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THE PAULINE TEACHING
OF THE FUTURE LIFE

A Thesis Presented to
The Faculty of Concordia Seminary
Department of New Testament Theology

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Sacred Theology

by
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THE BIBLE'S TEACHING
OF THE FUTURE LIFE

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THE PAULINE TEACHING
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Introduction

When we speak of Paul's teaching of the future life we do not mean to categorize his presentations as an isolated or particular doctrine of Christianity. Our purpose is to set forth Paul's way of presenting this great doctrine as taught by our Lord Himself. Higher criticism notwithstanding, the teachings of Paul and Jesus coincide. Paul's close agreement with the Gospel narratives had led some to assume that Paul had personally known Jesus and had experienced many of the occurrences related about Him. Scott says :

1

But however we may account for the paucity of his references to events and teachings it is now generally admitted that St. Paul had before his mind a conception of our Lord's ministry that was accurate if not detailed, and a picture of His death and resurrection which was both accurate and detailed.

This treatise on Paul's view of the future life is an exegetical study. The importance of such an exegetical study cannot be minimized; in a way it must take precedence over against the dogmatical approach. It has been aptly stated , " For all true dogmatics rests wholly on true exegesis; it is wholly dependent, never independent. "

1 - C. A. Scott, " Gospel according to St. Paul, Character and Source," The Expositor, II (1901), 202.

The outline or plan of this paper seeks to present both adequately and worthily the teachings of Paul. Its continuity carries us forward from the point of death to the end of the world, through the resurrection and judgment, and finds its completion in man's eternal state. Such a presentation is partially endorsed by Stevens :

2

It is necessary to consider his (i.e. Paul's) views on 3 subjects,- the parousia, the resurrection, and the judgment of the world,- in order to define the further problems to which these views give rise, and to trace the limits of the Apostles' affirmations regarding the last things.

There is a definite continuity between the present spiritual life and the future life. Believers are to seek for sanctification with the end in view that at the Lord's coming they may be presented holy and unblameable. The sanctified life is not to be conducted in a quietistic unproductive fashion, and it is destined for a share in the glorified state. The entire activity God directs towards believers aims at raising them unto likeness with Himself. ³ That is why this study is so important.

" If so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified with Him. "

2 - George B. Stevens, Pauline Theology, 344.

3 - Gerhardus Vos, " Structure of Pauline Theology, " Princeton Theological Review, v. 27, 22-23.

THE PAULINE TEACHING OF THE FUTURE LIFE

I. The State of Man after Death

Paul makes several references to death as a sleep. He says, " But some are fallen asleep." ¹ This is the Christian expression for dying, for death to the believer is a sleep for his body, a period of rest to be followed by a glorious day. The aorist here merely records the fact, for death converted into a sleep is the effect of Christ's resurrection.

This expression can have no other meaning. It cannot refer to a soul-sleep. Stevens states :

2

To understand this expression literally as designating an actual sleep of the soul, a state of unconsciousness between death and the resurrection, is clearly inconsistent with several passages where Paul presupposes an immediate entrance at death upon a conscious, joyous communion with the Lord (II Cor.5,8; Phil. 1, 23). The expression must be understood as an euphemism for death, and as denoting the blessed rest in fellowship with Jesus into which his followers enter at death.

Words and modes of speech of ancient origin were subject to attrition, being handled as word-signs. This expression had come to mean little more than to be placed in the recumbent position of the grave. Among believers a special sense of tenderness accompanied the act, reminiscent of the ordinary act of putting a child to bed with loving hands. The state of death is a state of consciousness capable of the sensation of comfort or discomfort according to the presence or absence of the body, such as results from

1. I Corinthians 15, 6.

2. George B. Stevens, Pauline Theology, 342-43.

a garment one is accustomed to wear, and which one misses
 when it is not on him.³

Paul uses a similar expression in his words, "many are
 weak and sickly among you, and many sleep."⁴ The reference
 is to those already dead. There is nothing in the context
 to intimate that these terms are used figuratively of moral
 infirmities and spiritual declension, but should be taken
 literally.⁵ Paul knew that the prevailing sickness and
 frequent deaths among the Christians at Corinth were a judg-
 ment on account of the irreverent manner in which they had
 celebrated the Lord's Supper.⁶

κοιμῶνται refers to physical death. The use of this
 particular verb is significant. Only those who are saved
 "are asleep" in the language of the New Testament, and his
 sleeping refers to their bodies, not to their souls. The
 judgment, thus, that Paul here refers to is at the worst
 an untimely physical death, not eternal damnation.⁷

In a conditional sentence, describing what would be
 the state of things if Christ did not rise from the dead,
 Paul says, "then they that fell asleep in Christ did perish."⁸
 To fall asleep in Christ is to die in faith in communion
 with Christ for salvation. Perdition, according to Scripture

3. Gerhardus Vos, "Structure of Pauline Theology,"
Princeton Theological Review, v. 27, 7-8.

4. I Corinthians 11, 30.

5. Charles Hodge, Commentary on First Corinthians, 233-34.

6. It should not be overlooked that there are some
 exegetes who give a different interpretation to I Cor. 11, 30,
 holding that the apostle is referring to spiritual feebleness
 and spiritual death. (Cf. Popular Commentary of the Bible, ad locum.)

7. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament,
 v. 6, 491.

8. I Corinthians 15, 18.

is not annihilation, but everlasting misery and sin. It is
 the loss of holiness and happiness forever. ⁹

In New Testament Greek ^{2'} *κατά* is not always post positive. It denotes a correspondence with the preceding: "accordingly." ¹⁰ *καί* adds this corresponding point to the one that precedes. When Paul wrote this letter close to Easter of the year 55, some of the Corinthians had already died, believing and trusting in Christ to the end. Thus the term is significant. Furthermore, the substantivized participle is qualitative, describing those persons by stating this one past act of theirs. Hence the aorist. The passive form is to be taken in the sense of the middle. We note, however, the term "in Christ," in union with Him, by true faith. To fall asleep in Christ is the beautiful Scriptural expression to designate the Christian's death; his body sinks into peaceful slumber, to be awakened presently by the risen Lord to a new and a glorious life in His presence.

The verb, "to perish," has in a gogmatic way been pressed to mean "to be annihilated," to be deprived of existence. This is done in the interest of the doctrine that for the wicked no hell or hell-fire exist. This is analogous to the treatment accorded the verb "to baptize" which is forced to mean only "to immerse." It is quite hopeless to overthrow the dictionaries and the established uses of language. In sacred language *ὁ ἀπολλόμενος* means perishing by losing salva-

9. Charles Hodge, Commentary on First Corinthians, 322.

10. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, v. 6, 669-70.

tion, in contradistinction to σωτῆρας, being saved by obtaining salvation. He who perishes is forever separated from God, heaven, eternal life. His body and his soul share the fate of Satan in the eternal torment of hell. No juggling of words will change that fact.

We now turn to I Thessalonians. Here Paul says, "but I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep." ¹¹ This statement is important, because this entire epistle is regarded as having an eschatological tone. Paul intended to furnish the Thessalonians with the instructions they needed, according to the reports Timothy had brought.

The verb here is the passive "those who fall asleep." It comes from κοιμάω, "to put to sleep," the passive of which is "to be put to sleep," i.e. to fall asleep. Thus the ¹² matter involved here does not merely refer to those already dead, but equally to those who would die before the end of the world. Evidently the Thessalonians had been grieving over the deaths of loved ones since Paul had visited them. Here he desires to show them that they should not sorrow as those who have no hope. Lenski suggests that the Thessalonians were constantly looking forward to Christ's appearing and the subsequent salvation of the believers. They did not seem to realize that Christ would bring with Him not only the living but also the dead believers.

11. I Thessalonians 4, 13.

12. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, v. 8, 330 ff.

It seems, however, that Eadie more correctly elucidates this matter.¹³ He points out that surely Paul had expounded to them that all believers would rise. This sorrow evidently was connected with doubts concerning the dead believers' relationship to the coming Kingdom. What they seem to fear is that those who fell asleep before the parousia might by their death be excluded in some way from the glories expected at the second advent. St. Paul clearly shows that they lose no advantage, but rise first.

It is wrong to attach any special significance to the term "sleep." It is purely comfort to those in mourning and gives hope of glory. Eadie quotes Chrysostom on this point, "He glances at some further mystery. What then is this? We who are alive and remain shall not prevent them that are asleep."¹⁴

Pagans also referred to death as a sleep. But the conception of its meaning is distinctly different in the forms of religious belief. To the pagans this sleep involved nothing more than his own conception of death. To the Christian this term includes all his knowledge of the saving facts which truly make death a sleep. Furthermore, it is not a mere pious homiletical idea that the word "to fall asleep" refers only to the resurrection awakening.

13. John Eadie, A Commentary of the Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians, 146-47.

14. Ibid.

There are those who maintain that this idea implies a shadowy existence in the realm of "sheol," and it cannot be called life until the reunion of the soul and the body. It is claimed that this intermediate state is designated by the Greek term *κοιμᾶσθαι*. This idea is rejected by Paul in Philippians 1, 23. Acts 7,59; Luke 23, 43. 44 as well as the Old Testament teaching clarify this matter. Thus the souls of the dead do not sleep. Luke 16, 22 ff. points out that the souls of Abraham and Lazarus are truly alive, though their bodies are dead. The description of Lazarus' lying on Abraham's bosom is parallel to John's resting on the bosom of Jesus as recorded in John 13, 25.

Eadie adds a further thought with regard to a proper understanding of this term, He states :

15

Sleep implies continued existence, rest, and awakening. The sleeper does not cease to be, though he sinks into a kind of unconsciousness; he is often thoughtful and active in dreams, but in this state of insensibility he enjoys repose, and then he wakens up to fresh activity.

There is another false conception of man's state after death which is built on the idea of the millennium. It is assumed by this view that the Thessalonians were disturbed about the possibility that those already dead would not enter the millennium, and Paul sought to correct this. There is then a further supposition that there will be two resurrections, one occurring at the beginning, the other

at the end of the millennium. Ordinarily, the millennialists teach that the first includes all believers so that the dead Thessalonian believers would after all enter the millennium. This brings about a difficulty in their doctrine. In order to correct it some of them say that the first resurrection applies to the martyrs only, not to those who die a natural death. So these Thessalonians would have to wait for the second resurrection, and this brought about their grieving and sorrow.¹⁶

However, this idea is immediately refuted by the subsequent clause, "as the rest, those who have no hope." Waiting for the second resurrection could not possibly mean those who have no hope. The Scriptures teach only one resurrection, as is shown in John 5,28-29 and Revelations 20,6.

Finally Paul says, "even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."¹⁷ The general understanding of this term as recorded for the previous verse applies here also. But there is a matter with regard to the interpretation of a particular term used in this passage which it would be well to consider. An interpretation is offered stating that God will bring with Him those who fell asleep through Jesus. Here the preposition *διὰ* does not mean union but mediation. Some suggest that this refers to the martyrs who fell asleep through Jesus, but even so the phrase

16. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, v.8, 334.

17. I Thessalonians 4, 14.15.

should not be "in Jesus" or "because of Jesus" (*ΣΙΝ* with the accusative). If this were true the thought would not apply, for the dead Thessalonians referred to were not martyrs. There is no evidence for such martyrdom in this entire epistle. ¹⁸

The idea of mediation is adequate. The power of Jesus' death and resurrection does not stop with death, but its efficacy will show itself in all its glory at the parousia. There the aorist passive participle refers to those who actually had fallen asleep. It is not like the present passive of vs. 13 which refers to those who may yet fall asleep. Those who fell asleep also refers to the bodies in the graves. These shall arise and be glorified, united with their souls, thus forever to be with Christ Who died and rose again for our salvation.

Throughout other passages it is clear the Paul teaches a continued consciousness of the soul after death. Paul tells us that as we live unto the Lord, so also we die unto Him. ¹⁹ In death we are the Lord's, and Christ is Lord both of the dead and the living. Paul wants to show the importance of death to the Christian. His blessed relationship does not stop there, but continues. *οὗ* means that when we so live and die to the Lord we are truly His. To be wholly His is our joy and blessedness, our purpose and intent. "We are the Lord's" is objective, the great fact that motivates us in life and in death. ²⁰ Christians are

18. R.C.H.Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, v. 8, 336-38.

19. Romans 14, 8.9.

20. R.C.H.Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, v. 5, 829.

happy here while living to the Lord, but they are still happier when they are dead to Him, when their souls have entered eternal life.

Christ's dominion over His people is not interrupted by their death. We may here compare Matthew 22,32. If Christ is Lord of His people, not only when living, but also when dead, it follows that they are to serve Him both in death and in life. The soul lives on after death.

Paul states that to die would be gain for him, for then his union with Christ will be more completely realized. The tense denotes not the act of dying, but the consequences of dying, the state after death.

The infinitive aorist here used marks the simple fact while ἐπιζῆν is a "continuative" present. The "gain" of which Paul speaks cannot be viewed simply as advantageous to the cause of Christ or the salvation of others. κέρδος is defined as σὺν Χριστῷ εἶναι in vs. 23 showing that this is true gain. It is implied that the Christian gains upon death the immediate life with Christ in Heaven.

The whole passage must be studied carefully. Paul means to tell us that it is all the same to him whether Christ be glorified through his life and activity, or by his death. Living consists in union with and devotion to Christ. His whole being and activities are Christ's. The context shows that χριστός besides the idea of union with Him, must

21. William Shedd, A Critical and Doctrinal Commentary upon the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans, 393.

22. Philippians 1, 21.

23. J. B. Lightfoot, St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians, 90.

24

also involve the idea of devotion to His service.

Paul further states that he has a desire to depart and
to be with Christ, which is far better. ²⁵ The preposition

εἰς points out the direction, whereas the genitive τοῦ
would represent death as the object of his desire. He is not
wearied of life but his thoughts pass beyond death as a trans-
ition, and fix upon that which is to follow. The departure
brings the Christian into this higher life of fellowship with
Christ. There is no thought of an intermediate state here. ²⁶
Thus the faithful are immediately in the presence of the Lord.

The meaning of the expression here τὸ ἀναλῦσαι is
"to break up, depart." The metaphor is drawn from breaking up
an encampment. On this point Lightfoot remarks :

27

The camp-life of the Israelites in the wilder-
ness, as commemorated by the annual Feast of Taber-
nacles, was a ready and appropriate symbol of man's
transitory life on earth : while the land of prom-
ise with its settled abodes, the land flowing with
milk and honey, typified the eternal inheritance of
the redeemed.

Paul further states that he is willing to be absent from
the body and present with the Lord, that while we are at home
in the body we are absent from the Lord. ²⁸ Συγκος refers
to "people" and thus he means "to be among one's own people,"
i.e. at home, and "to be away from one's people," a pilgrim

24. John Lange and Philip Schaff, "Philippians,"
A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, 24.

25. Philippians 1, 23.

26. John Lange and Philip Schaff, "Philippians,"
A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, 24-25.

27. J. B. Lightfoot, St. Paul's Epistle to the Phil-
ippians, 91.

28. II Corinthians 5, 6-8.

or a stranger in alien surroundings, i.e. "away from home." Paul shows us that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, away from His blessed presence.

Paul's expression "out of the Body" here refers to death.²⁹ Thus he shows that being out of the body means that our souls are present with the Lord. This is not merely a change of the body, but death. The words meaning to be present with the Lord have the same meaning as to be with Christ stated in Philippians 1, 23, for there also it was necessary that he die in order to be with Christ.

πρὸς τὸν κύριον is in relation to the Lord a pregnant expression and it signifies "to depart" to go to another country, in order to be with Christ. Clearly he teaches that immediately after death he would be with Christ in Heaven.³⁰

We should also note the prepositions used. In verse 6 it is "away from home *ἀπὸ* the Lord," and in verse 8 "at home *πρὸς* the Lord." The latter means then face to face. Thus it is a face to face relation that Paul has in mind. The other preposition means that we are still away from this. In verse 6 "in the body" means that we are away from the Lord, and in verse 8 "out of the body" means that we are face to face with the Lord.³¹

A passage in II Timothy must be looked at here. Paul

29. R.S.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, v. 6, 1043.

30. John Lange and Philip Schaff, "Philippians," A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, 84.

31. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, v. 6, 1043.

is assured that the Lord will preserve him unto His
 heavenly kingdom. ³² Lenski's interpretation of this
 passage lends added weight to the view that the soul goes
 immediately upon death to its assigned fate :

Here we have one of the clear passages of Scrip-
 ture regarding what happens when our souls leave ³³
 their bodies at death : we shall at once enter the
 heavenly kingdom, that is heaven, where the heav-
 enly King is enthroned. Phil. 1, 23 : " to be with
 Christ." There is no intermediate place for the
 soul, no Totenreich with two compartments, one ,
 "paradise," for the righteous, the other beneath
 it, an ante-chamber of hell for the wicked. Those
 who invent this fiction, darkening the true Chris-
 tian hope, quietly ignore all the passages which
 contradict such a notion. The body shall indeed
 sleep in the grave, but the soul shall be where
 Stephen's soul went at death, where Moses and
 Elijah are now (the latter even with his body) ,
 in the very presence of God and Christ. The souls
 of the damned at once go to hell. At the time of
 the resurrection the body will be raised from the
 dust, will be glorified like the soul, will be
 joined to it, thereafter also to partake of all
 the bliss of that heavenly kingdom. M

32. II Timothy 4, 18.

33. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, v. 8, 892.

II. The End of the World

In introducing the subject of Paul's teachings concerning the end of the world, we do well to take cognizance of some of the false notions regarding Paul's attitude. Stevens remarks :

1

In common with the whole church in the apostolic age, Paul regarded the return of Christ to raise the dead and judge the world as near at hand, and confidently hoped for its occurrence in "his own life time."

Stevens further argues that if this is not always true in the teachings of Paul, he must have changed his mind. In this connection let us remember :

- 1) Paul was writing for all Christians of all times, as the Holy Spirit directed Him.
- 2) The return of Christ is such an awesome and important fact that Christians are to live as if His return were imminent.
- 3) Paul clearly shows that there will intervene certain occurrences before this parousia (I Thess. 3, 6-12).
- 4) While Paul may have regarded the end near, as far as his personal convictions were concerned, he was aware that no human being has knowledge of the date of judgment day.

Another interpretation has been raised concerning

1. George Stevens, Pauline Theology, 344.

Paul and must be surveyed. We are told that he takes over the eschatology of the scribes. One difference is noted. Paul taught, the scribes differing, that the first participants in the Messianic Kingdom have the resurrection mode of existence. Elect of the last generation through the resurrection will participate.² He is said to take a middle position between the scribes and Jesus. He shares with the scribes their view of the course of events. With Jesus he shares the idea of the mode of being which those who participate in the Messianic Kingdom possess. However :

1) The conception of Jesus' eschatological view as being chiliastic is not in harmony with the facts.

2) Paul's order of events agrees with that of Jesus. The description of the judgment (Matthew 25) agrees with Paul's view.

3) Any possibility that Paul held chiliastic views is refuted throughout the exegesis of this paper.

4) The rabbinical writings purported to be the basis of Paul's view were written after Paul's time. Schweitzer himself confesses :

3

As the Apocalypses of Baruch and Ezra were not written until after the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, it might be questioned whether the eschatology which they offer was really that held by the scribes of an earlier period.

A false understanding had arisen among certain early

2. Albert Schweitzer, Pauline Epistles, 90-91.

3. Ibid., 89.

Christians regarding the resurrection. There were some who said that it was already past.⁴ Paul says that these people in respect of the truth have missed the way, meaning to lose or miss the good. The participle states how this happened : by declaring the resurrection already to have occurred,⁵ namely in baptism and conversion.

Undoubtedly, already in the apostle's time there were at Ephesus and other places false teachers who maintained that the Gospel taught nothing but a spiritual resurrection to a new spiritual life in fellowship with Christ. Evidently they found points of contact among the ~~Heretics~~ and the Sadducees.

The hope of the consummation of the world and a future resurrection is certainly an essential factor of Christian faith and Paul always stressed it. The resurrection here referred to can only be the resurrection of the dead bodies. Paul's teaching was based on the ground of Christ's own words as recorded in John 5, 28-29. At the end of the world will come simultaneously the resurrection of the dead. It is to be noted that the denial of a future resurrection leads to a perversion of the fact of the resurrection of Christ, which had already taken place, and shakes to the foundations the whole fabric of the Christian faith.

There are mistaken interpretations regarding this pass-

4. II Timothy 2, 18.

5. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 8, 812.

age. Some think of the later Gnostic teaching to this effect, but this did not concern Paul's time.⁶ Baur sought support for his theory of a later date for the composition of the epistles and maintained that this passage is a reference to the Marcion. However, this view is promoted without reason and the error undoubtedly referred to the errorists of Paul's day, to those who would spiritualize the resurrection. Thus Baur's view is superfluous.

Paul further shows that these babblers are overthrowing the faith of some. The expression used shows that the false teachers were not so very successful. But this passage serves as a warning to all Christians. As they approach the end of the world they are to beware of those who would make shipwreck of their faith and thus seduce them, but are to remain faithful to the word of God as they have been taught.

Paul points up another error and implies that forgery was already at work. A fictitious utterance and a letter had probably been circulated in the apostle's name teaching what he intimates in the last part of the⁷ verse, "that the day of Christ is at hand." The fifteenth verse of this same chapter places the genuine word and letter in contrast with the spurious, "hold the traditions which ye have been taught." Chapter 3, verse 17 describes a guard against a forged one,⁸ "the salutation of Paul with mine own hand."

6. John Lange and Philip Schaff, "II Timothy," A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, vol. 24, 99.

7. II Thessalonians 2, 2.

8. John Eadie, A Commentary of the Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians, 258 ff.

The ^ςωσ introduces the statement as so represented implying its falsehood. The "day of the Lord" is the day of the parousia. The true meaning of the verb ἐπέστηκεν is not "at hand" but "is present." Six cogent reasons are listed for the latter rendering :

1) In six other places of the New Testament this verb is rendered by "present," viz. Rom. 3,38; I Cor. 7,26; Gal.1,4; II Tim. 3, 1; Hebrews 9,9 ; I Cor. 3,22.

2) In twenty other places we have the rendering "at hand," but this is used with another Greek verb. It stands for ἤγγισεν nine times, ἔγγυς ten times, and ἐπέστηκεν once.

3) The Septuagint usage is similar as may be shown from Daniel 7,5; Esdras 5, 46; I Maccabees 12,44; II Maccabees 3,17; III Maccabees 1,16. The Hellenistic writers also offer evidence, as Josephus and Philo.

4) Classical usage shows this same thing (Xenophon, Aeschines, and Demosthenes).

5) The doctrine that the day of the Lord is at hand would not be treated as an error by the apostle. The New Testament teaches this, viz. Matt. 24; Romans 8, 12; Phil. 4,5 ; Hebrews 10, 25.

6) Such a doctrine would not throw the church into panic and confusion since the teaching of the imminence of our Lord's return was familiar to them. Even if this doctrine were new to them, they would have been filled with

joy, since the true Christian looks forward to Christ's return.

This translation further appears to be the oldest one. The Syriac has it : "Lo, the day of our Lord is come." The Syriac form of the Chaldee ܫܬܘܘܢܐ is "arrived" or "is come."

Chrysostom identified the error condemned here with that of those who said that the resurrection is already past. Henceforth, believers hoping for nothing great and splendid might faint under their sufferings.

The allegation made by these false teachers was not that the parousia of the Lord is present, but that the day of the Lord is present, taken in a wider sense. The apostle doesn't want us to think in terms of twenty-four hours or of a period of time, but rather in the sense of timelessness. Just what the false conception perceived the length of this period to be we do not know. However, it is evident that they expected the parousia at the end of this period.

The Lord Himself was detaining Paul in Corinth by a direct revelation (Acts 18, 9-11). The Lord could not have done this if the day were already present. In Paul's answer he says nothing about "the day" but confines his answer to the parousia alone.

While speaking of the believers' service to the true God Paul states, "and to wait for His Son from Heaven." ¹⁰

9. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 8, 414.

10. I Thessalonians 1, 10.

This statement clearly implies that Christ Who has gone to the right-hand of His Father will return from that glorious place in Heaven. He has gone there to prepare a place for His followers and has promised to return to receive them to Himself. The Christians are to await His return, and as true believers in Him they will quietly and patiently await it. Discussing eschatological problems Paul exhorted the Thessalonians to patience. Surely this is to be coupled with their awaiting His return. Casting aside the doctrines of false teachers, they will patiently await that return.

Paul states further that Christians are to be examples of the patience of Christ.¹¹ The AV translates this passage "patient waiting for Christ." Chrysostom also held this view. But it is untenable for the following reasons:¹²

1) ὑπομονή never bears this meaning. It is found thirty-four times and always has the sense of patience, patient endurance.

2) The word used to signify "to wait for Christ" is another compound, ἀναμμενεῖν.

However, we believe that this passage has a direct bearing upon the eschatological viewpoint of the Christian. Certainly great disorder and havoc followed in the wake of just such false ideas as that demonstrated above, that the day of the Lord was already at hand. Paul shows this by his constant warnings against idleness, habits of gossip,

11. II Thessalonians 3, 5.

12. John Eadie, A Commentary of the Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians, 307.

and aimless gadding about.

Lange-Schaff points out, " The Thessalonians particularly needed this admonition to humility in order to check their eschatological impatience, which showed itself practically in their ἀτάκτως περιπατεῖν and περιεργάζεσθαι (vs. 6, 11)."¹³

St. Paul's admonition is well put in view of the present conditions and applying to Christians of all times. They are to beware of all false teaching regarding the end of the world, but rather that "the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patience of Christ."

The Christians are hoppers. Their hope is not quiescent non-productive capital. Rather it contains energy and is a potential force. Quiet and intense energy of hoping appears in this that it is equal to transforming the protest against suffering into submissive patience.¹⁴ If we have turned out to be no more than Christ-hoppers and staked on that our whole present life, then we are of all men most miserable.¹⁵ The Christian looks beyond into another aeon.

St. Paul points out that the fashion of this world passes away.¹⁶ This is the true literal translation of the verb used. All about us there is evidence of decay. Everything germinates, ripens, and withers away.¹⁷ σχῆμα refers to the external form, the essence as it appears, the present state of things.

13. John Lange and Philip Schaff, " II Thessalonians," A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, vol. 24, 152.

14. Gerhardus Vos, "Structure of Pauline Theology," Princeton Theological Review, vol. 27, 433.

15. I Corinthians 15, 19.

16. I Corinthians 7, 31.

17. Henry Jacobs, " First Corinthians," The Lutheran Commentary, vol. 8, 20.

The figure is derived from the scenes of a theatre, in the
 actual process of change.¹⁸ So this world is ever moving
 onward to its final consummation, to its end. The final
 disruption of all things earthly will herald Christ's return.

Paul tells us that as we brought nothing into this world,
 neither are we able to bring a thing out.¹⁹ Paul shows the
 utter separation of things of this present world from the
 world to come. Nothing can be taken into the next world.
 The future life will not contain the things of this life,
 perishable, temporal, and passing things. There will be a
 distinct difference, a completely altered mode of existence.
 The end of the world will then mark the absolute termination
 of the things worldly and mundane. It will bring about a
 new order.

Paul speaks clearly and forcefully concerning the second
 advent of Christ. He says, "for what is our hope or joy or
 crown of rejoicing? is it not also you in the presence of
 our Lord Jesus as his coming?"²⁰ We are concerned here with
 the reference to the coming of the Lord Jesus. παρουσία²¹
 is presence, or a being present. Presence often implies
 advent or arrival as preceding or producing it, so that "advent"
 is a frequent meaning. The term is often employed to denote
 the appearance or coming of Christ, which are identical.

18. Charles Hodge, Commentary on First Corinthians, 130.

19. I Timothy 6, 7.

20. I Thessalonians 2, 19.

21. John Eadie, A Commentary on the Epistle of St. Paul
 to the Thessalonians, 98.

Most impressively Paul here refers to the presence of Christ in His glorified humanity, seated on His throne, and the work of redemption complete. His coming is the great hope of the church, which is cherished as the epoch when it shall be full in numbers and arrayed with perfection. The hope of the apostle was that as they stood in the Master's presence, they would not be ashamed, but find a crown of rejoicing in their final salvation.

Paul further says, "he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." ²² Here again Paul makes reference to the day of Jesus Christ, the day on which He will return to judge the world. Thus there is a limitation given over against the thought, "the day of your death." We should not infer that Paul expected the parousia during the lifetime of his Philippian converts, but the anticipation of its approach underlies the expression ²³ $\alpha\chi\rho\iota\varsigma$.

Paul says, "when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, ²⁴ then, too, shall ye with Him be revealed in glory." The verb $\varphi\alpha\upsilon\lambda\epsilon\rho\omega\sigma\eta\mu\acute{\iota}$ is opposed to the $\kappa\acute{\epsilon}\kappa\rho\upsilon\pi\tau\alpha\iota$ of the previous verse. There is concealment now, but then there shall be glorious disclosure. It is clearly a reference of reassurance for the returning appearance of Jesus Christ our Lord. Eadie says :

22. Philippians 1, 6.

23. J.B. Lightfoot, St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians, 82.

24. Colossians 3, 4.

25

To appear as our life implies our relation to Him as living ones and the unveiling of the Fountain shall allow the eye to discover the myriads of rivulets which issue out of it; or as our life is hid with Christ, so, when Christ comes out of His hiding place, our life shall accompany Him into openness and light ... Since He appears as our life, so to appear with Him is, on our part, to appear as partakers of His life. The source, progress, and maturity of our life shall then be fully apparent--how it originated, and how it was sustained--what course it took, and what obstacles it encountered--how it was still supported, and still maintained its hold --how it was felt in our consciousness, and yet had its hidden spring " with Christ in God-- and what shall be now its high crown, and its magnificent destiny--all shall be seen in the living and life-filling brightness of " Christ our life.

Paul tells us, " in regard to the coming of our Lord
 Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto Him. " ²⁶ Here he refers to the certainty of the personal and glorious coming of the Lord. Paul here is seeking to instruct the Thessalonians regarding this day, and the false teachings regarding it which we are to avoid. ²⁷ Chrysostom explains this by *περι* - in reference to that event in which we have so profound an interest, and which on account of this very interest you so sadly misunderstand. Again, this passage of Paul's gives us his reassurance regarding this day of our Lord's return.

Paul points out in a descriptive way the manner of Christ's return to this world. It will come very suddenly and this fact is brought out in his words, " the day of the Lord so

25. John Eadie, A Commentary on the Epistle of Paul to the Colossians, 214.

26. II Thessalonians 2, 1.

27. John Eadie, A Commentary of the Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians, 255.

cometh as a thief in the night."

No one knows the time of the Lord's reappearing, as the approach of a thief is indeed most secret. We note that ²⁹ *ἡμέρα* *κυρίου* has no article. It would be unnecessary, for there is only one such day. The omission of the article makes the expression a standard one, giving it the form of a proper noun. Furthermore, the writer knew the words of Jesus in this connection as recorded in Matthew 24,43 and Luke 12, 39 as Peter did also in II Peter 3, 10. The expression of "as" and "thus" demonstrate this comparison. The present tense used does not indicate the future but is the present tense found in doctrinal statements. It expresses absolute certainty.

The ancients thought that the reference to night indicated Christ's return at night. But this reference is suggested by the illustration of a thief. Some have suggested that this verse refers to the destruction of Jerusalem (Schoettgen, Hammond, Harduin).³⁰ However, this is disproved by the context, for verses 14-16 of the previous chapter indicate that the end of the world is spoken of. Others again have taken it in reference to each man's death or this and to the end of the world (Zwingli, Bloomfield, and Riggerbach). It is true, that each man may apply this to himself, for the day of death to each is the day of the Lord. However, again

28. I Thessalonians 5, 2-4.

29. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 8, 348.

30. John Eadie, A Commentary of the Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians, 175.

the context shows the true meaning of this expression.

Further, Paul speaks of this day as a " sudden destruction comes upon them, just as the travail upon the woman with child." There will be those who will scoff at this great truth crying, "peace and safety." The blind world remains blind to the returning of the Lord.

Like lightning the bolt will fall. The Greek places the adjective far forward and this gives a powerful emphasis. The subject is placed last and thus subject and predicate are reversed. It means either "all of a sudden" (adjective for adverb) or "sudden" (adjective) destruction comes upon them. Destruction is placed in opposition to salvation, and the point here is not annihilation of existence, but separation from the presence of Christ. Hence destruction may be eternal
31
as well as sudden.

The further illustration of the woman caught in travail is also used. It is used repeatedly in the Old Testament (Ex. 15, 14; Isaiah 13, 8; Jeremiah 13,21 ; Hosea 13, 13). This illustration has also been used in other ways. Jesus uses it to express birth pains ending in joy (John 16,21-22) and Isaiah (26, 17-18) used it in still another way. However, no illustration dare be used beyond the one point to elucidate that which it refers to. The point here is that a pregnant woman cannot predict her sudden attack of birthpains. It
32
comes suddenly and renders the victim helpless.

31. International Critical Commentary, vol. 37, 182.

32. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 8, 349.

There are points of analogy which have been suggested,
 33
 but they serve only to strain the true meaning :

1) Riger and Calvin suggest that, as the woman carries in herself the cause of her anguish, so unbelieving men bear their sin, the cause of their suffering, within themselves.

2) Pelt lays stress on the inevitableness of the travail. This mars the unity of the figure.

3) Chrysostom combines in his illustration the severity as well as the suddenness of the spasm. Theodoret states, " she knows that she is pregnant, but does not know the time of her travail, so we know that the Lord of all will come, but we have not indeed learned the time of His advent. " Eumenius adds, " that indeed she has signs of birth, but she knows not its hour or day. "

4) It is further held that the figure assumes the day to be near. Such a woman knows not the hour, but yet has knowledge of the period. This, however, contradicts the text. Further, it is not the pregnancy nor the birth, but the proverbially sudden pang which seizes such a woman that is here emphasized. This view was held by De Wette and approved by Koch and Lueneman.

5) Another idea foreign to the figure in its present tense is brought out by Olshausen. A higher life is to be produced in humanity by the will of God through the ordinance of these pangs. Bisping as quoted by Eadie

33. John Eadie, A Commentary on the Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians, 179.

further adds, " the end of all things is the time of the birth-woe which is followed by the new birth of humanity ' in grossen Gange," and of all nature (Rom. 3, 22)."³⁴

However, the result or product of the birth is not here presented, but it is the sudden rush of destruction upon those who are lulled in a false and carnal security. The advent is most unexpected for those who are not prepared for it or looking for it. This is the apostle's statement as pointed by the double figure. Jesus Himself showed this awful truth when He compared the coming of the Son of Man to the sudden destruction that was wrought in the days of Noah and in the days of Lot.

Finally, Paul says they shall in no wise escape. added to $\mu\eta$ expresses the negation. To all those who have refused salvation the awful epithet shall climax their tragic lives, " too late ! "

A further reference to the manner of Christ's return is indicated in Paul's words, " you are not in darkness, so that that day will catch you as a thief." The verb $\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\lambda\acute{\alpha}\beta\eta$ has from $\kappa\alpha\tau\acute{\alpha}$ an intensified meaning, that of eager or sudden seizure. It is interesting to note that $\eta\mu\acute{\epsilon}\rho\alpha$ is now used in contrast to $\sigma\kappa\acute{o}\tau\omicron\varsigma$. It is that period of light which breaks in upon the soul. Thus it is no longer $\acute{\epsilon}\nu\ \sigma\kappa\acute{o}\tau\omicron\iota$. This day of light, this day-spring from on

34. Ibid., 179.

high should not surprise the believers as a thief would steal suddenly upon them in darkness. But they are children of light and are prepared for the fuller light of day.³⁵

In some cases we have the reading $\kappa\lambda\epsilon\pi\tau\alpha\varsigma$ instead of $\kappa\lambda\epsilon\pi\tau\eta\varsigma$. AB and the Coptic version support this and it is favored by Grotius, De Wette, and Ewald. Even though it is the more difficult reading it cannot be sustained, for it needs the authority of manuscripts, versions, and fathers. However, if the reading $\kappa\lambda\epsilon\pi\tau\alpha\varsigma$ were adopted we could have the meaning that the day bursting upon the thief surprises him unawares when not expecting the dawn to be at hand. However, believers are not in that predicament. They are not like thieves who carry on their nefarious work at night.

Paul states, " in order to comfort your hearts unblameable in holiness before God and our Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints."³⁶ A special problem is raised here. Who are included under the $\sigma\iota\ \delta\gamma\iota\omicron\iota$ with whom or in whose company the Lord comes? The following³⁷ answers have been given :

- 1) Some restrict it to mean the saints or earlier believers, sanctified and perfected (Flatt, Olshausen, and Hofmann). The word is often employed in the narrower sense.
- 2) Others refer it to the holy angels (Musculus, Benson, De Wette, Olshausen, Macknight, Bisping, and Lueneman). However, $\sigma\iota\ \delta\gamma\iota\omicron\iota$ never by itself in the New Testament signifies

35. John Eadie, A Commentary of the Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians, 181.

36. I Thessalonians 3, 13.

37. John Eadie, A Commentary of the Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians, 120.

angels. This word is generally applied to human believers, and does not denote angels exclusively.

3) It signifies both holy men and holy angels. Arguments supporting this viewpoint show that Scripture clearly teaches the presence of both saints and angels. A term is used which can comprehend both according to the usage of Hebrew and the Septuagint (Deut. 33,23; Psalm 89, 7; Daniel 4,10; 7,13; Zechariah 14, 5). The addition of $\pi\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\omega\nu$ favors this.

4) Both angels and saints are called His. "His" refers to Jesus and not to $\text{ὁ } \alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\tau\omicron\varsigma$ (Bengel, Baumgarten-Crusius, Riggenbach, Alford, Ellicott).

Eadie holds to the third view. He admits that Jesus cannot come with all His saints because some will still be living on earth. But he counters by averring that both the dead and living will together meet the Lord in the air.

It seems that Lenski offers the most satisfactory solution.³⁸ Lenski maintains that in the New Testament this expression is the standard designation for the godly, and those who try to refer it to angels have no support in the New Testament. He points out that when this $\mu\epsilon\tau\acute{\alpha}$ phrase is construed with the preceding $\epsilon\upsilon$ phrase, Paul says nothing about a coming of either saints or angels in company with Christ. He points out that the parousia is the Lord's presence, not necessarily His coming.

38. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 8, 307.

Paul tells us, " the Lord himself, in connection with a command, in connection with an archangel's voice and in connection with God's trumpet, will descend from heaven."³⁹ The term $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\varsigma$ places all attention on Christ in this one great, grand act and does not serve to contrast. "Lord" is to be taken in its full soteriological sense, the Lord Who has bought us and made us His own (John 12,26; 14,3; 17,24). The $\kappa\alpha\iota$ phrases make for emphasis. They show the greatness of the Lord's descent from heaven and what will happen to the dead at the $\mu\alpha\rho\upsilon\sigma\iota\alpha$.⁴⁰

The Lord shall descend $\epsilon\upsilon\ \kappa\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\sigma\mu\alpha\tau\iota$, " in connection with an order. " The word designates a loud military command, the shout of a charioteer to his horses, of a hunter to his hounds, of a ship master to the rowers . It is the Lord's command to the dead to arise. The next two phrases are connected with $\kappa\alpha\iota$. John 5,28 shows that this command comes through the Lord's own voice, and it is not issued to the archangel to blow the grand signal with God's trumpet. Both the archangel's voice and God's trumpet shall sound forth in connection with the Lord's command. Several suggestions have been made regarding the meaning of this reference :⁴¹

1) Sometimes it is said that there are seven archangels, " the seven lamps" burning before the throne, and

39. I Thessalonians 4, 16 a.

40. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 8, 340.

41. John Eadie, A Commentary on the Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians, 165.

sometimes ten, and in the Jewish writing four are especially named corresponding to the "thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers." The names of these have been given thus: Michael and his company stand on the right hand of the throne, and Gabriel similarly on the left, Uriel in front, and Raphael behind, the Shechinah being in the center (Tobit 15, 15; Book of Enoch). However, these speculations prove nothing. Gabriel is mentioned in Luke 1, 19, but it is not stated that he is an archangel. Michael is the only one mentioned as such, and it appears acceptable to take this statement as referring to him.

2) Some have referred it to the Lord Jesus (Ambrosiaster, Olshausen). This idea would destroy the symmetry of the verse, and give to the Savior first a distinctive and then a unique and unfamiliar title. It is held further that to mention a creature next in order would be startling. However, nowhere else is Christ mentioned as an archangel.

Some even say that the Holy Ghost is here meant. The idea probably originated in the effort to find the Trinity in this verse, the Father in the last word "trumpet of God," the Son being the Lord Himself, and the Holy Ghost as the archangel. However, such an assumption is mere speculation and is absolutely baseless.

Scripture mentions only one archangel, Michael (Jude 9, Revelation 12, 7). Thus to take this in reference to Gabriel is incorrect. Then the greatest of the angels shall sound

the trumpet. $\varphi\omega\nu\eta$ is not a second command uttered by the archangel, but the sound this angel sends through God's trumpet. Here $\kappa\alpha\iota$ connects $\varphi\omega\nu\eta$ and $\sigma\acute{\alpha}\lambda\pi\iota\gamma\epsilon$. This is also God's trumpet and its blast comes with God's power, penetrating to all the dead.

Paul intends this record for our hope and comfort, not for speculation. We cannot truly comprehend this great day. Then time and space will cease. We can only wait in anticipation.

Paul further describes the second coming of the Lord Jesus in the words, "with the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven in company with his power of angels in flaming fire." ⁴² The Lord Jesus will then be revealed visibly in

all His glory, majesty, and power so that every eye shall see Him, also they that pierced Him. ⁴³ Paul makes it plain

by the term "from heaven" that it will be a visible descent in glory. ⁴⁴ These words $\acute{\alpha}\pi' \omicron\upsilon\rho\alpha\nu\omicron\upsilon$ indicate the locality from whence He comes. He is now in Heaven at the right hand of God and His visible return shall be from that place.

The expression $\mu\epsilon\tau' \acute{\alpha}\gamma\gamma\epsilon\lambda\omega\nu \delta\upsilon\nu\acute{\alpha}\mu\epsilon\omega\varsigma \alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon$ means "in company with the angels of His power." The genitive $\delta\upsilon\nu\acute{\alpha}\mu\epsilon\omega\varsigma$ is not of quality but of possession. The power is His, not theirs. Christ's power will be visibly

42. II Thessalonians 1, 7-8 a.

43. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 8, 395.

44. John Eadie, A Commentary on the Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians, 239.

displayed in the angels at His second coming.

The following points regarding the translation are pertinent :

1) The margin of the AV presents the right translation, but the version itself has "mighty angels." Theophylact explains by using the following order : *δυναμεις γὰρ ἄγγελοι τούτεστι δυναται*. But *αὐτοῦ* isto be construed with *δυναμεις* and not with *ἄγγελων* .

2) The Syriac translation translates it as " with the power of his angels." This view has been followed by Dzusius, Michaelis, Koppe, and Hofmann. For this purpose they attach *αὐτοῦ* to the following *διδόντος - δύναμις* . However , *δύναμις* never has this meaning in the New Testament. The order of the words for this sense would have to be *μετὰ δυναμεις ἄγγελων αὐτοῦ*.

Paul further states that the Lord will be revealed in flaming fire. He is revealed in a fire of flame, not a dull or veiled glow, but a radiance, bright, pure, and flashing, burning with intense brilliance. This is a familiar symbol of the divine presence and glory as is illustrated by the cloud which guided Israel and the pillar of fire by night.

Paul states, " then the end, when he shall deliver the Kingdom to the God and Father, when he shall have abolished
45
all rule and all authority and power." It has been maintained that this passage shows that Paul conceives of

the Kingdom not as peaceful blessedness, but as a struggle with the angelic powers. One after another of these powers will be overcome by Christ and His people until death shall be robbed of its power. With the overcoming of death, it is said, the Messianic Kingdom comes to an end. ⁴⁶ Similarities between this and the Apocalypse of Baruch are pointed to. Thus chiliastic conclusions are drawn from the passage. But the millennium is not referred to here. The following exegesis will show the proper interpretation of this passage.

Two tremendous acts here recorded constitute the end. Paul says that the parousia with the resurrection ushers in the end, namely the abolition of all hostile powers and the transfer of the Kingdom to God. This kingdom denotes the rule of Christ, as He rules with His grace and gifts in Word and Sacrament throughout the church. He received this rule from the Father and at the end when all the work of grace is finished according to the Father's will, then Christ will return this rule and authority with all that it has accomplished to the Father's hands. The one Greek article, "the God and Father," combines the two nouns as designations for one and the same person. Christ, however, will not fail to rule, even as the Father does not fail to rule now. ⁴⁷

The verb *καταρτισθήσεται* is the aorist subjunctive. The

46. Albert Schweitzer, Pauline Epistles, 66-67.

47. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 6, 388 ff.

addition of *κατα* lends to the verb a perfective force, " shall have put down utterly. " The aorist tense itself has similar force, " shall have completed" this act .

This tense in the second clause conveys the thought that the putting down of all opposition precedes the action of transferring the kingdom which was mentioned in the first clause and which is expressed by the present subjunctive. Christ shall transfer the kingdom when He shall have utterly abolished all opposition.

Paul goes on to say, " for he must reign until he shall have put all his enemies under his feet." Here we learn that a divine necessity lies in back of all of this. Christ's rule as king must extend that far. The aorist subjunctive *κατα* denotes completeness, " shall have put." " All his enemies " defines who is meant by " all rule " in verse 24. " Under his feet " brings out the full force of " shall have abolished " of verse 24.

Paul says further, " as a last enemy the death is abolished. " Death being personified is here regarded as an independent enemy. This abolition is not a separate act, one following resurrection, but death shall be gone when the bodies of the godly are raised. This means that what is called death shall no longer exist. Death being dependent on Satan and sin, and these being gone, so death the last enemy too shall be destroyed.

The verb *καταργεῖται* is the dramatic or prophetic

present. This tense startles and arrests, it affirms and does not merely predict. The abolition of the enemy, death, shall thus be last and mark the final part of the abolition which leaves no enemy on the scene.

Paul states, " for, all things he did put under his feet." By contrast man had lost his dominion and was in subjection. By becoming one of us Christ gained the supremacy over all things. Christ has all things placed under his feet for our sakes in order that He might restore us to our original and high position. Death especially exhibits man's loss of dominion and this enemy especially is conquered.

Paul adds, " but when he said, that all things have been put in subjection, it is evident that this is with the exception of him who did subject unto him all things." ⁴⁸ Paul has been quoting Psalm 8,6, and here he launches into an exegetical statement explaining just how far "all things" extend. It is God who speaks and Paul even restates the words. For this Paul uses the perfect. In the previous statement the aorist states the past fact while the perfect in the restatement conveys the thought that this situation continues in effect indefinitely.

Another interpretation presents this statement of Paul's by the use of a parenthesis, " but when he (Christ) shall have said (to God at the last day) : ' all things are put in subjection ! ' (evidently excepting him that did subject all

48. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 6, 696.

things unto him) ; when I say all things have been subjected unto him, then shall the Son also himself, etc." In this way Christ is pictured as rendering His final report to the Father stating the completion of His work. This arrangement seeks to satisfy the aorist tense and the perfect by using the parentheses, and by making the second $\overset{c/}{\sigma\tau\alpha\nu}$ clause resume the first $\overset{c/}{\sigma\tau\alpha\nu}$.⁴⁹

This reading is rejected for the following reasons :

1) The subject at the beginning is changed from God to Christ.

2) In this cumbersome sentence the fact that all things are subjected to Christ is repeated three times. This is unwarranted.

3) The aorist form is without linguistic necessity pressed to mean " when he shall have said. "

4) The perfect form is taken as a line of action reaching a point of termination. Its usual use is that of a point of beginning extending in a line of effect.

5) $\delta\eta\lambda\omicron\nu$ $\overset{c/}{\sigma\tau\iota}$ is taken to mean "evidently." This is an unusual meaning.

Finally Paul says, " now when all things have been subjected to him, then also the Son himself shall subject himself to him that did subject all things to him,-- in order that God may be all in all. "

49. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 6, 697.

Regarding Christ's subjecting Himself to the Father, some maintain this to be a proof of the subordination of the Son to the Father. However, true exegesis solves this problem. First of all, the Father has subjected all things to Christ. It is the incarnate Christ Who has all things made subject to Him. The incarnate Son delivers the Kingdom to His Father at the end, lays the completed work before Him, and by this act subjects Himself to the Father.

Hodge points out that the subjection of the Son to the Father here means precisely what is there meant by His delivering up the Kingdom to God even the Father. The thing done, and the person who does it, are the same. The subjection here spoken of is not to be predicated of the eternal Logos, the second Person of the Trinity anymore than the Kingdom spoken of in verse 24 is the dominion which belongs essentially to Christ as God. Finally Hodge says :

51

As there the word Christ designates the Theanthropos, so does the word Son here designate, not the Logos as such, but the Logos as incarnate, and as the delivery of the kingdom or royal authority over the universe committed to Christ after His resurrection, is consistent at once with His continued dominion as God over all creatures, and with His continued headship over His people; so is the subjection here spoken of consistent with His eternal equality with the Father.

Paul's closing statement shows that the Triune God in unity will rule with all His glory throughout eternity.

50. Charles Hodge, Commentary on the Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians, 333.

51. Ibid.

III. The Resurrection of the Dead

The resurrection of Christ together with the Atonement is the focal-point of Christian faith. It is the earnest seal of His victory and the glorious portent of things to come.

Charles Feinberg says :

1

The resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ means much to every believer...., for it is his guarantee.. that he also will some day be raised from the dead... Paul, proceeding upon the basis of the resurrection of Christ and its apparent implications for those who are in Him, goes on to show that the resurrection of the believer is certain and secure.

Despite their various aberrations from clear Scriptural dogma modern theologians appear to be approaching a proper evaluation of the resurrection of Christ. Hoyle says regarding Barthianism :

2

From this point of view we may understand Barth's vehement and frequent assertions in the "Rom.", that the Resurrection is the Crisis of all history, the turning-point of this age and the entrance of the "coming age."

3

Paul assures us that God raised His Son from the dead. His object is to give the leading events regarding the death, burial, and subsequent resurrection of Christ. The vital points he raises and the good conclusive proof of Christ's Messiahship is His resurrection. Though men crucified Him

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1. Charles Feinberg, "Pauline Theology," Bibliotheca Sacra, vol. 95 (1938), 307-08.
 2. R. Birch Hoyle, The Teaching of Karl Barth, 218.
 3. Acts 13, 30.

and sealed the sepulchre to keep Him there God raised Him
 from among the dead.⁴

Paul further clearly states that God has given assur-
 ance unto all men, in that he hath raised Him from the dead.⁵
 Here he reiterates the claim to Christ's resurrection. It
 confirms the truth of all his claims.⁶ He makes it very
 plain that here is a close and blessed relationship between
 the Father and the Son by saying that God raised Christ
 from the dead. Jacobus states :

7

The resurrection of Christ is the great mira-
 culous fact which declared Him to be the Son of God
 with power, (Rom. 1,4) and attested His claim to be
 the judge of the world. His resurrection also proved
 that all men would be raised; and this would be the
 judgment at His hands.

Furthermore, " which he wrought in Christ, when he
 raised him from the dead."⁸ This shows the adequate mea-
 sure of the exceeding greatness of God's power. By His
 resurrection and subsequent ascension Christ was declared
 to be the Son of God with power.⁹ This exaltation of Christ
 was the sign and pledge of the triumph of the Christian.
 Clearly and distinctly Paul makes plain the doctrine of the
 resurrection. He uses the expression, *ἐγείρασ*. This
 is the uniform teaching of the apostles, as will be noted

4. Melancthon Jacobus, Notes on the Acts of the Apostles,
 244.

5. Acts 17, 31.

6. Horatio Hackett, A Commentary on the Acts of the
 Apostles, 224.

7. Melancthon Jacobus, Notes on the Acts of the
 Apostles, 297.

8. Ephesians 1, 20.

9. Paul E. Kretzmann, Popular Commentary of the Bible,
 vol. 4, 265.

10

also in I Peter 1, 21. The particular act of raising Christ was the work of the Father. He raised Him from the dead. By this act God demonstrated His acceptance of the Atonement. This in no way belies the fact that Jesus, as the Second Person of the Trinity, would well enough have resurrected Himself.

Paul goes on to show that Jesus should be the first that should rise from the dead. ¹¹ The fact that Jesus was the first to rise from the dead is here emphasized. Christ rose and reigns as the representative of His people. Jesus is also called the first-born from the dead (Col.1,18; Rev. 1, 5). He was the first who was raised from the dead to immortal life (Ps. 16,10.22.32.; Is. 53, 10). Lazarus and others were raised miraculously, and many bodies of the saints that slept arose and came out of their graves after His resurrection. Jacobus says :

12

Hence He was the first fruits of the risen dead--as the first ripe stalks of the grain were presented at the Passover as a pledge and earnest of the great harvesting that was to follow.

Paul says further, " He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies." ¹³ The aorist participle indicates the historical fact. It is to be noted that the official name " Christ " is now coupled with

10. Brooke Foss Westcott, St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, 26.

11. Acts 26, 23.

12. Melancthon Jacobus, Notes on the Acts of the Apostles, 398.

13. Romans 8, 11.

the personal name "Jesus," for as the one who had completed his great redemptive mission God raised Him up. This Christ, with both of his indissolubly united natures, now dwells in us. Likewise we shall be quickened, our bodies shall be discarded. These mortal bodies shall be made alive by Him who raised up Christ's body. Jesus assures the believer, "and I will raise Him up at the last day" (John 6, 39.40. 44, 45).

In a rather lengthy discussion Paul brings out the great truths of the relationship of Christ's resurrection to our own.¹⁴ He does this in the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians. Paul alludes to the fact that if Christ is risen then there must be a resurrection of our bodies too.¹⁵ The actual is surely possible. The objection evidently had been raised that the reunion of soul and body was a second imprisonment. Paul goes on to show that if these objectors proved anything they proved what no Christian could admit, that Christ did not rise from the dead. Furthermore, preaching is useless without Christ's resurrection. If the apostles preached a risen and living Savior, and made His power to save depend on the fact of His resurrection, then their whole preaching was false and worthless if Christ were still in the grave. The dead cannot save the living.

Higher criticism severely attacks this particular

14. I Corinthians 15, 12-23.

15. Charles Hodge, Commentary on First Corinthians, 318 ff.

statement of Paul's. This is evident from arguments advanced by Rylands. He states that the words of I Cor. 15,12 are an hypothesis with which a writer would open an entirely new subject. In verses 1-11 we have convincing evidence for eye-witness reports. If Paul knew these verses he would not have given an abstract, hypothetical argument. Such procedure is "incredible" if Paul wrote verses 1-11 is the conclusion drawn. Rylands states :

16

He first gives evidence of a particular case of resurrection from the dead--that of Christ; then he opens a general argument on the subject as if nothing had been previously said upon it; and supports his argument by a reference to the same particular case of such a nature as to imply ignorance of the previous reference. The writer of 12 and the following verses can neither have written verses 1-11 himself nor had them before him when he wrote.

This is not deductive reasoning. It is reasoning based on assumption--the assumption that Paul is not the author of verses 1-11. Furthermore, Rylands assumes that Christ's resurrection is a "legend."¹⁷ However, the argument of Paul is clear-cut, logical, and impressive. In the opening verses of this chapter Paul proves the resurrection of Christ by evidence. In verse 12 he merely takes the conclusion drawn as the basis for a further argument, viz. that the dead will rise. Why Paul could not have reasoned thus is incredible indeed ! To the believing Christian this presents no problem.

16. L. Gordon Rylands, A Critical Analysis of the Four Chief Pauline Epistles, 186-87.

17. Ibid., 184.

Paul further assumes that to deny that the dead rise is to deny that Christ has risen. Consequently the apostles would be false witnesses. A man cannot admit Christ's resurrection and yet deny a general resurrection, because the thing denied was that the dead could rise. So the argument follows: if the dead cannot rise, then Christ did not rise, for Christ was dead. He further reasserts the inseparable connection between these two events. If the thing is impossible then it has never happened.

There is another consequence of the denial of Christ's resurrection. In verse 14 it was said that if Christ did not rise your faith is *κενύ*, empty. Here it is said to be *ματαιά*, fruitless. As Christ's resurrection is necessary to our justification (Romans 4, 25), if he did not rise, we are not justified. To deny the truth of the resurrection then is to deny atonement and pardon, and hence justification.

A fourth disastrous consequence is that all the dead in Christ would thus be lost. Paul states, "they perished." If Christ did not rise for the justification of those who died in Him, they found no advocate at the bar of God's justice. They would have incurred the fate of those who perish in their sins.

In verse 19 Paul states that if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. Not

only the future, but also the present is lost to us, if Christ is not risen. The expression ¹⁸ *μόνον*, only, has the following three explanations :

1) Although standing at the end of a clause, it may be connected with the words, " in this life." If all the good we expect from Christ is to be had in this life only, then we are most miserable, being subject to all manner of persecutions and sufferings, while non-believers are at their ease.

2) It is connected with the word " Christ." This is a natural construction, for the words, "in Christ only," stand together. The sense is : if we have set our hopes in Christ and He fails us, we are of all men most miserable. However, this supposes the important clause, "if he fails us," to be omitted. It also leaves the words, " in this life," without importance.

3) Recent editors, following the older manuscripts, place "in Christ" before the verb and make "only" qualify the whole clause. This would mean that if we have only hoped in Christ, and there is to be no fulfilling of our hopes, we are more miserable than others. Or that if we are only such (nothing more than such) as in life, and not in death, have hope in Christ, complete misery is ours.

The first explanation appears to be the best. The opposition between the dead in verse 18 and the living in

18. Charles Hodge, Commentary on First Corinthians, 322.

this verse indicates this. The Greek is : ἡλπικότες ἐσμέν, which expresses not what we do, but what we are. We are hopers. Christians surely are not more miserable than other men, but if you take Christ away from Christians you take everything. He is the source of their present as well as future happiness. Without Him they are yet in their sins, alienated from God, without hope, and yet subject to all the particular trials characteristic of the Christian life, which especially in the days of persecution were most severe.

Paul tells us, " knowing, that He which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present (us) with you." ¹⁹ Paul thus assures us that the resurrection of believers is as certain as the resurrection of Christ, not simply due to a promise of God, but because of our glorious union with Christ. We are partakers of Christ's life. As He lives, so do we also live. There is a contrast between death in us and life in you (vs.12) . Thus we trust that we too shall share in that Risen Life of Christ. ²⁰

Some have held the view that this passage is to be taken figuratively, that it is a mere deliverance from dangers. This view is rejected, because :

1) If a figurative sense is taken, the context or nature of the passage must justify and demand it. This is not the case here. Everything favors a literal interpretation.

19. II Corinthians 4, 14.

20. Robertson Nicoll, Expositor's Greek Testament, vol. 4, 63.

2) The figurative view would do violence to the passage and to the analogy of Scripture. "To present us with you" cannot be made to mean "to exhibit us with you as rescued from danger."

3) This interpretation assumes that Paul expected to survive the second coming of Christ and therefore could not expect to be raised from the dead. This is false. In this particular connection Paul says that he longs to be absent from the body and present with the Lord.

Again, it is said that Paul maintains that he will be raised up with Christ, and this cannot be taken as referring to a literal resurrection. Even though this reading be accepted, to be raised with Christ does not mean to be raised contemporaneously with Him but in virtue of our union with Him.²¹

Again Paul says, "for if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection."²² The verb $\varphi\sigma\omega$ means both to bear and to grow. In this term is expressed the idea of intimate union, and that is the idea which the word here is intended to express. The reference here emphasizes the certainty of sequence, or causal connection. If the one thing happens, the other shall certainly follow.

Both from what precedes and what follows this verse, it

21. Charles Hodge, Exposition of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, 196.

22. Romans 6,5.

is clear that the reference here is to a spiritual rising from the dead. The discussion relates to sanctification, to the necessary connection between the death of Christ atoning for our sins and the sanctified lives of His followers. However, reference to the future resurrection of the body is not to be excluded. In Romans 8, 11 Paul shows that the quickening of our mortal bodies is a necessary consequence of our union with Christ. Baptized into His death, conformed to Him in a holy life here, and gloriously united with Him in an eternal life by the resurrection from the dead. As He was, so too then shall we be.

Paul further says, " that I may know Him and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." ²³ Paul's use of the expression τοῦ γινώσκειν is not merely to know, but rather to recognize, feel, appropriate. Paul wants to recognize and feel the power of Christ's resurrection as the assurance of immortality. Paul then goes on to express his hope, here stated rather modestly, that he will attain unto the resurrection of the dead. This is the final resurrection of the righteous to a new and glorified life. This meaning is supported both by the context and the expression here used. It is interesting to note that

23. Philippians 3, 11.

the term used in reference to the general resurrection of all is ἡ ἀνάστασις τῶν νεκρῶν. The expression used of the resurrection of Christ and those who rise with Him is generally ἀνάστασις ἐκ νεκρῶν. The expression here is further intensified by the substitution of ἐξ-ἀνάστασις for ἀνάστασις. This word does not occur elsewhere in the New Testament. ²⁴

Paul tells us that we are not to sorrow as those who have no hope. If we believe that Jesus died and rose again even so those who sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. ²⁵ Then he goes on to refer to those who are alive and remain unto the coming of our Lord.

There should be no grief at the loss of a loved one, for they who sleep have not ceased to be, and they will appear with Christ. Eadie says :

26

The death and resurrection of Christ are primary objects of belief, the one event being the complement of the other, the resurrection proving that the purpose of the death had been accomplished, that the self-oblation had been accepted, that salvation had been provided in fulness and freeness, and that mortality had been conquered. The two events are often connected in the New Testament (Romans vi). To die is to rise again. They die, and they certainly shall rise again from their connection with Him--the organic union of the members with the Head.

We note, that the apostle does not merely say εἶπερ ἔστι here, but wishes to say more than that. He associates their

24. J.B.Lightfoot, St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians, 148.

25. I Thessalonians 4, 13-15.

26. John Eadie, A Commentary of the Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians, 149.

27

resurrection with the second coming of Christ. It is here implied that the believers are already raised (vs. 16) and are then brought with Christ. Thus the believers are brought in Christ's train at His appearance and coming. The apostle here is not teaching about Christ's coming, and its mode, but rather of the departed and their coming again with Christ.

Throughout his writings Paul gives us assurance of our resurrection. Before the Great Council, noting the presence of the Sadducees, Paul emphasizes the fact that concerning the great question of the resurrection he is called into the council. ²⁸ κρινομαι may be translated "I am being judged." This is not a court session or trial. The charges of the preceding day had been that Paul was introducing a new religion. Now he takes opportunity to show that he merely teaches according to their Old Testament faith, their heritage, the promise of a resurrection to their fathers, the promise that Abraham believed in. It is possible that his reason for crying out was a clash that arose between ²⁹ the Sadducees and Pharisees.

Does Paul here refer to a future resurrection or Christ's resurrection? Certainly both are inseparably bound together and a reference to one involves the verity of the other. If each of the terms used here is taken separately then the

27. John Eadie, A Commentary of the Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians, 153.

28. Acts 23, 6.

29. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 4, 932.

reference may be regarded as referring to Jesus' resurrection.

But if they are inseparably connected to $\epsilon\lambda\pi\iota\varsigma$, the future resurrection is meant. However, the resurrection of Jesus was to the apostle the primary matter of importance.

In this connection Jacobus says :

It may read : " concerning , or for the sake of a hope, and (even) a resurrection of the dead." The idea is that the great point at issue in his trial was a hope, as involved in the doctrine of the resurrection, a hope which is the Christian hope. This doctrine is vital in the Christian system for iff Christ be not risen, " our faith is vain"--there is no salvation wrought out and attested by this seal of His resurrection; and then besides, " we are yet in our sins"--there is no remission by the blood-shedding of Christ, as we hope (I Cor. 15, 12).

When Paul stood before Felix he pointed out that it was concerning the resurrection of the dead that he was being tried. Here Paul points out that his statement on the resurrection was the only thing his accusers had to bring up, certainly the last thing a prosecutor of the Jews could call a crime, for this would involve many Jews. Further, Paul was thus substantiating the statement of the chiliarch's letter, that the trouble was concerning contentions about their religious law. However, Jacobus points out a yet more strategic and convincing point to Paul's entire statement :

30. John Lange and Philip Schaff, A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, vol. 20, 409.

31. Melancthon Jacobus, Notes on the Acts of the Apostles, 359.

32. Acts 24, 21.

33. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 4, 972.

34

Here again he repeats before the Jewish leaders his profession of that vital doctrine which was illustrated in the case of the Messiah, a foundation fact of Christianity, at the same time proving Christ's Messiahship, and sealing Christianity as Divine, so that the whole Christian system was involved in this doctrine of the resurrection.

St. Paul points out that the prophets, the inspired writers of the Old Testament allowed that there is a resurrection of the dead both of the just and the unjust. ³⁵ Thus Paul gives assurance that the hope of the resurrection is established as a doctrine, the glory of which did not arise for the first time in the New Testament.

Lange-Schaff's Commentary states :

36

This golden thread of eternal life, on the contrary, through the whole of the New Testament. The Creator, who animated the dust of the ground with His breath--the covenantal God, who made an everlasting covenant (Gen. 17,7) with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, is not a God of the dead, but of the living... It is, however, true, that in the case of Paul, this hope first of all acquired a firm foundation, and was endowed with life and productive power through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead (II Tim. 1,10).

Furthermore, this resurrection of the dead bodies, both of just and unjust, is not confined, as some allege, merely to the just, nor does it give allowance to the idea of any annihilation of the wicked but rather includes the resurrection of both, which then involves also a state of retribution. ³⁷

34. Melancthon Jacobus, Notes on the Acts of the Apostles, 374-75.

35. Acts 24, 15.

36. John Lange and Philip Schaff, A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, vol. 20, 423.

37. Melancthon Jacobus, Notes on the Acts of the Apostles, 373.

ΜΕΛΛΕΙΝ here has the future infinitive, a periphrastic future. One doesn't look for a hope, but rather simply accepts it. Here Paul turns the tables on his accusers. The Pharisees stood in the forefront in the acceptance of the doctrine of the resurrection. In this respect they were no sect, but the Sadducees, who rejected, were. Thus the term "sect" recoils on Tertullus, who had tried to fasten that label on Paul.

Paul asks, " why is it thought to be incredible that God should raise the dead ? " The expression used here by Paul refers interrogatively to the object. Thus its meaning would be "whether" rather than "that." Thus he who deems it incredible denies its reality. The tense of "raise" is significant. It is not preterite referring to Christ's resurrection. But it is present, showing that the question does not refer to a special historical event, but to the conception of a general character, to an abiding attribute or power of God.

This question is addressed to the conscience of all who deny the resurrection. Thus such are reminded to examine the foundation, if there be such, of their unbelief.

38. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 4, 966-67.

39. Acts 26, 8.

40. John Lange and Philip Schaff, A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, vol. 20, 441.

41. Ibid., 447.

Paul vividly describes the manner of our resurrection. He says, " the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air."⁴² The question is not by what means the dead shall rise, but the relation they bear to their Redeemer.⁴³ $\pi\rho\omega\tau\omicron\nu$ has a distinct purpose in the clause, for it solves a problem among the Thessalonians. The first result of the advent shall be the raising of the dead in Christ, the believers. Thus the apostle refers to the two great results of Christ's coming : the resurrection of the dead saints and the assumption of the living saints.⁴⁴ This, of course, refers to a bodily resurrection, for a resurrection of souls would be impossible.

Some have sought to identify the reference here with the resurrection referred to in Rev. 20,6 and thus find proof for the teaching of a first resurrection (Pelagius, Ambrosiaster, Estius, Turretin, and Olshausen). This is rejected for the following reasons :

- 1) If the prophetic picture of the Apocalypse is a literal resurrection, it is confined to the martyrs.
- 2) The first resurrection is that of souls and is in contrast to the second death which is the "lake of fire," referred to in Revelations 20. Are the martyrs only to escape the second death ? That death is the eternal sever-

42. I Thessalonians 4, 16b-17a.

43. John Eadie, A Commentary of the Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians, 166 ff.

44. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 8, 343.

ance of a soul from God.

Furthermore, there is no reference to the resurrection of unbelievers. Their destiny is not explained and thus left under awful shadow. Oecumenius has explained this by saying that Paul's primary purpose here was to console and enlighten the Thessalonian church. Another has said that the wicked shall be raised with their present bodies and that in the general conflagration of the world they shall be destroyed. However, there is no implication of such a thing in this passage. Karsten has said that the wicked are raised to be disembodied. This, too, has no Scriptural weight. The first reason suggested is, however, tenable. (Cf. Page 101).

The adverb "then" shows the close connection between the raising of the dead saints and the rapture of the living saints. ⁴⁵ Both are simultaneously lifted up in one band to meet the Lord. Though the dead are prior in resurrection, the living are not posterior to them in this action.

The "air" designates the place of meeting, probably the space between the earth and firmament of heaven, as it is probably to the air, that the Lord descends from heaven. So it is into the air that all the saints are caught up into the company of the Lord. ⁴⁶ Clouds are often associated with the Divine presence (Ps. 104,3; Nahum 1,3; Acts 1,9; Matt. 24, 30; 26, 64). This event in some way corresponds in

45. John Eadie, A Commentary on the Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians, 168.

46. International Critical Commentary, vol. 37, 176.

majesty to Him and His coming. While the Lord descends the believers are caught up in His progress to meet Him. So God brings them with Him. The Christian will not meet the Lord through the air nor does it refer to heaven, nor to the heaven of believers. The New Testament does not teach this. This passage says nothing about the Christian meeting God in heaven as He leaves it nor on earth if He come down to it, but between heaven and earth in the air, which, in our imagination, is the way to glory. Here Paul affirms nothing of the judgment or the admission to final blessedness.

We shall ever be with the Lord. As a consequence of being caught away to meet Him in the air we are to meet and never more part from Him. The fellowship of the believers and their Lord is the everlasting source of their joy! What a blessed thought!

Here it is shown that those who survive to the Advent do not die, but rather as Paul tells us, we shall not all die, but we shall all be changed.

Paul reminds the Roman Christians that suffering with Christ is the way appointed by God to bring them to glory. Paul says that he reckons (counts, regards, estimates) that the sufferings of this time are insignificant with regard to future glory. ⁴⁷ Paul was well qualified to say

47. Romans 8, 18.

this. He had endured the greatest sufferings and also
had been favored with a sight of the glory of heaven.⁴⁸

The present is a time of suffering. This world is a field of battle to the believers. But such suffering is limited to the present time. Life is compared to a flower that comes forth and is cut down, and to a shadow which fleeth and continueth not. The expression "worthy" refers to weight.⁴⁹ It is not weighty in reference to or comparison with. Further, as the glory so outweighs the suffering, the idea of merit must be excluded. It is not the ground or basis upon which eternal life is bestowed.

The verb μέλλουσιν indicates confident expectation and also speedy revelation.⁵⁰ The New Testament use of *δόξα* is borrowed from the Hebrew קִדְּוָה or קִדְּוָה : Splendor, magnificence, excellence. The idea of glory in the presence of God is founded upon the idea of light or splendor in His presence. Light is often used in the Bible as the image of happiness. Referring to this glory Haldane says :

51

Though yet concealed, it is already in existence, its discovery only is future. Now it is veiled from us in Heaven, but ere long it shall be revealed. God is the source of ineffable light, joy, knowledge, power, and goodness. He is the sovereign good and will communicate Himself to them that behold Him, in a way that is incomprehensible.

48. Robert Haldane, Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans, 374.

49. Charles Hodge, Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, 268.

50. Moses Stuart, Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, 364.

51. Robert Haldane, Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans, 375.

Contemplation of this glory is the earnest expectation of the believers. Paul says, " for the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." ⁵² It is important here to determine the meaning of "creation" in the particular connection and by the teachings of Holy Scripture. Here the whole creation together with the believers is represented as being burdened, longing for deliverance. This is consistent with the context and the analogy of Scripture. ⁵³ It is the purpose of Paul to impress upon the believers the greatness of the glory of which they are to be subjects. It is common to represent the whole creation as a sentient being, rejoicing in God's favor, trembling at His anger, speaking aloud His praise. Isaiah said (55,12) , " The mountains and hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the fields shall clap their hands." What Paul here teaches is that the subjection of the creature to the bondage of corruption is not final or hopeless, but that the whole creation is to share in the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Paul goes on to give three reasons why the creature thus awaits in expectation : the creature is now subject to vanity, this subjection is not voluntary but is imposed by God, ⁵⁴ and it was never designed to be final.

52. Romans 8, 18-23.

53. Charles Hodge, Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, 271 ff.

54. Ibid.

The historical acrist is used here and refers to the fall of man. "Vanity" expresses physical frailty. The idea expressed here is antithetical to that expressed by the word "glory." Thus it distinguishes the creature in his present state from its original condition and from its glorious future. The inanimate creature was a passive sufferer, sharing in the curse resting on man for his apostasy. This cannot be said, however, for the sinner.

Regarding the expected deliverance Haldane says :

55

The creature then has been subjected to the indignity which it now suffers in hope that it will one day be delivered from the bondage of corruption, and partake of the glorious freedom of the children of God. This hope was held out in the sentence pronounced on man, for in the doom of our first parents, the divine purpose of providing a deliverer was revealed. We know not the circumstances of this change, how it will be effected, or in what form the creation--those new heavens and that new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, suited for the abode of the sons of God--shall then exist; but we are sure that it shall be worthy of the divine wisdom, although at present beyond our comprehension.

Paul goes on to say that the subjection of the creature is not hopeless because it shall be delivered from corruption. The bondage of corruption referred to means the state of degradation or frailty as referred to before. They shall be delivered or liberated into the glorious liberty of the children of God, that which is connected with the glory

55. Robert Haldane, Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans, 381.

which is the end result of Christ's work of redemption. The creature is to be partaker in some way, according to its nature, of the glories in reserve for the sons of God.⁵⁶

Paul confirms his affirmation by saying that the whole creation groans and travails in pain until now. The verbs used denote the mutual and universal sighing and sorrowing of mankind. The verb $\sigma\upsilon\nu\omega\ \delta\iota\upsilon\acute{\nu}\epsilon\iota$ suggests the travail out of which the new world is to be born. Finally, Paul points out that this situation has been in force up until now, the present, without stopping, ever since the beginning.⁵⁷

Paul further says that we Christians together with all creation long for this glorious day. We have the first fruits of the Spirit. The term here used refers to the evidence and assurance of the securing of the whole harvest. Thus a pledge is involved as well as the priority. It does not refer to those who were first converted.⁵⁸

Christians are but children of the inheritance, awaiting the fulfilling of the promise. What was expressed in the foregoing verse by "manifestation of the sons of God" is given here by the term "adoption." The prime character of this event is the redemption of our bodies. This shows the great stress that Paul laid upon the resurrection, when our vile bodies shall be changed and put into a beautiful glorious estate. This is the end, aim, and object of our waiting

56. Moses Stuart, Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, 373.

57. Robertson Nicoll, Expositor's Greek Testament, vol. 2, 650.

58. Charles Hodge, Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, 276.

in expectation. This is the focal point of the Christian view : deliverance from the body of this death to be fashioned like unto Him. This expectation on the part of the believer now leads us into a discussion of the actual consummation of the time when this change shall actually take place.

Paul follows out a scheme or gradation in discussing the bodies of men. First of all, he compares the body to seed which is sown. He discusses first the kernel of grain and then celestial and terrestrial bodies in general. Paul does not speak of bodies, one class of which we cannot see, whose glory is hidden from our view, which we cannot even imagine; but about bodies, all of which we ourselves can see, and both kinds of which we can compare as to their
59
glory.

The question arises : " when the disembodied soul comes forth and enters the body whence and of what materials shall that body be ?" Paul gives the following analogy :

- 1) the new body shall not be identical with the present one.
- 2) it shall be organically connected with the present body.

The buried body is resuscitated, and the continuity of the
60
personality on its corporeal side shall be unbroken.

Conybeare and Howson quote Dr. Burton of Oxford as

59. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 6, 725.

60. George Stevens, Pauline Theology, 349.

maintaining that Paul here gives proof that we shall not
 rise with our same bodies. ⁶¹ He deduces this from the
 statement in which Paul compares death and resurrection as
 the planting and flowering of a seed. The seed is not the
 same as the plant. However, he is not justified in this
 deduction. Paul states regarding the bodies of the dead :
 " it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption."
 Essentially, in essence our bodies will be the same. But
 Paul teaches an all-pervading change in the bodies of the
 dead, similar to the change the seed experiences when it
 is planted, buds, and grows. This in no way shows that we
 rise with different bodies.

Paul raises the question : " how are the dead raised
 and with what bodies do they come ? " ⁶² In order to show
 that the same body will not come forth, but that a change
 will be effected, Paul appeals to the varying bodies in
 nature. He names : animal flesh, heavenly and earthly
 bodies, and the lustre of the sun, moon, and stars. ⁶³

The reference to heavenly bodies has received varying
 interpretations. ⁶⁴ Some refer it to angels, and assume
 that either they have bodies or the reference is to the
 forms they take when they appear to men. Matt. 28,3 tells
 us, " His countenance was like lightning and his raiment

61. W.J. Conybeare and J.S.Howson, Life and Epistles of St. Paul, 478.

62. I Corinthians 15, 35-53.

63. Heinrich Meyer, Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the New Testament, vol. 5, 375-76.

64. Charles Hodge, Commentary on First Corinthians, 345-46.

as white as snow." This view, however, is antibiblical and speculative. Others say that these are the bodies of the saints in heaven. The common interpretation, however, takes the reference to mean the sun, moon, and stars. Appeal is made to the following verse as proof from the context that this is meant. The sun, moon, and stars mentioned in this verse are evidently included in the heavenly bodies there intended.

Both kinds of bodies, the heavenly and the earthly, are of different sorts of particular glory. The stars and all the heavenly bodies, by God's creation, have a glory which differs from that of the bodies in this world, though the beauty of the latter in the manifold miracles of nature can well compare with them. Finally, the heavenly bodies differ among themselves in beauty and brightness, the sun, the moon, and the stars exhibiting a variety of glory which must be recognized at once. All are glorious, but in degrees. This shows the degrees of glory that will be experienced by our bodies in the resurrection.

Paul now makes application of these statements with the words: "so also is the resurrection of the dead." He returns to his original statements that it is sown even as a seed is placed into the soil. Paul makes four contrasts. In three of them he uses $\acute{\epsilon}\nu$ phrases, in the fourth adjectives. Each phrase describes the condition of the body

65. Paul E. Kretzmann, Popular Commentary of the Bible, vol. 4, 165.

66. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 6, 727.

when it is buried and then when it is raised. Each time $\epsilon\upsilon$ states what is connected with the body, the idea being that of sphere, enclosing the entire body. Now it is a corruptible body, constantly tending to decay, subject to disease and death, and destined to entire dissolution. But hereafter, it will be imperishable, free from all impurity, and incapable of decay.

Certainly, dead bodies are in dishonor. Its decomposition causes one to shrink from it in horror. At the resurrection it appears in glory, the body itself made glorious, like that of Christ's at the transfiguration, radiant and shining. The body truly is sown in weakness. It doesn't have enough strength to draw a single breath. Lenski aptly points out, "helpless lies the dead body, wholly a prey to nature's elements." ⁶⁷ At the resurrection it is raised in power. This is not the same power as we have in our present bodies, but transcendent power, beyond all that our minds can now conceive.

Finally, Paul speaks of the natural body and the spiritual body, material and immaterial. The Greek expresses the immaterial by $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$ and $\piνευμα$. The natural body placed into the grave is that which was animated by the $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$. This lifeless body is a natural body. In the resurrection it comes forth completely changed, a spiritual body. The new

67. Charles Hodge, Commentary on First Corinthians, 347.

68. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 6, 728.

body is such now that in all aspects it is now a proper organ for the spirit.

Then Paul refers to the first Adam. Paul wants to point out that when he speaks about a natural body, this is the very way in which the Scriptures themselves speak in Gen.2,7, where there they say that Adam became a living soul. Then he says further that the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. At the beginning of this chapter Paul shows that Christ is the last Adam and a life-giving spirit.⁶⁹

There is a parallel between these two, yet many great differences. Both are progenitors, yet the one is a progenitor of only a natural, the other of a spiritual race. From the one we receive only a natural body, from the other a spiritual body. The first Adam left us on the low level of sin and brought about the need for the coming of the second to destroy sin and death. In the term "life-giving" lies the concept "life." $\pi\upsilon\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha$ is the heavenly life-giving principle which never dies but ascends to glory and blessedness.

Lenski maintains in the statement concerning Christ that we must supply $\epsilon\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\nu\epsilon\tau\omicron$ "became," an historical aorist. In His resurrection and glorification Christ literally and historically became the last Adam, a life-giving spirit.

69. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 6, 733 ff.

70. Ibid.

This term designates Christ in relation to us. He is the fountain of spiritual life. As the one who died for us and rose again He now brings back life and immortality.

Then Paul goes on to say that the natural precedes the spiritual. This enunciates a general law. The lower precedes the higher, the imperfect the perfect. Adam's earthly state was preparatory to a heavenly one. The present life is a seed time, the harvest is hereafter.⁷¹ Paul further illustrates this. He says the first man is earthy. The second is the Lord from heaven.⁷² What Paul means by saying those of the earth are earthy is that the descendants of Adam quite naturally inherit an earthly body from him. Those who are Christ's are to have a body fashioned like unto His glorious body.

Paul says that as we did bear the image of the earthy one, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly one. The verb is *φορέω*, a stronger form, which designates usual and continuous bearing. In contrast with the aorist Paul places the same verb in the future, "we shall Bear." Both tenses are viewed from the moment of the resurrection at the last day. Then both are true. As we did bear the image of the earthy one, now we shall bear forever the image of

71. Charles Hodge, Commentary on First Corinthians, 351.
72. Authorities are equally divided regarding the expression, some saying it should be omitted. Either way it does not affect the meaning. However, it is interesting to note that the early Gnostics used this point to maintain that Christ was really not born of the Virgin Mary, thus destroying the human nature of Christ. However, the text merely makes asseveration that Christ was of heavenly origin. (Cf. Charles Hodge, Commentary on First Corinthians, 352.)

the heavenly one.

Paul finally says that flesh and blood cannot inherit God's Kingdom, nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Our body as now constituted cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven. The perishable cannot be imperishable. This leads the apostle to the thought that if our bodies are to be immortal and imperishable they must be changed. ⁷⁴ Especially, in the following verse does he show the certainty that even those who taste not death must experience a body change. This point that Paul makes is also in keeping with the idea of a mystery: not all die, but all will be changed. All of us upon Christ's return in order to enter His Kingdom need not first fall asleep, but while alive shall experience this glorious change, as Meyer puts it, "so that our $\Psi\upsilon\chi\iota\kappa\acute{o}\nu\ \sigma\acute{o}\mu\alpha$ shall become a $\pi\pi\upsilon\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha\tau\iota\kappa\acute{o}\nu$." ⁷⁵

Paul's statement that this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal immortality is a re-emphasis. It is impossible that corruption should inherit incorruption. There must be a change. Incorruption must replace corruption, and immortality mortality.

Paul says, "who will change the fashion of the body

73. Textual evidence generally favors the aorist subjunctive, which here would be hortative. However, here the context decides the matter, since Paul beginning to speak in the resurrection moment would hardly return to the present time so suddenly. The and were sometimes confused in copying. (Cf. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 6, 745.)

74. Charles Hodge, Commentary on First Corinthians, 353.

75. Heinrich Meyer, Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the New Testament, vol. 5, 386.

of our lowliness to conform to the body of his glory. " ⁷⁶

This is a very clear statement regarding the change of our ⁷⁷ bodies. In verse 10 Paul describes our body as "the body of lowliness" (qualifying genitive) as the body in the "fellowship of his sufferings being conformed to his death." At last it shall be "conform(predicate adjective) to the body of his glory" (qualifying genitive). The change will be so complete that our body shall be like Christ's own glorified body.

Paul goes on to say how the Lord shall be able to do this. It is in accord with the working of His being able even to subdue to Himself all things that exist. The infinitive is the descriptive genitive used as a noun, "energy so that he is able." He who has the power to subdue all the universe to Himself will raise up our dead body in glory with His omnipotence.

Philosophers have tried to explain this. It is truly an esoteric concept. Bodies burned to ashes, bodies devoured by wild animals, bodies corrupted in the grave, how can they be restored ! Some answers are given : God conserves only a germ and brings that forth, God creates an entirely new body, or God merely leaves the souls of the saved bodiless like the angels. However, all of these ideas are mere speculation. There is but one answer regarding the glorious

76. Philippians 3, 21.

77. The verb "refashion" signifies the change of the outward fashion, the sensible vesture in which the human spirit is clothed. (Cf. International Critical Commentary, vol.36,120.)

change of the resurrection morn : God's omnipotence.

The Jews taught a restoration of the present body. Paul shows that there will be an organic connection with the present body. There is a change of substance, but not of personal identity. Paul's conception is the figure of the seed-corn in I Corinthians 15. Newman Smyth in Old Faiths in New Light is quoted by the International Critical Commentary as follows :

78

There is a real connection or some correlation between the present and the future embodiment, but not identity of substance. The life, the principle of life, the individuality of it, shall remain unbroken, but "the matter of life," as the physiologists say, shall be changed.

The tendency among many modern theologians has been to deny the idea of a bodily resurrection. The Auburn Affirmation is an example of this tendency. The implication of this document is that the resurrection of Christ is not necessarily a bodily one, and that the bodily resurrection is only one of many theories. Denial of the bodily resurrection of Christ naturally negates the general bodily resurrection. Rian very effectively refutes this position by showing that if the bodily resurrection is only a theory then I Corinthians must be mistaken, because it is devoted almost exclusively to a discussion and proof of the

78. International Critical Commentary, vol.36, 120.

resurrection of Christ and the assertion that the resurrection of Christ is a bodily one. It further makes of no claim the words of Christ to His disciples, "handle me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." (Luke 24,39). There is no other theory implied in the Scriptures, and all branches of Christendom in their creeds teach a bodily resurrection of Christ.

Paul points out that this change will be effected very suddenly, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye..... we shall be changed." The repetition of the phrase here emphasizes the suddenness. An *ατομον* is something that cannot be cut or divided. This certainly excludes the possibility of those still alive having first, perhaps to die at the parousia in order to come into the resurrection life. The reference to a twinkling of an eye means literally: the cast, glance, or glimpse of an eye. As the creative acts in Genesis, which includes also the animation of Adam's body, were instantaneously timeless, so will be the final change of our bodies when Christ comes at the last trump. Finally, from this verse we also learn that God Himself gives the signal, determines the moment when this glorious change shall come to pass.

79. Edwin H. Rian, The Presbyterian Conflict, 51.

80. I Corinthians 15, 52.

81. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 6, 754.

82. Heinrich Meyer, Critical and Exegetical Handbook of the New Testament, vol. 5, 386.

83. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 6, 756.

A complete victory will be manifested when all these things have occurred, as Paul says, " death is swallowed up in victory."⁸⁴ The point here is that not only shall those over whom death has triumphed, and those whom he had so long detained in the prison of the grave, be delivered from death's grasp, but death itself shall be no more. It shall be destroyed.

The passage quoted is Isaiah 25, 8 , " He will swallow up death in victory." In Hebrew the literal meaning of the last word is "forever." However, the sense is the same.⁸⁵ The victory over death is complete and final.

Then Paul breaks forth into the statement, " where, death, is thy victory ? where, death, thy sting ? " The reference is to Hosea 13, 14. No quotation is intended, only an adaptation. The Hebrew reads, " O death, I will be thy plagues : O sheol, I will be thy destruction. " The Septuagint has it , " O death, where is thy punishment? Where thy sting, O hades ?" Paul chooses the latter ,and the effect is not changed. Paul is concerned here with the concept : death. Hosea has Jehovah announce the utter abolition of death, so Paul does well to appropriate Hosea's words when he himself declares the destruction of death in the resurrection at the last day.⁸⁶

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84. I Corinthians 15, 54-57.
 85. Charles Hodge, Commentary on First Corinthians, 357.
 86. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 6, 762-63.

Paul sees death forever conquered. He sings a song of triumph over the vanquished foe. The expression "where" is both interrogative and exclamatory, and implies the answer, "nowhere." Paul images to himself death as a beast with a deadly sting. This sting is lost. Thus Paul means to say : thou death stingest no more, for no one dies henceforth. Thou death hast lost the victory, for the power of eternal life has won it over thee.

Furthermore, " the sting of the death--sin; the power of the sin--the law." The full impact of the thought here is given by the nouns. Sin is the murderous weapon of death. Take it away, and death is harmless. The term used for sin here is that of missing the mark, that which is set by God's law. Sin is always connected with the law. The law sets the mark and when sin misses its mark, it obtains its final reaction. Sin tries to thrust the law and God aside, as if they were not. In this way the law becomes the death-power of the sin. With invincible power it strikes and kills. Thus the law is the power of sin for two reasons : 1) without law there would be no sin (Rom. 4,15). 2) if there be no law there can be no condemnation.

Finally, Paul exclaims, " but to God thanks, to him that gives the us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

87. Heinrich Meyer, Critical and Exegetical Handbook of the New Testament, vol. 5, 389.

88. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 6, 766.

89. Charles Hodge, Commentary on First Corinthians, 359.

The author of the miraculous change which Paul describes is the Triune God. The victory bestowed on us is obtained now. We receive it from God in ever-increasing measure. The last phrase names the Victor as the medium through whom the victory-gift becomes ours. We note that Paul uses the full personal and official name of Jesus. This expresses faith, confession, and adoration on the ⁹⁰ Believers' part. It is alone through Jesus, our Lord and Savior, that these marvelous achievements could become ours.

90. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 6, 767-68.

IV. The Judgment

As God has appointed certain times and certain locations to every nation, so He has set a final judgment for all men. Paul speaks of this, " inasmuch as he set a day in which he is about to judge the inhabited earth in righteousness in the person of a man whom he ordained, having furnished assurance to all by having raised him up from the dead. " ¹ It will be a judgment acknowledged by men as right. ² The reference to the world means literally the inhabited world, and thus would include all men.

An outstanding feature of this judgment is that a man ³ is to judge the world. To the God-man has been entrusted this duty of judgment. He who alone is both God and man is to be the judge. St. John tells us that God has given Him authority to execute judgment, also because he is the Son of man. He was ordained or designated by God to do this who also set the day for its occurrence. Furthermore, the resurrection of Christ is the great miraculous fact which

1. Acts 17, 31.

2. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 4, 732.

3. The Greeks held that men were made judges in the world of spirits. They were demi-gods, deified after death. (Cf. Melancthon Jacobus, Notes on the Acts of the Apostles, 297.)

declared Him to be the Son of God with power, and attested His claim to be the judge of the world. By His resurrection the resurrection of all men was proved, and this would be for judgment at His hands.⁴

Furthermore, "for we must all be made publicly manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ, in order that each one may get to carry away the things (done) by means of the body, according to what things he did, whether something good, or something bad."⁵ Here Paul pictures to us the final judgment at which all men appear. *βῆμα* is the dais or platform on which the chair for the judge stands, from which he pronounces his verdict. Every man shall be made public and nothing shall be hid.⁶ It is true that man is already judged in the instant of death, but this last judgment is public. Here the judgments will not only be revealed,⁷ but substantiated and established.

Moral actions are here conceived as something deposited, which at the last judgment is carried away, received, and taken with us in the equivalent reward to punishment.⁸ These things done by means of the body are the fruit of one's life. Those which are a fruit of faith are marked and beautified by

4. Melancthon Jacobus, Notes on the Acts of the Apostles, 297.

5. II Corinthians 5, 10-11.

6. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 6, 1045.

7. Ibid., 1047.

8. Heinrich Meyer, Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the New Testament, vol. 5, 521.

trust in Christ, thus revealing to all eyes who it was that produced the good. The other is the product where faith was lacking and puts the unbeliever in his true light. Further, all the imperfections of the Christian deeds will be removed and blotted out, and in the place of his sin will be found the righteousness of Christ.

Paul shows what the Christian attitude toward the judgment ought to be when he says, "and that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep, for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." Paul here contrasts the time of the Romans' first believing and the time then present. The evident meaning of the word "salvation" here is the day of judgment, when their happiness will be more complete, and when the body and the soul shall enter into glory. This fact of the nearer approach of this time ought to have a great effect on the Christians, in thinking less of this world and more of that which they will some day inhabit.

The effect of this realization is to awaken the Christian from sleep. The term $\sigma\tau\upsilon\pi\omega\varsigma$ denotes the condition in which the true moral activity of life is bound down and hindered by the power of sin. By such sleep is meant indifference, carelessness, and forgetfulness regarding things

9. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 6, 1047.
 10. Romans 13, 11.
 11. Robert Haldane, Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans, 603.
 12. Heinrich Meyer, Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the New Testament, vol. 4, 1288.

13

spiritual. The Christian is to fight off this ensnarement, awaken to a life dedicated to God, preparing for that time when God shall come in all His heavenly glory.

Furthermore, "teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ."

14

Paul gives clear testimony as to the attitude that the Christian should take in view of the coming judgment. They are to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts. The ungodliness uncludes not merely idolatry, but whatever in the whole inner and outer life is offensive to God.

15

Worldly lusts are those which are cherished by the children of the world.

16

Then Paul points out the moral demands expected of the Christian. The oft recurring of "soberly" emphasizes the reign of immoderate passion. They live righteously and godly when they are intent on doing and suffering in all things the will of God. The Christian life is conditioned on our turning the back to the world and our eyes to the blessed prospect above and before us.

Christians look for the blessed hope, not subjectively, but as the object of hope. By reference to the appearing of the glory the apostle means simply what he elsewhere calls the "revelation" or "appearance" of Jesus Christ, the

13. Henry Jacobs, The Lutheran Commentary, vol.7, 272.
14. Titus 2, 12-13.
15. Henry Jacobs, The Lutheran Commentary, vol.10,204.
16. John Lange and Philip Schaff, "Epistle to Titus," A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, vol. 24, 16.

50

final appearing of the Lord (II Tim. 4,8). Paul's reference to the great God is evidently directed toward Jesus Christ. Paul always ascribes this act of appearing to the Son, the immediate context relating to Jesus Christ, Two of the ante-Nicene fathers (Clement of Alexandria and Hippolytus) and the great bulk of the post-Nicene writers, held this view. These and other reasons substantiate the interpretation. However, even if this did refer only to the Father it would not negate the Deity of Christ. Such an assertion would place Him equal in glory with the Father.¹⁷

Paul speaks of the resurrection of the righteous and of the unrighteous¹⁸ of the just and the unjust. Thus he teaches that a resurrection awaits both, the terms being forensic, those declared thus by the eternal judge. This is clearly the teaching of both the Old and New Testaments. (Dan. 12,2 ; John 5,28-29). It underlies all the passages that speak of the judgment.¹⁹

Paul speaks of the day of wrath and righteous judgment of God.²⁰ The genitive here makes the statement definite. This refers to the final day of wrath. An important second genitive characterizes this day, that day marked by the complete revelation of the *δικαιοκρίσις* of

17. John Lange and Philip Schaff, " Epistle to Titus," A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, vol. 24, 17.

18. Acts 24, 15.

19. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 4, 967.

20. Romans 2, 5-12.

God. Every judgment of God will be absolutely righteous. God is now very longsuffering and sometimes this puzzles the Christian. The last day, will, however, clear up every doubt. On the last day not a soul will question a single judgment of His. This will be due to the revelation God makes (objectively) and to the moral nature of those to whom He makes it, when at last they stand face to face with Him. ²¹

Paul demonstrates that this judgment will be individualized "to every man." God will render this verdict at the last day according to works, and not just according to presence or absence of faith, because this judgment is a revelation of the perfect justice of God. In His secret judgment of each man in life and at the moment of death, only faith and unbelief will decide. But in order to show the rightness of this secret judgment in public, works serve as outward testimony so that all can see. ²²

The two datives in verses 7 and 8 expand the dative ^ε *ἐκαστῷ*. The two classes are described and their final verdicts announced. Properly translated Paul states that God will give glory, honor, immortality, and to some according to endurance in well-doing. Thus these attributes are objects of what God gives and not what man seeks. Glory consists in the heavenly attributes bestowed on the last day as a permanent possession. Honor is a correlative, the high esteem

21. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 5, 145-46.

22. Ibid., 150.

from men and from angels who behold this gift of glory and its radiance. Incorruption is the complement of these. This glory shall not fade. This honor shall not cease. Thus the godly will be judged according to endurance in good works. The genitive, "endurance of good work," is objective, the endurance directed to good work. Only those who remain faithful, those that endure, as Jesus Himself said, shall be saved. The continuance in faith is evidenced by the endurance in good works.

The expression "as seeking life eternal" is predicative to the dative "some." This shows what moved them. They are those who by faith look ahead, seek the city to come. In its consummation this gift can never be lost. It is utterly blessed.

23

Paul then goes on to say, "to some, as from self-seeking as well as disobeying the truth as moreover obeying the unrighteousness." Paul here makes a restatement. Suppressing the truth is unrighteousness, doing both because of a low, self-seeking spirit. Truth is a broad term in this connection. These men disobey the truth which is even revealed in nature. They have remained hard and unrepentant. Of course, the term also includes the truth as revealed in the Word of God.

To such then God will give indignation and wrath in its hot outburst. Tribulation is in the sense of pressure, and thus anguish or narrowing in, for both body and soul. Such

23. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 5, 152-53.

will not know whither to turn. They will cry to the mountains, "fall on us !" and to the hills, "cover us !" But there will be no deliverance. ²⁴

Paul goes on to reemphasize the punishment that shall be meted out to the ungodly. The expressions he uses, "tribulation" and "anguish," express much the same thought as the previous verse, only under difference images. The first term takes the image of pressure, while the second that of confinement in a narrow space. The first term refers more to the cause of the feeling, and the second to the feeling itself. The latter is the more intense. The etymology denotes that feeling is accompanied with a sense of helplessness. ²⁵ In both pairs of words the same idea is expressed, only intensified by reduplication.

The soul is mentioned as the seat of feeling. The phrase "every soul of man" expresses the equality and universality of the treatment dealt out. Within this equality there is a sort of preference both as to judgment and salvation to the detriment and advantage of the Jew. ²⁶ The position of the Jew is also one of priority in time. Paul says that such punishment shall be to those who work evil, who work out such or accomplish it. The Jew is put first, because as possessor of an express law this is conspicuously true of him. ²⁷

24. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 5, 154-56.

25. William Shedd, A Commentary on Paul's Epistle to the Romans, 41.

26. F. Godet, Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, 120.

27. Robertson Nicoll, The Expositor's Greek Testament, vol. 2, 596.

The Greek εἰρήνη is much the same as the Hebrew
 □יְהוָה, a comprehensive term. It rather means salva-
 28
 tion, peace in a narrower sense. This peace is the glor-
 ious blessing conferred at the same time as the bestowal
 of glory and honor. This is truly the profound peace which
 is produced by deliverance from wrath, and the possessor of
 everlasting salvation. Here the expression is to "do" rather
 than "effect" as was used with reference to the evil. The
 latter verb implies something more violent, suited to evil.

The rejection of the Gospel is the supreme sin. It is
 the effect and cause of evil-doing. Its acceptance is the
 effect and cause of the determination to follow goodness and
 the practice of goodness. 29 Again the priority of the Jew is
 mentioned with the same purpose as previously stated. God
 certainly makes no difference in the Jews' favor because of
 his birth or because of his possession of the law. Rather,
 30
 his responsibility is the greater.

Paul's reference to the fact that there is no respect
 of persons with God is one frequently stated in the Old
 Testament (Deut. 10,17; I Sam. 16,7; II Chron. 19,7 ; Job
 34, 19). The phrase used means to accept the countenance,
 to pay regard to the external appearance. "With God" signi-
 fies that luminous sphere where only just pronouncements are
 made. Paul goes on to say that the want of the law no more

28. Robertson Nicoll, The Expositor's Greek Testament,
 vol. 2, 597.
 29. F. Godet, Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the
Romans, 120.
 30. Robertson Nicoll, The Expositor's Greek Testament,
 vol. 2, 597.

destroys the one than its possession saves the other. What Paul here teaches is that those who possessed the law shall be subjected to a judgment, a detailed inquiry, such as arises from applying the particular statements of a code . The Gentiles shall perish as a result of their moral corruption. On the day of judgment all who have sinned shall perish, each in his proper place. Divine justice shall be impartial. ³¹

Paul states, " in order that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." ³² Paul thus points out the great judgment which is to come upon those who out of unbelief rejected their one hope of salvation. This is a heinous sin, and the judgment will be according to truth, *πιστευουσις* *αδριστ* and glances back at the period which has passed before the judgment. The object of their unbelief was the truth. Their faith on the other hand had been centered in a lie. To have delight in unrighteousness, in what is opposed to the divine character and law, must from its very nature promote unbelief and destroy all love for the truth. There is thus a moral reason for want of faith in the truth. It is delight in unrighteousness. ³³

Paul refers again to the judgment upon all men when he states "lest ~~that~~ by any means I myself should be a cast-away." ³⁴ This statement of Paul's shows clearly the seriousness and power of sin, and the great need of complete

31. F. Godet, Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, 121.
 32. II Thessalonians 2,12.
 33. John Hadie, A Commentary on Paul's Epistle to the Thessalonians, 290.
 34. I Corinthians 9, 27.

self-surrender to God. There is always danger for the best Christians to become ensnared by sin. The expression Paul uses is ἀσκήμος, which means a reprobate or one rejected.³⁵

Paul states that God will render vengeance upon those who know not God. Here he refers to the fact that God will dispense punishment, and Jesus will execute the Divine judgment. To those judged it will not simply be a want of knowledge, but a criminal blindness. Instead of seeking God, many hold the truth down in unrighteousness, an angry defiance like Pharaoh. Such punishment will further be on those who obey not the Gospel. Christ has a right to claim obedience.³⁶ One must listen to, understand and believe Christ's gospel, and thus the heart is enabled to obey, accept its invitation, trust its promises, believe its doctrines, and obey its precepts. The Gospel has a living personal source -- our Lord Jesus. It is Christ Who has brought the good news of divine mercy to the world, and has sent the Spirit of Truth to work in men's hearts.

Paul states further, "who shall suffer punishment, everlasting destruction away from the presence of the Lord,³⁷ and away from the glory of His power." The sinners referred to not only feel the inner ruin wrought by ignorance and disobedience, but a positive penalty is laid on them.

35. Charles Hodge, Exposition of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, 169.

36. John Lange and Philip Schaff, "Second Epistle to the Corinthians," A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, vol. 24, 117.

37. II Thessalonians 1, 9.

That punishment is everlasting destruction. This expression means "death" in the Homeric poems, and then "destruction" in a general sense. It is ruin as a result of a sinful course, or inflicted as a divine penalty.

There are several interpretations as to what is meant by ἀπὸ προσώπου: 38

1) The simplest meaning is local, in separation from the face of the Lord, the source of joy. His face or countenance throws its benign radiance over his saints, who in their nearness worship Him, and are ever in fellowship with Him. His personal presence is the life and joy of heaven. To see Him is the greatest joy. To be severed from Him is gloom and death. That sad severance is the penalty to be endured. A similar expression is found in Isaiah 2, 10.

2) The earliest interpretation takes it in a temporal sense. The eternal destruction takes place at or after the manifestation of His Presence. However, the following weaknesses are to be noted about this interpretation: ἀπὸ is especially connected with ὀλεθρον and explains its awful nature in a local sense. b) προσώπου has the idea of local meaning attached to it. c) the phrases which are used to show that ἀπὸ has a temporal meaning describe an act, event, or period which forms an epoch (Romans 1,20).

3) ἀπὸ is said to be causal. The presence of Christ

38. John Eadie, A Commentary of the Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians, 243-46.

is the means of punishment. His mere look brings the penalty. However, such an interpretation would make this a mere repetition of the previous statement, "awarding vengeance." Furthermore, this interpretation more or less inserts some epithet as "angry" or "dark," and ἄπὸ in this sense is used to denote a personal source. Such a meaning would be more plausible if "face" had been left out.

The first interpretation is the proper one because it is the simplest and most natural explanation, and because the other two explanations cannot be fully substantiated.

Such will also suffer everlasting destruction from the glory of His power. The preposition here has the same local sense, the glory being that glory which springs from His power. It is an visible splendor. The glory is so connected with His might, as it is originated by it, that it characterizes and envelopes it. All its out-goings are ever encircled with glory. That power manifests its glory in the perfection and joy of the saints, who have been lifted beyond death to eternal life. Such everlasting destruction truly exiles from this glory of His power, but for the saved the opposite is true.

Paul tells us, "in order that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."³⁹ Here he refers to that time in which Christ will return to exercise judgment on all

39. I Corinthians 5, 5.

men. Particularly in this connection he points out that Christ shall confirm publicly every true Gospel judgment of His church, and shall publicly accept every sinner saved through the Gospel discipline which Christ has committed to His church on earth.

Thus shall judgment be pronounced and executed upon all men for all time. The unjust shall be cast away and the believers endowed with everlasting life.

40. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 6, 222.

V. The Eternal State of Man

Paul shows what the proper Christian attitude toward his eternal state ought to be by saying, "laying up for themselves as treasure an excellent stock for the future, in order that they may lay hold of the genuine life."¹ Thus Paul here shows us that which is the stock and stable possession of the Christian life. He lays up for himself the Treasure of genuine life, which refers to the life to come. The expression "genuine" is common to this epistle. It may be well to point out here that such works are the fruit of one's faith and are not the cause of salvation. Such evidence is the assurance of this genuine life and will also be in the verdict in the Lord's judgment.²

Further, "the hope, the one laid up for you in the heavens."³ Paul speaks of the great hope which is the rich treasure of all believers. Here this hope is identified with the object of the hope.⁴ It is laid away in the heavens, and is the eternal inheritance, "incorruptible and undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us," as Peter points out (I Peter 1, 4). Thus the whole Christian life is guided and directed by this hope.

1. I Timothy 6, 19.

2. R.C.H. Lenki, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 8, 742-43.

3. Colossians 1, 5.

4. John Eadie, A Commentary on the Epistle of Paul to the Colossians, 200.

It is an imperative of the Christian faith and life, and leads him to give forth those glorious fruits which grow out of love for God and the fellowman.

Paul says, "godliness is profitable with respect to everything, having promise for the present life and for the one to come."⁵ Paul shows the advantage of godliness, the advantage for the present life and for the future. We are especially concerned with its promise of the future, for it insures the highest well-being, the richest good, and all the blessings of the future life.⁶ Certainly then the stream of promise does not stop at the grave, but rather flows on into eternity. Promise connotes the idea of grace, and thus rules out the idea of work-righteousness. Thus the Christian in his godliness walks the golden garden of promise. Some may claim that such godliness forfeits joys in this life. But that is no loss. This promise beckons the Christian onward in this life. It is the golden imperative which⁷ even moves him onward to the attainment of his goal.

Paul further states, "but we all, with unveiled face reflecting as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are ourselves being transformed into the same image from glory to glory."⁸ Thus Paul speaks of the wonderful spiritual transformation that takes place in the life of the Christian.

5. I Timothy 4, 8.

6. Alvah Hovey, An American Commentary on the New Testament, vol. 6, 53.

7. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 8, 645-46.

8. II Corinthians 3, 18.

The sequel to this is the future and eternal glory to which we are called. Thus already, in a sense, the Christian dwells in glory reflected by the indwelling spirit, and longingly looks forward to eternal glory. He still battles with sin, but the time shall come when this transformation shall be complete, in the coming age when he truly shall reflect the image of Him Who is all glory.

God has great solicitude for the Christian. Paul tells us, " I know that he is able to guard the deposit of mine against that day." God will graciously care for the Christian's eternal salvation by guarding the deposit against that day. Various views have been taken as to what Paul is referring to. Lenski suggests that Paul means the Gospel he has preached. Others say : soul, spirit, salvation, good works. Although Paul here speaks of the Gospel, yet it is the Gospel through which God works in order to bring about our salvation. Paul in the context is speaking of the great plan of salvation. He speaks of the holy calling to which we have been called by God's grace. Certainly a Christian need have no fears that it will be lost to him. It is in God's keeping, deposited in His hands. And the height of this solicitude on God's part is shown in Paul's words : to that day. It is safe forever.

9. Heinrich Meyer, Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the New Testament, vol. 5, 482.

10. II Timothy 1, 12.

11. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 8, 779.

Paul says, " the Lord ... will preserve me unto His
 heavenly kingdom."¹² Again Paul assures us of God's
 solicitude for our salvation. The Lord's grace will not
 fail him, but in every temptation will preserve him till
 he reaches the heavenly kingdom. Even if temporal death
 seems to have gained the victory and separates the soul
 from the body, the believers again are the gainers, for
 their inheritance in heaven is thereby given to them.
 They are kept by the power of Jesus Christ, their Lord,
 unto salvation.¹³ This hope, of course, is not based
 on man's strength, or on his Christian growth, but simply
 on the Lord's faithfulness and power.¹⁴

Paul states, " but may our Lord Jesus Christ and God
 our Father who loved us and gave us everlasting conso-
 lation and good hope in grace, comfort your hearts, and
 stablish you in every good work and word."¹⁵ These are
 objective gifts. The expression "eternal consolation" has
 the effect of eternal, and good hope is the realization of
 that which will prove it valuable.¹⁶

This phrase, of course, does not characterize eternal
 blessedness. This consolation is enjoyed in the present,
 and it is everlasting, especially when compared to anything
 which the world might offer in its stead. Hope, however,

12. II Timothy 4, 18.
 13. Paul E. Kretzmann, The Popular Commentary of the Bible, vol. 4, 418.
 14. Alvah Hovey, An American Commentary on the New Testament, vol. 6, 121.
 15. II Thessalonians 2, 16.
 16. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 8, 455.

regards the future and points us to the blessed object contemplated. The blessed object is the eternal state of glory in the future life. Thus the Christian has the abiding comfort that regarding the glorious treasure of eternal glory God has given him eternal consolation and unquestioned hope. This will truly serve to stablish him in every good word and
17
work.

There is definite assurance of an eternal state in the teachings of Paul. He tells us that the end, aim, and pur-
18
pose of the life of service to God is everlasting life. Eternal life is the issue of this service to God, but not the reward of its merit. Particularly, Paul uses the expression for eternal life here whilst speaking of the issue of service to God. In verse 16, however, he says "obedience to righteousness," and not "obedience unto eternal life." In that connection he had spoken of death as the punishment for sin. Had he used the word "eternal life" in connection with the idea of obedience it would have appeared that he regarded
19
this state as a reward for our obedience.

In a most heartening way Paul assures us that our worldly afflictions are but momentary, that they work a far more exceeding weight of glory, that these things are eternal in
20
contrast to worldly things. The contrasts expressed by

17. Hohn Eadie, A Commentary of St. Paul's Epistle to the Thessalonians, 299.

18. Romans 6, 22.

19. Robert Haldane, Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans, 268.

20. II Corinthians 4, 17-18.

Paul are indeed impressive. Light stands opposite to weight and momentary to eternal. In speaking of the exceeding weight of glory we seem to sense Paul's struggle with the impotency of language to express these ideas. It is indeed difficult to express matters of eternal significance in the language of men, for "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard."

God has seen fit to reveal his purpose not only to reward the affliction of his people, but to make the afflictions the means for working out their joy. Sufferings endured for Christ's sake or that are imposed for the trial of our faith certainly have this effect. We are not to seek afflictions, but when God sends them we should rejoice in this divinely appointed means for our state of glory.

The things seen are ordinary earthly ones, those of the outer man. The things not seen are the spiritual and heavenly, those of the inner man. Unenlightened minds cannot perceive them and hence never regard them. Lenski points out :

21

But the things seen are "transient," *πρόσκαιρα*, for a brief, fleeting season. To regard them and to let them fill our eyes and hearts is folly : for what when their brief season is over ? But the things not seen, these are eternal, and never pass away, our inner, spiritual man, and the eternal weight of glory. To regard them, so that they become ours, this is blessedness indeed.

21. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 6, 1022-23.

Paul further points out, " for we know that, if our tabernacle here on earth is taken down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens."²² The apostle expresses the assurance that a blessed state of existence awaits the believers after death. The subjunctive denotes expectancy and visualizes for us what may occur at a future moment. Here again we have terms which are exact and placed in contrast. Our tent house or tabernacle is our earthly existence, which may be taken down at any time. Its opposite is a building from God which is eternal. It is the permanent, glorious, infinitely blessed existence in heaven.²³ The manner in which we already have this glory-life lies in the fact that we are co-heirs with Christ, as Paul plainly teaches.

Unworthy ideas have been suggested as definitions for this kind of body which we will have. There are those who maintain that the reference here is to ethereal bodies, possibly of ether or of a fire-like substance. This is even extended to include the angels and God. They say that these ethereal bodies are ready now, awaiting the coming of our naked souls. Some say that the souls of the dead do not enter heaven at death, but enter an intermediate place, the " Totenreich." Thus the problem is still more complicated. These speculations are baseless and unscriptural.

22. II Corinthians 5, 1-5.
 23. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 6, 1024 ff.

tural. Paul merely teaches here the great contrast between our present earthly existence and the glory of the world to come. He neither describes nor explains the details of this future state. Again human language would prove inadequate.

Thus Paul shows us that the dissolution of death does not destroy the soul nor deprive it of home. If unclothed the soul would not be naked. While at home in the body we are present with the Lord. It is obvious that the Apostle ²⁴ is here speaking of what takes place at death.

Paul goes on to say that we continue to groan, longing to put on our habitation, the one from heaven. The Christians groan and long to enter the blessed heavenly existence, all ²⁵ prepared and long awaiting them. Paul advances the idea of a building from God by now speaking of a habitation, the one from heaven, heavenly in its very nature. Then he says that after having put it on, we shall be found not naked. Thus the Christian shall be fully and forever clothed, never found otherwise after this garment has once been put on, never destitute of habitation, like those cast into outer darkness.

Paul states further, "for also, as they that are in this tent, we keep groaning as being weighted down; for the reason, not that we want to put off, but to put on, in order that the mortal may be swallowed up by the life." We groan being constantly under a depressing burden. The object of

24. Charles Hodge, Exposition of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, 110.

25. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 6, 1029 ff.

what we want when we groan under our burden is that this mortal may be swallowed up by the Life. This is not the mortal life animating the body in its earthly existence. The Life here referred to is the spiritual, divine, heavenly, eternal, the existence in heavenly glory of which Paul has been speaking.

The one who wrought this very thing for us is God, who gave us the pledge of the Spirit. Thus all glory is to God. He wrought this very thing that, namely that the Life is to swallow up the mortal. It is God's aim and goal in all His previous work in us. The pledge of the Spirit He gave to us is the full guarantee of what would follow. The gift is ours in Baptism, in the Lord's Supper, and in the hearing of His Word. He has given all this to us, and in a little while the consummation will also be ours.

Speaking of the Second Advent of Christ Paul says,
 " and so we shall ever be with the Lord." ²⁶ Here Paul gives further assurance of our eternal relationship to God. This is added emphasis upon the permanence of our fellowship. The result of the resurrection and meeting of the Lord in the air is that we shall be with the Lord, not for the moment only, but forever. ²⁷ We meet and nevermore part from Him. "With" implies close fellowship, and "ever" expresses endless duration without limit of time. The fellowship of the saved

26. I Thessalonians 4, 17b.

27. International Critical Commentary, vol.37, 176-77.

with the Lord is this everlasting spring of blessedness.

Paul speaks of Jesus Christ as being an example or
 pattern unto eternal life. ²⁹ Our faith must rest on
 Jesus Christ as the full assurance of attaining to eternal
 life. The certain end of our believing is eternal life
 or possession of the blessedness of the Divine Life, which
 is our glorious heritage in the world to come. ³⁰

Paul speaks of the elect obtaining salvation in connec-
 tion with Jesus Christ, in company with eternal glory. ³¹
 Again he gives assurance of this blessed estate. Here Paul
 shows us that this salvation in Jesus Christ finds its true
 termination in eternal glory. It is its end, aim, and pur-
 pose, and the believer may take heart in this world which
 is corrupted by sin.

Paul demonstrates that no fornicator, nor unclean per-
 son, nor covetor, which means idolater, has inheritance in
 the Kingdom of Christ and God. ³² Paul here speaks descriptively
 of those who are sinners, who stand outside the grace of God.
 Such people who live in sin and turn not in faith to Christ
 we generally term "the wicked." They will not be saved, but
 will be denied entrance into Christ's Kingdom. The negative
 used here is absolute. Not a single one of these sinners,
 whether or not he outwardly belongs to the congregation
 will be saved. The Kingdom here referred to is the rule of

28. John Hadie, A Commentary of the Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians, 170.
 29. I Timothy 1, 16.
 30/ H.D.M. Spence and Joseph Exell, The Pulpit Commentary, vol. 48, 31.
 31. II Timothy 2, 10.
 32. Ephesians 5,5.

God's grace on earth and of glory in heaven. It extends
from creation into all eternity. ³³

When that kingdom passes into its eternal development,
when the throne of God and the lamb is in the center of the
holy city, and those blessed shall be gathered around, then
those who through unbelief rejected Christ shall be denied
entrance. ³⁴

The desperate condition of the wicked rests
primarily in this fact that they will not inherit the King-
dom, but crushed by the weight of their sin, they shall have
to bear its eternal punishment. ³⁵

Paul says, " for he that soweth in the flesh, shall of
the flesh reap corruption : but he that soweth in the
Spirit shall of the Spirit reap everlasting life." ³⁶ Again

Paul shows the ultimate fate of the wicked. He does it by
contrasting parallel statements. The one sows for his own
flesh to promote it ; the other for the spirit, to promote
its interests. This is a figurative statement. Our life
is a sowing of one kind or the other. ³⁷

The stress is on
the sowers and what their sowing promotes. He who sows
for his flesh will sow the seed his flesh furnishes, and
by no means the seed furnished by the spirit. So it is
with the contrary case.

The terms "corruption" and "life eternal" are opposites.
Flesh refers to our own sin-corrupted nature. Corruption

33. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testa-
ment, vol. 7, 600.
34. H.C.G. Moule, Ephesian Studies, 252.
35. The use of the single article in the Greek indicates
that the reference, "Christ and God," refers to one person.
36. Galatians 6, 8.
37. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testa-
ment, vol. 7, 304 ff.

matches the flesh, but not in a physical way. Paul does not speak of physical corruption, for disease invades the bodies of the godly and his body also sees corruption in the grave. Corruption is the opposite of life eternal, hence it is eternal death. Life goes on and passes through physical death to the eternal beyond death. Luther says,

38

He pronounceth those which sow in the spirit, to be blessed both in this life and the life to come; and the other which sow in the flesh, to be both accursed in this life and in the life to come.

The question arises, does Paul teach the resurrection of unbelievers? It is maintained that nowhere does he speak of a general resurrection. However, Paul showed that all men are to be judged, and judgment presupposes resurrection. The whole world is to be the subject of judgment.³⁹ Paul was writing primarily to Christians, believers, which explains, perhaps, his silence on this topic.

Furthermore, "that in the dispensation of the fullness of time he might gather together in one all things in Christ."⁴⁰ God has committed great treasures into the hands of chosen representatives. All earlier dispensations were crowned by that of Christ in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden (Col. 2,3). Christ has dispensed these with perfect righteousness and love, giving Himself for and

38. Martin Luther, Commentary on Galatians, 533.

39. George Stevens, Pauline Theology, 356.

40. Ephesians 1, 10.

41

to His brethren.

The infinitive states purpose or intended result. The purpose is the gathering together of the elect of God. It is the fulfillment of that will of God which desires the death of no man. Matters are not left to drift for themselves. They are made to constitute one sum. So Paul says that all things, multiplied and varied as they are, are to be summed up in connection with Christ. This is to be the result of His ministering the good pleasure of God.⁴²

The final goal of this gathering is eternal union with God in the glory of the world to come.

Paul breathes a prayer for Onesiphorus that he would obtain mercy in "that day."⁴³ Paul refers to the time when all men shall enter eternity. He shows that man's blessed estate, which certainly was Paul's desire for his friend, is a matter of gracious mercy at the hands of the eternal God.

Paul, speaking of our resurrection through Christ, assures us that by virtue of this fact God has seated us with Him in the heavnes.⁴⁴ The meaning here is that Christians share in their Lord's glorification, and dwell with Him in heaven, in so far as they are united with Him. Paul refers to the "ages coming." Paul then looks to the

41. Brooke Westcott, St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, 13.

42. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 7, 373.

43. II Timothy 1, 18.

44. Ephesians 2, 6-7.

ages which are coming, the time of Christ's perfect triumph
 over evil, the ushering in of the eternal state. ⁴⁵

Some do not hold that this passage refers especially to the future life following the parousia. Eadie holds that the ages to come refers to the time following Paul's writing this letter in which God will display the riches of His grace to men. ⁴⁶

Hodge takes the expression as being without limitation, for all future time. This is not exactly in line with the thought of Calvin who holds that this expression refers to future generations in this world. ⁴⁷ However, it is evident that Paul is here especially speaking of the future life.

The following reasons bear this out :

1) In the preceding verse Paul is speaking of the believers' resurrection. He points to our being seated in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

2) Paul speaks of the exceeding riches of God's grace. Surely only in the Kingdom of Glory can the fullness of this grace become manifest.

3) The expression "ages" is used. αἰῶνες τῶν αἰώνων is used to express the idea of eternity, thus pointing to the future life. Expositor's Greek Testament says :

45. W.J. Conybeare and J.S. Howson, Life and Epistles of St. Paul, 819.

46. John Eadie, A Commentary of the Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians, 151.

47. Charles Hodge, A Commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians, 116.

God's purpose, therefore, is that in the eternal future, the future which opens with Christ's parousia, and in all the continuing length of the future, the grace of His ways with those once dead in sins should be declared and understood in all the grandeur of its exceeding riches.

The believers shall thus experience God's special kindness in Christ Jesus in the world to come. It is true generosity, without any merit or worthiness on the part of man. In this future manifestation of the surpassing wealth of God's kindness toward man we shall experience, wholly undeserving, what it means to have been plucked from the searing fire of sin and death, and granted a life unblemished by the taint of guilt and hallowed by the eternal presence of God.

Paul shows the fullness of our future glory by contrasting it to our present suffering. ⁴⁹ These sufferings are neither of equal importance nor of corresponding weight. They are unimportant when compared to future glory. This present time refers to the period now current which will end at the approaching parousia. This glory comes to us from without at Christ's descent, but it is not conceived as having already begun inwardly and then becoming apparent ⁵⁰ outwardly.

It is further of note that Paul does not reach this conclusion as a result of dubious calculation. Rather in

48. Robertson Nicoll, Expositor's Greek Testament, vol. 3, 288.

49. Romans 8,18.

50. Heinrich Meyer, "Epistle to the Romans," Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the New Testament, vol.4 b, 69.

his statement he suggests the strongest assurance. The idea of the insignificance of the present compared to future glory is a fixed idea with Paul (II Cor.4,17).⁵¹

The idea of merit, whether of congruity or condignity, is definitely excluded. It is entirely foreign to the context. Merit is not the ground or the basis on which eternal life is bestowed, but Paul here wishes to show the greatness of the glory which the believers are to inherit.⁵²

By this contrast Paul most effectively impresses upon us the wonder of this glory. Men often think of their sufferings in life as being most severe. Yet, no matter the greatness of their intensity, even though they be like Paul's with his "thorn in the flesh," his frequent beatings and imprisonments, they are unimportant when laid side by side with the future glory. What a glory that shall be revealed in us !

Paul gives us a further intimation concerning this future glory when he says that as we endure so shall we reign with Him. Paul previously said that if we die with Him we shall live with Him. How his next expression "reign" exceeds that of "live." This is a tremendous paradox. Here we remain under, others trampling over us. But there we shall reign as kings with Christ, our Savior, as our only Lord. We shall be seated with Him upon His eternal throne.

51. Robertson Nicoll, Expositor's Greek Testament, vol. 2, 648.
52. Charles Hodge, Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, 269.

We shall wear the glorious crown of eternal life with Him.

The reverse is also true. Permanent denial of Christ means eternal rejection in the world to come. In the case of Peter, he had repented of his denial. No retribution could be more just. Only one who has confessed can turn about and deny. Those then who cut themselves off from Christ by denying Him must not expect that Christ is as false as they. On the last day Christ will justly deny them. Christians throughout the pages of history have by either persecution or lucrative promises been tempted to deny Christ. The true disciples, however, though they may fall into temporary unbelief, will in the end be found faithful, and on the last day will, even as he suffered here, reign with Him eternally.

Paul says that he knew a man in Christ about fourteen years ago caught up into the third heaven. Here he speaks of himself, using the form of the third person. He wishes to adduce something in which no part of the glory at all falls on the Ego proper. In that ecstasy his lower consciousness had so withdrawn that he could not tell whether a temporary withdrawal of the spirit had taken place or whether his whole person had been snatched away. In this way he showed how incomprehensible was the incident which had taken

53. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 8, 805.

54. II Corinthians 12, 2-4.

place.

When Paul says he was "caught up" he means to show an action taken place without the agency of the subject. Paul was entirely passive with regard to this translation which took place.

The expression as to a third heaven has led to some speculation. The Lutheran Commentary enumerates three heavens : the cloud-heaven, the star-heaven, and the unseen-heaven. Into this inner sanctuary Paul is declared to have ascended.⁵⁶

Others hold that Paul used the language of or wished to conform to the language of the rabbis who visioned seven heavens and that here the region of the clouds is meant. However, Paul here simply means the highest heavens. This is true for the following reasons :⁵⁷

- 1) There is no evidence that the opinions of the later Jewish writers were prevalent at the time of St. Paul.
- 2) There is no evidence in the New Testament that the sacred writers held such opinions.
- 3) If Paul held such a view of seven heavens, then this view would of necessity be incorporated in the body of Christian doctrine.
- 4) Here it is evident that "paradise" and "third heaven" are synonymous terms. Paradise is always taken to

55. Meyer refers this to the time of Paul's conversion, but here we cannot agree. (Heinrich Meyer, Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the New Testament, vol. 5, 672 ff.).

56. Henry Jacobs, The Lutheran Commentary, vol. 8, 316.

57. Charles Hodge, Exposition of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, 282.

mean heaven.

Paul's description here of our coming glory is full of meaning. He was permitted to behold the state of those who are in eternal bliss. He was brought face to face with the realities of the unseen world, where he viewed the beatitude
58
of the triumphant church. There he heard words which are not to be uttered. Luther has interpreted this expression to mean words which cannot be translated into human language. Others say that this means that Paul was given information intended for him alone, to be enshrined in his heart, or that they were reserved for divine communication (Lutheran Commentary, Meyer, Hodge). Over against all of these we hold that Luther is more likely correct. Why should God give secret information to Paul ? The whole context of the verse wants to show the sibilimity and otherworldliness of this rapture which Paul experienced. Certainly then the words spoken are unlawful for a man to utter. He cannot do so because they are far above and beyond the language of man.

Paul speaks of the present Jerusalem and then of the
59
Jerusalem above, meaning the one of the future. Lenski says :

60

The capital city of the Holy Land was to be the center and source of heavenly grace and peace for the chosen nation, a type and symbol of heaven itself, which is thus also called "the new Jerusalem," where all that the earthly Jerusalem was to be comes to its consummation and final realization.

58. Henry Jacobs, The Lutheran Commentary, vol.8, 317 ff.

59. Galatians 4, 26.

60. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 7, 240-41.

To the true Christian the Jerusalem above is his true destiny. It is the symbol of all his longings and hopes. Best of all it will be free. It will be a liberation from sin and all of its resultant limitations and trials. It will be freedom from the mundane. This glorious freedom is far beyond man's comprehension and its full realization can be known only in eternity.

Finally, Paul speaks of the crown of righteousness laid up in heaven which the righteous judge will give us at the last day.⁶¹ This crown which the believer receives is truly a crown of victory. This crown of righteousness is not a merited one, but entirely like that of life or of glory which consists in the fact that one now becomes full partaker of the righteousness which is by faith.⁶²

The expression, $\delta\iota\kappa\alpha\iota\omicron\sigma\upsilon\acute{\nu}\eta$, is always forensic. It denotes that quality which is ours by virtue of a decree of the Divine Judge which declares us to be $\delta\iota\kappa\alpha\iota\omicron\varsigma$ or righteous according to his $\delta\iota\kappa\eta$ or norm of right.⁶³

"That day" refers to the final day of retribution. Jesus the Righteous Judge Himself will extend this blessed inheritance. All those who love His appearing, that is those who are true believers will receive this glorious crown of eternal righteousness.

61. II Timothy 4, 8.

62. John Lange and Philip Schaff, "II Timothy," A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, vol. 24, 114.

63. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the New Testament, vol. 8, 874.

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