

FREDRIK LINDGÅRD

Paul's Line of Thought
in 2 Corinthians
4:16–5:10

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For Kata,
Linus, Lukas, Linnea and Lova

Preface

It has been a fascinating task to try to understand Paul's way of thinking in 2 Corinthians, and especially in verses 4:16–5:10. During the years when Paul has "accompanied" me, as I have been working either at the university or as a pastor, several persons have helped me to learn to know him better.

The person who introduced Paul's letters and especially 2 Corinthians to me is Prof. Lars Aejmelaeus. His research concerning the Corinthian correspondence has been indispensable to me. His starting point, that the analyses of parts of the texts have to be anchored in the situation in which Paul wrote his letters, has been of great importance to me. His constant confidence in me as a scholar has encouraged me in times when I have thought that it is impossible to find out what Paul meant in 2 Cor 4–5. Prof. Aejmelaeus has also been directing the project group "The Hellenistic Context of Christianity" where I have had the opportunity to discuss my research with fellow-students. I am grateful to all the members of the project group.

I am deeply grateful to Prof. Heikki Räisänen who has been directing the project "Formation of Early Jewish and Christian Ideology" which was nominated a "Centre of Excellence" by the Academy of Finland. As I see it, it is to a great extent due to Prof. Räisänen that the research atmosphere is creative and encouraging. The research in the project may be compared to a meadow where very different flowers have been allowed to grow up forming a beautiful whole. Prof. Räisänen has given me many useful pieces of advice, both in seminars and private.

The discussions with Docent Erkki Koskenniemi has helped me on several issues. His knowledge of the literature of Antiquity has been very useful to me. His and Prof. Räisänen's comments on my dissertation in the preliminary examination have been of great importance.

Through Docent Matti Myllykoski, I learned that Paul's theological language is intimately bound to the purpose of each letter, something which proved to be true in 2 Corinthians.

I want to thank Prof. Karl-Gustav Sandelin (Åbo Akademi University) who at short notice accepted the task of being my opponent. I am pleased that Prof. Sandelin, whose knowledge of Paul's letters to the Corinthians is impressive, undertook this task.

I am deeply grateful to Margot Stout Whiting who has corrected my English. One of her many contributions to my work is that she cut out my

unconscious erroneous inventions of new English words. If there still are errors in my English, they are due to my own negligence.

My colleagues and fellow-students at the Department of Biblical Studies have aided me with their friendship and by helping me with both practical and theoretical issues concerning my research. Research assistant Perttu Nikander and IS-Manager Olli Kakriainen have kindly given me technical assistance concerning the final version of my text.

My discussions with international colleagues have greatly stimulated me. I am grateful that I had the opportunity to participate in the seminar “Paul between Judaism and Hellenism. The Corinthian Correspondence in Context.” at Rolighed, Denmark in 1997 and the International Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature in Lahti in 1999. I remember especially my discussions with Prof. David E. Aune at Rolighed and with Dr. Krister Stendahl in Lahti. The joint seminars with Åbo Akademi University and Uppsala University have also been stimulating. During the time when I was working as an assistant at the Department of Biblical Studies, several distinguished scholars visited Helsinki. The visit of Michael and Clare Goulder was perhaps the most important to me because of the discussions we had on life and faith.

In 1996 I had the pleasure of being able to study Paul and ancient Greek literature due to a one year grant from the 350th Anniversary Foundation of the University of Helsinki. During 2000–2001 the Centre of Excellence enabled me to work as a researcher for several months. The University kindly gave me a two month grant in 2002 which helped me to finish my dissertation.

Several of my relatives have shown a genuine interest in my research which is something I want to thank them for. I am especially indebted to my parents, Märta and Tor, and my brother Mats. My grandparents, whose toilsome trade as farmers was based on endurance, probably have been unconsciously significant to me when I have tried to complete my task. It is easy to give up but in the long run it does not pay. My friends as well as many people in the parishes where I have been working have also been interested in my research which I appreciate very much.

I am deeply grateful to Prof. Jörg Frey who recommended that my dissertation be published in *Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament*. I am happy that my dissertation is included in the publications of Mohr Siebeck.

My innermost feeling of gratitude concerns my family. My wife Kata and my children Linus, Lukas, Linnea and Lova have been the most important persons to me during this work. Their love and sense of humor have supported me every day.

Fredrik Lindgård

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Chapter 1

The Problems and my Aim

2 Corinthians 5:1–10 is well known among scholars as a notoriously difficult section. Every type of interpretation has its own weaknesses and I think I am right when stating that most scholars interpreting the section have felt that, whichever interpretative alternative they choose, they in some respect end up in a dead end. Paul is simply very difficult to understand in these verses. In chapter 2, I have tried to sort out the different types of interpretations in order to show the strengths and weaknesses of the different attempts to read Paul correctly.

It is my aim in this dissertation to understand Paul's way of thinking in the beginning of the fifth chapter of 2 Corinthians (2 Cor). It is, however, in my opinion, not possible to understand the line of thought in 5:1–10 without reflecting on the larger context and the immediate context. It is not clear how many letters the canonical 2 Cor contains. The mere fact that it is difficult to know which is the larger literary context, makes it difficult to understand the character of Paul's train of thought in 2 Cor 5:1–10 or 4:16–5:10. Is the larger context, for example, the canonical 2 Cor, chapters 1–9, 1–8, 1–7, the section 2:14–7:4 or 2:14–7:4 + chs. 10–13? The picture of Paul received by the listeners or readers of the text depends on which sections of the canonical 2 Cor they listen to or read. Therefore, I have devoted perhaps much more space than expected in this work to treating the question of which the plausible original literary unit was (see chapter 3) and what the character of the literary unit is (see chapter 4). As I will try to show in my work, the different sections in the canonical letter seem to present Paul in very different ways, something which raises the question of whether or not it is the same Paul who is dictating in one and the same situation. I will conclude that the plausible literary unit is chapters 1–9 although the picture of Paul even within these chapters is ambiguous. The long middle section 2:14–7:4 is an implicit criticism against the Corinthians imbedded in a happy-ending travel story which is followed by an appeal for the collection. The purpose of the letter is twofold. The Corinthians are urged to accept Paul on a more profound level as a credible and frank apostle and the only way of showing this is to participate in the collection. This overall view makes it difficult to think that Paul would be

interested in theoretical issues not connected to the situation in which the letter came into existence.

It is, moreover, not clear how Paul's line of thought at the beginning of the fifth chapter should be limited. The most common limitation is 5:1–10. Interpreters who envisage verses 5:1–10 as one unit tend to view the text as Paul's excursus on an eschatological or anthropological issue on a theoretical level (for example, Bultmann) or as a section about Paul's ambiguous attitude to his own future (for example, Héring). However, I will present an interpretation according to which the most natural way to limit Paul's train of thought is 4:16–5:10 or 4:16–5:5 and 5:6–10 (see chapter 5). The inclusion of verse 4:16 in the textual analysis where I try to determine the original reading (see chapter 6) is thus natural. I view section 4:16–5:10 as an integral part of Paul's overall attempt to assure the Corinthians about his credibility as an apostle in the midst of sufferings. I will maintain that the imagery in 4:16–5:10 is not caused by Paul's wish to engage in a debate on the resurrection body or the appropriate Christian anthropology. As a rejection of the view that Paul is involved in polemics concerning doctrinal issues, I will argue that the peculiar character of the choice of words, the style and syntax, is caused by Paul's creative and vivid mind uninterested in the elaboration of imagery and correction of stylistic weaknesses (see chapter 7). The analysis of the links of the text and the plural forms (see chapter 8) shows that Paul's way of presenting things is quite jerky (4:16 and 5:6 are clear beginnings, 4:18 has an independent character, 5:3 and 5:7 are parentheses, 5:4 repeats the beginning of 5:2 but with another meaning, 5:6 is an interrupted sentence) and that the plural form primarily stands for Paul but that Timothy or Paul's closest co-workers sometimes may be included.

Every interpreter of the fifth chapter of 2 Cor has to wrestle with the question of whether or not Paul's thoughts on death and the parousia developed over the course of time. Interpreters who view 5:1–10 as an excursus on a thematical issue may easily think that Paul has changed or at least modified his ideas on eschatology. However, I will argue that the different statements on death and the parousia in Paul are to be interpreted as determined by the actual situation when the text was written. Reflecting on his ideas of his own fate and the fate of other Christians, I will also try to show that Paul never ended up with a coherent concept on the relation between death and parousia (see chapters 2, 9 and 10). My conviction is that the distinct pieces in the "puzzle" were there all the time and that in one situation Paul chose one piece, and in another situation, another piece.

Another problem inherent in 2 Cor 4:16–5:10 is the anthropological question. Is Paul to be viewed as an anthropological dualist in 4:16–5:10 or as a "holist"? With the term "dualism," I understand the idea that the self

of the human being can be separated from the body. Despite the fact that some verses quite obviously seem to express an anthropological dualism, most scholars reject the view that Paul here would be a dualist, either by referring to the idea that the “normal” Pauline anthropology is holistic or to the assumption that Paul, in 4:16–5:10, wrestles with foreign terminology used in Corinth. Gundry, on the other hand, interprets 2 Cor 4:16–5:10 as a clearly dualistic section. I will argue that Paul is not consistent and that he switches back and forth between dualistic and holistic language. Dualistic statements are paired with holistic ones. For reasons of space, I will not participate in the debate on the character of Paul’s anthropological concepts in general but only in 2 Cor 4:16–5:10. The idea that, in this section, Paul tries to engage in a doctrinal debate in a polemical way I do not find satisfactory.

The problem which to me seems to be the most difficult one is the weak internal coherence in 4:16–5:10. On the cognitive level, there seems to be a conflict between 5:1 and 5:2–4. In 5:1 Paul seems to take for granted the possibility that he will die before Jesus comes. In 5:2–4, on the other hand, he seems to think that it is plausible that he will witness the parousia while still alive. In 5:1 the access to the heavenly house, that is the heavenly body, seems to be tied to the moment of death, in 5:2–4 to the parousia. The impression of a lack of an integrated concept on death and parousia is not confined to 5:1–5. Death in 5:8 does not seem to be combined with the concept of parousia in 5:2–4 or the concept of the heavenly body in 5:1. Is it possible that Paul treats the ideas on death and parousia as loosely as it appears in 5:1–10? If this is the case, what are the implications for our view of Paul as a “thinker” or “theologian”? I will try to show that, when not focusing on doctrinal issues but on the fact that Paul wants to present himself to the Corinthians as an apostle who is sincere and frank, the statements of Paul become more comprehensible. This way of reading Paul removes the focus from the cognitive aspect: Paul wants the Corinthians to observe that he deliberately exposes his internal motivations and attitudes as a suffering apostle.

This leads us to the emotional level which, however, in itself is not unproblematic either. The unemotional attitude in 4:16–5:1 does not easily fit in with the emotional attitude in 5:2–4: Is Paul affected or not by his sufferings and his possible death? Moreover, if the stripping in 5:4 and the removal in 5:8 are both viewed as references to the moment of death (something which I do not believe), Paul seems to be ambiguous towards death: Does he or does he not want to die? Even if the stripping in 5:4 is viewed as an expression of suffering not including death, the conflict is not totally settled since the moment or process of death in 5:8 certainly includes some kind of suffering. I will try to show that the solution to this

ambiguity lies in the fact that the sufferings of Paul in 4:16–5:1, 5:2–5 and 5:6–10 are not equal in character. In the section 2 Cor 4:16–5:10, Paul uses different categories of suffering. In 4:16–5:1, the sufferings either do not affect the important part of Paul or they have relative significance (they cause glory) and Paul may thus be quite untouched by them. In 5:2–5, the sufferings have no function and Paul may thus express his negative emotions towards them. In 5:6–10 Paul concentrates on the distance and nearness to the Lord. The sufferings are primarily a kind of pain from being separated from the Lord. The emotional longing for the Lord results in both the negative view on life in the body and the maintaining of the importance of living correctly in the body. Paul himself is probably not aware of, or at least not interested in, the contradictory character of his use of imagery and categories of suffering in 4:16–5:10.

In order to describe his openness and frankness on an emotional level, Paul resorts to quite drastic expressions and images. The emphasis lies on the emotional aspect as a means for a favorable communicative situation. Paul does not focus on the Corinthians' emotions or concepts of death but on himself and the picture the Corinthians have of him. Paul wants to stand out as a sincere and open apostle. The communicative situation is not that Paul would try to sound the wave-lengths of the Corinthians on issues of death. Instead, Paul tries to find an argumentation which would strengthen his position in Corinth.

Chapter 2

Types of Interpretations

A sorting of different types of interpretations of 2 Cor 5:1–10 is not easy since the passage contains many difficulties¹ and scholars have naturally combined their solutions on the distinct problems in a very varied way. It is obvious that no division can do full justice to every scholar mentioned since “hybrid” interpretations are numerous. It is also evident that my reflections on the types do not focus on exactly the same questions throughout the survey. I have rather chosen to concentrate on important aspects connected to different types. In doing this, I hope that the outlined types display the problems connected to the interpretation of the text.

2. 1. Changed Eschatology: An Individual Body at the Moment of Death

According to one type of interpretation, Paul has developed or changed his thoughts about his own fate concerning parousia and death. When writing 1 Cor 15, he still believed that he would be alive when Christ comes. For some reason, when writing 2 Cor 5, he no longer thinks that it is plausible that he will be alive at the parousia. The destruction in 5:1 refers to the moment of death. When Paul dies, he receives a new and better body. The transition from the earthly body in 5:8 refers to the moment of death. The adherents to this line of interpretation do not assume that Paul has totally given up his concept of resurrection and transformation at the parousia. It is his own individual perspective that has changed.²

¹ The statement of Allo 1956, 121 about 5:2–9 describes well the impression one gets when reading the pericope: “Ces versets contiennent mille difficultés.” Lincoln 1981, 59 says: “Possibly the one point about which there is no dispute with regard to 2 Corinthians 4:16–5:10 is its difficulty.”

² Pfeleiderer 1873, 258–264; 1887, 293–294, Heinrici 1890, 130–157, Schmiedel 1892, 236–241, Feine 1910, 499–503, Holtzmann 1911, 215–218, Windisch 1924, 157–175, W. L. Knox 1939, 128, 136–143, Davies 1948, 310–320, Hettlinger 1957, 174–194, Bruce 1971a, 200–206; 1971b, 467–472, Wiefel 1974, 74–79, Schnelle 1989, 42–45, Glasson 1990, 145–155, Thrall 1994, 356–400. Knox and Davies do not explicitly say when the event described in 5:8 takes place but seem to regard it as a reference to the moment of death (Knox 140, Davies 317–318). Lillie 1974, 59–70 thinks that 5:1 refers to the

The view that Paul has changed his view on his own fate seems problematic in the light of passages like 2 Cor 4:14, Phil 3:20–21 and Rom 8:18–23. According to these passages, it seems likely that Paul envisaged his own resurrection/transformation as connected to a larger punctiliar and collective event. According to Phil 3:20–21, written when Paul's earthly life is at stake, Paul waits for the parousia when his body will be transformed. Perhaps someone would object that 2 Cor 4:14 (where the verb ἐγείρω occurs) seems to support the view that Paul envisages a time when he has died: Jesus will raise Paul (from death). However, starting from the context (4:10–12), it seems sound to conclude that this existence of death is not a state following upon physical death but instead a present existence described figuratively. At any rate, the risen Paul is immediately viewed in relation to the Corinthians, something which does not support the idea that Paul concentrates on his own fate in death.

Paul's deepened reflection on personal unity with Christ as an explanation for the presumed development³ is not convincing, though the experienced unity certainly formed a conviction strong enough to change concepts. In 1 Cor, a letter belonging to a presumed earlier stage in the development, Paul addresses the Corinthians (3:21–23) with words which indicate that life and death cannot separate the Corinthians from Christ. The presumed shift of thought after Paul had written 1 Cor is strange considering the fact that in 2 Cor 5 Paul does not explicitly announce a new stand. On the contrary, the use of the verb "know" (5:1,6) seems to imply that the knowledge is not novel.

The reference to the experiences in Asia (1:8), thought to have provoked a new, more death-centered theology in Paul,⁴ is, in my opinion, very unconvincing since the catalogue in 2 Cor 11:22–33 shows (even if

moment of death when the new body is received. However, Paul has not changed his views, according to Lillie, who emphasizes the difficulties with a systematizing of metaphors. Thrall 1994, 399–400 suggests the implicit gradual transformation in the presence of Christ in death as a concept of Paul in 2 Cor 5. The transformation is not seen, as in 1 Cor 15, as something connected to the parousia but to death. This, so to say, hidden concept would tie together Paul's statement on the bestowal of the heavenly body at the moment of death (5:1) and his statement on moving to the Lord. However, in Paul, the gradual transformation of the life of the Christians seems not to be connected to physical death.

³ Feine 1910, 502, Thrall 1994, 398–400.

⁴ Schmiedel 1892, 239–240, Holtzmann 1911, 216–217, Windisch 1924, 174, Davies 1948, 311, 317, Hettlinger 1957, 186–187, Bruce 1971a, 200; 1971b, 468, Glasson 1990, 154, Thrall 1994, 396, 400. Holtzmann 1911, 216–217 accepts the view that the immediate resurrection at the moment of death is a privilege for a very few persons. In my opinion, however, this presumed privilege is not supported by the turns of phrase in the section 2 Cor 5:1–10, which certainly has a personal character, but which does not seem to exclude the listeners from the described events.

Paul probably exaggerates his trials) that the possibility of death always accompanied Paul during his missionary travelling. Paul's reference to his experiences in Asia (1:8) is best understood as part of his argumentation to convince the Corinthians of his divine commission in the midst of adversities.

The explanation connected to a possible adaptation to Hellenistic concepts⁵ is more serious. However, the problem with it is the combination of occurrences of references to thoughts which do not seem to be new to the Corinthians (5:1,6), a lack of explicit reference to the previous discussion in 1 Cor 15, and finally, a presentation of a new concept (resurrection at the moment of death). It seems strange that Paul who refers to common knowledge in 2 Cor 5 and who is aware of the fact that his gospel has not been clear to all (4:3) would present a changed or modified concept without mentioning it anyhow.

2. 2. Unexpected Dislike: Transformation at the Parousia and Reluctance Towards an Intermediate State

According to one interpretation, the waiting for the parousia is implicitly present in the section 2 Cor 5:1–10. The verb ἐπενδύσασθαι reflects the situation of the Christians still alive who do not need to be unclothed, e.g., to die before the parousia. The tearing down in 5:1 is usually regarded as a reference only to the moment of death. The possession of the heavenly building, the new body, is understood as a possession of something which

⁵ Pfleiderer 1887, 300 suggests that Apollos from Alexandria might have influenced Paul to combine a "Platonic-Alexandrian" doctrine on immortality with faith in Christ. Pfleiderer regards the Pharisaic and the Hellenistic ways of thinking as two distinct ones which both occur in Paul without merging into each other (303–304). The crucial question, however, is whether one has to assume some Hellenistic influence from outside of the Pharisaic context to which Paul belonged. The concept of an inner part of the human being who, at the moment of death, in some respect moves to the Lord is hardly an anomaly in the Pharisaic tradition (for a survey of the great variety of Jewish concepts on death and heavenly life, see Nickelsburg 1972, esp. 170–180 and Cavallin 1974, esp. 197–214). W. L. Knox 1939, 26 thinks that Paul's meeting with "serious philosophy" on the Areopagus forced him to a "progressive adaptation" of his message "to the general mental outlook of the Hellenistic world". In 2 Cor 5, this adaptation occurs in the fact that Paul "substitutes" the immortality of the soul for the bodily resurrection (142). In my opinion, however, Paul's turns in 5:1, 2, 4 would not satisfy a person believing only in the immortality of the soul. For a varied treatment on death and afterlife in Greco-Roman culture, see D. B. Martin 1995, 108–120 who notes that, for some theorists, the scale of hierarchical "stuff", not an ontological dichotomy between spiritual and physical, determined the view on the body. The body could not attain immortality because of its thick and heavy "stuff".

will be realized at the parousia. The transition from the body in 5:8 is usually viewed as a reference to death. The nakedness expresses the postmortem state and the stripping the moment of death.⁶

In this way of reading the text, the time between the moment of death and the transformation at the parousia is characterized as a naked, disembodied one which Paul tries to avoid by staying alive until the parousia. Some further explanation of the presumed reluctance to enter a disembodied state seems to be needed since this reluctance is not found in Phil 1:21–23 where Paul clearly speaks of his possible death.⁷ Paul's contradictory emotions in 2 Cor 5:4,8 (Paul both does and does not want to die) also seem odd when one notes that Paul soon (5:10) will conclude his self-presentation before turning to the Corinthians.⁸ His self-presentation

⁶ Bachmann 1909, 215–244, Lietzmann 1923, 116–123, Cullmann 1946, 212–214, Schweitzer 1954, 130–135, Sevenster 1955, 295–296, Berry 1961, 60–76, Grass 1962, 154–164, Héring 1967, 36–40, P. E. Hughes 1967, 153–185, esp. 169–173, Rissi 1969, 73–98, Barrett 1973, 149–161, Gundry 1976, 149–154, Gyllenberg 1978, 213–218, Vielhauer 1979, 100–104, Lincoln 1981, 59–71, Klauck 1986, 48–53, R. P. Martin 1986, 51–52, Meyer 1986, 379–381, Talbert 1987, 160–162, Craig 1988, 145–147, Osei-Bonsu 1986, 81–101; 1991, 169–194, Johansson 1990, 119–133, Witherington 1995, 391, Barnett 1997, 255–277, Lambrecht 1999, 80–89, esp. 261–263.

⁷ Even though the focus is on the Lord, not the new body, one would expect that Paul would somehow touch upon the unpleasant aspects of death in Phil 1 if an intermediate, disembodied state would be a problem for him. The scholars supporting this type of interpretation surprisingly seldom reflect on this issue. Schweitzer 1954 and Rissi 1969, however, are worth mentioning. Schweitzer 1954, 135–138 solves the problem by drawing on the hypothesis of the more or less unique fate of the martyr which is in view in Phil but not in 2 Cor. Rissi 1969, 91 holds that Paul's presentation of "the dark side" of death in 2 Cor 5 is a result of a polemical situation which is not present in Phil 1. The solution proposed by Schweitzer is quite hypothetical and the view of Rissi brings up another question: If Paul, without being forced into a polemical situation, can describe death without any negative emotions as in Phil, why attribute the nakedness in 2 Cor 5:3 to Paul's own concept of an intermediate state (90)?

⁸ The usual explanation is that the points of comparison in 5:1–5 and 5:6–10 are different. In the former, Paul compares the possibility of dying, losing his body with living until the parousia when he will get a new body, in the latter he compares the presence of Christ in death with life in the present body (Bachmann 1909, 235, Cullmann 1946, 213–214, Gundry 1976, 152, Klauck 1986, 51–52). However, in my opinion, the conflict between 5:4 and 5:8 remains. Craig 1988, 146 condenses the problem of Paul: "But the problem is that in order to thus attain the optimal state one must go on living in the worst state." The optimal state is when the soul is "united with the resurrection body", the worst state is when the soul is "united with the present earthly body." Paul is thus placed in a paradoxical situation. In my opinion, the text itself does not show that Paul saw his situation in such a light. Berry 1961, 66–67, Osei-Bonsu 1986, 93–94; 1991, 184–185 and Barnett 1992, 272 explain the ambiguity between 5:4 and 5:8 by a modern analogy: A person who has to undergo a surgical operation may have ambiguous feelings about it. As I see it, however, a chronically ill person will not become well without an

becomes quite puzzling if one accepts the view that the alternatives staying alive or dying are in his mind. One could perhaps maintain that this shift in emotions would be intentional, reflecting a kind of deliberate accomodation. However, this seems implausible (see below, 2.6.3.).

2. 3. Unsystematic Thinking or Eschatology: Paul Looks Over the Time Between the Moment of Death and the Parousia

According to one type of interpretation, Paul does not combine different aspects of the future into an integral whole. In 2 Cor 5:1–10 he certainly refers to the moment of death, to death as a state, and to the parousia but he does not explain how these states or events are to be viewed in relation to each other. According to this interpretation, the tearing down in 5:1 refers to the moment of death, while the receiving of the new body refers to the parousia. The nakedness in 5:3 refers to the disembodied dead Christian. In the pericope, the intermediate state is not, in fact, intermediate because this concept starts from the assumption that Paul clearly envisages his “eschatology” or “thanatology” as a carefully prepared system viewed from the perspective of time. However, this is not the case. The intermediate state is not treated because the existence with Christ in death is not combined with the parousia. Thus Paul does not combine the different stages but looks beyond the time between the moment of death and the parousia in 5:1–2,4–5.⁹

operation while Paul (at least in theory) has the opportunity to attain perfect health staying alive and being transformed with a minimum of unpleasant sensations at the parousia. Lincoln 1981, 70 and Johansson 1990, 131–132 seem not fully satisfied with the “psychological” explanation since they add a “polemical” explanation.

⁹ Wendland 1954, 168–175, esp. 174: “Unsere Frage, wie sich denn dies wider den Tod bestehende Bleiben der Christus-Gemeinschaft zu der noch zukünftigen, endzeitlichen Auferstehung beim Ende der Welt verhalte, hat sich Paulus offenbar nicht gestellt und sie daher auch nicht direkt beantwortet, wenigstens nicht in den uns vorliegenden Texten. Dies war vermutlich für ihn noch gar kein Problem, das einer theologischen Klärung bedurft hätte, weil er die Fragwürdigkeit des Zeitbegriffes nicht kannte...Das ‘Jetzt’ der Todesstunde und das ‘Einst’ der zukünftigen Vollendung stehen vor allem deswegen im Denken des Paulus nicht gegeneinander, weil der auferstandene und erhöhte Kyrios, der den sterbenden Paulus zu sich nimmt, und der kommende Christus für ihn die eine und gleiche Person sind, die über den Tod in der Zeit ebenso mächtig ist, wie sie das Ende des Kosmos und der Geschichtszeit im Ganzen bestimmt und heraufführt.” Plummer 1915, 140–164 also maintains this type of interpretation. Citing and agreeing with Wernle (non vidi), Plummer (161) says: “The man who wrote the great Resurrection-chapter in 1 Corinthians did not possess the capacity for altering his opinions which belongs to the modern theologian...The yearning to die and to be with Christ is for him the same thing as the hope of resurrection. His yearning overleaps all

The clear advantage of this interpretation compared to the previous one is that it is able to incorporate Phil 1:23 (and 3:20–21) in the overall view of Paul's thoughts without need of the unlikely concept of the privileged fate of the martyr¹⁰. Paul does not combine or problematize the relation between the two poles in his "eschatology", resurrection, and postmortem existence with Christ. However, the question is, from a late interpreter's view, whether or not the two poles could be juxtaposed so closely as in 2 Cor 5 without producing a time-related combination.

Paul's concept of time becomes important in this interpretation. Was Paul, who belonged to the ancient world, incapable of dealing with problems connected to the idea of time? This somewhat supercilious attitude to Paul by some scholars (see, for example, the statement of Wendland, n. 9) is correctly rejected by Caird who, dealing with Phil 1:23, refers to 4 Ezra 5:42 as an argument against the view that sophisticated thoughts on time and eternity were foreign to the ancient world. Caird holds that the image of sleep could be Paul's solution "to the problematic relation of time and eternity": "...Paul believed in a real analogy between sleep and death. Sleep is the experience which negates the passage of time. When a man falls asleep, the next thing he is conscious of is waking. Similarly, when a Christian falls asleep in death, the next thing he is conscious of is the great awaking of the Day of Christ."¹¹

between death and resurrection, and hurries to its goal for reunion with Jesus." According to Plummer, the interval between death and resurrection is "neither assumed nor denied". See also Nikolainen 1946, 234–235, Allo 1956, 119–160, esp. 153–154 and Kvalbein 1969, 179–195.

¹⁰ Lohmeyer 1961 thinks that Paul envisages martyrdom both in Phil 1:23 (62–64) and 3:10–11 (138–142). Commenting on the latter passage, he explicitly mentions (141) the individual resurrection before the parousia. Schweitzer 1954, 135–138 interprets Phil 1:23 as a reference to a being caught up to Christ in immediate resurrection (136).

¹¹ Caird 1976, 114. Caird on 4 Ezra 5:42: An angel "explains that the Day of Judgment is like a circle, in which all points on the circumference are equidistant from the centre. Every man's death is equidistant from the Day of the Lord." The translation of 5:41–42 by Metzger in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* edited by Charlesworth 1983: "I said, 'Yet behold, O Lord, you have charge of those who are alive at the end, but what will those do who were before us, or those who come after us?' He said to me, 'I shall liken my judgment to a circle, just as for those who are last there is no slowness, so for those who are first there is no haste.'" This kind of reflection by the author of 4 Ezra makes it obvious that the assumption that the problem of time is alien to Paul has to be backed up only from Paul's own texts and not from any kind of general view of humanity in Antiquity. For the view of death as sleep, see Plato, *Apologia* 40C-E and Plutarch, *Consolatio ad Apollonium* 12 (107D-F). The passages in Plato represent a quite sophisticated view of death as sleep: εἰ οὖν τοιοῦτον ὁ θάνατός ἐστιν, κέρδος ἔγωγε λέγω· καὶ γὰρ οὐδὲν πλείων ὁ πᾶς χρόνος φαίνεται οὕτω δὴ εἶναι ἢ μία νύξ. ("so if such is the nature of death, I count it a gain; for in that case, all time seems to be no longer than one night.", translation by Fowler).

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