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Christ as the Goal of the Law (Rom 10,4): Christ as the Converging Point in the History of Salvation.

Kristus – namen postave (Rim 10,4): Kristus kot združevalna točka zgodovine odrešenja.

Abstract: The article attempts to present Paul's argument in the Letter to the Romans that Christ is the goal of the Law and the culmination of all Israel's expectations, as suggested by the *propositio* Rom 10,4. The article highlights Paul's thought that Judaism and Christianity are not at odds but are part of God's plan that leads to Christ from the Law. The author uses the approaches of rhetorical analysis and intertextual reading. An analysis of structure, vocabulary and subject matter shows how all Paul's thought supports the idea of the continuity of the salvation history of Christ. Not less crucial is the intertextual approach, which shows how Paul bases his thought on the Old Testament parallels tied to the theme of the covenant that characterizes deuteronomic and prophetic thought. The article points to an additional historical literary parallel to Luke, who presents Christ in the Apostolic Works as the fulfilment of Messianic expectations. The article shows how Paul invites his contemporaries and today's readers to discover in Christ the key to the history of salvation.

Keywords: Letter to the Romans, Law, Christ, relations with Judaism

Povzetek: Članek poskuša predstaviti Pavlovo argumentacijo v Pismu Rimljanom, da je Kristus cilj postave in vrhunec vseh pričakovanj Izraela, kakor nakazuje *propositio* v Rim 10,4. Članek izpostavi Pavlovo misel, da si judovstvo in krščanstvo nista v nasprotju, temveč sta del božjega načrta, ki od postave vodi h Kristusu. Avtor članka pri tem uporabi pristope retorične analize in intertekstualnega branja. Analiza strukture, besedišča in tematike pokaže, kako celotna Pavlova misel podpira idejo kontinuitete zgodovine odrešenja, ki teži h Kristusu. Pri tem je ključen tudi intertekstualni pristop, ki pokaže, kako Pavel svojo misel utemeljuje s starozaveznimi vzporednicami, vezanimi na tematiko zaveze, ki zaznamuje devteronomistično in preroško misel. Članek pokaže na dodatno zgodovinsko literarno vzporednico z Lukom, ki v Apostolskih delih Kristusa predstavi kot izpolnitev mesijanskih pričakovanj. Članek pove tudi,

kako Pavel svoje sodobnike in sedanje bralce vabi, da bi v Kristusu odkrili ključ zgodovine odrešenja.

Ključne besede: Pismo Rimljanom, postava, Kristus, odnos z judovstvom

“For years I have looked for the right key to the mystery of life, seeking God and righteousness by close observance of the Law but now, I have finally found it in Christ whom I had persecuted.” These words could be ascribed to Saint Paul, an observant Jew and Pharisee, who struggled to achieve God’s righteousness through the observance of the Law. For this reason, he ferociously persecuted Jesus’s movement, called “the Way,” as well as simple Christians who seemed to overturn the existing socio-religious style of life. However, Paul followed strict prescriptions and prohibitions defined as the Law in its entirety, at least until his personal encounter with Jesus the Risen Christ. This event represents a turning point in Paul’s life. Paul realizes that Jesus, whom he was fighting against, represents the realization of all the promises, i.e. the renewal of the covenant by bestowing God’s righteousness on all who believe. Paul’s struggle to fulfil the Law receives an answer. The meaning, the goal (*τέλος*) of the Law is given in Jesus, the Risen Christ. However, if Paul has accepted the message of Christ due to his personal encounter with the Risen Lord, many Jews did not have such a privilege and thus preferred to cling to the social-religious establishments of the Law. Paul tackles this problem by discussing the problematic issue of the relationship between the Torah and Christ, between Israel and the Gentiles, very thoughtfully in his *Letter to the Romans*, especially in chapters Rom 9–11, and this is also a pivotal point for this paper.

Following Paul’s argument, the article tries to reconsider the relationship *Christ – Law* in terms of the continuity of the history of salvation. For this purpose, the teleological meaning of the notion *τέλος* in Rom 10,4 is defended by considering: (1) the rhetorical structure of Rom 9–11; (2) the lexical analysis of the notions *τέλος* and *νόμος*; (3) the context and Paul’s use of the Scriptures; and, finally (4), the context of Acts as contemporary and in thematically similar writing. These steps should shed some light upon how the nascent Christian community constructed its self-identity by referring to Israel’s inheritance.

1. Structure and interpretation

Paul confronts the question of salvation of both Israel and the Gentiles in the central part of Rom 9–11 (Aletti 2010, 126–127).² This part is interpreted as: (1) post-

² Various sections complement one another. Thus, the faith is not essential only for justification (Rom 4) but also for salvation which is given in Christ (Rom 10).

-Exilic supplication (2012, 140),³ (2) lamentation Psalm (Hays 1989, 64),⁴ and (3) intertextual correspondence to Is 51,1-18 (Belli 2010, 169–170). However, the argumentative proposal has precedence over the stylistic one (Belli 2010, 136–147; Gadenz 2009, 139–141) In any case, the well-organised composition of the main *propositiones* and Rom 9–11, as presented below, underlines the Christological interpretation of the entire letter (compare also Rom 10,4).

<i>Exordium:</i>	9,1-5		
<i>Probatio:</i>	9,6–11,32		
	A:	9,6-29	(9,6a: propositio A)
	B:	9,30–10,21	(10,4: propositio B)
	A':	11,1-32	(11,1a: propositio A')
<i>Peroratio:</i>	11,33-36		

Subdivision of B: 9,30–10,21

<i>Exordium:</i>	9,30–10,3	presentation of the question	A: 9,30–10,3
<i>Propositio:</i>	10,4	proposed thesis	B: 10,4-17
<i>Probatio:</i>	10,5-17	demonstration of the thesis	
<i>Peroratio:</i>	10,18-21	conclusion	A': 10,18-21

Moreover, the consideration of the main *propositiones* as the structural markers of the letter, shows how the argumentation guides towards the *propositio* in Rom 10,4. (Aletti 1990, 9–14)

Propositiones:

1,16-17:	the gospel is righteousness/power of God for salvation of the believer		
A:	9,6a:	God is faithful (God's word has not failed)	
B:	10,4:	Christ is the centre (goal/end/culmination) of Torah	
A':	11,1:	God has not abandoned his people	

The Christological statement, by reintroducing the main *propositio* (Rom 1,16), represents the clue to the understanding of Rom 9–11. Thus, salvation can be at-

³ The closest correspondence could be seen with Deut 32.
 God is just Deut 32,3-4.8-14 Rom 9,14-23
 The Israelites have sinned Deut 32,5-13.15-18 Rom 10,21; 11,12
 God will/has punished them Deut 32,19-26 Rom 11,15.19
 He will save his people Deut 32,36 Rom 11,25-32

⁴ Thus, the disposition follows the pattern:
 9,1-5: lament over Israel
 9,6-29: defence of God's elective purpose
 9,30– 10,21: paradox: Israel failed to grasp the word of faith attested by God in the Scriptures
 11,1-32: God has not abandoned his people – Israel will be saved
 11,33-36: doxological conclusion.

tained by everyone who believes, first the Jew and then the Greek (10,4-13). As the statement in 10,4 represents a watershed-line within Paul's argumentation (i.e., *exordium*: 9,30–10,3; and *probatio*: 10,5-17), the interpretation of the term τέλος also depends on the manner of connection either to the previous (causal γάρ) or the following section (connective γάρ).

2. The lexical analysis

2.1 The meaning of τέλος

Concerning the meaning of the concept τέλος there are different proposals (Howard 1969, 332; Schreiner 1993, 113–117; Fitzmyer 1993, 584); however, for the purpose of this paper, I will limit myself to briefly considering three basic meanings of the term τέλος as

- (1) temporal: end, termination, cessation;
- (2) teleological: goal, fulfillment; and as
- (3) the junction of both dimensions: climax, outcome and result.

(1) Τέλος as “end,” thus by giving the term a temporal connotation. The event of Christ terminates the period of the Mosaic Law (i.e. human strivings to achieve righteousness). Thus, Christ forms a complete discontinuity between the Law and the period of the gospel. The τέλος is consequently linked to the following 10,5 that speaks about the Law of Moses (presented by the citation of Lev 18,5). The adversative particle δέ and Midrashic citation of Deut 30,11-14 in Rom 10,6 introduces the theme of the Law of faith fulfilled in Christ. (Aletti 2010, 144–145) With the coming of the Christ the authority of the Law is ended (Badenas 1985, 28), meaning that the new era of the relationship with God begins.

As the Jews and the Gentiles lived together, it is difficult to sustain a mere historical interpretation. However, the theological claim, i.e. that the Law ends where there is faith, is valid if it is understood correctly. (Munck and Stendahl 1967, 84; Luz 1968, 143–158; Légasse 2004, 500–502) Thus, τέλος as “end” means the cessation of the misunderstanding of the Law in terms of achieving righteousness through works. The believer in Christ ceases using the law as a means of establishing his own righteousness (10,3-4). The search for righteousness is achieved neither by works nor by nation, but by submission to God. Reading with the following vv. 10,5-8 indicates that life according to the Law is impossible, unless by trusting Christ. Thus, Christ presents the end of the Law, since it is in Christ that Israel ceases to exclude others. (Dunn 1988, 596–597; Räisänen 1992, 30–45; Schreiner 1993, 121–124)

(2) Τέλος as “goal.” On the other hand, some scholars try to overcome the traditional understanding, as presented above, by defending the teleological meaning of the term (Howard 1969, 336; Gaston 1987, 122–130; Bechtler 1994, 291–302; Johnson 1997, 159). Christ is represented as the goal of and as the continuation

between the Mosaic Law and the gospel. According to Mary Getty, the Pauline studies have often been seen as polemicizing with Judaism, but this perspective should be modified, as Paul's mission aims only to include the Gentiles rather than to exclude the Jews (1988, 466–468). For Getty, to present Christ in 10,4 as a definite end of the Law, would mean to “jeopardize the entire endeavour of Romans” (466). The term τέλος should be understood as a “fulfillment,” based on the embracing *propositiones* (9,6; 11,1), as well as on the following chain of biblical proofs. Robert Badenas analyses the lexeme τέλος both within the Hellenistic and the biblical context (1985, 38–115). While the term certainly possesses a teleological meaning in the first context, in Pauline corpus it is used differently. Since Paul addresses Romans to Hellenistic recipients, the teleological meaning of the term is probably supposed. Badenas also supports his position by pointing out God's impartiality and the possibility of salvation for all people (1,16). In fact, by faith in Christ (10,4) Israel returns to the winning-post of righteousness, on the one hand, and the Gentiles join God's people, on the other.

(3) Τέλος as a converging “climax.” Some prefer to leave the term τέλος as *finis*, which means both “termination” as well as “fulfilment” (Dunn 1988, 589). Perceiving Christ as the climax, i.e. the point of convergence of the Law, means also the cessation of the Law; albeit in relative terms because Paul still quotes the Law as the norm also for the Christians (13,8-10) and Christ represents the finishing line in the race for righteousness (Moo 2000, 328–331; Sanders 1975, 379–383; Walters 1993, 73–75; Neusner 2009, 15–20). Some scholars such as Andrew Wakefield translate the term as “culmination,” as the history of salvation has arrived at its fulfilment by the arrival of Christ and the cessation of sin (2003, 77).

In brief, each of two basic interpretations of τέλος has important socio-religious consequences. Thus, neither of these positions should be carried to extremes, as it could overemphasize either (1) the discontinuity and lead to the *theology of substitution*, or (2) the continuity that could lead to misunderstanding the salvation of Israel as Israel's *Sonderweg* (Rom 11). In my opinion, the reader of Romans should take seriously Paul's endeavour to vindicate God's salvific purpose that includes both Israel and the Gentiles at the main *propositio* (1,16). Paul must combine both Christ's newness as well as the continuity of Israel's history by pointing to: (1) God's faithfulness (9,6a), despite Israel's rejection of his gospel (9,3) (Donaldson 1997, 243–248); and (2) the inclusion of the Gentiles that lies at the heart of the Law. For this reason, Christ represents the very goal of the Law (10,4). (Wright 2010, 42–53; Jewett 1985, 354)

In the following argumentation, Paul by using Scriptures defends the events as a prophetic call to conversion and renewal of the covenant between God and his people. However, before considering the context, the polysemantic nature of the correspondent notion νόμος must be exposed.

2.2 The meaning of νόμος

The notion of νόμος, equivalent to the Jewish law, Torah (תּוֹרָה), is very important for Paul, not only because of the number of occurrences (50 times in Ro-

mans),⁵ but moreover, because of its polysemantic value. Paul, in fact, does not make any explicit distinctions in semantic usage of the notion, but rather plays with its different meanings: (1) moral norm/measure of righteousness or God's will; (2) moral-ritual value of these norms confronted with faith; (3) Torah/Pentateuch.

(1) The Law refers to the Mosaic legislation, intended as a moral norm, that expresses God's will and represents the embodiment of knowledge and truth for the Jews (2,12-20). Although the Gentiles do not possess the law, they do what is required by the law. Thus, the law defines a moral imperative, on the one hand, and sin, on the other (5,13.20). If Paul seems to ignore the ritual value and to reduce the law to the commandment to love (13,8-10), it is to impress his Christian readers so that they do not nullify the law (3,31), but rather that they fulfil the most important parts of the law. (Räisänen 1983, 26–28)

(2) The Law is good and thus cannot be abolished as it indicates what is good or bad. Thus, the Law is not sin (7,7), but rather, it defines what sin is, therefore the Law is holy and spiritual (7,12-16); albeit, by setting the norm of good works, it calls down God's wrath on the wrongdoer (4,15). In Romans, the law is in force and it is only the misunderstanding and misinterpretation that has to be put away. (Räisänen 1983, 42) Even though it appears that "works of law" or "works" have negative connotations (4,2; 9,32; 11,6), this does not refer to the works as such, but rather to sin (7,9-11). God, in fact, reveals his will by means of the law, thus, the problem is not the law itself, but the law-dependent attitude, as a man believes he can attain salvation solely by doing the works of the law.

God's law, previously identified by the Law, has been reinforced as the "law of faith" (3,27) and as the "law of Spirit" (8,2). If within our hearts there is a constant battle between the law of sin and the law of God (7,23), as Paul asserts, the law of God goes hand in hand with the Law of the Spirit (8,2). Therefore, what counts is not ethnic or ritual membership, but membership through faith. Although Israel pursued the law of righteousness, it did not receive it because it was struggling according to its own works and not in faith (9,31-32). Christian freedom from the "law's condemnation" through being "under grace" (6,14) refers not to the moral measure of the law, but it includes the freedom of its misuse and misunderstanding as in some dietary prescriptions (14,14.20). (Räisänen 1983, 46–48)

The Law may be intended both as a part of the Old Testament (i.e. as it is either distinguished from the prophets in 3,21 or connected with Moses in 5,13-14) as well as the entire Old Testament tradition in 3,10-18 (Martin 1989, 22). If the combination of the notions τέλος and νόμος hints at the goal of the Law, intended either as a moral norm or as the entire Old Testament tradition, this is further supported by Paul's use of the Scriptures of Israel's tradition in terms of both the continuity and the newness of the Christian community.

⁵ Writing the occurrences by extent, Paul gives a certain picture: Rom 2,12-15.17.18.20.23.25-27; 3,19-21.27.28.31; 4,13-16; 5,13.20; 6,14.15; 7,1-9.12.14.16.21-23.25; 8,2-4.7; 9,31; 10,4-5; 13,9-10.

In brief, the Law is not presented in direct opposition to Christ. It defines the borders of sin, it indicates the way to God, which, however, can be walked only through faith in God and his Christ. Nevertheless, the Law does not possess the power to bring man righteousness; only Christ, who has been indicated all along, brings the goal of the Law: the righteousness of man before God through the faith.

3. The context and Paul's use of the Scriptures

By observing Paul's intertextual reading of the Old Testament, i.e. his redactional use of the biblical citation as a proof of authority, the reader better understands how Paul constantly underlines the continuity and fulfilment of Israel's history in Christ. For the scope of this article, I will consider only some "quotation verses" in three main parts: (1) *exordium* (9,33), (2) *probatio* (10,5.6-8), (3) *peroratio* (10,19-21).

(1) In *exordium* (9,30–10,3), Paul reflects both on Israel's failure (i.e. stumbling due to disbelief) as well as its salvation. His reflection is anchored in Isaiah's promise of "saved remnant" (κατάλειμμα [ὑπόλειμμα] σωθήσεται: Isa 10,22; Rom 9,27) and "left seed" (κύριος ἐγκατέλιπεν σπέρμα: Isa 1,9; Rom 9,29). Moreover, the lexical correspondences allude to Isa 51,1-8, where a hope for Israel is indicated. (Belli 2010, 205) Paul using the rabbinical *gezerah shawah* (Basta 2006, 24–29), concludes the first part of *exordium* (Rom 9,33) with a conflation of the two texts Isa 26,16 and 8,14.

Rom 9,33	ἰδοὺ τίθημι ἐν Σιών	Is 28,16	ἐμβαλῶ εἰς τὰ θεμέλια Σιων λίθον πολυτελεῆ ἐκλεκτὸν ἀκρογωνιαῖον ἔντιμον εἰς τὰ θεμέλια αὐτῆς	
	λίθον προσκόμματος καὶ πέτραν σκανδάλου,		Is 8,14	καὶ ἐὰν ἐπ' αὐτῷ πεποιθῶς ᾦς καὶ οὐχ ὡς λίθου προσκόματι συναντήσεσθε αὐτῷ οὐδὲ ὡς πέτρας πτώματι
	καὶ ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ' αὐτῷ οὐ καταισχυθήσεται.		καὶ ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ' αὐτῷ οὐ μὴ καταισχυθῆ	

Table 1: Comparison between the texts of Isaiah and Romans.

The first and last part of the *exordium* is taken from Is 28,16, where God replies to the leaders of Jerusalem. Thus, by setting a precious stone as a foundation in Zion, the salvation is announced to whoever believes, i.e. sets his hopes upon this chosen foundation. However, the quotation from Is 28,16 is modified by the redactional insertion from Is 8,14, which portrays the division between two groups of people: those who fear the imminent danger of the Samaria-Damascus invasion and those who fear the Lord. (Childs 2001, 74–75) The link between two Isaianic quotations is lexically (stone: λίθος) and thematically (faith/trust: πιστεύω/πεποιθῶς) based. The conflation of the two texts underlines the importance of

faith as a prerequisite for salvation. Only through faith and trust in God may salvation be attained. If trust in God should be associated with the Law, the context of Is 28–29 explains why people are unable to grasp the Law. The reason is the rigidity of the religious and political leaders who rather than listening to the Lord would seal the Law of God so no one can attain it. (Wagner 2002, 136–152) However, Paul will address the question of the formal cause of faith, i.e. hearing and obeying the Lord, only later in his letter (Rom 10,17; Deut 28,2). Therefore, Israel’s pursuit of the Law through works instead through faith, causes it to stumble, whereas the Gentiles have achieved the righteousness of the Law due to their faith (9,31-33) (Barrett 1982, 140–141). The second part of *exordium* (10,1-3), by using the same terminology (righteousness, Law-works, faith) underlines the argument. Israel, although having the zeal for God, lacks knowledge of God. Consequently, Israel, instead of submitting itself to the righteousness of God, seeks to establish its own. The righteousness of faith as the goal of the Law is established through Christ (10,4; 10,11).⁶

In brief, Israel seeks its own righteousness through works. However, the righteousness of God comes from faith and not from works.

(2) In the initial part of *probatio* (10,5-8) Paul uses different scriptural allusions (Belli 2010, 248).

Rom 10,5	Μωϋσῆς γὰρ γράφει τὴν δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐκ [τοῦ] νόμου ὅτι ὁ ποιήσας αὐτὰ ἄνθρωπος ζήσεται ἐν αὐτοῖς.	καὶ φυλάξασθε πάντα τὰ προστάγματα μου καὶ πάντα τὰ κρίματα μου καὶ ποιήσετε αὐτὰ ἀποιήσας ἄνθρωπος ζήσεται ἐν αὐτοῖς	Introduction Quotation Lev 18,5
Rom 10,6	ἡ δὲ ἐκ πίστεως δικαιοσύνη οὕτως λέγει· μὴ εὐτὴς ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου· τίς ἀναβήσεται εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν; τοῦτ' ἔστιν Χριστὸν καταγαγεῖν·	μὴ εὐτὴς ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου [...] τίς ἀναβήσεται ἡμῖν εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν καὶ λήψεται αὐτὴν ἡμῖν καὶ ἀκούσαντες αὐτὴν ποιήσομεν	Introduction Quotation Deut 9,4.(8,17) Allusion Deut 30,12 Comment
Rom 10,7	τίς καταβήσεται εἰς τὴν ἄβυσσον; τοῦτ' ἔστιν Χριστὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναγαγεῖν.	τίς διαπεράσει ἡμῖν εἰς τὸ πέραν τῆς θαλάσσης καὶ λήψεται ἡμῖν αὐτὴν καὶ ἀκουσθὴν ἡμῖν ποιήσει αὐτὴν καὶ ποιήσομεν	Allusion Deut 30,13 Comment

⁶ Christological references start with *propositio*: 10,4.6.7.9.12.13. The last two references indicate Christ in a theological sense as the Lord who saves.

Rom 10,8	ἀλλὰ τί λέγει; ἐγγύς σου τὸ ῥῆμα ἔστιν ἐν τῷ στόματί σου καὶ ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου, τοῦτ' ἔστιν τὸ ῥῆμα τῆς πίστεως ὃ κηρύσσομεν.	ἔστιν σου ἐγγύς τὸ ῥῆμα σφόδρα ἐν τῷ στόματί σου καὶ ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου καὶ ἐν ταῖς χερσίν σου αὐτὸ ποιεῖν	Introduction Quotation Deut 30,14 Comment
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Table 2: Comparison between Old Testament texts and the text of Romans.

In 10,5 Paul refers to the text of Lev 18,5. The citation is taken from the *Holiness Code* (Lev 17–26) that regulates the covenant between God and his people. By extracting the verse, “the man doing the precepts will live by them,” Paul interprets “doing” as the basic rule that determines the Mosaic Law. Following this logic, the Law instead of providing life, seems to lead the people to death (Rom 7,10). Therefore, Paul adds another twist to the matter. By personifying the righteousness of faith (10,6), he questions the possibility of achieving this righteousness. Paul, while quoting the rhetorical questions of Deut 9,4 and Deut 30,11-14, omits the reference to “doing” and instead introduces the comment from a Christological perspective (i.e. to bring Christ down from heaven or to bring him up from the dead). The fulfilment of the Law is not too hard since through Christ it comes closer to man. Thus, the Law can be accomplished through faith in Christ who descended from heaven and ascended from the dead. (Penna 2010, 708–710)

Not all scholars share this interpretation of Paul’s argumentation. The *crux interpretum* represents the particle δέ in 10,6 (BDR 1979 §447.1), as it can either separate or link two manners of righteousness: the righteousness of the Law and the righteousness of faith. Some scholars, by interpreting δέ as a strong opposition particle, distinguish between the two manners of righteousness. Thus, Paul demonstrates that the regime of the Law is ended and, moreover, that by faith in Christ, righteousness becomes possible. (Légasse 2004, 508–509; Penna 2010, 710–713) Others, by interpreting it simply as a linking particle, take the two verses as being interrelated and interpreting each another. Thus, the Law becomes possible by faith in Christ. Based on Christological insistence in 10,4.6.7.9, stylistic criteria and because the adversative particle ἀλλά appears only in 10,8 (BDB §§ 448.3; 452.1.3), I follow this second interpretation. Thus, the text shows the shift concerning fulfilling the Law, i.e. from the impossibility of fulfilling the Law to the possibility of fulfilling it through faith. The content of the faith that Paul announces is expressed in 10,9, “Jesus is Lord.” Thus, a man attains salvation by believing and confessing Jesus’ lordship.

In brief, as in the past, the people of Israel were granted deliverance by God’s faithfulness (Deut 9,4), thus again, now, believing what God has done in Christ leads to life (Howard 1969, 334–335; Wagner 2002, 160–167; Hays 1989, 76–77).

(3) The part of conclusion, *peroratio* 10,18-21, includes different quotations: Ps 18,5 (LXX), Deut 32,21 and Is 65,1-2. For the purpose of this article, I comment only on the last two Old Testament references.

Rom 10,19	ἐγὼ παραζηλώσω <u>ὑμᾶς</u> ἐπ' οὐκ ἔθνει, ἐπ' ἔθνει ἀσυνέτῳ παροργιῶ <u>ὑμᾶς</u> .	Deut 32,21	αὐτοὶ παρεζήλωσαν με ἐπ' οὐ θεῶν παρώργισάν με ἐν τοῖς εἰδώλοις αὐτῶν κἀγὼ παραζηλώσω <u>αὐτούς</u> ἐπ' οὐκ ἔθνει ἐπ' ἔθνει ἀσυνέτῳ παροργιῶ <u>αὐτούς</u>
Rom 10,20	[Ἡσαΐας λέγει] εὐρέθην [ἐν] τοῖς ἐμέ μὴ ζητοῦσιν, ἐμφανῆς ἐγενόμην τοῖς ἐμέ μὴ ἐπερωτῶσιν.	Is 65,1	ἐμφανῆς ἐγενόμην τοῖς ἐμέ μὴ ζητοῦσιν εὐρέθην τοῖς ἐμέ μὴ ἐπερωτῶσιν εἶπα ἰδοὺ εἰμι τῷ ἔθνει οἱ οὐκ ἐκάλεσάν μου τὸ ὄνομα
Rom 10,21	[πρὸς δὲ τὸν Ἰσραὴλ] ὄλην τὴν ἡμέραν ἔξεπέτασα τὰς χεῖράς μου πρὸς λαὸν ἀπειθοῦντα καὶ ἀντιλέγοντα.	Is 65,2	ἔξεπέτασα τὰς χεῖράς μου ὄλην τὴν ἡμέραν πρὸς λαὸν ἀπειθοῦντα καὶ ἀντιλέγοντα οἱ οὐκ ἐπορεύθησαν ὁδῷ ἀληθινῇ ἀλλ' ὀπίσω τῶν ἀμαρτιῶν αὐτῶν

Table 3: Comparison between the texts of Deuteronomy, Isaiah and Romans.

Paul changes the personal pronoun αὐτούς of Deut 32,21 to ὑμᾶς in Rom 10,19, so that God now speaks directly to the people. As once Moses witnessed that God is calling Gentiles to be a part of his people in order to make Israel jealous, now God addresses his people to explain this plan. Thus, Moses' song describing the history of Israel (Deut 31,1–32,47) underlines how God makes the people jealous to bring them to final salvation. (Wagner 2002, 190–196) Thus, while real, genuine zeal means faith as the sole way to approach God (Belli 1994, 103–104), Israel's arrogance causes it to stumble – on the one hand, and the Gentiles to be included, on the other. However, the prophetic indictment in Rom 10 should lead Israel to repentance (Getty 1988, 458–459).

The redaction of Is 65,1 in Rom 10,20 tries to set the evoked text in a more logical sequence: seeking-finding, asking-manifesting. However, despite the people's complaint about God's silence (64,11), the problem is not God's absence, but the people's resistance. God, in fact, calls: "Here I am" (65,1) and extends his hands to the people as if he were a petitioner (65,2). (Childs 2001, 535) If the addressee of God's speech in Isaiah is the people of Israel (65,1-2), Paul disunites the verses in order (1) to proclaim the inclusion for Gentiles (65,1) in Rom 10,20 and (2) to decry Israel's constant rebellion (65,2) in Rom 10,21 (Wagner 2002, 211–215).

In brief, in the *peroratio* Paul makes rhetorical use of the Old Testament to point out both the widespread message of Christ as well as Israel's rebellion to provoke its conversion.

3.1 Reading the context of the Romans

The notions of τέλος and νόμος converge as the notion of "righteousness" (10,4: εἰς δικαιοσύνην). This latter term expresses both the condition as well as the con-

sequence of salvation and it is important both for the immediate context (as its numerous occurrences form a thematic cluster) as well as for the entire letter (as it constitutes the connective thread of Romans).

In fact, as expressed in *propositio* (1,16-17.18), God's righteousness means both salvation for the believer in Christ as well as judgment against all ungodliness. Paul compares God's righteousness and faith, on the one hand, to the Law and circumcision, on the other, in order to show how righteousness and salvation can be reached only through faith in Christ, as Christ represents the verge of God's righteousness on man's behalf.

The law and the prophets witness to God's righteousness; however, God's righteousness supersedes the Law. Even though all have sinned, the righteousness of God is bestowed to all who believe in Christ (3,21-25). Therefore, even Abraham's circumcision is a seal of the righteousness of the faith, as righteousness precedes the circumcision (4,11). Paul shows how Jesus Christ's grace provides righteousness leading to eternal life (5,21). It is because of Jesus that the believer may begin a new life of faith (8,3-4), thus walking the way of Jesus to gain eternal life (8,10). Thus, righteousness is not due to the merit of works, but rather through faith in Christ (9,30).

With the aim to preserve the primacy and hope of salvation for Israel (11,26), Paul adopts different perspectives and points at:

- (1) God's faithfulness (9,6; 11,1);
- (2) the theology of Israel's faithful remnant (9,27; 11,5) and
- (3) God's plan of salvation for the Gentiles by means of Israel's hardening and stumbling (9,16.32; 11,11.17-24).

As God is both impartial (2,11) and faithful (9,6), he entrusts the entire humanity with righteousness through faith in Christ, through life in Christ and the life by the Law of Spirit (8,1-2). Thus, the believers have already been saved in hope (8,24), knowing that all things work for the good of those who love God (8,28). (Wright 2010, 50)

In brief, God demonstrates his righteousness for the salvation of man in Christ. If the Law had a preparatory function, Christ by showing God's love fulfilled the righteousness of the Law and the path to righteousness through faith and love. Christ is thus a goal of the Law, as through faith in him righteousness can be achieved that prior to him was impossible solely through works of the Law.

4. Comparison with Acts

Paul is not alone in his endeavour to interpret Christ as the goal of the Law. This can be supported by some thematic correspondences in the *Acts of the Apostles*, perceiving Christ as the core of the *kerygma*: thus as (1) the leader to life and (2) a stumbling stone to the ignorant and hardened people. On the other hand, Acts constantly underline God's faithfulness and impartiality.

Stone of stumbling	Rom 9,32-33: They have stumbled over the stumbling stone (λίθος προσκόμματος), as it is written, "See, I am laying in Zion a stone that will make people stumble (λίθος προσκόμματος), /.../ and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame."	Ac 4,11: This [Jesus] is 'the stone' (λίθος) that was rejected by you, the builders; it has become the cornerstone.
Ignorance	Rom 10,2-4: They have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For, being ignorant of the righteousness that comes from God /.../ Christ is the goal of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.	Ac 3,17-20: I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. [... Repent] that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus.
Salvation in Christ	Rom 10,9: If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.	Ac 2,36; 4,12: God has made him both Lord and Messiah, /.../ there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.
Inclusion Impartiality	Rom 10,12: For there is no distinction (διαστολή; 2,11: προσωπολήπτως) between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him.	Ac 10,34-35: I truly understand that God shows no partiality (προσωπολήπτως), but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him.
Hardness of the people	Rom 10,21: Isaiah says [Isa 65,2] "All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people."	Ac 7,51: [Isa 63,10] You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit.

Table 4: *Thematic comparison between the texts of Romans and Acts.*

4.1 Peter's second kerygmatic speech (3,11-26)

While there is a vast array of thematic correspondences, here only some themes developed in Peter's second speech will be explicated. In fact, both faith in Jesus and his resurrection, on the one hand, as well as the hope of the universal blessing due to God's impartiality, on the other, indicate an intertextual meeting point.

After the healing of the lame man in the temple, Peter addresses the astonished crowd (3,11). Peter designates Jesus as (1) God's servant, (2) holy, (3) righteous and (4) leader to life. All these titles evoke the figure of Isaianic Servant. While the people handed him over, denied and killed him out of ignorance, God has glorified him and raised him from the dead in order to fulfil his plan, as announced by his prophets (3,13-18). Jesus as the leader to life and salvation represents the common theme and the junction of the texts in terms of faith and hope in resurrection (Ac 5,31; Rom 4,24; Is 53,12).

Ac 3,13 God has glorified his servant (ἐδόξασεν παῖδα) Jesus	Is 52,13 (παῖς δοξασθήσεται)
Ac 3,14 you have denied the Holy and Righteous One (ἅγιον, δίκαιον)	Is 49,7 (ἄγιος); Isa 53,11 (δίκαιος)
Ac 3,15 [you have] killed the leader to life [ἀρχηγὸν τῆς ζωῆς]	Is 53,8 ἤχθη εἰς θάνατον
Ac 3,15 God has raised him from the dead	Is 53,8 αἴρεται ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς

Table 5: *Comparison between the texts of Acts and Isaiah.*

The people obtaining new awareness of God's plan are invited to conversion, as a prerequisite for the arrival of the times of refreshment and of the appointed Messiah (Ac 3,19-20) (Tyson 1992, 103–111). The need for new awareness is further supported by biblical proof, i.e. Moses' announcement of the arrival of the Messiah (3,22-23). In Ac 3,23, the reader perceives how Peter adopts some redactional retouches. Firstly, by conflating two texts, Deut 18,15.19 and Lev 23,29, he hints at the need to listen in order not to be cast off from God's people. Secondly, by introducing "every soul-whoever" (πᾶσα ψυχή), he extends his audience to all men. Moreover, the impartiality of God's plan is underlined in Ac 3,25 by introducing God's promise to Abraham in Gen 22,18 (Gen 12,3; 18,18; 26,14; 28,14). The people of Israel, as the bearer of the promises, is the bearer of the blessing to all the families of the earth.

Gen 22,18: ἐνευλογηθήσονται ἐν τῷ σπέρματί σου πάντα τὰ ἔθνη τῆς γῆς	Ac 3,25: ἐν τῷ σπέρματί σου [ἐν]ευλογηθήσονται πᾶσαι αἱ πατριαὶ τῆς γῆς.
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Table 6: *Comparison between the texts of Genesis and Acts.*

The final verse sums up Peter's entire speech. Jesus as the servant (παῖς) is the focus of Peter's speech, as shown through the inclusion of the term at the beginning and at the end of the speech (Ac 3,13.26). God's action in raising his servant expresses God's faithfulness. This means a blessing attained through conversion first to the people of Israel and then to the Gentiles (3,26). The people of the covenant are the first to attain the blessing, as is indicated by the adverb of time and quality (πρῶτον). However, Israel is the forerunner of the blessing (3,25) that should spread over the entire world, as the people gathered in Jerusalem for the Pentecost represent the worldwide diaspora (2,5-9).

Ac 3,26: **ὁμῖν** πρῶτον ἀναστήσας ὁ θεὸς τὸν παῖδα αὐτοῦ ἀπέστειλεν αὐτὸν εὐλογοῦντα **ὁμᾶς** ἐν τῷ ἀποστρέφειν ἕκαστον ἀπὸ τῶν πονηριῶν **ὁμῶν**.

A brief overview of Peter's second speech in Acts shows some resemblances with the content of Rom 10. Although the comparison cannot completely fulfil

Hays' criteria of availability and historical plausibility, in order to speak of direct dependence (1989, 29–31); however, it underlines the impression that the first believing community is not separated from, but rather rooted in Jewish tradition. Thus, the goal of the Jewish Law-covenant represents righteousness and blessing. As this goal is achieved through Christ's exaltation, the continuity of the promise of the righteousness and blessing is confirmed, whereas the termination and the abolishment refers to the dimension of sin.

5. Conclusion

The article, using *prosopopoeia* in Paul's observation "The mystery of life finds its goal and final resolution in Jesus," brings to the fore the turning point in Paul's life, namely the encounter with Jesus. Only a fervent Pharisee could rightly balance the Hebrew attitude to the Torah with the newness of Jesus Christ. Paul has understood that Christ represents the goal and purpose of the Torah. However, he must explain this fact both to the Jews as well as his communities.

The *propositio* "Christ the goal of the Law" (10,4) in the central part of the letter to the Romans (9,30–10,21) not only represents a part of the string of the main *propositiones* (1,16–17; 9,6a; 10,4; 11,1), but rather, it shows how God's salvific plan arrives at its purpose in the gospel of Christ (1,16), both for Jews as well as for the Gentiles.

The analysis of the terms τέλος and νόμος shows their ambiguity and polysemantic valence. Following scholars such as Mary Getty and others, the article interprets τέλος in terms of continuity, teleological meaning and covenantal theology.

Both reading of the close context as well as a brief thematic overview of Romans (i.e. pursuing the terms Law and righteousness) lead to similar conclusions that τέλος elicits teleological and covenantal interpretation. Such interpretation opens the doors of the believing community universally. Moreover, this reading finds some resonance also in the Acts both with regard to the form, by the redactional use of Scripture (Deut, Is), and the message by portraying the expansion of the gospel beyond the limits of Israel (Ac 1,8).

Thus, Christ is not abolition, but the goal of the Law, in which God's righteousness is given to all who believe in him. Thus, the community of believers, regardless of the limits of space and time, perceive Christ as both the realization of the aspiration for righteousness as well as the model to follow; moreover, the community perceives itself as a continuation of the covenant with Israel, in terms of bringing God's righteousness and blessing to the entire world. The Law, formerly indicating the way to follow, finds its goal not in itself, but in Christ. The Law prepares and points to Christ, given that not works, but rather only faith in Jesus leads to life and salvation.

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