

Notes on the Greek New Testament
Week 101 – Romans 9:19-10:11

Day 501: Romans 9:19-21

Verse 19

Ἐρεῖς μοι οὖν, τί [οὖν] ἔτι μέμφεται; τῷ γὰρ βουλήματι αὐτοῦ τίς ἀνθέστηκεν;

Cf. 3:6. Paul anticipates the question that may be raised by his reassertion of God's sovereignty in salvation in v.18.

ἐρεῖς Verb, fut act indic, 2 s λεγω
 ἔτι still, yet, moreover
 μεμφομαι find fault with, blame
 βουλημα, τος n will, purpose, intention
 ἀνθέστηκεν Verb, perf act indic, 3 s
 ἀνθιστημι resist, oppose, withstand

Verse 20

ὦ ἄνθρωπε, μενοῦνγε σὺ τίς εἶ ὁ ἀνταποκρινόμενος τῷ θεῷ; μὴ ἐρεῖ τὸ πλάσμα τῷ πλάσαντι, τί με ἐποίησας οὕτως;

"Paul again does not answer as we might expect. He offers no logical explanation of how God's determinative will and human responsibility cohere. Still less does he suggest that God's will is but his response to human decisions – as we would have expected him to say if, indeed, God's will to save were based on foreseen faith. No, rather than taking the defensive, Paul goes full speed ahead with yet further assertions of the freedom of God to do as he wants with his creatures." Moo. Wright argues that Paul is continuing to reflect on the history of Israel and now has in mind the story of the exile. His point is that "God has the right both to remake nations and peoples in a new way and to withhold judgment for a while in order that salvation may spread to the rest of the world."

ὦ O!
 μενουν and μενουνγε rather, on the contrary, indeed, much more
 ἀνταποκρινομαι reply, answer back
 ἐρεῖ Verb, fut act indic, 3 s λεγω
 πλασμα, τος n what is moulded (of clay)
 πλάσαντι Verb, aor act ptc, m dat s
 πλάσσω mould, form; perhaps create
 οὕτως thus, in this way

Dodd says that Paul's argument here is "the weakest part of the whole epistle," adding that man is not a pot and will answer back. But this is to miss the point. Moo writes, "As in the case with any analogy, the parallel is by no means perfect. Human beings, created in God's own image, have the power to think and make decisions; they are far more than inert clay. But the analogy works well as the one vital point the apostle wants to make here: God's right to fashion from the clay the kinds of vessels he wants."

For this analogy, cf. Is 29:15,16; 45:9; 64:8,9; Jer 18:1-6.

Wright comments, "If Bonhoeffer was right that putting the knowledge of good and evil before the knowledge of God was indeed, and remains, the primal act of human rebellion, then for a human to set up a standard and demand that God keeps to it already smacks of such rebellion. And where the humans are themselves among the sinners who have no claim on God except for judgment, their choice is in fact between accepting that judgment at once and accepting instead God's strange purpose in remoulding them to carry forward his larger plans. Paul's quotation of Isa 29:16 indicates that this is what he has in mind: the judgment on Israel, following its utter infidelity, will be the prelude to a new beginning, and Israel has no right to complain if this is so."

Verse 21

ἢ οὐκ ἔχει ἐξουσίαν ὁ κεραμεὺς τοῦ πηλοῦ ἐκ τοῦ αὐτοῦ φυράματος ποιῆσαι ὃ μὲν εἰς τιμὴν σκεῦος, ὃ δὲ εἰς ἀτιμίαν;

ἢ or
 ἐξουσια, ας f authority, right, power
 κεραμευς, εως m potter
 πηλος, ου m mud, clay
 φυραμα, τος n lump
 ποιῆσαι Verb, aor act infin ποιω
 τιμη, ης f honour, respect, price
 σκευος, ους n object, thing, vessel
 ἀτιμια, ας f disgrace, shame, dishonour

"Paul uses similar language to describe the different roles believers have in the 'household of God' (see 2 Tim 2:20). So, again, he may be depicting the different roles people have played in salvation history. But the parallel with 'objects of his wrath' and 'objects of his mercy, whom he prepared in advance for glory' (Rom 9:22-23) suggest rather that he is thinking of God's freedom to choose some people to be saved and leave others in their spiritual deadness." Moo.

The contrast may be between the larger part of Israel, presently in rebellion against God, and the 'remnant' of believing Israel through whom the gospel in presently being brought to the world. God has made these two from the same lump.

Day 502: Romans 9:22-26

Verse 22

εἰ δὲ θέλων ὁ θεὸς ἐνδείξασθαι τὴν ὀργὴν
καὶ γνωρίσαι τὸ δυνατόν αὐτοῦ ἤνεγκεν
ἐν πολλῇ μακροθυμίᾳ σκευὴ ὀργῆς
κατηρτισμένα εἰς ἀπωλείαν,

Verses 22-24 form an unfinished sentence.
The sense is, '... Wouldn't that put the matter in a different light?'

εἰ here = 'what if...'

θέλω wish, will

θέλων – God determined to delay the punishment of those rebelling against him for the very purpose of making a public display of his wrath and power at the end of history.

ἐνδείξασθαι Verb, aor midd infin

ἐνδεικνυμαι see v.17

ὀργη, ης f wrath, anger

γνωρίζω make known, disclose, know

δυνατος, η, ον strong, powerful; το

δυνατον power

ἤνεγκεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s φερω

bring, carry, bear, lead

μακροθυμία, ας f longsuffering, patience

σκευος, ους see v.21

ὀργη, ης f wrath, anger

κατηρτισμένα Verb, perf pass ptc, n

nom/acc pl καταρτιζω make complete;

act & midd make, prepare

ἀπωλεία, ας f destruction, utter ruin

Wright comments, "Paul is speaking at two levels. He is talking of the pre-exilic generation, with whom God bore patiently despite their persistent idolatry, sending prophet after prophet to them until the only reaction left was the devastating judgment of exile. And he is talking of his own generation, those upon whom, as he said in 1 Thess 2:16, wrath was now coming 'to the uttermost.'"

Verse 23

καὶ ἵνα γνωρίσῃ τὸν πλοῦτον τῆς δόξης
αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ σκευὴ ἐλέους, ἃ προητοίμασεν
εἰς δόξαν,

καὶ ἵνα is supported by p⁴⁶ vid & A *et al*, a few MSS, including B, read simply ἵνα. The absence of καὶ was probably an attempt to simplify the construction.

God's delay serves also the greater purpose of displaying his glory in salvation.

γνωρίσῃ Verb, aor act subj, 3 s γνωρίζω

see v.22

πλοῦτος, ου m & n riches, wealth

δόξα, ης f glory

ἐλεος, ους n mercy, compassion

προετοιμάζω prepare beforehand

Note that this latter group are not *deserving* of glory as the former are deserving of wrath.

"Behind verses 22-23 is a Jewish tradition that questioned why God was waiting so long to judge sinners and establish justice in the world. The cry of the martyrs in Revelation 6:10 reflects the same question: 'How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?' Paul answers the question by showing how God is using this time before the end to prepare for an even greater display of his powerful judgment and to bring glory to his chosen people." Moo.

Verse 24

οὓς καὶ ἐκάλεσεν ἡμᾶς οὐ μόνον ἔξ
Ἰουδαίων ἀλλὰ καὶ ἔξ ἔθνων;

μονον adv only, alone

Ἰουδαίος, α, ον a Jew, Jewish, Judean

ἔθνος, ους n nation, people; τα ἔ.

Gentiles

The covenant promise has not failed but comes to effect in the true Israel, the children of promise, the true seed (cf. Galatians 3-4). Basic to Paul's thought is the promise given to Abraham that in his seed *all the families of the earth* will be blessed. This, God has accomplished by 'calling' whom he wills to be his own.

Verses 25-29

In verses 25-26 Paul shows how the Old Testament confirms God's purpose to call the Gentiles. In verses 27-29 he shows that the Old Testament confirms God's promise to call *some* from among the Jews.

Verse 25

ὡς καὶ ἐν τῷ Ὡσηὲ λέγει, Καλέσω τὸν οὐ
λαόν μου λαόν μου καὶ τὴν οὐκ
ἠγαπημένην ἠγαπημένην·

λαος, ου m **people, a people**
ἠγαπημένην Verb, perf pass ptc, f acc s
ἀγαπαω **love, show love for**

A free quotation of Hos 2:23 (2:25 LXX).

Verse 26

καὶ ἔσται ἐν τῷ τόπῳ οὗ ἐρρέθη αὐτοῖς,
Οὐ λαός μου ὑμεῖς, ἐκεῖ κληθήσονται υἱοὶ
θεοῦ ζῶντος.

A verbatim quotation of the LXX of Hos 1:10a
(2:1 LXX).

ἔσται Verb, fut indic, 2 s εἶμι
τοπος, ου m **place**
οὗ adv **where**
ἐρρέθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s λεγω
ἐκεῖ **there, in that place, to that place**
κληθήσονται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 pl
καλεω
ζαω **live, be alive**

In Hosea the reference is to the northern tribes of Israel, previously rejected by God but on whom he will now show mercy. But Paul picks up on the echo in Hosea of the promise made to Abraham (cf. Hos 1:10 and Gen 13:16; 22:17; 28:14; 32:12 and also the quotation Paul uses in v.27). It is part of Paul's argument that God is fulfilling his promise made long ago to Abraham in saving a people from every nation under heaven. Wright adds, "Together, the two Hosea passages speak of the restoration Israel can expect after exile: it will be a strange reversal of judgment, in which a new word of grace will be spoken to a new people."

Day 503: Romans 9:27-29

Verses 27-29

"In the preceding verses the call of the Gentiles had been supported by and represented as the fulfilment of Old Testament promises. In these three verses the Isaianic witness is added to confirm Paul's thesis that the covenant promise did not contemplate or guarantee the salvation of all ethnic Israel." Murray.

Verse 27

Ἡσαΐας δὲ κράζει ὑπὲρ τοῦ Ἰσραήλ, Ἐὰν
ἦ ὁ ἀριθμὸς τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραήλ ὡς ἡ ἄμμος
τῆς θαλάσσης, τὸ ὑπόλειμμα σωθήσεται·

Cf. Is 10:22-23.

κραζω **cry out, call out**
ἐὰν **if, even if, though**
ἦ Verb, pres subj, 3s εἶμι
ἀριθμος, ου m **number, total**
ἄμμος, ου f **sand, seashore**
θαλασσα, ης f **sea**
ὑπολειμμα, τος n **remnant**

"The remnant conception emerged in the prophets as a message of both judgment and hope – judgment, because the continuing sinfulness of Israel brought God's judgment on the people as a whole, resulting in the salvation of only some of the people, hope, because despite Israel's sinfulness, God maintained his commitment to his covenant and pledged to save at least some of the people." Moo.

σωθήσεται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 s σωζω
save, rescue, heal

Verse 28

λόγον γὰρ συντελῶν καὶ συντέμνων
ποιήσει κύριος ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς.

συντελεω **complete, carry out, establish**
συντεμνω **cut short, bring about swiftly**
γη, γης f **earth**

Some MSS (followed by the TR), have a longer reading, conforming Paul's quotation to the LXX.

"Verse 28, which quotes from Isaiah 10:23, is difficult to interpret. But probably it reinforces the note of judgment from Romans 9:27: God will carry out the judgment he has decreed against Israel with certainty and with despatch." Moo.

Verse 29

καὶ καθὼς προεἶρηκεν Ἡσαΐας, Εἰ μὴ κύριος Σαβαωθ ἐγκατέλιπεν ἡμῖν σπέρμα, ὡς Σόδομα ἂν ἐγενήθημεν καὶ ὡς Γόμορρα ἂν ὁμοιωθῆμεν.

προεἶρηκεν Verb, perf act indic, 3 s
προλεγω say beforehand, warn in advance

Σαβαωθ (a descriptive name of God in Hebrew, lit. of the armies) κυριος Σ. Lord Almighty

ἐγκατέλιπεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s
ἐγκαταλειπω abandon, leave behind
σπερμα, τος n seed, offspring

The only change from the LXX of Is 1:9 is that Paul uses here the word 'seed' rather than 'little remnant'. In Paul's teaching here 'seed' and 'remnant' have the same meaning, namely those who are partakers of the promise, cf. v.8. "The 'remnant,' the 'holy seed' (cf. Isa 6:13; Ezra 9:2; Mal 2:15), is critical to Paul's argument in chap 11." Wright.

ὁμοιωθῆμεν Verb, aor pass indic, 1 pl
ὁμοιω make like; pass resemble, be like

"Cf. Gen 19:29, in which Lot and his family escape from Sodom because 'God remembered Abraham' – a foretaste of the exodus [cf. Exod 2:24 with Pss 105:8-9, 42; 106:45], and now of the new exodus that happens in the gospel." Wright.

Wright concludes, "The story Paul has told in vv. 6-29 is the story of what it means for Israel to be the people of the crucified Messiah... This is the hidden dimension of God's strange purpose of election: Israel has been called, exactly as in 5:20 and 7:7-25, to be the place where sin gathers itself into one place in order to be dealt with at last. Israel is the people through whom the evil of the world is funneled down onto the representative Messiah. The story of Abraham's family through the exodus and exile to the Messiah himself is a story of the cross casting its shadow ahead of it. The extraordinary things Paul says about God's strange ways with Israel, especially in 9:14-24, all reflect the theology of the cross he stated in 8:3. The judgment on Israel – including its 'hardening' in unbelief! – is the result of the divine purpose, that the Messiah would bear, all by himself, the weight of the world's sin and death. This in turn looks on to the conclusion in chap 11, as we shall see."

Day 504: Romans 9:30-10:4**9:30-10:13**

The emphasis on divine sovereignty in the preceding verses does not eliminate human responsibility, nor is the one incompatible with the other.

The theme of righteousness and faith dominate the following paragraphs. Paul contrasts two kinds of righteousness, each contrast occupying a central place in each of these three paragraphs:

- i) 'Righteousness that is by faith' versus 'a law of righteousness' 9:30-31 – paragraph 9:30-33;
- ii) 'God's righteousness' versus 'their own [righteousness]' 10:3 – paragraph 10:1-4;
- iii) 'The righteousness that is by faith' (10:6) versus 'the righteousness that is by the law' (10:5) – paragraph 10:5-13.

"Israel failed to enjoy the blessings of the messianic salvation because she had been preoccupied with a righteousness based on the law. Gentiles, on the other hand, are streaming into the kingdom because they have embraced a righteousness based on faith." Moo.

Nevertheless, we should remember that it is precisely through the ministry of the 'remnant' within Israel that the gospel has come to the Gentiles. The subject matter of chapters 9-11 remains the covenant faithfulness of the God of Abraham.

Verse 30

Τί οὖν ἐροῦμεν; ὅτι ἔθνη τὰ μὴ διωκοντὰ δικαιοσύνην κατέλαβεν δικαιοσύνην, δικαιοσύνην δὲ τὴν ἐκ πίστεως·

ἐροῦμεν Verb, fut act indic, 1 pl λεγω
ἔθνη Noun, nom & acc pl ἔθνος, οὗς n
nation, people; τὰ ἐ. Gentiles
διωκω seek after, pursue, follow
δικαιοσύνη, ης f righteousness, what is right
καταλαμβάνω obtain, attain
πιστις, εὖς f faith, trust, belief

The Gentiles were "ignorant of God's promises and excluded from the covenant, they had no concept of right standing with God. But when God offered it to them in his grace and through the preaching of the gospel, they responded in faith and so obtained it." Moo.

Verse 31

Ἰσραὴλ δὲ διωκων νόμον δικαιοσύνης εἰς νόμον οὐκ ἔφθασεν.

νομον δικαιοσυνης this phrase is the subject of some debate. It is probably shorthand, meaning that Israel sought righteousness through their own observance of the Mosaic law. Paul expands this thought further in the first half of the following verse.

"The thought, in fact, is here not far from 7:21-25: the more Israel clung to the law, the more it found that evil lay close at hand, and that covenant membership could not be had that way." Wright.

ἔφθασεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s φθανω
arrive at, achieve

Verse 32

διὰ τί; ὅτι οὐκ ἐκ πίστεως ἀλλ• ὡς ἐξ ἔργων· προσέκοψαν τῷ λίθῳ τοῦ προσκόμματος,

They had seen the law as a means of providing them with inalienable identity as the people of God over against those without the law, rather than seeing its true intent (cf. 10:4).

προσκοπτω stumble, strike something
against

λίθος, ου m stone, precious stone
προσκομμα, ατος n that which causes
stumbling or offence

"Paul explains this basic problem again in 9:32b-33, but in different terms. He draws the picture of a walker so intent on pursuing a certain goal that she stumbles and falls over a rock lying in her path. So Israel, myopically concentrating on the law and its demands, missed Christ, 'the stone' that God placed in her path. This imagery comes from Isaiah 8:14 and 28:16, which Paul quotes in Romans 9:33. These texts, along with another 'stone' text (Ps 118:22), are quoted together in 1 Peter 2:6-8, suggesting that they may have been brought together via the key word 'stone' by Christians before Paul's day." Moo.

Verse 33

καθως γέγραπται, Ἴδου τίθημι ἐν Σιων λίθον προσκόμματος καὶ πέτραν σκανδάλου, καὶ ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ• αὐτῷ οὐ κατασχυνθήσεται.

γέγραπται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s γραφω
τιθημι place, set, appoint

πετρα, ας f rock, solid rock
σκανδαλον, ου n that which causes sin/
offence, obstacle

πιστευω believe (in), have faith (in)
κατασχυνω put to shame, humiliate

Verse 1

Ἀδελφοί, ἡ μὲν εὐδοκία τῆς ἐμῆς καρδίας καὶ ἡ δέησις πρὸς τὸν θεὸν ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν εἰς σωτηρίαν.

ἀδελθοι contrasts the spiritual relationship Paul has with fellow Christians with the fleshly relationship he has with Israel (cf. 9:3).

εὐδοκία, ας f good will, pleasure, desire
ἐμος, η, ον 1st pers possessive adj my,
mine

δεησις, εως f prayer, plea
σωτηρια, ας f salvation

"This is the desire of his heart, the desire that springs out of the grief and pain that reside there (9:2); and this desire turns to prayer... He wants to draw his largely Gentile audience in Rome (11:13) to share his earnest desire for the salvation of Jews." Wright.

Verse 2

μαρτυρῶ γὰρ αὐτοῖς ὅτι ζῆλον θεοῦ ἔχουσιν, ἀλλ• οὐ κατ• ἐπίγνωσιν·

μαρτυρεω bear witness, testify
ζηλος, ου m, and ους n zeal, jealousy
ἐπιγνωσις, εως f knowledge

Religious zeal in itself is of no benefit nor is it pleasing to God. For a supreme example of such misguided zeal, see that of Paul/Saul himself prior to his conversion (Acts 22:3; 26:5, 8; Gal 1:14; Phil 3:6).

Verse 3

ἀγνοοῦντες γὰρ τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ δικαιοσύνην, καὶ τὴν ἰδίαν [δικαιοσύνην] ζητοῦντες στήσαι, τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ τοῦ θεοῦ οὐχ ὑπετάγησαν·

ἀγνοεω not know, be ignorant, fail to
understand, disregard

τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ δικαιοσύνην "God's righteousness' is a shorthand, here, for the entire sweep of covenantally loyal actions God had undertaken from Abraham to the Messiah. Paul's kinsfolk, like his own earlier self, have remained ignorant of it all, unaware that this was what God was up to and that it was what God had said all along.

"As a result, they have not submitted to this covenant history. They have resisted it, like the wicked tenants in Jesus' parable (Mark 12:1-12 and par., culminating in the rejection – and vindication – of the 'stone' the builders refused), hoping to claim the inheritance as their own. They have attempted, in other words, to set up a status of covenant membership in which the principle of 9:6-29 would be quietly set aside; this would be a status for all Jews, and only for Jews. No pruning down to a remnant; no admission of Gentiles (except by becoming full Jews through proselyte initiation). This is the 'righteousness' they sought to establish: a status that would be 'their own.' This does not refer to a status they might have achieved by moral effort, by climbing a ladder called 'works,' but a status that would be theirs and theirs only. Romans 10:3 is a statement of what Paul principally objects to, on the basis of the gospel, within the Judaism to which he had himself belonged. He does not regard his contemporaries as proto-Pelagians, trying to pull themselves up by their own moral bootstraps in order to be good enough for God and to earn 'works-righteousness' of that sort. Rather, they believed that God's covenant with Abraham was their exclusive and inalienable possession, whereas Paul had come to believe that, through the death and resurrection of the Messiah, the long covenant story as set out in the Scriptures had all along had a different shape. Paul is not turning his back on Judaism and its traditions. He is claiming to interpret them in their own terms, through their own Scriptures, and around their own Messiah (9:4-5)." Wright.

ἴδιος, α, ον one's own

Cf. Phil 3:9.

ζητοῦντες Verb, pres act ptc, m nom s

ζητεω seek

στήσαι Verb, 1 aor act infin ἵστημι and

ἵστανω establish, fix

ὑπετάγησαν Verb, aor pass indic, 3 pl

ὑποτασσω subordinate; pass. be subject, submit to

I.e. failed to believe in Jesus Christ.

Verse 4

τέλος γὰρ νόμου Χριστὸς εἰς δικαιοσύνην παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι.

τέλος, οὐς n end, conclusion, termination

The end (τέλος) of the law was righteousness, but because of the weakness of the flesh it could not deliver. But now Christ is the end (goal) of the law εἰς δικαιοσύνη (cf. 2 Cor 5:21). Christ delivers for us what the law could not, and by this means both fulfils and brings it to its proper fruition. "The Messiah is the goal of the Torah so that there may be righteousness – the righteousness of the 'Torah of righteousness!' – for all who have faith." Wright. Wright provides extensive argument for this understanding of τέλος as 'goal,' 'completion,' rather than 'abrogation,' 'termination.' He shows how it reflects Paul's argument throughout Romans. Moo prefers to understand the phrase εἰς δικαιοσύνην as stating the purpose of the first clause rather than qualifying νομου.

Day 505: Romans 10:5-11

Verses 5-11

Wright argues that our reading of these verses must be shaped firstly by "think[ing] one's way into a world of thought that Paul would have taken for granted" (the world of second Temple Judaism), and secondly by taking note of the entire context of the scriptures he quotes. So Wright comments, "At first sight, admittedly, it seems ... here is Moses telling people to keep the Torah, and here is something called 'the righteousness of faith' telling them simply to believe!" But to read Paul in this way is to read him in a post-Enlightenment framework rather than in his own context. So Wright continues: "Deuteronomy 30 comes immediately after the chapters in which Moses has held out to the people the covenantal blessings and curses... The final and most emphatic curse is exile: Israel will not simply suffer blight, mildew, barrenness, poverty, sickness, and a hundred other evils in the land, but will ultimately be driven off the land itself, scattered among the nations of the earth (28:63-68; 29:22-28...). It is assumed that all these things will come to pass; Deut 29:4 bewails the fact that Israel has remained hard hearted, and the curses are bound to follow.

"But after they have all happened, and in particular after the exile has done its worst, then there will come a great reversal. Deuteronomy 30 is a prediction of the return from exile, pointing to the spiritual and moral renewal that will make that return possible and appropriate. Israel will return to YHWH with all its heart and soul (30:2, 6). YHWH will turn Israel's captivity around, and regather his people (vv. 3-5). YHWH will circumcise Israel's heart to love YHWH, so that Israel may live (v. 6). Blessing will once more follow, if Israel will now be obedient (vv. 8-10). And the central blessing is life itself: God has set life before them (v. 15), the life that results from keeping the commandments (v. 16) as opposed to disobeying and so incurring death (vv. 17-18). Life is what they must choose (v. 19). They must love YHWH, obey his voice, and cleave to him, 'for he is your life, and the length of your days' (v. 20). The whole chapter might be entitled, 'the new obedience which brings new life.'

"In the middle of Deuteronomy [30] we find vv. 11-14, the passage Paul quotes in 10:6-8. The commandment is not too hard; it is not far off. You do not need someone to go up to heaven and bring it down, so that you may hear it and do it; you do not need someone to cross the sea and fetch it, so that you may hear it and do it (this language about impossible quests to the deep, or to heaven, has become proverbial in 4 Ezra 4:7-8). 'The word is near you; it is in your mouth, and in your heart, so that you may do it' (v. 14). The chapter, in other words, presumes that Israel has been sent into exile and is now going to turn to YHWH from the heart, and proceeds to explain what it really means to 'do' the law and so to 'live.' This life-giving 'doing' will be a matter, not of a struggle to obey an apparently impossible law, but of heart and mouth being renewed by God's living 'word.' It will not be a matter of someone else teaching it to them from a great distance. Verse 14, significantly, omits even the mention of 'hearing' the commandment; it will be inside them, in their mouth and heart. We cannot but think of Jer 31:33-34: In the restoration after the exile, the people will not need to be taught the commandments, because they will be written on their hearts. And this cannot but remind us of Rom 2:25-29, a passage that Paul is about to echo in 10:9-10. It should be clear already that Paul has the context, and overall meaning, of Deuteronomy 30 firmly in mind. This is anything but a clever prooftext taken out of context.

"This should make it clear, too, that Paul's quotation of Lev 18:5 in 10:5 is not set in opposition to Deuteronomy 30. He is not setting up a straw person ('Moses encouraged that stupid and impossible system we know as works-righteousness') in order then to knock it down with a bit of clever but slippery eisegesis of another part of the Pentateuch... Lev 18:5 brought together two things, 'doing the law' and 'living'; 'the one who does these things shall live by them.' This is what the 'righteousness which is from the the law' declares; this is how Leviticus 18 was heard in Paul's own day. Had Paul really meant that Christ is the termination of the law, we should have expected him to oppose such a view. But he does not suppose that Deuteronomy does any such thing. It offers, he insists, a fresh explanation, granted exile and return, for what 'do the law and live' might actually mean. In the original passage, the lines Paul quotes each end with 'so that you may do it.' Here, as in 2:25-29 and elsewhere, Paul's point is that those who share Christian faith are in fact 'doing the law' in the sense that Deuteronomy and Jeremiah intended. Those who believe that Jesus is Lord, and that God raised him from the dead, are the new-covenant people, the returned-from-exile people. The story of Israel in 9:6-29 took us as far as exile, pointing ahead to what might happen beyond (9:24). That story reached its dramatic climax in the Messiah, the one upon whom the curses ultimately fell (Gal 3:13). Now all who believe in the Messiah, whether they be Jew or Gentile, are thereby 'fulfilling the law'; they are 'doing' it in the sense Deuteronomy 30 intended; and they thereby find 'life,' as 8:9-11 demonstrated, the life that Torah wanted to give but could not (7:10), the life that can now be spoken of more specifically as 'salvation' (10:9, 10, 13). And that, of course, was all along the point of the paragraph (10:1-13). Paul has prayed for the salvation of his kinsfolk; now, starting with Torah itself, he has shown the way by which that salvation may be found."

Verse 5

Μωϋσῆς γὰρ γράφει τὴν δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐκ [τοῦ] νόμου ὅτι ὁ ποιήσας αὐτὰ ἄνθρωπος ζήσεται ἐν αὐτοῖς.

The γὰρ indicates that Paul is now providing an explanation of "why the Messiah is the goal of the law for righteousness to all who believe... The γὰρ, in fact, governs vv. 5-9 as a whole, not simply v. 5. Paul's explanation runs as follows: 'For, while Moses does indeed write concerning Torah-righteousness that "the one who does them shall live in them," what "doing" and "living" come to mean when God restores Israel after exile, is defined afresh by Deuteronomy 30, not in terms of an impossible demand, but in terms of God's gift of God's own word; and this "word" is the word of faith, faith that Jesus is Lord and that God raised him from the dead.' This, taken as a whole, explains verse 4, and thereby, in turn, explains how salvation is now available for all who share this faith." Wright.

δικαιοσύνη, ης f righteousness
ζήσεται Verb, fut mid indic, 3s ζαω live,
be alive

Cf. Lev 18:5, also Gal 3:12.

Verse 6

ἢ δὲ ἐκ πίστεως δικαιοσύνη οὕτως λέγει, Μὴ εἴπῃς ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου, Τίς ἀναβήσεται εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν; τοῦτ' ἔστιν Χριστὸν καταγαγεῖν·

πιστις, εως f faith, trust
οὕτως thus, in this way
εἴπῃς Verb, aor act subj, 3 s λεγω

The quotation alludes to Deut 9:4 which is a warning to the Israelites against thinking that they were accepted by God because of their own righteousness.

ἀναβήσεται Verb, fut midd dep indic, 3 s
ἀναβαινω go up, ascend
καταγαγεῖν Verb, aor act infin καταγω
bring down, bring

Wright comments here regarding Paul, "Here he casts Jesus himself in the role that other thinkers gave to Torah or to Wisdom. Jesus the Messiah is himself God's life-giving, covenant-renewing, community-defining gift to God's people. His 'coming down from heaven' and his 'coming up from the deep' are the events through which this gift is made available to all." Wright.

Verse 7

ἢ, Τίς καταβήσεται εἰς τὴν ἄβυσσον; τοῦτ' ἔστιν Χριστὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναγαγεῖν.

ἢ or
καταβαινω come or go down, descend
ἀβυσσος, ου f abyss, underworld, world
of dead
νεκρος, α, ον dead
ἀναγαγεῖν Verb, aor act infin ἀναγω
bring up, lead up

Verse 8

ἀλλὰ τί λέγει; Ἐγγύς σου τὸ ῥῆμά ἐστιν, ἐν τῷ στόματί σου καὶ ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου· τοῦτ' ἔστιν τὸ ῥῆμα τῆς πίστεως ὃ κηρύσσομεν.

ἐγγυς adv near
ῥημα, ατος n word, thing, matter
στομα, τος n mouth
κηρυσσω preach, proclaim

"The general point he wants to make about the righteousness by faith is clear enough:

Through Christ's being brought down to earth (i.e. his incarnation, Rom 10:6) and his being brought up from the dead (10:7), God has made righteousness readily available (10:8). One does not have to ascend into heaven or plumb the depths of the sea to discover it. All one needs to do to attain righteousness is to respond in faith to the gospel as it is preached." Moo.

Moses' words, which in context refer to the law, Paul applies to the gospel. Some think that Paul, viewing Christ as the end of the law, is here showing that what the Old Testament said of the law now applies to Christ. But the focus is rather on the accessible nature of God's revelation. "As God made available his will to his old covenant people, so now he makes available his will for the new covenant. Yet the new covenant word has an added element of 'nearness.' Christ, as the One who brings the law to its culmination (v.4), also writes that law on the hearts of God's people, as was predicted by Jeremiah in his famous 'new covenant' prophecy (Jer 31:31-34). So in Christ, the law has come near to God's people in a way that it never had before. All that is now required of human beings is that they accept God's word in faith." Moo.

"God has brought his 'word' near to you, placing it on your lips as you confess Jesus as Lord, writing it on your heart as you believe that he was raised from the dead... [Paul's] own announcing of Jesus as the risen Lord, summoning people to 'the obedience of faith' (1:5), is itself part of the answer to the prayer of 10:1." Wright.

Verse 9

ὅτι ἐὰν ὁμολογήσῃς ἐν τῷ στόματί σου
κύριον Ἰησοῦν, καὶ πιστεύσῃς ἐν τῇ
καρδίᾳ σου ὅτι ὁ θεὸς αὐτὸν ἤγειρεν ἐκ
νεκρῶν, σωθήσῃ·

ἐὰν if
ὁμολογήσῃς Verb, aor act subj ὁμολογεω
confess, declare

The confession, 'Jesus is Lord' is one of the
oldest expressions of Christian belief, cf. Acts
22:16; Phil 2:11; 1 Cor 12:3; 2 Cor 4:5.

πιστεύσῃς Verb, aor act subj, 2 s πιστευω
believe (in), have faith (in)

ἐγειρω raise
νεκρῶς, α, ον dead

"Jesus' resurrection was, for Paul, the demonstration that he really was the Messiah; his belief in Jesus as the turning-point of Jewish and world history, the bearer of God's purposes, the climax of the story of God's covenant, is unthinkable without it... Belief in Jesus' resurrection is thus not an arbitrary dogmatic test, a demonstration that one is prepared to believe something ridiculous on someone else's supposed divine authority. Genuine heart-felt belief can only come about, Paul believed, through the action of the Spirit in the gospel. This faith is the sure sign that the gospel has done its work." Wright.

σωθήσῃ Verb, aor pass subj, 2 s σωζω
save, rescue, heal

Verse 10

καρδίᾳ γὰρ πιστεύεται εἰς δικαιοσύνην,
στόματι δὲ ὁμολογεῖται εἰς σωτηρίαν.

σωτηρία, ας f salvation

Wright comments on the parallelism of these two phrases: "The two are closely correlated but not identical. 'Righteousness' denotes the status people have on the basis of faith: a present legal status that anticipates the future verdict of the divine lawcourt, a present covenantal status that anticipates final affirmation of membership in God's people. 'Salvation' denotes the actual rescue from sin and death effected in the future by the promised resurrection, and likewise anticipated in the present (so, e.g., 8:24). 'Salvation' is not a status but an event, and it is promised to those who have 'righteousness' as their status.

"The connection of righteousness with faith is clear; the connection of salvation with verbal confession of Jesus as Lord is not so obvious. It may well be that Paul is thinking of 'Jesus is Lord' as the baptismal confession, and that, as in Romans 6, he is understanding baptism as the present anticipation of final resurrection – that is, salvation from sin and death."

Verse 11

λέγει γὰρ ἡ γραφή, Πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ'
αὐτῷ οὐ κατασχυνθήσεται.

γραφή, ης f writing, Scripture
κατασχυνω put to shame, humiliate,
disgrace

Cf. Isa 28:16. On the theme of shame, cf. 1:16;
5:5 and 9:33.