), “καὶ ὁ θεὸς δέ, ὡς ἔοικε, πολλάκις χαίρει τοὺς μὲν μικροὺς μεγάλους ποιῶν, τοὺς δὲ μεγάλους μικροὺς.”

⁵⁴⁸ Hesiod, *Works and Days* (ca. 800–700 BC) 5–8: ῥέα μὲν γὰρ βριάει, ῥέα δὲ βριάοντα χαλέπτει, ῥεῖα δ’ ἀρίζηλον μινύθει καὶ ἄδηλον ἀέξει, ῥεῖα δέ τ’ ἰθύνει σκολιὸν καὶ ἀγήνορα κάρφει Ζεὺς ὑψιβρεμέτης ὃς ὑπέρτατα δώματα ναίει.

⁵⁴⁹ Versnel (2011: 157, 232, 422, 426). Hesiod’s personal appeal to the god’s capacity to do justice is reflected in the line two lines “give ear to me, watching and listening, and straighten the verdicts with justice yourself;1 as for me, I will proclaim truths to Perses (9–10).”

⁵⁵⁰ Versnel (2011: 426).

One of the most rigorous form of divine benevolent interference is manifested in divine supremacy over life and death in the first hymn of Isidorus.⁵⁵¹ Isis is referred to as “deathless saviour”, σώτειρ’ ἀθανάτη, who saves all those “under the fatal destiny of death”, ἐμ μοίραις θανάτου. Isis is exalted during the imperial period for having the power to alter one’s lifespan, in other words, being victorious over fate.⁵⁵² In short, soteriological implications are found in oxymoronic patterns about divine omnipotence, especially deities’ triumph over human death. It is time to turn to the Greco-Roman background of Paul’s designation addressing God’s power “to make life”, ζωοποιῆσαι, over death.

B. Divine ζωοποιέω in Greco-Roman background

The compound verb ζωός + ποιέω calls to mind a comparable etymology of the name “Zeus”. Plato called Zeus Ζῆνα and Δία (Cratylus 396A: “οἱ μὲν γὰρ Ζῆνα, οἱ δὲ Δία καλοῦσιν”; cf. Letter of Aristeas 16: δι’ ὃν ζωοποιοῦνται τὰ πάντα καὶ γίνεται). “The two in combination express the nature of the god...through whom (δι’ ὃν) all living beings have the gift of life (ζῆν).”⁵⁵³ According to Hellenistic philosophers, the life-giving property is repeatedly attributed to the heat. For instance, in Diogenes Laertius’ report on Pythagorean philosophical doctrine, the sun, the moon, and other stars are gods “ἥλιόν τε καὶ σελήνην καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους ἀστέρας εἶναι θεούς” and the sun’s ray makes alive all things “ταύτην δὲ τὴν ἀκτῖνα καὶ εἰς τὰ βένθη δύεσθαι καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ζωοποιεῖν πάντα” (*Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, VIII. 1. 27–28; cf. Cierco, *De Natura Deorum*, II. XV. 41). Although these Greco-Roman texts show deities are

⁵⁵¹ This text may belong to the second to first century BC and it is found in 1935 at Medinet Madi in the Fayum. The translation adopted here is from Vanderlip (1972: 17). Our example comes from lines 26–34:

“Deathless Saviour, many-named (σώτειρ’ ἀθανάτη, πολώνυμε), mightiest Isis,
Saving from war cities and all their citizens:
...in the power of death (ἐμ μοίραις θανάτου),
...When men may be destroyed and their ships wrecked and sunk,
All are saved (σώζονθ οὗτοι ἅπαντες) if they pray that You be present to help.”

⁵⁵² Versnel (2011: 268).

⁵⁵³ Plato, *Cratylus* (ca. 500–300BC) 396A, B: συντιθέμενα δ’ εἰς ἓν δηλοῖ τὴν φύσιν τοῦ θεοῦ, ὃ δὴ προσήκειν φαιμέν ὀνόματι οἷω τε εἶναι ἀπεργάζεσθαι... συμβαίνει οὖν ὀρθῶς ὀνομάζεσθαι οὗτος ὁ θεὸς εἶναι, δι’ ὃν ζῆν αἰεὶ πᾶσι τοῖς ζῶσιν ὑπάρχει. The notion about the etymology of Zeus’ name as the source of life is picked up later, for example, in Diogenes Laertius’ *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* VII.1.147, “Θεὸν δ’ εἶναι ζῶν ἀθάνατον, λογικόν, τέλειον ἢ νοερὸν ἐν εὐδαιμονίᾳ, κακοῦ παντὸς ἀνεπίδεκτον, προνοητικὸν κόσμου τε καὶ τῶν ἐν κόσμῳ... Δία μὲν γὰρ φασὶ δι’ ὃν τὰ πάντα, Ζῆνα δὲ καλοῦσι παρ’ ὅσον τοῦ ζῆν αἰτιόσιν ἐστὶν ἢ διὰ τοῦ ζῆν κεχώρηκεν.

capable of “making all things alive”, they are used in contexts of divine providence or sustenance of creation.⁵⁵⁴ Although many comment that Paul’s usage of ζωοποιέω might recall similar “creation” motif compared to that of his pagan counterpart;⁵⁵⁵ nevertheless, the notion of divine providence is nowhere to be seen in Romans 4. If one pays close attention, pagan texts also do not emphasise deities’ power to reverse adverse circumstances (eg. νεκρός) as Paul does.

C. Divine ζωοποιέω in the OT

The verb ζωοποιέω is only used of God four times in the OT (2 Kgs 5:7; Neh 9:6; Ps 70:20 LXX; Job 36:6 [with the negation μή]). Meanwhile, we should not overlook two other comparable examples, Deut 32:39 and 1 Sam 2:6.⁵⁵⁶ Similar to pagan literature, reference to creation is obvious in Neh 9:6 as the verb ποιέω is used beside ζωοποιέω to express God’s creation of the heaven and the earth. A soteriological overtone can often be heard as ὁ θεὸς ὁ ποιήσας is also the one who ἐλυτρώσαμην (redeemed) or βοηθηθήσῃ (will help) Israel (Is 43:1, 44:2). As for expressions with polar values, in Amos’ judgment scene, God is the one ποιῶν πάντα as well as transforms and turns morning into death and darkens day into night (5:8).

However, it should be noted that God’s competence of creation manifests, unlike the pagan texts, the uniqueness and singularity of YHWH [Σ]ὐ εἶ αὐτὸς κύριος μόνος.⁵⁵⁷ Deut 32:39 is an obvious example, immediate before the “making alive” expression ἡγῶν ποιήσω, YHWH declares that οὐκ ἔστιν θεὸς πλὴν ἐμοῦ (there is no god excepts me). Besides, the praise ἐγὼ ἀποκτενῶ καὶ ζῆν ποιήσω in the Song of Moses draws our attention to the “oxymoronic linguistic pattern” of Paul’s designation θεοῦ τοῦ ζωοποιούντος τοὺς νεκρούς in Rom 4:17b. Deut 32:39 makes a

⁵⁵⁴ Zimmerman (2007: 438).

⁵⁵⁵ As discussed above, some comment that the divine predication (Rom 4:17) confirms the importance of the creation motif in Romans 4. Byrne’s (1996: 154–55) commented on this connection suggest that the “inner logic” of Abraham’s faith reduces it to faith in God as creator.

⁵⁵⁶ Expressions similar to ζωοποιέω can be found in these two examples from the Song of Moses and Song of Hannah. The compound ζωός + ποιέω is expressed in Deut 32:39 as ἐγὼ ἀποκτενῶ καὶ ζῆν ποιήσω. The compound verb ζωογονεῖν is used in 1 Sam 2:6: κύριος θανατοῖ καὶ ζωογονεῖ, κατάγει εἰς ᾄδου καὶ ἀνάγει (see also Neh 9:6–7).

⁵⁵⁷ Versnel concludes that Greeks are different from us as they can do with the notion of theological omnipotence yet have so many gods simultaneously. A Greek prayer fraught with expressions about omnipotence is “a prayer of a high grade of intensity, then, is a henotheistic moment in a polytheistic religion. And the near formulaic phrase: “you can do everything you want, (so help me)” is the appropriate expression of that (2011: 434, 436).”

meaningful comparison with Rom 4:17b because not only are both expressions used for God, they are employed in the context of a life or death dichotomy.

The use of ζωοποιέω with reference to death or adversative situation is usually coupled with soteriological overtones. In Ps 70:20 LXX, ζωοποιέω is used with the participle ἐπιστρέψας to indicate God's help and rescue of individual poet from the grave danger or even death (the abyss of the earth).⁵⁵⁸ The characteristic of God's reversal of fortune is apparent in 1 Sam 2:6, which is an exact counterpart of Deut 32:39 but the latter is in first person singular. Meanwhile, the statement that YHWH "brings down" (ἵκ/ κατάγω) the psalmist's enemies to Sheol and "brings up" (ἐλ/ ἀνάγω) his people out of it parallels the pair of antonyms "to put to death" (θ/θανατόω) and "to make alive" (ζ/ζωογονέω) respectively. Similar to what we found in Hesiod's *Erga* about the appeal to divine justice, the psalmist's praise in 1 Sam 2:5, 7–8 invokes the common theme of social justice for the hungry, the poor and the needy.⁵⁵⁹ The last few lines of the song justify this divine reversal motif by featuring YHWH's control over creation because αὐτὸς κρινεῖ ἄκρα γῆς (v.10). Flebbe's comment succinctly relates the reversal motif with God's sovereign, "[D]ie Aussage steht im Lied der Hannah unter der Einleitung und Überschrift der Singularität und damit der Gottheit Gottes (V.2). Sie wird zugleich im Text gestützt und in den Zusammenhang gestellt mit dem Schöpfungshandeln Gottes (V.8), und sie steht in einem Kontext, der das souveräne Auserwählen Gottes zum Thema har."⁵⁶⁰

In the episode about healing of Naaman's leprosy, ζωοποιέω is used in the Israelite king's statement (2 Kgs 5:7 LXX).⁵⁶¹ Although "death" is not used, the impotence of the Israelite king to heal Naaman and Naaman's physical situation both "appear to have reached a dead end."⁵⁶² The verb ζωοποιέω indicates YHWH is the one who is in charge of life and death, contrasting with the king's impotence. Elisha initiates his action since v. 8 and unexpectedly Naaman responds to the prophet's message. Being healed, Naaman confesses that YHWH is the unique God οὐκ ἔστιν

⁵⁵⁸ Ps 70:20 LXX ὅσας ἔδειξάς μοι θλίψεις πολλὰς καὶ κακάς, καὶ ἐπιστρέψας ἐξωποίησάς με καὶ ἐκ τῶν ἀβύσσων τῆς γῆς πάλιν ἀνήγαγές με.

⁵⁵⁹ Willis (1973: 147).

⁵⁶⁰ Flebbe (2008: 234).

⁵⁶¹ 2 Kings 5:7 "καὶ ἐγένετο ὡς ἀνέγνω βασιλεὺς Ἰσραὴλ τὸ βιβλίον, διέρρηξεν τὰ ἱμάτια αὐτοῦ καὶ εἶπεν Μὴ θεὸς ἐγὼ τοῦ θανατῶσαι καὶ ζωοποιῆσαι, ὅτι οὗτος ἀποστέλλει πρὸς με ἀποσυνάξαι ἄνδρα ἀπὸ τῆς λέπρας αὐτοῦ; ὅτι πλὴν γινώτε δὴ καὶ ἴδετε ὅτι προφασίζεται οὗτός με."

⁵⁶² Kim (2005: 54).

θεὸς ἐν πάσῃ τῇ γῇ ὅτι ἄλλ’ ἢ ἐν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ (v.15). Then he offers to present gift and even sacrifices while standing as a servant (δοῦλος, cf. vv. 15, 17, 18) before Elisha and YHWH.⁵⁶³ Naaman’s deep “conversion” is clearly illustrated. Again, a pattern emerges, as ζῳοποιέω does not only indicate YHWH’s power, be it creation or healing, it is also soteriologically loaded. What is more, divine “life-making” radically reverses hopeless circumstances. A connotation is often left unnoticed, healing of leprosy is “aber gleichbedeutend mit der Integration eines aus der menschlichen Gemeinschaft ausgegrenzten Menschen in die menschliche Gemeinschaft”.⁵⁶⁴ This reading is supported by the use of ἥρασ with the particle ἡ for healing (5:7), which is appropriately translated as ἀποσυνάγω. These verbs mean collecting or gathering. Instead of using other common verbs for recovering from sickness (e.g. ζάω in 2 Kgs 1:2; 8:8, 9, 10, 14; 20:1; ὑγιαίνω in 20:7), the significance of ἥρασ/συνάγω should not be overlooked because it suggests the admission of the former sick member back into the community.

Therefore, it is possible that God’s action of ζῳοποιέω could be interpreted with reference to receiving the former impure or excluded “outsiders” into the (Jewish) communion of salvation. The “non-Israelite” identity of Naaman (2 Kgs 5:1, 17) is significant especially when we consider Deut 32:39. While the adjective living ζῶντος and the verbs ποιέω and ζάω are employed to draw a line between Israel’s God and other “gods” θεοί in Deut 32:39,⁵⁶⁵ God saves Gentile general Naaman in 2 Kings 5:7. Apparently, this single characterisation does not mean that God changes radically, as the “living God” grants life to the Israelites and kills Israel’s Gentile enemies consistently in Jos 3, 1 Sam 17, 2 Kgs 18–19.⁵⁶⁶ Yet, the picture is complex. The “life-giving” God can take lives of non-Israelites, and simultaneously grant healing to a Gentile general. Though it is not a prevailing view in the LXX, Paul might have picked it up — the ethnic boundary is not absolutely impermeable with regard to God’s designation of “life-giving”.

⁵⁶³ One should not overlook Naaman confesses again the uniqueness of YHWH in v.17b ἄλλ’ ἢ τῷ κυρίῳ μόνῳ (Kim, 2005: 55).

⁵⁶⁴ Although Moxnes (1980: 240) does not point this out, Flebbe (2008: 235) correctly and convincingly fills the gap.

⁵⁶⁵ Eg. Deut 4:7, 28, 34; 5:7, 26; 6:14; 7:4; 8:19; 11:16, 28; 13:2(3), 6(7), 13(14); 17:3; 28:14, 36, 64; 29:26(25); 31:18, 20; 32:17. The Song of Moses even states that YHWH plans to use sword (32:41) and arrows (32:42) to slay Gentile adversaries for vengeance (32:42–43).

⁵⁶⁶ Hicks–Keeton (2018: 89). In Joshua 3, seven Canaanite nations are threatened with destruction. In 1 Samuel/Reigns 17, Goliath the Philistine loses his head. In 2 Kings/4 Reigns 18–19, an Assyrian army becomes a host of corpses overnight.

D. Divine ζωοποιέω in early Jewish texts

Different perspective on Gentiles is reflected in the usage of ζωοποιέω related divine epithets in Hellenistic Jewish literature. In *Joseph and Aseneth* (*JosAs*),⁵⁶⁷ very close parallels to Paul's θεοῦ τοῦ ζωοποιούντος τοὺς νεκρούς epithet can be found. When Joseph first met Aseneth, the epithet ὁ θεὸς ὁ ζωοποιήσας τὰ πάντα (8:3) is used by Joseph to characterise God in his response to Aseneth's initial greeting (8:2).⁵⁶⁸ The epithet is used to justify his refusal to Aseneth of her attempt to kiss him because the God-fearing man Joseph cannot kiss the idol-worshiping woman, the "stranger" γυναῖκα ἀλλοτρίαν (8:5–7).⁵⁶⁹ Once again, the "life-giving" God draws a boundary between Jews and Gentiles.⁵⁷⁰ An unexpected turn happens as the tale goes on, Aseneth's "transformation" begins when Joseph addresses God as "an universal life giver" ὁ ζωοποιήσας τὰ πάντα καὶ καλέσας ἀπὸ τοῦ σκότους εἰς τὸ φῶς [καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς πλάνης εἰς τὴν ἀλήθειαν] καὶ ἀπὸ θανάτου εἰς τὴν ζωὴν (8:9a). Joseph's characterisation bears significance to Rom 4:17b. In the subsequent line of Joseph's prayer, he appeals to God ζωοποιήσον (to make alive), ἀνακαίνισον (recreate), ἀναζωοποιήσον (make alive again) Aseneth and ζησάτω (let her live) in God's eternal life forever (8:9b).⁵⁷¹ After Joseph's blessings and his departure, Aseneth repents for the next seven days (10:17; 11:1–17:10).⁵⁷² Hubbard concludes that the author "parallel[s] God's first creative act with his new creative act (conversion) making the former a metaphor for the latter."⁵⁷³ As Aseneth waited for a week until God accepts her, "this goes to underscore...the huge distance between her old and new existence."⁵⁷⁴ In Aseneth's prayer, God is again addressed as ζωοποιήσας who brought

⁵⁶⁷ Despite the date, genre and provenance of *Joseph and Aseneth* is disputed, a general consensus claims that it is composed in Egypt, its original language is Greek, and it is a Jewish text written somewhere between 100 BC and 115 CE which belongs to the wider genre of "rewritten bible" literature. See Docherty (2004:31).

⁵⁶⁸ Although a later manuscript has ζωογονέω, it does not make a stark difference as it is generally synonymous with ζωοποιέω. For textual variations, see Burchard (1985: 178–79). The text of *JosAs* adopted in this study is taken from Burchard's version unless specified.

⁵⁶⁹ Note the appearance of the arthrous τὸν θεὸν τὸν ζῶντα and the anarthrous θεὸν ζῶντα.

⁵⁷⁰ Hicks–Keeton (2018: 138–40).

⁵⁷¹ *JosAs* 8:10b–11: σὺ κύριε εὐλόγησον τὴν παρθένον ταύτην καὶ ἀνακαίνισον αὐτὴν τῷ πνεύματί σου καὶ ἀνάπλason αὐτὴν τῇ χειρί σου τῇ <κρυφαίᾳ> καὶ ἀναζωοποιήσον αὐτὴν τῇ ζωῇ σου καὶ φαγέτω ἄρτον ζωῆς σου καὶ πιέτω ποτήριον εὐλογίας σου καὶ συγκαταρίθμησον αὐτὴν τῷ λαῷ σου ὃν ἐξελέξω πρὶν γενέσθαι τὰ πάντα καὶ εἰσελθέτω εἰς τὴν κατάπαυσίν σου ἣν ἡτοίμασας τοῖς ἐκλεκτοῖς σου καὶ ζησάτω ἐν τῇ αἰωνίῳ ζωῇ σου εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα χρόνον. See Hicks–Keeton (2018:125–27) for textual variations.

⁵⁷² Aseneth's seven-day repentance mirrors God's creation process and thus reaffirms the notion that "conversion" is recasted as (re)creation in the narrative (Hicks–Keeton 2018: 127–28).

⁵⁷³ Hubbard (2002: 64–65).

⁵⁷⁴ Thiessen (2014: 234–35).

to life ἐξωογονήθησαν all his creatures (12:1–2).⁵⁷⁵ In Romans, God’s promise plays an important part in Isaac’s birth, whereas in *JosAs*, the means of “creation” is also God’s words. Aseneth’s repentance and confession are taken and accepted as the angelic visitor confirms she was ἀνακαινισθήση (being renewed) or ἀναζωοποιηθήση (made alive again), which is known as a “movement from death to life” (15:5).⁵⁷⁶ After her transformation, Aseneth’s family is astonished at her beauty and they “gave glory to God who gives life to the dead” τῷ θεῷ τῷ ζωοποιοῦντι τοὺς νεκρούς (20:7).⁵⁷⁷ The verb ζωοποιέω last appears when Joseph’s disloyal brothers, Dan and Gad aligned with Pharaoh’s son, and tried to kill Aseneth. Aseneth’s plea addresses God as ὁ θεός μου ὁ ζωοποιήσας με ἐκ τοῦ θανάτου and “who said to me, ‘Your soul will live forever’” (27:10).⁵⁷⁸ And her wish is granted. Chesnutt rightly notes the concentration of creation language and Aseneth’s conversion “is conceived as transition from death, destruction, corruption ...to life”.⁵⁷⁹

Nevertheless, one needs to be cautious when equating the ζωοποιέω with “creation.” Despite the affinity between *JosAs* and Genesis, the verb ζάω and its cognates seldom appear in the Genesis creation narrative (Gen 1–2 LXX), ζωοποιέω does not appear at all. Yet, the dichotomy between ζάω and θνήσκω in the Joseph cycle (Gen 37–50) is significant.⁵⁸⁰ Jacob tells his son to go to Egypt for food so that “we may live and not die” (42:2, 43:8; cf. 47:19). Thus, Keeton insightfully argues that *JosAs* pushes further the usage of ζάω in Gen 1–2, 37–50 to highlight the motif of God’s provision of life to Israelites and non-Israelites alike—in this case, Aseneth the Egyptian.⁵⁸¹ In *JosAs*’ rewriting of the Genesis Joseph narrative, Joseph, whom God has brought to Egypt “for life” (45:5 LXX), becomes the preserver of life for both Israelites and Egyptians.⁵⁸²

⁵⁷⁵ *JosAs* 12:1–2: ...ὁ κτίσας τὰ πάντα καὶ ζωοποιήσας ὁ δοὺς πνοὴν ζωῆς πάσῃ τῇ κτίσει σου...ὅτι σὺ κύριε ἐλάλησας καὶ ἐξωογονήθησαν ὅτι ὁ λόγος σου κύριε ζωὴ ἐστὶ πάντων τῶν κτισμάτων σου.

⁵⁷⁶ Hicks–Keeton (2018: 51–52).

⁵⁷⁷ The sentence found in Bu. is disputed because of various textual variants.

⁵⁷⁸ *JosAs* 27:10 “...Κύριος ὁ θεός μου ὁ ζωοποιήσας με ἐκ τοῦ θανάτου, ὁ εἰπὼν μοι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα ζήσεται ἡ ψυχὴ σου, ῥῦσαί με ἐκ τῶν ἀνδρῶν τούτων...”

⁵⁷⁹ See Chesnutt’s (1995:145) evidence of creation language related to Aseneth’s conversion in 12:1–2; 15:5, 20:7 (*pace* Hubbard, 2002: 57–58).

⁵⁸⁰ The word ζάω and its cognates occur only seven times in Gen 1:20, 24, 30; 2:7 [2x], 9, 19 LXX. The two words ζάω and θνήσκω and their cognates are used 40 times.

⁵⁸¹ Hicks–Keeton (2018: 55–56).

⁵⁸² Hicks–Keeton (2018: 56 n. 30) quotes Brueggemann “Joseph is life–bringer, using his power to bring life to Pharaoh, Egypt, and all the hungry world, as well as to his brothers, the chosen people (1985:108).”

The boundary-drawing⁵⁸³ meaning is important because it develops the Gentile motif of ζωοποιέω in Naaman's narrative in 2 Kings.⁵⁸⁴ The redefinition of Aseneth as God's people is illustrated in terms of "transformed kinship ties." She is called by the familial name "daughter of Pentephres" θυγάτηρ τοῦ Πεντεφρῆ (*JosAs* 1:3–4 cf. 1:7, 4:3) at the beginning, and Joseph also identifies her as "a stranger woman" (7:5). However, during her seven-day repentance, she is called "an orphan" ὀρφανή (12:13) and God is meanwhile "the father of orphans" (11:12–13). And God's response and acceptance brings along a new family bond as she becomes the bride of Joseph (15:6) and θυγάτηρ of Joseph's God (15:7). Thus, the application of ζωοποιέω in divine epithet implies a soteriological redefinition of boundary for God's people rather than denoting the power of the universal creator God.

4.2.7 Synthesis

To sum up, compared with Greco Roman usage, Paul's thematic meaning of ζωοποιέω does not pay heed to God's general universal creation power. Instead, it bears soteriological significance similar to the OT. Although the "living God" or "life-making God" of Israel in the OT frequently means the one who brings death to Gentiles,⁵⁸⁵ a nuance is found in 2 Kings where God's healing of Gentile Naaman could be read as inclusion of former impure outsiders into God's community of salvation. The theme of Gentile incorporation is developed most fully in *JosAs*, where "the principal metaphor through which God's ability to give life is conceived: not covenant, but creation."⁵⁸⁶ Bearing striking linguistic and semantic resemblance to the thematic meaning in *JosAs*, Paul similarly applies the ζωοποιέω to justify his Gentile-inclusive mission in Romans 4.

⁵⁸³ *JosAs*' desired division is indeed religious rather than ethnic: "While the religion of *Joseph and Aseneth* preserves sharp boundaries over against polytheism, these boundaries are not identical with the boundaries of ethnic descent (Collins, 1983:234)." The category of ethnicity is not discarded but it is no longer an exclusive criterion for granting access to Israel's God.

⁵⁸⁴ According to Keeton (2018:142), in Second Temple Literature, there are other Gentiles who avoid destruction in the face of Israel's living God and recognise his power, such as does Ptolemy Philopator in 3 Maccabees, Darius in Daniel (OG), and Cyrus in Daniel (TH).

⁵⁸⁵ Hicks–Keeton (2018:130 n. 51) criticises Goodwin (2001: 15) for overlooking this salient feature of the "living God" epithet in Deuteronomistic literature.

⁵⁸⁶ Hicks–Keeton (2018: 43). Moxnes (1980: 242) also refers to Philo's allegorical exegesis of the birth of Issac. The "Issac-blessing" is interpreted as God raising up those fallen down and bringing back to life the dead πεπτωκότα ἐγείρειν καὶ τεθνηκότα ζωοποιεῖν, and God's mercy for the sake of virtuous man, in this case, Abraham.

4.3 Τοῦ καλοῦντος τὰ μὴ ὄντα ὡς ὄντα (4:17b)

The designation, τοῦ καλοῦντος τὰ μὴ ὄντα ὡς ὄντα will not be analysed in depth. It is partly because the oxymoronic pattern has been discussed, and partly because there is lesser dispute relating it to Gentile inclusion. In addition, Paul's use of divine καλέω will be studied in Rom 9:12. Nevertheless, scholars often link this epithet to creation, in particular, *creatio ex nihilo*. The investigation below will show, with reference to the recurrent linguistic pattern of καλεῖν + τὰ ὄντα, that *creatio ex nihilo* cannot appropriately reflect Paul's meaning.

4.3.1 Creatio ex nihilo?

Byrne's position represents a general consensus that the second predication in 4:17b highlights God's role as a creator.⁵⁸⁷ Looking into the historical background, Dunn suggests that Paul is echoing a "distinctively Jewish belief that God created *ex nihilo*" as demonstrated with 2 Macc 7:28 and Philo's *Spec* 4:187.⁵⁸⁸ However, this scholarly pedigree have not gone unchallenged. Interpreting "call" in the sense of God "summoning", Moo doubts, "somewhat hesitantly and reluctantly, that the clause cannot refer to God's creative power as such."⁵⁸⁹ Thus, there is a need to clarify whether Paul means *creatio ex nihilo* in 4:17b.

The doctrine *creatio ex nihilo* states that "God created the world out of nothing – from no pre-exist matter, no space or time."⁵⁹⁰ It is anachronistic to claim that Paul embraces the doctrine in the strict sense with his designation because it was not even a cognitive option for Jewish and Christian writers until the second century.⁵⁹¹ Although Gerhard May rightly argues that ancient Jewish text remained remarkably uninterested in the doctrine,⁵⁹² discussion about the idea of God's creation in relation

⁵⁸⁷ Byrne (1996: 154–55). See also Käsemann (1980:122– 23) claims that Paul's wording is "by no means unclear": it is "inconceivable" that this text refers to anything other than creation. According to Wright, Paul characterises the God that Abraham believed as "the lifegiver, the creator *ex nihilo*" (Wright, 2002:498; 2013b:642). These commentators also think *creatio ex nihilo* is obvious: Byrne (1996: 159–60); Stuhlmacher (1994: 74); Ziesler (1989: 132); Dunn (1988a: 236–37); Hofius (1971: 93).

⁵⁸⁸ Dunn (1998: 40 n. 59). Byrne (1996: 154, 159–60) also lists Wis 11:25; *JosAs* 8:9; Philo, *Op.* 81; *Mig.* 183; *Her.* 36 as reference.

⁵⁸⁹ Moo (1996: 280–82). Worthington (2016:58) similarly notes that the context of Romans 4 does not suggests a creational sense to "call" as demonstrated in Wis 11:25— the creation is "called" by God.

⁵⁹⁰ Cogliati (2010:1).

⁵⁹¹ May (1994: 6–26); Young (1991: 147–48).

⁵⁹² May (1994: 24) quoted in Bockmuehl (2012: 257).

to “nothingness” in Paul’s ancient context is not unusual. For ancient Greek, it is not out of “non-existent” matter οὐ ἐκ τοῦ μὴ ὄντος that the creator “god” brought the world into being.⁵⁹³ For Aristotle, absolute ‘non-being’ is metaphysically absurd, — τὸ γὰρ μηδὲν ἐκ μὴ ὄντος γίνεσθαι “nothing comes from non-being”.⁵⁹⁴ Greeks explain the state before creation κόσμος as “lack of order” (ἄκοσμία), where formless and inconstant matter are available. It is in such a world where early Christianity developed “an understanding of the world which was self-consciously in confrontation with ancient culture”.⁵⁹⁵

2 Macc 7:28 and Philo’s *Spec* 4:187 are two of the most frequently cited Septuagintal passages asserting *creatio ex nihilo*. In 2 Maccabees 7:28, the Jewish mother encourages his last son to face death nobly by appealing to the creator’s power οὐκ ἐξ ὄντων ἐποίησεν αὐτὰ ὁ θεός, καὶ τὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων γένος οὕτω γίνεται. Soskice thinks that the passage “seems to rule out any notion of God...as a demiurge moulding pre-existing matter”,⁵⁹⁶ but she misses the parallel phrase describing God’s creation “out of nothing” is in the manner of (οὕτως) the genesis of human. In 2 Macc 7:23, the mother addresses God as “the one who formed the genesis of man” ὁ πλάσας ἀνθρώπου γένεσιν and “gives the spirit and the life” τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ τὴν ζωὴν...ἀποδίδωσιν. If there is an echo to Gen 2:7, where God formed man with dust from the earth ἔπλασεν τὸν ἄνθρωπον χοῦν ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς and infused him with the breath of life, then it is possible to read οὐκ ἐξ ὄντων (2 Macc 7:28) as a conceptual parallel to “with dust” χοῦν. Wolfson is correct to ask whether the “things non-existent” are “absolutely or relatively non-existent”.⁵⁹⁷ The case clearly refers to God making human beings out of “what is not a human being”, thus, οὐκ ἐξ ὄντων should not be short-circuited into evidence about *creatio ex nihilo* because it merely means “not out of existing things”.⁵⁹⁸

⁵⁹³ Plutarch, *Moralia. On the Generation of the Soul in the Timaeus* (ca. 1–100AD) 1014B: “...οὐ γὰρ ἐκ τοῦ μὴ ὄντος ἡ γένεσις ἀλλ’ ἐκ τοῦ μὴ καλῶς μηδὲ ἱκανῶς ἔχοντος (for the source of generation is not what is non-existent),” quoted in Young (1991: 139).

⁵⁹⁴ Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 11. 6 (1062b): “...τὸ γὰρ μηδὲν ἐκ μὴ ὄντος γίνεσθαι, πᾶν δ’ ἐξ ὄντος, σχεδὸν ἀπάντων ἐστὶ κοινὸν δόγμα τῶν περὶ φύσεως...” (cf. Philo *Aet* 5, ...ὥσπερ γὰρ ἐκ τοῦ μὴ ὄντος οὐδὲν γίνεται...); See also Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura* 1.149–50: nothing can be created from nothing (*nullam rem e nihilo gigni divinitus umquam*).

⁵⁹⁵ Young (1991: 139).

⁵⁹⁶ Soskice (2010: 31).

⁵⁹⁷ Wolfson (1962: 303).

⁵⁹⁸ Bockmuehl (2012: 257–58).

Although Philo's expression τὰ γὰρ μὴ ὄντα ἐκάλεσεν εἰς τὸ εἶναι "for the things do not exist he called into being" seems closer to Paul's, the phrase τὰ μὴ ὄντα does not necessarily imply "absolute non-existent".⁵⁹⁹ In *Spec* 4:187, the indicative ἐκάλεσεν, coupled with the participle "working" ἐργασάμενος elucidates Philo's cosmogonies with seven sets of "X out of non-X", God's call brought the things "not existing" (e.g. chaos, disharmony, inequality) into "existing" (e.g. order, harmony, equality).⁶⁰⁰ The non-existent matter is not absolute *nihilo* but in Philo's own word, "worse stuff" χείρονος οὐσίας.⁶⁰¹ Philo's usage is helpful because it illustrates how God's creation power is depicted not with regard to ontological cosmogonies, but in terms of *transforming* from one state to the other, precisely, from "worse" into "desirable". Interestingly, Aristotle uses a similar expression τοῦ ὄντος καὶ μὴ ὄντος to describe one's transition from youth to adulthood, for that is an intermediate between "being" and "non-being", thus "what is" and "what is not".⁶⁰² In Romans, Paul "applies this principle to human conception in the womb, which is clearly a case of God making human beings out of what is not a human being."⁶⁰³ Another example from *JosAs* 8:9 supports the close link between creation and transformation. God is addressed as the one who called (all things) from the darkness to the light (καλέσας ἀπὸ τοῦ σκούτους εἰς τὸ φῶς).⁶⁰⁴ Aseneth's transformation is understood in light of the Genesis creation narratives (Gen 1:3–4). Thus, the context of opposite values resembles our previous investigation about the first designation and illustrates God's power to "turn the table" especially for those in undesirable situation.

⁵⁹⁹ In support of this interpretation, see Runia (2001:253).

⁶⁰⁰ *Spec* 4:187, "...μηνύει δὲ ἡ τοῦ κόσμου γένεσις τε καὶ διοίκησις: τὰ γὰρ μὴ ὄντα ἐκάλεσεν εἰς τὸ εἶναι τάξιν ἐξ ἀταξίας καὶ ἐξ ἀποίων ποιότητος καὶ ἐξ ἀνομοίων ὁμοιότητος καὶ ἐξ ἑτεροιοτήτων ταυτότητος καὶ ἐξ ἀκοινωνήτων καὶ ἀναρμόστων κοινωνίας καὶ ἀρμονίας καὶ ἐκ μὲν ἀνισότητος ἰσότητα ἐκ δὲ σκούτους φῶς ἐργασάμενος..." See Worthington (2016: 55).

⁶⁰¹ Collins and Harlow (2012:270). Although Philo's belief about matter's origin is disputed among Philonic scholars, "Most scholars today recognize that, according to Philo, God's creation of the world was not *ex nihilo*. Living in an age when this notion did not yet exist, Philo rather assumed that God's creation consists in actively shaping the preexistent, passive material (*Opif.* 8–12)." Cf. Winston (1981: 7–21).

⁶⁰² Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 2. 2. 994a: "...ἀλλ' ἢ ὥς ἐκ παιδὸς ἀνὴρ μεταβάλλοντος, ἢ ὥς ἐξ ὕδατος ἀήρ..."

⁶⁰³ Bockmuehl (2012: 257).

⁶⁰⁴ Burchard's construction has the phrase "from the error to the truth" (καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς πλάνης εἰς τὴν ἀλήθειαν) following "from the darkness to the light" (καὶ καλέσας ἀπὸ τοῦ σκούτους εἰς τὸ φῶς), however, the former phrase is not in Philonenko's version.

Compared with the language of Philo and *JosAs*, we would expect Paul to say “calling things into εἰς being” (cf. Bar 3:34, Wis 11:25). However, Moo rightly points out that the expression ὥς ὄντα is confusing if it points to creation. Although those who think that ὥς may be used as expressing consequence — eg. “so as to” or “so that”: “calling the things not existing *so as* to exist.”⁶⁰⁵ However, Paul does not use ὥς with a subjunctive, infinitive, or optative, instead with a participle, the consequential meaning is unlikely. The ὥς–participle construction should be read in a sense treating the object comparatively, “as if” the object is something other than it is.⁶⁰⁶ What is God “speaking of” or “summoning”? Given the quotation from Gen 17:5 in Rom 4:17a, τὰ μὴ ὄντα must refer to “the nations” rather than “primordial nothingness”. Contrary to God’s words, the nations were not yet Abraham’s “sons” given the couple’s bareness. Yet, it is precisely at this moment when the nations “did not exist”, God “called” or “established” (cf. τέθεικά) the Gentiles “as if” they were already part of the community.⁶⁰⁷ Impact of God’s καλῶν extends to the salvation of the nations, yet, there is no direct calling of Gentiles in the LXX. Indeed, according to Isa 40:17, the ἔθνη are nothing ὥς οὐδέν and God “reckoned” ἐλογίσθησαν them εἰς οὐθὲν. An echo is heard with what we have established in Rom 4:5 that God justifies and reckons Gentiles as righteous. In Paul’s earlier use of God’s καλῶν, God called and chose τὰ μὴ ὄντα, ἵνα τὰ ὄντα καταργήσῃ (1 Cor 1:28). Originally, Gentiles are non-entities or nothing in socio-religious terms,⁶⁰⁸ yet, God’s calling to them (τὴν κλήσιν ὑμῶν) results in a radical status subversion and the former Gentiles became ἀδελφοί (1:26).

4.3.2 Synthesis

All in all, our investigation indicates the implication of Gentile salvation in Paul’s second divine designation καλοῦντος τὰ μὴ ὄντα ὥς ὄντα. Instead of referring to *creatio ex nihilo*, thematic meaning of God’s call signifies the construction of God’s people. Coupled with the first epithet θεοῦ τοῦ ζῶντος τοῦ νεκρούς, it is clear that Paul language characterising God (Rom 4:17b) justifies his argument concerning the

⁶⁰⁵ Cranfield (1975: 244); Chester (2003: 78).

⁶⁰⁶ Worthington (2016: 57) suggest an example from Aeschylus’ *Agamemnon* 672 “they speak of us as if [we are] ruined” (λέγουσιν ἡμᾶς ὥς ὀλωλότας) which resembles Paul’s syntax.

⁶⁰⁷ Worthington (2016: 59); Moo (1996: 281–82).

⁶⁰⁸ Thiselton (2001: 185).

inclusive entrance of Gentiles into Abrahamic family, God's divine community of salvation in Romans 4.

4.4. τὸν ἐγείραντα Ἰησοῦν τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν ἐκ νεκρῶν (4:24)

The last designation, τὸν ἐγείραντα Ἰησοῦν τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν ἐκ νεκρῶν in Rom 4:24 is situated in the short but pregnant passage (4:23–25). Although designating God in terms of raising Jesus from dead (e.g. 1 Cor 6:14; 15:15; 2 Cor 4:14) is common, not every commentator finds it to be as expected here in Rom 4. Contrary to Wright’s reading which diminishes the designation as ancillary to the covenant theme, we argue that the predicate is part of parcel to Paul’s argument. A contextual analysis will first be conducted to show that in Rom 4, the God who justifies, gives life, and raised Jesus from the dead is presented consistently as a reviver acting with both judgment and justification. Then, the last designation will be studied in relation to Paul’s line of argument in Rom 5–8 to illustrate not only does God save and justify, he also defines, creates and brings about a “death to life” transformation for his people.

4.4.1 The unexpected Rom 4:24–25?

Given the death of Jesus has only been mentioned so far in 3:22–26,⁶⁰⁹ the notions of sin or trespasses παραπτώματα are absent elsewhere in the chapter until 4:25,⁶¹⁰ Wright finds it “seems, frankly, a strange and roundabout way of saying” God’s resurrecting of Jesus in Rom 4:24–25 “demonstrates that Jesus’ death accomplished the forgiveness and justification of God’s people” (cf. 1 Cor 15:17–18).⁶¹¹ Reference to Jesus’ death (and resurrection) is repeatedly attributed as “latent” and “implicit”, in support of God’s faithfulness to the covenantal family.⁶¹² Although Wright recently asserts repeatedly the theme “Abraham’s worldwide family” does not play off against other familiar ideas like trespasses and forgiveness,⁶¹³ he nevertheless subsumes or attaches lesser weight to the soteriological significance of 4:23–25 than

⁶⁰⁹ Wright (2002: 503).

⁶¹⁰ Wright (2013b: 235).

⁶¹¹ Wright (2002: 504).

⁶¹² For Wright (2002: 503), 4:23–25 “draws out what is latent in the present section”, namely, the theological foundation of the non-ethnic covenant family although “Paul has not prepared us in Romans for any such statement thus far.” Paul is “making a different point” with Jesus’ death, “God unveils his ‘righteousness’ in the gospel of Jesus, in that the death of Jesus provides the way for people to be forgiven *in order that God could thereby give to Abraham the worldwide family, including the ‘ungodly’, that he has always promised* (Wright, 2013b: 234).” Wright insists that God’s vindication of Jesus (resurrection) is related to the creation of Israel (Rom 1:4).

⁶¹³ In Wright’s own words, “[N]othing that I have said here means that (as some have suggested) I have allowed ecclesiology (the single worldwide family) to elbow soteriology (how people are rescued from sin and its consequences) out of the picture. Anything but. (2013b: 235).”

the covenantal ecclesiological theme. Wright appeals to his analysis ranging from the redaction of Genesis to rabbinic commentaries so as to explain God’s way of dealing with Adam’s sin is inherited in the covenant.⁶¹⁴ Thus, Paul’s reference to “Jesus’ being put to death for our trespasses and raised for our righteousness” is only an expression of the *assumed* means necessary to the greater end. However, by reading contextually, it will be demonstrated Paul’s divine designation “the one who raised Jesus from the dead” patently, explicitly, and directly manifest God’s means to rescue and restore sinners.

4.4.2 Connecting τὸν ἐγείραντα Ἰησοῦν τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν ἐκ νεκρῶν with its context

A significant change of persons is noted in the concluding section. Only three first person plural pronouns in genitive cases ἡμῶν are found in vv.1, 12, 16, but four ἡμεῖς are used in vv.24–25.⁶¹⁵ While the four uses of ἡμῶν are all related to Abraham, ἡμεῖς are used in the conclusion to associate all the implied audience with the saving event of Christ’s death and resurrection. Yet, it does not “change the course”. Not only does v.23 contain a “shorthand allusion” to Gen 15:6 just as Paul does previously, the three verses (vv. 22–24) are threaded with the key word λογίζομαι. While the inferential διό in v.22 concludes the preceding section with God reckoning righteousness to Abraham, the sentence construction “οὐκ μόνον...ἀλλὰ...” (vv. 23–24, cf. vv.12, 16) aligns the implied audience with Abraham because both are the beneficiaries of divine λογίζεσθαι. The first οἷς-relative pronoun clause characterises believers as being reckoned righteous, the second τοῖς-clause illustrates the object of their faith. And here lies our last divine prediction. Similar constructions, substantival use of arthrous participle τοῖς πιστεύουσιν, are used to refer to Paul and his audience in v.24 as well as Abraham in vv.5, 17. In other words, both of them are not only defined in terms of their faith, but faith towards the same God.

⁶¹⁴ Wright (2013b: 233).

⁶¹⁵ Dahl (1951: 40) explains the change of persons serves as a transition from chapters 1–4 to 5–8. Rom 1–4 are mostly in third person while the dialogue style in Rom 5–8 is held mostly in first and second persons. See also Wright (2002: 501); Byrne (1996: 157).

In Rom 4, all three divine predications are repeatedly found in clauses governing by faith, identifying God as object of faith. God is the major actor in vv. 24 and 25.⁶¹⁶ The emphasis on God is unusual because Jesus Christ instead of God is always the object of believers' faith (eg. 3:22, 9: 33, 10:10–11, 14; Gal 2:16; 3:22; Eph 1:13, Phil 1:29; 1 Tim 1:16; 3:16) in Paul's writings.⁶¹⁷ One might argue that the nature of Abraham's and the believers' faith does not seem alike. Abraham had faith in what God will do for oneself whereas believers have faith in what God has done for another, namely Jesus.⁶¹⁸ However, the effect of believers' faith is also self-involving (δι' ἡμᾶς), identical to Abraham's. Believers' fate is entangled in the Christ event where "God who does the impossible and raises the dead has created *their* 'newness of life' in and by the resurrection of Jesus (6:1–6)."⁶¹⁹ Besides, the three divine predications are interrelated in literary terms. Syntactically, τοῦ ζῳοποιούντος τοὺς νεκροὺς (4:17) parallels with τὸν ἐγείραντα Ἰησοῦν τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν ἐκ νεκρῶν (v.24). The word νεκρός is used to describe the circumstances of the two sons, Isaac and Jesus (vv.17, 19, 24). Theologically, the salvific role of God is stressed with regard to his role as the "resurrector". "Resurrection is God's means of fulfilling his purpose to bless Abraham with a great family comprised of all nations (v.17, 23–24)."⁶²⁰ By articulating Abraham's situation as dead, God's resurrecting power is substantiated especially when God's promise is fulfilled (1:2–4; 4:16, 20, 21). When Paul casts Abraham's fatherhood in resurrection terms, being a descendant of Abraham is similarly defined as participating in the progeny raised up through God's resurrecting power. "The transfer from death to life which was implied in 4:17 is interpreted in the light of Jesus who died and was raised by God."⁶²¹ As a result, the fulfilment of the promise—πατέρα πολλῶν ἐθνῶν (v.18), is not limited to the birth of Isaac. Jesus' death and resurrection are also the means of fulfilment because he was raised for the believers'

⁶¹⁶ Moo, 1996: 288. The two parallel clauses defining Jesus as the one who is "handed over" and "raised" in v.25 are understood as divine passives.

⁶¹⁷ Kruse (2012: 221 n. 149). This description is repeatedly used by Paul implicitly without mentioning "God" in Rom 4:25; 6:9; 7:4; 8:34; 1 Cor 15:4, 12, 13, 14, 20; 2 Cor 5:15; 2 Tim 2:8 and explicitly with "God" in Rom 4:24, 6:4; 8:11; 10:9; 1 Cor 6:14, 15:15; 2 Cor 4:14; Gal 1:1; Eph 1:20; Col 2:12; 1 Thess 1:10.

⁶¹⁸ Barclay (2015: 490); Jewett (2007: 341); Moo (1996: 288) agrees and says that the locus of faith has shifted but the ultimate object of faith remains the same.

⁶¹⁹ Barclay (2015: 490 emphasis original).

⁶²⁰ Kirk (2008: 72).

⁶²¹ Moxnes (1980: 274).

justification ἡγέρθη διὰ τὴν δικαίωσιν ἡμῶν (v.25)— for the believers to be reckoned righteous just as Abraham and his heirs (v.13). As Kirk succinctly concludes, “[W]ho are the children of Abraham? Those whose faith rests on the God who raises Abraham from the dead through Isaac and Jesus from the dead through the Spirit. In both instances, the promise of God finds its fulfilment in God raising the dead.”⁶²² Thus, Paul’s characterisation of God as the “resurrector” (v. 24) is not an appendage with hidden implication of non-ethnic covenantal Abrahamic family, instead, the interrelated divine predicates (vv. 17, 24) are the climax of God’s salvation plan for Jew and Gentile alike—the creation of God’s resurrected people.

4.4.3 Τὸν ἐγείραντα Ἰησοῦν τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν ἐκ νεκρῶν and the rest of Romans

Despite the correspondence between Abraham’s and believers’ “resurrecting” experience, the Jesus event is not fully elaborated in Rom 4 beside v. 25. An explanation is added to the predication τὸν ἐγείραντα Ἰησοῦν τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν ἐκ νεκρῶν (v.24), qualifying Jesus as the one who God handed over “for” our παραπτώματα and ἡγέρθη “for” our justification (δικαίωσιν).⁶²³ By exploring the relation between 4:25 and Rom 5–8, a better understanding of how God’s action ἐγείρειν effectuates a “death-to-life” transformation will be gained.

A. Romans 4:24 and Romans 5

What God did to the earthly figure Jesus is the basis of being reckoned “righteous” (4:24).⁶²⁴ The link between resurrection and justification is more explicit in the next verse. Morna Hooker convincingly draws our awareness to an unusual but overlooked noun δικαίωσις in v. 25.⁶²⁵ Given the eight occurrences of δικαιοσύνη in Rom 4, the particular choice of δικαίωσις is extraordinary. The noun δικαίωσις has a closer meaning to the verb δικαιοῶ and refers to the *action* of putting things to right.⁶²⁶

⁶²² Kirk (2008: 82).

⁶²³ For a summary of scholars’ perspectives on the two different senses of διὰ in 4:25, see Kruse (2012: 221–23).

⁶²⁴ E.g., Byrne (1996: 155); Dunn (1988a: 239); Fitzmyer (1993: 388).

⁶²⁵ Hooker (2002: 324).

⁶²⁶ Hooker (2002: 331). Bird (2003:43) discusses the use of δικαίωσις instead of δικαιοσύνη in detail and he disagreed with Dunn who thought the repetition of δικαίωσις in 5:18 was “only for the purpose

Instead of dismissing it as “pre-Pauline” credal statement, the noun δικαίωσις also points us to 5:18,⁶²⁷ where παραπτώμα is used together with δικαίωσις. According to Hooker, the connection illustrates that 5:18 expounds the theological significance of 4:25. While Paul clearly describes Abraham’s plight as dead, νεκρός, Christians have similar problem as stated in 5:15–18. One’s παράπτωμα bring θάνατος (cf. ἀποθνήσκειν in v. 15), κρίμα and κατάκριμα (vv. 16, 17). While Adam’s sin results in the reign of death, God’s “grace” χάρισμα brings “acquittal” δικαίωμα (v. 16). The result of God’s gracious righteous act τῆς χάριτος καὶ τῆς δωρεᾶς τῆς δικαιοσύνης is that those who are its beneficiaries reign in life ἐν ζωῇ βασιλεύουσιν (v. 17). Therefore, the connection between our acquittal and life εἰς δικαίωσιν ζωῆς is clear (v. 18). “The change from a pattern of trespass leading to condemnation and so as to death, to a pattern of acquittal leading to life, takes place through one man Jesus Christ, because of the grace of God at work in him.”⁶²⁸ Therefore, both passages explain each other because the former spells out the effect of Jesus’ death and resurrection (4:24–25) whereas the latter (without mentioning death and resurrection but God’s χάρις, δωρεά) explicates its cause (5:15–18). “What we have in Romans 5...is precisely what was missing in 4:25, namely an attempt to explain the *link* between trespasses and death and between acquittal and life”.⁶²⁹ Our acquittal or justification is involved in Jesus’ resurrection because “Christ shares our condemnation in order that we might share his vindication by God, a vindication which was made known when he was proclaimed as Son by the resurrection of the dead.”⁶³⁰ In response to “deadness”, either the lineage problem or human sinfulness, divine action of ζωοποιεῖν (v.17) and ἐγείρειν (v.24) the dead son(s), brings a salvific transition from death to life.

B. Romans 4:24 and Romans 6–8

Life and death languages characterise Christian life as sharing the dying and rising with Christ (6:23; 7:4; 8:2). Christians are addressed as “men who have been

of avoiding needless repetition of phrases.” The fine nuance of δικαίωσις stresses the *process* of justification in addition to the *result*.

⁶²⁷ Rom 5:18 Ἄρα οὖν ὡς δι’ ἑνὸς παραπτώματος εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους εἰς κατάκριμα, οὕτως καὶ δι’ ἑνὸς δικαιοώματος εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους εἰς δικαίωσιν ζωῆς.

⁶²⁸ Hooker (2002: 328).

⁶²⁹ Hooker (2002: 329).

⁶³⁰ Hooker (2002: 339–40); Hooker (1993: 101–2).

brought from death to life” (6:13).⁶³¹ The idea of uniting with Christ in his death and resurrection (6:5) reappears in chapter 6 and believers have already “died to sin” so that they may “walk in newness of life” (6:2,4). Christians are identified again with the transition from death to life as they were former “salves to sin” but now “salves to righteousness” (6:17–19). Sin leads to death, but righteousness leads to eternal life (6:20–23). Chapter 7 mainly deals with the theme of death, but in chapter 8, a contrast is formed between “τὸ σῶμα νεκρὸν, ἁμαρτίαν” and “τὸ πνεῦμα ζωῆς, δικαιοσύνην” underscoring again the present life in the Spirit. The δικαίο-words and ζωή-words are interrelated to express the new reality brought about by the God “who raised Christ Jesus from dead” (8:11). “The resurrection of Jesus is that explosive moment when the power of the Spirit was unleashed, creating the life from death on which the believers’ faith is pinned, and out of which their identity is formed (6:1–12; 8:9–11).”⁶³²

Also, Paul’s line of argument climaxed at 4:23–25 can be traced to 3:21–31.⁶³³ In 3:21–31, God’s righteousness is revealed through the *death* of Christ conquering the problem of our sin/trespasses, Jews and Gentiles alike. And the theme *resurrection* is developed in Romans 4 in relation to Abraham. Thus, the three divine predications echo with one another in the lens of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ because the God “who raised Jesus from the dead” (v.24) is the same God “who justifies the ungodly” (v.5) in order to deal with human sin or trespasses. Meanwhile, the God “who gives life to the dead and calls things that do not exist into existence” (v. 17) creates a progeny for “Father Abraham” comprised of the nations. Ingathering of Gentiles and Jews are now “acquitted” as “righteous”, leading a new “life” (1:16–17).

Both the immediate context (Rom 4) and the wider context (Rom 5–8) illustrate how the divine designation (4.24) leads to forgiveness of trespasses and justification. The overarching theme “covenant” hardly apprehends the soteriological emphasis of all four predications (vv. 5, 17, 24) regarding God’s salvation plan to *transform* believers from death to life. While it is true that God’s plan results in the inclusion of Gentiles into the Abrahamic family, the significance of Jesus event cannot be easily dismissed. It is until Rom 4:24–25 God’s promised “resurrected” progeny is created

⁶³¹ Moxnes (1980: 275–76).

⁶³² Barclay (2015: 461).

⁶³³ Byrne (1996: 155); Birds has a similar comment on 4:25, “The text is perhaps a concise and formulaic summary of the meaning of Rom 3:21–26 where trespasses are removed, and a sentence of justification is pronounced (1996: 38).”

and partly fulfilled in Paul's ministry.⁶³⁴ Through divine ἐγείρειν, Abraham's, and also Jews' and Gentiles' "paradox of being that actively accepts the dilemma of human incapability and helplessness and believes despite or rather because of this" is underscored.⁶³⁵

4.4.4 Background

It might be surprising to note that Rom 4:24–25 is the only place in Paul's letters where resurrection of Christ is explicitly connected with justification.⁶³⁶ The question guiding the next section will be how do Paul's near contemporaries understand Paul's link between the divine act ἐγείρειν and justification? Is the attached soteriological meaning common or unique? Despite the absence of exact parallel, elective examples about divine revivification acts will be investigated.

A. Divine ἐγείρειν and Greco-Roman texts

While a complete survey about resurrection in Greco Roman literature is unnecessary,⁶³⁷ this section focuses on the recurrent linguistic pattern of deities resurrecting individual in the pagan "cultural encyclopedia". Instead of demonstrating direct dependency, this survey illuminates what idea is Paul conveying and how does he communicate it to his contemporaries. After acknowledging the complexity of ideas of resurrection, the linguistic patterns about resurrection in Greek heroes narratives and "dying and rising deities" will be studied.

"Christianity was born into a world where its central claim was known to be false. Many believed that the dead were non-existent; outside Judaism, nobody

⁶³⁴ Barclay analyses how Paul recasts Abraham's promises in his mission theology, "this mission has a distinctive rationale, which is deeper than a social commitment to inclusive equality. Paul's Gentile mission reflects his reading of Christ-event as God's fulfilment of Abrahamic promises in the mode of incongruous grace (2015: 491)."

⁶³⁵ Schliesser (2007: 318).

⁶³⁶ Kruse (2012: 223); Bird (1996: 31) also notes the peculiarity yet suggested that it may be implied in 1 Cor 15:17; 1 Tim 3:16. More discussions are given to crucifixion than resurrection. Resurrection is generally considered an addendum to the cross, which is often viewed as the basis of justification (cf. Rom 3:24; 5:9) or where justification is accomplished. Although Paul's gospel does not drive a wedge between the cross and the resurrection and their ensuing effect (cf. 1 Thess 4:14; 1 Cor 15:3–8; 2 Cor 5:15; Rom 14:7). See e.g. Käsemann (1971); Gathercole (2004: 175–83).

⁶³⁷ A variety of questions, for example, the probability of bodily resurrection, the immortality of the soul, the soul's destiny in the afterlife, metempsychosis or bodily transformation are related. For other well-informed and well-written monographs beside Porter's article, see Mettinger (2001); Wedderburn (1987); Bremmer (2002; 2008); Cook (2018); Fascher (1941: 166–229); Endsjo (2009).

believed in resurrection.”⁶³⁸ Wright’s forthright negation of bodily resurrection is not uncommon.⁶³⁹ However, Porter rightly disputes that “significant tradition of bodily resurrection has been neglected in discussion of the resurrection in the New Testament.”⁶⁴⁰ Crossan also comments “[T]hat the dead could return and interact with the living was a commonplace for the Greco-Roman world, and neither pagans nor Jews would have asserted that this could not happen.”⁶⁴¹ Zimmerman offers a more pertinent view, Greek ideas of afterlife is “vielfältig und uneinheitlich”.⁶⁴² Therefore, instead of asking whether the idea exists, it is more appropriate ask how does non-Jewish audience receive Paul’s designation τὸν ἐγείραντα Ἰησοῦν ἐκ νεκρῶν?

A1. Heroes resurrection narratives

In classical Greek texts, resurrection expressions can be found in Heroes resurrection narratives. In Homer’s *Illiad*, vengeful Achilles uses an ironic hyperbolic expression to assert that Hector will surely die. “Why, even the great-hearted Trojans I have slain will rise up again from beneath the murky darkness, just as this man has come back (ἀναστήσονται) and has escaped the pitiless day of doom...” (Homer, *Il.* 21.55–57).⁶⁴³ Later, ἀνάστηθι is used again when Achilles tells Priam “οὐδέ μιν ἀνστήσεις (you will never raise your son)” (Homer, *Il.* 24.551). In Aeschylus’ 5th century BC. tragedy *Libation Bearers*, Orestes and Electra taunt their father in order to force him to rise (ἐγείρω) from the grave: “ἄρ’ ἐξεγείρη τοῖσδ’ ὀνειδέσιν, πάτερ (are you awakened by the thought of that disgrace, father?)” (495). According to Apollodorus, Asclepius’ the healing God can also raise the dead ἀλλ’ ἀνήγειρε καὶ

⁶³⁸ Wright (2003: 35); Wedderburn (1987: 181).

⁶³⁹ E.g., “If the idea of resurrection of the dead is found in non-biblical Greek literature it is perhaps most frequently found as a statement of the impossible: the dead are not raised (Wedderburn, 1987:181).” Klauck concludes from mystery cult evidence that “There is nowhere anything exactly comparable to the Christian hope of resurrection (2000: 151).” In Aeschylus’s *Eumenides*, the city’s patron deity god Apollo says, “But when the dust sucks up the blood of a man, once he has died, there is no resurrection [or “rising up”] οὐτις ἔστ’ ἀνάστασις (647–8),” quoted in Bruce (1977: 247).

⁶⁴⁰ Porter (1999: 53).

⁶⁴¹ Crossan (1999: xv—xviii) questions the absolute impossibility of resurrection in ancient beliefs and asks, “Why, against that early-first century context, does vision, apparition or resurrection explain anything, since such events were not considered absolutely extraordinary let alone completely unique?”

⁶⁴² “Dennoch sind die griechischen Jenseitsvorstellungen vielfältig und uneinheitlich, und die Frage bleibt bestehen, wie die griechischen nicht-jüdischen Rezipienten das Evangelium vom auferstandenen Christus, bzw. die Rede von einem „Gott, der Jesus von den Toten auferweckt hat“ angesichts einer Ablehnung der leiblichen Auferstehung verstehen und annehmen konnten (Zimmerman, 2007: 482).”

⁶⁴³ “ἢ μάλα δὴ Τρῶες μεγάλῃτορες, οὐς περ ἔπεφνον, αὐτίς ἀναστήσονται ὑπὸ ζόφου ἡερόεντος, οἷον δὴ καὶ ὁδ’ ἦλθε φυγὼν ὑπο νηλεῆς ἡμαρ...”

τοὺς ἀποθανόντας. In Apollodorus' *The Library* III.10.3, Asclepius uses the blood received from Athena πρὸς σωτηρίαν (for salvation) and τοὺς τεθνηκότας ἀνήγειρεν (to raise the dead).⁶⁴⁴ Resurrection verbs ἐγείρω and ἀνεγείρω are used twice in this first or second century source following reference to death. A second century text Ps. Eratosthenes *Catasterismi*, arguably transmitting Eratosthenes' text from the third century BC, explains Asclepius is translated by Zeus into a star because he revived those already dead (τοὺς ἤδη τεθνηκότας ἤγειρεν).⁶⁴⁵ It should be noted the use of ἐγείρω is unusual compared to the more common verbs such as ἀνίστημι, ἀνάστηθι, ἀναβιώω.⁶⁴⁶ Besides, Heracles is another well known resurrected hero.⁶⁴⁷ Heracles is confident to σῶσαι (save) Alcestis, Admetus' wife, from Hades as he will fight Θάνατον (death) himself.⁶⁴⁸ Repeatedly described as νεκρόν (dead),⁶⁴⁹ Alcestis is returned from death by Heracles (Euripides, *Alcestis*, 1123, 1139, 1140–41, ca. 500–400 BC).⁶⁵⁰ According to Apollodorus, Theseus and Pirithous saw Heracles πλησίον

⁶⁴⁴ Apollodorus gives a list of heroes who are raised by Asclepius, "...for he had received from Athena the blood ...he used the blood that flowed from the right side for salvation, and by that means he raised the dead (τῷ δὲ ἐκ τῶν δεξιῶν πρὸς σωτηρίαν, καὶ διὰ τούτου τοὺς τεθνηκότας ἀνήγειρεν). I found some who are reported to have been raised by him (εὗρον δὲ τινὰς λεγομένους ἀναστῆναι ὑπ' αὐτοῦ), to wit, Capaneus and Lycurgus, as Stesichorus says in the *Eriphyle*; Hippolytus, as the author of the *Naupactica* reports; Tyndareus, as Panyasis says; Hymenaeus, as the Orphics report; and Glaucus, son of Minos, as Melesagoras relates." Although some regard the name list as an interpolation because nowhere does Apollodorus use first person, Cook (2016: 201 n. 21) finds an account from Theodoret (a II BC. historian) affirming Asclepius resurrection power, "So excellently and thoroughly was he trained, says Apollodorus, that not only did he heal sick but even dared to raise some of those who had died (τινας τῶν τετελευτηκότων ἐγείρειν)".

⁶⁴⁵ Edelstein and Edelstein (1945: T. 121).

⁶⁴⁶ A scholast to Euripides' *Alcestis*, use with reference to Zeus' killing of Asclepius: "...The reason was that Asclepius healed the dead and returned them to life (ἀνίστη γὰρ ἰώμενος τοὺς τεθνεώτας)." Apollodorus [2nd century BC] says that Asclepius was struck by lightning because he restored (ἀναστῆσαι) Hippolytus to ...in the first book of his *Histories* says he resurrected the dead in Delphi (θνήσκοντας αὐτὸν ἀναβιώσκειν). Edelstein and Edelstein (1945: T. 71).

⁶⁴⁷ Palaephatus, *De incredibilibus*, 40 quoted in Cook (2016: 153), "The tragic myth is told of Alcestis that when Admetus was once about to die, she chose to die for him and that Heracles delivered her from Death because of her piety and restored her to Admetus (καὶ ὡς ρακλῆς αὐτὴν διὰ τὴν εὐσέβειαν ἀφελόμενος τὸν Θάνατον καὶ ἀναγαγὼν ἐκ τοῦ ἰδοῦ ἀπέδωκεν δμήτῳ). It seems to me that once someone has died they cannot live again."

⁶⁴⁸ Euripides' *Alcestis*, 840–845: "δεῖ γάρ με σῶσαι τὴν θανοῦσαν ἀρτίως γυναῖκα κὰς τόνδ' αὖθις ἰδρῦσαι δόμον Ἄλκηστιν Ἀδμήτῳ θ' ὑπουργῆσαι χάριν. ἐλθὼν δ' ἄνακτα τὸν μελάμπεπλον νεκρῶν Θάνατον φυλάξω, καὶ νιν εὐρήσειν δοκῶ πίνοντα τύμβου πλησίον προσφαγμάτων..."

⁶⁴⁹ Euripides, *Ad Alcestim*, 432, 513, 635, 716, 729, and her dead body σῶμα is mentioned in 619.

⁶⁵⁰ See also Plato's discussion of Alcestis, the gods resurrect Alcestis because of her noble sacrifice "...although among all the many doers of noble deeds they are few and soon counted to whom the gods have granted the privilege of having their souls sent up again from Hades, hers they thus restored in admiration of her act ἐξ Ἀΐδου ἀνεῖναι πάλιν τὴν ψυχὴν, ἀλλὰ τὴν ἐκείνης ἀνεῖσαν ἀγασθέντες τῷ ἔργῳ..." (*Symposium* 179 C, ca. 500–400 BC). In first country biography, Philostratus the Athenian, *The Life of Apollonius of Tyana* (ca. 200–300 AD) IV, 45, Heracles and Alcestis tradition is

τῶν Ἄιδου πυλῶν (near the gate of Hades) and they reached out to him ὡς ἀναστησόμενοι διὰ τῆς ἐκείνου βίας (as if they should be raised from the dead by his might). Heracles managed to ὁ δὲ Θησέα μὲν λαβόμενος τῆς χειρὸς ἥγειρε (take Theseus' hands and raised him).⁶⁵¹

In short, the collocation of ἐγείρω and νεκρός expresses “resurrection” in the sense of temporarily return to physical lives. As for the heroes who are “resurrected” themselves, they are deified or resurrected after death for their merits, e.g., Asclepius for medical art, Heracles for his bravery, and enjoy immortality.⁶⁵² Thus, resurrection is synonymous with deification.⁶⁵³

A2. “Dying and rising deities”

Examples of “dying and rising deities” in mystic cults, with a focus on the language ἐγείρω are also worth investigating here. Smith helpfully explains and defines the “soteriological” aspect of mystic cults, “all cults implying a god experiencing a vicissitude...and as ‘mystical’, those which introduce a soteriological element” experienced by the cult members in relation to these vicissitudes.⁶⁵⁴

According to Porter, the Dionysian myth originated in the East around six century BC. and the Dionysian cult continued to thrive in many forms in the Greco–Roman period.⁶⁵⁵ Plutarch identifies Dionysus with Osiris, one of the most ancient “resurrecting” deities from Egypt. Both deities experience a story of dismemberment, revivification and regeneration (διασπασμοῖς καὶ ταῖς ἀναβιώσεσι καὶ παλιγγενεσίαις, Plutarch, *Moralia. Isis and Osiris*, 35. 365A). In Dionysus’ third birth (Diodorus

retold in Apollonius’ miracle of resurrecting (ἀναβιωθεῖσα) a bride from her apparent death (τοῦ δοκοῦντος θανάτου).

⁶⁵¹ Bremmer (2015: 43) notes that Theseus and Peirithoos were trapped in Hades instead of dead.

⁶⁵² The apologists recall the model of the mythical hero rapture to show that death does not contradict “being the son of God” (Justin Martyr, *I Apology* 21.2), and ultimately the rapture with the resurrection of Jesus is comparable. The apologist Theophilus of Antioch, for example, criticizes the denial of resurrection with the following comparison: “And then on the one hand you believe that Heracles who has burned himself is now alive and that Asclepius who was struck by lightning has been resurrected; on the other hand, you are full of unbelief about God’s claims” (*Apologia ad Autolyicum*, 1.13).

⁶⁵³ Zimmerman (2007: 484); Zeller (1997: 21).

⁶⁵⁴ Smith (1990: 107–8) discusses U. Bianchi’s concept of vicissitude and quotes his definition of mystic cults. Smith, *Drudgery Divine*, 107–8. Smith quotes these statements from the discussion of B. Dieterich, “The Religious Prehistory of Demeter’s Eleusinian Mysteries,” in *La soteriologia dei culti orientali nell’Impero Romano*, eds. U. Bianchi and M. J. Vermaseren (EPRO 92: Leiden, 1982), 445–71, esp. 469.

⁶⁵⁵ Porter (1999: 75–76).

Siculus, *The Library of History*, III. 62. 6), his members were put together after being torn apart and he experienced a new birth (πάλιν δ' ὑπὸ τῆς Δήμητρος τῶν μελῶν συναρμοσθέντων ἐξ ἀρχῆς νέον γεννηθῆναι). Because of the dismemberment, the deity has many θήκας (tombs). In Plutarch's *Moralia. Isis and Osiris*, 35. 365A, the female devotees of Dionysus woke the God of the Mystic Basket (Liknites) in the shrine of Apollo (αἱ Θυιάδες ἐγείρωσι τὸν Λικνίτην). Although neither θάνατον nor νεκρὸν is found, the use of ἐγείρω and θήκη is significant. Nilsson argues that the passage gives the impression "that Plutarch has in mind not the awakening of a sleeping god but the raising of him from the dead".⁶⁵⁶ According to many Egyptian afterlife texts, dead cult-worshippers acquired an "Osiris-aspect" through the efficacy of rituals performed. Undergoing the mummification rites, the Egyptians believed the deceased worshippers transited successfully from this life to the next with resurrected bodies. Also, though they were not deified, they were the god's followers and became one of Osiris' devotees in the underworld.⁶⁵⁷ Beside the Egyptian texts, Plutarch also identifies Osiris as "the ruler and king of the dead" ὁ θεὸς οὗτος ἄρχει καὶ βασιλεύει τῶν τεθνηκότων (78.382F). Plutarch interprets Osiris' cult in philosophical terms (54.373A) as Osiris' soul is regarded as αἰδίων εἶναι καὶ ἄφθαρτον (everlasting and imperishable), more superior to his dismembered body which is corruptible and changeable (φθορᾶς καὶ μεταβολῆς).⁶⁵⁸ He is thus epitomised as the κοινὸς λόγος of things in the heavens and the Hades (61.375E). Since this king of the dead is "far from the earth, untouchable, and immaculate"⁶⁵⁹, he can offer the deceased a real "life" in the sense that "Aber wenn sie [sc. die menschlichen Seelen], vom Körper gelöst, hirtübergehen zum Unsichtbaren, Unanschaulichen, Leidlosen, Reinen, dann ist dieser Gott ihnen Führer und König."⁶⁶⁰

⁶⁵⁶ Nilsson (1975: 39–40).

⁶⁵⁷ Smith (2009: 33–34) explains in detail the Osirian aspect involving the whole body in Egyptian cultic thoughts. "The deceased were elevated to the status of *akhs*, their *bas* were awakened, their *kas* were activated, and they were endowed with an Osirian aspect."

⁶⁵⁸ Similar to her husband/brother Osiris, Isis is also capable of "resurrecting" (ἀναστῆσαι). Diodorus Siculus, *The Library of History*, I.25.6–7: "εὐρεῖν δ' αὐτὴν καὶ τὸ τῆς ἀθανασίας φάρμακον, δι' οὗ τὸν υἱὸν Ἰτρον, ὑπὸ τῶν Τιτάνων ἐπιβουλευθέντα καὶ νεκρὸν εὐρεθέντα καθ' ὕδατος, μὴ μόνον ἀναστῆσαι, δοῦσαν τὴν ψυχὴν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῆς ἀθανασίας ποιῆσαι μεταλαβεῖν." This immortality was in some sense transferred to all initiates, who went through a process of initiation into the cult of Isis. See Porter (1999: 76).

⁶⁵⁹ Plutarch, *Moralia. Isis and Osiris* (ca. 1–100AD) 78. 382F, "...καὶ ὑπὸ γῆν τὸν ἱερὸν καὶ ὅσιον ὡς ἀληθῶς Ὅσιριν οἰκεῖν, ὅπου τὰ σώματα κρύπτεται τῶν τέλος ἔχειν δοκούντων. ὁ δ' ἔστι μὲν αὐτὸς ἀπωτάτω τῆς γῆς ἄχραντος καὶ ἀμίαντος καὶ καθαρὸς οὐσίας ἀπάσης φθορὰν δεχομένης καὶ θάνατον."

⁶⁶⁰ Feldmeier (2005: 225).

A dispute of ἔγερσιν in Josephus' writings concerning Tyrian Heracles should be noted. Barclay notes that some Latin translators understood ἔγερσιν to mean "erection of temple",⁶⁶¹ Barclay and Mettinger both argue that it makes more sense to take the cultic sense referring to the festival of "resurrection" or awakening of Heracles.⁶⁶² Mettinger suggests several interpretations and appeals to tradition of awaking Heracles (also known as Melqart) by cultic burning like that of Bal. It is interesting to note Hans-Peter Müller's suggestion that Heracles is awoken for his salvific intervention.⁶⁶³

The thematic meaning of ἐγείρω illustrates the salvific concept of resurrection is not unusual in Greek minds.⁶⁶⁴ Examples from mystic cults might seem comparable to Paul's meaning as cult worshippers are beneficiaries of resurrecting deities. However, the rites are believed to bring immortality or liberation beyond earthly existence, which is different from the promised new reality "from death to life" in Romans (cf. 1 Cor 15:26).

B. Divine ἐγείρειν in the OT

Instead of reopening the complex question of the origin of hope for resurrection,⁶⁶⁵ we should first note that nowhere in the LXX could we find the exact parallel of Paul's formulated expression. However, divine resurrection power is manifested in texts about God's sovereign over life and death. After an investigation of resurrection expressions in the Prophets and early Jewish texts, it will be

⁶⁶¹ Flavius Josephus, *Against Apion* (1. 118–19); see also *Jewish Antiquities* 8. 145–46, "Moreover he went off and cut timber from the mountain called Libanos for the roofs of the temples, and pulled down the ancient temples and erected new ones to Heracles and Astarte; and he was the first to celebrate the awakening of Heracles in the month of Peritius (πρωτός τε τοῦ Ἡρακλέους ἔγερσιν ἐποιήσατο ἐν τῷ Περιτίῳ μηνί)." Translation adopted from Barclay (2007: 73).

⁶⁶² Barclay (2007: 73–4); Mettinger (2001: 90).

⁶⁶³ Mettinger (2001: 92–94). See also Müller (1996: 121), "(Er-)Weckens' des Gottes zum helfenden Eingreifen." However, Mettinger thinks Müller's suggestion is possible but less likely.

⁶⁶⁴ Cook (2018: 22–23) helpfully suggests that since ἐγείρω has a general meaning of waking up from one's sleep or death, the verb is not very popular for resurrection before the NT period because sleep is not frequently used as an image of death in Greco-Roman culture in contrast to Jewish and Christian thinking.

⁶⁶⁵ See for example, Charlesworth (2006: 1–21); Nickelsburg (2006); Davies (1999: 110ff). Some think that resurrection has no roots in the Hebrew Bible and only emerges in the Second Temple period (Steinberg 1947: 162–63; cf. Silver 1957). However, Levenson challenges this view and argues that "[T]he expectation of a resurrection in Second Temple Judaism, when it does appear, was thus not a *total novum*. Rather, it was the end product of a centuries-long process by which these old traditions (and others that we have explored but not listed here) coalesced (2006: 218)."

demonstrated that Paul's designation in Rom 4:25 resembles the common OT predicate "God who led Israel out of Egypt" in linguistic and theological terms.

B1. Divine sovereign over life and death

The general power of God's control over life and death is indispensable to the divine resurrection power shown in a particular person, to raise the dead. In his monograph, Levenson summarises that the OT has "a definition of death and life broader than ours."⁶⁶⁶ This is an important reminder because many discussions narrowly look for evidence about or possibility of physical repatriation of life.⁶⁶⁷ Nevertheless, life and death are never conceived as purely and exclusively biological phenomena, "To be alive in this frequent biblical sense of the word inevitably entailed more than merely existing in a certain physical state. It also entailed having one's being within a flourishing and continuing kin group that dwelt in a productive and secure association with its land."⁶⁶⁸ Given this social embeddedness in Israelite culture, absence or loss of descendants is functionally equivalent to death (cf. Prov 30:16)⁶⁶⁹. Contrary to Sheol and infertility, fertility and birth especially of an expected child becomes resurrection and redemption to the barren or bereaved mother such as Rachel, Hannah, and the Shunammite lady (2 Kgs 4). Therefore, it is hardly surprising that Israel's renewal or restoration from the exile is often phrased in terms of God's return of the lost child (Jer 31:15–17), unbelievable rebirth of the deadened son/nation (Isa 48:17–19) to the forsaken and barren wife (Isa 49:21; 54:1–10).⁶⁷⁰ Although exact lexical parallel might be absent, the relevance of lineage and the concept of resurrection in Abraham's narrative in Rom 4 are noteworthy. Since resurrection should not be limited to physical revivification,⁶⁷¹ following Nickelsburg's approach, this section ascertains the function that resurrection performs in their respective stories

⁶⁶⁶ Levenson (2006:154).

⁶⁶⁷ For example, despite her informative analysis on resurrection as divine predication, Zimmerman (2007: 469–81) does not analyse her sources from this "social" understanding of life and death.

⁶⁶⁸ Levenson (2006: 154–55).

⁶⁶⁹ Noted that *עֶצֶר רָחֵם* (the barren womb) is translated as *ἔρως γυναικὸς* (the love of woman) in the LXX Prov 24:51.

Threats the the survival of the lineage is a common punishment formula in Genesis, the name of "that person shall be cut off from his kin" (e.g., Gen 17:14).

⁶⁷⁰ Levenson (2006: 142–55).

⁶⁷¹ Interesting though questions about the nature of resurrection (e.g., Are bodies involved and/or transformed? When does it happen?) are, more focus will be put on the function of different resurrection expressions.

of God's dealing with humanity.⁶⁷² Specifically, given Paul's designation bears soteriological significance for redeeming and creating God's people, we argue, *inter alia*, Paul's usage is not complete novelty but parallel to the variegated renditions of resurrection in relation to Israel's restoration.

B2. Restorative resurrection in the Prophets

Dan 12:2–3 is one of the least disputed resurrection passages in the OT.⁶⁷³ Towards the end of the vision, Antiochus' godlessness and arrogance (11:37), his desecration of the Jerusalem Temple, setting up of the appalling abomination (11:31–32, cf. 9:27), and selling of land given by God (11:39), set the stage for an anguished time of persecution for the Judaeans community. It is at that time Michael will rise and "your people" τοὺς υἱοὺς τοῦ λαοῦ σου/ ὁ λαός (2^x in 12:1) will be delivered. The expression ἀναστήσονται τῆς γῆς (12:2) is a specific promise addressing the specific situation. "Israel's god will reverse the actions of the wicked pagans, and raise the martyrs, and the teachers who kept Israel on course, to a glorious life. Simultaneously... YHWH as the righteous judge puts wrongs to right, punishing the wicked and vindicating the righteous."⁶⁷⁴ In Isa 26:19, ἀναστήσονται οἱ νεκροί, καὶ ἐγερθήσονται οἱ ἐν τοῖς μνημείοις, καὶ εὐφρανθήσονται οἱ ἐν τῇ γῇ is linguistically close to Dan 12:2–3.⁶⁷⁵ A parallel of ἀνίστημι and ἐγείρω is significant. In both Isaiah and Daniel, Israel's restoration from exile is itself God's sin-forgiving event. Israel's defeat to the nations is apparently a result of God's wrath, meanwhile, captivity and exile are God's purposes to punish and discipline his own people (e.g., Ezek 5:7–10; Jer 13:14; 15:14). Yet, suffering is simultaneously a token of selection, but not rejection (Amos 3:2). Punishment is redemptive as it aims at Israel's (re)turn to God (e.g., Jer 15:6, 19; 31:31–32; Deut 30:1–5). As Fredriksen puts it neatly, "historical experience of Exile and Return came in prophetic idiom to express a moral dialectic

⁶⁷² Nickelsburg (2006).

⁶⁷³ Charlesworth (2006: 12). Chester (2001: 59) affirms, "It is generally recognised that Daniel 12 is the only place in the Old Testament where the idea of literal, physical resurrection is unequivocally expressed." Wright (2003: 109) insists that what we have here is "concrete, bodily resurrection," and Lacocque suggests, "Here . . . Daniel is a pioneering work.... This is the most precise text concerning the resurrection of (some of) the dead in the Hebrew Scriptures."

⁶⁷⁴ Wright (2003: 114).

⁶⁷⁵ Collins (1993: 395) comments that Isaiah 26:19 espouses the same view in Ezekiel 37—restoration is as miraculous as resurrection.

of sin/punishment as well and of repentance and forgiveness.”⁶⁷⁶ This recalls our previous analysis of δικαίω in divine contention (Rom 4:5) settings (especially in prophetic texts)— “what the legal conceptualization of God justifying a guilty Israel communicates is forgiveness and reconciliation.”⁶⁷⁷

The prophet Isaiah envisions a bigger return beyond the restoration of David’s house in Isa 25–26 (cf. Jer 33:14–26). The ἡ ῥίζα τοῦ Ἰεσσαί — ὁ ἀνιστάμενος ἄρχειν ἔθνῶν (Isa 11:10), including all nations and all tongues (πάντα τὰ ἔθνη καὶ τὰς γλώσσας, 66:18) will assemble on “this mountain” of the Lord’s house in Jerusalem (2:2–4; 27:13–14) for a feast (25:6–7). In this “restoration”, God will swallow up death for ever (25:7) and raise the dead (26:19).⁶⁷⁸ Apart from Ezekiel, Day identifies eight parallels between Isa 26 and its surrounding “Isaianic Apocalypse” and Hosea 13–14.⁶⁷⁹ More relevant to our purpose is Hos 13:14 where the release from Assyrian captivity is depicted as redemption from death (ἐκ θανάτου λυτρώσομαι). Belonging to a tradition of freedom from Assyrian captivity narratives, Day argues rightly that the paring of יִחַי/ ζάω and מָקוֹ/ ἀνίστημι demonstrates Hos 6:2 is not simply talking about healing but also resurrection.⁶⁸⁰ While death and life are not contradictory categories in ancients’ minds,⁶⁸¹ God’s dominancy over life and death (cf. 5:14; 6:1), testifies naturally to the same God who heals sickness, gives birth to the barren, restores the exile, assembles Israel and the nations, and even resurrects the dead.

C. Restorative resurrection in early Jewish texts

Despite the similarities in the Prophets, Nickelsburg interestingly notes for “Daniel, resurrection is a means by which both the righteous and the wicked dead are enabled to receive their respective vindication or punishment,” however, in the Isaiah passage, “resurrection is not a means by which all parties involved are brought to

⁶⁷⁶ Fredriksen (2018: 23–24).

⁶⁷⁷ Prothro (2018: 78).

⁶⁷⁸ Fredriksen (2018: 25–26).

⁶⁷⁹ Day (2000: 122) quoted in Levenson (2006: 205).

⁶⁸⁰ Hos 6:2, ὑγιάνει ἡμᾶς μετὰ δύο ἡμέρας· ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ τρίτῃ καὶ ἀναστήσομεθα, καὶ ζήσομεθα ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ... Day (2000: 119). The others are Isa 26:14,19; Job 14:12,14.

⁶⁸¹ Barré (1978: 137–38) puts it well, “For the ancient Semites, life and death were not contradictory categories, but simply the opposite ends of a continuum; hence, to bring a dead person back to life would represent only a further step to healing a gravely ill person.”

judgment, but an appropriate vindication of the righteous.”⁶⁸² Vindication and judgement are apparent themes in Hellenistic Jewish texts.

The Maccabean martyrs explicitly illustrate the hope of bodily revivification as vindication for their adherence to Law in the face of Hellenizing pressure (2 Macc 14:36, 38). In one of the explicit uses of ἀνίστημι (cf. 2 Macc 7:14; 12:44), the second brother’s last word puts to shame the tyrant Antiochus by contrasting him with the ultimate judge,⁶⁸³ ὁ δὲ τοῦ κόσμου βασιλεὺς (2 Macc 7:9) who will εἰς αἰώνιον ἀναβίωσιν ζωῆς ἡμᾶς ἀναστήσει. God is addressed as creator of the world in their mother’s speech and resurrection is linked to “life-giving” τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ τὴν ζωὴν ὑμῖν πάλιν ἀποδίδωσιν (7:23, 28–29; cf. Rom 4:17, 24). Apart from the reappearing punitive and vindication themes against the wicked and for the obedient respectively (7:31, 34–35, cf. T. Judah 25:4, Wisdom of Solomon 3:1–4), God’s role as a judge is reinforced in the last brother’s speech when “the hope of resurrection goes hand in hand with hope for restoration of the nation of Israel.”⁶⁸⁴ Admitting their suffering is the result of τὰς ἑαυτῶν ἀμαρτίας (7:32), the brother holds out that the sufferings they endures are propitiatory for “our whole nation” τὸ σύμπαν ἡμῶν γένος ending God’s wrath τὴν ὀργήν (7:37–38). Goldstein remarks that the restoration promise forms the backdrop of resurrection hope has already been used in the song of Moses, “God will avenge the blood of his sons” (Deut 32:43, ὅτι τὸ αἷμα τῶν υἱῶν αὐτοῦ ἐκδικᾶται, cf. 2 Macc 7:6).⁶⁸⁵

Although resurrection belief is a dispute in Qumran scholarship,⁶⁸⁶ the Thanksgiving Hymns portrays God’s purification of offence אָנוּשׁ מִפֶּשַׁע לְהַתְקַדֵּשׁ (cf. תַּשְׁמַח, 1QH 19:11) and corresponding incorporation process into the everlasting community לְסוֹד עוֹלָם in terms of resurrection (לְהַרִּים מִעֵפֶר תּוֹלַעַת מַתִּים), to raise the worms of the dead from the dust, 1QH^a 19:12).⁶⁸⁷ Vermes comments on the “Messianic Apocalypse” (4Q521), “[T]he poem incorporates Ps 146:6–7 and Isa 61:1 . . . as in the Gospels, healing and resurrection are linked to the idea of the

⁶⁸² Nickelsburg (2006: 19).

⁶⁸³ Kirk (2008: 18).

⁶⁸⁴ Kirk (2008: 19).

⁶⁸⁵ Goldstein (1983: 303).

⁶⁸⁶ Vermes (1995: 56) denies that resurrection plays a part in Essence eschatology, on the contrary, Collins (1995: 102–12) argued that the teacher of Righteousness would be resurrected. 56.

⁶⁸⁷ Translation of Dead Sea Scrolls will follow Martinez and Tigchelaar’s (here 1997/98: 188–89) translation unless specified.

Kingdom of God.”⁶⁸⁸ More resurrection imageries are found in contexts of Ps 146 and Isa 61. “The Lord lifts up זקק/ ἀνορθοῖ those who are bowed down” in Ps 146:8 (145:8 LXX) and “he will cause righteousness and praise to spring up צמח/ ἀνατελεῖ before all nations” (Isa 61:11). Israel’s restoration is also prophesized in resurrection terms, “...they shall raise up יקומו/ ἐξαναστήσουσιν the former devastations...” (Isa 61:4). Both passages depicting God as a reviver of the marginalised in eschatological restoration, are incorporated in 4Q521 lines 7–12, “For he will honour the pious...freeing prisoners, giving sight to the blind, straightening out the twis[t]ed]...And the Lord will perform marvellous acts such as have not existed...[for] he will heal the badly wounded and will make the dead alive (ומתים יהיה), he will proclaim good news to the poor...”⁶⁸⁹ Similar idea is found in fragments 5 and 7, referring to God as “he who gives life to the dead of his people עמו המחיה את מתי עמו.” The מור-object in these divine designations is linguistically significant. Divine revivification in this “soteriological” sense is intimately related to communal restoration.

Although resurrection and restoration of people to their endowed land are not coterminous events, numerous passages in early Judaism in the Second Temple Period correlate both. This “restorative” function of resurrection is historical because of the desperation of post-exile Israel (e.g. Deut 28, 30). “Therefore, an alternative venue arose in order to help Israel hold fast to the belief in God’s goodness, faithfulness, and justice in the face of its continuing story as a scattered, subject, and sometimes persecuted people.”⁶⁹⁰ Although resurrection brings about the restoration of God’s promised community, it is not surprising to see pagans have no place, worse still, they are to be judged and destroyed in God’s plan for saving Israel.

D. “God who resurrected the dead” and “God who led Israel out of Egypt”

Having established the soteriological significance for Israel’s restoration, Paul’s designation “God who raised Jesus from dead” will then be compared with one of the most frequent divine designations in the OT— “the Lord God who brought you out of the land of Egypt” (e.g. Exo 29:46; Lev 19:36; 25:38; 26:13; Num 15:41; Deut 5:6;

⁶⁸⁸ Vermes (1995: 244).

⁶⁸⁹ The act of reviving the dead is not found in Isa 61:1 or Ps 146:4–7 (Ps 145:4–7 LXX).

⁶⁹⁰ Kirk (2008: 19, 31).

6:12; 1 King 12:28; Jer 16:14). Delling suggests long ago a comparison between the two “patizipiale Gottesbezeichnung” because God is similarly identified in his momentous saving act.⁶⁹¹ Beside a minor difference of either ἐγώ or Κύριος (e.g. Exo 6:7; Deut 5:6, Lev 25:38; Num 15:41), a generally similar recurrent philological pattern comprised of four elements is observed: 1) the arthrous or anarthrous noun θεός modified by 2) a substantival participle of ἐξάγω/ ἀνάγω, 3) second person pronouns in accusative cases referring to Israel σύ (cf. τοὺς υἱοὺς Ἰσραὴλ in Jer 16:14), followed by 4) a prepositional phrase ἐκ γῆς Αἰγύπτου. While Paul seldom uses the noun θεός, the other three components: substantive participle ἐγείρω, followed by the noun Ἰησοῦς in accusative case and prepositional phrase ἐκ νεκρῶν demonstrate close linguistic similarities.⁶⁹² Besides, the theological resemblance is profound.

In the OT, Egypt is often portrayed as an icon of death. Gage notes,

“In the symbolic world of the Old Testament, Egypt represents Sheol, or the land of death and the grave. Egypt . . . is where Joseph was sold into bondage, a kind of spiritual death presented as an alternative to the physical death his brothers originally intended.” Jacob mourned for his son Joseph, thinking him to be dead. Jacob spoke prophetically when he said that he would not see Joseph again until he himself went “down to Sheol” (Gen 37:35). as it happened, Jacob saw Joseph again when he “went down” to Egypt (Gen 46:3). The juxtaposition creates a symbolic equivalence between Egypt and Sheol, or the grave.”⁶⁹³

The idea reappears in Jeremiah 42 when God threatens those who seek refuge in Egypt. God’s anger will pour out on them, and the people shall be overtaken by the sword (42:16), they will die there by famine and plague (42:17) and become a curse (42:18). Death and destruction will be upon Judeans seeking shelter in Egypt (Jer 44:27; Ezek 29:12; 30:4, 6, 8, 11, 16). In contrast, the passover and the exodus are then movements from death to life. Since ancient Jews regard that life of a living being is in the blood (cf. Gen 9:4; Lev 17:11, 14; Deut 12:23), the Passover event (Exo 12:12–13) can then be understood as Israel “being marked with life” in the land of death.⁶⁹⁴ When God is being remembered again and again as the one leading Israel out of Egypt in the Passover (Deut 6:21; 16:1), not only is the special relationship between YHWH and

⁶⁹¹ Delling (1963: 15–18).

⁶⁹² Paul’s designation of the God who raised Jesus from dead can be found in Rom 4:24; 8:11; 2 Cor 4:14; Gal 1:1; Col 2:12; 1 Pet 1:21.

⁶⁹³ Gage (2011: 35).

⁶⁹⁴ Boakye (2017: 49–50) finds that the ten plague are also replete with death overtones.

Israel established, the fundamental saving act of the Lord is constitutive for the emergence and survival of the Israel community.

Similarly, the thematic meaning of Paul's divine designation is soteriologically significant and identifies God as the redeemer of his people, an essential constituent for the emergence of the Christian community regardless of ethnicity. As discussed above, divine revivification leads to justification (Rom 4:24), a new reality of living (Rom 5–8), and hope of future resurrection of believers (Rom 8:11). The similarity should not be exaggerated as the God delivering Israel from Egypt points to a past event while God's raising of Jesus is more future pointing. After all, Paul's exact phrase, especially the name Ἰησοῦν τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν, is the novum of Christian proclamation. Yet, the same underlying theological principle — God's *past* salvific intervention becomes the basis for the expectation of redemption in the *present* and *future* — is manifested in both designations.⁶⁹⁵

4.4.5 Synthesis

In Paul's exegesis in Rom 4:24 the Scripture has immediate relevance to the contemporary generation (cf. Rom 15:4; Philo *On Abraham* 4), Jews and Gentiles.⁶⁹⁶ Paul's divine designations are not abstract doctrines. God is described by his actions bearing concrete redemptive consequences on his people, especially Gentiles in Paul's mission. Although Paul departs from his Jewish counterpart because revivification is manifested in Jesus' resurrection, "the distinction should not be overstated in our shared, urgent attempt to bear witness to the God of life in a world mesmerised by death."⁶⁹⁷

⁶⁹⁵ Novakovic (2014: 30).

⁶⁹⁶ Moxnes (1980: 272).

⁶⁹⁷ Brueggemann (2007: 31).

4.5 Concluding remarks

Highlighting God's salvific actions, the ways Paul characterises God in Rom 4 also provides justification for his Gentile mission. The designation τὸν δικαιοῦντα τὸν ἄσεβῆ (4:5) connotes God's forgiveness for "the ungodly", both rebellious Israel and idolatrous Gentiles. In 4:17, the correlation of divine ζωοποιεῖν and καλεῖν signifies not only salvation, but incorporation of Gentiles into God's people in particular. In "the capstone of Paul's argument" (4:24–25), the predication τὸν ἐγείραντα Ἰησοῦν ἐκ νεκρῶν "inaugurates the new world promised to Abraham" — father of πάντων ἡμῶν.⁶⁹⁸

The interconnectedness of Paul's divine designations illustrates the issue of justification by faith and inclusion of Gentiles are inseparable because both Abraham and all of his children are "justified", "made alive", "called", and "raised" given their same faith towards the same God. Thus, it is not necessary to dichotomise "how Abraham got himself justified" and "whose father he is and in what way his children are related to him"⁶⁹⁹ because Paul does not nullify the former at the expense of the latter. Moreover, Paul's argument does not need to appeal to the covenant *per se*.⁷⁰⁰ Instead, the divine designations in Abrahamic narrative *displays* God's "operative principle" which is key to salvation history and thus to his hermeneutics. Watson explains correctly, "The normativity of Abraham does not rest in his faith *per se* but in his faith as the acknowledgment elicited by the promise of future divine saving action on his behalf".⁷⁰¹

In her recent study about Paul's gentile mission, Fredriksen traces God's interaction with *all* humanity (prior to Abraham and after Adam and Eve) to the "Table of Nations" in Genesis 10 and the primacy of Noah. Not only is the word ἔθνη/ גוֹי occurs for the first time in the Hebrew Bible, it is also the beginning of *all* humanity — the seventy nations descended from Noah. This way of understanding *all* humanity (cf. God's covenant with Noah, Genesis 6–7) provides a basis for discussion about Gentiles in later texts, for example, in the prophets, especially Isaiah; in later Second Temple writings (Jubilees, Qumran texts, the Sibylline Oracles), in Josephus, the

⁶⁹⁸ Schreiner (1998: 242); Kirk (2008: 74–81).

⁶⁹⁹ Hays (1985: 87).

⁷⁰⁰ Wright (2009: 94).

⁷⁰¹ Watson (2004: 217).

Aramaic Targumim, last but not least, in Paul's epistles.⁷⁰² The eschatological pilgrimage motif, especially evident in the exilic and postexilic prophets, is one of the most well-known traditions discussed recently.⁷⁰³ Relocating Paul's Gentile mission back to this "arc" of early Jewish apocalyptic hope, Fredriksen concludes that "the nations are partners in Israel's redemption" in this "divine comedy".⁷⁰⁴ It is worthwhile to quote her comments in full:

The idea of redemption itself enlarges, growing in dimension from a spatial or locative image to also a moral and an eschatological one: redemption from slavery (the Egyptian paradigm) or from Exile (the Babylonian paradigm); redemption from sin and/or from its effects (divine anger not least); redemption, finally, from want, from war, from death itself. And the scope of this redemption enlarges...Not only does the remnant of Israel return to the Land; so do all twelve tribes, miraculously reassembled. Not only do all twelve tribes of Israel gather in Jerusalem; so too do all seventy nations. Not only do the living assemble, but also the dead who rise ("Thus says the Lord: Behold, I will open your graves, and I will raise you from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you home into the Land of Israel," Ezek 37.12). All humanity, both Israel and the nations, acknowledge Israel's god: "All flesh shall come to worship before me" (Isa 66.23).⁷⁰⁵

It is striking to see how this study about Paul's four divine designations in Romans 4 echoes with the above summary of "the arc of Jewish apocalyptic hope". With this basic understanding of Paul's symbolic universe, a consistent "divine operative principle" can be observed from Paul's use of divine designations. Paul is not making the divine designations up out of nothing. This study shows that linguistic parallels to Paul's ways of characterising God can be found in his pagan and Jewish contemporaries. Yet, the similarity should not be exaggerated. By identifying God as the divine one who justifies, gives life, calls, and resurrects, Paul is justifying the

⁷⁰² Fredriksen (2018: 13–14). See Scott's (1995:53 quoted in Fredriksen, 2018: 13 n. 11) study for his incisive review on sources related to the "Table of Nations". Scott comments that the Table of Nations "provided a fundamental point of orientation for describing Israel's place among the nations of the world and the basis for envisioning world geography and ethnography both in the present and for the eschatological future (1995: 54)."

⁷⁰³ Nanos (1996: 62) observes this theme in Isa 2:1–3; 27:12; 49:5–6; 51:4–5; 52:7–10; 56:6–8; 60–66; Dan 7; Amos 9:11–12; Mic 4; Zech 8:20–23; 14:1–11; Pss Sol 11; 17:21–46. See also Novenson (2009: 365) on intra-Jewish explanations of Paul's universalistic rationale for the Gentile mission in Post-World War II scholarship.

⁷⁰⁴ Fredriksen (2018: 28).

⁷⁰⁵ Fredriksen (2018: 25–26).

place of ἔθνη in his mission as well as God's eschatological kingdom. It is clear Paul insists all the divine actions are not deviations but observations from Abraham's story, yet, he is expanding its redemptive dimension and scope to cover not only ethnic Jews but also the Gentiles (ἔθνη).

Chapter 5

The God who calls and has mercy (9:12, 16)

Two divine designations in Rom 9, namely τοῦ καλοῦντος (9:12) and τοῦ ἐλεῶντος θεοῦ (9:16), will be discussed. It will be illustrated that Paul uses both designations to justify his Gentile mission. By comparing and contrasting the recurrent linguistic pattern of καλέω and ἐλεέω/ἔλεος between Paul and his Jewish and pagan contemporaries, Paul's distinct way of characterising God will be illuminated.

5.1 Τοῦ καλοῦντος (9:12)

This section will approach τοῦ καλοῦντος (9:12) with the following questions in mind: does Paul mean God calls “true Israel” at the expense of the “corporeal Israel” when characterising God as “the one who calls”? If not, how does the designation fit into Paul’s argument? Instead of illustrating a division within Israel, this study argues the designation highlights God’s incongruous call which has sustained Israel from the beginning. It is the same creative agent that incorporates Gentiles into God’s community of salvation. The designation will first be studied in its own context. It will be demonstrated Paul interweaves καλέω as a thread with “promise”, “no human deeds” and “divine sonship” to justify his Gentile mission. Then, we will see whether antecedent for Paul’s use of divine καλεῖν can be found compared with his contemporaries.

5.1.1 “Israel” the centre?

The designation ὁ καλῶν is situated in one of Paul’s most disputed arguments, Romans 9–11.⁷⁰⁶ Among many “extreme tensions within these chapters,”⁷⁰⁷ one conflict takes place in the contraction between 9:6-29, which is commonly interpreted somehow as a denial of salvation to some part of Israel, and chapter 11, with its culmination in the claim that all Israel will be saved (11:26).⁷⁰⁸ Although tackling the issue of consistency is not only arduous but unnecessary here, it is important to begin with clarifying at least what Paul does not intend to do. The section has been read as a scriptural based demonstration of division between some “elected or believing” Jews and other “rejected or disbelieving” Jews, who are represented by Ishmael, Esau, and Pharaoh.⁷⁰⁹ This suggested reading is apparently not without problems. Barclay rightly

⁷⁰⁶ Dahl (2002: 138); Martyn (1991: 179 n. 44). Despite other disputes, there is a general consensus that these chapters are the integral parts of the whole letter and the subject matter is about God’s dealing with Israel but not in the abstract about election or predestination (Barclay, 2015: 520). See Reasoner (2010: 73–89) for scholarship in the last two centuries.

⁷⁰⁷ Haacker, 2003: 78. Gager (2000) holds that Romans 9–11 is full of “alleged contradictions and inconsistencies (129)”; See also Räisänen’s (1988) discussion of the question of consistency in Romans 9–11 in his essay (192–96).

⁷⁰⁸ See Dunn (1988b: 539–40) and Räisänen (1988: 178–202) for the issue of consistency. The major difference between two camps of perspective lies in whether one puts more emphasis on Romans 9 or Romans 11; see Reasoner (2010:83). For those privileging Romans 9, see for example Hodge (1947:323). For those attaching more weight to Romans 11, see C. Talbert (2002: 247).

⁷⁰⁹ Barclay (2015: 527 n. 15); Reasoner (2010: 84). Accordingly, Paul justifies that God’s word (9:6a) has not failed because God’s promise was never directed to corporeal Israel, so the present reduction of “Israel” to Christ believers alone is not the denial but fulfillment of his “word”.

notes it can hardly be comprehended given Paul's prayer for the salvation of his kinsmen according to flesh (10:1; cf. 9:3; 11:11-32), later positive references to "all Israel" as recipients of God's irrevocable call (11:29), the beloved because of the patriarchs (11:28), and objects of God's mercy (11:31).⁷¹⁰ If Barclay is right, what does "the God who calls" mean if it does not mean God calls some as "true Israel" and rejects "the corporeal Israel"?

Following the suggested reading of "double Israel", where "true Israel" is separated from "corporeal Israel", some commentators are at pains to justify God's rejection of the corporeal Jews. Wright insists that God is not unjust after Paul demonstrates in Rom 9 that "Scripture always envisages that Israel could not be affirmed as she stood...it is not God has failed, but Israel. That is the emphasis of 9:6-29."⁷¹¹ However, it is precisely what Paul is arguing against in 9:10-13, for there is no correlation between human conduct and divine decision (v.11). Contrary to the suggested reading, we argue that the centrality of Israel is unwarranted in the section, instead, much weight is attached to "God" contextually.

The question of 9:6 is about the word of God, and it follows that God is frequently referred to as the direct or implied subjects.⁷¹² Paul's discussion of Israel either comes before the section (see Ἰσραηλιταί in 9:5; 9:30) or resumes after it (10:1-3). Although Paul often comments on Jews, Gaventa observes that "there is no *explicit* reference to Israel (i.e., no use of the term itself) at all in chs. 1-8."⁷¹³ Instead, 9:6-26 is characterised by a few repeating rhetorical patterns tracing the patterns of divine actions (e.g. several "not...but" antitheses, "not only...but also" sentence constructions, rhetorical of reversals) which will be discussed later in detail.⁷¹⁴ Instead of repeating *whom* within Israel has been chosen or left out, or simply saying that God has justly exercised his choice,⁷¹⁵ the emphasis of τοῦ καλοῦντος (9:12) lies in *how*

⁷¹⁰ Barclay (2015: 529).

⁷¹¹ Wright (1991: 238-39) explains in his exegesis Israel's failure: nobody in contemporary Judaism would speak up for Ishmael or Esau (vv.6-13), Israel as a whole stood condemned as a rebellious and sinful nation in the Golden Calf incident (vv. 14-18), and Israel is punished in its exile (vv. 19-29).

⁷¹² God as implied subjects: κληθήσεται, 9:7; λογίζεται, 9:8; ἐλεύσομαι, 9:9, ἐρρέθη, 9:12. God as subjects in first person: ἠγάπησα and ἐμίσησα, 9:13; ἐξήγειρά and ἐνδείξωμαι, 9:17; καλέσω, 9:25. God as subjects in third person: ἐλεεῖ and σκληρύνει, 9:18; ἐνδείξασθαι, 9:22, ἐκάλεσεν, 9:24; ἐγκατέλιπεν, 9:29.

⁷¹³ Gaventa (2010: 256).

⁷¹⁴ Barclay (2015: 526, 529).

⁷¹⁵ Watson (2007: 308-22).

God has created Israel. In other words, “what Paul contends in Rom 9 is that God created Israel and that Israel’s past as well as its future depends entirely on God’s own saving power and glory.”⁷¹⁶

5.1.2 Τοῦ καλοῦντος (9:12) in its context

Although syntactically τοῦ καλοῦντος is part of the ἐκ-prepositional phrase which is linked to the section 9:10–13, it can hardly be isolated from its preceding context 9:6–9 as both concern the patriarchs’ generations. Also, the language of calling καλέω, one of the important threads of Rom 9, first appears not in v. 12 but in v.7 (cf. vv. 24, 25, 26). It is thus inevitable to take into account 9:6–13 as well as 9:24–26 when trying to understand the designation.

With the list of Jewish religious privileges (9:4–5), Paul picks up the question on 3:1 and once again answers the problem of Jewish unbelief on the Messiah (9:5)⁷¹⁷ with reference to “the word of God” (9:6, cf. 3:2). Being both an Israelite (11:1) and an apostle to the Gentiles (11:13), Paul maintains that his ministry fulfils instead of falsifies ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ.⁷¹⁸ Paul now turns to Scripture (vv. 6b–29) for justification.⁷¹⁹ A series of οὐ...ἀλλά antitheses (9:6b–7; 9:8; 9:10; 9:12) illustrate stark contrasts between human criteria of worth with divine preference. Romans 9:6b is often taken as Paul’s attempt to “make a distinction within Israel”⁷²⁰ between “true, spiritual Israel” and “ethnic, comprehensive Israel”.⁷²¹ The οὐ is read as either

⁷¹⁶ Gaventa (2010: 257); Barclay (2015: 529).

⁷¹⁷ Keck rightly identified that the problem of Jewish unbelief lies in the unexpected turn Paul took to embrace Gentiles into full benefits of salvation in Christ, the Messiah regardless of the Jewish religious privileges. “Chapters 9–11 were not set afoot by either a repressed criticism of Peter’s unsuccessful mission or by an unstated desire to exonerate him. ...Not because he took the gospel to *Gentiles*, but because of the *gospel he took* — one that insisted that Gentiles must not be required to become converts to Judaism in order to enjoy the full benefits of salvation in Christ, the Messiah (2005: 224–25).” Emphasis original.

⁷¹⁸ Flebbe (2008: 275); Jewett (2007: 573); Barclay (2015: 526 n. 14). The precise meaning of ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ has been taken variously as the purpose (Cranfield, 1975: 472–73; Piper, 1983: 49–50; Richardson, 1994: 32), promise (Sanday and Headlam, 1902: 240; Moo, 1996: 572–73), or gospel of God (Lodge, 1996: 51–52; Kotansky, 1977: 24–30). Wolter (2017: 31) rightly takes it as a generic expression of the assurance and promise whatsoever God has made on behalf of Israel.

⁷¹⁹ Gaventa (2010: 258); Cranfield (1975: 473); Käsemann (1980: 261); Zeller (1985: 176); Dunn (1988b: 539); Moo (1996: 570–71); Wright (2002: 635); Jewett (2007: 573).

⁷²⁰ “Paul attempts to make a distinction within Israel, using the Old Testament figures of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Esau as types (Richardson, 1994:32).”

⁷²¹ This reading is reflected in most contemporary English translations. For example, NRSV offers the following translation, “For not all Israelites truly belong to Israel”; and RSV and NIV similarly translate as “For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel”. Note the addition of “truly” or “really” in the translations of Barrett (1957: 179); Fitzmyer (1993: 558).

negating the first noun phrase πάντες οἱ ἐξ Ἰσραήλ⁷²² or the second Ἰσραήλ⁷²³. The division is justified later in ch. 11 by the distinction between “the elect” and the “rest” (11:7), or the “part” and “all” of Israel (11:25-26). However, Gaventa rightly suggests “the οὐ may also be construed as negating the entire statement,” in other words, it could be translated as “For it is not the case that all those who are from Israel (i.e., Israelites by birth), these people are (i.e., they constitute) Israel.”⁷²⁴ Israel is never a biological but theological category, “the only Israel that exists is the one God brought into being through promise and call.”⁷²⁵ Wolter observes a chiastic structure here:

6b οὐ γάρ

(a) πάντες οἱ ἐξ Ἰσραήλ

(b) οὗτοι Ἰσραήλ

7a οὐδ' ὅτι εἰσὶν

(b) σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ

(a) πάντες τέκνα

The correspondence of the two predicates πάντες οἱ ἐξ Ἰσραήλ and πάντες τέκνα is obvious, given the grammatical incoherent repetition of the masculine πάντες for the neuter noun τέκνα. Accordingly, the second Ἰσραήλ at the end of v.6b corresponds to σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ. It highlights the parallel negations joined together by the connective οὐδέ.⁷²⁶ Grammatically Gaventa's reading is strengthened as both οὐ negate the entire statement rather than merely one of the noun clauses.⁷²⁷ Barclay similarly notes ἐξ Ἰσραήλ in 9:6b means not “from within Israel” but “descended from Israel” because in the context of ethnicity the preposition ἐκ signals descent elsewhere (9:5, 10; 11:1; cf. Phil 3:5).⁷²⁸ Thus, the antithesis negates biological race and supports the claim with a quotation from Gen 21:12 LXX — ἀλλά ἐν Ἰσαὰκ κληθήσεται σοι σπέρμα (v. 7b).

⁷²² E.g., Jewett (2007: 567, 574–75); Cranfield (1975: 470, 473–74); Tanner (2005: 95–96).

⁷²³ Piper's translation is “for all those from Israel, these are not Israel (1983: 47–48; *pace* Dunn 1988b: 539).” However, Abasciano (2005: 310, 312) disagrees and explains that Piper's grammatical reasons for reading “not” modifying they are “the virtual copula” instead of all, but his concern is that negating the “all” will be supporting an individualistic argument (contra. Rom 10:1). See also Bell (2005: 210).

⁷²⁴ Gaventa (2010: 259), this is supported by Rom 2:13, 28; 7:15, 19 where the οὐ is used in similar sense.

⁷²⁵ Gaventa (2010: 260 n. 22).

⁷²⁶ According to BDAG, οὐδέ “joins negative sentences or clauses to others of the same kind (s.v. οὐδέ 1).”

⁷²⁷ Wolter (2017: 32–33).

⁷²⁸ The partitive sense is only used when ἐκ is governed by a verb (e.g. Rom 9:24; Rev 7:4–8). “The examples Paul chooses indicate the selection of Israelite lineage from a wider pool of patriarchal children (Barclay, 2015: 530 n. 23).”

Another antithesis introduced by τοῦτ' ἔστιν (v.8a) explains the quote. While it is obvious that the ἐν Ἰσαὰκ σπέρμα, τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ and τὰ τέκνα τῆς ἐπαγγελίας are interchangeable terms qualifying the “qualified” or “elected”, which is in contrast with τὰ τέκνα τῆς σαρκὸς (v. 8a); what Paul puts forth is more than two opposing groups. The locution σπέρμα which, appears three times in vv.7–8, is modified by various divine (passive) verbs in vv. 7–9. They are called κληθήσεται (ἐν Ἰσαὰκ) in v.7b, reckoned (λογίζεται; v.8b), and formed when God returns (ἐλεύσομαι; v.9b). The combination of λογίζειν (4:3 i.a.), ἐπαγγελία (4:13, 20) and κλησις (4:17) recall Romans 4, especially 4:17. Instead of stating whom is “elected” or “rejected”, more emphasis is put on *how* the σπέρμα or the υἱός is constituted by divine actions. Flebbe rightly comments that these divine actions signify a “theologischer Heilsgruppenbegriff”, which is solely constituted by divine actions and open to both Jews and Gentiles (cf. 4:16), unlike the “Israelite” group.⁷²⁹ According to our previous analysis, the God “who calls into being the things that do not exist” refers to the divine “act of creation, not simply an act of selecting one person or group rather than another.”⁷³⁰

A. Divine calling and promise

Quotations used in Rom 9 are divine oracles (9:7, 9, 12–13, 17, 25, 33;) where God addresses his people directly.⁷³¹ Quoting from Genesis, Paul contends that the blessing God graciously bestowed on Abraham has always come through promise and election rather than physical descent.⁷³² Isaac’s status as “seed” is ascribed (λογίζεται, v.8b) by God, likewise, the calling of Abraham’s seed as children of God (cf. Rom 8:16, 17, 21; Eph 5:1; Phil 2:5) is a fulfilment of God’s promise (vv. 8b, 9a). In v.9,

⁷²⁹ According to Flebbe, “Es ist ein theologischer Heilsgruppenbegriff, bei dem die Heilsgruppe allein durch Gottes Aktivität des λογίζειν 4,3 u.ä., der κλησις 4,17 und der ἐπαγγελία 4,13.20 konstituiert wird und die somit anders als die jakobinische Gruppe unterschiedslos offen ist für Juden und Heiden (2008: 282).” Wright also reads the cross reference to Romans 4 as evidence against the division argument. “The cross reference to Rom 4 shows how unwise it is to imagine that the true seed of Abraham in 9:7 is simply a subset of ethnic Israel (1991: 238).”

⁷³⁰ Gaventa (2010: 260).

⁷³¹ Hultgren (2011: 364). Taking τὰ λόγια τοῦ θεοῦ (3:2) as God’s promises is supported grammatically because throughout these chapters the passages from Scripture are often in first person speech where God addresses his people (9:9, 13–14, 17, 25, 33; 10:19–20; 11:4, 27) in the manner of divine oracles and twice in second person address (9:7, 26) to the same effect. In constructing a careful and credible argument, Paul reviews the record of what God has said. All this serves to show that God’s word has not failed. On the contrary, God’s word has been vindicated.

⁷³² Wagner (2002: 47).

the predicate ἐπαγγελία is thrown to the beginning for emphasis, explicating γάρ the children of promise (v.8).⁷³³ The calling (v.7) is congruous with God reckoning the children of promise as Abraham's seed (v.8). Also, divine actions are not hidden in the councils of God but are concrete and evident in God's word or promise (v.9).⁷³⁴ While the divine action regarding λογίζεσθαι is explained previously, the correlation between divine καλέω and ἐπαγγελία is also of vital theological significance. A brief look at the background of the promise, Gen 18:10, 14 (Rom 9:9); Gen 21:12 (Rom 9:7b), will be illuminating.⁷³⁵

The promises (Gen 18:10, 14) adduced to is set in the narrative where Abraham experiences a "theophany" (18:33) when Isaac's birth is announced (18:1–15). YHWH's promise to Abraham and Sarah is the focus of 18:9–15, indeed, a specific concern for Sarah is highlighted.⁷³⁶ The divine "visitors" ask Sarah's whereabouts (v.9) and their knowledge of Sarah's new name (cf. 17:15) bring the focus on the interaction between Sarah and YHWH. Hearing Sarah nearby, the promise is uttered for the first time (v. 10). Yet, Sarah laughs in unbelief (v.12; cf. 17:17) because of her old age, as mentioned three times in vv. 11–13. YHWH declares again his ability to fulfil his word with the rhetorical question μή ἀδυνατεῖ παρὰ τῷ θεῷ ῥῆμα and reiterates the reliability of his promise contrasting Sarah's doubt (v.14).⁷³⁷ The theme — God alone fulfills his promise (despite human expectations or difficulties) — is carried along in Rom 9:9 by mentioning Σάρρα, using first person singular verb ἐλεύσομαι, and emphasising divine designated time κατὰ τὸν καιρὸν τοῦτον.⁷³⁸ In short, Gen 18:10, 14 demonstrate the reliability of God's ἐπαγγελία (cf. ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ, Rom 9:6b) with reference to the divine promise of Isaac's miraculous birth. Nothing from the context suggests divine καλέω and ἐπαγγελία should be taken as God choosing Isaac instead of Ishmael.

⁷³³ Cranfield (1975: 476); Sanday and Headlam (1902: 24); Jewett (2007: 577).

⁷³⁴ Seifrid (2007: 639–40).

⁷³⁵ Indeed, as Piper has noted, "[m]ost commentators agree that the OT quotations in Rom 9:6–13 assume an acquaintance with the whole story of which they are a part and that without this knowledge the isolated quotations would be virtually unintelligible as part of the argument (1983: 60 n. 27)."

⁷³⁶ Abraham has already received the promise previously in Gen 17: 15–21.

⁷³⁷ Abasciano (2005: 146–51).

⁷³⁸ Seifrid notices, "The element of time, which Paul in fact fronts—'at this time I shall come'—is essential. There must be a time of waiting and faith before the promise is fulfilled (2007: 639)."

What about Gen 21:12? The pericope is about the birth (21:1–7) and the weaning of Isaac (21:8–21). Readers of Gen 18 will notice that the beginning of Gen 21 is intended to bring Gen 17–18 to a conclusion.⁷³⁹ The use of εἰς τὸν καιρὸν (21:2) specifically recalls and verifies YHWH’s promise (Gen 17:21, 18:14). The narrative climaxes in Sarah’s poem (21:6–7) praising God for making the impossible (bearing a child at such an old age) possible. Isaac’s weaning and growth are mentioned because they mark his survival in time of high infant mortality.⁷⁴⁰ Nevertheless, his place as Abraham’s heir as promised (cf. Gen 17:15–16, 19) is not yet secured. The threat of Ishmael is manifested when Sarah saw Ishmael mocking (קִטְצָה) Isaac (קִצָּץ) in 21:9.⁷⁴¹ Sarah is incited and thus asks for the expulsion of Hagar and Ishmael (21:10). Yet, God comforts Abraham by reiterating “in Isaac shall your seed be called” (21:12). Although some commentators equate Ishmael with ethnic Israel and regard it as evidence for their rejection, there is an alternative. God reassures Abraham that he will make Ishmael εἰς ἔθνος μέγα (21:13) and divine protection of Ishmael and Hagar in the wilderness confirms God’s faithfulness (21:14–21). Unless Paul is twisting his source, it would be hardly convincing to cite Genesis 21 in support of the claim that God rejects ethnic Israel as he rejects Ishmael. Coming back to Rom 9:7–9, God does not reject τέκνα τῆς σαρκός, be it Ishmael or the other six sons of Ketura (cf. Gen 25:1–4), he simply does not originate them. Isaac is exceptional because he is τῆς ἐπαγγελίας (cf. Gal 4).⁷⁴² Paul justifies that God’s people is marked by his promised calling instead of ethnic belonging. Two future form verbs κληθήσεται and ἐλεύσομαι pave the way for Paul’s argument for Gentile mission because God’s future inheritance, regardless of ethnicity, will be fulfilled in divine calling.

⁷³⁹ Westermann (1985: 331f) is correct to say that Genesis 21:1–7 is intended to bring chapters 17 and 18 to a conclusion.

⁷⁴⁰ Abasciano (2005: 167).

⁷⁴¹ Despite some disputes about “mocking” (קִטְצָה/קִצָּץ), Coats (1977: 91–109) highlights the significance of the word play, “Now the wordplay, so crucial for the whole story, sets out the weight of the conflict. . . It suggests . . . that Sarah saw Ishmael . . . playing the role of Isaac.”

⁷⁴² Wolter (2017: 34) rightly notes that “Abraham does not determine the identity of his children, but only God does. Being Abraham’s ‘child’ does not make a human being Abraham’s ‘seed,’ because only those children of Abraham who are in that sense τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ as they had been originated by God’s intervention are reckoned as ‘seed’ (see also Philo, QG 3:18 on Gen 16:1).”

B. Divine calling contrary to human deeds

Paul's argument is taken one step further in vv. 10–13 where the divine designation lies. The construction οὐ μόνον...ἀλλὰ καὶ draws parallels between Rebecca and Sarah. Their barrenness is overcome by divine intervention (Gen 25:21) and their sons, Isaac and Jacob, who inherited the covenant promise have rivals, Ishmael and Esau respectively.⁷⁴³ However, Paul does not merely repeat what he had just said.⁷⁴⁴ While Isaac's birth is presented as distinguishing in vv. 7–9, the uniqueness of Jacob's birth is denied. The expressions ἐξ ενός and κοίτην ἔχουσα emphasise, unlike Isaac and Ishmael, the twins have the same mother, father as well as “the same moment of conception” (v. 10).⁷⁴⁵ Nevertheless, the syntax is incomplete until the main verb ἐρρέθη αὐτῇ appears in v. 12b.⁷⁴⁶ The flow of Paul's argument is interrupted by two genitive absolute participles (v. 11a), an ἵνα-purpose clause (v. 11b) and its adverbial modifier (v. 12a). The interrupting clauses highlight the circumstances when God speaks to Rebecca.⁷⁴⁷ The moment *when the twins were not yet born nor done anything good or bad*, “shows the absolute independence of the divine call from any human qualification or accomplishment, for no distinction could be made in the fleshly origin of these two sons.”⁷⁴⁸

Not only is the brothers' “fleshly” conduct not taken into God's consideration,⁷⁴⁹ God's choice violates the law of primogeniture because the younger is chosen.⁷⁵⁰ Yet,

⁷⁴³ Moo (1996: 579).

⁷⁴⁴ Watson (2004: 312).

⁷⁴⁵ Jewett (2007: 577); Moo (1996: 585). Bell (2005: 211–12) observes that Paul omitted the preceding part “Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from within you will be separated: one people shall be stronger than the other” of Gen 25:23 because it points to “two nations.” Thus, the omission further discredits the reading of “two Israels”.

⁷⁴⁶ Jewett (2007: 570, 577) rightly proposes a verbal completion in vv. 10 and translates as follows, “Not only so, but also Rebecca [received a promise], having intercourse with one man, Isaac our father...”. Moo (1996: 579) also suggests that the sense of v. 10 finds its continuation in v. 12b.

⁷⁴⁷ Flebbe (2008: 289); Moo (1996: 579).

⁷⁴⁸ Jewett (2007: 577). Flebbe (2008: 288–89) notes that for Jewish mind, life only begins after the child's head comes out at birth.

⁷⁴⁹ Seifrid (2007: 640). The opposing vales ἀγαθόν or φαῦλον are negated, neither Esau's exchange of his birthright, Jacob's scheming nor good work influence divine decision. Paul's usage is contrary to the early Jewish construal of Esau's wickedness and Jacob's righteousness as the cause for the distinction between them (*b. Yoma* 38b; *b. Meg.* 6a; *Gen. Rab.* 63:8; *Jub.* 35:9–17; *L.A.B.* 32:5–6; cf. *Heb.* 11:20; 12:16–17; see Str-B 3:267–68).

⁷⁵⁰ Talbert (2002: 249–51) identifies this pattern of reversal of the law of primogeniture in the OT. “God preferred the sacrifice of Abel, the younger, over that of Cain, the elder (4:5). God preferred Isaac over Ishmael and Jacob over Esau. Again, God preserved the seed of Abraham through Joseph (45:4–7; 49:4) rather than through Reuben, the legitimate heir. Jacob blessed Ephraim second born, rather than the first born Manasseh, despite the protests of their father, Joseph (48:17–22).” Thielman (1994): 177.

the embedded ἵνα-purpose clause underlines divine initiative is not arbitrary nor random but in line with ἡ ἐκλογὴν πρόθεσις τοῦ θεοῦ.⁷⁵¹ The antithetical clause οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων ἀλλ' ἐκ τοῦ καλοῦντος (9:12) explains what sets God's purpose in motion. This loosely appended adverbial clause qualifies μένη. The present instead of aorist subjunctive illustrates God's purpose continues forward from the time of the patriarchs to the current generation,⁷⁵² it?? also stands in opposite with ἐκπέπτωκεν (9:6).⁷⁵³ The reason why God's word and his purpose of election has not failed and might stand firm is because it does not rest on human deeds but on "divine calling". The awkward syntax of this genitive absolute clause draws out the implication of v. 11a— that "there was nothing within the persons of Jacob and Esau that could have been the basis for God's choice."⁷⁵⁴

The antithesis between ἐξ ἔργων and ἐκ τοῦ καλοῦντος indicates that Paul puts the emphasis on divine instead of human initiative.⁷⁵⁵ The narrative Paul chooses from Genesis (before the Law), and the preceding reference to "doing anything good or bad" both suggest Paul is talking about general human works or contribution.⁷⁵⁶ Paul's presentation stands out when compared with other Jewish interpretations of the Jacob and Esau. For example, *Jubilees* 'implies Jacob has an edge over Esau because he is already "smooth and upright" (*Jub.* 19:13-14) *prior* to Abraham's blessing (*Jub.* 22:10-24). In Philo's comment on Gen 25:23, he contends God knows, when the twins are in their mother's womb, comprehensively about their actions or behaviour τὰ ἔργα καὶ πάθη and thus God chooses τὸ ἀστεῖον καὶ λογικὸν καὶ ἄμεινον but not τὸ φαῦλον καὶ ἄλογον (*Alleg. Interp.* 3.88-89).⁷⁵⁷ However, the same pair of adjectives ἀγαθός and φαῦλος is used to express the criterion ruled out by God in Romans. Instead of

⁷⁵¹ The colloquial combination of κατὰ and πρόθεσις recalls 8:28, where God calls "the children of God" (8:18–39) according to his purpose. Moo (1996: 580). The similarity between the expressions τοῖς κατὰ πρόθεσιν κλητοῖς (8:28; cf. 8:30) and ἡ κατ' ἐκλογὴν πρόθεσις (9:11) suggests a correspondence between divine calling κλητός and election ἐκλογή. Flebbe suggests interestingly that ἐκλογή is a term more for the Jews and καλεῖν aiming at the Gentiles. "Das wird auch dadurch deutlich, dass parallel zu dem stärker auf Israel bzw. die Väter zielenden Begriff der ἐκλογή der stärker für die Konstitution der Heilsgemeinde aus Heiden und Juden zielende Begriff καλεῖν verwendet wird (2008: 291)."

⁷⁵² Jewett (2007: 578–79) notes that μένη is only used here in Romans but it is frequently used in the LXX in the context of God's immutable being and counsel (Pss 9:7; 101:12; Isa 40:8; Dan 6:27).

⁷⁵³ Jewett (2007: 578); Cranfield (1975: 478).

⁷⁵⁴ Moo (1996: 580).

⁷⁵⁵ There is a discussion about whether "works" should be limited to the "works of the Law" (c.f. 3:27). See discussion of Dunn (1988b: 543); Byrne (1996: 292); Kruse (2012: 624).

⁷⁵⁶ Barclay (2015: 531).

⁷⁵⁷ Gaventa (2010: 262); see also Richardson (1994: 26–94).

arguing who is God’s chosen one, Paul’s argument “runs directly contrary to anything that might be construed as a qualification for election so that the logic that emerges is the logic of a reversal of values.”⁷⁵⁸ The next quotation “Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated” (9:13; Mal 1:2-3) concludes Paul’s point — it is simply that “no explanation, no rationale, nothing to indicate why one and not the other.”⁷⁵⁹ In other words, “Israel is a “*creatura verbi Dei*.”⁷⁶⁰

The contrast between τοῦ καλοῦντος and ἔργον might recall Rom 4, but ἔργον is not juxtaposed with faith and Abraham is not mentioned too.⁷⁶¹ Eclipsing the language about human response reinforces Paul’s focus on the purpose of God—the one who calls.⁷⁶² God’s call, past and present, is consistent with the same divine plan (9:11) and always by χάριτος (11:5-6), where human meritocracy is irrelevant.

C. Divine calling and Gentiles

Paul returns to the theme of God’s call in vv. 24–29.⁷⁶³ Beside being used as a thread throughout the chapter (vv. 7, 12, 24, 25, 26), the reappearance of καλέω in vv. 24–26 (after its absence in vv. 14–23) is compositionally significant. A general correspondence between vv. 6–13 and vv. 24–26 is identified, Paul’s argument is moved on as the “vocation motif” is picked up in 9:7 and hangs the Hosea quotation onto it (9:25–26).⁷⁶⁴ Paul now shifts the focus onto the scope of the call: “God summons into relationship with himself Gentiles as well as Jews.”⁷⁶⁵ Watson’s reading of an “artful chiasmus” of Paul’s scriptural argument confirms that both Rom 9:12–13 (Gen 25:23; Mal 1:2–3) and 9:25–26 (Hos 2:25, 1) are about Pauline “theology of Gentile salvation” which speaks of God’s creation of communities of Gentile believers. Put together with 9:7–9 (Gen 21:12; 18:14), both Jewish and Gentile

⁷⁵⁸ Grindheim (2005: 145); Barclay (2015: 531) marks the pattern of divine calling as God precludes numerous criteria such as birth (natural rights of descent), status (comparative “greatness”), and practice (“works”).

⁷⁵⁹ Barclay (2015: 531).

⁷⁶⁰ Seifrid (2000: 153).

⁷⁶¹ One should not misunderstand that faith is therefore excluded in salvation because faith returns to the argument as the corollary to election (9:30).

⁷⁶² Wagner (2002: 49 n.18).

⁷⁶³ Moo (1996: 610) notes the use of some characteristic vocabularies in vv. 24–29: “sons of God” (v.26; cf. v.8); “seed” (v.29; cf. vv. 7 and 8); “call” (vv. 24 and 26; cf. vv. 7 and 12).

⁷⁶⁴ Hays (1989: 67–68).

⁷⁶⁵ Moo (1996: 611).

believers can trace their existence back to the God — the word of promise for Jews and the call to those without works for Gentiles.⁷⁶⁶

The first person plural ἡμᾶς (9:24) elucidates Paul's point, not only does Paul include himself in the history he narrates, the antithetical construction οὐ μόνον... ἀλλὰ καί is also used to describe the people whom God ἐκάλεσεν, from both the Israel and the Gentiles. Although it is not in participial form, καλέω is one of the main verbs in God's direct speech (9:25) and the quoted divine oracles from Hosea (κληθήσονται, 9:26).⁷⁶⁷ A chiasmic pattern is noted,⁷⁶⁸ and the catchword καλέω is linked limitedly to the Gentile section (vv. 24–26). Israel is not the sole concern in this chapter, the expressions ἐξ Ἰουδαίων and ἐξ ἐθνῶν illustrate those called by God do not separate or lose their ethnic origins but retain it. The word Ἰουδαῖος occurs only twice (cf. 11 times in Romans) in Rom 9–11 and contrasts with Gentiles are drawn in the two occurrences (9:24; 10:12).⁷⁶⁹ For Paul, God's call is directed to those from among (ἐκ) their respective ethnic groups, yet, “the Jewish-Christians remain Jews, members of the people of Israel (cf. Rom 11:1; Gal 2:15), and the Gentile-Christians remain Gentiles (cf. 11:13).”⁷⁷⁰

Paul's adaptation of the Hosea citations creates a verbal link back to 9:12–13 where the divine designation is. The incomplete “elliptical” syntax of 9:22–23 forces attentive readers to pause,⁷⁷¹ thus, giving the rhetoric of “whom he called” more force. The catena of citations from Hosea loosely attached to 9:22–24 by ὡς καί brings the argument forward.⁷⁷² Paul alters Hos 2:23 and 1:10b LXX respectively in Rom 9:25–26 in order to “accentuate his interpretation of Hosea's words as God's promise to call

⁷⁶⁶ Watson (2004: 320); Gadenz (2009: 95). Whereas Jews and Gentiles are often contrasted with one another (cf. Gal 2:15), the first-person plural unit them as one group. Moreover, here in 9:24, “the emphasis is not so much on the horizontal dimension, but on the vertical dimension, Jewish-Christians and Gentile-Christians find themselves together in one group because both have been called by God.”

⁷⁶⁷ Jewett says: ‘The first-person singular form of an oracle spoken by YHWH is thus introduced here as a direct personal confirmation of the calling of believers (2007: 109).’

⁷⁶⁸ Moo (1996: 611) suggests the following:

A God calls Jews v. 24

B God calls Gentiles v. 24

B' OT confirmation of God's call of Gentiles vv. 25–26

A' OT confirmation of God's call of Jews vv. 27–29

⁷⁶⁹ Terms like Ἰσραηλίτης (9:4; 11:1) and Ἰσραήλ (9:6^{2x}, 27^{2x}, 31; 10: 19, 21; 11:2, 7, 25–26) are more often used for “Jews”. On the other hand, in the 9 occurrences of ἔθνος in Rom 9–11, the term is always in collective sense.

⁷⁷⁰ Gadenz (2009: 98–99).

⁷⁷¹ It is severely elliptical because the long protasis is followed by no apodosis (Meyer, 2004: 196–97).

⁷⁷² Jewett (2007: 599).

a people not only from among the Jews, but also from among the Gentiles.”⁷⁷³ Compared with Hos 2:23 LXX, particular prominence is attached to καλέω when Paul drops the initial καὶ ἐρῶ, and omits the clause governed by the verb ἐλεήσω in Rom 9:25. The syntax is further modified to suit καλέσω, which is the main verb governing both halves of the sentence (Rom 9:25). The Hosea dative indirect object τῷ Οὐ λαῷ μου is changed to accusative direct object τὸν οὐ λαόν μου to emphasise the change of names. Also, the substitution of the original ἡλεημένην with ἡγαπημένην forges a strong link back to 9:12–13 where God τὸν Ἰακώβ ἡγάπησα (Mal 1:2).⁷⁷⁴ Paul’s lexical change is peculiar given the prominence of “mercy” is in the preceding context (Rom 9:14–21).⁷⁷⁵ More strikingly, Paul reverses the order of the clause to place οὐ λαόν μου (instead of οὐκ ἡλεημένη) first. “Not my people” are now called “my people”. Beside linking back to 9:12, the change points beyond a fixed binary of “loved”/“hated” and consolidates Paul’s hermeneutics of reversal.⁷⁷⁶ Paul “hyper-extends” the logic of reversal inherent in Hosea’s salvation oracles— if the ten covenant-breaking northern tribes could be embraced, in the same way ὡς, Scripture supports that God’s call is extended to the once excluded Gentiles.⁷⁷⁷ Paul’s alteration in the second half of the citation from Hos 1:10b LXX is identical to his previous move because ἐρρέθη αὐτοῖς is replaced by ἐάν κληθῇσονται.⁷⁷⁸ A compound citation with three fold repetition of καλέω (vv. 24–26) is created. Rom 9:26 forms a parallelism with 9:25 where “not my people” will be called “sons of the living God.” The reoccurrence of υἱοί (cf. 9:9, 27) illustrates how Paul boldly redefines divine sonship with reference to God’s call to include Gentiles as his people.⁷⁷⁹

⁷⁷³ Wagner (2002: 79).

⁷⁷⁴ Wagner (2002: 80–81) concludes that Paul’s reading of καλέω in Hosea 2:23 and addition of ἀγαπάω show no support in the Greek textual transition, thus, they are probably Paul’s adaptations. See also, Gadenz (2009: 100); Watson (2007: 320); contra. Lindars (1961: 243).

⁷⁷⁵ Moo (1996: 612).

⁷⁷⁶ Barclay (2015: 535).

⁷⁷⁷ Wagner (2002: 81, 83) lists how Paul uses other “negative appellations” on Gentiles in Romans, for instance, Gentiles are those “not pursuing righteousness” (9:30, cf. Isa 51:1), “no nation at all... a nation without understanding (10:19; Deut 32:21)”, “those not seeking me...those not asking me” (10:20; Isa 65:1), “those to whom it was not announced concerning him... those who have not heard (15:21; Isa 52:15).”

⁷⁷⁸ This study follows Wagner’s conclusion that ℙ⁴⁶ and its Western allies rather than the majority reading of ἐρρέθη αὐτοῖς probably preserve the original text of Rom 9:26a (2002: 84, n. 126).

⁷⁷⁹ Byrne (1996: 290) rightly observes that the inclusio between vv. 7b–8 and vv. 24–29 is about who constitutes the people “called” to enjoy the privilege of “divine sonship”, corresponding to the first two privileges named in the list of 9:4–5—Ἰσραηλῖται and ἡ υἱοθεσία.

One might ask whether the strong association between divine call and Gentile inclusion we have argued so far is warranted in Scripture. Some think that Hosea demonstrates an analogous principle of God's acceptance for the rejected,⁷⁸⁰ but Moo is right that "this text reflects a hermeneutical supposition...that OT predictions of a renewed Israel find their fulfillment in the church."⁷⁸¹ Discussing the "legitimacy" of Paul's use of scripture is not our purpose,⁷⁸² however, since Paul's artistry of citations from Hosea is threaded with divine act of *καλέω*, it is necessary to understand whether and how Paul inherits his conclusion.

It is less likely that Paul simply adopts the original context and limits God's calling to Israel. Beside the absence of *Ἰσραήλ* in 9:7–26, it is clear that the Isaiah citations in vv. 27–29 are applied to *Ἰσραήλ*.⁷⁸³ God's calling of *ἔθνη* is the surprising announcement in v. 24 that needs scriptural proof.⁷⁸⁴ Hosea's context validly supports Paul's claim.

Divine giving and reversal of negative appellations are significant for Gentiles in both Hosea and Romans.⁷⁸⁵ Literally, *עַמִּי-לֹא* (Hos 2:23; Rom 9:25) refers to Gomer's third child and recalls Hos 1:6, 9 where two children are named *לֹא-מִתְּנָה* / *Οὐκ ἠλεημένη* and *עַמִּי-לֹא* / *Οὐ λαός μου* respectively.⁷⁸⁶ The name *עַמִּי-לֹא* witnesses Israel's apostasy, the covenant formula dissolves into a formula of "divorce" (Hos 1:9) and "the ultimate radicalisation of YHWH's judgement".⁷⁸⁷ Interestingly, the verb *καλέω* is used in 1:6, 9 when God gives the naming instructions. God's judgement in light of the idolatrous Israel is climaxed at the names of children of Gomer the prostitute and

⁷⁸⁰ Dunn (1988b: 571, 575) points out "the promise to the northern Kingdom of Israel enshrines a principle." However, he does acknowledge the sense that God's call to Jew and Gentile was "foreseen and spoken of long before in scripture." Paul's use of *ὥς* in the introductory formula may signal the presence of such an analogy (Hafemann, 1998: 4; Moyise, 2009: 106).

⁷⁸¹ Moo (1996: 613).

⁷⁸² According to Stanley (1992: 112), Paul is violently reinterpreting Hosea.

⁷⁸³ It should be noted that reading references to Gentiles in Hosea's citations does not affirm the "supersessionist" position or putting Israel in the realm of rejection. See for example Jewett (2007: 563); Gaventa (2010: 267); Tanner (2005: 101). The presence of Gentiles in the church is "the sign and pledge that the realm of rejection, of Ishmael, of Esau, of Pharaoh, and of the unbelieving Jews themselves, is not finally shut out from the mercy of God (Cranfield, 1975: 498)." Barclay (2015: 535) similarly notes that "if God here calls those who are *not loved*, there is hope beyond the present crisis...it is precisely the 'wealth' of mercy that Paul experiences in the Gentile mission that gives him reason to ...imagine a future in which even the exclude can be integrated again (11:11–32)."

⁷⁸⁴ Aageson (1986: 272), "A bold assertion such as this required authoritative endorsement".

⁷⁸⁵ Whittle (2014: 32).

⁷⁸⁶ Paul omits the second person singular *εἰ σύ* in Hos 2:23 LXX to change the direct address (Stanley, 1992: 110–111).

⁷⁸⁷ Wolff (1974: 27).

Hosea (1:4, 6, 9). In the wake of judgement, the renaming of Hosea's children ironically symbolizes God's restoration of covenant with Israel. Jezreel no longer means killing but multiplication of the nation, the reversal of "not pitied" and "not my people" signifies a renewal (2:23 LXX). Then, how does Paul arrive at his Gentile conclusion? One of the most straight forward answer is that Gomer and her children were not viewed as belonging to Israel. Indeed, it is explicit in the name Οὐ λαός μου.⁷⁸⁸ A more related reason lies in Paul's adaptation and emphasis. Throughout Romans, Paul uses many negative appellations on Gentiles, for example, they are those "not pursuing righteousness" (9:30; cf. Isa 51:1), "no nation at all... a nation without understanding (10:19 cf. Deut 32:21; 10:20 cf. Isa 65:1; 15:21 cf. Isa 52:15)." ⁷⁸⁹ Out of these scripture citations, the only historical referent of οὐκ ἔθνη in Deut 32:21 is Gentiles.⁷⁹⁰ No wonder many commentators suggest a correlation between Rom 9:25 and 10:19.⁷⁹¹ Although these appellations related to Gentiles are always negative outside Rom 9, they have positive association inside the chapter: seed, Isaac, Jacob, objects of God's honour and mercy.⁷⁹² Paul finds in Hosea a scriptural antecedent testifying for this reversal. The divine "call" proclaims inexorable doom and unconditional redemption to the "not my people/ beloved" and "sons of the living God" simultaneously, as Wagner succinctly puts,

Paul gains hermeneutical leverage over the text, wrestling from it the astounding conclusion that the promise of return from exile and national restoration for Israel in Hosea is recalling an announcement of God's embrace of Gentiles as his own people.⁷⁹³

⁷⁸⁸ For the background of Gomer, see Andersen and Freedmen (1980: 171–72); Macintosh (1997: 10–13).

⁷⁸⁹ Wagner (2002: 81, 83).

⁷⁹⁰ It is interesting to note that out of the four occurrences of "not people" in the OT, different phrases οὐ ἔθνος and οὐ λαός are used in the LXX, yet, the Hebrew terms are the same לֹא-עַמִּי (Hos 1:9^{2x}, 10; 2:23 LXX; Deut 32:21). We are aware that οὐ γὰρ λαός/ לֹא-עַמִּי is also used in Isa 27:11, however, it is the verb ἔστιν that is negated, not the noun people. It should be noted that the first occurrence of "not my people" in Hos 1:9 and that in Hos 2:23 LXX literally refers to the third child of Gomer, and the second occurrence in Hos 1:9 refers to the people of Israel. Thus, that leaves Hos 1:10b (Rom 9: 26) applying to the Gentiles.

⁷⁹¹ See Watson (2004: 448), "Paul may have identified the 'non-nation' of the Deuteronomy text with the Gentile Christian community by association with the 'not-my-people' of his earlier citation from Hosea (Rom.9.25)". Cf. Bell (1994: 185, n. 84); Moo (1996: 668); Wagner (2002: 83).

⁷⁹² Jewett (2007: 598); Whittle (2014: 41).

⁷⁹³ Wagner (2002: 81). The Babylonian Talmud witnesses to a similar reading of Hos 2:25 MT (23 LXX) regarding restoration of Israel with God's calling of Gentiles (cf. *b. Pesah. 87b*). See Foster (2016: 194).

Beside renaming, it is possible to understand the geographical reference in Paul's adaptations of Hosea as pointing to Gentiles. God's renaming κληθήσονται is qualified geographically by ἐκεῖ in Rom 9:26. The extended spatial reference ἐν τῷ τόπῳ οὗ to ἐν τῷ τόπῳ οὗ...ἐάν ἐκεῖ could be taken as his emphasis to recall God's punishment to Israel "in the place of exile".⁷⁹⁴ Geographic specificity is important for Paul's application to Gentiles because it illustrates "*wherever* people are estranged from God, there God is now actively calling out a people for himself."⁷⁹⁵ The geographical significance rather than location deserves more attention.⁷⁹⁶ The "place" becomes level ground for Israel and Gentiles, while Israel is scattered because of God's judgement, they will find God's mercy leading them out of the wilderness and desolation (e.g., Hos. 2:14–15; 5:8–15; 11:8–11; 14:1–7). Likewise, it is precisely in the place of the Gentiles, where the gospel will go forth to them (cf. 10:18; 15:17–21), and they will be called "sons of the living God."⁷⁹⁷

D. Divine calling and divine filiation

Paul exploits this doom-and-salvation tension and the motif of return from exile in the prophet's words for his divine "son-calling" citation. God's determination to restore Israel is attested by the gathering of Judah and Israel under one ruler and "ἀναβήσονται ἐκ τῆς γῆς" (1:11 LXX; 2:2 MT). The phrase is taken as reference to the return from exile.⁷⁹⁸ It also points to the oracle of restoration after judgment (2:14–23 LXX [16–25 MT]), which is also the context (2:2–13 LXX [4–15 MT]) for Hos

⁷⁹⁴ For discussion about textual variant concerning whether Paul adds or simply takes over the ἐκεῖ from the LXX, see Wagner (2002: 85 n.129).

⁷⁹⁵ Wagner (2002: 85). Contra. Moyise (2009: 13) who thinks the geographical reference weakens Paul's claim for his Gentile mission.

⁷⁹⁶ Munck (1959: 306–307; 1967: 72–73); Dahl (2002: 146) think it refers to Jerusalem and the tradition of eschatological pilgrimage of the nations; contra. Cranfield (1996: 500). Basing his analysis on the grammatical construction of Hos 1:10 (MT 2:1), Cranfield (1996: 500–501) reads the phrase ἐν τῷ τόπῳ οὗ...ἐκεῖ as "instead of".

⁷⁹⁷ Seifrid (2007: 648); Wagner (2002: 85); Moo (1996: 613–14). Glenny (1995: 54) reads the locality reference in light of Paul's missionary experiences and suggests that Paul contends that Gentiles do not need to go up to Jerusalem (nor become Jewish) in order to experience their transformation into "sons of God".

⁷⁹⁸ Wagner (2002: 87–88 n. 139–140) convincingly supports this reading with Targum Jonathan as it explicitly identifies the place as "the place to which they were exiled among the sons of the people בְּאַחֲרָא דְאַתְגְּלִיאוֹ לְבִינֵי עַמְמֵיָא" and "they shall go up out of the land of their exile מֵאַרְעֵי נְלוּתָהוֹן". Although Targum Jonathan dates later than the Second Temple Period, the Targum could preserve a reading contemporary to Paul. For the association between Israel's restoration and the call of the Gentiles, see Scott (2001: 518–59); Hafemann (1998: 47).

2:23 (Rom 9:25). YHWH, the faithful husband, is the one leading adulterous Israel into the wilderness (2:14), but “in there” he will renew his covenant with them, just like a new exodus κατὰ τὰς ἡμέρας ἀναβάσεως αὐτῆς ἐκ γῆς Αἰγύπτου (2:15). Hosea repeatedly depicts Israel’s restoration in terms of new exodus.⁷⁹⁹ It should also be noted that the divine calling sonship metaphor recurs in Hos 11:1 (cf. Exo 4:22-23): “When Israel was a child I loved him, and out of Egypt I called μετεκάλεσα my Son.” Despite Israel’s disobedience (11:2–7), it will be overcome by YHWH’s love and mercy (11:8) and the exile will be concluded with the return from Egypt ἐξ Αἰγύπτου to their homes εἰς τοὺς οἴκους αὐτῶν (11:10–11; cf. 1:10–11[2:1–2]; 3:4–5).⁸⁰⁰ The new appellation “sons of the living God”, which will only exist because of the life-giving power of YHWH, signifies the redemption of Israel post exile in a new exodus.⁸⁰¹ Historically, “with these words of the prophet, the promise to the patriarchs has become a new eschatological promise of salvation”.⁸⁰² In Romans, the future verb κληθήσονται heightens the sense of expectation to Hosea’s oracles. According to Paul, it is already a *reality* in the Roman community— composed of Jews and Gentiles — that God has now called into being (9:24).⁸⁰³

Radical reversal of status associated with “the divine one who calls” brings to mind our previous analysis. From “the one justifies the ungodly” (4:5), “the one gives life to the dead and calls into existence things that do not exist” (4:17), “the one raised from the dead Jesus our Lord” (4:25), to “the one who calls” (9:12), God’s “irrevocable call” (11:29) to his people is placed on a historical line, from past to future, from the origin of the Abrahamic family (Rom 4) to the means by which Israel was formed and preserved (Rom 9:6–13, 24–26). The thematic meanings of Paul’s divine designations are always about God’s creative actions in (re)fashioning his people, Jews and Gentiles alike.⁸⁰⁴ The divine call brings about status reversal, be it the reversal of the law of primogeniture, the preference of congruous human works, or the boundary of the

⁷⁹⁹ “Hosea has a doctrine of redemption by recapitulation. God will take Israel back into the desert, and begin all over again (Andersen and Freedmen, 1980: 203).” Cf. Exodus 34:6–7.

⁸⁰⁰ Israel’s restoration is repeatedly depicted with “an ingathering from the nations and a return to the land” in the Twelve Prophets. Keesmaat (1999: 39) concludes that both Hos 2 and 11 is a retelling of exodus on the part of God.

⁸⁰¹ Wolff (1974: 27).

⁸⁰² Wolff (1974: 26).

⁸⁰³ Wagner (2002: 85) follows Porter (1989: 414) and notes in relative clauses, the Future has a stronger sense of exception missing from the Subjunctive.

⁸⁰⁴ Hultgren (2011: 369).

people of God.⁸⁰⁵ Although God's story "is full of contradictions, reversals, and paradoxes, there is a persisting narrative of electing, calling and grace."⁸⁰⁶

5.1.3 Divine καλέιν and its background

After analysing "the one who calls" (Rom 9:12) in its own context, the next logical question would be to what extent Paul's usage is similar to or different with his contemporaries. In his study about Paul's God language, Richardson insists that Paul reaches "beyond the bounds of Septuagintal language" by developing his argument with reference to divine election.⁸⁰⁷ By omitting references to the characters of the "elected" patriarchs, Paul makes a radical statement about the freedom of God. Not only do we disagree with the reading that divine καλέιν is related to God making a selection within Israel,⁸⁰⁸ Richardson's emphasis on the distinctiveness of Paul's God language is not unproblematic. According to Chester's analysis of Paul's use of καλέιν, he concludes "[T]he Septuagint is clearly a source for Paul's use of this vocabulary in the sense that, had it not appeared in the scriptures, it seems unlikely that Paul would have employed the concept of calling."⁸⁰⁹ It should be noted that affirming the LXX as primary background for Paul does not mean the concept is used in an identical way given καλέιν is capable of conveying wide range of meanings.⁸¹⁰ Yet, the tension between Richardson and Chester indicates a background study is worth conducting.

A. Divine καλέιν in pagan literature

Martin remarks: "If one wishes to talk about the meaning of early Christian language, one must talk about the language in the context of the Graeco-Roman city. Regardless of the origin of the language, one must explain how it worked among and

⁸⁰⁵ Thielman (1994: 177–78).

⁸⁰⁶ Barclay (2015: 558).

⁸⁰⁷ Although the importance of καλέω is noted, Richardson (1994: 33–34, 43–44) does not elaborate on its meaning or significance. He reads that the crucial piece in Paul's midrash on καλέω (vv.6–13) comes in v.11 — ἐκλογή and πρόθεσις. Also, his reading fails to notice the significance of καλέω in 9:24–25 and limits it to 9:6–13. Although Richardson devotes one out of five chapters of his book on Rom 9–11, he does not focus on καλέω (or Paul's choice or use of individual words) as God language but compares and contrasts Paul's argument as a whole concerning the patriarchs (Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau) with that in Jewish traditions.

⁸⁰⁸ Richardson (1994: 32, 44).

⁸⁰⁹ Chester (2003: 77).

⁸¹⁰ Chester (2003: 77–78).

for Greek-speaking Gentiles.”⁸¹¹ Exploring the extensive lexical entry καλέω κτλ. is unnecessary.⁸¹² Yet, given Paul’s thematic meaning, we are particularly interested at texts about deities’ calling causing radical change of the recipients’ status.⁸¹³ Chester finds there are very few parallels in surviving Greco-Roman texts, but he helpfully suggests calling in philosophy conversion narratives could be a meaningful counterpart.⁸¹⁴ We will first probe into a few religious texts and then proceed to philosophical calling texts.

The call of divine patrons or benefactors is one of the conventional rhetoric patterns of ancient patronage and benefaction.⁸¹⁵ Prominent examples using καλέιν are found in Aristides’ *Hieroi Logoi* (*Sacred Tales*). The healing God Asclepius first began to reveal to Aristides addressing his two physical impasses (II.5–6).⁸¹⁶ Recognising Asclepius’ power at the first divine encounter,⁸¹⁷ this moment was also a transition in the narrative where hope replaces despair.⁸¹⁸ Aristides understood the dream as κλησις (the divine call) and immediately embarked his journey “with good fortune” to Pergamene Asclepieion where he would then be healed (II.7). Both κλησις and καλέιν were repeatedly used by Aristides to describe Asclepius’ instruction for him to go to his temple.⁸¹⁹ The benefaction call not only brought healing to Aristides,

⁸¹¹ Martin (1990: xvii).

⁸¹² Four major uses are listed in BDAG (s.v. καλέω κτλ.):

1. to identify by name — to name;
2. to request the presence of someone at a social gathering — to invite;
3. to use authority to have a person or group appear — to summon; and
4. from the meanings “summon” and “invite” there develops the extended sense of choice for receipt of a special benefit or experience.

⁸¹³ Paul almost always uses καλέω to describe God’s activity (Klein, 1984: 53).

⁸¹⁴ Chester (2003: 63, 70).

⁸¹⁵ Crook (2004: 91–150, esp. 97–100).

⁸¹⁶ Aelius Aristides, *Sacred Tales* II.5–6. Aristides narrates about the doctor’s inability to help (ἦν τοῖς ἰατροῖς ἀπορία πολλή) and his inability to breathe (χαλεπώτατον δ’ ἀπάντων καὶ ἀπορώτατον ὅτι τοῦ πνεύματος ἀπεκεκλείμην), followed by Asclepius’ initial revelation (πρῶτον ὁ σωτὴρ χρηματίζειν ἤρξατο).

⁸¹⁷ Aelius Aristides, *Sacred Tales* II.7 (Behr, 1968: 224), “ἐνταῦθα πρῶτον ὁ σωτὴρ χρηματίζειν ἤρξατο. ἀνυπόδητόν τε γὰρ προελθεῖν ἐπέταξε (He ordered me to go forth) καὶ ἐβόων δὴ ἐν τῷ ὄνειρατι ὥς ἂν ὕπαρ τε καὶ ἐπ’ ὄνειρατι τετελεσμένῳ, μέγας ὁ Ἀσκληπιὸς, τετέλεσται τὸ πρόσταγμα. ταῦθ’ ἅμα προῖων ἐδόκουν βοᾶν. μετὰ ταῦτα κλησις καὶ ἀφίξις ἀπὸ Σμύρνης εἰς Πέργαμον μετὰ τῆς ἀγαθῆς τύχης (After this an invitation and a journey from Smyrna to Pergamum with good fortune).” Behr’s translation will be followed unless specified.

⁸¹⁸ Harrison (2000: 245–59) reads it as a narrative of conversion and this is the turning point in which Aristides converted to the cult of Asclepius.

⁸¹⁹ Aelius Aristides, *Sacred Tales* IV. 83 (Behr, 1968: 272), “ταῦτα ἡπόρουν: κὰν τούτῳ ἐκάλει ὁ θεὸς πάλιν εἰς Πέργαμον (God called me again to Pergamum), καὶ ἐτύγχανε Πουφίνος ἐπιδημῶν”; IV. 103

it was “the catalyst for him to put in writing the many benefactions he received from the god.”⁸²⁰ In *Sacred Tales* IV 15, Aristides said “While I now rested in Pergamene because of the divine summons κατὰ τὴν κλησίν and my supplication, I received from the God a command and exhortation not to abandon rhetoric μὴ προλιπεῖν τοὺς λόγους.”⁸²¹ Aristides praised the god for his οἱ λόγοι,⁸²² the benefaction of oratory was casted in terms of a sign (given by God) calling us forth τὸ σύνθημα παρὴν ἀνακαλοῦν (XLII.14).⁸²³ In sum, the call of Asclepius is loaded with salvific significance illustrated in Aristides’ recovery,⁸²⁴ and also related to his oratory career. Although the orator is not called to be son of god, changes before and after the calling are somehow introduced. The pilgrimage call Aristides from sickness to health, and his oratory profession is ascribed by the divine call. Likewise, in an inscription in 118/9 C.E. from the area of Nisyra in Lydia, a woman was called to serve God (κληθεῖσα ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ) in a low-level capacity.⁸²⁵ It should be noted Paul’s letters are earlier than these texts⁸²⁶ and thus we are not suggesting they are directly related. Yet, they could provide a useful analogy to Paul from the vantage point of Greco-Roman religious benefactions background.

As for καλέειν in philosophical texts, “The motif of a conversion to philosophy comparable to a call is to be found in particular in the early Academy and among the

(Behr, 1968: 276), “μετὰ ταῦτα ἔφεσις, κλησις ἡγεμόνος, κλησις τοῦ σωτῆρος εἰς Πέργαμον (a summons of the Savior to Pergamum).” See also προκέκλημαί in IV. 104; Aelius Aristides, *Oration* XXIII. 15 (Edelstein and Edelstein, 1945: 202 T. 402).

⁸²⁰ Crook (2004: 97).

⁸²¹ Aristides attributed the organising principle, the κεφάλαια approach, for the 300,000 lines in his journals as he called on καλοῦμεν god’s guidance (ὅπως ἂν ὁ θεὸς ἄγῃ τε καὶ κινή) in II. 4. See also Aristides, *Oration* XLVIII. 4 (Edelstein and Edelstein, 1945: 155 T. 316).

⁸²² Cf. Aelius Aristides, *Oration* XLII. 12 An Address Regarding Asklepios (Edelstein and Edelstein, 1945: 158 T. 317), “ἐμοὶ γὰρ, ὃ δέσποτα Ἀσκληπιέ, πολλὰ καὶ παντοῖα, ὥσπερ ὑπέειπον, παρὰ σοῦ καὶ τῆς σῆς φιλάνθρωπίας γεγένηται, μέγιστον δὲ καὶ πλείστης χάριτος ἄξιον καὶ σχεδὸν ὡς εἰπεῖν οἰκειότατον οἱ λόγοι.”

⁸²³ Aelius Aristides, *Oration* XLII An Address Regarding Asklepios 12–14 (Edelstein and Edelstein, 1945: 158 T. 317), “ἐμοὶ γὰρ, ὃ δέσποτα Ἀσκληπιέ, πολλὰ καὶ παντοῖα, ὥσπερ ὑπέειπον, παρὰ σοῦ καὶ τῆς σῆς φιλάνθρωπίας γεγένηται, μέγιστον δὲ καὶ πλείστης χάριτος ἄξιον καὶ σχεδὸν ὡς εἰπεῖν οἰκειότατον οἱ λόγοι....καὶ ταῦτά τε οὕτως ἐπέπρακτο καὶ τὸ σύνθημα παρὴν ἀνακαλοῦν (the sign was given calling us forth), ἔργῳ σοῦ δείξαντος ὅτι πολλῶν ἔνεκα προήγαγες εἰς μέσον, ὡς φανείμην ἐν τοῖς λόγοις, καὶ γένοιτο αὐτήκοοι τῶν κρειττόνων οἱ τελεώτατοι....”

⁸²⁴ Note also XLII 7, when Aristide casted Asclepius’ healing in the metaphorical terms of primeval creation, “ἀλλὰ καὶ μέλη τοῦ σώματος...προνοία τοῦ θεοῦ γενέσθαι σφίσι, τῶν παρὰ τῆς φύσεως διαφθαρέντων...ἡμῖν τοίνυν οὐχὶ μέρος τοῦ σώματος, ἀλλ’ ἅπαν τὸ σῶμα συνθεῖς τε καὶ συμπήξας αὐτὸς ἔδωκε δωρεάν, ὥσπερ Προμηθεὺς τάρχαϊα λέγεται συμπλάσαι τὸν ἄνθρωπον”

⁸²⁵ Hoz (1999: 165 no. 5.35).

⁸²⁶ According to Russell, Trapp, and Nesselrath (2016: 6–7), the *Sacred Tales* were published in the very late 160s and 170s and *Orations* could be dated earliest to 140s.

Cynics.”⁸²⁷ Epictetus the Stoic (ca. 50-120 CE) taught philosopher is called to bear witness to the true nature of life, ὡς μάρτυς ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ κεκλημένος (*Discourses* 1.29.47). Also, being a philosopher was “all for himself and for God” πάντα ἑμαυτῷ καὶ θεῷ (*Discourses* 4.8.18).⁸²⁸ However, Epictetus is different from Paul because the one being called is deemed worthy σὺ γὰρ ἄξιος εἶ προαχθῆναι μάρτυς ὑπ’ ἐμοῦ (*Discourses* 1.29.47)/ ἄξιον ἡγήσατο προσαγαγεῖν εἰς μαρτυρίαν (*Discourses* 1.29.49) by the divine caller.⁸²⁹ Meanwhile, “the time of calling” καιροῦ καλοῦντος was characterised in terms of hardship (*Discourses* 2.1.34; see also 1.29.33). Philosophers were exhorted to do all these things with confidence, with trust in Him who has called you to face them and deemed you worthy of this position πεποιθότως τῷ κεκληκότι σε ἐπ’ αὐτά, τῷ ἄξιον τῆς χώρας ταύτης κεκρικότι (*Discourses* 2.1.39).⁸³⁰ The designation τῷ κεκληκότι bears resemblance to Paul’s construction, nevertheless, the stress on worthiness and endurance of hardship are contrary to Paul’s argument disparaging human ἔργον.

Although philosophers attribute the pursuit of philosophy to deities’ call, neither God’s role as creator, nor his concern for the salvation of his creature, nor the change of status, is suggested in the thematic meaning. Also, the use of καλέω κτλ. in both religious or philosophical Greco-Roman texts are directed towards individual, “to be called does not result in becoming part of a community.”⁸³¹

B. Divine καλέιν in the OT

Despite the fact that καλέω is an extremely common verb denoting a range of meanings in the LXX,⁸³² a number of occurrences are hardly genuine forerunners for Paul’s use of καλέω.⁸³³ However, according to Chester and Delling, a small but

⁸²⁷ Hengel (1981: 28). Nock (1933: 164–86) comments that conversion to philosophy was the only genuine parallel within Greco–Roman society to conversion to Christianity.

⁸²⁸ Chester (2003: 74) cautiously notes that Epictetus, being a Stoic after all, might conceive of his “god” who is indeed the “imminent reason”, in a strikingly concrete manner.

⁸²⁹ Epictetus, *Discourses* 1.29.47, 49: “ἔρχου σὺ καὶ μαρτύρησόν μοι· σὺ γὰρ ἄξιος εἶ προαχθῆναι μάρτυς ὑπ’ ἐμοῦ...ὅτι σε ἐτίμησεν ταύτην τὴν τιμὴν καὶ ἄξιον ἡγήσατο προσαγαγεῖν εἰς μαρτυρίαν τηλικαύτην...”

⁸³⁰ On the contrary, complaining about hardship is considered a disgrace to the calling “ταῦτα μέλλεις μαρτυρεῖν καὶ κατασχύνειν τὴν κλησιν ἣν κέκληκεν;” (*Discourses* 1.29. 49). See Chester (2003: 72).

⁸³¹ Chester (2003: 74).

⁸³² The verb appears 481 times in the LXX.

⁸³³ For example, God speaking loudly (calling out) to Moses (e.g. Exo 3:4; 19:3, 20) or Samuel (1 Sam 3) or God naming the stars (e.g. Ps 147:4).

relevant group of examples closely comparable to Rom 9:12 can be found in Second and Third Isaiah.⁸³⁴

The theme of creation is often employed in Deutero-Isaiah texts characterising God in terms of “the one who calls”. God is repeatedly and almost exclusively designated as *ὁ ποιήσας/ὁ πλάσας* in Isa 40–55, *ἐκάλεσά σε τὸ ὄνομά σου* “who called Israel by name” (43:1).⁸³⁵ God is identified specifically as creator of Israel, affirming an imitate relationship where they belong to him and he to them. References to God’s creative power and his divine calling are found often as parts of the announcements of redemption. With Genesis 1–2 as background, *בּוֹרֵא הַשָּׁמַיִם/ὁ ποιήσας τὸν οὐρανόν* “the one who created the heavens”, *יָרַךְ הָאָרֶץ/ὁ στερεώσας τὴν γῆν* “established the earth”, and “gave breath to the people and life to those who walk thereon” (Isa 42:5) — directly summons his servant *ὁ θεὸς ἐκάλεσά σε* (cf. Isa 42:1) to proclaim the word of redemption (Isa 42:6). God calls upon His servant to serve as “a covenant people *בְּרִית עַם/διαθήκην γένους*” and “a light of nations *אֹרַח גּוֹיִם/φῶς ἐθνῶν*”.⁸³⁶ While the purpose of God’s call in Roman 9:12 is expressed with an *ἵνα*-clause, the prophet employs two infinitives illustrating God’s aim, *לִפְקֹחַ/ἀνοῖξαι* to open the eyes of the blind and *לְהוֹצִיא/ἐξαγαγεῖν* to bring out those who are bound (42:7). Restoration of eyesight to the blind and recovery of hearing to the deaf is a common picture in Isaiah for God’s deliverance of Israel.⁸³⁷

The juxtaposition of God’s call and creation is found in texts about the Persian King Cyrus. Cyrus is depicted as the object of God’s *καλῶν* (cf. 41:2), *ἐκτίσα καὶ ἐποίησα, ἤγαγον αὐτὸν καὶ εὐόδωσα τὴν ὁδὸν αὐτοῦ* “whom God created and made, whom God brought and prospered” (46:11; 48:13, 15).⁸³⁸ The verb *καλεῖν* is used in 48:13 for God “calling” celestial bodies into existence, in the next verse, *καλεῖν* is used

⁸³⁴ Chester (2003: 64) lists 19 occurrences and 17 out of them are from second/third Isaiah. Delling (1963: 30) comments that “*καλεῖν* bezieht sich auch hier auf das Hineinnehmen in das Heil. — Gott ist der Berufende — darin ist auch der Gedanke der Souveränität seines Tuns eingeschlossen, der in Röm. 9, 12 im Zusammenhang des *ὁ καλῶν* ausdrücklich (durch den Gegensatz: *οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων*) herausgestellt wird (die Souveränität des göttlichen Handelns wurde spezifisch in dem *ἐγὼ Κύριος...ὁ καλῶν* Jes. 45, 3 sichtbar.)” And he noted that “Eine genauere Untersuchung des Gebrauchs von *καλεῖν* in LXX und ein Vergleich mit dem im Neuen Testament wäre wohl lohnend.”

⁸³⁵ E.g., Isa 27:11; 43:1; 44:2; 49:5; 44:24; 45:8; 43:1; 44:2; 51:13; 54:5. See Wagner’s (2002: 66) discussion on Isa 27:11 the only exception outside DeuteroIsaiah.

⁸³⁶ See Fishbane (1985: 6) for different possibilities of understanding the difficult syntax concerning the addressee’s identity and the meaning of the task.

⁸³⁷ E.g., 6:9–10, 29:10; 18; 32:3–4; 35:5; 42:7, 16, 18–20, 43:8; 61:1.

⁸³⁸ Isa 48:13, “*ἡ χεὶρ μου ἐθεμελίωσεν τὴν γῆν, καὶ ἡ δεξιὰ μου ἐστερέωσεν τὸν οὐρανόν.*”

for God's call to assemble the Judeans. Although called by God, Cyrus is neither aware of it (cf. Isa 45:4b, 5b) nor granted the intimate title as servant (παῖς, δοῦλος). Instead, prodigious power is bestowed in order to benefit God's "servant" Israel (48:14).⁸³⁹ Divine providence and concern for Israel through the calling of Cyrus is illustrated again in 45:3–4, God is repeatedly self-identified as ὁ θεὸς ὁ καλῶν τὸ ὄνομά σου but he makes it clear that it is ἔνεκεν "on behalf of" Jacob my servant and Israel my chosen.⁸⁴⁰ In sum, divine call is often related to creation as well as salvation of Israel.

Apart from Cyrus, God calls another individual in Deutero-Isaiah. God says that Abraham was called when he was one ὅτι εἷς ἦν καὶ ἐκάλεσα αὐτόν, and he blessed εὐλόγησα, loved ἠγάπησα, and multiplied ἐπλήθυνα him (51:2). The prophet's retelling of God's call to Abraham (Isa 51:1–8) is worth investigating because it has many points of contact with Rom 9. Lexically speaking, beside the occurrence of καλέω and Ἀβραάμ (Rom 9:6), Isa 51:2 is the only mention of Σάρρα after its last use in Gen 25:12 (cf. Gen 18:10 in Rom 9:9).⁸⁴¹ Isa 51:1 opens with a summons for οἱ διώκοντες τὸ δίκαιον "all who pursue righteousness" (cf. τὰ διώκοντα δικαιοσύνην in Rom 9:30),⁸⁴² both Isaiah and Paul look back to Abraham as a witness to God's faithfulness to his promise. The first section of the pericope (51:1–3) points back to God's past calling to Abraham and links the fulfilment of YHWH's promise to assure the readers with the restoration of Zion.⁸⁴³ Again in creational terms, Abraham and Sarah are identified as rock and quarry respectively in Isa 51:2.⁸⁴⁴ Beside tying καλέω to the larger creation theme, the audience attention is also drawn to Abraham's desperate situation and God's subsequent call. It is because כִּי/ ὅτι Abraham was one יחיד/ εἷς ἦν, that he had no son and his wife was barren, God called him ייחאדק/ ἐκάλεσα

⁸³⁹ Chester (2003: 67). While the MT says God has loved Cyrus, the LXX translation introduces the idea where Cyrus becomes the instrument of God's love for Israel.

⁸⁴⁰ God as maker ὁ πλάσων is parallel to God as redeemer ὁ λυτρούμενός in Isa 44:24 and these designations are the basis for the rebuilding of Jerusalem and inhabitation of Judah through the agency of Cyrus (Wagner, 2002: 67).

⁸⁴¹ Römer (2012: 167).

⁸⁴² The striking concentration of δίκ-words (51:1, 5, 6, 8) in 51:1–8 should not be easily overlooked.

⁸⁴³ Harmon (2010: 137); Chester (2003: 65).

⁸⁴⁴ According to Westermann, rock and quarry are allusions to ancient myths concerning the birth of men and women which "give Israel's descent from Abraham and Sarah the status of an act of creation (1969: 236)." Restoration of Zion is depicted as the new Eden in 51:3.

αὐτόν (51:2).⁸⁴⁵ God's call is salvific, benefactor, and more importantly brings about a change, from miniature to multiplication. In analogous fashion, the validity of God's word is questioned because of Israel was in exile in Isaiah and Jewish disbelief in Romans. Yet, God's faithfulness of his promise is demonstrated through God's call to Abraham (and his seed) in both cases. What is more, in the second section (51:4–6) of the oracle, God announces the nearness of his saving righteousness to not only Israel, but also to the ἔθνη (nations) and νῆσοι (islands) in 51:5. In Rom 9:24–26 Paul argues for the inclusion of Gentiles as λαόν μου with the Hosea citation, whereas in Isa 51:4 God directly addresses οἱ βασιλεῖς (the Gentile kings) in his salvation oracle. God's call plays a key role in the fulfilment of Abraham being a blessing to the nations (cf. φῶς ἐθνῶν in 42:1, 4, 6; 49:6; 51:4) in both Isaiah and Paul's rewriting of Abraham's call.⁸⁴⁶

In short, the thematic meaning of καλέω in Deutero-Isaiah is highly relevant to Paul's meaning in Rom 9. Instead of referring to divine selection within Israel, ὁ καλῶν is repeatedly identified as the creator of Israel where salvation and restoration of Israel are based. Deities' call is loaded with soteriological significance in the LXX or religious pagan texts. However, Paul's usage is closer to Deutero-Isaiah because the patriarch's narrative is invoked. God's purpose to extend Israel's boundary to the nations is stressed with reference to Abraham's call. Although the philosophers are called by God to be his servant in Greco-Roman philosophical call narratives, Abraham's call to become a light to the nations is communal-oriented. More importantly, both Isaiah and Paul stress on a change before and after the call. Just as Abraham is called from "one" to "many", Gentiles in Romans are similarly called from "not my people" to "my people". A consistency of divine action is observed as "the one who calls" (Rom 9:12) and "the one who calls into existence the things that do not exist" (Rom 4:17) works in the same way not to *creatio ex nihilo* but to "create" God's own people.

⁸⁴⁵ Janzen (1989: 69–82) suggests that the reference to "one" is an echo of the Shema, and it emphasises Abraham as a unique recipient of God's blessing. However, Harmon (2010: 137) rightly reputed that the issue at hand is not election but rather the minuscule beginning of the people of God. It was despite this seemingly impossible situation, no offspring for Abraham and a remnant for Israel in exile, God promises to bless and multiply them with numerous descendants (Römer, 2012: 166).

⁸⁴⁶ Harmon (2010: 138–39). It is interesting to note that the root קרא is not a frequent verb in Genesis description of God's calling to Abraham (Römer, 2012: 166–68).

C. Divine καλέιν in early Jewish texts

Good though Chester's survey is, he did not consider first century Jewish texts as relevant background.⁸⁴⁷ Although the number of occurrences is limited, meaningful counterparts can also be found.

Divine calling is often associated with divine filiation in some Jewish tradition.⁸⁴⁸ In *Sirach*, the high priest prays for God's mercy upon Israel, who are called in God's name נִקְרָא בְשֵׁם יְיָ and whom God have named "Firstborn" בְּכוֹר כִּינִיתָה (Sir 36:17[11]). The Seer in 4 Ezra likewise invokes God for deliverance and identifies Israel as "whom you have called your first born" (6:58; cf. Prayer of Joseph 2-3). Although the Seer addresses God as the creator, a stark contrast is drawn between Israel "whom God called as first born" and the nations who said to be "nothing" or derided as "spittle" (6:56–57). Contrarily, it is because the world was created for Israel (6:59), the people whom God loved should not be given over to godless tribes (4:23). A vivid picture of creation is the basis for Israel's eschatological restoration.⁸⁴⁹ In 2 Baruch, it is because God is sovereign over all human history and creation (21:9, 11), Baruch challenges God to show his power when Israel and Jerusalem in particular are suffering (21:19). God is invoked to help transform the state of death for the sake of his people, "because you called us a beloved people on account of your name" (21:21).⁸⁵⁰ Interpreted with the conception of creation and new creation, "the giving back of the dead from the graves is transformed into the gathering of the beloved... who are called 'beloved' God himself."⁸⁵¹ While creation, reversal of status and divine sonship motifs are used in context of divine calling, they are used to privilege Israel and exclude Gentiles in God's salvation plan.

Similarly, a contrast between υἱοὶ θεοῦ (Ps. Sol 17:27) and ἔθνη (Ps. Sol 17:24, 25, 29, 30) is present in *Psalms of Solomon's* use of divine καλέω. The Gentiles are

⁸⁴⁷ Although Chester (2003: 63) acknowledged *Jos.As* 8:9 is a text about "conversion", he regarded it as a Christian text with a late dating in 200–400 CE. However, Hicks–Keeton (2018: 17–19, 40) criticises it and suggests it could be dated earliest to 115–17 CE and latest 38–41 CE because of the date of the Jewish Revolt.

⁸⁴⁸ E.g., Jub. 1:25; Bib. Ant. 18:6; 4 Ezra 6:58. Byrne (1979: 120).

⁸⁴⁹ Endo (2002: 74–76). *Baruch* addressed God as "the one who in the beginning of the world called that which did not yet exist" (cf. 21:4, 6–8, 10; 2 Bar 48:2a) and "the only Living one" (21:10).

⁸⁵⁰ The author also pleads God to seal the realm of death on the account that God created the world for Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (2 Baruch 21:24).

⁸⁵¹ Herzer (2005: 62–65) observes that 4 Baruch 3:8 shares common key words with 2 Bar 21:21 and suggested that 4 Bar 3:8 develops the eschatological restoration in terms that span beginning and end.

objects for God's destruction (ὀλεθρεύω, ἐλέγχω) while he purges (καθαρίζω) Jerusalem (Ps Sol 17:24–30). A pericope from the *Book of Jubilees* should not be overlooked because of its striking resemblance to Hos 1:10 (Rom 9:26) and yet, its hostility towards Gentiles. In response to Moses' prayer interceding for Israel, God promises he will restore his people as a father to them and "they will all be called 'sons of the living God' (Jub 1:25)." The problem for Israel's sin is their mixture with Gentiles (Jub 1:19; cf. 4:26; 23:11–32), but God will intervene by recreating "all of the elect of Israel" just as he renews the heavens and the earths and recreates the temple (Jub 1:29). Not only does the author cast the unique relationship between God and Israel in creational terms, Israel's election is written anachronistically into the very fabric of the cosmos as the seed of Jacob is sanctified on the seventh day of creation (Jub 2:19–20).⁸⁵² Although God is a universal creator, "Jubilees merges creation and election in order to mark Israel as separate from all other nations and to mandate continued division."⁸⁵³ While God restores and renews the cosmos for those he called and separated as "sons of the living God", those who are not called (the Gentiles), are destroyed and annihilated from the earth and uprooted from the earth.⁸⁵⁴

From our previous examples, the divine act of καλέω is often used to emphasise the distinctiveness of Israel verses the Gentile nations. Yet, *JosAs* tells another story. Recognising Aseneth's distress at his rebuff (*JosAs* 8:8), Joseph blesses her for the second time and addresses God as ὁ ζωοποιήσας τὰ πάντα καὶ καλέσας ἀπὸ τοῦ σκότους εἰς τὸ φῶς (8:9a).⁸⁵⁵ Although καλέσας is in past instead of present tense as in Rom 9:12, the use of substantival participle for divine designation is a significant parallel.⁸⁵⁶ In his first blessing, Joseph has already identified God as ὁ ζωοποιήσας τὰ πάντα in 8:2 and he later reiterates the same point in 9:5 ὁ θεὸς ποιήσαι πάντα τὰ κτίσματα αὐτοῦ (see also 12:1).⁸⁵⁷ Nevertheless, God is not presented as the specific maker of Israel, instead, he is the creator "of all people", Jews and Gentiles alike.⁸⁵⁸

⁸⁵² Hicks–Keeton (2018: 121); VanderKam makes a similar point "*Jubilees* emphasizes the relationship between God and Israel by tracing it back to creation (1989: 122)."

⁸⁵³ Hicks–Keeton (2018: 121–22).

⁸⁵⁴ E.g., Jub 15:26, 34; 20:4; 22:20; 24:30–32; 26:34; 31:17, 19–20. Hicks–Keeton (2018: 123).

⁸⁵⁵ See Hicks–Keeton (2018: 125–27) for an analysis of textual variations.

⁸⁵⁶ Not to mention that ζωοποιήσας recalls another divine designation in Rom 4:17 as discussed.

⁸⁵⁷ *JosAs* 12:1–2 (Burchard's translation), "...ὁ κτίσας τὰ πάντα καὶ ζωοποιήσας ὁ δοὺς πνοὴν ζωῆς πάσῃ τῇ κτίσει σου...ὅτι σὺ κύριε ἐλάλησας καὶ ἐξωογονήθησαν ὅτι ὁ λόγος σου κύριε ζωὴ ἐστὶ πάντων τῶν κτισμάτων σου."

⁸⁵⁸ Goodwin (2001: 67–68).

Joseph's choice of divine designations are not just empty rhetorics because his appeal is well suited contextually. The one who created all (things) is the same God who called καλέσας his creature from darkness to the light, and from the error to the truth, and from the death to the life (8:9a). The imagery is hardly applicable solely to physical creation, a contrast between two realms of existence is drawn. Darkness, error and death characterise vain pagan existence outside, whereas light, truth and life mark the unique blessing of God's people inside. Yet, the conflict is resolved when Aseneth's "conversion" begins.⁸⁵⁹ The change of status before and after God's call, is again obvious. God is asked to ἀνακαίνισον, ἀνάπλασον and ἀναζωοποιήσον Aseneth the Egyptian. Not only does πλάσσειν recall one of Isaiah's favourite creation verbs, all three of the ἀνα-verbal phrases echo with the familiar theme of recreation with reference to Israel's restoration in the OT and some Hellenistic Jewish texts. What is different here is the object of divine renewal — it is no longer Israel, but an idol-worshipping Egyptian woman.⁸⁶⁰

Philo's discussion about repentance μετάνοια in *Virt.* 175–186 (esp. 175–179) similarly includes pagans. Rendering Moses' words from Deut 30:11–14, the compound verb προσκαλεῖται is used in *Virt.* 178, though not with God as subject, to express Moses "calling" people to forsake μυθικῶν πλάσμάτων (mythical fables). Pagans who did not honour τὸν κτίστην καὶ πατέρα τοῦ παντός before later changed and repented, which is comparable to recovery of sight from the "deepest darkness to behold the most radiant light" (*Virt.* 179).⁸⁶¹ The theme of conversion is expressed with many forms of contrast "from-to", which outline different changes between paganism and Judaism.⁸⁶² According to Philo, conversion is more than acknowledging the one God. One must also live a life in conformity to the Law of Moses (*Virt.* 180–182). Despite Philo's use of calling and conversion is similar to *JosAs* and *Romans*, Philo's emphasis on "human deeds" such as pursuing a Law-abiding life is unseen.

⁸⁵⁹ Chestnutt (1995: 100, 119, 145).

⁸⁶⁰ Hicks–Keeton (2018: 46–47, 56–57).

⁸⁶¹ Philo, *Virt.* 179, "...καθάπερ ἂν εἰ καὶ τυφλοὶ πρότερον ὄντες ἀνέβλεψαν ἐκ βαθυτάτου σκότους αὐγοειδέστατον φῶς ἰδόντες." Philo insists that the former pagans polytheists who embrace Jewish monotheism now must be accepted as Jews' φιλτάτους καὶ συγγενεστάτους.

⁸⁶² Philo, *Virt.* 180, "ἐξ ἀμαθίας εἰς ἐπιστήμην ὧν ἡ ἄγνοια αἰσχρόν, ἐξ ἀφροσύνης εἰς φρόνησιν, ἐξ ἀκρατείας εἰς ἐγκράτειαν, ἐξ ἀδικίας εἰς δικαιοσύνην, ἐξ ἀτολμίας εἰς θαρραλεότητα." Bekken (1998: 318–20).

Divine calling is not only directed to Aseneth individually, it is also communal oriented. After her seven days repentance or recreation mirroring God's creation in seven days (*JosAs* 15:4–5), the angelic visitor confirms she will be ἀνακαινισθήση, ἀναπλασθήση (cf. 8:9b; Gen 2:7 LXX) and ἀναζωοποιηθήση as well as accepted as Joseph's bride (15:4).⁸⁶³ The post-transformed Aseneth is then renamed, she will be called κληθήσει (15:6) “City of Refuge πόλις καταφυγῆς” as she will be a shelter for “many nations ἔθνη πολλά” who turn to God of Israel (15:7).⁸⁶⁴ The striking resemblance between renaming in Hosea and *JosAs* is important, divine act of renaming means acceptance of Gentiles as community members of God's people.⁸⁶⁵ From Ἀσενέθ to πόλις καταφυγῆς, from οὐ λαός μου to υἱοὶ θεοῦ ζῶντος (Hos 1:10b in Rom 9:26), God's call provides an access for Gentiles into his salvation.

5.1.4 Synthesis

Our investigation shows that Paul's divine designation, ὁ καλούων, is not “beyond the bounds of Septuagintal language” as Richardson comments. Instead, by comparing and contrasting Paul's usage of καλεῖν with his pagan and Jewish contemporaries, Paul shares more similarities with the OT than the pagan and certain Hellenistic Jewish texts.

In pagan religious texts, divine καλεῖν is salvific as demonstrated in *Asclepius*' healing call to Aristides. Besides, it is also related to Aristides' profession as an orator. Philosophers regard their intellectual pursuit as divine calling. However, pagan texts rarely employ the creation theme and does not highlight the change before and after the call. Deutero-Isaiah is one of the more relevant texts to Romans because God's role as creator and “the one who calls” is greatly emphasized. Coupled with divine calling, creation marks a unique relationship between God and Israel. It is used as the basis for assuring God's salvation and restoration for Israel. Also, God's call is used

⁸⁶³ Cf. Hubbard (2002: 64–65) concludes that the author “parallel[s] God's first creative act with his new creative act (conversion) making the former a metaphor for the latter.”

⁸⁶⁴ A majority of commentators (e.g., Barclay, 1996: 214; Collins, 1983: 216–18) think that Aseneth is a model for future idol-abandoning gentile converts to emulate. Some (e.g. Humphrey, 1995: 44; Hicks–Keeton, 2018: 57–58, 65) argue for a wider application that she is a proleptic mediator of God's eschatological renewal of repentant human, both Jews and Gentiles.

⁸⁶⁵ See the “City of Refuge” in *JosAs* 19:8, more importantly, the Hosean expression, ‘sons of the living God’ is applied to Gentile converts. See Starling (2011, 127–31) for study about “sons of the living God” in Jewish writings in the Second Temple Period.

with reference to Abraham (51:1–3; cf. 41:8–9) as it is in Romans. Not only does it result in the multiplication of Abraham’s descendants, divine καλεῖν implies an extension of salvation to the ἔθνη. The fate of the ἔθνη in relation to God’s call becomes a diverging point in Jewish Hellenistic texts. While the creation theme is prevalent in the context of divine καλεῖν in texts like 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch, the call brings salvation to Israel as well as destruction to ἔθνη. However, the similarities between the usage of Paul and *Joseph and Aseneth* are striking. Beside the linguistic resemblance of ὁ καλέσας (*JosAs* 8:9a; cf. Rom 9:12), God’s call brings about a transformation for the former idol worshipping pagan Aseneth and signifies God’s acceptance of ἔθνη into the blessed community of God’s people.

5.2 Τοῦ ἐλεῶντος θεοῦ (9:12)

Having established that Paul justifies his Gentile mission with τοῦ καλοῦντος (Rom 9:12), it will be demonstrated in this section the next designation τοῦ ἐλεῶντος θεοῦ in 9:16 serves the same goal. Instead of describing God selects some and rejects others arbitrarily, it will be illustrated first, divine mercy is the creative agent constituting Israel's (re)birth. Then, Paul's argument in 9:14–23 will be studied to show that the designation highlights divine initiative works independent of human contribution. Connection between God's mercy and the rest of Romans will then be studied to conclude that Jew and Gentile alike are embraced with the same mercy.

5.2.1 Τοῦ ἐλεῶντος θεοῦ in its context

In Paul's letters, ἐλεέω/ἔλεος and οἰκτίρω/οἰκτιρμός are used very rarely (e.g. Phil 2:1, 27; 1 Cor 7:25; 2 Cor 1:3; 4:1; Gal 6:16). While thirteen out of nineteen instances are in Romans, nine out thirteen are found in chs. 9–11.⁸⁶⁶ Barclay rightly comments "Romans 9–11 constitutes Paul's longest and most profound discussion of divine mercy."⁸⁶⁷ First appears in 9:15, the concentration of ἐλεέω/ἔλεος (9:16, 18, 23) proves its importance for Paul's argument.⁸⁶⁸

According to Wright, in Rom 9:14–29, God's mercy is manifested in his election, instantiated in the history of Israel, offering the rebellion of all humanity a divine solution. It is not about selecting some and leaving others or losing some and hating others. Instead, in Wright's words, "*the elect themselves being the people through whom God would perform the negative task essential to rescuing the world, namely, the outpouring of his anger and power.*"⁸⁶⁹ God is thus "just" because his mercy brings a delay of judgment for a period of time for Israel in order that God's glory could be revealed and name could be proclaimed.⁸⁷⁰ Since "the means of dealing with evil is to concentrate it into one place and condemn—execute—it there," Wright attempts to explain the merciful God necessarily has Israel become the "vessels of

⁸⁶⁶ Eastman (2010: 156); Ryliškytė (2019: 87).

⁸⁶⁷ Barclay (2015: 82).

⁸⁶⁸ Wagner (2002: 52); Gaventa (2010: 263).

⁸⁶⁹ Wright (2013a: 1191 emphasis original).

⁸⁷⁰ According to Wright (1991: 239), "Don't you know," writes Paul, "that God's kindness is meant to being you to repentance?" The day of judgement is coming, but it is held back in order to allow a breathing space, time for people to come to their senses, turn from their wickedness and live. Along these lines see Wright (2013: 1111–12; 2002:640–1).

wrath”. Yet, divine mercy is demonstrated when “the full force of this condemnation is not intended to fall on this people in general, but on their representative, the Messiah.”⁸⁷¹

A. Τοῦ ἐλεῶντος θεοῦ and Israel’s birth (9:14–18)

Possible though Wright’s suggested theology could be, it is not reflected in Rom 9:14–29 concerning τοῦ ἐλεῶντος θεοῦ. Indeed, with reference to the Exodus context, Paul effectively demonstrates Israel is part of the problem, not the necessary solution.

“God’s mercy is treated here not as a timeless attribute or as an undifferentiated disposition, but rather as a mode of activity that uses specific, historical forms of human disobedience to achieve God’s goal.”⁸⁷² Given that numerous qualifying criteria such as birth, status and behaviour have been ruled out (9:6–13), the seemingly arbitrary choice of Jacob over Esau calls into question God’s fairness and impartiality (2:10–11). In response to the accusation of ἀδικία (9:14), Paul refutes μὴ γένοιτο with a scriptural based rebuttal (9:15–18). Paul gives reasons for citing two divine oracles from Exo 33:19 and 9:16 respectively in 9:15 and 17 introduced by γάρ. Inferences of the citations are drawn out in 9:16 and 18 with the repeated use of ἄρα οὖν.⁸⁷³ The introductory phrase of Exo 33:19 (Rom 9:15) refers to τῷ Μωϋσεῖ not as the speaker, “but as an example of God’s mercy to Israel.”⁸⁷⁴ More than just a free-floating tag, the statement appears in the conversation between God and Moses after the rebellious acts of idolatry with the Golden Calf (Exo 32:1–35).⁸⁷⁵ Although God’s sovereignty and freedom in his own words has been generally noted,⁸⁷⁶ its significance for constituting “Israel” as God’s people is not frequently discussed. God revokes his presence with the Israelites (33:1–6) in the aftermath of the Golden Calf apostasy. Entering into the tent of meeting (33:7–12), Moses intercedes for Israel (33:12–23). In several key dialogues between Moses and God in the narrative before (32:7–14; 32:30–33:6), God

⁸⁷¹ Wright explains the final restoration of Israel in this way, “Israel was like a bomb disposal squad called to take the devastating device to a safe place to be detonated, and then to leave it there. If Israel clings to its status of privilege, refusing to give it up, it is like the members of a bomb squad who are so proud of their important mission that they become reluctant to leave the bomb behind (Wright, 1993: 57).” Cf. Wright (1991: 239; 2013: 1190–94).

⁸⁷² Keck (2005: 283).

⁸⁷³ Abasciano (2013: 193); Moo (1996: 594); Schreiner (1998: 508); Morris (1987: 360), etc.

⁸⁷⁴ Xue (2015: 83–84); Rom 9:15 agrees with the LXX exactly (Moo, 1996:592; Dunn 1988b: 552).

⁸⁷⁵ Gupta (2012: 85 n.16).

⁸⁷⁶ E.g., Cranfield (1975: 483); Eastman (2010: 377); Breytenbach (2010: 266).

judges that “this people” are “stiff-necked”, intends to wipe them out and starts over with Moses (32:9–11). Even when Moses’ plea wins greater concession from God, future punishment is still underwritten for the “stiff-necked” Israel (32:34; 33:3, 5).⁸⁷⁷ In the third dialogue where Paul cites, Moses pleads God to recognise “this people” as “your people” (33:13, 16) and requests for God’s own presence in accompany with their journey to the promised land so that “we shall be distinct, both I and your people, from all the nations on the earth” (33:16).⁸⁷⁸ Moses uses the repeated phrase “I and your people” indicates that he wants God to acknowledge not only him but also the people of Israel are favoured before God.⁸⁷⁹ God at last grants his request (33:17). Given what has just been said — God would consume this stiff-necked people and Israel might relapse into sin (we may also note there is no reference to repentance), Moses now requests to know more about God by asking him to “show me your glory” (33:18; cf. 33:13).⁸⁸⁰ “Moses seeks ... nothing less than a deeper and fuller revelation of the character of YHWH as a God whose very nature it is to be gracious and merciful (33:19, 34:6f). Only on this basis can the covenant be renewed because now even the sin of Israel can be accounted for within the mercy of God and lead not to the people’s destruction.”⁸⁸¹ God’s self-revelation points forward to 34:6–7, which is reverberated throughout the OT.⁸⁸² Immediately after that, Moses bows in worship acknowledging the merciful God who will go up with Israel *despite them remaining a stiff-necked people* (34:9; cf. Ps 8:27–31).⁸⁸³

God’s mercy is not a speculative theological preposition but embedded in the historical event of Israel’s “(re)birth”. According to the Exodus, “Paul’s quotation speaks to the nature of Israel’s election from its foundation.”⁸⁸⁴ It is clear Israel is not the solution but the problem in the Exodus context. “If God had not disclosed himself in this way, with such heavy emphasis on mercy...Israel would have no future.”⁸⁸⁵ Notwithstanding Israel’s utter failure, God renews his covenant with them— not

⁸⁷⁷ Beside God, Moses uses “sin” in connection with the people six times in 32:30–32 (Suomala, 2004: 22–23, 27–28).

⁸⁷⁸ Barclay (2010: 85).

⁸⁷⁹ Suomala (2004: 31).

⁸⁸⁰ Barclay (2010: 85–86).

⁸⁸¹ Moberly (1983: 68).

⁸⁸² Wagner (2002: 53, n. 32); Barclay (2010: 87).

⁸⁸³ Moberly (1983: 89–90); Gupta (2012: 87); Wagner (2002: 53); Grindheim (2005: 66).

⁸⁸⁴ Abasciano (2013: 174).

⁸⁸⁵ Barclay (2010: 87).

because of Israel's merits, but because of God's own mercy. In other words, God's free mercy is the sole basis constituting and generating his people, Israel.

B. Τοῦ ἐλεῶντος θεοῦ and divine initiative (9:16)

Drawing the lesson from the Exodus citation in 9:15, 9:16, God's initiative and the antithesis between men and God (cf. 9:12) are accentuated with the divine designation.⁸⁸⁶ The sentence is highly elliptic because it is made up of three genitive participles in present tense leaving the subject obscure. Based on the connection with v. 15, it is possible that the subject is "God's bestowal of mercy."⁸⁸⁷ A contrast is drawn between τοῦ θέλοντος (human willingness) or τοῦ τρέχοντος (running) and τοῦ ἐλεῶντος θεοῦ. The noun θεός following the articular participle sets God apart from its negative corollary. The juxtaposition of θέλω and τρέχω recalls θέλω and κατεργάζομαι in 7:15–21, suggesting the senses of human resolve to do the Law.⁸⁸⁸ Obviously human willpower or legalistic effort is irrelevant factor compared with God's merciful creation of his people. "The only factor at work in God's mercy is God's mercy itself."⁸⁸⁹ The designation τοῦ ἐλεῶντος θεοῦ further expands the logic of *idem per idem* formula in Paul's citation from Exo 33:19. The tautologous *idem per idem* consists of a verb in the principal clause repeated in the subordinate clause and connected by relative pronouns.⁸⁹⁰ While the verbal idea of bestowing mercy ἐλεέω is repeated, the number and person of the subject in the main clause is mirrored in the subordinate clause ὃν ἐλεῶ (see also Exo 3:14). Qualifying the object in these terms, the subject's freedom to perform the action in whatever way one sees fit is stressed.⁸⁹¹ Not only does God's initiative underscored in view of Israel, Paul also draws attention to God's role in the story of Pharaoh. Quoting Exo 9:16 in Rom 9:17, Paul first changes the LXX's ἔνεκεν τούτου to εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο, then, he substitutes the passive διετηρήθη

⁸⁸⁶ Close though 9:12 and 9:16 are, Abasciano (2013: 189 n. 149) notes that they are not in exact parallel (contra. Piper 1983: 153).

⁸⁸⁷ For suggestions about the subject, e.g. 'salvation', 'God's purpose in election' (9.11), 'the choice', or even the matter generally, see Cranfield (1975: 484); Moo (1996: 593); Piper (1983: 155).

⁸⁸⁸ Dunn (1988b: 552–53); Jewett (2007: 581); Abasciano (2013: 188).

⁸⁸⁹ Barclay (2015: 532).

⁸⁹⁰ Ogden (1992: 107).

⁸⁹¹ It should be noted that the emphasis of the subject's freedom does not exclude other nuances of the formula. See Ogden's review of other uses of *idem per idem* in the OT (1992:107–20); Abasciano (2013: 179); Durham similarly comments on Exo 33:19 that "YHWH's favor and his compassion are given only on his terms (1986: 452)."

in the LXX with the active ἐξηγείρα stressing divine sovereignty.⁸⁹² A pertinent conclusion is drawn in Rom 9:18 expanding the principle to reiterate God’s freedom in bestowing mercy as well as hardening “whomever he wishes”. Although σκληρύνω does not appear in the citation, it is frequently used in Exo 4–14. Moreover, the Exodus account affirms both that God hardens Pharaoh and Pharaoh hardens his own heart (Exo 8:28; 9:34; 13:15; c.f. 1 Sam 6:6). It is thus noteworthy that Paul mentions nothing about Pharaoh’s stubbornness. Paul’s emphasis on God’s role supports our reading that the history Paul narrates here is a history of God’s creation of Israel, what is important is not that Pharaoh is permitted to live (Exo 9:16) but that the role of Pharaoh is presented merely for ὅπως (Rom 9:17) God’s purpose and salvation plan. In Paul’s argument (9:15–18), Israel exists only because of τοῦ ἐλεῶντος θεοῦ, “Pharaoh is no more the author of his hardening than Isaac and Jacob are of their selection.”⁸⁹³

5.2.2 Ὁ ἐλεῶν θεός and the rest of Romans: mercy and Gentiles

If it is true that τοῦ ἐλεῶντος θεοῦ (9:16) is situated in a context about how God brings Israel into being as confirmed by the narrative of Exo 32–34, given the indeterminacy of the object of God’s mercy, Paul finds within God’s mercy hope for both Israel and Gentiles.⁸⁹⁴ By tracing down to the roots of Israel’s existence,⁸⁹⁵ ὁ ἐλεῶν θεός answers the ἀδικία question (9:14) because God is indeed consistent by incorporating both the once abandoned Israel and Gentiles into salvation community with his creative mercy.⁸⁹⁶ Yet, another question arises in v.19 challenging God’s right to μέμφεται, given “he hardens whomever he wishes” (v.18). The judicial nuance of μέμφεται marks the assumption that God acts and reacts to human activity. The

⁸⁹² Paul also uses δύναμιν for the LXX’s ἰσχύν. Wagner (2002: 55); Richardson (1994: 47); Cranfield (1975: 486); Jewett (2007: 584).

⁸⁹³ Gaventa (2010: 264); (2016: 65).

⁸⁹⁴ Barclay (2010: 100, 105); McFarland (2016: 141).

⁸⁹⁵ According to Barclay (2010: 99), Paul’s understanding of the “roots of Israel’s existence” is unique because many other Second Temple authors such as Pseudo-Philo are content to affirm the covenant promise to the fathers as the answer without pressing further.

⁸⁹⁶ Barclay rightly (2010: 102) concludes, “non-Jews are not ‘bolted on’ to Israel by some fresh divine decision, or by some “extension” of the terms of the original covenant promise, but are called into being as the ‘people of God’ by the very same means by which Israel herself was created and has been perpetually recreated.”

assumption is then refuted with the potter and clay imagery (vv.20–23) illustrating the “categorical difference” between man and God.⁸⁹⁷

Inter alia, σκεύη ἐλέους (v.23) is our interest here. Many attempt to identify the vessel of dishonour/ wrath (vv.21, 22) and vessel of honour/ mercy (vv.21, 23) respectively with the unbelieving and the believing Jews or “remnant”.⁸⁹⁸ However, strictly reading within ch. 9, they are at most connected with Pharaoh (suggested by the Exodus context as well) on one hand and Isaac and Jacob on the other.⁸⁹⁹ More importantly, the potter and clay imagery does not illustrate destruction of certain part of the lump, instead, “Selbstverständlich entspricht das betonte αὐτός des Töpferbildes in v.21 dem εἶς der Jakoberwählung in v.10, denn semantisch betont beides das „ein–und–dasselbe“ und damit das Einfluss– und Unterschiedslose der Ausgangssituation in Bezug auf die Objekte.”⁹⁰⁰ Paul’s point is not to differentiate, but contrarily to contend that the two completely different vessels are both made by God the potter from the same lump.

God’s prerogative is beyond questioning.⁹⁰¹ The “elliptical” construction (vv.22–23) with a long protasis without the anticipated apodosis strengthens Paul’s point that the contrast is not within humanity but between God and human.⁹⁰² The unstated response following vv.19–21 rhetorically demonstrates creature’s inability to answer the Creator back. Not only does Paul’s point here echoes with 1:18–32, similar vocabularies such as ὀργή, δυνατός, μακροθυμία, δόξα and ἔλεος (ἀνελεήμονας in 1:31) are observed.⁹⁰³ Paul’s argument does not end with asserting God’s sovereignty through brute force, the real question behind is how God’s promises of mercy are worked out when Israel is presently not experiencing it (cf. 9:1–5). Similar tension

⁸⁹⁷ “Diese kategoriale Unterscheidung schließt aus, dass die Beziehung zwischen Gott und Mensch die von Richter und Gerichtetem sein kann, weil darin impliziert wäre, dass auch der Mensch Gott beurteilen könnte, weil die Beziehung zwar die des Unterschiedes von Aktion und Reaktion ist...” (Flebbe, 2008: 306–7).

⁸⁹⁸ Taking into account Rom 11, Longenecker (2016: 767, 818) suggests that Paul’s argument in Romans 9–11 “is best understood when seen in terms of a Jewish and/or Jewish Christian remnant theology.”

⁸⁹⁹ Gaventa (2010: 265–67).

⁹⁰⁰ Flebbe (2008: 308).

⁹⁰¹ The same image is used in the same way in the prophetic texts (e.g. Jer 18:6; Isa 29:16; 45:9–13) to illustrate God’s prerogative and purpose (Meyer, 2004: 196–97). It should be noted that the Isaiah passages refute Israel’s doubt about God’s wisdom and power by using Cyrus as a means for deliverance (Wagner, 2002: 59–66).

⁹⁰² Meyer (2004: 196–97).

⁹⁰³ Gaventa (2010: 265).

between the ongoing mercy of God and his “handing over” his people to the “anti-God powers”, Sin and Death, is reflected in Rom 1. Gaventa cogently points to the intentional repetition of παραδίδωμι (1:24, 26, 28) and its specific use in 8:32, where the Father have given over his Son on the cross ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν πάντων — undoing his former παραδίδωμι with a final act of mercy for ultimate redemption for all.⁹⁰⁴ Coming back to 9:24, without completing his sentence, Paul quickly identifies σκευὴ ἐλέους as ἡμᾶς, comprising of οὐ μόνον ἐξ Ἰουδαίων ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐξ ἐθνῶν.⁹⁰⁵ Just as all humanity are under God’s wrath in chapter one, it is improbable to understand σκευὴ ἐλέους to include Israelites only (the same applies to σκευὴ ὀργῆς) as both Gentiles and Jews are called. Stegman rightly concludes, “Paul’s failure to complete the sentence might be a way of foreshadowing what he will say near the end of chap. 11—that mercy, not ‘destruction,’ is the last word.”⁹⁰⁶ The larger purpose of God’s mercy is ἵνα γνωρίσῃ τὸν πλοῦτον τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ (v.23), which is exactly what Paul experiences in his Gentile mission, thus enables Paul to look beyond the present distinction between “remnant” and “the rest” (11:1–10) and imagine a future in which even the excluded can be integrated again (11:11–32).⁹⁰⁷ The motif “making known God’s glory” also fits well with the Exodus context of “hardening” as God’s name might be proclaimed in the land of Gentile Egyptians (Exo 14:4–8, 17–18; cf. 7:5, 17; 8:6, 18; 9:14, 29; 10:2; 11:7).⁹⁰⁸ A stark difference can be observed from Wright’s reading, the final redemption of Israel does not grant Israel any “status of privilege”,⁹⁰⁹ instead, they are not unique as they are united with non-Jews under disobedience as well as God’s mercy. Beyond chapter 11, the juxtaposition of glory and mercy recalls 15:9, directly linking God’s mercy to inclusion of Gentiles. Despite the difficult syntax, Wagner’s proposed translation (15:8–9) illustrates the purpose of Christ ministry with a clear syntactic and semantic parallelism between “Jew” and “Gentile”, and “truth” and “mercy” respectively.⁹¹⁰ Both within chapter 9 and in the rest of

⁹⁰⁴ Gaventa (2007: 114, 122).

⁹⁰⁵ The change of person is significant as it changes from Moses (v.15), Pharaoh (v.17) to second person plural (v.19) and then resume to first person plural (v.24) involving Paul himself (Wagner, 2010: 422).

⁹⁰⁶ Stegman (2018: 1268).

⁹⁰⁷ Barclay (2015: 535); Richardson (1994: 63–64).

⁹⁰⁸ Stowers (1994: 300); Oropeza (2007: 65); McGinnis (2012: 61–64).

⁹⁰⁹ Wright (1993: 57).

⁹¹⁰ Wagner’s (1997: 481–84) translation is as follows, “For I say that the Christ has become a servant of the circumcision on behalf of the truthfulness of God, in order to confirm the promises made to the

Romans, God’s salvific purpose “embraces Jew and Gentile alike in such a way that God’s faithfulness to his promises to Israel is vindicated while, at the same time, God’s sovereign *mercy* is shown to be the sole basis of salvation.”⁹¹¹

5.2.3 Background

Barclay comments that Paul explicates a “distinctively Pauline theology of grace” with reference to divine mercy in Rom 9–11 after comparing and contrasting Paul’s treatment of the Golden Calf incident (Exo 32–34) with his Jewish contemporaries. The following section will take Barclay’s argument further. Instead of using the narrative of Exo 32–34, we will trace Paul’s *distinctive* understanding of τοῦ ἐλεῶντος θεοῦ when the designation is placed alongside his pagan and Jewish contemporaries. How and why does Paul unique to characterise God distinctively as “mercy-giving”? The linguistic patterned use of ἐλεέω/ἔλεος in relation to deities, and the frequently correlated concepts in pagan literature, Hellenistic Jewish literature, and the LXX will be examined.

A. Pagan’s divine ἐλεέω/ἔλεος

Aristotle defines ἔλεος as “a kind of pain about an apparent evil...that befalls one who does not deserve it ἀναξίου... one who is likely to feel pity ἐλεήσεν must be such as to think that he...is liable to suffer some evil, and such an evil as has been stated in the definition, or one similar, or nearly similar.”⁹¹² In short, ἔλεος is reserved for the innocent and one who experience ἔλεος “has to recognize a resemblance with the sufferer, but at the same time not find oneself in precisely the same circumstances.”⁹¹³ An earlier reference of ἔλεος is found in 1st century BC in Diodorus Siculus’ recapitulation of a debate about treatment of prisoners of war after the Syracusans captured 7,000 Athenian soldiers who were sent to conquer them in 413 BC. In Diodorus’ *Library of History*, Diocles, a popular leader, proposed that the captives ought to be tortured, enslaved and killed (13.19.4). An old man who lost two sons in the battle, Nicolaus, told the assembly surprisingly that the captives should be

patriarchs, and [a servant] with respect to the Gentiles on behalf of the mercy [of God] in order to glorify God.”

⁹¹¹ Wagner (1997: 483).

⁹¹² Aristotle, *Art of Rhetoric* (ca. 400–300BC), 2.8.2 (cf. Cierco, *Tusculanae Disputationes* 4.18).

⁹¹³ Konstan (2006: 202).

spared and showed mercy τὸν ἔλεον even to the bitterest enemies (13.22.8). In his prolonged speech furnishing “almost a complete lexicon” of ἔλεος, φιλανθρωπία and εὐγνώμοσύνη,⁹¹⁴ Nicolaus justifies his position by explaining the Athenians had paid due ἀξίαν penalty for their injustice to initiate an attack (13.21.1),⁹¹⁵ and that the Syracusans should respect the power of Fortune τύχης (13.21.5). By appealing to everyone’s vulnerability to misfortune, he argued they are reserving for themselves mercy from all men τὸν παρὰ πάντων ἔλεον lest ill befall them in the future (13.23.3–4).⁹¹⁶ Also, Nicolaus urged the Syracusans to outdone Athens not only in military terms but also in terms of τῇ φιλανθρωπία saying “καὶ οἱ πρῶτοι βωμὸν ἐλέου καθιδρυσάμενοι τοῦτον ἐν τῇ πόλει τῶν Συρακοσίων εὐρήσουσιν” (13.22.6). For Nicolaus, it is natural and useful (typical Diodoran thought)⁹¹⁷ to treat enemies mercifully as it promotes the wellness and δόξα of Syracuse (13.20.5). Not every ancient Greek argues for granting mercy unreservedly. Polybius insisted that ἔλεος was only for the misfortunate but not for those who brought on their own disaster because of ἀβουλίαν (*Histories*, II.7.1-3).⁹¹⁸ His comments on the Achaean War in 146 BC were illustrative.⁹¹⁹ Polybius compared the war with other Greek disasters, such as Xerxes’ invasion of Athens, Athens’ loss to Sparta after the Peloponnesian Wars.⁹²⁰ For the latter, Polybius highlighted that these are misfortunes. Yet, when the culprits repent μεταμέλομαι, the sufferers recovered quickly with the help of other’s mercy ὁ ἐκτὸς ἔλεος.⁹²¹ However, for the Achaean War, Polybius saw it as “meritted” suffering but not misfortune because the Greek’s conduct are thoughtless, ignorant, and mad,⁹²² therefore, their own folly had brought on themselves πράξεις αὐτοῖς ἐπήνεγκαν

⁹¹⁴ Konstan (2004: 90).

⁹¹⁵ In response to Nicolaus, Gylippus disagreed for the Athenians are “those who commit a wrong because of their own wickedness” and thus did not deserved mercy (13.29.3).

⁹¹⁶ Diodorus, *The Library of History* 13.23.4, “καλὸν οὖν ἐν ταῖς τῶν ἄλλων ἀτυχίαις ἡμέρους φανέντας ἔτοιμον ἔχειν τὸν παρὰ πάντων ἔλεον ἐάν τι συμβαίνει τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων.”

⁹¹⁷ Sacks (1990:43).

⁹¹⁸ “...διὸ καὶ τοῖς μὲν ἐκ τύχης πατῖουσιν ἔλεος ἔπεται μετὰ συγγνώμης κάπικουρία, τοῖς δὲ διὰ τὴν αὐτῶν ἀβουλίαν ὄνειδος κάπιτίμησις συνεξακολουθεῖ παρὰ τοῖς εὖ φρονοῦσιν.” For ἔλεος of god or of men aroused by misfortunes, see e.g. *Histories* XV.1.14; XV.17.2.

⁹¹⁹ Konstan (2004: 85–88).

⁹²⁰ Polybius, *Histories*, XXXVIII.2.1–3.4.

⁹²¹ Polybius, *Histories*, XXXVIII 3.1–2 “τοιγαροῦν βραχεῖ χρόνῳ τυχόντες ἐπικουρίας τινὸς αὐθις ὄκουν τὴν πατρίδα μετ’ ἀσφαλείας. ὁ γὰρ παρὰ τῶν ἐκτὸς ἔλεος οὐ μικρὸν ἐπίχειρόν ἐστι τοῖς ἀδίκως ἀκληροῦσιν, εἴ γε πολλάκις ἰδεῖν ἔστιν ἅμα ταῖς τῶν πολλῶν ὁρμαῖς καὶ τὴν τύχην μεταβαλλομένην καὶ τοὺς κρατοῦντας αὐτοὺς μεταμελομένους καὶ διορθομένους τὰς τῶν παραλόγως ἡτυχηκότων περιπετείας.”

⁹²² E.g. XXXVIII.3.8–13, XXXVIII.10.12, XXXVIII.11.6, XXXVIII.18.7–8.

disaster unworthy of mercy.⁹²³ Both historians Diodorus and Polybius, like Aristotle, adopt “a broadly ‘cognitivist’ approach” by taking into consideration ἄδικος (injustice) and ὁ παράλογος ἀτυχούντος (undeserved suffering) in their judgement of ἔλεος.⁹²⁴

Philosophers regarded ἔλεος as a human πάθος or λύπη (distress of mind) evoked by the suffering of fellow human.⁹²⁵ It belongs to unpleasant emotions like envy, zeal, grief, distress and confusion.⁹²⁶ The classification suggests that not only is ἔλεος not a virtue,⁹²⁷ the Stoics also rejected the idea that the wise should not be driven by passions or distress and be pitied.⁹²⁸ The ideal state of “apathy” is godlike, as Plutarch stated “gods were beyond mortal cares.”⁹²⁹ Given their invulnerability to misfortunes and transcendence, Aristotle’s definition seems to eliminate the deities’ capacity ἐλεεῖν.⁹³⁰ Thus, characterising deities as ἐλεεῖν is not usual in pagan literature. Dover observed that the Greeks in classical antiquity “did not expect gods to be merciful.”⁹³¹ No wonder in Sophocles’ tragedy *Oedipus at Colonus*, Oedipus’ daughter, Ismene, doubted that the gods would κατοικτιοῦσιν his father’s misfortunes (384) even though he pled to the city of Athens for οἰκτίρατ’ (109).

The evidence gleaned so far seems to denote a sense of ἔλεος so different from Paul’s discussion about divine saving action.⁹³² However, historiography and oratory offer tantalising insights into the “folk psychology of pity” in ancient Athens.⁹³³ Aloft though the pagan gods are, there are occasions when divine ἔλεος is granted. In

⁹²³ Polybius *Histories*, XXXVIII 3.7–10, “ἀκκληρεῖν μὲν γὰρ ἅπαντας ἡγήτεον καὶ κοινῇ καὶ κατ’ ἰδίαν τοὺς παραλόγους συμφοραῖς περιπίπτοντας, ἀτυχεῖν δὲ μόνους τούτους οἷς διὰ τὴν ἰδίαν ἀβουλίαν ὄνειδος αἱ πράξεις ἐπιφέρουσι... ἀλλὰ καὶ κατὰ . . . ἐπίπαν οὐκ ἡκλήρησαν, ἀλλ’ ἡτύχησαν ἀτυχίαν αἰσχροῖαν ὥς ἐνὶ μάλιστα καὶ ἐπονείδιστον· ἅμα μὲν γὰρ ἀπιστίαν, ἅμα δ’ ἀνανδρίαν ἔδειξαν, καὶ πράξεις αὐτοῖς ἐπήνεγκαν διὰ τὴν ἀτ.” Polybius also said those survived the war are pitiable ἐλεεινοτέρας (XXXVIII 1.7).

⁹²⁴ Loehr (2017: 93). Levene (1997: 134).

⁹²⁵ E.g. Plato, *Republic*, 387d; Epictetus, *Discourses* 2.17.26; 3.22.13; 3.24.43; cf. πάθος ἐλεούντων in Diodorus, *The Library of History*, 3.57.8.

⁹²⁶ Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers (Zeno)* 7.1.111, “εἶδη δ’ αὐτῆς ἔλεον, φθόνον, ζῆλον, ζηλοτυπίαν, ἄχθος, ἐνόχλησιν, ἀνίαν, ὀδύνην, σύγχυσιν. ἔλεον μὲν οὖν εἶναι λύπην ὥς ἐπ’ ἀναξίως κακοπαθοῦντι...”

⁹²⁷ E.g. Plutarch, *On the Fortune of Alexander*, 337b.

⁹²⁸ E.g. Plutarch, *Moralia: On Tranquility of Mind* (ca. 1–100AD), 7.11; Epictetus, *Discourses* 4.6.1–4; Sorabji (2000: 389–91 n. 37).

⁹²⁹ Plutarch, *How a Young Man Should Listen to Poetry* (ca. 1–100AD), 20E.

⁹³⁰ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* (ca. 400–300BC) 10.8, 1178b 8–23.

⁹³¹ Dover (1974: 156).

⁹³² Breytenbach (2010: 233).

⁹³³ Sternberg (2005: 16); Stafford (2000: 199–200). Meanwhile, literary evidence of ἔλεος suggests that it refers to the practical mercy sought by a suppliant either from a god or fellow men in a position of power (e.g. *Il.* 9. 172; 20.465; 21. 74; *Od.* 4.346; 13.182).

Homeric epic, Zeus ἐλέησε Achilles who mourned for his friend Patroclus' death (*Il.* 19.340; see also 16.431). Seeing Penelope's weeping and being distressed, the gods informed the suffering heroine in a dream that Athena ἐλεαίρει her (*Od.* 4.828). Another Greek mythology hero Protesilaus was brought back to life from Hades as the gods gave mercy ἐλεησάντων θεῶν because of his wife Laodamia's love for him (Pseudo-Apollodorus, *Epitome to The Library*, E.3.30). It is not surprising to find that gods are asked to have mercy on suffering mortals,⁹³⁴ yet, divine mercy "is not a quality on which human beings can safely rely."⁹³⁵ Παλλὰς Ἀθήνη turned down Hector and the queen Hecuba's petition for mercy ἐλεήσης on the city when Diomedes was pressing hard.⁹³⁶

The Atheian τὸν λέου βωμόν, attested in many writings from the mid-first century BC on, illustrates that it is usually a place for asylum for suppliants. The establishment of the altar is found again in *The Library* 2.8.1 attributed to Apollodorus. After the death of Herakles, his children were pursued by their father's old enemy Eurystheus, "διωκόμενοι δὲ ἦλθον εἰς Ἀθήνας, καὶ καθεσθέντες ἐπὶ τὸν ἐλέου βωμόν ἠξίουν βοηθεῖσθαι." The altar, and even the Athens, are thus famous for receiving and offering refuge to "strangers" who are defeated in war, the exiled, kings who had lost their realms, those guilty of terrible crimes such as Oedipus and Orestes.⁹³⁷

Apart from humankind's supplication for divine mercy, deities show mercy for human shortcomings unilaterally bearing significance for understanding Paul's usage. Plato said the gods ἐλεοῦντας (*Law* 653d.1–3, 665a.4) upon human beings and therefore provide them with the blessing of music. A less well-known evidence from *Symposium* deserves our attention. Aristophanes began the mythos about τὰ γένη τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων by introducing that originally humankind was a compound being jointed at the neck and waist, had four arms and legs, shared a single head with two faces each staring at opposition directions in the form of a sphere (189E–190B).⁹³⁸ Having great strength and power (τὴν ἰσχὺν δεινὰ καὶ τὴν ῥώμην), they conspired against the gods. The gods of Olympus punished them by slicing them in two (190D).

⁹³⁴ E.g. *Il.* 6.94, 275; 15.12, 44; *Od.* 5.336; 9. 349; cf. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities*, 10.53.6.

⁹³⁵ Konstan (2004: 110).

⁹³⁶ *Il.* 6.309–311.

⁹³⁷ Stafford (2000: 200–2).

⁹³⁸ There are three sexes, either two males, two females or a male and female (ἀνδρόγυνον).

In their new halved state, humankind desperately tried to find their other halves and casted their arms around each other (ἐπιθυμοῦντες συμφοῦναι). They refused to separate to the extent that they ignored hunger and thirst, οὕτως ἀπώλλυντο. Seeing humankind dying out, ἐλεήσας δὲ ὁ Ζεὺς ἄλλην μηχανὴν πορίζεται (191B). He moved their sexual organs to the front so that they can have offspring in their embrace.⁹³⁹ Zeus's mercy is comparable to Rom 9 as both happened in the context after human rebelled against God(s), also, given the absent evidence of repentance, the "survival" of human race/Israel depends on solely divine mercy. Similar to Paul's meaning in Rom 9, discussion about divine mercy in pagan literature highlights "the categorical difference" between divine and mankind. Nevertheless, pagan's account is different because mercy is not the deities' "primary trait, and philosophers never endorsed it".⁹⁴⁰ Also, in general, rejection of mercy is common because gods have mercy on suffering mortals "on their own accord".

B. Divine ἐλεέω/ἔλεος in the OT and early Jewish texts

Among over five hundred occurrences ἔλεος and its cognate in the Septuagint, they are frequently used to characterise God.⁹⁴¹ Various associated meanings will be studied to address the question: to what extent is the linguistic pattern of ἔλεος in the LXX formative to Rom 9?

A large group of evidence from the Psalter associates God's mercy with divine forgiveness and deliverance from calamity or enemies. For instance, David pled God's mercy ἐλέησόν/τό μέγα ἔλεός σου for erasing his transgression τὸ ἀνόμημά μου (Ps 50:3 LXX; see also 129:7–8 LXX; 31:10 LXX; 39:11–12 LXX). The supplicant prayed God shall remember μνήσθητι God's mercy but not his sins (Ps 24:6–7 LXX). Meanwhile, Israel in exile pled God to redeem his people (e.g. Ps 68:17–19 LXX; 78:8–9 LXX; 101:14 LXX).⁹⁴² Similar usage can be found in Mic 7:19 as θελητῆς

⁹³⁹ Zeus in *Ilaid* was not so remote as he was moved to mercy or pity because of human grief (e.g. *Il.* 16.431; 19.340).

⁹⁴⁰ Konstan (2004: 124).

⁹⁴¹ Achtemeier's (1976: 352) defines mercy: "Generally ... it denotes the divine love, manifested in saving acts of grace, which God holds for his covenant people."

⁹⁴² Different forms of ἔλεος is used: imperatives (e.g. Ps 40:5 LXX; 50:3 LXX; 56:2 LXX), nouns (e.g. Ps 24:6 LXX; 102:4 LXX), adjectives (e.g. Ps 102:8 LXX; 111:4 LXX; 144:8 LXX). Quite often ἔλεος is used in prepositional phrases such as κατὰ τὸ ἔλεός σου (e.g. Ps 50:3 LXX; 108: 26 LXX; 118: 149 LXX), ἐπὶ τῷ ἐλέει σου (e.g. Ps 137:2 LXX), or ἐν τῷ ἐλέει σου (e.g. Ps 68:14 LXX; 118:159 LXX; 142:12 LXX).

ἐλέους οἰκτερήσει “the mercy-desiring God will have mercy” and forgives Israelite’s ἀδικίας, ἀνομίας and ἀσεβείας (cf. 2 Sam 24:14; 1 Kgs 8:50; 1 Chr 21:13; Isa 49:10, 13; 55:7; 3 Macc 2:19-20; Sol 10:6–8). Common though these meanings are, they seem very different from Paul’s usage in Rom 9. As analysed above, Paul’s understanding relates closer to the foundational existence of God’s people, stresses divine unilateral initiative mercy in contrast with men’s incompetence and does not refer to repentance in the context.

Taking into consideration the use of ἔλεος in another key context, namely the penitential prayer texts (Ezra 9; Neh 9; Dan 9; Ps 105 LXX), it will be demonstrated that closer affinity with Paul’s usage can be observed. The theocentric confession of the penitential prayers is our concern. The prayers exhibit “catechismal elements...a confession of faith held by the post-exilic congregation. The primary intention...is twofold: to define the nature of God and to define the true Israel.”⁹⁴³ The ancient character creed of Israel—the proclamation of the Lord’s name linking to his self-revelation of goodness כל טובי (ἐλέω and οἰκτίρω) in Exo 33–34 (esp. 33:19; 34:6), is invoked as theological foundation for their plea. Neh 9:17b has the first most complete reference to divine attributes in Exo 34:6 as it reads: σὺ θεὸς ἐλεήμων καὶ οἰκτεῖρμων, μακρόθυμος καὶ πολυέλεος, καὶ οὐκ ἐνκατέλιπες αὐτούς as the prayer retells Israel’s history (cf. Dan 9:9).⁹⁴⁴ At every historical interval, from the wilderness wandering (v.15–21) to the possession of the land (vv. 22–29), divine mercy (ἐλεήμων and οἰκτίρμων) is repeatedly affirmed (vv. 17, 19, 27–28, 31). In spite of Israel’s consistent history characterised by stubbornness (σκληρύνω in vv. 17, 29), the merciful God never abandoned them οὐκ ἐνκατέλιπες αὐτούς (vv. 17, 19, 31). Also, Newman helpfully notes that the historical review in Nehemiah 9 betrays chronicle narrative sequence in Exo 32–34 by putting divine mercy *before* the episode of the molten calf. Thus, heavy weight is attached to the theme “God’s gracious providence in the face of continuing apostasy and disobedience on the part of Israel.”⁹⁴⁵ This observation is significant not only because the greatness of divine mercy is used in the context of the golden calf incident (Rom 9:15–18), the complex usage of “forgiving mercy” is illustrated. Traditionally, Neh 9 is flatly perceived as a Deuteronomistic confession in

⁹⁴³ Oeming (2006: 574).

⁹⁴⁴ The MT reads: ואתה אלוה סליחות חנון ורחום ארך אפים ורב חסד ולא עזבתם.

⁹⁴⁵ Newman (1999: 120–21).

the “Discipline model” when commentators try to trace the cyclical pattern of human rebellion, followed by divine punishment, human cry for mercy and finally divine deliverance mercy (cf. Judg 2; Ps 77:32–39 LXX; Ps 105:34–46).⁹⁴⁶ However, both Boda and Newman argue rightly for a different pattern concerning divine mercy, namely, “the Patience model”. Simply put, in “the ‘Patience model’, human response is set aside for divine action, while in the Discipline model, human response stands side-by-side in partnership with divine action.”⁹⁴⁷ The historical recital of the Exodus in Ps 105:6–12 LXX is also presented in terms of “the Patience model” as there is no reference to repentance prior to divine deliverance. God’s initiative is likely emphasised in Dan 9:4–19. While Israel’s sin brought disgrace and shame to Jerusalem (vv. 5–6, 7–8, 9–16), as the prayer progresses, “a shift occurs from an extended emphasis on Israel’s sin to an extensive elaboration on YHWH’s mercy and forgiveness (v.9a).”⁹⁴⁸ The prayer also attributes to God’s righteousness expressed by his foundation gracious act of the Exodus from Egypt (v.15). Although the prayer ends with requests to reverse the city’s fortune (vv. 17–19), given the intensity of Israel’s infidelity,⁹⁴⁹ “Daniel understands that such fulfillment is fully dependent upon YHWH’s own decision... He can be persuaded only by his own mercy and act for his own sake. The credit can only be his. God is the axis of everything (v. 18).”⁹⁵⁰ Similar as the prayer, history is presented not as a reciprocal event in the following narrative, time and means of deliverance is “determined נִחָתָךְ/ἐκρίθησαν (vv. 24, 26, 27).”⁹⁵¹

God’s unilateral sovereignty is related to foundation of Israel’s existence in Isaiah’s use of mercy in the communal lament (Isa 63:7–64:11).⁹⁵² The people is urged to commemorate God’s ἔλεος (v.7), God’s redemptive act in Exodus is contrasted with the rebellious act ἠπειθήσαν/מָרָו of the wilderness generation (v.10). Then, the prophet complains that God seems withholding his mercy and compassion (v.15b) which have characterised him from the beginning (v.7). Why should the prophets’ petition and

⁹⁴⁶ See Boda (1999: 81–83) for summary of these scholars’ opinion and the Deuteronomistic pattern of what he called the “discipline model.”

⁹⁴⁷ Boda (1999: 83). These models are not mutually exclusive.

⁹⁴⁸ Venter (2007: 36).

⁹⁴⁹ Boda (2009: 466); Dalit (2006: 62).

⁹⁵⁰ Venter (2007: 37, 42); Collins (1993: 96) rightly comments that the unilateral reliance on God’s mercy and decision indicates “Daniel 9 entails a rejection of Deuteronomistic theology, not an acceptance of its influence.”

⁹⁵¹ Venter (2007: 41–42).

⁹⁵² Gärtner (2006: 145).

complaint (vv.15–17) be addressed? An explanation is provided in v. 16, it is because the supplicants appeal not to the patriarchs, Abraham or Jacob, but their “real” father—God (cf. עמי, מִבְּנֵי/ὁ λαός μου, τέκνα in v.8). Not only does the supplicants declare God as “our father”, but his name is also tied to them מַעֲלֹם/ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς (v. 16b) because he had been their redeemer from ancient times (vv. 12,14).⁹⁵³ A profound resemblance with Rom 9 is observed. In the contexts where divine ἔλεος (and καλεῖν) are used, Israel’s existence is repeatedly identified not with the “fathers” such as Abraham, Issac, or Jacob, but instead, God’s mercy and calling is established as its sole foundation (cf. 64:8). Beside Isa 63, cognates of ἔλεος are used in Isa 54. God is self-identified as ὁ ῥυσάμενός “who will have mercy on you ἐλεήσω σε” (vv.7,8) and κύριος Ἰλεώς σοι (v.10). In this divine oracle of salvation, Zion is depicted as a barren woman (vv. 1–4; cf. 1 Sam 2:5, Gal 4:27), and called to rejoice (v.1).⁹⁵⁴ Although God’s abandonment and wrath are again mentioned, they are qualified as brief μικρὸν compared with the greatness and eternity of God’s mercy (vv.7, 8). While Isa 54:1–10 is loaded with expressions about God’s past severe punishment to Israel such as אִירָא/φοβέω and כָּלֵם/ἐντρέπω (v.4), they are negated with לֹא/μή to emphasize divine reversal in accordance with God’s character.⁹⁵⁵ By contrast with harsh treatment on Zion, God announces a new covenant of peace out of his merciful character (see רַחֲמִים גְּדֻלָּה /ἐλέους μεγάλου, חֶסֶד עוֹלָם /ἐλέει αἰωνίω and מְרַחֵם Ἰλεώς σοι in vv.7, 8b, 10; cf. Exo 34:6). The new covenant is likened to Noahic covenant because God makes a covenant with all living things after cleansing the earth with a flood (vv.9–10; cf. Gen 8:20–21; 9:8–17). Divine mercy is not only related to the establishment of Israel, reference to the universal nature of the Noahic covenant carries salvific implication for the nations (Isa 54:3; cf. Isa 55:5; 56:3, 6, 7). Both Isa 54 and the Noahic covenant highlight God’s role as Creator (ὁ ποιῶν σε/עֲשֵׂךְ in Isa 54:5), “existential incompleteness is a decisive reason for God’s forbearance towards humankind.”⁹⁵⁶ Thus, the use of ἔλεος/ἐλεέω in Isa 54 bears striking similarity with Rom 9 because not only is divine mercy expressed in creative terms, it addresses all of God’s creature including Jews and non-Jews.

⁹⁵³ Oswalt (1998: 612); Gärtner (2006: 147–48).

⁹⁵⁴ Blenkinsopp (2003: 361); Oswalt (1998: 416).

⁹⁵⁵ Pokrifka–Joe, Hyunhye Junia. 2004 D iv in e M ercy a n d Ju d g m e n t IN Exodus 34–6–7 AND A S e l e c t i o n o f I t s E c h o e s. 230–31.

⁹⁵⁶ Krašovec (1999: 40).

Apparently, Isaiah's usage is only one side of the story. Numerous examples of the rhetoric of God's mercies רחמים are found in Qumran literature, especially in the *Hodayot*.⁹⁵⁷ God's mercies are integral to God's forgiveness of sins, cleanings of transgression (e.g. מים[רה]רוב סליחות והמון in 1QH^a VII 34)⁹⁵⁸ because "man of emptiness איש תהו" (XV 32) who have utterly no defence before the judgment of God (XV 27–29). Similar to the Prophets, the *Hodayot* denies humans' innocence as no one has "the defences of flesh" (XV 17) nor can stand before the judgement of God (XV 29; XVII 16). Salvation is attributed solely to God and his mercies, which להעמידם "make them stand" (XV 31). Both Rom 9 and the *Hodayot* express "sons of Adam's" wickedness with "the clay" metaphor. Despite being in iniquity since one's maternal womb, the Creator still made known his power and richness of his mercies (גבורתו ורוב רחמיו) to the sons of his approval בני רצונו (XII 32–33; cf. 9:23).⁹⁵⁹

However, how can God forgive one who utterly does not deserve to be forgiven through his justice (בצדקתכה, XII 37; cf. Rom 9:14)? At precisely this point emerges the *Hodayot's* different understanding. Although God does not answer to a system of distributive justice independent of himself, his compassion on sinners is not arbitrary because it corresponds to his "predestined" election.⁹⁶⁰ God's merciful forgiveness is granted to those he "established even before creating" הכינותה בטרם בראתו (VII 17; cf. כון, VII 16–18, 22–25). Two types of destinies were allotted, in short, the children of God's preference בני רצונכה (XII 33–34; XIX 9), whom God grants his truth (אמתכה, XV 27, 31) of predestination, are chosen to experience mercy while the others experience wrath (IX 10–21; cf. 1QS II 7–9). God's predestined will, way and truth protrude every context where God's mercies are celebrated. Although Paul's unilateral mercy out of absolute divine freedom aligns with the *Hodayot*, he departs from it significantly as "Paul's eye is drawn not to a double resolution in the destruction of some and the salvation of others."⁹⁶¹ Basing mercy on God's promise but not

⁹⁵⁷ The terms חסד, רחמים, and טוב in the *Hodayot* has a remarkable frequency (חסד and רחמים occur thirty five times, and טוב fourteen times). Closely related to the list of God's characters in Exo 34:6–7, they are used interrelatedly as synonyms. Barclay (2015: 251).

⁹⁵⁸ See also 1QH^a IV 11–12; 1QH^a V 23; 11Q6 4–5; 4Q504 IV 5–8.

⁹⁵⁹ See also 1QH^a VII 21–23; Barclay (2015: 533).

⁹⁶⁰ Barclay (2015: 255–61).

⁹⁶¹ Barclay (2015: 534).

primordial cosmic design, it is not necessarily for Paul to specify to whom God will be merciful because the good news reaches “all” (Rom 9:24).

A similar pattern is exhibited in *Sirach*. God’s mercy ἔλεος/ἐλεεῖν (18:5, 11, 13, 14), which is at the end of Ben Sira’s long “discourse on sin” (15:11–18:14),⁹⁶² is mentioned after God’s creation, both of the universe (16:24–30) and of human beings ἄνθρωπον (17:1–24). While God sets the order and limit for each element (17:1–10), the Sinai theophany is added in 17:11–14. The revelation of the decalogue distinguishes Ἰσραήλ (first appears here), whom the Lord directly takes charge, from other people (17:17bc; cf. Deut 32:8–9).⁹⁶³ In the hymnic extolment of God’s mercy and forgiveness (18:1–14), human culpability (17:31; 18:8b) and finitude (18:7–9, cf. 17:2) are contrasted with divine justice and eternity (18:1).⁹⁶⁴ Because human beings are so short-lived (18:9–10) and miserable (18:11–12), the all-knowing and all-seeing God ἐμακροθύμησεν ἐπ’ αὐτοῖς “was patient with them” and ἐξέχεεν ἐπ’ αὐτοὺς τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ “poured upon them his mercy” (18:11). God’s mercy is contrasted with human mercy as the former extends to πᾶσαν σάρκα (18:13), yet, the qualifier “all” is not all encompassing but limited to “those who accept his guidance, who are diligent in his precepts”.⁹⁶⁵ Israel’s particular role as receivers of τὰ κρίματα (18:14; cf. 17:12) indicates that the particularity of God’s mercy on Israel (see also 47:22).⁹⁶⁶ Also, the only two occurrences of ἐλῆσον (36:11—12/17–18) as direct address to God are used in the third trope (36:10–13/16–19) of a prayer of deliverance where Israel (see also “Jerusalem”, “Zion”, “the people called by your name”) is the particular focus (cf. 48:20; 50:19, 22).⁹⁶⁷ Wis 3:8–12 similarly pertains God’s mercy to his τοῖς ἐκλεκτοῖς “chosen ones” (cf. 1 Enoch 1:8), whereas the ungodly ἔθνη are cursed. Although Paul also contrasts human weakness with divine mercy, Paul’s inclusive understanding is unique.

⁹⁶² See Gilbert (2002: 118) for the structure and classification of the discourse. God’s great mercy τὸ πολὺ ἔλεος is briefly mentioned in Sir 16:11–12 contrasting his ὀργή in the discussion about divine retribution (Beentjes 2002: 109–10).

⁹⁶³ Marttila (2012: 42–79) argues despite the particularistic features, universal implications can also be observed in 16:24–17:24.

⁹⁶⁴ The Creator’s majestic power κράτος and mercies ἐλέη (18:5) are incomprehensible to his creature (Gilbert, 2002: 131).

⁹⁶⁵ Skehan and Lella (1987: 279).

⁹⁶⁶ Xue (2015: 105).

⁹⁶⁷ Beentjes (2002: 110–11).

Nevertheless, divine mercy is not an exclusive privilege to Israel in *JosAs*. The language of mercy is frequently used in contexts of repentance (e.g. 6:7; 8:8), Aseneth's second prayer exemplifies the rhetoric as she appeals to the living, ἐλεήμων and οἰκτίρων God (11:10), confessing her sins and seeking refuge in him (11:11–12).⁹⁶⁸ She declares “there is no other refuge except God's mercy” (12:13)⁹⁶⁹ The connection between divine mercy and provision of refuge is significant as Aseneth herself is later renamed “City of Refuge” (15:7). In addition, the designation recalls the biblical concepts linking mercy and God's refuge for the sinners and the converts (e.g. Isa 55:7; Ps 55:17b—18 LXX).⁹⁷⁰ As “many repented nations” ἔθνη πολλά shall “attach to God” (οἱ προσκείμενοι τῷ θεῷ, *JosAs* 15:7), *JosAs* ' meaning is remarkably similar to Isa 56 because the foreigner also attach to God ὁ ἀλλογενὴς ὁ προσκείμενος πρὸς κύριον when mercy revealed (Isa 56:1, 3).⁹⁷¹ In short, divine mercy is explicitly linked to Gentile acceptance in Isaiah, *JosAs* and Rom 9, yet, it should be noted that human repentance is emphasised in the first two sources but not in Romans.

5.2.4 Synthesis

By comparing and contrasting Paul's divine designation ὁ ἐλεῶν θεός with its Jewish counterpart, God's unilateral sovereign mercy foundational to Israel's existence is highlighted in both Romans and the prophet's penitential prayers. The “categorical difference” between the merciful God and mortal human is a common motif in Qumran literature, *Sirach* and Romans. However, language of mercy represents salvation to Gentiles only in Romans, Isaiah and *JosAs* but not other Jewish texts.

⁹⁶⁸ Humphrey (2000: 107) describes that “the triumph of mercy over revenge, the lifting up of the meek and the lowering of the proud” dominate the narrative.

⁹⁶⁹ Burchard's (1985: 222) translation is followed.

⁹⁷⁰ Portier-Young (2005: 137—38). Aseneth also shows mercy and spare the lives of the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah (27.7–28.17) as God forgives her life.

⁹⁷¹ Hicks-Keeton (2018: 58—59).

5.3 Concluding remarks

By characterizing God as the one who calls and has mercy, Paul does not contend that God selects some but rejects the other within Israel. Instead, the designations highlight that God's incongruous call and mercy are what sustained Israel from the beginning. In addition, it is the same creative agent that incorporates Gentiles into God's people. By comparing and contrasting the recurrent linguistic pattern of καλέω and ἐλεέω/ἔλεος as divine designations between Paul and his Jewish and pagan contemporaries, relevant antecedents have been located, meanwhile, Paul's distinctive usage is also illustrated.

Chapter 6

The God of “virtues” (15:5, 13, 33; 16:20a)

Three groups of divine designations in the ending sections of Romans will be studied. The noun θεός is modified by genitive noun phrases (hereafter θεός-genitives), namely ὁ θεὸς τῆς ὑπομονῆς καὶ τῆς παρακλήσεως (15:5); ὁ θεὸς τῆς ἐλπίδος (15:13); ὁ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης (15:33; 16:20a). Despite the frequent use of prerogatives referring to God and Jesus Christ our Lord in Rom 14–16,⁹⁷² examining the θεός-genitives in these chapters is challenging for several reasons. The first two groups of designations in 15:5 and 15:13 belong to Pauline paraenesis,⁹⁷³ which had been regarded in the past as the least relevant to discussions about Paul’s theology in the letter.⁹⁷⁴ Although there has been a surge of scholarly interest in the last few decades, most effort has been devoted to uncovering its socio-historical background and the occasion of Paul’s writing.⁹⁷⁵ Nevertheless, these designations, perhaps the wider passage (14:1–15:13) as well, have not been regarded as theological significant (see 6.1.1 below) because it is assumed that it addresses practical, social or communal problems. In similar vein, 15:13, not to mention the designation ὁ θεὸς τῆς ἐλπίδος in particular, is sometimes left out as 15:7–12 is often under the limelight.

As for the last group of designation, “the God of peace”, which is found twice in Romans (15:33; 16:20a), is not a typical feature of letter closing in Paul’s letters. However, the ὁ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης are sometimes understood as one of the common formal characteristics of Paul’s liturgical prayers. Observed a “high degree of stylistic

⁹⁷² In Rom 14–16, the nouns θεός and πατήρ are used for 25 times (14:3, 6 [2x], 10 [2x], 12, 17–18, 20, 22; 15:5–9, 13, 15–17, 30, 32–33; 16:20, 26–27). The nouns κύριος, Χριστός, Ἰησοῦς, Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, κύριος Ἰησοῦς, are used for 38 times (14:4, 6 [3x], 8 [2x], 9, 14–15, 18; 15:3, 5, 6–8, 17–20, 29–30; 16:2, 3, 5, 7–11, 12[2x], 13, 16, 18, 20, 22, 25, 27).

⁹⁷³ For the formal category in general, see Aune (1987: 191, 194–97); Malherbe (1987: 124–29).

⁹⁷⁴ The imbalance can be illustrated in numeric terms (see Toney 2008:1). The first number gives the average pages in the commentary per chapter of Rom 1–11 and the second number is of Rom 12–16: 18 vs 9.5 in Esler (2003); 37 vs 30 in Fitzmyer (1993); 64 vs. 40 in Moo (1996); 25 vs. 6.5 in Tobin (2004).

⁹⁷⁵ See Reasoner (1999: 1–23) for the overview of secondary literature, ranging from the identity of the “strong” and the “weak”, whether the occasion of the conflict was historical or hypothetical, to whether Paul was addressing internal or external divisions, etc.

uniformity” across Paul’s letters,⁹⁷⁶ Weima suggests that “adversative particle ‘but’ (*de*) [which introduces the θεός-genitive in 15: 33, 16:20a] ...sets the prayer apart from the preceding material.”⁹⁷⁷ However, do they bear limited significance apart from being letter ending conventions? Are they detached from Paul’s argument in the letter?

⁹⁷⁶ According to Weima’s (1994: 104) analysis, there are four basic elements in “peace benedictions” (Rom 15:33, 16:20a; 2 Cor 13:11; Phil 4:9b; 1 Thess 5:23; 2 Thess 3:16; Gal 6:16): introductory, the wish, divine source, and the recipient. Weima (2016:135–36, 166–67) observes that four out of seven of the peace benedictions are introduced by the postpositive particle δέ (Rom 15:33; 16:20a; 1 Thess 5:23; 2 Thess 3:16), whereas the rest uses καί (2 Cor 13:11; Phil 4:9b; Gal 6:16). Therefore, he argued that the δέ particles should be read in adversative sense marking the transition from the letter body to letter closing. True though the observation is, Paul’s use of particles or conjunctions is not as systematic or standardised as Weima assumes.

⁹⁷⁷ Weima (2016: 135–36, 166–67).

6.1 Ὁ θεὸς τῆς ὑπομονῆς καὶ τῆς παρακλήσεως (15:5)

The parenetic nature of Paul's prayers is often noted. As Weima puts it lucidly, "By sharing with his readers the specific content of his prayers to God for them... Paul is urging the house churches in Rome, divided between the 'weak' and the 'strong,' to pursue like-mindedness and unity."⁹⁷⁸ It might be easy to draw a conclusion of unity,⁹⁷⁹ explicating what sense of unity does Paul mean with the θεός-genitives might not be so straightforward.

6.1.1 Introduction

In view of the conflict between the "weak" and the "strong" (14:1–2; 15:1),⁹⁸⁰ it has been suggested that ὑπομονή and παράκλησις are divine "resources for the congregation to overcome their conflicts and reproaches".⁹⁸¹ Tolerance is a theme often suggested.⁹⁸² For Jewett, the instruction in Rom 14—15 best expresses the gospel's vision of harmony and mutual tolerance. Paul advocates "tolerant coexistence between believers of different cultural and theological orientation" by "allowing cultural variations to stand side by side with equal validity".⁹⁸³ With all due respect to Jewett's contribution on the social intentions and effect of Paul's gospel in Romans, this section argues the tolerant, egalitarian, peaceful social virtues are unnecessarily confined and incline too close to pluralistic multiculturalism than Paul's theology. It will be demonstrated that Paul's theological vision of ὑπομονή καὶ παράκλησις is more constructive than the suggested understanding of mutual tolerance in negative terms

⁹⁷⁸ Weima (2016: 135–36, here 125).

⁹⁷⁹ Reasoner (1990: 101).

⁹⁸⁰ However, naming it a conflict between the "strong" and the "weak" is not completely accurate. While the first imperative προσλαμβάνεσθε "receive" (14:1) takes τὸν ἀσθενοῦντα τῇ πίστει "the one who is weak in faith" as direct object, the term οἱ δυνατοὶ "the strong" does not appear until 15:1. The opposite group is designated as ὃς πιστεύει φαγεῖν πάντα "one who has faith to eat everything" (14:2).

⁹⁸¹ Jewett (2007: 882). It is reflected in some common English translations where ὑπομονῆς and παρακλήσεως are rendered "patience and comfort" (e.g., KJV, NAB).

⁹⁸² Byrne (1996: 403–27) entitles the parenetic section (14:1–15:13) in terms of tolerance, e.g. "Plea for tolerance in the matter of food (14:1–15:13)", "The Tolerance Incumbent upon All (14:1–12)", "The Tolerance Asked Particularly of the 'Strong' (14:13–23)", "The Example of Christ as Grounds for Tolerance (15:1–6)". See also Boyarin 1994: 32; Talbert (2002: 321–22). *Oxford English Dictionary* glosses tolerance as "the disposition or ability to accept without protest or adopt a liberal attitude towards the opinions or acts of others (Brown 1993:3330)."

⁹⁸³ Jewett (2006: 144, 233).

(featuring the absence of conflict, superiority or discrimination).⁹⁸⁴ This section will first explain, with reference to the epistolary context of 15:5, the θεός-genitives are not used to justify tolerance for the sake of the community. Rather, the θεός-genitives are used to put more burden on “the strong” to accommodate to the tradition observed by “weak”. Also, Paul’s idea of “upbuilding” οἰκοδομήν and “other regarding” disposition put more weight on the soteriological consequences than respective coexistence.

6.1.2 The epistolary context of 15:5–6

The θεός-genitives occupy the ending position of the section (15:1–6), which summarises Paul’s exhortation in 14:1–23.⁹⁸⁵ After series of more general paraenesis (Rom 12–13), 14:1 begins with a new focus on specific issues affect the internal (cf. 1 Cor 8–10) relations between two groups in the Roman churches.⁹⁸⁶ It is likely that Paul is not addressing a hypothetical but real situation because he is so informed that he aligns openly with the strong.⁹⁸⁷ Despite the contested identity of the weak and the strong,⁹⁸⁸ 14:1 sets the scene of διαλογισμοί (disagreements). The dispute concerns difference in practice of the Torah: those who are “weak in faith” abstain from unclean food (14:2) and probably also idol-dedicated wine (14:21) according to *kosher* rules (14:14, 20) and honor the Sabbath (and Jewish feasts/fasts; 14:5–6), whereas the strong think all foods and all days are acceptable (14:2, 5).⁹⁸⁹ At first sight, the basic term of Paul’s exhortation, προσλαμβάνεσθε, seems fit well with Jewett’s concept of “respective coexistence”.⁹⁹⁰ Each group is equally exhorted (14:3, 10, 13): those who eat freely are not to ἐξουθενείτω (despise) those who do not eat, whereas those who

⁹⁸⁴ Barclay (2008: 107–9). Gaventa (2011c:4) notes the insufficiency of theological discussion in Rom 14–15 in her somewhat sweeping statement: “the appeals to God take on the character of secondary arguments that serve largely to shore up what Paul has already decided to say on other grounds.”

⁹⁸⁵ For the summarising function of δέ, see e.g., Meeks (1987: 291); Cranfield (1979: 729–30); Thielman (2018: 651).

⁹⁸⁶ Wilckens (1978:79).

⁹⁸⁷ Barclay (1996:289) rightly notes that Paul “would hardly donate his authority as a blank cheque cashable by any Pauline group claiming to be ‘the strong’”; contra. Sampley (1995:40–52) thinks the titles δυνατοί, ἀδύνατοι, and ἀσθενεῖς are Paul’s oblique rhetorical strategies.

⁹⁸⁸ In general, the weak is identified as Jewish Christians who keep *kosher* and the Gentiles Christians the strong (see e.g., Barclay 1996; Cranfield 1979:700; Fitzmyer 1993:687; Reasoner 1999:6–16). Nanos (1996:95–119) and Neil Elliot (1990) argue, unpersuasively, for non-Christian Jews.

⁹⁸⁹ Barclay (2013: 192); idem. (2011: 37–59).

⁹⁹⁰ Jewett (2006: 86).

practice abstention are not to κρινέτω (judge).⁹⁹¹ In 15:1–2, the strong are adjoined “to bear” the weakness of the powerless and do not please oneself. The idea βαστάζειν has sometimes been interpreted as “bearing with” or “putting up with”.⁹⁹² Thus understood, Paul is recapitulating his earlier demand of tolerance as the strong are required “not to overpower the powerless”.⁹⁹³ Likewise, οἰκοδομήν is explained in extremely limited terms:

“If each group seeks constructively to encourage the development of integrity and maturity in other groups, rather than trying to force them to conform to a single viewpoint, the ethnic and theological diversity in Rome would no longer be divisive and destructive.”⁹⁹⁴

However, this reading underrates Paul’s demand on the strong, whom Paul places much burden of changing practices.⁹⁹⁵ The series of demanding instructions directed at the strong (14:13b—14:23) go beyond the idea of unforced conformity.⁹⁹⁶ When we reach 15:1–2, the strong are foregrounded. As noted, the terms οἱ δυνατοί and οἱ ἀδύνατοι are not used until Rom 15 because Paul has been framing the disputing parties in terms of faith, ὁ ἀσθενῶν τῇ πίστει verses ὃς πιστεύει that one can eat everything (14:1–2). Beside the new designation, two new corresponding infinitives βαστάζειν and μὴ ἀρέσκειν ἑαυτοῖς are introduced in 15:1. The idea of “pleasing one’s neighbour” is elaborated by two purpose clauses εἰς τὸ ἀγαθὸν and πρὸς οἰκοδομήν (15:2). The strong are required to accommodate to the tradition observed by the weak, otherwise, ἐσθίοντι is considered κακόν because it places a stumbling block in the way of a sister or brother (14:13; 1 Cor 8:9–13) and destroys God’s work (14:20). The desired οἰκοδομήν in 15:2 looks back to these demands not only because οἰκοδομήν is a natural opposition to καταλύειν, it also recalls the earlier urge to pursue peace and “mutual upbuilding” (14:19). The substantial οἰκοδομήν is one of Paul’s common

⁹⁹¹ Horrell (2005: 204).

⁹⁹² E.g., NIV and NJB render it as “bear with”, NRSV as “put up with”; among commentators, Barrett 1991: 269; Fitmyer 1993: 701–2; Ziesler 1989: 337. Contra. it is argued the sense is more akin to Gal 6:2 (e.g., Cranfield 1979:287) as Dunn (1988:837) puts it, “Paul is asking for positive help not mere toleration.”

⁹⁹³ Jewett (2006: 876).

⁹⁹⁴ Jewett (2006: 870).

⁹⁹⁵ Horrell (2005: 216).

⁹⁹⁶ Several significant changes of persons from first person plural (14:13, 19) to second person singular (14:15, 21–22) illustrate that Paul is addressing the “faith-havers” who eats everything. Contra. Jewett (2006: 870) states the emphatic second person singular pronoun σύ direct “this rule to each person...not just to the ‘strong’.” See Engberg-Pedersen (2008: 22–38) for his debate with Watson about the addressees of the passage.

metaphorical languages for edification or simply spiritual advantage of God's church (e.g. 1 Cor 3:9, 14:3, 5, 12).⁹⁹⁷ According to its earlier occurrences (8:28 and 13:4), the εἰς-prepositional phrase εἰς τὸ ἀγαθὸν also denotes one's salvific advantage.⁹⁹⁸ Reading alongside 14:17–20, the collocation of ἀρέσκειν (one's neighbour) and οἰκοδομῆν in 15:2 corresponds to the early established argument: those who pursue οἰκοδομῆν (14:19) are εὐάρεστος (well-pleasing) to Christ (14:18).⁹⁹⁹ Thus, it is more than the pursuance of harmony for its own sake.

Christ's example of the other-regrading disposition introduced by the ascensive καί meaning "even" in 15:3 reinforces the importance of the divine other. Although the "other-regarding" disposition is exemplified with Christ, the relevance of the words Paul cites from Ps 68:10b LXX [69:9b MT] is not transparent. The relevance of installing Christ as the speaker of the citation (Rom 15:3) and the relevance of these words to "the strong" are contested. Scott criticises the Haysian purposed reading of "Christological vicarious suffering" does not explain why the psalmist, the divine other σε and the strong are identified in the sharing of common reproaches.¹⁰⁰⁰ Instead of appealing to the wider context of Ps 68 as Hays claims, Scott adduces to Barclay's socio-historical evidence that the Romans stigmatised the strong for adopting Jewish eating habits.¹⁰⁰¹ Besides the reproaches, the σε in the quote is also explained. The second person singular pronoun σε in Paul's citation (Ps 68:10b) refers to God, the possessor of "your house" (οἴκου σου) in Ps 68:10a. Scott argues that οἶκος in Ps 68:10 is associated with its cognate οἰκοδομῆν in Rom 15:2, and also its corporate subject "the weak".¹⁰⁰² *Inter alia*, Scott's argument helps explain first, how the practice of commensality is a "costly solidarity with the weak"; and second, what Paul demands

⁹⁹⁷ Cranfield (1975: 722); Moo (1996: 859).

⁹⁹⁸ Cranfield (1975: 732 n. 2); Moo (1996: 867).

⁹⁹⁹ The dative ἐν τούτῳ in 14:18 might be a little bit ambiguous, yet, ἅπα οὖν (14:19; see 5:18, 7:25b; 8:12) certifies the tight link between the pursuit of οἰκοδομή and the well-pleasing service of Christ. See Cranfield (1975: 720); Scott (2014: 80 n. 58).

¹⁰⁰⁰ See Scott's argument (2014: 78) against Hays (2005: 112). Contra Jewett (2007: 880), Paul never states that Christ died on behalf of those "reproached" (the recipients of ὀνειδισμοί), he died for the weak ἀσθενής (5:6), the ungodly ἀσεβής (5:6); the sinful ἀμαρτωλός (5:8); and God's enemies ἐχθροί (5:9) in Romans.

¹⁰⁰¹ Scott (2014: 83–84); Barclay (1996: 294–5; 304–5) concludes "the slanders and reproaches levelled at Jews in Rome would be shared by the strong to the extent that they were willing to adopt Jewish eating habits in their common meals."

¹⁰⁰² Scott (2014: 80).

the strong is “the coinherence of reproach directed against God and against his οἶκος (here, the ‘weak’).”¹⁰⁰³

6.1.3 Paul’s theological vision of ὑπομονή and παράκλησις

After explaining why Paul’s exhortation demands more than respective coexistence between the weak and the strong, we will then explore the nature of Paul’s theocentric exhortation. It will first be analysed that God’s critical role is emphasised in the divine providence of ὑπομονή and παράκλησις. Then, the formative role of ὑπομονή and παράκλησις will be discussed. Paul’s θεός-genitives highlight the judgmental divisive minds are transformed by divine ὑπομονή and παράκλησις. The result of the transformation is a reorientation of cultural variations or ethnic norms to God and Christ in this new community of salvation. Thus, the solidarity based on divine ὑπομονή and παράκλησις is fully expressed in corporate worship.

A. Divine providence of ὑπομονή καὶ παράκλησις

The critical role of God and the divine providence of ὑπομονή καὶ παράκλησις are marked in the ending doxological prayer.¹⁰⁰⁴ Prayers by its very nature is highly explicit in its orientation to “an other”.¹⁰⁰⁵ here, the divine other, ὁ θεὸς τῆς ὑπομονῆς καὶ τῆς παρακλήσεως. The θεός-genitives are in emphatic position preceding the main verb, the optative δῶη (15:5). The optative δῶη denotes an attainable wish which in fact can only be attained if God wills.¹⁰⁰⁶ Paul prays that both “the weak” and “the strong” ὑμῖν will be granted τὸ αὐτὸ φρονεῖν (cf. Rom 12:16). The articular infinitive is qualified by κατὰ Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν (cf. Phil 2:5). It points back to 15:3 where Christ is adduced as the supreme example of the one who οὐχ ἑαυτῷ ἤρεσεν (does not please himself) but please the divine other. The role of scripture, which looks beyond the quotation in 15:3,¹⁰⁰⁷ is declared as διδασκαλίαν, not only instructive but

¹⁰⁰³ Scott (2014: 84).

¹⁰⁰⁴ Although it is sometimes categorised as “wish-prayers” or “intercessory prayers” (Wiles, 1974: 79; Weima, 1994: 144; Doeing, 2012: 422), 15:5–6 should be identified as “homiletic benedictions” which are related to preaching situations and “tie together with the major theme of the letter, particularly the parenthetic themes.” Jewett, (1969: 26) follows Cranfield (1975:736) to criticise the inappropriateness of “prayer” language in the label “wish prayers”.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Newsom (2004: 205).

¹⁰⁰⁶ Jewett (2007: 883–84) finds δῶη is typical of LXX prayers and wishes and its form is a *hapax legomenon* in Paul,

¹⁰⁰⁷ Jewett (2007: 880).

formative.¹⁰⁰⁸ The “other-regarding” disposition is qualified by ὑπομονή καὶ παράκλησις, both from scripture and more precisely from God. The anaphoric τῆς of the θεός-genitives in 15:5 refer to a specific form of ὑπομονή and παράκλησις within scriptural parameters. The expected result of conformed mind is declared in the ἵνα-clause. The manner of glorification of God, expressed with two synonymous phrases ὁμοθυμαδὸν, ἐν ἐνὶ στόματι, is marked. The optative δόῃ, scriptural ὑπομονή and παράκλησις, and Christological character and doxological result of the same mind illustrate the unity that Paul is praying for is not a human attainment but God’s gift.¹⁰⁰⁹ Instead of praying for unanimity on the issue of dietary and calendric laws, Paul declares that only in God, Christ and Scripture, can the categorical distinction between “the strong” and “the weak” be overcome in one (αὐτό, ἐνί).

B. The formative role of ὑπομονή and παράκλησις

The fact that Paul elevates the table fellowship issue to liturgical level illuminates his theocentric argument. Although the dispute is about convictions regarding the “cleanness” (κοινός, καθαρός) of food (14:14, 20) and opinions of days (14:5–6), Paul’s argument “here undergirds not so much an individual’s stance”. The language of cognition (e.g. κρίνειν in 14:5, 13; φρονεῖν in 14:6; δοκιμάζειν in 14:22), for Paul, expresses the detrimental problem of judgement.¹⁰¹⁰ A heavy preponderance of κριν-words such as διάκρισις (14:1), κρίνειν (14:3, 4, 5, 10, 13, 22), διακρίνειν (14:23) and κατακρίνειν (14:23), and two parallel apostrophes (14:4, 10) bring God’s role as the ultimate judge to the foreground. The rhetorical force is realised with the abrupt shift to second person independent pronouns σύ in both questions. Reprised in the verbs ἐξουθενεῖω and κρινέτω (14:3, 10), judgment from both sides of the “weak” and the “strong”, is questioned. The “faith-havers” are reprimanded for ἀπόλλυναι destroying (14:15), καταλύειν demolishing (14:20) your brother and causing your

¹⁰⁰⁸ Ancient pedagogy was clearly formative in its aims (Carr 2005:178–81), with imitation a core value.

¹⁰⁰⁹ A majority of scholars (e.g., Sanday and Headlam, 1902: 396; Murray 1960: 201) take κατὰ Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν in the sense that the example or disposition (φρονέω) of Christ is followed; others (Cranfield 1979: 737; Käsemann 1980: 383) insist that the Lord’s will is intended here. These two ways of constructions do not bear big difference to our conclusion.

¹⁰¹⁰ Gaventa (2011c:8); McCruden (2005: 238).

brother to προσκόπτει stumble (14:21; cf. 14:13).¹⁰¹¹ The objects of destruction verbs identify one's brother in relation to the identity-shaping event on the cross: as the one whom Christ died for (οὗ Χριστοῦ ἀπέθανεν; 14:15) and the work of God (τὸ ἔργον τοῦ θεοῦ; 14:20). Thus, the table fellowship issue does not simply hurt (λυπεῖται) feelings or irritate individuals (14:15a), it has soteriological consequences. The core reason of the destructive consequences of "judgment" is not a matter of "monological ethics", but "a pattern of relating".¹⁰¹² Judgement directed against ἀλλότριον οἰκέτην "someone's [God's] slave" (14:4) and later described as τὸν ἀδελφόν σου "your brother" (14:10) is banned because "only God δυνατεῖ is able to cause human beings στήσαι to stand (14:4; cf. παραστησόμεθα 14:10)".¹⁰¹³ To judge or despise ἀλλήλους fellow believers (14:13) is to impose a valuation of worth contrary to that person's evaluation by God.¹⁰¹⁴ The next occurrences of the plural pronoun ἀλλήλους in 14:19 and more importantly 15:5 reiterate the other side of the same coin. Instead of defining by individual convictions about food and drinks, the only salient values which do not destroy but οικοδομή "build-up" fellow believers εἰς ἀλλήλους (14:19) are righteousness, peace and joy in Spirit (14:17). These values of the kingdom of God are integral to the divine ὑπομονή and παράκλησις so that individual judgmental minds are *transformed* into one mind conformed to the "other-regarding" disposition exemplified by Christ Jesus τὸ αὐτὸ φρονεῖν ἐν ἀλλήλοις κατὰ Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν (15:5).

C. A "reoriented" theological basis of unity

Paul's basis for solidarity is theological, fellow believers are welcomed (14:3) to meal because they stand before God on the basis of Christ's welcome alone (15:7). It is possible that the believers' new "standing" or status (14:4, 10) echoes with Paul's earlier idea of "the grace in which we stand" τὴν χάριν ταύτην ἐν ᾗ ἐστήκαμεν (5:2).

¹⁰¹¹ Although the admonition is against the strong (14:13–23) as discussed, Paul's earlier statement also undermines the principle of the "weak" as the connection between "honouring the Lord" and "keeping Kosher" is relativized (14:6).

¹⁰¹² Horrell, (2005: 204–7, here 207): "The Pauline Christian cannot do ethics monologically, reflecting in isolation on what is right and wrong, but can only make that discernment as a situated participant, in the context of human relationships." Despite Horrell's insight on relational nature of Paul's argument, we think that Paul argument concerns more about divine human relationships than mere human relationships.

¹⁰¹³ Meeks (1987: 293).

¹⁰¹⁴ Barclay (2015: 512).

The correspondence between 5:1–5 and 14:1–15:13 illustrated below might reinforce the suggestion that Paul takes up the core values in later exhortation:¹⁰¹⁵

	<u>Rom 5:1–5</u>	<u>Rom 14:1–15:13</u>
εἰρήνη	5:1	14:17, 19
ἐκ πίστεως	5:1	14:2
ἐστήκαμεν	5:2	14:4, 10
ἐλπίς	5:2, 4, 5	15:4, 12, 13 ^{2x}
ὁ δόξα τοῦ θεοῦ	5:2	15:7
ὕπομονή	5:3, 4	15:4, 5
ἀγάπη	5:5	14:15
πνεῦμα ἅγιος	5:5	14:17; 15:13

Rom 5:1–5 celebrates the new reality created in Christ. Standing in God’s grace, believers are provided with the grounds for confidence (“boasting”) of the God-created future of glory. Despite present suffering, hope is secured because ὑπομονή and thus δοκιμὴν are formed in the heart transformed by the gift of the Spirit (cf. 2:15, 29).¹⁰¹⁶ The hope-producing ὑπομονή is the inseparable result of Christ’s death for ἀσθενῶν (the weak), the ungodly and the sinful (5:6–8; cf. 4:5; 14:15). The collocation of ὑπομονή and ἐλπίς is noteworthy. Although ἐλπίς is the focus of the next section (15:7–13), it is mentioned in 15:4 for the first time since 14:1.¹⁰¹⁷ Other occurrences of ἐλπίς in Rom 8:20, 24, 25 indicate the hope of redemption characterises believers’ “new life in dying bodies”. At issue is τὸ φρόνημα “the mind” (8:5–7), entangled in the war between the flesh and the Spirit. Christian obedience “by putting death to the deeds of the body” (8:13) demonstrates the believer is drawing towards hope, climaxed in Christ’s resurrection (8:11; cf. Rom 6:5; 1 Cor 15:3–4), and the awaited redemption δι’ ὑπομονῆς (8:23, 25).¹⁰¹⁸ This “ethics” of “newness of life”¹⁰¹⁹ and hope-producing ὑπομονή are not illustrated with ethical instructions or specific examples in Rom 5, 8, yet, the gap is filled later. Paul’s carefully handling of the dispute indicates how important it is that this “newness of life” arising from the Christ event is expressed in

¹⁰¹⁵ Meeks (1987: 296) observes the parallel with 5:1–5 but limits only to 14:17, and echoes with the earlier warning against human judgement.

¹⁰¹⁶ Barclay (2015: 477). Cranfield (1975: 261) explains δοκιμὴν is “the quality of provedness which is possessed by faith when it has stood up to testing.”

¹⁰¹⁷ It would be less surprising if other aforementioned values, such as peace, mutual upbuilding or other-regard disposition are referred as the expected result of divine ὑπομονή and παράκλησις.

¹⁰¹⁸ Barclay (2015: 506); Moo (1996: 301).

¹⁰¹⁹ Engberg-Pedersen (1995: 477–505).

practices that are reframed and reoriented in allegiance to God.¹⁰²⁰ In other words, the new communal life characterised by divine ὑπομονή and παράκλησις (15:5) is the illuminating manifestation of the post-baptismal life (Rom 5, 8) inaugurated by God (and Christ) who justifies the ungodly and the weak (see 4.1). “The rediscovery of the latter half of Romans goes hand in hand with a returning awareness that Paul’s theology and his practice can hardly be understood correctly when they are separated.”¹⁰²¹

D. Corporate worship

The formative role of divine ὑπομονή and παράκλησις in this new communal life is not only fully realised in unity of thought but also of worship (15:6). The verb δοξάζετε in the ἵνα-clause anticipates the result of Jews and Gentiles glorifying God in 15:7, 9. It would be reasonable to think that there are both Jewish and Gentile believers among the weak and the strong (cf. 1 Cor 10:32), nevertheless, the ethnic titles are not used until 15:8–9.¹⁰²² Barclay rightly suggests there are good rhetorical reasons for Paul “*not* to spell out the entanglement of these issues with ‘the Law’ or with ethnic affiliations and attraction.”¹⁰²³ Since the grounds for solidarity is one’s standing before God, the values of different cultural customs with regard to food, convictions of the Torah or ethnical norms are subverted (οὐ ἔστιν) in God’s kingdom (14:17).¹⁰²⁴ Therefore, Paul addresses the Romans not *qua* Jews or Gentiles but *qua* believers, the strong or weak “in faith”. The only good τὸ ἀγαθόν (14:16; 15:2) arises from one’s allegiance τῷ θεῷ and τῷ κυρίῳ (14:4, 6–9). It is no longer necessary to identify believers in ethnic terms because they are thus brothers, who are welcomed (14:1; 15:7) by a common Master (14:4, 10).¹⁰²⁵ The God of ὑπομονή and παράκλησις

¹⁰²⁰ Barclay (2015: 516).

¹⁰²¹ Meeks (1987: 290).

¹⁰²² It is less likely that non-believing Jews are Paul’s interlocutor, see n. 15.

¹⁰²³ Barclay (2015: 511).

¹⁰²⁴ Barclay (2015: 512–13); Horrell (2005: 214) states, “Paul’s conviction that the basis for solidarity and identity is Christ, so firmly asserted in Galatians, provides the grounds for his ‘tolerance’ in Romans, where different customs with regard to food, no longer defining of identity and belonging, are in themselves indifferent and so can be treated with a Christ-like generosity.”

¹⁰²⁵ Paul’s self allegiance with the strong does not invalidate “the weak”. What is characteristic of “the weak” is that the cultural traditions are more connected to their faith in Christ, comparably, the strength of “the strong” lies in their accommodation to the weak. The strong can adjust their eating habits one way or another because they can more fully disaggregated from cultural norms and values not implicit within the Christ event itself (Barclay, 2013: 205; *idem* 2015: 516).

shapes, creates, generates the ground where believers reorient “their judgements” to God’s universal “welcome” reflected in corporate worship. The theme of universal worship is already intimated in as Paul quotes from Isa 45: 23 in 14:11, “...Every tongue shall confess ἐξομολογήσεται to God” (cf. ἐξομολογήσομαι in Rom 15:9) after his condemnation to judging (14:10).¹⁰²⁶ The “purifying” role of doxology could be traced back earlier in Romans as the refusal to give thanks to God (ἐδόξασαν, ἡὐχαρίστησαν in 1:21) expresses the root of human entrapment in the power of Sin (1:24, 26, 28), and “unites” Jews and Greeks in terms of sinners (3:9, 19–20).¹⁰²⁷ As a result, the united corporate worship granted by the God of ὑπομονή and παρακλήσις condemns and transforms the judgmental minds, accomplishes the repristination of human speech, and overturns the “apartheid” of Jews and Gentiles.

6.1.4 Concluding remarks

The thematic meanings of ὁ θεὸς τῆς ὑπομονῆς καὶ τῆς παρακλήσεως do not suggest a resolution characterised by tolerant, egalitarian, pluralistic social values. Paul’s exhortation is more demanding than restrictive or respective co-existence. Paul puts much burden on the “strong” to accommodate to the tradition observed by the “weak” and demands the “strong” to share the reproach directed at not only the “weak” but indeed also at God. Nevertheless, Paul’s theological vision of ὑπομονῆς and παρακλήσεως is not a human achievement but God’s gift. Judgmental divisive minds are transformed by divine ὑπομονῆς and παρακλήσεως into one conformed mind in accord with the “other-regarding disposition” examples of Christ Jesus. As a result, the unified worship is a bodily expression of the post-baptismal life characterised by ὑπομονῆς and ἐλπίς. Although God’s salvific purpose for both Jews and Gentiles is only implied in the θεός-genitives (15:5), the importance of Gentile inclusion will come to full fruition in the following divine designation (15:13).

¹⁰²⁶ Tomson (1990: 256).

¹⁰²⁷ Gavena (2008: 113–23).

6.2 Ὁ θεὸς τῆς ἐλπίδος (15:13)

The divine designation is located at the end of 15:7–13 which could be the conclusion of the parenthetic section (either Rom 12–15 or Rom 14–15) or of the letter body (1:16–15:13).¹⁰²⁸ The section has often been read “Christologically” or “ecclesiological”. With a focus on 15:7–9 (cf. 15:3–4), Wright suggests these unambiguous Messianic passages prove the “climax of the covenant” with Israel had taken place in Jesus Christ.¹⁰²⁹ Hays claims that the reason why Paul writes 15:9b–12 is that the present Gentile church is “an anomaly that Paul must explain”.¹⁰³⁰ However, *inter alia*, it could be easily observed that not only is 15:13 overlooked in these discussions, the importance of the divine designation ὁ θεὸς τῆς ἐλπίδος is also left unnoticed. Taking a cue from Karl Barth’s lament about how insufficient did his contemporary exegetical works engage with the divine “Subject”, Gaventa points out the often neglected theological factor in chs. 14–15:

What funds Paul’s response is the story of God’s action of redeeming a captive humanity from the powers of Sin and Death, a story of God’s re-creation of humanity for unity and thanksgiving, a story that has run through this letter.¹⁰³¹

With a focus on Paul’s designation of the divine “Subject”, the following section will try to investigate the theological significance of ὁ θεὸς τῆς ἐλπίδος particularly in view of Paul’s mission to the Gentiles.

6.2.1 Introduction

As discussed above, the θεός-genitives in 15:5 anticipates God’s plan and purpose of salvation for both Jews and Gentiles. It will be argued Paul’s ὁ θεὸς τῆς ἐλπίδος continues, broadens, and epitomises Paul’s argument of inclusion of Gentiles into God’s cosmic redemption. After establishing the parallel between 15:5 and 15:13,

¹⁰²⁸ E.g. Wright (1991: 235); Flebbe (2008: 406); Dodd (1932: 222); Dunn (1988b: 844–45); Hays (1989: 70) describe 15:7–13 as the “climax of the letter”. Others think that the section only draws a conclusion to the exhortation to “the weak” and “the strong”, e.g. Ziesler (1989: 336–37); Cranfield (1975: 739). It should be noted that the options are not incompatible, it is possible (Fitzmyer, 1993: 253) that 15:7–13 concludes Rom 14–15 as well as 1:16–15:13. The dual function is similar to 1:16–17 which serves as the thesis introducing Rom 1–15 and the introduction for the section Rom 1:18–4:25. For our purpose, the suggestion of dual function is helpful as both the importance of 15:13 and its connection with the rest of the letter could be better appreciated.

¹⁰²⁹ According to Wright (1991: 43), Paul “subverts the Jewish story from within” (235).

¹⁰³⁰ Hays’s (1989: 73, 90, 169; 1993: 122–36) “ecclesiocentric” hermeneutic suggests that the church is the fulfilment of Israel’s eschatological hope.

¹⁰³¹ Gaventa (2016: 112).

the relationship between the anaphoric genitive τῆς ἐλπίδος and its preceding Scripture catena (15:9b–12) will be explained. Paul reads from the Scripture a prefiguration of his own Gentile mission characterised by the divine eschatological hope.

6.2.2 Continuing and broadening the vision

While a clear demarcation could be observed after 15:13, the problem of delimitation of 15:7–13 is less obvious. It is clear that Paul’s appeal for assistance from the Roman churches for his planned missionary venture to the western Mediterranean in 15:14–33 opens a new section. Although most commentaries begin a new section in 15:7–13, a structural parallel is observed between 15:1–6 and 15:7–13:

1. opening imperatives (ἄρεσκέτω, v. 2; προσλαμβάνεσθε, v. 7);
2. are followed by Christ examples (vv. 3, 8–9a);
3. with supporting scripture quotations cited (vv. 3, 9b–12); and
4. “benedictions” conclude each section (vv. 5–6, 13).

The parallel between the “benedictions” (15:5–6; 15:13) illustrates Paul is continuing as well as broadening his vision beyond communal conflict. “Whereas vv. 5f dealt with the united character of the community manifested in worship, the point now is that the cosmic goal of redemption is not to be forgotten for a single moment and that burdens and necessities of the daily life are to remain against this background.”¹⁰³² Paul’s “cosmic goal of redemption” neither aims Christologically at proving Jesus as the Messiah (notes the absence of reference to Jesus Christ in 15:13) nor resolving the internal quarrel between “the weak” and “the strong” (notes the change of addressees from οἱ δυνάτοί to ὑμεῖς and ἀλλήλους),¹⁰³³ rather, it is characterised by eschatological hope, ὁ θεὸς τῆς ἐλπίδος.

6.2.3 The anaphoric τῆς ἐλπίδος and the scripture catena (15:9b–12)

While the definite articles of τῆς ὑπομονῆς καὶ τῆς παρακλήσεως in 15:5 refer back to the steadfastness and encouragement τῶν γραφῶν (15:4), the arthrous genitive τῆς ἐλπίδος is also anaphoric linking the θεός-genitive to scriptural quotation from Isa 11:10 in Rom 15:12. The scriptural antecedent of ὁ θεὸς τῆς ἐλπίδος specifies the

¹⁰³² Käsemann (1980: 387).

¹⁰³³ Jewett (2007: 889).

modifier ἐλπίδος is scriptural, concrete, and historical. Although the verb of hope (ἐλπιούσιν) is only used in 15:12 to speak of Gentiles adherence to the “shoot of Jesse” and to his God, ἐλπίς is already used in 15:4 to indicate the purpose ἵνα of Scriptures. Forging various verbal and conceptual links within the catena of quotations (15:9b–12) climaxed in divine ἐλπίς, Paul testifies God’s purpose of the Messiah’s ministry is to include Gentiles into the eschatological community where Jews and Gentiles glorify God together.

Paul begins the catena with a citation from Psalms 17:50 LXX (= 2 Sam 22:50) in Rom 15:9b. Attributed to David (2 Sam 22:1), Ps 17 LXX is an individual thanksgiving psalm of God’s “anointed king” τῷ χριστῷ αὐτοῦ (17:51). God, in whom the psalmist hope ἐλπιδί for help (17:3), is praised for his deliverance from mortal danger and victory over the enemies. A correlation with Isa 11:10 (Rom 15:12) is evident as God is identified as a ὑπερασπιστής for all who hope in him πάντων τῶν ἐλπίζόντων ἐπ’ αὐτόν (Ps 17:31). Beside victory, immediately before the cited verse, the psalmist celebrates his God-given dominion over the nations, καταστήσεις με εἰς κεφαλὴν ἐθνῶν· λαός, ὃν οὐκ ἔγνων... ὑπήκουσέν μοι (17:44–45a).¹⁰³⁴ “On account of these” διὰ τοῦτο (17:50), for God’s mercy ἔλεος (cf. Rom 15:9), to David and his seed τῷ Δαυίδ καὶ τῷ σπέρματι αὐτοῦ ἕως αἰῶνος (Ps 17:51), ἐξομολογήσομαί σοι ἐν ἔθνεσιν (Ps 17:50; Rom 15:9b). Paul reads it as words of Christ, as he omits the address κύριε/ἰησὺ from the citation to make sure that the praise is directed to God but not to Jesus as κύριος is Paul’s common appellation for Christ.¹⁰³⁵ What is remarkable about Paul’s “messianic exegesis” is that he focuses almost entirely on the messiah’s mission to the Gentiles.¹⁰³⁶ The description of the Messiah’s praise “among Gentiles” ἐν ἔθνεσιν is followed by two imperatives summoning the Gentiles to praise (15:10–11). Paul’s next quote from Deut 32:43 LXX is the doxological ending of the Song of Moses. Paul favours the more inclusive reading with the preposition μετά, “εὐφράνθητε, ἔθνη, μετὰ τοῦ λαοῦ αὐτοῦ”, contrary to the more exclusive call to the Gentiles to join Israel in the praise of God הרינו גוים עמו.¹⁰³⁷ Paul’s previous citation

¹⁰³⁴ Wagner (2002: 312–13). Several thematic links with Romans are observed ὑπακούσονται: the cognate of ἰστημι resonates with Rom 15:12 (Isa 11:10); the idea of “Gentile obedience” echoes with Rom 15:18, and the description of Gentiles λαός, ὃν οὐκ ἔγνων resembles Paul’s (Rom 9:25–26; 10:20).

¹⁰³⁵ Seifrid (2007: 688); Flebbe (2008: 424–45).

¹⁰³⁶ Wagner (2002: 313), emphasis original.

¹⁰³⁷ Dunn (1988b: 849).

of Deut 32:21 in Rom 10:19 marks God's purpose of provoking Israel to jealousy, to purify his people from apostasy, and then rescue them from their enemies (32:19–42).¹⁰³⁸ The eschatological rousing call to the heavenly beings and the earth reflects the result of Israel's restoration—not only God's people, but also the entire cosmos including ἔθνη, will be blessed (32:43).¹⁰³⁹ The collocation of ἔθνη and λαός (Rom 15:10) anticipates the next citation from Ps 116:1 LXX/ Rom 15:11. Similar to Ps 17 LXX, Ps 116:1 is one of the “Hallel” psalms imbued with eschatological overtones of Israel's restoration (Ps 111–117 MT).¹⁰⁴⁰ Paul foregrounds the address πάντα τὰ ἔθνη by moving it before the object τὸν κύριον of the imperative αἰνεῖτε to praise God (Rom 15:11) calls attention to Paul's emphasis on the worship of Gentiles.¹⁰⁴¹ Although Ps 116 LXX is rather short, Paul's choice is not coincidental as the covenant couplet of God's attribute ἔλεος and ἀλήθεια provides reason for praising God and draws the citation closer with 15:8–9.¹⁰⁴² Besides, God's mercy ἔλεος (cf. Ps 17:51) manifested in his faithfulness in rescuing the one who hopes ἐλπίζειν in him (117:9) is repeatedly declared in Ps 117:1–4, 29 LXX (cf. Ps 114:5 LXX).¹⁰⁴³ Although the praise of God in Ps 117 LXX remains in the midst of Israel, the repetitive πᾶς from Ps 116:1 fits Paul's inclusive purpose.

The last citation from Isa 11:10/ Rom 15:12 echoes with the first (Rom 15:9b/ Ps 17:51) as both indicative statements concern God's vindication of the Davidic seed respectively in both the past and the future. According to Wagner's study about Paul's use of Isaiah, the wider context of Isa 10–12 relates to God's merciful preservation of Israel's remnant through judgement. Similar to the Song of Moses (Deut 32), Israel's return and restoration after exile (pictured in terms of a “second exodus”) culminates “in a thundering chorus...of praise not only from the lips of redeemed Israel, but also from those among the Gentiles (12:1–6).”¹⁰⁴⁴ Throughout Isaiah's oracles of salvation, the explicit reference to the messiah's Davidic ancestry ἡ ῥίζα τοῦ Ἰεσσαὶ and the verb ἀνίστημι in Isa 11:10 are especially attractive to Paul given his earlier argument on

¹⁰³⁸ Xue (2015: 168).

¹⁰³⁹ Wagner (2002: 317 n. 38) rightly sees that the designation ἔθνη (Deut 32:43) is different from Israel's enemies (e.g., οἱ ἔχθροι, οἱ ὑπεναντίοι) in Deut 32: 27, 41–43.

¹⁰⁴⁰ Hafemann (2000: 182); Wagner, (2002: 314).

¹⁰⁴¹ Stanley (1992: 182).

¹⁰⁴² Moo (1996: 879).

¹⁰⁴³ Hafeman (2000: 183–84).

¹⁰⁴⁴ Wagner (2002: 318, 326–28); Hafemann (2000: 185).

Jesus' resurrection and exaltation (Rom 1:3–4; 10:6–13).¹⁰⁴⁵ Paul's omission of the LXX's temporal reference ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ links the prophecy of the future coming of the Davidic king (Isa 11:1–9) whose rule is characterised with δικαιοσύνη and ἀληθεία (Isa 11:5; cf. Ps 116:2 LXX) to Paul's time. Alongside the LXX, Paul departs from the Hebrew *Vorlage* by following the Greek translation to render the MT's מַלְכִּי references — לְנִי “for a sign” as ἄρχειν “to rule” and יִדְרְשׁוּ “they will seek” as ἐλπιούσιν “to hope” respectively.¹⁰⁴⁶ Paul's seamless movement from Isaiah's hope of the Gentiles to the hope of ὑμᾶς in 15:13 reinforces the significance of Gentiles inclusion. The idea of Gentiles' submission not only recapitulates ὑπήκουσέν in Ps 17:45a, the nations represented by οἱ υἱοὶ Ἀμμων are also subjected ὑπακούσονται to the reconstituted children of Israel (Isa 11:13–14) following the instantiation of the Davidic king's rule.¹⁰⁴⁷ Although ὑπακοὴ ἐθνῶν (Rom 15:18; cf. 1:5; 16:26) is found near the two explicit Davidic Messiah references, Paul places stronger emphasis on the non-partisan universal worship than the Gentiles defeated submission.¹⁰⁴⁸ Paul cites Isa 11:10/ Rom 15:12 not to “‘prove’ something about Jesus, but to show that scripture prophesies the inclusion of Gentiles in the worshipping community as a result of what *God* has done in and through Jesus Christ.”¹⁰⁴⁹ The interrelatedness of 15:9b–12 analysed above shows that ἔθνη is not just a catchword “poorly conceals the lack of a coherent rationale...of all four quotations”¹⁰⁵⁰, instead, Paul reads a prefiguration of his own Gentile mission.¹⁰⁵¹

6.2.4 Ὁ θεὸς τῆς ἐλπίδος and the rest of Romans

Apart from the connection between the anaphoric τῆς ἐλπίδος in the divine designation and the scripture catena (15:9b–12), Paul's language of hope is in closely related to faith as the reign of God's blessing is identified with two dative phrases ἐν τῷ πιστεύειν and ἐν τῇ ἐλπίδι (15:13). The word πίστις is not a new idea given the

¹⁰⁴⁵ Compared with similar prophecies about salvation and Gentile's hope in Isa 42:4 and 51:5, attractiveness of Isa 11:10 is potent. Wagner (2002: 319 n. 46).

¹⁰⁴⁶ Novenson (2009: 367–68); Seifrid (2007: 690).

¹⁰⁴⁷ Novenson (2009: 371).

¹⁰⁴⁸ Xue (2019: 122).

¹⁰⁴⁹ Wagner (2002: 323).

¹⁰⁵⁰ The integration of the emphasis on Gentiles' hope (Isa 11:10) with the first three citations on the Gentiles' praise of God is problematic to Keck (1990: 91).

¹⁰⁵¹ Novenson (2009: 369).

above exhortation to the “faith-havers” (14:13–23), nevertheless, the proximity of πίστις and ἐλπίς recalls Abraham’s narrative in 4:18 (cf. 5:1–2). Not only does the designation ὁ θεὸς τῆς ἐλπίδος rehearse 15:12/Isa 11:10, the benediction with reference to πίστις summarises one of the central motifs of Romans — “God has fulfilled the promise of the Abrahamic covenant by bringing Gentiles into the people of God through the gospel”.¹⁰⁵² A reference point is provided by the declaration about Christ’s ministry in 15:8–9a. Following the parallels discussed above between 15:1–6 and 7–13, Christ’s “other-regard” disposition (see 6.1.2) is elaborated in Christ’s becoming a servant διάκονος. Despite the vexed syntax of 15:8–9a, it is rendered here “Christ became a servant of the circumcision for the sake of God’s truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises to the patriarchs, and for the sake of his mercy, in order that the Gentiles might glorify God.”¹⁰⁵³ The term τὰς ἐπαγγελίας τῶν πατέρων points back to ch. 4 (cf. 1:2) where Paul argues for the priority of promise over the law. The ἐπαγγελία out of faith ἐκ πίστεως but not the law is confirmed βεβαίαν (see εἰς τὸ βεβαιῶσαι in 15:8) to all his seed παντὶ τῷ σπέρματι, the ones who have Abraham’s faith (4:14–16). The promised seed including Gentiles is specified in the next quote from Gen 17:5 LXX πατέρα πολλῶν ἐθνῶν τέθεικά σε (4:17). Paul’s understanding of ἐλπίς is always scripture-bound. Beside 15:9b–12, it is illustrated in 4:17–21 Abraham grounds his ἐλπίδα ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι on the basis of his faith ἐπίστευσεν, demonstrated in God’s ability to give life to dead, both to resurrect his body and Christ’s. The prominent theme of Gentiles giving glory to God (15:7, 9a) is also reflected in 4:20 as Abraham δοῦς δόξαν τῷ θεῷ and acknowledges God’s power δυνατός ἐστίν to do ποιῆσαι the promise (see 4.2.2–4.2.4). While the God “who gives life to the dead” fulfils his promise to Abraham by reviving Isaac, “the God of hope” also realises his promise to the Fathers by including Gentiles as his people. Moreover, Paul’s messianic exegesis in 15:9b/Ps 17:50 LXX and 15:12/Isa 11:10 indicates a deeper bond between Jesus’ Davidic ancestry and his confirmation of Abraham’s promise. If Christ descends from Jesse, then he is even more surely descended from Abraham.¹⁰⁵⁴ A

¹⁰⁵² Moo (1996: 875).

¹⁰⁵³ On the difficult syntax of this sentence, see Wagner (1997), whose conclusions I follow in part. Although Wagner’s translation is not without problems, for example, the mismatch between περιτομῆς and ἔθνη instead of the expected ἀκροβυστίας (3:30, 4:11–12), his solution elegantly accounts for the problem change of subject.

¹⁰⁵⁴ Whitsett (2000: 671–72).

possible echo is detected between the divine designations in 4:17 and 15:13 illustrating God’s continuing salvific purpose for the Gentiles. As a result, “the promise Christ confirms in Rom 15:8 is the promise ‘to the patriarchs,’ that is, to Abraham...the promise concerns not the land or Abraham’s physical descendants but Abraham’s universal fatherhood of Gentiles.”¹⁰⁵⁵

6.2.5 Concluding remarks

The designation ὁ θεὸς τῆς ἐλπίδος points back to a scripture catena characterised by eschatological hope. More than a scriptural proof for Christ’s messiahship or an explanation of the presence of Gentiles in Roman church, Paul’s θεός-genitive in the letter’s conclusion underscores the divine hope for the Gentiles in God’s salvation plan. Not only is the hope “scripture-bound”, the eschatological hope is also realised “now” in Paul’s mission to the Gentiles. The accomplishment of Paul’s goal of cosmic redemption is assured by God’s ultimate eschatological victory reflected in the following divine designations— “the God of peace” (15:33; 16:20a).

6.3 Ὁ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης (15:33; 16:20a)

The phrase “God of peace” is found twice in the ending section of Romans. Although ὁ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης (15:33; cf. 2 Cor 13:11; Phil 4:9b; 1 Thess 5:23; 2 Thess

¹⁰⁵⁵ Whitsett (2000: 668).

3:16; Gal 6:16) is often taken as Paul's letter ending convention and detached from the letter body as it is introduced with an "adversative" $\delta\acute{\epsilon}$,¹⁰⁵⁶ it will be demonstrated that the two designations are used similarly, apparently not without variations, with references to potential menace to Paul's ministry and gospel.

6.3.1 Introduction

After establishing the peculiarity of Paul's $\theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$ -genitive, the similarities between the two designations in 15:33 and 16:20a will be demonstrated. Contrary to the suggestion that peace denotes the elimination of conflicts in interpersonal relationships, especially among church houses,¹⁰⁵⁷ it will be argued that the designations carry more soteriological significance for Paul's Gentile mission. While "the God of peace" (15:33) is used in relation to languages with military overtones in its immediate context 15:30–33, the divine cosmic background is more evident in 16:20a. The ultimate cosmic victory of the God of peace against his enemies is reassured. Paul's unique idea of believers sharing the divine eschatological victory will then be discussed.

6.3.2 Conventional and detached letter endings?

Although Weima demonstrates Paul's "peace benedictions" illustrate "high degree of stylistic uniformity" across his letters,¹⁰⁵⁸ this study contends these two divine designations are more than formulaic, conventional, or even semi-detached from the letter body. It is common to interpret the phrases in the sense of objective genitive indicating the divine origin or source of peace, forming a consistent parallel with "grace and peace" benedictions $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma\ \upsilon\mu\acute{\iota}\nu\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \epsilon\iota\rho\acute{\eta}\nu\eta\ \acute{\alpha}\pi\omicron\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ in the letter openings (Rom 1:7; 1 Cor 1:3; 2 Cor 1:2; Gal 1:3; Phil 1:2; 1 Thess 1:1; Philem 3; cf. Col 1:2; 2 Thess 1:2; Eph 1:2).¹⁰⁵⁹ However, in the case of Romans, $\theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$ is not in

¹⁰⁵⁶ Weima (2016: 167) argues for an adversative reading of the $\delta\acute{\epsilon}$ particles, marking a transition from the letter body to letter closing. However, it is unnecessary to assume Paul's consistency in the use of particles or conjunctions.

¹⁰⁵⁷ Jewett (1998: 186).

¹⁰⁵⁸ According to Weima's (1994: 104) analysis, there are four basic elements in "peace benedictions" (Rom 15:33, 16:20a; 2 Cor 13:11; Phil 4:9b; 1 Thess 5:23; 2 Thess 3:16; Gal 6:16): introductory, the wish, divine source, and the recipient.

¹⁰⁵⁹ Weima (2016:40–44, 88, 167) helpfully observed that the greeting formulae "grace to you and peace from God our father and the Lord Jesus Christ" is in reverse or chiasmic order with the closing where the

genitive case. The noun ὁ θεός is modified by the genitive τῆς εἰρήνης. Why does Paul employ two different types of grammatical constructions if he wants to express the same idea of “divine origin” of the gifts of grace or peace? Also, if Paul wants to express the divine gift of peace in the so-called “peace benedictions”, the phrase “the peace of God” is plainly at hand for him. Philippians is the most striking example as the phrase ἡ εἰρήνη τοῦ θεοῦ (Phil 4:7) is used in proximity with the “peace benediction” in 4:9 where ὁ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης is found. Therefore, it is legitimate to take a closer look at the θεός-genitives, in this case, ὁ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης before assuming the phrase simply expresses the divine source, bestowment or gift of peace as it is commonly interpreted.¹⁰⁶⁰ Apart from the uniqueness of the divine designations, they are also not detached from their contexts.¹⁰⁶¹ For instance in 15:33, the postpositive δέ does not cut itself off from its precedent. The genitive modifier εἰρήνης is already used in 15:13, and the idea of “God being with you all” has an affinity with the verb συναναπαύσωμαι in 15:32. The recipient πᾶς echoes with various references to Gentiles (Rom 15:9, 10, 11, 12, 16, 18, 27) and reflects Paul’s intention to unify the Jewish as well as Gentile branches of the church in Rome.¹⁰⁶²

6.3.3 Two contradictory designations?

Beside the uniqueness of the construction ὁ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης, the double “peace benediction” is another unusual feature in the ending of Romans. This is not the occasion to rehearse the subtleties and nuances of previous discussion about the authenticity of Rom 16, this section will proceed by positing it as an original part of the letter.¹⁰⁶³ However, *inter alia*, Jewett suggests that there is a radical change of

peace benediction is followed by the grace benediction (eg. 2 Cor 1:2; 13:11, 14; Phil 1:2, 4:9, 4:23). In his words, “This pattern of aligning a peace benediction with God and a grace benediction with Christ follows naturally from the greeting in the letter opening, where the same two wishes are lined in chiasmic fashion with the same two divine figures.”

¹⁰⁶⁰ Many interpreters took the phrase to refer to the divine source of the gift—peace. Eg. Jewett (2007: 938–40); Schreiner (1998: 783); cf. Cranfield (1975: 780).

¹⁰⁶¹ See n. 86.

¹⁰⁶² Jewett (2007: 939).

¹⁰⁶³ For internal evidence discussed, see Dunn 1988b: 884. For external evidence such as the position of the doxology (16:25–27) in various manuscripts, see Gamble’s (1977: 47–53) analysis; and also e.g. Gamble (1977: 36–55, 84–95); Stuhlmacher (1994: 244–45); Fitzmyer (1993: 59–61); Metzger (1994: 476); Hurtado (2003: 114). Yet, there is no decisive evidence eliminating its authenticity, the most cautious conclusion to be drawn will be that 16:17–20 belongs to the letter. For scholars holding the same assumption, see e.g. Moo (1996:928); Fitzmyer (1992: 745); Thate (2008: 153).

mood observed in the two designations in 15:33 and 16:20a. “In the former, the God of peace eliminates conflicts between groups by evangelical reconciliation that produces mutual welcome of competitive groups, whereas in the latter, peace is achieved by stamping out dissension perceived to be demonic.”¹⁰⁶⁴

Paul’s prayer requests (15:30–33) for his journey to Jerusalem (15:31a) and Jerusalem Christians’ willingness to accept offering (15:31b) grow naturally from his reference to the collection for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem (15:25–28). Meanwhile, the “benediction” (15:33) reflects Paul’s deeper concern for integrating Jews and Gentiles as the people of God.¹⁰⁶⁵ As for 16:20a, it is undeniable that Paul instructs the Romans to keep an eye and avoid (16:17, 19; cf. Matt 10:16) those cause “dissensions and offences” τὰς διχοστασίας καὶ τὰ σκάνδαλα (16:18). Nevertheless, it is Satan, and not the schismatic group, who will be ultimately defeated by God (16:20). Although the false teaching might come from Satan, but Satan is not to be identified with the false teachers.¹⁰⁶⁶ Instead of a sudden change of tones from collegial or inclusive to admonitory or denunciatory, both sections 15:30–33 and 16:17–20 are introduced by παρακαλῶ (15:30, 16:17; cf. 12:1). The opening “does not make the section an authoritarian warning but rather a respectful, ‘urbane’ request.”¹⁰⁶⁷ On both occasions, Paul compliments the church for their “well-known obedience” ἡ ὑμῶν ὑπακοή (16:19; cf. 15:18) meanwhile wants them to combine this good quality with “wisdom” in response to a potential conflict. By implication, Paul is not rebuking a “developed state of conflict”.¹⁰⁶⁸ Difference in convictions and practice does not turn an exhortation into admonition (cf. 14:1).¹⁰⁶⁹ Given the above discussed peculiarity of the phrase ὁ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης (15:33), and the even more cryptic mention of Satan in 16:20a, what message(s) is/are Paul trying to convey? What is the meaning and function of “the God of peace” in Paul’s argument in Romans?

¹⁰⁶⁴ Jewett (1998: 186, 191).

¹⁰⁶⁵ Moo (1996: 908–11).

¹⁰⁶⁶ Gaventa (2014: 63 n. 11).

¹⁰⁶⁷ Gamble (1977, 52); Fitzmyer (1993, 61). Cf. Rom 12:1; 15:30; 1 Cor 1:10; 4:1 16:15; 2 Cor 2:8; 10:1; Eph 4:1; 1 Thess 4:1, 10; 5:14.

¹⁰⁶⁸ Gamble (1977: 52).

¹⁰⁶⁹ See Barrett (1991: 284–85); Dunn (1988: 906) for suggestions about possibilities and explanations about the schismatic group.

6.3.4 Divine peace (15:33) and potential threat to Paul's mission

Divine peace is commonly understood in the sense of elimination of antagonists and enabling co-operation.¹⁰⁷⁰ This peace (15:33) refers to “a new, harmonious relationship with God (cf. 2:10; 5:1; 8:6)...characterise[s] the relations of believers with one another (cf. 14:19).”¹⁰⁷¹ Jewett points specifically to competition among church houses, “the concept of divine peace relates to the gospel of Christ crucified, a gospel that set right a human race whose twisted systems of competition, boasting honour and shame have made conflicts, between fellow Christians.”¹⁰⁷² However, the proposed ecumenical and pastoral reading is dissatisfactory because it overlooks the salvational-historical significance of “God of peace”.

Paul's intention is more than requesting “earnestness” in prayers (15:30), the term συναγωνίσασθαι “to strive together” has military connotations which refers to spiritual struggles of righteous person in this life.¹⁰⁷³ What Paul is struggling against is the threat from the unbelievers and the possibility that his ministry is not accepted by Jerusalem church (15:31). The double emphatic first person references μοι, ὑπὲρ ἑμοῦ (15:30) point to Paul's self-understanding of his priestly ministry as an apostle to the Gentiles (με in 15:16; cf. 1:13; 11:13). While the recurrence of cultic language in 15:16, 25–32 has been noted,¹⁰⁷⁴ the importance of “the offering of the Gentiles” being accepted is not as well noted. The acceptance of ἡ διακονία μου “Paul's ministry and priestly service” is repeatedly equated with acceptance of “the offering of the Gentiles” (15:16; 15: 25, 31). Regardless of whether ἡ προσφορὰ τῶν ἐθνῶν is Paul's offering or the Gentile's offering,¹⁰⁷⁵ the purpose of Paul's ministry is that “the offering of the Gentiles might become acceptable”, “made holy by the Holy Spirit” ἵνα γένηται ἡ προσφορὰ τῶν ἐθνῶν εὐπρόσδεκτος, ἡγιασμένη ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ (15:16).¹⁰⁷⁶ The recurrence of “acceptance” εὐπρόσδεκτος recalls εὐάρεστος (12:1–2)

¹⁰⁷⁰ Jewett (1998: 190).

¹⁰⁷¹ Moo (1996: 911).

¹⁰⁷² Jewett (1998: 186).

¹⁰⁷³ Moo (1996: 909); Jewett (2007: 935); contra Cranfield (1975: 777); Barrett (1957: 274). For similar military imageries in Paul, see Pfizer (1967: 157–64).

¹⁰⁷⁴ Downs (2008: 180) gives these examples: λειτουργὸν, ἱερουργοῦντα, εὐπρόσδεκτος, and ἡγιασμένη (15:16); ἐπιτελέσας (15:28). Ascough (1996: 584–99).

¹⁰⁷⁵ For the discussion of subject and object genitives, see Downs (2008:150).

¹⁰⁷⁶ Oakes (2007: 171) explains the relationship between ἁγιάζω and Paul's mission, “[T]he immediate context does imply that the ‘making holy’ of the ‘offering of the Gentiles’ means the conversion of the Gentiles to Christian belief, a move from the sphere of the ordinary to the sphere of the holy: Rom 15:15–16 is a description of Paul's mission.”

thus connecting the offering of Gentiles to a form of worship “having made holy”.¹⁰⁷⁷ The shared cultic terminology and shared notion of corporate worship is critical because they echo with our previous observation of the importance of the inclusion of Gentile in Israel’s eschatological vision. Paul’s ministry intends to result in Gentiles’ participation as legitimate members of God’s people in Israel’s corporate eschatological worship. Thus, his prayer to the “God of peace” to ῥυθῶ (deliver) him reflects the potential enmity is directed at Paul’s gospel and ministry.

The soteriological consequence of τῶν ἀπειθούντων could be comparable to the potential destructive power of the “faith-havers” (14:15, 20) as discussed above. The unbeliever’s opposition indicates a threat to the above discussed salvific corporate worship including “holy” Gentiles. The soteriological significance of divine peace and θελήματος “divine will” (15:32) is reflected in the designation “the God of peace” in response to the menace to Paul’s gospel. The acceptance of the offering does not only “give expression to the pacification and cooperation of ethnic groups”,¹⁰⁷⁸ it is part and parcel of Paul’s ministry. By completing his service (15:28) in accordance with God’s will, the eschatological worship celebrating the triumph of God’s kingdom will be fully realised ἐν χαρᾷ “in joy” (14:17; 15:13).

6.3.5 Divine peace (16:20a) and ultimate defeat of anti-god powers

While “the God of peace” (15:33) is related to some languages with military overtones such as συναγωνίσασθαι (15:30) and ῥυθῶ (15:31), it confronts the evil threatening Paul’s mission more directly in 16:20a. Peter Macky suggests that τῆς εἰρήνης is a subjective genitive meaning “the God who acts peacefully”. Similar to the idea of “peace” in Col 2:15 and 2 Thess 2:8, the mere presence of God will consume his adversaries.¹⁰⁷⁹ Although it does not fit well with Paul’s other uses of peace in Romans,¹⁰⁸⁰ Macky’s reading brings out the importance of the cosmic battle background. Instead of overthrowing Satan peacefully, the objective genitive construction τῆς εἰρήνης signifies God is the one who brings peace. Yet, “this does not mean personal salvation as his gift but the defeat of Satan after the cosmic battle and

¹⁰⁷⁷ Whittle (2014: 177–84); Dahl (2002: 87).

¹⁰⁷⁸ Jewett (2007: 935).

¹⁰⁷⁹ Macky (1993: 121–33).

¹⁰⁸⁰ Rom 1:7; 2:10; 3:17; 5:1; 8:6; 12:18; 14:19; 15:33.

the definitive eschatological liberation of the earth.”¹⁰⁸¹ God’s not peaceful but violent crushing (συντρίψει) of Satan echoes with the eschatological Divine Warrior tradition (cf. Dan 7; Rev 19; *Jub.* 23:29; *As. Mos.* 10:1).¹⁰⁸²

Contradictory though it might be, warlike activity of the God of peace fits naturally with the rest of Romans. An extensive use of language associated with conflicts or even violence can be observed. For example, Paul exhorts believers to present their members as ὅπλα (weapons) to God. Instead of being ὅπλα ἀδικίας (sinful weapons), believers are identified as ὅπλα δικαιοσύνης (6:13; cf. 6:19), believers are admonished to put on the ὅπλα (armors) of light in 13:12. The term τὰ ὀνόματα is also often used to refer to wages of soldiers (1 Cor 9:7; Luke 3:14; *Ep. Aris.* 22; 1 Esdr 4:56; 1 Macc 3:28; 14:32).¹⁰⁸³ At Rom 7:8, 11, “opportunity” ἀφορμήν, a term found in military contexts as a pretext for making war, is employed by Paul to describe how sin takes the Law as an opportunity to deceive and ἀπέκτεινεν (to kill) human. Human is then “rendered a captive” αἰχμαλωτίζοντά (7:23) in the battle within oneself and the Law controlled by sin.¹⁰⁸⁴ Less explicit examples, such as ἐχθρός and its cognates (5:10; 8:7), God “handed over” παρέδωκεν (1:24, 26, 28; 4:25) and “did not spare” ἐφείσατο his son Christ (8:32), also reflect warring situations.¹⁰⁸⁵ Paul’s rhetoric of violence in Romans should be understood in the context of the cosmic battle. Simply put, Paul’s gospel conceptualises sin and death as evil cosmological powers that oppress (3:9), enslave (6:16; 8:15, 21), ensnare the Law (7:7–25) and victimise human (8:31–39).¹⁰⁸⁶ In response to the reign of sin and death in tandem over the world, divine “invasive activities” of the events on the cross of Christ are considered God’s apocalyptic triumphant victory (cf. 1 Thess 4:13–18; 5:1–11; 1 Cor 15:24–26).¹⁰⁸⁷

¹⁰⁸¹ Käsemann (1980: 418).

¹⁰⁸² Thate (2008: 159–60); Miller (1973).

¹⁰⁸³ Gaventa (2014: 64); Moo (1996: 408).

¹⁰⁸⁴ Gaventa (2014: 64–65); (2011a: 272).

¹⁰⁸⁵ Gaventa (2007: 113–23, 194–7).

¹⁰⁸⁶ Gaventa (2007: 125–36).

¹⁰⁸⁷ Martyn, “Specifically, both God’s sending of Christ to suffer death in behalf of humanity (the cross) and Christ’s future coming (the parousia) are invasive acts of God. And their being invasive acts—into a space that has temporarily fallen out of God’s hands—points to the liberating war that is crucial to Paul’s apocalyptic theology. It is this apocalyptic vision, then, that has given Paul his perception of the nature of the human plight. . . . The root trouble lies deeper than human guilt, and it is more sinister (1998:105, emphasis original)”.

Taking into account Paul's presentation of God as the victor who destroys his longstanding foe,¹⁰⁸⁸ the idea of "God crushing Satan" in 16:20a is not unusual. It should be noted that the figure of Satan is less essential or independent in Rom 16:20a compared with other occurrences of "Satan" in Paul's letters.¹⁰⁸⁹ Paul is glossing τὸν σατανᾶν with reference to evil (16:19), referring to the false teachers in 16:17–18. Following the more general instruction to "be wise in what is τὸ ἀγαθόν (good) and guileless in τὸ κακόν (what is evil)", it is "an eschatological reminder meant to compel the Roman Christians to act wisely in the face of those causing conflict and schism within the congregation (16:19)."¹⁰⁹⁰ The contrast between good and evil is not strange in Romans.¹⁰⁹¹ Beside Satan, Paul's idea of divine "crushing" συντρίψει could be associated with a first century A.D. interpretive tradition influenced by Gen 3:15, Ps 74:14 [73:14 LXX], and Ps 91:13 [90:13] where the mythological Leviathan is fused with and transferred into "the serpent in the garden of Eden".¹⁰⁹² Yet, a direct allusion from Rom 16:20a to Gen 3:15 is contested as Dunn cogently argues, "it is more likely that the Genesis text has influenced the broader Jewish apocalyptic hope of an ultimate defeat of the evil powers, of Satan being crushed or destroyed, which in turn has probably influenced the apostle's thought."¹⁰⁹³ Neither is identifying Paul's precise allusion nor studying the broad background of Satan in Jewish Apocalyptic hope our purpose here. Rather, it helps illustrate Paul's adaptation of divine cosmological battle backdrop in his exhortation about conflicts and schism within the community.

6.3.6 Believers sharing divine victory

If it is valid that 16:20a is not a detached benediction, the prepositional phrase ὑπὸ τοῦς πόδας ὑμῶν introducing Paul's congregation into the battle scene should not be easily overlooked. The reference ὑμῶν points to Paul's peculiar argument that "God is the victor who destroys Satan ... in such a way that the community shares in the

¹⁰⁸⁸ On the victory of God in Romans, see Rom 1:17, 32; 2:2, 3, 5, 16; 3:4, 5, 6, 25, 26, 30; 4:25; 5:9, 21; 6:9, 14; 8:1–39; 13:1.

¹⁰⁸⁹ E.g. 1 Cor 5:5; 7:5; 10:10; 2 Cor 2:1 1; 4:4; 6:15; 11:3, 14; 12:7; 1 Thess 2:18; 3:5.

¹⁰⁹⁰ Brown (2010: 5).

¹⁰⁹¹ Rom 7:19, 21; 12:17, 21; 13:10.

¹⁰⁹² Bauckham (1993: 193–94); Thate (2008: 158); see also Brown's reference (2010:6 n.17) to the demise of Satan in Second Temple Jewish texts.

¹⁰⁹³ Dunn (1988b:905).

triumph.”¹⁰⁹⁴ Brown suggests that the neglected phrase ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας ὑμῶν “is most likely an echo of Ps 110:1 [109:1 LXX]” comparable to 1 Cor 15:25–27 highlighting the subjugation of evil powers in eschatological time.¹⁰⁹⁵ While Ps 110 is one of Paul’s often cited psalms concerning the vindication and exaltation of the risen Christ, Paul extends τῶν ποδῶν σου to τοὺς πόδας ὑμῶν to include all believers.¹⁰⁹⁶ It should be noted that Paul does not point his finger at the false teachers *per se* (16:18), instead, Paul directs the readers’ attention to the anti-god powers beyond and behind humanity.¹⁰⁹⁷ Given the prevalence of the cosmological background in Romans discussed above, God’s enemies — be it sin, death or Satan which causes dissensions within the church — will be subjugated not only under the feet of Christ but also under the feet of the believers. Against the background of the rhetoric of violence in Romans, humanity sharing God’s defeat of Satan sounds less like a foreign element. More than mere ontological metaphors, figures of speech or vivid personifications, Paul’s language of violence attempts to grasp a cosmological reality about the deep captivity of human beings by anti-god powers, and their inability to free themselves (e.g. chs. 5, 8). The cosmic battle is embodied in humanity, with its creation, its confinement, and its redemption.¹⁰⁹⁸ Similar to Paul’s conclusion in 8:39 where “nothing will separate us from God”, the promised defeat of Satan in 16:20a reinforces that God does not leave humanity to itself. Thus, it is wrong to read that Paul is saying when God crushes Satan, the faithful will somehow defeat the false teachers.¹⁰⁹⁹ Since the conflict takes place between God and anti-god powers (but not among human beings), the crushing of Satan will not defeat the false teachers but deliver them from Satan’s grasp.¹¹⁰⁰

The idea of believers sharing God’s eschatological victory has wider implication beyond 16:20a. Following the God of peace, God is designated as τῷ δὲ δυναμένῳ ὑμᾶς στηρίζαι (16:25; cf. 14:4, 10) in the doxological ending of the letter. The two

¹⁰⁹⁴ Käsemann (1980, 418); cf. Byrne (1996: 278); Moo (1996, 933).

¹⁰⁹⁵ Brown (2010: 9–11).

¹⁰⁹⁶ Brown 2010:7; Macky (1993: 126–28) thinks that “the feet of the believers” should be understood as Christ feet, and the conquest of Satan is done through Christ and shared by the body of Christ.

¹⁰⁹⁷ This is also why divine peace denotes more than the absent of interpersonal conflicts among church houses as Jewett (see above n. 102, 108) suggested.

¹⁰⁹⁸ Gaventa (2011b: 270).

¹⁰⁹⁹ Gaventa (2011c: 74); contra Brown (2010:12) who thinks that while believers share God’s victory, by implication, the false teachers share the defeat of Satan.

¹¹⁰⁰ Gaventa (2014: 72–73); Murray (1960: 237).

designations are congenial as the theme of God's power has already been well established (8:38; 16:20a). The temporal reference ἐν τάχει in 16:20a is interestingly related to the revelation ἀποκάλυψιν of hidden mystery now νῦν (16:25–26; cf. 1:18–19; 3:21) in the eschaton. The participle φανερωθέντος is modified by four prepositional phrases, the first two specify the mystery made known is both “through the prophetic writing” and “in accordance with the will of God”. The last two illustrates its purpose, the obedience of faith (1:5; cf. 15:12/ Isa 11:10) might be brought about among all the Gentiles (16:26).¹¹⁰¹ Up to this point, it becomes clearer that Paul has been repeatedly associated the purpose of his ministry, namely the inclusion of Gentiles, with various divine designations in Romans. After spending three chapters (9–11) unpacking the marvel of this mystery (cf. 11:25), Paul reaches the crescendo of his argument: the long-hidden mystery μυστηρίου χρόνοις αἰωνίοις σσεσσημένον now revealed is both the ground and goal for the unified people of God, embracing Jews and Gentiles. The “peace” that the conquering “God of peace” brings consists therefore as much in the pacification of the powers hostile to God as in the restoration of peace between Jews and Gentiles, the peace of the Messianic kingdom (Eph 2:14).¹¹⁰² God's promised defeat of Satan, together with all evil, disorder and dissensions, results in a new world, or better, a new creation of a “unified body” of Christ which will take the hand of God and stomp all anti-god powers.¹¹⁰³

6.3.7 Concluding remarks

Neither is ὁ θεός τῆς εἰρήνης a conventional nor detached formulaic letter ending. Paul aims at assuring the accomplishment of God's eschatological salvation goal. The “peace” that the conquering “God of peace” brings consists as much in the pacification of the powers hostile to God as in the restoration of peace between Jews and Gentiles.

6.4 General background of Paul's θεός-genitives

Paul associates various abstract nouns, ὑπομονή, παράκλησις, ἐλπίς or εἰρήνη with θεός in his θεός-genitives. Compared with his contemporaries, it is not

¹¹⁰¹ Cranfield (1975: 812); Moo (1996: 940).

¹¹⁰² Thate (2008: 167); Carson (2004: 422–24).

¹¹⁰³ Thate (2008: 168–69); Kasemann (1971: 108).

conventional in Jewish tradition. In his study about divine predicates in the NT, Christfried Böttrich categorises Paul's θεός-genitives in terms of “newly coined expression” (Neubildung) among other five categories.¹¹⁰⁴ Instead of using abstract nouns like ἀγάπη, ἐλπίς, or εἰρήνη in genitive constructions, θεός (or κύριος)-genitives are usually connected with one of the following in the LXX:

1. persons (e.g. with names such as “Abraham”: Gen 24:12, 28:13, 31:53, Ps 46:10; “Isaac”: Gen 28:13; “Jacob”: 2 Sam 23:1, Ps 19:2; “Leah”: Gen 30:17, “Rachel”: Gen 30:22; “Elijah”: 2 Kgs 2:14; “David”: 2 Kgs 20:5, Isa 38:5; or with ancestors such as “God of my/your/their fathers”: Gen 31:5, 29; 50:17; Exo 3:13; 2 Chr 34:32, 33; Wis. 9:1; Ezra 8:28; or with national groups such as “God of Israel”: 1 Sam 5:8; 1 Chr. 15:14; Ezra 1:3, 6:14, 9:4; Sir 47:18; Isa 45:3; Ezek 10:19 or “God of sons of Israel”: Josh 22:33, or “gods of all these nations”: Isa 36:20 or “gods of Hamath and Arpad”: Isa 36:19, etc);¹¹⁰⁵
2. toponyms (e.g. “God of heaven/ and earth”: Gen 24:3, 7; Josh 2:11; Ezra 5:11; Jud 5:8; Tob 10:11; Ps. 90:1; Dan 2:44, 4:31; or “God of Jerusalem”: 2 Chron 32:19; Isa 36:20 etc);
3. abstract nouns related to God's salvific actions with personal note (e.g. “God of my righteousness”: Ps 4:2, “God of my salvation”: Ps 17:47, 84:5, “God of our salvation”: 1 Chr 16:35, Ps 87:2, etc);
4. abstract nouns related to God's salvific actions without personal note (e.g. “God of truth”: 1Es 4:40, Ps 30:6; “God of righteousness”: Mal 2:17; “God of salvation”: Ps 67:21).¹¹⁰⁶

The latter two types (3 and 4) could be taken as meaningful Jewish precursors of Paul's constructions. The psalmists often invoke God in terms of his saving action. For

¹¹⁰⁴ According to Böttrich's (1993: 63–73) categorisation, divine designations in the categories “Voraussetzung”, “Übernahme”, “Akzentuierung”, “Anknüpfung”, and “Vorbild” are somehow continuous with Jewish convention.

¹¹⁰⁵ See similar examples in the NT: “God of Israel” (c.f. Matt 15:31; Luke 1:68), or the “God of Abraham” or “God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob” (e.g. Mark 12:26; Acts 3:13; 7:32) or the “God of our fathers” (Acts 3:13; 7:32).

¹¹⁰⁶ See similar examples in the Dead Sea Scrolls: “God of victories” אֵל יְשׁוּעוֹת (1QS 1:19); “God of knowledge” אֵל הַדַּעַת (1QS 3:15, 1QH 9:26); “God of mercies” אֵל הַחַסְדִּים (1QM 14:8; 4Q491 fg. 8 10 6); “God of justice” אֵל הַצְדִּק (1QM 18:8); “God of compassion [and of abundant] mercy” אֵל הַרְחָמִים [חַסְדִּים] (1QH 18:14); “God of compassion and pity” אֵל הַרְחָמִים וְחַנּוּנָה (1QH 19:29). See also “God of peace” in *T. Dan* 5:2.

example, the God of τῆς δικαιοσύνης μου (my righteousness) or τῆς σωτηρίας μου (my salvation) is characterised in terms of his salvific actions towards the pious who are usually in danger or distress, or in need of revenge or in need of deliverance from enemies (Ps. 4:2; 17:47; 84:5). The לֵא-predicates in the Dead Sea Scrolls similarly indicate that God is modified according to his actions as revealed in respective contexts. For example, in 1QM 14:8, לֵא הַחֲסִידִים (the God of mercies) is praised for his deliverance and gathering of the remnant in accordance with the covenant which is understood as the divine bestowment of mercies (14:9). In 1QM 18:8, לֵא הַצַּדִּיק (the God of justice) is the one who proves himself to be faithful and just because he kept his covenant with Israel in the context. Although the exact phrases in Rom 14–16 can hardly be found, Paul’s thematic meanings in general does not diverge from the convention since Paul’s θεός-genitives are soteriologically-loaded.

As for Greco-Roman religious or cultic epithets,¹¹⁰⁷ divine epithets in genitival constructions are identified with:

1. toponyms, e.g. chief gods are often called “of the city” (Polieus), or Zeus Thebaeus (Zeus of Egyptian Thebes, the god we call Amun-Re),¹¹⁰⁸ etc. Beside cities, gods are usually locally defined with cults, for instance, Eteokles invokes πάντων δὲ θεῶν τῶν ἀστυνόμων, ὑπάτων, χθονίων, τῶν τ’ οὐρανίων τῶν τ’ ἀγοραίων” all the gods that guide the city, gods on high and gods below the earth, gods of the doors and of the market-place” (Aesch. *Ag.* 88) or;
2. ancestral deities, e.g. King of Plataeans appeals to “the gods who witnessed that earlier oath and to the gods of your fathers, and to the gods of our country” καὶ τοὺς ὑμετέρους πατρώους καὶ ἡμετέρους ἐγγχωρίους (Thuc. 2.71.4) or;
3. national or ethnical groups (see 3.3.2c), e.g. “the gods of the Pisidians” and “the gods of the Romans” or;¹¹⁰⁹

¹¹⁰⁷ For the problem of demarcation between epithets in cultic and other poetic texts, see Parker (2017: 9, 11). In general, cult epithets refer to ones “used in prayers and appeals to the god in prose, in dedications, and in indirect references to the god, and usually following god’s name.” This phenomenon is known as “cultic double name.”

¹¹⁰⁸ Parker (2011: 83).

¹¹⁰⁹ Versnel (2011: 116–19, 142–49).

4. cultic place or festivals, e.g. Apollos Pythios Ἀπόλλωνος Πυθίου (*Thuc.* 6.54), or Apollo Karneios, etc.¹¹¹⁰

The function of these epithets is often interpreted as not for honorific but for identification purpose, in other words, these are ways of addressing or referring to god(s). Thus, they are less relevant to our discussion. However, there is another group of epithets which “provide focus, to pick out one aspect or power amid the many of a god of broad powers.”¹¹¹¹ These genitival constructions specify the mode of activities in which the deities involved. For example, the epithet “of horses” is borne by Athena to highlight her skill and technology of driving chariots with the bit and bridle.¹¹¹² Certain gods exhibit one’s activity (generally with a sense of consistency) in different spheres of life. For instance, Aphrodite, the smiling goddess of procreation and charming conciliatory power, is Aphrodite “of all the people”, who brings citizens together in affection.¹¹¹³

Besides, the religious phenomenon of “the cult of virtues”¹¹¹⁴ could also be relevant precursors to our discussion. Although not in genitival constructions, ordinary divine names are often in juxtaposition with a deified abstraction: Athena Nike, “Victory”; Aphrodite Peitho, “Persuasion.”¹¹¹⁵ The worship of Eirene and Eleos originated from Athens and the cult of Concordia and Pax are the representative examples of a religious phenomenon common in Greece and Rome respectively.¹¹¹⁶ Although these virtues are abstract nouns in the modern sense, the ancient religious mentality reflected is not metaphysical, theoretical or conceptual, on the contrary, these godheads are named after actual, concrete, circumstantial situations. For instance, the Athenian altar of Eirene is like “a kind of war-memorial” established after Timotheos’ victory over Spartans leading to the later Panhellenic peace in 317 BC according to the account of the late-four-century historian Philochoros.¹¹¹⁷ Similarly,

¹¹¹⁰ Versnel (2011: 78).

¹¹¹¹ Parker (2017: 14).

¹¹¹² Parker (2011: 67).

¹¹¹³ Parker (2011: 89).

¹¹¹⁴ Fears (1981: 833–41).

¹¹¹⁵ Some functions can be quite precise, for example, Apollo Iatros, “Doctor,” Zeus Meilichios, “of Propitiation” (Parker, 2017: 15).

¹¹¹⁶ Fears (1981: 828).

¹¹¹⁷ Stafford (2001: 174); The first cult to Concordia was established by Camullos to mark the restoration of civil harmony after the disorders surrounding the passage of the Licinian-Sextian laws (Fear, 1981: 833).

pragmata is the Stoic designation for divine beings like Dike, Elpis, and Eunomia.¹¹¹⁸ Specific condition or quality like peace, victory, mercy is recognised as the operation of a characteristic or peculiar divine power, which in turn is designated by the condition or quality which it produces.¹¹¹⁹ The “functional” nomenclature perceptibly associates the gods closer to the worshippers’ specific need and circumstances.¹¹²⁰ Similarly, Paul’s θεός-genitives are neither detached conventional letter ending nor interpolation, they are inseparable from the gospel and the eschatological hope of the believers’ community.

6.5 Specific background of divine ὑπομονή, παράκλησις, ἐλπίς and εἰρήνη

The short survey of divine epithets in the LXX and other Greco-Roman tradition illustrates that although precise parallel is scarce,¹¹²¹ Paul’s creation of θεός-genitives is not without precedent. Apart from the general background, what about the specific abstract nouns in Paul’s θεός-genitives? To what extent is Paul’s meaning of ὑπομονή, παράκλησις, ἐλπίς or εἰρήνη as θεός-genitives consistent with or contrary to comparable divine designations of his contemporaries?

6.5.1 Divine παράκλησις

Very few relevant examples can be found concerning the noun παράκλησις in relation to divine epithets. Compared with its Greco-Roman and Jewish counterparts, it will be shown that Paul’s soteriologically oriented divine designation ὁ θεὸς τῆς παρακλήσεως aligns closer to the usage in the OT than that of pagan writings.

In Greco-Roman philosophical writings, παράκλησις is related to the idea of giving encouragement through persuasive instructions. For instance, in Dio Chrysostom’s Thirtieth Discourse, Charidemus is confident that god has taken him as his friends and thus he is not grieving for himself instead trying to give “comforts” παρακλήσιν to his friend on his death bed (Dio Chrysostom, *Discourse* 30. 4).¹¹²²

¹¹¹⁸ Fears (1981: 832).

¹¹¹⁹ Fears (1981: 828).

¹¹²⁰ Parker (2017: 19).

¹¹²¹ Jewett (2007: 883).

¹¹²² See Malherbe (2013: 254–56); see Holloway (2001) for the exhortation not to be overwhelmed by excessive grief as a standard part of consolation in Hellenistic literature.

Epictetus uses the cognates of παράκλησις to refer to a philosopher’s corrective lecture comparable to a therapy (*Discourses* III.27–29; cf. I.16.15–20). Philosopher παρακαλεῖ his students to be aware of their ignorance and learn to discern between good and evil, thus, Epictetus exclaims the philosophical discourse is κομψὴ παράκλησις (28). In Plutarch’s discussion about “the Virtue of Women” (*Moralia* 251F–253E), Διὸς Zeus is the one who encourages παρεκάλει human to battle (252F) with reference to the virtue courage. While the use of παράκλησις relates closer to philosophical pursuit of virtue (e.g. Dio Chrysostom, *Discourse* 52. 14, 17), it could be somehow related to Rom 15:4 when Paul links διὰ τῆς παρακλήσεως with the exposition of the scripture (cf. 1 Macc 12:9; 2 Macc 15:9; 1 Tim 4:13; 1 Thess 5:27).¹¹²³ Although it is possible to take παράκλησις in the paraenetic sense referring to Paul’s instructions to the neonate church, it is better to keep the focus on Rom 15:5 in the present where Paul uses παράκλησις to designate God.

Paul’s παράκλησις “comes from a position that seems to be closer to the role of the prophets in the Old Testament than to the moral authority of philosopher-moralists who wrote works of consolation in the Graeco-Roman world.”¹¹²⁴ Instead of appealing to their addressees to accept human suffering with equanimity, Paul encourages his congregations with God’s past and ongoing saving activities. Thematic meaning of divine παράκλησις is associated with God’s remarkable salvation events in Jewish history.¹¹²⁵ In a communal confession and plea for mercy in Psalm 89 LXX, the psalmist invokes God to return יְשׁוּבָה/ἐπίστρεψον and חַנּוּן/παρακληθήτι (89:13). The preceding Ps 88 elucidates that the prayer for mercy follows the lament over the destruction of Jerusalem and the fall of Davidic monarchy (88:40–41).¹¹²⁶ It should be noted that the cognates of ὀνειδισμός is used three times in 88:51–52 to recount the “reproaches” inflicted upon the Lord’s anointed (88:39–46; cf. Rom 15:3). The frequent reference to divine παράκλησις sets also in the catastrophic destruction of Jerusalem in Isa 40–55. God’s glorious return to Jerusalem is announced with the double first-person imperatives παρακαλεῖτε παρακαλεῖτε τὸν λαόν μου (40:1). God’s παράκλησις is specified as his task of protecting and guiding the people on their way

¹¹²³ Schmitz (1968: 773–779); Marshall and Towner (1999: 167, 563); Malherbe (1987: 81–88).

¹¹²⁴ Chapa (1994: 159).

¹¹²⁵ Alary (2003:55).

¹¹²⁶ Mays (1994: 293–94).

home (40:9–11; 49:13; 51:3) as illustrated by the parallel verbs of συνάξει and παρακαλέσει (40:11).¹¹²⁷ In 51:12, God is self-identified as “the consoler of Zion” ἐγὼ εἰμι ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ παρακαλῶν σε. A striking parallel is observed as the power of the creator God (51:13) is contrasted with ὀνειδισμὸν ἀνθρώπων “the mortals who oppress and reproach” (51:7) God’s people. Just as Paul exhorts his congregations to acknowledge ὁ θεὸς τῆς παρακλήσεως for only God can judge, Isaiah comparably promises that the oppressors οὐ στήσεται “will no longer stands” (Isa 51:14; cf. Rom 14:4, 10) because Zion is the people of God (Isa 51:16). In addition to Zion, Isaiah notes that ἔθνη (the nations) and νῆσοι (the islands) both await and hope ἐλπιούσιν for God’s return and restoration (51:3). Following Isaiah’s led to use “comfort” words to refer to the drawing near of God’s salvation, Paul adopts the language and sees his own ministry now “as part of the total messianic comfort and deliverance”.¹¹²⁸

6.5.2 Divine ὑπομονή and ἐλπίς

The study of ὑπομονή and ἐλπίς could be grouped together because of their similar linguistic profiles. Not only are the two nouns used by Paul to designate God, it is not coincidental that cognates of ὑπομονή are juxtaposed with that of ἐλπίς in Rom 5:4, 8:25, 12:12. Also in the LXX, both ἐλπίζειν and ὑπομένειν (and sometimes ἀναμένειν and μένειν) are used to translate the Hebrew verb נִחַן to accentuate the notion of waiting.¹¹²⁹ The parallel is also illustrated in identifications of God, for example, the psalmist names God ἡ ὑπομονή μου as well as ἡ ἐλπίς μου when celebrating how God protect and rescue his people from enemies (Ps 70:5; 61:6, 8 LXX). The Roman goddess Hope (*Spes*) will first be studied in the following. Although worshipped as an independent deity, pagan religiosity of divine hope focuses on followers’ earthly material gains. It will be noted that like Paul’s meaning, hope is sometimes used to differentiate between “insiders” and “outsiders”. While Paul’s usage diverts further from the pagan *Spes*, it will be illustrated that Paul’s designation in Romans shows greater affinities with its Jewish counterparts. Divine hope carries soteriological significance in both the OT and early Jewish writings. Yet, in the Jewish

¹¹²⁷ Bieringer (2008: 57–70).

¹¹²⁸ Thrall (1994:104).

¹¹²⁹ Waschke (2003: 566–67).

tradition, the nations are hopeless. Paul is different in this aspect as his Gentile mission is preconfigured in divine hope.

A. Greco-Roman divine hope

The goddess Hope (*Spes*) is one of the deified Roman virtues worshipped early in the Republic. The general Atilius Caiatinus or Calatinus erected a temple probably in 258 BC in the Forum Holitorium and dedicated on 1 August in an early calendar.¹¹³⁰ The temple of *Spes* was built alongside *Fides* and *Victoria* illustrating a specific, martially based kind of hope. In addition to the entangled political and religious motives of the generals, militaristic sense is evident as the temples were built in areas of political import along the triumphal procession route.¹¹³¹ Other goddesses *Salus* (security), *Fortuna* (material benefit or good fortune), *Ops* (wealth) are also linked with *Spes* and found in proximity to one another. Beside cultic affiliations, the divine role to fulfil human hopes and desires is evident. In Pindar's (ca. 518-438 BC) mythological poem *Olympian Odes* 13 (ca. 464 BC), Bellerophon yoked Pegasus and obtained the object he desired (63–86) after receiving Athena's bridle. The story then reflects on deities' abilities of achieving things "beyond hope", τελεῖ δὲ θεῶν δύναμις καὶ τὰν παρ' ὄρκον καὶ παρὰ ἐλπίδα κούφαν κτίσιν (83). Shortly after Hanno prayed to Jupiter, and called him "the one through whom we live our living lives, in whom are the hopes of life of all men," *per quem vivimus vitalem aevom, quem penes spes vitae sunt hominum omnium* (Plautus, *Poenulus* 1187–88), he successfully reunited with his lost daughter.¹¹³² Also in Plautus's another play *Rudens* (c. 211 BC), Palaestra invoked *Spes* for rescue from a shipwreck saying, *Spes bona, opsecro, subventa mihi* ("Good hope, I beg you, save me", 231). Beside comedians, in 41 CE, the emperor Claudius inscribed a coin with *Spes* when his son is born in the first year of his reign.¹¹³³ In Greco-Roman devotion to *Spes*, deities are often regarded as divine help to bring material, earthly benefits ranging from fortune, wealth to

¹¹³⁰ Fulkerson (2018: 161–62). See Weigel (1998: 126–27) and Ziolkowski (1992:152–54) for the historical circumstances of the dedication. Another private cult, *Spes Vetus* ("Old Hope"), which built in 477 BC might be the origin of this public cult (Clark, 1983: 81–82).

¹¹³¹ Fulkerson (2018:161–63); Clark (2007: 60–61).

¹¹³² See also Bacchylides, *Odes* 3.57–8; Plautus, *Poenulus* 1208; *Persa* 251–53; *Cistellaria* 596–97.

¹¹³³ "Hope" is also a common epithet "the Augustan Hope" on the coin in the Western Empire (Fear 1981: 893–94).

progeny. Given the close connection between divine hope and human desires, no wonder Diodotus criticises both ἡ ἐλπίς and ὁ ἔρως do great harm,

“ἡ τε ἐλπίς καὶ ὁ ἔρως ἐπὶ παντί, ὁ μὲν ἡγούμενος, ἡ δ’ ἐφεπομένη, καὶ ὁ μὲν τὴν ἐπιβουλὴν ἐκφροντίζων, ἡ δὲ τὴν εὐπορίαν τῆς τύχης ὑποτιθεῖσα πλεῖστα βλάπτουσι...” “Desire leads, Hope attends; Desire contrives the plan, Hope suggests the facility of fortune; the two passions are most baneful...” (Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, 3.45.5; cf. 5.103).¹¹³⁴

A similar point is found in Pindar’s *Nemean Ode* (ca. 500–400 BC), the poet thought that destructive consequences of “unrestrained hope” ἀναιδεῖ ἐλπίδι (11.45–46) coming “from Zeus” ἐκ Διός (11.43) could be avoided if “one seeks a measure of gains” κερδέων δὲ χρὴ μέτρον θηρευέμεν (11.47; see also Aeschylus, *Prometheus* 250, 252). In other words, the speaker encouraged a certain pragmatic and moral forethought (προμαθείας, 11.26) rather than over-ambitious hope (cf. vain goal of empty hopes, 8.45).¹¹³⁵ More than granting wishes, deities take up the task of sanctioning hopes in some of Pindar’s poems. For example, in *Pythian Odes*, the speaker subjects his desires of further success on a divinely sanctioned course, “εἰ δέ μοι πλοῦτον θεὸς ἀβρὸν ὀρέξαι, ἐλπίδ’ ἔχω κλέος εὐρέσθαι κεν ὑψηλὸν πρόσω (3.110).” Bellerophon in the above mentioned *Olympian Odes* (ca. 500–400 BC) also acknowledged he looked to Zeus and Enyalios to accomplish his hope (13.104–6 ; see also *Nemean Ode* 11.30).¹¹³⁶

Mark Clark rightly comments, “*Spes* was one of the most shadowy and elusive of the Roman virtues.”¹¹³⁷ Occasionally reflected in the cult titles *sancta* or *bona* modifying *Spes*, futile hope of ordinary mortals is contrasted with *Bona Spes* sanctioned by deities.¹¹³⁸ Compared with Paul’s ὁ θεὸς τῆς ἐλπίδος in Rom 15:13 highlighting the mission to the Gentiles, the above Greco-Roman examples do not show communal concerns. However, divine qualities, including *Spes*, is used by Cicero to delineate the boundaries between communities. Cicero (ca. 106–43 BC) listed the qualities of the people fighting “on his side” against Catiline. Following several opposing pairs of virtues and vices, the lists end with *bona denique spes* “well-

¹¹³⁴ See also Pindar, *Pythian Odes* 3. 19–25.

¹¹³⁵ Johnston (2018: 37–41); Theunissen (2002: 364–5).

¹¹³⁶ νῦν δ’ ἔλπομαι μέν, ἐν θεῷ γε μὴν τέλος· εἰ δὲ δαίμων γενέθλιος ἔρποι, Δὶ τοῦτ’ Ἐνυαλίῳ τ’ ἐκδώσομεν πράσσειν. For detail analysis, see Johnston (2018: 44–45).

¹¹³⁷ Clark (1983: 80).

¹¹³⁸ Fulkerson (2018:167).

founded hope” against *omnium rerum desperatione* “general desperation” (Cierco, *In Catilinam*, 1.25). Cicero describes Catiline’s followers as a band of criminals, gathered “from corrupt men deserted not only by every *Fortuna* but even by *Spes*”.¹¹³⁹ In antiquity, ἐλπίς is closely to human desires and the deified *Spes* is invoked as a deity who might intervene to the prayer’s advantage mostly in terms of material or earthly benefits. A comparison with these Greco-Roman examples shows the particularity of Paul’s salvific concern. Yet, the quality ἐλπίς is similarly used to mark the “inclusive” boundary between different communities in writings of Cicero and Paul.

B. Divine hope in Jewish tradition

While Greco Roman usage links ἐλπίς with material gain, ἐλπίς in Jewish tradition, so does Paul, pay heed to salvation. In the Psalms, God is invoked as ἡ ὑπομονή μου “my hope” or whom ones ἤλπισαν ῥύομαι “hoped for rescue” (Ps 38:8–9; 21:5 LXX; cf. 1 Macc 2:61). In two of the confessions in Jeremiah (14:7–9; 19–22), God as ὑπομονή Ἰσραὴλ “Israel’s hope” is called σῶζεις “to save” (14:8, 22) Judah’s from the consequences of their sin (14:7, 20) for the sake of God’s name (14: 9, 21). Also, a specific connection between divine ἐλπίς and the people of Israel is observed. God’s νόμος, ἐντολή (law and commandments), and Israel’s patriarchs Ἰακώβ, Ἰσραὴλ are recalled as basis of hope (Ps 77:5–8 LXX). By appealing to God’s covenant with the fathers ἐν διαθήκῃ τοῖς πατράσιν ἡμῶν, the present generation, τὸ σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ “the seed of Abraham”, ἐλπιούμεν “hoped” that God’s blessing will be ἐπὶ οἶκον Ἰσραὴλ “with the house of Israel” forever (Wis 9:9–11). The prophets similarly characterise ἐλπίς with reference to the time of eschatological salvation ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ “on that day” promised and established by God of Israel (Hos 2:18; Isa 28:5; Ezek 28:26).

Meanwhile, divine ἐλπίς is more often used for delineation the boundaries between communities. Pagan’s idea of vanity of hope could be found in Sir 34 concerning admonition against empty and false hopes κεναὶ ἐλπίδες καὶ ψευδεῖς (34:1). In contrast, dreams, divinations or omens are only reliable if they are from God, the most-high (34:6, 16; see also Ps 30:7 LXX). The hope of the ungodly and those

¹¹³⁹ Clark (2007: 219).

who despise wisdom is vain (Wis 3:11; 5:14).¹¹⁴⁰ Besides, divine ἐλπίς divides “the world into neat and well-defined categories” contrasting those ὅς τὴν ἐλπίδα ἐπ’ ἄνθρωπον “who hope on human” (Jer 17:5 LXX) with the one ἔσται κύριος ἐλπίς αὐτοῦ “whose hope is God” (17:7).¹¹⁴¹ Jeremiah rebukes and curses the former for seeking security in political alliances, military resources or “flesh” (cf. 2 Kings 18:24; Judith 9:7; Wis 17:33). Unlike pagan’s contrast between mortal’s futile hope and divine *bona Spes*, “godly hope” will not bring immediate prosperity as a reward in Jeremiah. Those who trust in God still face times of difficulty ὅταν ἔλθῃ καὶ ὕμνος “when heat comes” or ἐν ἐνιαυτῷ ἀβροχίας “in the year of drought” (17:8) but they will not fear.¹¹⁴² Yet, after God’s tests (17:10), the unfaithful Judah will be judged at last for they have forsaken ὑπομονὴ Ἰσραὴλ “the hope of Israel” (17:13). Hope in God is used to distinguish Israel from the nations in Ps 113 LXX [115 MT]. A polemic against the idols of the nations, expressed with a sarcastic mockery (113:12–15 [3–7]), begins the Psalm. An antithesis between God the sovereign creator of the heavens and the earth (113:3 [11]) and the impotent “human made” idols is established. As a result, the psalmist calls upon the congregation with three synonymous designations underscoring the uniqueness of Israel οἶκος Ἰσραὴλ, οἶκος Ααρων, οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν κύριον (113:17–19 [9–11]). Israel, distinct from the idol-worshipping nations, ἤλπισεν ἐπὶ κύριον for he is their helper and protector (see also Wis 13:10).

The contrast between hope of Israel and that of the “ungodly” is also evident in Philo writings. A sharp differentiation is drawn between false hope based on human wishes and projection and the perfect, true “valuable” hope χρηστὴ ἐλπίς based on God (*Cher* 106; see e.g., *Alleg. Interp.* 2:12; *Opif* 46, 81). Philo supports his course by describing that Enos (Gen 4:26) is the first one ἤλπισεν ἐπὶ τὸν τῶν ὅλων πατέρα καὶ ποιητὴν “hoped in the father and creator of the universe” (*Abr.* 9). Thus, Philo believes that those with a correct understanding of God do not abandon their hope in God (*Che* 1.9).¹¹⁴³ Thus, in the Jewish tradition, ἐλπίς “es auch explizit zur Markierung der Differenz zwischen Ingroup und Outgroup.”¹¹⁴⁴ Paul’s thematic meaning closely aligns with the OT and early Jewish writings because divine ἐλπίς is similarly a matter

¹¹⁴⁰ Martin (2020: 169).

¹¹⁴¹ Stulman (2005: 168).

¹¹⁴² Stulman (2005: 169).

¹¹⁴³ Martin (2020: 169).

¹¹⁴⁴ Flebbe (2008: 433).

of faith. However, the God of hope in Romans does not bring distinction and delineates Gentiles from Israel or from God's people. Rather, Paul reads that the God of hope brings salvation to the nations, particularly the Gentiles in Roman church.

6.5.3 Divine εἰρήνη

The following section will first discuss scholar's suggestion about reading Paul's "God of peace" as a direct confrontation of the Roman Empire's *Pax Romana*. Possible though the connection is, it will be illustrated that ancient Greek public cult of Εἰρήνηα could also be a piece of meaningful background evidence. Given Paul is designating a deity, precisely speaking not the emperor, with εἰρήνη, the use of εἰρήνη in ancient Greek religious texts is studied. It will be found that Paul's idea of "the God of peace" involving in battling scenes is not unprecedented as it is similar to that in pagan texts. While the goddess Εἰρήνηα concerns mainly with the well-being of Greek cities, Paul's God of peace has a cosmic dominion. Then, it will be discussed Israel's restoration is characterised by divine peace in the OT, especially the Prophets. Although Paul's usage stands closer with the Jewish tradition, Paul is unique in granting Gentiles a more active role in participating, sharing instead of just witnessing divine peace brought about by God's victory in the ultimate cosmic battle against evils.

A. *Pax Romana*?

Paul's imagery of the God of peace trampling Satan (Rom 16:20a) has aroused scholars' interests in the connection between Paul's texts and Roman Imperial propaganda. Instead of finding Paul's primary referent in the *Pax Romana*, Paul's God of peace has been read as "a hidden transcript" of Paul's confrontation "with the ubiquitous propaganda of Roman peace."¹¹⁴⁵ The imperial numismatic evidence of victors standing on the neck of the defeated enemy in the image of serpents, and the wide spread motif of peace in imperial ideology are cited to support Paul's imperial reference.¹¹⁴⁶ Also, Reasoner suggests similar evidence of the winged *Pax-Nemesis*,

¹¹⁴⁵ Puskas and Reasoner (2013:72) regard Rom 16:20 is less obvious but also a "certain critique" of *Pax Romana* propaganda compared with "peace and security" in 1 Thess 5:3. See also Reasoner (2014: 13–25); Witherington (2004: 398); Käsemann (1980: 418); Bowley (2000: 774).

¹¹⁴⁶ See Harrison's (2011: 113 n. 61) analysis for a Neronian (AD 63–64) silver denarius depicting Virtus standing on the severed head of a captive and holding a *parazonium* (a long triangular dagger).

holding a caduceus which points down at a snake on the right.¹¹⁴⁷ Evaluating the plausibility of Paul's referent to the neonate Roman Empire is neither a feasible nor necessary task here.¹¹⁴⁸ Given our particular focus on the divine designations ὁ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης in Romans (15:33, 16:20a), it would be more appropriate not to begin with an assumed Imperial referent. Instead of collapsing the images onto a singular referent, it is also possible to look for Greek religiosity concerning εἰρήνη.¹¹⁴⁹ In honour of Augustus' victories in Spain and Gaul, Roman *Pax* is best known in relation to the dedication of *Ara Pacis* on 30th January 9 BC in the Campus Martius. *Pax* may have been worshipped earlier, but the cult of Augustan Peace is regarded a radical development, linking the idea closely with the emperor.¹¹⁵⁰ Despite its propagandistic circumstances, it is problematic to charge that the cult of peace "is more propaganda than religion."¹¹⁵¹ While the imperial *Pax* equates the emperor with the virtue, Stafford helpfully illustrates Εἰρήνη has long been recognised as a deity in Greek pantheon in classical Athens before the Augustan Peace.¹¹⁵² Given Paul is at least explicitly addressing God but not the emperor with the genitive modifier εἰρήνης in the designation, it is indispensable to take the goddess Εἰρήνηα into account.

B. Ancient Greek public cult of Εἰρήνη

The public cult of Εἰρήνη was testified by various visual and literary representations. Isocrates' *Antidosis* (354/3 BC) is one of the earliest evidence for the founding of the cult in Athens. The Athenian general is praised for he had not only captured many cities, but also had done so without causing the city great financial burden οὐ δαπάναις μεγάλαις (109). "...he won a naval battle over the

For the imperial ideology of *Pax Augustus*, see Harrison (2003: 230 n. 69), e.g. Augustus, *Res Gestae* 12, 13, 26 (εἰρήνη, εἰρηνεύεσθαι), for peace in general means settlement of civil strives, or peace as the result of victories (cf. *Res Gestae*, 34); see also a poem of Horace written in 17 BC (*Carmen saeculare*): "Now good faith, and peace, and honour, and modesty ancient, and virtue long-abandoned, do dare to return, and blessed Plenty appears, her horn quite full (trans. Elliott and Reasoner, 2011: 25)."

¹¹⁴⁷ Reasoner (2014: 17–18) ; Fears (1981: 827–948).

¹¹⁴⁸ For general about the Empire in Paul's gospel, see e.g. Wright (2002: 716–23); Horsley (1997); Saunders (2005: 227–238); Elliott (2008: 59–161). Cf. Barclay (2011: 363–87); Gaventa (2017: 7–22).

¹¹⁴⁹ *Pax* and εἰρήνη are glossed very differently in *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* (Hornblower and Spawforth, 2003: 494, 1129), however, this does not mean they are mutually exclusive; Thate (2008: 164).

¹¹⁵⁰ These references are provided by Reasoner (2014: 16): Ovid, *Fast.* 1.711–12; Tibullus, *Eleg.* 1.10.69–70; Virgil, *Ecl.* 4, *Aen.* 6.851–3. Axtell (1907: 37–38).

¹¹⁵¹ Burkert (1985: 186).

¹¹⁵² Stafford (2001: 173–91).

Lacedaemonians and forced them to agree to the terms of the present peace καὶ ταύτην αὐτοὺς ἠνάγκασε συνθέσθαι τὴν εἰρήνην—a peace which has so changed the relative positions of Athens and of Lacedaemon that from that day to this we celebrate the peace with sacrifices every year because no other treaty has been so advantageous to our city ὥς οὐδεμιᾶς ἄλλης οὕτω τῇ πόλει συνενεγκούσης” (109–10).¹¹⁵³ Pausanias gives a description of a statue of Εἰρήνη (Peace) φέρουσα Πλοῦτον (Plutus) παῖδα (*Description of Greece* 1 VIII 2) in the Athenian agora (ca. 448 BC). In Zeus’ intervention to settle human dispute at the end of *Odyssey*, friendship is bestowed along with peace and wealth τοῖ δ’ ἀλλήλους φιλεόντων ὥς τὸ πάρος, πλοῦτος δὲ καὶ εἰρήνη ἅλις ἔστω (24. 486).¹¹⁵⁴ Pindar pairs Εἰρήνη with her sisters Εὐνομία (Order) and Δίκη (Justice), daughters of Zeus and Themis and describes that Εἰρήνη is “steward of wealth of men” τάμι’ ἀνδράσι πλούτου while the other two deities are the firm foundation of cities (*Olympian Odes* 13.6–7; Hesiod, *Theogony* 901–2). The concern of the well-being of the cities is also reflected in plays. In the lost tragedy *Cresphontes* (ca. mid-420s BC), resentment at the discord about Polyphontes’ murder of the elder Cresphontes is voiced in the pray to Εἰρήνη. Εἰρήνη βαθύπλουτε καὶ καλλίστα μακάρων θεῶν, ζῆλός μοι σέθεν ὥς χρονίζεις...ἴθι μοι, πότνια, πόλιν. τὰν δ’ ἐχθρὰν Στάσιν εἶργ’ ἀπ’ οἴκων τὰν μαινομένην τ’ Ἔριν θηκτῶ τερπομένην σιδάρῳ (Euripides, *Cresphontes*, frag. 534.15–26).¹¹⁵⁵ The Peace being invoked is characterised by her opposition to Στάσιν (Stasis) and Ἔριν (Eris), which often appear in the context of civil strife. Euripides’ *Suppliant Women* (ca. 424 BC), another play in the same historical context of the Peloponnesian war as *Cresphontes*, uses peace in an argument against war. Creon’s herald tried to persuade Theseus from starting a war against Thebes, for it is wise to think of the consequences before they vote for war (486–91):

Yet all men know which of two speeches is better, what is good and what is bad, and how much better for mortals is peace than war (ὅσῳ τε πολέμου κρεῖσσον εἰρήνη βροτοῖς). Peace is beloved by the Muses and hated by the Avenging Spirits, she delights in lovely children and glories in wealth.

¹¹⁵³ Stafford (2001: 173).

¹¹⁵⁴ Similarly, in *The Hymn of the Kouretes* (ca. 300 BC) 24–26, the connection between peace and wealth is linked to justice, and Justice (Δίκη) possessed mankind...which prosperity-loving Peace (ἁ φίλολβος Εἰρή[ν]α). See Harrison (1912: 1–29).

¹¹⁵⁵ Euripides, fragment 453, lines 15–26. See commentary in Harder (1985: 102–110).

The praise of Peace in the opposition of Ποινάι (Vengeance) is ironic for Thebes herself enacted retribution by refusing their enemies to bury their dead, breaking the first rules of ancient post-victory peace treaty.¹¹⁵⁶ Aristophanes had two comedies precisely called *Peace* (ca. 421 BC) and *Wealth* (388 BC) and Peace is called πότνια “mighty” (e.g. *Peace* 675, 975) and invoked as Λυσιμάχη, meaning “the one who ends the battle” for releasing people from battles and tumults λῦσον δὲ μάχας καὶ κορκορυγὰς (*Peace* 992). Outside Athens, coinage with the inscription ΕΙΡΗΝΑ ΛΟΚΡΩΝ is found in Western Lokroi (ca. 380 BC). Instead of holding a child, the female figure held a caduceus which is a suitable symbol for political peace.¹¹⁵⁷ Before the imperial cult, the people of Athens were familiar with the goddess Εἰρήνη and she was regarded as a real power essential to the city’s welfare.¹¹⁵⁸ Although the aforementioned is earlier than evidence of the imperial *Pax*, the worship of Εἰρήνη as an independent deity is still useful for understanding Paul’s ὁ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης. Although the Ancient Greek’s poetically and pictorially paired of Peace and prosperity is absent in Paul, the historical context of internal and external strife is similar to Rom 15:30–33; 16:17–20. Yet, Paul’s God of peace does not only deliver his people from wars or the Roman Empire, Paul’s God has a bigger serpent to crush. According to Paul’s conflicted world stage, the main players are “on the one side, the Spirit and grace, on the other, Sin, Death and the Flesh” but not warring nations, the emperor, or the Roman Empire.¹¹⁵⁹ The eschatological promise in Romans assures the people of God that they will share God’s cosmic victory against these powers.

C. Divine εἰρήνη in the Prophets

Although the exact phrase ὁ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης cannot be found in the LXX, the genitive τῆς εἰρήνης frequently modifies διαθήκην (e.g. Num 25:12; Sir 45:24; Mal 2:5; Isa 54:10; Ezek 34:25, 26). God’s establishment of the covenant of Peace with his people is common in the Prophets. “Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel frequently speak of

¹¹⁵⁶ Stafford (2001: 185). Although it is more explicit in *Cresphontes* peace is a goddess instead of an idea, Peace is addressed θεά in scholiast’s comment on Euripides’ *Orestes* 1682–83. Besides the strife between Athens and Sparta, the external war against the Persians also drove Euripides, as well as Aeschylus and Aristophanes to praise the virtues of Peace (Martins de Jesus, 2010: 35).

¹¹⁵⁷ Stafford (2001: 190, FIG. 51).

¹¹⁵⁸ Stafford (2001: 191).

¹¹⁵⁹ Barclay (2011: 383).

the period of Israel's restoration as a time of peace characterized by the presence of a new spirit, the remaking of Israel's heart, and the reign of righteousness."¹¹⁶⁰ Peace in the sense of Israel's restoration does not imply an absence of violence. Like Paul's and pagan's understanding, "warfare and conflicts are the central elements."¹¹⁶¹ A cluster of εἰρήνη-language in Ezek 38–39, the oracle against Gog, well illustrates how the prophet communicates God's defeat of opposing forces (38:5–6) in order to settle Israel to the land in peace.¹¹⁶² It is unusual that the eschatological war (Ezek 38–39) follows the gathering and resurrection of Israel (Ezek 34–37), nevertheless, Ezekiel envisions the divine warrior's destruction of enemies as part of the eschatological redemption. Once the scattered tribes are gathered, a final battle must occur to ensure their "peace".¹¹⁶³ Although Gog's army is described as "a storm cloud covering the earth" (38:9, 16), preying on the inhabitants and making desolate the land (38:10–13), Israel's deity will "muster" (ἑτοιμασθήσεται, 38:8; cf. Isa 13:4) Israel's adversaries with elements of nature as weapons (38:21–22; cf. Ezek 5:17).¹¹⁶⁴ God's role as the primary divine warrior continues in Ezek 39. After God strikes (39:3) and gives Gog over to animals as preys (39:4–5), God's cosmic sovereignty and ultimate victory is celebrated with a sacrificial banquet (39:17–20). In the final sequence (39:21–29), God's supreme sovereignty is fully realised and God declares that his punishment of Israel has completed (39:23–24) and "now" is the time when Israel is restored (39:25). The regathering of the exiled are realised ἐν τῷ κατοικισθῆναι αὐτοὺς ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν αὐτῶν ἐπ' εἰρήνης "on that day when they dwell securely in the land with no one to make them afraid" (39:26–27) because of the defeat and burial of Gog (38:1–10, 39:11). The motif of dwelling in the land ἐπ' εἰρήνης (in peace) is already foreshadowed in 38:8, 14.¹¹⁶⁵ Along with the establishment of this final peace, divine judgement and deliverance of Israel will be made known to all nations πάντα τὰ ἔθνη

¹¹⁶⁰ Thielman (1995: 178).

¹¹⁶¹ As Barbara Schmitz (2010: 106) puts it, "in the LXX God seeks not to start conflicts, but to end wars."

¹¹⁶² Gog and the enemy hordes are prominent figures fighting against God in Jewish texts (Fitzpatrick, 2004: 82–83, citing e.g. Sib. Or. III.319, 512; Targum Ezekiel; Babylonian Talmud), thus, Gog represents all of Israel's present and future enemies, whom YHWH promises to destroy (Fitzpatrick, 2004:180–81; Blenkinsopp 1990, 185).

¹¹⁶³ Ryan (2020: 54); Blenkinsopp (1990: 179).

¹¹⁶⁴ Ryan (2020: 48–49, 54–56).

¹¹⁶⁵ Ezek 38:8: οὗτος ἐξ ἐθνῶν ἐξελέλυθεν, καὶ κατοικήσουσιν ἐπ' εἰρήνης ἅπαντες; 38:14 τὸν λαόν μου Ἰσραὴλ ἐπ' εἰρήνης ἐγερθήσῃ;

(39:23–24; 38:16; cf. 38:11–13) so that God sovereignty as the ruler of all cosmos will be fully acknowledged.¹¹⁶⁶

Isaiah's divine peace is also found in context of divine war. Among many references to peace in Isaiah (e.g. 9:5–6, 45:7; 60:17; 66:12), Isa 52:7 is selected here not only because it illuminates divine peace in relation to the divine warrior, it is simply quoted in Rom 10:15.¹¹⁶⁷ The proclamation of peace εὐαγγελιζόμενος ειρήνης (52:7) belongs to the wider unit of 51:1–52:12 when Isaiah prophesies about God's salvation to Zion in the midst of Babylonian captivity. The motif of the Lord's arm, an expression of his might, evokes God's defeat of the primordial, mythical sea creature רַהַב (Rahab) in 51:9.¹¹⁶⁸ The Exodus imagery of God's dominion over the sea recalls the creator God's deliverance of the oppressed and captives—“God's people” (51:13–14, 16). God's past victory is recalled (51:9; cf. Isa 30:7;) to inspire the hope that “the ransomed of the Lord” will return to Zion (51:11) and God's might hand will save Jerusalem (52:1). Thus, the proclamation of peace (52:7) is elaborated in militaristic terms describing the return of a king from battle to one's subjects (52:8–10; cf. Exo 15:18).¹¹⁶⁹ The scope of God's reign cover the “end of the earth” (52:10) as God's arm (51:9, 16), including divine defeats of enemies and release of captives, will be revealed ἐνώπιον πάντων τῶν ἐθνῶν (before all nations).¹¹⁷⁰ It should be noted Isaiah provides a glimpse of salvation for the nations in this proclamation as they will hope ἐλπιῶσιν and wait ὑπομενοῦσιν (cf. Rom 15:5) in God's arm (51:5).

D. Divine ειρήνη in early Jewish writings

Israelites in Isaiah is depicted as captives waiting for God's restoration to peace, yet, the members of the Qumran community play a more active role in the cosmic battle in the War Scroll (1QM). The enemies of Israel are identified the Kittim (כְּתִיִּים) whose army, the sons of darkness, was attacked by the sons of light in I.1–2. In

¹¹⁶⁶ Block (1987: 257–70, 264) divides the sequence into two parts: vv. 21–24 address YHWH's judgment against Israel illustrated in their captivity; vv. 25–29 address YHWH's deliverance and Israel's restoration. He also notes the repeat emphasis on making the identity of Israel's god known among the nations is for countering the arrogance of Gog.

¹¹⁶⁷ For detail discussion, see Wagner (2002: 170–76).

¹¹⁶⁸ References to God's victory over suprahuman enemies are found in Job 26:12; Pss 87:4; 89:9–11; Ezek 29:2–6; 32:2–16; Jer 51:34–37 (Ballentine, 2015: 98–108). However, the name Rahab is not included in Isa 30:7, 51:9 LXX.

¹¹⁶⁹ Blenkinsopp (2002:112).

¹¹⁷⁰ Ryan (2020: 101–2).

accordance with God's predetermination, the victory of the sons of light will "shine to all the edges of the earth" and bring "peace שלושים, blessing, glory, joy and eternal life" (I. 8–9; cf. 4QM^a (4Q491) 18). In cols III–IV, various titles of God and the names of the Qumran members in the divine army are written on the trumpets and banners. For instance, "Peace of God in the camps of his holy ones" יכתובו שלום אל (III. 5), "God's acts of salvation", "God's victory", "God's help"... "God's peace" אל שלום (VI.13–14) explicate again, the final battle serves as God's judgment against the wicked and as the means to eradicate evil, paving the way for the chosen people's redemption (X. 2–8).¹¹⁷¹ As expected from Qumran's inclusivity, Israel's defeat of the foreign kings and oppressors is a just judgment against the wickedness of the nations (גוים; XII.14; cf. 1QH XIX. 26–27). Similar themes are observed in *Testament of Dan* 5. The phrase "God of peace" occurs once in 5:2 to refer to God's protection of a repentant Israel from its ungodly enemies. As these enemies will face God's vengeance in the end time, God will also eliminate the ungodly and do away with sin (5:10–11). Besides, in Philo's writing, God is celebrated as "the giver of peace (τοῦ εἰρηνοποιεῖ θεοῦ)" in *Spec. Leg.* 2:192 who abolishes all civic disorders and thus brings cosmic concord (see also *Dec.* 178; *Spec. Leg.* 2:188–192).

6.5.4 Synthesis

In Prophets and the Dead Sea Scrolls, divine εἰρήνης language carries the thematic meaning of divine victory over anti-God powers. The purpose of God's cosmic battle is "as in days of old, the defeat of the wicked, the redemption of Israel, and the establishment of God's kingship and kingdom forever."¹¹⁷² Divine peace is not only the result of Israel's restoration, it is also brought about by the divine warrior's defeat of Israel's enemies. While Israel will enjoy the peace, the role of the nations is either as adversaries or witness of God's power. Paul's idea of Jewish and Gentile believers in the church of Roman sharing God's victory and is thus an idiosyncratic development.

¹¹⁷¹ Ryan (2020: 145).

¹¹⁷² Miller (1973: 144).

6.6 Concluding remarks

Together with the aforementioned divine designations in Romans, the four θεός-genitives in Rom 15–16 exemplify Paul’s argument for the inclusion of Gentiles. While ὁ θεὸς τῆς ὑπομονῆς καὶ τῆς παρακλήσεως (15:5) is theo-logically oriented pointing to God’s salvation plan, the scripture-bound ὁ θεὸς τῆς ἐλπίδος (15:13) preconfigures divine eschatological hope justifying Paul’s mission to the Gentiles. With the last two designations ὁ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης in 15:33; 16:20a, Paul reassures that any threats to the community of God’s people will be ultimately “pacified” by the conquering warrior God of peace.

Although exact parallels to Paul’s θεός-genitives are scarce, our investigation into the recurrent linguistic patterns of designating θεός with reference to various abstract nouns such as ὑπομονή, παράκλησις, ἐλπίς or εἰρήνη shows that Paul’s language of divine designations is not totally unprecedented. Paul’s soteriologically-oriented ὁ θεὸς τῆς ὑπομονῆς aligns closely with the OT’s thematic meaning than that of pagan writings. Different from Greco-Roman’s philosophical consolation, Paul’s understanding of divine παράκλησις shares the linguistic profile of Isaiah’s idea of the advancing salvation of God. The deified virtue of Hope makes an interesting comparison with Paul’s ὑπομονή and ἐλπίς. Although worshipped as an independent deity, pagan religiosity of divine hope focuses on followers’ earthly material gains. Yet, a minor similarity is found when compared with Paul as divine hope is used to differentiate between groups of people according to Cicero. Paul’s usage being closer to the Jewish tradition for divine hope highlights God’s salvation. However, Paul is different from the Jewish tradition which describes the nations as hopeless because his Gentile mission is preconfigured in divine hope. By comparing and contrasting Paul’s “God of peace”, Roman’s *Pax Romana* and ancient Greek cult of Εἰρήνη, the pagan texts show that the divine warrior context is not a Pauline invention. While the goddess Εἰρήνη concerns mainly with the well-being of Greek cities, Paul’s God of peace has a cosmic dominion. While divine peace is also found in divine battle contexts in the

Prophets, the role of the nations or Gentiles are neither adversaries nor witnesses, but participants in the peace brought about by divine victory.

Chapter 7

Conclusions

A question about the presumed and neglected “preconceived understanding” of Paul’s God begins this study. Paul’s ways of designating God in Romans are neither ordinary nor precedented in the Jewish tradition. Nowhere does Paul refer to God as “the God of Israel” (e.g. Matt 15:31; Luke 1:68), or the “God of Abraham” or the “God of Abraham, Issac and Jacob” (e.g. Mark 12:26; Acts 3:13; 7:32) or the “God of our fathers” (e.g. Acts 3:13; 7:32).¹¹⁷³ Besides, God is identified such as “the one who justifies the ungodly” (Rom 4:5), “the one who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead” (Rom 4:24), and “the God of hope” (Rom 15:13). It has been explained in Part I that this is not a study of the *Gottesvorstellung*, Paul’s mental concepts about the deity or his “theo-logy”, rather, it is about Paul’s *Gottesbild*, “the express form in which the concept is communicated in texts”, in particular, the designations of God in Romans.¹¹⁷⁴ These designations are taken as a sociolinguistic phenomenon and Jay Lemke’s “thematic meaning” and “recurrent linguistic pattern” are introduced as guiding concepts employed in our analysis.

Rome, in mid-first century, is an ancient city “thickly inhabited” with god(s).¹¹⁷⁵ Jonathan Z. Smith describes Greco-Roman religion was “here”, located in homes and burial sites, “there”, evident in temples or imperial worships, and “anywhere”, manifested in a diversity of associations. More than topological taxonomy, the religions of “here, there, anywhere” witness “the contestations, permutations, and combinations generated within or between any particular tradition”.¹¹⁷⁶ This study has found that despite Paul’s designations of God in Roman are unprecedented in the OT or Jewish tradition, striking linguistic resemblance with Greco-Roman designations is observed. For instance, Paul’s appositional construction θεὸς πατήρ is close to the popular Greco-Roman epithet Ζεὺς πατήρ. The two oxymoronic designations θεοῦ τοῦ ζῶοντιος τοὺς νεκρούς and καλοῦντος τὰ μὴ ὄντα ὡς ὄντα (Rom 4:17) reflect

¹¹⁷³ Gaventa (2010: 256 n. 9), see also chapter 1, n. 5.

¹¹⁷⁴ Mettinger (1989: 135–36).

¹¹⁷⁵ The term “thickly inhabited” is borrowed from Fredriksen (2017: 33).

¹¹⁷⁶ Smith (2003: 21–36, here 35).

similar practice of naming deities with reference to “polar values” in Greek aretalogies (see 4.2.6). While it is not common to characterise θεός with abstract nouns such as ὑπομονή, παράκλησις, ἐλπίς or εἰρήνη, Paul’s θεός-genitives are similar to the pagan phenomenon of “the cult of virtues”. Divine names are in juxtaposition with a deified abstraction: Athena Nike, “Victory”; Aphrodite Peitho, “Persuasion” (see 6.4). Paul does not make up these epithets out of nothing, nevertheless, their thematic meanings divert from its pagan usage. With a focus on divine designations, this study shows how Paul appropriates, adapts, and adopts existing sociolinguistic resources to convey his understanding of the central figure —God, in the letter to the Romans.

“For Paul, language about God is not merely decorative...From the beginning of the letter to the end, God is the central figure.”¹¹⁷⁷ Paul’s designations in Romans trace God’s essential salvific activities that allows for the incorporation of Gentiles. With a view to explicate God’s salvation to παντί (all), “the Jews first and also the Greek” Ἰουδαίῳ τε πρῶτον καὶ Ἑλληνι (1:16–17), God is named πατήρ τοῦ κυρίου (ἡμῶν) Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ “the father of Jesus Christ” (1:7; 15:6), as well as πατήρ ἡμῶν “the father of the believers’ community” (6:4; 8:15). Unlike his pagan counterparts, divine fatherhood does not mean the ultimate epistemological source of all lives or the ultimate progenitor in Romans. Paul and the Jewish traditions similarly draw more attention to its soteriological significance. God is understood as πατήρ of Davidic kings in the OT. The Exodus imagery are often associated with divine paternity to illustrate that YHWH the divine Father is the “founder” who adopts Israel as a nation and their liberator (e.g. Deut 32:6; Isa 63:16, 64:7 LXX [8 MT]).¹¹⁷⁸ In early Jewish texts (e.g. Sir 23:1, 51:1) divine fatherhood is intensified in God’s chastising pedagogy and merciful restoration exclusively for Israel. Nevertheless, in Paul’s adaptation, the exclusivity fades. While God is understood as Father of Davidic kings in the OT, God’s Fatherhood is reinterpreted in terms of his redeeming acts on the cross of the Davidic Messiah Jesus Christ. Paul shares with the Jewish tradition the idea of divine-human kinship as God the father is the one who adopts, constitutes or establishes his people as son of God. The Father’s promises concerning salvation for Israel and the ἔθνη are accentuated through the Messiah, the Spirit-evoked ἀββα ὁ πατήρ cry reveals

¹¹⁷⁷ Gaventa (2011a: 105).

¹¹⁷⁸ Khobnya (2014: 23).

God has now vouchsafed Israel's blessing of υιοθεσίας "adoption" (cf. 9:4; 11:29), not redirected but expanded, to Gentile believers.

After categorizing both Jews and Gentiles, πάντας (all) are under the power of sin (2:9–10, 3:9), God is characterised as one in εἷς ὁ θεός (3:30). The analysis in chapter 3 (see in particular 3.2) shows that Paul contends the impartiality of the one God who justifies Jews and Gentiles alike on the same basis of faith. Our background investigation illuminated that neither pagan nor Paul asserts that εἷς denotes "only" with the exclusion of other deities. Pagan texts often use εἷς agonistically emphasising exceptional divine powers or miracles, whereas Paul elaborates εἷς ὁ θεός in terms of God's justifying action in 3:30. Similar to the Greco-Roman's concept of local, "ethnic" deities, the "one" God is also the "ethnic" God of Israel in the OT. However, Paul's One God reaches out to the Gentiles. The designation εἷς is used to explain that the God of Jews is also of Gentiles Ἰουδαίων/ ἐθνῶν ὁ θεός (3:29). Paul's idea of God's "cross ethnic outreach" for the Gentiles is reflected in Zech 14:9 and *Sib. Or.* 3:710–23. Israel's God is ultimately the God of all other ethnic groups because he is the "one" God who impartially justifies Jews and Gentiles alike. In short, the sociolinguistic resource of πατήρ and εἷς is utilized by Paul to make explicit the One Father God's justifying action for the Gentiles.

Beside the scope of God's justifying activities, four interconnected designations in Romans 4 are employed to justify the place of the ἔθνη in his mission as well as God's eschatological kingdom. The divine predication τὸν δικαιοῦντα τὸν ἄσεβῃ (4:5) denotes the unilateral, unmerited act of divine reckoning, which is wholly at odds with worth, antithetical to just reward. Compared to the recurring linguistic pattern of the divine action of δικαιοῶ τινά, Paul's language is both congruent and incongruent with his pagan and Jewish contemporaries. In some Greco-Roman and early Jewish texts, the verb δικαιοῶ denotes negative punishment or condemnation, against the "ungodly" personal objects. However, the prophetic texts (Deutero-Isaiah in particular) take δικαιοῶ in a positive sense in favour of the personal object just as Paul does. Thus, Paul reinterprets the idea of divine unilateral forgiveness of the confessed sinners to support his mission of divine justification to the ungodly Gentiles. The next participial phrases θεοῦ τοῦ ζωοποιούντος τοὺς νεκρούς and καλοῦντος τὰ μὴ ὄντα ὡς ὄντα (4:17b) are tied with God-reckoning faith (4:9–12) and God's miraculous realisation

of his promise (4:13–22), to justify God’s plan of including Gentiles into Abraham’s family. The compound construction of ζῳός and ποιέω expresses divine sustenance of creation in Greco-Roman texts, an idea which is absent in Paul’s usage. While similar pagan oxymoronic epithets connote divine omnipotence, the divine act of ζωοποιεῖν in the OT is soteriological illustrating divine intervention to reverse “deadly” circumstances or fortune. Though not a dominant view in Jewish tradition, the “life-making” God of Israel is sometimes used as a boundary-drawing designation representing the acceptance of impure outsiders into God’s community of salvation (2 Kgs 5:7; JosAs 8:3). Close affinity to Paul’s argument is observed. In light of Philo’s *Spec* 4:187, Paul’s τὰ μὴ ὄντα and ὄντα do not signify *creatio ex nihilo*. Instead, it again illustrates God’s power to “turn the table” for transforming the ungodly ἔθνη into his God’s promised children. The theme resurrection is developed with the interrelated designations. The God “who justifies the ungodly” (4:5) is the same God who “gives life to the dead” (v. 17) and creates a progeny for “Father Abraham”. Through the divine act of resurrecting Jesus Christ (4:24), God acquits and brings a new “life” (1:16–17) to the ingathered community comprised of Jews and Gentiles. Different from Greco-Roman resurrecting deities who bring immortality, Paul’s idea of divine revivification inaugurates a death-to-life transformation in believes’ community. In this sense, Paul aligns closer to the Jewish correlation with resurrection and Israel’s restoration. Although ἐγείραντα Ἰησοῦν τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν ἐκ νεκρῶν is a novum, the linguistic pattern is comparable to one of the most frequent divine designations in the OT— “the Lord God who brought you out of the land of Egypt”. Profound theological resemblance is exhibited not only is God identified in this momentous saving act in both the OT and Romans, God’s *past* salvific intervention similarly becomes the basis for the expectation of redemption in the *present* and *future*.

The issue about God’s saving power (3:1) returns in Rom 9–11. Given the disbelief of Jews, Paul responds to the question whether the word of God failed (9:6). With the two designations in Rom 9, namely, ὁ καλῶν (9:12) and ὁ ἐλεῶν θεός (9:16), Paul does not contend that God selects some but rejects the other within Israel. Instead, it is highlighted that God’s incongruous call and mercy are what constitute, create, and sustain Israel from the beginning. The same creative agent of calling and mercy, as Paul argues, incorporates Gentiles into his people in the same way. Different from the

salvific divine καλεῖν in pagan texts, Paul's understanding of divine act of call is closer to that in Deutero-Isaiah. Coupled with divine calling, creation marks a unique relationship between God and Israel, and implies the inclusion of ἔθνη in God's promised multiplication of Abraham's descendants (Isa 51:1-3; cf. 41:8-9). Although the creation theme is also prevalent in divine καλεῖν in 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch, divine call brings destruction instead of salvation to the nations. Yet, the designation ὁ καλέσας in *JosAs* 8:9a represents a new perspective and signifies God's acceptance of the former idol worshiping ἔθνη into the blessed community of God's people. In both the prophet's penitential prayers and Paul's argument, God's unilateral sovereign mercy is foundational to Israel's existence. Also, the "categorical difference" between the merciful God and mortal human beings is a common motif in Qumran literature, *Sirach* and Romans. Familiar with these concurrent linguistic patterns of his forebears and near contemporaries, Paul adapts the language of mercy to justify the salvation to Gentiles.

While God's cosmological redemption of creation (8:17–25) is anticipated in the eschatological future, Paul limns some of the features of the new communal lives of those delivered by God from the powers of sin and death in Rom 12–15. In response to a communal dispute, Paul's theological vision of ὑπομονῆς and παρακλήσεως (15:5) illustrates how God transforms judgmental divisive minds into one conformed mind. The result of unified worship is confirmed in the next designation (15:13). God's eschatological hope for the Gentiles is specified in the scripture-bound ὁ θεὸς τῆς ἐλπίδος (15:13). With the last two designations ὁ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης in 15:33; 16:20a, Paul reassures that any threats to the community of God's people will be ultimately "pacified" by the conquering warrior God of peace. Together with the aforementioned divine designations in Romans, the four θεός-genitives in Rom 15–16 reinforce Paul's argument for the inclusion of Gentiles.

In spite of their uniqueness, Paul's "θεός-genitives" are not entirely unprecedented. Paul's soteriologically oriented ὁ θεὸς τῆς ὑπομονῆς aligns closer to the usage in the OT than that of pagan writings. Different from Greco-Roman's philosophical consolation, Paul's understanding of divine παράκλησις shares Isaiah's linguistic profile of the advancing salvation of God. Compared with pagan religiosity of deified Hope, Paul's soteriological understanding of ὑπομονή and ἐλπίς is different.

Although divine hope refers also to God's salvation in Jewish traditions, Paul's usage is again extraordinary. While the Gentiles are often characterised as hopeless in some Jewish texts such as Ps 113 LXX [115 MT] and Philo's writings, Paul's Gentile mission is preconfigured in divine hope. By comparing and contrasting Paul's "God of peace", Roman's *Pax Romana* and ancient Greek cult of Ειρήνη, the pagan texts show that the divine warrior context is not a Pauline invention. While the goddess Ειρήνη concerns mainly with the well-being of Greek cities, Paul's God of peace has a cosmic dominion. In the Prophets and the War Scroll, divine peace is not only the result of Israel's restoration, it is also brought about by the divine warrior's defeat of Israel's enemies. Nevertheless, Paul adapts the motifs for his own purpose. The nations are neither adversaries nor witnesses of God's salvation of Israel, Paul insists idiosyncratically the believers, Jews and Gentiles alike, are participants sharing the peace resulted from divine victory.

This study proves that it is possible to investigate Paul's divine designations in a particular letter, and in a similar vein, it opens up the areas for further research about Paul's divine designations or God language in Paul's other letters. The meaning of various interesting designations in 2 Cor, such as ὁ πατήρ τῶν οἰκτιρμῶν καὶ θεὸς πάσης παρακλήσεως (1:3), ὁ βεβαιῶν ἡμᾶς (1:21), ὁ κατεργασάμενος ἡμᾶς (5:5), ὁ παρακαλῶν τοὺς ταπεινοὺς (7:6), is a question has not been unanswered. By implication, an overview of Paul's divine designations in all his letters is also a project that has not been undertaken. Another question, perhaps a larger one, is raised by our findings concerning the Gentile question. While a shift of accent is observed in Paul's emphasis on Gentiles participating in Israel's redemption with his divine designations in Romans, could this be observed in other language items in Paul's letter, such as language of the Spirit or his anthropological language? Another possible aspect for further investigation could be about Paul's and Marcion's God. As a devoted interpreter of Paul's letters, Marcion legitimated his criticism of the "Creator" in Scripture (the Septuagint) and defenended the "good God" in the gospel. While past discussions often focus on how the tension between law and gospel in Paul's writings might instigate Marcion, how Marcion radicalized or at least furthered the tension in Paul's understanding of God (as our findings partly show) is perhaps worth investigating. Although several passages analysed in this study concerning Abraham as

the father of believers (Rom 4; Gal 3) and God's promises to Israel and the church (e.g. Rom 9–11) are omitted by Marcion, Paul's divine designations in other letters are substantial materials for further researches.¹¹⁷⁹

Bultmann once defines doing theology in these terms, "if a man will speak of God, he must evidently speak of himself."¹¹⁸⁰ In response, Moxnes rightly suggests that "it is more to the point to say that, for Paul, to speak about God is to speak about his people!"¹¹⁸¹ This study arrives at similar conclusion with Moxnes' statement. For Paul, the God of Israel, especially in the OT and Romans, never falters in fulfilling his role as the Father, redeemer, justifier, reviver, mercy-giver, and warrior to create, rescue, and restore his people. However, Paul sees in these designations that "the nations are partners in Israel's redemption" in this "divine comedy".¹¹⁸² This study explains that Paul, in writing the letter of Romans, creatively reinterprets and adapts the divine designations for his purpose (as did other authors) of justifying his mission to the Gentiles.

¹¹⁷⁹ Räisänen (2011:299–315).

¹¹⁸⁰ Bultmann (1969: 55).

¹¹⁸¹ Moxnes (1980: 99).

¹¹⁸² Fredriksen (2018: 28).

Appendix: Paul's divine designations in undisputed letters

Rom	1 Cor	2 Cor	Gal	Phil	1 Thess	Philem
1:7 God our father and of the Lord Jesus Christ	1:3 God our father and of the Lord Jesus Christ	1:2 God our father and of the Lord Jesus Christ	1:1 God the father, who raised him from dead	1:2 God our father and of the Lord Jesus Christ	1:9 living and true God	3 God our father and of the Lord Jesus Christ
1:25 the creator	1:9 God is faithful	1:3 The God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ	1:3 God our father and of the Lord Jesus Christ	4:9 the God of peace	2:12 God calling you	
3:30 God is one	8:4 there is no God but one	1:3 the father of mercies and God of all consolation	1:6 the one called you		4:8 God giving his Holy Spirit	
4:5 the one justifying the ungodly	8:6 one God the father	1:4 the one consoling us	1:15 God the one setting me apart		5:23 the God of peace	
4:17 God making alive the dead and calling the things not being into being	10:13 God is faithful	1:9 God rising the dead	3:20 God is one		5:24 the one calling you is faithful	
4:24 the one raised Jesus the Lord of us from dead	12:6 the same god the one working all things	1:18 God is faithful	5:8 the one calling you			
8:11 the one raised Christ from dead	14:33 the God of peace	3:3 spirit of living God				
8:27 the one examining the hearts	15:57 God giving to us victory	4:14 the one raised the Lord Jesus				
8:33 God is the judging one		5:5 The one who had prepared us for this very thing is God				
9:11 the one who calls		5:18 God reconciling us...and giving us...				
9:16 God who shows mercy		6:16 living God				
9:26 living God		7:6 the one consoling the castdown				
10:12 for the same Lord (is over) all		8:16 God giving...the same care...				
15:5 God of endurance and consolation		13:11 God of love and peace				
15:13 God of hope						
15:33 the God of peace						
16:20 the God of peace						
16:25 the one who is able to strengthen you						
16:26 the eternal God						
16:27 only wise God						

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