

INTERCHANGE AND ATONEMENT¹

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THERE are in several of Paul's letters statements about the relationship between Christ and the believer which have been aptly if not entirely accurately summed up in the word "interchange". The most convenient way of explaining what is meant is to quote an expression of it which is not, in fact, Paul's own—namely the famous saying of Irenaeus: "Christ became what we are, in order that we might become what he is." The clearest examples in Paul's own writings are found in 2 Corinthians, the first in v. 21—"he became sin, that we might become the righteousness of God in him", the second in viii. 9—"though he was rich he became poor, in order that many might be made rich". Here we see the basic pattern of the interchange between Christ and the believer: Christ is identified with the human condition in order that we might be identified with his.

The term "interchange", though very useful, is not, however, entirely accurate. According to my dictionary, the word means "a reciprocal exchange" and implies a mutual "give and take". It is immediately obvious that as far as the relationship between Christ and the believer is concerned, the give and take are far from being mutual: the giving is all on one side, and the taking on the other. Nor is it a case of Christ and the believer changing places, as has sometimes been suggested in some crude interpretations of the atonement. In I Thessalonians v. 10—not itself an "interchange" statement, but one which nevertheless sums up in a similar way the relationship between Christ's death and our life—Paul speaks of Christ dying in order that we might live—but he adds the significant words *with him*: Christ "died for us so that . . . we might live with him". If Christ

¹ The Manson Memorial Lecture delivered in the University of Manchester on the 27th of October 1977. This lecture explores a topic ("The idea of interchange as a clue to Paul's understanding of the atonement") on which the author began work under Professor Manson's guidance in October 1957, and which was put on one side after his death the following year.

shares our death, it is in order that we might share his resurrection life. Paul's understanding of the process is therefore one of participation, not of substitution; it is a sharing of experience, not an exchange. Christ is identified with us in order that—in him—we might share in what he is.

The words *with him* in I Thessalonians v. 10 emphasize the dependence of the believer upon Christ. So do the words *in Christ* in 2 Corinthians v. 21—and they point also to another way in which this interchange is not a mutual one. When Paul says that Christ came “in the likeness of sinful flesh” (Rom. viii. 3), or that he was “born of a woman” (Gal. iv. 4), he is describing universal human experiences; to borrow Paul's own way of putting it, Christ is sharing fully in the condition of Adam. The process of reversal, however, is—at least at present—by no means universal. It may well be that Paul believed that in the end it would be, that all men would be “in Christ” and so share in all that this implied; but for the moment, at least, the reciprocal relationship is limited to those who are “in Christ”.

Paul's understanding of interchange is therefore one of interchange *in Christ*. It is achieved, on the one hand, by Christ's solidarity with mankind, on the other, by our solidarity with Christ. The former idea can be conveniently summed up in the non-Pauline term “incarnation”; the latter concerns our incorporation into Christ, and is expressed by Paul in terms of faith in Christ, baptism into Christ, and dying and rising with Christ. It is because Christ himself shared in the condition of being “Adam”, man, that man is now offered the possibility of entering a new kind of existence.

In asking how this idea of “interchange” fits into Paul's understanding of redemption, therefore, it is natural to turn to the contrast which Paul sets out between Adam and Christ in Romans v, and I want to begin my investigation there, even though this particular chapter does not contain any formulae of “interchange”.

It is perhaps a measure of our distance from Paul's way of thinking that many commentators have found themselves puzzled by verses 12-19 of Romans v. One scholar described them as “perhaps the most peculiar verses in all the epistle”¹; another

¹A. Nygren, *Commentary on Romans* (London, 1952), p. 207.

as a "theological digression"¹; even Luther referred to them as "a pleasant excursion".² But however pleasant they may be, they are certainly no excursion; I suggest, on the contrary, that they are the key to Romans, summing up the argument of the previous chapters in terms of the contrast between Adam and Christ. Throughout the early part of Romans Paul demonstrates how man lost his relationship with God, how he forfeited the divine glory and came under the wrath of God; in chapter v, he declares that man is restored to a right relationship with God, and that he can therefore rejoice in hope of the restoration of God's glory, and can be assured of salvation from the wrath to come. Paul reaches his triumphant conclusion in verses 9-11: having been reconciled to God by Christ's death, we shall certainly be saved by his life. The opening "therefore" of verse 12 introduces the final QED of Paul's argument³: because

¹ K. E. Kirk, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Oxford, 1937), p. 195.

² Preface to the Epistle to the Romans, 1522, E.T. *Works of Martin Luther* (The Philadelphia edition), vi (1932), 456.

³ Commentators tend to give the introductory *διὰ τοῦτο* of verse 12 less than its full force, suggesting that it indicates only a loose relation with the preceding argument in v. 1-11. The difficulty in understanding the logic at this point is partly the result of Paul's broken construction, since the *ὡσπερ* of verse 12 has no corresponding *οὕτως*. Nevertheless, Paul's meaning here is clear from the rest of the paragraph: everything which happened "in Adam" has been more than balanced by what happened "in Christ". Paul is able to introduce this pronouncement at this stage because in the preceding paragraph he has taken an important new step in his argument: he has moved on from the idea of "justification" or being put right with God to talk about the hope of glory, verse 2, and about salvation, verses 9 f. The wheel of the argument has now come its full circle. Paul has shown how man sinned, how he lost his relationship with God, how he forfeited the divine glory and came under God's wrath. Now he has said that man is restored to a right relationship with God through faith and that his sins have been dealt with—and that, this being so, he can rejoice in hope of the restoration of God's glory and can be assured of salvation from future wrath. The restoration of man is complete—or will be, when the eschatological hope is realized. Romans v. 9-10 are therefore the climax of the whole argument from i. 16 onwards—man's fall into sin and wrath is now reversed by his restoration in Christ. Now at last Paul can sum up all that he has said so far in a triumphant conclusion. Because man is not only "justified" but has confidence that he will be saved from wrath (verse 9); because man is not only reconciled but has a sure hope of salvation (verse 10); therefore everything which happened to man in Adam is paralleled by what has happened to man in Christ (verse 12). Far from being a loose linking phrase, the *διὰ τοῦτο* of verse 12 provides the vital introduction to this final step in Paul's argument.

man is not only "justified" and reconciled with God, but has assurance that he will be saved from wrath, *therefore* everything which happened to man in Adam is paralleled, or rather reversed, by what has happened to man in Christ. Therefore, as through one man sin came into the world, and death through sin, so through one man righteousness came, and life through righteousness.

In spite of Paul's somewhat confused syntax, the parallels and contrasts between Adam and Christ in this passage are clear: five times over, first negatively and then positively, everything which happened "in Adam" is more than counter-balanced by what happens "in Christ". If we understand his argument simply in terms of Adam and Christ, however, we shall misunderstand his purpose, for I suggest that there is another even more important contrast here, and that is the contrast between the activity of man and the activity of God himself; it is the results of the latter which are so much greater than the results of the former. This is clearly seen if we analyse the balance sheet which is drawn up in verses 15-19 and examine the terms which Paul uses. First (v. 15), we are told that the *παράπτωμα*, the transgression, is not like the *χάρισμα*, the gracious gift. It is the gracious gift of God which stands in contrast with the sin of Adam, so that it is hardly surprising that Paul declares that the two are not strictly comparable. In what follows, Paul underlines the contrast between Adam's transgression and God's gracious gift. Though many—i.e. all—died as the result of one transgression, the grace of God and his gift (which came in Christ) have proved abundant for many: since one transgression brought death, it is clear that the gift must bring life. The contrast is then (v. 16) elaborated in terms of the results of the sin and the gift respectively: the judgement of one transgression led inevitably to condemnation, but the gracious gift of God, coming after many transgressions, led to acquittal. Paul uses here the unusual term *δικαίωμα*, and it is often argued that he has chosen this, rather than the more usual word for righteousness, *δικαιοσύνη*, because its form balances that of the word for condemnation, *κατάκριμα*. Yet the meaning, as well as the form, of *δικαίωμα* makes it appropriate in this context; for it means

not only a regulation or commandment (as often in the LXX) but also the amendment of a wrong, the act of vindication.¹ The emphasis here falls on the action of setting things right. Paul sums up his argument in verse 17 with a contrast between the act of transgression on the one hand and God's abundant grace and gift of righteousness on the other ; as the former leads to death, so the latter leads to life ; and the two agents of death and life are Adam and Christ.

Paul has argued, then, that whereas Adam's transgression led to death for all, God's gracious act has led to life for all : the terms which fill out the progression are, on the one hand, sinning, judgement and condemnation, and on the other, grace, gift and acquittal. Since the condemnation of the many results from the condemnation of Adam, the logic of the argument suggests that the acquittal of the many depends on the acquittal of Christ. This acquittal, which leads to life for the many, would have taken place at the resurrection, an act of vindication which established his righteousness. Just as men share Adam's condemnation and death, so now they share Christ's vindication and life.

After these three statements in which what happened in Adam and what happened in Christ are contrasted, Paul presents two positive statements of the parallels. Once again we are told that transgression led to condemnation for all men ; but this time the parallel to *παράπτωμα* is *δικαίωμα*, and the result of this *δικαίωμα* is righteousness of life for all men. The sentence is most commonly understood to mean : just as *the transgression* of one man led to condemnation for many, so too *the righteous act* of one man led to righteousness of life for many. This, of course, necessitates taking *δικαίωμα* in a different sense from that which it has in verse 16, and understanding it of Christ's righteous activity. The sentence is then parallel to the final declaration in verse 19 : as through *the disobedience* of one man many were made sinners, so through the *obedience* of one man many were made righteous.

This interpretation is not, however, without its problems. For one thing, "condemnation" and "righteousness of life"

¹ Cf. H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, rev. H. S. Jones, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, Oxford, 1940.

are not true parallels. Moreover, it necessitates understanding *δικαίωμα* in two different senses in verses 16 and 18—and though this is possible, *δικαίωμα* then seems an odd term to use of Christ in verse 18: what does Paul mean by Christ's "righteous act"? Is it simply another way of referring to his obedience? Is it not more natural to understand it here, as in verse 16, as an act of acquittal or vindication (in contrast to *κατάκριμα*)—this time, however, with reference to Christ himself? ¹ A great deal depends on how we understand the phrase *δι'ένός*—does Paul intend to compare one man's transgression and one man's righteous act, or is he referring here to one act of transgression and one act of righteousness? ² In the former case, the contrast has shifted already to the two representative figures of Adam and Christ; in the latter, the contrast is still between man's transgression and God's activity in setting things right, and *δικαίωμα* is the equivalent of *χάρισμα*.

If *δικαίωμα* does, in fact, have the same meaning in verse 18 as in verse 16, and refers to one act of vindication or acquittal, then Paul's statement here not only sums up the argument of the previous three verses, but explains how the reversal of man's situation has taken place: just as one act of trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of setting things right led to righteousness of life for all men. The two statements are not, as we have seen, strictly parallel, for the comparison is between the two different ways in which one act leads to something of universal significance, and not between the results: the one act of transgression is balanced by the one act of reversal; but there is also a contrast between the two judicial acts of *κατάκριμα* and *δικαίωμα*. God's act of vindication in raising Christ from the dead stands over against the initial transgression, and the contrast

¹ Cf. J. C. O'Neill, *Paul's Letter to the Romans* (Harmondsworth, 1975), in loc.

² C. E. B. Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans*, vol. I (I.C.C., Edinburgh, 1975), in loc., argues that since *ένός* is masculine throughout verses 17 and 19, and since the whole section is concerned with the parallel between Adam and Christ, it is natural to take *ένός* as masculine in verse 18 also. The closest parallel to the statement in verse 18 is, however, verse 16b, where *ένός* clearly refers to *παράπτωμα*. Moreover, in verses 15, 16a, 17 and 19, the use of *άνθρωπος* (or an equivalent) makes the personal reference plain.

in verse 19 between Christ's obedience and Adam's disobedience explains how this act of acquittal was possible. The surprise comes in the fact that it is acquittal which leads to righteousness of life and not vice versa.¹

However we interpret this passage, it is clear that Paul understands the "justification" of believers to be dependent upon the death and resurrection of Christ. What I am concerned to argue is that this dependence is for Paul even closer and more logical than is often recognized: Christ's death and resurrection lead to "justification" for many precisely because he himself is "justified" by God and acknowledged as righteous. The disobedience of Adam led to condemnation for him and for all men, who share the consequence of condemnation, namely death, because they are "in Adam"²; the obedience of Christ led to vindication for him and for all those who are "in him", and the consequence of his acquittal is life. The symmetry in these verses is not perfect, and the reason for this is, I suggest, that Paul is not only contrasting Adam and Christ as representative figures, but also opposing the transgression of Adam and God's act of restoration in Christ.

Although we have no actual formula of interchange in Romans v, therefore, it seems that the idea itself underlies Paul's understanding of the way in which man's condition in Adam is reversed in Christ: Christ shares in man's situation—i.e. he comes under condemnation and sentence of death—and men in turn share in his vindication and resurrection.

The clearest expression in Romans of this idea of interchange is found in chapter viii. In this chapter Paul reaches the climax of his exposition of man's redemption. I have already argued that v. 12-19 is a key passage in that it sums up what Paul has said in the previous chapters about man's plight, in the representative figure of Adam; in typically chiasmic form, the implications of what he says in those verses about the parallel figure of Christ

¹ Diagrammatically, one would have to set the contrast out in this way:

παράπτωμα → *κατάκριμα*
δικαίωμα → *δικαίωσις*.

² This solidarity with Adam means that they come under the condemnation of death even when they do not share his transgression, verses 13-14.

are drawn out in terms of man's salvation in chapters vi-viii. At the beginning of chapter viii, Paul declares that those who are in Christ are free from condemnation, *κατάκριμα*: what the Jewish Law had been unable to do—i.e. set men free from the grip of sin and death consequent on Adam's transgression—has now been done by God himself. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he has condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the *δικαίωμα* of the Law might be fulfilled in us. Once again we meet the perplexing word *δικαίωμα*, and once again there is considerable debate regarding its meaning. Many commentators give to it the meaning which it frequently has in the LXX, as well as in Romans i. 32 and ii. 26—i.e. "regulation" or "requirement".¹ But Paul has just stated that the Christian is dead to the Law, and it would therefore seem very strange if he were now to tell us that by sending his Son God enables us to keep the Law's requirements. Others have understood the Law's requirement to be a verdict of condemnation²: but condemnation was something which the Law had shown itself entirely capable of doing! Paul is here referring to something which the Law could *not* do, and which only God could do; moreover this *δικαίωμα* which is fulfilled in us seems to stand in *contrast* to the condemnation of verse 1: as in Romans v. 16, *κατάκριμα* and *δικαίωμα* are in opposition. It therefore seems best to interpret *δικαίωμα* as meaning the Law's requirement that we should be found righteous.³ The meaning is close to that which it has in chapter v, but not exactly the same, since this time Paul is concerned with the condemnation and declaration of righteousness which are pronounced by the Law rather than by God himself; in both passages Paul is concerned with the declaration of righteousness which reverses our previous condition of being under condemnation.

The connection between Paul's argument in chapter v and what he says in chapter viii is clear: it is by entering the condition

¹ So, e.g. Cranfield, *op. cit.*, in loc.

² P. Benoit, "La Loi et la Croix d'après saint Paul", *Revue Biblique*, 1938, pp. 481-509; E.T. in *Jesus and the Gospel* (London, 1974), pp. 11-39.

³ So, e.g., C. K. Barrett, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Black's New Testament Commentary, London, 1957), in loc.

of Adam—coming in the likeness of sinful flesh¹—that Christ has been able to free men from condemnation. The consequences are worked out in the rest of chapter viii. Instead of living according to the flesh, believers now live according to the Spirit; they have exchanged the death which comes through sin for the life which comes through righteousness. The Spirit of God who raised Jesus from the dead lives in them—and so they themselves are given life; the Spirit of the Son lives in them—and so they too become children of God. Here we have the full working out of the idea of “interchange”: God sent his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, *in order that* the Law’s demand for righteousness might be fulfilled in us, who no longer live according to flesh but according to the Spirit—the Spirit by which we share Christ’s relationship of sonship to God. The remaining verses of the chapter elaborate what it means to be children of God: we are to be conformed to the image of the Son, so that he becomes the firstborn among many brothers; Christians share his glory, and creation itself is restored. The resurrection of Christ means new life for the whole of creation.

The argument in Romans viii is very similar to that used in Galatians iii-iv, where we have two of Paul’s statements of “interchange”. The clearer of them is in Galatians iv. 4 f., where Paul writes: “God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, *in order that* those under the Law might be redeemed, and *in order that* we might receive sonship”; here, as in Romans, the proof of sonship is the gift of the Spirit. The saying in Galatians iii. 13 is more difficult: “Christ redeemed us from the Law, becoming a curse for us, in order that the blessing of Abraham might come in Christ Jesus to the Gentiles”. Here, too, we have the idea of redemption from the Law; the curse of the Law is contrasted with the blessing promised to Abraham’s descendants, who are now identified as those who are in Christ, whether they are Jew or Gentile. Paul does not explain how one who is made a curse becomes a source of blessing; but since it is “in Christ” that the blessing

¹ The notion of interchange gives us the explanation for that puzzling use of the word “sinful”, which serves to stress the idea of Christ’s solidarity with mankind.

comes, and since it is by being identified with the one true descendant of Abraham that Jews and Gentiles receive the promise, it is clear that the curse has been annulled—transformed into blessing. This can only be through the resurrection: the judgement of the Law—that Christ was under a curse—has been overthrown; God himself has vindicated his Son as righteous, and those who have faith in him are reckoned righteous and live (Gal. iii. 11).¹

Paul does not explain in Romans viii how it is that the sending of God's Son in the likeness of sinful flesh frees men from condemnation. There is, however, a significant hint in verse 17 as to how the change in our status is effected. We share Christ's status in relation to God, only if we suffer with him in order that we may be glorified with him. It is not only that Christ shares our death, but that we deliberately share his—and in doing so are enabled to share in his resurrection. This idea has already been spelt out in chapter vi, where Paul speaks of baptism as a burial into the death of Christ: if we are united with his death, we shall also be united with his resurrection; in dying, Christ died to sin, in living, he lives to God, and the Christian who has died with Christ must consider himself, also, to be dead to sin and alive to God *in Christ Jesus*. To be "in Christ", therefore, to be joined to him in baptism, and so to die with him and rise with him, means to share in his death to sin and in his release from the power of sin; it is to share in his acquittal before the Law, and in the declaration of his righteousness before God. Paul's understanding of redemption here is based on the idea of Christ as Representative Man: we share in his righteousness, just as we once shared in Adam's transgression and condemnation. This is precisely the idea which I suggested was summed up in Romans v. 18: one act of transgression led to condemnation for all: one act of acquittal led to righteousness for all. It is by union with Christ that men and women share in his experience and are declared righteous by God.

¹ A. T. Hanson, *Studies in Paul's Technique and Theology* (London, 1974), pp. 13-51, argues that the quotation from Hab. ii. 4 is understood by Paul as a prophecy of the Messiah himself. Although this seems unlikely, Hanson's stress on Jesus as the vindicated one in Paul's understanding is welcome.

This interpretation of Paul's thought implies that he must have understood the resurrection of Christ as itself a great act of vindication, a declaration of his righteousness by God. The only clear statement of this idea in the Pauline literature occurs in 1 Timothy iii. 16, where we read that Christ was "manifested in the flesh, vindicated (justified) in the spirit". It would be rash indeed to give undue weight to a passage from the Pastorals, especially to one which is clearly a quotation from an earlier "creed"—unless, of course, we were to argue that this is a "Pauline fragment" incorporated by the author. Nevertheless, it is interesting to notice that the idea of Christ's vindication at the resurrection occurs in a confession of faith which is quoted as though it were well known in Pauline circles. Moreover, there are significant links between this statement and the one found in Romans i. 3 f.—which may or may not be Paul's own formulation, but which is of importance because it presents his introductory summary of the gospel as being about God's Son, "who was descended from David according to the flesh and has been declared to be Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead". Here we have the same contrast as in 1 Timothy iii between flesh and spirit, between what Christ was by birth and what he was declared to be by the resurrection. These two verses in Romans i have been the centre of much debate, in particular as to whether or not the formula is adoptionist. It is however clear that for Paul himself the resurrection is an acknowledgment of what Christ is, and that the participle *ὁρισθέντος* should be understood as "declared" rather than as "appointed": the resurrection is the acknowledgment of Jesus by God as his Son.¹ The resurrection in itself implies that Jesus is recognized as righteous before God, and the title "Son of God" expresses the same idea, since in Jewish thought the term is used for those who are righteous and are acknowledged by God as such.² It would seem, then,

¹ L. C. Allen, "The Old Testament Background of (ΠΡΟ) ΟΡΙΖΕΙΝ in the New Testament", *N.T.S.*, xvii (1970), 104-8, suggests that the background of the use of the verb here is the enthronement decree in Ps. ii. 7.

² E.g. *Wisd. ii. 16, 18: v. 5*. The idea of sonship was also linked in Jewish thought with the promise of life; this connection is explored by B. J. Byrne, in an unpublished D. Phil. thesis entitled "Sons of God—Seed of Abraham: A study

that Romans i. 3 f. expresses ideas which are very close indeed to those found in 1 Timothy iii. 16, where the resurrection is spoken of as the "vindication" or "justification" of Christ.

Similar ideas are found in Philippians ii, once again in a crucial summary of the saving events, and once again in a passage which may well be common tradition rather than Paul's own composition. Here, too, we have a contrast between the two modes of Christ's existence, expressed this time in terms of humiliation and exaltation. Although the terms are different, the pattern is similar to the one we find in Romans i. 3 f. There, the gospel is about God's Son, who was son of David according to the flesh, and declared to be Son of God by the resurrection. In Philippians, the so-called "hymn" is about one who was in the form of God, who took the form of a slave in his human life, and who was exalted by God and acknowledged to be Lord. In both cases, God's action in raising or exalting Christ is understood as an act of vindication which, though it gives him a new status, is nevertheless an acknowledgment of what is already true.¹

We have seen already how the ideas found in Romans i. 3 f.—on the one hand, Christ's sharing in our humanity, on the other his unique Sonship—form the basis of Paul's argument in later chapters in Romans²: it is precisely because he was born "according to the flesh" and shared *our* death that we can share his; it is because he was acknowledged Son of God "according to the Spirit of holiness" by the resurrection of the dead that we can share both *his* resurrection and his status of sonship. The Christological statement in Romans i. 3 f., when it is brought into relation with man's redemption in the later chapters of the epistle, is worked out in terms of an interchange of experience between Christ and the believer.

of the idea of the Sonship of God of all Christians in Paul against the Jewish Background", Oxford, 1977.

¹ In Rom. x. 9, confession that Jesus is Lord is balanced by the belief that God has raised him from the dead.

² Cf. J. D. G. Dunn, "Jesus—Flesh and Spirit: An Exposition of Romans i. 3-4", *J.T.S.*, n.s. xxiv (1973), 40-68, who argues that the phrases *κατὰ σάρκα* and *κατὰ πνεῦμα* have the same connotation in Rom. i. 3 f. as in the rest of Romans, and that what is said here about Christ's descent from David therefore has a pejorative, not an honorific, significance.

In a very similar way, Paul takes up the ideas expressed in the Christological passage in Philipians ii, and applies them, in a pattern of interchange, to the theme of our redemption. This occurs at the end of chapter iii, where we have repeated echoes of the language of chapter ii. Our hope is for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ—the same Jesus Christ who was acknowledged as “Lord” in ii. 11; the one who was found in the *form* of a slave and the *fashion* of a man, who *humiliated* himself to a shameful death, is going to *refashion* our body of *humiliation*, *conforming* it to his own body of glory.¹ In these verses, Paul works out the meaning of Christ’s exaltation for the believer: those who are in Christ share in the reversal of status which he experienced when God raised him up. If Christ became what we are when he took the form of a slave and was found in the likeness and fashion of a man, we share what he is by virtue of his exaltation.

Once again, however, this idea of interchange is far from being automatic. Christ shares our humiliation—but if we are to share his glory, then we must share *his* humiliation. This refers not simply to the symbolic rite of baptism, but to the Christian’s attitude to life, and to the attitude governing the whole Christian community. However paradoxical it may sound, we are to become like Christ in his self-emptying—which for him meant becoming like us: hence we have Paul’s appeal to have the mind which is found in Christ Jesus.² Just as in Romans viii. 17, Paul declares that we must suffer with Christ

¹ See M. D. Hooker, “Interchange in Christ”, *J.T.S.*, n.s. xxii (1971), 356 f., for details.

² Commentators have given very different interpretations to this appeal, ranging from the traditional “ethical” interpretation, which understands the words as a command to have the mind seen in Jesus himself, to the more recent interpretation, which takes them as a command to be what one is in Christ. There is no need, however, to make these into exclusive alternatives: Paul’s demand is not simply to imitate the historical Jesus, but neither is it to conform to some Christian character which is unrelated to the historical Jesus; rather it is to demonstrate a way of life which has its origin in the life of Jesus himself, and which is possible only because of the saving events of the gospel. Hence the paradox that Christians become like Christ by being identified with an attitude which was expressed in his becoming like us. Cf. M. D. Hooker, “Philippians 2: 6-11”, in *Jesus und Paulus*, Festschrift for W. G. Kümmel ed. E. E. Ellis and E. Grässer (Göttingen, 1975), pp. 151-64.

if we are to be glorified with him, so in Philippians iii. 10, he speaks of experiencing both the power of the resurrection and the fellowship of Christ's sufferings; Paul must be conformed to Christ's death if he is to attain the resurrection from the dead.

But how does this pattern of interchange in Philippians ii-iii work? Why should those who share Christ's sufferings and death share also in his resurrection and glory? A clue to Paul's understanding of the process is found in the section in between these two passages, at the beginning of chapter iii, where Paul warns his readers concerning the circumcisers, and opposes two kinds of "righteousness", the righteousness which is based on the law and that which is found in Christ. Paul has abandoned everything else in order to gain Christ and be found in him, and the righteousness which he now has is not his own, but the righteousness which proceeds from God and which is given through faith in Christ. One commentator on this passage remarks that "righteousness has here had forced upon it a meaning which is not really proper to it; in this context, the meaning which is required would be given better by the word 'forgiveness'."¹ But Paul is referring here, not simply to something which is received, like forgiveness, but to a status enjoyed by those on whom it is bestowed. God's righteousness is given to those who have none of their own, but who are "in Christ": it is theirs only because it belongs to Christ and they are in him. To have this righteousness is to know both Christ and the power of his resurrection—the event by which Christ himself was declared to be righteous.

A similar expression of this idea is found in 1 Corinthians i. 30, another passage which is concerned with the contrast between relying on one's own powers and on the powers of God. In 1 Corinthians, however, this contrast is expressed in terms of wisdom and knowledge, rather than law and righteousness—an interesting example of the "translation" of the gospel from one culture to another. Nevertheless, the word "righteous" does occur in the concluding summary of chapter i, where Paul reminds the Corinthians that God himself is the source of their

¹ F. W. Beare, *The Epistle to the Philippians* (Black's New Testament Commentary, London, 1959), p. 120.

existence "in Christ Jesus", who has become for us "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption". Christ is the source of wisdom, and this wisdom turns out to be the self-giving demonstrated on the Cross. The Corinthians, who hanker after wisdom, are therefore wise only when they are "in Christ" and share this attitude, so contrary to worldly standards. Similarly, it is by being in Christ and by sharing his righteousness that they become righteous.

To be in Christ is to be identified with what he is. It is not surprising, then, if his resurrection and vindication as the righteous one lead both to the acknowledgment of believers as righteous, and to their resurrection. One of the peculiarities of Romans i. 3 f. is the fact that it refers to the resurrection of the dead in the plural: it seems unlikely that this was accidental—more probable that it implies that the resurrection of Christ involves the resurrection of those who are united with him. Certainly this link is brought out in the later chapters of Romans. The fullest exploration of this theme is, however, in 1 Corinthians xv, where Paul uses again the parallel between Adam and Christ: "for since death came by a man, resurrection of the dead has also come by a man. As in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive." Paul then contrasts what it meant to be "in Adam" and "in Christ". On the one hand, we have a physical body which is corruptible, dishonourable and weak; on the other a spiritual body, characterized by incorruptibility, glory and power. Adam was from the earth, but the last Adam was from heaven, and those who belong to them share in what they are: as we have borne the image of the earthly man, so we shall bear the image of the heavenly—and that means we shall share in his resurrection. Once again, it is because Christ himself was "Adam", and exchanged corruption for incorruption, shame for glory, weakness for power, that those who are in him are able to exchange the image of the earthly for the image of the heavenly.

In Romans v Paul explores the Adam/Christ parallel primarily in terms of sin and righteousness, in 1 Corinthians xv in terms of death and resurrection; the two themes are, however, closely intertwined: sin and righteousness lead to death and life

respectively in Romans v, and the sting of death in 1 Corinthians is sin. If Christ has not been raised, declares Paul in 1 Corinthians xv. 17, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Here we see once again the close link between righteousness and resurrection : it is because Christ has been raised from the dead that we are set free from our sins and accounted righteous.

Christian theology and devotion have both concentrated on the sufferings and death of Christ in attempting to explain the meaning of atonement, often leaving no real place for the resurrection, except as a subsequent event. There are various reasons for this development : one is the fact that the Cross inevitably confronts Christians with the question " Why ? "— a question which many of the New Testament writers were content to answer with a reference to scripture or the purpose of God, but which increasingly was linked with the experience of reconciliation with God ; another is the influence played by the epistle to the Hebrews, where the Old Testament sacrificial system is used as a source of imagery in explaining the superiority of Christ to everything which went before. It is natural to read Paul through the spectacles of later theology and to assume that for him, too, his understanding of atonement was concentrated on the death of Jesus. Nevertheless, however much Paul may insist (in writing to the Corinthians!) that he knows no gospel except Christ crucified, he is equally insistent that if Christ has not been raised from death, Christian faith is vain : " you are still in your sins ", and there is no hope of resurrection life. It would be absurd to deny that Paul does use images which link the death of Christ with the theme of atonement : Christ is sacrificed for us as our Passover (1 Cor. v. 7) ; he has been put forward by God as an expiation by his blood (Rom. iii. 25) ; we have been justified by his blood (Rom. v. 9). What has often been overlooked, however, is the close link between the resurrection and redemption which we have been exploring : if Christ's *death* deals with *sin*, it is his *resurrection* which is the basis of our *righteousness*.

This understanding of the atonement is neatly summed up by Paul in Romans iv. 25 : " Jesus our Lord was given up to

death because of our trespasses and raised for the sake of our justification". This antithesis is often assumed by commentators to be merely rhetorical. However, in view of what we have seen elsewhere of Paul's understanding of our justification, it seems more likely that the links between trespasses and death on the one hand and justification and resurrection on the other are deliberate. He shows in Romans v how trespasses led to death for all, and how Christ's resurrection led in turn to justification and life. This is worked out in chapter vi in terms of our death to sin and resurrection to righteousness, and in chapter vii in terms of our death to the Law, which means that we can belong to one who has been raised from the dead: in chapter viii the Spirit of life (i.e. the Spirit who raised Jesus from death, verse 11) sets us free from sin and death. Here in iv. 25 we see how it is precisely because Christ shared in the death which results from our transgressions, that he could be raised from the dead and so become the source of our righteousness.¹ This particular summary in Romans iv. 25 comes at the conclusion of an argument demonstrating that Abraham was justified on the basis of his faith—the faith which he displayed when he believed in God "who gives life to the dead and calls into existence things which do not exist." Christians share Abraham's faith and show themselves to be his sons, since they believe in one who "raised Jesus Christ our Lord from the dead". The faith which is "reckoned to us for righteousness" is faith in the power of God to raise Christ from the dead. The stress throughout is on faith in the resurrection.

The link between justification and resurrection is a natural one. To pronounce a man righteous is to reverse the condemnation which sentenced him to death. It is hardly surprising, then, if Romans v. 18 apparently identifies righteousness with life; sin and death on the one hand are more than balanced by righteousness and life on the other.

We have seen that the idea of "interchange" between the

¹The apparent symmetry of the two clauses disguises the difference in construction; *διὰ* is used with the accusative in two different senses, since the "giving-up" of Jesus follows human transgression, and his resurrection leads to our justification.

believer and Christ is linked with Paul's understanding of the solidarity of mankind with Christ and with Adam. Inevitably, therefore, the relationship cannot be a mutual one, since the believer is always dependent upon Christ. Christ identifies himself with the human situation, and shares human experience, even to the point of death; the Christian, however, is able to share Christ's resurrection (and all that this means) only if he is willing to identify himself with Christ's death. By dying with Christ to sin, the believer is able to share in the verdict of "not guilty" pronounced on Christ at the resurrection. The process is a paradoxical one: Christ empties himself and humbles himself in identifying himself with mankind and becoming what men are; they in turn must identify themselves with his shame and death if they are to become what he is in his glorious resurrection life. I have argued that the pattern of reversal is based on the resurrection, and that this is understood by Paul in terms of Christ's vindication. It is because Christ is acknowledged as righteous, that believers are "justified"; because he is declared to be Son of God that we, too, receive sonship; because he is glorified that mankind is restored to glory. This seems to be the logic of Paul's argument, even though it must be admitted that the idea of Christ's resurrection as vindication is very rarely spelled out. The question therefore arises, why is there so little emphasis on this particular idea, if it is the foundation of Paul's understanding of the manner of man's justification?

Twenty five years ago, Professor Moule presented a paper entitled "From Defendant to Judge—and Deliverer",¹ in which he argued that "the figure of the one who is rejected but is ultimately vindicated is even more widely used in the biblical presentation of the Gospel than is sometimes recognized". He explored this theme primarily in terms of the Son of man, who is (or so some of us believe) a figure who suffers and who looks for vindication, but becomes the one who himself acts as judge of

¹Originally published in the *Bulletin of the Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas*, Cambridge 1952, pp. 40-53; reprinted in C. F. D. Moule, *The Phenomenon of the New Testament*, London, 1967, pp. 82-99. See also T. W. Manson, "The Son of Man in Daniel, Enoch, and the Gospels", *BULLETIN*, xxxii (1949-50), 171-95. Reprinted in *Studies in the Gospels and Epistles*, ed. M. Black, Manchester, 1962.

the nations. It is, I believe, possible to trace a shift of emphasis within the gospel tradition, with the result that sayings which in one context suggest vindication for the Son of man are interpreted in another of his role as deliverer. A similar shift of interpretation has taken place, I suggest, in relation to the resurrection of Jesus in the Pauline epistles. In itself, God's act in raising Jesus from the dead is clearly a vindication of Jesus as righteous, and this interpretation is naturally most clearly to be seen in summaries of the gospel. When Paul explores the theme of redemption, however, and the way in which God has dealt with the plight of mankind, the emphasis shifts somewhat; Christians, rather than Christ himself, are now seen as the recipients of God's deliverance—though it is still those who are "in Christ" who are justified. Meanwhile Jesus' own role is understood as less passive and more active: he is not only "given up" by God on our behalf (Rom. viii. 32) but "gives himself up" for our sakes (Gal. ii. 20); it is God who justifies (Rom. viii. 33), but Jesus, who has been raised from the dead, is now at God's right hand and will intercede for us (Rom. viii. 34); having been himself vindicated, he argues the case of those who belong to him.

It is one of the remarkable features of Romans, which sets out the fullest exposition Paul gives us of man's reconciliation to God, that it offers little indication as to how this reconciliation was achieved—except that it was through the death and resurrection of Jesus. The epistle opens with a lengthy declaration of the necessity for dealing with man's sinful condition, and this is followed by a short paragraph at the end of chapter iii describing how sin has been dealt with; even this is perhaps to be understood as one image among many which could be used of the death of Christ—one way of expressing what has been achieved. Perhaps this lack of explanation is not so strange if we remember that the writers of the New Testament were starting from experience and not from ready-made theories; they used a variety of images, and perhaps never attempted to produce a rational explanation. We distort their meaning when we try to force their metaphors into a consistent pattern.

Yet it is arguable that for Paul the idea of human solidarity is

a vitally important factor in the substructure of his thought, more fundamental than all the images he uses ; and that for him, man's redemption is seen primarily in terms of moving from the sphere of Adam to the sphere of Christ. The belief that it is possible for the believer to do this is dependent upon the fact that the Son of God came in the likeness of Adam's sinful flesh, and so enabled those in Adam to become children of God. The idea of interchange of experience in Christ is a vital clue to Paul's understanding of atonement.