

**Righteousness in the Concept of Covenantal Nomism:
An Exegetical Study of the Psalms of Solomon and Paul's Letters**

By

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This thesis is presented as part of the requirement for the Degree of Research Masters in
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I declare that this is my own account of the study and research that I have undertaken during my Masters by Research on Training (M. Theol) and contains no work which has been previously submitted for a degree at any other University

Irina S. Laloh

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Abstract

This thesis is an investigation of E. P. Sanders' concept of Covenantal Nomism as a description of the "pattern of religion" of Judaism. It has a particular focus on his argument that the religion of first-century Palestinian Judaism was not legalistic. This thesis seeks to show that his argument is evidently correct by taking the Psalms of Solomon as a case study to test whether its pattern of religion is rightly described as Covenantal Nomism. It offers a comparative analysis of the Psalms of Solomon and Pauline theology, focusing on the understanding of the 'getting in' and 'staying in' stages of their soteriologies. These are analysed using the concepts of 'monergism' and 'synergism.'

The thesis proceeds to examine their theology of *δικαιοσύνη* and *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* in association with the concept of Covenantal Nomism. The results of this examination are three main findings, which are as follows. Firstly, the 'getting in' stage of the Psalms of Solomon is monergistic because God's gracious election alone is involved, while the 'getting in' stage of Paul's soteriology is synergistic because faith in Christ Jesus is needed as a response to God's justifying activity. Secondly, in the 'staying in' stage, the soteriologies of both the Psalms of Solomon and Paul are synergistic, since obedience to the Law or 'obedience of faith' is required to maintain the covenant relationship with God. Thirdly, both the Psalms of Solomon and Paul's letters show a similar view, which is that God's discipline is fundamental to helping the righteous grow in their dependence on Him and rescuing those who sin from destruction. Both agree that God on the Day of Judgment will reward the righteous who obey, and punish the sinners and the righteous who disobey and choose not to repent.

The author concludes, from the findings, that contemporary Christians must take care to continue in the obedience of faith and the renewal of their minds through the empowering of the Spirit in order to ensure their continual growth into Christ's likeness and to avoid punishment on the Day of Judgment.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Christianity today is a multi-faceted belief and practice. This thesis will focus on two of these facets – faith and righteousness as lived through obedience to God’s will. When I look at the way in which some of contemporary Christians live their lives, it seems to me that they are ignoring the Biblical righteousness of God’s commands. The profession of Christianity is not always accompanied by a search for God’s way. A failure to understand the imperatives of righteousness and obedience may be the root of the problem. This raises a question: “How can we become Christians and obedient to the will of God?” Plainly, the question has become my pastoral concern in connection with the traditional Charismatic perspective which I have adopted and in which I have seen a problem. An academic discussion about first century Judaism and Paul’s letters might be helpful in rectifying this problem. I will analyse the language of righteousness in Judaism and Paul’s letters on the basis of the concept of Covenantal Nomism as their ‘pattern of religion.’ I have chosen this path because the concept links God’s righteousness and human righteousness in relation to obedience as a proper response to His grace. My pastoral concern has led to exegetical research which raises academic questions of this thesis, “What was the religion of first-century Palestinian Judaism – gracious or legalistic? Can the religion of Palestinian Judaism exhibit the concept of Covenantal Nomism as the ‘pattern of religion’? What is the relationship of the religion of Palestinian Judaism to Paul’s theology in terms of the concept of righteousness?” In addition, some criticisms of the ‘New Perspective on Paul’ are discussed in terms of their helpfulness to my research.

E. P. Sanders introduced the concept of Covenantal Nomism as his own description of the ‘pattern of religion’ of Judaism. He coined this term in his major book, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion*, (1977) as he argued that the Judaism of Paul’s day was not a religion of legalism or self-righteousness. He took the courage to challenge New Testament scholars on the Lutheran view of Paul¹ in relation to Palestinian Judaism as “a legalistic religion.”² His main argument is that the Judaism of Paul’s day has been wrongly criticized as a religion of works-salvation. Sanders believes that obeying commandments should no longer be considered as legalism but, rather, as keeping the covenant. Timo Laato compliments Sanders on an “innovative way”³ of establishing this Covenantal Nomism with the aim of understanding how the theological patterns of Judaism and Paul worked. Thus, the traditional Protestant interpretation that has dominated understanding of the writings of Paul has been challenged and revised. Most New Testament scholars have gained new insights into Paul’s writings in connection with their new interest and perspectives since they realised that the old Lutheran paradigm of understanding Paul was historically and theologically inaccurate. If the righteousness of God is related to His justifying activity, is the traditional perspective that

¹ Alister E. McGrath, *Justitia Dei: a History of the Christian Doctrine of Justification* (Cambridge: University Press, 1986), 379 notes Luther’s argument: “Paul criticized a totally misguided attempt on the part of Jewish legalists to find favour and acceptance in the sight of God, by earning righteousness through performing works of the law.” This Lutheran view is contested by Krister Stendahl, who had disputed his own Lutheran view in his thesis, ‘The Apostle Paul and the Introspective Conscience of the West’, in *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), prior to Sanders’ book.

² James W. Aageson, ‘Paul and Judaism: The Apostle in the Context of Recent Interpretation’, *Word & World*, Vol XX, Number 3, Summer (2000): 250, comments that E. P. Sanders has challenged “the Lutheran view of Paul with its anti-Jewish and negative implications: prior to the Damascus Road experience, Paul was a guilt-ridden Jew, who was burdened by his own inadequacy before the law and who lived in a religious world shaped by works of righteousness.” This indicates that Judaism in Paul’s day was legalistic.

³ As suggested by Timo Laato, ‘Paul’s Anthropological Considerations: Two Problems’, in *Justification and Variegated Nomism: the Complexities of Second Temple Judaism*, Vol 1, ed. D. A. Carson, Peter T. O’Brien and Mark A. Seifrid, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2001), 343. Laato comments that Sanders has developed “a very innovative theory” because Sanders sets out in this major book to eradicate the view that saw Judaism as “a legalistic religion” or “a religion in which one had to earn salvation by compiling more good works (merits).”

Paul is protesting against the Jewish teaching that justification must be earned by the works of achievement accurate?

This ‘New Perspective on Paul’ is a reaction to the traditional interpretation of Paul along the Martin Luther, Protestant Reformers, and Lutheran tradition, which considers that Paul is arguing against a legalistic Jewish culture seeking to earn salvation through works. For example, Rudolf Bultmann, a Lutheran theologian, portrayed Paul the Apostle as a self-righteous Pharisee who engendered the misconception of Judaism as a religion of self-righteousness.⁴ New Testament scholarship assumed that Paul was railing against Judaism as a legalistic religion: Paul’s argument over the Law in Gal 2:16 has been seen as “an indictment of legalistic efforts to merit favour before God.”⁵ According to this view, Jews in the first century BCE up to the rabbinic period believed they had to earn their salvation by obeying the Law and doing good works through their own efforts.

It is necessary to understand the nature of Paul’s critique of Judaism in order to provide evidence that the traditional Protestant interpretation has been wrong. Christians have listened to Paul’s writings but misunderstood them. For example, they assume that Paul compares his own righteousness with Jewish righteousness (Rom 10:3) which is seen as works-salvation in terms of gaining acceptance by God. This is basically opposed to the perception derived from the understanding of the Covenantal Nomism: Paul’s own righteousness comes by the Torah once

⁴ N. T. Wright, *What Saint Paul Really Said: Was Paul of Tarsus the Real Founder of Christianity?* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997), 15, and D. A. Carson, *Right with God: Justification in the Bible and the World* (London: World Evangelical Fellowship, 1992), 85. Carson comments that Rudolf Bultmann and Ernest Käsemann have read Paul through Lutheran eyes, and have regarded justification by faith as the central theological principle and “viewed Paul as rejecting a perverted attempt on the part of the Jews of his day to use the law as the means of earning righteousness by good works.”

⁵ As commented by Mark M. Mattison, ‘The Paul Page: A Summary of the New Perspective on Paul’; <http://www.thepaulpage.com/Summary.html>; retrieved 4 April 2008, 1.

he stays in the covenant.⁶ Sanders concedes that Paul considers his own righteousness a good thing (Rom 10:2; Phil 3:7), but it becomes wrong because of the revelation of God's righteousness which is by faith in Christ.⁷ As a result, Paul criticizes his own pre-Damascus righteousness for not putting his faith in Christ. In Phil 3:9, Paul confirms that those who have the righteousness that comes by the Law do not have the gift of the righteousness of God. Therefore, it is not possible that Paul criticizes Jews for their self-righteousness.

Sanders' concept of Covenantal Nomism will be used for a comparison between the Psalms of Solomon and Paul's letters in terms of their soteriologies. The view of Mikael Winninge is also engaged in the comparison between the two as he introduces it in his major book, *Sinners and the Righteous: A Comparative Study of the Psalms of Solomon and Paul's Letters*, in 1995. He suggests that the Psalms of Solomon, a collection of eighteen Jewish Psalms or songs from the first century BCE,⁸ are invaluable for gaining knowledge of Paul's Pharisaism. He adds that the Psalms of Solomon and Paul's letters "furnish us with good pre-70 knowledge about Pharisaism, there is sufficient reason to work with these two literary entities."⁹ Not all commentators would agree with Winninge's view about the Pharisaic origin of the Psalms of Solomon. Sanders views

⁶ E. P. Sanders, *Paul, the Law and the Jewish People* (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1983), 45. Sanders comments that "Paul knows that the most common term in Judaism for the maintenance of correct status is righteous. Phil 3 also shows that he is prepared to grant that observant Jews – he is the paradigm – have such righteousness. In the terms appropriate to Judaism, one is put in the covenant by the gracious election of God; one stays in it by observing the law and atoning for transgression; such a person is righteous by the Law."

⁷ Sanders, *Paul, the Law and the Jewish People*, 44. Sanders notes that "Paul does not say that boasting in status and achievement was wrong because boasting is the wrong attitude, but that he boasted in things that were gain. They became loss because in his black and white world, there is no second best. His criticism of his own former life is not that he was guilty of the attitudinal sin of self-righteousness, but that he put confidence in something other than faith in Jesus Christ."

⁸ Mikael Winninge, *Sinners and the Righteous: A Comparative Study of the Psalms of Solomon and Paul's Letters* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1995), 5. He notes that the Psalms of Solomon are a collection of texts written by Pharisees before 70 CE.

⁹ Winninge, *Sinners and Righteous*, 5.

the Psalms of Solomon as one of the bodies of writing to establish the “pattern of religion”¹⁰ of first century Judaism in connection with a description of how “getting into” and “staying in” the covenant is understood. Arguably, the promise of God’s renewal covenant (eschatological salvation through the Messiah) has brought a tremendous change in the way the Jews’ belief system is understood. Sanders affirms that the Psalms of Solomon, together with all types of rabbinic literature, have accepted the true fact that obedience is an act of basic loyalty to God.¹¹

The overall purpose of this thesis is to investigate Sanders’ Covenantal Nomism focusing on his argument that the religion of first-century Palestinian Judaism was gracious. I will use the Psalms of Solomon as a case study to test whether its pattern of religion is rightly described as Covenantal Nomism. A relationship of the Psalms of Solomon to Paul’s letters on the basis of the concept of Covenantal Nomism will be discussed in detail. The insight into the ‘getting in’ and ‘staying in’ stages of their soteriologies will be examined by using the terms of monergism and synergism. Similarity in the ‘staying in’ stages of their soteriologies is synergistic because obedience to God’s commands becomes a function in the maintenance of the covenant relationship with God. The results of the investigation will be exegetically developed in this thesis.

Chapter Two of this thesis will examine Sanders, Dunn and Wright due to their major approaches to the New Perspective on Paul on the basis of how Paul understands the language of

¹⁰ E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1977), 17. He defines a pattern of religion as the description of how a religion is perceived by its adherents to function. Perceived to function has the sense of “how getting in and staying in are understood: the way in which a religion is understood to admit and retain members is considered to be the way it functions. This may involve daily activities, such as prayers, washing, and the like.”

¹¹ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 17.

righteousness and protests against the Judaizers in his letters. Criticisms of the New Perspective on Paul will also be discussed in order to examine certain problems with Sanders' concept of Covenantal Nomism in Paul.

Chapter Three will take the Psalms of Solomon as a case study to test whether first-century Palestinian Judaism exhibits the concept of Covenantal Nomism as its 'pattern of religion.' The concept indicates the relationship between God's own initiative (covenant) and the Israelites' obedience to the law as their proper response (nomism). The analysis of the three categories of people in the Psalms of Solomon reveals that the 'getting in' stage is by God's gracious election and the 'staying in' stage is a function of obedience in order to maintain Jews' relationship with God with their righteousness. The key term 'righteousness' will be looked at closely in this chapter: God's righteousness and human righteousness. The case study will also investigate the meaning of God's discipline and His judgment in terms of His reward and punishment.

Chapter Four will use critical and analytical exegesis to investigate what Paul means by righteousness or justification with regard to God's righteousness and human righteousness. Paul's thought of righteousness will be based on the key texts of his letters to the Romans and Galatians. It will examine how the commitment to faith in Christ will lead to obedience in Christians' daily lives: the obedience of faith is a sign of righteousness. The linguistic meanings and characteristics of Pauline righteousness are carefully discussed in this chapter. Relating to Sanders' concept, the 'getting in' and 'staying in' stages of Pauline soteriology will be analysed in relation to righteousness. Can Pauline soteriology exhibit the concept of Covenantal Nomism as the 'pattern of religion'?

The question “What is the relationship of the Psalms of Solomon to Paul’s theology?” will be examined closely in chapter Five. The ‘getting in’ stage of Paul’s soteriology is to be justified in association with having an intimate relationship with God (Rom 3:22-24) through humans’ responding to what God has done in Christ, but what does it mean to the Psalms of Solomon? For Paul, salvation (Rom 8:23) belongs to Christians who will be rescued from God’s wrath (Rom 5:9; 1 Thess 1:10) as they obey and participate in the Spirit (Phil 2:1) in the process of sanctification, but did salvation in the Psalms of Solomon exclusively pertain to the righteous? This chapter presents a comparative analysis between the soteriologies of the Psalms of Solomon and Paul’s letters on the subject of the concept of Covenantal Nomism as their ‘pattern of religion.’ For the methodological explorations, I shall be focused on Paul’s authentic letters such as Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, and 1 Thessalonians. The Psalms Solomon and Paul’s letters both demonstrate a relationship between grace and works in their soteriologies: “salvation is by grace but judgment is according to works.”¹² In judgment, the consequences of wrongdoings will be looked at closely as the people in the covenant must be responsible for their behaviour.

Chapter Six is my conclusion and a reflection on the relevance and value of the research for practising the contemporary Christian faith. What I have discovered from the research will be summarized in this conclusion. This includes the major contribution of Sanders, Dunn, and Wright to Pauline understanding of justification and the significance of obedience as a function in the maintenance of a relationship with God in the ‘staying in’ stage. In light of the exegetical explorations of this study, I will discuss the obedience of faith as an on-going (in the ‘staying in’ stage) obedience which requires action from the Christian in two practical applications with

¹² Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 543.

respect to growing in Christ's likeness. The emphasis of the reflection will be on the perspective that to do God's will is to grow into Christ's likeness as we increase our love for Christ and trust in Him. The increase of obedience of faith through Christ's love and the empowering of the Spirit will be the key to doing God's will in relation to Christians' growth into Christ's likeness.

Chapter Two

The Significant Issue of Covenantal Nomism

Sanders did not argue against the theologians of the Reformation but protested at the broad academic consensus that Palestinian Judaism was a legalistic religion. He was aware that this ‘legalistic’ notion had become an issue as it had dominated Paul’s letters, and he started a dramatic change with Covenantal Nomism with the aim of representing his historical argument that Palestinian Judaism was a gracious religion, not legalistic. As a result, his comprehensive study has influenced how contemporary New Testament scholars should interpret Paul’s interaction with his fellow Jews in his letters. The proponents of the ‘New Perspective on Paul’ have given significant new fundamental insight into how Pauline theology is understood with reference to Judaism as a religion of grace. On the other hand, the New Perspective on Paul has engendered many criticisms in terms of problems with the pattern of Paul’s religious thought.

Sanders has used “a pattern of religion”¹³ to describe how the ‘getting in’ and ‘staying in’ stages of first-century Palestinian Judaism and Paul’s soteriology are understood. He affirms that the pattern of first-century Palestinian Judaism is best described as “Covenantal Nomism,”¹⁴ but the

¹³ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 17-18. He defines ‘a pattern of religion’ as “the description of how a religion is perceived by its adherents to function,” and this ‘perceived to function’ is of how ‘getting in’ and ‘staying in’ are understood. Its emphasis is on what principles they are based and what happens if they are not observed: it includes the logical beginning-point of the religious life as well as its end, and it includes the steps in between. He further explains that a pattern of religion has to do with thought, the understanding that lies behind religious behaviour. Therefore, the pattern of a religion was perceived by its adherents to have a certain function in their religious life. That the emphasis of a pattern of religion, for Sanders, is on adherents’ religious thought, not on their external behaviour – the thought/mindset always drives the behaviour.

¹⁴ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 422.

pattern of Paul's thought is portrayed as "Participationist Eschatology."¹⁵ In this chapter, I shall start with Sanders' view on Covenantal Nomism as the pattern of first-century Palestinian Judaism in order to find evidence for his historical argument that the Jewish religion was gracious and to understand Paul's objection to Judaism in his day. I will analyse Sanders' view on Paul's relationship with Palestinian Judaism in terms of the pattern of religion which clarifies a comparison of their religious thoughts. This chapter will also discuss James D. G. Dunn and N. T. Wright, who contribute their distinctive approaches to the New Perspective on Paul with a view to tackling the criticisms about Paul's soteriology.

2.1 Sanders' View on the Pattern of Religion in Judaism: Covenantal Nomism

According to Sanders, the pattern of first-century Palestinian Judaism is best described as Covenantal Nomism. He terms the Jewish belief of Covenantal Nomism as relating to the pattern of the 'getting in' and 'staying in' the covenant of God. This pattern of Covenantal Nomism deals with the theological understanding of the constitution of God's people: how they get in the covenant of God, and how they stay in that covenant of God. Sanders affirms that this Covenantal Nomism is crucial to understanding Judaism as "a national religion and way of life," focusing on the God of Israel and the people of Israel.¹⁶ God elected the Israelites as a nation, but how the Israelites responded to the election while in the covenant would be an individual response.

¹⁵ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 549. Their similarity is that judgment is according to works: punishment for transgressions and reward for obedience (518).

¹⁶ E. P. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice & Belief 63 BCE – 66 CE* (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1992), 262-263.

In order to analyse the theological ideas of Judaism, we need to look into Sanders' view on the aspects of Covenantal Nomism:

(1) God has chosen Israel; (2) Israel has been given the Law; (3) the Law implies both God's promise to maintain the election and (4) Israel's requirement to obey; (5) God rewards obedience and punishes transgression; (6) The Law also provides for means of atonement, and atonement results in (7) maintenance or reestablishment of the covenantal relationship; and (8) all those who are maintained in the covenant by obedience, atonement and God's mercy belong to the group which will be saved.¹⁷

'Covenant' stands for God's grace in election ('getting in'), and 'nomism' stands for the requirement of obedience to the Law ('staying in').¹⁸ It is obvious that the thrust of Covenantal Nomism is based on the notion that 'getting in' was by God's gracious election, and 'staying in' was by obedience to the Law in order to maintain the status of their righteousness in the covenant. God would reward obedience but punish transgression. In addition, God mercifully provided atonement and opportunity for the people's repentance of sins to receive His forgiveness until they would be ultimately saved at the final judgment. The concept of Covenantal Nomism has given us a clear picture of the theological thought of Judaism in terms of 'getting in' and 'staying in' the covenant of God.

2.1.1 The 'Getting in' stage of Covenantal Nomism

In the 'getting in' stage of Covenantal Nomism, Sanders views the Israelites as a nation which entered into the covenant with God's grace. He affirms that the 'getting in' stage of first-century

¹⁷ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 422.

¹⁸ Sanders, *Judaism: Practice & Belief*, 262.

Palestinian Judaism had to do with God's gracious initiative, not human achievement.¹⁹ This means that God took His own initiative when He made a covenant with Israel through Abraham (Gen 15:18) and Moses (Ex 19:1, 15). The 'getting in' stage of Covenantal Nomism was the unilateral work of God. The covenant belonged to the Jewish nation as the Israelites entered into the covenant; their 'getting in' the covenant was considered the special product of God's grace.

Sanders comments that Covenantal Nomism is "potentially expansive"²⁰ because the Jews accepted the fact that Gentiles had a share with them in entering the covenant of God. In other words, Gentiles as individuals could also be brought into the covenant. Sanders comments that Jews believed that their God had created the world and had made a covenant with humanity.²¹ Before God made promises to Abraham and Moses, He had made the promises to humanity. Although Gentiles were not in the covenant of Israel, they were in a covenant (the covenant with Noah or the covenant implied in the creation and written on their heart), and they would be saved. Therefore, Sanders asserts, as God's promises entailed obligations (the Law), Gentiles who accepted the obligations were in the covenant of Israel.²² In other words, Gentiles had already had a privilege to enter into a covenant of God, but they now had to be governed by God's regulations (the Mosaic Law).

¹⁹ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 75.

²⁰ Sanders, *Judaism: Practice & Belief*, 270.

²¹ Sanders, *Judaism: Practice & Belief*, 270. Sanders writes Pseudo-Philo writings in the Biblical Antiquities 11:1, regarding God's initiation of the covenant belonging to the world: "I will give a light to the world and illumine their dwelling places and establish with the sons of men and glorify my people above all nations."

²² Sanders, *Judaism: Practice & Belief*, 270.

2.1.2 The ‘Staying in’ stage of Covenantal Nomism

In the ‘staying in’ stage, obedience to the Law was required as a means of the maintenance of their ‘righteous’ status in the covenant. After God had elected the Israelites as a nation to get into the covenant, the individuals were now to obey the Law in order to maintain their covenant relationship with God until they would be saved at the final judgment. Atonement and God’s mercy also belonged to the group, and their individual obedience to the Law was the condition of their remaining righteous in the covenant. Sanders urges that repentance was in fact essential to the ‘staying in’ stage of Covenantal Nomism because being righteous and maintaining their status in the covenant implied repentance.²³ We see that, when Jews in first-century Palestinian Judaism spoke of obeying the Law, they were talking about maintaining their relationship with God in the covenant, not about entering into the covenant.

Who else had to obey the Law while in the covenant? Based on the Jewish belief, Gentiles individually had to obey God’s obligations (the Law) if they wanted to enter into the covenant of Israel. However, Gentiles who were in the covenant, Sanders guesses, were very few because, although they sympathized with Judaism due to its monotheism and high ethical standards, they did not want to give up idolatry by converting fully to Judaism.²⁴ Gentiles who were in the covenant of God were governed by the Mosaic Law, so they had to obey the regulations of the Law. Consequently, they should have known that they would be guilty in God’s eyes if they kept participating in idolatrous and homosexual practices.

²³ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 547.

²⁴ Sanders, *Judaism: Practice & Belief*, 270.

2.2 Sanders' View on the Pattern of Religion in Paul's Letters: Participationist Eschatology

Sanders admits that Paul's pattern of religion cannot be described as Covenantal Nomism. He portrays the pattern of Paul's religion as Participationist Eschatology because Paul's thinking of soteriology is understood to be this way:

“God has sent Christ to be the saviour of all, both Jew and Gentile (and has called Paul to be the apostle to the Gentiles); one participates in salvation by becoming one person with Christ, dying with Him to sin and sharing the promise of His resurrection; the transformation, however, will not be completed until the Lord returns; meanwhile one who is in Christ has been freed from the power of sin and the uncleanness of transgression, and his behavior should be determined by his new situation; since Christ died to save all, all men must have been under the dominion of sin, ‘in the flesh’ as opposed to being in the Spirit”²⁵

I shall make an attempt to capture my understanding of this Participationist Eschatology in terms of the ‘getting in’ and ‘staying in’ stages of Paul's soteriology: (1) ‘getting in’ stage as a ‘Transfer’ term in which God has sent Christ to become our Lord and Saviour – entering into the covenant means participating in Christ's death, being set free, being reconciled, and being justified in association with the transfer of lordships, and (2) ‘staying in’ stage as ‘One Body and Spirit’ term – Christians are described as being in the body of Christ, being in the Spirit, being in Christ, and belonging to Christ. Saving faith in Christ is the only way to enter into an intimate relationship with God, but working with God and the Spirit must be added to the obedience of faith until the coming of the Lord.

²⁵ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 549.

2.2.1 The ‘Getting in’ Stage of Paul’s Soteriology: Transfer Terminology

For Sanders, the ‘getting in’ stage of Paul’s soteriology is described as transfer. This ‘transfer’ terminology is employed when talking about entering into the group of believers or saints: “the transfer to being Christian.”²⁶ Sanders uses this transfer terminology as “being converted”²⁷ in association with Paul’s content of faith: “the saving death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God’s salvific action in Christ.”²⁸ Sanders affirms that this terminology can be described as five terms: participation in Christ’s death, transformation or new creation, freedom, reconciliation, and justification or righteousness. This means that we are transferred from death to life, from the lordship of sin to the lordship of Christ, from bondage of the flesh to freedom in the Spirit in relation to God’s reconciliation to the world and the establishment of a right relationship with God. According to Sanders, Paul holds to the notion that everyone is enslaved to sin and could be saved only by Christ: everyone is under the lordship of sin, and Christ has come to provide for His new lordship (Rom 7:4).²⁹ Therefore, the real problem with people is not only that they have sinned against God but also that they are not under the lordship of Christ. It is clear that people must be freed from the bondage of sin besides their past transgressions. I will explore how Sanders explains the five terms of this transfer terminology below.

²⁶ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 463. Sanders notes that for Paul, Christians are believers *saints* or *hagioi* (Rom 1:7; 8:27; 1 Cor 1:2) and others are unbelievers, *apistoi* (452).

²⁷ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 463. Relating to the transfer terminology, Sanders uses this term ‘being converted’ in related to the ‘getting in’ stage of Paul’s soteriology.

²⁸ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 463.

²⁹ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 467-468. Sanders expounds how Paul sees the term ‘sin’ which appears in singular as a power that enslaves people. Sin is “a power of the flesh, the rulers of this world or of the fundamental spirits of the universe.” Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 498, further notes that this singular sin itself is the enemy power that governs people who are not in Christ. Paul talks of sin as a power that enslaves people without reference to their transgressions. Paul’s idea of the term ‘sin’ is in contradiction to that of Judaism: sin in Judaism refers to human transgression, but Paul describes sin as a power within the unbelievers from which they must be freed if they want to be transferred to the lordship of Christ.

2.2.1.1 Participation in the Death of Christ

Sanders claims that ‘dying with Christ’ is the means of entering into the group of Christians who are in the body of Christ and in the Spirit.³⁰ This means that, for Paul, the key to being in Christ and belonging to Him is that one must participate in His death. Sanders argues that Christ’s death for all is not primarily expiatory as Paul explains his thought by saying that “all have died” (2 Cor 5:14). Sanders expounds that Paul’s meaning refers to dying to the power of sin, not just having trespasses atoned for.³¹ When Paul writes that the Lord Jesus Christ gave Himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age (Gal 1:4), Sanders suggests, Paul’s implication is that Christians are delivered from the evil age, not only past transgressions remitted. Sanders believes that Paul’s purpose of Christ’s death is “not simply to provide expiation, but that [Christ] might become Lord and thus save those who belong to him and are in him.”³²

Sanders asserts that, for Paul, the purpose of Christ’s death is “not backwards towards the expiation of past transgressions, but forwards, towards the assurance of life with Christ” at His coming (Rom 6:3-11; Gal 2:19; 5:24).³³ Therefore, Sanders believes that the true significance of Christ’s death in Paul’s thought has to do with a change of lordship which guarantees our future salvation. He notes that Paul’s thinking of the real problem with people is that they are not under the lordship of Christ (Rom 7:4).³⁴ Consequently, the transfer is not only from the uncleanness of idolatry to cleanness (forgiveness from past transgressions), but it is from one lordship to another, and the transfer takes place by participating in Christ’s death. Based on Sanders’ view,

³⁰ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 463.

³¹ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 465.

³² Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 465.

³³ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 465.

³⁴ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 466-478.

we realise that God has sent Christ not just to forgive our transgressions but also to become our Lord and Saviour. Participating in Christ's death determines our death to the power of sin and the removal of sins as a means of receiving the assurance of life with Christ.

2.2.1.2 Freedom

According to Sanders, Paul also expresses the transfer terminology in terms of freedom or liberation from bondage. Sanders notes that one is free from the power of sin and the Law, and the person is free to live for God.³⁵ What he is saying is that Paul describes Christians as having been sanctified from heathen transgressions (1 Cor 6:9-11) because they have been set free from sin in the singular (Rom 6:18, 22) and from the law of sin and death (Rom 8:2). Paul says, "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery" (Gal 5:1). As Christ Jesus redeems us, there is freedom from the power of sin, the slavery of the Law, or the fundamental spirits of the universe (Gal 4:1-9). Sanders uses Paul's contrast in Galatians to help us understand the real meaning of freedom as the transfer terminology.³⁶ For Paul, God's hope for the world is that it will be "liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God" (Rom 8:21).

³⁵ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 468. Sanders notes that what Paul is thinking about regarding death to the Law is that the Law's role was to condemn. Therefore, the entire world must have stood condemned. It is for this reason that Paul links the Law with sin, the flesh with death, being under the Law with being enslaved by the fundamental spirits of the universe.

³⁶ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 468.

2.2.1.3 Transformation or New Creation

Sanders believes that the term transformation is to express Paul's transfer terminology whose characteristic is focused on "changing or being transformed in the present and future tenses."³⁷ He uses this term as Paul says, "Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day" (2 Cor 4:16). This indicates that Paul sees the renewal as being already at work although the full transformation or the complete transfer from the old creation or old aeon to the new still lies in the future (2 Cor 5:1-5). Sanders asserts that, in Paul's thinking, a new creation (2 Cor 5:17) as the whole process of transformation is present, ongoing, and not complete till Christ returns (Gal 6:15; 2 Cor 3:8).³⁸

Sanders notes that this transformation can also be described in terms of the indicative and the imperative: "that those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires" (Gal 5:24) and also that if one puts to death the misdeeds of the body by the Spirit, he will live (Rom 8:13). This indicates that these terms are inter-related as Paul writes both that Christians have become slaves of righteousness (Rom 6:18) and that they should yield themselves to God and their members to God as instruments of righteousness (Rom 6:13). If Christians live in the Spirit, they also walk in the Spirit (Gal 5:25). In the process of our transformation, God has assigned each of us a task (1 Cor 3:5) as Paul insists, "I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow" (1 Cor 3:6). We are now God's fellow workers (1 Cor 3:9), so we must not remain infants in Christ (1 Cor 3:1-3). Paul urges Christians who are in the new creation or in the process of being transformed (2 Cor 3:18; 4:16) to be changed

³⁷ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 469.

³⁸ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 468.

“by the renewal of their mind” (Rom 12:2).³⁹ Therefore, Sanders has a strong view on Paul’s thinking of the possibility that the Galatians who would accept the Law (Gal 4:19) have no Christ ‘in’ them and that this transformation to the new creation (Gal 6:15) or the transfer from slavery to sonship (Gal 4:1-7) is threatened with cancellation.⁴⁰

2.2.1.4 Reconciliation

Sanders proposes that, for Paul, God has reconciled the world in Christ, or the death of Christ has accomplished the reconciliation of the world (mankind), but this reconciliation refers to sin as a human transgression, not as a power (2 Cor 5:17-21). Sanders explains, “The meaning of ‘justified’ from sins (1 Cor 6:9-11) is the same as ‘reconciled’: past transgressions have been overlooked or atoned for.”⁴¹ For Sanders, Paul’s reconciliation speaks of “the overcoming of enmity by God’s not counting trespasses (1 Cor 5:19), a ‘not counting’ which has to do in some way with the death of Christ.”⁴² This shows that there is no discussion of people repenting in order to obtain the reconciliation for their past transgressions, nor even to their accepting reconciliation.⁴³ Sanders claims that, for Paul, to be justified means to “only receive [reconciliation]”⁴⁴ (Rom 5:11) because human repentance “will not result in a change of lordship.”⁴⁵ For Paul, the key to entering into the covenant is to respond to the justifying activity

³⁹ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 469.

⁴⁰ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 469.

⁴¹ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 471.

⁴² Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 470.

⁴³ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 470.

⁴⁴ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 470.

⁴⁵ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 500. It is possible that Paul’s thought of reconciliation is equivalent to the concept of repentance in Mark, Luke, and Acts (Lk 3:3; 15:7; Mk 1:15; Acts 2:38): “the appropriate response to the nearness of the kingdom of God through Christ as Lord” by William D. Mounce, *Mounce’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old & New Testament Words* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2006), 581. He comments that this concept of “repentance goes hand in hand with the forgiveness of sins,” and it is “a radical turning from sin to a new way of life oriented towards God.”

of God in the gospel, believing that Christ is the Lord (Rom 10:9) and then giving glory as we have now received reconciliation through the death of Christ. Paul mentions repentance once dealing with post-conversion transgressions (2 Cor 12:21), but his response to the Christians' sins is focused on telling Christians to live according to the Spirit (1 Cor 6:9-11) because of what Christ has done on the cross.

2.2.1.5 Justification or Righteousness

For Paul, the verb justify as a transfer terminology is in parallel with sanctify, reconcile, wash, and set free.⁴⁶ The meaning of being justified is the same as being reconciled: “past transgressions have been overlooked or atoned for” (Rom 5:6-9).⁴⁷ Sanders insists that Paul also matches ‘being justified’ from the past transgressions with being set free from sin as an enslaving power. He observes that the language of cleansing from past transgressions (juristic terminology) and liberation from the power of sin (participatory terminology) is not presented by Paul as a distinction: “the two repeatedly appear together.”⁴⁸ He argues that the verb has to do with “the establishment of a right relationship.”⁴⁹ Thus, according to Sanders, Paul’s thought of ‘being justified’ has to do with participationist eschatology terminology, meaning that “one dies with Christ to the power of sin and lives in the Spirit, which also concretely means that one stops (and is acquitted of) sinning and produces the fruit of the Spirit.”⁵⁰ This indicates that we are

⁴⁶ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 471-472. In 1 Cor 6:11, Paul uses the Greek word *dikaionai*, meaning “acquitted,” and Sanders insists that this word is also parallel to “washed and sanctified” (503).

⁴⁷ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 471. Sanders explains that the interpretation of ‘being justified’ in Rom 5:9 is supported by the use of the word ‘sinners’ in Rom 5:8. This means that Paul does not use ‘sinner’ to refer to the fact that men are under that power of sin. Sanders affirms that, for Paul, the word ‘sinners’ refers to people who are sinning or transgressing against God.

⁴⁸ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 472. Sanders points out that Paul’s juristic language is sometimes pressed into the service of ‘participationist’ categories, but never vice versa.

⁴⁹ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 470.

⁵⁰ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 507.

justified because justification or righteousness from God (*δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ*) comes to us through faith in Christ (Rom 3:22). Sanders claims that this righteousness, for Paul, is “the reality of the new life offered by Christ.”⁵¹ According to Sanders, Paul’s thought of righteousness is ‘life’ or ‘the Spirit’ (Rom 8:11 – the Spirit gives life) as the guarantee of salvation (Gal 3:1-5), and this Spirit is received when we are justified as we believe in Christ’s death and resurrection. This is evidence that the righteousness of God cannot come by the Law; it comes only by faith in Christ.

Paul says, “You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ” (Gal 3:26-27). Sanders asserts that, for Paul, anything that is received by faith is ‘sonship in Christ Jesus,’ so Paul’s understanding of righteousness by faith comes only through Christ.⁵² Sanders claims that the terminology ‘righteousness by faith’ is based on Paul’s own conviction that Christ is Lord and Saviour. For Paul, this Christian righteousness cannot come by the works of the Law; it comes only by faith in Christ. Sanders writes that Paul links the Law to sin because the role of the Law is to condemn, especially as all the world can be saved only through Christ. As the requirement of the Law is fulfilled only in Christ (Rom 8:4), the aim ‘life’ is accomplished only in Christ. As the righteousness is only given to those who are found in Christ, Sanders affirms that “being found in Christ and having the righteousness which is based on faith, stand together.”⁵³ Thus, the participationist terms of being found in Christ, sharing with Christ’s death, and belonging to Christ determine righteousness by faith.

⁵¹ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 507.

⁵² Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 505.

⁵³ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 504-505.

2.2.2 The ‘Staying in’ Stage of Paul’s Soteriology: One Body and One Spirit

Sanders affirms that Paul himself advocates good deeds in addition to faith in Christ: “good deeds are the condition of remaining ‘in,’ but they do not earn salvation” (Rom 11:22).⁵⁴ Paul assures Christians that they possess the Spirit as the present guarantee of future salvation.⁵⁵ Therefore, Paul insists that Christians must walk by the Spirit, be led by the Spirit and produce the fruit of the Spirit (Rom 8:9-14; 1 Cor 6:19; Gal 5:16-25). Sanders believes that, for Paul, Christians are to remain blameless and pure until the coming of Christ. Sanders uses four images in order to expound what Christians are, once they are staying in the group of believers in association with Paul’s thought: members of Christ’s body, one Spirit, in Christ, and Christ’s servants.

2.2.2.1 Members of the Body of Christ

Once Christians are in the ‘staying in’ stage, they are members of Christ Himself (1 Cor 6:15). Paul urges, “The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts, and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ” (1 Cor 12:12). For Sanders, this terminology is also connected to Paul’s understanding of Christians’ participation in the Lord’s Supper: “Because there is one loaf, we who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf” (1 Cor 10:17). Relating to baptism, Paul clarifies that Christians (whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free) have been baptized into one body (1 Cor 12:13). I shall make a point here that we as

⁵⁴ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 517.

⁵⁵ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 447.

Christians have formed into one body which is the body of Christ: we are members of the body of Christ regardless of our diverse denominations.

Sanders elaborates that, for Paul, being members of the body of Christ is equivalent to the participatory union with Christ. He proposes that the participatory union with Christ is a metaphor of the real participation in Christ's body.⁵⁶ Sanders says that Paul has a notion that, if one commits idolatry, the commitment to idolatry involves a participatory union which excludes one from union with Christ (1 Cor 10:14-22). The reason it produces a union which excludes one from a union with Christ is that union with Christ and union with demons are mutually exclusive: participation in the body and blood of Christ will not save them if they commit idolatry.⁵⁷ It is impossible for Christians to have two unions, union with Christ and union with the flesh. We see that the union with the flesh will exclude Christians from union with Christ if they choose to commit idolatry.

2.2.2.2 One Spirit

Sanders points out that Paul connects being one Spirit with the Lord (1 Cor 6:17) to being members of the body of Christ. Paul urges that Christians are baptized into one body by one Spirit, and all are made to drink of one Spirit (1 Cor 12:13). This determines that Christians are one Spirit with the Lord (1 Cor 6:17): they participate in the body of Christ (1 Cor 10:16) and the Spirit (2 Cor 13:13). For Paul, the participation in or the fellowship of the body and the blood of Christ (1 Cor 10:16) is similar to the participation in or the fellowship in the Spirit (2

⁵⁶ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 455.

⁵⁷ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 455.

Cor 13:14). Sanders notices that Paul is frequently using this ‘one Spirit’ image in terms of “one’s having the Spirit or of the Spirit’s dwelling in the Christian”⁵⁸ (Rom 8:9-11).

Sanders affirms that the “Spirit plays a major role in providing the grounds of Paul’s parenesis.”⁵⁹ This means that, for Paul, Sanders notes, Christians who are members of the body of God and one Spirit with Him should walk by the Spirit, be led by the Spirit (Rom 8:9-14; 1 Cor 6:19), and produce the fruits of the Spirit (Gal 5:16-25). We see that Christians have no excuse for not being governed by the Spirit and not cultivating the fruit of the Spirit as long as they choose to maintain their union with Christ.

2.2.2.3 In Christ

Sanders suggests that the Spirit is the assurance of salvation given to Christians who are in Christ, so that they are alive in the Spirit and will be saved at the end of judgment. The assurance is that Christians who are in Christ are not condemned (Rom 8:1) but what they do is pleasing to God because they are in the Spirit (Rom 8:8). Paul explains, “But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness. And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you” (Rom 8:10-11). Sanders believes that, for Paul, the Spirit means life to Christians who are in Christ (Rom 8:11), so the phrases ‘in Christ’ and ‘in the Spirit’ are definitely connected. Sanders affirms that to have the Spirit results in participating in Christ and in the Spirit, and this participation provides the best guarantee that “Christians are sons of God” (Rom 8:16; Gal 4:7). Therefore, Sanders

⁵⁸ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 458.

⁵⁹ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 458.

claims that Christians who have the Spirit also possess *Charismata* or gifts as a sign of the Spirit's presence⁶⁰ in them.

According to Sanders, we are in Christ because we are reconciled by God through the death of Christ. Sanders writes of Paul's understanding of God's plan: Christ died for all; therefore, all died (2 Cor 5:14). This means that we no longer live for ourselves, but for Christ (2 Cor 5:15). As a result, because we are in Christ, we are a new creation (2 Cor 5:17), and this transformation of a new creation is from God, who has reconciled the world to himself in Christ, not counting our past transgressions (2 Cor 5:19). Sanders sees this connection between being in Christ and being reconciled as Paul asserts that God has committed to him and Christians the message of reconciliation (2 Cor 5:20). Sanders observes that Paul uses the converse statement 'Christ in us' in association with the phrase 'in Christ' (Rom 8:10; 2 Cor 13:5). 'Christ in us' is an image of the *koinōnia* (participation in or fellowship with) of the blood and body of Christ (1 Cor 10:16), the Spirit (2 Cor 13:13), and God's son, Jesus Christ: God has called us into fellowship with His son Jesus Christ our Lord (1 Cor 1:9). Thus, being in Christ is similar to baptising into Christ and putting on Christ. This relates to the fact of Paul's thought that Christ is with us.

2.2.2.4 Christ's Servants

Belonging to Christ means believing that "Christ is Lord and that Christians should serve and obey Him."⁶¹ Sanders explicates that Christians belong to Christ; therefore, they are His

⁶⁰ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 457. He denotes the term *charismata* as gifts. For Paul, there are many gifts but one Spirit (1 Cor 12:4). The possession of the Spirit is manifested by our various gifts or functions given by God: some are prophets, teachers, and the like (1 Cor 12: 28-30).

⁶¹ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 462.

servants. Because we belong to Christ, we no longer produce the fruits of the flesh (Gal 5: 16-23) and are no longer enslaved to sin (Gal 6:6). This terminology is also described as being Christ's slaves. For example, Christians were once 'slaves to sin,' but they are now 'slaves of obedience' which leads to righteousness (Rom 6:16) or simply 'slaves of righteousness' (Rom 6:18). Christians may choose to disobey Christ and sin against Him although they now belong to Christ and no longer live under the slavery of the flesh. Sanders states that Paul's focal message is that Christians should serve and obey Christ because He is their Lord. Sanders explains that "to belong to Christ is not different from being 'in' Christ"⁶² as Paul says, "You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature, but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ" (Rom 8:9). We see that our obedience to Christ in His Spirit is the most important ingredient in serving Him.

2.3 Sanders' Covenantal Nomism and Paul's Objection

Sanders' claim that Covenantal Nomism, the pattern of first-century Palestinian Judaism, was a gracious religion is fundamental to the New Perspective on Paul. If Judaism was gracious, Paul could not have been concerned about railing against Judaism as a legalistic religion. What was Paul's objection to Judaism in his day, then? To investigate the real cause of Paul's objection to the fellow Jews in his day, I need to analyse what role the works of the Law plays in justification. I will expand Sanders' views by adding the approaches of Dunn and Wright which are major contributions to the New Perspective on Paul in terms of the meanings of justification, faith, and the works of the Law.

⁶² Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 462.

2.3.1 Dunn's Approach

James D. G. Dunn stipulates that Paul's thought of salvation is primarily focused on the initiative of God, associating His grace with His *ἀγάπη* love.⁶³ According to Dunn, the grace of God through faith is the most fundamental principle of God's dealings with humans.⁶⁴ Dunn defines this faith as "simple trust."⁶⁵ This trust is reflected in the character of Abraham's faith – "not dependent on or qualified by any legal enactment, but dependent solely on God."⁶⁶ Paul describes Abraham's faith by saying, "Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God" (Rom 4:20). Dunn affirms that, for Paul, Abraham gave glory to God which people had refused to give (Rom 1:21). Therefore, Dunn spotlights that the faith required to respond to the gospel is equivalent to Abraham's faith: "a faith in the life-giving God who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead"⁶⁷ (Rom 4:23-24). Dunn argues that this faith has to do with "human dependence on divine grace," which means that God would not justify (sustaining in a right relationship with Him) those who

⁶³ James D. G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 1998), 319. Dunn comments that, for Paul, this love is considered "the primary or all-embracing fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23): it is to identify and define "the Spirit as the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of the self-giving and crucified Christ." Paul's description of this love is categorized as "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered; it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil, but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres" (1 Cor 13:4-7). The Greek word 'love' has three types of meanings: *φιλία* love is the love of emotion (friendship); the *ερωσ* love is physical attraction that is seen as "selfish, acquisitive love; and the *ἀγάπη* love as the divine love of intelligence. Here, Jesus talked about the *ἀγάπη* love, the quality of "Christ's love". It is "unselfish, self-giving, [and] outgoing love. The characteristic of *ἀγάπη* is reflected on Christ's submission to God (His willingness to die on the cross for us). This *ἀγάπη* love links with the gift of the Spirit: the most significant fruit of the Spirit given to believers (Gal 5:22). The *ἀγάπη* love comes from Christ through His Spirit.

⁶⁴ Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*, 378.

⁶⁵ Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*, 378.

⁶⁶ Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*, 379.

⁶⁷ Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*, 379. Dunn explores that Abraham's faith was the faith of the creature that is reliant upon and confident in God's promise because it was God who promised (Rom 4:21). Abraham's faith is similar to his faithfulness, his unquestioning obedience to God's commands (375).

did not rely completely on Him.⁶⁸ His clear definition of faith suggests that justification is by our total trust and surrender to God.

Dunn believes that justification is not a once-for-all act of God; it is “the initial acceptance by God into restored relationship.”⁶⁹ Dunn opines that, since Christians still sin, God continues to exercise His justifying righteousness in order to maintain the covenant relationship with Him. Dunn admits that Christians have already received the gift of the Spirit as “the essential character of beginning the process of salvation,”⁷⁰ but their lives in the flesh, their belongingness to this world, will not and cannot cease until they become spiritual bodies at parousia.⁷¹ It seems that Dunn has a view that Christians cannot stop struggling with a tension between flesh and Spirit, as he asserts, “So long as he is in the flesh, his life as a believer is a life of tension, a life of frustration.”⁷² This gift of the Spirit is seen as “the key to the eschatological tension,”⁷³ and Dunn calls this the “transformation to become like Christ.”⁷⁴ As a result, Dunn illustrates justification as ‘identification with Christ’ characterized by the ‘already-not yet’ tension of Christian existence. This ‘identification with Christ’ is considered “a process to be worked through and not simply a status to be accepted.”⁷⁵ This transformation process is associated with the power of the indwelling Spirit in order to help us become more and more like Christ “in

⁶⁸ Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*, 379.

⁶⁹ Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*, 386.

⁷⁰ Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*, 469.

⁷¹ J. D. G. Dunn, ‘Rom 7:14-25 in the Theology of Paul’, *Theologische Zeitschrift* 31 (1975), 266.

⁷² Dunn, ‘Rom 7:14-25 in the Theology of Paul’, 267.

⁷³ Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*, 469. Dunn says that the coming of the Spirit set up the tension as the Spirit is the bridge between the present and the future, between the already and the not yet. Dunn, ‘Rom 7:14-25 in the Theology of Paul’, elaborates that Paul lives in the overlap of the ages, where the new age of resurrection life has already begun, but the old age of existence in the flesh has not yet ended, where the final work of God has begun in Him but is not yet completed (Phil 1:6).

⁷⁴ Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*, 468.

⁷⁵ James D. G. Dunn, *The New Perspective on Paul* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 2005), 91.

his dying as well as his rising again.”⁷⁶ Paul’s salvation is the end point of a process of transformation (Rom 5:10; 13:11; 1 Cor 1:18; 2 Cor 2:15; 1 Thess 5:8), and justification itself is the beginning of a reality of life transformed to be like Christ.⁷⁷ Dunn suggests that, for Paul, the key to becoming like Christ is our “moral determination and obedience”⁷⁸ in association with “the enabling, in motivation and doing, of the Spirit.”⁷⁹ Dunn concludes with an opinion that, for Paul, justification and the new creation go together⁸⁰ as the transformation into Christ’s likeness (2 Cor 3:18) is similar to the image of being ‘in Christ,’ the new creation.

Dunn believes that, for Paul, the works of the Law are equivalent to the boundary markers such as circumcision, Sabbath Observance, and the food laws for the use of separating Jews from Gentiles. Dunn reasons that the use of “badges”⁸¹ (outward visible marks of Jewish identity) is that they serve effectively as boundary markers between Jews and Gentiles.⁸² Dunn argues that Paul’s thought of the works of the Law is understood as the visible definition of the covenant people (Rom 2:27-29; 7:6; 2 Cor 3:6-7).⁸³ For example, the Galatian Judaizers used these boundary markers to exclude Gentiles by teaching them that it was necessary for a Gentile to be a full proselyte to Judaism in order to stand justified. According to Dunn, the works of the Law were a peculiarly Jewish problem in that they distinguished Jews from believing Gentiles.⁸⁴

What we can see is that Dunn’s boundary markers are functioning sociologically as covenant

⁷⁶ Dunn, *The New Perspective on Paul*, 95.

⁷⁷ Dunn, *The New Perspective on Paul*, 97.

⁷⁸ Dunn, *The New Perspective on Paul*, 91.

⁷⁹ Dunn, *The New Perspective on Paul*, 91.

⁸⁰ Dunn, *The New Perspective on Paul*, 91.

⁸¹ James D. G. Dunn, *Jesus, Paul and the Law: Studies in Mark and Galatians* (London: SPCK, 1990), 194; Dunn, *The New Perspective on Paul*, 91. Dunn expounds that ‘badges’ are given by God for precisely that reason; they serve to demonstrate covenant status. They are “the proper response to God’s covenant grace, the minimal commitment for members of God’s people.”

⁸² Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*, 365.

⁸³ Dunn, *The New Perspective on Paul*, 129.

⁸⁴ Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*, 365.

badges in regard to protecting Jewish identity. The boundary markers were used to tie Jewish individuals in their covenant to God and to distinguish who was inside and who was outside the covenant of God. Dunn's view states that the works of the Law are not similar to good works because he insists that Paul's arguments is about Jews' attempt to force the Christian Gentiles into adopting Jewish covenant identities. There is no doubt that Paul opposed an exclusivistic national righteousness that insisted on the boundary markers so that Jews and Gentiles would be unified.

2.3.2 Wright's Approach

Wright claims that Paul has reconstructed a theology on the basis of faith in Christ as the redefinition of Israel's election. Wright discusses that Paul cannot ignore the election of Israel⁸⁵ (Rom 9:4) because "God will be true to his original promises though all humans, Israel included, are false" (Rom 3:1-4).⁸⁶ Furthermore, Wright urges that, for Paul, the Torah cannot be used as the means of redefinition because it was given only to Jews.⁸⁷ In this respect, Paul's redefinition of election, relating to God's promises (Rom 3; Gal 3), has to do with creating "a single family"⁸⁸ who will be justified through faith in Christ (Gal 2:15). The phrase faith in Jesus

⁸⁵ N. T. Wright, *Paul: Fresh Perspectives* (Great Britain: SPCK, 2005), 109. Wright notes what the purpose of God's election of Israel was understood: the one creator God had called Israel to be His special people, and he had given Israel the land to live in and the Law to live by, relating to the call. God's purpose for calling Israel was that God wanted Israel to be the light of the world, the royal nation of holy priests, and a chosen nation out of the world and for the sake of the world. God wanted the other nations to see in Israel what it really meant to be human and who the true God is. Therefore, God gave the Law to Israel in order to accomplish His purpose.

⁸⁶ Wright, *Paul: Fresh Perspectives*, 111. Wright expounds that Israel had been God's chosen messenger to the nations, but Israel, for Paul, had been unfaithful (Rom 3:2-3). From Wright, we know that "God's purpose in election, to root evil out of the world and to do so through Israel, would be fulfilled" (110). Wright believes, for Paul, although Israel had failed to understand God's covenant purposes (Rom 10:2-3), God had to stick to His plan, which means that God would require a representative Israelite who would be faithful, obedient to God's purpose not only to Israel but also through Israel for the world (47).

⁸⁷ Wright, *Paul: Fresh Perspectives*, 121.

⁸⁸ Wright, *Paul: Fresh Perspectives*, 114. Wright writes this: "Those who believe, those who are baptized into the Messiah, form the single family; they have come 'into the Messiah', they have 'put on the Messiah', they 'belong to

Christ or *πίστις Χριστοῦ* means “the faithfulness of Jesus the Messiah”⁸⁹ as Paul commends, “So, we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the Law, because by observing the Law no one will be justified” (Gal 2:16). Wright asserts that, for Paul, we must have believed in Christ if we want to be justified by His faithfulness. Wright suggests that Christ’s faithfulness, His obedience (Rom 5:12-21; Phil 2:8) to God’s plan in His sacrificial death is considered “the only badge of membership in God’s people” which is open to all.⁹⁰ In this, what we can clearly see from Wright’s view is that the involvement of our response to believing in Christ is the key to being justified by the faithfulness of Christ in order to have membership in a single family.

How can we tell when this justification by faith works, then? Wright explains this succinctly when he describes who belongs to God’s people in Paul’s soteriology:

“All who believe in the gospel belong [to God’s people], and that is the only way you can tell – not by who their parents were, or how well they have obeyed the Torah (or any other moral code), or whether they have been circumcised. Justification, for Paul, is a subset of election, that is, it belongs as part of his doctrine of the people of God.”⁹¹

Wright claims that justification in this ‘getting in’ stage of Paul’s soteriology is not how we become Christians, but it is the declaration that we have become Christians.⁹² In this respect, those who have faith in Christ (*πίστις Χριστοῦ*) are the members of the covenant of God, and this faith relates to their response to the gospel. Wright believes that this gospel refers to “the

the Messiah’, they are ‘in the Messiah’. And this single family, redefined around and by the Messiah, is the single family God promised to Abraham; that (Gal 3:29) is the punchline of the whole argument, showing once more what Paul’s main purpose has been.”

⁸⁹ Wright, *Paul: Fresh Perspectives*, 111. Wright spells out that faith in Jesus Christ or *πίστις Χριστοῦ* is referring to not only human belief or trust in the Messiah but also the Messiah’s faithfulness to God’s plan (Rom 3:21-26): “the two are closely correlated” (120).

⁹⁰ Wright, *Paul: Fresh Perspectives*, 120-121.

⁹¹ Wright, *Paul: Fresh Perspectives*, 121.

⁹² Wright, *What Saint Paul Really Said*, 125.

announcement of Jesus' lordship, which works with power to bring people into the family of Abraham, now redefined around Jesus Christ and characterized solely by faith in Him."⁹³ Thus, when we apply Wright's claim to how justification works, we can portray the purpose of Paul's justification as the declaration that we are truly members of God's people through both the faithfulness of Christ and our response to the gospel of Christ.

Wright proposes that the declaration of the present justification is the basis for the future justification. He notes that the past event of Christ's death and resurrection becomes a present justification through faith (Rom 8:3). According to Wright, the present justification requires a total allegiance to this Jesus in response to the gospel.⁹⁴ In addition, the future justification will include the works of the Law that are related to performing the believer's good deeds in the working of the Holy Spirit (Rom 2:13). Wright spells out that the works of the Law refers to "the works [we] have to perform to demonstrate that [we are members] of God's people" (Phil 1:6)⁹⁵ In comparison with circumcision, Wright comments that Paul did not see that Jewish circumcision (Gal 3) was part of performing good work. He believes that faith is "the first-fruits of the work of the Spirit, operating in the human heart through the preaching of the gospel" (1 Cor 12:3).⁹⁶ Faith is the first-fruits of the Spirit given by God to those who choose to respond to the gospel. The Spirit starts to work in our heart simultaneously once we respond to the gospel in connection with being justified by the faithfulness of Christ. What we can see from Wright's proposal here is that this future justification refers to the oneness between the work of the Spirit

⁹³ Wright, *What Saint Paul Really Said*, 133.

⁹⁴ Wright, *What Saint Paul Really Said*, 160.

⁹⁵ Wright, *Paul: Fresh Perspectives*, 120.

⁹⁶ Wright, *What Saint Paul Really Said*, 148. Wright points out that Jews circumcise as an ethnic badge and also as part of a self help moralism.

and the life of love as our Christian destiny in terms of producing the qualities of the fruit of the Spirit due to walking in the Spirit.

As a result, Wright believes that Paul emphasises the significant unity of how Gentiles and Jews get on as God's people and how they are able to eat at the same table (Gal 2). He urges that, once we are justified, we belong to the same table, regardless of our cultural or racial differences, and we have to practice the gospel by loving one another as a family.⁹⁷ He believes that justification no longer refers to soteriology, how sinners can have a right relationship with God instead, it is about ecclesiology.⁹⁸ Simply, those who believe the gospel message of Christ's death and resurrection have now received the status of *δίκαιος*: they are righteous and forgiven as a legal status of membership within the covenant people of God. Wright affirms that the Jews who believe the gospel have their membership in God's covenant renewed.⁹⁹ Thus, on this basis of being renewed by the Spirit, we as the renewed family of God should live by the call to holiness.

Wright claims that, for Paul, this true knowledge of holiness comes from the heart which has been renewed by the Spirit; it no longer comes from the Law although we use it as our guidelines.¹⁰⁰ Wright comments, "It is a holiness which ought to make the pagan nations see

⁹⁷ Wright, *What Saint Paul Really Said*, 158. Wright interprets Paul's concept of justification by faith as "the great ecumenical doctrine" – Christians' relationship in the church. He postulates that Christians who respond to the gospel belong together at the same table. This ecumenical doctrine is regarded as a powerful idea that "rebukes all [Christians] petty and often culture-bound church groupings, and which declares that all who believe in Jesus belong together in the one family." N. T. Wright, 'Romans and the Theology of Paul', in *Pauline Theology*, Vol 3, ed. Stanley I. Porter and Craig A. Evans (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), 211, notes that sharing the same table is the basis for "the unity of the church, across radical barriers, for which Paul fought so hard."

⁹⁸ Wright, *What Saint Paul Really Said*, 120.

⁹⁹ Wright, *Paul: Fresh Perspectives*, 140.

¹⁰⁰ Wright, *Paul: Fresh Perspectives*, 124-125. Wright notes Paul's theology of God's people as renewed through the Spirit: Paul urges that the renewed people of God receives the renewed call to holiness. "It is a holiness not

who the living God really is.”¹⁰¹ We can assert that, for Paul, the Law has been superseded by the Spirit, who works within our hearts and enables us to obey Christ’s teachings and thus to behave in His holiness. Wright is convinced that the renewed people of God are in the Messiah and are being transformed by the Spirit into Christ’s holiness through the renewal of the mind (Rom 12:2).¹⁰² Wright’s notion is that a family (church) of God must remain faithful to the gospel of Christ through producing the fruit of the Spirit by walking in the Spirit until Christ returns.

2.4 The Critique of the New Perspective on Paul

Sanders, Dunn, and Wright’s suggestions have engendered many criticisms in terms of problems with the pattern of Covenantal Nomism in Paul’s letters. Some scholars who have criticised the New Perspective on Paul are Timo Laato, E. Käsemann, Peter T. O’ Brien, Mark A. Seifrid, Simon Gathercole, Stephen Westerholm, and D. A. Carson. They insist that the ‘New Perspective on Paul’ has caused confusion in respect to understanding the Pauline thoughts of faith, justification, and works of the Law. For instance, Sanders, Dunn, and Wright’s discussions on the involvement of human response to the gospel as the key to being justified raise the question as to whether justification is synergistic or monergistic. Dunn proposes that the works of the Law refers to identity markers such as circumcision, Sabbath, and the food laws that defined Jews as belonging to the covenant of God. Simon J. Gathercole¹⁰³ argues that, since the

defined by Torah, and yet in much of what Paul says he can draw upon Torah for outline guidance in ways which have been studied in detail by those better qualified than I.”

¹⁰¹ Wright, *Paul: Fresh Perspectives*, 124.

¹⁰² Wright, *Paul: Fresh Perspectives*, 125.

¹⁰³ Simon J. Gathercole, *Where is Boasting: Early Jewish Soteriology and Paul’s Response in Romans 1-5* (Grand Rapids, Michigan; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002), 13. He comments that “since the idea of

works of the Law are closely related to boasting (Rom 3:27-28), the definition of boasting needs to be determined with the view to interpreting the meaning of these works of the Law accurately. He suggests that boasting could become the confidence of vindication on the basis of “national election and vocation.”¹⁰⁴ Can we agree with the New Perspective on Paul that justification is synergistic and the works of the Law refer to good deeds on the basis of one’s obedience to the Law with eternal life at the judgment day? The three criticisms that will be discussed are as follows: (1) Justification in Paul: Synergistic or Monergistic?, (2) Does Paul’s soteriology run from Solution to Plight?, and (3) Does Paul see the works of the Law as boundary markers?

2.4.1 Justification in Paul: Synergistic or Monergistic?

To identify whether justification in Paul’s thought is synergistic or monergistic, it is helpful to investigate what Paul thinks of faith and justification as the basis for his soteriology. If Paul’s thought of faith is a gift of God, justification is monergistic; however, justification is synergistic if faith involves a human response to the gospel. If faith is the entry to the covenant, when can faith come and what is faith in Paul’s thought? Gathercole is utilizing the terms of synergism and monergism in order to understand Paul’s thoughts of salvation in terms of faith, boasting, and justification in relation to the works of the Law. Synergism is a term for a co-operation between God and humanity in the ‘getting in’ stage of soteriology, while monergism has to do with God as the only agent who effects the process of salvation.¹⁰⁵ From Covenantal Nomism,

works of the Law is integrally related to boasting (Rom 3:27-28), one’s definition of boasting will be determined according to how these works are understood.”

¹⁰⁴ Gathercole, *Where is Boasting*, 13.

¹⁰⁵ Gathercole, *Where is Boasting*, 13. He defines the terms as the following: synergism in the sense of a concurrence of divine and human action, whereby divine initiative is supplemented by human response; in opposition to monergism, which thinks in terms of divine action in which God permits the human agent to share.

we have understood that the ‘getting in’ stages of Judaism and Paul’s soteriologies acknowledge that God’s chosen people enter into the covenant on the basis of God’s grace. Based on Covenantal Nomism, Sanders urges that Judaism did not need any human response as the ‘getting in’ stage was completely God’s favour to the Israelites as the chosen nation. If this justification of first-century Palestinian Judaism is monergistic, is Paul’s justification monergistic too as their characteristics are fundamentally based on God’s grace?

The opponents of the New Perspective on Paul definitely base Paul’s thinking of justification on monergism. For example, Gathercole considers faith a divine gift evoked by the action of the Spirit in conjunction with the preaching of the gospel.¹⁰⁶ He makes note of how this divine faith genuinely becomes a human act as God graciously permits the human person to share in the divine gift.¹⁰⁷ For Gathercole, saving faith probably takes place on the basis of God’s divine action before the involvement of human response. His reason for seeing faith as a divine origin is that God’s knowledge comes only through revelation (1 Cor 2:10). He notes that this divine gift is then transferred to the character of human faith that is fundamentally strengthened by “giving glory to God and being convinced of the truth of the promise of the Holy Spirit” like the faith of Abraham (Rom 1:20; 4:20-21).¹⁰⁸ Similarly, Käsemann sees both justification and sanctification as the active work of God – it is monergistic as human co-operation is not being exercised at all.¹⁰⁹ Mark A. Seifrid suggests this when he describes faith as “a norm or law

This monergism is the view that God is the only agent who effects the process of salvation, without the involvement of human response.

¹⁰⁶ S. J. Gathercole, ‘Justified by Faith, Justified by His Blood: The Evidence of Romans 3:21-4:25’ in D.A. Carson, Peter T. O’Brien and Mark A. Seifrid, *Justification and Variegated Nomism: The Paradoxes of Paul* Vol II (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2004), 161-162.

¹⁰⁷ Gathercole, ‘Justified by Faith’, 162.

¹⁰⁸ Gathercole, ‘Justified by Faith’, 162.

¹⁰⁹ Ernest Käsemann, *Perspectives on Paul* (London: SCM Press, 1996), 156. He states that “the righteousness of God does not presuppose our obedience; it creates it.”

which proceeds from God's work and bars the work of the human being" (Rom 3:21-26).¹¹⁰ The writings of Gathercole, Käsemann, and Seifrid concur that justification in Paul's letters is monergistic as faith itself is the work of God, a divine gift, through the gospel without any human involvement.

On the contrary, Sanders, Dunn, and Wright suggest that Paul's justification is synergistic. For instance, Wright proposes that we believe in the Messiah because of our response to the gospel in order to be justified by the faithfulness of Christ. This human involvement, for Wright, is considered the most essential element of our side in order to receive faith in terms of the first-fruits of the Spirit with the aim of responding to the gospel. Wright admits that 'being justified' is not about how someone becomes a Christian, but it has to do with "who belongs to the people of God and how [we] can tell that in the present."¹¹¹ Wright affirms that Paul has successfully redefined God's purpose in election by creating a single family of those who believe in Christ. Therefore, Wright insists that faith is no longer the practice of the Torah, but "the badge which marks out this family, the family which is now defined as the people of the Messiah."¹¹² Wright's view is that justification by faith is basically synergistic because the response to the gospel is the key to receiving the gift of the Spirit and the faithfulness of Christ although they occur simultaneously.

I conclude that Dunn's understanding of justification is synergistic in the sense that faith refers to a total human response to the gospel. He sees faith as the evidence that God has saved and

¹¹⁰ Mark A. Seifrid, *Christ, Our Righteousness: Paul's Theology of Justification* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 133.

¹¹¹ Wright, *Paul: Fresh Perspectives*, 112.

¹¹² Wright, *Paul: Fresh Perspectives*, 113.

declared us to be in the covenant. His emphasis is on the total dependence on God as the reflection of justification by faith. Dunn and Seifrid have suggested the similar aspect of faith in terms of relating God's promise to Abraham, but Seifrid claims that faith itself "is directed to God's promise to Abraham which has come to fulfillment in Christ," especially of his explanation that Paul's faith is not a general sense of dependence upon God.¹¹³ Dunn affirms that justification is for those who believe in Christ (Rom 1:16), which demonstrates that human involvement is not superfluous.

Sanders believes that faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes by the preaching of Christ; it is human need for decision for Christ's lordship.¹¹⁴ Sanders urges that God chooses those who shall hear and believe the message and, on the basis of faith, God justifies and glorifies them.¹¹⁵ It should be noted here that, for Sanders, faith represents people's entire response to the salvation offered by Christ, apart from the law.¹¹⁶ Byrne also proposes that faith involves both an attitude and a personal commitment: "attitude which discerns God acting creatively in the world and in one's life and which surrenders to that claim in confidence and trust."¹¹⁷ Moo comments that Paul identifies faith as our response to what God has done in Christ as we are justified.¹¹⁸ We see that the expression of human response to the Good News about Christ is required as one earnestly gives ear to the gospel. This faith involves an attitude of believing and commitment. Therefore, faith is the act of responding to the saving action of God in Jesus Christ.

¹¹³ Seifrid, *Christ, Our Righteousness: Paul's Theology of Justification*, 130.

¹¹⁴ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 447.

¹¹⁵ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 447.

¹¹⁶ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 492.

¹¹⁷ Brendan Byrne, *Reckoning with Romans: A Contemporary Reading of Paul's Gospel* (Wilmington, Delaware: Michael Glazier, Inc, 1986), 41.

¹¹⁸ Douglas Moo, *Romans The NIV Application Commentary* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2000), 37.

According to Sanders, Paul's gospel does not start with sin and human transgressions, but with human opportunity for salvation offered by God through Christ Jesus.¹¹⁹ Paul's gospel is that Christ has died and that God has raised Him, that Christ is Lord, that the Lord will return, that the *apistoi* (unbelievers) will be destroyed (2 Cor 4:3), and the believers will be saved – if alive by having their bodies transformed and if dead by being raised in a spiritual body (1 Cor 15:44). Paul's gospel is about Christology and soteriology, not human transgressions. The gospel of Christ intends to bring out faith, and faith can only be individual. Sanders says, "What God is doing is of cosmic significance and affects 'all things', and it is this that Paul preaches about; but individuals will be affected differently, depending on whether or not they believe."¹²⁰ If they decide to believe in the gospel, they participate in Christ's death and receive righteousness that comes only through Christ as Lord and Saviour. For Sanders, the principal word for participation is Christ, and righteousness comes only through Christ as Lord and Saviour. We are converted, reconciled, justified, and transferred from the lordship of sin to the lordship of Christ only through faith as our response to the gospel.

2.4.2 Does Paul's Soteriology Run from Solution to Plight?

Paul's thought of salvation can fundamentally be explored in relation to the conviction of Paul's call and robust conscience. Krister Stendahl in his essay, *The Apostle Paul and the Introspective Conscience of the West*, argued that Christians misconstrued Paul's teachings through the lens of an individualistic mindset or conscience on the basis of the personal

¹¹⁹ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 446.

¹²⁰ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 446.

experience of Martin Luther.¹²¹ Stendahl was convinced that Paul was not struggling with his conscience: Paul had a ‘robust conscience’ as he had been flawless in terms of his righteousness required by the Law (Phil 3:6). He notes that Paul never agonized over any guilty conscience as he was a devoted and joyful Jew.¹²² He admits that Paul was conscious of the chief sin of persecuting the church (1 Cor 15:9) because of his ignorance of Christ the true Messiah.¹²³ Wright affirms that Paul in pre-conversion devoted himself to the Jewish Law (Gal 1:13; Phil 3:6),¹²⁴ but Christ revealed Himself to Paul (Acts 9:1) and gave him a revelation about who the true Messiah was (Gal 1:15-16).

Paul introduces himself as a servant of Christ Jesus called to be an apostle (Rom 1:1; 1 Cor 1:1) by the will of God. Paul seems to be saying that he experiences God’s call as he is set apart for the gospel of God (Rom 1:1). In this respect, Wright propounds that Paul experienced a ‘call’ on the Damascus Road, not a conversion (Acts 9, 22, 26).¹²⁵ Wright’s reason for his proposal is that Paul had received a revelation of Jesus Christ as the ‘Lord Messiah’ and had been called to be a special Apostle to the Gentiles (Gal 1:15-16). For O’Brien, the change of Paul’s identity by

¹²¹ Stendahl, ‘The Apostle Paul and the Introspective Conscience of the West’, 85. He states that Augustine’s Confessions are known as “the first great document in the history of the introspective conscience” and then progressed with Martin Luther and the interpretation of Paul as its climax. Stendahl points out that the traditional Protestant theology has focussed more on Augustine and Luther’s anguish of sorrow and guilt than Paul’s teachings. For example, Luther showed his inner struggles with the Penance and Indulgence (82). Paul did not deal with the question which Luther was concerned about, “How can I find a gracious God?” The questions he was concerned about were: “(1) What happens to the Law (the Torah, the actual Law of Moses, not the principle of legalism) when the Messiah has come? (2) What are the ramifications of the Messiah’s arrival for the relation between Jews and Gentiles? (3) What is the place of the Gentiles in the Church and in the plan of God?” (84).

¹²² Stendahl, *Paul among Jews and Gentiles*, 78-96.

¹²³ Stendahl, *Paul among Jews and Gentiles*, 89.

¹²⁴ Wright, *What Saint Paul Really Said*, 31-35. He finds out Paul’s reason for persecuting the church of Christ: he was zealous for Israel’s God and for the Torah (Rom 10:2). Paul intended that Jews had to obey the Torah wholeheartedly in the present; they would be marked out already as those who could be vindicated when God finally acted to save and redeem His people, so He forced them to keep the Torah in His way, using violence as and when necessary.

¹²⁵ Wright, *What Saint Paul Really Said*, 84. Based on Gal 1:15-16 and Acts 9:22, 26, Wright professes that the ‘call’ is probably the best description of Paul’s encounter with Christ.

submitting himself to the lordship of Christ is described as “conversion.”¹²⁶ He professes that Paul transitioned from a Jewish Pharisee or a fulfilled Jew to a man who was in Christ.¹²⁷ Their proposals might assert that conversion is the best term in regard to describing Paul’s shift from Pharisaism to another identity, the Jesus community, but his revelation and encounter with Christ indicates that Paul experienced God’s call because Jesus simply called him to be an apostle (Rom 1:1; 1 Cor 1:1; Gal 1:15-16).

Sanders claims that Paul received the conviction that ‘Christ is Lord and Saviour’ when he experienced an encounter with Christ. Sanders writes, “We began the discussion where it appears Paul began, with the conviction that Christ is Lord and Saviour.”¹²⁸ Here we see Sanders’ attempt to tell Paul’s thought that Christ came to be Lord of all and that people were under a different lordship. According to Sanders, Paul began his ministry with a realisation that everyone was enslaved to sin and could be saved only by Christ. There is no doubt that, for Sanders, Paul’s thought runs from solution to plight as he believes that the interpretation of Rom 7 has nothing to do with the frustration of his life as a practicing Jew.¹²⁹ Bultmann asserts that “Paul saw Christ as offering a solution.”¹³⁰ This means that, he claims, the death of Christ is to provide for expiation of past transgressions and for death to the power of sin: everyone

¹²⁶ Peter T. O’Brien, ‘Was Paul Converted?’, in *Justification and Variegated Nomism: the Complexities of Second Temple Judaism*, Vol I, ed. D.A. Carson, Peter T. O’Brien, and Mark A. Seifrid, 370. He notes that the change of Paul’s identity and self-consciousness can only be described as conversion, not alteration or transformation (362). The reason for this type of ‘conversion’ is that Paul formerly persecuted the church of God (Gal 1:13; 1 Cor 15:9-11; Phil 3:6), but then he preached the faith he once tried to destroy (Gal 1:23; Phil 3:7): he experienced a change of commitment, values and identity. Did Paul experience a call or a conversion? O’Brien notes that Paul’s experience can be understood through different descriptions: (1) a *conversion* is “a radical change of thought, outlook, commitments, and practice; it involves either an overt or a subconscious break with one’s past identity,” (2) a *transformation* is “a new perception and a marked change in form or appearance, but not necessarily a break with the past,” (3) an *alteration* is “a shift in perspective and practice, but without any distancing from one’s past,” (4) a *call* is “a summons to a new career or a particular pursuit.”

¹²⁷ O’Brien, ‘Was Paul Converted?’, 370.

¹²⁸ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 472.

¹²⁹ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 443.

¹³⁰ Rudolf Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament* (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1952), 191.

transgresses, and transgression puts one under the power of sin. He writes that “every assertion about Christ is also an assertion about [people] and vice versa; and Paul’s Christology is simultaneously soteriology.”¹³¹ The criterion for his Christology is fixed on anthropology – we need Christ because of our transgressions; Christ died for our transgressions as only He can justify. If Paul’s Christology is focused on human transgressions, his thought cannot run from solution to plight. Sanders argues that Paul’s conviction “Christ came to be Lord of all” is the answer to the understanding of the human beings’ real plight that they were “under a different lordship.”¹³²

Sanders has commented on significant insights into what the problem of the human plight is and why God sent Christ to die. For example, Sanders prefaces the discussion about Paul’s thought that runs from the Solution to Plight. He claims that, for Paul, the problem of people’s plight is that they are not under Christ’s lordship. According to Sanders, Paul’s soteriology is the transfer from the lordship of sin to the lordship of Christ; being in the flesh (Rom 7:5; 8:4) to being in the Spirit; being under sin and the law to being in Christ or in the Spirit (Rom 6:15-20). Sanders expounds how Paul sees ‘sin’ which appears in singular as a power that enslaves people: a power of the flesh, the rulers of this world or of the fundamental spirits of the universe.¹³³ It is important to note that, for Sanders, Paul has a view that everyone is under the lordship of sin, and Christ came to provide a new lordship for those who participate in His death and resurrection. Therefore, it is clear that Paul’s thought of salvation does not start with people’s

¹³¹ Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, 191.

¹³² Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 500.

¹³³ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 498. Sin itself is the enemy power that governs people who are not in Christ.

transgressions in order to prove the fact that people are enslaved to sin and could be saved only by Christ.¹³⁴

Paul says, “That God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting [people]’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation” (2 Cor 5:19). It is possible that Paul’s thinking of people’s plight does not start by analyzing their transgressions, so he does not offer forgiveness and repentance as the solution to their transgressions (Rom 3:25). Sanders points out that speaking of people turning to God in repentance and being forgiven was not applicable to Paul’s thought because of his conviction arising out of a revelation that Christ came to be Lord of all and that people were under a different lordship.¹³⁵ Sanders comments that Paul’s reason for spreading the message without reference to people’s repentance is to emphasise the characteristic act of Christians: “to believe the gospel message that God had raised Christ and would raise those who believe, and therefore to receive the Spirit and participate in the Spirit.”¹³⁶ We see that the key to Paul’s justification is Christology as believing the gospel refers to the transfer from death to life, from the flesh to the Spirit, and from the lordship of sin to the lordship of Christ in association with being reconciled, justified, and forgiven for our past transgressions.

Unlike Dunn, who describes Rom 7:17-25 as Paul’s Christian experience of the tension between flesh and Spirit, Byrne’s exposition has portrayed the characteristic aspects of the non-Christian like flesh, sin, mind, and law with the absence of the Spirit (Rom 8:1-13). The passage is referring to Paul’s moral struggle without the Spirit of God before his encounter with the Lord

¹³⁴ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 499.

¹³⁵ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 500.

¹³⁶ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 500.

because of the “power of sin”¹³⁷ that took control over his mind. For instance, Byrne believes that Paul describes sin as “a power whose base of operations is in the flesh.”¹³⁸ Paul says, “We know that the law is spiritual, but I am unspiritual (fleshly), sold as a slave to sin” (Rom 7:14). Because Paul acknowledges that the law is good (Rom 7:12, 16), Byrne urges that Paul conceives a real yearning to fulfil the law in order to obtain life. He further writes that Paul, being fleshly, is compelled to live according to the flesh. He notices that Paul is struggling with his inner being (Rom 7: 22) or mind (Rom 7:23, 25)¹³⁹ that entices him to do evil things that he dislikes.

2.4.3 Does Paul See the Works of the Law as Boundary Markers?

Sanders, Wright, and Dunn have argued that the problem of Judaism in Paul’s letters was not dealing with the works of the Law as a means of salvation. Dunn connotes that, for Paul, the works of the Law such as circumcision, Sabbath Observance, and food are seen as the boundary markers for the use of separating the Jews from the Gentiles. Dunn calls these boundary markers badges in order to mark out the Jews as God’s people. In other words, to use badges (outward visible marks) of Jewish identity is to serve effectively as a boundary marker between Jews and Gentiles. Dunn believes that Paul sees the works of the Law as the visible definition of the

¹³⁷ Byrne, *Reckoning with Romans*, 137, notes that, for Paul, *αμαρτία* (sin) does not refer primarily to individual sinful acts (transgressions or sins). It denotes “a subtle, willed selfishness, the fundamental tendency in human beings to place self and the perceived needs of self in the position that should only be occupied by the life-giving sovereignty of God.” He believes that Paul does not describe sin as a force external to human beings, but it has an ambience transcending purely individual sin. Sin remains that deep-seated, fundamental proneness in human beings to snatch at life by asserting independence over against God (139).

¹³⁸ According to Byrne, *Reckoning with Romans*, 137, Paul’s understanding of flesh is “the aspect of frailty, mortality, proneness to sin, hostility to God – all that makes for the merely human in contrast and to some extent opposition to God.”

¹³⁹ Paul says, “But I see another law in my members fighting against the law of my reasonable self (mind) and holding me captive to the law of sin, which dwells in my members” (Rom 7:23) (141). Byrne, *Reckoning with Romans*, 143, expounds the characteristic of the mind: “a knowing, reasoning, and judging being, with a certain element of will or aspiration included.”

covenant people (Rom 2:27-29; 7:6; 2 Cor 3:6-7). In other words, these boundary markers were used to identify who was inside and who was outside the covenant. He proposes that the boundary markers functioned sociologically as covenant badges in regard to protecting Jewish identity. For Dunn, Paul opposed an exclusivistic national righteousness that insisted on the boundary markers so that Jews and Gentiles would be unified.

Seifrid has a view that Paul expresses the works of the Law as “deeds done in obedience to the Law of Moses.”¹⁴⁰ He suggests that the works of the Law refer to ethnic and national significance as only a Jew may boast in the works of the Law.¹⁴¹ Therefore, he suspects that Paul protests against these works of the law as “markers of ‘religio-national’ identity, not merely as signs of national privilege.”¹⁴² On the contrary, Stephen Westerholm comments that, if “the nationalism of some Jews had become proud and prejudiced, there was no need for the cross of Christ to demonstrate the error of their ways; such attitudes are abundantly condemned in the Hebrew Scriptures themselves.”¹⁴³ It seems that the focal point of Paul’s thought on these boundary markers is that keeping these boundary markers of Judaism no longer guaranteed that a Jew was already in the new covenant. Was Paul’s objection to Judaism related to good works on the basis of their righteous performance of the Law of Moses?

Dunn argues that Paul was opposed to the Judaizers as they began with a proclamation that “God’s grace [extended] only to those who wear the badge of the covenant.”¹⁴⁴ Therefore,

¹⁴⁰ Seifrid, *Christ, Our Righteousness*, 100.

¹⁴¹ Seifrid, *Christ, Our Righteousness*, 100.

¹⁴² Seifrid, *Christ, Our Righteousness*, 101.

¹⁴³ Stephen Westerholm, ‘The “New Perspective” at Twenty-Five’ in *Justification and Variegated Nomism: The Paradoxes of Paul*, Vol II, ed. D.A. Carson, Peter T. O’Brien, and Mark A. Seifrid (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2004), 28.

¹⁴⁴ Dunn, *The New Perspective on Paul*, 111.

according to Dunn, Paul protested against identity markers that were regarded as the means of salvation. It is wrong to accept the fact that to be a member of God's covenant was to be a member of Jews and to observe their boundary markers. Moo postulates that being a Christian is marked by the "circumcision of the heart because the Law comes in the context of the Spirit, not the written code."¹⁴⁵ Byrne states that the gift of the Spirit creates "circumcision of heart, enabling a person to live a life pleasing to God in a way which commitment to the written code could never do."¹⁴⁶ Wright and Dunn believe that Paul was protesting against the practices of his fellow Jews in his day because the Jews could not see that salvation by faith in Christ belonged to the world, including Gentiles.

My argument is that Paul was not protesting against legalism because the Covenantal Nomism of first-century Palestinian Judaism was gracious. We accept Dunn's view that Paul was fighting against the works and national pride that separated Jews and Gentiles. These works had to do with the Jewish badges in their nationalistic boundary markers such as circumcision, food laws, and Sabbath in order to keep them in the covenant. Gathercole observes that Paul was fighting against a boasting in the Law that made Israel a distinct nation¹⁴⁷ as obedience and election were the basis for Israel's confidence before God.¹⁴⁸ Sanders suggests that Paul's protest against Judaizing (Gal 3:1-5) was to assure Christian Jews and Gentiles in his day that they received the Spirit by faith, not by the works of the Law. Sanders further comments, "Paul can say that his faith and message are based on his having the Spirit"¹⁴⁹ (2 Cor 4:13). Agreeing with Sanders,

¹⁴⁵ Moo, *Romans*, 96.

¹⁴⁶ Byrne, *Reckoning with Romans*, 69.

¹⁴⁷ Gathercole, *Where is Boasting*, 261.

¹⁴⁸ Gathercole, *Where is Boasting*, 194.

¹⁴⁹ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 458.

Wright, and Dunn, I conclude that Paul was protesting against the Judaizers who claimed the fact that the works of the Law saved them.

2.5 Conclusion

Sanders has coined and popularized this concept of Covenantal Nomism to protest against the traditional Lutheran belief of Judaism as a legalistic religion. Sanders, Dunn, and Wright are convinced that the Judaism of Paul's day was not a legalistic religion. The idea of Covenantal Nomism has introduced the understanding that the Judaism of Paul's day was based on grace and obedience: the 'getting in' stage was a special product of God's grace, and the 'staying in' stage was the obligation to obey the Law as a gift of God in response to the electing grace of God. This concept of Covenantal Nomism has reframed the fact that Paul was not fighting against legalism. Therefore, when Jews in Paul's day talked about 'obedience,' they were in the context of Covenantal Nomism, not legalism. When Jews spoke of obeying the Law, they were talking about their maintenance in the covenant.

Using the pattern of Covenantal Nomism, Sanders has analysed the comparison between first-century Palestinian Judaism and Paul's letters in order to understand Paul's thoughts of salvation. Sanders has described Paul's pattern of religion as 'Participationist Eschatology': 'getting in' is portrayed as a transfer event, and 'staying in' is recognised as a metaphor of 'one body of Christ and one Spirit.' Sanders has described the 'transfer' terminology as interrelated five terms: participation in Christ's death, freedom, transformation/new creation, reconciliation, and justification. The 'getting in' stage of Paul's soteriology is about the death of Christ that has transferred us from the lordship of sin to the lordship of Christ, set us free from the bondage of

sin, reconciled, justified, and forgiven us for our past transgressions. Repentance is not included in the ‘getting in’ stage of Paul’s soteriology as God has reconciled Himself to all people through the death of Christ.

Sanders has discussed the ‘staying in’ stage of Paul’s soteriology as members of Christ’s body, in Christ, in the Spirit, and Christ’s servants. This means that we must choose to obey and produce the fruit of the Spirit as we now belong to Christ Jesus, who has crucified the flesh with its passions and desires (Gal 5: 16-23). In this stage, Sanders believes that Paul does not discuss that Christians who sin must repent and be forgiven. Paul responds to post-conversion transgression by telling Christians to walk according to the Spirit (1 Cor 6:9-11) so that they will be saved from God’s wrath at the Day of Judgment as God wants them to remain blameless, innocent (Phil 2:15), steadfast (1 Cor 15:58), and firm (1 Cor 16:13). Sanders recommends that “what is to be obeyed may be presented as a word of the Lord or as the apostle’s instruction; it is not a written code.”¹⁵⁰ Dunn views that the key to becoming like Christ is also obedience in relation to the enabling of the Holy Spirit in our ongoing sanctification until Christ returns. We see that our obedience to God’s commands is the key to producing good deeds in the working of the Holy Spirit.

Paul’s soteriology is all about the gospel of Christ, the promises of God to save all people on the basis of faith. Christians will be completely saved – “if alive by having their bodies transformed and if dead by being raised in a spiritual body (1 Cor 15:44). Sanders urges that Paul does not begin with people’s transgressions but with the opportunity for salvation offered by God through Christ. Paul’s thought of salvation runs solution to plight as his conviction is that Christ is Lord

¹⁵⁰ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 513.

and Saviour: “Christ came to provide a new lordship for those who participate in his death and resurrection.”¹⁵¹

Covenantal Nomism gives a clear picture of the patterns of Judaism and Paul’s letters in terms of synergistic or monergistic. The contrast between the two is that Paul’s thought of the ‘getting in’ stage needs faith as human decision or personal response to what God has done in Christ, so its characteristic is synergistic. The ‘getting in’ stage of Judaism does not need any response as it was completely God’s favour to the Israelites as a chosen nation, so it is monergistic. As I have argued, synergism is included at every stage of Pauline soteriology. The similarity is that the ‘staying in’ stages of their soteriologies are synergistic.

Sanders’ Covenantal Nomism of first-century Palestinian Judaism has broadened the understanding of how to deal with the oppositions to the New Perspective on Paul. The basis for the works of the Law is focused on faith because justification is now available to Gentiles and the world: the works of the Law are not the key to justification. In Christ, justification no longer belongs to boundary markers, identity badges of national privileges, or boasting about Jews’ righteousness. Our Godly deeds of love in association with the enabling of the Holy Spirit become evidence of Christians’ union with Christ in His death and resurrection. The Holy Spirit enables us to produce good deeds of love as we have been transferred from slaves of sin to slaves of righteousness, reconciled and justified.

¹⁵¹ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 499.

CHAPTER THREE

RIGHTEOUSNESS IN THE PSALMS OF SOLOMON

From the previous chapter, we saw how Sanders coined the concept of Covenantal Nomism in order to protest against the broad academic consensus that the Judaism in Paul's day was a legalistic religion. There is no doubt that, for Sanders, the 'getting in' stage of the Pauline Judaism is entirely monergistic: it is a gracious religion, not an achievement of self-righteousness. According to the concept, the soteriology of Judaism has two stages: 'getting in' is a special election of God's grace and 'staying in' is the obligation to obey the Law. Sanders, Dunn, and Wright have confirmed that, for Paul, union with Christ is a reality of the Pauline justification in response to faith in Christ. In addition, they have contributed major approaches to the 'New Perspective on Paul' to understand the meanings of the Pauline language of righteousness and Paul's opposition to the Jewish people in his letters.

In this chapter, the Psalms of Solomon are used as a vehicle for understanding the idea of righteousness in the Judaism of Paul's day on the basis of the concept of Covenantal Nomism as the 'pattern of religion.' The Psalms of Solomon are central to the Jewish literature in the last pre-Christian century, and they are the most significant collection of eighteen Psalms.¹⁵² Reference to the Psalms of Solomon 2:6-8, for example, reflects important imagery of God's righteousness by removing the sons and daughters of Jerusalem from their relationships with God in the covenant, because of the evil deeds they have done and their unwillingness to repent for their sins:

¹⁵² Herbert Edward Ryle and Montague Rhodes James, *Psalms of the Pharisees Commonly Called the Psalms of Solomon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1891), xlv, suggest that the Psalms of Solomon are also called the Psalms of Pharisees.

6. The sons and daughters (of Jerusalem) were held prisoner in terrible conditions: a seal on their necks, a Gentile mark; 7. He dealt with them according to their sins; He abandoned them to the hands of their oppressors. 8. For He turned away and showed them no mercy – young and old and their children – all alike.¹⁵³

However, God maintains the righteous in their healthy relationships with Him when they are standing rightly before Him by obeying Torah (9:3) and repenting of their sins (9:7):

3. For none that do evil can be hidden from your knowledge, Lord, you know of the righteous deeds of your devout; where will a person hide from your knowledge, O God? 7. And whose sins will He forgive, except those who have sinned? You will bless the righteous, and not accuse them for their sin because your kindness is upon those that sin, when they repent.

These texts contrast the sinners with the righteous in terms of what they are doing in their unrighteousness or righteousness. At the same time, God demonstrates His righteousness by judging the sinners in their disobedience and blessing the righteous in relation to their obedience as a means of maintaining their healthy relationships with God. This raises questions about: “Who are the righteous? Who are the sinners? How does God deal with them in His righteousness? Does the theology of the Psalms of Solomon exhibit the concept of Covenantal Nomism as the ‘pattern of religion?’”

This chapter will take the Psalms of Solomon as a case study to test some aspects of their theological terms that Judaism displays the concept of Covenantal Nomism as the ‘pattern of religion.’ This case study will provide evidence to support a view that obedience to God maintains righteous Jews in their relationships with God in the covenant, but does not earn His

¹⁵³ Robert B. Wright, *The Psalms of Solomon: A Critical Edition of the Greek Text* (New York: T & T Clark International, 2007), 61. The texts of the Psalms of Solomon in this thesis are quoted from 54-207 (see appendix 1).

grace. God elects the Israelites as His special people (9:9); they are elected by God's free grace, apart from observing the Torah (9:3). The Israelites are the people whom God has loved as the Psalmist says, "Now, then, you are God and we are the people who you have loved" (9:8a). The study is aimed at analysing, investigating, and critically discussing how effectively the dimensions of righteousness in the concept of Covenantal Nomism can be applied to the theology of the Psalms of Solomon. The historical setting of the Psalms of Solomon will be expounded to know whether the Psalms of Solomon are typical of first-century Judaism, and the categories of people will also be described with a view to supporting evidence that obedience to the Law is a function of their maintenance of their relationship with God.

3.1 The Historical Setting of the Psalms of Solomon

Historically, the eighteen Psalms of Solomon are classified among the Pseudepigrapha¹⁵⁴ not regularly found in the Septuagint (LXX).¹⁵⁵ They are recognised as being written in a period "in which the Jewish people, wherever they lived, were under the political and military control of other nations."¹⁵⁶ In this context, the Psalms of Solomon 17 focuses on important imagery of the eschatological king, titled the 'Lord Messiah,' whose character is righteous. Theologically,

¹⁵⁴ Julius Scott, *Jewish Backgrounds of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: BakerBooks, 1995), 30, and Everett Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 3rd ed, 2003), 448-449, where they expound on the introduction to the Pseudepigrapha: an open-ended category of Jewish works coming from roughly 200 BCE to 200 AD; this collection of Jewish literature was produced in pre-Christian and early Christian times. The Pseudepigrapha include many types of Jewish literature, including "Wisdom (4 Maccabees), edifying expansion of Hebrew Scripture (Jubilees, Marydom of Isaiah), apocalypses proper (1 and 2 Enoch, 2 Baruch), testaments (Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, Testament of Job; the Testament of Abraham is a narrative and not a testament), prayer and psalms (Psalms of Solomon, prayer of Joseph), and others" (Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*, 449).

¹⁵⁵ The Psalms of Solomon are found in some versions of LXX, included in Rahlfs' edition.

¹⁵⁶ James C. Vankerkaam, *An Introduction to Early Judaism* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2001), 1, writes that Jews continued to exist under the shadow of far greater powers although for a brief time in the late second and early first centuries BCE, they had their own independent state.

the righteousness of the ‘Lord Messiah’ becomes the quality of Christ’s covenant in the New Testament. The texts gave a ‘Messianic hope’ to Jews of that time with a view to setting them free from the political conflict and turmoil. What was the possible date of the Psalms of Solomon? Who were the community of Jews in the Psalms of Solomon? Who was the speaker of the Psalms of Solomon? These historical issues will be critically analysed below.

The possible date of the Psalms of Solomon can be argued with relevant evidence of the texts and interpretations. R. B. Wright in his latest edition, *The Psalms of Solomon: A Critical Edition of the Greek Text*, and Winninge comment that, if the conqueror of the Psalms of Solomon 2 and 8 is Pompey, the events would be associated with its historical allusions to Pompey’s invasion in 63 BCE.¹⁵⁷ Ferguson confirms that Pompey took Jerusalem in 63 BCE.¹⁵⁸ The texts confirm that Pompey came from the end of the earth, declared war against Jerusalem (8:15), pulled down the wall of Jerusalem (8:19) and killed off the Jewish leaders and all the councilmen (8:20). These particular texts of the Psalms of Solomon support solid historical evidence that God punished some of the Jews who chose to be sinners by abandoning them to the hands of Gentiles, the oppressors (2:7), who smashed down the Temple walls (2:1). The texts show that the Psalms of Solomon were composed after Pompey’s conquest in 63 BCE.

The historical dating of Pompey’s death can be the key factor in figuring out when Pss. Sol were composed. The death of the Roman General Pompey, who brought Roman rule over Palestine, is mentioned in the Psalms of Solomon 2:26-27:

¹⁵⁷ Wright, *The Psalms of Solomon: A Critical Edition of the Greek Text*, 6; and Winninge, *Sinners and the Righteous*, 12.

¹⁵⁸ Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*, 411. He notes that the Psalms of Solomon was “the first Jewish writing to express complete hostility toward Rome” (412).

“I did not have long to wait until God showed me his arrogance; Stabbed on the sand dunes of Egypt, he was more despised than anything in the whole world. His body was violently carried over the waves and there was no one to bury him, because God contemptuously despised him.”

The Psalmist’s knowledge of Pompey’s death supports historical evidence that the Psalms of Solomon were composed after the death of Pompey. Daniel Falk, Winnige, and Ferguson suggest that Pompey died in Egypt in 48 BCE.¹⁵⁹ Winnige points out that the collection was composed in the period 70-40 BCE,¹⁶⁰ and Falk considers that the Psalms of Solomon must have been completed after 48 BCE.¹⁶¹ Based on the historical point from these texts of the Psalms of Solomon, the possible date of the Psalms of Solomon is best indicated after 48 BCE.

Moreover, the Psalmist describes a foreigner whose heart was alien to God (17:13). Wright describes the foreigner as the king Herod, who exterminated the remaining Hasmonean leaders in 30 BCE.¹⁶² Wright adds that the Psalms of Solomon were probably composed in Hebrew, in Jerusalem, “shortly before the reign of Herod the Great (40-4 BCE).”¹⁶³ Ferguson records that Herod was declared king of the Jews in 40 BCE.¹⁶⁴ For Winnige, the foreigner was known as Pompey, not Herod.¹⁶⁵ If the foreigner was the king Herod, the texts of the Psalms of Solomon were written after the death of Pompey and before the reign of Herod the Great that is, around the middle of the first century BCE. Furthermore, it was certainly completed before 70 AD

¹⁵⁹ Daniel Falk, ‘Psalms and Prayers’, in D. A. Carson, Peter L. O’Brien, and Mark A. Seifrid *Justification and Variegated Nomism: The Complexities of Second Temple Judaism* Vol 1 (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 35; Evert Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*, 459, mentions the death of Pompey in 48 BCE; and Winnige, *Sinners and the Righteous*, 13.

¹⁶⁰ Winnige, *Sinners and the Righteous*, 13.

¹⁶¹ Falk, ‘Psalms and Prayers’, in Carson, O’Brien, and Seifrid *Justification and Variegated Nomism: The Complexities of Second Temple Judaism*, 36.

¹⁶² Wright, *The Psalms of Solomon*, 6.

¹⁶³ Wright, *The Psalms of Solomon*, vii.

¹⁶⁴ Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*, 413.

¹⁶⁵ Winnige, *Sinners and the Righteous*, 12.

because many Jews in Jerusalem knew the Psalms of Solomon as a major part of Jewish literature before the burning of the Temple in 70 AD.¹⁶⁶

Were the Psalms of Solomon produced by one person or a group? Wright suggests that a group of pious Jews is called “the synagogues of the devout” (17:16; 10:7).¹⁶⁷ He also affirms that the collection “emerges from the tradition of a Jewish community in the last century.”¹⁶⁸ Tromp recognises the synagogues of the devout as the gatherings of the holy ones,¹⁶⁹ a group of pious Jews who loved the gatherings in the temple. Falk suggests that the collection is “the product of a Jewish community – not likely a single author – in Palestine, and probably Jerusalem because of the preponderance of focus on the city.”¹⁷⁰ It seems that the perspectives and feelings of various men in the spirit of community as a whole have been expressed in the collection. This implies that the collection is composed by a group of pious Jews although the texts are spoken in either the first-person singular (the Psalmist) or the first-person plural (members of his own group). The texts show a consistent and coherent viewpoint so that the Psalms of Solomon can be treated as one work.

Who were these special people who produced the Psalms of Solomon? The Psalmist says, “The destruction of sinners is forever...This is the fate of sinners forever; but those who fear the Lord shall rise up to eternal life, and their lives shall be in the Lord’s light and it shall never end”

¹⁶⁶ Wright, *The Psalms of Solomon: A Critical Edition of the Greek Text*, vii.

¹⁶⁷ Winnige, *Sinners and the Righteous*, 10.

¹⁶⁸ Wright, ‘Psalms of Solomon’, in Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 641.

¹⁶⁹ Johannes Tromp, ‘The Sinners and the Lawless in Psalm of Solomon 17’, *Novum Testamentum XXXV*, 4 (1993), 351. Tromp suggests that the Jewish community (*συναγωγή*) is regularly used for the cultic community in the Septuagint. He expounds on the quality of the cultic community: the cultic community loved God (Ps 5:11; 31:23 69:36; Is 66:10; Lam 1:2). Simply, pious Jews who belonged to this cultic community loved its gatherings in the temple

¹⁷⁰ Falk, ‘Psalms and Prayers’, in *Justification and Variegated Nomism: The Complexities of Second Temple Judaism*, 35.

(3:11-12). Here the Psalmist writes about the resurrection for those who fear the Lord and eternal punishment for sinners (13:11; 14:9f; 15:12f). Sanders describes the Pharisees as a Jewish party whose belief is in the resurrection for the good souls and judgment for the evil souls (12:11). They believe that the wicked will suffer eternal punishment (13:11). They are responsible for their own actions (13:1-2); they are separated themselves from pagan rituals (17:17), and they worship and control synagogues (10:7).¹⁷¹ Winninge propounds that the authors of “the Psalms of Solomon are Pharisees of the first century BCE.”¹⁷² It is probable that the group of the Psalms of Solomon is Pharisaic.

Another historical question is the identification of ‘the Jewish sinners’ of the covenant. This issue has been tackled by many scholars, including Sanders, Tromp, and Ferguson, who suggest that the term ‘sinners’ refers to the Hasmonean High Priests and their supporters, the illegitimate rulers.¹⁷³ They are considered as Jewish sinners who had “unrightfully seized dominion in Israel.”¹⁷⁴ For example, the Hasmoneans themselves were sinful Jewish priests who had been alienated from the covenant/Jewish community by the setting aside of the legitimate line of the High Priesthood.¹⁷⁵ This means that they were opposed to the faithful Pharisees who believed in the resurrection (3:12). Therefore, the Jewish sinners can be “the Hasmonean Sadducees”¹⁷⁶ who have these characteristics: they violently seized the monarchy (17:5-8, 22); they complied

¹⁷¹ Sanders, *Judaism: Practice 63 BCE-66BE*, 299 and 388.

¹⁷² Winninge, *Sinners and the Righteous*, 2.

¹⁷³ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 403; Tromp, ‘The Sinners and the Lawless in Psalm of Solomon 17’, 345 and Wright, *The Psalms of Solomon: A Critical Edition of the Greek Text*, 665-666. Wright states that these sinners (17: 5) refer to Judeans, not Gentiles (look at the Psalm of Solomon 1:2; 2:1): these sinners are the Hasmoneans who were “probably intended as illegitimate usurpers of the government and religion.” Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*, 459, notes that the speaker rejects the Hasmonean monarchy and advocates a Davidic king.

¹⁷⁴ Tromp, ‘The Sinners and the Lawless in Psalm of Solomon 17’, 345.

¹⁷⁵ Suggested by Ryle and James, *Psalms of the Pharisees Commonly Called the Psalms of Solomon*, 130.

¹⁷⁶ Wright, ‘Psalms of Solomon’, in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, ed. Charlesworth, 642.

with the foreign traditions (8:22); and they “were not scrupulous in ritual purity and in ceremonial observances” (1:8; 2:3, 5; 7:2; 8:12; 17:45).

The Psalms of Solomon’s historical setting is significant in discussing Sanders’ argument that the Psalms of Solomon were typical of first-century Palestinian Judaism. The Psalms of Solomon were probably written over a period from before Pompey to a time after his death, or 70-40 BCE.¹⁷⁷ They were composed in or around Jerusalem before the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in 70 AD. The community represents “the ruling class and citizenry of Jerusalem” (1:4), and the texts themselves were known by many Jews “living in Jerusalem in the century before the burning of the Temple”¹⁷⁸ Argued above, the Psalms of Solomon were composed by Pharisees of the first century BCE, and Paul himself was a Pharisee (Phil 3:5). Paul became a persecutor of the church in regard to following the traditional view of the Pharisees that “their rules of daily life set them apart from their [unclean] neighbours”¹⁷⁹ (12:3-4). As a Pharisee, he had to separate himself from impurity, Gentiles, or irreligious Jews.¹⁸⁰ From this, it could be assumed that Paul was well-acquainted with the views held in the Psalms of Solomon.

3.2 The Categories of People in the Psalms of Solomon

The categories of people between ‘the sinners’ and ‘the righteous’ in the Psalms of Solomon provide evidence for supporting a view of obedience to God that maintains the status of the

¹⁷⁷ Winninge, *Sinners and Righteous*, 5.

¹⁷⁸ Wright, *The Psalms of Solomon: A Critical Edition of the Greek Text*, vii.

¹⁷⁹ Noted by Winninge, , *Sinners and the Righteous*, 160.

¹⁸⁰ Winninge, , *Sinners and the Righteous*, 160. He notes that a ‘Pharisee’ is one who is separated from impurity, Gentiles, or irreligious Jews: Pharisees means ‘separatists.’

righteous in a relationship with God in the covenant. The Israelites cannot merely be categorised as the righteous because they are “not the perfect, for they have sins to confess”¹⁸¹ (9:7). Some of them are innocent as they are passionate about choosing what is right (9:3). The overlap between the righteous and the sinners creates two subgroups in the Psalms of Solomon: righteous Jews who are passionate about choosing what is right (9:3) and those who sin but immediately repent of their sins. As a result, I identify these following categories in the Psalms of Solomon as I will look at them exegetically: (1) the righteous, (2) the repentant righteous, and (3) the sinners. These three categories in relation to their righteousness and unrighteousness need to be described and expounded below in order to discover that obedience to the Law is a function of maintaining Jews’ relationship with God in the ‘staying in’ stage of the Psalms of Solomon’s soteriology.

3.2.1 The Righteous

The psalmist describes the righteous as Jews who always choose to do what is right without hiding from God’s knowledge (9:3). The characteristic image of the righteous as the elect is clearly shown in 9:4-5 that they have freedom to choose between right and wrong, and they do choose what is right as they live in the covenant under God’s oversight. They are aware of choosing and doing what is right or wrong on the basis of their free will. They know that choosing what is wrong destroys their lives as they face God’s righteous judgments. They are humble, poor, and needy as the Psalmist questions God: “Who is the hope of the poor and the needy, if not you, O Lord?” (5:11) - the poor refer to the Israelites who humbly turned to God in great need and sought His help. The Psalmist describes ‘the poor and the needy’ as those who

¹⁸¹ As suggested by Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 389 and Winninge, *Sinners and the Righteous*, 75.

had experienced divine acts of deliverance (5:11-12; 10:6).¹⁸² They always expected help from God whenever they feel oppressed (15:1), so they were not poor in terms of financial problems or laziness. They suffered injustice because others had despised God's Law.

The Psalmist prays, "We are free to choose and do what we will to do right or wrong in how we live our lives, in your justice you watch mortals closely" (9:4). He knows that God's justice is watching the elect personally and they are given, "in the power of their own soul: to do either righteousness or iniquity in the works of our hands."¹⁸³ In this text, the word 'choice' seems identical to human power within the souls of the elect, so they are supposedly able to have knowledge of the Torah (9:3; 14:2-3) with regard to making correct choice between the good and evil deeds and between right and wrong (9:5). Wright suggests that their deeds are in "the choice and the authority of [their] souls,"¹⁸⁴ as they can freely choose between good and evil, right and wrong. Based on the texts, the righteous (Category One) can do what is right by choosing to obey the Law (9:3): their righteousness is closely linked with the Torah; they are passionate about doing right things that are pleasing to God so that they do not succumb to temptations. As a result, the righteous reap life with the Lord (9:5).

The 'righteous' that live in a healthy relationship with God in the covenant are characterised by right attitudes and choices as follows:

¹⁸² Verlyn D. Verbrugge, *The NIV Theological Dictionary of New Testament Words* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: ZondervanPublishingHouse, 2000), 477.

¹⁸³ Ryle and James, *Psalms of the Pharisees Commonly Called the Psalms of Solomon*, 91.

¹⁸⁴ Wright, *The Psalms of Solomon: A Critical Edition of the Greek Text*, 129, supports the idea: their deeds are the choice and authority of their own souls. Porter, 'The Psalms of the Pharisees', 175, notes that this free will in the Psalm of Solomon 9:7 is in parallel with the Mishnah: "Everything is foreseen; and free-will is given. And the world is judged by grace; and everything is according to law."

(1) They love the Lord, endure His discipline, live in the righteousness of His commandments (14:1-3):

1. The Lord is faithful to those who truly love him, to those awaiting (enduring) his discipline, 2. to those living in the righteousness of His commands, in the Torah that he commanded us for our life. 3. The Lord's devout will live by it forever; his devout are the Lord's paradise, the trees of life.

(2) They fear the Lord and live by God's mercy (2:33; 12:3b; 15:13):

(2:33) Praise the Lord, those of you who know enough to fear the Lord because His mercy will be with those who have good reason to fear Him; (12:3b) those who fear the Lord shall rise up to eternal life; (15:13) those fearing the Lord will find mercy, and they will live on in their God's mercy.

The Psalmist states that he and the 'righteous' community choose to love the Lord, endure His discipline, live in the righteousness of His commands, fear the Lord, and live by God's mercy. As a result of their right choices, they become God's trees of life and live on in His mercy. The Psalmist describes the righteous as the Lord's paradise, the 'trees of life' (14:3). They are the trees of life because they are in the light of the Lord and their lives never end (3:12b). This life¹⁸⁵ in the Psalms of Solomon is simply based on the Law which is commanded for the benefit of the righteous to maintain a healthy relationship with God: God gave Jews "the law for [their lives]"¹⁸⁶ in order to live in righteousness (14:2).

It is plausible that the righteous who fear the Lord will find mercy and live on in God's mercy (15:13). How did Jews in the middle of the first century BCE understand the idea of the 'fear of the Lord'? The Greek translation simply uses the verb *φοβέομαι* along the line of the Hebrew

¹⁸⁵ The Greek word *ζωή* (life) means "a fellowship with Yahweh" (Verbrugge, *The NIV Theological Dictionary of New Testament Words*, 2437.)

¹⁸⁶ Wright, *The Psalms of Solomon: A Critical Edition of the Greek Text*, 155.

verb *yārē* as “to fear reverentially”¹⁸⁷ or “submission to a proper ethical relationship to God.”¹⁸⁸ In other words, the manifestation of the fear of the Lord is obedience to God’s commands with regard to honouring, valuing, or respecting God above anyone else; it is an attitude of running from disobedience because of the person’s reverence for God. The Psalmist says, “Praise God, those of you who know enough to fear the Lord, his mercy will be with those who have good reason to fear him” (2:33).¹⁸⁹ This means that the righteous obey the Law because they honour the Lord with a view to doing what is right and living by God’s mercy (13:12; 15:13).

Their hearts are always prepared to call on the name of the Lord for help (6:1a). In their daily lives, they remember His name all the time (6:1b). They long for the Lord to direct their ways and protect their deeds (6:2). They completely trust in God, so they have no fear when facing difficulties in life; their spirits are not disturbed by nightmares (6:3). The righteous never stop blessing the name of the Lord when they get up in the morning from their sleep and singing in honour of His name when their hearts are at rest (6:4). They know that God hungers for sharing His mercy with those who hope in Him and truly love Him – praying to Him, singing praises, and singing in honour of His name. They eagerly pray for salvation of all the members of their families, and their households (6:5).

The righteous love the synagogues or the gatherings of the holy ones in the temple as they are innocent of sins: they give thanks in the assembly of the people (17:6) and praise Him joyfully

¹⁸⁷ William, D. Mounce, *The Analytical Lexicon to the Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: ZondervanPublishingHouse, 1993), 473.

¹⁸⁸ W. E. Vine, Merrill F. Unger, William White, Jr, *Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1985), 79.

¹⁸⁹ Wright in Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 654, translates the text (2:33) as “Praise God, you who fear the Lord with understanding, for the Lord’s mercy is upon those who fear him with judgment.”

in the assembly of the holy ones (10:6). The righteous praise the Lord's mighty name with their voices and "the accompaniment of a stringed instrument,"¹⁹⁰ for God is worthy to be praised (3:1). They love worshipping God with joyful psalms as the first fruit of their lips (15:3). As a result, they are always joyful (15:3), and free from unrighteousness. They are never disturbed by evil, and the flame of fire and anger against the unrighteous do not touch them (15:4). Therefore, they are not ashamed of being disciplined and corrected by God, for their desire is to be in His presence (3:4).

3.2.2 The Repentant Righteous (Category Two)

In 9:7b, the Psalmist describes a second category: the repentant righteous are the righteous who choose what is wrong (9:4-5) but immediately repent of their sins. They live in the covenantal sphere and receive the Torah in order to be a holy nation,¹⁹¹ but they are not perfect as they commit unintentional sins (3:7) and are ignorant of sins (3:8). Therefore, the significant aspect of the repentant righteous is that they need to be cleansed from sin (10:1) by means of discipline (10:2).¹⁹² The 'repentant righteous' in this second category call upon the Lord and commit unintentional sins (13:10) or "things done in ignorance" (13:7)¹⁹³ but confess them immediately

¹⁹⁰ Wright, *The Psalms of Solomon: A Critical Edition of the Greek Text*, 77.

¹⁹¹ Winninge, *Sinners and the Righteous*, 184. Winninge notes that the view of 'the repentant righteous' is derived from covenantal theology: as Israel became God's own possession and received the Torah, they also became a holy nation. The view is taken from Ex 19:5-6 "Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." This asserts that the Israelites would be holy as long as they kept the covenant by obeying His words, and it "was a privilege to be holy, because it was impossible to be holy outside Judaism."

¹⁹² Winninge, *Sinners and the Righteous*, 184.

¹⁹³ David Noel Freedman, *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* Vol 5 (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 35. He notes that sin as a form of nonmoral or nonethical evil is also expressed in the Hebrew conception of unintentional (unwitting, inadvertent, unconscious) sin.

(9:7b). Therefore, they will always receive God's provision for repentance and forgiveness.¹⁹⁴ The psalmist is convinced that God will always cleanse the righteous who sin from their sins when they confess and admit their sins publicly (9:6). They might feel embarrassed, acknowledging their sins publicly (9:6), but they are released from guilt and condemnation as God does not accuse them for their sins (9:7). Sanders suggests that the repentant righteous who sin are not called sinners because they know that God's judgments are just and immediately repent of their sins.¹⁹⁵ Sanders points out that the righteous in this category still maintain their relationship with God because they repent immediately when they sin, and the main key to receiving His forgiveness is God's mercy and their attitude of repentance.

When committing sins, the repentant righteous immediately ask God to wipe the sins away by submitting to God's discipline (7:9; 10:1; 13:10), confessing, fasting, and humbling their souls (3:8; 9:6). They are willing to endure God's discipline (14:1) as they understand that God is the only one who is able to discipline them (8:29), and His discipline is the fundamental means of atonement for their sins (13:9).

God tests or disciplines the righteous with suffering to prove their faithfulness (16:14). In the Psalms of Solomon, the Psalmist portrays himself as a helpless person when he separates his soul from God: he is far from God (16:1). He is standing very near to the gates of hell with sinners (16:2b) because he has neglected God (16:1-3). He begs that God will never remove His mercy from him and His memory from his heart (16:6) because His mercy saves him. His own experience demonstrates that, although discipline hurts, it is necessary: he is jabbed as a horse

¹⁹⁴ Freedman, *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 35.

¹⁹⁵ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 402.

(16:4) and has to endure severe trials in order to be brought back to the sphere of righteousness (16:11-15).¹⁹⁶ He asks God to restrain (16:7), “overpower, rule over”,¹⁹⁷ or “prune”¹⁹⁸ him. In other words, he is willing to endure God’s discipline on the subject of pulling him back from sexual (16:8) and other possible sins: “Put grumbling and discouragement in trouble far from me, if ever I sin while under your discipline intended to bring me back” (16:11). He is aware of God’s discipline in order to prove his faithfulness and dependence on Him.

The Psalmist himself realises that sins will blind him to maintaining his healthy relationship with God (16:7-9). He implores God to inhibit him from the intentional sin that is worthless and useless (16:8) and from every wicked woman who traps the foolish (16:7). He hates the involvement of the women of Jerusalem in sexual promiscuity (2:13), saying “thinking about these things makes me sick to my stomach” (2:14). He does not want to be deceived by the beauty of a woman who is “lawbreaker, Torah-violator, [or] criminal.”¹⁹⁹ He wants God to clothe his tongue and lips with the words of truth (16:10a) so that he speaks the truth always. He knows that God can change his outrageous behaviour by putting fierce rage and anger far from him (16:10b).

A good insight into understanding the repentant righteous’ response to God’s discipline is also derived from 3:3-8. The texts assert that the repentant righteous respond to God’s discipline seriously: they do not esteem lightly the discipline from the Lord (3:4). They are glad of being disciplined by God as their desire is to be in God’s presence (3:4b). When they stumble, they

¹⁹⁶ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 138.

¹⁹⁷ Wright, *The Psalms of Solomon: A Critical Edition of the Greek Text*, 171.

¹⁹⁸ Vine, Unger, and White, Jr, *Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary*, 497.

¹⁹⁹ Wright, *The Psalms of Solomon: A Critical Edition of the Greek Text*, 171.

understand that God is disciplining them for their sins by declaring that God’s judgment is right (3:5). In His discipline, the righteous are convinced to eliminate their sins by (a) having confidence in God that repeated sins do not exist in their houses anymore (3:6), (b) being constantly aware of removing unintentional sins from their household (3:7), and (c) atoning for the sins of ignorance by fasting and humbling their souls (3:8). We can see that the Psalmist’s theology also emphasises God’s discipline in order to set them free from destruction.

Strong support for this interpretation is expressed by Wright, who concedes that the righteous are “neither demoralised nor made resentful by affliction but [search] out [their] sins and [declare] God to be just”²⁰⁰ (3:3; 10:1-3). They endure God’s discipline and receive God’s mercy (3:3-5; 16:15; 10:2).

3.2.3 The Sinners (Category Three)

The Psalmist describes the sinners as Gentiles and “the apostates.”²⁰¹ The apostates refer to Jews who choose what is wrong (9:4-5) and do not confess their sins (9:7b). Human righteousness or moral character is definitely required with regard to maintaining one’s relationship with God in the covenant. There are two important elements in the term ‘covenant-behaviour’ in the Psalms of Solomon: First, knowing God as saviour (3:6; 14:2), and second, obeying the laws of the covenant (14:2). Freedman moots that ‘knowing God’ is simply identified by contrasting the righteous with the sinners: when the righteous stumble (3:5) and commit sins (3:7-8; 9:6-7), they look to where their salvation comes from and prove that the

²⁰⁰ Wright, ‘Psalms of Solomon’, in Charlesworth, *The Old Testament – Pseudepigrapha*, 644.

²⁰¹ Sanders, *Judaism: Practice & Belief 63 BCE – 66 CE*, 275, comments that, in normal Judaism, a Jew who systematically and regularly ignored the commands of God (Torah) would be regarded as an apostate or sinner.

Lord is right. The confidence of the righteous comes from God their saviour (3:6). On the contrary, sinners would curse their lives and never want to get up (3:9-12). Their obedience and attitude to the Law is also “the basis of distinction between sinners and the righteous.”²⁰² Some Jews became apostates in the view of the Psalms of Solomon because they ignored God’s commands, and their intentional and deliberate sinning, ‘with malice aforethought,’ and refusing to repent cut [them] off from the covenantal blessings.”²⁰³ The apostates and Gentiles were to be defined as sinners because they sin intentionally as they choose not to obey the commands of God (9:4).

In the Psalm of Solomon 2, the term ‘sinners’ is applied to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the sons and the daughters of Jerusalem (2:3, 6, 11), including children, young and old (2:8; 17:11), priests,²⁰⁴ and prostitutes (2:11). They have committed two types of sins: (a) cultic sins as they have desecrated the Lord’s sanctuary and profaned the offerings to God (2:3; 1:8) and (b) sexual sins as they have defiled themselves with sexual promiscuity (2:13), including prostitutes (2:11). They add sin upon sin in their lives; they have fallen into the deep pit but do not want to get up (3:10). These sons and daughters of Jerusalem have “a seal on their necks, a Gentile mark” (2:6). Wright describes them as “a spectacle among the Gentiles.”²⁰⁵ The Psalm of Solomon 1 describes the inhabitants of Jerusalem as Jews who are rich, famous (1:3), and influential in the Diaspora (1:4). They are arrogant (1:5), lacking in true knowledge (1:6), and have committed

²⁰² Winnige, *Sinners and the Righteous*, 175.

²⁰³ Winnige, *Sinners and the Righteous*, 175. It is important to note that “the sins of the [Jewish] sinners were considered so heinous as to cause those who committed them to forfeit their place in the covenant” (Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 404).

²⁰⁴ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 402, notes that the sons of Jerusalem included Jews’ priests who wilfully treated the sacrifices as if they were common flesh.

²⁰⁵ Wright, *The Psalms of Solomon: A Critical Edition of the Greek Text*, 61.

incestuous intercourse in secret hiding-places (8:9). They enjoy committing adultery with their neighbour's wives, even with husbands' agreement (8:10).

The leaders of the country are the leaders of all Jews, but the psalmist and his group claim that they do not acknowledge them as their leaders (8:16, 20).²⁰⁶ They live among the Romans, the Gentile rabble, by adopting their practices (2:2; 17:15) as they welcome the invader to enter Jerusalem (2:1; 8:16-17). Their hearts are far from God (4:1): they choose not to remember and fear God in all the things they did (4:21). They completely act like Gentiles by not acknowledging God and His law anymore (1:6).

The verses from 8:11-12 talk about the inhabitants of Jerusalem who are accused of having stolen the sacrifices of God (11) and having disregarded the laws of purity and the ceremonial laws (12).²⁰⁷ They did not respect the place of sacrifice of the Lord anymore: they defiled the holy place by serving the Temple after intercourse with their wives when [the wives] had not purified themselves after the menstrual period (8:12). They were accused of leaving no sin undone, so they were more wicked and worse than the Gentiles (8:13). Winninge suggests that the inhabitants of Jerusalem probably refer to the "Sadducean priests"²⁰⁸

As a result, God turned His face away and showed them no mercy (2:8). He punished them according to their wicked sins and actions (2:16): He abandoned them to the hands of their oppressors (2:7). Sanders elucidates that they identified themselves as sinners because they

²⁰⁶ Wright, *The Psalms of Solomon: A Critical Edition of the Greek Text*, 61. Winninge, *Sinners and the Righteous*, 126, asserts that the leaders of the country are considered "the leaders of all Jews," but the righteous did not want to acknowledge them as their leaders due to the sins their leaders had committed (8:8, 22). These leaders are indicated as the Hasmoneans as they set up a monarchy in their arrogance (17:6) 127).

²⁰⁷ Winninge, *Sinners and the Righteous*, 64.

²⁰⁸ Winninge, *Sinners and the Righteous*, 64.

shared with the Gentiles and therefore would be driven out by God.²⁰⁹ As they do not want to know God, they will face eternal destruction (2:31, 34; 3:10-12; 13:11; 14:9, 15:10).

The Psalmist argues that hypocrites who deceitfully quote the Torah will be removed from the presence of God (4:8). They profess themselves as the assembly of the holy ones (4:1a), but they always attempt to flatter, impress people, win public approval and applause at the sacrifice of principle.²¹⁰ The hearts of these profane men are far from the Lord (4:1), and their eyes are on every woman promiscuously (4:4-6). Their behaviour shows that their words are seductive (4:12) and that they like lying (4:4) and greedily scattering families by deceit (4:11a, 20), for they claim that there is no one who judges (4:11b). As a result, they experience the touch of emotional and physical catastrophes as their destiny was death (Hades) (4:13). Cursing and groaning surround them; they live in agony, poverty, depression, and distress (4:14, 15a). Because they do not receive God's mercy, they are always anxious about their lives: they have trouble sleeping and difficulty getting up (4:15b). They cannot sleep well every night (4:16a); they never feel satisfied with their own lives (4:17). They fail disgracefully in everything they do (4:16b) and betray the innocent ones with their lies (4:22). They are completely away from God's mercy, kindness, guidance and protection (12:5).

A sense of losing a relationship with God also happens to those who manipulate the truth of the Law. The Psalmist begs the Lord to save the righteous from these wicked sinners (12:1) who talk about lies and deceits, the criminal and slandering tongue. The words of their tongues show "many twists and turns. It is like a fire burning among a people scorching their beauty (12:2)." Their visits fill homes with a dishonest tongue; as a flickering flame has its own attraction to

²⁰⁹ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 404.

²¹⁰ Wright, *The Psalms of Solomon: A Critical Edition of the Greek Text*, 83.

people (12:3b). They set homes at war with their slanderous language so that their presence destroys “their trees of friendliness”²¹¹ (12:3bc), and their lives are doomed to flaming fire (12:4).

The other category of the sinners is identified as Gentiles, who did not have the Law and were “disqualified by the law from covenant righteousness.”²¹² Gentiles were the Romans and other nations (1:1; 2:1-2) who were “literally lawless: they did not have the law because they did not belong to the covenant people, the people of the law.”²¹³ The psalmist describes the Romans (2:2) as Gentiles who hate the righteous (7:1). They attack Jerusalem viciously (1:1; 13:3) and destroy Jerusalem (2:2, 19; 17:11-12): wild animals tear apart the flesh of the hypocrites (4:19a). Pompey and his Roman army (2:1) smashed down the fortified walls, and they worshipped other gods in the Jewish Temple, for they were arrogant (2:2).

3.3 The Role of Righteousness in the Psalms of Solomon

The concept of righteousness is fundamental to the Jewish understanding of a relationship between God and Jews of that time. The characteristics of the ‘righteous’ and the ‘repentant righteous’ have indicated that the key to maintaining a healthy relationship with the God of the covenant is their righteousness in terms of their right choices of living by the Torah (9:3-4; 14:2). Winnige comments that their righteousness “depends on their willingness to live according to the Torah (14:2). Thus, the repentant righteous are maintained in the covenant as long as they obey the Torah (9:3) and repent of their sins (9:7). The Psalmist emphasises “human choice and

²¹¹ Wright, *The Psalms of Solomon: A Critical Edition of the Greek Text*, 145.

²¹² Winnige, *Sinners and the Righteous*, 186.

²¹³ Dunn, *Jesus, Paul and the Law: Studies in Mark and Galatians*, 74.

responsibility”²¹⁴ as Jews themselves are responsible for their right choices in terms of maintaining their righteousness while in the relationship with God: they have the power and authority in their souls to choose what is right and wrong (9:3-4). How does God deal with the righteous and sinners, for He is righteous and just?

Falk suggests that the language of God’s righteousness in the Psalms of Solomon is “almost exclusively associated with [His] judgment.”²¹⁵ The texts characteristically translate the righteousness of God in two aspects: punishing sinners and disciplining the righteous. He disciplines the repentant righteous who sin unintentionally so that they are saved from destruction. The Psalms of Solomon are used to indicate the difference between the two:

25. See now, O God, you have shown us your righteousness in your judgments. Our own eyes have seen your judgments, O God. 26. We have vindicated your name, forever honoured, because you are a God of justice, judging Israel with discipline.

Firstly, the characteristic of God’s righteousness is manifest in judging the sinners (8:25). In the context, the Psalmist talks about God’s judgment by exposing their sins (8:8) and bringing a foreign Pompey, who declared war against Jerusalem (8:15). Secondly, the other characteristic of God’s righteousness is manifest in disciplining the righteous who sin unintentionally (8:26).²¹⁶ The judgment that happens to the righteous is identified as “suffering discipline” as it is their duty to acknowledge the righteousness of God.²¹⁷ The Psalmist asserts that the qualities of

²¹⁴Dunn, *Jesus, Paul and the Law: Studies in Mark and Galatians*, 73.

²¹⁵Falk, ‘Psalms and Prayers, p. 39. “I shall declare you just, O God, in uprightness of heart; for in your judgments is your righteousness, O God” in Pss. Sol. 2:15, translated by Falk, ‘The Prayers and Psalms’.

²¹⁶The Psalms of Solomon 2:10; 8:8, 24-26; 9:2-3. The phrase ‘judging Israel with discipline’ here refers to the righteous (8:26).

²¹⁷Winnings, *Sinners and the Righteous*, 132.

God's judgements are just or right, so in His judgments He displays His righteousness (2:10, 18, 32; 4:24; 5:1; 10:5; 17:29; 18:7; 8:32, 34). God judges sinners and disciplines the righteous, for He is righteous. Therefore, judging sinners and disciplining the righteous are the two aspects of God's judgments in His righteousness that cannot be separated.

The Psalmist indicates a comparison between God's justice and judgment in reference to His righteousness (9:3-5). Ryle and James moot that the righteousness of God is recognised as His justice and impartiality.²¹⁸ In His justice, God oversees the righteous closely by rewarding the one who loves God and does what is right (9:5a; 11:7; 4:25) and punishing the one who does what is wrong (9:5b). He judges sinners who choose what is wrong and are unrepentant on the basis of their actions leading to destruction (2:16; 17: 8-10), and He disciplines the repentant righteous leading to restoration (3:5; 10:5; 18:7). He also disciplines the righteous who are passionate about doing the right things in order to test their faithfulness (16). The Psalmist probably suggests that God's justice leads to His actions (judgment), as He watches them closely: "... in your righteousness, you oversee human beings" (9:4). To sinners, His action is manifest in punishment as a result of their disobedience. God's judgment is understood as the act of His righteousness: God forgives and shows His mercy to the repentant righteous, but He destroys and punishes sinners. Most of the texts (2:10, 15; 4:8; 5:1; 8:7, 26; 9:2, 5; 17:10) affirm that the qualities of His judgments are righteous, merciful, right, and just.

Does His mercy override His justice? The mercy of God differs from His justice. His mercy is related to "His steadfast love, the loving demonstration of God's covenant faithfulness to His

²¹⁸ Ryle and James, *Psalms of the Pharisees Commonly Called the Psalms of Solomon*, 92.

chosen people,”²¹⁹ but His justice is recognised by rewarding the obedient attitude of the righteous and by punishing the disobedient (9:4).”²²⁰ Falk affirms that “God’s discipline of the righteous is an act of His mercy” in relation to His righteousness because His mercy saves them from the fate of sinners.²²¹ His justice leads the righteous who sin to repent. This reveals that God’s justice cannot override His mercy: salvation definitely belongs to God’s mercy. In their innocence and their fear of the Lord, God protects and saves the righteous from deceitful, sinful people, and every evil snare (4:23; 2:33).

How does God deal with the repentant righteous that commit unintentional sins and repent? To demonstrate His mercy, God blesses them by forgiving their sins without accusing them for what they have sinned (9:7) and by disciplining them (10:1-3). There are two significant elements of God’s discipline: firstly, maintaining their covenantal relationship with God by making their ways straight, correcting their behaviour (10:3), restraining them from the way of evil with strokes (10:1), and turning back the obedient souls from transgressions of ignorance (18:5); secondly, rescuing them from losing the covenantal relationship (God’s worst punishment to those who do not want to repent of their sins). God aims at disciplining the Israelites, so they would know that He is righteous (2:18), to maintain their healthy relationship with God forever by raising them to life (2:19-21) and sharing in the resurrection (11) on the judgment day.

The Psalmist affirms that God always cleanses the repentant righteous of their sins when they confess: “Because the Lord will spare [the righteous], and He will wipe away their mistakes

²¹⁹ Geoffrey W. Bromiley, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* Vol 3 (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1986), 322.

²²⁰ Falk, ‘Psalms and Prayers’, 46. Falk suggests that God’s justice to Israel must involve two elements: “the obligation to obey and [God’s] punishment for disobedience.”

²²¹ Falk, ‘Psalms and Prayers’, 46.

with discipline” (13:10). The covenant provides forgiveness for righteous Jews who commit sins and repent as “God is the giver of forgiveness.”²²² God’s discipline is the key to maintaining the repentant righteous who sin in their relationship with Him. His discipline is a recurring concept throughout the Psalms of Solomon, applying to both the individual (13; 14:1-3) and the whole nation (7:6-10). The Psalmist knows that God always listens to the prayers of the righteous and forgives them if they sin and immediately repent (9:7). God does not reject or destroy them, but he saves them from a piercing sword of the sinners (13:1-4).

The Psalmist interprets sufferings as God’s discipline because God wants to prove His people’s faithfulness and to save the righteous who sin unintentionally from destruction. They are willing to endure pain and suffering because God’s discipline spares their lives and wipe away their mistakes (13:10), including their unintentional sins (3:7) and ignorance of sins (13:7; 18:4).

How does God deal with the sinners (Category Three)? God punishes the sinners, Jews and Gentiles, by taking them away to destruction forever, and no memory of them will ever be found (13:11; 4:6-8). God completely banishes those who choose not to repent of their unrighteousness (5:24). Sinners receive no mercy from God’s strict justice in the judgment (2:7-9, 17; 17:10-12). His salvation, protection and guidance do not live in their lives anymore (12:5-6). God is not being merciful and faithful to the sinners; they perish forever in the day of the Lord’s judgment (15:12). These sinners forfeit joy and peace because God only brings unending joy (10:8) to the righteous in the house of Israel (10:6). The Psalmist knows that God will destroy the sinners who sin intentionally (16:7) because they enjoy sinning; therefore, they choose not to repent of their sins.

²²² Winnige, *Sinners and the Righteous*, 198.

3.4 Conclusion

The connection between the Law and God's mercy has affirmed that the righteous must live by the Law (14:1-3) and God's mercy (15:12-13) while they are in their healthy relationships with God. Its emphasis is on "the importance of obeying the covenantal laws for maintaining a proper relationship with the God of the covenant."²²³ The repentant righteous will never be removed from their relationship with the God of the covenant²²⁴ as long as they obey God's law and quickly repent of their sins when sinning, for God is merciful and just. The right behaviour is chosen by the righteous, but, when they sin, they cannot hide their sins from God's knowledge (9). We see that that God will always show His mercy to those who truly love Him (6:6) and repent of their sins (9:7).

In His justice, God must reward the righteous who obey the Law, and they are disciplined to help them grow in their dependence to God. He disciplines the righteous who sin unintentionally but immediately repent, but God judges sinners by removing them from their relationships with Him. God's righteousness determines that righteous Jews have to obey the Law if they want to maintain their love relationships with God in the covenant. Sanders supports that the proper response to maintaining a healthy relationship with the God of the covenant is "to obey the law."²²⁵ Because God is just and righteous, their lives can be destroyed if they choose what is wrong (9:5b). The righteous can lose their relationships with God because they choose not to

²²³ As suggested by James C. Vankeram, *An Introduction to Early Judaism* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2001), 96.

²²⁴ Winninge, *Sinners and the Righteous*, 198, comments that, when the repentant righteous (Israel) committed sins, they "did not disappear from the covenantal sphere and fall from the reach of God's grace."

²²⁵ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 262.

repent of their wicked deeds and sexual sins by being removed from the covenant; they cannot sufficiently earn their relationship with God back by obedience.

The Psalmist stresses the importance of sacrifices in the Temple as he condemns the inhabitants of Jerusalem who have defiled the Sanctuary of God (1:8; 2:3; 8:11, 22).²²⁶ The righteous must repent of their sins in order to receive mercy and forgiveness of God if they want to maintain their relationship with God in the covenant. The Law offers a means of atonement in order to maintain their relationship with God in the covenant, but the atonement is not a result of their sacrifices or works: atonement takes place by God's mercy and grace. The righteous maintain their status in the covenant because God gives His forgiveness through His mercy. By His grace, the righteous are chosen in God's election in the 'getting in' stage of the Psalms of Solomon's soteriology, but they have to obey the Law as God's gift in order to maintain their righteousness while in the covenant of God. Therefore, the Psalms of Solomon cannot be demonstrated as a religion of righteousness by works, especially as God took the initiative in electing the Jews to be His chosen people. The aspect of maintaining the righteous in the covenant is also done through the piety of everyday life (3:3). This indicates that "faith and commitment to the Lord should be expressed by the [righteous] in daily life, and the Torah was to teach and lead [them] everyday." For example, they diligently examined their homes to remove any unintentional

²²⁶ Winninge, *Sinners and the Righteous*, 198, agrees with Sanders' view about sacrifices that were used to atone for sins in Judaism. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice & Belief*, 252, expounds that sacrifices, in Judaism, were believed to atone for sins: atonement and purification require the shedding of blood. In the Jewish sacrificial system, the guilt offering, the sin offering and the sacrifices of the Day of Atonement are provided for cleansing of impurity and expiation of sin. In Judaism, sacrifices and offerings were used as means of atoning for sins, so the righteous Jews who committed sins were warranted mercy and forgiveness only through the covenantal system and the significant events of sacrifices once a year. Jews had to be purified before sacrificing by waiting outside the temple for seven days. Immersion in Judaism was performed as an outer purification, an important means of cleansing, before receiving the inner purification. On the Day of Atonement, the special prayers were recited by all and the fast was observed by all (Sanders, cited in Winninge, *Sinners and the Righteous*, 197). Consequently, what the inhabitants of Jerusalem did was absolutely outrageous: the priests defiled the Temple by serving the Temple after having intercourse with their wives; they did not purify themselves before sacrificing in the Temple (8:12).

offences (3:7) and confessed their sins by fasting and humbling their souls (3:8). Their piety of everyday life is symbolic of their obedience to the commands of the Lord used as a requirement for maintenance of their relationship with God in the covenant. Therefore, the Psalms of Solomon exhibit the concept of Covenantal Nomism as the 'pattern of religion.'

Chapter Four

Righteousness in Paul's Letters

Paul communicates an eschatological hope of righteousness in the death of Christ as “the point of transition between old era and new.”²²⁷ In the letter to the Romans, Paul describes the hopelessness of the grievous human situations (Rom 1:18-3:20) because of their sins which belong to the old era. He then turns this hopelessness into hope in the meaning of the cross and the work accomplished there in the covenant of the new era. The fundamental human problem is that they are vertically estranged from the true God of Israel. He claims that the Law cannot justify people (Rom 3:20, 28) because everyone is under sin (Rom 3:9). However, he adds, “This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference (Rom 3:22), for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus” (Rom 3:24). This raises a question: “What does Paul mean by righteousness?”

In regard to discussing and exploring the task of this chapter, I shall establish Paul's thought of righteousness from the key texts of his letters to the Romans and Galatians. In addition, I will attempt to take Sanders as the main scholar and refer to other scholars in reference to my argument. From the previous chapters, I have shown that the usage of righteousness is crucial to Judaism and Paul's letters. For instance, in the Psalms of Solomon, righteousness is used as the maintenance of one's status in the covenant of God: to be righteous is to obey the Law and repent of transgressions. For Paul, the means of attaining righteousness is by faith, not by the

²²⁷ J. Douglas Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans* The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996), 221.

works of the Law. Sanders avows that Paul could not deny that the Jewish righteousness came by the Law (Phil 3:9), but his encounter with the power of Christ's resurrection becomes the key to his conviction that righteousness can come only through Christ. For this reason, the establishment of Paul's understanding of righteousness will be specified in terms of three exegetical explorations: what its linguistic meaning is; how justification can be attained in relation to entering into the new covenant of new era; and why justification is significant for the process of sanctification in the second stage of Pauline soteriology.

4.1 The Linguistic Analysis of Pauline Righteousness

This section starts with understanding that the Greek translation of the Old Testament, the Septuagint (LXX), uses the *dik* word-group to translate words which belong to the Hebrew *sdq* word-group. This understanding is expressed by Moo, who states that the meaning of the *dik* words for the Greek-speaking Jews was decisively influenced by the root of *sdq* which is associated with "conformity to a norm meaning."²²⁸ Moo states that this norm usually refers to the Law of God which stems from His relationship with Israel in the covenant.²²⁹ In relation to Pauline letters, Paul is using the Greek terms relating to the root *dik* word-group, which has to do with justice or righteousness, in his message to the Romans: the verb *δικαιόω* (to justify), the adjective *δίκαιος* (righteous), the noun *δικαιοσύνη* (righteousness), and the noun *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ*.

²²⁸ Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 80.

²²⁹ Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 80.

4.1.1 The Greek Verb *δικαιόω*

The verb *δικαιόω* is used in the Septuagint (LXX) to translate a range of forms of the Hebrew verb *sādaq*. The verb *δικαιόω* in the piel of *sādaq* means ‘to justify’ in a demonstrative sense; *δικαιόω* in the *qal* of *sādaq* denotes ‘to be righteous’; but *δικαιόω* in the *hiphil* of *sādaq* represents ‘to declare righteous’ in a declarative sense.²³⁰ Moo notes that the *hiphil* of *sādaq* is always used with “a judicial or forensic flavour.”²³¹ For instance, this declarative sense is expressed in Exodus 23:7 where God Himself declares, “I will not justify the wicked.” When Job says, “Now that I have prepared my case, I know I will be vindicated” (Job 13:18), he knew that he was innocent, and God was the One who would justify him. This declarative sense is articulated by judges who pronounced one who is right the innocent: “When [people] have a dispute, they are to take it to court and the judges will decide the case, acquitting the innocent and condemning the guilty” (Deut 25:1). Sanders states that the *hiphil* of *sādaq* refers to “[declaring] one to be in the right who is in fact in the right.”²³² This means that God will never declare one ‘righteous’ if the person is in fact guilty. This *hiphil* of *sādaq* has a strong sense of a declaration of being righteous on the basis of being innocent.

When we come to the use of *δικαιόω* in the New Testament, Paul translates the verb *δικαιόω*²³³ (to justify) in contrast to *κατακρίνω* (to condemn) in his letter to the Romans. He asserts, “But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom 5:8). God puts us right with Himself although we deserve the penalty of death due to our

²³⁰ Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 80.

²³¹ Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 80.

²³² Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 545.

²³³ Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider, *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament Vol 1* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1990), 330, write that the verb *δικαιόω* appears 25 times in Pauline letters and is translated as “to justify” (RSV, NIV, NEB); and “to put right” (TEV).

sin (Rom 6:23). Paul says, “Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all [people]” (Rom 5:18). Furthermore, he affirms, “Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” (Rom 8:1). “It is God who justifies. Who is he who condemns? (Rom 8:33-34). Philip Eveson points out that being justified, which is the opposite of being condemned, denotes “the declaration of a verdict of not guilty, of acquittal, and of a right status before God.”²³⁴ We see that God’s justifying action has declared us righteous, not guilty, or innocent in terms of embarking upon a right relationship with Himself once we believe in Christ.

Paul urges that *δικαιόω* takes place by faith, not by the works of the Law: “Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law, rather, through the law we become conscious of sin” (Rom 3:20). Sanders sees this *δικαιόω* as the expression of how one is transferred from transgressions or sin (Rom 6:7; 1 Cor 6:9-11) into being saved.²³⁵ He says that Paul uses *δικαιόω* to mean “being changed”²³⁶ as we are transferred from not being saved to being justified or saved. He claims that Paul contrasts his view with that of Judaism by shifting his emphasis from the adjective (in Judaism, one who is righteous is one who obeys the Law) to the verb (in Paul, one can be justified or declared righteous only by faith). Sanders sees this expression of being justified or declared ‘righteous’ as “the establishment of a right relationship.”²³⁷ Similarly, Dunn claims that this *δικαιόω* is about how Christ put sinners into a

²³⁴ Philip Eveson, ‘Justification the Right Words’; http://www.the-highway.com/justification4_Eveson.html; retrieved 10 October 2009, 6. How do we understand the term ‘condemnation’? Eveson states that condemnation refers to “pronouncement of a guilty sentence and the punishment due.” Mounce, *Mounce’s Complete Expository*, 130, defines the term as “[judging] someone guilty.”

²³⁵ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 545.

²³⁶ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 545.

²³⁷ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 470.

right relationship with God the Father and Himself.²³⁸ He suggests that faith in Christ or total surrender to the Good News is the evidence for being justified.²³⁹ They show that God’s justifying action takes place only in the context of the involvement of our faith in Christ Jesus, not the works of the Law.

4.1.2 The Greek Adjective *δίκαιος*

The Greek adjective *δίκαιος* normally translates the Hebrew *saddîq*, which involves describing two particular meanings that are extensively used in the Old Testament. Firstly, the Hebrew *saddîq* is extensively interpreted as “upright, just, [and] righteous”²⁴⁰ in relation to God’s characteristic and human beings. It describes the attribute of God as being righteous: ‘Righteous are you, O Lord, and your laws are right’ and ‘The Lord is righteous in all his ways’ (Ps 145:17). God is righteous and just, so He punishes sin (Neh 9:33). The nature of the Lord is ‘gracious and righteous’ (Ps 116:5). For the Psalms of Solomon, God’s judgment is righteous because He is a righteous judge (2:36; 4:24; 8:8; 8:27-32; 9:3-10); God is faithful in all His judgments (17:10).

The other description is that the Hebrew *saddîq* refers to the godly. For example, the Israelites, the chosen people in the covenant, were righteous as they fully observed God’s entire commandments (Ps 145:17). “When [people] have a dispute, they are to take it to court and the judges will decide the case, acquitting the innocent and condemning the guilty” (Deut 25:1).

²³⁸ Dunn, *The Theology of Paul*, 344.

²³⁹ Dunn, *The Theology of Paul*, 379.

²⁴⁰ Onesti, K. L., and M. T. Brauch. “Righteousness, Righteousness of God,” *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, ed. G Hawthorne and R. Martin (Downers Grove: InterVarsityPress, 1993), 831.

This indicates that the righteous were innocent before the Law. For the Psalms of Solomon, the righteous are those who are passionate about obeying God's command (9:5a). For example, in the Pseudepigrapha, the Psalms of Solomon interpret *δίκαιος* as the righteous who trust in God and keep God's commands, especially as they are distinct from sinners (2:34; 3:4-8; 15:6). Sanders affirms that, in Jewish literature, to live righteously is to obey the Torah and to repent of sins because the term 'righteousness' implies "the maintenance of status among the group of the elect."²⁴¹ This Hebrew *saddîq* obviously links being righteous to doing 'right' in our conduct or behaviour.

In Paul's letters, *δίκαιος* is to connote "what is right" (Phil 1:7).²⁴² For example, Paul says, "Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure...think about such things (Phil 4:8). In the 'staying in' stage, Paul defines the righteous as Christians who live by on-going obedience of post-justification (Rom 1:5; 16:28; Gal 3:11). Sanders is convinced that Paul does not use *δίκαιος* (the *dik* root) when he writes about right behaviour, but rather a variety of terms like blameless, innocent, steadfast, sound, guiltless.²⁴³ In contrast, Paul says, "But by faith we eagerly await through the Spirit the righteousness for which we hope" (Gal 5:5). He encourages Christians to stand fast only through faith (Rom 11:20). He adds, "Never be lacking in zeal, but your spiritual fervour serving the Lord" (Rom 12:11). This proves that Christians are able to be blameless, faultless, and steadfast on the Day of the Lord, especially as Sanders notes that Paul's conviction includes the assurance that Christians "possessed the Spirit as the present guarantee of future salvation."²⁴⁴ For the Jews, it is the works of the Law in the community of

²⁴¹ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian*, 494 and 544.

²⁴² Suggested by Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 88.

²⁴³ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian*, 544; Sanders, *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People*, 45.

²⁴⁴ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian*, 447.

the elect; for Christians, it is obedience of faith in the activity of God under the lordship of Christ Jesus through the enabling of the Spirit.

4.1.3 The Greek Noun *δικαιοσύνη*

The conception of *δικαιοσύνη* is more determined by its Hebrew background than by its Greek form.²⁴⁵ The Hebrew words associated with righteousness are known as *sedeq* (straightness, justness, and rightness) and *seāqā/sedāqāh* (justice, straightness, and honesty).²⁴⁶ The contrast between the two is that *sedeq* is the norm of God's action, and *sedāqāh* is the visible manifestation of that norm.²⁴⁷ This *sedāqāh* describes God's activity within His covenant with Israel.²⁴⁸ This *δικαιοσύνη* is normally focused on "Yahweh's saving acts as evidence of God's faithfulness to [His] covenant."²⁴⁹ In the Septuagint (LXX), the Greek noun *δικαιοσύνη* is used "81 times for *sedeq* [and] 134 times for *sedāqāh*"²⁵⁰ In six instances, this *δικαιοσύνη* is utilized for *hesed*, meaning loving-kindness, mercy, or goodwill.²⁵¹ Based on the standard of God's covenant faithfulness, the *δικαιοσύνη* is characterized by "the character or action of [the God of Israel,] who deals rightly within a covenant relationship and who established how others are to act within that relationship."²⁵² For example, "Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?" (Gen 18:25). From this Hebrew context, we can find that *δικαιοσύνη* has nothing to do with ethical issues and qualities, but God's covenant faithfulness to the covenant relationship.

²⁴⁵ Dunn, *The Theology of Paul*, 341.

²⁴⁶ Onesti and Brauch, 'Righteousness', 828.

²⁴⁷ Ziesler, *The Meaning of Righteousness in Paul: A Linguistic and Theology Enquiry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 33; Vine, Unger, and White, *Vine's Complete*, 207-208.

²⁴⁸ J. A. Ziesler, *Paul's Letter to the Romans* (London: SCM Press, 1989), 109, suggests that the word '*sedāqāh*' is to demonstrate how God delivers people from sins and punishes those who reject Him (Ps 9:4, 8; 50:6).

²⁴⁹ Proposed by Dunn, *The Theology of Paul*, 342 and Onesti and Brauch, 'Righteousness', 828.

²⁵⁰ Onesti and Brauch, 'Righteousness', 828.

²⁵¹ Onesti and Brauch, 'Righteousness', 828.

²⁵² Onesti and Brauch, 'Righteousness', 829.

This *δικαιοσύνη* in the Hebrew context can also be rooted in a person's legal forensic status, not right conduct. The status of righteousness in Isaiah: "He saw that there was no one, he was appalled that there was no one to intervene; so [His] own arm worked salvation for him, and [His] own righteousness sustained him" (Isa 59:16). This righteousness refers to a status of having a right relationship with Him, and He bestowed this status of righteousness on His people because their righteous acts were like filthy rags (Isa 64:6). Isaiah called God's gift of righteousness the fruit of righteousness as he said, "The fruit of righteousness will be peace; the effect of righteousness will quietness and confidence forever" (Isa 32:17). What this fruit of righteousness inspires the people's hearts is "a life of living righteously."²⁵³ Another example is how righteousness is credited to Abraham. Abraham "believed the Lord, and He credited it to him as righteousness (Gen 15:8).

We can also unravel the real meaning of righteousness in a more relational concept. Dunn writes an example of a relationship between king Saul and David in terms of their mutual obligations. According to Dunn, David was "to be reckoned more righteous than Saul because he fulfilled his obligation to Saul."²⁵⁴ David's reason for refusing to hurt Saul is that he knew that Saul was the Lord's anointed.

In Paul's letters, this *δικαιοσύνη* is comprised of both ethical and legal connotations. After presenting the free gift of righteousness as a right legal status through Christ (Rom 3:17-18), Paul continues with speaking about righteousness as "acts of obedience on the part of

²⁵³ As suggested by Mounce, *Mounce's Complete Expository*, 593.

²⁵⁴ Dunn, *The Theology of Paul*, 342.

believers.”²⁵⁵ Paul says, “You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness” (Rom 6:18). He further asserts, “...so now offer [members of your body] in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness” (Rom 6:19).²⁵⁶ In the same context, Paul encourages Christians in the Corinthians to become imitators of Christ (1 Cor 4:16) and to follow his example as he follows the example of Christ (1 Cor 11:1). Paul confidently presents this righteousness as imitators of Christ, and his thought of imitation is closely associated with the cross of Christ and thus crucial to his moral discourse.²⁵⁷ Paul strongly encouraged Christians in his day to imitate Christ because many “Christians needed models to show them how to live a redeemed lifestyle.”²⁵⁸ Paul says, “Do not anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Phil 4:6-7). This indicates that, once we are now in a union with Christ, we must continuously obey God’s will by imitating Christ through faith with a view to overflowing with thankfulness and growing in His likeness.

Paul also mentions the futile righteousness expressed in the religion of the Pharisees and the standard of the world. For instance, Paul admits, “...I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ – the righteousness that comes

²⁵⁵ Suggested by Eveson, *Justification*, 5.

²⁵⁶ The NASB translates Rom 6:19 as “...so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification.”

²⁵⁷ Suggested by Onesti and Brauch, ‘Righteousness’, 430. They mention the misunderstanding of imitation: “For Paul (and for all the Christians), the only arrogance surrounding the language of imitation would be the arrogance of those who think that they can walk the path of discipleship without observing, learning from and imitating those who are already further down the path.”

²⁵⁸ Mounce, *Mounce’s Complete*, 352, writes, “In the early church, many new Christians needed models to show them how to live a redeemed lifestyle, since up to that time their lives were shaped by a pagan culture.”

from God and is by faith” (Phil 3:6-9). Paul criticizes, “Since they did not know the righteousness that comes from God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God’s righteousness” (Rom 10:3). This *δικαιοσύνη*, for Paul, is closely linked to his union with Christ, not the Law which is powerless to produce righteousness. Paul says, “For if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law” (Rom 3:21). This affirms that *δικαιοσύνη* is God’s gift for the status of being an intimate relationship with Him as a result of God’s justifying activity to those who believe in Christ (Gal 2:21).

4.1.4 The Greek Noun *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ*

In the Old Testament and the Psalms of Solomon, this language of *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* means 2 things: God’s moral character and God’s saving action. Being righteous and just is the character of God, as is His desire to save and vindicate His people. In Paul’s letters, the *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* no longer describes the attribute of God. What does Paul mean by the language of *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ*, then? Some texts from the Old Testament, the Psalms of Solomon, and Paul’s letters in relation to *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* are illustrated as follows:

4.1.4.1 The *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* in the Old Testament and Psalms of Solomon

The word *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* describes a moral character of God; for example, Moses acknowledges, “God is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is [He]” (Deut 32:4). Pharaoh said to Moses and Aaron,

“The Lord is in the right, and I and my people are in the wrong” (Ex 9:27). David prays, “Answer me when I call to you, O my righteous God” (Ps 4:1a). “Save me from bloodguilt, O God, the God who saves me, and my tongue will sing of your righteousness” (Ps 51:14). David cries out, “The Lord loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of [His] unfailing love” (Ps 33:3).

The word *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* also describes God’s saving action or vindication. David prays, “Save me from bloodguilt, O God, the God who saves me, and my tongue will sing of your righteousness” (Ps 51:14). God promises through Isaiah: “I am bringing my righteousness near; it is not far away; and my salvation will not be delayed” (Isa 46:13). Isaiah acknowledges, “He saw that there was no one, [He] was appalled that there was no one to intervene, so [His] own arm worked salvation for [Him], and [His] own righteousness sustained [Him]” (Isa 59:16). Isaiah adds, “For Zion’s sake I will not keep quiet, till her righteousness shines out like the dawn, her salvation like a blazing torch” (Isa 62:1). In these verses, we see that God’s righteousness is parallel to His saving action. This indicates that God’s moral character of righteousness manifests itself in His saving action or vindication.

Negatively, God will bring punishment to the wicked as David acknowledges, “I know, O Lord, that your laws are righteous, and in faithfulness, you have afflicted me” (The Psalm of Solomon 119:75). In the Psalms of Solomon, the Psalmist says, “Those who do what is right save up life for themselves with the Lord, and those doing what is wrong cause their own lives to be destroyed, for the Lord’s righteous judgments come down on man and household” (9:5). God’s righteousness is recognised as His justice in which he rewards the one who loves God and does

what is right (9:5a; 11:7; 4:25) but punishes the one who deliberately chooses to do what is wrong (9:5b).

4.1.4.2 The δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ in Paul's Letters

In Paul's letters, there is a shift in Paul's theology of *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* as the word *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* no longer describes an attribute or character of God, but God's saving action. For instance, Paul says, "But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known to which the Law and the prophets testify" (Rom 3:21). Paul's theology of *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* seems to be construed in an apocalyptic/eschatological perspective because God reveals Himself to humanity. K. P. Donfried claims that *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* is about the sovereign God revealing Himself to us.²⁵⁹ This *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* is all about the God of Israel who takes the initiative to reveal Himself to us in Christ Jesus, apart from the Law. Moo also thinks that *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* is "the justifying activity of God"²⁶⁰ as a process by which God puts sinners in a right relationship with Himself.²⁶¹ Ziesler also views that *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* refers to "God's saving action."²⁶² This is evidence that, for Paul, *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* does not describe an attribute of God, but it has to do with God's action in which God justifies us. Based on Donfried, Moo and Ziesler's views, we understand that *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* is construed as a subjective genitive describing God's saving activity. Therefore, our moral righteousness which we have through God comes through our status of being in a right relationship with God.

²⁵⁹ Karl Paul Donfried, 'Justification and Last Judgment in Paul', *Interpretation*, Vol. 30 (1976), 141.

²⁶⁰ Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 344.

²⁶¹ Moo, *Romans*, 126.

²⁶² Ziesler, *Paul's Letter to the Romans*, 109

We also look into Phil 3:9 that will assist us in understanding Paul's thought of the *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ*. Paul's message of the righteousness of God in the verse sounds like a moral attribute God gives us:

“And be found in [Him], not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ – the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith” (Phil 3:9).

This raises a question: “Can God's attribute be imputed to us?” From the verse, Paul writes about two contrary types of his own righteousness: righteousness that comes from the Law and righteousness that comes from God through faith in Christ and is received by faith. The former has to do with Paul's moral achievement gained by obeying the Law, but the latter refers to his new righteousness as a result of his union with Christ. Peter T O'Brien argues that Paul's righteousness from God is a gift for his “status of being right with God”²⁶³ that has been revealed, demonstrated or known to the nations (Rom 1:17; 3:5, 1, 5; 10:3) through the faithfulness of Christ received by his faith. O'Brien believes that this gift of Paul's right relationship with God will continue “until the time when [Paul] is perfectly united with Christ.”²⁶⁴ This explains that Paul's right relationship with God is a gift of his righteousness as God has revealed Himself and justified him through the faithfulness of Christ on the cross by his faith. We see that, in Phil 3:9, Paul talks about God's action, not about God's attribute.

Paul does not see the righteousness of God as being imputed to us, but as the act by which God establishes a right relationship with us. Moo opines that the righteousness of God is about

²⁶³ Peter T. O'Brien, *Commentary on Philippians* New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1991), 397.

²⁶⁴ O'Brien, *Commentary on Philippians*, 397.

“God’s work in Christ on the cross.”²⁶⁵ In the same way, Dunnill suggests that the righteousness of God cannot be characterized by “a moral sense (God’s goodness) or an anthropological sense (divine righteousness imparted or imputed to humanity).”²⁶⁶ He notes that the expression of *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* should be in line with the Old Testament covenant (Ps 33:4-5; 36:5-6; 40:11) as it is an eschatological term: “God’s will is to set right, to enact justice, [and] to bring salvation.”²⁶⁷ If *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* describes a moral attribute, our righteousness describes our moral attribute too. This *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* is all about God’s activity of putting us into a right relationship with Him, so our righteousness refers to a status of being in a right relationship with God. We see that these recent scholars²⁶⁸ have agreed with my argument that an attribute of God in relation to the righteousness of God is not in Paul’s theology. Therefore, God’s action cannot be imputed or imparted to us, and the issue about the imputation of God’s righteousness should not have been raised.

For Paul, justification or being justified is the starting point of a right relationship with Christ as one receives the revelation of God’s righteousness in Christ Jesus by faith (Rom 3:22, 24, 28).

²⁶⁵ Moo, *Romans*, 55.

²⁶⁶ John Dunnill, “Saved by Whose Faith? – The Function of *πίστις Χριστοῦ* in Pauline Theology.” *Colloquium* 30 (1998): 7.

²⁶⁷ Dunnill, ‘Saved by whose Faith’, 7. He further notes that the “state in which God’s *δικαιοσύνη* is established is broadly equivalent to the kingdom of God in Jesus’ teaching. Paul’s claim is that through the good news about Jesus the imminence of this eschatological reality is being revealed to all nations.”

²⁶⁸ We need to be aware of the recent scholars who have accepted the doctrine of imputed righteousness as they construe the *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* as an objective genitive. For instance, John MacArthur insists that God’s grace “gives His righteousness to those who trust in His Son” in *Romans* 1-8 The MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991), 215. Donald A. Carson, ‘The Vindication of Imputation: on Fields of discourse and Semantic Fields’ in *Justification: What’s at Stake in the Current Debates?* (Eds.) Mark Husbands & Daniel J. Treier (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2004), 46-78, argues that, as our sins being imputed to Christ (1 Cor 1:30), Christ’s righteousness (2 Cor 5:21) is being imputed to us. Mark A. Seifrid, *Christ, Our Righteousness: Paul’s Theology of Justification* (Downer Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 174, believes that Christ Himself is our righteousness and that we become the righteousness of God in Christ. This means that God gives His moral characteristic of righteousness to humanity: either the righteousness of God or the righteousness of Christ is imputed or imparted to us.

We realise that God does not give us His moral characteristic as a gift or treat us as if we are righteous after being justified or declared righteous. The sovereign God reveals Himself in Christ, and what we need to do is to receive His gift of justification as we respond to the gospel of Christ, which is about the righteousness of God (Rom 1:16-17). Therefore, Donfried points out that justification is “an initiating event, which is actualized and made concrete through sanctification.”²⁶⁹ He uses Rom 5:9-10 for indicating the fact that, for Paul, justification is an event in which we have and continue to be sanctified in the process of sanctification, with salvation as a future event in which we have yet to participate fully.²⁷⁰ We have been justified by faith through the faithfulness of Christ (Rom 3:22-26; Phil 3:9), and we now have a right relationship with God. We will continue our right relationship with Christ as we receive the Spirit of God by faith (Gal 3:1-5) and start to produce our moral quality in sanctification. Now we have seen that faith is the key ingredient in responding to the justifying act of God in the gospel to receive the gift of righteousness that comes from God. The next issue is about what Paul means by faith in terms of entering into a right relationship with God and maintaining the status of a right relationship with God.

4.2 The Means of Justification: Saving Faith

We have observed that faith is of great magnitude in association with the righteousness of God. In Hebrew, the word *'āman* is used for faith in addressing the nature of God, human belief, and trust. For example, relating to the nature of God, David acclaimed that “The Lord is faithful to all [His] promises and loving toward all [He] has made” (Ps 145:13). The act of believing refers

²⁶⁹ Donfried, ‘Justification and Last Judgment in Paul’, 145.

²⁷⁰ Donfried, ‘Justification and Last Judgment in Paul’, 144.

to the expression of Abraham who *'āman* the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness” (Gen 15:6). Abraham demonstrated his faith in God by obeying what He had said (Gen 12:1-4). Trust means acknowledging God’s protection and liberation. The King Jehoshaphat assured his people that God would fight against their enemies, “Have faith in the Lord our God and you will be upheld” (2 Chr 20:20). The word *'amen* connotes human commitment to obeying God’s commands (Num 5:22; Deut 27:15-26; 1 hr 16:36): “At this the whole assembly said, *Amen*, and praised the Lord. And the people did as they had promised” (Neh 5:13). It is possible that faith in the Old Testament involves believing, trusting (in the sense of being rescued from enemies), doing, and obeying God’s commands on the basis of God’s faithful promise.

In Paul’s letters, the Apostle uses the same word faith in different meanings such as belief, trust, confidence, or faithfulness. Paul mentions the Greek noun *πίστις* 142 times, the Greek verb *πιστεύω* 54 times, and the Greek adjective *πιστός* 33 times.²⁷¹ Paul uses the noun *πίστις* to understand the concept of (1) *πίστις* as saving faith in terms of believing with regard to justification (2) and *πίστις* as Christian faithfulness and confidence in relation to human action such as trusting, doing, trustworthiness, and courage.

4.2.1 The *πίστις* as Saving Faith or the Act of Believing

In Romans, Paul says, “For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the [Law]” (Rom 3:28). Here Paul simply says that the key to being justified is by saving *πίστις*, not

²⁷¹ Morris, Leon. ‘Faith’ in *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, ed. G Hawthorne and R. Martin (Downers Grove: InterVarsityPress, 1993), 285. The translation of the Greek verb *πιστεύω* has to do with the attitude of believing and trusting in Christ; it is to “obey or trust [Christ].” Paul urges, “Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with [Him]” (Rom 6:8). The adjective *πιστός* denotes faithful to identify that God is faithful (1 Cor 1:9) and that Christians must also be faithful (1 Cor 4:17; Col 4:7). Paul himself admits that he is trustworthy (1 Cor 7:25) and faithful to God (1 Cor 4:2).

by works done in people's obedience to the Law. When we talk about the Law, we always think of something that has to be obeyed, but Paul's thought of saving *πίστις* in this verse has to do with our "attitude, a willingness to receive" (Rom 4:13-14).²⁷² Moo comments, "Believing means that we stretch out our arms and open our hands to receive the gift God wants to give us."²⁷³ Byrne believes that, for Paul, saving faith involves both "an attitude and personal commitment."²⁷⁴ If this saving *πίστις* is described as an attitude of believing, we have no doubt that saving *πίστις* involves human mind, feeling, and a response to justification or God's saving activity in Christ. This saving *πίστις* is believing as we respond to God in agreement with the gospel in order to receive the gift of justification God has offered to us, so saving *πίστις* has nothing to do with good deeds we do.

This saving *πίστις* is the human response to being justified; it is not a gift from God. In relation to entering into the new covenant, we have noted that the gift of God, for Paul, refers to God's action of justifying us, not faith. Sanders states, "Faith represents [people]'s entire response to the salvation offered in Jesus Christ, apart from the [Law]; and the argument for faith is really an argument against the [Law]."²⁷⁵ Sanders gives the reasons for the meaning of faith determined by "scriptural proof-texts (Gal 3:6, 11) or Christian experience" (Gal 3:1-5).²⁷⁶ In Gal 3:6, Paul tries to strengthen his argument that faith has to do with believing by mentioning the quotation of Gen 15:6: "[Abraham] believed God." In Rom 4:3, Paul uses a similar quotation of Gen 15:6 to urge that God credited righteousness to Abraham because he believed Him. He believed that God would make him the father of many nations (Rom 4:17-21) although he and Sarah were

²⁷² Suggested by Moo, *Romans*, 163 and Dunn, *Romans*, 166.

²⁷³ Moo, *Romans*, 163.

²⁷⁴ Byrne, S. J., *Reckoning with Romans*, 41.

²⁷⁵ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 491.

²⁷⁶ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 493.

already old. His faith is completely based on the God who gave life and kept His promises, not on his conditions.

This saving *πίστις* is related to an act of believing as our response to justification in association with receiving a new life with Christ. Therefore, this act of believing involves our mental intelligence, not human obedience which occurs after the genuine saving of faith (Rom 1:5). For Paul, Christ imparts life by the Spirit given to us (Gal 2:20) through faith, not the Law. This means that a sign of being justified is that we have not only life with Christ (Gal 2:20) but also the Spirit within us (Gal 3:14). Paul says, “Is the [Law], therefore, opposed to the promises of God? Absolutely not! For if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness could certainly have come by the law” (Gal 3:21). We find that the righteousness of God has been revealed to us as a gift in Christ, and what we need to do is to respond to receiving the gift of this status of a right relationship with God.

4.2.2 The *πίστις* as Christian Faithfulness and Confidence

Besides the saving *πίστις*, Paul also uses *πίστις* in relation to faithfulness or trustworthiness – showing how Christians live. For Paul, faithfulness is the fundamental quality of our Christian living once we are justified. For instance, *πίστις* in Rom 3:3 refers to “Christian faithfulness”²⁷⁷ as an act of trusting or doing in relation to God’s faithfulness when Paul says, “What if some [were unfaithful]? Will their [faithlessness] nullify God’s faithfulness?” Paul is talking about

²⁷⁷ Christian faithfulness or trustworthiness denotes that Christians are faithful, trustworthy, reliable, consistent, constant, and dependable to God as He demands fidelity. It can be connected with endurance, patience, perseverance, and standing firm in terms of persecution, difficulties, or sufferings for the sake of Christ by Mounce, *Mounce’s Complete Expository*, 233-234 and J. D. Watson, *A Word for the Day: Key Words from the New Testament* (Tennessee: AMG Publishers, 2006), 40.

God's fidelity or commitment to uphold His promises to Israel in accordance with His character of faithfulness: "to bless Israel if they obeyed but to punish them if they disobeyed."²⁷⁸ The *πίστις* here is not similar to that of saving *πίστις*, for this Christian *πίστις* requires our fidelity, faithfulness, or trustworthiness in God by obeying Him because God is faithful. Because God is faithful, we must obey Him by reflecting His quality in response to our fidelity to the covenant; and this *πίστις* can signify faithfulness as part of the fruit of the Spirit possessed by all Christians (Gal 5:22).²⁷⁹

Paul links God's grace with the obedience that comes from faith (Rom 1: 5-6; 15:18; 16:26). Paul says, "We received grace and apostleship to call people from among all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith" (Rom 1:5). He describes that faith comes from hearing, hearing the Good News about Christ (Rom. 10:17). The word obedience *ὕπακοή* is derived from *ἀκούω* (*hear with ὑπό: by hearing*).²⁸⁰ In the Septuagint, Nanos observes that the word *ἀκούω* is used for responding obediently to one who understands the message.²⁸¹ We perceive that Paul similarly develops the understanding of faith as right hearing, which is parallel with obedience. Mounce suggests that "true faith produces obedience"²⁸² (Rom 1:5; 16:26; Gal 5:6) as Paul starts and concludes with obedience of faith, "...so that all nations might believe and obey [Him]" (Rom 16:26). For Paul, faith and obedience are closely linked. We find that the saving *πίστις* as

²⁷⁸ Moo, *Romans*, 107.

²⁷⁹ Suggested by Morris, 'Faith', in *Dictionary of Paul*, 287.

²⁸⁰ Nanos, *The Mystery of Romans*, 222. Mounce, *Mounce's Complete Expository*, 327, writes that the *ἀκούω* has at least five nuances in the New Testament: (1) literal hearing is to exercise the human faculty of hearing (Mt 13:16; 13:13-15; Lk 7:22; Acts 28:26); (2) legal hearing means to hear a legal case (Jn 7:51); (3) learning hearing is to receive news or information about something or to learn about something (Mt 14:31; Jn 6:45); (4) obedience hearing is to give careful attention to so as to heed and obey (Acts 3:22); and (5) understanding hearing is to hear and understand a message (1 Cor 14:2; Gal 4:21; Rom 10:17).

²⁸¹ Mark D. Nanos, *The Mystery of Romans: Context of Paul's Letter* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 222; Dunn, *Romans*, 17. Dunn notes that the word includes in its range of meaning: "give ear to, answer, heed."

²⁸² Mounce, *Mounce's Complete Expository*, 232.

our genuine response to the gospel is the basis of our obedience to God in our covenant relationship with Him. Paul affirms, “So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in Him, rooted and built up in Him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught and overflowing with thanksgiving” (Col 2:6). In relation to the ongoing faithfulness as Christians continue to live in Christ (Col 2:6), Paul wants them to base their obedience on the preaching of the gospel (Rom 6:16; 1 Cor 15:2) and an attitude of thanksgiving (Col 2:6).

Paul also denotes *πίστις* as one of the spiritual gifts (1 Cor 13). He contends, “To another faith, by the same Spirit” (1 Cor 12:9) and “...if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing” (1 Cor 13:3). In this context, Paul uses this *πίστις* as one of “the gifts of the Spirit” (1 Cor 12:7) to Christians, not the saving faith. This *πίστις* is equivalent to confidence and “an assurance or proof”²⁸³ given by the Spirit. Paul defines this *πίστις* as it is written: “I believed; therefore I have spoken. With that same spirit of faith, we also believe and therefore speak” (2 Cor 4:13). Morris interprets the text as the evidence of Paul’s confidence in “acting and speaking under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.”²⁸⁴ Similarly, Paul mentions the measure of faith as a gift (Rom 12:3-5): “For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you..” Paul probably talks about God’s measurement of “one’s own faith in Christ,” meaning that our Christian minds must speak in accordance with the standard set by our faith in Christ.²⁸⁵ This measure of faith is a gift of “prophetic discernment of the will and the ways of God”²⁸⁶ as we increase our confidence in

²⁸³ Mounce, *Complete Expository*, 233.

²⁸⁴ Morris, ‘Faith’, in *Dictionary of Paul*, 289.

²⁸⁵ Moo, *Romans*, 403.

²⁸⁶ Paul Barnett, *Romans: The Revelation of God’s Righteousness* (Scotland: Christian Focus, 2003), 285.

God (2 Cor 10:15; 2 Thess 1:3). We become aware that this level of faith is fundamentally based on our action of faithfulness and obedience to God, and this measure of faith enables us to be competent to do the gifts God has assigned to us (Rom 12:4-8).

This Christian *πίστις* as our act of believing, trusting, doing, and obeying will continue to grow with regard to staying in the relationship covenant with God. Our Christian faith and obedience become one action as faith itself is to be shown by our obedience. By faith, we eagerly await through the Spirit the righteousness for which we hope (Gal 5:5). Paul urges, “We live by faith, not by sight” (2 Cor 5:7). This faith as the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22) is not static as Paul says, “Our hope is that, as your faith continues to grow, our area of activity among you will greatly expand” (2 Cor 10:15). Faith becomes our ongoing quality of life as it is linked with love and hope (1 Cor 13:13). These aspects of Christian *πίστις* must be based on the faith of justification or the gospel of Christ (Rom 10:9) so that our Christian faith will continue to produce obedience to Him as we are growing in our relationship with God in association with our sanctification until Christ returns.

4.3 The Fruit of Justification: The Obedience of Faith

In the Old Testament, the Hebrew adjective *qādōš* (holy) is used for the title of an attribute of God and His people. For example, the Lord said to Moses, “Speak to the entire assembly of Israel and say to them: ‘Be holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy’” (Lev 19:1-2). The remnant of Israel would truly rely on the Lord, the Holy One of Israel (Isa 10:20). The word

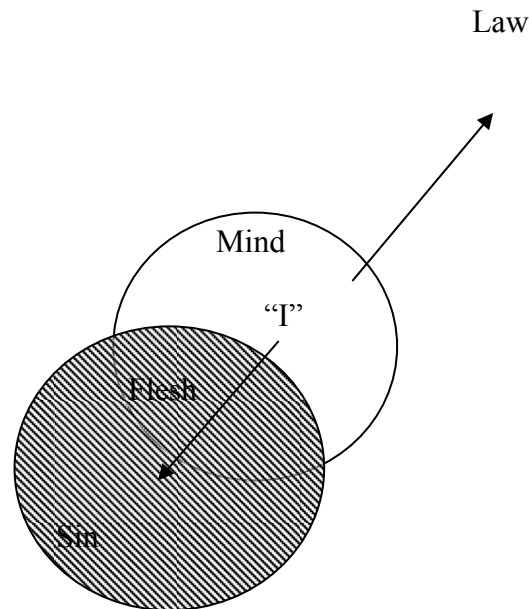
qādôš is also used of His people: “Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession” (Ex 19:5). The Holy God of Israel commanded His people to obey Him in order to be holy: “I am the Lord who brought you up out of Egypt to be your God; therefore be holy, for I am holy” (Lev 12:5). His people had to serve Him by doing ritual things such as separating themselves from their idolatrous practices (Jos 24:19), unclean food (Lev 44-45; Deut 14:21), and other unholy things.

In the New Testament, the Jewish ritual observance is no longer practised because the old Law “has been replaced by the Spirit which functions as a liberating force for life.”²⁸⁷ Paul verifies, “Because through Christ Jesus the [Law] of the Spirit of life set me free from the [Law] of sin and death” (Rom 8:2). In Christ, we are now under the Law of the Spirit where “a right moral life becomes a possibility”²⁸⁸ as we are no longer under condemnation of the old Law (8:1). The Torah has no capacity to fulfill the godly moral life of people. For example, Paul as a Jew realizes that sin controls his flesh and mind although he delights in obeying the Law. His question “Who will rescue me from this body of death?” (Rom 7:24) concludes with his own awareness that Christ Jesus is the only one who can rescue him (Rom 7:25a). Although the Law is good in itself (Rom 7:12), but the Law and the members of his body are unable to free him from the bondage of sin (Rom 7:25b). We see that Paul is insistent upon the Law’s negative effects when confronting those who have not been justified (Rom 3:20; 4:15; 6:5; 7:13; 7:14-15).

²⁸⁷ Byrne, *Reckoning with Romans*, 149.

²⁸⁸ Byrne, *Reckoning with Romans*, 149

Byrne's diagram²⁸⁹ gives us a clear picture of what Paul is thinking about how the body of death works in his flesh and sin (Rom 7:14-25):



Byrne explains that, for Paul, sin dwelling within him works its power in the presence of the Law, which remains external (Rom 7:23).²⁹⁰ This means that Paul consents to the Law according to the inner being (Rom 7:22) in his mind (Rom 7:22, 23). Byrne argues that sin uses the Law to stir up the hostility and rebellion latent in his flesh²⁹¹ although the Law itself is good. As a result, Paul ("I" in the diagram) is incapable of doing the good that he wants but compelled to do the evil that (in his mind) he dislikes – sin sets up unbearable tension within him. Byrne notes that, for Paul, sin is a power that controls his flesh, drags him into moral failure, and sets him inescapably in the direction of death. The Law can only threaten punishment and condemnation; it cannot address the root problem which is internal. Therefore, Paul thanks God that Christ Jesus has come to rescue him from the power of sin (Rom 7:25).

²⁸⁹ Byrne, *Reckoning with Romans*, 144.

²⁹⁰ Byrne, *Reckoning with Romans*, 144.

²⁹¹ Byrne, *Reckoning with Romans*, 144.

In Christ, for Paul, the Law of the Spirit is able to generate our godly moral lives as we now belong to “the manifestation of life produced by the Spirit.”²⁹² Now the Spirit has become a Law written in the heart (2 Cor 3:2-6) in order to deal with human root internal problems and effect true moral liberation.²⁹³ For sanctification, Paul uses the Greek verb *hagiazō*, meaning “to purify morally, reform, to live like one under a vow of abstinence.”²⁹⁴ Donfried believes that sanctification is a present process in which God offers us, through the gift of the Spirit, the possibility of leading a new life by being obedient to God and responsive to the needs of our fellow Christians.²⁹⁵ He encourages Christians to offer their bodies as living sacrifices, holy, and pleasing to God (Rom 12:1). Paul affirms, “For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God” (Rom 8:13-14). As a result, in Christ Jesus, the process of our sanctification is now under the leading of the Spirit. Paul insists that Christians have to imitate Christ (Rom 13:14; 15:1-5, 8; 1 Cor 11:1) with a view to growing in holiness/sanctification.

What are Christians to do in the ‘staying in’ stage of Pauline soteriology in association with their sanctification? In the letter to the Romans, Paul is concerned with Godly behaviour for “Gentiles who now have faith in Christ in matters of their outward expression of obedience.”²⁹⁶ He urges, “Don’t you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey – whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or obedience, which leads to righteousness?” (Rom 6:16). He warns them, “Therefore do not let

²⁹² Mounce, *Complete Expository*, 338.

²⁹³ Byrne, *Reckoning with Romans*, 150.

²⁹⁴ Mounce, *The Analytical Lexicon*, 50.

²⁹⁵ Donfried, ‘Justification and Last Judgment in Paul’, 143.

²⁹⁶ Nanos, *The Mystery of Romans*, 214.

sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires (Rom 6: 12) and offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness” (Rom 6:13a). As they have been brought from death to life, Paul insists that they “offer the parts of [their bodies] to [Christ] as instruments of righteousness” (Rom 6:13). Paul warns them not to continue indulging in sinning as they are no longer under the power of sin (Rom 6:1-11): “We are not under the Law, but under grace” (6:14). Because our old self has been crucified with Christ, we should no longer be slaves to sin (Rom 6:6). We see that, although we are no longer under the power of sin and the Law, we still have capacity to disobey God (Rom 6:15- 23) if we choose not to walk in the Spirit.

Paul further reminds them of their post-justification ongoing obedience to the faith in Christ (Rom 1:5; 16:26), “But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted. You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness. . . ., so now offer [the parts of your body] in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness” (Rom 6:17-19).²⁹⁷ This shows that obedience to the form of teaching (Rom 1:1-3a; 2:6; 6:17) is the key to righteousness with the enabling of the Spirit (Rom 8:13-14; Gal 2:20; Phil 2:12-13). For Paul, ministers of a new covenant are competent because of the Spirit: “the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life” (Rom 7:6; 2 Cor 3:6). This reminds us that, for Paul, we have Christ, the first fruits of the Spirit (Rom 8:11, 23; 1 Cor 15:25) as the Spirit of Christ dwells in us (Rom 5:5; 8:9; Gal 3:2, 5; 4:6). Therefore, we have no excuse for not obeying the teachings of Christ Jesus and the preaching of the gospel, for Paul’s letters tell us that the Spirit enables us (Rom 1:5; 16:26).

²⁹⁷ The NASB translates Rom 6:19 as “...so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification.”

Paul's emphasis is on teaching Christian Gentiles to be responsible for winning the battle against sin, although he insists that they are no longer under the power of sin (Rom 6:1-14) and the Law (Rom 6:14a). They have responded to the gospel and have now lived under God's grace. According to Moo, the 'instruments of righteousness' (Rom 6:13), for Paul, refer to "the standard of right behaviour God reveals to us, that we are now to serve."²⁹⁸ Nanos notes that this right behaviour requires "the very obedience of faith" as the characteristic of their righteousness in Christ.²⁹⁹ We realise that the obedience of faith has to do with our ongoing obedience to what we hear of the true teachings of Christ, understand, and do them so that we will be saved on the Day of Judgment.

Godly behaviour is the key to reflecting our right moral life in Christ. We need to understand that to produce Godly behaviour is to change the way we think. "When we change the way we think, we change the way we live."³⁰⁰ Paul says, "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – [His] good, pleasing, and perfect will" (Rom 12:2). I have noted that being a new creation is the beginning of transformation, so God starts transforming us by renewing our minds through the leading of the Spirit. Paul says, "...those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires" (Rom 6:5). He adds, "The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace" (Rom 8:6). The concept of mind here must have been crucial to Paul's thought. Moo suggests that the Greek word 'mind or a way of thinking' is *φρόνημα*, and the word might best be translated as

²⁹⁸ Moo, *Romans*, 200.

²⁹⁹ Nanos, *The Mystery of Romans*, 214.

³⁰⁰ Suggested by Moo, *Romans*, 398.

“mind-set.”³⁰¹ Moo denotes “the basic direction of a person’s will.”³⁰² He explains that the underlying way of our *φρόνημα* is crucial to the course of our Christian lives because it is our “fundamental orientation, the convictions, and heart attitude.”³⁰³ Paul describes a sinful one as a person whose lifestyle flows from a mind oriented to the flesh and whose will reflects the values of this world, and the person cannot obey God’s Law (Rom 8:7) and please God (Rom 8:8). It is clear that Christians are responsible for feeding into their minds information that will transform their old thinking to be in line with God’s will (Rom 12:2) in terms of His values and standard by the renewal of the Spirit.

4.4 Conclusion

The key to understanding Paul’s theology of *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* is that the concept of *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* describes a status of the right relationship with God, not an attribute of God. Paul’s thought of *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* is all about the true living God of Israel revealing Himself to us in the redemption of Christ on the cross if we respond to receive His justifying offer (Rom 3:22). For Paul, justification is “the beginning of the life in Christ;”³⁰⁴ and being justified, not faith, is a gift of righteousness from God we receive. This gift of righteousness becomes a status of our right relationship with God as *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* is the justifying action of God. Our justification is not simply a forensic metaphor that the sinners are declared righteous or treated as if they are righteous, but it is part of the apocalyptic/eschatological salvation. Therefore, *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* is construed in a sense of subjective genitive, not an objective genitive.

³⁰¹ Moo, *Romans*, 250.

³⁰² Moo, *Romans*, 250.

³⁰³ Moo, *Romans*, 257.

³⁰⁴ Donfried, ‘Justification and Last Judgment in Paul’, 144.

Saving faith is not the result of our obedience to the Law; it is the means of our justification as we respond to Christ's gospel which is about the righteousness of God. Saving faith is an attitude of believing that requires our willingness to receive the justifying gift of salvation God offers in Christ on the cross. In the post-justification, Paul talks about the obedience of faith (Rom 1:5; 16:26) and other aspects of faith as faithfulness and confidence that will continue to grow in our relationship with Christ. We see that obedience is the key to the life of our righteousness being led by the Spirit as Paul affirms,

“Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one who you obey – whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death or to obedience, which leads to righteousness?” (Rom 6:16).

Paul affirms that we now live by the leading of the Spirit, so we must continuously put to death the sinful nature of the body (Rom 8:13-14). As long as we remain obedient to the faith of the gospel, the Spirit will enable us to do “deeds of love” (Gal 5:14). Faith and obedience are an action we do as obedience is the product of our genuine faith in Christ.

We have understood that justification is about how we are transferred from slaves of sin into slaves of righteousness (Rom 6:18) and obedience (Rom 6:16) leading to sanctification (Rom 6:19). For Paul, the consequence of justification is a gift of sanctification as we receive the gift of the Spirit to live within us. Once we are in the right relationship with God, Christ Jesus lives within us, and the Spirit gives us life (Rom 8:10). We must start to produce a new godly moral possibility as we are controlled by the Spirit (Rom 8:9), given to us through the sacrificial death of Christ on the cross. Byrne urges that we are “to render service in a new life under the influence of the Spirit, in place of the old existence controlled by the letter of the [Law] (Rom

7:6).”³⁰⁵ The Spirit enables us to follow things that are in line with the will of God and to deal with our internal problems with a view to growing in our relationship with Christ.

As we are now under God’s grace, the process of our sanctification is now under the leading of the Spirit. As we are led by the mind of the Spirit, faith and sanctification are not static; they must increase as we imitate Christ. Christ is the end of the Law (Rom 10:4), and we are now able to fulfill the Law of the Spirit (Rom 8:1-4, 6; 3:8-10). Therefore, Paul urges that we should live by ongoing (post-justification) obedience of faith in sanctification in order to produce Godly behaviour by the renewal of our mind. For Paul, this is how we grow into Christ’s attitude in our sanctification until He returns.

³⁰⁵ Byrne, *Reckoning with Romans*, 154.

CHAPTER FIVE

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS: COVENANTAL NOMISM IN THE PSALMS OF SOLOMON AND PAUL'S LETTERS

This chapter is a comparative analysis of the Psalms of Solomon and Paul's letters on the subject of the concept of Covenantal Nomism. So far, the Psalms of Solomon, Romans, and Galatians have been carefully studied in relation to the dimensions of righteousness: God's righteousness and human righteousness. Both of them fit the Covenantal Nomism as the 'pattern of religion' in their soteriologies although the 'getting in' stage of Pauline soteriology differs from the 'getting in' stage of the Psalms of Solomon. From the previous chapters, we perceive that there are similarities and differences associated with their soteriologies. For example, the 'getting in' stage of the Psalms of Solomon is composed of God's divine election as His own initiative to choose the Israelites as His special people, but the 'getting in' stage of Paul's soteriology involves God revealing Himself to all people in order to justify those who respond to the gospel of Christ Jesus. The similar ideas of the 'staying in' of their soteriologies are related to being obedient to God in order to maintain their intimate relationship with Him.

For the methodological explorations, this chapter will discuss the comparative study between the Psalms of Solomon and Paul's authentic letters such as Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, and Philippians. I shall start by comparing the monergistic 'getting in' stage of the Psalms of Solomon with the synergism of the 'getting in' stage of Paul's soteriology. However, the 'staying in' stages of their soteriologies are both expressed as synergistic. God's discipline through the trials of the righteous and the repentant righteous who sin unintentionally with its

purpose of maintaining their obedience to God in the covenant will also be discussed. This chapter seeks to investigate a further comparison between the Psalms of Solomon and Paul's letters in relation to God's judgment after the 'getting in' and 'staying in' stages. I will discuss the apocalyptic categories of Paul's theology that involve justification (past experience), sanctification (present experience), and eschatological judgment (future hope). This chapter is to examine judgment in terms of God's rewards for the righteous and His punishment for sinners, including people of God who sin intentionally without repentant attitude. The judgment of God will be connected with the categories of people through their obedience to the righteousness of God's commands.

5.1 The 'Getting in' Stages of the Psalms of Solomon and Paul's Soteriologies: Monergistic or Synergistic

There are two different understandings of the 'getting in' stages of the Psalms of Solomon and Paul's soteriologies, although both of them share an emphasis of God's 'free grace' or mercy³⁰⁶ as the fundamental key to entering into an intimate relationship with God. In the Psalms of Solomon, the love of God (18:3) and His faithfulness to the promises of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Deut 7:6-7; 17:4) are the vital core of the covenant. For example, the Psalmist prays, "You made a covenant with our ancestors about us, and we will place our hope in you, when we turn ourselves towards you" (9:10). He acknowledges that the Jews are God's elected people (9:9). God's purpose of the election was for Israel to be a light to the other nations (Gen 12:1-3;

³⁰⁶ Mounce, *The Analytical Lexicon*, 178 and 336, notes that mercy is used to translate different Greek words: *ελεος* (pity, compassion, kindness, blessing); *οικτιρμός* (compassion, in relieving sorrow and want, favour, grace); and *οικτείρω* (to have compassion on, exercise grace or favour towards).

Isa 43:10): “You have been our God from the beginning and our hope is in you, O Lord” (8:31). God chose Jews as His elect people out of His love and faithfulness to their ancestors. This ‘getting in’ stage of the Psalms of Solomon’s soteriology is totally composed of God’s own initiative in terms of choosing the Jews as the elect (9:9). Accordingly, they did not have to make any decision on entering into the covenant. This provides evidence that the ‘getting in’ stage of the soteriology of the Psalms of Solomon is monergistic – entering into a relationship with God in the covenant is entirely God’s election, without any human response to God.

The ‘getting in’ of Pauline soteriology starts with God’s righteousness and His own initiative to reveal Himself to the world in the gospel of Christ (Rom 1:16-17). However, in contrast to the Psalms of Solomon, the ‘getting in’ stage of Paul’s soteriology becomes synergistic because God demands a human response as we are justified by faith or belief in what God has done through Christ Jesus on the cross. The ‘getting in’ stage of Pauline soteriology has nothing to do with human merit because, for Paul, there is no one who is righteous (Rom 3:9, 23). Paul affirms, “This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe (Rom 3:22)...for we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the [Law]” (Rom 3:28). Moo claims that, for Paul, justification involves “the decision of human beings to believe.”³⁰⁷ Consequently, they must decide to believe in their hearts that God raised Christ from the dead (Rom 10:9). I have noted that the gospel is all about the justifying action of God through the death of Christ Jesus, and this gift of justification can only be given to Jews and Gentiles by faith. We are justified by God (Rom 8:30, 33) because we respond by faith in Christ with reference to entering into an intimate relationship with Him.

³⁰⁷ Moo, *The Epistle to Romans*, 50.

Paul asserts, “However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justified the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness” (Rom 4:5). Paul argues that God credited righteousness to Abraham because he believed Him (Rom 4:3, 6, 22) – Abraham did not waver regarding the promise of God but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God (Rom 4:20). We realise that God also credits righteousness to us as Paul confirms, “God will credit righteousness – for us who believe in [Him] who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification” (Rom 4:24-25). In this way, Paul shifts the emphasis from the adjective ‘righteous’ (in the Psalms of Solomon, a Jew who is righteous is one who obeys the Torah) to the verb (in Paul’s letters, a Gentile or Jew can be justified only by God on the basis of their faith). For Paul, to be justified is to be given the status of being in an intimate relationship with God as we believe in Christ: we are transferred into being instruments of righteousness (Rom 6:13, 16). Paul says, “Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom 5:1). The stage of Paul’s soteriology is synergistic because our faith is the key to gaining access into God’s justifying action in Christ Jesus (Rom 5:2): justification requires a human response to what God has done in Christ on the cross.

Paul uses the Greek verb *σώζω* in the aorist tense to indicate that sinners were saved or justified once they believed in Christ. For instance, Paul advocates, “For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has?” (Rom 8:24). This Greek aorist tense refers to the event of justification as the beginning of our Christian lives. Justification is a turning point in transferring Christians from the lordship of sin to the lordship of Christ (Rom 9:30-33) as the eschatological has been brought forward at the redemptive action of Christ so that Christians are already justified by their faith. In contrast, for the Psalms of

Solomon, the Israelites start a life as God's elected people as the individuals enter into the covenant because God chose Israel as a chosen nation.

The *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* in the theology of Palestinian Judaism describes an attribute of God and His saving action. For instance, the Psalmist cries out, "Those who do what is right save up life for themselves with the Lord, ... For the Lord's righteous judgments come down on man and household" (9:5). In the 'getting in' stage of Paul's soteriology, the *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* is no longer understood as God's attribute, but His justifying activity. Paul says, "I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes first for the Jew then for the Gentile (Rom 1:16). He affirms, "This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe" (Rom 3:22). Paul is talking about the power of God in the gospel where God reveals Himself to humankind in order to put sinners in a right relationship with Him through faith in Christ Jesus. The 'getting in' stage of Paul's soteriology requires saving faith as the human response to what God has done in Christ on the cross. Therefore, the 'getting in' stage of Paul's soteriology is synergistic.

5.2 The 'Staying in' Stages of the Psalms of Solomon and Paul's Soteriologies: Synergistic

As the covenant is bound up with the notion of God's righteousness, the link between God's covenant and His righteousness requires the elect's behavioural righteousness on the basis of their obedience to God's ethical demands. In the Psalms of Solomon, the elect have to be righteous in order to be maintained in the covenant on the basis of their obedience to the Torah

and God's discipline. In the 'staying in' stage, the Psalmist asserts that the elect must live by the Law (14:1-3) and God's mercy (15:12-13). Paul uses the Greek verb *σώζω* in the present experience for expressing the process of sanctification as the 'staying in' stage of Paul's soteriology. In sanctification, Christians are now in the process of being saved as Paul affirms, "For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God" (1 Cor 1:18). Christians are not yet saved in this 'staying in' stage as they still wait for the rescue from God's wrath in the future hope (Rom 5:9), for their adoption as sons, and for the redemption of their bodies (Rom 8:23). Therefore, Paul commands that we continue to work out our salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil 2:12). We must be obedient to the teachings of Christ and the preaching of the gospel as we live now by the Spirit (Phil 2:1), for it is God who works in us to will and to act according to His good purpose (Phil 2:13). God starts transforming us to have Christ's mind (Phil 2:5), live in His will (Rom 12:2) and produce Godly behaviour as the Spirit is in our lives (Gal 5:22).

Paul's thought of *δικαιοσύνη* can be seen as semantic subject and object terms to show a contrast between the Psalms of Solomon and Paul's letters. For example, the Psalms of Solomon use the verb *δικαιόω* to refer to human beings as semantic subjects and to God as semantic object. The righteous declare God's attributes like His righteousness, love, and judgment (8:7; 2:15; 3:5). They proclaim that the Lord is worthy to be praised, for He judges the whole earth in His righteousness (8:24). Their righteousness depends on their intimate relationship with God in association with their obedience to the commands of the Law while staying in the covenant (9:5). On the contrary, Paul uses the verb *δικαιόω* in reference to God as the semantic subject and human beings as semantic objects. God is the only one who justifies the ungodly in order to put

them right in reference to their relationship with God and start producing Godly moral righteousness through the enabling of the Spirit (Rom 8). Paul only mentions that human beings declare God 'righteous' (Rom 3:4), allusion to Psalms 51:4.

In the Psalms of Solomon, Jews received the Torah³⁰⁸ as God's gift (9:3) that gives life (9:5) and enables to live the healthy relationship with God in the covenant (14:1-3). God's promise in the covenant is that He will always be merciful by protecting, disciplining, and forgiving them (9:8-10) so that they may live righteously in the covenant (9:5). This indicates that God's promises are the basis for their election, and their obedience as the proper response to His grace after they enter into the covenant. For Paul, Christians receive the gift of the Holy Spirit through saving faith after being justified by faith (2 Cor 4:13; Gal 3:1-5), and the Spirit gives life (Rom 8:11). This gift of the Spirit is the beginning of the process of sanctification or glorification as being transformed into the image of Christ Jesus (2 Cor 3:18), through our faith of obedience to the Spirit (Rom 1:5; 16:26). Christians live by obedience of faith through the enabling of the Spirit (Rom 8:9). The Law may be good in itself (Rom 7:12), but the Law without the Spirit brings negative effects like condemnation and punishment (Rom 3:20; 4:15; 7:14-25). Righteousness no longer comes from the Law as Christ has come because, for Paul, the Law is now clothed in Christ's love and the Spirit (Gal 5:14). The new Law of righteousness is written in our hearts (2 Cor 3:3-6) as Paul affirms, "...for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life" (2 Cor 3:6). Circumcision, Jewish dietary laws, and related Jewish ethical precepts are no longer requisite for

³⁰⁸ N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God* (London: SPCK, 1992), 271, notes that the Torah/law/instruction is understood as "the covenant document which, grounded upon the faithfulness of Israel's God, provided for [His] people the way of life by which they should express their answering fidelity to [Him]."

the life of faith in Christ Jesus. God's purpose in predestination³⁰⁹ is that we are to be conformed to the likeness of His Son and that He might be the first-born among many brothers (Rom 8:29-30). God calls us into fellowship with Christ Jesus (1 Cor 1:9) and into "a life of serving [Him] and our fellow Christians"³¹⁰ (1 Cor 7:15). We see that the 'staying in' stage of Paul's soteriology requires our total obedience to Him in order to receive the enjoyment of the gift of eternal life on the Day of Judgment. This indicates that both require human co-operation with the Spirit by obeying what is right and growing in a relationship with God in the covenant. Therefore, the 'staying in' stage of their soteriologies is synergistic.

5.3 God's Discipline is the Way to Obedience

We have found out that obedience is the key to receiving the gift of salvation as the future hope at God's judgment. Therefore, God's discipline becomes the focal ingredient in helping people be obedient to God in the 'staying in' stage. The term 'discipline' can be conceived of as a combination of training, instruction, firm guidance, reproof, and correction. In the Hebrew background,³¹¹ God became their source of guidance and educational discipline dealing with obedience and formation of character in order to do His will. Relating to the Hebrew terminology of discipline, the New Testament uses the Greek verb *παιδεύω* (to educate, instruct, discipline)³¹² and the Greek noun *παιδεία* (education, training up, nurture of children, discipline).³¹³ However, Paul only utilizes the verb *παιδεύω* twice: "But when we are judged by

³⁰⁹ Paul uses the verb *προορίζω* (predestine) to demonstrate that God has chosen, determined, and set us apart beforehand in order to mark out our destiny (Watson, *A Word for the Day*, 17). For Paul, God predestines us because He has a plan for directing us to a particular destiny in relation to being conformed to the likeness of Christ Jesus (Rom 8:29-30).

³¹⁰ As suggested by Mounce, *Mounce's Complete Expository*, 93.

the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be condemned with the world” (1 Cor 11:32) and “as unknown, yet regarded as unknown; dying, and yet we live on – beaten, and yet not killed” (2 Cor 6:9).

For the Psalms of Solomon, God’s promise to the covenant is that He will show mercy, love, and keep them under His yoke and whip of His discipline forever (7:8-9) as God’s judgment is by the good deeds of His devout people (8:33). Similarly, Paul talks about a testing or trial³¹⁴ (2 Cor 13:5) to strengthen our genuine faithfulness and obedience to Him in our daily relationship with Him. In trials, God will help Christians resist the temptation as long as they depend on Him. As Paul affirms that God is faithful, He will not let Christians be tempted beyond what they can bear. When they are tempted, God will also provide a way out so that they can stand up under it (1 Cor 10:13).

³¹¹ Bromiley, *The International Standard*, 948. For example, the ASV translates the term ‘discipline’ as instruction (Ps 50:17; Prov 5:12; 16:23; 12:1), correction (Prov 15:10; 6:23; 12:1), chastening (Prov 3:11; Heb 12:5f), chastisement (Dt 11:2; Jer 7:28). The key to expressing the notion of discipline is originally derived from the two particular Hebrew words: the verb *yāsār* is translated as “instruct, correct, [and] punish and the noun *mūsār* is construed as “instruction, correction, [and] punishment.” The concept of discipline is primarily symbolic of the parent-child relationship (Deut 8:5). Verbrugge, *The NIV Theological Dictionary*, 948, notes that, in Hebrew culture, discipline was an integral element of household life. The father’s task was to make his children aware of God’s claim for filial obedience, based upon His redemption of Israel in the Exodus, and to enforce with integrity the Law given at Sinai, in the knowledge that blessing from God depended upon compliance with His revealed will (Ex 12:26; 13:14; Deut 6:7, 20ff).” For example, Bromiley, *The International Standard*, 948, notes Sanders’ view that God is the subject of disciplining His people: (a) Israel is disciplined by adversity (Hos 5:2; 10:10; Jer 5:3); (b) Israel is disciplined by instruction or warning (Jer 7:28; 17:23); (c) an individual is disciplined by suffering (Jer 10:24; Ps 6:1); and (d) an individual is disciplined by instruction or warning (Isa 8:11; Job. 33:16); and Friedrich, *Theological Dictionary*, 605, affirms that all discipline “comes ultimately from God.”

³¹² Mounce, *The Analytical Lexicon*, 348. The terminology of the verb can be interpreted as to educate and instruct children (Acts 7:22; 22:3); to be taught, learn (1 Tim 1:20); to admonish, instruct by admonition (2 Tim 2:25; Titus 2:12); to chastise, chasten (1 Cor 11:32; 2 Cor 6:9; Heb 12:6, 7, 10; Rev 3:19; to scourge (Lk 23:16, 22).

³¹³ Mounce, *The Analytical Lexicon*, 348. The noun can be equivalent to “education, training up, nurture of children, Eph 6:4; instruction, discipline, 2 Tim. 3:16; in N.T. correction, chastisement, Heb 12:5, 7, 8, 11.”

³¹⁴ Mounce, *Mounce’s Complete Expository*, 715, notes that God allows us to be tempted as a testing (Gal 4:14) to discover the genuineness of our faith (2 Cor 13:5) and to help us grow up into Christian maturity. To be tempted means to be lured to do or think something wrong or contrary to God’s will (Gal 6:1).

Experiencing trials is part of God's discipline in respect to training and helping Christians grow in their faithfulness to God, not because they have sinned against God. Fundamentally, for Paul, Christians will encounter a significant feature of suffering for the name of Jesus. Paul sees his own sufferings as "the sufferings of Christ" (2 Cor 1:5; Phil 3:10; Col 1:24). He says that these sufferings aim at bringing him to "an awareness of his own weaknesses and nothingness" with respect to relying on God's strength (2 Cor 1:9; 12:7).³¹⁵ For Paul, God's discipline keeps him from being too elated, a thorn was given to him, and this thorn is "a messenger of Satan"³¹⁶ which torments and keeps him from being too elated (2 Cor 12:7). This means that God allowed a messenger of Satan to come and trouble Paul with a view to preventing him from being conceited (2 Cor 12:7), not because he had done wrong things. One thing we realise is that Paul always experiences God's comfort in the midst of his sufferings; as a result, he is also able to comfort others (2 Cor 1:3-7).

Whatever Satan attacks does not change the reality that this messenger of Satan belongs to the old era (2 Cor 5:17) and is a false messenger of light (2 Cor 11:14). What the messenger of Satan wants is to destroy Paul's relationship with Christ and his ministry by inflicting sickness on Paul. However, Satan cannot touch Christians without God's permission because, for Paul, the thorn is seen as "the effect of divinely permitted [satanic] antagonism."³¹⁷ Martin comments that a thorn is "physical illness"³¹⁸ in the biblical tradition. It is probably acceptable that this thorn causes Christians to suffer physical illness, as Paul suffers from being beaten,

³¹⁵ Bauer, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Theology*, 895.

³¹⁶ Ralph P. Martin, *2 Corinthians* Word Biblical Commentary Vol 40 (Waco, Texas: Word Books, Publisher, 1986), 417. For Paul, this messenger of Satan is associated with evil forces (though permitted by God).

³¹⁷ Vine, et al., *Vine's Complete*, 630.

³¹⁸ Vine, et al., *Vine's Complete*, 412. This thorn is described as "physical, painful, [and] humiliating." Paul's thorn could be the conflict he had with those who question his apostleship (2 Cor 12:12), those who are opposed to his ministry (2 Cor 11:13-15).

sleeplessness, hunger (2 Cor 11: 16-27). Martin adds that Paul experiences “insults, anguish, persecutions, and distress.”³¹⁹ Dunn interprets the thorn as the “eschatological tension”³²⁰ – a tug-of-war between the Spirit and the flesh. The powerful thorn that Satan uses to attack Christians is in their minds as Satan attempts to set up pride, prosperity, fears, doubts, wonderings, unbelief, and many other lies. The point here is that no matter how hard we struggle as Satan is trying to destroy our relationship with God, we know that God through His Spirit always strengthens our faithful obedience and endurance to deliver us in our distress (Rom 5:3-5; 8:12-39; 2 Cor 1:6). Therefore, Paul attests that the Christians are to set their minds on the Spirit and to seek those things that gratify the Spirit (Rom 8:5; 12:1-2). In his sufferings with Christ (2 Cor 4:17), Paul is convinced that God’s divine power is actively working through his humility and weaknesses. Paul questions God as replying, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness” (2 Cor 12:9). In our sufferings for Christ, we are able to respond with joy instead of grief (Rom 5:2). For Paul, Christian sufferings come as a result of the process of our sanctification toward glorification, not sufferings that result from sin.³²¹ We could perceive that we will grow in our obedience, joy, and love for God as we completely rely on Him in our sufferings for His sake.

³¹⁹ Vine, et al., *Vine’s Complete*, 423.

³²⁰ Dunn, *The Theology of Paul*, 484, believes that Paul sees “suffering as part of the already not-yet for all thus caught up in the eschatological tension.” The unique expression of the already-not yet tension is both painful and evil and yet is given by God (483). This indicates that the thorn and eschatological tension can probably be connected as they are considered as signs of justification. This eschatological tension, as well as the thorn, happens only to the godly who have been transferred from the old era to the eschatological era. The eschatological tension is also painful and evil as it involves “attacks on [the Christians’] relationship to God. Christians have to fight against their flesh in order to live by the Spirit – they must choose to do God’s will.” God has given these thorns and tensions to help the Christians grow in their dependence on Christ. Without the thorn in his flesh, Paul could have been arrogant as he had received spectacular revelations (2 Cor 12:1-6).

³²¹ As suggested by Capes, Reeves and Richards, *Rediscovering Paul: An Introduction to His World, Letters, and Theology*, 184.

The Psalmist says that God in His mercy will always cleanse the righteous who sin when they repent of their sins (9:6-7). The righteous who sin are not called sinners as “they know and confess [immediately] that God’s judgments are just.”³²² The Psalms of Solomon’s emphasis is on suffering as a means of atonement (10:2 13:10; 16:11). Discipline and sufferings are used as consequences of the atonement for sins in regard to the maintenance of the righteous status in the covenant. The righteous who sin were saved as they were standing rightly before God by repenting (9:7). In the Psalm of Solomon 7:8-9, the Psalmist acknowledges that God will always show His compassion on the Israelites by connecting their submission to God’s yoke ζυγός³²³ with the experience of the whip of His discipline. Because of their sins, God educates them by letting them experience adversities through invading the Gentile like Pompey, Antipater, and others (2:22). The Psalmist says, “You are the God of righteousness, judging Israel in discipline” (8:26). He talks about God’s discipline on the significant basis of His help in terms of preventing the Israelites from destruction (16:11). The people stiffen their necks, and God is the One who disciplines them in order to save them (8:33). As a matter of fact, the righteous are not ashamed to be taught by the Lord as their desire is to be always in His presence (3:4) and to be “experienced in suffering” as they endure discipline (10:2).

The Psalmist himself acknowledged that God’s discipline rescued him from destruction (16:11). He was about to sin against God intentionally (16:7) because he was almost seduced by a lawless woman’s beauty as someone under the control of useless sin (16:8). He felt like becoming far away from God, very near the gates of hell (16:1-3). He could have given into fierce rage, anger

³²² Mounce, *The Analytical Lexicon*, 348. The righteous are those who fear God; the pious are those who love God; these two groups praise and give thanks to God readily; they are humble (5:12).

³²³ Vine, et al., *Vine’s Complete*, 692. The Greek word ζυγός is metaphorically used as “submission to authority.” In the Psalm of Solomon 7:9, Christ’s yoke has nothing to do with any quality that is imparted by Christ to human beings, but it obviously refers to human beings’ submission or obedience to His authority by sharing with Him.

(16:10), grumbling, discouragement (16:11) if he did not immediately ask God to clothe his tongue and lips with the words of truth (16:10b). However, he did not give in to that temptation of Satan (16:6) because he immediately asked God to restrain him from this intentional sin that was completely worthless and useless. He pleaded with God to guide his actions by disciplining him, and then he would always atone for his sins (16:5) as he declared that God was his saviour and protector. Therefore, because he realised that God was completely his strength (16:12), he was not included with sinners for destruction (16:5b): God had rescued him (16:4).

Similarly, Paul uses the concept of discipline when he urges the Christian community at Corinth to change their arrogant behaviour (1 Cor 4:14-21). Paul exhorts them to imitate (1 Cor 4:6) his way of life in Christ Jesus (1 Cor 4:7). He asks, “What do you prefer? Shall I come to you with a whip, or in love and with a gentle spirit?” (1 Cor 4:21). The phrase ‘gentle spirit’ could mean “the Spirit who brings gentleness,”³²⁴ and this gentleness represents the reflection of Christ Jesus, “whose earthly life of gentleness was lived out in the power of the Spirit.”³²⁵ Paul lists some ways of imitating Christ’s gentleness: “We work hard with our hands. When we are cursed, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure it; when we are slandered, we answer kindly” (1 Cor 4:12-13). Paul urges, “When we are judged by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be condemned with the world” (1 Cor 11:32). We see that, for Paul, being judged is equivalent to being disciplined by God. This divine discipline is God’s reflection of correcting His people. In this context, Paul exhorts that, when Christians are tested

³²⁴ Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1987), 193. He notes that the thought of the Spirit is latent in every reference to the spirit of a Christian person (1 Cor 5:3-4; 14:4-5).

³²⁵ Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 193.

by God, they are being disciplined so that they will not be condemned at the final judgment (1 Cor 11:32).

In the Psalms of Solomon, God disciplines the righteous who sin and repent by correcting their behaviour (10:3), restraining them from the way of evil with strokes (10:1). They sin because of their ignorance (13:7), and God will wipe away their mistakes with discipline (13:10). The Psalmist confirms that God's discipline causes the righteous who sin to persevere with suffering in association with repenting for their wrong deeds (13:7), their unintentional sins (3:7; 13:11), and their sins of ignorance (13:7; 18:4). The sacrifices and offerings in the temple were performed to atone for their sins (1:8; 2:3; 8:11, 22). In order not to defile the temple, they had to purify themselves before offering their sacrifices in the temple (8:12). In contrast, Paul introduces Christ Jesus, the sacrifice of atonement (Rom 3:25). Christ gave His life for human sins (Gal. 5:1). Christians do not have to offer sacrifices in a temple anymore as they are now the temple of the living God (2 Cor 6:16; 1 Cor 3:16; 1 Cor 6:19). They purify themselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, and they make holiness perfect in the fear of God (2 Cor 7:1).

The Psalmist claims that God always shows His mercy (9:10) by forgiving those who sin unintentionally but both confess and publically acknowledge their sins immediately (9:6). However, God punishes Gentiles and Jews who sin intentionally and do not want to repent. Paul also affirms that God has taken away all the sinners' transgressions through Christ's death (Rom. 11:27), but he does not mention that Christians who sin must repent immediately and confess their sins publically. He urges Christians to walk according to the Spirit because they have been

justified in the name of Christ and by the Spirit of our God (1 Cor 6:9-11). God's discipline in trials has become a significant weapon in helping Christians grow in their dependence on Christ and to walk in the will of God and the Spirit. For Paul, God's discipline through sorrow is also used to save Christians who sin but regret their wrongdoing (restitution), so their godly sorrow leads them to repentance (2 Cor 9-10).

5.4 Judgment: Rewards and Punishment

The Psalms of Solomon talk about God's judgment that is rooted in God's righteousness: His justice is synonymous with His righteousness.³²⁶ Being righteous and just, God must reward the righteous and punish sinners unto judgment. For Paul, God will give eternal life to the righteous, but sinners will face wrath and fury (Rom 2:6-10). Paul uses the future tense to indicate that Christians will be saved from God's wrath through Christ on the Day of Judgment (Rom 5:9-10; 1 Thess 1:10). Paul says, "Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall be saved from God's wrath through him" (Rom 5:8). Judgment is one of the apocalyptic categories in Paul's theology after justification and sanctification. Paul says, "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery" (Gal 5:1). Donfried avers that Christians must be obedient to the hope of the gospel in order to receive the gift of salvation at Judgment.³²⁷ As a result, it is necessary for the justified to obey and produce righteous conduct in order to remain blameless and pure for

³²⁶ Proposed by Daniel Falk, 'Psalms and Prayers', in D. A. Carson, Peter T. O' Brien, and Mark A. Seifrid, *Justification and Variegated Nomism* Vol 1 (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 39-40.

³²⁷ Donfried, *Justification and Last Judgment in Paul*, 147.

judgment on the last Day of Christ. Relating to the concept of Covenantal Nomism, God's judgment in the Psalms of Solomon and Paul's letters includes rewards and punishment.

5.4.1 Rewards

The Greek word *μισθός* (reward) is understood as the special reward that God imparts "in recognition of the doing of His will."³²⁸ The Psalmist says that how God rewards them is completely dependent on their good deeds (14). The righteous who truly love God, await his discipline (14:1), and live in the righteousness of his commands (14:2) will live by his faithfulness "forever" (14:3). God never ceases showing His mercy to those who fear Him (2:33; 13:12; 14:3; 15:13b-15; 18:7), and the Messiah will direct them to righteous actions to confirm them all in the presence of the Lord (18:8). The Psalmist proclaims, "Those who fear the Lord shall rise up to eternal life, and their lives shall be in the Lord's light, and it shall never end" (3:12). The righteous will always flourish and grow in His relationship with the Lord like the trees that will never wither – living by the Lord forever as they are "the Lord's Paradise, the trees of life" (14:3).

For Paul, Jewish eschatological expectation has become the "eschatological now."³²⁹ This indicates that the 'eternal life' reward is now given to those who believe in Christ through faith (Rom 3:21). This 'eternal life' reward is the beginning of a relationship with Christ as a new creation (2 Cor 5:17; Gal 6:15). In 1 Cor 3:19, Paul talks about the continuity of the 'eternal life'

³²⁸ Gerhard Kittel, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1983), 699.

³²⁹ Dunn, *The Theology of Paul*, 180, is convinced that this 'eschatological now' is a feature of Pauline writing in Rom 3:26; 5: 9-11; 6:22; 7:6; 8:1; 11:30-31; 13:1; 1 Cor 15:20; 2 Cor. 5:16; 2 Cor 6:2; Gal 2:20; 4:9; Col 1:22; 26:3, 8.

with reward at the last judgment: Christians must live in line with the Spirit, within the will of God, not the flesh.³³⁰ Metaphorically, their foundation made of gold, silver, and costly stones is symbolic of “the gospel of Jesus Christ and him crucified.”³³¹ God will reward Christians who never stop producing the good fruit of righteousness (Gal 5:22) on the basis of the gospel of Christ. The motives, thoughts, and intentions of their hearts will also be examined (1 Cor 4:3-5). Paul affirms that the rewards of Christ’s faithful servants are imperishable (1 Cor 9:25) like a crown of rejoicing (Phil 4:1). Paul affirms, “Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” (Rom 8:1). We see that, as long as we are obedient in faith, we will be pure and blameless on the Day of Christ. Nothing will be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom 8:31-39).

5.4.2 Punishment

In The Psalms of Solomon, punishment refers to destruction or eternal torment³³² that is antithetical to that of the term ‘rewards.’ Thus, punishment exclusively refers to sinners who are the Gentiles (Pompey), the apostates, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Sadducean priests, and the hypocrites. They will perish forever (15:13b) and live in the world of the dead, darkness, and destruction (14:9). Their lawlessness will pursue them even down into hell (15:10). They live in agony, depression, distress, and hopelessness (4:14, 15a). They are anxious about their lives all the time (4:15b) because they were not content with their lives (4:17). They are punished as a result of their intentional sins (3:8; 9:7). In this respect, God shows sinners no mercy (2:8; 2:7-

³³⁰ Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 140, notes that the flesh refers to a foundation built on wood, grass or straw (2 Cor 3:9-15).

³³¹ Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 140.

³³² Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 391.

9, 17; 17:10-12) and protection as they are repugnant because they do not repent for their horrible sins (2:4). The destruction of sinners is grounded in their wrong deeds (9:5). God's justice to Israel indeed involves two aspects: "the obligation to obey and the punishment for disobedience."³³³

For Paul, sinners who do not know God and Christians who do not obey the gospel of the Lord Jesus are people who will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction. In Rom 2:12-16, Paul accentuates that God will punish not only sinners who reject Christ but also the Gentile and Jewish Christians who choose the Law as the source of their justification and who keep sinning against God deliberately by their disobedient deeds. Paul himself believes that he, including all Christians, will appear before the judgment seat of Christ according to his works whether they are good or bad (2 Cor 5:8-10). Therefore, obedience to the gospel of Christ is the condition of maintaining the right relationship with God,

Paul warns Christians to stand firm in their faith in order to prevent themselves from losing the freedom of their salvation as a result of God's punishment (1 Cor 16:13; Rom 14:4). In his letter to the Galatians, Paul mentions that Cephas, Barnabas, and other Jewish Christians became hypocrites as they did not act in line with the truth of the gospel (Gal 2:11-14). Betz argues that, for Paul, Christians will lose their salvation if they go back under the yoke of slavery.³³⁴ Paul comprehends the yoke of slavery as the acceptance of the Jewish Torah (Gal 5: 2-12) and the fraud of their sinful nature (Gal 5:13-24). The former relates to the Christian Jews who will lose their salvation if they accept the Law as the source of justification, not Christ (Rom 2: 21). This

³³³ Falk, 'Psalms and Prayers', in *Justification and Variegated Nomism*, Vol. 1, 46.

³³⁴ Betz, *Galatians*, 258.

means that the Christian Jews who continued to practise the Mosaic Law and were circumcised would never lose their salvation as long as they knew that Christ was the source of their justification/righteousness. The latter refers to those who are reluctant to walk in the Spirit. Paul asserts that Christians will not enter the kingdom of God if they sin deliberately by focusing on the acts of the sinful nature (Gal 5:16-19).

5.5 The Categories of People in Judgment

The Psalms of Solomon and Paul's letters emphasise obedience and God's discipline with reference to people's relationship with God in the covenant in order to remain blameless at the last judgment. Christians will receive the gift of salvation at the eschatological judgment as they have no fear of being separated from Christ's love (Rom 8:1; 31-39) as long as they remain steadfast and firm in sanctification (Rom 14:4; 1 Cor 7:37; 15:50, 58; 16:13). According to Donfried, judgment depends on whether Christians have held fast and remained obedient to their new lives in Christ.³³⁵ For the Psalms of Solomon, judgment depends on their good deeds in accordance with the Law (14). Therefore, it is essential to investigate how the Psalms of Solomon and Paul's letters describe the different groups of people like the righteous, the repentant righteous, and the sinners in relation to judgment.

5.5.1 The Righteous

The Psalmist identifies the righteous as the devout who love gathering in the assembly of the people (10:6). What they do in the synagogues is that they worship and glorify the Lord's name

³³⁵ Donfried, *Justification and Last Judgment in Paul*, 146.

together (10:7). They love praising the Lord joyfully in the assembly of the holy ones (10:6). They are also called the sons of the circumcision or the covenant (*bēnē bērit*) (17:15).³³⁶ They obey the ritual traditions like circumcision, the Jewish dietary laws, and the laws governing the Sabbath as part of God's covenant. They always choose what is right (9:3) as they are God's trees of life (3:12a; 15:13). They deeply fear the Lord (2:33a, b; 3:12; 4:21, 23; 5:18; 6:5; 12:4; 13:5; 14:7; 15:3). They love the Lord, endure His discipline, and live in the righteousness of His commands (14:1-3). They completely trust in the Lord as they live by the Torah (9:5) and by God's mercy (15:12).

Paul also uses the term of the righteous in association with those who have been justified (Rom 1:17). Paul calls all the righteous in the church of God 'saints' (1 Cor 1:2) or holy.³³⁷ Moo suggests that the righteous are "Christians"³³⁸ because they are now in Christ. Paul asserts that the righteous are the chosen people who have been transferred from the lordship of the flesh to the lordship of the Spirit (Rom 8:14). The righteous live by the obedience of faith in Christ (Rom 1:5-6, 17); they live before God in faithfulness (Gal 3:11). When there is faith, there is obedience. Therefore, the righteous cannot be separated from obeying God's ways. Christians have been justified and received the Spirit, so they are able to live in a way that is pleasing to God (Gal 5:2-6:10) by the enabling of the Spirit (Rom 1:5; 16:28). They are God's new creation (Gal 6:15-16) and "have the inner guidance of the Spirit in ethical matters."³³⁹ They have joy and peace as they trust in Christ, and they overflow with hope by the power of the Holy

³³⁶ Steven L. McKenzie, *Covenant* (St. Louis, Missouri: Chalice Press, 2000), 3. He states that the term (*bēnē bērit*) is used in the modern Judaism (the Second Temple Judaism) for the circumcision of male babies on the eighth day in accordance with God's covenant with Abraham in Genesis 17 as a mark of the covenant. Therefore, he also regards the sons of the covenant as the sons of circumcision.

³³⁷ Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 32.

³³⁸ Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 486.

³³⁹ Winninge, *Sinners and the Righteous*, 288.

Spirit (Rom 15:13). They are identified as the sons of God as they are led by the Spirit (Rom 8:14). They keep God's commands because obeying them is what counts (1 Cor 7:19). They live by faith, not by sight (2 Cor 5:7), and they belong to the household of faith (Gal 6:10). They do not stop giving glory, rejoicing in every circumstance (Rom 4:20; Phil 4:6), and having their minds renewed daily by the Spirit (Rom 12:2). They are the reflection of Christ's mind and His likeness (Phil 2:5).

5.5.2 The Repentant Righteous

It is affirmed that repentance is indispensable to the righteous who sin in the Psalms of Solomon. God would always cleanse the righteous of their sins when they immediately confessed (9:6-7) because, in their need, they remembered to call upon and hope in Him.³⁴⁰ Although they sin, they are not called 'sinners' because their sins are unintentional (3:8; 16). Furthermore, they immediately repent of their sins as they know that God's judgments are just.³⁴¹ Obviously, the righteous will experience God's kindness as they seek cleansing for their souls (7). Therefore, the main key to receiving God's forgiveness in the Psalms of Solomon is in an attitude of repentance.

Paul affirms that Christians are no longer under the power of sin (Rom 6:6), but they have a capacity to sin if they choose to disobey God. Therefore, Paul warns Christians: "Do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires" (Rom 6:12). For Paul, Christians should not let the influences of this evil age have control over their mortal bodies. Paul sees the

³⁴⁰ Falk, *Justification and Variegated Nomism*, 46.

³⁴¹ The righteous are those who fear God; the pious are those who love God: these two groups praise and give thanks to God readily; they are humble (Psalm of Solomon 5:12).

mortal body as believers' interaction with the world, and the mortal body itself is related to sin in order to entertain "its body's passions."³⁴² For Paul, the body's passion refers to desires that are in conflict with the will of God (Phil 1:23). This act of the sinful nature (Gal 5:19-21) cannot be eliminated although we have crucified their sinful nature, with its passions and desires (Gal 5:24): "a battlefield of the opposing forces of flesh and Spirit."³⁴³ Paul says, "Let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God" (2 Cor 7:1).

Paul does not tell Christians who sin to repent and be forgiven, but he commends them to walk according to the Spirit (2 Cor 7:9-11). He associates repentance with the word 'grief' (*λόπη*), in association with discipline and suffering.³⁴⁴ Paul says, "Yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us" (2 Cor 7:9). Paul exhorts that godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation until the last judgment (2 Cor 7:9-10). This godly grief is "the only sorrow that leads to life" (2 Cor 2:16; 2 Cor. 5:18-21; 2 Cor 7:10).³⁴⁵ Paul continues by arguing against a worldly grief (2 Cor 7:10). This worldly grief is similar to the godly grief in terms of pain and regret, but the worldly grief leads to "the alienation with God"³⁴⁶ or destruction because there is no repentance being exercised in this grief (2 Cor 2:16). Martin suggests that this worldly grief "comes about because of the unwelcome consequence of

³⁴² Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 486. Moo expounds that "these passions would include not only the physical lusts and appetites but also those desires that reside in the mind and will: the desire to have our own way, the desire to possess what other people have."

³⁴³ H. D. Betz, *Galatians* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), 272.

³⁴⁴ Winnige, *Sinners and the Righteous*, 330. It is believed that, for Paul, this word *λόπη* is related to "human response to transgression within the Jewish frame of covenantal nomism and the Christian frame of continuous participation respectively."

³⁴⁵ Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 232.

³⁴⁶ Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 233.

sin.”³⁴⁷ Christians who suffer this worldly grief know that they have sinned against God, but they do not want to repent of their sins. However, the godly grief leads to repentance by turning them to a closer relationship with Christ.³⁴⁸

5.5.3 The Sinners

The righteous who sin but do not want to repent are considered the sinners. Some of the Pharisees, like the inhabitants of Jerusalem (2:16) and the leaders of the country (17:5), become sinners because they practise their exceedingly wicked sins, idolatry, and violence (17:15). They know the Law, but they do not care about obeying it. The Psalmist says that they are “more wicked and worse than the Gentiles” (8:13). They serve but defile the Temple (8:12) as they commit sexual sins (8:9f), plundering (8:11), impurity (8:12); by doing so, they choose to join the Gentiles outside the covenant (8:13). Falk states that their “intentional sins are associated with the sinners who are judged.”³⁴⁹ Jewish apostates are unrepentant, so they are destroyed eternally as they are hopeless like sinners (17:22, 27, and 36).

Paul’s example is taken from 1 Cor 5:5: “Hand this man over to Satan, so that the sinful nature may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord.” According to Donfried, Paul is talking about the importance of the presence of God’s Spirit in the Corinthian congregation: “to cast out the works of the flesh and to return them to their proper authority, Satan, so that God’s

³⁴⁷ Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 232.

³⁴⁸ Mounce, *The Analytical Lexicon*, 317. Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 232, expounds on the real meaning of repentance: it involves the whole person – knowing, feeling, and willing. He notes Strachan’s view that “Recognition of sin by itself is not repentance; it may be defiance. Nor is sorrow for sin repentance, if it be alone in the mind; it may be remorse or despair. Abandonment of sin, by itself, may be no more than prudence.” Repentance has a powerful impulse that causes “a change of mode of thought and feeling.”

³⁴⁹ Falk, ‘Psalms and Prayers’, p. 49.

Spirit may continue to be present and thus preserve the congregation for the last day.”³⁵⁰ Paul warns, “Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed. He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor 1:7). Christians who are not obedient to the hope of the gospel will not be rescued from God’s wrath at the judgment (Rom 8:23). They choose to be ignorant about the knowledge of God by doing things that are not pleasing to God. Paul urges, “For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God” (1 Cor 1:18).

In Paul’s letters, sinners are the people of lawlessness (1 Cor 9:21) who are not keen on pursuing righteousness (Rom 9:10) and whose minds are blinded by the god of this age or this world (2 Cor 4:4). Sinners are those who are hostile against God (Rom 8:7; 1 Cor 8:12) and who do not obey the Law (Rom 2:13). They are not passionate about choosing the right things (2 Cor 13:7). They might want to do good, but evil is in them as sin dwells in them (Rom 7:20-21). The power of sin alienates them from the life of God (Rom 1:22-25). In the Psalms of Solomon, the Roman Pompey is considered a Gentile: “As the enemy was a foreigner and his heart was foreign to our God, so he acted arrogantly” (17:13; 2:1). The attacking Romans were called *αμαρτωλοί* – sinners (1:1). Gentiles were enemies as they worshipped other gods (2:2). They choose not to know the Lord (2:31); they are non-worshippers (13:5).

Some Jews are also considered sinners or apostates as they sin against God deliberately and choose not to repent. In the Psalms of Solomon, some Jews disobey God and join the Gentiles, such as the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the sons of the daughters of Jerusalem, who sin deliberately

³⁵⁰ Donfried, *Justification and Last Judgment in Paul*, 150.

(2:3, 6, 11), and the Sadducean priests who do not respect the Temple of the Lord (8:12). In Paul's letters, the Judaizers³⁵¹ could probably be considered unbelievers as they imposed their false teachings on Paul's converts in contrast to the true gospel of Christ.

5.6 Conclusion

We have seen the fact that Paul's salvation involves a past event (being justified), a present experience (sanctification), and a future hope (judgment), so we are able to distinguish between justification and salvation that refers to the future although Paul uses the same word. The apocalyptic components of Paul's theology have been explored: justification, sanctification, and judgment. For Paul, Christians are not yet saved in the sense of being totally rescued from the wrath of God (Rom 5:9). Therefore, we still have to face a judgment on the basis of godly deeds obedient to the Spirit in the process of sanctification.

This comparative study of the Psalms of Solomon and Paul's letters' soteriologies is exegetically explored in the concept of Covenantal Nomism. For the Psalms of Solomon, the 'getting in' stage is monergistic as God elects Israel as His chosen nation, and the Jews do not have to make any response to God because it only involves God's favour on them. For Paul, the 'getting in' stage starts with God's initiative by revealing Himself to us, but the 'getting in' stage as a whole is synergistic because God justifies us in response to our faith (Rom 3:22). In the divine action of justification, God reveals Himself to us and justifies us because we respond to what God has

³⁵¹ Betz, 'Galatians, Epistle to the', in *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 874, suggests that Paul was fighting the Judaizers or Judaists (Galatians 2:4; Ignatius; Mag. 10.3) described as Jews who erroneously prescribed Torah and circumcision for all Christians. On the contrary, Dunn, *The New Perspective on Paul*, 319, notes that they were "the non-Jew who adopted distinctive Jewish practices or assimilated to the Jewish way of life."

done in Christ Jesus on the cross. The ‘staying in’ stage of Paul’s soteriology is also synergistic because God only co-operates with the Christians who choose to walk by the Spirit in their journey. The ‘staying in’ stage of the Psalms of Solomon’s soteriology is synergistic as it requires the people’s obedience to the Torah.

The core similarity between the Psalms of Solomon and Paul’s ideas is that they require obedience to God’s commands with a view to accomplishing the maintenance of their righteous status in the covenant. The Psalmist urges that the righteous should live by the Torah (14:1-3), but Paul exhorts that the righteous should live by obedience of their faith in Christ (Rom 1:5; 16:26). For Paul, the ideas of maintaining the status of the righteous have to do with their ethical behaviour in relation to their obedience to the Spirit within the will of God. The righteous have the Spirit that will empower them to produce the fruit of the Spirit (Rom 8:9-14; 1 Cor 6:19; Gal 5:16-25)³⁵² or “the fruit of righteousness.”³⁵³ Christians who put their trust in Christ will grow in their obedience to God: to trust Christ is to be obedient to His commands within His will. For Paul, the righteous must live by the Spirit in order to grow in Christ’s likeness, blameless and pure, as the destiny of our lives.

God disciplines Christians who do not sin through trials for correcting, teaching, and instructing with the aim of helping them grow in their dependence on Him. God’s discipline will cause sorrow to Christians who sin, but his godly sorrow will lead to repentance so that they are saved from destruction. They still have to face the consequences of their wrong doings as they are responsible for their own conduct (Gal 6:5). Those who sin intentionally will lose their salvation

³⁵² Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 458.

³⁵³ Freedman, *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 760.

because they enjoy sinning and choose not to repent of their sins. For the Psalms of Solomon, rewards depend on their obedience to the Law. For Paul, rewards are according to our obedience to the Spirit within God's will, but justification is based on faith in Christ, not works. Christ is the One who will judge us (1 Cor 4:4), so we must stand firm, blameless (1 Cor 1:8), and unoffending (Phil 1:10). We should shine like stars in the world (Phil 2:16) as the reflection of Christ's likeness in the process of our sanctification. We are being transformed by God to reap eternal life if we sow to please the Spirit (Gal 6:8). As we live by obedience to the Spirit in our daily journey (Gal 5:16), we will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature but will be saved from the wrath of God (Rom 5:9) for the enjoyment of our eternal relationship with God as our reward at the Day of Judgment.

Chapter Six

Conclusion and Reflection

In this thesis, I have discovered that the concept of Covenantal Nomism as the ‘pattern of religion’ is a key to supporting Sanders’ argument that the Judaism of Paul’s day was not legalistic and to understanding the stages of the Psalms of Solomon and Paul’s soteriologies. The ‘getting in’ stage of the Psalms of Solomon was gracious and monergistic because God’s divine action worked without the individuals’ response to His election as He chose Israel as His chosen nation. By contrast, the ‘getting in’ stage of Pauline soteriology is gracious and synergistic because God’s justifying activity demands a human response to what He has done in Christ on the cross: we are justified by faith (Rom 3:22). From this concept, I have shown that obedience had a function in the maintenance of a relationship with God in the ‘staying in’ stage of both soteriologies. My exegetical research has assisted my reflection on the place of obedience in the lives of contemporary Christians. I have concluded that a life of the ‘obedience of faith’ is the key to growing into Christ’s likeness through the empowering of His Spirit.

6.1 Conclusion

This research confirms that the Psalms of Solomon’s and Paul’s soteriologies exhibit the concept of Covenantal Nomism as the ‘pattern of religion.’ The ‘getting in’ stage of the Psalms of Solomon is gracious and monergistic as God took the initiative in electing Jews as His chosen people without requiring their response to His gracious action. Once in the covenant, however, they had an obligation to be righteous through obedience to the Law with regard to maintaining

their relationship with God. In comparison, the ‘getting in’ stage of Pauline soteriology is gracious and synergistic because God’s justification requires a human response to what He has done in Christ. The Law given by God to Jews no longer excludes Gentiles in Paul’s soteriology because the Law is now written in the hearts of the Jews or Gentiles who respond to the Gospel. For Paul, justification is offered to Gentiles and Jews by faith (Rom 3:22) as the righteousness of God is revealed to everyone (Rom 1:16-17). However, the problem with the Jews in Paul’s day is that they were ignorant about the true righteousness which was based on faith in Christ (Rom. 9:30) and no longer on the Law. Paul affirms that only those who believe in God who raised Christ Jesus from the dead (the Gospel) are justified (Rom 4:24-25).

The establishment of a relationship with God in the ‘getting in’ stage of Pauline soteriology is always both gracious and synergistic. Paul’s soteriology starts with God’s own initiative, but a whole of the ‘getting in’ stage of his soteriology is synergistic because God justifies us through faith, that is our act of believing or response to what God has done in Christ in the Gospel. Paul affirms that those who confess with their mouths that Christ is the Lord and acknowledge that God raised Christ from the dead will be saved (Rom 10:9). Our response to the justifying activity of God in Christ Jesus has nothing to do with our own righteousness because, for Paul, there is no one who is righteous (Rom 3:9-10). Paul’s theology of *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* is about God’s divine action of putting us into an intimate relationship with Him, so our righteousness is the status of being in a relationship with God and Christ. Further, the ‘staying in’ stage of Pauline soteriology is synergistic because it requires obedience of faith to produce Godly moral righteousness to be conformed into Christ’s likeness as our destiny (Rom 8:29), so we will be saved from God’s wrath (Rom 5:9) at the Day of Judgment.

Using the pattern of Covenantal Nomism, Sanders has successfully analysed the comparison between first-century Palestinian Judaism and Paul's letters. The major approaches to the New Perspective on Paul taken by Sanders, Dunn, and Wright have also become the essential basis for grasping Paul's language of justification and his objection to the Jewish practices of boundary markers. Justification is the proclamation of Christ's death, so the unity of their notions supports evidence that God's gracious gift of Pauline soteriology requires the human response of faith which makes justification synergistic. For Wright, justification is the basis for the "unity of the church"³⁵⁴ as Christians become members of one family, regardless of their cultural or racial differences (1 Cor 3: 16-17; 16:19-20). Paul was not protesting against the theology of first-century Palestinian Judaism as legalism. According to Dunn, Paul protested against boundary markers such as circumcision, food laws and Sabbath in order to distinguish who was inside and who was outside the covenant of God: they separated Jews from Gentiles. In the 'staying in' stage, Sanders, Dunn, and Wright believe that Christians should produce Godly deeds through the power of the Spirit on the basis of their obedience until Christ returns.

6.2 Reflection

In light of this thesis, I will reflect on the relevance and value of the research for practising the contemporary Christian faith. Contemporary Christians must be passionate about obeying the teachings of Christ and the preaching of the gospel in order to be transformed into the likeness of Christ. I have realised that many Christians choose to be slaves of their own desires, rather than slaves of obedience to God (Rom 6:17) and righteousness (Rom 6:13, 18). They are not serious

³⁵⁴ N. T. Wright, 'Romans and the Theology of Paul,' in *Pauline Theology*, edited by Stanley I. Porter and Craig A. Evans Vol 3 (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), 211.

about obeying the will of God because they are lacking in love for Christ as their Lord and Saviour and do not trust in Him completely. They are ignorant of the fact that Christians are not yet saved in this process of sanctification: Christians will be saved from the wrath of God and given eternal life with Christ on the basis of their Godly deeds and obedience to the Spirit. Paul urges, “Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed – not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence – continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling (Phil 2:12).

This particular concern is grounded on the view of the ‘staying in’ stage of the Psalms of Solomon’s and Paul’s soteriologies that obedience to God’s commands is a key to maintaining human righteousness in a love relationship with God until Christ returns. For the Psalms of Solomon, the righteous must be characterised as those who live in the righteousness of God’s commands, the Law. For Paul, Christians who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires (Rom 8:5) because the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace (Rom 8:6) as the Spirit of God now lives within us (Rom 8:9). Paul affirms that our obedience of faith expresses itself through love (Gal 5:6). Therefore, we should increase our love for God and completely trust in Christ (2 Cor 10:15) in our daily lives in order to obey the will of God and grow into Christ’s likeness (Rom 8:29; Phil 2:5) by producing the fruit of righteousness (Gal 5:22). Contemporary Christians should live by the ‘obedience of faith’ as an on-going (post-justification) obedience that requires Christians’ action (Rom 1:5; Rom 16:26) in two practical applications: the increase of faith and the obedience to God’s will.

6.2.1 The Increase of Faith

For Paul, the significant practical application throughout Romans involves faithfulness and obedience. Paul is talking about Christians' obedience of faith (Rom 1:5; 16:26) as a trait of the Spirit (1 Cor 2:5; 16:13; Gal 5:22) that relates to obedience (Rom 1:5; 16:26), not saving faith. Moo comments that obedience of faith refers to the obedience lifestyle that must always be flowing from sincere faith in the Lord.³⁵⁵ In other words, the obedience of faith refers to our ongoing obedience to God's commands on the basis of our thanksgiving to the cross in the process of sanctification. In our journey, as we truly believe in Christ, we will obey His will as Paul says, "But what does it say? The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart, that it the word of faith we are proclaiming (Rom 10:8)." This faith of obedience (Rom 1:5; 16:26) is dependent on our trust in Christ after we have believed the justifying action of God (Rom 3:22). In this process of sanctification, we should live by obedience of faith because our genuine saving faith in Christ leads to obedience to God's commands in life. This obedience of faith is composed of both a trait of righteousness or faithfulness (Gal 5:22) and Christians' obedience in life (Rom 1:5; 16:26).³⁵⁶ We see that our righteousness has to do with our ethical quality of faithfulness (Gal 5:22) produced in our lives on the basis of our intimate relationship with Christ. Paul asserts that his gospel of Christ is totally grounded in the notion that Christians "will live by faith" (Gal 3:11) in the 'staying in' stage. This obedience of faith is the means of our righteousness, and our righteousness itself is the significant ingredient for life or a relationship with Christ in this 'staying in' stage of Paul's soteriology.³⁵⁷ For Paul, Christians once justified are to offer all parts of their bodies to God as instruments of Christ's righteousness (Rom 6:13).

³⁵⁵ Moo, *Romans*, 513.

³⁵⁶ Moo, *Romans*, 37.

³⁵⁷ Capes, Reeves and Richards, *Rediscovering Paul: An Introduction to His World, Letters, and Theology*, 180.

Therefore, faith as the fruit of the Spirit and obedience to God's commands are linked together in relation to growing into Christ's likeness according to His will.

This faithfulness and obedience are intertwined – they cannot be separated with the aim of helping Christians grow in Christ's likeness. Paul exhorts that this faith must be exercised through love in the process of sanctification (Gal 5:6). For Paul, this faith works through God's love (*ἀγάπη*). As we love Christ and trust in Him, the Spirit will enable us to obey God's commands. Obedience to His commands is the product of our love relationship with Christ. Our obedience results from the increase of our love for Christ and faith (the act of trusting) in Christ. Love for Christ, faithfulness in Him, and obedience to His commands cannot be erased from Christians' lives. The consequence of trusting in Christ is that Christians will be characterised by active obedience. We perceive that living by faith means that we choose to love and trust Christ to act in, through, or for our lives.

This faith and love are the traits of the Spirit (Gal 5:22) that need developing in Christians' daily journeys in order to live righteously as they obey the will of God. Paul says that this faith as the fruit of the Spirit within Christians must continue to increase abundantly (2 Cor 10:15) under the power of the Spirit. This means that this faith is not static – our faith in the hope of the gospel or faithfulness in Christ must grow. For example, some Christians are weak in faith (Rom 14:1), empty (2 Cor 15:14) as they deny the resurrection of Christ, and their faith is futile (1 Cor 15:17). For Paul, this faith is the key to Christians' obedience to God in the process of sanctification as Paul says, "We live by faith, not by sight" (2 Cor 5:7). This gift of faith causes Paul to speak and act under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (2 Cor 4:13). In the 'staying in'

stage, we are responsible for nurturing their love for Christ and faith in Him in order to obey the righteousness of God's commands. As Christians live by obedience of faith, the Spirit empowers them to obey God's will and to grow into the reflection of Christ's likeness through the fruit of the Spirit. The more faith we have in Christ, the more we will obey His will by the enabling of the Spirit.

6.2.2 The Obedience to God's Will

For Paul, the purpose of the Christian journey in the 'staying in' stage of soteriology is to imitate Christ by doing God's will – to be in the likeness of Christ (Gal 4:19; 1 Cor 11:1). Our obedience to God's will is the expression of true love and faith in Christ. For Paul, we can live in a way that is pleasing to God (Gal 5:2-6:10) in the eschatological age because of the Spirit's presence within our hearts. We have "the inner guidance of the Spirit in ethical matters."³⁵⁸ We see that the Spirit enables us to obey the Law of Christ, and our love relationship with Christ is the source of our righteousness in Christ. Obedience to God's commands leads to real evidence of Christ's likeness in our lives as our Christian destiny (Rom 8:29). Love, faith, obedience to God's commands, and the Spirit must work together so that Christ's attitude will be evident in Christians' lives (Phil 2:5).

For the Psalms of Solomon, God gave Jews the Law so that they could live righteously when they were in the covenant. The Law was used as a guide and a giver of life: a role of disciplinarian (14:2). The righteousness of the Jews was "due to their relation to the Law."³⁵⁹

³⁵⁸ Longenecker, *Galatians*, 241.

³⁵⁹ Winninge, *Sinners and the Righteous*, 202.

By contrast, Paul corroborates that no one is justified before God by the Law. The Law may be good, holy, and righteous (Rom 7:12), but the Law shows negative effects to those who have been justified because the absence of the Spirit within their lives. Therefore, circumcision, Jewish dietary laws, following distinctly Jewish ethical precepts, or any other matter having to do with a Jewish lifestyle is no longer requisite for the life of faith. Jewish Christians no longer lived a Jewish spiritual lifestyle that was governed by the Mosaic Law. Martin comments that Jewish believers were allowed to live a Jewish lifestyle for cultural, national, or pragmatic reasons, “but not as required spiritually.”³⁶⁰ They could only be justified if they responded to the gospel (Rom 3:26; Gal 3:11). Once the righteousness of God has been revealed (Rom 3:22) and saving faith (Gal 3:22b) has come, Christians are no longer imprisoned under this supervision of the Law (Gal 3:23-25). They are free from all the boundary markers or other precepts of the Law having to do with a Jewish lifestyle. The ethical qualities of the Law apply to contemporary Christians, and the Spirit enables them to obey the will of God, the teachings of Jesus and the preaching of the gospel, as the Law of Christ is now written in their hearts (John 14:21, 24; Rom 2:15; Gal 5:14; 6:2).

The obedience of faith relating to growing into Christ’s likeness is also involved in our true worship and the renewal of our minds (Rom 12:1-2). In Christ, Christians no longer offer animal sacrifices as Paul urges that, in view of God’s mercy, Christians are to offer their bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God as their spiritual act of worship (Rom 12:1). Many contemporary Christians are not growing spiritually, for they only offer their bodies as mere ritual. They pray and read the Bible for their ritual obligations as Christians, but their obedience of faith based on the realities of the gospel is not involved – their daily lifestyles do not reflect

³⁶⁰ Martin, *Galatians*, 149.

Christ's attitude. Our worship to God must engage our minds as it arises from the understanding of who God is, what God has done in Christ through the gospel, and what He demands after we have been justified. We know that our journey is a process of God's transformation from the old thinking into the thinking of Christ. Paul affirms that God wants to reprogramme our old thinking if we choose to obey the teachings of Christ and the preaching of the gospel so that we are able to worship Him with praises because of the renewal of our minds by the Spirit. For Paul, God's transformation starts with our minds as, "when we change the way we think, we change the way we live"³⁶¹ – our Godly behaviour (Gal 5:22) is the product of God's transformation of the renewing of our minds by the Spirit internally. We are to co-operate with the Spirit in order to feed into our minds the knowledge that will reprogramme our thinking (Rom 12:2) in line with Christ's attitude (Phil 2:5) as we are no longer under the Law (Gal 3:25).

Christians must obey God's commands in order to grow in Christ's likeness. As Christians increase their faith in Christ, the Spirit continues to empower them to obey the Law and grow into Christ's likeness. Their behaviour must be governed by the Spirit and God's commands. In His discipline, God corrects, guides, and teaches Christians to do what is right before Him. In the Psalms of Solomon, God disciplines those who disobey and go their own way through sufferings in order to rescue them from destruction if they repent immediately (9:7). God uses chastisement to cleanse the righteous of their unintentional sins (3:7; 13:10) and sins of ignorance (13:7). God knows the secrets of their hearts (14:8), but they are free to choose to do what is right or wrong (9:5). Therefore, God gives them the Law so that they live righteously. Those who sin intentionally live in agony, distress, and hopelessness (4:14; 15a). Similarly, for Paul, Christians will not enter the kingdom of God at the Day of Judgment if they continue

³⁶¹ As suggested by Moo, *Romans*, 398.

disobeying and doing the acts of the sinful nature (Gal 5:16-19) in the ‘staying in’ stage of soteriology. Christians who love and trust in Christ can always rejoice in the midst of suffering as part of God’s discipline with the full assurance that their hardships are producing in them patience, character, and hope (Rom 5:3-4). Paul says that God’s discipline is to help him grow in his dependence on Christ (2 Cor 1:9; 12:7). Having been justified, Christians are to increase their love for Christ and trust in Him in order to walk by the Spirit, obey His commands, and imitate Christ’s attitude each day. Obeying God’s commands is letting Him do His will in, for, and through us so that Christ’s attitude or character becomes real in them. In Christ, we now are instruments of obedience and righteousness, so we must grow into Christ’s likeness as we are serving Him:

“In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that [He] who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus”

(Phil 1:4-6)

Appendix One

The Psalms of Solomon

They rise out of sleep and give praise, when their hearts are strong, they

sing out to the name of the Lord

(6:4)

The text of the Psalms of Solomon is edited by

Robert B. Wright, *The Psalms of Solomon: A Critical Edition of the Greek Text* (New York: T & T Clark International, 2007), 54-207.

The Psalms of Solomon

Chapter 1. The Psalms of Solomon

1. I cried to the Lord when I was overwhelmed, to God, when sinners attacked.
2. Suddenly I heard cries of the battle right in front of me. “He will bear me because I am righteous.”
3. I reminded myself that I was indeed righteous; hadn’t I prospered and given birth to many children?
4. Their influence spread over the whole earth, and their reputation extended to the far reaches of the earth.
5. They soared as high as the stars; they never expected they would ever fall.
6. Their influence spread over They soared as high as the stars; they never expected they would ever fall.
7. Their wealth made them too proud, and they did not acknowledge God.
8. Their sins were in secret; I knew nothing about them.
9. Their crimes were worse than the Gentiles before them; they repeatedly profaned the Lord’s Sanctuary.

Chapter 2. A Psalm of Solomon: About Jerusalem

1. When the sinner contemptuously used his battering-ram to smash down the fortified walls, you did not interfere.
2. Gentiles who worship other gods went up to your altar; they brazenly trampled around with their sandals on.
3. For their part, the people of Jerusalem desecrated the Lord’s sanctuary. Their crimes profaned the offerings to God.
4. Because of all this he said: “Get these things far away from me! They are repugnant!
5. His beautiful and glorious sanctuary was despised before God, it was completely dishonoured.
6. The sons and daughters (Jerusalem) were held prisoner in terrible conditions: a seal on their necks, a Gentile mark.
7. He dealt with them according to their sins; he abandoned them to the hands of their oppressors.
8. For he turned away and showed them no mercy – young and old and their children – all alike, because they all sinned alike, for they would not listen.
9. The heavens were appalled, and the earth loathed them. Because no one had ever acted as they.
10. The world will know all your judgments; they are just, O God.
11. The Gentiles maligned the men of Jerusalem, because of the prostitutes among her. Everyone who passed by went in to them in broad daylight.
12. Even the Gentiles ridiculed such crimes, compared to how they themselves acted. They made a public display of their evil deeds.
13. And you have judged the women of Jerusalem polluted, for they defiled themselves with sexual promiscuity.
14. Thinking about these things makes me sick to my stomach.

15. I will defend your justice, O God, with integrity, because your judgments are just, O God.
16. Because you have repaid their sins according to their deeds and according to their exceedingly wicked sins.
17. You uncovered their sins that your judgment might be evident; you wiped out their memory from the earth.
18. God is an impartial judge, and is not impressed by appearances.
19. The Gentiles humiliated Jerusalem when she was trampled down; he dragged her beauty from her once magnificent throne
20. She was wrapped in sackcloth instead of beautiful clothes; a rope was around her head instead of a wreath.
21. And I saw all this and pleaded in the Lord's presence: I said: "Make it stop, Lord! By bringing in the Gentiles you have laid your hand heavily upon Jerusalem.
22. And they have humiliated them, and their frenzied passion did not let up, nor did their angry violence. And they will be destroyed unless you, O Lord, angrily denounce them,
23. Because they did not act out of zeal, but out of an obsession, venting their thieving anger against us.
24. Don't delay, O God, in retaliating against their leaders by disgracing the dragon's arrogance.
25. I did not have long to wait until God showed me this arrogance. Stabbed on the sand of Egypt, he was more despised than anything in the whole world.
26. His body was violently carried over the waves and there was no one to bury him, because God contemptuously despised him.
27. He did not realize that he was merely mortal, and he didn't think about the future.
28. He said: "I will be lord of the whole world," he failed to recognize that it is God who is great, who is mighty in his great strength.
29. He himself is king over the heavens, he who judges kings and rules.
30. He is the one who raises me up into glory, and who brings down the arrogant to sleep, to their dishonourable destruction forever, because they did not know him.
31. And now, you rulers of the earth see the judgment of the Lord, because he is a great and righteous king, judging what is under heaven.
32. Praise God, those of you who know enough to fear the Lord, because his mercy will be with those who have good reason to fear him,
33. For he will separate the righteous from the sinner, because he will always retaliate against sinners according to their deeds.
34. He will have mercy on the righteous, keeping them from the humiliation of sinners, and he will retaliate against the sinner for what he has done to the righteous.
35. The Lord is kind to those who persistently appeal to him; he treats his devout in accordance with his mercy, to keep them constantly before him in strength.
36. Praised be the Lord forever in the eyes of his servants.

Chapter 3. A Psalm of Solomon about the Righteous

1. Why am I sleeping, and not praising the Lord? Strum a new song to God who is worthy to be praised.
2. Keep on strumming and keep awake for he is awake. For a good psalm to God comes from a good heart.

3. The Lord is on the mind of the righteous through everything by recognizing and proving that the Lord's judgments are right.
4. The righteous will not be ashamed to be taught by the Lord, their desire is to be always in the Lord's presence.
5. The righteous stumble and still prove the Lord is right; if they fall, they expect God to help them; they look to the source of their salvation.
6. The confidence of the righteous comes from God their saviour. Repeated sin is not found in the home of the righteous.
7. The righteous thoroughly examine their homes to remove their unintentional offences.
8. They atone for sins of ignorance by fasting and humility and the Lord will cleanse every devout person and their household.
9. The sinners stumble and curse their life, the day of their birth and their mother's labor pain.
10. They sin repeatedly in their life: They fall, and are seriously hurt, they will never get up again.
11. The destruction of sinners is forever, and they will not be remembered when God looks after the righteous.
12. This is the fate of sinners forever; but those who fear the Lord shall rise up to eternal life, and their life shall be in the Lord's light and it shall never end.

Chapter 4. A Dialogue of Solomon with Hypocrites

1. Why are you sitting in the Holy Sanhedrin, you foul person? When your heart is far from the Lord, provoking the God of Israel with your rotten behaviour?
2. Verbose and flamboyant more than anyone, harshly condemning defendants in court.
3. His hand is among the first to be lifted against the defendant, as if he were motivated by a virtuous zeal, but he himself is guilty of a whole hoard of sins with no self-control.
4. His eyes are on every woman promiscuously, he lies when making contracts under oath.
5. He sins secretly and at night, as if no one saw him. With his eyes he propositions every woman for illicit affairs. However, he is quick to enter cheerfully into every house, as if he were innocent.
6. May God snatch away these hypocrites from among his devout; may he live his life in sickness and in poverty.
7. May God unmask the deeds of those hypocrites and expose their deeds with ridicules and derision.
8. And may the devout prove their God's judgment to be right, by the removal of the sinners from the presence of the righteous, even that hypocrite who deceitfully quotes the Torah.
9. And then their eyes are on another person's peaceful home like a serpent. Their arguments destroy with distorted words.
10. He speaks deceitfully, so that he may carry out his evil desires. He does not give up until he succeeds in scattering them as orphans.
11. He devastates a home with his twisted desire. He deceives with words, for he thinks: "There is no one who sees or judges."
12. He gorges himself with these kinds of crooked acts at one place, and then his eyes focus on another house, to destroy it with seductive words.

13. With all this his appetite, like Death, is not satisfied.
14. Lord, may his destiny be disgrace. May he go out groaning and come back cursing.
15. Lord, may his life be lived in agony, poverty, and distress; may he have trouble sleeping and difficulty getting up.
16. May he be unable to sleep at night; may he fail disgracefully in everything he does.
17. May he return to this house empty-handed, may his house lack everything with which he would satisfy himself,
18. May his old age be spent alone and childless, until he passes away.
19. Let wild animals tear apart the flesh of the hypocrites, and may the bones of the criminals disgracefully bleach out in the sun.
20. May crows peck out the eyes of these hypocrites because they disgracefully seized so many people's homes, and greedily evicted them.
21. In all these things they have not remembered God, nor have they feared God in all these things; but they have angered and aggravated God.
22. May he banish them from the earth, because they betrayed these poor souls with their lies.
23. Happy are those who are innocent and fear the Lord. The Lord will rescue them from deceitful and sinful people, and will rescue us from every legal trap.
24. May God banish those arrogantly doing every injustice, because our God is a powerful Lord and a great and just judge.
25. Lord, may your mercy be upon all those who love you.

Chapter 5. A Psalm of Solomon

1. O Lord God, I will joyfully praise your name among those who know your equitable judgments.
2. Because you are kind and merciful, the refuge of the destitute. When I cry out in anguish to you, do not ignore me.
3. For if no one can rob a strong man, who can take anything from all you have made, unless you give it away?
4. Because a person and their destiny are on the scales before you; no one can add anything that goes against your decisions, O God.
5. When we are persecuted, we call on you for help and you will not turn away from our prayer, because you are our God.
6. Don't be too demanding of us, lest we sin in desperation.
7. And even if you don't turn us back, we will not keep away, but we will come to you.
8. For if I am hungry, I will cry out to you, O God, and you will give me something.
9. You feed the young birds and the fish, when you send rain to the wilderness that the grass may grow;
10. So to provide pasture in the wilderness; for every living thing; when they are hungry, will turn to you.
11. You feed kings and rulers and their subjects, O God, and who is the hope of the poor and the needy, if not you, O Lord?
12. And you will listen, because who is kind and generous but you, cheering the humble, by reaching out in mercy?

13. Human kindness comes meagrely, and delayed and if it is repeated without grumbling this is remarkable.
14. But your gift is abundantly kind and generous, and those who hope in you will have everything they need.
15. O Lord, your kind mercy extends over all the earth.
16. Happy is the one whom God remembers with only what is necessary. If people are excessively rich, they easily sin.
17. Moderate wealth with righteousness is enough, for this comes with the Lord's blessing: to be satisfied with righteousness.
18. Those who fear the Lord are content with their possessions. May your kindness be upon Israel as you rule.
19. Praised be the glory of the Lord because he himself is our king.

Chapter 6. With Hope of Solomon

1. Happy is the person whose heart is ready to call upon the name of the Lord for help. When they remember the name of the Lord they will be saved.
2. Their ways are directed by the Lord, and the works of their hands are guarded by the Lord their God.
3. Their spirit will not be troubled by nightmares; they will not be frightened when crossing rivers or rough seas.
4. They rise out of sleep and give praise to the name of the Lord, when their hearts are strong, they sing out to the name of their God.
5. They seek the Lord for everyone in their household, and the Lord hears the prayers of all who fear God.
6. The Lord fulfils every request from all those who hope in him. Praised be the Lord who shows mercy to those who truly love him.

Chapter 7. Of Solomon: Restoring.

1. Don't leave us, O God so those who hate us without cause might not attack us,
2. because you have pushed them away, O God. May their feet not trample your holy inheritance.
3. Discipline us as you wish, but don't turn us over to the Gentiles;
4. for if you send Death away, it will be because you, yourself, have told him what to do about us.
5. Because you are kind, and you would not be angry enough to destroy us.
6. While your name lives among us, we will receive mercy; and the Gentiles will not defeat us.
7. Because you are our protector, we will call to you and you will hear us.
8. Because you yourself will have compassion on the family of Israel forever and will not reject them.
9. But we are forever under your yoke and the whip of your discipline.

10. For your help will direct us at the right time, to show mercy to the house of Jacob for the day when you promised it to them.

Chapter 8. Of Solomon: On to Victory

1. I heard sounds of suffering and battle, the blast of a trumpet sounding slaughter and destruction:
2. the sound of a huge mob, like a violent, raging wind, like a roaring fire storm sweeping down through the wilderness.
3. Then I said to myself: “Is this God’s judgment?”
4. I heard these sounds in Jerusalem, the holy city;
5. my stomach was sick at what I heard; my knees buckled, my heart was terrified, my bones shook like reeds.
6. I said: “Are not these people righteous?”
7. I considered God’s judgments since the creation of Heaven and Earth, I believed God to be right in his judgments, those from the beginning of time.
8. God exposed their sins to the light of the sun; all the earth recognized the righteous judgments of God.
9. But their offenses were in secret hiding-places, provoking him to anger: son with mother, and father with daughter – they were incestuously involved.
10. They all were committing adultery with their neighbour’s wives; they made agreements with each other about these things, under oath.
11. They plundered God’s sanctuary as if there were no redeeming heir.
12. They trampled the Lord’s altar coming straight from every kind of impurity, and with menstrual blood on them they defiled the burnt-offerings as if they were ordinary meat.
13. There was no sin that was not worse than the Gentiles.
14. On account of this God confused their minds, he made them drink as if with undiluted wine.
15. He brought the one from the end of the earth, the mighty warrior; he declared war against Jerusalem, and against her land.
16. The leaders of the country met him with joy. They said to him, “Welcome, “We have expected you. Come, all of you, enter in peace.”
17. They graded the rough roads for his coming; they opened the gates to Jerusalem, they lined her walls.
18. He entered peacefully, like a father into his sons’ house; he secured a foothold.
19. He pulled down her battlements and the wall of Jerusalem, for God led him in unscathed in their confusion.
20. He killed off their leaders and all the councilmen; he poured out the blood of the people of Jerusalem as if it were so much dirty water.
21. He led off their sons and daughters, those born defiled. They acted according to their defiled ways,
22. just like their ancestors, they defiled Jerusalem and the things consecrated to the name of God.
23. God has been shown to be justified in his decisions among the world’s Gentiles, and God’s devout are like innocent lambs among them.

24. The Lord is worthy to be praised, who judges the whole earth in his righteousness.
25. See now, O God, you have shown us your righteousness in your judgments. Our own eyes have seen your judgments, O God.
26. We have vindicated your name, forever honoured because you are a God of justice, judging Israel with discipline.
27. O God, turn your mercy towards us. and be compassionate to us;
28. gather the scattered of Israel with mercy and kindness, because your faithfulness is with us.
29. For we have stiffened our necks, but you are our teacher.
30. Don't neglect us, our God, lest the Gentiles swallow us whole as if there were no delivered.
31. You have been our God from the beginning and our hope is in you, O Lord.
32. We distance ourselves, because your judgments are kind towards us.
33. Be pleased with us and with our children forever, O Lord, our Saviour; we won't be upset ever again, but you are our teacher.
34. The Lord is worthy to be praised for his judgments by the voice of his devout people. May Israel be blessed by the Lord forever.

Chapter 9. Of Solomon: As Proof

1. When Israel was led away into exile in a foreign country, when they abandoned the Lord who had redeemed them, they were expelled from the inheritance that the Lord gave to them.
2. Israel was scattered in every Gentile nation, as God had spoken: that you may be proven right in this matter, O God: because you are a righteous judge over all the peoples of the earth.
3. For none that do evil can be hidden from your knowledge, Lord, you know of the righteous deeds of your devout; where will a person hide from your knowledge, O God?
4. We are free to choose and do what we will to do right or wrong in how we live our lives, in you justice you watch mortals closely.
5. Those who do what is right save up life for themselves with the Lord, and those doing what is wrong cause their own lives to be destroyed; for the Lord's righteous judgments come down on man and household.
6. To whom will you be kind, O God, except to those who appeal to the Lord? He will cleanse from sin the person who both confesses and publically acknowledges it. For all of these things we are ashamed, and we are embarrassed.
7. And whose sins will he forgive, except those who have sinned? You will bless the righteous, and not accuse them for their sin. Because your kindness is upon those that sin, when they repent.
8. Now, then, you are God and we are the people whom you have loved: Look, and be compassionate, O God of Israel, because we are yours, and don't take away your mercy from us, lest they set upon us.
9. Because you have chosen the descendants of Abraham over all other nations; you put your name upon us, O Lord, and that will not cease forever.

10. You made a covenant with our ancestors about us, and we will place our hope in you, when we turn ourselves towards you.
11. May the Lord's mercy be upon the house of Israel forever and ever.

Chapter 10. With Hymns. Of Solomon

1. Happy is the person whom the Lord remembers with punishment, and who has been restrained from going the wrong way with a whip, to be cleansed from sin so that it will not increase.
2. Those who prepare their backs for the whips will be cleansed, for the Lord is kind to those who endure discipline.
3. For he will set straight the ways of the righteous, and will not lead them astray by discipline. And the mercy of the Lord is upon those who truly love him.
4. The Lord will remember his servants with compassion, for the testimony is the Torah of the eternal covenant, this testimony of the Lord is found in the lives of persons under his watchful care.
5. Our Lord is just and holy in his judgments forever. And Israel will joyfully praise the Lord's name.
6. And the devout will celebrate in the assembly of the people, and God will be merciful to the poor to the joy of Israel.
7. because God always is kind and merciful, and the synagogues of Israel will glorify the Lord's name.
8. May the Lord's salvation cover the house of Israel to bring unending joy.

Chapter 11. Of Solomon: In Expectation

1. Sound in Zion the trumpet that summons the holy ones. Announce in Jerusalem the voice of one proclaiming good news: "God has been merciful to Israel by his watchful care over them."
2. Stand on a high place, O Jerusalem, and see your children from east to west finally brought together by the Lord.
3. From the north they come with the joy of their God; from far distant islands God brings them together.
4. He flattened high mountains into level ground for them, The hills fled at their coming.
5. the woods shaded them as they passed by; God made every fragrant tree to spring up for them:
6. that Israel might pass by in the watchful care of the glory of their God.
7. O Jerusalem, put on your glorious clothes, prepare your holy robes, because God has pronounced blessings on Israel forever and ever.
8. May the Lord do to Israel and Jerusalem the things that he has spoken; may the Lord lift up Israel by his glorious name.
9. May the mercy of the Lord be upon Israel forever more.

Chapter 12. Of Solomon: about the Discourse of those who Manipulate the Law

1. O Lord, save my life from the wicked man who twists the law, from twisting and slandering language that speaks lies and deceits.
2. The discourse of this wicked man takes many twists and turn. It is like a fire burning among a people, scorching their beauty.
3. His visit fills homes with lying speech; as a flickering flame has its own attraction to people, he sets homes at war with his slanderous language.
4. May God keep the lips of these criminals from distressing the innocent. May the bones of the slanderers be scattered far from those who fear the Lord. May the slanderous tongues be destroyed in flaming fire far from the devout.
5. May the Lord protect the quiet person who hates injustice, and may the Lord guide the person who lives quietly at home.
6. May the salvation of the Lord be upon Israel his child forever and ever. May the sinners be destroyed once and for all from before the Lord. May the Lord's devout inherit the Lord's promises.

Chapter 13. A Psalm of Solomon: Encouragement to the Righteous.

1. The right hand of the Lord covered me, the right hand of the Lord spared us:
2. the arm of the Lord saved us from a piercing sword, from famine and death at the hands of sinners.
3. Wild animals attacked them viciously, They ripped at their flesh with the teeth and with their jaws they crushed their bones:
4. And from all of these the Lord delivered us.
5. The ungodly were terrified by their mistakes, lest they be swept along with the sinners:
6. because the destruction of the sinner is terrible, but none of all these things will touch the righteous.
7. Because the discipline of the righteous for things done in ignorance is not the same as the destruction of the sinner.
8. The righteous are disciplined quietly, so that the sinner might not rejoice over the righteous.
9. Because God will admonish the righteous as beloved son, and his discipline is as for a first-born.
10. Because the Lord will spare his devout, and he will wipe away their mistakes with discipline.
11. For the life of the righteous goes on forever, but sinners will be taken away to destruction, and no memory of them will ever be found again.
12. May the Lord's mercy be upon the devout, and may his mercy be to those who fear him.

Chapter 14. A Hymn of Solomon

1. The Lord is faithful to those who truly love him, to those awaiting his discipline,
2. to those living in the righteousness of his commands, in the Torah that he commanded us for our lives.

3. The Lord's devout will live by it forever; his devout are the Lord's Paradise, the trees of life.
4. Their plant is rooted forever, they will not be pulled up as long as heaven shall last,
5. because God has reserved Israel for himself.
6. But it is not so with sinners and criminals, who love the time enjoying their sins.
7. Their enjoyment is brief and quickly decays, and they do not remember God.
8. Because he always knows how people live, and he knows the secrets of the heart before they happen.
9. Therefore there is reserved for them the world of the dead, darkness and destruction, and they will not be remembered on the day of mercy for the righteous,
10. but a happy life is reserved for the Lord's devout.

Chapter 15. A Psalm of Solomon with Song

1. When I was oppressed I called upon the Lord's name, for I expected help from Jacob's God, and I was saved: because you, O God, are the help and refuge of the poor.
2. For why does anyone have strength, O God, except to honestly confess you? And why is a person gifted, except to worship your name?
3. A new psalm sung from a happy heart; the fruit of the lips matched with a well-tuned tongue; the first harvest of the lips from a holy and righteous heart.
4. Those doing these things will never be distressed by evil; the flame of fire and anger against the unrighteous will not touch them,
5. whenever it goes out from the Lord's presence to destroy every confidence of sinners.
6. Because God's mark of salvation is on the righteous,
7. Famine, sword, and death shall be far from the righteous, for they will flee from the devout and pestilence from the living.
8. But they will pursue sinners and overtake them, and those acting lawlessly will not escape the Lord's judgment.
9. they will be seized as if by mercenaries, for the sign of destruction is right between their eyes.
10. For destruction and darkness is reserved for sinners and their lawlessness will pursue them even down into hell.
11. What is reserved for them will not be found in their children. For sin will turn the homes of sinners into deserts.
12. On the day of the Lord's judgment sinners will perish forever, when God examines the earth at his judgment.
13. but then, those fearing the Lord will find mercy, and they will live on in their God's mercy, but sinners will perish for all time.

Chapter 16. A Hymn of Solomon: Protection for the Devout

1. When I was drowsy, I slowly drifted down, away from the Lord, as I fell asleep, far from God.

2. For a moment my life was drained, I was almost dead. I was standing with the sinner, very near to the gates of hell.
3. So I would have been carried away from the Lord God of Israel, If the Lord had not taken hold of me with his eternal care.
4. In his vigilance he jabbed me as with a horse spur; my saviour and protector rescued me again.
5. I will confess you, O God, because you took hold of me and saved me and I wasn't included with sinners for destruction.
6. Don't take your mercy from me, O God, nor your memory from my mind until death.
7. Restrain me, O God, from intentional sin, and from every wicked woman who traps the foolish.
8. And do not let me be deceived either by a lawless woman's beauty, nor by anyone under the control of useless sin.
9. Guide my actions before you. Guard carefully my steps through remembering you.
10. May I speak the truth, Put fierce rage and anger far from me.
11. Put grumbling and discouragement in trouble far from me, if ever I sin while under your discipline intended to bring me back.
12. Support me with approval and happiness; when you strengthen me. Whatever you will give is good enough for me.
13. Because if ever you fail to give us strength who can endure discipline when they are poor?
14. When people are tested because of their mortality, you are examining them in their flesh, and in the burden of poverty.
15. The righteous survive all these things, by the Lord's mercy.

Chapter 17. A Psalm of Solomon with Song: For the king

1. O Lord, you yourself are our king forever and ever: because in you, O God, we will take pride.
2. How long is a person's allotted lifetime on earth? As long as he lives, he can hope.
3. But we hope in God our saviour: because the strength and mercy of our God will last forever, in judgment over the Gentiles.
4. It was you, O Lord, who chose David as king over Israel, and you promised him that his descendants would continue forever, that you would not abandon his royal house.
5. But sinners revolted against us because of our sins: they attacked us and drove us out. Those to whom you promised nothing, they violently stole from us,
6. In their pride they flamboyantly set up their own royal house. Their arrogant substitution desolated David's throne. And they did not glorify your honourable name.
7. But you, O God, will throw them down, and root up their descendants from the earth, for there will rise up against them a man alien to our race.
8. You will repay them according to their sins O God; It will happen to them according to their deeds.
9. God showed them no mercy. He hunted down their descendants, and did not let even one of them escape.
10. The Lord is faithful in all his judgments that he does on earth.

11. The lawless one devastated our land, so that it was uninhabitable; he eliminated young and old and their children together.
12. In his magnificent wrath God sent them away to the west, and he did not spare even the officials of the country from ridicule.
13. As the enemy was a foreigner, and his heart was foreign to our God, so he acted arrogantly.
14. So in Jerusalem he engaged in all the practices that Gentiles do for their gods in their great cities.
15. And the people of the covenant living among the many nations adopted these things. No one among them in Jerusalem acted with mercy or truth.
16. Those who loved the synagogues of the devout escaped from them as sparrows fly from their nest.
17. They wandered in the wilderness to save their lives from evil. The life of even one who was saved from them was precious in the eyes of the exiles.
18. They were scattered over the whole earth by the lawless ones. The heavens withheld rain from falling on the earth.
19. Springs were stopped, From the perennial sources far underground to those in the high mountains. For there was no one among them who practiced righteousness or justice:
20. From their leader to the commonest of the people they committed every kind of sin: the king broke the law, the judges disobeyed, they people sinned.
21. Look, O Lord, and raise up for them their king, a son of David, to rule over your servant Israel in the time that you know, O God.
22. Undergird him with the strength to destroy the unrighteous rulers, to purge Jerusalem from the Gentiles who trample her down to destruction;
23. In wisdom and in righteousness to drive out the sinners from the inheritance, to smash the arrogance of sinners like a potter's jar;
24. to demolish all their resources with an iron rod; to destroy the lawbreaking Gentiles with the word of his mouth;
25. to scatter the Gentiles from his presence at his threat; to condemn sinners by their own consciences.
26. He will gather a holy people whom he will lead in righteousness, and he will judge the tribes of the people who have been made holy by the Lord his God.
27. He will not tolerate unrighteousness to dwell among them again, and no person who knows evil will live with them. For he will know them, because they are all children of their God.
28. He will distribute them upon the land according to their tribes. The stranger and the foreigner will no longer live with them.
29. He will judge peoples and nations in the wisdom of his justice.
30. He will have Gentile peoples serving him under his yoke, and he will glorify the Lord publically in the whole world. He will pronounce Jerusalem clean, consecrating it as it was in the beginning.
31. He will have nations come from the ends of the earth to see his glory, giving back her scattered children and to see the glory of the Lord with which God has glorified her.
32. He will be a righteous king over them, taught by God, there will be no unrighteousness among them during his reign, because everyone will be holy, and their king will be the Lord Messiah.

33. For he will not depend on cavalry and archers; Nor will he need to finance a war; he will not place his hope on making war.
34. The Lord himself is the king, the hope of the one who hopes in God. He will be merciful to all the Gentiles that fearfully stand before him.
35. He will strike the earth with the word of his mouth forever; He will bless the Lord's people with wisdom and happiness.
36. And he himself will be free from sin, in order to rule such a great people. He will expose officials and drive out sinners by the strength of his word.
37. And he will not weaken during his reign, relying upon his God, because God will make him powerful by a holy spirit; and wise in intelligent counsel, with strength and righteousness.
38. And the blessing of the Lord will be with him in strength, and it will not weaken;
39. His hope will be in the Lord. Then who can be stronger than he?
40. He will be mighty in his actions and strong in the fear of God, faithfully and righteously shepherding the Lord's sheep, he will not let any of them stumble in their pasture.
41. He will lead them all impartially, and there will be no arrogance among them, that any of them should be oppressed.
42. This is the magnificence of the king of Israel that God acknowledged, to raise him over the House of Israel to discipline it.
43. His words will be purer than the finest gold. In the assemblies he will judge the tribes of a sanctified people. His words will be as the words of the holy ones, among sanctified peoples.
44. Happy are the people born in those days who will see the good fortune of Israel that God will cause in the gathering of the tribes.
45. May God hasten his mercy to Israel; May he shield us from the contamination of defiled enemies;
46. The Lord himself is our king forevermore.

Chapter 18. A Psalm of Solomon. About the Lord's Messiah

1. O Lord, your mercy is upon the works of your hands forever, your kindness to Israel with a lavish gift.
2. Your eyes are watching over them and none of them will be lacking. Your ears listen to the hopeful prayer of the poor.
3. Your compassionate judgments are over the whole world, and your love is for the descendants of Abraham, and Israelite.
4. Your discipline for us is as for a firstborn son, an only child, to dissuade the perceptive person from unintentional sins.
5. May God cleanse Israel for the blessed day of mercy, the appointed day for the appearance of his Messiah.
6. Happy are those living in those days, to see the good things of the Lord, that he will do for the coming generation;
7. That will be under the rod of discipline of the Lord's Messiah, in the fear of his God, in the wisdom of the spirit, and in righteousness and strength.

8. to direct people to righteous actions, in the fear of God, to confirm them all in the presence of the Lord.
9. This will be a good generation living in the fear of God, in the days of mercy.

Pause

10. Our God is great and glorious living in the highest heavens, who arranged the sun and moon into orbits to mark the times of the hours from day to day. And they have not deviated from their course, that he appointed for them.
11. Their course each day is in the fear of God, from the day God created them and until forever.
12. And they have not wandered from the day he created them, from ancient generations. They have not veered off their course except when God directed them by the command of his servants.

Appendix Two

A Comparison of The Psalms of Solomon and Paul's Letters

The 'Getting in' Stages of the Psalms of Solomon and Paul's Soteriologies

The Psalms of Solomon	Paul's Letters
<p>The 'getting in' stage of Pss. Sol.'s soteriology is monergistic because the election or entering into the covenant is entirely God's initiative. The first stage of Pss. Sol.'s soteriology does not need any human response to God.</p> <p>God chooses the same call for everyone: He elects the Israelites as His special people (9:9).</p> <p>The Israelites are elected by God's free grace, apart from observing the Torah (9:3). The Israelites are the people whom God has loved (9:8).</p> <p>Righteousness according to the Law automatically excludes Gentiles as the Torah is given by God only for the Israelites.</p> <p>Election is the beginning of Israel as a chosen nation. It is the beginning of obeying the Torah once the Israelites/individuals are in the covenant.</p>	<p>Paul's soteriology starts with God's own initiative, revealing Himself to humankind, but the 'getting in' stage of his soteriology is synergistic because God demands a human response by faith when He justifies (Rom 3:22).</p> <p>God chooses only those who respond to the gospel of Christ: they are justified through faith in Christ Jesus (Rom 3:25).</p> <p>Christians are elected or justified by God's free grace (Rom 3:24), apart from observing the Torah (Rom 3:28). God demonstrates His love to mankind: "While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom 5:8).</p> <p>Righteousness from God comes apart from the Law (Rom 3:21) for everyone (Rom 1:16-17), so justification includes both Jews and Gentiles.</p> <p>Justification is the beginning of Christians' transformation in Christ (2 Cor 5:17); Christians are a new creation, the old has gone, the new has come. It is the beginning of having Christ's mind, obeying His will, and producing the fruit of the Spirit.</p>

<p>There is no room for purely human righteousness, apart from the action of God in election.</p> <p>This ‘getting in’ stage does not involve any human ‘free will’ as God favours the Israelites (9:9-10).</p> <p>The Torah is God’s gift (9:3).</p> <p>The righteous are the trees of life as they will have life (a fellowship with Yahweh) through their obedience to the Torah (9:5).</p> <p>The Psalms of Solomon’s emphasis is on the adjective because the Israelites who enter into the covenant will receive the status of the righteous if they live in the righteousness of God’s commands – they do not have the status of the righteous before entering into the covenant (9:5).</p> <p>The concept ‘righteous’ refers to the Israelites as semantic subjects and god as semantic object: the Psalmist declares God’s righteousness (8:7; 2:15; 3:5).</p>	<p>There is no room for purely human righteousness, apart from the action of God in Christ. There is no one who is righteous (Rom 3:10).</p> <p>The ‘getting in’ stage of Paul’s soteriology involves human ‘free will’ as the sinners must make a decision whether or not they want to respond to what God has done in Christ (Rom 10:9-13). They are justified by faith (Rom 3:22).</p> <p>The Holy Spirit is God’s gift (Gal 3:1-5); the Spirit provides the power to enable Christians to obey God’s commands, the will of God that is good, pleasing, and perfect (Rom 12:2).</p> <p>The Spirit gives life to Christians through the death of Christ – justification is the establishment of an intimate relationship with God (Rom 8).</p> <p>Paul shifts the emphasis of the adjective <i>δίκαιος</i> to the verb because only those who are justified will enter into the new covenant (Rom 3:20). For Paul, human righteousness is given to the justified as the status of being in an intimate relationship with God through Christ (Rom 6:13): Christians are instruments of righteousness.</p> <p>The concept ‘righteous’ refers to God as the semantic subject and Christians as the semantic objects: God is the One who justifies Christians – they have obtained justification through faith in Christ (Rom 5:9). People declare that God is righteous (Rom 3:4) as Paul quotes Ps 51:4 – “Against you, you alone, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment.”</p>
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<p>The ‘getting in’ stage is the elect’s turning point in obeying the Torah and enduring God’s discipline (10:2) in order to be righteous in the covenant.</p> <p>The concept of <i>δικαιοσύνη θεού</i> means God’s moral character and God’s saving action. Being righteous and just is the character of God as is His desire to save and vindicate His people. The Psalmist says, “Those who do what is right save up life for themselves with the Lord...for the Lord’s righteous judgments come down on man and household (9:5).</p> <p>The Israelites as the elect must live by the Torah (9:3-5) and God’s mercy (9:8).</p>	<p>The ‘getting in’ stage is the transfer movement in which Christians are transferred from death to life (Rom 6:4), from the lordship of sin to the lordship of Christ (Rom 6:7; 2 Cor 6:9-10)</p> <p>The concept of <i>δικαιοσύνη θεού</i> is no longer described as an attribute of God, but the justifying activity of God. Paul’s theology of <i>δικαιοσύνη θεού</i> is construed in an apocalyptic/eschatological perspective because God reveals Himself to humankind in order to put sinners in a right relationship with Himself (Rom 3:21).</p> <p>Christians as the elect are justified and in Christ (Rom 8:1; 2 Cor 5:17; Gal 2:20). They must live by the Spirit (Rom 8:19).</p>
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The ‘Staying in’ Stages of the Psalms of Solomon and Paul’s Soteriologies

The Psalms of Solomon	Paul’s Letters
<p>The ‘staying in’ stage is expressed as synergistic because the Israelites have co-operation with God in terms of living in righteousness. They will get help from God as long as they live by the Torah (9:5), and God’s mercy is always upon those who fear Him (2:33). If they want to remain in the covenant, they must be passionate about choosing what is right (9:5) as God, in his justice, will watch them closely (9:4).</p>	<p>The ‘staying in’ stage of Pauline soteriology is expressed as synergistic as Christians must co-of their righteousness (Phil 2:12). Christians are empowered by the Spirit in regard to obeying Christ’s commands (Gal 6: 15-16). The emphasis of the ‘staying in’ stage of Pauline soteriology is on the elect’s behavioural righteousness on the basis of the obedience of faith (Rom 1:5-6). The ungodly see Christ in Christians!</p>

<p>The emphasis of the ‘staying in’ stage of Pss. Sol.’s soteriology is on the elect’s behavioural righteousness on the basis of their obedience to the Torah (9:5).</p> <p>The Psalms of Solomon’s obedience requires men’s free will: they must choose to do what is right and wrong (9:4). Obedience is the Israelites’ response to God’s commands in the Torah.</p> <p>The Israelites call themselves ‘righteous’ as they perform circumcision as part of God’s covenantal demands (1:3).</p> <p>The Israelites are the sons of circumcision (17:15)</p> <p>The righteous live by the Torah (9:4) and God’s mercy (15:12-13) in regard to maintaining their ‘righteous’ status in the covenant. The righteous must be characterised by the Law as a guide or role of disciplinarian.</p> <p>God’s discipline: God will show mercy, love, and keep them under His yoke and whip of His discipline forever (7:8-9). God’s discipline is a powerful</p>	<p>Pauline obedience requires free will in relation to ‘faith’ as the basis for their obedience (Rom 1:5; 16:26). Obedience comes from the genuine saving faith, responding to God’s word in Christ Jesus.</p> <p>Physical circumcision is dismissed (Gal 5:6) as, in Christ, Christians are ‘circumcised’ spiritually, in the putting off of the sinful nature. Christians who worship by the Spirit of God are the circumcision (Phil 3:3).</p> <p>Christians are the sons of God as they are led by the Spirit (Rom 8:14). The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children (Rom 8:16).</p> <p>Christians live by obedience of faith (Rom 1:5; 16:26) and by the Spirit (Rom 8:9). The Law may be good by itself since the Law is good, spiritual, and righteous (Rom 7:12), but it causes negative effects like condemnation. Therefore, righteousness no longer comes from the Law as the faith has come, so the new Law of righteousness is now clothed in Christ’s love and the Spirit. It is written in their hearts (2 Cor 3:3-6): “the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.” Circumcision, Jewish dietary laws, and following distinctly Jewish ethical precepts are no longer requisite for the life of faith.</p> <p>God’s discipline: God will show mercy, love, and protect Christians from the destruction (1 Cor 11:32). God’s discipline is a powerful weapon in terms</p>
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weapon in terms of maintaining their healthy relationship with God in the covenant and preventing them from destruction (16:11).

God's discipline as trials

The righteous endure God's discipline in order to cleanse them of their sins. They honour the Lord; they are not ashamed of being disciplined and corrected by God, for their desire is to be in His presence (3:4).

The Psalmist realises that God is his only strength (16:12); he is not included with sinners for destruction because God disciplines him (16:4). The Psalmist was seduced by the lawless woman's beauty as someone under the control of useless sin (16:8), but he did not give in to it. Trials of the righteous who sin but confess immediately: God educates them by sending invading the Gentiles like Pompey, Antipater, and others (2:22). Their wrong deeds (13:7) are caused by the unintentional sins (3:7; 13:11) and ignorance of sins (13:7; 18:4). God will wipe away their mistakes with discipline (13:10).

Repentance:

Being righteous and maintaining the status in the covenant of God implies repentance. In Pss. Sol., repentance is the essential aspect of remaining in a right relationship with God in the covenant.

of growing in their dependence on Christ and preventing Christians from the destruction.

God's discipline as trials

Paul sees his own sufferings as "the sufferings of Christ" (2 Cor 1:5; Phil 3:10; Col 1:24) with reference to growing in his dependence on Christ. For example, the messenger of Satan is allowed by God to torment him, to keep him from being too elated (2 Cor 12:7).

God brings discipline, not condemnation (1 Cor 11:32) although illnesses and other divine punishments warn Christians of their sins (1 Cor 11:29). According to Paul, godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation until the last judgment (2 Cor 9:7ff). Because God is faithful, God never stops disciplining those who are arrogant (1 Cor 4:14-21) in order to rescue them from destruction.

Repentance:

In the 'getting in' stage, Paul does not discuss repentance because, according to Sanders, repentance will not result in a change of lordships. In the 'staying in' stage, Paul mentions repentance once dealing with Christian sins (2 Cor 12:21), but what he responds to post-conversion transgressions is that Christians should live according to the Spirit (1 Cor 6:9-11). For Paul, walking in the Spirit is the significant aspect of being in an intimate relationship with Christ.

<p>Atonement: The sacrifices and offerings in the temple were performed in order to be cleansed of their sins (1:8; 2:3; 8:11, 22).</p>	<p>Atonement: Christ gave His life for human sins (Rom 3:22-26; Gal 5:1) so that Christians do not have to sacrifice offerings in a temple anymore. Paul attests that Christians are the temple of the living God (2 Cor 6:16; 1 Cor 3:16; 1 Cor 6:19) because they are in Christ. Paul urges that we present our bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is our spiritual worship (Rom 12:1).</p>
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Judgment: Rewards and Punishment

The Psalms of Solomon	Paul's Letters
<p>Categories of People in Judgment</p> <p>The Righteous: They love gathering in the assembly of the people (10:6). What they do in the synagogues is that they worship and glorify the Lord's name together (10:7). They love praising the Lord joyfully in the assembly of the holy ones (10:6). They live by the Torah and by God's mercy (9:5).</p> <p>The repentant righteous: They sin unintentionally. God would always cleanse the righteous of their sins when they immediately confessed (9:6-7) because they remembered to call upon and hope in Him, when in need.</p>	<p>Categories of People in Judgment</p> <p>The Righteous: Christians who have been called according to His purpose (Rom 8:28); who live by the obedience of faith (Rom 1:5; 16:26); who are obedient to God's commands as they are led by the Spirit (Rom 8); who live good, upright, and virtuous lives (Rom 5:7; Phil 4:8). They do not stop giving thanks (Rom 4:20; Phil 4:4-7) and rejoicing in every circumstance.</p> <p>The repentant righteous: Paul does not discuss that Christians who sin must repent and be forgiven. His response is that they must live according to the Spirit (1 Cor 6:9-11), not according to the mind of the flesh (Rom 8:5). Their sorrow (feeling sorry for what they have done or an emotional response to their wrongdoing) will lead them to repentance. The mind of the flesh produces desires and passion (Gal 5:16-17, 19-20) which are at work against the Spirit. Paul warns</p>

<p>Sinners: The righteous who sin but do not want to repent. They know the Law, but they do not care about obeying it. They practise their exceedingly wicked sins, idolatry, and violence (17:15).</p> <p>Gentiles are foreigners whose hearts are foreign to our God, so they act arrogantly (17:13; 2:1); they worshiped other gods (2:2). Jewish sinners who choose to stay outside with Gentiles: the Sadducean priests, Jerusalem daughters and sons, and the sons of the covenant (17:15).</p> <p>Judgment is according to works:</p> <p>For example, for God is just, he rewards the righteous and punishes sinners. He rewards the righteous as they do divine deeds (14). On the other hand, He punishes sinners forever (15:13b), and then they live in the world of the dead, darkness, and destruction (14:9) because they do sinful deeds. The reward is for those who obey the commands of God, and the punishment is for disobedience.</p> <p>Judgment: It relates to the eschatological expectation with reference to anticipating the coming of the Messiah (17), eternal life (9:5), resurrection, and the destruction (15:12-13).</p>	<p>Christians not to indulge in the sinful nature (flesh), rather, serve one another in love” (Gal 5:13).</p> <p>Sinners: Christians who choose to sin intentionally and do not want to repent. Those who have tasted the love of Christ but chosen to commit horrible sins. Christians who know Christ’s commands but do not care about doing them. Christians who choose to live by the sinful nature (Gal 5:19-21) will not inherit the kingdom of God. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God (Rom 8:8) as it is hostile to God (Rom 8:7) and death (Rom 8:6).</p> <p>Sinners are not keen on pursuing righteousness (Rom 9:10). Sinners are enemies of the cross of Christ (Phil 3:18). The Judaizers were considered unbelievers (Phil 3:2), and the unbelievers were sinners as they rejected Christ (Rom 3:3; 4:20; 11:20, 23).</p> <p>Judgment is according to works:</p> <p>For example, God rewards Christians who live in line with the Spirit, within the will of God, not the flesh (1 Cor 3:19). They are instruments of righteousness (Rom 6:18), so they are able to live in a way that is pleasing to God (Gal 5:2-6:10). Christians live by the obedience of faith in Christ (Rom 1:5-6, 17) in order to produce the good fruit of righteousness (Gal 5:22)</p> <p>Judgment: It is the future hope as part of Paul’s apocalyptic categories besides justification and sanctification. Christians who have been justified and are being obedient in the sanctification will receive the final gift of eternal life (salvation) at the Day of Judgment.</p>
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<p>God's judgment is rooted in His righteousness: God's justice is synonymous with His righteousness. God's judgment includes rewards and punishment.</p> <p>Rewards:</p> <p>The Psalms of Solomon demonstrate a combination of Hebrew background and the eschatological expectation: 'eternal life' (3:12) as God's salvation with unending joy (10:8).</p> <p>God will reward the Israelites as they are completely dependent on their obedient deeds (14).</p> <p>God rewards those who obey and fear Him (2:33; 13:12; 14:3; 15:13b-15; 18:7).</p> <p>The righteous will always flourish and grow in their relationship with the Lord like the trees that will never wither – living by the Lord forever as they are “the Lord's Paradise, the trees of life” (14:3).</p> <p>Punishment:</p> <p>Punishment or destruction exclusively refers to sinners who worship other gods.</p> <p>Some Jews like the apostates, the inhabitants</p>	<p>Christ will judge all people according to their works obedient to the Spirit (Rom 2:5): He will give eternal life to Christians who have been obedient in faith in the process of sanctification, but the sinners will face wrath and fury (Rom 2:6-10) as they have been disobedient to their calling in Christ.</p> <p>Rewards:</p> <p>Jewish eschatological expectation has arrived into the present eschatological age. This means that 'eternal life' reward is now given to those who believe in Christ through faith (Rom 3:21).</p> <p>God will reward Christians at the last judgment as long as they live in line with the Spirit, within the will of God, not the flesh.</p> <p>God rewards Christians who eagerly produce the fruit of righteousness (Gal 5:22).</p> <p>The rewards of Christ's faithful servants are imperishable (1 Cor 9:25) like a crown of rejoicing (1 Thess 2:19; Phil 4:1).</p> <p>Punishment:</p> <p>This punishment or destruction (Phil 3:19a) is for those, Jews or Gentiles, who live as “enemies of the cross of Christ” (Phil 3:18) – they reject Christ.</p> <p>Christians who choose to live in the flesh (1</p>
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<p>of Jerusalem, the Sadducean priests, and the hypocrites will suffer as a result of their intentional sins (3:8; 9:7). They will be punished forever as they always do what is wrong (9:5) – they choose to live like Gentiles.</p> <p>God shows sinners no mercy (2:8; 2:7-9, 17; 17:10-12) and protection as they are repugnant because they do not repent for their horrible sins (2:4).</p> <p>They will live in agony, depression, distress, hopeless (4:14, 15a). They are anxious about their lives all the time (4:15b), and they will never be content (4:17).</p>	<p>Cor 5:1-13) are also punished if they do not repent. They do not want to live by obedience of faith – they choose not to obey the commands of God.</p> <p>God shows His wrath to Christians who have tasted salvation but chosen to commit intentional horrible sins (2 Cor 10:5-6).</p> <p>They will not inherit the kingdom of God if they choose to produce the acts of the sinful nature such as impurity, idolatry, hatred, jealousy (Gal 5:19-21). They are punished as they only set their mind on earthly things (Phil 3:19).</p>
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