

# Romans

## An English and Hebrew Translation and Commentary

from the original languages

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# Paul's Letter to Rome

## אגרת פאול השליח אל-הרומים

### Chapter 2

### פָּרָק ב

1 Therefore, without excuse you are, O man, everyone judging, because in that *which* you are judging the other, yourself you are condemning, because the same things—these you are practicing—the one judging. <sup>2</sup>And we are knowing that the judgment of the Almighty is according to truth upon those practicing such things. <sup>3</sup>But are you supposing this, O man, that *is* judging those practicing such things and doing the same *yourself*, that you will escape the judgment of the Almighty? <sup>4</sup>Or of the riches of His goodness, and *his* forbearance, and longsuffering; are you thinking little, without knowing that the kindness of the Almighty is leading you to repentance? <sup>5</sup>But according to your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are treasuring wrath for yourself in *the* day of wrath and revelation of *the* righteous judgment of the Almighty, <sup>6</sup>“who will reward to each according to his deeds.”<sup>a</sup>

אֵל-כֵּן, בְּלִי הַתְּנַצְלוֹת אִתָּהּ, הִזוּ! אִישׁ, כָּל-הַשׁוֹפֵט; כִּי בְּזֹאת אֲשֶׁר אִתָּה שׁוֹפֵט אֶת-הָאֲחֵר; אֶת-עֲצָמְךָ אִתָּה מְרַשֵּׁיעַ, כִּי אֶת-עַצְמְךָ הַדְּבָרִים; הָאֵלֶּה אִתָּה פֹּעֵל הַשׁוֹפֵט: הַיּוֹדְעֵנוּ כִּי מִשְׁפָּט הָאֱלֹהִים הוּא כְּפִי אָמַת עַל הַפְּעֻלִים כְּאֵלֶּה: <sup>1</sup>אֵדְ הַחוֹשֵׁב | אִתָּה אֶת-זֹאת, הוּא אִישׁ הַשׁוֹפֵט אֶת-הַפְּעֻלִים כְּאֵלֶּה, וְעֹשֶׂה אֶת-עֲצָמָהּ, כִּי אִתָּה תִמְלֹט אֶת-הַמִּשְׁפָּט הָאֱלֹהִים?: <sup>2</sup>אוֹ הַשֹּׁפֵעַ טוֹבוֹ, וְסִבְלָנוּתוֹ, וְאַרְךְ רוּחוֹ; הֲאִם אִתָּה חֹשֵׁב קָטָן, מִבְּלִי יוֹדֵעַ כִּי טוֹבַת הָאֱלֹהִים מִדְּרִיךְ אוֹתְךָ לְתִשׁוּבָה? <sup>3</sup>אֵדְ כְּפִי הַקְּשׁוּתָד וְלִבְבְךָ בְּלִי תִשׁוּבָה, אִתָּה צַבֵּר לְעֲצָמְךָ חֲרוֹן לַיּוֹם חֲרוֹן וְהַתְּגִלוֹת מִשְׁפָּט צָדֵק הָאֱלֹהִים: <sup>4</sup>אֲשֶׁר <sup>5</sup>”יִשְׁלַם” לְאִישׁ כְּמַעֲשָׂהוּ”<sup>6</sup>:

6a = Psalm 62:12.

ו'א MT תשלם | ב Ps. 62:12

<sup>7</sup>indeed, to those who, by <sup>a</sup>patient endurance;<sup>a</sup> in good work—glory and honor and immortality, are seeking—*he will reward* eternal life; <sup>8</sup>yet to those *acting* from selfish ambition, and disobeying the truth, (that is, being persuaded to <sup>9</sup>injustice): wrath and anger, <sup>9</sup>tribulation and distress—upon every soul of man which is producing <sup>10</sup>evil, *upon the soul of Jew* firstly besides also *the soul of Greek*, <sup>10</sup>but glory and honor and peace to everyone that is working <sup>11</sup>good, to *the Jew* firstly besides also to *the Greek*. <sup>11</sup>For there is no partiality with the Almighty. <sup>12</sup>For as many as sinneth lawlessly, also as lawless will perish; also as many as that sinneth <sup>a</sup>according to habit<sup>a</sup>, through Torah will be judged; <sup>13</sup>because not the hearers of Torah *will be* right ones before the Almighty, but<sup>a</sup> the doers of Torah will be <sup>b</sup>made righteous.<sup>b</sup> <sup>14</sup>For when <sup>a</sup>Peoples *who are* not having the Torah, naturally the things of the Torah may be doing, these, not having Torah, to themselves, are torah, <sup>15</sup>who are showing the work of the Torah written in their <sup>16</sup>hearts, their <sup>17</sup>conscience bearing witness and *their* thoughts accusing; one with another, or also defending *them*,

7 a-a = ὑπομονήν = steadfast perseverance. 12a-a = by force of habit, *lit.* in norm. 13 a Syriac: if not | b-b *or* given righteousness, justified, vindicated. 14 a = nations.

אֱמַנִם | לְאֵלֶּה לְפִי סְבִלַת נְאֻמָּן; בְּפַעֲלָה טוֹבָה—אֶת־תְּפָאֶרֶת וְאֶת־כְּבוֹד וְאֶת־אֱלֻמוֹת הֵם מְבַקְשִׁים, הוּא יִשְׁלַם אֶת־חַיֵּי עוֹלָם:<sup>8</sup> אֲדָ לְאֵלֶּה מֵאֲנֵכֵי אֲמִבִּיעֵיהָ וְסוֹרְרִים אֶת־הָאֱמֶת (דְּהִינוּ נִפְתִּים אֶל־הָעוֹלָה) רָגַז וְחִמָּה:<sup>9</sup> צָרָה וְצוֹקָה עַל כָּל־נַפְשׁ אָדָם הַפֹּעֵל אֶת־הָרַע עַל־נַפְשׁ יְהוּדִי בְּרֵאשִׁיטָה כְּמוֹכֵן נֶפֶשׁ יוֹנִי: אֲדָ כְבוֹד<sup>10</sup> וְיָקָר וְשָׁלוֹם לְכָל־הַפֹּעֵל אֶת־הַטּוֹב, לְיְהוּדֵי בְּרֵאשִׁיטָה כְּמוֹכֵן גַּם לְיוֹנִי:<sup>11</sup> כִּי אֵין מִשׁוּא פָּנִים עִם־הָאֱלֹהִים:<sup>12</sup> כִּי כָרְבִים אֲשֶׁר כְּפּוֹקְרִים חֲטָאוּ גַם כְּפּוֹקְרִים יֹאבְדוּ גַם כָּרְבִים שְׁחָטְאוּ אֲבָכוּחַ הַרְגֵל, בְּדַרְדָּר תּוֹרָה יִשְׁפִּטוּ:<sup>13</sup> כִּי לֹא שָׁמְעֵי הַתּוֹרָה יִהְיוּ צְדִיקִים לְפָנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים, אֲלֵא<sup>14</sup> עֹשֵׂי הַתּוֹרָה כִּי־יִצְדָּקוּ:<sup>15</sup> כִּי כַּאֲשֶׁר גּוֹיִם, אֵלֶּה בְּבִלִי יֵשׁ לָהֶם תּוֹרָה, מִטְּבַע אֶת־דְּבָרֵי הַתּוֹרָה עֹשִׂים; הָאֵלֶּה בְּבִלִי יֵשׁ לָהֶם תּוֹרָה, לְעַצְמָם הֵם תּוֹרָה:<sup>16</sup> אֲשֶׁר הֵמָּה מֵרָאִים אֶת־פְּעֵל הַתּוֹרָה כְּתוֹב בְּלְבוֹתָם בְּהַעֲד לָהֶם בְּרַעֲיוֹנָם וּמַחְשְׁבוֹתֵיהֶם גַּם בְּתוֹכָם מַחְיְבוֹת; זֹאת אֶת־זֹאת אוּ גַם מְזַכּוֹת אוֹתָם:

יב'א-א = בְּנוֹרְמָה: יג'א = אִם לֹא | ב = יִינְתָנוּ צְדָקָה:

<sup>16</sup>in connection to the day when, the Almighty is judging the secrets of men, according to my good news, through Messiah Yeshua. <sup>17</sup>But if you are naming yourself Jewish and are finding rest in Torah and are rejoicing in the Almighty, <sup>18</sup>and are knowing *his* will and are approving things making a difference, being instructed out of the Torah, <sup>19</sup>as well, are confident yourself to be a guide of the blind, a light of those in darkness, <sup>20</sup>a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of the immature, having the structural form of knowledge and of the truth in the Torah, <sup>21</sup>who, then, are teaching another; are you not teaching yourself? who are proclaiming “do not be stealing”, are you stealing? <sup>22</sup>who are saying “do not be committing adultery”, are you committing adultery? who are abhorning idols, are you robbing temples? <sup>23</sup>who are boasting in the Torah, through transgression of the Torah, are you dishonoring the Almighty? <sup>24</sup>since “the name of the Almighty is being blasphemed among the Peoples because of you,” just as it is written.

<sup>20</sup>לְיוֹם כַּאֲשֶׁר שׁוֹפֵט הָאֱלֹהִים אֶת־תַּעֲלָמוֹת בְּנֵי הָאָדָם לְפִי בְּשׁוֹרְתֵי בְּדֶרֶךְ יֵשׁוּעַ הַמָּשִׁיחַ: <sup>17</sup>אֲבָל אִם אַתָּה יְהוּדִי נִקְרָא וְאַתָּה נָח בַּתּוֹרָה וְאַתָּה מִתְהַלֵּל בְּאֱלֹהִים: <sup>18</sup>וְאַתָּה יוֹדֵעַ אֶת־רְצוֹנֹו וּבַחֵן אֶת־הַמַּעֲלִים בְּאֲשֶׁר אַתָּה מְלַמֵּד מִן־הַתּוֹרָה: <sup>19</sup>כְּמוֹכֵן בְּטַח אַתָּה לְהִיוֹתְךָ עֹצְמָךְ נִהְגַּ עוֹרִים אֹר לְאֵלָה אֲשֶׁר בַּחֲשָׁד: <sup>20</sup>כְּמִיסַר אֲוִילִים מְלַמֵּד עֲלִילִים אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁלַח תַּבְּנִית הַדַּעַת וְהֶאֱמַת בַּתּוֹרָה: <sup>21</sup>כֹּא לְכֵן הַמְּלַמֵּד אֶת־אַחֵר הָאֵם אֶת־עֲצָמְךָ לֹא תִלְמָד; הַמְּגִיד לֹא לְגִנוּב הָאֵם אַתָּה גִנַּב: <sup>22</sup>כִּי־הָאֵמֵל לֹא לְנֶאֱפֵף הָאֵם־אַתָּה נֶאֱפֵף הַמִּתְעַב אֶת־הָאֲלִילִילִים הָאֵם־אַתָּה בִּזּוֹ אֶת־הַקֹּדֶשׁ: <sup>23</sup>כִּי־אַתָּה אֲשֶׁר מִתְהַלֵּל בַּתּוֹרָה הָאֵם בְּדֶרֶךְ שֶׁל הָעֲבֵרַת הַתּוֹרָה אֶת־הָאֱלֹהִים אַתָּה מְנַבֵּל: <sup>24</sup>כִּי הַשֵּׁם שֶׁל הָאֱלֹהִים בְּדֶרֶךְ מְגִדְךָ בְּגוֹיִם כַּאֲשֶׁר נִכְתָּב:

<sup>25</sup>For circumcision indeed is profiting when you may be practicing Torah; but when you may be a transgressor of the Torah, your °circumcision is made to be uncircumcision. <sup>26</sup>So when the uncircumcised *man* should be keeping the requirements of the Torah, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? <sup>27</sup>And the *one* naturally uncircumcised, keeping the Torah, will judge you, that, through an <sup>a</sup>inscription, (that is: circumcision), *are* a transgressor of Torah? <sup>28</sup>Because not what *is* on the outside is Jewish, nor what *is* on the outside in °the flesh *being* circumcision, <sup>29</sup>unless what *is* in °secret Jewish; and circumcision of °the heart *is* <sup>a</sup>in <sup>b</sup>spirit, not by *an* inscription; of whom the praise *is* not from men, but from the Almighty.

כ<sup>ה</sup> כִּי הַמִּילָה אִמָּנָם מוֹעֵלֶת הִיא  
אִם-אַתָּה עֹשֶׂה אֶת-הַתּוֹרָה, אַךְ אִם  
אַתָּה עֲבֵרִינִית תּוֹרָה מִלְּתֶךָ לְעַרְלָה  
נְהִיִתָּה: <sup>כ</sup>לֵכֵן אִם בְּזִהְעֲרָלָה שִׁמְרִי  
אֶת-צְדָקוֹת הַתּוֹרָה, הֲאִם-לֹא עָרְלָתוֹ  
לְמוֹלָה תִּחְשָׁב: <sup>כ</sup>וַיִּשְׁפּוֹט בְּזִהְעֲרָלָה  
מִן-הַטֵּבַע הַנִּצְרָא אֶת-הַתּוֹרָה אוֹתָךְ,  
אֲשֶׁר בְּדַרְךְ כְּתָבְתָּ (דְּהִינוּ שֶׁל-מִילָה)  
עֲבֵרִינִית הַתּוֹרָה אַתָּה: <sup>כח</sup>כִּי לֹא זֶה  
אֲשֶׁר בְּגִלּוֹי יְהוּדִי הוּא גַם-לֹא זֹאת  
אֲשֶׁר בְּגִלּוֹי בִּבְשָׁר מִילָה הִיא <sup>כט</sup>אֲלֵא זֶה  
אֲשֶׁר בְּסִתְרֵי יְהוּדִי הוּא וּמִלַּת הַלֵּב זֶה  
בְּרוּחַ לֹא כְּתָבְתָּ אֲשֶׁר | תְּהַלְתּוּ אֵינָנָה  
מֵאֵת אַנְשִׁים כִּי אִם-סֵאת הָאֱלֹהִים:

27 a *scriptio stigmatis*; γράμματος: cf. LXX Lev. 19:28. 29 a *or* by means of | b *or* Spirit.

כזא=גמר | ב = וכתבת קעקב, האות: כח'א =  
וכתבת קעקב:

## Romans, Chapter 2

1 Therefore, without excuse you are, O man, everyone judging, because in that *which* you are judging the other, yourself you are condemning, because the same things—these you are practicing—the one judging. <sup>2</sup>And we are knowing that the judgment of the Almighty is according to truth upon those practicing such things.

אֵל-כֹּן, בְּלִי הַתְּנַצְלוֹת אֶתְּהּ, הוּא! אִישׁ, כָּל-הַשׁוֹפֵט; כִּי בְּזֹאת אֲשֶׁר אֶתְּהּ שׁוֹפֵט אֶת-הָאַחֵר; אֶת-עֲצָמְךָ אֶתְּהּ מְרַשִּׁיעַ, כִּי אֶת-עַצְמְךָ הַדּוֹבְרִים; הָאֱלֹהִים אֶתְּהּ פֹּעֵל הַשׁוֹפֵט: רְיָדְעֵנוּ כִּי מִשְׁפָּט הָאֱלֹהִים הוּא כִּפְּי אֲמֹת עַל הַפְּעֻלִים כְּאֵלֶּה:

§2:1.1 “Judging” in vs. 1 means “condemning”. The word κρίνεις “judge” is explained by κατακρίνεις “condemn”. Paul’s point is that at whatever point person A condemns B, and does the same himself, he is condemning himself. What kind of person, then, is it that condemns others but exempts himself for practicing the same transgression? It is either the person of the world, or it is the person who thinks that are special. This is the secular moralist who releases himself from condemnation because he is self centered or a religious moralist because of his elect status. This is the Jewish person who feels secure in his or her “chosenness”, condemns sin in the *goy*, and then feels secure doing the same because they are “chosen”. This is the Calvinist who thinks he is one of the “elect” who is “eternally secure”, and can call the whole world depraved transgressors while exempting himself from the same behavior just because he is “elect”. This is the person who believes the law was kept for him, and therefore exempts himself from condemnation when practicing transgression.

2:1.2 How is a person to avoid such self-incrimination? The answer is not by irrevocable election, but by conditional election. It is not by eternal security, but by conditional security, which is based on repentance and knowing that Yeshua forgives the sin of those committed to Him. The repentant does not incriminate himself or herself when noting transgression in others, because he or she does not do the same thing as the others. On the other hand, those who believe in irrevocable election also believe they can transgress while being “elect”. They then condemn the same sin in the non-elect. Will their “election” save them from Yahweh’s judgment? Of course not!

<sup>3</sup>But are you supposing this, O man, that *is* judging those practicing such things and doing the same *yourself*, that you will escape the judgment of the Almighty? <sup>4</sup>Or of the riches of

אֵדךָ הַחֹשֶׁב | אֶתְּהּ אֶת-זֹאת, הוּא אִישׁ הַשׁוֹפֵט אֶת-הַפְּעֻלִים כִּי-אֱלֹהִים, וְעָשָׂה אֶת-עֲצָמְךָ, כִּי אֶתְּהּ תַמְלֹט אֶת-הַמִּשְׁפָּט הָאֱלֹהִים?: אִיא

His goodness, and *his* forbearance, and longsuffering; are you think-ing little, without knowing that the kindness of the Almighty is leading you to repentance?

הַשִּׁפְעַת טוֹבוֹ, וְסִבְלָנוּתוֹ, וְאַרְךָ רוּחוֹ; הֲאִם אַתָּה חֵשֶׁב קָטָן, מִבְּלִי יוֹדֵעַ כִּי טוֹבַת הָאֱלֹהִים מְדַרְיָד אֹתָךְ לְתַשׁוּבָה?

§2:4.1 The English translation has the words “think little”. This is synonymous with the Greek word *καταφρονεῖς*, def. no. 2, BDAG 3rd, and Thayer, “think little of” (קָטָן חֵשֶׁב). The word *καταφρονεῖς* consists of *κατα* [down] + *φρονέω* [think]. The word means “despise” (def. 1) or to be “unconcerned” (congruent to BDAG def. 2). For instance, the Jew may condemn the non-Jew for adultery, while thinking that he himself has escaped condemnation because of his elect status. Because of his “election” he is *unconcerned* with being condemned by God, and he *despises* the truth that transgression changes his status in Yahweh’s eyes to that of the lawless *goy*. The Modern Church doctrines of election are much the same. They argue that since election is individual and based in eternity past that the transgressions of the “elect” have no effect on their status.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, these “elect” condemn the same sin, which they willfully commit, in others who don’t believe the right doctrines to be “elect”. The only difference between the Jew and the Church then, is that one bases election on genetics while the other bases it on eternal security. Either way they absolve themselves while transgressing because they are “elect,” and condemn the same in others.

2:4.2 “Repentance” is entering into a state of being turned away from transgression, which is rebellion, and then doing righteousness through faithfulness. Repentance begins with the human decision to respond to God’s call, but only remains valid so long as the opportunity to turn from iniquity is not actively avoided after the initial decision. Repentance isn’t just a decision to turn from transgression. That’s the initial part of it. To be repentant, one must actually turn from transgression when the opportunity to enact the decision comes. The sequence of recognizing sin, deciding to turn from it, and turning from it when the time to act comes, is repentance. We may also say repentance is synonymous with faithfulness to Yahweh or commitment to Messiah.

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<sup>1</sup> The only effect that transgressions of the “elect” are said to have is to enhance the glory of God because he always forgives all transgressions of the elect, or planned to forgive them, no matter what they are. The classic case is David’s adultery. The truth is that David was not elect from eternity past. His election was conditioned on his repentance, and walking in faithfulness. If Yahweh had allowed him to die before offering him a chance to repent, then he would have died in his iniquity and have been condemned. David’s individual election was only restored upon his repentance to the remnant of Israel.

To be repenting, one need not be perfect, or cease all sinning<sup>2</sup>, but only rebellion. To be in repentance means to forsake willful sin, which is defined in the Scripture as “transgression” or “iniquity” (cf. Ezekiel 18:1-32; Gal. 5:19-21; Eph. 5:3-6; Num 15:22-37). Transgression is not a sin of circumstance, ignorance, or mere habit. It is a willful turning away from Yahweh by very serious sin. Consider the man who gathered firewood on the Sabbath day (Num. 15:32-37). Yahweh had made it possible for all Israel to observe the sabbath, providing them with food, heat by night, and shade by day, and no need to work, other than gather manna for six days. In this circumstance, the sin of sabbath breaking was rebellion. On the other hand, when the Israelites were in Egypt in slavery breaking the sabbath due to their bondage, and also largely ignorant of it, they were not condemned by Yahweh as transgressors, but he delivered them from Egypt first, and made it possible for them to keep His Sabbath. Only after a free choice to choose to obey or rebel was put before Israel did Yahweh regard the disobedience as transgression (cf. Deut. 8:1-2).

Repentance may include sorrow for sin, or a mental renouncing of it, or a sincere commitment to forsake it and walk in obedience to Messiah. But no one should be deceived that having initial intent without acting on it is repentance. Repentance requires an actual forsaking of transgression. It is not a one time event that happens at a point in time, but it is a state that the person enters into of forsaking iniquity—meaning actually being turned away from transgression in one’s daily walk and practice. It is also state of being responsive to the convictions of sin brought to notice by the Spirit of Yahweh, although sometimes forgetfulness or circumstance can cause us to ignore or delay acting on some promptings without being faithless.

Repentance includes an intellectual understanding that sin is wrong, but this alone is not repentance, or an emotional approval of righteousness, but this alone is not repentance, or a personal decision to turn from it, but this alone is not repentance. Consider the criminals on the cross with Yeshua (Luke 23:40-43). In this brief account the unrepentant criminal “railed on him” (Luke 23:39) continuing to transgress, while the other decided upon repentance, and “rebuked him”, He decided to abide in the word of truth that he knew in his heart, and then asked Yeshua to remember him in the kingdom. The repentant criminal took the opportunities he had left to refuse to join the other in slandering Yeshua, to inform the other crook of the true justice of the situation,

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<sup>2</sup> John speaks of the “sin not unto death” (1John 5:16), and Paul speaks of the sin that he commits, in which his mind is not submitted to the sin, but the circumstances of the flesh cause sin, (Rom. 7:18-25).

and to ask Yeshua to remember him in His kingdom. Obviously, the repentant criminal also had some knowledge of Yeshua's teaching and the Spirit of Yahweh fit the pieces together for him enabling him to see a clear choice concerning Messiah.

Also there is no assurance of salvation in a state of transgression (cf. Ps. 51:12; 1John 2:3-4; John 14:21; 15:10). This is because transgression is the opposite of faithfulness (πιστις) or the opposite of committing to Yeshua (πιστεύων εἰς αὐτόν, John 3:16).

2:4.3 The term μετάνοια in BDAG is “*repentance, turning about, conversion*” (pg. 640, 3rd ed.). It corresponds to a Hebrew technical term תְּשׁוּבָה (*teshuvah*) in the time of Yeshua, which means a state of “turning” from sin, particularly transgression and iniquity, and “turning” toward Yahweh by keeping his commandments. The usage of μετάνοια underwent a change between the time of the LXX and the first century. In the LXX μετάνοια is used much more for the Hebrew verb נָחַם than שׁוּב, and the verb ἐπιστρέφω is used for the latter. The Greek LXX was first translated from Hebrew in the 3rd century B.C. Later on, however:

In the extant fragments of later Greek translations of the OT there are clear traces of a complete equation of μετανοέω and שׁוּב. In 6 cases where שׁוּב means “to convert” in the religious sense Σ translates it by μετανοέω, Is. 31:6; 55:7; Jer. 18:8; Ez. 33:12; Hos. 11:5; Job (LXX always has ἐπιστρέφομαι or ἀποστρέφω). The same is true of 'A (Σ?) at Ps. 7:12 and E' Hos. 7:10. [Also] The OT apocrypha and pseudepigrapha give evidence of the break-through for which the way was prepared in the OT. The predominant sense of μετανοέω is now “to convert” and of μετάνοια “conversion.” Sir. 48:15 has μετανοέω for שׁוּב; ...But the fact that the Gk. translator uses both terms for שׁוּב with no recognizable distinction shows clearly what meaning he attaches to μετανοέω. (TDNT, pg. 990-991f, vol. IV).

The etymology μετάνοια “change of mind”, cited in many Lexicons is a typical case of abused etymology, and is often employed by gnostics to reduce the meaning of repentance to purely something that begins and ends in the mind. For example, the term “understanding” does not mean *stand under*. And the phrase “mind the store”, would be misleading if we went by the usual etymology<sup>3</sup>, and thought that someone only meant us to *remember* a particular store we'd been to. It really means “take care of the store”. To put μετάνοια into equivalent terms, we have “mind after” (as μετά may

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<sup>3</sup> mid-14c., “to remember,” also “to remind,” from the noun; sense of “object to, dislike” is from c.1600. Meaning “to take care of, look after” is from 1690s. Related: *Minded; minding* (<http://www.etymonline.com>).

mean “after”), or in Greek order “after-mind” (BDAG, pg. 637). To this we can say that תשובה (*teshuvah*) is the turning from sin that goes along with a decision to turn from sin, or that comes “after” a decision of the mind.<sup>4</sup>

Though, it is possible to think of μετάνοια this way, regardless of its etymology, it was synonymous with תשובה, and the verb μετανοέω to שׁוּב. The usages of μετάνοια and μετανόεω show that repentance is not complete without deeds (cf. Rev. 2:5; 2:21-22; 3:2-3; 2Cor. 12:21; Acts 26:20). Luke 15:7, “joy shall be in heaven over one sinner repenting, more than over ninety and nine righteous persons, which need no repentance”. Repenting changes one’s status from that of “sinner” (i.e. transgressor) to “righteous” (one who is not rebelling against the commandments). See also Luke 5:32; 3:8; and Mat. 3:8. Repentance is not valid without worthy fruits. See also Rev. 16:11, and especially Rev. 9:20-21, and compare with Gal. 5:19-21.

The reason this is so important is that the scriptural concept of repentance is תשובה. It is turning away from transgression, and not just believing. It is not just having a change of mind about facts concerning Yeshua or promises concerning Yeshua. True repentance involves a complete commitment to Messiah expressed in actual turning away from transgression (Gal. 5:19-21). The reason that some lexicons and fundamentalist preachers are so eager to point out the etymological derivation of μετάνοια is that they reject the scriptural concept, which is the actual meaning of the word. Etymology may only give a clue to the meaning of a word, and sometimes is misleading in that regard, and is only a last resort if usage fails to give the sense. The usages in Revelation show with perfect clarity that actual turning away from sin is required.

Repentance denier Lewis Sperry Chafer writes, “It is clear that the New Testament does not impose repentance upon the unsaved as a condition of salvation” (pg. 376, vol. 3, *Systematic Theology*). Such deceptive theology as Chafer’s is defended

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<sup>4</sup> The separation of true intent, or true disposition of mind from the action expected to result, is actually a dichotomy created by gnostic philosophy separating the “spiritual” from the “material”. If someone truly determines to turn from sin, then he will turn from Sin. If the determining in the mind does not result in actually taking the opportunity in the physical world to turn from transgression, then we have to say that a true decision was not made, or that the person, for some reason, changed their mind and decided not to repent. In both these cases the so called decision was not repentance, because in one case it was insincere, and the other case it was not completed with the expected action. Scripture does not concern itself with a dichotomy between mental decision and resulting action. This is evident in the concept of “hearing”. In Hebrew, to “hear” a matter is to agree with it, and to take the expected action concomitant with the hearing. It may be useful to have a taxonomy of distinguishing mental decision from resulting action, but to divide one from the other, and say repentance does not mean the one, but only the mental part is more than taxonomy. It is rather a foreign philosophy trying to impose itself on the scriptural concept of repentance.

with all vigor and appearance of “orthodoxy”, however, it is a false gospel leading to many false “conversions.” Chafer then demands that repentance only means a change of mind and that it is equivalent to “believing”. However, we saw in the last chapter that the translations “faith” and “believe” are incorrect. The noun πίστις and verb πιστεύω mean “commitment” (BDAG, def. 1a), and “commit” (BDAG, def. 2) respectively, in agreement with the Hebrew sense “give support to” or “make support on”. Messiah is the one we must give support to and make our support on. Obviously, then, the support includes turning from sin, because if one does not turn from sin, then one is not supporting, or giving support to Messiah, and neither can he support the one who will not turn from transgression.

Repentance is the negative side of faithfulness or commitment to Messiah. Whereas faithfulness tends to focus on the positive doing of right, repentance focuses on the negative turning away from sin. Faithfulness and repentance really go together, and are synonymous once we have realized that πίστις means “faithfulness”. The Lexicon also gives “commitment” in the first definition. They are two ways of expressing the same thing. John avoids the word, probably because the gnostics, like many today, corrupted the term by appealing to a faulty etymological theory, “change of mind”, and said that repentance had nothing to do with turning away from actual sins. John regularly expresses the condition of salvation as the need to “commit to Yeshua” (πιστεύων εἰς), or in a Hebrew sense, “give support to” (הֶאֱמִין).

2:4.4 The Hebrew word שׁוּב (shuv) does not mean always “return” in the sense of going back to a starting point. It’s first meaning is “turn back”<sup>5</sup>; one who has never been in Yahweh’s covenant may “turn back” from sin, and enjoy the covenant blessings. And the noun תְּשׁוּבָה derived does not mean someone that is returning to Yahweh. It just means “turning back” from sin. The idea is that the transgressor is always going deeper into sin, so that turning back involves retracement of steps. However, an illustrative interpretation of תְּשׁוּבָה using “return”, can be based on Ephraim becoming the “fulness of the nations” (Gen. 48:19), and “not my people” (Hos. 1:9-10; Rom 9:25). Using that rubric the non-Jew who commits to Messiah is Israel reinstated and returned to Yahweh.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> See BDB, “vb. **turn back, return**...1. turn back”

<sup>6</sup> This paragraph was motivated by an article by Tim Hegg (a popular Messianic Jewish teacher), wherein he creatively argued the sense of “return” in an attempt to support the doctrine of election in eternity past. Under the heading, “What

2:4.5 “The kindness of the Almighty is leading [people] to repentance”. Yahweh *leads* people to repentance. He shows the way, and enables the one led to see the road, but “to lead” does not mean to pull or compel. He leads by “kindness”. Kindness means enabling them to see, so that they may follow. Kindness means unlocking the door to life, so that the sinner may forsake their sin “and open the door” to dine with Yeshua (Rev. 3:20). Yahweh “calls” the sinner. “Many are called, but few are chosen” (Mat. 22:14). A certain man was called to Yeshua’s wedding banquet, but he did not put on the garment of repentance. He was enabled to do this, but he did not do it, and he was cast out of the kingdom (Mt. 22:9-13).

The scriptural concept of repentance is often treated as solely contingent on divine fate.<sup>7</sup> Since repentance is doing or working righteousness instead of sin, the call for repentance is accused of being salvation by works<sup>8</sup>. To escape this charge, divine fate is held responsible for repentance rather than human cooperation with Yahweh’s

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*is Repentance?”* Hegg writes, “Only those who are already God’s redeemed can ‘return’ to the place of redemption...are those who God has sovereignly chosen”. Mr. Hegg does not just mean that the remnant of Israel was collectively chosen and that individual’s are included if they repent. He believes in individual predestination as well. He continues, “He therefore grants repentance...repentance is God’s gift...not something the individual musters up himself” (pg. 5-8, ForgivenessTRNL.pdf). Such teaching is heresy, because it makes God responsible for sin, and it causes the weak to trust the false god of fate (eternal security) instead of repenting of their transgressions. Ezekiel 14:3 speaks of Israelites that “set up their idols in their heart”, which is called a “stumblingblock of their iniquity”. This prophecy is fulfilled by Calvinism. Idolatry is not just a manmade physical image that distorts the image of the true Almighty. Any false philosophy in the heart can also distort the true image of Yahweh. The Calvinistic doctrines of fate, the five points called “TULIP” create a false philosophical image of God, over which Israel stumbles into iniquity because they are assured that “elect” transgressors are saved in their transgression. “Thus, saith my Lord Yahweh, ‘repent, and turn from your idols; and turn away your faces from all your abominations’” (Ezek. 14:6). TULIP is truly an abomination, every point of it, and because of their unjust view of Yahweh, they in turn are unjust to others.

<sup>7</sup> i.e. predestination from eternity past.

<sup>8</sup> Those who make this charge defend it with various mistranslations and misconceptions, all of which would be premature to go into too much detail here, other than to deal with the principle proof text. Briefly in Ephesians 2:8-9, it says, “For by **grace ye are being made to be saved** (through faithfulness), and **that** not of yourselves; from the Almighty *it is* a gift; not from works, so that none should boast”. Paul includes the condition of repentance: “through faithfulness” (διὰ πίστεως), and says “and this not of yourselves” (καὶ τοῦτο οὐκ ἐξ ὑμῶν), which refers back to the **first underlined phrase** and not to “through faithfulness”. The demonstrative pronoun (τοῦτο) “this” is neuter and refers to the first phrase. “Faithfulness” (πίστεως) is feminine, and does not agree with the gender of the pronoun τοῦτο. Normally, the gender of the demonstrative pronoun in Greek or Hebrew agrees with the noun it refers to. So “this” does not point to “faithfulness” (πίστεως). The Greek neuter is used to refer to a phrase of mixed gender, which is exactly what the first phrase is. So the words “and that not of yourselves” point back to “by grace ye are being made to be saved”. Further, the words “gift” and “not from works” refer to the **first phrase** also, since both are dependent on “**this**”. The first phrase speaks of “being made to be saved” (perfect, passive, participle, masculine) cojoined with the word “grace” (feminine). When something is passive, it also means the action is being done to the subject. Paul is speaking of Messiah’s payment of the penalty of sin, and passive aspects of deliverance from sin due to the work of the Spirit. This is what is not by works. Active repentance, however, is working, and is synonymous with “through faithfulness”. So Paul is not denying the responsibility to turn from sin. He does not say that all parts of salvation are “without works”. He also says, “work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, because the Almighty is working in you also—to will and to work for *his* good pleasure” (Phil. 2:12b-13). What Paul is saying is that even though Yahweh works in us, our cooperation is imperative. Nowhere does Paul say that all of salvation is without works. This would in fact contradict Messiah’s teaching in Mat. 10:17-21, and Paul in Rom. 2:7.

faithfulness. Or the repentance may be redefined to simply mean a “change of mind” about Christ. And to keep this from being a human work, the “mind change” is also taught to be caused by divine fate. A belief in fate, however, makes Yahweh responsible for sin and repentance or a lack of it. Such a view does not glorify Him, but rather glorifies the false god of fate. These views of repentance keep men from realizing that the outcome is determined by their own decision to turn from sin and forsake it. When these views of repentance are grafted on to the good news, then the danger arises that one may trust in divine fate, and further may fail to turn away from sin.

It is trust in this doctrine of fate that leads to trust in once saved always saved<sup>9</sup>. Trust in these doctrines is not a true decision to repent or commit oneself to Messiah.<sup>10</sup> They are not the true good news, and no one is saved by trusting in them. Yet, many treat the doctrine of fate as essential to salvation.

True salvation depends on a real decision to repent, and a real commitment to Yeshua. From the moment one begins to truly repent and truly commit to Him, then His “faithfulness”<sup>11</sup> on the cross becomes effective. He forgives our transgression, and his resurrection life becomes effective to regenerate us as we accept his changes in our life. The way we know if we are in repentance and committed to Messiah is not through those false doctrines of election, but we know we know him if we love him and keep his

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<sup>9</sup> Along with doctrines of individual predestination, reprobation, irresistible calling, and unilateral regeneration. The correctives to these I will continue to give as we go through Romans. Briefly though, scriptural election refers to the corporate election of remnant Israel and not individual election. Yahweh’s calling can be resisted if the person does not want to repent, i.e. there is no such thing as effective calling in which Yahweh makes the one called accept it. Finally, true regeneration is not pre-conversion. True regeneration is cooperative, and take place as the faithful live a life of repentance choosing to accept divine aid in repenting.

<sup>10</sup> I am aware of the fact that there are some who believe these doctrines, but also profess to believe in the real need to repent, and the real need to be committed to Messiah, and who really know his forgiveness is not effective without it, and that some of these show real fruit of walking in obedience. We must understand that they may be saved in spite of their errant understanding, however those doctrines are heresy, and we must never allow them to be taught, because to the degree they are taught, a false gospel is being promoted. Further, I said they may be saved in spite of it, but if when shown their error, and the lack of integrity in their interpretation, if they turn around and cast us out, or persecute us for teaching the truth, then it is evident that their trust is really in those doctrines, and they have shown by their fruit that they are not really born of Yahweh, and the what spirituality they have is really the natural ability that is common to all men and is not the result of the resurrection life.

<sup>11</sup> More completely in Eph. 2:8-9 “through faithfulness” I take also to refer to Messiah’s faithfulness; still the neuter “this” does not refer to this phrase. The phrase is parenthetical and indicates the condition under which we receive grace or loving kindness straight from the Father as a result of “faithfulness”. Messiah’s faithfulness is the instrument of grace, but the grace itself is being viewed as the actual result, which is salvation from sin. The two ideas of our faithfulness and His faithfulness are conflated by Paul in Eph. 2:8 as conditions that cause salvation, one condition without our works, and the other with works. Paul simply subordinates the phrase in Eph. 2:8, and does not bother to parse out the “in not working” and “in working” aspects. This will be explained more in Romans 4:1-5. In this text “through faithfulness” is subordinated as a condition of the grace, (i.e. repentance and the work of the cross together), and the “by grace you are being made to be saved” is the actual love of the Father to us because of Messiah’s faithfulness and our faithful response (Ex. 20:6; John 14:21; 15:10; 1John 2:2-4).

commandments (1John 2:3-3; John 14:21; 15:10), and know we abide in him if we keep His word (John 15:1-9).

<p><sup>5</sup>But according to your stubbornness<sub>1</sub> and unrepentant heart you are treasuring wrath for yourself in <i>the</i> day of wrath and revelation of <i>the</i> righteous judgment of the Almighty,</p>	<p>ה'אֵל בְּפִי הִקְשׁוּתְךָ וּלְבַבְךָ בְּלִי תְשׁוּבָה, אֶתָּה צִבֵּר לְעֵצְמְךָ חֲרוֹן לַיּוֹם חֲרוֹן וְהִתְגַּלּוֹת מִשְׁפֵּט צֶדֶק הָאֱלֹהִים:</p>
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§2:5.1 People are stubborn due to willful causes and/or circumstantial causes like indoctrination or tradition. The word “stubborn” does not say which, but only refers to the hard resistance of people toward the truth. Likewise, “unrepentant” from the words *not turning* (בְּלִי תְשׁוּבָה) refers to the fact of not being turned to the truth, and does not connote the reasons why.

2:5.2 The difficulty with a lot of religious words, of negative connotation, that are used to point out sin, is that their users are indoctrinated in Augustinian/Calvinistic theology. They do not know how to use any of the words dispassionately. The words are always used to imply maximum or total fault. Such evangelists use words like “unrepentance” or “stubborn” in a weaponized manner. This comes out in much of their preaching. The object is always to blame the other guy at a conscious level, whether or not such blame is warranted. It is undoubtedly true that the words do apply in many cases of willful sin, but it takes a lot more discernment than a bankrupt theological system to tell who is the rebel and who is merely deceived.

Religious people have been misusing the words for so long that they have forced the words into a subculture, often criticized by the entertainment media, which only reinforces the “definition”.

<p><sup>6</sup>“who will reward to each according to his deeds.”<sup>a</sup></p>	<p>וְאֵשֶׁר “יִשְׁלַם” לְאִישׁ כְּמַעֲשָׂהוּ<sup>ב</sup>:</p>
<p>6a = Psalm 62:12.</p>	<p>ו'א MT תְּשַׁלֵּם   ב Ps. 62:12:</p>

§2:6.1 Ps. 62:12, “And with you Yahweh is loving kindness; for you will reward to each according to his work”. David exhorts men not to trust in riches (Ps. 62:10), because “power *belongeth* to Elohim” (62:11). He means if we trust in Yahweh, then He has the power to mercifully reward us later (62:12). David most strongly speaks of “reward” in a positive sense in the circumstance of חֲסָד (Chased), = “loving kindness” or “mercy”, and to this Paul agrees in vs. 7, but in vs. 8 Paul also uses it to illustrate the “reward” of the wicked.

Mercy is shown in judgment to those loving Yahweh and keeping his commandments (Exo. 20:6), yet we are to be rewarded for our good deeds, while in mercy He forgives our sin. The justice of mercy allows the balances to balance for the righteous, but for the wicked: “the sons of men are vapor—as false *weight* in the balances goes up—they are lighter than vapor altogether” (Ps. 62:9).

2:6.2 Paul agrees with the main Jewish thesis that covenant faithfulness is a necessary condition for receiving mercy, and being rewarded in the age to come. He would only part ways with this if Messiah Yeshua’s faithfulness is excluded, or if what is regarded as covenant obligation is reduced to rabbinic rules or in principle anything that secures one’s place in the remnant of Israel that is contrary to abiding “faithfulness”; Paul did not regard avoidance of transgression or fulfillment of covenant obligations as too hard, because he quotes from Deut. 30:11-15 in Romans 10:6-8. This is the essence of faithfulness.

2:6.3 Dunn tries to drive a wedge between the obligation to covenant faithfulness understood by first century Jews and the ‘faith’ of “the first Christians”. (*Word Biblical Commentary*, Romans, pg. 85). He suggests that for the Christian “‘work’ ” was redefined as merely “trusting in God through Jesus Christ”. But we shall see that Dunn is wrong to drive a contrast, or “antithesis” between faithfulness to the covenant and trust in Messiah Yeshua. It was shown in the last chapter that we must be “committing” (Rom. 1:16), and not just ‘believing’ or ‘trusting’ in Yeshua. It is exactly this error that has led Christendom astray. There is no “antithesis” between “grace” and “judgment” (to use Dunn’s words) because the Psalmist begins with, “And with you Yahweh is loving kindness” (Ps. 62:12a). This can only mean that Yahweh shows mercy to those who have done good works, and proves that mercy—loving kindness is not opposed to a condition of good works in faithfulness, and the same principle is found in the ten commandments, “shewing mercy unto thousands, to the ones loving me and keeping my commandments” (Exodus 20:6). See also John 14:21; 15:10; 1John 2:3-4.

<p><sup>7</sup>indeed, to those who, by <sup>a</sup>patient endurance;<sup>a</sup> in good work—glory and honor and immortality, <i>are seeking—he will reward</i> <sub>1</sub>eternal life<sub>1</sub>;</p>	<p>אָמְנָם   לְאֵלֶּהָ לְפִי סְבִלַת נְאֻמָּו; בְּפַעֲלָהּ טוֹבָה—אֶת־תְּפָאֶרֶת וְאֶת־כְּבוֹד וְאֶת־אֱלֻמוֹת הֵם מְבַקְשִׁים, הִנֵּא יִשְׁלַם אֶת־חַיֵּי עוֹלָם<sup>8</sup>;</p>
<p><sup>7</sup> a-a = ὑπομονήν = steadfast perseverance.</p>	

§2:7.1 “Eternal life” (עוֹלָם חַיֵּי) is referred to in Daniel 12:2. This text clearly teaches that faithfulness as expressed in “good work” is needed to appropriate “eternal life”. The antinomians rationalize, “in vv. 7 and 13 the cases are hypothetical” (C.I. Scofield—a famous American dispensationalist). However, Paul does not say the case is just hypothetical for the sake of argument. The verb “who will reward” is taken from vs. 6, a future indicative verb in Greek, and also quoted from Psalm 62:12, תִּשְׁלַם = *you will reward*. It certainly isn’t hypothetical there.

2:7.2 Also to be considered is Yeshua’s answer to the rich ruler (Luke 18:18) and Paul’s exhortation to Timothy to “keep hold on eternal life” (1Tim. 6:12) and then to the rich: “That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to share— laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may keep hold on eternal life” (1Tim. 6:19). Paul has given the rich here precisely the same answer that Yeshua gave to the rich man.

2:7.3 The antinomians place a stumbling block before the teaching that it is necessary follow Yeshua (not just believe) in order to appropriate eternal life. They say that the standard of perfection must be reached under such a regime. By exaggerating Yahweh’s requirements to be faithful they reject any requirements altogether.<sup>12</sup> The assumption that He required perfection for those who loved and obeyed him is simply a lie—a lie exposed of all places, in the ten commandments themselves, “And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments” (Exodus 20:6). Is this just another theoretical statement, another hypothetical text, or did Yahweh really mean what He said by “showing mercy”?

<sup>12</sup> When a man is thrown a life ring, he is required to hold on to it. When a man is in a life boat he is required to stay in the boat. By staying in the boat, the man seeks life. Real life is somewhat more complex, and to better the analogy we may say that the man is seeing hallucinations of life outside the boat, and false reasonings as to why he’d stand a better chance of being saved outside the lifeboat, or false doctrine that he is chosen to be saved, and is “elect” and cannot be lost outside the boat, so we might as well enjoy a swim in the dangerous deep. Those who argue that perfection is necessary tell the man that staying in the boat is legalism, and that Christ stayed in the boat for him, so that he need not stay in the boat. This is vain and deceptive reasoning, and I will deal with it when we come to the texts that are twisted to make this point.

2:7.4 Then the antinomians well tell that if salvation is contingent on good works that one is trying to “earn” salvation. This is like telling a criminal, who was pardoned on the contingency of repentance, this his repentance earns the pardon in the first place. This is complete nonsense. The pardon was the judge righteously being merciful. The ex-criminal continues in that mercy by walking uprightly, understanding perfectly well that his good deeds don’t undo the effect of his past crimes.

2:7.5 When the fatalists argue with the Arminians, the Arminians say that the faithful make a conscious and free choice to turn from sin and toward Yeshua, but the fatalists argue that their view is essential to salvation:

In the final analysis, the difference between two views of election [conditional vs. eternity past] can be seen in the way they answer a simple question, “What makes people differ?” If our answer is that it is based on sovereign election, then [it] is based on *grace alone*. If we answer that the difference between [the saved or lost] is because of a disposition to believe or not believe, then salvation depends on a combination of grace plus human ability. (pg. 678, *Systematic Theology*, Wayne Grudem).

But the teaching of “grace alone” appears nowhere in the Scripture. Romans 2:7 certainly does not teach it. Nor did Yeshua, because he did find a difference between the sheep and the goats (cf. Mt. 25:35-46). So then, it is necessary to continue in the good work that Yahweh has called us to do.

<p><sup>8</sup>yet to those <i>acting</i> from selfish ambition, and disobeying the truth, (that is, being persuaded to injustice): wrath and anger,</p>	<p>הָאֵד לְאֱלֹהִים מֵאַנְכִי אֲמִבִּיצִיה וְסוֹרְרִים אֶת־ הָאֲמֶת (דְּהִינּוּ נִפְתִּים אֶל־הַעוֹלָה) רְגִז וְחִמָּה:</p>
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§2:8 “Selfish ambition” means pursuing one’s goals by corrupt or unjust means. The word was used for “electioneering or intriguing for office”, i.e. for corrupt politicians who sell their vote for money, and use money to buy votes, or who make promises they cannot keep in order to gain a position of power.

<p><sup>9</sup>tribulation and distress—upon every soul of man which is producing evil, <i>upon the soul of Jew</i> firstly besides also <i>the soul of Greek</i>, <sup>10</sup>but glory and honor and peace to everyone that is working good, to <i>the Jew</i> firstly besides also to <i>the Greek</i>. <sup>11</sup>For there is no partiality with the Almighty.</p>	<p>ט צָרָה וְצוֹקָה עַל כָּל־נֶפֶשׁ אָדָם הַפֹּעֵל אֶת־הָרַע עַל־נֶפֶשׁ יְהוּדִי בְּרֵאשִׁיטָה כְּמוֹ־כֵן נֶפֶשׁ יוֹנִי: אֵד כְּבוֹד וְיָקָר וְשָׁלוֹם לְכָל־הַפֹּעֵל אֶת־הַטּוֹב, לְיְהוּדִי בְּרֵאשִׁיטָה כְּמוֹ־כֵן גַּם לְיוֹנִי: כִּי אֵין מִשׂוֹא פָנִים עִם־הָאֱלֹהִים:</p>
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§2:10 Compare this with vs. 7.

<sup>12</sup> For as many as sinneth lawlessly, also as lawless will perish;	כִּי כָרְבִים אֲשֶׁר כְּפֹקְרִים חָטְאוּ גַם כְּפֹקְרִים יִאֲבְדוּ
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§2:12.1 The Greek *ἀνομος* means, “lawless”<sup>13</sup> (BDAG, 3rd, def. 1), and the adverb *ἀνόμως* means “lawlessly” (BDAG, 3rd, def. 1). Thayer also says in Greek writers it was synonymous with “*unjustly, wickedly*” (pg. 49). In a neutral sense the word may denote, “without custom” (as in 1Cor. 9:21), but here it does not. It suggests iniquity, and any sense of “without law” merely means the lawless do not regard the law in their conscience as valid. The *-ως* ending makes the word an adverb. This is the same as adding the suffix “ly” or prefixing the word “as” to “lawless”. The idea is that the wicked sinneth lawlessly, i.e. iniquitously, with a high hand. Paul is talking about serious willful transgression. Then he says, “also as lawless will perish”. This does not mean that they will not be externally judged by the Torah. It describes that they will still perish “as lawless”, which is to say not holding to being lawful in their conscience. Picture a convicted war criminal insisting on his innocence despite heinous crimes. Such a one is “lawless” in the conscience, and perishes that way, never admitting to the validity of the law.

Also, “lawless” is a category label put on the transgressors, giving the reason that they will perish, and the state of mind in which they will perish.

<sup>12</sup> also as many as that sinneth <sup>a</sup> according to habit <sup>a</sup> , through Torah will be judged;	גַּם כָּרְבִים שֶׁחָטְאוּ בְּכֹחַ הַתּוֹרָה יִשְׁפְּטוּ:
12a-a = by force of habit, <i>lit.</i> in norm.	יב'א-א = בְּנוֹרְמָה:

2:12.3 In the second half of his statement, Paul covers everyone else who sins in circumstance or in ignorance, which is described as the *nomos* that is a social ‘habit’. The *nomos* is the status quo, which is regarded as proper by society, which nonetheless is sin. In Romans 7:21, Paul says, “I am finding then the *norm*, when I am desiring to do good, that evil is being present”, or “But I find another *norm* in my members, warring against the *norm* of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the *norm* of sin which is in my members” (Rom. 7:23). This kind of sin is not lawlessness because the

<sup>13</sup> Literally, *ἀνομος* = *anormal*, and *ἀνόμως* = *anormally, as anormal*. It denotes that which is outside or against the norm, and that which has the manner of being outside or against the norm. The *norm* is thought of by Greeks as the societal status quo. Anything that can show that it is the status quo for behaviour, a belief, or is thought of as the norm by a majority vote or consensus can be *nomos*. From an individual perspective any particular norm can be accepted or rejected, disparaged or embraced.

mind is not submitted to do transgression. The *nomos* of the sin nature controls our physical circumstances through the flesh. It is embedded in the degenerate genetic code, and also acquired epigenetics. While the mind can be repented of such habits as drinking a little too much, eating junk, swearing, snapping at our family, or getting angry, or excessive self doubt, or overconfidence in oneself, or tolerance of images in one's house, or lustful habits, and so on, they are imbedded in the flesh and take more than just cessation of transgression to overcome. They are *habits* that have become social *norms* in the fallen world.

Still further, “in norm sinneth” ἐν νόμῳ ἡμαρτον refers to social sin forced on us by exilic circumstances, by rules and structures customarily imposed on us by our government or family. We may know they are wrong but be trapped, or we may be so enculturated into the social norm that we are totally ignorant that it is against the Torah. Such sin is not transgression or personal rebellion, but it is sin just the same, and it will all be brought into judgment under the divine Norm (Torah).

Also “in norm sinneth” can refer to what one thinks is justified by divine sanction, but is merely tradition. Since Yahweh said not to add to his Torah (Deut. 12:32 [13:1]), rabbinic tradition can be considered the ethnical norm of Judaism, but since this norm denies Messiah nullifies a good deal of Torah, and replaces it with manmade norms, it is a social status quo such that even Jews “in *the* norm sinneth”<sup>14</sup>. It may be that Paul would have to explain this was what he meant to a Judean Jew who spoke poor Greek, in order to make it clear that he was not actually attacking the divine Law. The Jewish interlocutor might not agree, though, because the ethnical status quo, or the local *minhag* was typically thought to have divine sanction.

We may even think of such sins as committed “in law”, that is, with an attitude supportive of the law, where the person is mentally, “in law”, that is not lawless, but failing to do what is required through the habit of the flesh, or because he or she is not aware that the societal norm is contrary to Torah. Lawlessness is an attitude toward the law, and is more than just merely breaking the law without the attitude. Notice that Paul omits restating “will perish” as he did with the lawless: he does not say “will

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<sup>14</sup> Often Greek and Hebrew omit the definite article before a noun when preceded by a preposition, but the noun is still definite, even without the article (cf. Wallace, pg. 247). This is something that sounds odd in English, or like uneducated jungle talk, “Tarazan go get food”, but it is natural in both Hebrew and Greek to omit “the”. Also if the preposition ἐν is regarded as instrumental, then we may translate, “by norm sinneth” or “with norm sinneth”, but it is more likely locative, “within the norm sinneth”, because Paul is contrasting sin in one's social circumstances or human circumstance vs. transgression that deliberately steps outside the known rules.

perish”, but “through Torah will be judged”; to be judged by the Torah does not here mean to be “condemned” by the Torah. Paul does not use the word for “condemn” (κατάκριμα), but the word for judgement in the sense of ‘to decide’ κριθήσονται, from κρίνω<sup>15</sup>. Yahweh will decide all cases according to either mercy or according to penal justice on the sinner. It will be mercy for those walking in His faithfulness.

2.12.4 The antinomians have corrupted many a translation, and all explanations of Rom. 2:12 in order to get away from its plain meaning. First they drain the word ἀνόμως of its plain connotative adverbial meaning by translating it “without law”, especially in connection to the words “sinneth” and “will perish”. Then they use this to make the first clause refer only to Gentiles, whom they deem not “under law”. For extra measure the NAS, NET, ESV, and NIV translate the second clause “under” law even though the word “under” (ὑπὸ) isn’t represented in Greek.

The word *nomos* (νόμος), as pointed out before, stands for any kind of norm, status quo, or convention that has been adopted by a society. The *nomos* is, “that which is in habitual practice” (Liddell and Scott). *Nomos* in classical Greek literature often stands side by side with *ethos* (ἔθος) “habit”, and is used synonymously<sup>16</sup>. *Nomos* differs from *ethos* in that it implies an orderly causal link to the past that gives it a force, a compulsion, such that *nomos* would be “force of habit”, or habit due to the norms of the sin nature, whereas *ethos* would be a habit of personal choice or preference. The habits or animals called “instinct” might be classified as *nomos* if the Greek knew the circumstance of the genetic code which is rationally derived from the Creator. *Nomos* tends to have a rational and *orderly* origin, while *ethos* is more idiosyncratic. That is why *nomos* said to mean “order”, but in a rather broad sense. We can speak of the “New World Order”, which is nothing more than the international legitimization of sin and rebellion against Yahweh.

<p><sup>12</sup>also as many as that sinneth <sup>a</sup>according to habit<sup>a</sup>, through Torah will be judged;</p>	<p>בְּדָרֶךְ תּוֹרָה יִשְׁפֹּטוּ: לְפִי־בְכוּחַ הַרְגֵל, שְׁחָטְאוּ לְפִי־בְכוּחַ הַרְגֵל, בְּדָרֶךְ</p>
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12a-a = by force of habit.

How do we know that Paul speaks of “habit” in this text? First, if one is not “lawless” as the first half of the text describes sin, then one sins by habit, or circumstance. This is the first clue. Also, if we translate, “in Law sinneth”, then we are

<sup>15</sup> The word is used by the LXX in a positive sense, “For Yahweh will judge his people, and repent himself for his servants, when he seeth that their power is gone” (Deut. 32:36).

<sup>16</sup> See BDAG, 3rd edition, νόμος, pg. 677.

faced with unparsimonious logical choices. a) how can one sin “in law” if being “in law” is to be “lawful” or the avoiding of sin? b) Does “in law sinneth” mean one sin’s in spite of being in agreement with the law? that would be the same as the interpretation I have already described, “in *the* habit [norm] sinneth”, but by a path requiring one more assumption. c) or does “in law” mean “according to law”, but then do not the “lawless” of 12a already sin “according to the law”? This requires unparsimonious assumptions to explain why Paul’s categories overlap, or unparsimonious thinking that the “lawless” perish for reasons other than breaking the law. The dispensationalist will assume that the “lawless” merely means Gentiles neutrally “without law”, and that they perish because they do not ‘believe’ and for that reason only. d) Or does “in law” mean those people who are “in law” i.e. “under law”, namely just the Jews? Then it has to be explained why these are the only one’s to be judged by law. This is a moral double standard, and is contradicted in Roman’s 3:19<sup>17</sup> where “those in the law” means those delegated the responsibility of administering Torah, and in such a way that the whole world comes under divine sentence.

But if we take *anomos* equal to “lawless” in the first part of the verse, as it is normally used, and translate “in habit sinneth, through Torah will be judged” in the second part of the verse, then the logical problems disappear. Paul takes it for granted that the lawless who perish “as lawless” will be condemned by the Torah, but he also wants us to know that those who sin in the circumstance of the social norm, or fleshly norm will also still be judged by the Torah, though he does not say “perish”, because those who are faithful to Messiah, in spite of habit, will be shown mercy in judgement.

How does the Church want us to interpret vs. 12? The church wants to neutralize the term “lawless” in 12a to ‘without law’<sup>18</sup> and then apply it to the nations, suggesting that the nations are not to be subject to the Torah, and the the nations “will perish” not because they broke the Law, but because they did not have ‘faith’ or because they did not ‘believe in Jesus’ (which remember for them has nothing to do with actually

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<sup>17</sup> I deal with the unparsimonious attempts to dodge the plain meaning of Romans 3:19 later. “Parsimony” means agreement with the principle of Occam’s Razor. One should not multiply assumptions to maintain an explanation or theory of the presented reality that can be accurately explained in another way using fewer assumptions.

<sup>18</sup> A survey of the various forms of ἀνομία shows 26 occurrences in the NT, which are translated in Young’s Literal Translation as “lawless”, or a form near it, in all cases, except in Rom 2:12 (2x), 1Cor. 9:21 (4x), and 2Thess. 2:8 (1x). We may correct the translations in Rom. 2:12 and 2Thess. 2:8 leaving only the four cases in 1Cor. 9:21, where “nomos” takes on its native Greek sense again, “to those outside a norm, as outside a norm, not being outside the Almighty’s Norm, but in the Norm of Messiah, so that I may gain those outside the norm”. This is the only text where *anomos* is used in a neutral sense, as applying to norms about which the Torah says nothing good or bad. A survey of the 363 hits on ἀνομ\* in the LXX will show similar results. While I have not taken the time to collate them all, so far, I have yet to find even one neutral use “without law”.

showing one's commitment to Messiah by keeping His commandments). Further, they want us to believe that in 12b, Paul is addressing the Jews as those "under the law" who will be "judged by the Law". This dichotomy and double standard is not what Paul meant at all. The Church has multiplied assumptions quite needlessly to fit their theology (violating Occam's Razor) 1. ignored the usual sense of *anomos* = lawless, 2. assumed a dichotomy in the Torah itself (cf. vs. 14) and 3. Introduced a double standard into the practice of divine justice. Our solution does not rely on assumptions, but facts. 1. *Anomos* does mean lawless in normal usage. No assumption is needed for that, 2. Lawlessness is an attitude of disregard to the law. No one would dispute it. 3. The only interpretation that keeps us from assuming a double standard is "in nomos sinneth" = "in habit sinneth".

It is at this point that the unread, and uneducated in Greek literature might assume that Paul should put the same meaning on *nomos* every time he uses it. But a read of Martin Ostwald's book puts serious doubts to that assumption. Here is a choice section, where he sums up before wading through a multitude of examples.

The difficulty of analysing a concept such as νόμος into its constituent elements becomes more manifest as we now turn to its uses in religious contexts. For while it is true to say that the term may denote a ritual ordinance, that is, an injunction that something ought to be done, or a ritual practice, that is, a statement that something is actually done as a custom, or a belief, that is, a conviction that something exists or that it is right that something be done, it is always difficult and often impossible to determine in any given context which of these three notions its author had in mind. The reason for this is not far to seek. As we have seen time and again, the crucial point in νόμος is that it is something which, even when attacked and disparaged, is attacked and disparaged just because it is a generally accepted norm. It is, therefore, immaterial to the Greek way of thinking whether in any given context νόμος is a rule, a customary practice, or a belief; its characteristic is that it is something generally regarded and accepted as correct for a given group. (pg. 40, *Nomos and the Beginnings of the Athenian Democracy*, Martin Ostwald, Oxford).

A second use of νόμος consists in the application of the term to somewhat narrower norms of universal validity which form part of the general νόμος we have just discussed. When for example, the chorus in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* (1207) asks Cassandra whether she and Apollo produced any children νόμῳ, the addition of νόμῳ obviously cannot refer to a custom or a statute, but it signifies the Old Men's assumption that in the normal order of things the union of male and female will result in children. (ibid. pg. 22). In the lines immediately following, the comic point consists in a shift of the use of νόμος from the sense of customary practice (καλὸν νομίζεται τὸν πατέρα τοῖς ὄρνισιν ἄγειν καὶ δάκνειν) to that of statute (νόμος παλαιὸς ἐν ταῖς τῶν πελαργῶν κύρβειν). (ibid. note 2, pg. 22).

Ostwald is cited in the most important discussions of *nomos* including BDAG. It is this ambiguity of usage that allows Paul to speak a Torah message into an anti-semitic Gentile world, and to switch meanings between, *habit*, *norm*, and *law*. There is no doubt that Paul developed the usage of certain phrases, “the strength of sin is the habit/norm” (1Cor. 15:56), and that he pioneered usages such as “the habit of sin” (Rom. 7:25). Understanding Paul from the Greek language point of view was not a problem for speakers of Greek. Knowing what his innovative<sup>19</sup> usage meant was quickly made plain because Paul had personal contacts with those whom he wrote to, who did know what he meant. Without personal contact, a Greek reader would be able to figure out what Paul meant if he was respectful of Torah and had several of Paul’s letters. In the Greek mind, *nomos* was first “norm”, “habit”, “custom” in the sense of status quo or convention, and then “law” or “torah”; those likely to be confused would be those with limited knowledge of Greek (Palestinian Jews who spoke Hebrew or Aramaic) or post Pauline antinomians able to cast a philosophical interpretation over Paul, and introduce unparsimonious assumptions to their readers to habituate them to antinomian interpretive norms. The outlandish interpretations of gnostics prove that just about any plainly written text can be undermined by an unscientific and unspiritual approach, and of course they were the pioneers of Pauline misinterpretation. It may also be that Hellenistic Jews who opposed Paul sought to slander him by misrepresenting some of what he wrote in order to discredit him.

What every Greek had to ask himself when reading a phrase like “in norm sinneth, through norm will be judged”, is what “norm” was being talked about. The Greek familiar with the Torah would know right away which norm the world will be judged by, because Torah is the norm the world will be judged by. He knows this from the words used with the second occurrence of “norm”, but this does not mean that *nomos* means “torah” or “law” per se. *Nómos* just means some kind of norm. So then, the Greek thinks “in norm sinneth” (ἐν νόμῳ ἡμαρτον) means some kind of norm of sin that has seized the word, or a social status quo (norm) of habitual wrongdoing, something that might be equated to “law”, but is not a divine law, but merely the law of

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<sup>19</sup> Even the Greek philosophers like Plato and Aristotle discussed *nomos* extensively and developed their own understandings of its origin, and tried to convey Greek philosophical ideas using it. At the most, Paul can only be accused of being slightly odd upon the first introduction of his usage, and certainly no more odd than the other intellectual’s of his day in their usages of language. The problem in those days was that ready made terms for various complex concepts were not just laying around in an 800,000 word dictionary to be used. Writers were more likely to just use a more common term in their own special way. A good modern example of this is Peter L. Berger, *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion*, who uses *nomos* for the social status quo very extensively.

the jungle, the “law” of the fallen world. The last thing a Greek thinks that ὅσοι ἐν νόμῳ ἥμαρτον might mean is that “as many as in norm sinneth” means just the Jews, unless they are malicious and want to be antisemitic about it.<sup>20</sup> The educated Greek knows that the norm is a universal and flexible concept. The norm to the Greek is a flexible and relative concept that is defined purely by the status quo of the immediate subject. Walk up to any first century Greek and quote off one line from Paul, “as many as in norm sinneth, through norm will be judged”, and the first thing he will ask you is in what norm he sinneth, and what norm will be used to judge his sin.

Or in the phrase, “as many as sinneth a-normally, also as a-normal will perish”, then he might think of someone who deliberately steps outside society’s conventions of behaviour, and suffers the penalty because they are “anormal”. This is because Greek thinking about “law” was commonly relativistic and status quo oriented. And even if a Greek thought in absolute moral categories, he would understand the social contract definition of the norm. Only with knowledge of Torah does the term *anomia* in Paul take on the hard edge of “lawlessness”, but the general Greek sense that lawlessness is transgression against the accepted social norm never escapes the connotation of the Greek term. So first Paul teaches the Greek that Torah is the immutable Norm that stands over and judges all other norms, and then Paul does something the Rabbis would not suspect. He does not then reject the Greek use of *nomos* for other norms, rather he embraces it as useful to describe the norm of sin, the norm of condemnation, or the habit of sin, just by calling it the norm.

Nomos, in a sense, is the perfect parable for a lawless world. Paul was able to encapsulate the good news of the Messiah in the language of *nomos*, and then he who has eyes to see and ears to hear will hear, but the lawless who have no desire to repent and only wish to pervert and corrupt others are never hearing, and never seeing what Paul really meant. *Nomos* is like a Trojan horse that spreads like a virus among the lawless majority of the nations all too eager to say, see, “we are not ‘under law’ ”, and then at the right time the trap door opens, understanding flows forth, and those willing to repent, who were entrapped by the lawless finally understand.

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<sup>20</sup> Such twisting of Paul would become the norm over time as the anti-semitic gnostics multiplied. Then with the second Jewish revolt (AD 132-134) known as the Bar Kochba revolt, the Rabbis developed a doctrine that it was illegal for non-Jews to observe the Torah. At the same time the Romans made it illegal for Jews or non-Jews to observe Sabbath or circumcision. A sociological natural selection followed that pushed the antinomian gnostic interpretations of Paul forward, and weeded out those who would see it correctly.

<sup>13</sup> because not the hearers of Torah <i>will be</i> right ones before the Almighty, but <sup>a</sup> the doers of Torah will be <sup>b</sup> made righteous. <sup>b</sup>	”כִּי לֹא שָׁמְעֵי הַתּוֹרָה יִהְיוּ צְדִיקִים לְפָנַי הָאֱלֹהִים, אֲלָא עֹשֵׂי הַתּוֹרָה בְּיוֹצְדִקוֹ:
13 a Syriac: if not   b-b <i>or</i> given righteousness, justified, vindicated.	יגא = אם לא   ב = יִנְתְּנוּ צְדָקָה:

§2:13.1 This remarkable statement is regarded as only a theoretical principle by the antinomians. Chafer says, “This is to state an inherent principle of the law...the same principle is a warning to all who attempt, or even contemplate, the keeping of the law” (vol. 4, pg. 239, *Systematic Theology*). C.I. Scofield had the same opinion. This idea, that the statement is only an unattainable theory for the sake of argument is refuted in James 2:24, “by works a man is justified”;<sup>21</sup> now someone may warn us of a contradiction with Romans 3:20. Yes, there is a contradiction, but it is not to be solved by reducing this text to a theoretical statement. The solution is in the different applications of *δικαιόω* (*justifico*).

In English the word “justify”, by constant theological misteaching has been redefined from his ancient meanings, to two popular meanings, “to prove right” and “to straighten out a margin”, and two theological meanings that Churches argue over, “to declare righteous” (Protestant) and “to make righteous” (Catholic).

<sup>13</sup> because not the hearers of Torah <i>will be</i> right ones before the Almighty, but <sup>a</sup> the doers of Torah will be <sup>b</sup> made righteous. <sup>b</sup>	”כִּי לֹא שָׁמְעֵי הַתּוֹרָה יִהְיוּ צְדִיקִים לְפָנַי הָאֱלֹהִים, אֲלָא עֹשֵׂי הַתּוֹרָה בְּיוֹצְדִקוֹ:
13 a Syriac: if not   b-b <i>or</i> given righteousness, justified, vindicated.	יגא = אם לא   ב = יִנְתְּנוּ צְדָקָה:

2.13.2 Only the sense “to prove right” is understood by unindoctrinated English reader. This sense is correct for one interpretation of Rom. 2:13. The doers of Torah “will be justified/vindicated” in the eschaton (cf. note 13b-b). The eschaton is the age to come. In that day, we will be perfectly righteous, and will not be brought to trial anew because we will be vindicated by the righteousness that Yahweh has given us. The past will not be considered for those committed to Yeshua, because the penalty for the sins of the past (those belonging to this age) will have been paid. Having been given righteousness in the Age to Come, therefore, we will be proved right within the scope of that Age.

<sup>21</sup> And it is also refuted by Paul in Rom 10:6-8 where he quotes from Deut. 30:11-15, “For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off...but the word is...in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.” Paul calls this the word of “faithfulness”.

This interpretation is secured by other texts. The Torah is to be written on the heart in the age to come (Jer. 31:31-34), and the promise to Israel after the exile and return, and restoration of the kingdom, is that Yahweh will circumcise our hearts to obey him (Deut. 30:6). Paul does use the future tense “will be” of *δικαιόω*. So he is speaking of the future. In vs. 12, writing “will be judged”, he speaks of the future, and in vs. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11, he speaks of the future. The critical point with Paul is that the wicked will not have their penalty of sin paid, and thus will not be given the completed gift of righteousness in the age to come, but we who commit to Messiah, on the other hand will have our penalty paid, and therefore will be completed in righteousness, in which we will be justified (proved right). This justification does not pertain to our past sins. It is only a vindication of the righteousness that we shall be given, which in fact is Yahweh’s righteousness (cf. Jer. 23:6). The justification or vindication in the future will be an external recognition of then being proved right.

<sup>13</sup> because not the hearers of Torah <i>will be</i> right ones before the Almighty, but <sup>a</sup> the doers of Torah will be <sup>b</sup> made righteous. <sup>b</sup>	”כִּי לֹא שָׁמְעֵי הַתּוֹרָה יִהְיוּ צְדִיקִים לְפָנָי הָאֱלֹהִים, אֲלָא עֹשֵׂי הַתּוֹרָה יִוְצְדְּקוּ:
13 a Syriac: if not   b-b <i>or</i> given righteousness, justified, vindicated.	יג'א = א'ם לא   ב = י'נְתַנּוּ צְדָקָה:

2.13.3 The word *δικαιόω*, “be righteous”, does not just have external application. The reader should keep in mind that I am trying to communicate to both the unscholarly mind and the scholar, so at the risk of insulting the scholars, I have to illustrate what is meant in a less than formal way. I start by using the English word “justify” in the sense of making the margin of text straight and even. It means to straighten something out. So if a person is “justified” then he is being straightened out. From this idea comes the sense of “make righteous”. It is an internal justification of the faults of a person, i.e. straightening out. This sense is undeniably used by James, “by works is being made right a man” (James 2:24). He uses the present tense. In James 2:21, he says, “Be’eth not Abraham...made right by works?” In that case, he uses the aorist (completed point of view). We are no longer talking about the Age to come here, but about the here and now, or the past in Abraham’s case. Paul uses the same sense again in Romans 4:2, “when Abraham be’eth made right by works”. Thayer’s Lexicon gives definition no. 1, “to make; to render righteous or such as he ought to be” (pg. 150, #1344). This looks back to Hebrew usage, “Hiph. 4. make righteous, turn to righteousness” (BDB, pg. 834, צִדַּק, צְדָקָה), where it speaks in Daniel 12:3, “and

righteous-makers-of the many as stars” or “Niph...*the holy place shall be put right*” (BDB, pg. 842). This means the holy place is straightened out, i.e. corrected, in the sense I described above. And those who will shine as the stars, will be those who are the ones making righteous the many. This will be by teaching the many to do what is right. A similar usage occurs in Isaiah 53:11, “by his knowledge, my righteous servant, *will give righteousness to the many*” (לְרַבִּים...יִצְדִיק); the key point here is that it is done by “his knowledge”, which can only mean teaching of the heart to do right (cf. Jer. 31:32) as the meaning of “Torah” is “instruction”, and teaching about how mercy is granted in Yeshua’s death.

So then, to be justified is to be straightened out, to be corrected by teaching resulting in good works. That brings us back to the translation, “but the doers of Torah will be made righteous” (Rom. 2:13). It is a promise that those doing the Torah, albeit imperfectly now, will in the future be made righteous—i.e. justified, corrected, and straightened out. This is an internal righteousness, a righteousness that corresponds to outward obedience, and not just an external acknowledgement of being proved right.

<sup>13</sup> because not the hearers of Torah <i>will be</i> right ones before the Almighty, but <sup>a</sup> the doers of Torah will be <sup>b</sup> made righteous. <sup>b</sup>	“כִּי לֹא שָׁמְעֵי הַתּוֹרָה יִהְיוּ צְדִיקִים לְפָנַי הָאֱלֹהִים, אֲלָא עֹשֵׂי הַתּוֹרָה יִוָּצְדְּקוּ:
13 a Syriac: if not   b-b <i>or</i> given righteousness, justified, vindicated.	יג'א = אָם לֹא   ב = יִנְתְּנוּ צְדָקָה:

2.13.4 So far, I have construed both “justified/vindicated” and “made righteous” as strictly in the age to come. However, we do not have to take the future tense this way. For example, “You **will** not murder, you **will** not commit adultery” (Matt 19:18). That’s not a future promise but a command, or “he **will** hate the one and love the other” (Matt 6:24), or “scarcely for a righteous man **will** someone die” (Rom 5:7). This is a way of stating a general truth called ‘gnomic’, (c.f. Wallace, *Exegetical Syntax*, pg. 571). Therefore to apply the generic principle: the doers of the Torah are now made righteous in whatsoever matter they do it. And this is opposed to hearers which do not do it. This also fits the context of what Paul is saying.

Of course, we need not entertain any notion of perfectionism in the current age. Perfectionism is what the antinomians want to graft onto the text simply for the purpose of turning it into a theoretical argument or a proposition unachievable in practice. This is because they hate the Torah and never want to admit that doing it constitutes righteousness in any way. They may excuse themselves with a mistranslation

from Galatians 2:21, “for if righteousness *come* by the law, then Christ is dead in vain” (KJV), but which must be corrected to “For when through the norm is justice, then Messiah without effect dieth” (Gal. 2:21, corrected).

<p><sup>14</sup>For when <sup>a</sup>Peoples <i>who are</i> not having the Torah, naturally the things of the Torah may be doing, these, not having Torah, to themselves, are Torah,</p>	<p>”כִּי בְאִשֶּׁר גּוֹיִם, אֵלֶּה בְּבִלִי יֵשׁ לָהֶם תּוֹרָה, מִטּוֹבֵעַ אֶת־דְּבָרֵי הַתּוֹרָה עֲשִׂים; הָאֵלֶּה בְּבִלִי יֵשׁ לָהֶם תּוֹרָה, לְעַצְמָם הֵם תּוֹרָה:</p>
<p>14 a = nations.</p>	

§2:14.1 Paul reinforces the lesson from 2:12 by not using the word “lawless” here (which the antinomians corrupted into “without law” in that verse.) Here Paul really does mean “who do not have the Torah”, and he spells it out in Greek, but he only means they do not have the written Torah, and then proceeds to demonstrate that they still have the Torah nonetheless! According to the antinomian reasoning, we may expect Paul to continue to use the word “lawless” (*ἄνομος*) with their supposed meaning “without law”, but he does not, or according to their reasoning, we may have expected τὰ μὴ νόμον ἔχοντα (*who do not have law*) in both texts. The fact of the matter, though, is that *ἄνομος* means *lawless* in every case in the Greek writings, except where *nomos* does not mean “law” *per se*, but *tradition* or *custom*! And there is only one text (1Cor. 9:21) in which Paul uses it in the neutral sense of “outside a norm”.

2:14.2 Paul’s aim here is to show that the Gentiles cannot all be classed as “lawless”, which is the label the Jews might put on them. This is because they are not all lawless of heart, even though they do not have the written Torah. Nature<sup>22</sup> teaches them that which is lawful to a great degree. What creation teaches corresponds to what Torah teaches. It is just easier to ascertain from Torah.

2:14.3 Almost in every case, the scribes have supposed that they can make the text say “a law to themselves”, as if “a law” would help disconnect this naturally derived law from “the torah”<sup>23</sup>; however, this is entirely foreign to the context. The word “torah” means “teaching” or “instruction”. What creation teaches us about the disadvantages of unclean animals is the same as what Torah teaches us. What nature

<sup>22</sup> The word “nature” is a synonym of “creation”, and by it Paul means “creation” as the term used to be used before being hijacked by evolutionists to teach time and blind chance.

<sup>23</sup> The KJV has “a law unto themselves”, and the NAS, “a law to themselves”, but Greek does not have the indefinite article. Paul is showing that the nations are not truly without “Torah”, so it makes no sense to say that the law they have is just “a law”. Early on, when Christianity departed from the Torah, its sages tried to make a habit of deriving morality purely from nature and from philosophy, so as to avoid using the Torah.

teaches about the unhealthiness of promiscuity, so also does the Torah teach.<sup>24</sup> What Torah teaches about the benefit of washing when disease is present, so also was learned from creation science.

<p><sup>15</sup>who are showing the work of the Torah written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and <i>their</i> thoughts accusing; one with another, or also defending <i>them</i>, <sup>16</sup>in connection to the day when, the Almighty is judging the secrets of men, according to my good news, through Messiah Yeshua.</p>	<p>יִשׁוּעַ הַמָּשִׁיחַ:  אֶת־תַּעֲלָמוֹת בְּנֵי הָאָדָם לְפִי בְשׂוֹרְתֵי בְּדָרְךָ  מִזְכוֹת אוֹתָם: לִיּוֹם כַּאֲשֶׁר שׁוֹפֵט הָאֱלֹהִים  גַּם בְּתוֹכְכֶם מִחַיִּבוֹת; זֹאת אֶת־זֹאת אוֹ גַּם  בְּלִבּוֹתֶם בְּהַעֲיֵד לָהֶם בְּרַעֲיוֹנָם וּמַחֲשָׁבוֹתֵיהֶם  יִשְׁרׁוּ הֵמָּה מְרָאִים אֶת־פְּעֵל הַתּוֹרָה כְּתוּב</p>
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§2:16 “The day” refers to the last judgment. “Day” is both Hebrew and Greek can mean a period of time.

<p><sup>17</sup>But if you are naming yourself Jewish and are finding rest in Torah and are rejoicing in the Almighty,</p>	<p>בְּתוֹרָה וְאַתָּה מִתְהַלֵּל בְּאֱלֹהֶם:  אֲבָל אִם אַתָּה יְהוּדִי נִקְרָא וְאַתָּה נַח</p>
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§2:17 Finding “rest” in Torah is not the negative concept implied by the scribes translating “rely on” (NAS); to rest in Torah means to take comfort and repose in the Covenant, knowing that Yahweh is merciful to those loving Him (cf. Ex. 20:6). “Rely on” is calculated to disguise the lexical meaning of the Greek, which is “rest” or to explain it away theologically, by suggesting that the Jew is seeking to be lay his works on the balance of divine justice. While this could be the case for some Jews, a point which Paul takes up later, it is not his message here. Here, and in the following verses Paul is merely upholding the standard, and then asking his fellow Jews if they are guilty of transgressing the Torah.

<p><sup>18</sup>and are knowing <i>his</i> will and are approving things making a difference, being instructed out of the Torah,</p>	<p>בְּאֲשֶׁר אַתָּה מְלַמֵּד מִן־הַתּוֹרָה:  וְאַתָּה יוֹדֵעַ אֶת־רְצוֹנֹוּ וּבַחֲן אֶת־הַמַּעֲלִים</p>
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§2:18 “And know his will ...being instructed out of the Torah”. These are not hypothetical statements by Paul, but simple acknowledgements that through Torah we know His will, and what makes a difference in the world.

<sup>24</sup> To derive the creation teaching, however, would require some scientific work to discover what is best for health, but knowing we might not reach the conclusion quickly enough, Yahweh had mercy on us and gave us the Torah.

<sup>19</sup> as well, are confident yourself to be a guide of the blind, a light of those in darkness,	בְּמוֹכְנֵי בְטֹחַ אֶתְּךָ לְהִיוֹתְךָ עֶצְמָךָ נֹהֵג עוֹרִים אֹזֵר לְאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר בְּחֹשֶׁךְ:
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§2:19 Torah teaches us, and when we have learned, we can “guide the blind”, and we can be a “light to those who are in darkness”.

<sup>20</sup> a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of the immature, having the structural form of knowledge and of the truth in the Torah,	מְיַסֵּר אֲוִילִים מְלַמֵּד עֲלִילִים אֲשֶׁר יֵשׁ-לָךְ תְּבִגִּית הַדְּעַת וְהָאֱמֶת בַּתּוֹרָה:
	כ'א = מְדַרְיָד:

§2:20 And we also can correct “foolish” things, and teach “immature”, because the “structural form of knowledge and truth” really is in the Torah.

<sup>21</sup> who, then, are teaching another; are you not teaching yourself? who are proclaiming “do not be stealing”, are you stealing?	כ"ב לָכֵן הַמְּלַמֵּד אֶת-אֲחֵר הָאֵם אֶת-עֶצְמָךְ לֹא תִלְמַד; הַמְּגִיד לֹא לִגְנוֹב הָאֵם אֶתְּךָ גִּבּוֹב:
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§2:21.1 Paul begins to ask if the teacher of Torah follows the Torah. His aim here is not to convict those whose hearts are set on obeying the Almighty, but those who are hypocrites, and who though they teach it transgress it. This is part of Paul’s argument to show that Jewish people can also be transgressors committing serious sin. And again, it is part of his argument to show that Jewish people also need to repent and turn to Messiah, and that they cannot trust in their birth.

§2:21.2 Paul will show that all men need Yeshua, and not just transgressors, but his argument for those who only sinned in ignorance, which would be very few, would depend on the need for Yeshua to make us righteous and to deliver us from the sin nature and death. This is an argument that he weaves in later. He does not make it here. He is only intent on showing that Jews also transgress the Torah. And this is indeed the weak link in Jewish soteriology. So Paul concentrates on it.

<sup>22</sup> who are saying “do not be committing adultery”, are you committing adultery? who are abhorring idols, are you robbing temples?	כ"ב הָאֹמֵר לֹא לִנְאֹף הָאֵם-אֶתְּךָ נֹאֵף הַמִּתְעַב אֶת-הָאֱלִילִים הָאֵם-אֶתְּךָ בָּזוּ אֶת-הַקְּדוֹשִׁים:
<sup>23</sup> who are boasting in the Torah, through transgression of the Torah, are you dishonoring the Almighty?	כ"ב אֶתְּךָ אֲשֶׁר מִתְהַלֵּל בַּתּוֹרָה הָאֵם בְּדַרְדָּר שֶׁל הַעֲבֵרַת הַתּוֹרָה אֶת-הָאֱלֹהִים אֶתְּךָ מִנְּבֹל:

§2:23 It is possible to “boast in the Torah” yet to break it on the very points one is teaching. The word “boast” or “*glory, pride oneself, brag*” (καυχάομαι, BDAG, 3rd, pg. 536), is used in the LXX for הַתְּהַלֵּל “praise oneself” (cf. Thayer, pg. 342). Where the

boasting should be is in Messiah's faithfulness, in his work on the cross (cf. Gal 6:14; 1Cor. 1:31; 3:21; 10:17). The word can mean to take pride in a legitimate accomplishment with "divine help", i.e. "...in a good sense of an attitude of confidence in God *rejoice in, glory in, boast in...*of achievements through divine help" (Friberg). But here in this text it means a vain boast because the point of the boast is to make one look better than one really is. The teacher that boasts of torah, but then transgresses it, only boasts to make himself appear better than he is! This is the nature of pride.

"For by loving kindness you are being made to be saved (through faithfulness), and that is not from you; of the Almighty *it is* the gift; not from works, so that no one should boast" (Eph. 2:8-9). It was mentioned before that "through faithfulness" denotes our repentance (cf. footnote 8), and in another note, Messiah's faithfulness (cf. footnote 11). Our repentance, is in fact an appropriation of Messiah's faithfulness, where all good things come from. The reason for noting this text here is the phrase "so that no one should boast". Now here the Greek subjunctive means "should boast". It gives an expected obligation:

"Even in dependent clauses (such as after ἵνα), the subjunctive commonly has a volitional flavor to it. An acceptable gloss is often *should*, since this is equally ambiguous (it can be used for *probability, obligation, or contingency*)" (Wallace, pg. 463).

Paul's teaching, then, is that the part of salvation which is done for us, "by grace you are being made to be saved", being "without works", is sufficient reason that "no one should boast". This does not mean no one could potentially boast of their observance or repentance, but "no one should boast". It does not accomplish any good to human nature to claim that repentance is a gift entirely granted by the Almighty, as if this might remove the possibility that anyone "may boast"<sup>25</sup>. It doesn't. Humans will boast if they want to, no matter what belief they profess, and the Christian who makes his boast in being one of the "elect" makes the same boast as Paul's Jewish interlocutor that then allows him to be "elect" and transgress Yahweh's commandments:

[The elect] can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace, but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved, [which] depends not

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<sup>25</sup> Here is a nice illustration I found. *A man sails his sailboat several miles out to sea, and capsizes it, and it sinks. He'll die of hypothermia in a few hours. However, the Coast Guard has noticed that his boat went down, and sends a helicopter. They find him, and a diver jumps into the ocean, and throws the man a life ring. The man hangs on to the life ring. The helicopter brings him in, the diver puts him in the basket and he is lifted to safety and transported back to land. Once on land, the news media have taken notice and ask him about his ordeal. The man proudly boasts, "Yep, I saved myself. All I had to do was grab the ring." "What a stupid, ungrateful idiot, right? Yet, this is a good analogy for why the Arminian says the faithful need to turn from sin to hold on to life, and why it would be idiotic to boast of it later when interviewed by the Almighty. Hanging onto the life ring here is analogous to repentance.*

upon their own free will, but upon the immutability of the decree of election [in eternity past]; Nevertheless, they may fall into grievous sins; and, for a time continue therein, have their hearts hardened, hurt and scandalize others, and bring [only] temporal judgements upon themselves. (Westminster Confession, 17.1-3).

These false shepherds license their flocks to live profligate lives and are “turning the grace of our Almighty into lasciviousness” (Jude 1:4). The reason for being of the TULIP<sup>26</sup> doctrine is to say that, T: the unsaved can do no good. This means the unsaved cannot repent of transgression. U: an “election” that does not begin with a faithful response and thus is not conditioned on loyalty to Yahweh or repentance from sin. L: that the benefits of Messiah’s death cannot be extended to man on the condition of their repentance, since there is no condition, since “election” was made in eternity past, and I: that once God calls, his call cannot be resisted, and P: that an elect person can never lose their salvation no matter what transgressions they may decide to do.

<p><sup>24</sup>since “the name of the Almighty is being blasphemed among the Peoples because of you,” just as it is writtēn.</p>	<p>כִּי הַשֵּׁם שֶׁל הָאֱלֹהִים בְּדַרְכּוֹ מְגֻדָּף בְּגוֹיִם בְּאֲשֶׁר נִכְתָּב:</p>
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§2:24 < Ezek. 36:20; Isa. 52:5. Now Paul is very concerned with the Jewish doctrine of “election”, which is not unlike the Calvinistic one. The name of Yahweh is blasphemed by a doctrine of election that allows the “elect” to transgress Yahweh’s commandments and yet still maintian they are chosen by the Almighty. Yahweh’s name is distorted by those teaching such. It makes him the author and finisher of sin. It makes his judgments arbitrary. It gives a false picture of Yahweh, and a false picture is a false god. So the nations justly reject such a false image.

<p><sup>25</sup>For circumcision indeed is profiting when you may be practicing Torah; but when you may be a transgressor of the Torah, your °circumcision is made to bē uncircumcision.</p>	<p>כִּי הַמִּילָה אֲמַנָּם מוֹעֵלֶת הִיא אִם-אֵתָהּ עָשָׂה אֶת-הַתּוֹרָה, אֵךְ אִם אֵתָהּ עִבְרִינִית תּוֹרָה מִילָתְךָ לְעִרְלָה נְהִיִּתָה:</p>
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§2:25.1 Physical circumcision is a sign of covenant faithfulness, and a requirement for physical inheritance of the land of Israel in the coming Millennial Kingdom of Messiah Yeshua (cf. Ezek. 44:9). However, unless a person also circumcises their heart to obedience (Deut. 10:16) and allows the Almighty to circumcise their heart for obedience to His commandments (Deut. 30:6), it will be of no value. It will be of no value for those who lack a faithful response to Yeshua’s faithfulness, because the inheritance will be denied. Paul has to make this point because physical circumcision

<sup>26</sup> Total depravity, Unconditional election, Limited atonement, Irresistible grace, Perseverance.

was widely regarded as a ticket to paradise in the age to come irrespective of what other sins one may commit. Just being Jewish and circumcised was supposed secure one's status in the life to come. This belief may seem strange to many, but it exists in Judaism today, and was current among Jews in Paul's time. The same concept also exists in the Roman Church where physical baptism is the ticket off the path to Hell.

We can also draw spiritually parallel comparisons: for antinomian Protestants "Faith" defined as a "one time moment of belief" in the supposedly unconditional promise of Messiah, serves as the ticket to heaven for many. For the more gnostic Christians confidence that one is one of the elect is confirmed by having confidence in one's unconditional salvation. The confidence is the "gnosis" (knowledge of one's status). Questioning this confidence in the face of unrepented sin is the worst fear of the Gnostic<sup>27</sup> because they would think that they are probably not elect if they lose confidence. All these things are of no value without faithfulness. Circumcision, baptism, the moment of belief, maintaining confidence, or any other teaching<sup>28</sup> that denies the place of faithfulness in salvation is a false hope.

A big issue in Paul's time was false circumcision. We may compare it to the forced baptisms of the Church. Forced baptisms, of course, do not make the one baptised truly committed to Yeshua, even though from the time of Constantine, the Church has treated it this way. In like manner the mass circumcisions of the Idumeans (a.k.a Edomites) and Itureans in the time of the Maccabees did not make them "Jewish" in the heart.

2:25.2 With the words, "your circumcision", now Paul is using circumcision with a different sense. He uses it to mean anyone whose confidence of salvation is based on the fact of their physical circumcision as the status determinant to make them part of Israel. But if they are a transgressor of the Torah, then that circumcision is really a false flag. Circumcision is of no value unless the one with the sign is actually being faithful to the Almighty. It is no better than "uncircumcision", which is to say, one might as well have the sign pinned on him saying, "cut off from Israel" or "unsaved pagan".

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<sup>27</sup> I speak here of "reformed" doctrines of Calvin, summarized by TULIP. Salvation depends on "election" in this system and having *gnosis* (knowledge) that one is elect. The *gnosis* is all that is required for repentance.

<sup>28</sup> Cults keep inventing the particular deed or ritual that gets one "in". For some it is "speaking in tongues", and others properly confessing and saying the "sacred name." Yet others argue that one has to belong to their Church or have membership in their denomination to be "saved." All these methods are contrary to faithfulness, because all on them allow transgression so long as one believes or does the pet doctrine or ritual.

<p><sup>25</sup>For circumcision indeed is profiting when you may be practicing Torah; but when you may be a transgressor of the Torah, your circumcision is made to be uncircumcision.</p>	<p>כִּי הַמִּילָה אֲמַנְנָם מוֹעֵלֶת הִיא אִם־אֵתָהּ  עָשָׂה אֶת־הַתּוֹרָה, אֵךְ אִם אֵתָהּ עֲבָרִינִית  תּוֹרָה מִיִּלְתֶּךָ לְעֵרְלָה נְהִיִתָה:</p>
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2:25.3 The Greek word ἐὰν = when = אִם. The Hebrew word (and the Greek too) does not imply a purely hypothetical condition. The condition “if” applies to the time “when” it becomes true. It is assumed that the condition will become true at some point, the condition only being “when” it does. Thayer illucidates, “c. irregularly, but to be explained as an imitation of the Hebrew אִם which is also a particle of time (cf. Gesenius, Thesaur. s.v. 4), ἐὰν with the Subjunctive Aorist is used of things which the speaker or writer thinks will certainly take place, where ὅταν *when, whenever*, should have been used” (pg. 162). My only addition to Thayer’s here, is that the subjunctive does not grammaticalize time, and the present tense was only chosen to underscore the ongoing faithfulness of the Torah observer, so there is no reason to think this Hebrew influence is limited to the Aorist Subjunctive. Thus Paul is assuming that circumcision is of value for the one being faithful to Torah. Yet, the Church wants to deny that circumcision is ever of any value, despite Paul’s statement to the contrary in Romans 3:1-2. Therefore, Paul’s words here must remain a purely hypothetical statement for them, i.e. a condition that never comes true.

2.25.4 At the same time theologians like Chafer want to twist the meaning of the second half of the verse, “but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision” (Chafer, Vol. 4., pg. 239, Systematic Theology). The key word “breaker” is not to be interpreted as anyone who breaks Torah in any way, as if by ignorance, or by a sin of circumstance. The word means “transgressor” (cf. NASB). The word παραβάτης = עֲבָר = transgressor. This is one who commits the sin of the high hand, either פְּשָׁעִים or עֲוֹנוֹת (transgressions or iniquities). This is one who deliberately crosses over the line, so to speak. It is the “sin unto death” (1John 5:16). Chafer, of course, wants it to be any sin, because he follows a theological tradition that began with hatred of any circumcision, which wanted to leave little or no conditions under which it might be valid. Chafer cites James 2:10 in an attempt to say all lawbreaking incurs the equal guilt, but James is speaking of transgressions (cf. vs. 9). One transgression makes one *wholly* (πάντων) guilty. James only speaks of sins that lead to death.

<p><sup>26</sup>So when the uncircumcised should be keeping the requirements of the Torah, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision?</p>	<p>כִּלְיָן אִם בְּזִהְעֵרְלָהּ שְׂמֵר אֶת־צִדְקוֹת הַתּוֹרָה, הָאִם־לֹא עֲרַלְתּוֹ לְמוֹלָהּ תִּחְשָׁב:</p>
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§2.26.1 Now Paul is firstly speaking of the physical uncircumcision of the proselyte or new convert who has not yet been circumcised; he he using the word to refer to the period of time between the moment that a pagan renounces falsehood and faithfully commits to Yeshua, and a later time when he is circumcised, i.e. Paul is equating the circumstance of the new, but uncircumcised, citizen of Israel, who is still in the exile, with Abraham before he was circumcised. Paul shows that it is faithfulness that results in salvation status, not physical circumcision<sup>29</sup>. Paul is contrasting the situation in which circumcision cannot save one (if one is a transgressor) with the situation in which lack of circumcision is not regarded as unfaithfulness to the Almighty.

2.26.2 Once again the text does not mean “if” as a purely imaginary condition that is assumed never to be true. Under Hebrew influence, the Greek means “when”. See above 2:25.3. So Paul is assuming that the new convert will be showing his faithfulness to the Almighty by keeping His commandments.

2:26.3 The word “circumcision” at the end of the verse is used to mean *saved status*. It clearly cannot mean physically circumcised. The uncircumcision cannot in the circumstance where the pagan has become faithful be regarded as indicating unsaved status, because faithfulness does not require perfection on our part; it only requires heart loyalty to Yeshua. The uncircumcision of the outsider only becomes an issue if its continuance is understood as faithlessness, and there is a refusal to repent or correct the situation. This goes for any other commandment as well, though with the violation of some important commandments it would be hard to maintain that that the person sinning was still faithful. Uncircumcision may be a sin of circumstance or ignorance due to poor teaching or none at all. For example, the Rabbis went about teaching that Gentiles *only* had to follow their version of Noachide commandments. Therefore, neglect of non-Noachide commandments by many Gentiles could not be regarded as faithlessness. The blame is on the incorrect teaching. Therefore, uncircumcision is to be regarded as circumcision, i.e. unsaved status is really saved status in other words.

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<sup>29</sup> Circumcision was equated to “election” by the Jew.

2:26.4. In the preceding section, I identified “circumcision” with saved status, and “uncircumcision” with unsaved status, but Paul showed that actual circumcision does not determine the status. Only faithfulness determines the status, because Paul says that uncircumcision can be regarded as circumcision so long as the uncircumcised man approaches Torah with faithfulness, and Paul has also shown that physical circumcision cannot determine the status because so many that have physical circumcision are transgressors.

<p><sup>26</sup>So when the uncircumcised should be keeping the requirements of the Torah, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision?</p>	<p>כִּלְיָן אִם בְּזִהְעָרְלָה שִׁמְר אֶת־צְדָקוֹת הַתּוֹרָה, הָאִם־לֹא עָרְלָתוֹ לְמוֹלָה תִּחְשָׁב:</p>
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The key to Paul here is that he is using “circumcision” as a synonym for *remnant Israel*. This is the Israel that has saved status, wherein citizenship is based on faithfulness. It does not include all of Israel, but only the part approaching the covenant through faithfulness. So when he says that the physical circumcision of the transgressor is regarded as uncircumcision, he is saying that this Israelite is not part of remnant Israel. (He is not saying he is not an Israelite though.)<sup>30</sup> And when he says the uncircumcision of the man approaching in faithfulness is counted as circumcision, he means that person is reckoned as a citizen of remnant Israel. It does not make the former Gentile ethnically Jewish, but by faithfulness the non-Jew gains the same rights, privileges, and citizenship status, in the kingdom of the Almighty as fellow Jews who are part of the remnant by Israel, all by faithfulness, first Messiah’s and then our response.

So when Paul says the uncircumcised is reckoned as circumcised he means that person belongs to remnant Israel. Many Rabbis base their doctrine not in faithfulness, but in election and chosen status, claiming to be members of remnant Israel. It is clear from Paul’s teaching that faithfulness *alone*<sup>31</sup> was the sole criteria for citizenship in the remnant of Israel. The non-Jew who is faithful will be regarded as circumcised, i.e. joined with the remnant of Israel. This means Rabbinic control of the gates of the Kingdom by means of tradition, ritual, formal conversion under the authority of man,

<sup>30</sup> “For though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet a remnant of them shall return” (Isa 10:22 KJV; cf. Romans 9:27, “a remnant shall be saved” = LXX.)

<sup>31</sup> This is not to be confused with the doctrine of “faith alone”, a gnostic redefinition of πίστις to mean only inward belief in the heart. This kind of “faith” is dead because it has no repentance, or commitment. BDAG, 3rd edition, definition 1 for πίστις, “faithfulness, reliability, fidelity, commitment” (pg. 818).

or any other criteria of election not in accord with faithfulness is nullified. And the truth is, they themselves shut the gates to others, but will not themselves go through them (Matt. 23:13).

Since a faithful non-Jew is reckoned as circumcised, which is to say a member of remnant Israel, it logically follows that there is no legal discrimination between the non-Jewish faithful and the Jewish. The Rabbis cannot say the non-Jew must first become Jewish in order for the sabbath or food laws to be embraced with true conviction. The Rabbis cannot legislate a two-tier legal system, one for them, and one for the non-Jewish faithful on the basis of their doctrine of election. Paul has shown how that doctrine is nullified with respect to the remnant of Israel.

2:26.5 There is a second way of interpreting this text, which I classify as a drash.<sup>32</sup> When Paul says “uncircumcised” he means the house of Israel, and from the Jewish point of view, all non-Jewish circumcisions are “invalid circumcisions”. So if the person with the “invalid circumcison” keeps the requirements of the Torah, will not his “invalid circumcison” “be regarded as circumcison?”

<p><sup>27</sup>And the <i>one</i> naturally uncircumcised, keeping the Torah, will judge you, that, through an <sup>a</sup>inscription, (that is: circumcison), <i>are</i> a transgressor of Torah?</p>	<p>כִּי־יִשְׁפֹּט בְּזֵה־הָעֲרֻלָּה מִזֵּה־הַטֵּבַע הַנִּצְיָר<sup>א</sup>  אֶת־הַתּוֹרָה אוֹתָךְ, אֲשֶׁר בְּדֶרֶךְ כְּתָבָת<sup>ב</sup>  (דְּהִינּוּ שֶׁל־מִילָה) עֵבְרִינִית הַתּוֹרָה אֶתָּה:</p>
<p><sup>27</sup> a <i>scriptio stigmatis</i>; γράμματος: cf. LXX Lev. 19:28.</p>	<p>כזא=גמר   ב = וכתבת קעלב, האות:</p>

§2.27.1 Paul’s sentence implies that the transgressor of Torah is transgressing Torah by being circumcised. That’s because, if one is going to be circumcised, and not keep the Torah, then one is flying a false flag. If one’s ship is the *SS Transgressor* flying the flag of *HMS Righteous*, then the signal flag is a lie. A sign that misleads is worse than no sign at all. To fly the flag of the king and then not be loyal to the king is to use the king’s name in vain, which is a violation of the third commandment:

Thou shalt not take the name of Yahweh your Almighty in vain; for Yahweh will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain. (Exo 20:7 KJV)<sup>33</sup>.

<sup>32</sup> i.e. an illustration based on the text that is not intended to be strictly literal, but draws truths from elsewhere and uses the text to illustrate it. The Church term for the same is a homiletical interpretation.

<sup>33</sup> A literal translation, “Thou shalt not bear [or lift up] the name of Yahweh your Almighty in vain”. cf. Deut. 5:11; Ps. 24:4; 139:20. The commandment refers not to swearing, and not to saying Yahweh’s name, but to falsely identifying oneself as one of the redeemed when one is misrepresenting the King of kings by committing transgression.

Circumcision, in this case, and in Paul’s thinking, is no circumcision at all. It has become uncircumcision. Then what about the marks that people flying the false flag of circumcision have on their flesh—whether Jew or Gentile? If it is not circumcision, then what is it? It is mutilation (Gal. 5:12; Col. 3:2), and here Paul alludes to Lev. 19:28, **קַעֲקֹב וְכַתְּבָת** = *scriptio stigmatus*, an inscription incised in the flesh, or more commonly, a tattoo. Paul uses the Greek *γράμματος*, which is shorthand for *γράμματα στικτά*. The latter is the LXX’s rendition of Lev. 19:28. He is equating false-flag circumcision with a tattoo:

Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you: I am Yahweh. (Lev 19:28)

The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament defines *γράμμα*:

**A. *γράμμα* in Greek and Hellenistic Usage.** The use of *γράμμα* is par[allel] to that of *γραφή*. *γράμμα* is properly what is “inscribed” or “engraved” and then what is “written” in the widest sense. 1. The primary sense is most clearly seen in the prohibition of *γράμματα στικτά*, tattooing, (**קַעֲקֹב וְכַתְּבָת**) in Lv. 19:28; cf. Philo Spec. Leg., I,58. The word is thus often used for “inscription” (TDNT, pg. 761, vol. I).

So if a person is to be a transgressor, which is to say, disloyal to the Almighty One, then his circumcision is false-circumcision, and indeed, is itself a violation of at least two commandments. And if a person is not a transgressor of the Torah, then his circumcision is true circumcision, or if he is a new convert, who is being loyal to the Almighty, but has not been circumcised, then as Abraham was before being circumcised, he is assumed under the flag of circumcision. A transgressor is not merely someone who sins in ignorance, unwittingly, and due to circumstance. A transgressor is someone who is in rebellion against the Almighty.

<p><sup>27</sup>And the <i>one</i> naturally uncircumcised, keeping the Torah, will judge you, that, through an <sup>a</sup>inscription, (that is: circumcision), <i>are</i> a transgressor of Torah?</p>	<p>בְּיִשְׁפֹּט בְּזֵהֶרְלָהּ מִזֵּה־טֵבַע הַנְּצִיר<sup>א</sup>  אֶת־הַתּוֹרָה אוֹתָךְ, אֲשֶׁר בְּדַרְךָ כְּתַבְתָּ<sup>ב</sup>  (דְּהִינּוּ שֶׁל־מִלָּה) עֲבַרְיֵינִית הַתּוֹרָה אֶתָּה:</p>
<p>27 a <i>scriptio stigmatis</i>; <i>γράμματος</i>: cf. LXX Lev. 19:28.</p>	<p>כזא=גמר   ב = וְכַתְּבָת קַעֲקֹב, האות:</p>

2:27.2 The word *καὶ* = **that is** = **דְּהִינּוּ**: “often explicative; a word or clause is connected by means of *καὶ* with another word or clause, for the purpose of explaining what goes before it *and so, that is, namely*” (cf. BDAG, pg. 495, 1c). This usage of **וְ** also

occurs in Biblical Hebrew.<sup>34</sup> The word *καὶ* functions like the English abbreviation “i.e.” from Latin *id est* (that is). Or it may be intensive, “2b intensive: *even*” (BDAG, pg. 495). The explanatory *καὶ* is also called “epexegetical”.

Church tradition takes *καὶ* as a coordinate “and” so as to miss the point that Paul is speaking of a false sign of circumcision. They wanted to miss the point because they had no place in their hearts for true circumcision either, but wanted to make the text anti-torah, and anti-Jewish. Also, tradition places an “if” into the text (cf. KJV, NASB), i.e. “if it fulfil the law”, thus reducing Paul’s remark to a hypothetical proposition rather than the statement of fact that he meant it to be. There is no “if” in the text (cf. RSV, NIV).

<p><sup>27</sup>And the <i>one</i> naturally uncircumcised, keeping the Torah, will judge you, that, through an <sup>a</sup>inscription, (that is: circumcision), <i>are</i> a transgressor of Torah?</p>	<p>כִּי־יִשְׁפֹּט בְּיָהֳרָה מִן־הַטֵּבַע הַנֶּזְרָה  אֶת־הַתּוֹרָה אוֹתָךְ, אֲשֶׁר בְּדָרְךָ כְּתַבְתָּ  (דְּהִינּוּ שֶׁל־מִלָּה) עֲבַרְיָנִית הַתּוֹרָה אֶתָּה:</p>
<p>27 a <i>scriptio stigmatis</i>; γράμματος; cf. LXX Lev. 19:28.</p>	<p>כזא=גמר   ב = וכתבת קעלב, האות:</p>

2:27.3 Paul uses the word **naturally** = φύσεως = *מִן־הַטֵּבַע* to underscore the circumstantial nature of uncircumcision. Salvation begins with faithfulnesses, and not circumcision. Paul does not want people to assume they are saved because they are circumcised. Nor does he want people to assumed that others are unsaved because they are uncircumcised. Circumstances count. The exile is a factor. So also false teaching or ignorance. What is faithless in one situation is not faithless in another. Paul is not undermining the commandment by making this argument. Rather, he wants faithfulness to be established first, especially in the face of the false beliefs about circumcision being an automatic ticket to saved status, or uncircumcision being regarded as an automatic ticket to condemnation.

2.27.4 Possibly there is an escatological sense in Paul’s use of the word “keeping” (BDAG, 3rd d. def. 2) *τελοῦσα*; if translated “completing” or “finishing” [rather than mere *keeping* in the present] (cf. Hebrew note: *גִּמַּר*,) then Paul is suggesting that the non-Jew who joins Israel and *completes* the Torah through Messiah, when He returns, will afterward judge the Jew who transgressed the Torah. The house of Israel, which is called the “uncircumcision” by the “circumcision” will complete the Torah in the time to

<sup>34</sup> “3. intensifying: **also, even**...5. explanatory: **and indeed, namely**” (pg. 84, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, Holladay). “5. *γ* explaining (a.) **that is**: Am[os] 4,10, Sa[chariah] 9,9; J[u]d[ges] 10,10, 1 S[amuel] 17,40, 28,3, Js[aiiah] 57,11, Ir[emiah] 13,13, Am[os] 3,11, Pr[overbs] 3,12” (HALOT).

come. The house of Israel is also called the “goyim” or “Gentile” by the house of Judah. Of course, the non-Jew who completes the Torah is neither really a “Gentile” or “uncircumcised”, but Paul uses the language of his fellow Jews in such a way that in modern times we’d place the usage in quotation marks, or if we heard Paul reading it, he’d look up wryly, with a hint of sarcasm, as he enunciated it.<sup>35</sup>

<p><sup>28</sup>Because not what <i>is</i> on the outside is Jewish, nor what <i>is</i> on the outside in the flesh <i>being</i> circumcision, <sup>29</sup>unless what <i>is</i> in secret Jewish; and circumcision of the heart <i>is</i> <sup>a</sup>in <sup>b</sup>spirit, not by <i>an</i> inscription; of whom the praise <i>is</i> not from men, but from the Almighty.</p>	<p>כִּי לֹא זֶה אֲשֶׁר בְּגִלּוּי יְהוּדִי הוּא גַם-לֹא זֹאת  אֲשֶׁר בְּגִלּוּי בְּבֶשֶׂר מִיֵּלֶה הִיא כִּי אֵלֶּא זֶה אֲשֶׁר  בְּסֵתֶר יְהוּדִי הוּא וּמִיֵּלֶת הַלֵּב זֶה בְּרוּחַ לֹא  כְּתֻבָּת אֲשֶׁר   תְּהִלָּתוֹ אֵינָנָה מֵאֵת אַנְשִׁים כִּי  אִם-מֵאֵת הָאֱלֹהִים:</p>
<p>29 a or by means of   b or Spirit.</p>	<p>כח'א = וּכְתֻבָּת קַעֲקֹב:</p>

§2:28-29.1 These two verses are one sentence in the Greek. The second half of the statement (vs. 29) qualifies the first half. Standing alone, without qualification, vs. 28 would be a simple lie. Jewishness, undeniably, is on the outside, and circumcision is on the outside (as a sign). The anti-Jewish, antinomian, Church Fathers strove to make religion purely an inward private matter and never a matter of public or outward obedience to the commandments. They were prejudiced against the outward signs of the covenant, circumcision and Sabbath. What made their misinterpretation possible was the ambiguity of the Greek word ἀλλ' = ἀλλά. This is a word that had a thousand year relationship with the Aramaic אֲלֵא, and due to the similar pronunciation of the two words were equated in Judeo-Greek. Liddell defines the word: “used adversatively to limit or oppose words, sentences, or clauses ... 3. *except, but*” (pg. 67-68). BLASS §448 אֲלֵא = εἰ μὴ. The Syriac starts vs. 29 with אֲלֵא = ܐܠܐ, which Payne Smith glosses as “if not, unless, only, except” (pg. 17). The word is a contraction from the Hebrew אִם-לֹא (Jastrow). Thayer, “logically equivalent to *not so much ...as*” (pg. 28). The fundamental meaning of ἀλλά in Judeo Greek is “if not”, in two senses: a) if not = if

<sup>35</sup> Such usage also throws anti-Torah, anti Israel Gentiles off the track of what Paul is really saying. Paul was urgent to get the good news to the “fulness of the nations” even if he had to use Trojan horse tactics to do it. Peter knew what Paul was up to because he wrote, “even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness” (2Pet. 3:15-17).

the former statement is not true then the following is = **but**; *or* b) if not = if not also = the second clause is a condition that makes the first clause true = **except, unless**.

Therefore, one is not a Jew outwardly.....{unless, except, if not} ... he is also a Jew inwardly. And this agrees with the Prophetic saying:

Thus saith my Lord Yahweh; No stranger, uncircumcised in heart, nor uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into my sanctuary, of any stranger that is among the children of Israel. (Eze 44:9)

In other words, the one does not count without the other. Yahweh requires faithfulness in the heart, and not just a sign of faithfulness in the flesh.

2:28-29.2 The phrase περιτομή καρδιάς = מִילַת הַלֵּב = *circumcision of the heart*. Heart circumcision is part of the Torah (cf. Deut. 10:16; 30:6; Lev. 26:41; Jer. 4:4; 9:26). The commandment is for the faithful to circumcise their own hearts, and the promise is that Yahweh will himself circumcise our hearts. So the two are interdependent. If we circumcise what we can, then Yahweh will circumcise what we cannot. As explained in Habakkuk 2:4, “The just shall live by his faithfulness”, which refers to both Yahweh’s faithfulness and our faithfulness.

<p><sup>28</sup>Because not what <i>is</i> on the outside is Jewish, nor what <i>is</i> on the outside in the flesh <i>being</i> circumcision, <sup>29</sup>unless what <i>is</i> in secret Jewish; and circumcision of the heart <i>is</i> <sup>a</sup>in <sup>b</sup>spirit, not by <i>an</i> inscription; of whom the praise <i>is</i> not from men, but from the Almighty.</p>	<p>כִּי לֹא זֶה אֲשֶׁר בְּגִלּוֹי יְהוּדִי הוּא גַם-לֹא זֹאת  אֲשֶׁר בְּגִלּוֹי בַּבֶּשֶׂר מִילָה הִיא כִּי אֵלֶּא זֶה אֲשֶׁר  בְּסֵתֶר יְהוּדִי הוּא וּמִילַת הַלֵּב זֶה בְּרוּחַ לֹא  כְּתֻבַת אֲשֶׁר   תְּהִלָּתוֹ אֵינָנָה מֵאֵת אַנְשִׁים כִּי  אִם-מֵאֵת הָאֱלֹהִים:</p>
<p>29 a <i>or</i> by means of   b <i>or</i> Spirit.</p>	<p>כח'א = וכתבת קעקב:</p>

The Church tradition has tried to use Paul’s words to *redefine* circumcision, so as to translate, “circumcision [is] of the heart”. Surely no redefinition was necessary, since *circumcision of heart* was already a preexisting concept, however, the original Church translators and interpreters wanted to pretend that redefinition is what Paul was doing, because they did not want to acknowledge that either the command or promise to circumcise the heart was already in Torah! To do this they break up the phrase and add two words, so that it reads, “circumcision [is that] of the heart” (KJV). The NIV goes even further, saying, “[circumcision is] circumcision of the heart”. Following suit: NET, TNIV, RSV, YLT etc. We can trace this as far back as Tyndale, “circucisio of the herte [is the true circumcision]” (1534). Only the Latin is free of the mistranslation,

“circumcisio cordis” (Vulgate). By saying this, they want to imply that physical circumcision isn’t circumcision (or is no longer circumcision), and that the *only* circumcision is a heart spiritualization of physical circumcision, i.e. ignoring the fact that circumcision of the heart was in the Torah in the first place!

But everything is against them on this: the fact that circumcision of the heart is in the Torah, and not just in a prophetic sense (Deut. 30:6), but as a standing commandment (Deut. 10:16); the fact that both physical and heart circumcision are mentioned in the prophetic future (Ezek. 44:9); and the fact that adding words to the text in the middle of a genitive phrase is a conscious attempt to avoid the plain meaning by special pleading. They may argue that other statements from Paul demand their re-interpretation of this text, but the schoolboy grammar tricks underlying their pedigreed tradition may well be uncovered in those places also.

The text goes like this:

καὶ	περιτομή	καρδίας	ἐν	πνεύματι
And	circumcision	of heart	in	spirit
CC	NOUN NOM	NOUN GEN	PREP	NOUN

The Lexical search in Bibleworks (\*@nn??? \*@ng??? \*@p? \*@n????) for this grammatical construction yeilds 14 hits in the NT. In only one case is the word “is” interplated between the NOMINATIVE NOUN and the GENITIVE NOUN, and that is Rom. 2:29. Similar search of the LXX with partial sampling yielded no cases of the verb “to be” being interpolated between the nominative noun and the genitive noun. However several cases were found where the main verb was put before the preposition in the English text, which is exactly where “is” should be placed in Rom. 2:29. After searching numerous bible translations, I only found one that even comes close, which is “and circumcision, of the heart, in spirit” (*The Darby Bible*, 1884/1890), and even this one breaks the genitive phraise “circumcision of the heart” with an injudiciously placed comma.

Surprisingly, Cranfield’s Commentary on Romans has it correct, “circumcision of the heart” (*International Critical Commetary*, Romans, vol. 1, pg. 175, 4x, and pg. 137), but David Stern misses badly, saying “circumcision is of the heart, spiritual not literal” (*The Complete Jewish Bible*). So even Stern agrees with the redefinition, or somewhat incompetently used the English translations rather than checking the Greek to

determine his translation. Only Cranfield seems to know Greek then, and no one else does.

<p><sup>28</sup>Because not what <i>is</i> on the outside is Jewish, nor what <i>is</i> on the outside in the flesh <i>being</i> circumcision, <sup>29</sup>unless what <i>is</i> in <sup>a</sup>secret Jewish; and circumcision of the heart <i>is</i> <sup>a</sup>in <sup>b</sup>spirit, not by <i>an</i> inscription; of whom the praise <i>is</i> not from men, but from the Almighty.</p>	<p>כִּי לֹא זֶה אֲשֶׁר בְּגִלּוּי יְהוּדִי הוּא גַם-לֹא זֹאת  אֲשֶׁר בְּגִלּוּי בְּבֶשֶׂר מִלֵּה הִיא כִּי אֵלֶּא זֶה אֲשֶׁר  בְּסֵתֶר יְהוּדִי הוּא וּמִלֵּת הַלֵּב זֶה בְּרוּחַ לֹא  כְּתָבֶת אֲשֶׁר   תְּהִלָּתוֹ אֵינָנָה מֵאֵת אַנְשִׁים כִּי  אִם-מֵאֵת הָאֱלֹהִים:</p>
<p>29 a <i>or</i> by means of   b <i>or</i> Spirit.</p>	<p>כח'א = וּכְתָבֶת קַעֲקֹב:</p>

2:28-29.3 The phrase ἐν πνεύματι = in spirit = בְּרוּחַ. It is unlikely that this word was originally marked *nomina sacra*, i.e. ΠΝΙ. The word “in” can be either a dative of location or dative of instrument, i.e. “in spirit” or “by spirit”: 1. circumcision of the heart is accomplished “by” a man’s spirit, 2. circumcision of the heart is done “in” a man’s spirit. The word “spirit” may refer to Yahweh’s Spirit, hence: 3. circumcision of the heart is by the Spirit. All of these interpretations are true. There is the commandment to circumcise our heart. There is the promise that Yahweh will circumcise our heart (Deut. 30:6). And it takes place in the spirit. So then it is His faithfulness in connection to our faithfulness.

Cranfield supposes that “in Spirit” means only the Holy Spirit because he points out that “of the heart” already indicates the inward nature of “circumcision of the heart”, so that interpreting “in spirit” would be redundant (pg. 175, note 3). But there are a lot of people who think that an outward ritual accomplishes an inward reality. For instance, the Catholics believe outward baptism is the instrument of an inward transformation. Could it be that some of Paul’s Jewish interlocutors believed that outward circumcision was the instrument of “circumcision of the heart”? In that case “circumcision of the heart *is* in spirit” or “by spirit”, (interpreting ἐν as instrumental) is just as valid as “by Spirit”, and would equally address the error of the false doctrine. Circumcision of the heart is accomplished by Yahweh’s faithfulness and then our faithful response to His faithfulness expressed through Messiah.

2:29-29.4 The word **inscription** (γράμματα) is explained above in 2.27.1 in the literal sense. Here I expand the idea somewhat to superstitious uses of things written. I give a drash on it. (A drash is the use of a text to illustrate, and not literal interpretation.) We can use γράμματα to allude to phylacteries, and the idea that phylacteries circumcise the heart. We may also refer to Gematria which is Rabbinic

mathematical tricks with the letters of the Torah to try an extract strange interpretations, also we may refer it to modern use of ELS (Equal distant letter sequences) to find messages.<sup>36</sup>

Circumcision of the heart is by faithfulnesses. Just because one part of Judaism makes circumcision a ticket to the age to come does not mean that Judaism doesn't teach traditions to "maintain" one's status. Much like the Roman Church's grace after grace through the sacraments, so also Judaism tries to take shortcuts away from faithfulness via traditon to stay in the Almighty's favor. The commandment to circumcise one's heart is a commandment to obey what Yahweh actually said, but Judaisim takes the written text and puts it into a box, and then straps it on the head, and claims that this sacrament fulfills the commandment. But is this really what it means? No, because it does not enter into the heart. This is the same superstition as Church sacraments, albeit in a different form. It is just a sacrament using the "written text". So also the Mezzuzah is treated. A scripture, *γράμματα*, is placed in a small holder and placed on the doorway. This is supposed to fulfill the commandment to write the Torah on one's gates and doors. Does it? No not at all, because the *γράμματα*, remains invisible to the eyes, and hence invisible to the heart.

<p><sup>28</sup>Because not what <i>is</i> on the outside is Jewish, nor what <i>is</i> on the outside in the flesh <i>being</i> circumcision, <sup>29</sup>unless what <i>is</i> in °secret Jewish; and circumcision of the heart <i>is</i> <sup>a</sup>in <sup>b</sup>spirit, not by <i>an</i> inscription; of whom the praise <i>is</i> not from men, but from the Almighty.</p>	<p>כִּי לֹא זֶה אֲשֶׁר בְּגִלּוֹי יְהוּדִי הוּא גַם-לֹא זֹאת  אֲשֶׁר בְּגִלּוֹי בְּבֶשֶׂר מִלֵּה הִיא כִּי אֵלֶּא זֶה אֲשֶׁר  בְּסִתְרֵי יְהוּדִי הוּא וּמִלֵּת הַלֵּב זֶה בְּרוּחַ לֹא  כְּתֻבָּת אֲשֶׁר   תְּהִלָּתוֹ אֵינָנָה מֵאֵת אֲנָשִׁים כִּי  אִם-מֵאֵת הָאֱלֹהִים:</p>
<p>29 a <i>or</i> by means of   b <i>or</i> Spirit.</p>	<p>כח'א = וכתבת קעלב:</p>

2:28-29.5 The text alludes to the meaning of "Jewish" or "Jew" in the phrase "of whom the praise is not from men, but from the Almighty". The word *יְהוּדָה* means, "Yahweh be'eth made to be praised" (cf. Gen. 29:35). It begins with the pual perfect: "be'eth made to be praised" (*וְדָה*), and then is prefixed Yah (*יְה*), to form *יְהוּדָה*, or alternatively if we derive it from the participle (*מְוֹדָה*), "making to be praised", then the sense could be "Yahweh making to be praised". This sense is suggested in the text, "not

<sup>36</sup> A scientific analysis and rebuttal of the validity of the so called "bible code" was conducted by computer analysis by Randal Ingermanson, Ph.d., "Who Wrote the Bible Code?".

what is on the outside is Yahu-making praised...unless what is in secret Yahu-making praised...of whom the praise is ...from the Almighty”.

2:28-29.6 It should be noticed at no point does Paul oppose scriptural circumcision (Gen. 17:10-27; Ex. 12:44-48; Deut. 10:16; 30:6; Ezek. 44:9). But there are a few texts to explain that are not in Romans.

In 1Cor. 7:18, “Was any man called already circumcised? Let him not become uncircumcised. Has anyone been called in uncircumcision? Let him not be circumcised” (NAS). To understand this, we have to reconstruct the questions Paul was being asked. They would go like this, “Do I need to become a Jew (by circumcision)?” or “Do I need to undo my Jewishness by uncircumcising”. To the first question, Paul says no, because the non-Jew is *called* to be part of the house of Israel. To the second question, Paul says no, because he is already a Jew, and is *called* to be part of the house of Judah. If all the non-Jews became Jewish, then the house of Israel would be erased, or if all the Jews become non-Jews, then the house of Judah would be erased.<sup>37</sup> Paul’s example that this interpretation is correct is that he caused Timothy to be circumcised “through the Jews which were in those quarters”<sup>38</sup> (Acts 16:3). Timothy received a proper Jewish circumcision by a local Mohel because he was “the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess”. This demonstrates that Paul did not mean one should remain in the physical uncircumcision one had when they committed to Messiah. Timothy was *called* as part of the “circumcision”. Likewise, Titus was *called* in the house of Israel, since he was a Greek, and was not “compelled to be circumcised through the false brothers...”<sup>39</sup> The operative word here is “compelled” and it is explained in vs. 14, “compelled to become Jewish” (ἀναγκάζεις ἰουδαΐζειν). So Titus was not compelled to have a Jewish circumcision through the false brothers, but he was voluntarily circumcised<sup>40</sup> through the conviction of the Spirit, and remained in the house of the “uncircumcised”<sup>41</sup>.

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<sup>37</sup> Judah and Israel are two separate parts of Israel (cf. Ezek. 35:10; 37:22; Jer. 33:24). The Northern Kingdom was declared, “not my people” (Hos. 1:9), and became the “fullness of the nations” (Gen. 48:19), but through Messiah becomes “my people” (Hos. 2:1; Rom. 9:24-25; Eph. 2:11-19), restoring the birthright to Joseph (1Chron 5:1-2; Gen. 49:22-26).

<sup>38</sup> “διὰ τοῦς Ἰουδαίους τοῦς ὄντας ἐν τοῖς τόποις ἐκεῖνοις”; the sense is not “because of the Jews”, but “through the Jews”, as in “by aid of, by means of” (Liddell and Scott, διὰ with Accusative, BibleWorks 8), “thanks to, by aid of” (Liddell and Scott, pg. 389, 1968 edition). The Church perverted the text because they wanted to make it seem like it was done for fear of the Jews or out of cultural pressure and compulsion.

<sup>39</sup> That translation “διὰ δὲ τοῦς...ψευδαδέλφους” takes the preposition as instrumental, and the conjunction as explanatory, technically, “through, that is, the secret false brothers”.

<sup>40</sup> This is the obvious intent behind Paul’s choice of the word “compelled”, but it has to be tied in with vs. 4., “through, that is...the false brothers”. It seems that some of the “Church” father’s had knowledge that Titus was circumcised. Somehow words in some Greek MSS were omitted in vs. 5, “to whom” or “not even” as an attempt to explain the later

Then Paul says, “Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing unless<sup>42</sup> keeping the commandments of the Almighty” (1Cor. 7:19; cf. Gal. 5:6). What he means is that being Jewish or being non-Jewish isn’t important, unless they keep the commandments. If the case of keeping the commandments, though, it is important to which part of Israel one belongs.<sup>43</sup> The house of Israel is non-Jewish, and are “called uncircumcised” (Eph. 2:11) by the house of Judah, even though they be scripturally circumcised (Phil. 3:3).

The point here, of course, is that the term *circumcised* meant “Jewish,” and the term *uncircumcised* meant “non Jewish”<sup>44</sup>, and Paul knew that the house of Israel was reinstated through Messiah, not *called* to be Jewish, but *called* to be the house of Israel. So Paul is not saying one should avoid a scriptural circumcision. He is only saying one should avoid a ritual Jewish circumcision. From the Jewish point of view, a non-Jew is “uncircumcised” even though he is “circumcised”, and in fact, any non-Jew who is circumcised according to Scripture, but not by a Jewish Mohel, can legitimately claim to be “uncircumcised” according to the definitions of Jewish tradition, and thus compliant with Paul’s orders in 1Cor. 7:18 to remain in the house of Israel. And any non-Jew who is really of the uncircumcised house can still be scripturally circumcised without abandoning the birthright of Joseph, and also still be compliant with Paul’s words, since he is still not “circumcised” according to the Jewish definition under which Paul was answering the questions.

So then, when the Church says that Paul nullified circumcision as commanded for the seed of Abraham in Genesis 17, or elsewhere in the Torah, they are foolishly

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reality. These textual emendations need not be appealed to. It is plain that Paul only wanted Titus to avoid a certain kind of circumcision.

<sup>41</sup> The house of Judah was mostly physically circumcised, hence called the “circumcision”, and the house of Israel was mostly uncircumcised, thus called the “uncircumcision”, because Ephraim became the “fulness of the nations” (cf. Gen. 48:19), but only a remnant of all Israel is to be saved, and all Israel will have to be circumcised in the heart, and circumcised in the flesh (cf. Ezek. 44:9).

<sup>42</sup> Yes, this Greek word is the friendly ἀλλὰ from the Aramaic ܐܠܠܐ meaning, “if not”, or “unless” which I discussed previously.

<sup>43</sup> The preservation of the tribes was considered important in Israel (cf. Judges 21:6), and maintaining each tribe in its own inheritance was a commandment (cf. Num 36:9). But if Jew or Non-Jew did not keep the commandments, then in the end it did not matter if one was descended from Israel or not, as there is no inheritance for transgressors.

<sup>44</sup> Even if a non-Jew is already circumcised, such a circumcision is invalid from the Rabbinic Jewish point of view. A typical American hospital circumcision, or Islamic circumcision, or other circumcision that was not performed by a Jewish Mohel is invalid according to traditional law. So when Paul says, “Let him not be circumcised”, it has nothing to do with not getting a non-Jewish circumcision, and everything to do with getting the sort by a Mohel that qualifies as a valid Jewish circumcision. Halacha dictates that the status of those with invalid circumcision is “uncircumcised”, i.e. the person is a non-Jew, and further to make it a Jewish circumcision a pin prick ceremony called “hatafas dam bris” is required.

failing to comprehend that Paul was only objecting to Rabbinically defined circumcision that made a person “Jewish”, and they are not comprehending Paul’s affirmation of the commandments, “...unless keeping the commandments of the Almighty” (1Cor. 7:19b), or “...unless faithfulness working through love” (Gal. 5:6), “...unless a new creation” (Gal. 6:15).

On the other hand, Rabbinic circumcision, is defined to make one a Jew, and all other circumcision is decreed halachically invalid precisely for the purpose of bringing all Israel under the hegemony of Jewish authority<sup>45</sup>, and enslaving the house of Israel to Jewish tradition, to turn the non-Jew away from Messiah and the Torah, either by sucking them into Judaism, or by making Torah so odiously sectarian that no non-Jew would want to follow their version of it. But, the non-Jew who is quietly circumcised remains in his calling in the house of Israel<sup>46</sup>, but remains “uncircumcised” with respect to the house of Judah.

In Acts 15:1-4, “And certain men...taught...‘Except ye may be circumcised by the custom of Moses, ye are not being saved...some of those from the sect of the Pharisees who had committed, were saying, ‘it is necessary to circumcise them, besides commanding to be keeping the Law of Moses’; the question here what purely what the universal abiding requirement for salvation was? Like the Catholics with baptism, or the Church of Christ, they determined that circumcision was what maintained universal saved status. Paul’s answer to that was no, and that the abiding requirement is “faithfulness”, (which at different levels of maturity means understanding fewer, or more commandments, and depends on the individual walk and circumstance). The

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<sup>45</sup> This was the reason that Israel revolted against the tribe of Judah in the first place (cf. 1Kings 11:28-37; 12:3-16; 20-24), because Judah was taking away the birthright. This attempt to take away Joseph’s birthright and make it illegal for non-Jews to be circumcised and keep Torah outside of Rabbinic authority was sternly advanced by Rabbi Akiva and Simon Bar Kochba, and was made foundational in the early stages of the Talmud.

<sup>46</sup> “Recent statistical evidence from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) agencies indicates that in the United States (US) newborn circumcision rates remain high. A 2007 CDC report found that 79% of US males are circumcised (86% of non-Hispanic whites). There have been increases in circumcision among blacks and in newborns from the Midwest and the South, areas of the country with the fewest new immigrants. In specific communities high circumcision rates are being reported: 84% in Atlanta, Georgia, 85% in Houston, Texas, and 92% in a Wisconsin community served by a pediatrician opposed to circumcision. Falling circumcision rates in the West, particularly in California, reflect the fact that over 50% of births in the state are in Hispanics who do not circumcise on a cultural basis. Among non-Hispanic white males the rate in California remains about 80%. Lower NIH newborn incidence figures must be viewed with caution since they only represent coded data from the hospital of birth. In Alaska and Georgia it was found that about 15% of newborn circumcisions are not coded on discharge. Further, recent published evidence shows that 7-10% of males are circumcised for medical or personal reasons after the newborn period. These errors in coding and post-neonatal circumcisions accounts for the discrepancy between the 60-65% newborn rate reported by the NIH and the 80-85% circumcision rate found in surveys of older boys and in the 2007 CDC report. A survey reported in 2005 found that the U.S.circumcision rate was increasing recently, a finding attributed to the increasing awareness by the American public of the preventive health benefits of circumcision.” (www.medicirc.org). See also “Circumcision, Sex, God and Science”, Edgar J. Schoen, MD, Book Surge, 2009.

council decided that abstinence from idol sacrifice, immorality, blood, and trepha would at least be required to evidence valid commitment to Messiah in the most backward and out of touch converts, who would learn the commandments, and then be circumcised when correctly taught it. “Circumcision” is like the test commandment for all the commandments the non-Jew has not learned to habitually keep yet. Peter said, “And he putteth no difference between us and them, who purifieth their hearts by the *covenant* faithfulness” (Acts 15:9). “Purifieth” means that the Spirit of Yahweh which fell on the new converts convicted them of their transgression.<sup>47</sup> And enabled them to depart from it.

It should be quite clear then that Acts 15 does not teach all the obligations of the faithful, but only the obligations of the least mature.

So far we have found that circumcision is not necessary for salvation in the most immature. To follow the Spirit, however, does not mean to just repent of those things brought forward at the initial commitment to Messiah, but to continue to hear the teaching of the Spirit. The conviction to be circumcised would be when false teaching of the Church is exposed in the heart of the convert, and when knowledge of one’s membership in Israel is understood along with new awareness of the commandment. Also, it is important to understand that circumcision does not make one a Jew, but a non-Jew remains in his calling to the house of Israel, even when circumcised, even though the house of Judah would call them “uncircumcised”.

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<sup>47</sup> Transgression did not include “circumcision” in their case, as the Spirit determined, because the Spirit was not willing to universally enforce it at this time. The Spirit let the sons of Israel be uncircumcised in the wilderness until they reached the plains of Jericho. This is to say, like Abraham, some sins, that would be transgression if the mature neglected them, are not transgressions if the immature neglect them. So we may conclude, some sins are always transgression or iniquity, and breaking them is incompatible with commitment to Yeshua; the status of other sins depends on whether the one who knows the commandment is being faithless to Messiah in their breaking of them, and yet other sins are habits tied to our body of death, which will have to wait until we receive our new bodies. All the faithful, whatever their maturity, should seek Yahweh and His will as the Torah teaches, in order to make their calling and election sure.

## Hebrew Analytical, Chapter 2

v1 מְרִשִׁיעַ = pQams = judging. שֹׁפֵט = pQams = judging. שׁוֹפֵט הַ = the + pQams = one judge ing. v2 וַיִּדְעֵנוּ = and + fQa1cp = know eth + we. v3 הֲחֹשֵׁב = do? + suppose. שׁוֹפֵט הַ = the + pQams = one judge ing. v4 וְעָשָׂה = and + pQamp = do ing. מְלֹטֶתָּ = you will + mNp2ms = be deliver ed. v5 חָשַׁב = pQamp = think ing. יוֹדֵעַ = know ing. מְדַרְרִידָּ = pHamp = makes way. v6 צָבַר = pQamp = stor ing up. יִשְׁלֹם = will + mPa3ms = make to be complete d. v7 מְבַקְשִׁים = pPamp = making to be seek ed. יִשְׁלֹם = will + mPa3ms = make to be complete d. v8 וַיִּסְוְרְרִים = and + pQamp = disobey ing. גְּלוֹפְתִּים = pNpmp = be ing seduce, persuade d. v9 פֹּעֵל הַ = the + pQams = one work ing. v10 פֹּעֵל הַ = the + pQams = one work ing. v12 כִּפְּוֹקְרִים = as + pQamp = ones renounce, abandon, apostaciz ing. חָטְאוּ = fQa3cp = sin eth + they. יִאֲבֹדוּ = they will + mPa3cp = perish. וְשִׁחְטוּ = that + fQa3cp = sin eth + they. יִשְׁפֹּטוּ = w/o pause = יִשְׁפֹּטוּ = they will + mNp3cp = be judge d. v13 שָׁמְעוּ = pQampc = ones hear ing + of. עָשׂוּ = pQampc = ones do ing + of. וַיִּצְדְּקוּ = will be + mHp3cp = made to be righteous ed + they. v14 עָשׂוּ = pQamp = ה' do. v15 מְרַאֲיִם = pHamp = making ה' see n. כָּתוּב = pQpms = be ing write ed. בְּהִעָד = in + cHa = making be witness ed. מְחַיְבֹת = making to be חַיֵּב ed. חַיֵּב = making to be ה' acquitt ed. v16 שׁוֹפֵט = pQams = judges. v17 נִקְרָא = pNp be ing call ed. נָח = pQams = נוח rest. מְתַהַלֵּל = self + pTams = making praise d. v19 יוֹדֵעַ = pQams = know. וַיִּבְחַן = and + pQams = test, examine. מְלַמֵּד = pPpms = making to be learn ed. v19 בִּטְחָה = pQsms = be ing secure. לְהִיְיֹתָּ = to + cQa = ה' be + you. נִהְגָּה = pQams = lead ing. v20 מְיַסֵּר = pPams = reprov ing. מְלַמֵּד = pPams = making to be learn ed. v21 מְלַמֵּד הַ = the + pPams = one making to be learn ed. תִּלְמֹד = you will + mPa2ms = make to be learn ed. הַמְגִידֶה = the + pHams = one making plain. לְגַנֹּב = to + cQa = steal. גָּנַב = pQams = steal ing. v22 הַאֹמֵר = the + pQams = one say ing. לְנֹאֵף = to + cQa = commit adultery. נֹאֵף =

pQams = *committing adultery*. מְתַעֲבֵב־הַ" = the + pPams = one making to be *detest ed*. בִּזְזוּ =  
 pQams = *plunder, loot ing*. v23 מִתְּהַלֵּל = self + pTams = making *praise d*. מִן־נִבְּלָ = pPams =  
 mak (ing) to *be shameful*. v24 מִגְדָּף = pPpms = be ing made to *be insulted*. נִכְתָּב = pNpms =  
 is *write d*. מוֹעֵל־אֶת = pHafs = comes to 'י *be useful*. עֲשֵׂה = pQams = *do ing*. נִהְיֶתָּה =  
 pNpfs = ה' *becomes*. v26 שֹׁמֵר = pQams = *keeps*. תִּחְשַׁב = mNp3fs = it will + be *count ed*.  
 v27 וַיִּשְׁפֹּט־וַיִּשְׁפֹּט־וַיִּשְׁפֹּט = waw. consec. = **Then** + mQa3ms = he will + *judge*. וַיִּצַּר־הַ" = the + pQams =  
 one *keep, guard ing*. v28 גִּלְיוֹי = pQpms = be ing ה' *revealed*.