



BRILL

*Novum Testamentum* 55 (2013) 1-18

Novum  
Testamentum  
An International Quarterly for  
New Testament  
and Related Studies  
brill.com/nt

## Utterly Incapacitated: The Neglected Meaning of ΠΑΡΕΣΙΣ in Romans 3:25<sup>1</sup>

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### Abstract

This article considers the appropriate translation of *πάρεσις* in Romans 3:25, which is the only attestation of the word in the Greek Bible. The author argues that “incapacitation” should be considered as an appropriate translation based on the use of the term in other authors of the Hellenistic period, especially the medical writer Aretaeus of Cappadocia. Although some have mentioned “paralysis” as a possible meaning of *πάρεσις* in scholarly articles and monographs, no one has given serious consideration to understanding the term in this way or how such an understanding might align with Paul’s larger argument.

### Keywords

Pauline theology; ancient medicine; paralysis; human sinfulness; Romans

Scholars puzzle over the proper translation of *πάρεσις* in Rom 3:25 because it does not appear elsewhere in the Greek bible. A survey of major commentaries and monographs on the passage gives the impression that there are only two possible meanings for this allusive lexeme: either “forgiveness” or “passing over.” For example, Fitzmyer’s survey of the history of scholarship related to the term assumes only two options: he lists those scholars who read *πάρεσις* as “forgiveness” and those who read it as “passing over.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Many thanks to Dr. Beverly R. Gaventa for encouraging me to pursue this topic and for her helpful comments on previous drafts of the article; I am grateful also for the feedback of Dr. J. Ross Wagner and Dr. Shane Berg (all of Princeton Theological Seminary). Devin White (Emory University) has been a helpful dialogue partner in the latter stages of this article. Any remaining errors or inconsistencies are my responsibility.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Romans: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York: Doubleday, 1993) 351. His discussion reveals a tendency for reading it as “passing over” (Barrett, Byrne, Cranfield, Dunn, Jewett, Keck, Moo, and Schlatter), though many prefer to

In what follows, I will insist that understanding *πάρεσις* as “incapacitation” offers a remedy to the binary perception of previous scholarship because this meaning both corresponds with Paul’s developing argument regarding human sinfulness and the use of the term in his larger cultural context.

### Overlooking the Possibility of Paralysis

Since Rom 3:25 is the only occurrence of *πάρεσις* in the Greek bible, scholars search for clues to its meaning elsewhere, from within the context of Rom 3:21-26 or from non-biblical Greek. Keck posits that the phrase ἐν τῷ ἀνοχῇ τοῦ θεοῦ (“the forbearance of God,” Rom 3:26) controls the meaning of *πάρεσις*. With God’s forbearance in mind, he argues that *πάρεσις* here means “passing over” not in terms of God’s forgiveness or God’s ignoring human sinfulness, but rather God’s refusing to reckon judgment until the “day of wrath” (cf. Rom. 2:5).<sup>3</sup> Punishment for τὰ προγεγονότα ἁμαρτήματα (Rom 3:25) is pushed to the consummation of the *eschatos* for Keck. Kümmel, in contrast, argues for the opposite meaning of *πάρεσις* based on the meaning of ἀνοχή τοῦ θεοῦ. Calling attention to 1:24ff., he insists that God has not passed over sins or abstained from punishing human sinfulness. According to Kümmel, God’s ἀνοχή denotes that time when God allowed “men to sink increasingly deeper into the results of their disobedience.”<sup>4</sup> The negative results of human sinfulness indicate God’s judgment on human sinfulness, not God’s refusal to reckon judgment: “Thus, God’s ἀνοχή in the time before the sending of Christ does not consist in overlooking sins; it consists in a punishment which does not destroy but is intended to lead to repentance (Rom 2:4).”<sup>5</sup> Considering that God’s wrath has been revealed against human ungodliness (1:19), he takes *πάρεσις* to mean the “remission” of God’s punishment based on his understanding of ἀνοχή. Keck, based on his understanding of ἀνοχή, takes *πάρεσις* to be “passing over” in the sense of letting

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understand it as “forgiveness” or “remission” (Fitzmyer, Käsemann, Lietzmann, Schmithals, Theobald, Wilkens, and Zeller). Fitzmyer does note the existence of a third “more complicated, but less convincing” argument made by Lyonnet that *πάρεσις* should be rendered as “un pardon initial” (352). Cf. Stanislas Lyonnet, “Notes sur l’Exégèse de l’Épître aux Romains,” *Biblica* 38 (1957) 35-61.

<sup>3</sup> Leander E. Keck, *Romans* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2005) 111.

<sup>4</sup> Werner Georg Kümmel, “Πάρεσις and Ἐνδειξις: A Contribution to the Understanding of the Pauline Doctrine of Justification,” *JTC* 3 (1967) 10.

<sup>5</sup> Kümmel, “Πάρεσις and Ἐνδειξις,” 10.

go unpunished. While these two examples exemplify how difficult it is for the context alone to elucidate the meaning of *πάρεσις* in Rom 3:25, both work largely within an either-or framework.<sup>6</sup>

Scholars have turned to non-biblical texts to compensate for the term's only appearance in biblical Greek. Based on the use of *πάρεσις* in Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Creed concludes that "the passing over' not the 'remission' or 'forgiveness' is likely to be the true meaning of *πάρεσις* in Romans iii.25."<sup>7</sup> Conversely, Romano Penna cites the use of the term in Colophon's inscription in tribute of Polemeus Knemades as evidence for the meaning "pardon." He concludes that *πάρεσις* has the same sense as *ἄφεσις* ("forgiveness") because of its association with sin and because it is connected with the "concept of a debt to be remitted," which he understands to be the sense of the term in the inscription to Polemeus.<sup>8</sup>

What is particularly curious about the scholarly discussion surrounding *πάρεσις* is the insistence that there are only two possible meanings.<sup>9</sup> Even more confounding is the observation that neither "passing over" nor "forgiveness" is the most frequently attested meaning of *πάρεσις* at the time of Paul's writing; an often neglected third possible meaning,<sup>10</sup> namely

<sup>6</sup> Following LSJ, Kümmel does mention "paralysis" and "neglect" as possible meanings, but quickly dismisses both as "special meanings" with no explanation ("*Πάρεσις* and *Ἐνδειξις*," 3).

<sup>7</sup> J.M. Creed, "*Πάρεσις* in Dionysius of Halicarnassus and in St. Paul," *JTS* 40 (1940) 30.

<sup>8</sup> Romano Penna, "The Meaning of *Πάρεσις* in Romans 3:25c and the Pauline Thought on the Divine Acquittal," in *Lutherische und Neue Paulusperspektive* (eds. Michael Bachman and Johannes Woyke; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005) 260.

<sup>9</sup> Much of this "either-or" thinking may stem from Bultmann's treatment of the verbal and nominal forms in TDNT. Cf. Rudolf Bultmann, "*ἀφίημι, ἄφεσις, παρίημι, πάρεσις*," *TDNT* 1:509-12. He groups the two *παρ-* roots with the *ἄφ-* roots without mentioning the medical connotation of "paralysis." Cf. Horst Balz, "*πάρεσις*" and "*παρίημι*" in *EDNT* 3:39-41. While the verbal and nominal forms of *παρίημι/πάρεσις* are given separate entries, the medical connotation of "paralysis" is considered in neither. Moo is one of the few commentators to my knowledge who mentions "paralysis" as a possible meaning of *πάρεσις*, although only in a footnote (Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996] 240 n. 68). Compared to others surveyed, Wolfgang Kraus provides a more thorough discussion of the range of possible meanings for *πάρεσις* (Wolfgang Kraus, *Der Tod Jesu als Heiligtumsweihe: Eine Untersuchung zum Umfeld der Sühnevorstellung in Römer 3,25-26a* [WMANT 66; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1991] 93-103).

<sup>10</sup> On the meaning of "paralysis," see Kraus' summary of Mansetus Rath, "De Conceptu 'Paresis' in Epistola ad Romanos (3,25)" (Ph.D. diss., University of Jerusalem, 1965) in *Der Tod Jesu*, 95 n 17. Based on the history of interpretation, Rath finds three possible meanings of *πάρεσις*: "Nam interpretationem invenit in sensu remissionis (ac 'aphesis' aut specialis),

“paralysis,” occurs more frequently than both. What is strangest of all, though, is that some scholars note this third possible translation and even the precedent for understanding it in this manner within early Christianity, but give this possibility no further consideration. For example, Penna remarks in a footnote, “Here we are disregarding the medical connotations of ‘*paresis/paralysis*’ (for example in Philo, *Praem.* 143, 145).”<sup>11</sup> Penna provides no reason for disregarding the medical connotation, even though he recognizes that this meaning is not restricted to medical texts. In fact, he cites a non-medical writer (Philo) as an example of the medical connotation of *πάρεσις*. Moreover, Penna observes that, “some Greek Fathers understood the Pauline statement in precisely this [medical] sense.”<sup>12</sup> Similarly, Douglas Campbell states, “The noun occurs most frequently with the meaning ‘paralysis.’ This is its sense throughout the period’s medical literature, and also when it occurs in Josephus (*Ant.* 9.238; 11.234) and Philo (*Det. Pot. Ins.* 168; *Vit. Mos.* 26.143, 145).”<sup>13</sup> He goes as far to say that “the meaning ‘paralysis’ is perhaps worth reconsidering as a possible translation in Rom. 3:25d.” He concludes, however, that “it just does not seem to fit.”<sup>14</sup> Neither Campbell nor Penna provides a sufficient rationale for disregarding the possibility that *πάρεσις* bears the meaning “paralysis” in Rom 3:25.

The weight of the above comments must be emphasized. Though both Penna and Campbell observe that “paralysis” is a natural and frequently attested meaning of *πάρεσις*, that it is used with this sense in Paul’s Jewish contemporaries (Philo and Josephus), and that early Christian writers understood it to bear just this sense in Paul’s letter to the Romans, neither seriously entertains the possibility that such a meaning might be suitable for Rom 3:25. The present investigation into the meaning of *πάρεσις* will challenge these assumptions and show that “paralysis” is worthy of consideration in Rom 3:25, since it “fits” both with Rom 3:21-26 and with the larger argument of Romans. Consonant with previous scholarly endeavors, the term’s use in the literature in the time of Paul’s writing will be surveyed to see how its usage may bear on its meaning in Rom 3:25.

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praetermissionis (aut dilationis), et alicuius interni status debilis causati a peccato” (cited in Kraus, *Der Tod Jesu*, 96).

<sup>11</sup> Penna, “The Meaning of *Πάρεσις*,” 251 n. 3.

<sup>12</sup> Penna, “The Meaning of *Πάρεσις*,” 251.

<sup>13</sup> Douglas A. Campbell, *The Rhetoric of Righteousness in Romans 3:21-26* (JSNTSup 65; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992) 46 n. 2.

<sup>14</sup> Campbell, *Rhetoric of Righteousness*, 46.

## Paralysis in the Writings of Antiquity

### *ΠΑΡΕΣΙΣ in the Writings of Aretaeus*

A lemma search of ἡ πάρεσις on *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* (TLG) yields 66 occurrences of πάρεσις between the fifth century BCE (Aristophanes) and the second century CE (Pseudo-Galen). Twenty-five authors make use of the term in this time period. Although only eight of these authors are classified as medical writers, they represent nearly half of the total occurrences (29 of 66).<sup>15</sup> “Paralysis” is the conventional meaning of the term in the period’s medical literature, though it may be used more generally to denote weakness or exhaustion in both medical and non-medical literature.<sup>16</sup> I will begin my survey of those attestations of πάρεσις in antiquity that can be taken to mean “incapacitation” or “paralysis” by looking closely at how Aretaeus, a medical writer who likely wrote in the late first or early second century C.E., discusses paralysis in chapter seven of *On Chronic Diseases, Book One*. The work of Aretaeus suggests itself as a starting point for a number of reasons. First, he uses the term πάρεσις more than any other author in antiquity besides Galen.<sup>17</sup> In addition, it is likely that his work represents the accumulation (not without modifications) of the medical findings of preceding generations. Regarding this, Stringer notes that “Aretaeus is not an independent writer, but mainly a compiler.”<sup>18</sup> What Aretaeus offers in his work on paralysis may very well represent a consensus of medical understanding (and possibly popular knowledge as well). Third, he

<sup>15</sup> Authors and number of occurrences: Hippocrates (3x), Diocles (1x), Erasistratus (1x), Erotianus (1x), Soranus (1x), Galen (2x), Aretaeus (10x), and Pseudo-Galen (10x).

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Hippocrates, *Epid.* 4.45 (Smith, LCL) where πάρεσις is translated as “loss of strength.”

<sup>17</sup> The term appears 10x in Aretaeus and 12x in Galen. TLG attributes only two occurrences to Galen and ten to “Pseudo-Galenus.” TLG’s classification suggests that Aretaeus uses the term more than any other writer, but I am unclear of the criteria used to distinguish between the authentic work of Galen and those of pseudonymous writers. I do not wish to press the statistics more than necessary. More than half of Aretaeus’s uses of the term occur in his chapter on paralysis. The other four occurrences fall within the semantic range (“incapacitation” or “paralysis”) of those in his chapter on paralysis.

<sup>18</sup> Charles Stringer, “Medicine,” in *The Legacy of Greece* (ed. Richard W. Livingstone; Oxford: Clarendon, 1942) 234. See also Steven M. Oberhelman, “On the Chronology and Pneumatism of Aretaios of Cappadocia,” *ANRW* 37.2: 941-966 and John Scarborough, “Roman Medicine to Galen,” *ANRW* 37.1: 4-48.

lived and wrote within a century of the apostle Paul.<sup>19</sup> Finally, much of what Aretaeus says about paralysis echoes what earlier physicians (Hippocrates in particular) understood of paralysis. These four aspects of Aretaeus's work and context make him an ideal point of departure for considering the meaning of *πάρεσις* in Rom 3:25.<sup>20</sup>

Aretaeus is the first Greek medical writer<sup>21</sup> to devote an entire chapter of his work to the phenomenon of paralysis, as the title of chapter seven of *On Chronic Diseases, Book One* suggests: *Περὶ παραλύσεως*.<sup>22</sup> Aretaeus lists four types of paralysis which are "all generically the same (*ἅπαντα τῷ γένει τῷτά*):"<sup>23</sup> apoplexy (*ἀποπληξία*), paraplegia (*παραπλήξις*), incapacitation (*πάρεσις*), and paralysis (*παράλυσις*) (*Περὶ παραλύσεως*, p. 62 lines 12-13).<sup>24</sup> All four types are related because they refer to the loss (*ἔκλειψις*) of motion, of touch, of understanding, or of some other sense.<sup>25</sup>

In the lines that follow, Aretaeus distinguishes the various types of *παράλυσις* from one another. First, both apoplexy and paraplegia refer to the loss of multiple faculties. They differ from each other with regard to (a) the extent of the ailment and (b) the faculties affected by it. Apoplexy is an ailment experienced throughout the body (*ὅλος τοῦ σώματος*), while paraplegia is limited to a part (*μέρος*) of the body, such as a hand or a leg. Apoplexy is the *παράλυσις* of three faculties: sense, understanding, and

<sup>19</sup> For a recent discussion on the date of Aretaeus's writing, see Oberhelman, "Chronology and Pneumatism."

<sup>20</sup> For more on the biographical details of Aretaeus and his relationship to other notable Roman physicians (e.g. Hippocrates and Galen), see the treatment of Roman medicine before Galen in Plinio Pioreschi, *Roman Medicine* (Vol. 3 of *A History of Medicine*; Omaha, Nebr.: Horatius, 1998) 74-80, 260-275. See also Stringer, "Medicine," 237-245 and Francis Adams, *The Extant Works of Aretaeus The Cappadocian* (London: Sydenham Society, 1856) vii.

<sup>21</sup> Other medical writers after Aretaeus follow his example of including a section entitled *Περὶ παραλύσεως* ("concerning paralysis"): Oribius in the 4th century CE (*Eclogae medicamentorum* 73); Alexander in the 6th century (*Therapeutica*, Vol. 1, page 575ff.); Paulus in the 7th century (*Epitomae medicae libri septem* 18); Leo Medicus in the 9th century (*Conspectus medicinae* 2), and Joannes Actuarius in the 13th or 14th century (*De diagnosi* 54).

<sup>22</sup> The critical Greek text of Aretaeus's works can be found in Karl Hude, *Aretaeus* (Corpus Medicorum Graecorum Vol. 2; Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1958). I have made use of the Greek text of Aretaeus's *Περὶ παραλύσεως* found in Adams, *Extant Works*, 62-66.

<sup>23</sup> All translations are from Adams, *Extant Works* unless otherwise noted.

<sup>24</sup> Though semantically there appears to be little difference between *πάρεσις* and *παράλυσις* in this treatise, I have made a distinction between the two ("incapacitation" and "paralysis" respectively) for the sake of clarity.

<sup>25</sup> ἢ γὰρ κινήσιος, ἢ ἀφῆς, ἢ ἀμφοῖν ἔστι ἔκλειψις· κοτὲ καὶ γνώμης, κοτὲ τῆς ἄλλης αἰσθησίος (*Περὶ παραλύσεως*, p. 62 lines 13-14).

motion. Paraplegia is the πάρεσις of two faculties: touch and motion (p. 62 lines 14-16).<sup>26</sup> Paralysis (παράλυσις) is compared directly to paraplegia (cf. the μὲν . . . δέ construction, p. 62 lines 18-19); once again, the difference between the two concerns the number of faculties affected by the ailment. Paralysis is the πάρεσις of motion alone and of energy (κινήσιος μόνον, ἐνεργείης τε, p. 62 lines 19-20). The loss of touch alone is not called πάρεσις, but anesthesia (ἀναισθησίη μᾶλλον ἢ πάρεσις κικλήσκειται, p. 62 lines 21-22). The principal (τὸ κύριον) meaning of πάρεσις relates to the improper functioning of the bladder (p. 62, lines 25-26).<sup>27</sup> To this point, Aretaeus has provided the differences between the four types of paralysis named at the beginning of the chapter mostly in terms of the faculties that they effect. Despite the confusion that comes as a result of Aretaeus's using two of the terms (πάρεσις and παράλυσις) to define three of the other types (ἀποπληξίη, παραπληγίη, παράλυσις), it remains relatively clear that πάρεσις, like παράλυσις, has the sense of "incapacitation": apoplexy is the incapacitation of sense, understanding, and motion; paraplegia is that of touch and motion; and paralysis is that of motion alone. The parallel use of πάρεσις and παράλυσις (p. 62 lines 16-18)<sup>28</sup> and the fact that πάρεσις occurs in a chapter devoted to the medical phenomenon of paralysis, make it difficult to deduce a meaning of πάρεσις in Aretaeus other than incapacitation or paralysis.

Having arrived at a provisional understanding of how Aretaeus uses πάρεσις in his chapter on paralysis, a few additional comments regarding the meaning of those terms within the semantic field of paralysis (παράλυσις, πάρεσις, παριέναι, παραλύειν, and ἐκλύειν) are in order. All of these words demonstrate significant semantic overlap in his discussion of paralysis. Thus, the three verbs related to paralysis (παριέναι, παραλύειν, and ἐκλύειν)

<sup>26</sup> For the time being, I leave both παράλυσις and πάρεσις untranslated, but it is important to point out that they are used interchangeably at this point. This makes Adams's note regarding the difficulty of finding an appropriate word for πάρεσις, and his use of "remission" in his translation confounding. Even though παράλυσις and πάρεσις are used interchangeably, he suggests a special meaning for πάρεσις as "special loss" either of sensibility or of motion" even though translators before him made little or no distinction between the two (Adams, *Extant Works*, 305 n. 1).

<sup>27</sup> This is often how the term is used in Galen. See Karl G. Kühn, *Introduction seu medicus* (vol. 14 of *Claudii Galeni opera omnia*; Hildesheim: G. Olms, 1965) 748 line 2. Galen also uses πάρεσις in similar fashion to describe the incapacitation of the kidneys (Kühn, *Introduction seu medicus*, 748 line 15).

<sup>28</sup> One sees the proximity and semantic relationship between πάρεσις and παράλυσις again in Galen. See Karl G. Kühn, *In Hippocratis librum iii epidemiarum commentarii ii* (vol. 17.1 of *Claudii Galeni opera omnia*; Hildesheim: G. Olms, 1965) 692 line 10.

are used interchangeably throughout Aretaeus's chapter and are often rendered by Adams simply as "paralysis."<sup>29</sup> This observation is confirmed by the overlap between παράλυσις and πάρεσις discussed above. As a result, it is difficult to identify exactly which technical term encompasses the others. While the title of his chapter suggests that πάρεσις should be subordinated to παράλυσις (i.e. πάρεσις is a type of paralysis), elsewhere πάρεσις seems to be the more inclusive term. For example, toward the end of his chapter, he lists the six causes of πάρεσις (p. 65 line 7); here, he uses πάρεσις in a way that seems to include the other types of paralysis. Whether or not πάρεσις is the more inclusive term, the writings of Aretaeus suggest that πάρεσις refers to "incapacitation," that is to say that a natural faculty of the body or mind is not able to carry out its proper function because of some paralyzing defect.

#### *ΠΑΡΕΣΙΣ in the Writings of Philo and Josephus*

Above I noted the semantic overlap between πάρεσις and other terms describing the phenomenon of paralysis found in Aretaeus's *Περὶ παραλύσεως*. According to Aretaeus's explanation, the various words used to describe specific conditions (including πάρεσις) can all be understood as referring to paralysis. But, one might respond that Aretaeus's discussion of πάρεσις is too technical and cannot be taken to reflect the popular understanding of the term. In fact, though, the use of πάρεσις in Philo and Josephus demonstrates a similar meaning of πάρεσις as "incapacitation" among non-specialists, which lends further support to understanding the occurrence of πάρεσις in Rom 3:25 in similar fashion.<sup>30</sup>

Πάρεσις occurs twice in Josephus and three times in Philo. All five occurrences refer to the incapacitation of the body or a part of the body. Josephus speaks of the πάρεσις of limbs (*Ant.* 9.240) and of Esther's πάρεσις that results from the fear she experienced before the Persian king (*Ant.* 11.236). Philo uses πάρεσις twice in ways similar to Josephus: once to refer to the

<sup>29</sup> E.g., παρίεται (p. 63 line 4), ἐκλύομενα (p. 63 line 13), and παραλύεται (p. 63 line 23).

<sup>30</sup> In a less technical way, but still in the medical literature, one may consider Aretaeus's predecessor, Hippocrates. He provides an understanding of πάρεσις akin to that of Aretaeus, but in a more general sense. He uses πάρεσις to refer to the incapacitation of the human body, translated by Smith as "the loss of strength" (*Epid.* 4.138 [Smith, LCL]). For a similar sense outside of the medical writers, see Maximus, *Περὶ καταρχῶν* 6, p. 18 line 177 and *Περὶ καταρχῶν περὶ λείξει ἐκ τῶν ἡρωικῶν μέτρων* 1.6, p. 87 line 8 in Arthurus Ludwich, ed. *Maximi et Ammonis: carminum de actionum auspiciis reliquiae* (Leipzig: B. G. Tuebner, 1877).

incapacitation of the tongue (*Praem.* 25.143) and the other to that of the whole body (*Praem.* 25.145). In both, incapacitation comes as a consequence of human “impiety and disobedience” (ἀσεβεία καὶ παρανομία; *Praem.* 25.142). In an important passage that will be discussed more fully below, Philo describes the incapacitation (πάρεσις) and the slackening (ἔκλυσις) of the whole body that comes as a result of the mind’s paralysis (παράλυσις) (*Det.* 46.168). In this last case, as with Aretaeus, we see the close proximity and semantic overlap between παραλύειν, παριέναι, and ἐκλύειν.<sup>31</sup>

#### *ΠΑΡΙΕΝΑΙ in the Greek Old Testament*

Having demonstrated the strong semantic overlap between the various verbal and nominal forms of words related to paralysis, it is appropriate to widen the scope of investigation so as to consider more carefully the use of παριέναι in biblical material. As mentioned above πάρεσις occurs nowhere else in the Greek Bible besides Rom 3:25. However, the related verbal form, παριέναι, occurs twice in the New Testament and twenty times in the Greek translation of the Hebrew scriptures.<sup>32</sup> The occurrence in Luke 11:42 likely falls outside of the semantic range of “paralysis” (translated by the NRSV as “neglect”). The occurrence in Heb 12:12, however, shows a use of παριέναι with the sense of “incapacitation” in the New Testament.<sup>33</sup> Not only is παριέναι used in parallel with παραλύειν (as I noted above in the discussion of Aretaeus), but Harold Attridge notes that both phrases evoke “traditional images of exhaustion,”<sup>34</sup> a sense not far away from how both παριέναι and παραλύειν are used in the medical literature of the time.<sup>35</sup> When one

<sup>31</sup> See also a similar semantic overlap between (a) ἔκλυσις and παριέναι (*Cher.* 82; *Leg.* 267-268) and (b) ἐκλύειν and παριέναι (*Mos.* 1.325; *Sacr.* 81). See further παραλύειν: *Legat.* 39, 146; παριέναι: *Agr.* 160; *Deus* 15; *Ebr.* 130; *Somn.* 1.51; 2.160; *Ios.* 215; *Mos.* 1.182; 2.200; *Spec.* 1.219; *Praem.* 48; *Virt.* 193; *Flacc.* 10; *Prob.* 26; ἐκλύειν: *Post.* 112; *Sacr.* 80, 86; *Congr.* 177; *Abr.* 193; *Ios.* 61; *Decal.* 122; *Spec.* 3.33; *Virt.* 88; ἔκλυσις: *Cher.* 82.

<sup>32</sup> The abbreviation “LXX” will be used in what follows to denote the Greek translation of the Hebrew compositions now known as the Hebrew bible/Old Testament for the sake of expediency. As is well known, the relationship between the textual traditions is far more complicated than a simple one-to-one correspondence.

<sup>33</sup> Based on the preceding investigation, it is strange that Fitzmyer classifies this occurrence with the meaning “pass over, let go” (Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 350-351). While this definition may apply to the occurrence in Luke, it certainly does not apply to Heb 12:12.

<sup>34</sup> Harold W. Attridge, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1989) 365.

<sup>35</sup> E.g. Hippocrates, *Epid.* 4.

considers the use of *παριέναι* in the LXX, the likelihood that *πάρεσις* in Rom 3:25 could be understood as “incapacitation” becomes even stronger.

As with Aretaeus, Philo, and Josephus, *παριέναι* often occurs in parallel with other terms denoting “paralysis” or “weakness” in the LXX.<sup>36</sup> For example, the Lord is said to see the people of Israel paralyzed (*παραλύειν*) and enfeebled (*παριέναι*) in Deut 32:36. At the news of Abner’s death, Saul’s son Ishbaal’s hands are paralyzed (*ἐκλύειν*) and the Israelites grow faint (*παριέναι*) (2 Sam 4:1). As in Heb 12:12, Sir 25:23 makes reference to incapacitated hands (*χεῖρες παρειμέναι*) and paralyzed knees (*γόνατα παραλελυμένα*). *Παριέναι* describes the same affliction of the hands in Zeph 3:16 and Sir 2:12 as well. Both *ἐκλύειν* and *παριέναι* are combined in reference to the incapacitation of hands in Jer 4:31. In short, many of the occurrences of *παριέναι* in the LXX align closely with its usage in the medical writings of Aretaeus.<sup>37</sup>

Before discussing the sense of *πάρεσις* in Rom 3:25, it may be helpful to summarize those observations, which have necessitated the consideration of “incapacitation” as a possible translation. (1) Though neglected by major commentaries, the possibility of translating *πάρεσις* as “paralysis” has been noted by a few scholars, but has never been given serious consideration. (2) As we have seen, this is the most frequently attested meaning of *πάρεσις*, especially in the medical writers. (3) Aretaeus’s chapter *Περὶ παραλύσεως* presents *πάρεσις* along with other terms based on their “generic” similarities in denoting paralysis. (4) Aretaeus’s use of *πάρεσις* and other terms related to paralysis reveals a persistent semantic overlap among them,

<sup>36</sup> *Παριέναι* occurs with nearly the same frequency as *παραλύειν* (20x and 24x respectively) in the LXX. The most frequent nuance of *παριέναι* is “to incapacitate” or “to make weak” (11x: Num 13:20; Deut 32:36; 2 Sam 4:1; 3 Macc 2:13; Ode 2:36; Sir 2:12, 13; 25:23; Zeph 3:16; Jer 4:31; 20:9). It also bears the sense “to neglect” (4x: Exod 14:12; 1 Sam 2:5; Ode 3:5; Mal 2:9) or “to pass over” (3x: Ps 137:8; Sir 4:29; 23:2). The other two occurrences of *παριέναι* have slightly different meanings. In Judith 12:12, *παριέναι* is rendered “permit” (Jud 12:12, Brenton and NETS); in 4 Maccabees, Brenton renders it “transgress,” while NETS has “disregard.”

<sup>37</sup> The phrase “weakening of hands” is closely connected with the Hebrew root *נַחַר* (see *HALOT*, s.v.), which is used in Zeph 3:16. Other occurrences of this root with the same basic meaning are translated into the Greek with a variety of terms including *ἀσθενεῖν/ἀσθενής* (Num 13:19; Job 4:3), *ἐκλύειν/ἐκλύσις* (Josh 10:6; 2 Chr 15:7; Ezra 4:4; Neh 6:9; Isa 13:7; Jer 29:3), and *παραλύειν/παραλύσις* (Jer 6:24; 27:43; Ezek 7:27). It is interesting to note that the variety of words used by translators to render *נַחַר* into Greek corresponds in large part with the semantic overlap among the words employed by Aretaeus to discuss paralysis.

especially between παραλύειν/παραλύσις and παριέναι/πάρεσις.<sup>38</sup> (5) The use of both παραλύειν/παραλύσις and παριέναι/πάρεσις in Josephus, Philo, and the LXX confirms their interrelationship and semantic overlap. Understood within this larger family of words that describe the paralysis of the body or one of its parts, it seems quite possible that πάρεσις has a similar meaning in Rom 3:25.

### The Incapacitating Power of Sin in Romans

In addition to illuminating the types of paralysis, Aretaeus provides insight into some of its causes. Among those things that one might expect to cause paralysis (e.g. a wound, exposure to cold, or a severe blow), he suggests others more surprising causes, e.g. indigestion and intoxication (Περὶ παραλύσεως, p. 65 lines 7-8).<sup>39</sup> In addition to these, Aretaeus notes that paralysis can also occur because of “the vehement affections of the soul, such as astonishment, fear, [and] dejection of spirits” (p. 65 lines 8-9). We see then that a medical writer, who earlier had discussed the various forms of physical paralysis, is able to speak in a more figurative sense about paralysis similar to Josephus’s statement about the πάρεσις of limbs that comes with terrible strife (*Ant.* 9.240) or the πάρεσις caused by Esther’s fear before the Persian king (*Ant.* 11.236).

It is by no means outside the range of possible meanings, therefore, to understand πάρεσις in Rom 3:25 as incapacitation. The incapacitation Paul speaks of originates in “former sinful actions (διὰ τὴν πάρεσιν τῶν προγεγονότων ἀμαρτημάτων).” According to 3:24, God’s rectifying activity toward humanity comes about through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus (διὰ τῆς ἀπολυτρώσεως τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ). As will become clear in what follows, this redemption in Christ should be understood particularly as the redemption from the incapacitated state brought about by sin, a state that manifests itself in a worthless mind, weakened human vigor, and a body of sin and death. In short, God’s salvation power (Rom 1:16) restores to health that which previously had been paralyzed as a result of human sinfulness.

<sup>38</sup>) This semantic overlap includes flexibility between the two word families (i.e. πάρεσις and παραλύσις) and even within the word family (παριέναι and παραλύειν).

<sup>39</sup>) For paralysis by intoxication, see Plutarch, *Quaest. conv.* 652E.

### *Incapacitation in Mind, Strength, and Body*

In the first place, Paul understands a major consequence of sin to be a “worthless mind” (ἀδόκιμος νοῦς, Rom 1:28) that results from humanity’s failing to glorify God or give God thanks (1:21) despite their ability to know God (1:19-20). The degradation of the human mind to futility and diminished understanding results from this sin of omission. Evidence of humanity’s worthless mind emerges in a whole catalogue of sinful misdeeds described in 1:29-32. Paul is not unique in this understanding of the powerful consequences of human sinfulness. In the discussion above on two occurrences πάρεσις in Philo (*Praem.* 25.143 and 25.145), we saw that human impiety (ἀσέβεια) and disobedience (παρανομία) resulted in incapacitation (*Praem.* 24.142). In his interpretation of Gen 4:15 (*Det.* 46.168), Philo further describes the paralyzing consequences of sin, especially on the human mind. Here, Philo likens the “seven punishable objects” to the seven-fold division of the irrational side of the soul:

Were a man to do away with the eighth, mind which is the ruler of these, and here [in Gen. 4:15] called Cain, he will paralyze (παραλύσει) the seven also. For they are all strong by sharing the strength and vigour of the mind, and with its weakness (ἀσθενεία) they wax feeble, and by the complete corruption brought on them by wickedness they incur a weakening (πάρεσιν) and a slackening (ἔκλυσιν). (*Det.* 46.148 [Colson-Whitaker, LCL])

For Paul, like Philo, humanity’s depraved mind leads to utter incapacitation as a result of human sinfulness.<sup>40</sup>

A second consequence is the weakening of human vigor in more general terms. Above I noted that πάρεσις can refer to weakness or the loss of strength generally in addition to denoting the physical paralysis of the body or a part of the body. Παριέναι occurs with this sense in Hippocrates, Heb 12, and throughout much of the LXX. Much of what Paul says in Rom 5 coincides with this general notion of παριέναι/πάρεσις. Rom 5:6 and 5:8 offer a compelling parallel between humanity’s sinfulness and humanity’s weakness, which can best be displayed schematically:

<sup>40</sup> It is worth noting that Philo’s interpretation of Gen 4:15 (LXX) resembles Aretaeus’s discussion of paralysis: the biblical lexeme παραλυεῖν is expounded using other words with a similar semantic range, e.g. παριέναι and ἐκλυεῖν in *Det.* 46.167; ἀσθενεία, πάρεσις, and ἔκλυσις in *Det.* 46.168.

Rom 5:6

Ἔτι...

ὄντων ἡμῶν ἀσθενῶν...  
 ὑπὲρ ἀσεβῶν  
 ἀπέθανεν.

Rom 5:8

ἔτι

ἁμαρτωλῶν ὄντων ἡμῶν  
 Χριστὸς ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν  
 ἀπέθανεν.

In Rom 5:6, Paul claims that Christ died on behalf of the ungodly, who are characterized as being weak (ὄντων ἡμῶν ἀσθενῶν).<sup>41</sup> In 5:8, Paul says nearly the same thing, but he refers to humanity's sinfulness (ἁμαρτωλῶν ὄντων), not its weakness. This parallel suggests a link between humanity's sinfulness and humanity's weakness, since both are the object of God's rectifying activity that comes through Christ's death. Paul understands the present time (i.e. the repetition of νῦν in 3:26 and 5:9, 11) to be marked by God's rectification of weakness, a weakness which renders humanity utterly incapacitated. Thus, God's rectifying activity can be understood as God's power to restore health and bring healing (σωτηρία) to a humanity in desperate need of it.<sup>42</sup>

Paul extends the power of sin beyond a worthless mind and a general state of weakness to describe the whole of the human body as being utterly incapacitated. Having highlighted sin's power to turn even God's spiritual law into an opportunity for sin and death, Paul's rhetorical "I" cries out, "Who will rescue (ρύσεται) me from this body of death?" (7:24). Beyond referring to the body as the seat of death, Paul also refers to human body as the "body of sin" (6:6) and the "fleshly body" which is sold under sin (7:14); additionally, he speaks of sin dwelling in humanity (7:17), taking prisoner the parts of the body (7:23), and ultimately being the cause of death (8:10). In 8:3, Paul states that God sent Jesus in the likeness of human flesh in order

<sup>41</sup> Kümmel also considers Rom 5 as means of supporting his understanding of πάρεσις. Although he considers human ungodliness, he does not take into consideration the fact that weakness is associated with sinfulness in Rom 5:6-8. Thus, while he is correct to detect here God's "justifying activity" (Kümmel, "Πάρεσις and Ἐνδειξις," 8), he takes this activity to be related exclusively to the atoning God's wrath. It is more likely that God's "justifying activity" is synonymous with God's healing activity.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Howard Clark. Kee, *Medicine, Miracle, and Magic in New Testament Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986). Kee discusses the portrait of YHWH as healer in the Old Testament (12-16). He states that "the rectification of the people of God [is] portrayed under the figure of divine healing" (13). For a discussion of philosophy's ability to restore health to those weakened by bad morals, see, e.g., Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 8.5; Epictetus, *Disc.* 3.23.27-31; Lucian, *Demon.* 7. See also the discussion in Abraham J. Malherbe, *Moral Exhortation: A Greco-Roman Sourcebook* (LEC 4; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986) 40-47.

to condemn sin in the flesh and that the law's insufficiency (*ἀδύνατος*) is caused by the weakness of the flesh. Calling to mind what I said above about redemption in Rom 3:24, Paul remarks in 8:23 that humanity longs for the "redemption of the body." All of these descriptions of the human body support the notion that human sinfulness brings about incapacitation, a state of profound weakness that can be remedied only through divine intervention.

### *Incapacitation as Captivity*

The notion that sin takes the body prisoner (7:23) and results in the need for rescue (i.e. *ῥύσαι* in 7:24) suggest that sin's incapacitating power can be understood figuratively as captivity. In this light, Paul argues that all of humanity—Jews and non-Jews—are under the power of sin (*ὑφ' ἁμαρτίαν*, 3:9). Further, he says that sin both rules over (*βασίλευεν*, 5:21; 6:12) and exercises dominion over (*κυριεύειν*, 6:14) humanity. In similar fashion, Paul speaks of humanity's slavery to sin (6:17-20). Paul's application of terms denoting domination and slavery connect with two occurrences of *παριέναι* in the LXX in which a similar connection between "paralysis" and captivity is made. In both, Israel's captivity results from their disobedience.

The first example comes in the prayer of the High Priest Simon in 3 Maccabees (2:1-20) in view of Ptolemy's impending invasion. After recounting God's truth and faithfulness in rescuing Israel in the past (2:11-12), Simon prays in 2:13, "And now, behold, Holy King, on account of our many and great sins (*ἁμαρτίας*) we are oppressed, subject to our enemies and rendered powerless (*παρείμεθα ἐν ἀδυναμίαις*)" (NETS). Israel's oppression and subjection result in incapacitation, which leads Simon to pray that God would rescue the people just as God rescued Israel in the past. The cause of their incapacitation—sin (2:13)—and the source of redemption from it—God (2:12)—recall our discussion of God's rectifying activity in Rom 3:21-26 above.

We find a similar use of *παριέναι* near the end of the Song of Moses (Deut 31:30-32:43). Mention of incapacitation occurs in Deuteronomy 32:36 at the outset of a message of God's delivering the people of Israel from the consequences of their sinful rebellion. God's deliverance comes because God "saw them paralyzed (*παραλελυμένους*), both failed under attack and enfeebled (*παρειμένους*)" (NETS). Like 3 Maccabees 2:13, this verse contributes much to our discussion of incapacitation: first, incapacitation is the result of Israel's sinfulness and God's judgment; second, there is a strong semantic

relationship between παραλύειν and παριέναι; third, an additional consequence of Israel's sinfulness is "abandonment," which is similar to the notion of subjection in 3 Maccabees 2:13; and finally, Israel's incapacitated state is remedied by redemption.

Paul's exposition of sin's power in Rom 6-8 conforms especially well to the preceding investigation of the meaning of παριέναι in 3 Macc 2 and Deut 32 in which human incapacitation is tied to captivity. Notably, in both of these cases, humanity's incapacitation and captivity are caused by sin.<sup>43</sup> Reading the phrase τῶν προγεγονότων ἀμαρτημάτων in Rom 3:25 as a genitive of origin suggests that incapacitation derives from human sins committed in the past. Likewise, Paul's emphatic assertion that God "handed over" (παραδιδόναι, 1:24, 26, 28) sinful humanity corresponds to the notion of captivity brought about because of sin. Paul affords such totalizing power to sin that it is said to have full power over the parts of the body, able even to render the body entirely dead (6:12; 7:24; 8:10). John Chrysostom's commentary on Rom 3:25 reinforces the nefarious nature of sin: "There was no longer any hope of recovering health, but as the paralyzed body needed the hand from above, so doth the soul which hath been deadened."<sup>44</sup> Chrysostom appears to understand πάρεσις as incapacitation and he equates the total and absolute incapacitation that comes through sin with physical death.

#### *Redemption as Release from Incapacitation*

If Paul depicts the incapacitation caused by sin in terms of weakened faculties and captivity, it is not surprising that he speaks of redemption as restoration of those faculties and as new life. We may mention briefly those places in Romans where Paul speaks of redemption as undoing or setting right sin's incapacitating power:

<sup>43</sup> See also those places where παραλύειν describes the result of God's punishment on human sinfulness: Jer 26:15; Ezek 7:27; 25:9; 1 Macc 9:55. See also the healing of the paralytic in the Synoptic tradition (Mark 2:1-12 and parallels) whose healing results from Jesus' forgiving his sins. See further Larry P. Hogan, *Healing in the Second Temple [sic] Period* (NTOA 21; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992) 3-20, and Kee, *Medicine, Miracle, and Magic*, 9-26.

<sup>44</sup> George B. Stevens, ed. *The Homilies of St. John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople, on the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans* (A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church 11; ed. Philip Schaff; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980) 378.

- If humanity's failure to give God glory led to its depraved mind and its eventual loss of agency (cf. Rom 3:9), redemption envisions the renewal of the mind and the restoration of human agency. Thus, Rom 12:2 imagines the complete reversal of Rom 1:28-32: just as humanity's worthless mind led to a laundry list of sinful behaviors and dispositions, so the renewing of the mind envisions a way of being human that is not patterned after the standards of this world.
- If sin brought about death, redemption in Christ ensures that redeemed humanity can live in the newness of life (ἐν καινότητι ζωῆς περιπατήσωμεν, 6:4). This newness of life results from humanity's release from its former slavery to sin and because the "old human being" (ὁ παλαιὸς ἡμῶν ἄνθρωπος) has been crucified with Christ (6:6).
- If life under the power of sin was characterized by a body of death, redemption in Christ restores the possibility of living for God (6:10-11). Those who have been redeemed are to offer (παριστάναι) themselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life (6:13). Similarly, in Rom 12:1, the mercies of God make it possible for humanity to present (παριστάναι) their now redeemed bodies as living, holy, and pleasing sacrifices to God.
- If humanity's failure to give God glory and thanks (1:21) led to their incapacitation and captivity, redemption in Christ enables them to both give God thanks (14:6) and to give God glory (15:6).

Earlier in this article I mentioned Aretaeus's definition of paralysis as loss (ἔκλειψις) of motion or sense. Based on the above, it is clear that redemption in Romans relates to the restoration of that which has been "lost" as a result of human sinfulness, namely the mind, the body, and human agency in general.

### Conclusion

This article challenges the scholarly assumption that there are only two possible meanings of πάρεσις in Rom 3:25. Given the term's meaning in the medical literature of the time and the adoption of this meaning by other Jewish writers contemporary with Paul, the possibility that πάρεσις means "incapacitation" in Rom 3:25 is more than plausible. Lexical investigation has demonstrated the semantic overlap between παραλύειν/παραλύσις and παρῆναι/πάρεσις; this overlap between the two terms is so strong that it

suggests that they are nearly synonymous. Other authors, such as Philo and the author of 3 Maccabees, confirm that incapacitation is a consequence of human sinfulness; further, the only remedy for such paralysis comes through God's redeeming intervention. The cumulative effect of this argument casts previous scholarly attempts to illumine Paul's use of *πάρεσις* into new light. When scholars insist on either "passing over" or "remission," they rely on the term's *less frequently attested* meanings, while denying the one more frequently attested. What remains to be shown, then, is not that *πάρεσις* could mean "passing over" or "remission," but rather why either nuance should or should not overshadow the more frequently attested meaning of "paralysis."

In light of all this, it is entirely possible to understand God's rectifying activity in Rom 3:21-26 as the release from the incapacitating consequences of sin. A literal translation of Rom 3:25 is notoriously difficult<sup>45</sup> because of its convoluted syntax and the infrequently attested vocabulary. However, a suitably literal translation of Rom 3:25, highlighting this understanding of *πάρεσις* without addressing all of the exegetical issues reads: "[Jesus] whom God, because of the incapacitation caused by former sinful actions, put forward as a *ἰλαστήριον*<sup>46</sup> through faith in his blood<sup>47</sup> for a demonstration of

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Luke Timothy Johnson, "Rom 3:21-26 and the Faith of Jesus," *CBQ* 44 (1982) 79: "A decent translation [of Rom 3:25] is nearly impossible."

<sup>46</sup> The proper meaning of *ἰλαστήριον* is the subject of much debate and lies outside the purview of this article. I understand the word here functionally—Jesus is presented as the "place" where humanity's reconciliation with God is enacted. (Cf. the golden lid of the Ark of the covenant in Exod 25:17 and *passim*.) As the purgation of sin in the purification offering reconciled God with the Israelites, so the redemption that is in Christ (Rom 3:24) consists of reconciliation with God (cf. Rom 5:9-11; 1 Cor 1:30). For a survey of the different meanings proposed for *ἰλαστήριον*, see Sam K. Williams, *Jesus' Death as Saving Event: The Background and Origin of a Concept* (Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1975) 38-41; Jewett, *Romans: A Commentary* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 2007) 284-288.

<sup>47</sup> I read the phrase *ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι* metonymically in reference to Jesus's death (cf. Campbell, *Rhetoric of Righteousness*, 123; see further the correspondence between Jesus's blood and God's rectifying activity in Rom 5:9). See also Johnson, "Rom 3:21-26," who reads the two prepositional phrases *διὰ [τῆς] πίστεως* and *ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι* "almost as hendiadys" (80). With Johnson ("Rom 3:21-26," 79-80) and others, I understand *διὰ [τῆς] πίστεως* to be a subjective genitive. The two phrases, more periphrastically, could be translated as "through [the] faithfulness shown in his death."

[God's] rectifying power."<sup>48</sup> Of the implications of this reading of Rom 3:25, I will highlight two that are theological in nature.

First, understanding *πάρεσις* as "incapacitation" lends greater coherence to Paul's discussion of sin and redemption in Rom 1-8. Put simply, Paul depicts the ultimate result of sin to be death and he portrays redemption as the restoration of life. The picture of God, then, whether in chapter three or chapter eight, is consistently that of the God who brings to life those who are dead and calls into existence things that do not yet exist (cf. Rom 4:17). Second, and related to the first, this reading of Rom 3:25 sheds light on how Paul describes the nature of human sinfulness and God's response to it. My reading affirms God's active role in humanity's redemption. God does not passively wait for the proper sacrifice (i.e. *πάρεσις* as remission) or the coming day of wrath (*πάρεσις* as passing over) to respond to human sinfulness. Rather, Paul depicts God's active response to human sinfulness that can only be described as dialectical. God's wrath is revealed against all forms of ungodliness that suppress the truth of God and humanity's recognition of that truth's claim on them (Rom 1:18); God's response to this human disposition is to "hand over" humanity to its destructive consequences. Yet, God's rectifying activity is revealed in God's persistent power to work salvation for and restore life to the faithful (Rom 1:16); God reclaims humanity, that is to say, God redeems humanity from the incapacity and captivity that resulted from humanity's being handed over. Those who have been redeemed—those who have been the recipients of God's rectifying activity—are those who have had life restored to them.

Ultimately, this reading confirms Paul's programmatic citation of Hab 2:4 in Rom 1:17. The "righteous one" (ὁ δίκαιος) does indeed live from faith (ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται) (Rom 1:17). If the righteousness of God is revealed and made effective through the faithfulness of Jesus (διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, 3:22, 25), then the righteousness of God refers to God's saving activity whereby life is restored to humanity. Sin robs humanity of vitality, it leaves the mind and body utterly incapacitated, and ends in death; the good news of the gospel, then, is that God's spirit, which raised Jesus from the dead, is able to make alive (ζωοποιεῖν) even the human body that is prone to death (θνητός, 8:11).

<sup>48</sup> Without entering into the large and complicated discussion, I take the δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ to refer to God's rectifying activity. Cf. Kümmel, "Πάρεσις and Ἐνδειξις," 8. In this regard, Paul can speak of his gospel (εὐαγγέλιον), which points to God's rectifying activity, as God's power that brings about salvation for the faithful (δύναμις γὰρ θεοῦ ἐστιν εἰς σωτηρίαν, Rom 1:16-17).