

WAR IN THE SOUL

WAR IN THE SOUL:  
ROMANS 7:7-25 IN THE CONTEXT OF  
PALESTINIAN AND ALEXANDRIAN JUDAISM

by

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## ABSTRACT

The question of Paul's view of the nature of man has interested biblical scholars for the past 150 years. Of particular concern has been the degree to which Paul's heritage from Hebrew-speaking Judaism may have been altered by the admixture of Greek ideas. One of the passages used to measure this factor is Rom. 7:7-25, in which many anthropological terms and concepts appear. The presence of Hellenistic ideas in this passage has been both confidently affirmed and vigorously denied.

The present investigation attempts to resolve this question by a careful exegesis of the passage against the background of a comprehensive survey of the literature of Hebrew-speaking and Greek-speaking Judaism, particularly with respect to the nature of man and the origin and nature of sin. References to individual human destiny are included to the extent that they throw light on whether the immaterial part of man was seen to be distinct from the physical part.

The exegesis of Rom. 7:7-25 in this context shows that Paul does hold to a dualism of soul and body, or mind and flesh, at least in the passage in question. The opposition between the mind or "inner man" and the flesh or "members" is expressed as a war in which the "I" or subject is taken captive and can be delivered only through Christ.

No claim is made that an identical meaning is to be found in parallel passages using the same terminology or that Paul had a consistent scheme of the nature of man throughout his writings.



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## INTRODUCTION

Was Paul a dualist? Did he envisage man as a union of body and soul, the material and the immaterial, in which the former is inferior to the latter? More particularly, did he think of sin in terms of the desires of the flesh as well as of rebellion against God? These are questions which have occupied the attention of biblical scholars for centuries.

On the one hand there is no doubt that Paul seems at times to be a dualist, or at least to use dualistic language.<sup>1</sup> In Rom. 7:22-23 he says, "I delight in the law of God in my inmost self, but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin which dwells in my members." On the other hand scholars have questioned whether, in such passages, Paul means what he says. Paul, they argue, was a Jew, not a Greek (and the extent to which Paul's Jewishness was affected by Greek thought is hotly debated); Jews in Paul's day thought of man in holistic, not dualistic, terms (this is affirmed at least for Hebrew-speaking Judaism, and Paul's relation to Greek-speaking Judaism is again debated); in any event, Paul's dualistic

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<sup>1</sup>In "Monism and Dualism in the Pauline Anthropology" (Biblical Research, 3 [1958], 15-27), Samuel Laeuchli brings together a number of such passages; more could be added.

language has quite other and different meaning (a meaning supplied by later theology and by existentialist philosophy).

How is the real meaning of Paul's dualistic language to be recovered? One approach has been to attempt to determine the religious and philosophical thought-world to which Paul belonged and thereby to ascertain whether his view of man was essentially a biblical or a Hellenistic one. This procedure is problematical. It assumes that the biblical view of man was of one kind (holistic) while the Greek view was of another (dualistic). Further, it assigns Paul to one or other of these worlds and decides the question of his view of man accordingly.

A second approach has been to bring together all the passages in which Paul uses dualistic language (or indeed any anthropological language) and to compare these texts among themselves in the varying contexts in which they occur.<sup>2</sup> This approach, for all its value, is hampered by the limitations of any self-contained system. First, it lacks an objective standard by which the meaning of the terms and concepts encountered may be decided. Second, it does nothing to alter the a priori assumptions of the interpreter. If, for example, it is held that Paul could not have entertained certain views as to the nature of man and of sin (because he was a Jew and Jews did not think that way, or because he held other views which render the first views impossible or redundant), no amount of painstaking exegesis or of comparing passage with passage will necessarily recover his true meaning.

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<sup>2</sup>A recent example of such a study is Robert Jewett, Paul's Anthropological Terms (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1971).

A third approach is possible, which is a combination of the two. First, to determine whether Paul's use of dualistic language may have implied dualistic meaning it is necessary to discover how other Jews of his day viewed the nature of man and of sin. (Since scholars are agreed that most, if not all, of the Hellenistic content in Paul reached him through Hellenistic Judaism, it is not necessary to review the whole world of Greek literature.) It is possible, of course, that Paul entertained a dualistic view of man even if no other Jews of his day did so, but this possibility is so remote as to be discounted. If, on the other hand, Jews of Paul's day not only used dualistic language but employed it with dualistic meaning, the objections to Paul's having done so fall to the ground. This is the more true if evidence of such usage occurs in both Hebrew-speaking and Greek-speaking Judaism.

Recovering the view of man and of sin held by Jews in Paul's day allows us to decide whether, in passages where dualistic language occurs, Paul's use of such language may be understood in its natural or common-sense meaning. That is to say, it provides a guide as to what Paul may have meant by such language. To determine what Paul actually meant in each instance, a careful exegesis must be undertaken taking into account the context of the passage, the argument of the epistle, and all the usual canons of interpretation.

The investigation which follows attempts to resolve the question of dualism in Paul in the manner just outlined. The first chapter is a review of scholarly opinion on Paul -- first his religio-philosophical orientation, second his view of the nature of man, and third his

possible meaning in Rom. 7:7-25. This review is not intended to answer the question of dualism in Paul, but to provide a context for the investigation of the succeeding chapters.

The second and third chapters are a review of the conception of man and of sin in Hebrew-speaking and Greek-speaking Judaism respectively.<sup>3</sup> In both cases a comprehensive survey of Jewish literature prior to and contemporaneous with Paul is undertaken to determine whether dualistic language occurs and, if so, whether this language carries dualistic meaning. The primary focus of attention is the relation of body and soul in man and the nature of sin (whether the war of the passions against the mind or reason, or the rebellion of the will against God's law). Concepts of individual human destiny beyond this life are included to illustrate the extent to which the non-physical aspect of man's nature was seen to be different from, or more durable than, the physical.

Finally, the fourth chapter provides an exegesis of Rom. 7:7-25 in the light of the findings of the previous chapters. The choice of Rom. 7 is not intended to suggest that this chapter is the key to Paul's theology or anthropology, nor does the attention given to this intriguing passage mean that the investigation of the preceding chapters is of secondary importance. The question of concern is whether Paul's use of dualistic language, in this passage or elsewhere in his writings, implies

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<sup>3</sup>The division into Hebrew-speaking and Greek-speaking Judaism does not imply an absolute distinction between the two, but recognizes that differences do exist and that the difference in language is significant in itself.



dualistic meaning. Rom. 7:7-25 has been chosen because of its extended use of the language of anthropological dualism and because of the vast amount of scholarly attention which it has received over the centuries. To answer the question of dualism in Paul, other passages in which dualistic language occurs should be examined in similar fashion.

## CHAPTER ONE

### PERSPECTIVES ON PAUL'S ANTHROPOLOGY

#### A. THE ORIGIN AND ORIENTATION OF PAUL'S RELIGION

For the past one hundred and fifty years, scholars have debated the question of the orientation of Paul's religious thought. Granted that Paul was a Jew, was he a "Hebrew of the Hebrews" (Phil. 3:5) or was he a Hellenistic Jew, deeply influenced by Greek culture, philosophy and religion? Further, to what extent was his world-view altered by his experience of Christ? These Jewish, Hellenistic and Christian categories are not mutually exclusive, but they comprise the principal polarities by which Paul has been understood.

##### 1. Paul as a Hellenist

###### a) Nineteenth-century German scholars<sup>1</sup>

Starting in the mid-nineteenth century, a group of German scholars presented Paul as a Hellenist in the sense that his religious thought was deeply influenced by Greek philosophical and religious ideas.

In a series of articles and books written between 1831 and 1865,<sup>1a</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>This overview is indebted to Albert Schweitzer, Paul and His Interpreters; tr. W. Montgomery (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1912); W. D. Stacey, The Pauline View of Man (London: Macmillan and Co., 1956); and Jewett, Paul's Anthropological Terms.

<sup>1a</sup>See Schweitzer, p. 12-15; Jewett, p. 51.

F. C. Baur interpreted Paul as representing a particular party within early Christianity, distinct from and opposed to that of Peter and the Jerusalem church. Paul, Baur held, developed his doctrine in essentially Hellenistic terms. His religious thought culminated in the doctrine of the Spirit and in man's union with God by faith.  $\Sigma\acute{\alpha}\rho\acute{\xi}$  is identified with the physical  $\sigma\acute{\omega}\mu\alpha$  and is the source of sin; the good intentions of the  $\nu\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$  are frustrated by the sensual flesh. Further, this struggle represents the conflict of two cosmic powers striving for the control of man.

Hermann Lüdemann (Die Anthropologie des Apostels Paulus, 1872) held that there were two sets of ideas in Paul's mind, the first Jewish and simple, the second Hellenistic and complex. Where Paul presents the  $\sigma\acute{\alpha}\rho\acute{\xi}$  as weak and finite, the concept is Jewish; where  $\sigma\acute{\alpha}\rho\acute{\xi}$  is represented as matter and the source of sin, the concept is Hellenistic. According to the first view, sin springs from freedom of the will, the law is seen as possible of fulfilment, and redemption is by God's acquittal and man's act of faith. According to the second view, sin proceeds from the flesh, is stimulated by the law, and results in death. Further, redemption in the second view consists in the abolition of the flesh by the communication of the divine spirit. It was the latter view which was Paul's real position on man and sin, and it gradually pushed the earlier view into the background.

Otto Pfleiderer (Der Paulinismus, 1873, 1890; Das Urchristentum, 1887, 1902) also held that there were two lines of thought in Paul, one Jewish and the other Hellenistic. Paul's conversion created a transfor-

mation in his life with which his former categories of thought were incapable of dealing; he therefore had recourse to ideas from Greek sources and from Hellenistic Judaism. After his conversion, the Jewish and Greek notions formed two streams in his mind without truly coalescing. An example of this is Paul's concept of flesh and spirit. *Σάρξ* is understood in the Old Testament sense until it becomes a power; at this point Paul goes beyond Jewish presuppositions and adopts a dualistic and essentially Greek position. *Σάρξ* becomes inherently evil, and the mystical experience of the spirit is seen as bringing about the death of the flesh.

J. H. Holtzmann (Lehrbuch der neutestamentlichen Theologie, 1897) claimed that Paul's view of man contained both Jewish and Greek notions, the latter being the more important. His Christology was developed against the background of Alexandrian Judaism, his concept of redemption was a Hellenistic and ethical one, and his view of baptism was influenced by the mystery religions. Even his eschatology assumed a Hellenistic form. An important role was played by Paul's conversion in this fusion of Jewish and Greek ideas. Before his conversion, Paul experienced an inner conflict caused by his inability to keep the law. With his conversion, this conflict was resolved and his whole attitude toward righteousness and the law was turned around. His subsequent description of the antithesis between flesh and spirit was Hellenistic in form; it depicts the conflict between the outer and inner man, the former being fleshly in substance and bodily in form, while the latter is rational and spiritual.

Richard Reitzenstein (Die hellenistischen Mysterienreligionen: Ihre Grundgedanken und Wirkungen, 1910) attempted to show that Paul's religion shared common ground with the mysteries. Paul had been influ-

enced by the mysteries even as a Pharisee, and this prepared the way for his conversion. He then studied the literature of the Greek religions and borrowed Greek terms and concepts to express his thought. His view of man was essentially Gnostic: man is by nature imprisoned in the material world, from which he can be released by a visitation of the divine πνεῦμα which drives out the former centre, the ψυχή.<sup>2</sup>

b) Benjamin Jowett

One of the first British scholars to draw attention to Paul's Hellenistic orientation was the Greek scholar, Benjamin Jowett. In his "Essay on St. Paul and Philo," published in 1855,<sup>3</sup> Jowett asks how it was that Christianity was made intelligible to its day. Some of the speech and thought-forms were taken from the Old Testament, but others are peculiar to the New Testament; further, some of those which are common to both have a special significance in the latter.

The answer, Jowett suggests, may be found in part in Alexandrian Jewish philosophy.

There the Jew and the Greek may be said to have mingled minds; the books of Moses and the prophets and the dialectic of Plato and Aristotle met together, giving birth to the strangest eclectic philosophy that the world has ever seen. This philosophy was Judaism and Platonism at once; the belief in a personal God assimilated to the doctrine of ideas.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Alfred Loisy, "The Christian Mystery" (The Hibbert Journal, 10 [1911-12], 45-64) adopts essentially the same position.

<sup>3</sup>In his The Epistles of St. Paul to the Thessalonians, Galatians and Romans (London: John Murray, 1894), p. 382-434; first published 1855.

The chief exponent of this philosophy was Philo, but the New Testament writers share with him a number of ideas. First, there is a growing sense that God is an invisible reality, removed from the world, and that evil is the work of inferior powers. Second, God is known through the contemplation of his works, for he is present in them through his λόγος or νόμος. Third, the creation of the world is seen as the ordering of pre-existent matter and the body is understood as the source of evil and as impeding the growth of the soul. Fourth, the goal of life is seen as following God and becoming like him. All these show the similarity of Philo and Paul; there was a wide diffusion of the Alexandrian modes of thought, and "Alexandrianism" was the soil in which Christianity grew up.

c) Wilhelm Bousset

In Kyrios Christos,<sup>5</sup> published in 1913, Bousset draws a sharp distinction between the Palestinian church and that of the Diaspora and interprets Paul as belonging to the latter rather than the former.

Paul's personal "Christ piety,"<sup>6</sup> Bousset says, arose on the foundation of the κύριος faith and cult of the Hellenistic church, to which he added the note of intimate relationship with the exalted Lord. His religion was a "Christ mysticism"<sup>7</sup> in which Christ as the head of the church became the Christ of personal relationship, the sacraments of baptism and eucharist became symbols of mystic union with Christ in his death

<sup>4</sup>Jowett, p. 385.

<sup>5</sup>Tr. John E. Steely (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1979); first published 1913.

<sup>6</sup>Bousset, p. 153.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 154 et passim.

and resurrection, and the experience of the Spirit's power in worship became a mystical dwelling "in Christ" or "in the Spirit."

Paul's Christ mysticism, Bousset says, was a phenomenon of unique power and originality; exact parallels to it in Hellenistic religion are hard to find. Yet there are similarities in the mixture of philosophical reflection and religious mysticism to which Philo and the Hermetica, as also the whole world of Gnosticism, attest. Paul's *πνεῦμα* doctrine stands in this broad context; it represents a world-view which had already taken possession of many minds.

Bousset also claims that the mystery religions comprised the atmosphere within which Paul's soteriology developed. The common belief in a dying and rising God, the union of the believer with the god through the cultus, the goal of redemption from this evil world, the myth of the primal man and his fall into sin<sup>8</sup> -- all of these Paul brought together with the Christian gospel into a new and systematic structure.

d) C. G. Montefiore

Montefiore's Judaism and St. Paul (1914)<sup>9</sup> is an attempt to show that the Judaism which Paul knew before his conversion was unlike the Rabbinic Judaism of 500 or even 300 C.E. and therefore probably unlike the Rabbinic Judaism of 50 C.E. It was, in all probability, the Hellenized and inferior Judaism of the Diaspora.

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<sup>8</sup>Bousset (p. 195-98) believes that the myth of the primal man may have been adopted already by Judaism. He also recognizes that Paul makes adjustments to it (the redeemer is not also the one who fell into sin).

<sup>9</sup>London: Max Goschen.

We know little, Montefiore says, about the Rabbinic Judaism of Paul's day. What we must do is compare Paul to the Rabbinic Judaism of 500 C.E. and then ask if the latter fairly represents the former. If it does not, Paul's attacks upon the whole Jewish system become more comprehensible. Indeed, if Paul's religion before his conversion had resembled the Rabbinic Judaism known to us, "the conversion itself might well have taken place, but many things in the Epistle to the Romans could never have been written."<sup>10</sup>

The God whom the Rabbis reveal to us is the creator and ruler of the world, yet the Father of his people Israel. He is without form or substance, yet able to hear every prayer. He is far off, yet near; great and awful, yet merciful and loving; separate from the world, yet needing no intermediaries. He rewards and punishes, chastises and forgives, and has provided a means for the happiness and well-being of his people. This means is the law; to follow it is a privilege and a joy, and in keeping it there is happiness and peace. For those who transgress the law, God grants repentance and forgiveness, which can repair any sin. For Rabbinic Judaism, again, the world is not bad, but good, and life is to be enjoyed.

In the light of this picture, is it conceivable that Paul before his conversion was a Rabbinic Jew? Paul conceived of the world as in bondage and under the wrath of God. He held that the law brought neither happiness nor virtue, and indeed that it was never intended to; it gave the knowledge of sin and strengthened the desire to sin. Not even Paul's

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<sup>10</sup>Montefiore, p. 24-25.



conversion can account for this reversal of Rabbinic teaching.<sup>11</sup> Paul, further, speaks little of God's love, and much of his wrath. He is pessimistic about man, and ignores the Rabbinic doctrine of repentance and forgiveness. Such an omission is inconceivable if Paul up to his conversion had been a typical Rabbinic Jew. The Rabbis, again, did not oppose flesh and spirit in the way they are opposed in Paul. They did not make a distinction between the "spiritual man" and the "natural man." They did not teach that a man could conquer sin only if he were born again by the divine spirit. "The spirit and flesh doctrine of the eighth chapter of Romans could not have been devised by anyone who, to his Rabbinic antecedents, merely added a conviction that the Messiah had appeared in the person of Jesus"; the man who worked out that doctrine had never been thoroughly imbued with "true Rabbinic theology."<sup>12</sup>

Paul's religion prior to his conversion, then, was different from that of the average Rabbinic Jew of 300 or 500 C.E. It was not better or more liberal, but inferior to it. Does this mean that the Rabbinic Judaism of 500 C.E. had not come into existence in 50? Montefiore says: "I am . . . inclined to think that, even in 50, Rabbinic Judaism was a better, happier, and more noble religion than one might infer from the writings of the Apostle."<sup>13</sup> To account for the differences outlined above we need a form of Judaism other than the Rabbinic, as well as religious influences which were not Jewish at all. This combination of features is met with

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<sup>11</sup>Montefiore admits in a footnote (p. 73, n. 1) that it is possible that Paul radically changed his view of the law after his conversion, but he considers this unlikely.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 80.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 87.

only in the Hellenistic world.

e) W. L. Knox

In a series of three books written between 1925 and 1944,<sup>14</sup> W. L. Knox presents a picture of Paul as a Jew whose fundamental orientation was to his ancestral faith but who nevertheless had been deeply influenced by Greek thought.

Paul was born in Tarsus and was a Roman citizen by birth, but he was educated in Jerusalem in the "enlightened Pharisaism"<sup>15</sup> of the school of Hillel. There he learned to regulate his life according to the Mosaic law, and there he became familiar with the many elements of Pharisaic theology. Long before Paul's time, however, Judaism had adjusted its thinking to that of the Greek world. Greek ideas of divine reason as a power immanent in the world were discovered in the Old Testament; Jewish history and teachings were allegorized to make them more acceptable to the Greek world; the Jewish eschatological scheme was accommodated to the Greek notion of the periodic destruction and renewal of the universe; the Passover meal was interpreted as a mystery rite, and the Torah was seen as a book of wisdom or as "Wisdom" itself. As long as the unity of God and the supremacy of the Torah were preserved, Judaism was prepared to

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<sup>14</sup>St. Paul and the Church of Jerusalem (Cambridge University Press, 1925); St. Paul and the Church of the Gentiles (Cambridge University Press, 1939); Some Hellenistic Elements in Primitive Christianity (London: Published for the British Academy by Humphrey Milford, 1944).

<sup>15</sup>St. Paul and Jerusalem, p. 94. Here Knox holds that in Paul's infancy his parents moved from Tarsus to Jerusalem. In Some Hellenistic Elements (p. 30-31), Knox is more prepared to grant that Paul's youth was spent in Tarsus.

adopt any argument or form of thought that seemed suited to its purpose.

Paul's knowledge of Greek literature, Knox maintains, was probably limited to scattered fragments familiar to the Jewish synagogue. He had, perhaps, a superficial acquaintance with the conceptions of popular philosophy; he may even have known a collection of such teachings, but he was entirely indifferent to philosophy as such. The ultimate fact of his experience was his new life in Christ, and any value which the wisdom of Greece may have held vanished with his conversion.

In giving expression to his Christian faith, however, Paul was prepared to use the conventional language of Hellenistic theology. He changed the kingdom of God into a new age or a new creation. He interpreted Jesus as a cosmic redeemer, and salvation as rebirth as a child of God and as deliverance from the present evil age. He saw the goal of religion as death to the "flesh" in order to attain life on a "spiritual" plane. He envisaged life after death in spiritual terms, and described the church as the mystical body of Christ. He depicted ethical conduct in the Greek style, as the "putting on" of a new nature. He may even have borrowed ideas from the mysteries in depicting salvation as deliverance from sin and union with God. In adapting his language to the Greek world, Paul for the most part was following the accepted practice of the Judaism of his day. While he used the terms and concepts of the Greek world, he remained a Jew, and Christianity was for him the true development of Judaism.

f) James Parkes

James Parkes (Jesus, Paul and the Jews, 1936)<sup>16</sup> follows Monte-

fiore in claiming that the Judaism which Paul knew and which he later opposed was not that of the Rabbis, but the Judaism of the Diaspora, "a prosaic religion with little glamour in it, drier and more formal than the Rabbinic Judaism of Palestine."<sup>17</sup> This we know from Paul's attitude to the law; he could not have been attacking Rabbinic Judaism, for his depiction would have been inaccurate.

To understand Paul we must note the nature of his conversion. First, it was not a conversion from sin to virtue, except perhaps at the most profound personal level. "What had distressed him before was not so much inability to conform as a Jew but a deeper, more subjective inability to feel 'right with God,' even if he did conform."<sup>18</sup> The answer to his deepest longings Paul found in Jesus, and its impact on his earlier religion produced his form of Judaism. Second, Paul's conversion meant his acceptance of the executed prophet of Nazareth as the expected Messiah. In this there was nothing which was discontinuous with his earlier beliefs or which lessened his feeling that he was a Jew. Quite the opposite; for the first time Paul felt that he had discovered a completely satisfying Judaism.

It is in Paul's preaching to the Gentiles that we find evidence of his orientation to the Greek world. The language in which Paul proclaimed his message was Greek, and with the language there came in un-Jewish ideas such as a pessimistic world view and a dualistic opposition of spirit and matter. To non-Jews who looked for salvation as escape

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<sup>16</sup>London: Student Christian Movement Press

<sup>17</sup>Parkes, p. 124

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 135.

from this evil world and as immortality, Paul was prepared to present his message in terms borrowed from the mystery religions. While to Jews he remained a loyal Jew, to Gentiles he advocated abandoning the Jewish law. The truth is that Paul was not consistent; what was constant was his love for Jew and Gentile alike.

g) Joseph Klausner

In From Jesus to Paul,<sup>19</sup> Klausner holds that Paul was both a Hebrew of the Hebrews and a Hellenistic Jew, and that only such a dual heritage can account for the Christianity which he created.

On the one hand, Paul was a Hebraic Jew. He spoke Aramaic, and perhaps also Hebrew. He went to Jerusalem as a youth and was taught by Gamaliel the Elder.<sup>20</sup> He was a zealous Pharisee and a persecutor of the church. Even after his conversion he boasted of his Jewish origin; he never ceased thinking of himself as a Jew, and he continued to practise the Jewish religion. At the same time, Paul was not a typical Palestinian Jew, for he was born in the Diaspora and spent most of his life there. His home city was Tarsus, a centre of Greek learning and culture. He spoke and wrote Greek, and knew the Torah in Greek translation as well as in Hebrew. Although he probably never studied in the Greek schools, he absorbed elements of Greek literature and philosophy from his environment. All of this means that "he was detached from the authentic, living Judaism

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<sup>19</sup>Tr. Wm. F. Stinespring (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1943); first published in Hebrew in 1939.

<sup>20</sup>Klausner suggests (p. 310-11) that Paul was almost certainly "that pupil" of Gamaliel to whom Rabbinic sources refer.

which was rooted in its own cultural soil."<sup>21</sup> As we have said, only such a dual heritage can account for the Christianity which he created.

#### h) Rudolf Bultmann

Bultmann's estimate of Paul is set out in his Theology of the New Testament<sup>22</sup> and in earlier writings.<sup>23</sup> Throughout, Bultmann regards Paul as a Jew of the Diaspora and deeply influenced by Hellenistic ideas.

Paul called himself a "Hebrew of the Hebrews," which probably meant that his family preserved its Palestinian character and the use of the Aramaic language. He also received training in Jewish scribism, as seen in his thinking, arguments and exegesis. On the other hand, he was a Roman citizen and at home in the Greek language. He was familiar with some of the concepts of Stoic philosophy, and also with oriental and Gnostic mythology. It is probable that prior to his conversion he had not resided for any length of time in Jerusalem.

Paul was converted through the preaching of the Hellenistic church; it was their understanding of the gospel which he raised to the level of theology. From his letters we can see that the presuppositions of this theology rested on a dual base. The first was that of Hellenistic Judaism, which had already come to terms with Greek philosophy; the second was the Greek mystery religions. From each of these Paul inherited ideas about God, man and the world which he combined in his own peculiar

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<sup>21</sup>Klausner, p. 465, italics his.

<sup>22</sup>Tr. Kendrick Grobel (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951).

<sup>23</sup>E.g., "Paul" in Existence and Faith; tr. Schubert M. Ogden (Cleveland: World Publishing Co., 1960), p. 111-46; first published 1930.

theology. That theology included the worship of Jesus as Lord in the cultic sense, the designation of Jesus as "Son of God," the mystical meaning and efficacy of the sacraments, and the notion of the spirit as a permanent possession. There are even Gnostic motifs, which were perhaps absorbed from a Hellenized form of Judaism. In brief, Paul's theology was a new structure, the structure of Hellenistic Christianity.

i) Samuel Sandmel

Sandmel's view of Paul is found chiefly in The Genius of Paul.<sup>24</sup> In the 1979 edition of this work, Sandmel acknowledges that when the book was first written it was an indirect reply to W. D. Davies' Paul and Rabbinic Judaism.<sup>25</sup> Davies, Sandmel says, had interpreted Paul as a product of the Judaism of Palestine and had minimized the difference between that Judaism and the Judaism of the Diaspora. He had, moreover, set up Montefiore's Judaism and St. Paul as a straw man and then knocked it down. Sandmel, for his part, says, "I disagree almost one hundred per cent"<sup>26</sup> with Davies' portrait of Paul. There was a significant difference between the Judaism of Palestine and that of the Diaspora in Paul's day, a difference going back to the time of Alexander the Great. Facets of the Greek world entered the ken of Greek-speaking Jews, even in the case of those who considered themselves loyal to Judaism. Paul was such a Greek Jew;

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<sup>24</sup>Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979. See also his The First Christian Century in Judaism and Christianity (1969), Judaism and Christian Beginnings (1978), and Philo of Alexandria (1979), all published by Oxford University Press, New York.

<sup>25</sup>Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980; first published 1948.

<sup>26</sup>The Genius of Paul, p. 223.

his Hellenistic Jewish background was his frame of reference, and his contribution to early Christianity was informed by that world of thought.

Those who see Paul as a Rabbinic Jew, Sandmel says, rest their case largely on the book of Acts. But the portrait in Acts is unreliable, since it tries to enhance Paul's Jewishness and diminish his Hellenistic orientation. Again, even Paul's claim to be a Hebrew of the Hebrews and a Pharisee is not decisive. Not all Pharisees were the same, and even if Paul was a Pharisee he may not have been closely associated with the Pharisaism of Palestine.

A study of Paul's letters reveals that his Judaism was not the traditional Judaism of Palestine. The difference is not simply one of giving terms new meanings; it is a change in the fabric of religious presuppositions and in the goal of the religious quest. Whereas Palestinian Jews saw the universe as good, man as God's creation, and life as worth living, Paul saw the world as a place of suffering, man as a mixture of soul (good) and body (evil), and life as a burden. Like Philo, Paul held to a dualism of the material and the immaterial and sought salvation in the form of release from bondage to the flesh and in union or communion with God. Again like Philo, he wrestled with the problems of God's transcendence and of the role of the Mosaic law. To be sure, there are differences between Paul and Philo, but in spite of these differences Paul was a Hellenistic and not a Rabbinic Jew.

#### j) E. R. Goodenough

Goodenough's major interest was Hellenistic Judaism; his interest in Paul is related to that concern, and it is not surprising that he in-



terprets Paul as a Hellenistic Jew. His principal portrait of Paul is in an article, "Paul and the Hellenization of Christianity,"<sup>27</sup> completed by A. T. Kraabel and published in 1968, after Goodenough's death.

The book of Acts, Goodenough says, presents an account of Paul and his preaching which harmonizes beautifully with that of Peter and James. But Acts is a tendentious document, written to exaggerate Paul's Jewishness and to show the unity of early Christian preaching. By comparison with Paul's letters we might even say that the "essential Paul" is not there. While it is difficult to put together a consistent picture of Paul from his own writings, the letter to the Romans gives an illustration of his Hellenistic bias.

In the first chapter of Romans, Paul uses the word "righteousness" (*δικαιοσύνη*) to describe a state of harmony with God's spirit or law. He also claims that men should recognize God through his revelation of himself in the physical world. Both concepts are Hellenistic. In the second chapter, Paul refers to Gentiles who do what the law requires because they have the law written in their heart. In the fourth chapter, he argues that righteousness does not come through the written law, but by "faith." Both arguments reflect Paul's experience of Christ, but clear traces of the Hellenistic Judaism we know from Philo are everywhere to be seen.

In the sixth chapter, Paul begins the identification of sin with the body. This is Hellenistic, and foreign to Jewish thought. Likewise Romans 7 reflects the Greek understanding of man, sin and the law. The

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<sup>27</sup>In Jacob Neusner, ed., Religions in Antiquity: Essays in Honor of Erwin Ramsdell Goodenough (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1968); p. 23-68.

view of man in this chapter goes back to the Orphics, is continued in Plato's Phaedrus, and finds expression in Philo. In the eighth chapter Paul continues the same themes: the "law" of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set us free from the "law" of sin and death. The terminology of the higher and lower law is reminiscent of Philo, and is Hellenistic. In the closing chapters, Paul reflects a morality which transcends specific precepts and is based on the higher immaterial law. Like Philo, he is again thinking in Hellenistic terms. The book of Romans shows repeatedly, then, that Paul was a Hellenistic Jew and that his categories of thought were permeated with Greek ideas.

## 2. Paul as a Hebrew of the Hebrews

### a) Nineteenth-century German scholars

Not all nineteenth-century German scholars were prepared to see in Paul a significant admixture of Greek ideas. Paul's anthropology, they believed, could be explained in terms of his Jewish background, especially when one added to this the effect of his conversion.

In Die Entstehung der altkatholischen Kirche (1850), Albrecht Ritschl claimed that Paul's anthropological concepts were derived from Old Testament precedents.  $\Sigma\acute{\alpha}\rho\kappa\acute{\iota}\varsigma$  is not the outer man nor the evil impulse, but the whole person standing in opposition to God. The man of faith visualizes flesh as evil when he looks back at his experience before conversion, but flesh is not evil in itself nor the source of sin.

H. H. Wendt (Die Begriffe Fleisch und Geist in biblischen Sprachgebrauch, 1978) attempted to account for Paul's more radical statements

about *σάρξ*. Paul does indeed relate flesh and sin, but this relationship should not be understood to imply that the flesh is necessarily sinful. *Σάρξ*, for instance, can be used to denote the body, which can be holy as well as sinful.

Paul Feine (Das gesetzesfreie Evangelium des Paulus nach seinem Werdegange dargestellt, 1899; Jesus Christus und Paulus, 1902) accented Paul's Jewish consciousness and his relation to Jesus. Such Hellenistic ideas as were present in Paul had already been absorbed by Pharisaic Judaism. Feine also stressed Paul's conversion in which, he said, Paul experienced the exalted Lord as *πνεῦμα*; henceforth the category of spirit became all-important to him, while flesh and the law receded into the background and became negative.

b) Albert Schweitzer

In Paul and His Interpreters (1912), Schweitzer reviewed scholarly works on Paul from the time of the Reformation and offered his own interpretation of the origin and orientation of Paul's religion.

German scholars of the nineteenth century, Schweitzer contends, worked from the presuppositions of the Reformation, and their solutions all resemble each other. They assumed that Paul's system of thought arose from a series of reflections and conclusions, or they attempted to explain it on the basis of his conversion or of the religious struggle described in Romans 7. For the most part, they failed to appreciate the creative role of apocalyptic in his thought or to explain his mystical language of union with Christ in his death and resurrection.

The assumption of Greek ideas in Paul raises difficulties. First,

with respect to flesh and spirit, Paul is made to think Jewishly with one half of his mind and Hellenistically with the other, without realizing the conflict. Second, Paul's doctrine of the spirit shows no trace of Greek influence. Third, if Paul's thought had been Hellenistic the other apostles would have attacked him on that ground; in fact, they attacked only his attitude to the law. The assumption of Greek influence on Paul is therefore out of the question.

After reaching this conclusion, Schweitzer counters further arguments for Hellenism in Paul. Paul grew up in Tarsus, a centre of Stoic philosophy, but perhaps within an exclusively Jewish circle. His use of the Greek language does not imply the use of Greek concepts. If he knew Wisdom of Solomon or Philo he did not use their ideas, and he shows no trace of the Hellenistic Jewish theology of his time. His anthropology and psychology, which are claimed to be Greek, probably rest on ordinary observation of life. To be sure, Paul shares with Platonism the desire to be delivered from corporeal existence, but for Paul this is the deliverance of the whole person, not of the soul from the body. Paul believes in resurrection, not immortality. His concept of spirit is not that found in Stoicism, and his view of predestination is radically different from the Greek notion of fate. Schweitzer concludes again: "Paulinism and Greek thought have nothing, absolutely nothing, in common. Their relationship is not even one of indifference; they stand opposed to one another."<sup>28</sup>

Schweitzer turns to one more source of possible Greek influence

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<sup>28</sup> Schweitzer, p. 99.

on Paul, namely the mystery religions. He reviews the works of Anrich, Cumont and Reitzenstein on the mysteries and concludes that such influence is inadmissible. Paul does speak of death and resurrection, but not of rebirth. His notion of the sacraments bears little resemblance to the mysteries. His mysticism was a Christ-mysticism, not a God-mysticism, and was eschatologically conditioned. Even if he used the language of the mysteries, he did not share their concepts. Indeed, had he attempted to do so, the primitive church would not have allowed it. Schweitzer concludes for the third time: "Paulinism and Hellenism have in common their religious terminology, but, in respect of ideas, nothing."<sup>29</sup>

c) A. D. Nock

Nock (St. Paul, 1938)<sup>30</sup> regards Paul as a Jew largely uninfluenced by Greek thought. Tarsus, although a centre of Stoic philosophy and of learning in general, also had a Jewish colony and a synagogue in which the scriptures were regularly expounded. Paul grew up within this circle of Jewish piety. While he learned the Greek language, he learned it in an environment which was probably more Jewish and less Hellenic than that of Alexandria. He had little knowledge of Greek literature, whereas he was steeped in the language and thought of the Old Testament. In brief, "the Hellenistic influences which reached Paul reached him mainly through hellenized Jewish milieus,"<sup>31</sup> and his unconscious presuppositions

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 238.

<sup>30</sup>London: Oxford University Press, 1960; first published 1938.

<sup>31</sup>Nock, p. 77.

and instincts remained Jewish.

Nock interprets elements of Paul's thought in terms of this assessment. The basis of Paul's ethics differed from that of Stoic ethics; in Stoicism, that basis was the nature of man as man, while in Paul it was a man's standing "in Christ." Passages in which Paul refers to the struggle between flesh and spirit may recall the Orphic and Platonic teaching, but Paul could not strictly be a dualist. He believed in a future glorified body and did not see ascetic discipline as a way of salvation. His use of the term "flesh" probably represents the Jewish doctrine of the evil impulse in man. Deliverance comes not through moral conquests but by the power of the spirit. The only Greek concepts which Paul actually adopted were the idea of conscience and that of the law written on the heart.

d) W. D. Davies

Davies' view of Paul is found principally in his Paul and Rabbinic Judaism. It is possible to show, Davies says, that Paul "belonged to the main stream of first-century Judaism, and that elements in his thought, which are often labelled as Hellenistic, might well be derived from Judaism."<sup>32</sup>

The assessment of Paul as a Jew of the Diaspora requires three assumptions: first, that certain statements in the New Testament are not historically accurate; second, that Palestinian Judaism of the first century was similar to that of the fourth; third, that we can distinguish

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<sup>32</sup>Paul and Rabbinic Judaism, p. 1. Quotations are from the 1980 edition.

sharply between the Judaism of Palestine and that of the Diaspora. All these assumptions are false. There is no reason to reject the evidence of Acts, and of the epistles, that Paul was trained in Rabbinic Judaism at Jerusalem. Again we cannot, without extreme caution, use the Rabbinic sources as evidence for first-century Judaism. Finally, we cannot make a sharp distinction between the Judaism of Palestine and that of the Diaspora.

Davies also rejects three other assumptions which would place Paul outside the mainstream of Jewish life. The first is the distinction between apocalyptic and Pharisaic Judaism and the assigning of Paul to the former as over against the latter. But apocalyptic speculation was germane to orthodox Judaism, at least up to 70 C.E., and the Dead Sea Scrolls show its presence within Palestine in the time of Paul. Second, Paul's mysticism has been interpreted in Hellenistic terms. There were mystics among the Rabbis, however, and Paul need not have received his mysticism from Hellenism. Third, scholars have interpreted Paul as being opposed to the Mosaic law and have made justification by faith the centre of his theology. In fact, there is no strong dichotomy in Paul between law and gospel; for Paul, Christ is the new Torah and the new Wisdom of God.

If Paul was essentially "a Pharisee who had become a Christian,"<sup>33</sup> there was no radical discontinuity between his old faith and his new one. Paul did not think of his religion as distinct from, but as a further stage in, his ancestral faith. It was, for him, the full flowering of

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<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. xvii; cf. p. 16.

Judaism, its completion and not its annulment.

e) W. C. van Unnik

Van Unnik's monograph, Tarsus or Jerusalem: The City of Paul's Youth,<sup>34</sup> examines Paul's claim in Acts 22:3 to be "a Jew, born at Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in [Jerusalem] at the feet of Gamaliel." Most scholars, van Unnik says, have interpreted this to mean that Paul's youth was spent in Tarsus, so that he was subjected to Hellenistic influences during his formative years. Others have recognized that the natural sense of the verse requires Paul's having come to Jerusalem as a small child, but they have changed the meaning of "brought up" to "educated," namely as a Rabbi and at the feet of Gamaliel. An examination of the triad of verbs used in this verse (*γεννάω, ἀνατρέφω, παιδεύω*) as they appear in Greek literature of the period shows, however, that Paul spent the years of his youth completely in Jerusalem. Other New Testament texts bearing on Paul's youth either support this verdict or can be reconciled with it.

The reliability of this conclusion depends on the trustworthiness of the account in Acts. To this van Unnik replies that there are no other texts to which we can turn and that Luke as a writer of history is to be trusted. While he may have put appropriate words in the mouths of his speakers, he would not simply have invented facts nor did he have reason to do so.

If this thesis is accepted, all attempts to discover the nature

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<sup>34</sup>Tr. George Ogg (London: Epworth Press, 1962).



of the impressions made on Paul as a youth in Tarsus must be given up. Further, we can assume that Paul as a youth used Aramaic in the home, on the street and in school, and that his knowledge of Greek was acquired subsequently.<sup>35</sup> Finally, we can conclude that Paul acquired his knowledge of Greek culture after his conversion and in relation to his conversion.

### 3. Paul as a Christian

Many of the scholars reviewed above drew attention to Paul's conversion as a contributing factor in the formation of his religious outlook. The degree to which that experience determined his subsequent thought is variously estimated, however. Some scholars are prepared to make it the decisive element.

#### a) J. Gresham Machen

Machen's The Origins of Paul's Religion (1921)<sup>36</sup> is a defense of the claim that Paul's religion is derived ultimately not from Judaism or Hellenism, but from Jesus himself and from the early church.

Paul was the first great Christian theologian; he worked out the universalistic implications of the gospel, and he called Jesus "Lord," applying to him the LXX title for God. Such radical steps are to be explained, not from Jewish concepts of the Messiah nor from Hellenistic notions of a divine redeemer, but from that which Paul received from Jesus himself. The historic Jesus of Nazareth, who had lived and died and been

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<sup>35</sup>Van Unnik claims that Paul thought in Aramaic, even when he expressed his thoughts in Greek (ibid., p. 56).

<sup>36</sup>New York: The Macmillan Co.

raised again by God's power, was now alive in a new mode of existence, and this Jesus Paul preached as the Christ.

Before his conversion, Paul was a devout and zealous Jew, raised in the Diaspora but probably educated in Jerusalem. His conversion was sudden and unexpected. There is no evidence that he was unsure of his own religion or tormented by a sense of sin which he sought to allay by feverish attempts to keep the law or by persecuting the Christians. What happened on the Damascus road was that Paul received a new understanding of the facts about Jesus and a new attitude toward them. This contact with the risen Lord was sufficient to transform him and to provide the basis for his apostolic authority.

Following his conversion, Paul joined the Christians of Damascus and Antioch and received from them a Hellenized form of Christianity. He must also have inherited the gospel preached by the Jerusalem church; while there is evidence of a difference of opinion between Paul and Peter, there is little indication that this constituted a formal break or that it lasted all his life.

The origin of Paul's religion, then, was the historic Jesus and the message of the first Christians. His concept of the Messiah was not that of Jewish apocalyptic; the notion of the vicarious death of the Messiah was unknown in Judaism. His doctrine of redemption also differs from the Hellenistic concept of a dying and rising savior-god; much of the material used by scholars to show similarity is late, and it may be that the mysteries borrowed from Christianity and not the reverse. His use of "Lord" for Jesus is not indebted to Hellenism, but derives from the Jerusalem church and rests ultimately on the Old Testament.

b) H. G. Wood

The character of Paul's conversion, says H. G. Wood ("The Conversion of St. Paul: Its Nature, Antecedents and Consequences"),<sup>37</sup> is clear from his letters and the book of Acts. It was a sudden conversion, effected or at least accompanied by a vision of the risen Christ. Before his conversion, Paul had persecuted the early church. As a Pharisee and a patriot, he must have seen Jesus as breaking down the hedge about the law and as annulling Judaism. He was therefore convinced that the claim that Jesus was the Messiah must be exposed and its upholders made to suffer. It is to this kind of struggle, and not to a moral crisis like that of Augustine or Luther, that we must attribute Paul's words in Romans 7. Granted, perhaps we do not make sufficient allowance for Paul's moods and for his tendency to go to extremes. Paul may also have felt, like the rich young ruler, that while he had kept the law from his youth up he yet lacked something in God's sight. Still, it is doubtful that Romans 7 is typical of his pre-Christian experience or that the struggle depicted there, even if present in his inner life, was the dominant factor in his conversion.

We know also from Paul's interpretation of his conversion that it was a conversion, not to a fully articulated system of Christian thought, but to Christ. It meant the recognition that Jesus of Nazareth, crucified as a criminal, was in fact "the Anointed One of God, living now in the glory of the Spirit world, and that through this Anointed One an imperious call to tell the good tidings had come to him, Paul."<sup>38</sup> In the

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<sup>37</sup>In New Testament Studies, 1 (1954-55), 276-82.

light of this sudden revelation, Paul's whole world of thought had to be adjusted. The cross became the cornerstone of his faith and the burden of his preaching, and his estimate of Pharisaic righteousness and of a religion of law was radically revised.

c) Joachim Jeremias

In an article entitled "The Key to Pauline Theology,"<sup>39</sup> Jeremias contends that the key to Paul's thought is to be found not in Tarsus (Hellenism) or Jerusalem (Judaism), but in Damascus (Paul's Christian experience).

Those who hold to the primacy of Tarsus see Paul as brought up in a Hellenistic environment, surrounded by Greek language, culture and religion. The study by van Unnik has rendered this position untenable. Paul was brought up in Jerusalem, and Hellenistic influences on him must have been slight. Though he was familiar with the popular ideas of the Stoics, we cannot assume that this philosophy had a profound influence on him. Those who hold to the primacy of Jerusalem point out that Paul was a Jew by birth, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, a Pharisee and the son of a Pharisee. He had studied under Gamaliel, and was probably an ordained Rabbi. Throughout his life he retained many of the distinctive traits of his native religion; he used the Rabbinic style of biblical interpretation, and his whole life was deeply rooted in Jewish theology.

Those who see Paul as a Hebrew are certainly correct, but Jeru-

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<sup>38</sup>Wood, p. 279, quoting Nock, p. 74.

<sup>39</sup>In The Expository Times, 76 (1964), 27-30.

saalem no more than Tarsus can provide the key to Paul's theology. "There is only one key: Damascus. Paul is one of those men who have experienced a sharp break with their past. His theology is a theology rooted in a sudden conversion."<sup>40</sup>

Features of Paul's post-conversion religion verify this judgment. Paul's sense of the immediate presence of God, symbolized by the term "Lord," had its roots in the Damascus event. His understanding of the cross was anchored in the same event, for Jesus' existence as the risen Christ showed that the Christians' interpretation of the cross was true. Paul's sense of God's overwhelming grace, his conviction of having been chosen and foreordained by God, his knowledge of sin, his opposition to legalism, his eschatological hope, his sense of missionary obligation, his understanding of his own role and authority as an apostle, his identification of Christ and the church -- all these are understandable in terms of the Damascus event. To be sure, Paul received from the early church an account of the life, death and resurrection of Christ, but his understanding of this and of its significance for all men was rooted in the hour of Damascus.

#### 4. Summary

The question of the origin and orientation of Paul's religion is an ongoing one in which many of the same arguments are raised again and again. Few points of agreement have emerged from the century of debate. Two can be noted, but both have qualifications. First, whatever Helle-

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<sup>40</sup>Jeremias, p. 28.

nistic elements are found in Paul reached him through a Hellenized form of Judaism. The problem is to determine the nature and extent of this Hellenistic influence. Second, Paul's religious outlook at least, and possibly his philosophical outlook as well, was deeply affected by his experience of Christ. The question remains as to the religio-philosophical perspective which was thus altered, as well as the degree of the alteration. Since all the extant writings of Paul postdate his conversion, these questions are difficult to resolve.

#### B. PAUL'S ANTHROPOLOGY AS INDICATOR OF HIS RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHICAL ORIENTATION

Among the scholars reviewed in the previous section are some who drew attention to Paul's anthropological thought as evidence of his religious orientation. This practice began in the last century and has continued to the present. As we shall see, Paul's use of anthropological terms has been interpreted alternately as Hellenistic or Jewish, or has been explained on the basis of other philosophical and religious categories.

##### 1. Paul as a Hellenistic Jew

###### a) Hans Lietzmann

In a brief exposition entitled "Das Fleisch und die Sünde,"<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>41</sup>In An die Römer (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1928), p. 75-77; first published 1913.

Lietzmann examines Paul's view of the relation of sin and flesh in man.

The notion that man's sinful deeds originate in an "evil impulse" operative in him is found in the Jewish theology of Paul's day, but that theology did not connect the evil impulse to the flesh. This association of the flesh and sin was made by Philo, however, and it formed the basis of his ethics. If we ask the origin of the idea in Paul, it is natural to turn to passages in the LXX which speak of the corruption of the flesh and its opposition to God, but the sought-for thesis is nowhere clearly enunciated. One has the choice, then, either of making Paul an independent creator of the idea or of admitting that he got it from the Hellenistic environment which surrounded him.

A difference of terminology does exist between Philo and Paul, in that Philo prefers the antithesis *ψυχή-σῶμα*, while Paul uses *ψυχή*, *νοῦς* and *πνεῦμα* for the first term and either *σάρξ* or *σῶμα* for the second. The truth is that Paul lacks a consistent term for the higher part of man. If we recall that Philo, who was a philosopher by profession, likewise possessed no uniform anthropology, we will not find this strange.

#### b) Percy Gardner

In The Religious Experience of St. Paul,<sup>42</sup> Gardner claims that Paul has two conceptions of sin; the first is quasi-historical and connects sin to Adam, while the second is anthropological or mystical and arises out of his own experience. In the latter view, man is seen as a

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<sup>42</sup>London: Williams and Norgate, 1913.

composite being, the physical part of him constituting a stronghold of sin. This concept, as expressed in Romans 7 and 8, is "the very principle of Oriental asceticism."<sup>43</sup> The principle of evil or sin is entrenched in the flesh, and through the flesh makes war upon the spirit. The *voûs*, in contrast, appreciates and loves God's law. In both cases Paul reflects the Hellenistic philosophy of his day.

c) Samuel Laeuchli

In 1958, Samuel Laeuchli ("Monism and Dualism in the Pauline Anthropology")<sup>44</sup> challenged the increasing tendency to read Paul in purely monistic terms.

The early Greek fathers, Laeuchli states, understood the anthropology of the New Testament in the Greek framework of thought. The actual view of man vacillates between a dichotomistic and a trichotomistic one, but a dualistic disparagement of the body is constant. In recent scholarship, however, Greek influences have been denied in favor of a Hebrew understanding of man. *Σάρξ* is no longer the Greek flesh, but the Hebrew *רוח*; "spirit" is connected, not with the Stoic *πνεῦμα*, but with the biblical *רוח*. But "it seems to me that the rabbinical presuppositions of Paul's anthropology need certain modifications."<sup>45</sup> The protest against any Hellenistic element is made too easily.

Laeuchli points out a number of passages in which Paul has modi-

<sup>43</sup>Gardner, p. 166.

<sup>44</sup>See above, note 1.

<sup>45</sup>Laeuchli, p. 16.



fied the Hebrew monism in a dualistic direction. In Romans 7, Paul recognizes that there is a split in the ego between the *voûs* as the intellectual capacity and the flesh which is opposed to it.<sup>46</sup> In 2 Cor. 4:16, there is the same dichotomy between the inner and the outer man; the former can grow while the latter wastes away. In 2 Cor. 5, one aspect of man (his earthly "tent") is transitory, while another aspect is eternal. In 2 Cor. 12, Paul describes an "out-of-body" experience which clearly distinguishes between the earthly body and a heavenly state. In 2 Cor. 3:18 he again differentiates between the physical body and that which is non-physical; it is the latter which is being transformed. To these must be added passages which reveal an ascetic attitude. In 1 Cor. 9, Paul "pommels" his body and "subdues" it for the sake of his spiritual life. In 1 Cor. 7, he regards sexuality dualistically and disparages it; it is not an aspect of life which is transformed.

Laeuchli contends, finally, that Paul is not to be understood as intending a Hebrew meaning when using a Greek term. Paul spoke Greek, not Hebrew. "When he uses a Greek term. . .there must be, even if only in the slightest degree, an analogy to the use of the term in his home of Tarsus or among his many friends who conversed in this language."<sup>47</sup> Paul did not write *σάρξ* and think *גשם*, nor did he say *πνεῦμα* and think *נפח*. In this sense we must see his Rabbinic background as having been modified.

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<sup>46</sup>Laeuchli says of Rom. 7:22-23: "It takes all the well-established exegetical batteries in the hands of New Testament scholars to demonstrate that there is no dualism involved here whatsoever" (*ibid.*, p. 19).

<sup>47</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 24.

d) Samuel Sandmel

We have seen that Sandmel considers Paul to be a Jew of the Diaspora and deeply influenced by Hellenism. In this regard he compares Paul to Philo and draws attention to parallel aspects of their thought.

"The view of man common to Philo and Paul," Sandmel says, "is more dualistic than monistic."<sup>48</sup> It rests upon the Greek view of man as a mixture of the material and the immaterial, or body and soul, in which the former is inferior to the latter. Both Philo and Paul see a struggle going on within man between the enlightened mind and the aggressive senses and passions. Both understand salvation as, in one sense, the harmony of the soul achieved by the control of the bodily desires by reason and, in another, as the escape of the soul from the body and its movement toward life in the spirit. They disagree on how salvation in the first sense is to be achieved. For Philo, the law of Moses, when allegorically interpreted, shows man how to achieve victory over the bodily desires; for Paul, the attempt to keep the law results only in failure. Both interpret salvation in the second sense in a manner analogous to that of the mystery religions. Again, Paul understood salvation in the light of the event of Jesus and therefore in historical terms, while Philo's concept was ahistorical. Yet Paul, like Philo, was a mystic, and expressed his mysticism in Hellenistic terms. He believed that in union with Christ one died to the body but became alive in the spirit, or that one was transformed from a material or "natural" being into a "spiritual" being.<sup>49</sup> He believed that death would bring about such a transformation in

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<sup>48</sup>The First Christian Century, p. 131.

its completeness,<sup>50</sup> but also that immortal life can be entered into in the present.

## 2. Paul as a Hebrew of the Hebrews

### a) H. Wheeler Robinson

H. W. Robinson's The Christian Doctrine of Man (1911)<sup>51</sup> made a lasting contribution to the anthropological debate, particularly in English-speaking Protestantism.

Paul's psychological vocabulary, Robinson holds, was drawn in the main from the Old Testament, via the LXX. His contrast of flesh and spirit might seem to suggest that the flesh is the source of sin, but the truth is that there is no dualism in the Greek style. Though "Paul finds in man's physical nature the immediate foe of the higher principle,"<sup>52</sup> this does not make it the ultimate foe. That ultimate foe, as Romans 7 and Galatians 5 show, is sin itself.

Robinson grants that Paul did make advances on the concepts of the Old Testament, but holds that these were a natural Jewish development and primarily due to his personal experience. Whatever Hellenistic

<sup>49</sup>"This is what Paul's conversion amounts to in his eyes: the conviction of transformation from a material. . .into a spiritual being" (The Genius of Paul, p. 97). Sandmel even says that, for Paul, a man so united with Christ "is spirit and not body; he is no longer subject to the passions and senses of the body" (ibid., p. 87).

<sup>50</sup>Sandmel observes that resurrection, for Paul, "amounts virtually to immortality" (ibid., p. 90).

<sup>51</sup>Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1926; first published 1911.

<sup>52</sup>H. W. Robinson, p. 115, italics his.

influences were present were absorbed unconsciously and were subordinated to Paul's Jewish psychology.

b) W. D. Davies

Davies' interpretation of Paul's anthropology is found in Paul and Rabbinic Judaism and in an article entitled "Paul and the Dead Sea Scrolls: Flesh and Spirit" in The Scrolls and the New Testament (1957).<sup>53</sup>

Until recently, Davies states, two views of Paul's anthropology have been prevalent. The first sees the dominant element as Hellenistic, while the second postulates an Old Testament base. It is not difficult, however, to show that Paul's view of man is not the Hellenistic dualism of mind and matter. First, to ascribe such a view to Paul would be a "psychological, ethical and spiritual absurdity,"<sup>54</sup> since in such case Christ could not truly have come into the world. Second, in Hellenistic usage it is not *σάρξ* but *ὕλη* which is opposed to *νοῦς*. Third, examination of Paul's use of terms shows that it rests, not on Hellenistic concepts, but on the Old Testament.

But Paul's usage is not simply that of the Old Testament, even granted his accentuation of the ethical connotations which "flesh" had in the later canonical writings. There is a third source of influence, namely that of the Rabbis. The Rabbis did not, like Paul, take over *רש*

<sup>53</sup>Krister Stendahl, ed. (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press). Davies' article is p. 157-82.

<sup>54</sup>Davies, Paul and Rabbinic Judaism, p. 18, quoting N. P. Williams, The Ideas of the Fall and of Original Sin (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1927), p. 149.

from the Old Testament to express the side of human nature which is weak and prone to sin; their contrast was between the two impulses, the  $\text{רָצוֹן הָרַע}$  and the  $\text{רָצוֹן הַטוֹב}$ . From Paul's letter to the Romans we can see, however, that his concept of flesh and sin is parallel to the Rabbinic doctrine of the evil impulse. First, Romans 7 shows a direct connection to the doctrine of the two impulses. Second, in Romans 1, while the view of sin reflects Greek thought, Paul is still moving within the Rabbinic tradition. Third, Romans 5, which relates Adam's sin to that of his posterity, expresses Rabbinic thought; although it goes beyond the Rabbis, it is far removed from any Hellenistic dualism.

Paul is also thoroughly Rabbinic in his concept of resurrection, insisting on embodiment. Even 2 Cor. 5, in which the believer receives a new body at death, is not Hellenizing. "The language of Paul can be explained without recourse to Hellenistic sources. . . We cannot accept the interpretation of 2 Cor. 5 as the Hellenization of Paul's thought."<sup>55</sup>

c) J. A. T. Robinson

Robinson's The Body: A Study in Pauline Theology<sup>56</sup> makes two basic claims. First, with respect to anthropology Paul was a Hebrew of the Hebrews; however much he may have drawn on Hellenistic sources for other aspects of his thought, his view of man derives essentially from the Old Testament. Second, the concept of body forms the keystone of Paul's theology; the word  $\sigma\omega\mu\alpha$  knits together all his great themes,

<sup>55</sup>Davies, Paul and Rabbinic Judaism, p. 314.

<sup>56</sup>London: SCM Press, 1952.

and he alone of New Testament writers gives it theological significance.

Strictly speaking, Robinson says, the Old Testament offers no background for Paul's use of *σῶμα*. The Hebrews had no term for body; they did not, like the Greeks, distinguish between form and substance, body and soul. They saw men whole, and always in relation to God and to their fellow men. Paul's use of *σῶμα* reflects such thought.

In Paul's use of *σάρξ* there is a wide range of meanings similar to that of the Hebrew *גֶּשֶׁם*. These usages do not refer to the flesh as a part of the body, but to the whole person seen from the perspective of his physical existence and especially his distance and difference from God. Paul does make a new beginning when he uses *σάρξ* to depict man as part of a world fallen under the power of sin and death; this meaning is characterized by the phrase *κατὰ σάρκα*, which denotes an orientation of life away from God and toward the created world. It is in this sense that the "sinfulness of the flesh" must be understood in Paul. In his use of both *σῶμα* and *σάρξ*, then, Paul simply recapitulates the message of the Old Testament.

d) W. D. Stacey

W. D. Stacey (The Pauline View of Man, 1956) follows in the steps of H. W. Robinson and J. A. T. Robinson. While recognizing the existence of a Hellenized form of Judaism and its possible influence on Paul, he devotes most of his attention to Jewish and Greek thought in their unasimilated forms and sees Paul as a Hebrew of the Hebrews.

Paul's use of *ψυχή*, Stacey says, is not Hellenistic, and in those places where Greek dualism seems to be present, the word does not

appear. Paul's central concept is πνεῦμα, which received its entire meaning from the Old Testament and Paul's Christian experience. His use of σὰρξ shows a progression of meanings, but the flesh itself is not evil. "The only passages where the flesh appears evil in itself are those where, in his enthusiasm, Paul paints the picture with too vivid colors."<sup>57</sup> Generally speaking, opposition of flesh and spirit in man must be seen as involving the whole personality.

Paul borrowed terms such as νοῦς, συνείδησις and ἔσω ἄνθρωπος from Greek sources, but did not use them precisely in their Greek sense. Either he remoulded them for his own purposes or he made use of them while unaware that they were incompatible with his other terms. His depiction of man was more experiential than academic. His terminology was not precise, and at times, under the influence of a new experience, he borrowed the language of Greek dualism and exaggerated the tension between flesh and spirit. Nevertheless, behind the variety of terms and usage he saw man whole.

### 3. The Existentialist School

In the third and fourth decades of this century, a fresh perspective on Pauline thought was brought by a group of scholars who combined the insights of existentialist philosophy with the teachings of the Augustinian-Reformed tradition. According to this point of view, σὰρξ

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<sup>57</sup>Stacey, p. 170. In Romans 7, where sin and flesh appear as synonymous and in opposition to spirit, Paul wrote "in desperation" and was "over-reaching himself" (*ibid.*, p. 163-64).

is man in revolt against God, and not the physical flesh at war with the spirit. It may manifest itself as weakness of will in relation to the "desires of the flesh," but essentially it represents the propensity of man to trust in his own efforts rather than the grace of God and to put the creation in place of the creator. In its traditional form, this view depended upon acceptance of the historicity of the "fall" and the consequent sinfulness and depravity of mankind. In its modern expression it has come to terms with contemporary theories of man's origin, but continues to locate sin in man's existential choice vis-à-vis his creator.

a) Rudolf Bultmann

Bultmann's interpretation of Paul's anthropology is found chiefly in his Theology of the New Testament.<sup>58</sup> We must bear in mind, Bultmann says, that Paul does not develop his theology systematically, but in response to concrete situations. Paul was a theologian, but he "deals with God not as He is in Himself but only. . .as He is significant for man."<sup>59</sup> Similarly, he does not deal with the world and men as they are in themselves, but only as they are in relation to God. His theology, soteriology and anthropology are all of one piece.

Paul's use of anthropological terms illustrates this principle.  $\Sigma\omega\mu\alpha$  stands for the whole person, or man as he experiences himself. The body can come under the sway of other powers, or of the flesh, but in itself it is neither good nor bad. In Romans 6 to 8, to be sure, Paul

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<sup>58</sup>See ch. 4, "Man Prior to the Revelation of Faith" (I, 190-269).

<sup>59</sup>Bultmann, Theology, I, 190-91.



"sees so deep a cleft within man, so great a tension between self and self, and so keenly feels the plight of the man who loses his grip upon himself and falls victim to outside powers, that he comes close to Gnostic dualism."<sup>60</sup> But Paul does not distinguish between man's self (or "soul") and the bodily shell or prison. He does not expect a release from this body, but its resurrection and transformation. His use of *ψυχή* and *πνεῦμα* is essentially that of the Old Testament. When used of man rather than God, *πνεῦμα* does not represent a higher principle in man but simply the conscious and willing self. Similarly, *νοῦς* is not the mind or intellect as a special faculty, but the knowing, understanding, judging function of man.

Bultmann does not include *σάρξ* with Paul's anthropological terms, but considers it with sin and death. Paul's verdict, he says, is that man has missed the existence which at heart he seeks; his intent is perverse, evil. It is thus that we must understand "flesh" and its relation to sin. Evil is perverse intent, the failure to acknowledge one's creaturely status before God, the attempt to find life in the created world rather than God. Life "in the flesh" is a spurious life in contrast to life "in the spirit"; it means taking the flesh or the world for one's norm. This attitude expresses itself in many ways: self-seeking of every kind, anxiety about the world, trust in one's own strength or righteousness, even fulfilment of the Torah. "Flesh," finally, becomes a power to which man falls slave. It has desires, interests, works; it prompts man to rely on his own strength, and so brings death.

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<sup>60</sup>Ibid., p. 199.

b) W. G. Kümmel

Kümmel (Römer 7 und die Bekehrung des Paulus, 1929;<sup>61</sup> Das Bild des Menschen im neuen Testament, 1948;<sup>62</sup> The Theology of the New Testament, 1973<sup>63</sup>) assumes essentially the same position as Bultmann: "Flesh" is not an anthropological term, but represents man as over against God.

A number of assumptions underlie Kümmel's interpretation of Paul's anthropology. First, the New Testament writers present us with a unified picture of man. All see man as essentially a whole being who stands "over against God"<sup>64</sup> and ripe for judgment. Second, Paul was interested primarily not in anthropology but in man's relation to God. Man, for Paul, is "a historical being who derives his nature from his existence as a member of the present evil age, and from his being in accordance with his historical existence."<sup>65</sup> He is a member of the cosmos, a created being who must give glory to his creator. But he refuses to do this; he is caught by the cosmos and stands between *σάρξ* and *πνεῦμα* as these represent realms or powers. *Σάρξ* therefore means man as man, remote from God and hostile to him. Third, Paul's anthropology must be understood from the perspective of the Christian. Only with the eye of faith does one see that man is totally involved in sin; it is a conse-

<sup>61</sup>Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung.

<sup>62</sup>Zurich: Zwingli-Verlag. E.T. Man in the New Testament; tr. John J. Vincent (London: Epworth Press, 1963).

<sup>63</sup>Nashville: Abingdon Press; see especially p. 174-78.

<sup>64</sup>Kümmel, Man in the New Testament, p. 40 et passim.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., p. 70; cf. p. 42, n. 48.

quence of seeing salvation as being secured in Christ.

The result of these assumptions is that Paul cannot be said to have held to an anthropological dualism. When he does employ the language of Greek dualism, he uses the terms imprecisely to stand for the whole man who "wholly stands over against God."<sup>66</sup> His estimate of man is essentially in accord with that of Jesus, and radically different from any idealistic, humanistic or dualistic conception.

c) Herrade Mehl-Koehnlein

Mehl-Koehnlein's relational approach to Paul (L'Homme selon l'apôtre Paul, 1951)<sup>67</sup> is existentialist in its thrust. We will not arrive at a systematic picture of man in Paul, for Paul exercised considerable freedom vis-à-vis Greek philosophy and anthropology, and also made use of Jewish ideas. When he used terms from these sources, he was not tied to their original meanings. Further, he did not set out to describe man per se, but only in relation to God. A study of Paul's anthropological ideas will therefore discover "une sorte d'existentialisme biblique."<sup>68</sup>

Mehl-Koehnlein's review of Paul's anthropological terms yields results identical with Bultmann's.  $\Sigma\omega\mu\alpha$  always represents the whole man, man as subject-object as distinguished from a mere biological specimen.  $\psi\upsilon\chi\acute{\eta}$  stands for the life of the natural man, oriented to this

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., p. 47.

<sup>67</sup>Neuchâtel et Paris: Delachaux et Niestlé.

<sup>68</sup>Mehl-Koehnlein, p. 6.

world and limited to its sphere of life. Πνεῦμα is not a natural part of man, but God's gift. Νοῦς is not a superior organ as in Greek thought, but simply an aspect of human life. There is therefore in Paul no dualism in the Greek style. There is no "inner man" close to God but hindered by the flesh; there is only the whole man, alienated from God and far from him. Most of all, there is a portrayal of man as a being able to dispose of himself, and existing as a function of that freedom. His dilemma is that he can know God where God reveals himself, yet chooses not to do so.

d) Wm. R. Nelson

In "Pauline Anthropology: Its Relation to Christ and His Church,"<sup>69</sup> Wm. R. Nelson claims that previous presuppositions to a study of Paul's anthropology have all been too narrow. Attempts to understand Paul according to the categories of Greek philosophy have tried to determine whether his anthropology was dichotomistic or trichotomistic, whereas in fact there is no concept of exclusive elements in Paul, no Platonic doctrine of the soul trying to escape from the prison-house of the body. Paul does speak of man as body and soul, but always these are aspects of the one self or ego, and always they refer to man's relation to God.

A second assumption is that man can be understood prior to faith in Christ. This results in an analysis of the sinful nature of man in a vacuum. According to Paul, man is truly man only in his existence before God; it is therefore only in the Christian that we can study human nature

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<sup>69</sup>In Interpretation, 19 (1960), 14-27.

in its developed form. A third unsatisfactory procedure is to attempt to discover Paul's view of man by an analysis of his anthropological terms. This approach tends to look upon man in an individualistic way, whereas Paul always saw man as part of a corporate personality "in Christ."

The correct way to understand Paul's anthropology is in the theological continuity of his thought. The Adam-Christ typology of Rom. 5 and 1 Cor. 15 (the old aeon and the new), the new life in Christ, and the concept of the church all have to do with a man's whole being, not just a particular faculty. The power of the Holy Spirit, which transforms a man into the likeness of Christ, works upon him in his totality, not merely upon his mind or heart. Paul's anthropology is therefore not to be understood in any of the narrow ways previously used. "Man only becomes truly man in relation to Christ";<sup>70</sup> therefore the only way to understand man is in that context.

e) Ernst Käsemann

Bultmann, Käsemann claims (Perspectives on Paul)<sup>71</sup> provided a helpful corrective to Lüdemann, whose syncretistic interpretation of Paul had led to a dualistic view of man in which the "Christian" thing was to be drawn more and more into the spiritual world while awaiting the eschaton. Bultmann showed that Paul's anthropological terms did not represent the component parts of man, and that existence as a whole is according to its orientation (whether "flesh" or "spirit").

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<sup>70</sup>Nelson, p. 27.

<sup>71</sup>Tr. Margaret Kohl (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971); first published 1969.

Käsemann also agrees with Bultmann that, for Paul, the image of God was lost in the fall. "Only Christ has and is imago dei, an image which is only given back to us in faith."<sup>72</sup> But man is addressed by God; he is called to be a new creature, and must respond for good or ill. Perhaps Bultmann went too far in the individualistic interpretation of this existential choice, but his basic contention was correct: the sin of man is his refusal to acknowledge his creaturely status before God. "It is only under the lordship of Christ that the devout man ceases to make his worship a means of self-justification and self-praise."<sup>73</sup>

It is in this context that Paul's anthropology must be understood. True, at times Paul comes close to a dualistic approach, for he sees man in conflict with himself, knowing the right but not possessing the power to do it. But this is not real dualism, for corporeality is necessary and important; it is, in fact, man's capacity for relation, including his relation to God.

Käsemann's summary of Paul's anthropology typifies the combination of Lutheran-Reformed theology and existentialist philosophy just reviewed. "The terms used in Pauline anthropology all undoubtedly refer to the whole man in the varying bearings and capacities of his existence; they do not apply to what we call the individual at all."<sup>74</sup> Existence is conceived from the perspective of the world to which it belongs. It is "flesh" in so far as it has given itself over to the world of flesh, serves that world and allows itself to be determined by it. It is only

<sup>72</sup>Käsemann, Perspectives on Paul, p. 8.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid., p. 26.

in receiving redemption in Christ that man becomes a true human being.

#### 4. Paul and Qumran

A new avenue of approach to Paul's anthropology was opened up with the discovery and publication of the Dead Sea Scrolls. What the relationship was between Qumran and the New Testament writers has been a matter of debate; our concern here is for the possible relationship between that community and Paul, especially as regards anthropological concepts.

##### a) Karl Georg Kuhn

Kuhn's article, "New Light on Temptation, Sin and Flesh in the New Testament,"<sup>75</sup> appeared first in 1952<sup>76</sup> and provoked considerable response from the world of biblical scholarship.

The whole question of temptation, sin and flesh in the New Testament, Kuhn argues, should be approached afresh in the light of the Dead Sea Scrolls, for the parallels are obvious. Both depict a state of war between two powers in the world; both describe the temptation of the believer, and both reflect an eschatological cast of thought. In the New Testament, the two powers are God and Satan; the believer is exposed to the power of Satan and tempted to sin through the weakness of the flesh. In the Qumran texts, the situation of man in the world is determined by

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<sup>75</sup>In Krister Stendahl, ed., The Scrolls and the New Testament, p. 94-133.

<sup>76</sup>In Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche, 49 (1952), 200-22.

his belonging either to the "sons of light" or the "sons of darkness," and this allegiance is determined by a primeval divine choice.

Before the discovery of the Scrolls, it was impossible to account for the New Testament ideas just outlined, but with the discovery of the Scrolls we have a clear answer. "Here the religious ideas and the way of thinking are considerably and characteristically different from that form of Judaism which we, up to this time, considered to be the form of Palestinian Judaism at the time of Christ."<sup>77</sup> It is obvious now that Jewish concepts, at least in the case of Qumran, were influenced by "Parsiism" or Zoroastrianism. In that religion we find the dualism of two original spirits of good and evil, truth and lies, and we find all mankind divided into two groups as their followers. So also in the Scrolls, man has been placed in the ranks of one of the two powers; the "sons of light" are enticed by the angel of darkness and helped by the angel of truth, and the war between these powers continues until the end ordained by God.

It is in this context, and not that of Hellenism or Gnosticism, that the Pauline notion of "flesh" is to be understood, for in both Qumran and Paul there is a significant departure from the anthropology of the Old Testament. "Flesh" at Qumran is contrasted not only with the spirit of God but with the spirit of truth. Man as "flesh" is prone to evil, while the pious have the "spirit of truth." In this contrast between flesh and spirit, flesh becomes almost synonymous with evil. It is also the Qumran texts which offer the true parallel to the "I" sayings of Romans 7. This "I" is not the biographical "I" in Qumran or Paul, but

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<sup>77</sup>Kuhn, p. 97.



represents human experience, or mankind as flesh. Like Paul, the Qumran saint belongs both to the company of the redeemed and to sinful humanity. In Romans 7 and Qumran, "flesh" is the ungodly realm of power while the "spirit of truth" wills what is good. Paul's use of "spirit" is, of course, tied to the historic Christ, yet the over-all anthropological pattern inside which Paul affirms what is new in Christ is that of the Qumran texts.

#### b) Opposition to Kuhn

Not all scholars were prepared to accept Kuhn's assessment of the sinfulness of the flesh in the Dead Sea Scrolls or to grant the similarity of Paul's anthropology to that of the Qumran sect.

In an article entitled "בשר: 'Fleisch' in den Texten von Qumran,"<sup>78</sup> H. Huppenbauer argued that Kuhn had gone too far in making "flesh" the sphere of opposition to God. Many references to flesh in the Scrolls do not go beyond the Old Testament sense: "flesh" is weak and mortal, or stands for all mankind. Even when the psalmist calls himself a "spirit of flesh" (1QH 17:15), he means simply himself as man. The Teacher of Righteousness may "stumble" through the "sin of the flesh" (1QS 11:12), but "immerhin muss man fragen, ob damit wirklich etwas anderes ausgesagt ist als: 'wenn ich in meiner Eigenschaft als Mensch zu Fall komme.' Als Mensch wird auch der Gläubige von Qumran immer wieder schuldig."<sup>79</sup> Flesh in the Scrolls does stand over against God, but as the fleeting over

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<sup>78</sup>In Theologische Zeitschrift, 13 (1957), 298-300.

<sup>79</sup>Huppenbauer, p. 299.

against the eternal; to trust in it is disobedience and rebellion against God. But there is no proof that flesh is an impelling force for sin. Quite to the contrary, the saint at Qumran knows that God will take into account his nature as flesh, and have pity on him.

In 1957, W. D. Davies offered a guarded assessment of Kuhn's thesis. It is true that at times, in the Scrolls, "the association of the flesh with evil becomes so close that it seems to denote the morally lower nature of man."<sup>80</sup> Again, "it seems quite clear that to belong to the flesh is to belong to that sphere where the spirit of perversion, the angel of darkness, rules."<sup>81</sup> When Paul uses "flesh" with moral overtones his use is similar to this, but in spite of these parallels there is no fundamental similarity between Paul's thought on sin and that of the Sect. Paul's accentuation of the moral connotations of "flesh" and a similar accentuation on the part of the sect merely point to a common background where Hellenistic forces have been at work. In the case of Qumran these forces may have encountered a Zoroastrianized form of Judaism, so we can say that Paul's usage and that of the sect represent "a Hellenized Rabbinic Judaism and a Hellenized Zoroastrian Judaism, respectively."<sup>82</sup>

In his contribution to the article on σάρξ in the Theological Dictionary of the New Testament,<sup>83</sup> Rudolf Meyer registered even stronger disagreement with Kuhn. The "sinfulness of the flesh" in the Scrolls

<sup>80</sup> Davies, "Paul and the Dead Sea Scrolls," p. 161.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., p. 167.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., p. 165.

<sup>83</sup> Gerhard Friedrich, ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1971). Meyer's contribution on the Scrolls is in vol. 7, p. 110-14.

should be understood as the weakness of the flesh or the sinfulness of man seen as flesh. When man is called a "carnal spirit" what is intended is his identity with sinful mankind and distance from God. "Nowhere is it even probable that the flesh is in conflict with the spirit. . . All the indications are that the anthropological ideas of the Qumran community follow the ancient paths."<sup>84</sup>

In Paul and Palestinian Judaism,<sup>85</sup> E. P. Sanders addressed arguments put forward by Jürgen Becker,<sup>86</sup> H. Braun<sup>87</sup> and other scholars which support Kuhn's position.

Becker's argument, Sanders says, is that in the community hymns sin is conceived as a sphere rather than as individual transgressions. This argument is based primarily on the fact that in these passages the word for "sin" is in the singular, and secondarily on the fact that one is saved "from" sin. These arguments are not conclusive. The sin from which a member of the sect is purified is not conceived as a power which holds men in bondage, but is something that a man does and of which he may repent and be forgiven. The terminology of sin almost always implies evil actions, even when the singular ("sin") is used. Further, the concept of repentance and cleansing is a frequent one in the Scrolls.

Against Braun's claim that the "nothingness" passages in the

<sup>84</sup>Meyer in TDNT VII, 114.

<sup>85</sup>Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977; see especially p. 274-84.

<sup>86</sup>Das Heil Gottes (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1964).

<sup>87</sup>"Römer 7,7-25 und das Selbstverständnis des Qumran-Frommen," Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche, 56 (1959), 1-18; and Gesammelte Studien zum neuen Testament und seiner Umwelt (Tübingen: Mohr, 1967).

Scrolls are statements of man's lostness and that entry into the sect saves from such a state, Sanders argues that during life man never ceases being nothing before God and entry into the sect does not change this. One is not cleansed from being "fleshly" but from transgression. The predestinarian cast of thought of the sect does not alter this; the assumption continues to be that sin is either deliberate or inadvertent, but not unavoidable. More correctly, sin is not altogether avoidable, given man's weak nature, but this paradox is not worked out in the sect. We may conclude, therefore, that "although the sectarian theologians reached a profound and pessimistic view of human ability, this did not lead them to make a fundamental break with the conception of sin known elsewhere in Judaism."<sup>88</sup> Sin is transgression of God's will; to be of such a nature that one cannot sin is not in itself sin.

### c) Support for Kuhn

While many scholars rejected Kuhn's interpretation of "flesh" in Qumran and its possible relation to Paul's usage, others were prepared to support him on one or both counts.

In "Paul and the Manual of Discipline,"<sup>89</sup> Sherman Johnson claims that there are parallels in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Paul which go beyond their common debt to Judaism. Behind columns 10 and 11 of the Manual of Discipline, for example, lies a strong conviction of the weakness and sinfulness of human nature. This conviction takes a dualistic form which

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<sup>88</sup>Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, p. 284.

<sup>89</sup>In Harvard Theological Review, 48 (1955), 157-65.

is similar to that of 4 Ezra and at least as thorough-going as that of Paul. "Flesh" is seen, as in Paul, as the seat of wickedness. Now, while "there is no reason to think that the sectarians regarded the physical body as hopelessly corrupt. . . , if they were Essenes they were, like Paul, suspicious of the sexual life and no doubt regarded it as the realm where temptation to sin supremely takes place."<sup>90</sup> Paul, therefore, need not have derived his negative assessment of the body from Hellenistic sources; it was already present in Judaism.

In an article entitled "The Dead Sea Scrolls and Pre-Pauline Christianity,"<sup>91</sup> David Flusser contends that a close study of the Scrolls will show parallels to Paul, John and the author of Hebrews. These parallels seem to indicate that the New Testament writers used a common source, a source which was most probably a stratum of Christian thought influenced by sectarian ideas.

Paul's contrast of spirit and flesh, Flusser suggests, has strong affinities with Qumran. The spirit-flesh contrast of Qumran differs from the spirit-matter dualism of the Greeks, for Qumran does not show the same contempt for matter; nevertheless the world is polluted by sin and man shares that pollution. From this arises the notion that man is sinful by his very nature, and in the Scrolls (as in Paul) "flesh" is used to describe the basest aspect of human life. This usage cannot be explained from the Old Testament; it rests upon the awareness of election

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<sup>90</sup>Johnson, p. 161-62.

<sup>91</sup>In Chaim Rabin and Yigael Yadin, eds., Aspects of the Dead Sea Scrolls (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1965), p. 215-66.

by grace. "Flesh" means humanity apart from God's grace, and "spirit" is that which both saves and purifies from the realm of flesh. In both Qumran and Paul, the elect are freed from the flesh and yet still threatened by it; a man must struggle against his carnal nature and appropriate the spirit.

In Offenbarung und Schriftforschung in der Qumransekte,<sup>92</sup> Otto Betz draws attention to two sharply contrasting pictures of man in the Scrolls. In the first, man is "a shape of clay needed in water, a ground of shame and a source of pollution, a melting-pot of wickedness and an edifice of sin, a straying and perverted spirit, without understanding, and fearful of righteous judgments" (1QH 1:21-23). In the second (1QH 7:6-10), man praises God because he has been strengthened by God's power, given the holy spirit, and kept from falling away from the covenant.

Die Verschiedenheit der beiden Bilder entspricht dem Gegensatz zwischen dem natürlichen und dem von Gott neu erschaffenen Menschen -- dem Menschen κατὰ σάρκα, der nichts besitzt als den unreinen Leib und einen verkehrten Geist, und dem Mensch κατὰ πνεῦμα, der Gottes Kraft und den heiligen Geist empfangen hat.<sup>93</sup>

In 1QH 1:21-23, the writer sets forth a pessimistic view of man. Instead of following the priestly account of creation in Genesis 1, in which man is the crown of creation, he uses the account in Genesis 2, in which man is made out of the dust of the earth. His accent falls on the poor quality of the material out of which man is made. "Dieses Material bestimmt sein ganzes Wesen, so dass der Mensch geradezu als 'Lehm' be-

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<sup>92</sup>Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1960; see especially p. 120-26.

<sup>93</sup>Betz, p. 124.

zeichnet werden kann."<sup>94</sup> To this the writer adds an even more shameful defect, namely the fact of man's biological origin in the act of sexual union.<sup>95</sup> In the contrasting passage (1QH 7:6-10), we see man as the strong fighter against ungodliness, furnished with God's power and the holy spirit. His "edifice," unlike the clay hut built on dust of the first man, is like a fortress which God himself has erected upon a rock. These contrasting pictures depict, to be sure, one and the same person; the difference is that the first represents the natural man, while the second represents the spiritual man.

##### 5. Summary

The foregoing survey shows that the question of Paul's anthropological thought is far from being resolved. By and large, scholars are agreed that Paul did not have a consistent anthropological scheme which can be "discovered" by careful exegesis of his writings. They agree also that Paul was not centrally concerned with anthropology; while they differ as to what that central concern was, they hold that Paul's references to the nature of man are in terms of it, and not the reverse. Finally, most interpreters are prepared to see some Hellenistic content in Paul's anthropological thought, though they disagree on the extent of that content and on exactly what it means in Paul. The answer to these questions usually depends upon the interpreter's assessment of Paul's general reli-

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<sup>94</sup>Ibid., p. 121.

<sup>95</sup>Betz interprets "kneaded with water" as referring to semen and "melting-pot" as referring to the womb; see p. 122-23 and p. 122, n. 2.

gio-philosophical outlook, and also upon the theological position of the interpreter.

### C. ROMANS 7 AS AN EXPRESSION OF PAUL'S ANTHROPOLOGICAL THOUGHT

As pointed out in the introduction, the seventh chapter of Romans has been a favorite passage for interpreters of Paul's anthropological thought. Because of the large number of terms employed, and because of the setting of struggle and conflict in which they are used, the passage has lent itself to innumerable attempts at exegesis from the earliest days of the church to the present.

Division of opinion about Romans 7 has centred chiefly on two questions. First, is the chapter autobiographical or not? Second, does it depict Christian or pre-Christian life? To these must be added three further questions. First, is a "both-and" interpretation (e.g., both autobiographical and not autobiographical) possible? Second, what is to be made of the shift in tense at verse 14? Third, is Paul's intent anthropological? theological? psychological? existential? To these considerations, again, must be added any pre-judgment of the interpreter as to Paul's religious orientation and his view of the nature of man. The resulting combinations are endless, and a review of interpretation over the centuries bears out this premonition.

For the purposes of this investigation, scholarly opinion may be classified in three groups: the existentialist school, the non-existentialist school, and the Hellenist school. These categories are by no means exclusive; important considerations will be shared by two or more



groups. For purposes of understanding what Paul meant in this chapter, however, this classification may prove useful.

# 1. The Reformers

Because of their influence on later exegetes, the writings of Luther and Calvin may be taken as a convenient starting point for our survey of scholarly opinion of Romans 7. The reformers, of course, were indebted to earlier interpreters from the time of the church fathers to the middle ages.

## a) Martin Luther

Luther's Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans<sup>96</sup> is a compilation of notes of his lectures delivered between November, 1515 and September, 1516.

Luther holds, first, that Paul in Romans 7 writes about himself, and as a Christian. A carnal man does not love the law and hate the flesh. The perfectionists therefore are wrong, who say that the converted or spiritual man no longer knows sin. "The saints are at the same time sinners while they are righteous."<sup>97</sup> Second, the war within man is the war of the whole person. To be sure, some of Luther's statements appear to say the opposite. "The words 'I will' and 'I hate' refer to his spiritual nature; but the words 'I do' and 'I am carnal' refer to his fleshly nature."<sup>98</sup> But Luther immediately qualifies this: "Because

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<sup>96</sup>Tr. J. Theodore Mueller (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing House, 1954).

<sup>97</sup>Luther, p. 100

<sup>98</sup>Ibid., p. 97.

the total person consists of flesh and spirit, the Apostle ascribes to the whole person both things, which contradict each other and stem from parts of his being which are contradictory."<sup>99</sup> This holistic position is illustrated by Luther's exegesis of 7:25b. Here, he says, we have "the clearest passage of all, and from it we learn that one and the same person serves at the same time the Law of God and the Law of sin."<sup>100</sup>

b) John Calvin

In his commentary on Romans,<sup>101</sup> Calvin claims that Rom. 7:7-13 refers to unregenerate man while 7:14-25 refers to regenerate man. For the first man, "the wantonness of the flesh is not restrained, but, on the contrary, breaks out and prevails."<sup>102</sup> Such a man is endowed only with the gifts of nature, and this is what is meant by "in the flesh." Some knowledge of right and wrong is possible for such a man, but in the absence of law he does not recognize his depravity. His claim to "life" (7:9) is not really true; it means he claims life for himself when in fact he is dead. This was Paul's case before his conversion. It is not that he was without the law, but he had been taught the theology of the letter and was satisfied with the outward mask of righteousness. "When the commandment came" (7:9) means when the law began really to be understood; it then raised sin to life and slew him. In the second section

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<sup>99</sup>Ibid.

<sup>100</sup>Ibid., p. 99.

<sup>101</sup>Commentaries on the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans; tr. and ed. by John Owen (Edinburgh: Printed for the Calvin Translation Society, 1849); first published 1539.

<sup>102</sup>Calvin, p. 248.

(7:14-25), Paul sets before us in contrast "a regenerate man, in whom the remnants of the flesh are wholly contrary to the law of the Lord, while the Spirit would gladly obey it."<sup>103</sup> This must be the regenerate man, for only he recognizes the power of sin and its opposition to the law; this conflict "does not exist in man before he is renewed by the Spirit of God."<sup>104</sup>

Calvin, in the second place, interprets 7:14-25 as a conflict between "flesh" and "spirit," not between reason and the passions.

Under the term flesh, he ever includes all that human nature is, everything in man, except the sanctification of the Spirit. In the same manner, by the term spirit, which is commonly opposed to the flesh, he means that part of the soul which the Spirit of God has so reformed, and purified from corruption, that God's image shines forth in it. Then both terms, flesh as well as spirit, belong to the soul; but the latter to that part which is renewed, and the former to that which still retains its natural character.<sup>105</sup>

Calvin's reference here to "parts" of the soul is reminiscent of Greek philosophy, and a later passage supports this:

The inner man then is not simply the soul, but that spiritual part which has been regenerated by God; and the members signify the remaining part; for as the soul is the superior, and the body the inferior part of man, so the spirit is superior to the flesh. Then as the spirit takes the place of the soul in man, and the flesh, which is the corrupt and polluted soul, that of the body, the former has the name of the inner man, and the latter has the name of members.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>103</sup>Ibid., p. 259

<sup>104</sup>Ibid., p. 262.

<sup>105</sup>Ibid., p. 267.

<sup>106</sup>Ibid., p. 271.

It is clear from other passages, however, that Calvin wants to dissociate himself from the philosophical view. "It is evident," he says, "that no part of our soul is naturally good."<sup>107</sup> Paul's reference in 7:15 to desiring the good is not a picture of the natural man nor the depiction of human nature given us by the philosophers, for scripture shows that nothing has remained in the heart of man but corruption. Paul's confession in 7:16 is not the same as that of Ovid, for it is the testimony of a godly man. "Mind" does not refer to "the rational part of the soul which philosophers extol, but to that which is illumined by the Spirit of God, so that it understands and wills aright."<sup>108</sup>

Calvin's interpretation of "flesh" and "spirit" is therefore clear. "Flesh" is the natural or unregenerate man, while "spirit" is that which is added to the natural man in regeneration. The conflict in man is not between reason and the bodily desires, but between God's spirit and unredeemed human nature.

## 2. The Existentialist School

As noted earlier, the twentieth century has seen the marriage of Lutheran-Reformed theology and existentialist philosophy in the interpretation of Paul. The seventh chapter of Romans, with its language of despair and deliverance, has lent itself especially to such interpretation. The scholars reviewed below are only selected representatives of a very large school.

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<sup>107</sup>Ibid., p. 249.

<sup>108</sup>Ibid., p. 274.

a) W. G. Kümmel

Kümmel's interpretation of Romans 7 is given at length in Römer 7 und die Bekehrung des Paulus and in brief in Das Bild des Menschen im neuen Testament.

It is clear, Kümmel says, that the capacity of assenting to God's will and the intention of carrying it out is attributed in this chapter to the mind or inner man and that sin, which dwells in the flesh, prevents this. If Paul's reference is to the non-Christian or to man as such, the passage appears to be at odds with the rest of his writings. But Paul does not assume a dichotomy in man in which the *νοῦς* stands closer to God than the *σάρξ*; his major anthropological texts indicate that he sees the whole man as *σάρξ* and consequently as sinner. He uses *σάρξ*, that is, not of man's fundamental nature, but of his actual historical existence in the world in this evil age. The terminology of Romans 7 is different from other passages touching on anthropology, but this may be due to Paul's "careless and unsystematic dualistic form of expression."<sup>109</sup> The real dualism of the chapter is not an anthropological dualism of mind and flesh, but a cosmological dualism in which this age is marked by flesh, sin and rebellion against God.

b) Rudolf Bultmann

Bultmann's most extensive treatment of Romans 7 is in his essay, "Römer 7 und die Anthropologie des Paulus,"<sup>110</sup> published in 1932. Scat-

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<sup>109</sup>Kümmel, Man in the New Testament, p. 59.

<sup>110</sup>In Imago Dei: Festschrift für Gustav Krüger (Giessen: Alfred Töpelmann, 1932), p. 53-62; E.T. "Romans 7 and the Anthropology of Paul," in Existence and Faith: Writings of Rudolf Bultmann; tr. Schubert M. Og-

tered references appear in other writings.

The problem of Romans 7, Bultmann says, is usually seen to be that of the identity of the "I" that is speaking here. Is it the man under the law or the man under faith? If it is the former, is it man in general or Paul himself? There can be no doubt as to the answer: "The situation characterized here is the general situation of man under the law and, to be sure, as it appears to the eye of one who has been freed from the law by Christ."<sup>111</sup>

But what exactly is the split in man's existence that is portrayed in these verses? According to the usual interpretation, man wants to do God's will but does not get beyond good intentions. He agrees or delights in God's law, but sin expressed in desire overcomes his good will. But this interpretation is untenable, for Paul knew that many Jews fulfilled the law and he claimed the same for himself. His conversion was not the result of an inner moral collapse; it was the surrender of his old righteousness to God. The way of the law was not wrong because it failed to reach its goal, but because it is the means by which man tries to establish his own righteousness before God.

The anthropology usually seen in Romans 7 is also not that of Paul. This anthropology presupposes that the "willing" of 7:15-21 is conscious and capable of fulfillment. This presupposition is false. Paul does not see man as a conscious subject. For him, human existence transcends the sphere of consciousness; willing is not the subjective

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den (Cleveland: World Publishing Co., 1960), p. 147-57.

<sup>111</sup>Bultmann, "Romans 7," p. 147; cf. Theology I, 247.

movement of the will, but "the trans-subjective propensity of human existence as such."<sup>112</sup>

A third misunderstanding is that the doing of evil lies in the "flesh" while the willing of good belongs to the "mind" or "inner man." To be sure, Paul in 7:18 seems to dissociate his conscious self from the self which has fallen victim to the flesh, but "flesh" and "mind" are not two constituent parts of man. They denote rather the orientation of the whole person; man himself is a split and a warfare "because he ought not to be. . .i.e., because human existence is concerned with its authenticity and yet constantly fails to find it."<sup>113</sup>

The reason for man's failure is not the disparity between willing and doing; in fact, "nothing is said about good resolutions that come to nothing in actual conduct."<sup>114</sup> Rather, it is due to man's self-reliant will to be himself, his false will toward selfhood. The inner man knows that authenticity is to be found only in God and is driven to seek it, but in his effort to find it he tries to live in his own strength. He tries to be like God, and finds death. Were he to submit himself to the claim of God upon him, he would find life.

Romans 7, then, does not portray "the psychological process of the emergence in man of individual sins but rather the process that is at the basis of existence under the law and that lies beyond subjectivity

<sup>112</sup>Bultmann, "Romans 7," p. 151.

<sup>113</sup>Ibid.; cf. Theology I, 245: "To be innerly divided, or not to be at one with one's self, is the essence of human existence under sin."

<sup>114</sup>Theology I, 248.

and psychic occurrences."<sup>115</sup> What is ultimately at stake in this chapter is "eschatological salvation,"<sup>116</sup> i.e., the realization that the way of law leads to death.

c) Franz Leenhardt

The interpretation of Romans 7 as Paul's personal experience, says Franz Leenhardt (The Epistle to the Romans),<sup>117</sup> is fraught with difficulties whether the reference is to Paul's Christian or pre-Christian life. As a description of his pre-Christian life it clashes with the self-confident testimony of Phil. 3:6. The argument that it represents his Christian life appears stronger, for it is undoubtedly true that only the Christian can have such an acute sense of sin and only he truly delights in God's law. But the truth is that the passage is not autobiographical. Paul uses the first person to speak for all humanity or, more particularly, for man under the law, trying to earn merit before God. He is trying to reveal to man his hopeless situation by exposing his inner schism, a schism which shows what sin really is.

Leenhardt expounds Romans 7 in these terms. Paul's choice of the tenth commandment (7:7) is because covetousness is the impulse which subjugates man to things and leads him to make of them his gods. It is an act of egoism and pride, an idolatry of the world and of the self which denies God his rightful rule. The law confronts man with choosing self or God, and because man chooses self his whole existence is given the

<sup>115</sup>"Romans 7," p. 156-57.

<sup>116</sup>Ibid., p. 154.

<sup>117</sup>Tr. Harold Knight (London: Lutterworth Press, 1961); first published 1957.



character of negation and revolt. The cause of man's plight is "sin" or the "flesh." Sin shows itself by the division within man between willing and doing; "it strikes me at the heart of my being, for it destroys the unity of my inmost self."<sup>118</sup> This conflict is "in me" because it is "in my flesh," but "flesh" here is not an external or peripheral factor. Paul localizes action in the flesh or members because it is in the body that doing takes place, but generally speaking "in the flesh" means "in my former life."

In his use of *vous* and *ἐν τῷ ἄνθρωπῳ*, Paul borrows terms current in the religious and social vocabulary of his day. We should interpret these words in a psychological and secular sense. The inner man is the natural man endowed with the faculty of moral judgment, not the inner man of 2 Cor. 4:16 which is renewed by the Holy Spirit. Paul does not look for deliverance of the inner being from the body, but for salvation from sin which enslaves the body to both sin and death.

d) C. K. Barrett

Barrett's interpretation of Romans 7 (A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans)<sup>119</sup> is cautious and inconclusive, but its principal orientation is to the existentialist school.

Paul's account in Romans 7 is both autobiographical and not autobiographical. In 7:7-9 Paul, in addition to recalling the account of the Garden of Eden, seems to be telling his own story. In his youth

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<sup>118</sup> Leenhardt, p. 191.

<sup>119</sup> London: Adam and Charles Black, 1957.

Paul was "alive," but at his bar mitzvah, when he assumed responsibility under the law, sin entered his world and with it "death." On the other hand, other passages in which Paul describes his life before conversion show no trace of spiritual conflict or of a divided self. It seems, therefore, that his use of the first person in Romans 7 is to make his point vivid. But the truth is that Paul's principal concern is not psychological or anthropological; it has to do with the place of law in the religious life. He becomes involved in a psychological discussion and illustrates it from his own experience, but "it is human nature, and not Paul's nature, with which he deals."<sup>120</sup>

Paul, in second place, does and does not make use of Hellenistic categories. Barrett says of 7:18:

Here at last, and at v. 25, the flesh is radically evil; it corresponds to the 'evil inclination' of Rabbinic Judaism, which constantly draws man in the direction of sin. Whether Paul identified this evil principle with the material constituent of human nature, and regarded it as evil because it was material, are difficult questions.<sup>121</sup>

On the one hand, there is an element in human nature so completely under the power of sin that it corrupts all man's activities. On the other hand, the culprit is not the flesh but sin, a personal power residing in and dominating the flesh. It appears that Paul has borrowed Hellenistic terms but remoulded them to suit his soteriological-ethical scheme.

Barrett, third, interprets the conflict in Romans 7 in existentialist terms. "Desire" or "lust" (7:7) is man's attempt to usurp God's

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<sup>120</sup>Barrett, p. 152.

<sup>121</sup>Ibid., p. 148.

place as Lord. The "members" (7:23) are "a way of saying 'in my actual corporeal existence,' in which I am determined by the conditions of life in this (fallen) world; or, better, in this present age."<sup>122</sup> The source of Paul's wretchedness (7:24) is not a divided self, but the fact that his religion, instead of helping him, condemns him. Finally, Paul's summary statement in 7:25b means that while "the mind recognizes the law of God, the flesh -- human nature living in and for this age -- recognizes the law which sin has fashioned for this age."<sup>123</sup>

e) Ernst Käsemann

Käsemann's interpretation of Romans 7 (Commentary on Romans)<sup>124</sup> is a marked example of the existentialist position. It sets forth clearly what the chapter is not, and less clearly what it is.

First, Romans 7 is not an excursus or digression. "Paul did not permit himself the luxury of digressions."<sup>125</sup> Second, it is not autobiographical, for that is refuted by Phil. 3:6. Rom. 7:8-11 does sound like a first-hand report, but in the strict sense it can refer only to Adam. Only Adam lived before the law was given; only for him was the coming of the commandment an occasion for sin.

Third, the passage does not refer to the Christian, for the first section is in the past and in the second Paul describes himself as "carnal." This expression "qualifies a person in his cosmic fallenness to

<sup>122</sup>Ibid.

<sup>123</sup>Ibid., p. 151.

<sup>124</sup>Tr. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1980); first published 1973.

<sup>125</sup>Käsemann, Commentary on Romans, p. 210.

the world."<sup>126</sup> "I" therefore means all mankind under the shadow of Adam. Fourth, Romans 7 is not a description of the pious Jew, or of man under the law. No Jew experienced a time when he was without law or a moment when the law came to him; no pious Jew regarded the law as impossible to fulfil or as a spur to sin. In a sense, the passage does deal with the pious Jew under the law, but this is only as seen from the Christian perspective. The Jew himself can only confirm the givenness of the law by his transgression.

Fifth, Romans 7 is not the psychological account of a moral struggle. 7:7-11 does not refer to the Jewish practice of binding a boy of twelve to observance of the Torah, and the idea of childish innocence is "completely unbiblical and part of our modern mythology."<sup>127</sup> Covetousness, for Paul, is not primarily psychological, and sexuality is certainly not meant. A cleavage of will and action is seen in 7:15-20, but the description is not that of a moral struggle. Paul was not pessimistic about man's ability to do good, nor does he here bewail lack of will-power. He attacks the strong, not the weak; he shows that the way of the Torah is the way of self-assertion and that it leads to death.

From this description of what Romans 7 is not it is clear what the chapter is, namely a description of "the entanglement of a fallen creation in all its expressions in the power of sin."<sup>128</sup> The "I" which encounters the law is "supra-personal";<sup>129</sup> it stands for all mankind implicated in Adam's sin. "Covetousness" is the passion to assert one-

<sup>126</sup>Ibid., p. 199.

<sup>127</sup>Ibid., p. 193.

<sup>128</sup>Ibid., p. 204.

<sup>129</sup>Ibid., p. 196.

self against God and neighbor; it is "absolutely the basic sin against which the whole law is directed and which the law in fact provokes."<sup>130</sup> The parenthetical phrase in 7:18 ("that is, in my flesh") does not have a limiting sense, for flesh is the whole person in his fallenness to the world and alienation from God.

Käsemann recognizes that the war between the "members" and the mind or "inner man" (7:22-23) constitutes a problem for his interpretation, since the reference is plainly to unredeemed man. Paul here follows the Hellenistic tradition; he uses *νοῦς* for a higher part of man, the true man which participates in divine reason and is open to and delights in God's will. But the Hellenistic interpretation can be avoided by paying proper attention to 6:12ff, from which it is clear that what Paul describes is "cosmic strife projected into existence."<sup>131</sup> Paul refers to "members" because life is necessarily corporeal and the battle for world dominion takes shape as a battle for corporeal people. That is, he uses the terms and motifs of the Greek tradition, but not in their original sense.

In his cry for deliverance (7:24), Paul uses the *σῶμα-σῆμα* language of the Hermetic literature and seems at first to echo its meaning: where sin reigns, death qualifies our bodily existence and salvation is escape from corporeality. In fact, however, this verse expresses the heart of Paul's teaching. The religious person desires life and tries to snatch it, even by obeying the Torah. But life can only be given, so in his self-will, rebellion and perversion man falls subject

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<sup>130</sup>Ibid., p. 194.

<sup>131</sup>Ibid., p. 207.

to the powers of death. "What is brought to light is the depth of our fall, not our relatedness to God."<sup>132</sup>

f) C. E. B. Cranfield

Cranfield's commentary on Romans (The Epistle to the Romans)<sup>133</sup> is essentially a restatement of Calvin's position.

First, the two parts of our passage must be separated in accordance with the shift in tense at verse 14. In the first part, Paul is not speaking of himself or of a typical Jew but of "a man" generally, first in the absence of law and then in its presence. At the same time he does not divorce himself from this designation; his use of the first person singular is due in part to his deep sense of personal involvement. In the second section, Paul is speaking autobiographically and as a Christian. These verses "depict vividly the inner conflict characteristic of the true Christian, a conflict such as is possible only in the man in whom the Holy Spirit is active and whose mind is being renewed under the discipline of the gospel."<sup>134</sup>

Cranfield, in second place, interprets the conflict in Romans 7 as an existential one between man ruled by sin and the Holy Spirit. In 7:7-8, "covetousness" means "self-centredness and self-assertion over against God";<sup>135</sup> the commandment, meant for man's true freedom, is taken as an attack on that freedom and so rejected. In 7:9, Paul is describ-

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., p. 209.

<sup>133</sup> Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1975.

<sup>134</sup> Cranfield, p. 341; cf. p. 346

<sup>135</sup> Ibid., p. 349.

ing not his boyhood before he had the commandment, but mankind's experience before the giving of the law. "When the commandment came, sin revived and I died" (7:9) means simply that with sin man came under God's sentence of death.

In the second section, Paul describes the conflict between the "I" which is fallen human nature and the "I" which is renewed by the Holy Spirit. This struggle cannot be compared to examples in pagan literature, for Paul's struggle involves the knowledge of God's law and the activity of the Holy Spirit. By *νοῦς* and *ἔσω ἄνθρωπος* Paul means the "renewed mind" of 12:2 or the "renewed inner man" of 2 Cor. 4:16. In the *ἐγώ* which wills the good "we must surely recognize the human self which is being renewed by God's Spirit, not the self, or any part of the self, of the still unconverted man."<sup>136</sup> In 7:18, the principal clause ("I know that nothing good dwells within me") is a confession of the self's powerlessness for good, while the qualifying phrase ("that is, in my flesh") is necessary because in the Christian the Holy Spirit also dwells. The cry of 7:24 is a cry to be delivered from life in the body as we know it, a life which, because of sin, must succumb to death. Finally, in Paul's summary statement in 7:25b, *σάρκι* means "in this present life" and with a "fallen nature,"<sup>137</sup> while *νοῦς* means the mind in so far as it is renewed by the Spirit of God.

g) Hans Jonas

Mention may be made, finally, of Hans Jonas' "Philosophical Medi-

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<sup>136</sup>Ibid., p. 346.

<sup>137</sup>Ibid., p. 370.

tation on the Seventh Chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Romans."<sup>138</sup> This essay is not an exegesis of the text, but a translation of Paul's statements in Rom. 7:14-25 into the language of existential form description, a "freely philosophical reflection or meditation on the general existential phenomena which by hypothesis may be those that underlie the entire Pauline statement as its premise in the human constitution."<sup>139</sup>

The "I" which finds expression in Rom. 7:14-25, Jonas says, is not "Paul's empirical person" nor a "psychological type" nor "historical mankind,"<sup>140</sup> for if it were the truths expressed would be contingent and not necessary. It is, rather, "Man as such,"<sup>141</sup> whether Christian or Jew or pagan. Jonas attempts to show this by "a structural analysis of that mode of human being in which the 'primal sin' spoken of by Paul and Augustine is inevitably committed and constantly renewed."<sup>142</sup> The inevitability, that is, lies in the nature of man's being and of the freedom which he possesses to determine his own fate.

Jonas concludes from such an analysis that Paul's plight in Romans 7 is one which the law produces only when taken seriously, not when practised outwardly. Paul's critique strikes at all piety under the law; it describes the Pharisee who exposes himself to God's law and thus experiences the "defeat of his mere humanity."<sup>143</sup> Paul's message is there-

<sup>138</sup>In James M. Robinson, ed., The Future of Our Religious Past (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), p. 333-50; first published 1964.

<sup>139</sup>Jonas, p. 335.

<sup>140</sup>Ibid., p. 334.

<sup>141</sup>Ibid., "man" written as "Man."

<sup>142</sup>Ibid., p. 335.

<sup>143</sup>Ibid., p. 348.



fore different from that of Jesus. Jesus was concerned with the defects of the Pharisees, while holding that a better attitude was possible. Paul exposed the defect of Pharisaism itself, i.e., of the highest piety of which mankind is capable.

#### h) Summary

From the foregoing survey the essential features of the existentialist position will have become clear.

First, Romans 7 is the description, not of a psychological or moral conflict within man in the Hellenistic sense, but of the whole man standing in radical opposition to God. In particular it describes the hopeless plight of the man who attempts to justify himself before God or earn merit in God's sight by his own efforts. The role of the law is to force man to choose between self and God and to reveal to man the hopelessness of his situation. The correct understanding of that situation is available, of course, only from the Christian perspective.

Second, the antithesis in Romans 7 is not between body and soul, but between flesh and spirit, the old aeon and the new, the natural man and God's spirit. By "flesh" Paul means fallen human nature, or man on his own, or unregenerate man. By "mind" or "inner man" he means redeemed human nature, or regenerate man, or the Holy Spirit. If, alternatively, these terms apply to unregenerate man, Paul is using them in other than their Hellenistic sense, or is correcting them, or his usage is not typical.

Third, the existentialist position is marked by an effort to make Romans 7 fit into a theological scheme, either that of chapter 5

to 8 or the whole of Paul's theology. The presuppositions of the interpreter also appear to determine the meaning of many verses.

### 3. The Non-Existentialist School

Not all biblical scholars have been persuaded by the arguments of the existentialist school. While following generally in the tradition of the reformers, these scholars have allowed themselves considerable freedom in the interpretation of Pauline theology and of Romans 7.

#### a) W. Sanday and A. C. Headlam

Sanday and Headlam (The Epistle to the Romans, 1895)<sup>144</sup> provide a cautious interpretation of Romans 7 which can be summarized under four headings.

First, Paul is describing his own experience, which he regards as typical of all mankind. This is not his conversion, for the crisis is a moral one while his conversion was an intellectual one concerned with whether Jesus was the Messiah. Yet "the whole description is so vivid and so sincere, so evidently wrung from the anguish of direct personal experience, that it is difficult to think of it as purely imaginary."<sup>145</sup> Second, Romans 7 is a psychological account of Paul's encounter with the law at various stages of his life: first the happy stage of childish innocence, prior to consciousness of the law; next the struggle occasioned by the collision between the law and the natural appetites; finally the

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<sup>144</sup>New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1896; first published 1895.

<sup>145</sup>Sanday and Headlam, p. 186.

resolution of this conflict by the intervention of Christ.

Third, the description in Romans 7 is that of unregenerate man. To be sure, in the lower sense of "regenerate" this conflict can occur, but the higher stages of spiritual life seem really to be excluded. It would be better not to use the term "regenerate" at all, since the passage does not contain it. More accurately, the chapter is a description of Paul's encounter with the law prior to his conversion; as his passions pulled him in a contrary direction and proved stronger than his will he began to be disillusioned with the law, but he was reluctant to give it up until confronted by Christ.

Fourth, Paul was not a Hellenist and the flesh is not evil. At first glance, Romans 7 seems to present a Hellenistic dichotomy between body and mind. In 7:14-23 there is a germ of good in human nature which is overborne by temptation acting through the bodily appetites and passions. Again, in 7:18 "the part of man in which Sin. . .establishes itself is not his higher self, his conscience, but his lower self, the 'flesh,' which. . .is too easily made the instrument of evil."<sup>146</sup> But in fact Paul is not a Hellenist. "The Pauline anthropology rests entirely on an Old Testament base; the elements in it which are supposed to be derived from Hellenistic dualism must simply be denied."<sup>147</sup>

All of this means that in Romans 7, while *σάρξ* represents human nature in its frailty, the body is not seen as evil. "A clear distinction is drawn. . .between the will and the bodily impulses which act

<sup>146</sup>Ibid., p. 182.

<sup>147</sup>Ibid., p. 181, quoting Lipsius. Sanday and Headlam conclude: "The controversy may now be regarded as practically dead" (ibid.)

upon the will and a sort of external Power which makes both the will and the impulses subservient to it."<sup>148</sup> That is to say, the antithesis in Romans 7 is not between spirit and flesh, but between spirit and sin. "This is Paul's essential view, of which all else is but the variant expression."<sup>149</sup>

b) Anders Nygren

In his Commentary on Romans (1944),<sup>150</sup> Anders Nygren also makes four points concerning Romans 7.

First, Paul in this chapter is being autobiographical, but does not limit the application to himself alone. In 7:7-13 he describes what the Christian was before conversion, in the old aeon, when the law had the power to destroy. In 7:14-25 he describes the Christian in the new aeon, when the law still does not have the power to save. Before Paul's conversion, the law had been a heavy burden for him; at his conversion he saw that it was a false way of salvation. The role of the law did not change following his conversion; it was still impotent to bring about the good.

Second, Paul in 7:14-25 is describing the Christian. Nygren explicitly rejects the view that Paul is here speaking of man under the law as seen from a Christian perspective. Scholars like Kümmel and Bultmann seem to consider the matter closed, but that is far from the case; their position "is burdened with so many and great difficulties that it cannot

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<sup>148</sup> Ibid., p. 145.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid., p. 181.

<sup>150</sup> Tr. Carl C. Rasmussen (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1949); first published 1944.

be sustained."<sup>151</sup>

Third, in 7:14-25 Paul is not describing a divided and discordant state of the soul; anything like that is clearly not true of the Christian. What Paul has in mind is the tension which exists between will and action, intention and performance. This is a dualism with which he is familiar, for the Christian participates both in the old aeon and the new. His life is therefore a constant battle against sin; he delights in God's law "in the spirit," but the "flesh" exercises its effect, so that the will is not carried out in performance.

Fourth, the impotence of the law in 7:14-25 is due to the conflict between πνεῦμα and σὰρξ. Even though Paul uses the term σάρκινος and not σαρκικός, there is a pejorative overtone, as in everything Paul says about the flesh. As long as this life lasts, the Christian "lives under the condition of sin. . . He is not 'carnally-minded,' and yet the flesh sets its mark on all that he does."<sup>152</sup> The dualism of Rom. 7:14-25 is therefore that of the old aeon and the new. As long as the Christian remains in the flesh there is tension between that existence and being "in Christ," and so he cries out for deliverance (7:24).

#### c) W. D. Davies

In Paul and Rabbinic Judaism, W. D. Davies interprets Romans 7 as an account of Paul's struggle with his evil yezer.

First, the account is a personal one, the most personal point of all Paul's epistles. It is, in fact, an illustration of his moral fail-

<sup>151</sup> Nygren, p. 287.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid., p. 299.

ure, not in the sense of outward disobedience of the law, but in terms of the commandment which more than any other deals with the inner life. Second, Paul's description in this chapter is probably an account of his struggle against his evil yeşer. For Paul, like the Rabbis, sin was an external power which comes to dwell in the flesh and uses the desires of the flesh to accomplish its ends. We are justified, then, in tracing in this chapter a direct connection with the doctrine of the yeser hara'.

Davies expounds Romans 7 in these terms. Paul here describes three stages in his life. The first is his boyhood when sin was latent in him but "dead," a kind of age of innocence. The second began when the commandment came and sin sprang to life; the law thus brought not only awareness of sin but impetus toward it. The third period was marked by the spirit's coming to bring him deliverance. The Rabbis similarly discuss the stages of life, as well as the point at which the evil impulse enters a man. Usually this is held to be at birth, and hence the evil impulse is thirteen years older than the good impulse which comes with the giving of the law. At this point, which coincides with the first stirrings of sexual passion, the struggle between the two impulses begins, and from then on it is unceasing. Although there is no reference to the good impulse in Romans 7 (Paul has replaced it with the spirit), the parallel to Rabbinic notions is obvious. Paul had found from his own experience that the law, which was to be the chief remedy for the evil impulse, did not bring relief; deliverance came only through Christ.

Davies therefore agrees with N. P. Williams that "sin," "the old man," "the sinful body," "the body of this death," "the sinful passions aroused by the law" and "the mind of the flesh" are all just picturesque

and paraphrastic names for the yeşer hara', and that φρόνημα τῆς σαρκός "almost amounts to a literal translation of the yêtzet hâ-râ'."<sup>153</sup> To be sure, the Rabbis located the evil impulse in the heart while Paul locates sin in the flesh, but this is in keeping with Paul's wider use of σάρξ as exemplified in Gal. 5.

d) John Knox

According to John Knox in The Interpreter's Bible (1954),<sup>154</sup> Rom. 7:7-13 at least is autobiographical. Paul is recalling the carefree days of childhood, the coming of the law, and the growing consciousness of sin. 7:14-25 is almost certainly personal as well, and there is nothing to suggest that Paul could not have written it as a Christian. Such conflicts are known to Christians; why not to Paul?

The real conflict in Romans 7, moreover, is not between spirit and flesh but between spirit and sin. Paul experiences a struggle with the flesh and acknowledges defeat, but the flesh is not sinful in itself. It is rather the point of sin's attack, the place where sin gains entrance into human life. It is sin, therefore, which is to blame for man's struggle and failure, sin which is "an external power alien to man's true nature and hostile to him."<sup>155</sup> The law is helpless to save man from this power, but God in Christ has made possible a new life in the spirit.

<sup>153</sup> Davies, Paul and Rabbinic Judaism, p. 26, referring to Williams, p. 150.

<sup>154</sup> John Knox, "The Epistle to the Romans," in The Interpreter's Bible (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1954), vol. 9.

<sup>155</sup> John Knox, p. 502.

e) Krister Stendahl

In "The Apostle Paul and the Introspective Conscience of the West,"<sup>156</sup> Stendahl claims that the interpretation of Romans 7 as a depiction of Paul's own experience, and particularly as the account of a moral struggle, is to be rejected. From Paul's epistles we can tell that he had a rather robust conscience. There is no indication that he had any difficulty in fulfilling the law; his conversion was not the restoration of a plagued conscience, nor did he after his conversion offer Christ to the Jews as the remedy for such a condition. Paul also did not, as a Christian, suffer under the burden of a guilty conscience. We look in vain for a statement in which Paul describes himself as a sinner; what he confesses is his weakness, not his sin.

Prior to Augustine, Stendahl says, Paul's concerns were seen to be the place of the law since the coming of the Messiah and the relative place of Jews and Gentiles in God's purposes. It was not until Augustine that his thoughts on law and justification were applied to the problem of the introspective conscience. From Augustine this line of thought led into the middle ages and reached its climax in Martin Luther. Luther and the reformers then interpreted Paul's statements in this pietistic framework, as if his self-understanding were central to his theology.

In the light of the above, Romans 7 should be interpreted as an argument about the law, not about man's moral predicament. In 7:7-12, Paul shows that the law is not sin; in 7:13-25 he states that he serves the law with his mind, though not with his flesh. In 7:17 he makes a distinc-

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<sup>156</sup>In Harvard Theological Review, 56 (1963), 199-215.



tion between the self ("I") and the flesh and sin, and in doing so makes "the rather trivial observation that every man knows that there is a difference between what he ought to do and what he does."<sup>157</sup> This has led later exegetes, especially when approaching Paul with the western idea of the introspective conscience, to interpret his remarks as a penetrating insight into the nature of man and sin. The truth is that what dominates the chapter is a theological concern, namely the role of the law in God's purposes.

f) J. D. G. Dunn

In "Romans 7,14-25 in the Theology of Paul,"<sup>158</sup> James Dunn defends the claim that Rom. 7:14-25 describes Paul's own experience. First, the anguish is too real to allow reduction to a mere figure of style. "Whatever else this is, it is surely Paul speaking from the heart of his own experience."<sup>159</sup> It seems convoluted reasoning to make it the experience of every man -- except Paul! Second, the shift in tense at verse 14 must be taken into account. In the previous passage, sin launches its attack and strikes man down; in this section, the spirit joins battle with the flesh. "In no other place does Paul describe so fully the moral experience of the Christian."<sup>160</sup> Third, 7:25b, which is a problem for most interpreters, is seen to be the conclusion of the chapter as a whole.

This understanding of Romans 7 has implications for Paul's view

<sup>157</sup> Stendahl, p. 212.

<sup>158</sup> In Theologische Zeitschrift, 31 (1975), 257-73.

<sup>159</sup> Dunn, p. 260, italics his.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid., p. 272.

of man, especially his antithesis of flesh and spirit. Paul viewed life in the flesh in negative terms; it runs counter to the believer's relationship to Christ and hinders full expression of the spiritual life. Because of this opposition of flesh and spirit, the Christian is constantly at war with himself; he must continually affirm *κατὰ πνεῦμα* and deny *κατὰ σάρκα*. Paul was aware of this necessary conflict; his cry for deliverance in 7:24 was not one of despair but one of frustration, for he must try to follow the leading of the Spirit while still in the flesh. Just so, the Christian cannot escape the flesh-spirit conflict in this life. "So long as the believer remains in the flesh he cannot enjoy the full life of the Spirit."<sup>161</sup>

g) E. P. Sanders

Sanders' interpretation of Romans 7 is found principally in Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People.<sup>162</sup> Like Stendahl, Sanders relates the chapter to Paul's attitude toward the Jewish law.

First, righteousness by faith is not the centre of Paul's theology. Paul "did not begin his thinking about sin and redemption by analyzing the human condition, nor by analyzing the effect of the law on those who sought to obey it."<sup>163</sup> Rather, he reasoned from God's provision of salvation in Christ both that man was in need of salvation and

<sup>161</sup>Ibid.

<sup>162</sup>Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983.

<sup>163</sup>Sanders, Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People, p. 81. In Paul and Palestinian Judaism (p. 443), Sanders says: "Paul did not, while 'under the law,' perceive himself to have a 'plight' from which he needed salvation."

that it could come in no other way; his thought "did not run from plight to solution, but from solution to plight."<sup>164</sup> Sanders therefore rejects the existentialist interpretation of Romans 7 by Bultmann and his followers. Granted, we do not know whether Paul may have harbored a latent resentment of the law which he disguised, or whether in retrospect he saw his previous efforts to obey the law as perverted by sin. We do know that he knew Jews to be capable of doing what the law requires, and he gives himself as a prime example.

Second, Rom. 7:14-25 should be interpreted in the context of 6:5 to 7:6, in which the focus is on the relation of the law to the divine purposes. With his experience of Christ, Paul was in a dilemma. The law was given by God, yet salvation did not come through the law. What, then, was the role of the law? Paul offers three different solutions. First, in Galatians and in Romans up to 7:7 he assigns to the law the negative role of giving the knowledge of sin, stimulating to sin, and preparing man for salvation by grace. This is a solution which keeps the law subordinate to God's will. Second, in Rom. 7:7-13 Paul says that the law was given not to condemn, but for "life" (7:10,12); but sin as an alien power has grasped the law away from God and used it to bring about transgression and death. In this solution a connection between the law and sin remains, but the cause of sin has been removed from God's control. Third, in 7:14-25 the relation between the law and sin is severed; the problem lies in the "flesh" in the sense of man's weak nature which is used by sin to make man act contrary to the good which the law commands.

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<sup>164</sup>Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, p. 443; see the discussion of the precedence of solution to plight, ibid., p. 442-47, 474-502.

Sanders contends, third, that the depth of feeling which is found in Romans 7 and which has traditionally been attributed to Paul's moral struggle can be accounted for by the severity of the theological problem which he faced, namely the place of the law and of election in God's purposes if salvation comes by faith.

These were real problems, and it seems to me far more likely that Paul was driven to passionate expression by them than that the cause of his torment was Angst within his own psyche or his analysis of the existential plight of humanity. These may be the real problems for moderns, but I doubt that they were for Paul.<sup>165</sup>

Sanders cites Job and 4 Ezra as examples of such agonizing over theological problems.

Fourth, what Paul does say of an anthropological nature in Romans 7 is not consistent with what he says elsewhere about the law, sin and humanity; its extreme presentation of human inability is unique in the Pauline corpus. In recoiling from attributing sin to the law, Paul "overstates human inability to fulfil the law as well as Christian success in doing what it requires."<sup>166</sup> Although Paul's general line of thought is clear, all that he says about the law and sin cannot be held together in a unified whole.

#### h) Summary

The scholars reviewed above have exercised considerable freedom in their interpretation of Romans 7. Most (but not all) see the chapter

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<sup>165</sup>Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People, p. 79; cf. p. 76, 80.

<sup>166</sup>Ibid., p. 80.

as a description of Paul's own experience, i.e., his struggle to keep the law, his moral failure, and his deliverance through Christ. Most see at least the second section (7:14-25) as an account of Paul's experience as a Christian. The nature of the conflict is variously interpreted, but specifically Hellenistic categories are generally ignored or denied. The antithesis is not between mind and body, but between spirit and flesh, or spirit and sin. At times this antithesis is expressed as a radical eschatological dualism: life "in the flesh" or in the old aeon precludes fullness of life "in the spirit" or in the new aeon.

Two of the scholars reviewed (Stendahl and Sanders) offer a significantly different interpretation of Romans 7: the chapter is an account not primarily of a moral struggle but of Paul's dilemma with respect to the law. Sanders does not deny the validity of the anthropological terms employed, but holds that they are not typical of Paul or fundamental to what he says elsewhere.

#### 4. The Hellenist School

In addition to the schools of thought just surveyed, there are scholars who have interpreted Romans 7 in Hellenistic terms. Not surprisingly, most of these are also the ones who find Hellenistic influences in Paul's religio-philosophical background and in his anthropological orientation generally.

##### a) Benjamin Jowett

According to Jowett, Paul in Romans 7 is speaking of a conflict within the soul of man. The account begins with the state of childish

and unconscious ignorance, moves to that of deep consciousness of sin, then to one of agony, and finally to deliverance. The description is not one of progress from works to faith or law to grace, but of a growing division within man himself. The soul seems cut in two, into "the better and the worse mind, the inner and the outer man, the flesh and the Spirit."<sup>167</sup> The law is the dividing principle; on the one side is the flesh as a kind of "body of death"; on the other, the mind and spirit aspire to the good which they are helpless to achieve. Deliverance comes when we are completely under the power of sin. This was Paul's own experience; he is speaking "partly from recollections of his former state, partly from the emotions of sin, which he still perceived in his members."<sup>168</sup> At the same time he is describing, in terms borrowed from Alexandrian philosophy, the condition of every man.

b) F. C. Porter

In his study of the yeşer hara',<sup>169</sup> Porter examines the Jewish doctrine of the good and evil impulse and raises the question of the relation of that concept to Paul's thought in Romans 7. His conclusion is that the parallel is insignificant. Of course, Paul in Romans 7

is describing the same experience of struggle between two opposing forces in man upon which the Jewish doctrine rests, but his way of expressing the struggle as a war between the law (of sin) in

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<sup>167</sup>Jowett, p. 238-39.

<sup>168</sup>Ibid., p. 239.

<sup>169</sup>"The Yeşer Hara: A Study in the Jewish Doctrine of Sin," in Biblical and Semitic Studies (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1901); p. 94-156.

his members, and the law of his mind (*vous*), or between that which he possesses and does in his flesh and in his mind, is widely different from the Jewish conception, and seems to rest on a different view of the world and man.<sup>170</sup>

This judgment is borne out by the fact that Paul's idea of spirit has little in common with the Rabbinical idea of the good yeşer.

c) C. G. Montefiore

Romans 7, Montefiore says, must be used with caution as an indication of Paul's experience prior to his conversion. Paul is not so much giving his own experience as an account of sin and the law, an account drawn up after his conversion and depicting humanity as a whole. At the same time, the interpretation of the chapter as a description of Paul's own experience may not be without validity. Paul may have yearned to fulfil the law yet never have felt sure that he had fulfilled it perfectly. He did not have peace and happiness and a sense of God's presence, and he felt himself guilty of all and under a curse.

This is possible, of course, only if the Judaism Paul knew was not that of the Rabbis. "If Paul before his conversion had been a thorough Rabbinic Jew, the seventh chapter of Romans could scarcely have been written."<sup>171</sup> The assessment of human nature given here is not that of the Rabbis. But Paul knew a different and an inferior Judaism, more anxious and perplexed. He was obsessed by a sense of human frailty and sinfulness. He had discovered no remedy strong enough to deal with the evil

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<sup>170</sup>Porter, p. 134.

<sup>171</sup>Montefiore, p. 104.

impulse, for his God was too distant and repentance and forgiveness were not real enough for him. "He had always the horrid feeling of the unconquered evil inclination gnawing within his soul."<sup>172</sup> His conversion marked the release from this dilemma, and that experience, together with the Hellenistic orientation of his thought, account for his attitude toward the law.

d) G. F. Moore

Moore, in Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era,<sup>173</sup> claims that Romans 7 is not a description of Paul's own experience and that it represents a Hellenistic rather than a Rabbinic view of man.

The rhetorical form of the argument in this chapter has led interpreters to take it as Paul's own experience and to generalize it as the normal experience of a conscientious Jew. They find in it the "inescapable conviction of the impossibility of justification by the works of the law, and the despair of knowing that there is no other way."<sup>174</sup> To Jews, however:

it is a perpetual source of amazement how a Jew, on his own testimony brought up in an orthodox home, a professed Pharisee, for a time, it is reported, a student in the school of the elder Gamaliel, evidently well-versed in the Scriptures and the hermeneutics of the day, should ever have come to make such assertions or assumptions.<sup>175</sup>

The truth is that Paul's argument rests on two premises equally alien to

<sup>172</sup> Ibid., p. 115.

<sup>173</sup> Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1927-1930.

<sup>174</sup> Moore, III, 150.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid.



Jewish thought: first, that one must achieve perfect conformity to the law to be acceptable to God; second, that God cannot forgive a penitent sinner out of pure grace. Paul does hold such a position, and shifts the ground of relation to God from repentance and forgiveness to justification by faith. What has happened is that he is arguing back from the conclusion that salvation is only through Christ.

Paul also represents the dualism of Greek thought when he describes the conflict in man as a struggle between the aspirations of the mind and the impulses of the body. A similar way of conceiving the conflict may have been common among Hellenistic Jews, but it was not the psychology of the Rabbis. For the latter, it was the heart which generates the promptings and devices of evil. The Rabbis, in other words, described the conflict in terms of the two impulses, whereas Paul expressed it in a "Christianized Hellenized form."<sup>176</sup>

e) C. H. Dodd

To understand the letter to the Romans, Dodd says (The Epistle of Paul to the Romans),<sup>177</sup> we must bear in mind both the Old Testament and Greek thought. Paul's main background was Judaism, but his Judaism was, in part, the Hellenized Judaism of the Diaspora.

Already in Romans 6 Paul has raised the question of the flesh and sin. In 6:6, the "sinful body" is to be destroyed, for it has become the territory of sin. In 6:12-13, we are not to let sin reign in our mortal bodies, to obey their passions, but are to dedicate our "members" to God

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<sup>176</sup>Ibid., I, 484.

<sup>177</sup>London: Fontana Books, 1959; first published 1932.

for the service of righteousness. In Romans 7 Paul continues this line of thought. In 7:5 he speaks of the "sinful passions aroused by the law" which are at work in our "members" to bear fruit for death. In 7:7-25 he comes down to "direct psychological analysis of the experience of salvation from sin."<sup>178</sup> Paul in this passage is recounting his own experience, though he also makes use of the Genesis story. Further, he is describing his conversion, and not his Christian life as such. "There is nothing in his own confessions elsewhere to lead us to suppose that, with all his sense of struggle and insecurity, he ever had such an experience as this after his conversion."<sup>179</sup>

In depicting his inner struggle, Paul chooses the one prohibition of the law which deals with the inner life; the question of desire or covetousness was obviously "where the shoe pinched for Paul."<sup>180</sup> We have then a description of the natural history of sin from its beginnings in the conscious life: first the happy period of childhood, then the point when he became aware of the prohibitions of the law and when desires, thwarted and repressed, asserted themselves in return; then "I died" (7:9), a confession which describes the condition of impotence resulting from unsuccessful moral struggle. The law played a role in this struggle; it represented an objective moral ideal with which desires based on instinctual impulses were in conflict.

Dodd interprets this moral struggle more in Hellenistic than in biblical terms. Man's instincts are morally indifferent; they are not

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<sup>178</sup>Dodd, p. 123.

<sup>179</sup>Ibid., p. 126.

<sup>180</sup>Ibid., p. 128.

evil, but neither are they conducive to the true ends of personality. They are the raw materials of personality, but they must be oriented toward true ideals. As a boy, a person has a bias toward his lower desires and finds himself in reaction against the law, but as he grows up he finds in himself something which wants to be good. Thus he is plunged into moral perplexity; like Ovid, he wants to do the good but follows the worse. Paul in Romans 7 describes this condition as a conflict between the flesh and the mind or "inner man." As the flesh is related to the lower creation, so the reason is related to the higher order which is spiritual. As the law belongs to the spiritual realm, the mind is able to recognize it and assent to it; the flesh, because of the thrallldom of sin, revolts against it. This was Paul's state when he set out for Damascus, the state of a man who has reached desperation in his moral conflict. "He recognizes and affirms the moral ideal intellectually, with the 'reason'; but he has not succeeded in forging harmonious sentiments directed toward this ideal."<sup>181</sup> His instinctive impulses remain attached to the lower desires, and his reason does not provide the power for attaining the ideal. It is from this miserable state, Paul says, that God in Christ has delivered him.

f) E. R. Goodenough

Throughout his writings, Goodenough interprets Romans 7 as a struggle within the soul portrayed in Hellenistic terms. In an appendix

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<sup>181</sup>Ibid., p. 132. Following A. F. Shand, The Foundations of Character (London: Macmillan and Co., 1926), Dodd develops the self as a hierarchy of "sentiments." When ruled by a dominant sentiment, the self is unified; when the sentiments are at war with each other, a case of divided personality develops.

to By Light, Light,<sup>182</sup> he examines Philo's concept of the constituent elements in man and his goal of *δικαιοσύνη* or *ἁρμονία* by the control of the lower mind and senses by the higher mind or reason. There is in Paul a similar figure, namely that of the war between the "law of the members" and the "law of the mind" in Romans 7; in fact, no better summary of Philo's notion could be written than Paul's words in 7:21-23. Paul "assumes a knowledge of the sort of treatment of law in the inner man preserved to us only by Philo, a knowledge which his readers most probably had, but whose absence has obscured his remarks ever since for later readers."<sup>183</sup>

In an article entitled "Philo on Immortality,"<sup>184</sup> Goodenough discusses Philo's use of *σῶμα-σῆμα* terminology and says that Philo, "in terms which alone make Paul's seventh chapter of Romans intelligible. . . speaks of the body as a corpse to which we are bound, and of ourselves as 'corpse-bearers.'"<sup>185</sup> In Toward a Mature Faith,<sup>186</sup> he compares Paul's description of the psyche in Romans 7 to that of Freud. Paul was aware that man is beaten down by inner condemnation of his natural instincts, that there are tensions between the desires of the flesh and one's idealism, or sense of right. Paul's discussion of this in Romans 7 is "one of the most amazing premonitions of later Freudianism."<sup>187</sup>

<sup>182</sup>New Haven: Yale University Press, 1935; the appendix is p. 370-413.

<sup>183</sup>Goodenough, By Light, Light, p. 394.

<sup>184</sup>In Harvard Theological Review, 39 (1946), no. 2, p. 85-108.

<sup>185</sup>"Philo on Immortality," p. 97.

<sup>186</sup>New York: Prentice-Hall, 1955.

In The Psychology of Religious Experiences,<sup>188</sup> Goodenough discusses the concept of human nature in various Greek schools, in the mystery religions and Philo, and in Paul. Paul, he says, takes for granted the psychological scheme of the multiplicity of the parts of the soul and the necessity of their integration. In Romans 7 he speaks of the "members," of the "law" of the members, of the "mind of the flesh" which is active and clever and normally can defeat the "mind of the spirit" or the "inner man" or the "mind"; he speaks of the "I" which stands between the two, a weak member which recognizes the good but cannot do it. But God, Paul says, has helped man in his tragic state by sending the law to earth in human form, the "law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:2). This divine figure completely restructures the inner realm; the "mind of the flesh" and the "deeds of the body" are put to death, and the "mind of the spirit," by the power of the divine spirit, is able to rule. Paul in Greek fashion calls this new state "justice," the condition of inner adjustment and harmony.

Finally, in "Paul and the Hellenization of Christianity," Goodenough finds parallels between Paul's description of inner struggle in Romans 7 and the Hellenistic view of man:

I read with incredulity the arguments of modern commentators which identify this division of the law of the flesh and the law of the spirit with the yetzer ha ra and the yetzer tob in rabbinic thought. The sense of inner conflict between an impulse to do right and an impulse to do wrong is universal, and the Jews did express it in the lat-

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<sup>187</sup>Goodenough, Toward a Mature Faith, p. 119.

<sup>188</sup>New York: Basic Books, 1965.

ter form. They did not, in rabbinic circles, express it as the war between flesh and spirit; they did not urge us to get away from the flesh, to die to the flesh in order to escape this conflict.<sup>189</sup>

Paul, in contrast, wanted to be free of the conflict altogether, and so turned to the Greek identification of sin with the fleshly element in one's constitution.

g) Samuel Sandmel

Paul's statements in Romans 7, Sandmel says, are a response to the human predicament as he experienced it in his own person. Paul found in the legal code a highly personal and intense problem, namely his inability to observe it. Reluctantly he came to the conclusion that the law was not the ultimate for man in his quest for salvation; it did not bring him serenity, but only increased his disturbance. This occasioned for him "the most nearly central religious dilemma conceivable,"<sup>190</sup> and it is this dilemma which is expressed in Romans 7.

This chapter is therefore Paul's account of his experience before conversion. "Paul here is being autobiographical, and not theoretical. His inability to live up to the Law is assuredly a reflection of the previous unrest in him which later led to his conversion."<sup>191</sup> Those who say that Paul "discovered" such a difficulty only after becoming a Christian are mistaken.

In the 1979 edition of The Genius of Paul, Sandmel responds to

<sup>189</sup>"Paul and the Hellenization of Christianity," p. 56.

<sup>190</sup>Sandmel, The Genius of Paul, p. 29.

<sup>191</sup>Ibid., p. 28.

Stendahl's article on the introspective conscience. Stendahl, Sandmel says, ascribes to Paul such triumphant certainty that there is no room for any uncertainty. Sandmel is not convinced; even if Paul at one stage was sure and certain, this stage may have been preceded by one of doubt and uncertainty.

It is my conviction that no loyal Jew, as in his own terms Paul was, could have been raised in a synagogue and indoctrinated with the view of the centrality and eternity of the Laws and then break completely with what he was reared in, without undergoing some profound personal crisis. Only by supposing that Paul went through such an acute crisis of anxiety and doubt and then a conclusion that freed him of these, is he psychologically intelligible to me.<sup>192</sup>

Romans 7, then, is personal and autobiographical. It reveals Paul's difficulties with respect to the law when he was still in his inherited Judaism. When he had a direct experience of God, these troubles were left behind. Sandmel also agrees with Goodenough that Paul in Romans 7 is to be understood in terms of the Hellenistic concept of justice or harmony in the inner-personal realm.<sup>193</sup> Paul stands in this regard, he says, closer to the Judaism of Philo than to that of the Rabbis.

#### h) Summary

For the writers just reviewed, Romans 7 is an account in psychological terms of a moral struggle, and describes Paul's own experience: the carefree innocence of childhood, the encounter with the law and the

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<sup>192</sup>Ibid., p. x.

<sup>193</sup>See Sandmel, Philo of Alexandria, p. 152-54.

subsequent sense of sin and failure, and the deliverance through Christ. Interpreters differ as to the sense in which the passage is autobiographical. For Montefiore, the problem lay in Paul's perfect fulfilment of the law; for Moore, the account can be Paul's personal experience only if seen from a later Christian standpoint; for Sandmel, it is emphatically not from a later Christian standpoint. For Dodd and others, it is a description of Paul's conversion.

This school of thought is set off from both preceding groups particularly in its willingness to understand the anthropological terms in Romans 7 in a Hellenistic sense. The chapter is a description of the struggle between the mind or inner man, on the one hand, and the flesh or members on the other. Some of these scholars (Porter, Moore, Goodenough) explicitly reject an interpretation in terms of the evil impulse; several (Goodenough, Dodd, Sandmel) see the goal of the struggle as the establishment of *δικαιοσύνη* or *ἁρμονία* in the soul. All see in the chapter a Hellenistic view of man, regardless of whether this is consistent with Paul's other writings.



## CHAPTER TWO

### THE NATURE OF MAN AND THE ORIGIN AND NATURE OF SIN IN PALESTINIAN JUDAISM

#### A. THE OLD TESTAMENT

A study of the nature of man and the origin and nature of sin in Hebrew-speaking Judaism must begin with the Old Testament. The canonical scriptures are foundational to other Jewish writings not only in the chronological sense but in terms of religious authority.

##### 1. The Nature of Man

The Old Testament contains no formal statement on the nature of man. As many scholars have observed, Hebrew thought seems to have been interested not in a theoretical analysis of human nature but in the totality of the human situation. We must beware, therefore, of imposing a pattern on the biblical material where none exists. We must also bear in mind that the Old Testament saw men whole, even when that whole was represented in a part. This does not mean that shades of meaning cannot be found in the various physical and psychological terms employed; it does mean that the primary concern of the Old Testament is with the whole man, especially in his relation to God and to his fellow man.

As H. W. Robinson long ago pointed out,<sup>1</sup> the Old Testament provides a variety of starting-points for the study of man. These include the obviously physical nature of man, the life which pervades that physical nature, and the qualities or aspects which set man apart from the rest of the animal world. The study which follows will make use of this three-fold division.

a) The physical nature of man

The Old Testament uses a variety of terms to describe the physical nature of man. Of these the most common is basar (בשר), "flesh." This term covers a wide range of meanings from the more purely physical to the emotional, volitional and even intellectual and spiritual aspects of life.

"Flesh" is, first, the material substance of the body. From this it becomes a synonym for the body itself, a natural identification given that Hebrew lacks a term for "body" in the sense of an organized whole. Thus "flesh" can be used simply to represent the living person (Eccles. 5:6; Neh. 5:5). It is also a term of kinship (Gen. 2:23-24; 29:14), since biological relations are physical by nature. Of particular interest is the expression "all flesh" (כל בשר) to denote man's kinship with all living creatures (Gen. 6:13,17; 7:15; Ps. 136:25).

"Flesh" is used with religious significance to describe man's frailty and perishability in contrast to the power and imperishability

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<sup>1</sup>The Christian Doctrine of Man, p. 21; cf. The Religious Ideas of the Old Testament (London: Gerald Duckworth and Co., 1956), p. 79-83, and Sandmel, Judaism and Christian Beginnings, p. 177-79.

of God. In Gen. 6:3 the Lord says, "My spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh, but his days shall be a hundred and twenty years." In Isa. 31:3 the prophet argues:

The Egyptians are men, and not God;  
and their horses are flesh, and not spirit.

It is this kind of spirit-flesh dualism, and not a dualism of the Greek type, which characterizes Old Testament thought concerning the nature of man.

"Flesh" is used, finally, with a psychological sense in a wide range of Old Testament passages. The flesh is warm, sensitive, afraid, weary; it suffers, longs, rejoices, and even yearns for God (Ps. 63:1; 84:2 [MT 63:2; 84:3]). It is contrasted with "stone" for the heart of man in a passage destined to have great importance in later Jewish thought (Ezek. 36:26).

In addition to "flesh," other physical terms are employed to represent the whole person. By far the most important of these is "heart" (לב). This word is used for a variety of emotions and states of consciousness, but more significantly for personality, intellect and volition. Other organs used with psychological significance are the liver (consciousness); the kidneys (emotions); the bowels (compassion or affection). The bones, which can experience fear, pain and joy, are also a repository and source of life (2 Kings 13:21), while the belly is sometimes used metaphorically for appetite and greed (Prov. 18:8; Job 20:15). None of this usage is analytic in nature; almost invariably the activity of the whole person is intended.

b) The life in man

The life or life-principle in man was commonly associated by the Hebrews with the breath. The usual terms employed are neshamah (נֶשְׁמָה), nephesh (נֶפֶשׁ) and ruach (רוּחַ). The term neshamah occurs relatively infrequently and normally conveys a physical meaning, even when used for the life-principle in man (Gen. 2:5; 1 Kings 17:17). The term nephesh, in contrast, is widely used and acquires significant psychological overtones. The nephesh experiences distress, sorrow, anger, remorse, peace, longing, love, hate, weariness (e.g., Deut. 21:14; Gen. 42:21); it longs for God, rests in God, rejoices in God (Ps. 42:1-2 [MT 42:2-3]). To a far greater extent than neshamah, then, nephesh comes to represent the inner life of man.

A further meaning of nephesh is that of the person himself, especially when thought of as an individual (Gen. 14:21; Prov. 28:17).<sup>2</sup> In this sense, nephesh functions as the personal or reflexive pronoun, or as the characteristic term for "person." It is not the soul in the Greek sense; it does not survive the death of the body. Like the electricity in a battery, the nephesh is a vital energy which does not exist on its own; when it leaves the body in which it has resided one cannot, as Eichrodt remarks,<sup>3</sup> ask where it has gone.

c) The spirit in man

The third term used in the Old Testament for the life in man is

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<sup>2</sup>Walther Eichrodt, Theology of the Old Testament, tr. J. A. Baker (London: SCM Press, 1961-1967), II, 136, compares nephesh to ruach in this regard. Ruach is the universal, trans-individual breath of life in the

רוח, "spirit." The primary reference of this term is to God or the activity of God; when used of man it normally retains this sense of the presence and power of God. Its most rudimentary meaning is that of wind or breath, a powerful moving force from God (Gen. 1:2; 1 Kings 18:12). It denotes, further, a source of life (Gen. 6:3; Job 23:4; Ps. 104:30). The term acquires greater personal significance when it is used to denote the presence of God in the life of an individual (Ps. 139:7; 51:11 [MT 51:13]); as such it is the source of extraordinary power. Often this is physical or psychic power which comes on a person as if from outside, enabling him to accomplish great feats of strength (Judges 3:10; 1 Sam. 11:6-7). Again, it is the source of ability or skill beyond the ordinary, as in the art of the inspired craftsman (Ex. 28:3). More significantly, it is the source of special wisdom or knowledge (Num. 11:16-17; Job 32:8). One of the effects of this special wisdom is to enable a person to exercise judgment and execute justice (Isa. 11:1-4; 61:1-2). It is in keeping with this function of ruach that it is a source of a "word" from God, or even "the word of the Lord" (2 Sam. 23:1-2; 2 Chron. 15:1-2 and the many references in the prophets).

In addition to expressing the relation between God and man, רוח is used with primary reference to man. This usage develops particularly in the post-exilic period, when ruach comes to denote "the whole range of emotional and spiritual life"<sup>4</sup> of man. Sometimes the term is used in par-

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world, while nephesh is the individual life in a body. In this sense the nephesh dies, while the ruach does not.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 135.

<sup>4</sup>Stacey, p. 89. H. W. Robinson, in Inspiration and Revelation in

allel with nephesh (Isa. 26:9), or with the sense of "heart" (Ex. 35:21). Particularly important are passages referring to a "new heart and a new spirit" (Ezek. 18:31; 36:26). There are also repeated references to God's "stirring up" the ruach of man (Ezra 1:1,5; 1 Chron. 5:26; Jer. 51:11). The ruach of man has become, then, his personal "spirit," mind or disposition (Ezek. 13:3; Job 32:18).

In spite of what has just been said, it is not correct to say, with Edmond Jacob, that ruach is, in man, "the principal spiritual organ,"<sup>5</sup> if by "organ" is meant a special part of man which puts him into a relation of kinship with God. While it is true that man's ruach "yearns" for God (Isa. 26:9; Ps. 51:10-11 [MT 51:12-13]), we have found the same to be true of his nephesh and even his "flesh." It is also debatable that the use of ruach to refer to the human spirit "prepared the ground favourably for an alliance between Greek dualism and Hebrew thought."<sup>6</sup> When used in reference to man, ruach appears to serve more as a functional than a psychological term; it represents man's capacity for religious activity or communion with God, not a higher "self" or "soul."

#### d) Summary

The picture of man in the Old Testament is both composite and unified. It is composite because man is understood through a variety of ac-

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the Old Testament (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1946), p. 52, claims that ruach was never "a permanent element in man's constitution, like nephesh, before the exilic period."

<sup>5</sup>Edmond Jacob, Theology of the Old Testament; tr. A. W. Heathcote and P. J. Allcock (New York: Harper and Row, 1958), p. 163.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

tivities and characteristics; it is unified because the person so encountered is seen whole and not broken up into parts.

This picture of man forces us to question the dictum of H. W. Robinson (and many writers since) that "the Hebrew idea of personality is that of an animated body, not. . .an incarnated soul,"<sup>7</sup> and that "the body, not the soul, is the characteristic element of Hebrew personality."<sup>8</sup> This assertion is a helpful corrective to the practice of reading Greek dualism into Hebrew thought; certainly there does not seem to be, in the Old Testament, an anthropological dualism in which flesh and spirit, body and soul, are set in strict opposition to each other. The physical body is not depreciated; it is not opposed to spirit, nor is it the prison-house of the soul. There are no "pre-existent" souls, nor are the shades which survive in Sheol called "souls." The "spirit" of man is more clearly God's spirit in man than an inherent part of man's nature.

Yet this unitary conception of man is not the complete picture. There is, first of all, an obvious distinction between the physical body and that which animates it, even if the latter was understood in primitive times in quasi-physical rather than metaphysical terms. Second, there is a distinction between the instinctive or animal life (nephesh) of man and his capacity for spirituality (ruach). At the risk of over-simplification we may say that the physical nature of man is described chiefly by the term "flesh," his psychological and intellectual life by the terms nephesh and "heart," and his spiritual capacity by the term ruach. Such linguis-

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<sup>7</sup>The Christian Doctrine of Man, p. 27. See page 108.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 12.

tic usage should not mislead us, of course, into thinking that these terms represent "parts" of man's being. Rather, they are devices for describing the activity of man and his relationship to God and his fellow men.

## 2. The Human Situation

### a) Man as creature

The Old Testament view of man cannot be grasped simply by an examination of the terms used to describe his nature. The answer to the question, "What is man?" (Ps. 8:4 [MT 8:5]) is given not so much by a description of his being as by a statement of his situation in God's world.

The most fundamental statement in the Old Testament about the human situation is that man is a created being. This is a constant theme of the Old Testament. Man, like all other created beings, is weak, finite and subject to death and decay. He is a creature of dust (Gen. 3:19; Ps. 103:14), fragile and fleeting as a flower (Job 14:1-2; Ps. 103:14-16), and like the "beasts that perish" (Ps. 49:12 [MT 49:13]). In these passages the contrast between man and God is explicit. Man is flesh and not spirit; he is weak and ephemeral, while God is eternal. It is not stated that man, by being a creature, is necessarily sinful, but he is not a divine being living in an environment foreign to his true nature. He is a creature, and to this extent he is one with the rest of God's creation.

### b) Man as made in the image of God

Even as a created being, man occupies a special place in God's world. This is shown in both accounts of creation. In the older account



(Gen. 2), man is created first of all living beings; the breath of God, furthermore, is breathed directly into his face. In the later account, man is said to be made in the "image and likeness" of God (Gen. 1:26-27) and is given dominion over other living creatures.

The term "image of God" (צִלְמֵי אֱלֹהִים) has occupied many later thinkers, both Jewish and Christian; no other biblical writer, however, takes over the term and interprets it. The phrase is used four times in the Bible (Gen. 1:26,27,27; 9:6), but all of these occur in one literary stream (P). Many scholars have suggested that the primary reference is to physical likeness,<sup>9</sup> and it is possible that this is part of the original meaning. It is clear from the passages in which the phrase is used, however, that this is not the whole meaning. First, the image of God includes the dominion of man over other creatures (Gen. 1:26-28; cf. Ps. 8:5-8; 73:21-23). Second, the terms "image" and "likeness" are used to denote kinship (Gen. 5:3). Third, the image of God in man carries meaning for the sanctity of human life; it is because man is made in the image of God that his life is inviolable (Gen. 9:6).

The "image of God" in man therefore probably contains a reference to such qualities as consciousness, personhood and self-determination. This does not mean that man has a divine nature or a natural kinship with God, but that he can be aware of and respond to God's self-revelation in a way which sets him apart from the rest of creation. This is in keeping with the teaching of the Old Testament generally. Man is to love God with

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<sup>9</sup>H. H. Rowley, in The Faith of Israel (London: SCM Press, 1956), p. 75, n. 2, gives a list of such scholars. Eichrodt (II, 122-23) agrees with this interpretation.

all his heart and soul and strength (Deut. 6:5) and his neighbor as himself (Lev. 19:18). He can experience a relationship with God as intimate as that between father and son (Jer. 31:9) but can break that relationship by sin (Gen. 3:9; Isa. 59:2). He is also to do good to his fellow men, without which the worship of God is an empty form (Isa. 1:10-17).

c) Mas as a social being

Since H. W. Robinson's use of the term "corporate personality"<sup>10</sup> to describe the solidarity of the individual with his family, tribe and clan, it has become a commonplace in Old Testament studies to recognize the social dimensions of man's existence. The scriptures offer many illustrations of this notion: corporate guilt (Josh. 7; Num. 16); blood revenge (1 Sam. 15; 2 Sam. 21); the absolute right of parents over their children (Gen. 22; Judges 11); the practice of marriage within the tribe or clan (Gen. 24,28).

Important as this notion is, however, it must not overshadow that of individual responsibility. This concept exists in the earliest strata of the Old Testament, but becomes explicit in the exilic and post-exilic period. Jeremiah (31:29-30) is followed by Ezekiel (18:2-4; 33:12-13) in denouncing the injustice implied in the old adage, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge." Both prophets are in agreement with the Deuteronomist, that "the fathers shall not be put to death for the children, nor shall the children be put to death for

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<sup>10</sup> The Christian Doctrine of Man, p. 8 et passim.

the fathers; every man shall be put to death for his own sin" (Deut. 24:16). Both prophets recognize that the cure for the nation's ills will not be in legislative reform, but in a "new heart" and a "new spirit" (Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek. 11:19; 36:26).

The concepts of corporate personality and individual responsibility must therefore be kept in balance. It does appear, however, that over a millenium of time the accent shifts perceptibly from the former to the latter.

#### d) The destiny of man

An attempt to discover a people's views of the nature of man will be aided by an understanding of their concept of life after death. If life is held to end at death, a different view of man is being entertained than if life is held to continue, in similar or altered form, into the future.

The destiny of man is generally held in the Old Testament to be within this world. Man is by nature mortal; he is a creature of dust, and his destiny is to return to dust again (Gen. 3:19; Eccles. 3:20). Death, then, is the natural counterpart of life. It comes when the nephesh leaves the body (Gen. 35:18), and when God so wills (Job 34:14-15). It is mourned and, especially if untimely, fought against, but it is not seen as a punishment from God nor is it traced to Adam's sin.

The Hebrews shared with surrounding peoples the concept of a communal abode of the departed, called in the Old Testament "Sheol" (שְׁאוֹל). While it is not always possible to distinguish this place from the grave itself, the notion seems to have been that of a large cavern or communal

resting place in the deepest part of the earth. The description of existence in Sheol is similar to that found in Egyptian, Babylonian and Greek mythology. It is a place of darkness and decay (Job 17:13-14; Ps. 88:6), of ignorance, weakness and forgetfulness (Ps. 6:5; Eccles. 9:10). It is a place where man knows nothing of what goes on on earth (Job 14:21; Eccles. 9:5), and from which no-one ever returns (Ps. 88:4-5; Job 7:9-10). It is a place beyond God's knowledge or care (Ps. 88:5,10; Isa. 38:18). Residents in Sheol are the "shades" or "weak ones" (נְפִשִּׁים) (Isa. 14:9-10; Job 26:5), shadowy replicas of the living person. Their appearance resembles what it was in life (1 Sam. 28:14), but they are without power or strength (Job 3:17-19; Isa. 14:10). Even this existence, poor and unsatisfactory as it is, may be fleeting at best, lasting only until the disintegration of the body or until the memory of the dead vanishes from the minds of the living. In no sense can it be called "life." The inhabitant of Sheol is not described as the nephesh of the living person; much less is he the "soul" in the later Greek sense.

This is the accepted view of life after death throughout most of the Old Testament. Nevertheless, some hope in life beyond death emerges even during this time, and becomes more explicit in later writings. The source of this hope seemed to have been, first, the failure of the doctrine of retribution in either its personal or societal form and, second, the hope of a continued relationship with God beyond this life. The first is illustrated by Ps. 73 and the book of Job, the second by passages (e.g., Ps. 17:15; 73:23-26; 139:8) which express the faith that God's love and power will endure beyond the grave. These hopes are not worked out in detail; in many instances it is difficult to know whether the hope is of

being rescued from death or of surviving death (Job 14:13; Ps. 30:3; 49:15). But God himself is the goal of the religious quest and, through union with him, life acquires an indestructible quality.

It should be noted that this hope in life beyond death assumes two different forms. The first is the resurrection of the body and restoration to life on this earth. There are only two undisputed texts in the Old Testament where such a hope is expressed.<sup>11</sup> Significantly, both are in apocalyptic literature and both are late. The first is Isa. 25:6-8; 26:19, in which resurrection is not only to this world but to Palestine, with Jerusalem at the centre. This text comes from the fourth century B.C.E. The second text, Dan. 12:2, dates most probably from 165 B.C.E. Resurrection is of both the good and the wicked, although perhaps only for outstanding representatives of each. Even here it is not clear that the resurrected life is this-worldly in nature. The righteous are to "shine as the stars for ever and ever"; we shall see that this is a phrase common to Alexandrian Jewish literature and Greek philosophy. The second form of belief in life beyond death is the hope of continued personal existence in the presence of God. The form of this belief corresponds closely to the source of the hope: man experiences God's goodness here and now; communion with him is the highest good in life, and this cannot end at death (Ps. 23:4; 139:7-10).

Whatever the form of these beliefs, it would be a mistake to equate them with the Greek concept of the immortality of the soul. There is in the Old Testament no natural immortality of this type, no "soul" or

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<sup>11</sup> Passages like Hos. 6:1-2 and Ezek. 37 almost certainly refer not to literal resurrection but to the rebirth of the nation.

"spirit" which survives death by virtue of its own indestructible nature. The hopes which are expressed are congenial to the Hebrew understanding of the nature of man and his relation to God. In later Jewish literature these hopes develop into a bewildering variety of views, some of which are similar to Greek concepts while others more closely resemble their biblical antecedents.

### 3. The Nature of Sin

#### a) The terminology of sin

Some twenty terms are used in the Old Testament to describe wrongdoing or sin. Many of these overlap or shade into each other, but four general groups can be discerned.

First, there are terms which denote deviation from the right way. The most common of these is ḥaṭa' (חטא), sometimes used to describe man's relations to his fellow men (1 Sam. 2:25; 19:4), but more characteristically for his relation to God (Ex. 9:34; 20:20). Similar in meaning are 'awon (עוון), meaning to go aside knowingly from the way (see immediately below) and shagah (שגה), to err or go astray (1 Sam. 26:21; Num. 15:22-26).

Overlapping with these are terms denoting iniquity, guilt or punishment. One of these is 'awon (1 Sam. 20:1; Jer. 11:10), which is sometimes used in parallel with ḥaṭa' (Isa. 5:18; 43:24) or with pesha' (Ps. 107:17; Isa. 53:5). A very common term is resha' (רשע), denoting wickedness, criminality or guilt (Deut. 25:2; Num. 35:31). A third term conveying the sense of guilt or offense is asham (אשם) (Gen. 26:10; Jer. 51:5).

A third group of terms denotes rebellion against a superior, especially against God. This is the dominant idea of sin in the Old Testament; some ten or twelve terms convey this idea in one form or another. Of these the most common is pesha' (פֶּשַׁע), usually translated "transgression" and implying disobedience to God's law or transgression of his covenant (Job 34:37; Isa. 43:27). Two terms denoting stubbornness or defiance are marah (מָרָה) (Ps. 78:8) and marad (מָרָד) (Num. 14:9). Many other terms carry this sense of stubbornness or rebellion: sarar (סָרַר) (Deut. 21:18,20); kashah (קָשָׁה), to be hard, stubborn or apostate (Ex. 34:9); rum (רוּם), to be haughty or arrogant (Isa. 2:11) and gabah (גָּבַהּ), to be high or exalted (Jer. 48:29). Similar in meaning are words signifying rejection or refusal, i.e., to refuse to do good or to obey God. Such are the cognate words ma'as (מַעַס) (Num. 11:20) and ma'en (מַעַן) (Ex. 16:28). Terms such as ma'al (מַעַל) (Josh. 22:22) and bagad (בָּגַד) (Isa. 24:16) mean to act unfaithfully or treacherously. The term sarah (סָרַח) means to revolt or be apostate (Isa. 1:4-5).

Fourth, there are terms which describe some characteristic of the act itself -- its violence, destructiveness or folly. The most general of these are ra'ah (רָעָה), which denotes all kinds of evil (1 Sam. 12:17) and ro'a (רָעָה), meaning a form of ethical wrongdoing (Deut. 28:20). The term 'avlah (עוֹלָה) carries the sense of injustice or untruth (Deut. 25:16), while hamas (חָמָס) is used for violent crimes such as robbery or murder (Gen. 6:11; Amos 3:10). The term halal (חָלַל), finally, carries the sense of pollution, defilement, or of profaning the name of God or the holy place (Lev. 18:21; Amos 2:7).

b) The meaning of sin

From this review of the terminology of sin several conclusions can be drawn as to the meaning of sin. First, sin is an act of the will; it incurs guilt and calls for punishment. This means that sin is primarily moral and not physical in nature. It is true that there are instances of an objective or physical concept of sin; there is also the recognition that some sins are incurred unwittingly. But the predominant notion of sin is moral; man acts as a free agent and is responsible for the consequences of his act.

Second, sin is an offense against God or one's fellow man; it is an action which breaks that fellowship and must be set right. With respect to man, sin is any act which abuses the rights of others; with respect to God, it is rebellion against his law or rule. It is also rejection of God's love, and hence "sins" include many non-moral actions such as unfaithfulness, stubbornness and apostasy. The worst sin of all is idolatry (Deut. 13:6-16), which places something else ahead of one's devotion to God.

Sin, in third place, is more typically in the outward act than in the motive or thought, and more typically in the concrete deed than in the abstract principle. This generalization requires modification, for there is a distinction between witting and unwitting sins and, especially in the later canonical writings, a concern for the attitude of the heart. Typically, however, sin is in the outward act, and even acts done in ignorance must be set right.

It is in keeping with this understanding of sin that the characteristic term for repentance, shub (שׁוּב), signifies not so much sorrow



for sin as the action of turning away from sin and returning to God (Amos 4:6-11).

c) The changing concept of sin

Closer examination of the passages cited above reveals a changing concept of sin from the earliest sources to the latest books of the canon. This development is carried further in apocryphal and pseudepigraphical writings and in the Rabbis.

First, there is a development in the moral conception of sin. Almost certainly the earliest notions of sin were non-moral: sin is the counterpart of holiness (kodesh, קדש); it arises from the idea of mana or tabu, that which separates objects, places and persons from common or profane use. Examples of this are the "waters of holiness" (Num. 5), the ark (2 Sam. 6) and the division into "clean" and "unclean." The Hebrew prophets did much to change this concept. Sin is rebellion against God or the covenant, not merely violation of the conventions of society or of the cult. The qualities believed to be true of God must mark a man's relation to his fellow men: justice, mercy, humility, faithfulness, love (Micah 6:8).

Second, there is the change (noted above) from a corporate to an individual notion of sin. One of the reasons for such development was doubtless the difficulty encountered with the Hebrew doctrine of retribution (Jer. 12:1-2; Eccles. 8:14). That the doctrine as such was not abandoned is seen in its existence in the latest strands of Old Testament literature (Ps. 37, 49; Prov. 2:21-22) and by the repeated prayers for reward for right living (Ps. 17; Neh. 13:14). Yet the books of Job and

Ecclesiastes show that such thinking was under attack, and the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha reflect a continuing concern for a satisfactory theodicy.

Third, the canonical writings reflect a growing preoccupation with the written law. Sin becomes identified with transgression of the law, and measures are instituted for removing sin. This development is accompanied by a deep sense of piety; if sin is defined by the law, the good man can make a supreme effort to avoid sin and so be acceptable to God. This close association of the law and sin continues in post-canonical Judaism.

d) The universality, origin and locus of sin

The Old Testament seems to assume the universality of sin (Gen. 6:5; 1 Kings 8:46; Ps. 130:3); indeed, this fact is used as a ground for appealing to God's mercy (Ps. 143:2; Job 14:1-6). The universality of sin is not a carefully articulated doctrine, but a fact of experience. Some men, like Enoch, Noah and Job, are called "perfect" (Job 1:8; 2:3) or acceptable to God (Gen. 6:8).

The Old Testament contains no formal theory of the origin of sin, much less a doctrine of original sin. Genesis 3 does describe sin in the origins of the human race, but this story is not used by any biblical writer to explain the universality of sin. Other Old Testament passages which are sometimes held to teach original sin (Gen. 8:21; Ps. 51:5; 58:3; Job 14:4; 15:14-16) likewise do not do so. Rather, they set forth mankind's sinful condition, which includes all men and reaches back even to conception or birth.

The scriptures do give testimony to the ingrained and habitual nature of sin in man. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots?" asks the prophet (Jer. 13:23). "Then also you can do good who are accustomed to do evil." "The heart," he says, "is deceitful above all things, and desperately corrupt; who can understand it?" (Jer. 17:9). Yet this is not an alien principle in man, but a stubborn and rebellious attitude which amounts almost to a compulsion to sin. An actual doctrine of original sin would be contrary to the Hebrew view of the nature of man and, in fact, of the nature of sin.

It should be noted that in the Old Testament sin is not attributed to a cosmic evil force or person. The serpent in Genesis 3, like the Satan in Job 1 and 2, is a necessary condition or instrument of temptation. The prophets do not blame moral evil on Satan, but on man's stubborn heart or will (Isa. 5:18; Jer. 8:5; 9:14). Further, the Old Testament does not specifically locate sin in the physical nature of man, even though man as "flesh" is weak and prone to sin. The characteristic spirit-flesh dualism of the Old Testament is not between soul and body but between God (spirit) and man (flesh). Sex is not portrayed as sinful, though realization of nakedness is one of the results of sin in Genesis 3. Where sex seems to be denounced as sinful, it is usually a symbol for, or accompaniment of, idolatry.

Sin, then, remains a matter of the heart or will. In what amounts almost to a theory of the origin of sin, Jeremiah traces it to the "stubborn" or "rebellious" or "evil" heart (3:17; 5:23; 7:24; 18:12), or to the "evil will" (16:12), a concept which is close to the later doctrine of the yeşer hara'.

e) Summary

This survey of sin in the Old Testament shows that it is predominantly a moral and religious concept. Sin is an attitude or action of the will; it is disobedience to or defiance of God and his law. This is true even in so early a story as Genesis 3; man has been given freedom by God, and its use contrary to God's will is sin.

The concept of sin changes over the centuries, becoming more personal in nature and more clearly related to the revealed will of God. While sin is seen as virtually universal, no consistent theory of the origin of sin is articulated. The locus of sin is not the flesh, but the heart or will. It is the "evil heart" of Jeremiah which comes closest to being an explanation of the origin of sin. The remedy for sin is repentance on the part of man and forgiveness on the part of God. No emphasis is placed on the cultivation of virtues which would make a man more acceptable in God's sight.<sup>12</sup> The ultimate hope for man is a new heart or new spirit, which will be a reality only in the new age.

This concept of sin and salvation is fundamental to later Jewish thought, even when other and different notions are added to it.

B. THE APOCRYPHA AND PSEUDEPIGRAPHIA

The apocryphal and pseudepigraphical writings of the Old Testament constitute an important body of literature for a study of the Jewish con-

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<sup>12</sup>Otto Baab, The Theology of the Old Testament (New York: Abingdon Press, 1949), p. 75, observes that in this regard the prophets "were prophets primarily and teachers incidentally."

cept of man. These books cover a period of approximately three hundred years for which other sources of information on Jewish thought are meagre. They also come from a period in which much development took place in a number of religious ideas. These writings are therefore an important link between the Old Testament and the Rabbis, a link which is doubly important because it corresponds closely in time to the writing of the New Testament.

The survey which follows covers four books. Two of these (Ben Sira and 1 Enoch) are among the earliest books of the apocrypha and pseudepigrapha, while the other two (4 Ezra and 2 Baruch) are among the latest. The books selected also represent two different kinds of literature. Ben Sira falls specifically in the category of wisdom literature, while the other books are generally apocalyptic in nature. Even the apocalyptic books, however, are not without some elements of "wisdom." All four books represent Palestinian Judaism in the sense that they were written originally in Hebrew or Aramaic.

Our study of the nature of man and the origin and nature of sin in these books will not repeat the vast areas of agreement which they have with the Old Testament. Our concern will be with the development of these ideas beyond the point reached in the canon.

### 1. Ben Sira

The book known as "Ben Sira" or "Ecclesiasticus" was written about 200 to 175 B.C.E. in Hebrew and translated into Greek some time after 132 B.C.E. It was long known only in Greek, but about two-thirds of the book has been recovered in Hebrew from the Cairo Genizah. In addition, there

are some fragments of the Hebrew text among the Dead Sea Scrolls and some quotations in Rabbinic literature.

a) The nature of man

Ben Sira's thought on the nature of man is set forth clearly in one specific passage:<sup>13</sup>

- 17:1 The Lord created man from the earth  
and sent him back to it again.
- 2 He set a fixed span of life for men  
and granted them authority over everything on earth.
- 3 He clothed them with strength like his own,  
forming them in his own image.
- 4 He put the fear of man into all creatures  
and gave him lordship over beasts and birds.
- 6 He gave men tongue and eyes and ears,  
the power of choice and a mind for thinking.
- 7 He filled them with discernment  
and showed them good and evil.
- 8 He kept watch over their hearts,  
to display to them the majesty of his works.
- 10 They shall praise his holy name,  
proclaiming the grandeur of his works.
- 11 He gave them knowledge as well  
and endowed them with the life-giving law.
- 12 He established a perpetual covenant with them  
and revealed to them his decrees.

From this passage it is clear that the author placed great significance on man's having been created in the image of God (17:3). This means that man has dominion over other creatures (17:2,4), possesses "tongue and eyes and ears. . .and a mind for thinking" (17:6) and has "the power of choice" between "good and evil" (17:6-7). It means that man has the ability to see God's works (17:8,10) and possesses "know-

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<sup>13</sup>Unless otherwise indicated, quotations from the Apocrypha are taken from the New English Bible.

ledge" and the gift of the "life-giving law" (17:11). The image of God, therefore, means man's capacity to stand in a relationship to God such as is spelled out in the Hebrew scriptures.

This passage also shows man's nature to be limited and mortal; he is "from the earth" and goes "back to it again" (17:1). He has a fixed span of life (17:2; cf. Gen. 6:3; Ps. 90:10). Ben Sira says elsewhere:

- 18:8 What is man and what use is he?  
       What do his good or evil deeds signify?  
    9 His span of life is at the most a hundred years;  
 10 Compared with endless time, his few years  
       are like one drop of sea-water or a single grain of sand.

Ben Sira agrees with the Old Testament generally that death is the end of life:

- 17:30 Not everything is within man's reach,  
       for the human race is not immortal.  
  
 10:11 When a man dies he comes into an inheritance  
       of maggots and vermin and worms.

A man cannot praise God when he "is dead and ceases to be" but only "when he is alive and well" (17:28). It is foolish to lament overmuch at the death of a friend, for "you cannot help him and can only injure yourself" (38:21). In sum, "whatever comes from earth returns to earth" (41:10), and "this is the Lord's decree for all living men" (41:4).<sup>14</sup>

#### b) The origin and nature of sin

Ben Sira adopts the position of the Old Testament with respect to the nature of sin. Sin is transgression of the law, and must be punished;

atonement is possible by good works, sacrifice and repentance. The book shows development of thought, however, concerning the origin of sin. Three explanations are offered, not as competing theories, but as the author's observations on human life.

Sin is traced, first, to the solidarity of the race:

25:24 Woman is the origin of sin,  
and it is through her that we all die.

This verse is a commentary on Genesis 3. It does not attribute to woman the universal sin of mankind, but only its first instance. It is also death and not sinfulness which is singled out as the result of Eve's sin. We do not therefore have here a doctrine of original sin, but a statement of the solidarity of the race and of the relationship between sin and death.

Sin is traced, second, to man's natural and essential frailty (21:27; 17:31). This is not an important idea in Ben Sira; the reading of 21:27 is uncertain, while 17:31 states that it is natural for "flesh and blood" to have evil thoughts. This means that man sins because he is man, and not God. No spirit-flesh dualism should be read into the verse.

Ben Sira, in third place, attributes sin to the evil impulse, the yeşer hara'. This concept, as we have seen, is anticipated in the "stubborn" or "evil" heart of Jeremiah, but Ben Sira seems to be the first writer to use the term in a formal sense. The term yeşer occurs five times in Ben Sira in connection with sin. One of these passages is of

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<sup>14</sup>Sanders (Paul and Palestinian Judaism, p. 334) points out that 34:13 is not a reference to resurrection.



such importance that it bears quoting in full:

- 15:11 Do not say, 'The Lord is to blame for my failure;  
it is for you to avoid doing what he hates.  
12 Do not say, 'It was he who led me astray;  
he has no use for sinful men.  
13 The Lord hates every kind of vice;  
you cannot love it and still fear him.  
14 When he made man in the beginning,  
he left him free to take his own decisions;  
15 if you choose, you can keep the commandments;  
whether or not you keep faith is yours to decide.  
16 He has set before you fire and water;  
reach out and take which you choose.  
17 Before man lie life and death;  
and whichever he prefers is his.  
18 For in his great wisdom and mighty power  
the Lord sees everything.  
19 He keeps watch over those who fear him;  
no human act escapes his notice.  
20 But he has commanded no man to be wicked,  
nor has he given licence to commit sin.

The teaching of this passage is that sin is not to be ascribed to God.

Man was made free; he was placed "in the power of his own inclination"

(15:14, RSV).<sup>15</sup> If he chooses, he can keep the commandments (15:15),  
which are "life" (15:17), or he can follow the prompting of the evil im-  
pulse, which is "death" (15:17).<sup>16</sup>

The text of two other passages is uncertain. 27:6 reads in NEB:

As the fruit of a tree reveals the skill of its grower,  
so the expression of a man's thought reveals his  
character.

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<sup>15</sup>The Hebrew of 15:14 reads: אֱלֹהִים עֲבָרָא שִׁים בְּרָא (as in Moore, III, 147).

<sup>16</sup>Porter (p. 139) claims that "the יָצָר is not the free will, but man is free to choose between this evil nature or disposition in him and the Law." This distinction between the evil impulse and the power of choice is important, but it is not clear from the text itself.

Porter<sup>17</sup> translates the last line: "So the thought is according to the yeqer of man." 37:3 reads in RSV:

O evil imagination, why were you formed  
to cover the land with deceit?

The text is uncertain, but the sense seems to be that the evil impulse is the cause of the world's ills.

For the remaining two passages the Hebrew is missing. The first is 17:31:

Is anything brighter than the sun? Yet the sun  
suffers eclipse.  
So flesh and blood have evil thoughts.

Porter,<sup>18</sup> from the Syriac, translates the last line: "So the man who does not subdue his yeqer because he is flesh and blood." Williams,<sup>19</sup> following Bousset, reads: "So also is it with the man who subdueth not his yeqer." The second passage is 21:11:

Whoever keeps the law keeps his thought under control;  
the fear of the Lord has its outcome in wisdom.

Porter,<sup>20</sup> again following the Syriac, translates the first line: "He who keeps the law gets the mastery over his yeqer." This would then be an anticipation of the Rabbinic teaching of the role of the law in controlling the evil impulse.

Ben Sira's use of עקר as a descriptive term for the oc-

<sup>17</sup>P. 141.

<sup>18</sup>P. 143.

<sup>19</sup>P. 64, n. 1.

<sup>20</sup>P. 141.

casion of sin in man does not constitute an explanation of the origin of sin, much less an excuse for sin. As 15:11-20 shows, it is man and not God who is responsible for sin.

## 2. 1 Enoch

For the development of religious ideas, the book known as "1 Enoch" or "Ethiopic Enoch" is a most important pseudepigraphical work.

The book is composite in nature. The final author or editor apparently intended it to consist of five sections, like the Pentateuch or Psalms. There are differences of perspective between the sections, and also fragments of an earlier "Book of Noah." Scholars disagree as to the date of the various sections. Charles<sup>21</sup> dates some as pre-Maccabean, while Rowley<sup>22</sup> and Sanders<sup>23</sup> hold that no part predates the Maccabean period. Some scholars have seen chapters 37 to 71 as a Christian interpolation,<sup>24</sup> especially as no fragments of this section have been found at Qumran. The case for Christian authorship is not closed, however, and these chapters will be included in the present review.

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<sup>21</sup>R. H. Charles, The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), II, 170-71.

<sup>22</sup>H. H. Rowley, The Relevance of Apocalyptic (London: Lutterworth Press, 1963), p. 57.

<sup>23</sup>Paul and Palestinian Judaism, p. 347.

<sup>24</sup>See the discussion in Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, p. 347-48, and in E. Isaac, "1 (Ethiopic Apocalypse of) Enoch," in J. H. Charlesworth, ed., The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co., 1983), I, 7. Sanders opts for a Christian, Isaac for a Jewish, origin. J. H. Charlesworth, The Pseudepigrapha and Modern Research with a Supplement (Chico, Cal.: Scholars Press, 1981), p. 98, and Sandmel, Judaism and Christian Beginnings, p. 86-87, also take the section

a) The nature and destiny of man

The portrait of man in 1 Enoch is essentially that of the Old Testament, with some developments found in wisdom literature. God created man and gave him "the power of understanding the word of wisdom" (14:3); man is able to see God's works in creation (2:1-5:3). Men were created "exactly like the angels" (69:11), pure and righteous, and if they had not sinned, "death, which destroys everything, could not have taken hold of them" (69:11). Death came in through knowledge (69:9-11), especially the knowledge brought by the sons of God to the daughters of men (8:1-4; 65:6-11; 10:7-8). It was for eating of the "tree of wisdom" (32:3,6) that Adam and Eve were driven out of the Garden of Eden. Now, though man seeks for "eternal life" (10:10) or at least to live five hundred years (10:10), he will not be given "length of days" (10:9).

Other passages dealing with the destiny of man contribute to this view of man's nature. A number of ideas recur in this admittedly jumbled eschatological scheme. First, there will be a day of judgment, which will separate the godly from the ungodly and determine the fate of both (22:8-14; 26:1-27:5; 46:1-54:6). Second, there will be an earthly kingdom of peace and prosperity, before or after the day of judgment, and with or without a messianic figure (5:1-9; 10:17-11:2; 25:1-5; 22:6). Third, there will be a resurrection, either of all men (51:1-5) or of the righteous (91:17; 92:3-5; 93:10; 100:5-6). The relation of the resurrection to the day of judgment and the messianic kingdom is not consistent, nor is it always clear whether the kingdom will be in this world or in the

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to be Jewish.

world to come. Fourth, there is the hope of life in the presence of God or with the "righteous angels" or with the "holy and elect" (39:3-8; 41:2; 45:1-6; 48:1; 62:14-16). This form of the future hope makes no reference to resurrection but speaks of "heaven" and "eternal life" (39:5; 40:6-7; 43:1-4; 58:2-6).

Of particular interest are two passages which describe the future hope in spiritual terms and which reflect the author's view of the nature of man. The first is chapters 102 to 105. Those who have "died in righteousness" (102:4) are not to abandon hope, for death is not the end (102:5). Indeed, a "mystery" (103:2) has been revealed, which is

103:3 That all goodness and joy and glory are prepared  
for them,  
And written down for the spirits of those who have  
died in righteousness. . .  
4 And the spirits of you who have died in righteous-  
ness shall live and rejoice,  
And their spirits shall not perish. . .

Of special interest here is the author's use of the term "spirits" in connection with eternal life. In contrast to the righteous, the "souls" or "spirits" of sinners will descend into Sheol to suffer pain (103:7-8).<sup>25</sup> Of the good and faithful it is said that "in heaven" (104:1) the angels shall remember them before God; the "portals of heaven" will be opened to them (104:2); they shall "shine as the lights of heaven" (104:2), and they shall have "great joy as the angels of heaven" (104:4).

The second passage is the last chapter of the book (108) which

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<sup>25</sup>Cf. 22:3: "The spirits of the souls of the dead [shall] assemble [in Sheol]"; 9:10: "The souls of those who have died are crying and making their suit to the gates of heaven."

seems to be an independent addition.<sup>26</sup> Here an ascetic emphasis is combined with the other-worldly hope. The "spirits" of sinners are slain (108:3,6) or cast into the fire of judgment, but not so the "humble" and those who have "afflicted their bodies" (108:7). These are they who "love God" and not "gold nor silver nor any of the good things which are in the world" (108:8); they have "longed not after earthly food, but regarded everything as a passing breath," and their "spirits were found pure" (108:10); they have "loved heaven more than their life in the world" (108:10). Of such it is said that their "spirits" will be summoned (108:11); they will be brought forth "in shining light" (108:12); they will be seated on the throne of honor, and will live forever (108:12-13).

Almost the only passages in 1 Enoch, then, which reflect a dualism of soul and body are those dealing with the future life. With the exception of chapter 108 these developments are congenial with the Jewish hope of resurrection or eternal life found in the later books of the canon.

#### b) The origin and nature of sin

The view of sin in 1 Enoch is essentially that of the Old Testament, but there are emphases which are peculiar to the book.

First, the writer or writers were very much interested in the story of the union of the sons of God with the daughters of men (Gen. 6:1-4). This story is told and retold, often in embellished form (6:1 - 7:6; 64:1-2; 86-88). The primary accent falls on the giving of knowledge to men (7:1; 8:1-4; 9:6; 10:7-8; 16:3). This is the knowledge of arts

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<sup>26</sup>So Charles, Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, II, 280; Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, p. 359.

and crafts, but it includes also esoteric religious knowledge, such as astrology. A secondary accent falls on the "fornication" of the angels with women (8:2; 10:9-10; 15:3-7; 107:13-17). The concern here is not with the sexual act as much as with the unseemly union of heavenly and earthly beings.

At times the results of the sin of angels with women are set forth as the continuing sinfulness of mankind:

8:2 And there arose much godlessness, and they committed fornication, and they were led astray, and became corrupt in all their ways (cf. 69:9).

Yet these references should not be made into a doctrine of original sin. The effects of the primeval sin are variously described: physical death (10:7; 69:6-11); ruin (65:6); godlessness (8:2); sin (9:8; 10:8; 64:2); evil (16:3); the introduction into the world of a race of giants who sinned against men (7:1-5; 9:1) and who after death became evil spirits which afflicted men (15:8-16:1). The author's intent therefore is not to provide a theory of the origin of sin but to comment upon the Genesis account.

In addition to the heavenly watcher story, there is another explanation of the origin of sin in the book:

98:4 I have sworn unto you, ye sinners, as a mountain  
has not become a slave,  
And a hill does not become the handmaid of a woman,  
Even so sin has not been sent upon the earth,  
But man of himself has created it,  
And under a great curse shall they fall who commit it.

The writer's intent seems to be to show that God cannot be blamed for sin; man himself is responsible for it.

### 3. 4 Ezra

The book known as 4 Ezra is extant in several versions, of which the Latin is the most important. All apparently go back to a Greek version, and that in turn to a Hebrew or Aramaic original. The work appears to date from about 100 to 120 C.E. It has a close relation to 2 Baruch, and scholars have suggested that the latter may have been written to correct some of the unorthodox elements of the former.<sup>27</sup>

The Jewish portion of 4 Ezra (chapters 3 to 14) consists of seven visions granted to "Ezra" concerning the end of the world and the fate of God's people. The first three visions (3:1 - 9:25) are remarkable for an extended dialogue between the seer and the angel Uriel. Ezra raises many perplexing questions: Why do the righteous suffer? Why are there so few who will be saved? What will become of those who die before the present age ends? The angel answers in rigorous and even harsh terms: Those who die deserve their fate. The ways of God are inscrutable. The end of the age is fast approaching. The many wicked will be destroyed and the few righteous saved. All will be in accord with strict justice.

Scholars have debated whether the author's viewpoint is represented by the seer, the angel or both.<sup>28</sup> It is quite possible, however, that the author wished to set forth both views without identifying himself

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<sup>27</sup>E.g., Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, p. 409, n. 1; B. M. Metzger, "The Fourth Book of Ezra," in Charlesworth, The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, I, 522.

<sup>28</sup>See the discussion in Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, and the scholars cited there. Sanders maintains that the author's view is represented by the angel and is consistent throughout the book. Metzger (p. 517-23) does not distinguish between the author, Ezra and the angel.



with either. In any event a decision on the question is not required for our purposes; a sharp distinction will therefore not be made in the following overview.

a) The nature and destiny of man

The author of 4 Ezra makes use of both Genesis accounts to set forth man as a created being. God created man from the dust and breathed into him the breath of life, so that he became a "living person" (3:5). God created man as the crown of his work and gave him sovereignty over everything which he had made (6:54). Elsewhere, man's mental capacities are stressed. "Is the mind of man, like the rest of creation, a product of the dust?" (7:62). If so, it were better that we had never been created, for "we grow up with the power of thought and are tortured by it; we are doomed to die and we know it" (7:63-64). We are more unfortunate than the beasts, for they have no knowledge of what is to befall them (7:65-66).

A strong spirit-matter dualism appears in passages dealing with human destiny. The body is "mortal" (7:88); this "corruptible world" is like a prison-house of the soul (7:96). The soul came into this world unwillingly and for a brief time (8:4-5); at death each man "gives back his soul" to God (7:75). While the book makes provision for a messianic age and a this-worldly restoration<sup>29</sup> the more characteristic emphasis is on the destruction of this world and its replacement by a new age of incorruption (7:113-14). Similarly, the author's interest is not in the

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<sup>29</sup>Especially 4:52 - 5:13a; 6:13-29; 7:26-44; 8:63 - 9:12; and in ch. 11 and 12 (the "Eagle Vision") and ch. 13 (the "Son of Man Vision").

resurrected body but in the soul. At death, and not after resurrection, the soul enters a state of blessing or torment. The destiny of good souls, i.e., of those who have achieved "victory in the long fight against their inborn impulses to evil" (7:92) and who have kept the law "to the letter" (7:89,94), is to go to the presence of God (7:78). They will see God "face to face" (7:98) and will shine "like stars, never to fade or die" (7:97). In contrast, evil souls will wander in torment and grief (7:80,93), and cannot be saved by the intercession of the righteous (7:102-105). Effectively, then, judgment takes place at death; judgement day will only confirm this verdict and reveal the final destiny of the soul (7:36,102-105).

#### b) The origin of sin

The author of 4 Ezra deals at length with the origin of sin. A restatement of his argument is as follows.

God, the creator, placed man in a perfect paradise (3:6) and gave him only one commandment to obey (3:7). But Adam disobeyed and was made "subject to death" (3:7). This disobedience was due to the "grain of evil seed" in his heart (4:30), namely, the "wicked heart" with which he was "burdened" and by which he was "overcome" (3:21). His posterity followed in his footsteps. They behaved "just like Adam" (3:25) because they "had the same wicked heart" (3:26); so they too "sinned" and were "overcome" (3:21). Thus "the weakness became inveterate" (3:22). Adam's sin, therefore, meant the fall of the whole human race:

7:118 O Adam, what have you done? Your sin was not your fall alone; it was ours also, the fall of all your descendants (cf. 4:30).

Better that Adam had never been created or, if created, kept from sinning (7:116).

Still, men are responsible for their own sins. All have sinned (4:38; 7:46,68; 8:34-35), and most are doomed to eternal torment (7:47). This sin is due to the wicked heart in man,

which has estranged us from God's ways, brought us into corruption and the way of death, opened out to us the path of ruin, and carried us far away from life (7:48).

This is the case for "almost all who have been created" (7:48). God, it is true, gave the people the law at Sinai (3:17-19), but "you did not take away their wicked heart and enable your law to bear fruit in them" (3:20). Thus "the good came to nothing, while what was bad persisted" (3:22).

It was thus with conscious knowledge that the people of this world sinned; "they received the commandments but did not keep them; they accepted the law but violated it" (7:22). Therefore men will have no answer to give to God on judgment day (7:73); they can only appeal to his mercy (8:36). For God told men "how to attain life and escape punishment" (7:21) but they "refused to obey him" (7:22). They "rejected his law and refused his promise" (3:24), and "even denied the existence of the Most High" (3:23). Let men therefore think on this, and choose life (7:127-29).

This review of the textual evidence yields the following results. First, the writer sees two effects of Adam's sin. The first is death for Adam and his descendants (3:7). The second, while not so clear, is the sin of Adam's descendants (7:118). Adam's sin at least carried the power of example, an example set by the first representative of the race (3:25).

Second, the writer gives as the direct cause of sin the "wicked heart" or "grain of evil seed" (4:30; 3:21). This was so for Adam and also for his descendants (3:21,26). Many scholars<sup>30</sup> have interpreted this "wicked heart" as the evil impulse, although the Semitic text is lacking. It should be noted that the wicked heart is not the result of Adam's sin, but the cause. It is true that the "weakness" became "inveterate" in Adam's descendants and that "the wicked heart has grown up in us" (7:48), but it is not clear to what extent this is due to Adam's sin.

Third, the author of 4 Ezra holds that the law is impotent as a remedy for sin, for it is rendered ineffective by the evil impulse (3:17-22). As long as the evil heart remains, it prevents the law from bearing fruit. In the age to come, however, the evil heart will be taken away (6:26-28; 8:53). Finally, whatever the immediate or remote cause of sin, man is still responsible before God. He sins with conscious knowledge, for he has received the law and the knowledge of God but has refused to obey it (7:21-23,72-73); he cannot plead innocence on the day of judgment, but can only cry for mercy. This at least is the position of the angel, and Ezra's plea for compassion does not overthrow it. As Sanders remarks, this attitude represents "the closest approach to legalistic works-righteousness which can be found in the Jewish literature of the period."<sup>31</sup>

#### 4. 2 Baruch

Second Baruch, also called the "Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch," ap-

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<sup>30</sup>E.g., Metzger, p. 521.

pears to have been written in the last half of the first Christian century and given its final form about 120 C.E.<sup>32</sup> It was apparently written originally in Hebrew, from which it was translated into Greek and thence into Syriac. The book may have been written in part as an answer to 4 Ezra, or the two works may reflect a common interest. The book is in seven sections marked off by fasts. Conflicting views are offered in the different sections. This may reflect composite authorship or the author's use of heterogeneous materials.

a) The origin and nature of sin

The author of 2 Baruch deals at length with the origin and nature of sin. Like 4 Ezra, he traces the beginning of human misery to Adam's transgression:

56:6 For when he transgressed  
 Untimely death came into being,  
 Grief was named  
 And anguish was prepared,  
 And pain was created,  
 And trouble consummated,  
 And disease began to be established,  
 And Sheol kept demanding that it should be renewed  
 in blood,  
 And the begetting of children was brought about,  
 And the passion of parents produced,  
 And the greatness of humanity was humiliated,  
 And goodness languished.

This litany of woes is all ascribed to "the transgression wherewith Adam

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<sup>31</sup>Paul and Palestinian Judaism, p. 418.

<sup>32</sup>See Charlesworth, The Pseudepigrapha and Modern Research, p. 84; A. F. J. Klijn, "2 (Syriac Apocalypse of) Baruch" in Charlesworth, The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, I, 617. Klijn agrees with earlier scholars that the author used sources from before 70 C.E.

the first man transgressed" (56:5; cf. 17:3; 23:4; 48:42-43; 54:15). It is nowhere stated, however, that Adam's sin brought spiritual death or that it caused the actual sin of his descendants. In fact, the author is at pains to assert the reverse:

54:15 For though Adam first sinned  
 And brought untimely death upon all,  
 Yet of those who were born from him  
 Each one of them has prepared for his own soul  
                   torment to come,  
 And again each one of them has chosen for himself  
                   glories to come.

54:19 Adam is therefore not the cause, save only of his  
                   own soul,  
 But each of us has been the Adam of his own soul.

It is in keeping with this that sin in 2 Baruch is seen as the misuse of free will (51:16), especially in relation to God's law.<sup>33</sup>

15:5 Man would not rightly have understood My judgement,  
       unless he had accepted the law, and I had instructed  
       6 him in understanding. But now, because he trans-  
       gressed wittingly, yea, just on this ground that he  
       wot (thereof), he shall be tormented.

This position is advanced throughout the book (19:1,3; 17:4; 48:40; 59:2). Men, though possessing the law, have rejected it "by reason of their pride" (48:40); they have preferred Adam's darkness to Moses' light (18:1-2).

The author of 2 Baruch also speaks of mankind as possessing the "unwritten law" (57:1) yet as not seeing God in his creation (54:18) or confessing him as creator (48:46). He claims that "the lamp of the eter-

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<sup>33</sup>See the emphasis on keeping the law (31-33; 44:1-7; 46:5-6;

nal law shone on all those who sat in darkness" (59:2), but the context of this verse shows that this "eternal law" is the law of Moses. The author may not have made a sharp distinction between the unwritten law and the Mosaic law, or he may simply have identified them.

The accent in 2 Baruch falls on man's responsibility for sin. Significantly, there is no "evil heart," even in the case of Adam. There are men who keep the law perfectly and are justified thereby (51:3,7; 63:3,5; 85:2; 14:12; 67:6).

b) The destiny of man

To the author of 2 Baruch a satisfactory theodicy requires that there be a future life, "for if there were this life only, which belongs to all men, nothing could be more bitter than this" (21:13).<sup>34</sup> But what form will that future take?

First, there will be a messianic age -- a golden age of peace and plenty (29:3 - 30:1; 73:1 - 74:1); a time of judgment and destruction of the enemies of Israel (39:8; 72:106); an age that will last to the end of time (38:1 - 40:4). But this age merely marks the end of the corruptible world and the start of the world to come (40:13; 44:9-12; 48; 50; 74:2-3). Second, at the end of the messianic age the resurrection will take place:

30:2 Then all who have fallen asleep in hope of Him  
shall rise again. And. . .the souls of the  
righteous. . .shall come forth, and a multitude

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48:22-24,38; 84:1-11; 85:3).

<sup>34</sup>The parallel to 1 Cor. 15:19 is striking.

- 4 of souls shall be seen together in one assemblage of one thought. . . But the souls of the wicked, when they behold all these things, shall then waste away the more (cf. 42:7-8).

The author of 49:2-3 even asks, in the manner of 1 Cor. 15:35:

- 2 In what shape will those live who live in Thy day?  
Or how will the splendour of those who (are) after  
that time continue?
- 3 Will they then resume this form of the present,  
And put on these entrammelling members,  
Which are now involved in evils,  
And in which evils are consummated,  
Or wilt thou perchance change these things which  
have been in the world  
As also the world?

The answer which he is given is significant. The earth will restore the dead exactly in the form in which they died, but this restoration is for purposes of recognition only (50:2-4). Afterward, these bodies will be changed into ones fit "to acquire and receive the world which does not die" (51:3); they will be "transformed. . . into the splendour of angels" (51:5).

In a parallel passage, the similarity to concepts found in the literature of Greek-speaking Judaism is striking:

- 51:8 For they shall behold the world which is now  
invisible to them,  
And they shall behold the time which is now  
hidden from them;
- 9 And time shall no longer age them.
- 10 For in the heights of that world shall they dwell,  
And they shall be made like unto the angels,  
And be made equal to the stars,  
And they shall be changed into every form they  
desire,  
From beauty into loveliness,  
And from light into the splendour of glory (cf. 43:1-3).



The author of 2 Baruch therefore shows to a remarkable degree the dualistic tendencies which appear in other literature of Palestinian Judaism wherever the future hope is in view. This dualism is not a consistent scheme, but there is a growing awareness that man's destiny lies beyond this world and that existence in that age will be in a form unlike that of the present physical body.

## 5. Summary

The apocryphal and pseudepigraphical books which we have reviewed show development of thought beyond what is found in the Old Testament. This development occurs in all the concepts with which we are concerned.

### a) The nature of man

The concept of the nature of man is essentially that of the Old Testament, but there are developments in at least three areas. First, there is a marked interest in the "image of God" in man. This interest reflects the influence of wisdom literature; it is also an interest which Palestinian and Alexandrian Judaism have in common. Second, reasons for man's mortality are advanced. Specifically, man's mortal nature is traced to a catastrophe at the dawn of human history. In 1 Enoch this catastrophe is the bringing of knowledge to men by angels, but the more commonly accepted cause is the sin of Adam and Eve.

Third, these writings reveal a growing sense of the distinction between body and soul. This is not, with one or two exceptions, an ethical dualism. The flesh is not clearly said to be evil or the source of sin, although in 2 Baruch 49:3 and 1 Enoch 108 it is seen to be a burden

for the soul. Rather, recognition that man's nature consists of an imperishable as well as a perishable part seems forced on the writers by the demands of theodicy and by the implications of religious hope. The concept of "soul" or "spirit" does not correspond exactly to the Greek notion, but the change from traditional Jewish ideas is significant.

b) The destiny of man

The books just reviewed present a changing and confusing picture of human destiny. In Ben Sira no clear reference to resurrection or life after death is to be found. In 1 Enoch there is a two-fold eschatological hope: long life on this earth and eternal life in the presence of God. Resurrection has a place, but the future life takes place as much in a new world as in this one. In 4 Ezra the eschatological hope is expressed in dualistic terms. The body is mortal and corruptible; the soul came into the world unwillingly and for a brief time, and is given back to God at death. There will be a resurrection and judgment, but the author's interest is in the soul rather than the body. At death the soul enters heavenly bliss or goes away into torment and grief. In 2 Baruch hope in a messianic age and in resurrection is entertained, but both are a preparation for the world to come. Restoration to physical bodies is for purposes of recognition only; these bodies will be exchanged for a mode of existence fit for the world to come.

It should be noted that resurrection and immortality are not two clearly defined alternatives; they exist in a variety of combinations and in confused form. Nevertheless it is not true that the concept of immortality is a preserve of Greek-speaking Judaism while Palestinian or

Hebrew-speaking Judaism held exclusively to resurrection. In fact, the accent in the books studied falls as much on an other-worldly as on a this-worldly hope. Where a this-worldly hope is present, it is sometimes only a preparation for existence in a new and different world.

c) The origin and nature of sin

In the books just reviewed, the origin and nature of sin has become a matter of theoretical interest. One of the major formulations of the problem is the concept of the evil impulse. In Ben Sira this concept is used to express man's responsibility for sin; the law can help man in his struggle to control this evil impulse, but the choice is ultimately his. In 4 Ezra there is a more extensive development of the concept and an uneasy union with the theory of an ongoing result of Adam's sin. Still the intent is to show man's responsibility for sin, not to excuse it. The law, furthermore, is impotent to control the evil impulse.

A second explanation of the origin of sin is a catastrophe at the beginning of human history. As in the case of man's mortality, this argument occurs in two forms. The first, found in 1 Enoch, is the story of the fallen angels in Gen. 6:1-4. The sin in this story is the illicit union of spiritual beings with mankind and the transmission of forbidden knowledge by angels to men. In 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch, the sin of Adam and Eve has replaced the fallen-angel story as the explanation of the origin of sin. Neither biblical story is used to create a clear doctrine of universal human sinfulness, much less of "original sin."

There is thus no single theory of the origin of sin in the books

reviewed. The accent falls on man's misuse of free will, especially in relation to God's law. This is clearest in 2 Baruch, but is present in the other books as well. Sin, again, is not located in the flesh, although appeal is made to man's weakness as an excuse for sin (Ben Sira 18:8-12; 2 Baruch 48:11-18). Even the evil impulse is more a description than an explanation of sin.

### C. THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS

Written during the two centuries prior to 70 C.E., the Dead Sea Scrolls reveal the thought and life of a devout sect within Palestinian Judaism and provide us with an important window into the world immediately preceding the New Testament. While they do not reflect the whole of Judaism, "they reveal one facet of the spiritual ferment at work among the various parties of Palestinian Judaism at that time."<sup>35</sup>

Scholarly debate on flesh and sin in the Dead Sea Scrolls has been set out above (p. 51-59). The intent of the present review is to bring together relevant passages from the Scrolls and allow them to speak for themselves.

#### 1. The Nature of Man

##### a) Man as creature

It is a constant theme of the Dead Sea Scrolls that man is but

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<sup>35</sup>G. Vermes, The Dead Sea Scrolls in English (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1975), p. 14.

"dust" and a "creature of clay" (1QH 3:21-24; 12:24-27; 18:25-27), a "heap of dust" (1QH 12:25) who "returns to the dust" (1QH 10:3-4; 12:26). This theme occurs especially in the Hymns, but is not lacking in the other writings. Man is totally other than and inferior to God; he is as nothing in comparison with God.

Two examples of this oft-repeated refrain will be given; one is from the Manual of Discipline, while the other is from the Hymns.<sup>36</sup>

Who can endure Thy glory,  
 and what is the son of man  
 in the midst of Thy wonderful deeds?  
 What shall one born of woman  
 be accounted before Thee?  
 Kneaded from the dust,  
 his abode is the nourishment of worms.  
 He is but a shape, but moulded clay,  
 and inclines toward dust.  
 What shall hand-moulded clay reply?  
 What counsel shall it understand?  
 1QS 11:20-22

And yet I, a creature of clay,  
 what am I?  
 Kneaded with water,  
 what is my worth and my might?  
 1QH 3:24

We shall see that this preoccupation with man's mortal nature does not equate the flesh and sin. Rather, man is a mere creature before God and can make no claim to understanding, worth or righteousness.

#### b) The spirit of man

The term "spirit" is a common one in the Scrolls. It is used of-

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<sup>36</sup>Quotations are from Vermes; line divisions are according to A. Dupont-Sommer, The Essene Writings from Qumran; tr. G. Vermes (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1973).

ten for the heavenly host (1QH 1:9-11; 10:8; 1QM 10:12) but equally often for man. In 1QH 1:15-16, God is said to have given to "the spirit of man" dominion over all the created world. The use here is non-specific. In the following passages, however, something more than the personal pronoun seems intended.

The way of man is not established  
except by the spirit which God created for him.  
1QH 4:31

For it is Thou who hast founded my spirit  
and Thou knowest my intent.  
1QH 9:12 (cf. 13:18-19)

...I implore Thee  
by the spirit which Thou hast given [me]  
to perfect Thy [favours] to Thy servant [for ever].  
1QH 16:11-12

The thought is taken further in the Manual of Discipline. In 1QS 3:13-14 "the nature of all the children of men" is to be judged "according to the kind of spirit which they possess." When a man wishes to enter the Covenant, "they shall examine his spirit in community" (1QS 5:20-21); thereafter, "they shall examine their spirit and deeds yearly" (1QS 5:23-24; cf. 9:25). The meaning of "spirit" in such passages appears to be the same as that of "heart" in the Old Testament: intention, attitude, will. It is not used over against "flesh" in an anthropological sense.

### c) Predeterminism

The writings of the Dead Sea sect are marked by a strong sense of predeterminism. This is a natural result of the heightened emphasis on the vast gulf separating God and man. It may also be due to the cosmic dualism which is a prominent feature of the Scrolls.<sup>37</sup>

It is from the "God of Knowledge" that there comes "all that is and shall be" (1QS 3:15).

Before ever they existed He established their whole design, and when, as ordained for them, they came into being, it is in accord with His glorious design that they accomplish their task without change.

1QS 3:15-16 (cf. 1QH 1:7-8; 13:7-13)

The reference here is to the created world, but the same is true of men:

In the wisdom of Thy knowledge  
Thou didst establish their destiny before ever  
they were.

All things [exist] according to [Thy will]  
and without Thee nothing is done.

1QH 1:19-20 (cf. 1:23,27-28; 10:9)

More remarkable than this accent on predeterminism is the fact that it assumes a dualistic form. Men are good or evil according as they are assigned to follow the "Prince of Light" or the "Angel of Darkness":

He has created man to govern the world, and has appointed for him two spirits in which to walk until the time of his visitation: the spirits of truth and falsehood. Those born of truth spring from a fountain of light, but those born of falsehood spring from a source of darkness. All the children of righteousness are ruled by the Prince of Light and walk in the ways of light, but all the children of falsehood are ruled by the Angel of Darkness and walk in the ways of darkness.

1QS 3:17-21 (cf. 4:15-16; 1QH 1:16-17; 14:12)

This dualistic conception is a departure from the teaching of the Old

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<sup>37</sup>Sanders (Paul and Palestinian Judaism, p. 269) suggests that the predestination of the sect is due more to a strong sense of election than to the influence of Zoroastrian thought.

Testament, but the Scrolls are explicit that God is still sovereign. The supremacy of God is seen not only in his creation of the two spirits, but in his creation of man. 1QH 4:38 states bluntly: "Thou hast created the just and the wicked." In 1QH 14:20-21, the psalmist professes:

But according as [Thou drawest a man near to Thee,  
so will I love] him,  
and according as Thou removest him far from Thee,  
so will I hate him.

As Max Wilcox has remarked,<sup>38</sup> the dualism of Qumran is not absolute nor is it totally foreign to the spirit of the Old Testament. It would seem, in fact, that the authors of the Dead Sea Scrolls did not recognize the logical inconsistency of affirming at the same time man's freedom of choice and his assignment by God's decree to the "Prince of Light" or the "Angel of Darkness."

d) The destiny of man

The views of the Qumran community with respect to individual human destiny are difficult to determine.<sup>39</sup> The cast of thought of the sect is eschatological, and words such as "everlasting" and "eternal" are used with dramatic rather than doctrinal intent. The destiny of those who walk in God's way, for example, will be

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<sup>38</sup>"Dualism, Gnosticism, and Other Elements in the Pre-Pauline Tradition," in Matthew Black, ed., The Scrolls and Christianity (London: SPCK, 1969), p. 87.

<sup>39</sup>See Matthew Black, The Scrolls and Christian Origins (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1961), p. 135-42; John Pryke, "Eschatology in the Dead Sea Scrolls," in Black, The Scrolls and Christianity, p. 45-57; Helmer Ringgren, The Faith of Qumran; tr. Emilie T. Sander (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1963), p. 152-98.



healing, great peace in a long life, and fruitfulness, together with everlasting blessing and eternal joy in life without end, a crown of glory and a garment of majesty in unending light,  
1QS 4:6-8

while for those who walk in the way of falsehood there will be

a multitude of plagues by the hand of all the destroying angels, everlasting damnation by the avenging wrath of the fury of God, eternal torment and endless disgrace together with shameful extinction in the fire of the dark regions.  
1QS 4:12-13

In 1QM 13:7-8, God will renew the covenant with the children of the faithful "throughout eternal ages," while in 1QM 1:8-9 God's "exalted greatness shall shine eternally to the peace, blessing, glory, joy and long life of all the sons of light."

One reference of this obviously ambiguous language is to an earthly kingdom, and at times this is explicitly stated. In 1QM 12:13-15 and 19:5-8, the kings of the nations with their hosts will be brought to Jerusalem and to the cities of Judah, and Israel will reign over the nations. At other times the reference seems to be to eternal life in the presence of God. 1QM 12:3 states that God will rule over his saints "for ever and ever and throughout all the eternal ages." In 1QH 3:22-23 the psalmist says:

Thou hast allotted to man an everlasting destiny  
amidst the spirits of knowledge.

1QH 18:28-30 describes the glory of the world to come, when the straying spirit will stand before God forever in the "everlasting abode," illu-

mined with perfect light and enjoying endless joy and peace. As the destiny of the faithful can be described in other-worldly language, so also the lot of the wicked. In 1QS 2:7-8, the host of Satan is damned to "the shadowy places of everlasting fire." A man who enters the Covenant "while walking among the idols of his heart" (1QS 2:11) shall be consumed "in everlasting destruction" (1QS 2:15); his "spirit" shall be "destroyed without pardon" (1QS 2:14), and his "lot shall be among those who are cursed for ever" (1QS 2:17).

In spite of these references to "everlasting" redemption and destruction, however, it is probable that in most cases a this-worldly destiny is in view. The intent is more to accent finality than to describe an other-worldly mode of existence.

The Dead Sea Scrolls also make use of the language of resurrection (1QH 6:34; 11:10-14), but scholars are divided over what to make of this language.<sup>40</sup> It is not clear that literal resurrection is in view, although this cannot be denied. The accent throughout the Scrolls falls not on the resurrected body, but on man's sharing in the counsels and life of God and of the heavenly host. There is no "immortality of the soul" in the Greek sense, but there is a lively hope that God will work out his purposes in and through his faithful remnant.

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<sup>40</sup>Wilcox (p. 88) and C. F. D. Moule, "St. Paul and Dualism: The Pauline Conception of Resurrection" (in New Testament Studies, 13 [1966], p. 114) claim that there is no conclusive evidence for resurrection. Black (The Scrolls and Christian Origins, p. 141); Ringgren (p. 160); Pryke (p. 55); and Vermes (p. 51) incline to belief in resurrection, but admit that the evidence is ambiguous.

## 2. The Origin and Nature of Sin

### a) The human condition

The Dead Sea Scrolls reflect a variety of perspectives on the origin and nature of sin. The first of these is that man sins because he is man and not God.

As for me,  
 I belong to wicked mankind,  
 to the company of ungodly flesh.  
 My iniquities, rebellions, and sins,  
 together with the perversity of my heart,  
 belong to the company of worms  
 and to those who walk in darkness.  
 For mankind has no way,  
 and man is unable to establish his steps  
 since justification is with God  
 and perfection of way is out of His hand.  
 1QS 11:9-11

"Flesh" here does not mean the physical flesh as over against the "soul" or "spirit" but mankind as flesh over against God. This is brought out clearly in the continuation of the passage:

As for me,  
 if I stumble, the mercies of God  
 shall be my eternal salvation.  
 If I stagger because of the sin of flesh,  
 my justification shall be  
 by the righteousness of God which endures for ever.  
 \* \* \*  
 Through his righteousness He will cleanse me  
 of the uncleanness of man  
 and of the sins of the children of men.  
 1QS 11:11-12,15-16.

It is true that at times this sense of sin becomes overpowering, especially in the Hymns. To passages already quoted may be added the following:

[But what is] the spirit of flesh  
 that it should understand all this,  
 and that it should comprehend  
 the great [design of Thy wisdom]?  
 What is he that is born of woman  
 in the midst of all Thy terrible [works]?  
 He is but an edifice of dust,  
 and a thing kneaded with water,  
 whose beginning [is sinful iniquity],  
 and shameful nakedness,  
 [and a fount of uncleanness],  
 and over whom a spirit of straying rules.  
 1QH 13:13-15

But what is flesh [to be worthy] of this?  
 What is a creature of clay  
 for such marvels to be done,  
 whereas he is in iniquity from the womb  
 and in great unfaithfulness until his old age?  
 1QH 4:29-30

Still, these passages do not clearly equate the physical flesh and sin,  
 much less establish the flesh as a power for sin or as leading inevitably  
 to sin.<sup>41</sup> The central thrust of the flesh-sin language is to accent the  
 gulf between God and man. One of the passages just quoted continues:

Righteousness, I know, is not of man,  
 nor is perfection of way of the son of man;  
 to the Most High God belong all righteous deeds.  
 1QH 4:30-31

The same sharp contrast is found in 1QH 1:25-27; 12:19,24-28; 13:13-18.  
 Man is sinful by nature; only in God are righteousness and truth to be  
 found.

There is, in the Scrolls, some uneasiness about the process of

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<sup>41</sup>The translation of 1QH 9:13 by Dupont-Sommer as "original sin" is confusing, especially as it is accompanied by the explanatory footnote: "The sin of the first parents in Eden, the cause of man's corruption."

procreation, and this is reflected in a marked concern for sexual sins. In CD 4:20-21, fornication is said to include taking a second wife while the first is alive, which is contrary to "the principle of creation." In 1QSa 1:9-11, a man of the community is not to have sexual intercourse until twenty years of age, "when he shall know [good] and evil." In CD 12:1-2 and in 1QH 13:15, sexual intercourse itself seems to involve a kind of defilement. The concern for sexual sins is not obsessive, however, and at times relates more to ritual than to moral impurity. While the Scrolls make reference to the sin of angels with the daughters of men (1Q Gen. Apoc. 2:1,15-16; 4Q 180), they do not see in the event the basis of the sinfulness of men.

The passages quoted above support the position of those scholars (above, p. 53-56) who claim that the Dead Sea Scrolls do not depart radically from the Old Testament conception of sin. There is in the Scrolls a heightened sense of the difference and distance between God and man, but this condition does not make the flesh sinful in itself.

b) "Stubbornness of heart" and the "evil inclination"

In the Qumran community, the standard of right conduct is the law of Moses as interpreted by the "sons of Zadok" (1QS 5:2,9). Those who join the community pledge themselves "to return to the Law of Moses with a whole heart and soul, to whatever is found should be done at that time" (CD 15:9-10; cf. 16:1-2). Any man of the Council who deliberately transgresses "one word of the Law of Moses, on any point whatever, shall be expelled from the Council of the Community and shall return no more" (1QS 8:22-23; cf. CD 8:19).

Given this standard of right conduct, it is not surprising that sin is defined as "guilty rebellion" (1QS 9:4) or as "walking in the stubbornness of one's heart" (CD 3:5; 8:8,19; 1QH 4:15). This theme is repeated almost endlessly. In Egypt, the children of Jacob "walked in the stubbornness of their hearts, conspiring against the commandments of God and each of them doing that which seemed right in his own eyes" (CD 3:5-6). At Kadesh, "they chose their own will" (CD 3:7), and even after they were established in the land they "walked in the stubbornness of their hearts each of them doing his own will" (CD 3:11-12). The man of the covenant, in contrast, is not to walk "in the stubbornness of his heart" (1QS 1:6; 2:15,16; 3:3; 7:19) nor follow a "sinful heart and lustful eyes" (1QS 1:6).

Even apart from the textual evidence it would be natural to identify this "stubborn heart" with the "evil inclination" of Ben Sira. In any case the textual evidence is not lacking.

No man shall walk in the stubbornness of his heart so that he strays after his heart and eyes and evil inclination [אחר לבבו וְעֵינָיו וְעַתְּוָתוֹ],<sup>42</sup> but he shall circumcise in the Community the foreskin of evil inclination and of stiffness of neck.  
1QS 5:4-5

The (evil) inclination is found also in 1QH 5:5-6,31-32; 11:19-21; 15:13. In every case the term for "inclination" is יצר; while the יצר הרע is not specified as such, the translator has sometimes supplied it from

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<sup>42</sup>The Hebrew text is from Eduard Lohse, ed., Die Texte aus Qumran (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1964).

the sense of the passage.

In a very significant passage, the sin of the angels with women is even traced to the evil inclination -- in this case that of the angels:

Choose that which pleases Him and reject that which He hates, that you may walk perfectly in all His ways and not follow after thoughts of the guilty inclination and after the eyes of lust. For through them, great men have gone astray and mighty heroes have stumbled from former times till now. Because they walked in the stubbornness of their heart the Heavenly Watchers fell; they were caught because they did not keep the commandments of God.

CD 2:17-18

In this passage the evil inclination is placed in parallel with such sins as walking "in the stubbornness of their hearts," doing "their own will," and not keeping "the commandments of God." The passage goes on to say that "through it [i.e., the evil inclination] the children of Noah went astray," whereas "Abraham did not walk in it" (CD 3:1-2). The evil inclination is therefore that which prompts men (and angels) to sin, especially in the sense of rejecting God's command and following one's own will. Even these passages should not be taken as a theoretical explanation of the origin of sin. Rather, they describe it; their intent is to show that sin is due to man's own choice.

### c) Predestination

As observed earlier, the texts from Qumran are marked by a strong note of predeterminism. This takes the form of a double predestination in two senses. First, men are predestined both to good and to evil. Second, this divine election takes place on the level of supernatural "spirits" and on that of human beings.

In one sense, this predeterminism is used to account for the sin of men:

The Angel of Darkness leads all the children of righteousness astray, and until his end, all their sin, iniquities, wickedness, and all their unlawful deeds are caused by his dominion in accordance with the mysteries of God.

1QS 3:21-23 (cf. 4:9-11; 1QM 13:10-11)

Elsewhere, however, it is stated that the two spirits strive for mastery in the heart of man until the final age:

Until now the spirits of truth and falsehood struggle in the hearts of men and they walk in both wisdom and folly. According to his portion of truth so does a man hate falsehood, and according to his inheritance in the realm of falsehood so is he wicked and so hates truth. For God has established the two spirits in equal measure until the determined end, and until the Renewal, and He knows the reward of their deeds from all eternity. He has allotted them to the children of men that they may know good [and evil, and] that the destiny of all the living may be according to the spirit within [them at the time] of the visitation.

1QS 4:23-26 (cf. 4:15-18)

Two ideas seem to be fighting for expression here. The first is that man's "lot" or "portion" has been assigned to him by God; the struggle between good and evil is an outward one, and men partake in it as their lot has been assigned to them by God (cf. 1QH 15:12-15,17,21-22; 4Q 181; CD 2:7-13). The second idea is that the two spirits have been placed in man so that he can choose the good and avoid the evil and so that his destiny may be according to the spirit found in him on the day of judgment. The same confusion arises in the ambiguous use of the term



"spirits." On the one hand, the "spirits" are superhuman powers to whom men have been allotted by God before birth; on the other hand, the "spirit" is a presence placed in man by God which corresponds in some sense to his conscious mind or will. The latter is reflected in the following passage:

Thou hast favoured me, Thy servant,  
 with a spirit of knowledge,  
 [that I may choose] truth [and goodness]  
 and loathe all the works of iniquity.  
 1QH 14:25-26.

The same thought occurs in 1QH 12:11-12; 13:18-19; 14:12-13; 16:8-11. The element of predestination is not lacking in these passages, but it has been changed. Man has the freedom to respond to the spirit which God has placed within him, though the presence of that spirit is the work of God.

As noted earlier, there is no conscious tension between the ideas of predestination and free will. As in the Old Testament, the ideas of the sovereignty of God and the free will of man exist side by side without apparent contradiction.

#### d) Satan

The Dead Sea Scrolls make frequent reference to "Satan." Most of these references are to an actual political power, as in the War Scroll and 4Q Florilegium. At times, however, the term seems to denote a personal or cosmic power of evil. In 1QS 10:21-22 the Master vows:

I will not keep Satan within my heart,  
 and in my mouth shall be heard

no folly or sinful deceit,  
no cunning or lies shall be found on my lips.

In 1QH 6:21-22 (cf. 1QS 7:3-4), the psalmist says of the wicked:

A counsel of Satan is in their heart  
[and in accordance with] their wicked design  
they wallow in sin.

This cosmic role of "Satan" or Belial<sup>43</sup> is made explicit in other passages. In 1QM 13:11, the purpose of Satan is to "bring about wickedness and iniquity." In CD 4:13-19, Satan sets three snares for Israel: fornication, riches, and the profanation of the temple. CD 12:2-3 legislates:

Every man who preaches apostasy under the  
dominion of Satan shall be judged according  
to the law relating to those possessed by  
a ghost or a familiar spirit.

Characteristically, however, human sin is not attributed to Satan any more than to God. The cosmic dualism of the Scrolls requires an evil power at enmity with God, but this power is not normally portrayed as the source of human sin. The accent in the Scrolls is on the sovereignty of God over both spiritual and human powers and on the responsibility of men to fulfil the destiny decreed for them.

### 3. Summary

The portrait of man in the Dead Sea Scrolls is essentially that of the Old Testament, with some adjustments due to the eschatological cast

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<sup>43</sup>The characteristic term for Satan in the Scrolls is בְּלִיעַל.

of thought and the marked cosmic dualism. Man is a creature of dust, wholly other than God and unworthy of him. His "lot" is in God's hand and is according to whether he has been assigned to the Prince of Light or the Angel of Darkness; at the same time, he must choose between the two spirits and respond to God's law. The destiny of man is described in language which is a mixture of this-worldly and other-worldly concepts. References to resurrection are inconclusive, but there is no doubt that the destiny of both the righteous and the wicked lies beyond the present age in eternal happiness or destruction.

The sect's view of the origin and nature of sin is also that of the Old Testament, with adjustments caused by the dualistic world outlook. Sin is not traced specifically to the flesh, although there is some preoccupation with sexual sins. "Flesh" is not an anthropological term set over against "soul" or "spirit," but represents man in his distance and difference from God. Sin is characteristically described as rebellion against God and the law. A sinner is one who walks "in the stubbornness of his heart" or who follows his own will or evil inclination. In the use of such terms there does not seem to be any intent to construct a doctrine of original sin.

The notion of predestination affects the concept of sin in the Scrolls but does not radically alter it. It is by God's decree that men are assigned to the Prince of Light or the Angel of Darkness, yet the freedom of man to choose between the two spirits is also affirmed. Again, while the role of "Satan" in bringing about the sin of man is recognized, this role has more to do with a cosmic division into good and evil than with the origin of sin in the human race.

## D. THE RABBIS

Although subsequent to Paul, the writings of the Rabbis have been appealed to by scholars to illuminate aspects of Paul's religion, including his view of the nature of man. The legitimacy of this practice is based on the fact that these writings rest on a tradition reaching back to the first Christian century and before. They are, moreover, a kind of collective writing, so that while the evolution of specific concepts is difficult to trace, a gradual process of development can be assumed.

Our interest in Rabbinic literature has to do with the nature of man and of sin, and especially with any changes in the Old Testament conception. Because scholars have both affirmed and denied the similarity of Paul's statements in Romans 7 and the Jewish doctrine of the  $\gamma\delta$   $\gamma\gamma\eta$ , we will be particularly interested in that concept. No attempt will be made to date all quotations,<sup>44</sup> but it will be assumed that Tannaitic literature, while postdating Paul by perhaps a century, may reflect sources from his time. Quotations from the Talmuds and the Midrash Rabbah will be included, but on the understanding that these sources are further removed from the Pauline period.

### 1. The Nature of Man

#### a) The image of God in man

The Rabbis were especially interested in the image of God in man.

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<sup>44</sup> On the dating of Rabbinic materials, see C. G. Montefiore and

R. Akiba is quoted in Aboth 3:15:<sup>45</sup>

Beloved is man for he was created in the image [of God]; still greater was the love in that it was made known to him that he was created in the image of God, as it is written, "For in the image of God made he man."

That man was created in the image of God means that we must respect that image in our dealings with our fellow men. In T. Yeb. 8:7, R. Akiba says, "Whoever spills blood, lo, such a one diminishes the divine image."<sup>46</sup> In Sifra Perek 4 to Lev. 19:18 ("You shall love your neighbor as yourself"), R. Akiba claims, "That is a weighty principle in the law," but Ben Azzai replies, "'This is the book of the generation of Adam' [Gen. 5:1] is a weightier principle than that one."<sup>47</sup> The passage to which Ben Azzai refers continues: "When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God."

The Rabbis did not speculate on precisely where the image of God lay. It is assumed that when God said "Let us make man in our image" he was talking with the ministering angels (San. 38b; Gen. R. 8:4-5); it

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H. Loewe, A Rabbinic Anthology (London: Macmillan and Co., 1938), p. 709-13; Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, p. 61-69; Ephraim E. Urbach, The Sages: Their Concepts and Beliefs; tr. Israel Abrahams (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1979), I, 1-18; Sandmel, The First Christian Century, p. 58-92.

<sup>45</sup>Quotations from the Mishnah are from Herbert Danby, ed., The Mishnah (London: Oxford University Press, 1933).

<sup>46</sup>Quotations from the Tosefta are from The Tosefta; tr. Jacob Neusner (New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1979-1984).

<sup>47</sup>Unless otherwise indicated, quotations from Sifra are translated from Sifra: Halachischer Midrasch zu Leviticus; tr. Jakob Winter (Breslau: Stefan Münz [Jüdischer Buchverlag und Buchvertrieb], 1938).

seems, further, that the image of God in man has something to do with his freedom of choice (Mek. Beshallah 7 on Ex. 14:28). It is never stated explicitly that the image of God means man's constitution as "spirit" over against "flesh."

b) The dual nature of man

Like the Old Testament, the Rabbis understood man in both unitary and dualistic terms. On the one hand, man is seen whole. "Flesh" is used with the same range of meanings as in the Old Testament, and with little moral connotation. "Heart" is the dominant psychological entity, embracing emotions, intellect and will. On the other hand, the dual nature of man is increasingly recognized; in Moore's words, it is "a frequent subject of remark" by the Rabbis.<sup>48</sup>

The dual nature of man is expressed clearly in passages dealing with creation. In Sifre Deut. Ha'azinu 306 on 32:2, R. Simai says:

All the creatures that were created from the heaven, their soul and their body was from heaven (of celestial substance); and all the creatures that were created from the earth, their soul and their body was of the earth, except man, whose soul is from heaven, his body from the earth.<sup>49</sup>

In Gen. R. 8:11, R. Tifdai says in the name of R. Aha:

The Holy One, blessed be He, said: 'If I create him of the celestial elements he will live [for ever] and not die; and if I create him of the

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<sup>48</sup>Moore, I, 451; cf. the treatment of man's dual nature in Urbach, I, 218-52, and Sandmel, Judaism and Christian Beginnings, p. 177-79.

<sup>49</sup>As quoted in Moore, I, 451; cf. Urbach, I, 220-21.

terrestrial elements, he will die and not live [in a future life]. Therefore I will create him of the upper and of the lower elements: if he sins he will die; while if he does not sin, he will live.<sup>50</sup>

This passage is repeated in Gen. R. 14:3, while in Gen. R. 27:4 R. Judah says that if man had been created out of heavenly elements, he would not have rebelled against God.

The dual nature of man is illustrated also in passages dealing with the conception and birth of the individual human being. P. Kil. 31c describes the partnership entered into by the parents and God, and says that "the life and the soul"<sup>51</sup> are from God. In Nid. 31a, the part given by God is "the spirit and the breath, beauty of features, eyesight, the power of hearing and the ability to speak and to walk, understanding and discernment."<sup>52</sup> To these may be added passages which raise the question as to the time at which the soul and body become integrated in the fetus. San. 91b reports a discussion reputedly held between R. Judah the Prince and "Antonius," according to which the soul is associated with the body at conception. This view is supported by many other Rabbinic passages (San. 57b; Yom. 82b; Tem. 19a; Sot. 41b; Gen. R. 63:6), while according to other passages (San. 91b; Ohol. 7:6; Arak. 1:4; San. 72b) the child becomes a living human being only at birth.

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<sup>50</sup>Quotations from the Midrash Rabbah are from H. Freedman, ed., Midrash Rabbah (London: Soncino Press, 1939). Occasional changes have been made in orthography.

<sup>51</sup>As quoted in Urbach, I, 218; cf. Kidd. 30b; P. Peah 15c.

<sup>52</sup>Quotations from the Babylonian Talmud are from I. Epstein, ed., The Babylonian Talmud (London: The Soncino Press, 1948-1952).

If dualistic conceptions are present in passages dealing with the creation of man, such concepts are equally present in passages dealing with judgment.

Two men (jointly) committed the same offense against the king, one of them a simple villager, the other a man brought up in the palace. He let the villager go and pronounced sentence on the other. His courtiers said to him, Both of them committed the same offense; you have let the villager go and sentenced the courtier! He replied, I let the villager go because he did not know the laws of the government, but the courtier was continually with me and knew what the laws of the government are, and what judgment is pronounced against one who offends against me. So the body is a villager -- "God fashioned man out of dust from the ground;" but the soul is a courtier from above -- "He breathed into his nostrils a soul of life."<sup>53</sup>

The Rabbis also tell the story, found in eastern religions, of the blind man and the lame man in the garden. The blind man represents the body, the lame man the soul. Both think that they will escape punishment, but on the day of judgment the soul is replaced in the body and the two are judged together (Mek. Shirata 2 on Ex. 15:1; San. 91a,b; Lev. R. 4:5). Lev. R. 4:5 ascribes to R. Hiyya a similar story, but with a stronger Jewish flavor. A priest had two wives, one the daughter of a priest, the other the daughter of a layman. He gave them some dough of the heave offering, and they allowed it to become unclean. When he asked which one had done it, they accused each other; he accordingly let the daughter of the layman go and condemned the other. When she complained he replied

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<sup>53</sup>Tanhuma (ed. Buber), Wayyikra 11, as quoted in Moore, I, 488; cf. Eccles. R. 6:7.



that, as the daughter of a priest, she had been taught about these things in her father's house and was therefore more responsible.

Even so will it be in the Time to Come. The soul and the body will be standing for judgment. What will the Holy One, blessed be He, do? He will let the body alone, and take the soul to task. . . [saying,] 'The body is from the lower [earthly] regions, from a place where they sin, but thou art from the upper [celestial] regions, from a place where they do not sin.

Numerous passages also indicate that the Rabbis, at least from the middle of the third century, believed in the pre-existence of the soul.<sup>54</sup> Ber. 60b gives the following prayer (cf. Eccles. R. 12:7):

My God, the soul which Thou hast placed in me is pure. Thou hast fashioned it in me, Thou didst breathe it into me, and Thou preservest it within me and Thou wilt one day take it from me and restore it to me in the time to come.

Numerous Rabbinical passages speak of "Guf" (גוף), the region inhabited by the souls of those not yet born (Yeb. 62a; 63b; Ab. Zar. 5a; Nid. 13b). The usual statement is that "the Son of David will not come before all the souls in Guf are disposed of." Hag. 12b states that one of the firmaments of heaven is the abode of "the souls of the righteous and the spirits and the souls which are yet to be born," while Gen. R. 8:7 speaks of the souls with whom God took counsel before creating the world.

The above passages show that the Rabbis were familiar with a Greek style of body-soul dualism and that they even integrated it into

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<sup>54</sup>See Urbach, I, 234-42, and the sources cited there. Urbach holds that the pre-existence of souls was taught only from the middle of the third century.

their religious outlook. How early this dualistic thought was assimilated is difficult to determine. In Lev. R. 34:3 an analogy of the soul as a "guest" in the body is attributed to Hillel, but the attribution is uncertain and, if correct, may not carry the later meaning of "soul."

c) The destiny of man

The Rabbis present us with a complex picture of human destiny. On the one hand, they valued the good things of this life: "beauty, power, wisdom, riches, long life, honor, glory, and children" (T. San. 11:8). On the other hand, they began more and more to depreciate this life in comparison with the life to come. As early as the middle of the second century the view is expressed that this world is an "inn" while the world to come is a "home" (M.Kat. 9b), while R. Judah the Prince is quoted as saying:

He who accepts the pleasures of this world  
shall be denied the pleasures of the world to  
come; but he who does not accept the pleasures  
of this world shall be granted the pleasures  
of the world to come.<sup>55</sup>

A.R.N. 28

This does not mean that the present world is unimportant, but the relative value of this world and the world to come have been reversed from what it was in traditional Jewish thought.

What precisely the Rabbis meant by the world to come is difficult to determine. They speak of an age of prosperity, righteousness and peace in which Israel will live in its own land under its messianic king,

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<sup>55</sup>Quotations from A.R.N. are from The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan; tr. Judah Goldin (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955).

but also of an eternal world beyond the messianic age and the great judgment day. At times they recognize this confusion and seek to correct it. Tanna debe Eliyyahu 29, referring to God's blessing of Abraham, says:

Scripture does not refer here. . . only to a day in this world but also to a day in the days of the Messiah, and to still another day, [a day without end,] in the world to come.<sup>56</sup>

The same source interprets the "two days" and "three days" of Hos. 6:2 in the same manner. Generally, however, the two concepts exist side by side without clarification.

A similar ambiguity is found in Rabbinic references to the resurrection and eternal life. In a sense, the resurrection of the body was the standard Rabbinic teaching:

These are they that have no share in the world to come: he that says that there is no resurrection of the dead prescribed in the Law, and [he that says] that the Law is not from Heaven, and an Epicurean.  
San. 10:1

The resurrection was read back into the Torah and was depicted at times in the most literal terms. According to Ket. 111a and P. Ket. 35b, the dead will go by holes or tunnels in the ground to Palestine, there to be resurrected. According to Eccles. R. 1:4, the dead will rise exactly as they died and then be healed of their physical infirmities. On the other hand, the idea develops that at death one can enter the world to come directly. A passage in Tanhuma states:

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<sup>56</sup>From Tanna debe Eliyyahu; tr. W. G. Braude and I. J. Kapstein (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1981).

At the death of the righteous, their days cease from the world, yet they themselves abide, as it says, "In whose hand is the soul of all the living." Can this mean that the living are in God's hand, and not the dead? No, it means that the righteous, even after their death may be called living, whereas the wicked, both in life and in death, may be called dead.<sup>57</sup>

A statement in Ber. 17a entirely bypasses the resurrection and specifically denies bodily existence in the fashion of this world:

A favorite saying of Rab was: "The future world is not like this world." In the future world there is no eating nor drinking nor propagation nor business nor jealousy nor hatred nor competition, but the righteous sit with their crowns on their heads feasting on the brightness of the divine presence.

Since it is unlikely that Rab was quoting from the New Testament (Matt. 22:23-32), it is probable that Jesus and the Rabbis drew upon a common tradition.

#### d) Summary

Like the writers of the apocrypha and pseudepigrapha, the Rabbis were interested in what the image of God in man might mean. Their development of this concept was not in the form of a philosophical theory, but had more to do with man's relation to God and his fellow men. Man possesses something of the qualities or attributes of God; he is able to understand and obey God's law, and is under obligation to respect the image of God in his fellow men. Although he bears the image of God, he

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<sup>57</sup>Tanhuma (ed. Buber) Berakah 28b, as quoted in Montefiore and Loewe, p. 580-81.

is a creature and not God.

A significant development in the Rabbinical understanding of man is in respect to the dual character of man's being. The soul is said to be made from heavenly elements and to exist prior to its entrance into the body; it is given to man pure, and at death returns to God. The soul, moreover, knows God's law and is more responsible for man's actions than is the body. It is impossible to know at what point such explicitly dualistic thought began. Its fullest expression is not found until the third century, but in less explicit form it may have been part of the Rabbinical world view as early as the days of Hillel.

## 2. The Nature and Origin of Sin

### a) The nature of sin

The Rabbis took over from the Old Testament the dominant notion of sin as rebellion against God. A number of figures are used to describe such sin: it is "throwing off the yoke" of God or of the law (Aboth 3:5; Ber. 2:2; San. 111b); it is "stretching the hand into the root" (P. Peah 16a; P. San. 23c). The purpose of these figures is to show that such an attitude is the same as rejecting the sovereignty of God or removing the covenant made at Sinai (T. Shab. 3:6; T. San. 12:9; P. Peah 16a-b; P. San. 17c).

The Rabbis singled out three sins as being so serious that a Jew must undergo martyrdom rather than commit them (San. 74a; Yom. 9b; T. Men. 13:22; Arak. 15b). The first of these is idolatry, which is the most serious sin of all (Hor. 8a; Ned. 25a). This sin includes not only the

worship of graven images, but pride (Sot. 4b-5a), anger (Ned. 22b; Shab. 105b) and any act of rebellion against God (Gen. R. 23:7; Deut. R. 2:18).

The second cardinal sin is adultery and all forbidden sexual relations. The seriousness of sexual sin is illustrated by Sot. 3b:

At first, before Israel sinned [against morality], the Shechinah abode with each individual. . . When they sinned, the Shechinah departed from them.

Examples of this concern for adultery are provided in Kidd. 80b-81a: a man may not accompany a woman alone on a journey, lest he have intercourse with her on the way; a married woman may speak with a male friend in her house only "if the door opens to the street." In B.B. 91b, R. Johanan recalls the good old days "when lads and lasses of sixteen and seventeen years of age took walks in the open air and did not sin." It should be noted that for the Rabbis adultery is not merely a social sin, but a sin against God, for it implies that God does not know what a man is doing (Num. R. 9:1).

The third cardinal sin is murder, which destroys the image of God in man (Ex. R. 30:16) and God's work in creation (San. 4:5). It is not only the outward act of murder which is condemned, but also the thought or motive behind it. In Yom. 9b, hatred is said to be as great a sin as idolatry, adultery and the shedding of blood, all combined; in Mid. Teh. 52:2 a similar statement is made about slander. Other sins classed with murder or said to be the equivalent of it are robbery (B.K. 119a; Lev. R. 22:6), wrong administration of justice (Shab. 139a) and usury (B.M. 71a; Ex. R. 31:6,13).

That man sins by the misuse of free will is central to the Rab-

binic idea of sin and guilt. For the most part no conflict is seen between this freedom and God's sovereign will. The words of R. Akiba in Aboth 3:16 are typical: "All is foreseen, but freedom of choice is given." Similar in purport is the well-known saying attributed to R. Hanina (Ber. 33b; Meg. 25a): "Everything is in the hand of heaven except the fear of heaven."

A strong statement about free will is made in Makk. 10b:

From the Pentateuch, the Prophets and the Hagio-grapha it may be shown that one is allowed to follow the road he wishes to pursue.

This principle is taken further in Mek. Vayassa' on Ex. 15:26:<sup>58</sup>

If a man wishes to hearken, he will in the course of time be given the opportunity to hearken. If a man wishes to forget, he will in the course of time be led to forget. . . Once a man desires to hearken of his own will, he is led to hearken both when it is his will to do so and even when it is not his will. And if it be his will to forget, he will be led to forget even when it is not his will. Freedom of choice is given.

Other passages, however, evince some concern about God's involvement in man's evil choices. In Shab 104a, Resh Lakish says:

If one comes to defile himself, he is given an opening; if one comes to cleanse himself, he is helped.

Montefiore comments: "God permits a man to sin -- such seems to be the

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<sup>58</sup>Quotations from Mekilta are from Mekilta de-Rabbi Ishmael; tr. J. Z. Lauterbach (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1933, 1935).

prevailing doctrine -- for free will is given; but God actively helps a man to be good. It is in man's free choice whether he will be good and pious or the reverse."<sup>59</sup>

Generally speaking, sin is not counted until it is done, whereas a good deed is reckoned even in the intention (Mid. Teh. 30:4; Kidd. 40b). We should not deduce from this, however, that action alone matters, regardless of the motive or intent behind it. Num. R. 8:5 states:

The moment a man contemplates sinning it is as though he has committed a trespass against the Omnipotent.

There are, in fact, many passages which stress the importance of intention or motive in a person's actions. This can be illustrated by texts dealing with adultery:

R. Ammi stated, He who excites himself by lustful thoughts will not be allowed to enter the division of the Holy One, blessed be He.

Nid. 13b

Unchaste imagination is more injurious than the sin itself.

Yom. 29a

What matters, then, is not merely the outward act, but the motive or intent behind it.<sup>60</sup> This is stated succinctly in Ber. 17a:

One may do much or one may do little; it is all one, provided he directs his heart to heaven.

<sup>59</sup>Montefiore and Loewe, p. 291.

<sup>60</sup>On the importance of intent, see Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism, p. 107-09, 143.



The Rabbis from time to time spell out the effects of sin on man and society. A physical sense of sin is conveyed in sayings which describe sin as polluting the land. This is said especially of murder (Shab. 33a; Sifra Aharé, Perek 4, on Lev. 16:16; P. Peah 15d) and adultery (Mid. Teh. 51:2). A more spiritual concept is conveyed by passages which state that the effect of sin is to cause the Shechinah, or the splendour of God's presence, to be removed from the world. This is caused by immorality (Sot. 3b), bloodshed (Shab. 33a), slander (P. Peah 16a), wrong administration of justice (Ex. R. 30:24) or by sin in general (Ber. 5b). Similar in thought is the teaching that sin keeps God's power from manifesting itself fully in the world (Ber. 4a; Sot. 48b). Sin also inclines the moral balance of the world to the side of guilt (Kidd. 40b; T. Kidd. 1:14) and turns God's attitude from mercy to justice.<sup>61</sup>

On the human side, sin gains power over a man, so that seemingly trivial offenses lead on to greater ones. Aboth 4:2 quotes Ben Azzai:

Run to fulfil the lightest duty even as the weightiest, and flee from transgression; for one duty draws another duty in its train, and one transgression draws another transgression in its train; for the reward of a duty [done] is a duty [to be done], and the reward of one transgression is [another] transgression.

This same teaching is echoed in many Rabbinical passages (Yom. 39a; San. 99b; Suk. 52a; Gen. R. 22:6). At times this growing power of sin over a man is ascribed to the will of God; at other times it is attributed to the evil impulse:

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<sup>61</sup>See S. Schechter, Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1923), p. 240 and references there.

For this is the art of the evil impulse (רָצוֹן  
 טָמֵא). Today it says to a man, Do this! and  
 tomorrow, Do that! until at last it says, Wor-  
 ship other gods, and he goes and does it.<sup>62</sup>  
 Shab. 105b

#### b) The origin of sin

The Rabbis were not interested in a theoretical explanation of the origin of sin, but in the fact of sin and in how it is to be overcome. Rabbinical statements about the universality of sin are not logically consistent. Eccles. 7:20 is quoted to show that even the righteous are not without sin (San. 46b; 101a) but the Rabbis also speak about the "righteous" and even the "completely righteous" (Shab. 55a; Kidd. 40b; 72b). The patriarchs are generally said to be righteous (Ex. R. 44:1-9), yet it was taught:

R. Eliezer the great said: If the Holy One,  
 blessed be He, wished to enter in judgment with  
 Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, not [even] they could  
 stand before His reproof!  
 Arak. 17a

The truth is that the Rabbis were not setting forth a doctrine of sin, but describing it as they encountered it in life and in the scriptures.

The Rabbis, especially those of later generations, speculated about Adam. Adam was of such enormous size that he extended from one end of the earth to the other, or from the earth to heaven (Hag. 12b; San. 38b; Lev. R. 18:2; Gen. R. 8:1); he was formed from dust taken from every part of the earth (San. 38a-b); he was created a hermaphrodite (Gen.

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<sup>62</sup>As quoted in Moore, I, 469.

R. 8:1; Lev. R. 14:1). The intent of such sayings was to counter pride by showing the unity of the whole race in Adam (San. 4:5; San. 38a; T. San. 8:4-5), not to propound a doctrine of original sin.

At the same time, the Rabbis did speculate about the effects of Adam's sin. San. 39a-b and Hag. 12a state that as soon as Adam sinned, "the Holy One, blessed be He, placed His hand upon him and diminished him." A series of passages in Pes. Kah. and Pes. Rab.<sup>63</sup> state that through his sin Adam lost his power over the lower creatures, he came to fear the divine presence, and his face, which had borne the image of God, became disfigured and hateful. Earlier and more extensive are sayings attributing death to Adam's sin (Sifre Deut. Ha'azinu 323 on 32:32; Shab. 55b; Eccles. R. 3:15; 7:13). Yet it is clear that the Rabbis were uncomfortable with this teaching and tried to counter it. A passage from Tanhuma records Adam's distress upon hearing that his sin caused the death of all mankind, even the righteous, and God's assurance that every man dies for his own sins.<sup>64</sup>

In addition to passages which connect death to the sin of Adam, there are many which merely associate death with sin. The general principle is stated clearly in Shab. 55a:

R. Ammi said: There is no death without sin,  
and there is no suffering without iniquity.

In Shab. 55b and Yom. 87a the premature death of Moses and Aaron is traced to their sin, while Gen. R. 62:2 discusses the problem of the

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<sup>63</sup>See Schechter, p. 235-36.

<sup>64</sup>Tanhuma (ed. Buber), Bereshit 29, quoted in Moore, I, 476.

death of the young. In contrast to this, Gen. R. 9:5 attributes to R. Meir the statement, based on Gen. 1:31, that even "death was good"; a discussion follows between R. Jonathan and R. Simeon b. Lakish concerning the death of the righteous and the wicked and whether or not death can be considered good.

A variation on the theme of Adam's responsibility for death is the ascription of death to the sin of Eve (Gen. R. 17:8). In a number of passages this sin is seen as a sexual one with the serpent:

When the serpent copulated with Eve, he infused her with lust. The lust of the Israelites who stood at Mount Sinai came to an end, the lust of the idolaters who did not stand at Mount Sinai did not come to an end.

Yeb. 103b

The same theme is repeated in Shab. 145b-146a and Ab. Zar. 22b. The reference to "lust" or "filthy lust" (Ab. Zar. 22b) is obscure, but may be to unnatural sexual desires, such as incest (Yom. 69b) or sexual relations with animals (Ab. Zar. 22b).

It is important to note that references to the seduction of Eve by the serpent do not occur in relation to the introduction of death into the world and that the Rabbis did not make use of the "watcher" story of Gen. 6, with its explicit sexual references, to explain human sinfulness. Further, they did not develop the ethical connotations of נִשְׁכָּם in a sexual direction.

### c) Summary

The Rabbis retained the Old Testament understanding of sin as rebellion against God and the law. They singled out certain sins for spe-

cial attention -- idolatry, adultery, murder, blasphemy, slander -- but even sins which appear to be merely social sins are understood as sins against God. Sin, moreover, does not consist merely in the outward act, but includes attitudes such as pride, anger and hatred.

The effects of sin are described in both physical and spiritual terms. It pollutes the land, limits God's power in the world, and causes the Shechinah to be removed. It also grows in power over a man and causes others to sin. At the same time there is no doctrine of inherited sin, and sin is not especially associated with the flesh as over against the "soul" or "spirit."

### 3. The Rabbinic Doctrine of the Yeşer Hara'

The Rabbis took over and greatly expanded the notion of the evil impulse found in earlier Judaism. They also developed an elaborate theory of two impulses -- the evil impulse and the good impulse. As Schechter notes,<sup>65</sup> it is probable that the good impulse is a creation of later origin than the evil impulse; whenever the term yeşer is used alone, the evil impulse is intended.

#### a) The nature of the evil impulse

In Rabbinic thought the evil impulse is, first of all, simply human nature. This is shown by the fact that the term functions as a synonym for "heart" and by the fact that the evil impulse is the property of men and not angels (Shab. 89a; Gen. R. 48:11). The Rabbis were divided on

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<sup>65</sup>p. 243.

whether or not the evil impulse exists in the lower animals. According to A.R.N. 16, "there is no evil impulse in beasts," but Ber. 61a argues that it must be present in animals, for they bite and kick. The Rabbis were also divided as to when the evil impulse begins to be active in man. In the discussion between "Antonius" and R. Judah to which reference was made earlier (San. 91b), Antonius asks:

'From what time does the Evil Tempter hold sway over man; from the formation [of the embryo], or from [its] issuing forth [into the light of the world]?' -- 'From the formation,' he replied. 'If so,' he objected, 'it would rebel in its mother's womb and go forth. But it is from when it issues.' Rabbi said: This thing Antonius taught me, and Scripture supports him, for it is said, At the door. . . sin lieth in wait.

This debate illustrates the division of opinion among the Rabbis on the question. On the one hand, since even the sexual act is prompted by the yeşer, it would be hard for the unborn child not to be affected by it (A.R.N. 16; Lev. R. 14:5). But the accepted position is that advanced by Antonius, namely, that the evil impulse associates itself with a person at birth (P. Ber. 6d; Gen. R. 34:10; A.R.N. 16). The opinion is also expressed that the good impulse is born when a person reaches thirteen years of age (Eccles. R. 4:13; 9:15; A.R.N. 16). A third opinion, which seems not to have gained wide acceptance, is that a child under the age of nine or ten is innocent and only from that point begins to cultivate the evil impulse (Tanh. Bereshit 7 on Gen. 3:22). At whatever point the evil impulse becomes associated with a person, it is an inherent part of his nature and continues with him even into old age (Gen. R. 54:1; Eccles. R. 4:13; Mid. Teh. 9:2; 34:2).

The majority of Rabbinic references to the yeşer hara' have to do with sexual desire, so that "lust" or "passion" would often be a good translation of יֵצֶר. Schechter points out, for example, that adultery is called פִּגְמוֹת הַיֵּצֶר, the "passion of sin."<sup>66</sup>

Numerous instances of the close association of the yeşer hara' and sexual passion could be cited. In Suk. 51b-52a, the ruling that men and women are to sit separately at the festival gives rise to a host of sayings about the evil impulse. In Nid. 13b, masturbation is forbidden "because the man merely incites his evil inclination against himself." Kidd. 81a records the temptation of R. Meir and R. Akiba by the "Tempter" in the guise of a woman. Another source tells of a Rabbi who blinded his eyes so as not to be tempted by a beautiful woman, saying, "I fear lest the evil inclination may prevail against me."<sup>67</sup> The sages said, in fact: "Whoever has never glanced at a woman is safe from the evil inclination."<sup>68</sup> It may be noted also that many of the measures taken against the evil impulse have to do with sexual desire.

The evil impulse does not manifest itself solely as sexual passion; it appears in any form of self-glorification or self-aggrandizement. The most obvious expression of this is vanity or conceit.

R. Ammi said: The Tempter does not walk at the side [of the street] but in the broad highway, and when he sees a person rolling his eyes, smoothing his hair [in self-satisfaction], and

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<sup>66</sup>Schechter, p. 250.

<sup>67</sup>Tanhuma (ed. Buber) Hukkat 66a, as quoted in Montefiore and Loewe, p. 299.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid.

lifting his heel [in pride], he exclaims, 'This  
man belongs to me!'  
Gen. R. 22:6

Ned. 9b gives the example of a young Nazirite with beautiful locks of hair who, on seeing his reflection in the water, was assailed by the evil impulse and so swore to shave off his hair "for the sake of Heaven."

The evil impulse may also take the form of anger (Shab. 105b; P. Ned. 41b), or failure to do a charity (Ex. R. 36:3) or of rebellion against God and the law. A specific instance is disbelief in life after death (Aboth 4:22); another is impatience with the seemingly unimportant requirements of the law (Yom. 67b). According to Cant. R. 1:12, when Israel heard and accepted the law at Sinai, "the Evil Inclination was plucked from their heart," but when they asked Moses to be an intermediary between them and God, "the Evil Inclination returned to its place."

It is clear from the above examples that the evil impulse represents the movement of a person's will, whether expressed in sexual desire or in any form of self-glorification. This means that the "evil" impulse is not altogether evil, since it is a necessary part of human nature. In Gen. R. 9:7, Nahman says in the name of R. Samuel:

"Behold, it was very good" refers to the Good Desire; "and behold, it was very good," to the Evil Desire. Can then the Evil Desire be very good? That would be extraordinary! But for the Evil Desire, however, no man would build a house, take a wife and beget children; and thus said Solomon: "Again, I considered all labour and all excelling in work, that it is a man's rivalry with his neighbour."

In Yom. 69b, God warns Israel when they pray for the complete removal of



the yeşer: "Realize that if you kill him, the world goes down." Montefiore comments: "Since it is largely identified with sexual passion, and since without sexual passion the race of man could not continue, and since even sanctified marriage is dependent upon it, the evil yetzer is also good."<sup>69</sup>

It is not only with respect to sexual desire that the evil impulse can be described as good. As Nahman's appeal to Eccles. 4:4 shows, it is "a man's rivalry with his neighbour" which produces all the "excelling in work" which marks life in society. The form taken by this ambition may be constructive or destructive, beautiful or ugly, but without it the progress of the human race would come to a halt.

b) The locus of the evil impulse

With few exceptions, the Rabbis locate the evil impulse in the heart; indeed, the heart is often identified with the yeşer (Suk. 52a; B.B. 17a; P. Ber. 3c; Gen. R. 67:8; Num. R. 17:6). Passages locating the yeşer specifically in the flesh are few. The most important of these is A.R.N. 16 (cf. Mid. Teh. 9:5; 14:1):

When a man bestirs himself and goes off to some unchastity, all his limbs obey him, for the evil impulse is king over his two hundred and forty-eight limbs. When he goes off to some good deed, all his limbs begin to drag. For the evil impulse within man is monarch over his two hundred and forty-eight limbs, while the good impulse is like a captive in prison.

Even this passage, with its association of the evil impulse and the body

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<sup>69</sup>Montefiore and Loewe, p. 304-05.

and its description of the good impulse as a "captive in prison," does not reflect a body-soul dualism of the Greek type. The Rabbi simply remarks that when a person is tempted to sin his whole body seems eager to oblige, whereas when he is moved to do good it is reluctant to move. The Rabbis did concern themselves with many "sins of the flesh," but these are sins of the whole person, not of the flesh as over against the spirit.

c) The origin of the evil impulse

It is generally assumed, and in fact is explicitly stated, that the evil impulse was created by God:

My sons, I created for you the evil impulse;  
I created for you the Law as an antiseptic.<sup>70</sup>  
Sifre Deut. Ekeb 45, on 11:18

Our Rabbis taught: The Evil Desire is hard [to  
bear], since even his Creator called him evil.  
Kidd. 30b

The first of these passages is repeated in Kidd. 30b and B.B. 16a; in the second, a deliberate play is made on the words "creator" (yoşer) and "impulse" (yeşer). The statement that God created the evil impulse is common (Suk. 52b; Gen. R. 27:4; 34:10); it is God, in fact, who created both impulses (Ber. 61a).

That God should have created the evil impulse was an embarrassment for the Rabbis, and they used a variety of figures to describe it. The analogy of putting leaven in the dough is a common one (Ber. 17a; P. Ber. 7d; Gen. R. 34:10); a variant is that God is like a potter who leaves

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<sup>70</sup> As quoted in Moore, I, 481.

a pebble in the clay (Ex. R. 46:4). The implications of these analogies are far-reaching. First, it is God who is ultimately responsible for man's sin. Second, it appears that when a man sins "he acts under certain impulses not exactly identical with his own natural self."<sup>71</sup> It is easy to take the implications of the analogy too far, as Schechter appears to do when he describes the yeşer as "a certain quasi-external agency which is made responsible for sin, whilst man himself, by his spontaneous nature, is only too anxious to live in accordance with God's commandments."<sup>72</sup> There is no doubt that the Rabbis considered the evil impulse to be part of a man's own nature. Why God should have given man this urge to sin is a mystery; it is even said that God repented doing so (Suk. 52b; Gen. R. 27:4). But the evil impulse is not something foreign to man's nature.

It is true that at times the evil impulse is personified as if it were a demonic power within man which is other than his true self. Shab. 105b has already been quoted (above, p. 174), in which the evil impulse as the "tempter" urges man to commit sin and even to worship other gods. A similar passage is the following:

If the evil inclination say to thee: Sin, and  
the Holy One, blessed be He, will pardon, be-  
lieve it not.

Nid. 13b

In these passages the yeşer seems to have taken on the identity and function of Satan. This identification is made more explicit in P. Ned. 41b:

<sup>71</sup>Schechter, p. 262.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid.

R. Yannai said: He who hearkens to his evil yetzer is as if he practised idolatry; for it is said, "There shall be no strange God within thee; thou shalt not worship any foreign God."<sup>73</sup>

There are also passages in which the evil impulse is simply called "Satan" (Kidd. 81a). Finally, B.B. 16a makes the blunt statement:

Resh Lakish said: Satan, the evil prompter, and the Angel of Death are all one.

We must be careful not to assume from this that the Rabbis attributed the yeşer hara' to a cosmic evil power opposed to that of God. Rather, they recognized that in its workings the evil impulse is like a power within man which is in some sense foreign to him, a "tempter within" or "malevolent second personality," in Moore's words.<sup>74</sup> However vividly the evil impulse is personified, it "always remains the tendency and disposition of a man's own heart."<sup>75</sup>

The Rabbis naturally used the evil impulse as an excuse for sin and as the basis of an appeal for mercy. In Ex. R. 46:4, Israel pleads before God in words reminiscent of 4 Ezra 3:20:

Lord of the Universe! Thou hast created in us an Evil Inclination from our youth. . .and it is that which has caused us now to sin, for Thou hast not removed from us the instigator to sin. Remove it from us, we pray Thee, in order that we may perform Thy will.

The same thought occurs in San. 105a. Such appeals to the evil impulse

<sup>73</sup>As quoted in Montefiore and Loewe, p. 296.

<sup>74</sup>I, 482.

<sup>75</sup>Porter, p. 122.

as an excuse for sin are not the usual line of thought, however. The yeşer is a part of man, and with it God has given to man the means to conquer it.

d) The conquest of the evil impulse

The Rabbis are unanimous in attesting the power of the evil impulse. Suk. 52b and Kidd. 30b state that the evil inclination in a man grows in strength from day to day and seeks to slay him; both conclude:

Were it not that the Holy One, blessed be He,  
is his help, he would not be able to withstand  
it.

Suk. 52a states that "the greater the man, the greater his Evil inclination." The reference is probably to sexual passion, but the principle applies to other expressions of the yeşer as well.

The Rabbis use many analogies to describe how the evil impulse grows in strength:

The Evil Inclination is at first like the thread  
of a spider, but ultimately becomes like cart ropes.  
Suk. 52a (cf. San. 99b)

First he is called a passerby, then he is called  
a guest, and finally he is called a man [i.e.,  
the man of the house].  
Suk. 52b

At first sin is weak, like a woman, but then it  
grows strong, like a man.  
Gen. R. 22:6

At the same time, the Rabbis say that there are some classes of men over whom the yeşer has no power. Ber. 61b distinguishes between the "totally wicked" and the "totally righteous" and says:

The righteous are swayed by their good inclination. . . The wicked are swayed by their evil inclination.

Gen. R. 34:10 makes the same distinction, using "heart" in place of "inclination." B.B. 17a speaks of the patriarchs as those over whom the evil impulse had no control, and of David as one in whom it was slain. These various distinctions, however, give the impression of an idealized scheme similar to that of Philo's classes of men. As Raba says in Ber. 61b, "People such as we are of the average." Most men, that is, have the evil impulse within them and must constantly struggle against it.

The Rabbis give ample witness to the constant struggle in man to control the yezer. Aboth 4:1 states the general rule: "Who is mighty? He that subdues his [evil] nature." The reference here is to anger, but the principle applies to all expressions of the evil impulse. The Rabbis give examples of those who conquered their evil impulse: Abraham (Lev. R. 29:9); Joseph (Num. R. 14:6); Moses, David and Ezra (Cant. R. 4:4). San. 111b interprets Isa. 28:6 as referring to one "who rules over his inclinations." A.R.N. interprets Aboth 4:1 (quoted earlier):

To him who subdues his evil impulse, it is accounted as though he had conquered a city full of mighty men.

Gen. R. 9:5 says simply: "As long as the righteous live they must fight against their evil desires."

The goal of the struggle depends on how the yezer is seen. When it is understood as an indispensable part of man, the goal is to subdue it and turn it to good use (San. 107b; Sot. 47a). When it is seen as

evil, it must be totally conquered or suppressed (Num. R. 15:16; Pes. Kah. 14:17). It is unlikely that controlling and annihilating the evil impulse were seen by the Rabbis as alternatives; passages dealing with the yesei employ both concepts indiscriminately. In San. 43b and Num. R. 13:15-16, a man is to "sacrifice" his evil impulse, whereas in Lev. R. 29:7 he is to use a "goad" to direct it.

At times the Rabbis depict the struggle within man as a war between his good impulse and his evil impulse:

R. Levi b. Hama says in the name of R. Simeon b. Lakish: A man should always incite the good impulse [in his soul] to fight against the evil impulse.

Ber. 5a (cf. Lev. R. 34:1)

Eccles R. 9:7 records the story of a man who "allowed the Good Inclination to master the Evil Inclination" and did an act of charity at the risk of breaking the Sabbath. Pitting the good impulse against the evil impulse is not, however, a major solution to the problem. First, as Moore points out,<sup>76</sup> in any struggle between the two impulses on even terms it is taken for granted that the evil impulse is stronger than the good. Second, the "war" between the two impulses is in reality just a description of a man's struggle with his evil impulse. In all the passages just cited, the outcome of the conflict is decided not by the struggle between the two impulses but by man's active participation and choice.

The Rabbis occasionally advocate ascetic measures as a remedy for the evil impulse. We have noted the instance of a young Nazirite who had

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<sup>76</sup><sub>I</sub>, 485.

his hair cut off because it was a temptation to pride. Aboth 3:1 recommends thinking about death as a cure for vanity, while Hag. 9b extols the virtue of poverty. The ascetic stance was not wholly congenial to the Jewish mind, however, and complete denial was seldom advocated (cf. Yeb. 37b; 62b). Further, the Rabbis recognized the value of the moral struggle. Yom. 69b states:

Thou hast surely given him [i.e., the evil impulse] to us so that we may receive reward through him. We want neither him, nor reward through him!

Ab. Zar. 17a tells of two Rabbis who were walking down the road and came to a parting of the ways. One way led to a place of idol worship, while the other led to a harlots' place.

Said the one to the other: Let us go [through the one leading] by the place of idolatry, the inclination for which has been abolished. The other however said: Let us go [through that leading] by the harlots' place and defy our inclination and have our reward.

The truth of both passages is the same; there is merit in resisting the evil impulse, whether a man chooses the struggle or not.

The principal remedy for the evil impulse is the law. Passages have already been noted in which the law is described as an "antidote" to the evil impulse. Kidd. 30b places this in the context of an analogy:

Our Rabbis taught: . . . This may be compared to a man who struck his son a strong blow, and then put a plaster on his wound, saying to him, 'My son! As long as this plaster is on your wound you can eat and drink at will, and bathe in hot or cold water, without fear. But if you remove



it, it will break out into sores.' Even so did the Holy One, blessed be He, speak unto Israel: 'My children! I created the Evil Desire, but I [also] created the Torah, as its antidote; if you occupy yourself with the Torah, you will not be delivered into his hand. . . But if ye do not occupy yourselves with the Torah, ye shall be delivered into his hand.'

Other Rabbinic passages express the same thought in different words (Ab. Zar. 5b; Kidd. 30b; Suk. 52b).

The effect of the law on the evil impulse is variously understood. The evil tempter can be "cast down" or slain by the words of the Torah (Gen. R. 22:6), or it can be subdued or limited to its proper role in life:

The evil impulse is like iron which one holds in a flame. So long as it is in the flame one can make of it any implement he pleases. So too the evil impulse: its only remedy is in the words of the Torah, for they are like fire.

A.R.N. 16

It is important to note that the law is not regarded as a remedy for the evil impulse apart from human effort. Ber. 5a sets forth a sequence of measures to be adopted in overcoming this powerful enemy:

R. Levi b. Hama says in the name of R. Simeon b. Lakish: A man should always incite the good impulse [in his soul] to fight against the evil impulse. . . If he subdues it, well and good. If not, let him study the Torah. . . If he subdues it, well and good. If not, let him recite the Shema. . . If he subdues it, well and good. If not, let him remind himself of the day of death.

Human efforts to control the evil impulse can also be augmented by divine aid. We find in Rabbinic literature a multitude of prayers

for the subjugation or removal of the evil yeşer (Tem. 16a; Ber. 16b; 60b; Ex. R. 19:2; 46:4). A variant on the prayer for deliverance is an oath taken in the name of the Lord (Lev. R. 23:11; Num. R. 15:16). Numerous Rabbinic passages testify that ultimately, in the world to come, the evil impulse will be destroyed by God (Suk. 52a; Num. R. 15:16; Deut. R. 2:30). Several passages (Ex. R. 41:7; Num. R. 17:6) base this promise on Ezek. 36:26: "A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will take out of your flesh the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh." A passage in Tanhuma, finally, contains this promise:

In the world to come God will remove it [i.e.,  
the evil inclination] altogether and replace it  
by his Holy Spirit.<sup>77</sup>

#### e) Summary

The Rabbis made use of the notion of the עוון הרע as one of the principal explanations for the occurrence of sin in man. They did this not as a metaphysical theory or as a systematic doctrine of sin, but as a description of human experience and an exegesis of scripture. In doing so they took over a concept present in canonical and post-canonical literature, but broadened and developed it to embrace a wide range of emotions and activities. An especially prominent expression of the evil impulse is sexual desire, but it also includes pride, anger, vanity and rebellion against God and the law. In short, it is any expression

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<sup>77</sup>Tanhuma (ed. Buber) Hukat 66a, as quoted in Montefiore and Loewe, p. 299.

of self-will, or it is that which moves man to such an expression.

The presence of the evil impulse in man is ascribed by the Rabbis to God, and not to Satan or any outside agency or power. This is true even though the role of the yeşer in tempting man causes it to be virtually personified and though its creation by God runs the risk of attributing an error to God. The yeşer is also not identified specifically with the flesh, despite its close association with sexual desire. The concept of the yeşer hara' is therefore not an expression of either a cosmic or a metaphysical dualism. It represents an aspect of human nature implanted in man by God, but for whose quality as good or evil man himself is largely responsible.

The Rabbis recognize that a person must continually struggle against his evil impulse, but they hold that God has given him the means to conquer it. Chief among these is the law, but human effort also plays a part. In the world to come the evil impulse will be destroyed by God, but until then it is man's responsibility to subdue and control it by every means at his disposal.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE NATURE OF MAN AND THE GOAL OF THE RELIGIOUS QUEST IN ALEXANDRIAN JUDAISM

#### A. WISDOM OF SOLOMON

The book commonly known as "Wisdom of Solomon," but more correctly as "The Book of Wisdom,"<sup>1</sup> is an important example of Jewish wisdom literature. It is variously dated between 200 B.C.E. and 40 C.E.,<sup>2</sup> but the consensus is that it was written in the last half of the first pre-Christian century.<sup>3</sup> A number of scholars have held that the book was written originally in Hebrew,<sup>4</sup> but that position has now been generally abandoned. The character of the book is Hellenistic throughout, the language of the existing manuscripts is a vigorous classical Greek, and

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<sup>1</sup>See Samuel Holmes, "Wisdom of Solomon," in Charles, Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, I, 519.

<sup>2</sup>See Holmes, p. 520, and Joseph Reider, The Book of Wisdom (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), p. 12-14. David Winston, The Wisdom of Solomon (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co., 1979), p. 20-24, and G. W. E. Nickelsburg, Jewish Literature Between the Bible and the Mishnah (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981), p. 184, opt for 40 C.E., during the reign of Caligula.

<sup>3</sup>So Holmes, p. 521; cf. The Oxford Annotated Apocrypha (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 102. Ernest G. Clarke, The Wisdom of Solomon (Cambridge University Press, 1973), p. 2, gives the consensus as the mid-second to early first century B.C.E.

<sup>4</sup>See Reider, p. 22-24.

the book shows some apparent dependence on the Septuagint.

Almost all scholars agree that the book was written in Egypt, and most probably in Alexandria. The author of the book is unknown; it was certainly not Solomon, and almost equally certainly not Philo. While many parallels to Philo occur, the latter's "logos" doctrine is absent, the use of allegory is much less developed, and the body is not so sharply opposed to the soul. The unity of the book has been much debated. The language and some of the philosophical concepts argue for unity, while a shift in subject matter and style part way through argues for the book's composite nature. The current consensus is that the book is the work of one author, the shift in style being due to the change in subject matter.

The apparent purpose of the author is to show his fellow Jews of Alexandria and throughout the Hellenistic world that the Jewish faith and way of life are still valid and, in fact, superior to that which surrounds them. To accomplish this purpose, he presents a sustained argument about the nature and role of "wisdom," which is the supreme good in his religious and intellectual world, and attempts to show that this wisdom is to be found within the faith and teachings of Judaism.

### 1. The Role of Wisdom

In Wisdom of Solomon, wisdom assumes a role which in the Old Testament is occupied by God's "spirit," in Philo by the "logos," and in the Rabbis by the Torah, namely that of intermediary between a transcendent God and the world of men and nature. Wisdom is an emanation from God (7:25) or a personification of an attribute of God, without becoming a

being separate from God. Its activities and qualities are those of God himself; the personification of wisdom therefore does not represent a departure from the Jewish principle of monotheism.

Wisdom is described by twenty-one adjectives in 7:22-24; it is a pure, intelligent and freely-moving spirit penetrating all things. This description is amplified and illustrated in subsequent verses and throughout the book. Wisdom is the very "breath of the power of God," a "pure emanation of the glory of the Almighty" (7:25).<sup>5</sup> She is "a reflection of eternal light, a spotless mirror of the working of God, and an image of his goodness" (7:26). Although she is one, she can do all things, and "while remaining in herself, she renews all things" (7:27). She is more beautiful than the sun and stars, and superior to light itself (7:29-30). Wisdom, in short, possesses all the attributes of deity. She is omnipotent (7:27), omniscient (8:8; 9:11), and omnipresent (8:1). She sits by God's throne (9:4) and knows his thoughts and commands (8:4; 9:9). She is a spirit (1:6; 9:17), radiant and unfading (6:12). She administers all things (8:1), and existed before the foundation of the world (9:9).

Wisdom is not only an attribute of God, but is available to all who sincerely desire her and are prepared to keep her laws (6:12-18). "Solomon" testifies that he ardently desired her and prayed for her (7:7; 8:2,9; 8:21 - 9:18), esteeming her of more value than all other wealth (7:8-10). In return he was given her (7:7), and with her all good things (7:11-14; 8:14-18). Similarly, wisdom brings blessings to all who re-

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<sup>5</sup>Quotations from Wisdom of Solomon are from the Oxford Annotated Apocrypha.

ceive her. She teaches the four cardinal virtues (8:7), gives knowledge of all things in heaven and on earth (7:17-22; 8:8; 9:16-17), and leads men to immortal life in the presence of God (6:21; 7:14; 8:13,17).

## 2. The Nature and Destiny of Man

### a) The relation of body and soul

The view of body and soul in Wisdom of Solomon is a significant departure from Old Testament thought, even though we must be careful not to read into Greek terms the full meaning given them in Greek philosophy. The most helpful procedure will be to examine the use of these terms in their context.

First, there are instances in which the term "soul" is used, but not in opposition to "body." This is true even of passages where both words occur. In 1:4, the author argues for righteous living:

Because wisdom will not enter a deceitful soul,  
nor dwell in a body enslaved to sin.

It is clear that "soul" and "body" are here used in parallel, not in opposition. There are also passages in which the body is not mentioned, and "soul" is used to represent the whole person. In 4:14, it is said of Enoch that "his soul was pleasing to the Lord." In 3:13, the promise is made that the barren woman who is undefiled "will have fruit when God examines souls." Even 3:1 ("the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God") does not make a contrast between body and soul, although the use of "souls" in an eschatological context in this verse and in 3:13 may be significant.

At the other end of the spectrum are passages which make a direct contrast between soul and body. The most outstanding is 9:15:

For a perishable body weighs down the soul,  
and this earthly tent burdens the thoughtful mind.

Here there can be no doubt of the contrast between soul and body, nor of the superiority of the former to the latter. The body, it is true, is not said to be sinful in itself, but only "perishable," and the difference is significant. Indeed, the author elsewhere describes the created world as "wholesome" (1:4) and as the object of God's love (11:24).<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, the body is a burden for the soul ( $\psi\upsilon\chi\acute{\eta}$ ) or mind ( $\nu\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$ ), in a sense reminiscent of Plato.<sup>7</sup>

A second passage expressing a dualistic concept is the following:

8:19 As a child I was by nature well-endowed,  
and a good soul fell to my lot;  
20 or rather, being good, I entered an undefiled body.

This passage is important, first, because of the conscious shift in the referent of "I" in the last line. In the first two lines, the author says that "I" (the animated body) received by good fortune a good soul. Even here, the concept of "receiving" a "soul" is not traditionally Jewish; nevertheless, the speaker thinks of himself (and not his soul) as the subject. In the last line, the mode of thought is Greek: the "I" or subject is now the soul, which enters an undefiled body. That the author

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<sup>6</sup>The author believed in creation not ex nihilo, but "out of formless matter" (11:17), but this matter is not said to be evil.

<sup>7</sup>E.g., Phaedo 81c; Cratylus 400b; Gorgias 493a.



should make such a shift in mid-sentence attests to his belonging simultaneously to two different thought-worlds.

The passage is important, second, because it assumes the pre-existence of the soul; this is true of both the first and last part of the text. This pre-existence is not spelled out in detail. We do not know, for example, whether the author conceived of it as self-conscious. Nevertheless, the concept of pre-existence is clearly present.<sup>8</sup> Another passage supports this verdict; it describes the idol-maker who

15:8      after a little while goes to the earth  
              from which he was taken,  
              when he is required to return the soul which  
              was lent him.<sup>9</sup>

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11        He failed to know him who formed him  
              and inspired him with an active soul  
              and breathed into him a living spirit.

This passage taken alone would not establish belief in the pre-existence of the soul, but in the light of 8:19-20 it may be held to do so.

It should be noted, finally, that in 8:19-20 both body and soul are described as "good." More accurately, the soul is "good" while the body is "undefiled," but in any case the body is not said to be evil.

#### b) The mortal nature of man

The position of the author of Wisdom of Solomon with respect to

<sup>8</sup>Urbach, I, 235-36, claims that Wisdom of Solomon does not teach pre-existence of souls, but the meaning of the text seems clear enough.

<sup>9</sup>Cf. 15:16, in which it is the "spirit" which is borrowed, and 16:14: "A man in his wickedness kills another, but he cannot bring back the departed spirit, nor set free the imprisoned soul."

man's mortal nature is not easy to ascertain. On the one hand, man is said to be by nature "mortal" (15:17). In 7:1, Solomon says, "I also am mortal, like all men." In 7:6 he argues, "There is for all mankind one entrance into life, and a common departure." In 9:14, the reasoning of "mortals" is declared worthless, and in 9:15 the body is expressly said to be "perishable." On the other hand, death is not part of God's original intention for man:

- 1:13 Because God did not make death,  
and he does not delight in the death of the  
living.  
14 For he created all things that they might exist,  
and the generative forces of the world are  
wholesome,  
and there is no destructive poison in them;  
and the dominion of Hades is not on earth.  
15 For righteousness is immortal.  
16 But ungodly men by their words and deed summoned  
death;  
considering him a friend, they pined away,  
and they made a covenant with him,  
because they are fit to belong to his party.  
\* \* \*
- 2:23 For God created man for incorruption,  
and made him in the image of his own eternity;  
24 but through the devil's envy death entered the world,  
and those who belong to his party experience it.

According to this passage, God did not create man for death, but for incorruption. He made him, in fact, "in the image of his own eternity."<sup>10</sup> It was only through "the devil's envy" that death entered into the world. As the "image of God" in this passage refers to Gen. 1:26-27, so the "devil's envy" refers to the serpent's temptation of Adam and Eve

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<sup>10</sup> There are variant readings in the Greek mss.: τῆς ἰδίας ἰδιότητος ("of his own nature"), and τῆς ἰδίας αἰδιότητος ("of his own eternity"). See Reider, p. 70, note to 2:23.

in Genesis 3.

How is this conflict in the understanding of man's nature to be resolved? First we must bear in mind that the passages dealing with sin and death are part of a theodicy, and that in spite of the ascription of death to the envy of the devil the accent throughout the book is on man's free choice. Ungodly men, by their words and deeds, "summoned death" and "made a covenant with him" (1:16). Those who choose righteousness or wisdom are assured of "immortality" (6:18). It is only those who love wisdom and obey God's law, therefore, who inherit the incorruption which was God's original intention for man.

We must bear in mind, second, that the writer is more concerned with man's spiritual state than with his biological life or death. This is true both of the righteous and the wicked. The latter will confess on the day of judgment:

3:13 We also, as soon as we were born, ceased to be,  
and we had no sign of virtue to show,  
but were consumed in our wickedness.

The righteous, on the other hand, only "seem" to die (3:2); their "souls" are in the hand of God (3:1). As we shall see, both the righteous and the wicked continue to exist after death, the former in peace and the latter in torment.

### c) The destiny of man

The author of Wisdom of Solomon is concerned with human destiny. This concern is required by his doctrine of retribution. God rewards the righteous (2:22; 4:16; 5:1; 15:6) and punishes the wicked (1:8-9;

3:10-13,16-19; 4:3-6), but this retribution may not take place in this life. Rather, the reward of the righteous is a blessed immortality entered into immediately at death (4:14,16; 5:15-16), while the punishment of the wicked is death (1:16; 2:24; 4:18) and eternal torment (5:1-13).

The writer is at pains to counter the arguments of wicked men who have "reasoned unsoundly" (2:1) that life is short and sorrowful and that there is nothing beyond it. These materialists say that we were born by "chance" and that after death we will be "as though we had never been" (2:2). They claim that "the breath in our nostrils is smoke" and that "reason is a spark kindled by the beating of our hearts" (2:2). When this spark is extinguished, "the body will turn to ashes and the spirit will dissolve into empty air" (2:3). On this ground they encourage one another to enjoy the good things of this life -- wine, perfume, the flowers of spring, revelry -- and to oppress the poor and the righteous (2:6-20). Such men are "led astray," and "their wickedness blinded them" (2:21). They do not know God's purposes (2:22), and that man was made "for incorruption" (2:23).

In contrast are the righteous:

- 3:1 But the souls of the righteous are in the hand  
of God,  
and no torment will ever touch them.
- 2 In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died,  
and their departure was thought to be an affliction,
- 3 and their going from us to be their destruction;  
but they are at peace.
- 4 For though in the sight of men they were punished,  
their hope is full of immortality.
- \* \* \*
- 7 In the time of their visitation they will shine forth,  
and will run like sparks through the stubble.

- 8 They will govern nations and rule over peoples,  
and the Lord will reign over them for ever.  
9 Those who trust in him will understand truth,  
and the faithful will abide with him in love,  
because grace and mercy are upon his elect,  
and he watches over his holy ones.

The righteous, we see, only "seemed" to die; in fact, they are "at peace" (3:2-3) and have a sure hope of "immortality" (3:4). A second extended comparison of the wicked and the righteous occurs in 5:1-23: the wicked admit that their existence is but a fleeting shadow (5:1-14), while the righteous "live for ever" (5:15).

The true destiny of man, then, lies beyond this life and beyond this world. To be sure, the righteous are said to triumph over their enemies and to rule over nations (3:7-8), but there is no reference to a Messiah nor detailed description of a messianic kingdom. Rather, the accent is on a blessed existence in the presence of God. It is the "souls" of the righteous that are in the hand of God (3:1); the faithful "will abide with him in love" (3:9), or will "live for ever" (5:15). They will be "numbered among the sons of God" (5:5) and will receive "a glorious crown and a beautiful diadem from the hand of the Lord" (5:16). This hope awaits the righteous immediately upon death, and not merely at the end of time. It is fitting, then, that there is no reference whatsoever to a resurrection of the body.<sup>11</sup>

It would not be accurate to suggest that "immortality" for the

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<sup>11</sup>Reider's treatment of resurrection and immortality in Wisdom of Solomon is confusing. He speaks of the "immortality of the soul" and the "resurrection of the soul, not of the body" (p. 23), and says that, unlike Philo, our author believes "in resurrection" (p. 17).

writer of Wisdom of Solomon meant precisely what it did for a Greek philosopher such as Plato. It is not a quality by which the soul is inherently incorruptible, but something which a person acquires or which is given him by God. In 3:4, it is a matter of "hope"; in 4:1, it consists in "the memory of virtue." According to 8:13,17, it comes from wisdom; in 6:17-21, it is the result of keeping the law; in 15:3 it comes from knowing God. Nevertheless, it is clearly a spiritual and not a physical mode of existence.

### 3. Summary

Wisdom of Solomon is a significant expression of the thought of Greek-speaking Judaism in the first pre-Christian century. It reflects changing ideas concerning the nature and destiny of man; specifically, it reveals the growing tendency to think of man in dualistic categories and to conceive of human destiny in terms of soul rather than body.

The body-soul dualism of the book is not complete. The body is not evil in itself, and the soul is neither intrinsically good nor naturally immortal. But it is the soul, and not the body, which represents the real person. The soul existed before its entrance into the body, and will continue to exist after the body's dissolution. While it is in the body, the body constitutes a burden upon it. On the day of judgment it is the soul which will be examined and which will inherit eternal bliss or torment.

The author of Wisdom of Solomon does not deal at length with the origin and nature of sin. While he states that death entered the world through the envy of the devil, there is no doctrine of inherited

sin, and the effects of the first sin on subsequent generations are not clearly delineated. It is those of "the devil's party" who experience the penalty of sin, but there is little cosmic dualism which would assign men either to the devil's camp or to the company of God. Men are responsible for their own sins and are punished for them on the day of judgment. Further, despite the marked body-soul dualism of the book, the body is not singled out as the source of sin. As in the Jewish tradition generally, sin is a matter of man's disobedience of God's law.

#### B. FOURTH MACCABEES

The book commonly called "4 Maccabees," but more correctly "On the Sovereignty of Reason,"<sup>12</sup> is a discourse on the supremacy of reason over the passions in which the stories of the martyrs in 2 Maccabees 6-7 "have been transposed into the key of Greek philosophy."<sup>13</sup>

The book is variously dated between 65 B.C.E. and 118 C.E.<sup>14</sup> The latter date is almost certainly incorrect, as the book shows no evidence of having been written after the destruction of the temple. There is also no need to assign it to the days of Caligula;<sup>15</sup> a sense of impend-

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<sup>12</sup>See Moses Hadas, The Third and Fourth Books of Maccabees (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1953), p. 113-15; R. B. Townshend, "4 Maccabees," in Charles, Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, II, 654.

<sup>13</sup>Nickelsburg, p. 223.

<sup>14</sup>See Townshend, p. 654, and Charlesworth, The Pseudepigrapha and Modern Research, p. 151. The latter suggests a date between 40 and 118 C.E., but gives no reason for his choice.

<sup>15</sup>So Hadas, p. 95-96, and Nickelsburg, p. 226.

ing crisis is absent, and the focus is on the past rather than the present or future. The authorship of the book is a matter of debate. Eusebius, followed by Jerome, attributed it to Josephus, and hence it has often been published with his works. Internal evidence argues against this, as the style and concepts are not those of Josephus. The author seems to be an unknown Greek Jew, a student of Greek philosophy and at home in the Greek language, but loyal to the law and to his own religious heritage. Whether he lived in Alexandria or in Antioch of Syria cannot be decided. Hadas makes a strong case for the latter,<sup>16</sup> while earlier scholars opt for the former.<sup>17</sup>

#### 1. Reason, Wisdom and the Four Virtues

The author of 4 Maccabees states his purpose clearly at the outset:<sup>18</sup>

1:1 Philosophical in the highest degree is the question I propose to discuss, namely, whether inspired reason is supreme ruler over the passions; and to the philosophy of it I would seriously entreat your earnest attention.

The word which the author uses for "reason" is *λογισμός*, by which he apparently means the reasoning faculty in man. In the opening statement and in a number of significant passages later (6:31; 7:16,24; 13:1; 15:23; 16:1; 18:2), he qualifies this reason as *εὐσεβής λογισμός*, "in-

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<sup>16</sup>Hadas, p. 109-13.

<sup>17</sup>See Townshend, p. 654, and Hadas, p. 110, note 39.

<sup>18</sup>Quotations from 4 Macc. are from Townshend, with omission of capitals in some cases and also of the definite article before "reason."



spired" or "reverent" or "religious" reason. Elsewhere, λογισμός carries other adjectives. In 13:3 it is "commended in the sight of God"; in 13:16 it is "divine"; in 14:2 it is "kingly"; in 16:4 it is "religion-guided," and in 15:1 it is eulogized along with religion in a manner which suggests the virtual identification of the two. As we shall see, it is reason inspired by God or obedient to God's law which is the object of the author's interest.

In addition to passages in which reason is qualified in some way, there are many in which the word appears without an accompanying adjective. In these instances the author is thinking simply of the reasoning faculty in man. This is borne out by the fact that "mind" (νοῦς: 2:16, 11; 3:17), "intellect" (διάνοια: 7:5; 13:4) and "understanding" (ἐπιστήμη: 11:21) are used as synonyms for "reason." In these instances, similar adjectives are used to those with λογισμός.

For our estimate of what the author meant by λογισμός we are not left to conjecture, however, since he defines it clearly:

1:15 Reason I take to be the mind preferring with clear deliberation the life of wisdom.

Wisdom, moreover, is "the knowledge of things, divine and human, and of their causes" (1:16); it is also "the culture acquired under the law" (1:17).

In the practical life of man, wisdom is manifested in the form of the four Greek virtues: judgment or self-control (φρόνησις), justice (δικαιοσύνη), courage (ἀνδρεία) and temperance or prudence (σωφροσύνη) (1:18). Of these, self-control is the greatest (1:2),

because it dominates them all and "through it, in truth, reason asserts its authority over the passions" (1:19). The author is indebted to Stoic philosophy for this classification of the four virtues,<sup>19</sup> but he holds also that only through the law of Moses can these virtues be achieved. It is the law which gives the knowledge of right and wrong, and it is reason guided by the law which is able to control the passions.

## 2. The Passions

We must begin, our author says, by defining what "reason is and what passion ( $\pi\alpha\theta\acute{\eta}$ ) is, and how many forms of passion there are, and whether reason is supreme over all of them" (1:14). There are, he states, "two comprehensive sources [of the passions], namely, pleasure and pain, and each of them belongs essentially both to the soul and to the body" (1:20).<sup>20</sup> Elsewhere he makes a distinction between mental and physical desires ( $\epsilon\pi\iota\theta\upsilon\mu\epsilon\omega\nu$ ) and says that "both kinds are clearly controlled by reason" (1:32).

While the author refrains from classifying the passions, in Stoic fashion,<sup>21</sup> under the four heads of delight, grief, pain and fear, he does include a wide range of emotions in the passions which reason must control. These include physical hunger and thirst (1:3,27; 3:6-18); sexual desire (1:3; 2:2-4); covetousness (2:4-6); hatred (2:13-14; 3:4); ambi-

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<sup>19</sup>See the sources quoted in Arnim 3:262,264 (Ioannes ab Arnim, Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta [Lipsiae in Aedibus B. G. Teubneri, 1921]) and Diogenes Laertius 7:92-93 (in Diogenes Laertius: Lives of Eminent Philosophers; tr. R. D. Hicks [London: William Heinemann, 1925]).

<sup>20</sup>Townshend's wording has been altered to bring it up to date.

<sup>21</sup>See Arnim, 3:378 (quoting from Stobaeus).

tion, vanity, pride, backbiting (2:15); anger (1:3-4; 2:16; 3:3); fear, pain (1:4,21-23 et passim) and even natural affection (2:10; 15:23; 16:4). In brief, the passions are those impulses and desires which are contrary to the four cardinal virtues (1:3-4,6).

The author does not, like Philo, classify the five senses nor associate the passions specifically with the physical body. As we shall see, it is his position that the passions are implanted in man by God and hence are not evil in themselves.

### 3. The Control of the Passions by Reason

The central purpose of the author of 4 Maccabees is to convince his fellow Jews of the power of reason to control the passions. To do this he engages in a brief philosophical discussion of the relation between reason and passion, and then illustrates his claim by examples drawn from Jewish history. At appropriate intervals he draws the desired conclusion: "Beyond question, then, inspired reason is master over the passions" (6:31; cf. 1:9; 7:16; 13:1,4; 16:1; 18:2).

The author's understanding of human nature and of the relative place of passion, reason and the law is set forth clearly in the following passage:

- 2:21 For in the day when God created man, he im-  
planted in him his passions and inclinations,
- 22 and also, at the very same time, set the mind  
on a throne amidst the senses to be his sacred
- 23 guide in all things; and to the mind he gave  
the law, by the which if a man order himself,  
he shall reign over a kingdom that is temper-  
ate, and just, and virtuous, and brave.

A number of important principles are contained in these verses.

First, the human passions or "inclinations" (ἡθῆ) are not evil in themselves, since they are implanted in man by God. Second, the mind or reason has been placed by God in a position of sovereignty over the senses (αἰσθητήρια) to guide them in all things. Third, the mind has been given the law as a standard by which life is to be ordered. Fourth, the goal of this endeavor is the establishment of a harmonious "kingdom" in which the four virtues are fully realised. All of these principles are borne out in the author's development of his theme.

a) The essential goodness of the passions

It is a matter of great importance to our author that the passions and inclinations are implanted in man by God. It follows from this that they are not evil in themselves and that the role of reason is not to extirpate or eradicate them but to control them. Indeed, the writer makes this point repeatedly throughout the book. In 1:6, he states that the action of reason "is not to extirpate the passions, but to enable us to resist them successfully." In 3:2-5, he argues:

- 3:2 None of you is able to extirpate your natural desires, but reason can enable him to escape
- 3 being made a slave by desire. None of you is able to extirpate anger from the soul, but it is possible for reason to come to his aid
- 4 against anger. None of you can extirpate a malevolent disposition, but reason can be his powerful ally against being swayed by malevo-
- 5 lence. Reason is not the extirpator of the passions, but their antagonist.

In making his case so explicitly and at such length, the author appears to be countering a position which held that reason, or the law, is able to do away with the passions altogether. Whether such a claim was being

made within the Hellenistic Jewish community is difficult to ascertain, but we shall see that some of Philo's statements are open to such interpretation.

b) The relative roles of reason and the law

In a passage quoted earlier (2:21-33), the author assigns to both reason and the law a governing function in determining human conduct. The relative importance of reason and the law, however, and their relation to each other, are not easy to discover.

On the one hand, the author ascribes the role of rulership over the passions to reason and even selects one of the four cardinal virtues as the means by which this rulership is exercised. This may be through *φρόνησις* (temperance in the sense of self-control), as in 1:4:

If reason is proved to control the passions adverse to temperance, [namely] gluttony and lust, it is also clearly shown to be lord over the passions, like malevolence, opposed to justice, and over those opposed to manliness, namely rage and pain and fear.

Or it may be through *σωφροσύνη* (temperance in the sense of prudence), since "reason becomes supreme over the passions in virtue of the inhibitory action of temperance" (1:30).

On the other hand, the author makes the law of Moses the instrument of reason in the control of the passions. Reason, "through the law," is able to overcome hatred (2:13). It is when a man "orders his life according to the law" that he is able to act "contrary to his nature" (2:8). It was by her "religion-guided reason" (16:4) that the mother was able to overcome her natural affection and encourage her sons

to die a martyr's death. In sum, it is the law which

teaches us self-control, so that we are masters of all our pleasures and desires and are thoroughly trained in manliness so as to endure all pain with readiness; and it teaches justice, so that with all our various dispositions we act fairly; and it teaches righteousness, so that with due reverence we worship only the God who is (5:23-24).

The law, in other words, teaches the four virtues by which, in turn, the passions are controlled.

The statements of the author concerning the relative roles of reason and the law are nevertheless confusing, as the two terms are used in such close association that they become virtually interchangeable. In 2:9, the parsimonious man "is overruled by the law through the action of reason" so that he acts generously. In 5:34-35, Eleazar professes in one and the same breath:

I will not belie thee, O law that wast my teacher; I will not desert thee, O beloved self-control; I will not put thee to shame, O wisdom-loving reason.

The solution to the paradox is that reason and the law are equally expressions of God's nature and will. The law of Moses, Eleazar argues before Antiochus, is not "contrary to reason" (5:22). The divine lawgiver "feels for us according to our nature" (5:25); he commands us to eat those things which "will be convenient for our souls" (5:26) and forbids those which are contrary. To transgress the law in order to save one's life, after maintaining oneself in purity into old age, would be "contrary to reason" (6:18). To obey the law, then, is to act according

to reason, and to act according to reason is to obey the law.<sup>22</sup>

c) The struggle for mastery over the passions

The author of 4 Maccabees uses a number of analogies to describe reason's mastery over the passions. In 1:28-29, he likens the passions of pleasure and pain to two trees which, even if cut down, continually send up fresh shoots. A man's reason, then,

as master-gardener, weeding and pruning and building up. . . , brings the thicket of dispositions and passions under domestication.

In 7:1-3, reason is likened to a "fine steersman steering the ship of sanctity on the sea of the passions." A third analogy is that of an athletic contest or gladiatorial fight:

7:11 For truly it was a holy war which was fought  
 12 by them [i.e., the Maccabean martyrs]. For  
 on that day virtue, proving them through en-  
 13 durance, set before them the prize of victory  
 in incorruption in everlasting life. But the  
 14 first in the fight was Eleazar, and the mother  
 of the seven sons played her part, and the  
 15 brethren fought. The tyrant was their adver-  
 sary and the world and the life of man were  
 the spectators. And righteousness won the  
 victory, and gave the crown to her athletes.

This third analogy expresses particularly well the author's conviction that the control of the passions by reason must involve a continual struggle. The sense of conflict is brought out throughout the book.

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<sup>22</sup>The identification of reason and the law in 4 Macc. is clearly seen by comparing the book with 2 Macc. 6-7, on which it is based. In the earlier book, loyalty to the law is the sole cause of martyrdom and no reference is made to reason.

Reason, in 2:15, is said to rule over the "more aggressive passions," such as ambition, pride and self-seeking. The "temperate mind" in 2:16 is said to repel the debased passions and to "conquer" even anger; in 2:18 it is said to "win the victory over the passions, modifying some while crushing others absolutely." In 3:6-16, David is said to have conquered his physical thirst by "opposing his reason to his desire." The author follows this example with the general statement:

- 3:17 For the temperate mind is able to conquer the dictates of the passions, and to quench the  
 18 fires of desire, and to wrestle victoriously with the pangs of our bodies though they be exceeding strong, and by the moral beauty and goodness of reason to defy with scorn all the domination of the passions.

The author's chief praise, of course, is reserved for the Maccabean martyrs: the old priest Eleazar, the seven young men and the mother. Eleazar is said to have set his mind firm as a sea-cliff, thus breaking "the mad onset of the surges of the passions" (7:5) and becoming a "great king over the passions" (7:10). The seven young men were "despisers of the passions and masters over pain" (8:28). The mother "quenched her passions, many and strong as they were" (16:4), and won the prize in the struggle within herself (15:29).

How is it, someone may ask, that some men become "slaves to passion" (7:20)? Is it because their reason is unenlightened (7:17)? No, it is rather "in consequence of the weakness of their reason" (*διὰ τὸν ἄσθενῆ λογισμόν*) (7:20). It is clear that by this our author means not the absence of intellectual capacity, but what philosophers call "weakness of will." For, he says,



as many as with their whole heart make righteousness their first thought, these alone are able to master the weakness of the flesh (7:18).

The ultimate goal of the moral and religious quest, as we shall see, is immortal life in the presence of God. But the author also presents the goal of the moral struggle in more philosophical terms. It is the acquisition of the four virtues in one harmonious personal "kingdom" (2:23); it is a change in a man's "nature" (2:7). This is a Stoic ideal, and it is in keeping with this philosophy that the author speaks of the martyrs as defeating the "tyrant" (1:11; 8:15; 11:24) by their constancy, while he is unable to conquer them (or their "reason") by his measures against them (9:17; 10:19; 11:21,24,27; 14:11).<sup>23</sup>

#### 4. The Destiny of Man

The author of 4 Maccabees presents the ultimate goal of the religious life as "immortality" (14:5) or as "eternal life" in the presence of God (15:3; cf. 16:13). Those who make righteousness their first thought believe that

unto God they die not, as our patriarchs,  
Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, died not, but  
that they live unto God (7:19; cf. 16:25).

The seven brothers encourage each other with the same hope, saying:

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<sup>23</sup>Cf. Epictetus, Discourses 4:1:1-5, 11-14 (in Epictetus: The Discourses as Reported by Arrian, the Manual, and Fragments; tr. W. A. Oldfather [London: William Heinemann, 1938]).

After this our passion, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob shall receive us, and all our forefathers shall praise us (13:7).

The mother, choosing death rather than that a man should touch her body, is "set in heaven" with her sons (17:5). All of them together won "the prize of victory in incorruption in everlasting life" (17:12; cf. 9:22) and now "stand before the throne of God and live the blessed age" (17:8). In contrast to the righteous, the tyrant will suffer "torment by fire forever" (9:9; cf. 10:11; 13:12,15).

The accent of the writer on a spiritual mode of existence in the world to come is brought out sharply by comparing his imagery to the account in 2 Maccabees on which it is based. In the earlier book there are, to be sure, passages which approximate the language of 4 Maccabees. In 2 Macc. 7:9, the second brother says to the tyrant:<sup>24</sup>

You are setting us free from this present life, and, since we die for his laws, the King of the universe will raise us up to a life everlastingly made new.

The youngest son also speaks of "brief pain leading to eternal life" (7:36). The majority of references, however, are to resurrection. The third brother, who offers his tongue and hands to be cut off, expects to "receive them back" from God (7:11). The fourth brother speaks of "God's promise to raise us again" and says to the tyrant: "There will be no resurrection to life for you" (7:14). The mother encourages her sons, saying: "It is the Creator of the universe who. . .will give you back

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<sup>24</sup>Quotations from 2 Maccabees are from The New English Bible With the Apocrypha (Oxford University Press, 1970).

life and breath again" (7:23), and she urges her youngest son to be faithful unto death "so that by God's mercy I may receive you back again" (7:29). In contrast to this hope there is in 4 Maccabees no reference whatsoever to resurrection, either of the righteous or of the wicked. As in Wisdom of Solomon, immortality is a state entered immediately at death.

The concept of immortality found in 4 Maccabees is in keeping with the accent of the book generally on the soul rather than the body as the locus of the personality. The third of the seven brothers says to Antiochus in true Stoic fashion: "If ye have any engine of torment, apply it to this body of mine, for my soul ye cannot reach" (10:4).<sup>25</sup> The seven brothers encourage each other, saying:

13:13 With a whole heart will we consecrate our-  
selves unto God who gave us our souls, and  
let us lend our bodies to the keeping of the  
14 law. Let us not fear him who thinketh he  
15 kills; for a great struggle and peril awaits  
in eternal torment those who transgress the  
ordinance of God.

Eleazar is said to have defended his "sacred soul" (7:4) by his reason, and all the martyrs are gathered at death "unto the place of their ancestors, having received pure and immortal souls from God" (18:23).

This last passage seems to imply that the immortal soul is given at death to those deserving of eternal life. This may indeed be the intent of the author (cf. 7:3), but the concept of the soul as distinct from the body is not lacking throughout the book.

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<sup>25</sup>Cf. Marcus Aurelius, To Himself 2:1 (in Marcus Aurelius Antonius; tr. C. R. Haines [London: William Heinemann, 1930]).

## 5. Summary

From the standpoint of combining Jewish and Greek thought, 4 Mac-cabees is a most remarkable book and the fullest anticipation of Philo in Jewish literature. The language and thought-forms of the author are Greek, and the imagery, as Hadas observes,<sup>26</sup> is like that of a Greek tragedy. Yet the author remains a Jew throughout, and Judaism is for him the true and only satisfactory philosophy. Reason may be said to control the passions, but it is only reason filled with content by the law of Moses which is able to achieve that objective.

The author's view of the nature of man is not, with the exception of 2:21-23, presented in systematic form. While it would be possible to show from the book as a whole that he held to a tripartite concept of man similar to that of Aristotle and Philo, this tripartite scheme is not evident at first glance. The obvious contrast is a dualistic one, between "reason" (mind, intellect, understanding) on the one hand and the "passions" on the other. The author states explicitly that the latter pertain to both body and soul and that it is the function of reason to control them.

It is also important for our topic that the body is not seen as evil in itself and that the passions are not associated specifically with the senses. In sum, the contrast is not precisely between body (evil) and soul (good), but between the passions (essentially good but in need of control) and reason (which, with the aid of divine law, is able to control the passions).

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<sup>26</sup>P. 100-01.

## C. PHILO OF ALEXANDRIA

Philo Judaeus was a Greek-speaking Jew who lived in Alexandria in Egypt c. 20 B.C.E. to 40 C.E. Little is known of his life beyond what is revealed in his writings. It is evident that he was well educated in Greek literature and philosophy, as well as in his own religious tradition. Whether or not he knew Hebrew is a matter of debate;<sup>27</sup> he was certainly familiar with the Jewish scriptures, but in their Greek form, the Septuagint.

Philo's writings are extensive and varied; in the Loeb Classical Library they occupy twelve volumes of text and translation. Scholars have debated whether any of them were intended for non-Jews.<sup>28</sup> The most likely hypothesis is that they were written for the Jewish community, perhaps to encourage confidence in the faith or simply out of Philo's desire to share the deeper meaning of the scriptures. That deeper meaning Philo sought to discover through the use of allegory, which was his chief means both of spiritualizing the scriptures and of making them congenial to Greek philosophical thought.

Philo was a devout and loyal Jew; his fundamental orientation was to his own religious tradition. At the same time, he was enchanted with

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<sup>27</sup>See the review of scholarly opinion in Sandmel, "Philo's Knowledge of Hebrew," in Studia Philonica 5 (1978), 107-12. See also Goodenough, An Introduction to Philo Judaeus (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1962), p. 9; Sandmel, Philo of Alexandria, p. 131-33; Harry A. Wolfson, Philo (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1947), I, 88-92. Wolfson thinks that Philo knew Hebrew well; Sandmel disagrees.

<sup>28</sup>See the surveys of Philo's writings in Goodenough, Introduction, p. 30-51, and Sandmel, Philo of Alexandria, p. 29-81.

Greek ideas. He was familiar with the writings of the Greek poets and dramatists, and knew the teachings of the Greek philosophers either directly or through an anthology of their works. From various philosophical traditions he drew a wide range of ideas. Particularly important to him were the Platonic doctrine of forms and Stoic notions such as the world soul or logos, the classification of the passions and senses, and the ideal of living free from passion by following the law of nature. All that Philo found in Greek philosophy he claimed for Judaism, even to the point of asserting that the Greeks had gotten it from Moses.

# 1. The Creation of Man

A study of the nature of man in Philo may begin with his account of the creation of man in De Opificio Mundi. In reading this treatise, one has the impression that Philo wrote it while holding the book of Genesis in one hand and Plato's Timaeus in the other.

## a) Ideal man

Philo makes use of the two accounts of creation in Gen. 1 and 2 to distinguish between ideal man and corporeal man, a distinction which is in keeping with his distinction between the visible world and the intelligible world.<sup>29</sup> He also differentiates between the first day of creation and the six succeeding days for the same purpose. The first day of creation, he says, stands for the "intelligible world" (Opif. 15):

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<sup>29</sup>On Philo's metaphysical scheme, see Wolfson, I, 200-94; Good-enough, By Light, Light, p. 11-47; Introduction, p. 91-111.

For God, being God, assumed that a beautiful copy could never be produced apart from a beautiful pattern, and that no object of perception would be faultless which was not made in the likeness of an original discerned only by the intellect. So when he willed to create this visible world he first fully formed the intelligible world, in order that he might have the use of a pattern wholly God-like and incorporeal in producing the material world, as a later creation, the very image of the earlier, to embrace in itself objects of perception of as many kinds as the other contained objects of intelligence.

Opif. 16 (cf. Opif. 19)<sup>30</sup>

The intelligible world is like the plans in the mind of an architect. As the architect conceives the plans in his mind and then recalls them as he builds the city, so it is with God in respect to the "one great city" (Opif. 19) of this world.

Following Plato (Tim. 29e), Philo makes the cause of the world's creation God's goodness:

Just such a power is that by which the universe was made, one that has as its source nothing less than true goodness. . . Because of this he grudged not a share in his own excellent nature to an existence which has of itself nothing fair and lovely, while it is capable of becoming all things.

Opif. 21 (cf. Mut. 46)

Creation, as described here, is the process of bringing order out of chaos, not creation ex nihilo. Again Philo is following Plato (Tim. 30a). Philo states:

For of itself it [i.e., the uncreated world] was without order, without quality, without soul,

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<sup>30</sup>Quotations from Philo are taken from Philo; tr. F. H. Colson, G. H. Whitaker et al. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1927-1962).

(without likeness); it was full of inconsistency, ill-adjustment, disharmony; but it was capable of turning and undergoing a complete change to the best, the very contrary of all these, to order, quality, life, correspondence, identity, likeness, perfect adjustment, to harmony, to all that is characteristic of the most excellent model.

Opif. 22

The notion of the pre-existence of matter, and of creation as the establishment of order out of chaos, is important for the question of the relation of body and soul in man.<sup>31</sup>

God, then, first created the ideal or intelligible world, a world discerned by the intellect, a world not in time but in eternity,<sup>32</sup> a world made up purely of God's *λόγος*. In this world he created the forms or patterns of the sensible world, beginning with the forms of the four primeval elements (earth, water, air, fire), the forms of *πνεῦμα* and *φῶς* (Opif. 30), and the form of man.

The distinction between the ideal man and the corporeal man must be kept clearly in mind. Philo says:

There is a vast difference between the man thus formed [i.e., corporeal man] and the man that came into existence after the image of God; for the man so formed is an object of sense-perception. . . consisting of body and soul, man or woman, by nature mortal; while he that was after the (Divine) image was an idea or type or seal, an object of thought (only), incorporeal, neither male nor female, by nature incorruptible.

Opif. 13<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>31</sup>Further re Philo's belief in the pre-existence of matter, see Opif. 8,9,22-23; Spec. 1:328-29.

<sup>32</sup>Philo in Opif. 26-28 follows Plato (Tim. 27c-39e) in placing the ideal world outside the categories of time; cf. Immut. 31-32; Aet. 4.



The distinction is not precisely between the man of Gen. 1:26-27 and the man of Gen. 2:7, but between the ideal man of the first day of creation and the "earth-born"<sup>33</sup> man of the sixth. The image of God, which is present in corporeal man, is the entire constitution of ideal man.

b) Corporeal man

In contrast to ideal man, corporeal man is a composite being made up of body and soul:

The formation of the individual man, the object of sense, is a composite one made up of earthly substance and of Divine breath; for it says that the body was made through the Artificer taking clay and moulding out of it a human form, but that the soul was originated from nothing created whatever, but from the Father and Ruler of all; for that which he breathed in was nothing else than a Divine breath that migrated hither from that blissful and happy existence for the benefit of our race, to the end that, even if it is mortal in respect of its visible part, it may in respect of the part that is invisible be rendered immortal. Hence it may with propriety be said that man is the borderland between mortal and immortal nature, partaking of each so far as is needful, and that he was created at once mortal and immortal, mortal in respect of the body, but in respect of the mind immortal.

Opif. 135

This passage is an exposition of Gen. 2:7, a verse which, because of its reference to the "dust of the ground" and God's "breath," was to serve Philo on many occasions as a basis for expounding on man's dual nature.

This first man was the crown of God's creation. On the fifth day

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<sup>33</sup>Opif. 69. This term used here means simply the actual man, Adam, and not one of the three classes of men described in Gig. 60-61.

of creation, God created all forms of living creatures with five senses -- first the sea creatures, in whom "the body predominates over the soul of life-principle"; then birds and animals, which have "keener senses" and more of the life principle; and then, "to crown all. . .he made man, and bestowed on him mind par excellence, life-principle of the life-principle itself" (Opif. 66).

In the same treatise, Philo deals with the traditional concept of the "image of God" in man. Moses, he says, tells us that man was created in the image of God and after his likeness, and "right well does he say this, for nothing earth-born is more like God than man" (Opif. 67). But this image is not in man's bodily form:

It is in respect of Mind, the sovereign element of the soul, that the word "image" is used; for after the pattern of a single Mind, even the Mind of the universe as an archetype, the mind in each of those who successively came into being was moulded.

Opif. 69

The image of God, or mind, is like "a god to him who carries and enshrines it as an object of reverence"; it is "invisible while itself seeing all things; it comprehends all but is unperceived" (Opif. 69). It contemplates all the corporeal world and heaven, then "reaches out after the intelligible world" and discovers there "the patterns and originals of the things of sense which it saw here" (Opif. 71). Philo's description here passes into the language of mysticism, which serves to illustrate that this aspect of human nature is truly the "image of God" in man.

Philo also addresses the question of why the creation of man is ascribed in Gen. 1:26 to more than one god ("Let us make man in our im-

age..."), and his answer takes the form of a theodicy. Plants and animals, he says, have no mind or reason, which is where vice and virtue dwell. Other beings, such as angels, have part in virtue only. But man is "of mixed nature" (Opif. 73), and capable of both virtue and folly. Now, it was proper for God alone to make "excellent things" because of their "kinship to him" (Opif. 74); it was also fitting for him to make things neither good nor bad. But with respect to man, who is capable of both, God said "Let us make man." That is, he used subordinates who could be "held responsible for thoughts and deeds of a contrary sort," for "it could not be that the Father should be the cause of an evil thing to his offspring" (Opif. 75). This reasoning is found in other passages (Fug. 69-70; Conf. 178-79) which state that the rational part of man was created by God and the irrational parts by his subordinates. It is a variation on Plato's position that if the mortal parts of man were created by the Demiurge himself, "they would be on an equality with the gods" (Tim. 41c),<sup>34</sup>

Philo holds, finally, that the first man (Adam) greatly excelled all those who came after him in both body and soul, for he was "truly beautiful and good" (Opif. 136). For his body God used only the best clay, for he was making a "sacred dwelling-place or shrine" for the soul (Opif. 137). For his soul he used "no pattern taken from among created things" (Opif. 139), but his own λόγος, and breathed his πνεῦμα into his face. While succeeding generations were born of man, Adam was created by God as "the bloom of our entire race" (Opif. 140). His descendants

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<sup>34</sup>Quotations from Plato are from Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns, Plato: The Collected Dialogues (Princeton University Press, 1961).

preserve "marks," albeit "faint ones" (Opif. 145), of their kinship to him. Like copies of copies or magnets magnetized by other magnets, men have been declining ever since. "As generation follows generation, the powers and qualities of body and soul which men receive are feeblar" (Opif. 141).

## 2. The Tripartite Nature of the Soul

### a) Philo's terminology of soul

Philo, as we have seen (Opif. 135), makes use of dualistic terminology in depicting man as a being made up of body and soul. This dualistic usage informs Philo's total religious and philosophical outlook. It must be balanced and interpreted, however, by his use of tripartite language, especially as it applies to the word "soul."

First, Philo uses "soul" in an inclusive sense to embrace the entire organism:

There are three parts of the soul: one is nutritive, another is sense-perceptive, and the third is rational. Now the divine spirit is the substance of the rational. . . , blood is the substance of the sense-perceptive and vital (soul). . . , and in the flesh are sense-perception and passion.

Q.G. 2:59 (cf. 4:186)

Again, he describes the soul as made up of seven parts: the five senses, speech and the organs of reproduction. This classification, which is Stoic,<sup>35</sup> occurs frequently in Philo (e.g., Opif. 117; L.A. 1:11; Agr. 30; Det. 168; Mut. 11; Q.G. 1:75; 2:12).

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<sup>35</sup>See the sources in Arnim, 2:823-33.

Second, Philo uses "soul" to refer to reason and two kinds of emotion, all located in the appropriate parts of the body:

We must observe, then, that our soul is three-fold, and has one part that is the seat of reason, another that is the seat of high spirit, and another that is the seat of desire. And we discover that the head is the place and abode of the reasonable part, the breast of the passionate part, the abdomen of the lustful part.

L.A. 1:70 (cf. 3:115; Spec. 4:92-94)

In this tripartite scheme, Philo is following Plato's division of man into reason, emotion and desire;<sup>36</sup> in Spec. 4:92 he gives credit to those who have "made researches into the nature of the soul."

Third, Philo uses the word "soul" to refer to the rational part of the soul, the "soul's soul" (Her. 55; cf. Immut. 46), for which he also employs the term "mind" or "reason." This usage will be examined at length in the section immediately following.

Fourth, Philo uses "soul" to describe the entire non-material aspect of man's existence (Her. 55; Agr. 30; L.A. 2:95; Ebr. 101). This usage is not specific, but simply reflects Philo's dualistic concept of human nature.

#### b) The rational soul

Philo, as we have seen, distinguishes between the rational part of the soul and the part which has to do with emotions and desires. With respect to the rational soul man is akin to God and the angelic beings; with respect to the irrational soul he is akin to the animals:

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<sup>36</sup> E.g., Tim. 69c-70a; Rep. 580d-e; Phaedr. 246-48.

Living nature was primarily divided into two opposite parts, the unreasoning and the reasoning, this last again into the mortal and the immortal species, the mortal being that of man, the immortal that of unbodied souls which range through the air and sky.

Conf. 176 (cf. Det. 82)

In a number of passages (including the above), Philo distinguishes between bodied and unbodied souls:

Souls that are free from flesh and body spend their days in the theatre of the universe and with a joy that none can hinder see and hear things divine, which they have desired with love unsatiable. But those which bear the burden of the flesh, oppressed by the grievous load, cannot look up to the heavens as they revolve, but with necks bowed downward are constrained to stand rooted to the ground like four-footed beasts.

Gig. 31

The souls referred to in the first part of this passage are apparently unbodied and have never been embodied, but Philo's scheme is not always this clear. In Som. 1:138-39 (cf. Plant. 14), following Plato's account in the Phaedrus (246-47), he says:

Of these souls some, such as have earthward tendencies and material tastes, descend to be fast bound in mortal bodies, while others ascend, being selected for return according to the numbers and periods determined by their nature. Of these last some, longing for the familiar and accustomed ways of mortal life, again retrace their steps, while others, pronouncing that life great foolery call the body a prison and a tomb, and escaping as though from a dungeon or a grave, are lifted up on light wings to the upper air and range the heights for ever.

Philo's thought here is confusing, but he appears to be distinguishing

between two classes of souls which become embodied. Some are "fast-bound" in their physical prison, while others escape to their original and true home. To both of these he contrasts other souls which

are of perfect purity and excellence, gifted with a higher and diviner temper, that have never felt any craving after the things of earth, but are viceroys of the Ruler of the universe, ears and eyes, so to speak, of the great king, beholding and hearing all things.

Som. 1:140 (cf. Gig. 12-14)

These unbodied souls Philo calls "angels" (Som. 1:141; Plant. 14; Gig. 6), thus equating the divine messengers of Jewish theology with the incorporeal souls of Plato's Phaedrus. He also affirms that "the stars are souls divine" and are "mind in its purest form" (Gig. 8).

Philo is hard pressed to find terms to describe the nature of the rational soul in man. He is committed, on the basis of Gen. 2:7, to describe the divine element in man as  $\piνεῦμα$  (Q.G. 2:59), or  $\piνεῦμα θεῶν$  (Opif. 135,146; Her. 55). He states, in fact, that "the divine spirit is the substance of the rational [part of the soul]" (Q.G. 2:59). Again, he follows Stoic philosophy in describing the rational soul as made out of a "fifth substance" or "ether" (Her. 283),<sup>37</sup> and in more than one passage he brings the two ideas together. In L.A. 3:161 he says that "the soul is of the upper air, a particle detached from the Deity," and adds in support, "for God breathed into his face a breath of life, and man became a living soul" (cf. Som. 1:34).

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<sup>37</sup>See the position ascribed to Zeno in Diog. Laert. 7:156. Philo (Her. 281) grants that this is the opinion of "others," but he quotes it with approval.

There is evidence, however, that Philo is not comfortable with the notion of "spirit" or "ether," tenuous as these substances may be.<sup>38</sup> He prefers to speak in Platonic rather than Stoic terms, making an absolute distinction between the material and the immaterial. This shift in thought is illustrated in Mut. 223:

Reasoning [λογισμός] is something most perfect and most divine, a piece torn off from the soul of the universe, or, as it might be put more reverently following the philosophy of Moses, a faithful impress of the divine image.

In Spec. 4:123, after defining the soul as "divine spirit" on the basis of Gen. 2:7, Philo says:

Clearly what was then thus breathed was ethereal spirit, or something if such there be better than ethereal spirit, even an effulgence of the blessed, thrice blessed nature of the Godhead.

And in Plant. 18 he consciously dissociates himself from the Stoic position and substitutes the Platonic one:

Now while others, by asserting that our human mind is a particle of the ethereal substance, have claimed for man a kinship with the upper air, our great Moses likened the fashion of the reasonable soul to no created thing, but averred it to be a genuine coinagle of that dread Spirit, the Divine and Invisible One, signed and impressed by the seal of God, the stamp of which is the Eternal Word [λόγος].

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<sup>38</sup>See Goodenough, "Philo on Immortality," p. 91-92: "The contrast between a coarser material of the body and a finer type for the soul had seemed quite inadequate to Plato and his followers," who changed it into one between the material and the immaterial. Cf. Moore, I, 452: Philo first makes the "breath of life" of Gen. 2:7 "a πνεῦμα-soul of obvious Stoic extraction" and then substitutes for it the more Platonic "intellect" (διάνοια).



The rational soul in man, then, is a "copy or fragment or ray" (Opif. 146; cf. Det. 83) of the divine λόγος. It is a "closer likeness and copy than anything else on earth of the eternal and blessed idea" (Decal. 134; cf. Her. 231), an "impression stamped by the divine power" (Det. 83). It is a "rational spirit-force within us. . .shaped according to the archetypal form of the divine image" (Spec. 1:171). It appears, then, that while Philo alternates between Stoic and Platonic language, his preferred concept is a completely immaterial one.

Philo's usual term for the rational soul in man is νοῦς. It is νοῦς which, on the one hand, sets man off from the rest of the animal world and, on the other, puts him in touch with God. In Immut. 45, after describing the function of the irrational soul in animals, Philo says:

Let us now see where man has been made superior to other animals. We find that the special prerogative he has received is mind.

The same point is made at greater length in Det. 83. To man as an animal has been given "the power of vitality, in virtue of which we are alive," but to man as man has been given "the power of reasoning, in virtue of which we are reasoning beings." It is νοῦς which, in countless passages, is the "dominant" part of the soul.

Philo sometimes calls this mind in man λόγος (Spec. 4:92; Virt. 13; cf. L.A. 1:70), since it is a copy of the λόγος of God. He refers to two λόγοι, one of which "is the archetypal reason above us, the other a copy of it which we possess" (Her. 230), and to "the two reasoning and intellectual natures, one in man and the other in the all" (Her. 233). He says, in fact, that these two λόγοι "prove to be integral and undi-

vided" (Her. 233); whether in God or man, they are the divine λόγος.

c) The irrational soul

Philo, as we have seen, distinguishes between the rational and the irrational soul in man. This distinction is not always clearly stated, but it must be kept in mind if his view of man is to be understood.

In L.A. 2:6, Philo describes the irrational soul as "sense and the passions which are the offspring of sense." What this means can be seen from a series of passages in which he distinguishes between the life-principle in animals and the power of growth in plants. First, he states that "living creatures differ from those without life in nothing more than in ability to apprehend by the senses" (Opif. 62). Second, in L.A. 1:130 he states:

For the living creature excels the non-living in two respects, in the power of receiving impressions and in the active impulse toward the object producing them.

In a third passage, Philo articulates this difference further:

Life was made by its creator different from growth in three ways. It has sensation, "presentation," impulse. For plants have no impulse, no "presentation," no gift of sense-perception, while each living creature participates in all three combined.

Immut. 41

Philo goes on to explain what he means by "sensation," "presentation" and "impulse." The mind, he says, is a "vast and receptive storehouse, in which all that comes through sight or hearing and the other organs of sense is placed and treasured" (Immut. 42). "Presentation" is an "imprint

made on the soul:"

For, like a ring or seal, it stamps on the soul  
the image corresponding to everything which each  
of the senses has introduced. And the mind like  
wax receives the impress and retains it vividly.  
Immut. 43

The impression made on the soul may be a favorable or an unfavorable one,  
and the soul is thus moved to desire or reject it (Immut. 44).

In this passage, Philo uses "mind" interchangeably with "soul,"  
but it is clear that he does not mean by this the divine λόγος in man.  
Rather, it is what he calls in L.A. 1:32 the νοῦς γεώδης, the "earth-  
like mind" or soul. The function of this mind or soul is to receive in-  
formation from the senses, to store it, and to react to it.

Philo's terminology for the irrational soul is not without ambi-  
guity, however, and may reflect a similar vagueness of conceptualization.  
In Opif. 139, he states that "by the senses the Creator endowed the body  
with soul," meaning that it is only by information received from the  
senses that "the sovereign Reason" is able to know the things of this  
world. "The Reason, apart from perception by the senses, was unable by  
itself to apprehend these" (ibid.) Here it is indubitably the mind, the  
"princely part of man's being," which is in view. In another passage,  
Philo asks:

Is my mind my own possession? That parent of  
false conjectures, that purveyor of delusion,  
the delirious, the fatuous, and in frenzy or melan-  
choly or senility proved to be the very negation  
of mind. . . Not even of my sense-perceptions do  
I find myself master, rather, it may well be, its  
slave, who follows it where it leads, to colors,

shapes, sounds, scents, flavors, and the other  
material things.

Cher. 116

Philo is perturbed by the obvious dependence of the mind on the senses, for such limitation runs counter to his whole scheme of thought. In another passage (L.A. 2:23-24), he wrestles with the problem and comes to the notion of two minds, or two faculties within the mind. The lower mind, which receives the impression of the senses and is the object of impulses, is a "conscious" mind but incapable of "reason." This mind is shared with the animals. The higher mind is the power of thought, and in man is coupled with the power of speech. This mind is "shared, it may well be, by beings more akin to God" (ibid.)

We have returned, then, to a tripartite view of the soul. The highest faculty in man is the reasoning mind, or the rational soul. The second is a lower mind which is capable of receiving the impressions of the senses and responding to them, but incapable of "reason." The third is the sense-impressions themselves, which are produced by the bodily organism. Philo's use of "soul" to take in aspects of all three levels of man's nature is responsible for much of the ambiguity.

It is important to bear in mind, finally, that Philo makes a clear distinction between two parts of the irrational soul, namely that part which has to do with "high spirits" and has its abode in the chest, and that part which has to do with "desires" and has its abode in the abdomen (L.A. 1:70-73; 3:115; Spec. 4:92-94). This classification, which Philo admits to have borrowed from the philosophers (L.A. 3:115), will be of importance in examining the ideal of harmony in the soul and the dif-

ficulties encountered in achieving that goal.

d) Man as a mixture of body, soul and mind

Notwithstanding the delineation between the rational and irrational soul, phenomenal man is a mixture (σύνκρμα) of body, soul and mind which defies analytical description. There is a most remarkable passage which betrays Philo's uncertainty as to where the real "I" is to be found. Because of its relation to many aspects of his thought and its bearing on Paul's anthropology, this passage is here quoted at length:

I am formed of soul and body; I seem to have mind, reason, sense, yet I find that none of them is really mine. Where was my body before birth, and whither will it go when I have departed? What has become of the changes produced by life's various stages in the seemingly permanent self? Where is the babe that once I was, the boy and the other gradations between boy and full-grown man? Whence came the soul, whither will it go, how long will it be our mate and comrade? Can we tell its essential nature? When did we get it? Before birth? But then there was no "ourselves." What of it after death? But then we who are here joined to the body, creatures of composition and quality, will be no more, but shall go forward to our rebirth, to be with the unbodied, without composition and without quality. Even now in this life, we are the ruled rather than the rulers, known rather than knowing. The soul knows us, though we know it not; it lays on us commands, which we must fain obey, as a servant obeys his mistress. And when it will, it will claim its divorce in court and depart, leaving our home desolate of life. Press it as we may to stay, it will escape from our hands. So subtle is it of nature, that it affords no grip or handle to the body.

Cher. 113-15.

The fluidity of Philo's thought in this passage, especially as to what constitutes the essential person, is striking. "I" am formed of soul and body. "I" seem to have mind, reason, sense, yet none of them is real-

ly "mine." The self in this passage seems to be the mixture, perhaps the temporary mixture, of the whole.<sup>39</sup> Where was the self before the mixture came together? Where will it be when it is dissolved? These are questions to which Philo, for all his religious certainty, had no simple answer.

### 3. The Dual Nature of Man

In addition to his tripartite terminology, Philo often refers to man in dualistic terms. "There are two things of which we consist," he says, "soul and body" (L.A. 3:161). We are a "compound animal in which soul and body are woven or twined or mingled" (Ebr. 101). The formation of the individual man is "a composite one made up of earthly substance and of Divine breath" (Opif. 135; cf. 136; Her. 282; Som. 1:30-33). By the categories of soul and body Philo means simply the immaterial and the material aspects of man's nature.

#### a) The superiority of soul to body

It is a given of Philo's thought that the soul is superior to the body, as the immaterial is superior to the material. This can be illustrated from all sections of Philo's writings. In Quod Omnis Probus Liber sit, a treatise which he may have written in his youth, the heroes of virtue are said to have

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<sup>39</sup>Goodenough (Introduction, p. 115) and Sandmel (Philo of Alexandria, p. 84) both point out that if a person is a mixture of soul and body, his personality will change with advancing years because the "mixture" is different. This distinction may be important for the interpretation of Romans 7.

behaved as though the bodies in which they lay belonged to strangers or enemies. . . For having inured the soul from the first to hold aloof through love of knowledge from association with the passions, and to cleave to culture and wisdom, they set it wandering away from the body and brought it to make its home with wisdom and courage and the other virtues.

Prob. 106-07

These heroes of virtue did not identify the real person with the body. Philo quotes Diogenes Laertius: "'Pound Anaxarchus' skin," he said, 'Anaxarchus you cannot pound'" (Prob. 109).<sup>40</sup> A similar sentiment occurs in De Josepho. The true statesman, Philo says, will reject the overtures of the multitude and say:

Men, while they assume the sovereignty of my body, are not sovereign of the real I. For I take my title from the better part, the understanding within me, and by that I am prepared to live with little thought of the mortal body, the shell-like growth which encases me. And, though some may maltreat it, yet, if I be free from the hard masters and mistresses within, I shall suffer no affliction, since I have escaped the cruellest tyranny of all.

Jos. 71

In Mut. 32-34, Philo compares those who devote attention to the body to those who care for the soul, to the discredit of the former. In De Vita Contemplativa, he praises the saints who worship, not the things of sense, but "the vision of the Existent" (Cont. 11) and who pray "that the soul may be wholly relieved from the press of the senses and the objects of sense" (Cont. 27).

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<sup>40</sup>See Diog. Laert. 9:59.

An illustration of the relative worth of body and soul is found in the marriage of Abraham and Sarah:

In a marriage where the union is brought about by pleasure, the partnership is between body and body, but in a marriage made by wisdom it is between thoughts which seek purification and perfect virtues. Now the two kinds of marriage are directly opposed to each other.

Abr. 100

It is fitting that, on Sarah's death, Abraham did not grieve to excess:

He grappled with it [i.e., sorrow], as in the arena, and prevailed. He gave strength and high courage to the natural antagonist of passion, reason, which he had taken as his counsellor throughout his life and now particularly was determined to obey.

Abr. 256

In De Josepho, the reference to the body is at times directly sexual.

When Joseph rejects the advances of Potiphar's wife, he lectures her and says: "The end we [Jews] seek in wedlock is not pleasure but the begetting of lawful children" (Jos. 43).

In De Vita Mosis Philo presents an even more idealized picture, for he is depicting a man who, in his estimation, was as close to God as humanity could be. It is natural, then, that Moses as a boy did not "delight in fun and laughter and sport" but "applied himself to hearing and seeing what was sure to profit the soul" (Mos. 1:20). As a youth he controlled his passions, lest they run away with his reason:

For it is these impulses which cause both good and bad -- good when they obey the guidance of reason, bad when they turn from their regular course into anarchy.

Mos. 1:26



Moses' mind, Philo says, "dwelt in his body like an image in its shrine" (Mos. 1:27), while the pleasures of the body "passed altogether even out of memory" (Mos. 1:28). He desired to live "to the soul alone and not to the body" (Mos. 1:29). There is no doubt that Philo is holding up this kind of life as a model.

b) The sinfulness of the flesh

The passages just quoted illustrate the superiority of the soul to the body; they do not describe the body as inherently evil. Indeed, in one passage (Mos. 1:26) Philo says that "impulses" are productive of both good and evil -- of good when guided by reason, of evil when in a state of anarchy. A similar judgment is expressed in L.A. 3:67-68:

We have to say, then, that sense-perception comes under the head neither of bad nor of good things, but is an intermediate thing common to a wise man and a fool, and when it finds itself in a fool it proves bad, when in a sensible man, good.

There are passages, however, in which sin is traced to man's physical, and especially his sexual, nature. In Q.G. 1:99, Philo interprets Gen. 6:12 ("All flesh corrupted his way upon the earth"):

It considers flesh as the cause of spiritual corruption, which is indeed the truth, for it is the seat of desires, from which, as from a spring, flow the properties of desires and other passions.

In Opif. 151, the sin of Adam and Eve is related, not to a desire to become like gods, but to sexual desire:

And this desire begat likewise bodily pleasure, that pleasure which is the beginning of wrongs and

violation of law, the pleasure for the sake of which men bring on themselves the life of mortality and wretchedness in lieu of that of immortality and bliss.

Opif. 152

The story of the fallen angels in Gen. 6:1-4 lends itself to a similar interpretation. The evil angels are those which "court the pleasures which are born of men. . . , by which the senses are deceived" (Gig. 17). Some of them take for themselves the pleasures of sight, others those of hearing, palate, belly or sex. Among beings such as these God's spirit cannot remain, though it may sojourn for a while. "The chief cause of ignorance is the flesh, and the tie which binds us so closely to the flesh" (Gig. 29). That tie, in this context, is sexual desire.

The sinfulness of the flesh is of course not limited to sexual desire. In Decal. 143, Philo describes the way in which the various passions (pleasure, pain, fear, greed) work upon the soul. In Spec. 3:180, he condemns the person who "holds matter in higher esteem than God," and in Gig. 12-15 the evils which draw men downward include not only "that dead thing which was our birth-fellow, the body," but every form of worldly wealth and glory.

It is significant that those passages which attribute sin to the flesh do not describe flesh as evil in the material sense. When Philo speaks of the body as evil, he means that it is the source of the passions and desires which are, when properly understood, activities or conditions of the irrational soul. This is made clear in the following passages:

Hadst thou really sent forth and liberated the soul, thou wouldst have stripped from it all vices

belonging to the body and senses; for it is this way that the understanding is delivered from vices and passions.

L.A. 3:21

We must reject with scorn the superfluities which kindle the lusts that with a single flame-burst consume every good thing. Let not our appetites then be whetted and incited toward anything that is dear to the flesh.

Gig. 35

It is not matter (ὕλη) which is evil in Philo's scheme, but the passions and desires which, having their origin in the senses, make war upon the soul. The body may also be said to be evil when it competes with the soul as a "good" by which men orient their lives. In this sense it represents not only the physical flesh, but all the attractions and values of this world. It would more accurately reflect Philo's thought to say, not that the soul is good and the body is evil, but that to live according to the soul is good and to live according to the body is evil.<sup>41</sup>

c) The body as prison, coffin or corpse

In two passages already quoted, Philo refers to the body as a "shell-like growth" (Jos. 71) encompassing the soul or as a "dead thing which was our birth-fellow" (Gig. 15). The notion of the body as a prison or tomb of the soul,<sup>42</sup> or as a corpse to which the soul is tied, is a favorite one with Philo and illustrates the sense in which the body, while not evil in itself, is the enemy of the soul. In Mig. 16, Philo says:

<sup>41</sup>If so, there is a striking parallel to Paul's phrase κατὰ σάρκα, which is also derogatory in nature.

<sup>42</sup>A well-known figure in Greek thought; cf. Plato's Crat. 400b-c, where it is attributed to the Orphics.

Some make a truce with the body and maintain it till their death, and are buried in it as in a coffin or shell or whatever else you like to call it.

In Ebr. 101 he says:

When it [i.e., the soul] is cooped up in the city of the body and mortal life, it is cabined and cribbed and like a prisoner in the gaol.

And in Spec. 4:188, he speaks of

the human mind, imprisoned as it is amid all the thronging press of the senses, so competent to seduce and deceive it with false opinions, or rather entombed in a mortal body which may be quite properly called a sepulchre.

In addition to the figure of a coffin or prison, Philo uses the imagery of a corpse in which the soul is imprisoned or to which it is tied. In Q.G. 4:77 he states that "it is not wide of the mark to say that the soul of the wise man, having a body that is inanimate and heavy, like a bronze statue, is always carrying a corpse." In L.A. 1:108 (cf. Q.G. 4:152), he expounds on a saying of Heraclitus:

He means that now, when we are living, the soul is dead and has been entombed in the body as a sepulchre; whereas should we die, the soul lives forthwith its proper life, and is released from the body, the baneful corpse to which it is tied.

The same figure appears in L.A. 3:72 and Mig. 21, while in Q.G. 4:78 Philo states simply that "we are clothed with a dead body."

In the light of Philo's relative scale of values we can understand his description of the body as "wicked and a plotter against the

soul" (L.A. 3:69,71). The body, by being "a corpse and a dead thing" (L.A. 3:69) attached to the soul, works against the soul's higher good. As we shall see, the ultimate goal of the religious life is to be freed from the body's entrammelling and corrupting influences.

d) The senses and passions

Philo, in keeping with the custom of his age, enumerates and classifies the senses and passions. In Opif. 62, he says that "sense has a five-fold division," i.e., into sight, hearing, taste, smell, touch. The passions, as in Greek usage,<sup>43</sup> are four. Philo gives them as "pleasure, desire, fear, grief" (Abr. 236; cf. Mos. 2:139).

The senses, for Philo, are subject to the passions,

and are forced to pay them the tolls and tributes demanded by nature. Grievs and pleasures and fears and desires arise out of what we see or hear or smell or taste or touch, and none of the passions would have any strength of itself if it were not furnished with what the senses supply.

Abr. 237-38

As we have seen, even the dominant mind is dependent upon information received from the senses and transmitted to it by the irrational soul.

Philo also ranks the senses by the criterion of their ability, or inability, to transcend the body. On this basis he places sight and hearing at the top of the scale and taste and touch at the bottom. In Abr. 147-50, the lower senses are said to be characteristic of animal life, while sight and hearing "have a link with philosophy and hold the leading

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<sup>43</sup>See Arnim, 3:378; Diog. Laert. 7:93,111.

place." Philo even distinguishes between hearing and sight, assigning the highest place -- a difference almost in kind rather than in degree -- to sight. Elsewhere he says that it is by sight alone that "we apprehend the most excellent of existing things, the sun and the moon and the whole heaven and world" (Abr. 57). It is light or sight or both of them together by which man's soul is lifted up to the heavens and to God (Opif. 54,147; Abr. 156-66).

e) The various kinds of men

In a number of passages, Philo refers to three distinct classes of men.<sup>44</sup> An example is Gig. 60, in which he expounds on Gen. 6:4:

He [i.e., Moses] wishes to show you that some men are earth-born, some heaven-born, and some God-born.

This classification seems clear enough, but on closer examination it turns out to be ambiguous. First, in similar passages which employ a three-fold division, the highest category is that of unbodied souls, and not men (Her. 45; Gig. 12). Second, the category of the God-born includes, properly speaking, only two men: Isaac and Moses. Both are exceptions to the general run of humanity. Isaac, in Philo's mystical conception, was born without sin and achieved perfection by intuition (Sac. 6-7; Fug. 167). Moses was a kind of divine being sent by God to earth as a loan (Sac. 9). Both would apparently fall in the class of "perfect" men whom Philo describes as "neither God nor man, but, as I have said already, on the bor-

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<sup>44</sup> See a monograph by Alan Mendelson, Secular Education in Philo of Alexandria (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1982), esp. p. 47-65, "Philo's Typology of Mankind."

der-line between the uncreated and the perishing form of being" (Som. 2:234).

A third problem in Philo's classification is that his description of the God-born is sometimes identical with that of the heaven-born. In Gig. 60, he describes the heaven-born as "the votaries of the arts and of knowledge, the lovers of learning." These are the souls who

have given themselves to genuine philosophy, who from first to last study to die to the life in the body, that a higher existence immortal and incorporeal, in the presence of him who is himself immortal and uncreate, may be their portion.

Gig. 14

Yet this is precisely his description of the God-born in Gig. 61. It appears, as Mendelson points out,<sup>45</sup> that it is possible for the heaven-born to change status and become men of God. Indeed, the passage just quoted cites Abraham as one who, having been a "man of heaven" when in Chaldea, became in Canaan a "man of God" (Gig. 62-63).

We are left, for all practical purposes, with two kinds of men: the heaven-born and the earth-born. Philo's concern is with the former. Of the latter he says:

The life that looks to creation has never risen at all nor ought to rise, but makes its lair in the recesses of Hades and rejoices in a form of living, which is not worth the pains.

Her. 45 (cf. 78-79)

Again, the earth-born are they who

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<sup>45</sup>P. 52-54.

take the pleasures of the body for their quarry,  
 who make it their practice to indulge in them and  
 enjoy them and provide the means by which each of  
 them may be promoted.

Gig. 60

The heaven-born man, in contrast, stands "on the border-line" between the God-born and the earth-born, "a mixture of the other two" (Her. 45). He is the "neutral man, the man who is neither bad nor good" (L.A. 1:93). He is the "earthly man" in contrast to the man formed after the divine image (L.A. 1:94-95), yet not the "earth-born" man. He is therefore capable of progress toward God (Praem. 40-46) or of falling back into the life of the senses (Her. 46). The prototype of the first is Abraham, who transcended his first state and became a sage. The prototype of the second is Nimrod, who "debased the coin of truest metal and deserted from [his] post, [and] left a place that was better for a worse" (Gig. 65).

That the heaven-born or neutral man can make progress or fall behind in the spiritual pilgrimage requires a notion of free will, and this is generally assumed in Philo (Immut. 47-48).<sup>46</sup> The concept of free will is not, to be sure, a simple one. As Mendelson points out,<sup>47</sup> there is no progress without the aid of God, and only God knows who is worthy of his grace. It seems that God comes more to the gifted than to the disadvantaged (Q.G. 4:33,102), and a man should not attempt to rise beyond his

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<sup>46</sup>Yet in Fug. 46 and Q.G. 3:48, Philo speaks of men as "puppets." See the discussion in Mendelson, p. 59-62; Wolfson, I, 424-62; Sandmel, Philo of Alexandria, p. 100-01; David Winston, "Freedom and Determinism in Philo of Alexandria" (in Studia Philonica 3 [1974-75]), p. 47-70. Winston argues for a "relative free will" as over against absolute free will. Sandmel holds that Philo believed generally in free will but granted a large role to native endowment.

<sup>47</sup>P. 59.



own limits (Q.G. 4:102; Fug. 146; Mig. 171). But Philo's entire conceptual framework requires that one be able to make progress on the spiritual path, and he holds up many examples for us to follow.

#### 4. The Goal of the Religious Life

Philo presents two different goals of the religious life. The first is "this-worldly" in nature, namely the attainment of harmony in the soul. The second is "other-worldly," namely the vision of God or the union of the soul with the divine. Philo holds both ideals simultaneously, and there is a sense in which the first is a means to the second.

##### a) The harmony of the soul

The goal of the religious life is, first of all, the harmony or attunement of the soul which results from the complete control of the lower mind and the senses by the higher mind or reason. This is an ideal for which Philo is indebted to Greek thought generally.<sup>48</sup>

Philo calls this attunement of the soul by many names, of which the first and most natural is *ἀρμονία* itself. In Ebr. 116, using the analogy of the tuning of a lyre, he says:

So it is with the instrument of the soul. . . It is in harmony when all the strings of courage and every virtue combine to produce a single tuneful melody.

Similarly, in Conf. 53-55 he says that when all the thoughts of the soul

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<sup>48</sup> See the quotations from Posidonius in C. K. Barrett, ed, The New Testament Background (New York: Harper and Row, 1961), p. 65.

are one in purpose they are "like instruments of music where all the notes are in perfect tune." As Goodenough observes,<sup>49</sup> this ideal is similar to that of a modern psychiatrist whose aim is the harmonious functioning of all parts of the personality.

Second, Philo uses the term *δικαιοσύνη* ("justice," "rectitude," "virtue") for this state of the soul. This quality, he says, appears "when the three parts of the soul are in harmony" (L.A. 1:72). It is a virtue whose influence makes for peace and lawfulness (Mut. 240). An example is the good man Noah, who "expelled from the soul the untamed and frantic passions and the truly beast-like vices" (Abr. 31-33).

Third, Philo describes this condition of the soul as one of *δημοκρατία* ("democracy") as opposed to mob rule (Conf. 108) or the rule of tyrants (Abr. 242). It is in keeping with this thinking that he praises democracy as the best constitution (Virt. 180; Agr. 45; Conf. 180; Spec. 4:237; Immut. 176).

Whether harmony, justice or democracy, the ideal state of the soul is brought about

when the human race turns away from its sins and inclines and reverts to righteousness, following by a free-will choice the laws and statutes of nature.

Som. 2:174 (cf. Agr. 66)

This definition of virtue as living according to the laws of nature is common in Philo (e.g., Opif. 3; Spec. 1:318). It does not mean that the harmony of the soul can be achieved without effort; as we shall see, its

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<sup>49</sup>By Light, Light, p. 372.

attainment involves a veritable battle between man's rational and irrational faculties. Yet there is a sense in which this ideal state is not built up by effort; it flows naturally from man's attunement with the law of nature or the law of God.

b) The vision of God

The goal of harmony in the soul, admirable though it may be, is for Philo an intermediate one, a means to an end. The real goal of the religious life is a mystic vision of God which requires that the soul pass beyond the realm of the body altogether. For this ideal, Philo is indebted in part to the Platonic doctrine of forms but in even greater measure to his own mysticism.

A passage which reflects both the philosophical and religious background of Philo's thought is Praem. 24-27. The patriarchs, Philo says, all "pressed forward to the same goal in life, namely to be well pleasing to the Maker and Father of all"; they were "possessed with an intense longing to contemplate and for ever be in the company of things divine." Therefore the soul of such men, after investigating

the whole realm of the visible to its very end  
 . . .straightway proceeds to the immaterial and  
 conceptual, not availing itself of any of the  
 senses but casting aside all the irrational part  
 of the soul and employing only the part which is  
 called mind and reasoning.

A man of this nature, who "has made the excellent his own, has for his crown the vision of God."

A similar sense of deep longing for the vision of God appears in Som. 2:232. Philo is making a comparison to the high priest's entrance

into the holiest place, as described in Lev. 16:17:

When the mind is mastered by the love of the divine, when it strains its powers to reach the inmost shrine, when it puts forth every effort and ardour on its forward march, under the divine impelling force, it forgets all else, forgets itself, and fixes its thoughts and memories on him alone whose attendant and servant it is.

The man whom Philo holds up most clearly as an example of such a goal and vision is Moses. On Mt. Sinai, Moses entered "into the darkness where God was, that is, into the unseen, invisible, incorporeal and archetypal essence of existing things" (Mos. 1:158). In so doing, he was "changed into the divine" (Q.E. 2:29; cf. 2:40); he experienced "a second birth better than the first" (Q.E. 2:46), i.e., a birth without a body; and he joined with "the elements of all existence" (Virt. 73) in a song of praise to God. Moses' life was thus "displayed for all to see. . . , a piece of work beautiful and godlike, a model for those who are willing to copy it" (Mos. 1:158; cf. Conf. 95-96).

The vision of God which is the supreme goal of all cannot be attained by reason. In Q.E. 2:4-5, Philo says simply:

Now the divine place is truly inaccessible and unapproachable, for not even the holiest mind is able to ascend such a height.

In Her. 263-65, he states that the mind, like the earthly sun, must "set" before God's light can shine. In Praem. 29, he says that even reason, which is incomparably superior to opinion because it deals with conceptual things, nevertheless is "found to be in trouble on many points."

No, the vision of God cannot be attained by reason; it must be

received by the mystic experience. Philo presents as an example Jacob, the "man of practice who receives for his special reward the vision of God" (Praem. 36). In his former years, the eyes of Jacob's soul were closed, but by virtue of continual striving

he began though slowly to open them and to break up and throw off the mist which overshadowed him. For a beam purer than ether and incorporeal suddenly shone upon him and revealed the conceptual world ruled by its charioteer. That charioteer, ringed as he was with beams of undiluted light, was beyond his sight or conjecture, for the eye was darkened by the dazzling beams. Yet in spite of the fiery stream which flooded it, his sight held its own in its unutterable longing to behold the vision. The Father and Saviour perceiving the sincerity of his yearning in pity gave power to the penetration of his eyesight and did not grudge him the vision of himself in so far as it was possible for mortal and created nature to contain it.

Praem. 36-39

Even this vision, Philo says, showed only that God is, not what he is, for God's true essence can be known by God alone.

Another passage employing the lofty language of mysticism is Opif. 70-71. The mind, Philo says, is carried beyond the visible world to "the ether and the circuit of heaven, and is whirled round with the dance of planets and fixed stars, in accordance with the laws of perfect music." Yet its gaze is drawn even further, and

it comes to a point at which it reaches out after the intelligible world, and on descrying in that world sights of surpassing loveliness, even the patterns and the originals of the things of sense which it saw here, it is seized by a sober intoxication, like those filled with Corybantic frenzy, and is inspired, possessed by a longing far other than theirs and a nobler desire. Wafted by this to the topmost arch of the things perceptible to

mind, it seems to be on its way to the great King himself; but, amid its longing to see him, pure and untempered rays of concentrated light stream forth like a torrent, so that by its gleam the eye of the understanding is dazzled.

The exalted language of these passages may reflect Philo's own mystical experience (cf. Spec. 3:106). In any case, it is clear that the vision of God is a goal which requires transcending the whole realm of the physical, since it has to do with that which lies beyond even the furthest reaches of the mind.

## 5. Attaining the Goal

### a) War in the soul

Philo's intermediate goal, the attainment of harmony in the soul, does not come about without a struggle. In most men the impulses of the body and of the lower mind make war against the higher mind and the law of God, and if this war is not won a state of anarchy prevails.

The war within man may be described in general terms as the antagonism between body and soul, but this dichotomy is overly simple and not strictly accurate. Philo depicts the conflict in a variety of ways: the war between man's physical and non-physical nature, the strife among the various parts or passions of the soul, and the conflict between the rational and the irrational soul. The last of these is his most characteristic formulation.

The war within man may be described, first, as the antagonism between body and soul, or between man's physical and non-physical nature.<sup>50</sup> In L.A. 1:105-06, in which Philo speaks of death as "the separation of

the soul from the body," he states that during life these two (soul and body) were "combatants that had been pitted against one another." As we have seen, Philo regards the body as the source or seat of the senses and passions, and thereby inimical to the soul's good. He is even prepared to describe the body as a prison or tomb of the soul, or as a corpse to which the soul is tied. It is only occasionally, however, that Philo is concerned with the strictly physical nature of the body, in the sense of the material substance of which the body is composed. He is more concerned with the passions than with the physical organism, and his usual term is "body" and not "flesh."

Philo, second, speaks about the quarrelling and strife which takes place among the various parts of the soul. A typical example is his exposition of the story in Gen. 14 of the war between the five kings and the four kings. The five kings are the five senses and the four kings are the four passions. When the senses satisfy the demands of the passions, harmony prevails, but when these demands are not met, "discord and wars at once arise" (Abr. 240). Again, in Praem. 52, Philo says that there is a "sacred contest" in which the soul is engaged. This contest is due to the fact that the vices are "at variance with one another"; the soul restores order by wielding the various virtues against their respective vices. And in Ebr. 99 he expounds on Ex. 32:17 ("There is a noise of war in the camp"):

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<sup>50</sup>Goodenough (By Light, Light, p. 395): "The struggle for Philo between the law of the members and the law of the mind was the great struggle of his religious life." Sandmel (Philo of Alexandria, p. 286-87): "A constant struggle goes on in a man as to whether his body will dominate him, or whether his soul or spirit will."

True indeed. For where else do we find contentions, combats, hostilities and all the works that go with bitter and persistent war, but in the life of the body?

By "body" in this passage Philo means the passions and desires.

At times, Philo describes this civil war as a conflict between the "goods" which compete for the soul's attention. In Abr. 217-25, the dissension between the herdsmen of Lot and those of Abraham is likened to the conflict between external and internal values; these are "for ever jangling and quarrelling" and the soul is in a "state of war." Similarly, in Som. 2:12-14 Philo says that "our aims do not rest in peace" but engage in ceaseless attacks and counterattacks. "Such is the cycle of unceasing warfare ever revolving round the many-sided soul."

Philo, in third place, describes the war within man as that between the rational and irrational parts of the soul itself:

There are many nations in the soul, in its various irrational parts, I mean such as anger and desire, for which nothing is so useful as to be ruled by reason, their natural ruler and Lord.

Q.G. 4:216

In the same context he refers to the two "brothers" of Gen. 27:29:

[These] are parts of the soul, the rational, and the irrational. . . So long as the former rules, the latter is in a good way of life. But if it becomes indignant and withdraws. . . (the latter) will suffer the evils of anarchy.

Q.G. 4:218

In L.A. 3:116-17, Philo says that "reason is at war with passion, and cannot remain in the same place with it." To be sure, the mind can leave



its proper interests and give itself up to the inferior; this happens "when war prevails in the soul" and reason is taken captive as "a prisoner of war" (*ibid.*) The imagery of reason's being taken captive by the senses is similar to Paul's thought in Rom. 7:23.

That the control of the senses and passions by reason involves a veritable battle is stated repeatedly. In L.A. 3:190 (cf. Sac. 17), Philo likens the struggle to Jacob's wrestling at Peniel (Gen. 32):

The soul engages [in wrestling] against dispositions that are her antagonists, fighting as she does with passions and wickedness.

In Q.G. 4:163 he says:

The noble understanding is a fighter and contestant and is by nature good in battle, always opposing passion and not allowing it to raise itself and rise up.

In Abr. 48, the patriarchs are compared to "men who despise bodily training but foster robustness of soul in their desire for victory over their antagonists, the passions."

A favorite analogy used to depict this struggle is that of a horse, chariot and charioteer.<sup>51</sup> In Virt. 13, Philo says that "the health of the soul is to have its faculties, reason, high spirit and desire, happily tempered, with the reason in command and reining in both the other two, like restive horses." In L.A. 1:72 the same figure appears:

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<sup>51</sup>Cf. Plato's Phaedr. 246a-b, 253c-d, in which the charioteer is τὸ λογικόν, the nobler horse τὸ θυμικόν, and the baser horse τὸ ἐπιθυμικόν.

When the two, the high-spirited and the lustful, are guided by the reasoning faculty as horses by their driver, then justice emerges. . .Whenever, on the other hand, high spirit and desire turn restive and get out of hand, and by the violence of their impetus drag the driver, that is reason, down from his seat and put him under the yoke, and each of the passions gets hold of the reins, injustice prevails.

A similar analogy occurs in Sac. 49 and L.A. 3:193, while in Q.G. 4:218 the figure is broadened to include pilot and ship, army commander and troops, steward and household, statesman and state. Failure to exercise control in any of these is a bad state of affairs, but "of all these the worst and most terrible is anarchy in the soul" (Q.G. 4:218).

In Agr. 67-77, Philo changes the analogy of horses and charioteer and makes a comparison between two men mounted on horseback. One merely "rides" the horse while the second is a true "horseman." The first gives himself over to "an irrational and capricious beast," while the latter continually controls it. Philo then admonishes:

Search. . .your own soul; for you will find among its constituent parts both horses and one who wields the reins and one who is [merely] mounted. . . .Desire and high spirit are the horses. . . The mind is alike mounted man and wielder of the reins; a wielder of the reins, when he mounts accompanied by good sense, a mere mounted man when folly is his companion.

In this analogy Philo appears to depart from his usual dichotomy between reason on the one hand and the senses and passions on the other; the distinction is between the wise mind and the foolish mind. A similar comparison occurs in L.A. 3:79-81: Melchizedek, the mind which is a true king (because king of "peace") is at war with the despotic mind which

"decrees for both soul and body harsh and hurtful decrees working grievous woes." But this departure from Philo's usual categories is more apparent than real. On closer examination both passages illustrate his distinction between the rational and the irrational mind. A further quotation bears this out:

[The subject under consideration] is that of the rational and irrational faculties in the soul, [and] those will have ground for boasting who are convinced that they are able by employing the rational faculties as their allies to get the better of those which are irrational.

Agr. 63

It will be important for our study of Paul that Philo here distinguishes, albeit unconsciously, between the willing agent ("they") and the rational faculty employed, but the matter of note here is that the two faculties of the soul are set in opposition to each other.

One further passage in which Philo appears to depart from his usual scheme should be noted:

Into every soul at its very birth there enter two powers, the salutary and the destructive. If the salutary one is victorious and prevails, the opposite one is too weak to see. And if the latter prevails, no profit at all or little is obtained from the salutary one. . . And this mixture is in both the wicked man and the wise man but not in the same way. For the souls of foolish men have the unbounded and destructive rather than the powerful and salutary (power) . . . but the prudent and noble (soul) rather receives the powerful and salutary (power).

Q.E. 1:23

This classification of souls into two camps according to the "powers" given them at birth is reminiscent of the Dead Sea Scrolls. If taken in

isolation, it would suggest a dualism of two cosmic powers ultimately responsible for all human action. Such a concept is not in keeping with Philo's position generally, however, and the passage is probably closer to Jewish teaching on the עליון וישי than to that of Zoroastrianism or the Qumran community.

b) The escape of the soul from the body

The achievement of harmony in the soul is only an intermediate goal for Philo. The real goal of the religious life is the attainment of the vision of God. To achieve this goal, attainment of the intermediate goal is an important prerequisite. Philo states explicitly in Som. 2:250 that the city of God comes to dwell in a soul "in which there is no warring." In Som. 2:229, he says that the mind of the common man is caught up in the turmoil of worldly affairs, but the mind of the sage is released from storms and wars and is "on the border-line" between the human and the divine. But the goal of union with God requires more than harmony in the soul. It requires a denial of the things of this world and of this life which will allow the escape of the soul from the constraints of the body altogether. Philo's language in this regard is sometimes so other-worldly that it is difficult to know whether the state he describes is achieved in this life or the next.

In his classification of the various kinds of men, Philo describes the "men of God" as those who

have refused to accept membership in the commonwealth of the world and to become citizens therein, but have risen wholly above the sphere of sense perception and have been translated into

the world of the intelligible and dwell therein  
registered as freemen of the commonwealth of Ideas.

Gig. 61

These are the same as those who "study to die to the life of the body, that a higher existence immortal and incorporeal. . . may be their portion" (Gig. 14). In Gig. 53, Philo states that God's spirit abides only in those men who, "having disrobed themselves of all created things and of the innermost veil and wrapping of mere opinion, with mind unhampered and naked will come to God."

Philo's highest example of the escape of the soul from the body is Moses. God, Philo says, appointed Moses "as a god, placing all the bodily region and the mind which rules it in subjection and slavery to him" (Sac. 9). Thus imprisoned in "the ark of the body" (Conf. 106), Moses yearned for "a nature that knows no body" (ibid.) He was a stranger, even an alien there.

His tenancy of the body is not to him merely that  
of the foreigner as immigrant settlers count it.  
To alienate himself from it, never to count it his  
own, is, he holds, to give it its due.

Conf. 82

He yearned to see God, and so entered "on a quest of that which is beyond matter and beyond sight" (Post. 15; cf. Mut. 7-10).

Moses' mystic pilgrimage is symbolized most clearly by his ascent of Mt. Sinai. First, we note that it was Moses alone who went up:

For when the prophetic mind becomes divinely inspired and filled with God, it becomes like the monad, not being at all mixed with any of those things associated with duality. But he who is

resolved into the nature of unity, is said to  
come near to God.

Q.E. 2:29

Then, as we have seen, Moses was changed into the divine and experienced "a second birth better than the first" (Q.E. 2:46), i.e., a birth without a body.

Philo grants that it is impossible in this life to live without a body. In Mig. 7, he concedes that God's command to Abraham, "Depart from thy country and thy kindred and thy father's house" (Gen. 12:1) cannot literally mean to sever oneself from the body and things of sense perception, since "to issue such a command as that would be to prescribe death." No, the words mean: "Make thyself a stranger to them in judgment and purpose; let none of them cling to thee; rise superior to them all."<sup>52</sup>

Still, while the command cannot be fulfilled literally, it loses none of its force. Philo continues his exposition of Gen. 12:1:

Depart, therefore, out of the earthly matter that encompasses thee; escape, man, from the foul prison-house, thy body, with all thy might and main, and from the pleasures and lusts that act as its jailers. . .Depart also out of sense-perception thy kin. For at present thou hast made a loan of thyself to each sense, and art become the property of others. . .But if thou desire to recover the self that thou hast lent and to have thine own possessions about thee. . .thou shalt claim instead a happy life.

Mig. 9-11

In this remarkable passage, Philo says that the self has lent itself to

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<sup>52</sup>Again Philo, like Paul, makes a distinction between living in the flesh (Philo's term is "body"), which is a requirement of this life, and living according to the standards and interests of the flesh (body).

the various senses, and such a loan is essential to life in the body. But if the self is to recover its true life, it must call back the loan and escape from its bodily prison.

While it is impossible in this life to be totally free from the body, then, it is still "the business of wisdom. . .to become estranged from the body and its cravings" (L.A. 1:103).<sup>53</sup> The true man "will not of his own free will go near to the pleasures which are the friends and kin of the body, but will always exercise himself in the lesson of estrangement from them" (Gig. 33). Philo's thought is clear: the true life of the soul is as far removed as possible from the life of the body.

## 6. The Destiny of Man

### a) The immortality of the soul

From what has been said concerning the creation and nature of the soul it is evident that, in contrast to the body, the soul is immortal. A distinction must be made, of course, between the rational and the irrational soul. In L.A. 1:32, Philo states explicitly that the irrational or "earthlike" soul is "corruptible" ( $\phi\thetaαρτός$ ). In Fug. 69, it is called "mortal" ( $\thetaνητός$ ). In contrast, the rational soul is "indestructible" ( $\acute{\alpha}\phi\thetaαρτος$ , Immut. 46) or "immortal" ( $\acute{\alpha}\thetaάνατος$ , Prob. 46; Cong. 97; Spec. 1:81).

Two passages can be singled out which refer with special clarity

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<sup>53</sup>Cf. Plato's Phaedo 65a: "So it is clear. . .in the case of physical pleasures that the philosopher frees his soul from an association with the body, so far as it is possible."

to the immortal nature of the rational soul. The first is Immut. 46:

This branch of the soul was not formed of the same elements out of which the other branches were brought to completion, but it was allotted something better and purer, the substance in fact out of which divine natures were wrought. And therefore it is reasonably held that the mind alone in all that makes us what we are is indestructible.

In this passage, which follows closely Plato's Timaeus 69c, Philo seems to hold that the rational soul is immortal by its very constitution, and not as a special gift from God. This is his position generally, and is closer to Greek than to biblical thought.

The second passage is Her. 276:

When he [i.e., Moses] represents the good man as not dying but departing, there is sound doctrine in the words. He would have the nature of the fully purified soul shown as unquenchable and immortal, destined to journey from hence to heaven, not to meet with dissolution and corruption, which death appears to bring.

It is evident from this passage (cf. L.A. 1:105) that death is the separation of the indestructible soul from the corruptible body, at least in the case of the "good man." We shall see later that Philo's position with regard to the wicked is more equivocal.

The principle of the immortality of the soul is illustrated in Philo's treatises on the patriarchs and Moses. Abraham, at Sarah's death, was not carried away with excessive sorrow, for wisdom

taught him that death is not the extinction of the soul but its separation and detachment from the body and its return to the place whence it



came; and it came, as was shown in the story of creation, from God.

Abr. 258

Joseph, after his father's death in Egypt, still treated his brothers with kindness, for he reasoned that

no good man is dead, but will live for ever, proof against old age, with a soul immortal in its nature no longer fettered by the restraints of the body.

Jos. 264

Not only does Philo state the fact of immortality, but he uses scripture to prove its reality. In this regard his favorite passage is Gen. 15:15, in which God says to Abraham: "You shall go to your fathers in peace." Philo argues:

Clearly this indicates the incorruptibility of the soul, which removes its habitation from the mortal body and returns as to the mother-city, from which it originally moved its habitation to this place. . . . What else is this than to represent another kind of life without the body, which only the soul of the wise man ought to live?

Q.G. 3:11

#### b) The destiny of the soul

Philo, as we have seen, depicts death as the separation of the immortal soul from the body, the dissolution of the mixture of which man is composed. It is difficult at times, because of Philo's mystical language, to tell whether this escape from the body may take place even in this life. In Fug. 78 Philo asks: "Is not life eternal to take refuge with him that IS, and death to flee away from him?"<sup>54</sup> Goodenough com-

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<sup>54</sup>The parallel to John 17:3 is arresting.

ments: "Eternal life is a flight *πρὸς τὸ ὄν*, toward Being."<sup>55</sup> It is not at all clear that this life must await physical death.

A passage which illustrates Philo's other-worldly stance while recognizing the inevitability of physical death is Conf. 75-82. The wicked, Philo says, find a place of folly and settle there "as though it were their fatherland." The wise, in contrast, are "sojourners":

Their souls are never colonists leaving heaven for a new home. Their way is to visit earthly nature as men who travel abroad to see and learn. So when they have stayed awhile in their bodies, and beheld through them all that sense and mortality has to show, they make their way back to the place from which they set out at the first. To them the heavenly region, where their citizenship lies, is their native land; the earthly region in which they become sojourners is a foreign country.

Both for the mystic and the ordinary man, however, the point of physical death comes, and soul and body go their separate ways. The body, being of the earth, returns to the earth, but what is the destiny of the soul? In Cher. 114-15, a passage quoted earlier, Philo confesses ignorance. "Whence came the soul," he asks, and "whither will it go? What [will become] of it after death?" He attempts an answer to his question:

Then we who are here joined to the body, creatures of composition and quality, shall be no more, but shall go forward to our rebirth, to be with the unbodied, without composition and without quality.

Cher. 114

That Philo does not mean reincarnation by "rebirth" is clear from the

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<sup>55</sup>"Philo on Immortality," p. 102.

phrases which follow the term; it means to be with the "unbodied," or to be without "composition" or "quality."

A second passage in which Philo wrestles with the destiny of the soul is Her. 280-83, where he again expounds on the word "fathers" in Gen. 15:15. Who are these "fathers" to whom the soul is "gathered" at death?

Possibly, as some say, the sun, moon and other stars to which it is held that all things on earth owe their birth and framing, or, as others think, the archetypal ideas which, invisible and intelligible there, are the patterns of things visible and sensible here -- the ideas in which, as they say, the mind of the Sage finds its home. Others again have surmised that by "fathers" are meant the four first principles and potentialities, from which the world has been framed, earth, water, air and fire. For into these, they say, each thing that has come into being is duly resolved. . . Thus the soul whose nature is intellectual and celestial will depart to find a father in ether, the purest of the substances.

It is obvious, as Wolfson points out,<sup>56</sup> that Philo here presents various philosophical positions of his day. It is not the case, as Wolfson claims, that he rejects them all. Indeed, almost all of them can be found at some place in his writings. In Q.G. 4:111, Philo suggests that the home of the soul may be "in the ether and heaven or, still higher, with their governor, the divine Logos." In Sac. 5, he says that when Abraham left this world he "inherited incorruption and became equal to the angels, for angels -- those unbodied and blessed souls -- are the host and people of God." In Her. 276, he speaks of the destiny of the

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<sup>56</sup>I, 398-400.

"fully purified soul" as being "to journey from hence to heaven," while in Gig. 31 he states that souls which are "free from flesh and body spend their days in the theatre of the universe," seeing and hearing things divine. Again, Philo says that the destiny of the soul is to be with God, from whom it originally came (Abr. 258; Fug. 78), or simply to return to its home (Gig. 13).<sup>57</sup> In Mos. 2:108, he says that "a soul that is dear to God receives immortality, and is inscribed in the records of God, sharing the eternal life of the sun and moon and the whole universe."

True to his Platonic concept of being, Philo often depicts the destiny of the soul in the most immaterial terms, namely its return to the forms or ideas or logoi which constitute its essential nature. In Gig. 61, as we have seen, he says that the men of God are "translated into the world of the intelligible and dwell therein registered as freemen of the commonwealth of Ideas, which are imperishable and incorporeal." In Q.G. 1:86 (cf. Post. 43; Mut. 38), he expounds on the "translation" of Enoch (Gen. 5:24) and says:

The end of worthy and holy men is not death but translation and approaching another place. . .  
[that is] from a sensible and visible place to an incorporeal and intelligible form.

In Q.G. 3:11, he says of the "fathers" to whom the soul is gathered at death: "To me. . .it seems to indicate the incorporeal Logoi of the divine world, whom elsewhere it is accustomed to call 'angels.'"

As usual, Philo's supreme example of the destiny of the soul is

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<sup>57</sup>Philo assumes the pre-existence of souls. See, e.g., Opif. 135; Som. 1:138; Gig. 12-13.

Moses. As Philo regards Moses as a special kind of being, this example may not be appropriate for ordinary men; nevertheless Philo's treatment of Moses is instructive. As the place of Moses' burial is said in Deut. 34:6 to be unknown, there is ample opportunity for Philo to use Moses' "passing" to depict the soul's flight to and union with God. This he does in two important passages:

When he had ended his anthems. . .he began to pass over from mortal existence to life immortal and gradually became conscious of the disuniting of the elements of which he was composed. The body, the shell-like growth which encased him, was being stripped away and the soul laid bare and yearning for its natural removal hence.

Virt. 76

Afterwards the time came when he had to make his pilgrimage from earth to heaven, and leave this mortal life for immortality, summoned thither by the Father who resolved his twofold nature of soul and body into a single unity, transforming his whole being into mind, pure as the sunlight.

Mos. 2:288

Moses' death thus meant his change from a dyad into a monad. His rebirth, like that on Mt. Sinai (Q.E. 2:46), was one free of the mixture of soul and body.

Another passage describes Moses in such other-worldly terms that his death did not involve the dissolution of the mixture found in ordinary men:

There are still others whom God has advanced even higher, and has trained them to soar above species and genus alike and stationed them beside himself. Such is Moses to whom he says, "Stand here with me" (Deut. 5:31). And so when Moses was about to die we do not hear of his "leaving" or "being added"

like the others. [There was] no room in him for adding or taking away.

Sac. 8

Moses, that is, was a monad from the very beginning, and at his death there was nothing to be added or taken away. This docetic view is extreme even for Philo, but it is not out of keeping with his statements about Moses elsewhere.

### c) Personal immortality

Did Philo conceive of immortality as the continued personal existence of the soul or as its absorption back into the universal soul or God? Scholars are divided on this question. Wolfson, who is emphatic that there is no universal soul in Philo apart from the immanent powers of God, argues that for Philo "immortality means the eternal persistence of the individual soul as a distinct entity."<sup>58</sup> Goodenough, on the other hand, inclines to the side of complete union with God. "In his indifference to personal identity," he states, "Philo is completely Greek."<sup>59</sup>

Two passages in Philo, which do not resolve the issue, are nevertheless instructive for his view of death and that which immediately follows death. In Sac. 10 he says with regard to Moses' "passing":

I judge that the soul itself which is passing thus does not know of its change to better things, for at that hour it is filled with the spirit of God.

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<sup>58</sup>Wolfson, I, 396.

<sup>59</sup>"Philo on Immortality," p. 107. Earlier Goodenough says: "It is impossible to say whether for Philo that meant what we shall call 'personal immortality,' or was a spiritual absorption into the Source by which the individual spirit became an anonymous part of the universal Spirit" (p. 101).

The second passage is Virt. 76, which has just been quoted and which states that Moses, as he "began to pass over from mortal existence to life immortal. . . gradually became conscious of the disuniting of the elements of which he was composed." Philo is not logically consistent in these two passages, but it may be that he is describing two different stages in the soul's passing to God.

#### d) Hell

We have seen that Philo conceived of the life to come as a blessed existence in the presence of God, or in heaven, or with the angels. It is significant that in his writings there is only limited reference to a messianic kingdom<sup>60</sup> and none whatsoever to resurrection. There is also no rebirth to life on this earth in the style found in Plato's writings;<sup>61</sup> if Philo was aware of such teaching, he ignored or rejected it.

Did Philo believe in an eternal hell? He can certainly use such language. In Cher. 2 he says that "he who is cast forth by God is subject to eternal banishment," and continues:

The horrors of the future must needs be undying and eternal; he is thrust forth to the place of the impious, there to endure misery continuous and unrelieved.

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<sup>60</sup>E. P. Sanders, "The Covenant as a Soteriological Category and the Nature of Salvation in Palestinian and Hellenistic Judaism," in Robert Hamerton-Kelly and Robin Scroggs, eds. Jews, Greeks and Christians (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1976), p. 32, points out that Philo does have "a version of the traditional hope of the redemption of Israel from foreign powers"; e.g., in Praem. 162-72.

<sup>61</sup>E.g., Laws 903d, 904e; Meno 81b-d; Phaedo 70c-d; 81b-82c; 113a; Phaedr. 248c-249d.

In other passages the same imagery recurs:

In my judgment and in that of my friends, preferable to life with impious men would be death with pious men; for awaiting those who die in this way there will be undying life, but awaiting those who live in that way there will be eternal death.

Post. 39

Men think that death is the termination of punishment, but in the divine court it is hardly the beginning.

Praem. 69

It would not be surprising, however, that Philo meant such language in spiritual rather than literal terms. This in fact is what we find. While he describes Hades in Som. 1:151 (cf. Her. 78; Q.E. 2:40) as "the abode allotted to the bad," he explains in Cong. 57 that what he means by this is the separation of the soul from God, and not physical torment:

[God] banishes the unjust and godless souls from himself to the furthest bounds, and disperses them to the place of pleasures and lusts and injustices. That place is most fitly called the place of the impious, but it is not that mythical place of the impious in Hades. For the true Hades is the life of the bad, a life of damnation and blood-guiltiness, the victim of every curse.

In this description of hell, Philo anticipates the liberal theologians of eighteen centuries later.

## 7. Summary

Philo's writings represent a remarkable fusion of Greek philosophical ideas and Jewish religious thought. This fusion is not limited to



unimportant details nor is it a superficial veneer imposed on a background totally uncongenial to it. Rather it is a coherent, if not always consistent, system of thought produced by a Jewish writer who, while remaining loyal to his own religious tradition, was thoroughly at home in and in sympathy with the philosophy of Greece.

The view of the nature and destiny of man in Philo is a significant departure from that of traditional Judaism. First, it represents a whole-hearted acceptance of the duality of body and soul, the material and the immaterial, in which the latter is infinitely superior to the former. Second, within this dualism of body and soul man is seen as a complex mixture of reason, emotions and sense-perception in which the hierarchy of parts is matched by a hierarchy of values. The body, though not evil in itself, is the seat of the senses and passions which war against the soul. The immediate goal of the religious life is the control of the senses and passions by the higher mind, while the ultimate goal of union with God requires that the soul pass beyond the realm of the body altogether. Attainment of the first goal involves a battle between the mind on the one hand and the senses and passions on the other, while achievement of the ultimate goal requires a world-denying stance which makes possible the mystic vision.

Third, the destiny of man is seen in terms of the soul rather than the body. There is no mention in Philo of the resurrection of the body and little concern for a messianic kingdom. The fate of the wicked is to be eternally separated from God, while the destiny of the purified soul is to be in the presence of God or to return to the archetypal forms from whence it came. It is unclear in Philo whether this means continued

personal immortality, but it is a state of happiness beyond comprehension in this life.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### EXEGESIS OF ROMANS 7:7-25

#### A. PRESUPPOSITIONS

It will be in order, before undertaking an exegesis of Romans 7:7-25, to set forth my understanding of Paul's religio-philosophical orientation and also of those concepts of the nature of man and of the origin and nature of sin which he may have inherited from Hebrew-speaking and Greek-speaking Judaism. As stated in the introduction, these findings provide a guideline for what Paul may have meant in his statements about man and sin; what he actually meant must be discovered by the exegesis itself.

##### 1. Paul's Religio-Philosophical Orientation

Scholarly opinion on Paul's religio-philosophical orientation has been set forth fully above (chapter one). I am in agreement with those who see Paul as a Jew of the Diaspora, fundamentally oriented to his ancestral religion but open to and influenced by the currents of religious and philosophical thought which surrounded him. The question whether he "grew up" in Jerusalem (and "at the feet of Gamaliel") probably cannot be decided with certainty; on the basis of Paul's writings and the course of his life's work I am inclined to a negative verdict.

Acknowledgement that Paul was aware of the cultural and philosophical currents which surrounded him should not be taken as a claim that he had first-hand knowledge of Greek literary and philosophical works; there is little evidence of this in his writings. Of course, if we possessed more of his writings than a few brief letters, almost all of which were addressed to particular church situations, our estimate of his knowledge of Greek thought might be revised in an upward direction (Romans 2 should make us aware of that possibility). The argument from silence is admittedly precarious; at the same time, Paul's silence on particular matters should not be taken as evidence that he was not familiar with them.

It has become a commonplace in Pauline scholarship that the Greek thought which is present in Paul reached him through a Hellenized form of Judaism. This is almost certainly true; but there is also no reason to suppose that, in a city such as Tarsus or elsewhere in the world of his day, Paul could not have become familiar with the religious and philosophical ideas of the time through the general atmosphere which surrounded him. In any case if (as is generally agreed) the Judaism of Palestine had accommodated itself in great measure to Greek culture, thought and language, this must have been the case to a greater degree in the Diaspora. It has often been remarked that the Greek presence in the eastern Mediterranean was something of long standing, reaching back to Alexander the Great and earlier. An example of the extent of that influence is the translation of the Jewish scriptures into Greek, beginning in the middle of the third century B.C.E. By Paul's time, Greek-speaking Jews had been using the LXX (at least of the Torah) for as long as English-speaking Pro-

testants in the early twentieth century had been using the King James Version of the Bible.

It is also more reasonable to assume, with Laeuchli,<sup>1</sup> that the use of Greek words and phrases carried with it something of the meaning of those terms in the Greek language than to hold that the user dissociated himself from such meaning and held to the connotation in his native tongue. Certainly the burden of proof is on those who claim that Paul, whose language of everyday use was Greek, merely borrowed Greek terms and did not employ them in their natural sense.

All of this means that Paul, when using Greek anthropological terms, may reasonably be held to have employed them in essentially their Greek sense. This is the opinion of many scholars, especially of those who are prepared to grant Greek influence in Paul generally. Others, who are reluctant to find Greek thought in Paul, allow that he used dualistic terms but hold that he did so rarely, or imprecisely, or in other than their original sense. Only a few scholars (notably of the existentialist school) deny any Greek meaning in Paul whatsoever.

It is not my intention to argue that various aspects of Paul's theology (e.g., his Christology or soteriology) were formulated in terms of Hellenistic thought. Our sole concern is with his use of dualistic language and the question whether such usage implies dualistic meaning. The purpose of the preceding chapters has been to discover how Hebrew-speaking and Greek-speaking Judaism viewed the relation of body and soul in man and the nature of the religious struggle, and thereby to have a

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<sup>1</sup>P. 24.

criterion against which to judge Paul's usage in Rom. 7.

## 2. The Nature of Man and the Origin and Nature of Sin in Hebrew-speaking Judaism

### a) The nature of man

Paul's inheritance from Hebrew-speaking Judaism in terms of the nature of man may be set out according to the bodies of Hebrew literature reviewed in chapter two above.

#### (i) The Old Testament

The Old Testament was by far the most important source of Paul's thought concerning the nature of man. According to the Old Testament, man is a creature -- weak, finite, subject to death and decay, yet given life and breath as a gift from God. Man is made in the image of God; he has dominion over other creatures, and has attributes of thought and will analogous in some sense to those of God himself. He is made for fellowship with God; he is able to hear God's word and respond in love or reject God's word in rebellion and disobedience. His relationship to God is characterized by the word "spirit," a term applied primarily to God but also to man in his capacity of being in communication with God.

Even in the Old Testament, however, there are developments in the concept of man or in the characteristic description of man. Physical terms give way to non-physical terms, or when physical terms are retained (e.g., "breath," "heart") they acquire non-physical meaning. Especially is this true of "spirit," which comes to represent man's whole emotional and spiritual life.

From the Old Testament, Paul would have inherited a holistic view of man from which concepts such as the opposition of body and soul, the depreciation of the body as a tomb or prison of the soul, the pre-existence of the soul and the notion of "spirit" as a divine self in man were absent. Nevertheless, it was also a view in which changing concepts of man's future life could be found. In the greater part of the Old Testament, the end of life is simply death, or the grave, or Sheol. But beginnings of hope in life beyond death appear in the later books, arising apparently from the failure of the doctrine of retribution and from a sense of God's indestructible love. This hope expresses itself in two forms: the resurrection of the body (and restoration to life on this earth), and continued personal existence in the presence of God. Both concepts grow in importance in later writings.

(ii) Ben Sira

The wisdom of Ben Sira was well known to Jews in Paul's day. In this book the portrait of man is essentially that of the Old Testament. Man is made in the image of God, with dominion over other creatures and the ability to know God and respond to his law. He is also a mortal creature; rewards and punishments are worked out in this life, and the end of man (apart from a shadowy existence in Sheol) is the grave.

(iii) 1 Enoch

The book later known as the Ethiopic Apocalypse of Enoch was also, with the possible exception of ch. 37-71, known to Jews in Paul's day, although whether familiar to Paul himself we do not know. The view of man's nature in this book is essentially that of the Old Testament, with

some of the emphases found in wisdom literature (man's power of understanding and his knowledge of God through the works of creation).

The book is remarkable for its wrestling with the question of man's mortality. Man, the writer says, was created immortal like the angels, but sinned and became mortal; he now seeks for eternal life. The writer provides a complicated eschatological scheme which combines traditional Jewish concepts with elements usually thought to be Hellenistic. There will be a day of judgment, the resurrection of the righteous, and an earthly kingdom of peace and prosperity. But there will also be eternal life in the presence of God, or with the angels; the "spirits" of the righteous will shine like the stars of heaven, while the wicked will suffer eternal destruction with the fallen stars and angels. With the exception of the ascetic tone of ch. 108, the most marked occurrence of anthropological dualism is in passages dealing with life after death.

#### (iv) The Dead Sea Scrolls

It is unlikely that Paul was directly acquainted with any of the writings of the Qumran sect. He must, however, have been familiar with the teachings of the Essenes, as the movement was not confined to the Dead Sea community. Specific instances of indebtedness to Essene thought are difficult to document; in any event, the sect's position on the nature of man is essentially that of the Old Testament.

Man, according to the Dead Sea Scrolls, is a creature of dust, totally other than and inferior to God. He is characterized by the "spirit" which God has given him, but apparently nothing more is meant by this than in the later writings of the canon. The "spirits" of truth and falsehood struggle in the heart of man by God's decree, but despite the setting



of cosmic dualism man is free to choose his own fate.

The writings of the Qumran sect are marked by a strong sense of the impending end of the age, and the imagery suggests both an earthly kingdom and life in the presence of God. It is probable that the basic concept is of an earthly kingdom, but the apocalyptic language has carried it beyond the present age. There is in any event no immortality of the soul in the Greek style (just as the flesh is not equated with sin), and the focus is more on the destiny of the community than on the fate of the individual.

(v) 4 Ezra

With 4 Ezra we come to a book which was apparently written after Paul's time; it is therefore not a question of Paul's indebtedness to such a work, but of its reflecting a point of view with which he would have been familiar. The distance in time is not great -- perhaps fifty years -- and while the destruction of the temple took place in the interim its effect upon Jewish thought concerning the nature of man was minimal.

The author of 4 Ezra (whether his view is represented by the seer, the angel, or the book as a whole) was concerned with problems of theodicy and eschatology and saw the latter as the solution to the former. Man was created by God; the writer follows both Genesis accounts and places emphasis upon man's mental capacities. The traditional view of man is altered, however, by a marked body-soul dualism. The body is mortal, and like a prison-house of the soul; the soul comes to it at birth and leaves it at death. The view of human destiny likewise contains a wide range of concepts: resurrection, judgment and a messianic kingdom, but also the destruction of this world and its replacement by a new age of incorruption

and immortality. Eternal life is entered at death. The righteous go to be with God; they see him face to face and shine like stars, while the wicked are tormented in hell forever.

(vi) 2 Baruch

2 Baruch was apparently written at approximately the same time as 4 Ezra. It is not clear that the book sets out to answer 4 Ezra; both works may reflect concerns common to their age.

The view of man in 2 Baruch is revealed largely in the book's eschatological schemes, which include both an earthly kingdom and life in the presence of God. The messianic age marks the end of this corruptible world and the start of a world of incorruption. Resurrection takes place at the end of the messianic age, but for purposes of recognition only. The righteous will then be transformed into the splendor of angels, a mode of existence fit to inhabit the world of eternity. Their souls will shine like the stars, while sinners will be tormented in fire. As in 4 Ezra, the accent is on incorruption and a new mode of life rather than resurrection and a messianic kingdom.

(vii) The Rabbis

The writings of the Rabbis are difficult to date, and the evolution of any one idea is impossible to trace with precision. But the nature of the literature allows us to assume that the central concepts which are expressed are matters of long standing. The writings of the Tannaim are, in any event, only some one hundred or 150 years later than Paul.

The Rabbis, like the apocryphal writers, speculated on the "image of God" in man; it must mean that man can act in some sense like God.

Nevertheless, man is a creature and not God. Again like the apocryphal writers, the Rabbis drew attention to the dual nature of man. This dual nature is reflected in accounts of creation (man's body is from the earth, his soul from heaven; the soul existed before its entrance into the body) and in the conception and birth of the individual (the body is received from one's parents, the spirit-life-soul from God). The explicit dissociation of the soul from the body in Rabbinic writings is difficult to date; it may not predate the third century.

There is a diversity of elements in Rabbinic thought concerning the world to come. Literal depictions of the resurrection are found together with the hope of eternal bliss in the very presence of God. The future life of the individual is sometimes expressed in strongly dualistic terms. Death is the separation of the soul from the body; the body is cast off, while the soul is preserved. Both body and soul will come into judgment, but the soul, being more akin to God, will be judged more severely. This strict body-soul dualism, again is difficult to date.

#### (viii) Summary

Paul's inheritance from Hebrew-speaking Judaism was one from which dualistic language and conceptions were not absent. These dualistic conceptions (the increasing distinction between the physical and non-physical aspects of man's nature, the antagonism between body and soul in which the former is understood as the prison-house of the latter, the spiritualization of concepts of human destiny beyond this life) emerge most clearly, to be sure, from the time of 4 Ezra, 2 Baruch and the Rab-

bis, but the antecedents of these concepts can be found in earlier writings contemporaneous with and even prior to Paul.

b) The origin and nature of sin

As Paul received his basic understanding of man from Hebrew-speaking Judaism, so he must have received his fundamental view of sin from the same source.

(i) The Old Testament

The Old Testament provided the Jewish people with their fundamental concept of sin. Sin is essentially an act of the will, and is expressed most clearly in rebellion against God and rejection of his law. It is seen more typically in the act than the thought, and in concrete actions than in abstract principles. It incurs guilt and calls for punishment.

Even in the Old Testament, however, some development in the understanding of sin takes place. While the notion of sin as impurity or uncleanness is not given up, there is an increased emphasis on the moral nature of sin. Again, there is a growing emphasis on individual responsibility and on sin as the transgression of the law.

There is in the Old Testament no consistent doctrine of the origin of sin; the universality of sin is assumed, not argued. Sin is ingrained in man; it is a stubborn, rebellious attitude toward God (e.g., the "rebellious heart" of Jeremiah). It is not specifically located in the flesh. The remedy for sin is in keeping with this understanding of sin; it is repentance, confession and restitution on the part of man and

forgiveness on the part of God. The ultimate remedy for sin is God's gift of a new heart or spirit (Ezek. 36:26).

(ii) Ben Sira

In the writings of Ben Sira Paul would have found a similar concept of sin. Sin is disobedience of the Torah, just as righteousness is the fulfilment of the Torah. But he would also have found an attempt to explain the origin of sin in such a way that it cannot be attributed to God. Sin is ascribed to the solidarity of the race (it goes back to "woman"), or to the evil impulse. In any case man sins by the exercise of his imagination or will. The worst sin is to forsake God in pride and self-confidence and to act unjustly toward one's fellow man. Sin can be atoned for by repentance, sacrifice and good deeds.

(iii) 1 Enoch

If Paul was familiar with the (Ethiopic) Apocalypse of Enoch, he would have found there further speculation on the origin of sin, particularly in terms of the story of the fallen angels in Gen. 6. In the writer's interpretation of this story, the accent falls primarily on the angels' imparting of knowledge to mankind and secondarily on fornication (the illicit union of heavenly beings with women). The result of this primeval sin was physical death and other human ills, but the story is not made into a doctrine of original sin.

Paul would also have found in 1 Enoch the traditional teaching that man sins by his own choice. Sin was not sent into the world, but man of himself creates it; he can also choose righteousness and life. Particular stress is laid on the sins of the rich and powerful who per-

secute the righteous, pervert the law and blaspheme against God. Except for the elaboration of the fallen-angel story, then, the view of sin is that of the Old Testament. There is no explicit equation of the flesh and sin.

#### (iv) The Dead Sea Scrolls

Paul, as we have said, was probably unfamiliar with the writings of the Qumran community, especially if they were a conservative sect on the shores of the Dead Sea and he was a Jew of the Diaspora. In any event, the sect's view of sin follows essentially that of the Old Testament, with a heightened sense of predestination and of cosmic dualism.

Sin, for the Qumran community, is the transgression of the laws of Moses (as interpreted by the sons of Zadok) and of the rules of the sect. Perfection of way is expected of the members of the community, and transgressions are punished by appropriate penalties. The true nature of sin is characterized as "walking in the stubbornness of one's heart," or as "guilty rebellion." In many texts it is attributed to the "evil inclination" (even in the case of the fallen angels). All of these expressions are part of one package: sin is following one's own will instead of the will of God.

In spite of the strong sense of predestination (and explicit statements that God appointed some to follow the Angel of Darkness), sin is not characteristically blamed on assignment by God to the evil lot. In spite of the accent on "Satan," sin is not blamed on a cosmic evil power. And in spite of the heightened sense of man's sinfulness and unworthiness as "flesh" (weak, corruptible and utterly unworthy of God),

sin is not equated with the flesh. In brief, sin is not ascribed to cosmic or anthropological dualism; it is a matter of man's free will vis-à-vis God's law.

(v) 4 Ezra

With 4 Ezra, we face the exegetical problem of determining the point of view of the author of the book. Is it that of the angel? the seer? both of them together? Fortunately this problem does not affect the question of the nature of sin, but only man's ability to avoid sin. Sin is unfaithfulness to the law; it results in estrangement from God. The wicked are punished for their sins, and none can intercede for them. A pessimistic view of man's ability to keep the law pervades the book; man is responsible to keep the law but cannot do so, so in the end few will be saved.

The book is remarkable for its attempt to explain the origin of sin. The beginning of sin was Adam's disobedience which brought death to himself and all his descendants and was somehow connected to the sin of all mankind. Adam sinned because of the "evil seed" or "wicked heart," and his followers did the same. The law was given but was impotent to prevent sin, for the evil heart was not taken away. Nevertheless, each man is responsible for his sins, and transgressions will be punished.

If 4 Ezra was written c. 100 C.E., there is no possibility of Paul's dependence on the book, but the appearance of common elements in 4 Ezra and Paul shows that both are acquainted with a common tradition. In any case, apart from the negative judgment on man's ability to keep the law the book remains true to the traditional Jewish concept of sin.

The evil impulse is the cause, not the result, of the sin of Adam, and the same is true of his descendants. Sin is not attributed specifically to the flesh, in spite of the ascetic tendencies of the book.

(vi) 2 Baruch

2 Baruch also appears to have been written after Paul but certainly incorporates ideas from an earlier period. Like the author of 4 Ezra, the writer wrestles with the origin of sin and man's responsibility for sin. His answers are more orthodox than those of 4 Ezra; man can keep the law if he so chooses.

The effect of Adam's sin is "darkness," i.e., death for all mankind and all sorts of physical and emotional troubles, but not the sin of his descendants. Each man is the Adam of his own soul; each man chooses "light" or "darkness." Judgment is according to one's fulfilment of God's law (written and unwritten). No reference is made to the evil impulse, and the flesh is not equated with sin.

(vii) The Rabbis

The Rabbinic view of sin follows in the Old Testament tradition, with notable developments regarding the evil impulse. Sin is the transgression of the commandments, whether moral or ritual. Yet the accent is not on mere mechanical fulfilment; rather, it is on intention, or "directing the heart." Hence the most serious sin of all is the attitude of "casting off the yoke" or "denying the root"; it means the wilful rejection of God and his law.

The Rabbis attempted to reduce the law to a basic principle or principles (e.g., the three cardinal sins of idolatry, adultery and mur-



der and the attitudes and actions associated with each). Inherent in all sin, however, is the misuse of the will; this is a given in Rabbinic thought, and was not seen to conflict with the concept of God's sovereign will.

Although speculation about the effects of Adam's sin appears, the Rabbis did not have a consistent doctrine of the origin of sin. Generally they held that Adam's sin brought death into the world, but some uneasiness is apparent about ascribing the death of subsequent generations to Adam. There is also speculation about the sin of Eve; her sin is seen as a sexual one (with the serpent), and this unnatural lust is held to have been removed at Sinai. Generally there is no doctrine of inherited sin, and sin is not specifically related to the flesh.

The principal Rabbinic explanation of individual sins is the evil impulse. By the evil impulse the Rabbis meant that vital energy which belongs to human nature and manifests itself in sexual desire, self-glorification, ambition and even rebellion against God. The evil impulse is dangerous and potentially sinful; it is also necessary and potentially good. Man himself chooses to make it good or evil.

The origin of the evil impulse is ascribed to God, and God is said to have repented creating it. The evil impulse is not located specifically in the flesh (nor the good impulse in the soul), but in the heart, i.e. in the centre of man's thought, desire, volition. Sometimes it appears to be other than a man's own self (e.g., the tempter or Satan), but more characteristically it is a man's own will. The chief remedy for the evil impulse is the law. The struggle against it has moral value and is sometimes deliberately chosen when it could be avoided. The goal of the strug-

gle is more characteristically the control of the evil impulse than its annihilation; in the world to come it will be destroyed by God.

#### (viii) Summary

From Hebrew-speaking Judaism Paul received the concept of sin as rebellion against God and rejection of his law; i.e., sin is essentially the misuse of free will. Attempts were made to explain the origin of sin by a catastrophe at the dawn of human history, but no fully articulated doctrine of inherited sinfulness was worked out nor was sin specifically located in the flesh. Beginning with Ben Sira the evil impulse came to be one of the principal explanations for the occurrence of individual sins, but that concept served more as a description of sin than an explanation. Specifically dualistic notions of sin are not prominent, although in Rabbinic thought the soul is more responsible for sin than is the body.

### 3. The Nature of Man and the Origin and Nature of Sin in Greek-speaking Judaism

To the extent that Paul was a Greek-speaking Jew of the Diaspora he must have shared the views of the nature of man and the origin and nature of sin held by other Hellenistic Jews. He need not have been part of a school of thought such as that represented by Philo and 4 Maccabees; indeed, there is little evidence that his thought moved in such sharply Hellenistic categories. But much of the perspective revealed in the writings of Greek-speaking Judaism must have been familiar to him, and he doubtless shared that perspective to greater or lesser degree. The extent to which he did share it must be determined from his writings.

The literature reviewed in chapter three above reveals a marked divergence from that of Hebrew-speaking Judaism in terms of the nature of man and the origin and nature of sin. All three writers lived just prior to Paul or overlapped with his life. No claim is made here that Paul was acquainted specifically with these writings. Our concern is to determine the views of the nature of man and sin which are found in this literature and with which Paul also may have been familiar.

a) The nature of man

The view of man in Greek-speaking Judaism, while resting on an Old Testament base, reveals a marked shift in the direction of body-soul dualism. This adjustment can be seen in the three authors whose works are reviewed above.

(i) Wisdom of Solomon

In Wisdom of Solomon a direct contrast is made between the soul and the body. The soul exists before its entrance into the body; it is lent to the body, and while it is in the body the latter constitutes a burden upon it.

The author of Wisdom of Solomon holds that death was not part of God's original intention for man; it came in through the "devil's envy," i.e., through sin prompted by the devil. The interest of the author is not in biological or physical life and death, however, but in spiritual life, which is the life of the soul. The true destiny of man is beyond this life, and is entered immediately at death. That life is depicted in spiritual terms: it is immortality, the soul's peaceful existence in the hand of God; it is characterized by shining like the stars. There is no

reference to resurrection. To be sure, the concept is not totally Greek; immortality is not a quality natural to the soul, but God's gift. Nevertheless, the entire eschatology is in spiritual form.

(ii) 4 Maccabees

4 Maccabees contains no clear statement of the nature of man, but assumes the Greek notion of the various parts of the soul. The interest of the author is in the soul, not the body. The body is not evil in itself (the passions are not to be eliminated, but controlled), but the soul is the real self. The destiny of man is immortality, or eternal life in the presence of God. It is entered immediately at death.

(iii) Philo

Philo's writings are permeated through and through with Greek ideas of the nature of man, although these are tied into a framework provided by the Jewish scriptures.

The "image of God" in man is God's *λόγος*; in ideal man it forms the whole of his nature, while in corporeal man it constitutes his rational soul or mind. Empirical man is a mixture of body and soul; the body is created by God's powers, while the soul is placed in man by God himself.

The soul is tripartite in nature. The highest part is reason, the next the higher emotions, and the lowest the passions which depend upon the senses. Functionally man is a duality of soul and body, the immaterial and the material. The soul is infinitely superior to the body, and is the real "I." The body is not only inferior, but is the source of sin. This is due not so much to its being composed of matter as to its being the seat of the passions. The body is a prison, coffin, corpse or

shell; it weighs down the soul and works against the soul's highest good. The destiny of man is in terms of the soul; death is the separation of the soul from the body and its return to God or heaven or the Platonic forms. Even the persistence of the individual soul is uncertain; it may be that the soul is merged completely with God.

#### (iv) Summary

The understanding of man held by Greek-speaking Jews of Paul's day was essentially dualistic -- the antagonism of body and soul in which the soul is the real self while the body is a prison or coffin or corpse; the hierarchy of values represented by reason, emotions and the passions; the depiction of individual human destiny in spiritual rather than physical terms. To the extent that Paul shared this outlook he was at home with both dualistic language and dualistic meaning.

#### b) The origin and nature of sin

The concept of sin in Greek-speaking Judaism is tied to the concept of the nature of man. Sin is more a matter of the bodily passions (which war against the soul) than of transgression of God's law.

#### (i) Wisdom of Solomon

The origin and nature of sin is not dealt with at length in Wisdom of Solomon. Death came into the world through the "envy of the devil," which means the sin prompted by the devil; but there is no doctrine of inherited sin. Man sins by his own choice, and though the body weighs down the soul it is not explicitly said to be the source of sin.

#### (ii) 4 Maccabees

4 Maccabees much more clearly relates the flesh and sin, and does

so in the Greek sense. At the same time, the Jewish doctrine of creation and the essential goodness of man are maintained.

According to this author, the passions are implanted in man by God and are therefore good; the role of reason is not to eradicate the passions but to control them. This it does in two ways: by means of the four Greek virtues (especially temperance and self-control) which are the opposites of the passions, and by God's law, given to man as a guide for conduct. There is a constant struggle in man between reason and the passions, like that of an athlete in a contest or the helmsman of a ship. Some people fail in this struggle through "weakness of reason." The goal of the struggle is two-fold: the establishment of a harmonious inner kingdom and, ultimately, immortal life in the presence of God.

### (iii) Philo

In Philo, as in 4 Maccabees, the concept of sin is in keeping with the concept of man. The principal imagery is that of a war between reason and the passions. The nature of sin is reflected in what Philo says concerning the goal of the religious life.

The immediate goal of the religious life is the harmony of the soul, achieved through reason's control of the passions. Philo calls this state *ἁρμονία, δικαιοσύνη, δημοκρατία*; it is being in tune with the law of nature, which is also the law of God. There is a civil war going on in man, which may be thought of as between the physical and non-physical aspects of man, or among the various parts or passions of the soul, or among the various "goods" which compete for the soul's allegiance, or between the rational and the irrational soul. The rational soul or mind must rule and establish peace, like a charioteer's control of his

horses or a pilot's guidance of his ship. If this control is not achieved, a state of anarchy will continue.

The ultimate goal of the religious life is the vision of God, a mystical experience transcending the realm of reason but requiring the inner peace just described as a necessary condition. In this experience the soul passes beyond the realm of the body altogether and enters the world of incorporeal ideas. Philo's characteristic scheme is therefore not one of sin, repentance and atonement, but of the struggle within the soul which makes possible the mystic vision.

#### (iv) Summary

The concept of sin which Paul would have received from Greek-speaking Judaism differed significantly from that found in Hebrew-speaking Judaism. This concept is in terms of the war between the passions of the flesh or of the lower mind and the higher mind or reason. The immediate goal of the religious struggle is the establishment of peace, harmony or justice through reason's control of the passions, a goal which in turn makes possible the mystic vision or the union of the soul with God.

Paul therefore shared two streams of thought concerning the nature of man and of sin. In the second of these dualistic imagery is more marked than in the first, but in the first such dualistic conceptions are not lacking. It is not necessary to hold that these two perspectives constituted sharply defined categories in Paul's mind, much less that they stood in radical opposition to each other. Indeed, by comparison with Philo, for whom the fusion of Jewish and Greek thought was a consciously chosen objective, it appears that in Paul these differing ideas existed in casual juxtaposition or even in an unconscious synthesis.

#### 4. Hermeneutical Guidelines

If, as we have found, dualistic language and imagery were present in the Jewish literature of Paul's day, it is unnecessary arbitrarily to exclude such conceptions from Paul's thought. This means that Paul's language can be allowed to speak for itself in the natural or commonly understood sense of the terms. In the interpretation of Paul's thought all the established rules of exegesis must, of course, be observed, but any pre-judgment as to whether Paul could or could not have held dualistic notions is set aside.

To this premise (to which the foregoing chapters have largely been devoted), I must add other guidelines which have been observed in the exegesis which follows. First, I have attempted in so far as possible to disabuse myself of the theological systems which have been overlaid on Paul through the centuries. These systems, supposedly built on Paul but in fact incorporating many ideas brought to Paul from other sources, should not be taken as synonymous with what Paul himself meant.

Second, I have attempted to imagine the process involved in Paul's writing of a letter such as the epistle to the Romans. I have assumed that Paul did not first draw up a carefully crafted outline, as in the case of a modern essay or thesis, but came to the undertaking with certain central concerns in mind and then, as these expressed themselves in written (or dictated) form, followed the flow of ideas as they took shape in his mind. If this is at all an accurate description of what took place, we also must follow the flow of ideas as they appear in the text and beware of finding in them a closely-structured (and probably artificial) scheme.



Third, I have assumed that it is a sound exegetical principle to take words and phrases in their ordinary or everyday sense unless there is overwhelming reason to do otherwise. I have assumed, that is, that Paul did not write in a kind of code. He did not write "flesh" and mean "the natural man's existence in a fallen world," or write "desire" and mean "self-assertion and rebellion against God." That is to say, he did not intend the second meaning unless it can be shown conclusively that this is the case.

Fourth, I believe we must be cautious of stating categorically what is untypical or extreme in Paul unless it is in patent contradiction to what he says elsewhere. As remarked earlier, the whole of Paul's extant writings comprises some few letters addressed in the main to particular church problems. Were we in possession of his opinion on a broader range of topics, we might find that what appears exceptional is in fact the norm. Especially should we be concerned if we find "untypical" passages repeatedly in Paul;<sup>2</sup> we should suspect that we have set up an artificial criterion of what Paul's position is.

## B. THE CONTEXT OF THE PASSAGE

### 1. The Letter to the Romans

#### a) Literary questions

The letter to the Romans has been called "the first great work of Christian theology,"<sup>3</sup> "the most important theological book ever written,"<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Again, see the list of exceptions in Laeuchli (p. 17-24).

and "one of the formative documents of the Christian religion."<sup>5</sup> For western Christianity, there is probably "no other single writing so deeply embedded in our heritage of thought."<sup>6</sup> Yet scholars are generally agreed that Romans is not a theological treatise in the guise of a letter, but a true letter.

The Pauline authorship of Romans is, to all intents and purposes, a closed question. There also do not appear to be any extensive interpolations in the body of the letter. The major literary questions have to do with chapters 15 and 16, especially the latter. These questions are discussed fully in the literature and do not substantially affect the interpretation of the epistle.

Scholars agree also that the letter to the Romans was written, probably from Corinth or Genchreae, on the eve of Paul's departure for Jerusalem at the conclusion of his "third missionary journey" (Rom. 15: 15-32). Depending on the chronology adopted for Paul's travels, this would place the writing of the letter as early as 53 C.E.<sup>7</sup> or as late as 58 or 59;<sup>8</sup> the date favored by many scholars is 57 C.E.<sup>9</sup> The letter is

<sup>3</sup>Dodd, p. 9.

<sup>4</sup>John Knox, p. 355; cf. Barrett, Romans, p. 1: Romans is Paul's "greatest piece of sustained theological writing."

<sup>5</sup>J. A. T. Robinson, Wrestling with Romans (London: SCM Press, 1979), p. viii. Romans, Robinson says, is "the presentation of the gospel par excellence" (ibid.)

<sup>6</sup>Dodd, p. 9.

<sup>7</sup>John Knox, p. 358. Barrett, Romans, p. 15, puts it at 55 C.E.; W. G. Kümmel, Introduction to the New Testament (tr. Howard C. Kee [Nashville: Abindon Press, 1975]), p. 311, puts it at 55 or 56.

<sup>8</sup>Karl Barth, A Shorter Commentary on Romans (London: SCM Press,

therefore one of the latest in the Pauline corpus. The letter to the Romans bears some striking resemblances in subject-matter to Galatians; themes touched upon in the earlier work are given fuller and more dispassionate treatment in Romans.

#### b) The church in Rome

The origins of the Roman church are obscure; the letter itself is the earliest witness to the existence of a church in that city. Although Eusebius, following Papias, states that Peter preached there in 42 C.E.,<sup>10</sup> there is no reliable evidence of the apostolic foundation of the church.<sup>11</sup> Most probably it came into existence by the movement to Rome of Christians from other centres.

The question whether the Roman church was made up primarily of Jews or Gentiles has been a matter of considerable debate;<sup>12</sup> the arguments for both sides are based largely on the epistle itself. Both Jews and Gentiles are addressed in the letter, and while evidence for Gentile readership is more marked than for Jewish readership, Paul seems to assume on the part of all some familiarity with Jewish history and the Jewish law. It may be, as scholars have suggested, that a part of the church

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1959), p. 9; Sanday and Headlam, p. xxxvii; Dodd, p. 19.

<sup>9</sup>E.g., J.A.T. Robinson, Romans, p. 1; Leenhardt, p. 9; Jewett, p. 42.

<sup>10</sup>See J.A.T. Robinson, Romans, p. 6. Robinson holds the position that both Peter and Paul went to Rome and died there.

<sup>11</sup>Sanday and Headlam (p. xxxv) suggest that perhaps Paul or Peter organized several small groups, existing prior to their visit, into a "church."

<sup>12</sup>For a review of scholarly debate see Cranfield, p. 17-21.

was made up of proselytes to Judaism who had become Christians.<sup>13</sup> On the other hand, Paul addresses some specifically as "Gentiles" (1:13; 11:13) and includes them with other Gentiles as the object of his concern. It is hard to avoid the conclusion that both Jewish and Gentile elements were present in the church and that Paul addresses both without always clearly distinguishing between them.

c) The occasion and purpose of the letter

The occasion for the writing of the letter is clearly stated in 15:24-28. Paul hopes, after taking the offering of the churches to Judea, to visit Rome on his way to Spain and to be helped on his way by the Christians there. He also states that he has wanted for some time to visit them (1:9-13; 15:22-23), but has been prevented from doing so. The immediate intent of the letter, then, is to prepare the way for a personal visit which, in turn, will serve as the basis for a lasting and supportive relationship in terms of Paul's ongoing work.

Paul's purpose in writing what he wrote is more difficult to determine. The view that his intent was to set forth a full account of the gospel<sup>14</sup> must face the fact that many aspects of the gospel are ignored or treated lightly. More attractive is the suggestion that Paul, writing to a church which he has never met, and on the eve of a new missionary venture which requires their support, sets forth a reasoned account of

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<sup>13</sup>E.g., Jowett, p. 212: "It was the Jewish proselyte who commonly became the Christian convert."

<sup>14</sup>E.g., Barth, Shorter Commentary, p. 11-12, following Luther; cf. John Knox, p. 358. Kümmel, Introduction, p. 312, terms this the "old view."

his understanding of the gospel and a defense of his missionary methods.<sup>15</sup> Even this hypothesis does not do justice to the fact that in this letter a major concern is the place of Jews and Gentiles in God's purposes. The place of Israel in God's plans is specifically addressed in chapters 9 to 11, and the Jewish-Gentile concern appears repeatedly in earlier chapters as well. It may be an exaggeration to say that the Jewish-Gentile issue was the occasion for writing,<sup>16</sup> but it is evident that as Paul sets forth his gospel he does so in the context of that concern.

As has often been remarked, the letter to the Romans, unlike most of Paul's other epistles, was not addressed to specific problems in the church, and this is not surprising given the lack of personal relationship between Paul and the church. Paul, it is true, is not unfamiliar with some aspects of the church's life. In 14:1-15:6 he gives pastoral advice to the "strong" and the "weak" members of the church, and in 16:17-20 he warns the church of the danger of dissension. But his reason for writing is not to correct local problems, and there is no evidence of clearly defined "parties" in the church.<sup>17</sup>

#### d) The structure of the letter

Attempts to give a detailed outline of the letter and to provide

<sup>15</sup>So Kümmel, J.A.T. Robinson, Dodd, Barrett. Dodd (p. 18-19) and Barrett (p. 7-9) emphasize that Paul is giving the significance for all mankind of what he himself has experienced as the saving act of God.

<sup>16</sup>So Sanday and Headlam (p. xliv); Jowett (p. 215); Leenhardt (p. 15-16); cf. Sanders, Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People, p. 30-32.

<sup>17</sup>Jewett (p. 42-43) reviews scholarly opinion on this question. He himself thinks that the "weak" brethren are Judaizers and the "strong" brethren Gentile Christians, possibly pneumatics (p. 43-46).

headings for the various sections often reveal as much about the theological position of the interpreter as about the contents of the letter.<sup>18</sup>

The letter does break down naturally into three major divisions: ch. 1-8, ch. 9-11, ch. 12-16. The theme of the first section appears to be righteousness, or salvation, or the gospel, and Paul continually sets his understanding of this in the context of (and in opposition to) the Jewish understanding. The theme of the second section is the place of Jews and Gentiles in God's purposes. The final section contains advice on matters of Christian behavior. In addition to this three-fold division, there is a reasonably clear division in the first section between chapters 1 to 4 (God's way of making righteous) and chapters 5 to 8 (the new life in Christ). Further subdivision becomes increasingly arbitrary and runs the risk of imposing the interpreter's scheme on Paul.

The outline which follows is intended as a description of the movement of thought in the letter, and does not imply that Paul had a plan or scheme by which he structured the letter.

1. Introduction (1:1-17)
  - a) Greeting (1:1-7)
  - b) Thanksgiving (1:8-15)
  - c) Theme (1:16-17)
2. The sinfulness of man and the judgment of God (1:18-2:16)
  - a) The sinfulness of man (1:18-32)
  - b) The certainty of God's judgment (2:1-16)

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<sup>18</sup>E.g., the schemes provided by Sanday and Headlam, Leenhardt, Cranfield and J.A.T. Robinson. Leenhardt (p. 25) organizes the whole letter into the theological, anthropological, historical and ethical aspects of the gospel of justification preached by Paul.

3. The status of the Jew before God (2:17 - 4:25)

- a) The Jew and the law (2:17-25)
- b) The Jew has an advantage (3:1-8)
- c) The Jew has no advantage (3:9-20)
- d) Righteousness by faith (3:21-31)
- e) The example of Abraham (4:1-25)

4. The new life in Christ (5:1 - 8:39)

- a) Righteousness by faith (5:1-11)
- b) Adam and Christ (5:12-21)
- c) Freedom from sin in union with Christ (6:1-23)
- d) Freedom from sin and the law (7:1-6)
- e) The function of the law (7:7-13)
- f) Moral impotence: its cause and solution (7:14-25)
- g) Life in the spirit (8:1-17)
- h) The future glory (8:18-39)

5. Jews and Gentiles in God's purposes (9:1 - 11:36)

- a) God and his people (9:1-33)
- b) Salvation by faith (10:1-21)
- c) God's purposes for Jews and Gentiles (11:1-36)

6. Christian behavior (12:1 - 15:33)

- a) Life in God's service (12:1-21)
- b) Civil obedience (13:1-7)
- c) Christian conduct in love and righteousness (13:8-14)
- d) The strong and the weak (14:1 - 15:13)
- e) Paul's calling and work (15:14-33)

7. Greetings and exhortations (16:1-23)

8. Doxology (16:15-27)

2. Chapters 5 to 8

The immediate context of Rom. 7:7-25 is chapters 5 to 8. Even if 7:7-25 is an excursus, it must be understood in relation to the argument which brought it about. Indeed, an understanding of the context is required to determine whether it is an excursus.

Chapters 5 to 8 have been described as "much the most important section of the letter"<sup>19</sup> and "the central section of the epistle."<sup>20</sup> Ac-

according to another scholar, the entire letter builds up to a climax in chapter 8 and falls away after.<sup>21</sup> This section has been variously entitled: "The righteousness of faith as a reality of eschatological freedom" (Käsemann); "The life promised for those who are righteous by faith" (Cranfield); "The righteousness of God in salvation" (Dodd); "The new life in Christ" (Knox). The precise determination of Paul's intent in these chapters depends in part on the interpretation of chapters 1 to 4, and on the degree to which Paul may be thought to have consciously structured the argument throughout.<sup>22</sup>

The section is difficult to outline, as arguments and themes are intertwined and the logical connection between them is not always evident. Yet the argument as a whole moves forward, and the various topics all clearly relate to the central theme of righteousness, salvation or new life in Christ.

a) The salvation inherent in righteousness by faith (5:1-11)

In 5:1, Paul seems to be making a new beginning: "Therefore, since we are justified by faith..." This new beginning clearly rests on what he has just established concerning justification or righteousness by faith, and this may be summarized as follows.

First, all men, both Jews and Gentiles, are guilty before God. This is the theme of 1:18-3:20. It is summarized in 3:9 ("All men, both

<sup>19</sup>John Knox, p. 371.

<sup>20</sup>Dodd, p. 93.

<sup>21</sup>J.A.T. Robinson, Romans, p. 9.

<sup>22</sup>E.g., Leenhardt, p. 25, who finds in ch. 1-4 five specific themes which are exactly repeated (but from a new perspective) in ch. 5-8.



Jews and Greeks, are under the power of sin") and in 3:23 ("All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God").

Second, righteousness does not come through the law. The Jews, who have the law, have not kept it (2:17-24); circumcision is of value only if one keeps the law (2:25-29); Jews are no better off than non-Jews (3:9-20). Paul's conclusion is that "no human being will be justified in [God's] sight by works of the law, since through the law comes knowledge of sin" (3:20).

Third, righteousness comes through faith. This theme has already been announced in 1:16-17; in 3:21-31 it is spelled out at length. The righteousness of God has been revealed "apart from law" (3:21), i.e., "through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe" (3:22). Justification is by God's grace "as a gift, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus" (3:24). Jesus' death was an "expiation. . .to be received by faith" (3:25); God in mercy overlooks past sins and makes righteous "him who has faith in Jesus" (3:26). The "principle of works" has been replaced by the "principle of faith" (3:27), since "a man is justified by faith apart from works of law" (3:28). This new principle of faith is for both the circumcised and the uncircumcised (3:20).

In chapter 4, Paul gives Abraham as an example of all that he has said. Abraham was justified not by "works" but by "faith" (passim). His faith was "reckoned to him as righteousness" (4:9,22), and this before circumcision was given (4:10-11). He thus became the father of all who have faith, whether circumcised or not (4:11-12,13-25); the promises do not come "through the law but through the righteousness of faith" (4:13); i.e., they depend "on faith" or "on grace" (4:16). This means that the

promises come true for "us who believe in him that raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, who was put to death for our trespasses and raised for our justification" (4:24-25).

All this Paul has established in chapters 1 to 4. In chapter 5 he begins to spell out what this salvation in Christ means. First, it means that we have the triple boon of "peace with God" (5:1), the "grace wherein we stand" (5:1) and the "hope of sharing the glory of God" (5:2). All of this allows us to rejoice in our sufferings, since suffering produces endurance, and endurance character, and character hope; and hope does not disappoint us, since God's love has been poured into our hearts with the gift of the Holy Spirit (5:2-5). The steps in this chain of reasoning do not all follow logically; they are an example of Paul's being caught up in a linguistic device and then attempting to relate it to the topic at hand.

Following this exposition of peace, grace and hope, Paul returns to the theme of Christ's death for us which he has touched upon earlier (3:25; 4:25). He says that when we were "weak," "ungodly" and "sinners" Christ died "for us" (5:6-8). On this foundation rests the future hope of the believer. If we are now made righteous by Christ's death, how much more shall we be saved by him from God's wrath (5:9). If, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him by the death of his son, how much more, now that we are reconciled, will we be saved by his life (5:10). Paul is again using a literary device, in this case a double parallel structure in which one element is a contrast. The confident hope of the believer, he reiterates, is a cause for rejoicing (5:11).

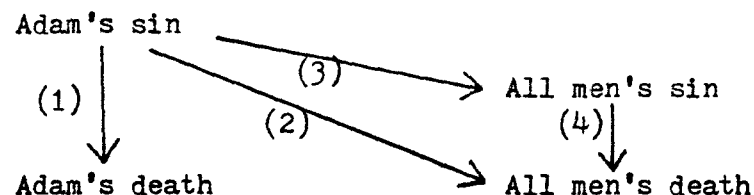
b) Adam and Christ (5:12-21)

In spite of the "therefore" (*διὰ τοῦτο*) of verse 12, what Paul says in this section does not follow directly from the argument of the preceding passage; it rests rather on the whole theme of salvation through Christ. Paul is reminded of the Adam-Christ analogy which he has used before (1 Cor. 15:21-22), and expounds on it to show the relation of sin and death, and redemption from both in Christ.

The passage is a self-contained unit, a piece of sustained reasoning which makes use of an analogy or typology not wholly amenable to Paul's purposes. In its relating of Adam's sin to the sin and death of his posterity it is reminiscent of Ben Sira, 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch, although there are also significant differences.

(i) The relation of sin and death in Adam and the human race

Paul's concept of the relation of sin and death in Adam and in the human race may be depicted by the following diagram:



First (arrow 1), Adam's sin was the cause of his own death. "Sin came into the world through one man and death through sin" (5:12). In stating this, Paul is following Gen. 2-3 and Jewish teaching generally.

Second (arrow 2), Adam's sin was the cause of the death of all mankind. This is implied in the clause just quoted (5:12) and is stated clearly in 5:15 ("For if many died through one man's trespass..."), 5:17

("If, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man") and 5:18 ("Then as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all men..."). Paul as we shall see, attempts to lay the blame for death on every man's sin, but his entire analogy requires that it be laid at Adam's door.

Third (arrow 3), Adam's sin was also the cause of the sinfulness of all men. This is implied in 5:12 ("As sin came into the world through one man") and stated clearly in 5:19 ("For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners..."). Paul does not give this causal relationship as much emphasis as the preceding one, and it is probable that he did not hold to a doctrine of original sin in the sense worked out by the later church, but his Adam-Christ typology requires the "sinners-righteous" parallel as well as the "death-life" parallel.<sup>23</sup>

Fourth (arrow 4), Paul makes a weak attempt to lay the blame for every man's death on every man's sin. This is found in the second clause of 5:12 ("...and so death spread to all men because all men sinned -- "). As the quotation shows, Paul breaks off the argument in mid-sentence, perhaps because the implications of the thought are too complex to be followed through, perhaps because the new idea of 5:13-14 has occurred to him and interrupted his train of thought. What Paul might have said about individual responsibility as over against Adam's responsibility is difficult to say; in any case, this line of thought does not fit the Adam-Christ typology which he is developing here.

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<sup>23</sup>It may be noted that at no place in this chapter does Paul (unlike Ben Sira and 4 Ezra) refer to the evil yeşer.

## (ii) Sin in the absence of law

A second question which interrupts the Adam-Christ analogy is whether sin is sin in the absence of law. Earlier in the letter, Paul has said that "through the law comes the knowledge of sin" (3:20) and that "where there is no law there is no transgression" (4:15). The thought now intrudes itself into his argument about the effects of Adam's sin. He breaks off his line of reasoning to say that "sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law" (5:13). Because this leaves the problem of death unanswered, he must immediately add, "yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam" (5:14). We have here a hint of a differentiation in kind between Adam's sin and that of his descendants, but the distinction is not followed through and the paradox of the penalty of sin (death) in the absence of the guilt of sin is not resolved.

At the end of the chapter, Paul returns to the relation of the law and sin and places the whole in the context of his soteriology. "Law came in to increase the trespass; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more" (5:20). Law is now used (apparently this is God's purpose)<sup>24</sup> to "increase the trespass" until eternal life is given by grace. Whether "increase the trespass" means "spur to more transgression" or "make the transgression truly sinful" (cf. 5:13) is not clear.

## (iii) The Adam-Christ parallel

The scheme of 5:12-21 is the Adam-Christ parallel, and we have

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<sup>24</sup>See Sanders, Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People, p. 29-36,

seen that other important questions are subordinated to it. Paul makes the parallel as exact as possible, even where he must point out the dissimilarity to do so (5:15-16). Sin and death came into the world through one man's obedience; righteousness and life came into the world through one man's obedience (5:17-19). The result is that "as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign in righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (5:21).

c) Freedom from sin in union with Christ (6:1-23)

(1) The consequences of union with Christ in his death and resurrection (6:1-11)

In 6:1 ("What shall we say then?") Paul seems again to be making a new start, but this impression is created by the diatribe style. He is in fact turning to an implication of the sin-grace contrast which he has just made (5:20-21), namely the possibility of using freedom from law as an excuse for license. That this is a particularly sore point for him is evidenced by his attention to it here and in 6:15, and his statement in 3:8 that "some people slanderously charge" him with holding such a position.

Paul does not answer the antinomian charge by a logical argument (logic is on his accusers' side), but by an appeal to a more basic principle, namely that union with Christ in his death means death to sin and transferal to a new kind of life. That radical change has been symbolized<sup>25</sup> for the Christian by the act of baptism (6:3-4), a graphic por-

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70-81 (and above, p. 87).

<sup>25</sup>Symbolized, not effected; Paul insists throughout this section that salvation is by faith.

trayal of the death of the old life, marked by sin, and the beginning of a new existence marked by "newness of life" (6:4).

The death and resurrection figure, helped along by the symbol of baptism, serves Paul well in answering the antinomian charge. "How," he asks, "can we who died to sin still live in it?" (6:2). "We know," he continues, "that our old self (ὁ παλαιὸς ἡμῶν ἄνθρωπος) was crucified with him so that the sinful body (τὸ σῶμα τῆς ἁμαρτίας) might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin" (6:6). The "sinful body" here is obviously not simply the physical body, for that body lives on and its sinful passions must continually be suppressed (6:12). It is, rather, the body in the sense of the whole man as he orients himself to the world, or the combination of "sentiments"<sup>26</sup> around which life is organized. It is, in fact, the "old self" which Paul has mentioned in the same breath. That old self is crucified with Christ (6:6); the one who has died with Christ is "freed from sin" (6:7) and is "no longer, . . . enslaved to sin" (6:6).

Having died with Christ, the believer is raised to a new life with Christ (6:8).<sup>27</sup> This is a resurrection kind of life, which is no longer subject to the powers of death (6:9-10); it is a life lived "to God" (6:10-11). This is not just a hope to be realized in the future after the day of judgment, although the eschatological dimension is not lacking (6:8). It is to be realized now, by the deliberate choice of the

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<sup>26</sup>See Dodd, p. 110-11 (and above, p. 94-95).

<sup>27</sup>Cf. 2 Cor. 5:17: "If any one is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come."

believer. Just as Christ died to sin and was raised to life by the power of God, "so you must also consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus" (6:11). In the oft-quoted dictum, the Christian must become what he already is; he must continually crucify the old life and claim and affirm the new.<sup>28</sup>

(ii) Life as service under a chosen master (6:12-23)

As we have just seen, a consequence of the believer's identification with Christ in his death and resurrection is that he must continually affirm the new existence by his conscious choice. In 6:12-23, Paul contrasts the old and the new modes of life as servitude to two different masters; he assumes that the Christian has in his power the choice of serving the one or the other.

The designation of that which a man serves is not uniform throughout the passage. More correctly, the one term ("sin") is constant (the only exception is in 6:19), while the other term varies. In 6:13 it is "God," but in 6:16-23 it begins as "obedience" (6:16), moves on to "the standard of teaching to which you were committed" (6:17), then to "righteousness" (6:18-20; cf. 6:13) and finally back again to "God" (6:22-23). In addition to Paul's problem with the analogy, this variation indicates that he is not here setting forth sin as a cosmic power or sphere in a personalized or dualistic sense; his accent is on the Christian's responsibility to choose that which he will serve, whether sin or righteous-

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<sup>28</sup>Cf. Gal. 5:24: "Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires." The reference is to the action of the Christian, not to God's act in salvation.



ness.<sup>29</sup>

6:12 follows immediately on 6:11 ("become what you are") and sets the theme for the entire passage. Paul says: "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions." Those who belong to Christ still have their "mortal bodies," and these still have their "passions" (ἐπιθυμίας). To let sin reign in one's mortal body is to obey the bodily passions. This is a mark of the old life, as everywhere in Paul (1 Thess. 4:3; Gal. 5:19-21; 1 Cor. 5:9-13; 6:9-11; Rom. 1:18-32) and in the New Testament generally (Col. 3:5-7; Eph. 2:3; 5:3-5; Rev. 21:8).

That Paul is referring here to the sins of the body is clear not only from his use of the term "passions" but also from his exhortation not to yield one's "members" (μέλη) as instruments of sin (6:13,19), his reference to "the things of which you are now ashamed" (6:21) and his substitution of "impurity" (ἀκαθαρσία) for "sin" in 6:19. With this he contrasts yielding oneself to "righteousness" (δικαιοσύνη; in 6:19 this is "righteousness for sanctification," δικαιοσύνη εἰς ἁγιασμόν),<sup>30</sup> or to God. His concern throughout is that freedom is based,

<sup>29</sup>In Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People, Sanders sees sin in Rom. 3-7 as a power opposing God or Christ, and salvation as escape from bondage. In 6:13, sin is "almost. . .an equivalent power" (p. 71-72) to that of God, while the "virtual dualism" (p. 73,79) of 6:1-7:6 is what leads to the discussion of the law and sin in 7:7-25. I do not find this sense of sin as a cosmic power in these chapters. Paul's words in 6:16 may be compared to those of Jesus in Matt. 6:24: "No man can serve two masters. . .You cannot serve God and mammon." In ch. 7, sin is briefly personified, but not in a cosmic sense.

<sup>30</sup>NEB reads: "As you once yielded your bodies to the service of impurity and lawlessness, making for moral anarchy, so now you must yield them to the service of righteousness, making for a holy life" (6:19).

not on logic or moral persuasion, but on the new standing of the Christian in Christ.

The passage ends with a typically Pauline combination of parallel and contrasting elements which sums up the whole: "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord" (6:23).<sup>31</sup>

d) Freedom from sin and the law (7:1-6)

In chapter 6, Paul has addressed the question whether freedom from sin means license to sin, and has answered in terms of the Christian's relation to Christ in his death and resurrection. He now gives an illustration of this principle which begins with freedom from sin and moves on to freedom from law. Because this passage is the immediate prelude to 7:7-25, it will be considered at length in that connection.

e) The function of the law (7:7-13); and f) Moral impotence: its cause and solution (7:14-25)

Having raised the question of the relation of the law and sin, Paul is prompted to illustrate this relationship by a personal example. He is thus drawn into a description of the conflict within man between what he knows to be God's will (the law) and what his bodily passions move him to do (sin). This passage is the subject of our detailed exegesis below.

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<sup>31</sup>Nothing is gained by trying to make "death" here more precise. John Knox (p. 485-86) suggests that the full meaning is eschatological, but admits that it is also a present reality.

g) Life in the spirit (8:1-17)

(i) The new life in Christ (8:1-4)

After dealing at length with the conflict in man in what amounts almost to a digression (7:7-25),<sup>32</sup> Paul stops, collects his thoughts, and returns to his main theme: "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and death" (8:1-2).

In chapters 5 to 7, "spirit" has been mentioned only twice (5:5; 7:6); in the present section it occurs more than twenty times. Indeed, the contrast between life "in the flesh" and life "in the spirit" is the theme of this passage. While there is an eschatological dimension to Paul's thought (and in the last half of the chapter this is given full expression), his concern here is for the present life of the believer, a life which is to be characterized by "spirit."

There is no condemnation, Paul says, for those who are "in Christ Jesus" (8:1), because "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and death" (8:2). Paul here is contrasting two laws, as he has done in chapter 7, but what he means by each is not self-evident. The second law ("the law of sin and death") is apparently the same as the "law of sin" of 7:23, but the first law ("the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus") is more enigmatic. Like the "law of sin," it is apparently an active force as well as a principle or rule.

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<sup>32</sup>Barrett (Romans, p. 140) considers 7:7-25 a digression and says that 8:1 picks up from 7:6. But Paul's "digressions" are usually developments, and he does not return precisely to the previous argument.

Its modus operandi is conveyed by the entire word-cluster: it is the law of the "spirit of life in Christ Jesus."

Leaving aside the question whether the "spirit of life" refers explicitly to the divine spirit (most commentators so take it, but Paul's thought is not always so precise), Paul's claim in this verse is clear. In 7:23 the "law of sin" overcomes the higher law ("the law of my mind") and takes me captive, but now the "law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus" proves superior to the "law of sin and death" and sets me free from its dominion. How this happens is explained in the following verse: "What the [Mosaic] law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God [has done by] sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin; [in so doing he has] condemned sin in the flesh." The fluid use of "law" which characterizes chapter 7 is seen to carry through to the first verses of chapter 8.

Rom. 8:3, then, restates in brief what Paul has said throughout 1:18-7:25, and especially in chapter 7. What the Mosaic law "could not do" was bring deliverance from sin. The reason for this failure is that it "was weak through the flesh" (*ἡσθένει διὰ τῆς σαρκός*). "Flesh" here apparently means the fleshly, weak and unsatisfactory nature of man, and not a sphere or power. What the law could not do because of this imperfect medium, God did by sending his son. He thereby "condemned sin in the flesh," i.e., he destroyed the sovereignty or reign of sin in the flesh by placing it under the sentence of death. This does not mean that sin was eliminated; as we have seen (6:11-13) and shall see (8:13), the Christian must continually "put to death" the things of the flesh. But the power of sin has been broken, and those it held as prisoners or slaves

have been set free.<sup>33</sup>

God, Paul says, sent his son "in the likeness of sinful flesh" (ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας). Three different interpretations of this phrase are possible. First, Paul does not hold to the true humanity of Jesus; the "likeness of sinful flesh" is a limiting construct which implies that Jesus did not truly come in the flesh. Second, no such limitation is intended; the phrase means simply "in the form of sinful flesh" (cf. Phil. 2:7). Third, Paul means that Jesus truly came in the flesh, which in the case of humanity generally is sinful but in Jesus' case obviously was not.

The correct understanding of the phrase cannot be determined by exegesis of the text in isolation. As John Knox has remarked,<sup>34</sup> if one had from Paul only Phil. 2:7 and Rom. 8:3, there would be ground for a Docetic interpretation. As this is inadmissible from the rest of Paul's writings and not required by the text,<sup>35</sup> the choice seems to lie between the other two positions. The English reading and the long history of Christological debate contribute to the feeling that Paul is avoiding stating simply that Jesus came "in sinful flesh"; he must mean that Jesus

<sup>33</sup>Dodd (p. 135-37) interprets all of 8:1-4 in terms of a court of law, but gets carried away. Christ has entered the realm where sin reigns; sin presses its claims against Christ but loses the case and is condemned, while those who belong to Christ are set free. John Knox (p. 507) similarly connects 8:1 and 8:4: there is no condemnation for us because God has condemned sin. Both interpretations appear contrived.

<sup>34</sup>P. 507.

<sup>35</sup>W. F. Arndt and F. W. Gingrich, eds., A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature (Cambridge University Press, 1952), p. 570, consider the meaning of ὁμοιώματι in both passages to be ambiguous.

came in the form (flesh) which in all men is sinful but which in Jesus' case is not.

In the context of the verse and the entire passage, however, the correct understanding seems to be that Paul means simply "in our sinful human form" (Goodspeed), without conscious effort to protect the sinlessness of Jesus. Indeed, Paul seems deliberately to choose the term "sinful flesh," since Jesus came "for sin" or "to deal with sin" (Moffatt) and the result of his coming was to "condemn sin in the flesh" (8:3). Only by coming in the form of sinful flesh could Jesus' death destroy the power of sin in the flesh.

A further result of what God did in sending his son to deal with sin was that "the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the spirit" (8:4). To take this result as the primary intention of God in sending his son would be to do an injustice to Paul's thought; his accent in Rom. 5 to 8 is not on receiving power to fulfil what one could not do before, but on the new life in Christ as opposed to the old life in the flesh. But one of the results of that new life is that the law's requirements are fulfilled.

(ii) Life κατὰ σάρκα and κατὰ πνεῦμα (8:5-13)

In 8:4b, Paul describes Christians as those "who walk not according to the flesh but according to the spirit," and this contrast forms the theme of the following verses. While "flesh" has a more generalized sense here than simply the physical body, its primary referent should not be forgotten.

Those who live "according to the flesh" (κατὰ σάρκα), Paul

says, "set their minds on the things of the flesh"; conversely, those who live "according to the spirit" (κατὰ πνεῦμα) "set their minds on the things of the spirit" (8:5). The Greek syntax is simpler than any English translation. The object of "set their minds" (φρονοῦσιν) is "that of the flesh" and "that of the spirit" respectively. The φρόνημα (mind-set, frame of thought, concern) which is directed toward "flesh" means death; that which is directed toward "spirit" means life and peace (8:6). The mind-set directed toward flesh is hostile to God and does not submit to God's law; indeed, it "cannot" (8:7), and those who are "in the flesh" cannot please God (8:8).

The meaning of "flesh" and "spirit" in these verses is a matter of interpretation. If "flesh" in the preceding sections (including 7:7-25) represents the physical body and the things of this world and of this life, there is no need to make it a cosmic sphere or power. But "spirit" seems open to both a divine and human reference. In 5:5, Paul says that God's love is poured into our hearts by the "Holy Spirit" which has been given to us, and this sense of spirit as God's spirit (or the "spirit of Christ") informs all his references to the "spirit" of the Christian. Indeed, in the rest of chapter 8 the predominant use of "spirit" is for the divine spirit. At the same time, the human reference should not be overlooked. Paul's contrast between those whose interests are "the things of the flesh" and those whose interests are "the things of the spirit" would thus be between two contrasting qualities of human life.

Before considering verse 8, we should also note the reference to "peace" in verse 6, especially in light of the extended description of inner conflict in chapter 7. To have the mind set on the spirit, Paul

says, means "life and peace," in contrast to that "death" which comes from having the mind set on the flesh. Dodd comments:

Here peace stands for the condition of inner harmony when all elements of the personality are organized around a single centre, and division and conflict are at an end.<sup>36</sup>

Such seems to be Paul's thought. "Peace" here is not the same thing as "peace with God" (5:1), but is its consequence.

In 8:8, Paul makes a statement which, if taken literally, would represent a radically dualistic or anti-flesh position. "Those who are in the flesh (ἐν σαρκί) cannot please God." There are two possible interpretations. First, Paul means that all who are in this present earthly body cannot be pleasing to God; only in the eschaton, when man is fully "spiritual," will this be possible.<sup>37</sup> This interpretation is incompatible with Paul's teaching generally; all life in this world is "in the flesh," and Paul's eschatological orientation is not so strong as to render all present existence displeasing to God. Second, by "in the flesh" Paul here means something like "according to the flesh" (8:4-5), i.e., living only in the flesh and oriented to the flesh and the things of this world. In this sense the phrase would be parallel to his statement in 7:5, "when we were in the flesh...", meaning before our death and resurrection with Christ. This interpretation is supported by the context of 8:8; Paul has just contrasted those whose interests are

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<sup>36</sup>Dodd, p. 138-39. Dodd interprets "flesh" as "instinctive impulses" and "spirit" as the divine spirit.

<sup>37</sup>E.g., Nygren, p. 299-302; Dunn, p. 267-73.



flesh and spirit, and immediately goes on: "But you are not in the flesh, you are in the spirit, if in fact the spirit of God dwells in you; and anyone who does not have the spirit of Christ does not belong to him" (8:9). Paul therefore means by "in the flesh" (in this instance) pre-Christian or non-Christian life, a kind of life which is inappropriate for one who has the spirit.

That Paul has not lost sight of the basic meaning of "flesh" is clear from 8:10. For those who have the spirit, or for those in whom Christ dwells, "the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness" (*τὸ μὲν σῶμα νεκρὸν διὰ ἁμαρτίαν, τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα ζῶν διὰ δικαιοσύνη*). Translators have had difficulty rendering these two clauses into English; exegetes have had equal difficulty in interpreting them. Both "body" and "spirit" are in the singular, and both appear to pertain to the Christian. Moreover, Paul is employing one of his usual contrasts. In this case, each part of the contrast has three elements (body-death-sin and spirit-life-righteousness). The simplest interpretation, bearing in mind the context, is also the most probable. For one who has the spirit (and here the reference is to the divine spirit) or in whom Christ dwells, the body (which was the object of his interest before) is "dead" because of its association with sin, but the spirit is "alive" because of its association with righteousness. Paul's thought in the second half of the contrast is not as precise as in the first; he makes all the terms fit their opposites in the figure, at the expense of their function in the phrase itself.

In the body-death-sin cluster, Paul by "body" means the physical body, which is "dead" to the Christian (or to which the Christian is

"dead") because of his identification with the death and resurrection of Christ. In 8:11, Paul specifically calls this body "mortal" and in 8:12-13 he uses "body" interchangeably with "flesh." In saying "the body is dead," therefore, it is the second term ("dead") and not the first ("body") which must be put in quotation marks.<sup>38</sup> But what of "spirit" in the parallel word-cluster (spirit-life-righteousness)? As we have said, Paul is caught up in the linguistic requirements of the contrast, but the most obvious referent of "spirit" is the believer's spirit, and not the divine spirit. Attempts to make "spirit" here the divine spirit are fraught with difficulties. (What would it mean to say that God's spirit is "alive" [or "life"] and that this is "because of righteousness"?)<sup>39</sup> Such a reading also destroys Paul's intended contrast. A few verses later (8:16), Paul brings the human and divine spirit into conscious relation.

In 8:11, Paul is temporarily drawn away to the hope of resurrection, a topic he will treat at length in the latter part of the chapter. If God's spirit is present in the believer, then God, who raised Jesus from the dead, will also give life to our "mortal bodies." The frame of reference here is eschatological, but the verse indicates that Paul does not abandon his interest in the physical body. As 1 Cor. 15 shows, that body is to be transformed.

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<sup>38</sup>Interpreters have taken this verse to mean that man is subject to death because of (Adam's) sin (Dodd, p. 140; John Knox, p. 512). Paul's concern here is not with mortality as the punishment for sin, however, but with the implications of sin in life.

<sup>39</sup>See the attempts by John Knox (p. 513) to make this fit: "That Spirit means life to us because of righteousness" or "the Spirit, because he gives righteousness, also gives life." The argument is confused.

In 8:12-13, Paul returns to the subject of life *κατὰ σάρκα* and life *κατὰ πνεῦμα*. The Christian has no obligation to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. Indeed, if he does so he will "die," but one who, by the spirit, puts to death the deeds of the body, will "live." The parallel construction makes clear what is meant by *κατὰ σάρκα*. It is precisely that orientation to the physical body (and all the affairs and concerns of the body and of this world) which has been Paul's concern since 8:5. It should be noted also that the Christian's relation to that life is governed by deliberate choice. He is to "put to death" the deeds of the body, exactly as in 6:12 he is not to "let sin reign" in his mortal body and in 6:13 he must not "yield" his members to sin. Yet, though this is an act of the will, it is not accomplished by will power (chapter 7 has shown that to be futile) but "by the spirit" (8:13).

(iii) Christians as sons and heirs of God (8:14-17)

All who are "led by the spirit of God" (cf. Gal. 5:18) are "sons" of God, and if sons then heirs, heirs of God and fellow-heirs with Christ. When we cry out to God as Father, it is God's spirit "bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God" (8:16). Here, as noted earlier, the divine spirit and the human spirit are in relation. There is nothing in this passage to suggest that this "spirit" is present only in regenerated man, though this may be Paul's teaching elsewhere.

h) The future glory (8:18-39)

If, in Romans 5 to 8, Paul has been setting forth a doctrinal scheme concerning sin, death, flesh and the law, this section appears to be a digression. If, on the other hand, he is caught up in the whole con-

cept of salvation, these verses constitute a climax. In any case, we have seen that throughout these chapters eschatological considerations continually find their way into his thought. Now he lets himself be carried away with them into a full expression of the Christian hope.

In 8:19-23, Paul enunciates a doctrine of redemption which ties cosmic suffering to the sin of man and similarly relates the hope of cosmic renewal to the expectation of the "glorious liberty of the children of God" (8:21). In his characteristic way, Paul places all of this within the divine purpose (8:20). His hope that in the "world to come" all of nature will be restored to its pristine perfection (which hope he shares with Jewish eschatological expectations generally) includes "the redemption of our bodies" (8:23), and although Paul elsewhere expresses this hope in spiritualized form (1 Cor. 15; 2 Cor. 5), there is no doubt that his underlying notion is the resurrection of the physical body. Just as the whole physical world is to be renewed, so Christians await the redemption of the body to complete their "adoption as sons" (8:23).

Until the eschaton arrives, the Christian has the spirit of God to help him in his "weakness" (8:26). Paul in these verses comes as close to trinitarian language as anywhere in his epistles. The spirit intercedes for us with God, and God, who searches human hearts, knows what is the "mind of the spirit" (8:26). The spirit, of course, is God's spirit, personalized and actively accomplishing God's work.

At the eschaton, the elect are to be "conformed to the image of [God's] son," so that Christ will be "the first-born among many brethren" (8:29). The precise meaning of both phrases is unclear. The first may refer to Christ's resurrection body, but more probably to his whole na-

ture; the second may mean the "first-born" in the new messianic kingdom or the "first-born" in the resurrection mode of existence. The future glory, Paul says, is based on God's gift of his son. God did not "spare" his own son (as we have seen throughout these chapters); how will he not with him also freely give us "all things" (8:32)?

### C. EXEGESIS OF 7:7-25

#### 1. The Immediate Context: Freedom from Sin and the Law (7:1-6)

The immediate context of Rom. 7:7-25 is the preceding paragraph (7:1-6), which deals with freedom from sin and the law.

##### a) The text in its setting

In chapter 5, Paul has expounded upon the righteousness by faith which was his theme in 3:20-4:25. As sin and death came into the world through the disobedience of one man (Adam), so righteousness and life came into the world through the obedience of one man (Christ). In chapter 6, he has attempted to answer the argument that freedom from sin means freedom to sin. He addresses this question not by logic but by an appeal to the Christian's new standing in Christ. Identification with Christ in his death and resurrection means a whole new kind of life: the "old self" or "sinful body" is destroyed; the new man is "freed from sin" and "no longer enslaved by sin." This new condition must continually be affirmed by the believer. He must "consider himself" dead to sin and alive unto God; he must "not let sin reign" in his mortal body or obey its passions. Paul illustrates the contrast between the old life and the new by

the figure of "slavery" to sin (or impurity) and to righteousness (or God). His accent throughout is on freedom: the Christian no longer is under obligation to sin; he has been "set free from sin" in union with Christ.

Paul now turns to a new illustration of the principle of freedom, namely that of marriage (7:1-3). His intention is to illustrate freedom from sin, but his reference to the law governing marriage and his constant concern for the place of the law in God's purposes leads him into the question of the Christian's relation to the law (7:4-6). This in turn will lead to further consideration of the role and function of the law (7:7), which question will be illustrated by an example of the law's operation in the inner-personal realm (7:7-25).<sup>40</sup>

b) The analogy of marriage (7:1-3)

- 7:1 Do you not know, brethren -- for I am speaking to those who know the law -- that the law is
- 2 binding on a person only during his life? Thus a married woman is bound by law to her husband as long as he lives; but if her husband dies she is discharged from the law concerning the
- 3 husband. Accordingly, she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man while her husband is alive. But if her husband dies she is free from that law, and if she marries another man she is not an adulteress.

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<sup>40</sup>This, as I see it, is the movement of Paul's thought. I disagree with those who see the principal theme of the chapter as freedom from the law. Nygren (p. 268) gives a scheme of 7:1-6 as paralleling 6:1-18 so that "law" in ch. 7 corresponds to "sin" in ch. 6, and entitles ch. 7, "Free from the Law" (p. 265). Cranfield (p. 330) entitles ch. 7, "A life characterized by freedom from the law's condemnation" and holds, with Barrett (Romans, p. 134) that 7:1-6 elucidates 6:16. I doubt that Paul's thought was so clearly structured; 7:1-6 follows from all of ch. 5 and 6, while "law" in 7:4-6 arises out of the reference to law in 7:1-3 and from Paul's constant concern for the law.

As just pointed out, Paul is drawn to the illustration of marriage to depict the notion of death to the old life and transferal to the new. The law governing marriage binds a woman to her husband as long as the husband is alive; if the husband dies she is free to be married to another man. There is nothing ambiguous about the example in itself; the problems arise because Paul, in addition to applying it to the Christian's relation to sin and to God, introduces the notion of the Christian's relation to the law itself. Even this, as we shall see, is not problematical except for the juxtaposition of the two ideas in one analogy.

Before examining Paul's application of the analogy we should note his use of "law" in verses 1 to 3. The question whether "law" in 7:1 refers to Roman law or to the law of Moses has been much debated;<sup>41</sup> arguments are based in part on the composition of Paul's readership, which in turn is a matter of conjecture. There seems no need to take "law" here to be the Mosaic law; the role of law in the Roman world (and Paul is writing to the church at Rome) was well enough understood to make his point clear.

What has just been said concerning "law" in 7:1 applies also to its use in 7:2. Here Paul even distinguishes it as the law concerning marriage, or the "law of the husband" (ὁ νόμος τοῦ ἀνδρός). His statement that a woman who lives with another man while bound by this law is an adulteress would be an accepted principle by his readers. In 7:4-6 "law," of course, clearly means the law of Moses, while in 7:7-25 the

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<sup>41</sup>That it refers to Jewish law is held, e.g., by Calvin, Barrett, Leenhardt, Kümmel; that it refers to Roman law or law in general is held by John Knox and Käsemann.

usage is extremely fluid.

c) The Christian and the law (7:4-6)

7:4 Likewise, my brethren, you have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead in order that we may bear  
5 fruit for God. While we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for  
6 death. But now we are discharged from the law, dead to that which held us captive, so that we serve not under the old written code but in the new life of the spirit.

The problems of interpretation in 7:1-6 arise, as we have said, because Paul applies his illustration of marriage to the Christian's relation to the law. As noted earlier, the illustration was originally intended to depict the change in life affected by a change in relationship. This is still a primary concern of Paul's, but relation to the law itself becomes mixed into the analogy and causes confusion. This mixing of ideas continues until, at verse 7, Paul moves on to the question of the law itself.

(i) The Christian's relation to sin and to God

In so far as Paul continues the original intention of the metaphor, his analogy serves his purpose well and is in keeping with what he has said in the previous chapter. Like a slave who has a new master and like a woman who has a new husband, the person who has been united with Christ in his death and resurrection has left behind an old relationship and entered into a new one. The example of marriage, and the specific case of a death which dissolves an old relationship and makes possible a



new one, is even more appropriate for Paul's purposes than the example of slavery. The question of what it is that the person is married to before,<sup>42</sup> and who (or what) it is that dies,<sup>43</sup> belongs properly to the illustration and not the application; to ask it is to treat the analogy as an allegory to a greater extent than does Paul himself.

Paul's application of the analogy in terms of its original intention (relation to sin and to God) should nevertheless be noted. The old relationship, Paul says, was marked by living "in the flesh," a life in which "our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bring forth fruit for death" (7:5). The reference here to "flesh" is as concrete as anywhere else in these chapters. First, just as in 8:8, "in the flesh" means in one's former life, before being "in Christ."<sup>44</sup> This sense is called for by the metaphor and by Paul's reference to participation in the death and resurrection of Christ. When we "were" in the flesh (7:5) means before we "died" with Christ (7:4) and were raised to a new life.

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<sup>42</sup>For Luther (p. 93); Barth (Shorter Commentary, p. 77); Sanday and Headlam (p. 173), this is the "old man" or the "old self." For John Knox (p. 487) it is sin; for Dodd (p. 120) and Nygren (p. 270) it is the law. For Käsemann (Romans, p. 187) it is not the law, since the Christian still has obligations to the law. For J.A.T. Robinson (Romans, p. 78) the question is better not asked, but the reference is probably to the "flesh."

<sup>43</sup>See attempts to work this out in Sanday and Headlam, Cranfield, Nygren, J.A.T. Robinson. All attempts are complicated by the intrusion of the law into the analogy; Robinson (Romans, p. 77) tries to connect the "law of the husband" in 7:2 to the "law of Moses" in 7:4. Some scholars have given up on the analogy, or limit it to stating that "a death has occurred" (Nygren, Cranfield, Barrett) or that a death dissolves relationships and obligations which obtain in life (Dodd, Käsemann).

<sup>44</sup>Agreeing with Leenhardt and Nygren. Sanday and Headlam (p. 174) see here a contrast to "in the spirit," but that is not Paul's point.

Second, the concrete meaning of "in the flesh" should not be forgotten. In that pre-Christian life, our "sinful passions" (τὰ παθήματα τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν) were at work in our "members" (ἐν τοῖς μέλεσιν ἡμῶν) to bear fruit for death. This depiction of pre-Christian living as marked by immorality and vice is in keeping with what we have already found in chapters 5 to 8 and is true of Paul's writings generally.<sup>45</sup> In contrast to such a life is the new existence in which the believer is enabled to "bear fruit for God" (7:4).

(ii) The Christian's relation to the law

We have seen that the meaning of Paul's analogy in terms of the Christian's relation to sin and to God is straight-forward enough. We now find that his application of the analogy to the Christian's relation to the law is equally straight-forward, especially when seen as parallel to its original sense. Just as the Christian has died to sin and been raised to new life with Christ, so also he has "died to the law through the body of Christ" (7:4). He has been "discharged from the law," and henceforth does not serve "under the old written code but in the new life of the spirit" (7:6). Paul mixes the two applications of the analogy together, but when they are separated they are found to be saying the same thing (first with respect to sin, second with respect to the law).

Again Paul's own interpretation of the analogy should be noted. First, his reference now is clearly to the law of Moses. It is the law

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<sup>45</sup>Cranfield (p. 337) points out that the noun (παθήματα) "is in itself neutral." This is true but of little relevance, since Paul explicitly describes the passions as "sinful" and treats the whole word-cluster as a conventional phrase.

of Moses to which the Christian "dies" (7:4) by participation in the death of Christ; it is the law of Moses which held him "captive" but from which he has been "discharged" (7:6); it is the law of Moses which is the "old written code" contrasted with the "new life of the spirit" (7:6).

Second, there is no reason to take Paul's reference to "the body of Christ" (7:4) as meaning the church.<sup>46</sup> Throughout these chapters Paul has continually alluded to the Christian's identification with the death and resurrection of Christ; now he says that the Christian has died to the law "through the body of Christ" and belongs to him who has been "raised from the dead" (7:4). The reference is not to the church, but to Christ's redeeming death on the cross.<sup>47</sup>

Third, the active role of the law in relation to sin should be noted. In 3:20, Paul has said that "through the law comes the knowledge of sin." In 4:15 he states that "the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression." In 5:13 he says that "sin is not counted where there is no law," and in 5:20 he states that "law came in to increase the trespass." Now he adds an unmistakable psychological dimension (which may have been present also in 5:20) when he says that "our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death" (7:5).<sup>48</sup> This role of the law is picked up and examined at length in the section immediately following.

<sup>46</sup>Against Dodd and Knox. Nygren (p. 274) and Käsemann (Romans, p. 188-89) see a reference to baptism.

<sup>47</sup>So Calvin, Sanday and Headlam, Käsemann, Barrett. Nygren (p. 274) and J.A.T. Robinson (Romans, p. 70) see both meanings.

<sup>48</sup>Cranfield (p. 338), following Calvin, says that the passions feel threatened by the law. This is reading into the passage.

## 2. The Function of the Law (7:7-13)

### a) The text in its setting

Paul has touched upon the law in previous chapters, not only on the fact that righteousness does not come through the law (3:20-4:25) but also upon the specific role or function of the law (3:20; 4:15; 5:13, 20; 7:5). There is no evidence that he has been consciously constructing a theology (or theodicy) of law, but his exposition of the righteousness which comes by God's grace prompts certain statements about what he considers the role of the law to be.

The question of the role of the law now becomes the focus of attention, forced into that position by the association of the law with sin in 6:14 and 7:4-6. Paul must face the inference that the law is itself sin; his natural reaction is a sharp denial and the granting to law of the role of prompting to sin (7:7-10). Beyond this, the role of the law (in the sense of intended role) is not worked out. By verse 11, the active agent is sin, which uses the law to bring about its purposes; by verse 15, the agent is "I" ("I myself" or my "flesh" or "members" or "mind"). The law is part of the scene in these later verses (I "delight" in the law or "serve" the law [7:22,25]), but it does not play an active role.

### b) The identity of "I"

Scholarly opinion as to whether the "I" in 7:7-25 refers to Paul himself, or to "existential man," or to mankind in general, has been reviewed in chapter one above. Some answer to this question must be essayed, although the attempt involves bringing forward the results of later exe-

genesis.

[First, I have become convinced that the "I" of Romans 7 represents Paul himself but that the passage does not describe his conversion nor a problem with the law which supposedly led to his conversion.] There is little to indicate that before his conversion Paul suffered under the burden of a guilty conscience or that he found the law a duty impossible to fulfil. Phil. 3:6 argues against such a supposition, and in any event that interpretation is not required by Romans 7. What Paul does in this passage is select one prohibition of the law (the one having to do with covetousness or desire) and use it to illustrate the law's role in relation to sin. If the passage is autobiographical, it means that Paul found within himself a conflict in relation to this command; it does not mean that he had a problem with the law itself, much less that such a problem led to his conversion. The reference to deliverance through Christ in verse 24 has to do with the specific question of desire, not with the law in general.

Second, I believe that Paul in Romans 7 is writing as a Christian but that his concern is not to make a sharp distinction between Christian and pre-Christian living. There is a shift in tense at verse 14, and Paul is probably thinking of his earlier (pre-Christian) life in the first section and his more recent (Christian) life in the second, but his intent is more to illustrate the role of the law in relation to sin than to contrast pre-Christian and Christian life. Certainly he does not imply that the inner conflict which he describes is unknown to non-Christians, but neither does he imply (indeed his argument is to the contrary) that it is unknown to Christians. Unless the use of the present tense in verses 14 to

25 is a literary device, and unless 25b is misplaced or a gloss, the conflict is a continuing one despite the deliverance available in Christ.

c) Exegesis of 7:7-13

7:7a What then shall we say? That the law is sin?  
By no means.

Τί οὖν ἐροῦμεν; ὁ νόμος ἁμαρτία;  
μὴ γένοιτο.<sup>49</sup>

Paul has made such a close connection between the law and sin in 7:4-6 (in fact, has treated death to the law and death to sin as parallel) and in 6:14 ("sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace"), and has so accentuated freedom from the law (the Christian has "died" to the law, is "discharged" from the law, is "dead" to that which held him captive, and is not to serve under the "old written code" [7:4-6]) that law has begun to look like the very embodiment of sin; certainly Paul could be accused of so saying. Such a thought provokes from him an instant reaction, not only because of possible attacks from his opponents (3:8) but because of his deep reverence for and loyalty to the law. |

Paul therefore finds a role for the law which is related to sin yet which keeps it from being itself sinful and which (although Paul does not explicitly say this) keeps it within the purposes of God. This defense of the law is picked up again in 7:13-14 (the fault is not in the

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<sup>49</sup>Quotations from the Greek New Testament are from Η ΚΑΙΝΗ ΔΙΑΘΗΚΗ (London: The British and Foreign Bible Society, 1958).

law but in sin, or in me), but without any further role being assigned to it.

7:7b Yet, if it had not been for the law, I should not have known sin. I should not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, "You shall not covet."

ἀλλὰ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν οὐκ ἔγνων εἰ  
μὴ διὰ νόμου· τὴν γὰρ ἐπι-  
θυμίαν οὐκ ᾔδειν εἰ μὴ ὁ νόμος  
ἔλεγεν, Οὐκ ἐπιθυμήσεις.

Paul, as we have said, finds a specific example of the law's function which preserves the goodness of the law without severing its connection with sin. The role of the law is to give the knowledge of sin and, it appears, also to stir up to sin. Both ideas are present in this verse, and it is impossible to separate them.

Paul seems, at first glance, to be making a distinction between the act of covetousness and the knowledge of the act, i.e., the knowledge that the act is forbidden and therefore "sin." On this understanding, the act itself may be a natural and morally neutral one (e.g., sexual desire), but when the commandment forbidding it is known it becomes morally reprehensible.<sup>50</sup> This sense of the verse would accord with Rom. 3:20 ("Through the law is the knowledge of sin") and perhaps with 1 Cor. 15:56 ("The power of sin is the law").

It is quite possible, however, that Paul means "know" in the sense of "experience." I would not actually have coveted if the law had not,

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<sup>50</sup>So Dodd, Cranfield, Leenhardt.

by forbidding it, suggested it. This sense of the verse is anticipated in 7:5 ("our sinful passions, aroused by the law") and illustrated in the verse immediately following ("sin, finding opportunity in the commandment, wrought in me all kinds of covetousness"). It is further supported by the fact that, in this section, Paul is not trying to establish the principle of moral responsibility for sin but to illustrate the role and function of the law. The two interpretations of the verse are not in any case mutually exclusive; both also accord with Paul's teaching elsewhere concerning the relation of the law and sin.<sup>51</sup>

It is noteworthy that, in this passage, Paul selects the one commandment of the decalogue which deals with inner desire and not with outward actions. As scholars have pointed out,<sup>52</sup> Paul follows Jewish tradition in singling out this commandment as representative of the whole law. That this commandment may have been the most difficult for Paul to obey is suggested by the depiction of moral struggle which follows.<sup>53</sup> Even if the reference is not autobiographical, this commandment serves Paul's argument ideally.)

It is important for the interpretation of the entire passage to understand the meaning of the verb "covet." Paul is quoting directly from the LXX of Deut. 5:21 (or Ex. 20:17): οὐκ ἐπιθυμῆσεις. As remarked

<sup>51</sup>Attempts by Sanday and Headlam (p. 179) and Barrett (Romans, p. 142) to draw inferences from the two forms of the verb "know" in 7:7 are inconclusive.

<sup>52</sup>Käsemann (Romans, p. 194); Leenhardt (p. 185-86). Interestingly, the sources cited fall largely within Greek-speaking Judaism.

<sup>53</sup>Note Paul's reference to the struggle with sexual passion in 1 Cor. 7:9. Paul's knowledge of such struggle need not have been entirely secondhand.



earlier, this portion of the Septuagint had been in use by Greek-speaking Jews for three hundred years by the time of Paul. Greek terms such as ἐπιθυμία and its cognates therefore carried their natural Greek connotation for the average user. In the case of ἐπιθυμία, that meaning (as illustrated at length in the Greek writers and philosophers)<sup>54</sup> is clearly "desire," "yearning," "craving," "lust," and often refers to sexual passion.<sup>55</sup> This meaning is also required by the use of the term in the tenth commandment.<sup>56</sup>

A tradition of long standing in Protestant circles has been to understand ἐπιθυμία in Rom. 7 as rebellion against God. Thus Calvin argues that covetousness, being an invisible sin, has always been associated with self-indulgence and self-assurance;<sup>57</sup> Bultmann includes in this sin a "false zeal for fulfilling the law";<sup>58</sup> Barrett claims that it means man's usurping of God's place as Lord;<sup>59</sup> Cranfield and Leenhardt define it as self-assertion and rebellion against God.<sup>60</sup> But the passage does not require such interpretation and, without serious distortion, will

<sup>54</sup>See the extensive list of references in H. G. Liddell and Robert Scott, eds., A Greek-English Lexicon (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1940), p. 634-35. Barrett (Romans, p. 141) points out that in Rom. 7:7 ἐπιθυμῶ, having a pejorative meaning, needs no object (cf. Cranfield, p. 349).

<sup>55</sup>E.g., Plato's Phaedr. 232b.

<sup>56</sup>One may note also that the first object of prohibition in this commandment is "your neighbor's wife."

<sup>57</sup>Calvin, p. 252. Augustine, Calvin says, was right when he said that Paul included in this prohibition the whole law.

<sup>58</sup>Theology, I, 247.

<sup>59</sup>Romans, p. 141.

<sup>60</sup>Cranfield, p. 349; Leenhardt, p. 185-86. The same interpretation is held by Barth, Jewett, Käsemann.

not bear it.] Paul in this chapter has not been dealing with rebellion against God (that theme is fully explored in 1:18-3:30), but [with sin in concrete physical terms: the "sinful body" (6:6); the "passions" of our "mortal bodies" (6:12); sin as "impurity" and as the opposite of "righteousness" and "sanctification" (6:19); sin as the things of which we are now "ashamed" (6:21); the "sinful passions" of the "flesh" and of the "members" (7:5).] This usage continues through the rest of chapter 7 and into chapter 8.

It is best, therefore, to take ἐπιθυμία in its literal sense and in the sense required by its place in the decalogue. As Paul has chosen this commandment to illustrate the "sinful passions aroused by the law," passions which are "at work in our members" (7:5), this is obviously his meaning here.<sup>61</sup>

7:8a But sin, finding opportunity in the commandment, wrought in me all kinds of covetousness.

ἀφορμὴν δὲ λαβοῦσα ἡ ἁμαρτία  
διὰ τῆς ἐντολῆς κατειργάσατο  
ἐν ἐμοὶ πᾶσαν ἐπιθυμίαν.

The role of the commandment here has not changed from what it was in 7:5,7, but the active agent has changed to "sin." Sin, using the commandment against covetousness, works up in man all kinds of covetousness.) This change of subject, from "I" (7:7) or the "sinful passions" themselves (7:6), in which the law plays an active role, to "sin" which uses

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<sup>61</sup>My argument is not that covetousness cannot be a form of idolatry (cf. Col. 3:5), but that this is not Paul's meaning here.

the law, will be important throughout 7:8-20. Paul's usage is fluid, but the active role of the law stops at verse 7.

Sin, here, finds "opportunity" (ἀφορμή, starting-point or base of operations) in the commandment; i.e., it uses the presence of the commandment against desire to stir up all kinds of desires.<sup>62</sup> [Whether Paul has in mind the story of Gen. 2-3 is difficult to decide; given his penchant for laboring the details of such analogies when he does use them, it is probable that he is not consciously recalling that story at this point. What is clear is that sin is here given a quasi-personal identity and an active role in stirring up desire. This active role continues through 7:20.]

It should be noted that what Paul has described in 7:7-8, namely the role of law in stirring up sin, is a psychological reality to which many even of the most religious people can attest. [Dodd quotes the example of Augustine who, in his Confessions, recalls stealing pears from a neighbor's tree, not to eat, but for the pleasure of stealing:]

What was it I loved in that theft? Was it the pleasure of acting against the law, in order that I, a prisoner under rules, might have a maimed counterfeit of freedom, by doing with impunity what was forbidden?<sup>63</sup>

Goodenough similarly cites the example of giving a little child a handful of beans to play with and at the same time forbidding him to put any of them up his nose; the very prohibition acts as a suggestion.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>62</sup>As Käsemann points out (Romans, p. 194), πᾶσαν ἐπιθυμίαν means more than just multiplicity.

<sup>63</sup>Quoted in Dodd, p. 127.

- 7:8b Apart from the law sin lies dead. I was once  
 -9 alive apart from the law, but when the command-  
 ment came, sin revived and I died.

χωρὶς γὰρ νόμου ἁμαρτία νεκρά.  
 ἐγὼ δὲ ἔζων χωρὶς νόμου ποτέ.  
 ἐλθούσης δὲ τῆς ἐντολῆς ἡ ἁμαρτία  
 ἀνέζησεν, ἐγὼ δὲ ἀπέθανον.

[It is possible, as we have said, that Paul here is recalling the Genesis story; the figure of sin "lying dead" and then, with the coming of the commandment, "springing to life," is reminiscent of the serpent's action in Gen. 3.] What is more undeniable is that Paul is thinking in psychological and not forensic terms. Death as the penalty of sin has been dealt with in chapter 5; death as the result of sin, especially when depicted in spiritual-psychological terms, is another matter.

In essence, 7:8b-9 repeats in graphic language what was said in the previous verse, but does so using the terms "life" and "death." [Apart from the law, "I was once alive," while sin lay "dead"; with the coming of the commandment, "sin revived and I died."] The account appears to tell the story of a particular point in Paul's life when he became conscious of the specific commandment (ἡ ἐντολή) concerning covetousness or desire. Prior to that time (the verb tenses are very specific here), "I was alive" (ἔζων, imperfect); but "when the commandment came" (ἐλθούσης δὲ τῆς ἐντολῆς, aorist participle, "upon the commandment's coming")

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<sup>64</sup> Goodenough, "Paul and the Hellenization of Christianity," p. 54-55. In Toward a Mature Faith (p. 119), Goodenough compares Romans 7 to Freud and says that Paul "makes one of the most amazing analyses of the effects of commands upon the human psyche."

sin "revived" (ἀνέζησεν, aorist) and I "died" (ἀπέθανον, aorist).

There is no need to date this event specifically to Paul's bar mitzvah; intellectual and moral development does not take place precisely according to the calendar, and a Jewish boy's knowledge of the law was also a growing process beginning before adolescence and continuing beyond it. There is also no need to suppose that this clash between the law and the natural desires took place on only one occasion; indeed, 7:15-25 describes its continuation into the present. Nevertheless, 7:7-11 seems to depict a specific point in the past when, for the first time, Paul experienced the full clash of desire and religious obligation.<sup>65</sup>

Paul describes the condition before this momentous event as "life" and the condition following it as "death." As in the Garden of Eden, the state of moral awareness (see the parallel use of "know" in the two chapters) is one of death. While the experience of dying is repeated and reinforced with every instance of moral failure, the happy state of "life" is not regained until the transformation described in 7:25.

7:10 The very commandment which promised life proved to be death to me.

καὶ εὗρέθη μοι ἡ ἐντολὴ ἡ εἰς  
ζωήν, αὖτε εἰς θάνατον.

Paul here continues the life-death contrast of the previous verse,

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<sup>65</sup>Agreeing with Jowett, Sanday and Headlam, Dodd, Davies, John Knox, Barrett; disagreeing with Cranfield (p. 351) who holds that "I died" means being placed under sentence of death, and with Käsemann (Romans, p. 197) that it refers to the fall in the Garden of Eden.

but ties it specifically to the law. The commandment, which was intended to bring life, had the reverse effect of bringing death.

It is probable that, in a general sense, Paul's reference to the commandment's bringing life rests back on the words of Deut. 30:15-20 (well-known and oft-quoted in Jewish circles): "See, I have set before you this day life and good, death and evil. If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God. . . then you shall live. . . But if your heart turns away, and you will not hear. . . you shall perish."<sup>66</sup> It is even more probable that he has in mind the Jewish teaching that study of the law is the best remedy for the evil yeşer. This teaching is found repeatedly in Rabbinic literature (see above, p. 188-89); the simplest form is that found in Baba Bathra 16a:

[ If God created the evil inclination, He also  
created the Torah as its antidote. ]

[ This promised remedy, in Paul's case, had the reverse effect: the law, far from freeing him from sin, stirred up sin and brought condemnation. ]

Whether in fact Paul is thinking here of the temptations of the flesh as the activity of the evil inclination is impossible to decide and is not critical to the interpretation of the text. We have seen that a primary referent of the evil impulse was fleshly desire, and particularly sexual lust. If therefore Paul was thinking in Jewish terms about the ערץ רע or in Greek terms about the ἐπιθυμία τῆς σαρκός, the net result would be the same.

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<sup>66</sup> Leenhardt (p. 188) draws attention also to Deut. 4:1 and Lev. 18:5. Aboth 2:7 is also a parallel: "The more study of the law the more life."

The role of the law in this verse, it should be noted, is more sinister than in 7:8, or that role is articulated here more fully than in the earlier verse. In 7:8, the law is the (perhaps unwilling) instrument of sin to bring about desire; in 7:10, this instrument proves to be a deadly one. Paul does not say that this is the law's intended effect (as the existentialist school implies); indeed, the intended effect is to bring forth life. Nevertheless, the law's actual effect is to cause death.<sup>67</sup>

7:11 For sin, finding opportunity in the commandment, deceived me and by it killed me.

ἡ γὰρ ἁμαρτία ἀφορμὴν λαβοῦσα  
διὰ τῆς ἐντολῆς ἐξηπάτησέν  
με καὶ δι' αὐτῆς ἀπέκτεινεν.

This verse is essentially a repetition of 7:8-10 and does not advance the argument. The only new element is the notion that sin "deceived me," which strengthens the connection with Gen. 3 ("The serpent deceived me, and I ate," Gen. 3:13).<sup>68</sup>

7:12 So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good.

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<sup>67</sup>Nygren (p. 281) attempts to defend the law: "Paul does not mean to say that God intended one thing through the law, but its effect actually turned out to be different and contrary"; God permits sin to use the law in this way because he intends to justify man by faith, so God is still using the law "against sin and the sinner." What Nygren says is true of Gal. 3:19-24, but not of Rom. 7:10.

<sup>68</sup>The wording of 7:11 (ἐξηπάτησέν με) is the same as the LXX of Gen. 3:13; Paul uses similar wording in 2 Cor. 11:3.

ὥστε ὁ μὲν νόμος ἅγιος, καὶ ἡ  
ἐντολὴ ἁγία καὶ δίκαια καὶ ἀγαθή.

Verse 12 does not follow immediately from verse 11, but from the argument of the whole preceding section; the blame for man's trouble has been laid at the door of sin rather than of the law. This may seem a small victory, for the law is still sin's instrument to stir up all kinds of desires and bring about death. But Paul certainly means that the goodness of the law has been preserved. The law as a whole (ὁ νόμος) is "holy," and the specific commandment (ἡ ἐντολή) is "holy and just and good."

7:13 Did that which is good, then, bring death to me? By no means! It was sin, working death in me through what is good, in order that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure.

Τὸ οὖν ἀγαθὸν ἐμοὶ ἐγένετο θάνατος;  
μὴ γένοιτο· ἀλλὰ ἡ ἁμαρτία, ἵνα  
φανῇ ἁμαρτία, διὰ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ μοι  
κατεργαζομένη θάνατον, ἵνα γένηται  
καθ' ὑπερβολὴν ἁμαρτωλὸς ἡ  
ἁμαρτία διὰ τῆς ἐντολῆς.

Paul is not satisfied in his own mind with the defense of the law which he has proposed. After all, the law is still sin's instrument to bring forth death (7:11). Can one therefore say explicitly that the law brings death? Factually speaking, yes, but in terms of a court of law, no. The law is the unwilling, almost the helpless, tool in the hand of sin (Paul does not say this, but surely he implies it), and it is sin



which is the guilty party. [Indeed, the fact that sin uses such a good thing to bring about so vile an end proves that sin is "exceeding sinful," or "sinful beyond measure." ]

Paul does not address the question whether sin's wresting the law away from God constitutes an evil greater than the one he has avoided; it is enough for him that he has safeguarded the goodness of the law. [Paul states, in fact, that all this has taken place "in order that" ( $\text{ἵνα}$ ) sin might be shown to be sin. In other words, the whole process is according to God's plan.<sup>69</sup> ]

[It should be pointed out that, beginning with verse 8, sin has been increasingly personified and credited with quasi-independent action in opposition to God. [At first this personification is a mere figure of speech, and may reflect an unconscious recollection of the activity of the serpent in the Garden of Eden. The personification reaches a peak in the present verse (7:13); sin uses the commandment to "work death," and thus reveals itself to be sinful beyond measure.] The activity of sin continues in a less dramatic form in verses 17 and 20; by verse 23 it has been replaced by the "law of sin," and this is repeated in verse 25. [The personification of sin in this chapter is therefore a limited one, and does not justify its interpretation as a cosmic power, an alien force which has a "demonic character."<sup>70</sup> ] Paul can use the language of cosmic

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<sup>69</sup>The second  $\text{ἵνα}$ , however, may simply indicate a "result" clause and not carry the sense of intention present in the first. Sanday and Headlam, Nygren and Cranfield take  $\text{ἵνα}$  in the strong sense in both cases. In any event, Paul feels he has vindicated God's purposes.

<sup>70</sup>Käsemann (Romans, p. 198). Käsemann continues this interpretation throughout the passage: 7:17 describes a "demonological state of af-

dualism (e.g., 8:38-39), but this is not the kind of conflict depicted here. In describing his problem with desire, Paul attributes to "sin" the otherwise inexplicable tendency to evil; nevertheless, as we shall see throughout the passage, he is constantly aware that it is "I" who do it.

### 3. Moral Impotence and Its Cause (7:14-20)

#### a) The text in its setting

Paul has completed his defense of the law: the responsibility for man's moral failure rests not with the law, but with sin. But Paul cannot let the matter rest. Having used the example of the relation of the law to sin in his own life, a relationship in which the law was the helpless instrument of sin and served only to bring condemnation and death, Paul is led on to describe the conflict in man between sin on the one hand and the intention to keep the law on the other. The parties to this conflict are variously described: in the one camp are sin, the flesh, the "members" and "this body of death"; in the other camp are the will, the good, the right, the law of God, the inner man and the mind. The "I" is torn between the two camps, siding now with the one, now with the other. Deliverance comes only through Christ.

As Paul becomes more and more involved in this description of moral conflict, the intention (stated in 7:7) of distinguishing between the law and sin becomes lost. The law indeed remains part of the scene as an

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fairs" which vastly transcends the field of ethics; Paul "really means that the I who speaks here is demonologically enslaved" (ibid., p. 214).

objective standard to which the mind gives allegiance but whose demands the flesh cannot fulfil. But the law does not play an active role in the conflict, and nothing more is said about God's purposes in giving the law.<sup>71</sup>

b) Exegesis of 7:14-20

7:14 We know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin.

οἶδαμεν γὰρ ὅτι ὁ νόμος πνευματικός  
ἐστίν· ἐγὼ δὲ σαρκινός εἰμι,  
πεπραμένος ὑπὸ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν.

Paul has striven to safeguard the goodness of the law; he has transferred the responsibility for man's moral failure from the law to sin. He now offers another reason for that failure, namely man's "carnal" nature which is radically different from the "spiritual" nature of the law. From this carnal nature comes man's inability to fulfil the law; he knows and acknowledges the goodness of the law, but is unable to do what the law requires.

In spite of the designations "spiritual" and "carnal" in this verse, the contrast in the following passage is not strictly between flesh and spirit, as is often claimed.<sup>72</sup> Indeed, the word "spirit" or "spirit-

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<sup>71</sup>John Knox (p. 498) sees the purpose of 7:14-25 as showing that no flesh will be justified by the law, for the law only gives knowledge of sin. Paul makes this point in earlier chapters, but that is not his purpose now.

<sup>72</sup>So Calvin, Nygren, Dunn. Dunn (p. 259) admits that the flesh-spirit dualism here is not the same as in Gal. 5:16-17, as there is no

ual" does not recur in the remainder of the chapter. That Paul can employ a flesh-spirit contrast is evident from other passages (8:4-14; cf. Gal. 5:17-24; 1 Cor. 3:1-4; 5:3-5), but this is not his thought here. Rather, the antithesis is between the two groups of concepts listed above, and specifically between sin (which is in the flesh or members) and the desire to obey the law (which is in the mind or inner man).

Notice should nevertheless be taken of the terms (*πνευματικός* and *σάρκινος*) employed here. The law, Paul says, is "spiritual"; by this he apparently means that the law is from God, who is spirit.<sup>73</sup> The term is also one of approbation; the law belongs to the spiritual world, which for Paul is superior to the world of flesh. In contrast to the law, "I" am "carnal." The word which Paul uses here is *σάρκινος*, but the qualificatory phrase "sold under sin" and the contrast with *πνευματικός* show that a pejorative meaning is intended.<sup>74</sup> Indeed, the supposedly clear distinction between *σάρκινος* and *σαρκικός* is not borne out in Paul's writings; both terms usually carry a negative connotation.<sup>75</sup>

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reference to spirit. Sanday and Headlam (p. 181-82), anticipating ch. 8, describe the dualism as "Spirit-sin."

<sup>73</sup>Sanday and Headlam (p. 181) draw attention to Paul's description of the manna and the water from the rock as "spiritual" (1 Cor. 10:3-4). Cranfield (p. 355) cites the familiar teaching in San. 10:1: Who does not have a share in the world to come? He who says "that the law is not from heaven."

<sup>74</sup>For discussion of the relative meanings of *σάρκινος* and *σαρκικός*, see Sanday and Headlam (p. 181); Cranfield (p. 356-57); J.A.T. Robinson (*Romans*, p. 89); Nygren (p. 299). Robinson, who holds that Paul observes the distinction consistently, tries to make *σάρκινος* in 7:14 a neutral term, in spite of "sold under sin." It should be noted that late mss. (sixth to eighth centuries) have *σαρκικός*.

<sup>75</sup>See Arndt and Gingrich (also Liddell and Scott) on both terms.

7:15 I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate.

ὁ γὰρ κατεργάζομαι οὐ γινώσκω.  
οὐ γὰρ ὃ θέλω τοῦτο πράσσω,  
ἀλλ' ὃ μισῶ τοῦτο ποιεῶ.

The two parts of this verse must be considered together; the "I do not understand" refers to the contrariety of actions described immediately following. Paul's point here is not, as is often alleged,<sup>76</sup> "I do not acknowledge" or "I do not approve" my actions. That Paul does not approve his actions is clear throughout the passage, and is the cause of his distress. But if οὐ γινώσκω is taken as "I do not acknowledge," the second part of the verse does not follow from the first. The more natural sense of the verb, and one which does not do violence to its meaning in the verse, is therefore to be preferred. ["I do not understand," Paul says, "how there can be such a discrepancy between what I want and what I do."<sup>77</sup>] This discrepancy is the theme of the remainder of the chapter.

7:16 Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good.

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<sup>76</sup>E.g., Calvin, Cranfield, Barrett. Bultmann ("Romans 7 and the Anthropology of Paul," p. 155) interprets the verse as meaning that "man does not know that his service under the old written code [7:6] leads to death." In contrast to the foregoing, Sanday and Headlam (p. 182) and most translators take the verb in its natural sense.

<sup>77</sup>Attempts to discover shades of meaning in the various verbs for "do" in this passage have proved futile (e.g., Sanday and Headlam, p. 181-82; Cranfield, p. 358). The variety is surely stylistic.

εἰ δὲ δὲ οὐ θέλω τοῦτο ποιῶ,  
σύνφημι τῷ νόμῳ ὅτι καλός.

The logic of this statement is not apparent on the surface. How does Paul's doing what he does not want prove that the law is good? [But again his intention is to show that failure to do the good cannot be blamed on the law. I want to do the good, but I do not accomplish it; this is not the fault of the law. This is Paul's final statement in defense of the law.]

7:17 So then it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwells within me.

νυνὶ δὲ οὐκέτι ἐγὼ κατεργάζομαι  
αὐτὸ ἀλλὰ ἡ ἐνοικοῦσα ἐν ἐμοὶ  
ἁμαρτία.

As most modern translations show, the "so then" (νυνὶ δὲ) at the head of this verse indicates not a causal relationship but a disjuncture: "however," or "but as things are" (NEB). Paul is picking up again the thought of 7:8-13, in which the blame for man's failure is laid on sin.

[This verse marks the beginning of a sharp distinction between the self and sin, a distinction which will be expressed in various ways in the following verses.] [Taken by itself, the verse lends support to those who see in this chapter the personification of sin as a power which has invaded man's nature and claimed his allegiance.] [We have argued, however, that the theme of this passage is not one of cosmic dualism but of the struggle within man between the desire to do good and the mysterious power

which moves him to do evil. It is true that in this verse Paul seems to be attempting to get "off the hook" as far as responsibility for sin is concerned. [This impression is strengthened by the distinction in 7:18 between "I" and "my flesh" and in the following verses between the "I" which wants to do God's will and the flesh or members in which sin dwells.] But we shall see that Paul never forswears responsibility for sinful actions (in this case, sinful thoughts or desires), and never totally divorces himself from that part of him which is ruled by sin.<sup>78</sup>]

7:18a For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh.

οἶδα γὰρ ὅτι οὐκ οἰκεῖ ἐν ἐμοί,  
τοῦτ' ἐστὶν ἐν τῇ σαρκί μου,  
ἀγαθόν.

This statement follows immediately on Paul's distinction between "I" and the "sin which dwells in me," and explains how it is that sin can dwell in me: it dwells "in my flesh." To be sure, Paul here says only that "nothing good dwells. . . in my flesh," but the argument requires that the clause "sin which dwells in me" (7:17,20) means that sin dwells "in my members" (7:23) or in "my flesh" (7:25).]

The interpretation of "in my flesh" as "in me as flesh" (i.e., in my "fallen human nature,"<sup>79</sup> or in my "alienation from God"<sup>80</sup>) is prompted

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<sup>78</sup>The interpretation that by "no longer I. . . but sin" Paul must be speaking as a Christian (Calvin, p. 266; Nygren, p. 200) seems dictated by theological considerations. Cranfield (p. 360) says that the fact of conflict with sin is a sign of hope -- a line of reasoning which accords ill with 7:24.

not by the text but by theological considerations and is to be rejected. Paul is not talking about man as flesh, over against God as spirit; he is not talking about the whole man's rebellion against God's law. He is distinguishing between himself and sin (7:17), and he is stating that sin dwells in his flesh. This is not to say that Paul cannot use "flesh" in a more holistic sense; it is to argue that such a holistic sense is not his intention here. Indeed, the following verses will describe the division within man as that between the flesh (or members) and the mind (or inner man), and not as the struggle of the will to submit to God's law.

7:18b I can will what is right, but I cannot do it.  
 -19 For I do not do the good I want, but the evil  
 I do not want is what I do.

τὸ γὰρ θέλειν παράκειται μοι, τὸ  
 δὲ κατεργάζεσθαι τὸ καλὸν οὐ.  
 οὐ γὰρ ὃ θέλω ποιῶ ἀγαθόν, ἀλλὰ  
 ὃ οὐ θέλω κακὸν τοῦτο πράσσω.

(The discrepancy in man between the good which he wants to do and the evil which he does is due to, and is a sign of, the sin which dwells in his flesh.) Throughout this section Paul alternates between both no-

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<sup>79</sup>So Calvin, Cranfield, Leenhardt, J.A.T. Robinson.

<sup>80</sup>So Käsemann (Romans, p. 204), who claims that the phrase "does not have a limiting effect." In keeping with his interpretation throughout, Käsemann takes the phrase as indicating enslavement to a demonic power: "flesh" means man's existence as "possessed" by sin (p. 205). Bultmann (Theology, I, 245) takes the phrase existentially: "I" and "in my flesh" mean the same thing; Paul means that the conscious self is dissociating itself from the self which has fallen victim to the flesh.



tions; they are dependent upon and illustrate each other. In 7:14 he alludes to his carnal nature, and in the following verse describes his inability to do the good. In 7:17-18a he refers again to his fleshly nature, and in 7:18b-19 returns to his failure to do the good. The moral failure is therefore both the result of, and illustrative of, the fact that sin dwells in his flesh.

[In 7:18b, Paul says simply: "I can will what is right, but I cannot do it." This willing of "the right" (τὸ καλόν) is paralleled in the following verse by the willing of "the good" (τὸ ἀγαθόν).] The first term (τὸ καλόν) is more accurately translated "the beautiful," i.e., the good in the sense of the excellent, worthy, noble, virtuous, and not the good in the sense of the obligatory. It is so used by Homer, Plato, Xenophon and the Greek writers generally.<sup>81</sup> We have here, then, the two ideals of "the beautiful and the good" which are so closely linked in Greek literature that they form a compound word (καλοκαγαθός).

Paul states in these verses that he can will (and does will) the beautiful and the good, but that he cannot accomplish it. One is reminded immediately of Ovid's oft-quoted line:

Desire persuades me one way, reason another.  
I see the better and approve it, but I follow  
the worse.<sup>82</sup>

The parallel is even more striking if we note that Ovid precedes this con-

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<sup>81</sup>E.g., Plato's Gorgias 474d; Symposium 201e; see the list of Greek authors in Liddell and Scott, p. 870.

<sup>82</sup>Ovid, Metamorphoses 7:19-20 (in Ovid: Metamorphoses; tr. F. J. Miller, vol. 1 [London: William Heinemann, 1921]).

fession with the exclamation:

Ah, if I could, I should be more myself. But  
some strange power holds me down against my will.<sup>83</sup>

Refusal on the part of scholars<sup>84</sup> to admit the parallel apparently springs more from theological considerations than from exegesis of the text. It cannot be, they argue, that Paul finds in himself one part which recognizes and wants to do the good while another part hinders its accomplishment; the whole man must always stand wholly over against God and under God's judgment. [What Paul says, of course, is precisely that: there is a part of him (his "mind" or "inner man") which recognizes and even "delights" (7:22) in God's law, while another part of him (his "flesh" or "members") prevents its accomplishment.]

As Dodd points out,<sup>85</sup> there is in Aristotle a parallel notion which is expressed by the term ἀκρασία or ἀκράτεια (lack of power, debility, incontinence). In Aristotle,<sup>86</sup> this quality represents one of the four stages in the moral development of the individual, namely the stage in which he recognizes the good but fails to do it. This concept is not limited to Aristotle but is found in many writers of the Greek world<sup>87</sup> and was considered a moral fault. Paul himself gives its oppo-

<sup>83</sup>Ovid, Metamorphoses 7:18-19.

<sup>84</sup>E.g., Calvin, Bultmann, Cranfield, Käsemann; contra: Dodd, John Knox.

<sup>85</sup>Dodd, p. 131.

<sup>86</sup>See especially his Nicomachean Ethics 1145<sup>a</sup>15 - 1152<sup>a</sup>35 (in Aristotle: The Nicomachean Ethics; tr. H. Rackham [London: William Heinemann, 1947]).

site (ἐγκράτεια) an important place in his list of virtues (Gal. 5:22).

[The natural interpretation of what Paul says in 7:19, then, is that there is a discrepancy between his will and his action] Attempts to avoid this interpretation are as ingenious as they are artificial. Bultmann, as we have seen, denies that there is a disparity in 7:19 between willing and doing ("Nothing is said about good resolutions that come to nothing in actual conduct"<sup>88</sup>); the willing of good is itself perverse, for it represents man's "self-reliant will to be himself,"<sup>89</sup> his "false will toward selfhood";<sup>90</sup> in any event, both the willing and the doing are "trans-subjective,"<sup>91</sup> i.e., they do not describe the activity of a conscious subject but represent man's attempt to find life apart from the righteousness of God.<sup>92</sup> Leenhardt similarly holds that "the antithesis is not concerned with the weakness of a will which is not capable of carrying out pure and lofty intentions";<sup>93</sup> rather, it is "between my 'conscience' which wills the good and my 'will' which produces action."<sup>94</sup> Leenhardt's explanation of the dichotomy is that τὸ θέλειν is "theo-

<sup>87</sup>E.g., Plato's Republic 461b; Laws 734b; cf. the list of Greek writers in Liddell and Scott, p. 54. The author of 4 Maccabees may have intended the same thing by "weakness of reason" in 7:20 (see above, p. 212-13).

<sup>88</sup>Bultmann, Theology, I, 248; cf. Calvin, p. 267: Paul "does not mean that he had nothing but an ineffectual desire."

<sup>89</sup>Bultmann, Theology, I, 245. <sup>90</sup>Ibid., p. 246.

<sup>91</sup>Bultmann, "Romans 7," p. 155.

<sup>92</sup>The willing, Bultmann says, is not the willing to fulfil the commandments, but the will for "life" (ibid., p. 152-55).

<sup>93</sup>Leenhardt, p. 192. <sup>94</sup>Ibid.

retical will to which the power of judgment belongs" while τὸ κατεργάζεσθαι is "practical will to which the power of decision belongs."<sup>95</sup> Calvin and his followers<sup>96</sup> ascribe the willing of good to the activity of the Holy Spirit (non-Christians, apparently, are incapable of willing the good).

[What Paul actually says is quite straight-forward and agrees with common experience: "I can will the good, but I cannot do it."<sup>97</sup> It should be pointed out also that Paul not only confesses failure to do the good, but acknowledges that he does "the evil" (τὸ κακόν) which he does not want, or which he "hates" (7:15).] In the language of the later Christian liturgy, these are the sins of "commission and omission." In the context of the tenth commandment, which Paul has chosen for his example, this evil or hateful thing is not an overt action but the inward sin of passion or lust.

7:20 Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwells within me.

εἰ δὲ ὃ οὐ θέλω ἐγὼ τοῦτο ποιῶ,  
οὐκέτι ἐγὼ κατεργάζομαι αὐτὸ  
ἀλλὰ ἡ οἰκοῦσα ἐν ἐμοὶ ἁμαρτία.

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<sup>95</sup>Ibid., footnote. The translation of κατεργάζομαι as "will" is unwarranted.

<sup>96</sup>Calvin (p. 249, 262, 267-68, 274); Cranfield (p. 361); Leenhardt (p. 196); cf. Luther (p. 97-99).

<sup>97</sup>Sanders (Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People) represents Paul as saying that "humanity without Christ cannot fulfil the law at all" (p. 78; cf. p. 80, 124). This interpretation is required only if by "the good" Paul means "the whole law."

As we have seen, Paul alternates between stating the fact of moral failure and giving the reason for that failure. In this verse, which is essentially a summary of 7:15-19, the accent falls again on the cause; it is "sin which dwells within me."<sup>98</sup>

#### 4. War in the Soul and Its Resolution (7:21-25)

##### a) The text in its setting

Paul in Rom. 7:7 set out to correct the inference that, by relating the law so closely to sin, he had actually made the law to be sin. The law is not sin; yet it has the function of giving the knowledge of sin and of stirring up to greater sinfulness. Paradoxically then, the law, which was intended for life, brings death. Yet the responsibility for this state of affairs lies not with the law, but with sin. Sin has used the law, good in itself, for an evil end. In this endeavor sin has had an ally or base of operations in the flesh. Indeed, the presence and activity of sin in the flesh means that the good intentions of the will are brought to naught.

Paul now pauses to summarize or state in general terms what he has said, not specifically with respect to the role of the law (which has dropped into the background), but with respect to the activity of sin in his members and its effects upon the fulfilment of the law. He describes this in terms of various "laws"; his play upon the word νόμος is deliberate and is typical of his style, but has proved a source of puzzlement

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<sup>98</sup>Käsemann, in keeping with his accent on sin as a demonic power, says that Paul here underscores "the fact of possession" (Romans, p. 205).

to interpreters.<sup>99</sup> In 8:2 he will pick up these contrasting "laws" again, one of them being now "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus."

b) Exegesis of 7:21-25

7:21 So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand.

εὕρισκω ἄρα τὸν νόμον τῷ  
θέλοντι ἐμοὶ ποιεῖν τὸ καλόν,  
ὅτι ἐμοὶ τὸ κακὸν παράκειται.

Having described at some length his failure to do the good, Paul states that he finds it to be a "law" or principle or rule that, when he wants to do the right, evil lies more closely at hand. Attempts to identify this law with the "other law" or 7:23<sup>100</sup> are fanciful and unconvincing. Paul's use of νόμος in a wide variety of senses (often not clearly defined) is deliberate and stylistic; theological exactitude should not be sought in every instance.<sup>101</sup>

It should also be noted that Paul here contrasts "the right" (τὸ καλόν) and "the evil" (τὸ κακόν), and not good and evil. This is for stylistic (i.e., euphonic) reasons, but also because the two qualities are real opposites: τὸ καλόν is the beautiful or worthy, while τὸ κακόν is the evil or unworthy.

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<sup>99</sup> Calvin (p. 269) sorts these laws into four kinds, Jowett (p. 297-98) into five.

<sup>100</sup> E.g., Sanday and Headlam (p. 182); Barrett (Romans, p. 149); Cranfield (p. 362).

<sup>101</sup> Goodenough ("Paul and the Hellenization of Christianity," p. 56) claims that νόμος here means a kind of law of nature, i.e., that man

7:22 For I delight in the law of God in my inmost  
 -23 self, but I see in my members another law at  
 war with the law of my mind and making me  
 captive to the law of sin which is in my mem-  
 bers.

συνφύδομαι γὰρ τῷ νόμῳ τοῦ Θεοῦ  
 κατὰ τὸν ἔσω ἄνθρωπος, βλέπω δὲ  
 ἕτερον νόμον ἐν τοῖς μέλεσιν μου  
 ἀντιστρατεύόμενον τῷ νόμῳ τοῦ  
 νοός μου καὶ αἰχμαλωτίζοντά με  
 ἐν τῷ νόμῳ τῆς ἁμαρτίας τῷ  
 ὄντι ἐν τοῖς μέλεσίν μου.

For the purposes of our investigation, these verses are the most important of the entire chapter. Paul here defines the two parties which are at war in his soul, a war the results of which are described in the previous verses. A number of key terms are employed here. As has been our practice, we will take them at face value and in the sense required by the context. Not to do so would be to do violence to the argument.

On one side in the conflict is the inner man (ὁ ἔσω ἄνθρωπος) or the mind (ὁ νοός); the terms are obviously used in parallel, and the second is qualified by the possessive pronoun "my." Both terms are used in their natural sense, and there is no need to look for limiting theological factors in either case. Theological considerations, in fact, have confused the sense of the passage for many interpreters. By the "inner man" or the "inmost self," it is said, Paul must mean the renewed inner man<sup>102</sup> (the unregenerate man, apparently, has no inner life). The

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has a divided ego. This extension of Paul's personal reference is, I think, unwarranted.

<sup>102</sup>So Calvin, Cranfield, Dunn, Barrett.

*νοῦς*, again, must be that of the converted man, for it "delights" in God's law, but having made such a claim interpreters ask what is to be made of the time sequence of the remainder of the chapter, and what in particular is to be done with 7:25b.

Fortunately these theological considerations were not in Paul's mind when he said, simply enough, "I delight in God's law in my inmost self" (7:22) and "I serve the law of God with my mind" (7:25). He meant that his mind recognizes and approves God's law even though, because of the sin which dwells in his flesh, he does not fulfil it perfectly.<sup>103</sup> It is unnecessary, and would certainly be incorrect, to affirm on this basis that Paul held the mind to be divine, a fragment of the deity and inherently good. In Rom. 1:28 Paul speaks of the mind as "base" and in 12:2 as in need of "renewal."<sup>104</sup> There is also no need to suppose that Paul held a fully articulated theory of the various parts of the soul (as, for instance, the rational and irrational soul of Philo). At the same time, the plain meaning of the verse, strengthened by its place in the context, should not be overlooked.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>103</sup>So Dodd (p. 132): the war is between reason (which affirms the moral ideal) and the passions; the will is impotent because of this internal division. Sanday and Headlam (p. 183) also take *νοῦς* as simply the reasoning faculty, the capacity to distinguish right and wrong. Leenhardt (p. 193) argues that Paul is borrowing conventional terminology, while Jewett (p. 388) claims that Paul uses the Gnostic identification of *νοῦς* and the "I" in order to refute it.

<sup>104</sup>If Col. 2:18 is by Paul, there is a further reference to the "carnal mind" (*ὁ νοῦς τῆς σαρκός*).

<sup>105</sup>Distinction between the outer and inner man was a commonplace in Greek thought; e.g., Plato's *Republic* 589a; Philo's *Cong.* 97; *Plant.* 42, *Det.* 22-23.



On the one side in the conflict, then, is the mind or the inner man. On the other is the "flesh" or "members." Paul has implied this dichotomy earlier, and now he states it in the clearest possible terms: "I delight in the law of God in my inmost self, but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin which dwells in my members" (7:22-23). At the end of the chapter the same antithesis is repeated: "So then, I of myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin" (7:25b).

Paul's use of "law" in 7:22-23 is fluid, but not sufficiently ambiguous to obscure the meaning. In verse 22, the law is stated to be "the law of God," while in verse 23 "law" is used with less precision and partly for stylistic reasons. Paul requires a contrast to "the law of God," and starts out: "I find in my members another law..."<sup>106</sup> This is obviously the "law of sin" of verses 23 and 25, which is not a law in the same sense as the law of God; in fact, Paul treats it as synonymous with "sin" itself. In any event, the contrast has now moved on to one between "the law of my mind" and "the law (of sin) which dwells in my members" (7:23). Paul, in other words, is caught up in the kind of double contrast we have seen before, in which all of the elements do not correspond exactly. His intention is nevertheless clear: the "law of my mind" has something to do with the "law of God," while the "law of sin" opposes it and dwells in the flesh or members.

In these many references to law it is important not to lose sight

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<sup>106</sup>As Sanday and Headlam point out (p. 183), "another law" (ἕτερος νόμος) is not just an "additional law" (ἄλλος νόμος) but a "different law."

of the imagery of conflict.<sup>107</sup> In this regard, Paul's proclivity for a play on words is not conducive to clarity. (How do two "laws" make war upon each other?) Even if law means modus operandi, the combination of figures is not a happy one. But the sense of the metaphor is clear nonetheless. The power which resides in the flesh or members makes war upon the power of the mind or inner man and proves superior, so that "I" am taken captive by it (7:23).<sup>108</sup> This "I" is not an impotent bystander, as some commentators suggest,<sup>109</sup> but is the self as subject or agent, or man seen whole. The division within man is not so complete that the self can totally divorce itself from the flesh; if such were the case, there would not be the agony of moral failure which is evident here. It is because "I" am both mind and flesh that the sense of frustration is so acute.

In spite of what has just been said, it must be admitted that there is in these verses a suggestion that the mind (or inner man) is more truly the subject than is the flesh. This impression begins in the previous section (7:14-20). "I" want the good and hate the evil; it is not "I" who do the evil, but sin which dwells in my flesh. So here, "I" delight in God's law in my inmost self, but the law of sin which dwells in my members brings "me" into captivity. Nevertheless, the identification of the self with the mind is not complete. The "I" comprises both mind

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<sup>107</sup>This sense of conflict is anticipated in the military metaphor "base of operations" or "bridgehead" (ἀφορμή) in 7:9,11. Note also the conflict language of Gal. 5:17.

<sup>108</sup>We are reminded of Philo's statement in L.A. 3:116-17 that "reason is at war with the passions" and, when it leaves its proper role, it "cannot fail to become a prisoner of war" (see above, p. 252-53).

<sup>109</sup>E.g., Käsemann (Romans, p. 205).

and flesh, and the internal tension which arises from that polarity is a source of despair.<sup>110</sup>

7:24 Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?

Ταλαίπωρος ἐγὼ ἄνθρωπος· τίς  
με ῥύσεται ἐκ τοῦ σώματος  
τοῦ θανάτου τούτου;

This verse has proved a problem for interpreters, both in the exclamation of the first part and in the question of the second. Is the cry of wretchedness one of frustration or of despair? What is meant by "this body of death," and how is one delivered from it? The interpretation of the cry of wretchedness depends in part on the sense of the whole passage, but also on the meaning of "body of death" in the second part; the "wretched" state and the "body of death" both constitute that from which Paul seeks deliverance.

At least four interpretations of "this body of death" have been offered. The first is that the phrase means "this body doomed to death" (NEB),<sup>111</sup> i.e., this mortal body which is condemned to death because of sin. That Paul is suddenly lamenting the mortality of the body (albeit a mortality due to sin) hardly fits the mood and argument of the passage, however, and there is no warrant for the words "doomed to" in the manuscripts.

<sup>110</sup> Again cf. Philo (e.g., Cher. 113-15; Agr. 63), for whom the "I" is greater than any one part of the soul (see above, p. 233, 255).

<sup>111</sup> Also Sanday and Headlam (p. 184); Cranfield (p. 367).

A second interpretation is that Paul's cry is a cry to be released from this life, a cry of frustration with trying to live the life of the spirit while still in the flesh. Thus Calvin states that Paul is longing for death and bidding the faithful to desire death so that they can be released from their wretchedness.<sup>112</sup> This interpretation is supported in part by the future form of the verb "deliver"; Paul sees the struggle with the flesh as interminable and asks who will deliver him from it (apparently at death or at the eschaton). While this interpretation cannot be ruled out, it is out of keeping with Paul's thought to suppose that a solution to the moral dilemma must await the end of life or of the present age. We have seen Paul's continual exhortation to Christians to "be what they are" through the death and resurrection of Christ, an exhortation not in keeping with a longing-for-death mentality. To be sure, complete deliverance from sin and the flesh may come only at the eschaton, but real deliverance from sin is available now.

A third interpretation of "this body of death" is one which equates the phrase with "flesh" in the sense of the whole unregenerated man, or man in his orientation to this world and rebellion against God.<sup>113</sup> The term "body" (used here for the only time in this chapter) would thus mean man as he encounters himself, man in his existential situation in

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<sup>112</sup> Calvin, p. 273-74. "The faithful never reach the goal of righteousness as long as they dwell in the flesh" (*ibid.*, p. 274). So also Nygren (p. 301-02); Dunn (p. 264-68).

<sup>113</sup> So Calvin (p. 272); Bultmann (*Theology*, I, 200). John Knox (p. 503) interprets "body of death" as the whole human situation, while Leenhardt (p. 194) understands it as the domination of sin. Both Bultmann and Leenhardt deny any mind-body dualism.

the world, while the adjectival phrase "of death" would qualify that existence as oriented toward death. If all the references to "flesh" and "members" in this chapter are interpreted in this existential manner, and if ἐπιθυμία really means rebellion against God (and not the desires of the flesh), then "this body of death" can (and must) be understood in this sense. If the more natural meaning of these terms is accepted, this interpretation falls to the ground.

A fourth interpretation of the enigmatic phrase "this body of death" (or "the body of this death"), and one which is in keeping with the exegesis offered in these pages, is that which understands "body" as the physical body with its passions and desires and "death" in the psychological and spiritual sense seen earlier in the chapter.<sup>114</sup> While the phrase "this body of death" is an unusual one, we have seen that Paul consistently associates sin with the physical body and describes the resulting condition as "death." It is in the body that the "sinful passions" reside which, aroused by the law, "bear fruit for death" (7:5). It is in the body that sin dwells, which uses the law to "work death in me" (7:13). It is by the awakening of the bodily passions that "sin revived" and "I died" (7:9). It is altogether possible then that Paul, in a turn of phrase unusual for him, speaks of the body as a "body of death," i.e., a body which brings psychological and spiritual death to him.

Whether Paul is thinking of the specific notion of the body as a corpse to which the real self is tied, as we have seen in Philo,<sup>115</sup> is

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<sup>114</sup>So Sanday and Headlam (p. 178); Dodd (p. 133).

<sup>115</sup>See above, p. 239-41.

probably impossible to decide.<sup>116</sup> The strange phrase "this body of death" (and not the figure of a coffin or tomb), and the imagery of being delivered from it as from a dead body to which one is tied as a punishment for sins, lend support to the suggestion.<sup>117</sup> Even if Paul is merely thinking of the body as a death-ridden and death-dealing frame which he inhabits (since it is the base of operations and abode of sin), his cry of wretchedness is not to be wondered at.

The meaning of the cry of wretchedness need not simply be read back from the phrase "this body of death," however, since it can be seen in the progression of thought in the preceding verses. In 7:9-11, Paul recounts his experience of "death" at receiving the full impact of the law's demands. In 7:15-20 he describes the unhappy state of wanting to do the good and instead doing the evil. Finally, in 7:23, he depicts his condition as one of captivity to the law of sin which dwells in his members, a condition from which he is helpless to rescue himself. He then cries out: "Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?"

In the narrower sense, therefore, Paul's cry is an unusually poignant plea for deliverance from the physical body which is synonymous with death. In the larger context it is a cry for deliverance from

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<sup>116</sup>Käsemann (Romans, p. 209) allows the verbal resemblance but interprets Paul in existential fashion. Jewett (p. 294) says that Paul is using the concept, but it is untypical of him and he tries to soften it.

<sup>117</sup>Goodenough, in "Philo on Immortality" (p. 97) draws attention to the close resemblance of Paul and Philo and says: "Philo has in this connection the same confusion of figures as Paul, for with both of them the body is simultaneously a corpse tied to the soul, and an active element for the soul's destruction." This active role of the dead body is found in L.A. 3:69,71.

the state of inner conflict between the mind and the flesh.<sup>118</sup> In both senses it is an extreme statement (for Paul) of the antagonism between mind and flesh, soul and body, a statement which reflects not a little body-soul dualism.

7:25a Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!

Χάρις τῷ Θεῷ διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ  
τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν.

The sudden and dramatic change of mood from 7:24 to 7:25 (so dramatic that later Greek manuscripts changed the exclamation to a statement)<sup>119</sup> is one of the most remarkable features of this chapter. The nature of the exclamation disproves the claim that Paul here is solving a theological problem, either that of the law or that of the relation of sin and death. Paul is not saying, "I am thankful to God that in Christ I am set free from the law" (this is his theme elsewhere in these chapters) nor "I am thankful that when this body dies I will have eternal life" (in the next chapter he will give most lyrical expression to that future hope), but "Thanks be to God, who in Jesus Christ has set me free

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<sup>118</sup>So Sanday and Headlam (p. 178,181); Dodd (p. 133); Goodenough ("Paul and the Hellenization of Christianity," p. 55-56; Toward a Mature Faith, p. 121). In Toward a Mature Faith, Goodenough compares Rom. 7 to Freud's description of the relative roles of the id, the super-ego and the ego. The ego is pulled back and forth between the sense of right and wrong and the compulsions of the body; it is caught between the two and therefore "wretched." See also Goodenough's chapter on "The Divided Self in Greco-Roman Religion" in The Psychology of Religious Experiences, p. 30-63.

<sup>119</sup>For the various forms of the text, see Sanday and Headlam, p. 184, and critical editions of the Greek New Testament.

from this body of death!" As we have said, this deliverance is not complete until the eschaton; nevertheless it is real and actual, not merely potential.

7:25b So then, I of myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.

Ἄρα οὖν αὐτὸς ἐγὼ τῷ μὲν νοῷ  
δουλεύω νόμῳ Θεοῦ, τῇ δὲ  
σαρκὶ νόμῳ ἁμαρτίας.

This verse, and particularly its position at the close of the chapter as if it were a summary of what has gone before, has been an enigma for exegetes. Particularly is this the case for those who refuse to see in the passage the description of an ongoing struggle in the Christian life. Attempts have been made to treat the verse as a gloss<sup>120</sup> or to move it to an earlier place in the text,<sup>121</sup> although no manuscript evidence exists for either practice.

If no pre-judgments are brought to the text, it seems obvious that Paul is summarizing what he has said in the previous verses: "So then, I of myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin."<sup>122</sup> Not only does this statement summarize the pre-

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<sup>120</sup>E.g., Bultmann (*Theology*, I, 212, footnote); Käsemann (*Romans*, p. 212: if not a gloss, the verse shatters the whole logic of Paul's theology and anthropology); Leenhardt (p. 195: the verse is not a satisfactory conclusion, for the subject of the previous verses could not have said that he served the law of God).

<sup>121</sup>E.g., Moffatt (puts after verse 23); Dodd (p. 132); Jewett (p. 388, n. 2).

<sup>122</sup>That the verse belongs where it is: Sanday and Headlam, J.A.T.



ceding verses (especially 22-23), but it does so in particularly effective fashion.

First, the "I" which in 7:18,23 seemed almost divorced from the flesh and the members now clearly embraces both "my mind" and "my flesh." As we saw earlier, it is precisely because these faculties belong to the one "I" that the inner strife is so painful.

Second, this verse shows that while Paul has figuratively laid the blame for wrongdoing on "sin," and has almost made "I" the innocent victim or at best the spectator of sin's activities, the "I" remains throughout the responsible agent. "I" serve the law of God with my mind; "I" serve the law of sin with my flesh. The personification of sin as a power is therefore a graphic figure; wrongdoing remains the deliberate choice of a responsible agent.

Third, the two aspects of man which in preceding verses appeared under a number of confusing headings are here simply called "mind" and "flesh." That which each serves is called a "law," respectively the "law of God" and the "law of sin." The first is quite obviously the Mosaic law; the second is not a law in the sense of a legal code, but is the "other law" which "dwells in my members" (7:23). The antagonism between these two laws is constant; the Christian serves one or the other (the verb is in the present tense), even though he is potentially and actually delivered from sin through Christ.

Finally, the enigmatic words "I myself" (αὐτὸς ἐγώ) support the impression made throughout the passage that the real self is identi-

fied more closely with the mind than with the flesh. Indeed, one senses that Paul sets out to make his summary statement in the form of the following contrast: "So then, I of myself serve the law of God, but my flesh serves the law of sin." This would be in keeping with verse 17 ("So then it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwells within me") and verses 22-23 ("I" want to do the good, but the law of sin in my members takes me captive). As Paul gets into the contrast, however, it turns out to be a somewhat different one ("I serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin").

Attempts to make αὐτὸς ἑγὼ mean "I on my own"<sup>123</sup> or "I left to myself"<sup>124</sup> face insurmountable syntactical and contextual problems. First, there is no warrant for the reading in the text. Second, such a reading is incomprehensible if the words apply to the clause immediately following ("I left to myself serve the law of God with my mind"), and there is no syntactical ground for applying them only to the second clause ("I left to myself serve the law of sin with my flesh")<sup>125</sup> or to both clauses together ("I left to myself am in this condition, that I serve the law of God with my mind while with my flesh I serve the law of sin"). The latter reading is a most attractive one,<sup>126</sup> agreeing with the sense

<sup>123</sup>C. L. Mitton, "Romans vii Reconsidered," in The Expository Times, 65 (1953-54), p. 133.

<sup>124</sup>So Moffatt, and variant in NEB. Phillips has "I left to my own nature."

<sup>125</sup>This seems to be the intent of Mitton's article, although he does not clearly differentiate between the two clauses.

<sup>126</sup>So understood by J.A.T. Robinson (Romans, p. 91).

of the passage as a whole, but it is too perfect and artificial. Paul does depict the whole self as pulled in two directions by the mind and the flesh, but here and elsewhere he betrays the assumption that the true self is more closely identified with the former than the latter.<sup>127</sup>

#### D. SUMMARY

The above exegesis of Rom. 7:7-25 has understood Paul's anthropological terms (σάρξ, μέλη, σῶμα, νοῦς, ἔσω ἄνθρωπος, ἐπιθυμία) in their everyday or common-sense meaning, a meaning found in the literature of Greek-speaking Judaism in Paul's day and to a lesser degree in that of Hebrew-speaking Judaism as well. When used in the interpretation of Rom. 7, this sense of the terms yields, not a contrived or artificial picture, but a natural one in which the various terms speak for themselves and the argument is allowed to flow without undue strain.

The intent of this exegesis has not been to prove or disprove the views of any one school of thought (or of one particular scholar). Nevertheless, similarities and dissimilarities to other interpretations have emerged throughout the exegesis. The most marked disagreement is with the existentialist school (Bultmann, Kümmel, Käsemann et al), which refuses to see in the passage any mind-flesh or body-soul dualism and interprets the "war" of 7:22-23 as the struggle of the whole person to submit to God's law. The existentialist view appears to rest on two hypo-

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<sup>127</sup> John Knox (p. 504) and Käsemann (Romans, p. 212) agree that by αὐτὸς ἐγώ Paul means the true self which serves God's law. Käsemann argues on this basis that the verse must be moved.

theses, first the Calvinistic doctrine of total depravity, and second the view that the whole man acts with radical freedom vis-à-vis his existential situation.

The principal reason for rejecting the existentialist view is that Paul's anthropological terms make excellent sense when taken in their natural or everyday connotation, a connotation allowed by other Jewish literature of his day; a more contrived or artificial meaning is therefore unnecessary. A second reason for rejecting the existentialist view is that, when the terms are applied in this sense to the passage in question, the exegesis cannot be carried through successfully. It is not surprising, for example, that when a passage which describes the division within man between mind and body, will and action, is taken to mean the whole person's standing wholly in opposition to God's law, the result is the convoluted reasoning and vague verbalizations characteristic of Bultmann's exegesis (see above, p. 65-68).

The above exegesis is most compatible with that of the Hellenistic school (Jowett, Porter, Montefiore, Moore, Dodd, Goodenough, Sandmel), as well as with scholars not of the Hellenist school (Sanday and Headlam, Davies, John Knox) who see in the passage the description in psychological terms of a struggle going on within man between the desires of the flesh and the mind or reason. This agreement is not complete in every respect. The exegesis just given does not hold that Rom. 7 is an account of Paul's conversion (Dodd, Sandmel) nor that the crisis described arose out of Paul's inability to keep "the law" (Montefiore, Sandmel). With regard to the first, it recognizes that the struggle to control desire may have continued after Paul's conversion despite the deliverance avail-

able in Christ; indeed, 7:25b seems to imply that such a condition continued even to the time of writing. With regard to the second, we have seen that while the chapter is prompted by a concern for the role of the law, the heart of the passage (and the section in which dualistic language is most prominent) has to do with the specific problem of desire.<sup>128</sup>

The basis for agreement with the Hellenist school is, again, the fact that this interpretation is called for by the everyday sense of the terms and is allowed by the Jewish literature of Paul's day. Moreover, the exegesis of the chapter in this way yields a natural and uncontrived meaning with as much consistency as the flow of the argument will allow.

The interpretation given above does not attempt to pronounce on the extent to which Rom. 7 reflects the Jewish doctrine of the  $\gamma\epsilon\mu\alpha$   $\chi\alpha\rho\iota\sigma\mu$ , and that for two reasons. First, our review of that concept (above, p. 177-91) shows that the Jewish teaching is not incompatible with the Greek notion of the desires of the flesh. Both concepts have a primary reference to sexual desire but embrace a variety of emotions ranging from the purely physical to the more psychological and even spiritual. Second, it seems an incorrect procedure to turn to a doctrine from Hebrew-speaking Judaism to illustrate a text written by a Greek-speaking Jew of the Diaspora. This is not to say that the concept of the evil impulse was not present in Paul's mind as part of his Jewish heritage, but

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<sup>128</sup>This point is made also by Robert H. Gundry, "The Moral Frustration of Paul Before His Conversion: Sexual Lust in Romans 7:7-25" (in Donald A. Hagner, ed., Pauline Studies: Essays Presented to Professor F. F. Bruce on His 70th Birthday [Exeter: The Paternoster Press, 1980], p. 228-45). Gundry argues, however, that Paul's struggle with desire did not continue into his Christian life.

the more immediate parallel to the terms and ideas found in Romans 7 is the use of these same terms and ideas in the Greek world.<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>129</sup>If, as Hadas suggests (p. 109-13), the author of 4 Maccabees lived in Antioch of Syria, he occupied essentially the same geographic area as did Paul a century later.

## CONCLUSION

Was Paul a dualist? Did he envisage man as a union of body and soul, the material and the immaterial, in which the former is inferior to the latter? Did he think of sin in terms of the desires of the flesh as well as of rebellion against God?

The above investigation has sought to discover whether Paul's use of dualistic language carries with it dualistic meaning. As part of this inquiry, a review of the literature of Hebrew-speaking and Greek-speaking Judaism prior to and contemporaneous with Paul was undertaken to determine whether dualistic language occurs and if so whether such language implies dualistic meaning. This survey of Jewish literature revealed the presence of dualistic imagery both in Greek-speaking Judaism and (to a lesser degree) in Hebrew-speaking Judaism. The a priori exclusion of such meaning from Paul was therefore rendered unnecessary and his dualistic language permitted to speak for itself.

Against this background, an extended passage of Paul's writing in which dualistic language occurs (Rom. 7:7-25) was examined to assess the presence and extent of dualistic thought. The result of this exegesis was that there is indeed a measure of dualism in Paul, at least in the passage in question. A distinction is drawn in this chapter between the mind or inner man (which consents to God's law and seeks to fulfil it) and the flesh or members (which war against the mind and take captive the

"I" or self); deliverance comes only through Christ.

This exegesis does not mean that Rom. 7 provides the "real" meaning of flesh and sin in Paul and that other passages must be brought into conformity with it. Indeed, a dramatic shift takes place between chapters 7 and 8. The Paul who is "wretched" in 7:24 and who serves both the law of God and the law of sin in 7:25 is now confident that the requirements of the law can be fulfilled by those who walk according to the spirit (8:4). The statements in these two chapters, which appear contradictory to us, certainly were not so for Paul. They represent rather two contrasting perspectives on the Christian life -- first the actual or experiential, second the potential or ideal. Even after the confident assertions of Rom. 8:1-11, Paul must exhort the Roman Christians to "put to death the deeds of the body" and not to live "according to the flesh" (8:12-13).

This exegesis of Rom. 7:7-25 also does not mean that Paul had a carefully articulated scheme of human nature or that he consistently thought of man in dualistic terms. To determine the extent of dualism in Paul it would be necessary to examine all the passages in which dualistic language occurs and bring the findings together into one picture.<sup>1</sup> Because of the limited extent of the Pauline canon, this picture would still be incomplete, but it would provide a reasonably adequate answer to the question with which we began.

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<sup>1</sup>An extended passage deserving of special attention is 2 Cor. 4:16-5:10; other passages include 2 Cor. 12:1-5 (Paul's "out-of-body" experience); Phil. 1:21-24 (his desire to "depart and be with Christ") and 1 Cor. 7 (his attitude toward marriage and sexuality).



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