



"Meditate
upon these things;
give thyself
wholly to them;
that thy profiting
may appear unto all"

I Timothy 4:15

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BERITH TERMINOLOGY

BERITH appears 282 times in the Old Testament. It is the Hebrew word for covenant, the Greek equivalent in the Septuagint and in the New Testament being DIATHEKE. BERITH is used for covenants between God and man or man and his fellowman. When the Lord God entered into covenant with man, He either bound Himself unilaterally and unconditionally to bestow specified blessings upon man or He bound Himself conditionally, the condition being the obedience of man to the terms of the covenant. When a covenant was made between two human parties, both bound themselves to the conditions of the covenant.

A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament, based on the lexicon of William Gesenius as translated by Edward Robinson and edited by Francis Brown with the cooperation of S. R. Driver and Charles A. Briggs (Oxford), subdivides covenants between men as follows: 1) treaty, alliance, league, as the covenant Abraham made with Mamre, Eshcol, and Aner, who campaigned with him against the kings who had ravaged Sodom and carried off Lot (Gen. 14:13ff), or the treaty that Joshua made with the Gibeonites (Josh. 9:6); 2) constitution, ordinance, as the covenant David made with Abner to consolidate the kingdom after the death of Saul and the ensuing civil war in Israel (II Sam. 3:12); 3) agreement, pledge, as the covenant Jehoiada, the high priest, made with the military leaders to overthrow Queen Athaliah and crown Joash king (II Kings 11:4); 4) alliance of friendship, as the covenant that Jonathan and David made (I Sam. 18:3); and 5) alliance of marriage, as in Mal. 2:14, where the term "wife of thy covenant" occurs. A sixth could be called a reconsecration as the covenants that Joshua made with Israel (Josh. 24:25) and Josiah with Judah (II Kings 23:3) to live by the covenant that the Lord had made with them.

BERITH occurs only in the singular in the Old Testament. The Lord God made repeated and successive covenants with His chosen people; yet the Old Testament never speaks of "covenants," always only of "covenant." In

the New Testament DIATHEKE (covenant) occurs 33 times, three times in the plural. When the Apostle Paul wrote of the two sons of Abraham in an allegory, he said that they represented "two covenants; the one from Mount Sinai" and the other "Jerusalem which is above," (Gal. 4: 21-31). Paul was not speaking historically, but was using historical fact allegorically. However, in Rom. 9: 4, when speaking of the prerogatives of Israel, he included the fact that unto them had been given the "covenants." He also wrote the Ephesian Gentile Christians that before their conversion they had been "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise," (Eph. 2:12). The succession of individual and distinct covenants in the Old Testament are spoken of in the plural in the New Testament. The Lord God made one variously repeated covenant of covenants with His people throughout their history.

The first two covenants are in a class by themselves. They were made by Elohim with Noah. The first of these was the covenant of Elohim with Noah (Gen. 6:18) to save his family and two of every living thing from the deluge. The second covenant was made with Noah after the deluge, (Gen. 9:8-17). Actually, it was made with Noah and his seed, together with every living creature of the fowl, cattle, and beasts of the earth. Elohim unconditionally bound Himself never again to destroy all life by means of a flood. God's faithfulness to His first covenant is recorded in chapters 7 and 8 of Genesis. His faithfulness to His second covenant has been recorded in history to this day. That covenant is called an "everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth," (Gen. 9:16). The Hebrew adjective "everlasting" (עֹלָם) in the singular is not absolute, but relative, the length of time being determined by the radius of time involved. In this case the "OLAM" extends to the end of this present era.

The second group of covenants was made with Abraham. The LORD made His promises to Abraham in both non-covenantal and covenantal form. The first time the LORD gave Abraham the promise, He did so in the form of a simple promise: "I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great: and thou shalt be

a blessing." To that fourfold promise the LORD added the following explanation: "And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed," (Gen. 12:2-3). To this promise the LORD added the promise of the land (Gen. 12:7), which He repeated after the departure of Lot, together with the promise of innumerable descendants, (Gen. 13:15-16). It was not until later that the LORD clothed His promises in the form of a covenant, thereby condescendingly adapting Himself to the customs of the surrounding nations, (Gen. 15:18) — the covenant to give Abraham's descendants the land. Twenty-four years after He had originally given Abraham the promise, when Abraham was ninety-nine years old, the LORD confirmed the promises in covenantal form — assuring him that he would be "a father of many nations" (17:4), that his covenant would be "an everlasting covenant" (17:7), promising to give "all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession" (17:8), and binding Abraham to keep the "everlasting covenant" of circumcision (17:9-14). To strengthen Abraham's faith the LORD heaped up covenant promises, binding Himself unconditionally and Abraham conditionally. Years later after Abraham had demonstrated his fear of the LORD by sacrificing Isaac, the LORD repeated the promise of innumerable descendants, victory over his enemies, and a blessing for all nations through his seed, not in a simple promise or in the form of a covenant, but with an oath (Gen. 22:16-18). The reason for this extraordinary confirmation of the promise in the form of an oath is stated: "Because thou hast obeyed my voice," (22:18).

The brief foregoing overview reveals that the covenant was not a stereotype form of promise, but rather one of the ways by which the Lord communicated His promises to His own. Thus the promise of the land was given in non-covenantal form in 12:7 and 13:15 and was confirmed in covenantal form in 17:7-8. The simple promise was given unconditionally; the same promise in covenantal form was given with the condition of keeping the covenantal sign of circumcision. The covenant promise to give the land was described as "everlasting," as was circumcision, the "sign of the covenant" (17:7,13), which was specifically disannulled in the New Testament. The

reception of covenant blessings is always conditioned upon God-worked obedience. The LORD made that clear when He revealed what prompted Him to make the forthcoming judgment upon Sodom and Gomorrha known to Abraham: "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him," (Gen. 18:19). The LORD is faithful to His promises but never in an automatic or mechanical way. He does not permit the disobedient recipient of His promises to say to Him, "But you promised!" as do our children. Neither is the LORD guilty of racism, for He is no respecter of persons. He is and remains always the Creator-God, able to create beneficiaries of His covenant from the very stones, if need be. In the passage cited above we have the first indication of a future obedient remnant from among the descendants of Abraham which became reality in the New Testament when Paul asserted that not all "of Israel" are truly "Israel," (Rom. 9:6).

The third group of covenants was made with the descendants of Abraham, the nation of Israel, as recorded in the books of Exodus and Deuteronomy. They are connected with the covenants made to the patriarchs, for "God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob," (Ex. 2:24). By this time God had already fulfilled His promise of many descendants. It was now time to establish those descendants as a nation. This took place at Sinai. The covenant established was conditional: "Now, therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation," (Ex. 19:6). This covenant was sealed with blood (Ex. 24:6-8), but Israel broke it after but forty days through their worshipping the golden calf, as the Lord declared through Jeremiah: "which my covenant they brake," (Jer. 31:32).

The situation was tense. The LORD was determined to destroy the people with whom He had so recently made a covenant (Ex. 32:10), but the people were saved through the intercession of Moses (Ex. 32:11-14). What was to be

done now? There was no covenant in effect, in view of the disobedience of the people. At the intercession of Moses the LORD made a temporary covenant in which He pledged to "do marvels," driving out the heathen tribes and giving Israel the promised land (Ex. 34:10-11). The words of the first covenant at Sinai were reaffirmed (Ex. 34:27-28).

Forty years later when the nation was assembled on the plains of Moab, Moses made another covenant "besides the covenant which he made with them in Horeb," (Deut. 29:1). This covenant was not sealed in blood. It was an extension and reaffirmation of the covenant made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Deut. 29:13); it repeated the promise of the occupation of the land of Canaan, dependent upon the condition of obedience (Deut. 29:9,28). The future disobedience of the people is prophetically outlined by Moses in Deut. 28, the threats and promises of the LORD repeated in final form in the "Song of Moses," (Deut. 32:1-43).

The covenant was originally made with one individual, Abraham. It was then passed on to Isaac and Jacob. After a silence of 430 years the covenant was made with the nation of Israel, which Israel promptly broke. The LORD patched up the covenant, as it were, for the nation was to continue in view of the promise of salvation for all nations through the seed of Abraham. In due time the nation rejected the leadership of the LORD by demanding a king (I Sam. 8:7). Yet the LORD gave them a king: "I gave thee a king in mine anger, and took him away in my wrath," (Hosea 13:11). In view of the consistent rebellion of His people against His rule, the promises the LORD made to David of establishing his house and kingdom (II Sam. 7) stand out as the purest of grace. There is no mention of a covenant in II Sam. 7, but through the psalmist the LORD reaffirmed His promises as a solemn covenant: "I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant. Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build thy throne to all generations," (Ps. 89:3-4). The final covenant transaction in the Old Testament was the promise of the new covenant, as recorded in Jeremiah 31:31-34.

The Old Testament speaks of the "covenant of the LORD" in the singular. Paul wrote to both the Romans and Ephesians of the covenants given to Israel. Historically, the LORD did make successive covenants reflecting the historical development of the nation from the patriarchs to its founding at Sinai and the subsequent reaching of the zenith of its power during the reign of David, down to the greater glory of David's greater Son, Who established the "new covenant" foretold by Jeremiah. Both testaments see unity in plurality. The succeeding covenants, each serving its time and purpose, culminate in the new covenant sealed not with the blood of beasts but with the blood of David's greater Son, the LORD.

NOMINAL TERMS BERITH appears as a simple noun 18 times from the Lord's speaking of His covenant with Abraham (Gen. 17:4) to His speaking of His covenant with Levi (Mal. 2:5).

The symbol of the covenant was "the ark of the covenant" (אֲרוֹן הַבְּרִית), which appears 40 times. The Lord gave Moses instructions concerning the ark while he was on Mt. Sinai, as recorded in Exodus 25:10-22. The ark was a portable box, 45"x27"x27", made of shittim or acacia wood, overlaid with gold, equipped with rings on either side for poles so that it could be carried. The top was the mercy seat or atonement cover with a cherub on each end facing inward, their wings covering the mercy seat. This was to be the meeting place of the LORD of the covenant: "And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel," (Ex. 25:22).

The covenant that the LORD made with Israel through Moses on Mt. Sinai was conditional. The condition was obedience to all the words of the LORD (Ex. 19:5,8). Moses wrote all these words in the "book of the covenant" (סֵפֶר הַבְּרִית), which he read to the people when the covenant was sealed with blood (Ex. 24:7). The term reappears three times centuries later in connection with the reforms of King Josiah (II Kings 23:2,21; II Chron. 34:30).

Closely related to the "book of the covenant" are the "words of the covenant" (דְּבַר הַבְּרִית). That expression appears once to designate the "ten words" (ten commandments) written on the two tables of testimony (Ex. 34:28). The expression occurs also in connection with the reforms of Josiah when the king read in the ears of his people "all the words of the book of the covenant" (II Kings 23:2), thereafter making a covenant before the LORD "to perform the words of this covenant (v. 3). Jeremiah used the term twice when reminding them of the LORD's threat to bring upon the people "all the words of this covenant" because of their disobedience (Jer. 11:8; 34:18).

Of all the words of the covenant the "ten words" were the most important. In recalling them to the generation about to enter Canaan, as they were camped on the plains of Moab, the rebellion of their fathers at Horeb, Moses used the expression "the tables of the covenant" (טַבּוֹת הַבְּרִית) three times (Deut. 9:9,11,15).

Two of the covenants were verified by external signs (אֵימָרָה), the Noahic and Abrahamitic. The sign of the covenant that God made with Noah and all flesh was the rainbow (Gen. 9:12,13,17). The sign of the covenant made with Abraham was circumcision (Gen. 17:11). The term "sign of the covenant" is not used in connection with the Sinaitic covenant, but that covenant did have its sign: "Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; ... Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever" (Ex. 31:13,16,17). The LORD of the covenant lists pollution of the sabbath, which had been instituted as a sign between the LORD and Israel, in His indictment of His people (Ez. 20:12,13,20-21).

Thus the covenant that the LORD made with His people had its symbol, the ark, its words or terms, written on tables, and its signs, both circumcision and the sabbath.

Three times, in connection with the prophecy of the Old Testament antichrist, Antiochus Epiphanes, in Daniel

11:28 and 30, the expression "holy covenant" (בְּרִית קְדוֹשׁ) is used.

Another expression, used three times, is "the salt of the covenant" (מֶלַח). It occurs the first time in connection with the laws concerning meat offerings (Lev. 2:13): "And every oblation of thy meat offering shalt thou season with salt; neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy meat offering: with all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt." Salt seasons and preserves. The sacrifice represented the person bringing it. By adding salt to the sacrifice the person bringing it testified to the integrity of his self-surrender unto the Lord — without reservations, impurity, or hypocrisy.

The ancient Greeks and Arabs sealed a treaty or alliance by eating bread and salt together. Being a preservative, salt symbolized that the covenant was indissoluble or irrevocable, an inviolable contract. In Numbers 18:19 the provision that the priests received all the heave offerings is called "a covenant of salt." When Abijah, the son of Rehoboam, went out to battle against Jeroboam, he exhorted and encouraged his troops by reminding them that "the Lord God of Israel gave the kingdom over Israel to David for ever, even to him and to his sons by a covenant of salt," (II Chron. 13:5), that is, by an irrevocable covenant. David had referred to the covenant that the Lord had made with him as an "everlasting covenant," (II Sam. 23:5).

Related to the covenant of salt is the BERITH OLAM (בְּרִית עוֹלָם), "the everlasting covenant." There are 18 such covenants recorded in the Old Testament Scriptures. Listing them will reveal that "everlasting" is not eternal, but rather a relative adjective, determined by the time radius of the covenant matter. Here are the "everlasting covenants":

1. Gen. 9:16 - The covenant with all living creatures that there would never again be a worldwide deluge.
2. Gen. 17:7 - The covenant with Abraham to make him the father of many nations and to

- give his descendants the land of Canaan.
3. Gen. 17:13 - The covenant to establish circumcision as the sign of the covenant with Abraham.
 4. Gen. 17:19 - The establishing of the covenant with Isaac and his descendants.
 5. Ex. 31:16 - The establishing of the sabbath as the sign of the covenant made with Israel at Sinai.
 6. Lev. 24:8 - The establishing of the rite of placing twelve loaves of bread, the showbread or bread of the face, before the Lord each sabbath.
 7. Num. 18:19 - The establishing of the ordinance that the heave offerings belong to the priests.
 8. Num. 25:13 - The establishing of the family of Phinehas in the priesthood as a reward for his heroic action at Baal-peor.
 9. II Sam. 23:5 - The covenant made with David.
 10. I Chron. 16:17 - The covenant made with Abraham and confirmed unto Jacob and Israel.
 11. Ps. 105:10
 12. Is. 24:5 - The basic covenant of law made with the earth.
 13. Is. 55:3 - The covenant made with David - "the sure mercies of David."
 14. Is. 61:8
 15. Jer. 32:40
 16. Jer. 50:5 - The covenant with Zion, the pious remnant in Israel, the revived "dry bones."
 17. Ezek. 16:60
 18. Ezek. 37:26

The following BERITH terms occur only once, except one term:

1. Deut. 29:31 - The curses (אֲלֹתַי) of the covenant.
2. Neh. 13:29 - The covenant of the priesthood (בְּרִיתֵנוּ), also Num. 25:13.
3. Ezek. 20:37 - The bond (בְּרִיתֵנוּ) or discipline of

- the covenant.
4. Dan. 11:22 - The prince (נְגִיד) of the covenant, the high priest Onias.
 5. Dan. 11:32 - "Such as do wickedly against the covenant" (KJV), i.e., covenant violators (מְשִׁיגֵי בְרִית).
 6. Zech. 9:11 - The blood (דָּם) of the covenant.
 7. Mal. 2:14 - The wife (אִשָּׁת בְּרִיתִי) of the covenant.
 8. Mal. 3:1 - The messenger (מַלְאָךְ הַבְּרִית) of the covenant.

The expression, "the covenant of peace" (בְּרִית שָׁלוֹם), occurs four times: Num. 25:12; Is. 54:10; Ezek. 34:25; and Ezek. 37:26.

The word "HESED" (חֶסֶד) or "steadfast love" occurs seven times with BERITH: Deut. 7:9,12; I Kings 8:23 and II Chron. 6:14 (Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the temple); Neh. 1:5,9,32; and Dan. 9:4. This combination was used by Moses, Solomon, Nehemiah, the priests, and Daniel with the same verb, "keep." The LORD is described as the One "which keepeth covenant and mercy" (KJV).

VERBAL TERMS The first group of verbs deals with covenant making. The hiphil form of קָם (arise, stand up, stand) is used 13 times, but not always for making a covenant. When the covenant is already in existence, the word is used to "uphold" or "confirm" the covenant, e.g., Gen. 17:7. It is also used when the covenant is "reaffirmed" for the next generation (Gen. 17:19 and 21) — the Abrahamic covenant passed on to Isaac. The first covenants that were made were made by Elohim with Noah, the covenant to save his family and the covenant with all flesh guaranteeing no future destruction of the earth by a deluge. The hiphil preterite of קָם occurs three times, the hiphil participle once: Gen. 6:18; 9:9,11,17.

The technical term for making a covenant is כָּרַח (cut off, cut down) in the kal form, that is, to "cut a covenant." The expression occurs 69 times. It was Yahweh who cut the covenant with Abraham and all his descendants. The first occurrence of the expression is in Gen. 15:18,

where the ceremony is described. The LORD adapted the custom from the Chaldees. In a vision Abram was instructed to take a three-year-old heifer, a goat, and a ram plus a turtledove and a young pigeon. These were the animals and birds that were later specified for sacrifice in the Torah. Abram was to split the carcasses of the animals and lay them over against each other. The birds were not divided, according to the future laws of sacrifice, but were placed whole over against each other. When the sun went down the LORD passed between the pieces in the form of a smoking portable oven. Abram did not pass between the pieces, for this was not a mutual, but a unilateral covenant. The LORD was binding Himself in formal covenant. Abram was the recipient of the blessing or the beneficiary of the covenant. The Lord promised to give Abraham's descendants the land of Canaan, between the river of Egypt and the Euphrates.

The covenant made with Israel at Sinai was conditional. Israel promptly broke that covenant and repeatedly violated it thereafter. Because of that came the Babylonian captivity centuries later. The LORD through Jeremiah brought this accusation against His people: "I will give the men that have transgressed my covenant, which have not performed the words of the covenant which they had made before me, when they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof, The princes of Judah, and the princes of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, and the priests, and all the people of the land, which passed between the parts of the calf," (Jer. 34:18-19). There is no record of such a "covenant cutting" ceremony at Mt. Sinai. Yet symbolically it remained true that the people had passed between the pieces of the calf, because they had agreed to the covenant: "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do," (Ex. 19:8).

The common verb 𐤇𐤍 (give) is used 5 times with BE-RITH. The kal participle is used when Elohim speaks of His making a covenant with Noah and all flesh and giving His bow as the sign of the covenant (Gen. 9:12). The kal future is used in Gen. 17:2 when the Lord informs Abraham: "I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly." (Chapter 15:18 used the standard term, to cut a covenant, when making the

promise of the land of Canaan.) The kal participle form is used again when after the Baalpeor incident the LORD gave the zealous and heroic priest, Phinehas, a special personal covenant: "Behold, I give unto him my covenant of peace ... the covenant of an everlasting priesthood," (Num. 25:12-13). In two passages of Isaiah, 42:6 and 49:8, the LORD promises to give (kal, future) His Servant "for a covenant of the people."

The verb בָּרָא (come in, come, go in, go) is used four times. In I Sam. 20:8 David is speaking to his friend Jonathan and pleads with him, saying: "Therefore thou shalt deal kindly with thy servant; for thou hast brought (hiphil preterite) thy servant into a covenant of the Lord with thee." II Chron. 15:12 reports the reform leadership of King Asa, which resulted in a covenant renewal on the part of the people: "And they entered (kal, future) into a covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers with all their heart and with all their soul." In Jer. 34:10 the kal preterite is used when speaking of the covenant the princes "had entered" to free all their Jewish slaves. In Ezek. 16:8, in an extremely tender passage, the LORD, reminding His people of the time and circumstances in which He had adopted them as a nation, said: "Yea, I swore unto thee, and entered (kal, future) into a covenant with thee."

Some verbs are used only once to express the thought of making a covenant. David used שָׁרַם (put, place, set) when in gratitude he exclaimed: "He hath made (kal, preterite) with me an everlasting covenant," (II Sam. 23:5). The psalmist in Ps. 111:9 used the verb צִוָּה (charge, command, order) in the synonymous parallelism: "He sent redemption unto his people; he hath commanded (kal preterite) his covenant for ever." (When Achan took of the accursed goods, the Lord indicted His people (Josh. 7:11): "Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them.") The chronicler reports that in the seventh year the priest Jehoiada "took the captains of hundreds ... into covenant with him," (II Chron. 23:1). The verb used is the kal future of לָקַח (take). Jeremiah, the prophet of doom, had a word of hope for his people after they had suffered the judgment of Babylon. The Lord said: "In those days ... they

shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the LORD in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten," (Jer. 50:5). The verb used is the niphil preterite of הִתְּוַחֵו (join, be joined). The psalmist used the hiphil infinitive of וַיְוַחֵו in Ps. 25:14: "And he will show them his covenant." Moses used the hiphil future of וַיְבַרֵּךְ (be conspicuous, tell, declare) in Deut. 4:13: "And he declared unto you his covenant."

As already indicated, the same word, the hiphil of קָבַע , that is used for making a covenant is also used for confirming or upholding a covenant, e.g., Gen. 17:7; Lev. 26:9; and Deut. 8:18.

The hiphil future of עָמַד (take one's stand, stand) is used twice in parallel passages, I Chron. 16:17 and Ps. 105:10, in the sense of confirming the covenant made with Abraham to the second generation patriarch Jacob. The kal future is used in II Kings 23:3 with the preposition עַל to express the people's assenting to and so confirming the covenant renewal of King Josiah: "And all the people stood to the covenant."

The niphil participle of קָבַע (confirm, support) is used by the LORD in Ps. 89:28 (29) when speaking of the Davidic covenant: "My covenant shall stand fast with him." The niphil preterite with the negative is used in Ps. 78:37 to note the people's failure to confirm the covenant: "For their heart was not right with him, neither were they steadfast in his covenant."

The hiphil preterite of בָּרַךְ (be strong, mighty) is used once in Dan. 9:27. The kal form of בָּרַךְ is used four times, twice in the preterite and twice in the future in Gen. 7:18-24 to describe the "prevailing" of the waters of the deluge. The hiphil future is used in Ps. 12:4: "With our tongue will we prevail." The verb is never used for the initiation of an action, but rather for the strengthening or confirming of an action that is already in existence. Thus the Gesenius/Robinson lexicon translates $\text{וַיְבַרֵּךְ הַגְּבִיר בְּרִית}$ "confirm a covenant," (Dan. 9:27). (This is a vital exegetical point in view of the Dispensationalists' interpretation that the passage speaks of the

New Testament antichrist making a covenant with the Jews. The verb does not allow that interpretation, which would violate the basic rule of literal interpretation. Walvoord in his commentary on Daniel does not even discuss the verb and its meaning. Thus the principle of literal interpretation is bypassed in favor of prophetic bias.)

The Old Testament has quite a variety of verbs expressing covenant violation, probably because this was such a characteristic feature of God's Old Testament people. The most commonly used word is פָּרַד (break, frustrate) in the hiphil preterite, infinite, imperative, and future. It is used 20 times, 11 times of man breaking God's covenant (Gen. 17:14; Lev. 26:15; Deut. 31:16,20; Is. 54:5; Jer. 11:10; 31:32; 33:20; Ezek. 16:59; 17:19; 44:7); four times of man breaking a covenant made with man (I Kings 15:19; II Chron. 16:3; Ezek. 17:15,18); and five times of God breaking His covenant with man (Lev. 26:44; Is. 33:8; Jer. 14:21; 33:21; Zech. 11:10).

The second most common verb is עָבַר (pass over, pass through, pass by). It is used nine times (Deut. 17:2; 29:11; Josh. 7:11,15; 23:16; II Kings 18:12; Jer. 34:18; Hosea 6:7; 8:1), all in the kal forms of infinite, preterite, future, and participle. In one instance, Deut. 29:12 (11), the kal infinite is used with the preposition ב. In this case the phrase means the opposite of "break," rather "pass in" or "enter in" (Beck), and so "keep."

The verb עָזַב (leave, forsake) is used four times, three in the kal preterite (Deut. 29:24; I Kings 19:10; Jer. 22:9), and once in the kal participle (Dan. 11:30).

The verb נָשָׁח (forget) is also used four times in the kal preterite and future, three times of man's forgetting God's covenant with him (Deut. 4:23; II Kings 17:38; Prov. 2:17), and once of God's forgetting His covenant (Deut. 4:31).

The piel form of לָלַךְ (pollute, defile, profane) is used three times, twice in the preterite and infinite of man (Ps. 55:21; Mal. 2:10), and once in the future of God (Ps. 89:35).

The following verbs are used only once:

1. **סָמָּה** (reject) in the kal future, II Kings 17:15: "They rejected his statutes, and his covenant."
2. **נָאָר** (abhor, spurn) in the piel preterite of God in Ps. 89:39 (40): "Thou hast made void the covenant of thy servant."
3. **חָלָה** (go to ruin) in the piel preterite of the priests in Mal. 2:8: "Ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi."
4. **שָׁפַר** (do or deal falsely) in the piel preterite, Ps. 44:17: "Neither have we dealt falsely in thy covenant."
5. **כָּפַר** (cover over) in the pual preterite, Is. 28:18: "Your covenant with death shall be disannulled."
6. **שָׁאָר** (lift, carry, take) in the kal future, Ps. 50:16 of the wicked who act hypocritically: "But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldst take my covenant in thy mouth."
7. **נָלַט** (totter, shake, slip) with the negative in the kal future: "Neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed," (Is. 54:10).

The Old Testament also employs a variety of words for keeping or obeying the covenant of the Lord. The most frequently used word (16 times) is **שָׁמַר** (keep, watch, preserve) in the kal preterite, future, participle, and infinite. In two instances, however, the verb is used with the negative and so means NOT to keep the covenant (I Kings 11:11; Ps. 78:10). The verb is used nine times of man (Gen. 17:9,10; Ex. 19:15; Deut. 29:8; I Kings 11:11; Ps. 78:10; 103:18; 132:12; Ezek. 17:14), and seven times of the LORD (Deut. 7:9,12; I Kings 8:23; II Chron. 6:14; Neh. 1:5; 9:32; Dan. 9:14). In all instances where it is used with the LORD, covenant is combined with **חַסְדֵּי**, the LORD being described as "keeping covenant and mercy."

The second most common verb is **זָכַר** (remember). It is used 10 times in the kal preterite, future, and imperative of God remembering His covenant (Gen. 9:15; Ex. 2:24; 6:5; Lev. 26:42,45; Ps. 105:8; 106:45; 111:5; Ezek. 16:60), and twice of man. In I Chron. 16:15 the men of Israel are urged to remember the covenant, and in Amos

1:8 Tyrus is condemned because they "remembered not the brotherly covenant" (with Edom).

In Jeremiah 11 the prophet uses שָׁמַע (hear) three times, vv. 2, 3, and 6 in the kal imperative and future. Twice he urged the people: "Hear ye the words of this covenant" and once he solemnly declared: "Cursed be the man that obeyeth not the words of this covenant."

The following verbs are used twice:

1. נָצַר (watch, guard, keep) in the kal future of the Levites in Deut. 33:9 and blessing "unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies" — kal participle (Ps. 25:10).

2. עָשָׂה (do, make) is used twice in II Chron. 34:31 and 32 in the kal infinite and future. In the first passage King Josiah made a covenant before the Lord "to perform the words of the covenant which are written in this book." The following verse reports that the "inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of God."

3. קָיַם (grow firm, strong) used by Isaiah in the participle form to describe the God-fearing eunuchs and strangers as ones that "take hold of my covenant," (Is. 56:4,6).

רָאָה (look) is used only once by the psalmist (Ps. 74:20) in a prayer to the Lord: "Have respect unto the covenant," hiphil imperative.

One verb that does not fit into any general category is נָקַם (avenge, take vengeance). It is used by Moses (kal participle) when threatening that the LORD will bring a sword that will take vengeance on all covenant breakers: "And I shall bring a sword upon you, that shall avenge the quarrel of my covenant," (Lev. 26:25).

The LORD's BERITH with His people was the chief expression of His steadfast love. The variety and richness of the BERITH terminology bear witness to the importance of the concept.

Paul F. Nolting

ROMANS 4:25*

The purpose of this article is to touch on certain factors involved in a precise understanding of Romans 4:25, and thereby to stimulate further private study on the part of the readers. "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification," (KJV). "ὃς παρεδόθη διὰ τὰ παραπτώματα ἡμῶν καὶ ἠγέρθη διὰ τὴν δικαίωσιν ἡμῶν."

A study of this kind is timely. As one of the passages cited in the *Brief Statement* in the article on justification, Romans 4:25 is also involved to a degree in the current discussion of that doctrine which has arisen in the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod in connection with Dr. Walter Maier. One of the by-products of this controversy is an article in the June 26, 1981, issue of *Christianity Today* entitled, "The Two Sides of Justification." The author is Dr. David P. Scaer, associate professor of systematic theology at Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Here is the opening paragraph: "In the 1970s, the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod's controversy over the historicity of certain biblical accounts was prominent in the press. Just when things were getting back to normal, a new controversy over objective justification has broken out."¹

The article is a careful discussion of such concepts as objective justification and subjective justification, with diligent effort being made to guard both against universalism on the one hand and conditional justifica-

* Editor's Note: This article is presented as a study document and is intended, as the author states, "to stimulate further private study on the part of the readers." The article deals with the use of DIA in Rom. 4:25 and addresses itself to the sense in which it is used, prospectively or retrospectively. It is to be noted that the author comes to the conclusion that Rom. 4:24 does teach objective justification.

tion on the other. It is a good article. But one cannot help noticing that there is not a single Bible reference on the entire page. Though one will cheerfully agree that scriptural material is being drawn upon, yet a statement like the following, "The doctrine of objective justification intends to preserve the concept that the question of salvation must be answered in Christ, not in the believer," surely puts the emphasis in the wrong place, as though we defend or even bolster the Scriptures by our doctrinal formulations. We hope that we have not lost the capacity to discern, also in ourselves, any signs of a tendency toward a dogmatical approach to Scripture. After all, exegesis, not dogmatics, is the queen of the theological studies.

Another by-product is Vernon Harley's "Problems with 'Objective' Justification," appearing in the June 8, 1981, issue of *Christian News*. This somewhat longer writing brings some interesting material and discussion. The point that absolute unanimity in human doctrinal terminology is not necessarily essential can be rightly understood. But its treatment of the three passages used by the *Brief Statement* in its article on justification — Rom. 5:19, II Cor. 5:18-21, Rom. 4:25 — is quite unsatisfactory indeed. Harley argues that "justification" is a term which should be reserved solely for the reception by faith of the objective merits of Christ's work, and his treatment of the above passages proceeds accordingly. In this, we cannot go along with him. The *Brief Statement* is correct; its use of these three passages is legitimate.

But Harley does put his finger on an exegetical point with this paragraph: "Those who insist Rom. 4:25 teaches 'objective' justification try to read 'delivered for our offenses' (*dia ta paraptoomata heemoon*) and 'raised for our justification' (*dia teen dikaiosin heemoon*) in a retrospective rather than a prospective sense. They make it read: Christ was put to death because we had sinned; he was raised because we were justified. If we grant this as a possible meaning, there are still problems, for that would mean that the justification took place prior to the resurrection, namely, in connection with the death of Christ and Christ was raised be-

cause this had already taken place. Christ's resurrection would then be only a declaration of a justification already accomplished, not the justification itself as these theologians otherwise so profusely proclaim."

That brings us to the chief point of this article: how are the two DIAs to be construed? Though that is a question which immediately forces itself upon the attention of one working in the Greek, it is also a question which has been strangely neglected in places where a fuller treatment might well be expected. The index to Franz Pieper's *Dogmatics* gives six references to Rom. 4:25 (all in Vol. II), but one searches in vain for explicit discussion of the DIA. This is true even of p. 321, which contains the most extended discussion. My own impression from statements such as this: "The term δικαιώσις here means the act of divine justification executed through God's act of raising Christ from the dead, and it is for this reason called the objective justification of all mankind" (p. 321), is that he is taking the second DIA prospectively.

In a quotation from Hollaz, Rom. 4:25 is cited on p. 401 of Schmid's *Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* as proof for the proposition that our justification is one of the fruits of the resurrection. E. W. A. Koehler's comments on pp. 103-104 of his *A Summary of Christian Doctrine* are helpful, but similarly fail to bring treatment of the exegetical question. Of the four references given in the index to Hoenecke's *Dogmatik*, the only one which comes close to our issue is Vol. III, pp. 139-140. "Ueber den Zweck der Auferstehung sagt die Schrift, dasz dieselbe allen Menschen zugute (finis ἢ oder cui) geschehen sei (Roem. 4:25 ...) und mit der Bestimmung (finis οἷ oder cuius), dasz dadurch ... unsere Rechtfertigung bestaetigt (Roem. 4:25) ... werde." The index of the recently republished (NPH) *Biblical Christology* of John Schaller gives four references, of which the only pertinent one is on p. 107: "The purpose of this resurrection is manifold. ... (4) Thus it became the unshakable witness of the justification of all mankind. Since he who offered his life in vicarious atonement for our sin, was raised from death, his work was thereby declared to be accomplished. 'He was raised again

for our justification' (Ro 4:25). For this reason Christ's resurrection is the basis of all Christian faith, and its denial is a total rejection of the gospel (I Cor 15:17ff; Ac 2:36)." It is also interesting that Adalbert Schaller's fairly lengthy treatment of justification, produced at a time when the subject was prominent because of Missouri-ALC dealings, offers discussion of Rom. 5:19 and II Cor. 5:19-21, but passes over Romans 4:25 in complete silence.³

DIA with the accusative may be used not only retrospectively (prior cause), but also prospectively (purpose, aim, object). Robertson, p. 584 of his large grammar, discusses this use. "The aim (usually expressed by ἔνεκα) may be set forth by δὲ also." He cites Mark 2:27, as well as other references. Is not J. P. Meyer making an understatement when he concedes only this much, that "in the Koine it [δὲ] was sometimes slightly tinged with a connotation of purpose, especially in the question δὲ αὐτὸν"?⁴ With two DIAs in this verse, four possibilities are open to us. Many would immediately reduce the possibilities to two by insisting that the usage in the second clause must be parallel to the usage in the first clause. Thus, we would have either two retrospective uses of DIA or two prospective uses. This assumption we challenge. There is just as much balance in having contrasting uses of DIA as in having parallel uses. There is no inherent reason why parallelism must be insisted upon, any more than a contrast, nor is any affront done to the structure by assuming such a balanced contrast. We are simply confronted with two equally defensible alternatives.

J. P. Meyer asserts: "The verse consists of two members, forming a perfect parallel, with every term in one member having an exact counterpart in the other."⁵ But this is not entirely true. The nouns are of different natures, the one ending in -MA, indicating a result; the other ending in -SIS, indicating an action.⁶ Although this may appear to be a very minor point, it is sufficient to alter the complexion of things. A one-hundred per-cent parallel would be secured only if the word δὲ καίωμα, or perhaps δὲ καλοσύνη, were substituted for δὲ

καὶ αὐτῶν. But these words are not used. Rather, an action-noun is used (with a corresponding shift also in the underlying agent), which could very well designate the aim or purpose, rather than the cause, of the resurrection from the dead.

The natural way to construe the first DIA is as indicating the prior cause (retrospective): He was delivered because of our offences. Our offences were the cause of His being delivered up. But the meaning of the second clause is still open. We may have the retrospective use again. Jesus was raised up because we had already been justified. Our justification, already completed, was the reason for the raising up of Jesus. This puts the justification prior to the resurrection. Or the DIA may be prospective. Jesus was raised up for the sake of or for the purpose of our justification. Declaring us just was the object to be achieved in and through the resurrection.

An examination of the various factors that would have a bearing on the exegesis becomes necessary. Does Paul's use of DIA elsewhere shed any light on our question? That he does operate with the prospective use of DIA is clear from passages such as Phil. 1:24; I Cor. 4:6; 8:11; 9:10; 11:9; II Cor. 2:10; 4:15; 8:9. But to pinpoint examples where contrasting uses of DIA occur side by side is less easily done. One's eye might well fall for a moment upon Rom. 8:10, where at least one commentator (Murray) argues that "spirit" is to be capitalized, coming as it does in the midst of frequent occurrences of the same word which without exception refer to God the Holy Spirit. Especially if this view were to be accepted, a prospective view of DIA in the second clause would be entirely possible. But πνεῦμα, offering as it does a contrast to σῶμα, very likely designates the spirit of man. The assertion is being made that though sin has brought about the death of the body, the spirit ever draws life from the righteousness which is ours in Christ Jesus. The indwelling of that Spirit who was associated with the Father in the work of vivifying the dead Jesus brings about a resurrection also in our mortal bodies. The Spirit generates sanctification which is operative even in and through mortal bodies. What a resurrection

miracle! A retrospective use also of the second DIA is thus most likely, although it appears that making a case for the prospective use cannot so readily be ruled out.

Another passage of Paul with side-by-side uses of DIA is Rom. 13:5, in which we find a dual retrospective use. Less pertinent for purposes of comparison are II Timothy 2:10 and I Cor. 11:10. In both cases, the first DIA is used with τοὔτο. In both cases, the second DIA is not that easy to analyze precisely. For now, we lean toward a prospective use in the Timothy passage and a retrospective use in the Corinthians passage. I Cor. 11:9, with its dual prospective use, is parallel to Mark 2:27, which has been noted above. Our probings are rewarded when we arrive at the highly significant passage in Rom. 11:28. Although this verse presents somewhat of an enigma at first glance, its meaning opens up to us when we remember that judgment upon the Jews was accompanied by blessings for the Gentiles. Cf. in this very section 11:11ff. Thus, the first DIA is prospective. The natural way to take the second is retrospectively. This passage should therefore go a long way toward allaying any doubts as to the possibility of having contrasting uses of DIA in Rom. 4:25.

Nor ought we overlook Rom. 4:23-24. The Dana-Mantey grammar cites this reference under "for the sake of" as a meaning of DIA.⁷ I Cor. 9:10, also involving the verb γράφειν, is a good parallel. Evidently a dual prospective use is before us in Rom. 4:23-24. Yet, even with the ἀλλὰ καὶ, which is a strong indicator of parallelism in regard to the DIA such as is not found in v. 25, there is not necessarily an absolute parallel in the meanings of the two DIA phrases. Let's hear Theodore Zahn: "When it says that the word of Gen. 15:6 was not written for Abraham's sake alone [*um Abr.'s allein willen*], but also for our sake [*auch um unsretwillen*], the causal relation expressed by DIA in the two clauses is naturally different, since Abraham was not a reader of the book which presented his life-history even beyond his death, as were Paul and his contemporaries. Only in this sense could one think that Gen. 15:6 was written on account of Abraham [*Abr.'s wegen*], that the purpose of taking up in the holy scriptures these dealings between God and Abraham

lies in the glorification of the patriarchs. But Paul much rather recognizes as the purpose of the entire holy Scriptures the religious instruction of those who read them or hear them read (15:4; I Cor. 10:11): the Jews, the Gentiles who visited the synagogues, and the Christians." We might shrink from taking the first DIA as referring to a glorification of Abraham until we recall his position as the father of believers and God's promise to make his name great and to make him a blessing to all nations. Indeed, on the basis of this verse, it would be possible to argue (although with little cogency as far as any relation to v. 25 is concerned, chiefly because of the flexibility of DIA and its subordination to whatever turns of thought are being pursued) that we are in a context of prospective uses of DIA.

In our exegetical minings, we look about for anything that might shed light, while realizing that sometimes nothing decisive emerges. So it is here. Nothing conclusive emerges. Yet we have gained something. We have become more open to the possibility of contrasting uses of DIA. We come away from consideration of the above evidence with an impression of flexibility which does not exclude any of the possibilities in the verse before us. Linguistically, then, we are still quite free to take the second clause either way. We proceed then to the question of whether there are passages of Scripture which shed light on the content and thereby steer us in one direction or the other.

In turning in this direction, perhaps it is the first thought of the reader, as it was of this writer, that the idea that justification was completed before the resurrection and actually was the cause of the resurrection does not harmonize with I Cor. 15:17: "And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins." The work of Christ would be of no avail without the resurrection. We would still be in our sins. How then is it possible to speak of a justification prior to the resurrection? Is it not putting the cart before the horse to speak of our justification causing Christ's resurrection, rather than of the resurrection of Christ being accomplished in order therewith to pronounce the objective verdict of "not guilty"? Is not Christ pictur-

ed in Scripture as our Forerunner? Does HE not lead the way? Without Christ's resurrection-victory over death, would we not still be subject to death's power? Are not all such thoughts embodied in Scripture's emphasis upon the resurrection? "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept," (I Cor. 15:20). Furthermore, does not Scripture even speak of Christ's own justification in connection with His state of exaltation? "ὁς ἐφανερώθη ἐν σαρκί, ἐδικαιώθη ἐν πνεύματι," (I Tim. 3:16).⁸ Is it possible for the world to be justified before Christ was justified? (On the other hand, does the context here perhaps impart a flavor to "justify" which renders such comparison with the Romans passage invalid?)

We need only proceed into Romans 5 to see that justification is connected with the death of Christ. "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life," (vv. 9-10). Justification is first connected with Jesus' blood. Then the same thought is rephrased, using instead of "justify" the term "reconcile," which is tied directly to Christ's death. We note in passing Meyer's correct use of this passage against Lenski: "Dr. Lenski is right in stressing the objectiveness of reconciliation, which stands entirely independent of our personal, subjective appropriation of this blessing by faith. But if we bear in mind that Paul uses this term to illumine what he had said about justification, the conclusion becomes inescapable that just as reconciliation is objective so must justification be, otherwise the explanation would be misleading."⁹ II Cor. 5:19 also connects reconciliation and justification.¹⁰

In view of the freedom with which the Scriptures speak of these matters, a measure of caution is in order before decisively establishing the meaning of Rom. 4:25 on the basis of other passages. On the one hand, this writer is willing to concede that more may be said for the retrospective view of DIA than he previously thought. On the other hand, it may be argued that it is only on the assumption of the completion of Christ's work — the

completion in all its phases, including the resurrection — that passages then freely refer to the fruits of certain aspects of that gracious work. The completed work entitles us to exult both in a justification in His blood and in a salvation from wrath; in a reconciliation with God through Christ's death as well as in a salvation in connection with His life. To this could be added a righteousness in His obedience (Rom. 5:19), a redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins (Eph. 1:7), etc. "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you ... how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures," (I Cor. 15:1-4). "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us," (Rom. 8:34). "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself ..." (II Cor. 5:19). "For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living," (Rom. 14:9). Only with the resurrection can benefits flow from the death; only with the substitutionary death can benefits flow from the resurrection.

When oppressed with the guilt of sin and its condemning power, we take refuge in our justification, the verdict of "not guilty" pronounced upon us on the basis of the merits of Christ; when overwhelmed with the thought of the separation between God and man caused by sin and of the horrible resultant state of enmity and war, we take comfort in the reconciliation effected by Christ and the state of peace which obtains through His having suffered estrangement and loneliness and enmity in our place; and when tormented by frightening intimations of the captivity and bondage with which sin oppresses its miserable victims, we find courage in steady contemplation of the all-sufficient purchase price paid to set us free. When our disobedience dismays us, Christ's obedience is our stay. When death terrifies us, His resurrection dispels our fears. "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life," (John 14:6). Thus we find a full measure of comfort in each aspect of the Gospel. This surely is the gracious will of the Holy Spirit of Christ for us.

It is interesting, as well as at times amusing, to take note of the views of commentators:

ICC (Sanday and Headlam): There is a brief discussion of the options with DIA. The second DIA is taken prospectively. Comments on the first DIA are cautious.

Tyndale (F. F. Bruce): He appears to take both prospectively.

NICNT (Murray): He assumes that the two should be parallel, gives a good discussion of the resultant meaning in either case, and opts for a dual prospective use. Unfortunately, he makes the comment: "Justification, we may infer therefore, refers to actual justification by faith ..."

Ex. Greek Test. (Denney): This brings a fairly long treatment, including good comments on DIA and the possibilities it offers. However, the whole discussion is vitiated by the underlying assumption that "justification is not only an act of God, but a spiritual experience; it is dependent upon faith (3:25)." The two prepositions are taken prospectively, chiefly because it is believed to be necessary in the second clause and parallelism is preferred.

Philippi: One gathers that both are taken prospectively. Most of the discussion is on the meaning of Christ's death and resurrection. "Elsewhere everywhere Scripture sets forth the death of Christ as the ground of our justification, 3:24-25, 5:9; II Cor. 5:21; Eph. 1:7; I John 1:7." Melancthon is quoted. Calov is quoted against the papists, who took the justification as sanctification!

Stoeckhardt: He offers a clear and helpful discussion, taking both prospectively and rejecting the view of commentators who inject faith into the discussion. "*Da- rum hat Gott Christum auferweckt, weil er eben damit uns rechtfertigen wollte, und eben dieser Zweck ist mit der Auferweckung erfuehlt worden. Unser Rechtfertigung er- scheint also an unsere Stelle als Effect der Auferweckung Christi.*" The pronouns indicate that the matters in ques-

tion, which indeed involve the whole world, are applied especially to the Christians.

H. A. W. Meyer: Both are taken prospectively. Faith is injected. "For the resurrection of the sacrificed One was required to produce in men the faith through which alone the objective fact of the atoning offering of Jesus could have the effect of δικαιώσις subjectively" (his emphasis). Melancthon and Calov are quoted.

Hodge: "That is, he was delivered in order that our sins might be expiated, and he was raised in order that we might be justified." I Cor. 15:17 is adduced. Christ's intercession is brought into the discussion. Christ rose and ascended "in order to secure the continued application of the merits of the sacrifice." Here also we find the Calov quotation.

Luther: In his remarks of 1515 (p. 284 of Vol. 25 of the American Edition), he seems to take both prospectively.

J. P. Meyer: "Dr. Lenski rightly rejects the distinction some exegetes try to make between *Realgrund* and *Zweckgrund*, but why interpret the preposition διό as expressing purpose? ... Then according to the second member our actual justification is the cause from which flowed the resurrection of Christ."¹¹

Lenski: In addition to the above, we note that he rejects justification of the whole world, and refers our passage to personal justification.

Nygren: "Paul recognizes no such alternative. To him the death and the resurrection of Christ belong together inseparably. Taken together they constitute the basis of our justification." The preposition is not discussed.

The Lutheran Commentary (Jacobs): Both are taken retrospectively. Following elaboration of the statement, "As our sins caused His death, so our justification caused His resurrection, comes this: "Potential justification (!) for all men is thus certified to by Christ's

resurrection." H. A. W. Meyer's view is mentioned and explained.

Godet: He argues forcefully that the second DIA must be retrospective, just as the first one is, and insists that πρὸς or εἰς would be necessary to avoid confusion if "with a view to" is the intended thought. His statement of the dual retrospective view is clear-cut: "By the same law of solidarity whereby our condemnation had brought Him to the cross, our justification must transform His death into life. ... His resurrection is the proof of our justification only because it is the necessary effect of it." However, he also states that after Christ's death, "God could pronounce the collective acquittal of future believers, and He did so."

Robertson: He allows that the first DIA could be prospective ("to make atonement for our transgressions"), but takes it as retrospective and the second as prospective. He calls our attention to Isaiah 53:12.

Zahn: "The justification is consummated [*vollzieht sich*] as little through the resurrection of Jesus [??] as through his death, but is rather the purpose-cause [*Zweckgrund*] of the resurrection of Jesus, just as the sins of men are the originating cause [*ursaechliche Grund*] of His deliverance into death. Both causal relationships can be expressed by δὲ with the accusative."

Kittel, TDNT (Oepke): Some of the discussion, such as the comments on Rom. 11:28, is stimulating and helpful. "In regard to their attitude to the Gospel they are hated (and thus stand under the wrath of God) for your sakes, i.e., in order that salvation may come to you Gentiles, but in so far as the election is normative they are beloved because of the fathers, i.e., in consequence of their election." But it's no easy task to figure out what the final conclusion is. Referring to the German, J. P. Meyer ("Obj. Just.," p. 36) writes that Kittel "labors very strenuously to establish a mixed meaning (cause and purpose) for our text."

Little comment need be added to the above, except to note that the same variations of viewpoint are also re-

flected in Bible translations.

In the two clauses coordinated by καί in Rom. 4:25, there is an interesting combination of parallels and contrasts. There is a pair of verbs, both in the aorist, but with contrasting meanings. Likewise there is a pair of nouns with contrasting meanings. And there is a pair of identical prepositions, both with the accusative case but with contrasting thrusts. These are the middle elements of their respective clauses. But the terms which impart the overall parallelism are the opening pronouns (ὅς, though not repeated, governs also the second clause) and the closing pronouns. These are identical in scope in both clauses. There can be no thought of anything else. One and the same person is delivered and raised. One and the same group is cause, by its sins, of the delivering, and recipient of the justification.

The 21st edition of Nestle Greek New Testament (Stuttgart, 1949), lists Is. 53:4,5, & 12 in the margin beside Rom. 4:25. "Surely our griefs He Himself bore, and our sorrows He carried. . . . But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed. . . . Because He poured out Himself to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet He Himself bore the sin of many, and interceded for the transgressors" (NASB). In the light of this Scriptural background for the first half of Rom. 4:25, doubts concerning the scope of "us" may be laid to rest. Undoubtedly the prior context, in which the Christians are referred to, led Stoeckhardt to his view.¹² But a transition to a broader use is surely anything but unnatural when such a grand statement concerning the work of Christ is appended to the previous discussion to bring it to a conclusion. Indeed, if anything, the augmented scope of ἡμῶν seems called for. It's a bit wooden to bind ourselves to the letter of the previous meaning when the term itself is inherently quite fluid in its range.

This very grandness of statement harmonizes well with contrasting uses of DIA, whereby the work of Christ is viewed from beginning to end: from the originating cause of the world's offences to the final objective of

the Heavenly Father: the declaration, in and with the resurrection of His Son, that the world is righteous in His sight. And in this setting, there is not a shadow of justification for injecting faith into the discussion. The unstudied effortless characterizing the presentation of this enormous fact of our justification in Christ's resurrection serves only to heighten the impact by showing how readily and naturally it moves to the foreground in the discussion. We conclude that "objective justification" is taught in Rom. 4:25.

This effort at touching upon some of the factors pertaining to a precise understanding of Rom. 4:25 has left intact our preference for taking the second DIA prospectively.

In letting our investigations come to rest at this point, we wish to borrow a statement from J. Schaller: "Our opponents through their bold opposition compel us also here to return to the Scriptures and from them to become reassured that we really possess this doctrine."¹³ What a joy it is to search the Scriptures! What certainty of salvation we obtain in meditating deeply on the merits of Christ. Glory, all glory, be to God!

R. E. Wehrwein

NOTES

1. This is not the first time that the dispute has reached the pages of *Christianity Today*. "Missouri Lutherans Clash Over Doctrinal Fine Point" [objective justification!] is the title of a news item on pp. 56-57 of the March 13, 1981, issue.
2. The article drew responses in succeeding issues from Rolf Preus and Kurt Marquart. (By the way, Harley surmises — p. 12, middle column — that F. Pieper, on p. 348 of Vol. II of his *Dogmatics*, footnote 34, is quoting J. P. Meyer of the Wisconsin Synod. He is, of course, quoting H. A. W. Meyer.
3. A. Schaller, "*Referat ueber die Bedeutung der Recht-*

fertigungs-Lehre in den heutigen Lehrstreitigkeiten," *Quartalschrift* (originally a conference paper), Vol. 39, No. 4 (October, 1942), pp. 225-252. Part I treats the current controversy involving the Synodical Conference and other Lutheran bodies, Part II deals with Scripture's teaching (Rom. 5:19 and II Cor. 5:19-21), and Part III discusses the role played by faith in justification.

4. J. P. Meyer, "Objective Justification," *Quartalschrift*, Vol. 37, No. 1 (January, 1940), p. 36. Portions of this 10-page article are directed against statements in Lenski's commentary on Romans.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 35.
6. W. D. Chamberlain, *An Exegetical Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1950; pp. 11-12. Robertson, large grammar, p. 151.
7. H. E. Dana and J. R. Mantey, *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, The Macmillan Company, 1927, 1955; p. 102.
8. For a splendid treatment of this Timothy passage, as well as of I Peter 3:18-19 and Romans 1:3-4 (the "three passages in the New Testament in which we are confronted by this contrast between flesh and spirit in Christ"), cf. Siegbert Becker, "The Christological Flesh-Spirit Antithesis," *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*, Vol. 76, No. 3 (July, 1979), pp. 235-249. The following statements are made in reference to I Timothy 3:16: "But if we understand the words *sarx* and *pneuma* here also as a reference to the two states of Christ, everything once more becomes clear. The word flesh is often used in the Scripture as a designation for man and particularly for man in his weakness (cp. e.g. Is. 40:6). Christ was manifest in flesh, that is, he appeared in this world as a lowly, despised and weak human being. But he was justified in spirit, that is, he was publicly vindicated by God as Lord and Christ (Ac 2:36) in that new glorified, spiritual state in which he appeared to his disciples after his resurrection," (p. 243). Cf. also Pieper, *Dogmatics*,

Vol. II. p. 318f.

9. J. P. Meyer, *op. cit.*, p. 40. Cf. also p. 34.
10. It is customary to take the $\mu\eta\ \lambda\omicron\gamma\upsilon\zeta\omicron\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\varsigma$ clause in II Cor. 5:19 as explaining or defining the reconciliation. Cf., for example, J. P. Meyer, *op. cit.*, p. 34. And Seth Erlandsson is quoted as follows on p. 284 of the October, 1973 (Vol. 70, No. 4), issue of the *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*: "I am well-acquainted with Valen-Sendstad's attempt to separate reconciliation from justification. But I believe that this cannot be maintained in the light of Scripture. That God in Christ reconciled the world unto Himself after all means that He does not impute the sins of men to them (II Cor. 5:19). Because the sins of all the world were imputed to Christ, therefore when Christ died, you and I and the punishment of all the sins of all men died. For what Christ did, He did not do for Himself but vicariously, for us. And His perfect and righteous life He lived not for Himself, but in our place. If Christ had not done all this perfectly, God would not be reconciled. Now He is reconciled and for this reason Christ could leave the grave. The sins have been reckoned to Christ, the verdict of 'not guilty' has been pronounced over the world. Ro. 5:18: 'a justification ... for all men.' This is the objective side of the question." (We quote his statements at such length because of their bearing on Rom. 4:25 as well as II Cor. 5:19.)

But John Schaller vigorously opposed this view. He writes: "Without a doubt, the sequence of the participial clauses in this verse [II Cor. 5:19] is to present the actual, at least logical sequence of the actions of God: first reconciliation, then non-imputation, then transmission of the word of reconciliation. Every other view leads to conclusions that are contrary to Scripture and entirely absurd. ... If we now were to assume that *mee logizomenos* is to present the way and manner in which God made Himself the reconciled one, the resultant thought would be: He changed His mind in that He overlooked the sins of the world. This, however, contradicts not only all clear concep-

tions of a reconciliation in which the non-imputation of the guilt is conceivable only after the appeasement of the offended, but it at the same time poses the possibility that God has suppressed His holiness with its principled opposition against sin and His righteousness with its irrevocable demands for punishment. ... If, however, *mee logizomenos* denotes an action which is not identical with reconciliation nor is presupposed by it, then Luther is correctly interpreting when he inserts an 'and,' which Paul did not have. And did not impute their trespasses unto them. ... Accordingly having reconciled the world for Himself, having made the reconciliation with the world a reality, God did not impute their sins to them." These statements are in "Redemption and Universal Justification According to II Corinthians 5:18-21" (translated from the April, 1910, *Quartalschrift*), *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*, Vol. 72, No. 4 (October, 1975), pp. 314, 315, and 316.

11. I find it difficult to reconcile Meyer's stated view here (*op. cit.*, pp. 35 and 36), that both DIAs are retrospective, with other written statements of his. For example: "In His resurrection He was justified of sin — but they were our sins of which He was pronounced free. Our sins are no more. Our guilt was wiped out. The whole world, every individual member of the world, was given a clean bill in the resurrection of Christ." ("Study on I Cor. 15," *Quartalschrift*, Vol. 41, No. 3 (July, 1944), p. 179.) Or: "Justification is a declaratory act, it is an imputing of a foreign righteousness, not an imparting of a new quality. It changes the status of a sinner before God. This judgment of God over every sinner was pronounced by God when He raised Jesus from the dead. Jesus had taken the guilt of the whole world upon Himself, the sins of every individual were imputed to Him; in the resurrection on Easter morning God absolved Him from all His assumed guilt, i.e., in fact He absolved every sinner from his actual guilt, because it had completely and to God's full satisfaction been wiped out by the vicarious death of Jesus." (From a closing address, *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*, Vol. 42, No. 2 (April, 1945), p. 67.) And on p. 101 of his *Ministers*

of Christ (NPH, Milwaukee, Wisc., 1963), quotations from Gerhard and Calov are given: "In Christ's resurrection we were absolved from our sins, so that they can no longer condemn us before the judgment seat of God." "As God punished our sins in Christ, which sins had been laid upon Him as our Surety (or. Substitute) and had been imputed to Him, so also in raising Him from the dead, He by that very deed absolved Him (Christ) from our sins which had been imputed to Him, and consequently He also absolved us in Him" (emphasis in original). Such statements harmonize with a prospective, not a retrospective, view of the second DIA in Rom. 4:25.

To turn also to Walther: "Walther writes: 'As by the vicarious death of Christ the guilt of the whole world has been blotted out and its punishment has been removed, so by Christ's resurrection righteousness, life, and salvation have been restored to the whole world and have come upon all men in Christ as the Substitute of all mankind.' Again: 'Christ's glorious resurrection from the dead is the actual absolution of the whole sinful world.' Walther's Easter sermons have themes such as the following: 'Christ's Glorious Resurrection the Fully Valid Justification of All Men.'" (Dr. Francis Pieper, "Dr. C. F. W. Walther as Theologian" (translated by J. T. Mueller from *Lehre und Wehre*, Vol. 36, 1890), *Concordia Theological Monthly*, Vol. 26, No. 12 (December, 1955; anniversary issue), p. 923.) Neither the above-mentioned sermon, nor the two other Easter sermons of Walther available to me, are based on Rom. 4:25. (All three are based on Mark 16:1-8.) The index of Scripture texts in *Law and Gospel* gives no references to Rom. 4:25.

12. J. P. Meyer ("Obj. Just.," p. 34) writes: "Dr. Lenski may be right in restricting the 'our' to the believers, as also Dr. Stoeckhardt agrees (*Roemerbrief*, p. 213); but from that it does not follow that Paul is speaking of personal (subjective) justification."
13. J. Schaller, *op. cit.* (footnote 10), p. 309.

COMMENTARIES

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CORRECTION . . .

The translator of the article, "Does the First Commandment Demand Justifying Faith," which begins on page 10 in the March, 1981, issue of the *Journal of Theology*, would like to offer the following correction: On page 15 the sentence beginning with the last word on line 18 should read: "Righteousness is surely commanded in the First Commandment," instead of "Justification is surely commanded in the First Commandment."

== PANORAMA ==

LCMS - 1981

It did not come as a great surprise when, on July 5, in the late hours of the afternoon, the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod voted to end "altar and pulpit fellowship" with the ALC. It had been the recommendation of Missouri's Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) that such a separation take place. Thus came to an end an official relationship that many were convinced should never have been entered upon in the first place, and had been called "fellowship in protest" since 1977.

Several writers have noted that the fellowship resolution of last July was adopted by a vote of 590 to 484 (54% to 46%) and that this was the same percentage of the vote by which the resolution to establish altar and pulpit fellowship between the two church bodies in 1969 was adopted. It is also interesting to note that most of the important doctrinal resolutions in Missouri's recent past have been decided by approximately the same voting percentage. This means, of course, that a change in stance of only 100 voting delegates or less has had a significant effect in the official direction the church has taken.

A substitute motion to the effect that fellowship truly existed between the LCMS and the ALC and should not be broken was defeated with roughly the same voting margin. If passed, this counter resolution would have favored acceptance of the recent proposal on the part of the ALC Church Council that grass-roots, parish level discussions on the doctrine of fellowship be held. The proposal of the ALC seemed to be a last-ditch attempt to forestall the resolution to end fellowship relations, and evidently did not find majority acceptance among the Missouri delegates in view of the fact that in 1977 the LCMS resolution declaring a state of "protesting fellowship" had made a similar proposal, which the ALC had at that time declined.

On the following day (July 6) a motion to reconsider the matter was presented. It is reported that newly-

elected President Bohlmann indicated his disapproval of such a move, declaring, "We have made a decision and I think we should live with it." The motion to reconsider was then defeated.

Thus, at least on paper, ends the up-and-down courtship between the LCMS and the ALC which began its recent history in the 1930's. It was during the attempts to bring about the establishment of fellowship between the two church bodies that it became apparent to members of the Synodical Conference that Missouri's position on many matters involving a correct understanding of the Scriptural teaching on fellowship had either changed or was in the process of changing. One example is the attitude of Missouri toward prayer as an exercise of fellowship. At one time the church body taught that joint prayer could be properly conducted only when there was agreement in doctrine; now it wants to make a distinction between prayers which are exercises of fellowship and joint prayers which are not. It was after the adoption on the part of Missouri of the so-called "Common Confession" in 1950 that repeated protests of two of its sister church bodies in the Synodical Conference, the Wisconsin Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, began to be heard, culminating after a number of years in the dissolution of the Synodical Conference. Even before the Synodical Conference broke up, a number of pastors and congregations had severed from the synods of the conference and formed new confessional groups, one of which is our own CLC.

It is because of the frustrations of the past, no doubt, that spokesmen for the more "conservative" groups that were once affiliated with Missouri seem to be reserving their judgment of Missouri's 1981 resolution to break from the ALC. After all, J. A. O Preus, former president of Missouri, is no doubt speaking for most Missourians when he states that there is need for study of the Scriptural doctrine of fellowship in that church body.

That can be seen in the great ambiguity in some of Missouri's recent statements. For example, the resolution declares, according to the convention news release, that fellowship between the LCMS and the ALC is ended and that this means that ALC and LCMS pastors are no longer

free to exchange pulpits for preaching and church members may no longer take communion in each other's churches. Yet, at the same time, congregations and pastors "as circumstances warrant, may provide responsible pastoral care to individuals of the ALC." Also, according to *Affirm* (Vol. IX, No. 3, October, 1981), a statement read to the convention prior to the vote on the resolution made it clear that in declaring fellowship with the ALC to be at an end, "we (LCMS) are not talking about grandpa and grandma from the ALC who come to visit their children and wish to commune with them at one of our altars."

In answer to this we can only state that Scripture nowhere gives any warrant to take the meaning of Romans 16:17 in any such cavalier fashion, for God's Word does not supply the exclusions that the LCMS wishes to make. Those who support false doctrine by their membership in and gifts to heterodox churches are equally to be identified and recognized as "causers of divisions and offenses." The LCMS resolutions quite clearly want to declare "altar and pulpit fellowship" to be something quite separate and distinct from the actual practice of fellowship between individuals in their ordinary lives as Christians. And also for this they have no Scriptural warrant.

There is, indeed, much confusion within the LCMS as to the meaning of fellowship and of termination of fellowship. It is to be feared that the intervening years since the dissolution of the Synodical Conference have brought about a much worse situation in Missouri today than existed back then. There is also much dissension, it would appear. It is reported that there are individuals and congregations in Missouri that are letting it be known publicly that they are simply not going to conform to their church's new stance of no fellowship with the ALC. We will surely be watching and waiting for further developments with deep interest and concern.

For, as we rejoice wherever there is obedience to the Word of God, also regarding unionism, false doctrine, and fellowship, so we rejoice in the measure of obedience Missouri has shown in its formal separation from the ALC. May it prove to be a separation in fact!

John Lau



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