

DAVID J. SOUTHALL

Rediscovering
Righteousness
in Romans

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zum Neuen Testament 2. Reihe*
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David J. Southall

Rediscovering Righteousness in Romans

Personified dikaiosynē within Metaphoric
and Narratorial Settings

Mohr Siebeck

DAVID J. SOUTHALL, born 1964; 2007 PhD; Associate Research Fellow at Spurgeon's College in South Norwood, London and Baptist Minister accredited by the Baptist Union of Great Britain.

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Preface

This book is a revised version of a doctoral thesis undertaken from 2004 to 2007 at Spurgeon's College, London. However, it had its origins back in 1998 when, training for the Baptist ministry, I took a class in Romans given by my mentor and friend Rev'd Dr. R. Alastair Campbell. By introducing me to the New Perspective on Paul and righteousness terminology, he set me on a trajectory of study which has provided interest and stimulation throughout my period of research, and which still does.

Of course, I owe a great debt to so many people and organisations who have given their help and support to me in the production of this work. Below I make special mention of some of those who have been particularly instrumental.

I wish to thank the Scholarship Committee of the Baptist Union of Great Britain for its generous award which enabled me to study full-time for three years. I am also grateful to the members and friends at Brighton Road (South Croydon) Baptist Church who provided such a warm and supportive home during my time of study.

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Special mention must, however, be reserved for three academics whose support has meant an extraordinary amount to me. Firstly, Rev. Dr. John E. Colwell has given me constant encouragement, support and challenge. He

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It feels an enormous privilege that my work has been selected for this series. For this I wish to express my appreciation to Dr. Carsten Claußen for pointing me in the right direction. And, of course, to Professor Dr. Jörg Frey for his recommendation that my work be incorporated into this series; indeed the speed of his response and the good news which came with it was most appreciated.

Of course, my final and most important expressions of thanks go to my wife, Alison, and my children, Suzy, Ashley and Charlie. To the former, words are inadequate. You have borne with me, supported me, loved me (and proof-read my text again and again!). To the latter, you have kept my feet on the ground and been a constant reminder of what is really important in life. I thank you.

Ash Wednesday, 2008

David J. Southall

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Part 1

Metaphor, Narrative and the Personification of
Righteousness in Romans:
A Critique of the New Perspective and a Way Forward

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1. The Trajectory of the Thesis

This thesis revolves around the interpretation of δικαιοσύνη in Romans as it undergoes personification within a metaphoric and narratorial setting. In essence, Part 1 contains a sustained introduction to the approach of my study; Parts 2 and 3 contain substantial exegetical treatments of pericopes in which δικαιοσύνη is specifically personified and operates in conjunction with metaphor and narrative; and Part Four seeks to ascertain, in a preliminary way, the impact of my findings on the remainder of the occurrences of the noun δικαιοσύνη within the Pauline corpus.

The starting point of my study is the assertion that the recent conceptualisation of δικαιοσύνη within New Perspective scholarship and its interpretation within the Pauline corpus are inadequate. In Chapter 2, therefore, I will argue the case for this assertion by evaluating the interpretation of righteousness in the work of James D. G. Dunn who is an exemplar of the position that δικαιοσύνη in Paul has a purely covenantal and relational orientation. In addition to outlining the already-made critique that the New Perspective's view of righteousness is reductionist, I will also draw attention to two particular passages in Romans where the covenantal, relational view of δικαιοσύνη is particularly problematic. Firstly in Rom 6:15–23 Dunn's specificity with regard to righteousness terminology will be shown to founder on the diversity of Paul's usage and the flexibility of the term – especially its personificatory nature. Secondly in Rom 9:30–10:21 I will outline the way in which Dunn minimises the importance of the footrace metaphor and the place of δικαιοσύνη within the pericope. I will also show that he is uncertain as to what exactly motivates the personification of righteousness in 10:6.

The two pericopes highlighted above will enable me to make the case that the major flaw in the New Perspective's treatment of righteousness is that it fails adequately to take account of the poetic, connotative, and metaphoric nature of Paul's language. As such, a purely covenantal conception of righteousness in Romans seems somewhat to overstate the case. More importantly, the inadequacies of the New Perspective's problematic passages point to a way forward for the investigation of δικαιοσύνη in

Romans. This is seen not only negatively (i.e. in the unconvincing treatment of righteousness terminology) but also in the way that both Rom 6:15–23 and 9:30–10:21 point to modes of expression which include: a) *The personification of Righteousness*; b) *Dominant metaphors*; and c) *Narrative elements*.

At this stage it is apposite to make reference to the thesis of the entire project. Simply stated, the thesis which I will defend asserts that when *personified* Δικαιοσύνη occurs within pericopes which display clear components of *metaphor* and *narrative*, then righteousness will take on more than the purely covenantal meaning posited by the New Perspective.¹ *In nuce*, I will suggest that the presence of personified Δικαιοσύνη embedded within a highly developed *metaphor* will allow righteousness to function metaphorically for Christ himself. Likewise the occurrence of personified Δικαιοσύνη within a *narratorial* framework will also have a transformative effect on the interpretation of the term: Righteousness will take its place as an actor, a character, in the drama which is being enacted in a narrative setting revolving around the story of Christ.

In sum, in the passages in Romans where Δικαιοσύνη is personified, it will act out its role which in less metaphoric and narratorially construed passages would be played by Christ himself.

With regard to the specifics, this means that within the metaphoric and narratorial matrices of Rom 6:15–23 and Rom 9:30–10:21, personified Δικαιοσύνη *connotes* Christ.² That is to say that at times Righteousness functions as an equivalent term for Christ himself.

Importantly here I must state that I am not seeking to provide a global interpretation of righteousness which fits *all* occurrences in Romans or the Pauline corpus. There is no *a priori* reason why δικαιοσύνη should connote Christ outside of the framework which I am suggesting. Rather it is the presence and strength of metaphor and narrative, and the functioning of the trope of personification within them, which will prove to be crucial; and it is the ability of these literary devices to engender new possibilities which will be seen to push δικαιοσύνη in the direction I suggest.

The thesis above sets the trajectory for the study which follows.

¹ In the text of this thesis, references to “righteousness” as a personified character invention are capitalized thus: Righteousness/Δικαιοσύνη.

² The *OED* defines “to connote” as “to mark along with;” “to signify secondarily or in addition; to include or imply along with the primary or essential meaning;” “to imply, include in its signification, convey to the mind.” This captures something of my deliberate use of the word. So at times I will state that δικαιοσύνη *connotes* Christ – but only within this specific metaphoric and narratorial context. This way of speaking is intended to convey the fusion which has taken place between righteousness and Christ within a metaphorical context (see below).

1.2. The Outline of the Present Thesis

In Part 1, I outline the way in which metaphor and narrative operate *in concert* as modes of semantic innovation. I also note that they form the framework within which personification functions (Chapter 3). In Chapter 4 I concentrate on the trope of personification, and point out that it too is a semantically innovative mode of expression which operates in a similar way to metaphor. Further to this I will suggest an approach which allows for the functioning of personification within a metaphoric and narratorial framework. At the end of Part 1, I will be able to put forward, in preliminary terms, the way in which my approach can impact on an exegesis of those passages in Romans in which personified Righteousness occurs within metaphoric and narratorial matrices.

With this approach in place, the main body of this study will consist of two parts (Parts 2 and 3) containing an examination of Rom 6:15–23 and 9:30–10:21 respectively. These passages have been chosen because the New Perspective (and other biblical scholarship) has shown that personified Δικαιοσύνη clearly occurs here, and yet has failed to deal with it adequately. The initial chapter of each Part will seek to demonstrate the presence of *metaphor*, *narrative* and *personification*. The aim of such an investigation will be to highlight the dominance and strength of these literary modes within the pericopes in question. Subsequent chapters will utilise the information gleaned from this initial investigation in order to allow personification, metaphor and narrative to exert their influence on the interpretation of δικαιοσύνη within an exegetical framework. In each exegetical endeavour I will examine every occurrence of δικαιοσύνη and consider if there is a Christ/Righteousness equivalence in operation.

Part 4 will continue this investigation in passages in Romans where the noun δικαιοσύνη occurs but is not explicitly personified. I will also, in a preliminary way, examine every other occurrence of righteousness in the Pauline corpus by applying the same approach as that adopted for Parts 2 and 3. The aim of such an investigation will be to elucidate how far, if at all, δικαιοσύνη is transformed in a similar way to Rom 6 and 9–10.

In the Conclusion, I will briefly draw together the threads of my study, and suggest avenues which may have been opened for further exploration by my results.

Chapter 2

Righteousness Terminology in the New Perspective: A Critique and a Way Forward

2.1. Introduction

In the first sections of this chapter (2.1–2.3) I will show that the New Perspective on Paul holds to a particular interpretation of δικαιοσύνη. Initially I will provide a brief description of the tenets of New Perspective thought, and in the light of this offer some reflections as to why the present study on righteousness is important. Following this I will outline the way in which δικαιοσύνη is interpreted in the New Perspective with recourse to the work of James D. G. Dunn: *in nuce*, righteousness is relational, dynamic, and covenantal in orientation.

In the next section of the chapter (2.4) I will show that Dunn's position has come under sustained critique by opponents of the New Perspective. Indeed they have called his interpretation of δικαιοσύνη into question on *methodological* and *exegetical* grounds. However, whilst some of these criticisms are well founded, they have, on the whole, failed to provide any modification of δικαιοσύνη because Dunn's opponents have been operating from *outside of* the New Perspective paradigm.¹ This has led to a polarised state of affairs in which there is an impasse between the New Perspective and its opponents.

At 2.5 I seek to move beyond this impasse by providing a critique of Dunn's view of δικαιοσύνη from *within* a New Perspective paradigm. My main contention is that Dunn fails to hear adequately the nature and function of Paul's language in relation to interpreting righteousness. As such I will provide evidence which suggests that his view of language is static and univocal. I will also show that, at times, he minimises metaphor, personification and narrative as they occur in Paul's writing with regard to δικαιοσύνη. In my view, these factors militate against a correct interpretation of righteousness in Paul.

¹ In my view the criticisms made by Dunn's opponents predominantly occur within debates that have a highly charged polemical element. As such, the conclusions reached by these scholars have tended to go little beyond justifying their own positions in the light of this new paradigm.

In the final sections of this chapter (2.6–2.7) I suggest that the inadequacies of the New Perspective’s interpretation of righteousness (and particularly the criticisms of Dunn’s view of the function of language) open up an alternative trajectory for my thesis, one hinted at in the work of N. T. Wright who is alert to the poetic and connotative elements of Paul’s writings. As such (*contra* Dunn), I propose that there is: a) the potential for a *multi-valent* interpretation of righteousness; and b) the possibility of a modification of δικαιοσύνη *within* the New Perspective by taking into account the three modes – metaphor, narrative and personification – which Paul is utilising at various points in the argument of Romans.

2.2. The New Perspective on Paul: Proponents and Challengers

“Since the publication of E. P. Sanders’ *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* in 1977...” So begin major monographs, essays and articles developing, responding to or challenging the New Perspective.² Indeed the New Perspective has been so well documented and debated that we can forgo an initial detailed description of what characterises this (far from homogeneous) movement: the critique of Luther; the placement of Paul within a matrix of Second Temple Judaism; the view of Judaism as ethnocentric rather than legalistic.³ We can also relegate to the footnotes the relentless debates, often characterised by polemic and stark antithesis, between New Perspective scholars and their pre-New Perspective opponents.⁴

² This quotation is from Simon J. Gathercole, *Where is Boasting? Early Jewish Soteriology and Paul’s Response in Rom 1–5* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 1. Of course, he is referring to E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977). For James D. G. Dunn on the New Perspective see “The New Perspective on Paul,” *BJRL* 65 (1983): 95–122; *idem*, *Romans* (2 vols.; WBC 38a–38b; Dallas: Word Books, 1988), 1:lxiii–lxxii; *idem*, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), 334–340. Also see James D. G. Dunn and A. M. Suggate, *The Justice of God: A Fresh Look at the Old Doctrine of Justification by Faith* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1993).

³ Brendan Byrne, “Interpreting Romans Theologically in a Post-“New Perspective” Perspective,” *HTR* 94 (2001): 227–41, 228–230; *idem*, “Interpreting Romans: The New Perspective and Beyond,” *Int* 58 (2004):241–52.

Also see Francis Watson, “Not the New Perspective,” Online: <http://www.abdn.ac.uk/divinity/articles/watsonart.htm>, 1–11, 2–3. For a good overview of the New Perspective see Michael B. Thompson, *The New Perspective on Paul* (Cambridge: Grove Books, 2002).

⁴ I have chosen the term pre-New Perspective rather than the more usual term Old Perspective as this is sometimes used by New Perspective scholars pejoratively. As an example of the polemical nature of the debate see some of the essays in D. A. Carson, Peter T. O’Brien, and Mark A. Seifrid, eds., *Justification and Variegated Nomism: Vol-*

It is not the purpose of the present project to navigate and describe the still-ongoing disputes which have become a feature of biblical Scholarship over the last twenty five years: such work has already been done.⁵ Rather I mention the New Perspective because a) it sets the framework within which the present study operates and highlights those with whom I will primarily be in dialogue, and b) it functions to delimit the specific content of my study, namely the conception of righteousness terminology within the work of proponents of this influential paradigm.

Immediately, however, one is faced with the question: “Has not all that needs to be said concerning Paul’s understanding of righteousness been said already?” I must answer in the negative for the following reasons.

Firstly, the New Perspective on Paul is almost irreversible, and, therefore, if the paradigm says something new about righteousness, then it has to be critiqued and augmented *primarily* in terms of the New Perspective and not with recourse to pre-New Perspective positions. I believe that this has not been done with sufficient rigour.

Secondly New Perspective scholarship has had the tendency to focus predominantly on some issues to the exclusion of others. So, for example, there has (rightly) been a great deal written about: Paul’s view of the Law; Paul and justification; and Paul’s use of ἔργα νόμου. However, in my view these particular debates have led to a tendency to minimise the importance of righteousness terminology *per se* within the New Perspective, leaving major exegetical issues unresolved or inadequately addressed, a factor which the present study will seek to redress.⁶

ume 1 – *The Complexities of Second Temple Judaism* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001); and idem. *Justification and Variegated Nomism: Volume 2 – The Paradoxes of Paul* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004). The polemical tone of the debate is criticised by Gathercole, *Boasting*, 20. A specific example of this tone is seen Mark A. Seifrid. *Justification by Faith: The Origin and Development of a Central Pauline Theme* (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 63–65; and idem, “Righteousness Language in the Hebrew Scriptures and Early Judaism,” in *Justification and Variegated Nomism: Volume 1* (eds. D. A. Carson, P. T. O’Brien, and M. A. Seifrid; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 1:415–442.

⁵ Stephen Westerholm, “The “New Perspective” at Twenty-Five,” in *Justification and Variegated Nomism: Volume 2* (eds. D. A. Carson, P. T. O’Brien, and M. A. Seifrid; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004) 2:1–38; also Kathy Ehrensperger, *That We May be Mutually Encouraged: Feminism and the New Perspective in Pauline Studies* (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 123–160. On another level see the critique offered by Douglas A. Campbell, *The Quest for Paul’s Gospel: A Suggested Strategy* (London: T&T Clark, 2005), 36–6, 46–52, who subsumes the New Perspective under a Salvation-Historical approach and attacks it for its inadequacy in relation to apocalyptic. [I am grateful to Douglas Campbell for allowing me to see the draft manuscript of *Quest* prior to publication.]

⁶ Seifrid, “Righteousness Language,” is a major exception in that he concentrates on righteousness terminology; yet he does so from a pre-New Perspective position; idem, “Paul’s Use of Righteousness Language Against its Hellenistic Background,” in *Justifi-*

Thirdly, the New Perspective interprets righteousness as a purely *relational* and *covenantal* term, and to some extent, this position has become critical orthodoxy within New Perspective circles. I will challenge the confidence of this mono-valent position, and suggest that it has been reached without proper scrutiny.

The New Perspective sets an important trajectory for understanding righteousness terminology which was missing from (or at least minimised in) previous pre-New Perspective scholarship. It is for this reason that I hope to demonstrate that the New Perspective (and particularly its inadequacies) provides the launch pad for a new way of viewing righteousness in certain passages in Romans. In fact, I do not think we would be able to get to the position which I will finally espouse without the contribution of the New Perspective's interpretation of δικαιοσύνη. In this sense I am in broad agreement with the New Perspective project, seeking to augment and modify a position with which I am in sympathy, rather than undermine its findings.

In order to achieve the task as set out above, I must start with a rehearsal of righteousness as viewed by the New Perspective; and I do so with recourse to the paradigm's finest exemplar: James D. G. Dunn.

2.3. Righteousness in the New Perspective: J. D. G. Dunn ⁷

James D. G. Dunn is exemplar *par excellence* of the New Perspective on Paul and his writings represent both an exegetical and systematic attempt to place a coherent and consistent Paul within his Jewish framework disentangled from Lutheran polemic. In his commentary on Romans and *Theology of the Apostle Paul*, Dunn aims to set Paul's letter within New Perspective thought.⁸

Dunn's exegetical treatment of "righteousness" in Paul is not difficult to delineate. He asserts that the δικ-terminology in the thematic statement of

cation and Variegated Nomism: Volume 2 (eds. D. A. Carson, P. T. O'Brien, and M. A. Seifrid; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 2:74.

⁷ The righteousness debate in the pre-New Perspective has already been well documented. The most important English language monographs are by John A. Ziesler, *The Meaning of Righteousness in Paul: A Linguistic and Theological Inquiry* (SNTSMS 20; Cambridge: University Press, 1972) and John Reumann, *Righteousness in the New Testament: "Justification" in the United States Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue, with a Response by Joseph A. Fitzmyer* (Philadelphia/New York: Fortress/Paulist, 1982). For righteousness in German scholarship see Manfred T. Brauch, "Perspectives on God's Righteousness in Recent German Discussions" in Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 523–42.

⁸ Dunn, *Romans*, 1:xiv.

Romans 1:16–17 shows that it “clearly has programmatic significance” for the rest of the letter.⁹ By this I take him to mean that decisions reached at this stage regarding the conceptual framework of righteousness will apply to occurrences throughout the epistle.¹⁰ With respect to δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ he states:

δικαιοσύνη is a good example of the need to penetrate through Paul’s Greek language in order to understand it in the light of his Jewish background and training. The concept which emerged from the Greco-Roman tradition to dominate Western thought was of righteousness/justice as an ideal or absolute ethical norm against which particular claims and duties could be measured. But since the fundamental study of H. Cremer it has been recognised that in Hebrew thought דָּרָשׁ // דִּקְדֻשָּׁה is essentially a concept of *relation*.¹¹

When predicated of God, *God is righteous when he fulfils his obligations in relation to the covenant*, namely to punish the wicked and to protect, restore and sustain Israel. For Dunn, “righteousness” is “*covenant faithfulness*” as evidenced by the synonymity of “righteousness” and “salvation” in the Psalms and Second Isaiah; it is “clearly this concept... which Paul takes over here [in Romans].”¹² Concomitantly, for Dunn, God’s righteousness at Rom 1:17 neither includes the thought of judgement nor is arbitrary or impulsive.¹³

Likewise, righteousness predicated of human beings is *relational, covenantal* and “a product of God’s fidelity to his obligations.”¹⁴ People are righteous when “they meet the claims which others have on them by virtue of their relationship.”¹⁵ This is evidenced by the LXX translator’s ability to use δικαιοσύνη for דָּרָשׁ (noting its merciful and covenantal connotations) and exemplified by a “relationship of mutual obligation” between David and Saul in 1 Samuel 24:17.¹⁶ Therefore, ὁ δίκαιος of the Habakkuk citation in Rom 1:17 would be understood in Paul’s day as the one who fulfils the obligations of the law of the covenant by “faithful observance of and devotion to the law as the ideal of Jewish piety.”¹⁷ Dunn asserts that the

⁹ Ibid., 1:38.

¹⁰ Dunn follows this through with consistent rigour. On numerous occasions, when dealing with a pericope containing righteousness terminology, he simply refers the reader to 1:17. For example, *Romans*, 1:139, 165, 173, 282; 2:580.

¹¹ Ibid., 1:40.

¹² Ibid., 1:41.

¹³ Ibid., 1:42. However, he does affirm that, as the fulfilment of God’s covenant obligations, it “is used occasionally for God’s punitive action against offending Israel,” 42.

¹⁴ Ibid., 1:45.

¹⁵ Ibid., 1:41.

¹⁶ Dunn, *Theology*, 342.

¹⁷ Dunn, *Romans*, 1:45.

source for this self understanding of “the righteous” is evident in the Psalms, Wisdom Literature and the Qumran *peshirim*.¹⁸

At this point, a preliminary account of Dunn’s concept of righteousness is possible. Firstly δικαιοσύνη is *relational*, marked by dynamic, salvific activity and divorced from any notion of normativity. This thoroughly Hebraic conception of righteousness is understood as “God’s activity in drawing individuals into and sustaining them within the relationship.”¹⁹ Secondly, righteousness is so inextricably linked with a *covenantal* motif that it can be designated “covenant faithfulness”²⁰ where the “righteousness of God” overlaps with the “faithfulness of God.”²¹ For Dunn, the above construction makes sense of the idea that, even in Rome where a “purely legal concept (justice)” of δικαιοσύνη prevailed, Paul was able to “take it for granted that the “righteousness of God” would be understood as God’s action.”²² In adopting this position he excludes the Greco-Roman concept of righteousness as an ideal²³ and undercuts traditional post-Reformation exegetical debates.²⁴

Having outlined his “programmatically” template from Romans 1:17, Dunn has no difficulty in maintaining it in his *Theology of Paul the Apostle*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 1:45.

¹⁹ Dunn, *Theology*, 344.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, *Romans*, 1:41. On a limited number of occasions Dunn notices some ‘creational’ associations. For example, in *Romans*, 1:42, he notes a broadening out of the “righteousness” concept to include the relationship of Creator and creature. In his later *Theology*, 342, where he is not constrained by one specific text, he asserts the “prior initiative of God, both in creation and election” but fails to integrate this into his overall concept of δικαιοσύνη. In the end he remains unconvinced of the importance of a creational motif (*Romans*, 1:175) and rejects the notion of righteousness as the “faithfulness of the Creator to his creation” because it sets too little store by the covenantal evidence.

²¹ Dunn, *Theology*, 343, fn. 33. He explains that he wants to give this covenantal concept more stress than those who insist on “a forensic or forensic-eschatological force of the term.”

²² *Ibid.*, 343.

²³ *Ibid.*, 341.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 344. There are two debates which Dunn considers resolved. Firstly, as to whether the ‘righteousness of God’ is a subjective or objective genitive, Dunn argues that this cannot be construed as a piece of either-or-exegesis because “a dynamic relationship refuses to conform to such analysis.” However, we must question his success at resolving this issue as his own comments on Romans 3:22 suggest that he has tied himself to a clear “subjective genitive” construction in opposition to those proposing alternative views (*Romans*, 1:166). Secondly, as to whether the verb δικαιοῦν means to make righteous or to count righteous, Dunn states that it is *both* of these options, for “the covenant God counts the covenant partner as still in partnership with him... but the covenant partner could hardly fail to be transformed by a living relationship with the life-giving God.” See also Dunn, *Romans*, 1:40–1.

where it remains substantially unchanged.²⁵ In my view he also successfully demonstrates how his formulation applies to certain sections of Paul's epistle to the Romans. For example, in Romans 3:21–26, δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ is God's dynamic, saving outreach in action "on behalf of those to whom he has committed himself."²⁶ God is δίκαιος (26) not in accordance with an ideal but because he fulfils his obligations as a covenant God.²⁷ Likewise in Romans 4:1–25, ὃς ὁ θεὸς λογίζεται δικαιοσύνη (6) refers to "God treating someone as fully acceptable, as a full participant in the benefits of the covenant."²⁸ Dunn has no hesitation in each of these cases to refer the reader back to his conclusions regarding Paul's use of δικαιοσύνη in 1:17 because his formulation fits well.²⁹

2.4. Critiques of Dunn's Interpretation of Righteousness

Despite Dunn's confidence with regard to his interpretation of δικαιοσύνη, his position is susceptible to critique at certain points. In this section, therefore, I will attempt a categorisation of some of the more significant critiques of Dunn's position. Whilst there will be inevitable overlaps between my groupings, I propose (for succinctness and convenience) to deal with the critiques under the two broad headings of: methodological/theological difficulties; and exegetical difficulties.

2.4.1. Methodological and Theological Difficulties with Dunn's Interpretation of ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣΥΝΗ

Methodological and theological difficulties have proved to be one of the main areas of contention for Dunn's opponents and here I will briefly describe three main criticisms oriented around the following: a) Dunn is criticised for reducing righteousness terminology to one particular strand of meaning despite assertions that there is a diverse range of meanings for righteousness in the Hebrew Scriptures; b) Dunn is criticised for his prioritisation of a *relational* view of righteousness at the expense of the conception of righteousness as *conformity to a norm*; and c) Dunn's critics suggest that his *covenantal* conception of righteousness fails to account for the *creational* orientation of the term. Each critique is briefly discussed below.

a) Dunn's view of δικαιοσύνη in Paul is predicated on his reading of righteousness in the Hebrew Scriptures, and he has adopted a conception

²⁵ Dunn, *Theology*, 340–6.

²⁶ Dunn, *Romans*, 1:166.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 1:173.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 1:206.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 1:165, 206, 580.

of צדק (ה) which is essentially relational and covenantal. However, monographs and dictionary articles suggest that there is a wide diversity of connotations for צדק (ה).³⁰ In fact Douglas Campbell picks this up when he says: “[I]t seems that any interpretation which reduces righteousness terminology to a single, specific stratum of meaning... seems doomed to founder on the actual diversity of usage.”³¹

Two examples will suffice to make this point. Firstly, by prioritizing covenantal/relational/dynamic motifs, Dunn pays little attention to the way in which aspects of צדק (ה) relate to a *non-theological stative* sense of the word group which describes inanimate objects as צדק.³² Thus “weights” and “measures” are “just”³³ in that they are legitimate and conform to the proper standard. Likewise “statutes and ordinances” are righteous³⁴ and “sacrifices” are described as “right.”³⁵ Whatever the contextual connotation is in each case, it is indisputable that here there is no possibility of right behaviour or action. Rather what is being described is a “right *state* of being for each object.”³⁶ However, this *stative* conception of צדק is used not only for inanimate objects but also within narrative, personal contexts. So Noah in Gen 6:9 is described as a “righteous man” who is “blameless” among the people of his time. Whilst it is true that there is an emphasis on correct behaviour here, there is also the idea that “the one who has lived rightly, has righteous status.”³⁷ This is perhaps more evidenced in Gen 38:24 with the case of Judah and Tamar. Judah’s acknowledgement that Tamar “is more in the right than I” (Gen 38:26) is clearly a pronouncement that she is to be accorded a “status” because of her behaviour.³⁸ I am not, of course, suggesting that Dunn is unaware of

³⁰ For example, Ziesler, *Meaning*, 17–46 and Reumann, *Righteousness in the New Testament*, 12–22. See also E. J. Achtemeier, “Righteousness in the Old Testament,” *IDB* 4:80–85; Benno Przybylski, *Righteousness in Matthew and his World of Thought* (SNTSMS 41; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980); David J. Reimer, “צדק,” *NIDOTTE* 3:744–69; H. Ringgren and B. Johnson “צדק,” *TDOT* 12:239–264; J. J. Scullion, “Righteousness (OT),” *ABD* 5:724–36.

³¹ Douglas A. Campbell, *The Rhetoric of Righteousness in Romans 3.21–26* (JSNTSup 65; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992), 50.

³² Reimer, *NIDOTTE* 3:748.

³³ Lev 19:36; Deut 25:15.

³⁴ Deut 4:8.

³⁵ Deut 33:19.

³⁶ Reimer, *NIDOTTE* 3:748.

³⁷ Reimer, *NIDOTTE* 3:748.

³⁸ The stative usage also applies to Yahweh; an example being the confession of 2 Chr 12:6 where the king and officers of Israel affirm that “The Lord is in the right”. (See also Ezra 9:15; Neh 9:8.) As Reimer, *NIDOTTE* 3:752 notes, “declarations concerning Yahweh’s actions using *sdq* shade naturally towards reflections of his being or character.”

these facts; rather that they do not sit comfortably with his salvific/covenantal motif. In my view, therefore, Dunn must do more than cite Cremer to explain why Paul prioritises one particular view of צדק (ה) over against another. In failing to do this his view runs the risk of being seen as an over-simplification which fails to do justice to a broad range of meaning within the Hebrew Scriptures.

Secondly, Dunn gives no space to the work of those scholars who consider the important evidence from the Ancient Near East.³⁹ Whilst not wanting to overemphasise the importance of lexical study, it is noteworthy that in Ugaritic, Phoenician and Aramaic sources the root צדק has well attested associations with the concepts of “legitimacy” and “normativity:”⁴⁰ “In sum, the term appears to be used to refer to right comportment: status or behaviour in accord with some implied standard.”⁴¹

Perhaps more important is the work by those who have suggested that צדק has links with comparable terms in Egypt and Mesopotamia, particularly the terms *mz. 't* (Egyp.) and *mesaru* and *kettu* (Akk.).⁴² These studies assert that צדק and related concepts are entities and personified forces, exemplified in Ps 85:11–14 where peace and righteousness kiss each other, with צדק being in the presence of Yahweh and looking down from heaven.⁴³ This framework has been developed by Koch who considers this usage as not merely a poetic form but indicative that צדק is an independent deity. In associating righteousness terminology with theophany, the “being” *sedeq* comes down to Mount Zion at the Autumn festival to renew king, people and nature.⁴⁴ In Koch’s view, this goes some way to explaining the occurrences in the Psalms where the worshipper

³⁹ Whilst acknowledging Barr’s famous warnings regarding the inadequacy of lexical work [James Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961)], there still seems to be value in careful, etymological study. Barr’s views are discussed at length in David Hill, *Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings: Studies in the Semantics of Soteriological Terms* (SNTSMS 5; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 1–22, 294–300. Despite Hill’s critique, the issues raised by Barr especially with regard to the “adding of significances” and the “dependence on etymologies”, with the concomitant plea to consider the individual word within its wider context, are still relevant. Nevertheless, Seifrid, “Righteousness Language,” 418 suggests that perhaps Barr did not leave sufficient room for etymological work.

⁴⁰ H. Ringgren and B. Johnson, *TDOT* 12:240–243.

⁴¹ Reimer, *NIDOTTE* 3:746.

⁴² Ringgren and Johnson, *TDOT* 12:240. Also, Helmer Ringgren, *Word and Wisdom: Studies in the Hypostatization of Divine Qualities and Functions in the Ancient Near East* (Lund: Ohlsson, 1947).

⁴³ I will deal with the hypostatization/personification debate in Chapter 4 with regard to wisdom and righteousness.

⁴⁴ Klaus Koch, “צדק *sdq* gemeinschaftstreu/heilvoll sein,” *THAT* 2:507–530, 519–520.

receives blessing and צדקה (24:5) and most notably in Ps 72 where the request is made that the king be given צדקה by God. There can be no doubt that this is a primitive explication of the terminology which was probably an early inheritance from Canaan. My point is not that this view is correct, but rather that it represents a strand of meaning for צדקה words which is linked to the notion of a *gift* from Yahweh, a view from which Dunn wants to distance himself because of an anti-Lutheran position.⁴⁵ I will show, however, that whilst presuppositionally he is able to do this, exegetically he is less convincing.⁴⁶

In my view, in both of the examples above, one must question Dunn's seemingly arbitrary prioritisation of one motif over against (and in exclusion to) another. Such a univocal position does not seem to fit well with the diversity of connotations of righteousness from which Paul *may* have drawn.

b) Dunn's *a priori relational* notion has also been challenged by those who want to maintain the emphasis of צדקה (ה) as *conformity to a norm*. At the very heart of this debate is the nature of justice itself. Most modern studies point to the work of E. Kautzsch (1881) who considered צדקה (ה) to be defined by *Normgemässheit* – “adherence or conformity to a norm.”⁴⁷ Morgensen demonstrates how Nötscher develops this concept of צדקה to mean in part a legal procedure such as Amos 5:7, while in part “it is a positive “justice,” that is, an impartial exercise of the law.”⁴⁸ These factors emphasize the distributive-retributive character of Old Testament justice and provide the mechanism by which Nötscher considers צדקה (ה) as corresponding to *iusiitia distributiva*. Nötscher's view has failed in its appeal because it can neither account for the closeness of meaning between “righteousness” and “salvation” in the Psalms and Deutero-Isaiah, nor for the collocation of צדקה, משפט and חסד. However, it is possible to hold the view that righteousness refers to some kind of norm without invoking distributive justice, as indeed Quell does when he regards צדקה (ה) as one of

⁴⁵ For the notion of righteousness as gift see Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology* (trans. D. M. G. Stalker; 2 vols.; Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1962), 1:375, who asserts that this is seen nowhere more clearly than in the messianic prophecy of Isa 11:1 ff. where “wonderful *charismata* enable the anointed to make the divine will for justice prevail in his kingdom.” This view is attested by Reumann, *Righteousness in the New Testament*, 16 and of course, others who follow the Lutheran or pre-New Perspective agenda.

⁴⁶ See, for example, 2.4.2. for Dunn's treatment of Rom 5.

⁴⁷ John Piper, *The Justification of God: An Exegetical and Theological Study of Romans 9:1–23* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1983), 82.

⁴⁸ B. Morgensen, “*sedaqa* in the Scandinavian and German Research Traditions” in *The Productions of Time: Tradition History in Old Testament Scholarship* (ed. K. Jeppesen and B. Otzen; trans. F. H. Cryer; Sheffield: Almond, 1984) 67–80, 69.