

THE 'APOCALYPTIC' PAUL:
AN ANALYSIS & CRITIQUE
WITH REFERENCE TO ROMANS 1-8

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	i
ABSTRACT.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
ABBREVIATIONS	v
INTRODUCTION.....	1
PART 1: PLIGHT AND SOLUTION IN THE APOCALYPTIC PAUL	
Introduction to Part 1	17
Chapter 1: William Wrede.....	18
Chapter 2: Albert Schweitzer	25
Chapter 3: Ernst Käsemann	36
Chapter 4: J. Christiaan Beker	50
Chapter 5: Martinus de Boer	63
Chapter 6: J. Louis Martyn	79
Chapter 7: Beverly Roberts Gaventa	100
Chapter 8: Douglas A. Campbell.....	112
Summary of Part 1	133
PART 2: ANALYSIS OF THE APOCALYPTIC PAUL	
Introduction to Part 2	134
Chapter 9: The Apocalyptic Plight.....	136
Chapter 10: The Apocalyptic Solution	147
Summary of Part 2	165

PART 3: CRITIQUING THE APOCALYPTIC PAUL WITH REFERENCE TO ROM 1-8

Introduction to Part 3	167
Chapter 11: Engaging an Apocalyptic Tension Between Rom 1-4 and 5-8.....	171
Chapter 12: Engaging the Theme of Conflict in Rom 1-8.....	189
Chapter 13: Engaging the Characterisation of Sin, Death and the Flesh in Rom 1-8.....	202
Summary of Part 3	230
CONCLUSION.....	231
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	239

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ABSTRACT

THE 'APOCALYPTIC' PAUL: AN ANALYSIS AND CRITIQUE WITH REFERENCE TO ROMANS 1-8

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The claim that Paul is an 'apocalyptic' theologian is often made and often criticised. The most common critique, however, has been terminological in nature, since 'apocalyptic' is taken to imply a relationship to Jewish apocalypses. Yet advocates of the apocalyptic Paul use the term to signal a connection to an interpretive genealogy—primarily descended from Ernst Käsemann and J. Louis Martyn—and to affirm a set of theological convictions in relation to Paul's gospel. This invites a different engagement with the apocalyptic reading of Paul, leaving aside questions of nomenclature to explore those genealogical claims, and to examine how well those theological convictions are grounded in Paul's letters.

Consequently, the aims of this thesis are twofold. First, to provide a more accurate account of the developments and disagreements within the contemporary apocalyptic reading which are often obscured by appeals to the same past interpreters and by a common subscription to the 'apocalyptic' label. This is accomplished in Part 1 by detailed examination of the works of William Wrede, Albert Schweitzer, Ernst Käsemann, J. Christiaan Beker, Martinus de Boer, J. Louis Martyn, Beverly Roberts Gaventa and Douglas A. Campbell. Part 2 analyses these findings and provides a detailed portrait of the contemporary apocalyptic reading of Paul. Second, making use of that portrait, this thesis provides the first detailed exegetical critique of the contemporary apocalyptic reading of Paul. This critique, constituting Part 3, is calibrated to the different reading strategies deployed by apocalyptic readers of Paul, and explores the unity of Rom 1-8, the textual evidence for motifs of cosmic conflict, and the

significance of Paul's personifications of sin, death and flesh. A number of apocalyptic emphases can be defended from those chapters, but the apocalyptic reading is also shown to be hampered by a number of false antitheses and from too selective a reading of Paul.

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Gracie, Evelyn, Annie and Digby: I am far more proud of each of you than I am of this book, but you might be glad to know that Daddy got it finished.

Finally, Jo. This is dedicated to you. We're wonderful one times one.

ABBREVIATIONS

All abbreviations used are taken from Patrick H. Alexander, et al. (eds.), *The SBL Handbook of Style* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1999), with the following exceptions, which are not included in the *Handbook*:

BHT *Beiträge zur historischen Theologie*

EC *Early Christianity*

IJST *International Journal of Systematic Theology*

JRPC *Journal of Religion and Popular Culture*

LNTS *Library of New Testament Studies*

MSB *Monographic series of "Benedictina"*

RRT *Reviews in Religion and Theology*

SNTW *Studies of the New Testament and its World*

INTRODUCTION

Like the portraits of Shakespeare that have come down to us, accounts of the apocalyptic Paul are somewhat varied. That said, several common features can be discerned in the following sketches:

Paul's view of wrong and right is thoroughly apocalyptic, in the sense that on the landscape of wrong and right there are, in addition to God and human beings, powerful actors that stand opposed to God and that enslave human beings. Setting right what is wrong proves then, to be a drama that involves not only human beings and God, but also those enslaving powers. And since humans are fundamentally slaves, the drama in which wrong is set right does not begin with action on their part. It begins with God's militant action against all the powers that hold human beings in bondage.¹

Paul's apocalyptic theology has to do with the conviction that in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God has invaded the world as it is, thereby revealing the world's utter distortion and foolishness, reclaiming the world, and inaugurating a battle that will doubtless culminate in the triumph of God over all God's enemies (including the captors Sin and Death).²

The unconditional, revelatory, transformational, and liberational aspects of this event mean that it is appropriately described as 'apocalyptic.'³

¹ J. Louis Martyn, *Theological Issues in the Letters of Paul* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997), 87.

² Beverly Roberts Gaventa, *Our Mother Saint Paul* (Louisville: John Knox, 2007), 80.

³ Douglas A. Campbell, *The Deliverance of God: An Apocalyptic Rereading of Justification in Paul* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 66.

The vision is undeniably engaging: powerful actors, more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in many philosophies, and a tragic captivity overturned by the dramatic entrance of an invading and all-conquering liberator. All is well ended.

It is not hard, therefore, to understand current enthusiasm for the apocalyptic Paul. To take one example, Fleming Rutledge recently suggested that “a powerful argument can be made that the most important movement in twentieth century New Testament theology was what Klaus Koch called ‘the recovery of apocalyptic.’ This rediscovery of apocalyptic theology in our time is in the process of reshaping our understanding of the cross.”⁴

In a similar vein, J. Louis Martyn predicted that a 2012 conference entitled ‘Apocalyptic Paul’ “will surely prove to be one of our period’s most significant international events in the study of the apostle Paul.”⁵

Whether or not these views prove hyperbolic, it is clear that interpretive energies continue to be expended and at a rate that threatens to date a thesis by the time its introduction has been written, let alone published.

Such industry has also generated a number of protests and critiques, which might appear to render this work not only dated but superfluous. However, a brief overview of those critiques will overcome that impression and establish a clear rationale for this study.

⁴ *The Crucifixion: Understanding the Death of Jesus Christ* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), 139. ‘The Recovery of apocalyptic’ was the English title given to Koch’s more provocatively titled original, *Ratlos vor der Apokalyptik*.

⁵ J. Louis Martyn, “Afterword: The Human Moral Drama,” in *Apocalyptic Paul*, ed. Beverly Gaventa (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2013), 157.

a. *Overview of Critiques with Reference to Jewish Apocalypses*

One of the most long-running critiques of the apocalyptic reading of Paul is that it has wandered too far from the literary genre whose name it bears. Even if the adjective *apocalyptic* can legitimately be applied to convictions or motifs that find expression outside of the literary genre of apocalypses,⁶ many have insisted that a tangible connection to the texts and the historical contexts from which they emerge must still be demonstrated.⁷

Along those lines, Matlock catalogues the diverse theological agendas that have found apocalyptic to be adaptable to their cause and ends with an endorsement of Christopher Rowland's approach which much more narrowly ties the apocalyptic in Paul to the themes and motifs of apocalyptic literature. More recently, N. T. Wright's exasperation bursts through at several points in his survey of apocalyptic readings, insisting that "the only point in invoking the category was that it appeared to offer historical anchorage. If that is denied or ignored, it would be better to find a different term."⁸

⁶ Perhaps most influentially, Hanson creates some space for talk of apocalyptic beyond apocalypses with the following definitions: *apocalypse* (the dominant literary genre favoured by apocalyptic writers); *apocalyptic eschatology* (a "religious perspective, a way of viewing divine plans in relation to mundane realities"); and *apocalypticism* ("the symbolic universe by which a specific movement codifies its identity and interpretation of reality"). See P. D. Hanson, "Apocalypticism," *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible: Supplementary Volume*, ed. Keith Crim (Nashville: Abingdon, 1976), 29–30.

⁷ The absence of detailed engagement with Jewish apocalypses has long been criticised. For example, R. H. Charles protested in the preface to the second edition of his *Eschatology: The Doctrine of a Future Life in Israel, Judaism and Christianity* (1913) that "Schweitzer's eschatological studies show no knowledge of original documents and hardly any of first-hand works on the documents." Quoted in T. F. Glasson, "Schweitzer's Influence—Blessing or Bane?," *JTS* 28 (1977): 296.

⁸ *Paul and His Recent Interpreters* (London: SPCK, 2015), 170. cf. the comments on 138 ("Whatever else the word 'apocalyptic' does in western scholarship, it always appeals implicitly to an historical context within the so-called 'history of religions' of the time") and 143 ("We must remind ourselves again that using the word

Within this broad protest there are a number of more specific objections to the way in which the apocalyptic Paul is derived from Jewish apocalypses. First, it is lamented that a number of presuppositions which have been claimed as the preserve of apocalyptically-minded writers are little more than basic Jewish convictions. N. T. Wright has discussed the celebrated ‘two-age scheme’ in this light,⁹ and we might also mention the commonplace conviction that God intervenes in human history.¹⁰

Second, several other supposedly apocalyptic emphases have been challenged on the basis that *no Jew* would plausibly have held such ideas. For example, the notion that God’s intervention in human history at the incarnation can be characterised as a *punctiliar* invasion. At the very least, the apocalyptic reading of Paul has created the impression of a

‘apocalyptic’ in New Testament Studies is itself a rhetorical device whose power lies in its implicit appeal to an explanatory history-of-religions map.” Cf. James Barr, “Jewish Apocalyptic in Recent Scholarly Study,” *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library Manchester* (1975): 30; and Matlock: “The abstraction apocalyptic... must, if terminology is to signify anything other than confusion, be made on the basis of the apocalypses,” *Unveiling the Apocalyptic Paul*, 261.

⁹ “The existence of a two-age scheme of thought—we can hardly emphasise this enough in the present context—*has no automatic connection to anything that can meaningfully be called ‘apocalyptic.’* A two-age scheme is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for giving a text, or the ideas expressed in it, that label. The two-age scheme is simply a widespread feature of Jewish thought throughout the second-Temple period and on into the rabbinic period,” Wright, *Paul and His Recent Interpreters*, 158, *emph. orig.*, cf. his comments on 140.

¹⁰ For example, this from Joshua Jipp: “One of the defining features of apocalyptic thought, that God intervenes decisively in human history, is present in Paul’s thought.” “Paul: The Apocalyptic Theologian,” in *Apocalypses in Context: Apocalyptic Currents through History*, ed. Kelly J. Murphy and Justin Jeffcoat Schedtler (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2016), 132.

“tacitly deist framework” in which a “normally absent god [sic] ... occasionally intervenes and acts in discontinuity with th[e] space time continuum.”¹¹

Third, some have highlighted themes characteristic of the Jewish apocalypses, which are present in Paul, but neglected by apocalyptic readings of him, and which might better warrant discussing Paul under that rubric. For example, Dunne’s article on Galatians just cited argues that the negotiation of suffering connects Paul’s letter to Jewish apocalyptic. Additionally, Rowland’s emphasis on the revelation of heavenly mysteries as a central feature of apocalyptic texts, means that 2 Cor 12 receives the most attention by far in his study.¹²

Fourth, Davies has critiqued the apocalyptic reading for its attempt to defend what he considers to be a number of false dichotomies in the four areas of epistemology, eschatology, cosmology, and soteriology by finding them to be characteristic of different

¹¹ N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God* (London: SPCK, 1992), 298. Cf. the updated critique along similar lines in John Anthony Dunne, “Suffering and Covenantal Hope in Galatians: A Critique of the ‘Apocalyptic Reading’ and Its Proponents,” *SJT* 68.01 (2015): 1–15. For a constructive proposal on this point, see Grant Macaskill, “History, Providence and the Apocalyptic Paul,” *SJT* 70 (2017): 409–26.

¹² Christopher Rowland, *The Open Heaven: A Study of Apocalyptic in Judaism and Early Christianity* (London: SPCK, 1982), 374–86. A somewhat distant second in his discussion is the use of ἀποκαλύπτω / ἀποκάλυψις in Gal 1. To Rowland’s mind it corroborates his thesis that the disclosure of heavenly mysteries is central to apocalyptic. Although those terms might have proved to be a fruitful way of drawing together the apocalypses and the apocalyptic reading of Paul, apocalyptic readers of Paul have argued that these terms denote invasion more than revelation. On this point, see David A. Shaw, “‘Then I Proceeded to Where Things Were Chaotic’ (1 Enoch 21:1): Mapping the Apocalyptic Landscape,” in *Paul and the Apocalyptic Imagination*, ed. Ben C. Blackwell, John K. Goodrich, and Jason Maston (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2016), 40. For a sample exegesis from an apocalyptic perspective, see Martinus C. de Boer, *Galatians: A Commentary* (Louisville: John Knox, 2011), 93.

strands of apocalyptic literature. Davies' distillation of the apocalyptic reading into those four areas is enormously helpful and overlaps with my own.¹³ The main burden of Davies' work, however, is to provide "detailed engagement with the Jewish and Christian apocalypses" in order to critique dichotomised readings of those texts and of Paul.¹⁴

In various ways then, the apocalyptic reading of Paul has had its feet held to the fire of the apocalypses. The critiques have challenged the nomenclature on the basis of what can be considered typical of the apocalypses; they have contested a dichotomised reading of Jewish apocalypses to substantiate a parallel set of dichotomies in Paul; and they have occasionally suggested other avenues and texts (arising from more direct engagement with the apocalypses) by which to interpret Paul as an apocalyptic theologian.

b. Apocalyptic Responses and the Aim of this Thesis

All of these protests have significant merit, and yet it is intriguing that they have not succeeded in curbing enthusiasm for an apocalyptic Paul.¹⁵ There are a number of likely reasons. In part, as we shall see, de Boer has attempted to ground his account of Paul in the

¹³ See Shaw, "Then I Proceeded to Where Things Were Chaotic," where, independently of Davies, I highlighted the same four areas.

¹⁴ James P. Davies, *Paul Among the Apocalypses?* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), 1. Thus, whereas Davies helpfully canvasses a number of apocalyptic antitheses (epistemology, eschatology, cosmology and soteriology) and holds them up against Jewish apocalypses and the book of Revelation, this thesis will focus on the text to which contemporary apocalyptic interpreters most frequently appeal: Romans.

¹⁵ The periodical calls for a moratorium on the use of the term have most certainly fallen on deaf ears. See e.g. T. F. Glasson, "What Is Apocalyptic?," *NTS* 27 (1980): 98–105; Graham Stanton, "Review of Galatians by J. Louis Martyn," *JTS* 51 (2000): 264–70. Stanton is echoed by Kwon, for whom apocalyptic is a term "fraught with ambiguity" rendering "the value of the term questionable." Yon Gyong Kwon, *Eschatology in Galatians*, vol. 183 of *WUNT* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 8n37.

context of Jewish eschatology and, at least in the eyes of some, he has succeeded in legitimising the use of apocalyptic in reference to Paul.¹⁶ Additionally, the staying power of the apocalyptic reading is due to its very great appeal; it has substantial exegetical warrant for several of its main tenets; it is unafraid of drawing robust theological conclusions, inviting the integration of theological disciplines; and, compared to the New Perspective, the apocalyptic reading of Paul has more immediately apparent cultural relevance and relies less upon a reconstruction of the historical and social realities of Second Temple Judaism.

More significantly for this thesis, however, are two further factors. First, apocalyptic readers of Paul often express disinterest in those literary and historical questions. When pressed as to why they label their reading apocalyptic, they most often express a desire to locate themselves within a stream of modern scholarship, rather than an historical or literary context. Many would be happy to use a different term, were it not that *apocalyptic* functions as convenient shorthand for an interpretive approach to Paul. The terminological critique is thereby defused to their satisfaction.

Second, the apocalyptic reading of Paul has continued apace because its engaging theological account of Paul's letters has largely escaped challenge at the exegetical level. This has not gone unnoticed by apocalyptic readers of Paul either. Campbell, for example, speaks of the approach that "often goes by the contentious name of 'apocalyptic'. But while the critics of this approach have been congratulating themselves on the cogency of their terminological critique, the theological model itself remains largely unscathed by all this,

¹⁶ For engagement with his reading of Jewish apocalyptic literature, see chapter 5 below; also: David A. Shaw, "Apocalyptic and Covenant: Perspectives on Paul or Antinomies at War?," *JSNT* 36 (2013): 155–71; Davies, *Paul Among the Apocalypses?*, chapter 5.

while its powerful internal coherence, illuminated with the help of certain theologians, is just beginning to emerge.”¹⁷

Although a few studies have begun to examine the apocalyptic reading from a theological or exegetical perspective,¹⁸ Campbell is right that critiques of the apocalyptic Paul have not focussed their attention upon its exegetical foundations, and this is one of the major burdens of this thesis. This lack of exegetical critique has also left unexplored the extent to which contemporary apocalyptic readings of Paul differ in substance and argumentation. Under the same banner, several conflicting accounts of Paul are being advanced.

In light of these lacunae, therefore, and in a sentence, the aim of this thesis is to examine carefully the *different* ways in which Paul’s theology has been expounded under the banner of apocalyptic, drawing together a *more accurate* sketch of the contemporary apocalyptic Paul, and then evaluating him *exegetically* beside the texts of the apostle Paul.¹⁹

¹⁷ *The Quest for Paul’s Gospel: A Suggested Strategy* (London: T&T Clark, 2005), 27.

¹⁸ Simon Gathercole questions the emphasis on *Sin* as opposed to *sins* in *Defending Substitution: An Essay on Atonement in Paul* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015), 47–53. The second issue of *JSPL* (2012) was devoted to engagement with the apocalyptic readings of Galatians. The 2016 edited volume *Paul and the Apocalyptic Imagination* demonstrates how imaginatively the adjective *apocalyptic* can be applied to Paul in support of different theological projects, but see Jason Maston’s chapter ‘Plight and Solution in Paul’s Apocalyptic Perspective’ for some perceptive exegetical engagement via 2 Cor 5:18–21. From a more theological perspective see Edwin Chr. van Driel, “Climax of the Covenant vs Apocalyptic Invasion: A Theological Analysis of a Contemporary Debate in Pauline Exegesis: Climax of the Covenant vs Apocalyptic Invasion,” *IJST* 17 (2015): 6–25.

¹⁹ Two aspects here distinguish the current project from Matlock’s *Unveiling the Apocalyptic Paul*. First, whereas his survey finished with Martyn, my focus increasingly falls on the generation that succeeded him and their appraisal and appropriation of the period Matlock surveyed. Second, whereas Matlock’s thesis provided a kind of hermeneutical exposé of past interpreters and the diverse agendas that prompted their enthusiasm

c. *Method and Rationale*

Before I outline how that aim will be accomplished, three points require attention. First, I want to develop the claim that apocalyptic functions as shorthand, claiming allegiance to an interpretive history. Several assumptions are at work here that justify spending as much time as I will on considering the distinctive features of eight individuals who are regularly associated with apocalyptic readings of Paul. More briefly, it is also necessary to defend two other methodological decisions: the choice of these eight scholars, and the choice of these eight chapters of Romans as the text with which to critique the apocalyptic reading.

First, then, the use of apocalyptic as a nod to an interpretive history. For Douglas Campbell, it is a matter of expediency: “The only use I can see for such a phrase [sc. apocalyptic] is to communicate ‘in-house’ information within Pauline debates quickly—where one stands roughly in interpretive terms, and who one reads (and the use of the word ‘apocalyptic’ usually denotes a strong link with either Käsemann or Martyn).”²⁰

for apocalyptic terminology, my aim is to develop an exegetical critique of contemporary apocalyptic scholarship.

²⁰ Campbell, *The Quest for Paul’s Gospel*, 57n3. In making these comments, Campbell addresses the terminological and historical critique levelled against the apocalyptic reading, arguing that: (1) recent apocalyptic interpreters of Paul are not claiming that Paul is dependent on the categories of Jewish apocalypses [Campbell makes no mention of de Boer’s attempt here]; (2) that apocalyptic literature cannot be reduced to a single motif; (3) that the vexed question of the relationship between the apocalypses and the apocalyptic worldview “does not have to be settled by Paulinists.” He therefore sees it as an interesting question, but his intent merely to signal his position vis-à-vis Martyn and Käsemann means that fixation on terminology is misguided.

For Beverly Gaventa, it is a matter of integrity:

Among the interpreters of Paul whose works most influence my own readings are Ernst Käsemann, J. Christiaan Beker, and J. Louis Martyn, all of whom explicitly adopt the terminology of apocalyptic. To withhold acknowledgment of their influence on my work by attempting to cloak my own views under other terminology strikes me as lacking in maturity and even gratitude.²¹

Several issues lurk here which govern the shape of this thesis. First, it is implied by such statements that Käsemann is the progenitor of this movement,²² but this is to confuse terminology with content. True, Käsemann popularises the use of the term *apocalyptic* but his account of Pauline theology differs quite markedly from those who take up his terms and seek to identify themselves as his heirs in some sense. As I will argue, it is more illuminating to explore the connections with Schweitzer and Wrede.²³

²¹ *Our Mother Saint Paul*, 82.

²² e.g. “In this relatively new view, spawned originally and centrally by the work of Ernst Käsemann, Paul is perceived to have been a thoroughly apocalyptic theologian,” J. Louis Martyn, “Afterword: The Human Moral Drama,” in *Apocalyptic Paul*, ed. Beverly Gaventa (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2013), 161; “Ernst Käsemann launched a new movement in the world of biblical theology with this much-quoted announcement: ‘Apocalyptic was the mother of all Christian theology,’” Rutledge, *The Crucifixion*, 139; “The ‘apocalyptic’ reading of Paul is generally traced, in modern scholarship, back to Ernst Käsemann,” Macaskill, “History, Providence and the Apocalyptic Paul,” 411; “Contemporary Christian apocalyptic includes a rich array of biblical and theological scholars, beginning in the 20th century with Ernst Käsemann,” Nancy J. Duff, “Christian Apocalyptic,” *ThTo* 75 (2018): 5–8.

²³ Matlock begins his survey with Schweitzer and ends it with Martyn. The subsequent development of the apocalyptic reading beyond Martyn, in the work of de Boer, Gaventa and Campbell, makes clear the need to include Wrede, and, once again, to carefully map out areas of confluence and contrast.

Relatedly, the critique of the use of the term *apocalyptic* has also largely left unaddressed the extent to which the apocalyptic reading is not a singularity. Rather divergent understandings of Paul's theology often go unnoticed because apocalyptic interpreters of Paul operate under the same banner and make common cause against traditional or alternative readings. Thus one can read that "continuing the thesis developed by Käsemann... and J. Christiaan Beker... Martyn affirms that Paul's theology is thoroughly apocalyptic."²⁴ Fleming Rutledge writes of "biblical theologians in the line of Ernst Käsemann (J. Louis Martyn, Beverly Gaventa, Douglas Campbell, Susan Eastman, and many others)."²⁵

Even where Schweitzer's influence is acknowledged, the impression endures of broad uniformity, as, for example, in Douglas Harinck's comment that "the understanding of Paul as an apocalyptic theologian goes back as far as the work on Paul by Albert Schweitzer. It has been given vigorous revival by Ernst Käsemann, J. Christiaan Beker and J. Louis Martyn."²⁶ Likewise, de Boer states that "my work builds on the contributions of other

²⁴ Kuo-Yu Tsui, "Reconsidering Pauline Juxtaposition of Indicative and Imperative in Light of Pauline Apocalyptic in the Context of Rom 6:1-14," *CBQ* 75 (2013): 309n62.

²⁵ *The Crucifixion*, 36n62. See also Brittany Wilson who aligns herself with "Ernst Käsemann, J. Louis Martyn, and other proponents of an apocalyptic Paul" in that she uses "the term 'apocalyptic' to reference the radical disclosure of God's salvific righteousness in Jesus Christ" and as exemplars she references works by de Boer and Gaventa. "Rereading Romans 1-3 Apocalyptically: A Response to Douglas Campbell's 'Rereading Romans 1-3,'" in *Beyond Old and New Perspectives on Paul: Reflections on the Work of Douglas Campbell*, ed. Chris Tilling (Eugene, Oreg.: Cascade Books, 2014), 182n2.

²⁶ *Paul Among the Postliberals: Pauline Theology Beyond Christendom and Modernity* (Eugene, Oreg.: Wipf & Stock, 2003), 16.

interpreters of Paul, most notably, Albert Schweitzer, Käsemann, J. Louis Martyn and Beker.”²⁷

Of course, none of these authors are suggesting that there is complete agreement within the apocalyptic camp, but, as I will demonstrate, the differences between Schweitzer, Käsemann, Beker and Martyn are pronounced, such that contemporary claims to their mantle require significant clarification. Likewise, it will become clear that the present day apocalyptic readings of Paul have their own internecine tensions, embracing different aspects of those older readings and taking their leave of others.

Turning now to those other methodological considerations, we ask: why these eight scholars? I trust that in many ways the above discussion justifies the scholars I have chosen to survey. Albert Schweitzer, Ernst Käsemann, J. Christiaan Beker, and J. Louis Martyn are surely uncontroversial. Wrede is certainly not the only figure prior to Schweitzer we might have discussed,²⁸ but the endearing brevity of his *Paulus* proves winsome to many, and both his influence on Schweitzer and their disagreements will prove significant and enduring.²⁹

²⁷ *The Defeat of Death: Apocalyptic Eschatology in 1 Corinthians 15 and Romans 5* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1988), 7, cf. 23.

²⁸ Sturm describes earlier arguments for interpreting Paul in light of apocalyptic eschatology from Johannes Weiss, Wilhelm Bousset and Richard Kabisch (all of whom published studies in 1892-3). See Richard E. Sturm, “Defining the Word ‘Apocalyptic’: A Problem for Biblical Criticism,” in *Apocalyptic and the New Testament: Essays in Honor of J. Louis Martyn*, ed. Joel Marcus and Marion L. Soards (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1989), 26–27. Adolf Deissmann’s studies of ‘in Christ’ mysticism in light of eschatology should certainly be included here also. See his *Die Neutestamentliche Formel ‘In Christo Jesu’* (Marburg: N. G. Elwert, 1892); *Paulus: Eine kultur- und religionsgeschichtliche Skizze* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1911).

²⁹ It is a strength of Campbell’s *The Deliverance of God* that Wrede’s significance is highlighted. De Boer and Matlock begin their surveys with Schweitzer but mention Wrede as a precursor: Martinus C. de Boer, “Paul

Of the contemporary advocates, Martinus de Boer, Beverly Gaventa, and Douglas Campbell have all published or edited significant works promoting an apocalyptic reading of Paul.³⁰ A wider group of scholars are connected in various ways: some writing under the apocalyptic banner (e.g. Susan Eastman), others reflecting or exerting some degree of influence (Gustaf Aulén, John Barclay, Karl Barth, Charles Cousar, Leander Keck, Paul C. Meyer, Chris Tilling, Alan J. Torrance), and still others attempting to develop the theological and ecclesiological implications of the apocalyptic reading, especially as expressed by Käsemann and Martyn (David Congdon, Douglas Harink, Philip Ziegler among others). Where appropriate, these figures will feature in the analysis of the apocalyptic Paul, but our aim within the scope of this thesis cannot be a comprehensive cartography of the apocalyptic landscape. The more modest aim of tracing the individual positions of the leading proponents and their mutual interactions is more than sufficient unto the day.

Lastly, a word about the focus on Rom 1-8. Historically, Galatians has an understandable reputation as the mighty fortress of the apocalyptic Paul, given the commentaries by Martyn and de Boer and its more antithetical and punctiliar themes.³¹ And yet before and

and Jewish Apocalyptic Eschatology,” in *Apocalyptic and the New Testament: Essays in Honor of J. Louis Martyn*, ed. Joel Marcus and Marion L. Soards (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1989), 168n1; Matlock, *Unveiling the Apocalyptic Paul*: 32n23, and Matlock repeatedly refers to a “new phase” of Pauline interpretation inaugurated by Wrede and Schweitzer together (1996, 33n23, 34, 56n62, 61).

³⁰ The surveys by Davies and Wright devote attention to these same three plus Martyn (although Wright gives less space to Gaventa). See Davies, *Paul Among the Apocalypses?*, 15–21; Wright, *Paul and His Recent Interpreters*, 155–218.

³¹ See J. Louis Martyn, “Apocalyptic Antinomies in Paul’s Letter to the Galatians,” *NTS* 31 (1985): 410–24; J. Louis Martyn, “Events in Galatia: Modified Covenant Nomism Versus God’s Invasion of the Cosmos in the Singular Gospel: A Response to J. D. G. Dunn and B. R. Gaventa,” in *Pauline Theology Vol. 1: Thessalonians, Philippians, Galatians, and Philemon*, ed. Jouette M. Bassler (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 160–79; Beverly Roberts

after that phase, the first eight chapters of Romans have been at least as significant. As we shall see, Schweitzer describes Rom 1-8 as a puzzle, and a great deal of contemporary apocalyptic effort has been spent trying to solve it. De Boer's *Defeat of Death*, Campbell's *The Deliverance of God*, and the vast majority of Beverly Gaventa's many stimulating articles on Romans all have the goal of planting the apocalyptic flag in that section of Paul's longest letter.³² These multiple and diverse efforts also provide a window onto some of the key differences between them and their apocalyptic forebears. Rom 1-8, then, is where the battle rages, and it is where the faithfulness of the apocalyptic Paul to the letters of Paul can best be tested.

d. Outline

This thesis has three parts. Part 1 surveys the eight scholars mentioned above, distilling their works into a statement of how they individually conceive of the Pauline plight and solution. In no way does this imply that Paul himself thought from plight to solution (a notion several of our subjects will strongly reject). Rather, this is a heuristic tool, enabling the comparison of one scholar with another and facilitating the kind of judgments we seek to make about compatibility across the generations and within the contemporary apocalyptic account of Paul. Part 2 will analyse these findings, focussing upon the

Gaventa, "The Singularity of the Gospel: A Reading of Galatians," in *Pauline Theology Vol. 1: Thessalonians, Philipians, Galatians, and Philemon*, ed. Jouette M. Bassler (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 147–59.

³² Despite seeing Romans as a strategic tempering of apocalyptic themes (in light of a negative reception of Galatians), Martyn latterly also joined this effort: See e.g. "Nomos Plus Genitive Noun in Paul: The History of God's Law," in *Early Christianity and Classical Culture: Comparative Studies in Honor of Abraham J. Malherbe*, ed. John T. Fitzgerald, Thomas H. Olbricht, and Michael L. White. Supplements to Novum Testamentum 110 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 575–87; "World Without End or Twice-Invaded World?," in *Shaking Heaven and Earth: Essays in Honor of Walter Brueggemann and Charles B. Cousar*, ed. Christine Roy Yoder et al. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), 117–32.

contemporary apocalyptic reading of Paul and its distinctive view of the Pauline plight and solution, but also highlighting several significant moves away from past accounts. This analysis makes its own contribution, in the absence of other substantial studies of the contemporary apocalyptic reading of Paul and its relation to the interpretive history with which it seeks to align itself. That said, this analysis also facilitates an accurate and focussed critical engagement in Part 3. As will become clear, contemporary apocalyptic readings largely hold their theological convictions in common but deploy a number of different exegetical strategies in their defence. Part 3 is therefore composed of several chapters addressing the breadth and assessing the strength of those arguments. The thesis will then conclude, summarising the critique of the apocalyptic reading of Paul, and charting a course by which the debate might progress.

PART 1: PLIGHT AND SOLUTION IN THE APOCALYPTIC PAUL

INTRODUCTION TO PART 1

As argued in the introduction, it is essential to identify the individual contributions of the names most frequently identified with the apocalyptic reading of Paul in order to understand accurately and engage appropriately with it. In view of the agreement commonly assumed to exist between those who speak of the apocalyptic Paul, this will be done in detail and with care, outlining their distinctive account of the human plight and its solution.

CHAPTER 1: WILLIAM WREDE

In the view of Wrede, Paul is much misunderstood.¹ Indeed he believes that no single church has grasped Paul's views "in the sense in which they were really meant... At most, a few members of certain small societies approximate to a true understanding" of the apostle's teaching (85).² Chiefly, the error lies in supposing that the redemption he offers is entirely subjective: "peace of heart, a pure conscience" (111-12). Anticipating later protests, this is laid at the feet of the Reformation: "in truth, the soul-strivings of Luther have stood as model for the portrait of Paul,"³ (146) and in its place, Wrede aims to restore the objective and corporate heart of Paul's soteriology. To that end he sketches humanity's plight.

¹ Parenthetical page references in this chapter are to Lummis' 1908 translation of *Paulus*, with original German cited from *Paulus* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1907). In relation to Wrede more generally see: Albert Schweitzer, *Paul and His Interpreters: A Critical History*, trans. William Montgomery (London: A&C Black, 1912), 166-71; William Baird, *History of New Testament Research Vol. 2: From Jonathan Edwards to Rudolf Bultmann* (Minn: Fortress, 2002), 144-50; Stephen Westerholm, *Perspectives Old and New on Paul: The "Lutheran" Paul and His Critics* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 102-7; Hans Rollman, "William Wrede," *Dictionary of Major Biblical Interpreters* (Nottingham: IVP, 2007), 1056-60. For early (and partial) adoptions of Wrede's thesis in English see William Morgan, *The Religion and Theology of Paul: The Kerr Lectures, Delivered in the United Free Church College, Glasgow, During Session 1914-15* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1917). See also Henry Beach Carré, *Paul's Doctrine of Redemption* (New York: Macmillan, 1914).

² One is put in mind of Franz Overbeck's quip that Paul only ever had one pupil who understood him, Marcion, "und dieser habe ihn mißverstanden!," *Christentum und Kultur: Gedanken und Anmerkungen zur modernen Theologie*, ed. Carl Albrecht Bernoulli (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1963), 218-19.

³ Several other features anticipate later scholarship; among them Wrede's view that Paul's doctrine of the law and justification was forged to serve missiological and sociological ends, the insistence that contradictions remain in its expression, and the observation that grace featured in the Judaism Paul opposed.

a. *Plight*

To begin with, the present world owes its misery to the fact that “men are here under the domination of dark and evil powers. The chief of these are the ‘flesh,’ sin, the Law, and death” (92). But this is not all: “The picture is supplemented by a view taken from a particular standpoint. Paul believes that mankind is under the sway of mighty spirits, demons, and angelic powers” (95).⁴

These “mighty spirits” are the hostile spiritual forces referred to in Paul’s writings as powers, dominions and rulers.⁵ Thus the Pauline plight looks beyond human transgression to bleaker realities: first, to flesh, sin, the law and death, regarded as “effective powers, almost as actual beings” (92-93 “wirkende Mächte, fast wie Wesenheiten,” (57)), and then beyond to actual beings—angels and demons—such that “no star shines upon this darkness” (96). Notably, for Wrede, with this cosmology and with this pessimism, Paul operates within a broad Jewish framework, to which the apocalypses bear witness (81).⁶

⁴ For a helpful bibliography of nineteenth century studies of angelology and demonology in Paul see Carré, *Paul’s Doctrine of Redemption*, 5n13. The significance of the demonic in early accounts of the ‘apocalyptic’ Paul should be noted. For Morgan, for example, “with both feet he stands on primitive apocalyptic ground,” (*The Religion and Theology of Paul*, 11) but the pessimism concerning the present age which substantiates Morgan’s claim largely relates to the “all-pervading activity of evil spirits,” *ibid.*, 12–13. Flesh is described as something of a power, but that represents a “Hellenistic stratum,” *ibid.*, 27. Wrede’s powers of sin, law and death are absent, however. Indeed, for Morgan, the personification of sin “cannot be regarded as more than figurative... From a multitude of passages it is abundantly clear that sin just means the motions or lusts of the flesh,” *ibid.*, 18.

⁵ Wrede cites 1 Cor 15:24, Col 1:16, 2:10, 15 and also identifies the στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου of Gal 4:3, 9 and Col 2:8, 20 as demonic powers.

⁶ Wrede argues that “the framework of the whole Pauline teaching is formed by the Jewish idea of a contrast between two worlds (aeons)” (139-40). Furthermore, “all is Jewish, from the judgment with its wrath and retribution to the great ‘oppression’ before the end, to the ‘blast of the last trumpet’ to the victory of Messiah

Before turning to the solution, Wrede's accounts of sin, law and death on the one hand, and flesh on the other, merit closer scrutiny. First, and more briefly, sin, law and death. While these are spoken of by Paul as "effective powers", they are also, as we saw above, only *almost* actual beings. Wrede argues that the human plight is elevated to the "supersensual region" (96 - "übersinnliche Gebiet," 58) only with the addition of angels and demons. That is, Paul is now speaking of humanity's existence under the power of "dieses Geisterreichs" (58). This point will become obscured by Campbell, who implies that Wrede's views of sin, death, the flesh, the law and the activity of demons, *taken together*, elevate the plight to the 'supersensual region.'⁷

Later, demons are described as the patrons of the law and provocateurs of sin (96), rather than law and sin being entities in themselves. Indeed when describing the effect of the law, Wrede speaks more of transgression than oppression: "The Law turns sin into a punishable transgression, into guilt" and sin, "implacably and by a firmly rooted law, draws death in its train" (94).⁸ Wrede does not develop this thought, however, and his preferred thought is that God relates to humanity as Giver rather than Judge.⁹

over the hostile spirits... Another group of thoughts is concerned with man. Paul's ethical pessimism is rooted in Judaism. The universality of sin and the 'evil heart' of man are known to the Jewish apocalyptic books—even if they make some few exceptions. They know too the devastating effects of the sin of Adam [Citing 4 Ezra 3:20, 7:118 and 2 Baruch]... What Jew would have found anything new in the idea that death is the consequences and wages of sin?" (140-41).

⁷ See *The Deliverance of God*, 178. Although Campbell argues that "more recently, many scholars have called this depiction of the 'problem'... 'apocalyptic,'" those scholars pay relatively little attention to the demonic, and still less do they make them as prominent as Wrede in their account of the Pauline plight.

⁸ Wrede cites Rom 3:20, 4:15, 5:20, Gal 3:19 and the climactic cry of Rom 7:24.

⁹ "Gott tritt dem Menschen überhaupt nicht als Richter gegenüber, er zeigt sich vielmehr als Geber" (76). For Wrede the graciousness of God is the grain of truth in Paul's polemical doctrine of justification by faith and

By contrast, the flesh takes on a far greater significance in Paul's thought, but not, we should note, as a power, even though initially Wrede lists it among them. Instead, the 'flesh' is somewhat neutral, signifying "the external, material part of man, his bodily self" (93), but it is to flesh that sin clings and it is flesh therefore that affords demons the opportunity to work mischief. Paul does allude to the fall narrative in Rom 5, making sin the result of Adam's transgression (93-94), but Wrede argues that things are far worse, not merely because of sin, death, and the spiritual forces at work, but ultimately because human flesh is eminently workable upon. Recourse to the Adam narrative is inadequate as soon as it is asked "whence came the sin of Adam"? (94) for the answer must be the flesh: "Man... through his mere earthly and bodily existence is made subject to the power of sin" (94) and there can be no redemption until that existence is left behind: "Man must go forth from this fleshly, earthly existence into a spiritual, immaterial existence." (97).¹⁰ This could mean no more than an escape from *sinful* flesh, but Wrede seems to imply that Adam's pre-fall existence was fleshly and therefore problematic, such that the human plight is not adequately stated by reference to human sin or cosmic powers and nor does their removal constitute redemption. Romans 5:12-21 notwithstanding, Wrede's view is that the Pauline

the point of contact between Paul and Luther. But whereas Luther views grace as directed to the individual's conscience, Paul sees the gift coming to the whole of humanity mired in fleshly existence. Furthermore, Lutheran interpretations are responsible for the fact that, in the mind of the laity, "faith appears as the one performance which is truly pleasing to God" whereas for Paul the formula 'justification by faith' speaks of the unconditionality of salvation, conferred by grace and appropriated by faith. This means that Wrede can reject justification by faith as a polemical expedient in Paul, misunderstood and mistaken for the theological centre by Luther and, in a different context, say that justification is "nothing else than Christ's historic act of redemption" (131).

¹⁰ Cf. Wrede's account of earthly life: "It is all condemned to destruction, all is merely 'flesh' and the sooner it vanishes, the better... The life to come, indeed, cannot wear any of the colours of sense. Earthly joys, not even in some purer form, can have no validity in heaven" (116-17).

plight begins not in Gen 3 but in Gen 1-2.¹¹ This is confirmed by Wrede's account of the solution.

b. Solution

The Pauline solution relies in equal measure upon the incarnation, death, and resurrection of Christ. The incarnation is key as Jesus submits to “the bonds of the body and the earthly world” (97): “he wears the flesh of sin” (98, citing Rom 8:3, cf. 88),¹² and so becomes subject to sin, the law, death, and demonic powers.¹³ Jesus' death, therefore, is the necessary consequence of this subjection-by-incarnation, but “death is at the same time the liberation of Christ from all these powers of perdition. Through death he passes again

¹¹ “Sin is not merely to be found, as a matter of fact in all men, but is a necessity” (94). Wrede offers no account of why Paul should deny so fundamental and so characteristically Jewish a doctrine as the goodness of creation, beyond suggesting that his absorption in his religion left “no room for worldly interests” and proposing world-weary parallels in *4 Ezra* and among the pagan Cynics, (27). Campbell's précis of Wrede's view of redemption also omits this dualistic streak, making Wrede appear more of a direct precursor to more recent apocalyptic interpreters than he is. *The Deliverance of God*, 177–83; cf. Westerholm, *Perspectives Old and New on Paul*, 102–7.

¹² Wrede also cites 2 Cor 5:21 in this connection (59), applying it to the incarnation. He finds it unthinkable “that a being in substance divine should enter into a true union with humanity” (90) and argues that Paul's own formulations (that Jesus appeared ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων, Phil 2:7, and ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας, Rom 8:3) reflect a similar concern. Campbell's account of Wrede sees an emphasis on Jesus' “concrete humanity,” *The Deliverance of God*, 178, but he rightly notes that “Wrede does not always fully endorse the incarnation,” *ibid.*, 976n23.

¹³ Wrede glosses 2 Cor 5:21 thus: “Him who [in his heavenly existence] knew not sin did God for us make [in his becoming a man] into sin” (98). For a similar reading see Albert Schweitzer, *The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle*, trans. William Montgomery (London: A&C Black, 1931), 222.

utterly out of their sphere; he no longer wears flesh, and therefore has nothing more in common with sin, law, and death” (99).¹⁴

Hence death represents his escape from their power and his resurrection sees him assume a new mode of being beyond their grasp.¹⁵ Three things flow from this. First, the resurrection becomes central: “it is not merely the divine Amen to the death of the son of God” (101), but the essential counterpart to his death. Second, the key soteriological model is participation. It is through union with him that humanity can undergo its own release.¹⁶ Third, this redemption is to be understood in corporate and universalistic terms. Wrede rejects a modern soteriology concerned with the individual, their soul and psychology, which finds no equivalent in Paul. Rather, his doctrine of redemption deals with humanity as a whole. Since he is representative of the human race, what is true of Christ is true of all: “from the moment of his death all men are redeemed, as fully as he himself, from the hostile powers, and together with his resurrection all are transferred into indestructible life” (100).

The objective nature of this redemption must be grasped, according to Wrede; it must not be reduced to a purely ethical sense, for Paul’s expressions of dying and rising with Christ are “*durchaus eigentlich gemeint*” (103). By contrast, and somewhat at odds with the

¹⁴ Most strikingly, and confirming our earlier suspicions, “Humanity then, is something strange to him, a beggar’s garment which the heavenly prince assumes for a while, to lay aside again” (90). Thus, when Wrede denies that redemption brings an ethical revolution, but rather “*eine naturhafte Veränderung der Menschheit*” (67), his view of the resurrection seems to imply this is a change *into something else*.

¹⁵ In Wrede’s view, the resurrection receives less attention in Paul simply because it is self-evidently salvific whereas Jesus’ death requires more explanation (101).

¹⁶ Wrede can still speak of Jesus’ death as vicarious, but not, he admits, in the sense in which the term has commonly been understood (100).

insistence that all men have been redeemed as fully as Christ himself, there is Wrede's emphasis upon the future: "the whole Pauline conception of salvation is characterised by suspense; a suspense which strains forwards towards the final release, the actual death" (105). The hope, in keeping with Wrede's views of the flesh, is of "a radiant, clarified 'spiritual' body" (117) and the suspense need not be for long: Paul "believed with all his might in the speedy coming of Christ and the approaching end of the world" (105). Wrede resists the suggestion that Paul shifted "the stress from the future to the past, looking upon the blessedness of the Christian as already attained" (108), indeed he argues that "all references to the redemption as a completed transaction swing around at once into utterances about the future" and, though wary of overstatement, Wrede can point only to the arrival of the Spirit as an indication that salvation's realisation has not been completely deferred (106-7). Thus, "the redemptive act must itself be reckoned as belonging to the final age; it is the first act of the last development, an act which must be followed swiftly and of necessity by all the rest" (105).

With some hyperbole, Wrede summarises the significance of the apostle Paul: "Once for all the whole horizon is altered" (167). The same expression would be even more hyperbolic applied in summary to Wrede himself. He does not emerge *sui generis*, and his arguments would take some time to alter the landscape but, as we shall see, Wrede's influence is significant. His fresh and provocative emphasis on powers and spiritual beings, the critique of Protestant individualism, the note of eschatological tension, and the participatory and universalistic soteriology would suffice to launch multiple new perspectives on Paul.

CHAPTER 2: ALBERT SCHWEITZER

Schweitzer's admiration for Wrede's *Paulus* is clear: "of the value and remarkable literary beauty of the book it is impossible to say too much" (168).¹⁷ It also holds theological value for Schweitzer in two respects. First, it argues that Paul's understanding of the plight derives from Jewish eschatology.¹⁸ Second, it confronts the reader with an objective and cosmic redemption, strange to modern ears but true to the apostle. Thus, although Schweitzer insisted that he had arrived at his own views independently of Wrede,¹⁹ and has

¹⁷ Parenthetical page references in this chapter are to *The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle*. German is quoted from *Die Mystik des Apostels Paulus* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1930). On Schweitzer in relation to Paul more generally see C. K. Barrett, "Albert Schweitzer and the New Testament: A Lecture given in Atlanta on 10th April 1975 as Part of the Albert Schweitzer Centenary Celebration," *Expository Times* 87 (1975): 4–10; Glasson, "Schweitzer's Influence—Blessing or Bane?"; Anthony C. Thiselton, "Biblical Classics: VI. Schweitzer's Interpretation of Paul," *ExpT* 90 (1979): 132–37; Erich Grässer, *Albert Schweitzer als Theologe*, BHT 60 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1979); Stephen Neill, *The Interpretation of the New Testament, 1861-1961* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966), 403–10; Matlock, *Unveiling the Apocalyptic Paul*, 23–71; Westerholm, *Perspectives Old and New on Paul*, 108–16; James Carleton Paget, "Schweitzer and Paul," *JSNT* 33 (2011): 223–56.

¹⁸ Specific parallels are rarely drawn in *Paulus* however (although see note 35 above) and Wrede believes that "Greek-Jewish (Hellenistic) ideas came into play" alongside "purely Jewish ideas" (*Paul* 142n2), something Schweitzer's antithetical tendencies will not allow.

¹⁹ Bultmann's review of *Mystik* suggested influence from Wrede which Schweitzer denied in personal correspondence, Carleton Paget, "Schweitzer and Paul," 246. As Carleton Paget observes: "Schweitzer is obviously sensitive to Bultmann's observation because it is the first item he mentioned in his reply to the latter's review," and the same sensitivity may explain "the strange juxtaposition in Schweitzer's account of Wrede's *Paulus* between, on the one hand, praise, and, on the other, the magnification of the differences between himself and Wrede." (*Ibid.*, 247).

a number of reservations about details within Wrede's account of Paul,²⁰ *Mysticism* aims to flesh out in more detail the thrust of Wrede's more popular-level work.²¹

a. *Eschatology's Plight and Solution*

In *Paul and His Interpreters*, Schweitzer criticises F. C. Baur because "Paul's views about the 'last things' and the angels are not allowed to become disturbingly prominent."²²

Schweitzer by contrast, as Wrede before him, delights in making them so: "the natural world is, in the eschatological view, characterised not only by its transience, but by the fact that demons and angels exercise power in it" (57).²³

²⁰ Schweitzer finds Wrede elliptical on four points: first, the basis of union with Christ; second, the reason Paul believes that the law is no longer valid (Schweitzer insists the reason must emerge as a logical and necessary conclusion from his system as a whole and not simply lie in the Gentile mission); third, how the "death of Jesus can be interpreted ... as taking place for the forgiveness of sins" (169), at the same time as Wrede's objective view of Jesus' death; and fourth, how Wrede accounts for the fact that Paul's objective view did not take hold in the church. Alongside these uncertainties, Schweitzer regrets the absence of Paul's eschatological scheme, beyond an imminent expectation of the end, and disputes Wrede's universalism, arguing that "in Paul, salvation has not reference to mankind as a whole, but only to the elect", *Paul and His Interpreters: A Critical History*, 169–70. Schweitzer's own account also bridges the Wredeian divide between Jesus and Paul and defends the latter against charges of self-contradiction (see e.g. 140), even though with Wrede he attributes his handling of the OT to "der sprunghaften rabbinischen Logik" (140) and at times Schweitzer presents himself as more capable than the apostle at assembling a coherent whole from the parts.

²¹ As Matlock notes "Wrede's interpretation marks the beginning of the 'new phase' ... from which Schweitzer proceeds, pressing through its insights and obscurities to a new synthesis." *Unveiling the Apocalyptic Paul*, 33n23.

²² *Paul and His Interpreters: A Critical History*, 15.

²³ This is not simple dualism, even though Schweitzer asserts Zoroastrian influence upon Jewish eschatology. Rather, angels, "with God's permission" (55), have interjected themselves between him and humanity. According to Schweitzer, Paul holds this view of the plight in common with Jesus and with 'Late Jewish'

Although he concedes that there is some variety in the extent to which this worldview holds across the apocalyptic literature, Schweitzer is sure that for Paul “angelic powers stand between God and man and render direct relations between the two impossible” (10).

These powers lie behind both death and the law. That death is “an Angel-power” (67)²⁴ is evident from the context of 1 Cor 15 where it is the last of the enemies subdued by the Messiah. Schweitzer finds some support for this view in *2 Baruch*,²⁵ but believes that Paul goes beyond anything in pre-Christian Jewish literature by arguing that the law was given

eschatology. Within the latter, Schweitzer locates Paul and Jesus closer to *1 Enoch* than Psalms of Solomon, *2 Baruch* and *4 Ezra*, given their lack of interest in “the fantastic legends of angel domination” (55), noting a lack of attention to this variety in the Jewish literature, although R. H. Charles’ introduction includes a catalogue of allusions to the book by Paul, *The Book of Enoch: Translated from Professor Dillmann’s Ethiopic Text* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1893), 45–47. Frank C. Porter’s early response to Charles and Schweitzer questioned the connection with Enoch and apocalyptic literature more generally, in light of Paul’s many more references to prophetic literature (on account of its spiritualised and inward focus, according to Porter). See “The Place of Apocalyptic Conceptions in the Thought of Paul,” *JBL* 41 (1922): 183–204.

²⁴ This is, therefore, stronger than Wrede’s account in which death is “almost” an actual being, *Paul*, 92–93. The question of whether to capitalise nouns emerges in Montgomery’s translation. Before page 52 demons and angels are lowercase, thereafter they are frequently, but not consistently uppercase. Within a few pages we find “angel-powers”, “Angel-powers” and “Angel-Powers” (68–71), and ‘powers’ itself is capitalised once (71). Lummis’ translation of Wrede resists all such capitalisation (only capitalising ‘law’ as per the wider convention), despite Wrede’s comparatively greater emphasis on sin, death and flesh as quasi-beings in their own right. Carré, writing in English, capitalises sin, death, and law wherever they are spoken of “as though they were sentient beings,” *Paul’s Doctrine of Redemption*, 11. For Carré, these instances go beyond personification for, with Paul, sin and death “were, from a certain point of view, hypostases, existences, beings, or personalities,” *ibid.*, 12. Even here, however, it is not clear how much the phrase “a certain point of view” qualifies the assertion.

²⁵ Citing *2 Baruch* 21:22–23, although in an earlier place he concedes that in *Baruch* the Angel of Death, though sinister, “is thought of as standing in the service of God” (57).

by angels “to make men subservient to themselves” (69), and that obedience to the law constituted worship of the στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου (70).²⁶ Whereas Philo and Wisdom of Solomon understand them as physical elements and the objects of pagan worship, Paul argues that they are, in reality, angels to whom all human worship has been diverted (72). So ‘cursed are those who are of the law,’ not because they cannot fulfil its demands, but simply because the law is of the angels.

For Schweitzer, then, the plight is defined almost exclusively as one of subjection to demonic forces. Whereas Wrede principally saw the flesh, law, and sin as powers in their own right, and demons and angels as a second level of agents, Schweitzer either identifies them with angels (in the case of death), or discusses them more as tools in their hands (law). The flesh, compared to Wrede, receives less attention.

As to the solution, at its most general level, eschatological redemption consists of the Messiah putting an end to the dominion of angels by a future act of judgment. For Schweitzer, this eschatological expectation is evident throughout Paul’s letters,²⁷ but crucially, Paul also asserts that already, “because of the death of Jesus, they are no longer subject to the Angels in the same measure as before” (64); and Schweitzer quotes Rom 8:31-39 as proof of that conviction. This desire to emphasise the inaugurated victory of the Messiah also accounts for Paul’s view of the law’s origin (70); Schweitzer argues it was widely expected that the law would come to an end with the arrival of the Messianic kingdom, and so by connecting angels to the law, he can also claim their defeat, albeit a partial one that anticipates their final destruction. So at least in Galatians, the death of Jesus represents a pyrrhic victory for the angels. By crucifying him, who by virtue of his

²⁶ This thought is mentioned but not developed by Wrede, *Paul*, 96.

²⁷ He references texts in every letter he considers authentically Pauline on 54-55.

divinity cannot be cursed by the law, they establish the exception that breaks their rule (Gal 3:10-14, cf. 1 Cor 2:6-8).

This then is the eschatological doctrine of redemption as developed by Paul. While Schweitzer insists this is the proper context in which to understand Paul, he also thinks that this account of the defeat of demonic powers is a minor theme in Paul and one that creates at least a few problems of its own.²⁸ That humans are enslaved to demons is not in doubt. But rather than look at the solution from the outside (evil powers are now defeated), Paul prefers to look at it from within (the elect are now in mystical union with Christ). Thus while Schweitzer suggests that Paul has three self-contained doctrines of redemption: the eschatological, mystical, and juridical, the mystical view of redemption is simply Paul's preferred way of addressing the eschatological plight.²⁹

²⁸ Most prominently, the view that obedience to Torah is actually rendered to demons proved so controversial that Paul was forced in Romans to reverse his position and construct an artificial argument about the law's redundancy on the basis of human incapacity to obey it (74).

²⁹ An early theme in Schweitzer's survey of Pauline interpretation is the observation (first made by Lipsius) of separate systems of thought in Paul: "a juridical system based on the idea of justification, and an ethical system dominated by the conception of sanctification." *Paul and His Interpreters: A Critical History*, 19. Lipsius, like Pfleiderer, however, holds together what Schweitzer puts asunder. Precedent for Schweitzer's approach is found in Reuss (*Histoire de la théologie chrétienne au siècle apostolique*, (Paris: Treuttel et Wurtz, 1864)) for whom redemption, justification, and reconciliation are three major motifs, of which the first (the most important) relates to "l'élément éthique et mystique" in Paul, and the second, regrettably prominent in Protestantism, to "l'élément rationnel et dialectique," *ibid.*, 2:180. Lüdemann also sets apart two concepts of redemption: the "juridisch-ideelle Fassung der Erlösung" in Rom 3-4 and the "ethisch-reale" in Rom 5-8 (and aligns Galatians with the former), *Die Anthropologie des Apostels Paulus und ihre Stellung innerhalb seiner Heilslehre: Nach den vier Hauptbriefen* (Kiel: Universitäts-Buchhandlung, 1872), 172.

b. *Mysticism as the Superior Solution to Eschatology's Plight*

If Paul's mysticism is his preferred way of solving the eschatological plight, it is also Paul's solution to the puzzle of why, contrary to the eschatological worldview, the new age has not visibly dawned, even though a resurrection has occurred. The answer is not to reject the eschatological premise. Paul insists that "if Jesus has risen, that means, for those who dare to think consistently, that it is now already the supernatural age" (98). But how can that be when to all appearances the world is unchanged? The answer is that, as a stage is transformed behind the curtain, so now "behind the apparently immobile outward show of the natural world, its transformation into the supernatural was in progress" (99). And the means by which that transformation is underway in believers is their mystical participation in Christ's death and resurrection.³⁰ Like Wrede, Schweitzer insists this is an objective change in the nature of the redeemed. It is not a metaphor, "but a simple reality" (15). It happens secretly, "but none the less really" (110). It is not a mere transaction between God and the believer, but rather a "world-event" in which the believer has a share (54).³¹

³⁰ According to Schweitzer, the reason that Paul can introduce the mystical doctrine of being-in-Christ without much explanation or controversy is that this mysticism is simply another way of expressing eschatological redemption and its emphasis on participation with Christ derives from the Jewish concept of the solidarity of the elect with the Messiah.

³¹ It is Schweitzer's account of this union, and the means by which it is effected, that cause Dunn to argue that Schweitzer actually harmed the cause of mysticism: "the extremeness of his views helps explain why the mystical approach faded so quickly as a viable option for Pauline studies in the middle decades of the century," *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), 392–93. In particular, Dunn cites Schweitzer's radically objective account of mysticism (united with Christ the believer loses "his natural personality," manifesting only the personality of Christ and forming part of the body of Christ which is "an actual entity") and the role of baptism in union as the "efficacious act" over against faith. As Dunn notes it is E. P. Sanders in the latter half of the twentieth century who revives the mystical theme (under the less

The present benefits of being in Christ chiefly involve transfer beyond the reach of the angelic powers, but there is a sense in which participation in Christ's death also bestows forgiveness and righteousness, which "is really the first effect of the being-in-Christ" (205, citing Rom 8:1-2, Gal 2:17 and 2 Cor 5:17). This is not, however, the concession to the traditional interpretation it appears to be. What must be grasped is that, for Schweitzer, Paul develops two distinct doctrines of righteousness and of atonement; one, briefly, in Gal 3:1-4:6 and a second in Rom 2:11-4:25.

The first of these is the more original for it remains connected with both the eschatological view of redemption and the mystical doctrine of being-in-Christ: "In the Epistle to the Galatians... it is not a question of an atonement made to God through Christ, but a most skilfully planned foray made by Christ against the Angel-powers, by means of which He frees those who are languishing under the Law (Gal 4:5) and so brings about 'the Coming of faith' (Gal 3:25) (212).³²

In this liberating work Jesus destroys sin and the flesh such that believers, by means of a "quasi-physical process," are "in the eyes of God, sinless beings" (223). For Schweitzer,

controversial rubric of participation) and does so in grateful though not uncritical dialogue with Schweitzer in *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion* (London: SCM, 1977), 431-523.

³² Indeed, in Galatians Paul would have framed the doctrine as 'justification by being-in-Christ' (207), but his polemical ends are better served by the 'justification by faith' formula for it allows the contrast with 'works' and 'law' and allows him to wrestle texts such as Gen 15:6 from the grip of his opponents. This is acceptable to Schweitzer in Galatians, where Paul's account of justification by faith "has as yet not been detached from the eschatological doctrine of redemption and the mystical doctrine of the being-in-Christ" (209). In Romans, however, justification by faith has slipped those moorings and 'by faith' locates the reception of salvation's blessings in the intellectual assent of the individual rather than in the mystical union of the believer with Christ's death and resurrection.

salvation is therefore “not so much a matter of a forgiving of sin as of an annulling of sin” (222). Yet, in a sense not explained, this annulment “in point of fact becomes the same thing as forgiving it” (222).

The second account of justification by faith in Rom 2:11-4:25 dispenses with “all speculations about the Law and the dominion of the Angel-powers” (212) and derives a plight solely “in the nature of Law and in the nature of man” (212). This view, like the eschatological one, has its roots in Jesus’ own view of the atoning value of his death, most notably in Rom 3:21-28,³³ and defines salvation as a form of forgiveness to be inwardly appropriated by faith. Hence alongside the two doctrines of justification stand two theories of the atonement:

According to the one, God forgives in consequence of the atoning death of Jesus; according to the other, He forgives, because through the dying and rising again with Christ He has caused the flesh and sin to be abolished together, so that those who have died and risen with Christ are, in the eyes of God, sinless beings. The former of these doctrines is traditional, the latter is peculiar to Paul, and is a consequence of the mystical being-in-Christ. Though he can express himself in both ways, his thinking follows by preference the lines of the latter (223).³⁴

³³ According to Schweitzer, Rom 3:21-28 regards Jesus’ death “as a dying which wipes out sin and makes it possible for God to forgive. Attempts to deny the existence in this passage of the conception of a satisfaction offered by Christ to God... are impossible to carry through” (217).

³⁴ The view that two parallel soteriologies exist within Paul is also held by Lüdemann, as noted above (n29), and Otto Pfleiderer, *Paulinism: A Contribution to the History of Primitive Christian Theology*, trans. Edward Peters (London: Williams & Norgate, 1877), 24, who terms them the “doctrine of the expiatory death of Christ” and the “doctrine of destruction of the flesh and of sin by the death of Christ.” Pfleiderer does not, however, force his reader to choose. Rather he describes humanity as a prisoner in a twofold sense, under the law and

These traditional versions of the atonement and justification are adopted in Romans to defuse the controversy provoked by his view of the law's origin in Galatians. It is more of an apologetic than polemical doctrine therefore; pragmatically useful, but theologically crippling in Schweitzer's view because, by arguing for the law's redundancy by setting faith and works in simple opposition, the connection between soteriology and ethics is broken.³⁵ The solution is also regrettably "*individualistisch*" and "*unkosmisch*" (219).

Thus Schweitzer affirms justification by faith in the Galatian sense, but famously consigns justification by faith as articulated in the early chapters of Romans to a "subsidiary crater" (225).³⁶ In light of subsequent debates and Part 3 of this thesis, however, it is worth noting that Schweitzer does not simply pit Galatians against Romans. For in Romans, to Schweitzer's bewilderment, Paul presents justification by faith in Jesus' atoning death in Rom 3:1-5:21 and then explains it "a second time, without any reference whatever to the previous exposition, as founded on the mystical dying and rising again with Christ" in 6:1-

therefore subject to wrath, and under sin "subjected as a slave... to its dominating desires," *ibid.*, 91. Salvation likewise, therefore, has a twofold shape: a ransom from wrath "satisfied by the death of Christ as a vicarious expiatory sacrifice" and "*at the same time*, the death of Christ frees us from the *power of sin* which dwells in the flesh, for this principle of sin is destroyed, first in Christ himself, and then in us through our mystical communion with him," *ibid.*, 92, *emph. orig.* For early responses to Schweitzer's *Mysticism* that refuse to separate justification from eschatology or to split Rom 1-8 in two, see Walter Grundmann, "Gesetz, Rechtfertigung und Mystik bei Paulus," *ZNW* 32 (1933); H. D. Wendland, *Die Mitte der paulinischen Botschaft* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1935).

³⁵ See e.g. 220, 287. This objection to the traditional view also appears in Gustaf Aulén (*Christus Victor: An Historical Study of the Three Main Types of the Idea of the Atonement* (London: SPCK, 1931), 167) and resurfaces frequently, perhaps most recently in Campbell (*The Quest for Paul's Gospel*, 46).

³⁶ Cf. the similar phrase of Aulén, who characterises the 'Latin' view of redemption as "a side-track in the history of Christian dogma." *Christus Victor*, 31.

8:1 (226).³⁷ “To the presence of these two independent expositions of the same question is due the confusing impression which the Epistle to the Romans always makes upon the reader” (226).³⁸

³⁷ These divisions are stated but not justified, even though Rom 5 is now included within the juristic presentation.

³⁸ In recent years, Gaventa and Campbell have made independent and conflicting attempts to resolve this perceived tension between Rom 1-4 and 5-8, on which see chapters 7 and 8 below. The beginnings of a more unified view of Romans and indeed of the Pauline corpus can be found in Schweitzer’s chapter discussing possession of the Spirit as a sign of being in Christ where he cites (in this order) Rom 8:1-2, Rom 2:28-29, Phil 3:3, 2 Cor 3:6, Gal 5:18, Rom 7:6, Gal 4:6, Rom 8:14-16, Gal 5:5, Rom 8:4, Rom 8:10, 1 Cor 6:11 and Rom 5:5 in defence of the view that

As a consequence of being in the Spirit, believers are raised above all the limitations of the being-in-the-flesh. As they are no longer subjected to death, so also they are no longer subject to the law, to sin and to condemnation. [Regrettably, Montgomery’s translation fails to translate this last sentence, thereby losing the connection with Rom 8:1-2. In the original it reads: *Wie sie dem Tode nicht mehr unterworfen sind, so auch nicht mehr dem Gesetz, der Sünde und der Verdammnis.*] Through the Spirit the true circumcision, that of the heart, is accomplished in them. In the Spirit the New Covenant comes into being. The Spirit is the new Law which gives life, whereas the Old Law, that of the letter, only made sin manifest and thereby delivered man over to death. The Spirit gives believers the assurance that they are Children of God, and are justified in his sight. Through the Spirit they feel the love with which they are loved by God. (167)

Here Schweitzer seems to argue that a theme, derived from eschatology and participatory in nature, is developed across the opening eight chapters of Romans, bridging the divide he sets up elsewhere. This argument aside, however, Schweitzer is content to sacrifice the coherence of Paul’s letter in order to preserve the coherence of his own elaborate account of Paul’s thought.

As to the future benefits of salvation, Schweitzer's (lengthy) account of Paul's eschatological expectation of the future, set against Old Testament and apocalyptic traditions, highlights a significant degree of eschatological reserve, even as mysticism still plays a crucial role.³⁹ By virtue of their mystical death and resurrection in Christ, believers are fit for life in the Messianic kingdom, and the eternal kingdom to follow. But, for all that Schweitzer can sometimes speak of the Messianic kingdom as already begun, it remains both a future and penultimate reality, and only beyond it lies the final defeat of death (1 Cor 15:26).

In summary, Schweitzer is in no doubt that Paul's eschatological plight is resolved most satisfyingly by a mystical solution. Mysticism is the logical corollary of the resurrection; it imparts the present benefits of salvation and qualifies the believer for those that lie in store. Regarding language relating to forgiveness and justification Schweitzer is more nuanced perhaps "than has hitherto been sufficiently recognised," to quote one of his favourite phrases. At one level he identifies those themes in passages (chiefly in Rom 1-4) as traditional and not characteristically Pauline. At another level he retains some sense in which Paul's gospel speaks of forgiveness and justification but fills those terms with new meaning. These strategies, as much as his account of Paul's theology, represent Schweitzer's legacy, as we shall see.

³⁹ *The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle*, 75–100.

CHAPTER 3: ERNST KÄSEMANN

In two seminal essays of 1960 and 1962 Ernst Käsemann set the cat among the pigeons by identifying apocalyptic as the mother of Christian theology, and by taking Paul as his crowning witness.⁴⁰

Although as we have seen, earlier interpreters might have expressed themselves similarly, it is with Käsemann that “enthusiasm for an ‘apocalyptic’ Paul” takes hold in New Testament studies.⁴¹ Given the diverse ways in which the term ‘apocalyptic’ is defined and

⁴⁰ J. Louis Martyn, *Theological Issues in the Letters of Paul* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997), 112. The two essays are ‘The Beginnings of Christian Theology’ and ‘On the Subject of Primitive Christian Apocalyptic,’ both now published in *New Testament Questions of Today*; see n70 for details. Mixing the animal metaphors, N. T. Wright views Käsemann’s *Römerbrief* as a coming home to roost of Schweitzer’s apocalyptic emphasis, “A New Tübingen School? Ernst Käsemann and His Commentary on Romans,” *Them* 7 (1982): 9; an influence also proposed in John K. Riches, “Review of An die Römer. Handbuch zum Neuen Testament 8a,” *SJT* 29 (1976): 557–74.

⁴¹ Matlock, *Unveiling the Apocalyptic Paul*, 187. For Käsemann’s own thought, see *Leib und Leib Christi: Eine Untersuchung zur paulinischen Begrifflichkeit*, BHT 9 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1933); *Essays on New Testament Themes*, trans. W. J. Montague (London: SCM Press, 1964); *New Testament Questions of Today*, trans. W. J. Montague (London: SCM, 1969); *Perspectives on Paul*, trans. Margaret Kohl (London: SCM, 1971); “Some Thoughts on the Theme ‘The Doctrine of Reconciliation in the New Testament,’” in *The Future of Our Religious Past: Essays in Honour of Rudolf Bultmann*, ed. James M. Robinson (London: SCM, 1971), 49–64; *Commentary on Romans*, trans. Geoffrey William Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980); “The Eschatological Royal Reign of God,” in *Your Kingdom Come: Report on the World Conference on Mission and Evangelism* (Geneva: WCC, 1980), 61–71; *Kirchliche Konflikte* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1982); “What I Have Unlearned in 50 Years as a German Theologian,” trans. S. John Roth, *CurTM* 15 (1988): 325–35; *On Being a Disciple of the Crucified Nazarene: Unpublished Lectures and Sermons*, ed. Rudolf Landau and Wolfgang Kraus, trans. Roy A. Harrisville (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010). On Käsemann more generally see the bibliographies in David Way, *The Lordship of Christ: Ernst Käsemann’s Interpretation of Paul’s Theology* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1991); and Matlock, *Unveiling the*

deployed by Käsemann, however, and the ways in which Käsemann has been enlisted more recently, we need to ask exactly how he conceives of the Pauline plight and solution and why he expresses those concepts in the language of apocalyptic. Only then will we be able to assess the extent of Schweitzer's influence upon Käsemann, and Käsemann's influence upon subsequent generations.

a. *Why Apocalyptic Language?*

The prominence of references to 'apocalyptic' is partly explained by Käsemann's interest in the question of Christian origins. As David Way traces, there is a shift somewhere between 1950 and 1960 as Käsemann begins to defend a Jewish apocalyptic background to Paul's thought, over against Gnostic and Hellenistic sources.⁴² On the other hand, to every reader's consternation, 'apocalyptic' in Käsemann begins to serve a theological as well as an

Apocalyptic Paul, 190–91; more recently, see Paul F. M. Zahl, "A New Source for Understanding German Theology: Käsemann, Bultmann, and the 'New Perspective on Paul,'" *STRev* 39 (1996): 413–22; Paul F. M. Zahl, "A Tribute To Ernst Käsemann and a Theological Testament," *AThR* 80 (1998): 382–94; de Boer, *The Defeat of Death*, 27–30; Roy A. Harrisville, "The Life and Work of Ernst Käsemann (1906–1998)," *LQ* 21 (2007): 294–319; J. Louis Martyn, "A Personal Word About Ernst Käsemann," in *Apocalyptic and the Future of Theology: With and Beyond J. Louis Martyn*, ed. Joshua B. Davis and Douglas Harink (Eugene, Oreg.: Cascade Books, 2012), xiii–xv; Philip G. Ziegler, "'Christ Must Reign': Ernst Käsemann and Soteriology in an Apocalyptic Key," in *Apocalyptic and the Future of Theology*, 200–218; Walter Klaiber, "Ernst Käsemann as Theological Exegete and Ecclesial Rebel," trans. Randi H. Lundell, *LQ* 26 (2012): 26–56; William Baird, *History of New Testament Research Vol. 3: From C. H. Dodd to Hans Dieter Betz* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013), 130–47.

⁴² Way, *The Lordship of Christ*, 122–25. In 1949 he gives an indication of this, writing to Bultmann concerning his Romans lectures: "With zeal I am championing the thesis that one can only understand the Pauline doctrine of justification against the background of Jewish apocalyptic and that in it one must see an adaptation of the cosmological views of this apocalyptic" quoted in *ibid.*, 123.

historical purpose in the same period, or rather (and hence the consternation) several theological purposes.⁴³

In one sense, for Käsemann, ‘apocalyptic’ refers to the eschatological future. Indeed, when pressed for a definition of apocalyptic in precise terms by Ebeling, Käsemann says that he speaks of it “to denote the expectation of an imminent Parousia.”⁴⁴ Consequently, for Käsemann, Paul’s battle against the overly-inaugurated eschatology of the enthusiasts was “fought under the sign of apocalyptic.”⁴⁵ While willing to concede the arrival of the new age, Käsemann detects in Paul a reworking of the Jewish apocalyptic concept of the two aeons wherein the old age does not simply give way to the next, but rather the new age invades the old and “the earth becomes their battleground.”⁴⁶

⁴³ Way laments “the failure to keep the historical and theological meanings of ‘apocalyptic’ sufficiently distinct. Indeed there are places where it is difficult to know what Käsemann means by the term.” Way, *The Lordship of Christ*, 175 cf. 290. Likewise Matlock: “apocalyptic is a theological shorthand for virtually every aspect of Käsemann’s self-understanding,” *Unveiling the Apocalyptic Paul*, 235. Moule similarly complains of “the use of ‘eschatological’ and even ‘apocalyptic’ in such wide senses as to threaten to debase linguistic currency,” “Review of Commentary on Romans by Ernst Käsemann,” *JTS* 32 (1981): 501.

⁴⁴ *New Testament Questions of Today*, 109n1.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 132. As is often noted, Paul and his interpreter merge here, for Käsemann takes up apocalyptic to do battle with the overly inaugurated eschatologies of Bultmann and Dodd or the overly optimistic accounts of salvation history he detects in Cullmann and Stendahl, and what he sees as their sinister secular analogues. In fact Way proposes that Käsemann’s preference for ‘apocalyptic’ rather than ‘eschatological’ language is explained by his concern that the latter has, through Bultmann’s usage, become insufficiently oriented to the future, *The Lordship of Christ*, 129.

⁴⁶ *Romans*, 134. Likewise Schweitzer sees the intermingling of the natural and supernatural worlds as a peculiar insight of Paul’s, in light of the resurrection. See *The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle*, 98–99.

In the present time, Christ's lordship extends over the church: it is "the world in obedience to God," and the body in which the powers, apart from death, have been dethroned. Even so, Käsemann asks to what extent this is even true of the church and finds that Christ's lordship is only manifested and anticipated as his people daily deliver "over to Christ by their bodily obedience the piece of the world which they themselves are."⁴⁷ In the Spirit they have "the reversionary expectation of the Resurrection and proclaim this by the new obedience of [their] lives. Further than this Paul, unlike the enthusiasts... is not prepared to go."⁴⁸

In this context the lordship of Christ is seen as both central but also "limited and passing": "The only goal it serves is to give way to the sole lordship of God. Christ is God's representative over against a world which is not yet fully subject to God, although its eschatological subordination is in train since Easter and its end is in sight."⁴⁹ "No perspective," Käsemann adds, "could be more apocalyptic."⁵⁰

⁴⁷ *New Testament Questions of Today*, 135. While willing to concede the possibility of the *nova obedientia*, Paul insists it is "partial and anticipatory of the future resurrection life, *New Testament Questions of Today*, 132-3.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 133. In particular, Käsemann resists the suggestion that believers participate in the resurrection as well as the death of Christ. Christ's resurrection is "still for the time being, the great exception, in which we can participate by hope alone," *ibid.*, 134. In light of this and the other evidence mentioned above, de Boer exaggerates to say that "Käsemann actually understands Paul's *present* eschatology to be as apocalyptic as his future eschatology," *The Defeat of Death*, 30, *emph. orig.* Since the resurrection of Christ, the contest for the world has begun, and in that Käsemannian sense present eschatology can be described as apocalyptic, but elsewhere Käsemann equates future eschatology with apocalyptic over against present eschatology, *New Testament Questions of Today*, 136-37, and without that distinction one wonders how Paul could wage an anti-enthusiastic battle under the sign of apocalyptic?

⁴⁹ *New Testament Questions of Today*, 133.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

In light of this, apocalyptic takes on a territorial as well as a temporal aspect. One of Käsemann's more frequent definitions of apocalyptic ties it to the question of to whom the earth belongs.⁵¹ In dispute with Bultmann's individualism, this also becomes the question of to whom the individual belongs, for as Käsemann insists:

Man for Paul is never just on his own. He is always a specific piece of world and therefore becomes what in the last resort he is by determination from outside, i.e. by the power which takes possession of him and the lordship to which he surrenders himself. His life is from the beginning a stake in the confrontation between God and the principalities of this world.⁵²

Of course, for Käsemann, that confrontation is easily and understandably conflated with his own confrontation with National Socialism and that experience explains yet further the appeal of apocalyptic language for Käsemann. As Way observes, "one of the roots of

⁵¹ Ibid., 135, cf. *Perspectives on Paul*, 25. In fact the two definitions are not unconnected in Käsemann's mind, since he believes that resurrection is primarily oriented "towards the reign of Christ"—that is to say, Paul imminently expects the question of to whom the world belongs to be settled in Jesus' favour, *New Testament Questions of Today*, 135.

⁵² *New Testament Questions of Today*, 136. For his part, Bultmann spoke of the individual "in the grip of the world," *Essays, Philosophical and Theological*, trans. James C. G. Greig (London: SCM Press, 1955), 78. In apparent distinction to Käsemann, however, this power "does not come over man, either the individual or the race, as a sheer curse of fate, but grows up out of himself," *Theology of the New Testament*, trans. Kendrick Grobel (London: SCM Press, 1952), 256. Käsemann does not reject this outright but sees it as only one half of a dialectic: "Since confrontation with the Creator is characteristic of this world, and since this confrontation has in fact always meant the isolation and rebellion of the creature, 'flesh' is also the sphere of the demonic. But this situation is ambivalent: the fall of man allowed the demonic cosmic scope. Conversely, the demonic reaches out for man objectively from cosmic breadths and depths." *Perspectives on Paul*, 26.

Käsemann's interest in eschatology, and, more specifically, its demonology, is the need to find a language to speak about the power of evil at a suprapersonal level."⁵³

There is therefore some plausibility to the claim that Käsemann sees humanity's plight as one of subjection to evil powers and that modern proponents of the apocalyptic Paul can therefore recruit Käsemann to their cause without qualification.⁵⁴ On the other hand, away from some of these debates and even behind some of this language, a different story emerges.

b. Unveiling Käsemann's Plight and Solution

When Käsemann speaks of the world as a "field of contending powers," he frequently describes a contention between God and humanity. For example, in connection with Rom 7:14ff, Käsemann states that "here is the heart of Paul's teaching." He continues:

It is not just that the creature repeatedly comes up against its limits after the fall, but precisely the religious person crashes and the pathway under man fails... [sc. Under the law] he becomes entangled in his own desire for life which tries to snatch what can only be given and thus falls subject to the powers of the world. The pious person typifies as no one else can the nature of the self-willed, rebellious, perverted and lost creation.⁵⁵

Although there is still mention here of 'powers,' Käsemann's main interest lies not so much in humanity's captivity but in its contention with the Creator, especially by means of

⁵³ *The Lordship of Christ*, 126.

⁵⁴ e.g. Beverly Roberts Gaventa, "God Handed Them Over: Reading Romans 1:18-32 Apocalyptically," *ABR* 53 (2005): 49; cf. de Boer's summary of Käsemann's position in *The Defeat of Death*, 30.

⁵⁵ *Romans*, 169.

religious observance. Furthermore, the powers are often identified with that self-will. This is the significance of “thus” in the quotation above: “He becomes entangled in his own desire for life which tries to snatch what can only be given and *thus* falls subject to the powers of the world.” Addressing Rom 1:18ff, he writes of humanity that God “pronounces judgment in that he gives the guilty over to the very separation from God which they have sought. What they desired becomes their destiny and therefore the governing force... Conversely this power lets them become once more the very thing they desire to be and are living as, namely creatures existing in creaturely corruption.”⁵⁶

Indicated here is Käsemann’s view that the powers which determine human existence are not ‘anti-god powers’ or demons but the fate which is sealed in the self-sustaining and ever-deepening act of rebellion.⁵⁷ Similarly, Käsemann praises the existentialist reading to the extent that “it recognises in pride and despair the powers which most deeply enslave mankind.”⁵⁸ And it is with these that God contends: “the Judge always comes upon the scene in conflict with human illusion. Illusion is any state which attacks the lordship of the

⁵⁶ My translation from *An die Römer*, 4th ed. (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1980), 40.

⁵⁷ When Käsemann speaks of the demonic he usually does so in one of two contexts. Either he characterises the general rebellion of creatures against the Creator as demonic (e.g. *ibid.*, 38) or when addressing the specific evils of the twentieth century he speaks of it as demonic or hellish (e.g. his experience of being accused of treason by the church and preaching before Gestapo officers, quoted in Zahl, “A Tribute To Ernst Käsemann and a Theological Testament,” 389). The closest Käsemann comes to equating sin with the devil is in *Romans*, 198, where he highlights the parallel between Satan’s self-disguise in 1 Cor 11:14 and the strategy of sin in Rom 7. Even so, here sin has “a demonic character,” which is not quite the same thing as saying sin is “a personal being that deceived, enslaves and ultimately kills,” a view which Jason Maston supports with reference to Käsemann on Rom 7, *Divine and Human Agency in Second Temple Judaism and Paul: A Comparative Study* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 141.

⁵⁸ *Romans*, 236.

Creator by forgetting one's creatureliness."⁵⁹ God's righteousness is also explained within this context, for it represents "God's victory amid the opposition of the world. By it, all human self-righteousness and insubordination come to destruction."⁶⁰ The shattering of these creaturely illusions is the work of God's righteousness, proclaimed by Paul as a *Kampfeslehre*: "the inalienable spearhead of justification because it attacks the religious person and only in so doing preserves the sense of the justification of the ungodly." Käsemann thereby takes the very term used by Wrede to dismiss justification as peripheral to Paul's theology and deploys it in a different sense to place it at the centre.⁶¹

⁵⁹ Ibid., 58. Compare Bultmann on this point, who defines sin as "man's self-powered striving to undergird his own existence in forgetfulness of his creaturely existence," *Theology of the New Testament*, 264.

⁶⁰ *New Testament Questions of Today*, 181, and note over whom the victory is won. Käsemann's famous insistence that God's righteousness involves power as well as gift can be understood at least in part from this polemic against humanity's self-assertion. God's righteousness represents a refusal to allow humanity to go on accepting God's gifts without relating properly to the Giver, for with the gift comes inseparably the power to live differently. Käsemann also hopes by combining 'power' and 'gift' to transcend the Reformation divide on imputed/infused righteousness and to unite juridical and participatory categories. His hopes in relation to the latter are somewhat dashed by his desire to use the language of justification as a catch-all. For the way in which this affects his reception amongst the New Perspective see Zahl, "A New Source for Understanding German Theology"; and for an example see Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 508.

⁶¹ Cf. Käsemann's opposition to Wrede and Schweitzer's polemic against justification in *New Testament Questions of Today*, 14. He also reinstates the Reformers' credentials as interpreters of Paul: "It must be asserted with the greatest possible emphasis that both historically and theologically Paul has to be understood in the light of the Reformation's insight. Any other perspective at most covers part of his thinking; it does not grasp the heart of it." *Perspectives on Paul*, 32.

The plight therefore consists of a creaturely delusion against which God as judge will act. Consequently, divine wrath features heavily in Käsemann's account of Paul.⁶² Like the righteousness of God, his wrath can be personified,⁶³ and is the eschatological fate which awaits a world that follows an Adamic path.⁶⁴

For Käsemann, the solution is unequivocally the justification of the ungodly.⁶⁵ If apocalyptic is the mother of Paul's theology, justification is the firstborn child. Exactly how that works in his scheme, however, is harder to pin down. In the essay 'The Saving Significance of the

⁶² The same is true of Aulén, despite the apparent affinity between his *Christus Victor* model and the apocalyptic reading of Paul. Indeed he characterises all of the 'powers' as expressions of the divine will, in some mysterious way, such that redemption is really a matter of God reconciling himself to the world (2 Cor 5:19 having foundational importance to Aulén). This approach generates some problems of its own (see esp. Michael J. Ovey, "Appropriating Aulén? Employing Christus Victor Models of the Atonement," *Chm* 124 (2010): 300–302) but also certainly stands at some distance from Wrede and Schweitzer. Contra Williams, *The Spirit World in the Letters of Paul the Apostle*, 38, for whom Aulén and Schweitzer's views of redemption are "exactly the same."

⁶³ Käsemann, *New Testament Questions of Today*, 173.

⁶⁴ E.g. Käsemann argues that the legal terms in Rom 5:16 show "that the apostle does not view man tragically but as a wrongdoer, even though he speaks of the ongoing curse of guilt. The message of 1:24ff is repeated. Judgement on the sin of the protoplast leads in anticipation of eschatological wrath to condemnation of the world dependent on him," *Romans*, 154. Similarly: "After Adam's fall mankind always finds itself in the power of sin and death, even before and outside the law which proclaims eschatological judgment on our works and summons us with our transgressions before the final judge," *ibid.*, 150.

⁶⁵ The motif is woven throughout Käsemann's account of Paul, often accompanied by talk of eschatological *creatio ex nihilo* and resurrection from the dead, revealing how determinative Rom 4 is for his reading of Paul; see e.g. *Romans*, 35, 112, 247, 287, 298; cf. *Perspectives on Paul*, 40–41, 75–76 and the discussion of Abraham in ch. 4. Similarly, when discussing the New Testament canon, it is the message of the justification of the ungodly that appears to Käsemann "as the qualifying and decisive criterion indeed of the New Testament," quoted in Baird, *History of New Testament Research Vol. 3: From C. H. Dodd to Hans Dieter Betz*, 135.

Death of Jesus,' Käsemann grants some occasional use of sacrificial motifs by Paul but notes that he never explicitly calls Jesus' death a sacrifice, "particularly since it was in general accounted as God's action and God cannot very well sacrifice to himself."⁶⁶ Likewise he rejects the "old view of vicarious punishment" for which the Pauline texts "provide no basis." Citing Gal 3:13 and 2 Cor 5:21 he argues "they do not speak of punishment but of the deep ignominy of the incarnation, which was the price of the salvation achieved without our aid, and of the divine condescension which abases itself to the level of the human sphere."⁶⁷ "Without our aid" is also the way Paul's 'for us' formulae are to be understood. Referencing Rom 5:6-10, Rom 14:15, and 2 Cor 5:14, Käsemann states that the thought of Christ dying 'for us' "covers the two meanings: 'for our advantage' and 'in our stead'" but, strikingly, Käsemann insists that, by these terms, "what he is establishing is our incapacity to achieve salvation for ourselves."⁶⁸ In addition to accounting for the evils of Käsemann's own day, this is the further value of recognising the demonic in Paul:

⁶⁶ One possible exception, unmentioned in that essay, is *περὶ ἁμαρτίας* in Rom 8:3, which Käsemann elsewhere argues for reading in the technical sense as a sin-offering, and translates it as 'expiatory sacrifice.' See *Romans*, 214, for the translation, 216 for the argumentation. On the other hand he cites 8:2 as evidence that Paul is more interested in liberation than expiation, *Perspectives on Paul*, 44, and interprets the phrase *κατέκρινεν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν* in light of the motif of the sending of the Son, to emphasise divine initiative and human self-deception: "It does not simply refer to Christ's penal suffering... if God representatively on the cross judged and condemned sin in the fleshly sphere, the Spirit is for the apostle the power which sets us under the cross and under the judgment executed there. In so doing he rescues us from our autonomy and illusions and manifests the Crucified as the end of our own possibilities and the beginning of the wonderful divine possibilities." *Romans*, 218.

⁶⁷ Käsemann, *Perspectives on Paul*, 43.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 39; cf *Romans*, 138 where Käsemann claims that "the characteristic *ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν* means both 'on behalf of' and 'in place of', substantively at any rate 'without us.'" This prompts Way, with good reason, to object that this "suppression of the traditional motifs contained within Paul's letter's is arbitrary. 'Christ died for our sins' cannot be translated without remainder into 'human beings are unable to save themselves.'

Since the fall of Adam man's heart and will and thinking have been corrupted and have fallen into the power of demonic forces. Such a view is indeed inescapable if redemption is to be understood as eschatological *creatio ex nihilo*. Only a theory which postulates free will can have any interest in weakening this metaphysical dualism into an ethical one.⁶⁹

Not for the last time, the demonic is evoked to shore up a view of soteriological agency rather than to augment the cast of cosmological actors.⁷⁰

The death of Jesus is salvific in a sense that corresponds to this plight, for when it is rightly apprehended it breaks the spell of human autonomy. "Jesus' cross is essentially directed against all religious illusion and relegates man to man's humanity."⁷¹ Jesus both models creaturely obedience and dies accursed, outside the covenant, and thereby calls his followers to join him in a recreated humanity beyond the religious establishment.⁷² By this the illusion is shattered, which is also to say that the 'powers' are defeated: Jesus "de-demonizes the world by leading us back from the condition of potential heroes and gods into human reality and thus into the simplicity which breathes liberty in the midst of every

Important themes in Paul's theology are being interpreted away (on the insufficient grounds that they are traditional) because they are not theologically congenial to Käsemann," Way, *The Lordship of Christ*, 218; cf. his comments on 235-36.

⁶⁹ *Perspectives on Paul*, 24.

⁷⁰ There is therefore an asymmetry in Käsemann. Human beings are responsible for their captivity but not their release; they find their identity either "through the demons to which one surrenders" or the Lord, who alone is able to rescue from their hand, *On Being a Disciple*, xiii.

⁷¹ Käsemann, *Perspectives on Paul*, 35.

⁷² "He died this death outside the limits of consecrated ground," *ibid.*, 36.

entanglement.”⁷³ “Before the God who humbles himself, self-transcending man comes to an end.”⁷⁴ Or as he expressed himself much later, we become God’s creatures when “in the experience of being ‘reduced to nothing’ we experience that we are just dreamers when it comes to our own righteousness.”⁷⁵ To the extent that this reveals Käsemann’s deepest conviction about salvation, and despite appearances to the contrary, we conclude that Käsemann has not fallen quite so far from the Bultmannian or indeed the Lutheran tree.

⁷³ Ibid., 46. Käsemann adapts Bultmann’s language of demythologisation in connection with this, speaking not of the need to bring ancient thought to modern expression, but of the need for humanity to be “summoned to the reality of earth from illusions about oneself, the world, and especially God. Demythologising must proceed to de-demonising,” *On Being a Disciple*, 177. Although he quotes this text, Congdon misses its intent, defining de-demonizing as the “invasion of God” which “destroys the illusory power structures that enslave the oppressed peoples of the earth” (“Eschatologizing Apocalyptic: An Assessment of the Conversation on Pauline Apocalyptic,” in *Apocalyptic and the Future of Theology*, 126n29.) Käsemann most certainly saw some political significance to this form of demythologisation, but the text cited proceeds to apply this not to “power structures” but to the “alleged enlightened person,” humbling them and us “to the place where we are nothing but creatures of his power and grace.” See *On Being a Disciple*, 177.

⁷⁴ *Perspectives on Paul*, 45–46. Death is elsewhere identified as an exception: “the powers of the world—other than death—no longer reign in her” [sc. the church], *New Testament Questions of Today*, 134. De Boer makes too much of this, however, arguing that for Käsemann “Paul’s eschatology is apocalyptic solely because death alone remains outside the sphere of God’s sovereignty,” *The Defeat of Death*, 16. What ought to be remembered is Käsemann’s insistence that the church both stands as a new world order, in proper relation to the Creator, but also that “her perfection has still to be accomplished” and so the church (in solidarity with the world) cries out for that freedom, *New Testament Questions of Today*, 136. Presumably there is also the fact that the world beyond the church is still contested territory—to whom does it belong?—and that quintessentially apocalyptic question awaits an eschatological answer.

⁷⁵ Zahl, “A Tribute To Ernst Käsemann and a Theological Testament,” 392–93. Käsemann also uses and acknowledges Bultmann’s language of the individual being brought to nought in *Romans*, 111, in connection with Rom 4:4-5.

This aspect of Käsemann is frequently downplayed in the genealogies presented by modern apocalyptic readers of Paul. For example, de Boer's desire to make Käsemann a spokesman for a "cosmological-apocalyptic reading of Paul" means that he overlooks the centrality of justification (addressed in Lutheran terms to rebellious creatures) and finds in Käsemann a conflict only between "God and the inimical suprahuman powers who have subjugated the world."⁷⁶

If de Boer's analysis fails to capture the true nature of the plight in Käsemann, it is worth highlighting an aspect of Käsemann's soteriology that will find more common ground with at least some contemporary apocalyptic readers of Paul, namely an emphasis, common to Käsemann and Bultmann, on the preaching of the cross, which becomes an existential encounter between Creator and creature.⁷⁷ The chief difference with Bultmann is that in Käsemann the gospel is more oriented to one's place within the cosmos than to the

⁷⁶ *The Defeat of Death*, 30. Likewise, de Boer's account of Bultmann and Käsemann's differences is exaggerated. According to de Boer, Bultmann's emphasis on *Anthropologie* "referred to the *individual* as he or she is addressed by the gospel of justification in the *present* and confronted with the *decision* of faith" whereas Käsemann's *Kosmologie* "seemed to denote the *future* liberation of the whole created order by *God* from those *cosmic forces* that have subjugated it," *ibid.*, 25 emphasis original. He also overlooks Käsemann's comments on faith which sounds strikingly Bultmannian, e.g. "faith is an appropriation of the eschatological public proclamation made to the whole world and to each individual. Each person is placed in a situation of personal responsibility," *Romans*, 23. Davies likewise characterises the Bultmann/Käsemann relationship only in terms of contrast, *Paul Among the Apocalypses*, 7-12.

⁷⁷ E.g. "The exalted Christ is present only in Christian proclamation," *Romans*, 290. Hence Beker's criticism of the role of the resurrection in Bultmann might fairly be applied to Käsemann: it is reduced "to a new self-understanding in the world. It becomes the perception of the meaning of the cross and thus loses both its character as event and its temporal apocalyptic mooring," *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1980), 154.

individual *per se*, such that salvation involves the apprehension that one has been in the grip of a mass delusion, rebelling against the Creator and incurring his wrath and then embracing one's creaturely place with Christ, outside every kind of establishment.⁷⁸

There can, in summary, be no disputing Barr's suggestion that "Käsemann's position, whether right or wrong, does something to put apocalyptic on the map as a relevant question for discussion" except for its understatement.⁷⁹ Behind that terminology, however, lies a very different account of the human plight and solution to those who will continue to use the terminology and invoke his name.

⁷⁸ This condition is maintained by the Spirit who "continually actualises justification" as he "points us back to the cross of Christ as the place of salvation," *Romans*, 219. Likewise the futurity of apocalyptic "renders to reality its due and resists pious illusion" because it always strains forward toward a goal not yet reached, *New Testament Questions of Today*, 137.

⁷⁹ "Jewish Apocalyptic in Recent Scholarly Study," 24.

CHAPTER 4: J. CHRISTIAAN BEKER

Beker is significant in this interpretive chain not only for his individual contribution,⁸⁰ but also because he provides a link between the European roots of this interpretation of Paul and the transatlantic seminaries (Union Theological Seminary and Princeton) in which it

⁸⁰ For Beker's thought see *Paul the Apostle* (subsequent page references are to this work); *Paul's Apocalyptic Gospel: The Coming Triumph of God* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982); "The Challenge of Paul's Apocalyptic Gospel for the Church Today," *JRT* 40 (1983): 9–15; "Suffering and Triumph in Paul's Letter to the Romans," *HBT* 7 (1985): 105–19; "The Faithfulness of God and the Priority of Israel in Paul's Letter to the Romans," *HTR* 79 (1986): 10–16; *Suffering and Hope: The Biblical Vision of the Human Predicament* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987); "Paul's Theology: Consistent or Inconsistent?," *NTS* 34 (1988): 364–77; "The Relationship Between Sin and Death in Romans," in *The Conversation Continues: Studies in Paul & John in Honor of J. Louis Martyn*, ed. Robert T. Fortna and Beverly Roberts Gaventa (Nashville: Abingdon, 1990), 55–61; *The Triumph of God: The Essence of Paul's Thought* (trans. Loren T. Stuckenbruck; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990); *Heirs of Paul: Paul's Legacy in the New Testament and in the Church Today* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991); "Recasting Pauline Theology: The Coherence-Contingency Scheme as Interpretive Model," in *Pauline Theology Vol. 1: Thessalonians, Philippians, Galatians, and Philemon*, ed. Jouette M. Bassler (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 15–24; "The Promise of Paul's Apocalyptic for Our Times," in *The Future of Christology: Essays in Honor of Leander E. Keck*, ed. Abraham J. Malherbe and Wayne A. Meeks (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 152–59; *The New Testament: A Thematic Introduction* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1994); Responses to his work include Andrew T. Lincoln, "Review of Paul The Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought by J. Christiaan Beker," *Chm* 95 (1981): 353–54; Ralph P. Martin, "Review of Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought by J. Christiaan Beker," *JBL* 101 (1982): 463–66; Vincent P. Branick, "Apocalyptic Paul?," *CBQ* 47 (1985): 664–75; A review of *Paul the Apostle* by J. Louis Martyn is republished in *Theological Issues in the Letters of Paul*, 176–182; de Boer, *The Defeat of Death*, 32–35; Paul J. Achtemeier, "Finding the Way to Paul's Theology: A Response to J. Christiaan Beker and J. Paul Sampley," in *Pauline Theology Vol. 1: Thessalonians, Philippians, Galatians, and Philemon*, ed. Jouette M. Bassler (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 25–36; Daniel L. Migliore, "J. Christiaan Beker: A Tribute (1924–1999)," *PSB* 21, no. 1 (2000): 96–98.

would find a new home.⁸¹ As to the former, Wrede, Schweitzer and Käsemann are all named as influences on his own work, although Beker distances himself from each of them in various ways as shall become clear.

According to Beker, “Paul’s gospel is formulated within the basic components of apocalyptic. To be sure, apocalyptic undergoes a profound modification in Paul, but this does not affect the intensity of its expectation” (145). By exploring elements of this statement we can arrive at Beker’s view of the Pauline plight and solution.

First, the “basic components of apocalyptic.” Beker relies on the works of Vielhauer and Koch, distilling their discussions into three apocalyptic motifs: historical dualism, universal cosmic expectation and the imminent end of the world. Lest the reader think these operate as an abstract philosophy, Beker is quick to insist that Jewish apocalypticism lives with the “tragic tension between faithfulness to Torah and its apparent futility... fed by his faith in the faithfulness of the God of Israel and his ultimate self-vindication.”⁸² Indeed, this theme—the faithfulness and future vindication of God—is subsequently added to the list of apocalyptic motifs and in fact becomes the central question. Whereas Käsemann’s apocalyptic question asks ‘To whom does the earth belong?’, for Beker it is “Why is

⁸¹See Beker, *The Triumph of God*, xii–xiii. On a personal level, the most striking affinity is with Käsemann. The Nazis cast their shadow over Beker’s youth, invading his native Holland when he was 16. He spent some time in hiding before being deported for factory work in Berlin. It was there, suffering from typhus and enduring nightly bombing raids, that he decided to become a theologian. After the war he studied at the University of Utrecht before a World Council of Churches scholarship enabled him to continue his studies in Chicago. Making his home in America, he taught New Testament at Union Theological Seminary (1956–1959) and eventually settled at Princeton as Professor of Biblical Theology from 1966–1995.

⁸² *Paul the Apostle*, 136.

faithfulness to the God of the covenant and to the Torah rewarded with persecution and suffering?”⁸³

Beker’s discussion of the components of apocalyptic has been criticised for its brevity and its failure to engage with the primary sources.⁸⁴ His response has been telling. Rather than defend the historical and literary credibility of his use of the term, he believes that these questions “could have been muted if I had frankly emphasized the polemical thrust of my usage as directed to the systematic theologians of our time.”⁸⁵ In particular he has rival views of eschatology in view which fail to reflect Paul’s expectation of a literal future cosmic event; in particular the christocentric salvation history espoused by Cullmann,

⁸³ *The Triumph of God*, 21. As early as the preface to the paperback edition of *Paul the Apostle*, Beker argues that his three apocalyptic motifs “are actually anchored in the even-more-central motif of the faithfulness of God.” *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought*, 1st pb ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), xv.

⁸⁴ The brevity of this discussion and the absence of sustained engagement with the primary sources disappoints Matlock: “the sceptic may perhaps be justified for suspecting that it is easier to interpret Paul in the light of Vielhauer and Koch than in the light—or the darkness—of the apocalypses,” *Unveiling the Apocalyptic Paul*, 247–48; cf. Matlock’s *Doktorvater* Andrew Lincoln in “Review of Paul The Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought by J. Christiaan Beker.”

⁸⁵ Quoted in Matlock, *Unveiling the Apocalyptic Paul*, 249n8. This admission comes in the paperback edition of *Paul the Apostle* (xiv). He does, however, also argue that the confusion might have been avoided if he had adopted Hanson’s distinctions between “apocalyptic genre, apocalyptic motifs and apocalyptic movements,” *Paul The Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought*, xv, and believes that “it would have been helpful to provide a more thorough account of the groups and communities that espouse an apocalyptic religiosity,” *The Triumph of God*, 64. It is unlikely that appeal to Hanson’s categories would satisfy Matlock, for, as he insists, the terminology still implies some relationship between the genre, motifs and movements, and the nature of the relationship needs explaining, *Unveiling the Apocalyptic Paul*, 260.

Bultmann's existentialism,⁸⁶ and Neo-orthodoxy's reinterpretation of eschatology: "no longer an ontic event expected in the future but a noetic-hermeneutical tool, that is, a linguistic concept, defining Christology as God's ultimate revelatory word" (139). According to Beker, it is embarrassment about Paul's expectations of the future that prompts these interpretations, abandoning apocalyptic to a lunatic fringe. Hence, unwilling to excuse this embarrassment, and against what he calls the "multivalent and often chaotic use of the concept 'eschatology' in modern theology," he asserts "future apocalyptic," with only the qualifier 'future' saving him from drowning in irony.⁸⁷

Thus, despite the nod to Jewish apocalyptic literature, Beker really understands apocalyptic to mean "imminent expectation." This is evident from the quote with which we began. Despite profound modifications to the other apocalyptic motifs, "the intensity of its expectation" remains and (for Beker, as for Käsemann) Paul's apocalyptic credentials are

⁸⁶ Between the time of Käsemann's landmark essays on apocalyptic and Beker, a number of studies had defended the Bultmannian position, arguing that Paul frequently put apocalyptic traditions to paraenetic use in the present. See the helpful survey in David W. Kuck, *Judgment and Community Conflict: Paul's Use of Apocalyptic Judgment Language in 1 Corinthians 3:5-4:5*, NovTSup 66 (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 12–15. Influential among those studies are Jürgen Becker, "Erwägungen zur apokalyptischen Tradition in der paulinischen Theologie," *EvT* 30, 1970, and Jörg Baumgarten, *Paulus und die Apokalypik: Die Auslegung apokalyptischer Überlieferung in den echten Paulusbriefen* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1975).

⁸⁷ There are echoes therefore of Way's suggestion that Käsemann spoke of apocalyptic in opposition to Bultmann's eschatology. Even so, Käsemann is not above reproach in Beker's eyes for three reasons. First, because Käsemann portrays 'future eschatology' more as a contingent response to Corinthian enthusiasts than as the coherent centre of Paul's theology (17). Second, because apocalyptic functions in Käsemann as an historical explanation ('the mother of all theology') but Käsemann retains justification by faith as the centre of Paul's theology (14). Third, because he is insufficiently theocentric, failing to emphasise the climax of the *regnum Christi* in the *regnum Dei* (17).

therefore in order.⁸⁸ That said, it is the modifications to the other apocalyptic motifs—historical dualism and cosmic universal expectation—which bring Beker’s view of the Pauline plight and solution into focus.

a. *Plight*

Had Beker not made “imminent expectation” the hallmark of apocalyptic, the modifications to other motifs might have disqualified Paul as an apocalyptic theologian. According to Beker, Paul “uses little of the traditional apocalyptic terminology” (145), namely, ‘this age’ paired with ‘the age to come’; mention of ‘powers,’ ‘rulers’ and so on “is restricted mainly to the apocalyptic sections of 1 Cor 15:24-28 and Rom 8:38-39”; and nor does he engage in “apocalyptic timetables, descriptions of the architecture of heaven, or accounts of demons and angels” (145).⁸⁹

In relation to the historical dualism of Jewish apocalyptic, Beker’s earlier work maintains that dualism but argues that Paul softens it from two directions: by introducing salvation-

⁸⁸ This is also the debt he acknowledges to Wrede, Schweitzer and Käsemann. Several times he cites Wrede’s comment that “the whole Pauline conception of salvation is characterised by suspense,” saying in one place that it “became for me the fundamental key for unlocking Paul’s thought,” *The Triumph of God*, xii; cf. *Paul the Apostle*, 177. Acknowledging other debts, Beker claims that “stimulated by the studies of A. Schweitzer and E. Käsemann, I am recasting Paul’s theology as a theocentric theology of hope,” Beker, *The Triumph of God*, xiii.

⁸⁹ Beker’s view that angels and demons are peripheral to Paul’s account of the plight distances him from Wrede and Schweitzer. Although in one section Beker discusses “the cross of Christ and the demonic powers,” (*The Triumph of God*, 80) the powers in question are death, sin, the law, and the flesh, and Col 2:15 is interpreted to speak of their defeat.

historical continuity between the past and the present,⁹⁰ and by describing the “proleptic presence of the new in the old” (146).⁹¹

As for cosmic universalism, “Paul modifies this apocalyptic motif at its very foundation.”⁹² Jewish apocalyptic anticipated the liberation of the whole creation but, crucially, the beneficiaries were the righteous over against the wicked; Israel over against the nations. Within this tradition “sin and death are powers that have lost their cutting edge for those who are faithful to Torah” whereas for Paul, sin and death, along with divine wrath and the law, are “ontological powers” and “major apocalyptic forces” (145).

Sin is no longer to be seen as something for which the law provides adequate remedies: “Paul radicalises this Jewish concept of sin. Sin, so to speak, grows over a person’s head and traps him into bondage. In other words, sin commences as a seemingly corrigible transgression by the person but ends as a power over the person” (215). Thus, while Rom 1:18-2:29 addresses the person in his “responsible culpability”, Rom 5:12-21 offers a

⁹⁰ Matlock characterises Beker as “a Käsemann who has softened considerably toward Cullmann,” *Unveiling the Apocalyptic Paul*, 302. To the disappointment of Martyn, Beker’s definition of Pauline apocalyptic “plays down the disjunctive dualism of the two ages, accenting instead the linear matter of God’s victorious faithfulness,” *Theological Issues in the Letters of Paul*, 178; cf. de Boer, *The Defeat of Death*, 33. Initially, in *Paul the Apostle*, this is a point of contrast between Jewish apocalyptic (dualistic) and Paul (more salvation-historical) but, as noted above, Beker’s account of Jewish apocalyptic is increasingly organised around the concept of God’s covenant faithfulness, no doubt to the increasing exasperation of Martyn.

⁹¹ While the language of prolepsis seems to accent the future in keeping with Beker’s wider aims, de Boer rightly highlights a degree of self-contradiction in the claim that the strict temporal dualism of Jewish apocalyptic “is only peripherally present in Paul because the old age has run its course already; the ‘end of the ages has come’ upon us... and the ‘fulness of time’ has occurred in Christ.” See *Defeat of Death*, 146.

⁹² *Paul’s Apocalyptic Gospel*, 25.

complementary portrayal of humanity in Adam as the victim of sin and Rom 7 describes the impotence of the law to garner obedience because humanity was sold under sin prior to its commands (215).⁹³

In Beker's account, death is sin's closest ally, but their relationship is difficult to determine. Paul frequently pairs death with sin, but he also isolates death as the "last enemy," implying that it has an existence independent of sin, and Paul can even speak of it as an inherent part of creation itself (Beker cites 1 Cor 15:26, 42-44 and 45-47). For Beker this latter emphasis represents a shift to a Hellenistic cosmology forced upon Paul by the ongoing enmity of death in the world after the defeat of sin. While determined to let all the evidence stand, Beker nevertheless insists that "Paul stands basically in the apocalyptic tradition," (223) citing texts from *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* as evidence of that tradition in which death's invasion of the world comes through Adam's sin. Ultimately, death is "is not a natural part of the created order" and has a "negative ontological status."⁹⁴

The law is also listed as a spiritual power (citing Gal 3:13 and 4:5) and a servant of sin, although Beker identifies the law ultimately as "God's agent of condemnation," (262) given

⁹³ For Beker, Rom 7 expresses the way in which "the law informs me about my imperative, 'Do this and you will live' (Lev 18:5, Rom 10:5), but not about my indicative, 'I am carnal, sold under sin' (Rom 7:14), so that even prior to my attempt at obedience I am already in a state of sin" (246). Although Beker elsewhere cites Stendahl's rejection of introspective individualism with approval (220, 236), he nevertheless sees something like it at work in one's relationship to the law: "The person under the law is, from the perspective of the lordship of Christ, *the homo incurvatus in se* (Luther). All his deeds only promote the attempt to secure his existence before God" (247).

⁹⁴ An ambiguous phrase, but in context it seems to mean that death is unnatural, and a negative "physic-spiritual power that rules the old age," (223). Beker might have in mind the concept of evil as a privation of good, but elsewhere he speaks of it as an "ontological power" (145).

the choice between that and aligning Paul with a Marcionite rejection of the law.⁹⁵ In a separate discussion of Paul's *theologia crucis*, Beker characterises law, along with wisdom, as "structures of this age, normative powers for Greeks and Jews respectively. They are the symbolic abbreviations of what 'the civilised and religious world' considers its highest values," (204) all duly overturned by the cross.⁹⁶ Though reminiscent of Käsemann, this is a minor theme in Beker's account. The manner in which the law is pressed into the service of sin receives much greater emphasis.

Finally, wrath; concerning which Paul affirms and radicalises the Jewish apocalyptic understanding. First, in agreement, he views it "not so much as [God's] purifying chastisement of the individual or as his pedagogy, but as a cosmic-apocalyptic event" (192). Second, Paul extends it to the Jews as well as the nations: "all fall under God's wrath and judgment" (193).

Taken together then, the Pauline plight emphasises the need for more than forgiveness under the provisions of the law. A cosmic day of judgment beckons and any solution must deal with humanity's bondage to sin and death. "Humankind 'under the power of sin' needs both forgiveness and a renewal of its being" (210).

⁹⁵ For a rejection of the view that the law is a power at work contrary to God's will, see *Paul the Apostle*, 55.

⁹⁶ Strikingly, Beker has substituted Jewish seeking after signs and wonders for the law in this reworking of Paul's argument from 1 Corinthians. Similarly his argument that "the cross negates and judges the worlds of religion and culture: it contradicts wisdom (1 Cor 1:18); it crucifies the law and the world (Gal 2:20; 6:14)" (205), owes more to Käsemann than to Paul. It is Paul's confession that he has been crucified with Christ and has therefore died to the law, not that the law itself has been crucified.

b. Solution

In several places, Beker distances Paul from a solution couched in the language of sacrifice and forgiveness. His reasons are twofold. First, Beker is concerned that such language is too ambiguous in the context of the early church's understanding of the ongoing role of the law. For example, he cites the Antioch church whose confession of Jesus' death 'for us' implies no decisive break with Torah and the Jerusalem council which represents merely a liberalisation of the Torah's demands.⁹⁷

However, Paul radicalises this confession, because the death of Christ 'for us' (that is, 'for our sins') does not simply mean forgiveness under the law (i.e. a new possibility of obedience under the law) or a covenant renewal (cf. Rom 3:24). Rather, it means the termination of the law (Rom 10:4), because it initiates a new eschatological life, where God and humankind meet under new conditions (186).

Second, however, Paul goes beyond the traditional vocabulary for, in Beker's view, the "rabbinic language of sacrifice and atonement" is "incapable of stating the new ontological state of life that succeeds the judgment of God" (197). To give expression to these realities, Paul reaches for the language of 'new creation.' The death of Christ is not a spur to moral reformation (in an Abelardian sense); nor does it simply "mean a new moral beginning for the 'old' person, or primarily the forgiveness of his former transgressions so that he can begin again with a clean slate" (191). Rather, the death of Christ brings ontological transformation.

⁹⁷ Rejecting the account of Paul in Acts as authentic, Beker places Paul in opposition to the apostolic decree as an instantiation of the Galatian heresy and therefore a denial of Christ (187).

There is here a striking emphasis on the extent to which salvation has been inaugurated at the ecclesial and individual level. On the ecclesial level, Beker both cites and sounds like Käsemann (even if the latter might have sounded a shade less triumphalist): “Paul’s church is not an aggregate of justified sinners or a sacramental institute or a means for private self-sanctification but the avant-garde of the new creation in a hostile world, creating beachheads in this world of God’s dawning new world and yearning for the day of God’s visible lordship over his creation, the general resurrection of the dead (155).”⁹⁸

On the individual level, the power of sin is broken in the life of the Christian to an extent underappreciated by the Reformation formula *simul iustus et peccator*. Rather, the believer is *tunc peccator-nunc iustus* (216) and a new creation over whom sin no longer reigns.⁹⁹ Death, as noted above, is more difficult. Paul stands basically within “the apocalyptic tradition” by linking sin and death such that their defeats are concurrent (Rom 8:2). On the other hand, death remains the last enemy and there seems to be “a residue of death in the created order that is not related to sin” (222).¹⁰⁰ In part these emphases are grounded in the

⁹⁸ Continuing the military metaphors, Both Beker and Käsemann also adopt Cullmann’s D-Day and V-Day analogy. See Beker 159, 177, and Käsemann, *Perspectives on Paul*, 67.

⁹⁹ Beker would not, however, go as far as Wrede and say believers are as fully redeemed as Christ himself. Rather Beker says that, in the present, sin is the “impossible possibility” (217) —impossible because it contradicts the new status, but a possibility nonetheless, and a stubborn possibility, given ongoing existence in the mortal body.

¹⁰⁰ While this account of death’s origin is supposedly Hellenistic, Beker’s account of apocalyptic means Paul remains within the fold regardless. Either he holds together the defeat of sin and death in accordance with Jewish apocalyptic texts, or he awaits a future defeat of death and thereby expresses the imminent expectation that Beker has made the hallmark of apocalyptic theology.

contingencies of Paul's letters,¹⁰¹ although they also represent enduring ambivalences and tensions in Paul's thought.¹⁰² Those tensions notwithstanding, Beker's view of the extent to which the eschatological future has invaded the present in the individual and ecclesial realms highlights for him the inadequacy of a soteriology that deals only in forgiveness.

What should not be missed, however, is that Beker's view of the Pauline solution retains a clear role for forgiveness on the basis of Christ's substitutionary death. Indeed, he insists that while by itself this is not a sufficient component of Pauline soteriology, it is nonetheless necessary. Reflecting upon dogmatic debates concerning the atonement he declines the choice between Anselm and Aulén, insisting that the cost of elevating one soteriological model in Paul over another is too high:

¹⁰¹ Where he meets overly-realised eschatology he emphasises death as the "last enemy"; where he needs to defend his account of justification against the charge of antinomianism he emphasises the ethical potency of new, resurrection life; and in contexts of martyrdom or suffering he emphasises the impotence of death to imperil the believer (229). The language of contingency alludes, of course, to Beker's more methodological contribution to Pauline studies, arguing for the necessity of recognising that Paul's letters deploy a variety of imagery and concepts to meet the contingent needs of his congregations which are drawn from, but not to be identified with, a structural and (largely) coherent core: namely, apocalyptic.

¹⁰² There also emerges a tension in Beker's own work here with his emphasis on 'future apocalyptic' and his description of the present as merely proleptic anticipation of the future (*proleptic* being a favourite term of Beker's, see *Paul the Apostle*, 180). As Martin's review highlights, this is hard to square with his (more uncharacteristic) claim that "the cross... is the apocalyptic turning point of history. The breaking in of the new age means the destruction and judgment of the old age" (206); indeed he earlier states that "the death of Christ does not in and by itself inaugurate the new age" (199). Perhaps most intriguingly, Beker can state that "the resurrection has inaugurated a new ontological reality, that is, the reality of resurrection life as the 'new creation' that—however proleptic—has changed the nature of historical reality" (138). For Martin's comments, see "Review of Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought by J. Christiaan Beker," *JBL* 101 (1982): 464. De Boer registers a similar criticism in *The Defeat of Death*, 34.

Whereas the Anselmian view threatens to cast sin and redemption in juristic-meritorious terms, the 'classical view' threatens to view sin and redemption in terms of a dualistic power struggle in which God in Christ simply conquers enemy territory by an invasion from heaven. In this scheme, sin is less a responsible guilt that must be forgiven than a power that must be eradicated, so that Anselm's dictum is relevant here: "Nondum considerasti quanti ponderis peccatum sit" (You have not yet considered the weight of sin). The death of Christ is here so conflated with his victorious resurrection that the depth, burden and costliness of God's love in Christ are not accentuated. This results in an interpretation of the 'righteousness of God' as simply God's redemptive act and ignores its Hebrew moral meaning of God's 'just order.' A Christology 'from above' overshadows a Christology 'from below' and our new creation in Christ threatens to become discontinuous with our former moral responsibility under the power of sin. This view ignores the fact that sin needs to be not only eradicated but also forgiven (209).¹⁰³

In similar fashion, Beker urges resistance to "two-crater theories" (256), citing Schweitzer's bifurcation of participatory and juridical categories, and drawing upon Gerd Theissen's account of the matrix of Pauline metaphors in which symbols of liberation, justification and reconciliation are intertwined. If one symbol stands proud it is justification, for it constitutes "the linguistic home of Paul's conversion experience" (260) and was the focus of his former life in pursuit of righteousness under the law. For Beker, however, the priority is only chronological: "although... it constitutes Paul's original hermeneutic of the Christ

¹⁰³ Beker's balance is maintained by Peter Macky who builds on his work in *Paul's Cosmic War Myth: A Military Version of the Gospel* (New York: Peter Lang, 1998). Cousar similarly notes Aulén's typology and resists the call to choose between soteriological metaphors. See *A Theology of the Cross: The Death of Jesus in the Pauline Letters* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990), 82–87.

event, it is not his only hermeneutic or the master symbol” (264).¹⁰⁴ In any event, although a forensic element remains, it is properly understood in Käsemann’s more expansive terms: “it is both the gift of salvation and his power that will encompass his whole creation” (264).

For Beker then, the sacrificial death of Christ and the forgiveness it brings are necessary but not sufficient elements in Pauline soteriology. Paul conceives of the human condition as bound by sin and death in ways that demand both a decisive break with the law and an ontological transformation. In describing this plight he has modified key apocalyptic motifs, redefining the ‘powers’ as sin and death and breaking down the historical dualism from several directions: emphasising salvation-historical continuity with the past and, in light of Paul’s inaugurated eschatology, finding an anticipation of the future in the present. In describing the solution, Paul both radicalises traditional concepts and imports new vocabulary to express the ways in which God’s triumph over the powers of sin and death has been proleptically manifested in Christ and is experienced in the life of the believer and the church.

¹⁰⁴ When pressed by R. P. Martin for a rationale by which apocalyptic is to be preferred among other symbols, Beker adapts this argument in favour of justification to defend apocalyptic, arguing that it is the true “linguistic home” of Paul (i.e. the traditional ‘in-house’ language of Pharisaism) and so the means by which he expresses his understanding of his calling (see the preface to the paperback edition of *Paul the Apostle*, xviii).

CHAPTER 5: MARTINUS DE BOER

As we have noted along the way, Käsemann and Beker adopted the language of ‘apocalyptic’ for theological and rhetorical reasons, rather than as an assertion of literary connection between Paul and the apocalyptic genre. In part, the contribution of de Boer has been to address the criticisms that attend the absence of that connection. In doing so, however, he organises the data in such a way that has significantly influenced accounts of the Pauline plight and solution, at least among those who adopt his approach to the literature.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁵ Although a generation or so apart, biographically Beker and de Boer are fellow travellers. They both left their native Holland for America, where de Boer studied for his PhD under Martyn’s supervision and was Beker’s colleague at Princeton from 1983-1990, before returning to his native Amsterdam. De Boer’s most relevant works include *The Defeat of Death: Apocalyptic Eschatology in 1 Corinthians 15 and Romans 5* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1988); “Paul and Jewish Apocalyptic Eschatology,” in *Apocalyptic and the New Testament: Essays in Honor of J. Louis Martyn*, ed. Joel Marcus and Marion L. Soards (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1989), 169–90; “Paul and Apocalyptic Eschatology,” in *The Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism Volume 1: The Origins of Apocalypticism in Judaism and Christianity*, ed. John J. Collins (London: Continuum, 2000), 345–83; “Paul, Theologian of God’s Apocalypse,” *Int* 56 (2002): 21–33; “Paul’s Use and Interpretation of a Justification Tradition in Galatians 2.15–21,” *JSNT* 28 (2005): 189–216; “The Meaning of the Phrase τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου in Galatians,” *NTS* 53 (2007): 204–24; “The New Preachers in Galatia. Their Identity, Message, Aims, and Impact,” in *Jesus, Paul, and Early Christianity: Studies in Honour of Henk Jan De Jonge*, ed. Rieuwerd Buitenwerf, Harm W. Hollander, and Johannes Tromp (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 39–60; *Galatians: A Commentary* (Louisville: John Knox, 2011); “Salvation History in Galatians? A Response to Bruce W. Longenecker and Jason Maston,” *JSPL* 2 (2012): 105–15; “Paul’s Mythologising Program in Romans 5–8,” in *Apocalyptic Paul* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2013), 1–20; “Cross and Cosmos in Galatians,” in *The Unrelenting God: Essays on God’s Action in Scripture in Honor of Beverly Roberts Gaventa*, ed. David J. Downs and Matthew L. Skinner (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013), 208–25.

Although Martyn was the supervisor to de Boer's doctoral dissertation, it is the latter's work on Jewish apocalyptic eschatology that underlies and predates much of Martyn's Pauline exegesis and for this reason we discuss de Boer first.¹⁰⁶ Specifically, Martyn relies upon de Boer's typology for Jewish apocalyptic eschatology, with two distinct tracks: 'cosmological Jewish apocalyptic eschatology' (hereafter CJAE) and 'forensic Jewish apocalyptic eschatology' (FJAE), which are first outlined in *The Defeat of Death*.¹⁰⁷ De Boer and Martyn then insist that Paul must be interpreted against this framework (albeit in slightly different ways). The best route to de Boer's understanding of the Pauline plight and solution lies, therefore, through his view of Jewish apocalyptic eschatology and so with that we begin.

a. *Plight and Solution in de Boer's Two Tracks of Jewish Apocalyptic Eschatology*

A word first about 'apocalyptic eschatology'. De Boer stresses the distinction between eschatology, commonly conceived as 'the last things' as they pertain to the individual, and *apocalyptic* eschatology which

Concerns visible, objective, and public events that are cosmic in scope and implication, for example, the general resurrection of the dead and the last judgment. Apocalyptic eschatology is fundamentally concerned with God's active and visible rectification (putting

¹⁰⁶ Martyn frequently refers his readers to de Boer's "extraordinarily perceptive essay" 'Paul and Jewish apocalyptic eschatology' (1989), J. Louis Martyn, *Galatians* (New York: Doubleday, 1997), 97n51. N. T. Wright discusses de Boer and Martyn in the same order and for the same reason in *Paul and His Recent Interpreters*, 155-86.

¹⁰⁷ See the summary on 83-91. Similar summaries can be found in "Paul and Jewish Apocalyptic Eschatology," 172-80; "Paul and Apocalyptic Eschatology," 357-66. The typology is also praised by Harry Alan Hahne in *The Corruption and Redemption of Creation: Nature in Romans 8:19-22 and Jewish Apocalyptic Literature* (London: T&T Clark, 2006), 12-13.

right) of the created world (the “cosmos”), which has somehow gone astray and become alienated from God.¹⁰⁸

Significantly then, all apocalyptic eschatology has a cosmic perspective. For de Boer this is also one of three points of contrast between apocalyptic eschatology and the eschatology of the Hebrew prophets (e.g. Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah). The second is that apocalyptic eschatology has a stronger temporal dualism, anticipating a greater eschatological upheaval including a post-mortem judgment, rather than a fulfilment of prophecy within the course of history.¹⁰⁹ Third, apocalyptic eschatology is a matter of divine ἀποκάλυψις; it is “*revealed* eschatology” in which both the present and the future find illumination.¹¹⁰

As to the two tracks, de Boer argues that CJAE appears in “*relatively* pure form” in ‘The Book of the Watchers’ (1 *Enoch* 1-36),¹¹¹ and that within it

This age is characterized by the fact that the world has come under the dominion of evil, angelic powers... These angelic powers are responsible for human sinfulness and its

¹⁰⁸ “Paul and Apocalyptic Eschatology,” 350; cf. “Paul and Jewish Apocalyptic Eschatology,” 181.

¹⁰⁹ It should be noted, however, that de Boer sees Isaiah 25-26 as proto-apocalyptic in its expectation of post-mortem judgment and its personification of death.

¹¹⁰ “Paul and Apocalyptic Eschatology,” 351. By emphasising this aspect of revelation alongside the dualism of the ages, de Boer is attempting to address the concerns of Rowland, Matlock et al. In what sense Amos, Isaiah and Jeremiah are not also revealed eschatology is left unexplained. Perhaps apocalyptic eschatological revelations involve *angelic* mediation but this is not spelled out. At any rate, de Boer subsequently qualifies this last point, thereby distancing himself from Rowland, to argue that “to speak of apocalyptic... is to concentrate not on the theme of direct communication of heavenly mysteries to a human being... but on God’s own visible eschatological *activity*, activity that will constitute the actual revelation, what we may call the apocalypse of God,” “Paul, Theologian of God’s Apocalypse,” 24, *emph. orig.*

¹¹¹ *The Defeat of Death*, 85 *emph. orig.*

consequences, namely, death. But there is a righteous remnant, chosen by God, who, by their submission to the Creator, the God of Israel, bear witness to the fact that those evil powers are doomed to pass away. This remnant, the elect of God, await God's deliverance. God will invade the world under the dominion of evil angelic powers and defeat them in a cosmic war.¹¹²

Within CJAE, the presence of evil in the world is attributed to the corrupting influence of angels who seduced women, begetting giants whose spirits now continue to afflict humanity. The rule of these murderous angelic powers is evident everywhere, but "finds its focus in the violent death or martyrdom of those who acknowledge the rightful claim of God."¹¹³ In these texts human oppressors such as Antiochus are characterised as demonic (Dan 8-12, 2 Maccabees), death is personified as an enemy from which God will deliver the faithful (Isa 25:28,¹¹⁴ 1 En. 69:10-11), and the hoped-for resurrection is not general, but particular to God's people.

In FJAE, found with comparable purity in *2 Baruch*, the notion of evil, cosmological forces is either "absent, recedes into the background or is even explicitly rejected... Instead the emphasis falls on human responsibility, free will and individual human decision."¹¹⁵ For an account of sin's origin this track looks back to the Adamic rather than the angelic fall. In the words of *4 Ezra* "Adam, burdened with an evil heart, transgressed and was overcome, as were all who were descended from him. Thus the disease became permanent" (3:21-22) but,

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid., 86.

¹¹⁴ According to de Boer, Isa 25:28 personifies death "as a quasi-angelic cosmological power that stands opposed to God" (90), which reads rather a lot into a text which, as he notes, objectifies death as an item on the menu at the divine feast.

¹¹⁵ "Paul and Apocalyptic Eschatology," 359.

de Boer would add, not terminal. For although Ezra expresses a striking pessimism about the law's capacity to overcome the 'evil heart', he is rebuked by the angel who maintains that Moses' invitation to choose life still stands and is embraced by at least a few. Thus, in this track, "we find a kind of legal piety in which personal accountability plays a decisive role."¹¹⁶ Correspondingly, the future involves a general resurrection and a courtroom judgment in which rewards and punishments will be allotted. Thus while FJAE remains cosmic in its scope (it remains a form of *apocalyptic* eschatology after all), there is a greater focus upon the individual.

On the question of their provenance, de Boer sees FJAE as "a modified form of the first track,"¹¹⁷ representing a rejection of the cosmological view; the earliest evidence for which being the 'Epistle of Enoch' (1 Enoch 91-105) which contains a "notable polemic against cosmological apocalyptic eschatology," while *2 Baruch* and *4 Ezra* offer evidence that "track 2 [sc. FJAE] overtook and displaced track 1 completely after the disaster of 70C.E."¹¹⁸ FJAE therefore represents something of a demythologisation of CJAE.

It is important to note that de Boer is careful to say that his two-track typology is a heuristic model.¹¹⁹ He recognises a degree of diversity within the texts he allocates to their respective tracks, and some, he admits, occupy a middle position (such as the Dead Sea Scrolls¹²⁰ and Paul himself) but he maintains that the tracks find reasonably pure

¹¹⁶ *The Defeat of Death*, 86.

¹¹⁷ "Paul and Jewish Apocalyptic Eschatology," 181.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 182.

¹¹⁹ *The Defeat of Death*, 85.

¹²⁰ De Boer's survey (*ibid.*, 69–73) discusses the *Rule of the Community* (1QS), the *War Scroll* (1QM) and the *Hodayot* (1QH^a).

expression in *1 Enoch* 1-36 and *2 Baruch*¹²¹ and that they each represent “an internally coherent or consistent configuration of motifs.”¹²²

De Boer asserts some distinctions between the tracks more clearly than others. On the question of cosmology, de Boer clearly thinks that what defines CJAE as *cosmological* is its emphasis upon demonic forces.¹²³ Equally clear in de Boer’s mind is the anthropological difference. In CJAE the problem admits no human solution, relying first on divine election, and then on a divine invasion, whereas, to varying degrees, FJAE believes that, with a little divine help, the faithful can fulfil the conditions for eschatological life.

Other aspects seem less clear in de Boer’s mind. For example, there is the question of whether all apocalyptic eschatology is cosmic in scope or whether FJAE is distinguishable by a narrower interest in individual salvation. Although, as we have seen, de Boer insists that all ‘apocalyptic eschatology’ is cosmic in scope, he also characterises FJAE as having an emphasis on individual and personal responsibility. Likewise, despite labelling track 2 *forensic* Jewish apocalyptic eschatology, he argues that “what unites all of 1 Enoch is the

¹²¹ *4 Ezra*’s location in de Boer’s typology varies. In places it is identified with FJAE on account of its lack of cosmological powers (e.g. “Paul and Jewish Apocalyptic Eschatology,” 179; *Galatians*, 32.) Elsewhere it occupies a “mediating position” (77), given its pessimistic anthropology.

¹²² “Paul and Jewish Apocalyptic Eschatology,” 181.

¹²³ It is the diversity within Jewish apocalyptic eschatology on the question of cosmological powers that prompts de Boer to ask: “Are there two different types of apocalyptic eschatology, one ‘cosmological’ and the other not?” (36). That diversity implies duality is simply assumed by de Boer at this stage. It should also be noted that de Boer acknowledges some overlap between the tracks on the question of cosmology. The author of *2 Baruch* knows of the myth of fallen angels (56:11-15), and assigns to the ‘angel of death’ a role in punishing sin. The personification of death is not exclusive to CJAE either, for de Boer notes its presence in *Pss. Sol.* 7:3-5, *Wis* 2:24, *4 Ezra* 8:53 and *Pseudo-Philo’s L.A.B.* 3:10.

theme of the coming Last Judgment” (52) and, when he comes to summarise FJAE, the difference is not so much an emphasis on judgment (for both streams include this), as on “free will and decision,” “personal responsibility and accountability” over against helplessness in CJAE.¹²⁴ Indeed for de Boer this issue can be the central point of distinction: “whereas track 1 underscores the human need for God’s help and action, track 2 underscores human accountability to God for sin and its terrible consequences.”¹²⁵ To that extent, FJAE might be better characterised as *nomistic* Jewish apocalyptic eschatology.¹²⁶

b. Plight and Solution in Paul

For de Boer it is beyond dispute that Paul is an apocalyptic theologian, the only question is of what sort.¹²⁷ On the one hand there are strong indications that he belongs to FJAE, not least the appeal to Adam in Rom 5 and 1 Cor 15, and his use of forensic language in Galatians and Romans. On the other hand, Paul speaks of Satan, ‘principalities and powers,’ rejects the efficacy of the law and personifies sin and death in ways that evoke CJAE.

¹²⁴ “Paul and Jewish Apocalyptic Eschatology,” 181. Generally, however, de Boer prefers to say that the denouement of CJAE occurs in a cosmic war and not a court of law. I have argued elsewhere that de Boer downplays forensic elements in 1 Enoch; see “Apocalyptic and Covenant.”

¹²⁵ “Paul and Jewish Apocalyptic Eschatology,” 181.

¹²⁶ De Boer himself uses ‘nomistic’ to describe Paul’s former way of life in “Paul’s Use and Interpretation of a Justification Tradition in Galatians 2.15-21,” 213. The possibility that Paul might be operating with a pessimistic anthropology and yet retain a forensic eschatology is not countenanced; indeed the nomenclature of the typology would seem to exclude it.

¹²⁷ De Boer cites Paul’s use of the expression ‘this age’ in Rom 12:2, 1 Cor 1:20, 2:6, 8, 3:18, 2 Cor 4:4 as evidence of eschatological dualism and argues that expressions such as the ‘Kingdom of God’, ‘eternal life’ and ‘new creation’ “are surely different ways of speaking about a new age,” *The Defeat of Death*, 22.

This confluence is the key to understanding not only Paul's theology but also the polarised nature of the debate among his interpreters. In particular, de Boer believes it accounts for the impasse between Käsemann and Bultmann.¹²⁸ Indeed, these two become champions and exemplars of the two tracks themselves in his reading. Käsemann offers "what we may call a 'cosmically-apocalyptic reading of Paul'"¹²⁹ given his emphasis on the conflict between "God and the principalities and the world," whereas Bultmann offers a demythologised and individualised "forensic-eschatological" reading.¹³⁰ The fact that they rely on Rom 1-4 (Bultmann) or Rom 6-8 (Käsemann) also means that the confluence of FJAE and CJAE in Paul accounts for the puzzle which Schweitzer was able to identify but not to solve: why Rom 1-4 and 5-8 seem to set out independent accounts of salvation.

De Boer also believes he holds the solution to that problem. Paul lives "in a time when both tracks of Jewish apocalyptic eschatology were still prominent" and, crucially, he is engaged

¹²⁸ See the discussion in *ibid.*, 25-30; 147-69, and "Paul's Mythologising Program in Romans 5-8," 3-7.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹³⁰ "Forensic-eschatological" was of course Bultmann's characterisation of the meaning of *δικαιοσύνη* shared by Paul and contemporaneous Judaism, *Theology of the New Testament*, 273. It is not always clear whether FJAE is inherently individualistic. Bultmann is charged with introducing an "individualistic constriction of Paul's thought" to FJAE, although de Boer does seem to ascribe some individualism to the stream itself. Although Martyn describes de Boer's work as a "mature analysis of Käsemann's respectful and radical departure from Bultmann" ("A Personal Word About Ernst Käsemann," xv), the above discussion of Käsemann would seriously question whether he can neatly be aligned with CJAE as de Boer describes it, or distanced so far from Bultmann or their shared Lutheran roots. The assertion that Käsemann "based his cosmological-apocalyptic reading of Paul largely on Romans 6-8" is also doubtful, given Käsemann's insistence on the very page de Boer cites, that "it is quite out of the question, then, that Paul is leaving the main theme of the epistle in chs. 6-8. He stays close to this theme [sc. the righteousness of God]... although approaching it from a different angle," *Romans*, 163. Similarly, he speaks of the cosmic horizons of 1:18-3:20 alongside those of 5:12ff; 8:18ff and chapters 9-11, *Perspectives on Paul*, 74.

in trying to reverse a trend. Faced with “a Judaism embracing track 2 apocalyptic eschatology”¹³¹ (as evidenced by *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*) Paul responds with his own “*christologically appropriated and modified*” (1989, 182, *emph. orig.*) form of CJAE.¹³² As Judaism embraces greater optimism regarding its capacity to obey the law, Paul mythologises sin and death in ways parallel to the angelology of CJAE in order to emphasise human incapacity and the priority of divine intervention. This is, we should note, a point of nuance which comes to be obscured later. According to de Boer, Paul sets himself against FJAE (it is not just un-Pauline, but anti-Pauline) but he does not belong foursquare within CJAE, as evidenced by the lack of a developed interest in angelology.¹³³

Rather, in agreement with Käsemann’s concession to Bultmann, de Boer believes that in Paul “the cosmos is primarily observed from an anthropological perspective... Evil cosmological powers, therefore, do not appear as ‘mythical cosmocrators’, but in ‘anthropological relevance’, as ‘law, error, sin and death.’”¹³⁴

Thus when Paul mythologises sin and death in *Romans*, he does so to ward off the anthropological optimism of FJAE: “Paul’s cosmological appraisal of death, and sin,

¹³¹ “Paul and Jewish Apocalyptic Eschatology,” 183.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 182. By contrast, when John K. Riches adopts de Boer’s typology and applies it to Matthew and Mark, he detects elements of both cosmic dualist and forensic cosmologies, arguing that the trajectory of both gospels is towards the latter, *Conflicting Mythologies: Identity Formation in the Gospels of Mark and Matthew*, SNTW (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000), 315.

¹³³ *The Defeat of Death*, 179.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

functions to exclude the Law's observance as the source of justification, righteousness, or eternal life."¹³⁵

Likewise, the flesh in Gal 5:13-6:10 stands as "a supra-human power, indeed an inimical, martial power seeking to establish a base of operations in the Galatian churches,"¹³⁶ but again the argument has an anthropological thrust. Paul is seen to be in dialogue with the notion of the Evil Inclination and a tradition in which fleshly desires can be overcome by the individual aided by the law (de Boer cites Sir 15:14, 1QS 5.4-6, 1QH 18.22-23, and Jas 1:14-15 as a Jewish Christian version).¹³⁷ By contrast, Paul personifies the flesh to reflect "the experience of a powerful force in human affairs, one not capable of being brought under control without divine assistance."¹³⁸

¹³⁵ *The Defeat of Death*, 179. Far from being the solution to sin and death, "the Law is their plaything and tool. It is no more than 'the Law of Sin and Death' as he writes in [Rom] 8:2," "Paul's Mythologising Program in Romans 5-8," 18. In 1 Cor 15 the motive is slightly different. There de Boer sees Paul countering a view that death is a welcome liberation of the soul and so is seeking to unmask the true and terrible reality of death. Nevertheless, the same pastoral goal is in view: a sense of salvation as a matter of gift "bestowed in [God's] cosmological-apocalyptic triumph over death" (185, *emph. removed*).

¹³⁶ De Boer, *Galatians*, 337, quoting Martyn, although the reference to flesh as an 'inimical' power may well reflect Martyn's dependence on de Boer. In *Defeat of Death*, the powers are described as 'inimical' 16 times. Although he cites Käsemann and Barclay in support of this view of the flesh, his account of it as a malevolent and martial power goes beyond their accounts. Käsemann describes the flesh as "the sphere of the demonic" but only insofar as it expresses the demonic desire of the creature to be rid of the Creator. Käsemann, *Perspectives on Paul*, 26. For Barclay, flesh is multivalent but basically signifies "what is merely human," *Obedying the Truth: Paul's Ethics in Galatians* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988), 206.

¹³⁷ See 'Excursus 16: The Flesh as a Cosmic Power' in *Galatians*, 335-39.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 338. In agreement with Schweitzer, de Boer also sees Galatians going further than Romans, describing not only the impotence of the law (see n170 above) but also its mediation by angels "who stand opposed to

Opposing this anthropological optimism, therefore, Paul sets out the plight as one of subjection to enslaving powers. Although personal responsibility is not denied, de Boer distances Paul from the notion that death is a punishment for sin both in 1 Cor 15 and the central section of Romans in a more general sense.¹³⁹ In keeping with de Boer's view of CJAE, the need is for liberation from evil rather than reconciliation to God.

This cosmological plight is matched by a solution expressed in the language of CJAE. The gospel reveals that the promised defeat of hostile powers has already occurred in the death and resurrection of Jesus. Although de Boer speaks of God's invasion having "inaugurated a cosmic war between the powers of sin and death on the one side and God's powerful rectifying, life-giving grace on the other," (179) he more commonly speaks about the victory already won. At the cross God both re-establishes his sovereignty over the world (183), and destroys the power of sin and death (185); it is an event which both reveals the true nature of things (humanity's foregoing enslavement to death) and through which "the whole world is also graciously rectified and placed in the realm of life" (185). The believer discerns and experiences that victory by means of participation which is not to be viewed as sacramental, nor as mystical, unless in Schweitzer's sense of eschatological mysticism, and therefore "informed and shaped by the categories and motifs native to Jewish

God" and were "tampering with God's *diathēkē* with Abraham," *ibid.*, 230, n337, acknowledging Schweitzer's similar view.

¹³⁹ De Boer argues that in Romans 5 "sin is explicitly brought into the equation (though it may be implicit in 1 Corinthians 15 as well; cf. 15:3, 17)." Despite a sustained focus on 1 Cor 15, strikingly absent from his exegesis is 1 Cor 15:56: τὸ δὲ κέντρον τοῦ θανάτου ἢ ἁμαρτία, ἢ δὲ δύναμις τῆς ἁμαρτίας ὁ νόμος. Although he notes the trilogy of sin, law and death in this verse and Rom 5:13-14, 20-21 (and, we might add, Rom 8:2) in the exegetical section he refers to it only twice and then only as "seemingly parenthetical" (95) and "parenthetical" (132).

cosmological apocalyptic eschatology.”¹⁴⁰ In particular this is worked out in the paradigmatic example of Paul himself, according to de Boer’s reading of Gal 1:16 and Paul’s account of the event in which God chose “to apocalyptically reveal his Son in me.”¹⁴¹ That is, an *apokalypsis* not understood as something disclosed to Paul, but something that *happens* in him. Just as God invaded the world in the course of its history by sending the Son, so now Paul confesses that “God invaded my life as a Pharisaic zealot and persecutor of the church with his Son, thereby bringing this life to an end.” Paul thus “personifies the radical discontinuity between the two ages” thanks to the death of his old way of life and “his *participation* in an apocalyptic-eschatological (thus cosmic) event, that of ‘Jesus Christ.’”¹⁴² Once again, then, participation is the key soteriological mechanism and, we might note, de Boer’s account of it highlights once more that Paul is drawing metaphors from CJAE, but that these metaphors ultimately are ways of making vivid an anthropologically-defined plight: “Crucifixion of the *old Adam* with Christ constitutes Paul’s soteriological adaptation

¹⁴⁰ “Paul’s Use and Interpretation of a Justification Tradition in Galatians 2.15-21,” 213n73.

¹⁴¹ *Galatians*, 91. Heaven, like de Boer’s infinitive, is split open. De Boer and Martyn are the first in our survey to argue that the presence of ἀποκαλύπτω and its cognates in Galatians confirms that Paul is an apocalyptic theologian. Whether the terms can bear the theological weight is questioned by e.g. Barclay: “Does Paul’s mention that he went to Jerusalem κατὰ ἀποκάλυψιν (2.2) really place his gospel ‘under the banner of apocalypse’ (p. 151), or is this reference to an inspired decision less theologically weighted (cf. 1 Cor 14.26)?” Barclay, “Review of Galatians by J. Louis Martyn,” *RBL* 3 (2001).

¹⁴² *Galatians*, 93, *emph. orig.* This reading is first proposed in “Paul, Theologian of God’s Apocalypse,” 29–33. Oakes rejects it in part because it posits multiple invasions rather than, as Martyn would insist, the one, punctiliar, invasion of the Son; Peter Oakes and Roy E. Ciampa, “Review Article: Two Recent Galatians Commentaries,” *J SPL* 2 (2012): 180. As we shall see, however, Martyn uses similar language.

and application of the cosmological-apocalyptic motif of God's eschatological destruction of the cosmic powers that have come to reign over the world" (177, *emph. added*).¹⁴³

In contrast to the pattern of either FJAE or CJAE, this rescue is universal. In the present, believers participate in this apocalyptic event, experience a measure of freedom from the rule of sin and death,¹⁴⁴ and perceive the true nature of reality, but the "dualism between believers and unbelievers... is provisional."¹⁴⁵ For de Boer this is demanded both by Paul's anthropology—salvation is either universal or a matter of individual choice and Paul's anthropology excludes the latter—and by God's universal sovereignty, or else "death is then given the last word over the vast majority of human beings and God's regripping of the world for His sovereignty becomes a limited affair."¹⁴⁶

¹⁴³ De Boer detects a more vicarious note sounded in Rom 4:25—"Christ dies for this cosmic accumulation of 'trespasses'" but this is viewed as an instance where Paul is "citing what appears to be tradition" (that citation might imply endorsement is rarely countenanced) and in any event the reference appears in the early section of Romans that has yet to be transposed to a cosmological key (166).

¹⁴⁴ Experienced only in part, given believers' continuing existence in and solidarity with a creation that continues to experience the power of sin and death. See de Boer's concluding reflections in *The Defeat of Death*, 185–88.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 174.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 175. De Boer cites Käsemann's comments on 5:12–21 in support, (Käsemann, *Romans*, 157.) Käsemann is not always so unequivocal, however. He had earlier argued that Paul "crystalises the message [sc. of reconciliation], relating it more strictly to the church and the individual Christian, so to speak, as verifiable facts. Reconciliation is certainly offered to the whole world, and it is the service of the apostles to proclaim the offer everywhere. But it comes into effect only where people become disciples of Jesus," *Perspectives on Paul*, 43–44. In what sense the world is rectified by the cross is also unclear. Although de Boer approves Käsemann's insistence that gift and power go together, de Boer limits the power to live free from sin to believers (175).

How then to account for the presence of FJAE elements in Paul? De Boer’s answer is to argue that in Galatians and Romans Paul is trying to lead his audiences from FJAE to CJAE. Hence in Rom 1:18-3:19,

Paul’s procedure is to embrace heuristically the presuppositions of forensic Jewish apocalyptic eschatology and of its Christian adaptation, particularly the role and function of the Law, only to claim that by the standard of the Law, through which ‘the whole world is held accountable... before God... the human situation is in fact hopeless... it is hopeless because, for Paul, everyone is under the power of sin.’¹⁴⁷

The forensic elements of Rom 1:18-3:19 are therefore explained by the fact that Paul is “in dialogue” with FJAE, citing 1:28-32 as a passage which sings from the same hymn sheet as 4 *Ezra* and 2 *Baruch*.¹⁴⁸ In this way, de Boer eases the tension felt by Schweitzer and anticipates a position that will be developed in far greater detail by Campbell. The turning point is Rom 5:12-21 which “marks a shift from predominantly *forensic* terminology and motifs to predominantly *cosmological* ones” (152),¹⁴⁹ and thereafter “while texts such as 8.1 and 8.33-

¹⁴⁷ *The Defeat of Death*, 156.

¹⁴⁸ “Paul’s Mythologising Program in Romans 5-8,” 13. In the lecture on which the essay is based, de Boer commented that “Paul gives voice to this perspective in order to undermine it,” but the remark is not preserved in the printed version. Sadly the audio recordings are no longer available online.

¹⁴⁹ Although Adam properly belongs to FJAE, Paul adapts the tradition to set it in a cosmological context. Chiefly this happens by bookending the discussion with cosmological language in 5:12a-b and 5:21a (see further the discussion in *The Defeat of Death*, 157–65):

<i>Cosmological</i>	5:12a-b	Protasis:	<i>Through one human being sin came into the world & through sin death (i.e. sin reigned in death)</i>
Forensic	5:12c-20b		[righteousness is not attainable via observance of the law but is a matter of grace, i.e., God’s free gift.]
<i>Cosmological</i>	5:21a	Protasis restated: Apodosis:	<i>Just as sin reigned in death So also grace might reign through righteousness unto eternal life</i>

34 indicate that forensic categories have hardly been given up or left behind, the structure and progression of Paul's argument in Romans 1-8 suggest that cosmological categories and motifs circumscribe and, to a large extent, overtake forensic categories and motifs."¹⁵⁰

This departure from FJAE concepts appears in embryo in Galatians. In Gal 1:4 Paul augments a traditional saying 'for our sins' with a reference to the present evil age. "Paul thus shifts the import of the phrase 'for our sins' from a forensic (judicial) frame of reference (the divine law court) to a cosmological one (a cosmic conflict between God and malevolent powers for sovereignty over the human world.)"¹⁵¹ Likewise in 2:16 "for the sake of argument, Paul adopts the language of forensic-eschatological justification (in the future), but the context in which he places it forces it to take on a different meaning, that of God's rectifying power (in the present)."¹⁵² And, as de Boer argues, Paul drops the language of justification (which properly belongs to his opponents) as soon as he is able in Galatians, in favour of his preferred terms: the language of deliverance, crucifixion with Christ, redemption, liberation, and walking by the Spirit.

Returning to Romans, Paul's departure from FJAE is signalled for de Boer either by the way in which its characteristic vocabulary is left behind in Rom 6-8, or by the way in which some terms are redefined. Death is an example of the latter: it is transformed from the punishment for sin, equivalent to wrath (1:32), into the ineluctable outcome of sin, and emerges as an enslaving and victimising power. In the case of justification, de Boer affirms

¹⁵⁰ "Paul and Apocalyptic Eschatology," 365.

¹⁵¹ De Boer, *Galatians*, 30. For a similar argument concerning Gal 1:4, but predating de Boer by nearly a century, see Carré, *Paul's Doctrine of Redemption* (1914), 62-63.

¹⁵² For de Boer "the notion of a present evil age assumes that the human condition for everyone (apart from God's deed in Christ) is a form of slavery or subjugation to evil powers," *Galatians*, 35.

“the forensic-eschatological status of ‘having been justified’” (169, citing Rom 5:1-11). But many of the prior references to justification are exported to the periphery of Paul’s theology (used only because he is speaking the language of FJAE and largely dropped after Rom 5) and subsequent uses of δικ- forms in Rom 5-6 are recast as references to liberation from the power of sin.

On the one hand then, de Boer accepts and exploits a divide between Rom 1-4 and 6-8. But he also believes that Rom 1-3 anticipates the introduction of CJAE, thereby proving a forerunner of the approach of Beverly Gaventa.¹⁵³ In particular he highlights the personification of the righteousness of God in 1:16-17 and the description of humanity in 3:9 as ὕφ’ ἁμαρτίαν, for here Paul “personifies sin as a cosmological, subjugating power, anticipating the material extending from 5:12-8:3, where he speaks of sin as a cosmological power some forty times.”¹⁵⁴ Likewise in 4:25, Jesus’ resurrection ‘for our justification’ is taken to mean “for making us righteous through the defeat and destruction of the inimical powers of sin and death” (164). On the rare occasion that forensic terms retain their traditional meaning and appear in the same context as cosmological language (e.g. Gal 1:4, Rom 8:1-4) it is de Boer’s consistent view that, rather than mutually informing one another, the forensic is consistently modified by or subordinated to the cosmological.

¹⁵³ His most recent work expresses appreciation for, and deference to, Gaventa’s research on Romans, “Paul’s Mythologising Program in Romans 5-8,” *passim*.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 19. The figure is not substantiated.

CHAPTER 6: J. LOUIS MARTYN

Martyn's account of Paul acknowledges two major influences.¹⁵⁵ First, he believes de Boer's "extraordinarily perceptive" typology of Jewish apocalyptic eschatology captures the

¹⁵⁵ Martyn's most relevant works include "Review of New Testament Questions of Today by Ernst Käsemann," *USQR* 25 (1970): 556–58; "Apocalyptic Antinomies in Paul's Letter to the Galatians," *NTS* 31 (1985): 410–24; "Events in Galatia: Modified Covenant Nomism Versus God's Invasion of the Cosmos in the Singular Gospel: A Response to J. D. G. Dunn and B. R. Gaventa.," in *Pauline Theology Vol. 1: Thessalonians, Philippians, Galatians, and Philemon*, ed. Jouette M. Bassler (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 160–79; "Covenant, Christ and Church in Galatians," in *The Future of Christology: Essays in Honor of Leander E. Keck*, ed. Abraham J. Malherbe and Wayne A. Meeks (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 137–51; "The Crucial Event in the History of the Law," in *Theology and Ethics in Paul and His Interpreters: Essays in Honor of Victor Paul Furnish*, ed. Eugene H. Lovering and Jerry L. Sumney Jnr. (Nashville: Abingdon, 1996), 48–61; *Galatians* (New York: Doubleday, 1997); *Theological Issues in the Letters of Paul*; "The Apocalyptic Gospel in Galatians," *Int* 54, no. 3 (2000): 246–66; "De-Apocalypticizing Paul: An Essay Focused on Paul and the Stoics by Troels Engberg-Pedersen," *JSNT* 24 (2002): 61–102; "Nomos Plus Genitive Noun in Paul: The History of God's Law," in *Early Christianity and Classical Culture: Comparative Studies in Honor of Abraham J. Malherbe*, ed. John T. Fitzgerald, Thomas H. Olbricht, and Michael L. White (NovTSup 110; Leiden: Brill, 2003), 575–87; "World Without End or Twice-Invaded World?," in *Shaking Heaven and Earth: Essays in Honor of Walter Brueggemann and Charles B. Cousar*, Christine Roy Yoder et al. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), 117–32; "Epilogue: An Essay in Pauline Meta-Ethics," in *Divine and Human Agency in Paul and His Cultural Environment*, ed. John M. G. Barclay and Simon J. Gathercole, LNTS 335 (London: T&T Clark, 2006), 173–83; "The Gospel Invades Philosophy," in *Paul, Philosophy, and the Theopolitical Vision: Critical Engagements with Agamben, Badiou, Žižek and Others*, ed. Douglas Harink (Eugene, Oreg.: Cascade Books, 2010), 13–33; "A Personal Word About Ernst Käsemann"; "Afterword: The Human Moral Drama," in *Apocalyptic Paul*, ed. Beverly Gaventa (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2013), 157–66. For responses to Martyn or Festschriften in his honour see Joel Marcus and Marion L. Soards, eds., *Apocalyptic and the New Testament: Essays in Honor of J. Louis Martyn* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1989); Robert T. Fortna and Beverly Roberts Gaventa, eds., *The Conversation Continues: Studies in Paul & John in Honor of J. Louis Martyn* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1990); Joshua B. Davis and Douglas Harink, eds., *Apocalyptic and the Future of Theology: With and Beyond J. Louis Martyn* (Eugene,

conflict in which Paul finds himself.¹⁵⁶ In *Theological Issues in the Letters of Paul*, Martyn offers a glossary in which the longest entries by some way are those outlining cosmological apocalyptic eschatology (“fundamental to Paul’s letters”) and forensic apocalyptic eschatology (“fundamental to the message of the Teachers who invaded Paul’s Galatian churches,” 298-99)¹⁵⁷ and the thrust of his Galatians commentary is that Paul is engaged in “circumscribing the forensic apocalyptic eschatology of the Teachers with a cosmological apocalyptic theology of his own.”¹⁵⁸

Oreg.: Cascade Books, 2012); Baird, *History of New Testament Research Vol. 3: From C. H. Dodd to Hans Dieter Betz*, 604–22 (containing rare biographical detail).

¹⁵⁶ *Galatians*, 97. Martyn once framed it as a conflict between Paul’s apocalyptic and the Teacher’s Two-Ways theology, “Apocalyptic Antinomies in Paul’s Letter to the Galatians.” De Boer challenges Martyn on this point in “Paul and Jewish Apocalyptic Eschatology,” 184–85, and Martyn concedes, bringing the whole debate under the rubric of apocalyptic and adopting de Boer’s typology in *Galatians*, 154. It is interesting to note, however, how little engagement there is in Martyn with those Jewish texts. De Boer’s work is simply cited as authoritative.

¹⁵⁷ Unspecified page references in this chapter refer to *Theological Issues*.

¹⁵⁸ *Galatians*, 154. Martyn also accepts de Boer’s projection of CJAE and FJAE onto Paul’s modern day interpreters. Käsemann and Bultmann reprise the roles they played in de Boer’s survey: “We have here a major issue facing the New Testament guild, and one of fundamental theological import. There are two camps: (1) On the one side are scholars who understand Paul to have viewed the gospel as the event that defines the category of God’s power, being itself God’s powerful invasion of the cosmos for the purpose of bringing about new creation. The seminal essay here is that of Käsemann... [i.e. “The Righteousness of God” in Paul] (2) The other camp credits Paul with a view that the gospel, rather than being itself God’s powerful invasion, is a message that establishes a human possibility. The Gospel, in short, is the new edition, in effect, of the ancient doctrine of the Two Ways” (219n23). With these words, and with some irony, Martyn preaches Two Ways to his contemporaries.

Second, the influence of Käsemann is palpable throughout Martyn's work. Although Käsemann, like Beker, is censured for a favourable stance towards salvation-historical readings of Paul,¹⁵⁹ Martyn dedicates the Galatians commentary to Käsemann and argues that "we are indebted above all to the works of Käsemann" for a vision of the apocalyptic Paul (65n36).¹⁶⁰

Notwithstanding these influences, however, Martyn develops his own vision in some striking and divergent ways. In search of his account of the Pauline plight and solution we will trace the arrival of the five major actors in the cosmic drama as Martyn perceives it: sin, flesh, the law, Christ, and the Spirit.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁹ "In his creative critique of Bultmann, Käsemann himself re-introduced the positive use of the expression 'salvation history,' but without a clear and forceful definition that would have precluded confusion," (178n36).

¹⁶⁰ Elsewhere Martyn reflects warmly on his time spent with Käsemann in Göttingen during 1957. That the warmth was mutual is signalled by Käsemann in a letter to Paul Zahl in 1995, expressing confidence that "people like Keck and Martyn will step up for me in the trenches." "A Tribute To Ernst Käsemann and a Theological Testament," 385.

¹⁶¹ Although this may appear to ignore Martyn's concerns about theologising from plight to solution (*Galatians*, 95n43), there is precedent in Martyn's essay "World Without End or Twice-Invaded World?" in which he narrates the movement from plight to solution by reference to three chronological "cosmic incursions": 1. The entry of sin into the world; 2. The Son's first coming; 3. The Son's second coming. For our purposes it will be helpful to include the flesh, the law and the Spirit, given their significance in Martyn's work.

a. *Plight*

i. *The Coming of Sin and the Flesh*

One echo of Käsemann appears in Martyn's insistence that there are two main apocalyptic questions: "What time is it?" and "What world is it?"¹⁶² In answer to the second, there is a crucial distinction to be made between 'the world' and '*this world*' (citing 1 Cor 3:19; cf. Rom 12:2).¹⁶³ 'The world' was created by God, not as "a hermetically sealed sphere" but permeable, "subject to entry from heaven,"¹⁶⁴ whereas "the genesis of what he calls '*this world*' lies in the arrival of the suprahuman power called Sin" who took advantage of that permeability.¹⁶⁵ To be sure, Paul recognises sins in the plural and they play a certain role "pointing both to a degree of human accountability and to the accompanying matter of God's role as absolute judge (1 Cor 11:32, 2 Cor 5:10, Rom 3:19)" but they do not provide "the major clue to the real state of affairs."¹⁶⁶ For that, Paul speaks of the entrance in Rom 5 of a singular power, Sin: "a powerful, cosmic enemy of God, and an enemy of every human being. That it is an enemy of us all is clear from the fact that as a power Sin brings in its wake an event that is manifestly universal, namely Death."¹⁶⁷ The result is that *this world* "is the scene of genuine tragedy because it is anthropologically and theologically 'out of control.'"¹⁶⁸ Briefly discussing the cause of Sin's entry, Martyn describes the event as Sin's "Adamic, cosmic breaking and entering."¹⁶⁹ He thereby gives a nod to Paul's discussion of

¹⁶² "World Without End or Twice-Invaded World?," 119; cf. *Galatians*, 23. Of course Käsemann framed the question as "To whom does the world belong?" and the difference will prove to be significant.

¹⁶³ "World Without End or Twice-Invaded World?," 119.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 120.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 121.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.* That death, although capitalised, is an "event" rather than actor, marks a departure from de Boer.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 122 cf; *Galatians*, 105: This world is "a space that has temporarily fallen out of God's hands."

¹⁶⁹ "World Without End or Twice-Invaded World?," 121.

Adam in Rom 5 but attributes no causal significance to Adam's transgression; indeed he does not mention it.¹⁷⁰ Rather the initiative was taken by Sin entering the world and its entrance precludes any human movement out of its sphere.

Alongside sin there is a role for the flesh in Martyn's account of the plight; this world is "the territory of the Flesh" (258), a power which Paul speaks of "as a distinctively assertive actor (hence the capital 'F'), and a power distinct from the Galatians in the same way that the Spirit is (albeit without precluding a sense in which believers might be invaded by both)."¹⁷¹ That qualification notwithstanding, the flesh is "an entity that has, to an important extent, a life of its own" (256).

Perhaps surprisingly, Martyn also believes that Paul is "in all probability following the Teachers" (256) when he speaks of the flesh in this manner. Indeed, "both Jews and Jewish

¹⁷⁰ Thus rather than acknowledging elements of FJAE in Romans 5 as de Boer does, Martyn seeks to read it as a univocal expression of CJAE. The mention of Adam (and the distinction between 'the world' and 'this world') may, however, dispel Davis' concern that it is "disturbingly difficult to determine whether Martyn is arguing that Paul believes the original creation is ontologically depraved," "The Challenge of Apocalyptic to Modern Theology," in *Apocalyptic and the Future of Theology: With and Beyond J. Louis Martyn*, ed. Joshua B. Davis and Douglas Harink (Eugene, Oreg.: Cascade Books, 2012), 42n156.

¹⁷¹ In fact Martyn seems to regard sin and the flesh as largely synonymous. Both are identified with the "Impulsive Desire," and Martyn's usage essentially mirrors the text in hand: he speaks of flesh in Galatians, sin when discussing Romans (e.g. in "World Without End or Twice-Invaded World?") and uses them interchangeably when both are in view (for example, when analysing Rom 8:1-4, he states that "Gal 5:16 specifies Sin as the Impulsive Desire of the Flesh," despite the absence of an explicit mention of sin in 5:16, "Nomos Plus Genitive Noun in Paul: The History of God's Law," 579.

Christians of Paul's time spoke at length about this monster."¹⁷² Although this seems to ascribe a CJAE flavoured outlook to the Teachers, it should be observed that Paul's monster has considerably more teeth. While both accounts of the flesh derived their language from the Jewish notion of the *yēṣer bāsār* or the *yēṣer hāra'*, in the view of the Teachers the flesh is internal to the individual, and, though dangerous, can be mastered by observance of Torah (254). Paul, by contrast, radicalises that tradition. The flesh operates at the communal and not the individual level; it is an apocalyptic power in the same sense that the Spirit is, acting in but also upon the Galatians; and, emphatically: "nothing is more foreign to Paul than the thought that the Flesh can be defeated by a course of human action (256)."¹⁷³

ii. *The Coming of the Law*

In this polemic against anthropological optimism, his account of the coming of the law becomes highly significant. The Teachers have fatally misconstrued the soteriological efficacy of the law, failing to see that the law "has fallen into the hands of Sin."¹⁷⁴ So far, so 'apocalyptic.' But Martyn's account of the law is actually where the originality and complexity of his reading of Paul emerges. The best approach lies through his understanding of τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου. For Martyn, the Galatians would have long been aware of the phrase and understood it to refer to the physical elements. They may well themselves have been worshippers of those elements and held that "changes in those

¹⁷² *Galatians*, 292. According to Martyn such personification is ancient and widespread, reaching back to "Iranian traditions in which one finds mythological lists of personified spirits of good and evil... that are opposed to each other," *ibid.*, 100, cf. 529 and *Theological Issues*, 257.

¹⁷³ For Martyn this is the crucial difference between CJAE and FJAE: they both may personify the flesh as a dangerous power, but CJAE alone insists on humanity's helplessness.

¹⁷⁴ "Nomos Plus Genitive Noun in Paul: The History of God's Law," 581.

elements, including the movements of the stars, caused the turning of the seasons” (130), which naturally leads to the demarcation of sacred times.¹⁷⁵ Furthermore, Martyn argues that it was commonly held that those physical elements were conceptually arranged as *pairs of opposites*,¹⁷⁶ to the extent that the cosmos is constituted by their opposition and their abolition would signify nothing less than the end of the cosmos.

At this point, however, things take a turn and Paul relies on the Galatians listening “to the whole epistle several times and with extreme care” (139). According to Martyn, Paul adapts these traditions to describe polarities that constituted the *religious* cosmos: chiefly circumcision/uncircumcision (Gal 6:14-15). Paul’s rejection of the validity of that pair of opposites in 6:15 is to be heard therefore as the death of that world in 6:14. A parallel to this idea and a clue to its origin lie in the pre-Pauline baptismal formula cited in Gal 3:27-28. In a similar fashion to 6:14-15, the denial of pairs of opposites in 3:27-28 (Jew/Gentile, slave/free, male/female) communicates to the (sufficiently-educated) baptismal candidate that their baptism involves a death to the religious world constructed by those antinomies.¹⁷⁷ Thus, in a point that is sometimes missed, “Paul employs the ancient equation of the world’s elements with archaic pairs of opposites to interpret the *religious*

¹⁷⁵ For de Boer this is the force of Paul’s argument. The Galatians would have recognised this to be true of their religious past; the new and polemical edge to Paul’s argument is the highlighting of calendrical observance as part of the old way of life, and that therefore to begin observing the Torah’s calendar is a reversion to that old way, “The Meaning of the Phrase τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου in Galatians.”

¹⁷⁶ Or ‘antinomies’, in what Martyn acknowledges is an idiosyncratic usage (115n13).

¹⁷⁷ Although refraining from criticism, de Boer underlines the likely need for repeated and careful listening in order for the Galatians to follow this argument. One also wonders whether Paul would plausibly rely upon such a generous hearing given the nature of his letter, especially in Martyn’s reconstruction where the Teachers were *in situ*. Indeed he believes they successfully disarmed Paul’s response, a fact demonstrated by the Galatians failure to contribute to the Jerusalem collection.

impact of Christ's advent" (139, *emph. orig.*).¹⁷⁸ Contrary to the views of Wrede and Schweitzer, for example, the advent of Christ has religious rather than ontological significance. The end of the world turns out to be the end of a particular religious construction of the world only.¹⁷⁹ Correspondingly, baptism signifies

the loss of the world of religious differentiation, the world, that is, that had as one of its fundamental elements the antinomy of the Law/the Not-Law. For crucifixion with Christ means the death of the cosmos of religion, the cosmos in which all human beings live. Swept away are the basic guidelines which—in one form or another—all people had formerly considered permanently dependable (119).

According to Martyn, "religion is a human enterprise" (79); what Paul is sweeping away is "the thought that, provided with a good religious foundation for a good religious ladder, the human being can ascend from the wrong to the right" (82).¹⁸⁰ Strikingly absent,

¹⁷⁸ This highly developed account is invoked but misunderstood by several who follow Martyn. Citing his discussion of antinomies, Cousar and Southall believe they find further examples in Rom 5-8 when Adam/Christ; sin/righteousness; flesh/Spirit are pairs set in radical opposition. However, Martyn's point is not that the new age constructs a set of antinomies with the old but rather that it is constructed out of a set of antinomies, just as the old was. The New contrasts the Old insofar as it is composed of *different* antinomies. See Charles B. Cousar, "Continuity and Discontinuity: Romans 5-8," in *Pauline Theology Vol. 3: Romans*, ed. David M. Hay and E. Elizabeth Johnson (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), 207-8; David J. Southall, *Rediscovering Righteousness in Romans: Personified Dikaiosyne Within Metaphoric and Narratorial Settings*, *Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament* 240 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 94-95, citing both Martyn and Cousar. The confusion is also present in Jipp, "Paul: The Apocalyptic Theologian."

¹⁷⁹ *Contra* Davis' view that Martyn is making "ontological, metaphysical claims about the truth of reality," "The Challenge of Apocalyptic to Modern Theology," 43.

¹⁸⁰ In the introduction of *Galatians*, Martyn references Käsemann and Bonhoeffer's protest against religion, *Galatians*, 37n67. Karl Barth is scarcely referenced by Martyn or others within the apocalyptic school, despite

compared to Käsemann, however, is the thought that this ascent is hubristic, an offensive creaturely declaration of independence from the Creator. Rather, the antagonism is located at a cosmological and social level. The attempt to ascend the religious ladder is mistaken because the powers hold humanity in their sway and it is serious because it divides humanity. Indeed “the binary religious categorization of human beings is the fundamental identity of the curse pronounced by the Law.”¹⁸¹

We ought lastly to note two related issues. First, some ambivalence regarding the timing and nature of this religious categorisation. On the one hand, Martyn can speak of “all people” depending upon religion and therefore erecting for themselves boundaries to separate the sacred from the profane. On the other hand, Martyn seems to see the arrival of the Sinaitic law as the pivotal moment: “In Paul’s view what is fundamentally wrong with both creation and the Law is that both have fallen into the company of anti-God powers, the Law in its tandem existence with the Not-Law—and creation itself by having—*after the advent of the Law/the Not-Law*—such elements as its base.”¹⁸²

the affinities that emerge from Martyn’s work onwards. (Although see Martyn, *Theological Issues in the Letters of Paul*, 144n8; Martyn, *Galatians*, 95; Carleton Paget notes that Schweitzer had read Barth’s *Romans* and even met him in 1928, “Schweitzer and Paul,” 236. Barth’s influence on Käsemann is more often noted (e.g. Wright, “A New Tübingen School? Ernst Käsemann and His Commentary on Romans,” 11; Scroggs, “Ernst Käsemann: The Divine Agent Provocateur,” *RelSRev* 11 (1985): 262).

¹⁸¹ *Galatians*, 406n59. Furthermore, Martyn’s view of the law as an angelic interpolation means that far from pronouncing blessing and curses, God is the author of blessings only, *ibid.*, 325. Likewise, Martyn’s view that the flesh operates at a communal rather than individual level means that the threat posed by the flesh has no explicitly vertical God-ward dimension, rather it will “destroy your communities” (257).

¹⁸² *Galatians*, 417. Cf. “Paul clearly considers the cosmos of religion to be younger than the cosmos created (in prospect) by God when he spoke his promise to Abraham” (238n7).

The coming of the law therefore, far from being the divine remedy to the flesh, proves to be a central element in the construction of ‘this world,’ and one of the anti-God enslaving powers (152). Martyn thus gives two accounts of the genesis of *this* world: the entrance of Sin from Rom 5 and the legislation of Sinai from Galatians.¹⁸³

Second, while the basic thought is that the law curses and God blesses, there is a sense in which the law also blesses, at least in its “original, nonreligious, Abrahamic form.”¹⁸⁴ This is the promise made to Abraham, the gospel preached in advance.¹⁸⁵ It is also the promise of Hab 2:4 and the singular demand of Lev 19:18.¹⁸⁶ At Sinai, however, it is paired with the not-law and becomes an “enslaving cosmic element,” the pre-eminent example of religion. To the obvious objection that Leviticus and Habakkuk are post-Sinai, Martyn responds that Paul’s fundamental hermeneutic is Christ, a fact that transcends “the fine points of chronology.”¹⁸⁷

¹⁸³ There is also a sense in which the flesh had always been present in the world, at least since the fall, but that it takes on a new importance by forming, with the Spirit, one of the antinomies that constitute the new age.

¹⁸⁴ *Galatians*, 417n82.

¹⁸⁵ Only this point counts against Harink’s portrayal of Martyn’s position that all history prior to the incarnation “is wreckage,” “Partakers of the Divine Apocalypse: Hermeneutics, History and Human Agency after Martyn,” in *Apocalyptic and the Future of Theology: With and Beyond J. Louis Martyn*, ed. Joshua B. Davis and Douglas Harink (Eugene, Oreg.: Cascade Books, 2012), 86, *emph. orig.*

¹⁸⁶ Whereas Lev 19:18 represents the “singular Law in its guiding function,” Paul also “hears the false promise of the cursing and plural Law” in Lev 18:5, *Galatians*, 510n112.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.* Cf. *Theological Issues* 238: “Caring nothing about what we would call the historical place of Habakkuk Paul hears in Hab 2:4 (as in Isa 54:1; Gal 4:27) an element of the original utterance of the Law.” Martyn also affirms some sense in which the promises to the patriarch are confirmed in each generation, but never, he insists, on the basis of anything other than God’s electing grace. In that context, Martyn denies the existence of “through-trains *from* the patriarchal traditions and their perceptive criteria—whether Jewish or Greek—to

As we shall see in a moment, Martyn outlines Paul's solution in detailed contrast to the proposal of the Teachers. The same can be said, in summary, of his understanding of the plight. Their script contains three actors: "sinful human beings, Christ, and the God of the covenant who has accomplished in the blood sacrifice of Christ the true forgiveness of sins." Paul's drama, on the other hand, features four: "human beings, Christ, God and anti-God powers" (152).¹⁸⁸ For Martyn those anti-God powers (principally sin, the flesh and the law with the religious world it creates) represent and rule over the cosmos, the present evil age. This account of the plight signifies three things for Martyn. First, given our enslavement, the solution must come from outside; second, the solution will have a military character—it will be a counter-invasion; and third, human beings are fundamentally victims by virtue of their subjection.¹⁸⁹ If their nature is elaborated upon any

the gospel of God's Son," a claim quoted and contested in Gaventa, "The Singularity of the Gospel: A Reading of Galatians," 159n33.

¹⁸⁸ Subsequently Martyn contrasts a two-actor drama (God and human beings) with a three-actor drama ("God, human beings and supra-human powers other than God"), "Epilogue: An Essay in Pauline Meta-Ethics," 178. This essentially becomes a definition of the apocalyptic reading, for a footnote adds that "in the present essay I use the term 'apocalyptic' for the most part to refer to this three-actor drama," (ibid., 178n12).

¹⁸⁹ At times there is a conflation of the first and third points. That slavery to sin implies an inability either to overcome sin or to respond by one's own volition to an offer of freedom is clear. That slavery to sin also transfers the slave from the category of sinner to victim is less clear. Martyn, it should be said, would not deny that individuals transgress, but the frequent equation is 'in bondage' therefore victim. It is notable that Paul's addition of a fourth actor to the Teachers list of *dramatis personae* also sees the removal of the adjective 'sinful' from humanity. Cf. Martyn's discussion of Gal 3:13 where the four actors signal that "not forgiveness, but rather victory" is central, *Galatians*, 318n110. Much later there is a significant passage in Martyn's postscript to *Apocalyptic Paul*, subtitled "Sin as Enslaving Power and Sin as a Human act," which argues that "the view of Sin as slavemaster is primary, while the view of the Adamic agent as active sinner is secondary. As we ponder this assertion, we find interpretive help in the term 'complicity.' In the full picture, that is, the prisoner... became—and becomes—*actively complicit* with the jailor." "Afterword: The Human Moral Drama,"

further, Martyn does so in terms of epistemological and ethical “incompetence” but not culpability.¹⁹⁰

b. Solution

As we have seen, Martyn argues that Paul announces the death of the religious world by denying the continued existence of its antinomies: “the new creation, marked by anthropological unity in Christ, does not have pairs of opposites” (119). On the other hand Martyn insists that in the sending of the Son and the Spirit “God is bringing to birth not only anthropological unity in Christ, but also a new set of antinomies” (120). Paradoxical as that sounds, the argument is relatively simple. The new creation is realised in the present in the church which is emphatically not a religious (and therefore divided) entity but marked by that unity in Christ. It owes its birth, however, to the arrival of two new antinomies in particular: Christ/law and Spirit/flesh. We will take these in turn as they are central to Martyn’s account of the solution.

i. Christ/Law

To formulate this antinomy, Paul makes use of a Jewish Christian tradition, alluded to in Gal 2:16. Combining that text with clues from Rom 3:25-26, 4:25, and 1 Cor 6:11, Martyn reconstructs the Jewish Christian tradition as follows:

163. Even here though, where Martyn borrows the language of complicity from Philip Ziegler, he does not carry over other terms that Ziegler uses, such as “personal accountability” and “the guilt of sin.” See Ziegler, “Christ Must Reign,” 205–6. Given that Ziegler is in fact accurately summarising Käsemann at this point, a tension emerges here between Martyn and Käsemann.

¹⁹⁰ See especially “Epilogue: An Essay in Pauline Meta-Ethics,” 177-78.

1. Rectification is an act of God.¹⁹¹
2. In that act God sets right things that have gone wrong.
3. What has made things wrong is transgressions against God's covenant committed among God's people.
4. What makes transgressing members of God's people right is God's act of forgiveness.¹⁹²
5. God's rectification is therefore God's mercy.
6. The Law is not mentioned because its continuing validity is taken for granted.¹⁹³
7. God has accomplished his rectifying forgiveness in Christ, specifically in Christ's death and resurrection. Rectification is not attributed to the Law.
8. In these formulas one finds, then, God's messianic grace in the context of God's Law, but a polemic against rectification by Law would be entirely beside the point.
9. God's rectifying forgiveness is confessed without explicit reference to faith.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹¹ For this account see 142-47. Martyn generally translates the δικαί- word group with terms like rectification; an approach seemingly introduced by Keck's *Paul and His Letters* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 119.

¹⁹² In this tradition, rectification is not accomplished "by a human being... but rather by Christ's death. And in this Jewish-Christian tradition, that death is understood to have been God's sacrificial act taken at his initiative." 144. Strikingly, therefore, we have here an example of something often assumed not to exist: a forensic soteriology combined with an emphasis on divine initiative.

¹⁹³ The transgressions in view were of course transgressions against the law and there was "no thought that God's rectification removes one from the realm of God's law," (146) but according to Martyn this is assumed rather than stated.

¹⁹⁴ This is because the polarities of law and faith demanded by later controversies were yet to be formulated. Martyn notes the presence of διὰ πίστεως in Rom 3:25 but questions its originality and argues that, in any event, in this tradition it spoke of God's faithfulness (147n14). There is also the question of Gal 2:16 itself where Paul still seems to be drawing on shared assumptions when he writes that ἡμεῖς εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐπιστεύσαμεν, ἵνα δικαιωθῶμεν ἐκ πίστεως Χριστοῦ, where at least the verb signifies faith in Christ. This is granted by Martyn but, he insists, it comes "in a decidedly second place," *Galatians*, 252.

For their part, the Teachers embrace the view of Jesus' death as "the totally adequate sacrifice made by God himself" (148) and, as missionaries to the Gentiles, they simply found it necessary to make explicit for the first time the assumption that the beneficiaries of God's deed in Christ would be law observant.

Like the Teachers, Paul is hearing the traditional formula in his missionary context, but in that context he sees churches participating in God's gift apart from law observance and so learns to speak of rectification as addressed neither to Jews who need restoring to a nomistic covenant, nor to Gentiles cut off from that covenant, but to both equally as ἄνθρωποι. The silence of the tradition concerning the law confirms both this and Paul's discernment that οὐ δικαιοῦται ἄνθρωπος ἐξ ἔργων νόμου. Instead Paul hears the tradition emphasising the priority of God's activity,¹⁹⁵ coining the phrase πίστις Χριστοῦ and thereby encapsulating the thought that "God has set things right without laying down a prior condition of any sort. God's rectifying act, that is to say, is no more God's response to human faith in Christ Jesus than it is God's response to human observance of the Law. God's rectification is not God's response at all. It is the first move; it is God's initiative, carried out by him in Christ's faithful death" (151).

In the subsequent argument of Galatians, this subjective genitive reading of the phrase falls into place in the wider apocalyptic framework as Martyn sees it. In Gal 3:6-4:7 the anti-god powers are emphasized such that the faithfulness of Christ addresses the human plight of oppression, not transgression. At this point, we should note, Paul also takes leave of the Jewish Christian tradition. He "still says that Christ died 'for us' (Gal 3:13). But now Christ's death is seen to have happened in *collision* with the law (153, *emph. orig.*).

¹⁹⁵ Thus in Martyn's reading Paul and the Jewish Christian tradition alike emphasise divine agency. The emphasis on human response, characteristic of FJAE, is expressed only by the Teachers.

Three elements of that collision require brief comment. First, although Jesus, by virtue of his birth was “subject to the curse of the law in its plural [i.e. religious] mode of existence” (240), there is also a sense in which the law “pronounced a specific curse on him... with malignant power” (240). This is what the law did to Christ.

But second, Martyn highlights what Christ did to the law: “He bore the Law’s curse for humanity, thus vanquishing the cursing voice of the Law”—a victory which constitutes the good news of Galatians and the thrust of Col 2:14-15, which Martyn also cites.

As to how that victory is accomplished, Martyn says little. The only hint lies in the third element of Christ’s relation to the law: he is not only cursed by, and victorious over, the law, he also enacts its pre-Sinaitic pre-religious promise. His incarnation and death fulfil the “singular, evangelical promise” of God’s unilateral intervention on behalf of his people. This inclusive and divine downward movement seems to be the key insight by which the law’s divisive and upward human movement is ended.

In keeping with his interpretive forebears, Martyn sees a redefined version of justification in development here. Like Schweitzer, Martyn locates Galatians closer to the Pauline *centrum* than Romans, and finds there an account of justification centred on the concept of redemption from slavery rather than forgiveness.¹⁹⁶ Like de Boer, he sees an intentional shift from FJAE categories to those of CJAE, not least in Gal 1:4.

Thus the role of Jesus in the Pauline solution corresponds to the plight as Martyn outlines it: Paul “is concerned to offer an interpretation of Jesus’ death that is oriented not toward

¹⁹⁶ On the strength of Gal 3:13 and 4:5, Martyn suggests that ἐξαγοράζω proves to be a synonym for rectification (153).

personal guilt and forgiveness, but rather toward corporate enslavement and liberation.”¹⁹⁷ Significantly, however that liberation comes about not through participation in Jesus’ death and resurrection (the latter especially is a muted theme in Martyn)¹⁹⁸ but rather through a revelation of the significance of the cross for the religious cosmos.¹⁹⁹

ii. *The Coming of the Spirit*

Although Martyn often speaks of the singular entrance of the Son and the Spirit,²⁰⁰ the role of the latter in Martyn’s work is sufficiently prominent to merit its own discussion. We will briefly address the Spirit’s connection to the law, and to human agency, before coming to the significance of the Spirit/flesh antinomy.

Puzzling over the twofold use of *nomos* in Rom 8:2-3, Martyn argues that both instances refer to the Mosaic law. Leaving aside his earlier account of the law’s history based in Galatians (paired with ‘Not-law’ as a constituent polarity of the religious cosmos),²⁰¹ he

¹⁹⁷ *Galatians*, 101.

¹⁹⁸ Again, Martyn might plead that he simply stands where Galatians stands and can do no other, but it is striking that there is not a single reference to resurrection in the topical index of *Theological Issues*.

¹⁹⁹ This can still be described as a participation in Christ’s death, but the model of participation is reconfigured around Martyn’s view of the law. Christ dies in a “head-on conflict with the Law’s power to pronounce a curse on the whole of humanity” (which is to say, to divide it into the sacred and profane) and Paul’s participation “involves his own death to the Law that previously formed his cosmos.” *Galatians*, 102, cf. 278-280.

²⁰⁰ E.g. “The advent of the Son and of his Spirit is thus *the* cosmic, apocalyptic event” (121). Although Martyn takes Baeck to task for neglecting Christ’s future Parousia (64-65), the fact that Martyn can speak of the Son and Spirit’s entrance as *the* apocalyptic event reveals how far the term apocalyptic has shifted, and the distance at which Martyn sometimes stands from Käsemann.

²⁰¹ He does, however, acknowledge that he has offered that “somewhat different view of the Law’s history” elsewhere, “Nomos Plus Genitive Noun in Paul: The History of God’s Law,” 587n24.

reads the νόμος τῆς ἀμαρτίας καὶ τοῦ θανάτου as a reference to the law in a “disastrous alliance,” seized by its “senior partner” sin.²⁰²

By contrast, and in a far more positive reading of the law than we have encountered thus far in apocalyptic readings, ὁ νόμος τοῦ πνεύματος τῆς ζωῆς speaks of the law, taken in hand once again by the Spirit in Christ, and thereby becoming “God’s appointed means for liberating the human race.”²⁰³ The result—and here Martyn aligns this reading with his Galatian exegesis—is that the law’s pre-religious promise and singular commandment (Lev 19:18) are fulfilled for and in the church.

That believers are now able to fulfil the commandment says nothing of their autonomous capacity, needless to say. For Martyn the church has only become a community to which Paul can address imperatives thanks to the preventient death of Christ and, especially, the indwelling of the Spirit. This is true of initial faith in Christ, for which Martyn has a genuine, though secondary place: “When we trust God, Paul would say, we signal that we

²⁰² Ibid., 582. Martyn cites Paul Meyer’s view that sin is the only operative power here approvingly: “the law has been used by sin to produce death”, contra de Boer, for whom Rom 8:2 speaks of the law as the “plaything and tool” of sin and death (see n170 above), “Paul’s Mythologising Program in Romans 5-8,” 18. Martyn’s dependence on Meyer’s article (“The Worm at the Core of the Apple: Exegetical Reflections on Romans 7,” in *The Word in This World: Essays in New Testament Exegesis and Theology*, ed. John T. Carroll (Louisville: John Knox, 2004), 57–77) is acknowledged and evident throughout Martyn’s discussion of Rom 7-8 in the article cited above and in *Theological Issues*, ch16.

²⁰³ “Nomos Plus Genitive Noun in Paul: The History of God’s Law,” 584. Martyn is quite emphatic on this point: the law has become “redemptively powerful” (583); “in the hands of Christ, the Law itself has undergone such change as to make it our liberator from the Law in the hands of Sin” (585). Beker notes the evidence of Rom 8:4 but remains persuaded of a more permanent rupture between Christ and the law. See *Paul the Apostle*, 247 (and the discussion on 247-51).

ourselves have been invaded by God's presuppositionless grace, and we confess that the locus of God's invasion is *especially* our will! Far from presupposing freedom of the will (cf. Hos 5:4), Paul speaks of the freeing of our will for the glad service of God and neighbour" (151n17).²⁰⁴

And it is true of the ongoing life of faith. In response to Barclay's suggestion that Paul's paraenesis in Galatians "sets before his converts what looks very like a 'Two Ways' choice," Martyn insists that this, though true, must be interpreted in light of the fact that "he presupposes that he is speaking to a community made newly addressable—made newly able to hear and follow the exhortation—by the liberating power of the indwelling Spirit."²⁰⁵

This liberating power not only creates the capacity to respond to God but also enables believers to take up arms against the flesh: "With the sending of the Spirit, then, God has invaded the territory of the Flesh (cf. Gal 1:4), inaugurating a war against that monster" (258). Martial language proliferates here.²⁰⁶ The Teachers have invaded the church (11n7,

²⁰⁴ Emph. orig. The insistence that faith is contingent upon the prior work of God accounts for another extended paraphrase, this time of Gal 3:6: Abraham "trusted God, and, as the final act in the drama by which God set Abraham fully right, God recognized Abraham's faithful trust," *Galatians*, 294.

²⁰⁵ "Response to Reviews of Galatians," *RBL* 3 (2001). Martyn does, however, concede to Barclay that he under-emphasises human agency somewhat, confessing surprise that Paul could say the Galatians themselves had crucified the flesh (Gal 5:24). As with ethics, so also with epistemology, Martyn insists that the Spirit's work is necessarily antecedent: "Prior to the event of the gospel, the human being does not possess adequate powers of discernment any more than he or she possesses freedom of will" (224). In light of the Spirit's work the plight is revealed and the world is viewed bi-focally (a frequent metaphor), at once unredeemed and a battleground in which God wages war to redeem it (63, 69 and esp. 284).

²⁰⁶ Martyn credits Käsemann with an insistence upon God's "military power, having acquired that focus by God's invincible act of invading the world in the sending of his Son" ("A Personal Word About Ernst

35v17 [Corinth is in view here], 160, 248n29, 299), and through their teaching the flesh detects an opportunity “to establish a military base of operations in the Galatian communities” (260).²⁰⁷ The solution is to adopt Paul’s apocalyptic vision of the world, perceiving that the Spirit and the flesh “constitute a pair of opposites at war with one another,”²⁰⁸ and to recognise that as God’s redeemed people they are neither bystanders nor puppets but combatants, already enlisted by the Spirit, “the general who has already affected the Galatians’ will itself, inciting them to service in its war against the Flesh” (264-5); and paradoxically they must fight in order to preserve the peace of their new creation communities.²⁰⁹

To this extent Paul is an enthusiast, announcing the arrival of the new creation.²¹⁰ Although there is a brief mention of the return of Jesus as a third cosmic incursion, Martyn far more

Käsemann,” xv). Yet militaristic language in Käsemann is far rarer than in Martyn, and while Käsemann sees the world as a battleground since the fall, Martyn insists that the apocalyptic war is of “recent vintage,” having commenced at the incarnation, *Theological Issues in the Letters of Paul*, 259.

²⁰⁷ “To establish a military base of operations” is Martyn’s gloss for ἀφορμή (Gal 5:13 cf. Rom 7:8, 11,) and the phrase is peppered throughout Martyn’s work and that of his students, see e.g. 259, 260, *Galatians*, 485, 531-2; even Paul, in writing to Rome, seeks to set up “a base of operations” *ibid.*, 351n197; cf. Marcus, “The Evil Inclination in the Letters of Paul,” 15; Beverly Roberts Gaventa, “The Cosmic Power of Sin in Paul’s Letter to the Romans: Toward a Widescreen Edition,” *Int* 58, no. 3 (2004): 232n11; eadem, “Neither Height nor Depth: Discerning the Cosmology of Romans,” *SJT* 64 (2011): 272; de Boer, *Galatians*, 335.

²⁰⁸ Martyn’s paraphrase of Gal 5:17, although Paul uses ἀντίκειμαι here and makes more explicit the military metaphor (if one is present in Galatians) in Romans 7:23 where we find ἀντιστρατεύομαι.

²⁰⁹ In Gal 6:1, Martyn recognises the inevitability that believers will “commit discrete transgressions that can be called sins.” Notably, however, these are immediately glossed as “missteps,” *Galatians*, 97.

²¹⁰ A fact “greatly underestimated by Beker,” *Theological Issues in the Letters of Paul*, 110n56. For Martyn, this yet further evidence of Paul’s debt to CJAE for the “enthusiastic strain” is “essential to the distinction between cosmological and forensic apocalyptic,” *ibid.* The thought is not developed but the reader is directed to the

often describes the twice-invaded world—first by Sin and second by Son and the Spirit in the Christ-event. That is “*the* apocalyptic event. There was a ‘before,’ and there is now an ‘after.’”²¹¹ Even the essay that refers to Christ’s future return answers the question of ‘When is God’s new creation?’ with the view that it does not lie in the future but simply that it “is already dawning.”²¹² There is no sense of a great disruption to come in world history. To be sure, the whole cosmos will ultimately be set free from the powers of the present evil age,²¹³ and “in the end Christ will hand over the kingdom to God the Father,”²¹⁴ but the assurance of those blessings comes not from the conviction that Jesus shall come again but from the character of his first coming. “God’s rectifying declaration of war in Christ is what gave Paul total confidence,”²¹⁵ and in particular the unilateral and unconditional nature of that intervention declares God’s intent and its scope.²¹⁶

glossary in which FJAE is defined as explicitly looking forward to the Last Judgment rather than a divine invasion but there is no sense in which CJAE, on Martyn’s definition, is necessarily more enthusiastic. The motif of divine invasion is, however, one that can more easily be located in the past without eschatological remainder than that of final judgment, even though one might argue that for Paul the verdict of the Last Day has already been declared.

²¹¹ *Theological Issues in the Letters of Paul*, 121, *emph orig.* Or, in answer to the central question of Galatians: ‘What time is it?’ Paul’s answer is: “It is the time after the apocalypse of the faith of Christ (3:23-25), the time of things being set right by that faith,” *ibid.*, 122. There is, therefore, at least in the structure of Martyn’s thought, no explicit eschatological reserve, no clear sense of a ‘not yet’ balancing a ‘now.’ There is D-Day but no corresponding V-Day—and Martyn’s inaugurated eschatology presumably accounts for the absence of that analogy in his work (and perhaps its origin with Cullmann), despite the abundance of other military imagery.

²¹² “World Without End or Twice-Invaded World?,” 127.

²¹³ *Theological Issues in the Letters of Paul*, 265.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 156.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 289, where Martyn observes that “God invades without a single if,” showing God to be “the powerful and victorious Advocate who is intent on the liberation of the entire race of human beings.”

In summary, elements of Martyn's views on Paul have a clear precedent in the foregoing survey. We have heard before of Paul's movement away from Jewish traditions of atonement and forensic judgment, the introduction of 'anti-God powers' and the parallel texts in Jewish apocalyptic literature invoked for support. But there is significant innovation here. Käsemann's critique of religiosity has evolved, and several other enduring and influential strands are introduced by Martyn, including an emphasis on agency and epistemology, and a definition of apocalyptic that shifts its gaze from future to inaugurated eschatology.

CHAPTER 7: BEVERLY ROBERTS GAVENTA

Although Beverly Roberts Gaventa once questioned Martyn's use of the term apocalyptic—"it obscures at least as much as it clarifies"²¹⁷—more recently she has adopted the language, in large measure to acknowledge the influence of Käsemann, Beker, and Martyn.²¹⁸ Since around 2004, having adopted the language, she has largely (but not exclusively) focused on attempting to read Romans in an apocalyptic vein,²¹⁹ in anticipation of a forthcoming

²¹⁷ "The Singularity of the Gospel: A Reading of Galatians," 158–59.

²¹⁸ Indeed she is now a spirited defender of the language for various reasons. In response to the critique of Matlock (*Our Mother Saint Paul*, 187n6), she argues the term is no more multivalent than others in common usage (e.g. narrative, feminism, rhetoric), and that de Boer has amply proven a relationship between Jewish apocalyptic literature and modern apocalyptic readings of Paul. Furthermore she questions the clarity of Campbell's alternative proposal (on which see chapter 8 below) and argues that adopting the term is almost required as a point of intellectual honesty and gratitude, given her debt to Käsemann, Beker and Martyn, *ibid.*, 82–83, 111.

²¹⁹ See especially, "The Rhetoric of Death in the Wisdom of Solomon and the Letters of Paul," in *The Listening Heart: Essays in Wisdom and the Psalms in Honor of Roland E. Murphy*, ed. Kenneth G. Hoglund (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987), 127–41; "The Singularity of the Gospel: A Reading of Galatians"; "Romans," in *Women's Bible Commentary*, ed. Carol A. Newsom and Sharon H. Ringe (London: SPCK, 1992), 313–20; "The Cosmic Power of Sin in Paul's Letter to the Romans"; "God Handed Them Over: Reading Romans 1:18–32 Apocalyptically"; "The God Who Will Not Be Taken for Granted: Reflections on Paul's Letter to the Romans," in *The Ending of Mark and the Ends of God: Essays in Memory of Donald Harrisville Juel*, ed. Beverly Roberts Gaventa and Patrick D. Miller (John Knox, 2005); "Interpreting the Death of Jesus Apocalyptically: Reconsidering Romans 8:32," in *Jesus and Paul Reconnected*, ed. Todd D. Still (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 125–45; *Our Mother Saint Paul*; "From Toxic Speech to the Redemption of Doxology in Paul's Letter to the Romans," in *The Word Leaps the Gap: Essays on Scripture and Theology in Honor of Richard B. Hays*, ed. J. Ross Wagner, Kavin C. Rowe and Katherine A. Grieb (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 392–408; "To Preach the Gospel': Romans 1:15 and the Purposes of Romans," in *Letter to the Romans*, ed. Udo Schnelle (Leuven: Peeters, 2009), 179–95; "Neither Height nor Depth: Discerning the Cosmology of Romans"; "The Mission of God in Paul's Letter to the Romans," in *Paul as Missionary: Identity,*

commentary on the letter.²²⁰ Perhaps most distinctively she argues that in Rom 1-4 Paul is neither presenting one distinct soteriology before transitioning to another (contra Schweitzer and de Boer), nor is he presenting a traditional Jewish-Christian soteriology in order to reduce it to absurdity (contra Campbell). Rather, from the start Paul is developing an apocalyptic theme. Indeed, building on Rom 1:15 and insisting that εὐαγγελίσασθαι bear its usual sense of initial proclamation, Gaventa argues that Paul is evangelising the Roman church, “convinced that they have not yet heard the gospel in its cosmic, apocalyptic fullness.”²²¹ To that end, Paul spends Rom 1-8 developing his distinctive account of the plight and solution, apparently outlining the plight and solution three times, in 1:18-5:11, in 5:12-6:23, and in 7:1-8:3. Following Keck’s analysis, Gaventa sees this as a three-stage spiral, “each time going deeper into the human condition, and each time finding the gospel the appropriate antidote.”²²² These cycles represent the unfolding exposition of a singular, apocalyptic gospel, but it will prove instructive to work through Gaventa’s discussion of each successive cycle.

Activity, Theology, and Practice, ed. Trevor J. Burke and Brian S. Rosner (London: T&T Clark, 2011), 65–75; “The Shape of the ‘I’: The Psalter, the Gospel and the Speaker in Romans 7,” in *Apocalyptic Paul*, ed. Beverly Gaventa (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2013), 77–92; “The Rhetoric of Violence and the God of Peace in Paul’s Letter to the Romans,” in *Paul, John, and Apocalyptic Eschatology: Studies in Honour of Martinus C. de Boer*, ed. by Jan Krans et al. NovTSup 149 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 61–75; *When in Romans: An Invitation to Linger with the Gospel According to Paul* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2016). Several of these articles, or rewritten versions of them, are collected together in *Our Mother Saint Paul*.

²²⁰ She also does this seeking to recover the apocalyptic emphasis “argued passionately by Ernst Käsemann and J. Christiaan Beker and developed in the works of Charles B. Cousar and Martinus de Boer” (*Our Mother Saint Paul*, 122).

²²¹ “To Preach the Gospel,” 179; cf. “The God Who Will Not Be Taken for Granted: Reflections on Paul’s Letter to the Romans,” 152.

²²² Leander E. Keck, “What Makes Romans Tick?,” in *Pauline Theology Vol. 3: Romans*, ed. David M. Hay and E. Elizabeth Johnson (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), 25.

a. *Plight and Solution in Rom 1:18-5:11*

Central to Gaventa's argument that the apocalyptic gospel is being preached to the Romans from the outset is Paul's use of παραδίδομι in 1:24, 26 and 28. Persuaded that the verb refers "to turning someone or something over into the custody of another or to surrender in a military context,"²²³ its use therefore "signals that the human situation depicted in Romans 1 derives both from human rebellion against God and from God's own active role in a cosmic conflict. In response to human rebellion, God surrendered humanity for a time to what we may call the anti-god powers, chief among which are Sin and Death."²²⁴

Of course, Paul speaks of humanity handed over εἰς ἀκαθαρσίαν... πάθη ἀτιμίας... and ἀδόκιμον νοῦν, and, as Gaventa concedes, "at first glance, these do not appear to be the names or descriptions of agents but of behaviours, aspects of the human being and human behaviour, thought, attitude."²²⁵ The parallel language in 1 Thess 4:5, where the Gentiles live ἐν πάθει ἐπιθυμίας, would seem to agree. However, on the assumption that later references to sin are to 'Sin' as a cosmic power, and noting the language of uncleanness and desire in 6:19 and 7:5 in connection with sin, Gaventa is confident that the references in Rom 1 "have in view the enslavement of humanity to agents that are set over against

²²³ "God Handed Them Over: Reading Romans 1:18-32 Apocalyptically," 45.

²²⁴ Ibid., 43. Gaventa acknowledges her debt to Martyn for the phrase "anti-god powers." In turn Martyn endorses this reading of Rom 1:21-28, "Epilogue: An Essay in Pauline Meta-Ethics," 179. Gaventa continues the tradition of capitalising Sin and Death and sought, with Richard Hays, to capitalise 'sin' 26 times in their proposed translation of Romans for the CEB. To their disappointment, the editorial board rejected this and other related suggestions. For an account, see Richard B. Hays, "Lost in Translation: A Reflection on Romans in the Common English Bible," in *The Unrelenting God: Essays on God's Action in Scripture in Honor of Beverly Roberts Gaventa*, ed. David J Downs and Matthew L. Skinner (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013), 83-101.

²²⁵ "God Handed Them Over: Reading Romans 1:18-32 Apocalyptically," 48.

God.”²²⁶ This reading, which Gaventa describes as significantly recasting the forensic interpretation, is set against the view that “God allows humanity to do what it wills or that God abandons humanity”—either view wrongly assuming that natural processes are to the fore.²²⁷ By contrast, and echoing Beker, Gaventa insists a theocentric (which is to say apocalyptic) account must be given.²²⁸ While it is true that Rom 2-3 accentuates the various human outworkings of sin (judgmentalism, corrupt speech, etc.) the first appearance of ἁμαρτία in 3:9 “states explicitly” the thought that underlies the section: “all... are ‘under the power of Sin.’”²²⁹

As to the solution, Paul speaks of “God’s action of rectification” in 3:21, picking up the theme from 1:17-18, and in 4:1-5:11 Paul speaks of the “life-giving promise to Abraham and the life-giving consequences of Jesus’ death.”²³⁰ In an earlier work, Gaventa treats 3:21-26 as a minority report in Paul, doubting that its reference to substitutionary atonement represents the true centre of his soteriology,²³¹ but more recently she interprets it in line

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, 49. Cf. the argument in “Interpreting the Death of Jesus Apocalyptically,” 134: “Uncleanness, dishonourable passions, and unfit minds are instances of synecdoche; they are ways of referring to anti-god powers; most especially the power of Sin.”

²²⁷ The possibility that God actively hands humanity over to inward corruption (without involving a role for cosmic powers in Rom 1) is not explored.

²²⁸ “To Preach the Gospel,” 193.

²²⁹ “Neither Height nor Depth: Discerning the Cosmology of Romans,” 270.

²³⁰ “To Preach the Gospel,” 180.

²³¹ “While Paul at times states the significance of Jesus’ death in language that lends itself to a theology of substitutionary atonement (e.g., Rom. 3.21-26), Jesus’ death is for Paul first of all God’s confrontation with the world... The cross is the ‘disclosure and destruction of the illusion that man can transcend himself, either through his presumption or his piety,’” “The Rhetoric of Death in the Wisdom of Solomon and the Letters of Paul,” 136. The quotation is from Kasemann; Beker is also cited.

with her apocalyptic reading. Romans 3:21-26 identifies “God’s offering up of Jesus in death as the apocalypse of God’s gracious defeat of Sin.”²³² Put differently, “exegetical problems abound here, but the general logic of the passage is sufficiently clear: all human beings fall short of God’s glory; and all are rectified freely through the grace of redemption in Christ Jesus, grace that results from God’s own action in putting Christ forward.”²³³

Forward for what though? Here the use of παραδίδωμι in 4:25 becomes significant, for the handing over of humanity to anti-god powers “comes to an end only when Jesus is ‘handed over’, which Paul asserts in 4:25 and at 8:32.”²³⁴ “God brings humanity’s enslavement to an end by handing over God’s son, in effect setting a trap, since the crucifixion becomes the occasion of death’s defeat.”²³⁵ The effect, coming back to Rom 3:21-26, is redemption, but “the nuance at work here is not that of ransom (i.e. the payment of a price), but of liberation, as in liberation from slavery. This view is reinforced when we observe that v. 25 refers to the passing over or ‘release’ (almost certainly not ‘forgiveness’) from former sins.”²³⁶

²³² “The Cosmic Power of Sin in Paul’s Letter to the Romans,” 235.

²³³ “The God Who Will Not Be Taken for Granted: Reflections on Paul’s Letter to the Romans,” 80.

²³⁴ “To Preach the Gospel,” 192. On 8:32 see esp. “Interpreting the Death of Jesus Apocalyptically.”

Importantly, Gaventa does not deny the possibility of an allusion to Gen 22 in these passages. Rather she questions the strength of the allusion and the assumption that it exhausts their content.

²³⁵ “To Preach the Gospel,” 193. Gaventa is alert the early church’s use of such notions, citing Col 2:14-15 and various passages in Irenaeus in “To Preach the Gospel,” 193n44. cf. “Interpreting the Death of Jesus Apocalyptically,” 140n8.

²³⁶ “Interpreting the Death of Jesus Apocalyptically,” 137. Here Gaventa relies on Douglas A. Campbell, *The Rhetoric of Righteousness in Romans 3:21-26*, JSNTSup 65 (JSOT Press, 1992).

b. *Plight and Solution in Rom 5:12-6:23*

“In the second stage of the spiral, Paul introduces not only the extent of human rebellion against God but also humanity’s capture by the powers of Sin and Death.”²³⁷ In light of the above discussion, of course, this is only a making explicit of themes that have already been introduced. In the case of the human plight, Sin (“the cosmic terrorist”) and Death (its “cosmic partner”) now emerge as named actors,²³⁸ and the language of warfare and conflict proliferates. Building on 1:18-4:25, humanity has been surrendered to these forces which are engaged in active warfare against God. They rule, enslave, and, most disturbingly, in Rom 7, sin has even been able to co-opt the law, thereby establishing a base of operations.²³⁹

Turning to the solution, God’s action in Christ is expressed in various ways through this section. In 5:1-11 the emphasis falls on peace (implying an end to warfare) and the reconciliation of enemies to God.²⁴⁰ In 5:12-21 the scope of God’s action, among other things, is addressed: “the universal consequence of Adam’s action has an equally universal consequence in Christ’s gracious death... Numerous attempts to limit this statement fail,

²³⁷ “The God Who Will Not Be Taken for Granted: Reflections on Paul’s Letter to the Romans,” 81.

²³⁸ “The Cosmic Power of Sin in Paul’s Letter to the Romans,” 234. Again this is an emphasis of Gaventa’s later work. In earlier work, surveying the theme of death in Paul, she addresses “death in relationship to sin” as a major theme of the first half in Romans in somewhat different terms: “Paul’s early indictment of all people for their sin characterises death as the appropriate reward for sin (1:32, cf. 2:50-11)” and this is also considered reflective of Paul’s view as a whole: “Sin produces death as its appropriate consequence,” with no reference to either as powers. “The Rhetoric of Death in the Wisdom of Solomon and the Letters of Paul,” 136–37.

²³⁹ The debt to Martyn was noted above, see n207.

²⁴⁰ Some sense therefore of antagonism between God and humanity persists, although it plays only a minor role. For references to enmity between God and humanity see “Neither Height nor Depth: Discerning the Cosmology of Romans,” 271; “The Shape of the ‘I’: The Psalter, the Gospel and the Speaker in Romans 7,” 89; “The Rhetoric of Violence and the God of Peace in Paul’s Letter to the Romans,” 68, 71.

since the comparison Paul makes will only work if the scope of Paul's gospel includes 'all.'²⁴¹ In Rom 6 the death of Christ secures liberation from slavery: "Those baptized into Christ's own death are simply dead to Sin—its power is shattered" and they may now take up weapons (ὄπλα, 6:13) against their former slave master.²⁴²

c. *Plight and Solution in Rom 7:1-8:39*

"In its third stage, the spiral cannot become more inclusive, but it does become more invasive."²⁴³ Like Martyn before her, Gaventa adopts Meyer's view that the central character of Rom 7 is not "I" but Sin, and that its invasive power has introduced a rupture in the law itself, which remains holy and yet becomes the law of sin and death—in their possession and under their power. Importantly, however, Gaventa does not set aside all questions concerning the "I," arguing instead that Sin's invasive rupture of the law necessarily produces despair at the individual level. Paul adopts the first person voice of the psalms (expressing delight in the law, an awareness of one's own failings, beset by enemies without) and gives it a new apocalyptic script: "Paul shows that Sin has reached down, even into the person of the archetypal 'I' who delights in God's Law, producing not

²⁴¹ Gaventa is willing to grant that this universalism is peculiar to Rom 5-8 ("Even if the first stage of the spiral imagines that God's redemptive action concerns only those who believe, the second does not." "The God Who Will Not Be Taken for Granted: Reflections on Paul's Letter to the Romans," 81.) That said, she is also inclined to take the phrase "all who believe" in Rom 3:22 as a reference to a limited number who rightly perceive God's action in the present, rather than to a limited number who benefit from that action, "The God Who Will Not Be Taken for Granted: Reflections on Paul's Letter to the Romans," 80.

²⁴² "The Cosmic Power of Sin in Paul's Letter to the Romans," 234. The translation of this term in the CEB as 'weapons' rather than 'instruments' or other common translations, represents a rare and welcome success for Hays and Gaventa before the editorial committee. See "Lost in Translation: A Reflection on Romans in the Common English Bible," 87n7.

²⁴³ "The God Who Will Not Be Taken for Granted: Reflections on Paul's Letter to the Romans," 81.

simply disobedience but despair.”²⁴⁴ The intended effect is to invite the hearer to identify with the “I” in their apocalyptic plight.²⁴⁵

Within this section the divine response “is not the putting forward of Christ as God’s righteousness for those who believe. Neither is it the death of Jesus that defeats Death for all. Now the response of God is to condemn sin itself (8:3) and to liberate not only humanity but all of the cosmos.”²⁴⁶ In one sense, Rom 8:3 is the climax of the three-fold retelling of humanity’s plight and God’s response, for there, “with the assertion that God condemned sin, does [the] ‘spiral’ account of the human condition come to an end.”²⁴⁷ On the other hand, as hinted at in the quote above, the rest of Rom 8 expresses confidence in the future and full working out of God’s victory. Because God has handed over his Son to the powers and the Son has defeated them, there is the assurance that all creation will one day be

²⁴⁴ “The Shape of the ‘I’: The Psalter, the Gospel and the Speaker in Romans 7,” 90.

²⁴⁵ Gaventa herself draws attention to one significant implication of this reading of Rom 7. While she has endeavoured “to offer an apocalyptic interpretation of Paul’s letter to the Romans” by highlighting its “cosmic horizons” (and by that term she means that “Paul’s understanding of the gospel is not addressed *solely* to the individual or *solely* to Israel or *solely* to Gentiles,”) she is aware that this can be interpreted as denying an interest in the everyday present reality of the individual. She hopes, however, that the emphasis here on Sin’s invasion into the individual self should “allay at least some of these concerns.” All these quotes are taken from “The Shape of the ‘I’: The Psalter, the Gospel and the Speaker in Romans 7,” 91, *emph. orig.*

²⁴⁶ “The God Who Will Not Be Taken for Granted: Reflections on Paul’s Letter to the Romans,” 81.

²⁴⁷ “To Preach the Gospel,” 181.

liberated.²⁴⁸ In the meantime, the children of God in the present are assured that they are “supervictors” over a host of anti-god powers described in 8:35-39.²⁴⁹

Commenting on those powers in various places, Gaventa expresses herself slightly differently. In one place, 8:35 is described as a parade “of those Powers that might seek to harm God’s chosen: hardship, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril and the sword.”²⁵⁰ No further comment or reflection on the significance of the capitalisation is given, rather focus shifts to the second list in 8:38-39, “the first of which is Sin’s cosmic partner, Death.”²⁵¹ In *When in Romans*, 8:35 describes “circumstances,” whereas 8:38-39 provides “a list of the powers that produce the circumstances.”²⁵² In a different article again, she speaks more cautiously of 8:38-39: “The list is a varied one, but at least some of the agents are to be understood as actual powers (especially angels and rulers and ‘powers’). Whatever their ontology, these powers have the intent of ‘separating’ human beings from the realm of God.”²⁵³

²⁴⁸ Gaventa argues against understanding κτίσις as the non-human creation, and so finds here another indication of Pauline universalism, as does Eastman, who develops a different but complementary argument in relation to Rom 8. See “Whose Apocalypse? The Identity of the Sons of God in Romans 8:19,” *JBL* 121 (2002): 263–77.

²⁴⁹ The translation is Jewett’s, quoted with approval in “The Rhetoric of Violence and the God of Peace in Paul’s Letter to the Romans,” 65.

²⁵⁰ “The Cosmic Power of Sin in Paul’s Letter to the Romans,” 237.

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*

²⁵² *When in Romans*, 40.

²⁵³ “Neither Height nor Depth: Discerning the Cosmology of Romans,” 274. In the same passage, Gaventa suggests Paul doesn’t address the ontological question “probably because he assumes the reality of these powers and is more interested in describing the captivity than he is in describing the captors.” In her most recent work, Gaventa recognises that her account will raise questions: “What can be said about their origin? Their ontological standing?” but finds it more helpful to develop analogies of the Pauline plight (alcoholism

In several other places Gaventa resists the suggestion that these are merely metaphors or literary personifications,²⁵⁴ and elsewhere develops the view that Paul is engaged in “ontological metaphor,” adapting a phrase of Jeffrey Burton Russell:

When Paul writes of Sin and Death entering and enslaving and so forth, he is engaged in ontological metaphor. Death and Sin and Rectification are more than illustrative figures of speech or vivid personifications; they are attempts to grasp in language a reality that is beyond language, attempts to convey what Paul sees as the deep captivity of human beings, their inability to free themselves. As Paul sees it, this captivity is not only that of the individual or even of the corporate human community, it is cosmic in its size and extent.²⁵⁵

Although we will have more say about personification in chapters 9 and 13, it is worth noting that Gaventa has given the question more thought than most, and makes two clear affirmations concerning their import.

First, the significance of the phrase “ontological metaphor” is not that death and sin and the rest are metaphors behind which lie real personal beings, but rather that they are metaphors expressing anthropological realities: they speak of an utter inability to free ourselves. Hence, while writers since at least the time of Ambrosiaster have identified

and, in particular, child soldiers) and commend its potency to address contemporary audiences, *When in Romans*, 44.

²⁵⁴ E.g. “The Cosmic Power of Sin in Paul’s Letter to the Romans,” 238.

²⁵⁵ “The Rhetoric of Violence and the God of Peace in Paul’s Letter to the Romans,” 73. As Gaventa notes, she has modified Russell’s language. He spoke of “metaphorical ontology” and the burden of his discussion is that metaphors can express the true nature of reality more powerfully than a literal statement of fact, *A History of Heaven* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 8.

personified sin in Paul with the devil,²⁵⁶ Gaventa moves in the other direction when discussing Rom 16:20: “Satan is more than adequate as a shorthand reference to the anti-God powers, prominent among whom is Sin itself,”²⁵⁷ and underscores the point concerning human agency on the basis of that verse: “any lingering notion that the anti-God powers, including Sin, are to be defeated by human strength fails on these words.”²⁵⁸

Second, Gaventa suggests the significance of Rom 8:31-39 lies not in the precise identity of those powers but in the way that it frames the plight and solution in apocalyptic *and not forensic* terms:

It is true that the first and second of these questions [sc. τίς ἐγκαλέσει... τίς ὁ κατακρινῶν; 8:33-34] may be taken as forensic. It must be acknowledged, however, that the passage drives as a unity towards the last question about separation. And the last question does not pertain to people being judged but to people being pursued by agents who wish them separated from their rightful Lord. In other words, it is about a conflict of powers.²⁵⁹

In summary, then, Gaventa follows Martyn’s emphasis on God as the divine agent who has mounted a successful campaign against the powers that held humanity in bondage. In cyclical fashion, Paul develops this theme in three phases through Rom 1-8 and thus, contrary to Schweitzer and de Boer, Gaventa insists that Rom 1-8 reflects this apocalyptic

²⁵⁶ See *Romans*, Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture Vol. 6, ed. Gerald Bray (Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP, 1998), 183.

²⁵⁷ “The Cosmic Power of Sin in Paul’s Letter to the Romans,” 237. The promise of Rom 16:27 becomes a restatement of Rom 8:38-39 therefore, and is somewhat demythologised in the process.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁹ “Neither Height nor Depth: Discerning the Cosmology of Romans,” 275.

perspective from beginning to end. The next chapter, however, demonstrates that the same basic convictions can produce a startlingly different reading of Romans.

CHAPTER 8: DOUGLAS A. CAMPBELL

In 2005 Douglas Campbell referred to his (then) forthcoming *The Deliverance of God*, provisionally subtitled *A Reappraisal of Justification in Paul*.²⁶⁰ When published in 2009 the subtitle became *An Apocalyptic Rereading of Justification in Paul*, signalling a desire to be identified with the movement we have been tracing,²⁶¹ even if it also overstates the extent to which the book offers a constructive proposal. In truth, most of its 1218 pages are devoted to the dethronement of ‘Justification Theory’ (hereafter JT) as the reigning soteriological paradigm in Pauline studies by means of ascribing its theology, as expressed in Rom 1-4, to Paul’s opponents, and so perhaps the original subtitle should have stood. Indeed, Gaventa laments that “Campbell’s version of Paul’s apocalyptic theology becomes just a little tepid. He insists on God’s unilateral rescue of humanity but from what? By obsessing over the bathwater, Campbell has forgotten the baby.”²⁶²

²⁶⁰ *The Quest for Paul’s Gospel*, 266.

²⁶¹ As noted in the introduction, Campbell embraces the term apocalyptic because it “usually denotes a strong link with either Käsemann or Martyn” *ibid.*, 57n3.

²⁶² Hence, perhaps, the ambiguous title of her review: “Rescue Mission: Review of *The Deliverance of God* by Douglas A. Campbell,” *ChrCent*, 2010. Is Campbell rescuing Paul? Is Gaventa rescuing Campbell? Is she rescuing the apocalyptic project from Campbell? Unsurprisingly, reviews of *The Deliverance of God* have also occupied themselves with summarizing and (by degrees) critiquing Campbell’s stance against JT rather than assessing his preferred model. Other responses (and counter-responses) to *The Deliverance of God* to date include Douglas J. Moo, “Review Article: *The Deliverance of God: An Apocalyptic Rereading of Justification in Paul* by Douglas A. Campbell,” *JETS* 53 (2010): 143–50; Francis Watson, “Review of ‘*The Deliverance of God: An Apocalyptic Rereading of Justification by Paul*’ by Douglas Campbell,” *EC* 1 (2010): 179–85; Gaventa, “Rescue Mission: Review of *The Deliverance of God* by Douglas A. Campbell”; Nijay K. Gupta, “Douglas Campbell’s Startling Alternative to Traditional Paradigms of Pauline Soteriology,” *RRT* 17 (2010): 248–55; Chris Tilling, “*The Deliverance of God, and of Paul?*,” *JSPL* 1 (2011): 83–98; Michael J. Gorman, “Douglas Campbell’s The

There are, however, sufficient clues across Campbell's works to set out his apocalyptic rereading of Paul.²⁶³ We will come to this in due course, but it will first be instructive to note his early work on Rom 3:21-26.

Deliverance of God: A Review by a Friendly Critic," *JSPL* 1 (2011): 99-108; Douglas A. Campbell, "What is at Stake in the Reading of Romans 1-3? An Elliptical Response to the Concerns of Gorman and Tilling," *JSPL* 1 (2011): 109-32; R. Barry Matlock, "Zeal for Paul but Not According to Knowledge: Douglas Campbell's War on 'Justification Theory,'" *JSNT* 34 (2011): 115-49; Grant Macaskill, "Review Article: The Deliverance of God," *JSNT* 34 (2011): 150-61; Douglas A. Campbell, "An Attempt to Be Understood: A Response to the Concerns of Matlock and Macaskill with the Deliverance of God," *JSNT* 34 (2011): 162-208; Douglas A. Campbell, "An Apocalyptic Rereading of 'Justification' in Paul: Or, an Overview of the Argument of Douglas Campbell's the Deliverance of God," *Expository Times* 123 (2012): 382-93; Douglas A. Campbell, "Beyond Justification in Paul: The Thesis of the Deliverance of God," *SJT* 65 (2012): 90-104; Bruce Clark, "Review Article: The Deliverance of God: An Apocalyptic Rereading of Justification in Paul by Douglas A. Campbell," *TynBul* 64 (2013): 55-88; Chris Tilling, ed., *Beyond Old and New Perspectives on Paul: Reflections on the Work of Douglas Campbell* (Eugene Oreg.: Cascade Books, 2014); Wright, *Paul and His Recent Interpreters*, 187-218.

²⁶³ Campbell's most relevant works are *The Rhetoric of Righteousness in Romans 3:21-26*; "The Atonement in Paul," *Anvil* 11 (1994): 237-50; "Determining the Gospel Through Rhetorical Analysis in Paul's Letter to the Roman Christians," in *The Gospel in Paul*, ed. Ann L. Jervis and Peter Richardson (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 315-36; "The Story of Jesus in Romans and Galatians," in *Narrative Dynamics in Paul: A Critical Assessment*, ed. Bruce W. Longenecker (Louisville: John Knox, 2002), 97-124; "Towards a New, Rhetorically Assisted Reading of Romans 3.27-4.25," in *Rhetorical Criticism and the Bible*, ed. Stanley E. Porter and D. L. Stamps (London: Sheffield Academic Pr, 2002), 355-402; *The Quest for Paul's Gospel; The Deliverance of God*; "Christ and the Church in Paul: A 'Post-New Perspective' Account," in *Four Views on the Apostle Paul*, ed. Michael F. Bird (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 113-43; "Is Tom Right?: An Extended Review of N. T. Wright's Justification: God's Plan and Paul's Vision," *SJT* 65.03 (2012): 323-45.

a. *Rom 3:21-26 and the Seeds of Campbell's Apocalyptic*

Supervised by Richard Longenecker and published in 1992,²⁶⁴ Campbell's doctoral dissertation focused on Rom 3.21-26. According to Campbell, this passage ought not to be ascribed to traditional sources but is "an authentic expression of Paul's theology," the central thrust of which concerns God's desire to save and the eschatological event in which God has worked to that end.²⁶⁵ Under Campbell's rhetorical and structural analysis, the passage highlights the revelation of δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ which comes

through the faithfulness of Christ

(for everyone who believes...)

through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus

whom God purposed, or, set forth, as a *hilasterion*

through the faithfulness in his blood.²⁶⁶

The phrase εἰς πάντας τοὺς πιστεύοντας... δικαιούμενοι δωρεὰν τῇ αὐτοῦ χάριτι (3:22-24), is thereby identified as a parenthesis and both justification and the human response of faith are found to be secondary themes.²⁶⁷ Instead, the emphasis falls on Jesus' faithfulness as the locus of the revelation of God's righteousness. Campbell approves what he takes to be a scholarly consensus on a liberative sense of δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ, and reads both of the terms ἀπολύτρωσις and πάρεσις in similarly liberative terms, such that the purpose statement in

²⁶⁴ That is, prior to Martyn's major works, making only a passing mention of Beker's *Paul the Apostle*, and scant reference to apocalyptic.

²⁶⁵ *The Rhetoric of Righteousness in Romans 3:21-26*, 201.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 95.

²⁶⁷ Regarding justification, Campbell also suggests that there may be a transformational sense in play here, for the justification of believers might be understood to restore the Adamic glory of which all fall short. *Ibid.*, 176, cf. 202.

3:26 describes a further expression of God's desire to save rather than the resolution to a point of theodicy. God has simply released and redeemed humanity from foregoing sins, in accordance with his righteousness, rather than in apparent tension with it.²⁶⁸ "Previously God was angry with sins (1.18-3.20), but now he releases us from them out of forbearance."²⁶⁹

That change is to be accounted for by the sacrificial death of Jesus. On the one hand the sacrificial element is another theme muted by Campbell's analysis. Structurally he sees ἰλαστήριον as subordinated to and explicatory of ἀπολυτρόσεως, and interprets αἷμα in the context of Christ's faithfulness unto death. Moreover, Campbell is at pains to emphasise that Paul's interest is in proclaiming that God has delivered his people, rather than offering an elaborate theory of the atonement. In addition, the sacrificial language is explained by Campbell's belief that Paul is presenting "a theology of the cross in essentially Jewish terms,"²⁷⁰ accommodating himself to his Jewish-Christian audience for whom the scandal of a crucified messiah was less palatable than one whose death serves as "a final consummation of God's saving purposes."²⁷¹

²⁶⁸ Ibid., 166–70. Campbell notes Kümmel's study of πάρεσις, which concludes that the forgiveness of sins is in view here, rather than their being formerly passed over, but Campbell states that "the meaning 'release' is even surer." Sins have simply been "neutralised because of the cross," *The Rhetoric of Righteousness in Romans 3:21-26*, 168. Earlier in the same work he also argues that ἄφεσις "can easily take the meaning 'release,'" *The Rhetoric of Righteousness in Romans 3:21-26*, 50n3.

²⁶⁹ Ibid., 168. Jewett's review of extra-biblical literature challenges this conclusion: "in the four instances where the verbal equivalent of πάρεσις is found in conjunction with sins, transgressions are left unpunished and passed over but not pardoned," *Romans*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), 290-91.

²⁷⁰ *The Rhetoric of Righteousness in Romans 3:21-26*, 203.

²⁷¹ *The Rhetoric of Righteousness in Romans 3:21-26*, 199.

On the other hand, however, the sacrificial element finds some prominence in Campbell's account.²⁷² He argues that ἱλαστήριον is best understood as "a metaphorical description of Christ's death as the supreme, divinely-ordained sacrifice for sins, in analogy to the great Jewish festival of atonement, Yom Kippur,"²⁷³ and agrees with Hengel that "a theme of Levitical and sacrificial imagery runs, partially submerged, throughout the text of Romans."²⁷⁴

In the case of 3:21-26, Campbell argues that the sacrifice is expiatory in nature, arguing that propitiation would only play a role if 3:21-26 "is precisely correlated to 1.18-3.20 (much as 'solution' to 'problem'). The majority of commentators have of course assumed as much, but this correlation is not at all a simple one, and a case can be made for a rather different relationship between 3.21-26 and Paul's preceding arguments, which would undermine this contention fundamentally."²⁷⁵

²⁷² Somewhat at odds with other summaries within the same work, Campbell's first summary of his exposition of 3:21-26 is that "Christ reveals God's final salvation in his life of faithful obedience and, above all, in his faithful endurance of death on the Cross. It is this event that constitutes the revelation of God's saving power, particularly in its sacrificial removal of sin." *The Rhetoric of Righteousness in Romans 3:21-26*, 21, emph. added.

²⁷³ *The Rhetoric of Righteousness in Romans 3:21-26*, 133.

²⁷⁴ *The Rhetoric of Righteousness in Romans 3:21-26*, 18. In particular, Campbell notes a cultic theme surfacing in 1:4, 5:2, 8:3, 8:34 and 15:8, defending the inclusion of 5:8 on the strength that 'blood' is "a word already sacrificially nuanced by ἱλαστήριον in 3.25" *The Rhetoric of Righteousness in Romans 3:21-26*, 17. When Campbell subsequently reviews Dunn's *Theology of Paul the Apostle*, he has changed his mind somewhat, believing that "the safest bets are Rom 3:25 and 8:3 where some sort of sacrificial allusion is clear," but warns against finding the theme elsewhere, even describing Rom 5:1-10 as "a standing retort to [the] assumption" that blood connotes sacrifice. "The ΔΙΑΘΗΚΗ From Durham: Professor Dunn's the Theology of Paul the Apostle," *JSNT* 21 (1999): 104n17. The evidence of Rom 5:9 is readmitted, however, in *The Deliverance of God*, 651.

²⁷⁵ *The Rhetoric of Righteousness in Romans 3:21-26*, 188. This statement anticipates his later work more than it summarizes the present one, given his argument that 3:21-26 describes an expiation which accounts for the

That case begins to be made in *The Quest for Paul's Gospel*, in which Campbell presents a “grand strategy” by which to advance the discussion of Pauline theology. His doctoral work prepared some of the ground for this and anticipates its conclusions in some respects,²⁷⁶ but with *Quest*, Campbell embarks on a far more ambitious project, wrestling with and attempting to co-ordinate exegetical, hermeneutical, theological, and philosophical questions.²⁷⁷ To that end he outlines three competing claimants to the title of ‘Paul’s gospel’ and proceeds, in this and subsequent works, to claim that his preferred model is the only one that can satisfactorily answer those questions.

The three models are “the traditional ‘Lutheran’ reading, which I call the ‘JF’ model (for justification by faith); the ‘PPME’ model (for ‘pneumatologically participatory martyrological eschatology’), which is often referred to as ‘apocalyptic’, ‘eschatological’, or ‘participatory’... and the SH model for salvation-historical.”²⁷⁸

fact that “previously God was angry with sins (1.18-3.20), but now he releases us,” *The Rhetoric of Righteousness in Romans 3:21-26*, 168.

²⁷⁶ The emphasis on divine benevolence, the use of Jewish motifs, the subjective reading of πίστις Χριστοῦ, and a secondary role for human faith will all remain, and can perhaps be traced to the influence of Campbell’s *Doktorvater*. The dissertation also observes tensions which his later work will seek both to heighten and resolve (e.g. the discussion of justification vis-à-vis participation and the contributions of Wrede, Schweitzer, Käsemann, and Sanders). See *The Rhetoric of Righteousness in Romans 3:21-26*, 142–47.

²⁷⁷ He also does so highlighting a new set of conversation partners, chief among them James B. Torrance and J. Louis Martyn—the “brilliantly lucid” “key harbinger” of a new paradigm, *The Quest for Paul’s Gospel*, 16.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 4. Campbell prefers to pin the blame to the door of Melancthon rather than Luther (despite Luther’s assessment of Melancthon’s *Loci* as “a book, in my judgment, worthy not only of being immortalized, but of being included in the ecclesiastical canon,” in the preface to *The Bondage of the Will*), hence the unwillingness to call the model ‘Lutheran.’ JF is used throughout *The Quest for Paul’s Gospel*, but since the proper translation of the terms ‘justification’ and ‘faith’ are at issue, he adopts JT (Justification Theory) in *The Deliverance of God*. More recently, however, Campbell has converted JT into FT (forward theory) for reasons that will become

Adopting Romans as a test-case (on the strength of its sustained argumentation, but without denying its own contingent qualities),²⁷⁹ Campbell finds that the three theological contenders for Paul's gospel (JT, PPME and SH) correspond largely to a "soteriological reading" of the "three rather abstract argumentative units, chapters 1-4, 5-8 and 9-11" respectively.²⁸⁰ Convinced that the "three models are not really ultimately compatible in rational terms as soteriologies" and that each has an exegetical base in those sections of Romans, Campbell is determined both to demonstrate their incompatibility and to see PPME's rivals either subordinated to it, or "exegetically eliminated."²⁸¹ It is SH's fortune merely to be subordinated, conceding hermeneutical priority to the Christology of PPME. By contrast, and more significant for our purposes, JT is sentenced to exegetical

apparent, "An Attempt to Be Understood," 180. For simplicity's sake, we will use JT to denote the model throughout. A fourth option, AT (anti-theological) is also discussed, in which the quest for coherence is abandoned in the face of Pauline self-contradiction. Although Campbell does appeal to Pauline incoherence in a few places (e.g. he will argue that Paul's argument in Rom 4 cannot really be supported by his proof-text and so he resorts to "a mixture of bombast, pathos and narrative suggestion," *The Deliverance of God*, 744), he warns that this approach is a card "that must not be played until the last round, on pain of interpretive self-destruction," *The Quest for Paul's Gospel*, 25.

²⁷⁹ See the discussion in *The Quest for Paul's Gospel*, 22-24.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 24. Regarding Rom 9-11, it has obviously had its champions as "the germ and centre of the whole" (F. C. Baur, *Paul, the Apostle of Jesus Christ: His Life and Work, His Epistles and Teachings* (trans. Eduard Zeller; 2 vols., 2nd ed.; London: Williams & Norgate, 1876), 1:315), or "a climactic point in the letter" (Beker, *Paul The Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought*, 87) but Campbell goes beyond this to imply that it stands in tension with the other sections (although like Schweitzer he only insists on an irreconcilable tension between 1-4 and 5-8; SH and its textual home can, he believes, be retained in a subordinate position to PPME). Regarding Rom 12-16, Campbell says it "should in no way be marginalised from the interpretation of Romans, but for our present didactic purposes it can be set to one side. (Really it represents that anti-theological analyst of Paul in its preoccupation with practical ecclesial matters)." *The Quest for Paul's Gospel*, 43.

²⁸¹ *The Quest for Paul's Gospel*, 4.

elimination by means of a Campbell's dramatic re-reading of Rom 1-4. We begin with that, before turning to PPME and its "heartland": Rom 5-8.

b. *JT's Plight and Solution in Rom 1-4*

Set out in detailed propositional form in *The Deliverance of God*, the heart of JT is "a transfer from one state to another, a transfer that we activate."²⁸² The whole structure is contractual, individualistic, prospective and therefore rationalistic, and yet also self-contradictory. Contractual, in the sense that it frames the human plight and solution in terms of a rigorous contract followed by a generous contract.²⁸³ The first places humanity in a preparatory phase in which God is known to all as a cosmic law-giver and judge who will punish wrongdoing and reward the doing of good (expressed well by Rom 2:6-10). The "rational self-interested individual" rightly discerns this and so sets about attempting to do good in this phase in prospect of an appearance in the eschatological courtroom. What separates this view from other accounts of a rational apprehension of moral order (secular or religious) in the cosmos is one of JT's unique qualities: the "introspective twist." As

²⁸² *Ibid.*, 34.

²⁸³ On the contractual nature of JT, see especially ch8 of *The Quest for Paul's Gospel*; cf. ch1 of *The Deliverance of God*, and note the influence of James B. Torrance, "Covenant or Contract: A Study of the Theological Background of Worship in Seventeenth-Century Scotland," *SJT* 23 (1970): 51-76. An early version of these arguments appears in "The Atonement in Paul," 237-50, in which Campbell approves Aulén's basic thought that the cross represents a victory but finds the model vague unless it adopts some notion of payment to the devil, which Campbell regards as "a variation of the propitiatory perspective," 238n2. A greater affinity between Aulén and Campbell lies in their characterisation of the view they oppose as rationalist and contractual. According to Aulén, in the Latin view of redemption "all the emphasis is on *man's movement to God*." *Christus Victor*, 171, *emph. orig.* While Anselm bears the lion's share of the blame, Aulén also anticipates Campbell in casting Melancthon as one who misunderstood Luther, becoming "the real father of the 'rational nomism' of Protestant orthodoxy." *Ibid.*, 144.

exemplified by Luther,²⁸⁴ there comes the realisation, through honest self-reflection, that one falls woefully short of the required standard and, in some versions, to the further realisation that the very attempt to do good is the height of impiety.²⁸⁵ The introspective twist may lead either into the ‘loop of foolishness’ (for those who resist the proper conclusion and engage in some form of boasting) or, more appropriately, to the ‘loop of despair’ which “disposes its occupants to make the further correct move, namely to appropriate the Christian gospel” on the terms of the second, generous contract, namely faith.²⁸⁶

Crucially this is “a much less arduous criterion than the demand under the law... *but a criterion nevertheless.*”²⁸⁷ When faith is exercised the benefits of the atonement (the satisfaction of God’s justice and the imputation of Christ’s righteousness) are appropriated by the believer who now stands in the famous formula, *simul iustus et peccator.*²⁸⁸ God’s relation to humanity, or rather to individual humans, remains contractual. The soteriology

²⁸⁴ In *The Deliverance of God* Campbell examines more closely the evidence for and against identifying Luther with JT, *The Deliverance of God*, 250–58 and 264–70 respectively.

²⁸⁵ Bultmann and Käsemann are in view here. Significantly, the latter is excluded from a survey of eschatological and participatory approaches (Schweitzer, Deissmann, Wrede, Martyn, Sanders) on the grounds that he “continued to endorse the JF model” and concluding that “he is best viewed as someone who attempted to modify the JF model in an apocalyptic direction, rather than as someone who shifted to an entirely new paradigm.” *The Quest for Paul’s Gospel*, 38n16. Elsewhere Sanders is said to offer a synergistic reading, having failed to “completely repudiate the Lutheran concerns that lie behind Bultmann’s enterprise,” *ibid.*, 15. Indeed, only Martyn escapes criticism of any form.

²⁸⁶ *The Quest for Paul’s Gospel*, 155.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 157.

²⁸⁸ That the model terminates here causes Campbell to echo Schweitzer’s complaint that a coherent ethic cannot be derived from the traditional doctrine of justification, *ibid.*, 46.

of JT is prospective because it argues from plight to solution,²⁸⁹ and because the first phase is merely preparatory, propelling one towards the second. It is also therefore rationalistic in that the individual (whether by means of special or general revelation) is capable of correctly perceiving his moral bankruptcy. And yet at the same time, because the first phase insists on universal sinfulness, there is “fundamental and simultaneous capacity and incapacity,” which is to say, a basic self-contradiction in JT at the anthropological and epistemological level.²⁹⁰

Responses to Campbell’s account of JT fill the reviews of *The Deliverance of God*, so we need not linger here. It will be of some help, however, to note how Campbell’s reading of Rom 1-4 relates to JT. Describing it as the ‘citadel’ of JT, Campbell views it as the “the only text in Paul where the apostle arguably sets out a theological program that is overtly prospective and foundationalist, and in a discussion that is extensive enough to launch Justification Theory.”²⁹¹ Unlike Gaventa, Campbell holds out no hope of redeeming Rom 1-4, but instead finds there a highly rhetorical rebuttal of a version of JT espoused by a figure Campbell calls the Teacher—a “fire and brimstone” counter-missionary who Paul fears is en route or

²⁸⁹ This is a fault shared by the SH model, although in a less sharply-defined sense, for it moves from promise to fulfilment, *ibid.*, 36–37. Cf. Gaventa’s critique of traditional readings of Romans, producing “a linear story of problem and solution” in which God offers a solution “that human beings may freely accept or decline,” *When in Romans*, 31.

²⁹⁰ *The Deliverance of God*, 44. A full catalogue of JT’s “intrinsic difficulties” can be found in *ibid.*, 36–61.

²⁹¹ *The Deliverance of God*, 528. In context, this quote addresses Rom 1-4, although it is 1:18-32 that represents that Teacher’s views verbatim, while 2:1-3:20 provides a complicated back-and-forth subversion of the Teacher’s presuppositions. Both Rom 3:21-26 and 3:27-4:25 represent delicate engagements with more traditional atonement theories or biblical narratives that “pave the way—if only subliminally—for Paul’s later argument,” *The Deliverance of God*, 710.

even already present in Rome.²⁹² Paul therefore quotes what the Roman church will recognise as the Teacher's opening salvo (1:18-32), before addressing the Teacher directly in 2:1. From there, Paul continues, by turns quoting and subverting his interlocutor's position.

In short, Rom 1:18-3:20 reveals four convictions held by the Teacher: first, a "meritocratic soteriology" (assumed in 1:18-32 and explicit in 2:6-10);²⁹³ second, a view of general revelation which offers all humanity "a relatively unobstructed perception of divinity" (1:19-21, 2:14-15); third, the need for Gentiles to embrace Torah in order to secure salvation; and fourth, the authority of Scripture, as exemplified by the catena that formed part of the Teacher's evangelistic appeal. In light of these, Paul's argumentative strategy is to exploit the contradictions between them. Thus, if the first and second are granted, then what need do Gentiles have of embracing Judaism? They must "already possess enough information to attempt salvation independently."²⁹⁴

Then again, the last conviction is hopelessly in contradiction with the first three. If 'no-one is righteous, not even one,' then no-one will be saved by a meritocratic soteriology, the knowledge of God from creation can have no saving power, and neither Jews by birth nor Gentiles by conversion can hope to gain any benefit by observing Torah. The result is that the Teacher's own proclamation collapses in self-contradiction and his charge that pagans are without excuse rebounds on him. Paul thereby delivers the Teacher into his own loop of despair and establishes the basic contours of his own message: given Scripture's

²⁹² The terminology is derived from Martyn, which Campbell nuances further "only in terms of singularity"—Paul addresses his rhetoric to the Jewish Christian leader of a group hostile to Paul, *ibid.*, 506.

²⁹³ *The Quest for Paul's Gospel*, 251.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 257.

judgment, a liberative action of God is required, of which there are hints in 2:29 (with the suggestion of pneumatological transformation) and 3:1-9 (where God’s fidelity somehow overcomes human infidelity).²⁹⁵

c. *The PPME Plight in Rom 5-8*

With those hints in place, Paul turns in Rom 5-8 to set out his own gospel, in which the plight is most commonly expressed as a share in “enslaved Adamic ontology.”²⁹⁶

According to Paul, humanity has been trapped within an enslaving ontology since the first transgression in the garden of Eden opened the door to the infiltration and oppression of human flesh by the powers of Sin and Death. The descendants of Adam sin repeatedly and horrifically, as 7:13-25 makes quite clear, but they also do so somewhat helplessly.

Consequently deliverance and not punishment is the obvious response—something Paul articulates immediately in the context of chapter 7: “who will rescue me from this body of death. Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord (7:24-25).”²⁹⁷

²⁹⁵ For these hints see *The Deliverance of God*, 569 and 577-78.

²⁹⁶ For this phrase, or variations of it, see *The Quest for Paul’s Gospel*, 47, 59, 63 (“The Adamic age”), 98 (“the Adamic aeon”), 201; *The Deliverance of God*, 63, 64, 65, 69, 70, 71, 73, 93, 422, 423, 617, 664, 669 (“ontological prison”), 672. For Campbell’s account of Rom 3:27-4:25, in which Paul does exegetical battle with the Teacher over Gen 15-17 see *ibid.*, ch18. In a sense there is an affinity with Wrede here, for they both identify the flesh/Adamic ontology as central to the plight, and yet, in some sense as neutral. However, for Campbell the flesh becomes problematic in Gen 3 and not before, and nor does salvation ultimately consist of leaving it behind in the future. Rather, one kind of flesh—Adamic ontology—is executed on the cross and exchanged for “a new ontology—a new flesh—free from the powers of Sin and Death,” *ibid.*, 73.

²⁹⁷ *The Deliverance of God*, 91.

Similarly, Campbell writes that Adam was “deceived by the evil intelligence of Sin itself” and “as a result of humanity’s first transgression, Sin enters creation permanently, taking up residence within the very constitution of humanity, that is, in the Flesh. And the entry of Sin facilitates the arrival of the still more powerful and oppressive Death, creating a fundamental human condition of slavery within a kingdom ruled by evil forces.”²⁹⁸

For Campbell, therefore, Paul not only includes elements of FJAE and CJAE but binds them together, and Adam’s transgression is important, not because of its forensic connotations, but because of its universal effects: humanity as a whole is imprisoned in the ontological state of Adam.²⁹⁹ Paul’s emphasis on that state of helplessness provides a point of contrast with JT. While both “accounts of Judaism conceive it [sic] as deeply sinful,”³⁰⁰ the perception of sinfulness in PPME is “more radical”:

²⁹⁸ *The Quest for Paul’s Gospel*, 57. Like the quotation above, this is a plight grounded in Rom 7-8, on the assumption of an “Adamic and ‘generic’” reading of Rom 7 and “an important connection between that text and Rom 5:12-21,” *ibid.*, 58n6.

²⁹⁹ “All those without the Spirit of Christ are mired in Adam’s narrative and being, where the forces of Sin and Death roam unchecked,” *The Deliverance of God*, 586. Comments such as these somewhat negate the criticism of Gaventa that, in *The Deliverance of God*, Campbell has obsessed about the bathwater of justification and neglected to develop the apocalyptic baby (where, she asks, “is the hideous power of sin and death?” “Rescue Mission: Review of *The Deliverance of God* by Douglas A. Campbell”). In essence, Campbell’s more frequent language of “Adamic ontology” is functionally equivalent to Gaventa’s references to the rule of Sin and Death. A related question is raised by Gorman: “In Campbell’s schema, we rightly hear that Paul’s soteriology is liberative, but we must ask, “liberation from what?” What does life in Adam (“Adamic slavery,” p.664) look like? What sins does Sin generate in the human community and what are the practical consequences of Sin? What is the concrete nature of the “ontological prison” (p. 669) from which we have been rescued?” In Gorman’s view “Rom 1:18-3:20 provides the Pauline answer to these kinds of questions.” Gorman, “Douglas Campbell’s *The Deliverance of God*: A Review by a Friendly Critic,” 106.

³⁰⁰ *The Deliverance of God*, 86.

Human beings are incapable of doing the good because they are oppressed by evil forces that are too strong for them to resist. Judaism is in Adam, so its ontological plight is very serious; it shares this plight with the rest of humanity. However, Judaism is not for this reason strongly culpable, or even especially self-conscious about its dire condition. Such a judgment is only reached retrospectively, ‘in Christ.’”³⁰¹

The plight is therefore “very serious”, but we are not “strongly culpable.” Or, as Campbell expresses it while commenting on Eph 2, humanity is “not held fully (i.e. ‘strongly’) accountable (although neither is humanity without accountability).”³⁰² The mind of the

³⁰¹ Ibid., 87. The fact that PPME apprehends Jewish sinfulness retrospectively, rather than suggesting it is empirically clear to rational beings, also commends PPME over JT in the post-Holocaust context to which Campbell frequently alludes. More widely, “a retrospective account will necessarily also possess a ‘softer’ position vis-a-vis the unsaved,” *The Quest for Paul’s Gospel*, 142–43. Softer, in part because they cannot be accused of knowingly rejecting God, and in part because their state is not objectively dark, but “dark primarily in relative terms. *Seen against the state now occupied by Christians*, the prior state looks awful,” *ibid.*, 216, *emph. orig.*

³⁰² *The Deliverance of God*, 930. The fact that this discussion comes at the very end of the book, in a section entitled “Loose Ends”, of which “God’s wrath” is the last (*ibid.*, 929–30), seems to imply a judgment, but it also includes a significant admission: Campbell grants a secondary place for God’s wrath, “directed against any situation that is evil” and “comprehensible as God’s reaction against a sinful situation.” Crucially though, God is not wrathful in some fundamental fashion and, in the final endnote of the work, Campbell also holds out the possibility that Paul’s “thinking may not be entirely consistent,” *ibid.*, 1177n72. It is also noteworthy that, in the discussion of God’s wrath, he addresses 1 Thess 1:10, 2:16, 5:3, 9; Eph 2:1–3; Col 3:6 (but not the parallel text in Eph 5:6); and 2 Thess 1:6–10, 2:2–12, but not Rom 5:9, 9:22, 12:19, or 13:5. They are briefly mentioned at an earlier point, but again the possibility of inconsistency on Paul’s part is raised and the focus of God’s wrath is said to be the impurity of ‘evil’ rather than an accountable humanity. *Ibid.*, 92–93.

flesh is hostile to God (Rom 8:7), but that is to say humanity “is profoundly mistaken and disoriented.”³⁰³

d. *The PPME Solution in Rom 5-8*

We will briefly note two main emphases, three narratives, and then come to the fourfold acronym. The two emphases, as we might expect, are a retrospective epistemology—rationality is a gift parcelled with salvation and not a given before it³⁰⁴—and a monergistic soteriology: “the model is utterly unconditional: no human act can initiate or effect the eschatological irruption of God.”³⁰⁵ Put another way: “the term ‘apocalyptic’ emphasizes the dramatic, reconstitutive and fundamentally unconditional nature of the acts of which these narratives speak—and in a permanent protest against their reduction to a merely human level.”³⁰⁶

As to the three narratives, that of Adam acts as a typological foil to the gospel. “Paul’s distinctive perspective tends to be stated in contrast to Adam, suggesting immediately its

³⁰³ *The Deliverance of God*, 65. As he notes in an earlier passage, those ‘in the flesh’ “are, somewhat incredibly, fundamentally God’s enemies (5:10; 8:5-8),” *ibid.*, 63. This is really a condition which calls for deliverance, however, and not forgiveness, given the epistemological and ethical incapacity that results from being in the flesh.

³⁰⁴ *The Deliverance of God*, 74.

³⁰⁵ “The Atonement in Paul,” 248. For Campbell the unconditionality also extends to any kind of human response to salvation; it is given “with no strings attached, as pure gift,” *The Deliverance of God*, 100. In Barclay’s helpful typology, Campbell thereby accents the *non-circularity* of grace, *Paul and the Gift* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), 171.

³⁰⁶ *The Deliverance of God*, 756.

radical, creative, and universal tenor.”³⁰⁷ Against this Adamic background, the other two narratives are fused by Paul to fill in some of the Christological detail.³⁰⁸

A narrative of debasement and execution drawing on martyrological notions—the story of Easter Friday—has been married to a narrative of royal enthronement and glorification that is also messianic and eschatological—the story of Easter Sunday. The resulting narrative synthesis recounts how Jesus enters a state characterized by the story of Adam, dies obediently within it as a martyr to God’s will, and is raised to new life and enthroned on high in glory as Israel’s king.³⁰⁹

Strains of the martyrological narrative can be detected in Rom 3:21-26 where the concept of an ἱλαστήριον offered διὰ [τῆς] πίστεως (i.e. through the faithful obedience of a willing martyr) finds echoes in 4 Macc 17:20-22, and owes its origin, via Lev 16-17, to Gen 22.³¹⁰ This allusion is significant because of its Trinitarian import. If Father and Son are united in

³⁰⁷ Ibid., 249. As noted above, Campbell argues the connection most often on the basis of Rom 7, rather than Rom 5 (and not at all, as others might, from Rom 1:18-32). An Adamic reading of 1:18-32 is questioned in *ibid.*, 1082n63. Thus, contra de Boer, Paul is not taking a motif from his forensic opponents and relocating it within a cosmological framework, but rather he is introducing Adam as a key component of his gospel—a component which is absent from that of the Teacher.

³⁰⁸ A striking aspect of Campbell’s account compared to his apocalyptic forebears is the extent of his use of OT narrative and his relative disinterest in Jewish apocalyptic. On these narratives see “The Story of Jesus in Romans and Galatians”; *The Quest for Paul’s Gospel*, chap. 4; *The Deliverance of God*, 647–56. It should be noted, however, that although these are clearly Jewish narratives, they have been “retrospectively constructed in order to give an account of the Christ event” and “radically reformulated,” *The Quest for Paul’s Gospel*, 78n14, *emph. orig.* Campbell thereby affirms some concerns of the SH model of interpretation, without jeopardising the *a posteriori* logic of Paul’s gospel. Cf. his comments in *The Quest for Paul’s Gospel*, 67.

³⁰⁹ *The Quest for Paul’s Gospel*, 38.

³¹⁰ Cultic themes are detected in Gen 22 due to the identification of Mount Moriah with the Temple Mount.

providing redemption for humanity, then God’s benevolent, rather than retributive, disposition towards humanity is clear, “as the beloved son is offered up to save a hostile humanity.”³¹¹ Traditional debates over ἱλαστήριον are therefore relativised: “Whatever more particular meaning we then supply to the signifier ἱλαστήριον—whether a generalised act of atonement, an object, or the mercy seat itself... and whether functioning in an exemplary, expiatory, propitiatory, and/or participatory fashion—it must be held to denote some sort of atonement.”³¹²

In contrast to his earlier work, the martyrological motif is much more prominent here. One does not need to specify the mechanics of the atonement because the evidence of 4 Maccabees indicates that ἱλαστήριον indicates “a broader process of atonement and reconciliation,” or even “a story of faithfulness, obedience, death and resurrection.”³¹³

The martyrological narrative is not left behind in Rom 1-4, however, for the Son enters the enslaved Adamic condition “and assumes it—a ‘martyrological’ narrative and journey of descent; he comes ‘in the precise likeness of sinful flesh’” and dies a death which has “a precise rationale. The old enslaved Adamic being is terminated by this death.”³¹⁴ The

³¹¹ The reference to humanity’s hostility is unusual here, and runs counter to Campbell’s argument (first developed in his doctoral work as we noted above) that the key terms δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ, ἀπολύτρωσις and πάρεσις all point to a plight defined by bondage.

³¹² *The Deliverance of God*, 604.

³¹³ *Ibid.*, 654, 655. We should note that Campbell not only recontextualises the ἱλαστήριον debate, but (in continuity with his earlier work) he also identifies a rhetorical strategy in Rom 3:21-26 by which Paul is seeking to transition from “an essentially expiatory and liberative view of the atonement shared with the early church to a more radically liberative conception that he will explicate in more detail in Romans 5-8,” *ibid.*, 713.

³¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 64.

references to a father not sparing his son and Jesus' death *περὶ ἁμαρτίας* (8:3) continue to evoke the Gen 22 narrative, while mention of Jesus' resurrection, enthronement and intercession alludes to the third narrative Campbell identifies—a narrative of ascent and enthronement exemplified by Pss 2, 110 and especially 98, which is alluded to in Rom 1:2-4, 1:17 and 8:34. This narrative has soteriological implications to which we shall come, but first it has theological significance. The resurrection of Jesus comes in response (somewhat contractually?) to his obedience (he lives on account of his faithfulness in Campbell's Christological reading of Hab 2:4) and it constitutes an exercise of the *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ*: “the act of resurrection, empowerment, and heavenly enthronement after his oppression and execution by evil opposing powers.”³¹⁵ Thus, when understood within this royal discourse, God's justification of his Son represents a forensic-nonretributive act (in the way a king liberates the oppressed—hence *The Deliverance of God*), rather than a forensic-retributive act (in which a judge acquits or compensates those threatened with judgment).³¹⁶

Coming finally to the fourfold acronym PPME (pneumatologically participatory martyrological eschatology), we discover the way in which God's deliverance of his Son moves from Christology to soteriology. Campbell sets it out in a convenient and propositional form:

³¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 699.

³¹⁶ Of course, this use of forensic terminology, notwithstanding its idiosyncrasy, differs from de Boer's polarisation of forensic and cosmological terms. For a fuller account of the distinction, see *ibid.*, 662. For a similar and earlier argument that justification involves “a regal rather than a judicial act” see T. W. Manson, *On Paul and John*, SBT 38 (London: SCM, 1963), 56.

- The Spirit now “maps” humanity onto Christ’s trajectory.³¹⁷
- Humans participate first in his martyrological journey, thereby dying; in so doing, their Adamic ontology is executed.
- Humans participate also in his messianic and eschatological journey, thereby living; in so doing they receive a new ontology—a new flesh—free from the powers of Sin and Death, and a new inheritance.³¹⁸

Pneumatology is therefore vital because the Spirit is the means of the Christian’s participation in the death and resurrection of Christ. The Spirit resurrects and engrafts a believer into Christ.³¹⁹ The resulting Trinitarian character of salvation is regularly emphasized by Campbell as a point of contrast with JT which “has no role for the Spirit, and so is not recognizably Trinitarian.”³²⁰

It follows that participation is the key soteriological image (Schweitzer and Deissmann are credited, as is Morna Hooker’s language of ‘interchange’),³²¹ and speaks not just of “an idea, or a mental identification. Paul clearly believes that something quite real has happened; it is irreducibly concrete.”³²² In dying with Christ, the Adamic ontology is “executed”—a very

³¹⁷ Although Campbell can say that ‘humanity’ has been mapped onto Christ, he can also predicate that of Christians exclusively: “Outside of him [sc. Christ], humanity is enslaved to hostile and evil forces that curve people in on themselves,” *The Quest for Paul’s Gospel*, 41. For Campbell’s position vis-à-vis universalism see Part 2 below.

³¹⁸ *The Deliverance of God*, 73.

³¹⁹ For this language see *ibid.*, 76.

³²⁰ *Ibid.*, 184.

³²¹ Schweitzer’s mysticism and “rather crude magical terms” are criticised, however; Deissmann is “a clearer exponent of participation.” *The Quest for Paul’s Gospel*, 39.

³²² *Ibid.*, 40.

precise term given Campbell's distinction between retributive and nonretributive forensic actions where the former result in acquittal or condemnation, the latter in liberation or execution. Thus once again God is to be seen as exercising regal power rather than pronouncing legal judgments. This process is "also eschatological, that is, denoting entry into the second age or 'the age to come.'"³²³ Hence Sanders' expression 'participatory eschatology' both helpfully reintroduces Schweitzer to the debate and accurately captures Paul's meaning.³²⁴ The last qualifier, martyrological, expresses the narrational connections and, doubtless with Käsemann's approval, adds "a little more balance to the Christology so that it is not too triumphalist."³²⁵

In conclusion, Campbell locates himself most clearly with Wrede, Schweitzer, and Sanders in his emphasis on participatory eschatology,³²⁶ and with Martyn most notably in the emphasis on epistemology and divine initiative, while also presenting a significantly different attempt to take up the mantle of Martyn, compared to de Boer and Gaventa. His work is much more concerned with theology proper, hermeneutics, and intertextuality

³²³ *The Quest for Paul's Gospel*, 41.

³²⁴ *Ibid.*, 42.

³²⁵ *Ibid.*, 24. Although it is primarily offered to dispel the impression that apocalyptic soteriology implies too radical a break either at the salvation-historical or individual level, Campbell's view that the mapping of humanity onto Christ "seems to be a subtle process at work within creation, constantly terminating and reconstituting" also presumably resists triumphalism. *Ibid.*, 64. There is also the dialectical experience both of Christ's resurrection and an ongoing sharing in his martyrological sufferings with eschatological glorification still in view. A *theologia crucis* ought therefore to have a role to play. *Ibid.*, 60; cf. Campbell, *The Deliverance of God*, 64–67.

³²⁶ On the other hand he neglects the future eschatology of Wrede and Schweitzer—something Campbell notes that Schweitzer emphasises "very strongly" but shows no interest in following, *The Quest for Paul's Gospel*, 39.

within the biblical corpus than with Jewish apocalyptic literature on the one hand,³²⁷ and ecclesiology—a theme more prominent in Käsemann and Martyn—on the other.³²⁸ Finally, like a modern-day Schweitzer (and unlike Gaventa), he believes it is impossible to insist on both the theological consistency of Paul and the integrity (traditionally understood) of his most famous letter. It is fitting, then, that we finish with one who self-consciously stands on the shoulders of those with whom we began, even as he champions most vocally many of the most recent accretions to the portrait of the apocalyptic Paul.

³²⁷ The indexes of *The Deliverance of God* bear this out. Psalms and Isaiah are frequently referenced, whereas 4 *Ezra* is referred to in the main text only once and in the endnotes only a handful of times; likewise 1 *Enoch*. 2 *Baruch* is confined entirely to six endnotes.

³²⁸ That is not to say that ecclesiology is absent, however. The social and ethical implications of PPME are explored in ch's 5 and 6 of *The Quest for Paul's Gospel*.

SUMMARY OF PART 1

Part 1 has surveyed eight major figures who associate themselves or have been associated with the apocalyptic reading of Paul. In each case their distinctive account of Pauline theology was analysed under the rubric of plight and solution. In places it was possible to note where lives or thought intersected, and careful attention was paid to the ways in which later generations position themselves in relation to their forebears.

This survey was necessarily an exercise in restraint. Description will soon give way to critique, but it was vital to hear each of these scholars on their own terms, given the way in which common terminology implies that there is a reasonably uniform apocalyptic interpretation running from Wrede and Schweitzer to Campbell, and given the way in which the history of interpretation is narrated by contemporary advocates of the apocalyptic Paul.

By now it ought already to be clear that greater diversity exists than is often assumed, and that Martyn and Campbell are more careful in their reading of Käsemann than de Boer, who polarises the positions of Bultmann and Käsemann in the same exaggerated fashion that he polarises Jewish apocalyptic literature. On the other hand, Campbell's appropriation of Wrede and Schweitzer is selective at best, while some of their idiosyncratic views are overlooked, despite being integral to their wider understanding of Paul. The result is that casual appeals to Käsemann, Beker, and Martyn to explain or defend contemporary apocalyptic readings communicate all too little. To develop this insight and to prepare to engage the apocalyptic Paul, Part 2 will analyse the findings of Part 1.

PART 2: ANALYSIS OF THE APOCALYPTIC PAUL

INTRODUCTION TO PART 2

One of the burdens of this thesis is to demonstrate that contemporary apocalyptic readings of Paul do not map as easily onto those of the past as is often supposed; another is to demonstrate that contemporary readings of Paul are themselves various and exist in degrees of tension. The survey in Part 1 has already begun to chart this territory but its significance is worth developing before we engage contemporary apocalyptic readings in Part 3. Areas of current consensus will offer an insight into what the contemporary apocalyptic reading of Paul stands for, in distinction from its prior iterations, while the areas of diversity will further substantiate the claim that the apocalyptic reading is not as homogeneous as is often supposed. This analysis makes its own contribution to a debate too easily distracted by the use of the term *apocalyptic* and too easily persuaded that the nomenclature guarantees uniformity and continuity with past interpretations. Notwithstanding that contribution, the analysis of Part 2 is also crucial to Part 3: only once these points of consensus and diversity have been brought into view can we begin a focussed and calibrated critical engagement.

To paint in the broadest of brushstrokes for a moment, Part 1 described a shifting account of Pauline theology along several axes. For Wrede and Schweitzer, Paul's distinctively apocalyptic perspective was characterised by two emphases: future eschatology and widespread demonology. Essentially these have been replaced by (and apocalyptic has been redefined more in terms of) two new emphases. First, there has been a shift from a theocentric and future eschatology to an inaugurated eschatology with a particular interest in Christology. Second, there has been a shift from demonology to the language of

cosmology and anthropology, although we will need to define those terms more carefully to discern the nature and significance of that shift. The latter of these shifts in particular also reflects a developing sense that one speaks of Paul as an apocalyptic theologian not to make him historically distant (as Schweitzer so relished doing) but rather to find him culturally relevant, in the sense that Paul's apocalyptic gospel communicates something significant about the questions of human agency, moral capacity, and the nature of evil.

In order to organise these insights into an analysis of the apocalyptic Paul, we will retain the plight/solution distinction. Chapter 9 will outline a relatively clear and ubiquitous development of the plight from an emphasis on demonology to anthropology and reflect upon its significance.

In chapter 10 we turn to the apocalyptic solution. On the matter of *timing*, we can trace a general transition from future to inaugurated eschatology. As to the *character* of salvation, there is a polarisation of liberative and forensic categories, and a clear embrace of the former. When one probes exactly how that liberation is effected, differences emerge and will be explored here. Lastly, the *scope* of salvation requires attention, highlighting increasingly confident assertions of Pauline universalism.

CHAPTER 9: THE APOCALYPTIC PLIGHT

In this chapter we focus on the apocalyptic plight and the ways in which its focus has shifted from demonology to anthropology. There are several stages to the argument here. The scarcity of references to angels and demons beyond Wrede and Schweitzer deserves comment. Then we will consider the significance for this development of the language of cosmology and the identification of sin, death, the flesh, etc., as powers, since they might be thought to reintroduce a demonological aspect under a different rubric. Once we have argued that that is generally not the case, we will determine what function the powers actually serve in the apocalyptic reading.

Interest in Paul's demonology predates Wrede and Schweitzer, although they were among the first in modern scholarship to argue for its theological significance for Paul.¹ On the other hand, for all that Schweitzer delights in redressing Baur's failure to make Paul's demonology "disturbingly prominent,"² (thereby making it significantly harder for Paul to be appropriated in pietistic ways) it might also be argued that he instigated its decline

¹ Baur's dismissal of angels and demons as vague points of minor doctrine (*Paul, the Apostle of Jesus Christ*, 2:253–58) is rejected by Everling as historically unsound, although Everling emphasises them more as a significant aspect of Paul's background (adducing parallels in Jewish apocalyptic literature) than as dominant themes in his theology. See *Die paulinische Angelologie und Dämonologie, ein biblisch-theologischer Versuch* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1888); for the criticism of Baur, see 15. A more positive case for their relevance to soteriology, especially Paul's language of the rulers of this age, is made by Martin Dibelius in *Die Geisterwelt im Glauben des Paulus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1909), who also expands his survey into Rabbinic literature. As Guy Williams highlights, this emphasis on the 'rulers' lent itself to political readings and to this mill the twentieth century would provide ample grist, *The Spirit World in the Letters of Paul the Apostle*, 39–42.

² *Paul and His Interpreters: A Critical History*, 15.

given his view that Paul finds mysticism to be a more amenable solution than that which was native to the eschatological doctrine of redemption, namely, the defeat of evil angels. At the very least, when Schweitzer is revived by Sanders and Campbell, it is not for his demonology, but rather for his emphasis on Jewish eschatology in the case of Sanders, and, for both of them, the participatory model of salvation he developed under the rubric of mysticism.³

For Käsemann, the demonic serves to express the reality of evil in the world, not least the evil that resides in the human heart: the “power of demonic forces” hold sway over “man’s heart and will and thinking” since the fall of Adam, producing humanity’s entanglement in “self-conflict” and the “chaos of rebellion” (chiefly against the Creator) such that the earth “as Rom 1:18-3:30 brings out... is subject to the divine judgment.”⁴ For Beker, Paul’s disinterest in the powers outside of 1 Cor 15 and Rom 8, and in angels and demons more generally, marks a point of contrast rather than contact between the apostle and Jewish apocalyptic literature, a point also conceded by de Boer.⁵ By way of confirmation, and in summary, it is noteworthy that when apocalyptic interpreters summarise the Pauline

³ Likewise, when Wrede’s significance is summarised by Campbell, Wrede emerges as a forerunner to Campbell’s pneumatological, participatory and transformational soteriology, while Wrede’s distinction between sin, death, flesh and the law on the one hand, and demons on the other as a distinct and second tier in the plight is overlooked, *The Deliverance of God*, 178–79.

⁴ *Perspectives on Paul*, 24. It bears repeating that, for Käsemann, the demonic aspect of humanity’s plight is precisely its rejection of God: “Since confrontation with the Creator is characteristic of this world, and since this confrontation has in fact always meant the isolation and rebellion of the creature, ‘flesh’ is also the sphere of the demonic. But this situation is ambivalent: the fall of man allowed the demonic cosmic scope. Conversely, the demonic reaches out for man objectively from cosmic breadths and depths.” *Ibid.*, 26.

⁵ “Paul is certainly not interested in pursuing the type of angelological speculation” found in CJAE, *The Defeat of Death*, 179.

plight and solution or define apocalyptic, it is hardly ever with reference to demons or angels.

As we noted a moment ago, however, it might be objected that the language of cosmology and apocalyptic accounts of the powers reverse or at least retard the development proposed here. In response, the significance of the language of cosmology is not immediately obvious for the term proves no less slippery than ‘apocalyptic.’⁶ For Käsemann, it is the term by which Bultmann’s individualistic and existential anthropology is to be opposed, speaking of larger forces at work in the world from which the individual cannot extricate himself. As the account of Käsemann demonstrated, however, that is not to say the demons *per se* are being invoked. A snapshot of the distinction between them can be found in their comments on Rom 5:12-21. For Bultmann, Adam brings about “the possibility of sin and death—a possibility that does not become a reality until individuals become guilty by their own responsible action.”⁷ For Käsemann, however, that is only half of the story, since Paul “unites what seems to us to be a logical contradiction... No one commences his own history and no one can be exonerated. Each in his own conduct

⁶ References to the ‘cosmic’ or ‘cosmological’ quality of Paul’s thought are ubiquitous, such that Graham Stanton’s protest that the word ‘apocalyptic’ is “sprinkled like confetti over nearly every page” of Martyn’s commentary on Galatians (“Review of Galatians by J. Louis Martyn,” *JTS* 51 (2000): 268) might also be registered in this case across the apocalyptic board. For example, quoting D. S. Russell, de Boer speaks of “a cosmic drama in which divine and cosmic forces are at work,” “Paul and Apocalyptic Eschatology,” 359, although here de Boer is the confetti-thrower, adding a second ‘cosmic,’ where the original reads “demonic forces,” *The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic: 200 BC-AD 100* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1964), 269. Although the terms of the Bultmann-Käsemann debate are clearly influential, the ‘cosmic’ language goes back at least as far as Carré, *Paul’s Doctrine of Redemption* (1914), in which three out of five chapter titles include the term.

⁷ Rudolf Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, 252.

confirms the fact that he finds himself in a world marked by sin and death and that he is subject to the burdening curse.”⁸ In this sense, anthropology cannot be understood in isolation from cosmology, but, as we have seen, Käsemann principally has creaturely delusions rather than crafty demons in view.

When we turn to de Boer, however, we find a more idiosyncratic use of the term. For him cosmological eschatology opposes forensic eschatology, a usage which defines the adjective ‘cosmological’ as relating not to a doctrine of the cosmos in general (in more common usage, we would have to say that both FJAE and CJAE have a cosmological outlook),⁹ but to one specific outlook (CJAE is cosmological and FJAE is not). To this extent, when de Boer speaks of cosmological eschatology he means a strain of eschatology in which demonic beings are prominent. At this point, however, it must be borne in mind that while CJAE is explicit in its demonological account of the human plight, de Boer does not believe that Paul follows suit. Rather, Paul is said to be speaking of sin and death in mythological terms analogous to CJAE in order to subvert the forensic categories and the overly optimistic views of human moral agency that de Boer and Martyn believe are inextricably bound up with FJAE. De Boer does not think sin and death are demons. Rather he believes that Paul speaks of them *as if they were* in order to make an anthropological point. It is for this reason,

⁸ *Romans*, 149. Once more we note evidence that the Bultmann/Käsemann debate cannot be mapped onto de Boer’s account of FJAE and CJAE without violence. On the other hand, Baird (quoting Käsemann) goes too far the other way, suggesting that he believes that Rom 5:12 “emphasises ‘responsible decision.’” In context, Käsemann is denying that the final phrase of 5:12 marks a shift from “the sphere of mythical curse to that of responsible decision,” insisting instead, as per the quotation above, that Paul holds them together. See Baird, *History of New Testament Research Vol. 3: From C. H. Dodd to Hans Dieter Betz*, 143.

⁹ In Eddie Adams’ definition: “Cosmology seeks to explain the origin, structure and destiny of the physical universe,” “Graeco-Roman and Ancient Jewish Cosmology,” in *Cosmology and New Testament Theology*, ed. Jonathan T. Pennington and Sean M. McDonough, LNTS 355 (London: T&T Clark, 2008), 5.

and in light of the multivalent uses of ‘cosmology,’ that I have described this development as a shift from demonology to anthropology.

There remains, however, the question of the prominence of the powers of sin, death, the flesh and so on, which apocalyptic interpreters speak of as malevolent beings in some sense. They have been variously described as “effective powers,”¹⁰ “ontological powers,”¹¹ “quasi-angelic,”¹² “real enemies,”¹³ “larger-than-human beings,”¹⁴ but do these statements mean that Paul has demonic beings in mind, or are they merely universal realities whose pervasiveness and power are expressed by personification?

To begin answering that question we should note several difficulties. The first is establishing whether an author really thinks that a real, personal demonic being lies behind Paul’s language of sin or death or some other power. There are numerous examples of scholars cited to that effect whose actual work is more ambiguous.¹⁵ There are also ways

¹⁰ Wrede, *Paul*, 92.

¹¹ Beker, *Paul the Apostle*, 145.

¹² De Boer, *The Defeat of Death*, 183.

¹³ Martyn, *Galatians*, 371.

¹⁴ Gaventa, *When in Romans*, 27n7.

¹⁵ For example, I. Howard Marshall’s view that “sin is a hostile power or a malignant disease” is quoted in support of Morlan’s view that “sin for Paul was not just the act of sinning but was itself a living entity,” David S. Morlan, *Conversion in Luke and Paul: An Exegetical and Theological Exploration* (London: Bloomsbury, 2012), 157. In the original passage, Marshall argues that sin “resembles a hostile power or malignant disease” and, in any event, his characterisation of sin stops short of saying it is a “living entity,” I. Howard Marshall, “Sins’ and ‘Sin,’” *BSac* 159 (2002): 14 *emph. added*. Morlan also too casually assumes that Käsemann’s language of powers has similar import. In Southall’s survey, Laato and Grundmann are said to be advocates of the view that, in Paul, sin is “a personal, demonic, entity,” when in truth the former says that sin “primarily refers to a wretched state of calamity” and “appears more like a demonic power,” while the latter argues that sin is

of describing the referents of Paul's language that seem to be intentionally ambiguous: for example, what is the function of *quasi* in the compound adjective 'quasi-angelic'?¹⁶

The second difficulty is a lack of clarity in the use of the term personification and the absence of explicit theoretical frameworks. As it stands, the debate frequently assumes that personification either denies existence to the object of the personification,¹⁷ or is too easily dismissed as a mere artistic flourish to capture the significance of Paul's discourse. The latter objection is raised by Beker who resists what he perceives to be a Bultmannian polarity: Paul's use of apocalyptic language is neither to be taken literally, nor to be demythologised and reduced to literal propositions. Rather "the historic-cosmic intent of the apocalyptic worldview and its imagery must not be overlooked" insofar as it expresses the human situation in the context of God's triumphal victory over the world.¹⁸ The same point is made by Gaventa: Paul's meaning is found *in* the 'ontological metaphors' not

personified as a demon (concurring with Stählin's uncertainty about whether this involves the "concrete notion of a demon... and how far it is simply poetic imagery") and argues that "the state of the world and each individual since Adam has a demonic character," but does not speak of sin as a "demonic entity." See Southall, *Rediscovering Righteousness in Romans*, 101; Timo Laato, *Paul and Judaism: An Anthropological Approach* (Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1995), 75; W. Grundmann, G. Stählin et al., "Ἀμαρτάνω," *TDNT* 1:296, 311.

¹⁶ Cf. Hurtado's question with reference to the discussion of personified Wisdom: "Just what are we to make of something defined as a 'quasi-personification of certain attributes proper to God, occupying an intermediate position between personalities and abstract beings?" Larry W. Hurtado, *One God, One Lord* (London: T & T Clark, 2015), 38.

¹⁷ E.g. Gaventa, *Our Mother Saint Paul*, 134; Jewett, *Romans*, 374, taking issue with C. E. B. Cranfield, *Romans: Chapters 1-8*, vol. 1 of *International Critical Commentary* (London: T&T Clark, 1975), 274.

¹⁸ *Paul the Apostle*, 141. In that passage Beker refers to "the cosmic victory of the Creator over his created world," expressing himself in remarkably Käsemannian terms. This is among the last references to God in contention with his world. After Beker, the world or humanity is much more frequently described as the captive which God acts to liberate, rather than the entity over which God triumphs.

sought behind them, and Paul's contemporary relevance lies precisely in the mythical account of evil he offers.¹⁹

This insistence notwithstanding, we ought to note that something less than a demonological account of the human plight is being offered. For Beker the triumphal victory, expressed in Käsemannian terms, is victory *over the world*. For Gaventa, Paul's personifications are "attempts to convey what Paul sees as the deep captivity of human beings, their inability to free themselves,"²⁰ just as for de Boer, Paul's mythologizing account of sin expresses the depths of human moral incapacity. These personifications are deeply theological rather than merely artistic metaphors, but they fall short of clearly ascribing ontological existence to their subjects.

The final difficulty is that we sometimes meet conflicting accounts of the powers within an individual's work. In the case of Beker for example, sin, death, the law and the flesh are described as "ontological powers," but on the other hand (and within the space of a few pages) Beker can also argue that Paul's view of death is ultimately incoherent,²¹ while sin is

¹⁹ *Our Mother Saint Paul*, 134. This is in explicit rejection of Engberg-Pedersen for whom the mythological element in Paul "does not constitute a real option for us," quoted in *ibid.* This is also Southall's complaint against interpreters who describe Paul's account of sin as personification. Although he agrees with them (against those who find a reference to concrete sinful actions on the one hand, or a demonic entity on the other), he follows Gunton in emphasising the power of metaphor to express truth, in contrast to a tendency to describe instances of personification as mere artistic adornment, *Rediscovering Righteousness in Romans*, 107–11.

²⁰ Gaventa, "The Rhetoric of Violence and the God of Peace in Paul's Letter to the Romans," 73.

²¹ *Paul the Apostle*, 229. In Paul's estimation, as noted above, death is both natural process and a "physico-spiritual power," *ibid.*, 223. At least in this instance, Beker believes the contingency of Paul's arguments cannot be brought to coherence.

“an anthropological reality”²² that grows up from an act of disobedience.²³ Likewise Martyn speaks of “real enemies” and “genuine powers” but those phrases in themselves are ambiguous, and he identifies the curse of the law as chief among them, which, given his account of the law, can hardly be a demon by another name.²⁴ The strongest candidate would be the flesh, for Martyn argues that Paul speaks of its existence in the same sense that the Spirit exists, and describes it, with an abundance of adjectives, as “an apocalyptic, cosmic, supra-human power.”²⁵ On the other hand, he ascribes the view that the flesh is “an entity that has, to an important extent, a life of its own” to the Teachers as well as to Paul, their disagreement lying in the sphere of the flesh’s operation, its genesis, and the means by which to resist it.²⁶ It is hard to know what to make of this but presumably, if this understanding of the flesh is common to Paul *and* his opponents (i.e., to CJAE and FJAE), then it is unlikely that flesh is to be viewed as an evil power, given that they only feature in his account of CJAE. Elsewhere, Martyn’s more anthropological interest is clear from the sense that the divine invasion strikes not against powers in the heavenly realms but brings liberation to the human heart, setting one free, in Campbell’s terms, from the “Adamic ontology” and its epistemological and ethical incompetence.

²² *Paul the Apostle*, 222.

²³ *Ibid.*, 141.

²⁴ *Galatians*, 371. Recalling that, for Martyn, the law (1) originally spoke a singular promise; (2) temporarily served to construct the religious cosmos in tandem with its antinomy not-law; and, (3) that world having ended, has now been released to fulfil its promise. Likewise, the elements of the cosmos prove to be conceptual and, for Paul, religious antinomies rather than demonic beings.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 528–36, 486.

²⁶ See *ibid.*, 526, 528. For the Teachers, the flesh is active within the individual, for Paul it threatens the community; for the Teachers, the flesh represents the Evil Inclination that has been a constant antagonist in human experience, whereas for Paul it is a power that emerges with the advent of the Spirit constituting with it an antinomy of the new age.

It can be seen, then, that neither the apocalyptic reading's language of cosmology or understanding of the powers stems the drift away from Wrede and Schweitzer's emphasis on demonology in Paul.²⁷ Whereas those earlier figures described demonic beings as the ultimate agents, lurking behind the world's curtain and deploying the powers of sin and death as their tools, in the contemporary apocalyptic reading the powers themselves are unveiled behind the curtain. Thus one imagines that contemporary apocalyptic interpreters would agree that Paul's language of sin and death fits Gunton's account of the language of the demonic in the NT more generally: "the texts present us not with superhuman hypostases trotting about the world, but with *the metaphorical characterisation of moral and cosmic realities which would otherwise defy expression.*"²⁸

To conclude this chapter, I want to consider briefly what purpose the powers serve in the apocalyptic reading of Paul. In essence, and as ought by now to be obvious, the powers are determinative for the human plight and therefore for the divine solution. In relation to human capacity for good or responsibility for evil vis-à-vis the human plight, Martyn puts what he sees as the crucial question: "what can it mean to speak of 'responsible human decisions' while talking about 'competing superhuman powers'?"²⁹ The force of the question is twofold. Not only are the powers enslaving, such that human beings are

²⁷ In fact, the more explicit affirmations of a demonological foundation for Paul's theology of sin are to be found outside the apocalyptic camp or on its fringes. For example, Jason Maston, for whom 'Sin' can function as a proper noun, akin to Mastema and Belial, although again, one also encounters phrases such as "quasi-personal," *Divine and Human Agency in Second Temple Judaism and Paul*, 144.

²⁸ *The Actuality of Atonement: A Study of Metaphor, Rationality and the Christian Tradition* (London: T&T Clark, 1988), 66, *emph. orig.*

²⁹ Martyn, "Response to Reviews of Galatians." Likewise, as we have seen Campbell argue, the significance of humanity's oppression and captivity is that it is "not held fully (i.e. 'strongly') accountable (although neither is humanity without accountability)," *The Deliverance of God*, 930.

incapable of exercising faith,³⁰ but the powers are also, in most accounts, external to the individual and can therefore replace humanity as the objects of God's wrath. This, one suspects, is part of the appeal of treating sin and death as more-than-personifications; it enables the powers to be located 'out there' somewhere and humanity therefore to be identified as their victim. Hence God's hostility is most often directed not against humanity but the powers that stand over it. This is true of the first coming, "a skilfully planned foray

³⁰ Whether there is any place in Paul's thinking for faith as the instrument by which salvation is appropriated is something of a disputed question within apocalyptic circles and the impression has been given, at least since Käsemann, that it finds no place (for example, see Zahl's question to Käsemann: "How does an individual come to faith in your scheme? ... If God's intervention on the human stage, exorcising the world of its demons, is 100% of the equation, where is human subjectivity in any recognisable form?" "A Tribute To Ernst Käsemann and a Theological Testament," 391. Cf. Bornkamm, *Paul* 147, and Käsemann's response with the article 'The Faith of Abraham in Rom 4,' (*Perspectives on Paul*, 79-101). Certainly Martyn and Campbell go furthest, denying faith a significant role, but this has not been without controversy or qualification. Gaventa, for example, takes issue with Martyn's treatment of Gal 1:13-14 on this front:

To ask to see the role of the individual is not to revert to language of God's initiative and human response. Instead, it is to observe that God's intervention overturns everything (not merely religion) in the life of Paul, and Paul sees in that overturning a paradigm of the way in which the gospel itself works. Martyn's avoidance of conversion language and earlier individualistic readings of Galatians has taken us too far here, so that even the function of Paul's self-reference in the letter's argument (or re-proclamation) does not become clear. (Beverly Roberts Gaventa, "Review of Galatians by J. Louis Martyn," *RBL*, 2001).

Likewise Barclay describes Martyn's "hyper-Lutheran anxiety in speaking of human acts," citing Martyn's paraphrase of Gal 3:6: "He trusted God, and, as the final act in the drama by which God set Abraham fully right, God recognized Abraham's faithful trust," Barclay, "Review of Galatians by J. Louis Martyn." Martyn concedes some small overstatement on his part in his response to the reviews, "Response to Reviews of Galatians."

against the powers,”³¹ and, at least as Campbell suggests, of final judgment which will prove to be a day of reckoning only for the powers.³²

Of course, we should note that this strategy does not suit every passage, and so a second approach is adopted in cases like Rom 5:1-11 where enmity is clearly present between God and humanity, or where the human heart is identified as the locus of God’s invasion and therefore as the former seat of the powers. In these cases it is often granted that humans remain morally culpable even if they are incapable of contributing to or even discerning the solution, but that “God in his benevolence decides to allow mercy to triumph over judgment.”³³ Nevertheless, in most instances the powers serve two related purposes in relation to the human plight: (1) Their power largely negates human responsibility for sin, and (2) their presence largely draws the fire of divine wrath away from humanity and onto themselves.

³¹ Schweitzer, *The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle*, 212.

³² As per Campbell: “Presumably evil powers, such as Sin and Death, will not be included in the glorious future kingdom of grace and life. They must therefore be eliminated at some point, most probably in this moment of wrath,” *The Deliverance of God*, 71–72.

³³ This is Aulén’s solution where the continuity of legal justice is shattered in order to preserve the continuity of divine action in the atonement (See e.g. *Christus Victor*, 95–96). Campbell embraces both strategies; at times the powers are the object of God’s judgment, while elsewhere his language of humanity as neither fully accountable but not without accountability relies on God’s benevolence to overlook those infractions. According to Martyn, Paul’s view is that humans are “fundamentally victims” of the enslaving power of sin (Rom 3:9) “without altogether eclipsing his view of sin as a human act” for “all have sinned” (Rom 5:12). Once enslaved and therefore in a secondary sense, the prisoner “became—and becomes—*actively complicit*.” “Afterword: The Human Moral Drama,” 163, *emph. orig.* There is, however, no sense that the divine response to that complicity is anything other than compassion; it is more a case of Stockholm syndrome than Vichy government.

CHAPTER 10: THE APOCALYPTIC SOLUTION

When we turn from this account of the powers and the anthropological captivity and incapacity they express, to apocalyptic accounts of the solution, there is a rather more complicated picture.

Along with the decline of explicit references to demonology since the time of Wrede and Schweitzer, there has been a transfer from future to inaugurated eschatology. Martyn has taught a generation to ask “What time is it?” and to answer that question with almost exclusive reference to the first advent of Christ.³⁴ To begin with then, this chapter will address the *timing* of the apocalyptic solution. Second, it will outline the apocalyptic solution’s basic *character*, entrenching a polarisation of forensic and liberative categories and expressing a clear preference for the latter. A brief excursus will highlight the ways in which apocalyptic readings conceive of the means of that liberation. In general, there is an emphasis on participation in the death and resurrection of Christ, although Käsemann and Martyn represent an enduring minority report with their emphasis on the epistemological or revelatory impact of the gospel. After that excursus, the chapter concludes with an account of the universalistic *scope* of the apocalyptic solution.

³⁴ For “What time is it?” see Martyn, *Galatians*, 104 and *Theological Issues*, 122. It is intriguing, in light of this, to see an enthusiastic adoption of Martyn’s work and the language of apocalyptic in Fleming Rutledge’s *Advent: The Once and Future Coming of Jesus Christ* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018) in which the accent clearly falls on the “future coming.”

a. *The Timing of the Solution: Future to Inaugurated Eschatology*

Yon Gyong Kwon rightly highlights a tension between two apocalyptic schools on the matter of eschatology, outlining “the ‘future apocalyptic’ of Käsemann and Beker vs. Martyn’s ‘realized, cruciform apocalyptic.’”³⁵ In part, of course, this diversity emerges from the attempt to account for Galatians. With no-one willing to dispense with the language of apocalyptic, the letter must either be considered an anomaly (Beker) or apocalyptic itself must undergo some redefinition (Martyn). One of the interesting questions, at least for our purposes, that emerges from this situation is what happens when Martyn’s students turn back to Romans. Is the future restored to the apocalyptic Paul or has it forever been drawn into the present? Once we have substantiated Kwon’s contrast between the positions of Käsemann, Beker and Martyn (and their apocalyptic forebears) we will return to that question.³⁶

In different ways, as noted above, Wrede and Schweitzer do fix their gaze upon the future. For Wrede the role of the flesh in the plight means that, whatever the sense in which humanity participates in redemption now, the longed-for release still lies ahead.³⁷ For Schweitzer, concerned to locate Paul among diverse eschatological schemata of OT prophecy and Jewish apocalyptic, the very significance of being-in-Christ lies in the fact that it qualifies the elect to participate in the Messianic kingdom and the eternal kingdom to follow. Union with Christ carries with it the elect’s invisible but real transformation behind the scenes and secures their freedom from the rule of the Angel-power death. Even

³⁵ *Eschatology in Galatians*, 8.

³⁶ Given that I am attempting here to make more explicit a development present in the foregoing survey, there is necessarily a chronological and therefore somewhat repetitive quality to the task. I can only promise to be brief and that this is the last such tour of the evidence.

³⁷ It is striking, therefore, that when Wrede is subsequently praised by Campbell, this aspect is overlooked.

so, “to be a Christian means to be possessed and dominated by a hope of the kingdom of God.”³⁸

Käsemann also belongs to this earlier group, for the future described in 1 Cor 15 looms large, and the note of eschatological reserve is sounded clearly. The lordship of Christ is manifested only in the church and even there only in part. The church remains vulnerable, assailed by death on the one hand,³⁹ tempted, on the other, to fall back into pious illusion, but continually called to be renewed in the *nova oboedientia* by the *theologia viatorum*, the *theologia crucis*.⁴⁰

As for Beker, the future triumph of God is, of course, writ large over all his work, even though there is some ambivalence as to whether the resurrection of Christ itself marks the apocalyptic turn of the ages. In part this future emphasis is simply a reflection of Beker’s conviction that God’s future triumph is the coherent core of Paul’s theology, and he finds confirmation of this in the fact that Paul dogmatically imposes the future resurrection on the Corinthian church against their own theological convictions.⁴¹ More than that, Beker’s analysis alludes to the contingences of his own day. Noting that a *theologia crucis* would have sufficed to dampen Corinthian triumphalism, Beker expresses some concern that such

³⁸ *The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle*, 384.

³⁹ In this the church expresses solidarity with the rest of creation, echoing the world’s cry for liberty from death. Käsemann takes up this theme in the essay ‘On the Subject of Primitive Christian Apocalyptic’ (*New Testament Questions of Today*, 108-137) and develops it by expounding Rom 8:26-27 in ‘The Cry for Liberty in the Worship of the Church,’ *Perspectives on Paul*, 122-37.

⁴⁰ This normative quality of the cross in Käsemann does challenge one aspect of Kwon’s contrast between ‘future apocalyptic’ and ‘realised, cruciform apocalyptic’—one suspects Käsemann might identify his approach as ‘cruciform, future apocalyptic.’

⁴¹ *Paul the Apostle*, See 170-73 under the subheading “Paul’s dogmatic imposition” and cf. 180.

theologies are “easily transformed into a passion mysticism and the resurrection into the noetic meaning of the victory of the cross.”⁴² The value of apocalyptic for Beker, therefore, is that it emphasises the expectation of creation’s physical liberation and prevents Christology from obscuring the ultimate theocentricity of Paul’s eschatology.⁴³

Thus, for remarkably different reasons, it is true that from Wrede to Beker there is a sustained emphasis upon the future and, when the term ‘apocalyptic’ becomes common currency, it is frequently, although not exclusively, defined with reference to future eschatology. The shift observed by Kwon occurs when Martyn proposes that “it may be well to return thanks for instruction received at the hands of Käsemann and Beker by suggesting another route,” for he refers explicitly to their insistence that apocalyptic speaks of expectation of the imminent Parousia.⁴⁴ Rather than dispensing with the term ‘apocalyptic,’ Martyn proposes to “begin with a certain amount of ignorance as to the definition” and to allow Galatians to offer one.⁴⁵ The result is that he perceives the apocalyptic invasion anticipated by CJAE to have occurred in the entrance of the Son and the Spirit, inaugurating the new creation and making something of an enthusiast out of

⁴² Ibid., 180. In addition, as noted above, he expresses misgivings about the Neo-orthodox collapse of “apocalyptic eschatology into Christology” and conversion of eschatology into “a noetic-hermeneutic tool, that is, a linguistic concept, defining Christology as God’s ultimate revelatory word,” *ibid.*, 139. Strikingly then, to Beker’s mind Barth represents a threat to the apocalyptic reading of Paul, whereas subsequently, and largely due to the development we are currently tracing, his influence is apparent.

⁴³ 1 Corinthians 15 appears again in this connection, for the Son’s eventual handing of the kingdom over to the Father (1 Cor 15:24) lies behind Beker’s *theocentric* emphasis (*Paul the Apostle*, 362). Ultimately, that is the occasion of the triumph of God.

⁴⁴ *Theological Issues in the Letters of Paul*, 113.

⁴⁵ Ibid. The circularity of the procedure does not seem to trouble Martyn.

Paul. While the conflict between flesh and Spirit is commenced rather than concluded with the arrival of the Son, his arrival is nevertheless *the* apocalyptic event.⁴⁶

As apocalyptic interpreters turn back to Romans some diversity emerges. Like Martyn, de Boer acknowledges a debt to Käsemann and Beker but refuses to emulate their emphasis upon the future.⁴⁷ Although de Boer's discussion of sin and death leads him to affirm a now-and-not-yet sense in which both have been defeated by the work of Christ (occasioning more references to the Parousia than one finds in Martyn),⁴⁸ the burden of his work has been to affirm Paul's apocalyptic credentials on the basis of his cosmology rather than his eschatology. This shared emphasis signifies both their connection to one another and their mutual distance from their forebears.

When Gaventa adopts the language of 'apocalyptic' she does so, we recall, to signal a debt to Käsemann, Beker and Martyn but, given their diversity on this question among others, we need to probe a bit more deeply. Essentially, Gaventa agrees with de Boer and Martyn on the definition of apocalyptic—it is “a way of interpreting the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ as the radically invasive disclosure of God's rectifying action on behalf of the world” —but nonetheless she emphasises the future at least to the same extent as de Boer,

⁴⁶ N. T. Wright makes the same observation well: Martyn's account represents “not simply a modification, but a serious deconstruction of Käsemann's future-oriented worldview, and its replacement with a decisively inaugurated eschatology,” *Paul and His Recent Interpreters*, 171.

⁴⁷ In particular he questions whether death can be separated from the other powers as the one enemy that remains as yet undefeated.

⁴⁸ Passing references can be found in Martyn to the future return of Christ (*Galatians*, 105; “World Without End or Twice-Invaded World?,” 120). However, although the text of that essay refers to three invasions (the world invaded by sin, the world invaded by the Son and the Spirit and the world to be invaded again at the Parousia) the title only accents the two, past invasions.

if not more.⁴⁹ In large part this is due to the prominence of Rom 8:31-39 and 16:20 in her readings of Romans, which, along with the military language throughout, signals that the conflict is far from over; on the contrary, “Paul regards the human cosmos... as a place which remains disputed territory.”⁵⁰ For that reason, Wrede’s suspense makes a return: “although the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ defeated Sin and Death and inaugurated a reign of God’s Grace all of creation continues to stand on tiptoe (to borrow from the translation of J. B. Phillips) waiting for the arrival of its redemption.”⁵¹

By contrast, and somewhat surprisingly given his appreciation for Wrede and Schweitzer, Campbell’s emphasis largely falls onto the present.⁵² The JT model leans heavily on the future both in its account of the plight and the solution, whereas PPME addresses a plight that is largely experienced now in slavery to the Adamic ontology, and describes a divine intervention which brings perception of and resolution to that plight. When Campbell outlines PPME in propositional form, he notes that humanity is destined for death, and lists hope, glory, and a new inheritance among the blessings of that intervention, but otherwise there is no mention of the future and the model terminates with an account of “a

⁴⁹ “To Preach the Gospel,” 189n30.

⁵⁰ “Neither Height nor Depth: Discerning the Cosmology of Romans,” 273.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 278.

⁵² It is Schweitzer’s mysticism, reframed as participatory eschatology, that Campbell most appreciates, while Campbell highlights “four emphases that can only be regarded as prescient” in Wrede, namely “the concrete reality of the Christian’s participation in Christ; the inaugurated nature of this participation; the imminence of Christ’s return for Paul; and the present reality and guarantee of the Spirit” of which all but the third are taken up in Campbell’s work *The Deliverance of God*, 179. Wrede’s other appeal is of course his lament over the distraction that “the soul-strivings” of Luther have proved to be.

community rooted in a divine communion.”⁵³ Lastly, as noted above, Campbell’s other discussions of the future are largely defensive, declining to derive much of substance from what he considers to be Paul’s ambivalent references to future events.⁵⁴

In summary then, there has been a noticeable, although not complete, shift from future to inaugurated eschatology with an increasingly Christological focus.⁵⁵ Within the apocalyptic reading since Martyn, one might say that the Father has handed over the kingdom to the Son, although de Boer and Gaventa offer more mediating positions.⁵⁶ While this development seems clear, the exact character of that Christological focus, or of what Kwon describes as ‘cruciform apocalyptic’ is not. There is in fact some disagreement within the apocalyptic camp here and we will develop that point shortly, once we have outlined the more general character of the solution.

⁵³ Ibid., 72–73. Cf. Campbell’s comment *contra* Beker that present participation in Christ “is more fundamental than [Paul’s] conception of future eschatology” in *The Quest for Paul’s Gospel*, 54.

⁵⁴ *The Deliverance of God*, 94.

⁵⁵ Harink puts the case most strongly: “Most simply stated, ‘apocalypse’ is shorthand for Jesus Christ. In the New Testament... all apocalyptic reflection and hope comes to this, that God has acted critically, decisively, and finally for Israel, all the peoples of the earth, and the entire cosmos, in the life, death, resurrection, and coming again of Jesus, in such a way that God’s purpose for Israel, all humanity, and all creation is critically, decisively, and finally disclosed and effected in the history of Jesus Christ,” *Paul Among the Postliberals*, 68.

⁵⁶ This is not to say that ‘apocalyptic’ as a term has simply shifted in its temporal frame of reference. Rather, the term has increasingly lost its temporal connotations and has become a way of expressing a specific view of the human plight or of understanding God’s action in Christ. By that more circuitous route, the future has largely given way to the present.

b. *The Character of the Solution: A Liberative and not Forensic Soteriology*

It is timely to recall the soteriological options as Schweitzer described them.

(1) There is the eschatological plight (demonic oppression) which is resolved by God's militant liberation. (2) There is the same eschatological plight solved (from a complementary and more distinctively Pauline perspective) by the believer's being-in-Christ. (3) There is a juridical doctrine which emerges from Jesus' understanding of his eschatological role but which becomes isolated from those moorings in the early church and in Paul's doctrine of justification, at least insofar as it is expressed in Rom 1-4.

With that in mind, regardless of whether Schweitzer's account of the origins of that third view is accepted, it is a point of apocalyptic agreement that the Pauline solution lies somewhere between the first two. For Beker, de Boer, Martyn and Gaventa, the Pauline solution is expressed more in terms of the first—the powers are defeated in a unilateral strike of some sort—without much emphasis upon the means by which the believer appropriates that salvation, or, rather, is appropriated by it. On the other hand, Campbell, like Schweitzer, emphasises pneumatological participation. For example, when he seeks an answer to the basic question of “how do we get from the present dark evil age into the future age of light and life,” he argues that the phrase ‘in Christ’ is the key and its meaning is best sought in Rom 5-8, which describe how “the very being of the sinful believer is taken up into Christ's on the Cross, crucified, buried, then resurrected in a transformed state, and here free from sin.”⁵⁷

⁵⁷ *The Quest for Paul's Gospel*, 39.

Käsemann, as we have seen, is harder to characterise. Although Martyn and de Boer claim that he emphasises a divine military campaign against the powers,⁵⁸ the theme is not as prominent as they suggest, nor is the target hostile powers so much as human illusion.⁵⁹ Campbell's account of Käsemann rightly dissents from that characterisation and identifies Käsemann more closely with JT, but two factors make even that identification problematic. First, Käsemann's use of justification terminology is broader than either JT, as Campbell describes it, or Schweitzer's juridical model; indeed, it bears some resemblance to Campbell's language of deliverance, expressing God's transformative power and the believer's experience of that power.⁶⁰ Second, although Campbell is right that Käsemann is closer to a traditional view than de Boer suggests, Käsemann nevertheless reinterprets sacrificial imagery such that 'for us' expresses 'not by us' rather than presupposing a substitutionary element to the cross. Thus, despite Käsemann's existence on the periphery

⁵⁸ According to Martyn, Käsemann insisted that "the central issue is focused... on militant power", "A Personal Word About Ernst Käsemann," xv; cf. de Boer, *The Defeat of Death*, 34–35. In fact, in Käsemann, it is Paul more than God who wages apocalyptic war, or at least wages war upon enthusiasm under the apocalyptic banner. As Campbell rightly notes, Käsemann also sees *himself* as a combatant in the Pauline and Lutheran mould, *Framing Paul: An Epistolary Account* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), 142n22.

⁵⁹ On one of the occasions that Käsemann uses military language, this is clearly the case: in man's fallen state "he boasts of himself and the powers. The apostle attacks this, since it is a denial of creatureliness" and it finds its cure in the recognition that "the new aeon invades" the old. Chronologically and spatially they become entangled— "the earth has become their battleground"—and, for those who submit themselves to the world's true Lord, their "Christian boasting paradoxically proclaims that peace and freedom are already secured even in the midst of the ongoing conflict." *Romans*, 133–34.

⁶⁰ A point observed by Sanders in the course of registering a criticism: "It seems confusing to follow Käsemann's procedure of insisting that righteousness by faith is central but then to define it as a cosmic and corporate act... I agree with Käsemann that Paul's soteriology is basically cosmic and corporate or participatory. I do not agree that this is best expressed by the term 'righteousness,' even though Paul sometimes used the term in this way," *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 508.

of the apocalyptic interpretation, even he represents a shift away from forensic or substitutionary models of the atonement carried out under the multivalent name of apocalyptic.⁶¹

The case for such a shift has a positive and a negative aspect. Positively, it is argued that Paul's use of military imagery and his personification of Sin and Death, in preference to the language of sacrifice, repentance, and faith points in such a direction. Thus for Martyn, commenting on Gal 3:10, "God would not have to carry out an invasion in order merely to forgive erring human beings. The root trouble lies deeper than human guilt, and it is more sinister. The whole of humanity—indeed, the whole of creation (3:22)—is in fact, trapped, enslaved under the power of the present evil age."⁶²

Negatively, it is argued that a view of substitutionary atonement or of propitiation cannot be reconciled exegetically with Paul's statements elsewhere concerning human moral

⁶¹ Of course the preference for participatory rather than substitutionary models is not exclusive to the apocalyptic interpretation. Rare attempts to hold together forensic and participatory elements within the apocalyptic fold or on its margins include Beker (*Paul the Apostle*, 208–10), Ziegler ("Christ Must Reign"); Eastman ("Double Participation and the Responsible Self in Romans 5–8," in *Apocalyptic Paul* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2013), 39–58), and also Cousar, in a work commended by Gaventa as an "excellent starting place" on Paul's theology of the cross: "When the soteriology is judged to be primarily participatory, then the judicial, sacrificial, and social categories are truncated in the name of theological appropriateness," *A Theology of the Cross*, 87. And this, to be clear, is *not* a good thing, at least in Cousar's mind.

⁶² Note that Martyn is reasoning about Paul's plight on the basis of a metaphor that Martyn himself has introduced. See also Gaventa, *When in Romans*, 43, for comments on the infrequency of repentance language in Romans and the claim that "nowhere does he [sc. Paul] talk of forgiveness."

incompetence or God's benevolence,⁶³ and, more conceptually, that they necessarily imply a salvation initiated from below which activates that divine benevolence.

The language of invasion therefore serves multiple purposes. It shores up a distinctively apocalyptic account of the human plight, capturing in vivid language the necessity of divine initiative and agency; it reframes salvation as cosmic warfare (over against forensic themes); and it signals a disjunctive event, allowing for the polemics against religion and salvation history (most strongly in the case of Käsemann and Martyn),⁶⁴ or foundationalist, prospective hermeneutics (Martyn and Campbell).

Excursus: The Locus of the Solution: Participation or Revelation

We noted above that Schweitzer delineates three soteriological models, representing the objective character of salvation as a divine invasion, a mystical participation, or a juridical doctrine of justification. Whatever the balance struck between the first two options, a majority of apocalyptic readings accept the basic premise that salvation is an objective reality. Wrede, Schweitzer, Beker, de Boer, Gaventa and Campbell all describe the death and resurrection of Christ as the definitive events in themselves, representing the defeat of the

⁶³ See e.g. Wrede, *Paul*, 134.

⁶⁴ Martyn's unequalled emphasis on these points has provoked historical and theological critiques, given that Jewish and Christian apocalyptic frequently unveils divine action throughout history, and that, in dogmatic terms, "the doctrine of creation is in the way. According to it, God has no call to invade the world, since he already rules within it." Robert W. Jenson, "On Dogmatic/Systematic Appropriation of Paul-According-To-Martyn," in *Apocalyptic and the Future of Theology: With and Beyond J. Louis Martyn*, ed. Joshua B. Davis and Douglas Harink (Eugene, Oreg.: Cascade Books, 2012), 159. In the same volume, Jenson and Fleming Rutledge critique Martyn's dismissal of salvation history and the witness of the OT to God's grace; 160-61, 312.

powers or as having ontological significance for the nature of humanity or the human situation.⁶⁵

By contrast, Käsemann and Martyn are less likely to speak of an ontological change, employing far more often the language of perception and revelation.⁶⁶ For Käsemann, it is by hearing the word of the cross afresh that the church is de-demonised, stripped of its delusions, pretensions and piety. “Jesus’ cross is essentially directed against all religious illusion and relegates man to man’s humanity”—that is the saving significance of Jesus’ death.⁶⁷ Likewise, for all that Martyn can express himself in language that everyone from Wrede to Beker could agree with,⁶⁸ his particular interest lies in the overcoming of a *religious* distinction between law and not-law, between the sacred and the profane, and the

⁶⁵ See Wrede, *Paul*, 102–3; Schweitzer, *The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle*, 15, 110; Beker, *Paul the Apostle*, 152; In de Boer’s language, “God not only justifies (declares right) in the future, but also rectifies (makes right) in the present; God does so concretely by joining believers to the death of Christ, thereby separating them from the powers that enslave,” *Galatians*, 164; Gaventa, Campbell, *The Quest for Paul’s Gospel*, 41.

⁶⁶ The apocalypse of Jesus Christ causes an “epistemological crisis”; it creates a “radically new perception of God”; “it also creates a radically new perception of time,” *Galatians*, 104. It ought to be noted that the cross remains a “thoroughly real event” wherein “God’s war of liberation was commenced and decisively settled” but for Martyn the crucial event is the epistemological and subjective revelation to the individual of the end of the religious cosmos. Cf. the Käsemannian discussion of the “word of the cross” and the cross as “apocalyptic sign” in Martyn, “World Without End or Twice-Invaded World?,” 128.

⁶⁷ *Perspectives on Paul*, 35. Bultmann expresses the view forcefully: “The salvation-occurrence is nowhere present except in the proclaiming, accosting, demanding, and promising word of preaching... The salvation-occurrence is the eschatological occurrence just in this fact, that it does not become a fact of the past but constantly takes place anew in the present,” *Theology of the New Testament*, 303.

⁶⁸ E.g. summarising the gospel (on the basis of Gal 1:4) he writes that “the human plight consists fundamentally of enslavement to supra-human powers; and God’s redemptive act is his deed of liberation,” *Galatians*, 97.

revelation of the end of that religious cosmos was the apocalyptic experience of Paul on the road to Damascus and that of his converts.⁶⁹ The apocalypse of the Son to Paul—drawing back the epistemological curtain and enabling bi-focal vision—this is how Paul is rescued from the world he once inhabited and in this sense the Galatians are to imitate Paul.⁷⁰

The ongoing appropriation of Martyn in dogmatic theology has often highlighted this emphasis on epistemological crisis as determinative of apocalyptic readings, with intriguing results.⁷¹ Inevitably it draws Barth into the conversation, but Bultmann and Luther also, despite the ways in which apocalyptic readings have often been constructed in opposition to them.⁷² In the case of Barth especially, it is striking that his mature thought

⁶⁹ This can still be described as a participation in Christ's death, but the model of participation is reconfigured around Martyn's view of the law. Christ dies in a "head-on conflict with the Law's power to pronounce a curse on the whole of humanity" (which is to say, to divide it into the sacred and profane) and Paul's participation "involves his own death to the Law that previously formed his cosmos." *Ibid.*, 102, cf. 278-280.

⁷⁰ David Congdon rightly captures this aspect of Martyn: "Martyn *existentialises* Paul's apocalyptic theology... God's action in the advent of Christ is apocalyptic in the sense that 'it is not visible, demonstrable or provable in the categories and with the means of perception native to 'everyday' existence.'" "Reconsidering Apocalyptic Cinema: Pauline Apocalyptic and Paul Thomas Anderson," *JRPC*, 1 January 2012, 24:406 *emph. orig.* and quoting from Martyn, *Galatians* 104.

⁷¹ This appropriation of Martyn's emphasis on epistemological liberation justifies treating the debate between participation and proclamation as an ongoing debate, even though de Boer, Gaventa and Campbell all take leave of Martyn on this point.

⁷² For Bultmann as an apocalyptic figure on the basis of *krisis* language, see Joshua B. Davis, "The Challenge of Apocalyptic to Modern Theology," 32 n130; Congdon, "Eschatologizing Apocalyptic" in *Apocalyptic and the Future of Theology*, 118-36. For Luther, see Ken Sundet Jones, "The Apocalyptic Luther," *WW* 25 (2005): 308-16. In light of Susan Eastman's discovery that Calvin has a strong participatory emphasis (for which, see "Apocalypse and Incarnation: The Participatory Logic of Paul's Gospel," in *Apocalyptic and the Future of Theology: With and Beyond J. Louis Martyn*, ed. Joshua B. Davis and Douglas Harink (Eugene, Oreg: Cascade Books,

on justification can be characterised as ‘forensic-apocalyptic’ without that term being self-contradictory, because here *apocalyptic* stands for this Christocentric epistemology, rather than ‘not-forensic.’⁷³

It is perhaps because the proclamation event bears the soteriological weight in Käsemann’s and Martyn’s systems that they do not enter into any substantial discussion concerning the nature of the atonement.⁷⁴ This has sometimes generated frustration. For Bruce McCormack, readers “are left with a rich battery of images and concepts. But images and concepts alone, no matter how rhetorically powerful, do not rise to the level of adequate explanation. How is it that the ‘rectification’ of the world is achieved by Christ’s faithful death?”⁷⁵

McCormack identifies an account of participation as the missing element, but one suspects that Martyn would focus more upon the epistemological revolution that occurs in the hearing of the gospel message. Whether or not that is right in Martyn’s case, these two models (participation in Christ and a revelatory experience brought about by the gospel

2012), 169) we might even say that the two strands we are tracing (participation in an objective event and the proclamation of a transformative word) have Calvin and Luther as their source.

⁷³ For this characterisation of Barth, see Shannon Nicole Smythe, *Forensic Apocalyptic Theology: Karl Barth and the Doctrine of Justification* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2016). Richard Muller’s “A Note on ‘Christocentrism’ and the Imprudent Use of Such Terminology,” *WTJ* 68.2 (2006): 253–60, provides welcome clarity for another over-used and under-defined term. Under his typology, we are dealing here with *pricipial Christocentrism*.

⁷⁴ On this, see Bruce L. McCormack, “Can We Still Speak of ‘Justification by Faith’? An In-House Debate with Apocalyptic Readings of Paul,” in *Galatians and Christian Theology: Justification, the Gospel, and Ethics in Paul’s Letter*, ed. Mark W. Elliott et al. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014), 166–77.

⁷⁵ “Can We Still Speak of ‘Justification by Faith’?, 167.

message) are the most common ways that an adequate explanation is attempted within an apocalyptic framework.

c. *The Scope of Salvation: Universalism*

Proving that he too is among the prophets, William Morgan, writing in 1917, anticipates various soteriological models of apocalyptic interpreters and shows how each logically tends towards universalism:

Pressed to its logical conclusion, Paul's doctrine of an objective redemption would seem to involve the immediate and unconditional salvation of the whole human race. If the demons have been overthrown, how should they any longer have power to harm? If the reign of recompense has been replaced by the reign of grace, what is left for man to fear? If the fleshly body of sin has been done away, how should man continue to be in bondage to sin?⁷⁶

Nevertheless, Morgan continues, "that the Apostle does not contemplate any such conclusion hardly needs to be said" in light of the "absolutely indispensable connecting link" between salvation and faith.⁷⁷ In this insistence he follows Schweitzer over against Wrede, for whom the objective nature of redemption forced the universalistic conclusion. Although Käsemann is sometimes listed among the universalists,⁷⁸ the question is not unambiguously answered in his work. In relation to Rom 5:12-21 he argues that "all-powerful grace is unthinkable without eschatological universalism."⁷⁹ When discussing κτίσις in Rom 8:18-30, he argues that "there can be no doubt that non-Christians are

⁷⁶ Morgan, *The Religion and Theology of Paul*, 113.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ See e.g. Cousar "Continuity and Discontinuity: Romans 5-8," 204.

⁷⁹ *Romans*, 157, 223.

included,” although he moderates that with the comment that “all the same, the main emphasis today is rightly put on non-human creation,” and elsewhere there are more particularist hints, such as his comment that “reconciliation is certainly offered to the whole world, and it is the service of the apostles to proclaim the offer everywhere. But it comes into effect only where people become disciples of Jesus.”⁸⁰

In Beker’s view, “Paul refrains from any unequivocal assertion” regarding universal salvation.⁸¹ His radicalisation of the plight seems to lead there, but, on the other hand, “the time between the cross and the end-time is a time for commitment, decision, mission and endurance. Those who are disobedient to the gospel will be judged and destroyed in the last judgment because they behave as if the powers defeated by Jesus Christ still rule the world.”⁸²

Thereafter, however, equivocation largely disappears. In Martyn the question itself, and indeed any real discussion of the future, disappears; the world has been twice-invaded, the new creation in the present “is nothing other than the new community, the cross-bearing church in the here and now,” and the battle has been engaged; there is simply the task of living under and proclaiming the word of the cross, and the fate of those who do not

⁸⁰ *Perspectives on Paul*, 43–44. Indeed Käsemann sees Paul *narrowing* the scope of reconciliation: “Although originally this was talked about in relation to the whole world, Paul crystallises the message, relating it more strictly to the church, and the individual Christian.” That said, divine agency is still central: Rom 5:10 “describes the justification of the godless as the gift of the divine peace to those who would otherwise remain enemies and who now through the *pax Christi* are led back into obedience,” *ibid.*

⁸¹ *Paul’s Apocalyptic Gospel*, 35.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 35–36.

experience its liberation is not discussed.⁸³ De Boer accepts that there is some counter evidence (texts which “envisage Christians appearing before the judgment seat of God or Christ”—1 Cor 3:17, 2 Cor 5:10, Rom 14:10; cf. Rom 2:1-16; 1 Cor 9:24-10:13) but argues that these bear the hallmarks of forensic apocalyptic eschatology and are therefore secondary, compared to a second set of texts which envisage the salvation of non-believers alongside believers (1 Cor 15:21-22 and Rom 5:12-21).⁸⁴ As already cited above, “the dualism... between unbelievers and believers, is thus entirely temporary and provisional.”⁸⁵ For Gaventa, Rom 5-8 makes explicit Paul’s universalism, citing 5:18 and insisting that “numerous attempts to limit this statement fail, since the comparison Paul makes will only work if the scope of God’s gospel includes ‘all.’”⁸⁶ Likewise, Campbell acknowledges the presence of loose ends such as 1 Thess 1:9-10 and Paul’s other references to future judgment but considers them to be “a small vein of evidence” and to represent a “distinctly muted theme in the rest of

⁸³ More broadly, N. T. Wright suggests that “universalism is implicit in the theology of ‘rectification’ offered by Martyn and de Boer: if ‘God’ has rectified the world, the presence or absence of explicit faith becomes irrelevant.” *Paul and the Faithfulness of God: Parts III and IV*, vol. 2 of *Christian Origins and the Question of God* (London: SPCK, 2013), 954n507. Perhaps this is so in Martyn’s case, although the sense in which he understands the rectification of the world, and the extent to which he affirms a necessary though secondary role to faith, would qualify the statement. Nevertheless, even if it is implicit in Martyn, it is certainly explicit in de Boer.

⁸⁴ “Paul and Apocalyptic Eschatology,” 371. Oddly, he argues that the issue comes down to these two sets of texts overlooking a third category of texts which describe ‘those who are perishing’, e.g. 1 Cor 1:18, 6:9; 2 Cor 2:15, 4:3; Phil 3:19, cf. 2 Thess 2:10. Of these, only one (1 Cor 1:18) is mentioned in the subsequent discussion. Nor does de Boer explain why, after circumscribing FJAE with CJAE throughout the earlier chapters of Romans, Paul would reintroduce a motif of FJAE in Rom 14.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 374.

⁸⁶ *Our Mother Saint Paul*, 153. Most recently, in *When in Romans*, Gaventa tentatively approaches the same conclusion, recognising that it will occasion “sharp dissent,” and that there are other canonical voices which would support that dissent. *When in Romans*, 127, and see the whole discussion from 121-28.

Paul's corpus;"⁸⁷ he then refers the reader to de Boer's "elegant suggestions."⁸⁸ In a subsequent publication, he makes clear his own universalistic convictions, arguing that the newly-formed community in Christ anticipates the future of all mankind; it "is not fundamentally different from the rest of humanity but rather *represents its true nature*."⁸⁹

⁸⁷ *The Deliverance of God*, 94.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 953n60.

⁸⁹ "Christ and the Church in Paul: A 'Post-New Perspective' Account," 138–39, *emph. orig.*

SUMMARY OF PART 2

Part 2 has provided an analysis of the contemporary apocalyptic reading of Paul. In chapter 9 we traced a clear development away from demonological accounts of the human plight, even though they were once considered constitutive of an eschatological or apocalyptic reading of Paul. Despite appearances, the frequent references to the malevolent powers of sin and death are not a way of expanding the cast of personal agents in the world so much as expressing the depths of the human predicament in its noetic and conative dimensions.

Chapter 10 outlined another clear development: from future to inaugurated eschatology. In Martyn's work this reaches its high-water mark, with the first coming of Christ representing a singular and punctiliar intervention of God in the world. Even if they express themselves in somewhat more measured terms, de Boer, Campbell and Gaventa all share this emphasis upon a past and decisive action. In other respects, the solution proposed by the contemporary apocalyptic reading shows more continuity with the past, mapping onto Schweitzer's typology of soteriological frameworks in various ways. In some cases, reference to the motif of cosmic battle serves as an account of the salvific significance of the Christ event. In others, the model is of participation in his death and resurrection. Either way, it is to be viewed as fundamentally liberative *and not forensic* in its character. Schweitzer's *either/ors* remain in force on that score and have only been further entrenched by Campbell. The apocalyptic model of salvation is now rather more emphatically universalistic than it was in the past; an objective and ontological transformation of the human situation has occurred. For de Boer, Campbell and Gaventa, that is chief locus of salvation. In what is perhaps a sign of things to come, more dogmatically-oriented approaches are appropriating a somewhat different steam, following Martyn and Käsemann. Here, Lutheranism might not yet dare to speak its own name, but

something like it can be detected in a greater emphasis placed upon the word of the cross, and the subjective disclosure of one world ending (a world characterised either by its creaturely pieties or its religious distinctions) and another beginning. Our chief interest, however, lies with the current apocalyptic reading Paul represented by de Boer, Campbell and Gaventa, and so we remain with them, turning now in Part 3 to a critical engagement with their accounts of the apocalyptic Paul on the basis of their exegesis of Rom 1-8.

PART 3: CRITIQUING THE APOCALYPTIC PAUL WITH REFERENCE TO ROM 1-8

INTRODUCTION TO PART 3

In Part 2 I outlined the basic shape of the contemporary apocalyptic reading of Paul. In distinction to earlier readings, there is an emphasis on anthropological, rather than demonological realities, and an emphasis on inaugurated, rather than future salvation. In its basic character, the salvation proclaimed by the apostle Paul is liberative, expressed vividly in the language of cosmic warfare, or explained more systematically with reference to participation in Christ. By such means, all are saved.

Since the contemporary apocalyptic interpreters of Paul build their exegetical case for such a reading on Paul's letter to the Romans, Part 3 will focus there as we move from analysis to critical engagement.

A crucial aspect of apocalyptic exegesis is the correct relation of Rom 1-4 to Rom 5-8, although, as Parts 1 and 2 have already intimated, there is more than one way of relating them. It is necessary, therefore, to describe the different accounts briefly since they will determine the shape of Part 3.

Apocalyptic Accounts of the Relationship between Rom 1-4 and Rom 5-8

In apocalyptic accounts of Romans it is a point of near unanimity that in Rom 5-8 Paul is at his most Pauline.¹ Campbell's recent contribution to a discussion of Pauline theology

¹ Granting that some would rather speak of 5:12-8:39 or of Rom 6-8.

highlights this point most starkly, building his case from that text alone.² Less unanimity, however, attends the question of how those chapters relate to what precedes them.³ In Schweitzer and Campbell we meet the view that they relate only as antagonists, offering incommensurable accounts of redemption. If Campbell represents an advance on Schweitzer it is only in the enumerated and theologically-sophisticated detail of his case. For de Boer, that tension is also present, but his case is more textual, built on shifting patterns of vocabulary, and in his view the argument can be seen to cohere once it is perceived that Paul intentionally shifts from the terms of FJAE to CJAE as he seeks to move his audience from the one paradigm to the other, with 5:12-21 as the transitional passage.⁴

By contrast, Gaventa seeks to demonstrate that, from the beginning, Paul is evangelising the Roman church to his apocalyptic gospel, primarily citing the use of military language and personification in Rom 1:18-32 and 3:9.⁵ Through Rom 1-8 she understands Paul to circle back around the same themes and to dig further into the human plight in 5:12-6:23 and 7:1-8:39. To be sure, her reading leaves room for “transitions, even for twists and turns

² Occasioning a strong censure from Luke Timothy Johnson: “Rather than attempt to characterise Paul on the basis of all of the letters, he [sc. Campbell] chooses to make his argument on the basis of Romans alone, not Romans as a whole (which is, as I have argued, conventional), but solely on Rom 5-8, with no attention to the argument preceding or following those four chapters (which is idiosyncratic, as well as wrong-headed),” Michael F. Bird, ed., *Four Views on the Apostle Paul* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 149.

³ The question of how Romans 5-8 relate to what follows is rarely raised, beyond Campbell’s decision to designate Rom 9-11 as home to the SH reading of Paul. The clearest indications of what an apocalyptic reading of Rom 9-16 might look like are provided by Gaventa. See especially, ‘From Toxic Speech to the Redemption of Doxology,’ ‘The God Who Will Not Be Taken for Granted,’ and *When in Romans*, chs. 2-4.

⁴ De Boer’s structural analysis is also adopted by Eastman in “Apocalypse and Incarnation,” 173.

⁵ For the conflict between Gaventa and Campbell on this point, see Wilson, “Rereading Romans 1-3 Apocalyptically: A Response to Douglas Campbell’s ‘Rereading Romans 1-3.’”

that displace or reinterpret previous statements.”⁶ She cites three examples, but only two really concern us, and only the first resonates with the approach of de Boer and Campbell. In that instance, Rom 3 is said to have told a story of human sinfulness atoned for by sacrifice, whereas Rom 5-7 “morphs into a story of conflict and enslavement and deliverance.”⁷ The second is that Rom 5:12-21 represents a circling back to the human plight, just as Paul had started to outline the present experience of believers. What is striking about that example, however, is that Gaventa includes the characterisation of the audience as formerly ‘weak’ and ‘ungodly’, ‘sinners’ and ‘enemies’ in 5:6-11 as part of this second consideration of the plight, rather than suggesting they belong to a competing soteriological paradigm.⁸ Thus, although Gaventa will argue that apocalyptic themes increase in prominence after 5:12, it is striking the lengths to which she goes to incorporate the early chapters. Indeed, she is as positive about the contribution of Rom 1:18-32 to the apocalyptic cause as Campbell is negative.

In essence then, there are two strategies by which the apocalyptic reading of Paul embeds itself in 5-8 and relates those chapters with Rom 1-4. The first is to distinguish sharply Rom 1-4 from 5-8, insulating the latter section from what is seen as the unavoidably forensic and retributive language of the former. This is chiefly the approach of Campbell, although de Boer also makes much of the distinctive vocabulary and themes of each section. The second strategy seeks instead to appropriate Rom 1-4, arguing that throughout Rom 1-8 Paul is developing an apocalyptic theme, albeit with increasing breadth and depth as the chapters progress. This is chiefly the approach of Gaventa.

⁶ *When in Romans*, 19.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 39.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 34-36. The third example (*ibid.*, 20) is that in Rom 2 Paul first denies any benefit to the Jews on account of their privileges, only to seemingly reverse that position in 3:1.

It is the task of Part 3 to engage both of these strategies in critical and constructive ways. In chapter 11 we will reflect upon the supposed incommensurability of Rom 1-4 with 5-8 and the significance of the decline in forensic terminology. It is here that I will be most critical of apocalyptic readings, although an olive branch can be extended in the way that Rom 1-4 provides support for some of their anthropological concerns. In chapters 12-13 we will turn to Gaventa's argument that Rom 1-8 presents an integrated and increasingly apocalyptic account of Paul's gospel. Here we will consider the role of martial language (chapter 12) and the characterisation of sin, death and the flesh in Rom 1-8 (chapter 13).

Before that work begins, two more general comments are in order. First, there is not, to date, detailed apocalyptic engagement of many of the key passages. Where possible I will engage with relevant works, but in several places it will be necessary to take more general claims about the role of sin in Romans, for example, and to test them in passages that have not yet been expounded through an apocalyptic lens. Second, as we progress through those passages in chapters 12-13 I intend not only to critically engage with the apocalyptic reading of Rom 1-8 but also to indicate how my cumulative exegetical decisions add up to a reading of those chapters. Although I doubt I shall convince my interlocutors, and constraints of space forbid a full commentary, it feels infinitely more satisfactory, and constructive, to offer a reading of my own in conversation with the apocalyptic Paul.

CHAPTER 11: ENGAGING AN APOCALYPTIC TENSION BETWEEN ROM 1-4 AND 5-8

The purpose of this chapter is to argue that Rom 1-4 is integrated within the letter and consistent with Paul's wider corpus, thereby challenging the suggestion that the material of Rom 1-4 is substantially left behind, either as the tattered argument of the Teacher (Campbell), or as an accommodated and more forensic prelude to Paul's presentation of an cosmologically apocalyptic gospel in 5-8 (de Boer).⁹

The argument here has three strands. First, it will be argued that Rom 1-4 is woven into the letter such that it cannot be removed or placed into the mouth of an opponent without doing considerable damage to the pastoral strategy of the letter.¹⁰ Second, we will review parallels between Rom 1-4 and the wider Pauline corpus. While Rom 5-8 is held up to be Paul at his most Pauline, it can actually be seen that there are significant but frequently overlooked parallels to Rom 1-4 in his other letters. Third, since de Boer in particular emphasises Rom 5 as a key transitional passage from forensic to cosmological categories, we will discuss the nature of that transition.

a. Rom 1-4 and the Purpose of the Letter

To make the first argument it is necessary to say something about Paul's purpose in writing to the church in Rome. As we do so it is worth recalling the significance for Campbell of Rom 1-4 in that regard. For him, these chapters are at once peripheral and central:

⁹ As noted in the introduction to Part 3, Gaventa argues for the unity of Rom 1-8 on the basis of emergent apocalyptic themes in Rom 1-4. Evidence for those themes will be evaluated in chapters 12-13 below.

¹⁰ Although for convenience we speak of Rom 1-4, the focus will fall on 1:18-3:20, given that this is perceived to be the most problematic passage.

peripheral in the sense that Paul actually stands opposed to so much of the theology of 1:18-3:20, but central in the sense that Paul's purpose in writing is to counter that same theology which (on Campbell's reading of 16:17-20) he fears is making its way to Rome in the person of the Teacher.

Campbell's argument is open to a number of challenges. First, as Bruce Clark highlights in one review article, Campbell resorts to massaging the text of Rom 1:18-3:20 in order to have it address an individual Teacher.¹¹ It is also inherently implausible that Paul should refer so obliquely and so late in the letter to circumstances that threaten to recreate a Galatian crisis.¹² Additionally, Campbell fixates on 16:17-20 rather than taking into account several other indications of Paul's purposes in writing—purposes which can help to anchor the theology of Rom 1-4 in the letter.

In order to advance that claim, we can draw upon Richard Longenecker's recent study which sets out a series of primary and subsidiary purposes:

1. To give the Christians at Rome what he calls in 1:11 a 'spiritual gift'... which he (a) thought of as something uniquely his (cf. his reference to 'my gospel' in 16:25; see also 2:16), (b) felt they needed if they were to 'mutually encourage one another' (1:11-12),

¹¹ See his "Review Article: The Deliverance of God: An Apocalyptic Rereading of Justification in Paul by Douglas A. Campbell," 63–64. When Campbell offers his repunctuated and annotated version of Rom 1:16-3:20, two endnotes alert the reader to the fact that he has twice excised the phrase "whoever you are" (2:1, 2:3). The first is especially significant, where Paul addresses himself to πᾶς ὁ κρινῶν, and not to a single individual, as Campbell proposes.

¹² As Barclay argues, the similarities between Galatians and Romans are better explained by the fact that "two different situations required a partially overlapping response." *Paul and the Gift*, 458.

and (c) evidently wanted them to know in order that they might understand accurately and more appreciatively what he was proclaiming in his mission to the Gentiles.¹³

2. To seek the assistance of the Christians at Rome for the extension of his Gentile mission to Spain.
3. To defend himself against certain criticisms of his person and various misrepresentations of his message.
4. To address the weak/strong dispute (alluded to in 16:17-20a) and
5. To counsel regarding the relation of Christians at Rome to the city's governmental authorities.¹⁴

Purposes 1-4 are staples of the Romans debate, and Longenecker's approach—allowing for multiple purposes, attempting to organise them, and prioritising the epistolary frame—is cogent. As that frame reveals, Paul's aim in writing to the church in Rome, expressed delicately at first, is to proclaim the gospel to it (1:15),¹⁵ not because he sees anything lacking in their conversion but because he feels a responsibility to the church and because a proclamation of his gospel, suitably adapted to the occasion, can accomplish many of his other aims.

¹³ This wording reflects Longenecker's more specific thesis that Rom 1-4 represents material well-known to sender and recipient, whereas 5-8 represents Paul's distinctive theological gift to the Romans and his usual account of the gospel to Gentile audiences. The assumption that Rom 5-8 offers a self-contained gospel will be challenged shortly.

¹⁴ Longenecker, *Introducing Romans*, 158-59. The last of these purposes, Longenecker admits, is less probable, and will not be developed here.

¹⁵ As Jeffrey Weima notes, Paul's commendation of the Roman believers, his initial assertion of his authority over Gentiles in general, rather than Rome more specifically, and his language of their mutual benefit all serve to establish a relationship with a largely unfamiliar audience, and to accent Paul's authority without appearing overbearing. See Jeffrey A. D. Weima, "Preaching the Gospel to Rome: A Study of the Epistolary Framework of Romans," in *Gospel in Paul: Studies on Corinthians, Galatians and Romans for Richard N. Longenecker*, ed. Ann L. Jervis and Peter Richardson (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 337-66.

Of those aims, the most relevant for our purposes is the way that Paul's presentation of the gospel can be seen to address the weak/strong dispute. In Longenecker's analysis, that dispute is largely unrelated to Paul's main aim of presenting his gospel for the approval and appreciation of the church. There is a strong case to be made, however, that Paul's theological exposition in Rom 1-11 testifies to a larger role for that dispute among the purposes of Romans. In the words of George Smiga: "Rom 1:18-11:35 is not simply a proclamation of the gospel but stands as a prolonged exposition by Paul regarding his conviction that the tensions in the Roman church can be resolved. The Roman community can be united through a proper understanding of the gospel."¹⁶

In particular, Rom 1-4 contributes to that resolution and therefore has an integral place within the pastoral purposes of the letter. Several indications of this can be mentioned. There is the emphasis on the common plight and solution in which the Jew and Gentile share, expressed in the uses of $\pi\alpha\tilde{\nu}\varsigma$ which cluster especially in Rom 1-4.¹⁷ Moreover, there is a clear contrast between the ethical situation of the Roman believers described in later chapters with that of their unbelieving past as described in 1-4. This contrast includes a reversal of 1:18-32 in Rom 12:1-2 as true worship and God-honouring bodily conduct are recovered.¹⁸ There is a restoration of right speech: thanksgiving (14:6) and praise (15:6-13)

¹⁶ "Romans 12:1-2 and 15:30-32 and the Occasion of the Letter to the Romans," *CBQ* 53 (1991): 263.

¹⁷ Most relevantly, Rom. 1:5, 1:7-8, 1:16, 2:9-10; 3:4, 3:9, 3:12, 3:19-20, 3:22-23; 4:11, 16.

¹⁸ Christopher Evans, "Romans 12:1-2: The True Worship," in *Dimensions de La Vie Chrétienne (Rm 12-13)*, ed.

Lorenzo de Lorenzi (MSB 4; Rome: Abbaye de S. Paul, 1979), 7-33; Seyoon Kim, "Paul's Common Paraenesis (1 Thess. 4-5; Phil. 2-4; and Rom. 12-13): The Correspondence Between Romans 1:18-32 and 12:1-2, and the Unity of Romans 12-13," *TynB* 62 (2011): 109-39. Additionally, note the contrast between the unrighteousness (1:18) of bodies given up to impurity ($\acute{\alpha}\kappa\alpha\theta\alpha\rho\sigma\acute{\iota}\alpha$) in 1:24 with the imperative in Rom 6 to no longer offer bodies $\delta\omicron\upsilon\lambda\alpha$ τῇ $\acute{\alpha}\kappa\alpha\theta\alpha\rho\sigma\acute{\iota}\alpha$ but as slaves to righteousness (6:19).

in place of their refusal in 1:21.¹⁹ Specifically, Paul’s portrayal of Abraham’s faith—the model for Jew and Gentile alike—is presented as a reversal of 1:18-32.²⁰ Strengthened in faith, reckoning with God’s power and giving glory on its account (4:20-21), Abraham emerges as the model believing pagan.

Finally, in Rom 1:18-3:20 Paul depicts an unrighteous world characterised by judgmental and divisive behaviour (1:29-31, 2:1-5) and launches an argument in favour of putting that way of life aside. To begin with, the argument is implicit, simply locating envy, strife, pride and judgmentalism in the world of unrighteousness that stands under God’s wrath (1:18). Subsequently, it becomes explicit in the form of injunctions that recall that world and the judgment of God which invalidates human judgments: ὁ κρίνων (2:1, 14:4) must do so no longer in light of the coming judgment (2:1-5, 14:6).²¹ Finally, Paul invites reflection on οἰκτιρῆσιν τοῦ θεοῦ, describing the ways in which God has acted without reference to ethnicity or law observance but has justified freely.²² These themes in 1:18-4:25 provide the theological and rhetorical ballast for Paul’s appeals in Rom 12:3, 14:3-4 and, somewhat

¹⁹ Simon J. Gathercole, “Romans 1-5 and the ‘Weak’ and the ‘Strong’: Pauline Theology, Pastoral Rhetoric, and the Purpose of Romans,” *RevExp* 100 (2003): 43; Gaventa, “From Toxic Speech to the Redemption of Doxology in Paul’s Letter to the Romans.”

²⁰ See esp. Edward Adams, “Abraham’s Faith and Gentile Disobedience: Textual Links between Romans 1 and 4,” *JSNT* 65 (1997): 47–66. This is not to say that the weak/strong distinction maps neatly onto Jew/Gentile categories. Although the greetings in 16:3-16 clearly indicate a mixed community in Rome along those lines, the audience is predominantly characterised as Gentile.

²¹ Gathercole, “Romans 1-5 and the ‘Weak’ and the ‘Strong,’” 44. See also the appeal against strife (ἔρις) in Rom 13:13, cf. 1:29.

²² Emphatically so: δικαιούμενοι δωρεὰν τῆ ἀποτοῦ χάριτι and has done so for *all* (that is, without distinction).

climactically, 15:5-7 where the church's unity is grounded in the welcome they have received from Christ.²³

What then is the significance of these connections? First, although Campbell might be right to say that "the only argumentation that Paul needs in order to address the congregational tensions apparent in Rom 14 is Rom 14 (perhaps supported by the rest of the paraenesis in Rom 12, 13, and 15),"²⁴ Paul patently has not restricted himself to that section but draws freely on his earlier material; indeed he crafted it in part to address those tensions.

Second, Rom 1-4 can be placed back in the mouth of Paul. Campbell's re-reading allows for 2:1 to be Paul's interjection in the Teacher's script, but in fact the whole passage is most plausibly read as Pauline, given the appeals and parallels to the opening argument in the closing chapters.

Third, the opening chapters are not merely "stage setting" as Campbell caricatures the traditional reading of them. Indeed one of the strengths of this reading is that it explains why Paul goes to such lengths to describe the ungodliness that his audience has already, in some sense, left behind.

Fourth, the argument above suggests that one of Paul's pastoral priorities is to see the Roman church united and at peace. With all the language of cosmic conflict in the air, it is striking that Paul's main concern is for *church* conflict to be avoided. Should the Roman church respond to Paul's argument they will naturally beware the division that false

²³ Cf. on this point, Gaventa's helpful discussion in *When in Romans*, 88-92.

²⁴ *The Deliverance of God*, 490.

teachers bring (16:17) and embody that vision of Rom 15:8-13, glorifying God ἐν ἐνὶ στόματι (15:6).²⁵

There are, therefore, ample indications that the argument of Rom 1-4 is well-integrated within the purposes of Romans. Paul's emphasis on a common plight, shared by Jew and Gentile alike, is expounded in order to accomplish Paul's purposes; it is, in agreement with Campbell, decidedly retrospective. Paul invites his readers to consider again their plight in order to see that Paul's gospel and mission are worthy of embrace and support, having a basis in Scripture and all humanity in their scope. Furthermore, and more specifically, this retrospective glance begins the work of advancing the unity of the church and locating division, judgmentalism and boasting in a world under wrath and left behind.

b. Romans 1-4 and the Theology of Paul

Further evidence that Rom 1-4 proceeds from the mouth of Paul himself comes from parallels elsewhere in his letters. Most striking of course is Eph 4:17-19 which shares many of the key terms with 1:18-32: there is a darkening of mental or moral faculties,²⁶ and a related handing over to depravity.²⁷ Whatever view of the authorship of Ephesians one

²⁵ They will also embrace Paul's Spanish cause, which is another beneficiary of the argument of Rom 1-4. If the revelation of God's righteousness is for Jew and Gentile, and is needful for both Jew and Gentile, and if God is not the sort to discriminate between them, then a mission to Spain by the commissioned apostle naturally follows.

²⁶ In Rom 1:21 the verb σκοτίζομαι appears (cf. 11:10, citing Ps 69); in Eph 4:18 it is σκοτόω, with the near synonyms καρδία and διάνοια as the stated objects.

²⁷ παραδίδωμι (1:24, 26, 28, Eph 4:19). Granted, the subject of the verb varies. In Eph 4, it is the Gentiles who handed themselves over to these things. The context of Ephesians, however, makes it less likely that this is an intentional step away from the theodical implications of Rom 1. Rather, Paul accents the Gentiles' agency as a counterpoint to his injunction to exercise their newly-recovered moral faculties by putting off that old self.

takes, this parallel is significant. If it is Pauline, as Campbell argues,²⁸ then it is a curious willingness on Paul's part to plagiarise the Teacher's text.²⁹ If it is not considered authentic, then it becomes clear that at least one deutero-Pauline author took Rom 1 to be proto-Pauline and carried the language into their own work.

More broadly, it is worth recalling that one of Campbell's chief concerns about the compatibility of Rom 1:18-3:20 with Paul's theology is the apparent admission of moral capacity therein, or at least a contradictory blend of moral capacity and incapacity. However, there are number of other passages which express the human plight in similar terms, where the shadow of the Teacher is nowhere to be seen.

In Eph 2:1-4, Paul offers perhaps his fullest account of the human plight, explicitly invoking behaviour that is κατὰ τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ κόσμου τούτου and κατὰ τὸν ἄρχοντα τῆς ἐξουσίας τοῦ ἀέρος, τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ νῦν ἐνεργοῦντος. However, our author has no embarrassment about including within that account a reference to transgressions and sins (2:1) or about concluding that ἡμεθα τέκνα φύσει ὀργῆς. Indeed, encapsulating the tension in a single phrase, Paul speaks of the spirit τοῦ νῦν ἐνεργοῦντος ἐν τοῖς υἱοῖς τῆς ἀπειθείας.³⁰ A further indication that these are tensions to be maintained *within* Paul's

The depravity in view in both cases is characterised as ἀκαθαρσία (Rom 1:24, Eph 4:19) and πλεονεξία (1:29, Eph 4:19). A third term in Eph 4:19, ἀσέλγεια, appears in Rom 13:13-14 where Paul is once more exhorting believers to put on Christ and exercise self-control in contrast to a licentious world.

²⁸ Campbell, *Framing Paul*, 336–38.

²⁹ It is perhaps telling that there is no mention of the passage in *The Deliverance of God*.

³⁰ Likewise, Paul speaks in 2 Cor 3 of the god of this age who has blinded τὰ νοήματα τῶν ἀπίστων. Campbell does discuss Eph 2:1-3 at the very end of *Deliverance* as the final “loose end.” He grants that wrath features, but describes the situation against which that wrath stands as one “characterised by a hostile, evil ruler” and “sinful, fleshly desires” to which humanity is enslaved. “Moreover, the situation underlying God's displeasure

theology comes in Tit 3:3, where the former life is once again characterised by a combination of disobedience (ἀπειθής, cf. Rom 1:30) and enslavement. Once again, disputed authorship makes no odds: either way an early Christian author relies on an account of the human plight that unites elements which the apocalyptic reading is often determined to set in opposition.

The net result is that Rom 1:18-32 sounds rather more Pauline than Campbell is willing to grant. In particular, it is striking that the epistemological and moral situation of those described is routinely complex. Campbell's account of 1:18-32 assumes a simplistic scenario in which God can be known and sinners are held accountable for their wilful disregard of self-evident truths. However, he has screened out the references to the epistemological effects of sin in Rom 1:18-32 (notably 1:21 and 1:28, but also 1:18),³¹ what Stephen Chester calls the "clouding of perception."³² Once those references are integrated, though, Rom 1-3

is one for which humanity is not held fully (i.e. "strongly") accountable, although neither is humanity without accountability," *The Deliverance of God*, 930. It is hard to see how multiple agents necessarily provide mitigation, or why Campbell is so unwilling to concede a more prominent place for human accountability. He provides an 'apocalyptic' context for wrath in which it is the reflex of love rather than God's permanent disposition, but no-one exegetes Rom 1 as if that were his disposition. As much as anywhere, Rom 1 describes God's wrath as a reflex to evil (1:18), and sets it in the context of the riches of God's forbearance (2:6), and his saving benevolence (1:18 follows 1:16-17 after all). Nevertheless, when Romans or Ephesians comes to define the redemption/deliverance God brings, they emphasise forgiveness of or atonement for sins (Eph 1:7, Rom 3:21-26).

³¹ In *The Deliverance of God* there is no discussion of their significance and only passing reference to 1:21.

Elsewhere Campbell rightly says that "Paul wishes to emphasise the sinfulness of humanity, and he is well aware that this sinfulness extends through the human mind (see esp. 8:5-8, 13, 12:2)" but again references to 1:18-21 are notably absent. "Christ and the Church in Paul: A 'Post-New Perspective' Account," 130.

³² *Conversion at Corinth: Perspectives on Conversion in Paul's Theology and the Corinthian Church*, SNTW (London: T&T Clark, 2005), 190n141.

can be seen to resonate with some of Campbell's epistemological concerns, as I have argued elsewhere.³³ Paul is not reciting a prospective two-stage evangelistic strategy in Rom 1:18-32 based on natural revelation, but is inviting his audience to acknowledge their prior unrighteousness by faith, in the epistemological light of Paul's gospel.³⁴ Within that account Paul accents the ways in which a rejection of the Creator leads to a cognitive and moral incapacity that only the gospel has the power to undo. As Griffith-Jones has eloquently suggested, the letter can itself be seen as an exercise in the moral and epistemological renewal of the church: "The letter to the Romans was therapeutic; Paul set out to heal the *voũç* of the letter's recipients through and during its reception." Paul does so, leading them from the "unreckoning minds" of 1:28 and 2:1 in which Paul "located the origin of the Romans' divisions" to the renewed minds of 12:2 and the exhortations beyond.³⁵

³³ Shaw, "Apocalyptic and Covenant," 158–62. They also resonate with Campbell's concern that categories of freedom and causality are wrongly assumed to exist "in zero-sum relationships," "Christ and the Church in Paul: A 'Post-New Perspective' Account," 132.

³⁴ Adapting Mark Seifrid's apposite phrase in "Unrighteous by Faith: Apostolic Proclamation in Romans 1:18-3:20," in *Justification and Variegated Nomism Vol. 2: The Paradoxes of Paul*, ed. D. A. Carson, Peter T. O'Brien, and Mark A. Seifrid (WUNT 2.181; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 105–46. Cf. the comment by John Barclay (provoked at least in part by Campbell's "implausible" reading of Rom 1-4): "Despite the surface impression that Paul's reasoning in Romans 1-3 runs from plight to solution, there are several indications here that his analysis of the plight in such terms arises from the good news itself." Barclay, *Paul and the Gift*, 474n62.

³⁵ Robin Griffith-Jones, "Beyond Reasonable Hope of Recognition? *Prosōpopoeia* in Romans 1:18-3:8," in *Beyond Old and New Perspectives on Paul: Reflections on the Work of Douglas Campbell*, ed. Chris Tilling (Cascade Books, 2014), 173.

c. *The Nature of the Transition Between Rom 1-4 and Rom 5*

Recalling the significance of this in de Boer's account, it is worth reproducing his tabulation of the evidence.³⁶

	Chs. 1-4	Chs. 6-8
Faith (πίστις)	22	0
To believe (πιστεύω)	9	1
Work/s (ἔργον)	8	0
Boasting (καύχ- words)	4	0
Righteousness (δικαιοσύνη)	14	6
To justify (δικαιόω)	10	4
To sin (ἁμαρτάνω)	3	0
Transgression (παράβασις)	2	0
Trespass (παράπτωμα)	1	0
Sinful action/s (ἁμάρτημα)	1	0
Wrath (ὀργή)	6	0
Judgment (κρίμα)	3	0

Although this shift in vocabulary is well documented,³⁷ it is also slightly exaggerated here. In fact ἁμαρτάνω appears once in 6:15, the cognate ἁμαρτωλός appears in 3:7, 5:8, 5:19 and 7:13, and we might add δικαίωμα, which appears once in 1-4 (1:32) and once in 6-8 (8:4). Similarly, although de Boer makes reference to forensic language in 8:1 and 8:34,³⁸ he omits κατάκριμα from the table (absent from 1-4, present in 8:1) and the verb κατακρίνω (once in 1-4: 2:1; twice in 6-8: 8:3 and 8:34).

That said, a fairly marked decline in the use of πίστις, πιστεύω, and ἔργον must be

³⁶ *Defeat of Death*, 148.

³⁷ See e.g. N. A. Dahl, "Two Notes on Romans 5," *ST 5* (1951): 37-48; Robin Scroggs, "Paul as Rhetorician: Two Homilies in Romans 1-11," in *Jews, Greeks and Christians: Religious Cultures in Late Antiquity: Essays in Honor of William David Davies*, ed. Robert G. Hamerton-Kelly and Robin Scroggs (Leiden: Brill, 1976), 271-98.

³⁸ De Boer, *The Defeat of Death*, 153.

granted and the question becomes: what is the significance of that decline? As we have seen, a common assumption, present in Schweitzer and de Boer especially, is that the decline reflects Paul's movement back to a new beginning, setting out the gospel a second time in terms irreconcilable with the first.³⁹ Several factors tell strongly against this however. First, the sheer improbability of Schweitzer's scenario: that Paul thought he would endear himself to a new audience and garner their support by simply setting two self-evidently conflicting systems side by side. Second, although the exact connection is not always clear, Paul signals a transition from one passage to another clearly enough and, at the key moments, he signals development, rather than duplication, of the argument (5:1 οὖν, 5:12 διὰ τοῦτο, 6:1 οὖν).⁴⁰ More specifically, Rom 5:1-11 and 5:12-21 clarify the relationship between 1-4 and 5-8 in ways that make it impossible for Paul to be devaluing forensic concepts in what follows.

i. Romans 5:1-11: A Hope Built on Rom 1-4

To begin with 5:1-11, Paul is clearly drawing a line under, but not through, his discussion of the means of justification. That one is justified by faith (δικαιωθέντες οὖν ἐκ πίστεως) is now the given, the circumstance under which the accompanying blessings can be discussed. The opening verses highlight those blessings: peace with God, access into grace

³⁹ Cf. Campbell: Regarding the problem posed by δικαιώ language in 5:1 for "Justification advocates": "they need to explain its sudden and almost complete disappearance and the apparent shifts in the actual categories that Paul is using from Romans 5 onwards," Campbell, *The Deliverance of God*, 822.

⁴⁰ For all his preference for participatory categories, E. P. Sanders warns against any approach which plays sections of Romans off against one another, for "it leaves out of account Paul's obvious attempt to make the argument flow," citing 5:1, 18, and 8:1 which "returns to the theme of 5:16-18. In the latter, Christ's death leads to acquittal and life instead of *condemnation*, while in 8:1 being 'in Christ' is said to result in one's not being condemned. The juridical and participatory statements are not in fact kept in water-tight compartments," *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 487 (emph. orig.).

and the hope of glory. If the theme of the section is rightly characterised as hope, and if Rom 5:1-11 provides something of a bookend with 8:18-39,⁴¹ it nonetheless introduces a hope that is grounded in the reconciliation and justification explicitly referred to in 5:10-11. Manifestly, that past reconciliation is described in terms that echo Rom 1-4. There is the prospect of future wrath (5:9, cf. 2:5, 8) against the ungodly (5:6, cf. 1:18, 4:5) and sinners (5:8, cf. 3:7, 5:19), from which only the justification ἐν τῷ αἵματι αὐτοῦ and ἐκ πίστεως rescues. Romans 1-4 is therefore foundational to the hope that begins to be expounded in Rom 5-8.

The atonement theology of Rom 3:21-26 is also interpreted in a significant way: as Paul recalls the death of Christ in 5:6-8 he sees divine love on display in him, especially in the fact that he dies for his enemies. When we add to that the gift of the Spirit in 5:5 making that love known, it is clear that Rom 5:1-11 has its own Trinitarian dynamic. Campbell, however, does not address many of these features, preferring, in a note on 5:1-2, to argue that δικαιοθέντες is better understood as a ‘forensic-liberative’ deliverance.⁴² This alludes to an earlier attempt to distinguish ‘forensic-retributive’ acts (which lead either to condemnation or acquittal) from ‘forensic non-retributive’ acts (resulting either in imprisonment or release/life) and which is deployed to interpret Rom 3:24, 5:1, 8:1 and 8:33-34.⁴³

⁴¹ See Moo’s tabulation of the vocabulary shared between 5:1-11 and 8:18-39 but which is largely absent from the intervening material in *Romans*, 293. This tells very strongly against de Boer’s efforts to place 5:1-11 with Rom 1-4.

⁴² *The Deliverance of God*, 822–25.

⁴³ *ibid.*, 659–663. Forensic-retributive verdicts accord with the presence or absence of qualifying criteria, whereas forensic non-retributive actions set those aside, either to the detriment or the benefit of their object. According to Campbell, “it is not uncommon to find God acting in the Old Testament to liberate those who have been held captive irrespective of whether they actually deserve that liberation” and he argues that Paul

In defence of this, Campbell dismisses the implications of 1:18-3:20—“we have already seen... [they] are irrelevant” —and argues that 3:23 characterises humanity as “universally enslaved and entrapped.”⁴⁴ That is a curiously passive depiction of humanity in light of the actual wording of 3:23 and at any rate proves too little. While it is true that humanity cannot meet the criteria for acquittal, the flow of Romans thus far makes it impossible that God can continue to overlook his people’s sin. God is *against* justifying the ungodly and, despite often showing intertextual sensitivity, Campbell does not wrestle with how Paul presents God to have done the very thing he condemns in others and forswears himself (Exod 23:7, Prov 17:15, 24:24, Isa 5:23). When we recognise Paul’s adamance that God has not acted unjustly in justifying the ungodly (all the while maintaining, as Campbell rightly does, that the ungodly only contribute their ungodliness) and that the outcome is expressed in terms of justification *and not condemnation* (5:12-21, 8:1), it becomes clear that the Pauline data does not lie all that comfortably in Campbell’s procrustean bed.

ii. *Rom 5:12-21: Hope, Righteousness, and Life Built on Rom 1-4*

Turning to 5:12-21, this complex and much-debated passage makes a rather simple comparison: Just as sin came into the world, and death with it, through Adam, so now, just as surely and much more wonderfully, life and justification have come through Christ. Paul thereby draws out the significance of the work of Christ already discussed in 5:1-11.⁴⁵

describes an equivalent deliverance in 3:24 and 5:1,” *ibid.*, 661. Aside from the immediate context of Rom 3, the ways in which the forgiveness of sin features more prominently in promises of the New Exodus (e.g. Isa 40:1-2), compared to the first Exodus, suggests that Isaianic expectation could best be described as forensic-retributive.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 663.

⁴⁵ See e.g. Moo, *Romans*, 316-317.

The much-debated διὰ τοῦτο may have 5:11 or 5:6-11 for an antecedent. Either way, it is best understood in its usual retrospective sense, where the foregoing provides the grounds or cause. It is on account of the past event of reconciliation accomplished by Christ that Paul can launch his comparison: Just as sin and death flow from Adam, so too, life and justification come through Christ. In this way 5:12-21 builds on 5:1-11: sounding a note of confidence in light of the gracious gift and denying that the law is a means of securing those blessings. The argument that 5:12-21 itself constitutes the grounds of the boasts of 5:1-11 often supposes that Paul is simply setting out a theology of headship, losing sight of the specific comparison Paul is making (as the apostle himself does for a time!).

In the course of sketching his typological history of humanity, Paul continues to locate the law in some sense on the side of sin and death in 5:20-21, just as he had in 3:20 and 4:16; indeed this is a further note of continuity throughout Rom 1-8. The law is unable to justify (Rom 1-4), nor is it able to subdue the flesh or produce righteous living (Rom 6-8), but in both respects what the law was unable to, God has accomplished through Christ.⁴⁶

To this evidence of continuity rather than contradiction we can add two further points. First, like 5:1-11, 5:12-21 contains a number of terms which tie it quite closely to Rom 1-4. The sentence that hangs over humanity from the time of Adam is that of condemnation (5:16, 18) and death (5:14, cf. 1:32).⁴⁷ This is true whether people sin apart from/before the law or under it, in which case the only difference is that their sinning has the special character of transgression (4:15, 5:13). The solution, correspondingly, is the justification

⁴⁶ That the law provides a foil throughout is indicated by the even distribution of references across the two sections: there are 35 references to νόμος in Rom 1-4, and 33 in 5-8.

⁴⁷ Although this is the first use of κατάκριμα in Romans, it summarises well the δικάσιμα τοῦ θεοῦ which pronounces death on sinful behaviour, cf. also 6:23.

(5:16) of the sinner which is emphatically a gift expressed in a gratuitous glut of terms—*χάρισμα* 5:15, 16; *χάρις* 5:15, 16, 20, 21; *δωρεά* 5:15, 17, *δῶρημα* 5:16⁴⁸—which clearly echo 3:24 and 4:4.

The parallel between *δωρεάν τῆ αὐτοῦ χάριτι* in 3:24 and *ἡ δωρεὰ ἐν χάριτι* in 5:15 is especially close. Barclay’s tantalisingly brief discussion of 5:12-21 rightly argues that the abundance of grace is not the chief point of the passage; rather, that aspect serves to accent the “incongruity of the gift with the human condition” in which sin multiplies. That is, Rom 5:12-21 addresses God’s gift to the same situation as 3:25 and 5:6, 8. There is little reason, therefore, to adopt de Boer’s view that 5:12-21 “marks a shift from predominantly *forensic* terminology and motifs to predominantly *cosmological* ones.”⁴⁹

Second, the apocalyptic reading has frequently found a universalism in Rom 5:12-21 and set that in tension with a forensic model such as one finds in Rom 2: 6-11.⁵⁰ The appeal of this

⁴⁸ As Barclay says, “we find here an extraordinary concentration of gift-terminology, whose variation seems to be more rhetorical than substantial.” Barclay, *Paul and the Gift*, 495.

⁴⁹ de Boer, *The Defeat of Death*, 152. In his view, a CJAE-flavoured protasis in 5:12a-b is met with a similarly cosmological apodosis in 5:21 and this cosmological frame supposedly circumscribes the more forensic intervening material. By far the more likely, and the more commonly held view, however, is that the apodosis arrives in 5:18-19, with the οὖν signalling the resumption of the argument after the foregoing material.

Structurally, 5:21 is a subordinate ἵνα clause within a distinct section of the argument (the δέ in 5:20 marking development) placing the law onto the Adam-Christ timeline. Nor is de Boer’s argument that 5:19 modifies the forensic language of 5:18 in a more cosmological direction persuasive. For all that there is a degree of passivity in the statement that humanity ἀμαρτωλοὶ κατεστάθησαν, they are nonetheless ἀμαρτωλοί.

⁵⁰ E.g. Campbell on 5:12-21 (with a somewhat incongruous reliance on a priori assumptions): “[Paul’s] discussion is never qualified or filled with conditions. And this seems reasonable. God’s decisive act on behalf of humanity in Christ is not likely to be qualified, limited, or inadequate.” “Christ and the Church in Paul: A ‘Post-New Perspective’ Account,” 128. cf. de Boer, “Paul and Apocalyptic Eschatology,” 371.

argument is obvious, but it is fatally flawed, for, as Sanders argues: “Paul too often mentions those who are perishing or those who will be destroyed on the day of the Lord.”⁵¹ Nor is that backdrop absent from Romans, even if the usual texts are cited from elsewhere. As we have seen, Rom 5:12-21 is embedded within an argument which insists upon faith as the means of justification (3:21-4:25) and which will shortly argue that it is the baptized who will live with Christ and share in his resurrection (6:5, 7).⁵² Indeed, even within 5:12-21 there is a significant nod in that direction at 5:17 where it is οἱ τὴν περισσείαν τῆς χάριτος καὶ τῆς δωρεᾶς τῆς δικαιοσύνης λαμβάνοντες who shall reign in life.⁵³ Broadening out still further, the letter continues to set its theological vision against the backdrop of a world that is under God’s wrath, a world that continues to exist outside the walls of the church and whose values are now to be resisted (6:19-21, 8:8-9, 13:12-14, 16:16-20).

The best explanation for the universalism of Rom 5:12-21, therefore, is that it is the same brand of universalism one meets in Rom 1-4; a universalism which offers salvation to all who believe, without distinction; a universalism expressly designed to consolidate unity *within* the people of God, and to garner support for a mission which has the whole world in its scope.

⁵¹ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 473.

⁵² “On the one side, faith as the *sine qua non* of justification; on the other, membership of the professing community as the assurance of salvation.” N. T. Wright, “Towards a Biblical View of Universalism,” *Them* 4 (1979): 55.

⁵³ Additionally, when the terminology of κατάκριμα and δικαίωμα resurfaces in 8:1, it is explicitly those who are “in Christ Jesus” (8:1) and who walk according to the Spirit (8:4) who fear no condemnation.

d. Conclusion

Chapter 11 has engaged the arguments of Campbell and de Boer that an apocalyptic Paul requires some distance between the apostle and Rom 1-4. We have argued, in response, that it is impossible to sever Rom 1-4 from the letter, given the ways in which it is woven into the argument and can be seen to support its pastoral purposes. Nor can Rom 1-4 be cast into the mouth of an opponent, given parallels elsewhere in the Pauline corpus. Within Romans, it is implausible to argue that either 5:1-11 or 5:12-21 represent the launch of a second altogether different account of the human plight or of God's response to it. Rather, they represent a shift towards the next stage in Paul's argument building upon the foundation of Rom 1-4. This is the significance of the decline in forensic terminology and best accounts for its presence in 5:1-11, 12-21 and its reappearance in Rom 8.

CHAPTER 12: ENGAGING THE THEME OF CONFLICT IN ROM 1-8

The previous chapter focussed upon apocalyptic efforts to set Rom 1-4 apart from Rom 5-8 in order to defend an account of the plight based on oppressive powers and a solution characterised by a universal liberation from them. In the next two chapters we turn our attention to Gaventa's efforts to reach the same theological conclusion by different exegetical means. Here in chapter 12 we will consider the argument that motifs of cosmic warfare suffuse Rom 1-8, and in chapter 13 we will broaden out to examine the wider characterisation of sin, death and the flesh in Rom 1-8.

We have already discussed the references to conflict between God and humanity in 5:1-11 and the overcoming of their enmity. Here we focus instead on the terms and passages which, across a range of articles, Gaventa cites as evidence of a wider cosmic conflict between God and hostile powers.

a. παραδίδωμι in Rom 1:18-32

Central to Gaventa's attempt to read Rom 1:18-32 "apocalyptically" is the argument that Paul's use of παραδίδωμι introduces an element of conflict. The argument substantially rests on the observation that in the LXX the handing over "virtually always involves handing over to another agent,"⁵⁴ and, more specifically, the "turning someone or something over into the custody of another or to surrender in a military context."⁵⁵ The

⁵⁴ Gaventa, "God Handed Them Over: Reading Romans 1:18-32 Apocalyptically," 46. The texts cited cluster around the conquest of the land (handed over to the Israelites) and the exile of Israel (handed over to the Babylonians). As Gaventa notes, in the latter instances "as in Romans 1, there is an explicit connection between faithfulness or disobedience and the 'handing over.'" Ibid., 45.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

result is twofold. First, we are to read the things to which humanity are handed over as active agents: “uncleanness, dishonourable passions and deformed mind are instances of synecdoche; they refer to the anti-god powers, most especially the power of Sin.”⁵⁶ Second, God’s handing over of humanity is elevated to “an event in God’s conflict with the anti-god powers.”⁵⁷ He has handed them over to “the lordship of another... an as yet unnamed something or someone [who] challenges God for humanity.”⁵⁸

In response we can first agree with Gaventa that Rom 1 does not describe God’s action as merely permissive (allowing humanity to pursue its own desires), and nor is it privative (removing restraint). These common readings do not account for the prominence of the ‘handing over’ language to which Gaventa rightly draws attention. On the other hand, there are good reasons to think that what Gaventa calls the forensic reading (“in that God hands humanity over to judgment”⁵⁹) is to be preferred to her own emphasis on anti-god powers. The whole section, after all, is bookended with the revelation of God’s wrath (1:18) and the passing of sentence (1:32). This context enables us to identify the sense of παραδίδωμι here. As the lexica frequently identify, in non-biblical usage the verb can refer to the handing over of a city or people group to an enemy or to justice/punishment, in addition to more technical senses of handing over/transmitting teaching.⁶⁰ The biblical usage within the prophets is more instructive, however, given the parallel to Rom 1 already

⁵⁶ Ibid., 49.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 47–48.

⁵⁸ “The Cosmic Power of Sin in Paul’s Letter to the Romans,” 233. cf. Brittany Wilson, who follows Gaventa closely and posits a choice between humans “handed over to God’s judgment because of their individual transgressions” and “humans... handed over to a third party who is actively fighting against God.” “Rereading Romans 1-3 Apocalyptically: A Response to Douglas Campbell’s ‘Rereading Romans 1-3,’” 189.

⁵⁹ Gaventa, “God Handed Them Over: Reading Romans 1:18-32 Apocalyptically,” 44.

⁶⁰ Cf. 1 Cor 11:2, 23 and 15:3. See L-S 1308; M-M 482-482 and the instructive discussion in NIDNTTE 622-627.

highlighted by Gaventa,⁶¹ where God punishes disobedience with ‘handing over.’⁶² To that extent at least, the context is forensic in that the handing over has a retributive and punitive aspect.

What, then, of the fact that παραδίδωμι usually has a personal agent as the recipient? It is by no means clear that this feature necessarily activates a conflict motif. Again, the biblical usage is instructive: to say that God hands Israel over to the Babylonians does not place a conflict between God and Babylon in the foreground, or even require it.⁶³ Nor does the verb’s usual usage require the reader to think that anti-god powers are being highlighted here. That might be the case if we had an example of the most frequently occurring idiom in the LXX—the verb + the prepositional phrase εἰς χεῖρας—but that is not present here.

Somewhat closer to Rom 1 are those variations which draw more attention to the results of the handing over, i.e. handing over to the sword, slaughter, distress or destruction (Mic 6:14, 16, Isa 34:2, 65:12, Jer 15:4). These terms are not simply synecdochical for the conquering powers; rather, they emphasise the *nature* of the punishment. Even if one grants that in those cases an agent is implicit—*someone* is wielding the sword after all—that agent is derived from the context and not from the syntax. For the closest parallel to Rom 1 we must turn to Acts 7:40-42 where, in Stephen’s speech, Israel is handed over (παρέδωκεν 7:42) to false worship in response to her idolatry. Although a different verb is used, Ps 80:13

⁶¹ Citing Jer 21:10, 22:25, 24:8, 39:28, Ezek 7:21, 11:9, 16:27, 21:31, 23:28; 25:4.

⁶² This is not to say that there is an allusion in Rom 1 to the exile, although there is an additional parallel in that humanity’s handing over to punishment is ended by the death of Jesus ὃς παρεδόθη διὰ τὰ παραπτώματα ἡμῶν (Rom 4:25) cf. the servant of Isaiah 53:6 of whom it is said κύριος παρέδωκεν αὐτὸν ταῖς ἀμαρτίαις ἡμῶν.

⁶³ More clearly still, to say that God hands over the Canaanites or the promised land to Israel implies no tension whatsoever between God and Israel (See e.g. Josh 2:24, 24:8).

(LXX) speaks of God giving his people over to their hearts' pursuits. Here, as in Acts 7 and, I would suggest, Rom 1, the context positively tells against a role for a third agent.

Indeed, to go looking for a third agent in this narrative is to miss the striking rhetorical force of Paul's argument as it relates to agency. On the one hand Paul maintains a delicate balance between human and divine agency, as demonstrated by the threefold exchange and the threefold handing over. On the other he highlights God's "personal action whereby, without withdrawing his presence, he gives the condemned what they want—with the reward ironically corresponding in some way to the sin of idolatry."⁶⁴

The effect is to affirm the truth of Gaventa's own striking phrase: God is revealed as the one "who will not be taken for granted." The support that Rom 1:18-32 provides for that assertion certainly allows us once more to affirm some aspects of the apocalyptic reading: there is a theocentric emphasis on matters of agency; Paul does not preach his gospel in a foundationalist, prospective manner assuming uninhibited epistemologically competence. Crucially, though, it also must be denied that such a state of affairs is inconsistent with unbelievers facing the prospect of judgment.

b. ὄπλα in Rom 6:12-14

The second text to consider more briefly is 6:12-14 where Paul exhorts the Roman church to present their members as ὄπλα to God. As an alternative to the translation 'instruments,'

⁶⁴ Simon J. Gathercole, "Sin in God's Economy: Agencies in Rom 1 and 7," in *Divine and Human Agency in Paul and His Cultural Environment*, ed. John M. G. Barclay and Simon J. Gathercole, LNTS 335 (London: T&T Clark, 2006), 166. Käsemann captures the same irony thus: "Men have to endure what they wanted to attain—they are themselves their guilt and its cost." *Romans*, 47. The same dynamic is present in Acts 7: idolatrous Israel is handed over by her God to her "gods."

‘weapons’ has been in use since the KJV,⁶⁵ and there is a strong case for adopting it here. The use of the term in Rom 13:12, τὰ ὅπλα τοῦ φωτός, makes best sense taken as a military image, as Silva argues, in the context of Paul’s mixed metaphor about armour worn in the day to combat the darkness.⁶⁶ The way of life commended by Paul, then, clearly has a character which is illuminated by drawing down metaphors from a semantic field of battle, and in this metaphorical setting, it is either in the service of sin or of God that believers are to wield their weapons. That said, the combatants in view here are believers; the reference to weapons in 6:12-14 does not in itself constitute evidence of “a conflict between God and anti-God powers.”⁶⁷

c. ἀφορμή in Rom 7:8, 11

Equally briefly, we can consider the term ἀφορμή in Rom 7:8 and 7:11. A consistent apocalyptic gloss for this term, where it appears in Rom 7 and also in Gal 5:13-14 is “a military base of operations.”⁶⁸ For Gaventa “a stronger translation [sc. than opportunity] is needed, given that the term refers to the starting point for an expedition,”⁶⁹ but BDAG, which she cites, describes the diachronic broadening out of that literal sense such that, by the time of the texts that fall within BDAG’s scope, ἀφορμή can be defined quite generally

⁶⁵ The marginal notes state that the Greek means ‘arms, or weapons.’ The Geneva Bible has ‘weapons’; of more recent translations only the CEB, HCSB and the J. B Phillips NT have ‘weapons’ in the main text, the NRSV and NASB have ‘weapons’ in the marginalia.

⁶⁶ NIDNTTE 525. Likewise the imagery in 2 Cor 6:7.

⁶⁷ “Neither Height nor Depth: Discerning the Cosmology of Romans,” 265. Such a conclusion could yet be established by the role sin plays in Rom 6, but that is a question we will return to in chapter 13.

⁶⁸ Martyn, *Galatians*, 485, with references to Rom 7 in n47. De Boer quotes this approvingly in *Galatians*, 337.

⁶⁹ “The Cosmic Power of Sin in Paul’s Letter to the Romans,” 232, n11.

as “a set of convenient circumstances for carrying out some purpose.”⁷⁰ That sense is confirmed by Paul’s other uses of the term where opportunities are afforded or denied to people (2 Cor 5:12, 11:12), or where the Galatians are commanded not to afford an opportunity to the flesh (5:13).⁷¹

d. τίς καθ’ ἡμῶν; *Hostile Opposition in Rom 8:31-39*

When Cranfield suggests “the words ὁ θεὸς ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν are a concise summary of the gospel,”⁷² Gaventa agrees but wants to add that so too are the words τίς καθ’ ἡμῶν; for here is the apocalyptic gospel *in nuce*: the powers, enumerated in the passage that follows, and their violent but futile conflict with God. Evidence for this comes from the use of παραδίδωμι once more in 8:32; the factors listed in 8:35, several of which “are directly or indirectly associated with conflicting powers, most notably ‘the sword;’” and the list in 8:38, “a varied one, but at least some of these agents are understood to be actual powers (especially angels and rulers and ‘powers’).”⁷³ Correspondingly, forensic elements are

⁷⁰ BDAG 158B. De Boer is more sensitive to that broadened sense and so sees no reference to conflict in Rom 7. On the strength of the context of Gal 5:13-14, however, (the conflict between Spirit and flesh) he argues that in that instance “the military connotations of the term need not... be neglected,” *Galatians*, 335. For a careful argument in favour of neglecting those connotations in Galatians, see Rodrigo J. Morales, *The Spirit and the Restoration of Israel: New Exodus and New Creation Motifs in Galatians*, (WUNT 2.282; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 197–201.

⁷¹ It should be noted that even in Galatians, it is not the flesh but the believers who would be seizing the opportunity. If a military reference were to be sought in Rom 7 then the uses of ἀντιστρατεύομαι and αἰχμαλωτίζω are the stronger candidates, although they are less commented upon, perhaps because the subject is less easily interpreted, and at any rate they seem to describe an internal conflict whose root cause is the ‘body of death’ (7:24).

⁷² *Romans 1-8*, 435.

⁷³ “Neither Height nor Depth: Discerning the Cosmology of Romans,” 274.

considered less weighty. In relation to 8:33-35, Gaventa notes that “it is true that the first and second of these questions may be taken as forensic. It must be acknowledged however, that the passage drives as a unity towards the last question about separation.”⁷⁴ Likewise, as we noted in Part 1, on the basis of 8:1 and 8:33-34, de Boer grants that forensic categories have not been “given up or left behind” in Rom 5-8, but that nevertheless cosmological categories and motifs “circumscribe and, to a large extent, overtake” them.⁷⁵

We will first seek to identify the nature of potential antagonists in 8:38-39, then turn to consider the relationship between 8:38-39 and 8:31-37.

Although some would argue that the entire list of factors in 8:38-39 refer to personal and hostile agents, Gaventa is more measured: “The list is a varied one, but at least some of these agents are to be understood as actual powers (especially angels and rulers and ‘powers’).”⁷⁶ Of the list, the least likely candidates are the pairings of life/death, things present/to come, and height/depth.⁷⁷ The most natural reading of ὕψωμα and βάθος is that

⁷⁴ Ibid., 275.

⁷⁵ de Boer, *The Defeat of Death*, 153. They therefore occupy a curious space: overtaken but not left behind.

⁷⁶ “Neither Height nor Depth: Discerning the Cosmology of Romans,” 274. See e.g. C. K. Barrett, *The Epistle to the Romans*, Black’s New Testament Commentaries (London: A&C Black, 1967), 174, for whom all ten are “astrological powers.” Walter Wink is often credited with this view, although he argues that references to height/depth and things present/to come are simply references to space and time, alongside cosmic powers. *Naming the Powers: The Language of Power in the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 47–50.

⁷⁷ See e.g. Cranfield for whom such a reading “is far from being natural.” *Romans 1-8*, 443. In light of the difficulty of making every term mentioned refer to a spiritual being, it makes better sense to take the phrase οὔτε τις κτίσις ἑτέρα to include the foregoing in the category of created things, without necessarily ascribing personhood to them (as per the NRSV: “nor anything else in all creation”). The reference to the creation here has a clear rationale in context: the Creator and subjugator of creation cannot be thwarted by his creation.

Paul mentions height and depth to express the confidence that there is no corner of creation that bears any threat to the believer's confidence.⁷⁸ That would correspond both with Paul's use of spatial imagery elsewhere (cf. Eph 3:18) and the only other biblical use of the terms in Isa 7:11.

As for the rest of the list, we should note here that a reference to physical death is to be found in the immediate context (8:35-36), and that it is paired with 'life,' which also invites a less mythologised reading.⁷⁹ In the case of the second pair, ἄγγελοι and ἀρχαί, and the reference to powers, δυνάμεις,⁸⁰ the correspondence with Paul's usage elsewhere compels us to see them as references to spiritual beings.⁸¹ By contrast, the absence of any

⁷⁸ Contra BDAG's argument that ὑψωμα and βάθος are conceived as "astral spirits," on the basis of a context addressing "transcendental forces" and a parallel expression in PGM IV, 575. Although it is true that the context speaks of "transcendent forces," it remains a leap to get from there to "astral spirits," while the proposed parallel in the papyri is inexact, for it also contains a more explicit reference to stars, BDAG 162B.

⁷⁹ Jewett records and rightly rejects various attempts to find a negative sense in which to take 'life' as a potential threat, *Romans*, 551.

⁸⁰ As Jewett notes, part of the explanation of why this appears unpaired may be that it is added in anticipation of the wordplay in 8:39—the powers that are powerless to separate.

⁸¹ ἄγγελοι and ἀρχαί are two terms among several Paul uses for beings in the spiritual realm. Perhaps Paul chooses these two for their alliterative quality. The pairing of ἀρχαί with ἄγγελοι makes a reference to earthly rulers (as per Rom 13:3) less likely in the case of the former, although see the good case made in Jewett, *Romans*, 552. The other polarised pairs in the list make a contrast between malevolent and benevolent spiritual beings possible, but Paul's usage does not offer the kind of consistency that could confirm it (2 Cor 12:7 providing some firm counter evidence). BDAG's suggestion that ἄγγελοι are "serving spirit-powers" compared to the ἀρχαί viewed as ruling powers is impossible to establish, BDAG 8B.

supporting evidence makes very unlikely any reference to spiritual powers in the mention of things present and things to come.⁸²

How then does this list relate to 8:31-37 in general and to the questions of 8:33-35 in particular? Three proposals merit consideration. The first, from Gaventa, is that 8:38-39 offer a crucial insight into the true human plight. Although the section may begin with two forensic questions in 8:33-34, the third in 8:35 launches a move away from those categories and the remainder of the passage substantially concerns itself with those powers that conspire to separate God's people from his love. In response, it is not at all clear that 8:33-39 serves that function. Of the ten factors named in 8:38-39, only three can be described without controversy as "anti-god powers." Given that it functions as the positive component of a pair, ζωή can hardly be a hostile antagonist. A better explanation of the list is to be sought.

Additionally, there are references throughout 8:31-39 that root its argument in the forensic categories of the rest of the letter. The parallels in terminology between 5:1-11 and 8:31-39 are regularly observed,⁸³ and they combine to make a parallel argument: there is assurance in the face of suffering on the basis of God's love expressed in the handing over of his Son ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν.⁸⁴ That God's love is so firmly located in the context of his Son's justifying and

⁸² Contra Wilckens for whom this pair must also represent "feindliche Wesen," *Der Brief an die Römer*, EKKNT 6 (Zürich: Neukirchener, 1978), 2:177. The only clear parallel is 1 Cor 3:22, where the insistence that things present and future belong to the Corinthians excludes a reference to hostile powers.

⁸³ For the fullest discussion see Douglas J. Moo, *Romans*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 290-95.

⁸⁴ Romans 8:32, though not structured in the same way, recalls the πολλῶ μᾶλλον thrust of 5:9-10. Cf. also the emphasis on the love of God (5:5, 8, 8:35, 39). In light of these parallels it makes no sense to see an implicit reference to hostile powers in the use of παραδίδωμι in Rom 8:32. As in Rom 5:1-11 (and Rom 4:25) Jesus'

reconciling death means that, contra Gaventa, all three questions in 8:33-35 flow in a similar direction.⁸⁵

Second, it could be argued that the connection between 8:33-35 and 8:38-39 is that the powers described in 8:38-39 are powers who bring accusation against God's people. On this account, the charges of 8:33-34 are brought in the eschatological courtroom and dismissed on account of the atoning work of Christ and his ongoing intercession.⁸⁶ In some ways this is an attractive proposal, and there is a strong case for finding an equivalent argument in Col 2:14-15.⁸⁷ The problem, however, is that on the one hand the "powers" simply are not prominent enough in this passage and, on the other, the prominent theme of suffering remains unexplained by a focus on eschatological judgment. This brings us to the third possibility.

death deals with the enmity between God and unrighteous humanity. The assurance that comes from that reconciliation undergirds the boasts of 5:1-11 and Rom 8:31-39.

⁸⁵ For this reason, Schreiner's division of 8:33-34 ("a judicial emphasis") and 8:35-39 ("a focus on love") is unhelpful. *Romans* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1998), 458.

⁸⁶ C. K. Barrett: "If 'Who shall bring a charge?' is to have a positive answer, Satan must be meant; the scene is the last judgment." *The Epistle to the Romans*, 173. Cranfield is more tentative: "The thought of Satan's role of accuser... was possibly in Paul's mind." *Romans 1-8*, 438n3. Neither commentator connects confidence in the face of the powers (8:38) with the removal of charges against God's people (8:33-34), but for that see Mark D. Thompson, "No Charge Admitted: Justification and the Defeat of the Evil Powers," in *Christ's Victory Over Evil*, ed. Mark D. Thompson (Nottingham: IVP, 2009), 123-49.

⁸⁷ It is also a Lutheran argument, as Blocher points out, quoting Paul Althaus' summary of Luther's view: "The satisfaction that God's justice demands is the primary and decisive meaning of Christ's work, in particular of his death. All the rest hangs on this, the Powers spoiled of all right and power," "Agnus Victor: The Atonement as Victory and Vicarious Punishment," in *What Does It Mean to Be Saved?: Broadening Evangelical Horizons of Salvation*, ed. John Gordon Stackhouse (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 89.

On this view, Rom 8:31-39 concerns itself with the ongoing experience of suffering, opposition and accusation. There is conflict, to be sure, but it is not the conflict between God and the powers, nor an eschatological prosecution of God’s people. Rather, Paul has in mind the same sufferings he referred to in 5:3 and 8:17-18, sufferings which he links to Jesus’ sufferings (8:17), and to the common experience of God’s people (Ps 44:22 quoted in 8:37) and his servants (Isa 50:7-9).⁸⁸ These sufferings are in one sense specific—they are not the generic sufferings common to existence in a creation subjugated to frustration—but they are the sufferings peculiar to God’s people, frequently consisting of attacks upon them, as per Ps 44 and Isa 50. They are ἔνεκεν θεοῦ. On the other hand they are quite general, taking a variety of forms, such as those listed in 8:35, all but one of which find some echo in Paul’s own ministry-related sufferings, as recounted elsewhere.⁸⁹

⁸⁸ An allusion to Isaiah 50:7-9 in 8:33-34 is almost certain, given the parallel between ἐγγίξει ὁ δικαιώσας με τίς ὁ κρινόμενός μοι (Isa 50:8) and τίς ἐγκαλέσει κατὰ ἐκλεκτῶν θεοῦ; θεὸς ὁ δικαίων· τίς ὁ κατακρινῶν... (Rom 8:33-34). The latter question in Rom 8:34 is closer to Isa 50:9 in the MT—יְנַשֵּׂךְ אֱהַיֶּמֶ —than LXX: τίς κακώσει με; but contextually the LXX shares that sense of prosecution. More broadly throughout this section of Isaiah there is the repeated reassurance to God’s servant/the beneficiaries of his suffering that they will not be put to shame (Isa 50:7, cf. Rom 5:5), while their accusers come to nought (see Isa 51:8, where the promise echoes 50:9 very closely, and cf. 54:17).

⁸⁹ Many of the terms found in Rom 8 only occur in those passages in 2 Cor where Paul is recalling physical hardship or human opposition:

term	Use in 2 Corinthians	Uses elsewhere
ἡ θλιψις	1:8, 6:4	<i>passim</i>
ἡ στενοχωρία	6:4, 12:10	Rom 2:9
ἡ διωγμός	12:10	2 Thess 1:4, 2 Tim 3:11
ἡ λιμός	11:27	
ἡ γυμνότης	11:27	
ἡ κίνδυνος	11:26	
ἡ μάχηρα		Rom 13:4, Eph 6:17

In a sense then, the eschatological courtroom is in view: it is there that God's people will finally be vindicated, but the purpose of this passage is to give the Roman church a sense of their security in the midst of opposition and suffering on the basis of the past justification and the ongoing intercession of Christ. It is to reprise the boast of 5:3 with all the intervening material now making its contribution. Within that setting, the significance of 8:31-39 is largely rhetorical. They support the claim of 8:37 that ἐν τούτοις πᾶσιν (i.e. the sufferings of 8:35) believers are far from overcome. To that end, Paul strains to express in the strongest possible terms, that nothing is to be feared. All things work to their good.⁹⁰

e. Conclusion

Conflict, to sum up, is prominent in Romans, but the evidence so far indicates that a conflict between God and the anti-god powers is not as significant as the apocalyptic reading makes out. Paul affirms the reality of an evil spiritual realm (8:38), and conceives of the life of faith as a battle in some sense, but the plight, as described in Rom 1:18-32, and its resolution, referred to in 3:21-26, 5:1-11, 8:1, and 8:31-39, centrally deals with the overcoming of hostility between God and humanity. In a secondary sense, conflict threatens the church both within and without and much of Paul's argument in Romans addresses itself to those threats. Indeed the resolution of the conflict between God and

⁹⁰ The pairings both individually and cumulatively signify comprehensiveness: height and depth, life and death, present and future (cf. 1 Cor 3:21-22). Jewett objects to what he calls "extraordinarily broad generalizations" in which each pair conveys a sense of totality, because of the degree of overlap between the pairings. However, rhetorical redundancies are hardly problematic; indeed, the duplication creates the very rhetorical effect we are describing. Jewett's alternative (*Romans*, 551) is that life and death are values held by the strong and weak parties respectively and which are hereby equalised by Paul, but the absence of any life/death terminology in 14:1-23 makes that reading more implausible by far.

humanity consistently appears to be the paradigm by which to resolve intramural conflict and to withstand suffering imposed from without.

CHAPTER 13: ENGAGING THE CHARACTERISATION OF SIN, DEATH AND THE FLESH IN ROM 1-8

A bewildering number of emphases have been labelled the hallmark of apocalyptic readings, but in this chapter we reach perhaps the most common of them: Paul's characterisation of sin, death, and the flesh as active agents. In the previous chapter we examined martial language that is supposed to evoke their hostility towards God. Now we consider their wider characterisation in Rom 1-8. As before, we will work through the passages most frequently discussed in apocalyptic interpretations. Building on the work of chapters 11-12, this is intended to be both a critical and a constructive enterprise, affirming what can be affirmed of the apocalyptic reading, and, where I demur, indicating how I think Paul's argument coheres and develops.

To begin, we can affirm Gaventa's entirely uncontroversial insistence that Paul's personifications of sin, death and the flesh require "something more than a generous God who forgives and forgets, and something entirely other than a Jesus who allows people to improve themselves by following the example of his good behaviour."⁹¹ Quite so; but if Paul's personifications deny that version of theological liberalism or popularist easy-believism, what do they require?⁹²

⁹¹ Gaventa, "The Cosmic Power of Sin in Paul's Letter to the Romans," 235.

⁹² For recent surveys of approaches to the personification of sin in Paul, see Joseph R. Dodson, *The "Powers" of Personification: Rhetorical Purpose in the Book of Wisdom and the Letter to the Romans* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 20-24; Günter Röhser, "Paulus und die Herrschaft der Sünde," *ZNW* 103 (2012): 93-106; Southall, *Rediscovering Righteousness in Romans*, 96-111.

The quest for a clear answer is frequently hampered by a lack of terminological and methodological clarity, and so we begin there. A study of personification and its relationship to metaphor will therefore prepare the way for an analysis of the key passages.

a. *The Meaning and Function of Personification and Metaphor*

The literary scholar Jon Whitman sets out two important senses of personification which we also find operative in the apocalyptic debate:

One refers to the practice of giving an actual personality to an abstraction. This practice has its origins in animism and ancient religion and is called personification by modern theorists of religion and anthropology. The other meaning of personification is the historical sense of *prosopopeia*. This refers to the practice of giving a consciously *fictional* personality to an abstraction, ‘impersonating it.’ This rhetorical practice requires a separation between the literary pretense of a personality and the actual state of affairs.⁹³

In the first instance the abstraction is believed to be a supernatural being by those who worship or fear it. In the second, the one who speaks of these personalities *knows* that this is a fictional ascription of being. As we have seen, the modern apocalyptic reading is somewhat caught between the two senses. On the one hand there is a marked ambivalence about whether Paul actually wants to ascribe personality to sin, death and the flesh,⁹⁴ but on the other hand there is a concern that Paul’s language be taken seriously and not

⁹³ *Allegory: The Dynamics of an Ancient and Medieval Technique* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 271–72.

⁹⁴ In our survey, Schweitzer comes closest to this, locating Paul precisely within the kind of ancient religious context Whitman has in mind.

dismissed as mere literary device. Hence the denials of a ‘merely’ metaphorical reading,⁹⁵ and the profusion of prefixes such as quasi- and supra-.⁹⁶

The validity of these concerns depends, however, on the theory of metaphor being employed, and can be allayed by drawing upon the insights of conceptual metaphor theory. Lakoff and Johnson, for example, argue persuasively that “human *thought processes* are largely metaphorical,”⁹⁷ meaning that metaphor is not merely an ornamental rhetorical option but is a basic and universal strategy for interpreting the world. They describe three forms of metaphor that cultures develop: a first wherein we understand one concept to be structured in terms of another” (*structural* metaphors, e.g. argument is *warfare*, time is *money*);⁹⁸ a second where concepts are spatialized, frequently on the basis of our actual physical experience (*orientational* metaphors, we *fall* asleep, we *wake up*); and a third where we think of concepts or events as entities or substances (*ontological* metaphors – inflation).⁹⁹

⁹⁵ See e.g. Gaventa “The Cosmic Power of Sin in Paul’s Letter to the Romans,” 238, cited approvingly by de Boer in “Paul’s Mythologising Program,” 19n43. cf. Jewett: “The language of ‘personification’ does not do justice to the apocalyptic worldview within which Paul is operating,” *Romans*, 374.

⁹⁶ The only author that I can find who explains what they intend by using one of these prefixes is Henri Blocher, who affirms the existence of fallen angels, describing them as “quasi-personal” where that term “means that their personhood, an analogical notion, is realized far differently than in human persons.” “Agnus Victor: The Atonement as Victory and Vicarious Punishment,” 72.

⁹⁷ George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 6, *emph. orig.* For a assessment of the significance of this work as a expression of conceptual metaphor theory, and for an extension of its basic theses, see Zoltán Kövecses, *Metaphor in Culture: Universality and Variation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 9-10 and *passim*.

⁹⁸ Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 14.

⁹⁹ These terms and examples can be found Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 3–32. The phrase “ontological metaphor” has a different sense here compared to Gaventa’s use of it; see chapter 7 above.

This is significant for our purposes because it allows us to describe more carefully the character of Paul's language.

First, metaphor's ubiquity urges caution. So much of our conceptualisation of the world takes the form of ontological metaphor and personification that it is not *necessarily* a very marked or prominent literary trope. This point is sometimes obscured by claims that personification is very rare in Paul.¹⁰⁰ In truth, many instances simply go unnoticed, but throughout Paul's letters hope does not disappoint (Rom 5:5), truth is obeyed (Rom 2:16), life swallows up what is mortal (2 Cor 5:4), the word of God dwells in us (Col 3:16), and love keeps no record of wrongs (1 Cor 13:5).¹⁰¹ There is, therefore, something of a spectrum to have in mind as we encounter these literary features, from casual or commonplace expressions to more arresting or prominent images.¹⁰² This will inevitably be somewhat subjective, but criteria that focus on frequency, originality and prominence within discourse will prove helpful, and there can be no doubt that Paul's personification of sin, death, and flesh in Rom 5-8 meets them.

Second, there is more to notice in Rom 5-8 than the instances of personification. For example, to speak of sin being charged (5:13) and abounding (5:20), or death as the wages paid by sin (6:23), is to deploy an ontological metaphor, conceptualising them as substances

¹⁰⁰ See e.g. Dodson, *The "Powers" of Personification*, 120.

¹⁰¹ A full catalogue is attempted by Lonny Matsuda, "Personification in Paul's Letters," *Notes* 105 (1985): 19-34.

¹⁰² Dodson's spectrum of personifications ranges from casual to general to representative. However, he merges issues that we, following Whitman, have kept separate, for his spectrum moves from casual figures of speech which no longer register as metaphorical images (so called 'dead metaphors') to statements that actually ascribe ontology to the referent, speaking of it by ellipsis or metonymy. See Dodson, *The "Powers" of Personification*, 31-33.

that accumulate. Likewise, to speak of the believer's new existence as slavery or warfare is a structural metaphor which explicates various aspects of the Christian life, but which obscures others.¹⁰³

Third, conceptual metaphor theory is instructive about the purpose of metaphor in general. As Gaventa especially is rightly at pains to emphasise, Paul is not simply adorning his argument by speaking of sin and death in metaphorical ways. Rather he is shaping the ways in which his audience conceive of their experience of the world and themselves.

Fourth, where we meet personification we are dealing with a subset of ontological metaphors where sin is spoken of as an entity. As Lakoff and Johnson point out though, it is the specificity of the personification that matters more than the personification itself. In their worked example, when one speaks of inflation as attacking or surprising us, "the metaphor is not merely INFLATION IS A PERSON. It is much more specific, namely, INFLATION IS AN ADVERSARY. It not only gives us a very specific way of thinking about inflation but also a way of acting toward it."¹⁰⁴

In the exegesis to come, it will be our argument that this illuminates Paul's personifications of sin. Paul is intentionally creating a metaphorical account of sin in order to teach his audience how they are to relate to it. In order to test and develop that thought we will put two questions to the most frequently discussed texts in Romans: first, what is the specific

¹⁰³ On the ways in which metaphors highlight and hide aspects of the 'target,' see Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 10–13. Paul's own awareness of this is likely expressed in Rom 6:19 where he is clearly not apologizing for the metaphor wholesale (he persists with it, after all) but is signaling the infelicity of the phrase 'slavery to righteousness.'

¹⁰⁴ *Metaphors We Live By*, 33–34.

way of thinking about sin/death/ flesh, and second: how does Paul thereby encourage his audience to act towards them?

b. *The World ὑφ' ἁμαρτίαν in Rom 3:9*

What to make of the prepositional phrase ὑφ' ἁμαρτίαν? After noting the “straightforward local or spatial sense” of the preposition, Silva comments that “greater interest attaches to the extended sense by which the prep. indicates submission or obligation, esp. when Paul uses it with ref. to sin and to the law.”¹⁰⁵ Although the example in 3:9 lacks a verb which would make the theme explicit,¹⁰⁶ it is clear that an extended sense is present here. Sin is the inescapable power under which all find themselves. On the other hand, it is not clear at this stage that personification is present, though this is clearly an ontological metaphor, as must surely be true of the instances of ὑπὸ νόμον.¹⁰⁷

Nor is there (yet at least) any sense in which this reality significantly recasts the human plight. Within the argument of 1:18-3:30, the purpose of 3:9 is to sum up what has already been charged (προαιτιόμααι) and so the assertion that all are ὑφ' ἁμαρτίαν must be related to the reality that all who do the same things merit condemnation and wrath (2:1, cf. 1:32). The catena of quotations that immediately follow in support of 3:9 (καθὼς γέγραπται...) strikes the same note, foregrounding moral corruption rather than cosmic subjection.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ NIDNTTE 560.

¹⁰⁶ Such as ἐξουσιάζω (1 Cor 6:12) or δουλόω (Gal 4:3), both used with ὑπό.

¹⁰⁷ Rom 3:21, 6:14-15, 1 Cor 9:20, Gal 3:23, 4:4-5, 4:21, 5:18.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Michael Winger, “From Grace to Sin: Names and Abstractions in Paul’s Letters,” *NovT* 41 (1999): 168–69. Winger offers a basic principle undergirding his argument and much of ours thus far: “the general reader (if not the scholar) is probably more likely to read what follows according to the ideas suggested by what precedes, than to proceed in the reverse fashion.” See also Bruce N. Kaye, *The Thought Structure of Romans: With Special Reference to Chapter 6* (Austin, Tex.: Schola Press, 1979), 39. For a contrary view on Rom 3:9 and 3:20

c. *Sin and Death in the World - Rom 5:12-21*

Here some reference to personification is inescapable. Death reigns over the world (5:14, 17), and sin reigns in death (5:21). Correspondingly, we also meet the ‘grace’ that multiplies and reigns through righteousness. But how is Paul teaching his readers/hearers to conceptualise sin and death here? Does Paul’s account of sin and grace take leave of the preceding account of the human plight? The preceding discussion already makes that unlikely, given the rootedness of 5:12-21 in the argument of Rom 1-4 and the absence of much support from 8:31-39.¹⁰⁹ Now we can add the ways in which Paul’s language of sin in 5:12-21 also resists this thesis.

To begin with, it is striking that the opening verses do not personify sin in a particularly prominent way.¹¹⁰ In keeping with the comparison Paul has launched, Adam is the protagonist here, not sin.¹¹¹ Nor is it clear that there is a direct path from the commonplace εἰσέρχομαι to the language of invasion or terrorism. To be sure, sin is characterised as foreign to the original creation, but that was already clear from Rom 1:18-23 where there is a clear declension from true worship to false.

Nor can we discern an orientation away from seeing sin as culpable human acts in 5:12, for the verse ends with an explicit reference to the act of sinning (ἐφ’ ᾧ πάντες ἥμαρτον)¹¹² and

influenced by Gaventa, see now Marcus A. Mininger, *Uncovering the Theme of Revelation in Romans 1:16-3:26: Discovering a New Approach to Paul’s Argument*, (WUNT 2.445; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 310-14.

¹⁰⁹ See chapters 11 and 12 above.

¹¹⁰ Cf. Cranfield, *Romans 1-8*, 274.

¹¹¹ Martyn’s colourful reference to sin’s “Adamic, cosmic breaking and entering” overeggs the pudding rather. “World Without End or Twice-Invaded World?,” 121.

¹¹² The connection of this phrase to the rest of 5:12 is of course problematic, but my argument only requires that there be a connection. For what it is worth, I think it has a consecutive force: *with the result that* all sinned

the subsequent qualifications in 5:13-14. This is confirmed by the observation that ἁμαρτία is not reckoned apart from law but takes on the additional character of παράβασις where law is present.¹¹³

While Rom 5:15-17 are occupied with further distinctions between the nature and consequences of the actions of Adam and Christ, 5:18-19 complete the postponed comparison. They do so in a way which strikes against Gaventa's argument that Rom 5:12-21 lays out a second version of the human plight, for no sooner is sin mentioned than it is superseded. There is no apocalyptic version of Rom 1:18-3:20; it would be quite wrong to characterise this as a second *Verdammnisgeschichte*. Romans 5:12-21 personifies sin and death only within the context of a passage that accents the certain salvation of God's people—a point that would have been clearer still had Paul's comparison not suffered such a delayed resolution.

In 5:20-21 singular uses of sin and death reappear and they are clearly personified. Two aspects of this merit comment. First, what can be said of sin here? In 5:20 Paul is exploring the effects of the law's coming; it multiplies transgression/sin (note their equivalence in 5:20). Given the connection between 5:20 and 21 (ἵνα), the reign of sin singular is consolidated by the committal of many sins. There is thus no move here away from the thought of sins committed, nor is it adequate to describe the introduction of sin and death

or perhaps, *on the basis of which* all sinned; cf. Paul's use of ἐπί with a relative pronoun in Rom 6:21 with that same sense. For a helpful discussion see Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "The Consecutive Meaning of ΕΦ' Ω in Romans 5.12," *NTS* 39 (1993): 321.

¹¹³ De Boer's gloss "For [the power of] Sin was in the world prior to the Law" is therefore unwarranted.

“as inimical powers or beings that victimise and enslave human beings.”¹¹⁴ Second, there is the matter of the role of sin and death here. Sin does not emerge as a dominant character. Rather its reign is a product of the law’s arrival and, more subtly, the *ἵνα* clauses in 5:20 and 21 show that sin’s increase through the law and its co-reign with death are part of the divine purpose.¹¹⁵

Strikingly though, Paul’s point is not even to highlight sin or death as major actors here. In 5:12-19, their entrance into the world is the lesser and known quality in the comparison Paul is making between Adam and Christ.¹¹⁶ Furthermore, in Rom 5:20-21, the reference to

¹¹⁴ De Boer, “Paul’s Mythologising Program in Romans 5-8,” 13. As Stephen Westerholm argues in relation to Rom 5-7, “each reference that might tempt one to think of sin as a demonic force is surrounded by others that militate against the notion,” “Paul’s Anthropological ‘Pessimism’ in Its Jewish Context,” in *Divine and Human Agency in Paul and His Cultural Environment*, ed. John M. G. Barclay and Simon J. Gathercole, LNTS 335 (London: T&T Clark, 2006), 79. The claim certainly holds true for 5-6, and it is from those chapters that Westerholm provides evidence. Romans 7 will be discussed below. In relation to death, de Boer argues that, in contrast to 1:32, death in 5:12-21 “is not thought of as the punishment for sin... but as the ineluctable result or outcome of sin.” de Boer, “Paul’s Mythologising Program in Romans 5-8,” 14. It is not at all clear though why these are mutually exclusive, or what grounds there are in 5:12-21 to see a disavowal of 1:32.

¹¹⁵ On the one hand, then, it is right to reject any straightforward account of death as God’s servant here. It is ranged with sin over against grace and righteousness. God is against it. On the other hand, it is overstated to say that it is “a murderous quasi-angelic power,” de Boer, *The Defeat of Death*, 183, or that “personified Death should be seen as God’s nemesis rather than his agent,” Dodson, *The “Powers” of Personification*, 126. It is too closely related here to the language of condemnation and elsewhere to the law’s sanctions (1:32, 1 Cor 15:56). In Paul’s view death is against humanity—it not so much God’s nemesis as theirs.

¹¹⁶ Campbell’s discussion of Rom 5:12-21 rightly majors on the Adam/Christ comparison and is, of course, correct to say that Paul is ‘thinking backwards’ to arrive at these convictions about Adam, Christ, sin, death, and the law, even as he finds this retrospective view to be confirmed in the Law and the Prophets. See especially “Christ and the Church in Paul: A ‘Post-New Perspective’ Account,” 129.

the reign of sin and death serves to make a statement about the law's inability to reverse the effects of Adam's sin. Thus, far from strutting as major actors on the world's stage, they, like the law, are utterly upstaged by the gift of grace and righteousness. In light of that dramatic entrance, sin and death are ushered offstage to await their fate. They are the Rosencrantz and Guildenstern of Rom 5.

As to Paul's purposes in speaking this way, de Boer is right to say of 5:12-21 that "Paul's cosmological appraisal of death, and sin, functions to exclude the Law's observance as the source of justification, righteousness, or eternal life," although this is more specifically the thesis of 5:20-21, yet to be expanded in Rom 7.¹¹⁷ More germane to this stage in the argument of Romans is Carter's argument that Paul is exchanging "new boundaries for old," drawing a line around, rather than through the Christian community in Rome. "Romans 5:12-21 has the effect of establishing and strengthening the boundaries around the group. Paul portrays the world as subject to the powers of sin and death as a result of Adam's transgression, but the Christians he is addressing have received the abundant gift of God's grace and righteousness, and so will reign in life through Christ."¹¹⁸

Paul's point is that the boasts of 5:1-11, unlike those of Rom 2-3, are justified, for righteousness and life are guaranteed to those whose boast is in God.¹¹⁹ One of the

¹¹⁷ De Boer, *The Defeat of Death*, 179. It is notable, however, that this denial of the law's efficacy does not depend on Paul's alleged transition to a "cosmological appraisal." Rom 1-4 makes it very clear that those ἐν τῷ νόμῳ (3:19) are also ὕφ' ἁμαρτίαν, such that no flesh will be justified by the works of the law.

¹¹⁸ *Paul and the Power of Sin: Redefining "Beyond the Pale,"* SNTSMS 115 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 169.

¹¹⁹ Käsemann nimbly avoids false antitheses when discussing Rom 5:12-21: "Paul's concern unites what seems to us to be a logical contradiction and what does in fact become antithetical in Judaism: No one commences his own history and no one can be exonerated," *Romans*, 149. What needs clarifying, however, is the nature of

implications of this is that we can better interpret the shift to a more universal frame. De Boer is right that there is a ‘cosmic’ (“=pertaining to all human beings”) frame here,¹²⁰ but the passage chiefly serves to ground the confidence of the believing community, in addition to furthering Paul’s wider aims to give the Roman church cause to unify around their shared hope and to encourage support for an ongoing mission within a world still ravaged by the effects of Adam’s transgression.

d. Sin: The Old Slave Master in Rom 6:1-23

Sin acquires a new prominence in Rom 6. At the most obvious level, ἁμαρτία appears more in Rom 6 (16 times) than any other chapter in Paul, and is frequently personified here, something Paul will sustain into Rom 7. As Kaye observes, “it is also noteworthy that, apart from the verb at Rom 6:15 and of ἁμαρτωλός at Rom 7:3, ἁμαρτία is the only term for sin used after Rom 5. This means that the major discussion of sin in Rom 6 and 7 is conducted almost exclusively by means of this one word.”¹²¹

Although there are several uses of the noun and cognate verb, death is also largely absent in Rom 6 as a personified figure (6:9 notwithstanding). The clear focus is on Paul’s insistence that God is to be served and sin is not. Does this mean, then, that sin emerges

Paul’s concern in Rom 5, which is to make a soteriological point, not an anthropological one. The Roman church is being told that their history has been dramatically re-commenced by Christ and graciously so, given their share in Adamic humanity.

¹²⁰ “Paul’s Mythologising Program in Romans 5-8,” 10.

¹²¹ Kaye, *The Thought Structure of Romans*, 34. Although their sense is debated, the instances of παράπτωμα in Rom 11:11-12 are probably omissions here. See the discussion in James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, WBC 38B (Dallas: Word, 1988), 653. Paul’s discussion of sin is also reaching its climax here. After 8:10, ἁμαρτία will only appear again in 11:27 and 14:23.

here as an anti-god power or a victimising tyrant? Or to return more prosaically to our two questions: how is Paul encouraging his audience to conceptualise sin? And to what end?

Paul's personification manifestly conceptualises sin as a former master to whom the audience must render no further service. Paul wants to highlight that sin is a tyrannical master, drawing attention to the threefold consequences of obeying sin, namely: a servitude in which the only freedom to be found is a freedom from righteousness (6:20); shame (6:21);¹²² and death for wages (6:23).

This is at best an incomplete answer, however, to the question of how Paul intends his hearers to conceive of sin. In 6:1-2 sin is conceptualised as a sphere in which one might dwell, the significance of which is well captured by N. T. Wright: "Of course to remain in sin, in English and for that matter in Greek, will mean to go on committing sin, but Paul is interested here in where one is first and foremost; it is like saying 'shall we remain in France,' with the assumption that if one does one will continue to speak French."¹²³ More significantly, there are a number of indications *within* the personifications of sin that reveal a concern with human rather than 'suprahuman' activity.

First, the language of gift set against sin's wages echoes not only 5:12-21, but 4:4 and 3:24. As before, Paul is accenting divine initiative here (rightly, an apocalyptic emphasis) but its special character and quality emerges in the contrast with prior *human* conduct. This was clearly the case in the transition from 3:20 to 3:21 and in 5:6-11, and the same dynamic is at

¹²² Punctuating 6:21 as per Nestle-Aland²⁸. In support of this, see the discussion in Cranfield, *Romans 1-8*, 328.

¹²³ N. T. Wright, "Romans," in *Acts, Introduction to Epistolary Literature, Romans, 1 Corinthians*, New Interpreter's Bible 10 (Nashville: Abingdon, 2002), 537. In 6:15 the question of whether to continue committing sin is explicitly raised with a rare use of ἀμαρτάνω.

work here, albeit with a greater emphasis on the human conduct that befits the gift.¹²⁴ To that end, Paul instigates a retrospective look at the former way of life and describes complicity in servitude and fluency in the customs of that sphere. This explains the emphasis on ἀδικία (6:13) as the outcome of serving sin (a prominent term in Rom 1-3: 1:18, 1:29, 2:9, 3:5) and the ways in which sin is set over against obedience (6:16) or righteousness (6:17) as a prospective master. Human complicity in sin also explains the appeal to shame in 6:21. As Cranfield writes, “The fruit which they used to have from their slavery to sin consists of things (Paul doubtless had in mind evil deeds, evil habits, evil characters), of which they are now ashamed.”¹²⁵

One of the values of this account is that habit and character have a potency—there is a kind of pressure they exert on the self, even as they constitute aspects of self. This is significant because it demonstrates that there are more interpretive options than saying that Paul thinks of sin as a demonic overlord or as a freely-chosen act, and it is borne out in the ways in which Paul relates sin to the body in Rom 6.

Though complicated, this is crucial to the way in which Paul is conceptualising sin in this chapter. Perhaps the clearest place to start, despite the textual variant, is 6:12, where the mortal body¹²⁶ is both the sphere of sin’s reign and the source of the desires that would be

¹²⁴ On this see Barclay, *Paul and the Gift*, 498–99.

¹²⁵ Cranfield, *Romans 1-8*, 328.

¹²⁶ τό θνητόν σῶμα is a rare phrase, appearing here and in 8:11.

obeyed under its reign.¹²⁷ Strikingly then, the body's desires are also sin's commands.¹²⁸

What complicates this picture further is that the subsequent verse depends upon an individual's ability to exert a distinct will over their body's desires, such that its parts can be presented in God's service. There is then a self, objectively presented to the world in the body,¹²⁹ which is called and, to some extent, enabled to resist the desires of its own mortal body.

In order to probe this further we turn to Rom 6:6, where we meet two more crucial but opaque phrases: ὁ παλαιὸς ἡμῶν ἄνθρωπος and τὸ σῶμα τῆς ἁμαρτίας. The former is best taken as the self, participating in the Adamic condition prior to and outside of Christ. This is the self still mastered by death (6:9) and bound to sin (6:7). Correspondingly, τὸ σῶμα τῆς ἁμαρτίας refers to the body dominated by and incapable of resisting sin. This is the condition Christ enters, and yet through his death and resurrection he enters a new set of relations, free both from sin (6:7) and death (6:9). The extent to which this new existence can be mapped onto the believer whose "eccentric existence" depends on Christ's risen life is helpfully delineated by John Barclay:

Whereas Christ is finished with death (6:9), believers have not: they are dead to sin (6:11), but not to death. This puts their lives in a state of permanent incongruity [sc. that is,

¹²⁷ Although $\mathfrak{P}46$ and a number of other sources have αὐτῇ for ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις αὐτοῦ, external evidence weighs heavily in favour of the longer reading. This verse is a striking example of the ubiquity of metaphor and their source in our embodied experience, for in 6:12 abstract notions of the self's relationship to itself are made more concrete by the personification of the mortal body, and its desires.

¹²⁸ Cf. the discussion in Michael Winger, "From Grace to Sin: Names and Abstractions in Paul's Letters," *Novum Testamentum* 41 (1999): 172.

¹²⁹ Note that in 6:13 the body's parts can stand metonymically for the self in 6:13 as the equivalence of τὰ μέλη ὑμῶν and ἑαυτούς demonstrates.

permanent until the resurrection]: in one respect they are bound to death (“on account of sin,” that is, as a residue of their Adamic heritage, 8:10); in another they are alive, in an eternal “life from the dead” that in its source and character is the life of Christ.”¹³⁰

There is, therefore, a crucial reserve in Paul’s account of the believer’s relationship to death. They walk ἐν καινότητι ζωῆς (6:4) but await the resurrection. Hence Barclay’s brilliant insight that for Paul a central dialectic in the Christian life is *simul mortuus et vivens*.¹³¹ What Barclay’s formula does not quite capture, however, is the effect of this on the relationship to sin. True, the believer is to reckon themselves dead to sin and this is no wishful thinking: their participation in Christ’s death effects that break with sin (6:7).¹³² But as we have seen the mortal body is also an immoral body; its desires still threaten to re-enact a slavery to sin and will not be silenced until the resurrection.¹³³ In the mortal body

¹³⁰ *Paul and the Gift*, 501.

¹³¹ *Paul and the Gift*, 502.

¹³² The referent of 6:7 could be Christ or the believer insofar as they have died with Christ. It is certainly not simply a truism about sin ceasing upon death. Given 6:6, the believer is likely the one in view who has been set free from sin. It is possible that δικαιόω retains its usual forensic sense here (for a strong argument in favour, see Cranfield, *Romans 1-8*, 1:311n1 and Stephen J. Chester, *Reading Paul with the Reformers: Reconciling Old and New Perspectives* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 2017), 276, 396). If this is the case then Paul in 6:7 is recalling the point of 5:1—it is justification that secures related blessings and 6:7 provides the grounds for 6:6 rather than simply restating its affirmation of freedom: there is freedom from sin (6:6) γὰρ (6:7) the one who has been crucified with Christ has been justified. *Contra* Campbell, the preposition does not demand “an explicitly apocalyptic notion” given the parallel in Acts 13:38-39, for there forgiveness of sins is proclaimed alongside justification ἀπὸ πάντων ὧν οὐκ ἠδυνήθητε ἐν νόμῳ Μωϋσέως δικαιωθῆναι. See Campbell’s note on Rom 6:7-8 in *The Deliverance of God*, 825–27.

¹³³ This reality is well expressed elsewhere by Barclay: “once appropriated by sin, the body is re-appropriated by Christ. The very location where sin once held most visible sway, and where its grip still draws believers’ bodily selves towards death, is now the location where the ‘newness of life’ breaks through into action,” *Paul and the Gift*, 505-6. Rightly, this allows for a measured optimism concerning the body, *contra* Carter who

there is, so to speak, significant muscle memory for sin, and a tangled web of neural pathways which resist the reckoning of 6:11.¹³⁴ Thus believers are to walk in newness of life but for now they walk in mortal bodies.

How then is Paul conceptualizing sin by means of this personification? The chief emphasis, in light of the verbs in play, is that the audience's former way of life was an enslavement that produced only negative outcomes. When it comes to sin's character and source, it remains a matter of unrighteousness, disobedience and shameful behavior having its source in the desires of the body.

And what does Paul accomplish by this? In keeping with the wider section, Paul is emphasising that it is in Christ that the blessings of the new age have dawned and he is urging the church to live in the light of that. Romans 6 clearly continues the thought of 5:12-21, making it explicit that the believer participates in the new reign of grace and enjoys its freedoms by virtue of their union with Christ's death and resurrection. Sin, death and the law are no longer determinative. Sin, in particular, can now be distinguished from the believer: the personification puts distance between them. As indicative begins to be mixed with imperative, Paul also emphasises the behaviour that is now fitting, given that sin is no longer the sphere in which the church lives, nor the master to whom it owes

believes that "in Romans 6-8, Paul repeatedly portrays the body as being completely dominated by the powers of sin and death... Only in Romans 12:1 do we find a more positive view of the body." Carter, *Paul and the Power of Sin*, 176-77.

¹³⁴ Douglas Campbell's analogy of a recovering drug addict is apt in that respect, "Christ and the Church in Paul: A 'Post-New Perspective' Account," 130. Subsequently, Paul will describe the same reality in 8:10 as the body being dead on account of sin and the need to mortify the misdeeds of the body (8:13). And as we will see, the body's desires overlap significantly with the σάρξ.

obedience. Indeed, “sin is a direct contradiction of the state of things which baptism assumes.”¹³⁵ The characterization of sin as slave master therefore makes clear that the prior situation was intractable to the extent that no less a solution than death and resurrection was necessary. It urges obedience to the new reality and loyalty to a new and far more benign master. Finally, sin continues to play a role in Paul’s developing characterization of the law. In what is Paul’s most controversial statement thus far, the law has the effect of establishing sin’s rule (6:14). Thus what was implicit in the question of 6:1 becomes explicit in 6:14. The law and sin are so closely related that to leave behind sin is also going to require a move away from law. The stage is now set first to spell that out (7:1-6) and then to exonerate the law from any blame (7:7-25). For that task, Paul will once more personify sin.

e. Sin-Controlled Flesh in Rom 7:1-25

Käsemann almost certainly undersells the significance of 7:2-3 when he says “the only point of comparison is that death dissolves obligations valid through life.”¹³⁶ At the very least there is the additional point that the believer’s union with Christ is more fruitful than the now defunct relationship to the law.¹³⁷

Indeed the language of fruitfulness connects 7:1-6 with the preceding section (καρπός in 6:21 and 22, καρποφορέω in 7:4) and makes Paul’s defence of the law even more urgent. In Rom 6 it was slavery to sin that produced negative fruit, in 7:4 it is by dying to the law that bearing fruit for God is possible.

¹³⁵ William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, 5th ed., ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1902), 153.

¹³⁶ *Romans*, 187.

¹³⁷ Perhaps too there is the rejection of an accusation that Paul’s ministry represents infidelity to the law.

Paul's defence of the law formally begins in 7:7, but as many observe, 7:5-6 provide the structural frame and interpretive key to that discussion.¹³⁸ Structurally, the situation in 7:5 is dramatically developed in 7:7-25, while 7:6 anticipates the argument of Rom 8, as mapped out here:

Rom 7:5	parallels in Rom 7:7-25	Rom 7:6	parallels in Rom 8:1-17
<i>For when we were in the <u>flesh</u></i>	7:14 I am <u>fleshly</u> , sold under sin	<i>But <u>now</u> (νυνὶ δὲ)</i>	8:1 There is <u>now</u> (νῦν)
<i>sinful passions, <u>through the law</u>,</i>	7:13 sin <u>through what is good</u> worked <u>death</u> in me	<i>we have been released from the law</i>	
<i>were at work in <u>the parts of our body</u></i>	7:23 I see another law at work in <u>the parts of my body</u>	<i>by dying to that which held us <u>captive</u> (κατέχω)</i>	8:2 <u>Set free</u> (ἐλευθερώω) from the law of sin and death
<i>so that we bore fruit for <u>death</u>.</i>	7:25a Who will deliver me from this body of <u>death</u> ?	<i>so that we serve in the new way of the <u>Spirit</u> and not in the old way of the letter</i>	8:4 We walk according to the Spirit, cf. 8:5 and 8:14. 8:9,11 We have the Spirit in us (cf. ἡ οἰκοῦσα ἐν ἡμῶν ἀμαρτία in 7:17,20)
<i>Cf. 7:6 having died to that which held us <u>captive</u> (κατέχω)</i>	7:23 making me <u>captive</u> (αἰχμαλωτίζω) to the law of sin		

Interpretively, 7:5-6 is crucial for the way in which it introduces major new terms to this section of Romans, chiefly, σὰρξ and πνεῦμα,¹³⁹ and draws them into more explicit connection with terms that are prominent 6:12-23: ἀμαρτία, θάνατος, νόμος, and ἐπιθυμία.

¹³⁸ See e.g. Meyer, "The Worm at the Core of the Apple: Exegetical Reflections of Romans 7," 73; Moo, *Romans*, 418-20.

¹³⁹ To be sure, both have made appearances in the letter already: 1:3, 2:28, 3:20, 4:1, 6:19 and 1:4, 1:9, 2:29, 5:5 respectively but their occurrence in 7:5-6 and frequency in Rom 8 marks a shift to rival any other terminological gearshifts in Romans, although it is much less commented upon.

In 7:5, flesh is clearly characterised as the sphere or mode of previous existence, and so lines up with Adam, sin, death and the law on the far side of the eschatological ‘now’ that has arrived in Christ. On this side of the divide, the Spirit replaces the flesh as the believer’s sphere of existence, a point Paul makes explicit in Rom 8:9 (ὕμεῖς δὲ οὐκ ἐστὲ ἐν σαρκὶ ἀλλὰ ἐν πνεύματι). By that stage Paul will clearly personify the flesh but he has not yet done so. Indeed, the references to the flesh thus far in Romans are towards the neutral end of Paul’s semantic range for σὰρξ,¹⁴⁰ with an emphasis on human descent (1:3, 4:1), outward appearance (2:28), physical weakness (6:19). Perhaps the most theologically-loaded use so far occurs in 3:20 where πᾶσα σὰρξ likely “denotes man in his weakness and corruptibility.”¹⁴¹ The beginnings of the contrast with the Spirit and the allusion to the new covenant in 7:6 confirm that this is probably the best way to take the term here, for they both raise the question of agency. Whereas the ‘flesh’ and ‘letter’ are characterised by weakness and incapacity, the Spirit is the one who empowers the new life.¹⁴²

¹⁴⁰ See especially the careful survey in Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*, 64–65.

¹⁴¹ *Romans 1-8*, 159. It is disputable whether Paul makes a conscious change to the LXX here, although it’s certainly true that πᾶσα σὰρξ gets closer to the nub of the issue for Paul and prepares for his account of flesh in Rom7-8. As BDAG says of this passage, to be ‘in the flesh’ is to be “in an unregenerate (and sinful) state.” BDAG 915B.

¹⁴² NB the use of καινότης here, echoing καινότητι ζωῆς in 6:4. The new covenant allusion seems clear given the parallels with Rom 2:29, 2 Cor 3:6. So James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, WBC 38A (Dallas: Word, 1988), 373. Cf. Schreiner, *Romans*, 353–54. Here then is a clear confirmation that Paul sees his churches as those who have been newly constituted as moral agents by the Spirit. See *inter alia* J. Louis Martyn, “Afterword: The Human Moral Drama,” 163–64, which rightly draws a connection between Paul’s thinking and OT prophetic promises of the new covenant.

The flesh in 7:5, then, is that realm of weakness in which sinful desires are generated by the law and bear their deathly fruits (as variously described in 5:12-21 and chapter 6).¹⁴³ This is a striking characterisation of the human plight in several ways. For our purposes, the most important aspect is the way in which human sinful desires are prominent rather than any personified power.¹⁴⁴ For Paul's purposes, his appositional qualification of those sinful desires as τὰ διὰ τοῦ νόμου provokes yet further the question of 7:7 and leads him once more to personify sin.

Happily, we need not contest the interpretation of Rom 7 *in toto* here. Campbell's characterisation of it as "the horrifying view backward" is one I would share and defend on the basis of 7:5-6,¹⁴⁵ which has clearly prepared the audience to think in salvation-historical terms about the significance of the arrival of Son and Spirit. This is, as Campbell's phrase captures, a decidedly retrospective view on the interaction between the law and the

¹⁴³ In Käsemann's striking phrase, "flesh... is the workshop of sin," *Romans*, 205. cf. Barth's emphasis on "sin-controlled flesh" (hence the subtitle of this section), characterised as a playground in which "men can exhibit their ingenuity" in blasphemous absurdities, *The Epistle to the Romans*, trans. Edwyn C. Hoskyns (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1933), 280. By contrast, in Gal 5:6 and Rom 8:1-8 the flesh is characterised as more active: like the mortal body, it has desires but, again, these are best understood as desires which belong to 'the old self' of Rom 6:6 rather than to an oppressive cosmological power. Its desires are the very desires indulged by the idolatrous and judgmental population of Rom 1-2 (as Paul makes clear in Rom 13:13-14).

¹⁴⁴ Paul's phrase is τὰ παθήματα τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν and not τὰ παθήματα τῆς ἁμαρτίας and this conforms to the way Rom 7:8 describes the effect of the law arousing covetous desire. Hence the NRSV's "our sinful passions" is not unwarranted.

¹⁴⁵ "Christ and the Church in Paul: A 'Post-New Perspective' Account," 133.

flesh.¹⁴⁶ With the reappearance of sin's personification though, we return to the question of how Paul teaches his audience to conceive of sin and why.

In 7:7-11 sin is clearly characterised as the real culprit. The law is not sin, sin is.¹⁴⁷ Through the coming of the commandment, sin springs to life (7:9), grasps the opportunity, deceives, and kills the ἐγώ (7:11). In light of that, Paul is able to provide an interim conclusion in defence of the law (7:12-13), underscoring that sin and not the law brought death. In 7:14 Paul begins to analyse in greater detail how sin accomplished that and does so by asserting the spiritual character of the law and the fleshiness of the ἐγώ.¹⁴⁸ The experience of the ἐγώ bears witness to both those facts, vindicating law (7:16b) and implicating sin as the one who indwells the ἐγώ (7:17, 20).

In 7:21-25 Paul reflects upon that situation in ways that anticipate its remedy in 8:1-4. As Paul describes it, evil is present because the mind's desire to do the law is frustrated by the presence of another 'law' in his members—a reference to the indwelling sin of 7:17 and 20. The effect of this is an assault upon 'the law of my mind' (i.e. the Torah, delighted in by the mind 7:22) and a captivity to 'the law of sin' (7:23).¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁶ Cf. Stephen J. Chester, "The Retrospective View of Romans 7: Paul's Past in Present Perspective," in *Perspectives on Our Struggle with Sin: Three Views of Romans 7*, ed. Terry L. Wilder and Chad Brand (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2011), 57–102. This is an expansion of his discussion of Rom 7 as "a piece of biographical reconstruction" in *Conversion at Corinth*, 183–95.

¹⁴⁷ A phrase I owe to Will Timmins.

¹⁴⁸ This is further indication that 7:7-25 is a retrospective look at Paul's pre-Christian existence. In 7:17-25 only the law is πνευματικός. The ἐγώ, in mind and members, is σάρκινος, a fact that conflicts with Paul's characterisation of the believer, both in 7:6 and 8:1ff.

¹⁴⁹ It is tempting to see this as a reference to Torah insofar as it is co-opted by sin, which makes a certain sense and preserves a consistent referent for νόμος. See e.g. Martyn, "Nomos Plus Genitive Noun in Paul: The

Throughout 7:7-13 then, Paul personifies sin to an unprecedented degree. It appears as a dynamic third party, wreaking havoc on the helpless ἐγώ. It is here, therefore, that Martyn's argument about the irrelevance of human responsibility in the three-actor drama seems strongest. Yet there are a number of indications that Paul does not mean for his audience to draw that inference. First, the allusions to Eden and Sinai strongly tell against it. Whatever their relative weighting, some reference to both narratives in 7:7-13 is widely acknowledged, but neither would support the innocence of the deceived. Paul has already characterised Adam's actions as transgression and the effect of the coming of law on Israel as reckoning sin and increasing the trespass and provoking divine wrath (Rom 4:15).¹⁵⁰ Second, Paul's analysis of the flesh as the corrupt Adamic inheritance in 7:5 continues here. As that verse led the hearer to expect, Paul is expounding the law's effect on people in the flesh, arousing every kind of coveting or desire (7:8, echoing the desires of the mortal body in 6:12). And as Paul makes clear later, those desires take hold not merely through a form of

History of God's Law," 580-81; Meyer, "The Worm at the Core of the Apple: Exegetical Reflections of Romans 7," 78-80; Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 409; Wright, "Romans," 570-71. On the other hand, understanding ἕτερος νόμος and νόμος τῆς ἁμαρτίας in 7:23 as references to the grip of sin effectively embodies Paul's message that sin overshadows and subsumes the law of Moses. This is what Paul finds with reference to the law (7:21, taking the articular νόμος as a reference to Torah), echoing 5:12-21 where the sin is not only unchecked by the coming of the law, but exacerbated by it. On the parallels between Rom 5 and 7:7-13 see Meyer, "The Worm at the Core of the Apple: Exegetical Reflections of Romans 7," 73.

¹⁵⁰ John Goodrich makes a strong case for an allusion to Israel's exile in the phrase πεπραμένος ὑπὸ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν, building on Mark Philonenko's article "Sur l'expression 'vendu au péché' dans l'Épître aux Romains," *RHR* 203 (1986): 41-52. On that reading there is a reference to the coming of the law in Israel's early history (7:7-13), and her experience of bondage to sin in her subsequent history (7:14-25) before the restoration in Rom 8. In addition to the evidence marshalled by Goodrich, we could also add the new covenant allusion in 7:5-6.

contra-suggestibility but because of the hostility of the flesh to God (8:7, with echoes of 5:9).¹⁵¹

Third, Paul's account of sin resists the suggestion that sin is characterized as an anti-God power unilaterally staging a cosmic coup, for the purpose clauses in 7:13 make clear that "the law remains God's and has continued to serve the divine purpose of disclosing and intensifying sin."¹⁵² If the ἔγώ is a hapless character, so, to a lesser extent, is sin.¹⁵³

Those cautions notwithstanding, however, we still need to give an account of why Paul personifies sin as an agent distinct from the ἔγώ. A number of possibilities have been suggested, the most frequent being Paul's desire to exonerate the law.¹⁵⁴ Undeniably that is one of Paul's aims in the chapter, but it is not clear that Paul needs to personify sin or to do so at such length, simply in order to vindicate the law. Indeed, as Jason Maston points out, a lengthy exposition of the law's generative effect on sin is a curious case for the defence of

¹⁵¹ On this point, see Gathercole, "Sin in God's Economy: Agencies in Rom 1 and 7," 169.

¹⁵² Meyer, "The Worm at the Core of the Apple: Exegetical Reflections of Romans 7," 74; As Gathercole highlights, this is not simply a rearguard response to Sin's incursion. God gave the law in the first place with the intention of it having this very effect. "This is another mechanism whereby Paul gives God a role in 'handing over' to Sin, without attributing to him authorship of that sin... Again, however, this is part of God's larger purpose in which Christ and the Spirit bring life where the Law failed (8:1-4)." Gathercole, "Sin in God's Economy: Agencies in Rom 1 and 7," 171.

¹⁵³ *Contra* Martyn, for whom "the incursion of Sin... has caused the cosmos to slip—at least partially—from God's omnipotent and gracious grasp." "World Without End or Twice-Invaded World?," 123.

¹⁵⁴ For a helpful survey see Dodson, *The "Powers" of Personification*, 135–39. One of his own main suggestions—that Paul is also seeking "to distance God from the origin of evil" (ibid., 90)—is less plausible given the way in which Paul signals that God remains in some sense behind these things (1:24, 26, 28, 5:20, 11:32).

the law *in se*. It is therefore more helpful to speak of Paul's desire to exonerate *his view* of the Torah.¹⁵⁵

A key indicator of that may be the language of deception in Rom 7, for the personification of sin allows Paul to explain how the law's failure is a real, but not self-evident, reality to those under it. While sold under sin, the 'I' is deceived about the true quality of its deeds, intending to do good but accomplishing evil.¹⁵⁶ Describing sin as a deceptive force thus accounts for the apparent zeal of those who are under the law (a point to which Paul will return later in the letter). But this is also a constructive move, demonstrating that it is in Paul's gospel and mission that the 'power for salvation' lies, and not in the law, thereby forging his audience's sense of salvation-historical privilege, assurance, and their loyalty to him.

f. Sin Condemned in the Flesh - Rom 8:1-4

That power for salvation is loudly proclaimed in Rom 8:1-4. As Dunn rightly says, in Rom 8:1 "Paul deliberately recalls the once-for-all-ness of the eschatological indicative, the opening of a new epoch effected by Christ."¹⁵⁷ At the head of that announcement is the removal of condemnation. As we might expect, in apocalyptic readings of 8:1 that mention of *κατάκριμα* is treated as a residual trace of earlier arguments,¹⁵⁸ or as incidental, compared

¹⁵⁵ *Divine and Human Agency in Second Temple Judaism and Paul*, 127.

¹⁵⁶ Paul's knowledge of sin (7:7) is retrospective, therefore, and the law's revelatory function is bound up with the gospel that discloses the true nature of the human plight, cf. 2 Cor 3:14-16. Unless the knowledge of sin is understood in this way, it is hard to resolve the tension between the law's revelatory function and sin's deception, on which see Chester, *Conversion at Corinth*, 186-90.

¹⁵⁷ Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 415.

¹⁵⁸ E.g. de Boer, *Defeat of Death*, 153.

to the liberative language to come in 8:2-3.¹⁵⁹ One response must be to highlight the theme of condemnation in 5:12-21, 8:34, and the conceptual affinity with 1:32 where God's decree in response to sin is death.¹⁶⁰ The most immediate context provides the more striking response, however, for Rom 8:1 casts the shadow of condemnation over Rom 7:14-25 precisely where the personification of sin has been most pronounced. What Paul goes on to develop is the way in which God's condemnation of sin (8:3) brings liberation from the enslavement to sin *and* the condemnation it brings.¹⁶¹ Even if that seems a harder pill to swallow, apocalyptic readings are right to emphasise the disruptive nature of this liberation: God has now, in the sending of the Son, accomplished what the law could not.¹⁶² Presumably, in light of 7:10, that is to say that God has made possible eschatological life of the sort envisaged in Lev 18:5. The δικαίωμα, or decree that grants life, has been fulfilled, as

¹⁵⁹ See e.g. Eastman, whose account of 8:1-4 sets 8:1 off from 8:2-3 and finds within them "Paul's overlapping yet tensive accounts of the human predicament in Romans 1-7. In the first place, Christ's union with sinful flesh allows him to absorb the judgment that brought condemnation on all humanity in the shadow of Adam (5:16, 18). But *even more*, his union with Sin in the flesh allows him to be the locus of the condemnation passed on Sin itself, which like a cancer that has metastasized through the body politic of the human race, has taken on a lethal power of its own." "Apocalypse and Incarnation," 176, *emph. added*.

¹⁶⁰ These references alone indicate that condemnation does not refer to "the power of sin's use of the law to kill" (Eastman, "Double Participation and the Responsible Self in Romans 5-8," 103) but rather to a divine and judicial response to sin.

¹⁶¹ That sin is condemned in the flesh speaks clearly to the needs of 7:14-25, and the ἵνα clause in 8:4 indicates that this condemnation breaks the power of sin. At the same time, the fact that the Son is sent *περὶ ἁμαρτίας* must imply that his death had a sacrificial aspect. That much is granted by Campbell, who stands out among apocalyptic writers for mentioning the phrase at all. See *Deliverance of God*, 64.

¹⁶² As Keck highlights, there are striking parallels here to Gal 4 in the language of the Son being sent and bearing the likeness of sinful flesh/born of a woman. See "The Law and 'The Law of Sin and Death,'" 44. Both passages also mark this as a decisive eschatological event ('in the fullness of time,' Gal 4:4, and 'now' in 8:1).

opposed to the divine decree of death in Rom 1:32.¹⁶³ This life is now guaranteed to those “in Christ Jesus” (8:1) and those walking according to the Spirit (8:4, 8:13).

It is in the service of this announcement of the gospel’s power that Paul continues to personify sin and death in Rom 8:1-4. In the preceding account, the Mosaic law has proved incapable of producing life in the face of the power of sin and death. Their power is characterised as the ‘law of sin and death’ which rendered the Mosaic law impotent to fulfil its purpose, but which has now met its match in a rival power: the “law of the Spirit of life.”¹⁶⁴ Paul’s characterisation of sin as an indwelling power serves to emphasise the

¹⁶³ For this interpretation, see, *inter alia*, Keck, “The Law and ‘The Law of Sin and Death,’” 53, and Wright, “Romans,” 577.

¹⁶⁴ Although it is tempting to treat both instances of νόμος in 8:2 as references to the Mosaic law, I think it is unlikely. *Contra* Martyn, ὁ νόμος τοῦ πνεύματος τῆς ζωῆς is not the Mosaic law in a new “redemptively powerful” phase redeeming those who suffered under the law in its earlier alliance with sin. (See Martyn, “Nomos Plus Genitive Noun in Paul,” 583). This cannot be so, for Paul insists that the subject of ἡλευθέρωσέν has accomplished what the law could not. It is more tempting to see references to the ‘law of sin (and death)’ (7:23, 25, 8:2), as a reference to the Mosaic law, given 7:9-10, and 1 Cor 15:56, and yet Paul’s argument in several places clearly distinguishes the ‘law of God’ from the ‘law of sin’ (e.g. in 7:25, and in 8:2-3 where the Mosaic law is not able to bring freedom from the law of sin of death). For these reasons it makes sense to distinguish three ‘actors,’ thus:

(1) Mosaic Law	(2) the power of sin and death	(3) the powerful work of the Spirit
7:23 “God’s law” 7:23 “the law of my mind” 7:25 “the law of God” [8:3 “what the law was unable to do...”]	7:23 “a different law” 7:23 “the law of sin in the parts of my body” 7:25 “the law of sin” 8:2 “the law of sin and death”	8:2 “The law of the Spirit of life”

In essence, then, Rom 7:14-25 describes the victory of (2) over (1), and 8:1-4 describes the victory of (3) over (2) in fulfilment of the intended goal of (1). For a similar reading, see Cranfield, *Romans 1-8*, 375-76, and Moo, *Romans*, 473-77. Moo speaks of this as “the majority view among commentators,” (*ibid.*, 474n23, but many join

inadequacy of the old covenant, and the sufficiency of the new. As Keck writes, “The power of sin and death, which operated in the flesh, has been displaced by the power of the Spirit. One power structure has replaced another. Now one is no longer captive to the law of sin in one’s members but is subject to a new order, that of the Spirit.”¹⁶⁵

Much that is dear to the apocalyptic reading is unambiguously supported here: participation in Christ is clearly central to the soteriology of Rom 6 and 8; there are freshly-reconstituted moral agents thanks to the decisive work of Father, Son, and Spirit. Crucially, this includes the Father sending the Son in order to deliver humanity from his condemnation. A complex doctrine of God emerges at this point and it will not do, as the apocalyptic reading rightly insists, to imply that a willing Son mollifies a begrudging Father. And yet, in keeping with the covenantal allusions of 7:5-6, and all that we have argued above, Paul’s personification does not require an account of sin which steps decisively away from a clear emphasis on sinful desires (7:5) and their condemnation (8:1). Indeed, to do so would be to lose the radical ethical transition from disobedience to obedience characteristic of Rom 6 and 8, and the way in which the eschatological courtroom’s verdict of ‘no condemnation’ relativises the accusations and condemnations of the present (8:31-39).

g. Conclusion

It is not much of an exaggeration to say that the contemporary apocalyptic reading of Paul hangs on the difference between sin and Sin. Very many treatments of Paul highlight the singular usage of ἀμαρτία, but apocalyptic interpreters will make much of that fact,

Martyn in seeing the Mosaic law behind both references to νόμος in 8:2. See Schreiner *Romans*, 400, for his argument and for a list of others in support).

¹⁶⁵ “The Law and ‘The Law of Sin and Death,’ 52.

insisting that the singularity of that term and what is predicated of it in Rom 5-8 proves their case that Paul's gospel addresses a divine conflict with anti-God powers and liberates a victimised, helpless humanity caught in the middle. Gaventa is certainly right to say that "salvation, for Paul, doesn't consist of simply being forgiven for sins; it is being delivered from Sin's power."¹⁶⁶ Any yet sin is often characterised by the apocalyptic reading in ways which exempt humanity from the need for forgiveness at all and which lose sight of the fact that an ongoing alliance with sin will give expression to fleshly desires and beget sins. The current chapter has shown this to be an over-simplification of the way in which Paul describes the transformation of the human situation through the gospel. That said, our study of the ways in which Paul characterises sin, death, and flesh in Rom 5-8 has provided support for a number of the anthropological insights of the apocalyptic reading.

¹⁶⁶ *When in Romans*, 43.

SUMMARY OF PART 3

Part 3 has critically engaged the apocalyptic reading of Paul and its contemporary exegetical defence in Rom 1-8. This critical engagement was tailored to the different strategies by which those chapters are argued to defend an apocalyptic interpretation. Chapter 11 focussed upon the relationship between Rom 1-4 and 5-8, in light of the arguments of Campbell and de Boer that Paul opposes or substantially leaves behind the theological perspectives of Rom 1-4. This was seen to be implausible, given the ways in which those opening chapters are integrated with the rest of the letter and resonate with Paul's wider corpus. Whilst Rom 5 can rightly be seen as a transitional chapter, it seeks to build upon rather than to replace what precedes it.

Chapters 12-13 interacted principally with the work of Gaventa who treats Rom 1-8 as an integrated whole which builds towards an increasingly apocalyptic climax. Chapter 12 assessed the evidence that martial imagery reflects an emphasis on cosmic warfare between God and anti-God powers in Paul's letter to the Romans and found that while the theme is present, it is significantly over-emphasised in the apocalyptic reading of Romans. Chapter 13 engaged with the characterisation of sin, death and flesh throughout Rom 1-8. Detailed apocalyptic exegesis of these chapters is not currently available, but I have sought to interact with their writings wherever possible and to develop a reading of these passages, integrating exegetical judgments made throughout Part 3 and with a view to affirming a number of apocalyptic emphases. In the conclusion to this thesis we will revisit the aims of this thesis, review its contribution, but also have the opportunity to summarise those affirmations.

CONCLUSION

T. F. Glasson once opined that *apocalyptic* is “a useless word which no one can define and which produces nothing but confusion and acres of verbiage.”¹⁶⁷ Whether this thesis has contributed anything other than acreage, I leave to others to judge. For my part, as I reflected on the frustration generated by the apocalyptic accounts of Paul since the time of Glasson, and the efforts of others to introduce terminological clarity, it seemed that time might also be fruitfully spent engaging the substance of the apocalyptic Paul.

In the introduction I sought to justify that supposition. As I outline there, numerous studies have challenged the propriety of the nomenclature, given the distant and sometimes strained relationship with Jewish apocalypses, but this study has focussed on the distinctive theological and exegetical emphases of major Pauline scholars in order to analyse and critique contemporary apocalyptic readings of Paul. This meets a need, given the desire of apocalyptic interpreters of Paul to deploy the term *apocalyptic* to signal an affinity with an interpretative tradition and to affirm a set of exegetical and theological proposals.

Part 1 analysed the work of eight scholars, synthesising their works into a summation of their account of the Pauline plight and solution. Part 2 brought the contemporary version of the apocalyptic Paul into sharper focus, outlining the ways in which (with some variation) the Pauline plight and solution is currently expressed. Across Parts 1 and 2 I have highlighted more significant differences than are often acknowledged between successive

¹⁶⁷ Glasson, ‘What is Apocalyptic?’, 105.

generations, and sought to map out current areas of disagreement and diversity, where again, the impression can be given of relative uniformity.

In Part 3, we turned to constructive critique. In light of the exegetical emphasis on Rom 1-8 by current apocalyptic interpreters, we focussed there, calibrating the engagement to their contrasting approaches to Rom 1-4. Chapter 11 argued that there is a transition in the argument of the letter at Rom 5:1 but not one that subverts or departs from the content of Rom 1-4. Instead, we noted the ways in which Rom 5-8 reflects, in several places, its dependence on the earlier chapters, and therefore resists a dichotomy between forensic and liberative or participatory categories. Chapters 12-13 turned to arguments in favour of an apocalyptic reading on the basis of conflict motifs and the characterisation of sin, death and the flesh across Rom 1-8. Here we sought to read those passages sensitively, building on the exegesis in chapter 11 concerning the relationship of Rom 1-4 to 5-8, and in light of metaphor theory.

There is much to affirm in apocalyptic readings of Paul, and, since studies in this area are too often hampered by an either/or mentality,¹⁶⁸ it is timely to record the affirmations, as well as challenges this thesis has brought, and to reflect upon how the conversation might fruitfully advance.

The argument of chapter 13 concerning Paul's personifications resonates with a number of apocalyptic concerns. With de Boer we can affirm that "Paul's cosmological language about Sin and Death as malevolent powers represents an attempt to account for anthropological

¹⁶⁸ It was Schweitzer who said that "progress always consists in taking one or other of two alternatives, in abandoning the attempt to combine them." *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* (ed. John Bowden; London: SCM, 2000), 198.

realities and experiences.”¹⁶⁹ Gaventa’s argument that the personifications represent “attempts to convey what Paul sees as the deep captivity of human beings, their inability to free themselves”¹⁷⁰ is certainly true of Rom 7 and lies behind the language of servitude and rule.

Paul personifies sin in keeping with his overall purpose in Rom 5-8, arguing that, whereas the law obscures and exacerbates the situation, the coming of Christ and the Spirit illuminate and resolve the problem of sin, all of which is according to God’s intention. In Rom 5-8 Paul’s salvation-historical timeline has only four points of interest: Adam, Sinai, Christ, and the resurrection to come, with Christ as the hinge upon which everything turns. With Campbell we can also affirm that Paul is taking a necessarily *a posteriori* epistemological stance as he reconstructs universal (5:12-21) and personal histories (6:21, 7:7-23). Taken together, Rom 1 and 7 have demonstrated that neither Jew nor Gentile have an unobscured view of their own predicament. As Martyn rightly says “the true discernment of Sin’s power is itself a result of God’s invasion of the world in Christ.”¹⁷¹

What is often unacknowledged here, however, is that these areas of affirmation are not exclusively the preserve of the apocalyptic reading. The human plight might be described in some fresh and vivid ways by the apocalyptic reading, but as Philip Ziegler demonstrates in *Militant Grace*, “time and again, Reformed sources stress the gracious agency and sovereign efficacy of the Spirit in freeing those ‘subdued captive[s] of sin.’”¹⁷² To some

¹⁶⁹ De Boer, “Paul’s Mythologising Program in Romans 5-8,” 13–14.

¹⁷⁰ Gaventa, “The Rhetoric of Violence and the God of Peace in Paul’s Letter to the Romans,” 73.

¹⁷¹ “World Without End or Twice-Invaded World?,” 124.

¹⁷² Philip Ziegler, *Militant Grace* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018), 75, quoting Turretin. Indeed he goes so far as to say that “Calvin thinks and speaks with an apocalyptic grammar of the kind that Martyn has

extent these resources are being drawn upon,¹⁷³ and further appropriation would represent a maturing of the apocalyptic reading that has either largely ignored or wilfully caricatured prior readings of Paul.¹⁷⁴

There are several obstacles to that rapprochement, however. For as long as the apocalyptic reading relies on a forensic/liberative antithesis, setting aspects of Rom 1-4 against 5-8, it can only be partial. As we have argued, in Rom 5-8 Paul builds on the preceding argument and begins to develop the certainty that righteousness and life flow from the work of Christ just as surely as sin and death flow from Adam. Within this section, Paul emphasises the newness of life available now, the imperative to pursue that way of life, and the enabling to do so that comes by the Spirit and not by the law. As Paul describes the past plight and present threats, however, his analysis is far more anthropological than cosmological. When Paul's personifications of sin are set beside his statements concerning the mortal body, the flesh and their desires, it becomes clear that the fundamental problem is not that human beings are acted upon by external forces but that they live and act in the flesh. To be sure, this is not a situation that they can fix and one which they did not themselves bring about. But the result, nevertheless, is that they are attuned to their own sinful desires and consequently perform acts of which they are (subsequently) rightly ashamed. Paul's morally complex picture thus resists the thought that the only available options are

discerned," 150, and helpfully highlights T. F. Torrance's account of Calvin's 'total perversity' derived retrospectively, "starting from the fact of grace," for which see Torrance's *Calvin's Doctrine of Man* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1957), 85.

¹⁷³ It was Käsemann's lament that "Christianity has unjustly forgotten or at least diminished the theologically non-recindable, though haplessly described doctrine of original sin," *Being a Disciple*, 232. More recently, Eastman discovers an emphasis on participation in Calvin in "Apocalypse and Incarnation," 169, n10.

¹⁷⁴ Cf. Stephen Chester's account of apocalyptic readings as an 'intensification' (and occasional distortion) of Reformed emphases in *Reading Paul with the Reformers*, 332-336, 386-390.

affirming unhindered moral capacity or severely-diminished responsibility.¹⁷⁵ As Richard Hays argues, “the Bible’s sober anthropology rejects the apparently commonsense assumption that only freely chosen acts are morally culpable. Quite the reverse: the very nature of sin is that it is not freely chosen. That is what it means to live “in the flesh” in a fallen creation. We are in bondage to sin but still accountable to God’s righteous judgment of our actions.”¹⁷⁶

It is to Käsemann’s credit that he resists oversimplification here. Ziegler rightly characterises his view thus: “This apocalyptic vision does not conceive of our subjection within the sphere of Adam as a purely extrinsic fate and so fatalistically conceive of human existence as tragic. Since men and women *are* active sinners even under (and as a result of) the curse of Sin, ‘personal accountability can neither be eliminated nor isolated.’”¹⁷⁷

One suspects that he would also resist what has been done in the name of apocalyptic, for the more recent emphasis on human victimhood all too easily and unwittingly generates a

¹⁷⁵ One thinks both of Campbell’s account of JT and Martyn’s comments that the “reducing of Sin to sins... is utterly foreign to Paul for it involves pretending that by repenting for sins one can climb out of the world that has tragically been entered by Sin,” “World Without End or Twice-Invaded World?,” 122.

¹⁷⁶ Richard B. Hays, *The Moral Vision of the New Testament: Community, Cross, New Creation, A Contemporary Introduction to New Testament Ethics* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996), 390. Cf. Bornkamm’s rejection of the thought that “the entrance of sin into the ‘I’ [is] a fate that has tragically come over me. In that case one could no longer speak of guilt, and the ‘I’ could produce its alibi in the ‘not-I.’” Günther Bornkamm, *Early Christian Experience*, trans. Paul L. Hammer (London: SCM, 1969), 98.

¹⁷⁷ *Militant Grace*, 206, quoting from Käsemann, *Romans*, 154. For further reflection on whether ‘sins’ precede or flow from ‘Sin,’ see Simon Gathercole, “‘Sins’ in Paul,” *NTS* 64 (2018): 156-157.

community invested in overlooking its own complicity in evil.¹⁷⁸ As we have noted, it is not the case that apocalyptic readings abolish any sense of complicity, and yet the exegetical side-lining of indicators of that complicity, and the consistent framing of the human plight in terms of cosmic terrorism, victimisation, and tragedy threaten to legitimise a certain kind of comfortable pietism that knows of evil ‘out there’ but never ‘in here.’¹⁷⁹

Perhaps it is also worth underscoring, in closing, that I am calling for a richer account of the human plight and not a more constricted one. For all that the apocalyptic reading has been promoted as a ‘thick’ account, it actually risks being somewhat anaemic. One way this can be seen is by setting the apocalyptic reading against the traditional tripartite formulation of the enemy: *the flesh, the world, and the devil*, which likely has its origins in Eph 2:1-4. Despite frequent references to ‘the flesh,’ the apocalyptic plight really only maps onto one aspect of the tripartite formula—‘the world’—for, in general, the powers are used to speak of extrinsic forces at work upon individuals and communities. By contrast, the individual’s own evil desires (‘the flesh’ in that more traditional sense), and the activity of spiritual forces are neglected.

¹⁷⁸ On this theme, see Michael J. Ovey, “Victim Chic? The Rhetoric of Victimhood,” *Cambridge Papers* 15 (Cambridge: Jubilee Centre, 2006), and comments in Rutledge, *The Crucifixion*, 141, 390, and this from 391: “Modern presentations of the *Christus Victor* theme tend not to be as complex and profound as that of the apostle, who puts forward the motif of the victorious liberating Christ in the context of the rectification (justification) of the *ungodly*,” *emph. orig.*

¹⁷⁹ For his part (and with a particular definition of tragedy in view) Käsemann rejects ‘tragic’ as a characterisation of the human plight: “We are not bearers of history like the characters in a tragedy. Precisely in our acts we are exponents of a power which transforms the cosmos into chaos,” *ibid.* In a different sense one can imagine him approving a tragic account of humanity wherein hubris constitutes its *harmartia*, in the Aristotelian sense.

Given the terminological affinity, one can see why Ziegler thinks that another historical formula—‘Sin, death, and the Devil’—provides a point of contact with apocalyptic readings of Paul, and he is engaged in a fruitful exercise in many ways, not least for the effort to restore the demonic to Reformed hamartiology.¹⁸⁰ And yet this phrase likewise highlights the mono-dimensional character of the apocalyptic reading, for not only does it require a more robust Satanology than one often finds, but, as far as I can tell, its original expression also resists treating sin and death as fellow cosmic powers, for Luther actually speaks of “sins, death, and the devil.”¹⁸¹

As these debates continue, two clear *desiderata* come to mind. The first is that apocalyptic interpreters of Paul produce commentaries on Romans in addition to the available volumes on Galatians. Although Romans has been the site of much industry in recent years, we await substantial commentaries which will, of necessity, address some of the harder texts, and will provide a greater opportunity to test the coherence of the apocalyptic reading across the whole letter. In the present work, it has been necessary to piece together clues spread across articles and monographs. Future researchers will be glad of fuller works to consult.

Second, it has been a noticeable feature of recent years that the apocalyptic Paul is stretching his legs more and more beyond the world of biblical studies. In part this is testimony to Campbell’s inter-disciplinary energies, but also because of the theological

¹⁸⁰ Philip G. Ziegler, “‘Bound Over to Satan’s Tyranny’: Sin and Satan in Contemporary Reformed Hamartiology,” *Theology Today* 75 (2018): 89–100. For references to ‘Sin, Death and the Devil,’ see 93-4, 97, 99.

¹⁸¹ Luther expounds the second line of the Apostle’s Creed in his *Shorter Catechism* thus: “I believe that Jesus Christ ... is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil.” The explanation of the sixth petition in the Lord’s Prayer also uses the ‘flesh, the world, and devil’ triplet.

character and homiletical potential of the apocalyptic reading. Although there is much to enthuse about here, there is also the potential for yet a further mutation of the term *apocalyptic*. It will be all too easy for even more to be lost in translation as the apocalyptic Paul is not only passed from generation to generation, but from department to department. If I may, then, the second desideratum is that works such as this present one are allowed to clarify what, for better or worse, actually constitutes the apocalyptic Paul in contemporary New Testament studies.

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