

Chapter 6

LAW AND LOVE IN ROMANS 13.8-10

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In Romans 13.8-10, Paul places the Law, the Torah, and the commandment to love one's neighbour in a relationship:

(13.8) Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another: for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law. (9) For the commandment, 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You shall not kill,' 'You shall not steal,' 'You shall not covet,' and any other commandment, is summed up in this word, in the command, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' (10) Love does no wrong to the neighbor; therefore the fulfillment of the law is love.¹

It is notoriously controversial whether a reduction, and that means a superseding, of the Torah in the commandment to love is intended here, or whether the Torah continues to exist as a fundamental authority legitimizing the commandment to love. A look at the research verifies this state of affairs.

1. The Spectrum of Interpretation

A few prominent research positions can suffice to indicate the different views. In an article from 2001, Michael Wolter starts out from broader considerations concerning the ethical identity of the early Christian congregations and diagnoses in general an inclusive ethos over against the Hellenistic world.² He explains the relationship of the commandment to love, as stated in Lev. 19.18, and the Torah accordingly: 'An keiner einzigen Stelle wird jedoch

1. Translation: J. D. G. Dunn, *Romans 9–16* (WBC, 38B; Dallas: Word Books, 1988), pp. 774–5.

2. M. Wolter, 'Die ethische Identität christlicher Gemeinden in neutestamentlicher Zeit', in *Marburger Jahrbuch Theologie XIII. Woran orientiert sich Ethik?* (MThSt. 67; Marburg: Elwert, 2001), pp. 61–90 (74).

die Liebesforderung aus dem Liebesgebot der Tora abgeleitet. Eher ist das Umgekehrte der Fall, insofern es zuallererst das Liebesgebot von Lev 19,18 ist, das eine Integration der Tora auch in die christliche Ethik ermöglicht. In diesem Zusammenhang lässt mindestens Gal 5,14 ... erkennen (vgl. aber auch Röm 13,8-10), dass das Liebesgebot die Tora adelt und nicht umgekehrt die Tora die Liebesforderung autorisiert' (p. 82f.). The question for me is whether one may sever the justification of a Christian ethos from the Torah in such a clear way – particularly in this early period and in the face of Paul's Jewish identity. It seems to me that the explicit reference to the Torah in Rom. 13.8-10 is inadequately represented here.

Oda Wischmeyer, who used tradition criticism to examine 'Das Gebot der Nächstenliebe bei Paulus' in 1986, goes one step further.³ That Paul only uses the Law as an ethical foundation represents a 'radikalen Bruch mit dem Judentum jeder Prägung'; the commandment to love thus has a 'gesetzesüberwindende Funktion' (p. 184). Paul places love 'gegen das Gesetz' which is 'faktisch aufgehoben' through the prominent emergence of love (p. 187). Wischmeyer can express the following as a 'Leitwort': 'durch das Gesetz das Gesetz aufheben' (p. 182, italics in the original). In his new book on Paul from 2003, Udo Schnelle follows suit here to a great extent: Paul reduces the Torah through his total orientation towards the love commandment; the other commandments and prohibitions lose 'vollends ihre Bedeutung' which compels one to conclude: 'Der Apostel verlässt durch seine Argumentation jüdisches Denken.'⁴ With respect to the love command, Schnelle can talk about a 'Neudefinition' and a 'Transformation' of the Torah (p. 396f., cf. pp. 595–8) which enables Paul 'den Kern des jüdischen und des griechisch-römischen Gesetzesdenkens gleichermaßen aufzunehmen und sein Gesetzesverständnis für alle Gruppen der Gemeinde annehmbar zu machen' (p. 397). The question remains for me whether Paul really wants to leave the Jewish world of meaning with this goal in mind.⁵

Thomas Söding⁶ sees the Christian hermeneutics of Paul as an extensive reform of the understanding of Law (probably in the sense of a reduction

3. O. Wischmeyer, 'Das Gebot der Nächstenliebe bei Paulus. Eine traditions-geschichtliche Untersuchung', *BZNF* 30 (1986): 161–87.

4. U. Schnelle, *Paulus. Leben und Denken* (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2003), p. 396.

5. K. Haacker also sees the correspondence to a secular concept of Law: *Der Brief des Paulus an die Römer* (ThHK, 6: 2nd edn: Leipzig: Evangelische Verlags-Anstalt, 2002), p. 273.

6. T. Söding, *Das Liebesgebot bei Paulus. Die Mahnung zur Agape im Rahmen der paulinischen Ethik* (NTA, 26: Münster: Aschendorff, 1995), pp. 255–8.

to ethics): thus ‘im Liebesgebot [wird] der tiefste Sinn und die eigentliche Verpflichtung des Gesetzes zum Ausdruck gebracht’ (p. 257). Stated more precisely, this means: ‘Das Gesetz ist für die Glaubenden mit der Fülle seiner Einzelweisungen, die den Sünder dingfest machen sollen, abgetan, dafür aber – als “Gesetz des Christus” (Gal 6,2) – im Liebesgebot “erfüllt” (Gal 5,14; Röm 13,8ff.)’ (p. 284). Heikki Räisänen⁷ already saw the focus on love as something which contrasts the Law: the ‘reference to the law is used simply as an argument to emphasize the significance of love’ (p. 64); the law has been devalued as a ‘supporting argument for something else’ (p. 65). At the same time, ‘Paul seems simply to ignore the ritual part of the Torah as a non-entity’; this is a matter of ‘a radical *reduction* of the law to the love command’ (p. 27; italics in the original).

In a completely new article from 2003, Philip Esler seeks to reinforce the contrast between Torah and the love commandment on the basis of a social-identity theory: ‘The love characteristic of the in-group is contrasted with the law characterizing the Judean out-group. This [Rom. 13.8-10] is a passage forged in the flames of intergroup group differentiation, not out of any irenic attitude on Paul’s part toward the Mosaic law.’⁸ Only distinguishing between a (Christian) in-group and a Jewish out-group falls, of course, way too short with respect to social history (see n. 8 below).

In her study from 1996 on the Torah and Pauline ethics, Karin Finsterbusch interprets the text entirely differently than those mentioned up to now: Paul exhorts the Gentile Christians to love their neighbour ‘weil dies ein Gebot der Thora und nicht weil es ethisch nützlich und geboten ist’.⁹ For the community, the Torah is ‘die Basis, von der her Handeln bestimmt wird’ (p. 107); but this is only valid when the Torah is restricted to its ‘gesellschaftlich-ordnende Funktion’ (p. 101f.) and thus to the conduct of Christians in the state (p. 103). Paul sees ‘die Thora als Gesetz, das die Gemeinde zusätzlich zu den Gesetzen des Staates bindet’ (p. 101). Here we can discern the connectedness of the

7. H. Räisänen, *Paul and the Law* (WUNT, 29; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1983).

8. P. F. Esler, ‘Social Identity, the Virtues, and the Good Life: A New Approach to Romans 12:1–15:13’, *BTB* 33 (2003): 51–63 (60). E. Lohse, *Der Brief an die Römer* (KEK, 4; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003), p. 360, also places ‘the letter of the law’ against ‘love’ which brings the law ‘zu seiner eigentlichen Bestimmung’ and exposes ‘den ursprünglichen Willen Gottes’ (cf. p. 362). A latent devaluation of the Law can be heard here.

9. K. Finsterbusch, *Die Thora als Lebensweisung für Heidenchristen. Studien zur Bedeutung der Thora für die paulinische Ethik* (StUNT, 20; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996), p. 97.

Pauline statement to its situation; we will still have to ask whether the situation is correctly grasped.

A few commentators try to do justice to the ambivalence of the Pauline statement and to the positive significance of the Torah. Ulrich Wilckens understands the love commandment as a hermeneutical criterion for the Torah as a whole which thus gives a 'verbindliche Weisung zum Leben in Gerechtigkeit' for Christians as well.¹⁰ A loss of function of the cultic and ritual precepts of the Torah is an indirect result (p. 70) since, in view of the Christ event as gauge of the Torah, 'große Teile der Tora – nämlich vor allem die gesamte Kulttora – ihre Geltung faktisch verloren [haben]' (p. 71).¹¹ But how does this 'selection' fit into the Judaism at the time of Paul, and how does the above-mentioned hermeneutics function socially and provide meaning?

Lastly, in his book *The Theology of Paul* from 1998, James Dunn also detects an opening up of the ethnic boundaries of Judaism. He describes the commandment to love as a higher authority for understanding the Torah, and this requires a substantially new interpretation: the 'love command fulfills the whole law because it fulfills the spirit of the law and, in the given situation of loving the neighbour, indicates what things really matter and what can be treated as nonessentials'.¹² The passage embodies 'the richness of the law as a guide for ethical conduct, but also indicates how the law is to be interpreted through love of neighbour' (p. 675); if they oppose this interpretation, 'the requirements could and should be dispensed with' (p. 656). For Paul, the love command means 'an opening out of Judaism itself, to lose its ethnic distinctiveness'.¹³

The research situation necessitates that we first consider the understanding of the Torah at the time of Paul and our own understanding of the Torah before we can view the text in a social-historical and ultimately theologically differentiated way.

10. U. Wilckens, *Der Brief an die Römer. Vol. 3* (EKKNT, VI/3; Zürich: Benziger Verlag / Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1982), p. 71.

11. Similarly M. Theobald, *Römerbrief. Vol. 2* (SKK. 6/2; Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1993), pp. 102–3, 106. Subsequently also. M. Stowasser, 'Christus, das Ende welchen Gesetzes? Eine Problemanzeige', *PzB* 5 (1996): 1–18 (6–9).

12. J. D. G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Cambridge and Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), p. 657.

13. Dunn, *Romans 9–16*, p. 781.

2. Early Jewish Torah Hermeneutics

I will begin with an example. The community rule found in the caves of Qumran stipulated an oath for admission to the community:

Whoever enters the council of the Community
 (8) enters the covenant of God in the presence of all who freely volunteer.
 He shall swear with a binding oath
 to revert to the Law of Moses, according to all that he commanded,
 with whole (9) heart and whole soul,
 in compliance with all that has been revealed of it to the sons of Zadok,
 the priests who keep the covenant and interpret his will ... (10) ...
 He should swear by the covenant to be segregated from all the men of injustice
 who walk (11) along the path of wickedness. For they are not included in his
 covenant since they have neither sought nor examined his decrees in order to
 know the hidden matters (נִסְתָּרוֹת) ... (1QS 5.7-11; cf. CD 15.5-17)¹⁴

In the Jewish tradition the covenant idea constitutes the overarching system of meaning within which the Torah is to be understood. Therefore the Torah is the controlling principle of life, namely in the interpretation typical of the community as that interpretation is disclosed by its priestly-Zadokite heads. Although those wishing to join are already Jews, they must learn this interpretation – this takes a whole year (CD 15.15) – since its contents are ‘hidden matters’ for outsiders (נִסְתָּרוֹת, 1QS 5.11). What is ‘hidden’ to others are the Qumran community’s specific insights into the Torah. As a result, however, the interpretation of the Torah entails the function of separating those who belong, the ‘observers of the Torah’ (1QpHab 8.1; 12.4-5), from the ‘wicked’ (1QS 5.11) remaining outside the interpretation who ‘have scorned the Torah of God’ (1QpHab 1.11). Hermann Lichtenberger gets to the heart of the matter: ‘An der Tora scheiden sich Gerechte und Frevler, solche, die der Gemeinschaft angehören und solche, die ihr die Gefolgschaft versagen.’¹⁵

Ethical consequences are of course unavoidable. Thus it says in the rule of the community: ‘To love everything which He [God] has chosen and to hate everything which He has rejected ... To love all the sons of light ... and to hate

14. Translation: F. García Martínez and E. J. C. Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls. Study Edition. Vol. 1* (Leiden et al.: Brill, 1997), p. 81. For a Qumran-specific interpretation of the Torah, cf. also IQH 12.10-11 (and 13.11-12; 14.10-11).

15. H. Lichtenberger, ‘Das Tora-Verständnis im Judentum zur Zeit des Paulus. Eine Skizze’, in J. D. G. Dunn (ed.), *Paul and the Mosaic Law* (WUNT, 89; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1996), pp. 7-23 (13).

all the sons of darkness' (1QS 1.3-4, 9-10). The will of God itself is claimed in a religiously sanctioning way for the group-specific interpretation (cf. 1QS 5.9). In terms of content, the following can be said – with Lichtenberger – about the Torah interpretation of the Qumran community: it advocates 'in manchen Einzelfragen, etwa in Dingen der Reinheit, der Sabbatheiligung oder der Ehegesetze, eine gegenüber der pharisäisch-rabbinischen Halacha strengere Auslegung'.¹⁶

In this context the reconstructed document 4QMMT is particularly interesting.¹⁷ It belongs to the pre-history of the Qumran community and owes its origin and tradition¹⁸ to the founding circle's dispute with the priestly aristocracy of Jerusalem concerning legal questions of a distinctively ritual nature which are also discussed in the Pentateuch. In this dispute fundamental details of the understanding of the Torah come to light, which then became formative for the Qumran group. It is, however, striking that the Pentateuch is not quoted here; instead, the citations are clearly from non-biblical legal collections – as they are also found in the Temple Scroll 11Q19 – and to wit, they are quoted with the preamble 'it is written' (e.g., 4Q394 fr. 8, 3.9). The decisive significance of such non-biblical legal clauses for sanctioned ritual practice vis-à-vis the Pentateuch stands out. This means that in Qumran

16. Lichtenberger, 'Tora-Verständnis', p. 15.

17. Miqṣat Ma'aseh ha-Tōrah = 4Q394–9; a reconstruction of three passages, A, B, C, from the fragments, executed by E. Qimron in *DJD* X 43–63. For understanding the מַעְשֵׂי הַתּוֹרָה as 'works of the Torah' (Greek ἔργα νόμου), cf. J. D. G. Dunn, '4QMMT and Galatians', *NTS* 43 (1997): 147–53 (150); F. García Martínez, '4QMMT in a Qumran Context', in J. Kampen and M. J. Bernstein (eds), *Reading 4QMMT: New Perspectives on Qumran Law and History* (SBL Symposium Series, 2; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1996), pp. 15–27 (23–6); J. Kampen, '4QMMT and New Testament Studies', in *ibid.*, pp. 129–44 (138–43).

18. From the point of view of social history, the document probably stands at the beginning of an inner-Jewish group-building process around the middle of the second century BCE (likely addressed to the Hasmonaean prince and high priest Jonathan) and characterizes the (radical) position of the Qumran community for the following period. Concerning this document now (with literature), cf. P. Foster, *Community, Law and Mission in Matthew's Gospel* (WUNT, II/177; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), pp. 80–93. With respect to the situation at the time of origin, cf. the contributions in *Reading 4QMMT* (ed. J. Kampen and M. J. Bernstein, see above). The strictness in questions concerning the temple cult and ritual purity became formative for the Torah practice of the Qumran community; cf. L. H. Schiffman, 'The Place of 4QMMT in the Corpus of Qumran Manuscripts', in J. Kampen and M. J. Bernstein (eds), *Reading 4QMMT*, pp. 81–98, here p. 98: 'It is this legal system which underlies the law of the Dead Sea Scrolls.'

the 'Torah' should be more broadly understood than the Pentateuch and its interpretation.¹⁹ Thus even *materialiter* the Torah is not firmly fixed in early Judaism! Leeway for group-specific interpretations remains.

At the same time a tendency towards a strict Torah interpretation is clearly discernible in 4QMMT, for example, in the proscriptions of slaughtering a pregnant animal and of admitting the blind and the deaf and dumb to the Temple, as well as in the determination of when ritual purity is effected.²⁰ If the letter's addressee orients himself to these 'Torah practices', then this action can 'be reckoned to you as justice when you do what is upright and good before Him [God], for your good' (4Q398 fr. 14, 2.3, 7).²¹ Interpersonal behaviour, admittedly, takes second place to the priority of the ritualized; the relevance of this behaviour is confined to the group's private domain. A tendency towards demarcation is being developed.

To summarize, the Qumran community has a specific hermeneutics of the Torah. This is instructive for today's observer since it shows the possibilities for interpreting the Torah and the breadth of the understanding of the Torah in Judaism before the rabbinical specifications in the wake of the crushing defeat in the Jewish-Roman war. The Qumran community played the role of an outsider, of course, but it undoubtedly belonged to Judaism; the depiction of the Jewish 'schools' in Josephus (*Bellum Judaicum* 2.119) demonstrates the range of traditions in early Judaism. The Pharisees, for instance, developed a different hermeneutics of the Torah. If it is fairly likely that the syntagma, 'the teachers of the glib', in 4QpNah 1.2, refers to Pharisees,²² then their particular interpretation of the Torah is rejected by Qumran as making things easy.

19. Cf. J. Maier, *Die Qumran-Essener. Die Texte vom Toten Meer. Vol. 2* (UTB, 1863; Munich and Basel: Reinhardt, 1995), p. 361. Also P. Foster, *Community*, p. 90. Besides the books of Moses, the Prophets and David, there is mentioned a fourth collection in 4Q398 fr. 14, 1.2-3 + 4Q397 fr. 14-21, 10-11 from which only the allusion to '(every single) generation' is preserved – possibly a group-specific Torah expansion! Josephus, *Bellum Judaicum* 2.142, knows about the Essenes possessing secret books; the Essenes exert a great effort to care for the writings of the ancients (2.136).

20. Concerning this point, see H. Lichtenberger, 'Tora-Verständnis', p. 15.

21. Translation: F. García Martínez and E. J. C. Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls. Study Edition. Vol. 2* (Leiden et al.: Brill, 1998), p. 803.

22. Concerning this point, see G. Theißen and A. Merz, *Der historische Jesus. Ein Lehrbuch* (3rd edn; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2001), p. 134; M. Ebner, *Jesus von Nazaret in seiner Zeit. Sozialgeschichtliche Zugänge* (2nd edn; SBS, 196; Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk, 2004), p. 73. Cf. 4QpNah 2.2, 4; 3.3, 6-7; 1QH 10.15, 32; 4Q163 fr. 23, 2.10; CD 1.18-20. The identification gains in plausibility through similarly directed remarks in Josephus. *Antiquitates Judaicae* 13.376, 380-381, 410.

Josephus confirms this picture for, according to *Ant.* 13.297, the Pharisees add laws from the tradition of the fathers to the written laws of Moses.

The situational hermeneutics of the Torah in the Judaism of the Diaspora is of particular significance since it stands in the same social-religious context as early Christianity. The altered living conditions far away from the land of Israel and far away from the Temple, and the daily encounters with pagan religion and culture result in corresponding modifications of the understanding of the Torah. Notwithstanding, the integral and comprehensive fulfilment of the Torah remains a self-evident requirement. As Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr has explicated, 'verbindet sich die Aufforderung zu umfassendem, ganzheitlichem Toragehorsam mit einer spezifischen Auswahl von einzelnen Torageboten, die rezipiert und aktualisiert werden'.²³ New formulations of Torah commands are oriented towards the tendency, 'in der Tora vorgegebene Zusammenhänge zum Tempelkult, zu Opfer- und Reinigungsvorgängen oder zur Heiligkeit des Landes Israel zu übergehen, aufzulösen oder ... umzuinterpretieren' (pp. 437f.). In this spirit, Josephus can understand the Torah in a general way under the philosophical-ethical keywords 'wisdom' and 'virtue' (*Contra Apionem* 2.183). The book of Tobit, which also envisages the Diaspora situation, focuses on appropriate, traditionally set Torah directives: compassion towards the needy, burial of the dead, marriage within the bounds of the in-group, brotherly love,

23. K.-W. Niebuhr, 'Tora ohne Tempel. Paulus und der Jakobusbrief im Zusammenhang frühjüdischer Torarezeption für die Diaspora', in B. Ego et al. (eds), *Gemeinde ohne Tempel* (WUNT, 118; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999), pp. 427–60 (437); concerning the analysis of the text material, *ibid.* pp. 430–46. Cf. Räsänen, *Paul*, pp. 33–41, who recognizes a 'concentration on the moral side of the Torah, but not its reduction to that side only' (p. 40) in Aristeas, Philo, Pseudo-Phocylides and the Sibyls; he emphasizes, however, that 'circumcision and ritual law were very essential' (p. 41, italics in the original). This situationally localized way of looking at things overcomes the extremes in the determination of the scope of the Torah-concept found in the research history. The one extreme has been marked by K. Berger, *Die Gesetzesauslegung Jesu. Teil I* (WMANT, 40; Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1972), *passim* (material reduction of the Torah), and the other by A. Nissen, *Gott und der Nächste im antiken Judentum. Untersuchungen zum Doppelgebot der Liebe* (WUNT, 15; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1974), esp. pp. 224–30 (Torah always thought of as a totality). Cf. now the publications of R. Weber, *Das Gesetz im hellenistischen Judentum* (ARGU, 10; Frankfurt a. M.: Lang, 2000), pp. 236–9, 319–22, and *id.*, *Das 'Gesetz' bei Philon von Alexandrien und Flavius Josephus* (ARGU, 11; Frankfurt a. M.: Lang, 2001), pp. 337–9. Weber diagnoses a moralization of the Torah in Hellenistic Judaism. This hermeneutics of the Torah seeks to enable and to justify Jewish life in the cultural realm of the Hellenistic world.

and honouring one's parents (as guarantors of the tradition!).²⁴ The testamentary exhortative passage in Tob. 4.3-19 provides a whole string of such commands. It is not accidental that the framing of the Tobit narrative stresses truth, justice and compassion as hermeneutical models of the all-embracing faithfulness to the Torah (1.3; 14.9, 11).

Thus a fundamental observation for understanding the Torah in early Judaism results, namely that every contact with the Torah occurs under hermeneutical premises specific to a situation so that there is no simple 'Torah observance' in the sense of its being recognized with one accord for all.²⁵

3. The Torah in a New Perspective

At the same time, it is important in terms of the sociology of knowledge to see how the perspective on the Torah is assessed in the research landscape of exegesis today. The work of E. P. Sanders, published at the end of the 1970s,²⁶ had a far-reaching influence. It exposes – in a significant break with the prevailing opinion – an essentially positive assessment of the Torah in early Judaism as a directive for life which permits one to live the covenant entered into by JHWH with Israel. Sanders coined the term *covenantal nomism* for this understanding of the Torah. Here he detects a fundamental common ground of Palestinian Judaism in the first century. In view of the Torah interpretation in Qumran just discussed, I would like to add that quite different Torah *interpretations* are of course possible in particular instances on this basis. The 'New Perspective' on Paul, which builds on Sanders work, is connected to the name of James Dunn.²⁷ Its advantage lies first of all in proving that the classical antithesis of Lutheran theology, 'Gospel *versus* law', is false

24. Cf. the references in Niebuhr, 'Tora', p. 439: Tob. 4.7-11, 16f.; 7.6; 9.6; 12.8-9; 14.2, 9, 11; then Tob. 4.3-4; 12.12-13; 14.12-13; then Tob. 1.9; 3.17; 4.12-13; 6.12, 16; 7.13; then Tob. 4.13; and finally Tob. 3.10; 5.1; 6.15; 11.17.

25. One could compare the Sadducees' understanding, which is focused on the Pentateuch, the allegory (among other things) of Philo of Alexandria (which incorporated Middle Platonic and Stoic influences), but also, for instance, the apocalyptic differentiation between public and secret (and thus hermeneutically fundamental) books according to 4 Esdras 14.45-47, where the possibility of divine revelation is extended beyond the Torah. Cf. additionally the overview in H. Lichtenberger, 'Tora-Verständnis', pp. 17-22.

26. E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion* (London: SCM Press / Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977).

as an interpretive paradigm: Paul stands within the scope of the Judaism of his time. This opens up the possibility of discovering a subtly differentiated assessment of the Torah in Paul's writings that is critical towards an ethnic particularism that ignores God's eschatological action on behalf of the Gentiles (as well). The New Perspective also emphasizes the situation-dependency of Pauline statements about the Torah: Paul does not provide systematic-dogmatic discussions, but reflects from the need to justify offering Gentile Christians full access to Christian communal life. This corresponds to a sociologically oriented approach of the interpreters. The polemic which sounds anti-Jewish is not directed against Judaism in general, but quite pointedly against particular ('Judaistic') opponents of the circumcision-free Gentile mission.

The concern that the New Perspective could result in a new one-sidedness in the sociological-situational approach has recently prompted criticism²⁸ which again gives priority to the *theological* perspective of inquiry. Theology and sociology, however, are closely correlated here: relativizing the identity marker 'circumcision', for example, is of course a theological decision, but it has been triggered by a sociologically tangible problem concerning living together, and in this sociological area the theological activity is operative again. But this effect can lead to serious consequences since that which can be discussed theologically can, sociologically speaking, entail dangers for the identity of the group.

Paul's statement in Rom. 13.8-10, which places *nomos* and the command to love in relationship to each other, will now be viewed within the framework of these considerations.

4. Romans 13.8-10 in the Context of Roman Society

The passage Rom. 13.8-10 is closely connected to its context.²⁹ The preceding vv. 13.1-7 attempt to attain a socio-political standpoint by considering the

27. J. D. G. Dunn, 'The New Perspective on Paul'. *BJRL* 65 (1983): 95-122; id., *Romans 1-8* (WBC, 38A; Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1988), pp. LXIII-LXXII; id., *Theology*, pp. 335-40.

28. As in B. Byrne, 'Interpreting Romans Theologically in a Post-"New Perspective" Perspective', *HTR* 94 (2001): 227-41, and id., 'The Problem of Νόμος; and the Relationship with Judaism in Romans', *CBQ* 62 (2000): 294-309; cf. also E. Lohse, *Römer*, pp. 140-5.

29. In this context it is discernible as a defined small unit. Stylistically the fourfold duplication of terms in v. 7 indicates a (relative) conclusion: on the other hand the phonetic word repetition at the beginning of v. 8 is stylistically striking; v. 10b has the

relationship to the Roman Empire.³⁰ This continues to be at work in 13.8-10 when ὀφειλάς from verse 7 is picked up with ὀφείλετε in verse 8. Therefore the social dimension is also taken into consideration in vv. 8-10.³¹ As a result, the situation of the addressees of the letter becomes apparent: the minority of the Christian household communities (*communitas*) live in the dominant Hellenistic-Roman society (*societas*). In the first place, in this situation there are experiences such as social problems and discrimination that are essentially shared with the synagogues so that this cannot be the proper place for polemics about the law; second, one does not discern the intent to structure a society (a state) as a condition for ethics, but to order the individual or the collective behaviour of a group *within* a society.

The socio-political dimension becomes apparent again in v. 10 since the attitude indicated in the wording 'do no wrong' recalls the social behaviour urged in 13.3-4 towards the state and in 12.17 and 21 towards others. In a Roman context, Cicero, for example, also considers it to be laid down by law that one person may not harm another; it is, however, the law of nature and the laws of the nations that demand this.³² But according to LetArIs 168, the *Torah* demands that you wrong no one. Paul aligns himself with ideas of his surroundings, and yet, in view of the dominant perspective of looking outwards, the negative wording, but above all love as a higher motivation imply that thus 'we' live differently (naturally morally 'better')³³ than our

character of a summarizing concluding sentence, and v. 11 takes the achieved level of knowledge (τοῦτο) forward to the eschatological perspective (vv. 11-14).

30. Concerning this point, see S. Schreiber, 'Imperium Romanum und römische Gemeinden. Dimensionen politischer Sprechweise in Röm 13', in U. Busse (ed.), *Die Relevanz der neutestamentlichen Exegese für Theologie und Kirche* (QD, 215; Freiburg et al.: Herder, 2005), pp. 131–70.

31. C. Burchard, 'Die Summe der Gebote (Röm 13,7-10), das ganze Gesetz (Gal 5,13-15) und das Christusgesetz (Gal 6,2; Röm 15,1-6; 1 Kor 9,21)', in *In Dubio Pro Deo* (Festschrift G. Theißen; machine printed, Heidelberg, 1993), pp. 28–62, here pp. 35–44, also takes this context as a basis, but continues in a too narrow fashion: one's good behaviour as a subject of the Empire (this also means loving) is grounded in one's own tradition (the *Torah*) and conforms at the same time to imperial law (esp. p. 43f.). Following in his wake, cf. K. Finsterbusch, *Thora*, pp. 100–7. K. Haacker, *Römer*, p. 271, points quite specifically to the 'Rückstand fälliger Zahlungen', so that Paul is warning against the 'Gefahren des antiken Kreditwesens für säumige Schuldner'.

32. Cicero, *De officiis* 3.5, 23, 27; in addition 1.7, 20. References from K. Haacker, *Römer*, p. 273.

33. With respect to how early Christian communities raised their profile by actually fulfilling generally accepted norms which were inadequately put into practice by society, cf. also M. Wolter, 'Identität', p. 79. Against the backdrop of the economical structure,

'surroundings'. Hidden social criticism can be heard! (Paul then makes use of this critical function of the Torah, which, after all, is fulfilled in love.)

In vv. 11-14 the socio-political statement about love and *nomos* (13.8-10) is integrated into the eschatological quality of the present in which it finds its theological empowerment.

5. The Rhetoric of Romans 13.8-10

The rhetorical structure of the text succinctly develops one thesis. In a pointed statement, Paul exposes love of neighbour as fulfilment of the Torah (v. 8); he fits it into the directives of the Torah (Decalogue selection) as a summary (v. 9) and gives it a clear profile in the diction of Hellenistic social ethics (v. 10a); in conclusion, Paul repeats and reinforces the thesis (v. 10b).

His aim in shaping the text betrays a rhetorical intent. As a summary for 12.1-13.10 and in preparation for chapters 14 and 15, the leading sentence indicates the direction for the orientation of behaviour and in this way channels the attention of his listeners.

The exhortation in v. 8a μηδενὶ μηδέν ὀφείλετε clearly harks back to a formulation common in antiquity³⁴ which propagates the ideal of freedom from debt, an ideal that can refer to financial dependencies and an underlying social code of honour. This ideal is unexpectedly surpassed here by Paul through 'loving', which represents a constant obligation. This commandment applies primarily to the everyday social contacts within the group, but it has the potential to extend beyond the boundaries of the group to all people (these overtones are conjured up by the direct object of loving in v. 8b: τὸν ἕτερον).³⁵

M. Bünker, "'Seid niemand etwas schuldig!'" (Röm 13,8). Ein Beitrag zu Theologie und Ökonomie bei Paulus', in *Gott an den Rändern. Sozialgeschichtliche Perspektiven auf die Bibel* (Festschrift W. Schottroff; Gütersloh: Kaiser, Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1996), pp. 113-29 (122-3), proposes the following interpretation: since Christians owe one another love, they do away with the social contradiction between creditors and debtors in the community and overcome 'faktisch ihre gesellschaftlich festgelegten Rollenzuweisungen im Sozialgefüge' (p. 123).

34. Cf. the parallels in U. Wilckens, *Römer III*, p. 67, n. 372, and *NW II I*, p. 206.

35. In Rom. 12.9-10 the paraenesis made inner-communal love, which continues to be operative here, the subject of discussion. The oft used object ἀλλήλους (cf. the overview in M. Wolter, 'Identität', p. 84f.) is supplemented here with ἕτερον and πλησίον: inner, but also outer, relationships of the community are to be taken into consideration. In Rom. 2.1, 21 ὁ ἕτερος means the other person in general: in 1 Cor. 4.6: 6.1; 10.24, 29; 14.17 and Phil. 2.4 it means the other within the group. Consequently,

It also admits of no diminution, but constantly remains a new demand. It thus connotes a great deal more than being free of debt, presenting a challenge to the listeners on a pragmatic level. Moreover, this challenge is accentuated theologically through the repeated thesis that love is the fulfilment of the νόμος (vv. 8 and 10). Here νόμος specifically means the Torah (not a law in the general sense used in antiquity), as becomes clear in the context of the Letter to the Romans and through the quotes in v. 9.³⁶ 'Fulfil' means to do in an appropriate way (and neither to supersede / to replace, nor to fulfil completely / perfectly).³⁷

According to the literary form, this is then not only an ethical admonition, but a theological-ethical thesis which intends to challenge in a pragmatic way.

6. Is Paul Taking Up a Saying of Jesus?

In v. 9, Paul quotes the commandment to love one's neighbour from Lev. 19.18 as the basis for his argumentation (cf. Gal. 5.14). Only³⁸ Mk 12.28-34 and parallels provide a comparable citation where Jesus responds to the question about the 'first' of all commandments with the quotes from Sch'ma Israel (Deut. 6.4-5) and the love command (Lev. 19.18; as δευτέρα). Although this synoptic combination of the summary of the Law has early-Jewish roots, no

and against W. Marxsen. 'Der ἕτερος νόμος Röm 13.8', *ThZ* 11 (1955): 230-7 and recently Finsterbusch, *Thora*, p. 101, τὸν ἕτερον is an object of ἀγαπᾶν, not an adjective for νόμον (albeit, also according to Marxsen, the 'other law' means the Torah of Moses, though in contrast to the imperial law, *ibid.*, p. 237).

36. Here νόμος undoubtedly means the Torah of Moses. Concerning Pauline usage, see J. D. G. Dunn, *Theology*, pp. 131-3. The statement of V. P. Furnish, *The Love Command in the New Testament* (London: SCM Press, 1973), p. 109, who equates the Law with the 'law of faith' (Rom. 3.27), the 'law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus' (Rom. 8.2) and the 'law of Christ' (Gal. 6.2), is at the least unclear.

37. The expression 'to fulfil the law' is idiomatic, cf. in addition to Rom. 13.8b and 10b also Gal. 5.14; 6.2 (cf. 5.3, 'to keep or observe the law'; similarly 3.10 and Rom. 10.5); also Rom. 8.4. This undoubtedly denotes the Law as a whole (not only an 'ethical' part). Cf. also Gal. 5.14. πᾶς νόμος is fulfilled in the command to love one's neighbour. Cf. J. D. G. Dunn, *Romans*, p. 777. To fulfil means 'properly perform' (not 'exhaustively complete').

38. It is true that James 2.8-11 also quotes Lev. 19.18, but it moves counter to Paul: every single command is to be kept. The pericope about the rich young man in Mk 10.17-22 quotes commandments of the Decalogue, intensifying them in the addition to give one's possessions to the poor.

citation occurs there.³⁹ It is possible that the wording of the Torah is explicitly quoted here because the transmission is due to the discussion about the range and interpretation of the Torah (one need only consider the discussion about the circumcision-free mission to the Gentiles where a nullification of the Torah was not intended on the Christian side). The Christian citation then makes it clear that Christians are undoubtedly operating on the basis of the Pentateuch and thus on the basis of the undisputed centre of the Torah, and that they are developing their own interpretation on this basis.⁴⁰

Is Paul then taking up the tradition behind Mk 12.28-34? To start with, Paul does not identify his statement as a logion of Jesus. There are also differences in detail which exist in the connection with Sch^oma (Mk 12.29-30) and the Decalogue (Rom. 13.9) respectively, and this, too, argues against a direct tradition-historical derivation.⁴¹ What the two texts have in common is the significance of Lev. 19.18 in early Christian ethics. Leviticus 19.18 was probably lying at the ready in the common ethical 'world of discourse'.⁴²

7. Love of Neighbour and the Torah in Early Judaism

In Rom. 13.9 Paul quotes individual commandments of the Decalogue from Deut. 5.17-21 LXX (cf. Exod. 20.13-17 LXX),⁴³ which function as a depiction

39. Cf. early Jewish thematic analogies to this combination in T. Dan 5.3. T. Iss 5.2; 7.6, LetAris 131; in addition Philo, *Spec. leg.* 2.63 (two main headings); later Abot 6.1, 6 (R. Meir, 130-60 CE).

40. The critical thrust of the synoptic passage is not directed against the Torah as such, but against a hermeneutics of the Torah which is centred on ritual and cult. as becomes clear in Mk 12.33. Cf. Wischmeyer, 'Gebot', p. 178.

41. Cf. Wischmeyer, 'Gebot', pp. 179-80. With greater confidence, Dunn, *Theology*, p. 655, counts Rom. 13.8-10 among the 'probable allusions to Jesus' teaching': cf. id., *Romans*, p. 779.

42. Matthew 19.19 (par. Mk 10.17-22) also adds Lev. 19.18 to the given material (thus to Sch^oma and the Decalogue commandments) which possibly points to the above-mentioned tradition as well; cf. Wischmeyer, 'Gebot', p. 180. Wolter, 'Identität', p. 81, characterizes love understood as a Hellenistic virtue in relationships among friends and families (cf. Plutarch, *Mor.* 7de: φίλους ἀγαπᾶν; Dio Chrysostomus, *Or.* 74.12: ἀλλήλοις [μᾶλλον] ὄφειλον ἀγαπᾶν) as a factor for the reception of speech about love in the New Testament. As much as this makes it possible to connect the Pauline statement to the Hellenistic environment, Paul himself refers just as clearly to Lev. 19.18. In contrast, cf. LetAris 229 and Wis. 6.17-18 where love functions as a general ethical principle.

43. Concerning the Decalogue as a meaningful part of the Torah, cf. Rom. 2.21-22 and 7.7-8; concerning its significance in early Judaism, see Berger, *Gesetzesauslegung*, pp. 38-55, 258-77; Wischmeyer, 'Gebot', pp. 162-3.

of the entire Torah, and he gives a ‘summary’⁴⁴ of the Torah with the logion of love of neighbour from Lev. 19.18. In order to be able to ask the question of where Paul positions himself within early Judaism with Rom. 13.8-10, we must compare relevant contemporaneous texts in a religious-historical way. The search for summaries of the Torah is the guide.

- Summaries of the Torah with respect to the two entities ‘God’ and ‘the human being’ in terms of worship of God and love of neighbour can be found rather frequently. They provide a concise linguistic description of the Torah:
LetAris 131: piety and righteousness
Philo, *Spec. leg.* 2.63 with the headings εὐσέβεια and ὁσιότης or φιλανθρωπία and δικαιοσύνη (cf. *Decal.* 108–10; *Virt.* 95; *Her.* 168 and 172)
T12P: T. Dan 5.1-3, T. Iss 5.1-2 and 7.6; T. Jos 11.1; T. Benj 3.1-5
Jub. 20.2-3, 7; 36.7-8
- In the T. Zeb 5.1, the exhortation to keep the commandments is explicated as mercy towards one’s neighbour. Sifra Lev. 19.18 is chronologically later where, according to R. Aqiba, love of neighbour is a ‘great comprehensive principle in the Torah’ (but among / besides others); and in Shab. 31a, R. Hillel cites the Golden Rule as the summary of the Torah, though with the goal of leading one to the study of the Torah.
- Additional summaries
Philo, *Spec. leg.* 4.84: covetous desire with regard to the second tablet of the Decalogue (as ‘root sin’ or ‘source of all evils’)
Cf. *Decal.* 153; Rom. 7.7; 4 Macc. 2.5-6
LAB 11.10-13: the Golden Rule with regard to the second part of the Decalogue
LetAris 168 says in summary that the Law commands us ‘not to injure anyone either by word or deed’, which is regulated ‘with a view to righteousness’ in order ‘to practice righteousness [always] before all men’; this also applies to the food laws (169).
1QS 8.2-4, the Torah: truth, justice / law / loving solidarity / prudent dealings among one another, faithfulness at home, expiation of guilt, truth, ranking

44. The verb ἀνακεφαλαιώ means to summarize, ‘to put something in a nutshell’. As a rhetorical term it can denote the summarizing end of a speech; cf. C. J. Classen, *Rhetorical Criticism of the New Testament* (WUNT, 128: Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), pp. 30–1.

CD 6.11b – 7.6: conduct in the covenantal community portrayed with excerpts from the Torah, among others commandments concerning maintaining separateness (l. 14) and ‘loving one’s brother as oneself’ (l. 20-21)

Cf. T. Jud 18.2-6: negatively formulated, avoidance of harlotry and avarice (in addition T. Dan 5.5-7; T. Reu 3.3-6, 8, a string of seven spirits who prevent one from understanding the Law)

- Emphasis on love of one’s neighbour / brother,⁴⁵ where a universal expansion to an ethical principle occurs in part:
 - Sir. 13.15:⁴⁶ Every living thing loves its own sort, and every man his fellow man.⁴⁷
 - Jub. 7.20 (et al.); 36.4
 - T. Reu 6.9; T. Iss 5.2; 7.6 (‘I loved the Lord, likewise also every man with all my strength.’); T. Zeb 8.4-6; T. Gad 4.2, 6-7; 6.1, 3; 7.7; T. Jos 17.2-3⁴⁸
 - 1QS 1.9-11 in the *yachad*: to love the sons of light and to hate the sons of darkness
- Allusions to Lev. 19.18?
 - Possibly Jub. 36.4: ‘let them love each other as their own souls (= as themselves)’
 - Possibly CD 6.20-21: ‘to love his brother as himself’
 - Possibly T. Jos 17.2: common motif with Lev 19.18: overlooking one another’s faults, and T. Gad 4.6-7; 6.2-3: common motif: hate

To conclude: (1) In emphasizing love of neighbour and in summarizing the Torah (in form and content), Paul situates himself in early Jewish tradition – the summaries serve to articulate the respective hermeneutical premises.

45. References in Wischmeyer, ‘Gebot’, p. 164f. Additional text material in Söding, *Liebesgebot*, pp. 56–66, and Berger, *Gesetzesauslegung*, pp. 112–34.

46. In Tob. 4.13, love of one’s brother is integrated into a series of additional principles for life.

47. Universally envisaged in LetAris 229 (along with 208) and (as love of wisdom, i.e., of the forming and keeping of the laws of wisdom which results in incorruptibility) Wis. 6.17-18; also Philo, *Spec. leg.* 2.63 (‘toward men’) and *Virt.* 116 (concerning enemies).

48. Concerning the double perspective of the commandment to love one’s neighbour in T12P, the perspective on one’s brother and on every person. cf. M. Konradt, ‘Menschen- oder Bruderliebe? Beobachtungen zum Liebesgebot in den Testamenten der Zwölf Patriarchen’, *ZNW* 88 (1997): 296–310.

(2) By directly quoting Lev. 19.18, Paul is in early Christian tradition (made possible by early Judaism). (3) Distinctively Pauline is the emphasis on love of neighbour according to Lev. 19.18 as fulfilment of the (entire) Torah.

With 13.8-10, therefore, Paul does not want to leave Judaism.⁴⁹ He develops instead a specific Torah hermeneutics with which he (pragmatically) strengthens love as a distinguishing feature of the followers of Jesus (to wit, all of them!). While doing so he seeks, on the one hand, the common ground with other Jewish interpretations of the Torah and perhaps also a conciliatory tone towards the end of the letter – with the final mentioning of the Torah in the Letter to the Romans and in view of his sharp statements in 10.4 and 5. In the context of the preceding political aspects (13.1-7), he has the *common* situation (and shared danger) for all Jews (including the Jesus-groups) in view.

On the other hand, Paul preserves the foundations of his particular interpretation of the Law which are based on the Christ event. Love as the principle of God's action was visible in the Christ event (e.g., 5.8 and 8.35), so it now becomes the principle of interpersonal behaviour. As a result, it is structurally analogous to God's action,⁵⁰ thus fulfilling God's being and will and therefore, corresponding to an inner logic, also the Torah. This view is based on the understanding of the present as *eschaton* as it is portrayed in the context of 13.11-14.

In addition, the non-Jew who believes in Jesus is capable of *this* fulfilment of the Torah! It is independent of Jewish identity markers! From the point of view of contemporary history, Paul tests the limits of what it means to be Jewish with this stance.⁵¹

49. In opposition to Wischmeyer, 'Gebot' (pp. 178, 181). Niebuhr, 'Tora', pp. 447–8, stresses the 'weitgehende sachliche Identität der materialen Forderungen' (p. 447) of the early Jewish and the Pauline Torah-paraenesis (in note 76 also explicitly for Lev. 19.18).

50. Cf. in addition 2 Cor. 5.14 and Gal. 2.20. According to Rom. 5.5, the human person participates in God's love which 'has been poured into our hearts'. John 13.34 and 15.12 explicitly formulate the correlation love of Christ–love of one another. According to Gal. 6.2, 'carrying each other's burdens' fulfils the 'law of Christ' – a further expression of the Pauline hermeneutics of the Torah.

51. Cf. differently, for example, LetAris 139, the Law as delimitation ('impregnable ramparts and walls of iron'), and 142, the rules of purity (with respect to food, drink, contact, etc.): Jub. 20.2-3, where circumcision and refraining from all impurity and fornication are added to love of neighbour (cf. CD 6.14-21, segregation and love of neighbour); and 1QS 1.9-11, which fortifies the boundary of the group: to love the sons of light, to hate the sons of darkness.

8. Group Constellations and Roman Society

At this point the connection of theology with the social-historical circumstances is to be taken into account to a greater degree. With respect to the communicative situation of the Letter to the Romans, we are dealing with a very specific constellation of groups. The Roman communities consist of (1) Jewish Christians and (2) Gentile Christians; as a group (inner relationship) they stand in very close connection (outer relationship) to (3) the totality of ancient Judaism (*prima facie* to the Roman synagogues); and they all live together (4) in the larger realm of Hellenistic-Roman society.

Paul is only writing for the first two groups here. He is not pursuing a fundamental discussion of the Torah with another Jewish Torah-authority, but creating categories for living, and that means for securing the identity of his addressees in the face of the political, cultural and social supremacy of Rome. Paul is not envisaging a general integration of the Gentiles into Judaism while disregarding the Torah, and he is certainly not pointing the way towards a separation of the church from Israel. In this respect, his remarks are completely conditioned by his time and his situation.

At the same time, Paul resorts to the theological foundation generally accepted on the Jewish side, the Torah, and promotes its practical implementation. Of course he has to say how he understands the Torah, and he does so by means of his summary in the love command. In this respect his remarks are a theological reflection with a fundamental claim to validity.

9. Conclusions with respect to Paul's Understanding of Ethics and the Torah

9.1. Ethics

Pauline ethics in the Letter to the Romans are Torah-ethics. The Torah is the authority, providing material orientation, and there is a common ground here with the rest of Judaism. Paul understands the Torah under the hermeneutical premise (as aim, not as a 'replacement') of the command to love which is taken from the Torah while simultaneously interpreting it. The emphasis is thus placed on the area of direct interpersonal behaviour.⁵²

52. This corresponds to the context of social behaviour which is the topic in Rom. 12 and 13; that is why the commandments of the Decalogue concerning God are not represented in v. 9 – essentially the first long section of the letter treats this area. It would

Love provides the foundation of ethics and points beyond (as does the entire Torah) to God himself (as source); that is, the one making love possible is God (or the Spirit, Gal. 5.13-26). On the behavioural level, *this* ethics promotes the determination of group identity – love-ethics strives to be differentiating! The *consciousness* of being set apart should result.⁵³ The Jesus-group (*communitas*) operates in society (*societas*) in this way.

9.2. The Torah

Its validity is not questioned in any way: the Torah remains the authority,⁵⁴ as a matter of course, as it were. The Torah acquires a specific hermeneutical principle: the ethical concentration in the love command. This hermeneutical principle seems (even if not explicitly) to have been obtained once again – analogous to Rom. 3.21-31 in structure – from the figure of Christ: love as the centre of the Torah points back to God's / Christ's love. In content (the love command) and form (the hermeneutical summary), a common base exists here with other Jewish schools of thought, especially with respect to the external relationship of the group which is problematical for all.

It is also undisputed that the Torah, when fulfilled in the love command, has the implicit function of delimiting the group – namely over against the Hellenistic-Roman world (not over against Judaism). That is why the Torah is important in the course of the argumentation. It retains its delimiting function over against Hellenistic-Roman society and the Hellenistic-Roman state since for Paul as well, the entire 'Gentile' world is not simply taken into the community of God, but only those who turn to God (and this is JHWH, the God

be worth considering πίστις (and analogously 8.2 νόμος τοῦ πνεύματος or Gal. 6.2 νόμος τοῦ Χριστοῦ) as a Pauline key word for a hermeneutics of the Torah in terms of one's relationship to God: cf. in Rom. 3.27 the formulation νόμος πίστεως. Gal. 5.6 establishes the connection: πίστις δι' ἀγάπης ἐνεργουμένη; cf. on the connection between faith and love, also Wilckens, *Römer III*, p. 70f. Wolter, 'Identität', p. 83. sees this combination as '*interpretatio christiana* des traditionellen Kanons der zwei Tugenden' (italics in the original).

53. In the areas πορνεία / fornication and εἰδωλολατρία / idolatry, Paul also achieves his delimitation over against Gentile conduct from a Jewish tradition: explicitly 1 Thess. 4.3-5 and 1 Cor. 5.1: cf. 1 Cor. 10.14 and, in terms of early Judaism, Wis. 14.11-12. 24-27 and Philo. *Decal.* 8. Concerning this background of Jewish ethos, cf. also Wolter, 'Identität', pp. 75-6. The Jewish will to mark off its boundaries is expressed in a significant way in LetAris 139, for example.

54. Cf. Wilckens, *Römer III*, p. 71.

of Israel!) through Christ. Paul facilitates *their* (and only their) incorporation. An opening for Gentiles who believe in Jesus as Christ is integrated into the Pauline hermeneutics of the Torah because the love commandment is also valid for them and can be fulfilled by them (and is emphasized instead of identity markers which are more ethnically and ritually fixed). This opening is made possible theologically by Paul's assessment of the present as *eschaton*.

At this juncture, however, there is the possibility of crossing borders, as is immediately clear when one considers the demarcation practised in Qumran by emphasizing the ritual purity presented in the Torah.⁵⁵ The Pauline hermeneutics of the Torah involves extensive implications; in particular, it relativizes ethnic and ritual markers and opens the eschatological relationship to God to those not born as Jews ('Gentiles'). Without a doubt, there is need for discussion here since the boundary over against the power of Hellenistic-Roman culture, which is unanimously secured by the Torah in early Judaism, is potentially broken open by Paul. If this appears to be a threat to identity, then potential for conflict arises. In the long term, this theological issue brought about a tangible sociological 'effect' in the space of history, producing two distinct groups (Jews and Christians).

In early Judaism the Torah is *theologically* one's access to God, while it grounds and secures one's identity *sociologically*. With Paul, however, Christ steps in front of the Torah in both instances: in Christ there exists eschatologically an access to God which does not oppose the Torah, but points beyond it (since in Christ the conquest of sin and death occur). This demands an eschatological reassessment of the Torah that leads to the Pauline hermeneutics of the Torah.⁵⁶

55. The martyrs in 2 Macc. 7.1-2, 9. 23 and 37 die in observance of the Law: the immediate reason here, their refusal to eat pork, stresses the ritual aspect that sets Jewish identity apart.

56. I thank Martha M. Matesich for doing this translation of my paper.