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# **'For in the Day that You Eat of It, You Shall Surely Die'**

The Early Reception History of the Death Warning in Genesis 2:17

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## Abstract

This thesis examines the early Jewish reception of the divine prohibitive command (Gen 2:16-17) in relation to its interpretative association with the introduction of physical death to humanity. The long-time rationale has been that the eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil brought sin and death ‘for in the day that you eat of it, you shall surely die’ (Gen 2:17). The thesis begins by examining the meaning of Gen 2:17 in its original context, then tracing its interpretation in subsequent Second Temple Jewish Literature. The study examines the Greek translation of Gen 2:16-17 and its translational elements that expand the possible range of understanding of the prohibition that would not have originated from the Hebrew text of Genesis. The thesis continues with an exegetical analysis of allusions and references to the prohibitive command in the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Book of Ben Sira, 1 Corinthians and Romans. It is argued, firstly, that there are no explicit narrative clues in the HB as to the physical status of Adam and Eve either as immortal or mortal before their disobedience to God’s command in Gen 2:17, and that the death warning itself does not provide textual support for the understanding of the death warning in the sense of becoming mortal. It is also argued that Paul’s explicit attribution of death to the disobedience of Adam and Eve (1 Cor 15:21-22; Rom 5:12) finds its earlier traces in the course of interpretation of the aforementioned literature: 1) clarification of the meaning of the death warning, i.e. death in the sense of becoming ‘mortal’ and death due to the violation of the command as applicable not only to Adam, but also to Eve and other human beings; 2) reinforcement of the presumptive association between the death warning and the introduction of death to humanity.

## **Declaration**

I, Chris Lee, hereby declare that this thesis has been composed by me and that it has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

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## Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	8
Abbreviations.....	9
<b>Chapter One – Introduction</b>	
1.1 Research question, objectives and scope.....	10
1.2 Research context.....	17
1.3 Course of analysis.....	21
<b>Chapter Two – The Prohibition of Gen 2:17 in Genesis</b>	
2.1 Introduction.....	25
2.2 Text and translation.....	26
2.3 Gen 2:16-17 in context: narrative with gaps and possibilities.....	29
2.3.1 ביום ‘in the day’.....	46
2.3.2 מות תמות ‘you shall surely die’.....	53
2.4 Conclusion.....	65
<b>Chapter Three – The Punishment and Expulsion Revisited - Gen 3:14-19, 22-24</b>	
3.1 Introduction.....	67
3.2 Till you return to the ground.....	67
3.3 Lest...he will live forever.....	75
3.3.1 Text and translation.....	76
3.4 Conclusion.....	85
<b>Chapter Four – Gen 2:17 in the Septuagint: ‘By death, you will be put to death’</b>	
4.1 Introduction.....	88
4.2 Characteristics of the Greek translation of Genesis.....	89
4.3 Narrative gaps and ambiguities ‘Translated’ in the LXX Genesis.....	91
4.4 Text and translation.....	96
4.5 ἡ δ’ ἂν ἡμέρα φάγητε ‘In the day which you eat’.....	96
4.6 ‘You (pl.) Shall not Eat’ and ‘by Death, you (pl.) shall Die’.....	99
4.7 The translator’s first encounter with the emphatic infinitive absolute in Gen 2:16-17: θανάτω ἀποθανεῖσθε (‘By death, You shall Die’).....	106
4.8 Gen. 2:16: βρώσει φάγη (‘You may eat for food’).....	117
4.9 Conclusion.....	119
<b>Chapter Five – Gen 2:17 in the Dead Sea Scrolls</b>	
5.1 Introduction.....	123
5.2 DSS references to the divine command in Gen 2:17.....	124
5.2.1 4Q2: 4Q Genesis <sup>b</sup> .....	124
5.2.2 4Q8a: 4Q GENESIS <sup>h2</sup> .....	125
5.2.3 4Q422: 4Q Paraphrase of Genesis and Exodus.....	126
5.2.4 4Q303: 4QMeditation on Creation A.....	131
5.3 DSS References to the Punishment of Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:14-24).....	134

5.3.1	4Q504: <i>Paroles Des Luminaires</i> (Words of the Luminaries).....	134
5.3.2	4Q423: 4Q Instruction <sup>g</sup> .....	137
5.3.3	4Q124: 4Q Unidentified Paleo-Hebrew text 1.....	140
5.4	Conclusion.....	144
<b>Chapter Six – Gen 2:17 in the Book of Ben Sira: ‘They shall surely perish’</b>		
6.1	Introduction.....	147
6.2	The Hebrew text and translations of Ben Sira.....	149
6.3	The Creation and Death of the Human in Ben Sira Reconsidered.....	150
6.4	The Perpetual Statute: גוע יגועו ‘They shall surely die’ (Sir 14:17).....	154
6.4.1	Past Scholarship on Sir 14:17.....	154
6.4.2	Text and translation.....	156
6.4.3	Text Notes.....	157
6.4.4	Context.....	158
6.4.5	Discussion.....	159
6.4.6	גוע יגועו ‘They shall surely die’.....	165
6.5	Conclusion.....	171
<b>Chapter Seven – Gen 2:17 in the New Testament: ‘Through a man came death’</b>		
7.1	Introduction.....	174
7.2	1 Corinthians 15:21-22.....	175
7.2.1	The context of 1 Corinthians 15.....	176
7.2.2	Text and Translation.....	178
7.2.3	δι’ ἀνθρώπου (‘Through a Man’).....	181
7.2.4	In Adam (ἐν τῷ Ἀδὰμ) versus In Christ (ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ).....	183
7.2.5	All (πάντες) Die, All (πάντες) Will be Made Alive.....	187
7.2.6	Does Paul Refer to ‘Physical’ or ‘Spiritual’ Death?.....	190
7.3	Romans 5:12-21.....	194
7.3.1	The context Romans 5:12-21.....	195
7.3.2	Text and Translation.....	197
7.3.3	The Coming of Sin and Death by the Agency of the One.....	199
7.3.4	ἐφ’ ᾧ: ‘In Whom/Because/On Which/So That’ All Sinned.....	205
7.3.5	Wisdom 2:23-24 and Rom. 5:12.....	213
7.4	Blaming Eve for the Transgression (παράβασις) of the Divine Commandment.....	218
7.5	Conclusion: Death as a Result of Adam’s Transgression.....	222
<b>Chapter Eight – Conclusion</b>		
8.1	Revisiting the question.....	226
8.2	Chapter by Chapter Summary.....	226
8.3	The ancient reception of the divine prohibition against eating from the tree of knowledge (Gen 2:17).....	234
<b>Bibliography.....</b>		<b>237</b>





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## Abbreviations

All abbreviations are taken from *The SBL Handbook of Style: For Biblical Studies and Related Disciplines* (2nd edition). Below are abbreviations not found in the Handbook.

AYB	The Anchor Yale Bible
(C)IOSCS	<i>(Congress of) the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies</i>
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CUP	Cambridge University Press
DSS	Dead Sea Scrolls
JSJSup	<i>Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism</i>
LXX-Gen	The Septuagint of Genesis
OEBC	<i>Oxford Encyclopedia of the Books of the Bible</i> . 2 vols. Oxford: OUP, 2011.
OUP	Oxford University Press
P&R	Presbyterian & Reformed
SSLL	Studies in Semitic Languages and Linguistics
V&R	Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht
WdG	Walter de Gruyter
(W)JKP	(Westminster) John Knox Press
YUP	Yale University Press

# Chapter One

## Introduction

### 1.1 Research Question, Objectives and Scope

The Garden of Eden story in Genesis 2-3 is a crucial and foundational text for both historic and contemporary Jewish and Christian theology, not only in academia, but also in a popular context. It is also foundational to our understanding of the topic – the origin of physical death. Gen 5:3 reports that Adam, the very first human being created on Earth, died at the age of 930 years. This is not a report of the death of just any human being; it is the death of a person who many readers and non-readers of the Bible believe to be originally created as an immortal being and who enjoyed that status in the Garden of Eden until the catastrophic event of the so called ‘Fall,’<sup>1</sup> i.e. prior to his disobedience to God’s command in Gen 2:17. On the same note, it has been commonly understood within the major Christian tradition that the first humans, Adam and Eve, were created as immortal beings. On this, the first canon of the Council of Carthage (418 CE) takes a very strong position as it states emphatically: ‘Whosoever says, that Adam was created mortal, and would, even without sin, have died by natural necessity, let him be anathema.’<sup>2</sup>

At the turn of the era, Paul of Tarsus was the most prominent figure, of decisive importance in attributing the presence of death in the world to Adam’s disobedience to God’s command (Gen 2:17). Paul states in Rom 5:12, ‘just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned’ and ‘Since by a man came death...in Adam all die’ in 1 Cor. 15:21-22. The Augustinian doctrine of original sin has developed

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<sup>1</sup> Although there are some disagreements on considering the central theme of the story of Adam and Eve as the ‘Fall,’ the incidence of Adam’s disobedience to God’s command in Gen 2:17 will occasionally be referred to as the ‘Fall’ in this thesis for the sake of convenience. For instance, instead of a ‘story of the origin of sin and evil,’ J. Barr considers the garden narrative a ‘story of how human immortality was almost gained, but in fact was lost.’ James Barr, *The Garden of Eden and the Hope of Immortality* (London, SCM press, 1992), 4. Barr’s stance will be discussed further in this and the following chapters of the thesis.

<sup>2</sup> Philip Schaff, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Christianity: A.D. 311-600*, vol. 3 of *History of the Christian Church*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (New York: Scribner’s Sons, 1889), 799.

based on Paul's exposition of the story of Adam and Eve. Centuries later, in order to refute the claims of Pelagius, Augustine of Hippo writes: 'Man's nature...was created at first faultless and without any sin.'<sup>3</sup> In his other work, *On the Merits and Forgiveness of Sins, and on the Baptism of Infants*, Augustine refers to some who 'say that Adam was so formed that he would even without any demerit of sin have died, not as the penalty of sin, but from the necessity of his being,'<sup>4</sup> disproving this notion by referring to Gen. 3:19, 'Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.'<sup>5</sup> He concludes that 'Therefore, if Adam had not sinned, he would not have been divested of his body, but would have been clothed upon with immortality and incorruption.'<sup>6</sup> In another work, *On Genesis Literally Interpreted (De Genesi ad litteram)*, Augustine further affirms that, 'This death occurred on the day when our first parents did what God had forbidden. Their bodies lost the privileged condition they had had, a condition mysteriously maintained by nourishment from the tree of life, which would have been able to preserve them from sickness and from the aging process.'<sup>7</sup> Augustine certainly has the introduction of the 'physical' death, i.e. 'mortality,' in view here. Similarly, John Calvin (1509-64) affirms that Adam, who had body and soul 'without defect' and was 'wholly free from death,' was cast down from his former state from the moment he violated God's command. Calvin specifically deals with the issue of non-fulfilment of God's warning of the death penalty on the day Adam ate from the tree of knowledge by insisting on a double notion of death (both spiritual and physical), which began from the moment of Adam's sin. Calvin states in his commentary on Genesis as follows:

But it is asked, what kind of death God means in this place? It appears to me, that the definition of this death is to be sought from its opposite; we must, I say, remember from what kind of life man fell. He was, in every respect, happy; his life, therefore, had alike respect to his body and his soul, since in his soul a right judgment and a proper government of the affections prevailed, there also life reigned; in his body there was no defect, wherefore he was wholly free from death. ... We must also see what is the cause of death, namely, alienation from God. Thence it follows, that under the name of death is comprehended all those miseries in which Adam involved himself by his

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<sup>3</sup> Augustine, *Nat. grat.*, III, 1.

<sup>4</sup> Augustine, *On the Merits and Forgiveness of Sins, and on the Baptism of Infants*, II, 2.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> Augustine, *Gen. litt.*, XI, 32.

defection; for as soon as he revolted from God, the fountain of life, he was cast down from his former state, in order that he might perceive the life of man without God to be wretched and lost, and therefore differing nothing from death. . . . Wherefore the question is superfluous, how it was that God threatened death to Adam on the day in which he should touch the fruit, when he long deferred the punishment? For then was Adam consigned to death, and death began its reign in him, until supervening grace should bring a remedy.<sup>8</sup>

Martin Luther's (1483-1546) stance is the same:

This threat, which was so clearly added, also proves that a Law was given to Adam. Moreover, it shows too that Adam was created in the state of innocence or was righteous. There was not yet any sin, because God did not create sin. Therefore, if Adam had obeyed this command, he would never have died; for death came through sin.<sup>9</sup>

The exegetes in the major Christian tradition from Paul onwards, although differing in minor details, generally follow Paul's assertion of human death coming about as a result of the sin of Adam.<sup>10</sup> It is not surprising therefore that a number of modern scholars, particularly the NT commentators in their discussion of Paul's notion of death as the punishment, point to the Genesis text in their underlying presumption that such an idea finds support in the Genesis narrative itself.<sup>11</sup> However, if the garden narrative in the book of Genesis is not read through the lens of Paul's statements in 1 Cor. 15:21-22 and Rom. 5:12, the idea of an 'immortal' Adam before the Fall finds no explicit textual support in the garden narrative itself. Such interpretations that affirm the immortal status of Adam and Eve prior to their disobedience are often purely inferential and influenced by later traditions that have no solid grounding in the original text. There are of course certain narrative elements

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<sup>8</sup> John Calvin, *Commentary on the First Book of Moses Called Genesis*, trans. John King, (vol. 1; Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1948), 127–28.

<sup>9</sup> Martin Luther, *Luther's Works: Lectures on Genesis, Chapters 1-5* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1958), 110.

<sup>10</sup> See, Jairzinho Lopes Pereira, *Augustine of Hippo and Martin Luther on Original Sin and Justification of the Sinner*, (Göttingen: V&R, 2013).

<sup>11</sup> For instance, commenting on 1 Cor. 15:21-22, Fitzmyer writes: 'In two verbless clauses, Paul alludes to the account in Gen 3:17–19, which tells how it came about that *anthrōpos* experiences death. There Adam is punished by God for listening to his wife and eating the forbidden fruit: "On the day you eat of it, you shall surely die" (2:17); "You are dust, and unto dust you shall return" (3:19).' Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AYB 32 (New Haven: YUP, 2008), 569.

that can be referred to in favour of the idea of the immortal status of Adam and Eve before the Fall, but these arguments can also be countered by those who point to the same narrative features and elements to insist on the very opposing idea of the existence of death before the 'Fall.'

Conversely, there are some who suggest that the first human beings were in fact created mortal. A strong proponent of this argument is James Barr, who does not consider the garden story as the 'story of the origin of sin and evil,' but as a 'story of how human immortality was almost gained, but in fact was lost.'<sup>12</sup> According to Barr, then, the garden narrative presents an etiology not for the introduction of death, but for the mortal human's permanent loss of access to immortality, which became momentarily available only after and as a result of their disobedience to God's command. Barr's argument will be discussed later in chapter three, but, in brief, he suggests the following points in his argument: 1) the cultural assumption in the OT is that death is natural for human beings; 2) there is an absence of any reference to words such as 'sin', 'disobedience' or 'rebellion' in the garden narrative; 3) 'within the Hebrew Bible itself the story of Adam and Eve [is] nowhere cited as the explanation for sin and evil in the world'; 4) the view that 'sin brought death into the world' is likely to be the product of a Hellenistic interpretation of the OT; and 5) the punishment brought upon the man does not include mention of death. The existence of different approaches to and controversial understandings of the physical status of Adam and Eve before their disobedience to God's command is due to the ambiguous characteristic of the Genesis narrative itself as it lacks definite evidence about whether Adam and Eve were either immortal or mortal before the incident of the Fall. The narrator does not provide any description of the human condition or life in the Garden of Eden before the 'Fall.' Indeed, there are many gaps and inconsistencies in the narrative: it jumps from one event to another, skips details, and provides seemingly controversial details without explanation or resolution. Every reader of the garden narrative is either faced with the challenge of filling in these narrative gaps or being content with only what the text clearly provides.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> James Barr, *The Garden of Eden and the Hope of Immortality.*, 4, 6–8.

<sup>13</sup> The following points given in the narrative and the missing details in the gaps between them allow readers to consciously interact with the text and to interpret beyond what the narrative clearly gives them: 1) God commanded Adam that he will surely die if he eats from the tree of knowledge

In this thesis, I reflect upon these presuppositions about the creational immortality or mortality of the first human beings and attempt to trace the early reception history of the divine prohibitive command in Gen. 2:17, along with other related passages (3:14-24) with regard to the original physical status of Adam and Eve before their disobedience. ‘Reception history’ is generally defined as the study of how the text has been received and understood by its readers over time with the conviction that the text cannot be understood in isolation from its reception and the interpretation of its readers. One of the editors of the Blackwell Bible Commentary series, John Sawyer, explains the perspective and aim of reception history in biblical studies:

What is also new is the notion that the reception of a text is more important than the text itself, and even that a text doesn’t really exist until somebody reads it. “The bare text is mute”. It is like the philosophers’ old question: If a tree falls in the forest and no-one hears it, does it make a sound? A text without a reader has no meaning. It is the readers of a text that give it meaning. In a sense the reader creates the text as much as the author does. The role of the reader as creator was a new concept and that is one of the concepts underlying the Blackwells Series.<sup>14</sup>

A recent multi-volume, international project encompassing a broader and comprehensive scope of the reception history of biblical texts, *Encyclopedia of the Bible and its Reception (EBR)*, witnesses the increasing scholarly interest and importance of reception history within the biblical studies. The twofold aim of this projected 30-volume *EBR* is:

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(2:17); 2) Eve tells the serpent that they will die if they eat or touch the fruit of the tree (3:3); 3) the serpent tells her that they will not die (3:4); 4) Adam and Eve do not die physically on the day they eat of the fruit (3:7); 5) Adam and Eve are expelled from the garden of Eden so that they do not eat from the tree of life in order to gain eternal life (3:22–24). Given such limited information, there arises further questions, such as: 1) why don’t they die immediately after their disobedience as God had predicted in Gen. 2:17; 2) what did God really mean by ‘you shall surely die?’

<sup>14</sup> John F.A. Sawyer, “The Role of Reception Theory, Reader-Response Criticism and/or Impact History in the Study of the Bible: Definition and Evaluation,” (paper presented at the biennial meeting of the authors of the series *Evangelisch-Katholischer Kommentar*, Germany, March 21–23), 1. See also, idem, ed., *The Blackwell Companion to the Bible and Culture* (Malden, M.A.: John Wiley and Sons, 2012), 1–7. For the historical background of the study of reception history, see Mary. C. Callaway, ‘What’s the Use of Reception History?’ (SBL Paper, San Antonio, November 2004), 1–14.

(1) Comprehensively recording – and, indeed, advancing – the current knowledge of the origins and development of the Bible in its Jewish and Christian canonical forms and (2) documenting the history of the Bible’s reception in Judaism and Christianity as evident in exegetical literature, theological and philosophical writings of various genres, literature, liturgy, music, the visual arts, dance, and film, as well as in Islam and other religious traditions and contemporary movements.<sup>15</sup>

This thesis will primarily follow and retain the convictions and perspective of the *BBC* and *EBR* projects; however, the scope of this work will be limited to the early Jewish reception and interpretation of the prohibitive command (Gen 2:17) with the foremost aim of investigating and tracing how this particular command concerning the tree of knowledge has been understood and how the notion that the first man was punished with death for his sin developed in its early reception history. Thus, the thesis will attempt to trace the interpretative development and history of the origin of human death in its association with the divine death warning in Gen 2:17 from the HB to its subsequent translations, rewritten texts from the DSS and other Jewish literatures, such as the Book of Ben Sira and Wisdom of Solomon, etc., which share themes and language with Paul’s assertion of the introduction of death through the disobedience of Adam and Eve. Special attention will be given to the texts in which the authors deliberately quote or make references to the prohibitive command concerning the tree of knowledge (Gen 2:17).

The command concerning the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in Gen 2:17 reads: ‘for in the day you eat from it you will surely die ( כי ביום אכלך ממנו מות ) (תמות).’ The question that often arises from a reading of Gen. 2:17 – whether Adam and Eve were originally created physically immortal or mortal – is closely related to the question of –why do the first humans not die immediately after their disobedience, as God predicted in Gen. 2:17? In the attempt to answer this question, there arises the suggestion that the death God meant was not an imminent death penalty, but simply humans becoming mortal. What follows this explanation is the presumption that had they not eaten from the tree, they would have lived forever. Or, had they continued to eat from the tree of life, they would have lived forever. I believe that the answer to this question could be better assessed, however, by

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<sup>15</sup> Hans-Josef Klauck et al., eds., ‘Introduction,’ *EBR* 1: ix.



scrutinizing the divine command in Gen. 2:17, its intended meaning, usage and literary context within the Hebrew Bible. Therefore, the thesis will begin with a detailed exegetical investigation of the command in its literary and narrative context. This preliminary analysis is required, firstly because many ancient and modern interpretative and translational decisions about the Hebrew phrase מוֹת תָּמוּת ('you will surely die') avoid analysis of the actual death warning and are primarily based on what happens in the narrative following the disobedience. The common rationale behind such a decision is that 'the death penalty is not carried out immediately, therefore the death warning is not about instantaneous death.'<sup>16</sup> The problem that Adam is not struck down on the day of his violation has been recognized by both ancient and modern readers, and from this apparent lack of agreement between the death warning and its fulfilment, there emerges different interpretations with regard to the meaning of the death warning in Gen. 2:17.<sup>17</sup> A careful analysis of the command is also required because, to ensure a thorough and reliable analysis of the reception history of the command, it is important to consider the original Hebrew text in order to determine its original meaning. Lastly, it should be noted that, although some aspects and development of the concept of spiritual death will be considered in relevant chapters, the discussion in this thesis will primarily be confined to the origin of 'physical' death. I will not attempt to engage broadly with

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<sup>16</sup> See footnote 89 below.

<sup>17</sup> In his Greek translation of the Old Testament in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century CE, Symmachus translated the phrase מוֹת תָּמוּת as *θνητὸς ἔσῃ* 'you will become mortal.' This translation implies Adam and Eve's loss of an original immortal status. Modern scholars, such as Budde, Speiser and Cassuto etc., also argue that the humans became mortal on that day, translating the phrase as 'you shall be doomed to death,' therefore seeing the origin of the physical death of any human being as the consequence of the violation of the command. Occasionally, this interpretation is further supported by the suggestion that the translation of the prepositional phrase בַּיּוֹם 'on the day' as a 24-hour day is too literal and should be translated more broadly as something like 'when' or 'if.' Following this line of argument, it is presumed that the nature of death is physical. The second argument we often encounter is as follows: it is possible to interpret the phrase בַּיּוֹם literally, that is, 'in the day,' but the death warning itself should not be taken literally. Rather, it should be interpreted metaphorically or symbolically; for example, John C. Collins has argued that death here refers to spiritual death, while others see it as breaking the relationship between God and human beings. For the list and discussion of modern scholars who advocate the nonliteral meaning of death, i.e. spiritual death, see footnote 90.

the interpretative development of the immortality of the soul or immortal life after the point of physical death.<sup>18</sup>

## 1.2 Research Context

The scholarly quest in search of the answer to the question of whether Adam and Eve were originally created immortal (or mortal) is not new, but no one has thus far focused exclusively on providing a detailed exegetical analysis of the divine prohibitive command (Gen 2:17) and its subsequent reception. In this work, pertinent and detailed discussions of scholarly literature will be provided in each relevant chapter, but a brief overview of those works that have some overlaps with this thesis will also be helpful. The influential book by James Barr, *The Garden of Eden and the Hope of Immortality*, has been a starting point that inspired this thesis to further investigate the topic of immortality. His work is compelling in that he explicitly argues that Adam and Eve were in fact created mortal. Barr challenges the traditional view that affirms the immortal status of Adam and Eve before the incident at the tree. Specifically, in the first two chapters, Barr argues that in the garden narrative (as well as the entire HB) ‘death’ is not presented as the punishment for sin, but rather ample evidence suggests that death was considered a good and natural part of human life that is willed by God. Barr also considers the ‘Pauline understanding of Adam and Eve’ to be grounded not in the text of Genesis but in certain later strata of the Old Testament including the books outside the Hebrew canon.<sup>19</sup> Barr observes that, apart from Paul, in the rest of the NT, there is not much interest in Adam as the one who brought sin and death, and this typology of Adam and Christ is of Paul’s own exposition and confined, even in Paul’s own writings, to Rom 5, 1 Cor 15 and 1 Timothy. Barr states the following:

Clearly, the emphasis on the sin of Eve and Adam as the means by which death came into the world was not considered a universal necessity in New Testament Christianity: whole books were written which took no notice of it. It is a peculiarity of St Paul, and it is very likely that the thought originated with

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<sup>18</sup> Cf. Murray J. Harris, ‘The New Testament View of Life after Death,’ *Them* 11.2 (January 1986), 47-52.

<sup>19</sup> Barr, *The Garden of Eden and the Hope of Immortality*, 18.

him; or, to be more precise, that its use as an important element *within Christianity* originated with him.<sup>20</sup>

Barr's work is certainly helpful in following and highlighting relevant themes and questions that are related to the discussion of death and immortality; however, as Barr informs the readers in the preface, this is not a detailed exegetical work that provides a 'thorough or systematic discussion of immortality,' or engages 'with all the vast discussion in the scholarly literature' and 'every biblical passage that might be relevant.'<sup>21</sup> Moreover, Barr's arguments are not without weaknesses and presuppositions that will be addressed later in this thesis.<sup>22</sup> For instance, Barr is one of the exegetes who argues that Adam and Eve were originally created mortal because, for example, 'to-be immortal' was dependent on partaking of the tree of life (3:22) and the death warning in Gen. 2:17 would be more relevant to mortal beings etc. However, there is no reason to assume that the warning of an immediate death penalty could not have been given to an immortal being, particularly in the scenario that the man was sustaining his immortal status through periodic consumption from the tree of life. Further, the suggestion that the man was originally mortal requires an underlying assumption that Adam and Eve did not have the chance to eat from the tree of life up to this point, which cannot simply be left to chance or explained away with other presumptive suggestions. Barr's arguments will be further addressed in chapter 3 of this thesis.

There are various other scholarly articles that aim to provide the early reception history of the topic of immortality to a certain extent, although not thoroughly. The main points of argument that these works have in common are: 1) the Genesis text itself teaches that Adam and Eve were created mortal; and 2) other early Jewish literature uniformly report that human beings were created mortal from the beginning (some of them would place even Paul within the same line of interpretation). For instance, in his "Adam Citings before the Intrusion of Satan: Recontextualizing Paul's Theology of Sin and Death," Henry Kelly provides a short survey of each reference to Adam and Eve. His work is comprehensive in that his lists include most of the early references to the story of Adam and Eve, including

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., xi.

<sup>22</sup> See pp. 80-83 of this thesis.

those that make no mention of Adam's physical status in the Garden of Eden, starting from the book of Tobit, through to the work of Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho* (160 CE). However, Kelly does not engage with the texts exegetically, but instead gives a short introduction to each citation. Kelly forces his interpretation that even Paul depicts Adam as originally created mortal merely based on Paul's description of Adam's creation from the earth (ἐκ γῆς) in contrast to Christ who is from heaven (1 Cor 15:47). Kelly also argues that Paul's view of death in Rom. 5:12-21 is not necessarily 'physical' when compared to Paul's discussion of 'the life of the next age' (15:21). His stance will be discussed further in the later chapters, but, in brief, his argument is not supported by Paul's overall context, his use of the word 'death' in the literal sense, or Paul's clear assertion of 'death' coming through one person within the context of justifying the physical death and resurrection of Christ, as well as of those who have died in him. Nevertheless, Kelly writes that 'Paul was out of the ordinary in his focus on Adam, and that his interpretation of Adam's sin and its effect...was not shared by other writers of his time.'<sup>23</sup>

John J. Collins' article, "Before the Fall: The Earliest Interpretations of Adam and Eve" discusses a number of texts (the Book of Ben Sira, a few manuscripts from the DSS, the Book of the Watchers/1 Enoch) and their interpretations of Adam and Eve.<sup>24</sup> Collins notes the lack of attention to the story of Adam and Eve in the entire HB and argues that his selected texts do not consider the present human condition or death as a result of the 'Fall.' Rather, he insists that there is clear textual evidence in the book of Ben Sira and 1 Enoch that Adam and Eve were originally created mortal. However, he does not discuss the divine command in Gen 2:17 or Sir 14:17, which may be a reference to the divine command in Gen 2:17. Chapter six of this thesis will interact with Collins' argument, and in particular his argument that Ben Sira describes death as the natural lot of human beings will be questioned.

The work that has the most overlap with this thesis is Konrad Schmid's article, "Loss of Immortality? Hermeneutical Aspects of Genesis 2-3 and its Early

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<sup>23</sup> Henry R. Kelly, "Adam Citings before the Intrusion of Satan: Recontextualizing Paul's Theology of Sin and Death," BTB 44 (2014): 14.

<sup>24</sup> John J. Collins, "Before the Fall: The Earliest Interpretations of Adam and Eve," in *The Idea of Biblical Interpretation: Essays in Honor of James L. Kugel*, JSJSup 83 (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 293-308.

Receptions”<sup>25</sup> as he discusses the usage of the death warning in the HB in the first half of the article.<sup>26</sup> However, his analysis of the garden narrative in the HB and of his passages selected from a number of early Jewish literatures in the second half of the article leads him to the conclusion that the death in Gen. 2-3 and its early receptions was considered to be a natural part of original creation, which echoes Barr and other scholars’ views mentioned above. Schmid argues that Ben Sira, Wisdom of Solomon, 1 Enoch, 4 Ezra, 2 Baruch, Josephus, Philo and Paul all took the view that humankind was created mortal.<sup>27</sup> Schmid’s work was helpful for this thesis in that it approaches each text from a reception historical point of view, focusing on the topic of the original immortal status of Adam and Eve. Nevertheless, given that Schmid’s work does not aim to provide a detailed exegetical analysis of each text (similar to the previous two works by Kelly and Collins), its use of passages from each text and the discussion of the context of each passage that he uses to support his argument is selective and requires further investigation. Schmid’s discussion of the meaning and usage of the divine command in Gen. 2:17 was particularly helpful for this thesis’ chapter on the MT, although there is still room for a thorough grammatical and exegetical analysis.

Contrary to the aforementioned scholars, the present thesis argues that there is a developmental process in the interpretation of the divine prohibitive command (Gen 2:17) with regard to its association with the introduction of death to humanity from as early as the LXX to Paul’s conviction of death as entering the world through human transgression (1 Cor 15:21; Rom. 5:12). This thesis is also unique in the way that it traces the reception history in early Jewish literature, adopting a text-critical and exegetical method, with a narrower focus on the prohibitive command (Gen. 2:17) in relation to the issue of the non-fulfillment of the death penalty predicted by God in Gen 2:17. On the premise that neither the garden narrative nor the death

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<sup>25</sup> Konrad Schmid, “Loss of Immortality? Hermeneutical Aspects of Genesis 2–3 and its Early receptions,” in Konrad Schmid and Christoph Riedweg, eds., *Beyond Eden: The Biblical Story of Paradise (Genesis 2-3) and its Reception History*, (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 58–78.

<sup>26</sup> Schmid considers the legal usage of the death warning in the HB involving the death penalty as one of the five problems with the garden narrative in relation to the traditional view of the original immortal status of human beings. Schmid, *ibid.*, 62-64. His suggested problems will be taken up in detail in the following chapters.

<sup>27</sup> See *ibid.*, 65-73.

warning convey information about whether the man was immortal or that he became mortal due to eating the forbidden fruit, the thesis will attempt to show how the association between the command and the introduction of death begins to appear in the subsequent interpretations and is further made explicit in the epistles of Paul. Although Paul is not the only one in the Second Temple Period in whose work it is possible to find traces of the interpretative attempt to attribute the transgression of Adam and Eve to the origin of death, Paul's explicit conviction and repeated emphasis on the idea that the transgression of the first man opened the way for the entrance of death into the world finds no precedent. In fact, Paul was also the only New Testament writer to take up the story of Adam's disobedience to God's command (Gen. 2:17) and to relate it to the introduction of death to humanity. The subsequent major Christian interpretation that Adam and Eve were created as immortal beings certainly owes much to Paul and follows Paul's interpretation on the origin of death by means of Adam's transgression in Rom. 5:12 and 1 Cor. 15:21-22.<sup>28</sup> For this reason, post-Pauline interpretations – although some are discussed in subsequent chapters to a certain extent (e.g. Augustine, St. Jerome, Symmachus etc.) – will be excluded from the scope of this thesis.

### 1.3 Course of Analysis

Following this introductory chapter, the thesis will be divided into six main chapters and conclusion. The second chapter considers the details of the narrative elements in Genesis with the intention of finding any clues regarding the status of the first human beings in the garden before the forbidden fruit incident, then it analyses the meaning intended by the original command in Gen 2:17. Particular attention is given to the phrase ביום 'in the day' and the usage of the death warning 'you shall surely die' (מות תמות) in the passages of Genesis, Pentateuch, and the rest of the HB, in order to answer whether the notion of physical death entering the world

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<sup>28</sup> J. Barr goes so far as to suggest that this correlation between death and Adam's transgression originated with Paul: 'Clearly, the emphasis on the sin of Eve and Adam as the means by which death came into the world was not considered a universal necessity in New Testament Christianity: whole books were written which took no notice of it. It is a peculiarity of St Paul, and it is very likely that the thought originated with him; or, to be more precise, that its use as an important element *within Christianity* originated with him.' J. Barr, *The Garden of Eden and the Hope of Immortality*, 5.

through Adam's disobedience is valid according to the literary usage and context of the death warning itself. The third chapter investigates the punishment and expulsion passages in Genesis 3:14-24 in more detail to consider interpretative questions that emerge from their possible relationships with the death warning. The fourth chapter looks at the Greek (LXX) and Latin translations (OL, Vulg.) of the divine prohibitive command, how the translators understood the death warning and translated it in the book of Genesis, and the subsequent books in the rest of the LXX. After discussing the lexical choices and translational elements in the garden narrative of the LXX (2:4a-3:24) that deviate from the text of the MT, particular attention is given to the following translational elements of the prohibitive command in Gen 2:17: 1) the Greek idiomatic phrase ἡ δ' ἂν ἡμέρα φάγητε ('in the day in which you eat...'); 2) the implications of the plural verbs ἀποθανεῖσθε ('you [pl.] shall die') used by the translator to render the singular of the MT; and 3) the usage of the cognate dative noun in the death warning θανάτῳ ἀποθανεῖσθε ('By death, you shall die') in relation to the MT's use of the infinitive absolute מות for emphasis. The fifth chapter focuses on the Dead Sea Scrolls manuscripts, the textual witnesses to the death warning מות תמות ('you shall surely die') in 4QGen<sup>b</sup> and 4QGen,<sup>h2</sup> as well as the allusions and references to the creation, divine command (Gen 2:17) and punishment (3:14-24) found in 4Q422, 4Q423, 4Q303, 4Q504 and 4Q124. The sixth chapter considers the book of Ben Sira, which has two important interpretative verses regarding the mortality of the human beings (Sir 14:17; 25:24). In particular, this chapter questions the current scholarly view of Sira's understanding of death as a natural part of creation and adds further textual support to the view that Sir 14:17 is indeed Sira's allusion to the divine command and to Eve's disobedience to the command found in Gen 2:17 and thus his explanation of the origin of death. Particular attention is given to the usage and meaning of the phrases גוע יגוע ('they shall surely die') and חוק עולם ('perpetual statute'). The seventh chapter investigates passages in the Pauline Epistles and the rest of the New Testament that refer to the disobedience of Adam and Eve concerning the tree of the knowledge of good and evil: John 8:44; Rom. 5:12-21; 1 Cor. 15:21-22; 2 Cor. 11:3; and 1 Tim. 2:13-14. The two main passages that will be dealt with in this chapter are 1 Corinthians 15:21-22 and Romans 5:12-21, in each of which Paul makes direct references to Adam's disobedience in relation to the 'coming' of death into the world. Finally, the last chapter will conclude this

thesis by summarizing the key points observed in each chapter and by connecting the progressive line of interpretative route in the Second Temple Period where the link between the divine death warning in Gen 2:17 and the idea of the coming of mortality into the world is strengthened and made explicit.





## Chapter Two

### The Prohibition of Genesis 2:16-17 in Genesis

#### 2.1 Introduction

For a thorough and reliable analysis of the reception history of the command in Gen. 2:16-17, it is important to consider the original Hebrew text in order to determine the original meaning. Acknowledging that the text itself is more important in determining its plain meaning than any other person's comment on it, I intend to scrutinize the death warning in Gen. 2:16-17, along with some related passages in the book of Genesis and the rest of the HB within their literary context.

This chapter aims to determine exegetically whether the death warning concerning the consumption of the fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, which is the leitmotif of the narrative,<sup>29</sup> presents any evidence on whether the first humans were created to be immortal. This analysis will help us to assess the text and consider whether humans lost their originally given immortality as a result of their disobedience, or whether they were originally created mortal, but lost their chance to become immortal by partaking of the tree of life.<sup>30</sup> After examining the passage from a text-critical perspective, the details of the narrative elements will be reviewed. Then, I will focus on the death warning, with particular attention to the usage and

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<sup>29</sup> C. Westermann points out that the term 'the knowledge of good and evil' is a central motif in the narrative, analysing its four occurrences from the construction point of view – twice in the exposé, 2:9,17; once at the climax, 3:5; and lastly in the final survey, 3:22. Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1–11: A Commentary*, CC (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994), 242. Undoubtedly the tree of knowledge of good and evil is important in the early chapters of Genesis, and so is God's commandment with regard to the tree when understanding the key themes of Genesis 2-3.

<sup>30</sup> In his, *The Garden of Eden and the Hope of Immortality*, James Barr, suggests that the garden story is not to be understood as 'the Fall' but instead as the story about humans' lost chance to become 'immortal.' He argues that Gen. 3:22 ('lest he reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever') implies the mortal nature of the first humans – therefore they did not lose immortality, rather they came very close to achieving immortality as a result of eating from the tree of knowledge. James Barr, *The Garden of Eden and the Hope of Immortality*, 16. The first human couple permanently lost access to immortality; nevertheless, the text does not say anything explicitly about whether they were mortal or immortal before their expulsion from the garden (3:22). That they lost the chance to become immortal is clear regardless of whether they were immortal or not. Further details on Gen. 3:22 will be discussed in the next chapter.

meaning of the phrase ביום ('in the day') and מות תמות ('you shall surely die') in Genesis, and the subsequent books of the Hebrew Bible (HB). These phrases are important to the question of the original immortal/mortal status of Adam and Eve as the scholarly questions and debates with regard to fulfilment/non-fulfilment of the death warning and the nature of death meant by God primarily focus on these two phrases.

## 2.2 Reconstructed Text and Translation

The first step in a thorough investigation of the passage will involve textual criticism and analysis. Differences between the MT and the Septuagint (LXX) in particular will be mentioned, since the Greek translation of Genesis was likely the *Vorlage* of the New Testament authors. Further details and discussions will be given in the relevant chapters.

### Gen 2:16-17

ויצו יהוה אלהים על-האדם<sup>a</sup> לאמר מכל עץ-הגן<sup>b</sup> אכל תאכל<sup>b</sup> (Gen.2:16)  
ומעץ<sup>a</sup> הדעת טוב ורע<sup>a</sup> לא תאכל<sup>b</sup> ממנו כי ביום אכלך<sup>c</sup> ממנו<sup>d</sup> מות תמות<sup>d</sup> (Gen.2:17)

2:16: And the LORD God commanded the human being, saying, 'From any tree of the garden you may freely eat,  
2:17: but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat from it, for in the day you eat from it you will surely die.'<sup>31</sup>

### Text notes

2:16<sup>a</sup>: The LXX reads τῷ Ἀδὰμ ('the Adam' or 'Adam') in place of the generic term, τὸν ἄνθρωπον ('the humankind' or 'man').<sup>32</sup> This is the first appearance

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<sup>31</sup> The English translation is mine. Unless otherwise noted, all other English translations are from the NASB.

<sup>32</sup> Although the Hebrew word אדם could be understood either as 'a man' or 'Adam' depending on the context, it is not until Gen. 4:25; 5.1a onwards that the MT starts to drop the article on אדם to explicitly refer to the male figure, Adam. In fact, until 4:25, there are only four occurrences of the word without the article (1:26; 2:20; 3:17, 21). In Gen. 1:26 ('God said, let us make man (אדם) in our image'), the translator renders the word generically with ἄνθρωπον rather than with the personal name Ἀδὰμ. Adopting the personal name Ἀδὰμ for אדם in Gen. 2:16 is a sudden change in the translator's lexical choice. As the story in the garden gets more personalized with Adam and Eve throughout chs.

in the LXX and use of the proper name Ἄδαμ by the Greek translator. The generic term τὸν ἄνθρωπον is retained until this verse. The translator may have wanted to stress the fact that the command was given only to the man since the woman had not yet been created at that point. However, the awkwardness of the sudden change, particularly in this verse, from τὸν ἄνθρωπον to Ἄδαμ, cannot be avoided. W. Loader suggests that the shift to the personal name ‘Adam’ in the LXX is probably due to the prohibition given in the next verse, which the individual figure of Adam violates in the following chapter. Loader suggests that readers might have gained the impression that humankind, and not just Adam, was placed in the garden had the generic term been retained in this verse.<sup>33</sup> This is not likely, however, since the generic term ἄνθρωπον in Gen. 2:15, and the change from singular to plural (‘you [pl.] shall not eat’) and (‘you [pl.] shall surely die’) in the LXX of Gen. 2:17 would give an even greater impression that there were many human beings placed in the garden. Possible intentions for this translational choice will be discussed further in the chapter on the LXX. S and T<sup>0</sup> also take the word as a proper name, but these translations have close affinities with the LXX and the scholarly consensus is that their agreement with the LXX against the MT should not be understood as two separate witnesses.<sup>34</sup>

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2-5, it seems that the translator takes a more active role in his translation of the term אָדָם onwards. However, contextually speaking, אָדָם in Gen. 2:16 does not need to be translated with the personal name Ἄδαμ; further, the translator randomly goes back to the generic term ἄνθρωπον for the same Hebrew word, cf. 2:18, 24; 4.1, etc. The translator is well aware of the unarticulated Hebrew term אָדָם and differentiates this with אָדָם throughout his translation. The translator’s rendering of the term אָדָם in Gen. 2:16 with the proper name, is therefore exegetical in nature, and opens up possible reception of the verse specifically to Adam, receiving the command from God without the woman or any other humankind present, or perhaps not created yet. Moreover, the personal name Ἄδαμ in 2:16 does not read smoothly with the plural verbs in 2:17 (singular in the Hebrew text) and creates another textual problem within the translation. This will be discussed further in the next chapter. For more discussion on the LXX’s stronger focus on the single figure of Adam and its influence in the works of Philo and the New Testament see William Loader, *The Septuagint, Sexuality, and the New Testament: Case Studies on the Impact of the LXX in Philo and the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 33-35.

<sup>33</sup> Loader, *ibid.*, 34.

<sup>34</sup> Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible: Third Edition, Revised and Expanded*

2:16<sup>b</sup>: the LXX translator renders the Hebrew infinitive absolute with a dative noun, βρώσει ('for food'). This is a typical way of treating the Hebrew infinitive absolute in the LXX, yet the translator's intended meaning and subsequent reception of it requires further investigation. It is notable that the OL (Vetus Latina) translation has a noun in accusative case followed by an adverb, *edes ad escam* ('you [2S] may eat as food'), indicating further the translator's lack of attention to the emphatic function of the Hebrew infinitive absolute. Vulgate (Vg.) also does not present the Hebrew infinitive absolute in his translation as the translator renders the combination of the verbs (inf. abs. + finite) as *comede* ('You may eat', 2ms) without any counterpart of the infinitive.

2:17a: the translator renders the same Hebrew phrase עץ הדעת טוב ורע ('tree of the knowledge of good and evil') differently in verses 9 and 17. The rendering with the infinitive τοῦ γινώσκειν ('knowing good and evil') in verse 17 (also in 3:22) is more literal as a rendering of the MT's substantivised infinitive דעת than that in verse 9 where an adverb is supplied, τοῦ εἰδέναι γνωστὸν ('knowing what is knowable of good and evil').<sup>35</sup> Such free rendering only occurs in verse 9; it is likely that the translator wanted to provide an explanation as to the meaning of 'knowing good and evil.'

2:17b: MT, 4QGen<sup>b</sup>, S, SP] LXX φάγεσθε. It has been suggested that LXX's pluralization of the verb οὐ φάγεσθε ('you [2p] will not eat') is a harmonization of the number with οὐ φάγεσθε ('you [2p] shall not eat') in Gen. 3:3.<sup>36</sup> However, it is important not to rule out the possibility of an interpretative decision on the number of the verb being undertaken by the Genesis translator. Further analysis on this will be given in the chapter on the LXX.

2:17c: MT, 4QGen<sup>b</sup>, S, SP] LXX φάγητε (2p), see 2:17b above.

2:17d: MT, 4QGen<sup>b</sup>, S, SP] LXX θανάτω ἀποθανεῖσθε (2p), OL *morte moriemini*, ('you [2p] will die the death/by death'), see the previous entry 2.16b on

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(Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012), 150-52.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. John William Wevers, *Notes on the Greek Text of Genesis* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993), 30-31.

<sup>36</sup> Ronald Hendel, *The Text of Genesis 1-11: Textual Studies and Critical Edition* (New York: OUP, 1998), 124.

the use of dative *θανάτω* in place of the Hebrew infinitive *מות*. The translation of Symmachus and T<sup>J</sup> is noteworthy here, with clear interpretative elements within their translation: Symmachus renders the phrase as *θνητὸς ἔσῃ* ('you shall become mortal'), and T<sup>J</sup> uses *תהי חייב קטול* ('you are liable for death'), which recalls the Mishnaic legal term (e.g. m. Šeb. 9:9). Jerome praises Symmachus' interpretation as a more appropriate translation: 'Symmachus translated more appropriately when he rendered it as "*you shall be mortal*" (*θνητὸς ἔσῃ*).'<sup>37</sup> Nevertheless, Vg.'s translation follows the LXX on the use of a dative noun for the Hebrew infinitive. On the number of the verb, Vg. agrees with the MT's second person singular: *morte morieris* ('you [2s] will die the death/by death').

### 2.3 Gen. 2:16-17 in Context: Narrative with Gaps and Possibilities

In Gen. 2:17, God warns the man, '...but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.' Although the creation/garden narrative in the early chapters of Genesis does not state explicitly whether God created the first human beings immortal or mortal, commentators have frequently pointed to this death warning for the textual reference that confirms the immortal status of the first man and woman before their disobedience to God's command.<sup>38</sup> The immediate problem that arises from the

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<sup>37</sup> Robert Hayward and Jerome, *Saint Jerome's Hebrew Questions on Genesis: Translated with Introduction and Commentary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 31, 110-11; Kamesar Adam, *Jerome, Greek Scholarship, and the Hebrew Bible: A Study of the Quaestiones Hebraicae in Genesim* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), 90. See, Alison Salvesen, *Symmachus in the Pentateuch*, JSS Monograph Series 15 (Manchester: University of Manchester, 1991), 9-10.

<sup>38</sup> It has been commonly understood within the major Christian tradition that the first humans, Adam and Eve, were created as immortal beings. Paul states in Romans 5:12: 'Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned.' It is Paul's exposition of Gen. 2 on which the Christian doctrines of original sin have been developed. Centuries later, to refute the claims of Pelagius, Augustine of Hippo writes: 'Man's nature...was created at first faultless and without any sin' (*Nat. grat.*, III, 1). In other work, Augustine points to some who 'say that Adam was so formed that he would even without any demerit of sin have died, not as the penalty of sin, but from the necessity of his being' (*On the Merits and Forgiveness of Sins, and on the Baptism of Infants* II.2), and asserts that such an understanding of Gen. 2:17 is dubious; he suggests that what they mean is the death of the soul, not the body. He

disproves such a notion by referring to Gen. 3:19, ‘Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return’ (ibid.). He writes that ‘Therefore, if Adam had not sinned, he would not have been divested of his body, but would have been clothed upon with immortality and incorruption’ (ibid.). In his treatise, entitled *On Genesis Literally Interpreted (De Genesi ad litteram)*, Augustine further writes, ‘This death occurred on the day when our first parents did what God had forbidden. their bodies lost the privileged condition they had had, a condition mysteriously maintained by nourishment from the tree of life, which would have been able to preserve them from sickness and from the aging process. Augustine, *Gen. litt.*, XI, 32. Similarly, the first Canon of the Council of Carthage from 418 C.E. states: ‘Whosoever says, that Adam was created mortal, and would, even without sin, have died by natural necessity, let him be anathema.’ Philip Schaff, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Christianity: A.D. 311-600*, vol. 3 of *History of the Christian Church*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (New York: Scribner’s Sons, 1889), 799. John Calvin (1509-64) also writes: ‘But it is asked, what kind of death God means in this place?...in his body there was no defect, wherefore he was wholly free from death...For then was Adam consigned to death, and death began its reign in him, until supervening grace should bring a remedy.’ John Calvin, *Commentary on the First Book of Moses Called Genesis*, trans. John King (vol. 1; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948), 127–28. Martin Luther’s stance is the same: ‘This threat, which was so clearly added, also proves that a Law was given to Adam. Moreover, it shows too that Adam was created in the state of innocence, or was righteous. There was not yet any sin, because God did not create sin. Therefore, if Adam had obeyed this command, he would never have died; for death came through sin.’ Martin Luther, *Luther’s Works: Lectures on Genesis, Chapters 1-5* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1958), 110. A similar notion is found in some Jewish literatures. The story of disobedience is found with minor differences in detail but is depicted as the origin of death, 4 Ezra 7:118: ‘O Adam, what have you done? Your sin was not your fall alone; it was ours also, the fall of your descendants’; Sir 25:24: ‘Woman is the origin of sin, and it is through her that we all die.’ Sir 25:24 will be discussed further in chapter Six. With regard to the question of the immortal/mortal status of Adam and Eve, K. Schmid provides a short survey and describes the understanding within early Jewish and rabbinic traditions as ‘ambiguous’ as both views are present (i.e. that Adam was originally created either mortal or immortal). The three example texts that Schmid provides (Pesiq. Rab. 42:1; 1 Enoch 69:11; and Gen. Rab. 12:6) describe ‘death’ as the consequence of Adam’s transgression of God’s command in Gen. 2:17. Schmid, “Loss of Immortality? Hermeneutical Aspects of Genesis 2–3 and its Early Reception,” 58–59. Gen. Rab. 12:6 in particular (a fifth century C.E. haggadic commentary on the book of Genesis) is worth noting: רבי יודן בשם רבי אבין אמר כנגד ששה דברים שנטלו מאדם הראשון, ואלו הן: זיוו, חייו, וקומתו, ופרי הארץ, ופרות האילן, ומאורות. זיוו [missing] six [that is, the numerical value of the vav] correspond to six things that were taken away from the first man, and these are they: his splendor, his immortal life, his stature, the fruit of the earth, the fruit of the tree, and the primordial lights’. Jacob Neusner, *Genesis Rabbah. The Judaic Commentary to the Book of Genesis. A New Translation*, vol. 1, BJSt 104 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985), 124. Moreover, the association between God’s command in Gen 2:17 and Adam’s loss of immortality in the sense of becoming mortal as a result of his violation of that command is clear and

narrative context, however, is that although God states that the man will *surely* die on the *day* he eats from the tree of the knowledge, he does not in fact die, but continues to live to the age of 930 years (Gen. 5:5). The problem that the man was not struck down on the day of his violation of the command has been recognized by both ancient and modern readers, and from this apparent lack of agreement between the death warning and its fulfilment, there emerge different interpretations with regard to the meaning of the death warning in Gen. 2:17. God himself is the one who warns that the man and woman will die upon the violation of the command, but it turns out otherwise, as James Barr notes: ‘the person who comes out of this story with a slightly shaky moral record is...God.’<sup>39</sup> However, since it would be contradictory to the general understanding of God for most readers to reach the conclusion that God told a lie about the consequence of eating the fruit,<sup>40</sup> or that he failed to keep his

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reinforced in Gen. Rab. 12:6, which provides Gen. 3:19 as the prooftext for Adam’s loss of immortality: חַיֵּיו מִנֵּץ [בראשית ג, ח] כִּי עָפָר אַתָּה (‘His immortal life? “For dust you are and to dust you shall return” (Gen. 3:19)’). Cf. also Gen. Rab. 20:10; Lev. Rab. 11:1; Ecc. Rab. 8:2; Pesiq. Rab. 14:2; 42:8; Num. Rab. 16:24; Exod. Rab. 28:4 and Midr. Pss. 92:2. All sources are quoted in Emmanouela Grypeou and Helen Spurling, *The Book of Genesis in Late Antiquity: Encounters between Jewish and Christian Exegesis* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 55. On the double usage of the verb מוֹת (‘to die’) for the death warning in Gen. 2:17, Gen. Rab. 16:6 states: מוֹת תָּמוּת, מִיתָה לְאָדָם, מִיתָה לְחַיָּה, מִיתָה לּוֹ, מִיתָה. ([‘Since the verb, “you shall surely die,” uses the root “die” more than once, what is indicated is] the death penalty for Adam, for Eve, and for coming generations’). J. Neusner, *ibid.*, 177. Gen. Rab. 20:10 focuses on the verb תָּשׁוּב (‘you will return’) and interprets it as referring to Adam’s resurrection after death: אָמַר רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן יוֹחָאִי מִכָּאן רָמַז לְתַחִית הַמַּתִּים מִן הַתּוֹרָה, כִּי עָפָר אַתָּה וְאֶל עָפָר אָמַר רַבִּי שִׁיּוֹן ב. יוֹחַאי נֹאֵמַר, אֵלֶּיךָ תָּשׁוּב (‘R. Shion b. Yohai notes that, ‘This is evidence in the Torah for the resurrection of the dead. What it says is not, “For you are dust, and to dust you will go,” but rather, “you shall return”’). Similarly, Tg. Neof. Gen 3:19 states: וּמִן עַפְרָא אַתְּ עֵתִיד חֲזֹר וּקְאָם וִיהֵב דִּין וְחוּשְׁבָן (‘...from the dust you will return and rise and give an account and a calculation concerning all that you have done’). See also Tg. Ps -J. Gen 3:19, which connects Gen 3:19 with future resurrection and judgment of Adam. Cf. also S. Eli. Rab. 16 and B. Šabb. 152b, S. Eli. Rab. 16 explains that Adam’s future resurrection is due to God’s mercy. All sources are quoted in Grypeou and Spurling, *The Book of Genesis in Late Antiquity: Encounters between Jewish and Christian Exegesis*, 58.

<sup>39</sup> Barr, *The Garden of Eden and the Hope of Immortality*, 14.

<sup>40</sup> Some modern scholars, although they would not claim that the serpent was morally more in the right than God, hold a view that God told a lie, or at best only a partial truth; e.g. John Gibson, ed. *Genesis*, vol. 1, Daily Study Bible (Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press, 2006), 113-14; James



word, two main lines of argument have been proposed to make sense of the text. Since God's death warning was not carried out on the very day of the transgression, some argue that the death threat was not about instant physical death; instead, they suggest alternative explanations as to the nature/type of death predicted in Gen. 2:17, e.g. becoming mortal, or spiritual death and alienation from God etc.<sup>41</sup> Although scholars do not agree on the nature of the death warning in Gen. 2:17, it is certainly true that Gen. 2:16-17 serves as the crucial passage that many readers associate with the story of disobedience in the garden and the mortality of human beings. Indeed, the major concern in the garden narrative is the prohibition of the tree of knowledge in Gen. 2:17: the narrative unfolds with God planting two trees in the garden, ordering the man not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the humans breaking the command, and God's punishments and banishment from the garden as a result of their disobedience.

At this point, it would be appropriate to ask, does the overall narrative of the garden story in Gen. 2-3 provide any clues as to the question of whether the first human being was created immortal or mortal? The overall literary form of the book of Genesis is narrative. In such a narrative, themes, messages and the theology of the narrator are embedded in a series of events and through the interplay of characters within the narrative. The narrator often expresses his message by using figurative and metaphorical language. On many issues, the narrator chooses to remain completely or partially silent and he skips details that would otherwise help us to

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Charlesworth, *The Good and Evil Serpent: How a Universal Symbol Became Christianized*, AYBRL (New Haven: YUP, 2010), 275-324. Most will not identify with the serpent over God: the serpent and human beings are the ones ultimately being held responsible and cursed for their act and disobedience. There is an interesting debate between Walter Moberly and James Barr on whether God is lying in this prohibition. Moberly points out Barr's words like God 'comes out of this story with a slightly shaky moral record' (Barr, *Hope of Immortality*, 14) and asserts that this is a euphemistic way of saying God is a liar. Walter Moberly, review of *The Garden of Eden and the Hope of Immortality*, by James Barr, *JTS* 45 (April 1, 1994): 173. Barr retorts that he does not mean to say that God is a liar, rather he points out that there can be untrue statements that are not necessarily lies, as lie is a term of moral condemnation. As God's warning is not a promise of favour, which he breached, it cannot be categorized as a lie. James Barr, "Is God a Liar? (Genesis 2-3) and Related Matters," *JTS* 57 (2006): 6-7.

<sup>41</sup> Different interpretations of the nature of death warning will be discussed later in this chapter.

understand better and make sense of the text.<sup>42</sup> As a result, the task of further interpretation is often left to subsequent readers who often project their preconceived ideas and assumptions onto the story, often unconsciously and without any textual support. In this regard, it must be noted that the garden story does not explicitly mention anything about the immortal status of the first human beings, nor does the narrator give any explicit description of human condition or life in the garden before the fall; in fact, the only thing we are explicitly told by the narrator is that ‘they were naked and they were not ashamed’ (Gen. 2:25).<sup>43</sup> Readers are not told how long the humans lived in the garden, or what age they were when they consumed the forbidden fruit. Further, the type of the fruit that we know as ‘an apple’ is not in fact given in the story.<sup>44</sup> In this regard, before we go into detail about the death warning

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<sup>42</sup> For example, in Gen. 3:22, God drives man and woman out of the garden so that they will not eat from the tree of life and attain immortality. However, the narrator is silent on whether they did or did not eat from the tree of life beforehand, even though God allowed them to eat from every tree in the garden except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Such a narrative gap allows for a variety of interpretations regarding the presence of the tree of life, e.g. that they had to keep eating from the tree of life to sustain their immortality, and so on. For instance, Augustine writes: ‘their bodies lost the privileged condition they had had, a condition mysteriously maintained by nourishment from the tree of life, which would have been able to preserve them from sickness and from the aging process.’ Augustine, *Gen. litt.*, XI, 32.

Meir Sternberg proposes the idea of ‘gap-filling,’ which refers to readers who would take an active and interpretative stance when reading a biblical story that does not provide details as to what occurs between events. M. Sternberg, “Gaps, Ambiguity and the Reading Process” in *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 186-90. Such ambiguity in a biblical narrative is also pointed out by Auerbach, who observes in his article that unlike some other ancient epics, e.g. *Odyssey*, biblical narratives have many gaps and do not tell the exact meanings of the story. While in Homer, a speech serves to disclose thoughts, in a biblical text, the motives and the purpose remain unexpressed in the speech. Erich Auerbach, “Odysseus’ Scar” in *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), 11. However, Robert Alter sees Auerbach’s comparison between *Odyssey* and the biblical narratives as inadequate as Auerbach does not seem to consider the distinctions between narratives written by different authors. Robert, Alter, “A Literary Approach to the Bible,” *Commentary* 60 (December 1975): 71.

<sup>43</sup> Schmid, “Loss of Immortality? Hermeneutical Aspects of Genesis 2–3 and its Early receptions,” 62.

<sup>44</sup> Sanhedrin 70 a-b provides an interesting discussion by the rabbis on the type of tree that Adam and Eve ate from in the garden. According to one opinion, the tree from which Adam ate was a grape vine, which resulted in Adam being drunk and furthering his transgression of God’s command: אִמֵּר

(Gen. 2:17), taking a careful and close look at the story will help us pinpoint the details we find, and also those which the narrator decided to remain silent on, in particular with regard to the immortal status of the first human couple. Recounting the story will also help us address some important questions that are relevant to further discussion on the topic of immortality. Occasionally, suggestions by other scholars on certain issues will be discussed in the footnotes.

The first chapters of the book of Genesis present two creation stories set in the prehistoric period.<sup>45</sup> In Gen. 1:1-2:4a (generally attributed to the Priestly [P] source), God's creation acts are spread over six days. The first three days (starting with light on the first day) are closely paralleled with the second three days (ending with animals and human on the sixth). God rests, blesses and sanctifies the seventh day. God gives his very first command to humankind (הָאָדָם) in Gen. 1:28: 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.' While there is no mention of the tree of knowledge or the tree of life in the first creation story, God gives to man 'every plant yielding seed...and every tree which has fruit yielding seed' for food (1:30). This statement presumably includes the tree

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רב חסדא אמר רב עוקבא ואמר רב עוקבא א"ר זכאי א"ל הקב"ה לנח נח לא היה לך ללמד מאדם הראשון  
ין ('Said R. Hisda said R. Uqba, and some say, Mar Uqba said R. Zakkai said, 'The  
Holy One, blessed be he, said to Noah, 'Noah, you should have learned from the first man, for whom  
it was only wine that was the cause [of all his troubles]'). The second and third opinions propose that  
the tree from which Adam and Eve partook was a fig tree or wheat respectively (cf. Gen. 3:7). Jacob  
Neusner, *The Babylonian Talmud: A Translation and Commentary* (vol. 16; Peabody, MA:  
Hendrickson Publishers, 2011), 369. See also Louis Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews*, 2 vols.  
(Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2003), 153-55. A pseudepigraphic text, 3 Baruch 4 1-17,  
also describes the specific type of the tree 'through which the serpent deceived Eve and Adam' as a  
vine (vv. 6-8). As in Sanhedrin 70 a-b, the author of 3 Baruch warns against drinking excessive wine  
as 'the tree still possesses its evil' (v. 16) and this results in 'murder, adultery, fornication and cursing'  
(v. 17). Noah is portrayed as the one who, after the flood, finds and plants the vine by which  
Santanael deceived Eve and Adam in the Garden of Eden (vv. 11-13). See Harry E. Gaylord, Jr., "3  
(Greek Apocalypse of) Baruch. A New Translation and Introduction." in *OTP* 1, 666-69.

<sup>45</sup> Hence, there is no need to track the historical background of the story. The overall narrative of Genesis comes in two basic parts: a 'prehistory' (chs. 1-11) and the story of the patriarchs, with focus on the stories of Abraham (1:27-25:11), Jacob (25:12-37:1) and Joseph (chs. 37-50).

of life and indicates that out of the two trees planted ‘in the midst of the garden’ (2:9), only the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is forbidden.

In the second creation story (Genesis 2:4b–3:24, generally attributed to the Yahwist [J] source), God, now referred to by the name Yahweh (יהוה אֱלֹהִים), creates the man from the dust of the ground and places him in the Garden of Eden with a clear motivation: to cultivate and keep it (2:15).<sup>46</sup> The narrative centres its focus on the Garden of Eden and two trees are brought to our attention: the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. It is difficult to imagine that the man did not notice the presence of the tree of life until this point as it is planted in close proximity to the tree of knowledge in the centre of the garden.<sup>47</sup> Whether God has told the man about the existence of the tree of life and its capability to render him immortal is not clear in the story. God does not give a specific decree that they have to eat from the tree of life to keep from dying. We are not told whether regular eating from the tree of life is required to sustain their immortal status or that becoming immortal is the result of one bite of the fruit.<sup>48</sup> The tree of life probably looks no different from other trees as every tree that God has ‘caused to grow’ is ‘pleasing to the sight and good for food’ (2:9). Readers therefore cannot exclude the possibility of man or woman accidentally consuming the fruit from the tree of life once, or even on a

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<sup>46</sup> Note also, when God sends man out of the garden at the end of the story, one of his two motivations for doing so is ‘to cultivate the ground’ (3:23).

<sup>47</sup> That man was permitted to eat from every tree is further confirmed in the command ‘from any of the garden you may eat freely’ (2:16) and in the woman’s reply to the serpent’s question in Gen. 3:3 ‘from the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat.’ As such, it is clear to the readers that all trees in the garden are permitted to be eaten from except the tree of knowledge. Ziony Zevit, pointing to the parallel Mesopotamian tradition and the mentioning of Eve as ‘the mother of all the living’ in 3:20, suggests that the population growth after the incident of the tree of knowledge triggered God’s concern that humans will want to gain immortality. This is a possibility, but not convincing since we must assume then some elapsed time between the incident of the tree of knowledge (3:19) and the banishment from the garden (3:22), e.g. time needed for the family to increase, etc. Moreover, the banishment of man from the garden is clearly associated in the narrative with the eating of the forbidden fruit (3:22). Ziony Zevit, *What Really Happened in the Garden of Eden?* (New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 2013), 228-29.

<sup>48</sup> The awkwardness and the ambiguity in the flow of narrative caused by the presence of the tree of life leave scholars suspicious that the idea of tree of life is an editorial insertion. See footnote 125 below.

regular basis.<sup>49</sup> After introducing the presence of the tree of life to the reader, the narrator does not mention it again until the end of the garden story, where God sends the man and woman out of the garden so they cannot eat from the tree of life and live forever.

In Gen. 2:16-17, God strictly forbids man to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, saying that he will surely die *on the day* (ביום) he eats from it. The tree of life, which is understood to bestow immortality upon eating, is not mentioned in the prohibition and kept aside until it comes into focus in Gen 3:22. The command to the man in 2:16-17 is God's first ever speech in the garden, which creates tension as it contains the potential cause of conflict between God and man. The penalty for eating the forbidden fruit is certain death, מות תמות ('you will surely die'), which has become a *terminus technicus* for sentencing punishment in the rest of the Pentateuch. However, the death warning has no further refinement as God does not reveal his intention in giving such a commandment, either to the man or to the readers,<sup>50</sup> nor does he give further detail on how this predicted 'death' will come about. The missing information seems to render the command rather unpersuasive.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> H. Th. Obbink suggests that man not only could eat from the tree of life, but that he actually did. He points to the word לֹא ('lest') in Gen. 3:22 which could also mean 'lest further,' 'lest more' (Ex. 13:17, 1 Sam. 13:19), and suggests that Gen. 3:22 does not discount the possibility that man in the garden has eaten from the tree of life. H. T. Obbink, "The Tree of Life in Eden," *Expository Times* xliv (1932-33), 475. Umberto Cassuto criticizes that this is a forced interpretation while James Barr briefly notes that he has 'gone through all the 131 cases of Hebrew לֹא "lest" in the Bible and found none which means "lest someone continues to do what they are already doing."' Umberto Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis: Part I, From Adam to Noah (Genesis I–VI8)*, trans. Israel Abrahams (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, The Hebrew University, 1998), 123; J. Barr, *The Garden of Eden and the Hope of Immortality*, 135.

<sup>50</sup> There are suggestions as to God's intention in forbidding access to the tree, for example: to test human obedience, to teach them to make distinctions, or to safeguard the ecological balance. But, again, these assumptions do not have solid grounds based on the text. Westermann (Gunkel, H. Grimm) points out the primeval nature of the prohibition as being something akin to a taboo, as the prohibition is directed towards an object without any rational reason provided. Westermann, *Genesis I–II*, 224.

<sup>51</sup> B. Stratton points to the lack of clarity in the command (e.g. missing details on the intention of God, what is dangerous about the tree etc.) and argues that God's rhetoric is unsuccessful in restraining the human from eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; had God's rhetoric

The man does not question God further for more information. It is only the serpent who later asks what exactly God said concerning the tree(s) (3:1). The narrator does not tell us yet of the human's response to the command, leaving the interpretation up to the reader on whether the man clearly understood what God meant by the command.<sup>52</sup> The man could have understood the command, but his silence may well indicate his lack of understanding of the concept of physical death; the threat of death may not have been intelligible to the man and his wife due to their lack of practical experience and knowledge of physical death (unless they had already witnessed the death of animals and birds), or as some may suspect, the lack of understanding could be due to their childlike and immature state before partaking of the tree through which they would gain that knowledge.<sup>53</sup> However, again, these suggestions are not given by the narrator, but are suggested by subsequent readers.

The third chapter of Genesis introduces the serpent (נחש),<sup>54</sup> who engages in a conversation with the woman (האשה), from which readers receive the woman's

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in the command been clearer and more persuasive, Adam and Eve would not have eaten from the tree of knowledge. Stratton therefore suspects that God and man were still in the process of learning to communicate and building trust. Beverly Stratton, *Out of Eden: Reading, Rhetoric, and Ideology in Genesis 2-3*, JSOTSup 208 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 139-40. If the death warning from God indeed meant 'death' in the sense of becoming mortal, neither the direct hearer of the command – Adam – nor the readers of the narrative are given sufficient detail to understand its correct meaning, thus the command fails to convey its real meaning.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. 1 Kgs 2:37, King Solomon warns Shimei that 'on the day you go out and cross over the brook Kidron, you will know for certain that you shall surely die (מוֹת תָּמוּת).' Here the response of the recipient of the warning is given as 'the word is good (טוֹב הַדְּבָר)' which indicates Shimei's acknowledgement and understanding of the command.

<sup>53</sup> Church fathers like Theophilus of Antioch and Irenaeus, and modern scholars like Hermann Gunkel consider Adam and Eve as being like innocent children. Cf. *Autol.* 2.24; *Haer.* 4.38.1 and Hermann Gunkel, *Genesis*. (Göttingen: V&R, 1902), 30, quoted in John Day, *From Creation to Babel: Studies in Genesis 1–11* (London; New Delhi; New York; Sydney: Bloomsbury, 2013), 44.

<sup>54</sup> For a discussion of the serpent's role as the 'agent' and 'catalyst' through whom 'Adam and Eve were transformed from mere living beings' (Gen. 2:7) into creatures 'in the image of God...like one of us, knowing good and evil (3:22),' as well as on the use and meaning of the word עָרוּם ('subtle/cunning') in the Wisdom literature, see John F. A. Sawyer, "The Image of God, The Wisdom of Serpents, and the Knowledge of Good and Evil," in *A Walk in the Garden: Biblical, Iconographical and Literary Images of Eden*, ed. Paul Morris and Deborah Sawyer (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), 66-68. For a rabbinic understanding of the role of the fallen angel Sammael and the serpent in tempting

cognizance and reception of the command in Gen 2:17.<sup>55</sup> In 3:1, the serpent asks the woman a question that brings the focus of the narrative back to the command once again: ‘Indeed, has God said, “You (pl.) shall not eat from any tree of the garden?”’<sup>56</sup> It is important to note that some of the details have been modified in the serpent’s question and the woman’s response: 1) whereas in the original command, the emphasis is put on freedom (‘From any tree of the garden you may *freely* eat’), the serpent makes the restriction universal (‘You shall not eat from any tree’); 2) the woman also responds to the serpent by leaving the word כָּל (‘all/every’) out of the command, hence the emphasis on freedom, i.e. ‘any/every tree’ is lost: ‘From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat, but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, “You (pl.) shall not eat from it *or touch it*, or you (pl.) will die” (3:2-3)’; 3) in the woman’s response, the name of the forbidden tree is not given, but referred to as the tree in the middle of the garden’; 4) the phrase ‘do not touch’ is added; 5) the serpent and the woman change the second person pronouns to plural from singular, which tells us that the serpent and the woman understood the command to be applicable not only to the man, but also to the woman (and possibly other human beings). In short, the emphasis on certain elements (e.g. freedom to eat from every tree, certainty of death) in the original command has been

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Adam and Eve to eat from the tree of knowledge, see Pirqe R. El. 13 and 14. In Pirqe R. El. 13, Sammael is described as the great prince in heaven (השר הגדול שבשמים) and the serpent as an intermediary of Sammael to tempt Eve: כּל מעשים שעשה וכל דברים שדבר לא דבר אלא מדעתו של סמאל (‘All the deeds which it [serpent] did, and all the words which it spoke, it did not speak and it did not do except by the intention of Sammael’). Similarly, Tg. Ps -J. portrays the serpent in relation to Sammael as the angel of death in Gen 3:6. See also Deut. Rab. 11:10; 3 Enoch 14:2 and 26:12. In these sources, the blame is laid specifically with Sammael for tempting Eve and Adam to their transgression of the command concerning the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Cf. Grypeou and Spurling, *The Book of Genesis in Late Antiquity: Encounters between Jewish and Christian Exegesis*, 47-50.

<sup>55</sup> As this passage is the first and last direct reference in the HB to the original command, more discussion will follow later in this chapter.

<sup>56</sup> Grammatically speaking, the statement ‘Indeed, God said, ‘You shall not eat from any tree of the garden’ (אף כִּי־אָמַר אֱלֹהִים לֹא תֹאכְלוּ מִכָּל עֵץ הַגָּן) is an incomplete sentence, since there is no relative statement for the particle אף (‘even so’ or ‘although’) at the beginning of the sentence. Contextually however, the statement is generally understood as a question despite the lack of an interrogative particle (e.g. הֲאֵף).

weakened, while the death warning itself has gained further restriction and applicable parties. There is no hint in the narrative that either the serpent or the woman has a different understanding about the nature of death from the one mentioned in the command. The serpent and the woman reiterate the words from Gen. 2:16-17 and speak as if the concept of death is understood in the same way among the characters (at least between the two). Perhaps it is only the readers who are left puzzled by the meaning of ‘death’ in the original command. Since the woman was not there to hear the original command in Gen. 2:17, this conversation between the two gives us a clue as to how the command was received by someone who was not present at the time. The serpent, on the other hand, may have overheard either the conversation between God and the man or between the man and the woman. The narrative does not tell us who the serpent or the woman heard the command from, nor whether the woman’s version of the command, which is not identical to the original, is the man’s idea or based on her own understanding. If the former, the man could possibly be held responsible for changing the original command when telling the woman about it.<sup>57</sup> It is noteworthy that the original command given to the man is already changing at this very early stage of reception.<sup>58</sup> Despite all these modifications, readers cannot blame

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<sup>57</sup> N. M. Sarna suggests the possibility of the woman actually ‘quoting what her husband told her.’ But there is no textual evidence for this speculation. Nahum M. Sarna, *Genesis: The JPS Torah Commentary* (New York: JPS, 1989), 24.

<sup>58</sup> For a detailed discussion of the garden narrative in Gnostic literature, *Hypostasis of the Archons* (Hyp. Arch.) (the fourth treatise of the second codex from Nag Hammadi) in particular, see Philip S. Alexander, “The Fall into Knowledge: The Garden of Eden/Paradise in Gnostic Literature,” in *A Walk in the Garden: Biblical, Iconographical and Literary Images of Eden*, ed. Paul Morris and Deborah Sawyer (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), 91-103. In Hyp. Arch. 88.24-91.7, the evil Archons play a prominent role in the creation, the placement of Adam in the garden, as well as the giving of the two different forms of the command concerning the tree of knowledge to Adam and Eve respectively (i.e. Gen. 2:17 and Gen. 3:3). It is explained that the change in wording of the command given to Adam and Eve by the Archons allowed God’s providence to work in Adam’s disobedience so that Adam would not die. How exactly this happened, however, is not given in the text: ‘They [the Archons] do not understand what [they have said] to him; rather, by the Father’s will, they said this in such a way that he might (in fact) eat, and that Adam might [not] regard them as would a man of exclusively material nature’ (88.33–89.3). *Ibid.*, 95-96.

According to ‘Abot R. Nat., (a midrashic commentary on the mishnaic tractate, Avot), the change in Eve’s wording of the original command, i.e. ‘nor shall you touch it,’ is attributed to Adam and his ‘hedge’ around God’s command in Gen. 2:17, strengthening the force of the command in order to



the woman alone for the disobedient act. While it is certain that she was not there to hear the original command when it was given to the man, it is noted in the text and therefore probable that the man was there with her when she ate the fruit from the tree: ‘and she gave also to her husband who was *with her* (עִמָּהּ), and he ate.’<sup>59</sup> Perhaps the man was present all along (3:1-4), a silent participant in the conversation.

The serpent’s retort explicitly denies the validity of God’s original command, this time employing the idiomatic double use of the verb מוֹת (‘to die’): ‘you (pl.) will *surely* not die’ (לֹא־מוֹת תָּמָתוּן). If God did imply the physical death penalty in Gen. 2:17, the serpent’s retort and denial of God’s death warning in fact turns out to be true since the physical death does not immediately follow their consumption of the fruit. Readers receive new information concerning the tree as the serpent expounds further on the implications of eating the fruit: ‘in the day you (pl.) eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you (pl.) will be like God, knowing good and evil.’ Regardless of the meanings of ‘becoming like God’ and ‘knowing good and evil,’ it is God himself who acknowledges the statement to be true (3:22). While the serpent and the woman speak about the command in the plural form, God’s statements concerning the command are always directed to the man: ‘Behold, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever’ (3:23-24).

The focus of the narrative now shifts to the tree of life. Already implied by its name, readers now come to know that the tree of life is linked with immortal life (cf. 3:22). On the other hand, unlike its counterpart, the tree of knowledge is associated more with ‘death’ than ‘knowledge.’ The relationship between death and eating from the tree of knowledge is made explicit in the command, but the consequence of eating from the tree does not in fact result in death. Perhaps it is the case that the immortal life mentioned in 3:22 does not refer to a physical eternal life. The narrator

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protect Eve from violating the command. See Judah Goldin, *The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan* YJS 10 (New Haven: YUP, 1955), 8-9. See also, Gary A. Anderson, “Mary as Second Eve” in *The Genesis of Perfection: Adam and Eve in Jewish and Christian Imagination*, (Louisville: WJKP, 2001), 77-78.

<sup>59</sup> For a detailed analysis of the phrase עִמָּהּ (‘with her’), see, Julie F. Parker, “Blaming Eve Alone: Translation, Omission, and Implications of עִמָּהּ in Genesis 3:6b,” *JBL* 132 (2013):729-47.

does not explain what ‘the tree of the knowledge of good and evil’ really means, and there is no consensus among scholars as to the nature and meaning of the tree.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> U. Cassuto suggests that the narrator did not have to give a detailed explanation of the concept and nature of both trees as the Israelites and scripture readers were already familiar with them: the fact that the tree of life and the tree of knowledge are referred to with the definite article even on their very first appearance in the narrative is indicative of the Israelite’s familiarity with the concepts. It is unusual, however, that no exact analogies and parallels with the concept of the two trees are found in neighbouring culture and literature. U. Cassuto, *Genesis*, 74. Peculiar to Hebrew, however, is the employment of the article to denote a thing or person, even though it is yet unknown to the reader or the audience; therefore it cannot be defined. In such cases, the indefinite article is mostly used in the English translation. Cf. Gen. 8:7 f., 14:13; 15:1, 11; 18:7; 19:30; 28:11; 42:23; 46:2; 50:26. Wilhelm Gesenius, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, ed. Emil Kautzsch, trans. Arther E. Cowley (2nd ed. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1910), 408 (GKC § 126).

John Day gives a helpful summary of three major interpretations of this. The knowledge of good and evil is understood as: 1) Ethical discernment. S. R. Driver, *The Book of Genesis, with Introduction and Notes*. WC (London: Methuen, 1904), 41; J. Barr, *The Garden of Eden and the Hope of Immortality*, 62; 2) Knowledge of everything. Cf. Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary*, trans. John H. Marks. Rev. ed. OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1972), 79-81; R.A. Oden, “Divine Aspirations in Atrahasis and in Genesis 1–11,” *ZAW* 93 (1981): 211–13; Howard N. Wallace, *The Eden Narrative*, HSM 32 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985), 115-30; 3) Sexual knowledge. I. Engnell, “‘Knowledge’ and ‘Life’ in the Creation Story,” in *Wisdom in Israel and in the Ancient Near East Presented to Professor Harold Henry Rowley*, eds. M. Noth and D.W. Thomas, VTSup 3 (Leiden: Brill, 1955): 116. All sources are quoted in John Day, *From Creation to Babel: Studies in Genesis 1–11* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 42-43. See also Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, WBC 1 (Dallas: Word, 1998), 63-4. Seizo Sekine’s work also provides helpful outlines of other interpretations, such as identifying the knowledge of good and evil as 4) Divine knowledge, a higher knowledge, a mark of divinity shared with God. Theodoor C. Vriezen, “Onderzoek naar de Paradijsvoorstelling bij de oude semietische volken” (PhD diss., Utrecht, 1937), 146; 5) Magical Knowledge. Vriezen, *ibid.*, 147. Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 242–48. All sources are quoted in Seizo Sekine, *Trancendency and Symbols in the Old Testament: A Genealogy of the Hermeneutical Experiences*, trans. Judy Wakabayashi, BZAW 275 (Berlin: WdG, 1999), 233-36. There is another view that sees the knowledge of good and evil in 6) A judicial setting. W. Malcolm Clark, “Legal Background of the Yahwist’s Use of ‘Good and Evil’ in Genesis 2-3,” *JBL* 88 (1969): 266-78.

K. Schmid contends that there is a literary link between Gen. 2-3 and Old Testament Wisdom (Schmid cites over 20 scholars who affirm likewise), suggesting in his discussion on the meaning of the ‘knowledge of good and evil’ that the ‘paradise story’ presents Wisdom as having an ‘ambivalent’ nature: ‘Gen 2-3 narrates how the human species became “adult”, that is “knowledgeable” at the beginnings of time, and explains at the same time why their achievement of knowledge and wisdom produced a fundamental and inevitable distance to God...the Paradise narrative, then, does not portray

Returning to the narrative, after the conversation with the serpent, the woman finally eats the fruit from the tree of knowledge, which looks ‘good for food, delightful to the eyes, and desirable to make *one* wise (3:6).’ Then, she also gives the fruit to her husband, and he also eats without hesitation. No lengthy survey of the story would have been necessary if the man was struck down immediately upon eating the fruit. However, as the text stands, imminent physical death by any means does not follow. Indeed, perhaps Adam knew already that he would not die seeing that Eve, who ate the fruit first, did not die either. In fact the only physical death that seems to take place that day is that of the animal/animals skinned to make the man and woman’s garments.<sup>61</sup> It is possible that man had witnessed the death of an animal or even of other human beings before their disobedience to the law of God, but whether animals had immortality or mortality in the garden is not explicit in the narrative. Readers now comprehend that the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is not a poisonous tree from which one bite will instantly kill. So, if the death warning were to be fulfilled, God must have provided a way to accomplish it. However, there is no mention of the word ‘death’ in God’s statements of punishment (3:14-19). Instead, in a mysterious way, the new knowledge they gain is that they are naked. No further explanation with regard to the nature of the tree is given except that knowing good and evil is later equated with ‘becoming like God’ (3:22). Soon they hear God walking in the garden in the ‘cool of the day’ (לְרֵיחַ הַיּוֹם) and they hide among the trees, not because they are afraid to die but because they are naked (3:10).<sup>62</sup> Still no word is given on the possible death penalty. God enforces the

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the loss of an unambiguously positive primordial condition that leads to a negative condition which endures into the present. The path is instead from one ambivalent situation to another.’ Schmid, “The Ambivalence of Human Wisdom: Genesis 2-3 as a Sapiential Text,” in *“When the Morning Stars Sang”*: Essays in Honor of Choon Leong Seow on the Occasion of his Sixty-fifth Birthday, eds. Scott C. Jones and Christine Roy Yoder, BZAW 500 (Berlin: WdG, 2017), 275-86.

John F. A. Sawyer denies that ‘the knowledge of good and evil’ refers to ‘what is right and wrong,’ instead arguing that ‘the knowledge of good and evil’ in a continuous narrative of Gen 1-3 is to be understood as part of the ‘image of God,’ which embraces the ‘whole vast range of human experience,’ including ‘success and failure, joy and sadness, victory and defeat.’ Sawyer, “The Image of God, the Wisdom of Serpents, and the Knowledge of Good and Evil,” 64-73.

<sup>61</sup> Kelly, “Adam Citings before the Intrusion of Satan: Recontextualizing Paul’s Theology of Sin and Death,” 15.

<sup>62</sup> Seeing nakedness is already portrayed by the narrator as something negative here in the first

association of the knowledge of being naked with eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil: ‘Who told you that you (sg.) were naked? Have you (sg.) eaten from the tree of which I commanded you (sg.) not to eat?’ (3:17). The narrative does not tell us whether the man or woman ever worry about when they will die or wonder why they do not die as a result of their disobedience.<sup>63</sup>

God now calls the man for investigation and the pronouncement of punishments. Punishments for their disobedience are laid out (Gen. 3:14-19): 1) God curses the ground, but not the man, so that the man must work hard to grow crops for food all the days of his life; 2) God increases the woman’s pain in childbirth.<sup>64</sup> In Gen. 3:19, 3) the serpent alone is cursed that it will walk on its belly and eat dust and that there will be ‘enmity between the serpent and the woman.’ God’s statement ‘you will eat bread, till you return to the ground, because from it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return’ is taken by some to refer to the fulfilment of the death penalty (Gen. 2:17). This will be discussed further in the following chapter, but briefly, the following narrative elements mitigate against such an interpretation: 1) the reason why the man should return to dust is not because he disobeyed the command but because he was made of dust (Gen. 2:7 and 2:19).<sup>65</sup> There is no causal connection between eating from the tree and the death. 2) As the man is reportedly made of dust (2:7), accordingly the statement ‘you will return to dust’ is a part of God’s punishment given to the man only; 3) God’s punishments for all three of them do not include a word about death, nor are they reminded of the original death warning (as King Solomon does in his investigation of Shimei, 1 Kgs 2:37). 4) There

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chapters of Genesis, Cf. Is. 47:3; Lam. 1:8.

<sup>63</sup> Nevertheless, the reduced quality of human life can already be sensed in the scenes following the disobedience. There is a new fear and tension in the man and woman concerning being in God’s presence, and the man, who once cherished the woman, is quick to blame her for the disobedience.

<sup>64</sup> Eve’s answer to God, ‘The serpent deceived me, and I ate’ (3:13) could mean either that: 1) Eve realized that what the serpent said about ‘death’ was a false promise; or 2) Eve understood the serpent’s promise that ‘you will not die’ as a true statement, but nevertheless she admitted before God that eating the fruit was not the right thing to do since God had forbidden it.

<sup>65</sup> The concept/idea that ‘man should return to dust as he is originally from dust’ is found in a number of passages in the HB, presumably referring back to Gen. 3:19: Cf. Ps. 103:14; 104:29; Job 4:19; 10:9; 34:15; Eccles. 3:20; 12:7. Barr, *The Garden of Eden and the Hope of Immortality*, 9-10. Perhaps, this statement fits better with the consistent view in the HB that God is eternal and immortal, whilst humans are finite and mortal.

is no description of fear or anguish concerning the pronounced punishment. In fact, there is not even a response. These narrative elements make the reader question whether what is being pronounced is indeed a punishment for eating from the forbidden tree.

God drives the man (אָדָם) out from the garden, this time forcefully forbidding them from partaking of the fruit from the tree of life, which would bestow immortality upon their eating from it. At the same time, God acknowledges, as the serpent predicted, that the man attained knowledge of good and evil and became like God after eating from the forbidden tree. With regard to this, it may be suggested that the serpent is the one who is telling a lie, as John Day puts it:

The serpent is telling only a half-truth in stating that their eyes will be opened but they will not die. For death is clearly depicted as the ultimate result of their disobedience, since the couple no longer have the possibility of accessing the tree of life following their expulsion from the garden.<sup>66</sup>

However, it must be observed that the serpent uses the exact same phrase – ‘on the day’ – as in the original command, which in turn limits the serpent’s prediction to that day only, hence the serpent is not to blame for Adam and Eve’s banishment from the garden. Moreover, God did not mention anything about either the tree of life or banishment from the garden in his original command. This would then make God appear to be telling a ‘half-truth’ in stating that they will die ‘*in the day*’ they eat from the tree of knowledge.

As noted above, whether Adam and Eve had never eaten from the tree of life until this point, or regular eating from the tree of life was necessary to maintain their immortal status is not explicit in the narrative. If we were to apply the principle that one bite of the forbidden fruit brought about a change to man, Gen. 3:22 would also imply that they had never eaten from the tree of life. Either way, what is certain in the narrative is that they lose the chance to become or remain immortal.

In sum, there is no explicit mention or narrative indication of the first human couple being created either mortal or immortal. The first human couple certainly did not die on the day they ate from the tree; therefore, the death warning in the divine command in Gen. 2:17 is not fulfilled in the sense of a physical death penalty. No other means or nature of death is warranted in the narrative itself. It seems that the

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<sup>66</sup> Day, *From Creation to Babel*, 40.

serpent's promise of 'not dying' on the day is fulfilled, as James Barr puts it, 'If one is to evaluate utterances by the scale of their correspondence with actual events, God's utterance does not come very high in degree, and that of the serpent comes as high as it is possible to come.'<sup>67</sup> Any attempt (either first or continuous) to eat from the tree of life is permanently forbidden due to their expulsion from the garden. Such an observation, however, should not lead us to interpret the meaning of the death warning 'you will surely die' (Gen. 2:17) as something like 'your death is now inevitable' or 'on the day you eat...you will become mortal.' The text is silent and lacks definite evidence about whether Adam and Eve had either immortality or mortality before the event of the fall. Did God prohibit the tree of life because Adam and Eve became mortal after eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thus losing the chance to reclaim immortality by eating from the tree of life? Or did God prohibit the tree of life because they need to continuously eat from the tree to maintain immortal status? Surveying the narrative did not yield an answer to any of the questions above.

The next step of this chapter will be to focus on the death warning in Gen. 2:17 and to analyse the literary context and its intended meaning. Scholars' propositions will be reviewed below, however, detailed exposition on this divine command itself is hardly found. Many skip the analysis of the actual command in answering the question: 'why do the first humans not die immediately after their disobedience as God had predicted?' The most common answer given is in fact irrelevant: 'because they were immortal.'

Two main argumentative assumptions preside over the interpretation of the ancient and modern scholars. First, translation of the prepositional phrase 'on the day' (ביום) as a 24-hour day is too literal and should be translated more broadly as something like 'when' or 'if.' Second, the phrase 'you will surely die' (מות תמות) would be better translated (at least to be interpreted) as 'you will become mortal' or 'you will be doomed to death.' In the next section, I suggest that the literal meaning of the phrase 'on the day' (ביום), that is a specific day is intended in Gen. 2:17 and is used to emphasize further the promptness of the death warning as well as to give a specific reference to the time in which the death penalty would occur. Secondly, it

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<sup>67</sup> Barr, *Escaping from Fundamentalism* (London: SCM, 1984), 34.

will be examined that the death warnings introduced in the passages of Genesis, Pentateuch and in the rest of the HB are strictly used in the legal context as a way of announcing death penalty as the consequence of legal process. Likewise, the warning in Gen. 2:17 should be interpreted in the similar sense.

### 2.3.1 ביום 'In the day'

How should we understand and translate the phrase ביום in Gen. 2:17? It is clear from the story that neither the man nor his woman literally dies 'in the day' – that is within the specific day of their disobedience.<sup>68</sup> Firstly, it is important to

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<sup>68</sup> It is also recorded that Adam lives to the age of 930 years (Gen. 5:5). The apparent discrepancy between the death warning and the punishment without fulfilment of the death penalty forced the author of the Book of Jubilees to interpret the phrase ביום in a metaphorical way, comparing a day to a thousand years, presumably referring to the idea that 'one day for God is one thousand years' in Ps. 90:4. Nevertheless, the author opted for the literal meaning of 'death' and argues that Adam indeed died physically on the day of his eating, since he did not live to the age of one thousand years (Gen. 5:5): 'And he lacked seventy years from one thousand years, for a thousand years are like one day in the testimony of heaven, and therefore it was written concerning the Tree of Knowledge, "In the day you eat from it you will die." Therefore, he did not complete the years of this day because he died in it' (4:30). O. S. Wintermute, "Jubilees. A New Translation and Introduction." in *OTP* 2, 63-64. Similarly, for Justin Martyr (ca. 160 CE), 'For as Adam was told that in the day he ate of the tree he would die, we know that he did not complete a thousand years.' Justin Martyr, "Dialogue of Justin with Trypho, a Jew," in *The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus*, vol. 3 of *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, eds. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe. Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1885), 239–40. Cf. also 2 Pet. 3:8: '...with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day.' Paul Morris provides a useful summary of midrashic interpretations of Gen 2-3 in Gen. Rab. that explicate and attempt to answer a number of 'gap-filling' questions that arise from the reading of the garden narrative, e.g. 'What tree was the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil?' 'why didn't they "surely die" upon eating of the Tree?' 'How can the "on that day" be reconciled with Adam's obviously longer life?' and so on. Paul Morris, "Exiled from Eden: Jewish Interpretations of Genesis," in *A Walk in the Garden: Biblical, Iconographical and Literary Images of Eden*, 117-147. Cf. Gen. Rab 19:8 for rabbinic interpretation of 'the day' (Gen. 2:17) as a thousand years (Ps 90:10): אִין אַתָּם יוֹדְעִים אִם יוֹם מִשְׁלִי אִם יוֹם אַחַד מִשְׁלָכֶם, אֲלֵא הֲרִי אֲנִי נוֹתֵן לּוֹ יוֹם אַחַד מִשְׁלִי שֶׁהוּא אֶלֶף שָׁנִים, וְהוּא חַי תִּשְׁעַ מֵאוֹת וּשְׁלִשִׁים שָׁנָה וּמִנִּיחַ לְבָנָיו שְׁבַעִים ('You do not know whether it is one day by my reckoning or one day by your reckoning. Lo, I shall give him a day by my reckoning, which is a thousand years by your reckoning. So he will live for nine hundred and thirty years and leave seventy years for his children to live in their time.')

acknowledge that the observation that Adam and Eve do not drop dead on the very day that the command is transgressed but continue to live could alternatively be interpreted as an unfulfilled death warning, i.e. for whatever reason the immediate death penalty is not carried out on the day the command is violated. However, based on the observation that Adam and Eve continue to live after they eat from the tree of knowledge, some propose regarding the meaning of the phrase בַּיּוֹם as referring not to a specific twenty-four hour day,<sup>69</sup> e.g. ‘in/on the day...you will die,’ but to a longer period of time,<sup>70</sup> therefore translating the phrase more broadly as ‘when’ or ‘if.’ In this line of argument, it is presumed that the nature of death implied in Gen. 2:17 is (or at least includes) the termination of physical existence, and thus such an

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A number of texts from the rabbinic tradition provide a detailed description and chronological order of the twelve key events in Adam’s life that took place in the Garden of Eden, each event occurring in one hour. Adam, having been created by God in consultation with the angels in the first seven hours of New Year’s Day, is placed in Eden in the eighth hour, and is given the command not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the ninth hour. In the tenth hour, Adam violates the command; in the eleventh hour, God judges Adam; and in the twelfth hour Adam is pardoned by God. Cf. Lev. Rab. 29:1, Pesiq. Rab Kah. 23:1, Pesiq. Rab. 46:2, B. Sanh. 38b, ’Abot R. Nat. A 1, ’Abot R. Nat. B 1, 42, Pirqe R. El. 11, Tanḥ (B) Bereshit 25, Tanḥ (B) Shemini 13, Tanḥ Shemini 8 and Midr. Pss. 92:3. All sources are quoted in Grypeou and Spurling, *The Book of Genesis in Late Antiquity: Encounters between Jewish and Christian Exegesis*, 40. Such a midrashic interpretation, which describes the events occurring in the first twelve hours of Adam’s life, shows that Adam’s creation, transgression and punishment all took place on the same day, thereby showing Adam’s inability to obey God’s command for even one day. For further analysis of the aforementioned texts, see *ibid.*, 39-47.

<sup>69</sup> Those who opt for a literal translation of בַּיּוֹם include: B. D. Eerdmans, E. Albert, J. Skinner, H. Gressmann (quoted in Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 224), John Day and Gordon Wenham et al. J. Day, *From Creation to Babel*, 41; Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, 68.

<sup>70</sup> Th.C. Vriezen analyses the use of the Hebrew phrase בַּיּוֹם and shows that it can have a different meaning in other places, therefore arguing that the same Hebrew phrase should not be understood literally in Gen. 2:17, quoted in Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 224. However, in some of his examples in which the phrase is used with a general meaning, there is no reason not to translate them literally, Exod. 6:28, 10:28; 32:34. Waltke and O’Connor, in their *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, translate the phrase as ‘when’ in Gen. 3:5, ‘For God knows that *when* you eat from it your eyes will be opened’, while translating the same phrase in similar apodosis + consequent construction in 1 Kgs. 2:37 as ‘*on the day* you go forth and cross over... know that you will die.’ Bruce K. Waltke and Michael Patrick O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 537.



attempt to interpret the meaning of **ביום** more generally is a means of defending the validity of the fulfilment of the death warning in the sense of physical death.

Those who argue that the phrase **ביום** ('in the day') in Gen. 2:17 means 'when' or 'if,' point out that the Hebrew word **יום** can have a number of variations in its usage and meaning. In the HB, the phrase can have one of the following meanings: 1) the period of light (as opposed to the period of darkness); 2) the period of twenty-four hours; 3) a general vague time; 4) a point in time; 5) a year (in the plural).<sup>71</sup> However, it is important not to read into the meaning of any word or phrase simply based on a possible usage, but instead to seek a probable meaning and function within the context. Of course, it is true that the phrase **ביום** ('in the day') is sometimes used in the HB with a general meaning, but we also need to note that in most other places where the phrase **ביום** ('in the day') is used, this literal meaning is intended. With regard to Genesis, I have scrutinized the twenty-two occurrences of the phrase **ביום** and only once in Gen 2:4 could the phrase possibly be interpreted as 'when' (but not necessarily so).<sup>72</sup> The normal usage of this kind of prepositional

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<sup>71</sup> Leonard J. Coppes, "יום," in *TWOT*.

<sup>72</sup> Cf. Gen 2:4: 'In the day/ (**ביום**) that the LORD God made earth and heaven.' In Gen. 1:18, 2:2, the phrase **ביום** ('in the day/over the day') is used for the literal day of creation. Twice in Gen 2:17, 3:5, the phrase **ביום** ('in the day') appears in conjunction with the death warning. Twice in Gen 5:1, 5:2, **ביום** refers to the literal 'day' in which God made the human being. In Gen 7:11, **ביום** refers to 'the seventeenth day' in the second month in the six hundredth year of Noah's life in which the flood started. Gen 15:18 speaks of the day (**ביום**) in which God made a covenant with Abraham. In Gen 21:8, **ביום** refers to the very day on which 'Abraham made a great feast that Isaac was weaned.' In Gen 35:3, Jacob says to his people, 'I will make an altar there to God, who answered me in the day (**ביום**) of my distress...' which most likely refers back to the day of the incident at Bethel. The phrase 'in the day' (**ביום**) in Gen 40:20 refers to the Pharaoh's birthday. In Gen 48:20, 'that day' (**ביום ההוא**) refers to the day when Jacob blessed Joseph's two sons. The word **מחר** (lit. 'tomorrow') in the HB sometimes refers to an unspecified time in the future (cf. Exod 13:14, Josh 4:6) and in Gen 30:33 it is used in a similar sense in conjunction with the phrase **ביום** ('in the day'). See Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 18–50*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 280; Below are the rest of the occurrences of **ביום**, the literal meaning of which is obvious. Cf. Gen 22:4: 'On the third day (**ביום השלישי**) Abraham raised his eyes and saw...'; Gen 26:32: 'Now it came about on the same day (**ביום ההוא**), that Isaac's servants came in...'; Gen 30:35: 'So he removed on that day (**ביום ההוא**)

phrase is to give a specific time reference as to when the action of the main verb will occur.<sup>73</sup> Such a process of finding the appropriate meaning is particularly necessary in the context of the garden narrative, as translation of the phrase בַּיּוֹם as ‘when’ or ‘if’ could lead to such interpretations of the whole command as ‘not necessarily this day, but you will eventually die in the future at an uncertain time.’ It will be shown below, however, that grammatically and contextually such a meaning is not suitable for the death warnings expressed so emphatically with a sense of certainty and promptness.

Some have observed the absence of the article for the word יוֹם (‘day’) and suggest the lack of any definite sense of time in the command. Sidney Hatch, for instance, makes the following statement:

The answer to the problem may be found in the phrase, ‘in the day.’ It is a Hebrew idiom meaning ‘when’...If God had meant ‘in that very day’ or ‘at once,’ the Hebrew text would probably read, *bayyōm*. Through assimilation, *bayyōm* is a shortened form for *be-ha-yōm*, ‘in the day,’ meaning in that particular day.<sup>74</sup>

He supports his argument with reference to the presence of the article in the phrase בַּיּוֹם in the mention of the seventh day of creation in Genesis 2:2 and therefore concludes that the word יוֹם in Gen 2:2 refers to the very day of creation in which God has finished his work and rested. However, such an argument does not hold for a number of reasons: 1) Hebrew has more peculiarities in its use of the article than most languages. There are many examples where nouns occur without the article, yet the meaning is definite.<sup>75</sup> The definite article (especially in poetry but not restricted to it) is often and inconsistently omitted where the context requires the definite

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the striped and spotted male goats and all the speckled and spotted female goats...’; Gen 31:22: ‘When it was told Laban on the third day (בַּיּוֹם השלישי) that Jacob had fled...’; Gen 31:40: “Thus I was: by day (בַּיּוֹם) the heat consumed me and the frost by night, and my sleep fled from my eyes.’; Gen 33:16: ‘So Esau returned that day (בַּיּוֹם ההוא) on his way to Seir.’; Gen. 34:25: ‘Now it came about on the third day (בַּיּוֹם השלישי), when they were in pain’; Gen 42:18: ‘Now Joseph said to them on the third day (בַּיּוֹם השלישי), “Do this and live, for I fear God.’

<sup>73</sup> Cf. Num. 30:5, 8, 9, repeated use of the phrase emphasizes the promptness of the action.

<sup>74</sup> Sidney Hatch, *Daring to Differ: Adventures in Conditional Immortality* (Sherwood, OR: Brief Bible Studies, 1991), 33.

<sup>75</sup> See GKC §126.

quality. The reader should be aware of such linguistic characteristics of the Hebrew language and should not interpret the meaning of the word on the basis of a single grammatical feature. Likewise, the absence of the article should not be the decisive factor in determining the meaning of the death warning in Gen 2:17. 2) He neglects to consider the absence of the article from the mention of the first five days of creation in which the phrase **ביום** may be interpreted in many ways regardless of the presence of the article.<sup>76</sup> 3) Grammatically speaking, the phrase **ביום** in the construct state, followed by an infinitive construct/absolute (i.e. verbal noun) cannot take the definite article, even though the prepositional phrase has the definite sense ('in the day').<sup>77</sup>

The opinion that the phrase **ביום** without the article in Gen 2:17 must be understood generally is untenable as we find other examples, especially in the very similar passages, where the prepositional phrase **ביום** is used in conjunction with the death warning, but still explicitly refers to a literal day.<sup>78</sup> Consider 1 Kgs 2:37-42 for instance: 'For *on the day* (**ביום**) you go out and cross over the brook Kidron, you will know for certain that *you shall surely die* (**מות תמות**) (1 Kgs 2:37).' In a passage like this, it is more natural to understand **ביום** literally, describing a specific point in time when the action of the main verb in 'you shall surely die' occurs; otherwise this would confuse the hearer of the command. Unsurprisingly, precisely on the day Shimei violates the command, he is called before the king, and the execution is carried out (1 Kgs 2:46). Similarly, in Exod. 10:28, the phrase **ביום** is used in essentially the same sense, as Pharaoh warns Moses: 'Beware, do not see my face again, for *in the day* (**ביום**) you see my face you shall die (**תמות**)!' Note also that in Exod. 32:34, the phrase **ביום** is used in conjunction with God's statement of judgment, '*in the day* (**ביום**) when I punish, I will punish them for their sin.' The punishment predicted in verse 34 is carried out in the following verse: 'Then the

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<sup>76</sup> Cf. Exod. 20:9–11, the narrator seems to have the six literal days of creation in Genesis as he uses this as a model for man's work week: work six days, rest one. It is difficult to suggest that the narrator had a different concept of time for the first six days and the seventh.

<sup>77</sup> Waltke and O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 239.

<sup>78</sup> E.g. Lev. 6:5, 20, 7:35,36; Num. 3:13, 8:17, where the specific day of Aaron's anointment is mentioned, 9:15 (the first day of the month when the tabernacle was to be erected), 25:18, etc.

LORD smote the people, because of what they did with the calf which Aaron had made.’ Such an emphatic function is confirmed by the repeated use of words such as הַיּוֹם (‘today’) and מִמָּחָרֶת (‘the next day’) in their immediate context (Exod. 32:28, 29, 30). Likewise, the phrase בַּיּוֹם in Gen. 2:17 coupled with a warning so emphatically expressed adds even more intensification to the command of the exact time for the completion of the death penalty and creates anticipation in the reader that the death penalty will be carried out promptly without any delay.

The inconsistent rendering of the modern translations of the phrase בַּיּוֹם used in the garden narrative adds further problems to our understanding of the command. The phrase בַּיּוֹם is used by the serpent in 3:5 and is seemingly picked up from the death warning in Gen. 2:17, but the translations of RSV and ESV (et al.) for each instance of this phrase (which attest to the same Hebrew construction) confuse its meaning for the readers. Unless the translator’s interpretation of the same phrase differs in each instance, for the sake of literal translation, it seems appropriate that the phrase in 3:5 is translated in the same way as in 2:17. In Gen. 2:17, the man and woman do not experience immediate death after their disobedience, yet both RSV and ESV render this as ‘in the day.’ However, in Gen 3:5, both RSV and ESV render the same phrase as ‘when’ even though the serpent’s promise has been fulfilled, literally the very day of their disobedience: ‘Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked’ (3:7); ‘Behold, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil’ (3:22). Other English versions that attest to the inconsistent rendering of בַּיּוֹם as ‘when’ or ‘if’ in Gen. 2:17 and/or 3:5 include NIV, NAS, HCSB and NKJV, GWT, Tyndale, etc. In his *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, B. K Waltke translates the phrase in 3:5 as ‘when,’ while translating the same phrase in similar apodosis + consequent construction in I Kgs. 2:37 as ‘on the day you go forth and cross over...know that you will die.’ It seems that Waltke (et al.) is interpreting the phrase in 2:17 with a general meaning, yet such an inconsistent translation could negatively influence the modern readers’ understanding of the phrase or the passage as a whole, thereby inaccurately rendering the original text.<sup>79</sup> The original meaning of this is lost in the

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<sup>79</sup> B. Waltke and O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 537.

translation. On the other hand, some English versions such as GNT disambiguate the meaning of the phrase ביום by rendering it rather freely, e.g. ‘on the same day.’<sup>80</sup>

The narrator could have used a number of other generic ways of expressing ‘when’ or ‘if’ than the word יום (‘day’): 1) the construction of an infinitive construct with a preposition, e.g. ‘...put the murderer to death *when* he meets him’ (Num. 35:19); 2) conjunctions that introduce a temporal clause, כִּי (‘when’) or אִם (‘if’), e.g. ‘*when* (כִּי with the existential verb הִיָּה) the Egyptians see you...they will kill me’ (Gen. 12:12); 3) apodotic ו, e.g. ‘*if* they are driven hard one day, all the flocks will die’ (Gen. 33:13) or ‘*when* (וְשָׁמַע) Saul hears it, he would kill me’ (1 Sam. 16:2). In these cases, the emphasis on the verbs ‘to kill’ or ‘to die’ and the sense of promptness are not as strong as that found in Gen. 2:17. The Egyptians might kill Abram *when* they see him, the flocks might die *if* they are driven hard one day and Saul could kill Samuel *when* the matter is known to him, but these are only possibilities. Similarly, if the narrator did not mean one twenty-four hour day in Gen. 2:17, or were the phrase ביום not there at all, the sense of promptness would have been weakened, and the command might not have been particularly meaningful.

When we turn back to Gen 3:3, it is noteworthy that Eve has left out the phrase ביום in her remarks about God’s command, ‘From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat, but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, “you shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die (פֶּן־תָּמּוּתוּן),”’ which casts doubt not only on the certainty of the punishment but also on the exact time at which the punishment will be carried out. God’s original command, expressed with idiomatic emphatic infinitive absolute construction, is simply put as ‘you will die’ (תָּמּוּתוּן). Not only are the emphasis laid on the original command and its specific time toned down, but other details of the command have been blurred: emphasis on the freedom, ‘any/every tree’ is lost and the forbidden tree is only referred to as the tree ‘in the middle of the garden.’ What was once conclusive and explicit has become weak and ambiguous. The wording of Gen. 3:2-3, which lacks both the prepositional phrase and emphatic infinitive absolute could yield a possible

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<sup>80</sup> So, *The Message Bible*: ‘the moment you eat’; *Douay-Rheims Catholic Bible*: ‘for in what day so ever,’; TEV: ‘the same day’; CEV: ‘before the day is over!’; ISV: ‘during the day.’

interpretation of the original death warning as ‘you will possibly die by eating from one of the trees in the middle of the garden, but even if death occurs, the exact time of it is unknown.’ Of course, from the point of view of the reader, it would be understandable if the execution of the death penalty is delayed a few days to give time for investigation etc., but it is difficult to suggest that what God said in the first place, with a death warning so emphatically expressed, was a conjecture along the lines of ‘you will possibly die someday in the future, perhaps after a thousand years.’ In the next verse, the serpent also leaves out the phrase **ביום** in its remarks, ‘you surely will not die!’ which, in a similar sense, could allow for the possible interpretation: ‘you will surely not die today.’ The serpent picks up the phrase **ביום** in the next verse, informing Eve of what will really happen on this day if they eat from the tree. The serpent states: ‘*on the day* you eat of it, your eyes will be opened, and you will be like gods, knowing good and evil’ (Gen. 3:4). Within such a context and the flow of the story, it is more probable that Adam and Eve understand the phrase **ביום** to mean the specific day. Therefore, an attempt to solve the question of ‘why don’t they die immediately after their disobedience?’ by translating the phrase **ביום** in the broader sense as ‘when’ or ‘if’ does not accord with the usage and meaning in other places of the HB or, more importantly, with the context of the actual command.<sup>81</sup>

### 2.3.2 מות תמות ‘You Shall Surely Die’

The prohibition and permission comprise one single command in which we witness the first occurrence of the verb **צוה** (‘to command’) in the HB: **וַיְצַו יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים** (‘and Yahweh-Elohim commanded’).<sup>82</sup> In fact, Gen. 2:16-17 outlines the first divine

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<sup>81</sup> A note should be made on the phrase **לְרוּחַ הַיּוֹם** (‘in the cool of the day’) in Gen. 3:8. Numerous suggestions have been made on the exact meaning of this phrase, e.g. ‘in the breeze of the day’, ‘in the side that declines with the day’ (Gen. Rab. xix 8), etc. Cf. Cassuto, *Genesis*, 153. Cassuto’s suggestion that we should see the word **רוּחַ** as a verb in the infinitive rather than as a substantive like **חם** (‘become hot’) in the phrase **כָּהָם הַיּוֹם** (literally, ‘as the day grew hot’ – i.e. ‘noon’) (Gen. 18:1) certainly fits better with the literal meaning of the phrase **ביום** in the sense that ‘God appeared to the man in the afternoon of the same day of the man’s disobedience.’ Cassuto, *ibid.*, 153. Nevertheless, Cassuto opts for the general meaning of **ביום** ‘when’ in Gen. 2:17.

<sup>82</sup> The idea of prohibition is dependent on permission: each verse contains a divine statement

words to the man in the Garden of Eden that provide specific guidance with regard to the general order given in Gen. 1:28: ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living things that moves on the earth.’ In chapter 3, as God investigates man concerning their disobedience, the same verb צוה (‘to command’) appears twice in God’s speech, referring back to the command in Gen. 2:17: ‘Have you eaten from the tree of which I *commanded* you not to eat? (Gen. 3:11)’; ‘Because you have...eaten from the tree about which I *commanded* you, saying, ‘You shall not eat from it (Gen. 3:17).’ Although God ordered something to exist in each of the events of creation prior to 2:17, this is the first command that involves the use of the verb צוה (‘to command’) on an active participant with a harsh punishment for breaking the command. Before Mosaic Law is established, here we see the first example of trial and punishment<sup>83</sup> – for eating a fruit! Note also, in both vv. 3:11 and 17, the forbidden tree is no longer referred to as the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, but as the tree ‘which I *commanded* you not to eat of it.’ The verb שמר (‘to keep/guard’) in the previous verse (Gen. 2:15) also places the man in the legal setting: ‘Then the LORD God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and *keep* it.’ Furthermore, the fact that the prohibition לא תאכל (‘you shall not eat’) resembles the ten commandments in its form (Exod. 20) and corresponds to the unique pattern of biblical law codes that often occur with an

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which has the infinitive absolute + finite verb construction; a permission in the former, and a prohibition in the latter with regard to what Adam should eat and not eat from the trees in the garden. This is a speech given in a continuous manner and spoken by one individual (God) to another (the man).

<sup>83</sup> G. W. Coats further points to the two formulae that appear later in the story and reinforce the legal context: ‘Included in the story is ‘a formal accusation, drawn from the pre-official legal process as a kind of summons to legal action, that typically begins with the interrogative particle *lāmmā* (why have you done this thing?). Or in 3:13, a more stylized formula functions in the same way: ‘what have you done?’ In both cases, the formula is constructed in the second person as a direct challenge to some previous act.’ George W. Coats, *Genesis, with an Introduction to Narrative Literature*, vol. 1 of *FOTL* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 58. For possible legal background to the expression ‘the knowledge of good and evil,’ see W. Malcolm Clark, “Legal Background of the Yahwist’s Use of ‘Good and Evil’ in Genesis 2-3,” *JBL* 88 (1969): 266-78.

appended motive clause<sup>84</sup> reinforces the judicial characteristic and background of the command. As the latter part of the command deals with the prohibition against eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the command also serves as a prototype of biblical eating regulation (explicated further to include the prohibition against touching the fruit, Gen. 3:3),<sup>85</sup> which continues to have a significant impact in modern Jewish dietary laws.<sup>86</sup> Overall, the first commandment of God to the man concerning the forbidden tree in the garden could be regarded as the model for Mosaic Law codes in the Pentateuch.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> The motive clause is unique to the law codes of the HB and rarely found in non-biblical sources. See Berend Gemser, "The Importance of the Motive in Old Testament Law," in *Congress Volume: Copenhagen 1953*, ed. G. W. Anderson et al., VTSup 1 (Leiden: Brill, 1953), 50-66. A motive clause 'for in the day you eat from it, you will surely die' is appended to the prohibition לֹא תֹאכַל ('you shall not eat').

<sup>85</sup> For a detailed discussion on the connection between the phrase 'do not touch' and the priestly code of cleanness in Leviticus (Lev. 11 and Deut. 14, etc.), see Wayne P. Townsend, "Eve's Answer to the Serpent: An Alternative Paradigm for Sin and Some Implications in Theology," *CTJ* 33 (1998): 399-420.

<sup>86</sup> Eating is one of the key themes in the garden narrative itself as the word appears sixteen times. In fact, the only prohibition that was given to the man in the garden is about not eating from one particular tree in the midst of many others that 'were good to eat' (Gen. 2:9). Sarna, *Genesis: The JPS Torah Commentary*, 21.

<sup>87</sup> Contrary to the long-standing view that laws derive from real-life issues and juridical practice in Ancient Israel, Calum Carmichael proposed a theory that argues for a close link between the laws and the narrative contexts in the Bible. See Calum M. Carmichael, *Law and Narrative in the Bible: The Evidence of the Deuteronomic Laws and the Decalogue* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), 13-23; idem, *Illuminating Leviticus: A Study of its Laws and Institutions in the Light of Biblical Narratives* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 1-10; idem, *The Book of Numbers: A Critique of Genesis* (New Haven: YUP, 2012). Carmichael writes: 'A thesis that argues for a close link between the laws and the narratives in the Bible need not occasion much surprise, even if the results are unexpected. The Pentateuch has been put together in such a way that both are mixed together, for example, the decalogue is embedded in a narrative structure, and the rules about killing animals and humankind in the story of the flood (Gen 9:5, 6).' Carmichael, *Laws and Narrative in the Bible*, 18. See also William S. Morrow, *An Introduction to Biblical Law*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017), 43: 'Law always has a narrative function, in that it "tells a story" about what a particular society values, about who is an insider and who is an outsider, how the society is organized, and what it does when faced with certain forms of social disruption. By the same token, stories can be "laws" in



Of the command set in this legalistic tone, the meaning and usage of the death warning, מוֹת תָּמוּת ('you will surely die') requires further investigation.<sup>88</sup> Although the focus of the argument regarding the introduction of death to humans in Genesis is on the death warning in verse 2:17, study on the death warning in the scholarly field remains scarce. Many interpretative and translational decisions for the phrase מוֹת תָּמוּת ('you will surely die') are primarily based on what happens in the narrative after the disobedience. The common rationale behind such a decision is that 'the death penalty is not carried out immediately, therefore the death warning is not about instantaneous death.' Some propositions have been made to eliminate the contradiction, i.e. the death does not occur on the very day of their transgression, as God plainly warned. Some argue that the humans become mortal beings on that day, therefore seeing the origin of physical death of any human being as the consequence of the first humans' violation of the command.<sup>89</sup> As we have discussed above, this interpretation is further supported by the suggestion that we should understand the phrase בַּיּוֹם more broadly as 'when' or 'if.' Following this line of argument, it is presumed that the nature of death is physical. The second argument often encountered is as follows: it is possible to interpret the prepositional phrase בַּיּוֹם literally, i.e. 'in the day,' but the death warning itself should not be taken literally.

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that they have a prescriptive function: they can inculcate values and norms of behavior that are as binding as any set of rules. Both functions come together in the first five books of Moses.'

<sup>88</sup> A reader or translator's interpretation of the matter of the immortality of man is often reflected in his translation of this death warning. Different translations reflect different understandings on the issue of immortality of Adam and Eve before the fall. E.g. Wycliffe: 'thou shalt die by death'; NKJV: 'you shall surely die'; NRSV 'you shall die'; TEV 'you will die the same day'; NJB: 'you are doomed to die'; CEV: 'You will die before the day is over!'

<sup>89</sup> For example, Ephraim A. Speiser translates the phrase as 'you shall be doomed to death' and comments as follows on the meaning of the death warning: 'The phrase need not be translated "you shall surely die," as it invariably is. Death did not result in this instance. The point of the whole narrative is apparently man's ultimate punishment rather than instantaneous death.' Ephraim A. Speiser, *Genesis: Introduction, Translation, and Notes*, AYB 1 (New Haven; London: YUP, 2008), 17. Cassuto interprets the meaning of the death warning as becoming mortal due to the loss of access to the tree of life: 'when you eat of the tree of knowledge it shall be decreed against you never to be able to eat of the tree of life, that is, you will be unable to achieve eternal life and you will be compelled one day to succumb to death; *you shall die*, in actual fact.' Cassuto, *Genesis*, 125.

Rather, the death warning should be interpreted metaphorically or symbolically; e.g. some argue that death here refers to spiritual (sometimes both physical and spiritual) death, while others see it as a broken relationship between God and human beings.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Philo of Alexandria sought to answer this dilemma by interpreting the warning as being a different kind of death: ‘That death is of two kinds, one that of the man in general, the other that of the soul in particular. The death of the man is the separation of the soul from the body, but the death of the soul is the decay of virtue and the bringing in of wickedness. It is for this reason that God says not only “die” but “die the death,” indicating not the death common to us all, but that special death properly so called, which is that of the soul becoming entombed in passions and wickedness of all kinds.’ Philo, *Alleg. Interp.* 1.105-06.

Among the modern exegetes, John C. Collins is one of the advocates of such a claim. Although he does acknowledge that the word ‘die’ most commonly refers to physical death in the semantic range of the Hebrew word, he asserts that it can also mean spiritual death. Collins backs up such an interpretation by pointing out the aim of the passage, the bigger picture glimpsed in the punishment and the causal connection found in the story. He argues that the aim of the passage is not to narrate the pre-fall condition of the humans, but rather to explain the current state of the man and the woman and to reveal the reason for the in-built yearning in humans, which is caused by estrangement from God. He highlights that God’s punishment goes beyond the three characters – the serpent, the woman and the man – extending to the dark power, the assured victory of one special human over the dark power and human toil to chastise and bring them back to God. This big picture shows that the focus is not merely physical death, but also a spiritual one. Also, Collins points out the causal connection in the story: there is God’s commandment forbidding the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in Gen. 2, followed by the disobedience in Gen. 3, the rapid degradation of humans into sin in Gen. 4 and the mention of the genealogy in Gen. 5 that highlights the desperate need for the ‘seed’ to come and save humanity. Many proponents of the spiritual death provide similar reasons to allege that the spiritual death, which is estrangement from God, is the primary meaning of God’s death warning in Gen. 2:17. Most of these scholars do not exclude physical death, but the physical aspect of death is only the consequence of the humans’ disrupted condition. Collins asserts that humans have an innate yearning for God due to the estrangement that happened at the fall. His arguments have merits in that they take a bigger picture into consideration, but he tends to jump to conclusions without appropriate evidence provided by the text. Many of his arguments remain assumptions, possibly based on his pre-existing beliefs. John C. Collins, *Genesis 1-4: A Linguistic, Literary, and Theological Commentary*, (Phillipsburg, N.J.: P&R Publishing, 2006), 162-64. Cf. also, Robert J. Utley, *How It All Began: Genesis 1-11. Study Guide Commentary Series*, (vol. 1A; Marshall, Texas: Bible lessons International 2001), 47 who writes: ‘Obviously, death refers to spiritual death here (cf. Eph. 2:1), which results in physical death (cf. Gen. 5).’ Those who consider ‘death’ to refer to alienation from God include: Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, 68; Walter Moberly, “Did the Serpent Get it Right?,” *JTS* 39 (1988): 1-27; idem, “Did the Interpreters Get it Right?,” *JTS* 59 (2008): 22-40; R. P. Gordon, “The Ethics of Eden: Truth-Telling in Genesis 2-3,” in *Ethical and Unethical in the Old Testament: God and Humans in*

The command in 2:16-17 consists of two clauses: a positive instruction and a negative prohibition. Both permission and prohibition are given in the combined form of the two same verbs: an infinitive absolute followed by a finite verb of the same root, which is a typical idiomatic way of indicating emphasis in Hebrew.<sup>91</sup> In verse 16, the MT puts emphasis on the divine command תֹּאכַל ('you will eat') by adding the infinitive absolute אֲכַל.<sup>92</sup> Similarly, in verse 17, emphasis is laid on the

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*Dialogue*, ed. K.J. Dell LHBOTS 528 (London: T&T Clark, 2010), 11-33.

<sup>91</sup> For such an idiomatic expression, the finite verb must be from the same root of the infinitive absolute, but it does not need to be in the same stem as the infinitive absolute. This use of the infinitive absolute construction is also referred to as the internal object accusative, the absolute complement, the intensifying infinitive, or the tautological infinitive. For a detailed study on the use and meaning of the infinitive absolute in the Hebrew texts, see GKC § 113; Joüon § 123. For the use of the infinitive absolute construction as a divine command in the Torah, see Jeremy D. Smoak, *The Priestly Blessing in Inscription and Scripture: The Early History of Numbers 6:24-26* (Oxford: OUP, 2016), 86-87; he argues that the use of the infinitive absolute as a command was more common in the classical period and later fell out of use from late biblical Hebrew during the postexilic period. See also, B. Waltke and O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 584–86.

<sup>92</sup> Zevit argues that the command was not clearly expressed to the man for the following reasons: 1) the two instructions were not given in the imperative verb form; 2) the preposition עַל following the word for command (צוה) indicates the restrictive/coercive nature of the command, hence the permissive instruction in verse 16 'to eat from every tree in the garden' could have been understood as 'God intended for the human to eat from each and every tree, leaving no option to skip one.' Zevit, *What Really Happened in the Garden of Eden?*, 120-22. (Cf. ESV translation of the phrase, 'you may surely eat'). However, the meaning and translation value of the infinitive absolute preceding a finite verb primarily depends on the particular context in which the form is found: verse 16 is in antithesis to v. 17 and is contextually linked closely with v. 17 in which the main idea of the command is found in the prohibition (to which the restrictive sense of the preposition עַל could be applied). It is clear enough that the permission of freedom is what is emphasized in the first part of the command, hence it should be translated accordingly: 'YHWH God commanded the man, saying: 'from every tree of the garden, you may *freely* eat, but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you will not eat from it.' Leaving the context aside, the verb for command (צוה) may well indicate a restrictive sense with other prepositions without the preposition עַל: Cf. Gen. 26:11, 'So Abimelech charged (צוה) all the people (אֶת-כָּל-הָעָם), saying, "He who touches this man or his wife shall surely be put to death.'" With regard to Zevit's opinion that both instructions lack imperatival sense, it should be noted that a verb in the imperfect tense is often used in a strict imperatival sense (Cf. Decalogue). Moreover, an infinitive absolute alone has the imperatival sense and is sometimes used to replace the finite verb, especially imperatives (Cf. Deut. 5:12). Regardless of whether they were generously allowed or strictly

finite verb תמות ('you will die') with the use of the infinitive absolute מות from the same root. The literary function of the infinitive absolute in these verses is to intensify the idea or to emphasize the certainty of the action of the following finite verb; hence God makes it clear that death will certainly be the punishment for eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Some English versions, such as NRSV, fail to present the emphatic sense of the Hebrew infinitive absolute in the translation, e.g. 'you shall die.'<sup>93</sup> In this case, the adverb 'surely' in the NRSV's translation seems to have been intentionally omitted as in no other place in the entire HB (except in Gen. 3:4) is the infinitive absolute left out in the translation, particularly in similar death warnings expressed with the emphatic infinitive absolute.<sup>94</sup>

Out of the forty-eight occurrences of the idiomatic phrase מות תמות ('you shall surely die') and its variants in the HB, sixteen occurrences in the second person form can be found, and four of these are in Genesis.<sup>95</sup> Three of these four instances are involved in the garden narrative – one in Gen. 2:17 and the other two in Gen. 3:3-4.<sup>96</sup> Of these forty-eight occurrences, two are with the first person form, sixteen with the second person form ('you will surely die') and the rest with the third person

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commanded to eat from all the trees in the garden, the text lacks mention of whether or not Adam and Eve struggled to eat from every tree, or even from the tree of life (cf. Gen. 3:22).

<sup>93</sup> Cf. CEV: 'you will die.'

<sup>94</sup> The death warning has additional narrative features that add emphatic sense to the warning: 1) the assertion of the command is strengthened further with the mention of a specific time reference: 'On the day you eat of it, you will surely die.'; 2) verse 17 gains more emphasis as the readers' attention moves naturally from God's generous permission to eat from a broad category, i.e. every tree in the garden, to the prohibition that excludes one single tree from the others. The narrative itself focuses and develops around the forbidden tree, which is the one and only element in the garden that has the potential to create something 'bad,' as opposed to the things that God created to be 'good' (Gen. 1:10 f).

<sup>95</sup> Cf. Gen. 2:17; 3:4; Gen. 20:7; 1 Sam 14:44; 22:16; 1 Kings 2:37; 2:42; 2 Kings 1:4, 6, 16; Jeremiah 26:8; Ezek 3:18; 33:8, 14.

<sup>96</sup> There are other similar passages that contain death warnings in the second person form, but which lack the emphatic infinitive absolute; only the ones that are relevant to our discussion will be dealt with in this paper. The remark of the woman in Gen. 3:3 does not use the infinitive absolute, yet it generally shares the same meaning as it is a direct reference to the original command.

form, mainly in the hophal stem<sup>97</sup> which explicitly indicates a type of unnatural death, e.g. the death penalty, ‘he shall certainly be put to death.’

God’s death warning given to the man in Gen. 2:17 is picked up a few verses later (3:1-4) in the conversation between the serpent and the woman. These are the only direct references to the original command and seemingly the earliest evidence of how the command is interpreted by anyone other than the first and direct recipient of the command: Adam. It was noted above that there is no response from Adam in the text as to how he understands the meaning of the death warning; he stands silent when the command is given.<sup>98</sup> In 3:3, Eve rephrases the command to פִּן־תָּמֹתוּן (‘lest you [pl.] die’). Here, the absence of the infinitive absolute present in the original command is notable. Already in the first reference to the original command in 2:17, the degree of certainty in the death warning has been weakened. On the other hand, the serpent’s retort, לֹא־מוֹת תָּמֹתוּן (‘you [pl.] will surely not die’) follows verbatim God’s original command in Gen. 2:17. The serpent disapproves of the validity of the command, with the negative article לֹא. It is noteworthy that the serpent does not follow the typical word order in negating the construction of a finite verb that comes with an infinitive absolute; the negative article usually comes in between the two verbs: infinitive absolute + negative + finite verb (e.g., Judg. 1:28). The NRSV renders this phrase simply as ‘you will not die,’ where there is no English counterpart for the Hebrew infinitive absolute. This translation fails to differentiate the latter statement from the woman’s simpler version ‘lest you shall die’ in the previous verse. The serpent’s statement also lacks the phrase בַּיּוֹם (‘on the day’), leaving it up to the reader to choose between ‘you will not die on this very day of eating (but you will in the future)’ and ‘you will not die forever (and remain immortal).’

In *What really happened in the Garden of Eden?* Zevit differentiates the second person form מוֹת תָּמוּת (‘you shall surely die’, qal, 2ms) from the third person

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<sup>97</sup> Of the third person form statement, some occur in the qal stem, מוֹת יָמוּת ‘he shall surely die.’ For 1 Sam. 14:39, a variant reading in the second person form is attested in the apparatus of the BHS. All first and second person forms occur in the qal stem.

<sup>98</sup> Cf. 1 Kgs. 3:12. In this closely paralleled passage, the response of the target of the command is given. To Solomon’s death warning ‘you shall surely die,’ Shimei responds: ‘The word is good. As my lord the king has said, so your servant will do.’

מוֹת יוֹמָת ('he shall be put to death', hophal, 3ms) and proposes that the phrase in the qal stem can be interpreted in more than one way (e.g. accidental or natural causes of death at some undetermined point in the future), whereas the phrase in the hophal stem explicitly implies an immediate death penalty.<sup>99</sup> However, the simple fact that these two forms are used interchangeably, especially in the legal context, militates such an argument.<sup>100</sup> Below, an examination of other passages in Genesis and other texts in the HB will show that there is no real difference in meaning and sense, but only in numbers, between the two forms of the same statement. Furthermore, the variant reading מוֹת יוֹמָת ('he shall surely be put to death') in 4QSam<sup>a</sup> for MT's מוֹת יָמוּת ('he will surely die'), and vice versa in the SP (Num. 35:17) shows that the scribes did not intend any significant difference in meaning between the two stems when used in the same context.

Two other occurrences of the idiomatic phrase מוֹת תָּמוּת in Genesis are found in 20:7 and 26:11. In chapter 20, Abimelech, the king of Gerar, takes Sarah for his wife, and soon after God appears to him in a dream and threatens to kill him: 'Behold, *you are a dead man* because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is married (Gen. 20:3).' This is more of an announcement of the death penalty than a warning, for the 'great sin' (חַטָּאָה גְּדוֹלָה) had already been committed (20:9).<sup>101</sup> The death sentence is announced first in the participial form, הִנְנֶה מָת (lit. 'you are dying'), implying the imminent death of the king. A few verses later, God gives Abimelech another death warning synonymous with the one in 20:3, this time employing the idiomatic phrase מוֹת תָּמוּת ('you shall surely die', qal, 2ms). The reason for this announcement of the death penalty is clearly given in the text: he has unlawfully

<sup>99</sup> Zevit, *Ibid.* Cf. Lev. 20:2, 9, 15, 27.

<sup>100</sup> Cf. Num. 35:17, 1 Sam. 22:16-17; Ezek. 18:13, etc. K. Schmid explains that the verb in the second person and active voice is due to its narrative setting and lack of legal system through which execution of the punishment may be carried out. Schmid, "Loss of Immortality? Hermeneutical Aspects of Genesis 2–3 and its Early receptions," 64.

<sup>101</sup> J. Barr is cautious about considering the garden story as 'the fall' for a number of reasons, one of which is the absence of the actual word 'sin' in the garden narrative. So Schmid, *ibid.*, 59. However, J. Day criticizes Barr's argument as a 'false dichotomy;' the story clearly presents a wilful disobedience of Adam and Eve to the divine command followed by investigation of sin and punishment. J. Day, *From Creation to Babel*, 43.

taken a married woman for his wife.<sup>102</sup> The legalistic setting of the story is further reinforced when the king goes on trial to plea his innocence before God (20:4-5). Abimelech defends himself by saying that he has been deceived by Abraham; God tells Abimelech that in his grace, he kept Abimelech from committing a greater sin by ‘touching her’ (לִגְעַת אִלְיָהָ).<sup>103</sup> Then God commands Abimelech: ‘Now therefore, restore the man’s wife, for he is a prophet, and he will pray for you and you will live. But if you do not restore *her*, know that *you shall surely die* (מוֹת תָּמוּת), you and all who are yours’ (Gen. 20:7). Similar to the death warning in the garden story, the death warning here is given in the form of a divine command, undoubtedly implying that death by punishment will occur as soon as the king disobeys God’s command. This is not about a death that will come later at an uncertain time in the future. This is made clear by the fact that we understand God’s further statement to the king, ‘you will live if you restore Sarah to Abraham’ (Gen. 20:7), in its plain sense: the king will avoid his death penalty by obeying the command. Similarly, the warning in the garden story which implies ‘Adam will live if he keeps my commandment’ in itself does not provide any hint of warranted eternal life for Adam and Eve in the garden. The similarity between the two passages is notable in the fact that God’s punishment for the female participants is concerned with difficulty in childbearing: ‘For the Lord had closed fast all the wombs of the household of Abimelech’ (20:18).

Gen. 26 reports a similar incident with Isaac, who deceives Abimelech by saying that his wife Rebekah is his sister. Isaac is concerned that the ‘men of the

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<sup>102</sup> Mosaic law codes require the death penalty for adultery, both for the man and the woman (Cf. Lev 20:10; Deut. 22:22).

<sup>103</sup> Although there is no direct reference to God’s forgiveness of Adam’s sin in the garden story, nevertheless, some scholars do suggest this possibility (e.g. H. Gunkel, J. Skinner, Gerhard von Rad, D. Clines, J. Barr, J. Day and John son Lim, M. Harris) in light of the narrative which follows the disobedience: 1) God provides clothing for Adam and Eve; 2) some interpret that God’s act of preventing them from eating the tree of life is an act of God’s grace so that they will not live forever physically as ‘sinners’; 3) no death penalty is mentioned in the punishment, rather the punishment is interested and geared towards the life ahead (e.g. child bearing, harsh labour, etc.); 4) the recurring theme of divine grace in the midst of judgment throughout the early chapters of Genesis. In a number of passages, God is described as capable of changing his mind or regretting his previous decisions Cf. Gen. 6:6, Exod. 32:11-14. In a similar sense, W. Moberly asserts that God’s words has a conditional quality due to the moral and relational nature of God’s words. Moberly, “Did the Serpent Get It Right?,” 10.

place' will kill him on account of Rebekah. The setting of this story is similar to the one in Gen. 20, yet in this passage, it is Abimelech himself who acts as the sole investigator of the scene. After the king discovers that Rebecca is Isaac's wife, he commands (צוה) that anyone 'who touches (נגע) this man or his wife' will *surely be put to death* (מות יומת, Gen. 26:11). The death warning here is given as a royal decree in the hophal stem, clearly indicating a statement of death penalty. Isaac uses two synonymous verbs that clarify the meaning of the death in the warning: פָּנֹן ('I might die on account of her') and פָּנֹן-אָמוֹת עָלֶיהָ ('they might kill me...on account of Rebekah').<sup>104</sup>

In the remainder of the HB, there are eleven other occurrences of the death warning מות תמות ('you shall surely die') in the second person form.<sup>105</sup> Of these, 1 Kings 2 displays a similar pattern and setting found in Genesis. In 1 Kings 2, King Solomon restricts Shimei to the confines of Jerusalem, offering it to him for refuge. King Solomon warns Shimei: 'For on the day (ביום) you go out and cross over the brook Kidron, you will *know for certain* (יָדַע תִּדְעַ) that *you shall surely die* (מות תמות); your blood shall be on your own head.' This death warning is given in the form of a royal decree using the identical idiomatic phrase that employs the emphatic infinitive absolute.<sup>106</sup> Note also, attached to the warning is the common legal expression 'your blood shall be on your own head,' which adds further detail and legal tone to the death warning. Such an expression is also found in Ezek. 18:13, and coupled with the announcement of the death penalty 'he will surely be put to death' (מות יומת) in the third person hophal stem.<sup>107</sup> Shimei's response to the king's

<sup>104</sup> Gen. 12 reports a similar story, where Abraham lies to the Pharaoh of Egypt about Sarah. The death warning is not given, either by God or the Pharaoh in this incident, but nevertheless it is implied in verse 20, 'Pharaoh commanded his men concerning him.'

<sup>105</sup> Gen. 2:17; 3:4; Gen. 20:7; 1 Sam 14:44; 22:16; 1 Kings 2:37; 2:42; 2 Kings 1:4, 6, 16; Jeremiah 26:8; Ezek 3:18; 33:8, 14.

<sup>106</sup> Note that ESV and NIV (et al.) ignore the infinitive absolute in their translation of this verse; hence they fail to bring out the sense of certainty of the judgment.

<sup>107</sup> In particular, the author of the book of Ezekiel actively uses the second person form and the third person form of the warnings interchangeably within the same context, (Cf. Ezek 3:18 f., 18:4 f., 33:8f.). Note also, in Ezek 18:13, the variant reading in multiple manuscripts attests to insignificant difference in meaning between the hophal and qal stem of the verb מות ('to die').



command ‘the word is good to me’ indicates his acknowledgement and understanding of the command. When Shimei violates the king’s command, he is summoned before the king. This time, Shimei cannot escape the death penalty as he has already been pardoned twice from the death penalty (2 Sam. 19:16, 18-23; 1 Kgs. 2:8-9). Shimei is put under the investigation: Solomon reminds Shimei of the command that accompanies the death penalty: ‘Did I not make you swear by the LORD and solemnly warn you, saying, “You will know for certain that *on the day* (בַּיּוֹם) you depart and go anywhere, you shall surely die (מוֹת תָּמוּת)”?’ And you said to me, “The word which I have heard is good.” Why (וּמַדּוּעַ) then have you not kept the oath of the LORD, and the command which I have laid on you?’ As expected, shortly after the investigation of the violation, the king commands the execution of Shimei (1 Kgs. 2:46).<sup>108</sup>

One final example of the phrase ‘you shall surely die’ (מוֹת תָּמוּת) will suffice to demonstrate that the use of the phrase throughout the HB uniformly refers to an imminent death penalty introduced as the legal consequence. In 1 Sam. 22, when King Saul hears from a man named Doeg that the priest Ahimelech helped David and his men with provisions, Saul immediately sends for Ahimelech. Saul investigates the priest, but in his madness, he will not listen to any explanations and pronounces the death penalty for the priest: ‘You shall surely die (מוֹת תָּמוּת), Ahimelech, you and all your father’s household! (1 Sam. 22:16).’ Then, he orders his guards to ‘put the priests of the LORD to death (וַיִּהְיוּ פְּהַגֵי יְהוָה) – the verb here is used in the hiphil stem.’ And on that day (בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא), eighty-five priests are put to death (22:18).

Summing up the main argument of this section, I would like to stress the following points. The language and the setting in the above passages clearly present striking similarities to the narrative of disobedience in Gen. 2-3: 1) the announcement of the death penalty is given in the form of a divine or royal decree employing the idiomatic infinitive absolute for emphasis; 2) the phrase is repeatedly used in the judicial context to announce a penalty for breaking a command or law; 3) the announcement of the death penalty is followed by trial and investigation; 4) ‘in the day’ when the command is disobeyed, a legal process takes place and the

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<sup>108</sup> Cf. 1 Kgs. 2:34, the execution by the same character ‘Benaiah the son of Jehoiada’ in the story, in the similar setting is described as ‘Benaiah...put him to death’ with the verb in the hiphil stem.

execution is carried out; 5) the use of the hophal stem indicates no significant difference in nuance and meaning from the qal stem usage. Therefore, it seems plausible to assert that the death warning ‘you shall surely die’ (מות תמות) in Gen. 2:17 (along with all other usages of the phrase in the HB) is to be understood in the juridical setting as a divine statement of imminent death penalty following man’s disobedience.

## 2.4 Conclusion

The primary intention of this chapter was: 1) to survey the garden narrative for any clue regarding the status of the first man in the garden before the incident of the forbidden fruit, indicating the status of the first man in the garden before the ‘fall’; and 2) to analyse the meaning intended in the original command (Gen. 2:17). At this point, it must be acknowledged that this paper does not yield a satisfactory answer to the long-standing question: ‘why don’t Adam and Eve die after the disobedience as God plainly told?’ Yet, in the process of analysing this point, I believe this chapter has made some contributions to the question. In addition to the analysis of the usage of the death warning מות תמות (‘you will surely die’), which suggests we should read the warning in Gen. 2:17 as introducing an immediate death penalty within a legalistic setting, I have also demonstrated that nowhere in the narrative of Genesis is man’s disobedience explicitly described as the cause of his mortality, either physical or spiritual. This observation should leave no doubt about the fact that answer to the question and the intended meaning of the original command in Gen. 2:17 is not ‘you will become mortal.’ In the following chapter, the statement of curses (3:14-19) and expulsion from the garden (Gen. 3:22-24) will be discussed in more detail with particular attention to the statement ‘for you are dust, to dust you shall return’ (3:19) and to the word פָּן (‘lest’) in Gen. 3:22. In subsequent chapters, we will investigate how this command has been understood in the history of interpretation, and how the notion that the first man was punished by death for his sin has been developed.



## Chapter Three

### The Punishment and Expulsion Revisited (Gen. 3:14-19, 22-24)

#### 3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter analyzed the command in Gen. 2:16-17 that imposes the death penalty on the man for eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In this, it was suggested that the death warning should be read as introducing an immediate death penalty within a legalistic setting, which leads to the logical conclusion that the death warning itself does not convey any information about whether the man was immortal or whether he became mortal due to his eating the forbidden fruit. This chapter will consider the punishment and expulsion passages, interpretative possibilities and questions derived from them in relation to the command in Gen. 2:17, particularly the statements that have the most relevance to the question of death: ‘until you return to the ground...for you are dust...’ (3:19) and ‘lest he stretch out...and live forever...’ (3:22).

#### 3.2 Till you return to the ground

Contrary to the traditional understanding of the close relationship between Adam’s transgression and death, it was suggested in the previous chapter that the punishments and expulsion together are hardly proof of the confirmation of the original command in Gen. 2:17. The following will further evaluate the points briefly mentioned in the previous chapter regarding the punishments following the man’s disobedience.<sup>109</sup> The fact that interpreters and translators sought to alter the text in Gen. 2:17 (e.g. ‘you will become mortal’ and ‘you will be doomed to death’) reflects the existing ambiguities and disagreements in the punishment and expulsion passages. In both passages of punishment and expulsion, there is certainly no explicit referral back to the idea of ‘instant death’ reflected in the prohibitive command in Gen. 2:17.<sup>110</sup> Although a punishment that entails an immediate death penalty is

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<sup>109</sup> The expulsion passage will be discussed in detail in the next section of this chapter.

<sup>110</sup> Although there is no reference to the idea of ‘immediate death’ in the punishments, God himself acknowledges that the punishments for the serpent and the man are the consequence of the disobedience to God’s command in Gen. 2:17: ‘Because you have done this...’ (3:14) and ‘Because

naturally expected to follow the disobedience in the narrative, it is reported that Adam lives to 930 years and some of his descendants even die before him (Gen. 5:5). Nevertheless, the prohibition in Gen. 2:17, ‘you shall surely die,’ has often been associated either with the phrase ‘till you return to the ground, because from it you were taken’ (3:19) and/or with the actual banishment of the couple from the garden. The best way to evaluate this presumed association is to assess the text.

The statement of punishment (Gen. 3:14-19) is three-fold: 1) the serpent will walk on its belly and eat dust for ‘deceiving’ the woman (3:14) and there will be an enmity between the serpent and the woman and between their seeds (3:15); 2) God will multiply the pain in childbirth,<sup>111</sup> the woman’s desire will be for her husband, and the woman will be under man’s dominion (3:16);<sup>112</sup> 3) God curses the ground so

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you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, you shall not eat from it’ (3:17).

<sup>111</sup> The two words ‘pain/sorrow’ and ‘childbirth’ form a hendiadys joined by the conjunction ׀, but it is possible to treat them as two separate entities: ‘sorrow and pregnancy.’ Thus, it could be read that God will multiply woman’s conceptions rather than the pain associated with childbirth. This interpretation will further lessen the severity of the woman’s punishment as abundance in childbearing is generally thought to be a blessing from God in the HB (Cf. Ps. 127, 128). The scene in which Adam names his wife הַחַיָּה (because she is mother of all the living) immediately after God announces the punishments (Gen. 3:20) could possibly be understood in this sense. The LXX translator has translated this as τὰς λύπας σου καὶ τὸν στεναγμὸν σου (‘your pain and your groaning’), avoiding the hendiadys of the MT. See also Vg. Translation, the two nouns *aerumnas tuas et conceptus tuos* (‘your toils and your conceptions’) are taken as two objects of the verb *multiplicabo* (‘multiply’).

<sup>112</sup> The Hebrew word תְּשׁוּקָה (‘desire’) occurs three times in the HB (Gen. 3:16b; 4:7; and Song of Solomon 7:10). The general meaning given by BDB and HALOT is ‘attract, impel, of desire, affection’ and ‘desire, longing’ respectively, (Cf., BDB: שׁוּק, III and HALOT: תְּשׁוּקָה). The parallel between the two occurrences in close proximity in the book of Genesis is easily recognizable. In both passages, the word תְּשׁוּקָה (‘desire’) appears in conjunction with the verb מָשַׁל (‘to rule’). Cf. V. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1-17*, NICOT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990), 201-02; Susan Foh, “What Is the Woman's Desire?” WTJ 37 (1975): 376-83. In Gen. 4:7, the word is used to describe sin’s ‘desire’ that is ‘crouching at the door’ like an animal, but Cain is to ‘do well’ and ‘rule over’ (מָשַׁל) it. Applied to Gen. 3:16, the woman’s desire could be taken to mean her attempt to take control and dominate man in her relationship with him, while man will undermine that ‘desire’ by ‘ruling over’ her. Another view sees the word תְּשׁוּקָה (‘desire’) in comparison with its occurrence in the Song of Solomon 7:11(10), which carries a positive and romantic nuance. This is used to describe the intimate relation between the two lovers: ‘I am my beloved’s and his desire (תְּשׁוּקָתוֹ) is

that only through the man's hard and painful work will he be able to obtain and eat food from the cursed ground (3:17-18). The punishments given to the serpent and the man exhibit a similar structural pattern in that both begin with the conjunction כִּי ('because'), followed by an indictment that serves to pinpoint that each curse is a direct consequence of disobedience to God's command given in Gen. 2:17. The word 'curse' (אָרַר) appears in both punishments, yet the objects of the curses are different: 'the serpent' and the 'ground' respectively. Both curses include the same expression that denotes their duration – 'all the days of your life' – through which the severity of the punishments is emphasized.<sup>113</sup> As the original command (2:17) relates to the matter of 'eating,' both punishments are concerned with 'eating': the serpent will eat 'dust' and the man will eat from the 'ground in sorrow/toil.'<sup>114</sup> The punishment of the woman, however, seems slightly less severe than that of the serpent or the man. God does not use the word 'curse' (אָרַר), nor does his statement begin with כִּי ('because') + indictment construction; God simply says that he will multiply her

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for me.' In this regard, the word תְּשׁוּקָה ('desire') in Gen. 3:16b could be read as woman's romantic/sexual 'desire' for man. In fact, some modern English translations seem to follow this interpretation as they render the Hebrew conjunction וְ in 3:16b as 'yet' in relation to 3:16a (cf. NRSV, NASB, NJPS). It is possible to then read the woman's 'desire' in Gen. 3:16b as the woman's overwhelming sexual craving for the man despite the pains of childbirth. See, Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Holy Bible*, 22. The LXX renders the word תְּשׁוּקָה ('desire') in all three occurrences with ἀποστροφή ('return'), possibly reading תְּשׁוּבָתְךָ ('your returning') instead of תְּשׁוּקָתְךָ ('your desire'). J. Wevers and others find the possibility of different *Vorlage* unlikely. Wevers, *Notes On the Greek Text of Genesis*, 45. W. Loader suggests that the translator may be connecting Adam returning to the earth with Eve returning ἀποστροφή to Adam, so the LXX could be implying that the disobedience has created a relationship in which man returns to the earth to serve it and the woman returns to the man to serve him, putting more emphasis on the reversal than the Hebrew. Loader, *The Septuagint, Sexuality, and the New Testament*, 46-47. The possible 'sexual' nuance of the word in the MT is lost in the LXX.

<sup>113</sup> To argue that the phrase 'all the days of your life' is linked to the original death warning is to go beyond what the narrator plainly tells us in the text. Most scholars now agree that the idea of the 'death' or even the limited lifespan of man is not the focus of the whole curse, but rather it is the ground that is cursed and the point is that the man will have to work harder than before to obtain food from the ground.

<sup>114</sup> The verb 'to eat' is one of the key words and it is used fifteen times in the garden narrative (2:16, 17; 3:1, 2, 3, 6, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 19, 22).

pain<sup>115</sup> in childbirth. Nevertheless, some similarities between the punishments put upon man and woman are worth noting: both consist of a task that was once appointed to them without any reference to ‘sorrow’ or ‘pain.’ The first human beings were initially charged to ‘be fruitful and multiply’ (Gen. 1:28), but the woman will now need to go through the painful process of childbirth. The man, who was charged with cultivating and keeping the garden (2:15),<sup>116</sup> will now have to work under the harsh conditions of the cursed ground to earn a living ‘by the sweat of his brow.’ It should also be noted that while the serpent is directly cursed, both the man and woman are not cursed; it is only the ground that is cursed because of the man.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> The same Hebrew word עֲצֻבוֹן for ‘sorrow/pain’ is used in the punishments for man and woman.

<sup>116</sup> Not only the punishment given to the man focuses on the ‘ground;’ in fact, the theme of cultivating the ground seems to be one of the key terms that the narrator uses to describe the man’s task in and outside the garden: ‘...there was no man to cultivate the ground’ (Gen. 2:5); ‘Then the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it’ (Gen. 2:15); ‘therefore the Lord God sent him out from the garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground’ (Gen. 3:23). Note that reference to the ‘ground’ in Gen. 2:5 and 3:23 together form an *inclusio* of the garden narrative.

<sup>117</sup> One of the three ‘*pesher*’ manuscripts found at Qumran cave 4, namely 4Q252 or 4QpGen<sup>a</sup> (the other two being 4Q253 and 4Q254), perhaps provide a clue as to why God did not curse the man (and woman), but the ground. The sixth line in the second column of the manuscript 4Q252 suggests an interpretation of Gen. 9 in which Noah curses his grandson Canaan instead of his son Ham: ‘[and he did not] curse Ham but his son for God had blessed the sons of Noah [and said to them, “Fill] (the) earth”’. This principle that Noah could not curse his son Ham because God had already blessed Noah and his sons (cf. Gen. 9:1) may be applied to God’s curse of the ground instead of Adam. In Gen. 1:22-28, God had already blessed the human beings ‘to be fruitful and multiply,’ so Adam and Eve cannot be cursed. Note that God’s blessing given to Noah and his sons ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth’ is identical to the blessing God originally gave to the human being (cf. Gen. 1:22, 28). Such a principle that blessing from God (or man) could not be reversed may be discerned in other places in the HB (cf. Gen. 27-28: Isaac could not take back his blessing on Jacob and correctly give it to Esau; God’s words to Balaam in Num. 22:12: ‘Do not go with them; you shall not curse the people, for they are blessed’ and Balaam’s words in Num. 23:20: ‘what God has blessed I cannot revoke it.’ I thank Professor Lim for bringing these 4Q manuscripts of ‘*pesharim* to Genesis’ to my attention. He also notes in his article that a similar exegetical tradition is also found in later Rabbinic writings (e.g. BrRab 36.4-5 and 7). This topic will be further discussed in chapter 5 of this thesis in relation to other biblical and *pesher*-type manuscripts on Genesis found at Cave 4. See Timothy H. Lim, “The Chronology of the Flood Story in a Qumran Text (4Q252),” *JJS* 43 (1992), 288-98.

The punishment placed upon the man is longer than the other two, and what is unique to the man's punishment is a prepositional phrase attached to the end of the punishment, which includes the idea that the man will return to the ground, to the original material from which he was created.

Some commentators have taken the expulsion passage (3:22-24) in which God sends the man (also with the woman, though it is not explicitly stated) out of the garden, as an expansion of man's punishment<sup>118</sup> but such an argument is problematic in that the reason God gives for the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the garden is not because of their disobedience, but instead strictly to prevent them from eating from the tree of life and living forever (3:22).<sup>119</sup> Moreover, the awkward scenes in which Adam names his wife and God clothes them with garments of skin (Gen. 3:20-21), which are placed between the two passages of punishments and expulsion, further weaken the association of the two distinct passages. It would also be incorrect to read into the text and suggest that Adam's naming scene and the meaning of the woman's name ('mother of all the living') here imply Adam's response to the punishment of 'loss of mortality' and his expression of a wish for continuous life through future generations.<sup>120</sup>

Having analyzed the contents of the passage, we will now consider the following question: is man's punishment, especially the idea of 'returning to ground' the fulfilment of the death warning in Gen 2:17? If we simply assume that it is, several questions arise from such an assumption. For example, why does the punishment placed upon the woman not include any word or idea that could possibly imply 'death' since she is likewise culpable as Adam, if not more so. There is not even a short phrase akin to the 'until you return to the dust' or 'for all your life' that are given in the serpent and the man's punishments. However, the most conspicuous problem in the punishment passage is that nowhere in the statements of punishment (3:14-19) do we find the idea and sense of 'instant death' that the death warning in Gen. 2:17 originally carried. The language and grammar used to describe the

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<sup>118</sup> Cf. Coats, *Genesis: With an Introduction to Narrative Literature*, 55; Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, 82-83; Kenneth A. Mathews, *Genesis 1-11:26*, ed. E. Ray Clendenen, NAC 1A (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1996), 254, etc.

<sup>119</sup> The expulsion passage will be discussed further in the next section of this paper.

<sup>120</sup> Carol L. Meyers, *Rediscovering Eve: Ancient Israelite Women in Context* (New York: OUP, 2012), 83-84.



consequence of breaking the command in Gen. 2:17 were deliberately emphatic and specific, so the narrative naturally progressed with the readers' increasing expectation of a scene in which God enforces an instant death penalty on Adam and Eve upon their violation of the command. However, none of the detail given in the punishments is what was originally mentioned or warned about in Gen. 2:17. Perhaps a statement such as the one found in the report of the death of King Ahaziah in 2 Ki. 1:16-7 would have better served the ending of the story: "You shall not come down from the bed where you have gone up, but *surely* die." So Ahaziah died according to the word of the Lord.' The fact that God does not bring about the immediate termination of Adam's physical life makes readers doubt God's intention behind the death warning, which was rather plainly expressed. However, without further explanation, God moves on and focuses on the aspects that will only matter to the future lives of the serpent, the woman, the man and their descendants. God makes no attempt to explain his change of heart or to reveal the 'hidden' meaning(s) of death (if there was any). In fact, what God plainly lays out in the punishment passages is not 'death,' but a harsh life. The effects of the punishment are not temporary and will not be removed during the lifetime of Adam, nor that of his generation. The serpent will live on its belly for the rest of its life. God, already with later generations in mind, institutes an enmity between the seed of the serpent and the woman. The multiplication of the pain of childbirth is also a matter that will only impact the future life of the woman. Whether God changed his mind or he did not really mean what he said are questions the narrator does not answer.

Neither Adam nor Eve's response to God's announcement of their punishments is reported. We do not know whether Adam thinks the punishment too harsh or whether he is relieved to find that the intensity of the punishment has been weakened from the expected death penalty. Adam's silence, however, is comparable to Cain's response to the similar punishment he receives from God after killing his brother Abel (Gen. 4:9-16). Just as God interrogates and curses the ground because of Adam, he first interrogates Cain and then curses the ground accordingly, 'what have you done?...and now you are cursed from the ground' (Gen. 4:10-11). To this Cain freely responds, 'my punishment is too great to bear!' (4:13).<sup>121</sup> Cain's response

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<sup>121</sup> Without any sign of fear or remorse, Adam's silence leads some commentators to doubt whether God's words should be considered a punishment or not (see Stratton, *Out of Eden: Reading*,

is similar to that of Adam in that they both show no sign of fear about or even awareness of the possible death penalty, but it is different in that Cain is worried about being killed by ‘anyone who ever finds him’ (4:14). Where Cain gets this idea of being killed by someone is unclear. Does the absence of God’s initial death warning in Cain’s story before he committed murder make the punishment less severe? Not necessarily so. As the idea of sorrow and painful effort in cultivating the ground is emphasized in Gen. 3:17-19 by the reference to thorns and thistles and to the sweat on Adam’s brow, God’s further explanation of the curse similarly commits Cain to a forced life of unfruitful work: ‘when you cultivate the ground, it will no longer yield its strength to you’ (4:12). His effort to cultivate the ground will not just become more difficult, it will be made almost impossible so that Cain will have to wander as a vagrant for the rest of his life. This similar emphasis on the harsh condition of the cursed ground is clearly visible and, furthermore, Cain’s punishment ends in the same way in that God sends him out to the east of Eden (4:16). In both curses, however, the possibility of being put to death is not considered; regardless of the presence/absence of the initial death warning, no one cares to bring up the issue. Notice, however, that in the case of Cain God curses Cain directly instead of cursing the ground on account of Cain: ארור אתה מן האדמה (‘Now, you are cursed from the ground...’); yet the focus is still on the ‘ground,’ which ‘will yield no strength’ to Cain. The causative sense of the prepositional phrase מן האדמה (‘because of the ground’) is reminiscent of the same curse pattern and may well be a deliberate reversal of the curse of the ‘ground’ *on account of* Adam (3:17).<sup>122</sup> This concept of difficulty farming due to the cursed ground finds further reference in Gen. 5:29, in which Lamech names his son Noah (meaning ‘rest’), hoping that ‘this one will give us rest from our work and from the toil of our hands *arising* from the ground which the Lord has cursed.’ Lamech is clearly referring to the original curse given to Adam in the Garden of Eden, and here too the only thing that Lamech recalls from the original punishment is the idea of pain and difficult work due to the cursed ground. It appears that, ever since God cursed the ground in the garden, people had to work and sweat to obtain their food without much rest. The curse is clearly on the ‘ground’ and

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*Rhetoric, and Ideology in Genesis 2-3*, 145).

<sup>122</sup> Coats, *Genesis: With an Introduction to Narrative Literature*, 64-65. Cf. also Deut. 28:18: ‘cursed shall be...the fruit of your ground.’

what we have here in these references to the punishment is the reminder of the curse that made man's work on the ground difficult, painful enough to be remembered by later generations.

Whether the punishment given to the man implies the fulfilment of the death warning in Gen. 2:17 should not be deduced simply from the fact that man returning to dust is included in the punishment, nor does such an observation give us the right to assume that the first humans were immortal. In fact, the most compelling support for the argument that the man was created mortal comes from the very idea that 'man should return to dust as he is originally from dust.' In several passages in the HB, human beings are consistently described as finite and mortal, whilst God is eternal and immortal, and many of these passages convey such an idea through the descriptions of the man originally being made from dust or clay.<sup>123</sup> Similarly, the reason for the man's 'return to the ground' is made clear and emphasized with the repeated use of the causal conjunction כִּי ('because'): '...until you return to the ground *because* (כִּי) from it you were taken, and you will return to dust *because* (כִּי) you are dust' (3:19). The causal conjunction כִּי ('because') in each clause separates the idea of 'returning to the ground' from the main idea of the punishment, which, in turn, weakens the presumed link between the man's 'return' with the death warning in Gen. 2:17.<sup>124</sup>

It may be summarized therefore that despite the fact that the expression of 'returning to dust' appears in the context of the punishments, the narrator does not really define the idea of man's eventual death as the fulfilment of God's death warning. Is death one of the effects of Adam and Eve's sin? We can suggest that it is, but only in the sense that their fate of eventual death has been sealed; their only chance of gaining eternal life is now permanently lost, but not in the sense of losing originally given immortality. The narrator certainly does avoid any explicit language that could imply such an understanding. Perhaps, by perceiving the way in which the story ends with expulsion from the garden, we as readers may insist that what God

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<sup>123</sup> Cf. Ps. 103:14; 104:29; Job 4:19; 10:9; 34:15; Eccles. 3:20; 12:7.

<sup>124</sup> J. Barr puts it as: 'His death is not the punishment, but is only the mode in which the final stage of the punishment works out. He was going to die anyway, but *this* formulation of his death emphasized his failure to overcome the soil and his own belonging to it.' J. Barr, *The Garden of Eden and the Hope of Immortality*, 9.

really meant by the death warning in Gen. 2:17 was simply man's becoming mortal, but from Adam's perspective, if they had been told about this immortality only after they broke the command, this would have been unfair. Even the readers come to grasp the real meaning of the death threat only after Adam's disobedience and only after God explicates the meaning in these punishment statements, so how could Adam have comprehended the warning? The analysis of the command and the punishment, the weak connection and lack of agreement between the two, makes it difficult for the readers to reach conclusive ideas about Adam and Eve's creational immortality/mortality or to suggest that the cause of Adam's eventual death ('his returning to the dust') is the result of the disobedience.

### 3.3 Lest...he will live forever<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> Based on the ambiguous nature and lack of attention to the tree of life until 3:22, some scholars doubt that the tree of life is part of the original narrative, suggesting it is a later editorial insertion. They suggest that the original narrative probably contained only one tree, i.e. 'the tree of knowledge.' See K. Budde, *Die biblische Urgeschichte (Genesis 1-12,5)* (Giessen: J. Ricker, 1883), 48-51; John Skinner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis*, ICC (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1910), 52; Speiser, *Genesis: Introduction, Translation, and Notes*, 27; H. Wallace, *The Eden Narrative*, 103; Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 212 et al. Ellen van Wolde gives a good survey of this line of interpretation and points out that 'the trees are almost always dealt with separately and not related to each other...attention is almost exclusively directed to the tree of knowledge of good and evil, whereas the tree of life is paid hardly any attention.' Ellen Van Wolde, *Words become Worlds: Semantic Studies of Genesis 1-11*, Biblical Interpretation 6 (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 32. The tree of life appears only twice in the narrative (2:9 and 3:22) and these two occurrences of the 'tree of life' do create an ambiguity in identifying the placement of both trees in the narrative: 1) the tree of life (not the tree of the knowledge of good and evil) is said to be 'in the midst of the garden' (Gen. 2:9); 2) God explicitly said in Gen. 2:17 that it is 'the tree of the knowledge of good and evil' that they should not eat from; 3) in Gen. 3:3, Eve tells the serpent (without mentioning the specific name of the tree) that it is 'the tree that is in the midst of the garden' that God forbids them from eating from. Readers now wonder whether both trees are in the middle of the garden and, if so, how Adam and Eve were able to tell the difference between the two trees is also left unexplained; 4) when God interrogates the man after the transgression (3:11 and 3:16), God identifies that the tree they ate from is the tree he commanded Adam not to eat from, i.e. the tree of knowledge: 'Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?' and 'Because...you have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, "you shall not eat from it."' Such ambiguity could be avoided by expunging all reference to the tree of life from the narrative, as Budde (and others who follow him with minor differences) has done. However, without any support in the manuscript

A new tension is introduced into the narrative due to man's partaking of the forbidden fruit. It was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil that God was originally concerned with, but now God is worried that the man might eat from the tree of life. The reason for God's new concern and for God's further action to drive the man out of the garden is given in 3:22. Note that God's words here for the tree of life make a more precise reference to the duration of the effect of eating than the words for the tree of knowledge (Gen. 2:17). He does not merely say 'he will live', as לְעֹלָם ('forever') is added. God also does not use the emphatic infinitive absolute in this verse.<sup>126</sup>

### 3.3.1 Text and Translation

#### Gen 3:22-24

(3:22) ויאמר יהוה אלהים הן האדם היה כאחד ממנו לדעת טוב ורע ועתה פן ישלח ידו ולקח גם<sup>a</sup> מעץ החיים ואכל וחי לעולם

(3:23) וישלחהו יהוה אלהים מגן־עדן לעבד את האדמה אשר לקח משם

(3:24) ויגרש<sup>a</sup> את האדם<sup>a</sup> וישכנ<sup>b</sup> מקדם לגן־עדן<sup>c</sup> את הכרבים ואת להט החרב המתהפכת לשמר את דרך עץ החיים

3:22: Then the Lord God said, '*Behold*, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil; and *now*, lest he stretch out his hand and take *also* from the tree of life, and eat, and *live forever*...'

3:23: and the Lord God *sent him out* from the Garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground from which he was taken.

3:24: and He *drove the man out*, and on the east side of the garden of Eden, He caused to dwell the cherubim and the flaming sword flashing back and forth *to guard the way to the tree of life*.<sup>127</sup>

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tradition, it would be difficult to suggest such conjectural emendation of deleting all reference to the tree of life. Other scholars, such as J. Barr et al., while acknowledging the possibility of the original story having only one tree, take the 'canonical approach' of including both trees in their discussion of the narrative. Cf. J. Barr, *The Garden of Eden and the Hope of Immortality*, 58-59. These narrative ambiguities have been treated by source criticism with the classic documentary hypothesis, yet the reception history approach assumes and begins with the 'final form' of Genesis narrative.

<sup>126</sup> Cf. Ezekiel 3:21.

<sup>127</sup> The English translation and emphasis in italics are mine.

## Text notes

3:22a: MT, SP, Vg., S, T] The LXX (and few minor manuscripts of S and T) lacks the adverb ׀ג ('also'). R. Hendel suggests that the MT's reading of ׀ג may be an explicating plus by a scribe creating a closer link between the two trees in the narrative, thereby solving the difficulty of the lack of mention of the tree of life in the earlier narrative.<sup>128</sup> The OL follows the LXX and omits *etiam* ('also'), which is present in the Vg. We retain the MT reading.

3:24a: MT, SP, T] S deletes the object ׀האדם ('the man') and provides the 3ms suffix that is attached to the verb: ׀הצא ('he drove *him* out'). The LXX (and Vg.) have the personal name τὸν Ἀδὰμ in place of the generic term τὸν ἄνθρωπον ('the humankind'). Retain the MT reading.

3:24b: MT, S, SP, T, Vg.] The LXX has 3ms pronoun αὐτὸν (3ms) after the verb κατώκισεν ('he settled'). The suffix in the LXX changes the object of the verb κατώκισεν ('he settled') from cherubim to Adam, thus making the eastside of the garden, as the dwelling place of Adam, opposed to the MT's reading in which the cherubim are stationed at the eastside of the garden. The man's exit through the eastside of the garden and the logical guess that the entrance to the garden is at the eastside are lost in the LXX. The MT's reading hints to the reader that blocking the eastward access to the garden prevents access to the garden as well as the way to the tree of life, while the readers of the LXX are left with doubts as to how God will prevent them from reentering the garden and as to the exact position of cherubim, either in or outside the garden. The exact location of the placement of cherubim and the way to the tree of life, the entrance to the garden and the allusion to the temple/tabernacle imagery are lost in the LXX reading. The rendering of the מקדם ('east') with ἀπέναντι ('opposite') further weakens the directional information involved in the expulsion narrative. S has ׀בסבב ('placed around') for ׀שב ('settle'), creating the image of cherubim encircling the entire garden. We retain the MT reading.

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<sup>128</sup> Hendel, *The Text of Genesis 1-11*, 45.

3:24c: MT, SP, Vg., T] LXX + *καὶ ἔταξεν*. Due to the personal pronoun *αὐτὸν* (3ms) in the previous clause, the LXX translator adds *καὶ ἔταξεν* ('and he placed') for τὰ *χερουβίμ* ('the cherubim').

For the first time in the narrative, God explicitly reveals that he does not want the man (אָדָם)<sup>129</sup> to live forever. Yet why is the immortality of the man suddenly of concern? An easy solution to this problem is to assume that the man was originally immortal but now he has become mortal as a result of partaking of the tree of knowledge, and now he needs to reclaim that lost immortality by partaking of the tree of life, which has the opposite quality of endowing immortality to the man. This line of interpretation assumes the concept of inherent immortality and that the single partaking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil or the tree of life was sufficient to transform the human body from immortal to mortal or vice versa and to maintain such a status until the tree with the opposite quality is consumed. However, such an explanation finds no explicit support in the text and is only possible if one assumes that the death penalty in 2:17 means 'you will become mortal in the *moment* you eat from the forbidden fruit' and that both man and woman clearly understood such meaning, which was revealed only at the end of the story particularly at the time when they had no practical knowledge or experience of death.<sup>130</sup> This suggestion also mitigates the claim that God's death warning (2:17) was fulfilled at the moment the man was expelled from the garden, since, according to the first suggestion, the death warning was already fulfilled when he became mortal at the very moment he ate from the tree of knowledge while in the garden. While assuming the man's original possession of immortality in the garden, some scholars further suggest: 1) that the nature of the death God intended in 2:17 is both spiritual and physical, i.e. the man became spiritually dead and physically mortal when he first ate from the tree

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<sup>129</sup> The woman is presumably included in this passage; nevertheless, the narrator strictly specifies that the person is 'the man' (אָדָם) and renders all the verbs in the singular. For the sake of consistency and brevity, my translation of the word אָדָם will adhere to the grammar and language of the Hebrew text.

<sup>130</sup> I have suggested in the previous chapter that man's silence on the death warning could imply either his lack of understanding of the concept of death, or that death was understood in the same way by the man, woman and the serpent. See pp. 36-40 of this thesis.

of the knowledge;<sup>131</sup> or 2) that the man had to continuously eat from the tree of life to sustain his immortality, therefore, man's expulsion from the garden does indeed accomplish the warning 'you will become mortal.'

We can further recall that God allowed the man and the woman to eat freely from any tree (except the tree of knowledge) in the garden, which presumably included the tree of life (1:29; 2:16), and in this it is made even clearer by God that the tree of life was indeed within the close reach of the man: 'lest he stretch out his hand...' (3:22). Did God ever worry about the man becoming immortal before he ate from the tree of knowledge? If we simply assume that the thought of man becoming immortal did not occur to God, we are then left with the question of whether the man had already eaten from the tree of life while he was in the garden. To answer this question, we need to look at the verse in more detail. The interjection הִנֵּה ('behold') along with the adverb עַתָּה ('now') in the second half of the verse clearly signifies a shift in the narrative and gives the sense that a new situation has emerged.<sup>132</sup> It is precisely the man's 'becoming like God in knowing good and evil' which seems to have triggered God's concern that they might also eat from the tree of life and thereby reach the state of 'living forever.' However, it is still difficult to make sense of the statement 'behold, the man has become like one of us' due to the fact that 'now the man has become mortal.'<sup>133</sup> Nonetheless, what God's speech in this verse

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<sup>131</sup> Cf. J.C. Collins, *Genesis 1-4: A Linguistic, Literary, and Theological Commentary*, 162-64; Utley, *How it all Began: Genesis 1-11*, 47; Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, 90 et al. For more detail, see footnote 90.

<sup>132</sup> The words הִנֵּה ('behold') and עַתָּה ('now') introduce the protasis and the apodosis respectively, so the two clauses should not be interpreted as independent. Speiser, *Genesis: Introduction, Translation, and Notes*, 24.

<sup>133</sup> See footnote 60 for a summarization of the possible meanings of the phrase 'knowing good and evil.' The knowledge of good and evil that Adam and Eve attain is equated with 'becoming like God' (Gen. 3:5 and 3:22) and, as some suggest, it could possibly signify an elevated status of the human being to a level close to that of the divine beings, whatever that may be. For example, Kant describes the event in Gen. 3 as not a 'fall' but a 'rise' – 'a transition from an uncultured, merely animal condition to the state of humanity, from bondage to instinct to rational control – in a word, from the tutelage of nature to the state of freedom.', "Conjectural Beginning of Human History," in *Kant on History*, ed. L. W. Beck (Indianapolis: Liberal Arts, 1963), 60, quoted in V. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1-17*, 211. See also, J. Barr, *The Garden of Eden and the Hope of Immortality*, 4, 6-8. However, at the same time, the clear reference to the man's present mortal status



plainly reveals is that the immortality of man is *now* dependent upon eating from the tree of life – without it, the man will not be able to live forever. Man’s dependency on the tree of life for his immortality is already in effect even before he is expelled from the garden and it is indeed the reason for God’s next action – driving the man from the garden by forceful means (3:23-24).<sup>134</sup> However, man’s inevitable dependency on the tree of life for his immortality often goes unnoticed. Has it always been that way? It could be suggested that the tree of life had no significant value and meaning for the man since he already possessed immortality without the help of the tree. Such an interpretation does have an advantage in resolving the ambiguities presented by the lack of attention to the tree of life in the narrative before the man’s disobedience, and in God’s preventing the man from eating from the tree of life appears only after he has disobeyed God’s command. However, its weakness lies in the fact that it entails further questionable assumptions.

Conversely, there are some who suggest that the first human beings were originally created mortal based on the same observation that the man’s immortality is dependent on partaking of the tree of life. A strong proponent of this argument is J. Barr, who does not consider the garden story as the ‘story of the origins of sin and

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and some negative aspects resulting from ‘knowing good and evil’ are also evident in the narrative, e.g. Adam and Eve hide from the presence of God as they gain knowledge of their nakedness, etc.

The aspect of the ‘opening of the eyes’ in the serpent’s promise (3:5) could imply the man’s finding the presence of the tree of life that will be gained with better vision. So, the serpent’s statement ‘you will surely not die’ (Gen. 3:5) could be interpreted as ‘you will not die because once you eat from the forbidden fruit, your eyes will be opened, then you will be able to find the tree of life and have the chance to eat from it.’ However, this suggestion would need to assume the original immortality of the man and whether the serpent himself knows about the tree of life is not given in the text. All of the above conjectures are possible as God’s confirmation of the idea that the man indeed became like God is left unexplained by the narrator.

<sup>134</sup> God’s determination to obstruct the man from accessing the tree of life and immortality is emphasized through the repeated use of verbs with a similar meaning, שלח (‘send out’) and גרש (‘drive out’) and further by the posting of the cherubim at the entrance to the garden. The entrance being at the east side of the garden alludes to the orientation of the tabernacle/temple. The association of the garden with the temple as a dwelling place of God is made explicit in later traditions of Jewish and Christian literature, cf. Peter T. Lanfer, *Remembering Eden: The Reception History of Genesis 3:22-24* (New York: OUP, 2012), 135-55.

evil,<sup>135</sup> but as a ‘story of how human immortality was almost gained, but in fact was lost.’<sup>136</sup> One of the main lines of argument for Barr is that the garden narrative lacks the language and atmosphere of guilt and tragedy: words such as ‘sin,’ ‘rebellion’ and ‘transgression’ are not found anywhere in the text.<sup>137</sup> Yet Barr seems to disregard the contextual sense of fear and abasement in certain aspects of man’s life and in his relationship with God following the transgression. Accordingly, Barr’s argument is criticized by J. Day as a ‘false dichotomy’ as the narrative clearly presents a case of man’s disobedience to God’s command, which is followed by punishment.<sup>138</sup> Barr also argues that the warning of an immediate death penalty in Gen. 2:17 will be more effective when it is given to a mortal being who already knows that he is going to die.<sup>139</sup> However, there is no reason to assume that a warning of an immediate death penalty could not have been given to an immortal being, particularly in the scenario that the man was sustaining his immortal status through the periodic consumption of the tree of life. If this were the case, Adam and Eve would have known that they could die either from not eating from the tree of life or by immediate execution by God. Although the text does not present a clear picture of how much guilt Adam and Eve feel after their transgression or how much Adam and Eve understand about death, it is evident from the conversation between the woman and the serpent and from the fact that they hide from God, that Adam and Eve have some knowledge of their wrongdoing and of death. Such knowledge of death also does not necessarily mean that they were created mortal. Indeed, the narrative does not suggest the impossibility of death by other means, for instance, someone who possesses immortality may avoid death by aging, but he or she may be

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<sup>135</sup> Barr, *The Garden of Eden and the Hope of Immortality*, 4. See also, Walter Brueggemann, *Genesis*, IBC (Atlanta: WJKP, 1982), 41 and Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 276.

<sup>136</sup> Barr, *ibid.*, 6-8. Barr suggests the following points in his argument (which are worth studying further): 1) the cultural assumption in the OT was that death was natural for human beings; 2) the absence of any reference to words such as ‘sin’, ‘disobedience’ or ‘rebellion’ in the garden narrative; 3) ‘within the Hebrew bible itself the story of Adam and Eve [is] nowhere cited as the explanation for sin and evil in the world’; 4) The view that ‘sin brought death into the world’ is likely to be the product of a Hellenistic interpretation of the OT; and 5) the punishment brought upon the man does not include mention of death.

<sup>137</sup> Barr, *ibid.*, 6.

<sup>138</sup> Day, *From Creation to Babel: Studies in Genesis 1-11*, 44-45.

<sup>139</sup> Barr, *ibid.*, 10.

killed or die by other means. In fact, the very first death of man (and animal) recorded in the book of Genesis is by killing.<sup>140</sup> The point that the narrative does not provide any explicit clues to the man being created immortal can be objected to on the same principle that there is no explicit mention of the original mortality of the human beings.<sup>141</sup> Furthermore, the suggestion that the man was originally created mortal requires an underlying assumption that Adam and Eve did not have the chance to eat from the tree of life up to this point. Why the tree of life was not forbidden in the first place and it is only at this point that God becomes concerned about it cannot be simply left to chance or explained away with other presumptive suggestions. The text does not draw a clear line on whether they had ever eaten from the tree of life, but it leaves the possibility open. In this regard, the dependency of the man's immortality on the tree of life and the expulsion from the garden, the permanent loss of the chance to eat from the tree of life, may not be taken as an absolute proof of the man's creational mortality.

The possibility that the humans have already eaten from the tree of life has been suggested by a number of scholars.<sup>142</sup> For example, H.T. Obbink opines that the man and the woman not only could eat from the tree of life, but they actually did eat 'their ambrosia, the remedy of the gods against death.'<sup>143</sup> He notes usage of the word לִפְנֵי ('lest') in Gen. 3:22 and suggests that it could also mean 'lest further,' or 'lest more,' therefore Gen. 3:22 does not discount the possibility that the man has eaten from the tree of life in the garden.<sup>144</sup> Obbink also suggests reading the adverb אֲדָ ('also') as 'again' so that Gen. 3:22 may be read as 'lest he would *continue* to stretch

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<sup>140</sup> Cf. Gen. 3:21; 4:8.

<sup>141</sup> Barr himself is aware of and cautious about an argument based on silence: 'Certainly Genesis 1 says nothing about God's creation of death. Yet perhaps silence about death does not mean that death was not part of the world as created?' J. Barr, *ibid.*, 25.

<sup>142</sup> Obbink, "The Tree of Life in Eden," 110-11; *idem*, "The Tree of Life in Eden," 475. See also, R. Gordis, "The Knowledge of Good and Evil in the Old Testament and the Qumran Scrolls," *JBL* 76 (1957): 134.

<sup>143</sup> Obbink, "The Tree of Life in Eden," 110-11.

<sup>144</sup> U Cassuto criticizes that this is a forced interpretation. Cassuto, *Genesis*, 123. Barr writes that 'the expression "put out his hand and do something" is an inchoative statement that cannot easily mean "continue to do what he has been doing all along."' He also notes that he has gone through all the 131 cases of Hebrew לִפְנֵי ('lest') in the Bible and found none that means 'lest someone continues to do what they are already doing.' Barr, *The Hope of Immortality*, 135, footnote 2.

out his hand and take *again* from the tree of life.’ The telic particle לִּפְנֵי (‘lest’) is used almost exclusively with an imperfect verb (106 out of 133 occurrences in the HB) to introduce a negative purpose clause, which requires some preventive action depending on the context in which the article is found.<sup>145</sup> Obbink’s suggestion that the word לִּפְנֵי (‘lest’) could also mean ‘lest further’ may be correct in some passages, but a possible usage of the conjunction לִּפְנֵי (‘lest’) in other places cannot be the decisive factor in determining whether the man has been continuously eating from the tree of life. This possibility already exists in the narrative regardless of the presence of the particle לִּפְנֵי (‘lest’). Similarly, in one of the two examples that Obbink gives (1 Sam. 13:19) the word לִּפְנֵי (‘lest’) only indicates the Philistines’ fear of the possibility that the Israelites will make swords and spears to wage war against them. The sense of continuous action (i.e. ‘lest the Israelites will *continue* to make weapons’) is not necessarily conveyed by the presence of the particle, but rather more likely be inferred from the hostile relationship between the Israelites and the Philistines. With regard to the adverb אֲדָמָה (‘also’) being used in the sense of ‘again,’ this is not really attested in the HB and there is no reason to assume such a meaning here in Gen. 3:22.<sup>146</sup> Apart from the question of the words לִּפְנֵי (‘lest’) and אֲדָמָה (‘also’), if we argue that the man had to eat from the tree of life to sustain his immortal status, in one sense this ironically assumes that the man was originally created mortal and that he was dying since his immortality was dependent upon the eating from the tree. This would also mean that the existence of physical death was already a reality in the garden before the transgression. Such an interpretation would then eliminate the question of the origin of physical death per se and create further questions to which no satisfactory answer can be obtained: e.g. ‘were the animals in the garden created immortal? If so, how did they sustain their immortality?’ Nevertheless, this interpretation does have an advantage in providing a clear answer to the question of whether the man was immortal or mortal in the garden, as well as in making sense of the fact that the tree of life was not forbidden, but was instead included among ‘any tree of the garden’ which God commanded ‘you may freely eat’ (Gen. 2:16). In fact, only in this interpretation does the tree of life serve its purpose – to endow

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<sup>145</sup> Waltke and O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 510-12.

<sup>146</sup> BDB: אֲדָמָה; HALOT: אֲדָמָה.

immortality to the man. Further, the serpent and the woman's conversation about 'death,' which seems to operate under the assumption that Eve already has some kind of knowledge of what it means to 'die,' fits better with this interpretation.

Some of the contextual clues that the man had not eaten from the tree of life continuously are as follows; although, they cannot be considered proof of the impossibility of man's possession of original immortality with or without the help of the tree of life. 1) Since one bite of the tree of knowledge brought about some change to the man (e.g. knowledge of being naked, knowing good and evil, becoming like God, etc.), the principle of such single partaking may be equally applied to the tree of life. 2) The last sentence in Gen. 3:22, 'lest he stretch out his hand and take *also* from the tree of life, and eat, and *live forever...*' is an incomplete sentence,<sup>147</sup> which indicates the quickness of the determination and action of God in sending the man out of the garden.<sup>148</sup> If the remedy for death ('tree of life') had only a temporal effect on humans in that it required regular eating, there would be no reason for such a sense of hurry and anxiety in driving the man out of the garden. He will die anyway once he is out of the garden. God could have easily driven the man out sooner or later; the text suggests that a single partaking of the tree of life will endow immortality forever. Had Adam already partaken of the tree of life prior to leaving the garden, it would have been too late for God to do anything about it. 3) God reveals the nature of the tree of life here in Gen. 3:22 for the first time in the entire garden narrative, yet God also keeps that information to himself as it is put in a self-addressed soliloquy, which gives the sense that God wants to send them away before they find out about the presence and nature of the tree of life.

Yet why would God initially not tell the man anything about the tree of life or possible expulsion from the garden? Adam's complete silence and lack of response to the expulsion brings further ambiguity to our understanding of his exact knowledge of, and relationship to, the tree of life before and after expulsion from the

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<sup>147</sup> The exact consequence of eating from the tree of life is left to the reader's imagination and will never be known to the reader as the man permanently loses access and the chance to eat from the tree of life. This literary device of sudden breaking off in speech is known as 'aposiopesis.' E. Bullinger terms it *Reticentia (Sudden-silence)*. Cf. Ethelbert W. Bullinger, *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1898), 152.

<sup>148</sup> Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, 85.

garden. Maybe he is relieved that no death threat has been exacted,<sup>149</sup> or he may have regretfully accepted the situation, or it may be that he will simply die outside the garden without ever knowing that he once had a chance to become an immortal being. Nowhere in the narrative is the man informed about the presence of or the implications of eating from the tree of life, only about the tree of the knowledge and what awaits them after eating from that tree – hard work for the rest of his life until his death. Looking back at the original command in the expulsion passage, the man can hardly be held responsible for breaking the command because he had no proper knowledge of the implications, and neither can we deduce from this an answer about the man’s original physical status.

### 3.4. Conclusion

To summarize, in the first half of this chapter, I reviewed the punishment passage and its putative association with the original command in Gen. 2:17. In the second half, possible interpretations that derive from the reading of Gen. 3:22 were discussed. Each argument does in some sense contribute to the meaning and clarification of the passage, but in the process, their interpretative assumptions cannot be avoided. In sum, although Gen. 3:22 tells us of the present state of the man in which he is dependent on the tree of life for his immortality, we are not informed whether it has always been that way. Did the man know about the presence of the tree of life? If he did, did he know that he could attain or reclaim his immortality by eating from it? Or has he actually eaten from the tree of life already? Analyzing the passages and arguments derived from them did not yield a definite answer as to

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<sup>149</sup> Some suggest that it is due to God’s grace that Adam does not die on the day of his transgression (Cf. von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 95-96; Schmid, “Loss of Immortality? Hermeneutical Aspects of Genesis 2–3 and its Early receptions,” 78), while others suggest that living physically forever in sin would be a tragedy, therefore mortality is a sign of grace, and immortality a curse (see, for instance, Utley, *How it All Began: Genesis 1-11*, 65). However, these suggestions would require a reading into the text. Interpreting the meaning of ‘life’ in Gen. 3:22 as that of ‘spiritual life’ would not be a plain reading of the text within the context of the creation/garden narrative. Also, distinguishing the meaning of death in Gen. 2:17 as ‘spiritual’ (spiritual death, alienation or separation from God, etc.), but the meaning of life in Gen. 3:22 as ‘physical’ (physically living forever) is not given nor implied anywhere in the narrative.

whether Adam and Eve ever ate from the tree of life before their expulsion, despite the fact that it was clearly available among the trees they could freely eat from in the garden. In this sense, whether they were immortal or mortal in the first place is not given by these passages. Had the narrator wanted to stress and convey the idea of original immortality (or mortality) in the narrative and that it was indeed the introduction of mortality that was brought by the disobedience, it would be better if he had been more specific and used clearer language as with the command in Gen. 2:17. Perhaps such questions regarding the mortal/immortal status of man were not really of concern to the narrator. The lack of clarity in the communication between God and man, ambiguities created by the narrator's skipping details, lack of agreement between the death warning and the actual punishments given for breaking the command, lack of clear association between the two trees and lack of Adam and Eve's response to the punishment and expulsion, all lead us to the conclusion that the narrator, while speaking of possibilities of death and life in two somewhat distanced passages, remains rather silent on the original physical status of the first human beings.





## Chapter Four

### Gen 2:16-17 in the Septuagint

#### 4.1 Introduction

Scholars, ancient and modern alike, have referred to the prohibition in Genesis 2:17 to explain the introduction of humankind to mortality. As observed in the previous chapters, the discussion of the immortality of the first humans is related closely to the question of why the first humans do not die immediately after their disobedience, as God had predicted in these verses. In the attempt to answer this question, there arises the suggestion that the death God meant was not an imminent death penalty, but meant that humans would become mortal. What follows these explanations is the presumption that had they not eaten from the tree, they would have lived forever. The main task of this chapter will be to review the prohibitive command in Gen. 2:17 as it is found in the Septuagint (LXX), first in the book of Genesis, and then subsequent books in the rest of the LXX. After discussing the translational characteristics of the Greek Genesis, the lexical choices and translational elements in the garden narrative of the LXX (2:4a-3:24), which deviate from the text of the MT in relation to the topic of immortality, will be reviewed. Then, I will focus on the prohibitive command in Gen. 2:17, paying close attention to: 1) the Greek idiomatic phrase ἡ δ' ἂν ἡμέρα φάγητε ('in the day in which you eat...'); 2) the implication of the plural verbs ἀποθανεῖσθε ('you [pl.] shall die') used by the translator to render the singular of the MT; and 3) the usage of the cognate dative noun in the death warning θανάτῳ ἀποθανεῖσθε ('by death, you shall die'). With regard to the death warning, it will be shown, on the one hand, that the legalistic setting and background of God's original command has been correctly understood and reflected in the translator(s)' renderings of the command; however, on the other hand, the emphatic force of the infinitive absolute has been significantly reduced or at times altogether effaced in the translator's renderings of the command. Taken all together, it will be suggested that the diverse aspects of the literalness and freedom found in the translator's renderings of the command in Gen. 2:16-17 inevitably pave the way for alternative meanings of the nature of the death mentioned in Gen. 2:17, which were not originally present in the Hebrew Text.

## 4.2 Characteristics of the Greek translation of Genesis

Although the translator of the Greek Genesis made a significant effort in his translation to produce precise representations of his Hebrew *Vorlage*, evidence suggests that the Greek translation of Genesis is not a straightforward rendering of the Hebrew text. At times, the translator deviates from his source text, using translation devices for clarification of the text, such as harmonization of parallel passages and, in a few instances, the translator even takes external exegetical traditions into account in order to explain his source text. Yet the general consensus remains that there is a close lexical and syntactical relation between the original Hebrew *Vorlage* and the Greek translation.<sup>150</sup>

However, describing the character of a translation is not a simple task. The general categories of ‘literal’ or ‘free’—often reflecting one’s mere impression of the text—are not sufficient to differentiate complicated sets of relations between the source and target texts. Nuanced qualifications are required for a precise evaluation of the translation technique employed by the translator. Reference should be made to the famous work of James Barr, *The Typology of Literalism in Ancient Biblical Translation*, which provides a sophisticated discussion on different types of ‘literality’ in ancient translation.<sup>151</sup> Barr demonstrates that there are many different

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<sup>150</sup> Johann Cook’s study on the translation technique of the Greek Genesis shows that there was one translator for the book and the translator is consistent and literal throughout in rendering his Hebrew *Vorlage*. Johann Cook, “The Exegesis of the Greek Genesis,” in *VI CIOSCS*, ed. Claude. E. Cox, SBLSCS 23 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), 120. Robert Hiebert also notes that Greek Genesis, lexically and syntactically, is a strict translation that represents its source text. Robert J. V. Hiebert, “Genesis,” in *NETS*, 1. R. Hendel also maintains that the inconsistencies in the Greek are the result of literal translations of a different Hebrew *Vorlage*, rather than deliberate interpretations. Hendel, *The Text of Genesis 1-11*, 16-20. J. Wevers argues that the translators were likely influenced by the fact that they were working on a canonical text. Wevers, *Notes on the Greek Text of Genesis*, xii. Marguerite Harl also regards Greek Genesis as a literal translation of the Hebrew text that was given to the translator. Marguerite Harl, *La Bible d’Alexandrie: La Genèse* (Paris: Cerf, 1986), 107.

<sup>151</sup> J. Barr divides indications of literality and freedom into: (1) elements or segments, and the sequence in which these elements are represented; (2) the quantitative addition or subtraction of elements; (3) the consistency or non-consistency in the rendering; (4) accuracy and level of semantic information, especially in cases of metaphor and idiom; (5) coded “etymological” indication of formal/semantic relationships obtained in the vocabulary of the original language; and (6) level of text

aspects of ‘literalness’ in translation, as well as different aspects of ‘freedom.’ Barr further demonstrates that these aspects of ‘literalness’ and ‘freedom’ within a translation do not always oppose each other; they may also correlate and co-exist at different modes and on different levels. Thus, a translation can be simultaneously literal and free from different perspectives.<sup>152</sup> When a translation is precisely analysed and distinguished on the level of literalness and freedom, the translation may be better assessed as it is presented from more than one perspective. In this regard, one cannot and should not automatically assume that a ‘literal’ translation is a better or more faithful translation of the source text. A translator who is being quite literal can equally misunderstand the meaning of a word or phrase and mistranslate; further, it is evident that a literal translator often adds or deletes elements from the text and sometimes even opts for idiomatic renderings with or without intending to. Therefore, with the multifaceted level of ‘literalness’ and ‘freedom’ of a translation in mind, it is important to distinguish the different modes and levels on which a particular translation is literal or free.

Sebastian Brock focuses on the translator and finds differing dynamics between the ‘literalness’ and ‘freedom’ in a broader historical background of the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible. He uses the terms – ‘*expositor*’ and ‘*interpretes*’ – to describe the opposing dichotomy in the translation process, similar to that of ‘literal’ verses ‘free.’<sup>153</sup> He draws out five main stages in the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament and observes the tendency of the translators to alternate between literal and free modes of translation, which is most evident in the first of his five stages, which he designates to the translators of the LXX

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and level of analysis. Cf. J. Barr, *The Typology of Literalism in Ancient Biblical Translation*, (NAWG; MSU 15; Göttingen: V&R, 1979).

<sup>152</sup> Barr, *ibid.*, 280: ‘For—and this is my principal argument—there are different ways of being literal and of being free, so that a translation can be literal and free at the same time but in different modes or on different levels.’ And 323–24: ‘It has been shown, I think, that “literal” and “free” are not clear and simple terms in the world of ancient biblical translation. There are numerous ways in which a version could be both at the same time. It could be literal, by one of the ways in which one may be literal, while by another of the ways it was simultaneously free.’

<sup>153</sup> The categories, ‘literal’ and ‘free’ are sometimes referred to as ‘formal’ and ‘dynamic/functional.’ See, Eugene A. Nida, *Toward a Science of Translating* (Leiden: Brill, 1964), 165.

Pentateuch.<sup>154</sup> These earliest translators adopted both ‘*expositor*’ and ‘*interpre*’ attitudes in translation, as Brock puts it: ‘the earliest translators, lacking any real precedent, work in an ad hoc fashion, producing somewhat uneven renderings that veer between the rather free and the literal.’<sup>155</sup>

Likewise, the translator of Genesis often seeks to make the best choice of what is closest to the original meaning and context, rather than operating under a strict and mechanical set of rules, and Gen. 2:16-17 is an illustrative example that exhibits simultaneous literalness and freedom within a translation. Even within the limit of these two verses, it is evident that the translator not only alternates between idiomatic and literalistic renderings, but his translation shows that he combines two approaches at the same time, sometimes failing, but other times succeeding in giving a correct impression of the meaning of the original. Moreover, some of the translational features do serve to clarify certain ambiguous aspects of the command. In this regard, after reviewing the narrative, each translational element in Gen. 2:16-17 will be carefully evaluated below.

#### **4.3 Narrative Gaps and Ambiguities ‘Translated’ in the LXX Genesis**

In the previous chapter, it was observed that the garden narrative contains ‘narrative gaps’ in which the narrator avoids providing details that would otherwise help us make sense and understand the text better. In this section, the deviations from the MT in the related passages of the garden narrative of the LXX will be discussed, which reflect how the earliest Greek translator acknowledged such ambiguities and sought to provide solutions to them.<sup>156</sup> The changes in the Greek are not always a

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<sup>154</sup> Sebastian P. Brock, “To Revise or Not to Revise: Attitudes to Jewish Biblical Translation,” in *Septuagint, Scrolls, and Cognate Writings: Papers Presented to the International Symposium on the Septuagint and its Relations to the Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Writings* (Manchester, 1990), ed. George J. Brooke and Barnabas Lindars, BJS 33 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), 325.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

<sup>156</sup> In this section, the changes in the Greek that are directly related to the topic of immortality will be discussed; for others, see Susan A. Brayford, *Genesis*, Septuagint Commentary Series (Boston: Brill, 2007), 205-48; Mark W. Scarlata, “Genesis,” in *T&T Clark Companion to the Septuagint* (ed. James K. Aitken; London: Bloomsbury, 2015); E. Tov, “The Septuagint Translation of Genesis as the First Scripture Translation,” in *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible, Qumran, Septuagint: Collected Essays*, vTSup 167 (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 504-20. Hiebert, “Genesis,” in NETS, 1-5; idem, “Textual

result of the translator's conscious attempt to provide an exegetical answer to the difficulty found in the text, but, in many cases, they are inevitable and/or coincidental consequences resulting from the differences between the two languages. Whether these changes influenced the subsequent readers of the LXX will require further study.

In Gen. 2:2 we see the translator's first explicit and intentional alteration of the Hebrew text in order to solve the apparent difficulty found in the context of the story. The translator renders the phrase בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי ('in the seventh day') as ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ ἕκτῃ ('in the sixth day'). Gen. 1:31 and 2:1 state clearly that God's creation works were completed on the sixth day, so the notion in 2:2 that God had completed his work by the seventh day likely raised this question for the translator. Instead of passing on the difficulty found in his *Vorlage* to the translation, the translator worked as *expositor* and changed the 'seventh day' to the 'sixth day' to avoid the interpretation that God may have worked on the seventh day also, which would be a violation of the law of the Sabbath.<sup>157</sup>

The addition of ἔτι ('again') in 2:9 shows the translator's desire to clarify the narrative feature(s) from the first creation account that seem to contradict the second account found in chapter two onwards. Since Gen. 1:12 states that God created plants and trees to grow, God's action in Gen. 2:9 which 'made every tree that is beautiful to the sight and good for food' is understood by the translator as an 'additional' act to the one found in 1:12, hence reflected in the translation accordingly.<sup>158</sup> In a similar sense, the use of the plural verbs in the prohibition against eating from the tree of knowledge in Gen. 2:17 could possibly be an intentional change based on the translator's understanding that the first woman, Eve, was already created when Adam received the command in 2:17.<sup>159</sup> However, the LXX does not provide any

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and Translation Issues in Greek Genesis," in *The Book of Genesis: Composition, reception, and Interpretation*. eds. Craig A. Evans, Joel N. Lohr and David L. Petersen, VTSup 152 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 405-26.

<sup>157</sup> Cf. Wevers, *Notes on the Greek Text of Genesis* 20, and Brayford, *Genesis*, 225. R. Hendel suggests that the presumed Hebrew *Vorlage* probably had the reading of יוֹם הַשְּׁשִׁי ('sixth day'), as found in the SP and S, considering the overall tendency of the translator to conserve what is given in the Hebrew. Hendel, *Genesis 1-11*, 32.

<sup>158</sup> Wevers, *ibid.*, 26.

<sup>159</sup> Cf. Gen. 1:27: 'And God made humankind...male and female, he made them.'

explicit clue of whether the woman existed by that time or whether she heard the command directly from God at the same time as the man first heard the command in Gen. 2:17. The Book of Jubilees, on the other hand, provides a clear interpretative statement of this in 3:18, describing that God gave the command directly to both man and woman.<sup>160</sup> Such an understanding is perhaps due to the influence of the plural verbs found in Gen. 2:17 of LXX and/or from the restatement of God's command by Eve, which uses plural verbs in both Hebrew and Greek. The plural verbs employed by the translator in Gen. 2:17 will be discussed further in the following section.

The statement that 'the two were naked...and were not ashamed' in Gen. 2:25 of the MT appears as an introductory statement in Gen. 3:1 of LXX. Their lack of knowledge, which is read by some interpreters as the couple's 'childlike or immature state,' is more closely linked and contrasted with the following narrative, in which Adam and Eve violate God's command, particularly in v.7 where they realize that they are naked as a result of their disobedience.<sup>161</sup> The exact meaning of 'not knowing' or 'being ashamed of their nakedness' is still unclear in the LXX, however, the closer link between these verses may be read as suggesting that the actual violation of God's command in Gen. 3:7 is due to the 'immature state' of the first human couple.

In the MT, it was observed that the narrative does not provide any information on God's intention in forbidding access to the tree of knowledge of good and evil. While this holds true in the LXX, in Gen. 3:5, the translator adds the interrogative particle *Ti* ('why') and renders the serpent's question as 'why is it that God said, "you shall not eat from any tree that is in the orchard?"' from the MT's 'Indeed, has God said, "you shall not eat...?"' Such an addition of the interrogative pronoun not only creates a closer link between the serpent's question and its own answer to the question in 3:5, 'for God knew that on the day you eat of it...you would be like gods knowing good and evil,' but it also adds a stronger impression and

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<sup>160</sup> Jubilees 3:18: 'She said to him: "...from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden *he told us*: 'Do not eat from it and do not touch it so that you may not die'"' (3:18). For more discussion on Jubilees' description of the garden narrative that share similar ideas with the LXX, particularly on the topic of sexuality, see W. Loader, *Enoch, Levi, and Jubilees on Sexuality: Attitudes towards Sexuality in the Early Enoch Literature, the Aramaic Levi Document, and the Book of Jubilees* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 236-48.

<sup>161</sup> Wevers, *ibid.*, 36, 40.

emphasis on the serpent's sagacity in approaching the woman; the question is more carefully and wisely worded than its counterpart in the MT. In the MT, the woman is able to answer the serpent's question by correcting the wrong information in the serpent's question, whilst in the LXX, the serpent is asking a question neither Eve nor the readers have any answer to. God did not explain his intention in forbidding eating from the tree, and only provided the consequence of eating from it, so she gives it to her husband (3:6). This more escalated portrayal of the snake's intelligence is confirmed in 3:1 of the LXX, where the translator describes the serpent as 'the most *sagacious* (φρόνιμος) of all the wild animals that were upon the earth (τῆς γῆς),' which is different from the MT's description, 'more cunning (עָרוּם) than any beast of the field (הַשָּׂדֶה).'<sup>162</sup>

After eating the fruit from the tree of knowledge, the woman gives the fruit to her husband, and he also eats the fruit. Here, the translator changes the phrase 'and he (3s) ate' (וַיֹּאכַל) in the singular, to 'they (3p) ate' (καὶ ἔφαγον) (3:6). This change from singular to plural, along with the plural verbs used for the command in Gen. 2:17, inevitably adds to the increased role and responsibility of the woman in the act of violation. In 3:11, the addition of the phrase *τούτου μόνου* ('of this one alone'),<sup>163</sup> which is lacking in the MT, adds further clarification to the limits of the prohibition in Gen. 2:17. The translator here makes it clear with the added phrase that it was only one tree that was originally prohibited by God. The phrase *τούτου μόνου* ('of this one alone') could reinforce such an interpretation regarding the tree of life: e.g. 'in the garden of Eden, the first couple were already immortal as they were not forbidden to eat from the tree of life.' In this verse, God's two independent questions in the MT ('who announced to you that you are naked? Have you eaten from the tree which I commend you...?') are joined together by the addition of *εἰ μὴ* ('unless'): 'Who told you that you are naked, *unless* you have eaten from the tree?' This additional phrase in the LXX strengthens the causal link between eating the fruit and gaining knowledge of their nakedness.<sup>164</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> Brayford, *Genesis*, 236.

<sup>163</sup> Gen. 3:11: 'He said to him, "Who announced to you that you are naked? *Unless* you have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, 'From this one alone (*τούτου μόνου*), do not eat.'"

<sup>164</sup> Harl, *La Bible D'Alexandrie*, 109 and Scarlata, *Genesis*, 19.

Gen. 3:19 and 22 in the LXX present some noteworthy differences from the MT. In v.19, the translator renders the וְ clause ('...till you return to the ground, *because* from it you were taken') with a preposition and a relative clause ἐξ ἧς ('...until you return to the earth *from which* you were taken'). In the MT, there is no clear causal connection between eating from the tree and returning to dust, and the text may be read accordingly that the reason why the man should return to dust is not necessarily because he disobeyed the command but because (וְ) he was originally made of dust (Gen. 2:7, 19).<sup>165</sup> Perhaps the translator wanted to avoid an interpretation that human beings were originally created mortal and returning to dust accords with the natural order of creation. By weakening the causal link between 'going back to dust' and 'being originally made with dust,' the translator provides a nuanced version of the text, which may suggest that Adam's 'going back to dust' is the result of his violation of the command. Read in this way, this may indicate the translator's understanding that Adam was immortal before eating the fruit.

In Gen. 3:22, out of the four verbs in the MT, 'he might *stretch out* (חָלַץ) his hand, and *take* (קָח) also from the tree of life, and *eat* (אָכַל), and *live* (חָיָה) forever,' only the first three are rendered with the subjunctive: 'he might *reach out* (ἐκτείνῃ) his hand and *take* (λάβῃ) of the tree of life and *eat* (φάγῃ).' The last verb חָיָה וְ (‘and live forever’) is rendered with the future indicative: ζήσεται εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα (‘he will live forever [lit. into the age]'). Whether Adam and Eve had been eating from the tree of life regularly is not explicitly given, neither in the MT nor in the LXX; nevertheless, the translator makes it explicit that ‘living forever’ is the effect of the three previous acts that are put in the subjunctive mode.<sup>166</sup> This reading could give the impression that the first humans had never eaten from the tree of life, but now they needed to eat to regain their immortal status, which was lost by eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

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<sup>165</sup> Wevers, *Notes on the Greek Text of Genesis*, 47.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*, 49.



#### 4.4 Text and Translation of LXX Gen. 2.16-17<sup>167</sup>

(Gen 2:16) και ἐνετείλατο κύριος ὁ θεὸς τῷ Ἀδὰμ λέγων Ἀπὸ παντὸς ξύλου τοῦ ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ βρώσει φάγη

And the Lord God commanded *Adam* saying, ‘From every tree in the garden, *you* (sg.) shall eat *for food*,

(Gen 2:17) ἀπὸ δὲ τοῦ ξύλου τοῦ γινώσκειν καλὸν καὶ πονηρόν, οὐ φάγεσθε ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ· ἢ δ’ ἂν ἡμέρα φάγητε ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ, θανάτῳ ἀποθανεῖσθε.

But from the tree for knowing good and evil<sup>168</sup>, *you* (pl.) shall not eat from it; the day in *which you* (pl.) eat of it, *by death, you* (pl.) shall die.’

#### 4.5 In the day *which* you eat... (ἢ δ’ ἂν ἡμέρα φάγητε...)

It was suggested above that the prepositional phrase בַּיּוֹם (‘in the day’) used in conjunction with the death warning should be understood literally with a sense of definiteness, describing the specific point in time when the action of the main verb ‘you will die’ will occur. In Greek grammar also, the definite article before a noun is often omitted for contextual and grammatical reasons. The definite quality of a given word is not determined based solely on the presence of the article, but its context must also be considered. However, regarding the retention or omission of the article, the translator of Greek Genesis consistently follows the Hebrew text regardless of the contextual meaning, as is reflected in the translator’s rendering of the very first word in the book of Genesis, where he imitates MT’s anarthrous בְּרֵאשִׁית with ἐν ἀρχῇ (‘in the beginning’).<sup>169</sup> Similarly in Gen. 35:3, for בַּיּוֹם צָרָתִי (‘in a day of my distress’), where the sense of definiteness is contextually applied even without the article, the translator nevertheless imitates the MT’s anarthrous phrase and renders בַּיּוֹם with ἐν

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<sup>167</sup> The English translation and emphasis in italics are mine. The Greek text is from the critical edition of Genesis in the Göttingen series. John W. Wevers, ed., *Genesis*, Septuaginta, Vetus Testamentum Graecum I (Göttingen: V&R, 1974).

<sup>168</sup> For the sake of clarification, the translator renders the same Hebrew phrase עֵץ הַדַּעַת טוֹב וְרָע (‘tree of the knowledge of good and evil’) differently in verses 9 and 17. See p. 28 of this thesis for textual analysis.

<sup>169</sup> There are also examples in which the translators simply follow the Hebrew *Vorlage*, employing the articles with the nouns that have an indefinite quality, Cf. 1 K. 17:34 ὁ λέων καὶ ἡ ἄρκτος (‘a lion or a bear’); 17:36; Amos 5:19; Is. 7:14 etc.

ἡμέρα.<sup>170</sup> Likewise, the prepositional phrase in Gen. 2:17, בַּיּוֹם, which is rendered without the article (also without the counterpart for the preposition), can be understood contextually as having a definite quality. It is noteworthy that the entire clause אֲכָלְתָּ מִן הַיּוֹם (‘for in [the] day you eat...’) is rendered rather freely as ἡ δ’ ἂν ἡμέρα φάγητε... (‘but [the] day in which you eat...’) with a relative pronoun ἡ preceding its antecedent ἡμέρα (‘day’). This grammatical construction, where the antecedent is taken up in the relative clause, is referred to either as the ‘incorporation’ of the antecedent or ‘attraction’ of the relative.<sup>171</sup> Incorporation of the antecedent can occur only when the relative clause is restrictive, in which the antecedent has the definite quality even without the article. Thus, in this verse, the relative clause ‘...which you eat’ serves to delimit the reference of the antecedent ἡμέρα (‘day’) to that very same day of eating. Rendered in this way, the antecedent becomes more closely associated with the action in the relative clause, namely ‘eating.’<sup>172</sup> Therefore, the general meaning of the phrase בַּיּוֹם, e.g. ‘when’ or ‘if,’ are not supported in the LXX, and the literal sense of the phrase ‘in the day’ as referring to a specific time frame for the death penalty is reinforced and expressed more clearly in the LXX. Moreover, as a result of the antecedent incorporation in this verse, the relative pronoun ἡ is fronted at the beginning of the entire sentence, thereby placing more emphasis on the relative clause and the antecedent, which has come already in the MT before the main clause for the sake of emphasis. Therefore, the emphatic nuance and definite quality of the phrase introduced first by the unique grammatical construction and furthered by the word order cannot be toned down. This idiomatic construction is comparable to Aquila’s version, in which each element of the relative clause is reflected in the same order as presented in the Hebrew text: σι εν ημερα βρωσεως σου (‘for in a day you eat’). The idiomatic rendering in the

<sup>170</sup> Cf. Gen. 2:2,4; 3:5; 5:1,2; 15; 18 etc.

<sup>171</sup> See BDF §294; P. Probert, *Early Greek Relative Clauses* (Oxford: OUP, 2015), 130-35; Eleanor Dickey, *An Introduction to the Composition and Analysis of Greek Prose* (Cambridge: CUP, 2016), 86.

<sup>172</sup> B. Reicke writes: ‘The reason for such an arrangement is probably a need to express a more intimate relation between the antecedent and the relative clause and in that way to avoid interruptions in the phrase.’ *The Disobedient Spirits and Christian Baptism: A Study of 1 Peter 3:19 and its Context* (Acta Seminarii Neotestamentici Upsaliensis, XIII; Munksgaard, 1946), 159.

LXX, ἥ δ' ἂν ἡμέρα ('but *the* day *in* which you eat...') is indicative of the translator's understanding of the Hebrew phrase ביום as implying that the specific time being referred to is when the predicted death warning would occur if the command was violated. This is precisely how the Old Latin translation (VL), whose parent text is primarily based on the LXX, was understood as it renders the phrase similarly with the relative pronoun and the antecedent in the inverted position: *qua die autem ederitis ab eo* (lit. 'however, [the] day which you [pl.] eat from it').<sup>173</sup> The similar phrase in the serpent's retort in Gen. 3:5 is rendered as ὅτι ἐν ἡ ἂν ἡμέρα ('for in [the] day which you eat...') with a more literal equivalent of the Hebrew יָ + יָ construction, ὅτι ἐν ('for in...').<sup>174</sup> In 1 Kgs. 2:37 and 42, where we find similar death warnings in apodosis + consequent construction, 'on the day you go...you will die,' the renderings are different in each verse (most likely for stylistic reasons) for the same prepositional phrase יָ + יָ used in the same context: ἐν τῇ ἡμέρα ('in the day') and Ἐν ἡ ἂν ἡμέρα ('in the day which...'). Yet the presence of the definite article in the former and the 'incorporated' antecedent in the latter indicate the translator's understanding of the definite quality in each case.

In sum, the translator has successfully captured the literal meaning of the phrase 'on the day' (יָ + יָ), which is a specific 24 hour day, as originally intended in the Hebrew text. In his translation, Symmachus follows the LXX's idiomatic rendering of the phrase ἥ δ' ἂν ἡμέρα φάγητε ('but the day in which you eat...') and perhaps this was one of the determining factors for Symmachus's interpretative rendering of the death warning: θνητος εση ('you will become mortal') as the warning, according to the grammatical construction, had to be realized on that very same day. Whichever meaning of 'death' the translator of the Greek Genesis had in mind, the translator's rather free and idiomatic rendering of the prepositional phrase

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<sup>173</sup> On the incorporation of antecedent in Latin, see J. H. W. Penney, "Archaism and Innovation in Latin Poetic Syntax" in *Aspects of the Language of Latin poetry*, eds. J. Adams and R. Mayer (Oxford: OUP), 251-52.

<sup>174</sup> In 2:17, the translator's lexical choice of δέ ('but') instead of ὅτι ('for') for יָ weakens the causal link between the prohibition and its consequence, 'you shall not eat from it, *but* on the day, you eat of it, by death, you shall die.' Theo A. W. van der Louw, *Transformations in the Septuagint: Towards an Interaction of Septuagint Studies and Translation Studies*, CBET 47 (Louvain: Peeters, 2007), 130.

resulted in the accurate representation of the literal meaning intended in the original text. Thus, it may be said that the Greek rendering ἧ δ' ἂν ἡμέρα for the prepositional phrase מִיּוֹם in Gen. 2:17 is a 'free' translation in form, but semantically literal and appropriate.

#### 4.6 'You (pl.) Shall not Eat' and 'by Death, you (pl.) shall Die'

The translator of the Greek Genesis renders the singular verb תָּמוּת ('you [sg.] will die') with the plural ἀποθανεῖσθε ('you [pl.] shall die'), seemingly making the consequential death applicable to Eve (and possibly other human beings) who is presumably still not yet created in Gen. 2:17. The pluralization of the verb ἀποθανεῖσθε in the LXX is not a mistake, as we see that all the verbs in v.17 are changed from singular to plural.<sup>175</sup> R. Hendel suggests that this is a harmonization with Eve's wording of God's command using the plural verbs in Gen. 3:2-3: 'God has said, "You (pl.) shall not *eat* from it or *touch* it, or you (pl.) will *die*."' <sup>176</sup> Eve

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<sup>175</sup> There are traces of singular verbs in other Greek MSS and quotations, cf. critical apparatus in J. Wevers, ed., *Genesis, Septuaginta, Vetus Testamentum Graecum I* (Göttingen: V&R, 1974).

<sup>176</sup> There are a few more examples in Genesis where the translator harmonizes a singular verb with the plural. In all these cases, the harmonization occurs with the corresponding verse in the earlier section of the narrative. For example, in 2:18, God refers to himself in the first person singular 'I shall make,' but this is rendered in the LXX as 'we shall make' (cf. 1:26). In Gen. 35:3a, MT's 'I shall build' is rendered in the LXX with 'we shall build' (cf. 35:3b). The plural verbs in Gen. 2:17 are different from these examples in that they are harmonized with the verbs that appear later in the narrative and it is God's own words that have been harmonized with the statement of Eve that refers back to the original wording. It is doubtful that the translator would give more credence to the modified version of the command which occurs later in the narrative and freely change the wording of what God himself originally said, unless it were the case that the translator really believed this was what God really meant and said. For the discussion on the overall harmonization tendencies in the Greek Genesis, see Hendel, *The Text of Genesis 1-11*, 81-92; Cook, "The Exegesis of the Greek Genesis," 91-125. See also, R. Hiebert, "The Hermeneutics of Translation in the Septuagint of Genesis," in *Septuagint Research: Issues and Challenges in the Study of the Greek Jewish Scriptures*, eds. Kraus and Wooden (Atlanta: SBL, 2006), 85-103, for his study on possible influence of Jewish halakah on the Greek translator. See also, E. Tov, "Textual Harmonization in the Ancients Texts of Deuteronomy," in *Mishneh Todah: Studies in Deuteronomy and Its Cultural Environment, in Honor of Jeffrey H. Tigay*, ed. Nili Sacher Fox, David A. Glatt-Gilad, and Michael J. Williams. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 15-28.

refers to God's first permissive command in Gen. 2:16 'to eat (φαγόμεθα) from every tree of the garden' using the plural form; however, the translator does not harmonize the verb in Gen. 2:16, but instead renders it as φάγη ('you (sg.) may eat'), leaving it in the singular form as in the MT.<sup>177</sup> Similarly, Wevers' suggestion that the second person plural verbs in verse 17 are introduced by the translator 'proleptically' to foreshadow what will happen in the following chapter<sup>178</sup> (i.e. Eve will also consume the fruit and be subject to the death penalty) cannot explain the use of the singular verb φάγη ('you may eat') and the use of the proper name Ἀδὰμ in Gen. 2:16.<sup>179</sup> Shifting from ἄνθρωπος ('human being') to the personal name Ἀδὰμ in translating אָדָם in 2:16 signals a sudden change in the translator's lexical choice, with no clear reason except for the fact that Eve is not yet created when the command is given to אָדָם ('the human being') and the command in v.16 is given in the second person singular verb תֹּאכַל ('you will eat'). It would have been more natural for the translator to adopt the personal name Ἀδὰμ in v.18 (as Jerome did in the Vulgate [Vg.]), where the woman is introduced for the first time in the narrative. The translator seems to have made a significant exegetical decision at this point to personalize the human being אָדָם as the individual male figure named Adam. The personal name itself opens up the potential for the interpretation that the command in Gen. 2:17 was given to the specific individual named Adam without the woman or any other human being present around him.

W. Loader suggests a reason for the change from ἄνθρωπος to Ἀδὰμ in 2:16: that v.17 contains the prohibition that the individual figure, Adam, violates in the

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<sup>177</sup> In Gen. 1:29, God gives the same command in the second person plural verb and object: "Behold, I have given you (pl.) every plant yielding seed...it shall be food for you (pl.)."

<sup>178</sup> Wevers, *Notes on the Greek Text of Genesis*, 30.

<sup>179</sup> Although the Hebrew word אָדָם could be understood either as 'a human being' or 'Adam' depending on the context, it is not until Gen. 4:25; 5:1a onwards where the MT starts to drop the article on אָדָם to explicitly refer to the male figure named Adam. In fact, until 4:25, the only occurrence of the word without the article appears in 1:27, 'God said, let us make man (אָדָם) in our image', in which the translator himself renders it generically with the term ἄνθρωπος. Note also, the translator does randomly go back to the generic term ἄνθρωπος for the same Hebrew word, cf. 2:18, 24; 4.1, etc.

following chapter. Had the translator adhered to the generic term ἄνθρωπος in 2:16, it might have given the impression that many human beings had already been created and therefore were responsible for the sin in the following chapter.<sup>180</sup> This is not likely, however, since the translator would not have missed the even greater impression created by the generic term ἄνθρωπος in 2:15 ('The Lord God took the *human* [ἄνθρωπος]...and placed *him* in the garden') and the plural verbs in v.17 ('you [pl.] shall not eat' and 'you [pl.] shall die'). The only interpretation that seeks to find a reason for the plural verbs in relation to the personal name Ἀδὰμ is Theo A.W. van der Louw. He contends that the plural verbs in v.17 would not have been necessary had the translator adhered to ἄνθρωπος ('the human being') in v.16 as the generic term ἄνθρωπος by nature would include the woman and future human beings in the prohibition.<sup>181</sup> According to van der Louw, the plural verbs in v.17 are the result of the translator's 'innocent interpretation' of אָדָמָה ('the human being') as the proper name Adam.<sup>182</sup> Nevertheless, this still does not account for the translator's sudden change from ἄνθρωπος to Ἀδὰμ in verse 16.

As we do not have access to the mind of the translator, it may simply not be possible to perfectly reconcile these two contradicting renderings. It is necessary to also consider that the translator may simply not have noticed that the personal name Ἀδὰμ and the singular verb φάγη ('you may eat') in v.16 do not fit with the plural verbs in 2:17. Although the rendering of the personal name Ἀδὰμ for אָדָמָה appears for the first time in Gen. 2:16, the translator must have already been troubled over the Hebrew generic term אָדָמָה ('the human being') as he was not able to retain the pun in the Hebrew words אָדָם and אָדָמָה, even from the first occurrence of the term אָדָם in Gen. 1:26 of the MT in an earlier part of the narrative. Therefore, the word Ἀδὰμ in v.16 may to some extent reflect the translator's desire to render the generic term אָדָמָה ('the human being') as Ἀδὰμ for the first time in the narrative.<sup>183</sup> I would

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<sup>180</sup> Loader, *The Septuagint, Sexuality and the New Testament*, 32-35.

<sup>181</sup> Theo A. W. van der Louw, *Transformations in the Septuagint*, 130.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid.

<sup>183</sup> Beyond Gen. 2:16, the Hebrew word אָדָמָה is generally treated as the proper name Ἀδὰμ throughout his translation (with some exceptions, cf. 2:18, 24; 4:1, etc.).

suggest that the translator, acknowledging the contextual importance and centrality of the command in the garden narrative, may have wanted to emphasize and clarify the actual recipient of the command, thereby avoiding an impression that the command was given to a human being (either male or female), rather than the specific individual named Adam. The responsibility of Adam for the sin would have been weakened had the translator opted for the generic term, whilst the responsibility of Eve for the sin would have been weakened had the translator opted for the singular verbs in v.17. The effects on the LXX account are then as follows: 1) it is the individual figure Ἀδὰμ to whom God gave the command, both the permission and prohibition; and 2) God made this more explicit by using the plural verbs in v.17 to note that the subjects of the prohibition and death penalty include not only that one person to whom he was speaking, but all who break the command. Perhaps, the death warning ἀποθανεῖσθε ('you shall die') rendered with the plural form may be heard or interpreted as implying that 'death reigned from Adam (Ἀδὰμ)... even over those who had not sinned (μὴ ἁμαρτήσαντας, [pl.]) in the likeness of the offence of Adam (Ἀδὰμ).'<sup>184</sup>

Whereas the human being (אָדָם) in the MT probably had to assume or work out by himself the inclusive nature of the prohibitive command given in the singular form, his counterpart Ἀδὰμ in the LXX should have felt, according to the translator, more responsibility for instructing Eve about the prohibition and its consequential death with the clearer information he received from God. All this might have been clear in the mind of the translator, but Ἀδὰμ in the narrative would probably have had difficulty understanding the prohibition given the use of plural verbs, especially when there was no one else present around him. Nevertheless, the plural verbs in the statements of Eve and the serpent (3:3-4, both in the MT and LXX) do tell us that Adam and Eve correctly understood that the prohibition and the consequence of eating the forbidden fruit apply not only to Adam, but also to Eve.

Following the first appearance of the personal name Ἀδὰμ in Gen. 2:16, one noticeable effect in the LXX account emerges in the narrative that follows. After the creation of Eve in Gen. 2:18, although she is presumed to be present next to Adam, it

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<sup>184</sup> Rom. 5:14.

is the individual figure Ἀδὰμ who now takes a more active role and receives more attention from the readers and the translator himself. For example, in Gen. 3:9, in his confrontation with the man, God calls him by his name Ἀδὰμ ‘Adam! where are you?’ There is no counterpart for this vocative in the MT. Further, it is Ἀδὰμ who actively participates in the trial scene, ‘Ἀδὰμ said...’, ‘To Ἀδὰμ he said...’ (Gen. 3:9-20); it is Ἀδὰμ whom God describes as becoming like a god (‘Ἀδὰμ has become as one of us...’ (3:22)); and it is Ἀδὰμ whom God sends out of the garden (‘so he threw out Ἀδὰμ and settled him...’ (3:24)). The rendering of the personal name Ἀδὰμ from 2:17 onwards produces a slightly different effect in the story in that Adam receives more attention and takes on a representative role in the narrative. At the same time, however, it must be noted that the translator particularly wants to emphasize, or perhaps clarify, that the woman is indeed involved in the violation of the command and therefore responsible for the sin. In Gen. 3:7, when the woman gives the fruit to Adam to eat, the MT reports that ‘and he (sg.) ate.’ However, the LXX translator, while endangering the literal translation, renders it as καὶ ἔφαγον (‘and they [3pl.] ate’).<sup>185</sup> This plural verb ἔφαγον (‘they ate’), along with the plural verbs in Gen. 2:17,

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<sup>185</sup> Increased focus on the woman’s role in the violation of the command is a characteristic of intertestamental literature. The plural verbs in LXX-Gen. 2:17 convey a similar idea and may well have influenced an interpretation that put significant blame on the woman for eating the forbidden fruit. In *The Septuagint, Sexuality, and the New Testament*, W. Loader conducts case studies on a number of passages, in which the Septuagint (LXX) deviates from the MT, particularly in relation to the topic of sexuality; he suggests a possible impact that the LXX translation would have had in the works of Philo and the New Testament. In the chapter on the Creation Stories, he highlights some passages in the first three chapters of Genesis, in which the Greek translation may have introduced new and different possibilities for interpretations, ones that could have been read as having a bias towards women. Concerning the passage on the creation of the woman (Gen. 2:18-23), Loader asserts that the LXX forges a closer link with Gen. 1:26-27, which creates an equation that man was made in the likeness of God and woman in the likeness of man, resulting in the understanding of βοηθός as referring to a helper who is subordinate, and he claims such understanding is fortified by Adam’s naming of Eve, the action of a superior (2:23). In the account of the fall (2:25-3:13), Loader highlights ἡπάτησέν, which has a range of meanings, including ‘seduce’ and considers that it opens the possibility that Eve’s sin could have been the result of sexual seduction and suggesting that women are vulnerable to seduction and thus cannot control their sexuality. Similarly, he suggests the rendering of לִישָׁן as κατανοῆσαι and related to the fact that seduction by beauty was a common



could easily be read as the translator's strengthening the inclusiveness of both Adam and Eve in the consequence of the violation of God's command. It could be that the translator understood the permission 'to eat (sg.) freely from any tree in the garden' as an optional and generous command that does not require absolute obedience or accompany bitter consequence, but the prohibition in v.17 as an absolute matter in which the consequence is inevitable for everyone who breaks it.

The effect of the plural form ἀποθανεῖσθε ('you [pl.] will die') used by the translator of Greek Genesis is not limited to the LXX alone, but it has created a number of diverse interpretations in the history of its reception. It is possible to argue that the plural verbs in verse 2:17 imply the translator's understanding that Eve was already created before the original command was given to Adam. According to this interpretation, then, the plural forms in Gen. 2:17 will be a harmonization with Gen. 1:27 ('and God made humankind...male and female, he made them') more than with Gen. 3:3-4. Such an understanding could further suggest that Eve too heard the command directly from God when the original command was given. This idea is supported in the Book of Jubilees, whose Ethiopic translation is a translation of the Greek and influenced by the LXX. Although its author omits the original command in Gen. 2:17, the conversation between the woman and the serpent is given in which, according to the author of the book, the woman reports that God spoke to both Adam and Eve about the command:<sup>186</sup>

From all the fruit of the tree(s) which are in the garden the *Lord told us*: 'Eat.' But from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden *he told us*: 'Do not eat from it and do not touch it so that you may not die.

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theme in warnings against sin, again revealing Eve's weakness. In the passage on the punishment (3:16-19), Loader points out that the translator may be connecting Adam returning to the earth with Eve returning ἀποστροφῇ to Adam, and claims that the LXX could be implying that the disobedience has created a relationship in which man serves the earth while the woman serves the man, highlighting the reversal more strongly than the Hebrew. With regard to the passage on human beings (5:1-3), Loader suggests that the LXX's translation of 5:1-2 shows that the translator clearly thinks 1:26-27 is a reference to the creation of Adam as a male and not a general human being, which would strengthen the interpretation that sees the male Adam as incorporating a male and a female. William Loader, *The Septuagint, Sexuality, and the New Testament*, 27-31.

<sup>186</sup> Translation from James C. VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees: A Critical Text*, CSCO 510; *Scriptores Aethiopicici* 87 (Louvain: Peeters, 1989), 18. For the Ethiopic text, see Vanderkam, *The Book of Jubilees, a Critical Text* (Louvain: In Aedibus E. Peeters, 1989).

Eve emphasizes that the commands were given to both Adam and Eve with the repetitive use of the added phrase  $\epsilon\upsilon\lambda\lambda\eta$  ('he/Lord said *to us*'). Such wording leaves the readers with an added nuance, implying that the woman was present and directly heard the command. The translator of Greek Genesis and the author of the Book of Jubilees, therefore, share and express the idea that the prohibitive command and its consequential death are applicable to both Adam and Eve.

Philo of Alexandria recognizes the singular and plural forms of the verbs in Gen. 2:16-17, and develops his allegorical interpretation based on the plural form, applying the command not just to Adam and Eve, but to humanity in general. He writes:<sup>187</sup>

He addresses the command to a single person, but when He issues the prohibition against making any use of that which causes evil and good, He speaks to more than one: for in the former case He says, 'Thou shalt eat from every tree'; but in the latter, 'ye shall not eat, and in the day that ye eat' not 'that thou eatest,' and 'ye shall die' not 'thou shalt die.' We must accordingly remark in the first place that the good is scarce, the evil abundant. Hence it is hard to find a single wise man, while of inferior men there is a countless multitude. Quite fitly, therefore, does He bid a single man to find nourishment in the virtues, but many to abstain from evil-doing, for myriads practise this.

For Philo, it would be difficult to find any individual who would be wise and faithful enough to observe God's positive command, therefore the singular is used in v.16, but many people are susceptible to sin and evil, hence in v.17, the prohibition is given in the plural. This is not a plain reading of the text, yet we see here an interpretation that expands the possible range of understandings of the prohibition that would not have originated from the singular form used in the Hebrew text. In this interpretation, the addressee of the prohibitive command and its applicable consequence, 'death,' is not limited to just one individual, but extends to humanity in general.

Augustine of Hippo, who had the Old Latin (VL) as his base text, follows the LXX for the plural verbs in Gen. 2:17, stating that use of the plural verbs in the

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<sup>187</sup> Philo. *Alleg. Interp.* 1. 101-02. The English translation is from F. H. Colson, G. H. Whitaker, *ON the Creation. Allegorical Interpretation of Genesis 2 and 3*, LCL 226 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1929), 215.

prohibition implies that the prohibition was also given to the woman. Augustine suggests two possible scenarios: that Eve was already created (cf. 1:27), or that God knew he was going to make the woman and gave the command to Adam accordingly in advance. Augustine also adds that giving the command to Adam alone is appropriate according to the ‘proper order’ between man and woman, as it was man’s responsibility to pass on instructions to his woman. Augustine here refers to Paul in 1 Cor. 14:35: ‘If they desire to learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is improper for a woman to speak in church.’<sup>188</sup>

#### 4.7 The translator’s first encounter with the emphatic infinitive absolute in Gen. 2:16-17: θανάτῳ ἀποθανείσθε (‘By death, You shall Die’)

Although LXX Gen. 2:16-17 displays characteristics of both literal and free translation, the translator himself was fully aware that he was working on an authoritative text, hence one of his primary intentions was no doubt to produce a translation that was literal and faithful to the Hebrew *Vorlage*, sometimes to an extreme. In Gen. 3:4, for instance, the translator imitates the awkward Hebrew word order of putting the negative particle in front of the infinitive absolute, לֹא־מָוֶתְךָ תִּמָּוֶת (‘you will surely *not* die’),<sup>189</sup> and in Gen. 2:17, the redundant phrase ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ (‘from it’) is used due to the translation of the Hebrew phrase מִמֶּנּוּ (‘from it’).<sup>190</sup> However, the Greek translator’s effort to produce a literal translation was challenged by his first encounter with an idiomatic Hebrew expression<sup>191</sup> in Gen. 2:16 and once again in v.17.<sup>192</sup> There is no equivalent infinitive absolute + finite verb construction

<sup>188</sup> Augustine, *Gen. litt.*, VIII, 17.

<sup>189</sup> The negative particle is normally placed between the infinitive and the main verb, and this word order is reflected accordingly in the LXX.

<sup>190</sup> Wevers, *Notes on the Greek text of Genesis*, 30.

<sup>191</sup> With regards to translating Hebrew idioms, the Greek translator of Genesis was inclined to be awkwardly literal, producing Hebraistic expressions with unidiomatic Greek. For example, the idiom בֶּן־מֵאָת שָׁנָה (‘son of one hundred years’) in Gen. 11:10 is rendered as υἱὸς ἑκατὸν ἐτῶν. In Gen. 13:4, וַעֲשֵׂה־חֶסֶד עִם אֲדֹנָי (‘and show steadfast love to my lord’) is rendered as καὶ ποιήσον ἔλεος μετὰ τοῦ κυρίου μου (‘and do mercy with my lord’). Scarlata, *Genesis*, 18.

<sup>192</sup> In v.16, the MT puts emphasis on the divine command תֹּאכַל (‘you will eat’) by adding the infinitive absolute אָכַל immediately before the finite verb, which comes from the same root of the following finite verb. With the added emphasis, the verse can be understood as ‘the man was

in Greek, so the translator had to make a decision on how he would represent such an idiomatic construction that carries an emphatic sense in the Hebrew.

The task of finding appropriate way(s) of rendering the infinitive absolute construction was not limited to the translator of Genesis; it is evident that subsequent translators also struggled with this as they alternate between different methods in rendering the Hebrew infinitive absolute in their translation.<sup>193</sup> However, it must have been more challenging for the earliest translator of the LXX who more or less worked in an *ad hoc* manner without the precedent of translation of an infinitive absolute construction that he could consult. Subsequent translators who learned and frequently adopted the same translation from earlier examples often created a fixed idiom for a given phrase.<sup>194</sup> Indeed, the translator of Genesis uses more diverse ways to translate the infinitive absolute + finite verb construction than subsequent translators of the LXX. On this, E. Tov suggests the possibility that the Greek translator was still in the process of working out the correct way to render the Hebrew infinitive absolute construction.<sup>195</sup> It is noteworthy that in the remaining four

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permitted to eat *freely* from every tree in the garden. Similarly, in v. 17, the divine warning תמות ('you will die') carries an emphatic sense with the infinitive absolute מות which also comes from the same root of the finite verb תמות. The literary function of the infinitive absolute in these verses is undoubtedly to intensify the idea of the following finite verb: the certainty of the generosity and punishment.

<sup>193</sup> Emmanuel Tov's chart for the distribution of different Greek renderings for the Hebrew infinitive absolute constructions is helpful in understanding the bigger picture of the change over time in the methods of rendering the infinitive absolute in the LXX. See E. Tov, "Renderings of Combinations of the Infinitive Absolute and Finite Verbs in the LXX – Their Nature and Distribution," in *Studien zur Septuaginta – Robert Hanhart zu Ehren* (MSU XX, Göttingen: V&G, 1990), 64-73.

<sup>194</sup> This is particularly true of the statement of the death penalty 'you/he shall surely die/be put to death.' The subsequent translators of the LXX exclusively used the cognate dative noun construction to render inf. abs. מות as it was first rendered in Gen. 2:17.

<sup>195</sup> For more discussions on the Greek translations of the inf. abs. constructions within the LXX, see E. Tov, "Renderings of Combinations of the Infinitive Absolute and Finite Verbs in the Septuagint – Their Nature and Distribution," 247-56; H. St. J. Thackeray, "Renderings of the Infinitive Absolute in the Septuagint," *JTS* 9 (1908): 597-601; and Raija Sollamo, "The LXX Renderings of the Infinitive Absolute Used with a Paronymous Finite Verb in the Pentateuch," in *La Sptuaginta en la Investigacion Contemporanea. V Congreso de la IOSCS Consejo Superior de Investgaciones Cientificas*, ed. Natalio Fernandez Marcos, Textos y estudios "Cadenal Cisneros" 34 (Madrid:

books of the Pentateuch, the renderings by the cognate noun construction for infinitive absolute are more prevalent than the participle construction, whereas the book of Genesis displays an equally distributed number of different types of renderings.<sup>196</sup> It is also observed that in Pentateuch, the cognate noun constructions are preferred, especially with verbs where a noun could be applied.<sup>197</sup> In a very small number of instances, the infinitive absolute is rendered quite literally with a Greek infinitive.<sup>198</sup> The translators sometimes even ignore the infinitive absolute in their translation.<sup>199</sup> Overall, however, the translators of the LXX usually opt for one of the two main types of renderings: (1) the infinitive absolute rendered with a cognate participle corresponding to the verb (e.g. Gen. 3:16);<sup>200</sup> or (2) with a cognate dative/accusative noun corresponding to the verb<sup>201</sup> (e.g. Gen. 2:16-17). The rendering by participle construction, which Thackeray describes as ‘distinctly unidiomatic’<sup>202</sup> is the method used almost exclusively by the translators of the historical books, where the translations more or less reflect the literalistic approach.<sup>203</sup> On the other hand, a cognate dative/accusative noun attached to a verb

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Instituto Arias Montano CSIC, 1985), 101-13.

<sup>196</sup> In Genesis, there are 31 examples of the inf. abs. + finite verb construction. In eight of these, the translator renders the inf. abs. with a cognate participle (Gen. 3:16; 15:13; 18:10; 18:18; 21:18; 22:17; 37:8; 43:7a.) In 13 examples, the infinitive absolute is rendered by a noun in the dative/accusative case of the same root or the supplementary root as the following finite verb (Gen. 2:16,17; 3:4; 17:13; 19:9; 28:22; 40:15; 43:3; 46:4; 50:24,25; 50:25). In two examples, the inf. abs. is rendered relatively freely by an adverb or adjective (Gen. 26:11, 32:12). In eight examples, the inf. abs. is omitted, (Gen. 20:7; 24:5; 27:30; 30:16; 31:30; 37:33; 44:28; 43:7b).

<sup>197</sup> H. Thackeray, *A Grammar of the Old Testament in Greek: According to the Septuagint* (Cambridge: CUP, 1909), 48.

<sup>198</sup> Cf. Jos. 17:13, ἐξολεθρεῦσαι δὲ αὐτοὺς οὐκ ἐξωλέθρευσαν (‘but destroying them, they did not destroy them’).

<sup>199</sup> The Book of Isaiah, more often than others, renders the infinitive absolute construction with finite verb only. Tov, “Renderings of Combinations of the Infinitive Absolute and Finite verbs in the Septuagint,” 254.

<sup>200</sup> The books that prefer the participle construction are: Judges B, 1-2 Samuel, 1 Kings, Jeremiah, and the Minor Prophets. Ibid., 254.

<sup>201</sup> The books that prefer the noun constructions are: Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Judges A, Ezekiel. Ibid., 254.

<sup>202</sup> Thackeray, *A Grammar of the Old Testament in Greek: According to the Septuagint*, 48–49.

<sup>203</sup> Ibid.

of the same root corresponds more closely to the usage of the normal Greek in which the noun may be used as the internal object of the verb, especially in the accusative case. Indeed, use of the cognate noun construction, although not common, and probably under the influence of the LXX Greek, sometimes does occur in the NT for the purpose of emphasizing the verb.<sup>204</sup> However, the LXX's consistent renderings of the infinitive absolute by a cognate noun, particularly in the dative case, are generally understood to be quite literal and as such construction is not really found outside Biblical Greek.<sup>205</sup> From the technical translation point of view, the fact that the most cognate nouns used to render the Hebrew infinitive absolute are in the dative instead of the accusative to some extent reflects the literalistic approach of the translators, often consistently resorting to one way of rendering the infinitive absolute for the sake of literalism. Translating the infinitive absolute construction with the combination of a cognate noun and a finite verb is also 'literal' in the sense that: (1) the translator chose a noun from the same root as the corresponding finite verb in Hebrew; (2) the translator rendered each Hebrew word with a Greek counterpart, retaining the word order.

From the Greek-speaking reader's point of view, however, a Greek noun in the dative/accusative case can by nature be understood as a normal substantive serving different purposes in close relation to the verb (e.g. accusative/dative of object, interest, purpose, etc.). For instance, a noun can be used in conjunction with a verb as a 'dative of instrument/means' to denote how the action of the main verb will be accomplished. The first appearance of the idiomatic phrase מוֹת תָּמוּת ('you will surely die')<sup>206</sup> in Gen. 2:17 is rendered with a noun in the dative case θανάτῳ ('by death'), followed by the finite verb of the same root, ἀποθανεῖσθε ('you shall die').

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<sup>204</sup> Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 168-169. A number of examples are found in the OT quotations, which indicates the likely influence of the LXX style in the NT uses of the cognate nouns with emphasis.

<sup>205</sup> Thackeray, *ibid.*, 49. See also, Sollamo, "The LXX Renderings of the Infinitive Absolute Used with a Paronymous Finite Verb in the Pentateuch," 106. Thackeray also points out that in the NT, there are no examples of the participial construction except in O.T. quotations.

<sup>206</sup> The death warning מוֹת תָּמוּת ('you shall surely die', qal, 2ms) and its variants expressed emphatically with infinitive absolute appear 48 times in the entire HB and four times in Genesis (2:17; 3:4; 20:7; 26:11).

Although the cognate dative θανάτω ('death') does not read smoothly with the intransitive verb ἀποθανεῖσθε ('to die') in normal Greek, it is not grammatically impossible that the entire phrase θανάτω ἀποθανεῖσθε may be understood and translated as 'by death, you shall die,' whichever means of death it might denote. We cannot be certain of whether the translator of the Greek Genesis did intend to reflect any of his exegetical points on the meaning of 'death' with his choice of the cognate noun construction, i.e. θανάτω ('by death'), but nonetheless, the translator has provided the readers with a word that could yield an interpretation as to the means by which Adam will die.<sup>207</sup> Philo's allegorical interpretation of this verse is an example of such usage of the dative noun:

That death is of two kinds, one that of the man in general, the other that of the soul in particular. The death of the man is the separation of the soul from the body, but the death of the soul is the decay of virtue

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<sup>207</sup> This is the first rendering of the death warning by the Genesis translator and first in the entire LXX, yet the expression θανάτω ἀποθανεῖσθε ('by death, you shall die') was to become, as the expression מות תמות in the MT, the fixed idiom for announcing the death penalty throughout the LXX, especially in the legal texts. Thackeray suggests that the retention of θανάτω ἀποθανεῖσθε (even in the most literal books that exclusively use participial forms for inf. abs.) in the subsequent books of the LXX is due to the occurrence of such a rendering in the familiar garden narrative. However, Sollamo contends that the exclusive use of the word θάνατος ('death') in the LXX could be due to the fact that it was already a *terminus technicus* widely used in Greek for 'death penalty.' Sollamo, "LXX Renderings of the Infinitive Absolute," 108, (So Martin Rösel, *Übersetzung als Vollendung des Auslegung*. Studien zur Genesis-Septuaginta. BZAW 223 (Berlin: WdG, 1994), 68. This implies that the translator of the Greek Genesis intentionally chose the word θάνατος to convey the legalistic tone in the warning, correctly acknowledging the judicial characteristic that lies behind the Hebrew expression, מות תמות. Sollamo, which also suggests that, had the translator used a more literal rendering with the participle form ἀποθνήσκων ἀποθανεῖσθε/θανατώσαι ('dying, you shall die/be put to death'), it would have given the impression that the death referred to here is either a death by torture or mercy killing, therefore a noun in the dative was preferred. Sollamo, "LXX Renderings of the Infinitive Absolute," 108. However, the analysis of the rendering by a noun construction in this paper will show that the noun construction with θανάτω ('by death') is also quite susceptible to misinterpretations that are not really conveyed in the original text. See also, *LSJ*: 'θάνατος' and *LEH*: 'θάνατος.' The word θάνατος primarily refers to 'death,' either natural or violent, but it is widely used to denote 'death penalty' in legal contexts.

and the bringing in of wickedness. It is for this reason that God says not only ‘die’ (‘ἀποθανεῖν’) but ‘die (by) the death’ (θανάτῳ ἀποθανεῖν) indicating not the death common to us all, but that special death properly so called, which is that of the soul becoming entombed in passions and wickedness of all kinds.<sup>208</sup>

Here, Philo considers the particular translational choice of the translator – Hebrew’s מוֹת מוֹת rendered with θανάτῳ ἀποθανεῖσθε – as evidence of the spiritual kind of death faced by humanity in general due to their disobedience to God’s command. Moreover, it is evident that Philo is less mindful of the emphatic function of the Hebrew infinitive absolute, but instead interprets the meaning of ‘death’ in Gen. 2:17 based on the translator’s use of the cognate substantive θανάτῳ (‘death’). In this regard, the cognate noun θανάτῳ (‘death’) clarifies the meaning of the finite verb ἀποθανεῖσθε (‘you will die’) as to how the action of dying will be done, e.g. ‘you will die by means of spiritual death’, or ‘you will die spiritually’ etc.<sup>209</sup> The Old Latin (VL) translation (working from the same Greek) renders the phrase as *morte moriemini* (‘by death, you [pl.] shall die’). Jerome follows VL’s rendering, but uses the singular form for the finite verb *morte morieris* (‘by death, you [sg.] shall die’). Abraham Tal briefly commented on this rendering: ‘Like G, V and S translate the infinitive absolute as a noun, which is their standard treatment of this part of speech, alien to their languages.’<sup>210</sup> However, the phrase *morte moriemini* (‘by death, you

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<sup>208</sup> Philo. *Alleg. Interp.* 1. 105-06. Translations of Philo’s work are from the LCL editions: Philo, 11 vols., trans. F. H. Colson, G. H. Whitaker and J. W. Earp. The emphasis in italics are mine.

Philo, *Alleg. Interp.* 1.105-106: ὁ μὲν ἀνθρώπου, ὁ δὲ ψυχῆς ἴδιος· ὁ μὲν οὖν ἀνθρώπου χωρισμός ἐστι ψυχῆς ἀπὸ σώματος, ὁ δὲ ψυχῆς θάνατος ἀρετῆς μὲν φθορά ἐστι, κακίας δὲ ἀνάληψις. παρὸ καὶ φησιν οὐκ ἀποθανεῖν αὐτὸ μόνον ἀλλὰ “θανάτῳ ἀποθανεῖν,” δηλῶν οὐ τὸν κοινὸν ἀλλὰ τὸν ἴδιον καὶ κατ’ ἐξοχὴν θάνατον, ὅς ἐστι ψυχῆς ἐντυμβευομένης πάθει καὶ κακίας ἀπάσαις.

<sup>209</sup> Perhaps, in the full-blown Hellenistic environment of the LXX, the word θανάτος could have easily suggested name of a Greek god, Thanatos, who was the personified figure of death and well-known as a merciless god who brings death to mortals. Thanatos plays a prominent role in two myths that describe rare occasions in which a human overcomes and evades Thanatos, though this is only for a limited span of time. However, unlike his sister, the Keres, who brought violent death, Thanatos was sometimes described as one who brings peaceful death. Cf. Hesiod, *Theog.* 758 ff, trans. H.G. Evelyn-White.

<sup>210</sup> Cf. “Commentary on the Critical Apparatus” (Abraham Tal, ed., *Genesis, BHQ I*[Stuttgart:



shall die’) is not in fact a slavish translation of the Greek. The word *morte* in Latin is in the ablative case, not dative, which clearly indicates the translator’s understanding of the Greek word θανάτῳ as the instrumental dative. In Latin, a noun in the dative case does not have an instrumental usage, hence, the translator of VL and Jerome (in Vg.) both rendered θανάτῳ (‘by death’) in the ablative case, which clearly denotes instrumentality. In Gen. 2:16, the fact that the VL translator changes the dative noun βρώσει (‘food’) used to render the infinitive absolute in לֶכְלֵךְ תֹּאכַל (‘you may surely eat’) as ‘preposition + accusative noun’ construction demonstrates that the Latin translator was not simply following the Greek translation; instead they gave careful thought to clarifying the semantic context of the given phrase. The cognate noun βρώσει (‘food’) in v.16 will be discussed further in the section below. Symmachus, who revised the Greek translation in the second century C.E., changed the phrase θανάτῳ ἀποθανεῖσθε (‘by death, you will die’) to θνητος εση (‘you shall become mortal’). Jerome showed his preference for such an interpretation, as he writes: ‘*melius interpretatus est Symmachus dicens: mortalis eris*’<sup>211</sup> but he nevertheless follows the noun construction, *morte moriemini* (‘by death, you shall die’), employed in the VL translation. Although the VL version and Jerome seem to be translating the prohibition literally with the cognate noun *morte* (‘by death’), their understanding of the phrase, ‘the introduction of mortality to humankind,’ may be inferred grammatically.

In fact, the instrumental use of the word θανάτῳ (or words with a similar meaning) with a verb other than ἀποθνήσκω (‘to die’) is quite common in the LXX: ‘finish with death’; ‘punish with death’; ‘kill with death’; ‘to kill with deceit’; ‘complete with death’; ‘to die by famine’; ‘to judge with death’; ‘to come to an end by sword’ etc. So, the emphatic use of the cognate dative (rarely employed in the classical Greek and the NT)<sup>212</sup> may not always be triggered in the mind of the readers. By my count, there are about 90 examples of similar cases, and only a few

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Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2015], 83).

<sup>211</sup> *Qu. hebr. Gen. 2:17*: ‘Symmachus’ translation is better, written: “you will become mortal.”

<sup>212</sup> Thackeray provides two examples from the classical literature, *A Grammar of the Old Testament in Greek: According to the Septuagint*, 50. Cf. εὐλογῶν εὐλογήσω σε (Heb. 6:14); θανάτῳ τελευτάτω (Matt. 15:4); παραγγελία παρηγγείλαμεν (Acts 5:28).

will suffice to illustrate the point; some of these are not expressed with the infinitive absolute expression, but are included to show the instrumental usage of the noun *θανάτω* with the accompanying verb. In Ex. 21, there are four occurrences of the death penalty *מוֹת יוֹמָת* ('he shall surely be put to death') and the translator varies the finite verb with a synonym *τελευτάτω* ('to come to an end/die') instead of *θανατούσθω* ('shall be put to death').<sup>213</sup> Note also that in such examples, the literal style of using a cognate noun is lost. In Ex. 22:18, the same phrase *מוֹת יוֹמָת* is rendered by the translator as *θανάτω ἀποκτενεῖτε* ('by death, you will kill') with a transitive verb from a different lexical root *ἀποκτενεῖτε* ('to kill'), therefore *θανάτω* here cannot be taken as a direct object but can only be understood as the dative of the instrument, i.e. ('by death, you will kill').<sup>214</sup> Similarly, in Gen. 9:11, the freestanding verb *ἀποθνήσκω* ('to die') in Gen. 9:11 accompanies the noun in the prepositional phrase, in which the substantive indicates the instrumentality by which 'death' will be accomplished: 'all flesh shall no longer die by/from the water of the flood.'<sup>215</sup> One of the clearest examples of the usage of *θανάτω* as an instrumental dative is found in Ezekiel 28:8, where the translator uses *θανάτω* to render the actual Hebrew noun *מוֹת* ('death') *ἀποθανῆθι θανάτω τραυματιῶν* ('you will die by the death of wounded') for *לִלְחָתֵי מְמוֹתֵי הַמְּתוּי* ('you will die by the death of those who are slain'), and in 28:10, where the translator exercises more freedom in rendering a similar phrase *מוֹתֵי עֲרֻלָּה* ('by the death of uncircumcised, you will die') as *ἐν πλῆθει ἀπεριτμητῶν ἀπολῆθι* ('in the multitude of uncircumcised, you will die'). Similarly, in Ex. 19:13, a non-cognate substantive *βολίδι* ('with/by an arrow') is used with a finite verb *κατατοξευθήσεται* ('he will be shot through') for *יִרְהַרְהַ* ('he will *surely* be shot through'). Lastly, in Ezekiel 38:22, the dative noun *θανάτω* is used to render the

<sup>213</sup> So, in Ex. 19:12, 13 is. 66:2; Amos 7:17; and Job 12:2.

<sup>214</sup> Rev. 2:23: *τὰ τέκνα αὐτῆς ἀποκτενω ἐν θανάτῳ* ('her children, I will kill with death').

<sup>215</sup> In this verse, the translator uses the verb *ἀποθνήσκω* ('to die'), which is not a regular equivalent for *כָּרַח* ('to be cut off...from water'). Note the prepositional phrase *ἐν λίθοις* ('by stone') in Lev. 20:2: *λιθοβολήσουσιν αὐτὸν ἐν λίθοις* ('they will stone him with stones') for *יִתְמָהוּ בְּאֲבָנֵי* ('they shall stone him with stones').

Hebrew word דָּבַר ('pestilence'), κρινῶ αὐτὸν θανάτῳ καὶ αἵματι ('I will judge him by death and blood') for וְנִשְׁפָּטֵי אִתּוֹ בְּדָבָר וּבְדָם ('with pestilence and with blood I will enter into judgment with him'). In all these cases, the translators are using either cognate or non-cognate nouns to explain the means or type of death implied by a variety of finite verbs. In accord with the discussion in the previous chapter, it is noteworthy that in 1 Sam. 22:16, there is a sense of certainty and promptness connected with the death warning, as the translator adds a temporal adverb σήμερον ('today') to the phrase θανάτῳ ἀποθανῆ ('by death, you shall die, *today!*') which is lacking in the MT. The analysis of the remaining renderings of the same death warning in Genesis in comparison with similar phrases in the LXX will show that the emphatic sense of the infinitive absolute is not necessarily conveyed in many of the Greek renderings and in fact the emphatic sense is lost on several occasions, as if the translators were not really interested in expressing the emphatic sense of the infinitive absolute, but were more attentive to representing the semantic quality of each phrase by differentiating the style and varying their lexical choices, etc.

In Gen. 3:4, the serpent's retort that follows verbatim God's original command with the negative article אֵל, is rendered in the same way as in Gen. 2:17 with a cognate noun in the dative, θανάτῳ ('by death'). Again, the translator's imitation of the awkward word order in negating the construction of a finite verb with an infinitive absolute is an illustrative example of the literalistic approach of the translator. The two other occurrences of the death warning as מוֹת תָּמוּת ('you will surely die') outside the garden narrative are found in Gen. 20:7 and 26:11. In Gen. 20:7, the translator does not translate the infinitive absolute at all, but only provides the finite verb ἀποθανῆ ('you will die'). The infinitive absolute has simply been omitted. Whether or not the translator accidentally missed the infinitive absolute in his presumed *Vorlage*, it is not only the infinitive absolute construction that was reduced to a simple finite verb ἀποθανῆ ('you will die'), but the emphatic sense of the Hebrew is entirely lost in his translation as there is no Greek counterpart that would allow the reader to trace the existence of the infinitive absolute in the original text. In this case, the translator exercises more freedom in his translation of the same phrase he finds in the earlier section of the book. It must be observed that, out of 31 examples of the infinitive absolute construction in Genesis alone, in eight cases, the translator of

Genesis omits the infinitive absolute entirely.<sup>216</sup> Certainly, not all of these omissions can be attributed to the translator having a different *Vorlage*. The emphatic sense of the infinitive absolute has not been reduced, but instead completely lost in all these cases. Perhaps the translator omitted the infinitive absolute מוֹת in 26:11 inattentively, or this was done for stylistic reasons, or it could be that the expression θανάτῳ ἀποθανεῖσθε ('by death, you shall die') has not become a fixed idiom yet in the mind of the translator who first used it. Some of the examples where the infinitive absolute is omitted in Genesis in the translation would suffice to show that, in a considerable number of places, the translator chose this free rendering intentionally for the sake of contextual clarification, despite the risk of losing the emphatic sense of the Hebrew infinitive. In Gen. 46:4, instead of the infinitive absolute of the MT, הִלְעֵם אֶתְּעַלְעֵם ('I will *surely* bring you up'), the translator has added a prepositional phrase to the finite verb, ἐγὼ ἀναβιβάσω σε εἰς τέλος ('I will bring you up *at the end*'). The phrase εἰς τέλος does not convey the emphatic sense, but provides a specific time reference as to when God will bring the Israelites out of Egypt. Similarly, in Gen. 50:25, the translator does not render the infinitive absolute דָּקַף יְקַפֵּךְ ('God will *surely* visit...'), but instead opts for a freer rendering with a prepositional phrase followed by the relative pronoun to give a specific time reference for the action of the finite verb that follows: Ἐν τῇ ἐπισκοπῇ, ἣ ἐπισκέψεται ὑμᾶς ὁ θεός ('in the time of visitation, *which* God will visit you...'). In Gen. 43:20 also, the translator does not render the infinitive absolute in וַיֵּרְדוּ יְרֵדוּ ('we *indeed* came down'), but only uses the finite verb κατέβημεν ('we came down'). The translator most likely considered that enough contextual information had already been reflected with the adverbial nominative τὴν ἀρχὴν ('at first') followed by another infinitive πρίασθαι βρώματα ('to buy food'). In Gen. 44:28, as Judah pleads with Joseph for Benjamin, he tells Joseph about what his father Jacob said about him: 'he is *surely* torn in pieces (by wild animals)' (הִרְטָה הִרְטָה). In the Greek, the infinitive absolute is omitted, and instead rendered with a single adjective θηριόβρωτος meaning ('eat/torn by wild animals'), which clearly indicates Jacob's

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<sup>216</sup> Cf. Gen. 20:7; 26:9, 11; 30:16; 32:12; 37:33; 44:28; 50:24.

belief of how Joseph died. These examples show that it is not the emphasis that the translator is always interested in, but instead the contextual meaning.

The rendering in Gen. 26:11 is noteworthy. The translator renders the Hebrew infinitive absolute (מות) + finite verb ('תמות') construction with θανάτω ἔνοχος ἔσται ('he will be liable to the death penalty'). The freer rendering here is a clear indication of the LXX translator's correct understanding of the phrase within the legalistic setting.<sup>217</sup> In this regard, while the translator has produced a freer rendering than in other places, his rendering is 'literal' in the sense that he has successfully transferred the semantic meaning of the original text and he consistently renders the infinitive absolute מות ('dying') with a dative noun. Note also that in this verse, the noun θανάτω ('death') is used as a dative of reference after ἔνοχος ('liable to.')<sup>218</sup> As in the previous rendering of the death warning in Gen. 20:7, the emphatic sense originally present in the Hebrew is lost, but the contextual meaning is clarified.<sup>219</sup>

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<sup>217</sup> Cf. Lev. 20:9, ἔνοχος ἔσται ('he is liable') without θανάτω ('death') is used to render the idiomatic Hebrew expression 'the blood is on him' in Lev. 20:9. In Deut. 19:10, a similar expression, 'bloodguilt is on him' is rendered as ἔσται ἐν σοὶ αἵματι ἔνοχος. Both expressions are closely linked with the repetitive use of the statement of death penalty denoting the death penalty within the same chapter as they are found.

<sup>218</sup> Cf. Matt. 5:21, 'liable to judgment' (ἔνοχος ἔσται τῇ κρίσει).

<sup>219</sup> It should be noted that, although the emphatic sense is lost in these cases, it doesn't mean that the translator was not aware of the emphatic function of the inf. abs. or that he misunderstood the contextual meaning behind each expression. This is evident in Gen. 32:13, for example, where the infinitive absolute is rendered with an adverb, Καλῶς εὖ σε ποιήσω ('I will do well with you') for כִּי יֵטִב אִיטִב ('I will surely do good with you'). Although less emphasized than its Hebrew counterpart, and different from the translator's other renderings of the infinitive absolute, the translator successfully represented the original meaning and context. This shows that, instead of opting for one or two methods, the translator examined the actual context of the text. His renderings do show in many places his attempts to provide a good explanation for his chosen word in dative. Thus, the translator of Genesis, working in an *ad hoc* manner, experimented actively or freely with his renderings of the infinitive absolute depending on the context within the limit in which Greek grammar would allow. Due to this process, in some considerable number of places, there are renderings that do not necessarily carry the same meaning and sense that were originally present in the Hebrew, or that created room for more creative interpretations, e.g. the loss of emphasis and/or further

#### 4.8 Gen. 2:16: βρώσει φάγη ('You may eat for food')

Lastly, a careful consideration of the translator's rendering of the phrase לֶחֶם תֹּאכַל ('you may *freely* eat') with βρώσει φάγη (lit. 'you will eat for food/by eating') found in the same command in Gen. 2:16 will demonstrate that similar translational effects are discernible as in v.17. The emphatic sense loses its trace in the Greek with the translator's use of the noun construction, but, at the same time, the phrase is contextually clarified because the adverbial use of the dative (i.e. instrumentality) is stressed. For the sake of literalism, the translators of the LXX would normally choose a noun or participle that comes from the same root as the following finite verb. However, the dative noun βρώσει ('food/eating') is not a cognate, but only semantically related to the finite verb φάγη. The translator here chose a non-cognate noun for the very first occurrence of such an infinitive absolute construction, which, in my opinion, is an indication of the translator's simultaneous attempt to provide a substantive that may help to clarify the meaning of the verb, while at the same time, taking the literalistic approach to the original text by rendering it in the dative case. The word βρώσις ('food') in the accusative with preposition εἰς ('for') appears in four other places within the garden narrative (1:29,30; 2:9; 3:6): 'every tree...will become your food'; 'every green plant for food'; and καλὸν τὸ ξύλον εἰς βρώσιν ('the tree was good for food'). The rendering βρώσει is a relatively free rendering compared to similar phrases found in Lev. 7:8, φαγὼν φάγη ('eating [ptc.], he may eat') for לֶחֶם תֹּאכַל ('it should ever be eaten'), Lev. 19:7, βρώσει βρωθῆ ('it is eaten *for food*') for לֶחֶם תֹּאכַל ('it is eaten *at all*') and Lev. 7:14 (24) καὶ εἰς βρώσιν οὐ βρωθήσεται ('it shall not be eaten *for food*') for וְלֶחֶם תֹּאכַל לֹא ('you must *certainly* not eat it'). The last example in Lev 7:14 is different from others in that, although the translator of Leviticus has taken a literalistic approach by adopting the cognate noun βρώσιν ('food/eating') of the finite verb βρωθήσεται, he has nevertheless rendered the noun βρώσιν in the accusative case with the preposition εἰς. The noun βρώσιν therefore serves as an indirect object of the verb βρωθήσεται, hence, the translator's intended

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clarifying information on the sense and meaning of the finite verb. This is the tendency of the translator when translating the inf. abs. The dative noun, however, has a variety of functions in Greek.

meaning for this rendering should be understood as ‘it shall not be eaten *for food*.’ This is an indication that the translator did not adhere particularly closely to the emphatic function of the infinitive absolute construction and therefore the rendering by a cognate noun in Lev. 7:14 is only superficially literal. Similarly, the translator of the Greek Genesis, in his first translation of the Hebrew infinitive absolute in 2:16, chose a relatively free rendering which does not necessarily convey the emphatic sense evident in the Hebrew. Although the noun βρώσει in Gen. 2:16 is in the dative case, grammatically speaking, it could still be taken as the substantive dative in relation to the verb φάγη, hence the preposition ‘for’ can be supplied in the translation and it can be understood that way.<sup>220</sup> For this particular phrase in Gen. 2:16, the Old Latin (VL) version, working on the same Greek text, has the word *escam* (‘food’) in the accusative case within a prepositional phrase, *edes ad escam* (‘you may eat as/for food’), which is, again, certainly an indication of the OL translator’s understanding of the Greek phrase βρώσει βρωθῆ, and of his lack of attention to the emphatic function of the Hebrew infinitive absolute. Vulgate (Vg.), on the other hand, only uses the finite verb *comede* (‘You may eat’, 2ms) without any counterpart of the Hebrew infinitive absolute.<sup>221</sup> Moreover, βρώσει in the dative case could also be interpreted as ‘the dative of instrument’ indicating a means by which the action of the verb φάγη is accomplished. This usage of dative usually clarifies or amplifies the meaning of the main verb,<sup>222</sup> and is illustrated in Philo’s interpretation of Gen. 2:16, in which he explains the meaning of the command βρώσει φάγη (‘by eating, you shall eat’) with particular attention to the dative noun βρώσει:

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<sup>220</sup> The noun βρώσει may fall under the criteria of ‘dative of interest’ in which the dative substantive βρώσει carries the sense, e.g. ‘for eating/for the benefit of nutrition.’ On ‘dative of interest,’ see, D. Wallace, *Greek Grammar: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament*, 142-44. So, M. Harl’s translation, 102: ‘*tu prendras ta nourriture*’ and NETS translation, 7: ‘you shall eat for food.’

<sup>221</sup> Although Jerome was quite capable of conveying the emphatic sense of the Hebrew infinitive absolute in his translation, it is evident in many places that he also simply omits the infinitive absolute in his translation, rendering only the finite verb. The inf. abs. is omitted also in Gen. 3:16.

<sup>222</sup> D. Wallace, *Greek Grammar: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament*, 162-63.

And he (Moses) not only says, ‘you shall eat’ (φάγη), but also ‘by eating’ (βρώσει), that is to say, *in the manner* of grinding and chewing the food, not like an amateur, but like an athlete, that you may acquire strength and power. For the trainers commend the athletes not to gulf down their food, but to masticate it slowly, so that it will contribute to their strength. For the athlete and I feed in different *manners*; I, just feed for the sake of living, the athlete, for the sake of gaining and become strong; therefore, their training is to masticate the food. This is the meaning of ‘you shall eat by eating.’<sup>223</sup>

Whether Philo’s allegorical interpretation is a correct one is not important here, but what should be noted here is Philo’s handling of βρώσει as the ‘dative of instrument.’ Moreover, in Philo’s interpretation, the command ‘to eat’ (φάγη) has lost its emphatic force, which was originally expressed with infinitive absolute construction in the MT. While Philo explains the phrase as how the action of ‘eating’ should be presented in a certain way, the idea of generous permission emphasized by the infinitive absolute in the MT has lost its trace.

#### 4.9 Conclusion

In summing up the main points of the analysis from the translation of LXX Gen. 2:16-17, I would like to stress the following:

- 1) The literal sense of the prepositional phrase יוֹמָא (‘in the day’), which emphasizes the certainty and promptness of the death warning, has been stressed further in the LXX by the translator’s idiomatic rendering, ἢ δ’ ἂν ἡμέρα (‘but in the day which...’).
- 2) The translator’s decision to render the command ἀποθανεῖσθε (‘you [pl.] shall die’) in the plural verb for the MT’s singular, as well as using the personal pronoun Ἀδὰμ instead of generic ἄνθρωπος (‘human being’) in Gen. 2:16, seems to be the

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<sup>223</sup> The English translation and emphasis in italics are mine. Philo, *Alleg. Interp.* 1. 98: δὲ ἡ ψυχὴ ἀναλήψει τῶν καλῶν καὶ πράξει τῶν κατορθωμάτων. μὴ μόνον δὲ φησι “φάγη,” ἀλλὰ καὶ “βρώσει,” τουτέστι καταλέσας καὶ ἐπιλεάνας μὴ ιδιώτου ἀλλ’ ἀθλητοῦ τρόπον τὴν τροφήν, ἵνα ἰσχὺν καὶ δύναμιν περιποιήσῃ καὶ γὰρ τοῖς ἀθληταῖς οἱ ἀλεῖπται παραγγέλλουσι μὴ κάπτειν, ἀλλὰ κατὰ σχολὴν λεαίνειν, ἵνα πρὸς ἰσχὺν ἐπιδιδῶσιν· ἑτέρως γὰρ ἐγὼ καὶ ὁ ἀθλητὴς τρεφόμεθα, ἐγὼ μὲν γὰρ ἕνεκα τοῦ ζῆν μόνον, ὁ δὲ ἀθλητὴς καὶ ἕνεκα τοῦ πιαίνεσθαι καὶ ῥώννυσθαι, παρὸ καὶ ἓν τι τῶν ἀσκητικῶν ἐστὶ τὸ λεαίνεσθαι τροφήν. τὸ “βρώσει φαγεῖν” ἐστὶ τοιοῦτον.



translator's exegetical touch that places Adam and Eve, with no ambiguity of identity, within the hearing and/or correct comprehension of the command, endowing them with the responsibility for breaking it.

- 3) The sense of certainty emphatically conveyed in the death warning (and other infinitive absolute constructions) of the MT, began to weaken or was lost as early as the Greek translation. One of the evidence in favour of this argument may be that ancient interpreters do not really appeal (at least explicitly) for such an emphatic function in the infinitive absolute in their explanation of the command. Perhaps inconsistent omission of the adverbial phrase 'surely' in our English translation may find its root in the Greek and Latin translation.
- 4) Although the cognate noun + finite verb construction, i.e. θανάτῳ ἀποθανεῖσθε ('by death, you shall die'), was used for the first time in Gen. 2:17, there is no consistent stereotyped rendering of the command מוֹת תָּמוּת ('you will surely die') in the book of LXX Genesis. The cognate noun construction settled in the subsequent books of the LXX, but in several places different lexical choices for the dative noun, and sometimes by way of omission, show more prevalent use and understanding of the cognate noun as denoting instrumental dative, which resulted in the further weakening of the emphatic sense that the original infinitive absolute construction carried.
- 5) The adverbial use of the dative (i.e. 'dative of instrument') employed by the translators in different places in the LXX opens the way for different understandings of the command, for example, the cognate noun θανάτῳ ('by death') in v.17 in particular can be interpreted as having the true force of the instrumental dative, indicating the means by which the action of the verb ἀποθανεῖσθε ('you [pl.] shall die') may be accomplished.

It still holds true that there is no explicit indication in the Greek translator's portrayal of the garden narrative that the translator understood the phrase as the 'introduction of mortality to humans' through the disobedience of Adam and Eve, and there is certainly room for subsequent interpreters or translators to provide clearer or more creative interpretations, e.g. Symmacus' rendering, 'you will become mortal,' or Philo's understanding of 'spiritual death' etc. Nevertheless, the translator's rendering of the command in Gen. 2:16-17 does contain a number of

distinctive grammatical and exegetical elements that are susceptible to different interpretations and these are not likely to have arisen from the *Vorlage*.



## Chapter Five

### Genesis 2:16-17 in the Dead Sea Scrolls

#### 5.1 Introduction

The popularity and importance of the Book of Genesis among the Dead Sea Scrolls is attested by the large number of biblical manuscripts of Genesis, as well as the non-biblical texts that paraphrased and reworked<sup>224</sup> the Book of Genesis, found in the various Qumran caves.<sup>225</sup> This chapter will consider the textual witnesses to the

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<sup>224</sup> Some scholars find the terms ‘reworked’ or ‘rewritten bible’ (first used by Geza Vermes in *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism: Haggadic Studies* [2nd ed. StPB 4; Leiden: Brill, 1973], 10) problematic as they carry anachronistic assumptions about the concept of ‘writing’ and the existence of a fixed biblical text in the late Second Temple period. See Hindy Najman, *Seconding Sinai: The Development of Mosaic Discourse in Second Temple Judaism*, JSJSup 77 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 7-8. E. Tov prefers the broader term ‘parabiblical’ to refer to literature that is ‘closely related to texts or themes of the Hebrew Bible. Some of these compositions present a reworking, rewriting, or paraphrase of biblical books.’ E. Tov, “Foreword,” Harold W. Attridge et al., eds., *Qumran Cave 4.VIII: Parabiblical Texts, Part 1, DJD XIII* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), ix. F. Martinez follows the use of the term ‘parabiblical’ and defines it as ‘literature that begins with the Bible, which retells the biblical text in its own way, intermingling it and expanding it with other, quite different traditions. Every one of these compositions has its starting point in specific texts of the Torah or of the Prophets but, unlike the exegetical literature, rather than interpreting the biblical text, they elaborate on it, augmenting it with other material.’ Florentino G. Martinez, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated* (Brill: Leiden, 1994), 218.

<sup>225</sup> Nineteen manuscripts of Genesis were found in Qumran caves 1, 2, 4, 6 and 8 dating from 250 BCE – 100 CE: 1QGen, 2QGen, 4QGen-Exod<sup>a</sup>, 4QGen<sup>b</sup>-4QGen<sup>g</sup>, 4QGen<sup>h1-2</sup>, 4QGen<sup>h-title</sup>, 4QGen<sup>i</sup>, 4QGen<sup>k</sup>, 4QpaleoGen-Exod<sup>l</sup>, 4QpaleoGen<sup>m</sup>, 4QGen<sup>n</sup>, and pap4QGen (4Q483), 6QGen and 8QGen. Four other biblical manuscripts of Genesis found at Masada and Wadi Murabba’at are: MasGen, MurGen 1, Mur, and Sdeir 1. Martin G. Abegg, Jr., Peter W. Flint, Eugene C. Ulrich, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible: The Oldest Known Bible Translated for the First Time in English* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1999), 4. This chapter will mainly deal with the manuscripts relevant to the quotations and allusions to the divine command in Gen. 2:17 and punishment in Gen. 3:14-24. For a more extensive review of the Genesis manuscripts found at Qumran, see Sidnie W. Crawford, “Genesis in the Dead Sea Scrolls,” in *The Book of Genesis: Composition, Reception, and Interpretation*, ed. Craig A. Evans, Joel N. Lohr, and David L. Peterson (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 353-74; Moshe. J. Bernstein, “Contours of Genesis Interpretation at Qumran: Contents, Context, and Nomenclature” in *Reading and Re-reading Scripture and Qumran* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2013), 63-91. See also, James R. Davila, “Genesis, Book of” in *The Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed.

death warning מות תמות ('you shall surely die') in 4QGen<sup>b</sup> and 4QGen,<sup>h2</sup> and allusions to the creation, divine command (Gen. 2:17) and punishment (3:14-19) found in 4Q422, 4Q423, 4Q303, 4Q504 and 4Q124. The aim of this chapter is to analyze the distinctive interpretation of the creation and transgression of Adam in the Garden of Eden and to find any trace of exegetical development in light of modern presumptive association between Adam's disobedience to God's command concerning the tree of knowledge and the introduction of physical death into humanity.

## 5.2 DSS References to the Divine Command in Gen 2:17

### 5.2.1 4Q2: 4Q Genesis<sup>b</sup>

#### Text and Translation:<sup>226</sup>

(Frg. 1 Col. ii, 3-4)

וַיִּצְוֵה יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים עַל הָאָדָם [לֵאמֹר] מִכָּל עֵץ הַגָּן אֲכַל [תֵּא] כָּל וּמִעֵץ	3
הַדְּעַת טוֹב וְרַע לֹא תֵאָכַל [מִמֶּנּוּ] כִּי [בַיּוֹם] אֲכַלְךָ מִמֶּנּוּ מוֹת תָּמוּת	4

2:16: And the Lord God commanded the human being, [saying],  
 'From any tree of the garden you may freely eat,  
 2:17: but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you [shall  
 not eat from] it, for [in the day] you eat from it you will surely die.'

#### Notes and Discussion:

The second column of the first fragment of 4QGen<sup>b</sup> preserves the reading of Genesis 2:14-19 that includes the divine command (Gen. 2:16-17) imposing the death penalty on the human for eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The text preserved in this fragment is identical to the MT, with no textual or orthographic variants.<sup>227</sup> Both permission and prohibition in the command are

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Lawrence H. Schiffman and James C. VanderKam, 2 vols. (New York: OUP, 2000), 1:299-300.

<sup>226</sup> The transcription of the verses is from James R. Davila, "4QGen<sup>b</sup>," Eugene Ulrich et al., eds., *Qumran Cave 4. VII: Genesis to Numbers, DJD XII* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 36. English translation is mine.

<sup>227</sup> 4QGen<sup>b</sup> preserves Gen. 1:1-28; 2:14-19; 4:2-11; and 5:13. J. Davila suggests the possibility that 4QGen<sup>b</sup> was not part of the original Qumran scrolls from Cave 4, but instead it was brought from another cave and mixed with other manuscripts for a number of reasons: 1) the leather was in poor condition; 2) the text is written in late Herodian/post Herodian script (c. 50-68+ CE); 3) the text is

rendered with the singular form, each with its accompanying infinitive absolute. There is no textual support for the LXX's readings of anarthrous personal name, Adam (τῷ Ἀδὰμ), and the plural form of the death warning, i.e. 'you [pl.] shall die by death' (θανάτῳ ἀποθανεῖσθε). The first and third letters of the word תָּמוּת ('you shall die') have slightly faded, but the second letter מ and the last letter ת are visible. The prepositional phrase בְּיוֹם in line 4 is damaged, but its presence can be estimated based on the space required for the unreserved part.

## 5.2.2 4Q8a: 4Q GENESIS<sup>h2</sup>

**Text and Translation:**<sup>228</sup>

מות תָּמוּת [	1
] אעשה [	2

2:17:       ] you shall surely die [  
2:18:       ] I will make [

### Notes and Discussion:

The only other manuscript witness to the death warning מות תָּמוּת ('you shall surely die') with an infinitive absolute intensifier preceding the finite verb is found in one of the four tiny manuscripts that are grouped together under the siglum 4QGen<sup>h</sup>. Only one fragment is preserved from each of these manuscripts and due to this fragmentary condition, it is not possible to be certain of the exact form and content of these manuscripts.<sup>229</sup> The two extant lines in 4QGen<sup>h2</sup> contain three words from Gen.

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identical to the MT (there is no single textual variant from the MT); 4) no fragment from 4QGen<sup>b</sup> was found among the photographs of fragments taken from Cave 4. *DJD* XII, 31.

<sup>228</sup> The transcription is from Davila, "4QGen<sup>h</sup>," in *Qumran Cave 4. VII: Genesis to Numbers*, 63-64. English translation is mine.

<sup>229</sup> 4QGen<sup>h1</sup>, 4QGen<sup>h2</sup>, 4QGen<sup>h-para</sup>, 4QGen<sup>h-title</sup>. 4QGen<sup>h1</sup> has three words from Gen. 1:8-10. It is generally agreed that this fragment, along with 4QGen<sup>h2</sup>, belongs to the biblical text of Genesis. 4QGen<sup>h-para</sup> seems to paraphrase Gen. 12:4-5. E. Tov categorizes 4QGen<sup>h-para</sup> as paraphrase possibly belonging to another manuscript, while Eugene Ulrich considers 4QGen<sup>h-para</sup> as a Genesis manuscript. E. Tov, *Revised Lists of the Texts from the Judaean Desert* (Brill: Leiden, 2010), 113. E. Ulrich, *The Biblical Qumran Scrolls: Transcriptions and Textual Variants*, VTSup 134 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 779. 4QGen<sup>h-title</sup> is one of the only four manuscripts in the entire DSS that preserve the title of the scroll. It

2:17-18, two of which are the same verbs employed for the emphatic infinitive absolute construction of the death warning: מוֹת תִּמָּוֹת ('you shall surely die') in verse 17. As the last two letters of the second verb מוֹת תִּמָּוֹת are missing, it is possible to suggest that the reading could be from the serpent's death warning in Gen. 3:4 rendered in the plural form (MT מוֹת תִּמָּוֹת). However, the word אֶעֱשֶׂה ('I will make...') in line 2, which presumably attests to its occurrence in Gen. 2:18, indicates that the death warning in proximity likely contained the singular form of the command, as found in Gen. 2:17 (unless the scribe had a Hebrew text before him which had the plural verbs for Gen. 2:16-7). The verb אֶעֱשֶׂה also confirms the MT's reading of the first person singular verb ('I will make...') in Gen 2:18, against the LXX which uses ποιήσωμεν ('let us make...').

### 5.2.3 4Q422: 4Q Paraphrase of Genesis and Exodus

4Q422 preserves a paraphrase of the opening chapters from the Books of Genesis and Exodus. In this, the author's use of the narrative details from the biblical creation account is also selective and limited.<sup>230</sup> The account of creation, God's prohibitive command concerning the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and the human's disobedience to the command are treated in the first column, which is

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contains a single word denoting the title: ברשית (without א). Davila, "4QGen<sup>h</sup>" in *Qumran Cave 4. VII: Genesis to Numbers*, 61-64.

<sup>230</sup> Dorothy Peters suggests that the title, "The Paraphrase of Genesis and Exodus," is misleading since not all the materials from the biblical books are covered in 4Q422. Dorothy M. Peters, *Noah Traditions in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Conversations and Controversies of Antiquity*, EJS 26 (Atlanta: SBL, 2008), 140. Torleif Elgvin categorizes 4Q422 along with Sap. Work A as the sectarian texts that use Gen. chs. 1-3, 8-9 and Ps. 8 as the basic texts for their interpretation on man's place and his tasks in God's creation. Torleif Elgvin, "Admonition Texts from Qumran Cave 4," in *Methods of Investigation of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Khirbet Qumran Site: Present Realities and Future Prospects*, ed. M.O. Wise, N. Golb, J.J. Collins, and D.G. Pardee, *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 722 (New York: New York Academy of Sciences, 1994), 186. See also, Geza Vermes, "Genesis 1-3 in Post-Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic Literature before the Mishnah," *JJS* 43 (1992): 221-25. E. Tov and Feldman consider 4Q422 a nonsectarian text, suggesting that some of the affinities which Elgvin observes to link 4Q422 to the sectarian writings are not really sectarian in nature. See Ariel Feldman, "4Q422 (Paraphrase of Genesis and Exodus)," in *Scripture and Interpretation: Qumran Texts that Rework the Bible*, ed. Devorah Dimant (Berlin: WdG, 2017), 85-86; E. Tov, "The Exodus Section of 4Q422," *DSD* 1 (1994), 197.

followed immediately by the flood narrative (Gen. 6:9-9:17) in the second column. The third column is concerned with the first chapters of Exodus.<sup>231</sup> Special attention will be given to the section that contains allusions and possible interpretative elements relevant to the discussion of the divine command in Gen. 2:17. 4Q422 1 1 6-13 reads as follows:

**Text and Translation:**<sup>232</sup>

(Frg. 1 Col. i, 6-13)

	השמים וכול[צבאם עשה בדבר]ו	6
	אש[ר עשה ורוח קודש]ו	7
	נפ[ש החיה והרמש]	8
	זורע זר[ע המשילו לאכול פר]י	9
	ל[ב]לתי אכול מעץ הד[עת טוב ורע]	10
	ה[ק]ים עליו וישכחו]	11
	ל[ ]ביוצר רע ולמעש[י]	12
	של[ה]	13

6	[	the heavens and all] their hosts <sup>233</sup> he made by [his] word [
7	[	whic]h he had done. And [his]holy spirit <sup>234</sup>
8	[	the living [creat]ures and the creeping things <sup>235</sup> [
9	[	sowing see]d he set him in charge to eat the fru[it

<sup>231</sup> For the discussion on the Exodus section of 4Q422, see E. Tov, "The Exodus Section of 4Q422," 197-209.

<sup>232</sup> The transcription is from A. Feldman, "4Q422 (Paraphrase of Genesis and Exodus)," 86. For T. Elgvin's reconstruction of the un preserved parts, see T. Elgvin, "Paraphrase of Genesis and Exodus," H. Attridge et al., eds., *Qumran Cave 4. VIII: Parabiblical Texts, Part 1. DJD XIII* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 421; idem., "Admonition texts from Qumran Cave 4," 186. For information on the physical condition of the manuscripts, see T. Elgvin, "The Genesis Section of 4Q422 (4QParaGenExod)," *DSD* 1 (1994), 181-83 and A. Feldman, "4Q422 (Paraphrase of Genesis and Exodus)," 83-86.

<sup>233</sup> The reconstruction of the phrase וכול[צבאם ('all their hosts') is from Gen. 2:1.

<sup>234</sup> The phrase אש[ר עשה ('that he had made') is found in Gen. 1:31 and 2:2 referring to God's creation in the first six days. The fragmentary phrase ורוח קודש[ו] ('[his] holy spirit') likely refers to the idea that the heavens and their host were created by the breath/spirit (רוח) of God. Cf. Ps. 33:6 and 104:30. See further Feldman, *ibid.*, 88.

<sup>235</sup> The expression נפ[ש החיה והרמש ('living beings and the creeping things') is from Gen. 1:28.



10 [ ]that he should[d n]ot eat from the tree of know[ledge of good and evil  
 11 [ ]he imposed upon him and they forgot[  
 12 [ ]in evil inclination and to deed[s  
 13 [ ]....[

### Text Notes:

*Line 11:* If Feldman's proposition that the verb קוּם in עָלִיוּ הִקִּים (‘he imposed upon him’) is in the hiphil stem (3ms) is adopted, the referent of the third masc. suffix on עָלִיוּ (‘on him’) is the human being/Adam. T. Elgvin, however, restores the statement as וַיִּקּוּם עָלָיו (‘he rose against Him’). In Elgvin's reading, the subject of the verb קוּם and antecedent of the suffix on עָלִיוּ are the human being and God respectively. It is difficult to distinguish whether the first vertical stroke of the first letter on הִקִּים is the left downstroke of (*he*) ה (as suggested by Feldman) or a *yod* (י). The third letter looks identical to the first letter and could be read either as a *yod* (י) or *waw* (ו). Contextually, both readings are possible. Feldman suggests that interpreting the antecedent of the suffix on עָלִיוּ as Adam is in fitting with Gen. 2:16-17 where Adam receives the command alone.<sup>236</sup> The number change in the verb וישכחו (‘they forgot’) immediately following the phrase עָלִיוּ (sg.) is sudden, yet it reinforces the inclusion of Eve in the transgression.

*Line 13:* ] שלהּ[. Elgvin reads this as שלום, while Feldman suggests that the third letter is a *he* (ה) – reading the vertical downstroke of the third letter as the right vertical stroke of *he* (ה), instead of *waw* (ו).<sup>237</sup> Feldman suggests that the word could also be שלהם (third person plural possessive pronoun) based on the possibility that the unreadable letter at the end of the word could be a final *mem* (ם). Based on my viewing of the photograph, there is a hole in the space between the upper stroke and the left vertical stroke of the letter *he* (ה), suggesting the possibility that the word could be the verb שלח (‘to send’), which appears in Gen. 3:23 to describe the man's expulsion from the garden. In this case, the final letter that is hardly visible at the end

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<sup>236</sup> Feldman, *ibid.*

<sup>237</sup> *Ibid.*, 87.

of the word could be the final *mem* (מ), a pronominal suffix attached to the verb: וישלחם ('and he sent them').

### Discussion:

The garden narrative (Gen. 1-3) serves as the biblical reference for the first fragment of 4Q422 (6-13). The text paraphrases: 1) the description of God's creation of the heavens and their hosts by his word (lines 6-8); 2) the assertion that God has placed the human being in charge of the garden and its trees (line 9); 3) God's prohibitive command against partaking of the tree of knowledge (lines 10-11); and 4) the disobedience of the human being in his evil inclination against God (lines 11-12). Line 9 alludes to the permission to eat from all trees in the garden (Gen. 2:16). Line 10, although the death warning is not cited verbatim, paraphrases the prohibitive command: 'that he should[d n]ot eat from the tree of know[ledge of good and evil.]' From the scene in which Adam receives the command (Gen. 2:17) to the scene of Adam's disobedience (3:7), the author appears to skip entire narrative details. The rapid transition from the theme of Adam's transgression in the garden narrative to the flood narrative (Gen. 6), in which God destroys all human beings for their sins, testifies to the author's selective focus on the aspect of sin and judgment. How Adam and Eve came to disobey God's command does not concern the writer; for example, the serpent, who plays an important role in deceiving the woman, is never mentioned in this text. Neither is there a mention of any details regarding the punishment of Adam and Eve. However, the text of 4Q422 is similar to the biblical account in that the initial focus is on the individual 'human being',<sup>238</sup> or 'Adam,' who is addressed in the singular: 'He set *him* in charge to eat...that *he* should not eat from the tree...*He* rose against Him.' The text therefore interprets the MT's description that the recipient of the command is solely the man. However, as in the case of LXX, the act of disobedience is reported as a collective action in the plural, וישכחו ('but they forgot'), with no specific mention of Eve's creation or existence. Although the description of the command and disobedience is brief, it conveys and highlights the idea that Adam alone received the command concerning the tree of the knowledge of

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<sup>238</sup> T. Elgvin's reconstruction at the beginning of line 9 has the generic term האדם. T. Elgvin, "Paraphrase of Genesis and Exodus," 421.

good and evil, yet it is both Adam and Eve who ‘forgot’ and disobeyed God’s command.

What is noteworthy in the paraphrase of the prohibitive command against eating the forbidden fruit (line 10) is the negative particle ל[ב]לתי preceding the infinitive construct אכול (‘to eat’). The expression לְבַלְתִּי אֲכַל (‘not to eat from...’) is found in Gen. 3:11 in the context of God’s interrogation: God questions the man on whether he has eaten from the tree that he was commanded ‘not to eat from.’ The author’s use of the language originally used in the context of transgression (Gen. 3:11) in his description of the command in Gen. 2:17 implies a foreshadowing of the man’s disobedience.<sup>239</sup> Again, the verb וישכחו (‘but they forgot’), describing the act of disobedience in the line immediately following the paraphrase of the command (without giving any details on the actual death warning and the punishment), testifies to the author’s selective focus on the theme of sin and judgement.

The phrase ביוצר רע (‘evil inclination’) in line 12 could reflect the author’s *Tendenz* on his view of Adam’s sin as originating from ‘evil inclination.’ Esther Chazon suggests that line 12 functions as a bridge that links the story of Adam to the flood story as the word יצר is drawn from Gen. 6:5 describing people’s evil inclination of heart (יִצֵר לֵב הָאָדָם רָע).<sup>240</sup> Feldman, on the other hand, highlights the fact that the expression ביוצר רע (‘evil inclination’) is placed in the very next line following the description of the divine prohibitive command, and that the word יצר is used in Ben Sira 15:14 to describe Adam’s inclination, to support the possibility that line 12 is still dealing with Adam’s sin.<sup>241</sup> The fact that the author of 4Q422 spends no more lines in moving from Adam’s act of disobedience to the flood narrative is evident in the first line of the second column, which starts with Gen. 6:5. As suggested by Elgvin, if the word יצר in line 12 was employed by the author in

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<sup>239</sup> So E. G. Chazon and Feldman.

<sup>240</sup> E. G. Chazon, “Creation and Fall of Adam in the Dead Sea Scrolls,” in *The Book of Genesis in Jewish and Oriental Christian Interpretation*, ed. J. Frishman and L. van Rampay. *Traditio Exegetica Graeca* 5 (Leuven: Peeters, 1997), 17. Similarly, D. Peters notes, “‘Evil inclination’ and ‘work[s] of wickedness]’ follow immediately after the reference to the tree of knowledge (4Q422 I, 6-12) and act as ‘a bridge to the Flood narrative.’” Peters, *Noah Traditions in the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 140.

<sup>241</sup> Feldman, “4Q422 (Paraphrase of Genesis and Exodus),” 91. So, T. Elgvin, “The Genesis Section of 4Q422,” 187.

relation to Adam's sin, its appearance in this text may be an early reference to the Rabbinic doctrine of 'evil inclination' (יצר רע) that considers Adam's sin not as the archetypal sin, but as any sin in which man's 'inclination' (יצר) is misused.<sup>242</sup> In this rapid narrative movement from one theme to another, the author of 4Q422 seems to have no interest in the original physical status of the human being. It is possible that line 13 may have mentioned Adam's expulsion from the Garden of Eden, but due to the fragmentary condition of the manuscript, it is uncertain whether the author expressed that the introduction of death is a result of Adam's disobedience. Nor is any reference to the 'death warning' evident in the extant lines of this text.

#### 5.2.4 4Q303: 4QMeditation on Creation A

##### Text and Translation:<sup>243</sup>

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<sup>242</sup> For more discussion on the doctrine of 'יצר רע' in Rabbinic Judaism, see A. P. Hayman, "Rabbinic Judaism and the Problem of Evil," *SJT* 29, 461-76; idem, "The Fall, Freewill and Human Responsibility in Rabbinic Judaism," *SJT* 37, 13-22. In the latter, Hayman reviews a number of rabbinic texts and suggests that there is no such doctrine of 'original sin' in the rabbinic understanding of Gen 2-3 as in Christianity. Instead he traces the origin of evil in יצר רע ('evil inclination'). He writes: 'the origins of evil are to be traced back to the time of man's creation when God implanted in him what is called the *Yetzer*, very often the 'evil *yetzer*'...Adam's sin is simply typical of how men use their *yetzer*. It is the first, but not the archetypal sin.' *Ibid.*, 17. Hayman also suggests that there are four viewpoints on the origin of death in the rabbinic tradition, although some of his example texts could be questioned. For example, his reference to Ben Sira as a proof text that confirms the later rabbinic view of death as man's natural lot is unclear and requires further analysis. See chapter 6 of this thesis on Ben Sira. The four views suggested by Hayman are: 1) Adam was originally immortal but his transgression brought death upon all of his descendants, cf. *Sipre Deut.* 323 and *Gen. Rab.* 17:8; 2) Adam was originally mortal and death was man's natural lot decreed by God, cf. *Sipre Deut.* 339; 3) death comes to all men, not because of Adam's transgression but because of each person's own sin, Cf. *b. Shabb.* 55a; 4) it is not Adam who condemned all his descendants to death, but it was because of his descendants' sin – Nebuchadnezzar and Hiram who declare themselves gods – that Adam died, cf. *Gen. Rab.* 9:5. Although there is no one agreed view on the origin of death among the rabbinic texts, Hayman cautiously suggests that the rabbinic texts, which often exclude or take a 'light' view of the concept of death as a result of Adam's transgression, reflect conscious reversal or reaction to developing Christian doctrine of the Fall. For more details, see *ibid.*, 19-22.

<sup>243</sup> The transcription and translation are from Timothy. H. Lim, "303 4QMeditation on Creation A," Torleif Elgvin et al., eds., *Qumran Cave 4. XV: Sapiential Texts, Part 1, DJD XX* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 152-53.

[מבינים שמעו ו[...]]	1
]מים וישביתו מעל נ[	2
]א[סרר] {נפלאות אל אש]ר	3
]לאור עולם ושמי טוה]ר	4
או]ר במקום תהווב]הו	5
]כולמעשיהם עד ק[	6
]ר במלך לכולם]	7
]ר ושכל טוב ורע ל]	8
]לוקח ממנה אדם כיא]	9
ו]עשה לו עזר כ]נגדו	10
]לו לאשה כיא ממנו]לקחח זאת	11
] חה vacat ]	12
]ל לפי ]	13
]ל]	14

1	]having understood, they listened and [
2	]mym and they caused treachery to cease n[
3	]....wonderful acts of God whi[ch
4	]for eternal light and cle[ar] heaven <sup>244</sup> [
5	]ligh]t in place of emptiness and vo[id
6	]all their deeds until q[
7	]r among them, a king for all of them[
8	]r and insight of good and evil, to[
9	]a man takes from it because [
10	and] He made for him a helper fit[ for him
11	He gave her] to him for a wife, because from him[ she was taken
12	]hh vacat [
13	]l according to[
14	]l[

### Notes and Discussion:

4Q303 is a fragmentary text that preserves a short paraphrase of the details regarding the creation of heaven and human beings. It consists of several fragments, of which some portions of 14 lines have been preserved.<sup>245</sup> Line 3 describes God's creation as the 'wonders of God' (נפלאות אל).<sup>246</sup> The 'king (מלך) for all of them' in line 7 likely refers to mankind (האדם) who would rule over all living creatures (Gen. 1:26). Line 8 preserves the phrase 'insight (שכל) of good and evil' and line 9 has the

<sup>244</sup> The phrase שמי טוהר ('clear heaven') is also found in 4QS<sup>h</sup> Frag. A line 5.

<sup>245</sup> Lim, "303 4QMeditation on Creation A," 151.

<sup>246</sup> Cf. Job 37:14 for the expression 'wonders of God' (נפלאות אל).

fragmentary statement ‘]a man takes from it because[.’ The account of Eve’s creation (Gen. 2:18) follows in lines 10-11. Although the exact phrase ‘insight (שכל) of good and evil’ in line 8 does not occur in the garden narrative, it is without doubt an allusion to the ‘knowledge (דעת) of good and evil’ (Gen. 2:9, 17). However, due to the fragmentary state of the line, the author’s intended meaning of the phrase ‘insight/knowledge of good and evil’ is not certain. Is the possession of such knowledge the result of eating from the tree of knowledge of good and evil? In light of 4Q305, which preserves the fragmentary statement, ‘He gave to man knowled[ge,’<sup>247</sup> it may be suggested that the phrase ‘insight of good and evil’ in 4Q303 was also used in the positive sense to express the notion that Adam was given insight to be able to discern good and evil. An alternative understanding may be suggested, however: lines 8-10 as a whole could be an allusion to the divine commandment, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2.17) and the subsequent incidence of Adam’s partaking of it (Gen. 3:6). Depending on the interpretation of the third fem. sing. suffix on ממנה (‘from it/her’), two different understandings are possible. Timothy Lim, while translating the statement in line 9 as ‘a man takes from it,’ also suggests the possibility that the third fem. sing. suffix on ממנה might denote the ‘the ground.’<sup>248</sup> Similarly, H. Jacobson suggests that לוקח in line 9 is to be read as a passive reference to the creation of Adam, who is ‘taken’ from the earth.<sup>249</sup> According to this view, line 9 is an allusion to the description of God’s creation of Adam prior to his transgression against God (Gen. 2:7). The main idea conveyed in this line is the source, i.e. ‘the ground,’ from which God creates Adam. Line 11 is also concerned with the creation of woman, who is taken ‘from him/Adam’ (ממנו]לקחה). It is also possible that line 9 reflects the notion of Adam’s ‘return’ to the ground as a part of his punishment (Gen. 3:19) since the language employed here reflects Gen 3:19 closely: ‘because from it (ממנה) you were taken (לקחה), for (כי) you are dust...’. However, the order in which the description of the

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<sup>247</sup> Lines 2-3 of 4Q305 preserve two fragmentary statements: נתן לאדם דע] (‘He gave to man knowled[ge...’]) and לרע [ ] לדעת] (‘and evil [ ] to know[’]). For the transcription of 4Q305, see T. H. Lim, “305 4QMeditation on Creation C,” *DJD XX* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 157-58.

<sup>248</sup> Lim, “303 4QMeditation on Creation A,” 153.

<sup>249</sup> Howard Jacobson, “Notes on 4Q303,” *DSD* 6 (1999), 78-80.

creation of man (Gen. 2:7) precedes the account of the creation of Eve (Gen. 2:18) would have read more naturally than the idea of ‘Adam’s going back to ground,’ which is brought up later in Gen. 3:22 as a part of Adam’s punishment. Second, if the third fem. suffix on מַמְנָה (‘from it/her’) is interpreted as referring to a person, i.e. Eve, then the likely candidate for the object that Adam takes from *her* (מַמְנָה) is the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 3:6): ‘the woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me *from the tree* (מִן־הָעֵץ), and I ate’ (Gen. 3:12). If this is the correct reading, this might be a sign as to the author’s bias against Eve, whom the author may have considered to blame for the man’s disobedience. Whether intended by the author or not, the simple prepositional phrase מַמְנָה (‘from it/her’) is sufficient to create a nuance that puts the emphasis on the woman’s role and responsibility in the transgression, implying that it is ‘from woman’ that Adam received the fruit, therefore disobeyed God’s command.<sup>250</sup> Mentioning the woman, who is not yet created (lines 10-11), in relation to the partaking of the forbidden fruit is not unprecedented.<sup>251</sup> In this regard, if line 9 is understood as containing a paraphrase of a warning or reproof for Adam concerning the partaking of the fruit, there is an equal chance that the expression ‘insight of good and evil’ in the previous line is a reference to the negative consequence of eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Drawing a conclusive interpretation of lines 8-9 may not be possible due to the fragmentary condition of the text, but as with the unidentified referent of the suffix on מַמְנָה (‘from it/her’) in line 9, the possibility remains that lines 8-9 may have contained a paraphrased statement that describes either the warning or the actual incidence of taking the fruit from the tree of knowledge with an emphasis on the woman’s part.

### 5.3 DSS References to the Punishment of Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:14-24)

#### 5.3.1 4Q504: *Paroles Des Luminaires* (Words of the Luminaries)

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<sup>250</sup> The notion that woman is responsible for introducing sin and death to humanity appears in other literatures: (Sir 25:24; 1 Tim 2:13-14).

<sup>251</sup> Cf. LXX 2:17, the prohibitive command מוֹת תָּמוּת (sg.) is rendered in Greek by θανάτω ἀποθανεῖσθε (pl.).

## Text and Translation:<sup>252</sup>

(Frg. 8)

זכו]ר אד[ו]נ[י] כִּי אֵל מֵעַמְּ	1
קִתְּנוּ וְאַתָּה חַי עוֹלָמִים	2
נִפְלְאוֹת מִקֶּדֶם וְנוֹרְאוֹת	3
אֵדָם אֲבִינֵנוּ יִצְרָתָהּ בְּדַמּוֹת כְּבוֹדְךָ	4
נִשְׁמַת חַיִּים נִפְחָתָהּ בְּאִפּוֹ וּבִינָה וְדַעַת	5
בְּגַן עֵדֶן אֲשֶׁר נִטְעַתָּה הַמְּשַׁלֵּתָהּ אֹתוֹ	6
וְעַלְתָּ בְּאֶרֶץ כְּבוֹד אֱלֹהִים	7
אֲשֶׁר שָׁמַר וְחָקַם עָלָיו לְבַלְתִּי סוֹרֵר	8
בְּשָׂר הוּאָה וְלֶעֱפָר הִיא	9
וְאַתָּה יָדַעְתָּהּ <i>vac.</i> וְיָדַעְתָּהּ	10
לְדוֹרוֹת עוֹלָם	11
אֱלֹהִים חַי וְיֹדֵכָהּ	12
הָאָדָם בְּדַרְכֵי	13
לְמַלְאוֹת אֶת הָאָרֶץ מִן הַמַּס וְלִשְׂפוֹךְ דָּם נָקִי	14
לְלֵל	15

1	Remem]ber Lord, that.. [
2	]...us. And you, who lives for ev[er...
3	] the marvels of old and the portents [
4	] our [fat]her, you fashioned in the image of [your] glory [
5	the breath of life] you [b]lew into his nostril, and intelligence and knowledge [
6	in the gard]en of Eden, which you had planted. You made [him] govern [
7	] and so that he would walk in a glorious land..[
8	] he kept. And you imposed on him not to tu[r]n away
9	] he is flesh, and to dust [
10	]... <i>vac.</i> And you, you know [
11	]for everlasting generations [
12	] a living God, and your hand [
13	] man on the paths of [
14	to fill the] earth with [vi]olence and she[d] innocent blood
15	...]....

## Notes and Discussion:

The text entitled *Words of the Luminaries* דברי המארות (4Q504) consists of

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<sup>252</sup> The transcription is from M. Baillet, *Qumran Grotte 4 III: Part 3, DJD VII* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), 162; English translation (with minor emendation to line 1) is from Florentino García Martínez and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, 2 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 1009. F. Martínez provides the reconstruction of the damaged portion at the beginning of line 1: תפלה ליום הראשון ('Prayer for the first day').



weekly ‘prayers’ or ‘liturgy,’<sup>253</sup> one prayer for each day of the week. Fragment 8, which preserves the prayer for the first day of the week,<sup>254</sup> paraphrases select events from the first chapters of Genesis: the creation of Adam (lines 4-6), his placement and dominion in the garden of Eden (lines 6-7), the divine commandment concerning the forbidden fruit (line 8), Adam’s disobedience and punishment (line 9) and the prevalence of sin and violence on Earth (line 14). The similarities between *Gen-Exod Paraphrase* (4Q422) and *Words of the Luminaries* (4Q504) have been noted by Esther Chazon:<sup>255</sup> 1) the use of the verb **משל** to describe Adam’s dominion over the garden;<sup>256</sup> 2) the foreshadowing of Adam’s disobedience through the incorporation of the negative particle **בלתי** (cf. Gen. 3:11) into the description of the divine command in Gen. 2:17; and 3) the phrase **הקים/ותקם עליו** (‘He/You imposed on him’), used in both texts, which seems to be a reference to the prohibition of eating from the tree of knowledge. Further, it is noted that in both texts, the account of creation is followed immediately by the flood and Exodus narratives.

The author of 4Q504 employs more positive language than the Book of Genesis in his description of Adam’s creation, his role, and the Garden of Eden: 1) in line 4, Adam is referred to as ‘our father’ who was created in the image of God’s *glory* (**בדמות כבוד**);<sup>257</sup> 2) Adam is given with understanding (**בינה**) and knowledge (**דעת**)

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<sup>253</sup> E. Chazon describes the text as a weekly liturgy that consists of ‘communal petitions motivated by historical reminiscences which progress chronologically during the course of the week.’ Chazon, “The Creation and fall of Adam in the Dead Sea Scrolls,” 14.

<sup>254</sup> M. Baillet suggests that 4Q504 fragment 8 is the first column of the scroll as the title **דברי המארות** is written on its back. Baillet, *DJD VII*, 137-38.

<sup>255</sup> Chazon, “The Creation and fall of Adam in the Dead Sea Scrolls,” 13-18. See also, M. Bernstein, “Contours of Genesis Interpretation at Qumran: Contents, Context, and Nomenclature,” 79-91.

<sup>256</sup> The notion of Adam’s placement in charge of the garden and the trees is found in Gen. 1:29 and 2:7-9, 15.

<sup>257</sup> Cf. 1QS 4:23 and CD 3:20. 1QS 4:23 writes that the faithful and chosen for the everlasting covenant will receive ‘all the glory of Adam’, while in the CD 3:20, ‘those who remain steadfast will receive eternal life and all the glory of Adam.’ Although the term ‘eternal life’ is better to be understood in the eschatological context; the mention of ‘eternal life’ in conjunction with the phrase ‘the glory of Adam’ is perhaps an indirect allusion to the ‘immortal’ status of Adam in the garden of Eden prior to his disobedience. While there is no consensus among the scholars on the meaning of the term ‘glory of Adam,’ Crispin H.T. Fletcher-Louis, in his extensive study on the term ‘glory of

(line 5); 3) lines 6-7 state that Adam was made to rule (משל) and to walk (הלך) in the 'glorious land' (ארץ כבוד), i.e. the Garden of Eden. This positive portrayal of Adam and the Garden of Eden sharply contrasts with a sudden shift to the description of a mere human being who is made of flesh and dust (line 9): 'he is flesh and to dust *he*' (בְּבָשָׂר הוּאָה וְלֵעָפָר הֵן]). In between the two opposing descriptions is a statement that relates to the divine command (Gen. 2:17), which provides a bridge between the status of Adam in the garden before and after his disobedience. This text is noteworthy as it seems to be one of the few texts among the Qumran materials that make reference to and association with the divine command concerning the tree (and presumably Adam's disobedience to the command) with the theme of 'man's returning to dust.' The phrase 'he is flesh' echoes the language in Gen. 6:3 in which God shortens the lifespan of humans to 120 years. Just as the author's use of the negative particle בלתי in his description of the prohibitive command in line 8 has the literary effect of foreshadowing Adam's disobedience, the use of the language that describes God's shortening of the lifespan for all humanity (Gen. 6:3) in conjunction with Adam's return to dust could possibly create the nuance in the reader's mind that the punishment for 'turning away' (לבלתי סור) from God's commandment is not confined solely to Adam but connected in some sense to all humanity. Due to the fragmentary condition, the exact context and association of lines 8-9 are uncertain, yet one may cautiously suggest that 4Q504 could be a text that interprets the statement 'you are dust and to dust you shall return' in Gen. 3:19 as the introduction of death to humanity as a result of Adam's disobedience to God's command in Gen. 2:17.

### 5.3.2 4Q423: 4Q Instruction<sup>9</sup>

#### Text and Translation:<sup>258</sup>

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Adam', suggests that '[t]he notion of Adam's glory is best understood as an affirmation of a particular theological anthropology, rooted, not in the *Endzeit*, but the *Urzeit*: because the true Israel are the true Adam and the Qumran community are the true Israel they possess all that Adam possessed before his departure from paradise.' Crispin H. T. Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory of Adam: Liturgical Anthropology in the Dead Sea Scrolls*. Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah 42 (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 97.

<sup>258</sup> The transcription is from John Strugnell and Daniel J. Harrington, "4QInstruction<sup>g</sup> (*Mūsār lē'mēvîn<sup>g</sup>*)," Joseph A. Fitzmyer, ed., *Qumran Cave 4. XXIV: Sapiential Texts, Part 2*, DJD XXXIV

(Frg. 1, 2, col. i)

1	[ ] זכל פרי תנובה וכל עץ נעים נחמד להשכיל הלוא גן נ[עים]	1
2	[הוא ונחמד ]ל[ה]שכיל מ[וא]וּהּ ובו המשילכה לעבדו ולשמרו vac ג[ן נאו]ת	2
3	[האדמה ]קוץ ודרדר תצמיה לכה וכוחה לא תתן לכה [ ]	3
4	[ ]במועלכה vacat [ ]	4
5	[ ] vac ילדה וכל רחמי הוּר[ת] ל[ ]הּ ש[ ]תה כל אוטכה	5
6	[ ] בכל חפציכה כי כל תצמיה [לכה] ם תמיד לא	6
7	[ ] ובמטע[ ]בם ה[ ] מואס [הרע יודע הטוב	7
8	[ ] ב[ ]זן דרכו ודרד	8
9	[ ] ה ולחם	9

- 1 [ ] and every fruit that is produced and every tree which is good, pleasing to give knowledge. Is [it] not a ga[rden of pastu]re  
 2 [and pleasant ] to [gi]ve great knowledge? He set you in charge of it to till it and guard it. An [enjoya]ble g[arden]  
 3 [ the earth,] thorns and thistles will it sprout forth for you, and its strength it will not yield to you, [ ]  
 4 [ ] in your being unfaithful  
 5 [ ] her child, and all the compassion of her that is pregna[nt ]you [... ]ed all your resources  
 6 [ ] in all your business, for everything it causes to sprout[ forth for you ] always not to  
 7 [ ]and in a planting[them [ rejecting ] the evil and knowing the good,  
 8 [ be]tween his way and the way of  
 9 [ ] and bread

### Discussion:

The text in fragments 1 and 2 of 4Q423<sup>259</sup> preserve a description of the Garden of Eden (line 1), Adam's authority over it (line 2) and a verbatim statement of the agricultural aspect of Adam's punishment from Gen. 3:18: קוץ ודרדר תצמיה לכה ('thorns and thistles will it sprout forth for you') (line 3). As in 4Q422 and

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(Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), 507-08. The transcription is given according to the observation that fragment 1 and 2 should be joined together in one column based on the shape of the two fragments. See also, T. Elgvin, "An Analysis of 4QInstruction" (PhD Diss., Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1997), 24-25. For the critique on the joining of fragment 1 and 2 i, see Matthew J. Goff, *4QInstruction*, WLAW 2 (Atlanta: SBL, 2013), 290-91.

<sup>259</sup> Part of the larger literary work entitled *4QInstruction* (initially named *Sapiential Work A*, before the publication of DJD edition by Strugnell and Harrington), 4Q423 consists of 24 fragments written in the middle or late Herodian (first half of the first century CE). Goff, *4QInstruction*, 7.

4Q504, the verb *משל* is used in line 2 to describe man's dominion over the Garden of Eden. It must be noted, however, that this text is not a simple paraphrase of the garden narrative, but instead the author draws out 'instructions' from the garden narrative to teach his intended addressee, usually referred to as a *מבין* ('understanding one'). Instructions are frequently addressed to the 'farmer' (*איש אדמה*)<sup>260</sup> with an agricultural theme.<sup>261</sup> It is not surprising therefore to find that the agricultural aspect of Adam's punishment in this fragment is particularly in focus. The description of the Garden of Eden in 4Q423 deviates from the biblical account that *every* tree (*כל עץ*) in the garden is *נעים* ('pleasant/delightful') and *נחמד להשכיל* ('desirable to make one wise,' cf. Gen. 3:6). However, the mention of 'every tree' could be a reference to the biblical notion that the man in the garden was permitted to eat from every tree except one (Gen. 2:16). Although the language is drawn from the garden narrative, the second person form of *המשילכה* ('he set you in charge') in line 2 and *במועלכה* ('in your being unfaithful') in line 4 indicate that the message is directed at the *mevin*, who is also entrusted with the responsibility to 'till' and 'keep' the garden. From the description of the Garden of Eden, the author skips the details and moves straight to the theme of the harsh condition of the cursed ground from which 'thorns and thistles' will sprout forth (line 3). Based on the extant phrase *במועלכה* ('in your being unfaithful') in line 4, which is to be connected with the harsh condition of the ground described in line 3, it is likely that the lesson to be drawn from the text is that as Adam's sin resulted in the curse on the 'ground,' human unfaithfulness will also result in an encounter with the same consequence. The text does not include a reference either to the tree of life or the tree of knowledge. Neither the death warning, nor the death penalty as punishment, is mentioned. The theme of expulsion (3:22) is not found in this text either. The theme of the harsh conditions for man in cultivating the ground is further emphasized with the added statement 'and its strength it will not yield to you,' which echoes the language of Cain's punishment (Cf. Gen. 4:12). The word *ילדה* could be translated either as 'she gave birth' or as 'her child.'<sup>262</sup> It could either be a reference to Eve giving birth to her child, i.e. Cain

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<sup>260</sup> Cf. 4Q423 5 and 4Q423 5a in Elgvin, *DJD XXXIV*, 518, 522.

<sup>261</sup> Cf. fragments 1, 3, 3a, 4, 5, 5a and 12.

<sup>262</sup> Elgvin opts for 'her child' in his translation, while Goff translates it as 'she has given birth.'

and Abel, or to the child himself. B. Wold suggests that the reference to childbirth in these lines may be connected to the curse of the woman (i.e. difficulty in childbearing, Gen. 3:16),<sup>263</sup> yet there is not enough context to be certain of whether lines 5-6 refer to the punishment given to the woman.<sup>264</sup> If this line refers to Eve's punishment, the author of 4Q423 has not followed the biblical order in which God punishes the woman first and then the man.

### 5.3.3 4Q124: 4Q Unidentified Paleo-Hebrew text 1

**Text:**<sup>265</sup>

(Frg. 4, 1-7)

]עלמ[	1
]מֶרֶבּוֹן[	2
]הָאֲדָמָה דָּלִל[	3
]מֵאֵץ כְּבוֹן[	4
]אֲתֵל[ ]רִי[	5
]זִדּוֹ[	6
]הֶ[	7

(Frg. 7, Col. ii, 1-6)

]ֶ[	1
]בְּעִלּוֹת[	2
]לְעֵב[ ]אֵת[ ]הֶ[	3
]וִישְׁלַח[	4
]גֵּרְשׁוֹן[	5
]בֶּ[	6

#### Notes and Discussion:

Contextually, either is possible.

<sup>263</sup> B. G. Wold, *Women, Men and Angels: The Qumran Wisdom Document 'Musar leMevin' and its Allusions to Genesis Creation Traditions*, WUNT 2/201 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 116.

<sup>264</sup> M. Goff suggests that the lesson in these lines is that the *mevin* should bear children as Adam and Eve did. Goff, *ibid.*, 297.

<sup>265</sup> For the transcription, see Patrick W. Skehan, Eugene Ulrich, Judith E. Sanderson, "4Qpaleo Unidentified (1)," P. Skehan et al., eds., *Qumran Cave 4. IV: Palaeo-Hebrew and Greek Biblical Manuscripts, DJD IX* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 208-09, pl. XLIV-XLV.

Among the manuscripts found in Cave 4 are thousands of tiny fragmentary texts containing only a few words or even letters. Connecting and deciphering these fragments is not an easy task and researchers have not always been successful in reproducing anything meaningful from the fragments, hence some of them are categorized as ‘unidentified texts.’ Three words were initially identified from fragments 4 and 7 of 4Q124, which helped the scholars with the conjecture that the manuscript originally contained some allusions to the garden narrative in Gen. 2-3: the word הָאֲדָמָה [‘the ground’] in line 3 of fragment 4, וישלח (‘to send’) and גרשו (‘to expel’) in lines 4-5 of fragment 7. The position of the latter two verbs in close proximity shows that these lines from fragment 7 likely contained a paraphrase of the expulsion narrative (Gen. 3:23-24) in which God drives Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden.

More recently, based on his recognition of the unique shape of the letter *qoph* (ק) in this manuscript,<sup>266</sup> Alexey Yuditsky has suggested changing the first letter of the word דלל (‘to be low’) in line 3 to a *qoph* (ק). Changing the first letter, which looks like a *dalet* (ד), to a *qoph* (ק), changes the word to קלל (‘to curse’) and such a change would make much more sense with the preceding word הָאֲדָמָה (‘the ground’) within the context of the garden narrative. If Yuditsky’s suggestion is correct, though a different word is used in this text for the verb meaning ‘to curse’ (ארוּרָה in Gen. 3:17), the two words הָאֲדָמָה and קלל together become an explicit reference to and paraphrase of God’s curse on the ground due to the transgression of Adam found in the biblical account: ‘cursed is the ground because of you’ (3:17). The word הָאֲדָמָה itself appears often throughout the early chapters of Genesis, yet the identification of the verb קלל (‘to curse’) certainly helps us to understand the word within the context of Adam’s punishment and to relate the ‘unidentified’ content of 4Q124 with Gen. 1-3 with more confidence. Moreover, the fact that a variant verb קלל is used for ארר

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<sup>266</sup> Nir Hasson, “Alphabet Soup in Dead Sea Scrolls Opens a Window to an Ancient Hebrew World,” *Haaretz*, 11.08.2017. <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-1.806283>. I am indebted to Professor Lim for bringing this article to my attention. For photographic comparison of the letters, see Alexey Yuditsky, “ההדרה חדשה: (4Q124): עושו ודם אדם וישלח: מגילת חוכמה המזכירה את חטא אדם ועושו (4Q124): ההדרה חדשה,” 79 (2017), 486. [in Hebrew].

helps to identify this text not as a biblical manuscript but as a text that ‘reworks’ or ‘rewrites’ the expulsion account from the Book of Genesis.

In his recently published article, with the help of the digital photographs produced by the Israel Antiquities Authority and his understanding of the unique use of the letter *qoph* (ק) in 4Q124,<sup>267</sup> Yuditsky has suggested an improved reading of the fragments 4 and 7 (col. i-ii) of 4Q124<sup>268</sup> in which he combines the two fragments together (4 +7) by joining the left edge of the second column of fragment 7 with the damaged portion on the right edge of fragment 4. Yuditsky’s reconstruction of the damaged parts of the left edge of fragment 4 are based on similar phrases and words from the expulsion account in the MT, the text of 4Q422 and 4Q504.<sup>269</sup> Yuditsky’s suggested transcription of 4Q124 is as follows (English translation is mine):

	Frag. 4	Frag. 7 col. ii	Frag. 7 col. i	
	עלמ[		]○[ ]○[	1
	ו]תשוקתו	פְעֻלוֹת [ ] פֶּרַע [ ]	וְלֹא [ ]	2
	לעפר ואת הָאדמה דלל] בעבורו	וישלח] הו [מאץ כבו]ד ומגן עדן	וְלֹא תִשְׁכַּח עֲלֵיתוֹ	3
		גֶּרְשׁוֹ [ כִּי אָכַל פְּרִי [ ]	וְיִזְוֶה וְהִקִּימוֹתָם	4
		בס] סעו [ ]	וְיִזְוֶה [ ]	5
		ה]○	וְיִזְוֶה [ ]	6
				7

  

	Frag. 7 col. i	Frag. 7 col. ii	Frag. 4
1	...		...
2	...	work...	and [his longing/desire <sup>270</sup>
3	]and do not forget his deeds...	for dust and he cursed the ground [because of him <sup>271</sup>	
4	]...be strong and stand...	and he sent him out from the land <sup>272</sup> of glor[y, and the Garden of Eden	
5	] for transgression	he drove him out [for] he ate the fruit [	
6	...	...	
7	...	...	

<sup>267</sup> Yuditsky, *ibid.*, 478-79 and 484-86.

<sup>268</sup> Based on the seam found in several passages, it seems that the scroll of 4Q124 had at least two sheets, each sheet containing two columns (e.g. frag. 4 and 7). *Ibid.*, 484.

<sup>269</sup> Yuditsky identifies 4Q124 as a sapiential text as his examination of the text in comparison with 4Q422 and 4Q504 shows some possible affinities between them in their use of the language from the garden narrative, *ibid.*, 485.

<sup>270</sup> The reconstruction of תשוקתו (‘his longing’) is based on 1QS 11:22: ולעפר תשוקתו (‘for dust is his longing’). *Ibid.*, 482.

<sup>271</sup> Cf. Gen. 3:17.

<sup>272</sup> The author probably skipped *resh* (ר).

This newly deciphered text of 4Q124 shows that the second column of fragment 7 combined with fragment 4 contains a paraphrase of the expulsion narrative in Gen. 3:22-24, while the first column contains some type of interpretation or instruction from the author based on the expulsion narrative found in the column next to it. Yuditsky comments that the text in its original form probably calls upon the reader to learn from the case of the first man (Adam) who received only one commandment but did not keep it and thus received the punishment of the expulsion from the garden and death, and so those who receive many commandments and laws but deviate from them will be punished more severely.<sup>273</sup> His reconstruction of תשוקתו ('his longing/desire') at the end of line 2 frag. 4 is from 1QS 11:22 in which the statement ולעפר תשוקתו ('for dust is his longing') is used to convey the idea of man's frailty (cf. Psalms 103:14). If his reconstruction is correct, then it may be that the author understood the notion of 'returning back to dust' within the context of the punishment for Adam's disobedience. The mention of the 'cursed ground' immediately following the word ולעפר ('for dust') in line 3 and the mention of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil also support such an argument. However, it is important to be cautious as the rest of the text, which would have been helpful for our understanding of the whole text, has not been preserved, so any conclusive interpretation on the death warning or the notion of 'returning to dust' in 4Q124 is not warranted.

As Yuditsky suggests, the damaged portion at the end of the fragmentary statement ]אכל פרי[ כי גרשון ('he drove him out [ ] he ate fruit.') in line 5 probably included a phrase that elaborates on the name of the tree עץ הדעת טוב ורע ('the tree of the knowledge of good and evil'). However, as this section expounds on the expulsion narrative, an alternative suggestion is that line 5 paraphrases Gen. 3:22 in which God sends the man out of the garden so that he cannot eat from the tree of life. The size of the damaged portion between גרשון and אכל seems a bit long for Yuditsky's reconstruction of a single word כי ('for'). Perhaps there was an imperfect form of the verb אכל with a negative particle פן.

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<sup>273</sup> Yuditsky, *ibid.*, 485.



## 5.4 Conclusion

Despite the significant interest in the Book of Genesis among the Dead Sea Scrolls and the importance and centrality of the command concerning the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the garden narrative, it is rather surprising to find the absence of the actual death warning in the extant manuscripts with references and allusions to Adam's disobedience. The fragmentary condition of the scrolls also adds to the difficulty of analyzing the exact content and message of the texts. Although it may not be possible to be definitive about the DSS materials, the following conclusions may be suggested from the examination of the allusions and references to the divine command and punishment:

- 1) Other than the two biblical scrolls of Genesis found in Cave 4 (4QGen<sup>b</sup> and 4QGen<sup>h2</sup>), the verbatim statement of the death warning מוֹת תָּמוּת ('you shall surely die') is not attested in any of the non-biblical texts that 'rewrite' or 'rework' the account of the creation and transgression of Adam.
- 2) Although scattered across different manuscripts, allusions to the divine command concerning the forbidden fruit and selective features of punishment for the disobedience are evident:
  - A. The most precise reference to the prohibition against 'eating' the fruit is found in 4Q422 1 i 10. The text of 4Q422 also shows the similar phenomenon of putting emphasis on the woman's role and responsibility for the act of disobedience, already witnessed in the translational process from the HB to LXX. God's instruction to Adam not to 'turn away' in 4Q504 8 7 is also likely to be an allusion to the divine command concerning the forbidden fruit.
  - B. The unidentified antecedent of the feminine suffix on the prepositional phrase מִמֶּנָּה ('from it/her') in 4Q303 1 9 leaves open the possibility for the 4Q303 to stand in the line of exegetical tradition evidenced in its contemporaneous and later literatures (e.g. Philo, Vulg., Apoc. Mos. etc.), which blame woman for the transgression.
  - C. The text of 4Q423 contains a mention of 'thorns and thistles' for 'unfaithfulness,' alluding to the agricultural aspect of Adam's punishment in Gen. 3:18, while the fragmentary text of 4Q124

mentions the 'cursed' land and 'expulsion' of Adam resulting from Adam's partaking of the forbidden fruit.

- 3) In all of the texts discussed above, Adam is not blamed to a great degree for the transgression, nor for the possible introduction of death to humanity. Although there seems to be no explicit exegetical attempt in any of the DSS materials to explain the origin of 'death,' the existence of a line of interpretation that views the fate of man's 'mortality' as the result of Adam's disobedience to the command in Gen. 2:17 may be suggested with caution based on the authors' selective focus and close placement of two themes in 4Q504 and 4Q124: 'man's returning to dust' and the 'divine commandment and/or transgression of Adam.'



## Chapter Six

### Genesis 2:17 in the Book of Ben Sira

#### 6.1 Introduction

The book of Ben Sira (*Sirach* in Greek and *Ecclesiasticus* in Latin) is one of the most important texts of the literature of the Second Temple Period, providing us with insights into early Jewish reflections upon and receptions of Gen. 1-3. While a potential source of the association of the death warning in Gen. 2:17 (or the punishment of Adam and Eve for their disobedience to the command) with the introduction of death was barely visible in the fragmentary texts from the DSS, two verses in the book of Ben Sira in particular provide a distinctive interpretation of the introduction of death into humanity in the sense of becoming ‘mortal’: 1) ‘From a woman (אשה) is the beginning of sin, and because of her, we all die/perish (גוענו)’ (25:24); 2) ‘All flesh wears out like a garment, for the perpetual statute is: “they shall surely die/perish” (גוע יגוע) (14:17). The aim of this chapter is twofold. First, it will question the scholarly view of Sira’s understanding of death as a natural part of creation. Second, it will add further textual support to the view that Sir. 14:17 is Sira’s allusions to the divine command and to Eve’s disobedience of the command found in Gen. 2:17.<sup>274</sup> After briefly reviewing the complex textual history of the

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<sup>274</sup> Unlike Sir. 14:17, Sir. 25:24 has been widely understood as the earliest post-Genesis reference that puts blame on a ‘woman’ (אשה) for the introduction of sin and death. For similar views that blame Eve for bringing death, Cf. Apo. Mos., Philo (LAB 13:10) and 1 Tim 2:13-14. Those who consider Sir. 25:24 as a reference to Eve include A.P. Hayman, “The Fall, Freewill and Human Responsibility in Rabbinic Judaism,” 16; Warren C. Trenchard, *Ben Sira’s View of Woman: A Literary Analysis*, Brown Judaic Studies 38 (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1982), 82; Alexander A. Di Lella and Patrick W. Skehan, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira: A New Translation with Notes, Introduction and Commentary*, AYB 39 (New Haven: YUP, 2008), 349; Miryam T. Brand, *Evil Within and Without: The Source of Sin and its Nature as Portrayed in Second Temple Literature* (Göttingen: V&R, 2013), 113-114, etc. Teresa Ann Ellis argues that the Greek translation of 25:24 alludes to Eve (but not the Hebrew) and suggests that the figure to whom the Hebrew text of Sir. 25:24 refers is the Greek figure Pandora. Her argument that the referent in Sir. 25:24 cannot be Eve is partially based on the fact that the verb employed in this verse is גוע (‘to die/to perish’) and not מות (‘to die’). Teresa A. Ellis, “Is Eve the ‘Woman’ in Sirach 25:24?” *CBQ* 73 (2011): 742; idem., *Gender in the Book of Ben Sira: Divine Wisdom, Erotic Poetry, and the Garden of Eden*, BZAW 453 (Berlin: WdG, 2013), 158-

162. Similarly, H. Kelly denies the allusion to Eve in 25:24 based on the usage of a different verb in Sir. 25:24 and suggests that it should be understood in the sense: ‘from a wife is the start of iniquity – and because of her we *waste away*.’ Kelly, “Adam Citings Before the Intrusion of Satan: Recontextualizing Paul’s Theology of Sin and Death,” 17. However, as will be observed in this chapter, there is not much difference in meaning between the two verbs, particularly when they occur together within the same context. I find rather that Sir. 25:24 is closely associated with Sir. 14:17 in that together they echo the divine command and the woman’s disobedience to that command through the use of the same verb גוע. Moreover, I suspect that Sir. 14:17 and 25:24 share the same concept of ‘death’ in that both verses borrow expressions from the same biblical verse. Job. 34:15 witnesses the use of the verb גוע in associated with the adverb יחד (‘all/together’) as in Sir. 25:24, and the use of the verb גוע with the phrase כל הבשר (‘all flesh’), as in Sir. 14:17. Moreover, it must be noted, as James L. Crenshaw observes, ‘[W]ith a single exception, Ben Sira withholds the names of persons to whom he refers in 1:1–43:33. That one specific reference is Lot (Sir 16:8). Ben Sira does mention Jacob, but the reference seems always to be national, hence synonymous with Israel,’ in James L. Crenshaw, “The Book of Sirach,” in *The New Interpreter’s Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997), v: 622–23. The lack of a mention of Eve’s name in Sir. 25:24 (as well as Adam’s name in 14:17) does not pose a problem in itself in terms of it being considered a reference to Eve. For these reasons, I view Sir. 25:24 as a likely allusion to Eve’s disobedience to the divine command that Ben Sira refers to in Sir. 14:17. In this chapter, I am inclined to focus mainly on the death warning in Sir. 14:17. Some scholars, including J.J. Collins, find a contradiction between Sir. 25:24 and Sira’s other statements about death (particularly 17: 1-2) therefore they suggest the possibility of Sir. 25:24 being a redactional addition. J.J. Collins, “The Root of Immortality: Death in the Context of Jewish Wisdom,” *HTR* 71 (1978), 179; see also J.J. Collins, “Before the Fall, The Earliest Interpretations of Adam and Eve,” 296-301; K. Schmid, “Loss of Immortality? Hermeneutical Aspects of Genesis 2-3 and its Early Receptions,” 12; Samuel L. Adams, *Wisdom in Transition: Act and Consequence in Second Temple Instructions*, JSJSup 125 (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 187. In light of the surrounding text, which discusses the ‘bad wife’ in general and her influence on her husband, Jack Levison argues that the woman whom Ben Sira refers to in 25:24 is the evil wife, and accordingly, ‘all’ those who die (גוע) are husbands in general. Jack Levison, “Is Eve to Blame? A Contextual Analysis of Sirach 25:24,” *CBQ* 47 (1985): 617-23. Crenshaw finds Levison’s argument based on contextual evidence unconvincing. Crenshaw, “The Book of Sirach,” 764. The sudden inclusion of ‘all people’ (יחד) in the discussion of woman’s bad effect on her husband (אישה) seems somewhat awkward. In this regard, I concur with W.C. Trenchard who sees 25:24 as a ‘climax’ to the entire section on the bad wife as he writes: ‘The author [Sira] has deliberately traced the evil of women and their evil influence to a woman’s role in the origin of all evil.’ Trenchard, *Ben Sira’s View of Woman: A Literary Analysis*, 82. Note also the use of the verb גוע with יחד (‘all’), i.e. ‘we all die’, in 25:24, which is comparable to a more general statement in Sir. 9:8: ‘on account of a woman many (רבים) will be led astray (שחטה).’

book of Ben Sira, Sira's description of the creation and death of humanity, which alludes to early chapters of Genesis, will be discussed. Then, I will focus on Sir. 14:17b, with special attention to the usage and meaning of the phrases גוע יגוע ('they shall surely die') and חוק עולם ('perpetual statute').

## 6.2 The Hebrew Text and Translations of Ben Sira

In accessing the text of Ben Sira, it is important to take into consideration its complicated transmission history and the plurality of the texts. The book was originally written in Hebrew (200-180 BCE), but no Hebrew manuscripts were discovered until late in the nineteenth century. It was translated into Greek by the author's grandson in Alexandria (116 BCE).<sup>275</sup> Six medieval manuscripts were discovered in the Cairo Genizah,<sup>276</sup> and some small portions of the text were discovered at Qumran<sup>277</sup> and Masada (50 BCE -70 CE). These fragments discovered in Qumran and Masada testify to the early period of the composition and circulation of the book and its faithful transmission is confirmed as the medieval manuscripts from Cairo Genizah have been found to be identical to those of Masada. Overall, about two-thirds of the original Hebrew text of the book has been preserved. General consensus is that there are two different Hebrew texts and two different Greek translations: the oldest form of the Hebrew text (HI or HTI) was the basis for the

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<sup>275</sup> Cf. Benjamin G. Wright, "Sirach," in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Books of the Bible*, ed. M. D. Coogan (New York: OUP, 2011), 324; T.H. Lim, *The Formation of the Jewish Canon*, AYBRL (New Haven; London: YUP, 2013), 94-106; Maurice Gilbert, "Methodological and Hermeneutical Trends in Modern Exegesis on the Book of Ben Sira," in *The Wisdom of Ben Sira: Studies on Tradition, Redaction, and Theology*, ed. A. Passaro and G. Bellia (Berlin: WdG, 2008), 1-13.

<sup>276</sup> The manuscripts from Cairo Genizah are denoted A through F: Ms A (3:6b-16:26); Ms B (30:11-33:3; 35:11-38:27b); Ms C (3:14-18, 21-22; 4:21-23, 30, 31; 5:4-7, 9-13; 6:18b, 19, 28, 35; 7:1, 2, 4, 6, 17, 20, 21, 23-25; 18:31b-19:3b; 20:5-7, 13, 22-23; 25:8,13, 17-24; 26:1-3, 13, 15-17, 36:27-31; 37:19, 22, 24, 26; 41:16); Ms D (36:29-38:1a); Ms E (32:16-34:1); Ms F (31:24-32:7; 32:12-33:8).

<sup>277</sup> Fragments from Cave 2 (2Q18) preserve 6:14-15; 20-31 and 11Q Psalms (11Q5) contains 51:13-19, 30. The Masada manuscripts contain 39:27-43:30. For more discussion on the Hebrew manuscripts of Ben Sira and their relation and influence on other texts found at Qumran, see Emile Puech, "Ben Sira and Qumran," in *The Wisdom of Ben Sira: Studies on Tradition, Redaction, and Theology*, ed. Angelo Passaro and Giuseppe Bellia, DCLS 1 (Berlin: WdG, 2008), 79-118.

grandson's translation (GI), then it was revised and expanded over time with additional materials (about 135 lines), which constitutes the second Hebrew text (HII).<sup>278</sup> The expanded Greek text that mainly translated HII is designated GII.<sup>279</sup> The Old Latin translation, called *Vetus Latina* (2<sup>nd</sup> CE), and one of the two different versions of Syriac translation (7<sup>th</sup> CE) are mainly based on GII, whereas the earlier version of Syriac (mid 4<sup>th</sup> CE) uses both HI and HII.<sup>280</sup>

### 6.3 The Creation and Death of the Human in Ben Sira Reconsidered

In Sir. 15:14, Ben Sira states that it is God who created human beings (אדם) from the beginning (מבראשית).<sup>281</sup> With regard to the source from which God creates the

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<sup>278</sup> B. Wright, *ibid.*, 328.

<sup>279</sup> For instance, in Sir. 17:11 of GII, the following statement is added: 'in order to be mindful that those who exist now are mortal (θνητός).' This is perhaps an early Christian editorial insertion to defend the doctrine of the original immortal status of human beings in light of other seemingly opposing ideas in the same chapter. Cf. 17:1: 'The Lord created a human being out of earth, and he returned him into it again'; and 17:30: 'For not all things are able to be among humans, because a son of man is not immortal (ἀθάνατος).' There is no Hebrew extant for ch. 17.

<sup>280</sup> B. Wright, *ibid.*, 328-29. The Latin (*Vetus Latina*) nevertheless contains some additions that are not extant in the Greek, (e.g. Sir. 24:3). Concerning the Syriac translation, there are two different opinions: H.P. Rüger suggests that the Syriac translator used HII, while M.D. Nelson suggests that the translator mainly used HI, while consulting HII, GI and GII. M.D. Nelson, *The Syriac Version of the Wisdom of Ben Sira Compared to the Greek and Hebrew Materials* (SBL. DS 107, Atlanta, 1988) and H. P. Rüger, *Text und Textform im Hebräischen Sirach* (BZAW 112, Berlin, 1970), quoted in M. Gilbert, "Methodological and Hermeneutical Trends in Modern Exegesis on the Book of Ben Sira," 4. The source text of the Syriac translator is not extant.

<sup>281</sup> The generic term ἄνθρωπος ('human being') is used in the LXX to render אדם ('Adam/human being'), however, M. Segal suggests that the Hebrew term could perhaps be associated with the specific person named Adam as this verse employs the language from Gen. 1-3, reflecting the paradigm for the incident of man's receiving the divine command in Gen. 2:17: 'God from the beginning made אדם and [gave him into his adversary] and gave him into the hand of his inclination... Before each person אדם are life and death and whichever one he desires will be given to him... I set you before you this day life and prosperity, death and adversity' (Sir. 15:14-17). The words in parenthesis are omitted in the Greek and Syriac. Michael Segal, "The First Patriarchs: Law and Narrative in the Garden of Eden Story," in *Rewriting and Interpreting the Hebrew Bible: The Biblical Patriarchs in the Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. Devorah Dimant and Reinhard Gregor Kratz (Berlin: WdG, 2013), 79-80.

human beings, Ben Sira consistently reflects the biblical notion that human beings are made of dust from the ground.<sup>282</sup> Notably, Ben Sira's observation in 17:1a that 'God made the human being out of earth (γῆ)' alludes to Gen. 2:7. In the second line of the same verse (Sir. 17:1b), Ben Sira further states that '...into it [the earth] is their return,' the language of which recalls the notion of man's returning to dust in Gen. 3:19 as a punishment laid on Adam and Eve. Immediately following this, in Sir. 17:2, is his statement that God gave human beings 'days in number and a fixed time,' possibly alluding to the shortening of human lifespan in Gen. 6:3: 'man is flesh, but his days shall be a hundred and twenty years.'<sup>283</sup> A few verses later in 17:7, Sira alludes to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil: 'With knowledge of understanding, he filled them, and good things and bad he showed them (Sir. 17:7).' It is possible, as suggested by J.R. Levison, to interpret this verse as a positive portrayal of possession of wisdom in contrast to the negative biblical portrayal of the possession of knowledge due to eating from the tree of knowledge in Gen. 2-3.<sup>284</sup> However, God's 'giving of knowledge' in 17:7 should not necessarily be interpreted as giving the particular knowledge that could have been attained from partaking of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and God's further act of 'showing good and evil' in 17:7b can be equally interpreted as God's introducing the prohibition against

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<sup>282</sup> Cf. Sir. 14:11-12; 16:30; 17:1-2; 32; 18:9; 33:10; 40:1; 41:3-4.

<sup>283</sup> Jean-Sebastien Rey, on the possible connection between Sir. 17:1 and Gen. 6:3, writes '[I]f this link between Sir. 17:1 and Gen 6:3 is justified, then Ben Sira...uses a statement that appears as the consequence of human failure in the Genesis narrative and presents it as part of the original divine plan' and he concludes 'it seems clear that in Sir. 17:1 death is not the consequence of disobedience, but was originally included in the divine plan of creation.' Jean-Sébastien Rey, "*In the Garden of Good and Evil: Reimagining a Tradition* (Sir. 17:1-14, 4Q303, 4QInstruction, 1QS 4:25-26, and 1QSa 1:10-11)," in *Is There a Text in this Cave*, ed. M. Cioata, C. Hempel and A. Feldman, STDJ 119 (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 476. However, it is reasonable to doubt that Sira's allusions to the creation and return of the human being from/to dust in chapter 17 are also punitive in context, therefore in fitting with the punishment statements in Gen. 3:19 and Gen. 6:3.

<sup>284</sup> John R. Levison, *Portraits of Adam in Early Judaism: From Sirach to 2 Baruch*, JSPSup 1 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1988), 37, and Shane Berg, "Ben Sira, the Genesis Creation Accounts, and the Knowledge of God's Will," *JBL* 132 (2013): 144, 149. Similarly, J.J. Collins observes: '[in Sira] there is no suggestion, however that they were forbidden to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.' J.J. Collins, *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age*, OTL (Louisville: WJK, 1997), 59.



partaking from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.<sup>285</sup> Ben Sira reminds the reader once again about man's inescapable fate of death at the end of chapter 17 with following statements: 'for not all things are able to be among humans, because a son of man is not immortal (ἀθάνατος) (17:30)'<sup>286</sup>; 'all human beings are earth and ashes (17:32b).' Based on these observations of Sira in chapter 17 and a few other passages that seem to speak of death as unavoidable for human beings (e.g. 41:3-4), John. J. Collins concludes that the book of Ben Sira as a whole depicts death as a natural condition of human existence since the time of creation: '[f]or Sirach death is an indisputable given and is part of the order of creation.'<sup>287</sup> B. Wright interprets Sir. 17:1 in a similar sense:

Of course, according to Genesis, the introduction of death into the world was an aberration, a consequence for disobeying God's order not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. For Ben Sira, by contrast, death was part of God's divine intention all along, whether humans obeyed or not.<sup>288</sup>

However, it must be noted that the common fact and observation that everyone is currently mortal and therefore will eventually die remains true regardless of one argument or the other, whether death is a lot naturally allotted to human beings, or part of a punishment punitively resulting from Adam's disobedience in the Garden of

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<sup>285</sup> In the biblical garden narrative, it is not the knowledge of good and evil per se that Adam and Eve attain after eating from the tree, but the knowledge of their nakedness (Gen. 3:7). Moreover, throughout the HB, the idea of attaining knowledge of good and evil is described positively, and such descriptions do not necessarily refer to the very first occurrence of the term 'knowledge of good and evil' in early chapters of Genesis. The term 'good and evil' occurs in Ben Sira six times: 11:14; 17:7; 18:8; 33:14; 37:18; 39:4. As S. Berg observes, the use of the term 'good and evil' in Ben Sira relates not only to Gen. 2-3, but also to Deut. 30:15 in which Moses states: 'See, this day I set before you life and good, death and evil,' thereby creating a visible link between the allusion to the garden narrative and the Mosaic law codes in Deut. 30:15. Berg, "Ben Sira, the Genesis Creation Accounts, and the knowledge of God's Will," 149-50.

<sup>286</sup> This verse is not extant in the Hebrew text.

<sup>287</sup> J.J. Collins, "The Root of Immortality: Death in the Context of Jewish Wisdom," 179; see also idem., "Before the Fall, The Earliest Interpretations of Adam and Eve," 296-301, and K. Schmid, "Loss of Immortality? Hermeneutical Aspects of Genesis 2-3 and its Early receptions," 12; José Anoz, "La Muerte en el Ben Sira," *Mayéutica* 5 (1979): 7-13.

<sup>288</sup> B.G. Wright, "Biblical Interpretation in the Book of Ben Sira," in *A Companion to Biblical Interpretation in Early Judaism*, ed. Matthias Henze (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 377.

Eden.<sup>289</sup> In fact, throughout the HB there are statements that reflect the popular biblical *topos* that everyone is indeed mortal and therefore dies.<sup>290</sup> Nonetheless, these statements do not necessarily preclude the possibility that universal death is a result of human disobedience. In this regard, it is important to note that although Ben Sira states that even death comes from the Lord (11:14), he also presents seemingly opposing ideas about and descriptions of death that are perhaps contextually and implicitly grounded in the punishment of Adam and Eve. For instance, the language in some of Sira's allusions to Gen. 2-3 has close affinities with the statements found in the punishment statements in Gen. 3:14-19: 'God has apportioned... a heavy yoke upon the "sons of a human being/Adam" (בני אדם) from the day that one comes out from his mother's womb until the day that he returns (שוב) to the mother of all the living (Sir 40:1).'<sup>291</sup> This verse makes reference to the idea of man returning to the ground by borrowing the language from the punishment statements, but Sira does not expound further on such punishments (i.e. 'heavy yoke' and 'returning to dust') resulting from the garden incident. In Sir. 40:9-10, Sira also states that evil and death (רעה ומות), along with blood, strife, sword, calamities, famine, ruin and scourge, are created (ברא) for the wicked.' Note also Sir. 15:17: 'life and death are before a human being (אדם), whichever he desires will be given to him'; and Sir. 24:28: 'The first human being did not know her [wisdom] perfectly..., ' both of which may be possible allusions to the disobedience and punishment of Adam and Eve for transgressing the divine command in Gen. 2:17. In this respect, caution is required when judging Sira's reflections on death in other places that seem to present it as a natural order of creation since they could be understood in the same way as the post garden narrative statements in the HB. It is possible that all these expressions that

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<sup>289</sup> For discussion on various interpretative considerations for Gen. 3:14-19, see chapter 3 of this dissertation.

<sup>290</sup> Cf. Eccl 3:20-21; 12:7; Ps 49:12, 20; 90:3; 103:14; 104:24-29; Job 34:14-15, etc. This way of expressing death also appears in the NT. See Acts 17:26: 'He made from one *man* every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined *their* appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation.' We cannot conclude that the author of Acts, in his allusion to the first man Adam, believed in the idea of original mortality based on this verse alone.

<sup>291</sup> The expression 'the mother of all the living' is from the statement concerning Eve's punishment in Gen. 3:20.

seem to contradict Sira's statement in 25:24, 'From a woman is the beginning of sin, and because of her, we all die (גוענו),' presuppose the idea of universal death caused by the disobedience.<sup>292</sup> We should now turn to Sir. 14:17.

## 6.4 The Perpetual Statute: 'They Shall Surely Die'

### 6.4.1 Past Scholarship on Sir. 14:17

It is surprising that scholars have not paid much attention to Sir. 14:17 and its possible association with the divine death warning in Gen. 2:17. Regarding Ben Sira's interpretation of the death of humanity, various scholars have rested their judgments on Sir. 25:24 – which blames a 'woman' for the 'beginning' (תחלת) of sin and death – either in favor or against the interpretation that mortality is a result of Adam's sin.<sup>293</sup> In fact, some simply ignore or briefly skip over Sir. 14:17 in their discussion of death in Ben Sira, and those who do include this verse in their discussion treat it as one of the examples of Ben Sira speaking of death as the natural lot originally destined for humanity.<sup>294</sup> Konrad Schmid, for instance, argues that

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<sup>292</sup> In fact, neither the HB (even in the very statements of punishment laid on Adam and Eve [Gen. 3:14-19]), nor Ben Sira explicitly indicate that death is the human lot as a result of Adam's disobedience. Similarly, there is not a single mention about humans being created mortal in the first place. Aforementioned scholars and readers of the bible seem to make a mistake in assuming the presence or absence of such doctrines in the HB, as well as in Ben Sira, by noting various passages throughout the texts that perhaps emphasize only the vulnerability of 'mortal' human beings against 'immortal' God, but that do not necessarily provide a clear explanation as to the origin of death, either as a part of creation or as a consequence of Adam's disobedience to the command. It is this ambiguity presented in the garden narrative that draws one back from an affirmative answer to the question of whether Adam and Eve, the first human beings, were created mortal, even with the ample expressions found in the HB that all human beings will eventually return to dust.

<sup>293</sup> J. Levison argues that the 'woman' in Sir. 25:24 is not 'Eve,' but woman in general. Levison, "Is Eve to Blame? A Contextual Analysis of Sirach 25:24," 617-23. J.J. Collins and K. Schmid concur with Levison's argument. Cf. footnote 268 above.

<sup>294</sup> J.J. Collins does not mention Sir. 14:17 in his discussion of Ben Sira's view of creation and death. See, J.J. Collins, "Before the Fall: The Earliest Interpretations of Adam and Eve," 296-301. In his earlier essay, although Collins mentions Sir. 14:17, he does not relate it to Gen. 2:17 and asserts that 'death... is a part of the order of creation' for Sira. J.J. Collins, "The Root of Immortality: Death in the Context of Jewish Wisdom," 179; K. Schmid, *ibid.*, 12. In a more recently published work, F. Castillo does not include or discuss Sir. 14:17 in his list of Sira's references to Adam in the book of

Sira's view of death 'as a regular and common feature of creation' is 'most clearly' demonstrated in Sir. 14:17 and his translation of this verse is as follows: 'All living beings become old like a garment, for it is an eternal law to die.'<sup>295</sup> Benjamin Wright, while acknowledging the possible connection between Sir. 14:17 and Gen. 2:17, nevertheless denies the possibility based on the observation that the verb employed in 14:17 is not the same as that of Gen. 2:17 and that, in Sir. 33:14-15, Sira considers both life and death as the works of God: '[G]ood is opposite evil, and life is opposite death...and so look at all of the works of the Most High, two by two, one opposite the other one.'<sup>296</sup> To my knowledge, Bradley Gregory and Frederick Tennant are the only scholars who discuss Sir. 14:17b, albeit briefly, as a plausible reference to Gen. 2:17. In relation to his understanding of חוק עולם ('perpetual statute'), Gregory comments that 'beyond the divine pronouncements of death in the early portions of Genesis, it is difficult to think of a plausible reference for the "ancient decree."<sup>297</sup> Based on his understanding, F.R. Tennant considers Sir. 14:17b as an 'obvious reference to Gen. 2:17,' similarly suggesting that Sira is attributing the introduction of death to the disobedience of Adam and Eve.<sup>298</sup> In the following section, the phrases גוע יגוע ('they shall surely die') and חוק עולם ('perpetual statute')

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Ben Sira. His examination of other texts (17:1, 30-32; 33:10; 40:1, 11) leads him to conclude that '[t]he most salient feature of Adam in Sirach is that all human beings are mortal by nature.' See, F. De Jesús Legarreta Castillo, *The Figure of Adam in Romans 5 and 1 Corinthians 15: The New Creation and its Ethical and Social Reconfigurations* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2014) 38-46.

<sup>295</sup> Schmid, *ibid.*, 12.

<sup>296</sup> B. Wright, "Biblical Interpretation in the Book of Ben Sira," 377.

<sup>297</sup> Bradley C. Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring: Generosity in the Book of Sira*, DCLS 2 (Berlin: WdG, 2010), 116-17. Box/Oesterley's translation, 'Thou shall surely die!' seems to reflect the editors' understanding of the verse as an allusion to Gen. 2:17. George H. Box and William O. E. Oesterley, "The Book of Sirach," *APOT*, 1, 368. Otto Kaiser also seems to interpret the verse in a similar sense and writes: 'it is a *hōq olām*, an eternal statute...that all flesh shall be mortal.' Otto Kaiser, "Covenant and Law in Ben Sira" in *Covenant as Context: Essays in Honour of E.W. Nicholson*, ed. A.D.H. Mayes and R.B. Salters (Oxford: OUP, 2003), 253. Rudolph Smend also treats Sir. 14:17 in his textual notes as a quotation (anführungszeichen zu denken) of Gen. 2:17. See Rudolph Smend, *Die Weisheit des Jesus Sirach Erklärt*, (Berlin: Reimer, 1906), 136. See also, J. Crenshaw, "The Book of Sirach," 716.

<sup>298</sup> Frederick R. Tennant, "The Teaching of Ecclesiasticus and Wisdom on the Introduction of Sin and Death," *JTS* 2 (1901): 212-13.

in 14:17 will be analyzed in more detail, based on which I am inclined to concur with the last two scholars who view Sir. 14:17 as a likely reference to Gen. 2:17.

#### 6.4.2 Text and Translation<sup>299</sup>

Hebrew (MS. A),<sup>300</sup> Greek (LXX), Syr. and Vg.

14:17 כָּל הַבָּשָׂר<sup>a</sup> כְּבִגְד יִבְלֶה<sup>b</sup> וְחֹק עוֹלָם<sup>b</sup> גּוֹעַ יְגוּעוּ<sup>c</sup>

All flesh wears out as a garment,  
for the perpetual statute is: ‘They (3<sup>rd</sup> pl.) shall surely die/perish.’

πάσα σὰρξ ὡς ἱμάτιον παλαιοῦται  
ἢ γὰρ διαθήκη ἀπ’ αἰῶνος θανάτω ἀποθανῆ.

All flesh becomes old like a garment,  
for<sup>301</sup> the covenant from ancient time is: ‘By death you (2<sup>nd</sup> sg.) will die’

ܟܠܗ ܘܒܫܐ ܟܝܟܠܝܢ ܟܝܟܠܝܢ ܟܝܟܠܝܢ ܟܝܟܠܝܢ ܟܝܟܠܝܢ ܟܝܟܠܝܢ ܟܝܟܠܝܢ ܟܝܟܠܝܢ ܟܝܟܠܝܢ ܟܝܟܠܝܢ

Because<sup>302</sup> of all people will certainly wear out,

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<sup>299</sup> The Hebrew of Ben Sira is from Ze’ev ben-Hayyim, *The Book of Ben Sira: Text, Concordance and an Analysis of the Vocabulary*, (Jerusalem: The Academy of the Hebrew Language and the Shrine of the Book, 1973), 21 and Pancratius C. Beentjes, *The Book of Ben Sira in Hebrew: A Text of All Extant Hebrew Manuscripts and a Synopsis of All Parallel Hebrew Ben Sira Texts*, VTSUp 68 (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 43. The Greek text is from the critical edition of Sirach in the Göttingen series. Joseph, Ziegler, *Sapientia Iesu Filii Sirach. Septuaginta Vetus Testamentum Graecum XII*. 2nd ed. (Göttingen: V&R, 1980). The Latin is from Weber, Robertus, and R. Gryson. *Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*. 5th revised edition. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1969. Unless otherwise stated, all English translations for the Greek version of Sira are from B.G. Wright in NETS and from H. Parker and M.G Abegg, Jr. for the Hebrew text. English translations for Sir. 14:17 are mine.

<sup>300</sup> This verse is preserved only in Manuscript A.

<sup>301</sup> The causal conjunction γὰρ (‘for’) in the Greek and *enim* (‘for/because’) in Latin reflects the causal function of the Hebrew conjunction ו (‘for’).

<sup>302</sup> Whereas in the Hebrew and Greek, the authors introduce their reference to the death warning in the second clause with the conjunction ו (‘for’) and γὰρ (‘for’), in the Syriac, the causal conjunction is introduced in the beginning of the first line. On the use of the preposition ܕܥܝܢܐ with a pronoun in 14:17, see Wido Th. van Peursen, *Language and Interpretation in the Syriac Text of Ben Sira: A Comparative Linguistic and Literary Study*, Monographs of the Peshitta Institute Leiden 16 (Leiden:

and the generations of eternity will die by death.

Vg. (14:12) *memor esto quoniam mors non tardat et testamentum inferorum quia demonstratum est tibi testamentum enim huius mundi morte morietur.*

Remember that death is not slow, and that the covenant of hell has been shown to you: for the covenant of this world is: ‘By death, *he* (3<sup>rd</sup> sg.) shall die.’

### 6.4.3 Text Notes

17a: The arthrous term כל הבשר (lit. ‘all the flesh’) has been rendered in the Greek with the anarthrous phrase πᾶσα σὰρξ (‘all flesh’).<sup>303</sup> Whereas the phrase ‘all flesh’ in Hebrew and Greek could possibly refer not only to humans but to ‘all creatures,’ the Syriac delimits the term by rendering it as ܕܢܗܝܢܐ (‘people’). The Syr. omits the phrase ‘as a garment’ in the second half of the first line. In the Latin, the entire first clause (17a) is omitted, i.e. ‘all flesh wears out as a garment’ and v. 12 and 17 are joined together.

17b: The Greek renders חוק עולם (‘perpetual statute’) with διαθήκη ἀπὸ αἰῶνος (‘covenant from ancient time’). The preposition ἀπο reflects the translator’s past-oriented perspective in his understanding of the Hebrew term עולם. Thus, the sense emphasized in the Greek translation is the ‘decree which has been passed down from the ancient past,’ rather than the ‘decree that will last to eternity.’ This point will be developed further below. The Latin renders חוק עולם with *testamentum huius mundi* (‘covenant of this world’), which reflects an understanding of the Greek term αἰῶνος

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Brill, 2007), 331-32. Van Peursen observes that the changes to the statements regarding death and Sheol in the Syriac are due to its eschatological views (e.g. ‘retribution after death, eternal life and the world to come’) that are not found in the Hebrew (and/or Greek) text of Ben Sira. Van Peursen, *ibid.*, 35-36.

<sup>303</sup> The arthrous term כל הבשר (lit. ‘all the flesh’) occurs twice in the book of Ben Sira 13:15; 14:17). Jeremy Corley observes that the arthrous term in Sir. 14:17, which is compared to כפרח עלה (‘a budding leaf’) (Sir. 14:18), is dependent upon Isa 40:6 in which כל הבשר (‘all the flesh’) is compared to קציר (‘grass’). Jeremy Corley, *Ben Sira’s Teaching on Friendship*, BJS 316 (Providence, RI: Brown University, 2002), 129. For the discussion on the use of the arthrous term in Sir. 13:15, see Corley, *ibid.*, 128-30.

in the sense of *κόσμος* (world).<sup>304</sup>

17c: The Greek renders the idiomatic expression גוע יגועו ('they shall surely die/perish') with θανάτω ἀποθανῆς ('you [2<sup>nd</sup> sg.] shall surely die'). Note the change from the third person plural verb in the Hebrew to the second person singular. The second person form in the Greek is likely to be the translator's deliberate change to accord the number of the verb with the LXX's reading of Gen. 2:17, yet it is still possible that the translator himself had a Hebrew copy with the second person form verb. The Latin translation is similar to the Greek in that it employs a dative noun for the Hebrew infinitive, but nevertheless renders the verb in the third person singular. The Syriac also has ܡܘܬܐ ܡܘܬܐ ('by death, they will die'); however, the subject of the verb is ܕܘܠܡܐ ܕܘܠܡܐ ('the generations of eternity') which comes from Sir. 14:18.

#### 6.4.4 Context

Ben Sira's notion of the inescapable fate of death in 14:17 needs to be read in light of its broader context (14:11-19) in which Ben Sira urges the reader to enjoy the wealth that he possesses (v. 11: 'my son, if you have something, treat yourself well and enjoy yourself as much as you can') and to be generous toward others (v. 13: '...be good to your friend and give to him what you acquire'). This enjoyment and use of wealth for others need to be practiced before one dies (v. 13a); Ben Sira appeals to the universal principle that 'all flesh wears out as a garment' (v. 17). It is important in this regard to remember (זכור) that death does not delay (v. 12) and that the appointed time (v. 12: 'statute of Sheol') for his death is unknown. The reason for generosity toward the self and others is therefore grounded in the unchanging principle that 'everyone dies' and that it will soon be too late to enjoy and use wealth for others. Ben Sira adopts expressions and styles from various books of the HB and below are possible biblical references for Sir. 14:17:

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<sup>304</sup> Cf. Sir. 3:18 where Sira uses the term עולם in the sense of 'world.' The alternative meaning frequently attested for the word עולם, particularly in Rabbinic Hebrew, is that of 'world.' Van Peursen, "Linguistic Observations on the Hebrew Prayer of Manasseh from the Cairo Genizah," in *Hebrew of the Late Second Temple Period. Proceedings of a Sixth International Symposium on the Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Ben Sira*, ed. E.J.C. Tigchelaar and P. Van Hecke, STDJ 114 (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 118.

- 1) The expression כבגד יבלה ('wearing out like a garment' or simply כבגד, 'like a garment') is found in: Isa 50:9; 51:6; Ps 102:27; and Job. 13:28.
- 2) The expression גוע יגועו ('they shall surely die'), which Ben Sira uses in relation to the theme of man's fate of death, naturally echoes the divine death warning in Gen. 2:17. In the book of Genesis, the verb גוע ('to die/perish') occurs twice in the flood narrative along with the same phrase, 'all flesh' (כל בשר), denoting the divine punishment for all human beings.<sup>305</sup> Note that in Gen. 7:21, the verb מות ('to die') is used as a synonym for גוע ('to die/perish') to refer to the same divine annihilation of all human beings.<sup>306</sup>
- 3) The description of death for כל הבשר ('all flesh') expressed in conjunction with the verb גוע ('to die/perish') along with the notion of their returning to 'dust' is also found in Job 34:15 and Psalms 104:29, though the infinitive absolute form of the verb גוע is missing in these verses: 'All flesh (כל הבשר) would perish/die (גוע) together and man (אָדָם) would return to dust'; 'you take away their spirit, they expire/die (גוע) and return to their dust (Ps. 104:29).'<sup>307</sup> Both verses recapture the biblical motif of the creation of man from dust and their eventual return to dust (Gen. 2:7, 3:19).

#### 6.4.5 Discussion

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<sup>305</sup> Cf. Gen. 6:17, 7:21-22: 'I am bringing the flood of water upon the earth, to destroy all flesh (כל בשר) in which is the breath of life, from under heaven; everything that is on the earth shall perish (יגועו)'; 'All flesh (כל בשר) that moved on the earth perished (גוע), birds and cattle and beasts and every swarming thing that swarms upon the earth, and all mankind; of all that was on the dry land, all in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life, died (מות).' B. Gregory also notes the usage of the same verb in Gen. 6:17 and 7:21 in relation to Sir. 14:17. B. Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring: Generosity in the Book of Sira*, 117.

<sup>306</sup> See also Gen. 25:8: 'Abraham breathed his last and died (ויגוע וימת)...'

<sup>307</sup> Job 34:15 could also be the reference text for Sir. 25:24 as the verb גוע is used with the adverb יחד ('all/together') in both verses. The usage of the verb גוע in Job 34:15 is 'creational' in context as the statement 'man would return to dust' in the second clause explicates further on the meaning of the statement in the first clause, which echoes the language of the punishment statement for Adam in Gen. 3:19. See also footnote 274 above.



In the first clause of 14:17, Ben Sira observes the principle that applies to all human beings: ‘all flesh wears out like a garment.’ The subordinate clause in the second line explicates the statement in the first, thereby answering the question of why all humans wear out like a garment: ‘for the perpetual statute (חוק עולם) is: “they shall surely die (גוע יגועו).”’ Note that here Sira employs the emphatic infinitive absolute + finite verb construction, which grammatically echoes the death warning מות תמות (‘you shall surely die’) in Gen. 2:17.<sup>308</sup> As Schmid’s translation of this verse has already demonstrated, some understand this verse to convey Sira’s view of death as a natural part of original creation: ‘all living beings become old like a garment, for it is an eternal law to die.’<sup>309</sup> However, such a translation is not a careful rendering of the verse and it is underpinned by two questionable assumptions. First, the term חוק עולם translated here as ‘eternal law’ reflects the presumed meaning of term עולם (‘eternal/ancient time’) in the sense that the ‘statute’ (חוק) was valid even before it was issued at a certain point in the past, perhaps since the beginning of creation.<sup>310</sup> Second, the translation of the statement in the second clause, ‘it is an eternal law to die’ fails to reflect the idiomatic usage of Hebrew infinitive absolute, thereby precluding the possibility of the death warning in Gen. 2:17 being the point of reference for Sir. 14:17.

Although Ben Sira here employs the idiomatic double usage of the same verb, echoing such usage in Gen. 2:17, the verb that Sira uses is not מות (‘to die’), but גוע (‘to perish/die’). This may be explained firstly by the fact that Ben Sira uses the verb גוע on almost all occasions as a synonym of the verb מות (‘to die’): 1) Sir.

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<sup>308</sup> The use of the infinitive absolute decreases in Late Biblical Hebrew and Qumran Hebrew and is almost absent in Mishnaic Hebrew. Cf. W.Th. van Peursen, *The Verbal System in the Hebrew Text of Ben Sira*, SSSL 41 (Brill: Leiden, 2004), 277-83; Elisha Qimron, *The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, HSS 29 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986), 47. The idiomatic construction, infinitive absolute + finite verb, in which the infinitive emphasizes the modal value of the finite verb occurs only six times in Ben Sira (5:11, 14:17, 19; 16:19; 35 [32]:23 and 31:22 [34:21]), two of them occurring in the same passage: 14:17,19. The use of the inf. absolute in v. 19 is perhaps triggered by its occurrence in v. 17, and its absence in v. 19 of the Greek version allows the possibility that the Greek translator had a different Hebrew *Vorlage*.

<sup>309</sup> Schmid, *ibid.*, 12.

<sup>310</sup> The phrase חוק עולם will be discussed later in this chapter.

8:7 – ‘do not praise God on account of one’s death (גוע)’; 2) 14:18 – ‘one dies (גוע) and one is born’; 3) 22:11-12 – ‘Mourn for a dead one (מת)...mourning for a dead one (גוע) is seven days’; 4) 25:24 – ‘...because of her, we all die (גוענו); 5) 37:30-31 – ‘...and sweating kills (גייע) the glutton. Many die (יגועו) when there is no discipline’; 6) 48:5 – ‘he who raised a dead one (גוע) from death (מות).’ In all these instances, the difference in meaning between these two verbs is marginal. Even in the HB, the primary and more attested meaning for the word גוע is ‘to gasp for breath/pass away’ (14 times),<sup>311</sup> and the remaining nine examples given under the secondary meaning ‘to perish’ could easily be understood in the sense ‘to die.’<sup>312</sup> The first two occurrences of the verb גוע in Genesis are set in virtually the same context as the garden narrative in that they describe the death and total destruction for all humanity as a punishment for their sin.<sup>313</sup> Note also, in Num. 17:25-28, the verb מות (‘to die’), גוע (‘to expire/die’) and אבד (‘to die/be killed’) occur together as synonyms: ‘...so that they will not die (ימתו)... Then the sons of Israel spoke to Moses, saying, “Behold, we perish (נָגַעְנוּ), we are dying (אֲבָדְנוּ), we are all dying! (אֲבָדְנוּ) Everyone who comes near, who comes near to the tabernacle of the LORD, must die (ימות). Are we to perish (לָגוּעַ) completely?”’ In fact, in the MT, the verb גוע is more often than not used in conjunction with the verb מות (‘to die’).<sup>314</sup> In the case of the DSS, CD 2:20 (4Q266 frag. 2 ii:18-19) attests to the usage of the verb גוע (‘to

<sup>311</sup> Cf. Gen. 25:8, 17; 35:29; 49:33; Num. 20:29; Jos. 22:20; Job 3:11; 10:18; 13:19; 14:10; 27:5; 29:18; 36:12; Ps 88:16.

<sup>312</sup> Cf. Gen. 6:17; 7:21; Num. 17:25-28; 20:3; Zech. 13:8; Ps. 104:29; Job 34:15; 34:20; Lam. 1:19. HALOT: גוע. For example, cf. Gen. 6:17: ‘I am bringing the flood of water upon the earth, to destroy all flesh...everything that is on the earth shall perish (גוע).’

<sup>313</sup> Cf. Gen. 6:17; 7:21.

<sup>314</sup> Cf. Gen. 35:29: ‘Isaac breathed his last (ויגוע) and died (וימת)’; 49:33: ‘Jacob...breathed his last (ויגוע) and was gathered (ויאסף) to his people;’ Job 3:11; 10:18: ‘Why did I not die (אמות) at birth, come forth from the womb and expire (ואגוע)?...Why then have You brought me out of the womb? Would that I had died (אגוע) and no eye had seen me!’; Job 14:10: ‘But man dies (ימות) and lies prostrate. Man expires (ויגוע), and where is he?’; Job 36:12: ‘...they shall perish (יעברו) by the sword, and they will die (ויגועו) without knowledge;’ Job 34:20; ‘In a moment they die (ימתו), and at midnight, people are shaken and pass away (יגעשו).’

perish/die’) in conjunction with the phrase כּוֹל בֶּשֶׂר (‘all flesh’), again within the context of divine punishment, describing the fall of the Watchers of heaven and their descendants because they did not keep ‘their creator’s precepts/decrees’ (מִצְוָה). It is also important to note that Ben Sira never uses any direct quotations from Genesis, as M. Gilbert correctly observes; Sira paraphrases all his allusions, sometimes making ‘incidental use of an expression from Genesis 1-11 without necessarily and clearly referring to its original context.’<sup>315</sup> Thus, it is characteristic of Ben Sira that he does not slavishly imitate biblical expressions, but rather he deliberately alters the various expressions found in the original text of Genesis.<sup>316</sup> The fact that Sira does not insist on imitating biblical quotations or expressions partially explains the change in the number of the verb, i.e., from the second person form to the third person form of גּוּעַ. While Gilbert does not discuss Sir. 14:17 as a possible allusion to Gen. 2:17, some of his examples of Sira’s allusions to verses in Gen. 2-3 are worth mentioning: 1) a man’s wife being described as ‘a help like his partner’ in Sir. 36:29b comes from the description of Eve in Gen. 2:18; 2) the statement ‘Hate not laborious work; work was assigned by God’ in Sir. 7:15 alludes to Gen. 2:15 and to the theme of difficulty in the agricultural aspect of Adam’s punishment in Gen. 3:17-19;<sup>317</sup> 3) a man who is not married is called a ‘restless wanderer’ in Sir. 36:30b and this expression is from Gen. 4:12, the context of which also deals with Cain’s punishment; 5) ‘a heavy yoke is on Adam’s sons...until the day of return to the mother of all’ in Sir. 40:1 also

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<sup>315</sup> Maurice Gilbert, “Ben Sira, Reader of Genesis 1-11,” in *Intertextual Studies in Ben Sira and Tobit*, ed. Jeremy Corley and Vincent Skemp (Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 2005), 90. For a review of different scholarly views on Sira’s extent of biblical allusions, see Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Law and Wisdom from Ben Sira to Paul: A Tradition-Historical Enquiry into the Relation of Law, Wisdom, and Ethics*, WUNT 16 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1985), 60-61.

<sup>316</sup> For a discussion on methodological considerations in relation to accessing Sira’s use of biblical quotations, see John G. Snaith, “Biblical Quotations in the Hebrew of Ecclesiasticus,” *JTS* 18 (1967): 1-12.

<sup>317</sup> In Sir. 7:15, Sira observes that ‘the laborious work was assigned by God’ without relating it particularly with the punishment addressed to Adam in the garden narrative. However, it would be more natural to assume such contextual background is behind Sir. 7:15 than to suggest that God’s assigned work has always been ‘laborious’ from the beginning of creation. Cf. Gen. 3:17-19: ‘Cursed is the ground because of you; In toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; And you will eat the plants of the field; By the sweat of your face, you will eat bread.’

recalls the punishment of Adam in Gen. 3:19; and lastly 6) Sir. 25:24 alludes to the disobedience of Eve in Gen. 3:6. That Sira often refrains from providing a specific context for his allusions holds true for all of these allusions to the punishment of Adam and Eve, where he does not mention that these punishments (e.g. difficulty in farming, heavy yoke upon Adam's descendants) are indeed the results of Adam's disobedience. Note that Sira's aforementioned biblical allusions to the verses found in near proximity to Gen. 2:17 are all paraphrased.

The verb גוע is also contextually, semantically and phonetically related to the verb נגע ('to touch/to strike'), which appears frequently together with the verb מות ('to die') or גוע ('to perish') within the context of divine punishment. For instance, in Gen. 3:3, Eve tells the serpent that anyone who touches (נגע) the fruit from the tree of knowledge will die (מות). The two other occurrences of the idiomatic phrase מות תמות ('you shall surely die') in Genesis occur in association with a prohibition against the act of 'touching': '...I did not let you touch (נגע) her...but if you do not restore her, know that you shall surely die (תמות מות)' (Gen. 20:6-7); 'he who touches (נגע) this man or his shall surely be put to death (יומת מות)' (Gen. 26:11).<sup>318</sup> It is noteworthy that in Sir. 37:10, the Hebrew text of Manuscripts B and D attest to two variant readings of the same verse: '...sweating *strikes* (יגיע) the glutton' (Sir B. 37:30); '...sweating *kills* (יגוע) the glutton' (Sir D. 37:30). Here, it is possible that the scribe confused the two words because of the similar sound and/or meaning. The verb נגע ('to touch/to strike') is also creational in context as it occurs in a number of places with the word 'dust' (עפר).<sup>319</sup> The above examples of the verb גוע as a synonym for מות with its usage in the context of creation and punishment show that the verb is a good replacement for Sira that would successfully recall the death warning from Gen. 2:17 in the mind of the hearer, particularly when expressed idiomatically within an infinitive absolute construction.

That Sir. 14:17 echoes the death warning in Gen. 2:17 is certainly evident in the Greek (also Syriac and Latin) translation of Ben Sira, in which the translator

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<sup>318</sup> See also Ex. 19:12-13: 'Beware that you do not go up on the mountain or touch (נגע) the border of it, whoever touches the mountain shall surely be put to death (מות יומת).'

<sup>319</sup> Cf. Isa. 25:12; 26:5; Ezk. 13:4; Lam. 2:2.

renders the Hebrew statement יָגוּעַ יָגוּעַ with θανάτω ἀποθανῆ ('by death you shall die'), adopting the LXX translation of Gen. 2:17.<sup>320</sup> Such a rendering by the grandson of Sira is important for a number of reasons: 1) the Greek translation of Sir. 14:17 itself is an important witness in the Second Temple Period (as early as the second century BCE) to the existence of an interpretation that finds a reason for the mortality of all human beings in the divine command that was given to the first man concerning the tree of knowledge: θανάτω ἀποθανῆ ('by death, you shall die'); 2) the Greek translation of Sir. 14:17 is an indisputable textual witness to an exegetical understanding of the LXX's reading of Gen. 2:17 as a warning to the first human couple in the sense that they will become 'mortal';<sup>321</sup> 3) by associating the statement in Sir. 14:17a, 'all flesh wears out like a garment,' explicitly with Gen. 2:17, the meaning of death (in both Gen. 2:17 and Sir. 14:17b) is further clarified as that of physical death, again, in the sense of becoming 'mortal.' This understanding accords with Symmachus' translation and St. Jerome's interpretation of the command in Gen. 2:17 (LXX): θνητος εση 'you will become mortal.' Whether or not the grandson of Sira correctly understood the meaning of the original Hebrew text, Sir. 14:17 in the Greek certainly reflects an unprecedented exegetical reading (which predates Paul) that connects the death warning in Gen. 2:17 with the introduction of death to humanity. In this regard, it is possible to conjecture that all other statements about death, particularly in the Greek translation of Sira, were understood by Sira's grandson and subsequent readers with the divine death warning from Gen. 2:17 in mind. If the term בית מדרשי ('house of my instruction') in Sir. 51:23 refers to an

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<sup>320</sup> Cf. Gen. 2:17 of LXX. The grandson of Sira rendered the verb ἀποθανῆ in the singular (same as the MT); the fact that the verb is in the second person form and that the translator adopts the LXX's unique and literal usage of the adverbial dative in translating the idiomatic infinitive absolute undoubtedly points to Gen. 2:17 as a reference for the Greek translation of Sir. 14:17b. Ben Sira's use of the plural verb יָגוּעַ ('they shall die') in the Hebrew coincides with the plural verb ἀποθανεῖσθε in the LXX and is probably because the subject of the verb is already mentioned at the beginning of the first clause: כל בשר ('all flesh') (14:17a).

<sup>321</sup> As observed in the third chapter of this dissertation, whether intended by the translator or not, the LXX's rendering of Gen. 2:17, θανάτω ἀποθανεῖσθε, may yield different meanings for different readers.

actual school Ben Sira ran in Jerusalem,<sup>322</sup> perhaps such an exegetical understanding attested by his grandson had already existed and become prevalent in his time.<sup>323</sup>

#### 6.4.6 'Perpetual Statute' (חוק עולם)

Ben Sira states in 14:17b that 'they shall surely die' (גוע יגועו) because it is a 'perpetual statute' (חוק עולם), but what does he really mean by the phrase חוק עולם?

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<sup>322</sup> It is suggested by some scholars that the place of composition for the book of Ben Sira and for the בית מדרשי ('house of my instruction'), which Sira mentions in 51:23, could be Alexandria. Such an argument based on the possibilities and observations listed below is plausible, but cannot prove its case with certainty: 1) the statements of accusations in Sir. 12:10-12; 25:7; 27:21-24; 51:6-7 might reflect Sira's own trials and accusations and suggests the possibility that Sira might have been one of the elite members at the time of Simon who were exiled in Alexandria after the Maccabean crisis; 2) an advanced level of Hellenization reflected in the book of Sira; 3) lack of mention of Pharaoh in the book, etc. Cf. Paul Mckechnie, "The Career of Joshua Ben Sira," *JTS* 51 (2000): 1-26; Philippe Guillaume, "New Light on the Nebiim from Alexandria: A Chronography to Replace the Deuteronomistic History," *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 5 (2005): 169-215. Nevertheless, in light of the ambiguous term ἀφύμοιος ('copy') used by the grandson in his prologue, there is a possibility that the book of Ben Sira already existed in Alexandria when the grandson arrived in Egypt: 'For having arrived in Egypt in the thirty-eighth year of King Euergetes, and spending some time, I found a copy (ἀφύμοιον) of no little instruction. I myself set a most necessary duty to bring some diligence and labor to translate this book.' A few manuscripts read ἀφορμην ('opportunity'). The Latin reads *libros relictos*, ('books left behind/untouched'). The meaning of the term ἀφύμοιος ('copy, exemplar, reproduction') is uncertain as it does not occur elsewhere in Greek, and the grandson does not identify what it is. B.G. Wright, "Translation Greek in Sirach in Light of the Grandson's Prologue," in *Texts and Versions of the Book of Ben Sira. Transmissions and Interpretation*, ed. J. Joosten and J.S. Rey, JSJSup 150 (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 85. Skehan and Di Lella have suggested it may mean 'written copies of the teachings of the scribes of the Jewish community in Egypt.' P. Skehan and A. Di Lella, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira*, 134. However, the term ἀφύμοιος could possibly refer to the copy of the book of Ben Sira that the grandson found (εὕρων) in Egypt. B. Wright suggests that the term probably refers to 'some book or books' that the grandson found after he arrived in Egypt. B. Wright, *ibid.*

<sup>323</sup> Cf. 'Book of Wisdom' (1BCE), 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch (1CE). Wis 2:23: 'God created man for incorruption, and made him the image of his own nature'; 4 Ezra 3:7: 'you laid upon him [Adam] one commandment of yours; but he transgressed it, and immediately you appointed death for him and for his descendants'; 3:21: 'The first Adam, burdened with an evil heart transgressed and was overcome'; 2 Baruch 23:4: 'Adam sinned and death was decreed against those who were to be born,' 54:15: 'Adam sinned first and has brought death upon all who were not in his own time.'

A number of scholars assume this is an ‘eternal’ principle originally and naturally allotted to human beings from the beginning of creation.<sup>324</sup> A more precise analysis of the meaning and usage of the term חוק עולם (‘perpetual statute’), however, in both the HB and Sira may add further clarification to the question of whether the second line of Sir. 14:17 is to be understood in the sense that God originally created human beings as ‘always/eternally’ mortal, or in the sense that everyone will surely die according to the specific ‘law/statute’ that was decreed by God (in the ancient time) and will remain valid ‘perpetually.’ The latter will be argued here.

The term חוק is from the root חקק, which has the primary meaning of ‘cutting in or engraving in stone’ and is used most commonly as a legal concept. More than 100 instances of the term חוק, of its 128 occurrences in the MT, carry a meaning related to statute, custom, law or decree.<sup>325</sup> Such usage and meanings, which are predominantly attested in legal contexts, are reflected in the LXX’s standard translational equivalents: *πρόσταγμα*, (‘official order, commandment, injunction’), *δικαίωμα* (‘regulation, requirement, commandment’), and *νόμιμος* (adj. ‘statute, law, commandment’).<sup>326</sup> In particular, the phrase חוק עולם (‘perpetual decree/statute’) is exclusively a *terminus technicus* denoting legal portions for the priest from the sacrificial offerings.<sup>327</sup> The feminine form חקת עולם is more often used to refer to the laws and commands concerning ordinances, festivals and prohibitions, yet it

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<sup>324</sup> H. Kelly, “Adam Citings before the Intrusion of Satan: Recontextualizing Paul’s Theology of Sin and Death,” 17; J.J. Collins, *ibid.*; K. Schmid, *ibid.*

<sup>325</sup> Frequently, חוק occurs as a synonym and in conjunction with other words related to ‘law/decrees’, e.g. *מִצְוָה*, *מִשְׁפָּט*, *תּוֹרָה*, *דְּבָר*. The most frequently attested verb with the term is *שמר* (‘to keep’). Its meanings include: ‘duties imposed by God or man’ (‘Ex. 18:16’); ‘legal right/portion’ (Gen. 47:26); natural laws such as the ‘boundary/limit’ of the sea (Prov. 8:29) and ‘privilege/due’ of the priests (Ex 29:28 etc.). Jack P. Lewis, “חוק,” *TWOT*. See also, Helmer Ringgren, “חוק,” *TDOT*, 5:140. See also, Peddi Victor, “A Note on חוק in the Old Testament,” *VT* 16 (1966): 358-361. Isa. 24:4-5 is noteworthy as it reflects the usage of חוק referring to a divine statute that is transgressed by the people of the earth. As a consequence, judgment is brought upon the ‘earth’ and ‘people’: ‘the earth mourns and withers (*נבל*), the world fades and withers, the exalted of the people of the earth fade away (*אמל*)...for they transgressed the laws (*תורה*), statutes (*חוק*) and eternal covenant (*ברית עולם*).’

<sup>326</sup> BDAG, 249, 676, 884.

<sup>327</sup> Cf. Lev 6:11(18), 15(22); 7:34, 36; 10:9, 15; 16:31; 17:7; 23:14, 21; 24:3.

generally has the same legal meaning and sense in that they are both used in conjunction with and as synonyms for commandments, testimonies and statutes.<sup>328</sup> In the book of Leviticus, several prohibitions against eating certain foods/drinks are designated as חוק/חקה in the construct form with עולם.<sup>329</sup> It is noteworthy in some of these occurrences that the חוק עולם, which is decreed by God, is preceded or followed by the purpose clause that contains a death warning: ‘so that they will not die’ (e.g. Ex. 30:21).<sup>330</sup> These death warnings emphasize and clarify the meaning of the term חוק עולם in the sense: ‘from the moment these statutes are decreed by God, they are to be kept “perpetually” and not to be transgressed otherwise the transgressor will be liable for death penalty.’ In light of the above examples, if Sira’s reference to Gen. 2:17 for Sir. 14:17 is presumed, then Sira’s use of a *terminus technicus* חוק עולם (‘perpetual statute’) links the prohibitions against eating certain foods found in the legal texts with the very first prohibition against eating in the HB, i.e. prohibition against partaking from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which may well have served as a prototype for the former.<sup>331</sup> Such usage of the technical term חוק עולם within the legalistic setting closely connects the statement in Sir. 14:17b to the divine ‘statute’ concerning the tree of knowledge, which accompanies a similar death warning in Gen. 2:17.

In the book of Sira, the term חוק (‘statute/covenant’) appears 21 times.<sup>332</sup> In six of these occurrences, חוק denotes humanity’s inescapable fate and the finality of death: Sir. 14:12, 17; 38:22; 41:2, 3; 42:2. In Sir. 41:2-3, חוק twice refers to the ‘death decree’ (ממות חקך), the meaning of which is explicated shortly after in 41:4 as

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<sup>328</sup> Jack P. Lewis, “חוק,” *TWOT*. The feminine form חקה occurs 104 times.

<sup>329</sup> Cf. Lev. 3:17; 10:9; 23:14.

<sup>330</sup> Cf. Ex. 30:21, Lev. 10:9. See also Ex. 28:43 and Lev. 6:11 (18) for similar construction, although the prohibition against eating is not found in the last two.

<sup>331</sup> It is observed that, although Sira never explicitly quotes from the Mosaic legal tradition, he is fully aware of it, sometimes referring to it as the ‘law’ or the ‘law of the Most High.’ B. Wright, “Biblical Interpretation in the Book of Ben Sira,” 378-79.

<sup>332</sup> Cf. Sir. 14:12, 17; 16:22; 38:22; 39:31; 41:2, 3; 42:2; 43:7, 10, 12; 44:5, 20; 45:5, 7, 17 (x2), 24; 47:11.





priests' office 'by the perpetual statute' (לְחֻקַּת עוֹלָם) (29:9) and that it will be a 'perpetual statute' (חֻקַּת עוֹלָם) for them to wear proper garments when entering the tent of meeting (28:43). What is stressed with the usage of the phrase חוק עולם in these verses is the 'perpetuity' and future-oriented perspective from the moment that the statutes are decreed. The presence of the strong death warning that will follow when the 'perpetual statute' is breached is also notable in this passage: '...in order that they will not incur guilt and die, it will be a perpetual statute for him and for his descendants after him' (28:43). Again, Sira seems to treat the term חוק עולם as having a similar meaning to ברית עולם ('eternal covenant') as both are used in the same chapter to denote the particular law concerning Aaron's priesthood.<sup>339</sup>

A note should be made on the Hebrew word עולם, which is mistranslated as 'eternal' in various English translations of the Bible.<sup>340</sup> I would suggest that it is this vague understanding of the word עולם in its strict sense as 'eternal' or 'eternity' (e.g. 'eternal God') that leads to the common presumption about the meaning of חוק עולם in Sir. 14:17 in reference to the past reaching the time/beginning of creation. The term עולם itself cannot provide any specific sense and meaning without contextual background. Therefore a clear perception of the specific context in which the term is found is essential to our understanding and judgment of the meaning of each

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<sup>339</sup> The Greek renders both חוק עולם and ברית עולם (45:7) with διαθήκαι αιῶνος. The same phrase διαθήκαι αιῶνος, which also occurs in Sir. 17:12 (there is no Hebrew extant for this verse) clearly refers to the covenant revealed on Sinai. Johannes Marböck suggests that the original Hebrew phrase for διαθήκαι αιῶνος in 17:12 is חוק עולם. Johannes Marböck, "Die "Geschichte Israels" als "Bundesgeschichte" nach dem Sirachbuch," in *Der Neue Bund im alten. Studien zur Bundestheologie der beiden Testamente*, ed. E. Zenger, QD 146 (Freiburg: Herder, 1993), 186. Interestingly, added to this verse in the expanded version of the GII translation is the reason for God's 'allotting a law of life' (νόμον ζωῆς) and 'establishing a perpetual statute' (διαθήκαι αιῶνος): 'in order to be mindful that those who exist now are mortal (θνητοί).'

<sup>340</sup> The Hebrew word עולם occurs almost 460 times in the OT, of which about 60 occurrences denote the time in reference to the past and 260 occurrences in reference to the future. Often combined with other words and phrases, the meaning and sense of the 'time' in terms of its duration and orientation, which עולם denotes, can only be determined by the context and nature of the thing dealt with. Horst D. Preuss, "עוֹלָם and עוֹלָה," in *TWOT*; Hermann Sasse, "Αἰών, Αἰώνιος," *TDNT*, 1:197.

occurrence of עולם.<sup>341</sup> The exclusive usage of the phrase חוק עולם as a technical term – which frequently appears with the expression ‘throughout your generations’ in legal texts – pushes its orientation to the future in the sense that the God-given ‘statute’ will continue to remain valid in reference to the future based on Sira’s own stance, as well as the stance of God and Adam in the Garden of Eden.

In the Greek translation of Sira, of the 21 occurrences, the term חוק is rendered with διαθήκη 10 times.<sup>342</sup> Just as the two words, חוק and ברית, are interchangeable for Sira, the Greek word διαθήκη is used in a number of places by the translator as a synonym for other words pertaining to ‘law/commandment.’<sup>343</sup> It seems that the Greek translator considered the terms ברית and חוק almost as identical, yet it is surprising that no other translators of the LXX render the Hebrew noun חוק with διαθήκη.<sup>344</sup> In any case, the Greek rendering of the Hebrew term חוק עולם with διαθήκη ἀπ’ αἰῶνος in Sir. 14:17 is not strictly ‘literal’. The preposition

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<sup>341</sup> In his description of the attributes of God, Sira uses the preposition מן with עולם in the strict sense of ‘eternity’: e.g. Sir. 39:20: ‘he gazes from everlasting (מעולם) to everlasting (עד עולם)’; 42:20: ‘he is the one from eternity (מעולם)’; 51:8: ‘his faithful love *which* has been from eternity (אשר מעולם)’ In these examples, the limit of עולם clearly reaches a point in time before the creation. On the other hand, Sir. 45:24, עד עולם, (‘till forever’) indicates an aspect of ‘future time’ from the point that the חוק is decreed (Gk: εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας). Similarly, in 51:30, the duration of the term עולם does not extend to the time in the past: ‘blessed is the name of the LORD from now and forever (מעתה ועד עולם).’

<sup>342</sup> Cf. Sir. 11:18 [Gr. 11:20]; 14:12, 17; 16:20 [Gr. 16:22]; 42:2; 44:20; 45:5, 7, 17; 47:11. The word διαθήκη appears 23 times in the Greek translation of Sira (11:20; 14:12, 17; 16:22; 17:12 24:23; 28:7; 38:33; 39:8; 41:19; 42:2; 44:11, 18, 20, 22; 45:5, 7, 15, 17, 24-25; 47:11).

<sup>343</sup> Cf. Sir. 41:19b; 44:11b; 44:18a; 44:20b, 20c, 22; 45:15c.

<sup>344</sup> For more information on the Greek translation of חוק as διαθήκη, see Marko Marttila, ““Statute” or “covenant”? Remarks on the Rendering of the Word חק in the Greek Ben Sira,” in *Scripture in Transition: Essays on Septuagint, Hebrew Bible, and Dead Sea Scrolls in Honour of Raija Sollamo*, ed. A. Voitila and J. Jokiranta, JSJSup 126 (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 87. Marttila highlights the usage of the Greek word διαθήκη in the Classical Greek in the sense of ‘ordinance’ or ‘disposition.’ He observes that such meanings of διαθήκη come from the verb διατίθημι, which has the meanings ‘to treat,’ ‘to dispose,’ ‘to establish,’ or ‘to arrange.’ *ibid.*, 79. For a further discussion of ‘covenant’ and ‘law’ in Ben Sira, see Otto Kaiser, “Covenant and Law in Ben Sira,” 235-56; E.J. Schnabel, *Law and Wisdom from Ben Sira to Paul*, 29-42.

ἀπό ('from') clarifies the meaning of חוק understood by the translator in the sense that it has been decreed and passed on from a remote time in the past and accordingly the Greek διαθήκη ἀπ' αἰῶνος should be translated as 'the statute from ancient time' or 'the statute of old time.'<sup>345</sup> With the presence of the verbatim statement from Gen. 2:17 (i.e. θανάτῳ ἀποθανῆ 'by death, you shall die!') following διαθήκη ἀπ' αἰῶνος, it is possible to be more precise in terms of the specific time when the 'statute' was decreed. Contextually, therefore, διαθήκη ἀπ' αἰῶνος also reflects the future-oriented perspective of the time that the 'statute' concerning the tree of knowledge in the Garden of Eden was decreed: 'θανάτῳ ἀποθανῆ.'<sup>346</sup>

## 6.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have firstly considered the lack of scholarly attention to Sir. 14:17 as a possible allusion to the death warning מות תמות ('you shall surely die') in Gen. 2:17 and in turn suggested the possibility that Sira's other statements about death throughout his book – which seem to present the idea of death as an inescapable lot that everyone has to accept – presuppose the idea of the 'introduction of mortality' due to the incident of the 'Fall.' Sira's grandson, who translated the book into Greek, deliberately took this exegetical route and adjusted his translation accordingly.<sup>347</sup> This left an important mark on the reception history of Gen. 2:17 in

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<sup>345</sup> Note that in other occurrences of the term עולם in construct combinations with חוק and ברית, the translator does not employ prepositions; cf. διαθήκη αἰῶνος in 17:12; διαθήκαι αἰῶνος 44:18; διαθήκη αἰῶνος 45:7, 15. For the use of αἰῶνος in NT Greek in reference to the future, cf. Lk. 1:70: 'He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from of old (ἀπ' αἰῶνος)'; Acts 3:21: '...all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time (ἀπ' αἰῶνος).' Cf. NETS translation of the phrase διαθήκη ἀπ' αἰῶνος in Sir. 14:17: 'covenant of old.'

<sup>346</sup> According to Benjamin Wright, the Greek translation of Sira takes an 'isomorphic' approach, which often results in awkward and unidiomatic expressions in the Greek translation. This holds true for his translation of Hebrew prepositions; for example, the grandson often renders the Hebrew preposition כן used in comparative construction with the Greek ὑπέρ, which in Greek does not normally have a comparative function. B. Wright, *ibid.*, 716. Nevertheless, the Greek translation occasionally supplies various prepositions when rendering the Hebrew words and phrases (including עולם) that appear with or without a preposition in the Hebrew.

<sup>347</sup> Cf. Sir. 14:17b (LXX): θανάτῳ ἀποθανῆ ('By death, you shall die').

the Second Temple Period and beyond, which must have exerted much weight on the subsequent readers towards the same exegetical direction. In light of the observations summarized below, I am also inclined to suggest, although with caution, that Sira intended a reference to Gen. 2:17 in Sir. 14:17.

- 1) Ben Sira makes frequent allusions to the biblical passages, employing a language and style reminiscent of various aspects from the creation/garden narrative, but rather freely, without always providing the exact context and meaning behind each allusion. This also holds true for Sira's allusions to the passages concerning the punishment of Adam, which Sira does not necessarily associate with the disobedience of Adam and Eve.
- 2) The analysis of the usage of the verbs גוע ('to die/perish') (as a synonym of the verb מות ('to die') within the creational and punishment context) and חוק עולם ('perpetual statute') (its meaning and sense as a technical term with a strong connection to the legal concepts and contexts in the HB and in Sira) adds further support to the view that Sir. 14:17 is a reference to Gen. 2:17.



## Chapter Seven

### Genesis 2:17 in the New Testament

#### 7.1 Introduction

This chapter will discuss two main passages in the Pauline Epistles – 1 Corinthians 15:21-22 and Romans 5:12-21 – in each of which Paul makes direct references to Adam’s disobedience in relation to the ‘coming’ of death into the world. These two passages are the most frequently referred to as clear textual evidence of Paul’s understanding of the introduction of mortality to humanity.<sup>348</sup> Paul does not simply allude to the incident in the garden narrative in these passages, instead he emphatically affirms and links the ‘coming of death’ with the incident of Adam’s disobedience in the Garden of Eden. Thus, Paul suggests that it is on account of Adam’s sin that all people are subjected to death. Paul’s attribution of death to Adam in these passages will be analyzed exegetically, particularly in light of the exegetical observations suggested in the previous chapters (from the LXX account and DSS), focusing on what is stressed and what is distinctively suggested in the Epistles of Paul. Occasionally, these passages will be considered in relation to other Second Temple texts that provide interpretations of the disobedience of Adam and Eve in Genesis 1-3.<sup>349</sup> At the close of this chapter, the exegetical tendency to blame Eve, as attested in a pseudepigraphal letter – 1 Timothy in relation to LXX Gen. 3:14 and 2 Cor. 11:3 – will be considered.

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<sup>348</sup> There are some passages in Romans that it has been suggested are ‘elusive’ allusions to the Adam story in Gen. 2-3 (Rom. 1:18–32, 3:23, 7:7–13, and 8:19–22). See James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, WBC 38A (Waco, TX: Word, 1988); idem. “Adam and Christ,” in *Reading Paul’s Letter to the Romans*, ed. Jerry L. Sumney (Atlanta: SBL, 2012), 125-38. See also, A. J. M. Wedderburn, “Adam in Paul’s Letter to the Romans,” in *Studia Biblica 1978. III. Papers on Paul and Other New Testament Authors*, ed. E. A. Livingstone (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1980), 413–30.

<sup>349</sup> While the Genesis narrative in the MT does not explicitly state whether death came into the world through the disobedience of Adam and Eve, Paul and other Jewish literatures all blame Adam and/or Eve for bringing death to humanity. Cf. Wis. 1:13; 2:23; 4 Esd. 3:7, 21, 26; 7:118 and Sir. 14:17; 25:24.

In this chapter, I do not intend to delve into the theological intricacies of the Augustinian doctrine of ‘original sin’,<sup>350</sup> nor the implications of the resurrection and life after the point of physical death, which cannot be dealt with in the limited scope of this chapter.<sup>351</sup> The questions I specifically intend to analyze and answer in this chapter are: did Paul or any other New Testament writers understand the introduction of physical death (in the sense of becoming ‘mortal’) as being the result of the disobedience of Adam and Eve? Is the universality of human’s mortal status the result of the disobedience of Adam and Eve? If so, how do they resemble or differ from other contemporaneous literatures? In the process of answering these questions, my primary interest is in providing a clear exegetical analysis of Paul’s understanding of the divine command (Gen. 2:17) in relation to the origin of death. In this chapter, I propose that Paul deliberately takes up and disambiguates the vague traces – found in the LXX, DSS, Ben Sira and other contemporaneous Jewish texts – of the exegetical association between Adam’s disobedience to God’s command concerning the tree of knowledge and the introduction of physical death to humanity.

## **7.2 1 Cor. 15:21-22**

Scholars generally agree that Paul’s first letter to the Christian community in Corinth was written in the fall or winter of 53-54 CE, thus predating Paul’s letter to the Romans (c. 57 CE).<sup>352</sup> The letters to the Corinthians and Romans are two of

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<sup>350</sup> The discussion of the Augustinian doctrine of ‘original sin’ focuses on the hereditary and intrinsic nature of sin, which seems to have originated from Augustine’s interpretation of Rom. 5:12 based on a Latin translation. This will be dealt with in the second part of this chapter on Rom. 5:12. Cf. Pier F. Beatrice, *The Transmission of Sin: Augustine and the Pre-Augustinian Sources*. trans. Adam Kamesar (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

<sup>351</sup> On the resurrection and immortality after life in early Christianity, see George. W. E. Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism and Early Christianity*, HTS 56 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 227-47.

<sup>352</sup> The 1 Corinthians in the NT is actually the second letter Paul wrote to the community in Corinth. The previous letter, which Paul refers to in 1 Cor. 5:9, ‘I wrote you in my letter not to associate with immoral people’, is not extant. In response to the previous letter, the issues that are taken up by Paul in 1 Corinthians are: church leadership (1:10-4:21), bad sexual behavior and marriage (5-7), people’s offerings to idols (8:1-11:1), problems in worship and spiritual gifts (11:2-14:40), resurrection (15:1-58) and money for Jerusalem (16:1-4). For the date and authorship of 1 Corinthians, see Paul J. Sampley, “The First Letter to the Corinthians,” in vol. 10 of NIB, ed. Leander



seven letters whose authorship is undisputedly attributed to Paul (i.e. Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians and Philemon). Paul's first assertion about the coming of death through one man appears in the fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians. The main thrust of this chapter is Paul's insistence to the readers of the certainty of the future resurrection of all believers, based on appealing to the historical evidence and verity of the death and resurrection of Christ. The resurrection of Christ serves as the undeniable proof and foundation for the future resurrection of all people who are also in Christ. Therefore, Paul's forthright statements concerning the coming of death in 1 Cor. 15:21-22, i.e. 'through a man [came] death...in Adam all die', are within the context of his larger discussion of the resurrection of Christ and the future resurrection of all who are in Christ.

### 7.2.1 The Context of 1 Corinthians 15

Paul's assertion about the coming of death through one man (δι' ἀνθρώπου) appears twice in his entire epistles (1 Cor. 15:21-22 and Rom. 5:12-21), both in the form of antithetical comparison between Adam and Christ. First, it is found in the fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians, which James Dunn considers as 'the most sustained theological section' in the whole letter.<sup>353</sup> Moving from his discussion of various practical issues in the previous chapters, in chapter 15, Paul takes up the issue of resurrection and defends his argument on the certainty of the future bodily resurrection of all 'those who belong to Christ' (v. 23). Paul's argument concerning the certainty of the future resurrection in chapter 15 is aimed at answering the questions in vv. 12b and 35 that are raised by the Corinthians: 'How do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?' and 'But someone will say, How are the dead raised? And with what kind of body do they come?' Responding to the first question, which presumes the denial of bodily resurrection, Paul answers that

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E. Keck (Nashville: Abingdon, 2002), 775–76; Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 5.

<sup>353</sup> James D. G. Dunn, *1 Corinthians*, New Testament Guides (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 84. G. Fee also suggests that 1 Cor. 15 is the crucial section in the entire letter, Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 861; Roy E. Ciampa and Rosner further suggest that the fifteenth chapter is the climax of the letter as a whole, Roy E. Ciampa and Brian S. Rosner, *The First Letter to the Corinthians*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 736.

denying bodily resurrection precludes the bodily resurrection of Christ and so denies the ‘gospel,’ i.e. the fundamental grounds and essence of all Christian ‘preaching’ and ‘belief’ (vv. 1-2). Paul also writes that he would be a false witness of God and their faith and lives would be vain if there were no resurrection of the dead (vv. 13-15). In response to the second question on the nature of the resurrected body, Paul answers by means of two antithetical comparisons: between the seed and the plant (vv. 36-44) and between the first Adam and the last Adam (45-49). Paul asserts that those who are dead ‘in Christ’ (ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ) will also experience such resurrection and their bodies will be raised in ‘glory’ and ‘power’ and transformed to an ‘imperishable,’ ‘spiritual’ and ‘immortal’ body (vv. 42-44). In this regard, Paul’s antithetical comparison of Adam and Christ (vv. 21-22) provides the means by which to explain and further verify his belief on the resurrection of Christ and the effects of this on the believers. The overall structure of 1 Cor. 15 can be divided into three sections:<sup>354</sup>

- A. The foundation of Paul’s argument: the death and resurrection of Christ (vv. 1-11).
- B. Paul’s response to ‘some’ (τινες) who argue that ‘there is no resurrection of the dead’ (vv. 12-34).
- C. Paul’s response to ‘someone’ (τις) who questions him on the nature of resurrection body, ‘how are the dead raised?’ and ‘with what kind of body do they come?’ (vv. 35-58).

The first section begins with Paul’s reminder to the Corinthians about Christ’s death and his resurrection from the dead. Paul calls this ‘the gospel’ that has already been ‘preached’ by Paul himself and so is ‘received’ and ‘believed’ by the Corinthians (vv. 1 and 11). As Paul is addressing his letter to people who had been already convinced about Christ’s resurrection from the dead, he does not attempt to explain or convince them further on this matter. Paul’s reminder of the gospel in the first section is his firm foundation, based on which he will argue against those who say in the next section that ‘there is no resurrection of the dead’ (v. 12). Paul argues

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<sup>354</sup> This tripartite structure may be further divided into smaller sub-sections. See Ciampa and Rosner, *ibid.*, 741; G. Fee, *ibid.*, 713-17.

that denying the resurrection of the dead equates to denying Christ's resurrection (v. 16). In the second section (vv. 12-34), Paul proceeds to verify the resurrection with a series of different argumentations, including the antithetical contrast between Adam and Christ (vv. 21-22), to whom Paul attributes the emergence of death and that of resurrection respectively. Moving into the third section, using a diatribe style<sup>355</sup> Paul addresses and answers two questions: 'How are the dead raised? And with what kind of body do they come?' (v. 35). Paul answers with a series of illustrations and antithetical comparisons between the bodies that are sown in death and the ones that will be raised in the future. In vv. 44-49, Paul again contrasts Adam (the first Adam) and Christ (the last Adam) and explains that the body sown and the body raised will reflect their images respectively: those who have borne the image of the man of dust from the earth will one day bear the image of the man who is from heaven (v. 49). The dead will certainly be raised 'at the last trumpet' (v. 52) and then the final victory over death will be achieved, as predicted in scripture (Is. 25:8, Hos. 13:14). Therefore, Paul closes the chapter with encouragement to be 'steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord' (v. 58).

### 7.2.2 Text and Translation<sup>356</sup>

21 ἐπειδὴ γὰρ δι' ἀνθρώπου<sup>a</sup> θάνατος, καὶ δι' ἀνθρώπου ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν. 22 ὡς περ γὰρ ἐν τῷ Ἀδὰμ<sup>a</sup> πάντες ἀποθνήσκουσιν, οὕτως καὶ ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ πάντες ζωοποιηθήσονται.

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<sup>355</sup> For Paul's use of the diatribe, see Stanley E. Porter, "Diatribe," in *Dictionary of New Testament Background: A Compendium of Contemporary Biblical Scholarship*, ed. Craig A. Evans and Stanley E. Porter (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 296–98; *idem.*, "The Argument of Romans 5: Can a Rhetorical Question Make a Difference?," *JBL* 110 (1991): 655–77; S. K. Stowers, *The Diatribe and Paul's Letter to the Romans*, SBLDS 57 (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1981); Changwon Song, "Reading Romans through the Macro-Structure of the Diatribe," *Society of Biblical Literature 2001 Seminar Papers*, SBLSPS 40 (Atlanta: SBL, 2001), 260–77; Duane F. Watson, "Diatribe," in *DPL* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 213–14.

<sup>356</sup> The Greek text is taken from *Novum Testamentum Graece* (ed. Barbara Aland et al.; 28<sup>th</sup> ed.; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2012).

21 For since by a man [*came*]<sup>b</sup> death, also by a man [*came/will come*]<sup>c</sup> the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.<sup>357</sup>

### Text and Translation Notes

15:21a: Paul uses the generic term ἄνθρωπος ('human being') in v. 21a, for which Paul further clarifies its referent in v. 22a as Ἀδὰμ. It is likely that both the generic term ἄνθρωπος and the personal name Ἀδὰμ are adopted from the LXX. As in the LXX, Paul's transition from the use of the generic term ἄνθρωπος to the personal name Ἀδὰμ in his reference to the incident of Adam's disobedience has the effect of delimiting the recipient of the command to the specific individual named Ἀδὰμ. In the LXX, it was observed that the Greek translator of Genesis made a sudden change from ἄνθρωπος to Ἀδὰμ in his rendering of the Hebrew generic אָדָם ('the human being') for the first time in Gen. 2:16-17, for which no satisfactory reason could be suggested, except that the translator may possibly have wanted to avoid the interpretation that the divine command was given to any human being (ἄνθρωπος), rather than to the specific person named Ἀδὰμ.<sup>358</sup> Paul's deliberate attempt to identify the referent of the ἄνθρωπος ('the human being') as Ἀδὰμ is also evident in 1 Cor. 15:45, where he uses both terms together: ὁ πρῶτος ἄνθρωπος Ἀδὰμ ('the first man, Adam'). As in the LXX, using the personal name Ἀδὰμ for the generic term אָדָם ('the human being') brings the reader's attention to the male figure in relation to the incident of the disobedience to the divine command.

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<sup>357</sup> N. T. Wright has noted the passive verb ζῳοποιηθήσονται ('they will be made alive') in v. 22b, as well as in v. 36 ('That which you sow does not *come to life* [ζῳοποιεῖται] unless it dies') and suggested that such usage of the passive verb reflects Paul's stress and theological consideration of the resurrection as the 'work of grace.' In other words, the people (v. 21) and what is sown (v. 36) are not creating the resurrection on their own, but that they will be brought to life by an agent, Christ. The ultimate agent, Paul describes, is God, to whom Christ will also be subjected. (v. 28). N. T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God*, vol. 3 of *Christian Origins and the Question of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 313; So Johann A. Bengel, *Romans and 1 & 2 Corinthians*, vol. 3 of *Gnomon of the New Testament*, trans. Charlton T. Lewis and Marvin R. Vincent (Philadelphia: Perkinpine & Higgins, 1864), 3:321.

<sup>358</sup> See pp. 99-104 of this thesis.

15:21b: The first two clauses of v. 21 lack a verb. A copular *ἐστί* may be assumed: ‘for since through a man [*there is*] death,’ but perhaps the sense is closer to ‘entering’ of death through man, as in Rom. 5:12: ‘through one man, sin *entered* (εἰσῆλθεν) into the world and death through sin.’ Either is possible, as the former reflects Paul’s understanding of the current state of death ‘reigning’ over all human beings (Rom. 5:14,17); nevertheless, the latter reflects better the sense of *διά*, denoting a means by which death entered the world.

15:21c: Several English translations use ‘came/comes’ or similar,<sup>359</sup> presumably understanding the resurrection of the dead (*ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν*) in v. 21b as referring to the resurrection of Christ, i.e. ‘since, death was *first introduced* by a human being, and likewise the *first* resurrection *occurred* by a human being.’ However, contextually, a verb in the future tense is equally possible: ‘through a human being, will come the resurrection of the dead.’ Paul’s focus on the future event of people’s resurrection throughout the chapter makes a verb in the future tense a suitable alternative (cf. v. 22: ‘in Christ all will be made alive’).

15:22a: Literally, ‘in *the* Adam’ (ἐν τῷ Ἀδὰμ) and ‘in *the* Christ’ (ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ). In the New Testament Greek, the use of the article before the personal names differs based on the individual author’s preference, but when the names are well known to the readers (e.g. Adam and Christ), they are generally anarthrous.<sup>360</sup> With the postpositive *γὰρ* at the beginning of v. 22 linking back to v. 21, it is likely that the two anarthrous personal names in this verse are used for emphasis and as an anaphoric reference to the term *ἄνθρωπος* (‘human being’) in the previous verse. The name Ἀδὰμ appears with the article here and in Luke 3:38, ‘the son of Adam’ (τοῦ Ἀδὰμ).

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<sup>359</sup> Cf. NASB (‘came’), NRSV/ESV (‘has come’), NLT (‘the resurrection has begun’), etc.

<sup>360</sup> In 1 Cor. 15, the personal name *Χριστός* is anarthrous in 13 out of its 16 occurrences (arthrous in vv. 15, 22, 23). For use of the article with personal names in the NT, see S. E. Porter, *Idioms of the Greek New Testament*, BLG 2, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 107; G.D. Fee, “The Use of the Definite Article with Personal Names in the Gospel of John,” *NTS* 17 (1970-71): 168-83; F. W. Blass, *Grammar of New Testament Greek* (London: Macmillan, 1911), 151-52. In LXX Genesis, until Gen. 4:1, the Greek translator uses the article with Ἀδὰμ whenever he sees the article with the Hebrew term *אדם* (‘the human being’). The article on *אדם* starts to drop out in the Hebrew text from 4:25. The phrase ‘in *the* Christ’ with the article appears only six times in the entire NT and without the article 67 times.

Paul does not use articles with the proper name Ἀδάμ in Rom. 5:14; 1 Cor. 15:45; 1 Tim. 2:13, 14 and Jude 14.

### 7.2.3 δι' ἀνθρώπου ('Through a Man')

In verse 21, the postpositive, explanatory γὰρ gestures back to Paul's imagery and identification of Jesus' resurrection as the 'first fruits' (ἀπαρχή), which implies the subsequent resurrection of those who are sleeping in death:<sup>361</sup> 'But now<sup>362</sup> Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep' (v. 20). In v. 21, Paul draws out the antithesis between death and resurrection, both of which are caused by one human being (ἄνθρωπος): the notion of 'death by one human being' is antithetically compared to the resurrection caused by another human being. The conjunction ἐπειδὴ<sup>363</sup> ('since') at the beginning of v. 21 preceding the postpositive γὰρ introduces the causal relation between the statement in the first clause, i.e. 'by a man came death', and the apodosis in the second clause, i.e. 'by a man came (will come) the resurrection of the dead.' The preposition διὰ ('by/through') in v. 21

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<sup>361</sup> Mark Taylor, *1 Corinthians*, NAC 28 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2014), 385; Ciampa and Rosner, *The First Letter to the Corinthians*, 762.

<sup>362</sup> The introductory νῦν ('now') in v. 20 marks the transition point in Paul's argument. In the previous section, Paul has argued that 'since Christ has been raised; therefore, there is a resurrection of the dead.' Now he turns his focus on the effects of that first resurrection, i.e. 'those who are in Christ will also be raised.'

<sup>363</sup> Elsewhere in the NT, ἐπειδὴ ('because,' 'since' or 'for') appears nine times: Luke 7:1, 11:6; Acts 13:46, 14:12, 15:24; 1 Cor. 1:21, 22, 14:16, 15:21; Philippians 2:26. Four out of these nine occurrences are found in Paul's letters, two of which are found in conjunction with explanatory γὰρ. In all cases (with the exception of Luke 7:1 where the term conveys more or less the temporal sense of 'when'), it serves as a direct causal link between one clause and the other immediately following. A more frequently attested conjunction, ἐπεὶ ('because,' 'since' or 'for'), also denoting a causal relationship between two clauses, is found in Rom 3:6; 11:6, 22; 1 Cor. 5:10; 7:14; 14:12, 16; 2 Cor. 11:18; 13:3. The term ἐπειδὴ used in 1 Cor. 15:21 is more emphatic than ἐπεὶ. For Paul's use of the conjunction ἐπειδήπερ ('because,' 'since' or 'inasmuch as'), which is even more emphatic than ἐπειδὴ, cf. Rom. 3:30. See, J. P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1989), 780.

denotes the human agency by which death arrived.<sup>364</sup> The fronting of the prepositional phrase δι' ἀνθρώπου ('through a man') naturally calls the attention to the causal relationship established by the two antithetical statements: *since* (ἐπειδὴ) it is *through one* human being death came, *so* (καί) did the resurrection of the dead come in the same way, *through one* who was also a *human being* (ἄνθρωπος). The second, explanatory γὰρ at the beginning of v. 22 also gestures back to the previous statement in v. 21, with the entire v. 22 serving as the parenthesis. What Paul further elaborates in v. 22 is twofold. First, the 'death' mentioned in v. 21 is not merely a death for one person alone (the one who brought death upon himself), but for all people (πάντες), and, similarly, Christ's resurrection was not an exceptional case for himself only; he was resurrected as the first fruits of all future resurrections. Second, the generic term ἄνθρωπος ('human being'), which appears twice in v. 21, is now identified specifically as Adam (Ἀδὰμ) and Christ (Χριστός) respectively in v. 22. In one way, this identification reflects the loss of the Hebrew pun in the words מָדָה and מָדָה in the LXX, and in another, it reflects Paul's desire to identify the generic human being as a specific person named Ἀδὰμ, as well as his understanding of the specific male figure Ἀδὰμ as the direct recipient of the divine command (Gen. 2:17). Such exegetical clarification has already been observed in the LXX.<sup>365</sup>

The continued antithetical comparison between Adam and Christ is marked by the adverbial marker of similarity ὡσπερ ('just as')<sup>366</sup> at the beginning of v. 22,

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<sup>364</sup> BDAG, "διά," 224. Athanasius commented on v. 21 that Paul's use of διά (not παρά) indicates Jesus' voluntary act of possessing man's nature to become the 'means' (not source) by which/whom mankind receives blessings, i.e. resurrection. Athanasius also understood the death referred to by Paul (and in Genesis) in the sense of 'mortality' caused by the disobedience of Adam. J. J. Lias, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, CGTSC (Cambridge: CUP, 1905), 170. William Orr similarly observes that, 'Paul does not argue that since Christ was divine, he could have been raised from the dead while the rest of mankind are not. Paul assumes that Christ's death puts him in the rank of humanity; and he could not escape the common human destiny, death.' William F. Orr and James Arthur Walther, *I Corinthians: A New Translation, Introduction, with a Study of the Life of Paul, Notes, and Commentary*, AYB 32 (New Haven: YUP, 2008), 325–26.

<sup>365</sup> See pp. 99-104 of this thesis.

<sup>366</sup> The same adverb is used in Rom. 5:12 in essentially the same sense: 'just as (ὡσπερ) through one man sin entered into the world...' (Rom. 5:12).

i.e. for *just as* (ὡσπερ) in Adam all die *so* in Christ all will be made alive.<sup>367</sup> Note also in v. 22 that the two prepositional phrases, ἐν τῷ Ἀδὰμ ('in Adam') and ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ ('in Christ'), fronted at the beginning of the two main clauses serve as emphasis. Grammatically, the statements in vv. 21-22, stressed with the prepositional phrases denoting 'agency', would read in the following sense: 'since it was *through* one human being (ἄνθρωπος) named *Adam* (Ἀδὰμ) that death for all (πάντες) came, the resurrection that occurred *through* one human being (ἄνθρωπος) named *Christ* is a sufficient means to bring future resurrection for all (πάντες). Paul's language in this passage (15:21-22), denoting the personal agency (δι' ἀνθρώπου) by which everyone dies (πάντες ἀποθνήσκουσιν), echoes a similar statement in Sir. 25:24 (LXX), where the context also deals with disobedience to the divine command (Gen. 2:17): δι' αὐτήν ἀποθνήσκομεν πάντες ('*through/on account* of her [Eve] we all die'). If the literal meaning of the word 'death' is presumed, Paul's association of the introduction of death with the human named Adam in 1 Cor. 15:21-22 is linguistically clear. As a consequence of the disobedience of Adam, all people die; death would not have entered the world had it not been for the disobedience of Adam. All human beings would not have died and would not die had it not been for the transgression of the man named Adam.

#### 7.2.4 In Adam (ἐν τῷ Ἀδὰμ) versus In Christ (ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ)

The expression 'in Adam' (ἐν τῷ Ἀδὰμ), which appears in antithetical structure with the expression 'in Christ' (ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ) links the death caused by this

<sup>367</sup> Ciampa and Rosner demonstrate the double parallel structure of the Adam and Christ antithesis well for easier comparison, as follows:

v.21	ἐπειδὴ γὰρ καὶ	δι' ἀνθρώπου δι' ἀνθρώπου	θάνατος, ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν
v.22	ὡσπερ γὰρ οὕτως καὶ	ἐν τῷ Ἀδὰμ ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ	πάντες ἀποθνήσκουσιν, πάντες ζωοποιηθήσονται.
v.21	(for since (also	through a man through a man	[came] death) [came] the resurrection)
v.22	(for just as (so also	in Adam in Christ	all die) all will be made alive.)

Cf. Ciampa and Rosner, *The First Letter to the Corinthians*, 762.



one human being (δι' ἀνθρώπου) with all people (πάντες) who are *in* Adam (ἐν τῷ Ἀδάμ). Likewise, with the comparative marker (ὡσπερ) introducing a simile, Paul associates Christ's resurrection with the future resurrection of all those who are *in* Christ (ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ). Yet how exactly is it that all people die 'in Adam'? An in-depth analysis of the prepositional phrases 'in Adam' and 'in Christ' may help us understand this text better. The former expression, 'in Adam,' does not appear in any other places in the NT. With regard to the latter, in more than 82 usages of the phrase 'in Christ/in the Christ' (or similar, e.g. 'in the Lord' etc.), Paul does not explain its meaning. The meaning of each occurrence, therefore, has to be deduced from its context, as Paul uses the phrase 'in Christ' with different connotations in different contexts. Most frequently, the phrase 'in Christ' refers to a person belonging to (or being in) Christ.<sup>368</sup> For instance, Rom. 8:1 reflects a sense of 'being in' or 'belonging to' Christ: 'There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ' (ἐν Χριστῷ).<sup>369</sup> In 1 Cor. 15, prior to vv. 21-22, Paul uses the phrase 'in Christ' to refer to 'those who have fallen asleep in Christ' (ἐν Χριστῷ) (v. 18).<sup>370</sup> Those who have fallen asleep in Christ (ἐν Χριστῷ) are the ones who will be resurrected in Christ (ἐν Χριστῷ). The expression οἱ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ('those who are Christ's') in Paul's description of the order of resurrection (v. 23) helps with the precise meaning of the

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<sup>368</sup> Cf. 1 Peter 5:14; Philippians 1:1; Romans 8:1 etc. Michael Parsons provides LXX examples (Gen. 12:3; 21:12) with the preposition ἐν suggesting the solidarity of all people who are incorporated together in one representative figure. Michael Parsons, "In Christ' in Paul," *Vox Evangelica* 18 (1988): 29. The phrase 'in Christ' is peculiar to Paul and is rarely found outside the Pauline Epistles. See, Albrecht Oepke, "Ἐν," *TDNT* 2:541. Whereas the preposition διὰ in v. 21 clearly denotes human agency, the Greek preposition ἐν has various usages. The general usage of ἐν, denoting local in the literal physical sense, is obviously ruled out. Oepke distinguishes 'in Christ' into four different usages, using examples mostly from Pauline texts: 1) in most cases it denotes 'membership of Christ and the church'; 2) it may be used to describe an 'activity or state as Christian'; 3) it can also be used as 'value judgments circumscribing the sphere of reference'; 4) it can denote the 'objective basis of fellowship with God' such as χάρις ('grace'), σωτηρία ('salvation'), or ἀπολύτρωσις ('redemption') etc. For a more detailed survey of the phrase 'in Christ' in Pauline writings, see M. Parsons, "In Christ' in Paul," 25-44.

<sup>369</sup> Cf. Rom. 8:11: 'If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to him.'

<sup>370</sup> The figurative use of the verb 'to sleep' in relation to 'death' appears in Matt. 27:52; Jn. 11:11; Acts 7:60.

phrase ‘in Christ’ (ἐν Χριστῷ) in v. 22 as referring to the ‘solidarity’ of those who belong to Christ: ‘But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those *who are Christ’s* (οἱ τοῦ Χριστοῦ) at His coming.’ Most commentators interpret ‘in Adam’ and ‘in Christ’ in v. 22 accordingly to mean ‘corporate solidarity’ in Adam and Christ respectively.<sup>371</sup> In 1 Thess. 4:13-18, the notion that those who have fallen asleep in Christ will be resurrected with the ‘coming of the Lord’ appears three times. The fact that Paul distinguishes those who have fallen asleep ‘in Christ’ from those ‘who have no hope’ (v. 13) adds to the restrictive sense of the phrase ‘in Christ.’ Thus, the group of people ‘who have fallen asleep in Christ’ does not necessarily include ‘all’ those who have fallen asleep. A person has to be ‘in Christ’ when he or she dies in order to be raised through Christ.<sup>372</sup> Similarly, the expression ‘those who are Christ’s’ (οἱ τοῦ Χριστοῦ) in 1 Cor. 15:23 limits the statement ‘in Christ, all will be made alive’ (v. 22) to those who belong to Christ.<sup>373</sup>

As observed above, with the explanatory γὰρ in 1 Cor. 15: 22 gesturing back to the preceding verse (v. 21), it is natural to take v. 22 as a parenthesis elaborating the antithesis in v. 21. In this regard, the preposition ἐν with a proper name in the dative (ἐν τῷ Ἀδάμ) could also explain and emphasise that the death and life mentioned are by means of the persons whose specific names are confirmed in v. 22. The understanding of the phrase ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ (‘in Christ’) as denoting agency is supported by Paul’s use of the word Χριστῷ with διὰ in passages with the same

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<sup>371</sup> M. Taylor, *1 Corinthians*, 385; Fee argues that the phrases must be understood in terms of Paul’s overall argument, noting that: ‘Both the context and Paul’s theology as a whole make it clear that in saying “in Christ all will be made alive,” he means “in Christ all *who are in Christ* will be made alive,”’ *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 830; Ciampa interprets ‘in Adam’ to mean: ‘to be part of the group which finds in Adam its representative and leader, which finds its identity and destiny in Adam and what he has brought about for his people.’ Ciampa and Rosner, *ibid.*, 763.

<sup>372</sup> Cf. 1 Thess. 4:13, 14, 16. The context of 1 Thess. 4:13-18 deals with the question of what will happen to the people who are already dead ‘in Christ’ before the coming of the Christ, and Paul’s answer is that those who have died will be resurrected first: ‘the dead in Christ will rise first’ (v. 16). Then those who are alive and remain in Christ will be caught up to meet Christ in the air (v. 17). Here also, the context undoubtedly points to the literal and physical death of the people who are ‘in Christ.’

<sup>373</sup> Cf. also 2 Cor. 5:17: ‘If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.’

context referring to the ‘resurrection’ or ‘reconciliation’ of the believers through Christ (διὰ Χριστοῦ). For instance, in 1 Thess. 4:14, Paul writes, ‘For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep *through* Jesus (διὰ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ).’<sup>374</sup> Therefore, although the causal use of the prepositional phrase ἐν τῷ Ἀδὰμ (‘by Adam/by means of Adam’) is not necessarily to be taken in its strict sense,<sup>375</sup> it is certainly possible grammatically and contextually that the phrases ‘in Adam’ and ‘in Christ’ denote causality in both, the one of death and the other of life for all people. Thus the prepositional phrase can be taken as an instrumental dative as it does not contradict Paul’s idea found in other places about the influence of Adam upon all men, especially after Paul has just taught in v. 21 that it was through one human being that death arrived. In fact, the idea of the ‘universal fate of mortality,’ which Paul conveys with the gnomic use of the present tense in v. 22, i.e. ‘all die’ (πάντες ἀποθνήσκουσιν),<sup>376</sup> stands out better with such instrumental usage of the prepositional phrase ἐν τῷ Ἀδὰμ (‘by Adam’). This would also accord with Paul’s repeated use of causal expressions denoting the agency of Adam in Rom. 5:12-21.<sup>377</sup> Taken altogether, the message that Paul conveys in 1 Cor. 15:21-22 is the causal relationship and influence of Adam and Christ on those who possess solidarity with them. Just as (ὡσπερ) Adam is the cause of the death of all people (v. 22a), Christ is the cause of the resurrection of all people (v. 22b). For Paul, the resurrection of Christ is the evidence and cause for the future resurrection of all; there would be no resurrection of people if Christ had not risen as the first fruits (v. 20). All people, without exception, have died, are dying, or will die, but Christ’s resurrection provides a solution in the precise way described by Paul: the ‘perishable’ will put on the ‘imperishable’ and the ‘mortal’ will put on ‘immortality’

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<sup>374</sup> Cf. also Rom. 5:1, 11, 17; 2 Cor. 5:18; Eph. 1:5.

<sup>375</sup> The phrase ἐν τῷ Ἀδὰμ is not the only suggestion in this passage of Paul’s idea of death brought upon all men through one man’s sin.

<sup>376</sup> The verb ἀποθνήσκουσιν (‘all die’) is a gnomic present, describing an action or state which continues from the past without time limits. See D. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, 522-24. Cf. Rom. 5:15, where Paul uses an aorist verb: τῷ τοῦ ἐνός παραπτώματι οἱ πολλοὶ ἀπέθανον (‘by the transgression of the one the many died’). On the contrary, Paul’s use of the future passive verb, ‘all will be made alive’ (ζωοποιηθήσονται) reflects his view of resurrection as occurring in the future.

<sup>377</sup> Cf. Rom. 5:12, 15; 16; 17; 18; 19.

(v. 55). The dying of all human beings ἐν τῷ Ἀδὰμ ('by Adam') will continue until the coming of Christ with the last trumpet, and by then, death will be defeated and swallowed up in victory (v. 54). In 1 Cor. 15:21-22, Paul speaks of the inevitability of human death due to the disobedience of Adam and the overcoming of that death ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ ('by Christ'), which is the main thrust of his message.

### 7.2.5 All (πάντες) Die, All (πάντες) Will be Made Alive

Not only does Paul's transition from the generic term ἄνθρωπος ('human being') to the specific personal name Ἀδὰμ echo the similar transition in the LXX (Gen. 2:16-17), but his use of the words 'death' (θάνατος) and 'all die' (ἀποθνήσκουσιν) in the plural is also reminiscent of the way in which the death warning in Gen. 2:17 is rendered in the LXX with the same words: θανάτῳ ἀποθανεῖσθε ('by death, you. [pl.] will die'). We should be cautious determining the direct influence of the LXX's use of the plural verb on Paul's understanding of death as applicable to all Adam's descendants; yet, as already observed, as with the case of Philo's interpretation of death in Gen. 2:17 as affecting all humanity based on the plural verb in the LXX, it is also possible that the plural verb in the LXX could have influenced Paul in formulating his idea of death caused by one man, affecting not only Adam and Eve themselves, but also all of humanity.<sup>378</sup> It is likely that Paul had a Genesis text very close to that of the LXX, since eight out of Paul's ten direct quotations from Genesis are cited verbatim from the LXX,<sup>379</sup> one of which is against

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<sup>378</sup> There is also a note of caution in judging the source text of Paul's OT quotations as the LXX, even in the cases where the quotations agree with the LXX. Timothy Lim rightly observes that, 'Greater caution must be exercised in describing biblical quotations in the Pauline letters as a whole to be septuagintal, since such a textual characterization assumes that the citations agree with the Septuagint over and against the MT, Samaritan, and all other text-types and recensions. To be distinctively septuagintal, as is often claimed, the cited verse or individual reading should agree with the LXX in those passages where the Septuagint differs from all other text-types.' T.H. Lim, *Holy Scripture in the Qumran Commentaries and Pauline Letters* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 140-41. See also idem, *The Formation of the Jewish Canon*, 167-68.

<sup>379</sup> Cf. 1 Cor. 6:16; 15:45; Rom. 4:3, 17, 18; 9:9, 12; Gal. 3:6, 8; Eph. 5:31. For a short survey on Paul's use of Genesis in Romans, see John W. Montgomery, "Some Comments on Paul's Use of Genesis in His Epistle to the Romans," *Bulletin of the Evangelical Theological Society* 4.1 (1961): 4-

the MT (1 Cor. 6:16).<sup>380</sup> The remaining two quotations also agree with the LXX, except that Paul either adds extra words for clarification (1 Cor. 15:45),<sup>381</sup> or he deletes words (Galatians 3:8).<sup>382</sup>

Just as the meaning of the generic term ἄνθρωπος ('human being') in v. 21 has been precisely defined as Ἀδὰμ in v. 22, the death (θάνατος) mentioned in v. 21 is likewise expounded by the use of a plural verb to mean applicable not only to Adam himself, but to all (πάντες) humanity. Thus, the death brought on by one human being was not merely a death for Adam alone; instead, the consequence of his disobedience becomes the death of all. Paul therefore establishes a causal relation between the disobedience of one human being (ἄνθρωπος) named Ἀδὰμ and the death of all people in v. 22. Although Paul does not explicitly cite Genesis 2:17, it is obvious that he is referring here to Adam's disobedience to the divine command concerning the partaking of the tree of knowledge (Gen. 2:17).<sup>383</sup> Paul's affirmation of the emergence of 'death' in relation to Gen. 2:17 naturally leads to the conjecture that Paul understood the death warning to have been fulfilled as God had predicted, i.e. 'you shall surely die' ('by death, you will die' [LXX]).<sup>384</sup> This would also mean that

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<sup>380</sup> In 1 Cor. 6:16, Paul quotes LXX Gen. 2:24 verbatim: οἱ δύο εἰς σάρκα μίαν ('the two shall become one flesh'). There is no equivalent of οἱ δύο ('the two') in the MT: 'they shall become one flesh.' See also 1 Cor. 15:32, in which Paul cites verbatim from LXX Is. 22:13.

<sup>381</sup> 1 Cor. 15:45 will be discussed later in this chapter. See also, John W. Latham, "The Use of the Old Testament in 1 Corinthians 15:44-49," *American Journal of Biblical Theology* 14.10, <http://www.biblicaltheology.com/Research/LathamJW01.pdf>.

<sup>382</sup> Gal. 3:8, 'All the nations will be blessed in you' (ἐνευλογηθήσονται ἐν σοὶ πάντα τὰ ἔθνη) is an abbreviation of similar expressions found in Gen. 12:3; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14. In all these cases, the phrase τῆς γῆς ('of the earth') is attached to 'the nations' (πάντα τὰ ἔθνη), which is missing in Gal. 3:8.

<sup>383</sup> As will be discussed later, in Romans 5:12-21, Paul's reference to Gen. 2:17 is more explicit and obvious than in 1 Cor. 15:21-22 due to his repeated use of the prepositional phrases 'through the transgression of one' Cf. Rom. 5:12, 15; 16; 17; 18; 19.

<sup>384</sup> Jesus' description of the devil (διάβολος) as 'a liar and the father of lies' in John 8:44 could possibly be an indirect allusion to Gen. 3:4, and perhaps reflects a line of understanding in the NT that identifies the serpent as the devil who told the very 'first' lie in human history. In Gen. 3:4, the serpent explicitly denies God's death warning (Gen. 2:17): 'you will surely not die' (וְלֹא-תָמוּתְּ). Such an understanding, holding the devil responsible for the introduction of death to humanity, is also found in Wis. 2:23-24, and therefore this is not unprecedented: 'For God made man as

Paul has likely understood the temporal phrase in Gen. 2:17 ‘in the day’ in the literal sense, i.e. the death entered the world ‘in the day’ they disobeyed God’s command, which is also in fitting with the LXX’s idiomatic and emphatic rendering of the phrase ‘in the day.’<sup>385</sup> Such an interpretation, which identifies God against the prediction of the serpent (Gen. 3:5), would likely lead to either or both of the two resolutions concerning the problem that Adam did not in fact die immediately on the day he ate from the tree of knowledge: 1) Adam died ‘spiritually’,<sup>386</sup> 2) Adam (and

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incorruptible/immortality...but by the envy of the *devil* (διάβολος), death came into the world’ The possible affinities between Wis. 2:23-24 and Rom. 5:12 will be discussed in the second part of this chapter. If we take John 8:44 as a possible allusion to the Genesis incident, then Jesus’ view of the devil as a ‘liar’ further reflects his and/or his contemporary’s understanding of the serpent’s retort in Gen. 3:4 as a ‘lie’ in contrast to God’s command, which by logic must have been understood as a true statement. In the Genesis narrative, however, it appears that it is actually the prediction of the serpent that turned out to be true: ‘For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil... Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked’ (Gen. 3:5-7). On this, see pp. 40-46 of this thesis. According to this view, then, the divine command, ‘on the day you eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you will surely die’ (Gen. 2:17) must have been fulfilled in a certain way (regardless of the nature of the death) in order for it to be true. Perhaps Paul’s description of Satan as one who ‘disguises himself as an angel of light’ in 2 Cor. 11:14 is an indication of his acknowledgment of a similar understanding. Cf. also Rev. 12:9; 20:2, the author of Revelation describes Satan in these verses as ὁ ὄφις ὁ ἀρχαῖος (‘ancient serpent’). Such a line of interpretation, which assumes the serpent’s retort in Gen. 3:4 to be a lie, will logically lead to the understanding that God was right, that Adam and Eve indeed died, either spiritually or in the sense that they became mortal. Paul’s promise to the Roman church in Rom. 16:20 that ‘the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet’ echoes one of God’s punishments directed at the serpent in Gen. 3:15: ‘I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed. He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel.’ Paul’s description of Satan in this verse echoing the language in Gen. 3:15 is a likely indication of Paul’s identification and association of the serpent with Satan, which fits with Jesus’ description of the devil as a ‘father of lie.’ The likelihood that Paul is considering the garden narrative is supported by the previous verse (Rom. 6:19), where another implicit allusion to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is found in Paul’s exhortation to the church ‘to be wise with respect to the good and pure with respect to evil’ (v. 19). See also Hebrews 6:8 for an NT allusion to the agricultural aspect of God’s punishment of Adam in Gen. 3:18. The author of the Hebrews describes a land that yields ‘thorns and thistles’ as a ‘curse.’

<sup>385</sup> See pp. 96-99 of this thesis.

<sup>386</sup> For Philo and modern exegetes’ interpretation of Gen. 2:17 as ‘spiritual’ death, see footnote 90.

his descendants) became mortal.<sup>387</sup> Paul’s use of the present tense verb ‘all die’ (ἀποθνήσκουσιν) seems to support the latter.<sup>388</sup> As such, if the nature of the ‘death’ mentioned by Paul in these verses is ‘physical,’ then it becomes certain that, in this, Paul provides a reason for the universal and present state of human mortality.

### 7.2.6 Does Paul Refer to ‘Physical’ or ‘Spiritual’ Death?

What is, then, the nature of death in Paul’s view? While most scholars would agree that the death meant by Paul in 1 Cor. 15:21-22 unambiguously and primarily refers to that of physical (or bodily) death, a few have suggested that what Paul refers to by the ‘death’ brought on through Adam is not physical, but spiritual/moral death.<sup>389</sup> However, Paul’s consistent use of the word νεκρός (‘dead/corpse’) in 1 Cor.

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<sup>387</sup> Symmachus’ rendering follows the same exegetical line: οὐ μὴ φαγῆ ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ· ἢ δ’ ἂν ἡμέρα φαγῆ ἀπὸ τοῦ ξύλου θνητὸς ἔσῃ (‘do not eat from it, on the day you will eat from the tree, you will become mortal’). Symmachus, *Hex. Gen. 2:17*. The Greek text is from Frederick Field, ed., *Genesis-Esther*, vol. 1 of *Hexaplorum quae supersunt sive Veterum interpretum Garecorum in totum Vetus Testamentum fragmenta* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1875), 14.

<sup>388</sup> On the other hand, the future tense verb ζῶσοποιηθήσονται (‘all will be made alive’) in v. 22b explaining the influence of Christ’s resurrection indicates Paul’s understanding of such resurrection as happening in the future.

<sup>389</sup> For instance, based on the notion of Adam’s creation from the earth (ἐκ γῆς), in contrast to Christ, who is from heaven (1 Cor. 15:47), H.A. Kelly argues that Paul conveys in 1 Cor. 15 the idea of Adam’s original physical status as mortal. He further argues that Paul’s view of death in Rom. 5:12-21 is not necessarily ‘physical’ based on his mention of ‘the eternal life’ in v. 21, Kelly, “Adam Citings before the Intrusion of Satan: Recontextualizing Paul’s Theology of Sin and Death,” 22-23. However, his argument is not supported by Paul’s overall context, his use of the word ‘death’ in the literal sense, or Paul’s clear assertion of ‘death’ coming through one person within the context of justifying the physical death and resurrection of Christ, as well as of those who are in him. Similarly, Paul writes that Adam is from the earth in v. 47 in order to further his argument on ‘bodily’ death and resurrection. Although Paul does speak of a life and resurrected body that are far better than the previous body before death (1 Cor. 15:45-49), this does not preclude the concept of physical death. In his doctoral thesis, while acknowledging Barr’s assertion that the Genesis narrative and the rest of the OT affirm Adam’s mortal status, rather than immortal, Mark E. Maxwell argues that Paul also does not see physical death as a punishment caused by Adam’s disobedience. Rather, Maxwell argues, death is viewed as something ‘good’ and a ‘necessary process that a believer must pass through to enter the kingdom of God.’ For instance, in 1 Cor. 15, according to Maxwell, Paul speaks of physical death and regards it as an ‘event’ and a ‘state of being.’ He writes that: ‘Physical death is not

15 in reference to death and resurrection<sup>390</sup> militates against such an argument.<sup>391</sup> Occasionally Paul does discuss death in a metaphorical sense, but in such cases, it is clear.<sup>392</sup> Moreover, the argument for the ‘spiritual’ as opposed to the ‘physical’ death is contrary to the overall context of 1 Cor. 15. Paul’s entire discussion of death and resurrection in 1 Cor. 15 is anchored on the verity of the bodily death and resurrection of Christ. In his attempt to justify the future bodily resurrection of the dead (*νεκρός*), Paul’s argument begins and continues with the notion of physical death and resurrection of Christ. Such a context logically leads us to consider the ‘death’ of all people caused by Adam (vv. 21-22) in a similar sense. As observed above, Paul’s response in 1 Cor. 15 is specifically addressed to those (*τινες*) who rejected the notion of the resurrection of the dead (*νεκρός*).<sup>393</sup> It is Christ’s physical death and resurrection that Paul regards as the foundation for his argument against

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problematic, it is not punishment, and it is not connected to sin.’ However, his argument is weak in that he overlooks the context and language that clearly emphasizes the causal relationship between sin and physical death. Mark E. Maxwell, “Condemnation, Death, and Justification: From What is One Saved in Paul’s Thought?” (PhD diss., University of Denver, 2015), 79, 90-102.

<sup>390</sup> Cf. 1 Cor. 15:12, 13, 15, 16, 20, 21, 29, 35, 42, 52, etc.

<sup>391</sup> The metaphorical use of the word *νεκρός* (mostly in the form of adjectives) is occasionally found in the LXX and the NT, but overwhelming evidence suggests the literal meaning in the sense of ‘dead person or body.’ BDAG, “*νεκρός*,” 667-69; Rudolf Bultmann, “*νεκρός*,” *TDNT* 4:892.

<sup>392</sup> Cf. 1 Cor. 15:31: ‘I affirm, brethren, by the boasting in you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I *die* daily’; Rom. 6:4: ‘Therefore we have been *buried* with Him through baptism into death...’; Rom. 6:11: ‘Consider yourselves to be *dead* to sin...’; 2 Cor. 4:10: ‘I carry in the body the *death* of Christ,’ etc. Even all these metaphorical statements about death appear within the context and discussion of the physical death and resurrection of Christ. See also Eph. 2:1-2: ‘you were dead in your trespasses and sins’; Col. 2:13: ‘you were dead in your transgressions.’ Based on the last two passages (Eph. 2:1-2 and Col. 2:13), we could suggest that Paul is speaking of both ‘spiritual’ and ‘physical’ death, but Paul does not expound further. Cf. also Rom. 6:11: ‘For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.’

<sup>393</sup> According to Lk. 20:27; Acts 4:2 and 23:6, in Paul’s time, two religious groups in Israel had different understandings of ‘resurrection.’ Unlike the Pharisees, the Saducees did not believe in the resurrection of the body or the existence of life after death. The fact that Paul was already a Pharisee suggests that he probably held the belief in the resurrection prior to his encounter with and acknowledgement of Jesus’ resurrection as the foundation of his belief.



those who deny the physical resurrection from the dead (*νεκρός*).<sup>394</sup> Thus, Paul's belief and assertion of the verity of the future resurrection of the dead is firmly grounded in the literal death and resurrection of Christ. Paul's mention of Jesus' burial (v. 4) and his appearance before Cephas, his disciples and 500 people also emphasizes the actual and physical death and resurrection of Christ (v. 4).<sup>395</sup> That Paul primarily has the physical death in view is further supported by the fact that v. 21 continues the argument of v. 20, serving as an elaboration of Paul's notion of Christ's physical resurrection as the first fruits in v. 20. The death specifically mentioned in reference to Adam's disobedience in 1 Cor. 15:21-22, therefore, must be understood as having the same sense as in Paul's notion of Christ's physical resurrection as the first fruits in v. 20. Further, as suggested by many scholars, it is possible that those who denied the resurrection of the dead (*νεκρός*) were under the influence of Greek philosophy, which regarded the physical body as inferior to the soul and unsuitable and unnecessary after the point of death.<sup>396</sup> Under this circumstance, it is probable that the questions regarding the manner and nature of the resurrection body (v. 12 and 35) were originally raised not by Paul himself, but by those among the Corinthians who were under the influence of this Hellenistic world view: 'How are the dead raised? And with what kind of body do they come?' Therefore, precluding the notion of physical death in Paul's refutation against those who cherished the immortality of the soul on the one hand and doubted the resurrection of the body on the other seems illogical and out of context.<sup>397</sup>

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<sup>394</sup> According to Paul, without resurrection of the dead, his faith and preaching about Christ's resurrection would be vain: 'But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain. Moreover, we are even found to be false witnesses of God because we testified against God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised' (1 Cor. 15:13-16). Paul also writes that those who do oppose such resurrection 'have no knowledge of God' (1 Cor. 15:34).

<sup>395</sup> Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians: A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), 255.

<sup>396</sup> Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 795. For discussion on the possible Hellenistic influence on Corinthians, see Fee, *ibid.*, 279-84; R. J. Sider, "St. Paul's Understanding of the Nature and Significance of the Resurrection in I Corinthians XV 1-19," *NovT* 19 (1977): 124-41.

<sup>397</sup> Paul also writes in v. 31 that he is in 'danger of death' every day, which would make sense only in the literal sense.

In 1 Cor. 15:42-59, in order to answer the question on the nature of the resurrection body (v. 35), Paul presents a series of antithetical contrasts distinguishing two types of bodies: 1) the ‘earthly’ (χοϊκός), ‘natural/physical’ (ψυχικόν) and ‘perishable’<sup>398</sup> (φθορᾶ) body that is sown in ‘dishonor’ and ‘weakness’; and 2) the ‘heavenly’ (ἐπουράνιος), ‘spiritual’ (πνευματικόν) and ‘imperishable’ (ἀφθαρσία) body that will be raised in ‘glory’ and ‘power’ (vv. 42-49). Such a clear reference to the natural and perishable body within the same context and theme of death adds to the physical sense of ‘death.’ In this section, once again Paul contrasts Adam and Christ (v. 45) using a direct quotation from Gen. 2:7: ‘So also it is written, “The *first* man, *Adam*, became a living being (ψυχὴν),” the last Adam became a life-giving spirit.’ The citation is identical to the LXX translation of Gen. 2:7c, except that he adds ‘first’ (πρῶτος) and ‘Adam’ (Ἀδὰμ).<sup>399</sup> Again, this is not a mere ‘human being,’ indeed Paul’s stress on the specific identity of the *first* human being as Adam is evident. The same verb ζῳοποιέω (‘to make alive’) as in v. 22 is used here to describe Christ’s influence on others. In v. 47, Paul recaptures the notion of Adam’s creation from the earth (ἐκ γῆς) to further illustrate the physical aspect of the death under discussion. Two things are clear from this antithesis between two types of bodies: 1) the death that Paul has been discussing up to this point is the physical death of the natural and earthly body; and 2) the body that will be raised at Christ’s ‘coming’ (παρουσία) with the sound of the last trumpet (vv. 23, 52) will be far better than the ‘mortal’ (θνητὸν) body before the resurrection (v. 53). The change will thus occur from ‘perishable’ to ‘imperishable’, from ‘mortal’ to ‘immortal.’ This is not merely a new body, but an ‘immortal’ (ἀθανασίαν) body no longer susceptible to death or decay. This is precisely the idea that Paul also conveys in Rom. 6:9: ‘knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him.’ Although Paul does not explicitly present the idea of the resurrection body as being restored back to the immortal state that Adam and Eve enjoyed prior to their disobedience in the garden, this understanding is perhaps implied in Paul’s contrast between the immortal body and the ‘death’ that

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<sup>398</sup> Paul also describes death as sown with a ‘perishable *body*’ in Rom. 8:21; 1 Cor. 15:50; Gal. 6:8.

<sup>399</sup> Cf. LXX Gen. 2:7c: καὶ ἐγένετο ὁ ἄνθρωπος εἰς ψυχὴν ζῶσαν (‘and he became a living being’).

is brought on by Adam's sin. Also, by following the logic of Paul's argument, if there was no death before sin, it can be inferred that the body Adam possessed (or God originally meant for Adam to possess) was immortal. The same idea is presented clearly in Wis. 2:23-24: 'For God created the human being with immortality, and in the image of his own likeness he made him. But by the envy of the devil, death came into the world.' The death brought on by Adam will be defeated by Christ who himself is resurrected as the first fruits. Again, verses 48-49 convey the idea of inclusiveness of all people who are under Adam and Christ respectively: 'Just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we will also bear the image of the heavenly.'

### **7.3 Romans 5:12-21**

Paul once again introduces his antithetical contrast between Adam and Christ in Romans 5:12-21. The logic and points of Paul's argumentation in this passage are basically the same, but presented in a much more developed and elaborated manner: Christ is to be considered as the opposite of Adam, just as sin and death came through one man, Adam, so through one man, Christ, come grace and life to all. After discussing the context and structure of Rom. 5:12-21, this passage will be exegetically analyzed with particular attention to verse 12, in which Paul's main assertion about death coming into the world through Adam is introduced. The last clause of v. 12, ἐφ' ᾧ πάντες ἥμαρτον ('because all sinned/in whom all sinned'), which has long been a subject of scholarly debate, will be given particular attention with regard to its usage and meaning in relation to the topic of the origin of death. The possible literary affinities between Rom. 5:12 and Wis. 2:24 will also be briefly reviewed. Although details of the remaining verses (5:13-21) that are relevant to the discussion of Paul's idea and assertion on the coming of death as a result of Adam's disobedience will be dealt with in this section, I do not intend to engage with a verse-by-verse analysis of the whole passage, nor to provide a full discussion of all the theological issues that are not particularly relevant to our topic.<sup>400</sup>

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<sup>400</sup> There are innumerable works and commentaries on the book of Romans that aim to provide fuller discussions of Paul's message in Rom. 5:12-21 and the whole book. The major commentaries I have consulted are: C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans: Introduction and Commentary on Romans I-VIII*, ICC (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 269-95;

### 7.3.1 The Context of Romans 5:12-21

As with the first epistle to the Corinthians, the issues of authorship and date for the epistle to the Romans are uncontroversial. There is a consensus that Paul is the author (1:1) of the letter and that the church in Rome is the recipient that Paul addresses as ‘all who are beloved of God in Rome’ (1:7). It is generally agreed that Romans was written in the middle to late 50s of the first century, from or near Corinth, while Paul was planning his voyage to Jerusalem, Rome and Spain (15:22-29).<sup>401</sup> The main purpose and theme of the epistle to the Romans are again rooted in the ‘gospel of the Christ,’ which Paul is not ‘ashamed of’ and firmly believes to be the ‘power of God to salvation for everyone who believes (1:16-17).’ Paul’s second and last assertion about the coming of death through one man appears in the fifth chapter of Romans, 5:12-21 in particular, where Paul’s recapturing of his antithetical comparison between Adam and Christ is similar to the one observed in 1 Cor. 15:21-22. Just as the fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians was for the entire epistle to the Corinthians, the fifth chapter of Romans is considered by scholars to be the central and pivotal chapter within the whole epistle, in which Paul continues his argument of ‘justification’ dealt with in chapters 1-4, but at the same time introduces the following section (chaps. 5-8) that discusses the new life and relationship with God because of Christ’s death.<sup>402</sup> In Rom. 5:1-11, Paul focuses on demonstrating how

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Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Romans: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AYB 33 (New Haven: YUP, 2008), 405-28; James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, WBC 38A (Waco, TX: Word, 1988), 269-300; Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 314-350; Richard N. Longenecker, *The Epistle to the Romans: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016), 575-603; Robert Jewett, *Romans: A Commentary*, Hermeneia 59 (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 369-89; Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1998), 267-97.

<sup>401</sup> N. T. Wright, “The Letter to the Romans,” in *The New Interpreter’s Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002), 396. For discussion on the date and place of composition, see J.A. Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 85-86. Fitzmyer dates the Romans to the winter of 57-58 C.E.

<sup>402</sup> The scholarly dispute concerning the place and role of chapter 5 within the whole letter questions whether it is a concluding part of the preceding section (1:18-4:25) that expounds the theme of ‘justification’ through faith in Christ’s death and resurrection, or whether it is an introduction to the following section (6:1-8:39) that describes the ‘sanctification’ and ‘future hope’ of those who are justified with God. D. Moo suggests four main reasons for considering chapter 5 prospectively as a

Christ's death brought 'grace' to the 'ungodly' (v. 6) and 'sinners' (v. 8). In 5:12-21, Paul reiterates his contrast between Adam and Christ and their opposite effects to further illustrate his point that Christ's death and resurrection bring new status and life to all who are in Christ. As Robert Jewett points out, Paul's interest in outlining the contrasting effects and implications of Adam and Christ does not lie in formulating a doctrine of Adam's sin, but instead illustrating the 'scope of the overflowing dominion of grace (vv. 15-17, 20-21) in the "life" of all believers (vv. 17-19, 21).'<sup>403</sup> The overall structure of Rom. 5:12-21 can be divided into six sections:

- A. The opening statement that asserts the coming of sin and death into the world through one man (v. 12);
- B. Parenthetical explanation to section A: the presence of sin and death in the time between Adam and Moses (vv. 13-14);
- C. The contrast between transgression through the one (Adam) and the gift through the one (Christ), resulting in death and condemnation and life and righteousness respectively for all men (vv. 15-17);
- D. The contrast between Adam and Christ resumed (5:18-19);

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shift or a transition in the letter: 1) the opening phrase of chapter 5 'having been justified by faith' summarizes the argument of the preceding section (1:18-4:25); 2) the use of the first person plural from 5:1 indicates a shift in style that reoccurs throughout chapters 5-8; 3) the frequent use of certain key words in chapters 5-8 (e.g. 'life' and 'to live') indicates a shift in focus; and 4) the focus and contents of chapter 5 is more closely connected to the section that follows. See D.J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 292-93. So, Fitzmyer views chapter 5 as a section introducing the following unit based on similar reasons. T.R. Schreiner, *Romans*, 245-49. Neil Elliott considers chapter 5 a 'transitional section' that 'channels the force of the opposition generated in chs.1-4 between divine righteousness and human boasting into an insistence that Christians boast "in God" (5.11), specifically in the mode of hope for "the glory of God (5.2)."' Neil Elliott, *The Rhetoric of Romans: Argumentative Constraint and Strategy and Paul's Dialogue with Judaism*, JSNTSup 45 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990), 226. The possibility of Rom. 5:12-21 being drawn from a writing by Paul for a different occasion has been suggested based on the use of the third person singular in 5:12-21, as opposed to the first person usage in the previous (5:1-11) and following unit (6:1-8). See Fitzmyer, *Roman*, 96-97, 411. See also N.T. Wright, "The Letter of the Romans," 508-14.

<sup>403</sup> R. Jewett, *Romans*, 370.

- E. The coming of the Law to increase the transgression. But grace increased even more so where the sin increased (v. 20);<sup>404</sup>
- F. The concluding statement that compares sin that reigned in death with grace that would reign through righteousness and eternal life through Jesus Christ (v. 21).

In v. 12, Paul begins the antithetical comparison between Adam and Christ, which he does not complete until vv. 18-19. Instead, Paul goes on to provide parenthetical statements (vv. 13-14) to v. 12, concerning the sins and deaths of those who lived in the time between Adam and Moses. The third section begins with ‘but’ (ἀλλά) in v. 15, explaining the differences between the ‘transgression’ by the one, Adam, and the ‘gift’ by the grace of the one, Christ. In v. 18, Paul resumes the comparison between Adam and Christ that he left uncompleted in v. 12. The comparison continues to v. 19. Note the comparative markers in these verses: ‘just as (ὡς/ὥσπερ)...even so (οὕτως καὶ)...’. In v. 20, Paul returns to the discussion of the Law (cf. 5:13-14), commenting on the purpose of the Law: ‘so that the transgression would increase.’ In the final verse (v. 21), Paul presents yet another comparison between ‘sin’ and ‘grace’ and concludes the whole passage with the recurring formula, ‘through Jesus Christ our Lord’ (διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν),<sup>405</sup> emphasizing the agency of Christ through whom the ‘reign of grace’ would abound (vv. 20-21).

### 7.3.2 Text and Translation<sup>406</sup>

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<sup>404</sup> Cf. Gal. 3:19: ‘Why then the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the offspring should come to whom the promise had been made.’

<sup>405</sup> Cf. 5:1, 11, 21; 6:23; 7:25; 8:39. The placement of the same formulae at the beginning, middle and end of chapter 5 (as well as at the end of chapters 6, 7 and 8) is intentional as its presence not only marks off each section of the chapter, but also shows that these sections constitute one main division within the whole epistle. C.E.B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, 258-59.

<sup>406</sup> The Greek text is taken from *Novum Testamentum Graece* (ed. Barbara Aland et al.; 28<sup>th</sup> ed.; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2012). The English translation of Rom. 5:12 is mine. All other English translations of Rom. 5:12-21 are from the NASB unless otherwise stated.

12 Διὰ τοῦτο ὡσπερ δι' ἐνὸς<sup>a</sup> ἀνθρώπου ἡ ἁμαρτία εἰς τὸν κόσμον  
εἰσῆλθεν καὶ διὰ τῆς ἁμαρτίας ὁ θάνατος, καὶ οὕτως εἰς πάντας  
ἀνθρώπους ὁ θάνατος<sup>b</sup> διῆλθεν,<sup>c</sup> ἐφ' ᾧ πάντες ἥμαρτον

12 For this reason,<sup>d</sup> just as through one man sin entered into the  
world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, <sup>e</sup>on  
the basis of which<sup>e</sup> all sinned—<sup>407</sup>

### Text and Translation Notes

5:12a: As in 1 Cor. 15:21-22, with Paul's use of both the generic term ἄνθρωπος ('human being') and the proper name Ἀδάμ ('Adam') in Rom. 5:12, 14 brings the focus on the individual figure named Adam – his role as the specific recipient of the command in Gen. 2:17 and as the human being (ἄνθρωπος) representing all humankind.<sup>408</sup> See textual note on 1 Cor. 15:21 above.

5:12b: The subject of διῆλθεν, ὁ θάνατος is omitted in a number of mss (D G 2945 al).<sup>409</sup> The reading ὁ θάνατος should be included as it is strongly supported by major textual witnesses, ⳨ A B C K P 0220<sup>vid</sup>, 33, 81, 614, 1739, Byz, Lect, etc.<sup>410</sup>

5:12c: The verb εἰσῆλθεν ('it came into') in minuscule 1881, instead of the widely attested διῆλθεν ('it spread') is likely to be an assimilation by the scribe with εἰσῆλθεν ('it came into') in the preceding clause.<sup>411</sup> The verb διῆλθεν ('it spread') would make better sense contextually as death has already entered the world through the transgression of one man.

5:12d: The conjunctive phrase διὰ τοῦτο ('therefore/for this reason' lit. 'for this') occurs 63 times in the New Testament, most of which are used retrospectively

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<sup>407</sup> That v. 12 contains an anacoluthon (i.e. a grammatical sequence is lacking) is indicated by the hyphen at the end of v. 12 in most English translations. More discussion on this will be given in the section below.

<sup>408</sup> J. Dunn, "Adam and Christ," 127.

<sup>409</sup> Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament: A Companion Volume to the United Bible Societies' Greek New Testament*, 3rd ed. (London: United Bible Societies, 1971), 512-13.

<sup>410</sup> For a complete list of textual witnesses, see Longenecker, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 575.

<sup>411</sup> *Ibid.*, 576.

referring back to the preceding contents. Its usage in Rom. 5:12a should be understood in the same way with a retrospective sense referring to the preceding contents. However, there is no consensus among scholars on what exact verses the phrase *διὰ τοῦτο* refers back to. This could either be a conclusion for Rom. 5:1-11, or for the whole of 1:16-5:11.<sup>412</sup>

5:12e: The most debated issue in Rom. 5:12 concerns the usage and meaning of the prepositional phrase *ἐφ' ᾧ*. In the section below (7.3.4), I suggest 'on the basis of which' for the translation of the phrase *ἐφ' ᾧ*: 'death spread to all men *on the basis of which* all sinned (5:12d).'<sup>413</sup>

### **7.3.3 The Coming of Sin and Death by the Agency of the One: Rom. 5:12-21**

In Rom. 5:12, just as in 1 Cor. 15:22, Paul's antithetical comparison between Adam and Christ begins with an adverbial marker of similarity *ὡσπερ* ('just as'), i.e. 'just as through one man, sin entered into the world.' However, Paul does not immediately introduce the *οὕτως καὶ* ('so too') phrase that should naturally lead to the conclusion of the comparison concerning 'grace' and 'righteousness' that entered through one man: Christ.<sup>414</sup> The fact that Paul does not provide the apodosis, but rather breaks off from the anticipated comparison between Adam and Christ into further parenthetical explanations of death, which 'spread to all men' even to the people 'who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam' (vv. 12d-14), reflects Paul's emphasis on Adam's sin that had ramifications on all human beings (5:12d-14).<sup>415</sup> The antithetical contrast between Adam and Christ that Paul started

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<sup>412</sup> D. Moo discusses four categories of *διὰ τοῦτο* in the New Testament. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 317-18. J. Dunn suggests that Rom. 5:12-21, with the phrase *διὰ τοῦτο*, is a conclusion to Paul's complete argument in 1:18-5:11. J. Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 271-72. Fitzmyer and Cranfield interpret *διὰ τοῦτο* as referring to 5:1-11, while Moo insists that Rom. 5:12-21, with the phrase *διὰ τοῦτο*, refers back to 'the promise of final salvation' in Rom. 5:9-10. Moo, *ibid.*, 318. For a review of scholarly positions on *διὰ τοῦτο* in Rom. 5:12, see Schreiner, *Romans*, 271-72.

<sup>413</sup> So Longenecker, *ibid.*, 575, 587-89.

<sup>414</sup> Cf. Rom. 5:15, 18, 19, 21.

<sup>415</sup> Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 406.



but left incomplete in 5:12 is taken up later and completed in 5:15-21 (v. 18 in particular) through a series of antithetical statements about Adam and Christ.

In this passage, as in 1 Cor. 15:21-22, Paul also employs both the generic term *ἄνθρωπος* ('human being') and the personal noun *Ἀδὰμ*, again making the passage a clear reference to the incident of the disobedience of Adam and Eve in Gen. 2-3. The idea of death in the sense of 'coming' into the world is much more explicit in Rom. 5:12 with Paul's use of the verb *εἰσέρχομαι* ('to enter'), whereas in 1 Cor. 15:21, such an idea is implied in the nominal statement: *δι' ἀνθρώπου θάνατος* ('by one man, *there is* death'). The prepositional phrase, *εἰς τὸν κόσμον* ('into the world'), specifically reflects Paul's understanding that death did not exist in this 'world' prior to its entering through one man's transgression. Further, Paul's use of the verb *διέρχομαι* ('pass through')<sup>416</sup> in v. 12c indicates a movement of death initiated by 'one man' to 'all men,' thereby in the same verse once again emphasizing the sense of agency through which death entered the world and exerted its force upon all. Note also, the fronting of the phrase *δι' ἐνὸς ἀνθρώπου* ('through one man') for the purpose of emphasis. Therefore, the main thrust of Paul's argument in Rom. 5:12-21 is clear even in v. 12 alone: that through one man named Adam, death came into the world and this had universal ramifications on all people. Paul's main idea in v. 12 is, simply put, all die because of Adam: death came (*εἰσῆλθεν*) into the world and passed on (*διῆλθεν*) to all human beings through one man (*δι' ἐνὸς ἀνθρώπου*).<sup>417</sup> It is observed above that Paul argues precisely the same in 1 Cor. 15:21-22, i.e. the agency of Adam and universality of death: 'For since by a man (*δι' ἀνθρώπου*) [came] death...in Adam all die.' Paul's affirmation of the coming of death into the world through Adam reflects an interpretation that sees the death warning in Gen. 2:17 as indeed fulfilled 'in the day' Adam ate from the tree of knowledge. As other ancient interpreters have noticed (e.g. Symmachus, Philo, etc.),

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<sup>416</sup> Cf. LXX Ezekiel 5:17: 'death and bloodshed will pass through you' (*θάνατος καὶ αἷμα διελεύσονται ἐπὶ σέ*). See, BDAG, "διέρχομαι," 244.

<sup>417</sup> Cf. Jewett, *Romans*, 374-75: 'To speak of sin as "entering" the world and death as "reaching" all persons clearly implies that neither was present prior to Adam's act. However one explains the background of this thought, it remains clear that Paul depicts Adam's act as decisively determining the behavior of his descendants.'

Paul too must have observed that Adam did not die (at least physically) when he violated the command (Gen. 2:17), therefore Paul's logic in his argument on the coming of death shows that he must have understood the death warning as being fulfilled in the sense of becoming 'mortal' and/or in terms of dying 'spiritually.'<sup>418</sup> Paul is not merely confirming the fulfilment of the death warning for Adam alone, but also of death for 'all' his descendants: 'by the transgression of the one, the many died (v. 15).'

Paul's further emphasis on the causal responsibility of 'the one' (δι' ἑνός) for the death that came to 'all men' (εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους) is demonstrated through the nine appearances of such phrases as 'through one man' or 'by the transgression of the one' etc. (vv. 12, 14, 15, 16 (2x), 17 (2x), 18, 19). Throughout Rom. 5:12-21, Paul repeats this assertion on the origin of death in different phrasing, about which he has already stated in the opening verse (5:12a): 1) 'through one man (δι' ἑνός ἀνθρώπου) sin and death entered the world' (v. 12); 2) 'by the transgression of the one (τῷ τοῦ ἑνός παραπτώματι), the many (οἱ πολλοί) died' (v. 15); 3) 'the judgment arose from one (ἐξ ἑνός) resulting in condemnation' (v.16); 4) 'by the transgression of the one (τῷ τοῦ ἑνός παραπτώματι), death reigned through the one (διὰ τοῦ ἑνός)' (v. 17); 4) 'through one transgression (δι' ἑνός παραπτώματος) resulted condemnation to all men (εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους)' (v. 18); 5) 'through the one man's disobedience (διὰ τῆς παρακοῆς τοῦ ἑνός ἀνθρώπου), "the many" (οἱ πολλοί) are made sinners' (v. 19). The four things that resulted for 'all men' from Adam's disobedience to God's specific command (Gen. 2:17) are: sin, death, judgment and condemnation. Hence, Paul's main point of argument in v. 12 is emphasized throughout the passage of Rom. 5:12-21: sin and death came through one person named Adam (agency) and this has ramifications for all people (universality). The recurring contrast between one person and 'all/many' adds to the sense of the 'universality' of one man's influence.<sup>419</sup> Conversely, in 5:15-21, Paul lays out the parallel statements that stress the agency of the other one man, Christ, and his influence on all men: 1) the 'grace' of God and the 'gift' by the grace of the one man

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<sup>418</sup> See discussion on vv. 13-14 below on the nature of death in Rom. 5:12-21.

<sup>419</sup> Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 412. So Dunn, "Adam and Christ," 130-31.

i.e. Christ (ἐν χάριτι τῆ τοῦ ἐνὸς ἀνθρώπου), ‘abound to the many’ (v. 15); 2) the free gift resulted in ‘justification’ (v. 16); 3) *through the one* (διὰ τοῦ ἐνὸς) ‘the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness will reign in life’ (v. 17); 4) ‘*through one man’s act of righteousness* (δι’ ἐνὸς δικαιώματος), there resulted justification of life to all men’ (v. 18); 5) ‘*through the obedience of one man* (διὰ τῆς ὑπακοῆς τοῦ ἐνὸς), many will be made righteous’ (v. 19). Again, what Paul has argued with regard to the effects of Christ’s death in 1 Cor. 15:21-22 is reiterated by Paul in Rom. 5:21, i.e. through the death of Christ, those who are *in* Christ will gain ‘immortality/eternal life.’ Paul further expounds on the effects of Christ’s death on ‘all men’ as the ‘grace’ and ‘gift of righteousness’ (v. 17). This ‘gift of righteousness... through the one (διὰ τοῦ ἐνὸς), Jesus Christ’ (v. 17) is not like that which came ‘through the one who sinned’ (δι’ ἐνὸς ἀμαρτήσαντος) (v. 16a): Adam’s disobedience brought sin, death, judgment and condemnation, whilst Christ’s obedience brought grace, righteousness and life. Despite these differences between the effects of Adam’s offense and those of Christ’s death, however, Paul describes Adam as a *τύπος* (‘type/pattern/example’) of Christ in v. 14d, which again reflects Paul’s emphasis on Adam’s leadership and his solidarity with all human beings, which are likened to Christ’s leadership and his solidarity with everyone. So, through the repetitive comparison between Adam and Christ in Rom. 5:12-21, Paul emphasizes the causal impacts of Adam’s disobedience and Christ’s obedience on humanity: one brought death, one brings life.

In vv. 13-14, Paul writes that even in the time between Adam and Moses, i.e. before the giving of the Law at Sinai, death reigned over those who had not sinned, in a likeness of the ‘transgression of Adam’ (*παραβάσεως Ἀδάμ*). These verses not only emphasize the ‘universality’ of sin and death, but indeed what Paul precisely expounds in these verses is an answer to the question: why is it that those who lived in between the times of Adam and Moses (who did not have the Laws) died, given that ‘sin is not imputed when there is no law?’ (v. 13b)<sup>420</sup> Paul affirms that sin existed in the world before the existence of the Law (v. 13a) and therefore death did reign during the time between Adam and Moses (v. 14a). Two considerations related

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<sup>420</sup> Cf. Rom. 4:15: ‘the Law brings about wrath, but where there is no law, there also is no violation (*παραβάσις*).’

to Paul's understanding of the divine command in Gen. 2:17 can be drawn from vv. 13-14: 1) this is yet another indication of Paul's understanding of the warning in Gen. 2:17 as a legal command as he puts it on an equal level with the Laws given to Moses and Israelites at Sinai; 2) Paul's understanding that Adam indeed received the punishment of 'death' due to his disobedience is inferred from the logic of his statement in v. 14: 'death reigned...even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam'. Therefore, since those who did not commit the transgression of Adam became subjected to death, even more so Adam, who committed the actual transgression, must have fallen victim to death. Despite the fact that sin is not counted as sin when there is no Law (5:13b), Paul makes it clear that from Adam to Moses death did rule over those who did not sin in the likeness of Adam's trespass. Such reigning of death over all people, Paul finds, is the fault of the first human, Adam: 'by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one' (v. 17a).'

These verses (13-14) are particularly important to discerning the nature of death in Paul's argument as Paul is using the fact that 'everyone who lived in the time between Adam and Moses died' as proof of the 'existence of sin' and the 'reigning of death' over all of them.<sup>421</sup> Those who opt for the 'spiritual' (or both 'spiritual' and 'physical') meaning of death in Rom. 5:12 point particularly to the word for 'eternal life' that is contrasted with death in v. 21.<sup>422</sup> I am not suggesting that Paul's argument about death in Rom. 5:12-21 precludes the meaning of spiritual death, but it must be noted that the concept of spiritual death is at least not as explicit as that of physical death in the context of Rom. 5:12-21.<sup>423</sup> The clear sense and meaning of physical death in the parenthetical verses in vv. 13-14 to Paul's statement of the entering of death in v. 12 militates against the suggestion that Paul does not have physical death in mind at all in Rom. 5:12. The logic of the implied question in these verses runs thus: if death came into the world because of Adam's transgression to a specific divine command (which presumes the death of Adam) why then did

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<sup>421</sup> Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 320; A.J.M. Wedderburn, "The Theological Structure of Romans 5:12," NTS 19 (1973), 347.

<sup>422</sup> See, for instance, T.R. Schreiner, "Original sin and original death: Romans 5:12-19," in *Adam, the Fall, and Original Sin: Theological, Biblical, and Scientific Perspectives*, ed. Hans Madueme and Michael Reeves (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014), 272, 282-83. See also footnote 389 above.

<sup>423</sup> For discussion on the nature of death in 1 Cor. 15, see section 7.2.6 above.

people who had not violated such commands as Adam die? The question naturally reads as referring to the physical death of these people. Wedderburn is also right in saying that: ‘There is nothing in this text to suggest either that Paul thinks of death as a natural part of life which is an inevitable consequence of man’s being set in a physical world, or that he does not here refer to physical death.’<sup>424</sup> In support of the presence of the concept of ‘physical death’ in Rom. 5:12, Wedderburn further writes: ‘The life that Christ brings is set against the death that Adam brought in Rom. v. 17 and 21; the life that Christ brings is set against the death that he endured in the bringing of it in v. 10. That death of his for sinners was undoubtedly a physical fact; it is therefore hard to argue that the death imposed on mankind because of sin is not similarly physical.’<sup>425</sup> Such understanding accords with 1 Cor. 15:21-22 where the concept of the ‘bodily’ (*νεκρός*) death of Christ provides the grounds for the ‘bodily’ death and resurrection of those who are in Christ.

The fact that Adam received and violated a command that was ‘legally’ given to him is stressed through the use of the term *παράβασις* (‘transgression’).<sup>426</sup> In fact, Paul uses three different words, all denoting Adam’s violation of God’s command in the garden of Eden: *παράβασις* (‘transgression’) (v. 14), *παράπτωμα* (‘offence/trespass’) (vv. 15, 16, 17, 18, 20), and *παρακοή* (‘disobedience’) (v. 19). It is also noteworthy that in vv. 16 and 18 Paul uses two words, *κρίμα* (‘judgment/verdict’) and *κατάκριμα* (‘condemnation’), that strongly convey the ‘legalistic’ sense and character of God’s command (Gen. 2:17) and Adam’s consequent disobedience: ‘the judgment (*κρίμα*) arose from one transgression resulting in condemnation (*κατάκριμα*)’ (v. 16). Paul further clarifies and stresses that the legal judgment/sentence that was declared by God to Adam for his offense

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<sup>424</sup> Wedderburn, “The Theological Structure of Romans v. 12,” 347.

<sup>425</sup> Ibid.

<sup>426</sup> Cf. Rom. 4:15: ‘where there is no law, there also is no violation.’ The term *παράβασις*, especially in the NT, denotes ‘sin in its relation to law, i.e., to a requirement or obligation which is legally valid or has legal force.’ Johannes Schneider, “Παραβαίνω, Παράβασις, Παραβάτης, Ἀπαράβατος, Ὑπερβαίνω,” *TDNT* 5:739-740. See also Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 419: ‘What Adam did in sinning resulted not merely in *krima*, “judgment,” but in *katakrima*, “condemnation,” when a verdict had to be given. “Condemnation” is the penalty of death, of eternal death passed as a verdict on all human beings.’

was not for Adam alone, indeed it certainly affected all human beings: ‘through one transgression there resulted condemnation (κατάκριμα) to all men (εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους) (v. 18).’<sup>427</sup>

### 7.3.4 ἐφ’ ᾧ: ‘In Whom/Because/On Which/So That’ All Sinned

The scholarly dispute concerning the prepositional phrase ἐφ’ ᾧ (lit. ‘on which’) in Rom. 5:12d questions whether humanity’s act of sinning is participatory in the act of Adam’s disobedience, or whether it is personal, focusing on the precise usage and meaning of the phrase. Although the theological intricacies of so-called ‘original sin’ are not the focus of this thesis,<sup>428</sup> an overview of the various scholarly positions will help our understanding of Rom. 5:12. It will be suggested that no matter which interpretation is chosen with regard to the meaning and function of the phrase ἐφ’ ᾧ, it will not affect Paul’s main idea intended in Rom. 5:12: death came into the world because of one man’s sin – death exists in this world because Adam sinned.

Rom. 5:12 was the foundational text on which Augustine of Hippo (354-430 CE) formulated his doctrine of ‘original sin.’ In particular, Augustine highlighted the prepositional phrase ἐφ’ ᾧ in the final clause of Rom. 5:12 as a proof-text to make his case for ‘original sin.’ Augustine interpreted ᾧ as a masculine relative pronoun referring back to ‘one man’ in 5:12a: ‘death spread to all men in whom [Adam] all

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<sup>427</sup> Jewett, *Romans*, 382: ‘The wordplay with κρίμα (“judgment, verdict”) and κατάκριμα (“punishment, condemnation”) conveys the doleful process that led from the verdict against Adam (Gen 3:13–14) to the punishment that affected all of his descendants (Gen 3:14–19).’

<sup>428</sup> Paul’s understanding of ‘death’ as entering the world of humanity through the disobedience of Adam does not require recognition of Augustine’s assertion of the ‘sin’ as automatically passing down from generation to generation. Augustine’s idea of ‘original sin’ was formulated in the process of refuting the claims of Pelagius in the early 5<sup>th</sup> century CE. While Pelagius insisted that a person can remain sinless as sin is dependent on human free will, Augustine taught that all humans possess original sin inherited from Adam’s first act of disobedience. On Pelagius’ view of free will and the death of Adam and his descendants, see R. C. Sproul, *Willing to Believe: The Controversy Over Free Will*, trans., J. I. Packer and O. R. Johnston (Grand Rapids: Baker books, 1997), 33-46. For rabbinic discussions on the concept of ‘original sin’ in relation to Paul’s understanding of sin’s origin, see Stanley E. Porter, “The Pauline Concept of Original Sin, in Light of Rabbinic Background,” *TynBul* 41 (1990): 3-30.

sinned.’<sup>429</sup> According to Augustine, the sin of Adam has been transmitted down to all his descendants, therefore it is not necessarily the actual sin of each individual, but instead Adam’s sin that automatically makes all human beings sinners because ‘all sinned *in Adam*.’ It has long been suggested, however, that there is an error in Augustine’s interpretation in that he relied on a faulty Latin translation: *in quo omnes peccaverunt* (‘in whom [Adam] all sinned’). Further, as Fitzmyer points out, treating ὃ as a masculine pronoun referring back to ‘one man’ does not read smoothly as the distance between the pronoun and the antecedent (‘one man’) is too great.<sup>430</sup> Augustine may have taken up this idea from 1 Cor. 15:22, ‘*in Adam, all die*’ (ἐν τῷ Ἀδὰμ πάντες ἀποθνήσκουσιν), but as Fitzmyer suggests, if Paul meant to say ‘it is Adam *in whom* all sinned,’ he would have used the prepositional phrase ἐν ᾧ (lit. ‘in whom’), as in 1 Cor. 15:22, instead of ἐφ’ ᾧ (lit. ‘on which’ or possibly ‘on whom’).<sup>431</sup> Nevertheless, considering 1 Cor. 15:21-22 and the overall context of Rom. 5:12-21 in which Paul clearly presents the idea of the ‘solidarity’ of all human beings *in/through Adam* (ἐν τῷ Ἀδὰμ), Augustine’s interpretation is not without value, nor is it particularly out of place in Paul’s theology of death brought to humanity by the very first act of disobedience by Adam. However, even if this interpretation is adopted, it is important to note that in Rom. 5:12d in particular, it is precisely the act of ‘sinning’, not ‘dying’ (1 Cor. 15:22), through which all people share solidarity *in Adam*, unless Paul treated the two statements as equivalent, ‘all

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<sup>429</sup> It has also been suggested by some modern scholars (Fitzmyer cites Galling, Leipoldt, Schlier and Bultmann) that the masculine pronoun refers back to ‘death’ as the antecedent of ἐφ’ ᾧ, but Fitzmyer rightly refutes this interpretation as it is ‘hard to reconcile with 5:21 and 6:23, where death is the result of sin, not its source.’ Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 414.

<sup>430</sup> Ibid. Fitzmyer has undertaken a detailed discussion of this prepositional phrase ἐφ’ ᾧ πάντες ἡμαρτον and its possible interpretations suggested by various ancient and modern scholars. For all the possibilities, see, Fitzmyer *Romans*, 413-17; and idem., “The Consecutive Meaning of ἐφ’ ᾧ in Romans 5.12,” NTS 39 (1993): 321-39. For a relevant discussion, see Richard Longenecker’s categorization of Fitzmyer’s 15 interpretative options of the ἐφ’ ᾧ phrase into four major options: 1) ἐφ’ ᾧ as a masculine relative pronoun; 2) ἐφ’ ᾧ as a neuter relative pronoun; 3) ἐφ’ ᾧ as a conjunction; and 4) ἐφ’ ᾧ as a consecutive conjunction. Longenecker, *The Epistles to the Romans: A Commentary on the Greek text*, 587-89.

<sup>431</sup> Ibid.

sinned in Adam’ and ‘all die in Adam.’ In fact, the idea that ‘all sinned *in* Adam’ is contextually weak, as not only in the passage of Rom. 5:12-21 (Cf. 5:14, 16, 19, 20), but also in other places (Cf. 3:9, 10:13, 23, etc.), Paul consistently stresses the idea that all people have committed actual sins. Moreover, nowhere in his entire corpus does Paul clearly assert the idea that sin is passed down ‘genetically’ or somehow ‘mystically’ from Adam to all his descendants. Fitzmyer is also correct in insisting that meanings such as ‘have sinned collectively’ or ‘have sinned in Adam’ should not be deduced from the aorist verb ἥμαρτον (‘all sinned’) as they would be ‘additions to Paul’s text.’<sup>432</sup> In any case, since Paul himself does not specify the precise antecedent of the phrase ἐφ’ ᾧ, even though Augustine’s view of the pronoun ᾧ as specifically referring to Adam is grammatically possible and can certainly be read into the text, it still remains a least favoured option by modern scholars.<sup>433</sup>

Most modern scholars, followed by major English translations, now take the prepositional phrase ἐφ’ ᾧ as functioning as a causal conjunction that is somewhat equivalent to διότι (‘because’) or ἐπὶ τοῦτο ὅτι (‘for this reason that’); hence the translation, ‘death spread to all men *because* all sinned.’<sup>434</sup> This causal use of ἐφ’ ᾧ could possibly yield an interpretation that ‘death spread to all men’ *because* of their own personal sin; therefore the immediate problem with this interpretation is that it seems to contradict what Paul emphatically asserts earlier in Rom. 5:12, as well as in later verses (5:13-21): that death entered because of the transgression and disobedience of one man (δι’ ἑνὸς ἀνθρώπου). It must be noted, however, that even if the causal use of ἐφ’ ᾧ in 5:12d, which stresses the individual sin of human beings, is presumed, this does not need to preclude or lessen the stress of Paul’s main idea, which emphatically attributes the entering of death as the effect/consequence of

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<sup>432</sup> Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 417. So N.T. Wright suggests that the decision about whether the verb ἥμαρτον (‘all sinned’) refers to the sin of Adam should not be based on the tense of the verb alone as Paul in Rom. 1:18-3:20 clearly conveys the idea that all humans have committed actual sin, particularly in Rom. 3:23, where Paul uses an aorist (‘all sinned and fall short of the glory of God’) to convey such an idea. N. T. Wright, “The Letter of the Romans,” 526.

<sup>433</sup> For a scholarly work that defends both the ideas of ‘original sin’ and ‘original death’ in Rom. 5:12-19, see T.R. Schreiner, “Original Sin and Original Death: Romans 5:12-19,” 271-88.

<sup>434</sup> Cf. KJV, NRSV, NEB, NASB, ESV, NIV, etc. Fitzmyer lists 35 proponents of this interpretation, including Dunn, Moo and Bultmann. Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 415.



Adam's sin, as Paul clearly states in the main clause of Rom. 5:12ab. Further, with the causal use of ἐφ' ᾧ Paul may possibly be expressing the idea that the deaths of all men can be ascribed to their own sins on the premise that Adam's sin brought about the condition in which are all destined to sin.<sup>435</sup> The stress on the actual sins of humanity, to a certain extent, eliminates the misunderstanding that might have been raised among church members about being under the influence of Adam's sin and dying whether one actually sins or not. However, Paul refutes such an idea by insisting that all are under the power of sin (Rom. 3:1-13)<sup>436</sup> and they have all committed actual sins (Rom. 3:23).<sup>437</sup> Those who favour the causal use of ἐφ' ᾧ in Rom. 5:12 argue that in its three other occurrences in the rest of the Pauline texts the phrase ἐφ' ᾧ functions as an idiomatic conjunction (2 Cor. 5:4; Phil. 3:12; 4:10).<sup>438</sup> For instance, in the NASB translation of 2 Cor. 5:4, Paul writes:<sup>439</sup> 'For indeed while we are in this tent, we groan, being burdened, *because* (ἐφ' ᾧ) we do not want to be unclothed but to be clothed, so that what is mortal will be swallowed up by life.' The causal use of ἐφ' ᾧ translated here as 'because' makes good sense, but it is still possible to take the phrase ἐφ' ᾧ as a relative clause ('on which/because of that which'), pointing back to the preceding clauses up to ἐφ' ᾧ describing Paul's present situation ('we are in this tent, we groan, being burdened'). As both usages of ἐφ' ᾧ in this particular case of 2 Cor. 5:4 are contextually fitting, there is no reason not to take ἐφ' ᾧ as the relative clause, which would provide a linguistically more accurate

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<sup>435</sup> Cranfield argues in a similar vein and suggests that all men commit actual sins themselves as a result of the 'corrupt nature' inherited from Adam. See Cranfield, *Romans 1:1-8*, 277-78. With regard to the causal usage of ἐφ' ᾧ ('because'), there is still room for an interpretation of the meaning of the immediately following clause πάντες ἥμαρτον ('all sinned') as 'all sin *in* Adam's sin.' Therefore, the first interpretation of ἐφ' ᾧ as a relative pronoun referring to 'Adam' and the second interpretation of ἐφ' ᾧ as a conjunction are not mutually exclusive.

<sup>436</sup> Cf. Rom. 3:10-13: 'There is none righteous, not even one; there is none who understands, there is none who seeks for god; all have turned aside, together they have become useless; there is none who does good, there is not even one.'

<sup>437</sup> Rom. 3:23: 'for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.'

<sup>438</sup> Cf. D. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, 342-43: 'This usage [causal] finds parallels in the papyri and in the rest of the Pauline corpus (cf. 2 Cor 5:4; Phil 3:12).'

<sup>439</sup> Unless otherwise stated, the English translation is from the NASB.

rendering of the phrase that reflects the presence and force of the neuter pronoun  $\text{ὃ}$  ('which'). In Phil. 3:12 Paul writes: 'Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of *that for which* ( $\text{ἐφ' ὃ}$ ) also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.' The NASB thus seems to translate  $\text{ἐφ' ὃ}$  here as a relative clause referring to the 'thing' that Paul is pressing on to lay hold of. The NRSV, on the other hand, translates  $\text{ἐφ' ὃ}$  as 'because' with a causal meaning.<sup>440</sup> In the former, Paul means that the very thing he is pressed to obtain is what Jesus has obtained him for, whilst in the latter, Paul means that he is pressed to obtain it – 'resurrection/Christ' – *because* Paul was first obtained by Christ. Again, either as a causal meaning or introducing a relative clause, both uses of  $\text{ἐφ' ὃ}$  make sense within the context. The last example of Paul's use of  $\text{ἐφ' ὃ}$  is found in Phil 4:10 whose NASB translation reads: 'But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at last you have revived your concern for me; indeed, you were concerned *before*, but you lacked opportunity.' Surprisingly, most of the English translations do not provide a translational equivalent for the Greek phrase  $\text{ἐφ' ὃ}$  in their translations, either as a conjunction ('because'), or as a relative clause ('with regard to which').<sup>441</sup> Unlike the former examples of  $\text{ἐφ' ὃ}$  in 2 Cor. 5:4 and Phil. 3:12,  $\text{ἐφ' ὃ}$  in Phil. 4:10 as a conjunction ('because') does not make sense, as it would read: 'I rejoiced in the Lord...that you have revived your concern for me *because* ( $\text{ἐφ' ὃ}$ ) you were concerned before, but you lacked opportunity.' The  $\text{ἐφ' ὃ}$  (neut. dat. sg) makes much better sense if understood as referring to its antecedent  $\tauὸ \upsilon\pi\epsilon\rho \epsilon\mu\omicron\upsilon$  ('on behalf of me'), i.e. Paul's welfare.<sup>442</sup>

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<sup>440</sup> J. B. Lightfoot, *Saint Paul's Epistle to the Philippians: A Revised Text with Introduction, Notes, and Dissertations* (London: Macmillan, 1927), 152.

<sup>441</sup> C.F.D. Moule proposes 'with regard to which' as a translation of  $\text{ἐφ' ὃ}$  in Phil 4:10. C. F. D. Moule, *Idiom Book of New Testament Greek* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953), 132; 'for which,' Jerry L. Sumney, *Philippians: A Greek Student's Intermediate Reader* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2007), 109-10; 'with a view to which,' Peter Thomas O'Brien, *The Epistle to the Philippians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 518-19.

<sup>442</sup> Even Fitzmyer, who prefers not to take  $\text{ἐφ' ὃ}$  in Rom. 5:12 as a relative pronoun, agrees that all Paul's other uses of  $\text{ἐφ' ὃ}$  likely attest to the relative-pronoun usage. Fitzmyer, "The Consecutive Meaning of  $\text{ἐφ' ὃ}$  in Romans 5.12," 329-31. While Fitzmyer proposes the 'consecutive' usage of  $\text{ἐφ' ὃ}$

In light of other Pauline uses of ἐφ' ᾧ that can be explained as a relative clause (exclusively in Phil. 4:10), the third interpretative option for the prepositional phrase ἐφ' ᾧ, which I suggest is a more likely option in the case of Rom. 5:12d, is taking the relative pronoun ᾧ as neuter with its antecedent being the entire idea of 'sin and death entering the world and spreading to all men' in the previous clause (5:12ab).<sup>443</sup> If this interpretation is assumed, the suggested translation of the prepositional phrase ἐφ' ᾧ is 'on the basis of which' or 'under which circumstances.'<sup>444</sup> Not only does this make good sense contextually and grammatically, but this usage also better reflects the presence of the relative pronoun than the causal usage of ἐφ' ᾧ ('because'). The relative-pronoun understanding of ἐφ' ᾧ would also certainly help to avoid the misunderstanding that would have developed from the causal usage ('because'), i.e. 'one's death is due to his own sin.' In the LXX, the phrase ἐφ' ᾧ appears twice (the Letter of Jeremiah 1:58; Proverbs 21:22) and it is noteworthy that ᾧ in these two occurrences is exclusively used as a relative pronoun referring back to its antecedent.<sup>445</sup> 1) 'A wise person attacked the strong cities and demolished the strongholds (τὸ ὀχύρωμα) on which (ἐφ' ᾧ) the impious trusted (Prov. 21:22)'; 2) 'So it is better to be a king who displays his manliness or a useful vessel in a house, which (ἐφ' ᾧ) the owner will use, than these fake gods...'<sup>446</sup> The above Pauline and LXX examples suggest that it is acceptable, perhaps even recommended to take ἐφ' ᾧ in Rom. 5:12d to also mean 'on which' referring to the statements in the preceding clauses.

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ᾧ expressing a result in Rom. 5:12d, nevertheless he seems to prefer the relative-pronoun understanding over the causal use of ἐφ' ᾧ. Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 415.

<sup>443</sup> T. Zahn, *Der Brief des Paulus an die Römer Ausgelegt* (Kommentar zum Neuen Testament 6; Leipzig: Deichert, 1910; 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Rev. F. Hauck, 1925): 'das relativische ἐφ' ᾧ auf den ganzen vorangehenden Satz zu beziehen', 268, quoted in Fitzmyer, "The Consecutive Meaning of ἐφ' ᾧ in Romans 5.12," 325. So, Longenecker, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 5.

<sup>444</sup> Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 415.

<sup>445</sup> I have not found any scholar mentioning these LXX examples in their discussion of the meaning of ἐφ' ᾧ.

<sup>446</sup> The English translation of the LXX is from the NETS.

The fourth and last interpretative option, proposed by Fitzmyer himself over all other interpretative options, is to take the phrase as a consecutive conjunction equivalent to ὡστε ('for this reason,' 'therefore'), introducing a result clause: 'with the result that all sinned.'<sup>447</sup> Fitzmyer supports his argument for ἐφ' ᾧ having such consecutive force with 17 examples of such usage from the literature of Plutarch, Athenaeus, Cassius Dio etc.<sup>448</sup> On this, Fitzmyer writes:

*Eph' hō*, then, would mean that Paul is expressing a result, the sequel to Adam's baleful influence on humanity by the ratification of his sin in the sins of all individuals. He would thus be conceding to individual human sins a secondary causality or personal responsibility for death... Thus Paul in v 12 is ascribing death to two causes, not unrelated: to Adam and to all human sinners. The fate of humanity ultimately rests on what its head, Adam, has done to it. The primary causality for its sinful and mortal condition is ascribed to Adam, no matter what meaning is assigned to *eph' hō*, and a secondary causality to the sins of all human beings... The universal causality of Adam's sin is presupposed in 5:15a, 16a, 17a, 18a, 19a. It would then be false to the thrust of the whole paragraph to interpret 5:12 as though it implied that the human condition before Christ's coming were due solely to individual personal sins.<sup>449</sup>

Fitzmyer therefore seems to stress both entities in Rom. 5:12 – Adam's sin and the sins of humanity – thereby avoiding the situation in which too much stress is put on Adam alone ('in whom'), as well as that which ascribes the death of all people to their own personal sin ('causal'). The weakness of this position, however, as N. T. Wright rightly points out, is that one might naturally read the last clause, 'all sinned,' as the *result* of the immediately preceding clause, 'death spread to all men,' unless the reader relates it with the very first clause of the verse, 'through one man sin entered into the world.'<sup>450</sup> The same problem occurs as in the case discussed above: the masculine pronoun refers back to 'death' as the antecedent of ἐφ' ᾧ so that 'death' becomes the source rather than the result/punishment of 'sin.' Nevertheless, as Fitzmyer has

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<sup>447</sup> Fitzmyer credits this position to Schwyzer, Kuhner-Gerth, and Smyth who relate ἐφ' ᾧ to the consecutive use of ὡστε. Fitzmyer, "The Consecutive Meaning of ἐφ' ᾧ in Romans 5.12," 329, 332.

<sup>448</sup> Fitzmyer, "The Consecutive Meaning of ἐφ' ᾧ in Romans 5.12," 332-38.

<sup>449</sup> Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 416.

<sup>450</sup> N.T. Wright, "The Letter of the Romans," 527.

intended, it is still possible that Paul is relating all the clauses of Rom. 5:12 up to the last clause, i.e. the entry of sin into the world (5:12a), the entry of death through sin (5:12b), and the spreading of death to all (5:12c) *as* providing the *result* that ‘all sinned’ (5:12d).<sup>451</sup> Linguistically and contextually, however, there is no reason to favour this position over the genuine relative-pronoun usage and meaning of ἐφ’ ᾧ (‘because of that which/on the basis of that which’), especially when the difference in Paul’s intended meaning in each case is minimal. Moreover, in some of his examples (7 out of 17), as Fitzmyer himself acknowledges, the distinction between the consecutive force of ἐφ’ ᾧ and its usage as a genuine relative pronoun is unclear, therefore the possibility of ἐφ’ ᾧ having both the consecutive and relative force in such cases cannot be excluded. For instance, in the work that recounts Cicero, Plutarch (46-120 CE) writes: ‘He [Cicero] also engaged in war, defeating the bandits who dwelled on Mt Amanos, *so that* (ἐφ’ ᾧ) he was even acclaimed Imperator by the soldiers.’<sup>452</sup> The meaning of ἐφ’ ᾧ in this example could be understood either as having consecutive force, or as the relative pronoun usage so as to mean ‘for which he was even acclaimed.’<sup>453</sup>

In my view, putting aside Augustine’s view of ἐφ’ ᾧ as specifically referring to Adam, which is a more likely reading into the text, all of the above interpretative options (particularly the relative-pronoun understanding) would suit the context of Rom. 5:12 as they potentially lead to a similar conclusion: all sinned as a result/because of that sin and death which entered the world through one man, therefore death spread to all men. What is more important to note in each interpretation is that the subordinate clause at the end of Rom. 5:12, ‘all sinned,’ does not counter Paul’s main point in the logical sequence of Rom. 5:12 that attests: death and its universal influence on all humanity had its origin in Adam’s sin. The causality of Adam’s sin on the death of all people, i.e. Paul’s stress on Adam’s act

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<sup>451</sup> Christopher Bryan, *A Preface to Romans: Notes on the Epistle in its Literary and Cultural Setting* (Oxford: OUP, 2000), 129.

<sup>452</sup> Plutarch *Cic.* 36.4.5, quoted in Fitzmyer, “The Consecutive Meaning of ἐφ’ ᾧ in Romans 5.12,” 337.

<sup>453</sup> Another weakness I find concerning about Fitzmyer’s examples is that except for a few works by Plutarch (who is also relatively later than Paul), most of his examples are from a later period ranging from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE to the 4<sup>th</sup> century CE, hence they are somewhat anachronistic.

and role as the instrument through which sin and death came into the world, has been so clearly and emphatically expressed by Paul (both in Rom. 5:12-21 and 1 Cor. 5:21-22) that it outweighs other possible meanings and the force of ἐφ' ᾧ that would suggest otherwise. Therefore, based on Paul's overwhelming linguistic and thematic references to the entering/existence of death in relation to Adam's disobedience to God's command, there is no reason to deny the correlation made by Paul between death of all and Adam's disobedience. In Paul's own words, it is clear that both sin and death entered the world through Adam's transgression.

### 7.3.5 Wisdom 2:23-24 and Romans 5:12

<sup>23</sup> ὅτι ὁ θεὸς ἔκτισεν τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἐπ' ἀφθαρσία  
καὶ εἰκόνα τῆς ἰδίας ἰδιότητος ἐποίησεν αὐτόν.

<sup>24</sup> φθόνῳ δὲ διαβόλου θάνατος εἰσῆλθεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον,  
πειράζουσιν δὲ αὐτὸν οἱ τῆς ἐκείνου μερίδος ὄντες.

<sup>23</sup> For God created the human being<sup>454</sup> with incorruption  
and made him in the image of his own nature/eternity,<sup>455</sup>

<sup>24</sup> but by the envy of the devil death entered into the world,  
and those who belong to his party experience it.

Considering the similar contexts and terminologies of Wisdom and Paul, there is a high possibility that Paul knew and used Wis. 2:23-24.<sup>456</sup> Wis. 2:23-24

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<sup>454</sup> The *NETS* inaccurately renders the singular term τὸν ἄνθρωπον ('the human being') and the personal noun αὐτόν ('him') in plural as 'the human beings' and 'them' respectively.

<sup>455</sup> See footnote 458 below.

<sup>456</sup> Despite clear literary and contextual similarities, scholars are somewhat cautious about confirming the direct access and influence of Wisdom on Paul. Although it is likely that Paul was familiar with the interpretative traditions on themes such as 'natural theology,' 'election' and 'immortality' etc., there are noticeable differences between the arguments of Paul and pseudo-Solomon, which indicate Paul's non-straightforward use of Solomon if he ever used it. See, T.H. Lim, *The Formation of the Jewish Canon*, 169-72; 200-03. Lim also notes Paul's use of the introductory formulas when quoting texts that would later be included in the canon and suggests it is likely that Paul did not consider the Wisdom of Solomon as 'scripture.' *Ibid.*, 171.

It is also to be noted that the Wisdom of Solomon is included in the LXX and therefore comes from the same literary milieu as the LXX. In the previous chapter on the LXX, I suggested the possibility that the subsequent translators and readers of the LXX Genesis may have understood the dative noun θανάτῳ in the death warning Gen 2:17 as an instrumental dative indicating the means by

expresses the exact same idea of death coming into the world as is in Rom. 5:12. This passage is undoubtedly an allusion to the disobedience of Adam in the garden narrative and thus it shares the same context with Paul's reference to Adam and his transgression in Rom. 5:12. In addition to its assertion about the origin of death, Wisdom adds a description of God's creation of the human being with 'incorruption/immortality' (*ἀφθαρσία*) (v. 23b). The statements in v. 24, 'death came into the world' and 'those who belong to his party experience it' have correspondent terms (*θάνατος, εἰσῆλθεν, εἰς τὸν κόσμον*) and the idea of the 'solidarity' under one representative figure in Rom. 5:12-21 (and 1 Cor. 15:21-22). Note also the same terminology used in Wisdom 10:1 and Rom. 5:15 in describing Adam's disobedience as a 'trespass/transgression' (*παράπτωμα*) of God's commandment. One major difference between Rom 5:12 and Wis. 2:23-24 is that in Wisdom, it is the devil not Adam who is said to have caused death to enter into the world. However, the implied meaning of this might be that Adam's transgression was caused by the envy of the devil.<sup>457</sup> Wisdom's stress on the agency of the devil thereby lessens the responsibility of Adam in relation to the entrance of death into the world. It is interesting to note in this regard that Wis. 10:1 describes Adam as one who was saved by Wisdom from his own trespass/transgression (*παράπτωμα*): 'She carefully guarded the first-formed father of the world, when he alone was created, and delivered him from his own transgression; she gave him strength to rule over all things.' The statement 'when he alone was created' in the middle of the verse reads with a nuance that puts blame on Eve: Wisdom guarded Adam before Eve was created, but it was the woman who tempted Adam to eat from the tree of knowledge. Nevertheless, Adam is saved from his transgression by Wisdom and is given the authority to rule over all creation. The fact that Adam is not referred to by his personal name Ἀδὰμ in Wis. 2:24, but rather

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which that death is carried out, instead of faithfully reflecting the emphatic sense of the Hebrew infinitive absolute. The use of the dative noun *θανάτῳ* indicating a specific type of death in Wis 2:20 is a clear example of such a usage of the dative noun. Wis 2:20: *θανάτῳ ἀσχήμονι καταδικάσωμεν αὐτόν* ('let us condemn him to a shameful death'). For a doctoral thesis investigating the overall literal affinities between Paul and Wisdom of Solomon, see Tadashi Ino, "Paul's Use of Canonical and Noncanonical Wisdom Literature in Romans and the Corinthian Letters" (PhD diss., Andrews University, 2003), 170-88.

<sup>457</sup> Cf. 4 Esd 3:21, 26.

by the generic term ‘the human being’ (τὸν ἄνθρωπον), accords with Wisdom’s intentional literary feature of avoiding proper names throughout the book. For instance, in Wis. 7:1, Adam is described as the ‘first-formed individual born on earth.’ Similarly, in Wis. 10:1 Adam is referred to as the ‘first-formed father of the world.’ In ch.10:1ff, the author provides contextual references to the ancestors of the Israelite – Cain, Noah, Abraham, Joseph etc. – by avoiding names and instead using terms such as ‘righteous/unrighteous man.’

The prepositional phrase ἐπ’ ἀφθαρσία (‘for immortality/incorruption’) in v. 23a requires some attention. James Barr addresses the issue of different possible meanings that the preposition ἐπὶ (‘on/in/above’) might have in conjunction with the word ἀφθαρσία.<sup>458</sup> The phrase ἐπ’ ἀφθαρσία can denote two seemingly different ideas: 1) God created the human being *with* intrinsic immortality; or 2) God created him *for* potential immortality. If the latter is presumed, Wis. 2:23-24, although using similar terms as Rom. 5:12, could present the very opposite idea from Paul in saying that the original state of the human being was mortal. James M. Reese suggests the former interpretation – ‘in/with incorruption’ – based on his observations that: 1) Wisdom never uses ἐπὶ + dative noun to indicate ‘finality’ (22 occurrences of this construction in Wisdom), but only to indicate a state;<sup>459</sup> 2) Wisdom’s view of man’s original condition as immortal is also found in Wis. 14:12: ‘For the invention of idols was the beginning of fornication, and the discovery of them the corruption (φθορά) of life.’<sup>460</sup> In my view, the logic of Wisdom’s argument supported by the statement in Wis. 2:24, ‘but (δὲ) by the envy of the devil death entered into the world,’ which contrasts with Wis. 2:23, ‘God made human being with incorruption,’ should suffice to suggest that ‘immortality’ refers to the human’s original state rather than his potential goal to be achieved. Otherwise, we would need to read this as ‘death

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<sup>458</sup> J. Barr, *The Garden of Eden and the Hope of Immortality*, 16; idem, *Biblical Faith and Natural Theology* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 61-62. Cf. 1 Cor. 15:42: ‘So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable *body*, it is raised an imperishable *body* (ἐν ἀφθαρσία, lit. ‘in immortality/incorruption’); 4 Macc. 9:26: ‘but as though transformed in the fire *into* immortality (εἰς ἀφθαρσίαν).

<sup>459</sup> Cf. Wis. 1:13; 17:3,7; 18:13, etc.

<sup>460</sup> James M. Reese, *Hellenistic Influence on the Book of Wisdom and its Consequences*, AnBib 41 (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute Press, 1970), 66.



entered into the world in which death already existed.’ Other verses in Wisdom that support man’s original immortal state are: ‘For they [‘fornication’ and ‘corruption (φθορά) of life’] did not exist from the beginning, nor will they last forever. For through human conceit they entered the world, and because of this a speedy end was planned for them (Wis. 14:13-14)’; ‘God did not make death...for he created all things that they might exist, and the generative forces of the world are wholesome, and there is no destructive poison in them, nor is the kingdom of Hades on earth (Wis. 1:13-14).’ Wisdom also urges the reader not to ‘zealously seek death which God did not make (1:12-13).’ With regard to the precise meaning of ἐπὶ + dative noun in Wis. 2:23, as J. Barr aptly points out, the fact that death was not part of human creation – therefore the first human being was not going to die in the end – remains the same regardless of the exact meaning of the prepositional phrase ἐπὶ ἀφθαρσία, either as *with* immortality (intrinsic) or *for* immortality (potential). Barr puts it as follows:<sup>461</sup>

For the main thought of the passage it makes little difference whether man was created with immortality (as if this was a built-in constitutional difference) or for immortality (which would have to be gained or merited). Death was, originally, not part of the human scene; only after the devil's intervention did it emerge as a prospect. Afterwards, according to the thought of Wisdom, humans might gain immortality through the possession of wisdom; but this was after death had entered in. In either case death was not originally part of human destiny. The translation ‘in’ or ‘with’ incorruption therefore seems to be right...In any case no substantial difference is made: for, if death is not part of the scene for the original humans, it makes little difference whether they ‘were’ immortal from the beginning or ‘were to be’ immortal: in either case they were not going to die. Moreover, the words ‘in the image of his own eternity’<sup>462</sup> imply that humanity, being made in the image of God, had from the beginning a share in God's own immortality.

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<sup>461</sup> Barr, *Biblical Faith and Natural Theology*, 62.

<sup>462</sup> Instead of the word ἰδιότητος (‘peculiar nature/being’) in v. 23b found in major uncial codices, J. Barr follows Rahlfs’ reading of ἀϊδιότητος (‘eternity’) on the basis of better parallelism created between the two lines of v. 23. If the reading of ἀϊδιότητος (‘eternity’) is presumed, Wisdom relates ‘immortality’ in 23a closely with the image of God in 23b and, accordingly, the exact force of the prepositional phrase ἐπὶ ἀφθαρσία would be ‘with immortality,’ i.e. the human was created originally immortal. Cf. Wis. 7:26, Wisdom is likened to eternal (ἀίδιος) light and the image (εἰκὼν) of God’s

It is also important to note that there is an eschatological dimension and focus in Wisdom's understanding of 'immortality' throughout the book.<sup>463</sup> For instance, in 1:15, Wisdom speaks of immortality in an exhortation to love 'righteousness' (v. 1) and equates 'righteousness' with 'immortal' (v. 15). The implied meaning seems to be that a person's failure to pursue 'righteousness' will not guarantee 'immortality.' According to Wisdom, the way to achieve 'immortality' is to 'love,' 'know' and 'recognize' righteousness, wisdom and God's power (6:18; 8:13, 17; 15:3 etc.). Wisdom's admonition to pursue 'immortality' is projected from the viewpoint of a 'mortal' man, 'I myself also am mortal man like everyone, and a descendant of the first-formed individual born on earth (7:1).'<sup>464</sup> So, although Wisdom seems to convey the idea of the entering of death into the world, it also speaks of 'immortality' in the sense that it can be pursued or perhaps regained after the point of physical death: 'the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God...in the sight of the unwise they seemed to die: and their departure is taken for misery, and their going from us to be utter destruction: but they are in peace. For though they be punished in the sight of men, yet is their hope full of immortality' (3:1-4).<sup>465</sup> Although this may not be an exact parallel, Wisdom's interest in 'immortality' after the point of physical death may be likened to Paul's similar notion of 'resurrection' and 'eternal

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goodness.

<sup>463</sup> The word ἀφθαρσία ('immortality/incorruption'), as well as other terms related to this theme of immortality, appears over 20 times in Wisdom. James M. Reese, *Hellenistic Influence on the Book of Wisdom and its Consequences*, 143. Cf. 1:15; 2:23; 3:4, 8; 4:1, 2, 19; 5:15; 6:18; 19, 21; 8:13, 17; 12:1, 10; 10:14; 13:9; 14:6, 13; 15:3; 17:2; 18:4.

<sup>464</sup> The author's self-description as 'mortal' in 7:1 should not be taken to mean that all human beings from the beginning of creation were created mortal. Such emphasis on the 'weakness' or 'mortality' of a human being appears throughout the OT, Ben Sira, and even in Paul, whose description of 'mortality' cannot be attributed to the original nature of human beings as 'mortal.' Cf. 1 Cor. 15:51-54; 2 Cor. 5:1-8. See discussion on pp. 74-75 above.

<sup>465</sup> Some scholars view Wisdom's statements about death and immortality as referring to 'spiritual' death and immortality rather than physical death. See Karina M. Hogan, "The Exegetical Background of the "Ambiguity of Death" in the Wisdom of Solomon," *JSJ* 30 (1999): 1-24. See also, M. Kolarcik, *The Ambiguity of Death in the Book of Wisdom 1-6. A Study of Literary Structure and Interpretation*, AnBib 127 (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1991): 159-84. The author of Wisdom points his discussion of 'immortality' to the dimension after the point of physical death; however, whether the author of Wisdom speaks merely of spiritual death is unclear in the text.

life,’ which Paul clearly envisaged as promised to believers in Christ: ‘so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord’ (Rom. 5:21).’

In sum, although it is important to exercise caution in affirming the direct relationship between Wis. 2:23-24 and Rom. 5:12, the similarities in their wordings and ideas within the same context do suggest some level of literary ‘affinities’ or ‘parallels.’<sup>466</sup> In Wis. 2:23-24, the author provides a textual precedent for the idea of ‘death’ entering the world that is similar to Paul’s assertion about the origin of death and the idea of the ‘inclusiveness’ of all people in the consequential death.<sup>467</sup>

#### **7.4 Blaming Eve for the Transgression (παράβασις) of the Divine Commandment**

An explicit reference by Paul to the incident of the tree of knowledge, particularly focusing on the serpent’s deception, is found in 2 Cor. 11:3, where Paul expresses his fear that the Corinthians will be led astray like Eve: ‘But I am afraid that, as the serpent *deceived* (ἐξήπατησεν) Eve by his craftiness,<sup>468</sup> your minds will be

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<sup>466</sup> For the full list and annotations of ‘all the purported allusions or echoes to extra-canonical Jewish writings in the Pauline letters,’ see T.H. Lim, *The Formation of the Jewish Canon*, 195-212. In its introductory section, Lim writes: ‘The comments accompanying the list below show that on the whole literary dependence of the Pauline letters on apocryphal and pseudepigraphical texts is not supported by the evidence. The purported “sources” are often better described as “literary affinities” or “parallels.”’

<sup>467</sup> Although he does not strictly claim Paul’s direct access to Wisdom, on the basis of similar ideas and theology shared by Wisdom and Paul, J. Barr argues that ‘it is in certain later strata of the Old Testament, including the books that are outside the present Hebrew canon, that the real grounds for the Pauline understanding of Adam and Eve are to be found.’ Barr, *The Garden of Eden and the Hope of Immortality*, 17.

<sup>468</sup> Whereas the Greek translator of Genesis uses a more positive term φρόνιμος (‘wise/sagacious’) to describe the serpent in Gen. 3:1 (‘the most sagacious [φρόνιμος] of all the wild animals that were upon the earth’), in 2 Cor. 11:3, it seems that Paul deliberately avoids using the term φρόνιμος (‘wise/sagacious’) but instead opts for πανουργία (‘craftiness’). The term πανουργία (‘craftiness’) is often used in the NT with a negative nuance, cf. Lk. 20:23; 1 Cor. 3:19; 2 Cor. 4:2 and Eph. 4:14. In 1 Cor. 10:15, the term φρόνιμος (‘wise/sagacious’) is used positively to refer to a person’s wisdom in Christ (φρόνιμοι ἐν Χριστῷ).

led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.’ It is noticeable that Paul specifically points to Eve as the one who was deceived by the serpent and this may reflect an exegetical trend in the contemporary Jewish texts of singling out and blaming the woman for the disobedience in the Garden of Eden.<sup>469</sup> Paul’s use of the verb ἐξαπατάω (‘to deceive’) in 2 Cor. 11:3 is an emphatic derivative of the verb ἀπατάω (‘to deceive’) from the LXX Gen. 3:13.<sup>470</sup> A pseudonymous Pauline epistle, 1 Timothy,<sup>471</sup> takes up this verb ἐξαπατάω (‘to deceive’), presumably following

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<sup>469</sup> Cf. Sir. 25:24: ‘The beginning of sin is from a woman and because of her we all die.’ In 1 Enoch 69:6, Eve is also portrayed as one who is led astray by an evil spirit: ‘And the name of the third is Gadreel. This is the one who showed all the blows of death to the sons of men, and he led Eve astray, and he showed the shield and the coat of mail and the sword for battle and all the implements of death to the sons of men.’ George W. E. Nickelsburg and James C. VanderKam, *1 Enoch 2: A Commentary on the Book of 1 Enoch, Chapters 37–82*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012), 297. *The Testament of Reuben* (5:1-7) describes women as the cause of the fall of the Watcher, and of man in general. Harm W. Hollander and Marinus d Jonge. *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: A Commentary* (Leiden: Brill, 1985), 101-02. The Books of Adam and Eve 9:1-10:3 also portrays Eve as being tempted by the devil again, even after she is expelled from the Garden of Eden. Tg. Ps -J. 3:6-4:1, records that Eve conceives and gives birth to Cain after being seduced by an angel named Samael. Philo also writes that the serpent chose to speak to the woman and not to the man because ‘woman is more accustomed to be deceived than man.’ Philo, *QG 1*, 43 and 45.

<sup>470</sup> Both ἀπατάω and ἐξαπατάω (‘to deceive’) have a range of meanings, including ‘seduce’, which may introduce the possibility that Eve’s sin was the result of sexual seduction and women are vulnerable to seduction and thus cannot control their sexuality. BDAG, “ἀπατάω,” 98; “ἐξαπατάω,” 345. See also, W. Loader, *The Septuagint, Sexuality, and the New Testament*, 45-49. Perhaps, the use of the same verb in the LXX Gen. 3:13<sup>470</sup> could have influenced Paul in his use of the word ἐξηπάτησεν (‘to deceive’) in 2 Cor. 11:3, which also carries a sexual connotation, especially in the context of his description of presenting the church to Christ as a ‘pure virgin’ (2 Cor. 11:2).

<sup>471</sup> Although 1 Tim. 1:1 claims that Paul is its author, most modern commentators generally agree that the 1 Timothy, along with other Pastoral Epistles (2 Timothy, Titus), is pseudonymous and written in the late 1<sup>st</sup> or early 2<sup>nd</sup> century; this is based on the considerable differences in language and style of these letters from other genuine Pauline epistles. Bonnie Bowman Thurston, “Pastoral Letters,” vol. 4 of *NIDB* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2009), 4:392. For a detailed discussion of the authorship of 1 Timothy, see Mark Harding, *What Are They Saying about the Pastoral Epistles?* (Mahwah: Paulist Press, 2001) 9-27; Linda M. Maloney, “The Pastoral Epistles” in vol. 2 of *Searching the Scriptures: A Feminist Commentary*, ed. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza (New York: Crossroad, 1994), 361-80. For a review of the position favouring the Pauline authorship of 1 Timothy, appealing primarily to the church tradition, see William D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, WBC 46 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson,

Paul's line of interpretation (2 Cor. 11:3) that puts emphasis on the woman's act and responsibility in the disobedience. 1 Tim. 2:14 writes: 'it was not Adam who was *deceived* (ἡπατήθη) but the woman being *deceived* (ἐξαπατηθεῖσα), fell in to transgression.' It is noteworthy that in this verse, the simple ἀπατάω ('to deceive') is used to refer to Adam's deception, and the more emphatic ἐξαπατάω is used for Eve in 1 Tim. 2:14, clearly a nuanced reading of which could suggest it puts more blame on Eve than Adam. Whilst the author of 1 Tim. 2:14 mentions Adam by name Ἀδὰμ, Eve is referred to here not by her personal name, Εὐαν (Gen. 4:1), but simply as the woman (γυνή). This is probably due to the overall context that the author's instructions are given to women in general, but it is also possible that this is being influenced by the LXX in that the use of the personal name for the man only in 1 Tim. 2:14 corresponds to the noticeable effect that the LXX translator created with the rendering of the personal name Ἀδὰμ from Gen. 2:17 onwards, which attributes Adam the more active and representative role than 'the woman.'<sup>472</sup> Moreover, 1 Tim. 2:13-14 highlights Eve as the one responsible for the disobedience, which also resembles the LXX's particular emphasis and clarification of the fact that the woman is indeed involved in the violation of the command and therefore responsible for the sin. Not only is the divine command 'by death, you will die' (Gen. 2:17) rendered in the plural (singular in the MT), the translator of LXX Genesis changes the phrase 'and he (3s) ate' (לְאָדָם) in the singular, to 'they (3p) ate' (καὶ ἔφαγον) (3:6). This change from singular to plural, along with the plural verbs used for the command in Gen. 2:17, inevitably adds to the increased role and responsibility of the woman in the act of violation. As discussed in the previous chapters, traces of this particular exegetical trend were evidenced in the LXX, the Book of Jubilees and DSS.<sup>473</sup> The

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2000), lxxxiii-cxxix.

<sup>472</sup> In the LXX, the first occurrence of the personal name Εὐαν is not found until Gen. 4:1. In the MT, the name הַיָּוֵה appears in Gen. 3:20 for the first time, where the translator renders it as Ζωή ('life').

<sup>473</sup> The Book of Jubilees notes that not just Adam, but in fact both Adam and Eve received the command concerning the tree of knowledge from God. For more details on the translational elements in the LXX and Jubilees that create a nuanced reading of the Genesis with a low view of woman, see pp. 92-94, 99-104 of this thesis. Among the DSS, the exegetical move towards the inclusion of both Adam and Eve (and possibly others) is also evident in the 4Q422 (4Q paraphrase of Genesis and

author of 1 Tim. insists that women are not to teach or have authority over man due to the woman's deception in the garden narrative (v. 12). The author seems to suggest that women are not only vulnerable to their own deception but are also capable of leading men into deception.<sup>474</sup>

The fact that the author of 1 Timothy follows Paul's theology and understanding of the divine command (Gen. 2:17) is reflected in his use of the technical term *παράβασις* ('trespass/transgression')<sup>475</sup> to describe the disobedient act concerning the tree of knowledge. The term *παράβασις* conveys the author's understanding of Adam's disobedience as a legal violation/transgression against the divine law and thus links the passage more closely with the divine command concerning the tree of knowledge (Gen. 2:17). The same word *παράβασις* is used by Paul in Rom. 5:14 to refer specifically to Adam's *transgression* (*τῆς παραβάσεως*

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Exodus). It is further observed that the prepositional phrase *ממנה* ('from it/her') in 4Q303 adds emphasis to the woman's role and responsibility for the transgression, implying that it is 'from woman' that Adam received the fruit and thus disobeyed God's command. See discussion on pp. 126-134 (5.22 and 5.23).

<sup>474</sup> In 1 Cor. 11:2-16, Paul describes his understanding of the hierarchal relationship between man and woman by appealing to Gen. 2:8, that woman was made from and for man. Paul also says in 1 Cor. 14:35 that women should be silent in the churches according to the 'law.' The 'law' that Paul refers to is perhaps an allusion to Gen. 3:16: '...yet your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.' Ciampa and Rosner, "1 Corinthians," in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 743. Augustine interpreted Gen. 2:17 on the basis of 1 Cor. 14:35 that God's giving of the command concerning the tree of knowledge only to the man was appropriate based on the 'proper order' between man and woman, Augustine, *Gen. litt.*, VIII, 17. Augustine also blames Eve for the disobedience to the command: 'What is the difference? Whether it is in a wife or a mother, it is still Eve (the temptress) that we must beware of in any woman,' idem. *Letter*, 243.10. For discussion of the association of Eve with sin and temptation in early Christian and Rabbinic texts, see, C.L Meyers, *Rediscovering Eve: Ancient Israelite Women in Context*, 60-65.

Paul's low view of woman is also evident in his defense of the authenticity of Jesus' resurrection (1 Cor. 15); Paul does not list women as witnesses to Jesus' resurrection, despite the fact that they were presumably the first to witness the event (cf. John 20:1-18). Cf. also 1 Cor 11:8. For a discussion of the view of the early Christian Fathers (e.g. Origen, St. Ephrem, Augustine) for 1 Tim. 2:14, see Gary A. Anderson, "Is Eve the Problem?" in *The Genesis of Perfection: Adam and Eve in Jewish and Christian Imagination*, 99-116.

<sup>475</sup> See, J. Schneider, "*παράβασις*," *TDNT*, 5:739. Cf. also, Rom. 2:23; 4:15; Gal. 3:19; Heb. 2:2.

Ἀδάμ) which Paul later relates with *παράπτωμα* ('offence/trespass') (v. 15) and *παρακοή* ('disobedience') (v. 19). It was also observed earlier that Paul's reference to non-existence of the 'law' (Rom. 5:14) during the period between Adam and Moses adds to Paul's understanding of the command (Gen. 2:17) as a specific legal command that was transgressed by Adam. Here, it is obvious that Paul refers Adam's trespass/disobedience (*παράβασις/ παρακοή*) as the specific transgression (*παράβασις*) of God's command concerning the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2:17). Further, Paul's suggestion that a person could be deceived into disobeying God's command is evident in Rom. 7:11, in which Paul may also possibly be alluding to the incident in the garden, particularly the deception of Eve (Gen. 3:11): 'for sin, taking an opportunity through the commandment, deceived (*ἐξήπατησέν*) me and through it killed me.'

Although 1 Tim. 2:14 does not present an antithetical comparison between Adam and Christ, nor does it present the idea of death as the consequence of Adam's transgression passed on to his descendants, the use of the technical term *παράβασις* ('trespass/transgression') and its synonyms, both by Paul and the author of 1 Timothy, in describing the violation of the specific command concerning the tree of knowledge (Gen. 2:17) reflects their understanding of the legalistic tone and judicial characteristic that lie behind the divine command. Traces and hints of an exegetical tradition that blames Eve for the disobedience concerning the tree of knowledge have been observed as early as in the LXX, Jubilees, DSS and Ben Sira etc. In light of the above observations, it may also be suggested that Paul shares, and the author of 1 Timothy follows, a similar exegetical route of singling out Eve for blame, and they present this in their writings.

## **7.5 Conclusion: Death as a Result of Adam's Transgression**

In this chapter, I have reviewed the Pauline references to the disobedience of Adam and Eve, in particular focusing on Paul's description of the entering of death into humanity in 1 Cor. 15:21-22 and Rom. 5:12-21, and I have suggested the following for both passages:

- 1) The causal connection between the death of Adam and the death of his descendants, as well as the causal relation between the resurrection of Christ and that of those who belong to him are explicitly and emphatically stressed.
- 2) Paul's discussion of death, of which Adam was the cause, is primarily that of a 'physical' death.
- 3) The use of the word *παράβασις* ('transgression') reflects Paul's understanding of the command as a legal one.
- 4) Although this should be taken with a note of caution, some noticeable similarities between exegetical elements observed in Paul and the LXX suggest that the LXX may have influenced Paul:
  - a. As in the LXX, Paul brings the readers' focus to the individual figure of Adam by way of transition from the generic term *ἄνθρωπος* ('human being') to the personal noun *Ἀδὰμ* ('Adam'). Paul does mention Eve in 2 Cor 11:3 as one being 'deceived' by the serpent, nevertheless Paul's focus in his discussion of the 'one' being responsible for the origin of death is clearly on Adam.
  - b. The LXX's distinctive rendering of the divine warning in the plural form, which has proven to be susceptible to different interpretations, may also have influenced Paul in his notion of the death of all people by means of Adam. The exegetical move towards the inclusion of both Adam and Eve (and possibly others) was also evident in the 4Q422,<sup>476</sup> but it is most clearly demonstrated in Paul's exegesis.
- 5) As far as 1 Cor. 15:21-22 is concerned, in the context of his proclamation of Christ's death and resurrection as the cause and foundation of all future resurrections of those who are also in him, Paul strengthens and clarifies the link between the incident of Adam's disobedience to God's command (Gen. 2:17) and the introduction of death by means of antithesis between Adam and Christ. In this passage, Paul clarifies the recipient of the command, the party the death penalty is applicable to, and the nature of death.
- 6) In Rom. 5:21-22, Paul's exegetical assertion about the causal relationship between Adam's transgression and the introduction of death into the world is

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<sup>476</sup> See pp. 126-31 above.



emphasized further with his repeated use of similar phrases denoting the agency of Adam – ‘*through one man* (δι’ ἑνὸς ἀνθρώπου)’, ‘*by the transgression of the one* (τῷ τοῦ ἑνὸς παραπτώματι)’ etc. – by means of antithetical comparison between Adam and Christ, as in 1 Cor. 15:21-22. Such extensive repetition of the twofold assertion that Adam’s transgression led to the introduction of death in the world and Adam’s transgression affected all human beings seems almost redundant, yet it clearly shows where Paul’s emphasis lies in his overall argument, which aims to explain the contrasting effects of the one man, Adam, and Christ on all human beings. It was also demonstrated that any suggested meaning of the final clause Rom. 5:12, ‘all sinned’ with the prepositional phrase ἐφ’ ᾧ (lit. ‘on which’) does not counter Paul’s main point in the logical sequence of Rom. 5:12 that attests: death and its universal influence on all humanity had its origin in Adam’s transgression.

- 7) Traces and hints of an exegetical tradition that blames Eve for the disobedience concerning the tree of knowledge have been observed as early as in the LXX, Jubilees, DSS and Ben Sira etc. Paul and the author of 1 Timothy follow a similar exegetical route of singling out Eve for blame and he presents this very clearly in his writings.



## Chapter Eight

### Conclusion

#### 8.1 Revisiting the Question

This thesis has sought to examine the early Jewish reception of the divine prohibitive command (Gen. 2:17) in relation to its interpretative association with the introduction of physical death to humanity. The long-time rationale has been that Adam and Eve's consumption from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil brought death to humanity (Rom. 5:12), as was predicted: 'for in the day that you eat of it, you shall surely die' (Gen. 2:17). Is it exegetically sound, however, to affirm that Adam and Eve were originally created immortal in the Garden of Eden? A careful examination of the narrative details in their original context and the intended meaning and usage of the prohibitive command entailing the death warning has shown that there are no explicit narrative and/or exegetical clues in the HB as to the physical status of Adam and Eve, either as immortal or mortal, prior to their disobedience to God's command in Gen. 2:17, and that the death warning itself does not provide textual support for its understanding in the sense of becoming mortal. How then can we explain Paul's explicit and emphatic attribution of death to the disobedience of Adam and Eve (1 Cor. 15:21-22; Rom. 5:12)? Do Jewish writings between Genesis and Paul evidence any development in the association of the two entities, the transgression of Adam and the presence of death in the human world? In search of the early 'reception history,' this thesis intended to fill the gap in our comprehension of the interpretative development and association of human mortality with the death warning in Gen. 2:17.

#### 8.2 Chapter-by-chapter Summary

Following the introductory chapter describing the research question, objectives, context and scope of this thesis, Chapter 2 examined the garden narrative and death warning (Gen. 2:17) in its original context. Firstly, the narrative details were carefully reviewed with the aim of finding any available clue regarding the original physical status of the first man in the garden before the so-called 'Fall,' i.e. the disobedience of Adam and Eve to God's command concerning the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The second part of Chapter 2 analysed the precise

meaning intended by the death warning מוֹת תָּמוּת ('you shall surely die') and its usage within the HB. The analysis suggested that the death warning in Gen. 2:17 should be read as introducing an immediate death penalty within a legalistic setting: 1) the literal meaning of the phrase בַּיּוֹם ('in the day'), that is a specific day, is intended in Gen. 2:17 and is used to further emphasize the promptness of the death warning, as well as to give a specific reference to the time in which the death penalty will occur; 2) the death warnings introduced in the passages of Genesis, Pentateuch and the rest of the HB are strictly used in the legal context as a way of announcing the death penalty as the consequence of legal process. The death warning in Gen. 2:17 should be interpreted in a similar sense. The analysis of the details of the narrative itself demonstrated that nowhere in the narrative of Genesis is man's disobedience explicitly described as the cause of his mortality, either physical or spiritual. This observation should make it clear that the intended meaning of the original command in Gen. 2:17 is not decidedly that 'you will become mortal.' The overall garden narrative and the death warning itself in its original context do not convey such an idea.

Chapter 3 continued the survey of the narrative details with an in-depth look at the statement of curses (3:14-19) and the expulsion from the garden (3:22-24); in particular, it considered the statement 'for you are dust, to dust you shall return' (3:19) and the word לֵאמֹר ('lest') in Gen. 3:22. The analysis demonstrated the rather weak association between the punishment and expulsion passages and the original death warning in Gen. 2:17. In particular, a range of possible interpretative options that derive from the reading of Gen. 3:22 were discussed; each of these in some sense contributes to the meaning and clarification of the ambiguous details of the narrative, but, in the process, it was demonstrated that they are dependent on interpretative assumptions. Although Gen. 3:22 tells us of the present state of the man, in which he is dependent on the tree of life for his immortality, we are not informed whether it has always been that way. Did the man know about the presence of the tree of life? If he did, did he know that he could attain or reclaim his immortality by eating from it? Or has he actually eaten from the tree of life already? Analysing the passages and scholarly arguments deriving from them did not yield a definite answer as to whether Adam and Eve ever ate from the tree of life before their expulsion, despite the fact that it was clearly available among the trees they

could freely eat from in the garden. In this sense, it was suggested that an answer to whether they were immortal or mortal in the first place is not given, even within the punishment and expulsion passages (Gen. 3:14-19, 22-24). Had the narrator wanted to stress and convey the idea of original immortality (or mortality) in the narrative and that it was indeed the introduction of mortality that was the result of the disobedience, it would have been better if he had been more specific and used clearer language, as with the command in Gen. 2:17. Perhaps such questions regarding the mortal/immortal status of man were not really of concern to the narrator. The lack of clarity in the communication between God and man, ambiguities created by the narrator skipping details, the lack of agreement between the death warning and the actual punishments given for breaking the command, the lack of clear association between the two trees and the lack of Adam and Eve's response to the punishment and expulsion, all lead us to the conclusion that the narrator, while speaking of possibilities of death and life in two somewhat distanced passages (Gen. 2:17, 3:22), remains silent on the original physical status of the first human beings.

Chapter 4 considered the reception of Gen. 2:16-17 in the LXX, first in the book of Genesis and then in the subsequent books in the rest of the LXX. In light of the narrative 'gaps' and ambiguities found in the MT, the first half of Chapter 4 sought to demonstrate how this earliest Greek translator of the LXX acknowledged such ambiguities and sought to provide solutions to them. On the premise that the Greek translator's translational deviations from the MT are not always a result of the translator's conscious attempt to provide an exegetical answer to the difficulties found in the text, it was observed that: 1) the Greek translator's emphasis on the individual figure named Adam in relation to the violation of the command is reflected in his use of the personal name Ἀδὰμ instead of the generic ἄνθρωπος ('human being') for the first time in Gen. 2:16; 2) the translator's change of the verb from singular to plural in Gen. 3:6: from 'and he (3s) ate (לָכַח)' to 'they (3p) ate' (καὶ ἔφαγον), along with the plural verbs used for the command in Gen. 2:17, θανάτῳ ἀποθανεῖσθε ('by death, you shall die'), inevitably adds to the increased role and responsibility of the woman in the act of violation; 3) the translator's addition of the phrase τούτου μόνου ('of this one alone')<sup>477</sup> in Gen. 3:11 adds further clarification to

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<sup>477</sup> Gen. 3:11: 'He said to him, "Who announced to you that you are naked? *Unless* you have eaten

the limits of the prohibition in Gen. 2:17, that it was only one tree that was originally prohibited by God. The phrase *τούτου μόνου* ('of this one alone') could reinforce such an interpretation regarding the tree of life: e.g. 'in the garden of Eden, the first couple were already immortal as they were not forbidden to eat from the tree of life'; 4) whereas in the MT there is no clear causal connection between eating from the tree and the notion of returning to dust, the translator's rendering of the *וְ* clause ('...till you return to the ground, *because* from it you were taken') with a preposition and a relative clause *ἐξ ἧς* ('...until you return to the earth *from which* you were taken') creates a nuanced version of the text that may suggest Adam's returning to dust is the result of his violation of the command. Perhaps the translator wanted to avoid the interpretation that human beings were originally created mortal and returning to dust accords with the natural order of creation; 5) whereas in the MT, whether Adam and Eve had been eating from the tree of life regularly is not explicitly given, the Greek translator makes it explicit that 'living forever' (*ζήσεται εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα*) (Gen. 3:22) is the result of the three previous acts that are put in the subjunctive mode: 'he might *reach out* (*ἐκτείνῃ*) his hand and *take* (*λάβῃ*) of the tree of life and *eat* (*φάγῃ*).' This reading could give the impression that the first humans had never eaten from the tree of life before, but now they needed to eat from it to regain their immortal status, which was lost by eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

In the second half of the chapter, a careful evaluation of each translational element in Gen. 2:16-17 demonstrated that: 1) the literal sense of the prepositional phrase *ביום* ('in the day'), which emphasizes the certainty and promptness of the death warning, has been stressed further in the LXX by the translator's idiomatic rendering, *ἢ δ' ἂν ἡμέρα* ('but in the day which...'); 2) the translator's decision to render the command *ἀποθανεῖσθε* ('you [pl.] will die') in the plural verb in the place of the MT's singular could suggest a possible answer to any one of the questions originally posed within the context of the ambiguous narrative of the original Hebrew text: for example, the plural verbs in the LXX may represent the translator's desire to include Eve (and/or other human beings) in the act of disobedience who

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from the tree of which I commanded you, 'From this one alone (*τούτου μόνου*), do not eat.'"

were either already present or were to be created in the future. According to the LXX translation, it could be suggested that Eve was already present when the command was given in Gen. 2:17 and that she heard the command herself (as in the Book of Jubilees). Furthermore, the translator's choice of plural for the verb ἀποθανεῖσθε ('you will die') arguably paves the way for such an interpretation that the consequence of eating the forbidden fruit applies not just to one person (as opposed to the permission in v. 16 that is rendered as a singular verb, βρώσει φάγη), but to all humanity, for instance, the introduction of mortality to the entire human race. As a result, whether intentional or not, such a grammatical change in the translation that deviates from the original Hebrew can imprint an idea(s) that is not present in the Hebrew text in the readers' mind and makes it susceptible to different interpretations that may not have arisen from the original text, e.g. Philo, Symmachus and Paul.

The analysis of the death warning θανάτῳ ἀποθανεῖσθε ('by death, you shall die') within the LXX showed that the sense of certainty emphatically conveyed in the original death warning of the MT began to weaken or was lost as early as the Greek translation. In favour of this argument it may be pointed out that ancient interpreters do not really appeal (at least explicitly) for such an emphatic function in the infinitive absolute in their explanation of the command. Perhaps the inconsistent omission of the adverbial phrase 'surely' in our English translation finds its root in the Greek and Latin translation. Although the cognate noun + finite verb construction, i.e. θανάτῳ ἀποθανεῖσθε ('by death, you shall die'), was used for the first time in Gen. 2:17, there is no consistent stereotyped rendering of the command מות תמות ('you will surely die') in the book of LXX Genesis. The cognate noun construction was settled on in the subsequent books of the LXX, but in several places different lexical choices for the dative noun, sometimes by way of omission, show more prevalent use and understanding of the cognate noun as denoting instrumental dative, which resulted in the further weakening of the emphatic sense that the original infinitive absolute construction carried. Instead, the adverbial use of the dative (i.e. 'dative of instrument') employed by the translators in different places in the LXX paves the way for different understandings of the command, for example, the cognate noun θανάτῳ ('by death') in Gen. 2:17 in particular can be interpreted as having the true force of the instrumental dative, indicating the means by which the action of the verb ἀποθανεῖσθε ('you [pl.] shall die') may be accomplished.

Chapter 5 considered the references and allusions to Gen. 2:17 in the DSS. Other than in the two biblical scrolls of Genesis found in Cave 4 (4QGen<sup>b</sup> and 4QGen<sup>h2</sup>), the verbatim statement of the death warning מות תמות ('you shall surely die') is not attested in any of the non-biblical texts that 'rewrite' or 'rework' the account of the creation and transgression of Adam. This is perhaps partially due to the fragmentary condition of these texts. Nevertheless, noticeable allusions to the divine command concerning the forbidden fruit and the selective features of punishment for the disobedience are evident. An in-depth analysis of these extant texts illustrated a similar phenomenon to that witnessed in the translational process from the HB to the LXX: 1) there is added emphasis laid on the woman's role/responsibility for the act of disobedience and inclusion of both Adam and Eve (and possibly others) as the recipients and applicable parties to the punishment (4Q422 1 i 10 and 4Q303 1 9); and 2) reinforcement of the exegetical association of Adam's transgression of the command with the theme of 'man's returning to dust' (4Q504). In particular, it was observed that the use of the phrase 'he is flesh' in 4Q504, which echoes the language used to describe God's shortening of the lifespan of all humanity (Gen. 6:3), in conjunction with the notion of Adam's return to dust, might create the nuance in the reader's mind that the punishment for breaking the command (Gen. 2:17) is not solely confined to Adam, but connected in some sense to all humanity. The last section of this chapter dealt with an unidentified text of 4Q124, in which a paraphrased reference to God's curse on the ground due to Adam's transgression is found (thanks to Alexey Yuditsky's identification of the first letter as *qoph* (ק) from *dalet* (ד)). Yuditsky's reconstruction of the statement תשוּקתו ('his longing/desire') at the end of line 2 frag. 4 may also suggest that the author of 4Q124 understood the notion of 'returning back to dust' within the context of the punishment for Adam's disobedience. Although fragmentary in nature, the selective focus and close placement of two themes, i.e. 'man's returning to dust' and the 'divine commandment and/or transgression of Adam,' within these DSS texts is witness to a line of interpretation that views man's 'mortality' as the result of Adam's disobedience to the command in Gen. 2:17.

Chapter 6 focused on the allusions to the divine command of Gen. 2:17 in the Book of Ben Sira. Particular attention was given to Sir. 14:17, which provides a distinctive interpretation of the introduction of death to humanity in the sense of



becoming ‘mortal’: ‘All flesh wears out like a garment, for the perpetual statute is: “they shall surely die/perish” (גוע יגוע) (14:17). This chapter first considered the lack of scholarly attention to Sir. 14:17 as a possible allusion to the death warning מות תמות (‘you shall surely die’) in Gen. 2:17 and in turn suggested the possibility that Sira’s other statements about death throughout his book – which seem to present the idea of death as an inescapable lot that everyone has to accept – presuppose the idea of the ‘introduction of mortality’ due to the transgression of Adam. Sira’s grandson, who translated the book into Greek, deliberately took this exegetical route and adjusted his translation accordingly to align with the LXX’s translation of the divine warning in Gen. 2:17, θανάτω ἀποθανῆς (‘by death, you shall die’), whose interpretation accords with Symmachus’ translation and St. Jerome’s interpretation of the command in Gen. 2:17 (LXX): θνητος εσῆ ‘you will become mortal.’ The suggestion that Sir. 14:17 is more likely to be an allusion to the divine command in Gen. 2:17 was further supported by the following: 1) Ben Sira makes frequent allusions to the biblical passages, employing a language and style reminiscent of various aspects from the creation/garden narrative, but rather freely, without always providing the exact context and meaning behind each allusion. This also holds true of Sira’s allusions to the passages concerning the punishment of Adam, which Sira does not necessarily associate with the disobedience of Adam and Eve. 2) The analysis of the usage of the verb גוע (‘to die/perish’) as a synonym of the verb מות (‘to die’) within the creational and punishment context and the meaning of the phrase חוק עולם (‘perpetual statute’) as a technical term with a strong connection to the legal concepts and contexts in the HB and in Sira. Ben Sira (and his grandson) provide an important witness in the Second Temple Period (as early as the second century BCE) to the existence of an interpretation that finds a reason for the mortality of all human beings in the divine command that was given to the first man concerning the tree of knowledge. In the explicit association between the statement in Sir. 14:17a, ‘all flesh wears out like a garment,’ and Gen. 2:17, the meaning of death (in both Gen. 2:17 and Sir. 14:17b) is further clarified as physical death, again, in the sense of becoming ‘mortal.’ Whether or not the grandson of Sira correctly understood the meaning of the original Hebrew text, which I suggest he did, Sir. 14:17 in the Greek certainly reflects an unprecedented exegetical reading (which predates Paul) that connects the death warning in Gen. 2:17 with the introduction of death to humanity.

Finally, Chapter 7 turned to the reception of Gen. 2:17 in the NT and discussed allusions to Adam's transgression in the Pauline epistles (1 Cor. 15:21-22; Rom. 5:12-21) and in a pseudepigraphal letter (1 Timothy 2:14). The line of exegesis that relates Adam's transgression and his punishment to the introduction of death to humanity develops into its fullest bloom in the aforementioned passages of Paul. Paul deliberately takes up and disambiguates the vague traces – found in the LXX, DSS, Ben Sira and other contemporaneous Jewish texts – of the exegetical association between Adam's disobedience and death. It was also argued in this chapter that Paul's discussion of death, of which Adam was the cause, is primarily that of a 'physical' death in the sense of becoming mortal. A number of the exegetical elements found in the Pauline epistles showed some noticeable similarities with those of the LXX observed in Chapter 4: 1) Paul brings the readers' focus to the individual figure of Adam by way of transition from the generic term *ἄνθρωπος* ('human being'), to the personal noun *Ἀδὰμ* ('Adam'). Paul does mention Eve in 2 Cor 11:3 as one 'deceived' by the serpent; nevertheless Paul's focus in his discussion of the 'one' responsible for the origin of death is clearly on Adam. 2) The LXX's distinctive rendering of the death warning in the plural form, which has proven to be susceptible to different interpretations, may also have influenced Paul in his notion of the death of all people by means of Adam. The exegetical move towards the inclusion of both Adam and Eve (and other human beings) is witnessed in the texts prior to Paul, but it is most clearly demonstrated in Paul's exegesis. In 1 Cor 15:21-22, in the context of his proclamation of Christ's physical death and resurrection as the cause and foundation of all future resurrections of those who are him, Paul strengthens and clarifies the link between the incident of Adam's disobedience/transgression to God's command (Gen. 2:17) and the introduction of death by means of antithesis between Adam and Christ. In Rom. 5:21-22, Paul's exegetical assertion about the causal relationship between Adam's transgression and the introduction of death into the world is emphasized further with his repeated use of similar phrases denoting the agency of Adam – 'through one man (*δι' ἑνὸς ἀνθρώπου*)', 'by the transgression of the one (*τῷ τοῦ ἑνὸς παραπτώματι*)' etc. – and by means of antithetical comparison between Adam and Christ, as in 1 Cor. 15:21-22. In both passages, Paul clarifies the recipient of the command (Adam), the party the death penalty is applicable to (all human beings), and the nature of death

(physical). Traces and hints of an exegetical tradition that blames Eve for the disobedience concerning the tree of knowledge have been observed as early as in the LXX, Jubilees, DSS and Ben Sira etc. Paul and the author of 1 Timothy follow a similar exegetical route of singling out Eve for blame and he presents this very clearly in his writings.

### **8.3 The ancient reception of the divine prohibition against eating from the tree of knowledge (Gen. 2:17)**

Contrary to the traditional Christian affirmation of the connection between Adam's transgression and the death of humanity, it was observed in this thesis that the association of human mortality and Adam's transgression was barely established in the original context of the garden narrative. God's death warning מות תמות ('you shall surely die') of Gen. 2:17 concerning eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was neither followed by the immediate death penalty for Adam, nor was there an explicit or narrative hint of the accomplishment of the death warning in the sense of 'physical' and/or 'spiritual' death. There is a surprising lack of attention to the divine death warning of Gen. 2:17 in the Second Temple Period literature; however, the foregoing analysis of such extant texts, with allusions to and citations of the death warning of Gen. 2:17 has traced the gradual emergence of exegetical interpretation, hitherto unrecognized, in which the presumptive association between the death warning and the introduction of death to humanity, as well as the meaning of death and its applicable parties, are reinforced and clarified.





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