

BI-COVENANTALISM IN RELATION TO PAUL'S LETTERS? A RESPONSE TO LLOYD GASTON

by

Michael G. Vanlaningham, Ph.D.

Interest in Israel and the Jews has always been high in Christian circles, but no more so than since World War II. The restoration of national Israel has caused a stir in virtually every wing of Christendom, especially following the Holocaust and the manner in which the nation was established. Furthermore, there is renewed interest in the theological question of Israel. This latter interest concerning Israel's theological importance raises other questions of the relationship of this people to the church.

Recently a small but influential group of primarily Protestant scholars has reinterpreted Paul as teaching distinct means of salvation for the church and Israel. It is this topic that will be addressed here. The purpose of this paper is to examine the letters of Paul to determine his understanding of the relationship of Jewish salvation to the gospel of Jesus Christ. It will attempt to address the specific question of the means of salvation for Israel, and to confirm that Paul believes Israel is saved through faith in Christ. Some maintain that Paul sees the Jews having ongoing validity before God as His people, as a result of His faithfulness to them through the covenants and their faithfulness in keeping them. On this reading of Paul, the Jewish people enjoy a right standing with God apart from Jesus Christ. This position is called the "two-covenant" or "bi-covenantal" approach.¹ The bi-covenantal reading of Paul's epistles is championed most notably by three scholars, Lloyd Gaston,² John G. Gager,³ and Sidney G. Hall, III,⁴ though their approach shares much in common with the approach of Krister Stendahl.⁵ Gaston and Gager argue that both Israel and the Gentiles are saved by faith, but the objects of

¹N. T. Wright (*The New Testament and the People of God* [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992], 473 n. 5), and Nahum N. Glatzer (*Franz Rosenzweig--His Life and Thought* [New York: Schocken Books, 1953], xxv), credit Franz Rosenzweig with being the first serious proponent of this bi-covenantal approach, in which Christianity and Judaism are both seen as legitimate religions and approaches to God and to reality. Cf. Ernest Simon and Edith Rosenzweig, ed., *Franz Rosenzweig--Briefe* (Berlin: Schocken Verlag, 1935), 73-74; and Rosenzweig's *The Star of Redemption*, trans. William W. Hallo (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970), 265-424, especially 413-16. For a brief but helpful review of the historical development of the two-covenant position, and for the ideology of it, see Jakób Jocz, *The Jewish People and Jesus Christ: A Study in the Relationship between the Jewish People and Jesus Christ* (London: S.P.C.K., 1949), 314-22.

²Lloyd Gaston, *Paul and the Torah* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1987). This work is a compilation of Gaston's articles written over several years. References to Gaston's works will be drawn from this book.

³John G. Gager, *The Origins of Anti-Semitism: Attitudes toward Judaism in Pagan and Christian Antiquity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983).

⁴Sidney G. Hall, III, *Christian Anti-Semitism and Paul's Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993).

⁵See Krister Stendahl, *Paul Among Jews and Gentiles and other Essays* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), especially 1-77, 78-96; idem, "In No Other Name," in *Christian Witness and the Jewish People*, ed. A. Sovik (Geneva: Lutheran World Federation, 1976), 48-53, especially 52-53; idem, *Meanings. The Bible as Document and as Guide* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 213. An approach similar to Stendahl's is expressed by M. Rese, "Die Rettung der Juden nach Römer 11," in *L'Apôtre Paul: Personnalité, Style et Conception du Ministère*, BETL, ed. A. Vanhoye, vol. 73 (Leuven: University Press, 1986), 429-30; and Paul van Buren's *Discerning the Way: A Theology of the Jewish Christian Reality* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1980), 198-200; idem, "The Church and Israel: Romans 9-11," *The Princeton Seminary Bulletin* ns. 11, Supplementary Issue no. 1 (1990): 8, 11-12.

their respective faiths differ. For both, it is ultimately faith in the righteousness of God. For Gentiles, however, the object of their faith is the righteousness of God found in Christ, but for Jews it is faith in the righteousness of God found in Torah.⁶ Gaston and Gager maintain that when Paul says individuals are saved apart from the law, he is referring to Gentiles only, and not to Jews.⁷ In short, the Jews continued to be on good terms with God through faith in God and His revelation, which translated into Torah observance, and His faithfulness to Israel. The Gentiles found a similar right standing with God in Christ apart from Torah observance.⁸

The procedure will involve the presentation of five propositions held by the two-covenant proponents, summarizing their interpretations of some of the texts they utilize, and offering a moderately detailed critique of those interpretations.

Proposition #1: "*Paul never viewed the
gospel of Christ as salvifically
relevant for the Jews.*"

This is the over-arching thesis of Gaston and those who follow him, and most of the propositions which follow in some way or another bolster this one. Did Paul, in fact, never intend the gospel of Christ to be embraced by the Jewish people, as the bi-covenantalists claim?

Romans 1:13-17

Gaston's hermeneutical approach is clearly evident in his treatment of Rom 1:16.⁹ He argues that Gentiles now have a right to be counted among God's people, a position held previously only by the Jews. The πάντι of πάντι τῷ πιστεύοντι has primary reference to the Gentiles. The πρῶτον of 1:16, says Gaston, "is to be understood not temporally but of degree. But if the Jews are 'in the first place,' it is clear that Paul's interest is almost exclusively with those in the second place, with those now being included, with the Gentiles."¹⁰ In the preamble of Romans, then, the theme is presented for the entire epistle, namely, that God's righteousness now includes the Gentiles.

There are several serious problems with Gaston's view. Paul maintains in 1:1 that he was set apart εἰς εὐ'αγγέλιον θεοῦ. While the exact force of εὐ'αγγέλιον is debated,¹¹ it is impor-

⁶Gager, *Origins*, 261-62. For the same point, though made with less substantial exegetical support, see Pinchas Lapide in Lapide's and Peter Stuhlmacher's book entitled *Paul: Rabbi and Apostle* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1984), 41-52, 68-74.

⁷For a similar understanding, see Norbert Lohfink, *Der Niemals Gekündigte Gund: Exegetische Gedanken zum christlich-jüdischen Gespräch* (Freiburg: Herder, 1989), 104-7.

⁸Gager, *Origins*, 263-64; and similarly John Koenig, *Jews and Christians in Dialogue: New Testament Foundations* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1979), 40-46, 53-59; idem, "The Jewishness of the Gospel: Reflections by a Lutheran," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 19 (Winter 1982): 61-67.

⁹Gaston, *Paul and the Torah*, 117-19.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 118.

¹¹For an extensive treatment of the word in this context, see Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. and ed. by Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 6-10. There is debate as to whether or not εὐ'αγγέλιον has a more active (the *act of proclaiming* the gospel message) or static (the *contents* of the gospel

tant to note that this is a gospel originating with God, and concerns fundamentally His Son (περὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ, 1:3).¹² The apostleship that Paul received (ἀπόστολος, 1:1; ἀποστολήν,¹³ 1:5) was intended specifically for the purpose (εἰς) of bringing about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles (1:5). The nature of the genitival πίστεως has been variously understood,¹⁴ but it is probably best not to over-interpret it. The idea of a full-fledged Christian discipleship, with faith and obedience being indispensable elements of it, is most likely the sense of the phrase.¹⁵ The point here is that this gospel for which Paul is a called apostle, and for which he received his apostleship, is a gospel originating from God and is a gospel concerning God's Son. Furthermore, it is a gospel aimed at engendering the obedience of faith--at least among all the Gentiles.¹⁶

message) sense. On the latter, cf. Ulrich Wilckens, *Der Brief an die Römer*, vol. 1, EKKNT (Zürich: Benziger Verlag, 1978), 74-75. On the former, cf. John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans*, vol. 1, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959), 3. The difference in meaning is slight, and at any rate has little bearing on the issue at hand.

¹²There is disagreement regarding the syntactical connection of περὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ (1:3). Frederick Godet (*Commentary on Romans* [Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1977], 120-21) insists that it depends on προεπηγγείλατο in v. 2. He states that in 1 John 5:10 there is the presence of a relative pronoun ἣν with verb and the prepositional phrase (ἣν μεμαρτύρηκεν ὁ θεὸς περὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ) just as there is in Rom 1:2-3 (ὁ προεπηγγείλατο...περὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ). In 1 John it is certain that the phrase goes with the verb in the relative clause, not with the noun μαρτυρίαν before it. Theodor Zahn (*Der Brief des Paulus an die Römer*, KNT, vol. 6 [Leipzig: A. Deichertsche Verlagsbuchhandlung Nachf., 1910], 34-35), on the other hand, maintains that the prepositional phrase in Rom 1:3 is dependent on the noun εὐαγγέλιον. The difference in meaning is virtually non-existent, and the flow of thought speaks of "the gospel of God, a gospel promised (by God) . . . concerning His son . . ." In both 1 John and Romans, then, the focus of the gospel is a person, God's Son.

¹³The phrase χάριν καὶ ἀποστολήν "almost forms a hendiadys." The idea is "the grace of an apostolic commission" (James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, WBC, vol. 38a [Dallas: Words, 1988], 17). Here, as in 1 Cor 9:2 and Gal 2:8, ἀποστολήν refers to the apostolic office.

¹⁴Wolfgang Wiefel ("Glaubensgehorsam? Erwägungen zu Röm. 1,5," in *Wort und Gemeinde. Festschrift für Erdman Schott zum 65. Geburtstag*, Aufsätze und Vorträge für Theologie und Religionswissenschaft [Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, n.d.], 137-44) offers a good survey of the possible meanings of the phrase, though he himself does not take a firm position. Cf. C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, vol. 1, ICC (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark Limited, 1975), 66, for seven options. Gaston claims that εἰς ὑπακοὴν πίστεως ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ὑπὲρ τοῦ ὀνόματος αὐτοῦ should be translated "for [bringing about] obedience to [God's] faithfulness for the sake of his name among all the Gentiles" (*Paul and the Torah*, 118). He does not draw out the implications of such a translation for himself in his comments on Rom 1:16-17, but apparently his intent is to emphasize salvation for Gentiles coming through God's faithfulness over against the believer's faith in Christ. This is also borne out in 1:17, where he translates ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν as "from [His, God's] faithfulness to [our] faithfulness." He explains the Hab 2:4 citation as a reference to how one comes to salvation, that it takes place through God's righteousness or faithfulness. Gaston seems to ignore the several contextual clues (mentioned below) that strongly tie this righteousness/faithfulness of God to Jesus Christ, and that Jew and Gentile both are saved through the gospel of Christ. It is not just the faithfulness or righteousness of God that saves Jew and Gentile--the former through the Torah and the latter through Christ--but it is the faithfulness or righteousness of God in Jesus Christ that saves Jew and Gentile through faith.

¹⁵Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans* NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 51-52.

¹⁶Note also that in 1:8 Paul mentions the faith of the Roman church in close connection with the gospel of God's Son in 1:9.

But Gentiles are not the only ones for whom the gospel of Jesus Christ is intended. In 1:16-17, Paul brings together several thematic threads mentioned throughout the prescript:¹⁷ εὐ'αγγέλιον (1:1, 9; and the cognate εὐ'αγγελίζω in v. 15, which is virtually identical in meaning with the noun);¹⁸ δύναμις (1:4, 16), and πίστις (1:5, 8, 12, 16, 17). Up to this point Paul connected the gospel and faith to the Gentiles, but in v. 16 this is widened to include all who believe (παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι), among whom are the Jews as well as Greeks. Whatever the meaning of Ἰουδαίῳ τε πρώτον, the phrase cannot be construed to divorce Jews from the gospel of God found in Jesus Christ and appropriated by faith.¹⁹ The context of the entire pre-script will not allow for it. It is unlikely, then, that Rom 1:13-17 supports the idea that Paul did not see his gospel as binding on the Jews.

Conclusion to Proposition #1

The first proposition, that the gospel of Christ was not intended by Paul to be embraced by the Jews, simply is not convincing. It is true that Rom 1:1-17 emphasizes Paul's mission to the Gentiles, but v. 16 unavoidably enfolds the Jews as well (as it does also in 1 Cor 1:18-25). This assertion thus also makes it difficult to agree with the second proposition which follows.

Proposition #2: "Paul never condemns the Jews for rejecting Christ."

As one moves into the body of the book of Romans, there is fertile ground found for investigating Paul's understanding of salvation. Romans 2:17-3:20 serves as an important foundation from which Paul will build his even stronger discussion of salvation.

Romans 2:17-3:20

The comments on this section by the bi-covenantalists are extensive and challenging, and deserve to be weighed carefully. Because of its length and the intricacies of the various

¹⁷For a detailed treatment of the relationship of Rom 1:16-17 with Rom 1:1-15, see Jules Cambier, "Justice de Dieu, Salut de tous les hommes et Foi," *RB* 71 (October 1964): 550-78.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 548, 553.

¹⁹Ἰουδαίῳ τε πρώτον continues to be a challenge for scholars. Does it refer to Paul's evangelistic strategy of going to the synagogue as a point of first contact in a region (Sigfred Pedersen, "Theologische Überlegungen zur Isagogik des Römerbriefes," *ZNW* 76 [1985]: 66-67; Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 40), or to the historical facts of the Jews being the first to receive and disseminate the gospel (C. K. Barrett, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 2d ed., BNTC [London: Hendrickson, 1991], 29), or to the theological precedence and peculiar relevance of the gospel to the Jewish people because of their OT status (Dieter Zeller, *Juden und Heiden in der Mission des Paulus: Studien zum Römerbrief* [Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1973], 141-45)? The last option is to be preferred because of the theological emphasis of v. 16 (δύναμις, σωτηρίαν, πιστεύοντι) *vis-à-vis* historical indications. Furthermore, Joseph A. Fitzmyer points out that according to 1:2, the gospel was promised in the sacred Scriptures of the Jews, making it especially relevant to them (*Romans*, AB, vol. 33 [New York: Doubleday, 1993], 257). Cf. also D. Fraikin, "The Rhetorical Function of the Jews in Romans," in *Anti-Judaism in Early Christianity: Paul and the Gospels*, Studies in Christianity and Judaism, ed. Peter Richardson, 2, vol. 1 (Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1986), 96.

interpretive issues in it, it will be considered under three headings: Romans 2:17-29; 3:1-8, and 3:9-20.

Romans 2:17-29

Gaston maintains that all of 1:18-3:20 is an indictment of the Gentile world, and that, with the possible exception of Rom 2:17-29, Paul offers no condemnation of the Jewish people.²⁰ Paul's "almost exclusive" interest in the Gentiles in 1:16-17 carries over into 1:18-2:16,²¹ so that the unit must be read as "dealing exclusively with the situation of the Gentile world." The reproaches against the Jews have to do with Israel's failure to be a light to the nations, and with her failure to see that the eschatological hour of deliverance offered in Christ *for the Gentiles* has arrived.²² Paul also reproaches the Jewish missionaries to the Gentiles who did the wicked things listed in 2:17-24 (theft, adultery, robbing temples), and so caused the Gentiles to blaspheme God. But Gaston states that this cannot be a universal indictment since not all Jews, nor all Jewish missionaries to Gentiles, did these things.²³ Gaston argues that Paul's main point is the negative impact these missionaries had on proselytes. Finally, 2:17-29 is really nothing more than an aside in the midst of discussing the Gentile problem of being unrighteous and rightly condemned by God.²⁴

Gager²⁵ says that Paul's point in Romans 2-3 is that the Torah is useful for Jews, and the usefulness of the Torah for Jews is now "replicated" (Gager's word) by Christ for the Gentiles. The Torah remains valid for the Jews as long as their observance of it continues, and righteous Gentiles stand on equal footing before God with the Jews, though the means of that righteousness for the Gentiles is Christ and not the Torah. The equal footing makes inappropriate the boasting of the Jews mentioned in 2:17.

Gaston's points are considered here first. He maintains that the whole section of Rom 1:18-3:20 deals only with Gentiles, and that Jews are not condemned in Romans 2-3. But against Gaston's observations, 1:13-16 cannot be construed as a narrow interest in Gentiles to the exclusion of Jews. While Gentiles are recipients of the righteousness of God along with Jews, it will be shown throughout the treatments of 3:1-8, 9-20, and 21-31 below that Jews are in Paul's sights as much as Gentiles. Furthermore, G. B. Garlington points out that Israel is implicated in Rom 1:18-32 no less than the Gentiles. For example, in Rom 1:23, the phrase καὶ ἠΰλλαξαν τὴν δόξαν is drawn from Psa 106 (LXX 105):20 and Jer 2:11 (cf. also Deut 4:15-18), which deal with Israel's idolatry in the wilderness and later in the land.²⁶ Moreover, Gaston does not treat 2:25, where the Jew is reduced to the same status as a Gentile and can claim no special

²⁰Gaston, *Paul and the Torah*, 121-22.

²¹Gaston is right to note the many connections in the two sections of 1:18-32 and 2:1ff: ἀναπολόγητος in 1:20 and 2:1; πᾶς with ἄνθρωπος in 1:18 and 2:1, and πράσσω and ποιέω in 1:32 and 2:1-3 (*Paul and the Torah*, 119).

²²*Ibid.*, 12, 30, 79, 99. The quote is from 120.

²³Note, however, that 2:23 parallels "boasting in the law" (ὁὶς ἐν νόμῳ καυχᾶσαι) with the other sins of hypocrisy in 2:21-22. Gaston's point that 2:17-29 cannot be a universal indictment of the Jews loses potency if it can be shown that Jews as a whole boasted in the law.

²⁴*Ibid.*, 138-39.

²⁵*Origins*, 214.

²⁶G. B. Garlington, "Ἱεροσυλαεῖν and the Idolatry of Israel (Romans 2,22)," *NTS* 36 (January 1990): 144.

privilege on the basis of his circumcision or possession of the law.²⁷ He also assumes that 2:17-24 condemns "Jewish missionaries to Gentiles" when in fact there is no hint of this either in the context or in history.²⁸ As to the contention that 2:17-29 is "just an aside," Gaston offers no support. The section is, in fact, more than one-half of a well-rounded argument against Jewish misunderstanding of their privileged position, and there is no proof of it being a mere "aside."

In response to Gager's points, he is hard-pressed to justify his statement that Paul's objective in Rom 2:17-3:18 is to show that the law is useful for the Jew. Dunn points out that the question of 3:1 gives

clear confirmation of Paul's target in chap. 2: the "Jew" in his self-assurance as a Jew, i.e., Jewish over-confidence in the privilege of being God's chosen people. It is the *assumption* that being a Jew is an advantage, that circumcision *is* of value even when one goes on to break the law (2:25), that Paul has attacked--and attacked so effectively that the slightly agonized cry of Jewish self-identity responds in bewildered protest.²⁹

Suffice it to say at this point that Gager's overly-optimistic view of the law for Jews is not the best reading of Paul in Rom 2:17-3:20.

Romans 3:1-8

Gaston believes that Rom 3:1-8 deals with the faithfulness of God toward Israel, which is in no way denied when Paul asserts the inclusion of the Gentiles in His righteousness.³⁰ And while 3:1-8 does mention the Jews, Gaston avows that the thrust of the paragraph deals with the Gentile problem of being excluded from the covenant righteousness of God enjoyed by Israel. The objections raised in 3:4-8 are voiced by Gentiles over the apparent unfairness of God in providing His covenant loyalty *only* for Israel. Paul is discussing two different groups in this passage, evident from the syntactical shifts in person. Gaston writes,

The shift from third person [in 3:1-3, referring to Jews] to "every human being" [πᾶς ἄνθρωπος, 3:4, i.e., Gentiles] to first person [ἡμῶν, 3:5; ἐμῶ, κα'γώ, 3:7] is then not insignificant, and the shift from "some" [τινες, i.e., Jews] in verse 3 to "every" [πᾶς, Gentiles] in verse 4 is not "a blatant non sequitur."³¹

On this perception of the text, Gaston seeks to prove that Rom 3:1-8 (and 1:18-3:20 as a whole)

²⁷So Otto Kuss, *Der Römerbrief: Übersetzt und Erklärt*, vol. 1, 2d ed. (Regensburg: Verlag Friedrich Pustet, 1963), 89, and Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 321. Cf. Jürgen Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit: A Contribution to Messianic Ecclesiology* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1977), 140-41, who argues that not infrequently in the NT Israel suffers a demotion in status so that she is no different from the Gentiles before God because of her refusal to believe in Jesus Christ. See especially Acts 4:23-28, where the leaders of the Jews are reduced in status to that of the "Gentiles, peoples, and kings of the earth" (Psa 2:1-2).

²⁸In his thorough discussion of Jewish missionary activity during the Second Temple period, Scot McKnight concludes that there is no evidence that prompts the conclusion that Judaism was a "missionary religion" in the sense of making aggressive attempts to convert Gentiles. Scot McKnight, *A Light among the Gentiles: Jewish Missionary Activity in the Second Temple Period* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), 117.

²⁹Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 137-38, emphasis Dunn's.

³⁰Gaston, *Paul and the Torah*, 60.

³¹*Ibid.*, 121.

deals with the Gentile problems associated with Israel's exclusive covenantal ties with God. Neither 3:1-8 nor the broader 1:18-3:20 deals with the problems of Israel regarding her view of Christ.

Significant problems must be overlooked to hold to such a view of Rom 3:1-8. First, the οὐρανός of 3:1 (on which Gaston offers no comment) speaks of a logical inference that one might make from something that is said.³² John Piper states correctly that the connection with what precedes 3:1 appears to be the leveling out of distinctions between Jew and Gentile in Romans 2. This is indicated by the fact that Paul says the Jew will be judged for his evil deeds as well as the Gentile (2:9), and in fact will be judged by the Gentile who keeps the law (2:27).³³ As an inference from 2:28-29, the objection might now be made from the *Jewish* standpoint against Paul, that he does away with the advantage of Judaism and the benefit of circumcision.³⁴ The logical connection with the preceding makes it unlikely that the objections of 3:4-8 are those of the Gentiles.

Second, Gaston's assertion that Paul shifts from Jews in 3:3 to Gentiles in 3:4 is not defensible. Presumably Gaston would say that since the Jews were unfaithful (εἰ ἡπίστησαν τινες) to their task of being a light to the Gentiles, God proved faithful by sending Christ to the Gentiles (μὴ ἡ ἀπιστία αὐτῆν τὴν πίστιν τοῦ θεοῦ καταργήσει) to save them. But this view does not fit the Psa 51:4 citation. Gaston claims that the OT verse should be understood "in terms of the covenant lawsuit to say that God is victorious and expresses his righteousness by forgiving sin."³⁵ However, both the context of Psalm 51, which asserts the fairness of God in judging man's (especially David's) sin,³⁶ and the presence of κρίνω/κρίμα in Rom 3:4, 6, 7, 8, suggest that Paul is not describing the faithfulness of God to His promises to save Gentiles, but describes His faithfulness in judging unbelievers (in this case, Jews). His righteousness, as Piper says, "... is neither a strict distributive justice nor a merely saving activity [Gaston's view]. It is more fundamental to God's nature than either of these and thus embraces both mercy and judgment. It is God's inclination always to act so that everything abounds to his glory."³⁷ God manifests His righteousness in a merciful way by keeping His promises to those who believe, but manifests it also by judging those who persist in unbelief.³⁸ The introduction of God's justice in judging people accounts for the continued discussion of wrath and judgment in vv. 5-8 better than Gaston's view, which sees God's faithfulness displayed only in saving people.

Third, Gaston thinks that πᾶς ἄνθρωπος in 3:4 and κόσμος in 3:6 refer to Gentiles to the exclusion of Jews. This is unlikely. One of the hermeneutical assumptions made by the bi-covenantal proponents is that Paul's epistles were written to Gentile churches about Gentile

³²Murray, *Romans*, 1:91.

³³John Piper, *The Justification of God: An Exegetical and Theological Study of Romans 9:1-23*, 2d ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993), 125.

³⁴So H. A. W. Meyer, *Critical and Exegetical Handbook on the Epistle to the Romans* (Winona Lake: Alpha Publications, 1979 reprint), 110-11.

³⁵Gaston, *Paul and the Torah*, 121.

³⁶Note well that Psalm 51 is written by a Jew (David) about his moral failure as a Jew, and God's justice in judging a Jew who sins.

³⁷Piper, *Justification*, 133.

³⁸So Hartwig Thyen, *Studien zur Sündenvergebung im Neuen Testament und seinen alttestamentlichen und jüdischen Voraussetzungen*, FRLANT, vol. 96 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970), 165-66.

problems by the apostle to the Gentiles, and as such Jewish concerns do not enter into Paul's thinking in his epistles.³⁹ In response to this overarching "hermeneutical commitment" in Gager's and Gaston's works, Frank Thielman offers a piercing criticism. He says,

This hermeneutical decision [that Paul is really only speaking to Gentiles in his epistles] . . . allows Gager and Gaston to interpret a number of texts in which Paul's language could include both Jews and Gentiles to refer to Gentiles alone. Since Paul is writing to Gentiles, the reasoning goes, nearly everything he says is meant exclusively for Gentiles, and non-Christian Jews are left out of the picture.

Here, however, Gager and Gaston have misused a valid hermeneutical rule. Taking into account the historical context of a text, especially an occasional letter, is clearly important for discerning the author's meaning; but Paul may have had occasion to discuss concepts of universal significance in order to address the specific situation of Gentiles in Galatia or Rome or Philippi. So in Phil. 2:11 when Paul says "every knee shall bow, whether heavenly, earthly, or subterranean, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father" we should not infer that he means every *Gentile* knee shall bow and tongue confess, even if he is addressing a predominantly Gentile church. The scene is the eschaton and the language is cosmic and all-encompassing, even though the problem at hand is probably the mundane squabbles of the Philippian congregation (see 4:2). When Paul does not say "every Gentile" we should not understand him to mean "every Gentile" unless the context of the argument itself demands that meaning.⁴⁰

The context of Rom 3:3-8 contains language that "is cosmic and all encompassing." For instance, in 3:3 Paul takes the Jews to task for their unbelief or unfaithfulness, and asks if God's faithfulness is rendered inoperative as a result of it. In 3:4a, Paul responds emphatically by saying this is not the case. Jewish unfaithfulness does not cancel out God's faithfulness. But Paul's net is spread more widely in 3:4, where he refers to *everyone* being found a liar. Πᾶς ἄνθρωπος includes Gentiles, but it cannot be construed as now *excluding* Jews. On Gaston's reading, vv. 3-4 say, "If some of the *Jews* were unfaithful, their unfaithfulness does not render inoperative the faithfulness of God, does it? Not at all! Let God be found to be true, even if every *Gentile* is a liar . . ." If 3:4 is responding to the problem of Jewish unfaithfulness in 3:3, then to inject the idea of *Gentiles* to the exclusion of Jews into v. 4 does too much violence to the context.⁴¹ It will be argued in what follows that the paragraph is almost exclusively about the Jews and Jewish objections to Paul's gospel.

The change in persons in 3:5-8 presents a similar problem to Gaston, especially in light of the above understanding of 3:3-4. It has been argued that 3:3-4 do not refer to two distinct groups and that Jews are absent from 3:4. If they are present in 3:4, they are probably present in

³⁹ See especially Gaston, *Paul and the Torah*, 37, 57.

⁴⁰ Frank Thielman, *From Plight to Solution: A Jewish Framework for Understanding Paul's View of the Law in Galatians and Romans*, SupNovT, vol. 61 (Leiden: Brill, 1989), 126-27. For the same point, see also Loren Stuckenbruck, "Theology, Exegesis and Paul's Thought: Reflections on *Paul and the Torah* by Lloyd Gaston," *Koinonia* 2 (Fall 1990): 137-39. Πᾶς ἄνθρωπος cannot possibly mean "every Gentile" in such passages as Rom 5:12, 18; 12:17-18, or 1 Cor 7:7.

⁴¹ For a similar understanding, see Käsemann, *Romans*, 81-82. Cf. also Heikki Räisänen, "Zum Verständnis von Röm 3,1-8," in *The Torah and Christ*, Publications of the Finnish Exegetical Society, vol. 45 (Helsinki: Kirjapaino Raamattutalu, 1986), 195, who writes, "Bei Paulus dient aber das Psalmwort 'jeder Mensch ist Lügner' (Ps 115,2 LXX) auch zum Aufweis dessen, daß 'alle unter der Sünde sind' (3,9). Trotzdem hat er wohl auch hier vor allem den *Juden* im Blick. Von den *Juden* handeln VV. 1-3, und wird werden sehen, daß dies auch in VV. 5-7 der Fall ist. Dann empfindet sich aber ein einheitliches Verständnis der VV. 1-7."

3:5-8 as well.⁴² One indicator of this is the similarity between the alleged different groups. Note the parallels⁴³ between the different persons, their shortcomings, and the consequences in 3:4-8:

VERSE	PERSON	SIN	CONSEQUENCE
(3:3)	Jews	unbelief/unfaithful	(omitted) ⁴⁴
(3:4)	All men	lie ⁴⁵	judgment
(3:5)	We	unrighteous	wrath
(3:6)	The world ⁴⁶	(omitted)	judgment
(3:7)	Me	lie	judgment
(3:8)	Some/They	blasphemed Paul	judgment

These parallels suggest that Paul has both Jews and Gentiles in mind as he writes.

Romans 3:9-20

Gager declares that in Rom 3:9-26 Paul is not assaulting the Torah, but Jewish boasting in it. Through the Torah, Jews and Gentiles are "under the power of sin" (3:9b) or "receive the knowledge of sin through the law" (3:20). This fact in turn prepares the way for the claim that God's righteousness for Gentiles is manifested apart from the Torah, and is not any longer Israel's exclusive privilege.⁴⁷ Gaston's insights are more provocative. He claims that none of the Psalms cited in the catena of 3:10-18 refers to Israel, but to Gentiles. For example, Psalm 14 contrasts the wicked with "my people," "Israel," and "His people." The LXX of Psalm 9 refers seven times to *ta ethn*. It is the Gentiles who are condemned in the catena, not Israel.⁴⁸

There is a preferable way to understand the paragraph. Gaston overstates his case when he says "all the Psalms" in the catena refer to the Gentiles alone. Some of them do, without a

⁴²Cf. Kuss, *Der Römerbrief*, 1:103; Hans Lietzmann, *An die Römer*, HNT (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1971) 46. Also Wilckens, *Römer*, 1:165-66, asserts (unfortunately, without any real support) that the shift to first person plural in v. 5 refers to the Jews.

⁴³On these parallels and the connections between vv. 3-7, see William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, *The Epistle to the Romans*, ICC (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1902), 72.

⁴⁴While a consequence is omitted in v. 3, if the above interpretation of the tie of v. 3 to v. 4 is correct, then the judgment of v. 4 is applied to the Jews of v. 3 on the basis of their unfaithfulness.

⁴⁵Note that the falsity of man is found in both 3:4 and 3:7, with the identical consequence, judgment. If πᾶς ἀνθρώπος includes Jews in 3:4, then it is quite possible that by "my" (ἐμῶ) and "even I" (καὶ γώ) in 3:7 Paul is referring to himself rhetorically as a representative of the Jews, if on no other evidence than the presence of lying and judgment in both verses. Gaston says that the lying in 3:4 has singular application to the Gentiles since it is used in 1:25 for (Gentile) idolatry (*Paul and the Torah*, 121). But it is better to view the sin of untruthfulness in 3:4, 7 as essentially synonymous with (Jewish) unfaithfulness (3:3) and unrighteousness (3:5) because of their close connection in the paragraph, and because the opposite characteristics found in God seem to be so closely related as well. See Peter Stuhlmacher, *Gerechtigkeit Gottes bei Paulus*, FRLANT, vol. 87 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1965), 85-86.

⁴⁶Both Moo (*Romans*, 192) and Leon Morris (*The Epistle to the Romans* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988], 159-60) understand κόσμος as a broad reference including Jews and Gentiles.

⁴⁷Gager, *Origins*, 214.

⁴⁸Gaston, *Paul and the Torah*, 121.

doubt; but Psa 5:9 (Rom 3:13a), 140:3 (Rom 3:13b), Isa 59:7-8 (Rom 3:15-17), and Psa 36:1 (Rom 3:18) are directed at fellow Jews by the writer(s).⁴⁹ At the very least one must say that the catena condemns Gentiles as well as Jews.⁵⁰ These OT verses serve to demonstrate the fact that rather than the law being *useful* for Jews (as Gager claims) it is instead *devastating* for them.⁵¹ It is not enough to say that the law is useful as long as it is observed, and that the Jews only need to be restored to the faithful observance of it; Paul's point is that the law *cannot be observed* sufficiently enough to gain righteous standing with God. All this suggests that Gager's statement regarding Paul's overall purpose about the usefulness of the law is vulnerable.

Conclusion to Proposition #2

The second proposition states that Paul never condemns the Jews for rejecting Christ. But there is no adequate attention given to the fact that Jews are not completely absent from the indictment of Romans 1. Furthermore, Rom 3:1-8 is best understood as condemning not just Gentiles, but Jews as well. Perhaps the most telling point against the bi-covenantal theologians is the clear indication that the catena of Rom 3:9-20 includes both Gentiles and Jews. Further light is thrown on the issue of Paul's view of the salvation of Jews as one considers the relationship of Jews and Gentiles to the law.

Proposition #3: "*Paul never criticizes the Jews for doing 'works of the law.'*"

There are three passages that are especially relevant to the discussion of the relationship of Jews and Gentiles to the law. They are Rom 3:21-31; Gal 2:11-21, and 3:19-4:11, but only Romans 3 can be considered at this point.

⁴⁹In *Midr.* Psa 149.5, Psa 5:9 (see Rom 3:13) is cited, referring to the "wicked" (among the Jewish people), distinct from the "saints" and "the nations." *Midr.* Psa 120.3 cites Psa 140:3 (see Rom 3:13) as an allusion to "those evil-tongued children of Israel . . ." who spoke against Moses (cf. Num 21:5) (*Ibid.*, 2:291). Isa 59:7-8a (see Rom 3:15) refer to Jews: "a prophet or other spiritual leader addresses the community, . . . asserting that the real reason for his [God's] failure to come to their help is that they are sunk in sin" (R. N. Whybray, *Isaiah 40-66*, NCBC [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975], 219). Finally, Psa 36:1ff (see Rom 3:18) seems to describe the personal enemies of the Psalmist and not those of the nation as a whole, suggesting that these wicked are from among the Jewish people (Charles Augustus Briggs, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Psalms*, ICC, vol. 1 [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1906], 315). The evidence indicates that Jews as well as Gentiles are included in the catena.

Furthermore, Gaston's argument that the other passages in the catena refer to Gentiles may be suspect as well. For evidence that the other verses (Pss 14:1-3 [in Rom 3:10] and 10:7 [in Rom 3:14]) may refer to the Jews and not Gentiles, see Glenn N. Davies, *Faith and Obedience in Romans: A Study in Romans 1-4*, JSNTSup, vol. 39 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990), 82-88.

⁵⁰For the many thematic connections of the catena with Rom 1:18-3:9, 19, and for how they relate to Jew and Gentile, see Leander A. Keck, "The Function of Rom 3:10-18--Observations and Suggestions," in *God's Christ and His People: Studies in Honour of Nils Alstrup Dahl*, ed. Jacob Jervell and Wayne A. Meeks (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1977), 151-54.

⁵¹Cf. also Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:196.

Romans 3:21-31

The bi-covenantal adherents maintain in this paragraph that Paul does not discourage the Jews from keeping the law. In fact, the phrase "works of the law" refers not to Jews who keep the law in order to be justified before God (the traditional understanding of Rom 3:28), but rather to the devastating effects of the law *upon Gentiles*. Gager's and Gaston's view of this important paragraph can be summarized in four points: (1) The phrase "without law" (χωρίς νόμου) in 3:21 does not imply Paul was opposed to the Torah, and in fact the phrase should be read as "alongside and in conformity with the law." Paul says the law and prophets bear witness to the righteousness of God found now, for the Gentiles, in Christ and not in Torah.⁵² (2) In the phrase "by the works of the law" (ἐξ ἔργων νόμου) in 3:20 (as well as in Gal 2:16 *tris*; 3:2, 5, 10), νόμου should be understood as a subjective genitive, so that Paul is considering the "works or effects produced by the law" rather than human attempts to do the deeds prescribed by the law. The negative effects of the law are clear enough in Romans. They apply, however, only to the Gentiles. The Gentiles do not have the law nor keep its commandments (Rom 1:18ff) but sin. Nevertheless, Paul says that they do τὰ τοῦ νόμου (2:14), i.e., they set themselves up as their own ultimate spiritual standard when they sin, and "...put themselves idolatrously where only God's Torah belongs. That is why the things of the law have such bad effects. By idolatrous sinning they show that the work of the law is written in their hearts, not the law itself, but the work of the law, that is, wrath and sin."⁵³ Since the Gentiles are outside of the gracious covenant, Torah destroys them. But for the Jews, it has no such negative impact. (3) Since the passage is dominated by the thought of the inclusion of the Gentiles in God's people, the phrase εἰς πάντας τοὺς πιστεύοντας in 3:22 refers *only* to Gentiles who receive a new manifestation of divine righteousness apart from the law, though it is possible that the phrase refers to Jews and Gentiles who believe as a result of this new manifestation. If this is the case, then the outcome is that no one is excluded (including Jews).⁵⁴ (4) The phrase "since He has passed over former sins" (διὰ τὴν πάρεσιν τὴν προγεγονότων ἁμαρτημάτων) in 3:25 refers quite specifically to the Gentile sins cataloged in 1:18-28. It is thus the Gentiles who have faith in Christ whom God now justifies. Gager states, "It is not at all clear that Paul is thinking here of Jews. The transition to a primary focus on Gentiles comes earlier, certainly in v. 20 and perhaps already in v. 19."⁵⁵

First, in response to the foregoing interpretation, χωρίς νόμου probably does not mean "alongside and in conformity with the law." The more likely meaning of χωρίς is "without," or "without relation to, independent of" something (in this case, the law).⁵⁶ Because the phrase

⁵²Gager, *Origins*, 215. Cf. also Gaston, *Paul and the Torah*, 32, 60, for the same point.

⁵³*Ibid.*, 105-6.

⁵⁴See also George Howard, "Christ the End of the Law: The Meaning of Romans 10:4ff," *JBL* 88 (1969): 336; and Koenig, *Jews and Christians*, 43-44, 46.

⁵⁵Gager, *Origins*, 216. Cf. also Gaston, *Paul and the Torah*, 122-23. Gaston says that the phrase in 3:25, διὰ [τῆς] πίστεως ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι, should be translated "through [Jesus'] faithfulness at the cost of his blood." He argues, "There is no way grammatically to make the phrase mean 'to be received by faith' as in the usual interpretations, even if it is a Pauline insertion" (224, n. 47).

⁵⁶See BDAG, 1095. Paul uses χωρίς six times in Romans (3:21, 28; 4:6; 7:8, 9; 10:14), and in all but the disputed usage in 3:21 it does not have the sense Gaston ascribes to it. While it might mean "*alongside and in conformity with the law*" in 3:21 (as Gaston maintains), it does not have that meaning elsewhere in the epistle. And

νοὐὶ δέ is best understood temporally,⁵⁷ Paul is referring to a new epoch that has dawned in Jesus Christ,⁵⁸ suggesting that the "law" is passé and salvation is now found apart from the law.⁵⁹

Furthermore, as Dunn points out, χωρὶς νόμου is closely paralleled by other phrases in this section (especially χωρὶς ἔργων νόμου, 3:28; χωρὶς ἔργων, 4:6).⁶⁰ In these parallels, the emphasis is on the fact that the righteousness of God is found apart from doing the deeds prescribed by the Mosaic law, not that the righteousness is "alongside and in conformity with works of the law" as Gager maintains.

Regarding the second point above, related to the "works produced by the law," several criticisms should be voiced. When ἔργον is the head term in a genitival phrase, and the word in the genitive case denotes something non-personal (i.e., an inanimate object or something abstract), however the genitive is construed (objective, descriptive, etc.), it is a person suggested by the context who commits the "work" of the genitival phrase.⁶¹ This makes it unlikely that

in Rom 3:28, its nearest contextual neighbor, it cannot possibly mean, "The Gentile is justified by faith *alongside and in conformity with* the works of the law," rendering a position even Gaston would reject. It is likely, judging from Paul's use of the word and the context of their occurrences, that it means "without, apart from" here and in the other verses where it occurs.

⁵⁷Νοὐὶ probably does not have a logical force in this connection, but maintains a temporal idea (cf. also the temporal use of the word in Rom 6:22; 7:6; 1 Cor 13:13; 15:20; Eph 2:13, and Col 1:22). The δέ emphasizes a contrast between the impossibility of justification by works (mentioned in the previous verses), and the fact that in the recent past a decisive event took place by which a righteousness of God is given as a free gift and has now been manifested (Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:201). Paul is emphasizing not only the contrast between justification and true works of the law and justification without the law, he is also emphasizing the manifestation of justification apart from law which came with the revelation of Christ. *Now* (νοὐὶ), in contrast with the past, this righteousness of God is manifested apart from the law (Murray, *Romans*, 1:108; Normand Bonneau, "Stages of Salvation History in Romans 1:16-3:26," *Église et Théologie* 23, no. 2 [1992]: 194). A similar temporal shift is found in connection with the phrase ἐν τῷ νῦν καιρῷ in 3:26.

⁵⁸Charles H. Cosgrove, "The Justification of the Other: An Interpretation of Rom 1:18-4:25," *SBL Seminar Papers 1992*, ed. Eugene H. Lovering (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), 626.

⁵⁹Ulrich Luz, *Das Geschichtsverständnis des Paulus*, BEvT, vol. 49 (Munich: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1968), 168-69. Paul elsewhere says that the law was a temporary epoch *by design* (2 Cor 3:7, 11; Gal 3:23-25; 4:1-5). Now that the "new covenant" has come (2 Cor 3:6), the "old covenant" has come to its end (2 Cor 3:14). Cf. Stephen Westerholm, *Israel's Law and the Church's Faith: Paul and His Recent Interpreters* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 130.

⁶⁰Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 164-65.

⁶¹For example, ἀποθώμεθα οὐ ἐν τὰ ἔργα τοῦ σκοτους in Rom 13:12 should be understood not as "works produced by darkness," but "works typified by darkness" carried out by people (in this case Christians who should know better, ἀποθώμεθα). In Eph 4:12, the "work of service" (ἔργον διακονίας) is "service-oriented work" done by the saints. First Thess 1:3 and 2 Thess 1:11 have the similar phrases τοῦ ἔργου τῆς πίστεως and ἔργον πίστεως respectively, both referring to faith-filled deeds done by the Thessalonian church. And in Jude 15, περὶ πάντων τῶν ἔργων ἀσεβείας means "ungodly deeds" done by the godless. At least one phrase may not quite fit this maxim. Φανερά δέ ἐστὶν τὰ ἔργα τῆς σαρκός in Gal 5:19 may refer to "fleshly works" done by people, not by some abstract, impersonal force called the "flesh." But σὰρξ is so closely connected with one's personhood that it may fall outside the limits of the maxim.

These observations appear to hold up for the construction in the LXX. Representative of the construction are phrases such as "works of the tent" (τὰ ἔργα τῆς σκηνῆς, objective genitive, Exod 35:21; Num 3:7), "the work(manship) of the ephod" (τὸ ἔργον τῆς ἐπωμίδος, objective genitive, Exod 36:15 LXX), "work of lily"

ἔργων νόμου means "works produced by the law;" instead, the construction and context point toward these being "law-type of deeds" that might be attempted by everyone (πᾶς ὁ κόσμος, 3:19; πᾶσα σὰρξ, 3:20). Furthermore, it was argued above that the law has a negative influence on both Jews and Gentiles.

On the third and fourth arguments (which are closely related) voiced by Gager, it is exceedingly unlikely that Paul begins to deal exclusively with Gentiles beginning at 3:19-20. As it was mentioned above in the treatment of Rom 2:17-3:20, the OT catena includes references to the Jews. The catena is followed by phrases that have a decidedly universal emphasis (πᾶν στόμα, πᾶς ὁ κόσμος, 3:19; πᾶσα σὰρξ, 3:20; εἰς πάντας τοῦ πιστεύοντος, 3:22; πάντες ἡμάρτον, 3:23), indicating that both Jews and Gentiles are included in the condemnation of the catena, as well as in the need to appropriate God's provision in Christ. This universal motif continues into v. 24 as well, where justification is tied directly to the redemption found in Jesus Christ. This makes it unlikely that the justification of Jews comes through a means other than the gracious redemption found in Christ. As for the "sins previously committed" referring only to the catalog of Gentile sins in Romans 1, the context of 3:21-31--especially the catena (which intervenes between Rom 1:18-28 and 3:21-31) being applied to Jews and Gentiles, and the universal language of the section--makes referring these sins to Romans 1 and to Gentiles (not Jews) too difficult to be credible. It seems much more likely that the context points in the direction of the sins of both Jews and Gentiles being passed over.

In addition, it appears that Gager has not paid close enough attention to the context of 3:29-30 when he asserts that the faith Jews need is faith in the Torah. Much of the "righteousness" and "justification" language found throughout this brief section is tied closely to the theme of the gospel of Christ being apropos for all humanity, and not just Gentiles.⁶² These two themes of justification and universality are, in turn, tied to faith in Christ.⁶³ The unit is tightly knit

(ἔργον κρίνου, appositional genitive, 3 Kgds 7:19), the "works of service" (τῶν ἔργων τῆς λειτουργίας, objective genitive, 1 Chron 9:19), "acts of pride" (ἐν ἔργοις ὑβρεως, descriptive genitive, Sir 10:6), and "deeds of justice [that] someone announces" (ἔργα δικαιοσύνης τίς ἀναγγελεῖ, descriptive genitive, Sir 16:22). Forty-five times the construction occurs; in forty-two occurrences ἔργον means "work, deed, act" (not "thing," "matter;" cf. Gen 40:17; 2 Chron 4:6; and 1 Macc 10:44), and in all but two it is people found in the context who are doing the work. The exceptions are Isa 32:17 (ἐσται τὰ ἔργα τῆς δικαιοσύνης εἰρήνη, "And the work of righteousness will be peace") and Jer 14:4 (τὰ ἔργα τῆς γῆς ἐξέλιπεν, "the works of the earth have failed"). But in Isaiah 32, it is the Spirit who effects the "work of righteousness" (32:15), not righteousness itself (Franz Delitzsch, *Isaiah*, vol. 2, trans. James Martin [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980], 53). As for Jeremiah 14, ἔργον may take on a more metaphorical sense of "produce," or "crops," a nuance that would fit well with ἐκλείπω ("the crops have failed").

⁶² Οὐ δικαιωθήσεται πᾶσα σὰρξ ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ, 3:20; πάντες...δικαιούμενοι, 3:23-24; δικαιῶσθαι πίστει ἄνθρωπον (Gager reads "Greek" or "Gentile" here, without contextual warrant; it refers to humanity in general), 3:28; δικαιώσει περιτομὴν...καὶ ἀκροβυστίαν, 3:30. Thielman points out that πάντες in 3:23 is not qualified by "Gentiles," and that διαστολή in 3:22 refers to the lack of distinction between Jews and Gentiles. Therefore, "it is virtually impossible to read the πάντες of 3:23 as anything but a reference to the whole world, both Jews and Gentiles, who without distinction need to be justified 'by redemption in Christ Jesus'" (*Pilght*, 128).

⁶³ Cosgrove, "The Justification of the Other: An Interpretation of Romans 1:18-4:25," *SBL Seminar Papers 1992*, ed. Eugene H. Lovering, Jr. (Atlanta: Scholars, 1992), 627. Bonneau ("Stages," 177, n. 1) makes the informative observation that Paul's treatment of God's wrath begins at 1:18 and continues to 3:20, and that it is

enough with these three elements that to claim that faithful observance of the *Torah* (or God's faithfulness as grounded in *Torah*) as the means of the salvation of Jews appears to do violence to the context.

Conclusion to Proposition #3

The third proposition dealt with the relationship of the Jews and Gentiles to the law. It was argued in connection with Rom 3:21-31 that the occurrences of the words "justification," "faith," and "Christ" are found in too close a connection with both Jews and Gentiles to exclude Jews from the need for Christ. Furthermore, the phrase "works of the law" can only refer to deeds required by the law which people perform, and do not speak of the effects of the law upon Gentiles only.

Proposition #4: "*Paul never says that the Jews
are not right with God.*"

This proposition obviously has much in common with the others found above. But the bi-covenantalists find this idea in passages which others traditionally view as condemning the Jews if they persist in their rejection of Christ. Those passages include Gal 6:11-18 and Phil 3:2-11, though space permits consideration only of the former.

Galatians 6:11-18

In Gal 6:16, Gager says that Paul does not address the church as Israel, nor does he transfer to the church Israel's distinctives. The phrase "and upon the Israel of God" (καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰσραὴλ τοῦ θεοῦ) refers not to the church, or even to a faithful, converted Jewish remnant, but, in Gager's words, to ". . . Israel's unshakable standing with God."⁶⁴ In other words, the Israel of God enjoys an ongoing, right standing ("peace and mercy") with God that is completely distinct from those who "walk according to this rule."

Betz is correct to note the centrality of this passage for the whole argument of the letter.⁶⁵ The statement of Paul's "rule" must be read in light of the context of the entire epistle, in which Paul not only censures the law as the governing rule of life for the Christian (as seen in the hortatory section in, e.g., 5:3-4, 14), but also as the means of salvation (as seen in the theological core of the letter in 3:10-14, 17-18, 23-24, 28).

"bracketed by statements on the righteousness of God in 1:16-17 and 3:21-26." As argued above, if 1:16-17 ties Jews to the gospel of Christ, the second part of the *inclusio* requires a similar idea in 3:21ff, as it appears to do if the interpretation of 3:21ff is correct.

⁶⁴Gager, *Origins*, 229.

⁶⁵In *Galatians: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 319, Betz points out that the whole epistle revolves around the "rule" of 6:15. The narrative in chapters 1-2 shows that Paul himself consistently followed the rule. The theological core of the letter (chapters 3-4) as well as the hortatory portions (5-6) indicate that Paul required the rule to be followed. Cf. also Betz, "The Literary Composition and Function of Paul's Letter to the Galatians," *NTS* 21 (April 1975): 356-58, 378-79; and Wolfgang Harnisch, "Einübung des neuen Seins. Paulinische Paränese am Beispiel des Galaterbriefs," *ZTK* 84, no. 3 (1987): 279-80, 286.

The main syntactical difficulty in Gal 6:16 is in the force of the third conjunction καί: καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰσραὴλ τοῦ θεοῦ. Is the conjunction to be understood as exegetical (so that "those who walk" are identical with "the Israel of God"), ascensive ("those who walk" refers to Christians in Galatians, while the "Israel of God" then refers to Christians in general), or is it adjunctive (meaning "also"--"those who walk" refers to Gentile believers, and "Israel of God" to Jewish believers or Jews)?⁶⁶ The discussion of these issues is exceedingly complex and especially prone to theological bias.⁶⁷ Nevertheless, the primary issue raised by Gager is whether or not there is any relationship between "those who walk according to this rule" who have "peace and mercy," and the "Israel of God" that has "peace and mercy" as well. His view is that there is none, and that Israel has an on-going relationship with God *apart from the "rule" of Paul* as that rule focuses on Christ.

While Gager's view is grammatically possible, it must be rejected in light of the fact that Paul saw his gospel, the gospel of grace found in Jesus Christ as it is appropriated by faith, to be of universal significance. While some of this has been argued above, the presence of such verses as Gal 3:10 (οἷοι [see also οἷοι in 6:16] . . . πᾶς), Gal 3:22 (τὰ πάντα), and 3:26-28 (πάντες . . . οἷοι . . . πάντες) support the fact that the Israel of God does not have a fundamentally distinct standing with God by means that differ from Gentiles.

In addition, the progression of thought in the passage does not support Gager's contention. Gal 6:13 speaks of those who seek to boast in the circumcised flesh of the Galatian believers. In 6:14, H. A. W. Meyer⁶⁸ says that the adversative δέ offers a contrast to those circumcisers, indicating that Paul boasts only in the cross of Christ. Then, in 6:15, γάρ introduces an explanation⁶⁹ of v. 14 as to why Paul boasts only in the cross: circumcision is nothing, nor uncircumcision, but being a new creation. Finally, in 6:16, the first occurrence of καί shows that there is a connection between the benediction Paul pronounces in v. 16 and the actual "rule" itself

⁶⁶For a helpful summary of these interpretive options, see Gottlob Schrenk, "Was bedeutet 'Israel Gottes'?" *Judaica* 5 (1949): 84-85.

⁶⁷It is beyond the scope of this paper to consider this difficult problem. Those who argue that "Israel of God" refers to Jews or Jewish believers include Robert L. Saucy, *The Case for Progressive Dispensationalism* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993), 198-202; S. Lewis Johnson, Jr., "Paul and 'The Israel of God': An Exegetical and Eschatological Case-Study," in *Essays in Honor of J. Dwight Pentecost*, ed. Stanley D. Toussaint and Charles H. Dyer (Chicago: Moody Press, 1986), 191-94; and Peter Richardson, *Israel in the Apostolic Church*, SNTSMS, vol. 10 (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1969), 84. For those who view the phrase as a reference to the church, see Richard N. Longenecker, *Galatians* WBC, vol. 41 (Dallas: Word, 1990), 298, as well as Luz (*Das Geschichtsv-erständnis*, 285-86) and N. A. Dahl ("Der Name Israel: Zur Auslegung von Gal 6,16," *Judaica* 6 [1950]: 168). They maintain that after arguing throughout the letter for the fact that there are no distinctives between Jews and Gentiles, it becomes absurd for Paul to mention such distinctives in the benediction. On the contrary, *historical, cultural, and ethnic distinctives* are maintained throughout the epistle (1:13, 16; 2:7-9, 14-15; 3:14), while only in *soteriological* contexts are there said to be no distinctives in terms of the appropriation of salvation (2:16; 3:1-5, 7-14, 22, 26-28; 5:2-6; 6:14-15). For this point in relation to Gal 3:28, see S. Lewis Johnson, Jr., "Role Distinctions in the Church: Galatians 3:28," *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism*, ed. John Piper and Wayne Grudem (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1991), 158-60, 164.

⁶⁸H. A. W. Meyer, *Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the Epistle to the Galatians and Ephesians* (Winona Lake: Alpha Greek Publishers, 1979), 265.

⁶⁹So J. D. G. Dunn, *Galatians* BNTC (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1993), 342.

presented in v. 15.⁷⁰ Peace and mercy are for all who walk by that rule. The third problematic "and" of v. 16 could be understood in the way Gager views it, but it is not likely. He suggests that the copulative provides a looser connection to 6:16b,c than is warranted. Typically, according to A. T. Robertson, the simple copulative idea is the more common use of καί "where words are piled together by means of this conjunction."⁷¹ It is more likely that there is a closer tie between the εἰρήνη καὶ ἔλεος, τὸν Ἰσραὴλ τοῦ θεοῦ, and the cross of Christ than Gager says. The Israel of God has peace and mercy (εἰρήνη...καὶ ἔλεος καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰσραὴλ τοῦ θεοῦ). But this peace and mercy cannot be divorced from Christ.

Conclusion to Proposition #4

It is unlikely that either Galatians 6 can be used to support the fourth proposition in which it is claimed that Israel continues to be right with God apart from Christ. The tight flow of thought in Gal 6:11-18 makes it unlikely that the "Israel of God" is righteous by some means other than the "rule" by which Paul and other believers walked (Gal 6:14-16).

So, if one grants that Paul never viewed the gospel of Christ as salvifically relevant for the Jews (Proposition #1), or never condemned the Jews for rejecting Christ (#2), never criticized them for doing "works of the law" (#3), never says that the Jews are not right with God (#4), then what (one might ask) *was* Paul's complaint against the Jewish people? This question leads to the fifth and final proposition presented by the bi-covenantalists.

Proposition #5: "Paul's only complaint against the Jews related to their exclusivity."

Gaston and those who follow him maintain that Paul's only real complaint against the Jews was their unwillingness to recognize that *in Christ* the Gentiles could have the same standing before God that they enjoyed through the Torah. There are two passages that are especially relevant to this point: Rom 9:24-31 and 10:1-21.

Romans 9:24-33⁷²

Bi-covenantal proponents maintain that in Romans 9 Paul affirms the fact that ethnic Israel still continues to be the people of God, and that by no means is she rejected. Instead, Rom 9:30-10:21 is about the inclusion of Gentiles in the righteousness of God, but it does not deal with the refusal of Israel to believe in Christ. Gentiles acquired the righteousness of God, even if they did not pursue it. But Israel stumbled. In 9:31, according to Gaston, Israel did not attain the goal of the Torah, which was acceptance of the fact that the Gentiles could be included in the righteousness of God apart from, though expressed in, the Torah. In 9:32, Gaston says that Paul

⁷⁰Meyer, *Galatians*, 267.

⁷¹A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (Nashville: Broadman, 1934), 1182.

⁷²E. Elizabeth Johnson has written a brilliant summary and critique of Gaston's interpretation of Rom 9:1-23. It is unlikely that the present treatment can improve on hers, and the reader is referred to her discussion on these verses (*The Function of Apocalyptic and Wisdom Traditions in Romans* SBLDS, vol. 109 [Atlanta: Scholars, 1989], 193-99).

is explaining how it was that Israel did not arrive at the law which promised righteousness to the Gentiles. She was unfaithful to this goal of the law (the availability of the righteousness of God to the Gentiles) because she was distracted by works, and so stumbled over the goal. Paul says nothing negative about works, except that they do not lead to the realization of the goal. Israel was faithful to the Torah *as it related to Israel*, but stumbled and was unfaithful when the Torah offered righteousness through Christ to the Gentiles. The stone of offense in 9:33 is not a reference to Jesus Christ, and the stumbling is not Israel's refusal to place her faith in Him. The stone is not Christ, but the gospel of righteousness for the Gentiles as contained in and forecast by the Torah. This gospel is thus something to be trusted, and Gentiles trust Christ in it (as suggested in 9:32), *and* it is something to be stumbled over by Israel (9:33). Paul never argues that Israel as a whole stands under the judgment of God because of her rejection of Christ. Israel rejects the gospel because of her exclusivism, and it is for this that Paul condemns her.⁷³

In response, Gaston is right in drawing attention to the theme of the inclusion of the Gentiles and Paul's criticism of Israel for her exclusivity. But this is probably not quite Paul's main point in this paragraph. Moo⁷⁴ offers two objections to Gaston's position on Romans 9 as a whole that are especially pertinent to 9:24-33. First, Rom 9:1-3 does not fit with what Gaston, Gager, or Hall say.⁷⁵ Paul's anguish about the condition of the Jews cannot be adequately explained if his sentiment were concerned only with Jewish exclusivity.⁷⁶ Paul uses the word ἀνάθεμα in 9:3, to which it is difficult to assign a temporary, non-eternal meaning.⁷⁷ Second, Paul's willingness to be condemned instead of Israel makes sense only if Israel is condemned because she is "separated from Christ" (9:3).⁷⁸

Additionally, 9:32-33 can be marshaled against the bi-covenantalists. While Gaston maintains that the stone of offense over which Israel stumbles is her own law,⁷⁹ it is preferable to see the stone as having a messianic reference.⁸⁰ This is supported contextually by the fact that

⁷³Gaston, *Paul and the Torah*, 96-99, 126-29, 141, 149; Gager, *Origins*, 223-25; Klappert, "Traktat," 73-76.

⁷⁴Moo, *Romans*, 557-58.

⁷⁵Hall (*Christian Anti-Semitism*, 120-21) argues that in 9:1-3 Paul does not imply the rejection of the Jews by God. Instead, Paul is using an image reiterated in 11:17-24, where the "cutting off" of some Jews is a temporary act of God. Thus Paul, in 9:1-3, cannot envision anything but a temporary separation of some Jews from God because of their unfaithfulness in accepting that Gentiles are now right with God through Christ.

⁷⁶On this point, see also Heikki Räisänen, "Römer 9-11: Analyse eines geistigen Ringens," *ANRW* 2.25.4 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1987), 2895-96, and n. 27; idem, "Paul, God, and Israel: Romans 9-11 in Recent Research," in *The Social World of Formative Christianity and Judaism: Essays in Tribute to Howard Clark Kee*, ed. Jacob Neusner, et al. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 190.

⁷⁷ἀνάθεμα means "to be destroyed, to receive eschatological judgment" (H. Aust, and D. Müller, "Curse, Insult, Fool," *NIDNTT*, ed. Colin Brown [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975], 1:414-15).

⁷⁸R. Liechtenhan, *Die göttliche Vorherbestimmung bei Paulus und in der poisionianischen Philosophie*, FRLANT, vol. 35 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1922), 43. Liechtenhan points out that Paul's willingness to cast himself away from his salvation in order to provide it for his fellow Jews is an indication that his fellow Jews are outside of the realm of salvation found in Christ.

⁷⁹Gaston, *Paul and the Torah*, 128-29.

⁸⁰There is evidence that the messianic interpretation of Isa 28:16, which Paul cites in 9:33, is pre-Christian. Some versions of the LXX (e.g., Vaticanus) contain the phrase ἐπὶ τῷ ἰσραὴλ, with no equivalent in the MT, though the phrase may be a Christian interpolation which has penetrated the LXX from Rom 9:33. If this were the case,

the rock of offense in 9:32-33 is tied directly to Christ in 10:11 (where, as in 9:33b, the phrase πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ' αὐτῷ οὐ καταισχυνθήσεται occurs again). This in turn is found in connection with the acceptance of Christ in 10:9. It appears that Israel's main problem is rejecting Jesus Christ, rather than holding exclusively to her own privileged position as God's people.⁸¹

Romans 10:1-21

Gager⁸² here argues that the whole section is dominated by the theme of the inclusion of Gentiles. He presents five arguments. First, 10:3 indicates that Paul writes against Jews who hold to their claim of righteousness to the exclusion of Gentiles, not to their efforts to establish their own righteousness through works of the law. Second, Christ is the *telos* of the law in the double sense of the Torah pointing toward the redemption of the Gentiles, and pointing toward the need for faith both by Jews and Gentiles. Third, Paul uses a series of biblical proof-texts in 10:5-13, 18-20, that supports the idea of the legitimacy of the inclusion of the Gentiles. Thus in these verses, whatever they might say about the Jews, the point is that there is a strong case made for the inclusion of Gentiles from the OT. Fourth, faith is the key for Gentiles, as seen in 10:9. And fifth, Paul returns to the unity of God and of faith (10:10-12), proving that there is an equal footing before God for Gentiles and Jews. This equal footing is reached, however, through different paths. Paul never speaks of Israel as rejected by God, never speaks of the Torah as being abrogated, and so never speaks of Gentiles or Christians as taking Israel's place.

While it is true that Paul never speaks of the replacement of Israel by the church, Gager's other contentions have little if any contextual support. For example, in response to his first argument, in which Gager says that Paul never speaks of the Torah as being abrogated, it is remotely possible that τέλος νόμου in 10:4 could be understood this way. But even so interpreted, Rom 10:4 poses certain difficulties for this position. Granted, the meaning of τέλος νόμου is notoriously difficult.⁸³ But Schreiner makes an important point. He claims that the

however, it would imply literary dependence of 1 Pet 2:6 (where the phrase occurs) on Rom 9:33, which is problematic. For the evidence that this is messianic and not "nomistic," cf. Joachim Jeremias, "λίθος, λίθινος," *TDNT*, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967), 6:272-73; Peter Stuhlmacher's article "Paul: A Rabbi Who Became an Apostle," in Lapidé's and Stuhlmacher's *Paul: Rabbi and Apostle*, 59; and Käsemann, *Romans*, 278-79.

⁸¹Hall (*Christian Anti-Semitism*, 122) says that Rom 9:30-32 is ". . . Paul's clever way of saying that some Jews did not see that righteousness is not only theirs but the Gentiles' as well." The Jews stumble over Christ *only in the sense that they refuse to recognize that He is God's provision of righteousness for the Gentiles*. But as it has been demonstrated by the connection of 9:33c with 10:9-11, Hall's interpretation of 9:30-33 is weak.

⁸²Gager, *Origins*, 223-25. Gaston gives nothing but a passing reference to Rom 10:1-4.

⁸³Does the phrase mean "conclusion/termination" of the law? See Otto Michel, *Der Brief an die Römer. Übersetzt und Erklärt* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1955), 223-24; Paul Althaus, *Der Brief an die Römer* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1959), 108; M. -J. Lagrange, *Saint Paul, Épître aux Romains*, EtBib (Paris: Librairie LeCoffre, 1950), 253; C. H. Dodd, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans* (New York: Harper and Row, 1932), 176; and David K. Lowery, "Christ, the End of the Law in Romans 10:4," in *Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church: The Search for Definition*, ed. Craig A. Blaising and Darrell L. Bock (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 235-36.

Does it mean "fulfillment/goal?" See Daniel P. Fuller, *Gospel and Law: Contrast or Continuum?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 84-88; and C. Thomas Rhyne, "*Nomos Dikaïosynēs* and the Meaning of Romans 10:4,"

purpose of Rom 10:4 "is not to provide a global theological statement on the relationship between gospel and law. Instead, verse 4 should be interpreted in relationship to verse 3, inasmuch as the two are joined by 'for' (γάρ)." ⁸⁴ In 10:3, Paul writes that the Jewish people sought to establish their own righteousness through their own efforts (see also the same idea in 9:32). Thus "it is fair to conclude that Paul says that some Jews thought they could obtain righteousness by doing what the law says." ⁸⁵ Schreiner writes,

The context suggests that the Jews should have submitted to God's righteousness by believing in Christ. Verse 4 then provides the reason why the Jews should have subjected themselves to God's righteousness--that Christ brings to an end the attempt to establish one's own righteousness. The close connection between verses 3 and 4 demonstrates that in verse 4 Paul does not make some overarching theological statement on the relationship between gospel and law. He responds to the specific problem raised in verse 3 of people wrongly using the law to establish their own righteousness. In verse 4 Paul points out that those who believe in Christ cease using the law as a means of establishing their own righteousness. ⁸⁶

Regardless, then, of what view one takes on the meaning of τέλος νόμου, the point of the statement of 10:4 is to challenge Jewish works-righteousness through keeping the law, and to emphasize the need to obtain the righteousness of God found in Christ. Israel cannot hope to gain this righteousness through the Torah and apart from Christ, *contra* Gager.

Gager's remaining arguments, which relate to the contention that the inclusion of Gentiles in the people of God is Paul's main point in Romans 10, have problems, too. Does Rom 10:9-11 refer only to Gentiles, and does 10:12-13 indicate that Jews and Gentiles become right with God

CBQ 47 (July 1985): 492-93.

For a concise (and therefore valuable) summary of the various views, and for the bibliographic information on this issue, see Douglas J. Moo, "The Law of Moses or the Law of Christ," in *Continuity and Discontinuity: Perspectives on the Relationship Between the Old and New Testaments: Essays in Honor of S. Lewis Johnson, Jr.*, ed. John S. Feinberg (Westchester: Crossway Books, 1988), 206-8. Moo rightly adopts the view that combines the ideas of "goal" and "termination." He writes, "[Christ] is the point of culmination for the Mosaic Law. He is its 'goal,' in the sense that the law has always anticipated and looked forward to Christ. But he is also its 'end' in that his fulfillment of the law brings to an end that period of time when it was a key element in the plan of God. Both ideas are clearly present in the context: Paul scolds the Jews for failing to see that the law had other purposes than a call to works (9:31-32) and for failing to recognize 'God's righteousness' (10:2-3), a righteousness that has come 'apart from the law' (Romans 3:21)." For a similar conclusion, see Franz J. Leenhardt, *The Epistle to the Romans: A Commentary* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1961), 266; and Mark A. Seifrid, "Paul's approach to the Old Testament in Rom 10:6-8," *TrinJ* ns. 6 (Spring 1985): 6-10.

⁸⁴Thomas R. Schreiner, *The Law and Its Fulfillment: A Pauline Theology of Law* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993), 134.

⁸⁵*Ibid.*, 135.

⁸⁶*Ibid.*, 135-36. This perspective on Rom 10:3-4 is preferable to Gager's (*Origins*, 249) or Hall's (*Christian Anti-Semitism*, 122). They claim that 10:3 is about how "the Jews have failed to understand the redemption of the Gentiles in Christ . . ." The failure of the Jews in 10:1-3 was that they rejected the fact that Gentiles could have God's righteousness through Paul's gospel concerning Jesus Christ. But in 10:1, Paul's evaluation of their condition, and the one about which he felt so much anguish, was their σωτηρίαν, *not* their attempt to exclude Gentiles from God's righteousness. Once this point is realized, Schreiner's approach is demonstrably superior and better accords with the textual data.

through distinct ways? Neither of these is likely. While the central section of Romans 10 does argue that the Gentiles can have right standing with God, it does not support the view that Jews have a similar standing through means that differ from the Gentiles. Evidence for this understanding is seen in the flow of the passage and the oft repeated motifs of righteousness, faith, and the global implications of the gospel.⁸⁷ But probably the strongest contextual clue is that mentioned above, namely, that the citation of Isa 28:16 in Rom 9:33b (καὶ ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ' αὐτῷ οὐ κατασχυνοθήσεται), where Paul clearly has the Jews in mind (Ἰσραήλ, 9:31; ἐν Σιών, 9:33), is used again in Rom 10:11. Hence, Gager's assertions that only Gentiles are in view in 10:9-13, and that Jews are acceptable to God on the basis of His faithfulness and their observance of Torah, are suspect.

Conclusion to Proposition #5

Rom 9:24-31 and 10:1-21 do emphasize strongly the inclusion of the Gentiles in the people of God, and Gaston and Gager are right to stress this. But there is too much evidence that indicates that Israel stumbled over the rock of offense, best understood as Christ and the redemption offered only in Him (9:30-33), or that Christ is both the goal and termination of the law as the one who must be reckoned with for salvation.

Conclusion

It is hoped that the above gives a fair summary and a defensible critique of the bi-covenantal approach to Paul's view of Jewish salvation. A survey of some of the relevant texts indicates that Paul did, in fact, believe that the Jewish people stood in need of the righteousness of God *found only in Christ*. They were not right with God through the Torah, or through God's faithfulness to them manifested without Christ. Bi-covenantalism does not do an adequate job of explaining Paul's view of the spiritual condition of the Jewish people. The passages utilized by Gaston and his followers actually point toward the need which the Jewish people have for Jesus Christ.

If the foregoing discussion is correct, then bi-covenantalism is actually guilty of what it condemns in those who hold to an exclusive approach to Christ and Christianity: anti-semitism.

⁸⁷The flow of thought in Rom 10:1-21 can be considered only in an exceedingly superficial way here. Johnson's observations (*Function*, 198-99) about Gaston's exegesis of Rom 10:1-21 will be cited at length both to summarize the passage and draw attention to some of the problems Gaston's view encounters:

[The entirety of Rom 9:32-10:9] . . . could still apply only to Gentiles, as Gaston maintains, were it not for vv. 12-13. The reassertion of divine impartiality (cf. Rom 3:22, 29) explains why the same one is κύριος πάντων, that is, of both Jew and Greek, and why *all* who call upon his name will be saved.

One of the subtlest features of Gaston's exegesis of chapter 10 is his claim that vv 18 and 19 speak of different groups: v 18a asks, '(the Gentiles) have surely heard, have they not?' and v 19a asks, 'Israel did not understand, did it?' What Israel did not understand is 'that the time had come to do this [i.e., include the Gentiles].' [Johnson cites Gaston's *Paul and the Torah*, 33.] The very inclusiveness of 10:12-13, however, forbids such a reading. If everyone--both Jew and Greek--who calls on the Lord's name is saved, then the subject of each of the third person plural verbs in 10:14 [ἐπι καλέσωνται, ἐπίστευσαν, πιστεύσωσιν, ἤκουσαν, and ἀκούσωσιν] must be the same mixed company included in the πᾶς of v 13. Accordingly, the same must be the subject of the third person plural verbs in 10:16 [ὑπήκουσαν] and 18 [ἤκουσαν]. The naming of Israel in v 19, then, cannot be the fortuitous change of subject Gaston thinks it is.

Paul maintains that the Jews individually and corporately need Jesus Christ to be reconciled to God. To argue that they do not, and to foist upon Paul's epistles the two-covenant approach is ultimately to withhold the gospel from Israel and to condemn her to alienation from God. Such a perspective would be the height of anti-semitism, yet this is precisely where the bi-covenantal proponents go.⁸⁸ There is also a broadening tendency in several denominations to adopt a view similar to Gaston's and Gager's regarding the Jews.⁸⁹ The result is a disinclination to see evangelism of the Jews take place. In light of the foregone observations, these denominations must reevaluate their philosophy of ministry as it relates to the Jewish people.

⁸⁸For a similar criticism of the two-covenant approach, cf. Richard H. Bell, *Provoked to Jealousy: The Origin and Purpose of the Jealousy motif in Romans 9-11*, WUNT, vol. 63 (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1994), 354-55.

⁸⁹See Allan Brockway, et al., *The Theology of the Churches and the Jewish People* (Geneva: World Council of Churches Publications, 1988), *passim*, for an anthology of opinions from various denominations regarding the Jewish people.