

THE *CRUX INTERPRETUM* OF ROM 7,25b OCCASIONED BY HANS KLEIN'S INTERPRETATION: PROTESTANT AND ORTHODOX EXEGETICAL TRADITIONS IN DIALOGUE

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Abstract. Occasioned by Hans Klein's commentary, this study examines the history of interpretation of Rom 7:25b by comparing Protestant and Orthodox exegetical traditions. Klein, following Augustine and Luther, sees the verse as describing the believer's ongoing internal struggle (*simul iustus et peccator*). In contrast, Greek patristic exegetes assign the "divided self" to the unredeemed human, while highlighting the baptized believer's ability to overcome sin. The article suggests that although both traditions partly diverge from Paul's theological view, they can complement one another when not taken in an absolute sense. The study concludes with a pastoral caveat regarding the mindset of believers: while the Protestant perspective may lead to resignation and despair over sin, the Orthodox emphasis on spiritual perfection may foster neurotic dissonance and self-estrangement. A hermeneutical approach is proposed to help navigate everyday spiritual struggle, growth, and the path to sanctification.

Keywords: Luther, Augustine, patristic interpretation, New Testament hermeneutics, Pauline anthropology, Rom 7:25b.

1. Introductory Remarks

Professor Hans Klein worked for many years in the ecumenical setting of the University of Sibiu in Romania, where, as a Protestant theologian, he interacted daily with colleagues from the Orthodox Faculty of Theology and with Orthodox believers. It was only natural, then, that he placed particular emphasis on the dialogue between Western and Eastern Christian traditions. This is evidenced by his active role as a founding member of the *Eastern Europe Liaison Committee* (EELC) of the *Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas* (SNTS) and his involvement in the symposia organized by the EELC on New Testament topics explored through the lens of both Eastern and Western New Testament scholars.¹

¹ See, for instance, the volume of the first symposium organized in 1998 in Romania: J. D. G. DUNN, H. KLEIN, U. LUZ, and V. MIHOC (eds.), *Auslegung der Bibel in orthodoxer und westlicher*

Among his many works, Hans Klein also wrote a commentary on the Epistle to the Romans based on his lectures to the Protestant students of his Faculty. His methodological approach is primarily historical-critical. Concerning the history of interpretation, Klein mostly considers Luther's lectures on the Epistle to the Romans and Augustine's interpretation as reflected in them.² Overall, the commentary shows that Klein writes not only as a New Testament scholar but also as a pastor, combining academic and pastoral perspectives where appropriate.

The presence of both these dimensions, the academic and the pastoral, is especially clear in Klein's exegetical comments on Rom 7,25b,³ a passage that has become the focus of significant debates throughout the history of interpretation to this day, particularly within Western Christianity.⁴ Like the rest of his commentary on Romans, Klein's interpretation of this passage centers on the Pauline text and its Augustinian and Lutheran interpretations, without referencing the Orthodox hermeneutical tradition, despite his overall strong interest in it.

Thus, he paves the way for us to examine in the present study the history of the interpretation of Rom 7,25b within the Eastern Christian tradition, concentrating on the major Greek-speaking exegetes up to the 12th century A.D. Our aim is to bring this tradition into dialogue with his views—and through them, with the corresponding Protestant tradition.

We will begin by presenting Klein's views on Rom 7,25b. Then, we will examine Augustine's and Luther's interpretations through their own writings. Next, we will selectively cite interpretations from key Greek-speaking church Fathers and authors to highlight the main milestones in the history of the text's interpretation in the Christian East. Finally, we will compare the core exegetical and theological similarities and differences between Eastern and Western—and by extension, between the Orthodox and Protestant—understandings of 7,25b. We will conclude with reflections on the pastoral implications of these perspectives and on the relevance and usefulness of their synthesis.

Perspektive: Akten des west-östlichen Neutestamentler/innen-Symposiums von Neamt vom 4.–11. September 1998, WUNT 130, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen, 2000.

² H. KLEIN, *Der Brief des Paulus an die Römer*, Honterus, Sibiu / Hermannstadt, 2019, 5.

³ KLEIN, 191–194.

⁴ See, among others, C. P. BÄMMEL, "Justification by Faith in Augustine and Origen", in *JEH* 47 (1996) 223–235; G. BERCEVILLE, and E.-S. SON, «Exégèse biblique, théologie et philosophie chez Thomas d'Aquin et Martin Luther commentateurs de Rm 7,14-25», in *RSR* 91 (2003) 373–395; H. LICHTENBERGER, „Der Beginn der Auslegungsgeschichte von Römer 7: Röm 7,25b“, in *ZNW* 88 (1997) 284–295; J. MÜLLER, „Willensschwäche und innerer Mensch in Röm 7 und bei Origenes: Zur christlichen Tradition des Handelns wider besseres Wissen“, in *ZNW* 100 (2009) 223–246; M. REASONER, *Romans in Full Circle: A History of Interpretation*, Westminster John Knox Press, 2005, Louisville, 2005, 68–84; S. VOORWINDE, "Romans 7 - A History of Interpretation", in *Vox Reformata* 82 (2018) 74–94.

2. Rom 7,25b in Hans Klein's Commentary on Romans

As mentioned earlier, in his commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, Hans Klein emphasizes the anthropological and soteriological problem that arises from 7,25b, specifically the internal conflict within the human being, who appears to serve God's law with the mind (νοῦς) while simultaneously obeying the law of sin with the flesh (σάρξ).⁵

Klein accepts the prevailing view in New Testament scholarship as the most plausible explanation for the contradiction between 7,25b and its context: he considers it a "gloss" (*Glosse*), an originally marginal comment later incorporated into the text. Klein finds this clear from the *hapax legomena* in Paul's writings in this verse, namely τῷ νοῖ δουλεύω νόμῳ θεοῦ and νόμῳ ἁμαρτίας. However, he argues that a more compelling point is that 7,25b disrupts the connection between verses 7,25a and 8,1. While the former is a thanksgiving for the believers' salvation, the latter introduces a new section on their redemption through the Holy Spirit. According to Klein, the Christian who added the gloss projected onto chapter 7 his own inner tension between obeying God's will and obeying the commands of the "flesh." Klein concludes that both Augustine and Luther used 7,25b to interpret Rom 7,14-25 as referring not to the non-Christian but to the internal conflict within the Christian himself.⁶

According to Klein, Augustine believes that the Christian's inner self is divided between "norm" and "being," between "ought" and "want." Even the redeemed human, who is oriented in hope—in accordance with Rom 8,24—experiences himself as someone who has not completely let go of his non-Christian past.⁷ On the other hand, Klein writes that Luther projects a new dimension onto the Pauline text that personally affected him: In 7,25b, the spiritual human is described as someone who perceives and knows the division between "ought" and "want," being simultaneously "righteous and a sinner" (*simul iustus et peccator*). Conversely, the carnal human does not recognize this division because he lives in the flesh and not in the Spirit. Luther himself testifies that before his conversion, it was not division that dominated his existence, but the fear of eternal hell, which led him to despair. Luther's response is that, during times of great doubt and crisis, Christians can rely on the certainty that, as baptized believers, they have been elected by God. These internal conflicts are signs of that election. Klein correctly notes that Luther's view does not exactly mirror Paul's, but it remains "Gospel" in the apostle's spirit.⁸

⁵ KLEIN, 191–192.

⁶ For an overview of the discussion on Rom 7,25b as a gloss, see LICHTENBERGER, 281–289, and the relevant bibliography cited there.

⁷ KLEIN, 192–193.

⁸ KLEIN, 193.

Klein concludes his remarks by referencing contemporary Christians, who, in his view, do not need to choose between Paul's approach and the interpretations of Augustine and Luther. Instead, they are permitted to hold different understandings of Rom 7, while remembering that full redemption has not yet occurred in this world. Therefore, it is not enough for believers to have once placed Christ at the center of their lives. They must continually keep Christ at the center, even if they have not experienced a significant conversion in the past or if their current will is opposed to Christ. This ongoing process of spiritual renewal involves internal conflict. In fact, this conflict serves as evidence of the believers' spiritual life and journey.⁹

3. Rom 7,25b in Augustine and Luther

Examining Augustine's exegetical approach to Rom 7, we observe a notable shift in how he interprets the first-person singular in 7,14-25. Specifically, in his earlier work *Expositio quarundam propositionum ex epistola ad Romanos* (c. 394) Augustine considers the first-person singular as representing the human being outside of Christ, who is under the law and not under grace. However, in 7,25a, where Paul exclaims, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord," the meaning of "I" changes. Augustine then recognizes a clear contrast between, on one side, the "old human being," who cannot be freed from the mortal body and the power of sin that controls it, and on the other side, the spiritual human being, who not only desires to follow God's law but also serves it with his mind, fighting simultaneously with his physical existence ("in the flesh") against the law of sin on a moral level. In this struggle, he can now find victory because, as Paul writes, "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin" (Rom 8,2).¹⁰

Later, as shown in his work *Retractationes* (c. 427), Augustine distances himself from his earlier interpretation of Rom 7,14-25, explicitly rejecting it as mistaken. He now argues that this Pauline passage refers not to the human outside of Christ but to the Christian, who struggles against the "mind of the flesh" and the power of sin. This struggle cannot be won on one's own but only through God's grace, as evidenced by the doxological exclamation in v. 7,25a. In this context, Augustine believes that the first-person singular in 7,14-25 represents the Apostle Paul himself. Conversely, he maintains that 7,25b still reflects the human in Christ fighting against sin. However, he no longer sees a contrast between 7,25b and the

⁹ KLEIN, 193–194.

¹⁰ Augustine, *Expositio quarundam propositionum ex Epistola ad Romanos*, 45–46, PL 35, 2071–2072.

previous verses, viewing it rather as their continuation and as sharing the same subject with them.¹¹

Luther's interpretation follows an exegetical path similar to that of later Augustine, as he attributes the entirety of 7,14-25 to the human of grace, who, although justified by God, is simultaneously a sinner (*simul iustus et peccator*). Luther emphasizes 7,25b in relation to what has come before. He explains that the justification of the Christians is because God's righteousness is granted to them, for they not only fail to fulfill God's law but also remain under the influence of sinful desires. They are spiritually sick and healthy at the same time; however, they are only potentially healthy, with the hope that they will eventually become truly healthy and be saved. They have begun this process, but if they believe they are now completely healthy, they will relapse into sickness. Luther later states that Paul, from the second chapter of the Epistle to the Romans onward, opposes those who justify themselves and judge others while they act in the same unethical manner as those they condemn. Ultimately, Luther concludes that the Christians' goal should be to recognize their sinfulness rather than to achieve complete victory over it, since such victory is impossible. Recognizing their inability to fully overcome sin is essential for their healing and salvation, which come solely from God. In this life, there can never be a complete release from sin.¹²

4. Eastern Patristic Interpretation of Rom 7,25b

In the Eastern patristic tradition, many exegetical approaches to Rom 7,25b are preserved. Here, we present select interpretations by key exegetes either from commentaries on Romans or from extant exegetical fragments in catenae.¹³

Initially, Origen (c. 185–253) interprets Rom 7,14-25 as a unified text describing the Christian who, being a sinner, continues to struggle against sin without yet being able to overcome it. However, Origen does not agree with later Augustine, who suggests that Paul refers to himself here; instead, he believes Paul merely takes on the role of a sinner. Origen argues that Paul cannot be speaking about himself because, as an apostle, he is not subject to sin. If, as Origen notes, we were to accept that Paul “serves the law of sin with the flesh,” then all humans would be doomed to despair, because this would imply that no one can ultimately conquer sin. On the other hand, Origen clearly states that the transition from a sinful state to obedience to God's law, guided by the mind and will, is not automatic but requires time and effort. The will alone is not enough, since habits

¹¹ Augustine, *Retractationum libri duo*, I, 23, 1, PL 32, 620-621.

¹² M. LUTHER, *Der Brief an die Römer*, ed. J. FICKER, WA 56, Hermann Böhlhaus Nachfolger, Weimar, 1938, 347.

¹³ See K. STAAB, *Pauluskommentare aus der griechischen Kirche: Aus Katenenhandschriften gesammelt und herausgegeben*, Aschendorff, Münster, ²1984.

and the “taste” of passions hold such power that, at first, the mind leans toward virtue, but the desires of the flesh still serve sin and obey its law.¹⁴

In his commentary on Romans, John Chrysostom (c. 347–407) distinguishes himself from Origen, aligning with early Augustine regarding the interpretation of 7,14-24; that is, seeing the first person singular as expressing the tragic existential situation—due to enslavement to sin—of the human outside of Christ. Additionally, like early Augustine, he views, from 7,25a onward, the human being in Christ taking the floor. However, he differs in his interpretation of verse 7,25b, which he regards as a final reminder from Paul about humans enslaved to sin, preceding the extensive reference to new life in Christ (8,1-17). Chrysostom interprets this reminder as addressing Christians who continue to sin after baptism. It is worth noting that in his interpretation of the initial verses of chapter 8, Chrysostom emphasizes that sin no longer defines the nature of the person in Christ. He states that the danger of falling back into sin is not rooted in the believers’ inner self but in their mindset (*φρόνημα*) and sloth (*ῥαθυμία*). However, it is now possible for believers not to “walk according to the flesh,” whereas before baptism this was difficult (*δύσκολον*).¹⁵ In his subsequent exhortation, Chrysostom urges his audience not to betray the spiritual gift they have received but to live in accordance with it (cf. Rom 8, 12). Even the worst sinners, such as Paul himself, Manasseh, the Ninevites, or David, can be corrected. Chrysostom makes a clear distinction between the mindset of the flesh, which is hostile toward God and not subject to him “because it cannot be” (Rom 8, 8,7), and the flesh itself— that is, human nature. However, based on the Spirit’s mindset, humans can become subject to the law of God.¹⁶ Chrysostom’s exegesis thus embodies an optimistic view of human nature, seeing humans as now freed from the power of sin and capable of victory through the Holy Spirit. Based on this, he identifies the speaking subject in verses 7,14-24 with humans outside of Christ and attributes 7,25b to the same subject, thereby fully separating the divided “old human being,” who serves sin unconsciously and walks according to the flesh, from the human being, who walks according to the Spirit (Rom 8,4).¹⁷

Theodore of Mopsuestia (c. 350–428) follows the same exegetical approach as John Chrysostom. In his view, 7,25b refers to the human outside of Christ, who prefers the things commanded by God’s law but, because of mortality, inevitably falls into sin. However, he adds that we now “have been delivered from all these

¹⁴ Origen, *Commentarii in Epistolam ad Romanos*, VI, 10, in T. HEITHER (ed.), *Origenes Römerbriefkommentar: Fünftes und sechstes Buch*, Fontes Christiani 2, Herder, Freiburg–Basel–Wien, 1993, 284–286.

¹⁵ John Chrysostom, *Commentarius in Epistolam ad Romanos*, XIII, 4, PG 60, 513.

¹⁶ John Chrysostom, 13, 6, PG 60, 515-516.

¹⁷ John Chrysostom, 13, 4, PG 60, 512-513.

things and are outside of all punishment,” because, through faith in Christ, we have escaped mortality and the compulsion of a life driven by sin.¹⁸

Severian of Gabala (c. 355–408/425) also interprets 7,25b the same way Chrysostom does. He argues that this verse describes the situation of a person seeking salvation yet caught in the struggle between the body and the soul. Still, the saving God transforms, through Jesus Christ, the human “body of death” into a “body of life” (cf. 7,24). The humans do not seek to be saved from the body itself, but from the death that possesses it through sin, because they want a body of life and not a body of death or sin.¹⁹

Cyril of Alexandria (c. 376–444) interprets 7,25b in light of 7,18b, seeing both phrases as referring to the old state of humans outside of Christ, where the mind and will chose to serve the divine law but flesh imposed its own will, pushing them toward sin. Therefore, those who desired to do good but were unable due to the tyranny of passions were condemned. However, in Christ, the cause of condemnation—the dominion of fleshly impulses—has now ended. The law of the Spirit of life, which is the will of the mind leading to life, existed in humans from the start but could not resist fleshly desires. When humans shed this weakness, they were strengthened through Christ. Cyril continues in the first person plural, describing the new state of Christians, who were sealed with the Holy Spirit, clothed with power from on high, and redeemed, freed from evil’s yoke. Accordingly, Cyril also sees 7,25a and 7,25b as being in strict opposition. He links the former directly with the start of chapter 8 and the latter with the previous monologue in chapter 7.²⁰ Clearly, according to Cyril, 7,25b reflects the “old human being” outside of Christ. Thus, he aligns more with the exegetical views of the Antiochene interpreters than with those of Origen or Augustine.

It is notable that Theodoret of Cyrus (c. 393–458), although he cites 7,25b in his commentary on Romans, does not interpret it. In his exegesis of 7,25a, however, he suggests that its thanksgiving resolves the impasse of the human being, as described in the previous verses of chapter 7. Then, he moves directly to the exegesis of chapter 8.²¹ This may indicate that he sees the theological conflict of 7,25b with its immediate context and therefore chooses not to comment on it.

Gennadius of Constantinople (d. 471) notes that the content of 7,25b refers to those who are under the law and, therefore, cannot be justified because, due to the corruptibility of the flesh, they are divided between two lords, God and sin. However, the grace given to humans through Christ delivers them from this

¹⁸ STAAB, 133.

¹⁹ STAAB, 220.

²⁰ Cyril of Alexandria, *Explanatio in Epistolam ad Romanos*, PG 74, 813D-816D.

²¹ Theodoret of Cyrus, *Interpretatio Epistolae ad Romanos*, 79–80, PG 82, 128A-B.

condemnation (7,25a). Through participation in the spiritual, immortal life, which is free from passions, the faithful are delivered from sin and the death caused by it.²²

Much later, Theophylact of Ohrid (1055–after 1107), following Chrysostom’s exegesis, writes that the verb *δουλεύω* in 7,25b, even if it is in the present tense, recalls the previous matters. Since Paul is about to refer to the grace of Christ immediately afterward, he reminds his readers of the condition outside of Christ, during which, although humans desire good, they fall under the law of sin. However, the baptized no longer face condemnation. According to Theophylact, Paul added the phrase “who do not walk according to the flesh” (8:4) for those sinning after baptism, indicating that it is now possible for Christians not to live according to the flesh. If they live this way, it is solely due to their sloth. Finally, Theophylact notes that passive abstention from evil, which is definitely possible, is not enough. Therefore, active engagement in virtue and spiritual works is also necessary.²³

5. Concluding Observations and Reflections

In the previous analysis, we first explained the interpretation of Romans 7,25b in Hans Klein’s commentary on Romans, which refers to Luther’s and Augustine’s interpretations. Hans Klein considers that 7,25b is a gloss, as it does not naturally fit into the Pauline text. However, by referring to Luther and Augustine, he sees in 7,25b a genuine reflection of the Christian’s internal struggle; therefore, he considers it “Gospel” in the broader sense of the word.

Indeed, a study of the texts by Luther and Augustine confirms that they follow a similar exegetical path. In fact, it seems possible that Augustine would agree with Luther’s classic formula *simul iustus et peccator*, as he argues that even Paul continues to struggle within himself against sin’s power. Therefore, the internal division described in 7,14-25, culminating in 7,25b, characterizes the Apostle as well.

On the other hand, Eastern exegetes clearly follow a different approach in interpreting Rom 7:25b. First, Origen appears to be somewhere between them and later Augustine. He maintains—like later Augustine and Luther—that 7:14-25, including 7:25b, expresses the human being in Christ struggling against sin. However, unlike them, he believes this struggle does not involve Paul himself. Instead, he argues that the Apostle is on a completely different spiritual level, having already overcome the “mind of the flesh” and essentially living the life in the Spirit. Therefore, according to Origen, while Paul may speak here in the first

²² STAAB, 374–375.

²³ Theophylact of Ohrid, *Commentarius in Epistolam ad Romanos*, 52–53, PG 124, 432D-433B.

person singular, he does so on behalf of the spiritually immature Christian who needs time and effort to overcome the power of sinful habits.

Eastern exegetes after Origen generally agree on their interpretation of Romans 7:25b. They believe that Paul's "I" in 7,14-24 does not represent the Apostle himself or a spiritually immature Christian still struggling with passions and sin. Instead, it is the expression of the "old human being" outside of Christ. This same idea applies to 7,25b, which depicts the division of the non-Christian who, with his mind, desires to serve God's law but, with his body, follows the law of sin. Furthermore, the Eastern exegetes attribute the thanksgiving in 7,25a to the human being who has already been renewed in Christ and thus gives thanks to God for being freed from the internal conflict and existential deadlock described earlier. As a result, they link 7,25a directly to 8,1-17, where Paul discusses the new existence in Christ and the Spirit-filled life of the baptized believer.

From the above snapshots of the history of the interpretation of Romans 7,25b, important theological questions emerge: Is the baptized Christian fully freed from sin, or only partially? Does sin still dwell within him, or does it just assault him from outside? Is the Christian's will strong enough to easily resist sin's attacks, or does it remain vulnerable? Is the Christian truly *simul iustus et peccator*, or does one attribute exclude the other? How can it be that Christians keep sinning after baptism, even though, according to Paul, they are dead to sin (Rom 6,3)?

In his commentary, Professor Klein represents the traditional Protestant view that Christians' internal struggle with sin is unavoidable as long as they are on the path to final salvation.²⁴ However, from the perspective of Eastern patristic exegesis and, by extension, Orthodox theology, all Christians have the potential—despite occasional setbacks during their spiritual journey—to fully overcome sin even in this life. The Orthodox teaching about sanctity and *theosis* reflects this very expectation and confidence.²⁵ Therefore, failing to do so is understood as being solely due to their sloth.

In our view, both tendencies—the Protestant and the Orthodox—diverge to some extent from the Pauline anthropological and soteriological teaching. For Paul, the coexistence of sin and grace within the believer—as held by Augustine, Luther, and partly Origen—appears to be inconceivable, because he sees these two powers as mutually exclusive. On the other hand, Paul does not appear to envision the *apatheia* preached by the Fathers—namely, complete immobility of the passions, total "immunity" to sin, and full unification with God—as something every

²⁴ See the interpretation of Rom 7,25 by K. BARTH, *Der Römerbrief*, Theologischer Verlag, Zürich, 1922, 370–371; cf. also M. W. ELLIOTT, "Romans 7 in the Reformation Century", in K. EHRENSPERGER and R. W. HOLDER (eds.), *Reformation Readings of Romans*, Romans through History and Cultures Series, T&T Clark, New York–London, 2008, 171–188.

²⁵ On the patristic teaching on *theosis*, see the relevant comprehensive monograph by P. NELLAS, *Deification in Christ: Orthodox Perspectives on the Nature of the Human Person*, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood, NY, 1987.

believer can and should aim for in the present life. This is clear, among other examples, in Paul's own acknowledgment that he can still fall into temptation, as he states in 1 Cor 9,27: "I punish my body and enslave it, so that after proclaiming to others I myself should not be disqualified" (NRSV; cf. Phil 3,12).

Certainly, it is important to consider that Paul lives and writes within an enthusiastic atmosphere, shaped by the fervent faith of the newly baptized believers and the anticipation of the Lord's imminent *parousia*. In this specific context, it makes sense for Paul to promote a strict separation between sin and grace, while also viewing the current provisional life as an eschatological battlefield for the believer against sin. However, in the post-Pauline era, the indefinite delay of the Parousia and the empirical reality of Christians' sinfulness and sanctity over the centuries led to various interpretations of Paul's texts, depending on the era and its particular challenges. From this standpoint, the different interpretations of 7,25b previously mentioned can be seen as mutually complementary, provided they are not treated as absolute.

On one hand, the absolutization of the Protestant interpretation of 7,25b, which suggests that sin will inevitably continue to live inside Christians regardless of their efforts to fight it, could lead them to a psychological and spiritual dead end and, eventually, cause them to give up hope of overcoming sin's power. While victory over sin may ultimately be a gift from God, humans must not only desire and pursue it but also firmly believe that this victory is truly possible. Therefore, by giving up this effort, Christians risk remaining stagnant and indefinitely compromising their existence and life due to the ongoing presence and influence of sin.

On the other hand, the absolutization of Orthodox teaching, which holds that every person can overcome sin, become sanctified, and attain *theosis*, could cause a dissociation between the actual and ideal self, potentially leading to serious neurosis. These issues might manifest as Christians resenting themselves for failing to attain spiritual ideals or fantasizing that they have achieved the required spiritual heights, while ignoring the reality of their actual state.

From both a theological and a pastoral-psychological perspective, it is especially important to follow the middle way and avoid making these teachings absolute. In this context, mutual understanding among different Christian traditions and dialogue between their views can help prevent extreme and harmful interpretations and practices, while also fostering a more inclusive and constructive view of the shared heritage of all Christians: Holy Scripture and its healing and salvific message.²⁶

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²⁶ Cf. C. KARAKOLIS, “One Can Learn and Be Enriched by Others”, in S. ALKIER, C. KARAKOLIS, and T. NICKLAS, *The Promise of Ecumenical Interpretation*, Fortress, Minneapolis, 2024, 168–171.

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