

U N I V E R S A L I S M
A N D T H E T H E O L O G Y O F P A U L

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PREFACE

This study attempts to fill a present-day gap in New Testament research--the exploration of universalist texts in Paul's letters. Questions of authorship in 2 Thessalonians, Colossians and Ephesians are incidental to our investigation and are therefore mentioned only briefly. For convenience, references to Colossians and Ephesians have been placed separately; the Pastorals are treated in occasional notes only. The spelling convention of Webster's Dictionary, third edition, has been adopted throughout, and scripture quotations are from the Revised Standard Version unless otherwise noted.

I am grateful to Dr. Ernest Best, former professor of New Testament at the University of Glasgow, for his gracious assistance and wise counsel throughout the period of this research. Lastly, I thank my wife, Karen, for her supportive love and continued interest in this project.

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SUMMARY

This thesis examines the texts in Paul's letters which historically have been used to support the doctrine of universalism.

Section One: Chapter I discusses Paul's judgment terminology (wrath, destruction and death) and concludes with a sociological study of group boundaries. These terms portend annihilation or hell because they contain no sense of eschatological reformation. Group boundaries confirm the exclusive nature of Pauline belief that there exist two classes of people, insiders who look forward to a glorious salvation with Christ, and outsiders who will be destroyed in the eschaton.

Chapter II considers the possibility that a person might compensate for his sins by some form of postmortem remedial suffering; this is deemed unlikely.

Chapter III examines the tension between grace and works and whether Paul would permit an unbeliever to be saved on the basis of his works. Paul requires a profession of faith to be saved, with one exception: Gentiles who earnestly seek after God.

Section Two: Chapter I shows that salvation in Rom. 11:26, 32 is better understood as corporate mercy than individual salvation. Collectives (Jews and Gentiles), not individuals are promised salvation.

Chapter II reads 1 Cor. 15:22 restrictively; only those who belong to Christ will be made alive. Reasons for this conclusion are derived from the context and from the possibility that Paul expected a resurrection of only the righteous.

Section Three: Chapter I examines Rom. 8:19-23 and its Jewish background, the Renovation of nature. The text itself limits salvation to certain sectors of the cosmos. This agrees with the essential element of the Jewish Renovation which is a removal of the wicked.

Chapter II investigates Eph. 1:10 and Phil. 2:10 f. Both texts set Christ up as divine ruler of the cosmos, but neither implies that cosmic lordship imparts saving benefits. The passages are better understood in terms of cosmic conquest than cosmic salvation.

Chapter III argues that the cosmic scope of the reconciliation in Col. 1:20 is curtailed in the Pauline redaction of the hymn as well as elsewhere in Colossians.

Conclusion: Paul's judgment terminology and his use of insider/outsider language strongly support particularism. This conclusion is sustained by the universalist texts themselves which often fit into particularist themes.

Section One

THE SOTERIOLOGICAL CONSEQUENCES OF JUDGMENT

In Romans 14:12 Paul raises the spectre of final judgment where everyone must give account of himself to God. Sinners receive the sentence of death but the righteous find life eternal (Rom. 6:20-23). Paul and his readers are confident that they are delivered from the wrath to come (1 Thess. 1:10). They are not like the wicked who store up wrath for themselves and in the end are destroyed (Rom. 2:5; Phil. 3:19).

If this is truly the fate of the wicked in Pauline theology, how could Paul be anything other than a particularist? There appears to be little room for the universalist who wishes to find in Paul an endorsement for the ultimate reconciliation of all things. But as harsh as Paul's judgment terminology may be, it is not always clear that terms such as wrath, destruction and death should have an eternal focus.

This section discusses the consequences of judgment, whether Paul's judgment terms are final and whether he ever allows that a person can be saved apart from a formal profession of faith in Christ.

I. PAUL'S JUDGMENT TERMINOLOGY

Traditionally Paul's judgment terminology has been considered harsh and unyielding. This chapter examines how Paul uses his judgment language and, specifically, whether such terms as wrath, destruction, death, sin and law entail eternal consequences in his theology.

A. HELL AND ETERNITY

In Christian theology hell is commonly understood to mean the final place of punishment for unbelievers. The destiny of the unregenerate is thought to be irrevocable and eternal. One wonders, however, whether Paul adheres to such a strict view. He argues that God's love embraces the wicked as well as the righteous: "But God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8). True, he does warn the wicked, "you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed" (Rom. 2:5). But this wrath might be something less than eternal judgment. The righteous judgment of God might be considered hell--but a hell of reformative suffering where the wicked are brought to repentance.

Paul (not only in Ephesians and Colossians but also in the undisputed letters of Romans and Philippians) believes

in a day of ultimate reconciliation: "and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross" (Col. 1:15; cf. Rom. 8:19, 21; Phil. 2:6-11; Eph. 1:10). This day of reconciliation, then, provides hope that ultimately all of God's creation will be at peace with God.

1. Universalism and Divine Judgment

At first glance the cosmic texts cited above might suggest that God's wrath is temporally restricted. On this reckoning it would be reformatory; wrath would not burn forever. But if this were so, we might expect him to say more clearly that divine wrath would be swallowed up in the final reconciliation. For example, Clement of Alexandria (c. 150- 215) is an early instance of someone who believed in divine wrath but still argued against a theology that limited God's power at the grave. God loves every aspect of his creation, he says, and proffers saving grace to all mankind, even to those who are in Hades.¹

This type of universalist position, however, has been criticized for not taking Paul's judgment terminology seriously. Dietrich Bonhoeffer (though he addresses a different context) is often cited. He castigates those who

¹Protrepticus 9; Paedagogus (Paed.) I. 8; Stromata (Strom.) VI. 6.

do not take sin seriously and declares that the effect of preaching forgiveness without requiring repentance is tantamount to offering "cheap grace."²

But most universalists, and this includes Clement of Alexandria, do not offer cheap grace. They do not suggest, as did Hosea Ballou, the de facto head of the universalist movement in nineteenth century America, that Christ's atoning work on the cross guaranteed that none would suffer punishment in the afterlife.³ Clement, for example, believed that some would perish of their own volition, but once in the postmortem state, when their souls were released from their bodies and proper correction was applied, they would understand more clearly the nature of the gospel and would turn to Christ even though in Hades.⁴ Ballou, on the other hand, argued that at death God would equip all for eternal bliss. He would purify their souls and alter their characters. He would convert even the most reprobate from sin to holiness.⁵

²Dietrich Bonhoeffer, The Cost of Discipleship (New York: 1959), pp. 35-47, et passim.

³Ernest Cassara, Hosea Ballou: The Challenge to Orthodoxy (Boston: 1961), pp. 72 f. Cf. J. L. Neve, A History of Christian Thought, Vol. 1 (Philadelphia: 1946), p. 282 and Geoffrey Rowell, "The Origins and History of Universalist Societies in Britain, 1750-1850," JEccHist 22 (1971), 38-47; esp. 45-47.

⁴Quis Dives Salvetur (Quis Div. Sal.) 42; Paed. I. 8; Strom. VI. 6.

⁵Supra

More characteristic of the contemporary view is that in face of God's love death is not a final act which closes the door forever on forgiveness or progress. The love and mercy of God are infinite, stretching far beyond the cessation of one's present life. This, however, does not mean that the plight of the wicked is taken lightly. Their fate is grave indeed; it rests uneasily in the balance. Judgment is near. Most universalists are quick to acknowledge the severity of eschatological judgment. Suffering in the postmortem condition remains a real possibility--though not the unimaginable, senseless torment depicted in days gone by.⁶ Punishment would be remedial, designed to bring the recalcitrant to a place where divine truth and love no longer could be resisted.⁷ The universalist faces the

⁶ Saul Lieberman cites a number of Jewish texts which graphically describe the rabbis' views of hell and its punishments, "On Sins and their Punishments," trans. D. S. Winston, in Lieberman, Texts and Studies (New York: 1974), pp. 29-56. Cf. Paul Volz, Die Eschatologie der jüdischen Gemeinde im neutestamentlichen Zeitalter (Tübingen: 1934), p. 323.

⁷ For example, Nels Ferré, The Christian Understanding of God (New York: 1951), p. 228 and "Universalism: Pro and Con," ChrT 7 (1963), 540 stresses that the lot of the wicked is serious indeed--but not eternal retribution. Only God's love is eternal. He grounds his eschatological hopes in the agape nature of God and finds it incomprehensible that anyone could believe that God would inflict infinite punishment on someone for finite transgression. "The very conception of an eternal hell is monstrous and an insult to ...God's sovereign love" (Christian Understanding, p. 228). "Such a doctrine," continues Ferré, would make Hitler "a third degree saint, and the concentration camps...picnic grounds." For Ferré, the fundamental goodness of God is the
(Footnote Continued)

judgment question with profound humility--but in the end, God is love. No one can stand obdurate forever in the presence of omnipotent love. This is "ultimately unendurable," argues J. A. T. Robinson, "the sinner must yield."⁸ Eventually, even the most stubborn will arise a new creation fully participating in the joys of salvation.⁹

Universalism, it must be underscored, does take Paul's judgment terms and the judgment of the wicked seriously. To say that judgment or punishment must be eternal in order to be taken seriously is misguided. In the normal course of life we often recognize the gravity of tragic events. When people suffer, even for a short time, we are overwhelmed by

(Footnote Continued)

deciding factor; this is also the case in the earliest days of the Church. Origen (c. 185-254), Clement's successor, taught that in the end God's goodness must restore unity and harmony. Punishment in the postmortem state would be remedial, intended for the purification of souls. Contra Celsum 5, 15; 6, 25 and 8, 72; De Principiis 1, 6, 2; 3, 5, 7 and 3, 6, 6.

⁸ John A. T. Robinson, In The End God, Religious Perspectives (New York: 1968), p. 133; cf. Robinson, "Universalism--Is it Heretical?" SJT 2 (1949). For replies, see T. F. Torrance, "Universalism or Election?" SJT 2 (1949), 310-18; Robinson, "Universalism--a Reply," SJT 2 (1949), 378-80.

⁹ Not all of those classed as universalists insist that God's love necessarily will conquer all opposition. Herbert H. Farmer, The World and God: A Study of Prayer, Providence and Miracle in Christian Experience (London: 1935), p. 256 allows for the essential unpredictability of human volition and therefore the possibility of some resistance to God's will even throughout all eternity. This, though possible, seems unlikely to Farmer since God has all eternity to draw men to himself. Cf. Farmer, God and Men (New York: 1947), p. 169.

the serious nature of their plight. But human, earth-bound suffering is different from eternal, postmortem suffering. Eternal suffering is unimaginable. Not even the dreaded inscription, ARBEIT MACHT FREI can compare to the words of eternal punishment which Dante sees over the gate leading to hell:

Through me you pass into the city of woe:
Through me you pass into eternal pain.¹⁰...
All hope abandon, ye who enter here.

These words of hopelessness imply something quite different from what we find in the human situation. The pains of this life can never be compared to eternal pain, or even to purgatorial suffering in a hell of limited duration. The awesome spectre of unfavorable judgment by an angry God cannot be anything other than grave. Purgative or reformatory suffering in the afterlife, as we shall see, need not be eternal to be unspeakably grave. The universalist understands the gravity of divine judgment. But he also is impressed with the number of times that the letters of Paul (as we have them) allude to the restoration of all humanity. So punishment might be a reformatory measure.

Most universalists, therefore, expect the wicked to undergo a form of punishment in the eschaton. In fact, not

¹⁰Dante (Alighieri), The Divine Comedy, Canto III, trans. Henry F. Cary, The Harvard Classics, Vol. 20 (New York: 1909), p. 13.

only is punishment possible, it is deemed likely. The universalist believes that the wicked are responsible for their deeds, and in the end, will face a harsh but purposeful judgment. God's love is a reforming love, and postmortem punishment of the wicked is educational; it is never eternal.

Wilhelm Michaelis picks up the nineteenth century debate over αἰώνιος and concludes that nowhere in the New Testament should the term be applied to limitless punishment. It is better, he suggests, to describe God's unfavorable judgment as eschatological punishment and expiation.¹¹ Judgment terminology such as ἀπόλλυμι, ἀπώλεια and ὀλεθρος, are serious, but they do not in Michaelis' view refer to an unending condition.¹² He contends that the gathering together of all things in Christ (Eph. 1:10), can have only positive effects: "Vielmehr muss diese Zusammenfassung für das Zusammengefasste selbst eine durchaus positive Bedeutung haben."¹³ Michaelis agrees with other universalists who caution that the reconciliation of all things must be understood as a process. It does not take place instantaneously on judgment day. The

¹¹ Wilhelm Michaelis, Versöhnung des Alles: Die Frohe Botschaft von der Gnade Gottes (Bern: 1950), pp. 41-48.

¹² Ibid., p. 80; cf. pp. 73-79.

¹³ Ibid., p. 22.

subordination of every creature remains a distant goal which God's actions are "moving towards" (hintendiert).¹⁴

In general, we might say that the universalist agrees with the particularist that Paul's theology imposes a doctrine of eschatological punishment. But the particularist believes that Paul's idea of eschatological punishment is eternal judgment. The universalist sees this judgment as reformatory or purgative.

2. Hell and Eternity

At this point the particularist finds himself in an awkward position. Since he consigns the wicked to an eternal hell on the basis of Paul's theology he is embarrassed because: (1) Paul never uses standard terminology for hell (ᾠδης, γέεννα, τάρταρος, and (2) he never links the eternal perspective with judgment of the wicked.

(1) Hell is a common term in antiquity.¹⁵ One wonders why there is no mention of it in the entire Pauline

¹⁴Ibid., p. 26.

¹⁵For example, ᾠδης (usually translating ᾠδης) occurs over one hundred times in the LXX; ten times in the NT; nine times in Philo; 5 times in Josephus. Other words such as ἄβυσσος, γέεννα and τάρταρος are less frequent. But except for γέεννα, which is a regional term referring to the Valley of Hinnom, these words are found throughout Greek literature. I might add that while γέεννα is a regional

(Footnote Continued)

corpus.¹⁶ Moreover, the notion of eternal punishment is often used by intertestamental and New Testament writers to express God's anger.¹⁷ Yet, Paul himself chooses not to link his judgment terminology with things eternal. True, he does depict the Day of the Lord as a fiery judgment (1 Cor. 3:13, 15; 1 Thess. 1:7), but this may be quite different from those who describe the abode of the wicked as a place of fire,¹⁸ and from those who further specify that the fire is eternal (τὸ πῦρ τὸ αἰώνιον, e.g., 4 Macc. 12:12; Test. Zeb. 10:3; Matt. 18:8; 25:41; Jude 7; cf. Rev. 20:10; 1QS 2:8, אש עולם). He prefers such words as wrath, destruction and death.

(Footnote Continued)

designation, it would be wrong to infer from this that the rabbis located it in the Valley of Hinnom. Most placed it in the depths of the earth, though a number of other views were held. See Lieberman, "Some Aspects of After Life in Early Rabbinic Literature," in his work, Texts and Studies, pp. 236-41. For further discussion of hell, see Joachim Jeremias, TDNT 1:146-49; 657 f.; T. H. Gaster, IDB 2:361 f.; Hans Bietenhard, NIDNT 2:206-09; Haim Z'ew Hirschberg, EncJud 6:860-86, esp. 875 f.

¹⁶ Paul uses ἄβυσσος in Rom. 10:7 but this refers more generally to the realm of the dead. Eph. 4:9 uses κατώτερος and this again is a general reference, referring here to the lower parts of the earth where Christ descended.

¹⁷ E.g., Tob. 3:6; Wis. Sol. 17:2; IV Macc. 9:9, 32; 10:11, 15; 11:23; 12:12; 13:15; 18:5, 22; I En. 84:5; 91:15; II En. 10:6; 1QS 4:12 f., 18 f. NT references relating to eternal punishment can be found in the text and note below.

¹⁸ I En. 10:6, 13; II Bar. 44:14; IV Ezra 7:36, 61; Sir. 7:17; 21:9; 23:16; IV Macc. 9:9; Matt. 3:10, 12; 5:22; 7:19; 13:40, 42, 50; 18:9; Mark 9:43-49; Luke 3:9, 17; John 15:6; Jas. 3:6; Jude 23; Rev. 14:10; 19:20; 20:10, 14, 15; 21:8.

A question to consider is whether Paul uses these words as circumlocutions for hell. Or might they represent a restraint or reluctance on Paul's part to pronounce God's judgment as eternal? We must recognize, of course, that the absence of words for hell is no indication that the concept is not present.

Peter Berger, and Thomas Luckmann in a chapter entitled, "The Foundations of Knowledge in Everyday Life," discuss the importance of commonsense, everyday knowledge. What a society takes for granted must weigh equally with what it consciously affirms.¹⁹ Howard Clark Kee takes up Berger and Luckmann's thesis noting that the interpreter must not restrict himself to the explicit statements in the text. He must also pay attention to the common assumptions shared by writer and hearer. More specifically, an interpreter must be sensitive to "...those aspects of agreement within a society which are regarded as self-evident, so that they do not need to be verbalized...."²⁰ Kee cites Alfred Schutz who calls this

¹⁹Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge (Garden City, N.Y.: 1966), pp. 19-28 and Peter L. Berger, The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion (Garden City, N.Y.: 1967), p. 24.

²⁰Howard Clark Kee, Christian Origins in Sociological Perspective: Methods and Resources (Philadelphia: 1980), pp. 23 f. "Above all," says Gerd Theissen, "historiographic texts from the past preserve for posterity that which is unusual." Theissen, The Social Setting of Pauline

(Footnote Continued)

the "and so forth" idealization.²¹ A speaker need not make explicit what he assumes his hearers already agree with. At times he might simply say, "And so forth," or "You know what I mean."

By itself the absence of words for hell discloses little. Paul and the missionary communities that received his letters may have been operating on the "and so forth" idealization. They may have understood his judgment terminology as referring to an eternal hell. Paul would not need to state the obvious. We will return to this later, but if we recognize wrath, destruction and death as circumlocutions for everlasting punishment, then naturally Paul would be considered a particularist. Conversely, there is little reason to assume that Paul was a particularist if we cannot establish the probability of his employing the "and so forth" idealization. We would need at least to show that his judgment terminology was underpinned by the belief that irrevocable dire consequences (e.g., annihilation of the wicked) awaited the unbeliever at death.

(Footnote Continued)

Christianity: Essays on Corinth, trans. J. H. Schutz (Philadelphia: 1982), p. 181.

²¹ Alfred Schutz and Thomas Luckmann, The Structures of the Life-World, (1973), pp. 7, 241 in Kee, Christian Origins, p. 24.

(2) It is surprising that Paul never uses "eternal" language when speaking of the fate of the wicked.²² Since he often speaks of things eternal this is a notable omission. In fact, the eternal perspective, expressed by the terms αἰών and αἰώνιος, frequently is applied by Paul to God, Christ, and the destiny of believers but never to punishment and judgment.²³ Perhaps most significant is Paul's seeming refusal to complete couplets of polar opposites involving eternal life and its negative counterparts. For example, he stresses that the "gift of God is eternal life" but does not say that the wages of sin is eternal death (Rom. 6:23). Elsewhere those who seek for "glory, honor and immortality" receive "eternal life," but the wicked suffer "wrath and fury" (2:7 f.; cf. 5:21). Similarly, those who sow to the flesh "reap corruption," but those who sow to the Spirit, "reap eternal life" (Gal. 6:8). We cannot say that Paul deliberately refuses to speak of eternal judgment, but the contrast between the frequency of his references to eternal salvation and the absence of αἰών or αἰώνιος when dealing with divine judgment is striking.

Usually soteriological particularism is tied to the concept of an eternal conscious hell. Particularism,

²²The question of ὀλεθρον αἰώνιον (2 Thess. 1:9 will be discussed later in this chapter.

²³There are numerous examples where αἰών and αἰώνιος are used in connection with God, Christ, believers or heaven. But, as noted, they are not applied to the wicked.

however, can be expressed in other ways. Annihilation of the wicked at or sometime after death, for instance, might be a preferable belief to a particularist than endless punishment in hell.²⁴ But just as there are distinctions within the scope of particularism, there is one common agreement: the wicked are excluded from salvation.

Since Paul does not speak of eternal judgment, the question arises whether this omission implies a temporal restriction on eschatological punishment. Perhaps Paul held a different view from the later ecclesiastical councils that embraced the doctrine of eternal punishment. For example, he might expect the wicked to suffer God's wrath in hell, but eventually (after this reformatory experience) be returned to the Father.²⁵ Or he might think that wrath is

²⁴There are many understandings of annihilation and conditional immortality. For convenience, the term "annihilation" will be used throughout to mean "extinction of one's existence." Recent discussion on the destiny of unbelievers and related terminology can be found in Martha Himmelfarb, Tours of Hell: An Apocalyptic Form in Jewish and Christian Literature (Philadelphia: 1983); Neal Punt, Unconditional Good News: Toward an Understanding of Biblical Universalism (Grand Rapids: 1980); Edward William Fudge, The Fire That Consumes: A Biblical and Historical Study of Final Punishment (Fallbrook, CA: 1982).

²⁵See, e.g., Gregory of Nyssa (c. 335-94), Oratio catechetica (Orat. cat.) 8, 26, 35; De anima et resurrectione (De an. et resurr.) who taught that the remedial process, designed to bring men back to Christ, would be severe and inexpressibly painful. The fires of purification would burn up the impurities of those who led sinful lives in a process extending over long periods of time.

poured out on judgment day, but that none would suffer extended punishment in the afterlife.²⁶

There is also the possibility that at the time of his missionary letters, Paul had not consciously thought through the ultimate fate of the wicked. W. D. Davies rightly points out that missionaries are not always constructing theology at their desks.²⁷ It would be wrong to impose on Paul and his letters a strict logical consistency that we nowhere else expect. Paul, after all, might not be consistent. It could be that both universalism and particularism are present in his theology. "Paul wrote for the moment, not for posterity," says J. L. Houlden. "Sometimes, perhaps, he wrote in a hurry, without revising."²⁸ So he may have had little time to come to thorough conclusions, or at different points he may have been influenced by different strands of theology, or perhaps different external factors forced him in different

²⁶See, e.g., John Scotus Erigena (c. 810-77), De Divisione Naturae V. 27-32 who considered the punishment of the wicked to be mental anguish and remorse, a kind of reforming postmortem experience which the wicked would suffer as they began to realize more fully the folly of their former ways.

²⁷W. D. Davies, Paul and Rabbinic Judaism: Some Rabbinic Elements in Pauline Theology (Philadelphia: 1980), p. 68.

²⁸James L. Houlden, Paul's Letters From Prison: Philippians, Colossians, Philemon, and Ephesians, Westminster Pelican Commentaries (Philadelphia: 1977, orig. pub. 1970), p. 15.

directions. These are important considerations and will be discussed as we examine the individual texts.

There is also the well-known problem of theological development in the Pauline corpus. If there are hints of evolution within Pauline eschatology, why not an analogous evolution within his soteriology (particularism to universalism or vice versa)? The case for particularism seems stronger in the earlier epistles than in the later ones--especially if we assume that Paul wrote 2 Thessalonians. Correspondingly, the best evidence for universalism seems to be in the late cosmic reconciliation texts (Rom: 8:19, 21; Phil. 2:11; cf. Eph. 1:10; Col. 1:20).

But is this development? Paul never discusses cosmic reconciliation in his early correspondence so we have no way of knowing what his thoughts were in those days apropos cosmic reconciliation. He may have held the later views all along but the occasional nature of his letters does not reveal it. Moreover, except for Romans 8:19, 21, the cosmic texts are likely pre-Pauline and hence may have been adopted without Paul consciously noting their universalism. In any case, we cannot assume that universalism is concentrated in the later letters. M. E. Boring argues this point convincingly and concludes:

...development from particularism to universalism does not work: the particularist passages are both early and late; Paul's last letter contains both

kinds of passages.²⁹

Boring is mistaken, however, in the central thesis of his article. He notes two images recurring in Paul's eschatological language: "God-the-judge who separates" and "God-the-king who unites all in his kingly reign."³⁰ As Boring sees it, there are two sets of texts in Paul, universalist and particularist, and the problem comes when one group is made subordinate to the other with the assumption that Paul's "real" view can be found. But, says Boring, Paul affirms both universal and particular salvation: the particular statements relate to the image of God-the-judge; the universal statements to God-the-king. He holds the two together, not as propositions that are contradictory, but as pictures which point "to the God whose grace and judgment both resist capture in a system, or in a single picture."³¹ It would be wrong, therefore, to take Paul's judgment language as evidence of Pauline particularism because it conflicts with the kingdom language.

But Boring misconstrues the kingdom language in Paul. He assumes that it is universalist because in the texts he reviews "the judicial way of thinking with its two groups

²⁹M. Eugene Boring, "The Language of Universal Salvation in Paul," JBL (1986), 288, et passim.

³⁰Ibid. p. 280.

³¹Ibid. p. 292.

drops out entirely."³² Yet Boring's hard distinction between judicial and kingdom language is artificial because the two overlap. At times Paul's kingdom language reveals anything but "the gracious kingly rule of God."³³ Boring overlooks the exclusivistic kingdom language in 1 Corinthians 6:9 f.: "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God.... (So also 1 Cor. 15:24; Gal. 5:21; cf. Eph. 5:5; Col. 1:13.) Here the kingdom language in Paul is not as benign as Boring thinks; it often contains the language of judgment.

3. Summary

Universalists are often misunderstood. They are sometimes cast in the role of constructing a God who is nothing more than an overindulgent father overlooking faults he ought not to overlook. But most universalists take God's judgment seriously. The wicked will one day give an account of their deeds. And the burning, reforming love of God (in whatever form it takes) will not be easy.

A peculiar problem arises when we examine Paul's judgment terminology. For some reason he never mentions hell. Moreover, he never uses αἰών and αἰώνιος negatively

³²Ibid. p. 281.

³³Ibid.

with respect to judgment, but does use them positively with respect to salvation. This creates an eloquent argument from silence in favor of universalism. Of course, if this "eternal" terminology were used neither for salvation nor for rejection, then this would be compatible with universalism--but not an argument for it. But these terms are used only for eternal life and never for eternal rejection. This, combined with the absence of words for hell, argues eloquently in favor of a universalist position.

B. APOCALYPTIC

By now it will be evident that Paul does not like to use "eternal" language when describing the fate of the wicked and he never uses standard terminology for hell. He substitutes less specific words such as wrath, destruction and death. On the face of it this might suggest that Paul is a universalist since he appears reluctant to consign the wicked to an interminable hell. In other words, his silence on the specific fate of the wicked could mean that he holds out hope for a universal restoration of mankind, or, that he has no clear conviction regarding their fate. In either case he would not be classed a particularist.

But this explanation from silence is not the only possibility. There are a number of Jewish apocalypses, for

example, that are particularist, but, like Paul, they do not speak of an eternal hell.

Recently, attempts have been made to define more closely the often vague term "apocalyptic." More than one scholar has complained of the term's continual misuse and its resistance to definition.³⁴ Definitions are often too broad or too narrow to fit the data precisely. Our concern is not to define apocalyptic,³⁵ nor to argue, as does J. Christiaan Beker, that the center of Paul's thought is apocalyptic.³⁶ But we recognize that apocalyptic theology has had at least some influence on Paul. Leander Keck points out that while we cannot say that any of the extant Jewish apocalypses directly influenced Paul's thought, it does appear that apocalyptic was one of the theologies that

³⁴James C. VanderKam, "Recent Studies in 'Apocalyptic'," Word and World 4 (1984), 71 cites John Collins's remark: "the abstraction 'apocalyptic' hovers vaguely between literature, sociology, and theology." Cf. VanderKam, Enoch and the Growth of an Apocalyptic Tradition, The Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series 16 (Washington: 1984), pp. 1-8. Leander E. Keck, "Paul and Apocalyptic Theology," Interp 38 (1984), 229-41 discusses the challenge that "apocalyptic" presents together with its resistance to definition.

³⁵The definitions of apocalyptic proposed by J. Carmignac, J. J. Collins, P. D. Hanson, C. Roiland and others are discussed by VanderKam, op. cit., pp. 70-77. Cf. J. G. Gammie, "Recent Books and Emerging Issues in the Study of Apocalyptic," Quarterly Review 5 (1985), 96-108. wL

³⁶J. Christiaan Beker, Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought (Philadelphia: 1980) and Paul's Apocalyptic Gospel: The Coming Triumph of God (Philadelphia: 1982).

contributed to his understanding, and in particular his Christology.³⁷

1. The Apocalypse of Moses

A neglected model for understanding Paul's judgment terms is the Apocalypse of Moses. This first century apocalypse³⁸ is helpful because it shares a similar

³⁷Keck, op. cit., pp. 229-241, esp. p. 241. There has been much discussion of apocalyptic and its influence on Paul. Aside from those noted above, see Ernst Käsemann, "On the Subject of Primitive Christian Apocalyptic," in his work, New Testament Questions of Today, trans. W. J. Montague (Philadelphia: 1969), pp. 108-37, esp. 124-37 and "Justification and Salvation History in the Epistle to the Romans," in his Perspectives on Paul, trans. M. Kohl (Philadelphia: 1971), p. 67, et passim; J. Baumgarten, Paulus und die Apokalypik. Die Auslegung apokalyptischer Überlieferung in den echten Paulusbriefen (Neukirchen-Vluyn: 1975), passim; Leonhard Goppelt, Typos: The Typological Interpretation of the Old Testament in the New, trans. D. H. Madvig (Grand Rapids: 1982), pp. 209-37; H. J. Schoeps, Paul: The Theology of the Apostle in the Light of Jewish Religious History, trans. H. Knight (Philadelphia: 1959), pp. 97-110; James D. G. Dunn, Unity and Diversity in the New Testament: An Inquiry into the Character of Earliest Christianity (Philadelphia: 1964), pp. 325-40; Gerhard Munderlein, Die Überwindung der Mächte: Studien zur theologischen Vorstellung des apokalyptischen Judentums und bei Paulus (Zürich: 1971), pp. 119-22, et passim; Vincent P. Branick, "Apocalyptic Paul?" CBQ 47 (1985), 664-675.

³⁸As with any Jewish apocalyptic, the Apocalypse of Moses cannot be dated with precision. For a judicious discussion of the matter, see Christopher Roland, "Dating the Apocalypses," in his work, The Open Heaven: A Study of Apocalyptic in Judaism and Early Christianity (New York: 1982), pp. 248-267. It does appear, however, that the Herodian Temple is still standing at the time of the writing of the Life of Adam and Eve (29:6), which is a literary dependent of the Apocalypse of Moses. In any case, a first

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apocalyptic world view with Paul. A number of intertestamental and Jewish apocalyptic writings might be used to demonstrate that a writer can have similar judgment terminology to Paul but yet still be distinctly particularist. But most of this literature either uses αἰώνιος negatively with respect to the fate of the wicked or it does not use Paul's most typical judgment terminology. These writings are therefore not similar enough to Paul to be used as a model for understanding his theology. We are using the Apocalypse of Moses and the Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch because of their early dates, because they have important similarities with Paul's judgment language and because there are many parallels with Pauline texts.³⁹

(Footnote Continued)

century date is considered likely for these two works. So Charles, Apoc. & Pseud. 2:126 f.; Otto Eissfeldt, The Old Testament: An Introduction, trans., P. R. Ackroyd (New York: 1965), pp. 636 f.; D. S. Russell, The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic: 200 BC - AD 100 (Philadelphia: 1964), pp. 59 f.; M. D. Johnson, Life of Adam and Eve in Charlesworth, OT Pseud. 2:252.

³⁹ There are a number of similarities between the Apocalypse of Moses (II Baruch parallels are noted later) and the writings of Paul. E.g., the human race is both slain and raised in Adam (13:3; 41:2 f.; 1 Cor. 15:22); defeat of the evil powers (39:2 f.; 1 Cor. 15); third heaven (37:5; 2 Cor. 12:2); clothed in righteousness/clothed in heavenly dwelling (20:1; 2 Cor. 5:2); Eve made from Adam (42:5; 1 Cor. 11:12); Satan pictured in the form of an angel (17:1; 2 Cor. 11:14); etc.

We must not suppose, however, that these similarities imply interdependency. We do well to remember Samuel Sandmel's salutary words of caution in the use of parallels, "Parallelomania," JBL 81 (1962), 1-13 and Philip S. Alexander's recent reminder, "Rabbinic Judaism and the New Testament," ZNW 74 (1983), 237-46 that while parallels are

(Footnote Continued)

The Apocalypse of Moses, like Paul, does not use ἄδης, γέεννα, or τάρταρος for hell but speaks of God's wrath (ὀργή, 3:2; 8:1; 14:2; 26:1) which leads to death (θάνατος, 14:2), and to the "Lake of Acheron" where Adam is purified (37:3 f.) and where ultimately the "seducer" is cast (39:2 f.).⁴⁰ Reminiscent of Paul, the whole human race dies in Adam (14-17; cf. Rom. 5; 1 Cor. 15:22), and like Paul, all will be raised up in a "second" Adam:⁴¹ "I shall raise you on the last day in the resurrection with every man of your seed" (41:3). But in the Apocalypse of Moses the seed of Adam does not include all men without exception, or even every single Israelite. The Apocalypse is particularist throughout. It can speak as if all Israel will be raised but, in reality, only the true children of Adam will experience resurrection.

(Footnote Continued)

often helpful, many times they can be misleading if elements are extracted from different systems and compared in isolation. Cf. Mikeal C. Parsons, "The Critical Use of the Rabbinic Literature in New Testament Studies," Perspectives in Religious Studies 12 (1985), 85-102.

⁴⁰The Acherusian lake alludes to the river of fire, Acheron, popularly associated with Hades' chief river in the nether world. In Virgil's Aeneid 7.312, ed. H. Rushton Fairclough, Loeb (London: 1934), Acheron includes the whole of hell in contrast to heaven: "flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo." Similarly, Charles, Apoc. & Pseud. 2:150 notes a late Armenian gloss which specifies more pointedly the nature of the Acherusian lake: "I send him into the Gehenna of fire." Cf. Dan. 7:10 f.; I En. 14:19; II En. 10:2.

⁴¹John L. Sharpe, "The Second Adam in the Apocalypse of Moses," CBQ 35 (1973), 35-46, esp. 40 f. calls this second Adam in the Apocalypse of Moses, the "exalted" Adam.

Robin Scroggs is no doubt correct that Adam functions here as the father of Israel: "Because Adam is assured of a resurrection, the Jewish reader can believe that he is assured of one also. The assurance depends upon Adam's place as the father of Israel."⁴² Yet, the assurance of resurrection does not extend to all of Adam's natural children. The wicked come to "sorrow" (λύπη) and are "condemned" (κατακρίνω, 39:2 f.); and in the end they are excluded from the delights of paradise (13:3 f.).

So the writer of the Apocalypse of Moses offers his readers eschatological assurance: "all flesh from Adam up to that great day shall be raised" (13:3). Then he qualifies his statement saying that this resurrection applies only to those that "shall be [of] the holy people" (13:3).

The designation "holy people" (λαὸς ἅγιος) is intended for those Jews who continue within the framework of the Covenant.⁴³ Those who do not obey are excluded from this hope: viz., "evil Cain" (40:4)--also called the "son of wrath" (3:2); the devil with his minions (15 ff.; 39:1 f.); and presumably the Gentiles (since in the LXX λαὸς ἅγιος commonly refers to Israel in contrast with the Gentiles).⁴⁴

⁴²Robin Scroggs, The Last Adam: A Study in Pauline Anthropology (Philadelphia: 1966), p. 31.

⁴³So Sharpe, "Second Adam," op. cit., 38 f., n. 13.

⁴⁴See Ibid. for discussion of the Gentiles.

The Apocalypse of Moses is helpful in understanding Paul. If we use it as a model, we find a writer, who, like Paul, uses judgment terminology such as wrath and death to describe the fate of the wicked. He does not use standard terminology for hell and does not explicitly say that the fate of the wicked is eternal or irrevocable. Yet, he is a particularist. Adam returns to his former pristine glory; he and his kind achieve the resurrection. Those deemed wicked are cast down with no hint of a later reconciliation.

Seen in the light of the Apocalypse of Moses, Paul appears very different. By itself Paul's language is neutral. To be sure, at first glance his language would seem to endorse universalism, or at least make one wonder whether he is open to the possibility of this hope. He never uses common words for hell and never applies "eternal" language to the fate of the wicked. But in themselves these discoveries are neutral. They are, after all, compatible with the particularist Apocalypse of Moses. They may suggest universalism, but as we have seen in the Apocalypse of Moses, a book may be particularist nonetheless.

Two things, however, detract from our model. First, the Apocalypse of Moses does not use the word αἰώνιος. Neither salvation nor rejection is said to be eternal. Paul, on the other hand, does use the term, but only for the righteous, never for the wicked. While no model is perfect, one might argue that in this case the departure from the Apocalypse of Moses is important because Paul often uses

"eternal" language in his writings, but for some reason not when it comes to describing the fate of the wicked. Does this distinguish a particularist Apocalypse of Moses from a universalist Paul? A universalist might argue, for example, that Paul consciously avoids speaking of an irreversible rejection of the wicked because of his universalist hope.

But the departure of Paul from the model is not as significant as would appear on first reading. It is true that the Apocalypse of Moses does not explicitly say that the destiny of Adam and the holy people is eternal (and Paul does). Yet, there is little doubt that Adam's ultimate fate is certain and permanent (cf. 13:3-5; 28:4; 39:2 f.; 41:1-3). In the end, therefore, the Apocalypse of Moses is quite similar to Paul:

- a) it uses similar judgment terminology to Paul,
- b) it sanctions a permanent (eternal?) abode for the righteous,
- c) it never says that the fate of the wicked is eternal,
- d) it never mentions hell.

Yet, notwithstanding these similarities to Paul, the Apocalypse of Moses is particularist.

Second, more generally, Paul departs from the Apocalypse of Moses model on the issue of ultimate reconciliation. Throughout the Pauline literature there is the constant hint that eventually all creation will participate in a final cosmic redemption. If we take this to be a restoration of all things, then Paul, of course, must be considered a universalist. In the later chapters these texts will constitute the bulk of our discussion.

2. The Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch

Another model which aids our understanding of Paul's judgment terms is II Baruch.⁴⁵ Unlike the Apocalypse of Moses, this apocalypse applies the eternal perspective to God and the destiny of believers. It also avoids using "eternal" language when delineating the fate of the wicked.⁴⁶ For example, II Baruch 44:11-15 contrasts those who will inhabit the world to come with those who have withdrawn from God's mercy. The righteous will be given a world which does not pass away (vv. 11, 15), one that remains forever (v. 12); but the habitation of the wicked will be in the fire (v. 15).

⁴⁵ Present scholarship dates II Baruch in the first century, after A.D. 70. Cf. Pierre-Maurice Bogaert, L'Apocalypse de Baruch: introduction, traduction du syriaque et commentaire, Sources chretiennes 144 (Paris: 1969), pp. 294 f.; James H. Charlesworth, The Pseudepigrapha and Modern Research: With a Supplement, SBL Septuagint and Cognate Studies Series 7S (Chico, CA: 1982), p. 84; George W. E. Nickelsburg, Jewish Literature Between the Bible and the Mishnah: A Historical and Literary Introduction (Philadelphia: 1981), p. 287. A. F. J. Klijn, 2 (Syriac Apocalypse of) Baruch in Charlesworth, OT Pseud. 1:616 f. thinks the first or second decade of the second century.

⁴⁶ The concept of eternity is applied to God in II Baruch 5:2; 82:3-9; and to believers in 43:1; 44:11; 48:50; 51:3, 16; 66:6; 74:3; 78:6. In our examination of language in II Baruch we must be cautious. Nickelsburg (Jewish Literature, p. 287) notes: "Second Baruch" is extant in one Syriac manuscript, which is translated from the Greek, which itself may be a translation of a Semitic original." For discussion, see Charles, Apoc. & Pseud. 2:472-74; Bogaert, Apocalypse de Baruch, pp. 378-80; Klijn, 2 Baruch, p. 617.

This is similar to Romans 6:23 ("wages of sin is death...gift of God is eternal life"). One would expect the writer of II Baruch to balance eternal bliss with eternal judgment (even if judgment meant annihilation), but like Paul he does not. In II Baruch the hope of the righteous is clear and eternal, but such clarion terms are never used to mark the destiny of the wicked. The writer never explicitly says that judgment is eternal (i.e., unalterable). Even so, there is a sharp and lasting distinction between the fates of the righteous and wicked.

Like Paul, II Baruch uses a number of judgment terms when talking about the consummation and the destiny of the wicked: wrath (48:31; cf. 48:14, 17); destruction (19:8; 52:3; 54:17; cf. 85:15); fire (48:43; 59:2, 5; cf. 85:13); torment/punishment (15:6; 30:5; 44:12; 46:6; 51:2, 6; 52:3; 54:14; 55:2, 7; 59:2, 11; 78:6; 83:9, 18; 85:9).

Thus far II Baruch is similar to Paul in its judgment terminology without being universalist. Again we find an example in Jewish apocalyptic literature, roughly contemporaneous with Paul,⁴⁷ which speaks similarly about the fates of the righteous and wicked in the consummation

⁴⁷A later contemporary, as already noted. Charles, Apoc. & Pseud. 2:480 points out a number of parallels between Paul and II Baruch, some of which are: 1 Cor. 15:19/II Bar. 21:13; 1 Cor. 15:35/II Bar. 49:2; 2 Cor. 3:18/II Bar. 51:10. We cannot say whether II Baruch is dependent on the NT. Klijn, op. cit., p. 619 remarks: "[II Baruch] most likely shared with the New Testament authors a dependency on apocalyptic imagery."

but which remains distinctly particularist. There is no suggestion, as there is in Paul, of a future reconciliation.

II Baruch, however, differs from Paul in an important respect. The apocalypse mentions hell; Paul does not. In II Baruch 59:5 the writer refers to the abyss and five verses later, to Gehenna. As noted above, the place of judgment is described vividly as a place of fire and torment. This in some measure weakens II Baruch as a model to understand Paul. The point of these models is this: to show that a writing can be particularist without having explicit references to hell or eternity. In our present example, we find that II Baruch is contemporaneous with Paul, has similar theology and similar judgment terminology, but is distinctly particularist. Again--no model is perfect. II Baruch is flawed because it mentions hell.

Nevertheless, this apocalypse, together with the Apocalypse of Moses, is helpful because it shows that the use or non-use of certain eschatological terminology may not be significant in determining whether a book should be considered universalist. II Baruch clearly functions in a particularist way but records only two occurrences of words for hell. Alongside this is the apocalypse's overwhelming preference for judgment terms such as wrath, destruction, fire and punishment.

3. Summary

From our use of the Apocalypse of Moses and II Baruch as models we find that it is not unusual for a particularist writing to use judgment terms other than those which designate an eternal hell. By itself, it is not significant that Paul never uses standard terminology for hell and never links the eternal perspective with judgment of the wicked. He may be operating on the "and so forth" idealization. His readers may share with Paul an understanding that judgment terms such as wrath, destruction and death are the same as terms for hell or annihilation. Judgment of the wicked, in their minds, would be eternally fixed; the evil ones would be swept from the presence of God and the righteous forever.

The Apocalypse of Moses and II Baruch are clearly particularist. But we cannot be certain that the "eternal" judgment they speak of is conscious. They might suppose that the wicked will be annihilated. The writer of the Apocalypse of Moses, for example, might think that the wicked would simply not be raised on the last day (since only the "holy people" merit resurrection), or that they might be destroyed in the Acherusian lake where the deceiver is cast. In II Baruch the wicked are punished in the fires of Gehenna. But this too might not be conscious suffering; the writer might mean that they are burned up and destroyed, since fire is a destroyer.

In any event, whether conscious or unconscious, the Apocalypse of Moses and II Baruch are particularist. The wicked are removed with no thought of their return.

We have found, therefore, that these two first century apocalypses use similar judgment terminology to Paul, but do not hold the universalist perspective. One of the crucial differences between Paul and these apocalypses, however, is that Paul stresses an ultimate cosmic reconciliation. Certainly there are a number of other Pauline texts that can be read in a universalist key, but, as we shall see, the cosmic texts are the most favorable. Thus, if the cosmic reconciliation texts are indeed universalist, then it is understandable why Paul never mentions hell and avoids linking "eternal" language with the wicked. But until we study these universalist texts and the specific way in which Paul uses his judgment terminology, his use or non-use of eschatological language will remain neutral. We turn now to an examination of Paul's judgment terms.

C. WRATH

Paul's response to the question, "From what is one saved?," is hardly uniform. One is saved from wrath (Rom. 5:9 f.; 1 Thess. 1:10; 5:9), from destruction (Phil. 1:28),

from death (Rom. 8:2; 2 Cor. 1:9 f.; 2:15 f.; 7:10), from sin (Rom. 6) and from the law (Rom. 7:4-6).⁴⁸ But if one were not delivered from these, would this imply eternal consequences? Is the notion of hell or annihilation a necessary corollary of such words as wrath, destruction and death?⁴⁹

Paul's understanding of God's wrath is rooted largely in the Old Testament. Numerous terms are used in the Old Testament to specify God's anger,⁵⁰ e.g., *אף*, fierce anger, displeasure (2 Kgs. 13:3; Ps. 96:7; Jer. 25:37). *אף* commonly refers to the nose (Gen. 2:7; Prov. 11:22; 30:33; Amos 4:10), but for the Hebrew this was the seat of wrath, as in Psalm 18:8 (Heb. 18:9): "Smoke went up from his

⁴⁸ Paul also says that we are saved from unbelievers (Rom. 15:31) and the body of death (Rom. 7:24). Col. 1:13 further cites "the dominion of darkness" and 2 Tim. 4:18 "every evil" as that from which we are saved.

⁴⁹ We will not discuss Paul's comments on salvation from sin and the law. Both lead directly to death (Rom. 6:22 f.; 7:10). Thus the relevance of both terms to universalism is contingent upon the relevance of death. This we will examine in the latter part of this chapter.

⁵⁰ Care, of course, must be taken not to assume that the derivation of a word results ipso facto in its present meaning. In our study we will concentrate on how Paul uses his words in their different contexts. James Barr rightly notes: "The main point is that the etymology of a word is not a statement about its meaning but about its history...it is quite wrong to suppose that the etymology of a word is necessarily a guide either to its 'proper' meaning in a later period or to its actual meaning in that period." The Semantics of Biblical Language (Oxford: 1961), p. 109; cf. David Hill, Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings: Studies in the Semantics of Soteriological Terms, SNTSMS, 5 (Cambridge: 1967), pp. 1-22.

nostrils" (cf. Ezek. 38:18). Here and elsewhere, אף אף refers to the burning anger of God).⁵¹ Similarly, אַחַז often refers to hot anger (Jer 4:4; Ezek. 3:14) and אַחַז, in both verb and noun forms can mean fierce anger or indignation (verb, Ps. 7:11; Isa. 66:14; noun, Jer. 10:10; Nah. 1:6).⁵²

We need not detain ourselves here. For our purposes it is sufficient to note the disquieting portrayal of an angry God and to specify the recipients of that anger. Prior to the exile, as Walther Eichrodt notes, the wrath of God most often is directed at the failures of God's people.⁵³ Thus in Joshua 7:1, "the anger (אף) of the Lord burned against the people of Israel;" Ezekiel 21:31, "I will pour out my indignation (אף) upon you;" Jeremiah 42:18, "my wrath (אף) will be poured out on you" (cf. Exod. 4:14; Deut. 9:19; Isa. 9:7-21; Jer. 4; Hos. 5; Amos 5). But after the exile God's

⁵¹Oskar Grether and Johannes Fichtner, TDNT 5:392; Bruce T. Dahlberg, IDB 4:904. Grether and Fichtner, p. 411 point to the difficulties the LXX translators had with אף. When it referred to an animal's nose they could use ῥίς (Prov. 11:22), or to a man's nose, μωσθήρ (Prov. 30:33). But in Ps. 18:8 (9) noted above, they translate עַל־פִּי בָאֵפֶר with ἀνέβη καπνὸς ἐν ὀργῇ αὐτοῦ.

⁵²See Elsie Johnson, TDOT 1:351-53 for a full discussion of the less common terms.

⁵³See Walther Eichrodt, Theology of the Old Testament, Vol. 1, trans. J. A. Baker, OTL (Philadelphia: 1961), pp. 464-67; Johannes Fichtner, TDNT 5:397-409; Calvin J. Roetzel Judgement in the Community: A Study of the Relationship Between Eschatology and Ecclesiology in Paul (Leiden: 1972), pp. 18 f.; Richard Adamiak, Justice and History in the Old Testament: The Evolution of Divine Retribution in the Historiographies of the Wilderness Generation (Cleveland: 1982), passim.

wrath "increasingly centered on the heathen and unfaithful in the community."⁵⁴ The wrath of God prior to the exile was largely intended to reform; afterwards it still retained a sense of reformation but more and more it operated retributively⁵⁵ against the heathen outside the camp and unfaithful Jews within.

Paul views God's wrath in a similar manner. His theology reserves the ὀργή Θεοῦ for the unbeliever; the believer is comforted in the knowledge that he has been rescued from the wrath of God: "much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God" (Rom. 5:9); "and to wait for his Son from heaven....Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come" (1 Thess. 1:10; cf. 8:31-39).⁵⁶ To be sure, judgment begins at the house of God and some believers might be required to endure purgative trials in this present life (1 Cor. 5:5; 11:27-32). And some who persist in immorality might even suffer the full wrath of God. Aside from this

⁵⁴Roetzel, Judgement, p. 19, following Eichrodt, Theology, pp. 268 f. See also E. Sjöberg and G. Stahlin, TDNT 5:415 who agree that in later Judaism God's wrath focused on those outside Israel and was limited to the unfaithful within. But sometimes those within could suffer an eternal wrath (Jub. 15:34; 36:10).

⁵⁵The term "retributive" is used here and elsewhere to mean punishment of the wicked as opposed to reformation of their characters.

⁵⁶The governing authorities in Rom. 13:4 f. are said to execute God's wrath on believers who disobey civil law. But this is present and not eschatological wrath (from which the believers are said to have been rescued).

latter possibility, which we will take up later,⁵⁷ the ὀργή θεοῦ for the unbeliever appears to be far more serious than the purgative trial of a believer. How then does Paul understand God's wrath? Does it continue as an eternal postmortem punishment?⁵⁸

1. Wrath as Present and Eschatological

Pauline theology distinguishes between wrath in the present age and wrath in the eschaton. God's wrath can be imposed in the present through the moral deterioration of those rejecting God (Rom. 1:18-32; cf. Eph. 4:17-19) and through the punitive role of the state (Rom. 13:4 f.).⁵⁹ In

⁵⁷The possibility that believers themselves might suffer the wrath of God is discussed in Section Two, I, "The Olive Tree Analogy."

⁵⁸Wrath in Eph. 2:3 and 5:6 (Col. 3:6) is discussed below. But it is difficult to determine whether they speak of eschatological wrath and, if so, whether the wrath is eternal. For these texts, see Heinrich Schlier, Der Brief an die Epheser: Eine Kommentar (Düsseldorf: 1971), pp. 107 f.; Joachim Gnilka, Der Epheserbrief, HTKNT, 10/2 (Freiburg: 1971), pp. 116 f., 250 f.; Marcus Barth, Ephesians: Introduction Translation, and Commentary, AB, Vol. 34, 34a (Garden City: 1974), pp. 102 f. The wrath in Eph. 4:31 and Col. 3:8 deals with man's wrath and is not relevant to our discussion.

⁵⁹Cf. Ernst Käsemann, Commentary on Romans, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: 1980), p. 358; William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, ICC (Edinburgh: 1902), p. 368. The question of wrath's being personal or impersonal does not bear directly on the issue at hand. The issues and opinions may be found in Gustav Stahlin, TDNT (Footnote Continued)

1 Thessalonians and Romans, divine ὀργή is poured out both in this present life (Rom. 1:18; 13:4 f.; 1 Thess. 2:16) and in the eschaton (Rom. 2:5, 8; 1 Thess. 1:10; 5:9). All other Pauline references to ὀργή are ambiguous with respect to whether they have a temporal or eschatological focus (viz., Rom. 3:5; 4:15; 5:9; 9:22; 12:19; cf. Eph. 2:3; 5:6; Col. 3:6).⁶⁰

Now the question arises whether we can determine the extent to which God's eschatological wrath affects Pauline soteriology. To anticipate the discussion below, we may say that for Paul it appears that the wicked have no recourse once under eschatological wrath. Their position is hopeless; they are excluded from salvation.

(Footnote Continued)

5:423 f.; Bultmann, TNT 1:288; Anthony Tyrrel Hanson, The Wrath of the Lamb (London: 1957), passim; Leon Morris, The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross (Grand Rapids: 1965), pp. 147-54, 179-84; D. E. H. Whiteley, The Theology of Paul (Oxford: 1965), pp. 61-72; Ernest Best, A Commentary on the First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians, HNTC (New York: 1972), pp. 83-85.

⁶⁰ Paul uses θυμός for divine anger or wrath only in Rom. 2:8 and there it is coupled with ὀργή. Elsewhere in Paul θυμός refers to human anger: 2 Cor. 12:20; Gal. 5:20; cf. Eph. 4:31; Col. 3:8. Friedrich Buechsel, TDNT 3:168 does point out, however, that between the two words there is no inherent difference. For comments relating to the present and future aspects of God's wrath, see G. H. C. MacGregor, "The Concept of Wrath in the New Testament," NTS 7 (1960), 101-09; Morris, loc. cit.; Günther Bornkamm, "The Revelation of God's Wrath: Romans 1-3," in his work, Early Christian Experience, NTL, trans. Paul L. Hammer (London: 1969), pp. 47-70.

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Outside Paul wrath in the eschaton is common, and often it is eternal.⁶¹ But Paul, himself, does not designate God's wrath as eternal. Nevertheless, he does stress continually the great price that Christ paid to deliver mankind from the divine wrath (Rom. 5:6-11; 1 Cor. 15:3; 2 Cor. 5:15; cf. Eph. 2:13; Col. 1:15-23). The unbeliever's position is precarious. He should not take God's wrath lightly. C. E. B. Cranfield suggests that Paul's use of ὀργή in Rom. 1:18 ("the wrath of God is revealed from heaven") emphasizes "the utter seriousness of the ὀργή Θεοῦ as being really God's wrath: it amounts in fact to an underlining of Θεοῦ."⁶² The unbeliever, then, is storing up wrath for himself, when, on the day of wrath, God's judgment will be revealed: ὀργή καὶ θυμός (2:5, 8).

The believer, on the other hand, has been saved from the wrath of God (Rom. 5:9; 1 Thess. 1:10), yet he too may be judged for sin. But this judgment is considered a

⁶¹As pointed out more generally in n. 17 of this chapter. Eschatological wrath is eternal in: Jub. 3:23; 5:6-10; 36:10; I En. 68:4 f.; Ps. Sol. 15:5, 13 f.; IQS 2:5-10; 4:12 f. In the following wrath is eschatological but there is no specific reference to eternality in the immediate context: Job 20:28; 21:30; (Ps. 110:5); Isa. 2:12; 13:9-16; Ezek. 7:12, 19; (Joel 1:15; 2:1 f.; Amos 5:18-20; 8:9-14); Zep. 1:14 f.; Sir. 36:8 f.; Jub. 24:28, 30; I En. 55:3; 62:12; 90:15-18; As. Mos. 10:1-10.

⁶²C. E. B. Cranfield, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans., ICC, Vol. 1 (Edinburgh: 1975), p. 111. Cf. Adolf Schlatter, Paulus der Bote Jesu: Eine Deutung seiner Briefe an die Korinther (Stuttgart: 1969), p. 565 and Käsemann, Romans, p. 38.

chastening (παίδεῖα) so that he will "not be condemned along with the world" (1 Cor. 11:32). In 1 Corinthians 11:27-32 Paul suggests that the reason for sickness and death within the body of the Corinthian church was their misuse of the Eucharist. Such sickness and death Paul understands to be divine judgment and chastisement. This chastening, in Paul's mind, applies equally to death as well as to sickness. The effect, then, is to say that those who have fallen under God's judgment have been permitted to die as a form of punishment so that they would not be condemned along with the world. This implies that being condemned along with the world brings about apocalyptic or postmortem consequences related to God's wrath which is considered a fate worse than death. In other words, death rescues the believer from an otherwise grave postmortem punishment. The plight of the unbeliever, therefore, is more to be feared than the unfavorable testing of the believer because the unbeliever must face the full eschatological wrath of God.

Eschatological wrath in Paul has a two-fold setting: (1) the parousia (1 Thess. 1:10; 5:9) and (2) some indeterminate "day of wrath" (Rom. 2:5, 8). In neither case can the particularist simply assume a postmortem setting. The wrath associated with the parousia may well be poured out solely on those alive at the time and not on those in the postmortem period. The same holds true for "the day of

wrath," an expression too vague to be confidently located in a specific apocalyptic framework.⁶³

These observations, though important, present too strong a conclusion. Those who are condemned in 1 Corinthians 11:27-32 do seem to face extended postmortem punishment. Outside Paul wrath poured out on the wicked often has postmortem implications, many of which are eternal. For these reasons, and for others yet to be developed, eschatological wrath in Paul undoubtedly has a postmortem setting.

But even if divine wrath continues in the postmortem condition, it might not be eternal. Paul, like Origen, might limit its scope to purgative or reformatory suffering of a fixed duration. In the mind of Origen, for example, all things eschatological are anchored directly to the fundamental goodness of God.⁶⁴ He argues that the end must be like the beginning, that through God's goodness differences and varieties will be restored to unity and harmony with God.⁶⁵ An intransigent man might persist in

⁶³Cf. Martin Rist, IDB 1:783; Ernst Jenni, IDB 1:784 f.; Bruce T. Dahlburg, IDB 4:907 f.; A. Joseph Everson, IDB, Supp.:209 f. who discuss "Day of Christ," "Day of the Lord," and "Day of Wrath" with their attendant vagaries.

⁶⁴De Principiis 2, 5.

⁶⁵De Prince. 1, 6, 2.

his evil ways, but ultimately even the most reprobate will be overcome by the irresistible goodness of God.⁶⁶

Yet, if Paul's views are similar, he is not so explicit. Conceivably one could argue that the process of "storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath" (Rom. 2:5) does not necessarily mean for Paul that God's patience and kindness designed to lead to repentance (2:4) have been abandoned. God's love may continue to search out the lost and eventually, through purgative or reformatory measures, bring erring ones to repentance.

Following this line of thought, salvation could occur both in the present life as well as in the next.⁶⁷ But if this accurately reflects Paul's thought, we might expect him to say that God's eschatological wrath is remedial, designed to lead to repentance. Origen takes this course. He argues for the remedial nature of punishment. Believing that none has been created evil, he concludes that wickedness is learned. Surrounding influences of evil slowly wend their way into the hearts of men. But, suggests Origen, such an educational process can easily be reversed by God: if only

⁶⁶ Contra Celsum 8, 72.

⁶⁷ In the next chapter, "Compensatory Suffering" (II, B), we will discuss examples of purgative suffering in the present life (1 Cor. 5:5; 11:27-32) and in the postmortem existence (1 Cor. 3:15; 2 Cor. 5:10). Other passages of interest: Col. 1:24; 2 Tim. 2:12; 1 Pet. 4:1.

the wicked would choose to trust in him.⁶⁸ Thus, gradually, by degrees, through infinite and immeasurable ages, correction would be realized by means of discipline, education and reason.⁶⁹

On these things, however, Paul is silent. For Origen, postmortem corrective punishment is intended for the purification of souls.⁷⁰ God has an eternity to accomplish his objectives. Long ages may be necessary to refine and purify those who have fallen the farthest and deepest, viz., the Devil and his angels,⁷¹ but in the end, all God's enemies would be subdued. They would achieve the blessedness of salvation, and then God would be all and in all.⁷²

⁶⁸ Contra Cels. 3, 69.

⁶⁹ De Princ. 3, 5, 7 and 3, 6, 6.

⁷⁰ Contra Cels. 5, 15 and 6, 25.

⁷¹ De Princ. 1, 6, 3 and in the Greek text--2, 10, 8. There is some question whether Rufinus represents Origen's thought accurately that in the end Satan himself would be restored (although the Greek text supports this view). In addition, while unlikely, it is always possible that this view found in De Principiis represents Origen's early thought (prior to 231) which he subsequently altered to exclude Satan from salvation.

⁷² De Princ. 1, 6, 1 and 4. Henry Chadwick, The Early Church, The Pelican History of the Church (Baltimore: 1967), p. 119 cautions that salvation for all is not an inevitable process in Origen's theology. It is more of a hope: "The steps to heaven are a staircase to be climbed," says Chadwick, "not an escalator." The door is never closed but the decision must rest with each individual.

Except possibly for the cosmic salvation texts discussed at length in section three, Paul chooses not to comment directly on God's ultimate plan for the wicked. Nevertheless, he does not sanction Origen's conception of a postmortem remedial divine wrath. At the same time, however, he never explicitly says that God's wrath is everlasting. This, of course, does not imply ipso facto that wrath is limited in duration. As we shall see, God's eschatological wrath may be final. When God's wrath falls on the wicked in the eschaton it may imply that he has finally withdrawn his love from them and they are now beyond hope. But this we have yet to discuss.

A key text for the particularist is Romans 9:22 which specifies certain ones as vessels of wrath (σκεύη ὀργῆς)⁷³ made for destruction (κατηρτισμένα εἰς ἀπώλειαν). The problem lies not only in the meaning of the word destruction (discussed later), but also in our approach to the grammar of the text. The wicked are like clay in the potter's hand (Jer. 18:1-10) which can easily be discarded. From this we would naturally infer that God will discard the wicked as a potter discards unusable clay.

⁷³For σκεῦη ὀργῆς as objects rather than instruments of God's wrath, see Heinrich Schlier, Der Römerbrief, HTKNT, 6 (Freiburg: 1977), p. 301 who points to v. 21 as an indication that Paul intended the former. See also Käsemann, op. cit., p. 270.

Some scholars⁷⁴ disagree with this conclusion pointing to the possible concessive use of the participle $\theta\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\omega\nu$ in verse 22. Rather than reading $\theta\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\omega\nu$ causally (because God wished) the contention is that it reads better concessively (although God wished). This opens the possibility that the tempering patience of God (reintroduced in this verse from 2:4) might eventually rescue the "vessel made for destruction" from its otherwise inevitable demise. ("Although") God wishes to pour out his wrath, he is restrained from doing so by reason of his patience and kindness. But the concessive is surely more awkward not only grammatically but also contextually.⁷⁵ The perfect passive ($\kappa\alpha\tau\eta\rho\tau\iota\sigma\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu\alpha$) is better rendered "ready for destruction" allowing for some active participation on the part of the wicked as, for example, in the case of Pharaoh a few verses earlier. The translation "made" or "prepared" appears to exclude participation of the wicked suggesting that God alone has brought them to this point. But this

⁷⁴ Sanday and Headlam, Romans, p. 261; Franz J. Leenhardt, The Epistle to the Romans, trans. Harold Knight (London: 1961), pp. 257 f.; Max Zerwick and Mary Grosvenor, A Grammatical Analysis of the Greek New Testament, Vol. 2 (Rome: 1979), p. 480.

⁷⁵ Most commentators find the concessive awkward. For discussion and bibliography, see C. K. Barrett, A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, HNTC (New York: 1957), pp. 189 f.; John Murray, The Epistle to the Romans: The English Text with Introduction, Exposition and Notes, NIC, Vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: 1959), pp. 33-35; Otto Michel, Der Brief an die Römer, KEK (Göttingen: 1966), p. 244. Käsemann, op. cit., p. 270 f.; Cranfield, op. cit., pp. 493 f.

overlooks the example of Pharaoh and the use of the perfect. Because of their wickedness God readied them for destruction.⁷⁶

A vessel "ready" or "ripe" for destruction, however, suggests that the vessel has a fitting nature for destruction. It does not mean that the vessel's destruction is inevitable. The "children of wrath" in Ephesians 2:3, for example, were headed for destruction but by God's grace were "saved through faith" (2:8). In Romans 9:22, the "vessels of wrath ready for destruction" [my translation] are Israelites (9:1-4) who have stumbled (9:32 f.), but who will rise again (11:1 f., 11).⁷⁷

Moreover, it is worth pointing out that even if one were to concede that the vessels of wrath will be destroyed, still, this need not lead indisputably to annihilation or to an eternal conscious hell. It is always possible that Paul is thinking along the lines of Jeremiah 18:4 which has the clay destroyed only to be reworked by the potter into a more usable form. The "vessels of wrath ready for destruction"

⁷⁶So William S. Campbell, The Purpose of Paul in the Letter to the Romans: A Survey of Romans I-IX with Special Reference to Chapters IV-XI (University of Edinburgh, Ph.D. Dissertation, 1972), p. 349, n. 3 and Herman Ridderbos, Paul An Outline of his Theology, trans. John Richard de Witt (Grand Rapids: 1975), p. 111, n. 53.

⁷⁷The "vessels of wrath" are like the "children of wrath" in Eph. 2:3 who receive salvation. But unlike the "children" in Ephesians, Paul does not mean in Romans 9-11 that every single Israelite will be saved. For discussion, see Section Two, I, "The Olive Tree Analogy."

in Romans 9:22 may indeed have exhausted God's patience; they may in the end have to be destroyed. But must we say that divine anger burns forever? Could not God's wrath be a regenerating anger that reworks the clay?

2. Wrath as Retribution

Essentially, the question at issue is whether Paul sees God's eschatological wrath as retributive or reformative. If it is retributive then his wrath is final and there is no appeal for the wicked. They are cut off from his love. If it is reformative then his eschatological wrath functions as a part of God's love. God loves his creation and while his anger may endure for a time, it is always a constructive anger ultimately producing good for his creation.

The main difficulty with the idea that God exacts retribution from the wicked is that it seems unworthy of a God of love. This idea is well-argued by H. H. Farmer. It is exceedingly difficult, in Farmer's view, to conceive of the divine love dispatching vast numbers of persons to everlasting damnation. He wonders how God's love should be viewed were some of his creation to fall irretrievably into hell or were they to be annihilated.⁷⁸ For Farmer, such a fate might be considered a victory of sorts if the God under

⁷⁸ Farmer, The World and God, p. 255 and God and Men, p. 169.

consideration were a God primarily of justice, but for a God "who is primarily love it could only be the most absolute form of defeat."⁷⁹ In effect, it becomes a Pyrrhic victory first class: a part of God's creation plunges into eternal darkness, the joys of the redeemed diminish because of hell's existence and the divine love appears to suffer a grievous defeat.⁸⁰

Similarly, Russian religious philosopher, Nicholas Berdyaev, thinks that the linkage of a loving God with eschatological retribution is unconscionable. He approaches the retribution issue by suggesting that the concept of eternal punishment is disproportionate and unjust: "There is something hideous and morally revolting in the idea of eternal torments as a just retribution for the crimes and sins of a short moment in life."⁸¹ Furthermore, "a God who deliberately allows the existence of eternal torments is not God at all but is more like the devil. Hell as a place of retribution for the wicked...is a fairytale."⁸²

⁷⁹ Farmer, World and God, p. 255.

⁸⁰ As earlier noted Farmer does allow for the possibility that because of man's free will some will not achieve salvation but will bitterly resist God to the end. But Farmer thinks this unlikely since God has all eternity to draw men to himself; eventually divine truth and love will no longer face resistance (ibid., 256 f.).

⁸¹ Nicolas Berdyaev, The Destiny of Man, trans. Natalie Duddington (London: 1937), p. 279.

⁸² Ibid., p. 268. Berdyaev does not deny the existence
(Footnote Continued)

In short, if eschatological wrath does operate retributively, and if in the end there is no recourse for the wicked in hell, this would appear to diminish God as a God of love.

3. Wrath as Reformation

Because endless retributive wrath seems incompatible with a loving God, it has been argued that wrath is God's response to disobedience. Wrath is not the opposite of love; it functions as an aspect of God's eternal love. As such, one ought not to think of wrath as a fixed unalterable condition but rather as a part of God's love designed to lead rebellious ones to repentance. Postmortem punishment, therefore, might be painful for the wicked but it is corrective in nature intended for the betterment and purification of souls.⁸³

The seventeenth century Cambridge Platonists, Peter Sterry and Jeremiah White, for example, describe God's wrath

(Footnote Continued)
of a hell. But hell is not an objective place; it exists subjectively within man himself. It seems as if Berdyaev conceives of a purgatorial hell--perhaps in this life--where the soul can develop on its way to eventual paradise. Cf. Destiny, pp. 264-79 and Berdyaev, Beginning and End, trans. R. M. French (London: 1952), p. 137.

⁸³ Origen, Contra Cels. 5, 15 and 6, 25; Gregory of Nyssa, De an. et resurr.; Orat. cat. 8, 26, 35; John Scotus Erigena, De Divisione Naturae V. 31 f.

as a consuming love, a raging fire which "burns upon sin and opposition" until the impurities of the soul evaporate in the flames of love. This might sound like a dilution of Paul but Sterry and White insist that in reality God's wrath is none other than his reforming love. Direct contact with this kind of love would not be an easy process for the wicked. It would produce bliss in the saved, but for the rebellious, unspeakable agony.⁸⁴

Reformative wrath, therefore, has an intrinsic advantage; it defines God's wrath as purposeful. It is not unbridled anger methodically extracting retribution from the fallen part of creation. It seeks to reclaim. God is not pleased with sin and rebellion: he will judge the sinner and his judgment will not be trite. But he loves all of his creation--even in his anger.

4. Wrath in Popular Thought

It is worth mentioning that popular notions of hell have contributed to the anguish most Christians feel when confronted with the possibility that the wrath of God is retributive. These excesses have proved a source of embarrassment for the church at all levels. Earlier

⁸⁴D. P. Walker, The Decline of Hell: Seventeenth-Century Discussions of Eternal Torment (London: 1964), pp. 105-15; cf. E. H. Plumptre, The Spirits in Prison and Other Studies on the Life After Death (London: 1884), pp. 192 f.

descriptions of hell have a strange ring to them today. Samuel Cox captures the sentiment of certain particularists of his age when he describes hell as a:

...vast and burning prison, in which lost souls writhe and shriek for ever, tormented in a flame that will never be quenched.⁸⁵

Many contemporary particularists, however, have shown a marked sensitivity to the implications of a doctrine of eternal conscious punishment. Aside from those who suggest annihilation, there is a growing acceptance of the possibility of relative pleasures for the wicked in hell.⁸⁶ Since Paul never mentions hell and the Gospels often speak of it metaphorically, there is good reason to be cautious. For these particularists, hell is real, and final, and a place to avoid, but not a place of Dantesque sufferings.

⁸⁵ Samuel Cox, Salvator Mundi: Or Is Christ the Saviour of All Men, (New York: 1878), p. 41.

⁸⁶ C. S. Lewis, The Problem of Pain (New York: 1948), p. 114 allows the possibility of relative pleasures in hell, though in comparison to the joys of heaven he calls them "black pleasure[s]." F. F. Bruce also holds similar ideas to Lewis. See his recent comments in the Foreword to Fudge, Fire That Consumes, p. viii.

Particularists are not monolithic on the destiny of non-believers; there are many differences of opinion, cf. Robert D. Brinsmead (ed.), "Is There Salvation Outside Christianity?" Verdict 20 (1985), 5-8, and Malcolm J. McVeigh, "The Fate of Those Who've Never Heard? It Depends," Evangelical Missions Quarterly 21 (1985), 371-79.

5. Wrath in Pauline Theology

If God's wrath is not reformative and is not a function of his love, then it makes little sense to say that he loves the wicked who suffer everlasting wrath. At least, our use of the word "love" would differ radically in meaning from any ordinary reportive sense of the word. It would be better to say that those who fall under God's eschatological wrath are cut off from his love. Admittedly, this creates philosophical problems with our understanding of God which may or may not be solved satisfactorily for a given individual. Robinson, for example, argues that as omnipotent love God both desires and is able to save the whole of his creation.⁸⁷ If even one person were condemned eternally, God's love would be defeated and he would not be omnipotent--he would simply cease to be God.⁸⁸

The issue confronting us, however, is whether Paul himself thought that those under God's wrath were cut off from his love. If Paul's thoughts regarding the coming consummation prove to be inadequate or inconsistent philosophically, we might want to modify our own particular understanding of God and his love.⁸⁹ At times we might want

⁸⁷ Robinson, "Heretical," passim.

⁸⁸ Robinson, In the End God, p. 118.

⁸⁹ J. L. Houlden, Paul's Letters, p. 26 is right: "The
(Footnote Continued)

to amend or draw from Paul's theology. But we acknowledge Paul for what he was. Therefore, when we ask whether wrath is the opposite of love, or whether it is an aspect of God's love, we are wondering about Paul. We are wondering if Paul assumed the worst for those under divine eschatological wrath. Were they cut off from God's love and thus excluded from the joys of salvation? If God still "loves" the wicked in hell, what would this mean? How does God's love operate for the condemned if it is not remedial or purgative? To this we now turn.

One of the more compelling aspects of the universalist thesis is that God's love is sovereign. Divine love should not be limited by, or considered parallel to notions of divine wrath, justice or man's freedom. Wrath and justice are not on the same level as God's love; rather they are manifestations of that love. Again, Robinson's remarks are pertinent: "[Wrath and justice] are but ways in which such love must show itself to be in the face of its denial."⁹⁰ God's love is eternal and sovereign. His love for every

(Footnote Continued)

Church has never fossilized Paul and could not do so if she wished. Paul received anew is Paul interpreted anew." Or to put it another way, "both the text and the interpreter are conditioned by their given place in history." Anthony C. Thiselton, The Two Horizons: New Testament Hermeneutics and Philosophical Description with Special Reference to Heidegger, Bultmann, Gadamer, and Wittgenstein (Grand Rapids: 1980), p. 16, et passim.

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 115.

human being, rebellious or not, is incontrovertible. In the end, says Robinson, "God is the eternal 'Yea'."⁹¹

Robinson's point is well-founded, at least, in the Old Testament. Love and wrath are not always opposites; at times they are inseparable. Eichrodt calls this, "love concealed in wrath."⁹² But, as we have already mentioned, after the exile the sense of reformatory wrath gave way to retributive wrath which was directed against the heathen and unfaithful in the community. We cannot say that Paul strictly follows this line of thought but he does stress that the faithful have been delivered from the wrath of God soon to be poured out upon the wicked in the eschaton (Rom. 2:5; 1 Thess. 1:10).

In addition, Paul uses the word *ὀργή* in such a way that it seems to exclude any notion of divine love. When he speaks of wrath, and especially eschatological wrath, there is little reason to think that the wrath is a manifestation of God's love leading to improvement or repentance. In fact, divine wrath appears to be the opposite of God's love. It does not have that pre-exilic sense of being the austere curtain which conceals God's love. One looks in vain for a remedial use of *ὀργή*. Paul does not use it in a corrective sense to suggest that God's wrath leads the wicked to

⁹¹Robinson, "Heretical?," 145.

⁹²Eichrodt, Theology, Vol. 1, p. 288.

repentance; and when he does use it he usually means that God's wrath is final.

But it would be a mistake to assume that ὀργή is always final. An exception can be found in the Paul of Ephesians who acknowledges, "we were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind" (2:3; cf. 5:6). Here "God, who is rich in mercy" (2:4) loves those who were once "children of wrath." We will note that wrath in the expression τέκνα φύσει ὀργῆς is not final and, hence, we cannot say that Paul chooses the word ὀργή only when he wants to designate those who are beyond God's love. This whole problem disappears, of course, if we assume that Paul is not the author of Ephesians.

But even if we accept the phrase, "children of wrath," as genuinely Pauline, still, there is no suggestion in the text that God's wrath is remedial leading the erring children to see their need of repentance. Nor is there any suggestion that the wrath conceals God's love, as if the wrath were intended as a chastening for the good of the recipients, or as if it were an instrument designed to draw the erring children back to himself. The wrath here, as elsewhere in Paul, is true anger which does not include nuances of love.

The point is that the children of wrath were once like the rest of mankind--but no longer. Now "out of the great love with which he loved [them]" (2:5), they have been "saved through faith" (2:8). In this text wrath is not the

way that God demonstrates his love in face of rebellion, as Robinson thinks (as least when he thinks generally about the nature of God); wrath does not function as a part of God's love. Rather, it runs parallel to his love. God still loves those with whom he is angry and when his grace is met with faith, the children of wrath no longer are like the rest of mankind but receive the gift of God--salvation. Presumably, those children of wrath who do not have faith, but continue in disobedience, eventually find themselves under God's eschatological wrath, which, as we shall demonstrate, is always final in Paul.

Let us summarize briefly our thoughts on wrath in Pauline theology to this point: normally Paul's use of *2087* is final; it excludes any notion of God's love. The exception in Ephesians 2:3 is not a true exception. Love and wrath in the context run as parallel attributes. Moreover, other considerations emerge which minimize the impact of this text: (1) Ephesians is likely deutero-Pauline, (2) there is no clear sense of eschatological wrath, which, as suggested, is always final, and most importantly, (3) the wrath at issue in Ephesians 2:3 is not remedial designed for the good of the errant children. It is still the opposite of love.

Before we precede with Paul's understanding of eschatological wrath one other text bears mentioning. In Romans 13:4 f. Paul uses the word *ὀργή* specifically for believers. But as with Ephesians 2:3 we should not think of the wrath

as part of God's love. It too has no sense of remediation. Paul stresses in Romans 13:4 f. that those who resist civil authorities, resist God, and will justly incur "God's wrath" (13:5). But this wrath is not an aspect of God's goodness, even though the civil authorities are said to be exercising authority for the good of the believer (13:4). The authorities are "good" because they serve God in deterring believers from doing wrong. Wrath, as always, has its deterrent effect but it is not intended as a restorative measure leading errant ones to repentance. Also, the text deals with present, not eschatological wrath.⁹³

We are now prepared to discuss eschatological wrath and its final nature in Pauline theology. We have already noted that when wrath is applied to Christians (Rom. 13:4 f.) or to pre-Christians (Rom. 3:5; Eph. 2:3) there is always the prospect of salvation. But when wrath is applied to non-believers there is never any hint of their eventual salvation. It appears to be final. As for eschatological wrath, it is never directed at believers. The wicked in the eschaton face the full force of God's wrath (Rom. 2:5, 8;

⁹³Romans 3:5 asks whether "God is unjust to inflict wrath on us." Here the wrath probably has eschatological elements since it mentions God's judgment of the world (3:6). But one wonders how strictly wrath in 3:5 relates to the believer since it is used anthropologically to indict the world (or perhaps more specifically, Israel, 3:1) which is "under the power of sin" (3:9). In any case, there is no hint of hidden love or remediation within God's wrath.

1 Thess. 1:10; 5:9), from which apparently there is no appeal.

Paul, of course, uses other terms besides *ὀργή* to express God's anger. The point to note here is that while these terms allow for hope, *ὀργή* does not. Evidently, when Paul wishes to stress the utter hopelessness of the wicked, he uses *ὀργή*. By choosing this term he is saying that these rebellious ones have no hope of salvation. They will be swept from the presence of God and the righteous; they are in effect beyond the pale of God's love. But this is not the case with other terms that Paul uses to depict God's displeasure. Words such as *ἀποβολή*, *ἀποτομία*, *ἐκκαθαίρω*, *ἐπιτιμία*, and *ἐχθρός* are more flexible. They are sometimes used strongly but often with the allowance that salvation is still within reach of the unrepentant.

For example, in Romans 11:15 Paul uses *ἀποβολή* when speaking of God's plan for the salvation of the world. He says of Israel, "For if their rejection (*ἀποβολή*) means the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance mean but life from the dead?" Here Paul hints that those rejected might eventually be accepted. In Romans 11:22 f. Paul's use of *ἀποτομία* in relation to the unbelieving is quite different from his use of *ὀργή*. "Note then," says Paul, "the kindness and the severity (*ἀποτομία*) of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God's kindness to you, provided you continue in his kindness; otherwise you

too will be cut off. And even the others, if they do not persist in their unbelief, will be grafted in...."

We note that while wrath directed at unbelievers seems to be final, here and elsewhere parallel terms for wrath do allow for hope even in the face of unbelief. Thus, "severity" in Romans 11:22 f. allows for the reversal of faith: those who enjoy kindness might in the end receive severity, and those under severity, perhaps kindness.⁹⁴

In order for universalism to work, eschatological wrath must operate as an aspect of God's love. Wrath in the eschaton must have a remedial sense. It must seek to reform. But as we have seen, Paul never hints that eschatological wrath is reformatory or that it functions as a part of God's love. He never says, for instance, that the wicked suffer wrath in order to bring them to repentance. Rather, one gets the impression that those who fall under eschatological wrath are cut off from God's love.

It is true that 1 Corinthians 13:8 says, "Love never ends" (πίπτω). This suggests that the universalist is correct, God's love for mankind--all mankind--is eternal.

⁹⁴ Much the same may be said about the other negative terms, ἐκκαθαίρω (1 Cor. 5:7), ἐπιτιμία (2 Cor. 2:6) and ἔχθρος (Rom. 5:10; 11:28, etc.). Other parallel terms to wrath such as ἀδόκιμος (Rom. 1:28), ἀνάθεμα (Gal. 1:8 f.; cf. Rom. 9:3), δίκη (2 Thess. 1:9), θλίψις (2 Thess. 1:6 f.) and κατακρίνω (1 Cor. 11:32) seem less hopeful because of their contexts.

A particularist objection, however, might run as follows:
...the phrase "love never ends" applies to our love, not God's. Chapter 13 says nothing of God's love. It is exegetically illegitimate to argue analogically and say, "If people ought to love others this way, how much more would God love his creation?" Why is this unsound? Because God's love is different from our love. That is the issue in Romans 9:15, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy." Analogies between God and man cannot be so inclusive. Therefore, "love never ends" can apply only to our love, not God's.

There is some merit in this kind of argument. But it is not unreasonable to think that in this chapter Paul has the love of God or Christ in mind. One of Paul's points in chapters 12-14 is that all things come from God. It is not a large step, therefore, to suppose that God's love is behind the enduring nature of love to which the believers at Corinth are encouraged to aspire.

But we cannot say that Paul expects the enduring love of God to guarantee salvation for all. This chapter is not addressed to the wicked who are under God's wrath, but to believers in Corinth who suppose that their spiritual gifts are unexcelled. Paul attempts to convince his Christian readers that spiritual gifts will pass away; only love endures. To extrapolate from this that God's love abides forever on the wicked and righteous alike is unwarranted.

But as we have seen, there is no remedial or purgative *sense* in Paul's understanding of eschatological wrath and, hence, no meaningful way to say that God loves the wicked in the eschaton. Love is not concealed in wrath.

If we are correct in our reflections that wrath is not remedial, and that God's love is positive action on behalf of others, then eschatological wrath for Paul would mean that at the final judgment God is no longer willing to operate on behalf of the wicked. Love would not be concealed in the wrath. There would be nothing but wrath for the wicked. To put it another way, God would no longer "love" them. His wrath in the eschaton would be final.

6. Summary

Paul never says that God's wrath is eternal. Sometimes wrath is poured out in the present; sometimes in the eschaton. Once under eschatological wrath, however, the plight of the wicked appears to be hopeless. God no longer acts on their behalf and therefore we say that he has withdrawn his love from them. His wrath is permanent or eternal.

A universalist argues that wrath does not function this way. Wrath is reformatory or purgative, not retributive. God loves his creation and while it may be necessary for him to punish those who persist in wickedness, he does so out of love, with the intent to restore.

But in eschatological wrath, at least, Paul does not suggest that wrath conceals God's love. Eschatological wrath seems final. To be sure, God's anger at times does seek to restore, but when Paul allows for the possibility of reformation, he uses words less definitive than "wrath" (e.g., "enemy," "rejection," "severity"). These and other terms allow for hope; wrath does not. Wrath seems to be reserved by Paul to stress the utter hopelessness of the wicked. He never, for example, suggests that wrath in the eschaton is remedial or purgative. And never does he hint that love is hidden in the wrath working out a better fate for the wicked. For Paul, wrath seems to be the opposite of love. We conclude, therefore, that in the eschaton God's wrath is final.

D. DESTRUCTION

In addition to wrath, divine judgment is expressed by various terms indicating destruction: ἀπόλλυμι (Rom. 2:12; 1 Cor. 1:18; 2 Cor. 2:15; 4:3; 2 Thess. 2:10), ἀπώλεια (Rom. 9:22; Phil. 1:28; 3:19), and ὀλεθρος (1 Cor. 5:5; 1 Thess. 5:3; 2 Thess. 1:9).⁸⁹ In the LXX ἀπόλλυμι and ἀπώλεια (Hebrew usually נָחַח) and ὀλεθρος (non-Hebrew examples cited below) often refer to physical death or destruction (ἀπόλλυμι, Lev. 23:30; Deut. 7:24; Esth. 9:2, 6; Ps. 5:6 (7); Wisd. 14:6; ἀπώλεια, Deut. 4:26; 8:19; Esth. 8:6; Prov. 28:28; Wis. 18:7; I Macc. 3:42; II Macc. 8:4); ὀλεθρος, Wisd. 1:12, 14; 18:13; Sir. 39:30; II Macc. 6:12; 13:6).

All three words can be used to indicate eschatological destruction,⁹⁰ and sometimes the destruction is said to be eternal (e.g., ἀπόλλυμι and ἀπώλεια are linked with αἰώνιος in Test. Abr. 11:11 and αἰώνιον ὀλεθρον is found in IV Macc. 10:15 and 2 Thess. 1:9).

⁸⁹ Both ἀπώλεια and ὀλεθρος recur in 1 Tim. 6:9 but denote judgment in the world. Similarly, the following (not noted above) are either ambiguous or point to events prior to death: ἀπόλλυμι (Rom. 14:15; 15:18; 1 Cor. 1:19; 8:11; 10:9 f.; 2 Cor. 4:9), καταλύω (2 Cor. 5:1), καταργέω (Rom. 6:6; 1 Cor. 6:13; 15:24, 26; 2 Thess. 2:8), and φθείρω (1 Cor. 3:17).

⁹⁰ General references to eschatological destruction may be found in: Sir. 36:8 f.; Jub. 24:30; 36:10; I En. 96:8; 97:2; Ps. Sol. 2:35; 9:9; 14:6; 15:10-14; 16:5; Apoc. Abr. 24:7-10; cf. 1QS 2:5-8; 4:12-14, 18-20; 1QpHab 5:3 f.

1. Present Destruction

Of the three times in question that Paul uses ὀλεσθῶς two almost certainly refer to destruction occurring in this present life. In 1 Corinthians 5:5, for instance, the Apostle instructs the church to deliver the incestuous man to Satan for the "destruction of the flesh." We note two things. First, the man's flesh is to be destroyed in order for his spirit to be saved. Regardless of how one interprets the phrase "destruction of the flesh," we must admit that it probably refers to present destruction. In other words, the destruction occurs before "the day of the Lord Jesus" (5:5); a postmortem judgment involving destruction is therefore unlikely. The other point to note is that unlike Paul's use of wrath (which never reforms), destruction can be used reformatively.⁹¹ The incestuous man is "destroyed" in order to be saved.

The second text describes the day of the Lord. It will come like a thief in the night: "When people say, 'There is peace and security,' then sudden destruction (ὀλεσθῶς) will come upon them" (1 Thess. 5:3). Here divine ὀλεσθῶς engulfs

⁹¹Or perhaps in a compensatory way. The destruction in 1 Cor. 5:5 may be linked with another sin tolerated in the community--the profanation of the Eucharist (11:17-32). There the destruction of the flesh is present and physical: "that is why some of you are weak and ill, and some have died" (v. 30). I will return to this issue later (Section One, II, "Compensatory Suffering").

complacent unbelievers, this time at the end of the age--the parousia.

Since the destruction occurs in the present age, albeit at the end, we might wonder whether it continues into the postmortem period. Must we say that the wicked are extinguished, or suffer eternal conscious retribution? Is it not possible that "sudden destruction" means that the wicked are destroyed (i.e., killed) at the parousia, then brought through an extended judgment, perhaps, where they are disciplined, educated and corrected?⁹²

This is the kind of destruction we have in the story of the incestuous man (1 Cor. 5:5) mentioned above. He dies when excluded from the community of believers,⁹³ but has hope of rising again. Here divine destruction is a reformative tool. It is positive judgment, not negative.

Perhaps the same is true for the "sudden destruction" in 1 Thessalonians 5:3. Perhaps "sudden destruction" is positive implying remediation as it does in 1 Corinthians 5:5. It must be said, however, that this seems not to be the case. It is true that destruction is remedial in the story of the incestuous man, but apparently this interpretation cannot be used for 1 Thessalonians 5:3. The

⁹²So Origen, De Princ. 3, 5, 7 and 3, 6, 6; Contra Cels. 5, 15 and 6, 25.

⁹³Discussed in Section One, II, "Compensatory Suffering."

context of 1 Thessalonians 5:3-9 (discussed below) forces us to conclude that the destruction is more than a temporary setback for the wicked. Indeed, there is no reason to suppose that the destruction of the wicked is reformatory;⁹⁴ it appears to be retributive. Paul probably thinks that the destruction at the parousia will mean the annihilation of the wicked, or perhaps even some form of extended punishment in hell.

We cannot know for certain what Paul thought about the doctrine of a conscious retributive hell. We do know that he was a Pharisee and that the Pharisees likely believed in the annihilation of the wicked.⁹⁵

The issue here, however, is whether we are correct in thinking that this text connotes a permanent separation of the wicked from the righteous. We, of course, should not take Paul's statements about the destruction of the wicked lightly, as if destruction were another way of saying that God will chastise the wicked briefly in the afterlife. We have already established that the universalist takes God's judgment seriously. Extended punishment in hell, whether eternal, or limited and corrective, is a grave matter.

⁹⁴I.e., other than Paul's remedial use of destruction in 1 Corinthians 5:5 and the presence of "universalist" texts yet to be discussed.

⁹⁵This will be discussed in Section Two, II, "The Adam-Christ Analogy."

We are asking, therefore, whether destruction in 1 Thessalonians 5:3 should be understood as reformative or retributive, as temporal or final.

The presence of eschatological ὀργή in 1:10 and 5:9 supports a retributive conclusion. The wrath in these texts (especially in 5:9) can only mean that Paul believed God's judgment of destruction in 5:3 was final. We know this because those who suffer destruction in 5:3 are the same ones who endure wrath in 5:9. Paul says that "sudden destruction" (v. 3) will fall upon those in "darkness" (vv. 4-7) who are under God's "wrath" (v. 9), but his readers who are "sons of light" (vv. 4-8) will obtain salvation: "For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ" (v. 9).

Since Paul never regards wrath as remedial, but as final, and since he presumes that destruction comes as a result of God's wrath, we must conclude that his use of destruction in 5:3 is also not corrective but final. Thus 1 Thessalonians 5:3 appears to be saying that the wicked will face eternal (permanent) destruction at the coming of Christ.

2. Eternal Destruction

Eternal destruction also occurs in our third text, but there are problems. The expression ὀλεθρον αἰώνιον, found in 2 Thessalonians 1:9, reads: "They shall suffer the punishment

of eternal destruction and exclusion from the presence of the Lord...." Michaelis, however, may be correct in his assumption that αἰώνιος does not mean "endless."⁹⁶ But if this is so, Johannes Schneider's question in his review of Michaelis seems appropriate: "Fallen damit nicht die Begriffe 'Ewigkeit' und 'ewig' hin?"⁹⁷ Indeed, is αἰώνιος, as it is applied by Paul to Christians, something other than unlimited duration?

Yet, in defense of Michaelis it might be said that the adjective does not necessarily mean everlasting. For example, in I Enoch 10:10 eternal life (ζωὴν αἰώνιον) is limited to five hundred years (cf. 1:5, 12). Similarly, the uses of the plural χρόνοι αἰώνιοι in Romans 16:25; 2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 1:2 and the phrase ἵνα αἰώνιον αὐτὸν ἀπέχησ in Philemon 15 ("that you might have him back for ever") hardly denote an extended time without end. Moreover, in the LXX αἰώνιος regularly translates ⲙⲓⲗⲗ which need mean no more than "for a long time." Thus, αἰώνιος does not mean eternal in Job 41:4 (LXX 40:28); Psalm 77:5 (LXX 76:6); Jonah 2:7; Isaiah 63:9; Jeremiah 51:39 (LXX 28:39) and Ezekiel 35:5.

Furthermore, there are numerous examples of αἰώνιος referring to the life-span of various emperors. Moulton and

⁹⁶Michaelis, Versöhnung, pp. 44-48.

⁹⁷Johannes Schneider, Theologische Literaturzeitung 17 (1952), 160.

Milligan conclude that while the adjective αἰώνιος usually denotes "everlasting," it may also mean "that of which the horizon is not in view, whether the horizon be at an indefinite distance...or whether it lies not farther than the span of a Caesar's life."⁹⁸ Therefore, the temporal extent envisaged in the expression ὀλεθρον αἰώνιον in 2 Thessalonians 1:9 remains, at least, ambiguous. In any case, it is unwise to build too heavily on a disputed letter. Though 2 Thessalonians is often accepted as authentic,⁹⁹ we do well to pay heed to Leander Keck's dictum: "In no case should a disputed letter be the basis for interpreting something in a genuine letter."¹⁰⁰

So although αἰώνιος usually means "everlasting," as Moulton and Milligan point out, it can have a more limited sense. In 2 Thessalonians 1:9 αἰώνιος probably does refer to everlasting destruction¹⁰¹ just as it implies eternity

⁹⁸MM s.v. Cf. James Barr, Biblical Words for Time, SBT 33 (Naperville: 1969), pp. 76-83, et passim; David Hill, Greek Words, pp. 173, 186; D. E. H. Whiteley, Thessalonians, NCB (Oxford: 1969), p. 94; Hermann Sasse, TDNT 1:208 f.

⁹⁹Cf. Hans Conzelmann, An Outline of the Theology of the New Testament, trans. John Bowden (New York: 1969), p. 155; for discussion, see Best, Thessalonians, pp. 50-58.

¹⁰⁰Leander E. Keck, Paul and His Letters, Proclamation Commentaries (Philadelphia: 1977), p. 4.

¹⁰¹Annihilation does not appear to be the intended meaning; see Best, op. cit. pp. 262 f. Best cautions, however, that we ought not to speculate on the meaning of the word "eternal," saying, for example, that it means "everlasting" or "infinite duration." He points out that
(Footnote Continued)

when applied to God, Christ and the destiny of believers. If one confines everlasting destruction to a circumscribed "age to come," then perhaps salvation also should be perceived as something less than eternal (as in I En. 10:10). But since many have seriously questioned the authenticity of 2 Thessalonians, the prudent course would be to leave the question open. We should not preclude universalism on the basis of a disputed passage.

Already we have noted that 2 Thessalonians 1:9 is unique. It is the only passage in the Pauline corpus where αἰώνιος relates to the judgment of the wicked. But as we have seen, the adjective αἰώνιος is not the only way for Paul to introduce the concept of eternity (or permanence). In view of our discussion of wrath and destruction thus far, we can say, with reasonable certainty, that the eternal perspective is present in Paul's judgment terminology. And at times these terms sound final.

3. Life and Death

Paul uses two other terms for destruction (ἀπόλλυμι and ἀπώλεια). Sometimes these judgment terms, particularly the former, are said to pronounce irreversible doom on the

(Footnote Continued)

"the Jew was not interested in metaphysical infinitude." He thought more in terms of a permanent exile of those doing wickedness: "so long as existence continues in the age to come persecutors will be separated from God."

wicked. "Definitive destruction," concludes A. Oepke, "an eternal plunge into Hades and a hopeless destiny of death" is what Paul means when he uses these terms for destruction.¹⁰² For Oepke, destruction is eschatological death. It is not clear whether he means that the wicked are consigned to a conscious hell or simply annihilated. He does say, however, that Paul (and John) intend more than mere "extinction of physical existence."¹⁰³

We recognize that any of Paul's judgment terms have grave postmortem consequences; the problem comes with statements such as Oepke's on ἀπόλλυμι. Our first inclination is to reject them. We do so, it seems, because of other texts in Paul which imply universal restoration. This is not unreasonable, of course, and we will soon examine these universalist texts to see whether they overturn Paul's judgment terminology. But at present we want to determine how rigid, flexible, etc. these terms are within their own contexts.

The contrast Paul makes between σόζω and ἀπόλλυμι is striking (1 Cor. 1:18; 2 Cor. 2:15; 2 Thess. 2:10; cf. 2 Cor. 4:3; ἀπώλεια, Phil. 1:28). These texts distinguish sharply between those who perish and those who obtain salvation. If we ask what happens when the wicked are

¹⁰²Albrecht Oepke, TDNT 1:396.

¹⁰³Ibid.

destroyed, part of the answer must surely be that they lose all that salvation and eternal life implies. The stark contrast between the two groups obviates the possibility that the wicked will be destroyed and then rise again. In other words, we should not think that Paul's destruction terminology implies hope; it is the opposite. When contrasted with salvation and life, it implies eschatological death. And this, we shall argue, appears to be a final, hopeless condition.

Life and death are also contrasted in 1 Corinthians 15:18. Here Paul uses ἀπόλλυμι when answering a question about deceased believers, whether they survive in the postmortem condition: "How can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead" (v. 12)? If this were so, "then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished" (ἀπώλοντο, v. 18).

The issue at hand is life after death versus ultimate death, i.e., whether a believer in Christ will find himself at the mercy of death as a power, as the last enemy (cf. v. 26).¹⁰⁴ This raises the question of Paul's understanding of death (discussed later in this chapter). In 1 Corinthians 15:12-18, however, Paul is speaking hypothetically and therefore we may not wish to press too

¹⁰⁴Hans Conzelmann, A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians, trans. J. W. Leitch, Herm. (Philadelphia: 1975), pp. 266 f.

far the issue of eternal consequences in his reference to destruction.

4. Eschatological Destruction

There remains one final issue with respect to the concept of destruction. The fact that ἀπώλεια is τὸ τέλος of the enemies of Christ leaves little room for universalism if τὸ τέλος implies a final, unalterable state in Philippians 3:19: "Their end is destruction, their god is the belly...."

According to R. Shippers this verse admits only the strongest possible interpretation, that the fate of the wicked is irrevocable: "the enemies of the cross of Christ find their ultimate fate in eternal destruction."¹⁰⁵ But Shippers overstates his case. Paul is inconsistent in the way he uses τὸ τέλος. The term is applied to the parousia in 1 Corinthians 1:8 and to the post-parousia period in 1 Corinthians 15:24. By contrast, 1 Thessalonians 2:16 (cf. 1 Cor. 10:11) says that the eschatological τέλος with its attendant divine ὀργή has already arrived. This inconsistency suggests that τὸ τέλος should not be used to resolve the universalism question.

¹⁰⁵Reinier Schippers, NIDNT 2:61.

Some texts which use τὸ τέλος even seem to favor universalism. Romans 6:21 f. identifies τὸ τέλος of the sinner with θάνατος. This raises the argument from silence discussed earlier: i.e., since the contrast is between θάνατος and ζῶν αἰώνιον in 6:21 f., then αἰώνιος is conspicuous by its absence in 6:21. But as we have already noted in our discussion of the Apocalypse of Moses and II Baruch, the use or non-use of eschatological language may not be as significant as we think. Sometimes we have false contrasts.

In any event, there are many problems connected with a particularist use of τὸ τέλος in Philippians 3:19. Therefore, in view of the different ways Paul uses τὸ τέλος (in the present, at the parousia, after the parousia), and because the context of Philippians 3 does not explicitly say that the end of the wicked is irreversible, we ought not to assume that the presence alone of τὸ τέλος enhances a particularist conclusion. Philippians 3:19 does underscore Paul's belief in the inevitability of coming judgment, but whether it is everlasting is uncertain. ¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁶The temporal parameters of his other soteriological references to ἀπόλλυμι are at best ambiguous in Rom. 2:12; 14:15; 1 Cor. 1:19; 8:11; 10:9 f.; 2 Cor. 4:9. The same is true for ἀπώλεια in 2 Thess. 2:3; cf. 1 Tim. 6:9.

5. Summary

Paul assures his readers that God will destroy the wicked. This implies that the wicked will be removed from the presence of the righteous, either by annihilation or by consignment to hell. Eschatological destruction in Paul does not mean that the wicked will be destroyed in hell for a time, and then rise again.

Outside Pauline literature ἀπόλλυμι, ἀπώλεια and ὀλεσθρος are often used to denote eschatological destruction. As we noted earlier, this kind of destruction is almost always permanent; the wicked are utterly destroyed. But the Pauline texts commonly used by particularists to support eternal destruction (e.g., 2 Thess. 1:9; Phil. 3:19) are rife with ambiguities.

Some texts, however, do suggest that "destruction" is eternal. There is no thought of a future resurrection for the wicked who come under "sudden destruction" in 1 Thessalonians 5:3. There the destruction is tied directly to God's wrath; and as we have seen, Paul's use of wrath is final not remedial. This final use of wrath, and now destruction, attaches permanent consequences to Paul's contrasts of life and death (1 Cor. 1:18; 2 Cor. 2:15; 2 Thess. 2:10). The wicked seem to lose forever what the righteous gain--life.

E. DEATH

Paul also says that we are saved from death (Rom. 8:2; 1 Cor. 1:9 f.; 2:15 f.; 7:10).¹⁰⁷ There are several ways in which Paul speaks of death. Central for our purposes is Paul's understanding of death as a natural phenomenon. Biologically, all die, sometimes at the hands of others (Rom. 11:3; 2 Cor. 1:9; 6:9; 11:23), or following sickness (Phil. 2:25-30), or because of personal commitment to a way of life (1 Cor. 9:15; Phil. 1:20). Death is both natural (Rom. 8:38; 1 Cor. 15:32; Phil. 1:21; 1 Thess. 4:15 f.) and inevitable (1 Cor. 15:22). But while Paul can accept death as "natural," he does so with qualification. All "in Adam" die (1 Cor. 15:22) because "all have sinned" (Rom. 3:23; cf. 5:12) and because the "wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23).

1. Sin and Death

For Paul, the immediate consequence of sin is death (Rom. 1:32; 5:12, 15-20; 6:16, 21, 23; 7:5, 10; 8:6, 13;

¹⁰⁷Paul uses a number of terms for death. Chief among these are ἀποθνήσκω, θάνατος, κοιμάομαι and νεκρός. For discussion of the ambiguity of these terms, see Bultmann, TDNT 3:16 f.; Walter Schmithals, NIDNT 1:435-41; Lothar Coenen, NIDNT 1:446; BAGD 91, 350 f., 534 f.; Schlier, Römerbrief, p. 76; Roetzel, Judgement in the Community, p. 85.

1 Cor. 15:56); death is natural only in the sense that humanity participates in Adam's sin-conditioned world. Sin is all-embracing because all men in their turn share the transgression of Adam. This does not mean that Adam is solely responsible for the ruin of mankind. He is surely responsible for opening the flood-gates of sin, but all are active sinners, all are responsible. Thus, men sin in their own persons but as a result of their corrupt nature inherited from Adam.¹⁰⁸

This formulation is convenient but the two clauses seem mutually exclusive. The first clause, "all men die as a result of their own sin" seems to exclude the second, "all men die as a result of Adam's sin." We must admit that this creates a problem. "But here Paul is simply following a Jewish conception," says W. G. Kümmel, "according to which Adam incurred the connection of sin and punishment, but every man earns this punishment through his own sin."¹⁰⁹ These two lines of thought also emerge in the rabbis, as H.

¹⁰⁸This view is well argued by Cranfield, Romans, pp, 274-81. I find his discussion of ἐφ' ᾧ πάντες ἡμαρτον in v. 12 convincing and will avoid replication of his position.

¹⁰⁹Werner Georg Kümmel, The Theology of The New Testament, trans. J. E. Steely (Nashville: 1973), p. 179. Kümmel cites II Bar. 54:15: "Though Adam first sinned and brought premature death upon all, yet each individual one of those descended from him has brought upon himself future misery...." To this may be added IV Ezra 7:118: "O Adam, what have you done? For though it was you who sinned, the fault was not yours alone, but ours also who are your descendants."

J. Schoeps and others point out.¹¹⁰ On the one hand, Moses, though not guilty of death, must die because Adam brought sin into the world (Deut. Rabba 9:4); but, on the other hand, there is no death without sin (Shabbath 55a-b). Like Kümmel, Schoeps thinks that both these rabbinic views are known by Paul. He suggests that Paul "accepted them both--the doctrine of inherited death (v. 14) [as well as] the idea that death was the punishment of actual sins committed by the individual man" (v. 12b).¹¹¹

Consequently, men die not only because they commit specific sins ("all have sinned"--Rom. 3:23), but because they are heirs of death ("death spread to all men"--Rom. 5:12). "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor. 15:22). Moreover, this text with its reference to Adam and Christ represents for Paul two streams of humanity: "Es geht allein um die Gegenüberstellung zweier Menschheitsreihen, die je von Adam und Christus als kosmisch-eschatologische Universal-persönlichkeiten

¹¹⁰ Schoeps, Paul, p. 189; cf. A. Buchler, Studies in Sin and Atonement in the Rabbinic Literature of the First Century (New York: 1939), pp. 337-74; Scroggs, Last Adam, p. 36; E. P. Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion (Philadelphia: 1977), p. 173.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

repräsentiert und umschlossen werden."¹¹² Those outside Christ find only death and destruction.

While Paul holds that we are saved from death, he sometimes speaks as though death were a power already operating in the present life (e.g., Rom. 5:17; 7:9-11; 2 Cor. 3:7). In 1 Corinthians 15:26 Paul speaks of death as a personified power, an enemy aligned with the authorities and powers of the world (15:24). The dark enemy entered the world through Adam's sin; from Adam to Moses it has held sway over men (Rom. 5:12; 14), but through Christ it will be destroyed (1 Cor. 15:26, 54).

2. Death in the Old Testament

The roots of Paul's thoughts can be found in the Old Testament. Death as a personified force may possibly be traced to the Jewish idea of the angel of death, or the Destroyer, as Paul and others call him (1 Cor. 10:10; cf. Exod. 12:23; 2 Sam. 24:16; 1 Chron. 21:12, 15; Job 15:21; Isa. 37:36; Wisd. 18:25). But in these texts the Destroyer is the servant of God, not, as Paul describes (him), an enemy whose reign of death opposes Christ. In Pauline

¹¹²Hans-Alwin Wilcke, Das Problem eines messianischen Zwischenreichs bei Paulus, ATANT 51 (Zürich: 1967), p. 75. This issue is discussed in Section Two, II, "Adam-Christ."

theology Christ's reign brings life; death's reign brings only death (Rom. 5:12-21).

Death in the Old Testament, however, is not always the servant of God. The kind of personified opposition we find death taking in Paul is also present in the Old Testament. Death, at times, is cast in the role of an enemy who opposes the Most High (Ps. 13:3-5; 18:4 f.; 31:8 f.; 42:9 f.);¹¹³ though we may surmise that the enemy relationship is closer to Pauline personification than it is to Canaanite theology, where the god Mot (death) stands before Baal as his personal adversary.¹¹⁴

In any event, the Old Testament well understands the biological necessities of life and death.¹¹⁵ The Yahwist depicts man in Genesis 3:19 as a perishable creature--out of dust he was taken, to dust he shall return. Death, if it

¹¹³Detailed discussion of the personifications of death can be found in Nicholas J. Tromp, Primitive Conceptions of Death and the Nether World in the Old Testament (Rome: 1969), pp. 98-128, esp. 114-19.

¹¹⁴Cf. ibid., p. 99 and Lloyd R. Bailey, Biblical Perspectives on Death, Overtures to Biblical Theology (Philadelphia: 1979), p. 41.

¹¹⁵We must naturally remember that when we talk of an "OT view" of anything we do so on the basis of selected materials from a community that grows and changes in understanding. And significantly, we now have information about that community because a partisan group chose to preserve a piece of literature which at the time may have reflected minority opinion. But for our purposes in understanding Paul the "minority opinion" would later have been accepted as "normative" in the wider community. See Bailey, Death, pp. 23 f.

occurs peacefully and in old age, is accepted as the normal course of things (Gen. 46:30; Num. 23:10; Jer. 34:4 f.).

E. Jacob comments on the "full life" of man:

A human life, arrived at its full maturity, is plucked like a ripe stalk at harvest time (Job. 5:26). After a happy old age, man, "full of years," is "gathered to his people" (Gen. 15:15; 28:8; 35:29; Judg. 8:32; I Chr. 23:1; 29:28; II Chr. 24:15; Job 42:17). Arrived at the end of his life, man goes the way of all earthly creatures (Josh. 23:14; I Kings 2:2; Job 30:23).¹¹⁶

Yet, while death is normal, it is regrettable:¹¹⁷ "We must all die, we are like water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again..." (2 Sam. 14:14). This regret sometimes surfaces more concretely as Yahweh's punishment for sin (Gen. 2-3; cf. Prov. 14:27; 15:24; Ezek. 18:31 f.).¹¹⁸ Presumably if one did not sin, one would not die, though this kind of speculation seems not to interest Israel.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶Edmond Jacob, TDNT 1:802. Note: a typographical error occurs in line 4; Gen. 28:8 should read 25:8.

¹¹⁷Cf. Gerhard von Rad, TDNT 2:846 and his Old Testament Theology: The Theology of Israel's Historical Traditions, Vol. 1, trans. D. M. G. Stalker (New York: 1962), pp. 389 f.

¹¹⁸Walter Brueggemann, TDNT, Supp.: 220. Cf. C. Clifton Black, "Pauline Perspectives on Death in Romans 5-8," JBL 103 (1984), 415 f. who discusses the tighter connection between sin and death in the intertestamental literature (Sir. 25:24; II En. 30:17; Apoc. Mos. 14:2; II Bar. 54:15, 19; 56:6; IV Ez. 3:7).

¹¹⁹The possibility, broached earlier, is argued in the rabbis. See Schoeps, Paul, p. 189; Scroggs, Last Adam, p. 36; E. P. Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, p. 173.

But, for the ancient Israelites, the chasm between the living and the dead is "disturbingly deep."¹²⁰ The older texts separate the dead from the presence of Yahweh. Those in sheol cannot praise him (Isa. 38:18); they are cut off from the hand of Yahweh (Ps. 88:5). "And this," says G. von Rad, "is for centuries the real sting of death in OT religion."¹²¹ In short, death is considered natural but anathetical to God's plan.

At times, however, God's power extends to the gates of sheol (1 Sam. 2:6; Jonah 2:2, 6 = Hebrew 3, 7). Sometimes it even reaches beyond the sphere of life to raise the dead (1 Kgs. 17:17-24; 2 Kgs. 4:18-37) or, as in the case of Enoch and Elijah, to snatch them away from death's inevitable hands (Gen. 5:24; 2 Kgs. 2:6-12). Some think that the doctrine of general resurrection (though vague) begins in a number of these kinds of texts, e.g., Isaiah 25:8, "He will swallow up death forever...." In Psalm 49:14 f. (Hebrew 15 f.) we read that the wicked may waste away in sheol, but the righteous are able to say, "God will ransom my soul from the power of Sheol, for he will receive

¹²⁰Werner H. Schmidt, The Faith of the Old Testament: A History, trans. J. Sturdy (Philadelphia: 1983), p. 270.

¹²¹G. von Rad, TDNT 2:847; Theology, 1:277, 369 f., 387-98. Cf. Tromp, Primitive Conceptions, pp. 187-90, et pass. who describes the condition of the dead in primitive Jewish belief as a negative cosmos: no possessions; no memory; no knowledge; no joy; no return; no end; etc. Similar discussion may be found in Schmidt, op. cit., pp. 268-77.

me." And again, "My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever" (Ps. 73:26). Eventually, this desire for continued life in the presence of God manifests itself in the hope of the resurrection of the dead (Dan. 12:2 f.; cf. Isa. 26:19; IV Ezra 7:26-28; II Macc. 7:9-14, 23; I En. 51:1; 61:5; II Baruch 50:1-3; 1 Cor. 15:51 ff.; etc.).

3. The Christian and Death

Under both old and new covenants we find that aside from Enoch and Elijah, death claims everyone. Even those raised from the dead (the widow's son--1 Kgs. 17:17-24; the Shunammite's son--2 Kgs. 4:18-37; the widow's son--Luke 7:12-14; Lazarus--John 11:38-44; Dorcus--Acts 9:37; possibly Jairus' daughter--Mark 5:39 and Eutychus--Acts 20:10), all must still die again.

But, for Paul, the Christian has confidence in the face of death. He knows that death cannot separate him from "the love of God in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:38 f.) because "Christ has been raised from the dead" (1 Cor. 15:20); and through him "has come the resurrection of the dead" (v. 21) where "all shall be made alive" (v. 22). Nevertheless, in the present age death still holds its power over the believer; all must die. Paul can say that Christ is "Lord both of the dead and of the living" (Rom. 14:9) and that "death no

longer has dominion over him" (Rom. 6:9), but it still holds sway after all because its final defeat lies in the future (1 Cor. 15:54-56). For the believer, writes E. Käsemann, "the world-powers have been put in subjection. There remains only the end of the lordship of death upon earth, which is identical with the end of history."¹²²

We see, therefore, that the last enemy to be destroyed is death, θάνατος (1 Cor. 15:26). All men, including believers, have sinned and "the wages of sin is θάνατος" (Rom. 6:23). "But thanks be to God," says Paul, "θάνατος is swallowed in victory" (1 Cor. 16:54-57); it has no sting for the believer.

The Pauline literature has four common words for death: ἀποθνήσκω, θάνατος, κοιμάμαι and νεκρός. Of primary importance for our study is θάνατος and its relation to κοιμάμαι. Often Paul uses θάνατος for the dark personified power of death at work in the world (e.g., Rom. 5:14, 17, 21; 7:9-11; 2 Cor. 3:7; 4:12), which brings to a close the sinful life of the wicked (Rom. 6:23; cf. 1:32; 6:16; 7:5; 8:6; 2 Cor. 2:16; 7:10). He can also use the term in other ways as, for example, when he refers to Christ's death (e.g., Rom. 5:10; 1 Cor. 11:26; Phil. 3:10) and to the

¹²²Käsemann, "Primitive Christian Apocalyptic," in New Testament Questions, p. 134. So also Victor Paul Furnish, Theology and Ethics in Paul (Nashville: 1968), p. 117 and Beker, Paul the Apostle, p. 190.

physical death of believers (e.g., Epaphroditus in Phil. 2:27: "he was ill, near to death;" cf. 2 Cor. 1:9; 11:23).

So θάνατος does not always point toward final judgment for the sinner. Often it is used for Christ, and occasionally even for believers. But when Paul uses it for believers he means biological death, not eschatological.¹²³ Over against this, Paul's characteristic usage of death for the wicked is eschatological; in this context he ascribes to death a most bitter end.

These dire eschatological nuances rarely surface in Paul's other words for death. ἀποθνήσκω and νεκρός seldom refer to death's bitter end, and κοιμάομαι is always expectant and hopeful. For instance, in forty occurrences of νεκρός, negative eschatological elements appear only four times (Eph. 2:1, 5; 5:14; Col. 2:13), and in forty-one occurrences of ἀποθνήσκω, again only four negative uses (Rom. 5:15; 7:10; 8:13; 1 Cor. 15:22). And κοιμάομαι (occurring nine times) is the single term which Paul uses for death that consistently strikes a positive note. It is

¹²³2 Cor. 4:11 f. are not exceptions. See C. K. Barrett, The Second Epistle to the Corinthians, HNTC (New York: 1973), pp. 140-42; Victor Paul Furnish, II Corinthians, AB, Vol. 32a (Garden City, NY: 1984), pp. 284; Rudolf Bultmann, The Second Letter to the Corinthians, ed. (Ger.) Erich Dinkler, trans. Roy A. Harrisville (Minneapolis: 1985), pp. 119-21.

never used for the fate of the wicked. Paul reserves it exclusively for the death of believers.¹²⁴

In Paul's death terminology, then, κοιμάομαι is distinct. Unlike ἀποθνήσκω, θάνατος and νεκρός, whose meanings at times converge, κοιμάομαι stands alone. It always refers to the death of believers and it always has hope.

There are, of course, differences between θάνατος and the other two, ἀποθνήσκω, νεκρός. All can have negative eschatological consequences, but θάνατος differs from the others in its special emphasis on the end of the sinner: "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). But this is a small difference compared to the gulf that lies between θάνατος and κοιμάομαι. The "sleep" of the righteous is radically different from the "death" of unbelievers. θάνατος gives no indication of hope for the wicked after death; κοιμάομαι always embodies hope which reaches beyond the grave.

Although the matter is not beyond dispute, it seems that Paul avoids θάνατος when talking about the final state

¹²⁴The sense of hope attached to θάνατος by Paul is not unique. Elsewhere in the NT, in the LXX and in early Christian literature, κοιμάομαι (when not referring to natural sleep or sexual intercourse) gives death a sense of hope: e.g., Gen. 47:30; Deut. 31:16; 1 Kgs. 11:43; 2 Macc. 12:45; Matt. 27:52; John 11:11; Acts 7:60; 13:36; 2 Pet. 3:4; 1 Clem. 26:2; 44:2; Herm. Man. 4,4,1, and Sim. 9,16,7; Ign. Rom. 4:2. MM 349 f. cite additional material such as inscriptions, but not all are Christian, and not all are positive. Cf. BAGD 437.

of the righteous because he reserves this word for those who have no hope. Eschatological death is the lot of the wicked. The wicked have no hope; they are under the sentence of permanent death.

This, we recognize, is an argument from silence. But the argument gains force when death is seen in the light of Paul's other judgment terms, wrath and destruction. We go too far, however, if we link Paul's death terminology with the popular images of the second death. The expression ὁ δεύτερος θάνατος, widely known from its use in the Apocalypse (2:11; 20:6, 14; 21:8), is sometimes linked with Paul in popular thought. It is assumed that when he speaks of salvation from death, he means from the second death, i.e., the lake that burns with fire and brimstone (Rev. 2:11; 20:6, 14; 21:8). But Paul is not so explicit.

It is better to conclude that as far as Paul and believers are concerned, the death of the wicked means the end of the wicked. And the sleep of the righteous implies eventual resurrection to life eternal.¹²⁵ A typical use of the believer/sleep image is Paul's encouragement to the Thessalonians. He instructs them not to "grieve as others do who have no hope....since...God will bring with him those

¹²⁵"Sleep" is never negative but it does not always imply eventual resurrection. 1 Cor. 7:39 gives no hint of future hope or resurrection. The reason for this is that Paul is speaking about a husband (presumably Christian, cf. 7:36-38) who has died. So the issue is marriage relations, not eschatology.

who have fallen asleep" (1 Thess. 4:13 f.; cf. 1 Cor. 15:51).

4. Summary

Death is a natural but disturbing event. All must die because all have sinned. Even the Christian must face death because death's final defeat lies in the future. But the believer has confidence that victory in Christ is sure; "death is swallowed in victory" (1 Cor. 15:54). When he dies he sleeps the sleep of the just, confident of the resurrection unto life.

The wicked, however, have no such confidence. Paul says that their destiny is death, a term which harbors no hope beyond the grave.

If we ask what the connection is between θάνατος and κοιμάμαι the first thing we must say is that Paul avoids using θάνατος when considering the eschatological fate of believers. He prefers κοιμάμαι for believers, possibly because of the implications of sleep and the subsequent awakening at the resurrection: "Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep" (1 Cor. 15:20). In any event, death terminology such as θάνατος has negative connotations; κοιμάμαι does not.

From this, and Paul's other judgment terms, we adduce that the unbelieving dead have no hope of resurrection.

Short of some ultimate reconciliation of all things, the wicked are eternally lost.

F. GROUP BOUNDARIES

Thus far we have seen from Paul's judgment terminology that the plight of the unbeliever is serious indeed. True, he does not say explicitly that those outside Christ are annihilated or destined for hell. But if the case we have been making is reasonable, then Paul is a particularist. Or, more properly, we might say that he is a particularist in the way that he uses his judgment terminology. This we will examine later. For the moment it is sufficient to recall that a document need not have explicit statements affirming hell or eternity to be particularist. This was demonstrated with the Apocalypses of Moses and Baruch. There we saw that other judgment terms could effectively communicate the demise of the wicked: i.e., an irretrievable separation from God and his people.

Naturally we cannot know Paul's thoughts on final judgment, but some help may be found in recent sociological studies of the New Testament. These studies provide us with an additional tool to examine Paul's judgment terminology. Unfortunately, the sociological approach lacks precision; and there are dangers. Among these are reductionism,

incomplete information, modernizing and inadequate models.¹²⁶

1. World-building

Social historians have made some progress in these areas, but conflicting opinions abound. No such conflict obscures the one area important to the universalist/particularist question: the discussion of group boundaries. These boundaries, we shall see, illustrate how difficult it might have been for Paul and his readers to entertain the possibility of universalism.

Every group or sect has boundaries. The lines of demarcation permit a group to differentiate itself from other groups with competing lines. Equally, every group strives to preserve itself, and an important aspect of

¹²⁶Discussion of these and other problems facing the sociologist can be found in Gerd Theissen, "Theoretische Probleme religionssoziologischer Forschung und die Analyse des Urchristentums," Neue Zeitschrift für systematische Theologie und Religionsphilosophie 16 (1974), 35-56; Robin Scroggs, "The Sociological Interpretation of the New Testament: The Present State of Research," NTS 26 (1980), 164-79; Thomas F. Best, "The Sociological Study of the New Testament: Promise and Peril of a New Discipline," SJT 36 (1983), 181-94; O. C. Edwards, "Sociology as a Tool for Interpreting the New Testament," ATR 65 (1983), 431-48; Wayne A. Meeks The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul (New Haven: 1983), pp. 2-7; Bruce J. Malina, "Why Interpret the Bible with the Social Sciences," American Baptist Quarterly 2 (1983), 119-23; Philip J. Richter "Recent Sociological Approaches to the Study of the New Testament," Rel 14 (1984), 77-90.

survival is the maintenance of clear boundaries.¹²⁷

Boundaries are essential if a community is to continue.

Peter Berger has shown that all human societies, including religious ones, are enterprises of world-building. They build boundaries. Societies may differ but each has its "official" interpretation of reality and this interpretation passes for "knowledge" in the community. "To participate in the society," says Berger, "is to share its 'knowledge,' that is, to co-inhabit its nomos [meaning-order]."¹²⁸

In an earlier study Berger and Luckmann stress that individual members of a group, whether they know it or not, are participants in a socialization process. This process continually constructs and reinforces a particular "reality" or "world." A community will share the same understanding of the world, the same language, the same orientation.¹²⁹

But every community is in constant danger of collapse. It is an island in the center of chaos, an edifice constructed in the face of potent alien forces bent on

¹²⁷ Other aspects necessary for survival are noted in the literature cited below.

¹²⁸ Berger, Sacred Canopy, p. 21; cf. pp. 1-51, esp. pp. 3, 19-21. Cf. James M. Gustafson, Treasure in Earthen Vessels: The Church as a Human Community (Chicago: 1961), pp. 26-29.

¹²⁹ Berger and Luckmann, Social Construction of Reality, passim.

destruction.¹³⁰ The outside world can swallow it easily. So if a society is to survive it must provide its members with a sound plausibility structure (i.e., a system that is believable). The most desirable plausibility structure is one that is taken for granted. It must seem obvious.

"Only a madman or one who is Acheruntis pabulum would deny the universal reality of my religion," a model adherent might say. He must think that his religion's truth is clearly written in the fabric of the universe for all to see. The more obvious a belief system looks to one who is inside a group, the more clearly defined will be the boundaries. "It is not enough that the individual look upon the key meanings of the social order as useful, desirable, or right," says Berger. "It is much better...if he looks upon them as inevitable, as part and parcel of the universal 'nature of things'."¹³¹

2. Paul and Boundaries

This plausibility structure, the structure that is taken for granted, creates a sense of belonging. At the same time it creates borders against the intrusions of

¹³⁰Berger, Sacred Canopy, pp. 23 f.

¹³¹Ibid., pp. 24, 37-39; Cf. Gustafson, Treasure, pp. 20 f.; Berger and Luckmann, Social Construction of Reality, pp. 20-23; Meredith B. McGuire, Religion: The Social Context (Belmont, Calif.: 1981), pp. 29-31.

outside ideas. In the Pauline literature many beliefs, ways of acting or speaking set up boundaries between members of the sect and the outside world. W. Meeks observes a number of ways that Pauline Christians maintained their boundaries.¹³²

According to Meeks, clues to keeping sect members within acceptable bounds can be found in the language of belonging/separation. This is the language used by the community to include or exclude. It sharply distinguishes insiders from outsiders. Insiders are "saints" (Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:2), "loved" by God (1 Thess. 1:4), "known" by God (1 Cor. 8:3), "brothers and sisters" (Rom. 16:1, 17), "children of light" (1 Thess. 5:4-11; Eph. 5:4), "believers" (Rom. 4:11; 1 Cor. 1:21; Gal. 3:22). Outsiders are "outsiders" (1 Cor. 5:12, 13, 1 Thess. 4:12), "unrighteous" (1 Cor. 6:1, 9), "those who do not know God" (Gal. 4:8; 1 Thess. 4:5), the "world" (1 Cor. 1:20-28; Gal. 1:4; 4:3), "children of darkness" (1 Thess. 5:4-11; Eph. 5:4), "unbelievers" (1 Cor. 6:6; 7:12).¹³³

¹³²Wayne A. Meeks, "Toward a Social Description of Pauline Christianity," in William Scott Green (ed.), Approaches to Ancient Judaism: Essays in Religion and History, Vol. 2, BJD 9 (Chico, CA: 1980), pp. 27-37, esp. pp. 32-35 and Meeks, Urban Christians, pp. 84-107.

¹³³Meeks, "Pauline Christianity," p. 33; Urban Christians, pp. 85-88, 94-96. The Pauline texts cited above are representative, not exhaustive. Meeks, Urban Christians supplies additional references.

"By this kind of talk," says Meeks, "members are taught to conceive of only two classes of humanity: the sect and the outsiders."¹³⁴ For Paul and the Pauline community these two groups diametrically oppose each other. This is similar to the two solidarities found in the Adam-Christ typology of 1 Corinthians 15:22.¹³⁵

Meeks finds the language of family "especially striking."¹³⁶ The members of the Pauline community characteristically see themselves as a family: children of God, brothers and sisters. Those outside are not part of the family but "enemies," "idol-worshippers," etc. Yet the boundaries between the two groups are malleable; they could be expanded to include these former "enemies" (Rom. 5:12) and "idol-worshippers" (1 Thess. 1:9). To this we will return.

The initiate, therefore, must break with the past. He no longer defines his life and place in society in terms of his natural family and former relationships. These are "supplanted by a new set of relationships," says Meeks. "Whatever else is involved," he says, "the image of the initiate being adopted as God's child and thus receiving a new family of human brothers and sisters is a vivid way of

¹³⁴Ibid. p. 86. Cf. Gustafson, op. cit., pp. 46, 54-56.

¹³⁵Cf. Joachim Jeremias, TDNT 1:141-43.

¹³⁶Ibid.

portraying what a modern sociologist might call the resocialization of conversion."¹³⁷ This new set of relationships creates a new solidarity. The believer is now "in Christ." "If any one is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold the new has come" (2 Cor. 5:17).

There are other means of integrating new believers into the community. These include baptism and the Eucharist. As with any group ritual, baptism and eucharistic rituals establish boundaries and promote group solidarity.¹³⁸ Believers are "one in Christ" (Gal. 3:28) because they have been "baptized into Christ" (3:27) and because they have "put on Christ" (3:27). Believers are united also by continually rehearsing the Eucharist (1 Cor. 11:23 ff.); this "common memory" as Gustafson calls it, fosters solidarity: "the sense of common purpose and life grows...the historical community is deepened."¹³⁹

These and other aspects of Pauline religion heighten the difference between the insider and outsider. The family

¹³⁷ Ibid. p. 88.

¹³⁸ Ibid. pp. 88 f., 102 f.; cf. similar discussions of ritual and corporate memory in Gustafson, Treasure, pp. 11, 72 f.; Meredith B. McGuire, Religion: The Social Context (Belmont, CA: 1981), pp. 12 f., 150 f.; Anthony Thiselton, "Knowledge, Myth and Corporate Memory," in Believing in the Church: The Corporate Nature of Faith, ed. John V. Taylor, Chairman of The Doctrine Commission of the Church of England (London: 1981), pp. 45-78, esp. pp. 52-67.

¹³⁹ Gustafson, Treasure, pp. 73 f.

of God is continually contrasted with the "world." Clear boundaries are established. When the believer suffers for his newly found faith (Rom. 8:17 f.; 2 Cor. 1:5; 1 Thess. 1:4-6; 3:3 f.), the suffering further unites him with the community: "one function of the talk about suffering," says Meeks, "is to strengthen group solidarity by emphasizing the dangers from without."¹⁴⁰ Meeks points out that the paraenetic material in 1 Thessalonians 3:3 f. indicates that new converts were instructed to expect suffering. Powerful models of endurance in the face of suffering--such as Paul, fellow workers, and Christ himself--were given to assure converts that suffering was part and parcel of the faith.¹⁴¹

The result is a sharp distinction between God's chosen disciples and those outside the faith. Outsiders are ever bent on inflicting suffering on the righteous. Meeks thinks that the Pauline allusions to opposition and suffering are "a compelling picture of a world hostile to God's intentions and to his chosen agents."¹⁴² Paul maintains clear lines of demarcation between the wicked and the righteous. Indeed, these boundaries are significant even in the eschaton. Sufferings for Christ bring "glory" (Rom. 8:18; 2 Cor. 4:17), and those afflicting the faithful are destroyed

¹⁴⁰ Meeks, Urban Christians, p. 96.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Ibid.

(1 Thess. 5:3).¹⁴³

3. Universalism and Boundaries

One wonders, therefore, how reasonable it is to say that Paul is a universalist. Or, harder still, that his readers understand him to mean that one day even outsiders will join the insiders in a harmonious union. Aside from our discussion of Paul's judgment terminology, which points to particularism, group boundaries also indicate that Paul was a particularist. Boundaries are designed to include and exclude. They intensify belief in the community, harden distinctions between true believers and the outside world and, in general, make particularism easier to believe than universalism. A sect member would find it natural to exclude outsiders. After all, truth resides only in the community; salvation therefore must be the exclusive possession of those in the sect.

But we cannot be sure what these boundaries mean to Paul. Without doubt his language depicts two classes of people, and demarcation lines do seem fixed even in the eschaton suggesting a fixed separation of insiders from outsiders. But Paul, as we know, sees mystery in the "unsearchable" and "inscrutable" ways of God (Rom. 11:33).

¹⁴³Ibid.

"God consigned all men to disobedience, that he may have mercy upon all" (11:32). Again, we remind ourselves that we have yet to discuss the universalist texts; for now we leave open the possibility of some eventual ultimate reconciliation.

If Paul were a universalist, how should we account for his sharp insider/outsider language? We might say that he has existential reasons for fixing clear borders, viz., to maintain discipline in the community, to preserve group identity in the center of an alien world, etc. But why, if Paul were a universalist, would he use such exclusive language? Why not avoid the harsh warnings of judgment, and tone down the "two classes of people" language? The universalist might suggest several possibilities.

The first bears mentioning because it has classic antecedents. But it does not seem likely. Origen and Gregory of Nyssa¹⁴⁴ argue that Paul, though a universalist, did not want to say flatly that eventually all will be saved. They contend that preaching universalism to sinners is unprofitable.

Origen, for example, assumed the vast majority of humanity to be incapable of receiving the unrefined truth of the doctrine of punishment.¹⁴⁵ The fear of eternal

¹⁴⁴And more recently, Nels Ferré, Christian Understanding, p. 228.

¹⁴⁵Contra Cels. 3, 79.

punishment restrained the multitude from plunging further into wickedness. It would be unwise--even dangerous--to teach the many anything other than the traditional view of everlasting punishment.¹⁴⁶ Origen believed that this procedure was completely defensible. The overriding concern of the Christian must be to reform the human race and this could best be accomplished by threats of punishment.¹⁴⁷ Final discovery of truth should be left to those few who were capable of investigating the gospel in a philosophical manner.¹⁴⁸

Gregory of Nyssa held a similar view. He could readily speak of "fire that is never quenched," the "worm that dieth not" and an "eternal recompense."¹⁴⁹ But he deemed such strict terms as neither literal nor the final word. The awesome picture of painful retribution is useful to induce the wicked to mend their ways. Thoughtless sorts take hellfire imagery at face value; but those with clearer understanding perceive God's larger plan. His plan is remedial, a process designed through Christ to bring men back to himself.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁶ Contra Cels 6, 26.

¹⁴⁷ Contra Cels. 4, 10; cf. 4, 19.

¹⁴⁸ Contra Cels. 3, 79.

¹⁴⁹ Orat. cat. 40.

¹⁵⁰ Orat. cat. 8. Cf. Ferré, Christian Understanding,
(Footnote Continued)

But we have no reason for thinking that Paul holds views similar to Origen and Gregory of Nyssa. Even if Paul were a universalist, there is no evidence that he uses his judgment terminology simply to prod the wicked to do good.

There is another possibility. Paul might use harsh warnings and exclusive language because he believes that there will be a temporal separation of the wicked from the just. He might think that the wicked will be removed to a place of severe (though not endless) punishment. In short, a purgative hell in the eschaton. This view has the advantage of keeping universalism intact, while at the same time preserving the integrity of Pauline judgment language.

But the solution seems out of place. It does not match with Paul's judgment terminology which seems to exclude the possibility of eventual salvation for the wicked. When Paul warns that the wicked are doomed to wrath, destruction and death, or, when he uses the language of belonging and separation to create solidarities, there is good reason to think that he has a permanent condition in mind. Wrath, destruction and death, as we have seen, are not likely reformatory. They seem final.

(Footnote Continued)

p. 228 who agrees that preaching universalism is a bad idea. What must be preached? "Repent or perish," says Ferré. "You are going to hell...." For Ferré, preaching must stress responsibility. The lot of the wicked is serious; the wicked will face the consequences of their disobedience, both in this life and in the next. But the lot of the wicked is not eternal retribution; God is love.

Moreover, group boundaries have, as Meeks calls it, a "soteriological contrast pattern."¹⁵¹ They remind believers that in the past their eschatological future was grim and bleak, but now in Christ they have hope eternal. Their future is secure. This is similar to our discussion of the way Paul contrasts the righteous with the wicked. The stark contrast between the two groups is striking; one receives life eternal, the other God destroys. There we concluded that when the wicked are destroyed they lose all that salvation and life implies.

Still, we must not forget the goal of Paul's missionary enterprise: to bring others to faith in Christ (Rom. 9:10-19; 11:14; 1 Cor. 9:19-23). Outsiders can be converted to insiders. The boundaries are not so hardened that outsiders cannot cross over into the community of believers. But in doing so the outsider accepts the truth of the Messiah and the structures of his new family.¹⁵²

So the structuring of "insider/outsider" does not exclude the wicked as a matter of course forever. The

¹⁵¹Meeks, Urban Christians, p. 95.

¹⁵²Unlike the Qumran community, the Pauline sect chose to live and interact with the world. Naturally, this created a number of problems (e.g., marriage to unbelievers--Rom. 7; lawsuits before the unrighteous--1 Cor. 6:1-11); weak and the strong--Rom. 14; 1 Cor. 8-10; relations with the governing authorities--Rom. 13:1-7). But this was unavoidable because "you would need to go out of the world" (1 Cor. 5:10) to avoid such problems.

wicked are excluded only as long as they remain wicked. If they repent and believe, they will then be insiders.

But what does this mean? Certainly it means that outsiders (as Paul himself once was) have opportunity to be justified by faith in Christ. The gospel he preaches "is the power of God for salvation to every one who has faith..." (Rom. 1:16; cf. 10:8-10). But is salvation available for those under eschatological wrath? Here we must say that in these circumstances the wicked are not prospects for what Paul would call salvation.

As we have discussed earlier, Paul does not say that God's wrath is a tool prodding the wicked to eventual salvation. Eschatological wrath is final, not reformative. The believer is saved from wrath, destruction and death. Therefore, if one were to fall under God's wrath in the eschaton, then salvation would be lost.

Put simply, salvation in Pauline theology may have positive definitions, but it also may be understood as the avoidance of wrath, destruction and death. The wicked who fall under eschatological wrath do not receive life; but death. To say that the wicked will be "saved" nonetheless might be unthinkable for Paul. God's wrath leads to death and destruction; in the Pauline scheme salvation might not be a thinkable possibility for one so indicted. Paul contrasts death and life because he sees the two as mutually exclusive.

For Paul, then, wrath, destruction and death may point to eternal punishment, or to annihilation. These are particularist conclusions.¹⁵³ Once under eschatological wrath, salvation is lost.

But there is another way of looking at this issue. Even if the wicked were said to lose all hope of salvation, they may, as suggested above, still unite with the righteous at some later date. But this unification might not be considered salvation by Paul. He might perceive wrath, destruction and death as so severe that the prospect of release would not be conceived as any sort of blessed hope.

Release, admittedly, is hopeful speculation. But it is speculation based on the presence of a number of texts which point to a gathering together of all things. If these texts do not indicate an ultimate restoration, what do they mean? This we will discuss in the succeeding chapters. But if the universalist is correct--that the wicked will one day be released--then perhaps the term "salvation" is an improper term for ultimate restoration in Pauline theology. Release should perhaps be called Christ's vindication or cosmic reconciliation rather than salvation.

¹⁵³There are other particularist options. These two are central.

4. Summary

Every sect has boundaries. In the Pauline letters there is ample evidence to show that members of the community were taught an exclusive view of the world. There were only two classes of people: those who believed in Christ (insiders) and those who did not (outsiders). Insiders look forward to a glorious future with Christ; outsiders are destroyed in the eschaton.

With such a rigid view of the world, it is difficult to imagine that sect members expected the outside persecutors to unite with them in glory. They would be more inclined to think that in the eschaton the righteous would go the way of life; the wicked the way of death.

But during the Pauline mission boundaries were more fluid. Outsiders could be converted to insiders. Still, this does not mean that Paul expects such conversions or salvation of the wicked to occur in the age to come. In fact, believers are saved from wrath, destruction and death. To assume that those under the indictment of death still retain hope of salvation is awkward. Such a notion seems foreign to Paul. Yet, universalism still remains a possibility. Wrath in the eschaton might be irreversible; salvation might be lost. But in the end God will unite all things in Christ. This could be conceived by Paul as Christ's ultimate victory when all things are put under his feet.

G. SUMMARY OF CHAPTER

Paul often speaks of wrath, destruction and death. This is the fate of the wicked. But when we look more closely at Paul's judgment terminology we find that Paul never mentions hell. If we ask whether the wicked are eternally condemned, we notice that Paul uses "eternal" language only when speaking positively. It is as if he avoids saying that judgment of the wicked is eternal.

But this is not significant. The Apocalypse of Moses and II Baruch use similar judgment terminology to Paul, and both are particularist. Terms such as wrath, destruction and death often portend annihilation or hell. Indeed, eschatological wrath in Paul appears to be final. It never prods or encourages the wicked to do good; it seems reserved by Paul to stress the utter hopelessness of the wicked. The same is true with destruction and death. They allow for no hope beyond the grave.

The unbelieving dead, therefore, have no hope of the resurrection to life in Pauline theology. The lines that divide the righteous from the wicked in the present age carry over into the eschaton. Once this present age passes away, all hope of salvation seems lost.

The possibility always remains, however, that God's reconciliation of all things will unite the wicked (now repentant) with the righteous. One might call this Christ's vindication rather than salvation for all. But this

suggests remediation. Punishment in the eschaton induces the wicked to repent, and as we have seen this concept is absent in Paul. It also suggests that God loves the wicked who are under his eschatological wrath. This too seems at odds with Paul's understanding of divine wrath. Paul never hints that eschatological wrath conceals God's love. For Paul wrath seems to be the opposite of love.

Yet, a final resolution can be made only after an examination of the universalist texts. To this we now turn.

II. Compensatory Suffering as a Vehicle of Divine Appeasement

It is sometimes believed that in the eyes of God suffering compensates for insufficient works, and at times even for wrongful deeds. In the following discussion compensatory suffering refers to the belief that suffering can atone for sin. More specifically, it refers to the belief widespread in the Judaism of late antiquity and early Christianity that the suffering of the righteous can appease God.

Compensatory suffering may be understood corporately or individually. Corporately, it involves the pains of righteous persons who atone for the sins of God's people (e.g., 4 Macc. 6:29; 17:22; Philo, Sacr. 1:121; the Anti-Montanist cited in Eusebius, HE V. 18.7).¹ Individually, it implies that a person can atone for his own sins by suffering (e.g., Sanhedrin 6.2; Ignatius, Eph. 1:1;

¹The Qumran community believed that their suffering atoned for the sins of the Land (1QS 8:3, 6, 10; 9:3). Whether this "atonement for the Land" should be understood as an atonement for the sins of Israel or for the Land itself is disputed. Millar Burrows prefers an atonement for the people; E. P. Sanders thinks atonement for the Land is better, especially if the atonement is a cleansing of the Temple after defilement by the wicked. Cf. Burrows, More Light on the Dead Sea Scrolls: New Scrolls and New Interpretations with Translations of Important Recent Discoveries (New York: 1958), p. 369 and Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion (Philadelphia: 1977), p. 303.

10:3; Mag. 5:2; Smy. 10:2; Hermas, Sim. IX, 28.3, 5; Tertullian Apol. 50:16).²

Suffering that atones for sins or appeases divine wrath is important to the universalist question; it may provide another road to ultimate salvation (other than the seemingly strict Pauline route of grace through faith in Christ). In this regard, the second group of texts listed above is more important. They deal with individual appeasement where the believer suffers and atones for his own sins.

The situation may be constructed like this: A believer falls into sin, grossly endangers his salvation, but God in his mercy allows the errant one to find salvation by turning him over to compensatory suffering. This suffering might involve a number of things. The wayward believer could experience prolonged sickness or even death, but eventually, when God sees that he has suffered enough, he is forgiven and brought back into the fold.

If we understand God to operate this way, then perhaps hell operates on the same principle. To be sure, Paul does not directly mention hell, but this, as we have seen, is not significant. Perhaps he would allow for a hell where one

²Cf. W. H. C. Frend, Martyrdom and Persecution in the Early Church: A Study of a Conflict from the Maccabees to Donatus (Garden City: 1967), pp. 57, 166, 199, 292.

Rabbinic evidence that death or sufferings atones for sins can be found in H. J. Schoeps, Paul, p. 128, n. 2; Saul Lieberman, Texts and Studies, pp. 507-09, 530; E. P. Sanders, Paul, pp. 168-74, and Sanders in OT Pseud 1:877.

could compensate for past sins. Since there are times when believers compensate for sins, perhaps the wicked can appease God as well--through suffering in the afterlife.

The primary texts in Paul that seem to involve some form of compensatory suffering are 1 Corinthians 5:5; 11:27-32 and 3:15.

A. THE INCESTUOUS MAN

In 1 Corinthians 5:5 Paul addresses the problem of the incestuous man.³ He instructs the church, "to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh,"⁴ that his

³Not a case of incest in the strict sense; γυνή πατρός, "father's wife" in the LXX appears to be "an OT and Rabbinical designation for a stepmother." So Conzelmann, First Corinthians, p. 96, n. 25.

⁴Much could be said about the phrase, "destruction of the flesh." Here we assume that Paul means the man's death, possibly a slow suffering death (Hodge, Lietzmann/Kümmel, Käsemann, Conzelmann) and not the destruction of the corrupt nature (Grosheide, C. Brown). Thiselton and Collins provide additional perspectives. References are: Charles Hodge, An Exposition of the First Epistle to the Corinthians (Grand Rapids: 1857; reprint 1980), p. 85; Hans Lietzmann, An die Korinther I-II, rev. Werner Georg Kümmel, HNT, 9 (Tübingen: 1949), p. 23; Adolf Schlatter, Paulus, der Bote Jesu: Eine Deutung seiner Briefe an die Korinther (Stuttgart: 1956), pp. 177 f.; Ernst Käsemann, "Sentences of Holy Law in the New Testament," in his New Testament Questions of Today (Philadelphia: 1969), pp. 71 f.; Conzelmann, First Corinthians, p. 95; F. W. Grosheide, Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians: The English Text with Introduction, Exposition and Notes, NIC (Grand Rapids: 1953), p. 123; Colin Brown, NIDNT 1:466; Anthony C. Thiselton, "The Meaning of σάρξ in Corinthians 5:5: A Fresh Approach in the Light of Logical and Semantic Factors," SJT (Footnote Continued)

spirit⁵ may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." Here "destruction" (v. 5) and "judgment" (v. 3) are limited to the present life. Evidently, the man is driven from the community and suffering follows. But "destruction" has an added dimension; it is the precise vehicle that makes possible the man's ultimate salvation. The hope of salvation on the last day is made possible by the "destruction of the flesh." In some sense the incestuous man compensates for his sins by enduring painful "destruction."

It is surprising that this man should be saved at all. His deeds are far worse than those of pagans who presumably have no hope of salvation. Paul's comparison of Christian and pagan behavior in verse 1 is particularly interesting. "It is actually reported that there is immorality among you, and of a kind that is not found even among pagans..."

(Footnote Continued)

26 (1973), 204-28; Adela Yarbro Collins, "The Function of 'Excommunication' in Paul," Harvard Theological Review 73 (1980), 251-63.

⁵For a discussion of the meaning of πνεῦμα in 5:5, see Stephen D. MacArthur, "Spirit in Pauline Usage: I Corinthians 5.5," in Studia Biblica 1978: III. Papers on Paul and Other New Testament Authors, JSNT, Supp. 3, ed. E. A. Livingstone (Sheffield: 1980), pp. 249-56 who concludes that πνεῦμα represents the condemned person insofar as he will exist after his death in the realm of the dead. Cf. Thiselton who underscores the complexities of the semantic relationship between πνεῦμα and σάρξ in "The Meaning of σάρξ in Corinthians 5:5," supra.

(1 Cor. 5:1). So Paul thinks that this man's sin is more serious than even some of the distressing things he has found among the pagans.

Paul is disturbed on two counts. He is upset that the Corinthians would permit such immoral conditions to continue in their midst (5:2). Apparently, this is his chief concern since he begins and ends the incestuous man section with admonitions to the Corinthians to reevaluate their indulgent, arrogant ways (5:1, 2, 6). But Paul is also deeply disturbed about the immorality itself. It is embarrassing to the Christian community at Corinth--or at least it ought to be--for its leaders to tacitly approve such inexcusable behavior (even pagans have better morals). But more than the bad image is the appalling act itself. The Corinthians are told to shun anyone who participates in such immorality (5:11).

1. Unbelievers and Compensatory Suffering

Paul's admonition to shun immoral believers raises an interesting point for universalism. Immorality inside the camp is as bad--and perhaps worse--than immorality outside. "I wrote to you in my letter," says Paul, "not to associate with immoral men; not at all meaning the immoral of this world..." (5:9 f.).

The Corinthians are told that relations with immoral unbelievers are permitted (otherwise "you would need to go

out of the world," 5:10). But the deeds of the incestuous man are somehow worse than the equally sinful deeds of the pagan. To an enraged Paul, the man's immorality is so deep that salvation can be found only in compensatory suffering (or possibly in suffering that will drive him to repentance). He is delivered to Satan "that (ὅνα) his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (5:5).

We are now faced with a question. If the salvation of an arrogant incestuous man is just short of being unconditionally secure, how could any believer under any circumstance lose his salvation? And more important for universalism and the destiny of unbelievers--what happens to the unbeliever who has sinned less grievously than this man? Might not Paul allow him to be saved on a similar scheme, i.e., an opportunity to compensate for sins by suffering or repenting in the afterlife?

Paul's failure to say so is inconsequential. The point is that the Apostle writes to believers about inhouse problems. He says in effect that the incestuous believer has grossly violated God's law; he must suffer for his sins in order to be saved. He resolves the problem with what appears to be compensatory suffering. Paul has no reason to comment on possible routes to salvation for the unbeliever since his focus is on immorality within the camp. But if he were to comment (a universalist might argue), perhaps he would allow for a similar compensatory salvation plan.

Naturally, this runs counter to the usual understanding of Pauline theology, justification by grace through faith.⁶ But compensatory salvation might be an exception to Paul's usual approach to redemption. He might think that salvation comes through faith in the present age; but in the age to come, purgative or compensatory suffering might suffice.

Also intriguing is that the man's salvation is said to take effect only on "the day of the Lord Jesus" (v. 5), i.e., at the parousia. What happens to him between death and the parousia (if such a period is envisaged) remains unclear. It would be tempting to suggest that during this time he undergoes a postmortem pergartion similar to what is sometimes presumed in 1 Corinthians 3:15.⁷

But this kind of speculation imposes too mechanical an interpretation on Paul's words. It implies that Paul intends to disclose the exact moment of salvation. This assumes too much. The Apostle simply provides assurance

⁶Discussed in Section One, III, "Judgment According to Works." In another vein, it has been urged that the incestuous man might be saved in spite of his reprehensible behavior because of his baptism which in and of itself was believed to produce salvation. Cf. John Coolidge Hurd, The Origin of 1 Corinthians (Macon, GA: 1983), pp. 137, 286. But this overlooks the Pauline stress in 5:5 on abandonment to Satanic destruction; this surely has remedial underpinnings. Otherwise, how can the $\lambda\upsilon\alpha$ clause be explained? Even if one assumes the doubtful prospect that baptismal regeneration is found in 1 Pet. 3:21, this cannot be confidently read into Pauline baptismal theology, cf. Rom. 6:1-6.

⁷Infra, this chapter.

that the man will eventually be restored at the time of judgment (Rom. 14:10, 12; 2 Cor. 5:10) when he must be found blameless (1 Cor. 1:7 f.; Phil. 1:10; 1 Thess. 3:13; 5:23).

How closely we should link compensatory suffering with the incestuous man's salvation is difficult to say. A. Y. Collins may be right that it is unlike Paul to think that compensatory suffering alone would expiate sin because:

(1) the rabbis believed that death atoned only when accompanied by repentance; (2) Paul elsewhere ties judgment to deeds "done in the body" (2 Cor. 5:10); (3) while Paul does not say so, it is possible that he expected banishment and ensuing suffering to produce repentance.⁸

Of course, if banishment did produce repentance, then there would be no need for a compensatory salvation hypothesis. The incestuous man in 1 Corinthians 5:5 would simply repent of his folly and be saved. True, the man does repent for less than lofty reasons--he suffers purgative or reformatory punishment. From a universalist perspective, there might be similar pressures placed on "good-living" unbelievers. God, in his mercy, might drive some unbelievers to repentance, especially those who live moral, upright lives. But universalism is not enhanced by this view. The most that can be said is that God sometimes causes people to repent and believe through suffering.

⁸Collins, "Excommunication," op. cit., p. 258.

2. The Eucharist and Salvation

J. C. Hurd pursues another line of thought. His view is compatible with compensatory suffering, but explains 1 Corinthians 5:5 in light of the Eucharist. He wonders whether the incestuous man's ultimate salvation can be explained by the almost magical preservative effect of the Eucharist.⁹ Hurd suggests that early Christians believed that the regular participation in the Eucharist would guarantee their survival until the parousia.

In Hurd's view the story of the incestuous man has been misunderstood. He thinks that 1 Corinthians 5:5 reveals Paul's belief that once excluded from the Church and sacraments, a person would die. Hurd's study is intriguing but not convincing. He relies on 1 Corinthians 11:17-34 to make his point. But this section is written largely to correct the abuses in the observance of the meal where one is hungry, another drunk (11:21). One cannot assume that because Paul holds that the improper reception of the Eucharist results in sickness and death, he must also believe the reverse (that the proper reception of the sacrament would prevent death). Though possible, it is better not to associate the incestuous man's consignment to

⁹Hurd, loc. cit.

Satan with the simple abstinence of participation in the Lord's Supper.¹⁰

3. Summary

Compensatory salvation runs counter to Pauline theology, grace through faith in Christ. Yet, in ancient times many believed that suffering compensated for sins. If Paul shared this view, then perhaps the incestuous man (1 Cor. 5:5) is best understood as a sinner who is in danger of losing his salvation, but who is turned over to suffering to compensate for his sins.

Paul thinks that this man's sins are worse than the pagans'. If death (or sickness) preserves salvation for the wayward believer, why not the unbeliever? Perhaps God in his mercy might save the unbeliever who has sinned less grievously than the incestuous man. Of course, this says nothing about the hopelessly depraved, or universalism in general, but it might suggest that some unbelievers could

¹⁰ Further discussion may be found in G. W. H. Lampe, "Church Discipline and the Interpretation of the Epistles to the Corinthians," in Christian History and Interpretation: Studies Presented to John Knox, ed. W. R. Farmer, C. F. D. Moule, R. R. Niebuhr (Cambridge: 1967), pp. 337-61 and Goran Forkman, The Limits of the Religious Community: Expulsion from the Religious Community within the Qumran Sect, within Rabbinic Judaism, and within Primitive Christianity, Coniectanea Biblica, 5, trans. Pearl Sjolander (Lund: 1972), pp. 141-47.

undergo remedial suffering to compensate for sins. And even if we conclude that there is no compensatory suffering in 1 Corinthians 5:5, but assume that the man is driven to repentance, still, by extension, this might mean that God provokes the "less sinful" pagan to repent. On this view, we might say that Pauline theology is more inclined to bestow salvation on the "good" pagan than on the "bad."

B. PROFANING THE EUCHARIST

Compensatory suffering reappears in a second text, 1 Corinthians 11:27-32. Here Paul intimates that those who profane the Eucharist will become sick and possibly die:

For any one who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment upon himself. That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died....when we are judged by the Lord, we are chastened so that we may not be condemned along with the world (1 Cor. 11:29-32).

It is striking that believers die in order to be saved. In this text suffering as an agent in salvation appears more sharply than in 1 Corinthians 5:1-5: the very act of dying seems to save those who otherwise are lost ("that is why...some have died....so that we may not be condemned along with the world"). Paul is saying that the punishment of death compensates for the believer's reprehensible use of the Eucharist. In effect, God subjects him to compensatory suffering in order to save him. We have, therefore, both in the case of the incestuous man (1 Cor. 5:1-5) and in the profanation of the Eucharist (1 Cor. 11:27-32) what appears

to be cases where compensatory suffering preserves salvation.

As we have seen, another line of interpretation is open to us. Repentance might be the issue. Paul might be saying that "destruction of the flesh" (5:5) and sickness leading to death (11:27-32) bring about repentance. God is displeased with the sinful ways of a believer; he sends sickness. As the rebellious one draws closer to the brink of death, he sees the folly of his ways, repents, and is restored to fellowship with God.

This kind of interpretation is not unreasonable because it maintains a consistent theology of grace through faith in Christ. It argues that there is no forgiveness without repentance. But we should remember that these texts are dealing with Christians--at some point they did repent. Paul might think that the requisite grace and faith are still alive and therefore an erring believer may compensate for past indiscretions by suffering. Besides, there is no hint that either the incestuous man in chapter five or the abusers of the Eucharist in chapter eleven are being driven to repentance. Suffering seems to make up for their impious ways.

We should not suppose that compensatory salvation is at odds with Paul's theology. These two passages are more closely aligned with Pauline soteriology than one might suppose. It might be argued, for example, that the *ὁμο* clause in Romans 8:17 establishes suffering with Christ

(συμπάσχομεν) as a necessary condition for glorification (συνδοξασθῶμεν). In order to be glorified with Christ suffering is essential; or, at least, it is an inevitable feature of the Christian life.¹¹ While this suffering is not strictly compensatory in the way 1 Corinthians 5:1-5 and 11:27-32 would be, nevertheless, Romans 8:17 does indicate that the suffering of believers has a role in Pauline soteriology. It is a means of ensuring redemptive security.¹²

Are we to conclude then that at times God compensates for the sins of believers with suffering? Admittedly, we cannot have absolute certainty; the answer seems to be--yes.

¹¹ Cranfield's attempt (Romans, p. 407 f.) to understand συμπάσχειν as an integral part of faithfulness to Christ does not nullify the soteriological import of the connecting ἵνα clause. But Cranfield's caution is undoubtedly correct; our sufferings should not be considered redemptive in the sense that Christ's are. Perhaps in 1 Cor. 5:1-5 and 11:27-32 Paul saw suffering as a purgative event which secured salvation in the face of sin. Discussion may be found in Barnabas Mary Ahern, "The Fellowship of His Sufferings (Phil. 3,10): A Study of St. Paul's Doctrine on Christian Suffering," CBQ 22 (1960), 1-32; Günther Bornkamm, "Sohnschaft und Leiden," in Judentum, Urchristentum, Kirche; Festschrift für Joachim Jeremias, Hrsg. Walther Eltester (Berlin: 1960), pp. 188-98; E. Earl Ellis, Paul and his Recent Interpreters (Grand Rapids: 1961), pp. 39 f.

¹² Other passages in the NT point in this direction: Col. 1:24 ("in my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ's affliction"); 2 Tim. 2:12 ("if we endure, we shall also reign with him"); 1 Pet. 4:1 ("whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin"). Unfortunately these texts are sufficiently ambiguous so as not to add greatly to our discussion.

The deeper question remains: Can unbelievers be saved in a similar fashion? Both 1 Corinthians 5:1-5 and 11:27-32 deal strictly with Christian concerns. It is therefore difficult to extrapolate from this Paul's thoughts on unbelievers. However, a final passage (1 Cor. 3:15) deals with compensatory suffering in a way which can more naturally include unbelievers.

C. SALVATION THROUGH FIRE

The third text that appears to use compensatory suffering as a vehicle to salvation is 1 Corinthians 3:15. "If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire." This verse differs from 1 Corinthians 5:1-5 and 11:27-32 in an important respect: its setting is postmortem. Unlike the other passages, 1 Corinthians 3:15 assumes that suffering takes place after death, not in the present age.

The interpretation of this verse hinges upon two key issues: (1) the scope of the trial by fire and (2) the precise location of judgment.¹³

We must ask, therefore, whether the scope of

¹³Our focus is universalism/particularism. Issues, therefore, that do not relate strictly to this subject we shall pass over.

1 Corinthians 3:15 encompasses all humanity? But if its scope is limited to believers, can we legitimately extend the trial by fire to include everyone? Perhaps Paul expects all humanity to share the fate of believers who build poorly on the one foundation (Christ, 3:10-15). This would mean that others outside Christ could pass through the fires of judgment to gain ultimate salvation. In this regard we will examine rabbinic and apocalyptic parallels which are similar to 1 Corinthians 3:15 but which broaden the scope of salvation.

In 1 Corinthians 3:15 believers who build poorly are "saved...through fire." If this verse implies some form of compensatory suffering, might not unbelievers also pass through a similar judgment and compensate for sins? To put it another way, perhaps ultimately even the wicked could be "saved...through fire" (3:15).

The location of the trial is also important. Is it at the judgment seat where believers are judged for deeds done in the body (2 Cor. 5:10)? If so, then maybe salvation through fire benefits only believers. Or is the trial in hell where unbelievers are cast? If we locate the fiery trial in hell, then perhaps believers and unbelievers are treated alike. Paul might think that after a period of remedial suffering in hell the wicked will have compensated for their sins. At this point he might think them ready for release.

1. The ראש השנה Parallel

Determining the scope and location of 1 Corinthians 3:15 is a difficult task. Central to this problem is the nature of the fire in v. 15. Does the fire have refining or purgatorial qualities? The answer seems to be yes--even if we should limit the fire to a purging of believers. But scholars are divided over even this basic issue of purifying.¹⁴ Some have sought answers in the background of the text, and for our purposes, these are important.

John Townsend¹⁵ suggests that the proper background of 1 Corinthians 3:10-15 is the parallel rabbinic tradition of TB Rosh ha-Shanah 16b-17a baraita.¹⁶ This tradition raises the question of the unrighteous at death. What happens to impious Jews when they die? The solution offered by the

¹⁴For example, J. B. Lightfoot, Notes on the Epistles of St. Paul (London: 1895), p. 193 argues that fire in 1 Cor. 3:10-15 has no trace of refining or purging as it may in Mal. 3:3. Rather, the fire appears to be a fire of judgment, of testing, and not of cleansing. Cf. Joachim Gnllka, Ist I. Kor. 3:10-15 ein Schriftzeugnis für das Fegfeuer? Eine exegetisch-historische Untersuchung (Düsseldorf: 1955), pp. 126-30. Others think that 1 Cor. 3:15 does imply purgation: Ethelbert Stauffer, New Testament Theology, trans. John Marsh (New York: 1955), pp. 212 f., 312 f.; Ernest-Bernard Allo, Saint Paul: Première Éptre aux Corinthiens, Études Bibliques (Paris: 1956), pp. 59-63, 66 f.; Johannes Michl, "Gerichtsfeuer und Purgatorium zu I Kor. 3, 12-15," Analecta Biblica, 17-18 (Rome: 1963), pp. 395-401. eL

¹⁵John T. Townsend, "1 Corinthians 3:15 and the School of Shammai," HTR 61 (1968), 500-04.

¹⁶Paralleled in Tosefta Sanhedrin 13:3. Ibid., p. 501.

rabbis is that they go to Gehenna where they are saved--but only through fire. So Jews who lack the requisite qualities for salvation must suffer the refining fires of hell before they can participate in the joys of heaven.

Townsend points out that both schools of Hillel and Shammai agreed on the nature of judgment. The thoroughly righteous (צדיקים גמורין) would receive eternal life; the thoroughly wicked (גמורין רשעים) Gehenna; but those neither wholly good nor wholly bad (בינוניים) were forgiven by a gracious God (in the case of the Hillelites) or passed through the fires of Gehenna (in the case of the Shammaites).

Those "saved...through fire" (1 Cor. 3:15) are thought to be the בינוניים, the neither wholly good nor wholly bad. "The incestuous man," says Townsend, "seems to be an extreme example of those who according to 1 Cor. 3:10-15 have built falsely upon the foundation of Christ, a בינוני, who will yet 'be saved, but only as through fire.'"¹⁷

Townsend argues that Paul was a Shammaite, not a Hillelite. He dismisses as improbable the claim in Acts 22:3 that Paul was a student of Hillelite Gamaliel. He is persuaded on various grounds that 1 Corinthians 3:15 is best understood in terms of Shammaitic thought. From this standpoint Paul's words would permit a wider group to

¹⁷Ibid. p. 503.

achieve salvation than is traditionally thought. "At the end of the age," says Townsend, "there would be a final opportunity for some to be saved from the fires of Gehinnom."¹⁸

In essence, Gehenna is elevated to the status of a purgative bridge to heaven.¹⁹ The question is, do believers and unbelievers alike have access to this bridge? Can anyone, through postmortem purgation, circumvent the standard Christian means of attaining divine grace? Certainly the supposed Jewish background of this verse makes such an inference possible.

But one qualification should be made: Not all are saved in the baraita. Townsend's parallel centers on כִּי־נִבְנוּ, who are neither wholly good nor wholly evil and, hence, would correspond to Christians who build foolishly. The scope of the foolish builders might be extended to include non-offensive unbelievers, but we cannot read into Paul's discussion or Townsend's parallel the unbelievers who are totally wicked.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹The idea of purgative cleansing was popular even in Tertullian's day (d. 220). He believed that the soul sojourned in Hades in preparation for eventual promotion to heaven: "...the soul undergoes in Hades some compensatory discipline, without prejudice to the full process of the resurrection, when the recompense will be administered..." (Tert., De Anima 58).

2. The Testament of Abraham Parallel

Although the Rosh ha-Shanah parallel provides an interesting point of contact with 1 Corinthians 3:15, another more convincing parallel can be found in the Testament of Abraham 13. In Rosh ha-Shanah 16a-18a the judgment scene contains only one important parallel, viz., that some pass through the fires of hell. The Testament of Abraham 13 has at least three: (1) the testing by fire, (2) the burning of works, and (3) most strikingly, the language, which suggests a literary relationship.

Charles Fishburne compares the two and concludes: "The language is so similar that it is difficult not to postulate a dependence of one upon the other."²⁰ Fishburne sets the salient features side by side:

<u>1 Cor. 3:10-15</u>	<u>T. Abraham 13</u>
13: καὶ ἐκάτ' τοῦ ἔργου ὁποῖόν ἐστὶν τὸ πῦρ αὐτὸ δοκιμάσει.	καὶ δοκιμάζει τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἔργα διὰ πυρός.
14: εἴ τινος τὸ ἔργον μενεῖ	εἴ τινος δὲ τὸ ἔργον τὸ πῦρ δοκιμάσει καὶ μὴ ᾗσεται αὐτοῦ
15: εἴ τινος τὸ ἔργον κατακαήσεται	εἴ τινος τὸ ἔργον ²¹ κατακαύσει τὸ πῦρ

²⁰ Charles W. Fishburne, "1 Corinthians III. 10-15 and the Testament of Abraham," NTS 17 (1970), 109-15. Fishburne disagrees with the majority of scholarship; he argues that the Testament of Abraham is earlier than 1 Corinthians and that Paul uses the Testament as a source.

²¹ Fishburn, ibid. cites a number of other parallels that go beyond a comparison of language, see pp. 110 f.

The Rosh ha-Shanah baraita has no real language similarities to 1 Corinthians 3:10-15, but as we can see, the judgment scene in the Testament of Abraham does. So the combination of similarities (fiery trial, burning of works, language) makes the Testament of Abraham a more attractive parallel than the rabbinic passage. We also stand on much firmer ground with the earlier dating of the Testament of Abraham²² than with the later Talmudic literature (not to mention Townsend's debatable contention that Paul was a Shammaite).

The scene of judgment in the Testament of Abraham 13 is remarkable in light of 1 Corinthians 3:15. In the Testament the fate of all humanity is determined in a trial by fire: "The archangel Puruel δοκιμάζει τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἔργα διὰ πυρός" (TAbe 13:11)²³ Like Paul, one's works may be consumed at the judgment. "If the fire burns up the work of anyone," says the Testament of Abraham (13:12), "immediately

²²The Testament of Abraham is quite early, likely written in the first century. James H. Charlesworth, The Pseudepigrapha and Modern Research, p. 70 believes it to be a Jewish composition from the first century A.D. So also E. P. Sanders in Charlesworth, OT Pseud. 1:874 f. who sets the date at about A.D. 100. Fishburne's view, art. cit., that the Testament is early first century is possible but not well-founded. With no citations in literature contemporaneous with Paul, we have little idea precisely when it was written.

²³Greek text, M. R. James, The Testament of Abraham in Michael E. Stone (trans.), The Testament of Abraham: The Greek Recensions, Texts and Translations 2 (Missoula: 1972), p. 34.

the angel of judgment takes him and carries him away to the place of sinners, a most bitter place of punishment" (τὸν τόπον τῶν ἀμαρτωλῶν, πικρότατον κολαστήριον). But if the works are not consumed then "the angel of righteousness takes him and carries him up to be saved in the lot of the righteous" (v. 13).

This kind of separation, the wicked from the righteous, implies that the Testament of Abraham is particularist. Later we shall argue that indeed this is a particularist document, but on first reading we must admit that there is some uncertainty. The God pictured in the Testament is compassionate. "I do not want to destroy any one of them," he says, "but I delay the death of the sinner until he should convert and live" (10:14).

Compassion, of course, does not equal universal salvation. But there are compensatory elements in the Testament which allow for egregious sins to be forgiven.²⁴ By extension, then, perhaps all could be saved. The writer speaks of the "boundless mercy" of the "Most High God" (14:9) that permits many to be saved--even though their works do not stand the test of fire. Because of inadequate works salvation must come through another route, through compensatory suffering. The examples we find in the Testament of the wicked compensating for sins are clear and

²⁴ E.g., robbery, murder, looting, sexual immorality (10:5-11).

specific. The wicked manage to obtain salvation because they suffer premature death; their earthly lives are cut short (ch. 10).

Like Paul in 1 Corinthians 11:30, the Testament of Abraham holds that sometimes God allows premature death to take the lives of wrongdoers in order to save them.²⁵ Actually, the Testament does not say that life is taken in order to save, rather, it deems premature death an atonement for sins: "those whom I destroy while they are living on the earth, I do not requite in death" (14:15). We wonder, however, whether compensatory suffering is a vehicle that reaches beyond death to rescue (eventually) those in the "bitter place of punishment" (13:12).

We do know that in the Testament of Abraham death compensates for sin. The wicked are destroyed at the request of righteous Abraham in chapter ten, but later (in ch. 14) they find salvation through his prayers and their suffering. In some measure, punishment compensates for sins. A voice from heaven speaks to Abraham telling him about their punishment in the afterlife: "I did punish them in judgment for a time" (14:15). So the writer discloses that following "judgment" these unrighteous ones are saved.

²⁵We encountered this earlier in our discussion of death (II, A, "Paul's Judgment Terminology"). Death as an atonement for sins is common in the rabbis, but death by itself would not atone. An outright rebellious man would receive no forgiveness; repentance must be present as well. For bibliography see n. 2 this chapter.

But we cannot be sure what "judgment for a time" (πρὸς καιρὸν εἰς κρίσιν) entails. Certainly it includes their death, but does it mean that they undergo remedial suffering in hell?²⁶ Here we must return a non liquet. Probably they are exempted from further suffering since verse 15 implies that their death sufficiently compensates for past sins.

Traces of compensatory suffering may also be found in the Testament of Abraham's judgment scene (chs. 12-14). The "fiery and merciless" archangel Purouel²⁷ (13:11-13) carries sinners to a place of pain where possibly corrective measures are administered. Specifically, in the Testament of Abraham 13:12 there appears the phrase, "bitter place of punishment." We might translate κολαστήριον differently: e.g., "bitter place of correction." If we say that it means "correction," this might imply a purgation of limited duration. If we translate it with "punishment," then there would be no reason to expect eventual release.²⁸

²⁶The Testament of Abraham does not speak of hell. "Hades" occurs four times in 8:9 f.; 19:7 but these are circumlocutions for the grave. The preferred judgment term is "destruction."

²⁷"Purouel" is probably the Greek form of Uriel, as Sanders notes in Charlesworth, OT Pseud. 1:890.

²⁸M. Stone, Testament of Abraham, p. 35 translates it, "correction;" Sanders in Charlesworth, OT Pseud. 1:890 thinks "punishment" is better.

Unfortunately, the word itself provides us with few clues since it can be used both ways.²⁹

Yet, we can determine from the context that the place of pain is permanent, not temporary. Now there is no doubt that κολαστήριον could mean "correction" in the sense of purgation. Further, Fishburne could be right that Paul has before him a copy of the Testament of Abraham, and perhaps the Apostle may have even taken over the tradition in toto.

As such, 1 Corinthians 3:15 would reveal Paul's universalism. He would be saying, first and foremost, that believers who built poorly would be saved, but only through fire. More importantly, he would follow the Testament of Abraham which says "all people are tested by fire and balance" (13:14). Paul, therefore, would move beyond the narrow focus on believers; his judgment by fire would include all humanity. Even the wicked would be "corrected," though, undoubtedly, their correction would be more severe than the believers'. In any case, the wicked would have opportunity to "make up" for their sins through compensatory suffering. In short, they could avoid eternal damnation.

Several obstacles stand in the way of this kind of interpretation. Aside from the obvious problem of assigning a pre-Pauline date to the Testament of Abraham,³⁰ a number

²⁹ Cf. κόλασις in MM 352; BAGD 440 f.; TDNT 3:816 f.

³⁰ We have already pointed out that no citations of the
(Footnote Continued)

of other difficulties surface. First, even if we grant that Paul is using the Testament of Abraham as a source, we cannot suppose that he takes over in toto the Testament's eschatology. He may like the imagery of testing by fire, but abrogate other less agreeable aspects. The decisive factor is not the earlier meaning of the source, though surely an aid to understanding, but how Paul uses that source.

A second problem in using the universalism of the Testament of Abraham to inform the judgment scene in 1 Corinthians 3:10-15 is that the Testament appears not to be universalist after all. Certainly those who were destroyed at the request of Abraham (10:6-11) find salvation through suffering (14:15). But elsewhere the Testament is strictly particularist. It states that the end of the wicked is "destruction" (12:2; cf. 11:11 f.); their punishment is "eternal" (13:4; cf. 11:11). Apparently, the writer considers the wicked beyond the hope of even compensatory suffering; their sins are too deep, or their souls too rebellious to find salvation. "There will be perfect judgment and recompense," says the writer, "eternal

(Footnote Continued)

Testament of Abraham have been found in literature prior to or contemporaneous with Paul. Fishburne's dependency claims might amount in reality to the Testament's dependency on 1 Corinthians rather than the other way around. Indeed, most scholars prefer a late first, early second century date (noted earlier).

and unalterable (αἰώνια καὶ ἀμετάθευτο), which no one can question" (13:4).³¹

So the wicked cannot object to their judgment. After the trial by fire, the angel carries their lost souls "to the place of sinners, a most bitter place of punishment" (13:12). The meaning of the Archistrategos's words in 13:4 seems clear and unmistakable: judgment is "eternal and unalterable."

This particularist conclusion, however, is not without objection. One might argue, for example, that it is the angel's judgment, not the actual suffering that is eternal. Thus in 13:4 the Archistrategos would be stressing the decision of judgment, not the duration of sentence. In other words, he would be saying that archangels Purouel and Dokiell, who record sins and righteous deeds (13:9), who test by fire and balance (13:14), are not subject to review. Their's is a "perfect judgment and recompense, eternal and unalterable, which no one can question/alter" (ἀνακρίναι, 13:4).

³¹In TAbe 11:11 we read "for the broad gate is (the gate) of the sinners, which leads to destruction and to eternal punishment" (κόλασιν τὴν αἰώνιον). This precludes universalism in the Testament of Abraham. But the words "eternal punishment" are likely due to later Christian editing. Sanders in Charlesworth, OT Pseud. 1:888 reminds us that the later copyists were Christians. So the phrase, "eternal punishment," and the one that precedes it, "which leads to destruction" probably conflate Matthew 7:13 ("that leads to destruction") and Matthew 25:46 ("eternal punishment").

Although the "perfect judgment" cannot be questioned, it goes too far to say that only the decision making process is eternal. Sanders points out:

The soteriology of [Recension] A is simple: If sins not repented of or punished by premature death prior to the judgment outweigh or outnumber righteous deeds, the soul is sentenced to punishment. If righteous deeds predominate, the soul goes to life. If they are equally balanced, the implication of A14:6 seems to be that the balance can be tilted in favor of life by intercessory prayer. God is merciful and desires that sinners repent, but if they³² deserve punishment, he is righteous and will punish.

How then should we understand the "bitter place" where the wicked are taken? Is it a place of limited correction? Or a place of permanent punishment? The answer must be that the "bitter place" is permanent. God is merciful in the Testament of Abraham, but if a sinner has died unrepentant, his deeds, whether good or ill, determine his fate. Only premature death seems to compensate for a life of sin. So if sins outweigh righteous deeds at the fiery judgment, the soul is driven through the gate of destruction to its doom (ch. 12).

It is reasonable to expect that this destruction is eternal. Abraham is surprised to see the souls of the men he had earlier "cursed and destroyed" (14:11). But God tells him (14:14 f.) that he destroyed them only on earth (implying that had he destroyed them at the final judgment, they would never have been seen again). They would have

³²Sanders in Charlesworth, OT Pseud. 1:878.

been carried to the "place of sinners, a most bitter place of punishment." There, "judgment and recompense" would have been "eternal and unalterable" (13:4).

Both the Testament of Abraham and 1 Corinthians 3:10-15 are less than favorable to a universalist reading. In both there appears to be a form of compensatory suffering that enables some to be saved. In the Testament premature death compensates for sin; in 1 Corinthians the poor builder's work is consumed--he suffers loss--but is saved through fire. But this is not universalism.

In fact, in 1 Corinthians the poor builders are believers. This is clear because throughout the passage the focus is on Christians. They are "God's fellow workers" (3:9), who build upon the one "foundation...which is Jesus Christ" (3:11). "If the work which any man has built... survives, he will receive a reward" (3:14); "If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, but he himself will be saved, but only as through fire" (3:15). It is difficult to argue, therefore, that a transition occurs in verse 15, i.e., verse 15 broadens to include unbelievers who build foolishly. The $\epsilon\lambda\tau\epsilon\rho\omicron\varsigma$ in verse 14 is picked up in verse 15, continuing the focus on believers.

"Saved...through fire" (1 Cor. 3:15) might involve compensatory suffering--but only for wayward Christians who build injudiciously upon Christ, the foundation. We cannot assume that the fire in verse 15 is an inclusive purgatorial

burning which ultimately purges the sin and dross from the human race.

If we lay aside verse 15, we find that the fire in verses 10-14 serves as a vehicle for testing one's spiritual mettle rather than improving one's postmortem plight.³³ This might suggest that in verse 15 *ἡ* should be taken in a local rather than instrumental sense. But as we have seen, even if it is instrumental, the important question is the scope of the trial. Who are "saved...through fire?" We have concluded that 1 Corinthians 3:15 refers to wayward members in the community, not those outside the camp. If this is a sound conclusion, then it matters little to the universalism/particularism debate whether a Christian, for example, gains salvation through compensatory suffering. It would be crucial, however, if an unbeliever could be saved in this way. But, as it is, we have no reason to extend the purging elements of the fire (if indeed they are there) to unbelievers.

³³So J. B. Lightfoot, Notes on the Epistles of St. Paul, p. 193; Archibald Robertson and Alfred Plummer, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians, ICC (Edinburgh: 1914), p. 65; Lietzmann/Kümmel Korinther, p. 16 f.; Friedrich Lang, TDNT 6:944; Karl Maly, Mündige Gemeinde: Untersuchungen zur pastoralen Führung des Apostles Paulus im 1. Korintherbrief, Stuttgarter Biblische Monographien (Stuttgart: 1967), p. 69; C. K. Barrett, A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians, HNTC (New York: 1968), p. 89; Conzelmann, First Corinthians, p. 77.

There might be something in the suggestion that works play a greater part than we allow.³⁴ Perhaps, therefore, the more important question is whether 1 Corinthians 3:15 presupposes a universal judgment according to works. When Paul discusses "judgment," can we legitimately say (as we have above) that only believers are being judged? Are there times when both believers and unbelievers are judged for their works? And, if so, can God acquit unbelievers on the basis of their good works?

3. Summary

The important issue in 1 Corinthians 3:10-15, as least insofar as it touches universalism and particularism, is the location and scope of the trial by fire. Does the fire burn the dross accumulated by both believer and unbeliever? Perhaps so, if Paul were using the Rosh ha-Shanah parallel, but there is little evidence for this. The baraita applies salvation beyond the narrow scope of the righteous. In it God saves the larger portion of mankind, those neither wholly good nor wholly evil, by cleansing them in the fires of hell.

³⁴ Lieselotte Mattern, Das Verständnis des Gerichtes bei Paulus, ATANT, 47 (Zurich: 1966), pp. 109 f. holds that the works of the believer are at issue in this passage and not his salvation.

A more attractive parallel is the Testament of Abraham. Unlike the baraita, the Testament has the advantage of an early date, striking language similarities to Paul, and clearer parallels to the fiery trial in 1 Corinthians 3. But the Testament of Abraham is not universalist. Only some of those deficient in works are saved by compensatory suffering; the rest are carried away to a place of bitter punishment, from which apparently there is no escape.

So even if Paul used the Testament as a source, it is unlikely that he intended to say that numbers of unbelievers would suffer the purifying fires of judgment, after which they would rise again. In fact, there is considerable doubt that he even contemplated unbelievers undergoing the trial by fire. His remarks in 1 Corinthians 3:10-15 seem to be addressed strictly to wayward members of the community.

D. SUMMARY OF CHAPTER

Believers are not immune to sin. Sometimes they act worse than unbelievers. In 1 Corinthians 5 and 11 Paul warns that such behavior invites God's judgment; God will not overlook the reprehensible ways of his people, but with illness and even death he will chastise them in order to bring them back.

Paul's suggestion in 1 Corinthians that suffering compensates for sins is similar to the belief widespread in late Judaism and early Christianity that suffering can atone

for sins. It is difficult, however, to move from believer compensatory suffering to conclusions about unbelievers. The problem is that Paul does not center his attention on unbelievers in 1 Corinthians 5:1-5 or 11:27-32. He is concerned to discipline sinners within the camp.

What this may say to those outside the camp who sin less overtly we do not know. But in view of our earlier discussion of sects and their boundaries, it is unlikely that Paul has salvation in mind. In that discussion we concluded that communities of the Pauline sort held an exclusive view of the world. There were two classes of people: insiders who looked forward to a glorious salvation, and outsiders who were to be destroyed in the eschaton.

The judgment scene in 1 Corinthians 3:10-15 is different from the other two texts in 1 Corinthians 5 and 11. The setting in chapter 3 is postmortem, presumably at the last judgment. If we say that both believer and unbeliever shall appear at this judgment, we might wonder if the works of both groups will be tried by fire. In short, will both be judged according to works?

Our first inclination is to say that the testing or purging by fire in 1 Corinthians 3 applies only to believers because Paul's warnings are directed solely to wayward Christians. We must recognize, of course, that the actual judgment in 1 Corinthians 3:15 may be universal. If so, it is appropriate to inquire whether there are any conditions

in which God would permit an unbeliever to be saved on the basis of his works. This we will discuss in the following chapter ("Judgment According to Works").

III. Judgment According to Works

Can unbelievers find salvation apart from a confession of faith in Christ? Thus far we have found no evidence that unbelievers can circumvent this means of grace. Purgation or suffering does not seem to be an option for them. We have found that believers sometimes suffered--and their suffering compensated for sin. But for reasons already cited, we determined that this suffering is probably not a circumvention of faith in Christ.

We now take up the question of whether there are any circumstances under which Paul would regard good works as another avenue to eternal life. To be sure, salvation by good works does not imply universalism. It implies only that "good" people, or people, perhaps analogous to the בְּיִנְיָנִים, may be saved apart from a conscious faith in Christ. The utterly depraved or those whose works are deficient would not be saved.

Therefore, the possibility of salvation through works raises the question of other avenues to salvation apart from faith in Christ. Paul might think that God would save those living up to the spirit of the law, as he summarizes it in Galatians 5:14: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." The "good" pagan might not know all that is required. He might at time engage in the "works of the flesh" (Gal. 5:19-21, e.g., fornication, impurity, licentiousness,

idolatry, et al.), but as long as he displayed something of the "fruit of the spirit" (Gal. 5:22 f., love, joy, peace, kindness, et al.), he would be saved.

In short, the unbeliever might be judged on the basis of works provided he has had insufficient opportunity to respond in faith to the message of Paul's gospel.

A. JUDGMENT OF THE WORLD

Judgment of the world was a common expectation in antiquity.¹ Paul assumed (as did most Jews) that God's judgment was a fixed tenet.² He alludes to this judgment often (Rom. 3:6, 19; 1 Cor. 6:2; 11:32) and at times speaks as if it were a judgment of works (Rom. 2:16; 14:10-12; 1 Cor. 4:5; 2 Cor. 5:10). The universal scope of the judgment can be seen in Romans 14:10-12:

...For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God;³ for it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give

¹Friedrich Büchsel and Volkmar Herntrich, TDNT 3:921-54.

²Cf. Johannes Weiss, Earliest Christianity: A History of the Period A.D. 30-150, Vol. 11, trans. F. C. Grant (Gloucester: 1970), p. 540.

³The variant reading in Rom. 14:10 (Χρὶστοῦ, κ^c C²vid) no doubt reflects a scribal assimilation to 2 Cor. 5:10 since θεοῦ is strongly supported by κ^c A B C D G 1739. Cf. Bruce M. Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament (New York: 1971), p. 531.

praise to God." So each of us shall give account of himself to God.

The judgment in Romans 14:10-12 embraces all humanity. This seems to be the case since both the quoted Isaiah 45:23 and the Pauline parallel Philippians 2:10 are universal in scope.⁴ Paul mentions this judgment again in 2 Corinthians 5:10. Here he states explicitly that one is judged according to deeds done in the present age:

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive good or evil, according to what he has done in the body (2 Cor. 5:10).⁵

If Romans 14:10-12 and 2 Corinthians 5:10 refer to the final judgment of the world, then this raises a problem for the particularist. Paul says that on judgment day a person "shall give account of himself to God" (Rom. 14:12) so that he "may receive good or evil, according to what he has done in the body" (2 Cor. 5:10).

But at the judgment does the presence of believer and unbeliever alike imply that both classes are judged by the same standard--their works? What fate, then, would Paul envisage for the "upright" unbeliever? Would he be treated favorably at the final judgment if his works were comparable or superior to those of the average believer?

⁴See Lietzmann/Kümmel, Korinther, p. 122.

⁵Paul's use of "Christ" or "God" with respect to the judgment seat is not a present concern. Sanday and Headlam, The Epistle to the Romans, p. 389 think that God judges the world through Christ.

Admittedly, Romans 14:10-12 and 2 Corinthians 5:10 do seem to refer to a final comprehensive judgment. But the anticipated presence of all humanity hardly warrants the assumption that unbelievers are judged on the basis of their works. The point is that these passages deal with the judgment of Christians, not with the rest of mankind. We can see this from the use of the first person plural before, during and after the specific judgment comments in Romans 14:10-12 and 2 Corinthians 5:10. The contexts in which these passages are found consistently deal with Christian concerns and there is no apparent break before or after which would suggest a shift in focus to include unbelievers.

This is not to say that the judgment in these texts is an exclusive judgment of Christians--as if non-Christians were somewhere else.⁶ To be sure, Paul focuses on Christians but the actual judgment could encompass both Christians and non-Christians. In other words, Paul would

⁶Mattern, Verständnis des Gerichtes, pp. 155-58 maintains, for example, that 2 Cor. 5:10 deals with a judgment of Christians--an examination of their works done in the body. Mattern concludes from this that salvation is not an issue in the passage since only believers are being judged. Roetzel, Judgement in the Community, p. 75, n. 1 rightly rejects this notion. He does not think it possible for one to distinguish between the universal judgment and a more limited judgment concerned with the individual believer's works. But he fails to see that Paul's words are directed to Christians and their coming judgment. The judgment itself may be universal, but Paul's comments are more limited; they are directed to believers and their works.

be reminding the Corinthians that they are by no means exempt from the coming global judgment. To paraphrase 2 Corinthians 5:10: "Live disciplined, holy lives, for you also must appear before the judgment seat of God. There you will receive good or evil, according to the deeds done in the body." Thus Paul addresses Christians. We cannot sweep aside the context of Romans 14 and 2 Corinthians 5 which deal specifically with Christian issues.

So while the judgment itself might embrace all mankind, nevertheless, Paul does not address everyone; he speaks to Christians about their own judgment. It would be wrong to take words that pertain to Christians and their judgment and apply them to non-Christians and their judgment--even if the actual judgment for both groups is the same and takes place simultaneously. Good works may play a prominent role in the believer's judgment, but they may have little to do with the non-believer and his judgment.

The issue at hand will be resolved shortly through an analysis of the Pauline tension between grace and works. At this point, however, we pause briefly to consider one further issue which relates to the earlier discussion of compensatory suffering. We decided that Paul might see suffering as a viable way for believers to compensate for sins. It must now be asked whether the judgment scene in 2 Corinthians 5:10 refers to Christian postmortem suffering. Does the phrase "that each one may receive good or evil"

(φαῦλον) indicate that some believers will endure purgative trials in the afterlife?

The "evil" that some Christians receive would be connected with postmortem purgation. But this connection appears artificial and forced. The "good or evil" that Christians receive in 2 Corinthians 5 is more closely related to Paul's earlier comments in 1 Corinthians 3:10-15. There the Christian builds on the foundation--Christ. If he builds wisely, his works are rewarded; if foolishly, his works are deemed worthless and burned up. It seems better to translate φαῦλος (2 Cor. 5:10) in a similar way, as something akin to "worthless," which is its usual meaning. We conclude, therefore, that the judgment scene in 5:10 reveals not a postmortem purgation for Christians, but a judgment where works are assessed.

B. GRACE AND WORKS: THE PROBLEM

In Paul's letters one gets the impression that salvation includes aspects of both grace and works. This might suggest that Paul is inconsistent since the two positions are antithetical. How can Paul say that salvation depends on works (Rom. 2:6-16) and still maintain that it comes by grace through faith in Christ (Rom. 3:20-24, 28; 11:6; Gal. 2:16; cf. Rom. 4:16, 22-24; 9:16, 32)? Are there circumstances whereby a person can be saved apart from faith in Christ?

The possibility that Paul allowed "another door" to salvation besides grace through faith in Christ is underscored in Romans 2:6 f., 12-16:

For he will render to every man according to his works: to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life....All who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law. For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified. When Gentiles who have not the law do by nature what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that what the law requires is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness and their conflicting thought accuse or perhaps excuse them on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.

This passage refers to the ultimate fate of all humanity.

We cannot say as we have earlier that only Christians are in view--that when Paul discusses works at the judgment, the works are specifically Christian works and not those of unbelievers. Here the whole world is judged according to works, Jews and Gentiles alike (cf. Rom. 2:9 f.).

At first glance, therefore, it seems that Paul allows for salvation on the basis of works. We might ask what Paul means when he proposes a judgment of works. Do some by their deeds "pass the test" and achieve redemption without faith in Christ? There is no supposition here that the pagan Gentiles have faith or rely on faith in any way.

Moreover, it is unlikely that the good works referred to in 2:7 are really an allusion to Gentile faith ("to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and

immortality, he will give eternal life").⁷ In this verse good works seem totally divorced from requirements, attitudes, or beliefs about Christ. Paul seems to be saying that every good person regardless of religious persuasion will be saved.

Naturally this does not mean that all pagans and Jews will be saved. Good works must be performed: "There will be tribulation and distress for every human being who does evil...but glory and honor and peace for every one who does good" (2:9 f.). If we take this text at face value, it cuts the cords between salvation and the required faith in Christ. Good works and not faith determines whether some people inherit eternal life. But, says Paul, "No human being will be justified in [God's] sight by works of the law..." (Rom. 3:20; cf. 3:28; Gal. 3). Paul's words leave little room for compromise. He argues that by the works of the law no one can be saved. How can this issue be resolved?

C. GRACE AND WORKS: SOLUTIONS

As we can see the contrast between Romans 3:20 and 2:6-16 is striking. In the space of a few paragraphs Paul is able to say that no one will be justified by the works of

⁷So George Bertram, TDNT 2:651; Cranfield, Romans, p. 147; Käsemann, Romans.

the law (3:20) and that the doers of the law will be justified (2:13). The solutions proposed to solve this dilemma range from flat contradiction to scribal interpolation.⁸ The discussion below examines the more plausible explanations and concludes with what appears to be the most reasonable solution given the evidence we have.

1. Forgotten Thoughts

One possibility is to say that Paul had forgotten his earlier thoughts. Wrede argues that Paul's psychological temperament was such that it enabled him to hold one position and then later forget it while he set forth a new and contradictory position.⁹ But there is no need to say that seeming opposite ideas in Pauline theology result from forgotten thoughts. Sometimes Paul retains ostensibly opposite ideas in tension in the same context. Filson cites Philippians 2:12 f. as an example of two lines of thought in one sentence. "Human responsibility and divine operation," he says, co-exist side by side "without any feeling of

⁸We cannot discuss the many solutions offered. These may be found in Klyne R. Snodgrass, "Justification By Grace--To the Doers: An Analysis of the Place of Romans 2 in the Theology of Paul," NTS 32 (1986), 73 f.

⁹William Wrede, Paul, trans. Edward Lummis (London: 1907), pp. 77 f.

inconsistency."¹⁰ Doubtless one can always appeal to Paul's forgetfulness or confusion to resolve a problem, but in this case there is little reason for doing so.

2. Hypothetical Speech

Lietzmann suggests that the good works in 2:6 ff. must be understood hypothetically.¹¹ On this view, Paul explores for his readers what the situation would be like if the gospel had never been preached. He concludes that salvation would depend on the fulfillment of the law. But this would amount to salvation on the basis of one's works; no one would be saved because no one could keep the law. All would be guilty.

Thus, Paul uses a hypothetical argument in 2:6 ff. to show what he will affirm in Romans 3:20, that no one can be justified by the works of the law. Works, therefore, would not be tantamount to another door through which one may attain salvation.

In other words, it may be that Paul's doctrine of grace through faith in Christ absolutely precludes any avenue to salvation except this prescribed route. Whether one is a

¹⁰Floyd V. Filson, St. Paul's Conception of Recompense, UNT, 21 (Leipzig: 1931), pp. 129 f.

¹¹Hans Lietzmann, Einführung in die Textgeschichte der Paulusbriefe; an die Römer, HNT 8 (Tübingen: 1933), pp. 39 ff.

Jew (and judged under the law) or a Gentile (and judged by the moral law written on one's heart), justification cannot be obtained by the observance of the law. No one can keep the law.¹² Therefore, in the final analysis, everyone (whether Jew or Gentile) depends upon faith in Christ for his salvation, since all have sinned, and sin brings death.

But the hypothetical explanation must be rejected. There is no indication in the text that Paul is speaking theoretically when he suggests that good works lead to salvation.¹³ It appears that Paul is serious when he says, "[God] will render to every man according to his works: to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life" (Rom. 2:6 f.).

¹²Günther Bornkamm, Paul, trans. D. M. G. Stalker (New York: 1971), pp. 121-23 comments that the truly revolutionary aspect of Paul's gospel was that the law applied to all men, not just to Jews. "All...were given God's law, though in different ways--the one on the tables of stone at Sinai, the other by having it written on their hearts..." (p. 122). The law was powerless to bring salvation, even though it was holy and good in itself. The law "declared that all men, Jew and Gentile alike, are guilty in God's sight....The way to God still remains closed" (pp. 122 f.). Cf. Rudolph Bultmann, Primitive Christianity: In its Contemporary Setting, trans. R. H. Fuller, (New York: 1956), pp. 192 f.

¹³So Paul Althaus, Der Brief an die Römer, NTD, 6 (Göttingen: 1966), p. 19. A somewhat different line of thought is pursued by Mattern, Verständnis des Gerichtes, pp. 131-37 who wonders whether Paul provides a test in this passage to determine if one is indeed a Christian.

3. Earlier Modes of Speech

Some believe that an understanding of Paul's earlier training may resolve the tension between grace and works. Specifically, since Paul was a Pharisee, the possibility arises that he lapsed into earlier modes of discourse.¹⁴ Certainly the Pauline doctrine of salvation can be traced to the Jewish doctrine of salvation which Paul had held as a Pharisee.¹⁵ So at times, it is suggested, Paul slips into his earlier Jewish expressions which make it sound as if he were affirming judgment according to works, when in reality he was not.

This argument finds support in the work of E. P. Sanders.¹⁶ Sanders discusses the nature of salvation in Jewish thought and in Paul; he concludes that the two are much alike. "In Paul, as in Jewish literature," says Sanders, "good deeds are the condition of remaining 'in', but they do not earn salvation."¹⁷ His point is that while Judaism emphasizes works as necessary for salvation, the

¹⁴Adolf Jülicher, Der Brief an die Römer, Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments, 2, ed. J. Weiss (Göttingen: 1908), p. 232. S

¹⁵Werner Georg Kümmel, The Theology of the New Testament According to its Major Witnesses: Jesus--Paul--John, trans. John E. Steely (Nashville: 1973), p. 195.

¹⁶Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, pp. 515-18, et al.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 517.

underlying assumption is that salvation rests on the grace and mercy of God. Sanders argues forcefully that this is indeed the case¹⁸ concluding that in various sectors of Judaism obedience was assumed to maintain one's position in the covenant but it did not earn God's grace as such.¹⁹ From this perspective Judaism could speak as if salvation were accomplished by works but at the same time never eliminate grace. Thus, one's salvation came through God's grace but disobedience (a lack of works) could exclude the person from the covenant.²⁰

Paul was a Pharisee prior to his conversion to Christianity.²¹ It is therefore reasonable to expect that

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 125-82, 292-97, 419-22, et passim. IV Ezra 8:33 forms an exception and is duly noted by Sanders on p. 422.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 420.

²⁰Sanders (p. 516) also distinguishes between punishment and salvation in Rom. 2:12-16. He correctly observes that the curiosity in this passage is its reference to righteousness by works which Paul otherwise insists must be by faith and not by works. He tries to elude this difficulty by pointing out that "righteousness or being justified here has to do with whether one is punished on the day of judgment." He says that "once we see here that the righteousness terminology refers to the question of punishment, and not to whether or not one is saved (which is its more usual meaning in Paul), the difficulty vanishes." This cannot be. Apparently, Sanders envisages a third possibility in which one is neither saved nor punished in the postmortem condition, a sort of spiritual limbo for which no evidence in Paul is adduced. Otherwise the conclusion seems inescapable that if one is not punished then one must be saved.

²¹The question of Paul's relation to Pharisaism is
(Footnote Continued)

his soteriology would at times reflect general Judaistic attitudes. We might expect him at times to mirror his Jewish upbringing and say that salvation comes through grace, but that the doing of good works remains an absolute necessity in order to continue in God's grace.

Indeed, Paul's stern warning in Romans 11:22 is consistent with this Jewish approach. "Note the kindness and severity of God," he says, "severity toward those who have fallen, but God's kindness to you, provided you continue in his kindness; otherwise you too will be cut off." This sounds as if works are required for salvation. But Sanders would say that insufficient works make it impossible for the disobedient to continue within the framework of God's kindness. In other words, Paul cautions his readers that just as obedience will lead to righteousness, disobedience will lead to death (6:16). In the same way Christians in Corinth and Galatia are advised that those among them who persist in their unrighteous ways will not inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6:8-10; Gal. 5:21; cf. Rom. 8:12 f.),²² or, at least, will suffer loss

(Footnote Continued)
discussed later in Section Two, II, "The Adam-Christ Analogy."

²²Cf. James D. Hester, Paul's Concept of Inheritance: A Contribution to the Understanding of Heilsgeschichte, SJT Occasional Papers, 14 (Edinburgh: 1968), p. 86 who concludes that Paul's teaching on inheritance shows that a Christian could disqualify himself for heirship. See also Section Two, I, "The Olive Tree Analogy" and Kümmel
(Footnote Continued)

(1 Cor. 3:15; 5:5; 11:29-32).

Therefore, the tension between grace and works in Paul (where he seems to embrace one and then the other as the efficient agent in salvation) might be because he was previously a Pharisee. It would be understandable that he should lapse into earlier modes of discourse.

The argument may be constructed as follows. Judaism speaks as if salvation were accomplished by works, yet it presupposes grace as being necessary. Paul shares this view. When he speaks of salvation by faith, he assumes that a person is faithful in his works.²³ When he speaks of works as necessary for salvation he presupposes grace in operation. Therefore we need not suppose that Paul saw another door to salvation alongside grace through faith in Christ. Romans 2:6-16 is simply a lapse by Paul into earlier more comfortable modes of discourse.

This is an interesting view and quite defensible. "Naturally," says Käsemann, "one cannot rule out in

(Footnote Continued)

(Theology, pp. 228 f.) who argues that Paul takes it for granted that Christians can be rejected by God.

²³This bears on Bultmann's contention (TDNT 6:205 f.; 217-19; TNT 1:314 f. that Paul understands faith primarily as obedience. Whiteley (Theology of Paul, p. 162 ff.) provides the necessary corrective to this overstatement, but with this in mind Bultmann's point stands; part and parcel of πίστις is ὑπακοή, as a comparison of Rom. 1:8; 1 Thess. 1:8 with Rom. 15:18; 16:19; or 2 Cor. 10:15 with 10:5 f. shows.

principle a Judaizing relapse, even by Paul."²⁴ But arguments of this sort, though difficult to disprove, are not convincing. Käsemann is probably right, it is more likely that the Apostle thought through the tradition than it is to claim a Judaizing relapse.²⁵ In any case, we are not dealing with universalism per se because we cannot know how and to what extent this proposed regression into Jewish thought would pertain to the salvation of Gentiles since they would not be in primary focus. Besides, there is another more satisfactory solution to the tension between grace and works.

²⁴Käsemann, Romans, p. 57.

²⁵Ibid.

4. The Gentile Exception

"No human being will be justified in his sight by works of the law" (Rom. 3:20). How should we take this statement? Is it all-encompassing or a general rule? Paul seems to be making a general rule because he has an exception; he places Gentiles who do not have the benefit of the law outside this edict.²⁶ They may be justified by their works if their "well-doing" is sufficient. "Those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality," Paul says, "he will give eternal life" (Rom. 2:7).

These individuals who receive "eternal life" are saved apart from faith in Christ. Romans 2:7 seems to include both Jews and Gentiles, but as we shall see, it is the Gentiles (some of them at least) who eventually receive eternal life on the basis of works. The Jews, however, have the law; they fall under the indictment of Romans 3:20 and cannot be justified "by works of the law."²⁷

²⁶ Phil. 3:6 ("as to righteousness under the law blameless") is not another exception. Paul is not saying that a faithful Jew may be saved if he scrupulously observes the law. His words immediately following count against this interpretation. Walter Grundmann, TDNT 4:573 puts it this way: "The sin of Paul is the persecution of the Church. But this persecution is zeal for the Law.... Thus zeal for the Law and fulfilment of the Halacha becomes sin, and righteousness by the Law becomes impossible, not because he cannot keep the Law, but because keeping it is itself sin."

²⁷ Some of the Rabbis believed that man could keep the whole law (Str.-B. 1:814 f.), but this does not seem to be
(Footnote Continued)

In Romans 2:12-16 Paul discusses these two groups. He begins with the assumption that "God shows no partiality" (2:11): those who have sinned "without the law" and those who have sinned "under the law" will perish (2:12). The point is that sin leads to death in Pauline theology (6:23). Now when we look at Paul's summation of this section in Romans 3:20 we find that no one will be saved by the works of the law. But the first group does not have the law, neither the Old Testament nor the Mosaic law. So even though they are sinners, they are not sinners because they transgress the law. Rather, they are sinners because they transgress the law "written on their hearts" (2:15).

If our assumptions are correct thus far, then Paul places the people "without the law" (2:12) in a different category. They sin, and as a result they die, but they transgress only the inner law written on their hearts. They cannot transgress the Mosaic law because they do not have

(Footnote Continued)

Paul's position. He does not think that God saves those who scrupulously observe the Jewish law. True, he does say in Phil. 3:6, "as to righteousness under the law blameless." But Paul rejects this himself in the ensuing verses. Works are insufficient for Paul the Christian. They are worthless, "as refuse" (Phil. 3:8). Far from bringing salvation to the Jew, the law exposes one's sin (Rom. 4:15; 5:20; Gal. 3:19). It shows that no one acquires salvation by the works of the law (Rom. 3:20). Except for Rom. 2, Paul rejects any such notion.

it: "sin is not counted where there is no law" (Rom. 5:13).²⁸

Of course, Romans 5:13 focuses directly on the pre-Mosaic era. But if God accepted these pre-Mosaic people --even though they committed law-based sin--then the same is probably true for Gentiles without the law. Gentiles would be responsible to live up to the "law written on their hearts" (2:15), and if they did, they would be given "eternal life" (2:7). But if they did not live up to the "law written on their hearts," then they would have "sinned without the law" (2:12). They would be like the pre-Mosaic sinners who died ("death reigned from Adam to Moses," 5:14); they would "perish without the law" (2:12).

In short, Gentiles who pursue a lifestyle of sin perish, but "those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality" (2:7) are considered not to have sinned.

So, conceivably, Paul would resolve the difference between 2:6-16 and 3:20 by saying that Gentiles who have a lifestyle of sin will be condemned, but others will have no sin imputed to them because (1) they are not under the law and (2) they live good lives, i.e., they live up to the moral law written on their hearts whereby they are without

²⁸ Οὐκ ἐλλογεῖται (not counted or reckoned in the account). "The sin is there; but it did not take the form of transgression and so is not set down." Lightfoot, Notes, p. 289.

excuse (1:18 ff.; 2:15). Thus, when Paul says in 3:20 that no one will be saved by the works of the law, he appears to be thinking specifically of the Mosaic law. If one lives up to the Mosaic law written on one's heart, then God will give to him eternal life.

The wider question of whether this circumvents faith in Christ is of little consequence. These Gentiles have no opportunity to believe in Christ. Perhaps, to draw a parallel from another context, Paul might think that God will have mercy upon whomever he wills (Rom. 9:18) and will validate the faith of the Gentile who patiently seeks for glory, honor and immortality (2:7).

Murray believes that these terms define the highest aspirations of Christian hope.²⁹ Similarly, Cranfield regards them as circumlocutions for the eschatological gifts of God which in Jewish thought were closely connected with believers.³⁰ If this is so, then Paul expects God to save those who pursue such praiseworthy goals. They truly do hope in God because he alone is the source of glory, honor

²⁹ Murray (Romans, p. 64) provides the following evidence for this conclusion: Paul often uses "glory" to describe the goal of the believer's expectation (e.g., 5:2; 8:18, 21, 30; 9:23; 1 Cor. 2:7; 15:43; 2 Cor. 4:17; Col. 3:4); "honor" often unites with "glory" in Jewish and Christian thought (e.g., Rom. 5:10; Heb. 2:7; 1 Pet. 1:7; 2 Pet. 1:17; Rev. 4:9, 11; 5:13); "immortality" is associated with the resurrection hope of the believer (e.g., 1 Cor. 15:42, 50, 52-54; cf. Rom. 8:23; 2 Cor. 5:4; 1 Pet. 1:4).

³⁰ Cranfield, Romans, p. 147.

and immortality. "The reward of eternal life," says C. K. Barrett, "is promised to those who do not regard their good works as an end in themselves, but see them as marks not of human achievement but of hope in God."³¹

In essence, those who do good receive eternal life because they seek after glory, honor and immortality. They will be saved because they hope in God, not because they amass good works.

5. Summary

Among all of Paul's contrasting statements, few are more striking than his inimical comments on grace and works. "No human being will be justified in his sight by works of the law," he says, even though he earlier declares that "the doers of the law...will be justified" (Rom. 3:20 and 2:13).

No proposed solution is entirely satisfactory. Some appeal to his forgetfulness, or suggest that he speaks hypothetically, or say that he falls back into earlier modes of discourse--these are difficult to deny categorically--but a more likely explanation is that Paul sees Gentiles as an exception. They are like those in the pre-Mosaic era who cannot transgress the Mosaic law because they do not have

³¹Barrett, Romans, pp. 46 f. Similarly, Cranfield, loc. cit. sees good works in this passage not as something "meriting God's favour but as the expression of faith."

it. Gentiles become a law to themselves so that by obeying the moral law written on their hearts, they may find salvation on the day of judgment. Thus if a Gentile keeps the law written on his heart, he will be saved.

D. SUMMARY OF CHAPTER

When Paul describes the final judgment it sounds as if he is speaking of a judgment of works. This is a problem for the particularist because the actual judgment likely includes everyone, both believer and unbeliever. If unbelievers are present at the final judgment, then, conceivably, some would be judged favorably on the basis of their works, and hence saved apart from faith in Christ.

But the presence of all humanity at the final judgment does not require that all be judged on the basis of works. Paul's words are more narrowly focused in Romans 14:10-12 and 2 Corinthians 5:10; they apply to Christians who are saved by grace through faith in Christ.

Paul also says, "No human being will be justified in his sight by works of the law" (Rom. 3:20). Yet this declaration applies only to those with the law. "Sin is not counted where there is no law" (Rom. 5:13). Gentiles without the law become "a law to themselves" (Rom. 2:14); they are considered not to have sinned if they live up to the "law written on their hearts" (Rom. 2:12). If they

pursue God in hope, seek for glory, honor and immortality, they will be saved (Rom. 2:7).

Some, therefore, may be saved without actively professing faith in Christ, but this must be considered an exception, not a foothold for universalism. In order to be saved these Gentiles must seek after God in hope; if not, says Paul, they will be accused at the final judgment (Rom. 2:15).

Section Two

THE SOTERIOLOGICAL CONSEQUENCES OF DISOBEDIENCE

Thus far we have examined the consequences of divine judgment. Apart from a profession of faith in Christ, unbelievers have no hope of salvation. Paul does allow one exception--Gentiles who earnestly seek after God receive eternal life. The rest of humanity, thinks Paul, either tries to achieve righteousness through good works, which cannot be done, or willfully turns from the truth. The truth, he believes, is there for all to see; it is clearly perceived in nature or known in the conscience (Rom. 1:20; 2:15).

We have found no compelling reason to consider works or compensatory suffering as additional roads by which an unbeliever can secure eternal life. In fact, our study of Pauline judgment terminology has shown the opposite: disobedience alienates the wicked from God and places them under his wrath (Rom. 5:19). Consequently, disobedience leads to God's judgment, the force of which may be seen in Paul's judgment terminology (wrath,¹ destruction² and

¹Rom. 1:18; 2:5, 8; 1 Thess. 2:15 f.; cf. Eph. 5:6; Col. 3:5 f.

²Rom. 2:12; Phil. 1:28; 3:18 f.; 2 Thess. 2:10.

death³). And as we have seen, this provides no comfort to the unbeliever because in the eschaton God's wrath is permanent. It implies that salvation is forever lost.

Yet, at times Paul is ambivalent when he discusses the fate of the disobedient. He seems to say that salvation is not lost after all, that in spite of disobedience salvation may still be within grasp of the unbeliever. How is this possible?

This section examines the plight of the unbeliever in light of Paul's comments on human disobedience. In the following two chapters ("The Olive Tree Analogy" and "The Adam-Christ Analogy") discussion centers on examples where salvation is attained despite disobedience.

³Rom. 5:12; 6:16, 21, 23; 7:5, 13; 8:6, 13; 1 Cor. 15:21 f.

I. The Olive Tree Analogy

Throughout Romans 9-11⁴ Paul has been dealing with the problem of Jewish resistance to the gospel. His distress is deep and clear; he is distraught that his brethren should openly reject the Messiah:

I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen by race (Rom. 9:2 f.).⁵

In Paul's mind, Israel had turned its back on God. They were "a disobedient and contrary people" (Rom. 10:21). But in spite of Israel's disobedience, Paul argues that God could never reject his people--he still loves them (11:1 f.). "A hardening has come upon part of Israel," he says, "until the full number of the Gentiles come in, and so all Israel will be saved..." (11:25 f.).

Actually, both Jew and Gentile have been disobedient, but, significantly, Paul believes that in the end both will

⁴Difficulties in the structural relationship of chapters 9-11 with the rest of Romans is not a concern. See Jacques Dupont, "Le Problème de la structure littéraire de l'épître aux Romains," RB 62 (1955), 365-97; F. F. Bruce The Epistle to the Romans: An Introduction and Commentary, TNTC (London: 1963), pp. 181-84; W. D. Davies, "Paul and the People of Israel," NTS 24 (1977), 14-16; Käsemann, Romans, pp. 253-56; James W. Aageson, "Scripture and Structure in the Development of the Argument in Romans 9-11," CBQ 48 (1986), 265-89.

⁵In 9:1 Paul protests that he is "speaking the truth." Barrett, Romans, pp. 175 f. wonders whether Paul as the Jewish "apostle to the Gentiles" has been accused of indifference to the fate of fellow Jews.

"receive mercy" (11:30 f.). A. M. Hunter calls this the "bright vision of God's ultimate mercy."⁶

On this triumphant note Romans 9-11 concludes. Paul is confident in the future: "For God has consigned all men to disobedience, that he may have mercy upon all" (11:32). The joyous doxology that follows (11:33-36) is fitting; it praises the One whose judgments are "unsearchable," whose ways "inscrutable." The merciful God is in control. "To him be glory for ever. Amen" (11:36).

How, then, should we understand God's ultimate mercy on the disobedient? Should we take Romans 11:32 at face value (as I have above)? If so, then clearly we have universalism. Against this the particularist can hardly argue that Romans 11:25-32 merely reflects Paul's belief that salvation is available for all. Paul is not talking about availability. He is either saying that every single individual will ultimately be saved (universalism), or he is thinking of groups in general, i.e., groups of Jews and Gentiles who would experience salvation (particularism). Both these views rightly link Paul's triumphant universal message of mercy with the whole of mankind.

In the following pages we shall argue that Romans 11:25-32 is better understood in terms of groups. Paul does not expect that God's mercy will save every individual.

⁶Archibald M. Hunter, The Epistle to the Romans (London: 1955), p. 105.

A. TWO APPROACHES TO GOD'S MERCY

In our discussion we have assumed that if God has mercy on someone, he will be saved. But is this so? Cranfield resists such outright linkage, cautioning that "'have mercy on' and 'save' are not exact equivalents."⁷ This is a useful distinction. Indeed, Hans-Helmut Esser points out that in Matthew and Luke, at least, the ἔλεος of God sometimes seeks a response from man,⁸ thus differentiating between the mercy offered and the resultant salvation received.

On the other hand, a distinction between mercy and salvation in the Gospels may not be significant in the present discussion. Paul's use of ἔλεος and ἐλεέω reveals that for him God's mercy always brings about the desired results.⁹ Naturally, the "mercy" of God at issue in Romans 9-11 and specifically in 11:32 might be exceptions to Paul's usage elsewhere, but it is more likely that "mercy" and "salvation" are indistinguishable.¹⁰ God's mercy will in the end effect salvation.

⁷ Cranfield, Romans, p. 588, n. 2.

⁸ Hans-Helmut Esser, NIDNT 2:596.

⁹ E.g., Rom. 9:23; 15:9; 1 Cor. 7:25; 2 Cor. 4:1; Gal. 6:16; Phil. 2:27; cf. Eph. 2:4.

¹⁰ See Dodd, Romans, pp. 183-88.

1. Corporate Mercy

Any attempt to understand Romans 11:32 must confront the difficult phrase, τοὺς πάντας ἐλεήσει . If "mercy upon all" is tantamount to "salvation upon all," then Paul is saying that (1) God will save every individual without exception, or (2) God will save Jews and Gentiles as collectives.

This latter view assumes that Paul is thinking of corporate rather than individual salvation. In Romans 9-11 Paul would be describing God's mercy as it relates to the nation of Israel, and to those outside, the Gentiles. It further assumes that throughout these three chapters Paul has been contrasting Israel and the Gentiles as nations and has continually been speaking of them in a collective sense.

J. Munck takes this position.¹¹ He strongly resists Dibelius and Kümmel's¹² suggestion that Romans 9:15 ("I will have mercy on whom I have mercy") is an example of mercy shown to individuals. Munck sees this as a misreading of Romans 9-11. "Paul speaks not of individuals, but of

¹¹Johannes Munck, Paul and the Salvation of Mankind, trans. Frank Clarke (Richmond: 1959), pp. 42-49.

¹²Martin Dibelius and Werner Georg Kümmel, Paul, trans. Frank Clarke (Philadelphia: 1953), p. 34.

nations," he says. "Abraham and Isaac, Edom and Pharaoh are nations. God chooses one nation and rejects another."¹³

As far as Munck's thesis on collectives goes, a number of scholars agree. Sanday and Headlam, for instance, think that the Jews and Gentiles in Romans 11:25 f., 32 are best understood as whole nations:

All the classes into which the world may be divided, Jews and Gentiles alike, will be admitted into the Messianic Kingdom of God's Church. The reference is not here any more than elsewhere to the final salvation of every individual.¹⁴

Similarly, Otto Michel thinks that when Paul discusses salvation for Jews and Gentiles, his stress is not on the individual.¹⁵ F. J. Leenhardt believes that the phrase "full number of the Gentiles" is parallel to "all Israel" and denotes the Gentile world as a whole.¹⁶ Somewhat different in emphasis is Christian Müller. He thinks that the τοὺς πάντας of Romans 11:32 is parallel to Romans 5:18 and 1 Corinthians 15:22. His point is that the new humanity

¹³Munck, op. cit., p. 42.

¹⁴Sanday and Headlam, Romans, p. 339. Munck (op. cit., pp. 42-49, 275-78) differs somewhat from Sanday and Headlam and others in his stress that full salvation for Jews and Gentiles is "a representative acceptance of the Gospel by the various nations" (p. 278).

¹⁵Otto Michel, Der Brief an die Römer, KEK (Göttingen: 1966), p. 284.

¹⁶Leenhardt, Romans, p. 293. Cf. Krister Stendahl, Paul Among Jews and Gentiles and Other Essays (Philadelphia: 1976), pp. 1, 23.

takes the place of the old, and πάντες (ἄνθρωποι) is limited to those who are in Christ (ἐν Χριστῷ).¹⁷

2. Individual Mercy

The second approach assumes that God's mercy extends to every individual without exception. Franz Mussner, for example, argues that πᾶς Ἰσραὴλ in Romans 11:26 is inclusive: Paul proclaims the eschatological salvation of the Jews. They are beloved for the sake of their forefathers (11:28) and their election is irrevocable.¹⁸ Rissi believes that the "entire people of Israel" will be saved, "and especially--those who before this eschatological event were among those whose hearts were hardened."¹⁹ Similarly, J. C. O'Neill suggests that the probable import of Romans 11:25-32 is that "God's mercy would extend to all the Gentile members of the Church and to all Jews."²⁰ Dodd

¹⁷ Christian Müller, Gottes Gerechtigkeit und Gottes Volk: Eine Untersuchung zu Römer 9-11 (Göttingen: 1964), p. 48.

¹⁸ Franz Mussner, "'Ganz Israel wird gerettet werden' (Röm 11,26). Versuch einer Auslegung," Kairos 18 (1976), 241-45.

¹⁹ Mathias Rissi, The Future of the World: An Exegetical Study of Revelation 19.11-22.15, SBT 23 (Naperville: 1966, Ger. ed.), p. 75.

²⁰ J. C. O'Neill, Paul's Letter to the Romans (Hammondsworth: 1975), p. 190. O'Neill believes that this portion of Romans is non-Pauline.

also sees this passage, and especially 11:32, as evidence that every individual will be saved: the final aim, he says, "is a state in which God's mercy is as universally effective as sin has been. In other words, it is the will of God that all mankind shall ultimately be saved."²¹

3. Summary

"Mercy upon all" in Romans 11:32 refers to salvation. It is unlikely that Paul distinguishes between salvation and mercy, saying, for example, that God's mercy is offered to all--but only those who respond in faith will be saved.

The problem in 11:32 is deciding whether the "all" who receive salvation is collective or individual. For a number of reasons cited below the collective approach is more reasonable.

B. JEWS AND GENTILES:

COLLECTIVES OR INDIVIDUALS?

John Knox concludes from his examination of Romans 11:25-32 that Paul did not intend for his words to include every single individual. But, he says, "if we had only ch. 11 on which to base our answer, we could hardly avoid

²¹Dodd, Romans, pp. 183-88.

interpreting Paul as intending to proclaim an unqualified universalism."²² Knox's position is well taken, but as we shall see, it largely overlooks the question of whether Paul is speaking collectively or individually.

1. Corporate Salvation

In Romans 11:11 Paul insists that salvation has come to the Gentiles in order to make Israel jealous. But since all Israel has not rejected the gospel and all Gentiles have not responded, Paul is contrasting the two as groups. This contrast recurs in 11:12, 15, 25-28, 30 f.

The same is true of the phrase, "All Israel will be saved" (11:26); Paul refers to the Jews as collectives. In fact, it would be surprising if Paul were using it otherwise. Among the Jews the words πᾶς Ἰσραὴλ consistently refer to Israel as a nation or as a corporate body, but never as individual Jews. For example, in the LXX πᾶς Ἰσραὴλ is often used, but always collectively. It never includes every single member of the people of Israel (cf. Num. 16:34; 1 Sam. 7:5; 25:1; 1 Kings 12:1; 2 Chron. 12:1;

²² John Knox, The Epistle to the Romans, IB, Vol. 9, pp. 576 f. Knox argues that universalism is unlikely, however, because elsewhere Paul is acutely aware of the reality of faith and unbelief, sin and judgment.

Ezra 6:17; Dan. 9:11).²³ Philo does not employ the phrase, but the Mishnah (Sanhedrin 10:1) reads: "All Israel has a share in the world to come." It then goes on to say, "And these are they that have no share in the world to come...." The catalogue of exceptions²⁴ which follow lists those who say there is no resurrection of the dead, readers of heretical books, various people of Israel, those of the generation of the Flood, the generation of the Dispersion,

²³ Josephus uses πάντας Ἰσραηλίτας in a collective manner (Ant. IV 50; cf. VII 262) but does not use it or similar phrases designating "all Israel" to mean every individual Israelite. In the NT Acts 2:36 and 4:10 ("all the house/people of Israel) are not clear but probably refer collectively to those within the covenant of Judaism, not to every decendent of Abraham. Acts 13:24 is undoubtedly collective in its sense.

²⁴ Danby's translation reads "All Israelites have..." but Cranfield (Romans, p. 577) points out that a better translation of the Hebrew is "All Israel" in a collective sense. Cranfield's translation is preferable because it show more clearly the collective intent of the text (clearly seen from the exceptions that follow).

On the other hand, the issue may be, "What is an Israelite?" Here the exceptions might indicate that Jews by birth who do such things are no longer considered to be of the House of Israel. In the case of Paul such a conclusion might be inferred from Rom. 9:6: "For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel." But surely one would not read this restrictive sense back into the LXX passages, and if one were to say that Sanh. 10:1 and Rom. 11:26 are not collective but rather specify the true Israel, then this would support the particularist position. In other words, only the "inward Jew" (2:29), who believes "in him that raised from the dead Jesus our Lord" (4:24), would be saved. The sense of the passages, however, indicates a more collective posture.

the generation of the Wilderness, the men of Sodom and various others.²⁵

Paul uses the titles "Jews" and "Gentiles" corporately throughout Romans 11, and seems also to employ the common phrase "all Israel" as a collective. We assume, therefore, that his concluding remarks in 11:32 ("mercy upon all") are consonant with the whole of chapter 11. "Mercy upon all" is thus best understood as mercy upon both groups--Jews and Gentiles.

2. Individual Salvation

A number of considerations also lend support to the individual interpretation. (1) Romans 11 does not consistently speak in terms of groups. In the metaphor of the olive tree (11:17-24) "some" of the branches were said to be broken off. (2) The two πάντας in 11:32 must balance; if all men everywhere are disobedient, then all men everywhere will receive mercy. (3) Even if Paul does contrast groups in chapter 11, it still remains possible that the "unsearchable" and "inscrutable" ways of God

²⁵Cf. Str.-B. 4:1052-56; Käsemann, Romans, p. 313; Cranfield, Romans, p. 577; Joachim Jeremias, "Einige vorwiegend sprachliche Beobachtungen zu Röm 11, 25-36," in Die Israelfrage nach Römer 9-11, Monographische Reihe von Benedictina: Biblisch-ökumenische Abteilung, 3, ed. Lorenzo de Lorenzi (Rome: 1977), pp. 199 f.

(v. 33) will, in Paul's mind, have mercy on all without exception.

The first objection is serious if we assume that the $\tau\lambda\upsilon\epsilon\varsigma$ in 11:17 specifies individual Jews as the branches broken off.²⁶ But this presses the metaphor too far. It is difficult to argue that Paul is thinking of individual Israelites when, as pointed out above, 11:11 indicates that he is thinking of Israel collectively. It is better to say that the branches broken off are identical with the group "Israel" who have been disobedient in their rejection of the gospel.

Second, the parallel occurrences of $\pi\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\alpha\varsigma$ in Romans 11:32 are indeed striking at first glance.

For God has consigned all men to disobedience,
that he may have mercy upon all.

But there is good reason to think that Paul uses this parallel structure for no more than rhetorical effect.

C. F. D. Moule comments: "There are passages which, judged by their words rather than their ideas, contain...parallelisms, but which, judged by their ideas, appear less obviously balanced...."²⁷ Such is the case with Romans 11:32. The obvious parallelism breaks down when we view it in light of the similar content of Galatians 3:22:

²⁶For the issue of whether 11:17 should be considered a marginal gloss, see Käsemann, Romans, p. 295.

²⁷C. F. D. Moule, An Idiom-book of the New Testament Greek (Cambridge: 1960), p. 80.

But the scripture consigned all things to sin,
that what was promised to faith in Jesus Christ
might be given to those who believe.

The difference between this passage and Romans 11:32 is that in Galatians Paul feels the need to make clear that "faith" is necessary for salvation.²⁸ We cannot assume that because Paul has dropped πίστις in 11:32 the concept is absent. Sufficient weight must be apportioned to the Apostle's earlier discussion of Jews and Gentiles where he concludes that "all have sinned" (3:23), "the whole world [is] accountable" (3:19), and hence "the righteousness of God [comes] through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe" (3:22), and for "all who call upon him" (10:12).

In Romans, then, Paul stresses that all have been disobedient but through faith they may become righteous. All the disobedient will not share the benefits of God's mercy,²⁹ rather, all the disobedient who respond in faith

²⁸Probably because of the tension between law and faith, 3:1 ff.

²⁹Parallelism is again discussed in the next chapter, "The Adam-Christ Analogy." Barrett, Romans., p. 227 and John Murray, The Epistle to the Romans: The English Text with Introduction, Exposition and Notes, NIC (Grand Rapids: 1968), p. 103 suggest that the stress in 11:32 may fall on the "disobedience" and the "mercy" rather than on the "all men." Moreover, Cranfield, Romans, p. 588 thinks it uncertain whether Paul intended to say that all men were shut up to disobedience; perhaps, says Cranfield, he meant that "God has shut in the various groups he has mentioned as wholes."

will have their share in God's mercy.³⁰

The third position is correct. It is always possible that Paul speaks collectively of the Jews and Gentiles throughout the chapter, but, at the same time, individually in his conclusion that mercy embraces all. We cannot prove the contrary. But in light of our above discussion of faith, mercy on all individuals seems an unlikely interpretation of Romans 11:32. Paul, therefore, appears to be concerned with things other than a postmortem cosmic redemption.

3. The Divine Plan

Paul's discussion of Jews and Gentiles as totalities diminishes, but does not preclude, the possibility of universal salvation in Romans 11:32. In way of excursus we now consider God's mercy in light of human disobedience. This is important because a particularist might argue

³⁰Conzelmann, Outline, p. 250 notes: "It is not enough to assert that it [election] is the one-sided, free and irrevocable act of God, which happens without any human activity....Free election has as its correlate free rejection." Similarly, Erick Dinkler, "The Historical and the Eschatological Israel in Romans 9-11: A Contribution to the Problem of Predestination and Individual Responsibility," JR 36 (1956), 118 argues: "The call into decision and the imperatives of our New Testament are meaningful only as long as we have freedom for decision. If ever decision for faith itself were predestinated, it would no longer be 'decision'. And then we could no longer speak seriously about obedience and disobedience."

that even if "mercy upon all" in 11:32 should be understood as including every individual, this still falls short of universalism. In other words, Romans 11:32 might mean that God intends to have mercy upon all (the ἵνα clause points in this direction), but that his intention is frustrated by man's disobedience.

So we must ask: Does Paul think that some whose "divine plan" it is to be saved will not be saved because of disobedience? If so, we would conclude that certain of the "called of God" would in the end thwart his design for their lives by their own disobedience.

Naturally, on the human level disobedience constantly frustrates the divine will (θέλημα) or call (καλέω) of God. Paul continually admonishes believers to follow God's will³¹ or call³² in their lives. They, of course, are free to violate God's will at any time. But would Paul acknowledge ethical and moral disobedience as a threat to the believer's salvation?

The answer seems to be--yes--although the texts appealed to above give no evidence for this conclusion. These texts are severe, but at bottom they simply exhort the believer to remain in the will of God; they disclose nothing concerning the consequence of continual immoral or

³¹Rom. 12:2; 1 Thess. 4:3; 5:18; cf. Eph. 5:17; 6:6; Col. 4:12.

³²1 Cor. 7:15, 17; 1 Thess. 4:7; 5:24.

unethical actions. Yet, there is a strain in Pauline thought which speaks to the consequences of wrongdoing. Paul stresses that believers who disobey God run the risk of forfeiting their salvation (Rom. 11:21 f.; 1 Cor. 6:8 f.; 9:27; 10:5 f., 12; 2 Cor. 13:5; Gal. 5:21; Phil. 2:12; cf. Col. 1:22 f.).³³

Such an undercurrent in Pauline thought suggests that genuine risk imperils the believer who disregards the moral and ethical dictums of God. Sometimes disobedience results in compensatory suffering, and at times, perhaps, in outright rejection by God.

But it is worth noting that while Paul does allow for the believer to thwart God's "will" in moral and ethical matters, he never states anywhere that the believer can thwart God's plan of salvation for his life. The writer of 2 Peter is more overt. He declares that some will not be saved (2 Pet. 3:7) in spite of God's "desire" for them to be saved (2 Pet. 3:9). Paul never acknowledges this in his

³³Johannes Weiss, Earliest Christianity, p. 542 comments, "all depends upon this, whether the Christians have 'proved' themselves (Rom. 5:4; 1 Cor. 11:19; cf. Jas. 1:12; 2 Tim. 2:15); whether they have earnestly fought through the battle against the flesh in the power of the spirit (Rom. 8:13), whether they have really cast off the works of darkness (Rom. 13:12), and put on the Lord Christ (Rom. 13:14), whether they have mortified their earthly members (Col. 3:5), put away sins (Col. 3:7), whether they have really entirely put off the 'old man' (Col. 3:9)....the will of man must still cooperate. Thus the ethical character of this religion of salvation constantly reappears."

letters.³⁴ Indeed, whenever Paul links salvific language with God's will (θέλημα), wish (θέλω), call (καλέω), purpose (πρόθεσις), or his predestination (προγινώσκω, προορίζω), salvation appears to be an assured fact.³⁵

Yet, at the same time, Paul solemnly warns Christians who persist in immorality that they run the risk of forfeiting any claim to eternal life. According to J. D. Hester, Paul believes that Christians participating in the works of the flesh would not inherit the kingdom. He takes Paul's words in Galatians 5:21 as definitive: "I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Hester thinks that this teaching was a regular part of Paul's missionary message. For Paul, immoral behavior precludes one's status as heir.³⁶

³⁴For examples of God's desire for all men to be saved, cf. Ezek. 18:23; 33:11; IV Ezra 8:59; Wisd. Sol. 1:13; Leg. Alleg. 3:106; see Str.-B. 3:774 f. for rabbinic citations; Matt. 18:14; Luke 15:7; 1 Tim. 2:4; Titus 2:11; 1 Clem. 8. With reference to the Paul of 1 Tim. 2:4, see the brief comments of Martin Dibelius and Hans Conzelmann, The Pastoral Epistles, trans. Philip Buttolph and Adela Yarbro, Herm. (Philadelphia: 1972), p. 41.

³⁵E.g., Rom. 1:6 f.; 8:29 f.; 9:24 f.; 11:2, 29; 1 Cor. 1:2, 9, 24, 26; Gal. 1:4, 15; Phil. 3:14; 2 Thess. 2:14; cf. Eph. 1:4 f., 11, 18. Gal. 1:6 might be an exception, but it is difficult to say. Other terms such as decree (κρίνω) and ordain (διατάσσω, τάσσω) are not relevant because they have no connection with soteriological themes.

³⁶Hester, Paul's Concept of Inheritance, pp. 85-87. Hester writes: "The obvious import of this teaching is that a Christian could disqualify himself for heirship. Since Paul was writing to churches, it cannot be assumed that this teaching was meant for people outside the church. Paul
(Footnote Continued)

Evidently, Paul holds both a soteriological certainty for the "called" and a precarious future for the unethical and immoral believer. What this means in practical terms is unclear. But in view of the soteriological uncertainty that accompanies some believers (or at least some within the believing community), it is reasonable to assume that the salvation of unbelievers is cast in an even more unfavorable light.

4. Summary

Since Paul speaks collectively of Jews and Gentiles in Romans 11, he probably continues to do so in verse 32. Paul believes that God will save both collectives: Jews and Gentiles. But in order for individuals to be saved within each collective, they must have faith in Christ; this can be seen in the earlier chapters of Romans and in the contrast

(Footnote Continued)

plainly says that members of the Body of Christ can disqualify themselves if they persist in engaging in immoral behaviour." However, Ernest Best, One Body in Christ: A Study in the Relationship of the Church to Christ in the Epistles of the Apostle Paul (London: 1955), p. 191 cautions that Paul may have treated those who allied themselves with the believing community as members of the Body of Christ: "in his own mind he had a shrewd suspicion that some of them were not really members of Christ's Body." Yet, if we assume that these ones who allied themselves with the believing community were also baptized members of that community, the issue becomes thorny indeed. In any case, certainty on either side of the issue is lacking. An interesting discussion of this question can be found in Filson, Recompense, pp. 92-97.

of Romans 11:32 with its parallel, Galatians 3:22.

Nevertheless, it is not inconceivable to think that within the framework of God's "inscrutable" ways (Rom. 11:33) all might yet receive mercy. Since "mercy" in Paul appears to be synonymous with salvation, one wonders whether Paul holds out a final hope, believing that in the end God will save everyone.

There is also the broader issue of human disobedience where some might freely choose to resist God's ways. But while Paul is serious when he warns believers that persistence in the ways of the world, might lead to rejection by God, we cannot be certain that actual loss takes place.

In any case, one would have to sin grievously, presumably more deeply than the incestuous man (1 Cor. 5:1-5), or the profaners of the Eucharist (1 Cor. 11:27-32), in order to fall from divine grace. But to assume that Paul could not possibly be giving anything more than rhetorical warnings is ill-considered.

For the moment we leave open the question of whether the soteriological consequences of disobedience are voided by God's ultimate plan of cosmic redemption. At this point, it is sufficient to note that disobedience carries with it grave consequences for the individual.

C. PAUL'S MISSIONARY APPROACH

Paul's methodology in missions also affects the balance in Romans 11:32. It underscores what we have been trying to establish in our discussion on Jews and Gentiles, that 11:32 (and its context) has little to do with individual salvation. Rather, Paul focuses on two collectives--Jews and Gentiles--and their respective roles in God's final plan of redemption.

1. Israel's Jealousy

Paul expected Israel to become jealous when they perceived that the blessings intended for them were falling to the Gentiles (Rom. 10:19). "Israel could feel no jealousy towards the Gentiles," says J. Munck, "as long as she did not count on their attaining salvation. But as soon as the Jew can see...that the Gentiles are attaining what was promised to Israel, the possibility of jealousy exists, because what was promised to Israel was falling to the 'foolish nation'...."³⁷

Paul felt explicitly called to a Gentile ministry,³⁸ but, equally, he expresses deep concern for the faltering

³⁷ Munck, Paul and the Salvation of Mankind, p. 45.

³⁸ Gal. 1:15 f.: "But when he who had set me apart
(Footnote Continued)

Jewish mission (Rom. 9:1-5). He uses Deuteronomy 32:21 (= Rom. 10:19) to show that God will make the Jews jealous of the Gentiles, and repeats his thought in Romans 11:11: "salvation has come to the Gentiles, so as to make Israel jealous" (11:11).

In Paul's mind, an additional benefit flows from his missionary service to the Gentiles: viz., the salvation of fellow Jews. "Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles," he says, "I magnify (δοξάζω) my ministry in order to make my fellow Jews jealous, and thus save some of them" (11:13 f.). Paul takes his mission to the Gentiles seriously, but in the not too distant background runs a secondary motive, that of provoking his kinsmen to jealousy so that they too might share the blessings of Christ.

In attempting to arouse jealousy within the recalcitrant ranks of Israel, Paul evidently places some hope in the collection.³⁹ But how central is the collection

(Footnote Continued)

before I was born, and had called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles...." So also Rom. 11:13; 15:16, 18; Gal. 2:7-9; cf. Acts 9:15; 13:47; 26:17 f.

³⁹The collection was for the poor in the mother church in Jerusalem; cf. Rom. 15:25-28; 1 Cor. 16:1-4, 15; 2 Cor. 8, 9; probably Gal. 2:10; Acts 24:17. See E. B. Allo, "La portee de la collecte pour Jerusalem dans les plans de s. Paul," RB 45 (1936), 529-37; Munck, Salvation, "Israel and the Gentiles in the New Testament," JTS n.s. 2 (1951), 3-16, and Christ and Israel: An Interpretation of Romans 9-11, trans. I. Nixon (Philadelphia: 1967); Hans-Werner Bartsch, "Die Kollekte des Paulus," in Kirche in der Zeit 20 (1965), 555 f.; Dieter Georgi, Die Geschichte der

(Footnote Continued)

in stirring up jealousy among Jews? To be sure, Paul is genuinely concerned for the poor in Jerusalem.⁴⁰ Even though he has "longed for many years" to visit the Roman Church, he foregoes the desire in order to travel "to Jerusalem with aid for the saints" (Rom. 15:23-25).

But the collection is more to Paul than a straightforward offering for the saints.⁴¹ His concern extends through three and possibly four of his major

(Footnote Continued)

Kollekte des Paulus für Jerusalem ThF, 38 (Hamburg: 1965); Leander E. Keck, "The Poor Among the Saints in the New Testament," ZNW 56 (1965), 100-29, and Keck, "The Poor Among the Saints in Jewish Christianity and Qumran," ZNW 57 (1966), 54-78; Keith F. Nickle, The Collection: A Study in Paul's Strategy, SBT, 48 (London: 1966).

⁴⁰ John Coolidge Hurd, IDB, Supp., p. 638 suggests the possibility that some Corinthians may have attributed wrongful motives to Paul in his handling of the finances. Paul feels compelled to write: "We intend that no one should blame us about this liberal gift which we are administering, for we aim at what is honorable..." (2 Cor. 8:20 f.).

⁴¹ Ethelbert Stauffer, "Petrus und Jakobus in Jerusalem," in Begegnung der Christen: Studien evangelischer und Katholischer Theologen, Hrsg. Maximilian Roesle, Oscar Cullmann (Stuttgart: 1959), p. 370 suggests that in effect the collection was tantamount to a tax imposed by James, similar to the tax paid to the Temple by Diaspora Jews. Against this, see Ferdinand Hahn, Mission in the New Testament, SBT, 47 (London: 1965), p. 81, n. 2 and Ernst Bammel, TDNT 6:909. For a general treatment of the Temple tax, see Emil Schürer, The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.-A.D. 135), Vol. 2, revised by Geza Vermes, Fergus Millar, Matthew Black (Edinburgh: 1979), pp. 270-72; Str.-B 1:760-71; S. Safrai, M. Stern, D. Flusser, W. C. van Unnik (ed.), The Jewish People in the First Century: Historical Geography, Political History, Social, Cultural and Religious Life and Institutions, Vol. 1 & 2, Compendia Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum (Assen: 1974, 1976), Vol. 2, pp. 880 f., cf. vol. 1, pp. 261, 335, 460.

correspondences,⁴² and he is so dedicated to the task that he disregards dangers awaiting him in Jerusalem (Rom. 15:31; cf. Acts 21:7-28:3). Beyond the plain need of relief for the poor, three further possibilities come to light concerning the collection and Paul's perception of it.

(1) It served as an appreciative gesture both on the part of the Gentiles who had received the gospel from Jerusalem (Rom. 15:27; 2 Cor. 9:11 f.) and on the part of Paul who had been entrusted by the Jerusalem apostles with the Gentile ministry (Gal. 2:7-9).⁴³ (2) It served as a means of generating better relations between Gentile and Jewish

⁴²Whether Gal. 2:10 ("only they would have us remember the poor, which very thing I was eager to do") refers to the collection is disputed. Georgi, op. cit., p. 23, building on Karl Holl's work (to which I have not had access, "Der Kirchenbegriff des Paulus in seinem Verhältnis zu dem der Urgemeinde," Sitzungsbericht der Berliner Akademie, 1921, pp. 920-47 = Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Kirchengeschichte II (Tübingen: 1928), pp. 44-67) argues that "the poor" in Gal. 2:10 was a technical name for the people of Jerusalem. The concept of the poor, he thinks, can be traced back to late Judaism where the terms for the Jewish "pious" and "just" became equated with "poor". Thus, certain groups from Maccabean times called themselves "the poor" and used the term to designate themselves as the holy remnant. However, Georgi (pp. 80 f.) sees a distinction between Romans and Galatians with respect to "the poor." In Rom. 15:26 "the poor" no longer designates all Christians in Jerusalem but rather a particular group residing there because Paul specifies that the poor are "among" the saints in Jerusalem (τῶν ἁγίων τῶν Ἰερουσαλήμ). Further treatment of this question together with bibliography can be found in E. Bammel, TDNT 6:888-915 and Keck (both articles), art. cit.

⁴³Cf. Hurd, IDB., loc. cit. and Nils Alstrup Dahl, Studies in Paul: Theology for the Early Christian Mission (Minneapolis: 1977), p. 141.

Christians in Jerusalem who were not always supportive of Paul's Gentile mission (e.g., Gal. 2:3-5, 12; 3:1, 10; 4:21, 31; 5:2, 12, 18; 6:12-15).⁴⁴ (3) It served as an instrument to provoke jealousy in the Jews so that they would turn and be saved.

The first two purposes of the collection are not in dispute and, more importantly for us, not of relevance to universalism in Romans 11:32. The third, however, is central to the question of universalism.

There is no doubt that Paul hopes to bring the Jews to salvation through jealousy, but whether he thinks the collection would cause them to turn and be saved is not clear. We cannot be dogmatic here, but there is some reason to believe that Paul sees the collection as a tool which will bring significant numbers of Jews in Jerusalem to salvation.

Apparently, Paul believes that once he has preached the gospel in a particular region, his missionary activity in that area is complete. He expresses to the church in Rome that his desire to visit them can now be fulfilled because

from Jerusalem and as far round as Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ, thus making it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named, lest I build on another man's foundation (15:19 f.).

⁴⁴Cf. Heinrich Schlier, Der Brief an die Galater, KEK (Göttingen: 1965), pp. 38 f. and Nickle, Collection, p. 131. For a discussion of Judaic opposition throughout the Pauline corpus, see John J. Gunther, St. Paul's Opponents and their Background: A Study of Apocalyptic and Jewish Sectarian teachings (Leiden: 1973), pp. 59-94, et pass.

Here Paul speaks of having completed the necessary missionary work even though all Gentiles within that area had not responded to the gospel or, indeed, had even heard the name of Christ.⁴⁵ With his work complete Paul intends to press on to the west: "I no longer have any room for work in these regions...I hope to see you in passing as I go to Spain" (15:23 f.). From this Munck concludes that Paul does not expect every single person to hear and believe the gospel; rather he expects a representative acceptance of the gospel by the various Gentile nations--Corinth, Ephesus, Philippi, etc.⁴⁶ Thus, having accomplished his missionary objective in the eastern half of the empire, Paul prepares to proclaim the gospel in the western half--foremost in his mind, Spain.⁴⁷ He supposes that when he has completed his Gentile ministry, Israel would see that the blessings

⁴⁵It is of course not reasonable to suppose that Paul preached the gospel in every village and hamlet from Jerusalem to Illyricum. He was an urban missionary, preaching in the main cities along the main Roman roads. Cf. Meeks, Urban Christians, pp. 9 f.

⁴⁶Munck, Salvation, p. 278; cf. his "Israel and the Gentiles," passim and Christ and Israel, pp. 96-99. Dahl, Studies in Paul, p. 153 agrees: "Paul does not affirm that every individual Israelite will attain salvation, but that God will grant salvation to both parts of his people...."

⁴⁷Hahn, op.cit., p. 96. Georgi, Geschichte der Kollekte, pp. 80 f. concludes that Paul wanted to go to Rome, a place where Christ had "already been named" (Rom 15:20), in order to use it as a starting point for the west. This is correct, but it would appear from Rom. 1:9-14 that Paul has other motivations as well for going to Rome.

intended for them had passed them by, and would in turn respond to the message of the gospel. Paul, therefore, perceives that the hardening of Israel would last only until the full number of Gentiles had come in, and then Israel would be saved (11:25 f.).

But in order for Israel to become jealous, they must first be aware that Gentiles were experiencing the blessing. Nickle surmises that Paul uses the collection as "an unmistakable witness to the fact that salvation had come to the Gentiles, for those who had eyes to see and ears to hear."⁴⁸ In the collection the nation of Israel receives a clear and definite sign: "Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it...righteousness through faith" (Rom. 9:30). The large delegation of Gentile Christians bearing the collection to Jerusalem would be proof of God's blessing.⁴⁹

On his last journey to Jerusalem, then, Paul takes with him seven representatives of the Gentile churches,⁵⁰ or possibly an even larger group if one presumes that the number of delegates listed is limited to seven for symbolic effect.⁵¹

⁴⁸Nickle, op.cit., p. 136.

⁴⁹Ibid., pp. 134 f.; cf. Hahn, op.cit., p. 109.

⁵⁰As noted in Acts 20:4.

⁵¹A suggestion made by Otto Dibelius, Die Werdende
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2. Israel's Rejection

In the background of our discussion stands Israel's rejection of the gospel and Paul's perception of the Gentile mission. "All day long," he says, "[God] has held out [his] hands to a disobedient and contrary people" (Rom. 10:21; cf. Isa. 65:1 f.). But they stumbled on Christ, a stone laid in Zion, a rock that made them fall (Rom. 9.33; cf. Isa. 8:14 f.; 28:16; also 1 Pet. 2:6-8). God, therefore, turned away from his people to the Gentiles: "those who were not my people I will call 'my people,' and her who was not beloved I will call 'my beloved'" (Rom. 9:25; cf. Hosea 1:10; 2:23; also 1 Pet. 2:10). Paul still delivers his message of the gospel "to the Jew first" (Rom. 1:16; 2:9 f.)⁵² but their unbelief will persist until "the full number of the Gentiles come in" (11:25).

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Kirche (Berlin: ⁴1941), pp. 158 f., and cited with approval by Nickle, op.cit., p. 68, n. 83. The assumption is that the unnamed Corinthian congregation, ready with its contribution (Rom 15:26), was not represented by Paul, but brought its own gift to Jerusalem. Further, Dibelius suggests that the number of delegates may have increased as the group travelled to Jerusalem. This may be but the lack of evidence in both the Pauline letters and Acts makes such a conclusion rather tenuous. Cf. Munck, Salvation, p. 303.

⁵²Cf. also Acts 3:26; 13:46. In Rom. 1:16 προτον is omitted in part of the tradition (B G it^g cop^{sa} Tertullian Aphraem) but is present in all other witnesses. The omission arose, it seems, not because of scribal assimilation to Rom 2:9 f. but rather because of Marcion's desire to eliminate any notion of Jewish privilege. See Metzger, Textual Commentary, p. 506. Moreover, the

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If Paul believes that his Gentile ministry in the West is complete, then perhaps the collection is a visible sign to Jews that the fullness of the Gentiles is drawing nigh. The idea that Gentile nations in the last days would stream to Zion is widespread in Old Testament tradition:⁵³

In that day they will come to you, from Assyria to Egypt, and from Egypt to the River, from sea to sea and from mountain to mountain (Micah 7:12).

It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; and all the nations shall flow to it (Isa. 2:2 = Micah 4:1).⁵⁴

The difference, however, is that whereas Old Testament tradition holds that God's glory would radiate from Israel drawing all nations to Zion⁵⁵ (Isa. 60:3: "the Lord will

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suggestion of Murray, Romans, p. 28 that $\pi\rho\omicron\tau\omicron\nu$ implies that the gospel "has primary relevance to the Jew" rather than the implication of time is not convincing. According to the Acts account (3:26; 13:46) Paul's strategy was to go first to the synagogues in order that the "blessing" might fall first to the family of Abraham, but being confronted with rejection he turned to the Gentiles. A similar inference is gathered from Rom. 9-11. Thus, while the gospel may in fact have a primary relevance to the Jew, nonetheless, $\pi\rho\omicron\tau\omicron\nu$ probably denotes time--"to the Jew first."

⁵³ So Joachim Jeremias, Jesus' Promise to the Nations, SBT, 24, trans. S. H. Hooke (London: 1958), pp. 57-59; Hahn, op.cit., p. 19; Munck, Salvation, pp. 303-05.

⁵⁴ Hahn, op.cit., p. 19, n. 1 cites further references in the pre-exilic period (Isa. 18:7; Jer. 3:17; 16:19; Isa. 45:18, 25; 60:1-22) and the post-exilic period (Zeph. 3:8-11; Hag. 2:6-9; Zach. 2:10-13; 8:2, 20-23; 14:16; Isa. 25:6-8; with later echoes in Ps. 68:29, 31; 86:9; 96:8, 10) for the nations' streaming to Zion.

⁵⁵ So Jeremias, Promise, p. 57 who advances the
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arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you. And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising"), Paul may believe that because of Israel's rejection, the gospel is now passing to the Gentiles whose example of salvation would bring about salvation in Israel through jealousy (Rom. 11:11: "Through their [Israel's] trespass salvation has come to the Gentiles, so as to make Israel jealous"). It may be then that the collection becomes for Paul the kind of visible evidence that would cause the nation of Israel to embrace the gospel.

3. Reversal of the Old Testament

If the above discussion is correct, then evidently for pragmatic reasons Paul reverses the Old Testament order of eschatological salvation. No longer would salvation be given to Israel who would then become a beacon drawing all nations to Zion to worship God. Beyond purely pragmatic grounds, Paul may be following that element in Old Testament thought which allows for a reversal in the accepted order of eschatological salvation.⁵⁶ Paul frequently cites Old

(Footnote Continued)

following passages in support of this conclusion: Isa. 2:2; 11:10; 40:5; 51:4 f.; 52:10; 60:3; 62:10; Zech. 2:13; Midr. Ps. 21.

⁵⁶Nickle, op. cit., p. 133.

Testament passages throughout Romans 9-11 which portray a disobedient Israel who has caused God to turn to the Gentiles. The blessing now proceeds from the Gentiles to Israel and not as originally intended--from Israel to the Gentile nations.⁵⁷

This picture of God turning from a disobedient Israel to the Gentiles can also be found in the sayings of Jesus. In the Matthean tradition Jesus instructs his disciples: "Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, but rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (10:5 f.). Similarly, of his own ministry he says, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (15:24).⁵⁸

⁵⁷Nickle (*ibid.*) sets out the relevant verses: Israel's stubbornness hinders their ability to hear God's word (Rom. 9:33--Isa. 28:16; Rom. 10:21--Isa. 65:2; Rom. 11:8--Isa. 29:10). God's word is therefore taken from Israel to a strange people; only when they respond will it again be proclaimed to Israel (Rom. 9:25 f.--Hos. 2:23 and 1:10; Rom. 10:20--Isa. 65:1). God will then use the Gentiles to proclaim his salvation to Israel--the message Israel originally was to have proclaimed to the Gentiles (Rom. 10:19--Deut. 32:21; cf. Rom. 11:11-15).

The "original" plan of salvation (from Israel to the Nations) need not be reversed absolutely. Paul might think that the conversion of the Gentiles would cause repentance in Israel which in turn would cause further blessings to be poured out on the Gentiles. Munck, Salvation, p. 305 f. believes Rom. 11:15 may support such a view: "For if their rejection means the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance mean but life from the dead?"

⁵⁸There has been considerable discussion whether these texts should be accepted as genuine sayings of Jesus. We cannot enter this dispute, but merely cite a few who have. Rudolf Bultmann, The History of the Synoptic Tradition,
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Evidently, Jesus' practice was to limit both his and his disciples' ministry to Israel, and only in exceptional or unavoidable circumstances would he respond to the Gentiles.⁵⁹ It may be pointed out, however, that other sayings of Jesus connote an all-embracing understanding of the gospel; not only is the gospel available to the Gentiles but Israel's hardness of heart could cause it to be given over to the Gentiles:

I tell you, many will come from east and west and sit at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into outer darkness... (Matt. 8:11 f.; cf. Luke 13:28 f.).⁶⁰

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trans. John Marsh (Oxford: 1963), p. 163 considers Matt. 15:24 as a Palestinian Church addition reflecting its opposition to the Gentile mission. However, Jeremias, Promise, p. 27 and David Hill, The Gospel of Matthew, NCB (London: 1972), p. 185 have argued persuasively for its authenticity; they dismiss on linguistic grounds the view that 15:24 stands in stark contrast with the rest of Matthew's Gospel which, they say, sounds continually a "particularist" theme. Further discussion can be found in Schulyer Brown, "The Two-fold Representation of the Mission in Matthew's Gospel," Studia Theologica 31 (1977), 21-32 who on other grounds finds Matt. 10:5 f. to be a genuine logion.

⁵⁹ So Jeremias, Promise, pp. 25-39. Jeremias concludes: "the principle that the hour of the Gentiles can only come after the Cross and the Resurrection underlies the missionary commission of Matt. 28:18-20" (p. 38; cf. p. 72). For an analysis of Jeremias' position, see Benjamin Jerome Hubbard, The Matthean Redaction of a Primitive Apostolic Commissioning: An Exegesis of Matthew 28:16-20, SBL, Dissertation Series, 19 (Missoula: 1974), pp. 7-9.

⁶⁰ Edward Schweizer, The Good News According to Matthew, trans. David E. Green (Atlanta: 1975), p. 213 believes that the Matthean form of this saying may be attributed to Jesus himself. He suggests that Jesus' reference to the Gentiles may be similar to the actual circumstances described in the

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Paul shows no awareness of these traditions or "severe" sayings of Jesus.⁶¹ If, however, he was familiar with them, they would have added considerable weight to his interpretation of the Old Testament, viz., that confronted with Israel's rejection, the gospel would pass to the Gentiles. In any event, Paul does stress in Romans 9-11 that continual disobedience would cause God to turn to the Gentile nations.

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passage. So also Jeremias, Promise, pp. 55-73 and I. Howard Marshall, The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: 1978), pp. 567 f.

Matt. 21:43 ("the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a nation producing the fruits of it") reinforces the Matt. 8:11 f. text since it points out that the kingdom will be taken from Israel and given over to the Gentiles, see Günther Bornkamm, "End-Expectation and Church in Matthew," in his Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew, trans. Percy Scott, NTL (Philadelphia: 1963), p. 20. But it is widely held that this saying is a Matthean interpretation; one cannot confidently place it on the mouth of Jesus. Similar difficulties are encountered with Matt. 25:31-46, esp. v. 32 and Luke 14:15-24, esp. v. 24. The central idea remains, however, that there is a strain of thought running through these Gospels which holds to a rejection of Israel and an acceptance of the Gentiles.

⁶¹Cf. David L. Dungan, The Sayings of Jesus in the Churches of Paul: The Use of the Synoptic Tradition in the Regulation of Early church Life (Oxford: 1971), pp. 139-50 for a discussion of difficulties involved in the question of Paul's access to the sayings of Jesus. Dungan believes that Paul may have been familiar with a considerable number of Jesus' sayings.

4. Summary

Throughout Romans 9-11 Paul discusses Jews and Gentiles as collectives. As such, "mercy upon all" (11:32) points to all nations, not all individuals. In combination with this is Paul's missionary strategy which is to set up churches in the main cities along the main Roman roads. With these cells in place he can say, "I have fully preached the gospel....I no longer have any room for work in these regions..." (Rom. 15:19, 22).

Paul also perceives that God's blessing would no longer be mediated through Jews to Gentiles. The usual order is reversed. Paul seems to be following that strain in Old Testament prophecy where God turns from his people to the Gentiles in order to awaken Israel from their indifference: "...salvation has come to the Gentiles, so as to make Israel jealous" (Rom. 11:11). The collection (with its delegates), therefore, becomes the visible sign to Israel that the promised blessing had passed them by and had fallen upon the Gentiles. So Paul expects that when he arrives in Jerusalem a large number of Jews will become jealous and repent when he provides them with the proper interpretation of Hosea 2:23 (= Rom. 9:25), and when he, along with his delegation of Gentiles, offers them the collection.

We cannot infer from Paul's words, "mercy upon all," that every single individual will receive mercy--especially when the context of Romans 11 has little to do with

individual salvation. Paul believes that "salvation" has come to the Gentiles, as he says, "from Jerusalem as far round as Illyricum" (Rom. 15:19). Therefore, when he speaks about salvation in this context, he means something quite different from what contemporary evangelism means with its emphasis on individual salvation. He centers his attention on two entities--Jews and Gentiles--and on their respective roles in God's eschatological plan of salvation. We may grant that Romans 11:32 sounds universalist, but it is unlikely that Paul had salvation of every individual in mind.

D. SALVATION OF ALL ISRAEL

Of further interest to the question of universalism is Paul's understanding of the wild olive tree analogy in Romans 11:17 ff. and its relation to the pre-Pauline tradition of 11:25 f. The presence of the term *μυστήριον* in 11:25 suggests that this passage is pre-Pauline since elsewhere *μυστήριον* is used to designate traditional material (e.g., 1 Cor. 15:51 f. which is thought to be prophecy⁶²). There is a striking similarity between

⁶²Gerhard Dautzenberg, "Botschaft und Bedeutung der urchristlichen Prophetie nach dem ersten Korintherbrief (2:6-16; 12-14)," in Prophetic Vocation in the New Testament and Today, ed. J. Panagopoulos, *NovT* 45 (Leiden: 1977), p. 143 and Hill, New Testament Prophecy, pp. 130 f.

1 Corinthians 15:51 f. and a corresponding prophecy in 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17, which takes its authority from a "word of the Lord;"⁶³ this suggests that G. Dautzenberg and D. Hill are right that 1 Corinthians 15:51 f. contains prophecy. We cannot be certain that these texts should be called prophecy, but it does appear that μυστήριον refers to traditional material both in 1 Corinthians 15:51 and Romans 11:25.

This pre-Pauline tradition in Romans 11:25 f. specifies that all Israel will be saved.⁶⁴ Implicit in the καὶ οὕτως of v. 26 is the "streaming in" of the Gentiles which will cause Israel to be saved.⁶⁵ As we have seen, Paul views the

⁶³Best, Thessalonians, pp. 189-94; cf. Leon Morris, The First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians: The English Text with Introduction, Exposition and Notes, NIC (Grand Rapids: 1959), pp. 141 f.; Dautzenberg, op. cit., p. 137.

⁶⁴If 11:25 f. is indeed pre-Pauline tradition, then this says more about Paul's predecessors than about Paul. In other words, some of Paul's predecessors may have believed that every single Israelite would be saved. In way of excursus, it is interesting that Rom. 11:25 f., Phil. 2:6 ff.; Col. 1:15 ff. (all presumable pre-Pauline material) present potent cases for universalism. This raises the question whether at an earlier stage of the church some form of universalism was endorsed and later abandoned. Perhaps this sort of tension has given rise to the universalist strains in Pauline thought.

⁶⁵But not necessarily immediately. Cranfield, Romans, p. 576 sees οὕτως as an emphatic: Paul means that Israel would be saved "in this way and only in this way." Similarly, Leenhardt, Romans, points out that καὶ οὕτως (and so) is not equivalent to καὶ τότε (and then). In other words, the fulfillment of God's plan cannot take place until the fullness of the Gentiles comes in, but the plan need not take place immediately upon fulfillment. Cf. V. Bartling,
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collection as the beginning of the Gentile "stream" to Zion which would provoke Israel to jealousy, cause them to confess their sins and become Christians.

Now, if we accept the collection as the background to Romans 11:25 f., then the salvation of Israel depends on their jealous reaction. In effect, salvation depends on Israel--Paul expects them to repent and become Christians as a result of the influx of the Gentiles. Such a situation, therefore, is no more universalist than it would be to say that if everyone repents and accepts Christ, then everyone will be saved. But Paul does not think that every single Israelite will repent and believe. Aside from the point already argued that Paul is using "Israel" in Romans 11 as a collective, he also states explicitly in 11:14 that only some will be saved. E. Käsemann suggests that this may be a case of Paul's being cautious; W. Campbell thinks that he is being modest.⁶⁶ These are unlikely possibilities. It seems more reasonable to assume along with Cranfield that Paul expects something less than conversion of every individual within the body of Israel. He comments:

While Paul may indeed have expected his Gentile mission to disturb the Jewish nation as a whole, he clearly expects it to result in the conversion of only some

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"'All Israel Shall be Saved,' Rom. 11:26," CTM 12 (1941), 641-52 who argues that οὕτως is an adverb of manner in this passage and cannot be used as an adverb of time. Cf. also, Dahl, Studies in Paul, p. 152.

⁶⁶Käsemann, Romans, p. 306; Campbell, Purpose of Paul, p. 413.

individuals out of it.⁶⁷

Earlier we argued that "all" in 11:26, 32 need not imply a totality of individuals; it might also be noted that when confronted with a clash between an apparent pre-Pauline tradition (11:25 f.) and Paul's words on the same subject (11:14), we must take Paul's own words as the decisive factor in interpreting the earlier tradition cited by him.

A final issue bears mentioning: this involves Paul's interpretation of *μυστήριον* as the fulfillment of the covenant with Israel. The covenant has soteriological implications, and in 11:29 Paul says: "For the gifts and the call of God are irrevocable."⁶⁸ Paul must mean that the gifts and call are inextricably bound together⁶⁹ and hence ensure salvation for Israel.

So perhaps the reason why Paul states in 11:26 that all Israel will be saved is because he believes that God's covenant fidelity dictates such a conclusion. God cannot take back any of the gifts, soteriological or otherwise, that are promised in the covenant. Yet, this appears not to be cast in cement because Paul does say "some" (11:14) when addressing the issue directly. Moreover, E. P. Sanders,

⁶⁷Cranfield, *Romans*, p. 561.

⁶⁸Mussner, "Ganz Israel," *art. cit.* sees this as a factor leading to universalism; the all-merciful God will at the end elect Israel.

⁶⁹Käsemann, *Romans*, pp. 315 f.

while granting that there is no hint in the entire body of Tannaitic literature that God would cancel the covenant if its conditions were not fulfilled, nevertheless, points out that the disobedient could reject and withdraw from the covenant: "but this in no way implies cancellation on God's side. The Rabbis never doubted that God would remain faithful to the covenantal promises, even when faced with disobedience."⁷⁰

In Romans 11:29, therefore, Paul seems to be saying that God's covenant (from his side) will not be broken. Practically, the irrevocable promise is limited to those who respond. But however we read 11:29, there does appear to be flexibility in Paul's mind when it comes to designating the exact number of Israelites to be saved. The apparent tension between "some" in 11:14 and "all" in 11:26 is left unresolved. The actual number of Israelites who will become jealous and repent when they see the "streaming in" of the Gentiles is of little concern to Paul. He speaks in terms of collectives.

⁷⁰E. P. Sanders, Paul, pp. 95 ff. Sanders (pp. 95 f.) cites a possible exception in Sifre Deut. 96.

E. SUMMARY OF CHAPTER

In Romans 11 Paul records two provocative statements which lead some to conclude that he expects ultimately everyone to be saved. His phrases, "all Israel will be saved" (v. 26) and "mercy upon all" (v. 32) would doubtless be universalist if they meant every single individual. But they seem better suited in the context of groups. This is confirmed not only by an analysis of the chapter, but by Paul's missionary strategy which sees evangelism more broadly than today's individualistic approach. So in Romans chapter 11 Paul discusses two collectives, Jews and Gentiles, affirming that both are included in God's final plan of redemption.

II. The Adam-Christ Analogy

In 1 Corinthians 15:22 Paul writes, "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive." This chapter examines the two parallel occurrences of πάντες . If the whole human family dies in Adam, can it then be said that this same human family will also be restored to life in Christ? In short, are the "all" who are in Christ identical with the "all" who are in Adam?

We can hardly deny that the parallel drawn in this verse (έν τῷ Ἀδὰμ πάντες...έν τῷ Χριστῷ πάντες) favors a universalist interpretation.¹ On semantic grounds alone we should suspect that universalism underlies the text. Furthermore, seven verses later (15:29) we find proxy baptism at work. If Paul permits baptisms for the unregenerate dead--presumably leading to their salvation--then he circumvents the need for a formal profession of faith in Christ. Much the same may be said about the "holy children" in 1 Corinthians 7:14 who are saved in spite of their inability to profess faith in Christ.

¹If the second πάντες governs έν τῷ Χριστῷ, then we would normally expect πάντες to be connected to this prepositional phrase with a definite article οἱ . As it stands, έν τῷ Χριστῷ may more naturally be taken adverbially with the verb ζῶσιν . This, then, seems to favor a universalist understanding of the verse.

A. PAUL'S USE OF "ALL"

As we have seen in Romans 11:32, Paul's use of the word $\pi\alpha\varsigma$ is central to an understanding of the text. In the context of Romans 11, "all" designates a collective--Jews or Gentiles. Here again we must examine Paul's use of "all," this time in 1 Corinthians 15:22.

Paul generally uses $\pi\alpha\varsigma$ in a more restrictive sense than might be supposed. This, of course, should come as no surprise since the meaning of a word "depends not on what it is in itself, but on its relation to other words and to other sentences which form its context."² For example, Paul is fond of saying that the gospel has been made known throughout the whole world (Rom. 1:8; 16:19; 2 Cor. 2:14; 1 Thess. 1:8; cf. Col. 1:6, 23, 28). In reality, however, there were many who had not yet heard the gospel, as exemplified by Paul's remark that he has yet to go to Spain (Rom. 15:24).

Similarly, Paul's use of $\pi\alpha\varsigma$ is sometimes limited to believers. For example, in 1 Corinthians 7:7 Paul speaks about the advisability of remaining unmarried in view of the imminent parousia: "I wish that all were as I myself am." While it might appear that he is talking about all men

²Anthony C. Thiselton, "Semantics of New Testament Interpretation," in New Testament Interpretation: Essays on Principles and Methods, ed. I. Howard Marshall (Exeter: 1977), pp. 78 f.

everywhere irrespective of belief, the context of the chapter and words immediately following confirm his intention that he wants every believer to remain single. "I wish that all were as I myself am. But each has his own special gift from God, one of one kind and one of another."³

Finally, $\pi\alpha\varsigma$ is used restrictively in a number of different passages. In 1 Corinthians 6:12 (10:23) Paul employs the phrase, "All things are lawful for me." The saying appears to have been a slogan bandied about Corinth by Paul's opponents who enjoyed the widest sense of freedom. As such, "all," in their vocabulary would be used more or less inclusively. Paul cites the phrase to demonstrate that he too has freedom, but his freedom in Christ is of a different order. His readers discover that certain restrictions apply to his use of the word "all." He says, "All things are lawful," but in the immediate context (6:9 f.) he recites a list of things from immorality to robbery which are not lawful for him. There is presumed in this context a restriction on $\pi\alpha\varsigma$ and it may be that this same restrictive sense surfaces in 1 Corinthians 15:22.⁴

Our procedure, therefore, will be to examine 1 Corinthians 15:22 and its context in order to determine how

³For further examples where $\pi\alpha\varsigma$ is confined to believers, see 1 Cor. 11:3; 12:29 f.; cf. Eph. 4:13.

⁴See also 1 Cor. 9:22; 15:30; 2 Cor. 4:8; 11:6; 2 Thess. 2:9; cf. Col. 3:20.

inclusive we should read Paul's use of "all." But before the discussion of 1 Corinthians 15:22 we must consider what might be called its parallel passage, Romans 5:19.

1. ROMANS 5:19 and the Hebraic πολλοί

In Romans 5:19 Paul uses οἱ πολλοί rather than πᾶς.

For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous" (NIV).

Evidently, in this parallel occurrence of πολλοί we have an example of the Hebraic inclusive, i.e., "all" were made sinners; "all" will be made righteous.⁵

To say that πολλοί in Romans 5:19 is identical with an absolutely inclusive πάντες overstates the case, but πολλοί certainly has an inclusive sense and could easily be replaced with πάντες in this context.⁶ The evidence for this is overwhelming, especially in the preceding verses (12-18) which demand the inclusive sense: through Adam in verse 12 death comes to πάντας men; the same death in verse

⁵ See Sanday and Headlam, Romans, p. 140; Matthew Black, Romans, NCB (Grand Rapids: 1973), p. 90; Joachim Jeremias, The Eucharistic Words of Jesus, trans. Norman Perrin (London: 1966), pp. 123-25, 148-52, Jeremias, TDNT 6:536-45. Cf. Aubrey R. Johnson, The One and the Many in the Israelite Conception of God: Some Rabbinic Elements in Pauline Theology (Cardiff: 1961).

⁶ Contra E. P. Sanders, a letter quoted in Boring, "Universal Salvation," 285, n. 46.

15a comes to οἱ πολλοί. Through Christ in verse 15b the gift (of life) comes to τοὺς πολλοῦς; the same life in verse 18 comes to πάντας men.⁷

Since Paul makes it clear in Romans 5:12-14 that all men die, the presence of πολλοί in the protasis of 5:19 ("many were made sinners") decidedly reveals the Hebraic inclusive usage. So the presence of πολλοί in the apodosis ("many will be made righteous") suggests that here too we have an example of the Semitism.⁸

This raises the question whether the parallelism in 5:19 leads to a universalist conclusion that all humanity will one day "be made righteous." But even if we acknowledge Paul's use of the Semitism in both the protasis and the apodosis (which seems to be the case), still, we cannot say that the apodosis includes every single individual. In fact, as we shall see, it is more likely that Paul uses the Hebraism in both clauses to contrast the sum total of Adam's descendants with the sum total of

⁷ Cf. Best, One Body, p. 37.

⁸ Aside from the immediate context, it appears that Romans 5:19b refers to Isaiah 53:11 f. which is inclusive. Cf. J. Skinner, The Book of the Prophet Isaiah: Chapters XL-LXVI, The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges (Cambridge: 1917), p. 148; John L. McKenzie, Second Isaiah: Introduction, Translation, and Notes, AB (Garden City: 1968), pp. 132, 136; R. N. Whybray, Isaiah 40-66, NCB (Grand Rapids: 1975), p. 181. We cannot always be certain when we are dealing with an inclusive Semitism. See the discussion of Dan. 12:2 in Alexander A. DiLella, The Book of Daniel, AB (Garden City: 1978), pp. 307 f.

believers. We must be careful, therefore, not to assume that the Hebraic use of "many" means that every last person that can be included will be included. Even the use of $\pi\alpha\varsigma$ does not guarantee this.⁹

2. Universalism and Romans 5:19

Käsemann castigates Zahn and Murray who restrict the apodoses of 5:18 f. to believers only; he argues that while believers are included in the apodoses, nevertheless, they are not alone--others are present as well.¹⁰ But this conclusion owes more to cosmological considerations (discussed in Section Three) than it does to the content of the passage before us. In Romans 5:18 f. there is good reason to suppose that Paul is contemplating something other than universalism when he writes: "many were made sinners...many will be made righteous." Three considerations support this view.

First, while it is true that the parallelism of the "many...many" in 5:18 f. seems to be a Semitic circumlocution for "all...all," nevertheless, the parallelism does not balance. In other words, the "many"

⁹As shown earlier in this chapter. See also the discussion of Rom. 11:26, 32 in Section Two, I, "The Olive Tree Analogy."

¹⁰Käsemann, Romans, p. 157.

who were made sinners are not the same as the "many" who were made righteous. We can see this in the preceding verse (v. 17) where Paul writes:

If, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.

Here Paul weakens considerably the parallelisms of the succeeding verses because he distinguishes between those who receive the abundance of grace and those who do not. So in 5:17 Paul treats those who receive the abundance of grace as a category to be distinguished from those who are excluded. Sanders thinks that Paul was "carried away by the force of his analogy and argued more than he intended."¹¹ He quotes Conzelmann to sustain his argument. "At the decisive point," says Conzelmann, "the analogy does not work: left to itself, it does not take faith into account. Salvation does not follow naturally from Christ (as does death from Adam), but is received by faith."¹² Consequently, the

¹¹Sanders, Paul, p. 473.

¹²Conzelmann, Outline, pp. 187 f. in Sanders, ibid. Boring, "Universal Salvation," 284-88 thinks the weakness in Sanders' view is that "Rom 5:19 is absolutely parallel to 5:18, rather than a modification of it. Each verse affirms that whatever humanity lost in Adam humanity (more than) gained back in Christ." But this and his ensuing discussion does not do justice to the distinctions Paul makes in 5:17. Cf. Best, One Body, p. 37 who suggests that we ought not to pass over the possibility that 5:17 "may imply the necessity of deliberate reception" especially since the two preceding chapters apportion salvation only to those who have faith.

apodosis of 5:18 f. should not be taken in the widest possible manner encompassing the entire human race.

The second indication that Paul is not affirming universalism in Romans 5:18 f. is found in his understanding of salvation. In this text there seems to be a distinction between the theoretical aspects of salvation and the actualization of it. Actual salvation is limited to those who have faith. For example, in Romans 5:10 Paul says, "For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life." Here Paul seems to be speaking anthropologically rather than biographically. When Paul writes, "while we were enemies," he does not address his readers only, referring to their condition before they embraced Christianity (biographical). Rather, he refers to the time prior to Christ's death, saying in effect, "before Christ died we were alienated from God" (anthropological).

This seems to be what is taking place in the pronouncement, "we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son" (Rom. 5:10). Paul is not saying that his readers were reconciled when they accepted Jesus Christ as Lord (biographical); he means that the mass of humanity is reconciled to God because of and at the time of the death of his Son (anthropological). He is thus speaking in general soteriological terms, assigning an anthropological sense to the passage.

This conclusion seems inescapable in light of Paul's comment that the reconciliation took place without us--"while we were enemies."¹³ L. Morris distinguishes between a Godward and a manward aspect of reconciliation: "there is a sense in which a reconciliation can be said to be proffered to us...reconciliation was wrought on the cross before there was anything in man's heart to correspond."¹⁴ Thus, Paul can write, "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself" (2 Cor. 5:19), but still insist that the relationship in order to be whole depends upon man's entering in, "we beseech you in behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God" (2 Cor. 5:20).¹⁵

¹³Bultmann (Second Corinthians, p. 164) comments: "People must now seize the $\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\lambda\lambda\alpha\gamma\eta$ which God has brought about apart from them and prior to all human action and behavior." Cf. Ridderbos, Paul, p. 185. This issue is discussed again in Section Three, III, "The Reconciliation of the Cosmos."

¹⁴Morris, Apostolic Preaching, p. 225, cf. pp. 225-32; similar to J. Denney's earlier comments in The Second Epistle to the Corinthians, The Expositor's Bible (London: 1894), pp. 211-215 and cited with approval by Ralph P. Martin, 2 Corinthians, WBC, 40 (Waco, Texas: 1986), pp. 154-55.

On Romans 5:18 Cranfield (Romans, p. 290) comments: " $\delta\iota\kappa\alpha\iota\omega\sigma\iota\varsigma\ \zeta\omega\eta\varsigma$ is truly offered to all, and all are summoned urgently to accept the proffered gift, but at the same time...this clause does not foreclose the question whether in the end all will actually come to share it."

¹⁵We must not think that the reconciliation is addressed only to the unconverted world. "It is also a call to believers--to be renewed in their faith and life as individuals and as a believing community." Furnish, II Corinthians, p. 350.

So, if this analysis is accepted, then Paul is speaking in general soteriological categories emphasizing what God has done through Christ on the cross. Implicit in the passage is the glorious potential awaiting those who are fully reconciled to God. Instead of living as enemies under the wrath of God, people may accept the gift of peace and love from God.¹⁶ In Christ's death, therefore, everyone is "saved" in theory--they are reconciled--but the actual benefits of salvation are appropriated only through a response to God, i.e. by faith. So if we read Romans 5:19 ("many were made sinners...many will be made righteous") in the light of 5:10 ("while we were enemies we were reconciled"), and if 5:10 is seen in the light of the theoretical implications of the cross, then 5:19 does not intend universalism.

One further comment. We have suggested that the reconciliation in 2 Corinthians 5:19 f. has to do ultimately with salvation, but it might be argued that Paul is not concerned in this text with salvation or with the period after death. Rather he is caught up in the urgency of the present--man's need to restore fellowship with God. If this were so, one might contend that there may still be opportunity for a person to be reconciled even after death.

¹⁶Ridderbos, Paul, p. 157.

But in this passage Paul is concerned with more than the present affairs of this life, important though they may be. Prior to his comments on reconciliation in 2 Corinthians 5:19 f., for example, he contrasts the earthly transient body with the eternal resurrection body (5:1-5), speaks of heaven (5:8), and then refers to the final judgment (5:10) as a rationale for preaching the gospel (5:11; cf. Rom. 5:9 f.). Naturally, one could still reply that death does not close the door on the hope of a final and fully realized reconciliation. But this is not the point. The question is whether Romans 5:18 f. actively implies universalism, and it does not appear to do so.

The third reason why Romans 5:18 f. should not be construed as a universalist text is its close relationship to 1 Corinthians 15:22 which, as we shall see, is unsuitable for those who would argue for universalism.

2. Universalism and 1 Corinthians 15:22

One can hardly deny that the natural sense of 1 Corinthians 15:22 is that ultimately all humanity will be raised in Christ. We shall argue, however, that this text is more restrictive; by "all shall be made alive" Paul means that only those who belong to Christ will be made alive.

Robertson and Plummer, who also hold to a restrictive understanding of the verse, suggest that a proper paraphrase would be as follows: "As it is in Adam that all who die

die, so it is in Christ that all who are made alive are made alive."¹⁷ The tautology "all who are made alive are made alive," however, does not clarify the position that only believers will be made alive since the "all" who die may still be the "all" who are made alive. Moreover, in 15:22 it is unlikely that Paul has in mind a resurrection or "quickenings" of both the righteous and the wicked dead (which Robertson and Plummer rightly note is "not the same as saying that all will be saved").¹⁸ While it may be that Paul does suggest a quickening of the wicked--albeit to judgment--in 1 Corinthians 6:2; 11:32; Romans 2:5 (cf. Acts 24:15 and John 5:29), such a resurrection is not stressed in 1 Corinthians 15:22.¹⁹ The "all" Paul has in mind includes only those who belong to Christ. The following three reasons point to this conclusion.

First, Conzelmann rightly points out that the content of chapter 15 focuses exclusively on the plight of Christians.²⁰ His conclusion, however, is overstated somewhat and cannot apply to verses 24-28 which reveal the fate of the cosmos. It would be better to say that in

¹⁷ Robertson and Plummer, First Corinthians, p. 353.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ The question of a resurrection of the wicked will be discussed more fully later in this section.

²⁰ Conzelmann, First Corinthians, p. 268, n. 49. Cf. Weiss, Earliest Christianity, p. 532.

general the emphasis falls on the believer in chapter 15, and especially in verses 1-23 where Paul is concerned to assure his fellow Christians that they "all" would indeed be made alive.

Evidence for this can be found in the chapter itself where some Corinthians, while affirming the resurrection of Christ, nevertheless, were denying the resurrection of Christians (vv. 12, 13). Against this (vv. 12-19) Paul argues that if there were no resurrection of the dead for Christians, then Christ also is not raised, and those who have hoped in Christ are to be pitied. "But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead," claims Paul in verse 20, and is the first fruits of those (brethren--cf. v. 6) who have fallen asleep. Through him, then, has come the certainty of resurrection for Christians (v. 21). Therefore, just as certain as it is that in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all (Christians) be made alive in the resurrection (v. 22).

If this reconstruction is sound and represents Paul's thought in the passage, then the "all" who are made alive are the ones who belong to Christ.

The second reason which suggests that the "all" in verse 22b refers to believers is that just as ἐν τῷ Ἀδὰμ πάντες means "all who are in Adam," so too ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ

πάντες means "all who are in Christ."²¹ In this way we would understand ἐν to be functioning locally rather than instrumentally and hence only those who are "in Christ" would be restored to life.

On the other hand, one might insist on the instrumental use arguing that the meaning intended is that just as all die as a result of Adam's sin, so too will all be made alive as a result of Christ's resurrection. But this is unlikely because (1) such a rendering does not take seriously the formula ἐν Χριστῷ which implies a solidarity with Christ, and further designates a new organism which now exists alongside that other organism--ἐν Ἀδμ,²² (2) it cannot be assumed at the outset that all die solely as a result of Adam's sin, as if he alone were responsible for our demise,²³ and equally it cannot be assumed that all rise solely as a result of Christ's resurrection, and (3) the assumption that the two clauses must balance is misguided.²⁴

²¹In contradistinction to n. 1 of this chapter.

²²Cf. Best, One Body, pp. 36-39; A. S. Peake, "The Quintessence of Paulinism," BJRL 4 (1917-18), 303-11; Robin Scroggs, The Last Adam, pp. 87 f., 100 ff.

²³See Cranfield, Romans, pp. 275-79 who discusses ἡμαρτον as referring to "men's sinning in their own persons but as a result of their corrupt nature inherited from Adam."

²⁴Contra Mathias Rissi, Time and History: A Study on the Revelation, (Richmond: 1966), pp. 125 f. and Rissi, The Future of the World, p. 112, n. 255.

To put it another way, even if we grant in 22b that "all" are made alive as a result of Christ's resurrection, we still cannot say that the πάντες is totally inclusive. It may not be. Indeed the reverse may be preferable, for as Hans-Alwin Wilcke argues, it is not the two πάντες that are set parallel by the ὡπερ--οὕτως (as--so), but rather the results of the deaths of both Adam and Christ.²⁵

We conclude, therefore, that the ἐν in verse 22 points to those who belong to Adam and to those who belong to Christ.

The third reason why the "all" restored to life in 1 Corinthians 15:22 refers exclusively to believers is that believers are specified in verse 23 as the group which rises. In other words, it may be unclear in verses 21 and

²⁵Hans-Alwin Wilcke, Das Problem eines messianischen Zwischenreichs bei Paulus, ATANT 51 (Zürich: 1967), pp. 74 f. Wilcke maintains that ζωοποιεῖν carries a soteriological character which, when connected with ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ, assures that the πάντες in v. 22b can refer only to believers. Thus, the ζωοποίησις leads to eternal life and cannot be equated with a general resurrection. For Wilcke the attempt to find ἀποκατάστασις πάντων in Paul fails because the resurrection will happen only to those who through baptism and belief are found in Christ. He insists that in v. 22 the stress falls on the ἐν τῷ Ἀδὰμ and the ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ just as in v. 21 it falls on the dual δι' ἀνθρώπου. Paul's concern, then, centers not on the seemingly parallel occurrence of πάντες but rather on the two streams of humanity represented by Adam and Christ.

To this might be added Moule's observation about parallelisms (noted in part earlier): "There are passages which, judged by their words rather than their ideas, contain antitheses or parallelisms, but which, judged by their ideas, appear less obviously balanced in structure; and it is possible that, in such cases, the antitheses or parallelisms may be nothing more than rhetorical effect." Moule, Idiom-Book, p. 194.

22 as to who will or will not be included in the resurrection, but verse 23 does designate a particular group:

"those who are Christ's" (cf. 1 Cor. 3:23; Gal. 5:24).

Against this, Lietzmann²⁶ has suggested that τὸ τέλος in verse 24 is best translated "the rest" (rather than the more common "the end"). For Lietzmann verses 22-24a read as follows:

For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order (τάγματι): Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at his coming, the (comes) the rest (τέλος).

Here τέλος would refer to a third τάγμα--the rest of mankind. Such a rendering would naturally point to the ultimate restoration of all mankind. This explanation, though possible, has won little approval because apart from the fact that the phrase εἶτα τὸ τέλος functions in a series, there is no further evidence to suggest that τὸ τέλος should be understood in any other manner than its familiar sense, viz., "the end."²⁷

²⁶Lietzmann/Kümmel, Korinther, p. 80.

²⁷Whiteley, Theology of Paul, p. 271 comments that Lietzmann's interpretation is "so obscure that it is dangerous to build anything upon it." So also Allo, Corinthiens, pp. 406-08; Jean Héring, The First Epistle of Saint Paul to the Corinthians, trans. A. W. Heathcote and P. J. Allcock (London: 1962), pp. 165-67; W. D. Davies, Paul and Rabbinic Judaism, pp. 293 f.; Wilcke, Zwischenreichs, pp. 85-101; Gerhard Barth, "Erwägungen zu 1. Korinther 15, 20-28," EvTh 30 (1970), 522; Conzelmann, First Corinthians, pp. 270 f.; Gerhard Delling TDNT 8:55 f.

It is generally accepted that the two examples where τὸ τέλος can be construed to mean "the rest" (LXX, Isa. 19:15 and Aristotle, De Generatione Animalium 1:18) are at best ambiguous
(Footnote Continued)

3. Summary

Normally we would expect $\pi\alpha\varsigma$ to be inclusive, but Paul often uses it in a restrictive manner. An examination of words (in this case "all" or "many") must look beyond dictionary definitions to see how they are used in relation to other words and sentences in the context.

The contexts of both Romans 5:19 and 1 Corinthians 15:22 indicate that Paul is focusing on those who belonged to Christ and their future resurrection. There is no reason to assume that these texts disclose an inclusive plan of ultimate salvation.

B. EXCEPTIONS TO FAITH IN CHRIST

Paul's stress on faith in Christ and belonging to Christ in chapter 15 of 1 Corinthians is followed by what appears to be vicarious baptism for the dead in 15:29. Earlier in his letter, 1 Corinthians 7:14, he refers to children who attain salvation even though they do not actively put their faith in Christ. These two groups seem

(Footnote Continued)

and obscure. And although it does not affect the conclusion of this discussion, it is also extremely remote that $\tau\omicron\ \tau\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\omicron\varsigma$ should be considered an adverb meaning "finally" (as in Karl Barth, The Resurrection of the Dead, trans. H. J. Stenning (New York: 1933), p. 171 and F. C. Burkitt, "On 1 Corinthians XV 26," JTS 17 (1916), 384 f.).

to be outside the normal channels of salvation, and while the passages do not authorize universalism, they warrant discussion because of their exceptional natures.

1. Vicarious Baptism and
1 Corinthians 15:29

In 1 Corinthians 15:29 Paul appears to sanction vicarious baptism for the dead: "Otherwise, what do people mean by being baptized on behalf of (ὕπὲρ) the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why are people baptized on their behalf (ὕπὲρ αὐτῶν)?"

Our concern in this verse is to determine whether Paul recognized proxy baptism as a valid mode of producing salvation. Would he allow certain of the unbelieving dead to circumvent the established Christological means of salvation, grace through faith in Christ? The problem may be laid out as follows. If we assume that the dead are deceased Christians who for some reason had not been baptized, then we might have an odd custom but not one that is significant to universalism since they already have placed faith in Christ. But if the dead are unbelievers, then conceivably Paul acknowledges certain exceptions within his soteriological framework.

Thus far our discussion presupposes that embedded in 15:29 is a reference to vicarious baptism. But the situation is more complicated than that. Scores of interpretations have been proposed for this text over the

years;²⁸ unfortunately none has satisfied.²⁹ The meaning rests largely on one's understanding of the genitive ὑπέρ.³⁰ For our purposes the more important translations of the word are "in behalf of" or "instead of." These renderings raise the possibility of salvation apart from faith in Christ, i.e., vicarious baptism.

But another interpretation must at least be mentioned. Some scholars think that ὑπέρ expresses purpose ("because of"). Robertson and Plummer³¹ suggest that people were "baptized out of affection or respect for the dead." When unbelieving relatives of deceased Christians recalled how their family (or friends) had prayed earnestly for their

²⁸G. R. Beasley-Murray, Baptism in the New Testament (Grand Rapids: 1962), p. 185 quotes Bengel (c. 1750): "Of the baptism for the dead, the variety of interpretations is so great that he who would collect, I shall not say those different opinions but a catalogue of the different opinions, would have to write a dissertation." Says Conzelmann, First Corinthians, p. 276., "the ingenuity of the exegetes has run riot."

²⁹"Here the safest course would be to admit openly our ignorance," wrote A. M. Schurmann (1650); noted in Bernard M. Foschini, "Those Who are Baptized for the Dead" I Cor. 15:29: An exegetical Historical Dissertation (Worcester: 1951), p. 1. The variety of opinion can be found here and in Mathias Rissi, Die Taufe für die Toten: Ein Beitrag zur paulinischen Tauflehre, ATANT, 42 (Zürich: 1962).

³⁰Though theological and historical considerations sometimes determine this understanding. Cf. H. G. Marsh, The Origin and Significance of the New Testament Baptism (Manchester: 1941), p. 147; Beasley-Murray, op. cit. pp. 187 f. and Rudolf Schnackenburg, Baptism in the Thought of St. Paul: A Study in Pauline Theology, trans. G. R. Beasley-Murray (Oxford: 1964), pp. 100 f.

³¹Op. cit., pp. 359 f.

conversion, they too repented and believed. A similar proposal comes from M. Raeder³² who takes ὑπὲρ in a final sense. The baptized are those who wish to attain a goal for themselves. In order to be reunited with Christian friends or relatives who had died these people participated in baptism.

There is little to commend this interpretation, but equally little reason to preclude it. The problem is that our information on the Corinthian community is insufficient to make sound judgments. But if we did assume that Raeder, et al. were correct, universalist possibilities are not enhanced because in both instances the deceased person is a believer. This view contains no suggestion that unbelievers receive salvation in the grave. Also, the benefits from the baptism fall totally on the person participating in the rite. To be sure, this view still allows that people might be baptized for sub-Christian motives. Members of the Corinthian community might, for instance, have had little or no faith in Christ, but allowed themselves to be baptized simply because they wanted to see their relatives again. But such motives would hardly qualify them as having attained salvation in Pauline theology. More likely (following this line of thought) is that these people had

³² Maria Raeder, "Vikariatstaufe in I Cor. 15:29?," ZNW 46 (1956), 258-60. So also Joachim Jeremias, "Flesh and Blood Cannot Inherit the Kingdom of God (I Cor. XV. 50)," NTS 2 (1955/56), 155 f. and Schnackenburg, op. cit., p. 102.

become genuinely receptive to the Christian message after their relatives had died, and, hence, were baptized "because of" their deceased relatives' faith. If this were the case, we would normally deem them converts. In any event, the question of universalism is not greatly affected when one supposes that the genitive preposition ὑπέρ expresses purpose.

More important are the implications arising from the prospect that 15:29 refers to proxy baptism. Here ὑπέρ would mean "on behalf of" or "instead of." Some have urged that a number of Corinthian believers underwent baptism on behalf of other believers who had died before they were able to receive baptism.³³ Why some at Corinth would be vicariously baptized for other Christians is difficult to say.³⁴ It is widely held that the Corinthians believed in

³³James Downey, "1 Cor 15:29 and the Theology of Baptism," Euntes Docete 38 (1985), pp. 23-35; W. F. Flemington, The New Testament Doctrine of Baptism (London: 1948), p. 55; Hering, loc. cit.; Barrett, First Corinthians, p. 364; Harald Riesenfeld, TDNT 8:513.

³⁴Rissi, Die Taufe für die Toten, pp. 85-89 conjectures a calamity taking the lives of a number of Christians before they had opportunity for baptism. Proxy baptism proved a vehicle of confession whereby living Christians could testify to the faith of deceased Christians and their hope in the resurrection of the dead. Herbert Preisker, "Die Vicariatstaufe I Kor. XV. 29: ein eschatologischer nicht sakramentaler Brauch," ZNW 23 (1924), 298-304 suggests that the early primitive church did not baptize all its converts and hence some died without baptism. As time passed baptism took on eschatological dimensions promising the end of the age once the full number of the righteous had come in. Vicarious baptism served to hasten the end by filling out
(Footnote Continued)

baptism as a supernatural power which could reach beyond the grave.³⁵ Thus, proxy baptism could affect not only the believer but the non-believer as well. This leaves open the possibility that proxy baptism was believed to procure forgiveness for sins committed in the past by deceased persons who had not put their faith in Christ.³⁶

We must now ask whether Paul would approve of such practices. Unfortunately, we cannot be certain since Paul withholds his judgment on proxy baptism. He simply uses the custom as a foil to point out that if the Corinthians denied the resurrection of the dead they also reduced their baptismal practice to absurdity. This silence has provoked two responses. The first suggests that Paul uses an argumentum ad hominem; he does not approve of the practice but uses it in order to further his own argument on the certainty of the resurrection.³⁷ The second assumes that

(Footnote Continued)

the determined number of the elect. Downey, art. cit. thinks that unbaptized deceased Christians were believed to be vulnerable to the cosmic powers; vicarious baptism was a means of protection.

³⁵ Bultmann, TNT 1:135 f., Lietzmann, Korinther, p. 82; Schoeps, Paul, pp. 110-14; Conzelmann, First Corinthians, p. 276.

³⁶ Cf. Bultmann, TNT 1:136.

³⁷ E.g., Flemington, loc. cit.; Beasley-Murray, op. cit., p. 191; Henry M. Shires, The Eschatology of Paul: In the Light of Modern Scholarship (Philadelphia: 1966), p. 195; Albrecht Oepke, TDNT 1:542; James D. G. Dunn, Baptism in the Holy Spirit: A Re-examination of the New Testament Teaching on the Gift of the Spirit in Relation to
(Footnote Continued)

Paul must have at least tolerated the custom because he advances no criticism whatever.³⁸

In truth, this single reference to the baptism of the dead scarcely affords us a solid base from which to build anything at all, never mind the beginnings of a universalist hope. Perhaps it is better to conclude with a non liquet and heed Whiteley's advice who counsels the prudent road: "It is clearly unwise to build much upon a passage about which we know so little."³⁹

2. Holy Children and 1 Corinthians 7:14

Another group who appear to attain salvation while not actively putting their faith in Christ are the holy children.

For the unbelieving husband is consecrated (ἁγιάζεται) through his wife, and the unbelieving wife is consecrated through her husband. Otherwise, your children would be unclean (ἀκάθαρτά), but as it is they are holy (ἅγιά) (1 Cor. 7:14).

(Footnote Continued)

Pentecostalism Today, SBT, second series 15 (London: 1970), pp. 104 f.

³⁸ E.g., Bultmann, TNT 1:136; Hurd, I Corinthians, pp. 135 f.; Bornkamm, Paul, p. 189.

³⁹ Whiteley, Theology of Paul, p. 174. So also Ridderbos, Paul, p. 25. The suggestion that the Corinthians were misunderstood by Paul (resurrection versus life after death) cannot be considered here. See Hurd, op. cit., pp. 196 ff. and Walter Schmithals, Gnosticism in Corinth: An Investigation of the Letters to the Corinthians, trans. John E. Steely (Nashville: 1971), pp. 156 ff.

Our chief concern is Paul's pronouncement that the children in the above relationship are "holy" (οὗν δὲ ἅγιά ἐστιν). Since there is no indication that they actually come to faith we might ask whether such children form an exception to the usual means of procuring salvation, similar to the Gentiles who live up to the light given them.

A secondary question relates to Paul's initial comments in this verse. The unbelieving husband or wife, he says, is consecrated by the believing partner (7:14a,b). Beasley-Murray wonders how Paul "could apply so exalted a description as 'sanctified', or 'consecrated' to one whom he explicitly characterizes as ἄπιστος, an unbeliever."⁴⁰

This question is important because the ἅγιος word group in Paul reveals that no one is considered "holy" without first being a Christian. The only exception is Paul's statement in Romans 11:16, "if the root is holy, so are the branches."⁴¹ But even this is not an exception if we suppose that the branches are the collective Israel which ultimately will be saved (Rom. 11:26).⁴²

We are asking if Paul assigned saving benefits to the pagan partner on the basis of the marriage relationship. It

⁴⁰Beasley-Murray, op. cit., p. 194.

⁴¹Another exception might be adduced from the Pastorals, 1 Tim. 4:4 f.

⁴²Discussed in Section Two, I, "The Olive Tree Analogy."

is difficult to imagine Paul representing someone steeped in unbelief as a possessor of salvation.⁴³ Yet, he does say that the unbeliever who participates in such a union is "holy."

But we must not assume that Paul's usual salvific usage of ἄγιος guarantees that every time we meet with the word it refers to salvation. The context must decide and in this case the context appears to favor a broader interpretation. A number of reasons support this conclusion.

First, we note that the issue in 1 Corinthians 7:12 ff. is whether the believing husband or wife in the intimacy of marriage would be defiled by so intimate a relation. Paul is not providing information about the salvation of the unbelieving partner; he writes to assure his readers that the Christian spouse would not be defiled and hence should remain with the unbelieving partner (7:12-14). That partner is consecrated (ἡγιάσται) because, as Conzelmann points out, "in living together with the world, the 'saints' are the stronger party."⁴⁴ The sanctifying effect of the one is understood to overcome the uncleanly influence of the other. There is no hint in the context that ἀπλῶτος continues to be anything other than ἀκάθαρτος. As A. Thiselton says, "the meaning of a word depends not on what it is in itself, but

⁴³Cf. 2 Cor. 4:4; 6:14 and the discussion in Section One, III, "Judgment According to Works."

⁴⁴Conzelmann, First Corinthians, p. 122.

on its relation to other words and to other sentences which form its context."⁴⁵ So in light of our discussion, the presence of ἡγίστα is not a compelling reason to presume salvation for the unbelieving partner.

Second, salvation on the coattails of one's marriage partner seems unlikely in view of 7:16 which suggests that the unbelieving husband or wife is not yet saved but might be brought to faith at a later date.⁴⁶ We conclude, therefore, that ἀγιάζω is applied to the pagan in his marriage relationship, not because it implies saving benefits, but because it allows that the unbeliever now lives in the sphere of divine influence (ἐν τῇ γυναικί κτλ.), as Paul says, who knows "whether you will save your husband/wife" (1 Cor. 7:16).⁴⁷

The problem of the "holy" children in 1 Corinthians 7:14c is similar to what we find in the unbelieving marriage partners: Paul's use of ἅγιος seems to imply that the children are saved even though they do not actively have faith in Christ. In 14c Paul contrasts ἅγια with its opposite ἀκάθαρτα: "Otherwise, your children would be

⁴⁵A. Thiselton, "Semantics," in Marshall, New Testament Interpretation, pp. 78 f.

⁴⁶The difficult phrase τί γάρ οἶδας εἰ may even connote doubt regarding the future salvation of the unbelieving partner.

⁴⁷Cf. Robertson and Plummer First Corinthians, p. 142; Ridderbos, Paul, p. 264; Conzelmann, First Corinthians, p. 121, n. 27.

unclean, but as it is they are holy." So children having even one Christian parent are pronounced holy, but those without are considered unclean.⁴⁸ We wonder, therefore, whether these "holy" children are Christian in the same sense as their confessing parents. Paul surely sees them in a different light from those of pagan parentage, but does this imply salvation?

In approaching this question we must ask why these children should be considered holy. At least three possibilities arise: (1) because they have not yet reached the age of accountability, (2) because they have received infant baptism, and (3) because Christian parentage assures salvation apart from a formal profession of faith. The first two alternatives are not discussed by Paul. It would appear, however, that the age of accountability⁴⁹ is not at issue here because Paul points out that were it not for the believing parent, the children would be unclean.⁵⁰

The second possibility, the infant baptism dispute, is rife with seemingly unresolvable issues little connected to

⁴⁸The words "your children" are taken to mean children with at least one Christian parent. Cf. Schlatter, Paulus der Bote Jesus, p. 224; Ridderbos, Paul, pp. 412 f.; Conzelmann, First Corinthians, p. 123.

⁴⁹Discussion of childhood to adolescence and its accompanying responsibilities can be found in Safrai, et al., Jewish People, vol. 2, pp. 771-73.

⁵⁰There is no uniform opinion on the innocence of children in rabbinic literature. Cf. Albrecht Oepke TDNT 5:646 f.

the question of universalism. It is difficult to demonstrate from 1 Corinthians 7:14 (or 6:11) that baptisms were performed in order to make children holy (or even that infants were baptized).⁵¹ But if the children are considered holy because of baptism, we must recognize that baptism occurs within the sphere of Christian parentage.

The third alternative, Christian parentage, must on any reckoning be involved in Paul's statement that the children are holy. He seems to be saying that children of even one believing parent are "holy," i.e., they are within the covenant. Baptism may be involved but there is a clear link to Christian parentage. Of course, Paul may have overstated his case. In his zeal to persuade the Corinthians that unequal marriage did not give rise to unclean children, he may have too hastily pronounced the children holy. This is possible, but more likely is the suggestion that Paul's pronouncement is intended to "clinch" the whole argument that the marriage relationship is sanctified even if one's partner is an unbeliever. Barrett holds to this view: "The

⁵¹Discussion of this and other issues may be found in: Oscar Cullmann, Baptism in the New Testament, SBT 1 (London: 1950), pp. 43-45; Joachim Jeremias, Infant Baptism in the First Four Centuries, The Library of History and Doctrine, trans. David Cairns (London: 1960), pp. 44-48; Kurt Aland, Did the Early Church Baptize Infants?, The Library of History and Doctrine, trans G. R. Beasley-Murray (Philadelphia: 1963), passim; J. Jeremias, The Origins of Infant Baptism: A Further Reply to Kurt Aland, Studies in Historical Theology, trans. Dorothea M. Barton (London: 1963), pp. 36-38.

children are within the covenant; this could not be so if the marriage itself were unclean."⁵²

Consequently, if the children are understood to be holy in the full sense of the word, then they possess salvation apart from a formal profession of faith in Christ. We conclude, therefore, that vicarious baptisms and marriage relationships do not circumvent faith in Christ, but children who live in a household sanctified by at least one Christian parent are soteriologically secure: "they are holy." Yet, if one of these children at a later date chose to ally himself with the world by not participating in the body of Christ, he would almost certainly not be deemed Christian.⁵³

3. Summary

Faith in Christ is Paul's standard means of attaining salvation, but it is not his only means. We found this in our discussion of Gentiles who live up to the light given

⁵²Barrett, First Corinthians, p. 165. That the children are indeed holy is regarded as axiomatic by Paul; see Lightfoot, Notes, p. 226; Robertson and Plummer, First Corinthians, p. 142; Beasley-Murray, op. cit. p. 193.

⁵³1 Cor. 10:9: "We must not put the Lord to the test, as some of them did and were destroyed by serpents." Cf. Gal. 5:19-21 and Section One, III, "Judgment According to Works."

them and now we see this again with the "holy" children. They are secure under the soteriological umbrella of their believing parent(s).

Issues such as vicarious baptism and mixed marriages are not additional doors to salvation. Too little is known about the first to make such judgments and in the second Paul stresses that the world has no power over the believer. Children in a mixed marriage are holy, and even the unbelieving partner dwells in the sphere of the sacred, and may himself one day be saved.

C. RESURRECTION OF ONLY THE RIGHTEOUS?

It has sometimes been suggested that in Paul's theology only the righteous are raised from the dead.⁵⁴ This amounts to a belief in the annihilation of the wicked and may be the reason for Paul's seeming reluctance to speak of hell which we noted earlier.⁵⁵ If Paul restricted the resurrection to Christians, then 1 Corinthians 15:22 would be perceived in an entirely different light. The wicked would have no share

⁵⁴E.g., R. H. Charles, Eschatology: The Doctrine of a Future Life in Israel, Judaism and Christianity (New York: 1963), pp. 444-52. Cf. Alfred Plummer, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians, ICC (Edinburgh: 1915), p. 163.

⁵⁵Section One, I, A, "Hell and Eternity." There is also a possibility (raised later in this chapter) that the souls of the wicked will be brought to judgment even though their bodies lay unresurrected in the ground.

in coming eschatological riches and therefore Paul would not need to be careful in his language. He would expect everybody in Corinth to understand his reference to "all shall be made alive" (15:22b) because it could refer only to Christians; unbelievers would have no share in the resurrection.⁵⁶

It is noteworthy that neither here nor anywhere else does Paul explicitly discuss the resurrection with reference to the unbelieving.⁵⁷ One reason for this seeming oversight may be Paul's belief that unbelievers never actually have a bodily resurrection.⁵⁸ Paul, to be sure, does speak of a

⁵⁶That ζωοποιηθήσονται in v. 22 refers to bodily resurrection is clear from v. 21.

⁵⁷Filson, Recompense, p. 67 believes that references such as Rom. 4:17; 1 Cor. 15:21; 2 Cor. 1:9 indicate that Paul believed in a general resurrection of both righteous and unrighteous. These oblique references, however, are unsatisfying; the first and third are rarely understood as referring to a general resurrection (cf. the commentaries ad loc.), and the second, as we shall see, appears to be restricted to a resurrection of only the righteous (so also Eph. 2:1, 5). It is also worth noting that the saying or hymn fragment used in Eph. 5:14, "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light," does not suggest a resurrection of the wicked. Rather, the preceding context strongly implies that the new or weak Christians who are being admonished to "walk as children of light" are one and the same as those being encouraged to "awake...and arise."

⁵⁸Acts 24:15 records Paul as saying: "there will be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust." The question arises whether this speech should be taken as the ipsissima verba of Paul or rather as Pauline echoes within Luke's theological framework. Ernst Haenchen, The Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary, trans. Bernard Noble and Gerald Shinn, revised R. McL. Wilson (Philadelphia: 1971), pp. 656-59 rejects the notion that the speeches in Acts are entirely Lucan compositions
(Footnote Continued)

judgment for unbelievers: "by your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed" (Rom. 2:5); "the saints will judge the world" (1 Cor. 6:2); "when we are judged by the Lord, we are chastened so that we may not be condemned along with the world" (1 Cor. 11:32) and possibly "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive good or evil, according to what he has done in the body" (2 Cor. 5:10).

(Footnote Continued)

and maintains that Luke probably learned a few details concerning Paul's trial under Felix: "That Luke from such a notice could have created so colourful a story is the secret of his great art." I. Howard Marshall, "The Resurrection in the Acts of the Apostles," in Apostolic History and the Gospel: Biblical and Historical Essays Presented to F. F. Bruce on his 60th Birthday, ed. W. Ward Gasque and Ralph P. Martin (Grand Rapids: 1970), pp. 94 f. acknowledges that Paul's speeches have been thoroughly rewritten in Luke's own vocabulary and style but believes that Luke did use existing sources. F. F. Bruce, The Acts of the Apostles: The Greek Text with Introduction and Commentary (Chicago: 1952), p. 20 insists that from such sources Luke created a summary "giving at least the gist of what was really said." In any case, it is not unreasonable to doubt the reliability of Luke's reference to the resurrection of the unjust, especially in view of Paul's silence on the issue of his letters--in places where we would normally expect him at least to mention the unbelieving dead. If the veracity of Acts 24:15 is called into question then the door opens for us to examine whether Paul assumed a resurrection of only the just. And if this case can be made, the argument for universalism in 1 Cor. 15:22 is slender indeed. On the question of Luke's reliability, brief but informative discussion and bibliography can be found in F. F. Bruce, "The Speeches in Acts--Thirty Years After," in Reconciliation and Hope: New Testament Essays on Atonement and Eschatology Presented to L. L. Morris on his 60th Birthday, ed. Robert Banks (Grand Rapids: 1974), pp. 53-68 and W. Ward Gasque, "The Book of Acts and History," in Unity and Diversity in New Testament Theology: Essays in Honor of George E. Ladd, ed. Robert A. Guelich (Grand Rapids: 1978), pp. 54-72.

But judgment upon unbelievers does not necessitate a bodily resurrection. In other words, when Paul speaks of a judgment for unbelievers, he may presuppose not a resurrection of their bodies, but rather a bringing of their souls to final judgment. Precisely what it would mean for the "souls" of the wicked to be brought to final judgment is difficult to say. They might account for their wicked deeds and then be destroyed, or perhaps suffer some form of retribution in their disembodied state.⁵⁹ Perhaps the most that can be said is that when the believer receives his resurrection body, the unbeliever would not. To speculate beyond this to the "form" of the wicked would be unproductive. Plummer simply says: "If retribution begins immediately after death, there is no necessity for a resurrection of the wicked."⁶⁰

⁵⁹We might wonder how a disembodied soul can experience retribution, i.e., is not a body necessary for retribution? We cannot know Paul's thoughts but there are many examples in intertestamental literature where the disembodied do suffer retribution. Perhaps Paul shares a similar view. See examples below.

⁶⁰Second Corinthians, pp. 161 f.

1. Resurrection Belief in
Intertestamental Judaism

The idea of a bodily resurrection for both the righteous and the unrighteous is widely known in intertestamental and Christian writings.⁶¹ But the double resurrection is not taught consistently in the intertestamental literature. The following passages underscore various perceptions related to the fate of the wicked, but all three sets of texts illustrate the belief that the wicked have no part in the resurrection to life.

First, at times judgment is pronounced on disembodied souls or spirits of the wicked--with no hint of their bodily resurrection. For example, in 1 Enoch 22:11, 13 the spirits

⁶¹Test. Benj. 10:8; II Bar. 42:7 f.; 50:2-4; IV Ezra 7:32; Syb. Oracles 4:181-86; Apoc. Moses 41:2; Matt. 10:28; John 5:28 f.; Acts 24:15; Rev. 20:12 f. The two passages which deal with resurrection in Qumran (1QH 6:29 f.; 11:10-14) are obscure and not of significant value to the discussion. With respect to resurrection in the OT, Ezek. 37:11-14 and Hosea 6:1 f. suggest that Israel as a righteous nation would be raised; Isa. 26:19 apparently indicates a resurrection of the righteous only and Dan. 12:2 teaches that both the wicked and the righteous would be raised, though it is often held that this resurrection includes only the pre-eminently righteous and pre-eminently wicked. For this last, see Hans Clemens Caesarius Cavallin, Life After Death: Paul's Argument for the Resurrection of the Dead in 1 Cor 15; Part I, An Enquiry into the Jewish Background, Coniectanea Biblica: N.T. Series 7 (Lund: 1974), pp. 26 f. A survey of the various interpretations of Dan. 12:1 f. can be found in B. J. Afrink, "L'idée de résurrection d'après Dan., XII, 1.2," Bib 40 (1959), 355-62. Cf. Albrecht Oepke TDNT, 1:369 f.

of the dead wait in "hollow places" until the day of judgment:

[the wicked] spirits shall be set apart in this great pain till the great day of judgment and punishment and torment of those who curse for ever and retribution for their spirits. There he shall bind them for ever ...their spirits shall not be slain in the day of judgment nor shall they be raised from thence.

"Woe" is pronounced in 1 Enoch 103:8 on those who have died in their sins:

And into darkness and chains and a burning flame where there is grievous judgment shall your spirits enter: And the great judgment shall be for all the generations of the world. Woe to you, for ye shall have no peace.⁶²

In the Testament of the XII Patriarchs, the Testament of Asher, disembodied souls are condemned with no suggestion of resurrection: "When the soul departs troubled, it is tormented by the the evil spirit which also it served in lusts and evil works" (6:5). But sometimes, as in the Psalms of Solomon, the wicked are annihilated: "they that fear the Lord shall rise to eternal life" (3:16), but the wicked, "He falleth--very grievous is his fall--and riseth no more" (3:13).

Second, the apocalyptic writers often portray the righteous as the ones who attain the resurrection; the

⁶²This text also bears on the immortality of the soul. For a brief discussion together with texts, see D. S. Russell, The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic: 200 B.C. - A.D. 100 (Philadelphia: 1964), pp. 372 f.

wicked suffer destruction. For example, in 2 Baruch 30:2, 4, 5 at the consummation of the times,

all who have fallen asleep in hope of Him shall rise again....but the souls of the wicked, when they behold all these things, shall then waste away the more. For they shall know that their torment has come and their perdition has arrived.

Also, in 1 Enoch 91:9 f. the heathen are cast into the judgment of fire and perish in wrath (perhaps annihilated) while "the righteous shall arise from their sleep." The same is true of 1 Enoch 51:1; 92:3-5; 2 Enoch 8:5; 65:10, and the Testament of Judah 25 where the sense of the passages specifies resurrection for the righteous, but destruction for the wicked. The destruction seems permanent since there is no hint of a later resurrection.

Third, with respect to the immortality of the soul, some Wisdom writers hold that immortality applies only to the righteous; the wicked perish. *Wisdom of Solomon* 2:23 f. reads: "For god created man for incorruption, and made him in the image of his own eternity, but through the devil's envy death entered the world, and those who belong to his party experience it" (cf. 3:1). Furthermore, "perverse thoughts separate men from God...wisdom will not enter a deceitful soul, nor dwell in a body enslaved to sin" (1:3 f.). George Nickelsburg adequately summarizes the import of these Wisdom passages:

In the *Wisdom of Solomon*, immortality and life are not inherent in the soul. The person--or his soul--acquires life or death as a result of his actions in this life. Therefore it is the soul of only the righteous that is immortal. The wicked bring death upon themselves, death in an ultimate sense....The

righteous man attains to immortality when Wisdom, the spirit of the Lord, dwells in him (1:4-7) and this is not the gift of every man.⁶³

So there is great variety with respect to the fate of the soul-spirit-body in intertestamental Judaism; the double resurrection was widely known,⁶⁴ but resurrection of the wicked is often left in doubt or even denied.

D. S. Russell cautions, however, that "in Hebrew thought personality was wholly dependent on the body for its expression" and thus "if a man is to be adequately punished for the sins which he committed in the body, then it is in the body that he must suffer punishment for them...and not as a 'truncated personality' in the form of a discarnate spirit or disembodied soul."⁶⁵ But Russell does not intend this to include all intertestamental writers for, as we have seen, they are by no means consistent and, as Russell admits, it cannot be said that in the intertestamental period personality was always dependent on the body for its

⁶³George W. E. Nickelsburg, Jr., Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism, HTS 26 (1972), p. 179. Cf. Martin Hengel, Judaism and Hellenism: Studies in their Encounter in Palestine During the Early Hellenistic Period, Vol. 1, trans. John Bowden (Philadelphia: 1974), pp. 198 f. and Russell, op. cit., pp. 372 f.

⁶⁴See n. 61 above.

⁶⁵Op. cit., pp. 374 f.

expression since personality, in his words, "could be expressed also in terms of discarnate soul."⁶⁶

2. Resurrection Belief of the Pharisees

It would be attractive at this point to draw parallels between the apocalyptic writers who restricted the bodily resurrection to the righteous, and Paul who may have affirmed a similar view. Such Jewish "models," however, can be proffered only as possible antecedent beliefs which may or may not have influenced Paul.

But there are further reasons which suggest that Paul endorsed the single resurrection. As a Pharisee⁶⁷ he inherited the Pharisaic belief that only the righteous participated in the resurrection. According to Josephus the Pharisees did not contemplate a resurrection for the wicked:

Every soul, they maintain, is imperishable, but the soul of the good alone passes into another body, while the souls of the wicked suffer eternal punishment (War II, 163).

They believe that souls have power to survive death and that there are rewards and punishments under the earth for those who have led lives of virtue or vice: eternal imprisonment is the lot of evil souls, while the good souls receive an easy passage to a new life (Ant. XVIII, 14).

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Phil. 3:5; cf. Acts 23:6; 26:5.

Josephus, of course, may have been influenced by Greek thought in his description of Pharisaic resurrection belief.⁶⁸ This reduces, but by no means removes, the importance of his account. Indeed, Josephus may have been less influenced by Greek thought than some will allow. For example, much of the Hellenization in Josephus' writings may be because he was writing to a Greco-Roman audience and thus couched his description of Jewish sects in a way that would make sense to a pagan readership.

Still, if we say that Paul inherited his resurrection ideas from the Pharisees, we are faced with several problems. (1) Josephus might have been mistaken in his information about the Pharisaic doctrine of the resurrection, (2) Paul, after his conversion, might have modified his inherited Pharisaic teaching on the resurrection, and (3) the teaching quoted by Josephus might not have been a uniform Pharisaic view but rather a doctrine held in certain Pharisaic circles with which Paul had no contact.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Discussion of the issue may be found in Shaye J. D. Cohen, Josephus in Galilee and Rome: His vita and Development as a Historian, Columbia Studies in the Classical Tradition, 8 (Leiden: 1979), p. 106; George Foot Moore, Judaism: In the First Centuries of the Christian Era the Age of the Tannaim, Vol. II (Cambridge: 1932), pp. 317 f.; Str.-B. 4:1172 ff., 1188 f.; Schurer, History of the Jewish People, 1:48.

⁶⁹ Cf. Geerhardus Vos, The Pauline Eschatology (Grand Rapids: 1961), pp. 218 f.

Too much weight must not be accorded these objections. At bottom the first two are speculation; the last, though equally speculative, suffers from the fact that Josephus was a Palestinian Jew, living as Pharisee in Jerusalem (War I, 1; Life 1-5; 10-12) where Paul is said to have studied under the Pharisaic Rabban Gamaliel (Acts 22:3; 23:34).⁷⁰

Regardless whether Paul received his education in Jerusalem, it is almost certain that he was familiar with the Pharisaic teachings there because of his Jerusalem visits (Gal. 1:18; 2:1; cf. Acts 9:26; 11:27; 12:25). Therefore, even if the teaching of Josephus on the Pharisees (that they held to a resurrection of only the righteous) was not a uniform Pharisaic view, nevertheless, Josephus would have drawn upon his Jerusalem experience--a Pharisaic circle with which Paul was familiar.

⁷⁰Bornkamm, Paul, pp. 3 f. is an example of the many scholars who doubt Luke's account that Paul received his education in Jerusalem: "this all too clearly reveals Luke's inclination to make Paul an out-and-out Jew and connect him with Jerusalem as closely and as early as possible." Hengel remarks: "In what goes for critical scholarship...there is a tendency to doubt that the young Pharisee Paul was educated in Jerusalem....there is no reason to doubt that he was in the school ('sat at the feet') of Gamaliel I...." Martin Hengel, Acts and the History of Earliest Christianity, trans. John Bowden (Philadelphia: 1979), pp. 81-83. So also W. C. van Unnik who argues that Paul spent the years of his youth in Jerusalem. Tarsus or Jerusalem: The City of Paul's Youth, trans. George Ogg (London: 1962), pp. 17-45.

3. Paul's Resurrection Belief

Josephus' knowledge of the Pharisees and their resurrection beliefs may be accurate but the issue ultimately rests with Paul himself. Do his writings allow the view that unbelievers never actually experience a bodily resurrection?

It is significant that Paul never mentions the resurrection of the wicked. This may be because his attention is focused on questions related to his Christian readers, or because he sees no need to set forth the eschatological fate of the wicked, save that they are destined for wrath, destruction and death. Paul discusses the final resurrection in two central passages.

For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the archangel's call, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first; then we who are alive, who are left, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we always be with the Lord (1 Thess. 4:16 f.).

Lo, I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed...and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed... (1 Cor. 15:51 f.).

Paul's failure to mention a resurrection for the wicked in the Thessalonian passage suggests that if the wicked are resurrected at all it occurs at some other time, or, possibly, it is not a present concern of Paul who is addressing a different problem, viz., whether deceased Christians will "miss" the benefits of the parousia.

In 1 Corinthians 15:52 the discussion of the resurrection of the dead is restricted to Christians. We know this because in the context immediately preceding (15:42-51) Paul begins: "So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable." It would be exceedingly awkward to enlarge the scope of this text to include the presence of the wicked, as if the resurrection in 15:42a could refer to anything other than the righteous. The body in 15:42-57 is described as "imperishable," "spiritual," "raised in glory" and "raised in power." Certainly the resurrection "body" of the wicked would not be described in these terms.

To be sure, Paul's failure to mention the wicked when addressing the resurrection of believers is insufficient reason to conclude that the wicked are not raised. But this silence becomes understandable when we read Philippians 3:10 f. which appears to endorse a single resurrection.

That I might know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that if possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead (Phil. 3:10 f.).

Paul's statement, "That if possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead" (εἰ πως καταντήσω εἰς τὴν ἐξανάστασιν τὴν ἐκ νεκρῶν) could mean that some--perhaps

even Paul--might not attain the resurrection from the dead.⁷¹

Is it possible that Paul expresses doubt regarding his own resurrection from the dead? Even with consideration given to 1 Corinthians 9:27 ("lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified"), it seems remote that Paul should express genuine doubt. Elsewhere, throughout his letters, he has a confident expectation of the future, e.g., "we shall surely be united with him in a resurrection like his" (Rom. 6:5).⁷² G. B. Caird is probably correct in thinking that Paul writes in a spirit of deep humility and with a commendable distrust in self.⁷³

⁷¹The compound ἐξανάστασις occurs in the phrase τὴν ἐξανάστασιν τὴν ἐκ νεκρῶν but nowhere else in the NT, not in the LXX (cf. MM s.v.). The compound may indicate Paul's desire to emphasize a resurrection out of the dead or from among the dead (note the double occurrence of ἐκ) to counteract those who "denied the future hope on the mistaken ground that the only resurrection was a spiritualized one, already past," so Ralph P. Martin, Philippians, NCB (London: 1976), p. 135. Cf. also Peter Siber, Mit Christus leben: eine Studie zur paulinischen Auferstehungshoffnung (Zürich: 1971), pp. 116-22. In any case, use of the phrase does not measurably affect the discussion of the wicked and whether they are raised. Henry Alford, The Greek Testament, Vol. 3, revised Everett F. Harrison (Chicago: 1958), p. 181 rightly notes that the ἐξ in ἐξανάστασιν points to a rising up out of the dust rather than to a first resurrection.

⁷²Cf. Rom. 6:8; 8:16 f., 38 f.; 1 Cor. 5:51 f.; Phil. 1:21; 3:20 f.; 1 Thess. 4:14, 16.

⁷³G. B. Caird, Paul's Letters from Prison (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon), NCB (Oxford: 1976), p. 141. Martin, op. cit., pp. 135 f. wonders if the term ἐπὶ πῶς might not refer to the way in which Paul might attain the resurrection "whether by martyrdom or at a more distant
(Footnote Continued)

If we agree with Caird that Paul had confidence in the future but "dare[d] not presume on the divine mercy,"⁷⁴ then conceivably εἰ πως could indicate that some would not attain the resurrection of the dead. If one is evil or presumes on the divine mercy, he might not attain the resurrection. The implication is that those who do not have "righteousness from God that depends on faith" (Phil. 3:9), and do not "know him and the power of his resurrection" (v. 10), and do not "share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death" (v. 10), they also would not "attain the resurrection from the dead" (v. 11).

But this still does not provide a rationale for why Paul would think that only believers could be resurrected. We might say that he simply continued to hold his earlier Pharisaic single resurrection belief. This may be, but a further rationale can be provided. In 2 Corinthians 5:1-10 Paul takes up the question of death, and how the believer is to be resurrected.

For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Here indeed we groan, and long to put on our heavenly dwelling, so

(Footnote Continued)

time, as in 1:20-26. The last thing Paul wishes to imply is a hesitation about the full realization of Christian hope in the resurrection." Even so, Robert C. Tannehill, Dying and Rising With Christ: A Study in Pauline Theology (Berlin: 1967), p. 121 is right that "Paul uses εἰ πως instead of a purpose clause as at Rom. 8:17 in order to guard against the idea that this is something which the believer has in his pocket."

⁷⁴Caird, op. cit., p. 140.

that by putting it on we may not be found naked. For while we are still in this tent, we sigh with anxiety; not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life (2 Cor. 5:1-4).

Much could be said on this passage⁷⁵ but our primary concern is the nature of the resurrection body and its relation to universalism. Paul says that if the earthly tent we live in (ἡ ἐπίγειος ἡμῶν οἰκία τοῦ σκήνους) is destroyed or taken down (καταλυθῇ), we have a building (οἰκοδομήν) from God. This "building" is further defined as a "heavenly dwelling" or "garment" which is put on over the present "tent." The tent that we live in refers to our bodies⁷⁶ which are perishable,⁷⁷ and the building from God⁷⁸

⁷⁵ Bibliography may be found in Ernest-Bernard Allo, Saint Paul: Seconde Épître aux Corinthiens, Études Bibliques (Paris: 1956), pp. 137-55 and Murray J. Harris, "Resurrection and Immortality: Eight Theses," Themelios 1 (1976), 50-55.

⁷⁶ τοῦ σκήνους is taken as an epexegetical genitive explaining the nature of οἰκία which in turn designates the earthly body. This last is evident from γάρ which explains the previous verses (4:16 ff.). So the earthly tent (5:1) accords with the "outward man" which is wasting away and with the "unseen things" that are transient. It even reaches back to the "earthen vessels" (4:7), the "body" (4:10) and the "mortal flesh" (4:11). Cf. Bultmann, TNT 1:249. Wisd. Sol. 9:15 also relates σκήνος to the earthly body. Note C. K. Barrett's discussion in A Commentary On the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, HNTC (New York: 1973), pp. 151 f. who makes the point that the temporary nature of a tent "is a common picture of the earthly life and its setting in the body." So also Hebert M. Gale, The Use of Analogy in the Letters of Paul (Philadelphia: 1964), p. 156. Cf. Otto Michel, TDNT 5:132 f.

⁷⁷ 1 Cor. 15:42, 47, 53 f.

⁷⁸ Discussed below.

refers to the resurrection body which exists for us in heaven.⁷⁹

The meaning assigned to *ὁλκoδομή* is disputed. Some argue that the word denotes not the resurrection body of the individual Christian but rather the body of Christ in its entirety.⁸⁰ It is doubtful whether this view can stand. Robinson's point⁸¹ that *ὁλκoδομή* is always used by Paul to mean the body of Christ has been shown to be mistaken.⁸² If we assume a corporate rather than an individual

⁷⁹It is unlikely that the present tense (*ἔχομεν*) means that Paul envisaged a coatrack full of spiritual bodies awaiting believers. Plummer, *Second Corinthians*, p. 144 rightly notes that the "present tense is often used of a future which is absolutely certain." This meets John A. T. Robinson's objection (*The Body: A Study in Pauline Theology* (London: 1952), p. 77) that Paul cannot be speaking of the individual resurrection body because the present tense (*ἔχομεν*) demonstrates that the believer now possesses his resurrected body. Furthermore, Best (*One Body*, p. 161, n. 1) points out that interpreting the present in light of the future accords with v. 2 which says that we long to put on our heavenly dwelling, and hence, "the present tense must be taken eschatologically: though we have not yet entered it, we have this building from God in the sense that we are certain of it." So also Lietzmann/Kümmel, *Korinther*, p. 118 f.; Vos, *Pauline Eschatology*, p. 188; Barrett, *Second Corinthians*, pp. 151 f.

⁸⁰E.g., Robinson, *The Body*, pp. 76-83 and E. Earl Ellis, *Paul and His Recent Interpreters* (Grand Rapids: 1961), pp. 36-40. For further bibliography, see F. F. Bruce, *Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free* (Grand Rapids: 1977), pp. 311-13.

⁸¹*Op. cit.*, p. 76.

⁸²See Best, *One Body*, p. 161, n. 1. Cf. William Lillie, "An Approach to 2 Corinthians 5:1-10," *SJT* 30 (1977), 66 and C. F. Evans *Resurrection and the New Testament*, SBT, 12 (London: 1970), p. 158.

interpretation in 2 Corinthians 5:1 ff., we have difficulty with the phrase, "if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed," because "tent" strongly suggests that Paul has the individual body in mind.⁸³

Here the contrast lies between the temporary nature of the tent and the permanence of the heavenly body or dwelling (οὐρανίον). This interpretation fits well with verse 10 ("we must all appear before the judgment seat...") where Paul speaks of a judgment for each individual according to what he had done in his pre-resurrection body (ἵνα κομίσηται ἕκαστος τὰ διὰ τοῦ σώματος πρὸς ᾧ ἔπραξεν). Moreover, notwithstanding the difficulties involved in reconciling 1 Corinthians 15 with 2 Corinthians 5,⁸⁴ there does seem to be an undeniable correspondence between the spiritual body of 1 Corinthians 15:42 ff. and the heavenly dwelling of

⁸³ See n. 76 above.

⁸⁴ The problem is whether the change from an earthly to a heavenly body as described in 2 Cor. 5:1-10 is identical with the change at the last trumpet that takes place in 1 Cor. 15:51-54. This, and further questions such as whether the resurrection body is received at the parousia or at death, whether there is eschatological development, do not strictly relate to the discussion at hand. Cf. the commentaries ad loc.; J. N. Sevenster, "Some Remarks on ΓΥΜΝΟΣ in II Cor. V. 3," in Studia Paulina in honorem Johannis de Zwaan, ed. J. N. Sevenster and W. C. van Unnik (Haarlem: 1953), pp. 52-65; S. H. Hooke, The Resurrection of Christ as History and Experience (London: 1967), pp. 172-75; Frederick W. Danker, "Consolation in 2 Cor. 5:1-10," CTM 39 (1968), 552-56; Karel Hanhart, "Paul's Hope in the Face of Death," JBL 88 (1969), 445-57; F. F. Bruce, Paul, pp. 310-13; Eduard Schweizer TDNT 7:1060-62; Hurd, Origin of 1 Corinthians, p. 8 f., n. 3.

2 Corinthians 5:1-5, and this is further reason to believe that the body Paul is speaking about is the individual believer's body.

If this is so, where then does that leave unbelievers? In other words, the idea of the heavenly body we find in 2 Corinthians 5 suggests that it is a body already prepared or at least being prepared (ἔχομεν)⁸⁵ in heaven. It seems to be a body which in some sense fuses with this earthly body (v. 4, "not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life"). If this is the way Paul thinks the resurrection body is received, there would be little room for the unbeliever. He would not, it might be argued, have a heavenly body and he therefore would have no chance for resurrection.

5. Summary

Paul never discusses the resurrection of unbelievers, even though he assumes that they are accountable for their actions and will be brought to judgment. This may be

⁸⁵Lillie, art. cit., p. 67 wonders whether οἰκοδομή suggests "something under construction, something that God is preparing for his people (cf. John 14:2)." In addition, he suggests that even though the work of building may have its origin in heaven, nevertheless, it "may be going on in the hearts of men rather than on heavenly shelves."

because he expects that only believers will receive a bodily resurrection. The wicked are either annihilated or suffer God's wrath in their disembodied state.

In intertestamental Judaism we find that while the double resurrection is widespread and common, there are also many antecedents of the single resurrection. Since Paul appears to affirm the doctrine of the single resurrection, it may be that his pharisaic training contributed to his belief that God would raise only the righteous from the dead. This would be in keeping with Paul's understanding of the resurrection body which, by its very nature, would seem to exclude unbelievers.

D. SUMMARY OF CHAPTER

On semantic grounds 1 Corinthians 15:22 favors universalism. But the words which balance are not consonant with the ideas which do not. From the context of chapter 15 it appears that Paul restricts his comments to Christians when he says, "all shall be made alive." This suggests that Paul expects only those who belonged to Christ to be made alive. One explanation for this conclusion may be Paul's belief that only Christians participate in the resurrection of the dead. Unbelievers would be annihilated or would suffer God's wrath in their disembodied state.

Section Three

THE SOTERIOLOGICAL CONSEQUENCES OF COSMIC REDEMPTION

Thus far we have found that terms such as wrath, destruction and death often imply annihilation, and conceivably even an inescapable hell. But Paul never says that God's judgment is eternal¹ and he never directly mentions hell. Nevertheless, once in the eschaton, God's anger toward the wicked seems unrelenting. Never, for example, does Paul hint that eschatological wrath is remedial or purgative, as if God's wrath concealed his love, or his chastisement were designed to instruct wayward ones for a season in order to bring them into light and truth.²

The Pauline community, as with any sect, believed it possessed the truth; anyone preaching salvation outside the prescribed way was accursed. The community of faith consisted of those who believed in Christ, and as insiders, they were secure in the hope of a glorious future with Christ; but those outside would find in the eschaton only destruction and death.

¹The singular exception is found in the possibly deutero-Pauline epistle of 2 Thess. 1:9. See the discussion in Section One, I, D, "Destruction."

²Discussed in Section One, I, C, "Wrath."

Another set of texts, however, have yet to be discussed. These speak of final cosmic victory and harmonious relationships throughout creation. Through Christ God's reconciliation unites all things so that the whole of creation obtains the glorious liberty of the children of God. The following section, therefore, considers the possibility of cosmic redemption in Pauline theology.

Three subjects are examined: "The Liberation of the Cosmos" (Rom. 8:19-21); "The Divine Subjection of the Cosmos" (Eph. 1:10; Phil. 2:6-11); "The Reconciliation of the Cosmos" (Col. 1:20).

I. The Liberation of the Cosmos

The most striking passage on the final liberation of the cosmos is Romans 8:19-21:

For the creation (κτίσεως) waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God....because the creation (κτίσις) itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God.

A universalist reading of this text must presume that κτίσις is all-encompassing. Paul must expect that all humanity is destined to share the glorious fate of the children of God.³

A. ΚΟΣΜΟΣ AND ΚΤΙΣΙΣ

According to H. Sasse, κόσμος in the New Testament designates the "sum of all created things" as well as a "world which is now estranged from its Creator and Lord."⁴ In Pauline theology, at least, Sasse's understanding proves to be correct. Paul often chooses κόσμος to picture a world at enmity with God. He contrasts the wisdom of God with that of the world (1 Cor. 1:20 f.), stresses that "the

³The various meanings of κτίσις can be found in G. Gieraths, Knechtschaft und Freiheit der Schöpfung: Eine historisch-exegetische Untersuchung zu Röm 8, 19-22 (a doctoral thesis at University of Bonn, 1950), pp. 20-87, noted by Siber, Mit Christus leben, p. 145, n. 149. See also Henning Paulsen, Überlieferung und Auslegung in Römer 8, WMANT, 43 (Neukirchen: 1974), pp. 112-18.

⁴Hermann Sasse, TDNT 3:885. For the development of the word, see pp. 867-98 and BAGD 445-47.

wisdom of this world is folly with God" (3:19), and suggests
 ~ that Christians may be "chastened so that [they] may not be
 condemned along with the world" (11:32).

Naturally, κόσμος does not always imply nefarious activities. In Paul the term is not stamped with the negative impress that it bears in the Johannine circle and later gnostic texts. Sometimes it is used benignly as the sum of all that is--but never in a way that would suggest harmony with God. In short, κόσμος commonly represents an estrangement with the Creator.⁵

On the other hand, κτίσις and its derivatives do not connote estrangement or enmity with God, even though they regularly represent the sum total of everything created. The terms also can be applied restrictively to specify certain of God's creatures.⁶ With the possible exception of Romans 8:39, Paul never uses κτίσις (or κτίζω) in a way that would suggest hostile relationships between God and man.⁷

⁵As in 1 Cor. 2:12; 5:10; 7:31; 2 Cor. 5:19; 7:10; Gal. 4:3; 6:14; Phil. 2:15; cf. Eph. 2:2; Col. 2:8, 20; 1 Tim. 1:15; 3:16; 6:7; John 8:23; 12:25, 31; 13:1; 16:11; 18:36; 2 Pet. 2:20; 1 John 8:23; 12:25, 31; 13:1; 16:11; 18:36; 2 Pet. 2:20; 1 John 4:17; 5:19. In the remaining 26 occurrences of κόσμος (found in the traditional Pauline corpus), the word is used in a number of ways but never in a manner which would suggest harmony with God.

⁶The following passages allow for the restrictive translation "creature." Rom. 1:25; 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15; cf. Col. 1:23; Heb. 4:13; Jas. 1:18; Rev. 5:13; 8:9.

⁷All the occurrences in Paul are positive or neutral.
 κτίσις: Rom 1:20, 25; 8:19-22, 39; 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15;
 (Footnote Continued)

Rather, it is the κόσμος which becomes the willing participant in evil against God; the κτίσις is subjugated against its will and waits with eager longing to be set free (Rom. 8:19-23).⁸

In Romans 8:19, 21, Paul uses κτίσις to portray creation as anticipating its liberation from bondage. Doubtless, had he chosen κόσμος we would expect he meant the setting free of all men, believing and unbelieving, because κόσμος often involves the estranged creation in an overt way. As it is, Paul uses κτίσις--a word which carries no overtones of estrangement or enmity with God, either inside or outside the New Testament.

In and of itself, the presence of κτίσις tells us little. It is true that Paul would likely not choose κτίσις to denote the agents of wickedness, but we cannot suppose that the mere use of the word excludes all evil men or powers in Romans 8:19-23. The term, after all, often expresses an inclusive sense of created reality, representing the sum total of everything created--angels, demons, men, animals, trees, rocks--everything.⁹

(Footnote Continued)

cf. Col. 1:15, 23. κτίζω: Rom. 1:25; 1 Cor. 11:9; cf. Eph. 2:10, 15; 3:9; 4:24; Col. 1:16; 3:10; 1 Tim. 4:3.

⁸Horst R. Balz, Heilsvertrauen und Welterfahrung: Strukturen der paulinischen Eschatologie nach Römer 8, 18-39, BET, 59 (München: 1971), p. 48.

⁹See the many references in BAGD 455 f. and Werner Foerster, TDNT 3:1028-35.

B. THE EXTENT OF THE ΚΤΙΣΙΣ

If we regard Romans 8:19-23 as God's ultimate plan to "save" everyone, then the startling part of this revelation is that cosmic salvation will overcome divine wrath. Even those who suffer wrath in the eschaton (Rom. 2:5, 8; 1 Thess. 1:10; 5:9) will eventually be restored. This is especially striking because, as we have seen, when Paul speaks of eschatological wrath he gives no hint that it is anything other than final, and never does he suggest that it is reformatory. The focal point of the text to Paul's readers, therefore, would be the redemption of the wicked since, as believers, they alone expected to unite with Christ in glory.

So in Romans 8:19-23 Paul would be telling his readers that even the wicked (presumably after enduring God's wrath) would "obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God." It is odd, therefore, that Paul would not use his customary word to denote the agents of wickedness, viz., κόσμος. Consequently, his selection of κτίσις heightens the possibility that the cosmic salvation he is talking about is restricted to things that are not overtly evil. At this point we cannot be certain, but at least the presence of κτίσις draws attention to the possibility.

This brings us to a point where we must determine the parameters of κτίσις within the immediate context of verses

19-23. Various interpretations have been offered¹⁰ and for reasons of convenience the rational is usually separated from the non-rational in creation. This is a useful distinction and will be maintained in the following discussion.¹¹ Our task, therefore, is to determine what groups Paul intends when he says that the creation will be set free. Does he limit the $\kappa\tau\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\epsilon\varsigma$ to those of God's creation who can distinguish between right and wrong: angels, demons and the world of humanity? Or does he refer to the lower order of nature: animals, trees and rocks? We might even conclude that he means everything--the entire creation without exception.

The modern interpreter may wince at the difficulty of imagining the lower order of nature "longing for the revealing of the sons of God" (8:19). He may therefore anachronistically infer a Pauline preoccupation with the rational part of creation. But the conjecture that $\kappa\tau\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\epsilon\varsigma$

¹⁰ Discussion of these views may be found in a number of sources: Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer, Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the Epistle to the Romans, Vol. 2, trans. William P. Dickson and Frederick Crombie (Edinburgh: 1874), pp. 71-73; Sanday & Headlam, Romans, pp. 206-08; Otto Kuss, Der Römerbrief, Vol. 2 (Regensburg: 1959), pp. 622-24; Leenhardt, Romans, p. 219; Siber, Mit Christus leben, p. 145, n. 150; Cranfield, Romans, p. 411; Ulrich Wilckens, Der Brief an die Römer, EKK, 6/1 (Neukirchen: 1980), pp. 152 f. See Str.-B. 2:53 f.; 3:245 f. for the relating Jewish literature.

¹¹ But as we shall see such a differentiation is less clear than it would appear.

simply denotes rational creation is undermined by insuperable difficulties.

In the first place, despite being a part of the rational creation, believers seem to be excluded from the $\kappa\tau\acute{\iota}\sigma\iota\varsigma$ in verses 19-22. Immediately following these verses Paul explicitly contrasts the $\kappa\tau\acute{\iota}\sigma\iota\varsigma$ with believers (in v. 23) as if the two were different groups: "and not only the creation, but also we ourselves." One solution to this problem is to translate $\kappa\alpha\acute{\iota}$ as "especially" rather than "also." In this way the phrase would read, "and not only the creation, but especially we ourselves." This translation eliminates the contrast and has the advantage of allowing verse 19 to mean that believers are part of the creation who eagerly, expectantly wait.

This translation is not impossible, but the evidence for the contrast between the $\kappa\tau\acute{\iota}\sigma\iota\varsigma$ and believers is unmistakable. It occurs not only in the disputed verse 23 but also in verses 19 and 21. These texts make little sense unless we acknowledge a distinction between the $\kappa\tau\acute{\iota}\sigma\iota\varsigma$ and believers. We must therefore resist the temptation to equate believers with those who eagerly long for the divine unfolding of the eschatological plan.

But when Paul uses $\kappa\tau\acute{\iota}\sigma\iota\varsigma$, might he not mean unbelieving mankind (or evil powers)?¹² This possibility,

¹² Examples of this view can be found in Käsemann,
(Footnote Continued)

of course, is central to the question of universalism--the restoration of the wicked at the end. But advocates of this possibility are immediately embarrassed by the concomitant implications that unbelievers comprise the totality (or at least part of the totality) of those who are said to be waiting with "eager longing (ἀποκαταδοκία¹³) for the revealing of the sons of God" (v. 19).¹⁴ This proves to be an almost insurmountable difficulty, especially since Paul had earlier characterized many in this category as being the antithesis of ἀποκαταδοκία: "by their wickedness [they] suppress the truth....they did not see fit to acknowledge God" (Rom 1:18b, 28a; cf. 1:18-32).

Moreover, Cranfield makes a strong case against the inclusion of mankind in the κτίσις; his comment on οὐχ ἐκ οἰᾶ in Romans 8:20 is worth noting:

...if it is given the sense which seems natural in the context, namely 'not by its own choice', this seems to

(Footnote Continued)

Romans, pp. 232 f.; W. D. Stacey, "Paul's Certainties: II. God's Purpose in Creation--Romans viii. 22-23," ExpT 69 (1958), 178-81; Stauffer, New Testament Theology, trans. John Marsh (New York: 1955), pp. 74 f.

¹³ Ἀποκαταδοκία occurs in the NT only here and in Phil. 1:20. Wilckens (Römer, p. 152, n. 646) notes its close connection with "hope." The noun form with its double prefix may have been coined by Paul, so MM 63, cf. BAGD 92. James Denney is one example from a wide range of scholars who describe ἀποκαταδοκία as an "absorbed, persistent expectation--waiting, as it were, with uplifted head." St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, EGT, Vol. 2 (London: 1900), p. 649. Thus, we have an unparalleled example of the created universe waiting expectantly, Balz, Heilsvertrauen, pp. 37 ff. Cf. Paulsen, Überlieferung, p. 117 f.

¹⁴ The same concern applies to the evil powers.

rule out mankind generally; for, if Paul meant to include mankind when he used *κτίσις* here, he can hardly have intended to exclude Adam, the created man par excellence (had he intended to make so strange an exception, he must surely have indicated it), and Adam at any rate clearly cannot be said¹⁵ to have been subjected *οὐχ ἐκὼν* to *ματαίωτης*.

Although the matter is not beyond dispute, it appears that Paul's use of *κτίσις* designates not the world of the rational, but rather the lower order of nature: sub-human creation, animate and inanimate. Therefore, since the scope of *κτίσις* is decisive for any universalist interpretation of Romans 8:19-23, it seems unlikely that Paul envisaged a universal restoration.¹⁶

C. THE ANGUISH OF CREATION

If the creation that waits with eager longing is the lower order of nature we might wonder: Can sub-human creation be said to await anything? To us such a notion can

¹⁵Cranfield, *Romans*, p. 411.

¹⁶Cranfield (*ibid.*, p. 412) introduces a cautionary note saying that even if ἡ *κτίσις* refers only to the sub-human creation it still could include unbelieving mankind because the possibility remains that Paul "did not accept that human unbelief presents God with an eternal fact but saw believers as the first fruits of mankind." This suggestion will always be counted a possibility and must be adjudicated on a text by text basis.

appear nonsensical; to those in Hellenism and Judaism, however, this cosmology is legitimate.¹⁷ In Judaism the sin of Adam involves the earth as well: "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you" (Gen. 3:17).¹⁸

Evidently, Paul is following the line of thought which sees Adam's sin extending to the earth and its lower creatures (e.g., Isa. 24:5 f.; Jub. 3:25, 28; cf. Josephus, Ant. I, 49). Thus he can say that the creation longs to be freed (Rom. 8:19-23). The anguish of creation results from man's sin, but man in turn will be instrumental in its liberation.¹⁹

¹⁷ See the discussions in Best, One Body, pp. 116 f. and Davies, Judaism, pp. 38 f. Cf. Murray, Romans, p. 303, Dodd, Romans, pp. 133-35 and Cranfield, Romans, p. 412 who loosely characterize Paul's language as poetic or personification.

¹⁸ John G. Gibbs, Creation and Redemption: A Study in Pauline Theology, NovT, 26 (Leiden: 1971), p. 55 cites similar passages: Isa. 24:5; 33:9; Jer. 12:4, 11; Jub. 3:28; Apoc. Mos. 8:2; 24; 37:5; I En. 2-5:3; 7:5 f.; II Bar. 56:6; IV Ezra 7:11; Sir. 40:1-11. Cf. G. W. H. Lampe, "The New Testament Doctrine of KTISIS," SJT 17 (1964), 452 and Bailey, Death, p. 88.

¹⁹ Ernest Gauger, Der Römerbrief, Prophezei, Vol. 1 (Zürich: 1945), p. 303. On the basis of 1 Cor. 15:40 f. (different degrees of glory), Scroggs, The Last Adam, p. 72, suggests that Paul believed "the cosmos is destined for an existence of 'glory' similar to but not necessarily identical with that glory to be enjoyed by eschatological man." If this is so then we can understand how Paul would expect an eschatological restoration of the irrational creation to its pristine glory.

D. THE RENOVATION ON NATURE

Behind Romans 8:19-23 stands the Jewish belief in the Renovation of nature, a Messianic expectation of a new heavens and a new earth.²⁰ In Isaiah 65:17, cf. 66:22 ("For behold I create a new heavens and a new earth") the earth is renewed, the lower nature resumes its former glory--the wolf and lamb feed together (65:25). The entire creation is transformed and a new and glorious heavens and earth come into being. This "Good Time Coming"²¹ is deeply rooted in Judaism and, indeed, as Dahl points out, such an expectation

²⁰The expectation of a new heavens and a new earth was widespread but not uniform in its implementation. See Schurer, History of the Jewish People 2:537 f. and Helmut Traub, TDNT 5:514-16. Cf. Sanday and Headlam, Romans, pp. 210-12 and Cranfield, Romans, p. 415, n. 2. One qualification should be noted. Conzelmann, Outline, p. 15 is right to point out that the Renovation of heaven does not include heaven as the abode of God, for it is changeless.

²¹Dodd, Romans, p. 134 comments on the beliefs of Paul's contemporaries: "The material universe would be transfigured into a substance consisting of pure light or glory, thus returning to its original perfection as created by God." To this, T. W. Manson, On Paul and John: Some Selected Theological Themes, SBT, 38 (London: 1963), p. 26 adds, "Some transformation of the existing world seems to be implied in 1 Cor. 7:31: 'For the form of this world is passing away'." See further, Scroggs, The Last Adam, p. 56 who comments on the Rabbis' belief of a restoration of the original light created on the first day. Ernest Best, The Letter to the Romans (Cambridge: 1967), p. 98 emphasizes that man's sin separated himself and the creation from its original state of perfection and now scripture looks to a reconstituted and perfect universe--a new heaven and a new earth (Isa. 66:22; Rev. 21:1).

is widespread and characteristic of every religion that features an eschatology.²²

For our purposes, the crucial point to note in Jewish apocalyptic is that the Renovation of nature takes place without any extension of its benefits to the wicked. When the creation is restored and the righteous receive their inheritance, the wicked suffer loss. I Enoch 45:4-6 is typical:

On that day, I shall cause my Elect One to dwell among them, I shall transform heaven and make it a blessing of light forever....But sinners have come before me so that by judgment I shall destroy them from before the face of the earth.

II Baruch 44:12, 14 reads,

And that period is coming which will remain forever; and there is the new world which does not carry back to corruption....For the coming world will be given to these, but the habitation of the many others will be in the fire.

Similarly, in the Qumran literature the renewal does not afford the wicked salvation but destruction:

Until now the spirits of truth and falsehood struggle in the hearts of man....for God has established the two spirits in equal measure until the determined end, and until the Renewal, and He knows the reward of their deeds from all eternity....that the destiny of all the living may be according to the spirit within them at the time of the visitation (1QS 4:23-26).

²²Nils A Dahl, "Christ, Creation and the Church," in The Background of the New Testament and its Eschatology, ed. W. D. Davies and D. Daube (Cambridge: 1956), p. 425.

If a man's portion of the spirit of Darkness was great he would receive:

everlasting damnation by the avenging wrath of the fury of God, eternal torment and endless disgrace together with shameful extinction in the fire of the dark regions....God has ordained an end for falsehood, and at the time of the visitation He will destroy it for ever (1QS 4:12 f., 18 f.).

Pseudo-Philo²³ sees the events of the renewal in this way:

And it will happen when the appointed time of the world is fulfilled that the light will cease and the darkness will be extinguished and I will resurrect the dead and arouse those sleeping in the ground...and I will repay the wicked man according to the fruit of his deeds. ...and the earth shall no more be without growth, and its inhabitant will not be sterile, and those judged guilty will not defile it, for the new earth and the new heaven will be an everlasting habitation (Pseudo-Philo 3:10).²⁴

²³ Daniel J. Harrington (ed. & trans.), The Hebrew Fragments of Pseudo-Philo's Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum preserved in the Chronicles of Jerahmeel (Missoula: 1974), cf. M. R. James (trans.), The Biblical Antiquities of Philo, ed. H. M. Orlinsky (New York: 1971). Discussion of the dating of Pseudo-Philo can be found in Charlesworth, Pseudepigrapha and Modern Research, p. 170 f. who points out that the traditions found in Pseudo-Philo are not as late as earlier believed. He dates the work at about A.D. 100. Harrington, "The Biblical Text of Pseudo-Philo's Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum," CBQ 33 (1971), 1-7 suggests a pre A.D. 70 date because the writer makes no mention of the Temple's destruction. Similarly, George W. E. Nickelsburg assigns an early date, shortly before or after the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah: A Historical and Literary Introduction (Philadelphia: 1981), pp. 267 f.

²⁴ Other texts relating to Rom. 8:19-23 are 1QH 3:3-17; IV Ezra 4:35-43; 7:11-16; 9:38-10:14; II Bar. 15:6-8.

In rabbinic literature (later and therefore less valuable than the other quoted material) we find the clear implication that at the time of renewal salvation applies to the righteous, not the wicked. For example, in Midrash Tehillim 46:2 (from 3rd century but most extending over some later centuries, EncJud 11:1519) we read:

(Footnote Continued)

In these and other passages, the renewal associated with the "Good Time Coming" specifically applies to the righteous; it does not embrace all humanity.²⁵ In fact, many of the texts expressly state that the wicked are destroyed or removed from the earth. When no mention is made of the wicked, it is because the writer is preoccupied with the righteous, describing the delights in store for them.

The transformation of the heavens and earth noted in the root texts of Isaiah 65:17 and 66:22 reflect a similar cosmology. The writer expects the glory of God to be proclaimed among the Gentiles (66:19); some of their number

(Footnote Continued)

"The sons of Korah said: 'Fear not on the day when the Holy One, blessed be He, will shake the wicked out of the earth,' as it is said 'To take hold of the ends of the earth, that the wicked might be shaken out of it' (Job 38:13), and also 'for behold, I create new heavens and a new earth' (Isa. 65:17). On that day where will the righteous stand? They will cleave to the throne of glory which is under the wings of the Presence." Similarly the *Pesikta de Rab Kahana* 9:1 (c. 5th century, *EncJud* 13:334) reports: "the bestowal of reward upon the righteous will be without end...so, if not in this world, then surely in the world-to-come the infliction of punishment upon the wicked will be without end." Dahl, "Christ, Creation and the Church," p. 428 even asserts that the predominant view in rabbinic sources is that the powers of darkness were to be eliminated in the new creation. Unfortunately, he cites no texts.

²⁵I can find no passage in the context of renewal which suggests otherwise. Possible exceptions might be in the Testament of the XII Patriarchs, T. Levi 2:11; 4:4; T. Zeb. 9:7 f.; T. Asher 7:3; cf. T. Jos. 19:11; T. Ben 10:5. But these are not linked to the renewal and are not held consistently. Parallels more closely aligned with Phil. 2:6-11 are cited in Section Three, II, "The Divine Subjection of the Cosmos."

will even become priests (66:21), but destruction will befall the enemies who rebel (66:24). The hope and expectation of the "Good Time Coming" was a hope of the righteous, and its benefits were intended specifically for the righteous. It was not perceived as a blessing for the wicked.²⁶

E. SUMMARY OF CHAPTER

It is unwise to build too heavily on the use or non-use of a word. Both κόσμος and κτίσις can be used to designate the entire creation, and as such, both may include elements of evil. But κόσμος commonly implies a creation at odds with its Creator; κτίσις does not. From this, however, we should not conclude that Paul's use of κτίσις in Romans 8:19-23 excludes the elements of evil from the coming restoration. Rather, it alerts us to the possibility.

The immediate context of 8:19-23 strongly indicates that, indeed, Paul has in mind a Renovation of the lower order of nature--not a restoration of the wicked. This is

²⁶See further Jub. 1:29; 4:26; I En. 72:1; 91:16; II Bar. 36:4-6; 51:8, 16; 57:2; 74:2; IV Ezra 7:75, 96; 1QH 11:13 f.; 13: 11-13; Str.-B. 3:842-47 for rabbinic citations; cf. further TB Ber. 17a (102); TB Meg. 15a (90); Gen.R. 95.1; Pesik. 22.5a; S2.1; S5.4; Pesik.R. 14.15; 26.6; 31.6; 36.2; 37.2; Did. 10:6; II Clem. 11; Barn. 6:13. The New Testament passages relying on Isa. 65:17 and 66:22 are Matt. 19:28; Gal. 6:15; 2 Pet. 3:13 and Rev. 21:1.

confirmed not only by an examination of verses 19-23, but, by the Jewish understanding of the Renovation of nature.

To the contemporary mind it might appear illogical to speak of a new heavens and a new earth and at the same time expect part of the "earth" to be destroyed. If we were to hold these writers to a rigid consistency, we might demand that everything without exception be rejuvenated in the Renovation. Yet, the Jewish literature of late antiquity does not pursue this line of thought to an ultimate and favorable conclusion for the wicked. On the contrary, the writers are inclined to dismiss the wicked as hostile elements, as intrusions which mar the landscape of God's Renovation. Indeed, an essential element of the Renovation appears to be the removal of the wicked.

But inconsistency (as we would call it) in a society's beliefs should not disturb us. As Peter Berger has shown, a society does not live in a world of consistent ideas or coherent propositions; it constructs its own reality--one which is self-evident and one in which it feels secure and comfortable.²⁷

Hence, when Jewish apocalyptic writers refer to the cosmic hope of liberation and freedom, they are not concerned to apply renewal consistently to every aspect of creation. They consciously exclude the wicked. One might

²⁷ Berger, Social Construction of Reality, p. 15 and Sacred Canopy, pp. 30, 41.

argue, of course, that Paul does not continue this tradition but has an additional eschatological hope which benefits the unbelieving portion of mankind. But, as we have seen, in Romans 8:19, 21 this view has little to commend it.

We have argued that the $\kappa\tau\lambda\sigma\iota\varsigma$ likely excludes the world of people. Moreover, we have found that in the Jewish literature outside Paul the redemptive scope of cosmic renewal never encompasses all humanity. It would, be imprudent, therefore, to insist that in Romans 8:19, 21 Paul consciously intends for the wicked to share the fate of the children of God.

II. THE DIVINE SUBJECTION OF THE COSMOS

The question of universalism is also raised by the cosmic scope of Ephesians 1:10:¹ "As a plan for the fulness of time, to unite (ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι) all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth." Many scholars cannot accept Ephesians as Pauline, or even as substantially dependent on Paul. The question of authorship, however, is incidental to our present purposes. An intriguing case for universalism can be argued from this letter, whether it be Pauline universalism or not. We will therefore examine the universalist tendencies in the text without passing judgment on the question of authorship.

Besides Ephesians 1:10 (and 1:22 f.), universalist interpretations emerge in the Philippian hymn (2:6-11) where "every knee" bows and "every tongue" confesses that Jesus is Lord. This will be examined later in the chapter, but at present we turn to Ephesians 1:10 and the meaning of ἀνακεφαλαιόω.

¹ The cosmic scope is indicated by the phrase, "things in heaven and things on earth." Cf. Martin Dibelius and Heinrich Greeven, Ant die Kolosser, Epheser, an Philemon, HNT, 12 (Tübingen: 1953), pp. 63-65; Franz Mussner, Christus, das All und die Kirche: Studien zur Theologie des Epheserbriefes, Trierer Theologische Studien, 5 (Trier: 1968), p. 29; Gnllka, Epheserbrief, p. 81.

A. THE CONTEXT OF ΑΝΑΚΕΦΑΛΑΙΩ

The relation of ἀνακεφ. to its immediate context makes little difference to the question of universal salvation. Whether one understands the infinitive as connected with (1) μυστήριον or (2) εὐδοκίαν (with the following ἦν...καιρῶν forming a parenthetical clause), or (3) προέθετο, or (4) the nearby clause εἰς οἰκονομίαν ...καιρῶν or (5) the whole thought from γνωρίσας to καιρῶν,² the question still remains: Does ἀνακεφ. imply universal salvation for mankind?

The prospect of universalism, however, is enhanced if the ἀνακεφ. can be construed as specifying the divine θέλημα (cf. ἦν προέθετο) alluded to in verse 9. In other words, the θέλημα here may pick up θέλημα in verse 5 which clearly has soteriological implications. On this reckoning, the act of cosmic ἀνακεφ. in 1:10 would have a soteriological connection, and the scope of it (τὰ πάντα...τὰ ἐπὶ τοῖς οὐρανοῖς καὶ τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς) might be similar to what we find in Col. 1:15-20, viz., cosmic reconciliation. Thus the gathering together of all things in Ephesians 1:10 might be another way of saying, to paraphrase Origen, that ultimately

²These positions are set forth fully in S. D. F. Salmond, The Epistle to the Ephesians, EGT, Vol. 3 (London: 1900), p. 260 and Schlier, Epheser, p. 62, n. 1.

even the most reprobate of God's creation will be overcome by the irresistible goodness of God.³

At first sight, Ephesians might appear to disclose a redemptive plan working in behalf of evil powers to bring about their salvation. The church already operates "in the heavenly places" (1:3) and as such makes known "the manifold wisdom of God...to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places" (3:10). The point is that if these "principalities and powers" are malevolent, this may suggest a redemptive plan that incorporates the very forces of the Evil One. Naturally, by extension, such an inclusive plan would also encompass humanity as part of the redeemed cosmos. But this interpretation requires us to assume that θελήματος in verse 9 is directly linked with the ἀνακεφ. even though the clause εἰς οἰκονομίαν...καιρῶν is nearer to ἀνακεφ. and therefore the more natural choice.

But before the discussion of heavenly powers we must determine the meaning of ἀνακεφ. To be sure, the compound ἀνακεφαλαιόω is derived from κεφάλαιον and not κεφαλή.⁴ Generally, κεφάλαιον (and the verb κεφαλαιόω) translate as "the total amount" of a column of figures or "the chief or main points" (a summarizing) of what has been said.⁵ The

³ De Princ. 1, 6, 2; Contra Cels. 8, 72.

⁴ Overwhelmingly supported by the commentators and interpreters. See also MM s.v.

⁵ BAGD s.v.; MM s.v.

preposition ἀνά in this context has been taken variously to mean "again," "up," "over" and "together."⁶ Consequently, three alternative interpretations of the compound ἀνακεφαλαιόω have dominated scholarly debate: (1) that it points to a repeating, renewal or recapitulation of all things,⁷ (2) that it represents Christ as head⁸ and (3) that it expresses a unification of all things.⁹

B. INTERPRETATIONS OF ANAKEΦΑΛΑΙΩ

The first interpretation, though possible, must contend with the infrequency of its meaning. "In literature close to the NT," says M. Barth, "the meaning of 'repeat,' occurs only once" (e.g., Protevangelium of James 13:1) and, moreover, "Ephesians contains no trace of a recapitulation

⁶Gibbs, Creation, pp. 119 f. and Salmond, op cit., p. 261 discuss the various possibilities.

⁷Early represented by Irenaeus, Adversus Haereses I, 10:1; III, 22:2; cf. I, 3:4. Michaelis, Versöhnung, p. 22 f. cavils at the possibility that ἀνα- should mean reaching again a former state that had been lost. Rather he thinks that ἀνα- denotes an unknown new state for the totality of the cosmos which had never previously been achieved.

⁸E.g., John Chrysostom, Homiliae in epistolam ad Ephesios, PG 62, ed. J.-P. Migne (Paris: 1862), col. 16 and more recently Schlier, TDNT 3:682 and Epheser, p. 65. Michaelis, op. cit., pp. 22-26 holds that ἀνακεφ. attests to both a renewal and the headship of Christ.

⁹Most widely held position.

theory."¹⁰ Actually, the recapitulation inference draws its true strength not from Ephesians nor from an examination of ἀνακεφ. Rather, its proponents appeal to other texts such as Colossians 1:20 as well as Romans 5:18 f.; 8:19-23; 11:32; 1 Corinthians 15:22 and Philipians 2:6-11 in order to establish its universalist credentials. Therefore, the promise that this rare term, ἀνακεφαλαιόω, discloses universalism is best judged by an examination of the cited texts themselves.

The second interpretation holds that the headship of Christ can be inferred from the broader context. It is readily acknowledged that the verb ἀνακεφαλαιόω comes not from κεφαλή (head) but from κεφάλαιον, nevertheless, the former is invoked on the basis of its presence in 1:22 (καὶ αὐτὸν ἔδωκεν κεφαλὴν ὑπὲρ πάντα τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ). The effect then would be to allow κεφαλή to condition the meaning of κεφάλαιον such that some understanding of headship of Christ would be implied in 1:10.

But this view raises problems.¹¹ Clearly Christ must be understood as "head" in verse 22 but it seems somewhat

¹⁰M. Barth, Ephesians, pp. 90 f. Cf. John McHugh, "A Reconsideration of Ephesians 1.10b in the Light of Irenaeus," in Paul and Paulinism: Essays in Honour of C. K. Barrett, ed. M. D. Hooker and S. G. Wilson (London: 1982), pp. 302-09.

¹¹See C. H. Dodd's review of TWNT in JTS 39 (1938), 293 which finds Schlier's suggestion that κεφάλαιον ought to be understood in terms of κεφαλή to be "methodologically questionable."

hazardous to impose this meaning on verse 10. How the reader in verse 10 could be expected to anticipate the κεφαλή twelve verses hence is difficult to see. It is equally difficult to understand why, if the notion of headship were intended in verse 10, the writer of Ephesians did not introduce κεφαλή at this point--especially since κεφάλαιον was widely used and understood to mean something quite different, viz., "sum" or "total."¹²

This brings us to the third interpretation of ἀνακεφαλαιώ, "unification," which has been extrapolated from the root elements of summarization and totaling. Here the word means a gathering together or a unifying of all things in Christ. But gathering together and unifying are not always synonymous in meaning and we might wish to distinguish between the two. The latter, for example, may designate a reconciliation of the parts to one another, the former not necessarily so. For the moment we will leave this question open and for convenience will proceed using the terms interchangeably.

¹²"The commonness of κεφάλαιον, 'sum,' 'total' would make the meaning obvious even to ordinary readers" (so MM "ἀνακεφαλαιώ"). It is more reasonable, therefore, to assume that the writer of Ephesians intended the usual meaning rather than a special rendering of the word. Cf. Barr, Semantics, pp. 237 f.: "although it is possible that the thought of the Head may have crossed the writer's mind, it is rather unlikely that it was so determinative...." Ernst Gaugler, Der Epheserbrief, Auslegung Neutestamentlicher Schriften, 6 (Zürich: 1966), pp. 46 f. also finds Schlier's position (that κεφάλαιον is conditioned by the later κεφαλή) semantically weak.

As noted above, the true etymology of ἀνακεφ. connects with κεφάλαιον which designates a summing up or a drawing together of things. Outside Ephesians 1:10 ἀνακεφ. occurs only once in the New Testament, Romans 13:9. There Paul states that the whole law is "summed up" in the command to love one's neighbor. In the absence of convincing evidence favoring the other two interpretations of recapitulation and head, it seems preferable to regard ἀνακεφ. in Ephesians 1:10 as expressing a unifying or gathering together of all things in Christ.

One further issue: M. Barth, while recognizing the etymological barriers of ascribing "headship" to κεφάλαιον, offers a compromise understanding of ἀνακεφ.¹³ Like Schlier,¹⁴ he finds it difficult to ignore the context of 1:22 and argues that the inexplicable ἀνακεφ.,

has been given a new meaning by the author of Ephesians--if only his own later words in the same epistle are permitted to serve as dictionary and commentary.

Barth, therefore, speaks of blending "headship" with "unification" so that in the end Christ unites all things divided and hostile under his reconciling headship.¹⁵

¹³M. Barth, Ephesians, pp. 91 f.

¹⁴TDNT 3:681 f.

¹⁵In his commentary, Schlier (Epheser, p. 65) moves much closer to the above position. He maintains that the ἀνακεφ. of the "all" in Christ means that God gives to them a head under whom everything will be unified. Cf. also

(Footnote Continued)

It is not readily apparent how this avoids the objections outlined above. Perhaps one might say that just as a word has shades of meaning, so too, ἀνακεφ. has the general meaning of "gathering up" but carries with it overtones of "headship" when it is connected with Christ.¹⁶ The blending of these two passages provides a striking confirmation of the universalist perspective. If headship in 1:10 is the same as, and therefore as soteriological as, the role of Christ in 1:22--head of the church--then the case for universalism in Ephesians would be forceful indeed. Not only would Christ be the salvific head of the church, but of the cosmos as well. This issue, therefore, merits closer scrutiny.¹⁷

(Footnote Continued)

Michaelis, Versöhnung, pp. 23, 25 who acknowledges the question of derivation but insists that the "larger meaning" of ἀνακεφ. carries with it the notion of headship since Christ as head is found repeatedly in Eph. (1:22; 4:15; 5:23) and, further, Col. 1:20 supports this view of Eph. 1:10.

¹⁶Gnilka, Epheserbrief, p. 80 warns that the grammatical observation alone that ἀνακεφ. is derived from κεφάλαιον rather than κεφαλή is not decisive. He suggests that after Christ is recognized, he takes on the position of head over all, and in him all things are brought together under his headship.

¹⁷I note here that neither Schlief nor M. Barth is pressing this kind of question (though Barth, Ephesians, pp. 156 f. comes close). This question, however, does seem a natural corollary. Also, the assignment of Christ as head of the church in 1:22 requires qualification. See below.

C. CHRIST AS HEAD

A universalist interpretation of 1:22b becomes viable if we assume that Christ's function is "head over all things," rather than the more limited "head of the church." As head of the cosmos, Christ would be God's gift to the church. To be sure, grammatically it is more natural to take 1:22b as designating Christ head over all things. Less likely is the view that τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ is a dative of reference limiting the extent of Christ's headship to the church.

It is true that elsewhere Christ is designated head of the church (Eph. 4:15; 5:23), but this must not obscure the cosmic dimension of ὑπὲρ πάντα in 1:22b. This phrase, with its use of πάντα, appears to pick up the cosmic dimension of the πάντα immediately preceding it in 1:22a: "and he has put all things under his feet" (a citation of Psalm 8:7, LXX 8:7).

Actually, the question of universalism in Ephesians 1:22 would not arise if the phrase κεφαλὴν ὑ. π. referred explicitly to standard ecclesial jurisdiction. But apparently it does not. The particularist, therefore, is faced with a problem. He must explain how the gift character of Christ's cosmic headship relates to the church if an all-inclusive cosmic redemption is not implied? Might we not reasonably suppose that Christ's headship implies saving benefits for all?

1. Cosmic Salvation or Conquest?

It has earlier been noted (on the second page of this chapter) that because the church already operates in the heavenlies and makes known the wisdom of God to the principalities and powers, this might point to a redemptive plan extending even to the malevolent powers. God's redemptive activity, it might be said, is already at work in the present. Yet, Ephesians does not say that the church consists of all humanity, at least not during this evil age (2:1-5, 11, 12; 4:14-18; 5:5, 6). Nor at this time does it include the heavenly powers which in fact continually wage war with the body of Christ (6:10-17). Rather, the church is the body of Christ, consisting of Jews and Gentiles reconciled to God (2:16; 3:6).

So the church, of which "Christ...is himself its Savior" (5:23), cannot be understood as incorporating the totality of the cosmos in the present. To assume that Ephesians 1:10, 22b imply a universal hope on the basis of such realized eschatological texts as 1:3, 20; 3:10 is unwarranted.

On the other hand, even if we acknowledge a present adversarial relationship between the church and evil men or powers, it might still be argued that the redemptive plan is in its incipient stages and will ultimately blossom to cosmic salvation. This attractive suggestion has the advantage that it stresses an eschatological salvific

process but does not specify when or how it should transpire. It may occur even after postmortem purgative trials. But in the end God will unite all things in Christ making him head over the cosmos so that he fills all in all.

This view, however, faces a major difficulty.¹⁸ If the πάντα in 1:22b does pick up the cosmic dimension of πάντα in 1:22a ("and he has put all things under his feet"), then the relation of Christ to the cosmos is probably better understood as a proclamation of Christ's supremacy over all things. The writer of Ephesians seems to be stressing the completeness of Christ's conquest; in the clauses immediately preceding 1:22a he says, for example, that Christ sits "at [God's] right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named..." (1:19-21). There may even be parallels to Paul's thought in 1 Corinthians 15:25 where all enemies are put under Christ's feet.¹⁹

So from this perspective cosmic conquest rather than cosmic salvation appears to be uppermost in our writer's mind. Perhaps a supreme Christ over all things is all that should be extracted from the cosmic passages. The

¹⁸Whiteley, Theology, p. 95 comments that Eph. 1:10 "could be understood as an indication of eventual universal salvation but that would be to take the words as an answer to a question which has not been asked."

¹⁹Cf. Section Three, III, "Reconciliation of the Cosmos" which discusses the role of the hostile powers in Colossians.

particularist, however, faces an additional problem. If Christ is head of the cosmos, or to put it another way, if a loving Christ is supreme, would his headship not lead to universalism?

2. Divine Headship and Salvation

It is possible that divine headship itself might imply saving benefits. One might argue, for instance, that the mere presence of Christ in the role of "divine head" accrues saving benefits for those under his jurisdiction. As subjects of Christ, therefore, all creation would ultimately be saved.

But elsewhere jurisdiction is no guarantor of salvation. In the Old Testament, post-Old Testament Judaism and early Christianity, whenever God²⁰ or an angel (e.g., Michael²¹ and Melchizedek²²) is placed at the head of all

²⁰E.g., Deut. 4:32-40; Ps. 82; 89:5-37; 90; Isa. 2; 40; Jer. 10; Amos 1; 2; Add. Esth. C, 1-4; Sir. 10:4; 17:15-24; 18:11-14; 43:26; Bel. 5; II Macc. 6:14; I En. 9; 10; 84; Sib. Or. 3:11-62; III Macc. 2:2-20; 6; 12; 1QM 10:8-15; Philo, Rev. Div. Her. 23; Vit. Mos. 2, 117-35; Quaest. in Ex. 2, 68, 117; Diognetus 7; I Clem. 59:37.

²¹E.g., Dan. 12:1-3; Sir. 17:15-24; III Bur. 11-17; 1QS 3:24; 1QM 13:9 f.; 17:5-9; Hermas, Sim. VIII, 1-3; Pseud. Clem., Recog. II, 42. With respect to archangels, see I En. 20; 40:9-10; 54:6.

²²E.g., 11QMelch. 6-16. At times the functions of Christ, Melchizedek and Michael run parallel in Jewish and Christian literature. This, however, is not a concern in
(Footnote Continued)

things, and is represented as being in control of creation or nations, this jurisdiction is invariably restricted to control over history or evil forces, but does not include the unconditional salvation of all those under jurisdiction. Indeed, in most cases where such control is depicted, the writers often make a distinction between the righteous and the wicked in the immediate or surrounding contexts.

Hellenistic literature also provides no satisfactory examples of cosmic headship in the role of bestowing universal salvation. Zeus and the other Olympians conferred neither personal salvation nor immortality on their subjects.²³ Examples such as Orphic fragment 168 where Zeus is head (κεφαλή) of the cosmos do not promise "salvation" and appear to be quite different from the soteriological content of Ephesians.²⁴ The designations of σωτήρ or εὐεργέτης also provide little help. For example, Antigonus (IV century B.C.) is described as εὐεργέτηι γενομένῳ καὶ προθύμῳ ἐόντι εἰς τὴν πόλιν, Nero as σωσικόσμοις and Trajan as ὁ παντὸς κόσμου σωτήρ καὶ εὐεργέτης, but with the

(Footnote Continued)

the present discussion. See M. De Jonge and A. S. Van der Woude, "11Q Melchizedek and the New Testament," NTS 12 (1965-66), 301-05 and Oscar Cullmann, The Christology of the New Testament, trans. S. C. Guthrie and C. A. M. Hall (Philadelphia: 1962), pp. 84-86 for bibliography and discussion.

²³William Woodthorpe Tarn, Hellenistic Civilization, rev. W. Tarn and G. T. Griffith (London: 1952), p. 53.

²⁴Cf. Heinrich Schlier, TDNT 3:676.

exception of Nero these are honorific epithets conferring respect or honor not eschatological salvation.²⁵

When men did take to serious king-worship of such figures as Ptolemy I, Antiochus Epiphanes and Nero, the Benefactor-king was not expected to provide eschatological salvation, but rather, in return for obedience he provided deliverance from enemies, protection from hostile nations and practical help in times of need. Disobedience, on the other hand, always brought punishment.²⁶

The point is that if examples were available in which "divine headship" were perceived as bestowing salvation on its subjects, then we would have established some external basis for acknowledging the possibility that Christ as head bestows salvation. The linking of headship with salvation, for example, might have been "in the air" during the first century and readily accessible to our writer who in turn used it to express his cosmic *understanding of salvation* in

²⁵ Cf. MM, s.v.; Lid.-S., s.v.; BAGD, s.v.; Adolph Deissmann, Light From the Ancient East: The New Testament Illustrated by Recently Discovered Texts of the Graeco Roman World, trans. Lionel R. M. Strachan (New York: 1927), pp. 364 f.; Lily Ross Taylor, The Divinity of the Roman Emperor, American Philological Association, Monograph Series, 1 (Chico, Calif.: 1931), passim; Eduard Lohse, The New Testament Environment, trans. John E. Steely (Nashville: 1976), pp. 216-21; David R. Cartlidge and David L. Dungan, Documents for the Study of the Gospels (Philadelphia: 1980), pp. 13-22; Frederick W. Danker, Benefactor: Epigraphic Study of a Graeco-Roman and New Testament Semantic Field (St. Louis: 1982), pp. 323-25; 369-71.

²⁶ Tarn, op. cit., pp. 52-54.

Christ. Therefore, beyond internal considerations within the body of Ephesians and in the wider context of Paul's theology, we would have an important piece of evidence pointing in the direction of universalism. If others by their headship confer salvation--how much more so Christ.

But since universal salvation is not implied by divine headship in Judaism, early Christianity or Hellenistic thought, there is no reason to assume that such broad saving benefits are implicit in the headship of Ephesians 1:22b (1:10)--as if cosmic headship itself were a guarantee of ultimate salvation regardless of whether one is wicked or righteous.

This is not to say that the absence of salvific headship in other circles requires that it also be absent in Ephesians. One might argue that the presence of Christ allows a different eschatological scenario. With Christ, cosmic headship might imply cosmic salvation.

This principle, however, is not picked up in the few references we have to Christ's headship in early Christianity. The placing of Christ at the head of all things or in control of mankind (as we found in the case of God, Michael and Melchizedek) makes no difference with respect to the ultimate destiny of mankind. For example, the Shepherd of Hermas, Similitude IX, 12, 5-8 places Christ in a headship role but salvation remains the inheritance of believers only. Hermas says that entrance to the kingdom of God is controlled by Christ who is the one "gateway" to

life. Yet, in spite of this supreme position, some in due course will be rejected (Sim. IX, 14, et pass.). Ignatius in his letter to the Philadelphians 9 can speak of Christ exercising providence over all things but at the same time can also warn (ch. 8) that to disobey Christ is manifest destruction. Similarly, Polycarp to the Philippians 2:1 echoes Paul's words in Philippians 2:5-11 (cf. 1 Pet. 3:22) where all things in heaven and on earth are subject to Christ. Yet, Polycarp portrays the scene as one of judgment. Christ's blood will be required of those who do not believe. Also, Irenaeus, Adversus Haereses I, 10:1 employs Ephesians 1:10 and Philippians 2:10 f. to emphasize Christ's headship over all things, but does so to illustrate his righteous judgment: the wicked are consigned to everlasting fire, the righteous to everlasting glory.

In early Christianity, therefore, Christ's headship does not appear to be an occasion for cosmic salvation. More important is the question of whether the New Testament itself authorizes universal salvation in face of Christ's cosmic headship. Unfortunately, the passages that would provide the answer to this question are often themselves the ones in dispute (e.g., 1 Cor. 15:20-28; Phil. 2:6-11; 3:17-21; Col. 1:15-20; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 2 Thess. 2:1-12; cf. 1 Pet. 3:18-22; Rev. 5:19). Many of these, therefore, are considered at some length throughout this study.

3. Romans 13:1-7

One final aspect of divine headship occurs in Romans 13:1-7. We need not be detained here since this text cannot have the same import for universalism as Ephesians 1:22. The latter has a soteriological context whereas Romans 13:1-7 is concerned about other matters--primarily, one's relation to the state.

Briefly, in the Romans passage Paul speaks of "governing authorities" that "God has appointed." These ἐξουσίαι have been identified as either the Roman government with its civil magistracy in political power,²⁷ or as the invisible angelic powers that stand behind the state government.²⁸ In either case, the authorities in power would be considered evil by Paul, or at least neutral in this present age.²⁹ It is interesting, however, that such authorities are designated as "ministers of God" and "servant[s] of God."

²⁷Most commentators.

²⁸Notably, Oscar Cullmann in Christ and Time: The Primitive Christian Conception of Time and History, trans. F. V. Filson (Philadelphia: 1964), p. 195. Discussion of the subject may be found in Clinton Morrison, The Powers That Be: Earthly Rulers and Demonic Powers in Romans 13:1-7, SBT, 29 (London: 1960), passim and Wesley Carr, Angels and Principalities: The Background, Meaning and Development of the Pauline Phrase hai archai kai hai exousiai, SNTSMS, 42 (Cambridge: 1981), pp. 115-121.

²⁹See the discussion of "Group Boundaries" in Section One, I, F.

Paul, then, allows that God works good through what would normally be considered neutral or evil powers and treats the question of salvation as a separate issue. So in Romans 13 those authorities which operate under divine prerogative are not assumed to have been granted soteriological benefits. As in Judaism and early Christianity, divine headship per se does not imply saving benefits.

4. Summary

The church in the present age does not consist of all humanity, nor on the basis of Ephesians 1:10, 22 f. is it likely to in the future. These texts are better interpreted in terms of Christ's supremacy rather than eschatological salvation. The divine headship of Christ is also no guarantee of cosmic redemption. Universal saving benefits are not implied by divine headship in Judaism, early Christianity or in Hellenistic thought. Assuming that ἀνακεφαλαιόω in 1:10 is best understood as a gathering or unifying of all things--conditioned perhaps by Christ's headship in 1:22--the case for universalism is not very convincing.

D. THE PHILIPPIAN HYMN

The Philippian hymn (2:6-11) has provoked a flood of scholarly work throughout the years. The number of studies is enormous and has led more than one scholar to cite A. B. Bruce's terse comment in 1876: "the diversity of opinion...is enough to fill the student with despair and to afflict him with intellectual paralysis."³⁰ A century later scholarly discussions continue and treatments of this difficult text increase--now almost beyond counting.³¹

The prospect of a universalist hymn in Philippians is complicated by our uncertainty about its origin. The Philippian hymn³² might be a Pauline or pre-Pauline

³⁰A. B. Bruce, The Humiliation of Christ (Edinburgh: 1876), p. 8.

³¹Bibliography may be found in Gerald F. Hawthorne, Philippians, WBC, 43 (Waco, Texas: 1983), pp. 71-75; R. P. Martin, Carmen Christi: Philippians ii. 5-11 in Recent Interpretation and in the Setting of Early Christian Worship, SNTSMS, 4 (Cambridge: 1983), passim; Joachim Gnllka, Der Philipperbrief, HTKNT, 10/3 (Freiburg: 1968), pp. 112-30; Gibbs, Creation, p. 73; Otfried Hofius, Der Christushymnus Philipper 2, 6-11: Untersuchungen zu Gestalt und Aussage eines urchristlichen Psalms, WUNT, 17 (Tübingen: 1976), passim.

³²Since the time of Ernst Lohmeyer's ground-breaking work, Kyrios Jesus: eine Untersuchung zu Phil. 2:5-11 [Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-historische Klasse, 1927-28], (Heidelberg: 1928, 1961) it has been widely accepted in scholarly circles that this passage contains a pre-Pauline Christological hymn. Three reasons are generally given in support: (1) the style discloses liturgical language and not epistolary prose, (2) the language reveals unusual terms
(Footnote Continued)

composition.³³ If Pauline, we have two options: Paul may have composed it spontaneously while writing Philippians or he may have written it earlier and inserted it into the text at this point. Both the formulaic introduction (v. 5) and the almost rhythmic selection and arrangement of key terms in the hymn militate against spontaneous ad hoc composition.³⁴ The more plausible conjecture of pre-Pauline origin raises thorny questions of original wording and the extent of Pauline redaction--in short, of Paul's

(Footnote Continued)

and phrases over against the rest of the letter, and (3) the passage is self-contained and is not dependent on the rest of the letter in which it is found. See Martin, Carmen Christi, pp. 42 ff. and Günther Bornkamm, Early Christian Experience, NTL, trans. Paul L. Hammer (London: 1969), p. 113 for further discussion. Against the prevailing thought which designates Phil. 2:6-11 as a hymn, however, stands G. B. Caird, Paul's Letters from Prison, pp. 100-04, 119, 174 whose brief but illuminating comments weaken the case for "hymnic structure." So Charles J. Robbins, "Rhetorical Structure of Philippians 2:6-11," CBQ 42 (1980), 73-82.

³³From time to time some have suggested that Phil. 2:6-11 might be a later insertion or a composition composed by a contemporary of Paul. These views have won little favor. See Martin, Carmen Christi, pp. 42-62.

³⁴So Martin, ibid., p. 43. Pierre Bonnard, L'épître de Saint Paul aux Philippiens, CNT, 10 (Paris, 1950), p. 49 believes that this hymn originated in a non-Christian setting, possibly "Judaean-Gnostic." But see Reinhard Deichgräber, Gotteshymnus und Christushymnus in der frühen Christenheit: Untersuchungen zu Form, Sprache, und Stil der frühchristlichen Hymnen, SUNT, 5 (Göttingen: 1967), p. 130 f. who points to the difficulty of death with respect to a Son of Man saying source. Deichgräber considers the hymn to be of Jewish Christian origin. Cf. Ferdinand Hahn, The Titles of Jesus: Their History in Early Christianity, LL, trans. Harold Knight and George Ogg (London: 1969), pp. 110-13.

interpretation of the hymn.³⁵ At present our concern is not the authorship or original intention of the hymn, fascinating though this may be, but rather the meaning of the hymn for Paul as he used it in its present context.³⁶

1. Jesus is Lord

The universalist/particularist dispute is brought sharply into focus in Philippians 2:9-11:

Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

The confession "Jesus is Lord" is an early Christian confession probably originating in the primitive Palestinian community.³⁷ The title "Lord" is also preserved in the

³⁵For example, Lohmeyer's original reconstruction (*op. cit.*) of the hymn cites, "even death on a cross" (v. 8) as a Pauline addition. Joachim Jeremias, "Zur Gedankenführung in den paulinischen Briefen," in *Studia Paulina in honorem Johannis de Zwann Septuagenarii*, ed. J. N. Sevenster and W. C. van Unnik (Haarlem: 1953), pp. 152-54 agrees with Lohmeyer and further deletes, "in heaven and on earth and under the earth" (v. 10) and "to the glory of God the Father" (v. 11).

³⁶In Section Three, C, "The Reconciliation of the Cosmos" I argue that traditional material should be regarded as representative of a writer's theology.

³⁷Wilhelm Bousset, *Kyrios Christos: A History of the Belief in Christ from the Beginnings of Christianity to Irenaeus*, trans. John E. Steely (New York: 1970), p. 136 f. argued that the title κύριος Ἰησοῦς originated in the

(Footnote Continued)

pre-Pauline Aramaic formula "maranatha" ("our Lord, come!").³⁸ It occurs in 1 Corinthians 16:22 (cf. Rev. 22:20 f.; Didache 10:6) and no doubt originated in the early Aramaic-speaking church.³⁹ But it is "extremely difficult," says Longenecker, "to say with any degree of finality precisely what the early Jewish Christians really thought when they uttered the word מָרָנָא or μαράνα ("our Lord") with respect to Jesus."⁴⁰

Nevertheless, by the time of 1 Corinthians 8:6 and Philippians 2:6-11 Jesus is regarded as a pre-existent

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Hellenistic community. So also Bultmann, TNT 1:51-53, 124-26. However, this view has not enjoyed wide acceptance and most scholars support an earlier Palestinian origin. Further discussions of κύριος and the Aramaic formula "maranatha" can be found in Cullmann, Christology, pp. 203-37; Werner Kramer, Christ, Lord, Son of God, SBT, 50, trans. Brian Hardy (London: 1966), pp. 66-107; F. Hahn, op. cit., pp. 68-128; Reginald H. Fuller, The Foundations of the New Testament Christology, (London: 1965), pp. 156-58; Richard N. Longenecker, The Christology of Early Jewish Christianity, SBT, 17, Second Series (London: 1970), pp. 120-24; Matthew Black, "The Maranatha invocation and Jude 14, 15 (1 Enoch 1:9)," in Christ and Spirit in the New Testament, ed. Barnabus Linders and Stephen S. Smalley (Cambridge: 1973), pp. 189-96; Cranfield, Romans, pp. 527 f.

³⁸ For discussions of the ambiguities in the Aramaic formula see, K. G. Kuhn, TDNT 4:466-72 and Kramer, op. cit., pp. 99 ff.

³⁹ Kramer's view (ibid. p. 100) is widely accepted: "Since maranatha was preserved as an Aramaic formula even in Greek-speaking churches we must assume that it originated in the early aramaic-speaking church."

⁴⁰ Longenecker, Christology, p. 123. Cf. Hahn Titles of Jesus, p. 79 and I. Howard Marshall, The Origins of New Testament Christology (Leicester: 1977), p. 100.

participant in creation whose heavenly status was assumed and acknowledged.⁴¹ Thus, while certainty surrounding the title "Jesus is Lord" might not be attainable as one presses back into the primitive Christian community, still, by the time of Paul the confession itself bears directly on the question of whether a person is considered a Christian.

2. Parallels: עלינו לשבח and I Enoch 63

A Rabbinic Prayer

Notwithstanding the hymnic structure of Philippians 2:6-11, the language of verses 10 f. doubtless rests ultimately on Isaiah 45:23: "...to me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear." G. F. Moore⁴² finds a reference to this Old Testament text in a third century A.D. Jewish prayer, עלינו לשבח. The Aleinu Le-Shabbe'ah (so called because the prayer begins, "It is our duty to give praise...") has been ascribed to the third-century Babylonian Rabbi, Abba b. Aivu, or better known as simply Rav.⁴³ The significance of this prayer apropos universalism

⁴¹ Marshall, ibid. p. 107. Cf. R. G. Hamerton-Kelly, Pre-Existence, Wisdom, and the Son of Man: A Study of the Idea of Pre-Existence in the New Testament, SNTSMS, 21 (Cambridge: 1973), pp. 156-68.

⁴² Moore, Judaism, Vol. 1, p. 434.

⁴³ TJ Rosh ha-Shanah 1:3 (68). Popular traditions hold that the prayer originated much earlier with Joshua or
(Footnote Continued)

is marked by its apparent expectation that the whole world will eventually be saved. The second part of the prayer reads as follows:

We therefore trust in thee, O Lord our God,
 that we may soon behold the glory of thy power,
 to cause the idols to pass away from the earth,
 and the false gods shall be utterly cut off;
 to perfect the world in the reign (kingdom) of the
 Almighty, and all the children of flesh shall
 call upon thy name;
 to turn unto thyself all the wicked of the earth.
 All the inhabitants of the globe shall perceive
 and know that unto thee every knee shall bow and every
 tongue confess.
 Before thee, O Lord, our god, they shall bend the knee,
 and prostrate themselves;
 and give honor to thy glorious name.
 They shall take on them the yoke of thy sovereignty
 (kingdom), and do thou reign (be king) over them soon,
 for ever and ever.

Based on Isaiah 45:23,⁴⁴ the Alienu confidently looks toward the day when "all the children of flesh" will call upon God and "all the wicked of the earth" will turn toward him. The prayer proclaims that all shall bow, confess and give honor to the glorious name of the Lord, and he shall reign over them forever. The point of contact between the prayer and

(Footnote Continued)

during the period of the Second Temple. See EncJud 2:555-57.

⁴⁴Isa. 45:23 itself does not authorize universal salvation, although it does extend a broad invitation to all nations. Cf. Martin, Carmen Christi, pp. 255-57; Claus Westermann, Isaiah 40-66: A Commentary, trans. David M. G. Stalker, OTL (Philadelphia: 1969), p. 176; Edward J. Young, The Book of Isaiah: The English Text, with Introduction, Exposition, and Notes, Vol. 3, NIC (Grand Rapids: 1972), pp. 216 f.; Robert Davidson, "Universalism in Second Isaiah," SJT 16 (1963), 166-85; D. E. Hoolenberg, "Nationalism and 'the Nations' in Isaiah XL-LV," VetT 19 (1969), pp. 23-36.

Philippians 2:9 ff. is Isaiah 45:23 which is held to be universalist by the framers of the prayer. Whether Paul shared this comprehensive hope of eschatological salvation is yet to be determined, but at least the prayer provides us with an example of some who do.

At the same time, the apparent lateness of the rabbinic parallel (third century A.D.) weakens the comparison substantially. Even if we were to assume a pre-Pauline date (which is dubious at best), we still have no way to know whether Paul had access to the prayer, or whether he would have shared its universalist intent.

I Enoch

The confession of the reprobate rulers in I Enoch 63 provides another parallel to Philippians 2:6-11. The advantage that the Parables (chapters 37-71) have over the Alienu is that the former can be placed more confidently in the first century. J. T. Milik's dating of the Parables to the third century A.D. is no longer credible.⁴⁵ "Today no specialist on the Parables of Enoch agrees with Milik's judgment," says J. H. Charlesworth.⁴⁶ All hold to the first

⁴⁵ J. T. Milik, in collaboration with M. Black, The Books of Enoch: Aramaic Fragments of Qumran Cave 4 (Oxford: 1976), pp. 89-96.

⁴⁶ James H. Charlesworth, "Research on the Historical Jesus Today: Jesus and the Pseudepigrapha, The Dead Sea Scrolls, the Nag Hammadi Codices, Josephus, and Archaeology," The Princeton Seminary Bulletin 6 (1985), 102.

century date (or earlier), and most think it predates A.D. 70. M. A. Knibb's view that the parables were composed after 70 at the end of the first century is possible but has not found acceptance in recent years.⁴⁷ "All scholars, except one [Knibb],"⁴⁸ says Charlesworth, "are convinced the Jewish work must predate the destruction of Jerusalem in 70."⁴⁹

I Enoch 63 differs from the universalist rabbinic prayer in its assessment of what takes place when the wicked bend their knees and confess the the supremacy of the Lord. The Enochic text reveals that when the reprobate kings and rulers "fall and worship before the Lord" (63:1), they do so in vain. Their homage is sincere but it is too late. The opportunity of salvation has passed, and now, in judgment, they are driven from the presence of the Lord (63:1-3, 10 f.). Their final prayer is a confession of the hopeless:

⁴⁷ M. A. Knibb, "The Date of the Parables of Enoch: A Critical Review," NTS 25 (1979), 345-59.

⁴⁸ At the international Pseudepigrapha Seminars of the SNTS in Tübingen (1977) and Paris (1978).

⁴⁹ Charlesworth, "Research," 102. The recent revision of Schürer, Jewish People, III, 1 (1986), p. 259 reflects G. Vermes' late first century date. For discussion and bibliography, see Jonas C. Greenfield and Michael E. Stone, "The Enochic Pentateuch and the Date of the Similitudes," HTR 70 (1977), 51-65; J. A. Fitzmyer, "Implications of the New Enoch Literature from Qumran," ThStud 38 (1977), 332-45; Charlesworth, Pseudepigrapha and Modern Research, p. 98; G. Vermes, The Dead Sea Scrolls: Qumran in Perspective (Philadelphia: 1981), p. 223; Nickelsburg, Jewish Literature, pp. 221-23; E. Isaac, 1 (Ethiopic Apocalypse of Enoch in Charlesworth, OT Pseud. 1:7.

Now we have come to know that we should glorify
 and bless the Lord of kings--him who rules over
 all kings....
 Light has vanished from before us,
 And darkness has become our habitation forever and ever
 because we have formerly neither had faith
 nor glorified the name of the Lord....
 We had put our hopes upon the sceptre of our empires.
 (Now) on the day of our hardship and our tribulation
 he is not saving us;
 And we have no chance to become believers....
 (So) we will vanish away from before his face
 on account of our deeds....(I En. 63:4-8).

This early Jewish apocalyptic parallel is solidly particularist. In fact, the whole of the Parables is anti-universalist. Everywhere we see the utter hopelessness of fallen angels and wicked men: "Those who have led the world astray shall be bound with chains...all their deeds shall vanish from before the face of the earth" (69:28). Severe judgment has been pronounced against the evil ones, says the writer, and it shall abide upon them "forever and ever" (68:5). And the wicked shall be swept from the presence of the righteous, "from thenceforth they [the righteous] shall never see the faces of the sinners and oppressors" (62:13; cf. 38:2-6; 45:6; 46:4-6; 48:8-10; 54:5; 67:4-7; 69:4-11).

It must be said, however, that an absolute conclusion regarding particularism in the Parables, and consequently in the prayer itself (ch. 63), is hindered by the sweeping scope of I Enoch 50:2 f. which provides hope for the Gentiles. This text suggests that on the last day the Gentiles are given an opportunity to repent and hence achieve salvation:

...they may repent and forsake the deeds
of their hands.
There shall not be honor unto them...
but through his name they shall be saved,
and the Lord of the Spirits shall have mercy on them,
for his mercy is considerable (50:3).

These words are strange in such a particularist setting as the Parables of Enoch. R. H. Charles wonders whether they might be interpolated in view of their incongruity.⁵⁰ But although they do offer a broad-scoped salvation, they are not universalist. The writer goes on to say in verse 4 that "the unrepentant in his [God's] presence shall perish," as if the offer of repentance did not extend to all, or would not be accepted by certain rulers who, perhaps, were especially evil.

In any case, we have in I Enoch 63 a text which runs parallel to Philippians 2:6-11 and which points in the particularist direction. Yet, our text is weakened somewhat by the broad mercy offered in I Enoch 50:2 f. and, of course, by a lack of close corresponding language which would assure us of a literary dependence of one source upon the other. At best, therefore, I Enoch 63 provides an example of the forces of evil bowing and confessing at the final judgment--but to no avail. It, therefore, keeps open the particularist possibilities of the Philippian hymn but does not support it in any substantial way.

⁵⁰ Charles, Apoc. & Pseud. 1:218.

3. The Powers and Confession

The issue of universalism in the Christ hymn is tied largely to our understanding of the confession "Jesus Christ is Lord" (Phil. 2:11). We must determine the soteriological significance of this confession when it is placed on the lips of everyone "in heaven and on earth and under the earth."⁵¹

Paul speaks as if the confession "Jesus is Lord" is adequate proof of one's salvation. "If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord," says Paul, "and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved" (Rom. 10:9). More importantly, the Apostle thinks that the phrase can be uttered only under the Spirit's inspiration: "no one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:3).⁵² If, therefore, the confession "Jesus is Lord" duly constitutes one a Christian in Paul's theology, one wonders whether it implies universal salvation in Philippians 2:9-11 since everyone in the cosmos makes confessional tribute to Christ.

⁵¹The three locations are representative of the entire cosmos. See Josef Ernst, Die Briefe an die Philipper, an Philemon, an die Kolosser, an die Epheser, Regensburger Neues Testament (Regensburg: 1974), p. 71.

⁵²This may be compared with the account of Peter in Acts 2:21 which reads: "And it shall be that whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (cf. Joel 2:32; 2 Cor. 4:5; Col. 2:6; 1 Pet. 3:15; Acts 10:36).

To say that the entire cosmos confesses Jesus as Lord is to admit that universalism is a possibility in the Philippian hymn. On any reckoning the elements of wickedness must be included in a cosmic confession. Still a matter of debate, however, is the extent to which the three genitive adjectives in 2:10, ἐπουρανίων καὶ ἐπιγείων καὶ καταχθονίων, should be read. We might take them as neuters encompassing the entire creation, animate and inanimate, or as masculines designating the rational world of angels, men, and demons (or some such combination). But in either case, evil forces are involved in the confession. Some restrict the confession to people only, righteous and wicked;⁵³ some to spirits, astral, terrestrial and chthonic;⁵⁴ and some prefer to identify the creatures who confess with bended knee as the powers that control the cosmos.⁵⁵ But always the forces of evil are included.

So because some or all of the elements of darkness are included in the cosmos which pays homage to Christ, universalism must be deemed a possibility, for, as we have

⁵³I.e., souls in heaven, the living on earth, souls in purgatory; an example noted by J. B. Lightfoot, St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians, (London: 1913), p. 115.

⁵⁴E.g., F. W. Beare, A Commentary on the Epistle to the Philippians, Black's New Testament Commentaries (London: 1959), p. 86.

⁵⁵Martin Dibelius, Die Geisterwelt im Glauben des Paulus (Göttingen: 1909), p. 231; cf. Stauffer, New Testament Theology, p. 130; Houlden, Paul's Letters, p. 84.

seen, the confession "Jesus is Lord" discloses one's true destiny--a glorious future in heaven with Christ and the saints.

But is the postmortem confession on the lips of wicked men (and powers) the same as, and as soteriological as, the confession during Paul's missionary days? In other words, must we assume that it is given freely? Could not the evil portion of the cosmos be resigned to its fate or coerced to admit that the negative verdict on the Day of Judgment is just? Perhaps the wicked utter their confession with a remorseful eye to their exclusion from the protective benefits of Christ's lordship.

Resignation and coercion are legitimate alternates to universalism. True, some do confess freely (believers, angels), which might suggest that all confession is freely and joyfully given; and where the confession does surface in Paul it witnesses to personal salvation. Are we to say then, that in the eschaton the whole cosmos without exception freely pays homage to Christ? Or to put it another way, should we conclude from the confession "Jesus Christ is Lord" in Philippians 2:10 f. that ultimately all of God's creation will enjoy peace with God?

Certainly the possibility exists, but in the Philippian hymn conclusions of this sort prove groundless. If this is so, what then is the meaning of the confession on the lips of the wicked? Would this not be evidence of their eventual restoration since elsewhere the confession is salvific?

The confession, we must not overlook, is also a statement about Jesus himself--that he is Lord. He became "obedient unto death," says the hymn, "therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name that...every knee should bow...and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord...." The death and resurrection of Christ, his ascendancy as "Lord," is not a signal of restoration for the powers, but confirmation of their destruction: In the eschaton Paul expects Christ to destroy "every rule and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet" (1 Cor. 15:24 f.; cf. 1 Cor. 2:8; Gal. 1:4; Col. 1:13; 2:10, 15). The confession of "Lord" is more easily read as resignation or coercion of a defeated power than it is as a joyous confession.

The troublesome aspect of this kind of a solution is that a forced confession seems unworthy of a God of love. "For a man to stand on another's neck," says E. Best, "and compel him to confess he has been vanquished is not a victory compatible with the God of the cross."⁵⁶ Best's point is reasonable and admittedly difficult to resist. But although the hymn is concerned with lordship and not with universal or particular salvation, there is good reason to

⁵⁶Best, Thessalonians, p. 369.

think that behind the confession is Paul's belief in a resigned or coerced confession by the wicked.

First, the context of Philippians suggests that Paul is using the Christ hymn in a triumphant way, and this includes triumph over the evil portion of mankind that had opposed Christ.⁵⁷ Throughout this letter he condemns the workers of iniquity (2:15; 3:2; 18) saying that they will be destroyed (1:28; 3:19). Earlier⁵⁸ we discussed a number of texts where Paul distinguishes sharply between those who perish and those who obtain salvation. We found that for Paul "destruction" means the wicked lose all that salvation and eternal life implies.

Here, in Philippians, we find the contrast again when Paul discusses the "enemies of the cross of Christ" (3:18). "Their end is destruction," he says, "...but our commonwealth is in heaven" (3:19 f.). In talking about the opponents of the Philippians: "This is a clear omen to them of their destruction, but of your salvation..." (1:28). These continual distinctions between insiders and outsiders in Paul's letters would harden the perception within the Pauline community that truth and hence salvation were the exclusive possession of those in the sect. The contrast

⁵⁷We are assuming that Paul agrees with the theology of the hymn. For discussion see Section Three, III, "The Reconciliation of the Cosmos."

⁵⁸Section One, I, D, "Destruction."

between salvation and destruction, therefore, does much to repudiate the notion that the wicked are destroyed for a season in hell and then rise again. Thus it is doubtful that a cosmic confession implies that the wicked have changed their ways, have risen anew and are now confessing willingly the name of Jesus.

Second, the phrase "every knee shall bow...every tongue confess" (Phil. 2:10 f.) is used elsewhere by Paul--but with particularist implications. In Romans 14:11 the Apostle quotes Isaiah 45:23:

For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God;
for it is written,
"As I live says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall give praise to God."
So each of us shall give account of himself to God.

In Romans this text functions as a warning to those who would pass judgment on a brother. The implication appears to be that these people will indeed confess and give praise to God, but they will do so under the shadow of divine judgment for being judgmental themselves.

If Paul assumed that the Isaiah 45:23 text was universalist, then his argument in Romans 14:10-12 loses its force. He would in effect be admonishing his readers not to despise their brothers since they all would stand in judgment before God. And then to underscore this solemn pronouncement he would, on this view, cite a text which assures salvation for all.

On the other hand, Paul's main point might be that one day all shall kneel and account to God--and in this case

give an account of actions directed toward one's brothers. Paul might mean that all will be saved but not before the ominous prospect of accounting to God for one's less praiseworthy actions. But pressing into service a supposed universalist text from the Old Testament at the crux of his argument does little to further his warning that one should not despise a brother. The glorious hope detracts from his argument. It is reasonable to conclude, therefore, that Paul's citation of this judgment text stands in place of his other stern warnings to Christians that those who persist in the works of the flesh run the risk of forfeiting any claim to eternal life.⁵⁹

Naturally, in principle, one cannot deny that Paul might be using Isaiah 45:23 (apparently non-universalist) to emphasize one thing in Romans 14:11 (the gravity of coming judgment) and another in Philippians 2:10 f. (the lordship of Christ leading ultimately to universal salvation). But this assumption is unwarranted. The stress of humiliation and conquest seem more suited to victory over one's enemies than soteriological benefits for the powers so defeated.

Third, Paul's statement, "if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord...you will be saved" (Rom. 10:9), more naturally fits with salvation in the present age than with cosmic reconciliation. In other words, those who confess

⁵⁹Section II, 1, B, "Jews and Gentiles."

and believe are saved from wrath--they will not be condemned with the world (Rom. 5:9; 1 Cor. 11:32; 1 Thess. 1:10). But the wicked, once under eschatological wrath, do not appear to be prospects for what Paul would call salvation.⁶⁰ In Paul's mind wrath seems to be so dreadful that unless one is saved from it, any proposed reclamation cannot lay claim to the term salvation. For the wicked salvation is forfeited.

So if we say that the wicked are restored at a later date, then this would not be salvation in Paul's mind because the dire nature of eschatological wrath would exclude salvation. Such a restoration would, perhaps, be called Christ's vindication, but not salvation. For Paul the missionary confession "Jesus is Lord" leads to salvation (Rom. 10:9), but it cannot apply to those under wrath in the eschaton. There is therefore no reason to say that such a confession constitutes one a Christian at the final judgment. The confession could as easily be a resigned or coerced chorus from the wicked elements in the cosmos.⁶¹

A subsidiary argument may be adduced to show the incongruity of the two confessions. In Romans 10:9 the confession is followed by the citation of Joel 2:32 ("every one who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved").

⁶⁰ Argued at the end of Section One, I, "Paul's Judgment Terminology."

⁶¹ See ibid for discussion of Christ's vindication and the implausibility of release for the wicked under eschatological judgment.

This verse suggests that those who fail to invoke the Lord's name will be excluded from salvation. Paul stresses that the Lord's name cannot be invoked unless people hear about him from a missionary (10:14 ff.).

If everyone will eventually be saved, why does Paul bother to seek converts? The probable answer is that the prospect of divine wrath or postmortem purgation injects urgency into Christian mission. But if Paul accepts a soteriological schema of postmortem punishment for unbelievers followed by their redemption, we might expect some hint of the proposed period of purgation.⁶² Instead we find judgment terms that are firm and unyielding.

Equally, we might expect the confession "Jesus is Lord" to take place either at Christ's exaltation, or at the parousia when all opposition is silenced.⁶³ The problem is that we do not know whether Paul had a specific time-frame for apocalyptic events (such as the parousia, exaltation, cosmic reconciliation, the Renovation of nature), or whether these terms are loosely applied by him to events which he was not always concerned to keep distinct. It is difficult, therefore, to discern a continuous sequence of eschatological events in his letters.

⁶²1 Cor. 15:29 does not constitute such a hint; see Section Two, II, B, 1, "Vicarious Baptism."

⁶³See Martin, Carmen Christi, pp. 266-70 for his comments on the interrelation of present actuality and future realization of the exaltation.

But there is a possibility that Paul regards the confession in Philippians 2:11 as prior to other more ultimate eschatological events such as the cosmic restoration. An indication of this can be found in a comparison of 1 Corinthians 15:24, 28 with Philippians 2:9-11. In the former text Paul assigns to God ultimate sovereignty in the affairs of the universe, saying in effect that when all things are subjected to Christ, he delivers the kingdom to God. In the Philippian hymn, we hear only of the subjection of all things to Christ. On this reckoning, the confession "Jesus Christ is Lord" in the hymn would at best be a penultimate eschatological event.

Where, then, would this leave the universalist contention that at some later date all unbelievers, one by one, will confess Christ as Lord and thereby achieve salvation.⁶⁴ Such a possibility would not be in the apostle's schema of things. Given Pauline consistency, which in itself can be debated, Paul would appear to be saying that all humanity would bend, either willingly or not, and confess Jesus as Lord. A universalist might reply that there are too many uncertainties in Paul's eschatological thought to make definitive judgments of any kind. This may be true, and perhaps it would be better not to use the hymn in support of either particularism or

⁶⁴E.g., Origin, De Princ. 1, 6, 3 = the Greek text 2, 10, 8.

universalism. But on the face of it Philippians 2:9-11 would seem to lend more credence to the former view than to the latter.

4. Summary

The climax of the Philippian hymn reveals that every knee will bow and every tongue will confess Jesus as Lord. Elsewhere this confession is uttered by converts of the Christian faith and raises the possibility that in the postmortem period ultimately all will be saved.

The evil portion of the cosmos who confess, however, do so as defeated enemies rather than as belated but committed devotees of Christ. This conclusion is supported (1) by Paul's discussion of the fate of the wicked in the surrounding Philippian letter, (2) by his particularist use of the phrase "every knee shall bow...every tongue confess" outside the hymn, and (3) by the fact that the salvific implications of the confession, "Jesus is Lord," do not apply to the postmortem setting.

E. SUMMARY OF CHAPTER

Both Ephesians and Philippians contain passages that set Christ up as divine ruler of the cosmos. In Ephesians 1:10, 22 f. Christ reigns as head over all things, and in

Philippians 2:6-11 he is Lord of heaven, the earth and beneath. But even though all creation is subject to Christ, there is insufficient reason to conclude that his lordship imparts saving benefits. Those who confess him as Lord in Philippians do so, it seems, as defeated enemies rather than as joyful allies. Even Ephesians represents Christ's headship more in terms of cosmic conquest than cosmic salvation. We therefore conclude that these texts cannot be used to press universalist notions, and if anything, they lend credence to the particularist viewpoint.

III. THE RECONCILIATION OF THE COSMOS

The phrase "cosmic reconciliation" is often applied to texts which picture salvation on its grandest scale, a final restoration of the cosmos to its pristine glory. An important text for this cosmic drama is Colossians 1:20: "And through him to reconcile (ἀποκαταλλάξαι) to himself all things (τὰ πάντα), whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross."¹

As with Ephesians the question of authorship is incidental to our examination of the universalism. Therefore, issues will be raised and questions discussed without passing judgment on Pauline authorship, though, for convenience, we shall designate Paul as the author.

Colossians 1:20 has been much studied because of the difficulty in determining the precise meaning of the words, ἀποκαταλλάξαι τὰ πάντα εἰς αὐτόν.² Here the central

¹In Section Three, "Cosmic Redemption," we have discussed evidence for universalism in a number of cosmic reconciliation texts, Rom. 8:19, 21; Phil. 2:11; Eph. 1:10.

²Whether αὐτόν refers to God or Christ is not significant to our present study. Cf. Robertson, Grammer, p. 226; BDF 35; Moule, Idiom Book, p. 119; Eduard Lohse, A Commentary on the Epistle to the Colossians and Philemon, trans. W. R. Pöhlmann and R. J. Karris, Herm. (Philadelphia: 1971), p. 59, n. 201; Houlden, Paul's Letters, p. 173; Eduard Schweizer, The Letter to the Colossians: A Commentary, trans. Andrew Chester (Minneapolis, MN: 1982), p. 79, n. 71; F. F. Bruce, The Epistles to the Colossians to Philemon and to the Ephesians, NIV (Grand Rapids: 1984), p. 55, n. 71 and p. 74, n. 165.

question is whether this phrase points to the ultimate reconciliation of all mankind.³

A. COLOSSIANS 1:20 AND ITS BACKGROUND

Colossians 1:20 is widely regarded as the conclusion of a Pauline,⁴ pre-Pauline,⁵ or pre-Christian hymn (1:15-20)⁶

³For a survey of the exegetical history of Col. 1:20, see Johann Michl, "Die 'Versöhnung' (Kol 1,20)," ThQ 128 (1948), 442 ff.; Nikolaus Kehl, Der Christushymnus im Kolosserbrief: Eine motivgeschichtliche Untersuchung zu Kol 1, 12-20. Stuttgarter Biblische Monographien, 1 (Stuttgart: 1967), pp. 125 ff.; Joachim Gnifka, Der Kolosserbrief HTKNT 10/1 (Freiburg: 1980), pp. 51-59; Jean-Noël Aletti, Colossiens 1, 15-20: Genre et exégèse du texte Fonction de la thématique sapientielle, Analecta Biblica, 91 (Rome: 1981), pp. 20-27, et pass.

⁴E.g., Christian Maurer, "Die Begründung der Herrschaft Christi über die Mächte nach Kolosser 1, 15-20," in Wort und Dienst, Jahrbuch der Theologischen Schule Bethel, NF 4 (1955), 79-93; Kümmel in Paul Feine, Johannes Behm, Werner Georg Kümmel, Introduction to the New Testament, trans. Howard Clark Kee (Nashville: 1975), pp. 342 f.; André Feuillet, Le Christ sagesse de Dieu d'après les Épîtres pauliniennes, Études bibliques (Paris: 1966), pp. 246-73; cf. Kehl, op. cit. p. 51; P. T. O'Brien, Colossians, Philemon, WBC, 44 (Waco, TX: 1982), pp. 40-42; Steven M. Baugh, "The Poetic Form of Col 1:15-20," Westminster Theological Journal 47 (1985), 227-44.

⁵E.g., Charles Masson, L'épître de Saint Paul aux Colossiens, CNT 10 (Neuchâtel: 1950), pp. 97-107, 138 ff.; Eduard Schweizer, "Die Kirche als Leib Christi in den paulinischen Antilegomena," ThLit 86 (1961), 241-56, and "The Church as the Missionary Body of Christ," NTS 8 (1961), 1-11 (the preceding two articles = Neotestamentica: deutsche und englische Aufsätze 1951-1963; German and English Essays 1951-1963 (Stuttgart: 1963), pp. 293-316, 317-29; Harald Hegemann, Die Vorstellung vom Schöpfungsmittler im hellenistischen Judentum und Urchristentum, TU 82 (Berlin: 1961), pp. 109 ff.; Ernst Bammel, "Versuch zu Col. 1:15-20," ZNW 52 (1961), 88-95; Ralph P. Martin, "Reconciliation and Forgiveness in the Letter to the Colossians,"
(Footnote Continued)

secondarily embedded in its present context.⁷ It seems probable that this text does, in fact, consist of a hymn or credal formula interspersed with additional material. Yet, any attempt to penetrate the hymn's theological provenance and background⁸ is complicated by the formidable barriers to

(Footnote Continued)

in Reconciliation and Hope: New Testament Essays on Atonement and Eschatology presented to L. L. Morris on his 60th Birthday, ed. Robert Banks (Grand Rapids: 1974), pp. 104-24; Lohse, Colossians, pp. 41-46; Wolfgang Pöhlmann, "Die hymnischen All-Prädikationen in Kol 1, 15-20," ZNW 64 (1973), 53-74.

⁶E.g., Ernst Käsemann, "A Primitive Christian Baptismal Liturgy," in his Essays on New Testament Themes (London: 1964), pp. 149-68; Ulrich Wilckens, Weisheit und Torheit: Eine exegetische-religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zur I Kor. 1 und 2, BHT 26 (Tübingen: 1959), pp. 200 f.; Karl-Gottfried Eckhart, "Exegetisch Beobachtungen zu Kol. 1:9-20," ThV 7 (1960), 87-106.

⁷This hymnic passage has commanded a great deal of interest and close study since the early philological work of Eduard Norden, Agnostos Theos, Untersuchungen zur Formengeschichte religiöser Rede (Berlin: 1913), pp. 250-54. For further bibliography and discussion of the various views, see Hans-Jakob Gabathuler, Jesus Christus, Haupt der Kirche-Haupt der Welt: Der Christushymnus Colosser 1, 15-20 in der theologischen Forschung der Letzten 130 Jahre, ATANT 45 (Zurich: 1965), pp. 11-124; Lohse, op. cit., p. 41; Pöhlmann, op. cit., pp. 53 f.; Bruce, Colossians, pp. 55-76. For the view that the paragraph is a meditation adapting a rabbinic midrash on Gen. 1:1 and Prov. 8:22, see C. F. Burney, "Christ as the APXH of Creation (Prov. viii 22, Col. i 15-18, Rev. iii 14)," JTS 27 (1926), 160-77; Davies, Paul and Rabbinic Judaism, pp. 150-52, 172; T. E. Pollard, "Colossians 1:12-20: A Reconsideration," NTS 27 (1981), 572-75. Cf. Ernst Lohmeyer, Die Briefe an die Philipper, an die Kolosser und an Philemon, KEK 9 (Göttingen: 1930), zweite Hälfte, pp. 40-68.

⁸Ralph P. Martin, Colossians: The Church's Lord and the Christian's Liberty--an Expository Commentary with a Present-Day Application (Exeter: 1972), pp. 40-55 describes the suggested background influences as "a bewildering variety" but sets out the three most probable, viz., (1) pre-Christian gnostic, e.g., Käsemann, "Baptismal Liturgy," (2) rabbinic Judaism, e.g., Burney, art. cit.,

(Footnote Continued)

a reconstruction of the original hymn. No consensus has been reached concerning which parts of the hymn should be allocated to the Urtext, which to the author of Colossians, and even possibly which to later editors or glossators.⁹ A confident analysis of Colossians 1:15-20 is therefore thwarted by an array of interrelated problems.¹⁰ The present study must thus content itself with a quest for the meaning of the final Pauline redaction of the hymn.

B. THE THEOLOGY OF THE HYMN

Robin Scroggs believes that both Philippians 2:6-11 and Colossians 1:15-20 can be used to determine Paul's thought:

(Footnote Continued)

and (3) Hellenistic Judaism, e.g., Schweizer, vide supra, n. 4. These items cannot be examined here. Reference can be made to Martin, Church's Lord, Gibbs, Creation and Redemption, pp. 109-13 and Gabathuler's detailed treatment Jesus Christus, pp. 11-124 already noted.

⁹The view espoused by Frank C. Porter, The Mind of Christ in Paul: Light From Paul on Present Problems of Christian Thinking (London: 1930), pp. 179 ff., and Max-Adolf Wagenführer, Die Bedeutung Christi für Welt und Kirche: Studien zum Kolosser--und Epheserbrief (Leipzig: 1941), pp. 18 f., 62 ff. that all or part of the hymn must be regarded as a later interpolation into Colossians has not gained acceptance.

¹⁰Cf. Erhard Güttgemanns, Offene Fragen zur Formgeschichte des Evangeliums: Eine methodologische Skizze der Grundlagenproblematik der Form--und Redaktionsgeschichte, BET 54 (München: 1971), pp. 257 f.; Fred O. Francis and Wayne A. Meeks, ed. & trans., Conflict at Colossae: A Problem in the Interpretation of Early Christianity Illustrated by Selected Modern Studies, Sources for Biblical Study, 4, SBL, 1975, pp. 209-18.

"had Paul disagreed with these hymns, he would hardly have quoted them...."¹¹ Scroggs' point is well-taken. It is likely that Paul did affirm the theology of the hymn especially since the hymn is an integral part of its immediate context.¹² To be sure, there may be Pauline additions designed to bring an essentially acceptable Christology in line with the present contextual argument, but such adaptations need be understood only as minor modifications.¹³ It may even be that the hymnic material cited by Paul is used, not only because it is an available formulation from the past, but because it is an authority, as Vawter puts it, "an argument that was supposed to have some telling effect."¹⁴ Still, the uncomfortable fact

¹¹ Scroggs, The Last Adam, p. 62, n. 5. So also J. A. Fitzmyer, "Reconciliation in Pauline Theology," in No Famine in the Land: Studies in Honor of John L. Mc Kenzie, ed. J. W. Flanagan and A. W. Robinson (Missoula: 1975), p. 165.

¹² Otto A. Piper, "The Saviour's Eternal Work: An Exegesis of Col. 1:9-29," Interp 3 (1949), 290 notes that both the prayer in vv. 9-14 and the hymn in vv. 15-20 are mutually conditioned. See also Gibbs, Creation and Redemption, p. 101 who argues for a "continuous movement of thought from 1:3 to 2:7." Cf. Gibbs, "The Cosmic Scope of Redemption According to Paul," Bib 56 (1975), 13-29.

¹³ Here I agree with Rudolf Schnackenburg, "Die Aufnahme des Christushymnus durch den Verfasser des Kolosserbriefes," EKK 1 (Zürich: 1969), 33-50 who believes that the modifications were designed to make an acceptable Christology more comfortable in terms of word usage; in contradistinction to Schweizer, Neotestamentica, pp. 301-09 who suggests that the editorial additions transform radically the meaning of the hymn.

¹⁴ Bruce Vawter, "The Colossians Hymn and the Principle of Redaction," CBQ 33 (1971), 80.

remains that certain elements preserved in the hymn may not by themselves adequately represent what Paul intends.

In other words, we cannot assume that every aspect of a quoted hymn--even one with supposed authority--must agree flawlessly with Paul's stated theology. The Vorlage itself apart from Pauline redactional efforts could be misleading. So it would be a mistake to examine ἀποκαταλλάξαι τὰ πάντα εἰς αὐτόν (which has always been viewed as part of the Vorlage and never an addition) without giving due consideration to the presumed additions of verse 20b, c and particularly the application in verses 21-23.¹⁵

C. THE EXTENT OF RECONCILIATION

There can be little doubt that the cosmic work of Christ in 1:20 is a reconciliation of all humanity. This is clear from the final (and somewhat awkwardly placed) clause, "whether on earth or in heaven," which underscores the inclusive scope of the reconciliation. The phrase

¹⁵ This application section is discussed below. Whether we take the so-called modifications in v. 20b, c as part of the original text or as later additions appended to v. 20a makes little difference in the final interpretation, except perhaps to underscore Paul's concern to modify the existent hymn. Caird, Paul's Letters from Prison, p. 175, though he goes too far, is worth noting: "Speculations about the previous function of the hymn...are totally irrelevant to the exegesis of Colossians." Cf. Gibbs, Creation and Redemption, pp. 94 ff., esp. p. 100 who discusses possible influences on the hymn's motif.

emphasizes that the whole cosmos is subject to God's reconciling work and nothing, it would seem, is excluded in a reconciliation which extends even possibly to inanimate nature.¹⁶ Such a broad understanding of ἀποκαταλλάξαι τὰ πάντα implies reconciliation not only in the shattered world of humanity but also in the discordant world of the spirits and the inanimate--perhaps a return to original harmonious relationships, a reconciliation of all things.¹⁷

1. The Meaning of Καταλλάσσω

We will resume our discussion on the reconciliation of the cosmos below, but at this point a comment on the meaning of καταλλάσσω is in order. The root word in καταλλάσσω is

¹⁶ It is not significant to universalism how broadly we take the reconciliation. It may include all things or just the human race. For the former, see Best, One Body, pp. 116 f. and C. F. D. Moule, The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Colossians and to the Philemon, CGTC (Cambridge: 1968), p. 71. For the latter, see Kehl, Christushymnus, p. 162 who finds reconciliation to apply only to men and angels, and Manson, On Paul and John, pp. 18 f. who agrees with Johannes Weiss' suggestion that a falling away or estrangement of the cosmos from God comes about because "the Cosmos is in the power of a host of personal spiritual beings, and properly speaking it is they who stand in a wrong relation to God and have estranged the Cosmos from him." Cf. the earlier comments on this issue in Section Three, I, "The Liberation of the Cosmos."

¹⁷ Cf. Käsemann, "Baptismal Liturgy," p. 152; Lohse, Colossians, p. 59; Schnackenburg, "Aufnahme des Christushymnus," p. 38.

ἄλλος which contains the meaning "other" or "another."¹⁸ ἀλλάσσω can mean either to change or alter (e.g., Acts 6:14; Gal. 4:20; 1 Cor. 15:51 f.), or have the sense of exchange (e.g., Rom. 1:23; cf. Mark 8:37).¹⁹ The precise meaning of the verb καταλλάσσω (Rom. 5:10; 1 Cor. 7:11; 2 Cor. 5:18, 19, 20) and its cognate noun καταλλαγή (Rom. 5:11; 11:15; 2 Cor. 5:18 f.) is difficult to ascertain but the thought of change still predominates.²⁰

Thus, in the arena of personal relationships, there is a change from a disrupted to a restored relationship--a "reconciliation" (cf. 1 Cor. 7:11). It might be said that "peace" is restored. The double compound ἀποκαταλλάσσω is found only in Colossians 1:20, 22, Ephesians 2:16 and in writings dependent on them, but nowhere prior to the Pauline writings.²¹ Its meaning essentially parallels καταλλάσσω, though some have suggested that the further addition of ἀπό may indicate a qualitative intensification--to reconcile completely.²²

¹⁸Friedrich Büchsel, TDNT 1:251.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Str.-B. 3:519 note that καταλλάσσω corresponds in rabbinic literature to נָצַח and פָּיַח meaning "to make benevolent or well-disposed." Cited by Büchsel, TDNT 1:254.

²¹BAGD s.v.

²²E.g., Morris, Apostolic Preaching, p. 215; cf. Büchsel, TDNT 1:258 and I. Howard Marshall, "The Meaning of 'Reconciliation'," in Unity and Diversity in New Testament (Footnote Continued)

2. Benign and Malevolent Spirits

Picking up our earlier thoughts on cosmic reconciliation, we can hardly avoid the implications of τὰ πάντα in Colossians 1:20. If we say that ἀποκαταλλάσσω includes all things and in addition signals the restoration of a disrupted relationship, what, might we ask, is implied by a reconciliation of the presumably secure "heavenly things" (τὰ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, 1:20)?

Angels in heaven, a universalist could point out, already engage in harmonious relationships with God; why do they need a reconciliation? Would it not be better to take "heaven" in 1:20 as a neutral term for the realm of the spirits, benign and malevolent? In this way, the coupling of good and evil spirits would permit a common fate for both categories of beings. So the reconciliation in the heavens would not pertain to the manifestly good in the heavenly sphere because benign spirits would have no need of reconciliation. Malevolent spirits, on the other hand, would be the obvious choice to receive a reconciliation taking place in the heavens. Reconciliation of spiritual powers in the heavenlies, therefore, supports a universalist position.

(Footnote Continued)

Theology: Essays in Honor of George Ladd, ed. Robert A. Guelich (Grand Rapids: 1978), p. 125.

To be sure, there is no precedent in Paul for this two-pronged nuance of heaven, i.e., οὐρανός as a term which accommodates both good and evil beings. But a particularist who argues this line assumes--wrongly--that words have no flexibility of meaning and that contexts have no role in determining sense.²³ It is true that Paul customarily uses οὐρανός in connection with benign "secure" beings but an exception can be found in 1 Corinthians 8:5 f. There Paul acknowledges the "so-called gods in heaven" as opposed to the one true God, "the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist...." So while this text (1 Cor. 8:5 f.) might not be as clear as we would like,²⁴ nevertheless, we must admit the possibility of a reconciliation for malevolent beings which are themselves in the heavenlies.

Yet, this interpretation is flawed after all. It is probable that οὐρανός in Colossians 1:20 ties directly to the total phrase εἴτε τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς εἴτε τὰ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς (1:20c). To interpret οὐρανός apart from this

²³Thiselton, "Semantics," pp. 75-104. The spectrum of views on heaven may be found in Andrew T. Lincoln, Paradise, Now and Not Yet: Studies in the Role of the Heavenly Dimension in Paul's Thought with Special Reference to his Eschatology, SNTSMS 43 (Cambridge: 1981), pp. 77 ff.; 185 ff.

²⁴Robertson and Plummer (op. cit., p. 167) comment that Paul might have denied the reality of heathen gods (Gal. 4:8), but still believed that heathen sacrifices were offered to beings that did exist (1 Cor. 10:19-21). "There were supernatural powers behind the idols," says Héring, explaining Paul's belief, "although not the gods which the idols represented." Héring, First Corinthians, pp. 68 f.

phrase is mistaken because in both Jewish and Greek thought the expression "heaven and earth" commonly designates the cosmos.²⁵ Put simply, the entire phrase is better understood as a description of the cosmos, a circumlocution for everything in the universe. Paul's intent in 1:20c, then, is not so much to specify one group as opposed to another which would benefit from the reconciliation, but rather to underscore the effect and scope of a reconciliation which embraces the total cosmos.

Thus, the clause, "on earth or in heaven," defines more clearly the claim that God²⁶ was pleased to reconcile all things to himself. So, on the one hand, it would be wrong to insist that Paul consciously distinguishes between benign and malevolent spirits, and specifies the latter as recipients of a reconciliation which in turn points toward a universalist direction. On the other hand, it would be equally wrong to assume that the general interpretation somehow underpins a particularist conclusion. In fact, at first glance, the case for universalism appears especially strong in this passage. A number of factors, however, force us to a more neutral position.

²⁵ So Conzelmann, First Corinthians, p. 143, n. 34. E.g., Gen. 1:1; Acts 17:24; Pseudo-Aristotle, De Mundo 2 (391b, line 9).

²⁶ I assume here that God is the subject of εὐδόκησεν. Evaluation of the various possibilities can be found in Kehl, Christushymnus., pp. 110 ff.; Lohse, Colossians, pp. 56 ff.; Gibbs, Creation and Redemption, pp. 99 f.

3. Potential and Actual Reconciliation

Colossians 1:20 indicates that all people everywhere are already reconciled.²⁷ We might think, therefore, that this kind of reconciliation sanctions universal salvation. But as we shall see, there appears to be a distinction in Colossians between those who experience a "potential" reconciliation and those who enjoy an "actual" one.²⁸ Therefore, even if we assume that the reconciliation in 1:20 applies equally to all, we must ask whether in the end all will experience "actual" reconciliation and thereby inherit God's gracious salvation.

Paul distinguishes sharply between the broad-based reconciliation of 1:20 (potential) and its application in 1:20-23 (actual).²⁹ In 1:20 he assures his readers that all existing things, regardless their standing before God, are reconciled by the blood of the cross. But the cosmic dimension of reconciliation in verse 20 is telescoped in

²⁷ The aorist infinitive ἀποκαταλλάξαι in 1:20 coupled with the earlier aorist infinitive κατοικῆσαι of 1:19 points in this direction. That reconciliation is considered a present reality by Paul will be further developed below.

²⁸ "Potential" and "actual" are terms of convenience. The distinction I am making is between reconciliation as a completed act on God's part but with no response from man and reconciliation that has received a response.

²⁹ καὶ ὑμᾶς is the object of the preceding infinitive ἀποκαταλλάξαι. Also, the textual problem in v. 22 does not affect the present discussion.

verses 21-23. In the Christ hymn God's reconciliation embraces all mankind; at the same time, Paul restricts the saving benefits of the reconciliation in verses 21-23 to believers--who come "by the blood of his cross"--thus making a clear distinction between them and the rest of unbelieving humanity (albeit a "reconciled" humanity).

Once the Colossian church members were hostile to God, estranged, doing evil deeds; now their entire characters have been transformed. They had heard the preaching of the gospel, had placed their faith in Christ and now in this letter they are being admonished to continue in that faith. The purpose of the cosmic reconciliation in 1:20 is underscored in 1:22: "in order to present [them] holy and blameless and irreproachable before him." This seems to imply that the reconciliation is salvific, and in this case salvific for all because the reconciliation in 1:20 includes all. But God's reconciliation at the cross is effective--actual--for them, "provided that [they] continue in the faith" (1:23).³⁰

³⁰ Marshall ("Reconciliation," in Unity and Diversity, p. 126) comments: "in verse 23 Paul implicitly states the terms on which reconciliation becomes a reality: it depends upon faith and acceptance of the gospel preached by Paul. If the Colossians are urged to continue in faith and hope, the implication is clearly that their reconciliation began with their act of faith and hope."

4. The Spirits of Darkness

Not only does Paul distinguish between an actual and a potential relationship with God, he also makes the distinction when addressing the relationship between humanity and the spirits of darkness. Besides the new relationship that men and women have with God (derived "by the blood of his cross," 1:20)., they also have freedom from the dominating elemental spirits. Through Christ God disarms and triumphs over the principalities and powers (2:15).³¹ More properly, it is through the work of Christ and his cross that God "cancelled out the certificate of debt...against us" (2:14, NASB), and made a "public example" of the principalities and powers (2:15).

On the one hand, the human record of debt is "smeared out" (ἐξαλείφειν) as a writing tablet of wax was smoothed away,³² and, on the other, the "dominion of darkness" (1:13 f.) is reduced to utter weakness, no longer holding people

³¹We pass over the questions (1) whether ἐν αὐτῷ should mean ἐν Χριστῷ or ἐν σταυρῷ, (2) whether the rare middle form ἀπεκδυσάμενος κτλ. should be understood as "putting off" or be taken in the active sense "having stripped off" and (3) whether God or Christ is determined as subject of ἀπεκδυσάμενος. These do not affect our discussion. Cf. J. B. Lightfoot, Saint Paul's Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon (Grand Rapids: 1959, orig. pub. 1879), pp. 189 f.; Dibelius/Greeven, An die Kolosser, pp. 32 f.; Lohse, Colossians, pp. 111 ff.; Franz Zeilinger, Der Erstgeborene der Schöpfung: Untersuchungen zur Formalstruktur und Theologie des Kolosserbriefes (Wien: 1974), pp. 171 ff.

³²Moule, Colossians, p. 98.

in its sway.³³ The devastation inflicted upon the spiritual powers was total. Now Christ triumphs over them, presenting them as a public spectacle for all to see.

Christ becomes the "sole head of the whole of things," to use C. F. D. Moule's language.³⁴ Of course, Christ is said to be the head of the church (1:18), but beyond this Paul makes clear that in Christ "all things were created ...whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities" (1:16). In Christ "all things hold together" (1:17); he is "head of all rule and authority" (2:10), "that in everything he might be preeminent" (1:18).

Yet, in spite of Christ's preeminence, the humiliated powers are anything but "powerless" in the cosmos.³⁵ As with reconciliation, one must distinguish between the potential and the actual. The spirits of darkness have been stripped of their power in so far as they can no longer lay claim to humanity's allegiance. Beside Christ they are weak and ineffectual. Schlier suggests that the public display

³³Gal. 4:3 ff. speaks of bondage to the elemental spirits as being in the past.

³⁴Moule, Colossians, p. 70.

³⁵This is especially true if ἀπεκδυσάμενος retains its middle sense. Cf. Lohse, Colossians, p. 112 f. who quotes from Bornkamm's article, "Baptism and New Life in Paul" (Early Christian Experience), p. 80: "[Colossians] does not say that the evil powers are done away, but that they are disarmed, incorporated as the vanquished in the triumphant procession of Christ (Col. 2:15)."

of defeat does not emphasize the openness or boldness of the act "but rather the superiority or ἐξουσία of Christ."³⁶

In Christ, therefore, cosmic peace is restored. The hostile forces of evil have been suppressed and no longer are able to manipulate men and women at their will. But, nevertheless, evil forces are still at large (Rom. 8:38 f.; 1 Cor. 15:24 ff.; Eph. 6:11 ff.; Col. 2:8, 18); in what sense, then, is cosmic peace restored? Colossians 2:15 indicates that the peace restored to the cosmos is a peace imposed on some. The renegade powers, says Bruce, "are certainly not depicted as gladly surrendering to divine grace but as being compelled to submit to a power which they are unable to resist."³⁷ Schweizer is probably correct in classifying such an event as "an overcoming, a pacifying in the sense in which Roman emperors used it."³⁸

³⁶Heinrich Schlier, TDNT 5:884.

³⁷F. F. Bruce, The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians NIC (Grand Rapids: 1984), p. 76.

³⁸Schweizer, Neotestamentica, p. 326. Schweizer, however, is careful to distinguish the disarming of the powers from reconciliation.

5. Reconciliation: A Finished Product

Thus far we have found that reconciliation and peace extend to all humanity; yet things are not as they should be. Only some have responded to God's reconciling work in Christ, and hence the promise inherent in that work lies unfulfilled in many quarters. Harmonious relationships are not the order of the day. Indeed, the implication of Col. 2:8, 16-23 is that "elemental spirits" and "puffed up" men are promoting false doctrines and philosophies which oppose Christ. Such a state of affairs further confirms that the reconciliation of 1:20 has not yet been completed in its fullest sense.³⁹

In short, reconciliation is complete from the divine standpoint but incomplete from the human standpoint (at least in those who remain rebellious). The reconciliation and peace of 1:20 are achieved by God--not by humanity. The encompassing nature of this reconciliation exists apart from human volition. Humanity is placed in its reconciled relationship to God. "While we were enemies (ἐχθροί)," says Paul, "we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son" (Rom. 5:10; cf. Col. 1:21 f.; Eph. 2:13-17). Elsewhere Paul

³⁹Cf. Gibbs, Creation and Redemption, p. 143; S. Lewis Johnson, Jr., "From Enmity to Amity," BibSac, 119 (1962), 139-49; Lohse, Colossians, p. 59; George Eldon Ladd, A Theology of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: 1974), pp. 450-56.

can write, "God...reconciled us to himself" (2 Cor. 5:18), but then go on to say: "Be reconciled to God" (5:20).⁴⁰ Two observations can be used to illuminate this position. First, reconciliation in Paul is a finished product available to mankind.⁴¹ Second, men and women do not receive God's reconciliation in purely a passive state. They must act to receive it in its fullness.⁴²

Those who do act in faith have their sins forgiven (2:13). They are freed from the domination of the "principalities and powers" (2:15) and are no longer bound by the "elemental spirits of the universe" as others are (2:8, 20). Thus, reconciliation in Colossians 1:20 makes possible the restoration of fellowship with God. It does

⁴⁰When Paul admonishes his readers to be reconciled even though they have already been reconciled at the cross, he is probably addressing believers rather than the world at large. In other words, he seems to be admonishing wayward members of the Corinthian church to continue within the fullness of God's reconciliation. Discussion of Rom. 5:10 and 2 Cor. 5:18-20 can be found in the earlier Section Two, II, "The Adam-Christ Analogy."

⁴¹In a sense it already exists at the cross and God proffers it to mankind. Cf. Morris, Apostolic Preaching, p. 228 and Marshall, "Reconciliation," p. 125.

⁴²Cranfield (Romans, p. 267) acknowledges that when Paul uses a verb form of "reconciliation" he uses the active voice only of God and the passive only of men. "Yet," says Cranfield, "the fact that he can in 2 Cor. 5:20 represent God as calling upon men to be reconciled is a clear indication that he does not think of men's part as merely passive." So also Friedrich Büchsel, TDNT 1:256 and Ralph P. Martin, Reconciliation: A Study of Paul's Theology, NTLA (Atlanta: 1981), p. 148.

not, however, place all mankind in an actual state of such fellowship.

6. Summary

The work of Christ in Colossians 1:20 is a cosmic reconciliation, it encompasses all creation--wicked and righteous alike. Yet, in light of Paul's later comments regarding the demise of the principalities and powers (2:15), and presumably wicked humanity (2:8, 16-23), it is difficult to think of this reconciliation effecting the same thing for both wicked and righteous. There is no hint in Colossians that the enemy relationship between God and the wicked changes.

We are, therefore, not justified in saying that all creation will ultimately enjoy the full saving benefits of Christ's work on the cross. As we have seen, for Paul, all are reconciled at the cross, but not all experience an actual reconciliation.

D. SUMMARY OF CHAPTER

The phrase, "to reconcile all things to him[self]," concludes an early Christian hymn now embedded in the first chapter of Colossians (vv. 15-20). While there is some disagreement regarding the extent of Pauline redaction of the hymn, this phrase has always been recognized as part of

the Vorlage. If we think that Paul (or an unnamed writer of Colossians) has taken over an early hymn rather than composing the words himself, then we must allow that he might have expressed himself differently had he chosen the words.

Certainly, Paul would not have quoted a hymn he strongly disagreed with; yet any interpretation must consider the Apostle's own words as commentary, whether they be redactional expansions in the hymn or thoughts expressed later in the letter.

From the vantage point of Colossians 1:21-23, the scope of the reconciliation is sharply curtailed. The potential reconciliation in 1:20 is universal; the actual in 1:23 is decidedly particular. Salvific reconciliation is available to the Colossians "provided that [they] continue in the faith." Hostile men and women, as the Colossians once were (1:21), and malevolent powers (2:15, 20) have no part in the actual reconciliation, and there is no hint that the condition will change.

IV. CONCLUSION

This study has concentrated on the number of passages in Paul's letters that seem to imply universalism. It is often assumed that these allegedly universalist texts amount to Paul's endorsement of the "larger hope" and constitute a universalist thread running the length of the Pauline corpus. The present study has conceded that there is some justification for this view; there is the curious fact that Paul never uses standard terminology for hell and never states that punishment and judgment of the unbeliever are eternal.

But the absence of words for hell and eternity discloses little. In first century particularist documents such as the Apocalypse of Moses and II Baruch, it is not unusual for writers to use judgment terms other than those which designate an eternal hell--yet still be particularist. Hell or annihilation do not need to be mentioned explicitly in order for the concept to be present. Both the writer and the recipients of a document share self-evident, common assumptions which need not be verbalized. A speaker has no need to make explicit what he assumes his readers already agree with; he may simply say, "and so forth."

Apparently, this is the case with Paul and his letters. He uses judgment terms such as "wrath," "destruction" and "death" as circumlocutions for an everlasting consignment to hell, or for annihilation. Which of these two fates awaits

the sinner cannot be confidently discerned. But it seems clear that Paul expects only the righteous to share in the eternal riches of Christ. Several reasons support this particularist conclusion.

First, eschatological wrath is not reformatory in Paul's theology and it never functions as an aspect of God's love. Paul never suggests that wrath in the eschaton is remedial, designed to bring about repentance and ultimately eternal life. When wrath falls on the wicked in the eschaton it implies that God has finally withdrawn his love from the rebellious part of his creation. The same holds true for destruction and death; they allow for no hope beyond the grave.

Second, Paul uses discriminatory insider/outsider language that sets up boundaries between members of the Christ sect and the outside world. Boundaries are designed to include and exclude. Believers are taught that there are two kinds of people, the chosen disciples and those outside the faith. The stark contrast between the two groups is striking; one receives life eternal, the other God destroys.

Third, the universalist texts we examined are in fact particularist. Our study has shown that at first glance some texts appear to endorse universalism, but in light of the contexts or background considerations they are consonant with Paul's judgment terminology and his understanding of boundaries. There is therefore insufficient reason to think that Paul expected ultimately all humanity to be restored.

Paul is a particularist, but in the last analysis, we cannot entirely know his thoughts on the fate of the wicked. We see only partial answers as the Apostle writes to churches about their problems, their questions, and their eschatological hopes. His attention is directed toward believers and those coming to faith. The most we can say is that the wicked who persist in unrighteousness will be swept away in the eschaton. Paul was a missionary with a message: to the wicked, repent and believe; to the righteous, stand fast--this age is passing away. "Rejoice in the Lord alwaysThe Lord is at hand" (Phil. 4:4 f.).

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Series

AB	Anchor Bible
ATNAT	Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments
BET	Beiträge zur evangelischen Theologie
BHT	Beiträge zur historischen Theologie
BJD	Brown Judaic Studies
CGTC	Cambridge Greek Testament for Schools and Colleges
CNT	Commentaire du Nouveau Testament
EGT	Expositor's Greek Testament
EKK	Evangelisch-Katholischer Kommentar
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
Herm	Hermeneia
HNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament
HNTC	Harper's New Testament Commentaries
HT	Helps for Translators
HTKNT	Herder's theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
HTS	Harvard Theological Studies
ICC	International Critical Commentary
KEK	Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament
Moffatt	Moffatt New Testament Commentary
NCB	New Century Bible
NF	Neutestamentliche Forschungen
NFTL	New Foundations Theological Library
NIC	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary

NTD	Neues Testament Deutsch
NTL	New Testament Library
OTL	Old Testament Library
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SBT	Studies In Biblical Theology
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SUNT	Studien zur Umwelt des Neuen Testaments
ThF	Theologische Forschung
TNTC	Tyndale New Testament Commentaries
TU	Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur
UNT	Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament

Journals

ATR	Anglican Theological Review
Bib	Biblica
BibSac	Bibliotheca Sacra
BJRL	Bulletin of the John Rylands Library
CBQ	Catholic Biblical Quarterly
ChrT	Christianity Today
CTM	Concordia Theological Monthly
EvTh	Evangelische Theologie
ExpT	The Expository Times
HTR	Harvard Theological Review
Interp	Interpretation
ITQ	Irish Theological Quarterly
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature
JEcch	Journal of Ecclesiastical History
JSNT	Journal for the Study of the New Testament
JTS	Journal of Theological Studies
Kairos	Kairos
NovT	Novum Testamentum
NTS	New Testament Studies
RB	Revue Biblique
Rel	Religion
SJT	Scottish Journal of Theology
ThLit	Theologische Literaturzeitung
ThQ	Theologische Quartalschrift
ThStud	Theological Studies

ThV Theologia Viatorum

VetT Vetus Testamentum

ZNW Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft