

## 8 MAKING OF NEW TESTAMENT

the "way"<sup>1</sup> of the scribes. These Christians signalized their faith by the rite of baptism, and gloried in the sense of endowment with "the Spirit." Saul was profoundly conscious of the yoke; only he had not dreamed that his own deliverance could come from such a quarter. But contact with victims of the type of Stephen, men "filled with the Spirit," conscious of the very "power from God" for lack of which his soul was fainting, could not but have some effect. It came suddenly, overwhelmingly. The real issue, as Saul saw it, both before and after his conversion, was Law *versus* Grace. In seeking "justification" by favour of Jesus these Christians were opening a new and living way to acceptance with God. Traitorous and apostate as the attempt must seem while the way of the Law still gave promise of success, to souls sinking like Saul's deeper and deeper into the despairing consciousness of "the weakness of the flesh" forgiveness in the name of Jesus might prove to be light and life from God. The despised sect of 'sinners' whom he had been persecuting expressed the essence of their faith in the doctrine that the gift of the Spirit of Jesus had made them sons and heirs of God. If the converted Paul in turn is uplifted—"energized," as he terms it—even beyond his fellow-Christians, by

<sup>1</sup> *Tarik*, i. e. "way," is still the Arabic term for a sect, and the Rabbinic term for legal requirement is *halacha*, i. e. "walk."