

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Our understanding of how the old and new covenants relate largely determines our understanding of how the Old and New Testaments relate. I frame the issue this way to highlight the importance of the covenants. Our grasp of the character of the two covenants will have a wide-ranging impact on our grasp of the content of revelation given under those covenants.

All the attention that E. P. Sanders has generated concerning Paul and the law has not produced a corresponding interest in analyzing Paul's understanding of the Mosaic covenant. Pauline scholars continue to treat the Mosaic law in abstraction from its historical nexus in the Mosaic covenant.¹ Therefore, certain fundamental questions suffer from scholarly neglect. For example, what is “new” about the new covenant? Surprisingly few Pauline studies directly address this question although many vexing Pauline problems stem from a failure to answer it correctly. Even more Pauline scholars have ignored the related question, what is “old” about the old covenant? This study seeks to tackle this long-standing problem. Many legitimate questions will necessarily remain unanswered concerning this topic because of the immense scope of the covenant concept. The central question of this study concerns the character of the Mosaic covenant.²

What is the character of the Mosaic covenant in the theology of Paul? I will advance the following thesis: Paul conceives of the Mosaic (old) covenant as fundamentally non-eschatological in contrast to the eschatological nature of the new covenant. Paul declares that the Mosaic covenant is now old because it belongs to the old age, whereas the new covenant is new because it belongs to the new eschatological

¹ For the best overview of the vast literature on Paul and the law, see S. Westerholm, *Perspectives Old and New on Paul: The “Lutheran” Paul and His Critics* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004).

² The designation “Mosaic” covenant is not entirely felicitous because God cut the covenant with *Israel* through Moses as the covenantal mediator. “Israelite” covenant may serve as a more descriptive term because it specifically identifies the covenant partner. This study will use the traditional term “Mosaic” covenant for ease of reference as long as this distinction qualifies the common terminology.

age. This distinction has determinative effects. The old age is transitory and impotent, and therefore the Mosaic covenant is both transitory and ineffectual. The new covenant is both eternal and effectual because it belongs to the new age and partakes of the power of the new age, the Holy Spirit.

Another way to state the difference is as follows. As the eschatological covenant, the new covenant consists of what one could call “eschatological intervention,” while the old covenant does not. God intervenes through His Spirit in the new eschatological age in order to create what He calls for in the new covenant. The Mosaic covenant lacked this power to produce what it demanded. One could illustrate this point in the following poem:

To run and work the law commands,
 Yet gives me neither feet nor hands;
 But better news the gospel brings:
 It bids me fly and gives me wings.³

Before examining the merits of this thesis, we should quickly review the history of research and the relevant discussions to date. Few scholars have directly addressed Paul’s conception of the character of the Mosaic covenant. Therefore, the reader must begin with general trajectories of thought concerning continuity and discontinuity in Paul and then move to specific attempts to understand the Mosaic covenant in Paul.⁴

³ Quoted in F. F. Bruce, *Romans*, TNTC, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985), 154. Some attribute the poem to John Bunyan. W. Gadsby credits John Berridge as the author (*Gadsby’s Hymns Buckram: William Gadsby’s Catechism* [England: Gospel Standard Publications, 1999], 74). C. H. Spurgeon also credits Berridge (1716–1793) as follows: “Run, John, and work, the law commands, yet finds me neither feet nor hands, But sweeter news the gospel brings, it bids me fly and lends me wings!” (*The Salt-Cellars: Being a Collection of Proverbs, Together with Homely Notes Thereon* [London: Passmore and Alabaster, 1889], 200). Ralph Erksine (1685–1752) has a similar poem in his gospel sonnets: “a rigid matter was the law, demanding brick, denying straw, But when with gospel tongue it sings, it bids me fly and gives me wings” (*The Sermons and Practical Works of Ralph Erksine*, vol. 10 [Glasgow: W. Smith and J. Bryce, 1778], 283).

⁴ Spatial constraints necessitate the omission of the pre-Sanders history of this debate. P. Gräbe does a fine job of concisely surveying and summarizing the main lines of thought for the new covenant in the NT, the second-century Syrian tradition, and the history of theology. P. J. Gräbe, *New Covenant, New Community: The Significance of Biblical and Patristic Covenant Theology for Contemporary Understanding* (Carlisle, CA: Paternoster, 2006). For a study that focuses on the concept of covenant in the Ante-Nicene church fathers, see J. L. Duncan III, “The Covenant Idea in Ante-Nicene Theology,” Ph.D. diss. (New College, Scotland: The University

The Clash between Continuity and Discontinuity

James D. G. Dunn⁵ helpfully orients the reader to two dominant perspectives in Pauline scholarship concerning the newness of Paul's gospel: the "salvation history" (*heilsgeschichtlich*) and apocalyptic⁶ approaches. The first perspective states that Paul's gospel relates to the Old Testament as a renewed expression of God's Old Testament promises to Israel so that the new covenant fulfills the old covenant. The second perspective suggests that Paul advocated a clear and decisive break between the old and the new covenants so that the new covenant eschatologically "invades" the old one. Therefore, the first approach emphasizes continuity between Paul and the Old Testament, while the second focuses on discontinuity.

Dunn correctly identifies the reactionary nature of these two perspectives.⁷ The "New Perspective on Paul" and its emphasis on the continuity between Paul and his Jewish heritage arose as a reaction against the "Lutheran" antithesis between law and gospel, and its corresponding antithesis between Judaism and Christianity.⁸ The "apocalyptic" approach to Paul reacted against treatments that tended to downplay the eschatological nature of Paul's gospel.⁹

This book is not the place to examine each perspective in a comprehensive fashion. The main goal of this summary is to show that these opposing poles of thought in Pauline studies continue to clash

of Edinburgh, 1988). For a sustained study and critique of the federal form of covenant theology that flourished in the seventeenth century and its origins in the sixteenth century, see D. A. Weir, *The Origins of the Federal Theology in Sixteenth-Century Reformation Thought* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990).

⁵ J. D. G. Dunn, "How New Was Paul's Gospel? The Problem of Continuity and Discontinuity," in *Gospel in Paul: Studies on Corinthians, Galatians and Romans for Richard N. Longenecker*, ed. L. A. Jervis and P. Richardson, JSNTSup 108 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 367–88.

⁶ The reader should note R. B. Matlock's sustained criticism of labeling Paul's thought as apocalyptic. R. B. Matlock, *Unveiling the Apocalyptic Paul: Paul's Interpreters and the Rhetoric of Criticism*, JSNTSup 127 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996).

⁷ Dunn, "How New Was Paul's Gospel?" 367–68.

⁸ See the seminal work of E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977). See also the work of Dunn himself, who caused a further shift in understanding Paul based on the work of Sanders. J. D. G. Dunn, "The New Perspective on Paul," *BJRL* 65 (1983): 95–122. A collection of Dunn's essays is now available, which traces the development of Dunn's contribution to the New Perspective. See J. D. G. Dunn, *The New Perspective on Paul: Collected Essays*, WUNT 185 (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2005).

⁹ Dunn cites the influential work of E. Käsemann, "Primitive Christian Apocalyptic," in *New Testament Questions of Today* (London: SCM Press, 1969), 108–37.

as each perspective wins prominent proponents who forcefully advocate one approach over against the other.¹⁰

However, some scholars detect a false dichotomy in the way the debate has materialized: salvation history *or* apocalyptic. James D. G. Dunn¹¹ and D. A. Carson¹² both argue against an either-or approach. They advocate a balanced approach that integrates both salvation history and apocalyptic into the overall structure of Pauline thought.¹³ This study understands Paul along similar lines and attempts to build on this balanced approach.

The influential work of E. P. Sanders in particular has led to a more intense fixation on issues of continuity and discontinuity, and thus this brief history of interpretation must now move from gen-

¹⁰ R. B. Hays and N. T. Wright represent the *heilsgeschichtlich* side of the ledger, while scholars like J. C. Beker and J. L. Martyn occupy the “apocalyptic” side of the ledger. For the work of Hays and Wright see R. B. Hays, “Salvation History: The Theological Structure of Paul’s Thought (1 Thessalonians, Philippians and Galatians),” in *Pauline Theology: Thessalonians, Philippians, Galatians, Philemon*, vol. 1, ed. J. M. Bassler (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 227–46; id., *The Faith of Jesus Christ: The Narrative Substructure of Galatians 3:1–4:11*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001); and N. T. Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996). For the work of Beker and Martyn see J. C. Beker, *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990); and J. L. Martyn, *Galatians*, AB, vol. 33A (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1997); id., “Apocalyptic Antinomies in Paul’s Letter to the Galatians,” *NTS* 31 (1985): 410–24; id., “Events in Galatia: Modified Covenantal Nomism Versus God’s Invasion of the Cosmos in the Singular Gospel,” in *Pauline Theology: Thessalonians, Philippians, Galatians, Philemon*, vol. 1, ed. J. M. Bassler (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1985), 160–79.

¹¹ “In short, the degree of integration of the two perspectives (salvation-history and apocalyptic) within pre-Christian Judaism makes one wonder if the tendency to see the two perspectives as mutually exclusive is simply a false reading of Paul by technicians who have lost sight too much of the historical context within which Paul framed and preached his gospel.” Dunn, “How New Was Paul’s Gospel?” 385.

¹² “Nevertheless it is not uncommon for some scholars to stress one stance at the expense of the other. Some lay emphasis on the salvation-historical developments, and underline elements of continuity, others appeal to the apocalyptic and revelatory emphases in *mysterion*, and find a great deal of discontinuity.” D. A. Carson, “Mystery and Fulfillment: Toward a More Comprehensive Paradigm of Paul’s Understanding of the Old and the New,” in *Justification and Variegated Nomism*, vol. 2, ed. D. A. Carson, P. T. O’Brien, and M. A. Seifrid (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2004), 425–26. Carson offers his answer to this problem in saying, “Paul feels no tension between these two stances because, as he understands them, there isn’t any. . . . What starts off as almost intolerable paradox emerges as a coherent and interlocking web.” *Ibid.*, 427.

¹³ Despite the fact that they adopt the same approach, Dunn and Carson reach different conclusions on how to balance continuity and discontinuity. This study will spell out those differences at a later point.

eral interpretive frameworks to a more specific focus on the “Sanders revolution” with respect to grace and works in Paul.

E. P. Sanders

The paradigm shifting work of E. P. Sanders¹⁴ has dominated the Pauline landscape not so much by securing a consensus, but by setting the agenda for subsequent Pauline studies, which many call “post-Sanders.”¹⁵ Sanders argued that Second Temple Judaism was a religion of grace, not legalism. He coined the term *covenantal nomism* to express this “pattern of religion.”¹⁶ One obeyed the law as a response to grace already given; one did not obey the law in order to enter the covenant (getting in), but as an obedient expression of covenantal life already begun (staying in). The Sinai covenant was gracious from beginning¹⁷ to end in this system of thought.¹⁸

Despite Sanders's widespread influence, this study will suggest that Sanders's “covenantal nomism” fails to explain fully the differences between the “old” and “new” covenants because of a faulty understanding of grace. Specifically, I agree that the structure of grace

¹⁴ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*; id., *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983); id., *Paul, Past Masters* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991); id., *Judaism: Practice and Belief 63 BCE–66 CE* (Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1992).

¹⁵ B. Byrne, “Interpreting Romans Theologically in a Post-‘New Perspective’ Perspective,” *HTR* 94 (2001): 183–214; M. F. Bird, “When the Dust Finally Settles: Coming to a Post-New Perspective,” *CTR* n.s., 2 (2005): 57–70.

¹⁶ Sanders defines covenantal nomism as “the view that one’s place in God’s plan is established on the basis of the covenant and that the covenant requires as the proper response of man his obedience to its commandments, while providing means of atonement for transgression.” See Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 75. Jewish thought interpreted covenant as wedded with law in a marriage matrix in which they are simply two sides of the same coin. This dimension of Sanders’s interpretation of Judaism finds earlier assent. See the 1963 study of A. Jaubert, *La Notion D’Alliance dans le Judaïsme: Aux Abords de L’Ere Chrétienne*, *Patristica Sorbonensia* 6 (Paris: Cerf [Editions du Seuil], 1963), 457–58.

¹⁷ Israel’s election, that is, God’s choice to enter into a covenant relationship with Israel, was a free act of God’s grace. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 422.

¹⁸ The salvation that came from membership in the covenant was also by God’s grace. Even though the covenant required obedience to the covenant in order to maintain one’s place in the covenant, God provided a means of atonement and an opportunity for repentance to deal with the transgressions of his people. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 427. Sanders’s earlier study focuses on the same facts. See id., “The Covenant as a Soteriological Category and the Nature of Salvation in Palestinian and Hellenistic Judaism,” in *Jews, Greeks and Christians: Religious Cultures in Late Antiquity* 21, ed. R. Hamerton-Kelly and R. Scroggs (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1976), 262–78.

is the same, but I sharply disagree with Sanders over the nature of grace.¹⁹

The State of the Post-Sanders Discussion

Many of those who followed in Sanders's wake²⁰ adopted his understanding of Judaism, but not his view of Paul. In other words, they agreed with Sanders's assessment of Paul's context (i.e., the Judaism to which Paul responded) but not Paul's content (i.e., Paul's response to Judaism). Sanders argued that Paul attacked Jewish legalism, but only because he misunderstood the Judaism of his day. New Perspective adherents assert that Paul understood Second Temple Judaism, and therefore he did not attack Jewish legalism, but Jewish exclusivism.

Responses to Sanders and the New Perspective have followed four different tracks. First, some scholars responded exegetically by contesting the New Perspective reading of Paul's epistles.²¹ Second,

¹⁹ I find three major points of agreement with Sanders. First, God elected Israel for the sake of the fathers, not on the basis of their merits. Second, Israel received the law after God's gracious act of "redemption" so that obedience did not merit entrance into the covenant. Third, God gave Israel gracious provisions as part of the covenant for atonement and the restoration of fellowship. These observations underscore the structure or sequence of grace within the covenant. However, the nature of grace differs between the Sinai (extrinsic grace) and new (intrinsic grace) covenants. God did not give a covenant that could change the heart of Israel. He demanded fidelity to the covenant, but He did not give any intrinsic provisions that would create or cause Israel's fidelity to the covenant.

²⁰ Spatial limitations preclude a detailed summary of the "New Perspective." Suffice it to say that the New Perspective is not a monolithic movement but its adherents broadly share common convictions. They agree with Sanders's assessment of Second Temple Judaism, and they share Dunn's conviction that Paul did not attack a legalistic Judaism in his epistles. One of the first contributions concerning this new approach to Paul and Judaism was that of N. T. Wright, "The Paul of History and the Apostle of Faith," *TynBul* 29 (1978): 61–88. See also id., *What Saint Paul Really Said: Was Paul of Tarsus the Real Founder of Christianity?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997). For the work of J. D. G. Dunn, see especially Dunn, *The New Perspective on Paul*. See also id., "The New Perspective"; id., "Works of the Law and the Curse of the Law," *NTS* 31 (1985): 523–42; id., *Romans 1–8*, WBC, vol. 38A (Dallas: Word, 1988); id., *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998). See also D. B. Garlington, "The New Perspective on Paul: An Appraisal Two Decades Later," *CTR* n.s., 2 (2005): 17–38; and M. B. Thompson, *The New Perspective on Paul*, Grove Biblical Series (Cambridge: Grove, 2002).

²¹ See the following references arranged according to publication date: S. Kim, *The Origin of Paul's Gospel* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1981); T. R. Schreiner, "Is Perfect Obedience to the Law Possible: A Re-Examination of Galatians 3:10," *JETS* 27 (1984): 151–60; id., "Paul and Perfect Obedience to the Law: An Evaluation of the View of E. P. Sanders," *WTJ* 47, no.2 (1985): 245–78; R. H. Gundry, "Grace, Works, and Staying Saved in Paul," *Bib* 66 (1985): 1–38; S. Westerholm, *Israel's Law and the Church's Faith: Paul and His Recent Interpreters*

scholars have reevaluated the Judaism of Paul's day and begun to question Sanders's one-sided reading of Second Temple Judaism.²² Some scholars then combined both of these elements in contesting the New Perspective.²³ Fourth, some studies now call the New Perspective's reading of Luther into question.²⁴

(Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988); F. Thielman, *From Plight to Solution: A Jewish Framework for Understanding Paul's View of the Law in Galatians and Romans*, NovTSup 61 (Leiden: Brill, 1989); T. R. Schreiner, "'Works of Law' in Paul," *NovT* 33 (1991): 217–44; id., "Israel's Failure to Attain Righteousness in Romans 9:30–10:3," *Trinity Journal* 12 (1991): 209–20; M. A. Seifrid, *Justification by Faith: The Origin and Development of a Central Pauline Theme*, NovTSup 68 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1992); T. R. Schreiner, "Paul's View of the Law in Romans 10:4–5," *WTJ* 55 (1993): 113–35; id., *The Law and Its Fulfillment: A Pauline Theology of Law* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993); F. Thielman, *Paul and the Law: A Contextual Approach* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1994); M. A. Seifrid, "Blind Alleys in the Controversy Over the Paul of History," *TynBul* 45 (1994): 73–95; F. Thielman, *The Law and the New Testament: The Question of Continuity*, Companions to the New Testament (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1999); M. A. Seifrid, "The 'New Perspective on Paul' and Its Problems," *Them* 25 (2000): 4–18; T. R. Schreiner, *Paul, Apostle of God's Glory in Christ* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2001); S. Kim, *Paul and the New Perspective: Second Thoughts on the Origin of Paul's Gospel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002); P. Stühlmacher, *Revisiting Paul's Doctrine of Justification: A Challenge to the New Perspective* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2002); A. A. Das, *Paul and the Jews*, Library of Pauline Studies (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003); Westerholm, *Perspectives*; D. A. Carson, P. T. O'Brien, and M. A. Seifrid, eds., *Justification and Variegated Nomism*, vol. 2 (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2004); B. Vickers, *Jesus' Blood and Righteousness: Paul's Theology of Imputation* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2006).

²² C. L. Quarles, "The Soteriology of R. Akiba and E. P. Sanders' *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*," *NTS* 42 (1996): 185–95; F. Avemarie, *Tora und Leben: Untersuchungen zur Heilsbedeutung der Tora in der frühen rabbinischen Literatur*, TSAJ 55 (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1996); id., "Erwählung und Vergeltung. Zur optionalen Struktur rabbinischer Soteriologie," *NTS* 45 (1999): 108–26; M. A. Elliott, *The Survivors of Israel: A Reconsideration of the Theology of Pre-Christian Judaism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000); D. A. Carson, P. T. O'Brien, and M. Seifrid, eds., *Justification and Variegated Nomism*, vol. 1 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001); C. L. Quarles, "The New Perspective and Means of Atonement in Jewish Literature of the Second Temple Period," *CTR* n.s., 2 (2005): 39–56. Some scholars have also questioned Sanders's treatment of the Halakah, saying that he imposed the term *covenant* on it. Sanders does not dispute the centrality of the Halakah; he only insists that covenant is its conceptual framework. See Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 420–21; id., "Puzzling Out Rabbinic Judaism," in *Approaches to Ancient Judaism*, vol. 2, ed. W. S. Green (Chico: Scholars Press, 1978–85), 43–63. Though Jacob Neusner vigorously opposes Sanders on certain issues, he agrees with Sanders at this point. J. Neusner, "The Use of the Later Rabbinic Evidence for the Study of Paul," in *Approaches to Ancient Judaism*, vol. 2, ed. W. S. Green (Chico: Scholars Press, 1978–85), 43–63. A. F. Segal also defends Sanders's reading in Alan F. Segal, "Covenant in Rabbinic Writings," *SR* 14 (1985): 53–62.

²³ A. A. Das, *Paul, the Law, and the Covenant* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2001); S. J. Gathercole, *Where Is Boasting? Early Jewish Soteriology and Paul's Response in Romans 1–5* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002).

²⁴ See Westerholm's analysis of Luther. Westerholm, *Perspectives*, 22–41. He also restates Sanders's claim that Judaism did not believe in salvation from scratch by human effort or achievement, but he rightly reminds those who might have forgotten their church history that

Paul, Second Temple Judaism, and Grace

One of the most extensive effects of Sanders's work concerns his understanding of grace.²⁵ He argued that Paul and Palestinian Judaism share an almost synonymous perspective with regard to grace and works.²⁶ Scholars like K. L. Yinger²⁷ would concur with Sanders's assessment of Judaism and Paul. They are no more “synergistic” or “monergistic” than the other.

This perspective has not gone unchallenged. Stephen Westerholm objects to some of the contradictory ways that the New Perspective establishes its case. First, he recites the common charge that “Lutheran” interpreters of Paul are guilty of imposing “Lutheran” categories on the texts of Judaism that are foreign to their ethos. Second, he cites the conclusions of scholars like James D. G. Dunn who make the claim that first-century Jews turn out to be good Protestant “champions of grace.”²⁸ Sanders “explicitly and repeatedly” makes the same point: Judaism never held grace and works in any kind of opposition. Therefore, Westerholm rightly asks how Judaism can then preach Protestant doctrine (salvation by grace, not works) when they did

neither did the opponents of Lutheranism, who acknowledged the need of grace. Lutheranism suggested that “humans can contribute nothing to their salvation,” which is what their opponents and Judaism would deny. *Ibid.*, 351.

²⁵ See also J. G. Harris, “The Covenant Concept Among the Qumran Sectaries,” *EvQ* 39 (1967): 86–92; P. Garnet, “Qumran Light on Pauline Soteriology,” in *Pauline Studies: Essays Presented to Professor F. F. Bruce on His 70th Birthday* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1980), 19–32.

²⁶ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 543. Cf. also pp. 517, 548.

²⁷ K. L. Yinger, *Paul, Judaism, and Judgment According to Deeds*, SNTSMS 105 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 103–04. He says that critics of Sanders “have not succeeded in demonstrating that the grace-works axis in Judaism generally is any more synergistic or meritorious than in Paul.” *Ibid.*, 4. Yinger points to OT passages like Ezek 36:19 to show that Israel’s restoration from exile is “purely a matter of gracious initiative, not Israel’s obedience.” *Ibid.*, 33. He also states that psalms like 18:20–24 also do not express self-righteousness in the form of synergism; they “thankfully affirm confidence in the covenant relationship, which at one and the same time is completely an act of divine grace, and yet conditional upon the loyal obedience of those within this elect community.” See *ibid.*, 47. In terms of the Qumran hymns, Yinger observes that “God’s election and grace, not human obedience or righteousness, are the main themes when the hymns reflect on the source or cause of salvation.” The Qumran hymns focus on divine intervention (“the way of man is not firm unless it be by the Spirit which God has created for him” [IV 31]) and sovereign grace (“I know that the inclination of every spirit is in Thy hand [XV, 13], “And I have no fleshly refuge; [and man has no righteousness o]r virtue to be delivered from si[n] [and wi]n forgiveness. But I, I have leaned on Thy abun[dant mercy] [and on the greatness of] Thy grace” [VII 17–18]).

²⁸ Westerholm, *Perspectives*, 341.

not hold grace and works in contrast like the Protestant doctrine they supposedly preach?²⁹

Simon J. Gathercole also stands as a prominent voice in the attempt to demonstrate the differences with respect to Paul and Judaism. Gathercole affirms continuity between the two in that they “share an elective grace and also assign a determinative role to works at final judgment.”³⁰ However, he detects a note of discontinuity in the substantial difference between the synergism of Judaism and the monergism of Paul.³¹ The work of Timo Laato³² and Timo Eskola³³ bring

²⁹ Ibid. The very fact that Dunn and others reformulate Judaism by using “Lutheran” categories seems like a failure to take their own medicine. Westerholm also finds fault with the very evidence that Sanders uses to construct his case. Sanders’s gratuitous claims for first-century Judaism will not hold water because his conclusions often fail to fit the texts of Judaism he cites in defense of those conclusions. Two of the three kinds of texts Sanders cites testify in the opposite direction. Westerholm, *Perspectives*, 341–42. Sanders’s work resembles the proverbial Procrustean bed, which slices or stretches problematic texts. F. Avemarie rightly charges that Sanders underinterprets problematic texts and over interprets supporting texts by squeezing more out of them than the texts allow. He documents this frequent “systemizing approach” in Sanders’s work on the Tannaitic materials. See Avemarie, *Tora und Leben*, 40–42. Avemarie also convincingly shows that the rabbinic literature documents two positions: (1) retribution (those who obey the Torah will receive eternal life) and (2) election (all Israelites have a place in the world to come). Sanders errs in subordinating the retributive texts and favoring the election texts. See Avemarie, “Erwählung und Vergeltung,” 113. Other scholars have made the same case that there is soteriological diversity in the teaching of the rabbis. See Quarles, “The Soteriology,” 185–90. He also states, “Precision demands that one speak of Second Temple Judaism (pl) rather than assume all Jews of the period shared a single soteriological system” (Quarles, “The New Perspective,” 40). M. A. Elliott takes this argument further and documents the existence of a substantial movement of dissent within Second Temple Judaism, which viewed Israel as apostate because of the broken covenant. He observes that the covenant theology of this strand of Judaism was “dualistic” in the sense that some Israelites were in the covenant, while others were not. Therefore, they drew up the boundary lines within Israel, not between Israel and the Gentiles (*The Survivors of Israel*, 248–50).

³⁰ Gathercole, *Where Is Boasting?* 135.

³¹ Ibid., 134. Cf. also D. A. Carson, *Divine Sovereignty and Human Responsibility: Biblical Perspectives in Tension*, New Foundations Theological Library (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1981). Gathercole agrees with Carson’s assessment of the Jewish sources in which God responds to the merit of Israel. See Gathercole, *Where Is Boasting?* 15. Similar views are expressed by C. F. D. Moule, “Jesus, Judaism, and Paul,” in *Tradition and Interpretation in the New Testament: Essays in Honor of E. Earle Ellis*, ed. G. Hawthorne (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 43–52.

³² T. Laato, *Paul and Judaism: An Anthropological Approach*, trans. T. McElwain, South Florida Studies in the History of Judaism 115 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995); id., “Paul’s Anthropological Considerations: Two Problems,” in *Justification and Variegated Nomism*, vol. 2, ed. D. A. Carson, P. T. O’Brien, and M. A. Seifrid (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2004), 349–59.

³³ T. Eskola, *Theodicy and Predestination in Pauline Soteriology* (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1998).

similar claims to bear concerning the anthropological dimensions of the differences between Paul and Judaism. They hold that because Paul's appraisal of human nature is much more pessimistic than that of Judaism, Paul stresses predestination and grace, while Judaism expresses synergistic sympathies because of their "higher view" of human nature.

These wide-angle debates over continuity and discontinuity serve as a necessary background for the approaches whose lens provide a more narrow focus to the relation between the Mosaic and new covenants.

Five Approaches

This narrow lens focus will introduce the reader to some very nuanced discussions of how the Mosaic covenant and the new covenant relate. One way to group these discussions is through a categorical taxonomy. At the risk of oversimplification, this study can utilize the taxonomy of Walter C. Kaiser.³⁴ Kaiser labels five different ways interpreters relate the covenants: (1) replacement,³⁵ (2) super,³⁶ (3) dual,³⁷ (4) separate,³⁸ and (5) renewed.³⁹ It is helpful to order them

³⁴ W. C. Kaiser Jr., "An Epangelical Perspective," in *Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church: The Search for Definition*, ed. C. A. Blaising and D. L. Bock (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 360–76.

³⁵ This view states that the church, Abraham's spiritual seed, has replaced Israel, his physical seed.

³⁶ This is the covenant of grace position that arose in the sixteenth century, which is commonly called "covenant theology." For the precursors of this position, see Weir, *The Origins*.

³⁷ Ethnic Jews are saved through God's promise to Abraham, while Christians are saved through their own covenant. Kaiser traces this view back to the Jewish philosopher Franz Rosenzweig, who reacted to varying forms of anti-Semitism. For a sustained case for the two covenant theory, see F. Mußner, "Gottes 'Bund' mit Israel nach Röm 11, 27," in *Der ungekündigte Bund? Antworten des Neuen Testaments*, ed. H. Frankemölle, *Quaestiones disputatae* 172 (Freiburg/Basel/Wien: Herder, 1998), 157–70; N. Lohfink, *The Covenant Never Revoked: Biblical Reflections on Christian-Jewish Dialogue*, trans. J. J. Scullion (New York: Paulist Press, 1991); id., "Bund," in *Neues Bibel-Lexikon*, M. Görg and B. Lang (Zürich: Benziger, 1988), 344–48; id., "Der Begriff 'Bund' in der biblischen Theologie," *Theologie und Philosophie* 66 (1991): 161–76; For the best treatment of and response to these views, see D. E. Holwerda, *Jesus and Israel: One Covenant or Two?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995).

³⁸ Israel and the church have different programs of salvation. This is the view of traditional dispensationalism, but few appear to advocate it today. Modified or Progressive Dispensationalists have largely rejected this position.

³⁹ Contents of the new covenant are a repetition of what already appeared in the preceding covenants. Kaiser does recognize that the Sinaitic covenant had some transitory elements in

according to their placement on the spectrum of continuity versus discontinuity. Positions two and five represent continuous positions, while one, three, and four fit the discontinuity perspective. This survey of scholarship will now further clarify these categories of thought in relation to Paul's own exposition of the Mosaic covenant. Some of the scholars mentioned do not consciously place themselves within one camp or the other, but it may help the reader to classify their thought according to the five categories.

Although few scholars comment on the character of the Israelite covenant in Paul's theology, theological approaches to the covenants continue to exercise determinative effects. Scott J. Hafemann falls into the "renewed" approach to the covenants. He has argued extensively for understanding the law/gospel or old/new covenant debates in terms of their respective functions rather than in terms of their content, structure, or purpose so that the "new" is a "renewal" of the "old."⁴⁰ The character of the old covenant mirrors that of the new covenant: they are coequal in grace and glory.⁴¹ The only difference concerns the fuller presence of the Spirit, which is owing to the respective places

contrast to the Abrahamic, Davidic, and new covenants. Kaiser states that God progressively expanded the sphere of the covenants, while maintaining the base of the original promises. He points to three common realities: (1) heir, (2) inheritance, and (3) heritage. One example of how Kaiser's position differs from the covenant theology (the super covenant) is that he does not see a pre-fall covenant of works preceding the post-fall covenant of grace of covenant theology.

⁴⁰ Hafemann cites his agreement with the work of C. Levin, *Die Verheißung des neuen Bundes in ihrem theologiegeschichtlichen Zusammenhang ausgelegt*, FRLANT 137 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht), 137. Hafemann says that "the covenant promised in Jer. 31 is thus 'new' in the sense that it is a radical break with the past, but it is not new in its structure, content, or purpose. In this latter case it is a 'renewal.'" See S. J. Hafemann, *Paul, Moses, and the History of Israel: The Letter/Spirit Contrast and the Argument from Scripture in 2 Corinthians 3*, WUNT 81 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1995), 129 n. 121. Many other scholars also advocate understanding the "new" covenant as a "renewal" of the Mosaic covenant. See W. J. Dumbrell, "Remarks on the Interpreting of Paul and the Function of Romans 3:20 in Its Context," *RTR* 64, no.3 (2005): 135; W. C. Kaiser, "The Old Promise and the New Covenant: Jer 31:31–34," *JETS* 15 (1972): 11–23; id., *Toward an Old Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978), 231–35; 268–269.

⁴¹ Hafemann emphasizes that the contrast between the new and Sinai covenants is "a contrast between two different *conditions of the people* who are brought into these covenants and their correspondingly different responses to the *same Law*." His emphasis. See S. J. Hafemann, *Paul, Moses, and the History of Israel*, 133. See also id., "The 'Temple of the Spirit' as the Inaugural Fulfillment of the New Covenant Within the Corinthian Correspondence," *ExAud* 12 (1996): 36–39.

the covenants occupy in redemptive history. Therefore, he says, “The designation ‘old’ is not a pejorative evaluation of the character of the Sinai covenant, but a temporal and eschatological designation of its fulfillment.”⁴²

James D. G. Dunn also adopts the “renewed” approach. He says that the new covenant and its variations (Isa 59:21; Ezek 36:26) are “renewals of the Sinai covenant or indeed as the promise of a more effective implementation of the earlier covenant by divine initiative.”⁴³ Ellen Jühl Christiansen is similar in that she asserts that the new covenant is new as “that which brings the potential of the ‘old’ into existence by adding a new Christological and pneumatological dimension.”⁴⁴

Adherents of covenant theology (i.e., the “super covenant” position) attempt to understand Paul’s statements in a way that does not detract from the character of the Israelite covenant.⁴⁵ They emphasize the gracious nature of the Mosaic covenant when it is taken on its own terms. They also suggest that Paul’s statements should be read polemically as his responses to legalistic misunderstandings concern-

⁴² S. J. Hafemann, *Paul, Moses, and the History of Israel*, 378–79. Gaston also constructs a hermeneutical shield to protect the Sinai covenant from negative criticism. He suggests that the translation “ancient covenant” actually derives from Paul’s opponents. See L. Gaston, *Paul and the Torah* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1987), 164. Hafemann distances himself from Gaston’s approach. He says, “Gaston’s desire to deflect criticism of the Sinai covenant is correct, but his view misses the eschatological context of Paul’s statement and that the use of the veil as a metonymy makes it clear that the problem in view is not the covenant *per se*, but Israel.” See S. J. Hafemann, *Paul, Moses, and the History of Israel*, 378 n. 140.

⁴³ J. D. G. Dunn, “Did Paul Have a Covenant Theology? Reflections on Romans 9.4 and 11.27,” in *The Concept of the Covenant in the Second Temple Period*, ed. S. E. Porter and J. C. R. de Roo, JSJSup 71 (Leiden/Boston: E. J. Brill, 1993), 304.

⁴⁴ E. J. Christiansen, *The Covenant in Judaism and Paul: A Study of Ritual Boundaries as Identity Markers* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), 259. Dunn served as her doctoral supervisor. H. Merklein gives an answer similar to Dunn and Christiansen. H. Merklein, “Der (neue) Bund als Thema der paulinischen Theologie,” *TQ* 176, no. 4 (1996): 294.

⁴⁵ W. VanGemeren, *The Progress of Redemption: From Creation to the New Jerusalem* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 158–77; O. P. Robertson, *The Christ of the Covenants* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 1980), 167–99. VanGemeren’s summary of the function of the Mosaic covenant is representative of the others: “the Mosaic covenant *applies the divine administration of grace and promise to a particular people, namely Israel.*” His emphasis. VanGemeren, *The Progress of Redemption*, 158. The word “administration” becomes important within a schema that holds to one covenant of grace with many different administrations.

ing the Mosaic covenant.⁴⁶ Meredith Kline⁴⁷ and Mark Karlberg⁴⁸ take a different track within covenant theology. They understand the Israelite covenant as a covenant of works on the earthly level and a covenant of grace on the spiritual level.

Progressive Dispensationalists occupy the “replacement” camp in Kaiser’s taxonomy.⁴⁹ They tend to emphasize discontinuity and “newness” with respect to the new covenant. Bruce A. Ware advocates a newness with regard to mode, result, basis, and scope.⁵⁰ Craig A. Blaising⁵¹ chalks up the differences between the Mosaic and new covenants to the respective type of covenant each one represents. The old covenant was a suzerain-type covenant (bilateral), whereas the new covenant is a superior grant-type covenant (unilateral).⁵²

Lutheran scholars consistently affirm a discontinuity between the old and new covenants. Ernst Kutsch asserts that the newness of the new covenant concerns the concept of inviolability. The old covenant is deficient in that unlike the new covenant, it can be broken, even

⁴⁶ See for example, Robertson, *The Christ of the Covenants*, 182. The covenant concept also functions as an argument for infant baptism in that the covenant sign of baptism in the new covenant replaces the covenant sign of circumcision in the old covenant. Covenant theology is normally defined in terms of adopting a pre-creation covenant of redemption, a pre-fall covenant of works, and a post-fall covenant of grace. In that specific sense, their views can be distinguished from the “renewed” approach of Hafemann, Dunn, and others.

⁴⁷ Kline reads Paul’s statements as expressions of his own views on the Mosaic covenant, not the distorted perspective of the opponents. For example, he says that the Mosaic covenant “made inheritance to be by law, not by promise—not by faith, but by works.” M. Kline, *The Structure of Biblical Authority* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), 23; see also 94–110.

⁴⁸ M. Karlberg, “Reformed Interpretation of the Mosaic Covenant,” *WTJ* 43 (1980–81): 1–57.

⁴⁹ They distance themselves from the older dispensational view (separate approach to the covenants). The older view said that Israel should have rejected the law and pled for a continued relationship of grace.

⁵⁰ B. A. Ware, “The New Covenant and the People(s) of God,” in *Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church: The Search for Definition*, ed. C. A. Blaising and D. L. Bock (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 68–97. He states that the mode of implementation is different because the new covenant internalizes the law. The result of the new covenant is faithfulness to God, and thus all in the new covenant know God in a saving way in terms of its scope. The basis of God’s gracious work in the new covenant is full and final forgiveness.

⁵¹ C. A. Blaising and D. L. Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993), 140–59.

⁵² The new covenant is superior in terms of grace because “He will give to His people that which He commands from them, and He will command that which He gives.” See Blaising and Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism*, 155.

though both covenants consist of “obligation” (*Verpflichtung*).⁵³ Erich Gräßer also posits a stark antithesis between the old and new covenants.⁵⁴ He contests a “renewed” understanding of the covenants and highlights the discontinuity of the Mosaic and New covenants.⁵⁵

I am not a conscious adherent to any theological system within Kaiser’s taxonomy. One can profit from an orientation that takes account of these theological categories, but one must not assume that Paul operated with the theological categories that the exegete brings to the text. Therefore, Kaiser’s taxonomy is pedagogically helpful, but this book will not attempt to place Paul in one of the categories. The argument of Stephen J. Wellum is very well stated in this regard: we should put a “moratorium” on using language like the “covenant of grace” and speak instead of the “one plan of God” or “the eternal purposes of God centered in Jesus Christ” in order to express the concept that the “covenant of grace” terminology is trying to convey; however, when speaking of the biblical covenants, one should speak of the *plural* covenants of Scripture and their place in the “overall eternal plan of God centered in Jesus Christ.”⁵⁶ This approach will keep scholars from flattening the progressive development of the covenants and will allow Paul to answer his own questions in his own categories. This aspect of the study will require firm methodological footing.

Methodology

The method employed in this book is thoroughly exegetical. I will only engage in synthesizing Paul’s position after the exegetical data has emerged from each individual context. We need to avoid flattening the features of Paul’s position and should hesitate to color Paul’s position with later theological categories.

⁵³ E. Kutsch, *Verheißung und Gesetz: Untersuchungen zum sogenannten “Bund” im Alten Testament*, BZAW 131 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1973), 28–39; id., *Neues Testament—Neuer Bund? Eine Fehlübersetzung wird korrigiert* (NeukirchenVluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1978). The idea of *Verpflichtung* (obligation) functions as the dominant concept.

⁵⁴ E. Gräßer, *Der Alte Bund im Neuen: Exegetische Studien zur Israelfrage im Neuen Testament*, WUNT 35 (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1985), 78.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁵⁶ S. J. Wellum, “Baptism and the Relationship between the Covenants,” in *Believer’s Baptism: Sign of the New Covenant in Christ*, ed. T. R. Schreiner and S. D. Wright, NACSBT (Nashville: B&H, 2006), 126–27.

Paul's discussion of the old covenant comes to the reader in very different contexts (Galatians, 2 Corinthians, and Romans). Paul faced different opponents and had to respond to their specific arguments in these epistles. This fact should not call Paul's consistency into question. This study will attempt to demonstrate that he advances the same perspective throughout his epistles, while expressing that perspective by drawing on different terminology, arguments, and Scriptural support.

Two essays within one volume⁵⁷ exemplify the sharp divide in Pauline studies concerning Paul's covenantal theology. James D. G. Dunn⁵⁸ undertakes to understand the concept of covenant in Paul by adopting a methodology that examines the eight occurrences of the term "covenant" (*diathēkē*) in chronological order.⁵⁹ He argues in a forceful fashion for the peripheral nature of Paul's concept of covenant. He advances the thesis that Paul did not have a "covenant theology." He defends this assertion by highlighting both the infrequent and reactive nature of Paul's usage of "covenant." In other words, in the relatively few places where Paul uses "covenant" (*diathēkē*), he did not develop the concept to express his own thinking; he forged it in the heat of battle because his opponents' use of the term forced his hand.⁶⁰ Erich Gräßer takes a similar approach and relegates the covenant concept in Paul to the tangential sphere.⁶¹

Stanley E. Porter⁶² cautions against narrowing the scope of covenant in Paul to only those places where Paul uses the term "covenant"

⁵⁷ S. E. Porter and J. C. R. de Roo, eds., *The Concept of Covenant in the Second Temple Period*, JSJSup 71 (Leiden/Boston: E. J. Brill, 1993).

⁵⁸ Dunn, "Did Paul Have a Covenant Theology?"

⁵⁹ Gal 3:15,17; 4:24; 1 Cor 11:25; 2 Cor 3:6, 14; Rom 9:4 and 11:27. Dunn limits his search to the undisputed Pauline epistles, so he does not examine Eph 2:12. Many favor this approach because of the ease with which one may identify the object of study (i.e., the eight or nine occurrences of *diathēkē* in Paul).

⁶⁰ J. L. Martyn also argues for this perspective. J. L. Martyn, "Covenant, Christ, and Church in Galatians," in *The Future of Christology: Essays in Honor of Leander E. Keck*, ed. A. J. Mahlerbe and W. E. Meeks (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 137–51. Cf. also C. K. Barrett, "The Allegory of Abraham, Sarah and Hagar in the Argument of Galatians," in *Essays on Paul* (London: SPCK, 1982), 154–70.

⁶¹ He speaks of a "covenant silence" in Paul that arises because Paul's stress on individual salvation makes the corporate and national dimension of the covenant concept irrelevant for Paul's epistles. Gräßer, *Der Alte Bund im Neuen*, 77.

⁶² S. E. Porter, "The Concept of Covenant in Paul," in *The Concept of the Covenant in the Second Temple Period*, ed. St. E. Porter and J. C. R. de Roo, JSJSup 71 (Leiden/Boston: E. J. Brill, 1993), 269–85.

(*diathēkē*), in order to avoid the fallacy of “equating words and concepts.”⁶³ Porter notes that even though many biblical scholars buy into James Barr’s classic criticism⁶⁴ of this error in *The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*,⁶⁵ some still unwittingly dredge it back up in their own writings.⁶⁶ The irony of Porter’s essay preceding Dunn’s contribution is that Dunn’s work effectively becomes an example of what Porter stringently labels as “fundamentally flawed.”⁶⁷

Porter attempts to develop a linguistically informed approach to the lexicographical study of “covenant” (*diathēkē*). Therefore, he prefers a study based on the semantic domain of “covenant” through the use of the Louw-Nida lexicon and “contexts where other covenant terminology may be suggested by immediate usage.”⁶⁸ This analysis leads him to assert that there is a semantic relationship between *diathēkē* and “righteousness” (*dik-*) words based on semantic domain.⁶⁹ He also concludes that immediate usage suggests a relationship between *diathēkē* and “promise” (*epangel-*) words.⁷⁰

My approach runs parallel to Porter’s analysis although this study will build on the foundation he established. The semantic domain and contextual approach is sound, and the present study will come to some of the same conclusions as Porter. I will suggest an even more expansive approach that does not narrow the concept of “covenant” (*diathēkē*) to “righteousness” (*dik-*) and “promise” (*epangel-*) words alone.

Several other works have stressed the importance of the covenant concept in Paul. These works are notable exceptions to the common

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 271.

⁶⁴ J. Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961), 206–62.

⁶⁵ G. Kittel and G. Friedrich, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 10 volumes, trans. G. W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–76).

⁶⁶ Porter says that James Barr’s work has become “one of those artifacts that is often acknowledged yet widely misunderstood, with the result that much lexicographical study of the Greek of the New Testament continues as before.” S. E. Porter, “The Concept of Covenant in Paul,” 272.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 273.

⁶⁸ J. P. Louw and E. A. Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains*, 2 volumes (New York: United Bible Societies, 1988). See Porter, “The Concept of Covenant in Paul,” 282–83.

⁶⁹ Porter, “The Concept of Covenant in Paul,” 282–83.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 283.

tendency to restrict the covenant concept to a few passages in Paul and thus relegate it to the tangential sphere of Paul's thought.⁷¹ N. T. Wright states this perspective with characteristic clarity:

At this point at least I am fully on the side of E. P. Sanders when he argues that the covenant is the hidden presupposition of Jewish literature even when the word hardly occurs. Exegesis needs the concordance, but it cannot be ruled by it. It is no argument against calling Paul a covenantal theologian to point out the scarcity of *diathēkē* in his writings. We have to learn to recognize still more important things, such as implicit narratives and allusions to large biblical themes. Just because we cannot so easily look them up in a reference book, that does not make them irrelevant.⁷²

I will build on these studies. This book will make some methodological refinements by taking semantic domain and immediate contextual usage into account. Furthermore, one of the specific refinements this study will suggest is that the reader must pay attention to *grammatical* links between *diathēkē* and other terms. Four different categories

⁷¹ W. C. van Unnik, "La conception paulienne de la nouvelle alliance," *RechBib* 5 (Louvain: Peters, 1960), 109–26; H. N. Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology*, trans. J. R. de Witt (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), 333–41; R. D. Kaylor, *Paul's Covenant Community: Jew and Gentile in Romans* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1988); Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant*; B. Longenecker, "Contours of Covenant Theology in the Post-Conversion Paul," in *The Road from Damascus: The Impact of Paul's Conversion on His Life, Thought, and Ministry*, ed. R. N. Longenecker (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 125–46; P. J. Gräbe, *New Covenant*; id., "Καὶνὴ διαθήκη in der paulinischen Literatur: Ansätze zu einer paulinischen Ekklesiologie," in *Ekklesiologie des Neuen Testaments: Für Karl Kertelge*, ed. R. Kampling and T. Söding (Freiburg: Herder, 1996), 267–87. For further discussion, see Merklein, "Der (neue) Bund"; K. Backhaus, "Gottes nicht bereuter Bund: Alter und neuer Bund in der Sicht des Frühchristentums," in *Ekklesiologie des Neuen Testaments: Für Karl Kertelge*, ed. R. Kampling and T. Söding (Freiburg: Herder, 1996), 33–55; J. Eckert, "Gottes Bundesstiftungen und der neue Bund bei Paulus," in *Der ungekündigte Bund? Antworten des Neuen Testaments*, ed. H. Frankemölle, QD 172 (Freiburg/Basel/Wien: Herder, 1998), 135–56; G. Sass, "Der alte und der neue Bund bei Paulus," in *Ja und nein: Christliche Theologie im Angesicht Israels. Festschrift zum 70. Geburtstag von Wolfgang Schrage*, ed. K. Wengst and G. Sass (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1998), 223–34; G. Dautzenberg, "Alter und neuer Bund nach 2 Kor 3," in "Nun steht aber diese Sache im Evangelium." *Zur Frage nach den Anfängen des christlichen Antijudaismus*, ed. R. Kampling (Paderborn/München/Wien/Zürich: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1999), 53–72.

⁷² N. T. Wright, *Paul: In Fresh Perspective* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005), 26. P. R. Williamson shares this perspective. He says that one must "recognize that the concept might sometimes be assumed even where the terminology is lacking. Thus, given the weight Paul attaches to the concept where it is mentioned, covenant—particularly the new covenant and its implications for the place of the law—is undoubtedly more foundational and pervasive in Pauline theology than a mere word study might suggest." P. R. Williamson, *Sealed with an Oath: Covenant in God's Unfolding Purpose*, NSBT 23 (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2007), 186. Williamson, however, still surveys the new covenant in Paul by studying the canonical occurrences of *diathēkē*.

appear if one observes its grammatical usage. It serves as (1) the subject of the relative clause in Rom 9:4,⁷³ (2) a predicate nominative in Rom 11:27;⁷⁴ 1 Cor 11:25;⁷⁵ and Gal 4:24,⁷⁶ (3) the direct object in Gal 3:15⁷⁷ and Gal 3:17,⁷⁸ and (4) a genitival modifier in 2 Cor 3:6,⁷⁹ 14;⁸⁰ and Eph 2:12.⁸¹ One could delve further by focusing on the words or phrases that modify *diathēkē*. This kind of analysis uncovers three different categories: (1) prepositional phrases,⁸² (2) adjectives,⁸³ and (3) genitival modifiers.⁸⁴ I will also suggest some methodological refinements by examining (1) semantic domain, (2) immediate contextual usage, (3) grammatical usage, (4) Old Testament precedent,⁸⁵ and

⁷³ This observation would tie *diathēkai* to *Israēlitai*, the antecedent of the relative pronoun *ōn*. In other words, the divine covenants represent one of Israel's privileges.

⁷⁴ This kind of analysis would suggest that the covenant in Rom 11:26–27 is linked to the two-fold divine work of “removing ungodliness from Jacob” and “taking away their sins.”

⁷⁵ This analysis would suggest a link between *to potērion* as the subject and *hē kainē diathēkē* as the predicate nominative.

⁷⁶ Gal 4:24 shows that Sarah and Hagar (*hautai*) in their role as “mothers” metaphorically represent two different *diathēkai*. Furthermore, this verse suggests a link between one of the covenants and Mt. Sinai (*apo ous Sina*). This covenant begets children into a state of slavery (*eis douleian gennōsa*).

⁷⁷ This verse suggests a semantic relationship between *diathēkēn* as the direct object of the verbs *athetei* and *epidiatsetai*.

⁷⁸ This verse resembles Gal 3:15 in showing that *kuroō* is covenant terminology. Galatians 3:17 also has the alpha privative form *akuroō*. This same terminology appears again in this verse as Paul also uses a form of *prokuroō* as an adjective.

⁷⁹ This text suggests a close relationship between *diakonos* and *diathēkē*.

⁸⁰ Second Corinthians 3:14 features *diathēkē* functioning as the genitival modifier of *anagnōsis*. The “old” covenant is a written document that can be read.

⁸¹ The Gentiles were foreigners to “the covenants of the promise (*tōn diathēkōn tēs epangelias*).”

⁸² Romans 11:27 speaks of “the from me covenant” (*hē par emou diathēkē*), and 1 Cor 11:25 says this cup is the new covenant “in my blood” (*entō emō haimati*).

⁸³ Adjectives include (1) “new” covenant (*hē kainē diathēkē*) in 1 Cor 11:25 and 2 Cor 3:6 (*kainēs diathēkēs*), (2) “old” covenant (*palaias diathēkēs*) in 2 Cor 3:14, (3) a “having been ratified covenant/testament” in Gal 3:15, and (4) a “previously ratified by God” covenant in Gal 3:17.

⁸⁴ Genitival modifiers of *diathēkē* include “of man” (Gal 3:15), “not of the letter, but of the Spirit” (2 Cor 3:6), and “of the promise” (Eph 2:12).

⁸⁵ This test provides the reader with an awareness of prior semantic links. For example, the study will suggest that OT precedent favors a connection between the Mosaic law and the Mosaic covenant. Therefore, the fact that a historical connection exists between covenant and law may authorize a connection between *diathēkē* and *nomos* when the context specifies a Mosaic referent. The fact that Paul gives parallel assessments of the old covenant and the law (i.e., they both condemn, kill, cannot secure righteousness or life, etc.) further suggests their interdependent identity. Paul's discussion of the Mosaic law may suggest a commentary on the covenant from which it came: the Mosaic covenant. E.g., Frank Thielman argues for the validity

(5) multiple attestation. These semantic, grammatical, and contextual links will ground the present study in Paul's own usage. The upshot of this approach is that the interpreter does not impose on Paul an alien system of thought. These links will arise organically from the text and not from the ideas of the interpreter. I will stress some of these findings more than others, but all of these considerations will receive attention throughout this study.

Chapter two will explore the plural usage of *diathēkē* in Rom 9:4 and Eph 2:12 as unique instances that view the Mosaic covenant in a transhistorical sense. Chapter three shifts to a study of the adjectives "old" and "new," which become central in 2 Cor 3:1–18. It is surprising that many studies focus exclusively on the "new covenant" (2 Cor 3:6) and the "old covenant" (2 Cor 3:14) in 2 Corinthians, while ignoring Paul's usage of "old" and "new" elsewhere in his writings. This analysis will suggest further connections that are often neglected.

Chapters four through six constitute a three-part study of the Mosaic covenant in contexts of contrast. Chapter four examines the Mosaic covenant in 2 Cor 3:1–4:18. Chapter five carries this exploration further into Galatians. The covenantal contrast of Galatians 4:21–31 will function as the main focus, and Gal 3:1–4:20 will provide supplementary material. The third part of this series takes the reader to Rom 9:1–11:36. The new covenant of Rom 11:27 serves as the focal point along with a study of the relationship between the themes of seed, remnant, and covenant. The study of Rom 9:1–11:1–26, 28–36 will round out the discussion.

Can Paul's reading of the Mosaic covenant stand even on Old Testament terms? Chapter seven attempts to ground the discussion in the Old Testament itself by examining the metaphor of the circumcision of the heart.

of understanding themes in their wider covenantal context: "The Mosaic covenant contains certain broad themes, such as the election of God's people and the importance of their sanctity, which reappear in Paul's letters in more subtle ways than a study only of Paul's explicit statements about the Mosaic covenant would detect" (*Paul and the Law*, 12).