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The Intermediate State in Pauline Eschatology: An
Exegesis of 2 Corinthians 5: 1-10

by

Barbara Tychsen Harp

Thesis

submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in
Religious Studies

McGill University, Montreal

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Short Title.

The Intermediate State in Pauline
Eschatology.

Abstract

This thesis will examine closely two aspects of Pauline theology, namely, the timing of the resurrection and the state of the believer who dies before the parousia. Through an exegesis of 2 Cor 5:1-10, the basic consistency in Paul's thinking and the arguments for and against the intermediate state will be examined. Chapter 1 analyzes what 1 Thess. 4, 1 Cor. 15, and 2 Cor. 5 have to say on the issue, comparing the passages as to content and compatibility. Chapters 2 and 3 pursue more fully questions related to the issue of postmortem existence. Chapter Two deals with Paul's use of the verb κοιμᾶσθαι as a metaphor for death and the idea of the intermediate state as soul-sleep (psychopannychism). Chapter 3 explores the matter of Paul's concept of the "I" or "self" (or "naked" self), raised by Paul in 2 Cor. 5:3. The Pauline anthropology is compared with Hellenistic anthropological dualism in order to show the similarities and differences.

EXTRAIT

Cette thèse va examiner deux aspects de la théologie paulinienne, c'est à dire, le moment présumé de la résurrection et l'état du croyant qui meurt avant la parousie. A travers une exégèse de 2 Cor. 5:1-10, on étudiera les fondements de la pensée de Paul et les arguments pour et contre l'état intermédiaire. Le premier chapitre analyse ce que 1 Thess. 4, 1 Cor. 15, and 2 Cor. 5 disent sur le sujet, en comparant le contenu et la compatibilité des passages. Les chapitres deux et trois se penchent plus en détail sur des questions en relation avec le problème de l'existence postmortem. Le deuxième chapitre traite de l'usage que Paul fait du verbe κοιμᾶσθαι, comme métaphore de la mort, et de l'état intermédiaire en tant que sommeil de l'âme (psychopannychisme). Le troisième chapitre explore le sujet du concept paulinien du "je" ou "soi" (ou "nu" soi), abordé par Paul dans 2 Cor. 5:3.

L'anthropologie paulinienne est comparée avec le dualisme anthropologique helléniste populaire afin d'en montrer les similitudes et les différences.

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Introduction

This thesis will examine closely two related aspects of Pauline theology, namely, the timing of the resurrection and the state of the believer who dies before the Parousia. Through an exegesis of 2 Cor. 5:1-10, the consistency in Paul's thinking on these two points will be tested, and the arguments for and against the so-called intermediate state between the individual's death and the final resurrection will be examined. Chapter 1 will analyze what 1 Thess. 4, 1 Cor. 15, and 2 Cor. 5 have to say on the two issues, by comparing the passages as to content and compatibility. Chapters 2 and 3 will pursue more fully questions related to the issue of postmortem existence. Chapter 2 will deal with Paul's use of the verb κοιμάσθαι as a metaphor for death and the idea of the intermediate state as soul-sleep (psychopannychism). It will include a brief survey of the intertestamental notion of Sheol as an intermediate state, but will focus primarily on whether Paul had in mind conscious fellowship with Christ or a sleep-like state of suspended animation, or both -- one view in the earlier letters and another view later on. Chapter 3 will explore the matter of Paul's concept of the "I" or "self". Because the notion of the "naked" self is raised by Paul's use of the term γυμνός in 2 Cor. 5:3, the Pauline anthropology is

compared with Hellenistic anthropological dualism in order to show the similarities and differences. Is it embodiment or disembodiment he has in view for those in the postmortem state? In the phrasing of Oscar Cullmann's famous treatise¹, is it immortality of the soul or resurrection of the dead that Paul teaches, or is this a false contrast? The spotlight will be on: 1) how this "naked" self in Paul is distinct from the sarkic and pneumatic body, and 2) what the exegetical evidence indicates about Paul's anthropology.

By way of introduction, the topic of personal eschatology must be placed in the larger context of New Testament eschatology, in general, and Pauline eschatology, in particular. The approach here will attempt three things: 1) a definition of terms; 2) a brief description of the history of the debate in Christian theology; and 3) an overview of the Jewish apocalyptic views directly relevant to the issues discussed in this thesis. From the general problematic of eschatology/apocalyptic, the introduction will move to Paul, and then to the issues at stake in 2 Cor. 5.

The study of "the last things", from the Greek word ^{3/}ἐσχατος, "last", usually encompasses topics such as death, resurrection, the return of Christ, judgement, and the end of the world, the future "epochal finality" (Vos 5). But it

¹Immortality of the Soul or Resurrection of the Dead? (London: Epworth, 1958).

concerns more than the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come, for, broadly defined, eschatology addresses the future not only of the individual, but of the community, Israel or the Church, and the cosmos, including the revelation of "a new heaven and a new earth" (Rev. 21:1). It is, to put it in more personal terms, the study of the promises of Him who is the Last (Rev.22:13; 1:8; Isa. 44:6; 48:12).

The eschatological side of the Christian scriptures was de-emphasized in the nineteenth-century in favour of the theme of the kingdom of God, usually with a post-millennial accent on the human effort which would help bring it about.² In contrast, the early twentieth-century, largely through the scholarship of Johannes Weiss and Albert Schweitzer, recognized eschatology as occupying a place at the very core of the teaching of Jesus in the New Testament as a whole. The eschatological perspective, these scholars observed, shaped the structure of Christian theology in general, and Pauline preaching, in particular. Consequently, most of the classic interpretive studies of Paul include major sections dealing with Pauline eschatology. (See, for example, those

²For this survey I rely on E.E. Ellis, "Paul", New Bible Dictionary, J.D. Douglas, ed. (Wheaton, Ill.: IVP, 1988): 893-900; L.J. Kreitzer, "Eschatology," Dictionary of Paul and His Letters, Ralph P. Martin, ed. (Downers Grove: IVP, 1993): 253-69; John Macquarrie, Principles of Christian Theology (New York: Scribners, 1977), 351-57; and G.C. Berkouwer, The Return of Christ (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), 24-31.

of G. Vos, E. Kaesemann, J. Munck, H.J. Schoeps, and W.D. Davies.) Today, however, at least as far as the message of Jesus and Paul is concerned, there is again a trend away from eschatology.

Although formerly the terms "eschatology" and "apocalyptic" were regarded as interchangeable, they are no longer. J.J. Collins (1979) and C.C. Rowland (1982) delineated the difference between eschatology and apocalyptic, showing that apocalyptic is better understood as a genre classification, than as a type of eschatology. Because apocalyptic may or may not deal with the traditional topics associated with "the last things", it should be categorized as a type of theology, not a subset of eschatology.³ Before examining the elements of Jewish apocalyptic, it is helpful to understand something about the developments within the study of Pauline eschatology over the past fifty years.

Rudolf Bultmann is usually cited as making a

³J.J. Collins, ed., Apocalypse: The Morphology of a Genre (Missoula: Scholars, 1979), 9, cautions against the use of the adjective "apocalyptic eschatology" without careful attention to how it is used. D.E. Aune, "Apocalypticism," Dictionary of Paul and His Letters, Ralph P. Martin, ed. (Downers Grove: IVP, 1993): 26, defines "apocalyptic eschatology" as: "a type of eschatology ... found in apocalypses or ... similar to [that] ... of apocalypses, characterized by the tendency to view reality from the perspective of divine sovereignty (e.g., the eschatologies of the Qumran Community, Jesus and Paul)."

significant break with Schweitzer's interpretation of Paul. The existentialist view, as developed by Bultmann, insists that New Testament teaching has little to do with the future or with history, but more to do with individualized eschatology (Mythology 29-33, 73-83). Against the original interpretation of eschatology which is grounded in a "mythological" world-view, according to Bultmann, his approach emphasizes the believer's "new self-understanding" which expresses itself in "readiness for the unknown.... being open to... [the unknown] future in the face of death and darkness" (Mythology 81, 31). The deeper meaning of eschatology is found in the individual's attempt to "live authentically" in the face of death. By comparison, then, the traditional emphasis on the (distant) future in Christian teaching of the "last things" is mistaken (Macquarrie 354).

Another significant reaction to Schweitzer came from C.H. Dodd, who is more than anyone else associated with the phrase "realized eschatology". Dodd emphasized that Paul's teaching had to do not with expectation but with realized experience.⁴ The Kingdom of God had come through the events surrounding Jesus' death and resurrection, according to Dodd, and therefore the presence of salvation in the present

⁴The Parables of the Kingdom (London: Nisbet, 1935), 49; see also, The Apostolic Preaching (Chicago: Willett Clark, 1937), 33-43; and The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1953), 450-57.

time is what really matters. Dodd's thesis has been characterized as "over-realized" eschatology (Kreitzer, "Eschatology" 254), as it refuses to see that Paul held together both the historical reality of Christ's incarnation, death, and resurrection and the "correlative" of the return of Christ (Berkouwer, Return 109). It is generally recognized today that one must view these "realized" and "futurist" elements as "dynamically interconnected" (Kreitzer, "Eschatology" 254). The two are not mutually exclusive, nor is there any contradiction in saying that both elements are present in Paul's writings. As E.E. Ellis explains, it is a good example of an "improper either/or" ("Paul" 900). A more accurate, balanced view would include a realized eschatology which is not "exclusive" and a futurism which "does not disassociate the future from the present" (Berkouwer, Return 109).⁵

J.C. Beker (Paul The Apostle) in 1980 re-affirmed the centrality of eschatology in Paul's thinking. Following Kaesemann's thesis that "apocalyptic was the mother of all Christian theology" ("Beginnings of Christian Theology",

⁵See also W.G. Kuemmel, Promise and Fulfillment, trans. D.M. Barton (London: SCM, 1957), 141-55; and "Futurische und Praesentische Eschatologie", NTS 5 (1958-59): 113-26, for a persuasive argument that both elements are firmly rooted in the teaching of Jesus and Paul. The term "inaugurated eschatology" is considered by some a more descriptive term, as it connotes something begun, but not necessarily completed. See Dodd, Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1953), 447, n.1, for the original use of the expression "inaugurated eschatology".

1960), Beker defined apocalyptic as a belief in the future, imminent consummation of the world. The future parousia of Christ -- the return of the Lord -- would be the event inaugurating the end of the world. Indeed, for Jesus and the first disciples, it was argued, the ideals of peace, prosperity, and justice associated with the Kingdom of God, were never going to be achieved through moral advance (as in modern humanism or utopianism, for example) or through an immanent principle of history (as in the Marxist dialectic), but only through the supernatural intervention of God.

As an alternative to Schweitzer's emphasis on mysticism, and Bultmann's on self-understanding, Beker maintained that "the triumph of God [is] the center of Paul's thought" (Paul the Apostle 355). Because he also insisted -- without satisfactory proof, according to some -- that an apocalyptic interpretation is the only means for understanding Paul's "fundamental coherence", Beker has been criticized for imposing his apocalyptic framework upon Paul's letters without due consideration to its appropriateness.

Nevertheless, even if Beker may be accused of overstating the case, it remains important in any discussion of Pauline eschatology to understand the apocalyptic background of his thought. The following is a brief summary of the Pauline form of apocalypticism, relevant to his views on the future life, generally, and the timing of the resurrection,

in particular.⁶

1. Temporal dualism: Time is divided into two aeons, the existing order and the new age (or new world). Related to this is the metaphysical dualism, which expresses itself in Paul's Adam/Christ analogy (1 Cor. 15; Rom. 5) and the extended series of antitheses (2 Cor. 4:16-5:10) with outer self/inner self; physical person/spiritual person; seen/unseen; transient (or momentary)/eternal; naked/clothed.

Paul also divided temporal history into the "already" and the "not-yet", which he signalled in part by his use of the indicative and imperative in passages such as Gal. 5:25 and Rom. 6:1-14 (Aune 32). While God's dealings with "the present evil age" (Gal. 1:4) have begun, his ultimate goal is still unfulfilled (cf. Mt. 3:17; 12:28ff.; Lk. 17:20ff.). Christians live in the "time between" Christ's ascension and his return, according to A.T. Lincoln (Paradise 191-95). New Testament teaching, including Paul's, then is different from traditional Jewish apocalyptic in that its negative evaluation of present history is modified by the conviction that God has indeed acted in raising Jesus from the dead. His redemptive purpose is still being worked

⁶See J.J. Collins, ed., Apocalypse: The Morphology of a Genre (Missoula: Scholars, 1979); J.J. Collins, The Apocalyptic Imagination (New York: Crossroad, 1984), 207-209; J.C. Beker, Paul's Apocalyptic Gospel (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982); and D.E. Aune, "Apocalypticism", Dictionary of Paul and His Letters, Ralph P. Martin, ed. (Downers Grove: IVP, 1993): 31-33.

out in this present era and will only reveal itself for all to see at the completion of history (Aune 31).

2. Messianism: More than anything, for the first-century Jew, it is the appearance of the Messiah that inaugurates the new age. Jesus' resurrection is the "triumph of God", and is the model and promise of the believer's resurrection, the "first fruits of those who have fallen asleep" (1 Cor. 15:20). Jesus is portrayed as the one who in the resurrection "triumphs" over death, yet paradoxically, death is also the "last enemy" (1 Cor. 15:26). In this sense, the final triumph is still to come. Death is personified as in other apocalyptic literature, such as 4 Ezra 8:53; Rev. 6:8; 20:13-14.⁷

3. Resurrection of the Dead: The dead will be raised at the return of Christ (1 Cor. 15:23; 1 Thess. 4:16). Those who are still alive at this time will be transformed into resurrection life without experiencing physical death (1 Cor. 15:52; 1 Thess. 4:17). The apocalyptic view found in some Old Testament writings probably includes belief in the resurrection, as expressed in Isa. 25:8; 26:19; and Dan. 12:2.

4. The Parousia of Jesus as Imminent: The ultimate redemption of believers will be fulfilled at the time of Christ's return. The emphasis is on the nearness of this

⁷See M.C. de Boer, The Defeat of Death: Apocalyptic Eschatology in 1 Corinthians 15 and Romans 5 (Sheffield: JSOT, 1988), 90-91.

event (1 Thess. 4:15); it is not going to take place in the remote future, but in the not-too-distant future, or "soon" (Phil. 4:5). Unlike his first coming in anonymity, Jesus' Second Coming will be, above all, a revelation of God's "glory" (Phil. 2:9; Eph. 1:20-23; cf. Heb. 2:9; Mt. 24:30). Christ's reign is made visible at the time of His return or ἀποκαλυψις ('unveiling', 'disclosure', or 'revelation'). If anything, this apocalyptic motif is made "even more intense" by Paul (Beker, Apocalyptic Gospel 47). For, the Christ-event (the death and resurrection of Christ) marks the beginning of the end, so that, as Beker notes: "in principle no other conditions need to be met before his glorious return in the triumph of God" (Apocalyptic Gospel 47). Of course, at the same time, Paul does expect the full number of the Jews and Gentiles to be saved before the parousia.

5. The Judgement of the world, the wicked, Satan and his minions: All will be required to give account. The faithful will receive a reward and the wicked will receive their punishment. The judgement of believers (Rom.14:10) is a biblical concept, but theirs is to be a judgement without fear (Gal. 5:5; cf. 1 Jn. 4:17). Works will have a part to play (2 Cor. 5:10; 1 Cor. 3:10-15; cf. Jas. 2:13), since justification does not rule out being judged.⁸

⁸See the exegesis of 2 Cor. 5:10 in Chapter 1, sect. III.

6. Cosmic transformation: At the "end" (τὸ τέλος ; 1 Cor. 15:24), the world order will be transformed, Satan will be punished, and the Kingdom will be handed over to the Father. "When the perfect (τὸ τέλειον) comes, the imperfect will pass away" (1 Cor 13:10). The present imperfect world will be swallowed up by the new age, the new world, or the new heaven and earth.

III

If it is true that apocalyptic Judaism explains much of Paul's eschatology, it is the movement away from Jewish apocalyptic, according to one important school of thought within biblical scholarship, which explains the rest. Having said above that eschatology is the key to Paul's thinking, there are some who believe that the so-called "delay of the parousia" is the key to his eschatology.

Related to the issue of delay is the question of development in Pauline thought. In dealing with the topic of the intermediate state, it is important to note that many scholars have perceived a theological shift in Paul from the earlier letters (1 Thessalonians and 1 Corinthians) to the later letters (2 Corinthians and Philippians).

The history of this particular debate begins with the work of Otto Pfleiderer (Paulinism 1:264ff.). Within the nineteenth-century debate over the background or sources for Paul's thought, Pfleiderer concluded that there was good

evidence for "development" in Paul, from the earliest more Jewish eschatology of 1 Thess. 4 and 1 Cor. 15 to the later, fully Hellenized beliefs of 2 Cor. 5. Paul's former, traditional Jewish view with regard to the status of the departed believer is replaced, according to Pfleiderer, by a belief in the believers' instant transmittal to heaven at the moment of death.

R.H. Charles in 1913 (Doctrine of the Future Life 415-61) argued for multiple stages in Paul's thinking and read 2 Cor. 5 to mean the receipt of an immortal body at death.

C.H. Dodd in 1934 (New Testament Studies 111-41) refined Pfleiderer, by arguing that in view of fading hopes of Christ's early return, Paul turned from Jewish thought in 1 Thess. 4 to the half-way house of 1 Cor. 15 with its notion of a spiritual body (σῶμα πνευματικόν), before embracing the full-blown Platonic dualism evidenced in 2 Cor. 5.⁹

While other Pauline passages dealing with death and resurrection are relevant, the critical pericopes are found in 1 Thess. 4, 1 Cor. 15, and 2 Cor. 5. Is there evidence of a theological shift in the Pauline corpus? Is the movement in Paul from a Jewish to a Hellenistic understanding of resurrection? Does he change the timing of the resurrection, or move in an increasingly individualistic

⁹For an elaboration of Dodd's thesis, see J.A.T. Robinson, Jesus and His Coming (London: SCM, 1958), 160ff.

direction? Not surprisingly, there are almost as many interpretations as there are interpreters. In answer to the question of whether and where there is a shift in Paul, J. Gillman (439-54) offers the following survey of interpretations regarding the Corinthian correspondence (1 Cor. 15 and 2 Cor. 5):

1. Major shift: from resurrection at Parousia to resurrection at death. (C.H. Dodd, F.F. Bruce, M.J. Harris, V.P. Furnish).
2. Major shift: from intermediate state as "soul-sleep" to intermediate state as a more blessed state, "with the Lord".¹⁰
3. Major shift: in Paul's perspective on matter, from the idea of resurrection as transformation in 1 Cor. 15 to the notion of resurrection as replacement in 2 Cor. 5. (W.L. Knox, C.F.D. Moule).
4. No shift: Both passages speak of resurrection at the Parousia. (C.K. Barrett, W. Lillie).
5. No shift: There is a difference in subject matter; one is about collective eschatology, while the other is about individual resurrection. (E.E. Ellis).¹¹

¹⁰For authors defending this position, see P. Hoffmann, Die Toten in Christus: Eine Religionsgeschichtliche und exegetische Untersuchung zur paulinischen Eschatologie (Muenster: Aschendorff, 1978), 4-20.

¹¹Authors such as M.J. Harris and C.F.D. Moule could be safely listed in this category as well since they locate a shift in Paul's understanding of resurrection and in the subject matter being addressed.

The question of whether Paul changed his mind or merely developed in his understanding relates directly to the doctrine of the intermediate state. What did Paul believe about the status of those who died before the Parousia? And did his beliefs evolve over time, and if so, why? Was the resurrection body granted the believer at the last day as expressed in 1 Thess. 4 and (according to some) in 1 Cor. 15, or did believers enter immediately into Christ's presence, as 2 Cor. 5 and Phil. 1 seem to suggest? In short, what did Paul believe happens when the believer dies before the parousia?

The Corinthian letters in general, and 2 Cor. 5:1-10, in particular, hold a place of central importance in any discussion of the future life in Paul, judging by the attention they have commanded in the debate.¹²

In this study the unity of 1 Corinthians and of 2 Corinthians is accepted or rather, the arguments against their integrity I do not consider compelling. As for chronology, I follow the consensus opinion that 1 Thessalonians is an example of Paul's early letters; that 1

¹²The question of Pauline development is a complicated one, involving at least three related debates: the integrity of the Corinthian correspondence; the chronology of the Pauline corpus, i.e., the order in which the letters were written; and the dating of the epistles, e.g., how much time elapsed between the writing of 1 and 2 Corinthians? However, only if one assumes an important shift in Paul's thought, which is not the position taken in the present study, are these debates relevant. The argument may, in fact, be circular in that chronology and dating may be based on a perceived shift in Paul's eschatological views.

and 2 Corinthians were written after this; and that Philippians is one of Paul's later letters.

The issues to be discussed in Chapter 1 are: 1) Is there compelling evidence that Paul changed in his thinking about some of the end-time events? 2) What does a close examination of 2 Cor. 5:1-10 indicate about Paul's personal eschatology? Chapter 2 will explore more fully Paul's understanding of the intermediate state. Is it the Jewish notion of Sheol -- a shadowy existence -- commonly called "soul-sleep" (1 Thess. 4; 1 Cor. 15), or is it a blessed state in which the believer enjoys the visio Dei, and is conscious of being "with the Lord" (2 Cor. 5; Phil. 1). Chapter 3 will develop the issue of the "I" or "self" in Paul's thought, an issue basic to the exegesis of 2 Cor. 5:3 in Chapter 1. The strategy will be to show what can be deduced about Paul's anthropology based on the biblical evidence. What is meant, for example, by Paul's use of the anthropological term "naked" self, and how is this "self" different from the sarkic and pneumatic body?

Chapter 1 The Issue of the Shift in Pauline Eschatology

If biblical scholars agree about one thing in Pauline theology it is that Paul's statements about life beyond death are a source of much controversy. Most scholars would also agree that any discussion of Pauline eschatology necessarily involves the related topics of his anthropology and christology. The purpose of this study is to examine one aspect of Pauline eschatology, namely, the timing of the bodily resurrection of individual believers. In order to demonstrate through biblical exegesis Paul's position on this issue, the question of the so-called intermediate state must be addressed.

This expression, "the intermediate state," ("Zwischenzustand") is not found in Scripture, but in Christian theology it traditionally refers either to the condition of all women and men between death and resurrection or to the period of time that elapses (from an earthly viewpoint) between the death of the individual and the consummation of history. This condition or period is called "intermediate" because it lies between two fixed points, the death of the individual and the final resurrection, and because it is temporary, ultimately being eclipsed by the "final state" of humankind (Harris, Grave 206).

Did Paul postulate an 'interim state', that is, a kind

of suspended existence between the death of the body and its resurrection, or did he assume that the believer received the incorruptible body immediately upon death? Closely related to this question is the possibility of a shift or development in Pauline eschatology from 1 Thess. 4:13-17 to the two Corinthian epistles.¹ As we hope to show the arguments for a substantial change in Paul's views throughout these writings, are not compelling. The larger aim, however, shall be to examine closely the passage 2 Cor.

¹ The chronological order of the Pauline corpus is a much debated topic. Some authors date Philippians to Paul's Roman imprisonment and specify it as c.61; others date it to his imprisonment in Caesarea, c.57-59, or argue it was written in Ephesus, perhaps c.53-55; see L.C.A. Alexander, "Chronology of Paul," Dictionary of Paul and His Letters, Ralph P. Martin, ed. (Downers Grove: IVP, 1993): 115-23). The present study, however, involves only the sequence 1 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, and Philippians, an order generally accepted by scholars. Some, including L.T. Johnson, The Writings of the New Testament (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986), 248-50, follow the traditional order; others, such as K. Hanhart, The Intermediate State in the New Testament (Franeker: Wever, 1964), 115, place Paul's letter to the Philippians between 1 and 2 Corinthians. Hanhart believes "an early date for Philippians would explain Paul's reference to the parousia in Phil. 3:21 in terms similar to 1 Cor. 15:51ff and would be Paul's last indication that he hoped to be alive at the parousia." However, Paul's general emphasis in the letter away from apocalyptic descriptions of the parousia and toward his growing confidence that upon death he would be with the Lord is the point. Though the dating of Paul's letters is a separate issue, it is reasonable to assert that Paul still has his hope fixed on the Second Coming after he himself is resigned to not being alive at that time. See G. Luedemann's chronological chart and his warnings about using the presence or absence of apocalyptic descriptions to determine chronology in Paul: Apostle to the Gentiles (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 262-63. See also, G. Ogg, Chronology of the Life of Paul, (London: Epworth, 1968), 60-65; and R. Jewett, A Chronology of Paul's Life (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), 72-82.

4:16b-5:10 as it illuminates Paul's beliefs on life after death, in general, and the timing of the resurrection, in particular.

Already before the beginning of this century 2 Cor. 4:16-5:10 was interpreted as showing a development (or 'Hellenization') of Paul's eschatology.³ Many scholars agree that Paul's close brush with death at Ephesus was a critical event in Paul's life which influenced his thinking about death, specifically as reflected in 2 Cor. 1:8-11 and Phil. 1:12-26.³ It is here, so it is argued, that one finds Paul faced with the realization that he may not be alive for the parousia after all. The scope of Paul's missionary travels, and the dangerous experiences accompanying his

³The seminal works include C.H. Dodd's two articles on the subject which appeared as: 'The Mind of St. Paul: A Psychological Approach' (1933) and 'The Mind of Paul: Change and Development' (1934). They have been reprinted in New Testament Studies (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1953), 67-128. See W.L. Knox, St. Paul and the Church of the Gentiles, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1961), 128-45, for the view supporting Hellenistic revision in Paul. See also E.E. Ellis, "2 Cor. 5: 1-10 in Pauline Eschatology", NTS 6 (1959-60): 211-24; A. Schweitzer, Paul and His Interpreters (London, 1912), 69ff.; H.A.A. Kennedy, St. Paul's Conception of the Last Things (London, 1904), 242-62; G. Vos, The Pauline Eschatology, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1961), 172-205; and W.D. Davies, Paul and Rabbinic Judaism, 4th ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), 309-320. As noted above, (Introduction, sect. III), the debate can be traced back at least as far as O. Pfleiderer, Paulinism (London, 1877). Naturally, there are any number of ways to frame the issue of development, and each interpretation emphasizes the degree of development in Paul to a different extent.

³1 Cor. 15:32 could be included, as well, since even if Paul's mention of "beasts" is metaphorical, he is reporting a perilous experience just the same.

ministry would also account for the shift in emphasis. It is important at this early juncture, then, to ask where critics see evidence for a shift in Pauline thought.

1 Thess. 4:13ff., it is proposed, documents Paul's earliest view, a view closest to the ancient Jewish idea of physical resurrection at the last day. It would appear that the despair of the Thessalonians was not that those who were dead in the Lord would not be raised, but rather that they would not be restored to the congregation since they would be raised separately. He reassures them that those who had recently died would be at no disadvantage compared with those still alive at the time of the parousia. That is, the Christian dead will first "rise", and in this sense, "rejoin" the community. Thus, at the Lord's return, everyone will be "caught up" (4:17) or taken away, together. There will be no second-class citizens; all will be on "the same footing" (Vos 173).

The Thessalonians needed to be reassured because they had misunderstood Paul's teaching on the resurrection. Paul must explain that all will participate equally in the celebration of the Second Advent. "The dead ... will rise first" (4:16). Those still alive will then meet Christ and the resurrected dead in the air. And so shall all be together with him forever.

The issue addressed in this passage is the sequence of events, as can be seen from 1 Thess. 4: 15 to 17:

For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven....And the dead in Christ will rise first; then we who are alive, who are left, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so we shall always be with the Lord.⁴

Paul assumes the time until the parousia was short, includes himself among those alive at the parousia, and expresses a typically Jewish view of the resurrection at the Last Day. But those who view this passage as Paul's early eschatology (as contrasted with his later eschatology of 2 Corinthians, for example), interpret the term "resurrection" to mean revivification or reanimation of the dead. Since no mention is made of transformation of the body and because resuscitation of the corpse is consistent with the Jewish belief, Paul is assumed to be teaching here resurrection life as nothing more than the resumption of material existence.⁵

The second stage of Paul's development is seen in 1 Cor. 15, where Paul distinguishes between the σῶμα ψυχικόν and the σῶμα πνευματικόν. Here Paul's pneumatic theology presumably begins (Vos 173). While in 1 Thess. 4

⁴English text used for biblical and apocryphal texts is Revised Standard Version unless otherwise indicated.

⁵Of course this is an argument from silence, since Paul does neither affirm nor deny that the material body would be changed. Because the issue is the sequence of events, there was presumably no need to comment on the nature of the resurrection body--which is the issue in 1 Cor. 15.

nothing is said about resurrection transformation, Paul now speaks of the transformation of the body at the resurrection and the Spirit as the transforming agent. The 'sarkic' body is eliminated in the process of the resurrection, which the Apostle continues to assign -- as in 1 Thess. 4 -- to the moment of the parousia:

So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable.... It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body. (σπείρεται σῶμα ψυχικόν ἐγείρεται σῶμα πνευματικόν) ... For the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable nature must put on the imperishable, and this mortal nature must put on immortality (1 Cor. 15:42; 44a; 52b-53).

This passage expresses the belief that a dramatic change occurs in the "natural body" at the resurrection, though the timing of the resurrection is still closely linked to the parousia (15: 51-52).

This passage from 1 Cor. 15 shares the basic structure of 1 Thess. 4 in that it presupposes three things: 1) the sequence is "sleep"-resurrection ("We will not all sleep, but we will be changed..."); 2) the resurrection is at the Last Day; and 3) the corporate rather than the individual nature of the resurrection is emphasized since the "spiritual body" is not given individually at the moment of death, but to all at the End, in the general resurrection.

Some interpreters, such as J.A.T. Robinson (Jesus and His Coming 101, 160ff.) and R.F. Hettlinger ("2 Cor. 5:1-10" 174-194) view Paul as teaching in 1 Cor. 15 something

different from the teaching in 1 Thess. 4.⁶ Without reckoning with the fact that the issue is different in 1 Cor. 15 (the nature of the resurrection body), they would contrast Paul's message in 1 Thess. 4, that the dead will be raised with a sarkic body at the last day, with 1 Cor. 15, where Paul makes an important distinction between the σωμα ψυχικόν and the σωμα πνευματικόν. This is, allegedly, an example of Paul qualifying the ancient Jewish view of physical resurrection, and Paul's eschatology is then interpreted as moving in a Hellenistic direction.

The notion of resurrection has undergone a shift, according to this line of thought, from revivification to transformation, with the spiritual body replacing the natural body. Yet because Paul is saying that the 'sarkic' body is lost at death but the resurrection is still delayed until the Second Coming, according to some, the hellenization is incomplete.⁷

⁶See for example C.H. Dodd, who considers this passage the half-way house on the way to the fully hellenized outlook of 2 Cor. 5, New Testament Studies (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1953), 83-128. This was also the view held by interpreters such as O. Pfleiderer, Paulinism (London, 1891), 1:264; and W.L. Knox, St. Paul and the Church of the Gentiles, 2nd ed., (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1961), 128ff. See above, Introduction, Section III.

⁷Commentators have perceived resurrection delay as an anomaly or inconsistency in Paul's thought. Preserving the continuity of the deceased, according to some, requires that the sarkic body be replaced immediately by the spiritual body, otherwise, the connection between the two forms of embodiment and the status of the dead in the interim between death and Christ's return is uncertain. Yet Paul in 1 Cor. 15 does not argue for immediate continuity between the

The development of a third stage in Paul's thinking is found in 2 Cor. 5:1-8. This passage completes the process since it allegedly views the transition in Greek fashion as occurring, not at the Lord's Return, but at the moment of death.⁸ The crux interpretatum is the precise meaning of ἔχομεν in 2 Cor. 5:1:

For we know (οἶδαμεν) that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed (καταλυθῇ), we have (ἔχομεν) a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

The interpretation is problematic because the verb can be taken either as a simple present, meaning that at death the believer receives a new body, or it can be treated as a futurist present (or future possessive) indicating certainty.⁹ Those favouring the first position argue as

buried seed and the appearance of new growth.

⁸On the relationship between 1 Cor. 15 and 2 Cor. 5:1-10, see William Baird, "Pauline Eschatology in Hermeneutical Perspective," NTS 17 (1970-71): 315ff.; R.F. Hettlinger, "2 Cor. 5:1-10," SJT 10 (1957): 174-194; E.E. Ellis, "2 Cor. 5:1-10 in Pauline Eschatology," NTS 6 (1959-60): 211-24; C.F.D. Moule, "The Influence of Circumstances on the Use of Eschatological Terms," JTS 15 (1964): 1-15; K. Hanhart, "Paul's Hope in the Face of Death," JBL 88 (1969): 445-57; M.J. Harris, "2 Cor. 5:1-10: Watershed in Paul's Eschatology," TB 22 (1971): 32-57; and W. Lillie, "An Approach to 2 Cor. 5:1-10," SJT 30 (1977): 59-70.

⁹Cf. Davies, Paul and Rabbinic Judaism, 4th ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), 309ff., who defends the interpretation of ἔχομεν as a simple present. For interpreters who understand it as expressing certainty, see Lincoln, Paradise Now and Not Yet (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1981), 63-64; and Vos, The Pauline Eschatology, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1961), 188-89.

follows:¹⁰

1. Such an interpretation accords best with the Pauline belief recorded in 1 Cor. 15:35-49 (but not 15:51-52), where the earthly body must be changed into the spiritual body, especially vis-a-vis Paul's 'grain-of-wheat' analogy.

Presumably, the spiritual body is granted upon the dissolution of the earthly tent just as the appearance of new life is evident upon the "death" of the seed, though presumably not at the point of burial.

2. The use of the present tense where a future tense might have been used is in this instance deliberate on Paul's part and indicates that the believer's acquisition of the new body is instantaneous at the moment of death, when the 'old dwelling' is destroyed. This approach is favoured by those whose principal concern is to harmonize 1 Cor. 15 with 2 Cor. 5.¹¹

3. The conditional 'if' of 2 Cor. 5:1a -- 'For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed....' -- accords more easily with a present tense than with a futurist

¹⁰I am indebted to Yates, "Immediate or Intermediate: The State of the Believer Upon Death," Churchman 101 (1987): 311, for this summary of principal objections raised against a present tense interpretation of ἐχομεν.

¹¹This argument ignores the fact that 2 Cor. 5:1 reads "if" (ἐάν with the subjunctive) and not "when", and thus does not focus on the timing but on the certainty that if the protasis obtains the consequences will follow.

reading of ἔχομεν . The uncertainty implied by the particle εἰ in its conditional sense must relate to when the resurrection body is received, at death or the parousia, whichever comes first. Again, this interpretation of εἰ ignores the fact that Paul could have used ὅταν.

These arguments for a present tense reading of in 2 Cor. 5:1 are not very convincing, however, and may be answered thus:

1. This interpretation which tries to relate 2 Cor. 5 to 1 Cor. 15 is based on such an obvious misreading of 1 Cor. 15 that it may be quickly dismissed. Paul's 'grain-of-wheat' analogy must not be pressed too far or given the force of logic, but must be read for what it is: a metaphor employed to express a difficult truth (Davies 310).

2. While it is true that Paul could have used the future tense of ἔχομεν to convey his meaning, the present tense may also be taken as designating future possession (Lincoln 63). In other words, it may be that Paul used a futuristic present because he was so assured of his possession of the resurrection body after the parousia that he could speak of it as present. It may also be that by "ἔχομεν ... οἰκοδομήν... ἐν τοῖς ὕπνου" (5:1), Paul is saying we, including all believers, ("asleep" or alive on earth) have ready for us, like a garment, in heaven, the resurrection body. Present

tense in this usage would not convey a future sense, but would describe a state of affairs in the present (like having money in the bank ready for use when needed).¹² In any case, it is unlikely that he was teaching immediate resurrection or immediate acquisition of the resurrection body, as this would have involved a radical break with, and contradiction of, his previous teaching in 1 Cor. 15 (Lincoln 64).¹³

3. The conditional particle *ἐάν* goes back to 4:16: "Though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed...." The particle should be linked to the verb *καταλυθῇ*, understood as referring to the present suffering of Christians. In this case, Paul is saying: "If it is the case that our earthly bodies are already being destroyed (2 Cor. 4:8-12, 16), then it is also the case that our heavenly bodies are already being prepared for us in heaven. Alternately, if the resurrection life is already present in the life of Christ's followers (4:12), so the resurrection body is already prepared for the person who dies "in

¹²Cf. Rom. 8:30, an example of Paul using, this time, a past tense (*ἐδόξασεν*), to express certainty.

¹³The interpretive principle at stake here is that one should only assume a radical shift or break if the evidence is unambiguous and sufficient, which is hardly the case here.

Christ".¹⁴ The only uncertainty, then, for the believer is whether the ἐπίγειος will be fully dismantled, that is, whether death will precede Christ's Return. The γὰρ explains the reason for the statement, i.e., "because we know we have a building from God" (5:1). Picking up from "we do not lose heart" (4:16) then, Paul is saying: we do not lose heart because we have a "building from God" already prepared for us.¹⁵ But Paul does not say: as soon as the ἐπίγειος is destroyed, we will occupy the heavenly building; but rather when the ἐπίγειος is destroyed, we will have already prepared for us the heavenly dwelling. In other words, the occupant will take up residence in the new building at the parousia. The resurrection body will be ready when we are, but it is not thereby received immediately upon the

¹⁴Paul connects the daily inner renewal of the believer (4:16-17) with the production of the resurrection body; see A. Plummer, Commentary on the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians (New York: Scribners, 1915), 143. See also, Lillie, "An Approach to 2 Cor. 5:1-10," SJT 30 (1977): 67. J. Gillman, "A Thematic Comparison: 1 Cor. 15:50-57 and 2 Cor. 5:1-5," JBL 107 (1988): 454, observes that "while ongoing transformation prefigures the future transformation, the two, though related, are not the same." One represents victory amid death, the other represents victory over death. See also, Beker, Paul the Apostle (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), 180.

¹⁵Robinson, The Body (London: SCM, 1957), 77, believes the reference is to the pre-existence of the new body. Others, including Vos, The Pauline Eschatology, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1961), 175, 188, object to the idea of a "pre-fabricated" resurrection body, as it were, waiting on the shelf. Many interpreters (such as Vos) want to go no further than agreeing that the believer enjoys "de jure" possession. Admittedly, the reference can be taken either way as it makes no difference for the argument.

dissolution of the earthly house.¹⁶

It should be clear from the foregoing arguments that those who see a transition in Paul's earlier eschatology bear the burden of proof.¹⁷ Whether or not Paul is making a radical break with his previous teaching all depends on the exegesis of 2 Cor. 5:1, which is ambiguous on this point and must be discussed further.

One might tentatively conclude, then, in favour of the traditional view which saw an uncertain Paul, one who was unsure as to whether he would survive till the Second Coming or die prior to that point. In the former case, Paul would put on immediately the resurrection body, without first stripping off the old earthly body (cf. 1 Cor. 15:53). This option is his preferred mode of transformation, bypassing as it does, the dread and "nakedness" associated with death. Yet should the latter happen, should he die before the Lord's Return, he would be subject to spending the interval between death and the parousia in a disembodied state, or a state of γυμνός (nakedness), as he calls it (2 Cor. 5:3). Given these two alternatives, Paul expresses the strong

¹⁶So, the other interpretation, though possible, would create a contradiction with 1 Cor. 15 and thus is less likely.

¹⁷So Lincoln, Paradise Now and Not Yet (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1981), 64: "If [Paul] made clear [in Cor.:15] that the time of the receipt of [the resurrection body], both for those who had died and those who had survived, was at the Parousia, then the same must be assumed [for 2 Cor. 5] unless it can be proven otherwise."

desire to escape death and be caught up with those still alive at the Second Coming (cf. Rom. 8:22-24; Phil. 3:20ff.). That the new body might be granted immediately upon death he does not consider. He is ready to accept whatever the Lord has in store for him, knowing that even if called to experience death, he has the assurance of being immediately with Christ (Phil. 1:23).

Yet Paul, throughout those epistles which were most likely written before 2 Corinthians, normally speaks about himself as one who will survive till the parousia. In 1 Thess. 4:17, for example, Paul explains that after the dead in Christ arise "...then we who are alive, who are left, shall be caught up together... to meet the Lord....," clearly including himself in the group that will escape death (cf. 1 Thess. 4:15). In 1 Cor. 15:51ff. is recorded Paul's belief that "we shall not all die, but we shall all be changed.... The dead shall be raised imperishable and we (the living) shall be changed." While other passages like 1 Thess. 5:10 and 1 Cor. 6:14 suggest that Paul had in the past contemplated the possibility of pre-parousia death, it is evident the prospect seemed unlikely to him considering that he always had managed to survive the dangers and trials. Now, because of the Thessalonians' apparent misunderstanding, he has had to address the question of the fate of Christians who had died. Also, he has been brought face to face with death, having personally endured a

life-threatening experience in proconsular Asia where he despaired of life itself:

For we do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, of the affliction we experienced in Asia; for we were so utterly, unbearably crushed that we despaired of life itself. Why, we felt that we had received the sentence of death... (2 Cor. 1:8-9a).

All these burdens, then, have taken their toll and have led Paul to reflect on his afflictions (2 Cor. 4), and probably on his own mortality, including the possibility of a pre-parousia death. In the midst of the suffering (cf. 2 Cor. 1:5-7), he recounts the consolations which he knows to be his even while he remains in this present life (Lincoln 59).¹⁸

Phil. 1:20-26 is another example of Paul at work refining his resurrection theology. It wrestles with a conflict of values in Paul's thought: being with the Lord versus serving his churches. Paul was imprisoned and facing the threat of death, and yet he was confident that all would turn out well. It was his one desire that whatever the circumstances, whether the issue of his imprisonment was release or death, he would honour Christ. In 1:21-23 he weighs in his mind the two alternatives, life and death. Both give him reason to rejoice. To continue in this life on earth means further fruitful toil in the Master's

¹⁸So Hanhart, Intermediate State (Franeker: Wever, 1966), 120, n.1: "The deep impression...made [by Paul's experience of mortal danger] is evident from the term 'comfort' in 2 Cor. 1:3-7, used ten times."

service--and greater benefits for those who still needed him. Yet he knows, on the other hand, that death is gain, because it would mean being with Christ (1:23). Life and death, far from appearing as two evils look to him like two blessings. In both this passage and in 2 Cor. 5:1ff. Paul does not desire death as an escape. He understands "departure" to mean immediate fellowship with the risen and ascended Lord.

Though it would be more advantageous for him to go to be with his Lord, it is more advantageous for others that he should continue in this life (Phil. 1: 24,25). For, by doing so, he would help them to make spiritual progress and to be more joyous and triumphant in their faith. The passage parallels 2 Cor. 5:1-10, so Paul's views are probably the same with regard to the relevant details respecting the timing of the resurrection. In both cases, the distinction is made between being in the body and being with Christ. No mention is made of God giving the Christian a body immediately upon death. The options then are either residence in the earthly body or temporary disembodiment in the intermediate state, which includes consciousness of being with Christ (Cooper 166).

Yet, those who argue for immediate resurrection see great significance in the shift in terminology from $\sigma\omega\mu\alpha$ (Phil. 1:20) to $\sigma\acute{\alpha}\rho\chi$ (1:22, 24). Ostensibly, Paul contrasts "being with Christ" with "living in the flesh," not with

living in the body. These interpreters thus claim that it is not a matter of embodiment versus disembodiment, but fleshly existence versus spiritual existence. In other words, Paul is allegedly arguing here for an immediate resurrection to a spiritual body. This argument falters however on the fact that Paul clearly does use σῶμα and σὰρξ to mean the same thing as the plain sense of 1:20 demonstrates: "It is my eager expectation and hope ... that...now as always Christ will be honored in my body (τῷ σώματί μου), whether by life or by death." And the σῶμα πνευματικός is a body, after all. Presumably, Paul would have specified resurrection body were that the future state he envisioned.¹⁹ It is much more likely that Paul conceives of the existence between death and resurrection as a bodiless existence in Christ's presence. In short, there is no apparent contradiction between the two passages, and Phil. 1:20-26 may be interpreted in the light of 2 Cor. 5:1-10. For, as Cooper concludes, "attempting to argue for an immediate spiritual resurrection in Philippians 1 is a case of special pleading" (167).

Phil. 1:23 does not speak of the intermediate state, as such, though it is clearly a legitimate inference from what is said. Neither does it reflect the idea of Soul-sleep.

¹⁹"Immediate resurrectionists" must explain 1 Thess. 4 and 1 Cor. 15 or assume a change in Paul's views. Again, the exegesis of 2 Cor. 5:1ff is the crux interpretatum, as the following section will attempt to show.

(See discussion in Chapter 2.) The destiny of the believer is seen from the viewpoint of one who himself faces death. And while Paul may be reckoning here with the possibility of martyrdom (cf. Phil. 2:17), it is clear that Paul is not hoping to receive a special resurrection granted only to martyrs.²⁰

It remains to discuss the immediate context for the passage at hand, beginning with 2 Cor. 4:7ff.

II

"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, to show ...the...power belongs to God...." (4:7):

Paul speaks of carrying the "treasure" of the gospel or the gospel as revealed by the apportioned Holy Spirit in the clay pot of a frail and feeble body (cf. Is. 64:8). Because of human weakness and insufficiency, God's power is demonstrated all the more clearly (cf. 2 Cor. 4:10; 1 Cor. 1:26-31; 2:5). In 4:8-9, Paul lists a series of rhythmic antitheses paralleling 4:16-18 in their "unique optimistic

²⁰Some "immediate resurrectionists" speak of special treatment for Christian martyrs whereby they receive an earlier (immediate) resurrection and entrance into glory at the moment of death. See, for example, T.E. Pollard, "Martyrdom and Resurrection in the New Testament," BJRL 55 (1972-73): 240-51; cf. Hanhart, Intermediate State (Franeker: Wever, 1966), 182.

pessimism" (Hering 32): afflicted/yet not crushed; perplexed/yet not in despair; persecuted/yet not forsaken; struck down/yet not destroyed. The sufferings endured for the sake of the gospel (cf. 1:5; 11:23f.) are referred to here as "carrying in the body the death of Jesus" (4:10). These daily mortifications (4:11) magnify the triumph of divine power (cf. 1:9). The more he is "giving up to death" (4:11; cf. 1 Cor. 15:30f.; Rom. 8:36) in his labor to share the gospel, the more spiritual "life" Paul brings to others, and the more the "life of Jesus" is revealed in him (cf. Phil. 3:10). Σωμα (4:10) and σαρξ (4:11) are both used here to mean "bodily existence" (Hering 33). Again, Christ's resurrection life is made manifest in human weakness.

2 Cor. 4:13 quotes Psalm 116:10: "I believed and so I spoke," which indicates Paul's faith in him who "raised the Lord Jesus" and "will raise us also with Jesus" (4:14). Because God raised Jesus, he will also raise "us", reasons Paul (cf. 1 Cor. 15:20f.).²¹ "With Jesus" (σὺν Ἰησοῦ) here conveys the idea that all believers will participate in the resurrection retinue together and all will enjoy future fellowship with Christ. Death will not separate Paul from the Lord or his fellow Christians. Grace leads to thanksgiving, which in turn leads to God's greater glory

²¹Again, the theological model is "as Christ--so the Christian"; see Luedemann, Paul: Apostle to the Gentiles (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 220.

(4:15). As Paul by God's grace is able to bring the gospel to "more and more people", so will their thanksgiving invite yet more abundant grace (cf. 9:1).

In 2 Cor. 4:16-18, Paul continues his theme, comparing the earthly existence with the heavenly through another series of antitheses: 'outer'/'inner', 'momentary'/'eternal', 'seen'/'unseen', and 'transient'/'eternal'. Likewise, Paul contrasts in 2 Cor. 5:1-10, 'naked'/'clothed', 'mortality'/'life', 'at home in the body'/'at home with the Lord', etc. As has been pointed out, these verses could have been written by Philo or another Platonist, if one ignores the immediate context and the Apostle's other teaching (Hering 34). Nevertheless, while using language which is borrowed from anthropological dualism, Paul is describing the one identity of the Christian believer, whose $\epsilon\sigma\omega \acute{\alpha}\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\varsigma$ --new Adam--grows invisibly, day by day, through the experience of renewal, even while outwardly advancing in decay (4:16). Though the body, the flesh, the corporeal, is outwardly perishing by affliction, the spirit, the inner person, the $\epsilon\sigma\omega \acute{\alpha}\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\varsigma$ is renewed daily (4:16) by the means of grace and the hope of glory (4:17). Paul's perspective on present suffering is from the viewpoint of eternity; his trials are 'slight' and 'momentary' and are insignificant compared to the "exceeding" glory to be revealed at the end 4:17; cf. Rom. 8:18). Paul concentrates on the unseen ($\tau\acute{\alpha} \mu\grave{\eta} \beta\lambda\epsilon\pi\acute{o}\mu\epsilon\nu\alpha$),

the "ἀόρατα" (things invisible; 4:18; cf. Heb. 11:26, 27). He stays focused on his goal and pursues his aim with singleness of heart. He encourages believers to look up and away to the permanent and true realities of the unseen, rather than at the visible, passing experiences and circumstances of this present life (cf. Phil. 3:20; Heb. 12:2). The thought, once again, strikes a Platonic chord. (See discussion in Chapter 3.)

Paul's reflections on "earthen vessels" (4:7), "afflictions" (4:8), "death for Jesus' sake" (4:10-12), and "wasting outer nature" (4:16), are preparatory to his reflections on the resurrection body in 2 Cor. 5:1-5. The link between the two is his mention in 4:18c of "the things that are unseen", but "eternal", of which the resurrection body is a foremost example.

Having set the immediate context for 2 Cor. 5:1-10, we can now turn to the exegesis of these verses.

III

5:1 For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. 2 Here indeed we groan, and long to put on our heavenly dwelling, 3 so that by putting it on we may not be found naked. 4 For while we are still in this tent, we sigh with anxiety; not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. 5 He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.

The difficulty of the passage is complicated by a textual problem in verse 3. In deciding between ἐνδυσάμενοι and ἐκδυσάμενοι, Bruce Metzger concludes that "in view of its superior external support the reading ἐνδυσάμενοι should be adopted, the reading ἐκδυσάμενοι being an early alteration to avoid apparent tautology" (579-80).

2 Cor. 5:1: 'Οἶδμεν...ὅτι' -- 'we know ... that', one of several Wissensformeln in 2 Corinthians, introduces something his readers already know or should have known.²² Apocalyptic sources spoke of new 'dwelling-places' reserved for the faithful in the future Age.²³ But Paul invests this building from God with new meaning. The loss of the earthly body will be made up for, sooner or later, by the acquisition of a new body, according to these verses (cf. 1 Cor. 15:35ff.). As to when this will happen, no mention is made. We have (ἔχομεν), present tense, most likely carries here the sense of 'We have already prepared for us', though it presently exists elsewhere, namely in heaven. It is ready for us, but not yet possessed. This goes beyond the

²²Cf. 1 Cor. 8:1, 4; Rom. 2:2; 3:19; and 8:28. Against Plummer, The Second Epistle to the Corinthians (New York: Scribners, 1915), 141, who suggests the phrase means simply "intuitive knowledge".

²³Slavonic Enoch 61:1: "In the great Age [to come] are many mansions prepared for men, good for the good, and bad for the bad; cf. Jn. 14:2; Rev. 21. 2 Corinthians alters this slightly, of course, in that the wicked have no dwelling-places at all; see J. Hering, The Second Epistle to the Corinthians (London: Epworth, 1967), 36, n.1.

Greek idea of the immortality of the soul. The building from God and the house in the heavens do not have to imply the pre-existence of souls (Vos 188). The dwelling from God (5:1) points to heaven as the seat and source of the new body (Hughes, Commentary 160-61). 'Earthly tent' can be cited as a common Greek expression for body. It is for Paul an appropriate symbol of transitoriness, perhaps an allusion to the Israelites' pilgrim life in the wilderness (cf. 1 Pet. 2:11).²⁴

2 Cor. 5:2: 'Here indeed we groan, and long to put on our heavenly dwelling.' We groan in complaint or in prayer, with the epitasis, "being burdened" added in 5:4 (cf. Rom. 7:24). The important distinction here is between ἐνδύσασθαι and ἐπενδύσασθαι to 'put on' and 'to put on one garment over another'. The picture conveyed is that of the heavenly body being put on, like a pullover, over the earthly body, with which the believer is clad, so as not only to cover it, but absorb and transfigure it, as well. It includes the idea of continuity and transformation (cf. 1 Cor. 15:51-52).

The same idea is conveyed by 1 Cor. 15:53-54, which provides a helpful commentary on this 2 Cor. 5 passage: 'For this perishable nature (τὸ φθαρτὸν) must put on

²⁴See Davies, Paul and Rabbinic Judaism (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), 313-14, who relates the use of σκηνοῦς to the Feast of Tabernacles. He interprets Paul as saying the Christian must live in the "booth" of the earthly body before reaching the Promised Land.

(ἐνδύσασθαι) the imperishable, and this mortal nature (τὸ θνητὸν) must put on (ἐνδύσασθαι) immortality. When the perishable puts on (ἐνδύσῃται) the imperishable, and the mortal puts on (ἐνδύσῃται) immortality, then shall come to pass the saying . . . : 'Death is swallowed up in victory'."

The ἐπενδύσασθαι must be construed, then, as taking place at the parousia in those still alive at the time of Christ's return. For the disembodied, it is a "putting on". For those still in the earthly body, it is a "putting on over". Otherwise, Paul must be interpreted as saying the ἐπίγειος is carried over into the afterlife (Hughes, Commentary 168-69).²⁵

2 Cor. 5:3-4: 'so that by putting it on we may not be found naked. For while we are still in this tent, we sigh or groan, being burdened (στενάζομεν βαρούμενοι); not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.' These verses introduce the reasons for Paul's wish to be numbered among those who will avoid death. If at the Lord's appearing he is in his mortal body, he shall not be found γυμνός -- in a disembodied state. In other words, Paul is using γυμνός anthropologically to describe that state of

²⁵ ἐνδύσασθαι in 2 Cor. 5:3 and ἐνδύσασθαι in 1 Cor 15:53ff. are used rather than ἐπενδύσασθαι to convey the same meaning. Still, ἐπενδύσασθαι should be interpreted in 2 Cor. 5:2,4 in its normal sense. See J.H. Moulton, A Grammar of New Testament Greek (Edinburgh: Clark, 1906), 1:115.

nakedness which results from leaving the 'sarkic' body at death, or of being divested ('stripped') of one's body.²⁶ It has also been suggested that γυμνός is related to the fate of unbelievers, who are 'naked' before God in that they have no covering for sin.²⁷ While such a meaning can be attested elsewhere, it is inappropriate here. For one thing, Paul is addressing the particular eschatology of believers only, all of whom will 'appear before the judgement seat of Christ' (2 Cor. 5:10). 2 Cor. 5:4 confirms Paul's aversion to 'soul-nakedness'. While for Plato and Philo the nakedness of disembodiment was the goal of life, for Paul it was short of the goal, to say the least.²⁸

Paul's larger concern in verse 4 can be paraphrased as

²⁶Against Ellis, Paul and His Recent Interpreters (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1961), 43, who believes this verse 'does not presuppose an anthropological dualism.' J. Cooper, Body, Soul, and Life Everlasting (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 163-66, believes the best way to understand Paul's anthropology is by use of the term 'holistic dualism' -- the view that scripture teaches both the functional integration of human life and a disembodied intermediate state. See Chapter 3 for a fuller discussion of this issue.

²⁷See, for example, Hanhart, Intermediate State (Franeker: Wever, 1966), 175: "the term 'naked' stands here for being bereft of righteousness in Christ...." This interpretation, which understands nakedness in a soteriological sense, is defended by Hettlinger, "2 Cor. 5:1-10," SJT 10 (1957): 190-92; and Ellis, "2 Cor. 5:1-10 in Pauline Eschatology," NTS 6 (1959-60): 220-21, among others. Cf. V.P. Furnish, II Corinthians (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1984), 298, for a slight variation on this theme.

²⁸To say as Ellis does, Paul and His Recent Interpreters (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1961), 43, that "nakedness" for Paul was "patently undesirable" is overstating the case. After all, in Phil. 1:23 his "desire" is to be "with Christ".

follows: 'For while we who are in these earthly tent bodies are burdened by its frailties and limitations, we would not wish to divest ourselves of the body, but put on over it the transforming heavenly garment.' Note that any mention of being burdened or groaning would be out of place if one received the new body at the time of death. The simple sense of the verse is that a new structure will be received in place of the 'dismantled tent' of the mortal body.

2 Cor. 5:5: 'He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.' The predicate nominative "θεός" is in a position of emphasis, driving home the fact that it is God Himself who has prepared believers for αὐτὸ τοῦτο ('this very thing'), that is, 'the being clothed upon', the ultimate investiture with the glorified body (Hughes, Commentary 174). The pledge of the Spirit (τὸν ἄρραβῶνα τοῦ πνεύματος; cf. 2 Cor. 1:22) is not a static deposit, but the active vivifying operation of the Holy Spirit, who effects daily renewal and bears internal witness to the believers' heirship with and in Christ (cf. Rom. 8:15ff). Paul's emphasis in this participial construction is on how God effects the revivifying activity, namely, through the Spirit (Gillman 448).

6 So we are always of good courage; we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, 7 for we walk by faith, not by sight. 8 We are of

good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. 9 So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. 10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive good or evil, according to what he has done in the body.

2 Cor. 5:6-8: "At home in the body" (ἐνδημοῦντες ἐν τῷ σώματι
 ^ carries forward the metaphor of the preceding verses

and means while in the present tent-dwelling (5:1, 4).

Being confident, we walk by faith, which is the opposite of walking by appearance, διὰ εἰδους (5:7). The word pair, "at home/away" signifies a stay in 5:6; but "at home/away" in 5:8 signifies a departure. These words seem to discount the idea of the new body being given at death. One can hardly be 'absent from the body' (ἐκδημησάμην) if the new body would be immediately substituted. Likewise, 'being present with the Lord' (ἐνδημησάμεν πρὸς τὸν κύριον) must not be equated with the resurrected state.²⁹

²⁹On the one hand, the believer is 'away from the Lord' here only in the sense of being unable to see Him and not in any absolute sense. On the other hand, according to Lincoln, Paradise Now and Not Yet (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1981), 69, 2 Cor. 5:8 expresses a sentiment similar to Paul's perspective in Phil. 1:21-23 where, faced with the same choice, he sees dying as 'gain' and as 'far better' because it means being with Christ. Since Christ is in heaven, "being at home with Him must involve being in heaven in His presence." Many scholars have observed that the meaning of this verse is unlocked by the 'with the Lord' motif, which, as Yates explains, "assures of a superior blessedness, richer fellowship, and a more intimate approach to Christ than anything possible in this obstacle-ridden present existence". See "The State of the Believer Upon Death," Churchman 101 (1987): 318.

Nevertheless, those who imagine an immediate resurrection interpret 'away from the body' to imply some other type of embodiment. But 5:8 only makes sense if Paul is referring to the earthly body since he does not speak of being away from this body, but from the body (ἐκ τοῦ σώματος). This fact together with the use of the expression πρὸς τὸν κύριον, makes it likely Paul is alluding to the nakedness of 5:3, 4 (Lincoln 69; against Harris, Raised 99).

Then there are those, like E.E. Ellis, who contend that this particular passage "simply does not deal with the intermediate state" (Interpreters 48). Ellis supports this assertion by stating that "Paul's primary thought is not of individual bodies at all, but of corporate solidarities which inhere in Adam and in Christ, the old aeon and the new aeon" (41).³⁰ With J.A.T. Robinson, he believes that "whenever Paul uses the word οἰκοδομῆν it means the Body of Christ, the Church, not an individual body" (The Body 76). Yet this begs the question. The three examples he lists (1 Cor.3:9; Eph.2:21; and Eph.4:12,16) cannot be wholly determinative when the immediate context so obviously points to a different use. Paul is clearly speaking of the

³⁰On this individual-corporate shift in Paul, see Moule, "The Influence of Circumstances," JTS 15 (1964): 1-15. See also, Harris, Raised Immortal (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 101, who favours the view that "2 Cor. 5, written from the perspective of the individual Christian, envisages transformation at death, while 1 Cor. 15, expressing the corporate hope of the Church, places the resurrection at the second advent."

individual body as the following examples from 2 Corinthians demonstrate: 'earthen vessels' (4:7); 'our body' (4:10); 'our mortal flesh' (4:11); 'our outward man' (4:16); 'at home in the body' (5:6); 'absent from the body' (5:8); and 'things done in the body' (5:10).

To impose on this passage a theological doctrine concerning the "corporate solidarities which inhere in Adam and in Christ" (Ellis, Interpreters 41) -- however true and Pauline it may be -- is to obscure the issue and the interpretation. Surely Paul would have spelled out clearly what he meant should this have been his concern (Hughes, Commentary 184).

2 Cor. 5:9: "We make it our aim to please him" (cf. 1 Thess. 4:11; Rom. 15:20) means we make it our lawful ambition to be acceptable to him, especially as respects the ministry (Bengel, 295), whether he find us ἐνδικοῦντες (in the body) or ἐκδικοῦντες (out of the body).

2 Cor. 5:10: 'We must appear before the judgment seat of Christ (ἐμπροσθεν τοῦ βήματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ), ... that each ... may receive (ἵνα κομίσῃται ἕκαστος) good ... or bad (φαῦλον or κακόν, in some mss.), according to what he has done in the body'. A good commentary on this verse is 1 Cor. 4:5b: "[The Lord] will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of the heart. At that time each will receive his commendation from God" (translation mine; cf. Rom. 2:1-11; Rom. 14:10-12).

2 Cor. 5:10 needs further explanation since, on the one hand, it can be taken as supporting a 'doctrine of merit' (Rom. 2:12-16); while, on the other hand, Paul clearly teaches elsewhere remission of sins and justification by grace through faith (Gal. 3:1-5:1; Rom. 3:21-8:39). Some have seen in 2 Cor. 5:10 a doctrine of rewards or punishment because here and in 1 Cor. 3:10-15, Paul can be interpreted as saying the judgement of believers will determine what kind of "crown" (μλοθὸν -- reward, v. 14; cf. 2 Tim. 4:8) or chastisement each one is to receive.³¹

Certainly, Paul is clear about human accountability. A weak, insipid ministry will prove of no lasting value, seems to be the sense of 3:13. In other words, in the end, it will be made clear why each receives the commendation appropriate to her or him.

If 2 Cor. 5:10 is understood as an assessment of the believer's faithfulness, Paul is saying that those who die in the Lord face a kind of stewardship audit, whose aim is rewarding those who have brought forth the visible fruit of

³¹The relevant passages include Gal. 5:19-21; 1 Cor. 6:9ff.; 2 Cor. 11:14ff.; Rom. 6:21; and Phil. 3:19. Some interpreters insist that Paul always leaves open the possibility that believers, too, may lose their salvation in the day of judgement or conclude that Paul taught both salvation by grace and judgement on the basis of deeds. See J.N. Sevenster, "Some Remarks on the ΤΥΜΝΟΣ in 2 Cor. 5:3," in Studia Paulina in honorem Johannis de Zwaan (Bohn: Haarlem, 1953), 206; cf. Hughes, Commentary on Second Corinthians (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962), 185-86; and E.P. Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977), 515-18.

good works and withholding reward from those who have not. Paul in 1 Cor. 4:1-5, for example, speaks of himself as a steward (οἰκονόμους) who should be found "trustworthy".

The judgement seat of Christ (τοῦ βήματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ) is the same thing as the judgement seat of God (τῷ βήματι τοῦ Θεοῦ) before which "all stand" in Rom. 14:10b. The judgment seat belongs to God in the Romans reference and to Christ in 2 Cor. 5, which has made this verse an important crux interpretatum for Pauline christology. It highlights Christ's role as God's appointed judge in Paul's thought. Kreitzer points out that "there is some precedent for this fluctuation between God and [his] messianic agent within Jewish pseudepigraphal texts, such as 1 Enoch 37-71 ... [and] T. Abra.13:1-2", but the way the meaning of "Lord" shifts from God to Christ is peculiar to Paul, e.g., in the phrase "day of the Lord" ("Eschatology" 261; Jesus and God 112-128).

All things considered, Paul seems not to depart from the essentials of the Jewish belief about the day of judgment, though his teaching stands in some tension with some of his specifically Christian beliefs about justification. He shares the Jewish assumptions about judgment according to deeds (1 Enoch 45:3; 4 Ezra 7:33-44), the Day of the Lord, and God's prerogative in calling all to account for their lives (Travis 31-124). But faith or unbelief is the issue for "God judges the secrets of men by

Christ Jesus" (Rom 2:16). Deeds "done in the body" (2 Cor. 5:10) reveal the fundamental orientation of each, whether they know God or not, whether they are with him or against him. The verse may be paraphrased: "that each may receive according to what he has made of himself" (Bultmann Theology 1:197).

IV

In conclusion, one must admit the impossibility of fitting neatly together every verse in 2 Cor. 5:1-10. Surely, the numerous attempts made in commentaries, theses, and articles to solve its difficulties testify to its enigmatic qualities. For example, it touches on several of the major themes in Pauline theology, including his anthropology (v.1), eschatology (vv.2-10), pneumatology (v.5), and christology (v.10). Thus, any discussion of the passage in a study of this length is necessarily partial and fragmentary. Even so, there are three final points which should be made:

1) The details of the passage 2 Cor. 4:16-5:10 fit best the view of an intermediate state. And, based on New Testament evidence, there is no obligation to move the timing of the resurrection from where it has traditionally been -- at the parousia.

2) The disembodied state is short of the goal for Paul, yet it is at the same time something to be preferred because

it will mean being present with the Lord. Death is both the enemy and the gateway. Though death destroys the earthly tent, it affords a deeper fellowship with Christ.

3) While not contending for an 'ultimate anthropological dualism', the Apostle does imply a kind of 'temporary dualism'. The intermediate state, though blessed, is penultimate because for Paul the final redemption must include resurrection and transformation of the body.

Chapter 2 The Intermediate State as Soul-Sleep

The exegesis of 2 Cor. 5:1-10 in the previous chapter led to the conclusion that Paul most likely assumed the existence of an interim period between the death and resurrection of the individual. Yet the apostle's attention was not primarily on this phase of the divine plan, his main emphasis was that we live--and die--in expectation. Still, if there exists an interval of time between death and resurrection, this leads to the question about the nature of this intermediate state. If it has been established in the previous chapter that the transformation associated with resurrection takes place at the consummation of the New Age, what is the state of the Christian dead during the intervening period? Some have argued that the intermediate state in Paul is characterized by soul-sleep, i.e., the "self" or the "soul" exists in an unconscious state during the interim period.

Two other commonly held views regarding the intermediate state will not be discussed here. One posits the receipt of the resurrection body immediately upon death and thus, strictly speaking, is not relevant to the present discussion about the nature of the intermediate state. The second view, commonly called "extinction-re-creation" assumes that the soul or conscious ego is annihilated at

death and re-created in the resurrection (as reported by Cooper 118-19) . This view has been advocated by several sects in the past, and is still held by some groups today, such as the Russellites and the Mormons. It has a special appeal for those who cannot reconcile continued consciousness after death with death of the brain. The "extinction-re-creation" view upholds the futurist timing of the resurrection, but in terms of the Pauline evidence, it is deficient. Though its proponents argue it takes the dissolution of death seriously, this view may be ignored in the present discussion since it, too, essentially denies the existence of an intermediate state.

Paul uses the verb "to sleep" in 1 Thessalonians and 1 Corinthians to describe those who have died in the Lord.¹ Because this sleep imagery is directly related to our discussion of the intermediate state, it is worth discussing at some length. First, we will look at how Paul's sleep metaphor builds upon the intertestamental idea of Sheol. Next, we will look at three alternative interpretations of the data: 1) that Paul assumed an intermediate state of soul-sleep, as described by Oscar Cullmann in his famous essay, "Immortality of the Soul or Resurrection of the Dead?"; 2) that Paul shifted in his writings from soul-sleep to a conscious (though bodiless) being with the Lord after

¹Nine times in all: 1 Thess. 4:13, 14, 15; 1 Cor. 7:39, 11:30, 15:6, 18, 20, and 51.

death; and 3) various hybrid solutions. Our larger purpose will be to shed light on the topic of the intermediate state in Pauline eschatology.

I

Although we are not suggesting Paul's direct dependence² on intertestamental sources, it is instructive to ask what Paul's Jewish contemporaries and immediate predecessors believed about the afterlife. Without attempting more than can be adequately discussed within our limited scope, what eschatological ideas were "in the air"?

Whereas in some parts of the Old Testament, one can detect the notion of the dead awakening, the concept of "sleep" as a description of the state of the dead is developed only later in the intertestamental literature. Isaiah 26:19 is often cited as one of the few, if not the only, O.T. examples of such a belief. Here we read:

Thy dead shall live, their bodies shall rise.

O dwellers in the dust, awake and sing for joy!

For thy dew is a dew of light,

and on the land of the shades Thou wilt let it

²See Ellis, "Paul," New Bible Dictionary, J.D. Douglas, ed. (Wheaton, Ill.:IVP, 1980): 898, who provides a general caution to interpreters who are intent on identifying Paul's dependence upon any one particular source. Ellis warns against what he calls "the tendency to convert parallels into influences and influences into sources."

fall.'

Thus, the theme found in some parts of the Old Testament (Dan. 12:2-3; Ezk. 37; Pss. 16:10f.; 49:14-15) of the dead in Sheol awakening to new life and rising on the day of the Lord to take up residence in their revived bodies is not altogether absent from the Hebrew scriptures, but it takes the intertestamental literature to develop this idea. The writings of this period reveal in general a greater interest in the afterlife. They include specific references to "spirits" or "souls" (Cooper 90).

Three examples are found in 1 Enoch 22:3,5,9; 91:10; and 92:3. These passages speak of "the spirits of the dead" and "the souls of the righteous" having been separated into distinct corners, and Hades as the place of the sleep of the dead. In chapter 22, the date of which is uncertain, though certainly pre-Christian, Enoch is taken on a tour to the "high mountain". Here he is shown the holding pen where all the spirits of the dead are assembled until the great day of judgement. The place is Sheol, though it is not identified by name (Nickelsburg 136, n. 18). He sees "the hollow places ... created for ... the spirits of the souls of the dead...." (22:3); and "the spirits of the righteous" who

³The Septuagint renders the verse: ἀναστήσονται οἱ νεκροί, καὶ ἐγερθήσονται οἱ ἐν τοῖς μνημείοις, καὶ εὐφρανθήσονται οἱ ἐν τῇ γῇ. ἡ γὰρ ὁρὸς ἡ παρὰ σοῦ ἰαμα αὐτοῖς ἐστίν, ἡ δὲ γῆ τῶν ἀσεβῶν πεσεῖται.

have died (22:9).

In 4 Ezra 7 we find a reference to spirits, having left the body, either "entering into habitations" or "wandering about in torments" (7:78-80). 4 Ezra 7:75-101, dated by most scholars to first or early second century C.E., speaks of an extended intermediate state. These references are useful to show the ideas of the afterlife which held sway around the time Paul's letters were written. In 4 Ezra 7, we also find a reference to the new age when: "the earth shall give up those who are asleep in it, and the dust those who dwell silently in it; and the chambers shall give up the souls which have been committed to them" (7:32).

Especially in a book like 4 Ezra, one must resist the urge to read it as a systematic eschatology.⁴ Still, the notions about death, resurrection, and the afterlife which can be inferred from this literature help significantly in understanding the context of Paul's eschatology. At the same time, with regard to Enoch 22, one must agree with Nickelsburg that the author's purpose is "not to expound his ideas about judgement and resurrection", so much as to "describe geography" (136).

⁴To this point, see D.E.H. Whiteley, The Theology of St. Paul (Oxford: Blackwell, 1964), 264: "No scholar could maintain that 2 Esdras [4 Ezra] presents us with a coherent and carefully articulated system of eschatology, but at least it is clear that in such writings, when the word 'sleep' is applied to the dead, it is ... employed euphemistically for death."

But with intertestamental ideas of souls and spirits existing separately from their physical bodies, the question naturally arises: are they conscious or asleep, awake or in a state of soul-sleep? The answer is that no uniform view emerges from an examination of the intertestamental literature. In the words of Nickelsburg: "The evidence indicates that in the intertestamental period there was no single Jewish orthodoxy on the time, mode, and place of resurrection, immortality, and eternal life" (180). Cullmann presupposes a unitary Jewish viewpoint which did not exist (Immortality 33ff.). Some texts speak of the shadowy existence traditionally associated with descriptions of Sheol. Yet some speak of immediate assumption to heaven. Some texts imagine the dead in an intermediate state, but others, as in Enoch 22 and 4 Ezra 7, picture the righteous enjoying -- or at least anticipating or experiencing in part -- their rewards directly after death. In late Judaic eschatology, sleep is a familiar term for the state of the dead (1 Enoch 92:3), but sleep can also be used where no indication of resurrection hope is found (Jub. 23:1, 36:8, 45:15, Ass. Moses 1:15, 10:14).

In 1 Enoch 100:5, the righteous "sleep a long sleep", but only a little further on in 102:4-5, they are described as hopeful, not sad, which implies a conscious, active intermediate state. The "sleep" metaphor cannot be said to imply literal unconsciousness, nor does it rule out the

possibility of the afterlife as an alert, active state (Cooper 93).⁵

II

The thesis that between death and the general resurrection the believer exists in a condition of soul-sleep received the strong and significant support of Cullmann in his 1955 Ingersoll lecture at Harvard. The description of the intermediate state as soul-sleep is historically associated with Luther, though it is debatable whether he actually supported it (Berkouwer 60, n.68; Althaus, Theology 410-17).⁶

Cullmann's thesis is that "the teaching of the great

⁵In 4 Ezra 7:35 there is even a description of sleep imagery applied to deeds: "righteous deeds shall awake and unrighteous deeds shall not sleep."

⁶Calvin's views are strongly opposed to the doctrine, as can be seen from his discussion of "falling asleep" in Psychopannychia, a theological treatise written in 1534 against the Anabaptists' teachings on soul-sleep; see Tracts and Treatises of the Reformed Faith (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1958), 3:413-490. No doubt Calvin also had in mind Pope John XXII's defense of the doctrine when he formed his critique, balancing, in Hanhart's words: "an immediate beatitudo (blessedness) of the soul off against an expectatio (expectation) of the resurrection"; see The Intermediate State (Franeker: Wever, 1966), 106, n.4. To the question whether the anima separata (separated soul) could enjoy the visio dei (vision of God) before the resurrection, Calvin's answer is that the intermediate state allows for the soul's provisional happiness even if the awaited fulfillment does not take place until the End, which is most likely the Pauline view as well, according to the exegesis above in Chapter 1. See also, Paul Althaus, Die Letzten Dinge, 7th ed. (Guetersloh: Bertelsmann, 1957), who is recognized as an important defender of the soul-sleep position.

philosophers Socrates and Plato can in no way be brought into consonance with that of the New Testament" (Immortality 60).⁷ Cullmann opposes the Greek and Jewish/Christian views with respect to anthropology, understanding of death, immortality, and the intermediate state.⁸

In the chapter on the interim state, Cullmann makes a major concession. He admits that in New Testament theology there is "a kind of approximation to the Greek teaching" in that, after death, the inner person "continues to live". Yet he stipulates that this transformed way of being is "the condition of sleep", rather than the immortality of the soul (Immortality 56).

Cullmann correctly identifies Paul's frequent use of the verb "to sleep" (κοιμάομαι) to describe the deceased. In 1 Thess. 4:13, for example, he instructs the church not to grieve excessively for those "who are asleep" (οἱ κοιμώμενοι). In 1 Cor. 15:6, 18 and in 1 Thess. 4:14 and 15 the term "those who have fallen asleep" appears in the aorist passive (οἱ κοιμηθέντας), and once, in 1 Cor. 15:51, in the future passive (κοιμηθησόμεθα). In 1 Cor. 15:20 the same verb in the perfect tense (ἡκοιμημένον) is used by

⁷Cullmann puts the emphasis on "teaching" in order to distinguish this from the philosophers' character and behaviour, which Cullmann believes may exemplify some Christian values.

⁸See also, Cullmann's contrast of the Greek and Judeo-Christian view of history in Christ and Time (London: SCM, 1951).

Paul with reference to the dead.

Nevertheless, Cullmann is wrong when he identifies the euphemistic expression "to sleep" as "the customary designation in the New Testament of the interim condition" (Immortality 57). For example, it has been observed that in the New Testament as a whole the term is relatively rare (Hanhart, Intermediate 108). Paul uses it only in 1 Thessalonians and 1 Corinthians. Frequently, where it is found, its use is similar to that of the Septuagint and intertestamental literature. For example, in Acts 7, the stoning of Stephen ends with the phrase "and he fell asleep" (καὶ τοῦτο εἰπὼν ἐκοιμήθη; v.60). Likewise, in 1 Cor. 7:39: "A wife is bound to her husband as long as he lives. If the husband falls asleep (κοιμηθῇ), she is free...." It is, then, a figurative way of speaking of death.

Among biblical writers, Paul uses the phrase more than anyone else. But even in Pauline passages, the number of times it could be interpreted as a description of the interim state are not more than two, namely, 1 Thess. 4:13-- "we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning those who are asleep"; and 1 Cor. 15:20--"Christ has been raised ..., the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep." Furthermore, one can distinguish between the general punctiliar meaning, to "fall asleep", as opposed to the linear meaning, to "be asleep". In other words, "falling asleep" could describe how one enters into the interim

state, rather than one's condition therein (Harris, Raised 135).⁹

Paul does seem to follow traditional phraseology similar to that of other apocalyptic writings. In Jewish eschatology, the contrast is often made between sleep and awakening, a "symbolic word-pair", for Paul, according to Hanhart, denoting death and resurrection (Intermediate 236). Yet, scholars are divided about whether the sleep metaphor is theologically significant or not. It may be argued, for instance, that the Pauline examples are more metaphorical or euphemistic than anthropological or ontological.

Sleep as a euphemism for death is not unique to Paul. It appears in Greek and Hebrew sources as well. According to Bultmann, TDNT, s.v. θάνατος, II, 14n: "κοιμάσθαι is used for the sleep of death from the time of Homer". Still, Paul's use of κοιμάσθαι seems to imply a certain truth, namely, that as sleeping is followed by waking, the death of believers is followed by resurrection. For example, Paul says in 1 Cor. 15: 51b: "we shall not all sleep (κοιμηθησόμεθα), but we shall all be changed", by which he means, "the dead will be raised" (15:52b).

In 2 Cor. 5:8, Paul states positively that when the believer "departs" this body, she shall find herself "with the Lord". Cullmann would view this text, when read

⁹Cf. Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics (Edinburgh: Clarke, 1959), 3:2:778, who expresses a similar opinion.

alongside the sleep metaphor passages from 1 Thess. 4 and 1 Cor. 15, as providing a solid foundation for his doctrine of the interim condition (Immortality 51-56). He argues that because Paul uses sleep terminology to describe death, because the ἔσω ἄνθρωπος is in a waiting mode, and because proximity to Christ is a sure promise, it follows that believers exist in a condition of soul-sleep.

However, while one might admit that soul-sleep is a logical possibility, there is no basis to the claim that it was clearly taught by Paul. In addition to the Pauline passages mentioned above, what New Testament examples we have suggest that the intermediate state is marked by consciousness. For example, in Luke 16:19-31, there is recorded the story of the rich man and Lazarus. Although the parable is not designed to provide instruction on the intermediate state, it does indicate the continuance of a conscious "self" beyond death. Similarly, in Luke 23:43, where the penitent thief receives the promise: "Today, you will be with me in Paradise", the continued existence of a conscious soul is clearly implied. Likewise in Rev. 6:9-10, the souls of the martyrs, presumably not asleep, are said to "cry out with a loud voice". Finally, Luke 20:38b speaks of the dead being "alive unto God".

That the believer will be with Christ after death is certain for Paul, but in what sense she is with Him, Paul does not say. It clearly need not be at all like "the

condition of sleep" that Cullmann has in mind. Despite what Cullmann says about the interim condition being analogous to a dreamlike state which effectively combines being asleep and being conscious (Immortality 57), the evidence for his theory remains unconvincing. To reiterate, κοιμάσθαι in the Pauline (and non-Pauline) passages of the New Testament -- when referring to those who have died -- does not necessarily carry the meaning "unconscious".

In short, the Cullmann thesis is too speculative, for the Pauline examples referring to the "sleep of the dead" do not consistently support either the state of being conscious or the state of being unconscious. The evidence is insufficient, and therefore compels the agnostic's position as to the question of one's ontological status or condition in the intermediate state.

III

Alternatively, some interpreters have concluded that the data suggest Paul shifted in his writings from soul-sleep to a conscious (though bodiless) being with the Lord. Because Paul uses the sleep terminology in his earlier letters, but not in any of his later letters, it follows, according to this view, that Paul modified his thinking on this issue.

1 Thess. 4 and 1 Cor. 15 would seem to suggest that those who have fallen asleep are in a kind of soul-sleep and

not "with the Lord". In that case, he has modified his view in 2 Cor. 5 and Phil. 1. He no longer refers to those who have "fallen asleep" and instead substitutes the notion of "being with Christ". It has been suggested that Paul found incompatible the notion of conscious fellowship with the Lord and impassive existence in a state of suspended animation (Thackeray 102-135). It is possible that Paul shifted in his understanding of how believers are "with Christ" after the separation of body and soul at death. The state of the dead, after leaving the earthly body, but before donning the resurrection body, is, in the language of 2 Cor. 5:3, the state of being "γυμνός". That this discarnate "self" enjoys fellowship with Christ is clear (2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23). Therefore, it is argued, Paul changed his mind, not on the timing of the resurrection, but on the status of those who died before the parousia.

The two Pauline passages examined in the previous chapter, 2 Cor. 5:6-8 and Phil. 1:22-23, are directly relevant to the issue at hand. They illustrate that Paul did not hold consistently to the postmortem condition as soul-sleep.

In these verses, the emphasis is clearly on what D.E.H. Whitely calls "the positive advantages of leaving our home in the body and going to live with the Lord" (Theology 259). The believer's fellowship with the Lord, according to Paul, is more blessed once she has "shuffl'd off this mortal coil"

(Hamlet 3.1.66). Yet if κοιμάμαι refers to a state of unconsciousness, how can Paul regard it as preferable? How could Paul consider being unconscious, in a state of soul-sleep, as affording him deeper fellowship with the Lord? If the dead lack consciousness, how can their communion with Christ have improved from that experienced in their earthly life? Conscious existence and active communication with the Lord is clearly implied, albeit in a disembodied state, as shown in the previous chapter.

Furthermore, the sleep imagery, though providing a "metaphorically nice way of speaking of the dead" (Reichenbach, 188, n.17); and though telling us something about the way death is "relativized" for the Christian, does not imply that the intermediate state is one of soul-sleep. If the sleep imagery is understood as merely pointing to the fact that the Christian dead "rest in the peace of God" and are "liberated from the struggle, toil and suffering of their earthly pilgrimage" (Kunneth 274), then the biblical data are sufficient to prove this.

The point may be illustrated by an analogy from this side of the grave. Imagine an aged father comatose on his death bed in hospital. His daughter enters the room, stays for an hour, and departs, without any change in the father to indicate acknowledgement of her presence. It would be nonsense to describe the cataleptic patient as having "enjoyed the daughter's company".

For those who die "in the Lord" (ἐν κυρίῳ ; Rev. 14:13), the promise of Romans 8:38-39 is given: "neither death, ... nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." So, while the passages considered above use different prepositions to convey this idea of proximity to Christ, the point Paul is making is the same as that of Rom. 8, namely, that after death the believer enjoys conscious fellowship with Christ.¹⁰

In 2 Cor. 5:8, the dead are "with (πρός) the Lord". In this context, as we have shown, the juxtaposition is made between being "at home in the body" (5:6) and "away from the body" (5:8). When the believing dead cease to be "at home in the body", they then take up residence "with the Lord", literally, ἐνδημῆσαι πρὸς τὸν κύριον. Similarly, verse 7, juxtaposes "walking by faith" and "walking by sight". Death marks the transition from the former to the latter. One can conclude from this that the believer is not only with the Lord, but sees and is seen by Him (1 Cor. 13:12). In Phil. 1:23, Paul voices his heart's desire, which is to be "with (σύν) Christ". Whereas in 2 Cor. 5:8 he states a preference to be away (ἐκδημῆσαι), in Phil. 1:23 Paul has a desire to

¹⁰Of course, it can be argued that "falling asleep in Christ" might mean "in the Lord's care". This, in turn, could be conscious or unconscious. In other words, it could be said that the unconscious dead Christian is not separated from the love of Christ. One can be with the Lord and yet be unconscious.

depart (ἀναλῦσαι) this life, so appealing is the prospect of being "with Christ".

No doubt the use of the preposition σύν in Greek is similar to its use in English. And, one must admit, as M.J. Harris does, that, "in themselves the prepositions need mean no more than 'in the presence of' and contain no idea of reciprocity of action" (Raised 136-37). But Paul is here using the word in the context of an inter-personal relationship. The personal dimension is critical; the fact that the verse deals with a relationship between two persons is hermeneutically important. Again, Harris explains (Raised 161):

... when used to define the relationship between two living persons previously 'spatially' separated, ... [the preposition 'with'] can hardly fail to denote an active, mutual fellowship qualitatively superior to that experienced during the period of relative separation. That is, if death removes the Christian from one form of corporeity, the physical, it augments another, since to the 'in Christ' corporeity which remains intact ... is added a personal 'with Christ' dimension.... The difference between 'the dead in Christ' and Christians who are still living is not in their status ('being in Christ') but in the quality of their fellowship with Christ and the degree of their proximity to Christ ('being with Christ').

Thus, though Paul teaches throughout his writings that death is "neutralized" for the Christian, after 1 Corinthians, he prefers the use of "sleep" in favour of the "with Christ" terminology.

IV

Among other interpretations are two worth mentioning, which we might term, hybrid solutions. The first is a slight variation on the explanation described above, namely that Paul at one time regarded the interim mode as soul sleep, but subsequently discarded the belief. It holds that between Paul's earlier letters and his later writings, he experienced a close brush with death. Having reflected on his many "afflictions", some of which were serious enough to lead him to "despair of life itself" (2 Cor. 1:8-9a), Paul underwent a change of viewpoint from believing he would be alive at the parousia to assurance that, if he died before the Lord's return, he would enjoy immediate, though bodiless, fellowship with Christ.¹¹

The second hybrid solution suggests the term "sleep" may point to a contrast in the corporate Pauline eschatology as over against the individual Pauline eschatology. When considered as a corporate entity (1 Thess. 4 and 1 Cor. 15), the Christian dead are in a "waiting mode", since they have not yet received their resurrection bodies, which will be given them at the General Resurrection. On the other hand, when considered as individuals (2 Cor. 5 and Phil. 1), the

¹¹As to the influence of circumstances, F.F. Bruce in Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), 313, quotes Samuel Johnson: "When a man knows he is to be hanged in a fortnight, it concentrates his mind wonderfully." Bruce goes further yet down this line of reasoning, suggesting Paul may have in fact received an actual death sentence from a judge's lips.

Christian dead are in the presence of the Lord (Moule, "Circumstances" 1-15; Ellis, "2 Corinthians" 211-24). This interpretation does not propose that the corporate entity is different from each of its members. Rather, it suggests that whereas the early letters are written from the perspective of the group, the later epistles are written from the perspective of the individual. For this explanation to work, however, the timing of the resurrection has to shift as well, from the parousia to the moment of death. Because the exegesis in Chapter 1 proved it unlikely that Paul assumed an immediate resurrection at the moment of death, this option is more a hybrid than a solution.

In summary, the point is clear that Paul, by the time he writes his later epistles, no longer describes departed Christians as "sleeping". Whether the influence of Hellenistic thought caused him to modify his views shall be taken up in the following chapter. The Pauline passages when taken together as a whole do not support the concept of soul-sleep.

Rom. 8:38, 2 Cor. 5:8, and Phil. 1:23 all point to the same truth that post-mortem fellowship is different and better than that experienced this side of the grave. How exactly it is different, we are not told. But it seems safe to rule out that "dwelling with the Lord or being with Christ implies no more than his incorporation in Christ, or his impassive 'spatial' juxtaposition to Christ, or a state

of semi-conscious subsistence or suspended animation"
(Harris, Raised 136).

What was imperfect and limited fellowship with the Lord on earth Paul believes will be replaced by the unbroken peace and perfect communion of "seeing face to face" (1 Cor. 13:12b). What was "veiled" by the disabilities and suffering of this life will be "unveiled" in the life to come (2 Cor. 3:15). What was "fading" will be replaced by "permanent ... splendour" (2 Cor. 3:11). The darkness will become light (2 Cor. 4:6). And in seeing the "face of Christ", the believer will receive "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God" (2 Cor. 4:6b). As Paul conceived it, being with Christ and being "alive unto God" are the same thing, for in the heavenly realm "death no longer has dominion" (Rom. 6:11). In the light of the resurrection, the basic powerlessness of death is proclaimed.

Chapter 3
The Intermediate State and Dualism:
The Pauline View of the "Self"

As the previous chapters have shown, scholars are divided as to how the New Testament data relating to the intermediate state is to be interpreted. Some, such as Cullmann, have framed the issue in terms of a contrast between immortality of the soul and resurrection of the dead, thus drawing a sharp distinction between Greek and Jewish thought. For others, including Calvin, any talk about the soul's continued existence after the death of the body necessarily entailed belief in an immortal soul. Indeed, when Calvin in his treatise "Psychopannychia" denies that the believer's soul exists in an unconscious state between death and resurrection, this denial can be seen as a natural corollary of, and even required by, his belief in the soul's immortality (Tracts 3:427).¹

Certain scholars, such as W.D. Davies (Paul 311-314), have tried to deny the existence of the intermediate state, in general, and any dichotomous understanding of human beings in Paul, in particular. Davies insists that "the

¹In one sense, Cullmann represents the inverse of Calvin's position. By rejecting the immortality of the soul, Cullmann was led to embrace the teaching of soul-sleep; see Immortality of the Soul or Resurrection of the Dead? (London: Epworth, 1958), 48-57. See also, P.E. Hughes, True Image (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 398-408, for a brief but helpful discussion of how these two issues are linked.

language of Paul can be explained without recourse to Hellenistic sources" (314). Paul's historical and cultural milieu, he claims, were thoroughly Hebraic and the decisive influences upon him were the Old Testament and Palestinian Judaism.² Similarly, W.L. Knox suggests that Paul's Judaism made it impossible for him to contemplate "a bodiless existence in the hereafter" (128ff.); and F.F. Bruce observes that: "[Paul] could not conceive of conscious existence and communication with his environment in a disembodied state" (Paul 313).

Bultmann, for another, can be seen as arguing for the unity of human nature in Paul when he explains that "man does not consist of two parts ($\sigma\omega\mu\alpha$ and $\psi\upsilon\chi\acute{\eta}$), much less of three ($\sigma\omega\mu\alpha$, $\psi\upsilon\chi\acute{\eta}$, and $\pi\nu\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha$)", and adds that for Paul, even the future life is an existence which requires a body (Theology 2:209, 203, 192).³

Some (including Bruce) refuse to accept that the Pharisees were dualists, as Cooper says, despite "the intertestamental literature, Josephus, and the rabbinic

²To be fair to Davies, he admits that first-century Judaism had been "influenced and modified by Hellenistic conceptions of immortality" (320).

³See also, D.E.H. Whitely, The Theology of St. Paul (Oxford: Blackwell, 1964), 32-34; R. Jewett, Paul's Anthropological Terms (Leiden: Brill, 1971), 82-95; and H. Ridderbos, Paul: An Outline of His Theology (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), 29-32, all of whom agree with Bultmann on the ontological inseparability of the human person. H.M. Shires, Eschatology of Paul (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1966) defends a monistic interpretation as well.

writings" (163). Berkouwer (Man: The Image of God) and Ridderbos (Paul: An Outline of His Theology) can be classed in this same category to the extent that they are also eager to dismiss any hint of dualism in Paul. Then there are others (e.g., Helmut Thielicke, Living With Death 173) who affirm the intermediate state, but deny the separation of the "I" into body and soul.

Against those who set up a straightforward, and arguably artificial, contrast between Athens and Jerusalem, is the interpretation which emphasizes the pluralism present in Jewish thinking about life after death. This approach affirms that the immortality of the soul was certainly embraced by some groups in first century Judaism (Badham 39). Clearly, there is no one universally accepted approach to interpreting the data. Nevertheless, the question must be: Which view, based on the epistolary evidence, best represents Paul?

In rejecting soul-sleep, we proposed that Paul viewed death as the departure of the inner person (ὁ ἔσω ἄνθρωπος, 2 Cor. 4:16) -- the disembodied "self" -- to an interim way of being with the Lord. It is left then to examine the nature of this "I" or "self" in Paul. Without digressing too far from the topic of the intermediate state, what can be deduced about Pauline anthropology from the relevant data? Does Paul say anything about exactly what "part" of the whole person survives death? Does he reflect a Platonic

belief in the immortality of the soul? Has he embraced a popular form of Hellenistic anthropology or redefined it in Christian terms?

The contrast between immortality of the soul, a Greek notion, and resurrection of the dead, the usual New Testament expression (e.g., Acts 17:32; Heb. 6:2; Mt. 22:31; 1 Cor. 15:12, 13, 21, 42), hinges on a distinction between the postmortem state as one of embodiment or disembodiment. From the exegesis of Chapter 1, it is clear that Paul never postulated a state of ultimate disembodiment. Yet one cannot draw too sharp a distinction between the Greek and Jewish view. Cullman, for example, makes too much of the contrast when he identifies the teaching of most of the New Testament books as centred on resurrection of the body, rather than immortality of the soul.

It has been observed that the contrast between the New Testament view and the Hellenistic anthropology is largely in the eye of the beholder. Some interpreters believe the New Testament assumes the immortality of the soul. Citing texts such as Matthew 10:28a, Christ's proclamation about "not fearing those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul", they legitimately conclude that the soul lives on after the death of the body. But others argue that, at least in Paul, the concept of immortality is applied, not to the disembodied soul, as such, but to the resurrection body. For example, Matthew 10:28b, "rather fear those who can

destroy both body and soul in hell", seems to imply that the soul is unequivocally mortal (Hughes, Image 398).

Having said this, it is helpful at this juncture to take inventory of the common elements in Greek and Pauline thought. For example, is it possible to speak of semantic equivalents? The approach here will be to describe Hellenistic dualism, using Plato, and to investigate where the similarities and differences lie.

According to Greek dualism, the classical example of which is Plato's teaching in the Phaedo, the human person is comprised of two parts, a pre-existent, immortal soul and a material, mortal body. The body is considered a prison house -- or even a tomb -- of the soul (Phaedo 67 D; 66 B; Phaedrus 250 C). At death, the soul is separated--or "liberated"--from the encasing body. The view of the body here, indeed of all material things, is negative. The real person is the soul; and the goal of life lies beyond death, for then the soul's long-awaited desire is fulfilled (Phaedo 66 B; 67 A). Physical death, with its consequent separation of body and soul, leads to the ideal state (cf. Philo, Leg. All. I:77-84; Gorgias 524 D).

In Pauline theology, by contrast, the view of the postmortem state is more complex. It is only a blessed state for the righteous. For the wicked, it is a cursed state, since for them "there will be tribulation and distress" (Rom. 2:9). Although the body includes all that

encumbers the soul in this life, death is not simply a release from embodiment for Paul. An important distinction is drawn, in fact, between the intermediate state as blessed and yet penultimate. It is not the ultimate goal of salvation. When he contemplates leaving the earthly body, Paul shrinks from death and would rather not be found "naked" (γυμνός; 2 Cor. 5:3). He can only think of this state of "being γυμνός" with understandable apprehension, in that the discarnate state is incomplete and unnatural.

His desire is to put on the heavenly dwelling (2 Cor. 5:2). For Paul, the goal is somatic existence in a spiritual body. In 1 Cor. 15:35-54, Paul explains that God will give bodies to the dead (v. 38), for in the resurrection, he will clothe them with immortal bodies (vv. 53-54; cf. Rom. 8:11 and Rom. 8:23). Paul's deity is the "God who raises the dead" (2 Cor. 1:9) and his constant theme is that "God will raise us with Jesus" (2 Cor. 4:14). Paul's eschatology includes an intermediate state for this very reason, that ultimate salvation happens at the final resurrection (Phil. 3:20-21).⁴

While for Plato, immortality is "psychical" and substantially incorporeal (though perhaps not essentially so), for Paul, the resurrection body is immortal. Yet, for Paul, the emphasis is more often on "eternal life" (Rom.

⁴See R.H. Gundry, SOMA in Biblical Theology (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1976), 149-154, 159-83.

2:7; 5:21; 2 Cor. 4:18) rather than immortality. And this eternal life is a gift received only by those who are in Christ (2 Cor. 5:4-5; Rom. 2:7; Rom. 6:23). The Christian hope lies not with something within the believer herself, but is something given by God.⁵

For both Plato and Paul, the earthly body belongs to this world; it is mortal and material. The earthly tent is transient and, because life is fleeting, it is only a matter of time before it is dismantled (2 Cor. 4:18b; 5:1a). For the Christian, however, the desire is not for disembodiment, but for the heavenly body. Or more exactly, the desire is really for the return of the Lord prior to one's death. According to Paul, all believers should like to see the last day, the Lord's Return, in their earthly lifetime. "It is to desire translation rather than death and resurrection" (Gundry 152; cf. 2 Cor. 4:16, where the renewal/translation is said to begin before death).

So, there are differences but also important similarities. Despite the protests of those, such as J.N. Sevenster, who insist the similarity of terms does not

⁵See P.E. Hughes, The True Image (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 400, who refers to "the immortality of the whole person in the fulness of his or her humanity, bodily as well as spiritual". The emphasis is on "whole person" to distinguish this from the notion that immortality subsists in the nature of the soul. Hughes further points out that even Calvin interpreted 1 Tim. 6:15-16, which refers to the "Lord of lords, who alone has immortality", in a non-Platonic way, rejecting immortality as the natural property of all human souls.

entail an "affinity in ideas" (209), it is perhaps more accurate to say that the New Testament modifies popular Hellenistic anthropology and redefines it in Christian terms. If the Pauline "self" is defined as that which is clothed in a body, the difference with Plato is not all that substantial. For Paul, the "self" continues beyond death; it does not end at death. In this sense, the soul is immortal (and, some would argue, pre-existent, at least in God's mind).⁶

The state of being *γυμνός* is not really something essentially negative or undesirable, for Paul, but it is incomplete and thus includes a yearning for completion at the final resurrection. In Phil. 1:23: "My desire is to depart", a Platonic note is struck. Yet the apostle's desire to be absent from the earthly body must be balanced with his natural apprehension--not about nakedness as such--but, about death.⁷ However spiritually mature, Paul exhibits an understandable fear of the unknown. He expresses a preference for moving directly from the earthly tent to the heavenly tent (2 Cor. 5:4), without dying first.

In Phil. 1:23, Paul compares the intermediate state

⁶For Paul, as against Plato, the soul is immortal, if by "immortal" we mean "undying" rather than "divine and undying". See also, Wisdom of Solomon, 1-3 for an example of belief in the immortality of the soul.

⁷Of course, this apprehension is also common in a Platonic context for Socrates' serenity in the face of death is exceptional.

with earthly life, but in 2 Cor. 5:3, he compares the intermediate state with resurrection life -- the goal of salvation, the state of heavenly glory after the last judgement (Sevenster 207). The realization that Paul compares the two alternatives differently, in each of the two passages from Philippians and 2 Corinthians, makes the meaning clear. To reiterate what was said in the previous chapter, Paul's stated preference for being "away from the body" (2 Cor. 5:8) must be understood as referring to a better but not the best state, for relative to life on earth, heavenly life is better. In the same way, Paul's anxiety regarding death must be understood as less desirable to being alive at Christ's return. If allowed to choose, Paul would gladly have avoided the intermediate state altogether. For it is not so much that he desires to strip off the earthly body, but rather that he would have "what is mortal ... swallowed up by life" (2 Cor. 5:4).

II

Paul's eschatology does not suggest that the Christian dead cease to exist during the interim period, nor that the transformed $\sigma\omega\mu\alpha\ \pi\upsilon\sigma\upsilon\chi\alpha\tau\iota\kappa\acute{o}\varsigma$ is received at the moment of death. The exegesis of 2 Cor. 5:1-10 supports the conclusion that the emphasis in Paul is balanced between two truths: 1) The believer lives earthly life as a body-soul

entity (Seelenleib), and so shall she be once again after the resurrection body has been bestowed; 2) Notwithstanding, the dead can and do exist in a temporarily discarnate state. Death disrupts the unity, but only for a time. The Zwischenzustand is a state of blessedness (communion with Christ), but it is not yet the full salvation of resurrection life. So the initial "being with Christ" is provisional, in contrast to the final "being with the Lord" which will never end (Sevenster 207). The final redemption is characterized by the conferring of a new body: "Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven" (1 Cor. 15:49).

The idea of the intermediate state, then, rests on certain dualistic assumptions regarding the separation of body and soul in physical death. The question is not why Paul made dualistic assumptions (for that was his starting point), but why he (against some Corinthian believers) insisted on the resurrection of the body. The reason, apart from his Jewish background which included this belief, is that for him the resurrection of Christ involved the resurrection of Christ's body.

The broader topic of biblical anthropology is not relevant to the issues addressed in this thesis. The anthropological arguments may be of interest to theologians but not exegetes. Here, the interpretation depends strictly on what can be determined about the Pauline view. It

remains, then, to examine briefly one or two questions directly related to the intermediate state.

Many biblical scholars before the twentieth-century and much of contemporary theology today has endorsed some form of monism (or holism) as fitting best with the biblical view of human nature, usually without proper attention to the exegetical task (Chamblin 766).

With respect to those interpreters who rule out the doctrine of an intermediate state a priori, one has to question whether their protests result from a faulty premise. Historically, many scholars have begun assuming Paul's anthropological monism and argued their interpretation against the intermediate state from this assumption.⁸ In other words, the intermediate state is rejected because most modern scholars reject anthropological dualism and force Paul to agree with them. This approach subsequently fails to wrestle with the clear implications of Paul's teaching in 2 Cor. 5:1-10 and Phil. 1:21-24.

Commentators seem to be trying too hard when they argue that Paul did not share in the dualism of his time. These critics want to avoid reading "unbiblical" Greek philosophy into the Pauline corpus; or they are concerned to demonstrate that Paul has a holistic Hebrew (monistic) anthropology. Conservative Protestants, for example, have

⁸See J. Cooper, Body, Soul, & Life Everlasting (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 162, for a survey of the principal players.

denied traditional body-soul dualism, suspecting that it is a foreign import, and thus, beyond the confines of sola scriptura. Though their quarrel is primarily with what they view as pagan accretions, dualism in any form is given a wide berth. Liberal scholarship, in turn, considers the traditional body-soul dichotomy irrelevant and outdated. In the context of contemporary neural science and philosophical materialism, it is unsatisfying, if not untenable (as reported by Cooper 2-6). Thus, the modern bias in favour of the holistic nature of human beings is found both in liberal and conservative scholars.

Critics from both camps can object with some legitimacy that Paul when he became a Christian did not cease to be a Jew, but the point is that Hellenism had by this time already greatly influenced Judaism (Hengel 1:310-314). Similarly, certain critics point out that, because the New Testament is not a treatise on philosophy, it is not surprising that Paul uses anthropological terms in an imprecise way. No doubt, the debate over Paul's view of human nature is complicated, in many cases, by the difficulty of defining terms. There is, for example, no agreement on what exactly is meant by "dualism"? Cooper, for one, claims that the Pauline corpus, with regard to the monism-dualism debate, is pre-philosophical (112, 180, 197):

We get no philosophical definitions of 'ego,' 'person,' 'body,' 'soul,' or 'spirit' from the doctrine of the intermediate state [in Paul]. We have no information about what sorts of experience

are possible without bodies.... All we know from Scripture is that in God's providence human beings can exist in fellowship with Christ without earthly bodies. But we can ... see that ... this possibility must necessarily be dualistic. For that is minimally what dualism means.

In short, Paul is more practical than theoretical.

III

Paul, through the use of synecdoche, could refer to the whole person by use of such terms as "σῶμα", "πνεῦμα", "καρδιά", "νοῦς", or "ψυχή". Given his Jewish outlook, it is highly probable he viewed the human person as a soul-body entity, but, it is being argued here, a divisible soul-body entity.

As Jewett points out, Paul does not use the terms "soul" or "spirit" to refer to persons in the afterlife (Terms 449): Paul never uses "ψυχή" in "the strict sense of 'soul,' i.e., the God-related portion of man which survives after death." Certainly, Paul uses the terms "ψυχή" and "σῶμα" frequently, but never does he use the two together to denote two parts of the whole (Jewett 334-46).

This suggests that Paul is not a Platonist. His is not the radical dualism of soul and body associated with Platonism, nor does he use a technical anthropological vocabulary. Yet Paul reflects, more or less, the popular

anthropology of his time. Perhaps the distinction to be made is that, while for Plato it is a straightforward dualism of body-soul, for Paul it is slightly different. Rather than body-soul dualism, one should instead assign to him a self/body, ego/body, or person/body dualism (Cooper 171).

Nevertheless, Paul's view is clearly that the "self" can separate from the σῶμα. 2 Cor. 5:1-10 and Phil. 1:22-24 teach this. 2 Cor. 12:1-4 also clearly reflects a kind of anthropological dualism. In this passage Paul speaks about his experience of "visions and revelations of the Lord" (12:1). He refers to being "caught up to the third heaven" into Paradise -- whether in the body or out of the body" he does not know (12:2-3). In his dualism, Paul reflects the Hellenistic environment of his day.

The view insisting on Paul's anthropological monism has been effectively challenged by two relatively recent studies by Cooper (1989) and Gundry (1976). Gundry speaks of an "overarching unity" in Paul's view coupled with "an ontological duality" and "a functional pluralism" (84). According to Gundry, Paul typically uses various terms to refer to the two components of the human being, the tangible (corporeal) and intangible (incorporeal) aspects of ἄνθρωπος, the word normally used to designate the whole person, in the unity of his or her parts (156).

Cooper uses the term "holistic dualism" to describe Paul's anthropology (50). By his definition, holistic

dualism affirms both a disembodied intermediate state and the "functional unity" of human life, both of which are, in his view, taught by the Christian scriptures. Cooper's antidote to monism would "affirm phenomenological, existential, and functional unity,... [without] entailing monism or personal extinction at death" (179ff.).

Such an approach to the dualism debate is subject to the criticism that Cooper is trying to have it both ways. Still, it would leave room for the fact that Paul taught both provisional blessedness in the interim state and somatic existence in the resurrection. Again, the semantic difficulties in Paul's sometimes confusing use of terms should be kept in mind. Specifically, if immortality of the soul is understood to mean immortality of the "self", that is, the believer's immediate presence with Christ at death, then Paul certainly adhered to such a belief.

Admittedly, Paul does not clarify how the Christian dead exist with Christ between death and resurrection, except to say it is by the power of the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 5:5; Rcm. 8:11, 23). And yet the dualistic assumptions of the intermediate state accord best with the exegesis of 2 Cor. 5:1-10 and the other relevant passages examined above (1 Thess. 4, 1 Cor. 15, and Phil. 1). If the believer is "away from the body", then she is "at home with the Lord", so the destiny of those who die before the parousia is bodilessness. At the same time, Paul teaches the

resurrection body is not put on till the Lord's return and the final redemption.

In conclusion, it would seem clear that Paul's view is dualistic, though it is by no means identical to Platonic dualism. The terms "functional holism" or "holistic dualism" were suggested as possible descriptions of the Pauline anthropology (Cooper 171ff.). But it is debateable whether such designations are either helpful or apt. For some critics, such paradoxical expressions are unnecessary to describe Paul. It may suffice to say simply that Paul is not an anthropological monist.

In any case, Paul's view is distinct from Platonic dualism in that the σῶμα and σάρξ are not inherently evil⁹, nor is the ψυχή or πνεῦμα inherently good. The naked/clothed imagery in 2 Cor. 5 does not necessarily carry with it connotations other than that the dressed state is seen to be the complete state, i.e., there is no hint of nakedness/shame, or nakedness/innocence. The subject of Paul's incorporeal "way of being" is not exactly the immortal soul, but the self, ego, inner-person, or πνεῦμα of the new creature in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17) -- it is man or woman renewed by the Holy Spirit.

The question of how to situate Paul with respect to the

⁹Of course, it can be argued that in his view of fallen human nature, Paul sometimes comes close to this. Certainly the sarkic self, for Paul, is subject to sin, weakness, dishonour, and death.

Hellenistic and Hebraic settings, goes far beyond the limits of this thesis. The debate is a complicated one and is revived afresh with each new generation of biblical scholars and may not, in fact, be all that important. Yet it is possible to summarize our conclusions as follows:

1) Paul did not make any particular effort to produce "a truly consistent anthropology" (Jewett, Terms 447).¹⁰

Where necessary, Paul, the Pharisee, used the foothold of common Greek terminology to gain a hearing for his Christian views. His approach was practical, with his principal aim being the message of Jesus Christ and the good news of salvation. In his effort to communicate the gospel to his readers, Paul was not averse to including -- and thereby christianizing -- non-Jewish terms within his eschatology.

2) Because Paul objected to any suggestion of terminal nakedness, he emphasized the body supplied by God. It may be said that he altered the framework of traditional Jewish eschatology to accommodate Christian beliefs, but, he did not, in the process, adopt a "pneumatic" eschatology based on Platonic ideals.

¹⁰See also, G.E. Ladd, Theology of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 499, who makes the same point when he observes that Paul never takes human nature as an independent theme in itself.

Conclusion

Having examined 2 Cor. 5:1-10 from several different perspectives, it remains to summarize what our investigation has revealed.

The preceding analysis showed that the believer's bodily resurrection in Pauline eschatology is best understood as occurring at the parousia despite various objections which have been raised against this view. The notion of an intermediate state is compatible with Paul's teaching in this passage and there is nothing in 1 Thess. 4 or 1 Cor. 15 which necessitates the assumption that Paul shifted his expectation from resurrection at the parousia to resurrection at the moment of death.

At the same time, Paul's principal focus is on what lies beyond the interim state. He views the Christian's true destiny as sharing Christ's destiny, which includes being "glorified with him" in the resurrection (Rom. 8:17). Even if he dies before the parousia, even if he should have to spend the interim period in a discarnate state, Paul is saying, he is confident he will receive the heavenly body at the Lord's return. So, whether he is found in a state of embodiment or disembodiment, he feels assured that he belongs to the Lord, for Christ is Lord of the living and the dead (Rom. 14:8-9).

In answer to the question as to what happens to the individual believer in the interval between his or her death and the parousia, Chapter 2 surveyed several possibilities. Because commentators have interpreted the data in various ways, with some concluding that Paul had in mind either a state of sleep (1 Cor. 15:51), a state of nakedness (2 Cor. 5:3), or a deeper communion with Christ (Phil. 1:23), a number of alternatives were examined in detail. Paul's sleep metaphor was related to the intertestamental idea of Sheol and his use of the verb κοιμάσθαι.

Although the idea of the intermediate state as the soul's sleep-of-death has many defenders, including Oscar Cullmann, the textual evidence would suggest that Paul assumes a conscious (though bodiless) presence "with the Lord" after death. Thus the sleep imagery probably should not be understood literally, reflecting a belief about one's ontological status in the intermediate state. Rather, it should be understood as simply a euphemism for having died, denoting the end of one's earthly life.

Chapter 3 assumed that Paul's views regarding the intermediate state can be more easily grasped by understanding his concept of the Christian "self". While the exegesis undertaken in Chapter 1 began with a straightforward contrast between immortality of the soul and resurrection of the body, this proved through the analysis in Chapter 3 to be a false antithesis. Though Paul was not

properly speaking a Platonist, the idea of the intermediate state, it was shown, rests on certain dualistic assumptions regarding body-soul separability. It would appear that the textual evidence is best accounted for if we attribute to Paul an anthropology which reflects the popular Hellenistic view of his day (cf. 2 Cor. 12:2,3; Phil. 3:21). Still, resurrection for Paul is bodily, since Christ's body was raised from the dead and Christ's resurrection is the theological model for the future life (1 Cor. 15:1-20).

The question of how to situate Paul with respect to the Hellenistic and Hebraic settings is a complicated one. As far as the topic of the intermediate state is concerned, however, it is relevant to note that Paul clearly did not make any particular effort to produce a truly consistent anthropology nor did he take human nature as an independent theme in itself. Nevertheless, the notion of an intermediate state may be rejected only by ignoring the clear implications of Paul's teaching in 2 Cor. 5:1-10 and Phil. 1:21-24.

Furthermore, one might agree with W. Lillie that Paul throughout his epistles differs from both the materialistic view of death associated with some Old Testament texts, on the one hand, and a more narrowly Platonic idea of death as the soul's escape, on the other ("Approach" 63-64). Echoes of both these views can be seen in 2 Cor. 5:1-10, no doubt, but Paul's view is distinctive with respect to his emphasis

on bodily resurrection. So while the risen Lord is understood as enjoying a somatic existence, it is a somatic existence of a different order. Scholars agree that Paul's confidence in God assures him that he will be provided for--even after death, and even though he may not know this side of the grave "what things the Lord hath prepared for them that love Him" (1 Cor. 2:9, KJV). Thus, Paul would have his readers understand that through the gift of the Holy Spirit, believers have a pledge of the resurrection life (2 Cor. 5:5), but only a limited knowledge of its characteristics.

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