

## *Pistis* and *Nomos* in Romans (1)

Shuji Ota

In my previous essay I proposed, mainly drawing on Galatians, the theory that Paul's absolute use of the Greek word *pistis* indicates a superindividual, collective-communal reality coming from God which works as a new economy of salvation; that it involves the three elements of this reality, i.e., human beings believing in God/Christ, the God/Christ of their belief, and the word of God that creates their relationship; and that any genitive noun or pronoun (referring to human being(s), God, or Jesus Christ) attached to *pistis* functions as a means of differentiating its basic meaning and should be understood in a strictly subjective sense (Christ's faithfulness, etc.). (*AJBI* 23 [1997], 64–82).

In the present essay, Romans 5:12–21, located at the end of the section discussing God's righteousness working through superindividual *pistis*, is identified as the starting point for looking into the apostle's expositions of *pistis* and the righteousness of God in the letter's preceding section, and is then interpreted in connection with Genesis 2–3 and the *Wisdom of Solomon* 2:23–24, which are among the most important subtexts for Paul. The opening verse of Romans 5:12–21 can then be translated: "Therefore, (the salvation is) just like sin entered into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all; all sinned for death's sake." This interpretation makes possible an in-depth understanding of the true nature of Pauline *pistis* and the real problem with the Jewish Torah, which is only "to increase the trespass" from the apostle's standpoint.