

## ABSTRACT

This dissertation analyzes the worldview foundations and functions of resurrection belief in the scriptures of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam by reference to case study texts of Dan 12, 1 Cor 15, and Q Al-Qiyamah 75. In other words, it analyzes the reasons (or worldview foundations) for resurrection belief that make that belief plausible in the worldview each text seeks to form in its audience, and it analyzes how resurrection relates to worldview component functions (using N. T. Wright's worldview model). The analysis of each of these texts through my methodology of exegetical-theological comparison demonstrates both significant continuity and even more significant discontinuity between these worldviews in what is an ostensibly similar article of faith of resurrection belief. I juxtapose the case study texts, with 1 Cor 15 as my central term of comparison in order to demonstrate two points. One, related to the general comparative task, I argue that the functions of resurrection belief in the texts and in the symbolic universes these texts help form are consequences of the particular worldview foundations the authors use as bases for resurrection belief. Two, related to my specific task of illuminating the NT, I argue that this comparison shows how Christian resurrection belief as presented in the NT (specifically by Paul) is of such a Christomorphic character that, even where its worldview foundations and functions have continuity with the Tanakh and the Qur'an, every element is reformulated around the resurrection of Jesus.

WHY SHOULD GOD RAISE THE DEAD?  
WORLDVIEW FOUNDATIONS AND FUNCTIONS OF RESURRECTION BELIEF IN DAN  
12, 1 COR 15, AND Q AL-QIYAMAH 75

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## CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	ix
INTRODUCTION .....	1
Research Problem, Purpose, and Propositions.....	2
Definitions and Clarifications .....	3
Structural Design .....	7
CHAPTER 1: THE RESEARCH CONTEXT OF THIS PROJECT .....	10
Multi-Author Volumes on Afterlife Beliefs .....	11
Judaism .....	12
Christianity.....	14
Islam.....	16
Single-Author Volumes on Afterlife Beliefs.....	18
The Natures of the Studies.....	19
Judaism .....	22
Christianity.....	24
Islam.....	27
Evaluation .....	28
CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY:	
EXEGETICAL-THEOLOGICAL COMPARISON.....	39
Comparison.....	40
Assumptions.....	42
Purpose.....	45
Best Practices.....	47
Worldview Analysis.....	52
Defining “Worldview”.....	52
A Wrightian Worldview Model of Component Functions .....	61
Narrative/Story.....	62
Symbols.....	65
Praxis.....	66
Answers to Basic Worldview Questions.....	69
Textual Comparison.....	71
Procedure .....	74
CHAPTER 3: THE CANONICAL CRESCENDO:	
RESURRECTION BELIEF IN DAN 12.....	75
Translation of the Text.....	77
The Resurrection of Dan 12 in Context.....	78
Resurrection in Dan 12:1–3, 13 .....	81
Verse 1 .....	81
Verse 2 .....	88

Summary of Foundations in Verse 2 .....	97
Verse 3 .....	99
Summary of Foundations in Verse 3 .....	104
Brief Additional Comments on Verse 13.....	107
Summary of Worldview Foundations for Resurrection Belief.....	108
CHAPTER 4: THE CHRISTOLOGICAL CENTER OF GRAVITY:	
RESURRECTION BELIEF IN 1 COR 15 .....	110
Translation of the Text.....	111
The Resurrection of 1 Cor 15 in Context.....	115
Resurrection in 1 Cor 15 .....	122
Verses 1–11.....	122
Paul and the Pre-Pauline Tradition .....	124
The Summary of Gospel Events .....	131
The Appearance to Paul.....	154
Summary of Foundations in Verses 1–11 .....	157
Verses 12–19.....	161
Summary of Foundations in Verses 12–19.....	170
Verses 20–28.....	172
Jesus as the First in Resurrection.....	172
The Adam-Christ Contrast.....	174
The Resurrection and the Consummation of the Kingdom: Implementing Victory .....	182
The Resurrection and the Consummation of the Kingdom: Who Does What? .....	193
Summary of Foundations in Verses 20–28.....	200
Verses 29–34.....	202
Summary of Foundations in Verses 29–34.....	208
Verses 35–41.....	209
Summary of Foundations in Verses 35–41 .....	215
Verses 42–49.....	216
The Resurrection Body .....	217
The <i>σῶμα πνευματικόν</i> .....	226
Adam-Christ Contrast Continued .....	238
Summary of Foundations in Verses 42–49.....	241
Verses 50–57.....	244
The Fate of the Living.....	248
Transformation and the Victory of God.....	253
Summary of Foundations in Verses 50–57.....	262
Verse 58 .....	263
Summary of Worldview Foundations for Resurrection Belief.....	267

CHAPTER 5: THE CONCLUSIVE COURT:	
RESURRECTION BELIEF IN Q AL-QIYAMAH 75.....	272
Translation of the Text.....	274
The Resurrection of Q Al-Qiyamah 75 in Context.....	276
Resurrection in Q Al-Qiyamah 75 .....	283
Verses 1–15.....	283
Summary of Foundations in Verses 1–15 .....	287
Verses 16–19.....	288
Verses 20–30.....	290
Verses 31–40.....	294
Summary of Worldview Foundations for Resurrection Belief.....	297
CHAPTER 6: COMPARATIVE SYNTHESIS.....	299
Foundations of Resurrection Belief in the Texts .....	299
Common Foundations.....	302
Summary of Remaining Differences .....	305
Resurrection in a Jewish Worldview Formed by Dan 12 .....	310
Narrative .....	310
Comparison to 1 Cor 15.....	313
Symbols.....	315
Comparison to 1 Cor 15.....	317
Praxis.....	318
Comparison to 1 Cor 15.....	319
Answers to Basic Worldview Questions.....	320
Comparison to 1 Cor 15.....	322
Resurrection in a Muslim Worldview Formed by Q Al-Qiyamah 75 .....	322
Narrative .....	323
Comparison to 1 Cor 15.....	324
Symbols.....	326
Comparison to 1 Cor 15.....	326
Praxis.....	328
Comparison to 1 Cor 15.....	328
Answers to Basic Worldview Questions.....	329
Comparison to 1 Cor 15.....	330
Christomorphic Resurrection Belief	
in a Christian Worldview Formed by 1 Cor 15.....	331
Narrative .....	332
Symbols.....	337
Praxis.....	340
Answers to Basic Worldview Questions.....	342
Conclusion .....	348

CONCLUSION.....	351
Summary .....	351
Contributions.....	357
Implications.....	359
For Further Study.....	361
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	365



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## INTRODUCTION

The reality of death is one of the most formative factors for the development of communal beliefs, practices, and general worldview. Some of the most pressing and pervasive questions throughout history concern death. Does death truly mark the end of the person? If not, then what lies beyond it? Among the many who answer the first question negatively, there have been multitudinous answers to the second. In many ancient beliefs, such as among the Mesopotamians or Greeks, the expectation was that some shade of the person would continue existing but would not truly be experiencing “life” after death. In many cases, including among many religions and philosophies that exist today, the belief is that some aspect of the person endures in perpetuity, whether for additional embodied lives until ultimate liberation (as in metempsychosis or samsara), or immediate release from the material world into an immaterial afterlife. Among these different views, there is also a diversity of expectations as to whether the individual as such will persist in perpetuity or will be absorbed into some greater metaphysical reality. What unites the majority traditions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam in their answer to the second question is their common claim that the One they know as God will resurrect the dead. Indeed, this common claim is inscribed to varying extents in their canonical scriptures.

As with any beliefs about post-mortem fate, a number of questions arise. Why expect an eschatological resurrection? More specifically, why do these scriptures proclaim belief in an eschatological resurrection in order to teach others to hold to that same belief? And why do the similarities and differences exist between these forms of resurrection belief? These questions

lead us into the thick of the worldviews these scriptures seek to form. In the process of juxtaposing these texts, certain similarities stand out as consistent characteristics of resurrection belief in general. But perhaps even more notable is how the process illustrates the distinct characteristics and emphases of each scripturally formed worldview. Regarding the latter function of this juxtaposition, one can recognize more extensively the importance of an element of belief when it is absent, muted, or more explicit in one case as opposed to another. This juxtaposition is thus a good exercise for a NT specialist like me to explore the depths of the NT theology of resurrection, even as I seek to understand resurrection belief more generally.

### **Research Problem, Purpose, and Propositions**

My research problem thus has two components. First, related to the general issue of the logic of resurrection belief, it is necessary to look to deeper worldview analysis to answer this question: Why do the Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Scriptures proclaim that God should raise the dead in an eschatological resurrection? Second, related to the specific comparative task, it is necessary to outline the textual details in their scriptural and worldview contexts to answer this question: Why do the similarities and differences exist between these forms of resurrection belief?

My purpose in engaging in this project is twofold. Primarily, through my deep exegetical and theological engagement with representative texts from each canon—specifically, Dan 12, 1 Cor 15, and Q Al-Qiyamah 75—I aim to illuminate the specific characteristics of Christian (or Christomorphic) resurrection belief in its worldview context as presented in the NT. In the process, I hope to illustrate why it has its peculiar or distinct shape in a belief it generally shares with the other worldviews shaped by these other texts. Secondly, I aim to illuminate the characteristics of resurrection belief in the other worldview contexts in comparison.



My overall argument focuses on two points, one related to the general comparative quest and the other related to my more specific concerns as a NT scholar. One, this study argues that the functions of resurrection belief in the texts and in the symbolic universes these texts help form are consequences of the particular worldview foundations the authors base resurrection belief upon. Two, since this study is to be a contribution to NT studies, this comparative analysis will present in starker relief by juxtaposition my other major argument: Christian resurrection belief as presented in the NT (specifically by Paul) is of such a Christomorphic character that, even where its foundations and functions have elements in common with the Tanakh and the Qur'an, every element is reformulated around the resurrection of Jesus.<sup>1</sup> This latter argument may seem to be obvious, but I suggest that scholars have not truly accounted for its significance for the distinctive character of Christian resurrection belief because they have not pursued an in-depth comparative analysis of the foundations of resurrection belief.<sup>2</sup> Specifically, there has been no systematic comparison of resurrection belief without Jesus's resurrection at the center (non-Christomorphic) to resurrection belief shaped around Jesus's resurrection at the center (Christomorphic) through comparison of a text like 1 Cor 15 with pre- and post-NT texts.

### **Definitions and Clarifications**

However, before I can proceed with my exploration, I must clarify and define some key points. First is the notion of "eschatological resurrection." My definition of this phrase will be different from how most in my literature review define the term and from their conceptions of what the

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<sup>1</sup> My analysis will emphasize the triune characteristics of this resurrection belief, but I describe it as specifically "Christomorphic" because it is Jesus's resurrection that forms how Paul describes the action of the Father and the Holy Spirit in resurrection.

<sup>2</sup> I have made a similar argument in K. R. Harriman, "For David Said Concerning Him": Foundations of Hope in Ps 16 and Acts 2," *JTI* 11 (2017): 239–57.

action of resurrection involves. When I refer to “resurrection” in its literal sense (and I will explicitly indicate otherwise), I refer to a renewal of bodily life, particularly with an implied physical upward movement, after a period of death. Texts can use this language metaphorically to refer to some other kind of renewal, such as the reference in Ezek 37 to describe return from exile and reunion of the covenant people. Still, the source domain of the language is that of a renewal of bodily life after a period of death, not a renewal brought to any other proposed anthropological aspect, such as the soul or spirit. The Gnostics would eventually broaden this resurrection language to refer to resurrection of distinct anthropological aspects not including the body, but prior to them, and still generally after them, the typical meaning of resurrection language was of a bodily character and that is the definition I use here.<sup>3</sup>

Rather than the popular differentiation between “resuscitation” and “resurrection,” I prefer to differentiate between “temporary” and “eschatological” resurrection.<sup>4</sup> By “eschatological,” I mean that the event in question is climactic in the communal/scriptural worldview narrative and/or is instrumental to the ultimate resolution of that grand story. In each scripture, this resurrection is of final, everlasting consequence. In each case, the eschatological resurrection is also a collective raising of the dead, although the picture in 1 Cor 15 is of a collective resurrection divided into two parts. In that case, the subject I am analyzing is primarily the second, larger-scale resurrection, in relation to the “firstfruits.” I have kept this definition of

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<sup>3</sup> For analyses of resurrection language in ancient texts that demonstrate the assumed bodily character, see John Granger Cook, “Resurrection in Paganism and the Question of an Empty Tomb in 1 Corinthians 15,” *NTS* 63 (2017): 56–75; Cook, “The Use of ἀνάσθημι and ἐγείρω and the ‘Resurrection of a Soul’,” *ZNW* 108 (2017): 259–80; James P. Ware, “The Resurrection of Jesus in the Pre-Pauline Formula of 1 Cor 15.3–5,” *NTS* 60 (2014): 490–97.

<sup>4</sup> I think the weakness of the former differentiation is that it can imply a terminological distinction that does not exist in the texts. In all scriptures, the same verbs appear in reference to those who are raised from the dead who will die again and those who will be raised (or, in the case of Jesus, has been raised) to everlasting life. I think the lack of terminological distinction is significant for establishing the assumed bodily character of the action when used in a literal fashion, and so I maintain that lack of distinction in the term itself here. It can also, misleadingly, imply that the events called “resuscitation” do not, properly speaking, constitute resurrection at all.

“eschatological” broad both to fit my focus on worldview function and to accommodate the different pictures of eschatology presented in these texts, which include events at “the end” and events of “the end” that have occurred in the middle of history.

When I refer to “worldview functions,” I refer to how a belief (in this case) operates in relation to various worldview components. As there are many models of worldview components, I save more detailed discussion of this point for my chapter on methodology. When I refer to “worldview foundations,” I refer to the bases of resurrection belief grounded in the plausibility structures of other worldview constituents summarized as beliefs. These foundations may be explicit when the author directly draws the logical links (using “if-then” statements, “therefore” statements, “in the same way” statements, and so on). In other cases, these foundations are implicit because the author is assuming an earlier part of an argument or an earlier text. In still other cases, these foundations could be assumed simply because the author saw no need to state them, in which case the only recourse for an interpreter is to examine an author’s overall theology presented elsewhere in the text and/or in other texts the author wrote.

My account of these worldview foundations is necessarily textually based. It is not, then, any attempt at a comprehensive account of the assumptions that the authors may have possessed that led them to affirm these beliefs. One can only explore such foundations insofar as the texts indicate them. The texts, shaped as they are by rhetorical purposes (i.e., persuasion to some end), operate at the intersection of (1) the author conveying a personally held worldview and (2) the task of worldview formation—in terms of construction, maintenance, deconstruction, and reconstruction—of the author’s audience. The text will not communicate the entirety of (1), both because the author will not be fully cognizant of the personal worldview and because the author is conveying a worldview only insofar as to address the matters deemed crucial to the audience.

Likewise, the text is only a piece of (2), the precise characteristics of which readers in the present time can only speculate through analogy.

Of course, if this is the case, why use other texts that were written to other audiences? Because one must remember that these texts do not represent the initiation, summary, or entirety of the authors' communicative relationship with the audience. We are dealing with documents of varying levels of high-context character in which the authors can communicate implicitly with the audience on matters where they expect shared understanding. This is especially the case with 1 Corinthians, the primary audience of which Paul has as much familiarity as with any of his congregations (arguably excepting Ephesus). He could thus leave some points unstated or in more coded statements than in comparison to texts like Romans, which was addressed to Christians who were not as directly familiar with Paul's teaching. These other texts can therefore offer potential illumination for any gaps or ambiguities in 1 Cor 15. This argument is also applicable for the Qur'an, but it is not similarly applicable in the case of Daniel. In that case, only the larger context of Daniel is available for illumination in a similar fashion. Yet, this analysis will also include consideration of the larger Tanakh and other Second Temple Jewish texts in the latter case to illustrate the traditions on which Daniel draws or relies.

Finally, some may object to my division of these texts as Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Scriptures, such that I review Daniel exclusively under the rubric of the scripture of "Judaism," and 1 Corinthians exclusively under the rubric of the scripture of "Christianity," as if I am necessarily rejecting Daniel from consideration as part of Christian Scripture or dismissing the Qur'anic category of Christians and Jews as People of the Book (Q 2:101, 144–46, 213; 3:19–20, 65, 69–72, 98, 100, 113; 4:123, 131, 159; 5:15, 59, 65–66, 77; 9:29; 29:46; 57:29; 74:31; 98:1–6). This is a framework I adopt for the sake of the analysis in view of the fact that Dan 12 has

shaped Jewish resurrection theology (see relevant chapter for examples), but the other scriptures have not, whereas the NT, especially 1 Cor 15, has more directly shaped Christian resurrection theology, while Muslim resurrection theology relies on the statements of the Qur'an more so than on texts from the other People of the Book. It would be interesting to see this analysis performed at another level of complexity—e.g., how one might understand the foundations and functions of resurrection belief in Dan 12 in the context of a larger Christian canon or through the framework of the Qur'an—but the purpose of my own analysis is to compare these texts on their own terms, which I think is a prerequisite to any more complex analysis.

### **Structural Design**

The structural design for this dissertation is as follows. Chapter 1, “The Research Context of This Project,” outlines the history of analyses comparing the afterlife beliefs—and specifically resurrection beliefs—of the Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Scriptures, including both edited and single-author volumes. After summarizing the basic claims, arguments, and frameworks of past projects, I present an evaluation of the past research on this subject, particularly highlighting the errors and oversights of previous studies. Finally, I outline how my own project aims to address these problems and contribute to the fields of comparative study in general and NT studies in particular.

Chapter 2, “Methodology: Exegetical-Theological Comparison,” lays out the theoretical framework of my approach. First, I articulate my assumptions of what constitutes good comparative work, examine different proposed purposes of comparison, as well as best practices that help this approach to avoid overstressing either continuity or discontinuity between the resurrection beliefs exemplified in these three texts. In this section, I draw insights primarily

from the field of comparative religion. Then, as my comparison involves worldview analysis, I present my definition of “worldview” and my preferred model of worldview component functions (at least, for the purposes of this analysis) in the context of several other such definitions and models. Finally, as my comparison involves comparing scriptures, I draw on insights from the practice of scriptural reasoning.

In the next three chapters—Chapter 3, “The Canonical Crescendo: Resurrection Belief in Dan 12,” Chapter 4, “The Christological Center of Gravity: Resurrection Belief in 1 Cor 15,” and Chapter 5, “The Conclusive Court: Resurrection Belief in Q Al-Qiyamah 75”—I apply this method to the case study texts from the Tanakh, NT, and Qur’an. In each case, I examine resurrection belief in the larger context of the text’s book. I then analyze the text itself, in the process determining the worldview foundations of resurrection belief. For each text, where possible, I explore relationships with other writings by the author or with other canonical texts to provide additional illumination, particularly where an idea may be assumed in the case study text but stated more explicitly in another.

Chapter 6, “Comparative Synthesis,” synthesizes the conclusions reached about the individual texts in their contexts. Specifically, I compare and contrast the worldview foundations operative in each text and the worldview functions resurrection belief performs in each text. This is also the chapter in which my chief arguments come to their points. Through the juxtaposition of similar beliefs in these worldview settings, it becomes clear how the “shape” and functions of resurrection belief are consequences of particular worldview foundations, which means that the commonalities between these structures of resurrection belief can illustrate the general character of resurrection belief across religions, and that the particular foundations and functions of resurrection belief can illustrate broader points about the particular worldviews. In particular,

given my focus on NT studies, this juxtaposition will make especially clear the peculiarly Christomorphic character of early Christian resurrection belief, even where its foundations and functions have elements in common with the other texts.

Finally, the “Conclusion” has four features. First, I summarize the dissertation as a whole. Second, I note the contributions this dissertation makes to both broader comparative studies and to NT studies particularly. Third, I describe some of the implications of this study, mostly for issues in 1 Cor 15, Pauline literature, and the NT more broadly. Fourth, I suggest some areas for further study that scholars can pursue based on the work presented here.

## CHAPTER 1 THE RESEARCH CONTEXT OF THIS PROJECT

While my project is focused on the NT as the center point of comparison and contrast, my scope necessarily takes me beyond NT and even biblical studies. As noted below, some NT scholars have contributed to this larger scope of conversation about resurrection belief across religious traditions. However, the most similar precedents for my work are in volumes of comparative religion. In my attempts to draw these fields together, I aim to contribute, on the one hand, to exploring further the prospects of comparison in NT analysis, as well as, on the other hand, to correcting some of the inherent flaws in previous comparative work by use of exegetical tools.

To illustrate the need for both better comparative analysis and deep exegetical engagement, I examine here a variety of studies. Several volumes have explored the scriptures studied here in relation to general questions about afterlife beliefs. Many others have explored resurrection in particular writings or the particular canons individually. Any comparative works in this latter category have tended to involve two of the canons (mainly Jewish and Christian), but not all of them, and usually for the sake of diachronic analysis of resurrection belief, as distinct from my project. I will have occasion for dialoging with these latter types of sources in the relevant chapters below and so I do not review them here. The works most comparable to this project belong to the former category of general explorations of afterlife belief in each of the religions and their scriptures. Each of these works have a broader scope than Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, but for the purposes of my project, I restrict my review of the literature to the analyses of these three religions and, more specifically, their scriptures. This restriction, as



well as concerns of logistics and of working with projects most similar to mine, also rules out any comparative analysis that does not at least cover all three religions.

The studies of afterlife belief that have included these three religions and their scriptures have appeared in one of two basic formats. One, edited volumes have featured experts on the respective religions articulating the afterlife beliefs as they understand them, but without direct interaction between the authors or those authors (usually) engaging in comparative work. Two, single-author volumes include analyses of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam as part of the author's worldwide survey in which he or she necessarily engages in comparative work. As the volumes in each of these two groups can sometimes be remarkably similar in terms of themes, emphases, and even conclusions, my review groups them under these two basic headings of multi-author and single-author volumes, rather than proceeding volume-by-volume.

### **Multi-Author Volumes on Afterlife Beliefs**

Three collections in this category are of interest: *Death and Afterlife* edited by Hiroshi Obayashi (1992), *Life After Death in World Religions* edited by Harold Coward (1997), and the three-volume *Heaven, Hell, and the Afterlife* edited by J. Harold Ellens (2013).<sup>1</sup> The first collection was the result of an interdisciplinary lecture series at Rutgers University in 1987–1988 that provided little in the respect of an organizing concern, save for the simple topic of views of death and afterlife across world religions. The second collection came from lectures delivered at the Centre for Studies in Religion and Society of the University of Victoria as part of the Distinguished Speakers Series in 1995. The methods employed in these various studies draw

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<sup>1</sup> Hiroshi Obayashi, ed., *Death and Afterlife: Perspectives of World Religions*, Contributions to the Study of Religion 33 (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1992); Harold Coward, ed., *Life After Death in World Religions* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1997); J. Harold Ellens, ed., *Heaven, Hell, and the Afterlife: Eternity in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2013).

from sociology, psychology, anthropology, archaeology, theology, history of religion, historical criticism, and literary criticism. But again, I am primarily interested in how these scholars treat scriptural texts in relation to resurrection belief.

### Judaism

George Mendenhall and Eliezer Segal both concern themselves with social history and how the historical experiences of the Jews influenced developments in afterlife.<sup>2</sup> They both observe that the earliest evidence from Jewish history is generally silent about afterlife, with all the dead being consigned to Sheol, a state that is more about continued existence than true life after death, since the dead are presented as (mostly) beyond communication with the living.<sup>3</sup> As Segal notes concerning Sheol belief, “The afterlife is at most a fact of nature that carries no visible implications as regards one’s moral or religious behavior.”<sup>4</sup> The continuance of life consisted of the continuance of one’s family line, which in turn depended on ethics, particularly faithfulness to Torah.<sup>5</sup> Naturally, the realities of exile and subjugation under gentile rulers presented challenges to the adequacy of these ideas, as the faithful suffered and died for their adherence and it only seemed natural that God would recompense them with renewed life to receive the divine promises, as well as exact retribution against those who oppressed them. In this context, resurrection belief represents a commitment to justice, a desire for the complete dispensation of God’s justice, and a valuation of embodied life and material creation.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> George E. Mendenhall, “From Witchcraft to Justice: Death and Afterlife in the Old Testament,” in *Death and Afterlife: Perspectives of World Religions*, ed. Hiroshi Obayashi, Contributions to the Study of Religion 33 (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1992), 67–81; Eliezer Segal, “Judaism,” in *Life after Death in World Religions*, ed. Harold Coward (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1997), 11–30.

<sup>3</sup> The famous exception being the case of necromancy at Endor in 1 Sam 28.

<sup>4</sup> Segal, “Judaism,” 15.

<sup>5</sup> Mendenhall, “Witchcraft to Justice,” 74–75; Segal, “Judaism,” 13–15.

<sup>6</sup> Mendenhall, “Witchcraft to Justice,” 77–79; Segal, “Judaism,” 18.

Jennifer Rosner's comparative work involves some scriptural analysis, but it is more directed towards contemporary reality for the purpose of bringing Jewish and Christian eschatology together as a Jewish Christian/Messianic Jew. Her argument seeks to reconcile how, by her understanding (following R. Kendall Soulen), the traditional Christian narrative perceives the canon as a story of sin-salvation with how the traditional Jewish narrative perceives the canon as a story of creation-consummation (and the role of Israel therein). To accomplish this, she follows Kinzer in describing Jesus as the embodiment of the kingdom of God, the one who overcomes the chaos that threatens God's good creation, and as the one whose resurrection guarantees that his followers will participate in the new creation. The promise of vindication for faithfulness to God's will instantiated in his own resurrection extends to his followers, "In this way, the holiness that Israel embodies and is called to perpetuate throughout the earth is extended to and through Jesus' followers."<sup>7</sup>

In a similar vein, Gregory C. Jenks reviews Jesus's explicit and implicit teaching on the afterlife in the Gospels and compares it to Second Temple Jewish beliefs. He ultimately concludes that Jesus's basic teachings on resurrection belief is fundamentally consistent with Second Temple Jewish expectations of resurrection. Notably, however, he excludes Jesus's resurrection narratives (since they were not part of his teaching), his predictions of the same, and the texts about Jesus's coming in judgment, which in the narrative context of each of the Gospels would imply the resurrection of Jesus and of those participating in the judgment.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Jennifer M. Rosner, "Jewish Christian Eschatology," in *Heaven, Hell, and the Afterlife: Eternity in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, vol. 1: End Time and Afterlife in Judaism, ed. J. Harold Ellens (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2013), 142.

<sup>8</sup> Gary C. Jenks, "Jesus and the Afterlife: Glimpses of Jewish Tradition in the Teachings of Jesus," in *Heaven, Hell, and the Afterlife: Eternity in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, vol. 1: End Time and Afterlife in Judaism, ed. J. Harold Ellens (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2013), 147–68.

## Christianity

Leander Keck addresses death and afterlife beliefs in the NT, once again in a historical fashion that places beliefs and developments in historical context (indeed, this same approach continues in two subsequent chapters on the histories of Jewish and Christian beliefs that are beyond the scope of this analysis).<sup>9</sup> He first defines key terms, noting that “death” has literal and metaphorical senses in the NT and that it is regularly treated as an enemy; immortality refers to the outcome of resurrection, not to some natural immortality of the soul; and resurrection itself is not merely a coming to life again (resuscitation/reanimation), but also involves a transformation into immortality. Likewise, he notes that the NT never confuses Sheol/Hades with Gehenna/Hell like some Bible translations.<sup>10</sup> He also notes the importance of the context of the developments of earliest Christianity itself, as it shifted from a majority-Jewish movement to a majority-Gentile movement and produced a merging of ideas from these multiple backgrounds (including of immortality of the soul with the resurrection of the body). With this groundwork laid, he surveys the teachings of Jesus, Paul, Revelation, and the Gospel of John, wherein he provides examples of these various claims and tracks the theological challenges, conflicts, and combinations. A regular emphasis of his that he summarizes in his conclusion is that death and afterlife beliefs belong to a larger complex of ideas, “This is why, in learning what the New Testament says about death and afterlife, we found it necessary also to consider the nature of the self and the human dilemma and its resolution.”<sup>11</sup> This statement makes more pronounced what has been

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<sup>9</sup> Leander E. Keck, “Death and Afterlife in the New Testament,” in *Death and Afterlife: Perspectives of World Religions*, ed. Hiroshi Obayashi, Contributions to the Study of Religion 33 (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1992), 83–96.

<sup>10</sup> Keck, “New Testament,” 83–84.

<sup>11</sup> Keck, “New Testament,” 94.

generally consistent to this point: an anthropological focus in defining and describing resurrection belief.

Terence Penelhum proceeds in a less systematic fashion, but his chapter is also focused almost exclusively on the NT.<sup>12</sup> While he identifies some of Jesus's teaching as concerning afterlife (particularly Luke 16:19–31; 23:39–43; Mark 12:18–27 and pars.), he clearly says that for the core Christian claims about the afterlife, “The primary sources for these are Paul's letters, which were written before the resurrection narratives in the four gospels and contain the direct claim by the writer himself that he was a witness to one of Jesus' appearances.”<sup>13</sup> He then outlines Paul's resurrection teaching in 1 Cor 15, only addressing at any length the question of the nature of the resurrection body, of which he says:

I think he means that the *soma pneumatikon* is not a spirit but an incorruptible body, that is, the body of a person who has been redeemed from corruption. It will, Paul says, have glory and power, and be clothed with immortality. But this does not entail that it is not spatial, three-dimensional, or material. Not only is this the most natural reading of what Paul says, but it is enshrined in the church's creeds, where believers declare that they believe in the resurrection *of the body*.<sup>14</sup>

He also argues that in Paul's own work, and subsequent tradition thereafter, the belief in a disembodied afterlife immediately after death in which individuals are already judged prior to the judgment at the resurrection reasserts itself, which leads to the tensions in how Christians today describe their afterlife beliefs.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Terence Penelhum, “Christianity,” in *Life after Death in World Religions*, ed. Harold Coward (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1997), 31–47.

<sup>13</sup> Penelhum, “Christianity,” 37.

<sup>14</sup> Penelhum, “Christianity,” 38 (*italics original*).

<sup>15</sup> Penelhum, “Christianity,” 40–46. A more detailed account that seeks to track the historical relationship between these two afterlife beliefs (often articulated as complementary with the disembodied afterlife being an intermediate state) can be found in Philip C. Almond, *Afterlife: A History of Life After Death* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2016).

Ellens's chapter examines material related to the afterlife in the Apostles', Athanasian, and Nicene Creeds, although he uses material from the NT to critique these creeds. He asserts most extensively here that any notion of hell as a state of existence for the condemned after death is utterly unbiblical. Rather, the most one can say of when Jesus referred to Gehenna is that he is, "always referring to a contingent situation, namely, the state of meaninglessness or suffering any person has who is separated from God. That condition of hellishness is what we experience here and now, in our sense of alienation from God and, therefore, alienation from our true and whole selves."<sup>16</sup> Likewise, of the resurrection he says that Jesus could not have been bodily raised from the dead, since his body is clearly different.<sup>17</sup> As for Jesus's earthly body, he claims that it simply does not matter what happened to it.<sup>18</sup> This is the same kind of pattern that he sees for Christians, although he thinks that Christians do not wait for the resurrection, but proceed into it immediately upon death.<sup>19</sup>

### Islam

William Chittick opens his chapter in the first collection with this direct statement: "From the beginning of Islam all Muslims have accepted the resurrection of the body and the existence of heaven and hell as fundamental articles of faith."<sup>20</sup> Each of these beliefs contribute to the essence of Islamic eschatology (*ma'âd*), which is that God created all things and that all things return to

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<sup>16</sup> J. Harold Ellens, "Heaven, Hell, and Afterlife in the Christian Creeds," in *Heaven, Hell, and the Afterlife: Eternity in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, vol. 2: End Time and Afterlife in Christianity, ed. J. Harold Ellens (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2013), 85.

<sup>17</sup> Ellens, "Creeds," 89.

<sup>18</sup> Ellens, "Creeds," 91.

<sup>19</sup> Ellens, "Creeds," 98–99.

<sup>20</sup> William C. Chittick, "'Your Sight Today Is Piercing': The Muslim Understanding of Death and Afterlife," in *Death and Afterlife: Perspectives of World Religions*, ed. Hiroshi Obayashi, Contributions to the Study of Religion 33 (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1992), 125.

God, but in the return to God, humans who fail in the obligations God has placed upon them will experience God in a different way from those who fulfill those obligations. He thus proceeds to a discussion of Islamic anthropology and the implications that Allah created humans in his image. He also illustrates the importance of cosmology, the link of dreams to the spiritual world, and the moment when all things are unveiled in the eschaton, including the revelation of all the secrets of the human soul in the Day of Resurrection. Likewise, he summarizes the state of the dead after the final judgment as being a contrast between receiving the vision of Allah and being veiled from Allah.<sup>21</sup>

Hanna Kassis analyzes Islamic afterlife belief through a balanced approach of attending to ritual, Scripture, and tradition. In terms of outlining the theological context of resurrection belief, he essentially concurs with Chittick, but also provides elaboration.<sup>22</sup> He describes the most common Muslim funerary rituals, which are aimed at preparing the dead and the living for the Day of Resurrection (*yawm al-qiyamah*), including by the repeated recitation of the *shahādah* and the glorification of Allah (*takbīr*).<sup>23</sup> The recitation of the *shahādah* in particular serves the Muslim in the judgment in the tomb, when two angels visit the tomb and question the deceased about their faith, which will lead to them being left alone until the Day of Resurrection if they answer correctly (or being tormented in the tomb if they answer incorrectly). Then, as is common for Muslim works on eschatology, he outlines the eschatological schema of events in

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<sup>21</sup> Chittick, “Sight,” 138. As for the fire imagery in Hell, he has this to say on the same page, “The Fire is their own regret assuming concrete, imaginal form, appropriate to the perceivers. By the way, most Muslim authorities maintain that the fires of hell eventually will abate. After many aeons those who dwell in the Fire will become so accustomed to the veil that they would not be able to bear entering into paradise. God’s all-embracing and precedent mercy gives solace even to the damned.”

<sup>22</sup> Hanna Kassis, “Islam,” *Life after Death in World Religions*, ed. Harold Coward (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1997), 48–51.

<sup>23</sup> Kassis, “Islam,” 52–54.

and around the Day of Resurrection by collating scattered qur'anic passages, and he describes the basic pictures of Paradise and Hell.<sup>24</sup>

Grant Shafer's essay most closely matches my project as he both describes what the Qur'an says about the hereafter and the hidden realm and compares it to beliefs in Judaism and Christianity. However, he performs this comparison sporadically and not methodically through the ten topics he covers (God, spiritual beings, life on earth as preparation, predestination, the Last Day, resurrection, judgment, hell, heaven, and eternity). His descriptions also focus on citation of the Qur'an without deeper engagement with the reasoning and worldview. For example, his description of resurrection in the Qur'an involves descriptions of the Day of Resurrection and how the Qur'an responds to denial of resurrection.<sup>25</sup>

### Single-Author Volumes on Afterlife Beliefs

Five works by four authors are of interest here: S. G. F. Brandon's *Man and His Destiny in the Great Religions* (1962) and *The Judgment of the Dead* (1967); Alan F. Segal's *Life After Death* (2004); Christopher M. Moreman's *Beyond the Threshold* (2008) and Deborah M. Coulter-Harris's *Chasing Immortality in World Religions* (2016).<sup>26</sup> Each of these studies has massive breadth of scope for works by single authors, but varying levels of depth. However, due to the

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<sup>24</sup> Cf. Theodore Gabriel, "Resurrection in Islam," in *Jesus and the Resurrection: Reflections of Christians from Islamic Contexts*, ed. David Emmanuel Singh (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2014), 65–75.

<sup>25</sup> Grant R. Shafer, "Al-Ghayb wa al-'Akhiraḥ: Heaven, Hell, and Eternity in the Qur'an," in *Heaven, Hell, and the Afterlife: Eternity in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, vol. 3: End Time and Afterlife in Islamic, Buddhist, and Indigenous Cultures, ed. J. Harold Ellens (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2013), 9–39.

<sup>26</sup> S. G. F. Brandon, *Man and His Destiny in the Great Religions* (Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 1962); Brandon, *The Judgment of the Dead: The Idea of Life After Death in the Major Religions* (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1967); Deborah M. Coulter-Harris, *Chasing Immortality in World Religions* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2016); Christopher M. Moreman, *Beyond the Threshold: Afterlife Beliefs and Experiences in World Religions* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2008); Alan F. Segal, *Life After Death: A History of the Afterlife in the Religions of the West* (New York: Doubleday, 2004). I am aware that Moreman's work has a second edition, but since that second edition does not substantially add to, or otherwise alter, the chapters of interest to this review, I only interact with the first edition here.



significant repetition among these different sources and, like the multi-author volumes, the general lack of interaction (much less critical engagement) between these sources, I have foregone a procedure of going through each author's work individually in order to prevent unnecessary repetition. Still, it is prudent to outline the aims of each project individually.

### The Natures of the Studies

S. G. F. Brandon was an Anglican priest and a professor of Comparative Religion at the University of Manchester who wrote near the culmination of the old era of comparative religion. His first volume relevant to our subject is the published version of the Wilde Lectures in Natural and Comparative Religion that he had delivered at Oxford from 1954 to 1957. He designed the second volume as a supplement based on his perception that the subject required its own study. In his first volume Brandon acknowledges the challenges he faces on addressing so many different fields of research. In the process, he presents his reasoning for why a single-author project is superior to an edited volume:

Such a study, however, even if it were planned on adequate lines, would undoubtedly suffer from the fault which seems to beset all collaborative works, namely, lack of unity in conception and purpose. Moreover, in the study of an uncharted subject such as the present that lack of unity would also be likely to extend into the manner of approach—the definition of the constituent topics and the kind of data to be considered relevant. But, even if these difficulties were overcome and a series of expert monographs collected which dealt severally with the historic interpretations of human nature and destiny, there would still remain the task of evaluating the comparative significance of these interpretations ... But such a process inevitably means the apprehension and interpretation by one person of a mass of specialised data, much of which he has not acquired directly by his own original investigation.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Brandon, *Destiny*, vii–viii.

Indeed, it is unlikely that any multi-author work could avoid these problems.

Brandon directs his research to an inductive inquiry of literature—where a religion or culture has them—rituals, artifacts, inscriptions, and ethical or legal codes that are present in each case. The title of his book suggests that his scope concerns “the estimate of human nature and destiny which have emerged in the cultural tradition of the Western World and to see that estimate in its similarities and contrasts against the classic evaluations of the oriental cultures.”<sup>28</sup> His second study follows the same type of method, but focuses more on the crucial link that postmortem judgment provides between ethics and eschatology, a basic idea of which he tracks expressions across cultures and times.

Alan F. Segal was a scholar of ancient religions, particularly Judaism and Christianity. Indeed, he was most known—especially in NT studies—for his studies on the Jewish influences of Paul. In a similar vein, his *Life After Death* explores the histories and influences of afterlife beliefs in the “Western” religions. His interests extend beyond the foundational religious texts and their influence on their original societies, as he seeks, “to not only ask what was believed, but to ask why people wanted an afterlife of a particular kind and how those beliefs changed over time.”<sup>29</sup> In short, his work is a “social history” of the afterlife.<sup>30</sup> This social history matters for studying the afterlife because, “we tend to project on our view of a happy afterlife those things that we think are best, most lasting, virtuous, and meaningful in this life while eliminating those things we think are the most difficult, frustrating, evil, and inessential.”<sup>31</sup> In this manner, Segal’s treatment of theology is as an outgrowth of sociology.

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<sup>28</sup> Brandon, *Destiny*, 5.

<sup>29</sup> Segal, *Life*, 3.

<sup>30</sup> Segal, *Life*, 4.

<sup>31</sup> Segal, *Life*, 11.

Christopher Moreman is the Chair of the Department of Philosophy & Religious Studies at California State University, East Bay, specializing in comparative religion and subjects related to death, dying, and afterlife. *Beyond the Threshold* is the published version of his dissertation. He follows the patterns of Mircea Eliade's work in comparative religion in his focus on both beliefs and experiences.<sup>32</sup> The scope of the former, which most directly concerns my analysis, covers both orthodox religious traditions and folkloric material related to each religion. Furthermore, he describes his work as tracing,

the evolution of the chosen schools of thought through an historical analysis of each religion individually. Additionally, the chapters are specifically organized in an attempt to show some chronological coherence, both in the text and in the religious traditions themselves, especially where the development of a given religion was clearly dependent upon an older faith.<sup>33</sup>

After presenting each tradition in turn, and after a section outlining various cross-cultural human experiences, he devotes a chapter to comparative analysis of the beliefs in question (then followed by a comparative analysis of the experiences).

The most recent author to engage all three religions in her exploration of afterlife beliefs is Deborah M. Coulter-Harris. Coulter-Harris is a professor of English Language and Literature at the University of Toledo. Her *Chasing Immortality in World Religions* is a broad exploration of "concepts of immortality, the afterlife, the substance of the human soul, and theories of rewards and punishments from ancient Sumer to Islam."<sup>34</sup> In the process, she also explores how earlier religious ideas influenced later ones. Unfortunately, the depth with which she engages

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<sup>32</sup> Moreman, *Threshold*, 3. For key examples of Eliade's work, see Mircea Eliade, *Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return*, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York: Harper & Row, 1959); Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, trans. Rosemary Sheed (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1958).

<sup>33</sup> Moreman, *Threshold*, 3–4.

<sup>34</sup> Coulter-Harris, *Chasing Immortality*, 1.

these tasks is made apparent by the opening paragraph of her chapter on Judaism: “An attempt to tie threads of Hinduism into the Hebrew Bible’s belief system yields surprising connections: afterlife rewards and punishments, ideas of *moksha* and nirvana, and human life as a divine emanation are similar; however, these universal ideas appear to be active in almost every religious system of thought since ancient Sumer.”<sup>35</sup> As is too common in a comparative religious framework unaware of problems posed by the critiques of Jonathan Z. Smith and others, she transfers terminology from one context to another without account for the specific details of each context in order to declare ideas to be fundamentally the same and thereby demonstrative of some universal religious theme/archetype.<sup>36</sup>

### Judaism

Brandon’s engagement with the Jewish Scriptures exemplifies an approach that was especially popular in his time: deep engagement with a text consisted of noting genealogical influences and hypothesizing about the redactional layers of a text (usually because some feature of the text otherwise interferes with the scholar’s hypothesis). For example, Brandon’s hypothesis that the Gen 2–3 narrative conceived of humans as originally created to be immortal receives complication from the presence of the tree of life, which Brandon solves by claiming that it was not an original part of the story.<sup>37</sup> But like other authors with similar projects, he glides over the

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<sup>35</sup> Coulter-Harris, *Chasing Immortality*, 83.

<sup>36</sup> For critiques of approaches like this one, see Aaron W. Hughes, *Comparison: A Critical Primer* (Bristol, CT: Equinox, 2017), 14–49; Brent Nongbri, *Before Religion: A History of a Modern Concept* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), 85–153; Martin Riesebrodt, *The Promise of Salvation: A Theory of Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 1–20; Jonathan Z. Smith, *Drudgery Divine: On the Comparison of Early Christianities and the Religions of Late Antiquity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 36–53; Smith, *Map Is Not Territory: Studies in the History of Religions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 240–64.

<sup>37</sup> Brandon, *Destiny*, 124–25.

details of most texts rather quickly, as the whole book of Job receives about four pages of treatment, largely consisting of quotes.<sup>38</sup> As he explores the resurrection in the OT, he claims that it represents a rejection of Yahwist orthodoxy and a fundamental change in *Weltanschauung* from a belief in Sheol as a fate without distinction, a picture of Sheol with which all other authors here agree.<sup>39</sup> Nevertheless, he does ground resurrection belief—first appearing as an image in Ezekiel until it developed into a concrete hope in Daniel during the time of the Maccabean War—in the foundational Hebrew belief of humans being essentially psycho-physical organisms, and he notes that such an act would represent both the vindication of the faithful (as well as condemnation of the wicked) and the vindication of Yahweh as faithful and sovereign.<sup>40</sup> He ultimately concludes that the development of Jewish afterlife belief, “witnesses uniquely to the power of the individual’s insistence for significance.”<sup>41</sup>

Segal agrees with most of this account. He also adds that he thinks an important factor in the emergence of resurrection belief was the adoption of imagery from Canaanite language about Baal (or, in the case of the Book of Watchers, from Babylonian mythology).<sup>42</sup> He thinks the key apocalyptic text of Dan 12, especially by its promise of the knowledge-givers being transformed into shining stars/angels, served as a foundation for Jewish ascent mysticism, which supplied Paul his context for resurrection belief.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Brandon, *Destiny*, 131–36.

<sup>39</sup> Brandon, *Destiny*, 138–39; Brandon, *Judgment*, 56; Moreman, *Threshold*, 35–38; Segal, *Life*, 123–37.

<sup>40</sup> Brandon, *Judgment*, 63–67. Segal describes the situation that led to the concretizing of resurrection belief as a situation in which “the pious had been suffering, not for forgetting God’s law but precisely because they observed it. It comes from a time when some were eating pork and others, trembling for the fear of God, forbore from the sin. If God was letting his faithful suffer, the very promises of the Bible are brought into doubt.” Segal, *Life*, 265.

<sup>41</sup> Brandon, *Destiny*, 152. Cf. Brandon, *Judgment*, 60, wherein he argues that a shift from communal responsibility to individual responsibility in later prophetic texts was crucial for developments of afterlife belief.

<sup>42</sup> Segal, *Life*, 255–65.

<sup>43</sup> Segal, *Life*, 265–66.

Moreman's and Coulter-Harris's accounts likewise significantly overlap, albeit with more pronounced emphasis in their respective chapters on the claim that it was not until the Jews were exposed to influence from the Greek notion of the immortality of the soul and the Persian/Zoroastrian notion of the resurrection of the body that Judaism developed afterlife beliefs beyond the initial stage of Sheol belief. But what truly accelerated the process was Jewish suffering in the Second Temple era, especially under Antiochus Epiphanes, and the rupture it created between those who conformed to more Hellenistic ideas and practices and those who conformed more closely to Jewish tradition.<sup>44</sup> Resurrection belief was particularly appealing for how it recompensed those who died for their faithfulness to Torah.

### Christianity

Unlike their chapters on Judaism, our authors' chapters on Christianity exhibit more idiosyncrasies. Brandon uses the framework of the thesis he propounded elsewhere that Paul and the Gospels represented conflicting traditions of NT-era Christianity to present his ideas about Christian afterlife belief. Such an unmooring from common ground naturally provides support for Brandon's reading of Paul's statements on resurrection belief, since it allows him to distinguish Paul from the typical Jewish views enshrined in the Gospels.<sup>45</sup> By this account, Paul's distinctive notion of the resurrection body as a *σῶμα πνευματικόν* represented him moving away from his Jewish roots, which Brandon finds otherwise exemplified in the earlier 1 Thess 4:13–18. Indeed, Brandon suggests that Paul developed the notion precisely to accommodate Greek objections to a resurrection of the buried body, so as to suggest that resurrection would be

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<sup>44</sup> Coulter-Harris, *Chasing Immortality*, 86–89; Moreman, *Threshold*, 38.

<sup>45</sup> Brandon, *Destiny*, 207–11; Brandon *Judgment*, 98–104. "Typical," that is, if Jesus's resurrection plays no significant role in how one describes the Gospel presentations.

a more “ethereal form of manifestation,” a body composed of spirit, as it were.<sup>46</sup> In both studies, Brandon then charts the development of Pauline soteriology (which he describes as contributing to Paul’s *Weltanschauung* its “anthropocentric” character) in later Christian tradition.<sup>47</sup> As with Judaism, what he emphasizes in this development is the great significance given to the individual.

In Brandon’s book on judgment, he also adds a new claim related to the role of afterlife belief in Paul’s overall soteriology. According to Brandon, Paul’s soteriology, through its teachings of the regeneration and incorporation of Christians, effectively,

rendered the idea of a *post-mortem* judgment unnecessary, at least so far as baptized Christians were concerned; and it is difficult to see what significance it could have had relative to the rest of mankind, since they were already doomed to a state of perdition. It is true that in the course of his writings Paul makes many incidental references to the judgment of God after death, but they only indicate that, like most of his contemporaries, he generally accepted the notion of a *post-mortem* judgment and did not notice the implicit contradiction that such references constituted to the logic of his view that the baptized Christian was *in Christo*.<sup>48</sup>

As with his earlier redaction-critical analysis, such a note relieves Brandon of the burden of articulating the relationship of resurrection and final judgment in Paul’s theology, since Paul himself apparently did not see fit to construct a coherent theology.

Segal also sees a basic conflict in the conception of resurrection between Paul and the Gospels: “In flat contradiction to Paul, the Gospels (when they discuss the process of

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<sup>46</sup> Brandon, *Destiny*, 221. On the whole, see Brandon, *Destiny*, 218–22. In the process, he also lays out a typical theory of development in Paul’s resurrection belief from the time of 1 Thessalonians to the time of 2 Corinthians, both in terms of its timing (as Paul seemingly became less confident that Jesus would return before his death) and its nature (moving from an earthly bodily resurrection at the Parousia to an immediate “spiritual” or “heavenly bodily” resurrection immediately after death). For a summary and response to such a theory, see Ben F. Meyer, “Did Paul’s View of the Resurrection of the Dead Undergo Development?” *TS* 47 (1986): 363–87.

<sup>47</sup> Brandon, *Destiny*, 223.

<sup>48</sup> Brandon, *Judgment*, 107.

resurrection at all) strongly assert a physical, fleshly notion of Jesus' bodily resurrection. It is this physical resurrection which most suits their mission of conversion. The Gospels were written for the conversion and maintenance of the community."<sup>49</sup> For Paul, Segal returns to his thesis of the link between apocalypticism and mysticism (two similar ways of describing religiously altered/interpreted states of consciousness) to describe a key influence on Paul and his notion of the *soma pneumatikon*.<sup>50</sup> That is, just as Paul could not determine whether his mystical experience in 2 Cor 12 was in the body or not, the *soma pneumatikon* was part of the mystical experience that Paul used to frame the expectations of the Corinthians about their future inheritance by virtue of their identification with Jesus. This *soma pneumatikon* is, "the ordinary body subsumed and transformed by the spirit," as in the aforementioned mystical experience and as in Paul's own "visionary revelations" of the risen Christ beginning on the road to Damascus.<sup>51</sup> Segal thus sees Paul as more reflective of the earliest Christian experiences of Christ after his death, i.e., in terms of visions or religiously altered states of consciousness, which the Gospels concretize.<sup>52</sup> In the fusion of Pauline and Gospel perspectives that occurred with the solidifying of the canon, Paul's peculiar resurrection language became distorted by its conformation to the Gospel accounts.

Moreman, by contrast, sees more continuity between the Gospels and Paul, even as he agrees that much of the NT assumes an understanding of the Jewish concepts of resurrection and judgment. After reviewing Jesus's interaction with the Sadducees (Mark 12:18–27 and pars.), he concludes, "It seems obvious, then, that when Jesus refers to resurrected humans as being like

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<sup>49</sup> Segal, *Life*, 442. In this same vein: "He was not merely a ghost (*pneuma*) nor a 'spirit,' which Luke explicitly denies, although it is precisely the word that Paul used for the kind of body that the Christ had in 1 Corinthians 14:44 [sic.], a 'spiritual body' (*soma pneumatikon*). The Gospel of Luke explicitly denies the very terms which Paul used to describe the resurrected presence of Christ" (Segal, *Life*, 459).

<sup>50</sup> Segal, *Life*, 410–16.

<sup>51</sup> Segal, *Life*, 430, 441.

<sup>52</sup> Segal, *Life*, 448–67.



angels, he is referring to a spiritual element, which allows them to simultaneously remain ethereal and occasionally appear as a seemingly physical manifestation in the pursuance of their duties.”<sup>53</sup> Concerning Jesus’s own resurrection, he argues that the discontinuities in Jesus’s resurrection body and 1 Cor 15:44 support the theory that the NT writings undermine the idea of a belief in literal physical resurrection of the body. Early Christians—mostly Jews—simply forced Jesus’s return from death into the framework of bodily resurrection.<sup>54</sup>

As is characteristic of Coulter-Harris’s book, her chapter on Christianity stresses the claim of influence, in that she thinks Christian ideas about death, judgment, burial, and immortality came from Egypt, ideas about the soul came from Greece, and belief in corporeal resurrection came from Judaism.<sup>55</sup> In the case of Egyptian influence, she reaches so far as to claim that the story of Jesus parallels the myth of Isis, Osiris, and Horus.<sup>56</sup> As for Paul’s argument in 1 Cor 15, she argues that it is an argument directed towards controlled obedience based on fear, but she says little else about Paul’s theology of the resurrection in this text.<sup>57</sup>

## Islam

The chapters on Islam present a reconvergence for our authors, at least at the point of the Qur’an. All of them have little to say about Islam’s resurrection belief presented in the Qur’an as such,

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<sup>53</sup> Moreman, *Threshold*, 57.

<sup>54</sup> Moreman, *Threshold*, 58–60.

<sup>55</sup> Coulter-Harris, *Chasing Immortality*, 103–11.

<sup>56</sup> Among her many claims to this effect, she cites the following, “Horus was born of the virgin Isis on 25 December in a cave, and his birth was announced by a star in the East and attended by three wise men; the infant Horus was carried out of Egypt to flee the Typhon’s ire, while Jesus was carried into Egypt to escape the wrath of Herod; Jesus had the same titles as Horus, such as the way, the truth . . . the Word, the Morning Star, the light of the world” (Coulter-Harris, *Chasing Immortality*, 104–5). For more historically informative expositions on this story and resurrection, see John Granger Cook, *Empty Tomb, Resurrection, Apotheosis*, WUNT 410 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018), 74–87; Nicholas Perrin, “On Raising Osiris in 1 Corinthians 15,” *TynBul* 58 (2007): 117–28.

<sup>57</sup> Coulter-Harris, *Chasing Immortality*, 114–15.

except to note that it is bodily/physical and that the Judeo-Christian Scriptures influenced it.<sup>58</sup> Generally, the authors are more interested in the larger afterlife and eschatological schema of which the resurrection is a part and in Muhammad's eschatological rhetoric. In terms of the former, the authors devote significant attention to the state of the body in interim period of death and resurrection, the notion of Islamic purgatory (as they describe *barzakh*), and the afterlife descriptions that are more extensive and concrete in the Qur'an than in the Bible.<sup>59</sup> In terms of the latter, the authors note that Muhammad's program was eschatologically driven from the start, constantly invoking references to the Day of Judgment/Resurrection to motivate religious conversion ("conversion" also being a possible sense of the name "Islam").<sup>60</sup> When Muhammad faced the rejection of his message, he appealed to the idea that Allah predestined humans for different ends, but he nevertheless made appeals to his people to follow him and submit themselves to Allah, in whose mercy and wrath alone lies the fates of humans.<sup>61</sup>

### Evaluation

In my evaluation of the preceding literature, I proceed from comments on specific works to comments on the general body of texts that illustrate the need for a different approach to the study of resurrection belief. I begin first with Ellens's work. In responding to the creeds, Ellens finds it sufficient in refuting portions of the creeds to cite Scripture, give his interpretation of the text without acknowledging any controversy, and then attribute corrupt motivation to the credal formulators. To make such arguments, he makes sloppy statements like this: "Paul observes that

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<sup>58</sup> Brandon, *Destiny*, 246; Coulter-Harris, *Chasing Immortality*, 130–31; Moreman, *Threshold*, 85; Segal, *Life*, 642–46.

<sup>59</sup> Coulter-Harris, *Chasing Immortality*, 131–35; Moreman, *Threshold*, 82–87; Segal, *Life*, 649–52.

<sup>60</sup> Brandon, *Judgment*, 139–40; Segal, *Life*, 643–44.

<sup>61</sup> Brandon, *Destiny*, 244–51; Brandon, *Judgment*, 144–45.

*Jesus died in the flesh but he rose in the spirit* (I Cor. 15:44). Peter says exactly this same thing (I Pet. 3:18). The body Jesus had after the resurrection was a different body than he had before the resurrection. Before the resurrection Jesus' body was a physical and material body and afterward his body was a spiritual and nonmaterial body."<sup>62</sup> There is much conflation here, some of which I address in my chapter on 1 Cor 15. The worst piece of conflation that amounts to scholarly malpractice is his paraphrase of 1 Pet 3:18 that he attributes to 1 Cor 15:44, which he follows with claiming that Peter writes "exactly this same thing." There are interpretations of both texts that support this equation, but these interpretations are hardly non-controversial, and they are hardly sound bases for bald assertions about how unbiblical the creeds are on this point.<sup>63</sup> Unfortunately, his alternatives to the statements of the creeds are so much pabulum as saying Paul, "knew God is not in the business of shaping us up but of cheering us up."<sup>64</sup> The irony of making such a statement of a man who wrote 2 Corinthians and Philippians seems completely lost on Ellens.

Rosner's comparative work is better than most, but her work differs from my own in her lack of detailed engagement with the scriptural texts and from the fact that her comparison seeks to create a synthesis, where mine seeks to illuminate similar-yet-different worldviews. Such synthesis can certainly be valuable work, but it works best when avoiding stereotypes about typical canonical narratives and engaging more deeply with the specifics that compose those canonical narratives. Deep comparative work should drive any attempts at synthesis—which emerges from observations of both continuity and discontinuity—not the other way around.

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<sup>62</sup> Ellens, "Creeds," 98 (*italics original*).

<sup>63</sup> A still more egregious, ill-supported claim that he makes is that Peter "clearly had in the back of his mind" during his Pentecost proclamation what had happened to the two Qumran messiahs who had been murdered in the streets of Jerusalem and whose bodies disappeared three days later, with their followers then claiming that they had risen from the dead and ascended into heaven (88). This claim, without citation of primary or secondary texts, is built on the unmentioned (and extremely speculative) work of Israel Knohl.

<sup>64</sup> Ellens, "Creeds," 100.

Jenks's comparative work, despite its extent, is ultimately superficial. There certainly are many similarities between Jesus's teachings on resurrection (explicit and implicit) and Second Temple Jewish resurrection beliefs. But Jenks extracts these teachings from their larger Gospel contexts in which Jesus's resurrection narratives reframe all the preceding teachings and events, wherein Jesus predicts his own death and resurrection and attaches teachings on discipleship to at least the first prediction, which feature Jesus's expectations of his role in the final judgment, and which include Jesus's statements linking resurrection to his own work and identity (e.g., Matt 11:5 // Luke 7:22; John 11:25–26). This extraction inevitably distorts any question of Jesus's theology of resurrection by insisting from the outset that what is distinctive can be disregarded. A key reason for Jenks eliminating the resurrection predictions—and, by entailment, the resurrection narratives—is that he thinks they predict, “not the future life beyond death to be enjoyed by Jesus, but rather his return to this life after his anticipated vindication as an innocent martyr whose death cannot be allowed to stand.”<sup>65</sup> However, this is not the obvious meaning, given the context of Jesus's other teachings about his identity, work, and future noted above, and given the fact that one can hardly draw such a clear distinction from some clear terminological cue from Jesus that distinguishes a resuscitation from a resurrection to everlasting life. His argument only works by rejecting the Gospel context and substituting his own.

Penelhum's interpretation of Paul and his significance is generally on-point, save for his adherence to the same type of development hypothesis that Brandon advocates. His work on Jesus's teaching is deficient in a similar way to Jenks's work, as he treats the given texts in isolation. Other concerns that he addresses in his essay lie outside my scope, since they concern challenges that are either not endemic to resurrection belief or are anthropocentric.

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<sup>65</sup> Jenks, “Jesus,” 151.

I have already made evaluative comments on Shafer's essay and the problems I see that need addressing, such as the need for methodical (rather than sporadic) comparison, deeper engagement with texts, and more worldview analysis. Chittick's essay is insightful in how it draws on both qur'anic theology proper and on anthropology to articulate resurrection belief. As I address below, the singularity (or, more appropriately, *tawhīd*) of Allah is crucial for qur'anic resurrection belief and more fundamental than particular assumptions about anthropology. Also crucial is the pervasive link of the eschatological resurrection with the final judgment, such that reference to the Day of Resurrection or Day of Judgment appears in most surahs, even when the subject of resurrection receives no elaboration. Kassis helpfully elaborates on Muslim praxis in their treatment of the dead in anticipation of resurrection, including by reaffirming the foundational beliefs the living share with the dead. I return to another feature of his elaboration of the place of resurrection in the eschatological schema below.

As for the single-author volumes, I must note that while both Brandon and Moreman had comparative chapters that synthesized chapters covering Judaism, Christianity, and Islam with the other chapters of their works, I have not reviewed them here because they consistently place these three religions on the same side of a comparison and contrast to the other religions covered (except for linking early Yahwism to ancient Near Eastern religions). As such, they simply reiterate points from their individual chapters and do not explore the deeper comparisons and contrasts between these traditions. Part of what makes such a task difficult for them is that, despite the focus on a central theme, they have not chosen something else to bring further specificity to the comparison and contrast, such as the different scriptures, different ritual practices, different forms of mysticism, different credal statements, or so on, but have instead chosen to remain at the level of broad comparison.

Brandon's particular work on Judaism is oddly anthropocentric. One must wonder why the development of Jewish afterlife belief is, at least chiefly, a testimony to the individual's "insistence for significance," and not an insistence on the importance of YHWH's covenant with his people and an insistence on the character of YHWH. His work on Christianity relies on two problematic bases: 1) his controversial conflict hypothesis concerning the earliest Christian generation; 2) his misreading of the *soma pneumatikon* in 1 Cor 15:44 as a body composed of spirit. One of these ideas feeds into the other, as this notion of the nature of the resurrection body is supposed to be an instance of the conflict between Paul and the Gospels. Of course, Brandon also shares this misreading with Segal, Moreman, and others, and I address this matter in the relevant chapter. I also address his claims about the role of final judgment in Paul's theology. Otherwise, there is little to say about his chapter on Islam in relation to resurrection belief, as he spends most of it on different ideas, such as the tension in the Qur'an between Allah's predestination and evangelism.

Segal's argument for the link of apocalypticism and mysticism as a way of explaining Paul's resurrection belief (again, over against the Gospels) similarly relies on a misreading of 1 Cor 15:44. He also relies on a reading of Dan 12:3 of the righteous "becoming angels" (rather than shining *like* the stars/angels, as per the text) to support his notion of a mystical experience of union and enlightenment being crucial to the development of an analogous form of "spiritual" resurrection belief. I address both claims in the relevant chapters.

Besides the already noted misreading of 1 Cor 15:44, Moreman presents a peculiar reading of Jesus's interaction with the Sadducees, in which he claims that Jesus's argument is for an essentially immaterial state of existence for the resurrected. But once again, this misses the qualifier that the resurrected will be *like* angels and Moreman simply assumes transference from

the source to the target of the analogy in every respect. The connection is in the similarity of mode of existence rather than nature, as Jesus's point in the comparison is that the resurrected receive everlasting life and no longer need to engage in procreation. If procreation is no longer necessary, it will no longer be necessary to initiate or re-initiate marriages. Likewise, patristic interpreters debated with interlocutors whether the resurrected bodies would have sexual organs, and their consensus was that these bodies would have such organs, but they would no longer be used, since procreation would no longer be necessary.<sup>66</sup>

Moreman's analysis is also peculiar for his attempts to overstress continuity between the different religions he studies. As observed above, he notes differences in beliefs, of course. But in the end, his project places greater emphasis on global religious experiences and the beliefs are subsumed to these experiences. Such an approach fits with his appeal to Jungian psychology and to the Universal Mind hypothesis. However, as seen above, and as will continue to be seen, such a paradigm has distorted his analysis by causing him to forego deep engagement with foundational texts, to gloss too easily over differences, and to avoid deeper worldview analysis for each religion he examines.

Likewise, Coulter-Harris's is lacking in any in-depth engagement with the primary texts. She instead employs texts as illustrations of ideas. And aside from her overemphasis on influence and a genealogical method of comparison—whereby similarity + a posited historical relationship = influence or borrowing of ideas—there is another striking characteristic of her analysis. She often sets forth contradictory views in proximity without any attempt to adjudicate or argue why the reader should accept the prevailing view of her analysis. For example, after she

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<sup>66</sup> Justin, *Res.* 3; Hilary of Poitiers, *Comm. Matt.* 23.4; Jerome, *Comm. Matt.* 22:30; Epiphanius, *Pan.* 64.43.3–8. This type of argument fits with how the Jews generally regarded angels as beings with sex.

references Shaul Bar's view that opposes the consensus on the nature and function of Sheol in the Hebrew Scriptures as a universal abode of the dead, she immediately re-assumes the consensus without argument.<sup>67</sup> This is not a matter of her simply presenting diverse views, but rather a matter of sloppy presentation, because her analyses in each chapter rely on certain views prevailing, such as the proposed influence of Egyptian mythology on key aspects of Christianity.

In general, four characteristics of (most of) these analyses are noteworthy and demonstrate a need for a different approach to the matter of resurrection belief in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. First, these works, whether edited or single-author volumes, suffer from an overly broad scope. The need to cover such an amount of material encourages operating at the level of broad generalizations, instead of detailed engagement with select texts, key rituals, crucial symbols, and so on. Likewise, the broad scope that covers many different potential areas of expertise, at least some of which the individual scholar is unlikely to be an expert in, often entails a lack of multilingual competence (beyond key terms at least), extensive engagement with representatives of each religion, and critical interaction with diverse scholarship in the subject areas.<sup>68</sup> The edited volumes might seem to avoid these problems precisely because they feature experts in the individual areas, but they instead feature other problems, especially for thoroughgoing comparative work, as Brandon outlines well. What is truly needed is for either a single scholar to operate with a restricted scope or for multiple authors with varying types and levels of expertise to engage in direct dialogue under the guidance of a restricted scope. The

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<sup>67</sup> Coulter-Harris, *Chasing Immortality*, 85.

<sup>68</sup> "Successful comparison must involve immersion in languages, texts, traditions, *and* theory. One cannot compare unless one knows the languages *in their original*." Hughes, *Comparison*, 84 (*italics original*).



former is the aim of this project, as I focus specifically on Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Scriptures and, even more specifically, on case study texts from each canon.<sup>69</sup>

Second, many of these works—particularly those of Mendenhall, E. Segal, Keck, Brandon, A. Segal, Moreman, and Coulter-Harris—are taken with an approach to explaining resurrection belief in a particular historical fashion. That is, they are concerned with identifying external factors related to historical origins and influences. My own project is not to disregard or dismiss historical contexts or developments (in future work, I hope to contribute to studies of such matters, as I have before).<sup>70</sup> Rather, I aim to go beyond them. Too often in the analyses considered above (and many others), scholars seem to think that identifying historical stimuli for resurrection belief (or any other form of afterlife belief)—whether in terms of influence, crisis, response, or any other form of development—is sufficient for articulating resurrection belief and why people adhered to it. The role and perceived necessity of resurrection belief in the logic<sup>71</sup> of the sources is often less important than identifying origins or analogies. Relatedly, scholars regularly give attention to proposed influences for groups developing resurrection belief, but less so to the worldviews of the developing groups in order to explain why those groups found resurrection to be plausible and a good hope in the worldview context. My project is more concerned with the internal worldview dynamics and the factors of the worldview context that make resurrection belief make sense in the particular worldviews formed by the Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Scriptures.

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<sup>69</sup> As I will illustrate in the outline of my procedure in the next chapter and in the execution of that procedure in chs. 3–5, while my focus is restricted to these specific texts, I also demonstrate the relevance of what is noted in these chapters for other texts in the canon through examining the texts in context, showing their connections to other texts beyond the book context, and using other texts to illuminate worldview foundations in the individual texts.

<sup>70</sup> K. R. Harriman, “A Synthetic Proposal About the Corinthian Resurrection Deniers,” *NovT* 62 (2020): 180–200.

<sup>71</sup> Short for “theological logic.” Alternatively, one could say “theological reasoning.”

Third, since scholars have too often not pursued the internal worldview dynamics of resurrection belief, especially in comparative contexts, the programmatic questions they pose also tend to remain surface-level. As part of what was supposed to be a larger comparative project, Hans Cavallin exemplifies the type of questions that the scholars I have noted have regularly addressed, as these are the types of questions that have dominated discussions on afterlife and resurrection for a long time: “(A) Does the text speak about life after death, and if so (B) about the resurrection of the body, immortality of the soul or other alternatives, as (C) a return to earthly life or a glorified heavenly existence? (D) When does new life after death begin and how is it related to final judgment?”<sup>72</sup> These questions may be interesting, but they do not address what is most important for deep comparison in terms of how resurrection belief functions in a particular worldview. Similarly, the overwhelming tendency in qur’anic studies (among both Muslim and non-Muslim scholars) is to describe the role of resurrection belief in the Qur’an by describing its place in a larger schema of eschatological events. Such a concern is natural in view of the more extensive and concrete portrayals of eschatological events in the Qur’an. However, these schematic outlines do not provide answers to why the Qur’an proclaims resurrection belief or its relationship to other worldview components. In other words, all of these concerns address the “what” of resurrection belief, but not the “why” of it. This project concerns at least some of those “why” questions of resurrection belief, which should have primacy, as the answers to them animate the “what” questions.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Hans Clemens Caesarius Cavallin, *Life After Death: Paul’s Argument for the Resurrection of the Dead in 1 Cor. 15*, part 1: *An Enquiry into the Jewish Background*, ConBNT 7:1 (Lund: Gleerup, 1974), 18.

<sup>73</sup> For example, questions concerning whether resurrection happens on earth or in heaven, or whether it involves some kind of “earthly” or “heavenly” existence, are ultimately answered by what fits the worldview plausibility structures connected to resurrection belief (i.e., the answers to the “why” questions).

Fourth, these works frequently have an anthropocentric focus in articulating and explaining resurrection belief. That is, their focus is primarily on the anthropology of resurrection. This is of course a fair approach, as anthropology, especially in terms of concepts of human composition, is crucial in discussions of resurrection, and resurrection can be incompatible (or difficult to make compatible) with some notions of anthropology. However, explanations of resurrection belief that rely so heavily on anthropology are essentially answering the question: Why should humans rise from the dead? But the focus on this question misses a more fundamental one: Why should God raise the dead?<sup>74</sup> All of these scriptures implicitly and explicitly attribute the action of resurrection to God. None of the scriptures specifically indicate that there is something inherent to human composition that demands resurrection; rather, it is the divine will and action that necessitates resurrection. As seen above, scholars may well note that concerns about theodicy or assumptions of God's justice or faithfulness may aid the emergence of resurrection belief, but they tend to look to concerns of anthropology to answer why God raises the dead. Anthropological concerns are indeed unavoidable in exploring why an adherent of a worldview should expect an eschatological resurrection, and this project will not avoid them either. But they need not be central, as these past analyses have made them. As the title indicates, the primary interest of this project is to address why God should raise the dead, making its central concern the theocentric concerns of these scriptures.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Here, my reference to "God" is deliberately general, not as an assumption that Judaism, Christianity, and Islam all refer to the same God per se, but in recognition that all of them refer to one God that the adherents know as "God" who they refer to as the God who raises the dead, regardless of any other distinct ways they have of identifying the one they call "God."

<sup>75</sup> As I illustrate in the next chapter, particularly where I discuss the roles of the "emic" and "etic" in comparative analysis, I find the theocentric focus crucial to incorporating emic elements to my analysis, as opposed to focusing more strictly on etic concerns. While my own beliefs naturally align me to what is presented in 1 Cor 15 as attesting to the truth that defines me, my aim here is not so much to argue for this text as the one that definitively presents the thoughts, wills, and desires of God. Rather, my focus is on what these authors and groups as represented in these texts attest as what they understand to be revelation of the God who they say will raise the dead. This, again, is part of my concern to incorporate the "emic" or insider perspective into my analysis.

My project aims to respond to these interwoven concerns through a comparative analysis that addresses the aforementioned deficiencies in previous comparative studies. One, my answers to these questions will treat a restricted scope by focusing on case study texts from each canon, which allows for deep engagement with the text and with other readers of the text. Two, my method in approaching these questions and these texts will focus on internal worldview dynamics and the factors of the worldview context that make resurrection belief sensible.<sup>76</sup> Three, my aim is to avoid answering the “why” questions of resurrection belief with answers to “what” questions or with appeal to proposed historical influences. Four, I explore more specifically how these texts in their scriptural and worldview contexts answer the titular question: Why should God raise the dead?

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<sup>76</sup> As noted in my introduction, I am focused here on worldviews insofar as the authors convey them in the texts. I am offering neither a comprehensive analysis of the authors’ worldviews (as each contains more than what can be conveyed in the text), a comprehensive analysis of worldview formation, nor a full account of possible worldviews that these texts can contribute to. Each text has certain rhetorical purposes that operate at the intersection of the author conveying a personally held worldview and the task of worldview formation—in terms of construction, maintenance, deconstruction, and reconstruction—of the author’s audience. It is these textual considerations that restrict the scope of the worldview analysis here, as the concern is with worldviews as conveyed in texts designed for worldview formation.

## CHAPTER 2

### METHODOLOGY: EXEGETICAL-THEOLOGICAL COMPARISON

The case study texts I examine for this project are some of the key resurrection texts in each canon: Dan 12 (particularly vv. 1–3, 13); 1 Cor 15; Q Al-Qiyamah 75. Daniel 12 represents the most extensive and clearest articulation of literal resurrection belief in Tanakh, and, as I argue in the relevant chapter, it is something of a canonical crescendo in how it draws together several other texts to articulate the expectation of resurrection. Paul’s text of 1 Cor 15 represents his most extensive articulation of resurrection belief, especially because it is in a context in which some deny it. Muhammad’s text of Q Al-Qiyamah 75 not only has a name which translates to, “The Resurrection,” but it is also an earlier Qur’anic text that later ones (such as Q Qaf 50) would extend from or summarize, making it a rough equivalent to 1 Cor 15 in the context of Paul’s ministry. All of these texts not only articulate resurrection belief, but they are also particularly vivid in how they indicate implicitly and explicitly the bases for this belief.

My method for analyzing these texts represents a fusion, to which I have given the name “exegetical-theological comparison.” It is *exegetical* in that it engages in detailed investigation and interpretation of texts in context. This aspect of the method allows for engaging with each text on its own terms before setting each in comparison to the others. It is, after all, resurrection belief conveyed in written texts that is my concern here. This aspect of the method will also necessitate extensive engagement with experts on each text (including both those who do and those who do not regard the text as sacred scripture), as well as with the interactions of the respective traditions with each text.

It is *theological* in two senses. One, since an overarching purpose of this study is considering how these scriptures might address why God should raise the dead, the chief concern of the textual investigation is what the texts state or imply about divine action, speech, and identity. Two, in that theology is a form of reflection on the symbolic universe or worldview, especially in the context of communal worldview formation, this analysis is theological in its focus on the role of resurrection belief in the worldviews conveyed by these texts for the purposes of worldview formation.<sup>1</sup>

Finally, my method is *comparative*. It involves analyzing the similarities and differences between similar types of belief in different worldview contexts. The following sections explain my methodology in reverse order from the noun “comparison,” to the “theological” in terms of worldview comparison, to “exegetical” in terms of textual comparison.

### **Comparison**

Comparison is one of the fundamental functions of the human brain. It is an essential means by which relationships, categories, distinctions, symbols, stories, and all types of communication in general take shape.<sup>2</sup> The various acts of translation between languages and cultures depend on it. Indeed, it is foundational to the formation of communities, including of the earliest Christians. Margaret Mitchell notes that Paul’s strategies of proving that Christ is the one the Jews expect as the fulfillment of the scriptures (e.g., 1 Cor 15:3–4) and that he is the answer to Greek wisdom both required comparison and comparative exegesis: “As Paul allows within this classic

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*, vol. 1 of *Christian Origins and the Question of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 126–27.

<sup>2</sup> For more on the many shared characteristics of humans that makes comparison and communication possible, see Jeppe Sinding Jensen, “Revisiting the Insider-Outsider Debate: Dismantling a Pseudo-problem in the Study of Religion,” *MTSR* 23 (2011): 29–47.

formulation, both sets of comparisons must emphasize continuity *and* discontinuity; the crucified Christ is both an obvious fit and a thoroughly unexpected and incongruous one.”<sup>3</sup> Likewise, much of early Christian literature, rabbinic literature, and the literature of Islam at its emergence are occupied with some form of comparison in pursuit of establishing and forming identity.

At the least, comparison involves the selection, juxtaposition, and manipulation of, “two or more unrelated objects that an individual perceives to share one or more similar or overlapping characteristics.”<sup>4</sup> Or, in the words of Jonathan Z. Smith, “Comparison provides the means by which *we* ‘re-vision’ phenomena as *our* data in order to solve *our* theoretical problems.”<sup>5</sup> While comparison seems naturally drawn towards the postulation of similarity—hence the link of “compare” to similarity and of “contrast” to difference—the act of comparison necessarily assumes both similarity and difference, as Fitz John Porter Poole observes:

On the one hand, the postulation of identity precludes the possibility of comparison by obliterating the “gap” and rendering comparison tautological. On the other hand, the postulation of difference is meaningless for comparison without some connective tissue of postulated similarity. Difference makes a comparative analysis interesting; similarity makes it possible. Neither quality, however, is simply and unproblematically inherent in the phenomena to be compared. Only abstract concepts can provide the problems, lenses, and constructed patterns in terms of which we can postulate analytically useful similarities and differences.<sup>6</sup>

Individual comparativists may emphasize one of these qualities over the other, but a proper comparative analysis cannot ignore either. The exact content of a comparative analysis is determined by the subject in question. Comparative methods exist in most fields of study,

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<sup>3</sup> Margaret M. Mitchell, “On Comparing, and Calling the Question,” in *The New Testament in Comparison: Validity, Method and Purpose in Comparing Traditions*, ed. John M. G. Barclay and B. G. White, LNTS 600 (London: T&T Clark, 2020), 96 (emphasis original).

<sup>4</sup> Hughes, *Comparison*, 9.

<sup>5</sup> Smith, *Drudgery*, 52 (emphases original).

<sup>6</sup> Fitz John Porter Poole, “Metaphors and Maps: Towards Comparison in the Anthropology of Religion,” *JAAR* 54 (1986): 417.

including in my own field of NT studies, but the field of comparative religion should also be considered for the many insights of critical reflections it has produced from the soil of an extensive history of distortion. I draw from these insights here by outlining my assumptions, purposes, and practices in comparison.

### Assumptions

In order for comparison to be possible, the comparativist must first posit the respect in which two or more given entities are similar. This positing stems from the recognition of a pattern. The comparativist states this pattern in terms of a concept (in this case, of belief in an eschatological divine act of raising the dead to life). With the concept defined, the comparativist then develops an analytic model that specifies the focus of the analysis “by emphasizing a particular dimension (or set of dimensions) of the phenomena to be compared, and not by postulating the comparison of phenomena *in toto*.”<sup>7</sup> A properly comparative inquiry makes clear with its model that “categories are *our* tools of description and analysis, that they are map, not territory, but that they may for that reason be useful in seeing aspects of the territory we might not have otherwise seen.”<sup>8</sup> In this case, the model focuses on texts that articulate resurrection belief and analyzes this belief in terms of worldview analysis, which I outline further below.

Some of my methodological assumptions about what constitutes a good comparison of beliefs from different religious contexts broadly agree with those of Robert Neville and Wesley Wildman of the Comparative Religious Ideas Project.<sup>9</sup> 1) Comparison first requires

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<sup>7</sup> Poole, “Metaphors,” 420.

<sup>8</sup> Robert Ford Company, “‘Religious’ as a Category: A Comparative Case Study,” *Numen* 65 (2018): 342.

<sup>9</sup> I draw the following four assumptions about comparison from Robert Cummings Neville and Wesley J. Wildman, “Comparing Religious Ideas,” in *Ultimate Realities*, vol. 2 of *The Comparative Religious Ideas Project*, ed. Robert Cummings Neville (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2001), 190.



understanding all sides to be compared in their own terms (i.e., in their own contexts). Of course, as Howard Eilberg-Schwartz notes, “determining just what is ‘the context’ is itself always an interpretive act. Cultural wholes are complex and thus there are numerous ways in which the interactions among cultural elements can be construed. Since it is impossible to see everything as related to everything else, the interpreter is forced to make a decision as to which elements in the system are related.”<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, this aspect of comparison also includes attentiveness to the differences in importance that religious traditions assign to the items being compared.<sup>11</sup> 2) Comparison is more than assembling accurate representations of the things to be compared; a “third term” is necessary for defining the respect in which things are similar and different.<sup>12</sup> 3) Comparisons are claims that aim to be true in what they assert about the relations among religious ideas and should be grounded in processes that test them according to relevant criteria. 4) Claims to the truth of comparisons ought not capitulate in the face of critical qualifications but should amend and improve themselves. That is, a good comparative approach should be a “properly empirical procedure that prizes vulnerability of comparative hypotheses and actively seeks to improve them in as many ways and with as much diligence as possible.”<sup>13</sup> Detail-oriented comparison is particularly vulnerable, as the more details it seeks to incorporate, the more chances there are for misunderstandings on the part of the analyst.

To these assumptions I also add the following. 5) Comparisons that involve deeper examination of details are more likely to be accurate and illuminating than comparisons that

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<sup>10</sup> Howard Eilberg-Schwartz, *The Savage in Judaism: An Anthropology of Israelite Religion and Ancient Judaism* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1990), 95. Cf. Hughes, *Comparison*, 81–82.

<sup>11</sup> Neville and Wildman, “Comparing,” 201.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Smith, *Drudgery Divine*, 51.

<sup>13</sup> Wesley J. Wildman and Robert Cummings Neville, “How Our Approach to Comparison Relates to Others,” in *Ultimate Realities*, vol. 2 of *The Comparative Religious Ideas Project*, ed. Robert Cummings Neville (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2001), 215.

involve much broader generalizations.<sup>14</sup> 6) Genealogical comparisons of ideas or beliefs are possible, but much more difficult to establish than often assumed.<sup>15</sup> In the case of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, there are definitely historical relationships between these traditions, but the precise nature and history of those relationships are heavily debated and building theories of influence on such bases can prove precarious.<sup>16</sup> Projects that look for analogy (structures that perform similar functions), as opposed to homology (structures that perform similar functions due to common ancestry/descent), are less fraught with difficulties.<sup>17</sup> 7) As opposed to the modernist tendency to emphasize similarity at the service of some universalist idea and the postmodernist tendency to emphasize difference at the service of some nominalist idea, a better approach would be to attend to similarity and difference that emerges from perspectives held “simultaneously.”

André Droogers represents such an approach entailed by the last assumption with his “methodological ludism,”<sup>18</sup> which is to say, “methodological play.” What Droogers means by “play” is a capacity to interact with reality from different perspectives “simultaneously,” including both involvement/participation and distance, wherein the researcher, “makes an effective use of play by occupying varying positions, if only for as long as is necessary to

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<sup>14</sup> Such comparisons are more likely to achieve what Poole refers to as good qualities of analogical mapping: “1) clarity of definition of mappings; 2) richness or density of predicates (especially relational predicates); 3) systematicity or coherence of mapping; and 4) abstractness of mapping with respect to the hierarchical level of the predicates in the propositional semantic networks representing the domains to be compared.” Poole, “Metaphor,” 422–23.

<sup>15</sup> As an example of a good genealogical comparison related to the subject here, see Tryggve N. D. Mettinger, *The Riddle of Resurrection: “Dying and Rising Gods” in the Ancient Near East*, ConBOT 50 (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 2001).

<sup>16</sup> For some recent examples of analyses of these relationships, see James D. G. Dunn, *Neither Jew nor Greek: A Contested Identity*, vol. 3 of *Christianity in the Making* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015); Francisco del Rio Sánchez, ed., *Jewish-Christianity and the Origins of Islam: Papers Presented at the Colloquium Held in Washington DC, October 29-31, 2015 (8th ASMEA Conference)* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2018).

<sup>17</sup> On this distinction, see Company, “Religious,” 335.

<sup>18</sup> André Droogers, “Playing with Perspectives,” in *Methods for the Study of Religious Change: From Religious Studies to Worldview Studies*, ed. André Droogers and Anton van Harskamp (Sheffield; Bristol, CT: Equinox, 2014), 62–63.

understand what the seemingly contrasting positions look like, whether of science and religion, researcher and researched, outsider and insider or *emic* and *etic*.”<sup>19</sup> I have placed “simultaneously” in quotes multiple times here, because neither the researcher nor the reader truly engages with these perspectives at the same time, but rather “in turn.” The “simultaneity” simply comes from holding both kinds of perspectives together. In any case, Droogers has articulated well the need for a multi-perspective analysis to attain more holistic learning about worldviews that people are committed to.

### Purpose

In addition to articulating assumptions, it also helps to articulate the purpose of the comparison. Michael Stausberg lists many purposes pursued in comparative designs in general, including category formation, generalization/systematization (including by challenging previous ones), construction and testing of hypotheses, interpretation, explanation, and construction of typologies/taxonomies.<sup>20</sup> In fact, these purposes are extensions of what comparison itself does, as noted earlier.

In NT studies in particular, John Barclay, in describing his own famous project *Paul and the Gift*, promotes the purpose of portraying, “the familiar in a new light (‘to see ourselves as others see us’) and thereby to generate the possibility of new understandings, including better understandings of ourselves as the people conducting that comparison.”<sup>21</sup> The purpose is not necessarily to replace the perspective of those who regard the matter in question as familiar or to

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<sup>19</sup> Droogers, “Playing,” 71 (italics original).

<sup>20</sup> Michael Stausberg, “Comparison,” in *The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in the Study of Religion*, ed. Michael Stausberg and Steven Engler (Abingdon, U.K.: Routledge, 2011), 33–34.

<sup>21</sup> John M. G. Barclay, “‘O wad some Pow’r the giftie gie us, To see oursels as others sees us!’ Method and Purpose in Comparing the New Testament,” in *The New Testament in Comparison: Validity, Method and Purpose in Comparing Traditions*, ed. John M. G. Barclay and B. G. White, LNTS 600 (London: T&T Clark, 2020), 9–10.

invalidate the emic, but to supplement it and diversify it, in recognition of the researcher's own multiple subjectivities and situations, addressing the subject matter from different perspectives (provided one takes the first assumption above seriously), to different audiences (with different interests), for different reasons.<sup>22</sup> In the same volume, Troels Engberg-Pedersen—known especially for his comparisons of the NT and Stoicism—describes his own method of comparison as heuristic, meaning that his comparison is for the purpose of understanding one of the ideas compared (*comparanda*) through its comparison to the other, as opposed to genealogical or analogical designs.<sup>23</sup>

My own purpose in comparison is threefold. One, I compare these forms of resurrection belief in order to construct and test explanatory theological hypotheses about these similar-yet-different beliefs in the scriptures of these similar-yet-different religions. Two, I compare these forms of resurrection belief in order to provide more holistic interpretations of them, as I draw attention both to how the general patterns of resurrection belief manifest in these texts and to how the texts manifest distinct emphases. In a sense, I am portraying the familiar in a new light by virtue of the juxtaposition in order to illustrate how even the elements of resurrection belief otherwise shared between these scriptures have their own peculiar natures and functions. Three, my method aims to be primarily heuristic and secondarily analogical in that I emphasize the implications of the comparison for understanding one *comparandum*, but in order to achieve proper understanding on this front, I also must explore each of the *comparanda* on their own terms first. Too much comparative work overemphasizes continuity between *comparanda*, leading to distorted perspectives of one or more of them.

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<sup>22</sup> Barclay, "Method," 17–20.

<sup>23</sup> Troels Engberg-Pedersen, "The Past Is a Foreign Country: On the Shape and Purposes of Comparison in New Testament Scholarship," in in *The New Testament in Comparison: Validity, Method and Purpose in Comparing Traditions*, ed. John M. G. Barclay and B. G. White, LNTS 600 (London: T&T Clark, 2020), 55–61.

### Best Practices

As Stausberg observes, there are many challenges that the comparativist must address, in that comparative analysis: 1) requires extensive preparations; 2) can require various sorts of specialist expertise; 3) is time-consuming; 4) can create difficulty in finding matching sets of source materials; 5) is prone to mistakes because of complexity; 6) can sacrifice depth for breadth in wide-ranging comparisons; 7) may be insensitive to contexts; 8) is prone to confusion because of surface similarities or differences; 9) can be poorly received by specialists; 10) is potentially static and essentializing.<sup>24</sup> I have noted the ways in which the previous comparative works failed to address at least some of these challenges (particularly 6–9). To meet these challenges and avoid the pitfalls of earlier analyses, it is important to outline best practices of comparison.<sup>25</sup>

Smith identifies four parts, or what he calls “moments,” of the process of comparison.<sup>26</sup> The first moment is description, which involves the definition or representation of each *comparandum* within its context (be it literary/textual, social, historical, cultural, or so on) that provides it with its significance, as well as a reception-history interacting with how others have described each *comparandum* and its significance. The second moment is comparison proper after the analyst has described two or more *comparanda*, wherein the analyst relates what he/she regards as significant using a given analytic framework/“third term.” The third moment is redescription, wherein the analyst combines the work from these moments in redescribing *comparanda* in relation to each other. The fourth moment is the rectification of the academic

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<sup>24</sup> Stausberg, “Comparison,” 29.

<sup>25</sup> Also note Stausberg’s helpful checklist for comparative work in “Comparison,” 31.

<sup>26</sup> Jonathan Z. Smith, “The ‘End’ of Comparison: Redescription and Rectification,” in *A Magic Still Dwells: Comparative Religion in the Postmodern Age*, ed. Kimberley C. Patton and Benjamin C. Ray (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 239.

categories used for comparison, whether by offering a new framework or otherwise correcting an established framework.

Barclay similarly identifies three movements in comparison: selection, generalization/abstraction, and redescription.<sup>27</sup> The first movement is assumed in Smith's first moment and it is an obvious first step, as all comparison is selective, but it is important to emphasize at this step the need to establish the cogency of the selection. As Mitchell states, "It is up to the modern researcher to justify a comparison s/he wishes to make, explain the terms of that comparison (this includes the third term, but also the body of questions being asked and the assumptions on which the comparison proceeds) and argue for why his/her interpretation of either *comparandum* is compelling or is of analytical benefit."<sup>28</sup> The second movement is another way of stating Smith's second moment. The third movement is a more straightforward restatement of Smith's third moment.

With these basic steps outlined, it is also important to know what kind of comparison one is pursuing. Bruce Lincoln suggests favoring "weak comparisons" as opposed to "strong comparisons." The latter are wide-ranging comparisons that tend to make strong claims about universality/genealogy. The former are "modest in scope, but intensive in scrutiny, treating a small number of examples in depth and detail, setting each in its full and proper context," which thus produce conclusions that are, "more probative, reliable, and surprising."<sup>29</sup>

In this same vein, one notion that has regularly appeared in comparative literature of the last few decades as illustrating best practices is the notion of "thick description." Clifford Geertz, who borrowed the term from Gilbert Ryle, first popularized this notion in the realm of

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<sup>27</sup> Barclay, "Method," 10–16.

<sup>28</sup> Mitchell, "Comparing," 110.

<sup>29</sup> Bruce Lincoln, *Apples and Oranges: Explorations in, on, and with Comparison* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018), 11. Cf. Hughes, *Comparison*, 79.

ethnography.<sup>30</sup> According to Geertz, while a “thin description” consists of simply describing a thing (in the case of his analysis, behavior), a “thick description” of the same places the thing in, “a stratified hierarchy of meaningful structures in terms of which ... [it is] produced, perceived, and interpreted,” thereby making the thing meaningful to its target audience.<sup>31</sup> Such a description also functions as redescription, since the deeper understanding it produces of a thing enables the analyst to translate it into an analytic framework used for comparison with something from another context:

A repertoire of very general, made-in-the-academy concepts and systems of concepts—“integration,” “rationalization,” “symbol,” “ideology,” “ethos,” “revolution,” “identity,” “metaphor,” “structure,” “ritual,” “world view,” “actor,” “function,” “sacred,” and, of course, “culture” itself—is woven into the body of thick-description ethnography in the hope of rendering mere occurrences scientifically eloquent. The aim is to draw large conclusions from small, but very densely textured facts; to support broad assertions about the role of culture in the construction of collective life by engaging them exactly with complex specifics.<sup>32</sup>

Therefore, the project of thick description also needs to interact with the history of interpretation of the same data.<sup>33</sup> Comparativists thus see thick description as a thoroughly contextual remedy to the problem observed in many earlier comparisons of simply extracting data from their contexts in order to place them in a context of the scholar’s own choosing.

The stress on thick description raises an additional consideration of the use of “emic” (from inside a system) and “etic” (from outside a system) categories in the comparative process. This terminological distinction between emic and etic was coined by Kenneth L. Pike in his *Language in Relation to a Unified Theory of the Structure of Human Behavior* (originally

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<sup>30</sup> Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic, 1973), 3–30.

<sup>31</sup> Geertz, *Interpretation*, 7.

<sup>32</sup> Geertz, *Interpretation*, 28.

<sup>33</sup> Hughes, *Comparison*, 81.

published in 1954), deriving from the linguistic concepts of *phonemic* and *phonetic*.<sup>34</sup> Etic classifications are available apart from the analysis of a specific subject, but emic classifications emerge from the analysis of that subject.<sup>35</sup> The etic perspective presents a perspective external to the system in question and uses criteria for analysis determined for relevance outside the system, but the emic perspective presents a perspective internal to the system in question and uses criteria for analysis determined for relevance from within the system for the purpose of functioning within that system.<sup>36</sup> Etic perspectives tend to describe similarity and difference according to external criteria, but emic perspectives tend to describe similarity and difference by reference to responses from actors within the system.<sup>37</sup> To give an example, “to an external observer the physical act of swatting a fly does not appear much different in India or in the Western world. Yet, for the devout Hindu it would have profound religious implications, whereas for the Westerner it is an action to get rid of a nuisance and can even be viewed as a hygienic necessity.”<sup>38</sup> Ideally, etic perspectives should provide a means of entry into the system being analyzed, which are then refined by encounter with the emic.<sup>39</sup> This last point makes especially clear that Pike sought not for preference of one over the other, but for each to complement the other.

If one of the tasks of good comparison involves properly contextualizing what is being compared, surely the emic perspective is crucial. Otherwise, particularly in religious studies and

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<sup>34</sup> Kenneth L. Pike, *Language in Relation to a Unified Theory of the Structure of Human Behavior*, 2nd ed. (The Hague; Paris: Mouton, 1967), 37. “Phonemic” concerns the sounds (or signs in the case of sign languages) that distinguish one word from another within a particular language. “Phonetic” concerns the sounds (or signs) that humans use and perceive in language in general.

<sup>35</sup> Pike, *Language*, 37–38.

<sup>36</sup> Pike, *Language*, 38.

<sup>37</sup> Pike, *Language*, 38.

<sup>38</sup> Till Mostowlansky and Andrea Rota, “A Matter of Perspective? Disentangling the Emic-Etic Debate in the Scientific Study of Religion\,” *MTSR* 28 (2016): 323.

<sup>39</sup> Pike, *Language*, 38–39.



related fields like my own, one can fall into the all-too-common trap of muddling the distinction between “attempting to *understand* a given religion on the terms of those who believe and practice it, and attempting to *explain* that religion (or religion in general) in terms that reduce it entirely to something else.”<sup>40</sup> On this point, even Geertz’s vaunted project of thick description does not go far enough, as Brad S. Gregory has noted in his critique of Geertz’s naturalistic reduction of religion to a “system of symbols” that provide an “aura of factuality.”<sup>41</sup> To contextualize in the context of religion is to ask as a programmatic question: “What did/does it mean to them?”<sup>42</sup>

Of course, it is possible to overstress the emic perspective, indeed, so far to the point that one overstates the importance of the insider/outsider distinction beyond the basic fact that there may be an unequal distribution of knowledge between the two.<sup>43</sup> To insist on only emic categories is to imply that two worldviews are incommensurable and untranslatable, despite appearances to the contrary. But as Jeppe Sinding Jensen notes:

Shared representations and discourses are social facts and they are only social facts because of their fundamentally linguistic nature. There is a base semantic level, a linguistic “substratum,” which permits the semantic comparison of them.... Holistic philosophical and linguistic reflections tell us that the multiple semantics of different “frameworks” rest upon a largely shared knowledge about the world and that although there may be marked interpretive differences among frameworks, discourses and meta-languages such differences do not entail that they are epistemically incommensurable or mutually untranslatable.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Brad S. Gregory, “The Other Confessional History: On Secular Bias in the Study of Religion,” *HistTh* 45.4 (December 2006): 134 (emphases original).

<sup>41</sup> Gregory, “Confessional History,” 142–45. His critique also applies to Peter Berger’s approach to religion in *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1967).

<sup>42</sup> Gregory, “Confessional History,” 146–48.

<sup>43</sup> Jensen, “Revisiting,” 29–47.

<sup>44</sup> Jensen, “Revisiting,” 40.

Likewise, as Kevin Schilbrack is keen to remind us, an etic term can refer to a reality that is present in a context, even when the terminology the analyst uses to refer to it is not present.<sup>45</sup>

A truly deep comparative analysis must rigorously pursue the emic perspective in order to place ideas in their proper contexts (including linguistic, literary, historical/cultural, theological/philosophical, religious, and overall worldview), wherein they have their meaning in the world behind the text and the world of the text. However, comparative analysis must also rely for its organization and methodology on etic categories of thought that translate the emic ones for the world in front of the text. For example, none of the texts I examine here were originally written in English or used the terminology of “resurrection,” “resurrect,” or its Latin precursors, such as *resurrectio* or *resurgo*. Rather, they use terminology (e.g., רָצַח, ἐγείρω, and قَامَ) that translators have recognized as equivalents of the same across Hebrew, Greek, and Arabic.

My particular comparative approach uses a form of worldview analysis that is textually focused. The next section concerns the former aspect and focuses on two major tasks in describing this kind of analysis. First, I must define the notion of “worldview” that I utilize here. Second, I present my model for analyzing worldview component functions.

## **Worldview Analysis**

### Defining “Worldview”

The concept of “worldview” has an extensive history that has drawn interest from a variety of fields of research.<sup>46</sup> The origin of this precise term is the German term *Weltanschauung* coined

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<sup>45</sup> Kevin Schilbrack, “A Realist Social Ontology of Religion,” *Religion* 47 (2017): 161–78.

<sup>46</sup> It is beyond my scope to outline the history here, but for such history and for more definitions, I direct the reader to Michael Kearney, “World View Theory and Study,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 4 (1975): 247–70;

by Immanuel Kant, who used it only once in his *Critique of Judgment* (1790). In this context, Kant used it simply refer to the “sense perception of the world” (*Welt + Anschauung*), meaning that it had a similar sense to other preexisting German compounds, such as *Weltbeschauung* (world examination or inspection), *Weltbetrachtung* (world consideration or contemplation) and *Weltansicht* (world view or opinion).<sup>47</sup> Such a concept was one way of expressing his epistemological ideas of distinguishing between noumena and phenomena, the thing in itself and a person’s perception of the thing. But after Kant’s initial solitary use of *Weltanschauung*, it quickly developed into a much more significant notion across a variety of contexts of describing a conception of the universe from a knower’s perspective.

By “defining” the concept of “worldview,” I aim to describe its characteristic elements, circumscribe the scope of my study, and, most simply, to clarify what I mean for those who will interact with this work.<sup>48</sup> The type of definition I offer is of a “family resemblance” type, as I am not attempting to identify the necessary and sufficient characteristics of a worldview, but possible traits to look for in the descriptive and classifying work of worldview analysis. The long list of previous definitions for “worldview” includes the following:

- Diederik Aerts, et al.: “a symbolic system of representation that allows us to integrate everything we know about the world and ourselves into a global picture, one that illuminates reality as it is presented to us within a certain culture.”<sup>49</sup>

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David K. Naugle, *Worldview: The History of a Concept* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002); James W. Sire, *Naming the Elephant: Worldview as a Concept*, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 23–69, 111–25.

<sup>47</sup> Naugle, *Worldview*, 59.

<sup>48</sup> On many possible functions of the action of “definition,” see André Droogers, “Defining Religion: A Social Science Approach,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the Sociology of Religion*, ed. Peter B. Clarke (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 270–71.

<sup>49</sup> Diederik Aerts, et al., *World Views: From Fragmentation to Integration* (Brussels: VUB Press, 1994), 18. Cf. Berger, *Sacred Canopy*, 19: “the socially constructed world is, above all, an ordering of experience. A meaningful order, or nomos, is imposed upon the discrete experiences and meanings of individuals.”

- Clifford Geertz: “an attempt (of an implicit and directly felt rather than explicit and consciously thought-about sort) to conserve the fund of general meanings in terms of which each individual interprets his experience and organizes his conduct.”<sup>50</sup>
- Paul Hiebert: “the ‘fundamental cognitive, affective, and evaluative presuppositions a group of people make about the nature of things, and which they use to order their lives.’ Worldviews are what people in a community take as given realities, the maps they have of reality that they use for living.”<sup>51</sup> Or, later in the same source: “It encompasses people’s images or maps of the reality of all things that they use for living their lives. It is the cosmos thought to be true, desirable and moral by a community of people.”<sup>52</sup>
- Kathryn A. Johnson, Eric D. Hill, and Adam B. Cohen: “Sometimes referred to in anthropology as ‘ordered universes’ (Klass, 1995), worldviews are the socially constructed realities which humans use to frame perception and experience (Redfield, 1952). A worldview involves how an individual knows and thinks about what is in the world, and worldviews influence how he or she relates to the persons and things in the environment.”<sup>53</sup>
- Michael Kearney: “The world view of a people is their way of looking at reality. It consists of basic assumptions and images that provide a more or less coherent, though not necessarily accurate, way of thinking about the world. A world view comprises images of

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<sup>50</sup> Geertz, *Interpretation*, 127. Here, he is describing how religion functions as a worldview prior to his exposition on how religion also functions as an ethos (127–41). Other analyses which describe religions as sign systems, incorporating worldview and ethos, include Hans-Josef Klauck, *The Religious Context of Early Christianity: A Guide to Graeco-Roman Religions*, trans. Brian McNeil (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003), 7–9; Gerd Theissen, *A Theory of Primitive Christian Religion*, trans. John Bowden (London: SCM, 1999), 2–12.

<sup>51</sup> Paul G. Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews: An Anthropological Understanding of How People Change* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 15. Cf. Sartini Sartini and Heddy Shri Ahimsa-Putra, “Preliminary Study on Worldviews,” *Humaniora* 29 (2017): 265–66.

<sup>52</sup> Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 25–26.

<sup>53</sup> Kathryn A. Johnson, Eric D. Hill, and Adam B. Cohen, “Integrating the Study of Culture and Religion: Toward a Psychology of Worldview,” *Social & Personality Psychology Compass* 5 (2011): 138.

Self and of all that is recognized as not-Self, plus ideas about relationships between them, as well as other ideas we will discuss.”<sup>54</sup> Or, later in the same source, “the collection of basic assumptions that an individual or a society has about reality.”<sup>55</sup>

- Mark E. Koltko-Rivera: “sets of beliefs and assumptions that describe reality. A given worldview encompasses assumptions about a heterogeneous variety of topics, including human nature, the meaning and nature of life, and the composition of the universe itself, to name but a few issues.”<sup>56</sup>
- David K. Naugle: “a semiotic system of narrative signs that creates the definitive symbolic universe which is responsible in the main for the shape of a variety of life-determining, human practices. It creates the channels in which the waters of reason flow. It establishes the horizon of an interpreter’s point of view by which texts of all types are understood. It is that mental medium by which the world is known.”<sup>57</sup>
- James H. Olthuis: “the integrative and interpretative framework by which order and disorder are judged; it is the standard by which reality is managed and pursued; it is the set of hinges on which all our everyday thinking and doing turns.”<sup>58</sup> Or, later in the same source, “simultaneously a vision ‘of’ life and the world and a vision ‘for’ life and the world.”<sup>59</sup>
- James W. Sire: “a commitment, a fundamental orientation of the heart, that can be expressed as a story or in a set of presuppositions (assumptions which may be true,

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<sup>54</sup> Michael Kearney, *World View* (Novato, CA: Chandler & Sharp, 1984), 41.

<sup>55</sup> Kearney, *World View*, 42.

<sup>56</sup> Mark E. Koltko-Rivera, “A Psychology of Worldviews,” *Review of General Psychology* 8 (2004): 3.

<sup>57</sup> Naugle, *Worldview*, 330.

<sup>58</sup> James H. Olthuis, “On Worldviews,” in *Stained Glass: Worldviews and Social Science*, ed. Paul Marshall, Sander Griffioen, and Richard Mouw (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1989), 29.

<sup>59</sup> Olthuis, “Worldviews,” 29.

partially true or entirely false) that we hold (consciously or subconsciously, consistently or inconsistently) about the basic constitution of reality, and that provides the foundation on which we live and move and have our being.”<sup>60</sup>

- Brian J. Walsh and J. Richard Middleton: “A world view is never merely a vision *of* life. It is always a vision *for* life as well.... A world view, then, provides a model *of the world* which guides its adherents *in the world*. It stipulates how the world ought to be, and it thus advises how its adherents ought to conduct themselves in the world.”<sup>61</sup> Or, later in the same source, “world views are founded on ultimate faith commitments.”<sup>62</sup>
- N. T. Wright: “Worldviews have to do with the presuppositional, pre-cognitive stage of a culture or society. Wherever we find the ultimate concerns of human beings, we find worldviews.”<sup>63</sup>

Apart from the use of the basic term, no singular thread connects all these definitions. Many emphasize assumptions or presuppositions. Many use language implying a “frame” or “framework.” Many portray the concept as a symbolic reality. Some explicitly link it to action. Finally, as befits the language of “worldview,” many use visual metaphors for their definitions.

Both these similarities and differences in worldview definitions raise concerns about the term “worldview” itself. David K. Naugle rightly observes, “There is simply no impartial ground upon which to stand when attempting to develop, promote, or criticize a thesis about this concept. Definitions, meanings, and models about ‘worldview’ are definitely *not* the result of presuppositionless thinking, but reflect the perspectives and interests of their originators.”<sup>64</sup> As

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<sup>60</sup> James W. Sire, *The Universe Next Door: A Basic Worldview Catalog*, 5th ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2009), 20. For explication, see Sire, *Naming*, 142–53.

<sup>61</sup> Brian J. Walsh and J. Richard Middleton, *The Transforming Vision: Shaping a Christian World View* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1984), 31–32 (emphases original).

<sup>62</sup> Walsh and Middleton, *Transforming Vision*, 35.

<sup>63</sup> Wright, *New Testament*, 122.

<sup>64</sup> Naugle, *Worldview*, 254 (emphasis original). Cf. Sire, *Naming*, 68.

such, the term remains an essentially contested concept, much like “history” or “religion.” Furthermore, Paul Hiebert identifies three potential problems with the term and its use. First, the term tends to focus on the cognitive, but not the affective or moral dimensions of a culture. Second, the term itself prioritizes the capacity of sight over hearing, even though “sound” and its sub-categories (e.g., the spoken word) are more often considered the dominant sensory experience in a culture. Third, the term applies on both individual and communal levels, even though different dynamics are involved in the shaping of individual and communal worldviews.<sup>65</sup> Naugle also adds that in modernity, the term has often “carried the connotations of historicism, subjectivism, perspectivism, and relativism.”<sup>66</sup> Likewise, in postmodernity, “As the personal, dated constructs of myopic selves or cultures, the status of ‘worldview’ becomes even more questionable ... Worldviews slump to the status of a personal story in an age characterized by an ‘incredulity toward metanarratives.’”<sup>67</sup> For similar reasons, adherents of the religious traditions described as “worldviews” may object to the term because of its implication that these traditions simply consist of subjective perspectives.

Still, neither Hiebert nor Naugle ultimately suggest abandoning the term. Because it is widely known and there is no better term, it is better to expand the concept than to get rid of it.<sup>68</sup> Naugle even compares using the term for Christian purposes to Augustine’s strategy of employing Greco-Roman philosophy for the Church, using the “Egyptian gold” for holy purposes.<sup>69</sup> He suggests the term itself is powerfully evocative, at least when one stresses the first half of *worldview*, “It places the familiar doctrines of the faith in a new, cosmic context and

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<sup>65</sup> Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 15.

<sup>66</sup> Naugle, *Worldview*, 257.

<sup>67</sup> Naugle, *Worldview*, 257.

<sup>68</sup> Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 15.

<sup>69</sup> Naugle, *Worldview*, 258.

opens them up so that their comprehensive scope, deeper meaning, and spiritual power is unleashed. This scope, meaning, and power, of course, is resident in these biblical doctrines themselves, but the framework provided by worldview enables them to be seen more clearly in their true light.”<sup>70</sup> I would also add that the integrative ability that draws these other characteristics together is part of what makes “worldview” a compelling concept and a useful one for analyzing the larger contexts of stories, actions, values, and so on.

These definitions also raise the issue of “how far down” in thinking worldviews go. Scholars of many varieties generally agree that they are presuppositional, but can one go further and identify them with the pre-theoretical? It does not seem so. As Sire explains, “The utterly pretheoretical is that without which we cannot think at all. The presuppositional is that which, though we may be able to give reasons for, we cannot, strictly speaking, prove.”<sup>71</sup> To suggest otherwise is to suggest that people truly cannot change their thinking at the worldview level, which does not comport with extensive evidence of such transformation.<sup>72</sup> Worldviews naturally include the pre-theoretical, but they cannot be identified without remainder with it.

Thus, I should also clarify that when I refer to “worldview foundations,” I am referring to presuppositions, foundations for other beliefs, rather than to the pre-theoretical. To clarify my metaphor of “foundations,” the reader should imagine a conceptual equivalent to pile foundations, whereas the pre-theoretical would be equivalent to the bedrock the foundations rest upon. Those foundations could not function properly without the bedrock in place, but that bedrock is not what one properly refers to as a foundation.

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<sup>70</sup> Naugle, *Worldview*, 342.

<sup>71</sup> Sire, *Naming*, 98.

<sup>72</sup> Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 307–33.



Based on these considerations, I now have a basis on which to present my own definition of “worldview” for the purposes of this analysis. A worldview is *a commitment that fundamentally orients and integrates persons and communities—in terms of cognition, affection, valuation, and so on—that provides them a framework in relation to reality, which can be expressed as a narrative, a system of symbols, actions, values, presuppositions, and (in attempts to synopsise these expressions) articulated sets of beliefs*. With this conceptual definition established, it is also necessary to consider other qualities of worldviews and how they form that will be important for this analysis.

Worldviews as such are often not subject to analysis and reevaluation as they are frameworks to which people have faith commitments, meaning that they have allegiance to them as reliable frameworks. However, worldviews are not simply given or simply received; they are also formed in various ways to improve their functionality as reliable frameworks and to form individuals. People engage in active formation (including construction, maintenance, deconstruction, and reconstruction) of worldviews insofar as they seek to develop a worldview that accounts for as many aspects of experience as they can.<sup>73</sup> While technically there are as many worldview variations as there are individuals, communities can unite around commonalities in worldview and they can shape individual worldviews in such a way as to solidify communion.<sup>74</sup> After all, worldviews attain their shape from their embeddedness in a particular tradition (or group of traditions). For these reasons, Michael Kearney notes, worldview assumptions can be shaped by two types of impetuses:

The first of these is due to internal equilibrium dynamics among them. This means that some assumptions and the resultant ideas, beliefs, and actions predicated on them are

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<sup>73</sup> Aerts, et al., *World Views*, 18. On the feedback loop of worldview construction between the worldview itself and the world it aims to account for, see Kearney, *World View*, 44–45; Koltko-Rivera, “Psychology,” 38–39.

<sup>74</sup> Naugle, *Worldview*, 270–72; Olthuis, “Worldviews,” 29–33.

*logically* and *structurally* more compatible than others, and that the entire world view will “strive” toward maximum logical and structural consistency. The second and main force giving coherence and shape to a world view is the necessity of having to relate to the external environment. In other words, human social behavior, social structure, institutions, and customs are consistent with assumptions about the nature of the world.<sup>75</sup>

Of course, per the literature review above, one can extend Kearney’s notion of the external impetus to include influences and crises that lead to some form of worldview formation.

What tends to bring worldviews to the surface for examination is encounter with other worldviews, crises that can be hostile to any worldview, and/or critical examination.<sup>76</sup> Such factors lead to worldview formation, which can take the form of construction (inculcation, development, or addition), maintenance (preserving a worldview in the face of challenge), deconstruction (when some aspect of a worldview or the worldview itself is deemed no longer fit for purpose), or reconstruction (i.e., transformation). Hiebert notes that the last type of worldview formation can occur in two basic ways:

Normal change occurs when changes on the level of conscious beliefs and practices over time infiltrate and bring about change at the worldview level. Paradigm or worldview shifts take place when there is a radical reorganization in the internal configurations of the worldview itself to reduce the tensions between surface culture and the worldview. In their own turn, these paradigm shifts reshape the surface culture. The relationship is two-way: conscious beliefs reshape worldviews, and worldviews mold conscious beliefs.<sup>77</sup>

Again, formation of any of these kinds can occur at the individual or communal level. In the latter case, it will often occur through the influence of a particular teacher or group of teachers.

Finally, it is necessary here to clarify how “worldview” relates to other key terms used in worldview analysis. Like many others, I will use “worldview” and “symbolic universe” almost

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<sup>75</sup> Kearney, *World View*, 52. Cf. Theissen, *Theory*, 5.

<sup>76</sup> Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 47, 319–24.

<sup>77</sup> Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 319.

interchangeably. Both can refer to the personal or the communal, especially since the former is embedded in the latter.<sup>78</sup> If there is a distinction, it would be in the sense that the symbolic universe is the world as presented through the framework of the worldview. Furthermore, “worldview” should be distinguished from “ideology,” which refers primarily to socio-political orientation or well-established political ideas. One may argue that the latter is part of the former, but they are not identical. But in any case, my approach to worldview analysis does not fit with the common Marxist connotations of “ideology,” which Mona Kanwal Sheikh describes as a “‘distorted vision of reality’ or superstructure that conceals the true nature of things and makes people perceive things that are not in accordance with objective reality.... This usage actually makes ideology irrelevant in itself or relevant only as a rhetorical tool to enhance matters that are viewed as being ‘more real.’”<sup>79</sup> In other words, I do not adopt a hermeneutic of suspicion assuming that “worldview formation” is concealing some other activity and agenda.

#### A Wrightian Worldview Model of Component Functions

As my comparison is exegetical-theological, I need a worldview model that is helpful for text-based analysis. And since I have defined “worldview” with a scope beyond beliefs—as crucial as beliefs are to my analysis—I also need a model that can describe worldview functions beyond the realms of belief. The best fit for this purpose is Wright’s worldview model, which he established in *The New Testament and the People of God* and has since used for the entirety of the *Christian Origins and the Question of God* series. His model consists of four component

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<sup>78</sup> Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1966), 96: “The symbolic universe is conceived of as the matrix of *all* socially objectivated and subjectively real meanings; the entire historic society and the entire biography of the individual are seen as events taking place *within* this universe” (emphases original).

<sup>79</sup> Mona Kanwal Sheikh, “Worldview Analysis,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Global Studies*, ed. Mark Juergensmeyer, Saskia Sassen, and Manfred B. Steger (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 161.

functions or expressions of worldviews: stories, answers to basic questions (which he adapts from Walsh and Middleton), symbols, and praxis.<sup>80</sup> Of these four components, he regards story/narrative as the most characteristic expression of worldviews.<sup>81</sup> But in day-to-day reality, all of these aspects of worldviews are typically assumed in the form of sets of beliefs and aims.<sup>82</sup>

Wright has used his own model extensively in the interpretation and illumination of texts, thereby providing his own demonstration many times over of its usefulness and helpfulness for my purposes. Furthermore, such a model correlates well with what Neville and Wildman identify as the “sites” for testing a comparative method’s representation of ideas. The first is intrinsic (i.e., emic) representation, which corresponds to this overall paradigm of worldview analysis. The second is perspectival representation, how an idea configures perspectives, which corresponds particularly to the narrative dimension. The third is theoretical representation in terms of how it effects other ideas in symbol systems, which corresponds to the symbol dimension. The fourth is practical representation in terms of how ideas shape practice, which corresponds to the praxis dimension.<sup>83</sup> A Wrightian model thus seems to be a good base to use for my purposes, although some further explanation is required for the relevance of the parts.

### **Narrative/Story**

The first component function of worldview is narrative or story, for which I use Shaun

Gallagher’s definition:

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<sup>80</sup> Wright, *New Testament*, 122–26. He also adds a fifth question—What time is it?—in N. T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, vol. 2 of *Christian Origins and the Question of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996), 138, 467–72. For more on his model, specifically as it relates to Paul, see N. T. Wright, *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*, vol. 4 of *Christian Origins and the Question of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013), 28–36.

<sup>81</sup> Wright, *New Testament*, 123.

<sup>82</sup> Wright, *New Testament*, 125–26.

<sup>83</sup> Neville and Wildman, “Comparing,” 202–4.

narrative is an interpretive account that selectively connects events across time on the basis of their significance or meaning to oneself and/or to others [i.e., characters].... That narratives involve meaning, significance, actions, selves, and others all points to the assumed and obvious fact that narratives are by and about persons (or events that have significance for persons). One can narrate the adventures of an object or artifact only if one personifies it.<sup>84</sup>

Worldviews are stories that people inhabit, use to convey explanations and hopes, draw from to construct their identities, and in general have as a framework through which to see the world and its history around them.<sup>85</sup> Worldview formation often occurs in the context of story. These stories exist in contexts with competing stories and with crises that can be hostile to any worldview. Individuals and groups may navigate these contexts by reaffirming their traditional stories, modifying their stories in light of new crises or other worldview stories, adopting a new story with some narrative elements carried over from the old worldview, or radically rejecting the old story in favor of a new one. Naugle argues that worldviews form as stories because humans are fundamentally storytelling creatures in that, “They provide narrative answers to the fundamental questions about the realm of the divine, the nature of the cosmos, the identity of human beings, the solution to the problems of suffering and pain, and so on. Even the seemingly nonnarrative aspects of a *Weltanschauung* – its doctrinal, ethical, or ritual dimensions – can be explained by a fundamental narrative content.”<sup>86</sup> It is by no means clear that narrative or story is the most fundamental expression of a worldview—assigning such “vertical” dimensions at this level seems to be simply a result of the analyst’s own presuppositions—but the importance of narrative to humans is undeniable.

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<sup>84</sup> Shaun Gallagher, “Self and Narrative,” in *The Routledge Companion to Hermeneutics*, ed. Jeff Malpas and Hans-Helmuth Gander (Abingdon, U.K.: Routledge: 2014), 405–6. For many other definitions of narrative, see Christoph Heilig, *Paulus als Erzähler? Eine narratologische Perspektive auf die Paulusbriefe*, BZNW 237 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2020), 42–61, 81–113.

<sup>85</sup> Naugle, *Worldview*, 297–303; Wright, *New Testament*, 38–44, 126–31, 139–43.

<sup>86</sup> Naugle, *Worldview*, 302.

Indeed, narrative is foundational to human neurology and the sense of the self. Kay Young and Jeffrey L. Saver note that, “While we can be trained to think in geometrical shapes, patterns of sounds, poetry, movement, syllogisms, what predominates or fundamentally constitutes our consciousness is the understanding of self and world in story.”<sup>87</sup> The so-called “default mode network” or “default state network” of the brain—which is activated in daydreaming, thinking of others, thinking of oneself, remembering the past, and planning for the future—operates in the construction and comprehension of narrative.<sup>88</sup> Neuroscientists have devoted extensive research into how the brain functions in understanding and producing story, and the theory of embodied cognition suggests that even more features of the person are involved in such processes.<sup>89</sup> Young and Saver posit:

Narrative framing of the past allows predictions of the future; generating imaginary narratives allows the individual to safely (through internal fictions) explore the varied consequences of multitudinous response options. The potent adaptive value of narrative accounts for its primacy in organizing human understanding (as opposed to pictorial, musical, kinesthetic, syllogistic, or multiple other forms). Consciousness needs a narrative structure to create a sense of self based on the features of storytelling, like coherence, consequence, consecution.<sup>90</sup>

One can also see negative demonstration of this idea in neurological and psychological disorders manifesting in some form of narrative impairment.<sup>91</sup>

Gallagher argues that one of the foundations of hermeneutics is the storied self: “The self interprets itself (and gets interpreted by others) in narrative form; the meaning of a narrative or

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<sup>87</sup> Kay Young and Jeffrey L. Saver, “The Neurology of Narrative,” *SubStance* 30.94/95 (2001): 73.

<sup>88</sup> Lewis Mehl-Madrona and Barbara Mainguy, *Remapping Your Mind: The Neuroscience of Self-Transformation Through Story* (Rochester, VT; Toronto: Bear & Company, 2015), 2, 65–67.

<sup>89</sup> Koltko-Rivera, “Psychology,” 38–40; Mehl-Madrona and Mainguy, *Remapping*, 235–56; Tamer M. Soliman, Kathryn A. Johnson, and Hyunjin Song, “It’s Not ‘All in Your Head’: Understanding Religion from an Embodied Cognition Perspective,” *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 10 (2015): 852–64.

<sup>90</sup> Young and Saver, “Neurology,” 78–79.

<sup>91</sup> Young and Saver, “Neurology,” 76–78.

the narration of a meaningful event are subject to interpretation; actions may interpret narrative (and not only in theatrical performance), and are interpreted in narrative; and narrative often contributes to the interpretation of others, and vice versa.”<sup>92</sup> Narrative also enables the narrator to relate himself/herself to their sense of time by means of a narrative’s internal temporality—the order of events in the “plot” of the narrative—and external temporality—the narrator’s temporal relation to the events in question.<sup>93</sup> Such a connection of events to the narrator allows the person to identify their relation to these events in terms of the events’ meaning or significance (which may or may not include the causality of events).<sup>94</sup> Likewise, narrative enables the narrator to establish relations to others who function as characters in the narrative.

Beyond the self, narrative is also a key aspect of community formation in how it inherently objectivizes. Worldview narratives, in particular, are crucial for the formation of a symbolic universe to which they orient people, through which they guide people, and in which they enable people to develop identity and ethics. These narratives have what Naugle calls, “a kind of finality as the ultimate interpretation of reality,” which in turn serve powerfully to integrate the community both as a community and in relation to the world.<sup>95</sup>

## Symbols

Symbols, what Geertz describes as, “any object, act, event, quality, or relation which serves as a vehicle for a conception,”<sup>96</sup> are that which communicate by representing and signifying, usually in visual or auditory form (or mental impressions of the same). They represent and signify by

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<sup>92</sup> Gallagher, “Self,” 404. Cf. Mehl-Madrona, *Remapping*, 67–72.

<sup>93</sup> Gallagher, “Self,” 404. Cf. Berger and Luckmann, *Social Construction*, 103.

<sup>94</sup> Gallagher, “Self,” 405; Heilig, *Paulus als Erzähler?*, 108.

<sup>95</sup> Naugle, *Worldview*, 303. Cf. Sheikh, “Worldview Analysis,” 167.

<sup>96</sup> Geertz, *Interpretation*, 91.

their qualities of unification/synthesis (bringing together many potential meanings or layers of meaning) and condensation—of both meaning and responses to the same—into a singular symbol. Some symbols, namely icons, may further draw their representative capacity from their resemblance to what they signify. Other symbols, especially metonyms and synecdoches, draw their representative capacity from their association or accompaniment with something else signified (e.g., smoke signifying fire). Specific symbols may come to be indelibly associated with particular communities, movements, or ideas, but the chief set of symbols that every worldview requires for communication is the set of symbols known as “language.”<sup>97</sup> Worldview symbols work much like maps, using symbols to represent reality and orient the map-reader to it in a more manageable fashion than looking at the world from the ground-level.

As with narratives, the construction and comprehension of symbols are endemic to humans, how they think, and how they act. Naugle observes, “A defining trait of persons as persons who possess *logos* is the ability to use one thing to stand for another thing (*aliquid stans pro aliquo*), to section off one part of reality and employ it to refer to, mean, or stand for another part of reality.”<sup>98</sup> As indicated above, this trait is also an intrinsic function of language, the primary means by which people communicate worldviews.

## **Praxis**

This worldview component, in its association with action and the larger context of that action could be summarized as “a way-of-being-and-doing-in-the-world.” Praxis refers to action, habits, characteristics/virtues associated with them, and, at least implicitly, the “vision for life”

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<sup>97</sup> Cf. Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 91.

<sup>98</sup> Naugle, *Worldview*, 292.



constituted in a sense of good and evil, of right and wrong. Yet, the nature of the relationship between worldview and praxis, especially in terms of action, is probably the most controversial of all the components. Is action simply the outcome of belief or presupposition? Or can actions function more as a first-order expression of worldview on par with the other components?

In the context of cultural analysis, Kearney states the typical assumption of the relationship, at least in the West, as, “Our link from these abstractions to behavior is the theoretical bias that specific world views result in certain patterns of action and not others. Therefore, knowledge of a people’s world view should explain aspects of their cultural behavior.”<sup>99</sup> Similarly, Koltko-Rivera affirmatively answers the question of whether or not worldviews causally shape cognition, affect, and behavior by appealing to four lines of evidence: “cultural differences in cognition, ethnocultural differences in values, the explicitly labeled worldview research literature, and research on the differential effects of religious belief and experience.”<sup>100</sup> However, while these lines of evidence show that worldviews make a difference for conduct, they do not necessarily indicate that the action is a *result* or an *effect* of the worldview; that posited relationship stems from assumption.

Martin Riesebrodt, although referring more specifically to religion than to worldviews per se, asserts that the scholars who often posit such a relationship are essentially projecting their own intellectual fascination with a given body of knowledge or belief, “At the beginning of the analysis stands a systematized body of knowledge that is as a rule reserved for intellectuals. The practitioners—laypersons and clergy—are unfamiliar with this knowledge, at least in its complexity, systematicity, and entirety.”<sup>101</sup> Indeed, Christian Smith argues that practices do not

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<sup>99</sup> Kearney, *World View*, 53.

<sup>100</sup> Koltko-Rivera, “Psychology,” 23.

<sup>101</sup> Riesebrodt, *Promise*, 80. Cf. Christian Smith, *Religion: What It Is, How It Works, and Why It Matters* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017), 31–32

derive their meaning(s) simply from what individual actors assign to them in light of consciously held beliefs. Practices may, even more typically, be functions of the influence of inculcation, institutionalized voices, traditions, scriptures, and so on.<sup>102</sup> Furthermore, practices are themselves formational, “People need to start engaging in the prescribed practices and, it is hoped, as a result they should over time find themselves transformed in spirit and mind.... The sheer *doing* of them helps to bring into being that which they also embody.”<sup>103</sup> As such, the relationship between actions/practices (as well as the larger praxis of which they are a part) and the larger worldview does not appear to be a one-way cause-and-effect chain.

A further complication emerges in the form of what all the worldviews in question refer to as “sin.” People regularly violate—intentionally or unintentionally—their deeply held sense of right and wrong. People may understand what they should value, but some other factor besides their “true worldview” causes them to place more immediate value on something else. That observation does not mean that actions cannot reveal the true worldview that someone inhabits as opposed to the beliefs the person proclaims—they certainly can—but it does highlight that the relationship is not always clear. If both beliefs and practices are formational, it only makes sense that people would imperfectly embody beliefs, actions, and their overarching worldviews.

As such, Sheikh suggests reframing this relationship in light of the consideration of what makes for a strong relationship between worldview and actions: “When actors have a combination of well-defined principled [ethical] beliefs, in which the pathway to achieve their objectives is powerfully defined [such as with simplicity or less ambiguity], they are in possession of a strong narrative.”<sup>104</sup> Instead of a relationship of causality, she suggests

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<sup>102</sup> Smith, *Religion*, 33.

<sup>103</sup> Smith, *Religion*, 45 (emphasis original).

<sup>104</sup> Sheikh, “Worldview Analysis,” 164.

conceiving of it as, “a looser relationship in which X is related to Y, either by way of enabling certain kinds of behavior or by justifying behavior. In the second case, worldviews are seen as playing a role in guiding human behavior, leading it onto certain action tracks while obscuring other tracks without asserting direct causality.”<sup>105</sup> In light of these factors, it is justifiable to assert praxis as a distinct worldview component function on par with the others, rather than one that is hierarchically lower.

### **Answers to Basic Worldview Questions**

Most worldview models are question-oriented and topic-oriented. However, each model differs in what questions they assign to this component. As noted above, Wright paraphrases the questions of his model from Walsh and Middleton and he later added a fifth question: 1) Who are we? 2) Where are we? 3) What is wrong? 4) What is the solution? 5) What time is it?<sup>106</sup> Other models state their questions or topics (with implicit questions) differently but overlap at least in addressing matters of metaphysics or ontology, epistemology, and ethics.<sup>107</sup> These questions and many others that these analyses do not articulate are important means of interrogating and investigating worldviews, but the number and variety must remain limited for the sake of analysis, and the subject matter here must be decisive for such consideration. Given how Wright has demonstrated the usefulness of his questions in relation to two of the bodies of text analyzed here, it is appropriate to retain his five questions. As other worldview components in this model address matters of metaphysics and ethics, but since none address epistemology on

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<sup>105</sup> Sheikh, “Worldview Analysis,” 164.

<sup>106</sup> Wright, *Jesus*, 138. The “we” in each case primarily refers to the community that adheres to and is formed by the worldview in question.

<sup>107</sup> E.g., André Droogers, “The World of Worldviews,” in *Methods for the Study of Religious Change: From Religious Studies to Worldview Studies*, ed. André Droogers and Anton van Harskamp (Sheffield; Bristol, CT: Equinox, 2014), 23–24; Koltko-Rivera, “Psychology,” 29–36; Walsh and Middleton, *Transforming Vision*, 35.

anything more than an implicit basis, it is prudent to add a sixth question: 6) How can we know these things?

The mundane expression of worldviews in the form of beliefs relates especially to this component. Beliefs may synopsisize stories or provide concluding statements to them. Beliefs may restate a symbol's meaning(s) in more prosaic form. And beliefs may explain, enable, or justify praxis. But statements of belief more directly take the form of answers to implicit or explicit questions.

All of these components thus expand the vision of what it can mean for these scriptures to be involved in the task of worldview formation, including by supplying the material for worldview foundations for other beliefs, such as resurrection belief. Worldview formation involves the articulation of narrative, including by identifying significant events and characters, describing their meaningful relationships to the narrator and the audience, and supplying a sense of identity by specifying roles and relationships in the story. Another task of worldview formation is to supply people with symbols that represent the world to which they relate and orient them to the same. Worldview formation also consists in the formation of praxis, including of practice, habits, virtues/character traits, and a sense of good and evil, of right and wrong. Finally, worldview formation includes posing questions and answering them, especially basic questions that generally confront worldviews. The formation of beliefs that comes with worldview formation may be part of any of these components, but beliefs most characteristically emerge as tasks associated with the last component. Worldview foundations may be laid early in this multi-faceted process of any type of formation and further reinforced through subsequent formational work pertaining to any of these component functions.

When this analysis considers how the texts engage in worldview formation in relation to resurrection belief—and how they compare to one another in how they do so—these are the concerns it seeks to address. One must understand that these writings, as works of worldview formation, in some way rely upon previous scriptures, traditions, proclamation, teaching, storytelling, and probably even other forms of engagement in corporate worship and communal life, and so they form a crucial part of a larger task of formation. And as this analysis is ultimately textually based, I must outline what my textual comparison involves.

### **Textual Comparison**

Texts as linguistic artifacts are important windows for worldviews. Exegesis of texts is thus a crucial method for investigating worldviews. Of course, I am not only engaging in exegesis here, but also in exegetical comparison. Because I am interacting with texts from different religious contexts, it is helpful to draw on the insights of another form of textual comparison across religious boundaries: scriptural reasoning.

My project is not itself scriptural reasoning, as the latter involves live group discussion from faithful and committed representatives of different religious traditions reading their own and one another's scriptures.<sup>108</sup> As the individuals are firmly rooted in their own religious traditions, they speak and interact with one another as members of communities that have had their worldviews formed by the texts in discussion. Betül Avcı describes the aspects of the process well:

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<sup>108</sup> Nicholas Adams, "Making Deep Reasonings Public," in *The Promise of Scriptural Reasoning*, ed. David F. Ford and C. C. Pecknold (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006), 41–45; Mike Higton, "Scriptural Reasoning and the Discipline of Christian Doctrine," *Modern Theology* 29.4 (October 2013): 131–32; Darren Sarisky, "Religious Commitment in Scriptural Reasoning: A Critical Engagement with Gavin D'Costa's 'Catholics Reading the Scripture of Other Religions,'" *Modern Theology* 36 (2020): 318–19.

during an SR session, a Muslim individual who has been intellectually molded by modern academy will be engaged with:

- (1) Her own scripture, the Qur'an;
- (2) Jewish and Christian scriptures;
- (3) Jews and Christians who read the Qur'an;
- (4) Jews and Christians reading their own scriptures;
- (5) Her own co-religionists in such a setting.<sup>109</sup>

By such means, participants in scriptural reasoning can articulate their own worldviews in their own terms, and they learn how to translate their categories into other comparable categories.

This discussion format also enables participants to learn about the worldviews of others by learning the languages of each other's traditions, both in terms of the ancient languages of the scriptures and commentaries, and in terms of, "patterns of usages, shapes of thinking, ways of describing and judging."<sup>110</sup> Finally, it encourages dialogue at a deep level by making what Nicholas Adams calls "deep reasonings" public:

By deep reasonings I mean histories of interpretation of scripture and histories of their application to particular problems in particular times and places. Deep reasonings are not merely the grammars and vocabularies of a tradition, but the relatively settled patterns of their use transmitted from generation to generation. Scriptural reasoning models a practice of making deep reasonings public, by offering a forum, in which mutual learning of languages takes place, unpredictably, among friends, to which an open invitation is extended to those who are interested to participate.<sup>111</sup>

In the terms of my analysis, deep reasonings are crucial means of worldview formation by means of reading and shaping the reading of the texts.

The ethos of scriptural reasoning is also notable in how its goals are oriented towards understanding the texts, the traditions they have shaped, and the other in their otherness, rather

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<sup>109</sup> Betül Avci, "Comparative Theology and Scriptural Reasoning: A Muslim's Approach to Interreligious Learning," *Religions* 9.10 (October 2018): 4.

<sup>110</sup> Adams, "Deep Reasonings," 49.

<sup>111</sup> Adams, "Deep Reasonings," 54.

than seeking consensus or agreement.<sup>112</sup> Participants of scriptural reasoning often describe sessions using the imagery of “house” and “tent.” While each individual has a “house” signifying their own religious tradition, the scriptural reasoning sessions represents a “tent,” a temporary arrangement in which the individual encounters another tradition and is treated in that context as a guest.<sup>113</sup> However, the “hosts” of the respective scriptures and traditions are open to challenge from the other participants, in that they, “are to be questioned and listened to attentively as the *court of first (but not last) appeal.*”<sup>114</sup>

Since this practice has mostly involved Jews, Christians, and Muslims, or some portion thereof, it is thus a helpful analogue and precedent for my own purposes. I cannot engage in group discussion by myself, but I can engage the deep reasonings of these different traditions through exegesis of their scriptures and interaction with readers who are committed to other worldviews. I participate in this process as a committed Christian who is able to articulate more about the deep reasonings of my own traditions in relation to my scriptures than about either Judaism or Islam in relation to their scriptures.

Furthermore, as is consistent with my first assumption, my goal in comparison is similar to the ethos of scriptural reasoning in that I aim to understand the texts and the worldviews they shape on their own terms, rather than simply seeking the common ground between them. And as in scriptural reasoning, my approach does not privilege the “insider’s” voice over all others so as to give any “insider” the place of hermeneutical finality about their own texts. But I also do not assign my own—or my own tradition’s—engagement with 1 Cor 15 any sort of hermeneutical

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<sup>112</sup> David F. Ford, “An Interfaith Wisdom: Scriptural Reasoning between Jews, Christians and Muslims,” in *The Promise of Scriptural Reasoning*, ed. David F. Ford and C. C. Pecknold (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006), 5–6; Marianne Moyaert, “Ricoeur, Interreligious Literacy, and Scriptural Reasoning,” *Studies in Interreligious Dialogue* 27.2 (2017): 18–24; Sarisky, “Religious Commitment,” 319.

<sup>113</sup> Avci, “Scriptural Reasoning,” 5.

<sup>114</sup> Ford, “Interfaith Wisdom,” 5 (emphasis original).

finality. It is as vulnerable to challenge from both Christians and non-Christians as my work on the other texts. Finally, in my own comparative method I hope I have found a way for diverse voices to be heard in their diversity, while also acknowledging the commonalities that enable these diverse voices to communicate on the subject of resurrection belief.

### **Procedure**

My procedure henceforth involves the following steps. First, I explain my selection of the representative from each scripture. Second, I supply translations of each text. Third, I examine each text's context—namely, the book context—to see what contextual factors may illuminate the foundations and functions of resurrection belief in the text.<sup>115</sup> Fourth, I exegete each text with particular attention to identifying the worldview foundations the texts implicitly or explicitly identify as bases for resurrection belief. In this same step, I explore the possible illumination other relevant texts may provide, particularly where an idea may be assumed in the case study text but stated more explicitly in another. Fifth, I provide a comparative synthesis in the penultimate chapter appealing to both worldview foundations and component functions, where I illustrate by juxtaposition the deep similarities and differences of each form of resurrection belief based on the identified worldview foundations and function. In this same chapter I will also demonstrate most directly my argument concerning the thoroughgoing, worldview-shaping significance of the Christomorphic character of Christian resurrection belief represented in the NT, even where it otherwise shares similarities with resurrection presented in the Tanakh and Qur'an.

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<sup>115</sup> I realize that this step makes the veritable “catchment area” of context for Q Al-Qiyamah 75 much larger than for Daniel or 1 Corinthians.



### CHAPTER 3

#### THE CANONICAL CRESCENDO: RESURRECTION BELIEF IN DAN 12

Over the remaining chapters, I aim to demonstrate both sides of my thesis. One, more generally, the functions of resurrection belief in the symbolic universes these scriptures help construct are consequences of the worldview foundations the authors base resurrection belief upon. Two, concerning my specific NT focus, Christian resurrection belief as presented in the NT is of such a Christomorphic character that, even where its foundations and functions have elements in common with the Tanakh and Qur'an, every element is reformulated around the resurrection of Jesus. The first point will be demonstrated through the engagement of each text in turn by identifying the worldview foundations in the course of exegesis, showing how they function in the text, and demonstrating how resurrection belief thus functions in the worldview context. The second point becomes clearest in the fourth and sixth chapters as a result of juxtaposing a pre-Christian text declaring resurrection and a post-Christian resurrection text declaring resurrection to the middle term of a Christian text formed around the resurrection of Jesus Christ. This chapter begins that juxtaposing comparison through an examination of Dan 12.

As scholars generally recognize, Dan 12 (specifically vv. 1–3 and 13) presents the least ambiguous declaration of belief in concrete resurrection of the dead in the Tanakh.<sup>1</sup> In fact, if one were to present the most commonly examined OT resurrection texts on a spectrum from most likely metaphorical to most likely literal—one could arrange it as follows:

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<sup>1</sup> However, even Dan 12 has had non-literal readings, but these have been few and far between in its reception history. On this aspect of its reception history, see Zvi Ron, “Allegorical Interpretation of Dan 12:2,” *JBQ* 47 (2019): 123–27.

Ezek 37:1–14 (and Hos 6:1–2) – Isa 53:7–12 – Isa 26:19 – Dan 12

As I aim to show below, Daniel draws in some measure from each of these preceding texts, as well as others, in how he portrays the hope of Israel.<sup>2</sup> In this sense, Daniel presents his vision as a “canonical crescendo,” a culmination and climax that incorporates the narrative and prophetic tradition that preceded him. Indeed, Daniel brings to fruition a well-established tradition of describing God’s salvific action in resurrection imagery (Deut 32:39; 1 Sam 2:6; Pss 16:9–11; 73:23–24; Isa 26:19; 53:7–12; Ezek 37:1–14; Hos 6:1–2),<sup>3</sup> albeit in more concrete form here.<sup>4</sup>

Daniel 12 itself would become formative for other Second Temple era descriptions of the fate of the righteous, of resurrection belief, and of the dichotomous final judgment (Wis 3:7–8; 2 Macc 7:9; 1 En. 91:10; 92:3–5; 104:1–4; 108:8–15; 4 Ezra 7:32, 97; 2 Bar. 51:1–6, 10; T.Mos. 10:8–9; Apoc. Mos. 41; LAB 19:12–13; 23:13; 26:13; Pss. Sol. 3:11–12). The language of the Second Benediction of the Amidah mixes multiple texts, such as Deut 32:39 (referring to God as the one who puts to death and makes alive), Dan 12:2 (in reference to those who sleep in the dust), and Isa 26:19 (describing the revival of the dead). Another connection to Dan 12 may be implied more indirectly through the reference to the rising of the people of God in the midst of the text’s use of Dan 7 in 4QArmaic Apocalypse/4Q246 II, 1–6.

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<sup>2</sup> On Hosea, see Bertrand C. Pryce “The Resurrection Motif in Hosea 5:8–6:6: An Exegetical Study” (PhD diss., Andrews University, 1989).

<sup>3</sup> On Ps 16, see Harriman, “For David Said,” 241–46. Indirectly, one may also point to Isa 25:8. Job 19:26 is also frequently discussed, but due to the complexity of the textual issues there that would need to be analyzed, I do not note it here. On resurrection in the Tanakh, the best surveys are Jon D. Levenson, *Resurrection and the Restoration of Israel: The Ultimate Victory of the God of Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006); Robert Martin-Achard, *From Death to Life: A Study of the Development of the Doctrine of the Resurrection in the Old Testament*, trans. John Penney Smith (Edinburgh; London: Oliver and Boyd, 1960); Mamy Raharimanantsoa, *Mort et Espérance selon la Bible Hébraïque*, ConBOT 53 (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 2006).

<sup>4</sup> Likewise, Antonio Bonora describes Dan 12 as an actualization of Ezek 37 and Isa 26 (“Il linguaggio di risurrezione in Dan 12:1–3,” *RivB* 30 (1982): 116–17).

For the rabbis, however, Deut 32:39, Ezek 37:1–14, and even Hos 6:2 were more influential than the more clearly literal Dan 12.<sup>5</sup> Still, there are a few references to it in rabbinic literature. In t. Sanh. 13.3, the school of Shammai refers to this text to describe the two basic fates at the final judgment, but they add—based on Zech 13:9 and 1 Sam 2:6—that there is a third class of those who descend to Gehenna but are brought up again to receive healing (see also b. Roš Haš. 16b.15–17a.1). It also appears among many other texts in b. Sanh. 92a as a proof of the resurrection of the dead from Scripture. Sipra 194 draws upon it for its teaching of the resurrection to judgment while linking this text to Lev 18:5 like Tg. Onq. Lev 18:5.

This brief review provides at least a small impression of how the vision of resurrection in this text has crystallized earlier worldview articulations and has shaped others as a text engaged in worldview formation. For the purposes of this analysis, what requires much more investigation are the worldview foundations for resurrection belief as manifested in the text and how resurrection functions in a worldview articulated and formed by this text. To this end, I provide a translation of the text, place the text in its context, proceed to a more detailed exegetical examination of the text itself, summarize the worldview foundations demonstrated in the text, and explore the worldview functions of resurrection belief therein.

### **Translation of the Text**

Daniel 12 (MT) <sup>1</sup> Now at that time will arise<sup>6</sup> Michael, the great prince<sup>7</sup> who watches over the children of your people. And there will be a time of distress such as has never happened since

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<sup>5</sup> E.g., m. Sanh. 10.1–3; m. Sotah 9.15; t. Sanh. 13.3, 5; t. Hul. 10.16; y. Sanh. 11.8; y. Šabb. 1.3; b. Sanh. 90b; 91b; b. Ketub. 111a–b; b. Roš Haš. 17a; Gen. Rab. 13.6; 14.5; Lev. Rab. 14.9; Sipre Deut. 306.35; 329.3.

<sup>6</sup> OG: “come forward.”

<sup>7</sup> OG: “great angel.”

any nation has existed until that time, and at that time your people will be delivered,<sup>8</sup> everyone whose name is found written in the book.<sup>2</sup> Then many of those sleeping in the earth<sup>9</sup> of dust<sup>10</sup> will awaken,<sup>11</sup> some to everlasting life, and some to reproach and everlasting abhorrence.<sup>12 3</sup> And those who have insight will shine like the brightness of the expanse and those who lead the many to righteousness<sup>13</sup> [will shine]<sup>14</sup> like the stars<sup>15</sup> forever and ever....

<sup>13</sup> But as for you, go until the end and you will enter into rest<sup>16</sup> and stand again<sup>17</sup> for your portion at the end of days.<sup>18</sup>

### The Resurrection of Dan 12 in Context

Daniel addresses an audience that has experienced conquest by foreign powers, displacement, and conflicts while striving to maintain a sense of religious identity (Dan 7:21, 24–25; 8:23–25; 9; 11:28–35). “Defectors” among the Jews further exacerbate this problem through the dissolution of communal bonds in their lack of adherence to the tradition of Torah they had received (Dan 11:30, 32, 34–35, 39). Daniel responds to this situation by giving its audience a view behind the curtain of empirical reality in order to show the full heavenly significance of

<sup>8</sup> OG: “all the people will be exalted.”

<sup>9</sup> Or “land.” Others translate this as an adjectival genitive “dusty earth.” I prefer to retain the word order and oddness of the phrase, as this oddness seems designed for drawing attention.

<sup>10</sup> Θ and Vulgate follow the word order of the MT, which the OG smooths to “breadth/surface of the earth.”

<sup>11</sup> MT: וקיצ; Θ: ἐξεγερθήσονται; OG: ἀναστήσονται; Vulgate: *evigilabunt*.

<sup>12</sup> The OG expands the description: “some to everlasting life, others to reproach, and others to scattering and everlasting shame.” Bernardus J. Alfrink, “L’idée de resurrection d’après Dan 12:1–2,” *Bib* 40 (1959): 367 argues that the OG use of διασπορά (“scattering”) here is a mistaken reading for διαφθορά, a group that decays.

<sup>13</sup> Θ: “some of the many righteous.” OG: “those who strengthen my words.”

<sup>14</sup> The verb is gapped in the MT.

<sup>15</sup> OG adds “of heaven.”

<sup>16</sup> Θ and OG, albeit with slightly different verbiage: “go and rest, for there are yet many days [and hours] until the fulfillment of the completion.” The OG adds another, “and you will rest,” after this.

<sup>17</sup> MT: דמתע; Θ and OG: ἀναστήση; Vulgate: *stabis*. I have added “again” to the English translation to bring out the resurrection sense more clearly.

<sup>18</sup> Because the reference to resurrection is so implicit here and because of the value of v. 13 in addressing other aspects of the text while adding little else new, I do not have an extensive distinct analysis of it.

earthly events, to comfort the audience with knowledge of what God will yet do for the faithful, and to encourage the audience to hold fast to what they have in the meantime.

The scene of Dan 12:1–3 in particular serves as a denouement drawing together many themes and motifs of Daniel. This event of the righteous being raised from the dead and being given everlasting life is a signature demonstration of God’s inexorable, faithful love—which neither Israel’s general unfaithfulness nor death can stop (9:4, 12–15, 19)—to sustain and to deliver his faithful righteous ones whose lives are constantly under threat in this book (1:4–20; 2:44–49; 3:12–30; 4:10–37; 5; 6; 7:9–10, 13–14, 18, 21–22, 25–27; 11:33–35; 12:1, 10).<sup>19</sup> It is also the supreme confirmation and exaltation of the wisdom of the righteous—especially the teachers who have insight (משכילים) among them—who had the divinely gifted insight to see what was right and to do it (1:4–20; 2:20–23; 3; 4:8–9; 5:11, 14; 6; 9:22, 25; 11:33, 35; 12:10). Resurrection to everlasting life vindicates their way of life by enabling it to go on forever. It is thus also a means of royal exaltation for the wise righteous as they are endowed with authority to rule over the world in the kingdom of God.

The last point hints at the parts of Daniel that most thoroughly shape the context of Dan 12. As Jacques Doukhan observed, Daniel has a structure that one could either describe as concentric parallelism or double chiasm with ch. 1 as the introduction.<sup>20</sup> In this structure, chapter 12 is in concentric parallelism with both chs. 2 and 7, with 7 functioning as the pivot point, while it is also in reflective chiasm with ch. 7. Several features support this observation, though for my purposes I only focus on the connections to ch. 12. One, both chs. 7 and 12 feature a heavenly

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<sup>19</sup> For more on this theme in Daniel, see Gregory Goswell, “Resurrection in the Book of Daniel,” *ResQ* 55 (2013): 139–51.

<sup>20</sup> Jacques B. Doukhan, *Daniel: The Vision of the End* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1987), 3–6. Cf. Goldingay, *Daniel*, 325. For a smaller, but similar chiasm of Dan 2–7, see A. Lenglet, “La structure littéraire de Daniel 2–7,” *Bib* 53 (1972): 169–90.

representative of the saints (7:13–14; 12:1).<sup>21</sup> Two, these chapters have a type of terminological connection in reference to the “everlasting” kingdom, life, or contempt (עלם in Dan 2:44; 7:14, 18, 27; עולם in Dan 12:2–3, 7; cf. 4:3, 34; 6:26; 9:24). Three, the picture of the wise shining like stars fits with God’s promise of royal authority to them (12:3; cf. 2:35, 44–45; 7:13–14, 18, 22, 27), which in turn fits with the common association of royalty with angels and celestial bodies (Num 24:17; Judg 5:19–20; 1 Sam 29:9; 2 Sam 14:17, 20; Isa 14:13; cf. Wis 3:7–8; 1 En. 104:2–6; 108:11–15; 2 Bar. 51:10; T. Levi 18:3–4; LAB 26:13; 1QS IV, 6–8; 1QM XVII, 6–8). Four, Dan 12 brings to a climax the theme in chs. 2 and 7 that God’s kingdom will triumph over the worldly kingdoms by showing that God’s victory over the enemies who would seek to extinguish the righteous will be complete, universal, and everlasting (2:44–45; 7:9–14, 21–27; 11:21–12:3).<sup>22</sup>

Artur Stele makes a keen observation here about the connection of the kingdom and resurrection promises, since the gift of the kingdom to the saints raises the question of whether the dead saints will benefit, since everlasting life would be necessary to participate in the everlasting kingdom.<sup>23</sup> As Paul would later need to address the expectations of both the living and the dead in the day of Christ’s return, so Daniel begins with the resolution of troubles for those alive during the time of distress and follows with addressing the place of the dead in this eschatological salvation. The last verse of the book, in combination with 12:1–3, demonstrates that the Jews who composed Daniel’s audience could no longer conceive of the righteous who died during Daniel’s narrated and envisioned times as having fulfilled lives, especially if they

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<sup>21</sup> Philip R. Davies, “Eschatology in the Book of Daniel,” *JSOT* 17 (1980): 43 explores this point further.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Wright, *Resurrection*, 114.

<sup>23</sup> Artur A. Stele, “Resurrection in Daniel 12 and Its Contribution to the Theology of the Book of Daniel” (PhD diss., Andrews University, 1996), 241. Also see Bonora, “Il linguaggio di risurrezione,” 113–14.

would have no part in God’s grand promises of restoration, renewal, and relationship. In this need for resurrection, one finds a complex of worldview foundations and scriptures coming together to articulate this hope, which I outline in the process of exegetical investigation below.

### **Resurrection in Dan 12:1–3, 13**

#### Verse 1

What does Dan 12:1–3 itself show about the nature of resurrection belief presented therein? First, one should note that, unlike several other instances in the Tanakh of describing God’s action in terms of resurrection imagery, this event has a clear eschatological setting (as noted before, by “eschatological,” I mean that it concerns climactic events in the communal worldview narrative that are instrumental to the ultimate resolution of that grand story). Daniel signals as much with the especially dense usage of קץ (“end”) in this particular section (with 11:27 and 35 anticipating the coming end and the use of it to signal a new setting in 11:40; 12:4, 6, 9, 13). The reference to Michael arising in a time of extreme anguish also indicates the eschatological scene is one of climactic conflict in which the deliverance of the righteous will be cause for glorifying God. The description of this time resembles Jer 30:7, but Anne Gardner finds more consonance with the eschatological day of the Lord that Zephaniah describes in Zeph 1:14–15, 17.<sup>24</sup> That this time is a time of both judgment and salvation also comports with the further description of the day of the Lord in Zeph 3:8–20, as well as the day of the Lord in Joel 2:28–32 (3:1–5). The last text also uses the terminology of deliverance (מלט) that Daniel uses here of those who keep the

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<sup>24</sup> Anne E. Gardner, “The Way to Eternal Life in Daniel 12:1e-2 or How to Reverse the Death Curse of Genesis 3,” *ABR* 40 (1992): 14.

covenant.<sup>25</sup> The audience knows that the recipients of deliverance are righteous because they are the people who were found written in the book, which is to say that they are those who share characteristics with the righteous dead implied in the next two verses, “adherence to the covenant, humility or fear of the Lord, following the path of wisdom and association with a righteous one.”<sup>26</sup> Conversely, they present a moral/covenantal contrast to the aforementioned defectors who have abandoned the covenantal way *of* life and thus the way *to* life, as well as a contrast to those who will rise for condemnation in v. 2.

Before this investigation leaves v. 1, two other features require comment. First, as already noted, Michael is the parallel heavenly representative of Daniel’s people to the one like a son of man in Dan 7. He has previously appeared in Dan 10:13, 21 as the one who represents Israel in the heavenly counterpart of its conflicts on earth. Indeed, John Collins has argued that Michael is identical to the one like a son of man in Dan 7.<sup>27</sup> This argument is part of his larger argument that Dan 7 concerns angels primarily and the people of Israel only secondarily. After all, Daniel describes angels in similar terms as being like humans (8:15–16; 9:21; 10:5, 16, 18; 12:6–7). Furthermore, the references to “holy ones” (קדושים) could simply be references to angels, as the term sometimes is (Job 5:1; 15:15; Pss 89:5, 7; Dan 8:13; Zech 14:5 [possibly]; cf. Dan 4:13, 17, 23). He even explains the phrase in 7:27 referring to the “people of the holy ones of the Most High” as referring to three entities in synonymous relations: the holy ones associated with the Most High and the people associated with the holy ones.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> On this terminology of deliverance, see further Gardner, “Way,” 14–17.

<sup>26</sup> Gardner, “Way,” 19.

<sup>27</sup> John J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016), 132; Collins, *Daniel*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 304–10.

<sup>28</sup> Collins, *Apocalyptic*, 129–32.



Apart from the parallel textual function in chs. 7 and 12, as well as the vaguely similar descriptions of angels in general with the one like the son of man, there is too little to commend this identification. First, what similarities there may be between angels and the one like a son of man may actually be indicative of traditions of the angel of the Lord that inform Daniel and his audience, as Phillip Munoa observes, “The core characteristics of the ‘one like a human being’ in Dan. 7.13-14 are those of the angel of the Lord. The figure in Dan. 7.13-14 is nameless, human in appearance, solitary, heavenly in association, possesses divinely bestowed authority, and its climactic appearance in Daniel’s vision may imply that it is God’s agent of judgment and deliverance.”<sup>29</sup> Second, the mere use of “holy ones” is not decisive in either direction as the extensive evidence of the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek equivalents attest.<sup>30</sup> Third, the phrase of Dan 7:27 is more likely an appositional construct, comparable to Dan 8:24 and 12:7. The OG and  $\Theta$  reflect such an understanding in their phrasing of  $\lambda\alpha\tilde{\omega}\ \acute{\alpha}\gamma\acute{\iota}\omega$  and  $\acute{\alpha}\gamma\acute{\iota}\omega\iota\varsigma$  respectively. Finally, Collins’s linkage of chs. 7 and 12 in this regard is self-defeating, as the “holy ones” apparently constituting angelic counterparts of Israel are plural while Michael is singular.

As Andrew Steinmann observes, the relationship claimed for Michael in 10:21 and 12:1 is the opposite of that claimed for 7:18, “That is, in 10:21 and 12:1, the people of God are not associated with Michael. Rather, Michael is associated with the people. God has assigned him to protect and fight for the people.”<sup>31</sup> The relationship of Michael and the one like the son of man is more likely equivalent to their relationship in Rev 1:13–16 and 12:1–9: the former is subordinate to the latter and both act for the benefit of the people they both represent in different capacities.

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<sup>29</sup> Phillip Munoa, “The Son of Man and the Angel of the Lord: Daniel 7.13-14 and Israel’s Angel Traditions,” *JSP* 28 (2018): 143–67, here 151.

<sup>30</sup> See the extensive survey of Gerhard F. Hasel, “The Identity of ‘The Saints of the Most High’ in Daniel 7,” *Bib* 56 (1975): 173–92.

<sup>31</sup> Andrew E. Steinmann, *Daniel*, ConcC (St. Louis: Concordia, 2008), 369. Also see his larger argument for the identification of the “holy ones” as God’s people (*Daniel*, 366–70).

In any case, both are not only heavenly representatives of the people, but are also the agents through whom God acts to bring about his salvific will for the covenant people.

The second noteworthy feature is the book. This is the second time in Daniel in which books have appeared in the context of judgment, the first case being the reference to multiple books in Dan 7:10, prior to the introduction of the one like a son of man.<sup>32</sup> But unlike that more general reference, this book records people specifically designated for salvation. Such an image has a long history in the Tanakh with references from the Torah (Exod 32:32–33), the Psalter (Ps 69:28), Isaiah (Isa 4:3), and Malachi (Mal 3:16).<sup>33</sup> The use of the language in Isaiah is especially resonant with Daniel, as they point to the notion of a remnant for whom God ensures salvation (cf. Isa 10:20–22; 11:10–16; Jer 23:3–8; 31:7–40; Mic 2:12–13; 4:1–7; 5:7–9; 7:18–20; Zeph 3:11–13; Zech 8:11–23; 13:8–9). The existence of such a book is a sign of God’s faithful love to sustain relationships with those written in the book, as well as a surety that in the long hoped-for divine judgment, God will vindicate the faithful and condemn the wicked.

Although this text has not yet articulated resurrection belief, one can begin to see worldview foundations that have manifested elsewhere in the book that will prove crucial for maintaining resurrection belief. The first foundation is God’s inexorable, faithful love, love which keeps the word to those promised, no matter the obstacle. In the case of resurrection belief, even death and mortality itself cannot stop this love. The second foundation is in God’s justice to vindicate the faithful and condemn the wicked as part of the larger process of setting the world aright.<sup>34</sup> For this justice to be manifest before all, the dead will need to rise for

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<sup>32</sup> Likely due to the influence of Daniel, a similar notion of the books of the living ones being open before God appears in 1 En. 47:3.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Second Temple references to the book of life (Apoc. Zeph. 3:6–8; 9:2; Jos. Asen. 15:4; 4QInstruction<sup>c</sup>/4Q417 2 I, 15–16; 4QDibHam<sup>a</sup>/4Q504 1–2 VI, 12–14) and the heavenly tablets (1 En. 81:1–3; 98:6–8; 104:7; Jub. 31:32).

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Martin-Achard, *From Death to Life*, 207–15; Stele, “Resurrection,” 221–36, 251–57

judgment. Those who have lived rightly in view of God's promised future will arise to everlasting life, while those who lived wrongly in denial of God's promised future will arise to face the condemnation that they denied they would receive for their actions (thus we see an implicit point made here of the moral concerns attached to affirmation and denial of resurrection belief, which will become most explicit in the Qur'an). Both foundations have appeared throughout Daniel—in both narrated and promised forms—in wondrous divine acts of deliverance and in vivid demonstrations of divine sovereignty over the powers of the world. It is thus only fitting that resurrection to everlasting life should be the climax of divine action and divine victory in this book.

To the latter point, one can see in Daniel an implicit appeal to one of the popular traditional themes for portraying the inexorable, faithful love of God, as well as the justice of God: God as Divine Warrior. In Daniel in particular, there are glimpses of this portrayal of God in ch. 12 through the representative Michael (cf. 10:13, 21) and in the vanquishing of powerful enemies in the visions (7:11, 19–26; 8:23–25).<sup>35</sup> In the Tanakh as a whole, this was a well-established portrayal of God initially connected with the exodus—the most dramatic and most frequently referenced of demonstrations identifying Israel as God's people—then augmented through other events such as the conquest of the promised land, and later became formative for hopes of God's future action (Exod 15; Deut 32:1–43; 33:26–27; Josh 23–24; Judg 5; Pss 18; 24:7–10; 29; 77:16–20; 89:10–11; 96:10–13; 97; Isa 24–27; 34–35; 51:9–11; Jer 17:5–8; Hab 3; Zeph 3:9–20; Hag 2; Zech 9; 14).<sup>36</sup> From the earliest recounting of history to the latest

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<sup>35</sup> More implicitly, one might argue that the deliverance of the righteous in the narratives of Daniel are also manifestations of the Divine Warrior.

<sup>36</sup> On relating this point to resurrection, see Leonard J. Greenspoon, "The Origin of the Idea of Resurrection." in *Traditions in Transformation: Turning Points in Biblical Faith*, ed. Baruch Halpern and Jon D. Levenson (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1981), 261–81; Levenson, *Resurrection*, 208–13.

expectations of the future, the Yahwists and the Jews held to the conviction that God was, is, and will be at work by the processes of history to bring about the divine will, “In their recitations of the history of mankind, the writers of the Hebrew Bible fused event and interpretation, since for them no meaningful description of, for example, the activities of the Exodus-Sinai-Conquest complex was possible without the acknowledgment of God’s determinative role.”<sup>37</sup> Only by God’s delivering action in directing history could history reach its proper completion.<sup>38</sup> In order to maintain this confidence in divine deliverance, the Jews would also need to believe that God’s faithfulness is inexorable, breaking even through the barrier of death. Thus, it would be a sensible notion that resurrection would be the expected form of God’s deliverance.

One text that formed such an expectation was Ezek 37.<sup>39</sup> In its initial context, the use of resurrection imagery is a fitting metaphor combined with the severe separation and disintegration of relationship with God that the state of exile, subjugation, and dispersion/disintegration itself signifies. The fittingness of this metaphor is well established from the story of Genesis, in which Adam and Eve’s exile from the garden and from the special relationship with God thereby entailed is tied to the condition of death.<sup>40</sup> Life meant following the covenant made with the God of life (Deut 30:19–20; Pss 1; 119). Through the people’s adherence to this covenant, they would live in the promised land (Lev 26:9–13; Deut 28:1–14). The promised land served not only as a fulfillment of promises to Israel, but as the ever-present reminder of God’s larger promises for creation (Gen 12:1–3; Exod 19:4–6; Deut 28:1–14; cf. Ps 72; Isa 2:2–5; 42; 49; 61; Ezek 36; Mic

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<sup>37</sup> Greenspoon, “Origin,” 265.

<sup>38</sup> See also Gerhard F. Hasel, “Resurrection in the Theology of Old Testament Apocalyptic,” *ZAW* 92 (1980): 283–84; Stele, “Resurrection,” 256.

<sup>39</sup> On this text, see Andrew Chester, “Resurrection and Transformation,” in *Auferstehung – Resurrection: The Fourth Durham-Tübingen Research Symposium. Resurrection, Transfiguration, and Exaltation in Old Testament, Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, ed. Friedrich Avemarie and Hermann Lichtenberger, WUNT 135 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 54–57; Raharimanantsoa, *Mort et Éspérance*, 378–408.

<sup>40</sup> For more on the sense of death in Gen 2–3, see R. W. L. Moberly, “Did the Serpent Get It Right?” *JTS* ns 39 (1988): 1–27; Moberly, “Did the Interpreters Get it Right? Genesis 2–3 Reconsidered,” *JTS* ns 59 (2008): 22–40.

4). Thus, exile was not an arbitrary punishment for unfaithfulness; it was an organic and effective punishment proclaiming the brokenness of the covenant and thus the end of the covenantal way of and to life (Lev 26:33–39; Deut 28:63–68; 29:22–28; 30:19–20). By the same token, restoration of the covenant and return from exile would mean return to life (Lev 26:40–45; Deut 30:1–10; 32:15–42), or resurrection, as Ezekiel describes it.

The fact that this imagery was originally a metaphor in Ezekiel should not obscure what it shares with more literal articulations of resurrection belief like Daniel. One can scarcely imagine Ezekiel rebuffing later interpreters with, “That was only a metaphor, I surely do not expect God to raise the dead.” As Jon D. Levenson observes:

If resurrection were thought ludicrous, or impossible even for God, then it would be a singularly inappropriate metaphor for the national renewal and restoration that Ezekiel predicts, and the vision in Ezek 37:1-10 could never have succeeded in its goal of overcoming the hopelessness of the audience. . . . In short, even as a figure, the vision of resurrection must have carried considerable credibility if it was to do what the prophet intended.<sup>41</sup>

As such, Ezekiel shares the same foundations of resurrection belief already noted. And in any case, even before the rabbinic texts noted above, at least some Jewish believers in resurrection understood Ezekiel’s text literally, as 4QpsEzek<sup>a</sup>/4Q385 demonstrates.<sup>42</sup>

Although there are almost no significant lexical/verbal links between Ezek 37 and Dan 12—the exception being the rare use of the common verb *עמד* in connection to resurrection (Ezek 37:10; Dan 12:13), on which see below—they share a constellation of concerns and expectations. As noted before, both texts address audiences that have experienced conquest by

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<sup>41</sup> Levenson, *Resurrection*, 161.

<sup>42</sup> For more on this text, see Émile Puech, *La croyance des Esséniens en la vie future: Immortalité, resurrection, vie éternelle? Histoire d’une croyance dans le Judaïsme ancien*, 2 vols., EBib 2/21–22 (Paris: Librairie Lecoffre, 1993), 2:605–16.

foreign powers, displacement, and conflicts amidst maintaining a sense of religious identity. Both are concerned with the abandonment of Torah and the way of life it directed, an abandonment which involves both the dissolution of communal bonds for the covenant community and the reenactment of the cause of exile. One sees such a concern especially in the repentant prayer of Dan 9. Both texts are thus also concerned with the solution to the state of exile, subjugation, and dispersion/disintegration in God's action of return, reign, and reunion. Ezekiel simply describes this condition as one of metaphorical death and metaphorical resurrection while Daniel engages the problem of death on a more literal level with a more literal resurrection.<sup>43</sup> Both texts also follow the narration of resurrection with God's endowment of kingdom/sovereignty for God's people (Ezek 37:15–28; Dan 12:3). In Ezekiel's case, this promise comes in the form of the Davidic king ruling over the resurrected and reunited people (cf. Isa 9:1–7; 11; 55:1–5; Jer 30:1–3, 18–22; 33:14–26; Ezek 34:23–31; Mic 5:2–15; T.Jud. 24; Pss. Sol. 17:21–46; 4QpIsa<sup>a</sup> III, 11–24; 4QFlor 1 I, 7–13). In Daniel's case, this promise is applied more generally to the people, although the text gives special attention to the *משבילים*.

## Verse 2

With this framework of context and scriptural tradition in place, this analysis now turns to the actual description of the resurrection in 12:2: “Many of those who sleep in the earth of dust will awaken, some to everlasting life, some to reproach and everlasting abhorrence.” There is much to unpack in this brief description. The first point to consider is the verb used to convey

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<sup>43</sup> For other texts that connected resurrection with the solution to these problems, sometimes through using new exodus imagery, see the Second and Tenth Benedictions of the Amidah; 2 Macc 7:32–38; 1 En. 62:15–16; 90:33; 2 Bar. 29:8; 75:7–8; T.Dan 5:8–9; T.Benj. 10:11; Liv. Pro. 2:15; 4QpsEzek<sup>a</sup>/4Q385.

resurrection: the *hiphil* imperfect יקיצו. The verb typically has the sense of “awaken,” which makes it an appropriate counterpart to the previous state of the subjects who were sleeping (ישו).

It is thus not a technical term for resurrection. It attains this sense rather from the context that associates sleep with death, and indeed references to “dust” and “sleep” are commonly associated with death in the Tanakh (Gen 3:19; 1 Kgs 1:21; 2 Kgs 4:31; 13:21; Job 3:13; 7:21; 14:12; 21:26; 34:15; Pss 13:3; 22:29; 76:5; 104:29; Eccl 3:20; 12:7; Isa 26:19; Jer 51:39, 57; Nah 3:18).<sup>44</sup> Θ translates with the verb ἐξεγείρω while the OG uses ἀνίστημι, which overlaps with the former in the sense of “arising,” but it does not have the sense of “waking up” like the former.<sup>45</sup>

The particular *hiphil* form tends to give the verb a causative meaning. According to GKC, in this case, the verb is “inwardly transitive” in the *hiphil* as a verb that expresses, “entering into a certain condition and, further, the being in the same.”<sup>46</sup> Likewise, Bill. T. Arnold and John H. Choi describe this type of *hiphil* as designating “intransitive causation,” and, “entry into a state or condition and the continuation of the state or condition.”<sup>47</sup> Such an understanding fits this context; while one can assume that God is the one who awakens the dead, this idea is nowhere grammatically represented. Grammatically, the focus is on those who awaken, not on the agent who acts on a recipient. One should likewise understand the Greek translations of Θ and the OG (ἐξεγερθήσονται and ἀναστήσονται respectively) as intransitives rather than true passives.

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<sup>44</sup> For more on the use of such terms in resurrection contexts, see John F. A. Sawyer, “Hebrew Words for the Resurrection of the Dead,” *VT* 23 (1973): 223–24.

<sup>45</sup> As Cook observes, while ἀνίστημι was a more common verb associated with resurrection in Greek literature before the Common Era, ἐγείρω was not, since the attendant imagery of death as “sleep” was not common outside of Jewish and Christian texts (Cook, *Empty Tomb*, 22–23).

<sup>46</sup> GKC § 53d and e. Cf. Bruce K. Waltke and M. O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 439.

<sup>47</sup> Bill T. Arnold and John H. Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 61.

The other verb for resurrection in Dan 12 is the common verb *עמד* in v. 13, here in its *qal* imperfect form of *תעמד*. The only other biblical example to use this verb in relation to resurrection is Ezek 37:10, but there it follows a verb for coming to life.<sup>48</sup> Here, the context of the references to the “end of days,” to Daniel’s rest (cf. Prov 21:16; Job 3:11–13, 17; Isa 57:2), and to the “end”—which could be Daniel’s own “end” of death (cf. 11:45; Ps 39:4; Jer 51:13; Lam 4:18)—is what lends this typical verb its rare sense of resurrection. The same applies to the use of *ἀναστήσει* in both Θ and the OG, although this term was more frequently associated with resurrection than its Hebrew counterpart.<sup>49</sup>

The second point to consider about v. 2 is the implications of the verb. Does it apply to one group—the group that receives everlasting life—or to both groups? Does it imply bodily resurrection or another kind of resurrection? In response to the first question, some have posited that the wicked do not rise from the dead and their fate, linked as it is with Isa 66:24, implies that they simply remain corpses throughout the judgment.<sup>50</sup> I explore the intertextual link with Isa 66 below, but more directly problematic for this view is the syntax, as the application of *רַיָּה* to the righteous alone leaves the other sub-class of “many” without a complement, as this is the only proper verb in the sentence (cf. Josh 8:22; 2 Sam 2:13; Isa 49:12).

In response to the second question, Collins claims that one cannot take for granted that the resurrection here is bodily or that the scene is on earth.<sup>51</sup> But the contrasting imagery of sleep—referring to the repose of the body in the ground—and awakening entails that the body is

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<sup>48</sup> For more on the use of this verb and *קום* in resurrection texts, see Sawyer, “Hebrew Words,” 222–23.

<sup>49</sup> Cook, “Use,” 259–80; Erich Fascher, “Anastasis – Resurrectio – Auferstehung: Eine programmatische Studie zum Thema ‘Sprache und Offenbarung.’” *ZNW* 40 (1941): 170–94.

<sup>50</sup> Alfrink, “L’idée,” 362–71; Chester, “Resurrection,” 60.

<sup>51</sup> Collins, *Daniel*, 392.



involved in the latter as in the former.<sup>52</sup> Furthermore, given the earthly setting of the preceding scenes and the lack of a clear scene change, one must wonder why the scene cannot be on earth.

The third point to consider is the intertextual link to Isa 26:19, another important resurrection text, in describing those who arise/awaken out of the dust.<sup>53</sup> Specifically, both texts refer to the dead as lying (יָשַׁב in Isa 26:19) or sleeping (יָשָׁן in Dan 12:2) in the dust (עָפָר) and both texts contrast that state with the state of waking up/resurrection (קָיָה). In both cases, the context also places this rising action in a context of deliverance and judgment. The MT and Peshitta maintain both connections, but the different versions of the LXX use synonymous verbs of ἐγείρω and ἐξυπνίζω in Isa 26:19 instead of the ἐξεγείρω and ἀνίστημι in Dan 12:2. Likewise, the Vulgate uses the synonymous *expergiscimini* in Isa 26:19 and *evigilabunt* in Dan 12:2. Daniel P. Bailey further argues that there is a closer verbal connection to Dan 12:2 in the *Vorlage* of the OG and the 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> version of Isa 26:19 with its imperfect verb.<sup>54</sup>

In one way or another, all versions attest to the connection of these texts. As the resurrection in Isa 26:19 is clearly bodily—regardless of if the reference is metaphorical or literal—the intertextual link further supports that Dan 12:2 concerns a bodily resurrection. Both texts also feature both retribution and salvation in their promised futures. However, Daniel’s vision involves a broader picture of resurrection than Isaiah’s text, given the contrast supplied in

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<sup>52</sup> Cf. C. D. Elledge, *Resurrection of the Dead in Early Judaism 200 BCE–CE 200* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 22–23; John Goldingay, *Daniel*, WBC 30 (Dallas: Word, 1989), 307–8; Puech, *La croyance*, 1:80–82.

<sup>53</sup> On Isa 26, see Hasel, “Resurrection,” 267–76; Christopher B. Hays, *A Covenant with Death: Death in the Iron Age II and Its Rhetorical Uses in Proto-Isaiah* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), 320–36; Dan G. Johnson, *From Chaos to Restoration: An Integrative Reading of Isaiah 24–27*, JSOTSup 61 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1988); Raharimanantsoa, *Mort et Éspérance*, 409–26.

<sup>54</sup> Daniel P. Bailey, “The Intertextual Relationship of Daniel 12:2 and Isaiah 26:19: Evidence from Qumran and the Greek Versions,” *TynB* 51 (2000): 305–8.

Isa 26:14.<sup>55</sup> Still, the closeness of the language implies affinity with the text and a presentation of scriptural promises coming to fruition in this vision. Daniel also shows this sense of fulfilling Scripture while going beyond precedents in the fact that those who awaken arise not only from dust but from the “earth of dust.”

This unique phrase in the Tanakh—which I have translated “earth of dust” (אדמת־עפר)—is the fourth point to consider. Its very peculiarity may be designedly provocative and evocative. Some have proposed that one ought to understand the phrase as meaning “land of dust,” and that such a phrase is a metonym for Sheol.<sup>56</sup> Even granting the potential for metonymy of Sheol and dust, this phrase is extant nowhere else prior to Daniel as a description of Sheol. There is thus no reason to avoid the sense of this phrase as referring to the ground from which the dead emerge. However, beyond that basic sense, the phrase may be suggestive of more in its closest affinities to texts from Gen 2 and 3.

The most similar phrase to this one in the Tanakh is in Gen 2:7 (עפר מן־האדמה), which describes the formation of האדם out of the ground. Interestingly, this text is also formative for the imagery in Ezek 37:9–10 in its portrayal of resurrection as a reenactment of creation with the Spirit being breathed into the people.<sup>57</sup> Also relevant is the parallelism in the same order of words in Gen 3:19, where God tells Adam that he will return to the ground (אדמה) because he was taken from it, that he is dust (עפר) and to dust he will return. While Gen 2:7 describes

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<sup>55</sup> Cf. Hasel, “Resurrection,” 279–80.

<sup>56</sup> Louis F. Hartman and Alexander A. Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, AB 23 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1978), 307, 309; Raharimanantsoa, *Mort et Éspérance*, 435; Nicholas J. Tromp, *Primitive Conceptions of Death and the Nether World in the Old Testament*, BibOr 21 (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1969), 41, 91.

<sup>57</sup> Chester, “Resurrection,” 50; Levenson, *Resurrection*, 159–60.

creation and formation, Gen 3:19 describes its reversal in death and dissolution. Given how these terms are related to the formation and dissolution of the human body, the implication of rising out of the latter state would also imply a bodily restoration in fulfillment of the initial creative will, but this time endowed with everlasting life. Indeed, a further resonance in v. 2 that supports this intertextual link is that the righteous who wake to everlasting life (לְחַיֵּי עוֹלָם) receive what Adam and Eve lost access to by their disobedience (וְחַי לְעָלָם; Gen 3:22).

The link of the “earth of dust” to the Genesis texts is most closely maintained in both texts by Θ. The Vulgate’s translations of the texts maintain the link between Dan 12:2 and Gen 3:19, but not with Gen 2:7 (*terrae pulvere* in Dan 12:2 and *de limo terrae* in Gen 2:7). The Peshitta simplifies the phrase to “dust” and thus vitiates its distinctiveness. As with the smoothing of the OG translation earlier, these differences seem to stem from the difficulty of the phrasing and not clearly from different *Vorlagen*. However, all versions maintain the connections between the references to everlasting life in both texts, consistently in adjectival forms in Dan 12 and verbal forms in Gen 3.

If Daniel is indeed evoking these texts with this special phrasing and with the fate of the righteous, the implication is that resurrection is a renewed act of creation and reconstitution, not only of individuals, but of a community of people.<sup>58</sup> Thus, this resurrection to everlasting life represents an everlasting fulfillment of God’s creative will for humans to bear the divine image, to govern creation, and to enjoy fellowship with God, and not even death can stop it.<sup>59</sup> In fact,

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<sup>58</sup> On the connections of resurrection and national restoration, see esp. Wright, *Resurrection*, 121–24.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Jacques B. Doukhan, “From Dust to Stars: The Vision of Resurrection(s) in Daniel 12,1-3 and Its Resonance in the Book of Daniel,” in *Resurrection of the Dead: Biblical Traditions in Dialogue*, ed. Geert Van Oyen and Tom Shepherd, BETL 249 (Leuven; Paris; Walpole, MA: Peeters, 2012), 89–90; Stele, “Resurrection,” 246–51.

the implication of the allusion to Gen 3:22, as well as references to God elsewhere in Dan 4:34 (לחי עלם) and 12:7 (בחי העולם) as the one who lives forever is that those who are resurrected to this life have received God's life in a way that God's initial life-breath did not provide. Once again, Daniel's vision speaks beyond his predecessors, but in a way that brings the preceding story to fruition, rather than abandoning it. In this act of raising the dead to everlasting life, the covenant history has finally reached its goal of renewing a fallen creation and fallen humanity, bringing them into accord with God's creative will.

The fifth point to consider is another confirmation of this theme at the end of the verse. Here there is a verbal link to Isa 66:24, a text which appears in the context of new creation. Specifically, the verbal link is the term דראון ("abhorrence/contempt," which only appears in the Tanakh in Isa 66:24 and Dan 12:2) as the everlasting fate of the wicked, which implies the presence of new creation and the everlasting enjoyment of it by the righteous (Isa 66:22–24).<sup>60</sup> These new creation connections show that resurrection is crucial to the *inclusio* of the grand worldview narrative, so that *Endzeit* links with *Urzeit*.

Interestingly, while this intertextual link is remarkable for featuring the only two occurrences of the key term in the MT, none of the other versions maintain the lexical link. In the Vulgate and Peshitta, there are no similarities of sound or verbiage whatsoever. Θ maintains the most continuity between the texts phonetically (εἰς ἱκανὸν ὄρᾱν in Isa 66:24 vs. αἰσχύνην in Dan 12:2). However, it is the last element in Θ's translation of Isa 66:24 that shows the visual element most common to the other versions. Either a different *Vorlage* (different also from

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<sup>60</sup> Virtually every critical commentary notes the link between Dan 12:2 and Isa 66:24. For more detail, see George W. E. Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism and Early Christianity*, exp. ed., HTS 56 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 33–37; Carol A. Newsom, *Daniel*, OTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2014), 363–64.

1QIsa<sup>a</sup>) or a preference for a more idiomatic translation emphasizing the visual element of looking on the corpses in contempt may be the cause of these variations.

But given how this link breaks down in the other versions, it is worth pondering what else might link these texts. One, as implied by the linkage to Gen 2 and 3 in Dan 12, Isa 66 shares with this text a new creation context. For the Isaiah text, this frame of reference initially appears in 65:17–25 and it reappears in the closing portion of the book in 66:22. There is no explicit reference to resurrection in Isa 66, but many other subsequent texts would link the resurrection to new creation, and Daniel is implicitly one of them.<sup>61</sup> Two, although Isa 66 lacks the explicit language of “everlastingness” that Dan 12:2 has, it is implicit in the descriptions of the enduring character of the fates of the faithful and the unfaithful in vv. 22–24. Three, the scenes in both texts are two-sided realities of condemnation and salvation, as stated extensively in Isa 66:10–17. Four, as the Hebrew makes most explicit, there is a similarity in the fates of the condemned in both texts. Isaiah 66:24 makes clear that this fate is bodily in nature and this intertextual link, in addition to the other factors noted previously, buttresses a similar understanding of the fate of the condemned in Dan 12:2. Of course, since there is no explicit resurrection in Isa 66 and those regarded as *גוֹיִם* are clearly corpses, one could infer, as the aforementioned scholars have, that the intertextual link indicates that the condemned in Dan 12:2 are the dead who never rose. But as noted above, the syntax makes this interpretation too contrived. Still, the intertextual link may indicate that the condemned become corpses of everlasting abhorrence after this judgment.

In any case, in the final point to consider about v. 2, the interpreter encounters a problem in understanding this picture. This text is the only one in the Tanakh that describes a resurrection

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<sup>61</sup> 1 En. 25:4–6; 51; 91:16; Sib. Or. 4.181–182; 4 Ezra 7:30–44; 2 Bar. 73–74; T.Dan 5:12–13; LAE 42; 51:2; Apoc. Mos. 13:2–5; LAB 3:10; 19:12–13. Cf. Rom 8:18–25; Rev 20–22; b. Sanh. 90b; 91b; Lev. Rab. 14.9.

of both the righteous and the wicked, but it does not seem to be a universal resurrection. The phrase רבים מישני מן indicates as much, as the vast majority of scholars take the מן partitively, so that the phrase means “many of” in the sense of “many, but not all.” When these two terms (רב and מן) appear together, it is a virtual guarantee of a partitive sense and arguments for a contrary sense (i.e., taking the “many” as meaning “all”) have understandably been difficult to make.<sup>62</sup> What makes this argument even more difficult is the fact that all versions are consistent in maintaining a partitive grammatical construction.

Yet, Doukhan makes an argument in this vein by appealing to an allegedly idiomatic use of “many” in the unit of Dan 11:40–12:13 as referring to the righteous in general and the eschatological community of the redeemed in particular (11:44; 12:3, 4, 10).<sup>63</sup> He applies the partitive to the wicked, insisting that the wicked who rise are simply the wickedest ones.<sup>64</sup> If this message is Daniel’s point, the writer has presented it in an incredibly obscure fashion, since the placement of the partitive makes it qualify the general group of those who rise rather than the wicked specifically. Furthermore, since “wake up/rise” is the action of the “many,” his argument would, contradictorily, need to entail that the wicked do not rise, which would further confuse the eschatological picture here for reasons I have already noted.

Who are the “many,” then? The larger Danielic context may provide some clues. One, from the beginning Daniel has been concerned with the faithfulness of Israelites in the face of external threats, lest they should reenact the root sin of idolatry that led to the exile. Chapters 3

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<sup>62</sup> See the extensive analysis of Stele, “Resurrection,” 139–48. As an example, Steinmann (*Daniel*, 556) does not deal linguistically with the partitive issue and further conflates this text with examples of definite uses of רבים (Isa 53:11; Dan 9:27). The case most like Dan 12:2 is that of Esth 8:17, where there is a clear partitive sense.

<sup>63</sup> Doukhan, “Dust,” 93–94.

<sup>64</sup> Doukhan, “Dust,” 95.

and 6 present the picture of faithful Israelites resisting idolatrous practices under threat of death, but ch. 11 demonstrates an awareness of Israelites who have defected and participated in idolatry. Two, 9:1–19 connects the exile with Israel’s refusal to keep covenant and the presence of this prayer in the text serves as an expression of lament and repentance, as well as a warning to the covenant people against continued disobedience. The act of the sacrilegious prince in 9:27 of making a covenant with many—in light of 11:30–39—may be an attempt to replace the divine covenant, much as he replaces the typical operations of the temple with a desolating abomination. Three, Daniel also describes judgment against the ruling empires (2:44–45), most specifically against the last kingdom and its worst king (7:9–14, 19–26; 8:9–14, 21–25; 11:45). Four, the immediately preceding verse speaks of how “your people” will be delivered. While that reference is directly to the living, it implies that the salvation experienced in v. 2 is in continuity with this statement. Five, however distant from the time of the end Daniel himself is, he is a participant in this resurrection (12:13). The participants of resurrection can thus not be restricted to some specific period that does not include Daniel (as, e.g., with the idea that this resurrection includes only martyrs of the Maccabean era). On these bases, the strongest conclusion one can draw is a plausible one: the scope of the resurrection vision in Daniel primarily concerns Israel (both the righteous and wicked) throughout the ages in addition to enemies who have oppressed the covenant people. Those beyond this scope, whether the faithful in Carthage or the wicked in Scythia, are simply not addressed.

### **Summary of Foundations in Verse 2**

After these dense exegetical considerations, what foundations of resurrection belief does v. 2 reveal? As with the text leading to v. 2, one sees here the first two identified worldview

foundations. The first foundation of God's inexorable, faithful love appears here in the action of resurrection of Daniel's people, as well as of Daniel himself in v. 13. It also appears in the complex of scriptural language linking this text to multiple others. In the end, death will not be able to prevent God from fulfilling promises to those who died before the time of fulfillment. In this text, God not only overcomes death through his resurrecting power, but his love is such that he makes death no longer a possibility for the faithful in his grant of everlasting life, which is sharing his life.

In the fact that this resurrection is to judgment of both vindication and condemnation, one sees the second foundation of God's justice with its guarantee that God will set the world aright. There will be more to say about this foundation below after the complete examination of the full outcome of the judgment, but for now it is important to reiterate the note about the reception of everlasting life. When God in his judgment dispenses everlasting life as the verdict for the resurrected righteous, he demonstrates the ultimate vindication of their way of life, defined by faithfulness to his will, by enabling their lives to go on forever. This verdict fulfills what might have been for Adam and Eve and upholds God's creative purpose, even as it has come to pass in a way that incorporates the breach in relationship between God and humans, as the resurrection is necessary for overcoming death.

This text further indicates the presence of two other worldview foundations for resurrection belief. The third foundation, as would become more popular in later Second Temple Jewish literature and in the NT (as well as the rabbinic literature already noted), is that God fulfills Scripture, in terms of faithfulness to both promises made and patterns of action performed, and thus that resurrection is in accordance with Scripture.<sup>65</sup> Through the intertextual

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<sup>65</sup> Second Benediction of the Amidah; Wis 3:7–8; 2 Macc 7:9, 32–33, 37–38; 1 En. 91:10–11; 92:3–5; 104:1–4; 108:8–15; 4 Ezra 7:32, 97; 2 Bar. 51:1–6, 10; Liv. Pro. 3:12; 4Q246 II, 1–6; 4Q385; 4Q521 2 II, 7–12; 7+5



links with Gen 2–3; Isa 26; and 66 (as well as, more distantly, Ezek 37), Daniel demonstrates that the resurrection is the crucial narrative denouement for the larger story in which he and his people are participants. God acts not only for the good of his people, but in consistency with specific texts that make promises to those people and establish specific narrative contours to their interrelationship (in terms of both past precedent and future expectation).

The fourth foundation is that the redemption of humans is crucial to fulfilling God’s creative purpose. This foundation is perhaps at a further remove of implicitness than the third, as there are fewer signals of its presence. In the rest of Daniel, the promise of the everlasting kingdom is prominent while the notion of new creation is only implicitly indicated here through peculiar and attention-grabbing links to Genesis and Isaiah. Resurrection is thus essential for reversing the problem of death and enabling God’s people to receive everlasting life to reign in the everlasting kingdom, as God created them as the bearers of his image and likeness.<sup>66</sup>

### Verse 3

Verse 3 addresses in greater specificity the fate of one or two subdivisions of the righteous after the resurrection, namely the insightful ones (המשכלים), those who make the many righteous (מצדיקי הרבים): “And those who have insight will shine like the brightness of the expanse and those who lead the many to righteousness [will shine] like the stars forever and ever.” Before I address the nature of what expectations this text conveys, it is important to note the links to one

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II, 6; Matt 21:37–44 and pars.; Matt 26:23–24 and pars.; Matt 26:31–32 and par.; Matt 26:54–56 and pars.; Luke 24:25–27, 44–47; John 2:18–22; 17:12; 20:9; Acts 2:14–36; 3:18–26; 8:32–35; 10:43; 13:26–41; 17:2–3, 11, 18, 31–32; 18:28; 26:6–8, 22–23; 28:23; Rom 1:1–4; 1 Cor 15:3–4.

<sup>66</sup> On creation language in Daniel, see Jacques B. Doukhan, “Allusions à la Création dans le Livre de Daniel,” in *The Book of Daniel: In the Light of New Findings*, ed. A. S. van der Woude, BETL 106 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1993), 285–92, esp. 290.

other passage: Isaiah's Fourth Servant Song (Isa 52:13–53:12). Given the frequent attention that the last Servant Song has drawn from scholars, it is unsurprising that the intertextual links to this text have been frequently noted.<sup>67</sup>

That Song introduces the servant by applying the verb *ישביל* (of which Dan 12:3 represents the participle form), which in this context could have the sense of either “prosper” or “be wise/insightful” (Isa 52:13). Translations are split on this decision, but it is clearly possible that the author of Daniel could have understood the term in the latter way. The idea that he did so and linked the wise with the servant gains additional support from how he evokes the promise that the Servant will *לרבים ... יצדיק* (“[will] make the many righteous”; Isa 53:11). It should be noted, however, that the lexical links between these texts are closest in the MT. The links are not clear in the Peshitta. The first participle in the OG of Dan 12:3 (*οἱ συνιέντες*) corresponds with the equivalent verb of Isa 52:13 (*συνήσει*), but the lexical link is not present in the case of the phrase. Conversely, the Vulgate maintains the similarity of the phrase (*iustificabit ... multos* in Isa 53:11 and *qui ad iustitiam erudiunt multos* in Dan 12:3), but not of the participle and verb.

With that being said, the two texts share significant thematic features already noted. These resonances include the exaltation of the righteous (Isa 52:13; 53:12), suffering and even dying for faithfulness to the divine will (Isa 52:14; 53:3–5, 7–10), and experience of some kind of life that conquers death (Isa 53:10–12; cf. 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>, which states that the servant will see light,

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<sup>67</sup> Cf. Chester, “Resurrection,” 62; John Day, “*Da‘at* ‘Humiliation’ in Isaiah LIII 11 in the Light of Isaiah LIII 3 and Daniel XII 4, and the Oldest Known Interpretation of the Suffering Servant,” *VT* 30 (1980): 99–101; H. L. Ginsberg, “The Oldest Interpretation of the Suffering Servant,” *VT* 3 (1953): 400–404; Sawyer, “Hebrew,” 233; Wright, *Resurrection*, 115–16. The earliest influential source in modern scholarship to draw attention to this link was Gustaf Dalman, *Der leidende und der sterbende Messias der Synagoge im ersten nachchristlichen Jahrtausend*, *Schriften des Institutum Judaicum in Berlin* 4 (Berlin: Reuther's, 1888), 29–31.

making a connection with Isa 26:19).<sup>68</sup> In some sense, the author of Daniel sees the wise/insightful in the role of the servant, which thus pluralizes the servant (cf. 4 Macc 6:27–29; 17:22; 18:4). The closing of the story of the seven brothers in 2 Maccabees probably follows in the tradition of this text in presenting the expectation of resurrection for those who embody the role of the servant (7:32–33, 37–38; cf. Isa 53:4–6, 10–12).

In any case, there is a sense in which Daniel augments the picture of the *משכלים* in comparison to Isaiah. Both texts comport in that the ones described with *שכל* are those who understand the will of God, do it, and teach others to do it (Dan 1:4–20; 2:20–23; 4:8–9; 5:11, 14; 9:22, 25; 11:33, 35; 12:10). However, for Daniel the insightful are not simply those who have knowledge and suffer passively for preserving and being faithful to it.<sup>69</sup> Rather, they are those given insight into the “divinely ordained pattern in history,” and make known such revealed mysteries to others, because, “Knowledge of the divine plan strengthens the people’s resolve to adhere to the requirements of the covenant, even if that fidelity results in death.”<sup>70</sup> Daniel’s focus is also not on their manner of suffering as opposed to violent resistance.<sup>71</sup> Rather, he insists on conveying that, despite present trials and even apparent defeat of the *משכלים* (11:33–35), the God they know is faithful to his word and will deliver them, even raising them from the dead.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Levenson (*Resurrection*, 188–89) entertains the possibility that the Fourth Servant Song presents literal resurrection. Sawyer (“Hebrew,” 234) is much less cautious: “there is no good reason for denying that originally, that is, in the original context of the final form of the Book of Isaiah, this passage referred to the resurrection of the servant from his grave with a rich man. It may have been at least partly due to the overwhelming Christian associations which the passage accumulated that this interpretation was officially rejected in Jewish tradition.”

<sup>69</sup> Klaus Koch, *Das Buch Daniel*, EdF 144 (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1980), 165–66.

<sup>70</sup> Newsom, *Daniel*, 352.

<sup>71</sup> Pace Koch, *Daniel*, 165. As Newsom, *Daniel*, 352 notes by analogy, “2 Maccabees endorses the actions by Judah and his brothers, even while insisting that the key factor in ‘turning away the wrath’ of God (7:38 AT) is the death of the martyrs.” For more on this point, see Willibaldo Ruppenthal Neto, “Martírio e resistência em 2 Macabeus,” *Estudos de Religião* 33 (2019): 231–52.

<sup>72</sup> Newsom, *Daniel*, 352.

The exact nature of what the wise receive as reward is debated. Some see here a reflection of the notion of “astral immortality” or a thusly influenced description of the transformation of the righteous into angels.<sup>73</sup> This reading ignores the  $\supset$  preposition, which can indicate a comparison (“like”), so the point is not that they will shine after becoming stars (or being raised to a place among or above the stars), but will shine “like” stars.<sup>74</sup> None of the cosmological structure that upholds astral immortality is here either, and it is unclear by what mechanism it could have become an accepted part of Jewish expectation for a text like Daniel that is hardline traditionalist in orientation.<sup>75</sup> Rather, this imagery fits with a Danielic theme of God’s exaltation of the righteous, in this case by emphasizing God’s grant of royal power and authority to the wise, raising them to a state of glory, “for which the best parallel or comparison is the status of stars, moon and sun within the created order.”<sup>76</sup> Given the context of Dan 7, this glory they receive in this exaltation is a share of God’s own heavenly glory and indicates their endowment with sovereignty.<sup>77</sup>

Similar complexes of images of light/shining, heavenly exaltation, angelic qualities, and reception of royal authority appear in a variety of texts after Daniel (1 En. 104:2–6; 2 Bar. 51:1–10; T. Levi 18:3–4; LAB 26:13; 1QS IV, 6–8; 1QM XVII, 6–8). Wisdom 3:7–8 uses a similar verb to  $\Theta$  in reference to “shining” (*ἀναλάμπουσιν*; *ἐκλάμπουσιν* in Dan 12:3) and connects the imagery to governing the nations in subjection to God (cf. also Isa 5:24; Joel 2:5; Obad 18; Mal

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<sup>73</sup> Stephen J. Bedard, “A Nation of Heroes: From Apotheosis to Resurrection,” in *Resurrection of the Dead: Biblical Traditions in Dialogue*, ed. Geert Van Oyen and Tom Shepherd, BETL 249 (Leuven: Peeters, 2012), 456–58, 460; Martin Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism: Studies in Their Encounter in Palestine During the Early Hellenistic Period*, trans. John Bowden, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1974), 196–97; Segal, *Life*, 265–66.

<sup>74</sup> Collins, *Daniel*, 394; Goldingay, *Daniel*, 308.

<sup>75</sup> Wright, *Resurrection*, 58–60, 110–13.

<sup>76</sup> Wright, *Resurrection*, 113. Cf. Elledge, *Resurrection*, 32–34; Puech, *La croyance*, 1:83–85.

<sup>77</sup> Walther Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament*, trans. J. A. Baker, vol. 2, OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1967), 513–14; Nickelsburg, *Resurrection*, 41.

4:1).<sup>78</sup> The text of 1 En. 108:11–15 is more explicitly associated with resurrection and likewise links the shining of the righteous with their reception of the throne of honor. These similar texts from early readers of Daniel—combined with the parallel structure already noted between the second, seventh, and twelfth chapters of Daniel—indicate that the astral/heavenly imagery is a proper parallel to the promises of the saints’ everlasting kingdom in subjection to God.<sup>79</sup>

Of course, it is possible to press this emphasis on the reception of kingship too far so as to make the resurrection language simple imagery for enthronement. Walter Brueggemann argued that the movement of arising from the dust—as in Isa 26:19 and Dan 12:2—was part of an enthronement formula.<sup>80</sup> He thus confidently asserts, “The promise of the text then is not that there will be a departure from the graves, but rather an affirmation that in the movements of history, the ‘nobodies’ will be given great power and the people who now seem to have all the power will not really count in the moment of reversal.”<sup>81</sup> He claims that the difficulty of properly discerning that Isa 26:19 and Dan 12:2 are enthronement formulae is, “because we have expected something else in light of the later faith of the Church.”<sup>82</sup> But the major similarity he can point to is only the reference to dust. There is no sense of “awakening” in the texts he compares nor a prior sense of sleeping in the dust. And his last assertion is especially puzzling, unless he wishes to posit that the Church influenced Second Temple Jewish readers and the rabbis.

However, there is something to be said in favor of this link of—but not identification of—resurrection and enthronement. J. Wijngaards referenced, in relation to Hos 6:2, several ancient examples from covenantal contexts that linked death to deposing and resurrection

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<sup>78</sup> Wright, *Resurrection*, 169–70. Also note Matt 13:43, which uses the same verb as Dan 12:3 in Θ, albeit with reference to the sun, instead of the stars in general.

<sup>79</sup> Cf. André LaCocque, *The Book of Daniel*, 2nd ed. (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2018), 283–84.

<sup>80</sup> Walter Brueggemann, “From Dust to Kingship,” *ZAW* 84 (1972): 1–18, esp. 2–5.

<sup>81</sup> Brueggemann, “From Dust,” 12.

<sup>82</sup> Brueggemann, “From Dust,” 13.

imagery to enthronement or restoration of a vassal by a suzerain.<sup>83</sup> Daniel may well have some relation to this ancient tradition associating resurrection with enthronement in covenantal contexts, albeit with a broader vision of the covenant people being resurrected and enthroned. But affirming such a possibility does not require, as Brueggemann implies, denying the concrete resurrection in this text.<sup>84</sup>

### Summary of Foundations in Verse 3

With all of these points in mind, what does v. 3 contribute to the picture of worldview foundations for resurrection belief in Dan 12? The first foundation of God's inexorable, faithful love appears again in the intertextual links with Isa 52:13–53:12 as what aligns the fates of the servant and the *משכלים*. By this same means of intertextual links, the third foundation of God fulfilling Scripture by acting in accordance with it is manifest in this text. The first foundation is also manifest in the attention the text gives to the *משכלים* and this climax of God's faithful attentiveness to and loving deliverance of those whose lives have often been threatened in the book, even raising them from the dead and exalting them to a royal and/or angelic status.

The second foundation of God's justice is more prominent in this v. 3, particularly concerning a particular sub-group of those vindicated. The attention to this sub-group and their reception of God's exaltation brings into focus the importance of "publicizing" God's justice. The resurrection serves the important function of judgment to uphold the ethical aspect of the

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<sup>83</sup> J. Wijngaards, "Death and Resurrection in Covenantal Context (Hos. VI 2)," *VT* 17 (1967): 230–34.

<sup>84</sup> It is worth noting that Brueggemann acknowledged the literal sense in his later work. See Walter Brueggemann, *Reverberations of Faith: A Theological Handbook of Old Testament Themes* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002), 173; Brueggemann, *Theology of the Old Testament: Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997), 483–84.

worldview. The resurrection at last publicly vindicates the underlying conviction of the Jewish teachers that God honors ethical faithfulness and perseverance in the face of pressure to believe and live otherwise.<sup>85</sup> Indeed, both the faithful and the unfaithful will be present at this judgment so that, as Walther Eichrodt says, “*in their fate the whole seriousness of historical decision for or against God is to be made visible.*”<sup>86</sup> This message would be especially important in a time and place in which people are suffering and dying for their faith (as portrayed in Daniel), although I must disagree with scholars who say that this situation of being murdered for faithfulness was unprecedented in the eyes of the Jews and that it therefore acted as the chief catalyst for resurrection belief.<sup>87</sup> Exile and martyrdom were certainly not sufficient conditions for the expression of resurrection belief in most exilic and post-exilic texts. Nor was the situation of being murdered for righteousness unprecedented, since the traditions of Israel include stories such as Abel, as well as the suffering under Ahab and Jezebel (1 Kgs 17–19; 21).<sup>88</sup>

Such claims tend to demonstrate the overweening interest in the anthropology—as opposed to the theology—of resurrection belief. Rather, the focus is on the transcendent action of God in history to overcome any apparent obstacles—even death itself—to his faithfulness in history. Notably, many later texts would manifest such anthropological concerns alongside the theological (2 Macc 7:9, 14; 12:43–44; 1 En. 51; Sib. Or. 4.181–183; Apocr. Ezek. frag. 1; Apoc. Zeph. 10:12–14; 2 Bar 50:2–51:6; LAB 3:10; Ps.-Phoc. 100–108, 111, 114–115; Josephus, *J.W.*

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<sup>85</sup> Cf. Bonora, “Il linguaggio di risurrezione,” 115; Goldingay, *Daniel*, 318.

<sup>86</sup> Eichrodt, *Theology*, 513 (italics original).

<sup>87</sup> Chester, “Resurrection,” 66; LaCocque, *Daniel*, 277. Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 140 notes this point but attempts not to overemphasize it, lest he should neglect his particular emphasis on the relationship with angels and the sense that the *משכלים* experience angelic fellowship.

<sup>88</sup> Levenson, *Resurrection*, 192–93.

3.374), but such notes are absent in Daniel. He shows more concern for God's faithfulness and God's justice as the foundations for the resurrection event.

Another potential false trail in understanding this foundation is in the overemphasis on the problem of theodicy and the desire for retribution as roots for resurrection belief.<sup>89</sup> Gerhard F. Hasel observes that such concerns are ultimately subordinate to the manifestation of God's glory in his justice, in his kingdom, and thus in resurrection:

The advent of God's universal dominion and thus the manifestation of his glory is signified among other things precisely in the resurrection of the dead ... and beyond in death's final destruction. The corollaries of the manifestation of the glory of God are his sovereign Lordship over history which he directs to its appointed goal and his lordship over life which puts an end to death and leads to new life. Apocalyptic theology knows God as Lord of history and Lord of life. The indispensable feature of the latter is the reestablishment of a life of fellowship and communion with God. The *ṣāddiq* is "righteous", because he is grounded in the vital God-Man relationship.<sup>90</sup>

God's eschatological judgment is part of his action of setting the world aright in order that God may have everlasting communion with his people who bear his image and likeness.

Additionally, as hinted in the previous paragraph, one sees in v. 3 evidence of another form of the fourth foundation likewise described with the adjective "everlasting." The new creation is also the long hoped-for kingdom of God. The imagery of v. 3 in combination with the parallels with chs. 2 and 7 designate the resurrection of the dead as an essential means by which God will establish the eschatological reality of the kingdom. The sense of powerlessness for the covenant people on display throughout this book gives way to God's action of empowering the

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<sup>89</sup> Cf. Alfrink, "L'idée," 369; Day, "The Development of Belief in Life After Death in Ancient Israel," in *After the Exile: Essays in Honour of Rex Mason*, ed. John Barton and David J. Reimer (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1996), 245–47; Elledge, *Resurrection*, 13–18.

<sup>90</sup> Hasel, "Resurrection," 283–84.



people by raising the dead and endowing them with the sovereignty of his kingdom. Hence, as in Isa 52–53 and Ezek 37, the resurrection hope is of one piece with the hope for God’s kingdom.<sup>91</sup>

Contrary to the notion that the resurrection hope of Dan 12 replaces the hope of Dan 7 for the divine kingdom of saintly rule, the imagery of v. 3, the reception of everlasting life, and the various connections noted between the two chapters show that the two objects of hope go together.<sup>92</sup> Resurrection likewise fits with the hope for national restoration, hence why the righteous rise as a group, so that hope never takes an entirely individualistic dimension.<sup>93</sup> In Daniel’s vision, resurrection is the means by which the departed saints experience the fulfillment of promises of God’s kingdom. As such, God acknowledges that the great promises were for all the saints, not simply the ones who would be alive at the time of fulfillment. Those who reign in the everlasting kingdom will themselves receive the corresponding everlasting life.

#### Brief Additional Comments on Verse 13

I have already noted elements of resurrection in v. 13 in the process of examining the rest of this text. The one other feature of v. 13 that requires comment is the use of גורל for what Daniel will receive at the end of days. This term has covenantal connotations in the Tanakh, referring often to the allotment of land for the tribes and families within the tribes (the term is most prevalent in Joshua). The undergirding of that lot is God’s faithfulness to covenantal promises of land grants (Gen 12:7; 23; Exod 3:8, 17; 13:5; 33:3; Lev 20:24; Num 13:27; Deut 6:10–11; 8:7–10; 11:10–15; 26:1–11, 15; Pss 16:5; 89:35–37; Isa 65:17–25; Jer 11:5; 32:22; Ezek 20:6). There is no clear

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<sup>91</sup> Bonora, “Il linguaggio di risurrezione,” 113–15; Levenson, *Resurrection*, 187.

<sup>92</sup> Pace Davies, “Eschatology,” 42–43.

<sup>93</sup> Eichrodt, *Theology*, 514.

sense of a land grant here, but its covenantal connotations are consistent with the first foundation of God's inexorable, faithful love. God is here promising Daniel that he has a portion, an inheritance, after his death and that God himself is the guarantor that Daniel will receive this portion because God is the guarantor that Daniel will live and stand again after his death.

### **Summary of Worldview Foundations for Resurrection Belief**

My analysis has identified at least four worldview foundations for resurrection belief in Dan 12. The first foundation of God's inexorable, faithful love has been operative throughout Daniel in terms both of God's faithfulness in fulfilling promises and of his deliverance of his people, even in ways reminiscent of the traditional portrayal of God as Divine Warrior. This foundation comes to climactic expression in God's resurrecting action as God shows that not even death can hinder the demonstration of his faithful love for his people, as he ultimately delivers them from death to fulfill promises to them. He shows that his promises are for all of his people, not simply those who are already alive at the time of fulfillment. In fact, God not only overcomes death through his resurrecting power, but his love is such that he makes death no longer a possibility for the faithful when he shares with them his everlasting life.

The second foundation of God's justice in setting the world aright, particularly in vindicating the faithful and condemning the wicked, has been another key assumption underlying the whole narrative of Daniel. For this justice to be manifest before all, the dead will need to rise for judgment for living in faithfulness to or denial of God. Resurrection to everlasting life for the righteous serves as the ultimate vindication of their way of life, a way of life defined by faithfulness to God's will, by enabling this way of life to continue forever. Those who have persevered in the face of obstacles to faithfulness will be declared "in the right" before all.

The third foundation, which operates more implicitly in Daniel outside of ch. 9, is that God fulfills Scripture by acting faithfully to both promises made and patterns of action performed. Daniel conveys by the collection of intertextual links in this text—including to Gen 2–3; Isa 26; 52–53; 66; and possibly Ezek 37—that resurrection is in accordance with Scripture, being the means by which God will bring the great promises for his people to fruition.

The fourth foundation, hinted at here with small but noteworthy textual signals, is that the redemption of humans is crucial to fulfilling God’s creative purpose and establishing God’s kingdom. This foundation establishes that the story of which resurrection is a part stretches back to the beginning, wherein God created humans to bear his image and likeness, specifically by their representative reign in creation. In this context, resurrection reverses the problem of death, thereby removing that obstacle to God’s purpose for his people, and enables God’s people to receive everlasting life, as they ideally would have, if not for the breach in relationship that brought death in separation from God.

The long hoped-for reality of the kingdom of God has been crucial to the narrative of Daniel, especially at the crucial junctures of chs. 2 and 7. While ancient precedent often associated resurrection with enthronement in covenantal contexts, here Daniel articulates literal resurrection belief, specifically in an eschatological resurrection to everlasting life, as crucial to the establishment of the everlasting kingdom of God. As God raises his people from the dead and shares with them his life, so also God endows his people with his own heavenly glory and authority in his kingdom.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE CHRISTOLOGICAL CENTER OF GRAVITY: RESURRECTION BELIEF IN 1 COR 15

Martin Luther once said of Paul's teaching on resurrection in 1 Cor 15, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks' is a common saying. St. Paul is able to speak about this article at such length because his heart is filled with it and he is so convinced of it that he regards all else as nothing by comparison."<sup>1</sup> Indeed, by the abundance of Paul's conviction, the strength of his language, and the scope of his vision on the subject, he has impressed upon many generations of readers across the world the cruciality of resurrection belief. This text has been central to multitudes of articulations of Christian resurrection belief, whether in formulated confessions, in fostered controversies, or in other fashions beyond count.<sup>2</sup> While various controversies have certainly contributed to the text's broad legacy of reception, what has given it such significance in the articulation of Christian resurrection belief is in its presentation of the christological center of gravity in Christian resurrection belief, such that Jesus's resurrection shapes the vision of the general resurrection by virtue of its centrality in that grand vision. No other NT text expresses this christological center of gravity to this extent, both explicitly and implicitly. As I argue more directly later, it is this christological center of gravity and its influence in shaping everything around it (hence my description of this resurrection belief as "Christomorphic") that distinguishes Christian resurrection belief from its counterparts in this comparative analysis,

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<sup>1</sup> Martin Luther, "Commentary on 1 Corinthians 15," *1 Corinthians 7, 1 Corinthians 15, Lectures on 1 Timothy*, Luther's Works 28, ed. Hilton C. Oswald (St. Louis: Concordia, 1973), 202.

<sup>2</sup> For histories of such articulations of resurrection belief (or descriptions of the same), see François Altermath, *Du corps psychique au corps spirituel: Interprétation de 1 Cor. 15,35-49 par les auteurs chrétiens des quatre premiers siècles*, BGE 18 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1977); Caroline Walker Bynum, *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity, 200-1336* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995).

even where it otherwise shares similar worldview foundations and functions with other forms of resurrection belief.

While Dan 12 engaged in worldview formation in the context of communal conflict, there was no clear signal that Daniel was engaging specifically with resurrection skepticism (insofar as one can speak of “denial,” it would be of the defectors living in denial that the judgment was coming by their persistent infidelity). Here—as well as in Surah 75—resurrection skepticism provides an impetus for the approach to worldview formation taken in this text. This is one of the root problems—along with the audience’s miscomprehension of the cross—that drives this congregation to be riddled with problems that Paul addresses throughout the letter. For this reason, some of the worldview foundations are more explicit in 1 Cor 15 than in Dan 12. There is also significant overlap in worldview functions of resurrection belief, as Dan 12 is part of Paul’s—and his community’s, outside of the deniers—worldview context. But again, the christological center of gravity reshapes these functions and adds new dimensions to them. To see how exactly these points are manifest in Paul’s action of worldview articulation and formation, this chapter proceeds through the same procedure as the last one, providing a translation of the text, placing the text in its context, proceeding to a more detailed exegetical examination of the text itself, summarizing the worldview foundations demonstrated in the text, and exploring the worldview functions of resurrection belief therein.

### **Translation of the Text**

1 Corinthians 15 <sup>1</sup> Now I make known to you [again], brothers and sisters, the gospel which I proclaimed to you, which also you received, in which you stand, <sup>2</sup> and by which you were saved

(or for what reason did I proclaim to you?),<sup>3</sup> if you hold fast, unless you have believed in vain.<sup>4</sup> <sup>3</sup> For I handed on to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for<sup>5</sup> our sins according to the Scriptures,<sup>4</sup> that he was buried, and that he has been<sup>6</sup> raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,<sup>5</sup> and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the Twelve.<sup>6</sup> After that<sup>7</sup> he appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters, most of whom are still alive even now, though some have fallen asleep.<sup>7</sup> After that he appeared to James, then to all the apostles.<sup>8</sup> Then last of all, as to an aborted one, he appeared to me as well.<sup>9</sup> For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, since I persecuted the church of God.<sup>10</sup> But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me has not proved fruitless. Rather, I labored harder than all of them, yet not I but God's grace which is with me.<sup>11</sup> Whether, then, it is I or they, it is this that we proclaim and it is this that you came to believe.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>12</sup> But if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how then do some among you claim that there is no resurrection of the dead?<sup>13</sup> But if there is no resurrection of the dead, neither can Christ have been raised.<sup>14</sup> Yet if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation is empty,<sup>9</sup> and your faith is also empty.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, we will also be found<sup>10</sup> to be false witnesses of God, because we testified against God that he raised the Christ<sup>11</sup> whom he did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised.<sup>16</sup> For if the dead are not raised, neither has Christ been raised,<sup>17</sup> and

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<sup>3</sup> The translation as a rhetorical question in a parenthetical clause reflects Timothy A. Brookins and Bruce W. Longenecker, *1 Corinthians 10-16: A Handbook on the Greek Text*, BHGNT (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2016), 136–37. Cf. N. Clayton Croy, “A Note on 1 Corinthians 15.1-2,” *BT* 55 (2004): 243–46.

<sup>4</sup> Or “without result” (cf. Rom 13:4; Gal 3:4; 4:11).

<sup>5</sup> The use of ὑπέρ here is controversial, as I discuss below. As such, I opt for a neutral translation here.

<sup>6</sup> Although this is awkward rendering in English, this reflects the Greek perfect, as opposed to the two previous aorists.

<sup>7</sup> Although there is not a profound difference between εἶτα and ἔπειτα in this context, I have attempted to translate the latter in a way that is distinct from the former.

<sup>8</sup> Rendering the aorist as distinct from the present of the previous verb.

<sup>9</sup> Or “insubstantial.” This is the same word translated as “fruitless” in vv. 10 and 58.

<sup>10</sup> I have translated this present as a “futuristic” present, one expressing certainty of an outcome, which seems appropriate in light of the hypothetical setting of this segment.

<sup>11</sup> The first arthrous use of “Christ.”

if Christ has not been raised, your faith is ineffectual, you are still in your sins.<sup>18</sup> It also follows that those who have fallen asleep in Christ have been lost.<sup>19</sup> If we have hoped in Christ only for this life, we are more pitiable than all people.

<sup>20</sup> But actually, Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who sleep.<sup>21</sup> For since by a human death came, by a human also came the resurrection of the dead.<sup>22</sup> For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ<sup>12</sup> all will be made alive.<sup>23</sup> But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; then afterward, at his arrival, those who are Christ's.<sup>24</sup> Then is the end when he hands over the kingdom to him who is God and Father, when he shall have brought to nothing<sup>13</sup> every principality, power, and authority.<sup>25</sup> For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.<sup>26</sup> The last enemy that is doomed to destruction<sup>14</sup> is death.<sup>27</sup> For, "He has put all things in subjection under his feet." But when he shall have said,<sup>15</sup> "all things [are] in subjection," it is clear that "all things" excludes the one who has brought all things into subjection to him.<sup>28</sup> When all things will have been subjected to him, then the Son also will subject himself<sup>16</sup> to the one who subjected all things to him, in order that God may be all in all.

<sup>29</sup> Otherwise what will those people do who are baptized for<sup>17</sup> the dead. If the dead are not raised at all, why then are they baptized for them?<sup>30</sup> Why are we also in danger every hour?

<sup>31</sup> I court fatality daily,<sup>18</sup> by the boasting in you, brothers and sisters, which I have in Christ Jesus

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<sup>12</sup> Although both "Adam" and "Christ" are arthrous, and I discuss this point below, I have rendered both as anarthrous for a smoother English translation (as opposed to "in the Adam" and "in the Christ").

<sup>13</sup> The *ὅταν* + aorist subjunctive *καταργήσῃ*, assuming the completion of the verb's action, functions here as a future perfect. E.-B. Allo, *Saint Paul: Première Épître aux Corinthiens*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Librairie Lecoffre, 1956), 409; Jan Lambrecht, "Structure and Line of Thought in 1 Cor. 15:23-28," *NovT* 32 (1990): 146, 150.

<sup>14</sup> Rendering the future sense of the present form used here. See Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids; Cambridge: Eerdmans; Carlisle: Paternoster, 2000), 1234.

<sup>15</sup> This is the same kind of construction as noted in v. 24, which makes this likely a declaration by a speaking subject, rather than the text being quoted, hence why I add the bracketed "are."

<sup>16</sup> Most translations render this phrase passively. On the proper middle sense, see Larry W. Richards, "ὑποταγῆσεται in 1 Corinthians 15:28b," *AUSS* 38 (2000): 203–6.

<sup>17</sup> As in v. 3, the sense of *ὑπέρ* is controversial here and I have once again opted for a neutral translation.

<sup>18</sup> Thiselton, *Corinthians*, 1250.

our Lord, I so declare.<sup>32</sup> If it was only within human horizons<sup>19</sup> that I have battled wild beasts in Ephesus, what does it profit me? If the dead are not raised: “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.”<sup>33</sup> Do not be deceived, “Bad company corrupts good character.”<sup>34</sup> Become sober-minded, as is proper, and stop sinning. Some people, you see, have no knowledge of God. I say this to your shame.

<sup>35</sup> Nevertheless, someone will say, “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body can they come?”<sup>36</sup> Fool! That which you sow is not made alive unless it dies.<sup>37</sup> And as for what you sow, you do not sow the body which is to be, but a naked grain, perhaps of wheat or of something else.<sup>38</sup> But God gives it a body just as he purposed, and to each of the seeds a body of its own.<sup>39</sup> All flesh is not the same flesh. There is one [flesh] for humans, another flesh for beasts, another flesh for birds, and another [flesh] for fish.<sup>20 40</sup> There are also heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is one thing and the glory of the earthly quite another.<sup>41</sup> The glory of the sun is one thing, the glory of the moon is another, and the stars have yet another glory of their own. For star differs from star in glory.

<sup>42</sup> Thus also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruptibility; it is raised in absolute vivification.<sup>43</sup> It is sown in humiliation; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power.<sup>44</sup> It is sown a body belonging to the soul, it is raised a body belonging to the Spirit. If there is a soul-possessed body, there is also a Spirit-possessed<sup>21</sup> one.<sup>45</sup> Thus also it is written, “The first human being,” Adam, “became a living being;” the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.<sup>46</sup> However, it is not the one who is of the Spirit that is first, but the one who is of the soul and then the one who is of the Spirit.<sup>47</sup> The first is from earth, belonging to dust, the

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<sup>19</sup> Jean Héring, *The First Epistle of Saint Paul to the Corinthians*, trans. A. W. Heathcote and P. J. Allcock (London: Epworth, 1962), 171.

<sup>20</sup> The Greek lacks “flesh” for both the first and last clauses.

<sup>21</sup> In both cases, “possessed” as in “belonging to,” as these are the same phrases used in the previous clause.



second man is from heaven. <sup>48</sup> As is the one of dust, so also are the ones who are of dust; as is the heavenly one, so also are the ones who are heavenly. <sup>49</sup> Just as we have worn the image of the one from the dust, we will also wear<sup>22</sup> the image of the heavenly one.

<sup>50</sup> Now I say this, brothers and sisters: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor corruptibility inherit absolute vivification. <sup>51</sup> Look, I am telling you a mystery: we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed,<sup>23</sup> <sup>52</sup> in an instant, in the blinking of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised absolutely vivified, and we will be changed. <sup>53</sup> For this corruptible [body]<sup>24</sup> must be clothed with absolutely vivification, and this mortal [body] must be clothed with immortality. <sup>54</sup> But when this corruptible [body] will have been clothed in absolute vivification, and this mortal [body] with immortality, then shall come to be the word that is written, “death is swallowed up in victory.” <sup>55</sup> “Death—where is your victory? Death—where is your sting?” <sup>56</sup> Now the sting of death is sin and the power of sin is the law, <sup>57</sup> but thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>58</sup> Therefore, my beloved brothers and sisters, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not fruitless in the Lord.

### The Resurrection of 1 Cor 15 in Context

While ch. 15 is the only extensive engagement with the topic of resurrection in 1 Corinthians, the chapter draws together several strands of themes and motifs spanning the letter. It brings to

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<sup>22</sup> Perhaps the most controversial of the textual variations of this chapter in modern scholarship is whether the earliest recoverable reading was *φορέσομεν* (a future indicative) or *φορέσωμεν* (usually understood as an aorist hortatory subjunctive). I have addressed this variation in detail in K. R. Harriman, “Same Sound, Better Reading? A Text-Critical Analysis of the 1 Cor 15,49 Variants,” *Bib* 102 (2021): 419–34.

<sup>23</sup> As in the Greek of 2 Cor 7:3, this attachment of the negative to the verb actually negates another part of the sentence. The greatest divergence in the textual history of 1 Cor 15 concerns the placement and number of negatives. The alternatives are poorly attested in Greek and/or do not fit cohesively with the chapter (e.g., Paul nowhere indicates that changing is the reserve of the specially rewarded).

<sup>24</sup> Verses 53–54 only use the demonstrative without an accompanying noun.

fruition the eschatological frame on which Paul's whole ethical instruction hangs (1:7–8, 18–19; 2:6–16; 3:12–17; 4:5; 5:5, 13; 6:2–3, 9–11, 14; 7:29–31; 9:25; 10:11–13; 11:26; 13:8–13; 16:22).<sup>25</sup> The articulation here of the gospel to which all Christians agree by virtue of being Christians reflects Paul's frequent exhortations to proper fellowship and unity under the common Lordship of Jesus declared in the gospel (1:10–15; 3; 5–6; 8:7–13; 9:19–27; 10:14–33; 11–14).

Furthermore, when Paul arrives at his resurrection teaching in ch. 15, he thereby envelops the entire letter by building once more on the foundation of the gospel he had already laid among them. After all, ch. 15 (addressing the Corinthians' errors concerning the message of resurrection) reflects a similar problem and tactic of address as 1:18–2:16 (addressing the Corinthians' errors concerning the message of the cross). Deviating from both aspects of the gospel has sown discord and produced a factionalism that perpetuates the same.<sup>26</sup> In both cases, to act in denial of the gospel is to deny the word and power of God, and denial of both is connected to the variety of significant moral problems the Corinthian community faces.<sup>27</sup> Likewise, this structural unity illustrates something of the relationship between the cross and the resurrection. For he clearly proclaimed Jesus's resurrection to the Corinthians (15:1–4), but he says in 2:2 that he determined not to know anything among the Corinthians except "Jesus Christ and him crucified." This structural unity in light of Paul's statement does not illustrate, as Jeremy Punt thinks, "that for Paul the resurrection was in the end actually little more than the warrant

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<sup>25</sup> For more on how Paul sets the scene for 1 Cor 15 with his eschatological statements throughout 1 Corinthians, see Timothy L. Christian, "Paul and the Rhetoric of *Insinuatio*: How and Why 1 Cor 15 Functions Rhetorically as the Climax of 1 Corinthians" (PhD diss., Asbury Theological Seminary, 2019), 294–308.

<sup>26</sup> On discord and factionalism in 1 Corinthians, see esp. Margaret M. Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation: An Exegetical Investigation of the Language and Composition of 1 Corinthians* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1993).

<sup>27</sup> As Paul Gardner states, "This is God's message that is in itself a performative action. The gospel is a speech act with perlocutionary force. Thus, it is that God's gracious act in Jesus Christ is both the content of the gospel and the power of the gospel in producing salvation (Rom 1:16)." Paul Gardner, *1 Corinthians*, ZECNT (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018), 648.

which made the cross ring true,”<sup>28</sup> lest one should think that Paul was a typical modern Western theologian. It is precisely the resurrection and its reproduction for those in union with Christ that is the focus of ch. 15, rather than the cross. As Hendrikus Boers writes, after noting the unity of the cross and resurrection as a single complex of events, “In his mind the Christ who had been crucified was the resurrected Christ who had appeared to him, and inversely, the Christ who appeared to him was the Christ who liberated him from sin.”<sup>29</sup> The word of the cross is also the word of the resurrection, for they proclaim the same Christ.

The teaching here also serves as the basis for completing Paul’s thought in ch. 12 and at still earlier points about the believers’ participatory union with Christ (3:16–17; 5:3–8; 6:9–20; 8:6; 10:16–22). If they are in this union, it follows that they will share in Christ’s resurrection fate. If this is the *telos* of the Christian life, all else in Paul’s ethical instruction follows, per 15:29–34 and 58, and thus denial of this *telos* inevitably entails ethical consequences. Likewise, this teaching provides the underlining for Paul’s exhortation to union in worship in the previous chapters, since it is this gospel of which Jesus’s resurrection—and their implied resurrection—is an essential aspect that defines their community as the community of Christ and, indeed, the body of Christ.

Finally, this chapter, particularly beginning in v. 35, brings to completion Paul’s “body” language used throughout 1 Corinthians (5:3; 6:12–20; 7:4, 34; 9:27; 10:16–17; 11:24–34; 12; 13:3). The literal and metaphorical usage of such “body” language was pervasive in Paul’s context with ideas clustered around it related to politics, cosmology, ethics, mythology

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<sup>28</sup> Jeremy Punt, “Paul, Body, and Resurrection in an Imperial Setting: Considering Hermeneutics and Power,” *Neot* 45 (2011): 327.

<sup>29</sup> Hendrikus Boers, “The Meaning of Christ’s Resurrection in Paul,” in *Resurrection: The Origin and Future of a Biblical Doctrine*, ed. James H. Charlesworth et al. (New York: T&T Clark, 2006), 137.

(especially in terms of the bodies of the gods and heroes), and so on.<sup>30</sup> Outside of ch. 15, *σῶμα* in 1 Corinthians is part of a conceptual constellation linked to physical presence, food, sexuality, temple, outward action, suffering, communion, the Eucharist, and unity in diversity. What links all these points together in the letter, and what is more of a direct implication of the *σῶμα* language in contexts like ch. 12, is what Constantine Campbell has described as the notion of incorporative, identifying, and participatory union, which Paul also signifies by his use of language such as ἐν Χριστῷ (1:2, 4, 30; 3:1; 4:10, 15, 17; 6:11; 10:16; 15:22, 31; 16:24) and ἐν κυρίῳ (4:17; 5:4; 7:22, 39; 9:1–2; 11:11; 15:58).<sup>31</sup> As Paul outlines in ch. 15, the larger reality in which the *σῶμα* is in such a union shapes the characteristics of the *σῶμα*.

Although a fuller treatment of *σῶμα* in relation to resurrection must wait until later, I must briefly address here the sense of the term. One influential account of the use of *σῶμα* claims that it essentially means a “being,” “person,” or “self.”<sup>32</sup> That is, it refers to the “totality” or “whole” of the person, rather than to any particular anthropological aspect. Rudolf Bultmann famously summarized this understanding as, “man does not *have* a *soma*; he *is* *soma*, for in not a few cases *soma* can be translated simply ‘I.’”<sup>33</sup> However, this account features some intractable problems. First, there is no clear attestation of using *σῶμα* in such a holistic fashion. At most, one can argue for *σῶμα* as a synecdoche, but not simply as the whole itself. For the latter

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<sup>30</sup> Despite the problems I note with the analysis of 1 Cor 15, Dale B. Martin, *The Corinthian Body* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995) is a generally helpful orientation to this “body” language in Paul’s context. Also see Dag Øistein Endsjø, *Greek Resurrection Beliefs and the Success of Christianity* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 22–45; Endsjø, “Immortal Bodies, before Christ: Bodily Continuity in Ancient Greece and 1 Corinthians,” *JSNT* 30 (2008): 417–36.

<sup>31</sup> Constantine R. Campbell, *Paul and Union with Christ: An Exegetical and Theological Study* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012). For more on such concepts of relation with Christ, see A. J. M. Wedderburn, “Some Observations on Paul’s Use of the Phrases ‘In Christ’ and ‘With Christ,’” *JSNT* 25 (1985): 83–97.

<sup>32</sup> Rudolf Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, trans. Kendrick Grobel, vol. 1 (New York: Scribner’s Sons, 1951), 192–203; M. E. Dahl, *The Resurrection of the Body: A Study of I Corinthians 15*, SBT 1/36 (London: SCM, 1962), esp. 10, 60–61, 94.

<sup>33</sup> Bultmann, *Theology*, 194.

function, *ἄνθρωπος* served well enough and was readily available to Paul (he uses the term thirty-one times in this letter alone). Second, this interpretation is essentially a misguided inference from the traditional Semitic focus on the person as a whole, albeit from different angles depending on the term used, to the conclusion that a *σῶμα* is simply a totalized reference to that unified nature. Third, this view de-emphasizes the physical character of such “body” language in its literal uses (and in its function as source domain for non-literal uses).<sup>34</sup>

Another influential account identifies *σῶμα* with the physical body as roughly synonymous with “flesh.”<sup>35</sup> This view benefits from greater definitional clarity. Indeed, its clarity is matched by its comprehensibility in that it comports with how “body” language is often used today. Additionally, it illuminates the transition from Paul’s references to the *σῶμα* in resurrection to the early church focus on flesh in resurrection if these terms were synonymous. However, Sarah Harding notes that Paul’s eschatological and cosmological vision that supplies context for his anthropology makes a static anthropology problematic, as, “What humans are is a function of the dominant power. Thus, with the progression from the old to the new aeon, and the introduction of the Holy Spirit, humans undergo transformation as they are caught up in the eschatological dynamic.”<sup>36</sup> A proper articulation of what Paul says when he uses *σῶμα* needs to take greater account of the role of transformation in his thought, as well as the cosmological and eschatological contexts.

James D. G. Dunn attempted to address this problem by arguing that *σῶμα* in Paul typically refers to embodiment, rather than the physical body specifically (although the latter is

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<sup>34</sup> Cf. E. Earle Ellis, “*Sōma* in First Corinthians,” *Int* 44 (1990): 133.

<sup>35</sup> Robert H. Gundry, *Sōma in Biblical Theology: With Emphasis on Pauline Anthropology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987).

<sup>36</sup> Sarah Harding, *Paul’s Eschatological Anthropology: The Dynamics of Human Transformation* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2015), 4 (cf. 26–28).

part of Paul's spectrum of meaning in his use of the term).<sup>37</sup> In other words, "body is not a substance of which a person is composed, but a medium of existence, along with and in communication with other bodies."<sup>38</sup> If one can criticize Gundry's interpretation as being too static, Dunn's is too abstract.<sup>39</sup> It is rather more likely that Paul's different uses of "body" language derive from the source domain of the tangible body, and all that is thereby entailed according to the function it has in a given worldview.

Where Gundry and Dunn are right is in their conceptions of the relational character of the *σῶμα*. It is in/as *σῶμα* that humans interact with the world. According to Harding, "To be a *σῶμα* is to exist within a matrix of interconnected phenomena, bound together by cosmological powers. The *σῶμα* is the corporeal substratum that is determined by the power that dominates it, whether Sin or the Holy Spirit. The operation of these powers, working in and through humans, likewise determines the nature of the cosmos the *σῶμα* inhabits."<sup>40</sup> This is why Paul describes the body of the present age as a bearer, among other things, of corruptibility, mortality, and suffering.<sup>41</sup> Particularly on an ethical level, it is also the, "visible expression of alterations occurring in the *νοῦς* and *καρδία* in response to external stimuli; and it is primarily in and through the authentic actions solidified in the *σῶμα* that humans become aware of what they are."<sup>42</sup> The *σῶμα* is thus both a microcosm of its world and a synecdoche representing the whole human by

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<sup>37</sup> James D. G. Dunn, "How Are the Dead Raised? With What Body Do They Come? Reflections on 1 Corinthians 15," *SwJT* 45 (2002): 9.

<sup>38</sup> Dunn, "How Are the Dead Raised," 9.

<sup>39</sup> Also see James D. G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Grand Rapids; Cambridge: Eerdmans, 1998), 56–57.

<sup>40</sup> Harding, *Paul's Eschatological Anthropology*, 92–93.

<sup>41</sup> On the significance of the last point in particular as it relates to martyrdom and resurrection, see Claudia Janssen, *Anders ist die Schönheit der Körper: Paulus und die Auferstehung in 1 Kor 15* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2005), 82.

<sup>42</sup> Harding, *Paul's Eschatological Anthropology*, 169. For more on the ethical/relational aspects of this "body" language, see Rodolphe Morissette, "L'expression ΣΩΜΑ en 1 Co 15 et dans la littérature paulinienne," *RSPT* 56 (1972): 230–34.

particular reference to corporeal, visible, tangible, relational (including ethical), and unifying characteristics.<sup>43</sup> In fact, as Paul illustrates especially in ch. 12, it is precisely the body's unifying characteristics—both of its different external parts, such as hands and feet, and its internal aspects, such as “mind” and “heart”—that make it a fitting synecdoche for the whole person from a particular angle, as well as a fitting source for “body” language at the corporate level.

The one other reference to resurrection in 1 Corinthians outside ch. 15 appears in 6:14, which is illustrative for how Paul draws together some of these contextual strands (although I cannot examine that text in its context in as much detail here). It reinforces the eschatological frame of Paul's ethical instruction, along with the preceding vv. 9–11. In order to reinforce his teaching that the body is for the Lord, Paul refers to the key gospel event of the resurrection by which Jesus's Lordship was declared and by which he demonstrated the sanctity of the body. The whole segment of vv. 12–20 is one of the most extensive articulations of union with Christ in 1 Corinthians, as well as a text featuring one of the highest concentrations of “body” language in the letter, as the resurrection teaching impinges on what it means to be in union with Christ and on what believers do with the body. This text is also noteworthy for being the only active use of resurrection verbs in the letter besides 15:15. Both texts clearly identify God as the agent and Christ as the recipient of the resurrecting action. In these various ways, one can also see how 1 Cor 6:12–20 itself comes to completion in Paul's fuller exposition on resurrection in ch. 15.

In the process of drawing these strands of his message and rhetoric together, Paul also signifies the worldview foundations on which he constructed his argument for resurrection belief, and thus of how these foundations functioned in the worldview he was communicating to his audience. That he must present these foundations and build upon them is a consequence of

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<sup>43</sup> Cf. Ellis, *Sōma*, 133–34; Harding, *Paul's Eschatological Anthropology*, 183; N. T. Wright, “Mind, Spirit, Soul and Body: All for One and One for All: Reflections on Paul's Anthropology in His Complex Contexts,” in *Pauline Perspectives: Essays on Paul, 1978–2013* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013), 470–71.

the claims of the resurrection deniers among the Corinthians. If not for the resurrection deniers in Corinth, we may never have seen such a theological exposition of the foundations and functions of resurrection belief among the earliest generations of Christians. As such, this text is especially apropos for the type of analysis I undertake here.

### **Resurrection in 1 Cor 15**

#### Verses 1–11

Paul opens this chapter with a verb ordinarily used for disclosure: *γνωρίζω*. In this context, given that Paul is referencing what he has already proclaimed to them and which they received years ago, when he was among them for eighteen months (according to Acts 18:11), scholars generally take this verb as bearing the sense of “remind,” rather than “make known,” as if for the first time.<sup>44</sup> Still, the fact that Paul uses this verb, rather than the more restricted *ἀναμνησκω*, may signal a sense of “making known again,” as a proleptic criticism against the resurrection deniers among the Corinthians.<sup>45</sup> These people are those who have no knowledge of God (v. 34), and thus apparently need these things made known to them again.

How he describes the relationship of the Corinthians to this gospel (vv. 1–2) anticipates the course of his argument, since this gospel of the crucified and risen Christ that they have received is that in which they stand, through which they are being saved (*σώζεσθε*; cf. 1:18), provided that they continue holding fast to it (*κατέχετε*; cf. 11:2), the opposite condition of

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<sup>44</sup> E.g., John Calvin, *Commentary on Corinthians*, vol. 2, trans. John Pringle, (Christian Classics Ethereal Library, 2009): 4, <https://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/calcom40.pdf>

<sup>45</sup> Wayne Coppins, “Doing Justice to the Two Perspectives of 1 Corinthians 15:1-11,” *Neot* 44 (2010): 283.



believing “in vain” (εἰκῆ) by not attaining its end.<sup>46</sup> The Corinthians could accept these basic descriptors of their relationship to the gospel easily enough, but some of them had not yet realized the implications of their relationship to a gospel of a risen Lord, even as they had not realized the implications of their relationship to a gospel of a crucified Lord (1:18–2:16). The message that defines their state of existence is one of the crucified and risen Lord. Their path of salvation past, present, and future runs through the crucified and risen Lord. What they must hold fast to is the gospel and its subject of the crucified and risen Lord. Even as their state of existence should be defined by a way of life participating in the pattern of the crucified Lord, their hope for the future, in which they are participating even now, has the pattern of the risen Lord. While Paul’s Corinthian interlocutors have accepted that Christ has gone the way of crucifixion that leads to resurrection, they have not yet accepted that this same way defines their existence as those who are ἐν Χριστῷ.

This preface prepares the way for Paul’s *narratio* in vv. 3–11, whereby he reestablishes the common ground he shares with the Corinthians, even with those who would deny the general resurrection. This use of *narratio*, despite the common identification of 1 Cor 15 as resembling deliberative (and thus future-oriented) rhetoric, is most likely explicable as being due to the rhetorical convention that narrating past facts facilitated decision-making, so that, “The narration of the past facts underlying the traditional moorings of the doctrine of the resurrection facilitates Paul’s argumentation about the future resurrection.”<sup>47</sup> Since this part of the argument functions not so much to prove Paul’s larger argument as to provide the basis for it, and to establish Paul’s

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<sup>46</sup> As Thomas Aquinas described this state in *Comm. 1 Cor.* §892. Cf. C. K. Barrett, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, BNTC (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1968), 337.

<sup>47</sup> Duane F. Watson, “Paul’s Rhetorical Strategy in 1 Corinthians 15,” in *Rhetoric and the New Testament: Essays from the 1992 Heidelberg Conference*, ed. Stanley E. Porter and Thomas H. Olbricht, JSNTSup 90 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1993), 236–37.

*ethos* as communicator of the *narratio*,<sup>48</sup> one should not see Paul here as arguing for Jesus's resurrection, as his past proclamation has already performed this task. If anything, Paul is narrating already supplied proof, rather than proving at this moment. That this *narratio* consists of references to many other individuals and concludes with a final note that Paul testifies in unison with these other leaders that the Corinthians know further solidifies its function as narrating common ground of tradition in contradistinction to the earlier identified spirit of factionalism in Corinth.<sup>49</sup>

### **Paul and the Pre-Pauline Tradition**

What Paul handed on (*παρέδωκα*) to the Corinthians as of first importance was the gospel that he also received (*παρέλαβον*). This terminology signifies action of “traditioning,” as in 11:2, 23–26, as Paul is conveying a gospel that he did not invent (Rom 6:17; Gal 1:9; Phil 4:8–9; 1 Thess 2:13; 4:1–2; 2 Thess 2:15; 3:6, 14; cf. Gal 1:14; Col 2:8). Several features of this segment further suggest some portion of it is non-Pauline in origin. 1) Paul's overwhelming tendency is to refer to singular “sin” as a power rather than to a collection of individual acts (though see Gal 1:4; 1 Thess 2:16; cf. Rom 3:25).<sup>50</sup> 2) More remarkably, Paul nowhere else uses the reference formula *κατὰ τὰς γραφάς*, but uses some variation of *γέγραπται* (in this letter alone, see 1:19, 31; 2:9;

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<sup>48</sup> Watson, “Paul's Rhetorical Strategy,” 238.

<sup>49</sup> Although it is not unusual for scholars to argue that Paul had different ideas about key concepts from the rest of the early church leaders, the fact that Bruce Chilton attaches the following claim to 1 Corinthians, of all of Paul's letters, is especially baffling: “Paul's view of Jesus' resurrection is, of course, by no means the only one available in the New Testament. Any claim of normativity for it would be misleading, even in Paul's own time (when his disagreements with other authoritative teachers were notorious).” Bruce D. Chilton, *Resurrection Logic: How Jesus' First Followers Believed God Raised Him from the Dead* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2019), 69. On this point, at least, Paul is going out of his way to present his view as in line with the others. To do otherwise would be fatal to the presentation of this particular letter.

<sup>50</sup> The use in v. 17 of this chapter probably takes its cue from this verse.

3:19–20; 4:6; 9:9; 10:7; 11:16; 14:21; 15:45, 54).<sup>51</sup> 3) The reference to “the Twelve” is both an indication of an early fixed reference (which some manuscripts attempted to correct to “the Eleven”) and a unique reference in Pauline texts, even when he might have had occasion for specifying them when referring to apostles. 4) The fourfold parallel structure of  $\theta\tau\iota$  clauses defining the content of what he proclaimed also indicate a fixed structure.<sup>52</sup> Many have noted that this is likely the earliest gospel summary in the NT, since it would have needed to be formulated prior to Paul’s Damascus Road encounter and his initial meeting with the “pillars” of the Jesus movement. As such, scholars suggest that this summary coalesced anywhere between three months to three years after Jesus’s death and resurrection.<sup>53</sup>

Naturally, scholars have engaged in extensive debate over the precise parameters of what Paul received. One extreme proposal by Reginald Fuller, following Ulrich Wilckens, identifies four different formulae signified by the four uses of  $\theta\tau\iota$ , which come from four different sources.<sup>54</sup> Such a claim has understandably not attained much of a following, as it is unclear why

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<sup>51</sup> Cf. Rom 1:17; 2:24; 3:4, 10; 4:17; 8:36; 9:13, 33; 10:15; 11:8, 26; 12:19; 14:11; 15:3, 9, 21; 2 Cor 4:13; 8:15; 9:9; Gal 3:10, 13; 4:22, 27.

<sup>52</sup> Joachim Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, 3rd ed., trans. Norman Perrin (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977), 101–2. For more arguments (not all equally suggestive), see Pinchas Lapide, *The Resurrection of Jesus: A Jewish Perspective*, trans. Wilhelm C. Linss (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1983), 98–99; Michael R. Licona, *The Resurrection of Jesus: A New Historiographical Approach* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press; Nottingham: Apollos, 2010), 224–35. Jeremias’s additional proposal that this text goes back to an Aramaic original has not garnered as much support (*Eucharistic Words*, 102–3). Against an Aramaic original, see Hans Conzelmann, “Zur Analyse der Bekenntnisformel I. Kor. 15,3-5,” *EvT* 25 (1965): 5–6. Given the multilingual character of the Church from the beginning, it is by no means clear that assigning the origin of this proclamation to Judea or Galilee thereby entails that it was originally in Aramaic. It is equally possible that the leaders constructed it in Greek with a view to its transmission beyond primarily Aramaic-speaking communities. Either way, it is not possible to firmly establish the original language. The reference to Peter as “Cephas” is, at best, a supporting argument rather than being of independent value, as Paul refers to Peter this way on multiple occasions, as noted below. Even less likely suggestive is the claim that the “divine passive” reference to the resurrection here (on which, see below), is an indication of a Hebrew or Aramaic way of speaking to avoid mentioning God (Lapide, *Resurrection*, 98).

<sup>53</sup> Licona, *Resurrection*, 234 n. 140; Gerd Lüdemann, *The Resurrection of Jesus: History, Experience, Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994), 37–38; Joseph J. Smith, “Resurrection Faith Today,” *Landas* 20 (2006): 151–52. With such an early tradition in place, Roy Hoover’s claim that the Gospels have such different stories about the resurrection because “there is no common tradition behind them” is unlikely in the extreme. Roy W. Hoover, “Was Jesus’ Resurrection an Historical Event? A Debate Statement with Commentary,” in *The Resurrection of Jesus: A Sourcebook*, ed. Bernard Brandon Scott, Jesus Seminar Guides 4 (Santa Rosa, CA: Polebridge, 2008), 81.

<sup>54</sup> Reginald Fuller, *The Formation of the Resurrection Narratives* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), 13–14.

a series of  $\delta\tau\iota$  uses should signify entirely separate traditions, why a tradition would be exclusively devoted to either the burial or the appearances without reference to anything else, or why one should consider it unlikely that the death and resurrection of Jesus should be part of the same tradition, as attested in a variety of NT texts outside of the Gospels (Acts 2:23–31; 3:13–18; 4:10–11; 5:30; 10:39–42; 13:27–37; 17:3; 26:23; Rom 4:24–25; 5:6–11; 6:1–11; 7:4; 8:34; 14:9; 2 Cor 4:10–12; 5:15; 13:4; Phil 3:10–11; Col 2:11–15; 1 Thess 4:14; Heb 13:20; 1 Pet 1:2–3, 18–21; 2:4–8; 3:18–4:2; Rev 1:5, 17–18; 2:8; 5:5–6).

Most scholars see the pre-Pauline tradition as ending in v. 5 after the last  $\delta\tau\iota$ , either with the appearance to Peter or the appearance to the Twelve.<sup>55</sup> Others develop this notion further by arguing that Paul has joined two or more separate pre-Pauline traditions, one ending at v. 5 and the other(s) including some portion of vv. 6–7 (with v. 6b omitted as an obvious Pauline insertion).<sup>56</sup> Even in this latter development, the gospel that Paul proclaimed is restricted to the first tradition. These scholars regularly give a few reasons for why they see vv. 3b–5 as a traditional unit distinct from the rest of this segment. First, this range of text includes all the most likely signals of non-Pauline origin. Second, the balanced structure of  $\delta\tau\iota$  clauses ends in v. 5, while another structure emerges of  $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\tau\alpha$  or  $\epsilon\pi\epsilon\iota\tau\alpha$  clauses. Third, as Murray J. Harris succinctly expresses, the idea that the whole list of witnesses to the end of v. 7 was part of the original tradition would distort the focus of the tradition, “in the original formula, whatever its extent, the emphasis rests on the death and resurrection of Jesus, with the burial and appearances of Jesus

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<sup>55</sup> E.g., Gérard Claudel, *La confession de Pierre: Trajectoire d'une pericope évangélique*, EBib 2/10 (Paris: Librairie Lecoffre, 1988), 133–35; C. F. Evans, *Resurrection and the New Testament*, SBT 2/12 (London: SCM, 1970), 43–46; Joseph Schmitt, “Le ‘Milieu’ littéraire de la ‘Tradition’ citée dans I Cor., XV, 3b-5,” in *Resurrexit: Actes du Symposium International sur la Résurrection de Jésus (Rome 1970)*, ed. Édouard Dhanis (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1974), 169–81; Thiselton, *Corinthians*, 1186–89.

<sup>56</sup> Peter J. Kearney, “He Appeared to 500 Brothers (I Cor. XV 6),” *NovT* 22 (1980): 264–84; Jerome Murphy-O’Connor, “Tradition and Redaction in 1 Cor 15:3-7,” *CBQ* 43 (1981): 582–89; A. J. M. Wedderburn, *Beyond Resurrection* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1999), 114–15.

confirming the reality of these events. A lengthy list of witnesses would not only create a structural imbalance in the formula but would tend to detract from the centrality of the death-resurrection by making the tradition appear largely apologetic.”<sup>57</sup> This last reason is the weakest. Since the witnesses testify to the risen Jesus, it is difficult to see why this should be the case, nor is it clear at what point one crosses the threshold that shifts the focus to the witnesses. By this same notion, Paul’s addition of the witnesses, plus his personal story that is longer than the narration of the gospel complex, would also be detracting from that focus.

Finally, a few scholars have proposed that the pre-Pauline tradition that Paul passed on to the Corinthians includes all of vv. 3b–7, minus Paul’s comment on the state of the 500+ in v. 6b.<sup>58</sup> With that omission, one can see an additional structure—this time chiastic—of appearances introduced with εἶτα, ἔπειτα + ὥφθη, ἔπειτα + ὥφθη, then εἶτα.<sup>59</sup> The change in structure is hardly an indication that the fixed tradition has concluded, as there is no reason to continue the ὅτι clauses after noting the first appearance. The εἶτα and ἔπειτα clauses are simply continuing an element of the traditional formula (including by using the same verb with the latter adverb), rather than introducing a new one, as in the progression from death to burial to resurrection to appearance. If the established list of witnesses included the content of vv. 6–7 (minus the obvious insertion), and the Corinthians knew this because it was part of what Paul proclaimed to them, it makes better sense of why Paul keeps the list this extensive before he mentions himself, whereas the alternative would be that he set up his own obstacle by adding to a pre-established

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<sup>57</sup> Murray J. Harris, *Raised Immortal: Resurrection and Immortality in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985), 10.

<sup>58</sup> Birger Gerhardsson, “Evidence for Christ’s Resurrection According to Paul: 1 Cor 15:1–11,” in *Neotestamentica et Philonica: Studies in Honor of Peder Borgen*, ed. David E. Aune, Torrey Seland, and Jarl Henning Ulrichsen, *NovTSup* 106 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 79–80; Kirk R. MacGregor, “1 Corinthians 15:3b–6a, 7 and the Bodily Resurrection of Jesus,” *JETS* 49 (2006): 227–29; David M. Moffitt, “Affirming the ‘Creed’: The Extent of Paul’s Citation of an Early Christian Formula in 1 Cor 15,3b–7,” *ZNW* 99 (2008): 49–73.

<sup>59</sup> For more on this structure and its significance, see Moffitt, “Affirming,” 53–60.

list the reference to “all the apostles” that did not include him. On the other hand, such a reference to “all the apostles” would provide him an opportunity not only to add his own testimony, but to discuss his own apostleship.<sup>60</sup>

Additional evidence favoring a collection of testimonies being part of such a summary comes from the gospel proclamations of Acts. In these speech summaries, one sees contents, and sometimes structures, resembling what Paul outlines in his summary of tradition. Peter’s speech on Pentecost in Acts 2 moves from Jesus’s death (2:23) to his resurrection and implied burial corresponding with Scripture (2:24–31) to the declaration of witness (2:32). Likewise, Peter’s speech at Solomon’s Porch moves from Jesus’s death (3:13b–15a) to his resurrection (3:15b) to the declaration of witness (3:15c), later followed by linking with Scripture (3:18, 22–25). The speech of the apostles in Acts 5 is different in that it moves from a statement of Jesus’s resurrection (5:30a) to a description of his death (5:30b) to a statement of his exaltation (5:31) to the declaration of witness (5:32). Peter’s speech to Cornelius in Acts 10 is especially emphatic on the element of witness, as he moves from declaration of apostolic witness of Jesus’s ministry (10:39a) to describing Jesus’s death (10:39b) to his resurrection (10:40) to declaration of witness (10:40b–42) to fulfillment of Scripture (10:43). Finally, Paul’s speech in Pisidian Antioch moves from referencing Jesus’s death in connection with Scripture (13:27–28) to an explicit burial (13:29) to his resurrection (13:30) to the declaration of witness that implies a crowd larger than the Twelve, as in 1:1–3, 15 (13:31, omitting clear reference of Jesus’s appearance to Paul, unlike his defense speeches), which he then follows with further correspondence of Jesus’s resurrection with Scripture (13:32–37). As these texts are speech summaries, it is uncertain if these speeches featured lists of witnesses like the one in 1 Cor 15—and if any additional stories like those found in the Gospels might have been featured, as Acts shows significant variability in structure and

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<sup>60</sup> Moffitt, “Affirming,” 69.

content extent of each proclamation—but given their summary nature, the age of this tradition, the need for invoking witnesses, and the similarities of content and even structure (especially in the cases of Acts 2 and 13), it is plausible that Acts corroborates that the structure of vv. 3b–7 (minus 6b) as a whole reflects pre-Pauline apostolic preaching.<sup>61</sup>

As with the Acts speeches, this “creed” in 1 Cor 15 summarizes larger stories and is not simply a list of facts. As Stefan Alkier notes, “The verbs *die—to be buried—to be raised—appear* are the smallest narrative details that in their sequence reveal the narrative plot of the Jesus-Christ-Story in its Pauline version.”<sup>62</sup> That story is itself set in the narrative context of Scripture, here merely summarized as “according to the Scriptures.”<sup>63</sup> Paul and his fellow evangelists could hardly have made such a statement without having some specific details to address questions that would obviously arise. Similarly, the references to these appearances would raise questions that would most naturally be addressed—in anticipatory or responsive fashion—with narratives.

Birger Gerhardsson states this point best:

Elementary psychological considerations tell us that the early Christians could scarcely mention such intriguing events as those taken up in statements about Jesus’ death and resurrection without being able to elaborate on them. Listeners must immediately have been moved to wonder and ask questions. Regarding our text there must have existed in support of the different points in the enumeration ... narratives about how they came

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<sup>61</sup> On the early character of resurrection formulae in Acts, see Gary R. Habermas, “Experiences of the Risen Jesus: The Foundational Historical Issue in the Early Proclamation of the Resurrection,” *Di* 45 (2006): 291–92. These correlations also make more plausible the common explanation of the relationship of Paul’s claim of receiving this gospel with his claim in Gal 1:11–12. As Wright explains, “The *content* – that Jesus had been raised from the dead, and the basic truths that followed from that – he had, it is true, received independently of anyone else, on the road to Damascus. But the *form*, this way of putting it, this manner of telling the story, was apparently passed on *to* him (verse 3), and passed on *by* him to his churches.” Wright, *Resurrection*, 319 (emphases original). Cf. Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians*, AB 32 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 545–46.

<sup>62</sup> Stefan Alkier, “*The Reality of the Resurrection: The New Testament Witness*,” trans. Leroy A. Huizenga (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2013), 23. On the overall sequential similarities of this text with the Gospels, see Dale C. Allison, Jr., *Resurrecting Jesus: The Earliest Christian Tradition and Its Interpreters* (New York; London: T&T Clark, 2005), 239.

<sup>63</sup> In a similar vein, Craig Keener notes that this text resembles the frequent appearance of a narrative framework reciting divine acts in the OT in outlines of salvation history (*1-2 Corinthians*, NCBC [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005], 123).

about. Our text is, as I have already pointed out, a list rather than a narrative. It cries out for elaboration. A preacher can begin with an outline, but he cannot go on forever repeating mere outlines.<sup>64</sup>

As such, one can conclude that this list of witnesses presupposes narratives attached to the various figures. Thus, while the assembled written Gospels may be products later than this letter, at least some of the stories—whether in the Gospels or not—surrounding these summary points were likely already circulating before Paul.

In light of these evangelistic and narrative interests, it is further unlikely that this list was designed for the purposes of legitimation of the people who Jesus appeared to.<sup>65</sup> On the one hand, it is difficult to imagine this being the primary purpose if the facticity of the central story they attest to was not somehow established in the same context (meaning that such a formula would hardly have served for evangelistic purposes). On the other hand, such a purpose cannot make sense of the reference to the unnamed 500+, nor of the sequence of appearances. This claim is built upon the fact that this list names prominent individuals, but as Dale Allison argues, this was probably simply because they were well known, “If Jesus had appeared to the obscure Peleg and to the little-known Serug as well as to the famed Peter and to the important James, we would expect a creed to advert to the latter, not to the former pair.”<sup>66</sup> The primary function of this list in terms of worldview formation is to affirm the central gospel narrative through the individual narratives it summarizes, rather than to authorize only certain individuals as teachers or proclaimers.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Gerhardsson, “Evidence,” 89. Cf. Allison, *Resurrecting Jesus*, 235.

<sup>65</sup> Pace Daniel A. Smith, *Revisiting the Empty Tomb: The Early History of Easter* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2010), 34–35; William O. Walker, Jr., “Postcrucifixion Appearances and Christian Origins,” *JBL* 88 (1969): 157–65; Ulrich Wilckens, “Der Ursprung der Überlieferung der Erscheinungen des Auferstandenen,” in *Dogma und Denkstrukturen*, ed. Wilfried Joest and Wolfhart Pannenberg (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1963), 64–71.

<sup>66</sup> Allison, *Resurrecting Jesus*, 237.

<sup>67</sup> For more against this legitimation hypothesis, see Licona, *Resurrection*, 339–43.



## The Summary of Gospel Events

With this framework of the whole established, we can now proceed to analyze the parts of the text. The first part of the gospel message Paul highlights is that Christ died *ὑπέρ* our sins. I am most convinced by the interpretation that sees in this preposition a causal sense: “because of our sins.”<sup>68</sup> The need to deal with the problem of sin is the motivating cause for Jesus’s death, rather than sins being what he dies on behalf of, the proper object of which would be people. This causal sense of *ὑπέρ* would fit the sense of Isa 53:5, part of the chapter most widely recognized as having the most direct OT resonance with this text.<sup>69</sup> Most specifically, it comports with the OG as a potential translation of Isa 53:5, as it uses the causal construction of *διὰ* + accusative. Others have linked this reference to Ps 22;<sup>70</sup> Dan 9:26;<sup>71</sup> Zech 12:10.<sup>72</sup> But I must save further comment on his death being “according to the Scriptures” for later when the same note reappears after reference to resurrection.

The next clause in v. 4a simply states that Jesus was buried. I return to the question of how this statement relates to whether Paul understood the tomb to be empty below. For now, two points are worth noting. First, although the phrase “according to the Scriptures” is not attached to this clause, some—especially ancient teachers—have noted this statement as a further correlation

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<sup>68</sup> E.g., Kenneth E. Bailey, *Paul Through Mediterranean Eyes: Cultural Studies in 1 Corinthians* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press Academic, 2011), 432–33.

<sup>69</sup> John Chrysostom, *Hom 1 Cor.* 38.3; Theodoret, *Comm. 1 Cor.* 15:3; Ambrosiaster, *Comm. 1 Cor.* 15:3; Hans Conzelmann, *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, trans. James W. Leitch, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), 255; Gardner, *1 Corinthians*, 652–54; Johannes Weiss, *Der erste Korintherbrief*, KEK 9 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1910), 347–48.

<sup>70</sup> Simon J. Kistemaker, *Exposition of the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993), 529.

<sup>71</sup> Calvin, *Corinthians*, 6.

<sup>72</sup> Gregory J. Lockwood, *1 Corinthians*, ConcC (St. Louis: Concordia, 2000), 553.

with Scripture. Ambrosiaster linked it to Isa 53:9 (*Comm. 1 Cor. 15:3*),<sup>73</sup> Theodoret connected it with the OG Isa 57:2 (*Comm. 1 Cor. 15:3*), and John Chrysostom noted the correspondence of both the burial and the resurrection “on the third day” with the story of Jonah (*Hom 1 Cor. 38.4*). Although the tradition does not directly link Scripture with the burial, such correlations are hardly out of line among the earliest Christians, as illustrated in Acts 2 and 13 above.

Second, some have claimed that this statement serves simply to confirm that Jesus had died.<sup>74</sup> In some cases, scholars have made this claim for the purpose of heading off the notion that Paul’s reference to the burial could be a confirmation of bodily resurrection.<sup>75</sup> However, this subordination is an assumed conceptual one, not a grammatical one, as there is no sign of hypotactic syntax here. It is simply the second of four clauses that begin with *ὅτι*. There is no need to suppose a conceptual subordination of burial to death and appearances to resurrection when the more obvious relationship between these facts is simply chronological. This same relationship then becomes more grammatically obvious in the list of appearances vv. 5–7. A chronological relationship also fits better as a precedent set for early church summaries, as David M. Moffitt notes, “Moreover, as more formal Christian creeds do develop, they show a distinct tendency in the christological portions toward a chronological enumeration of events in Jesus’ life. One already sees this in the development of the *regula fidei* in the second and third centuries.”<sup>76</sup> It is difficult to account for this widespread and well established tendency if this initial “creed” that had already been established for decades and spread to areas well beyond its origin had a markedly different structure.

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<sup>73</sup> Cf. Jacob Thiessen, *Die Auferstehung Jesu in der Kontroverse: Hermeneutisch-exegetische und theologische Überlegungen* (Zürich; Berlin: LIT, 2009), 94.

<sup>74</sup> Aquinas, *Comm. 1 Cor.* §896; Jan Lambrecht, “Line of Thought in 1 Cor 15,1-11.” *Greg* 72 (1991): 663–65; Gerd Lüdemann, “The Resurrection of Jesus: Fifteen Years Later,” in *Resurrection of the Dead: Biblical Traditions in Dialogue*, ed. Geert van Oyen and Tom Shepherd, BETL 249 (Leuven: Peeters, 2012), 543.

<sup>75</sup> Conzelmann, *Corinthians*, 255; Lüdemann, “Resurrection,” 543.

<sup>76</sup> Moffitt, “Affirming,” 61.

With the next clause, the one most important for the purposes of this analysis, Paul proclaims that Christ has been raised from the dead on the third day according to the Scriptures. The first point to examine is the bare statement of Christ’s having been raised from the dead. The verb Paul uses exclusively in this chapter for referring to Jesus’s resurrection is ἐγείρω. Like ἀνίστημι, ἐγείρω implies, “a physical motion upward from the state of sleep, lying down or death – in contexts where individuals are sleeping, lying down or dead.”<sup>77</sup> Cook, drawing from Ammonius, also makes a slight general distinction—which still collapses in some contexts—between ἀνίστημι and ἐγείρω in that the former refers to arising from a sitting or supine position while the latter refers to arising from sleep.<sup>78</sup> In broader Greek usage, authors use both terms to refer to rising/raising from the dead, but they seem to prefer ἐγείρω for rousing from sleep and connected ideas, whereas they prefer ἀνίστημι for raising in building action or in “standing” to take action.<sup>79</sup> Similar ranges of meaning are also operative in NT usage, although it is also notable that ἐγείρω appears in contexts of healing, causing to exist, or arising to take action.<sup>80</sup> Johannes P. Louw and Eugene A. Nida likewise include ἐγείρω in the semantic domains of change of state (by restoring), causing to exist, standing, waking, restoring someone to health, and living again after being raised from death, while they include ἀνίστημι in the semantic domains of standing and living again after being raised from death.<sup>81</sup> The primary ways authors distinguish the uses of both verbs for resurrection are through contextual references to death or the dead. In the case of the NT, an additional trope is to add reference to “three days” or “the

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<sup>77</sup> Cook, “Resurrection,” 59. Cf. Ware, “Resurrection,” 492–94.

<sup>78</sup> Cook, “Resurrection,” 58–59.

<sup>79</sup> Franco Montanari, ed., *The Brill Dictionary of Ancient Greek* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), s.v. “ἀνίστημι,” “ἐγείρω.”

<sup>80</sup> BDAG, s.v. “ἀνίστημι,” “ἐγείρω.”

<sup>81</sup> L&N 13.65, 83, 17.7, 9–10, 23.77, 94, 140.

third day” concerning Jesus’s resurrection and “the last day” or some other eschatological indicator for the general resurrection.

In this text, the verb is also in the perfect passive form: ἐγήγερται. The sense of the perfect in this context emphasizes the completed state-establishing action of Jesus’s resurrection—i.e., that Jesus’s resurrection has established a new state of affairs—that has continuing results. The perfect also marks this event out from the preceding and succeeding series of aorist verbs that refer to past events. The results of this past action still resonate for the audience, and it is this action that brings forward the results of the previous actions, for it was the dead and buried Jesus who has been raised.

The fact that this verb is in the passive has inspired more discussion. This is technically an agentless passive construction, specifically of the type where God is the assumed agent. Throughout the chapter, Paul typically uses the passive form (vv. 4, 12–14, 15, 16 [2x], 17, 20, 29, 32, 35, 42, 43 [2x], 44, 52; cf. Rom 4:25; 6:4, 9; 7:4; 8:34; 2 Cor 5:15; 2 Tim 2:8), but the cases in which he uses it actively also inform his passive use, since the active form shows that God is the active party in resurrection (v. 15 [2x]; cf. Rom 4:24; 8:11 [2x]; 10:9; 1 Cor 6:14; 2 Cor 1:9; 4:14 [2x]; Gal 1:1; Eph 1:20; Col 2:12; 1 Thess 1:10). The recipients of these verbs in this chapter are either Christ (vv. 4, 12–14, 16, 17, 20), the faithful dead (vv. 15, 16, 29, 32, 35, 52), or bodies (vv. 42–44).<sup>82</sup> The assumed or explicit agent of the verbs—God—appears to be consistent throughout each use.

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<sup>82</sup> David R. Kirk argues that the recipients of σπείρεται and ἐγείρεται in vv. 42–44 are the present and new cosmos respectively and that Paul signals this through the use of ἡ ἀνάστασις τῶν νεκρῶν as a synecdoche for the larger cosmological hope. David R. Kirk, “Seeds and Bodies: Cosmology, Anthropology and Eschatology in 1 Corinthians 15:35–49” (PhD diss., University of Aberdeen, 2015), 205–6. Although I am inclined to agree with Kirk’s larger argument, as I show below, this sense of contrast between old and new creation is at least a degree removed from the more immediate sense, wherein the bodies are particular instantiations of the cosmological principles Paul outlines in vv. 36–41. Indeed, if Christ’s body is a kind of microcosm of the new cosmos in a way similar to how Adam’s body was a microcosm of the present cosmos, as Kirk himself argues (“Seeds and Bodies,” 206–17), then it would make sense for Paul to use bodies as the recipients of vv. 42–44.

But this passive use has raised two further issues in scholarship. The first issue is that many scholars have assumed the presence of a *passivum divinum* or divine passive here and in the rest of the chapter.<sup>83</sup> In NT scholarship, *passivum divinum* is the name given to the perceived tendency of NT authors to use agentless passive constructions, “to indicate an action of God without referring to God (and certainly not by name) out of reverence for the deity.”<sup>84</sup> Some scholars may mean this term simply as a shorthand for an agentless passive construction with God as the implied agent, but others clearly retain its classical sense and it is not easy to tell the difference in the absence of clear explanation.

This idea is not applicable for these passives for two reasons. One, the context directly states that God is the agent. If the intention of this construction is to function as a reverential circumlocution, then Paul has undermined the need for it with his active statements in v. 15 and 1 Cor 6:14. Two, this hypothesis misconstrues the point of agentless passives. Unlike the active construction, which emphasizes agency by its identification of the agent and subject, the passive construction emphasizes what is influenced by the action by its identification of the subject and the influenced one.<sup>85</sup> As such, the agent is no longer the focus in this construction, and the lack of reference may be due to the lack of need to be explicit (based on the context, as here), the lack of a clear agent, or some other reason altogether.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Among the many scholars who assume the presence of a *passivum divinum*/divine passive here, see Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Der erste Brief des Paulus an die Korinther*, Historisch Theologische Auslegung (Wuppertal: Brockhaus, 2006), 959; Christian Wolff, *Der erste Brief des Paulus an die Korinther*, THKNT 7 (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2000), 406; Wright, *Resurrection*, 321.

<sup>84</sup> Peter-Ben Smit and Toon Renssen, “The *passivum divinum*: The Rise and Fall of an Imaginary Linguistic Phenomenon,” *Filología Neotestamentaria* 28.47 (2014): 3.

<sup>85</sup> Ben-Smit and Renssen, “*passivum divinum*,” 19.

<sup>86</sup> Ben-Smit and Renssen, “*passivum divinum*,” 20–21; Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 435–38.

The second issue is that the passive form of this verb can properly function as a medial intransitive (in this case, “he has risen”).<sup>87</sup> Some scholars have suggested such a use for this text.<sup>88</sup> The passive in v. 4 works against this idea, assuming that Paul has not adapted the voice of this pre-Pauline tradition. Outside of Paul, there are also early uses of some variation of “God raised Jesus” statements using both *ἐγείρω* (Acts 3:15; 4:10; 5:30; 10:40; 13:30, 37; cf. 1 Pet 1:21) and *ἀνίστημι* (Acts 2:24, 32; 13:34; cf. 17:3, 31). The consonance already noted with the gospel proclamations in Acts may further suggest that we see a similar “God raised Jesus” notion implied by this verb form, even if the focus is on the action.

But whatever the case may be for v. 4, the other passive uses in this chapter require explanation. First, the active uses in v. 15 illuminate the passive uses elsewhere in this chapter. Otfried Hofius claims that the parallel between the nominal *ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν οὐκ ἔστιν* in vv. 12–13 and the passive *νεκροὶ οὐκ ἐγείρονται* in vv. 15–16 suggests that the latter phrase has a similarly intransitive sense conveying the rising of the dead instead of suggesting an agent.<sup>89</sup> The problem with Hofius’s claim for this parallel is that the passive form immediately follows these active uses; the first application of this verb to the dead, rather than Christ, does not appear until Paul has identified who raises the dead. Second, this reference to God as not raising the dead in this hypothetical outcome is the central problem that causes everything else to fall apart. It is less of an issue that the dead do not rise than it is that the God the apostles have testified about does not raise the dead. Thus, the cruciality of v. 15 and its active use imply that Paul uses true passives.

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<sup>87</sup> Otfried Hofius, “‘Am dritten Tage auferstanden von den Toten:’ Erwägungen zum passiv ΕΓΕΙΡΕΣΘΑΙ in christologischen Aussagen des Neuen Testaments,” in *Resurrection in the New Testament: Festrict J. Lambrecht*, ed. R. Bieringer, V. Koperski, and B. Lataire, BETL 165 (Leuven: Leuven University Press; Peeters, 2002), 93–106. On the ambiguity in general, see Cook, *Empty Tomb*, 24–30.

<sup>88</sup> Hofius, “‘Am dritten Tag,’” 102–4; Jacob Kremer, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther*, RNT (Regensburg: Pustet, 1997), 324–35; Thiessen, *Auferstehung*, 98.

<sup>89</sup> Hofius, “‘Am dritten Tag,’” 103–4.

Next, we encounter the second statement that an event—Jesus’s resurrection on the third day has happened “according to the Scriptures.” Frederic Godet observes, “the Divine testimony of the Scriptures is designedly placed before all the apostolic testimonies which are about to follow. The Scriptures had said the event would happen; the witnesses declare it has happened.”<sup>90</sup> The phrase itself also hints at a number of themes to unpack over the course of this investigation, as Anthony C. Thiselton summarizes well:

(a) First, it does indeed relate this divine act of vindication and sovereign action to *the theme of promise*. Its occurrence rests not only on divine power and divine grace, but also on *divine faithfulness* to vindicate his obedient messianic agent. (b) Second, therefore, it would amount to *unintended reductionism and constraint if we seek to isolate some specific individual text* (e.g., Ps 2:7; 16:9, 10; or Hos 6:2) rather than understanding the resurrection of Christ as the witness to a climactic fulfillment of a cumulative tradition of God’s promised eschatological act of sovereignty and vindication in grace. In this respect the phrase operates in precise parallel with its use in relation to Christ’s death **for our sins** in v. 3. (c) Third, it bears witness to *the character of God whom the scriptures portray as a giving and gracious* as well as a sovereign, faithful creator.<sup>91</sup>

In these ways, this general statement paves the way for Paul’s multiple uses of Scripture in quotation, allusion, and echo throughout this chapter to show that both Christ’s resurrection and the believers’ resurrection accord with Scripture and are part of the grand narrative of God and God’s people conveyed in Scripture.

Of course, that both vv. 3b and 4b resort to these general statements has raised the question of what, if any, specific Scriptures are evoked. As noted already, the most common text linked with the first reference is Isa 53, and John Chrysostom extends the connection to resurrection, relying on vv. 8–11 in that passage (*Hom. 1 Cor. 38.4*).<sup>92</sup> He also connects the

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<sup>90</sup> Frederic Louis Godet, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, trans. A. Cusin, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1971), 331.

<sup>91</sup> Thiselton, *Corinthians*, 1195 (bold and italics original).

<sup>92</sup> Cf. Andreas Lindemann, *Der erste Korintherbrief*, HNT 9/1 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), 331.

resurrection to the story of Jonah (particularly 1:17) and Ps 16:10, a set of links he shares with Theodoret (*Comm. 1 Cor.* 15:3).<sup>93</sup> Ambrosiaster cites Hos 6:2 in reference to the resurrection, given the use of resurrection language in that text, as well as its reference to “the third day” (*Comm. 1 Cor.* 15:4; cf. Tertullian, *Marc.* 4.43; *Adv. Jud.* 13.23; Cyprian, *Test.* 2.25; Lactantius, *Epit.* 47; Aquinas, *Comm. 1 Cor.* §897). Overall, commentators have proposed a variety of texts, including Gen 1:11–13;<sup>94</sup> Exod 19:10–11, 16;<sup>95</sup> Lev 23:10–11, 15;<sup>96</sup> 2 Kgs 20:5;<sup>97</sup> Ps 16:9–10;<sup>98</sup> Hos 6:2;<sup>99</sup> Jon 1:17.<sup>100</sup> Sometimes scholars note even longer lists of texts, usually revolving around reference to “three days” or a “third day.”<sup>101</sup> The Ps 16 text is the one that does not reference a third day, but such an idea is assumed to be implicit because of the statement that the holy one will not see corruption/decay, which is then correlated with the apparently widespread contemporary beliefs that decay does not begin until after the third day and that the soul hovers near the body for three days (outside of the rabbis, noted texts include T.Abr. 20:11; T.Job 53:5–

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<sup>93</sup> Cf. Martin Pickup, “‘On the Third Day’: The Time Frame of Jesus’ Death and Resurrection,” *JETS* 56 (2013): 536–37.

<sup>94</sup> Jens Christensen, “And That He Rose on the Third Day According to the Scriptures,” *SJOT* 2 (1990): 101–13. He notes a similar notion linking the cross and the tree of life (created on the third day) in Ignatius, *Smyr.* 1.2; *Trall.* 11; Barn. 8.5; Justin, *Dial.* 73; *1 Apol.* 41.4.

<sup>95</sup> Cyprian, *Test.* 2.25; Lindemann, *Korintherbrief*, 331

<sup>96</sup> Jacob Thiessen, “Firstfruits and the Day of Christ’s Resurrection: An Examination of the Relationship Between the ‘Third Day’ in 1 Cor 15:4 and the ‘Firstfruit’ in 1 Cor 15:20,” *Neot* 46 (2012): 379–93; Joel R. White, “‘He Was Raised on the Third Day According to the Scriptures,’ (1 Corinthians 15:4): A Typological Interpretation Based on the Cultic Calendar in Leviticus 23,” *TynBul* 66 (2015): 103–19.

<sup>97</sup> Lindemann, *Korintherbrief*, 331.

<sup>98</sup> E.g., John C. Poirier, “Psalm 16:10 and the Resurrection of Jesus ‘on the Third Day’ (1 Corinthians 15:4),” *Journal for the Study of Paul and His Letters* 4 (2014): 149–67.

<sup>99</sup> E.g., James Moffatt, *The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians*, MNTC (New York; London: Harper and Brothers, 1900), 237–38; Lidija Novakovic, *Raised from the Dead According to Scripture: The Role of Israel’s Scripture in the Early Christian Interpretations of Jesus’ Resurrection*, T&T Clark Jewish and Christian Texts 12 (London: Bloomsbury; T&T Clark, 2012), 126–33.

<sup>100</sup> Justin, *Dial.* 107; Cyprian, *Test.* 2.25; Lockwood, *1 Corinthians*, 554. For more on various proposals, see Karl Lehmann, *Auferweckt am dritten Tag nach der Schrift: Früheste Christologie, Bekenntnisbildung und Schriftauslegung im Lichte von 1 Kor. 15, 3–5, QD 38* (Freiburg: Herder, 1968), 205–316.

<sup>101</sup> The occasional suggestion that “according to the Scriptures” is linked with only the resurrection and not the reference to the third day cannot be sustained on a syntactical basis. Furthermore, the similar statement in Luke 24:45–48 rules out that the reference to the third day would naturally be excluded (cf. John 2:18–22). For more on this point, see Poirier, “Psalm 16:10,” 152–53.



8; Apoc. Zeph. 4:7).<sup>102</sup> While some reference to Ps 16 is plausible, it is less clear that the connection would be made precisely because of this background belief, as it is not well-attested before this pre-Pauline tradition and even the earlier texts thought to corroborate its presence are typically read in light of the later rabbinic texts when it is otherwise not clear that this is the notion they present.

Of course, since the reference is to plural Scriptures for both the death and resurrection, one should probably not look for a singular text. If this general idea came from Jesus, as Luke 24:25–27, 44–47 attests, it seems unlikely that one text was at the root of this belief that the gospels events happened according to the Scriptures. In the proclamations of Acts, when specific texts are linked to the resurrection, it is precisely multiple texts that appear, not the same one in every case (Acts 2:22–36; 4:10–11; 13:27–37; possibly 3:22–23). Furthermore, it is more likely that the “third day” feature of this belief came from a memory, particularly the discovery of the empty tomb, than that it was woven out of whole cloth from a particular text (especially if that one text was Hos 6:2, which otherwise shows no impact on the NT).<sup>103</sup> As in Luke, the process moved from the events to Scriptures, not the other way around.

Such a process would also explain why most of the early references to the fulfillment of the Scriptures in Jesus’s death and resurrection remain generalized (Luke 24:25–27, 44–47; John 2:18–22; 17:12; 20:9; Acts 3:24; 8:32–35; 10:43; 17:2–3, 11, 18; 18:28; 26:6–8, 22–23; 28:23; Rom 1:1–4), including this one. For this reason, as Thiselton exemplifies above, the majority of scholars today think of this accordance with the Scriptures as either general thematic fulfillment

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<sup>102</sup> Poirier, “Psalm 16:10,” 160–62. More extensively, see Pickup, ““Third Day,”” 511–42.

<sup>103</sup> William Lane Craig, “The Historicity of the Empty Tomb of Jesus,” *NTS* 31 (1985): 42–49. One might also suggest that Jesus’s predictions served some role in this memory, but that reference may be at a further remove from this text.

or fulfillment of Scripture as a whole.<sup>104</sup> Given the aforementioned texts, this view certainly has merit, but in light of the noted exceptions, it is more likely that this “creed” was open to articulation from multiple specific Scriptures, as Acts attests a tendency for variety of reference.<sup>105</sup> The use of specific Scriptures would not undermine the general point; rather, they would supply corroborations and instantiations of the same. In fact, the later parts of Paul’s argument will appeal to specific Scriptures.

The final verb in this sequence—*ὤφθη* (“he appeared”)—has also been central to the most controversial debates about this segment. At this juncture, many scholars make one or both of the following moves. One, they claim that Paul skipping to the appearances implies that he either does not know or does not care about claims of an empty tomb after Jesus’s resurrection, which are reflected in the Gospels.<sup>106</sup> Two, they claim that this particular verb form signifies a visionary experience, perhaps resembling OT theophanies, gnostic spiritual resurrection, or visionary revelations of apotheosis, in which Jesus’s body was not involved.<sup>107</sup>

Against the first move of denying the presence or relevance of the empty tomb in Paul, it is important to consider four points. First, one cannot assume, as in the over-confident statements

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<sup>104</sup> Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, rev. ed., NICNT (Grand Rapids; Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2014), 804–7; Lehmann, *Auferweckt*, 291–316; B. J. Oropeza, *1 Corinthians*, NCCS (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2017), 198–200; Wolfgang Schrage, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther (1 Kor. 15,1-16,24)*, EKKNT 7/4 (Düsseldorf: Benziger; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 2001), 24–25; Wright, *Resurrection*, 320–21.

<sup>105</sup> Paul J. Brown, *Bodily Resurrection and Ethics in 1 Cor 15*, WUNT 2/360 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 121–28; Roy E. Ciampa and Brian S. Rosner, *The First Letter to the Corinthians*, PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Cambridge: Apollos, 2010), 747. F. W. Grosheide, *Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1953), 350 is an odd exception to any of these tendencies, as he sees a general reference to Scripture in v. 3b, but he sees Jon 1:17 specifically behind v. 4b.

<sup>106</sup> Peter Carnley, *Resurrection in Retrospect: A Critical Examination of the Theology of N. T. Wright* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2019), 116–36; Adela Yarbro Collins, “The Empty Tomb in the Gospel According to Mark,” in *Hermes and Athena: Biblical Exegesis and Philosophical Theology*, ed. Eleonore Stump and Thomas P. Flint (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1993), 111–14; Hans Grass, *Ostergeschehen und Osterberichte* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1956), 146–48; Smith, *Revisiting*, 27–45.

<sup>107</sup> Hans Werner Bartsch, “Inhalt und Funktion des urchristlichen Osterglaubens.” *ANRW* II 25.1 (1982): 811–32; Carnley, *Retrospect*, 86–115; James M. Robinson, “Jesus – from Easter to Valentinus (or to the Apostles’ Creed),” *JBL* 101 (1982): 9–16 refers to these appearances as “luminous appearances” or “luminous visualizations.” Cf. Bernard Brandon Scott, ed., *The Resurrection of Jesus: A Sourcebook*, Jesus Seminar Guides 4 (Santa Rosa, CA: Polebridge, 2008), 46.

of many scholars, that Paul “knows nothing” of the empty tomb. It is difficult enough to determine what Paul “knew” from an absence of evidence, but it is even more difficult to determine what Paul “did not know” from that same absence. In the words of Harris, “We should not imagine that we can convert our ignorance of the extent of Paul’s knowledge into a knowledge of the extent of his ignorance.”<sup>108</sup> If the Corinthians did not happen to have problems in observing the Lord’s Supper, we would never have direct evidence that Paul knew of the Lord’s Supper or of the story surrounding it. If the Corinthians did not happen to have some among them who denied the resurrection of the dead, Paul would have had no occasion for referring to the foundational tradition he passed on to them, and thus we would never have direct evidence that Paul knew of resurrection appearances to others (though such might still be implied by 1 Cor 9:1). Without the need to address these issues, Paul still would have known these things, but we who are reading Paul long after his death would not have direct evidence that he knew them. If we had no other basis to proceed on, the lack of reference to the empty tomb could just as likely be an indication that the Corinthians had no objection to the idea that Jesus’s tomb was empty as it could be an indication that neither Paul nor the Corinthians thought that Jesus’s resurrection implied an empty tomb. But in fact, we do have other bases for thinking that Paul was neither ignorant nor apathetic about the claim of the empty tomb.

Second, the lack of explicit reference to the empty tomb cannot be counted as a point in favor of such interpretations, because the gospel summaries in Acts never explicitly reference the empty tomb (2:24–36; 3:15–21; 4:10–12; 5:30; 10:40–42; 13:30–37; 17:3, 31–32; 23:6; 24:21; 26:6–8, 23), despite the clear reference in Luke 24:1–12 and 22–24. This is also consistent with all summaries of the gospel and confessional formulae elsewhere in Paul (Rom 1:3–4; 5:6–11; 8:18–24; 10:5–10; Eph 1:20–23; 2:4–8; Phil 2:5–11; Col 1:15–20), non-Pauline texts (1 Pet 1:3–

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<sup>108</sup> Harris, *Raised*, 41.

5, 18–21; 3:18–22; 1 John 1:1–5; 3:1–3; 5:6–12; Rev 1:4–6; 5:9–10), and subsequent creeds.<sup>109</sup>

In fact, reference to the empty tomb only appears in proper narratives of Gospel accounts.

Patristic authors further argued—consistently with the point of incarnational theology that what is not assumed is not saved—that the sequence of verbs implies a continuous subject and a continuous presence of Jesus’s body in the actions described (Tertullian, *Res.* 48; *Marc.* 5.9; John Chrysostom, *Hom. 1 Cor.* 38.4; Cyril of Alexandria, *Comm. 1 Cor.* 15:3–4; cf. Irenaeus, *Haer.* 2.29.2; 3.18.7, 23.7–8; 5.1.3, 13.4; *Epid.* 31; Origen, *Princ.* 3.6.5; Athanasius, *Inc.* 10; 21; 24; 29; Epiphanius, *Pan.* 64.64–65; 67.6). Likewise, many scholars today argue for the implied empty tomb from the sequence of verbs.<sup>110</sup> However, this argument rests on the assumption that the continuous subject has a continuous character across the sequence, and this assumption is not secure (as seen in, e.g., Plato, *Phaed.* 115d.18–22), even if it is generally safe.<sup>111</sup> One must look elsewhere for a better basis of argument.

Third, per the analyses of James Ware and John Granger Cook, consideration of the larger body of lexical evidence indicates that the key resurrection terminology, including Paul’s frequently used ἐγείρω, were never applied to the “spirit” or “soul” in any Greek literature in resurrection contexts—as opposed to being awakened or roused—until the Gnostics did so.<sup>112</sup> In addition to what I have already noted about this verb, Ware observes that it “denotes the action whereby one who is prone, sitting, prostrate or lying down is restored to a standing position.”<sup>113</sup> Cook also notes, “Physical motion upward (usually ‘standing up’) is implied in all these texts.

<sup>109</sup> Ware, “Resurrection,” 480–82.

<sup>110</sup> Christopher Bryan, *The Resurrection of the Messiah* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 50–51; Martin Hengel, “Das Begräbnis Jesu bei Paulus und die leibliche Auferstehung aus dem Grabe,” in *Auferstehung – Resurrection: The Fourth Durham-Tübingen Research Symposium. Resurrection, Transfiguration, and Exaltation in Old Testament, Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, ed. Friedrich Avemarie and Hermann Lichtenberger, WUNT 2/135 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 129–35; Ronald J. Sider, “St. Paul’s Understanding of the Nature and Significance of Resurrection in I Corinthians XV 1–19,” *NovT* 19 (1977): 136–39.

<sup>111</sup> Ware, “Resurrection,” 483–84.

<sup>112</sup> Cook, “Resurrection,” 56–75; Cook, “Use,” 259–80; Ware, “Resurrection,” 490–97.

<sup>113</sup> Ware, “Resurrection,” 494.

Clearly the verb is not equivalent to ‘exalting’ (for which an ancient Greek author would use ὑψόω).”<sup>114</sup> It is for this reason, and not simply the implied sequence of verbs, that a burial of a body followed by a resurrection would imply the resurrection of the body (as also implied in Dan 12). The terminology itself lends support to the interpretation that this tradition assumes some degree of continuity in resurrection.<sup>115</sup> Paul is thus consistent with the Gospel narratives, where Jesus’s tomb is empty because his body has left there to appear to his disciples so as to be identifiable to them (although not immediately recognizable).

Fourth, as per the earlier point about this tradition being a narrative summary, the reference to Jesus rising on the third day assumes a larger narrative. Elsewhere in the NT, the “third day” applies to the emptying of the tomb and perhaps secondarily to appearances (Matt 12:40; 27:63–64; Luke 24:7, 21–23; implicitly Acts 10:40), whereas this tradition only explicitly references appearances.<sup>116</sup> This is thus another means by which the tradition implies the empty tomb through this abbreviated narrative reference.

Against the second move of attempting to render the appearances as non-bodily or, at least, heavenly visions, three points require consideration. First, this passive form often leads scholars to posit an analogy with theophanies in the OT, specifically the LXX (Gen 12:7; 17:1; 18:1; 22:14; 26:24; 35:9; 48:3; Exod 16:7, 10; 33:22–23; Lev 9:4, 23; Num 14:10; 16:19; 17:7; 20:6; 2 Kgdms 22:11 // Ps 17:11; 3 Kgdms 3:5 // 2 Chr 1:7; 3 Kgdms 9:2 // 2 Chr 7:12; 2 Chr 3:1; Isa 60:2; Jer 38:3; Bar 3:37; cf. Gen 31:13; 35:1; Exod 3:16; 4:1, 5; Judg 13:10; 3 Kgdms 11:9). However, the corollary that such vocabulary also implies visionary experience does not

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<sup>114</sup> Cook, “Resurrection,” 59–60. *Pace* Conzelmann’s unsupported claim, “Paul and the formula are both agreed that the raising (or ‘resurrection’) and exaltation are identical.” Conzelmann, *Corinthians*, 256.

<sup>115</sup> There are metaphorical uses of resurrection language in the NT (e.g., Col 2:12; 3:1), but Cook notes that these uses have as their source domain the image of Jesus’s resurrection (“Resurrection,” 75). These are also not cases that identify an explicit object besides the body as what is raised.

<sup>116</sup> For more on this point, see Karl Olav Sandnes and Jan-Olav Henriksen, *Resurrection: Texts and Interpretation, Experience and Theology* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2020), 99–100, 105–7.

hold for many of these LXX texts. Furthermore, many other subjects either “appear” or “are seen” with this verbal form, including humans (Exod 10:28–29; Lev 13:7; 3 Kgdms 3:16; 1 Macc 4:6, 19; 9:27; cf. Gen 46:29), angels (Exod 3:2; Judg 6:12; 13:3; Tob 12:22; cf. Judg 13:10), a vision (Dan 8:1), land (Gen 1:9), flowers (Song 2:12); a horse (2 Macc 3:25), and the way of knowledge (Bar 3:22). The variety of settings and subjects comport with what Andrzej Gieniusz observes in his survey of the use of this construction, in that it,

can be used for (1) ordinary seeing of material object and (2) for a real and objective visualizing of supernatural beings, normally invisible, made possible for the seer because of divine enablement, or even for (3) a kind of a vision that is clearly intellectual. The precise nature of the seeing is each time decided by the convictions of the one who tells the stories and does not have much to do with the semantics of the expression itself.<sup>117</sup>

Given the resurrection narratives as we have them, one point that one can confidently make about this form in light of its OT context is that it implies the initiative of Jesus in causing the encounter.<sup>118</sup> Divine commissioning or calling is a frequent, but not necessary feature of either the OT or NT stories. Such is certainly implied in at least some of the appearance narratives (not least Paul’s in v. 8), but this is not necessarily so in all cases (e.g., the Emmaus Road episode), and it is best to see this feature as more of a contextual similarity of instances of this vocabulary.

Second, the Gospel accounts, as well as the references in Acts, indicate the compatibility of the basic verb *ὁράω* in all of its forms, including this passive one, with both the assertion of the empty tomb and with non-visionary encounters. What they stress in all cases is the actual visible

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<sup>117</sup> Andrzej Gieniusz, “Jesus’ Resurrection Appearances in 1 Cor 15,5–8 in the Light of the Syntagma Ὡραθῆναι + Dative,” *BibAn* 9 (2019): 490.

<sup>118</sup> Karl Barth, *The Resurrection of the Dead*, trans. H. J. Stenning (New York; London: Revell, 1933), 138–39; Gerald O’Collins, *Believing the Resurrection: The Meaning and Promise of the Risen Jesus* (New York; Mahwah, NJ: Paulist, 2012), 76–78; Joseph J. Smith, “N. T. Wright’s Understanding of the Nature of Jesus’ Risen Body,” *HeyJ* 57 (2016): 42–45.

manifestation (cf. Acts 10:40 [ἐμφανῆ]).<sup>119</sup> The angel's promise in Matt 28:7 // Mark 16:7 of seeing Jesus uses the future middle ὄψεσθε (cf. Acts 20:25). Jesus's own promise in Matt 28:10 that the disciples will see him uses the future middle ὄψονται. The fulfillment of this promise in Matt 28:17 takes the aorist participial form ἰδόντες, as it here precedes the main verb of προσεκύνησαν (cf. the same participle in John 20:20). The active form appears in Luke 24:24 when the disciples on the Emmaus Road said that those who went to the tomb did not see (εἶδον) Jesus. The passive ὤφθη appears in Luke 24:34 in reference to the otherwise unexplored appearance to Simon. The aorist active imperative ἴδετε (cf. John 20:27) appears in the context of Jesus's appearance to the disciples in Luke 24:39—alongside the command to touch—where it also parallels θεωρεῖτε.<sup>120</sup> This latter verb appears (as θεωρεῖ) in John 20:14 when Mary Magdalene sees Jesus, whereas she uses the perfect active ἐώρακα in reference to her seeing (which the disciples also use in John 20:25 [ἐώρακαμεν] and which Jesus uses referring to Thomas's act of seeing [ἐώρακάς] in 20:29).<sup>121</sup> Acts 9 uses both the passive participle (ὀφθείς) to describe Jesus as the one who appeared to Paul (9:17) and the active verb (εἶδεν) to describe Paul seeing the Lord (9:27). When Paul recounts the story in Acts 22, he says that he was appointed to see (ιδεῖν) the Righteous One and that he was to be a witness of what he has seen (ἐώρακάς) and heard (22:14–15; cf. 1 John 1:1–3). When he recounts the story again in Acts 26, the verb goes from the aorist passive (ὤφθη) to the active (εἶδές) to the future passive (ὀφθήσομαι; 26:16). When Paul refers to the appearances of Jesus to the other apostles, he uses the passive ὤφθη

<sup>119</sup> Schnabel, *Korinther*, 888–89.

<sup>120</sup> Compare this text with 1 John 1:1–3.

<sup>121</sup> The two verbs appear in antithetic parallelisms in Jesus's promise of John 16:16–19.

(Acts 13:31) in the midst of a text in which he clearly articulates a bodily resurrection that would also imply an empty tomb (13:27–37).

For Paul and the Gospel writers, there does not seem to be a stark distinction between the active, middle, and passive forms of ὀράω in terms of what kind of experience they convey, even as Paul himself uses the perfect active ἐόρακα in 1 Cor 9:1.<sup>122</sup> The major distinction is that the passive draws attention to the action of Jesus while the active draws attention to the action of the witness. This notion fits with the tradition in 1 Cor 15, where the focus remains on Jesus even as the various witnesses are listed.

Third, the other uses of this passive form in the NT outside of the resurrection appearances are also not necessarily indicative of visionary experiences. Acts 16:9 is certainly a case of a visionary experience, and several other examples involving angels (Luke 1:11; 22:43; Acts 7:30), Moses and Elijah (Matt 17:3 // Mark 9:4; cf. Luke 9:31), or God (Acts 7:2; cf. Gen 12:7) could conceivably be beyond the realm of normal sight as epiphanies or visionary experiences. One might also point to the appearance of what looked like tongues of fire in Acts 2:3. But the form can also refer to the basic act of “showing up” or “making an appearance” at a location (Acts 7:26; Rev 11:19; 12:1, 3).<sup>123</sup>

What then does the statement imply about Jesus appearing to the list of witnesses? Most fundamentally, the statement means that in each case Jesus shows up, being visible and even tangible to the witnesses, and initiates encounters for his purposes. Again, the passive form in particular places the emphasis on Jesus’s action rather than the witnesses. The witnesses are who

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<sup>122</sup> On the various accounts of Paul’s experience, see Licona, *Resurrection*, 373–400; Wright, *Resurrection*, 375–98.

<sup>123</sup> The case of 1 Tim 3:16 is not as easily categorizable, as it involves an action of Jesus interacting with angels.



they are because of the action of Jesus, as Paul will illustrate in an especially vivid fashion in his own recounting in vv. 8–10.

But what about the mode of appearances? Scholars have proposed multiple ways of conceiving this kind of experience at work, beyond what I have noted previously. These include experiences brought on by bereavement,<sup>124</sup> hallucinations (perhaps arising from the same),<sup>125</sup> altered states of consciousness,<sup>126</sup> revelatory encounters,<sup>127</sup> ordinary sight,<sup>128</sup> or that the mode of the experience is simply indeterminate.<sup>129</sup> I do not examine these various theories in detail here, as that would take this analysis too far afield, but I offer a few considerations.

It would be helpful if the advocates of the various theories could unpack their assumptions and definitions of key terms en route to explaining all of the appearances. Joseph J. Smith provides one example related to this text, “What is contestable is that 15:1–11 speaks of ‘*a public event*.’ A public event should be open to neutral observation by anyone who might happen to be present at the time of the event. But the Easter appearances were not generally observable events of this kind. They were events of revelation by a special intervention of God through

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<sup>124</sup> Allison, *Resurrecting Jesus*, 269–99, 364–75. Or rather, he proposes such experiences as heuristically profitable analogies (Allison, *Resurrecting Jesus*, 285). Against this, see Licona, *Resurrection*, 631–35; O’Collins, *Believing*, 71–72, 175–91.

<sup>125</sup> Michael Goulder, “The Baseless Fabric of a Vision,” in *Resurrection Reconsidered*, ed. Gavin D’Costa (Oxford: Oneworld, 1996), 48–61; Lüdemann, “Resurrection,” 551–57. Against this, see Licona, *Resurrection*, 479–519; Jake H. O’Connell, “Jesus’ Resurrection and Collective Hallucinations,” *TynBul* 60 (2009): 69–105.

<sup>126</sup> Pieter F. Craffert, “‘I “Witnessed” the Raising of the Dead’: Resurrection Accounts in Neuroanthropological Perspective,” *Neot* 45 (2011): 1–28. Against this, see Licona, *Resurrection*, 557–82.

<sup>127</sup> Smith, “N. T. Wright’s Understanding,” 41–47. Kremer, *Korinther*, 327–29 links this type of experience with Paul but differentiates him from the others listed.

<sup>128</sup> William Lane Craig, “The Bodily Resurrection of Jesus,” in *Gospel Perspectives: Studies of History and Tradition in the Four Gospels*, vol. 1, ed. R. T. France and David Wenham (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1980), 50–51; Stephen T. Davis, “‘Seeing’ the Risen Jesus,” in *The Resurrection: An Interdisciplinary Symposium on the Resurrection of Jesus*, ed. Stephen T. Davis, Daniel Kendall, and Gerald O’Collins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 126–47.

<sup>129</sup> Hans Kessler, *Sucht den lebenden nicht bei den Toten: Die Auferstehung Jesu Christi in biblischer, fundamentaltheologischer und systematischer Sicht* (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1985), 219–36. For more on the debate, see Jacques Schlosser, “Vision, extase et apparition du Ressuscité,” in *Résurrection: L’après-mort dans le monde ancien et le Nouveau Testament*, ed. Odette Mainville and Daniel Marguerat, *MdB* 45 (Geneva: Labor et Fides; Montreal: Médiaspaul, 2001), 146–59; Joseph J. Smith, “The Resurrection Appearances and the Origin of the Easter Faith,” *Landas* 20 (2006): 200–242.

which the risen one became visible ‘not to all the people but to the witnesses elected by God’ (Acts 10:41).”<sup>130</sup> But that these events were not publicly perceptible is an assumption not required by the vocabulary of the appearances and certainly not by the narratives. It is difficult to conceive how the appearance to the 500+ would not have been “open to neutral observation by anyone who might happen to be present at the time of the event.” Likewise, in the case of Thomas (John 20:24–25), he did not see, not because Jesus’s appearance was concealed from him, but because he was not present at the time of appearance. The two disciples on the road to Emmaus were not prevented from seeing him altogether, but they were prevented from recognizing him at first (Luke 24:13–16). The narrative that comes closest to validating Smith’s assumption is Paul’s, but there Paul’s companions could see a light, but apparently not the person at the center of it (Acts 22:9). Furthermore, one wonders what Smith means by “neutral” in this context. If he means people who were not already followers of Jesus, or at least were not hostile to him, it is hardly impossible that the 500+ included such people. And this text also mentions James and Paul, the latter of whom was clearly hostile to the movement and the former of whom may have been prior to the appearance he received. If he means people who could have potentially seen the event and been unaffected by it, beyond retaining a memory, it is difficult to see why the presence of such a person would change our conception of the event’s nature and not simply our conception of its effectuality.<sup>131</sup> In fact, in neither case is it clear that the presence of a “neutral” observer would have implied a different kind of event.

As Larry Hurtado argues, any analysis of these appearances must take account of two factors. One, the appearances are not described as encounters with the still dead Jesus, but as encounters with the risen Jesus, “He is not portrayed as communicating with them from the

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<sup>130</sup> Smith, “N. T. Wright’s Understanding,” 45 (emphasis original).

<sup>131</sup> Harris notes, “Only in the apocryphal gospels (e.g., Gospel of Peter 35–49; Gospel of the Hebrews *apud* Jerome, *Vir. ill.* 2) do unbelievers become witnesses of the risen Jesus—and remain unbelievers.” Harris, *Raised*, 50.

realm of the dead, but instead as confronting followers in a new and more powerful mode of existence and a more august status, delivered from death, divinely vindicated and glorified.”<sup>132</sup> Despite the witnesses having categories for the former type of encounter, they refused to use these categories and instead portrayed him as being raised to never die again. Two, these experiences were crucial to generating beliefs that supported worshiping Jesus as part of the activity of worshiping God, that God himself required such worship, and these beliefs emerged among Jews.<sup>133</sup> That is, these experiences must have been mechanisms of worldview formation that helped produce the larger theological edifice of Christian resurrection belief (as would be implied by the reference to them in fundamental tradition). In other words, while the basic mechanics of the sense experience of the risen Jesus may have been similar to the disciples’ experiences of witnessing Jesus raising Jairus’s daughter, the widow’s son at Nain, or Lazarus, the disciples worshiped the risen Jesus, while they never worshipped those whom Jesus raised. Neither Paul nor the Gospel authors provide detail as to what precise qualities of Jesus’s resurrection body and appearances made such impressions—nor would such have been likely to be the only factors—but they nevertheless reflect these impressions in their indirect descriptions of Jesus as being transformed to have qualities of the new creation and the peculiar nature of his abilities (including being able to appear in the middle of a room with locked doors yet still being tangible, being identifiable by the marks of death but not immediately recognizable, and so on).

Sometimes scholars argue that Paul’s description of his experience, using the same vocabulary as he does for the other appearances, conforms the other experiences to visions or

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<sup>132</sup> Larry W. Hurtado, “Jesus-Devotion and the ‘Historical’ Jesus: The Resurrection of Jesus as a Test-Case,” *RCT* 36 (2011): 129.

<sup>133</sup> Hurtado, “Jesus-Devotion,” 130.

heavenly epiphanies.<sup>134</sup> But this reverses the direction of the argument, as Paul is working from the vocabulary of a pre-formed articulation of tradition and saying that his experience was like theirs, rather than saying that theirs was like his. Nor does Paul even describe his own appearance from Jesus in terms of a visionary experience here (unlike his description of an experience in 2 Cor 12:1).

One point that has been noteworthy in examining this chapter thus far cuts against much of scholarship. Brian Schmisek summarizes well the common tendency to read Paul separately from the Gospels in order to hear him on his own terms:

Although the writings of Paul are the earliest documents we have of the New Testament, when we read Paul's letters we often assume knowledge from the gospels, which were all written later. But what would Paul's letters sound like if they were read without our knowledge of the gospels? Such an exercise can be difficult but useful, for it allows the reader to hear Paul's voice unencumbered by other New Testament voices.<sup>135</sup>

But with Paul's argument in vv. 1–11 being what it is, and with his interest of fighting factionalism being established from the first chapter, the approach Schmisek describes would not be taking Paul on his own terms, at least when describing the resurrection tradition and the appearance narratives. Since at least part of this segment is not his own creation and the purpose of the rest is to stress his continuity with the preexisting tradition, to take Paul on his own terms would be to accept his invitation to consider that tradition, including stories of the resurrected Christ that were circulating at the time, at least some of which appear in the Gospels, and to see his own experience in light of them. The noted connections to the Gospels and Acts further solidify this continuity and undercuts the exercise of reading Paul as entirely separate or only in

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<sup>134</sup> E.g., Peter Carnley, *The Structure of Resurrection Belief* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987), 222–30, 237–38; Hoover, “Historical,” 80; Wedderburn, *Beyond Resurrection*, 71–75.

<sup>135</sup> Brian John Schmisek, *Resurrection of the Flesh or Resurrection of the Dead: Implications for Theology* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2013), 58.

contrast to the Gospels. Unless Paul wished to produce a factionalism of his own in Corinth, this appeal to this earliest of traditions would fail in its task of worldview formation for his designs if one were to read this specific text in contrast with the other early narratives.<sup>136</sup>

With this analysis of the fourfold sequence of verbs completed, a much more cursory analysis of the list of appearances will suffice here. The appearance to Cephas—which is also Paul’s typical designation of Peter in 1 Cor 1:12; 3:22; 9:5; Gal 1:18; 2:9, 11, 14 (also see John 1:42)—is often linked to the reference in Luke 24:34. That he received such an individual appearance was crucial to his position in the earliest years of the Church, as is the case also for James. Furthermore, Peter’s presence among the witnesses is implied in at least two other cases with the appearance to the Twelve and “all the apostles,” though he may have also been among the 500+. This foremost leader of the Church can be called as a witness to testify to how Paul describes the resurrection body, since he saw Jesus’s resurrection body.

Next, the tradition says Jesus appeared to the Twelve. As noted before, a few manuscripts attempt to correct this to refer to the Eleven, as Matthias was not added to reconstitute the Twelve until after Jesus’s ascension (Acts 1:15–26). Indeed, multiple early authors show concern over whether this could have been an appearance not attested in the Gospels in which Matthias would have been present (Origen, *Fr. 1 Cor. 77*;<sup>137</sup> John Chrysostom, *Hom. 1 Cor. 38.5*; Oecumenius, *Comm. 1 Cor. 15:5*; cf. Aquinas, *Comm. 1 Cor. §900*). Of course, if the concern is that Jesus needed to appear to exactly twelve, this is complicated by the additional detail in Acts that there was a second candidate for the new twelfth member: Joseph/Barsabbas/Justus. More likely, “the Twelve” here simply serves as a fixed title for this group of apostles that Jesus

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<sup>136</sup> For more on how Paul describes his relationship with the larger apostolic tradition, see Peter R. Jones, “1 Corinthians 15:8: Paul the Last Apostle,” *TynBul* 36 (1985): 3–34.

<sup>137</sup> For the fragments of Origen’s commentary concerning this chapter, see Claude Jenkins, “Origen on I Corinthians, IV,” *JTS* 10 (1908–1909): 29–51.

designated during his earthly ministry and the numerical group title remained even when the numbers fluctuated (although Matt 28:16 indicates that it was not always so).<sup>138</sup> As such, without access to a speech in which the summarized narrative was more fully articulated, it is unclear if this appearance was an otherwise unrecorded one in the days between Jesus's resurrection and ascension, or which of the particular stories related in the Gospels this text references.

Third in the sequence is the appearance to the 500+.<sup>139</sup> Paul further notes that most of them are still alive, although some have fallen asleep.<sup>140</sup> As noted in the Daniel chapter, this expression was one way of describing death, but it is also one that fit particularly well with a resurrection verb that had the sense of "waking up." As such, this description fits with both Paul's argument in the next section and with Jewish tradition of the time. He also identifies these 500+ as brothers and sisters, which C. F. Evans understands as implying that this was a group of people who were already Christian believers when Jesus appeared to them.<sup>141</sup> This reading is possible, but by no means clear, since all this statement needs to mean is that the members of this crowd are identifiable as brothers and sisters now.

Beyond these points, Paul does not provide enough specifics for a clearer identification. While most commentators have been content with seeing this episode as one that is simply unattested elsewhere in the NT, some have attempted to find a specific identification. One

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<sup>138</sup> Cf. Keener, *1-2 Corinthians*, 124 n. 272.

<sup>139</sup> John Chrysostom notes in his own day that there was some debate over whether the phrase meant "he appeared above 500" or "he appeared to over 500" (*Hom. 1 Cor.* 38.5). Either reading is possible, but the overall numerical focus of this verse leads me to side with the majority that Paul is referring to an appearance to more than 500 people. Kearney's gematrical reading of the 500+ as incorporating the symbolism of holiness or sanctification pointlessly separates this reference from the other more straightforward ones in this text and there is no clear reason to accept his reading over a literal one. Kearney, "500 Brothers," 267–77.

<sup>140</sup> Conzelmann's claim that Paul's stress is on those who have fallen asleep, not on the majority who are still alive (*Corinthians*, 258) is another of his claims of hierarchy in Paul's syntactical structure that he provides even less of a basis for than his claim of the subordination of burial and appearance to death and resurrection respectively.

<sup>141</sup> Evans, *Resurrection*, 50–51.

occasional suggestion is that this event corresponds to Pentecost,<sup>142</sup> which is surely an odd construal of that event as a resurrection appearance, when neither Acts nor any other text identifies it as such. In some older scholarship, the most common specific identification was the appearance on the mountain in Matt 28:16–20.<sup>143</sup> If one assumes a larger crowd than the Eleven, this would be the best candidate of the narrated appearances, but there is not much else to say in favor of any specific identification. As at least some of these witnesses were probably more immediately accessible to the Corinthians, Paul could also call upon them to confirm both the gospel testimony and what he has to say about the resurrection body.

The reference to James most obviously refers to the most distinguished James in the early church, the brother of Jesus.<sup>144</sup> An individual appearance to James appears nowhere else in the NT, but such a story explains the discontinuity between James’s relationship with Jesus narrated in the Gospels (Mark 3:20–35; 6:2–4, 6; John 7:1–5; 19:25b–27) and his prominence among the Jerusalem Christians (and thus the early church). As with the story of Peter’s denials of Jesus followed by his redemption, such a discontinuity would highlight the power of God’s salvific work in Jesus at an individual level. The same can be said of Paul’s story, but before this analysis turns to that, there is one more clause in the pre-Pauline tradition to note.

The last appearance in the traditional list is one to “all the apostles.” As this language is apparently all-inclusive, and Paul links apostleship to seeing the risen Jesus (1 Cor 9:1), it is possible that Paul is referring to a group even larger than the 500+.<sup>145</sup> But it is difficult to be definite on this point, especially if, as I have argued, this is part of the pre-Pauline tradition,

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<sup>142</sup> Chilton, *Resurrection Logic*, 112.

<sup>143</sup> E.g., R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul's First and Second Epistles to the Corinthians* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1963), 635–37; Archibald Robertson and Alfred Plummer, *First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians*, 2nd ed., ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1914), 337.

<sup>144</sup> For more on James in this context, see Licona, *Resurrection*, 440–61.

<sup>145</sup> Wright, *Resurrection*, 326. For Paul’s references to apostles beyond the Twelve, see Rom 1:1, 5; 11:13; 16:7; 1 Cor 1:1; 4:9; 9:1–2; 15:9; 2 Cor 1:1; Gal 1:1, 19; Eph 1:1; Col 1:1; 1 Thess 2:7; 1 Tim 1:1; 2:7; 2 Tim 1:1, 11; Titus 1:1.

wherein the reference to apostles could be more restricted. Simon J. Kistemaker suggests that the phrase is synonymous with “the Twelve” and that this reference is to Jesus’s appearance at which he ascended (Acts 1:6–11) while the first one referred to his first appearance to the group (John 20:19, 26), meaning that these two references essentially bookend the list of historical appearances besides Paul’s.<sup>146</sup> Even taking into account that this is a pre-Pauline tradition, it is difficult to maintain this identification, as Luke also had a broader category of apostles than simply the Twelve (Acts 14:1–6, 14). It is also unclear why the phrasing would vary in this way, rather than to say, “then to the Twelve again” or, “to all the apostles again.” But in any case, Theodoret considered “all the apostles” to be a larger group than the Twelve (*Comm. 1 Cor.* 15:7), as did John Chrysostom (*Hom. 1 Cor.* 38.5). Such a conclusion is agreeable, but there is little else to say about this appearance for our purposes.

### **The Appearance to Paul**

That leads us to the last appearance to Paul, who considers himself the least of the apostles, in v. 8.<sup>147</sup> Although Paul persecuted the church of God, Christ still appeared to him, and through this encounter Paul experienced the resurrecting grace of God, for God’s favor has borne fruit in one who was dead to him by working through him to produce communities like the Corinthians.<sup>148</sup> What particularly makes Paul’s story an exemplary demonstration of God’s resurrecting power

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<sup>146</sup> Kistemaker, *Corinthians*, 533. On this identification of the appearance to “all the apostles,” Godet, *Corinthians*, 336–37 agrees.

<sup>147</sup> For other texts declaring insufficiency for God’s call, see Exod 3:11; 4:10, 13; Judg 6:15; 1 Sam 9:21; Isa 6:5; Jer 1:6; 2 Bar 54:9; As. Mos. 12:6–7; Eph 3:8; 1 Tim 1:15–16.

<sup>148</sup> Fee observes about this statement, “On the one hand, it points both backward (v. 2) and especially forward (v. 14), where there is considerable danger that if they persist in their present folly, God’s grace to them will have turned out to be ‘useless.’ On the other hand, it points directly to their own existence in Christ; they themselves are the sure evidence that God’s grace in terms of Paul’s apostleship was not without effect.” Fee, *Corinthians*, 815.



in terms of life-giving transformation before the eschaton (and the literal resurrection) is his self-description as an *ἔκτρωμα*.<sup>149</sup>

This provocative term has inspired much discussion.<sup>150</sup> It could refer to a “miscarriage” and it has often been translated more loosely as “one untimely born.” Ambrosiaster took the latter route and thought the sense of the term was that he was born “outside the time” of Christ’s ascension (*Comm. 1 Cor. 15:8*). Theodoret (*Comm. 1 Cor. 15:8*) and Thomas Aquinas (*Comm. 1 Cor. §904*) took the former route and presented Paul as one who was not fully formed and had not come to term. More ambiguously, C. K. Barrett states that the term, “suggested the characteristics of an unformed, undeveloped, repulsive, and possibly lifeless foetus.”<sup>151</sup> Godet, in agreement with Aquinas, thinks it is a fitting metaphor for the “violent and unnatural mode of his call to the apostleship,” particularly in reference to the Damascus Road experience.<sup>152</sup> Archibald Robertson and Alfred Plummer focus on the comparison to the Twelve as those who were disciples before they were apostles, “Theirs was a gradual and normal progress; his was a swift and abnormal change.”<sup>153</sup> Timothy Brookins and Bruce Longenecker combine these senses and add that, “Paul had turned to Christ late in life despite having been set apart for God from natural birth (cf. Gal 1:15).”<sup>154</sup> George W. E. Nickelsburg previously expanded on this last point by suggesting that this term was linked with Paul’s self-conception (linked with Isa 49:1 and Jer

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<sup>149</sup> For others who describe this text in terms of resurrection imagery, see David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 693; Andrzej Gieniusz, “‘As a Miscarriage’: The Meaning and the Function of the Metaphor in 1 Cor 15:1-11 in Light of Num 12:12 (LXX),” *BibAn* 3 (2013): 105–6; Sebastian Schneider, *Auferstehen: Eine neue Deutung von 1 Kor 15*, FB 105 (Würzburg: Echter, 2005), 138–39.

<sup>150</sup> For more on the history of interpretation, see Gieniusz, “‘Miscarriage,’” 102–4; Harm W. Hollander and Gijsbert E. van der Hout, “The Apostle Paul Calling Himself an Abortion: 1 Cor. 15:8 within the Context of 1 Cor. 15:8-10,” *NovT* 38 (1996): 224–27; Matthew W. Mitchell, “Reexamining the ‘Aborted Apostle’: An Exploration of Paul’s Self-Description in 1 Corinthians 15.8,” *JSNT* 25 (2002–2003): 470–73.

<sup>151</sup> Barrett, *Corinthians*, 344.

<sup>152</sup> Godet, *Corinthians*, 339.

<sup>153</sup> Robertson and Plummer, *Corinthians*, 339.

<sup>154</sup> Brookins and Longenecker, *1 Corinthians 10-16*, 142. Cf. Gardner, *1 Corinthians*, 657.

1:5) that he was called as an apostle from the womb.<sup>155</sup> Harm W. Hollander and Gijsbert E. van der Hout think that the sense Paul derived from the LXX and Jewish tradition is that it, “refers to people who are in a deplorable position and whose lives are miserable and worthless.”<sup>156</sup>

Matthew W. Mitchell defines it in its normal sense of “abortion,” one forced out of the womb, and that Paul is, “cast aside or rejected in the manner of an aborted fetus, most likely with respect to his claims to equal authority with the other apostles.”<sup>157</sup>

The text scholars most often draw from to illuminate this one is Num 12:12, which describes Miriam after she was stricken with leprosy. In the various versions, the description is understood as referring to a baby born dead.<sup>158</sup> Gieniusz argues for another level of meaning based on the ambiguity of the Hebrew and the experienced reality of miscarriage in the ancient world: the baby born dead that is itself deadly.<sup>159</sup> Since it was not unusual for women to die in childbirth, the delivery of a miscarriage or stillborn baby could itself be lethal for the mother. This description fits how Paul explicitly describes his past as lethal to the community in which he has now been born. But the grace of the God who raises the dead was such that he made alive this one who was born dead, discarded, and disregarded, and he bore further fruit in Paul by bringing life to other communities, such as the Corinthians.

Paul closes this portion of the argument by reiterating that, despite his special insufficiency and unworthiness, he has experienced the grace of the same God who made the others to be apostles, having received an appearance from the same risen Christ. The gospel he proclaims is the same as theirs, and it is this same gospel that the Corinthians came to believe.

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<sup>155</sup> George W. E. Nickelsburg, “An Ἐκτρωμα, Though Appointed from the Womb: Paul’s Apostolic Self-Description in 1 Corinthians 15 and Galatians 1,” *HThR* 79 (1986): 198–205.

<sup>156</sup> Hollander and van der Hout, “Abortion,” 231.

<sup>157</sup> Mitchell, “Reexamining,” 484.

<sup>158</sup> Gieniusz, “Miscarriage,” 94–101; Hollander and van der Hout, “Abortion,” 227–32.

<sup>159</sup> Gieniusz, “Miscarriage,” 101, 105–6.

Those who undermine the implications of this gospel undermine the story that constitutes them as a community, and they undermine the messengers who proclaimed it (despite their attempts to claim allegiance to this messenger or that messenger). Paul explores this point in the next segment of vv. 12–19.

### **Summary of Foundations in Verses 1–11**

Throughout this segment, we have seen three worldview foundations illustrated. The first, most obvious, and most important in Paul's argument is Jesus's own resurrection. His resurrection is the fount of all hope—being essential to the gospel story itself—including of the resurrection of believers. The pattern of God's grace is drawn in the crucified, buried, resurrected, and appearing Christ. The witnesses of the risen Jesus have experienced this pattern in a unique way compared to other believers, but as the rest of Paul's argument will make clear, the God who raises the dead extends his resurrecting power to all who receive this gospel and join the community of Christ's body. Thus, if Christians want to know what to expect of their own future, they must look to the resurrected Jesus.

The importance of this foundation for Paul is clear from the course of his argument in vv. 3–23 as he illustrates the foundational significance of Jesus's resurrection for the gospel story that unifies the community of believers with each other and with Paul (vv. 1–11), the hypothetical inevitable despair if Jesus had not risen from the dead—since every aspect of salvation depends on Jesus's resurrection, per vv. 12–19—and the necessary consequences of the actuality of Jesus's resurrection for the believers' expectations for the future in vv. 20–23. This last segment in this phase of his argument supplies the direct, affirmative necessities that link Jesus's resurrection with that of believers and thus provides a fitting climax to the first part of

Paul's argument, ending with the crescendo of the eschatological expectation that God will be all in all.

Two other points are worth noting about this foundation at this point. One, Paul's linkage between Jesus's resurrection and the post-mortem fates of Christians distinguishes him from his historical-cultural context. In so doing, he serves as a personal demonstration of how to think Christianly in distinction from the surrounding world, which has been one of his chief emphases in this entire letter. That is, Paul makes this argument for the inextricable link of continuity between Jesus's resurrection and the believers' resurrection in contrast to both Jewish resurrection beliefs and gentile resurrection beliefs. Although some Jews believed in a general resurrection, no Jew before Jesus had clearly expressed an expectation that the Messiah would experience resurrection, much less that this resurrection would be inextricably linked to the general resurrection as a foundation of hope for it. While Greco-Roman philosophers and other prominent authors rejected resurrection as a post-mortem fate, the popular myths (Greek, Roman, and others) presented instances of resurrection, but only applied that imagery to certain gods and heroes. In no myth or religion were such resurrections of gods and heroes connected to the post-mortem fates of the masses as part of an eschatological state for which they could hope.<sup>160</sup> This pronounced disconnect on the part of Paul with his environment illustrates the importance of this resurrection link to his overall structure of resurrection belief, since he necessarily must hold it in opposition to both Jewish and Greco-Roman trends of thinking.

Two, however much of this text one assigns to pre-Pauline tradition, one fact remains clear: it is not the testimony of the witnesses that is central; it is what they testify to that is

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<sup>160</sup> For surveys of resurrection and afterlife beliefs in the Greco-Roman and Jewish worlds of the time, see Brown, *Bodily Resurrection*, 28–56, 85–89; Cook, “Resurrection,” 60–74; Endsjø, *Greek Resurrection Beliefs*, 21–140; Pheme Perkins, *Resurrection: New Testament Witness and Contemporary Reflection* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1984), 37–63; Wright, *Resurrection*, 32–84, 108–28, 146–206.

central. When they testify to the appearances, what is important is not that the risen Jesus made appearances to them specifically, but that they can attest it was the risen Jesus who made appearances to them. The stress remains on Jesus's action in appearing. It is the reality that they attest that serves as the worldview foundation rather than the testimony. In the structure of belief, it is on a level above the foundation, since the testimony exists because of the reality.

The second foundation one can see in this text is that God's inexorable, faithful love, love which keeps the word to those promised, is what leads to resurrection. Paul will make this foundation clearer in the next segment, but he has already hinted at it in three ways. One, the reference to the gospel events happening "according to the Scriptures," which is also the third foundation, signifies, among other things, that they happened according to God's purpose declared and promised long ago. The one who promised was faithful and did it, showing that he will yet do what he has promised (a crucial assumption for the rest of Paul's argument). Two, the passive form of the declaration that Jesus has been raised indirectly affirms that it was God who raised Jesus. Three, Paul describes God's grace making him what he is, taking one who was born dead (and deadly) and raising him to new life in Christ.

The rest of the chapter will show how these foundations work together, as Jesus is the executor of God's will, the enactor of his faithful love. Indeed, as Gordon Fee says, "the inevitable chain of events set in motion by Christ's resurrection has ultimately to do with God's own absolute authority over *all things*, especially death."<sup>161</sup> While Jesus is the prominent, visible actor in the gospel story, the gospel is about God's action in him.<sup>162</sup>

Likewise, the pattern of God's action established in Jesus's resurrection demonstrates that God's raising action is action of consistent fidelity to a particular, continuous recipient of action.

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<sup>161</sup> Fee, *Corinthians*, 827 (emphasis original).

<sup>162</sup> Cf. the Trinitarian observations of Philippe Wagnies, "Témoins de Dieu qui relève les morts: Un regard sur 1 Co 15,1-19," *NRTh* 121 (1999): 359.

The one who has died is also the one who is raised. The ultimate source of continuity between the present and the future is none other than the God who raises the dead. While the answers to the questions of *how* continuity is maintained and *what* that continuity consists of in terms of the person are debatable, Paul subsumes any such concerns under the answer to the question of *who* guarantees the continuity of identity.

In these various ways, one sees the inexorable, faithful love of God. The faithful love is inexorable because nothing, not even death and its subjecting power, can hinder its purpose. The inexorable love is faithful because it maintains a character of consistency and keeping promises at any cost. The inexorable faithfulness is loving because God wills the ultimate good for those who receive it in the expression of absolute, unwavering commitment to bring them into everlasting union.

As noted already, the third foundation manifested in this text is that resurrection, particularly Jesus's resurrection, is how God fulfills Scripture, in terms of faithfulness to both promises made and patterns of action performed. On the one hand, the crucifixion and resurrection are crucial to bringing the whole story of Scripture to fruition, as the same Author brings this event to pass in fulfillment of such broad promises, patterns, and plots as have been set up in the story of Scripture previously. On the other hand, one can also find specific Scriptures that can apply these points, whether in terms of new/renewed creation (Gen 1:11–13), new covenant and communion with God (Exod 19:10–11, 16; Hos 6:2; cf. Gen 22:4–18), Christ as the firstfruits of resurrection and new creation (Lev 23:10–11, 15), the faithful love of God who will not abandon his beloved to death (Ps 16:9–10), the pattern of bringing life out of the jaws of death (Jon 1:17), and so on.

## Verses 12–19

In this segment Paul enters into the main body of his argument addressing those who deny the resurrection of the dead.<sup>163</sup> Elsewhere, I have addressed at the length the question of who these resurrection deniers were.<sup>164</sup> I summarize that proposal here.

Most summaries of views focus on three theories: 1) the deniers denied afterlife in general (being or being influenced by Epicureans, Sadducees, or other such groups);<sup>165</sup> 2) the deniers had an over-realized eschatology (whether due to the influence of gnostic thought, Hellenistic Judaism, pneumatic enthusiasm, and/or imperial eschatology); 3) the deniers denied resurrection because of its bodily character in favor of prevailing beliefs in Greco-Roman philosophy about afterlife and anthropology. My own theory is that the deniers are a cross-section of members from upper and lower classes, with varying levels of education, whose denial of the general resurrection stems from multiple sources of philosophy and mythology. Such a group could accept Jesus's resurrection by analogy with the myths of gods and heroes who returned from the dead and received the immortal life of the gods. Because this group's Christology, afterlife beliefs, and overall eschatology had not been sufficiently integrated with the gospel, they would have had no issue with accepting the resurrection of one designated as the Son of God, but they would have trouble understanding why his resurrection would entail their

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<sup>163</sup> Among the many rhetorical critics who observe the shift here from *narratio* to *probatio* (more specifically in this case, *refutatio*), see Anders Eriksson, *Traditions as Rhetorical Proof: Pauline Argumentation in 1 Corinthians*, ConBNT 29 (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1998), 248–51; Mitchell, *Paul*, 287–88; Thiselton, *Corinthians*, 1177–78, 1214–15.

<sup>164</sup> Harriman, “Synthetic Proposal,” 180–200.

<sup>165</sup> Since my essay was published, a more recent article has appeared that advocates this theory by Stefan Szymik (“The Corinthian Opponents of the Resurrection in 1 Cor 15:12: The Epicurean Hypothesis Reconsidered,” *BibAn* 10 [2020]: 437–56). Szymik considers whether it is possible to make sense of the text if one assumes the deniers were Epicurean in philosophy, but he has not disposed of the severe problems afflicting this theory. He obviously would not have had the ability to interact with my proposal, but he does not engage with my precursors, such as Brown and Endsjø, either.

own resurrection (if they should die). As I note in this summary from my article, it is crucial for Paul's argument that Paul shares with the deniers this foundation of Christ's resurrection:

This assumption of shared belief is why he ties the general resurrection to Jesus's resurrection in vv. 13 and 16 (and thus the affirmation of remembering one event to the affirmation of expecting the other). Paul then outlines the consequences of denying the first and thus the second of these beliefs: emptying the audience's faith of any substance or salvific effect (vv. 14, 17), the apostles (the founders of the community and proclaimers of its shared kerygma) bearing false witness of God (v. 15), and the loss of any hope after death if Christ has not preceded them in resurrection (vv. 18–19). To deny the general resurrection is to deny Jesus's resurrection and to deny Jesus's resurrection is to deny the essence of the Christian faith, the salvific benefits thereof, and the foundation of the community.<sup>166</sup>

By such means, Paul aims to address their insufficient worldview formation signified in this denial of resurrection, which, as noted above, has contributed to the many ethical problems among the Corinthians.

One other point to note about v. 12 before I continue through the rest of this segment is the phrase "resurrection of the dead." Sometimes scholars will make much of the difference between this phrase in the NT (outside of this chapter, see Matt 22:31 [cf. Luke 20:35]; Acts 17:32; 23:6; 24:21; 26:23; Heb 6:2) and the later emphases on "resurrection of the body/flesh."<sup>167</sup> This difference does illustrate a difference in the NT context, but not because the NT is necessarily less concerned about the body in resurrection or with continuity of identity involving the body. Such an idea cannot be derived from this difference. Rather, as the semantic analyses of Cook and Ware show, the use of the resurrection verbs or the nominal equivalents (usually *ἀνάστασις*, as here) in resurrection contexts would imply either a literal action involving the dead body or a metaphorical action that derives from that same source domain. A reference to the "resurrection of the dead" would thus entail "resurrection of the body/flesh." Later authors

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<sup>166</sup> Harriman, "Synthetic Proposal," 183.

<sup>167</sup> Harris, *Raised*, 132–33; Schmisek, *Resurrection of the Dead*, 49.



would stress the latter because the semantic domain of the relevant terms had broadened, and it was deemed necessary to be more direct and explicit.<sup>168</sup>

In any case, Paul says that if there is no general resurrection of the dead (and in this context he is primarily focused on Christians),<sup>169</sup> Christ also has not been raised. There is an inextricable link between the two, as they are both parts of one event of the eschatological resurrection of the dead. C. D. Broad insisted that Paul's argument here has no merit:

if Christianity be true, though Jesus was human, He was *also* divine. No other human being resembles Him in this respect ... the body of Jesus did not decay in the tomb, but was transformed; whilst the body of every ordinary man rots and disintegrates soon after his death. Therefore, if men do survive the death of their bodies, the process must be utterly unlike that which took place when Jesus survived His death on the cross. Thus the analogy breaks down in every relevant respect, and so an argument from the resurrection of Jesus to the survival of the bodily death by ordinary men is utterly worthless.<sup>170</sup>

One wonders why Broad has construed Paul's argument as one from analogy. Did Broad imagine that Paul was unaware that bodies decayed in tombs, and this despite his use of terms related to decay and corruption later in this same chapter? Did he think Paul was unaware even of Jewish practice of secondary burial after the body had decayed and left bones, which were then placed in ossuaries? Furthermore, such an argument would have obviously left Paul vulnerable to counter in his context. The myths of Osiris and Pelops involved reassembly of their dismembered bodies, albeit with one member missing. In these and other myths, it was crucial to preserve the body, whether through an actual preservation process or through quick action,

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<sup>168</sup> Other factors that led to the emphasis on "resurrection of the flesh" included inclinations to use "flesh" in the neutral sense (much more so than Paul did), and a strong stress on bodily continuity in resurrection to the point of sometimes describing resurrection as reconstitution. I plan to analyze these statements about resurrection of the selfsame flesh in future work.

<sup>169</sup> Michael Bachmann, "1 Kor 15,12f: 'Resurrection of the Dead (= Christians)'" *ZNW* 92 (2001): 295–99 disputes this claim, but the analysis of this segment, as well as later ones from which he pulls support, will demonstrate that this typical reading is justified. Even if the phrase itself properly refers to the dead in general, Paul's exposition has the consequences for believers squarely in view.

<sup>170</sup> C. D. Broad, *Religion, Philosophy, and Psychical Research* (New York: Harcourt, 1953), 236–37 (emphasis original). Interestingly, Aquinas anticipated such an argument long ago in *Comm. 1 Cor.* §§913–914.

because of the problem of decay. Paul could not have been ignorant of this problem and so he could not have made the argument from analogy that Broad charges him with.

But what type of argument is Paul making here? He assumes a causal relationship between Christ's resurrection and the general resurrection. In view of the larger segment, as well as general theological considerations, Albert the Great described God's power as the first or principal cause of the general resurrection, whereas Christ's resurrection is the more proximate efficient cause (*Res.* 2.Q1.S5; cf. Aquinas, *Comm. 1 Cor.* §§913–915).<sup>171</sup> This construal fits Paul's overall argument and allows us to see the implied syllogism as follows:

- P1) If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised.
- P2) Christ has been raised.
- C) Therefore, there is a resurrection of the dead.

This is a valid argument in the *modus tollens* form. Other scholars have also noted that this segment overall (with v. 20 included) comports with *modus tollens* argumentation.<sup>172</sup> The only way out that Paul allows for this argument would be to formulate a *modus tollens* that entails both a negative conclusion that the Corinthians cannot accept and the negative hypothetical reality that Paul articulates in vv. 13–19:

- P1\*) If Christ has been raised from the dead, then there is a resurrection of the dead.
- P2\*) There is no resurrection of the dead.
- C\*) Therefore, Christ has not been raised.

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<sup>171</sup> Cf. Murray J. Harris, "Resurrection and Immortality in the Pauline Corpus," in *Life in the Face of Death*, ed. Richard N. Longenecker (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 158.

<sup>172</sup> Theodor G. Bucher, "Allgemeine Überlegungen zur Logik im Zusammenhang mit 1 Kor 15,12–20," *LB* 53 (1983): 70–98; Bucher, "Die logische Argumentation in 1 Korinther 15,12–20," *Bib* 55 (1974): 465–86; Jan Lambrecht, "Just a Possibility? A Reply to Johan S. Vos on 1Cor 15,12–20," *ZNW* 91 (2000): 143–45; Moisés Mayordomo, *Argumentiert Paulus logisch? Eine Analyse vor dem Hintergrund antiker Logik*, WUNT 2/188 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 108–22. Mayordomo, *Argumentiert*, 126–27 also proposes that Paul uses *modus tollens* in Rom 4:2; 1 Cor 2:8; Gal 2:21; 3:18, 21.

In either case, the relationship assumed in P1 and P1\* remains intact. The causal relationship better explains the logic than the occasional claim that Paul is using a revised “Socrates is a man” syllogism:<sup>173</sup>

- P1^) The dead are not raised.
- P2^) Christ is one of the dead.
- C^) Therefore, Christ has not been raised.

This syllogism cannot explain why Paul can work with the assumed relationship in P1 and P1\*, which is crucial to the next segment.

However, there remains a question of why this causal relationship is assumed. Paul’s argument in general presents Christ’s resurrection as establishing a pattern. To deny the general resurrection is to deny the effects of the salvific paradigm shift, by which Paul could also explain the significant ethical problems among the Corinthians. The missing premise is inferred from the other negative outcomes and from the overall tenor of Paul’s argument. For example, if Christ in his resurrection did not defeat death for those united with him, then neither did he defeat sin in his crucifixion (vv. 16–17; 50–57). That is why faith would be described as “empty” or “insubstantial” (v. 14), as it would invalidate Paul’s own testimony (v. 10), the apostolic proclamation, and thus the Corinthians’ own lives as Christians. This assumption is thus another manifestation of the theme that is pervasive in 1 Corinthians of the union of Christians with Christ. Its role in resurrection belief here thus presents it as another worldview foundation.

This union with Christ is part and parcel of the reality of faith. If there is no resurrection, it is because there is no union and Christ himself cannot have been raised. And if there is no union, then the faith is empty of all substance. It comes from an empty proclamation aimed to

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<sup>173</sup> William F. Orr and James Arthur Walther, *1 Corinthians*, AB 32 (New York: Doubleday, 1976), 325–26; Eriksson, *Traditions*, 258–59.

lead people into this union through the gospel story. Paul will reiterate these points in vv. 16–17, but there they will be an inference from the central problem that Paul identifies in v. 15.<sup>174</sup>

That is, Paul and his fellow proclaimers of the gospel—such as those listed in vv. 5–7—would be found guilty of being false witnesses of God if there is no resurrection of the dead. The genitive relationship here is generally regarded as objective, meaning “false witnesses about God,” which fits with the rest of the sentence. They would be people who testified “against” (*κατά*) God by claiming that God did what he in fact did not do. As Fee articulates this notion, “Since for Paul Christ’s resurrection is not his (Christ’s) own doing, but *God’s* vindication of the work of the Son, that means that a denial of the resurrection of the dead leads ultimately to a denial of the gospel altogether and levels an accusation against the living God, that God did what in fact God did not do – if they are correct.”<sup>175</sup> Those who claimed to be sent by God to proclaim his message would instead be testifying in opposition to the one they falsely presented as the God who raises the dead. Because the resurrection of the Christ could have only been an act of God (shown in the only active uses of the verb in this chapter), and any hoped-for resurrection could only be an act of God, the question of the possibility of resurrection is fundamentally a question about who God is and what God does. The pattern is established in Christ, but if there is no resurrection, thereby denying that God raises the dead, then he did not raise Christ either.

A further significance to this argument is that the resurrection—which was claimed as, among other things, the ultimate vindication of Jesus as the Christ and the Lord—would only become another blasphemous lie, confirming the condemnation of Jesus and his movement. Jesus’s function as pattern for his followers depends on what he has declared about God being true. In the words of Karl Olav Sandnes and Jan-Olav Henriksen, “Had Jesus not been

<sup>174</sup> On the centrality of v. 15 in this segment, see Wagnies, “Témoins,” 362–66.

<sup>175</sup> Fee, *Corinthians*, 823 (emphasis original). Cf. Michel Quesnel, *La première épître aux Corinthiens*, Commentaire biblique: Nouveau Testament 7 (Paris: Cerf, 2018), 380.

resurrected, this would have meant that even the one who gave his life entirely to God and to other humans in order to proclaim the kingdom of God, in the end, had to see himself defeated by the powers of death. That would not only have meant that his own proclamation was a failure, but also that the God he witnessed to was not the one Jesus claimed God to be.”<sup>176</sup> Jesus himself would be the lying progenitor of more liars. The Sanhedrin would not have needed their own false witnesses (*ψευδόμεαρτυς*, the same word is used in v. 15 and Matt 26:60; cf. Mark 14:56–57); Jesus’s false testimony would be sufficient to condemn his message.<sup>177</sup> And as the language of v. 15 suggests, with its definite use of “the Christ,” if God did not raise Jesus, he also did not validate his identity as the Christ.

Indeed, the language here is suggestive of an imagined lawcourt setting and evocative of long-established legal values concerning false testimony, especially in the Mediterranean and Near Eastern world of Paul’s context. On the first point, the combination of *εὐρισκόμεθα* with the witnessing language of *ψευδομάρτυρες* and *ἐμαρτυρήσαμεν*, as well as the preposition signifying testifying against another, all serve to establish a legal context. The present tense of the first verb expresses a certainty of outcome in this hypothetical scenario while the aorist tense of the second verb fits the past-oriented language dominant in lawcourt settings and juristic rhetoric. There is otherwise not a clear reason to switch the tenses here. Similarly, the active uses of *ἐγείρω* here are also noteworthy for how they are the only aorist uses of the verb (*ἡγείρεν*) applied to Jesus’s resurrection, when every other reference to the same in this segment, taking a cue from v. 4, is a perfect passive (vv. 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, as well as 20). The aorist correlates with *ἐμαρτυρήσαμεν* and further supports an imagined legal setting in which the evangelists declare that, on the third day, God raised the Christ. The first use of the verb is also the only case in Paul’s articulation of

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<sup>176</sup> Sandnes and Henriksen, *Resurrection*, 266–67.

<sup>177</sup> For more on the connections of this story with this text, see Wagnies, “Témoins,” 367.

the negative hypothetical reality in vv. 13–19 where the resurrection verb is not preceded by a negative. This positive statement, which would amount to a charge in the imagined lawcourt setting, harkens back to the summary of the gospel in vv. 4 and 12, and thereby signifies what had been implicit in those texts: that it is God who was said to raise Jesus, as is consistent with the second foundation of resurrection belief.

On the second point of legal values concerning false testimony, it was a long-established precedent that false testimony could have reflecting effects on false witnesses, even to the point of lethal consequences in capital cases (e.g., Laws of Hammurabi §§3–4; Deut 19:16–21). The severity of false testimony is further demonstrated in the Torah in its place among the Ten Commandments (Exod 20:16; Deut 5:20). Violation of the ninth commandment would also entail violation of the third commandment, taking the Lord’s name in vain, when one swore an oath to give true testimony in the court. F. W. Grosheide expresses the condemnable offense well: “people who give their false witness in God’s name not only speak an untruth but they hold God in derision by covering their false witness with His name.”<sup>178</sup> The kind of case Paul describes here would make the connection of violating both the third and ninth commandments all the more poignant, as the false testimony concerns God’s action. These false witnesses would be blasphemers against God, which was punishable by death (Lev 24:16). And death they would have, not in the sense of falling asleep to awaken in resurrection (as in v. 6 and Dan 12:2), but in the sense of oblivion, because they and those they deceived would still be in their sins.<sup>179</sup>

From this central problem in v. 15, all else would follow, as the inferential γάρ implies in v. 16. If God does not raise the dead, God has not raised Christ. If God has not raised Christ, then the Corinthians’ faith has no effect, for they are still in their sins (v. 17). In other words, if God

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<sup>178</sup> Grosheide, *Corinthians*, 358. Cf. Barrett, *Corinthians*, 348: “If there is no resurrection, the Christian proclamation is a lie placed where it is likely to do most damage, in a statement about God.”

<sup>179</sup> I owe the insights of these last two paragraphs to personal correspondence with Keldie Paroschi.

has not addressed the problem of death, he has also not addressed the problem of sin, “The logic of it is simple, granted the close link throughout scripture between sin and death: if God has overcome death in the resurrection of Jesus, then the power of sin is broken; but if he hasn’t it isn’t.”<sup>180</sup> Those who have already died, who Paul has described as falling asleep “in Christ,” would in fact be lost forever, consigned to oblivion. There is thus no hope beyond this life, and this collection of liars proclaiming an empty faith, still wallowing in the sins they proclaimed salvation from, being doomed to oblivion, are the most pitiable group of all people.

Before moving on to the summary of worldview foundations in this segment, two other points should be noted about this latter half of the argument. Verse 18 seems confusing in that, given what Paul has said previously, those who are said to have fallen asleep in Christ could not be “in Christ” in this scenario.<sup>181</sup> But Brookins and Longenecker note that the reader must attend to the function of the ἄρα at the beginning of this sentence,

which specifies disagreement between the perspective of the interlocutor and that of the speaker. In other words, we have a “blended” perspective involving two discrete “mental spaces,” one containing Paul’s perspective (those asleep in Christ are not perished), the other, as far as Paul is concerned, a “counterfactual” space, belonging to the Corinthian dissenters, containing a world in which Christ has not been raised from the dead.<sup>182</sup>

Even with this blended perspective, Paul keeps in view the reality of being “in Christ” as a foundation of hope. In his perspective, those who are “in Christ” who have died can be said to be asleep, because there is a guarantee that they will be awakened (ἐγείρω), as Christ has.

Finally, v. 19 raises the question of what Paul links “only” (μόνον) to in the protasis. It could technically modify “we have hoped” or “in Christ,” but Paul never uses the vocabulary of

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<sup>180</sup> Wright, *Resurrection*, 332. Cf. Schnabel, *Korinther*, 881.

<sup>181</sup> Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians*, 564 links ἀπώλοντο, rather than οἱ κοιμηθέντες, with ἐν Χριστῷ: “those who have fallen asleep have perished in Christ.”

<sup>182</sup> Brookins and Longenecker, *1 Corinthians 10-16*, 152.

hope in a negative sense elsewhere, and it makes no sense for Paul to think of hoping “only in Christ” as a negative, as if it were in contrast with hoping in someone greater. It is possible that it modifies the whole protasis so that it could be translated almost as an insertion: “If we have hoped in Christ for this life, *and nothing more*, we are to be more pitied than all people.”<sup>183</sup> This translation best reflects the placement of “only” in the Greek clause, but the sense it gives this sentence is also reflected and clarified by it modifying “in this life.” This makes the best sense of the clause in light of the preceding sentence describing the oblivion of those who have died and in light of the succeeding clause describing the pitiable state of the proclaimers.<sup>184</sup> Hope that is for this life only is no hope at all. If death and not resurrection represents the true end for the proclaimers and those they have proclaimed to, then nothing more needs to be said.

### **Summary of Foundations in Verses 12–19**

Obviously, the first foundation of Christ’s own resurrection is still fundamental to Paul’s argument here, though it is given a more negative expression here, as opposed to its positive expression in the preceding and succeeding segments. Without Christ’s resurrection, the gospel is empty of all substance and all effect. If Christ has not been raised, he has not defeated death in himself, and so he cannot have defeated sin by his death either. And if he has not risen, then all that Paul has described as the reality of being “in Christ”—including the transferal of victory over sin and death—is empty as well, for there would be no “Christ” to be “in.”<sup>185</sup>

The second foundation of God’s inexorable, faithful love is also clearly operative here, as the matter of God raising Christ or not is at the center of this segment. If he has not raised Christ,

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<sup>183</sup> Cf. Barrett, *Corinthians*, 349–50; Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 703.

<sup>184</sup> Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians*, 565.

<sup>185</sup> Cf. Thiselton, *Corinthians*, 1220.



everything else falls apart. The distinct actives in v. 15 illustrate that the surrounding passives are true passives functioning in allusion to what the active attests: it is God who raises the dead, or it is no one. God's identification as the God who raises the dead is at stake here, as one can see in the use of gnomic presents of ἐγείρω (vv. 15–16; cf. vv. 29, 32, 35, 42–44). In other words, the present form of the verbs is not concerned with identifying that action as belonging to any specific absolute or relative time, but in this context, they present identifying action that is characteristic of God.<sup>186</sup> If God is not the God who raises the dead, then the gospel testimony about him is utterly false, and he is neither inexorably faithful nor inexorably loving.

While the third foundation is not clearly operative in this segment, this analysis has shown a fourth foundation at work: resurrection is the theo/logical end of the Christians' incorporative, identifying, and participatory union with Christ. This assumption drives the whole argument about the link between Christ's resurrection and the general resurrection, and it will be crucial again in the next segment. It also appears in the two uses of Paul's crucial ἐν Χριστῷ phrase. This phrase is empty of meaning if Christ has not been raised. But if Christ has been raised, it is part of the larger phrase ("those who have fallen asleep in Christ") signaling the temporariness of death. It also defines those who have hope beyond this life, for they are the ones "in Christ," the one who has gone through death and out the other side into the hope that awaits us. This particular form of the union language emphasizes oneness in being contained in Christ, while other forms of this union language signify togetherness in being in proximity to Christ.<sup>187</sup> But whatever form it takes in Paul's argument, the point he makes with it as far as resurrection is concerned is that the entwining that Christians signify with their baptism in

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<sup>186</sup> Brookins and Longenecker, *1 Corinthians 10-16*, 150.

<sup>187</sup> On these points, see Frederick S. Tappenden, *Resurrection in Paul: Cognition, Metaphor, and Transformation*, ECL 19 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2016), 179–86.

dying and rising with Christ will come to its fruition in the literal, eschatological resurrection. If it does not, then baptism too is empty of substance and effect.

### Verses 20–28

#### **Jesus as the First in Resurrection**

With the segment of vv. 20–28, the first part of Paul’s argument reaches its crescendo and the profundity of its impact has made it one of the most cited, alluded to, and discussed segments in all of Paul’s writing. Its impact beyond the Pauline corpus was nearly immediate (in ancient text terms), as the first allusion to it appears with the use of “firstfruits” language applied to Jesus’s resurrection and the future resurrection in 1 Clem 24:1.<sup>188</sup> Below I make note of many other references to this text related to eschatology and Christology. But for now, we must attend to how this text corrects course towards the zenith of v. 28 after the nadir of v. 19.

Paul’s opening *ὡνὶ δέ* in v. 20 serves to connect his teaching in this segment to the gospel events—especially Jesus’s resurrection—summarized and attested in vv. 3–11. The construction serves to create a disjunction with the immediately preceding segment of vv. 12–19. Since the circumstances discussed therein are hypothetical conditions that would obtain if Jesus never rose from the dead, the *ὡνὶ δέ* signals a return to conditions of the actual world as initially described in the more distant unit of vv. 3–11. Whether one describes this shift as moving from a hypothetical timeline in vv. 12–19 to the real timeline in vv. 20–28 or as moving from unreal conditionals to the adversative reality, Paul’s point in making the transition is fundamentally the

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<sup>188</sup> More distantly, 1 Clem 37:3 and 41:1 have sometimes been identified as allusions to v. 24, with their references to “each in his own rank.”

same and the continuity in logic is maintained between vv. 20–28 and vv. 3–11.<sup>189</sup> As such, the form of Paul’s argument itself, in addition to its content, attests to the link between Jesus’s resurrection and the resurrection of believers.

At this point, Paul gives further specificity to his description of the nature of the causal relationship between Christ’s resurrection and the believers’ resurrection through two images. First, Paul represents the resurrections as one event in two phases by using the language of “firstfruits” (*ἀπαρχή*) to refer to Jesus in his resurrection (vv. 20, 23). Such terminology would be readily comprehensible for Paul’s audience, given the general religious significance of offering the first/best part of something to a deity for the purpose of dedication and consecration.<sup>190</sup> It also had particular significance for Paul’s Jewish background in the Jewish cult (Exod 23:16; Lev 23:10–15; Num 18:11–18; Deut 18:4; 26:2, 10; 2 Chr 31:5), including in its renewal after the Babylonian exile (Neh 10:35–37; Tob 1:6–7; Jdt 11:13; Sir 45:20; Josephus, *Ant.* 12.50; 16.172–173) and in eschatological hopes (Ezek 44:30; 11QT<sup>a</sup> XVIII–XIX).

Scholars have often noted the suggestiveness of this imagery, the significance of which Thiselton has summarized well as involving, “(1) prior *temporality*; (2) *representation* of the same quality or character; and (3) *promise* or *pledge* of *more of the same kind to come*.”<sup>191</sup> One may add to this list the sense of a priority of “rank” (combined with the use of *τάγμα* in v. 23):

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<sup>189</sup> For the first alternative, see Kevin Southerland, “Not One Iota Will Ever Pass Away: A Discourse-Pragmatic Approach to Understanding Νῦνί Versus Νῦν” (paper presented at the Midwest Region Meeting of the Society of the Biblical Literature/Middle West Branch of the American Oriental Society, Notre Dame, IN, 3 February 2018), 9–11. For the second, see Schnabel, *Korinther*, 918; Schrage, *Korinther*, 159; Thiselton, *Corinthians*, 1223. Fee, *Corinthians*, 828 sees both logical and temporal significance in this construction. Quesnel, *Corinthiens*, 382 notes that the ultimate force of this construction in context is to indicate that the preceding conditions are irrelevant in actuality.

<sup>190</sup> Joost Holleman, *Resurrection and Parousia: A Traditio-Historical Study of Paul’s Eschatology in 1 Corinthians 15*, NovTSup 84 (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 49–50; Gerhard Delling, “ἀπαρχή,” *TDNT* 1:484–85.

<sup>191</sup> Thiselton, *Corinthians*, 1224 (emphases original). Cf. Raymond F. Collins, *First Corinthians*, SP 7 (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1999), 548; Terri Moore, *The Mysteries, Resurrection, and 1 Corinthians 15: Comparative Methodology and Contextual Exegesis* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books; Fortress Academic, 2018), 110–11. On the last point of significance, see particularly Tertullian, *Res.* 51.

the firstfruits represents the first, choice, and best parts of the harvest as a whole (cf. Exod 34:26; Jer 2:3; Hos 9:10). Paul thus explains the unprecedented division of the eschatological resurrection into two parts while still maintaining the connection between Jesus's resurrection with the resurrection of the faithful as one event through the use of this firstfruits image. Jesus is the first part of the resurrection in both time and rank, the representative of what is yet to come, and the pledge that the rest of the harvest of resurrection of those who sleep will indeed come.

Indeed, outside of this text the NT often declares that Jesus's resurrection was the first piece of the eschatological reality, that the new creation and the new human family—consisting of both Jews and gentiles—began with Jesus (Acts 3:15–21; 26:23; Rom 8:11, 23, 28–29; 2 Cor 1:22; 4:13–5:5; Eph 1:14, 19–20; Phil 3:19–21; Col 1:18; 1 Thess 4:14–15; 5:9–10; Heb 2:14–15; Rev 1:5).<sup>192</sup> The different expressions in these texts still articulate some dimension of this common belief. Jesus has inaugurated this eschatological reality by virtue of his becoming the new progenitor in his resurrection.

### **The Adam-Christ Contrast**

On that note, Paul here also attends to a second image of Christ as the contrast of Adam. In the logic of Paul's argument the respective characters and fates of these two progenitors connects intricately with the expected fate of those who participate in the patterns of their lives, whether that pattern is one of disobedience that leads to death or faithfulness that leads to death's reversal in resurrection unto everlasting life.<sup>193</sup> This participatory pattern relies on a larger framework of

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<sup>192</sup> On Rom 8:23 specifically, White argues that the phrase τὴν ἀπαρχὴν τοῦ πνεύματος is an allusion to Paul's teaching in 1 Cor 15:20. Joel R. White, "Christ's Resurrection Is the Spirit's Firstfruits (Romans 8,23)," *Resurrection of the Dead: Biblical Traditions in Dialogue*, ed. Geert Van Oyen and Tom Shepherd, BETL 249 (Leuven: Peeters, 2012), 300–302.

<sup>193</sup> Murray J. Harris, *From Grave to Glory: Resurrection in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Academic, 1990), 224.

union with the progenitor in question, since death and resurrection are only the culminations of lives lived in union with one progenitor or another. Furthermore, that framework of union in turn relies on a larger framework of union between the respective progenitors and the old and new creations they participate in as microcosms, particularly by virtue of the ruling powers they release on their respective creations: sin in the case of Adam, the Holy Spirit in the case of Christ.<sup>194</sup> Paul's conception of the resurrection makes the sense that it does in light of the cosmic-scale hope he articulates in terms of the kingdom of God and new creation.

But more specifically for this text, the primary point of contrast is the antithetical manner in which both Adam and Christ serve as progenitors who define the dominions of their progeny.<sup>195</sup> Indeed, as C. E. Hill notes, "it is because Christ stands in such a relation to Christians as Adam does to those who die that the historical reality of Christ's bodily resurrection can furnish grounds for the Christians' hope of their own."<sup>196</sup> While Adam is the progenitor of humanity by virtue of being the first man, Christ is the new progenitor of humanity by virtue of his resurrection and communication of resurrection life to others. The first Adam could only receive life and then die, so that death defines the dominion of Adam (v. 21a, 22a); Christ, the last Adam (v. 45), gives life by his resurrection, so that resurrection life defines the dominion of Christ (vv. 21b, 22b).<sup>197</sup> Indeed, this resurrection life is the direct reversal of death through

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<sup>194</sup> Cf. Harding, *Paul's Eschatological Anthropology*, 119–21; Kirk, "Seeds," 206–17; Thiselton, *Corinthians*, 1270–73. It is this dual framework of union and participation that informs the argument here, rather than the idea of "Adam" and, by extension, "Christ" being corporate personalities. The fullest articulation of this idea in relation to 1 Cor 15 is probably Bernardin Schneider, "The Corporate Meaning and Background of 1 Cor 15,45b—'O Eschatos Adam eis Pneuma Zōiopoious,'" *CBQ* 29 (1967): 450–67.

<sup>195</sup> On Jewish traditions about Adam and Paul's place in relation to them, see Felipe de Jesús Legarreta-Castillo, *The Figure of Adam in Romans 5 and 1 Corinthians 15: The New Creation and Its Ethical and Social Reconfiguration* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2014), 33–117; John R. Levison *Portraits of Adam in Early Judaism: From Sirach to 2 Baruch*, JSPP 1 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1988).

<sup>196</sup> C. E. Hill, "Paul's Understanding of Christ's Kingdom in I Corinthians 15:20-28," *NovT* 30 (1988): 305.

<sup>197</sup> In the NT, the verb used for giving life here—ζωοποιέω—elsewhere conveys the communication of resurrection life or otherwise appears in the context of resurrection imagery (vv. 36, 45; John 5:21; Rom 4:17; 8:11; 2 Cor 3:6; 1 Pet 3:18).

giving immortal life that is of Christ (v. 49).<sup>198</sup> This fact fits with the Adamic role of Christ to be for the world—for humanity—what Adam should have been: God’s true image-bearer.<sup>199</sup> N. T. Wright summarizes well that in this function as the proper progenitor in God’s new creation project, Jesus in his resurrection “enters upon a new mode of human existence, becoming in one sense the pattern and in another sense the life-giving source for the future resurrection life of those who belong to him.”<sup>200</sup> As such, Paul argues that Christ has become a proper counteraction to Adam; Christ is the pattern and source of life that reverses the death that leaves one separated from God borne in Adam (cf. vv. 45–49).

The key language that Paul uses to define this relationship for Christians is his frequently used phrase ἐν [τῷ] Χριστῷ (v. 22),<sup>201</sup> contrasted here with ἐν τῷ Ἀδάμ. In line with what I have noted earlier about ἐν Χριστῷ, scholars generally take these phrases to denote “location,” of being in the domain/dominion of Adam or Christ.<sup>202</sup> Campbell notes that this interpretation fits with the logic of the subsequent text concerning kingdoms and the rule of Christ’s kingdom over the powers of the world (vv. 24–26), in which the dominion of Adam previously defined the domain of humanity.<sup>203</sup> Schnabel states that the phrases function instrumentally, causally, and locally.<sup>204</sup> However, it is not clear that the phrase itself functions in the former two ways, especially since Paul conveyed instrumentality well enough in v. 21 with his διὰ phrases. In the same way, the causal sense is implied by Paul’s argument to this point, particularly in his use of the “firstfruits” imagery. Therefore, even if the phrase itself does not have such a complex

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<sup>198</sup> On the connection resurrection and sharing in the immortal life of Christ, see Harris, *Grave to Glory*, 270–75.

<sup>199</sup> Wright, *Resurrection*, 334.

<sup>200</sup> N. T. Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 35. For more on Paul’s Adam-Christology, see Wright, *Climax*, 26–37.

<sup>201</sup> The article is in brackets because it does not often appear in the common phrase.

<sup>202</sup> Brookins and Longenecker, *1 Corinthians 10-16*, 154; Campbell, *Union*, 142; Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians*, 570; Luther, “1 Corinthians 15,” 114–15, 120–21; Wolff, *Korinther*, 384–85.

<sup>203</sup> Campbell, *Union*, 348.

<sup>204</sup> Schnabel, *Korinther*, 923.

function, the context indicates that the relationship between Christ and Christians is such that resurrection defines the dominion occupied by those who are in incorporative, identifying, and participatory union with Christ (local), who receive resurrection life through the one who was resurrected (instrumental), because the effect of union with Christ is sharing in his fate (causal).

This contrast between the domains and dominions of the progenitors Adam and Christ raises the question of scope that has interested interpreters for centuries. In other words, if one assumes that ἐν τῷ Ἀδάμ πάντες is universal in scope, because all die, should one not also assume that ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ πάντες is universal in the same sense? The general view has been that the latter is not universal in the sense that the former is.<sup>205</sup> After all, the second πάντες seems to be qualified on both sides by terms otherwise exclusively applied to believers in union with Christ that have soteriological significance (ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ, ζωοποιηθήσονται; cf. v. 45).<sup>206</sup> This position also seems plausible in light of the fact that nowhere in this passage does Paul seem directly concerned with the resurrection of those who are not believers. In fact, in every case in which Paul unpacks the significance of gospel events, he only writes concerning the consequences for believers.<sup>207</sup>

However, a few scholars have disputed this view and insisted that one should read both ἐν τῷ ... πάντες constructions as universal in scope. Andreas Lindemann is incredulous that Paul would argue that Adam defines the domain and fate of all people, but Christ defines the domain

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<sup>205</sup> Among many others, see John Chrysostom, *Hom. 1 Cor.* 39.5; Augustine, *Ep.* 157.14; *Civ.* 13.23; Ambrosiaster, *Comm. 1 Cor.* 15:22; Theodoret, *Comm. 1 Cor.* 15:22; M. Eugene Boring, “The Language of Universal Salvation in Paul,” *JBL* 105 (1986): 279; Andrew Wilson, “The Strongest Argument for Universalism in 1 Corinthians 15:20–28,” *JETS* 59 (2016): 805–12; Ben Witherington III, *Jesus, Paul and the End of the World: A Comparative Study in New Testament Eschatology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 192.

<sup>206</sup> E.g., Hill, “Paul’s Understanding,” 306.

<sup>207</sup> Roger Paul Lucas (“The Time of the Reign of Christ in 1 Corinthians 15:20-28 in Light of Early Christian Session Theology” [PhD diss., Andrews University, 1997], 261–68) comes to this conclusion about the scope of the resurrection effects on the basis of connections he makes between this passage and the sequence of events in the pervasive New Testament “session theology.”

and resurrection fate of a potentially small subset of humanity.<sup>208</sup> Wolfgang Schrage likewise insists that the πάντες cannot be restricted, given the global scope of Christ's work in Paul's argument.<sup>209</sup> Sebastian Schneider, since he already<sup>210</sup> sees the resurrection of unbelievers implied in vv. 51–52 (rather than a distinction between those who are dead and those who are alive at the time of the Parousia), insists that it is possible to read Paul's vocabulary here in such a way as to include unbelievers.<sup>211</sup> He thinks Paul is using a more inclusive version of his ἐν Χριστῷ phrase, since it now includes an article, and the use of ζῶποιέω in reference to unbelievers need only imply that they receive the positive outcome of returning to life, even if it is to judgment.<sup>212</sup>

These objections to the restricted scope fail in the context of this passage and in the context of Paul's overall theology. The generalized sense of ζῶποιέω does not work in light of the usage elsewhere in Paul or the rest of the NT—where it carries the theological freight of receiving the everlasting, resurrection life, rather than simply arising after being dead (John 5:21; Rom 4:17; 8:11; 2 Cor 3:6; 1 Pet 3:18)—and no other contextual clues indicate a different use here, unless one begs the question.<sup>213</sup> If Paul's point was to indicate a universal resurrection, he was clearly capable of using ἐγείρω rather than the more soteriologically loaded ζῶποιέω.<sup>214</sup> Schneider's attempt to differentiate the use of ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ here from other uses based on the

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<sup>208</sup> Lindemann, *Korintherbrief*, 344. Cf. Origen, *Fr. 1 Cor.* 84; Marlis Gielen, "Universale Totenaufweckung und universales Heil? 1 Kor 15,20–28 im Kontext paulinischer Theologie," *BZ* 47 (2003): 89–91.

<sup>209</sup> Schrage, *Korinther*, 165–66. Cf. Origen, *Princ.* 1.6; Scott M. Lewis, *So That God May Be All in All: The Apocalyptic Message of 1 Corinthians 15:12–34* (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1998), 50–51.

<sup>210</sup> His argument is structured in such a way that he writes concerning these verses earlier in his book.

<sup>211</sup> Schneider, *Auferstehen*, 168. Cf. Gielen, "Universale Totenaufweckung," 92–95, 100–102.

<sup>212</sup> Schneider, *Auferstehen*, 168–69. He further justifies this argument by claiming that v. 26 would be undermined if there was no resurrection of unbelievers.

<sup>213</sup> For more on this term, see Cook, *Empty Tomb*, 37–45.

<sup>214</sup> Even in John 5:21, which occurs in the context of a statement of the universal resurrection, this same terminology does not appear in the actual statement of universal resurrection, but only in terms of giving life to whomever the Son wills. In other cases, it indicates more than restoration to life; it indicates receiving everlasting life by the salvific action of God, the one who makes alive (Rom 4:17; 8:11; 2 Cor 3:6; 1 Pet 3:18).



appearance of the article places far too much weight on the article, which only appears rarely in Pauline literature and never with the obviously more inclusive sense Schneider tries to find in it (cf. 2 Cor 2:14; Eph 1:10, 12, 20; 3:11).<sup>215</sup> The more general argument that Adam and Christ should correspond in their scope does not take into account what advocates of the traditional position have noted. By Paul's logic, all humans are related to Adam regardless of volition—although their sin further confirms their connection to Adam—but not all humans are naturally related to Christ; only those who are in willing union with him are so related.<sup>216</sup>

Furthermore, it may be that the assumption on which proponents of both views typically build may be false, as they do not take proper account of the combination of Paul's first (Christ's resurrection) and fourth (union with Christ) foundations of resurrection belief here. Is it truly the case that Paul sees a universal scope in his phrase ἐν τῷ Ἀδὰμ πάντες? This assumption would require that Paul's argument identifies believers as being in the domain of Adam no matter what they do, but that they are additionally in the domain of Christ. Ironically, this logic would dictate that, at least for most believers, it would take death to free them from the domain of Adam—the one by whom death came into the world—before they could be exclusively of the domain of Christ. The transformation of those who are alive at the time of Christ's coming would likewise be a transferal into the domain of Christ. Such an argument would undermine the tenor of Paul's logic concerning the union of Christians with Christ.

One should not see ἐν τῷ Ἀδὰμ as defining one aspect of the current state of believers—namely, their mortality—but rather as a shorthand for the former state of believers, one in which they would remain if Christ never rose. The phrase ἐν τῷ Ἀδὰμ is thus connected with the

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<sup>215</sup> The article is also used in the parallel Adam phrase, but the article itself does not have the significance there. At least part of the explanation for the use of the article in either case is stylistic consistency of these parallel phrases.

<sup>216</sup> Holleman, *Resurrection and Parousia*, 55; Schnabel, *Korinther*, 924.

consequences outlined in vv. 12–19 in the event that there is no resurrection. It is a state of hopelessness where death is not simply the end of mortal beings, but the ultimate separation from God, which leads to perishing rather than sleeping (v. 18).<sup>217</sup> Indeed, Paul insists that not everyone will die anyway (vv. 51–52), so even in that sense Adam does not define them. Instead, those who are ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ are defined in contrast to those who are ἐν τῷ Ἀδὰμ, as Paul will also do later in his argument when he writes about receiving a body like Christ’s in contrast to one like Adam’s (vv. 42–49). Paul ultimately says that the wearing of Christ’s image is in the future because it involves resurrection (v. 49b), but he also relegates the wearing of Adam’s image to the past (v. 49a). The present state of believers is defined primarily in relation to this future state rather than both the past and future state, since the future state is the goal of the current conforming process of sanctification (cf. Rom 8:29–30; 2 Cor 3:18; Phil 3:10–11, 20–21). This is also why Paul defines the resurrection with which he is concerned as victory over death (vv. 26, 54–57), which is never the inheritance of those identified with Adam (or “in Adam”).

This account fits with Paul’s argument in Rom 5:12–21. That unit illustrates a distinction of being defined by Adam and Christ respectively. In both texts, Christ reverses the effects of Adam and brings those who receive God’s grace through him into a new dominion. In Rom 5:17–18, this is indicated particularly in reference to the “all,” since not all will be both condemned and justified (nor does Paul argue that all who were once condemned will be justified), but all who define themselves in relation to Adam will be condemned while all who receive God’s grace in Jesus will be justified. One should see both uses of πάντες in 1 Cor 15:22 in the same way, as defining all who are in union with Adam as being subject to the dominion of death and all who are in union with Christ as being subject to the dominion of the God who

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<sup>217</sup> Thiselton, *Corinthians*, 1228–29.

raises the dead. And thus one can see how in these dual images of the firstfruits and the Adam-Christ contrast the first and fourth foundations of resurrection belief are operative.

In addition to the first and fourth foundations, it is also important to note the re-emergence of the third foundation that resurrection is in accordance with the Scriptures. The first point to note here concerns the influence of the opening chapters of Genesis for forming a picture of new creation and the kingdom of God that Paul will imply in vv. 24–28 and 45–49. The reference to Adam here, and thus implicitly to the story of Gen 1–3, sets up what Paul will address through his use of Pss 8 and 110, as well as his allusions to Dan 7 and (later) Gen 5, in terms of how Christ solves the problems Adam created. Patristic interpreters particularly emphasized the implications of Christ’s reversal of Adam’s disobedience that led to death. If Christ truly reverses the work of Adam, then his work must entail the redemption of the body otherwise doomed to rot in death. As in new creation, where what is subject to death and decay is renewed and redeemed (Rom 8:18–25), the resurrection must involve redemption of the body (Irenaeus, *Haer.* 2.29.2; 3.18.7, 23.7–8; 5.1.3, 13.4; *Epid.* 31; Tertullian, *Res.* 48; *Marc.* 5.9; Athanasius, *Inc.* 10; 21; 24; 29; Epiphanius, *Pan.* 64.64–65; 67.6). If the body is abandoned rather than redeemed, then there is an anthropological hole in the logic of new creation.

Paul implicitly establishes such links between resurrection and new creation through the allusions to the opening chapters of Genesis. The influence of these chapters is manifest in a few ways in Paul’s chapter. One, the reference to the story of Adam in general evokes Genesis and its origin story of the current world order. Two, the reference to Adam as the progenitor in parallel to Christ relies on the role of Adam as one of the original humans made in the image of God (Gen 1:26–27). Three, the “image” language itself appears in v. 49, although there it more directly relies on Gen 5:1–3 with reference to wearing the images of Adam and Christ

respectively. Four, the reference to Adam bringing death to the world relies on the story of Gen 3 with Adam's disobedience and the consequent death sentence placed upon him and his descendants who follow in his footsteps. The combination of these elements is important to Paul's argument as his contrast between Adam and Christ is one between the image-bearer of God who fell and brought death to the world (vv. 21–22, 54–56) and the image-bearer of God who arose and brought life to the world (vv. 20–23, 45, 54–57). Five, this contrast establishes a later one relying on Gen 2:7 in v. 45, in which the original Adam is a life-receiving being, while the last Adam is life-giving, one who communicates his resurrection life to others. Six, vv. 39–41 evoke the taxonomies of creatures (in reverse order, as presented in Ps 8) and heavenly bodies (in Gen 1 order) as Paul lays the foundation for how the dead are raised by appealing to God's creative power, will, and wisdom (cf. Gen 1:14–28; Deut 4:16–19; Job 12:7–8; Pss 8:3–8; 148; Ezek 29:5; 38:20; Hos 4:3).<sup>218</sup>

### **The Resurrection and the Consummation of the Kingdom: Implementing Victory**

But before Paul unpacks these other points, he completes his point here about the sequence of resurrection, in which the “all” will be made alive, as well as other eschatological events. He notes that each must be made alive in its own order or rank, Christ the firstfruits and then, at his Parousia, those who are his. Paul has previously tied the resurrection of believers to Christ's Parousia in 1 Thess 4:13–18, where he also used the imagery of ἀπάντησις (1 Thess 4:17) to describe the living as “meeting” the Lord in the air. The implied force of the combination of παρουσία and ἀπάντησις is that of a royal or official arrival being met by a delegation to escort the honored one the rest of the way to the city. The latter term is missing in this text, but the

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<sup>218</sup> Ciampa and Rosner, *Corinthians*, 805–6; Kirk, “Seeds,” 142–43, 148–51.

royal arrival still fits the context here. Additionally, since the former term is also connected with theophanies, this text has overtones of a divine, glorious appearance that serves as the most manifest confirmation of who Jesus is to the world (cf. Matt 24:3, 27, 37, 39).<sup>219</sup>

The outcome of the Parousia and resurrection is that the τέλος, the goal/end, will have been reached and thus it will be the time for Christ to hand over the kingdom to him who is God and Father. In this first use of “kingdom” or “dominion” language, Paul supplies the first lexical indication of the fifth foundation, which he has hinted at thematically to this point: resurrection is necessary to the realization of God’s cosmic-scale promises of the new creation and the kingdom of God. As noted above, Paul initially signaled this foundation through his Adam-Christ contrast and the entailed contrast of old and new creations.

Paul implicitly places resurrection within the eschatological framework of cosmic-scale hopes of the kingdom of God and new creation, motifs which reinforce the same logic of continuity and discontinuity in which the latter is in service to the former and which constitute the fifth foundation of resurrection belief. As noted at multiple points above, Paul’s conception of the resurrection makes the sense that it does in light of the cosmic-scale hope he articulates in terms of the kingdom of God and new creation. Still, the precise manner in which the logic of this foundation is operative in this unit and in this chapter in general requires explication.

Beyond the Adam-Christ contrast, Paul relates resurrection to the kingdom by reference to Christ’s post-resurrection reign (v. 25), the kingdom he reigns over and will hand over to God (vv. 24, 28), and—most frequently—Christ’s and/or God’s action of subjugation by using the language of καταργέω (twice in vv. 24, 26) and ὑποτάσσω (six times in vv. 27 [3x], 28 [3x]). The reign of Christ is, of course, implied by the traditional gospel proclamation, in which Christ dies,

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<sup>219</sup> For more on this term, see Adolf Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East: The New Testament Illustrated by Recently Discovered Texts of the Graeco-Roman World*, rev. ed., trans. Lionel R. M. Strachan (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2004), 368–73; Albrecht Oepke, “παρουσία, πάρεμι,” *TDNT* 5:859–65.

is resurrected, and is then exalted to the right hand of God. There does not seem to be any grounds for delaying this reign to some future time before the new creation and the allusion to Ps 110 makes sense as a description of Christ's reign if he reigns while still in the midst of rebellious enemies.<sup>220</sup> Christ's own resurrection entailed his reign in the present time in a similar way to how the general resurrection will entail the consummate kingdom of God (vv. 26–28). Each of these points, and others, require further unpacking.

The precondition for this goal being reached is that every principality, power, and authority will have been brought to nothing. Three points are worth considering about this precondition and the verse that it is part of. First, I briefly explore how this statement is an expression of the second foundation of God's inexorable, faithful love. Second, I discuss what exactly this verse is saying about these principalities, powers, and authorities (as well as who they are). Third, I consider the possibility of whether or not this statement is related to the common relationship of resurrection and final judgment (as in Dan 12).

First, the characterization of God's faithful love as "inexorable" implies that there could be, in principle, enemies or obstacles for God to overcome in this framework. Paul clearly states such in v. 26 when he characterizes death as the last enemy. Here he most closely aligns with apocalyptic traditions in linking death to Adam's sin and seeing in death not merely the end result of transience, but a primeval enemy that separates the faithful from God.<sup>221</sup> But the foundation is also set up here in both the statement of Christ handing over the kingdom to God, indicating that he is fulfilling God's purpose as the executor of God's will, and in the statement that these entities are brought to nothing in the process. The question of who precisely brings

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<sup>220</sup> Hill, "Paul's Understanding," 297–320. Cf. Alexander E. Stewart, "The Temporary Messianic Kingdom in Second Temple Judaism and the Delay of the Parousia," *JETS* 59 (2016): 255–70; Hans-Alwin Wilecke, *Das Problem eines messianischen Zwischenreichs bei Paulus*, ATANT 51 (Zürich: Zwingli, 1967), 56–108.

<sup>221</sup> Legaretta-Castillo, *Figure*, 128–31; Levison, *Portraits*, 156–58.

them to nothing is a question that I must leave for later, but for now the parallel with v. 26 sufficiently shows that both actions serve God's purposes. It is merely a question of whether God the Father himself performs this action or if Christ performs it as his executor.

Of course, the fact of Christ's present reign and his handing over of the kingdom in self-subjection to God has often been a problem for Christian interpreters to address. Patristic interpreters realized how this text was (or at least could be) used by various subordinationist groups and thus many of them saw the need to address its interpretation.<sup>222</sup> A frequent point they made is that Christ's reign does not come to its simple end (i.e., its cessation) in the kingdom of v. 28, but to its proper end (i.e., its goal/τέλος, as is consistent with the language of v. 24).<sup>223</sup>

Second, in further consonance with apocalyptic traditions, Paul states here and elsewhere in the text that every principality, power, and authority must be made subject to God (vv. 24–26, 54–57). With most interpreters, I take these descriptions as referring primarily to demonic forces.<sup>224</sup> The imperial “powers that be” surely are included, but more important to this text are the powers behind the powers, the higher servants of sin and death.<sup>225</sup>

Emma Wasserman, however, presents a more qualified view of the powers in Paul and apocalyptic tradition. She notes that Jewish texts do not present these entities as simply evil powers, “Instead, they typically employ lower-ranking deities as foils for representing the Jewish God as an unmatched and invulnerable sovereign. This is the case whether they envision these

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<sup>222</sup> Origen, *Princ.* 3.5.7; Hilary of Poitiers, *Trin.* 11; John Chrysostom, *Hom. 1 Cor.* 39.7–10; Jerome, *Ep.* 55.5; *Helv.* 6; Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat. Lect.* 15.30; Theodoret, *Comm. 1 Cor.* 15:25, 27. For a more recent argument, see R. B. Jamieson, “1 Corinthians 15.28 and the Grammar of Paul's Christology,” *NTS* 66 (2020): 187–207.

<sup>223</sup> Cf. Collins, *First Corinthians*, 555; Thiselton, *Corinthians*, 1231; Wolff, *Korinther*, 387.

<sup>224</sup> Teodor Braşovneanu, “ΠΑΣΑΝ ΑΡΧΗΝ ΚΑΙ ΠΑΣΑΝ ΕΞΟΥΣΙΑΝ ΚΑΙ ΔΥΝΑΜΙΝ (1 Cor 15,24) and Its Anti-Imperial Interpretation,” in *Paul's Graeco-Roman Context*, ed. Cilliers Breytenbach, BETL 277 (Leuven: Peeters, 2015), 417–40.

<sup>225</sup> For those who draw attention to the imperial powers, see Punt, “Paul, Body, and Resurrection,” 311–30; Luise Schottroff, *Der erste Brief an die Gemeinde in Korinth*, ThKNT 7 (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2013), 288–91, 305–6; Ben Witherington III, *Conflict & Community in Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Carlisle: Paternoster, 1995), 294–98, 304–5.

deities as foolish insubordinates, doomed opponents, harassing earthly spirits, middle managers, or various classes of lesser deities mistakenly worshiped by gentiles.”<sup>226</sup> In other words, the beings, particularly angels, who stand behind the gods the gentiles worship are not simply forces of evil that exist as the metaphysical antitheses of God, even though it does include those who have engaged in some form of disobedience, defiance, and even rebellion.<sup>227</sup> Their existence and function may serve to explain cosmic disorder, but more fundamentally they merely function to magnify the rule of God.<sup>228</sup> Likewise, Paul’s ultimate point about referencing these entities is to underscore the inexorability of God’s purposes and sovereignty. Paul may be portraying Christ, God’s resurrected one, as God’s general conquering God’s enemies with God’s resurrecting power, but it is notable that Paul does not present any anticipation of an actual battle.<sup>229</sup> As Wasserman observes, “There may be war on the horizon, then, but there will be no threat of usurpation, matched battle, or competition with the high God, least of all from Christ.”<sup>230</sup> Whatever the principalities and powers may do, Paul insists that they exist only to give way to the purposes of God and God’s kingdom (cf. Rom 8:38–39; Phil 2:10–11).

Wasserman’s point is well taken, but it is still likely that the rebellious forces are foremost in Paul’s presentation, since he might have used *ὑποτάσσω* for this broader sense, rather than *καταργέω*. When Christ submits himself, the verb Paul uses is the former, not the latter. It is true that the latter verb most clearly parallels the former in vv. 26–28, indicating the subjugation of death in resurrection.<sup>231</sup> Still, these verbs most likely parallel in a synthetic fashion moving

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<sup>226</sup> Emma Wasserman, “Gentile Gods at the Eschaton: A Reconsideration of Paul’s ‘Principalities and Powers’ in 1 Corinthians 15,” *JBL* 136 (2017): 727.

<sup>227</sup> In this respect, at least, she was anticipated by Calvin, *Corinthians*, 20.

<sup>228</sup> Wasserman, “Gentile Gods,” 735.

<sup>229</sup> On the military imagery in this passage, see Ciampa and Rosner, *Corinthians*, 776–77.

<sup>230</sup> Wasserman, “Gentile Gods,” 743.

<sup>231</sup> Martinus C. de Boer, “Paul’s Use of a Resurrection Tradition in 1 Cor 15,20-28,” in *The Corinthian Correspondence*, ed. R. Bieringer, BETL 125 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1996), 648–51.



from the narrower to the broader, given how Paul uses *καταργέω* elsewhere in 1 Cor 1:28; 2:6; 6:13; 13:8, 10, 11. The parallel thus might suggest that death and these powers are “brought to nothing,” nullified, abolished, stripped of their power, and placed in subjection, rather than “annihilated,” per se.<sup>232</sup> On the other hand, the strength of language Paul uses against death later in this chapter may imply that it is acceptable to read a different sense of the verb there as referring to annihilation or, in my translation, being “doomed to destruction.” When a force like death is stripped of its power, it no longer has function and is, for all intents and purposes, completely wiped out. It may also be possible, on an annihilationist view of the fate of the condemned, to see the notion of “annihilation” in parallel with eschatological subjugation, but the evaluation of such a possibility in light of further alternatives is beyond my scope here.<sup>233</sup>

Third, with such descriptions, it is worth considering if this text at all evokes belief in final judgment. The link between resurrection and final judgment was common in Second Temple texts that articulated resurrection belief, particularly regarding the involvement of the human servants of the powers.<sup>234</sup> As a former Pharisee, Paul was thoroughly familiar with this framework of expectations, as Josephus indicates (*Ant.* 18.14; *J.W.* 2.163; cf. *Ag. Ap.* 2.217–218). Acts 24:15 also shows that he maintained this belief well after becoming a Christian and writing this letter. That he maintained this belief is further confirmed by Paul’s own writings in the early 1 Thess 1:10 and 5:1–11, as well as the later Rom 2:6–10 and Phil 3:18–21 (cf. also the disputed 2 Thess 1:5–10; 2 Tim 4:1). He uses the prospect of judgment as a basis for ethical

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<sup>232</sup> Allo, *Corinthiens*, 407; Barrett, *Corinthians*, 357–58; Gardner, *1 Corinthians*, 679; Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 710–11; Robertson and Plummer, *Corinthians*, 355.

<sup>233</sup> Conversely, Lewis argues for the “subjection” understanding because of the universalist (specifically, Origenist) tenor of his argument. Lewis, *All in All*, 57–58.

<sup>234</sup> 2 Macc 7:9, 11, 14, 17, 19, 23, 29, 34–36; 12:43–45; 14:46; 1 En. 25:4; 27:3–5; 51; 61:8–11; 91:10–11, 14–15; 92:3–5; 100:4–5; 102:4–11; 103:5–15; 108:8–15; Sib. Or. 4.179–192; Apocr. Ezek. frag. 1; Apoc. Zeph. 10:4–11; 4 Ezra 4:40–42; 7:32–44, 115, 128; 2 Bar. 50:2–4; 83; T.Zeb. 10:2–3; T.Benj. 10:6–11; LAB 3:10; 25:7; Pss. Sol. 3:12; 1QH<sup>a</sup> XII, 26–27; XIV, 18–19, 29; 4QAramaic Apocalypse/4Q246 II, 4–6; 4QTQahat ar/4Q542 1 II, 3–8; Josephus, *Ant.* 18.14; *J.W.* 2.163; *Ag. Ap.* 2.217–218.

instruction in Rom 14:10–12 (cf. 2 Cor 5:10). In 1 Corinthians, he appeals to the final judgment as the coming Day, when people’s works will be revealed and tested with fire (3:10–15; cf. 4:5; 5:5), but he also warns that those who destroy God’s temple (i.e., God’s people, the body of Christ) will themselves be destroyed on that Day (3:16–17). He also lists people who are characterized by sin who will not inherit the kingdom of God (6:9–10; cf. Gal 5:19–21), which appeals to the final judgment that decides everyone’s ultimate verdict (cf. 5:13; Phil 3:18–21).<sup>235</sup>

Why then does Paul not mention final judgment here? The aforementioned texts show that this belief was a long-held one for him and that he could appeal to it in order to reinforce praxis.<sup>236</sup> And yet it is distinctly absent in this section. Perhaps this absence is a confirmation that Paul is not primarily speaking about humans when he refers to principalities, powers, and authorities. Otherwise, this text would probably be the most opportune occasion to bring up the link between resurrection and final judgment. However, such a consideration is not entirely absent from this chapter, as I note in the next segment.

While vv. 24 and 26 incorporate the second foundation of God’s inexorable, faithful love into Paul’s argument, vv. 25 and 27 incorporate the third foundation of resurrection as the fulfillment of Scripture. Particularly, he articulates this basis through using the texts of Dan 7, Pss 8, and 110. Because it is the least direct, but still establishes a context for the use of the other two texts, I consider Dan 7 first.

In line with his reference to the story of Adam, Paul’s use of Dan 7:14 and 27 (and, by further indirect implication, 2:44) connects resurrection with the reign of God and God’s ideal image-bearer (or, in Dan 7, the one like a Son of Man). This connection is not as frequently

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<sup>235</sup> For more on judgment in Paul, see L. Joseph Kreitzer, *Jesus and God in Paul’s Eschatology*, JSNTSup 19 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987), 93–130.

<sup>236</sup> Thus, Héring, *Corinthians*, 167 goes too far in saying of vv. 23–24, “In any event, it seems clear that if the Apostle had believed in a resurrection of the non-elect, this would have been the time to mention them and this chapter the place!”

noted in contemporary scholarship as the noted psalms, but patristic interpreters noted it on several occasions (Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 32.26–40; Hilary of Poitiers, *Trin.*, 11.39; John Chrysostom, *Hom. 1 Cor.* 39.6; Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat. Lect.* 15.29, 31–33; Ambrosiaster, *Comm. 1 Cor.* 15:24–27a; Theodoret, *Comm. 1 Cor.* 15:25). Of course, this is not to say that scholars never note this connection, but it is less prominent in discussions, since it is less direct than the psalms.<sup>237</sup> What these scholars and their patristic forbears have observed comports with the collocation of allusions to Dan 7 and Ps 110 elsewhere in the NT in Jesus’s statement before the Sanhedrin (Matt 26:64 // Mark 14:62 // Luke 22:69) and Stephen’s description of his vision of Jesus prior to his own death (Acts 7:56), although in the latter case Jesus is described as “standing” instead of “sitting” or “seated” at the right hand.<sup>238</sup>

The first connection between Dan 7 and Paul’s text is the eschatological concern of the kingdom, which Paul refers to here in a form uniquely—for him—unadorned with any modifiers (τὴν βασιλείαν; v. 24), as is consistent with the unadorned reference in Dan 7:14.<sup>239</sup> Both texts present a theme of subjugation of enemy powers to God’s ideal ruler (which Dan 7 highlights with the contrast of the representative figure as one “like a son of man” with the abominable beasts of other kingdoms), although in this context it is the role of the Son that Paul emphasizes. The description of death as the last enemy may also owe something to the description of the fourth beast as the climactic enemy of God and the promise of everlasting victory.<sup>240</sup> The

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<sup>237</sup> Anthony J. Chvala-Smith, “The Boundaries of Christology: 1 Corinthians 15:20–28 and Its Exegetical Substructure” (PhD diss., Marquette University, 1993), 132–74; Nicholas A. Meyer, *Adam’s Dust and Adam’s Glory in the Hodayot and the Letters of Paul: Rethinking Anthropogony and Theology*, NovTSup 168 (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 170–71; Jeffrey Earl Peterson, “The Image of the Man from Heaven: Christological Exegesis in 1 Corinthians 15:45–49” (PhD diss., Yale University, 1997), 62–63; Schrage, *Korinther*, 156–57.

<sup>238</sup> On the linking of these texts, see Martin Hengel, “Psalm 110 und die Erhöhung des Auferstandenen zur Rechten Gottes,” in *Anfänge der Christologie: Festschrift für Ferdinand Hahn zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Cilliers Breytenbach and Henning Paulsen (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991), 57–66.

<sup>239</sup> Chvala-Smith, “Boundaries,” 137–38.

<sup>240</sup> Chvala-Smith, “Boundaries,” 149–55. It is an interesting coincidence, if nothing else, that death is the fourth entity Paul lists after the plural figures of principalities, powers, and authorities.

conclusion of this segment in v. 28, and the kingdom significance of the same, may also resonate with Dan 7:27 and its statement of the everlasting kingdom (on which see below). Both texts (in Dan 7, particularly in vv. 14 and 27) also present a picture of the representative of God's people receiving the kingdom so that the saints in general receive the kingdom. However, the process is more complex in 1 Cor 15, as Christ must first implement God's victory and then deliver the kingdom to the Father.

Although the uses of Pss 110 and 8 are separated here by v. 26, it seems best to consider them together here. After all, Paul's use of Ps 8:6b (8:7b LXX) in v. 27 with some grammatical modifications—*πάντα ὑπέταξας ὑποκάτω τῶν ποδῶν αὐτοῦ* in the LXX vs. *πάντα ... ὑπέταξεν ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ* in v. 27—in connection with Ps 110:1b (109:1b LXX) in v. 25 with other grammatical modifications—*ἕως ἄν θῶ τοὺς ἐχθρούς σου ὑποπόδιον τῶν ποδῶν σου* in the LXX vs. *ἄχρι οὗ θῆ ... τοὺς ἐχθρούς ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ* in v. 25—is but one example of the collocation of these texts in the NT (Eph 1:20–23; Heb 1:3, 13; 2:6–9; and 1 Pet 3:21b–22).<sup>241</sup> Psalm 8 is concerned more with protology and Ps 110 with kingdom theology and eschatology (Matt 22:43–45 // Mark 12:35–37 // Luke 20:41–44; Matt 26:64 // Mark 14:62 // Luke 22:69; Mark 16:19; Acts 2:33–36; Rom 8:34; Eph 1:20–22; Col 3:1; Heb 8:1; 10:12–13; 12:2; 1 Pet 3:22; cf. Acts 5:31; 7:55–56), but these texts are linked through the common theme of the subject's rule, which is illustrated through the common imagery of the ruled being under the subject's feet.<sup>242</sup> Likewise, the former text presents an implicit eschatology through an idealized picture of human function in creation that one can hope becomes actualized again.<sup>243</sup> The figure in Ps 110 is an

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<sup>241</sup> de Boer, "Paul's Use," 639–51; Kirk, "Seeds," 155–56. Paul seems to derive the elided *πάντας* in v. 25 from Ps 8:6, which further tightens this collocation. On the grammatical changes in these references, see David M. Hay, *Glory at the Right Hand: Psalm 110 in Early Christianity* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1973), 36–37; Jan Lambrecht, "Paul's Christological Use of Scripture in 1 Cor. 15.20–28," *NTS* 28 (1982): 508–11.

<sup>242</sup> See other examples of this imagery in Bailey, *Paul*, 446–47.

<sup>243</sup> Schnabel, *Korinther*, 939.

ideal priestly ruler taking the place of the ideal human in Ps 8, except that the former context indicates clear hostility that is absent from the latter text.<sup>244</sup> This connection receives further support from the explanation of the “image” concept in Ps 8 in terms of rule, as in Gen 1:26–30 (a text with which it has many other links), meaning that the ideal ruler is also the ideal image-bearer.<sup>245</sup> These collocated texts thus became useful for describing the current role and rule of Christ as one who fulfills the position of Adam as the image-bearer of God, being the priestly king who rules over creation in the midst of continuing hostility.

How, then, do these texts relate to resurrection in Paul’s argument? First, as implied by the typical gospel proclamation throughout the NT, including here in vv. 20–28, the current state in which these psalms are being fulfilled is one that is the direct result of the resurrection, since resurrection leads to exaltation. Indeed, the logical flow of this text follows the gospel progression, in which Jesus’s resurrection defeats death and precedes exaltation (Matt 28:16–18; Acts 1:3–11; 2:31–36; 5:28–32; 7:55–56; 13:30–39; 17:31; Rom 1:1–4; 8:34; Eph 1:17–23; Phil 3:18–21; Col 1:18–20; 2:11–15; Heb 2:5–12; 7:23–27; 12:2; 1 Pet 1:18–21; 3:18–22; Rev 1:5; 3:21; 5:5–12; 17:14; cf. Rev 20:4–6; 22:3–5), though now it is also the general resurrection that precedes the consummate kingdom.<sup>246</sup> Second, these particular scriptures also serve to establish the cosmic context of the fifth foundation of the kingdom of God and new creation. Only in this cosmic context does resurrection make the sense that it does and only by means of resurrection can Paul imagine people participating in this hoped-for reality. The resurrection of Jesus will be writ large on a cosmic scale in the form of new creation. If believers participate in this gospel story and they believe that the goal of it is the kingdom of God and new creation, they must also

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<sup>244</sup> On Israel’s king functioning in a priestly capacity, see 2 Sam 6:14, 17–18; 8:18; 1 Kgs 8:14, 55, 62–64.

<sup>245</sup> For more on this text and Gen 1, see Rodolphe Morissette, “La citation du Psaume VIII, 7b dans I Corinthiens XV, 27a,” *ScEs* 24 (1972): 330–32.

<sup>246</sup> On how this text fits within a larger tradition thoroughly shaped by this gospel narrative and its progression, see Lucas, “Reign,” 197–244.

believe that their resurrection is necessary to God's larger cosmic project and to their inheritance of it. Third, the subjection of enemies in Paul's argument ultimately happens by resurrection, since the last enemy to be subjected—namely, through being destroyed by the divestment of its power—is death. Only when all enemies are thus subjected will the scriptures be consummately fulfilled, meaning that not only is Jesus's resurrection necessary for their fulfillment, but the believers' resurrection is also necessary.

Nicholas Meyer observes of the connection between these texts that they, “share two related themes: a concern with God's royal representative and with the exercise of dominion within the context of potentially (or actually) disruptive forces.”<sup>247</sup> These themes fit Paul's inaugurated eschatology, in which the eschatological event of Jesus's resurrection has already happened, but the final subjugation of death through the general resurrection is yet to come. Psalm 8 (along with Gen 1) illustrate the divine purpose for humans to rule according to the will of God, even if there is the inevitable recognition that this is not the current state of affairs because of the forces of sin and death, which creates an implicit eschatological expectation that God will restore humans to their proper function. Jesus accomplishes this restoration through his faithful life unto death, his resurrection, and the salvific union through which he becomes the new progenitor of image-bearers. Psalm 110 most directly refers to ruling even while enemies undergo subjection. It is thus an ideal text for describing what Jesus is doing now, ruling and subjecting until the subjugation is complete in his total communication of resurrection life in the general resurrection. Daniel 7 focuses on the completion of this subjection rather than any process of it, as one presented as God's ideal ruler and image-bearer receives God's kingdom. In Paul's text, the connections to Daniel also primarily concern the goal of Christ's rule and communication of his resurrection life, which is that God may be all in all. Through these texts,

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<sup>247</sup> Meyer, *Adam's Dust and Adam's Glory*, 165.

Paul signifies that the resurrection of Jesus and of believers draws together the beginning, middle (i.e., both the central axis and present setting of the story), and end of the grand narrative of Scripture that they serve effectively to summarize and interweave.

### **Resurrection and the Consummation of the Kingdom: Who Does What?**

What is less clear in Paul's argument is how his utilization of these texts affects his statements in vv. 24–28a, wherein many verbs lack an explicit subject so that it is not clear if the subject is God or Christ, or at what point the subject might shift. Those who claim that God is the subject of  $\theta\eta\acute{\iota}$  and  $\acute{\upsilon}\pi\acute{\epsilon}\tau\alpha\acute{\xi}\epsilon\nu$ , being the one who places all things under Christ's feet, argue that the Scripture citations, in which it is clear that God is the one performing the action, are decisive for this view.<sup>248</sup> In fact, Eph 1:20–23 uses these texts with God as the referent.<sup>249</sup> The agent of the subjection action in v. 28c ( $\acute{\upsilon}\pi\omicron\tau\acute{\alpha}\acute{\xi}\alpha\nu\tau\omicron\varsigma$ ) is clearly God and thus this would seem to suggest that the other uses of the verb have God as their subject.<sup>250</sup> Uta Heil, based on a chiasmic structure of vv. 24–28 with v. 26 at its center, argues that God is the subject of the verbs in vv. 27 and 28b and that this implies God as the subject in v. 24c and following.<sup>251</sup> Likewise, the agentless passive in v. 26 seems to indicate God as the actor, since God is the one who raises the dead.<sup>252</sup>

Those who advocate for Christ as the subject for most of the text argue that, without a clear signal after v. 24, there is no reason to see here a change in subject.<sup>253</sup> As Anthony J. Chvala-Smith argues, these considerations must be primary, “It cannot be argued that since the

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<sup>248</sup> Hay, *Glory*, 60–61; Uta Heil, “Theo-logische Interpretation von 1 Kor 15,23-28,” *ZNW* 84 (1993): 30–31; Holleman, *Resurrection and Parousia*, 59; Novakovic, *Raised*, 160–61.

<sup>249</sup> Heil, “Theo-logische Interpretation,” 30–31.

<sup>250</sup> Holleman, *Resurrection and Parousia*, 59; Novakovic, *Raised*, 161.

<sup>251</sup> Heil, “Theo-logische Interpretation,” 29–30. For more extensive arguments for a chiasmic structure, see Hill, “Paul's Understanding,” 300–302; Meyer, *Adam's Dust and Adam's Glory*, 169–72.

<sup>252</sup> Heil, “Theo-logische Interpretation,” 32; Holleman, *Resurrection and Parousia*, 60.

<sup>253</sup> E.g., Fee, *Corinthians*, 837; Kreitzer, *Jesus and God*, 149–50; Schneider, *Auferstehen*, 189–94.

psalm makes God the subject, Paul must also intend it. This claim ignores the text as it stands.”<sup>254</sup> Indeed, Jan Lambrecht has argued that a Christocentric reading of the psalms in this passage imply that Christ is the subject of the verbs supplied from these texts.<sup>255</sup> It may be the case that God is the subject of the subjection verbs in vv. 27c and 28c, but Paul clearly indicates this identification in the context of distinguishing God from Christ, who is the indirect object of God’s action in both cases.<sup>256</sup> That chiasm is present here or that chiastic logic is operative is far from certain, as Lambrecht has extensively critiqued this approach and suggested instead that the structure of vv. 23–28 is one of a thesis (vv. 23–24) followed by explanation of the thesis’s points (vv. 25–28), which better explains the parallels in certain parts of this text without forcing specifically chiastic parallels.<sup>257</sup> The passive verbs in vv. 25 and 26 need not signal a change of subject, but rather a shift in emphasis to the fate of death.<sup>258</sup> The insistence on God as subject because God is the one who raises the dead ignores the aforementioned point about the larger context describing Christ as being like a general who implements and exercises the power of his king. Furthermore, Joseph Plevnik has argued that the cautionary explanation in v. 27bc that the Father is not included in being subjected to Christ would make sense only if Christ has been the subject of the verbs to this point.<sup>259</sup> Indeed, the overall case seems to favor Christ as the subject of the verbs until clear indications of a shift with the dative case appear in vv. 27c and 28c.

Still, others have suggested a mixed interpretation. L. Joseph Kreitzer argues that the overall parallelism of vv. 27–28 implies a continuity of subject for the verbs.<sup>260</sup> This incorporates Plevnik’s type of argument but undermines the force of his conclusion by recognizing a switch

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<sup>254</sup> Chvala-Smith, “Boundaries,” 89.

<sup>255</sup> Lambrecht, “Christological Use,” 508–11.

<sup>256</sup> Chvala-Smith, “Boundaries,” 96.

<sup>257</sup> Lambrecht, “Structure,” 143–51.

<sup>258</sup> Lambrecht, “Christological Use,” 510.

<sup>259</sup> Joseph Plevnik, *Paul and the Parousia: An Exegetical and Theological Investigation* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997), 133.

<sup>260</sup> Kreitzer, *Jesus and God*, 150.



where Plevnik does not expect. For the overall text in question, Kreitzer asserts that it, “contains a unique blending of christocentricity and theocentricity. We see the christocentric facet first in vv. 23 to 26 and the theocentric facet next in vv. 27 to 28. It is perhaps not surprising that these same verse divisions (vv. 23-26 and 27-28) embody the references to Ps. 110.1 and Ps. 8.6 respectively.”<sup>261</sup> Scott M. Lewis argues similarly, noting that the key verbal action in vv. 24–26, where Christ is the subject, is *καταργέω*, whereas the key verbal action in vv. 27–28, where God the Father is the subject, is *ὑποτάσσω*.<sup>262</sup> He summarizes this interpretation as meaning, “Christ would be the one to whom all things are subjected, but God would be the ultimate agent and source of power, protecting both Christ’s status and mission and God’s sovereignty. This harmonizes well with apocalyptic theology, which places all ultimate power and interventive force in the hands of God, with the Messiah acting as an agent.”<sup>263</sup> This is a suitable theological summary, but it is still difficult to grapple with the change in verbs being a signal for the change in subject when there is no other clear indication of a shift. Even so, I think these arguments are on the right track, even as I propose that the blending factor goes deeper.

While it may aid interpretation to be more precise as to who is at the fore of Paul’s referents, it is also important not to overemphasize the distinction, since Paul’s apparent vagueness on this matter may be part of his point. In his Christocentric reading of the psalms, Paul is surely aware as he reads Christ to be the fulfillment of these texts that it is God who subjects on behalf of the figure referred to in these passages. Is he deliberately changing the subject of the action (in one or both cases) or is he instead amplifying or augmenting it? As the ideal ruler and image-bearer, Christ receives God’s action, but he also acts on God’s behalf to establish this subjection. In the same way, he participates in God’s action of giving life and

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<sup>261</sup> Kreitzer, *Jesus and God*, 151.

<sup>262</sup> Lewis, *All in All*, 66.

<sup>263</sup> Lewis, *All in All*, 66. Cf. Morissette, “La citation,” 335.

defeating death by communicating resurrection life that he has received. Paul seems to be intentional about narrowing the distinction and collapsing the distance of God and Christ, as Christ is the conduit of divine action in resurrection. In the same way, the clearest indication of subject shift in vv. 27c and 28 could signal the need to think through the previous verses with an extra theological layer of God's action. David Garland memorably states this point: "It is impossible for Paul to think of Christ's acting independently of God, or of God's acting independently of Christ, or of one doing all the work while the other does nothing."<sup>264</sup> In Paul's blurring of the distinction in the agent of these psalms, he may well be supplying the roots of later doctrines of the unity of divine action (*opera trinitatis ad extra sunt indivisa*). There may be good reason for thinking that one is primary in a certain action, but Paul does not describe a case in which God and Christ are not both involved.

Such blurring and blending, without totally collapsing the distinction, also fit early Christian worship (e.g., Rom 9:5; 11:36; 1 Cor 8:6). As Hurtado observes, "The resurrection-faith attested in the NT reflects the conviction that God has acted in a novel way that gives a new direction to history and redefines Jesus also in a remarkably more exalted way. However central Jesus was in early Christian faith, that centrality was not simply based on what Jesus did and said, but was also heavily based on what God was believed to have done."<sup>265</sup> That faith led to the conviction expressed in worship that Jesus is worthy of honor equal to God, or rather, that worshipping Jesus is necessary to worshipping God, and this is so according to the will of the God who harshly rebuffed idolatry.<sup>266</sup>

Another point requires further comment, namely, Christ's action of subjecting himself in v. 28 upon transferring his kingdom to God. R. C. H. Lenski insists that, "This transfer indicates

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<sup>264</sup> Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 712. Cf. Schrage, *Korinther*, 175–78.

<sup>265</sup> Hurtado, "Jesus-Devotion," 127.

<sup>266</sup> Also see Larry W. Hurtado, "Resurrection-Faith and the 'Historical' Jesus," *JSHJ* 11 (2013): 35–52.

no subordination of the Son to the Father as little as the transfer of the rule to Christ originally involved a subordination of the Father to the Son. All three persons rule now and forever because of the oneness of their being, yet *per eminentiam* Christ rules now, the Father eventually.”<sup>267</sup> Furthermore, the middle form of the verb for subjection is significant in indicating self-subjection. It implies that this is a voluntary action on the part of the Son in unison with and realization of the will of God now that the messianic reign has served its purpose of implementing God’s resurrecting power. The oneness of will further contrasts Jesus with the myths that the Corinthians would have known all too well, including stories of Kronos dethroning Ouranos, only for Zeus to dethrone him, and for Zeus to thus be leery of his own seed (who seem to have been as numerous as trees in a forest).<sup>268</sup> Christ as the Son of God is no usurper, unlike the gods the Corinthians knew, nor as the Last Adam and new progenitor of humanity is he like Adam attempted to be in his disobedience. By the same token, as R. B. Jamieson notes, “If the fact of Jesus’ crucifixion does not efface his identity as ‘Lord of glory’ (2.8), neither does his last-day submission to God the Father.”<sup>269</sup> Indeed, both events testify to the oneness of will between the Son and the Father, leading to the dispensation of the indwelling Holy Spirit and resurrection life, in reversal of Adam’s pursuit of his own will, which led to the dispensation of sin and the death that separates from God.

To flesh out this last point a little further, it is necessary to return to the statement on the fate of death in v. 26, which is the final precondition before the climactic statement of v. 28. The fate of death as being doomed to destruction, and this concept being placed in parallel to

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<sup>267</sup> Lenski, *Corinthians*, 675. Cf. Jamieson, “1 Corinthians 15.28,” 201: “That Jesus’ deputised reign as Messiah has an end point no more contradicts his divinity than does the fact that it has a starting point.”

<sup>268</sup> Both the ancient Didymus of Alexandria, *Fr. 1 Cor. 15:27–28* (Karl Staab, ed., *Pauluskommentare aus der griechischen Kirche*, 2nd ed. [Münster: Aschendorff, 1984], 8) and the modern Héring, *Corinthians*, 168 make this point. Cf. Wayne A. Meeks, “The Temporary Reign of the Son: 1 Cor 15:23–28,” in *Texts and Contexts: Biblical Texts in Their Textual and Situational Contexts, Essays in Honor of Lars Hartman*, ed. Tord Fornberg and David Hellholm (Oslo: Scandinavian University Press, 1995), 801–11.

<sup>269</sup> Jamieson, “1 Corinthians 15.28,” 200.

subjection, resembles what Paul says elsewhere about Jesus's resurrecting power as being one and the same with his power to subjugate (Phil 3:20–21). From ancient times, interpreters have recognized this destruction of death as being resurrection to everlasting life (Irenaeus, *Haer.* 3.23.7).<sup>270</sup> Jesus exercises this power to resurrect as God's agent, and so we see here an implicit appeal to the second foundation of God's inexorable, faithful love.

If death, alongside sin (vv. 16–17, 56–57), is an enemy opposing the purpose of God regarding God's people and God's creation, then God's inexorable, faithful love dictates that God will defeat death with resurrection. If death is the last enemy destroyed, then the general resurrection brings in the unopposed reign of God, much as Jesus's resurrection inaugurated the eschatological kingdom of God. Paul Gardner summarizes the logic of vv. 25–28 well as indicating that, “The end result of God's overcoming death in Christ, and of Christ's vanquishing all God's enemies, is that God reigns supreme. If there is no resurrection of the dead, it is the very reign of God himself that has been denied.”<sup>271</sup> After all, like the kingdom promises, the resurrection is rooted in the faithful love of the God of creation and covenant.<sup>272</sup> This text thus also appeals to the fifth foundation of kingdom and new creation, which will come to its fruition in v. 28 alongside the appeal to the second foundation.

The inexorable purpose of God—which is the exercise of God's faithful love—is the goal towards which this passage builds: that God might be all in all (*πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν*; v. 28).<sup>273</sup> Some have argued that the sense of this statement is mystical in that it indicates the direct relationship

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<sup>270</sup> Cf. Perkins, *Resurrection*, 225.

<sup>271</sup> Gardner, *I Corinthians*, 685.

<sup>272</sup> Cf. Wolfhart Pannenberg, “The Progress and End of History, Life after Death, and the Resurrection of the Human Person in Christianity,” trans. David W. Lutz, in *Progress, Apocalypse, and Completion of History and Life after Death of the Human Person in the World Religions*, ed. Peter Koslowski (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic, 2002), 87.

<sup>273</sup> Against the idea of Stoic influence, see Wright, *Paul*, 1093, 1386–406.

with God and the participation of all things in God.<sup>274</sup> David E. Fredrickson has memorably argued that this phrase was a phrase of personal relation, bespeaking the love and devotion implied in being “all things” to someone.<sup>275</sup> He thus summarizes Paul’s logic in vv. 27–28:

When all things have been subordinated to Christ—that is, when all things receive their identity from their participation in the Son—then there will be no barriers for God to be in direct and personal relation with all of creation as the Father is directly related to the Son. In other words, God becoming all things to all is made possible by the participation of all things in Christ, whose identity is generated in his filial relation to the Father.<sup>276</sup>

However, Dieter Zeller has noted the problem with this idea. Fredrickson’s reading requires that one read this phrase in a subjective fashion (“he is all things to creation”), but the phrase in Paul is part of an objective statement about God.<sup>277</sup> While the mystical interpretation is not necessarily incorrect, it is incomplete, especially as Fredrickson formulates it in opposition to the kingdom interpretation. In the context of a passage where Paul has been speaking about the kingdom, and about the Son handing over the kingdom, the phrase most likely refers to God’s universal kingship in the eschatological kingdom (cf. Zech 14:9).<sup>278</sup>

As the logic of vv. 23–28 makes clear, the goal of resurrection is the eschatological kingdom of God, in which God will be all (cf. Rom 8:9–23; Eph 1:7–14; Col 1:15–20). This point also resembles the influential kingdom expectation of Dan 7, which similarly describes a representative of God’s people receiving the kingdom of God.<sup>279</sup> The consummation of God’s kingdom will only be made possible when the executor of God’s will in heaven and on earth

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<sup>274</sup> E.g., Brookins and Longenecker, *1 Corinthians 10-16*, 161; Luther, “1 Corinthians 15,” 146.

<sup>275</sup> David E. Fredrickson, “God, Christ, and All Things in 1 Corinthians 15:28,” *WW* 18 (1998): 254–63.

<sup>276</sup> Fredrickson, “God,” 263.

<sup>277</sup> Dieter Zeller, “Die Formel εἶναι τὰ πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν (1 Kor 15,28),” *ZNW* 101 (2010): 150–51.

<sup>278</sup> Among many others, see Ambrosiaster, *Comm. 1 Cor.* 15:27b–28; Theodoret, *Comm. 1 Cor.* 15:27–28; Schrage, *Korinther*, 187–89; Thiselton, *Corinthians*, 1237–39; Wright, *Resurrection*, 336–37; Zeller, “Die Formel,” 152.

<sup>279</sup> Chvala-Smith, “Boundaries,” 257–63.

unifies creation in accordance with God's will and nullifies all opposition to that will.<sup>280</sup> A cosmos in which God is all in all can only come to be when God's image-bearers are conformed to Christ rather than to Adam, to the death-conquering life that is of God rather than to the death that separates from God. Only then can the grand narrative be brought full circle and God's creation fulfill God's creative will of a world of proper order with God as Lord and the image-bearers at one with God's will in representing him.

### **Summary of Foundations in Verses 20–28**

In this segment, Paul's articulation of resurrection belief relies on five worldview foundations. First and most clearly in Paul's argument, Jesus's own resurrection serves as the precedent and pattern, or, in Paul's terminology, firstfruits of the general resurrection. It is by his resurrection that Jesus is established as the new progenitor of humanity, fulfilling the functions that Adam should have. And as a consequence of his resurrection, Jesus has been exalted to the right hand of God and is in the present time implementing his resurrection power in establishing God's kingdom, over which he also is King. The hope of believers in their own resurrection, as well as their cosmic hope of kingdom and new creation in which that hope makes sense, have their roots in the resurrection of the Messiah who himself brings these hopes to consummation.

Second, God's inexorable, faithful love necessitates the general resurrection, since not even death can resist God's determination to show divine love and keep divine promises (in this case, to those who have died). It is as the agent and executor of the inexorably faithful and loving God that Jesus does what he does, both before and after the resurrection. This oneness of will creates some of the ambiguities of this text, and I suggest that is by Paul's design precisely to

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<sup>280</sup> Meyer, *Adam's Dust and Adam's Glory*, 173.

illustrate that oneness and the guarantee it establishes that God's purpose of being "all in all" will come to fulfillment. As Jesus's resurrection was the precondition for his own messianic enthronement, the general resurrection is the precondition for God's eschatological kingdom, the consummation of his inexorable, faithful love.

Third, resurrection—both of Jesus and those who belong to him—must happen in order for Scripture to be fulfilled, both in terms of the specific scriptures Paul relies on and in terms of the larger story that they summarize. The specific scriptures Paul uses in this segment are especially helpful for establishing the cosmic significance of Christian resurrection belief. They show how Jesus's resurrection is in accord with both implicit (i.e., realized creative purpose) and explicit biblical eschatology. They also show how Jesus's post-resurrection reign fits with biblical expectations of God's king reigning in the midst of hostility until the time of consummation when God's kingdom will no longer be opposed. Finally, they show how both Jesus's resurrection and the general resurrection are necessary for bringing God's great promises and his creative purpose to fulfillment.

Fourth, the general resurrection is the inevitable outcome of the continued union with Christ, so that believers share in the resurrection of Christ as they shared in his life through their faithfulness. This foundation is especially crucial to the conclusion of Paul's point that he began in v. 12 and it is operative here in ways that scholars have not tended to recognize in the Adam-Christ contrast. But it also informs the link of necessity Paul draws between the resurrection of believers and the fulfillment of Scripture, even as Christ's resurrection fulfilled Scripture. It also buttresses the link of this text to Dan 7, both of which focus on an individual representative of God's people whose reception of divine blessing is tied with the people as a whole. Because Christ has risen from the dead to everlasting life and received the kingdom, so believers can hope

that they too will rise from the dead to everlasting life (or be transformed for everlasting life, if they are alive at the time of the Parousia) and receive the kingdom.

Fifth, the promises of the kingdom of God and the new creation require the defeat of death in resurrection for the dead believers to inherit them and for the living to be transformed for life in the kingdom. This foundation will receive further expression later in this chapter, particularly in the form of new creation language, but it first emerges here in the Adam-Christ contrast followed by the description of the resurrected Jesus's kingdom work. It ultimately comes to its climactic expression in the stated expectation that when the time of Jesus's reign has reached its goal, then God's universal eschatological kingdom will be fully implemented. Based on these foundations, Paul presents the resurrection as the expectation for those who are in Christ, the goal of Christ's reign by the power of God, and the precursor to the consummation of God's kingdom and the new creation, in which God will be all in all. Resurrection is thus enabled to serve as a synecdoche for this grand eschatological picture. It directly refers to what happens to the dead in the eschaton, but it is tied to much more eschatological freight in terms of the expectations that the resurrection will bring God's other grand promises to fruition.

#### Verses 29–34

The ethical/practical interlude of vv. 29–34, where Paul returns to the style of argumentation appealing to negative consequences from vv. 12–19, has raised several questions in the history of interpretation. In fact, scholars have often had difficulty with accounting for why it is here.<sup>281</sup>

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<sup>281</sup> William O. Walker, Jr., "1 Corinthians 15:29-34 as a Non-Pauline Interpolation," *CBQ* 69 (2007): 84–103 represents an extreme version of this consternation, a version for which matters of text-critical evidence are an insignificant obstacle.



My own aims in research drive me to examine the role of this text in worldview formation, particularly in how it utilizes worldview foundations of resurrection belief.

As such, for example, I cannot here explore the wide-ranging interpretive debate about what it means for people to be baptized *ὑπέρ* the dead. Even in ancient times, some interpreted this description as a vicarious baptism for the dead, while others insisted that such an understanding was unacceptable for a proper theology of baptism.<sup>282</sup> The debate continues today, with the majority of scholars claiming that Paul is referring to a vicarious baptism, but the significant minority have proffered many other alternatives.<sup>283</sup>

What matters for my purposes is not so much how resurrection is connected with this particular baptism, but how resurrection completes Christian baptism *per se*. As shown most fully in Paul's teaching of Rom 6:1–14, resurrection is the completion of what is signified in baptism of the believer's incorporative, identifying, and participatory union with Christ by sharing in his death, burial, and, subsequently, resurrection. Romans 6:5 presents this sequence of the participatory narrative most succinctly: "For if we have become united with the likeness of his death [i.e., in baptism], certainly we will also be with the resurrection." Whether or not Theodoret was aware of debates about if the baptism for the dead is vicarious, he avoids the question by cutting to the heart of the symbolism of baptism: "The baptized person, he is saying, is buried with the Lord so that, having shared death, they may also become sharers in the resurrection. But if the body is dead and does not rise, why on earth are they baptized?"<sup>284</sup> While the question of the meaning of *ὑπέρ* has drawn the attention of scholarship, regardless of what it

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<sup>282</sup> Ambrosiaster, *Comm. 1 Cor.* 15:29 and Epiphanius, *Pan.* 28.6 both attest vicarious interpretations. Others argued vigorously against such an interpretation and its implications for baptism in general (Tertullian, *Marc.* 5.10; John Chrysostom, *Hom. 1 Cor.* 40.1; Didymus of Alexandria, *Fr. 1 Cor.* 15:29 [Staab, *Pauluskommentare*, 8]).

<sup>283</sup> Fee, *Corinthians*, 844–50; Michael F. Hull, *Baptism on Account of the Dead (1 Cor 15:29): An Act of Faith in the Resurrection* (AcBib 22; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005); Joel R. White, "Recent Challenges to the *Communis Opinio* on 1 Corinthians 15.29," *CurBR* 10 (2012): 379–95.

<sup>284</sup> Theodoret of Cyrus, *Commentary on the Letters of St. Paul*, vol. 1, trans. Robert Charles Hill (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox, 2001), 231.

means, the question of why people would be baptized would remain. The force of that question derives not only from the importance of the ritual, but, more importantly, from the fourth foundation of union with Christ that informs both the practice of baptism and resurrection belief. While it is a frequent feature of cultures to assume some solidarity of the dead and the living, Paul shows here that the only grounding by which it is acceptable for Christians to believe in this link is Jesus's resurrection and the unity that the resurrected Jesus ensures for his body (cf. Rom 14:7–9). After all, as Paul has already stated in v. 18, if the dead are not raised, they do not sleep; they have simply perished.

While this emptying of the import of baptism is more of a general practical consequence of the no-resurrection potentiality, vv. 30–32 explore consequences for the evangelists specifically. Paul and his fellow proclaimers have put themselves in danger every hour in proclaiming the gospel. If there is no resurrection, then this endangerment is to no end. Courting fatality daily is hardly the best use of a life when there is no possibility of divine vindication and confirmation by resurrection to everlasting life. Paul's statement of affirmation thus not only declares the danger he places himself in, but it also stands or falls with the link Paul has made between resurrection belief and the fourth worldview foundation of union with Christ.

More vividly, Paul states that he has battled wild beasts in Ephesus (v. 32). Although later Christian martyrs would become all too familiar with wild beasts in arenas, even in ancient times this was considered a metaphorical/spiritual reference on Paul's part, as Ignatius implicitly (*Rom.* 5:1) and Origen explicitly (*Fr. 1 Cor.* 86) exemplify.<sup>285</sup> Barrett summarizes well why most interpreters since then have regarded this reference in the same general way:

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<sup>285</sup> For similar figurative language, see Abraham J. Malherbe, "The Beasts at Ephesus," *JBL* 87 (1968): 71–80.

Notwithstanding the apocryphal acts of the martyrs [e.g., Acts Paul 7], even apostles seldom emerged alive from exposure to wild beasts; moreover, if Paul had been sentenced to this punishment he would have lost his Roman citizenship, which, according to Acts xxii.25, etc., he still had after this time. The list in 2 Cor. xi.13ff., though detailed and explicit, makes no mention of beasts, and it seems likely that Luke, if he had heard of so dramatic an event, would have made use of it in Acts.<sup>286</sup>

Paul writes this letter from Ephesus at a time of both trouble and opportunity (16:8–9), but he would write 2 Corinthians after facing life-threatening struggles in the same region (2 Cor 1:8–9). Thus, it is unlikely that Paul refers here to the riot in Acts 19:23–41.<sup>287</sup> Still, Daniel Frayer-Griggs argues that this description could be related to that riot in that Paul could be referring to the powerful cult of Artemis (the “mistress of wild beasts” [e.g., Homer, *Il.* 21.470]) as the “wild beasts” he has battled.<sup>288</sup> As Paul had obvious problems with idolatry and as the cult of Artemis was a dominant force in Ephesus, this reading is certainly plausible

In any case, Paul states that such an action would be only “within human horizons” (*κατὰ ἄνθρωπον*) without the hope of resurrection. This sense of the prepositional phrase parallels Paul’s earlier contrast between acting according to human tendencies instead of according to the Spirit of God (3:3), as well as the parallel conditional clauses of “if the dead are not raised at all” (v. 29) and “if the dead are not raised” (v. 32). Fee aptly articulates the sense as, “if there is no hope in the resurrection, then his life-or-death struggle against the opponents of his gospel is carried on at the merely human level—he is nothing more than a ‘mere man’ among other ‘mere humans,’ with nothing better than merely ‘human hopes.’”<sup>289</sup> The awareness of the coming

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<sup>286</sup> Barrett, *Corinthians*, 366. Cf. Daniel Frayer-Griggs, “The Beasts at Ephesus and the Cult of Artemis,” *HThR* 106 (2013): 461.

<sup>287</sup> Pace Aquinas, *Comm. 1 Cor.* §959.

<sup>288</sup> Frayer-Griggs, “Cult of Artemis,” 459–77.

<sup>289</sup> Fee, *Corinthians*, 854. Frayer-Griggs, “Cult of Artemis,” 474 reads the prepositional phrase as modifying the verb so as to read “I fought with wild beasts in human form.” This reading is unnecessary for the purposes of his argument, and it ignores the parallel of this phrase with the other conditional clauses in vv. 29 and later in v. 32.

resurrection that he will participate in informs his conduct. Without that context, his conduct is nonsensical.

The only recourse one has without the prospect of resurrection is to repeat the resignation of gluttony and revelry of those doomed to oblivion: “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.” This quote of Isaiah 22:13 (LXX) is from those who resigned themselves to destruction by their enemies and decided to engage in one last round of hedonism, rather than lament, repent, and seek the Lord (Isa 22:11–12).<sup>290</sup> Qoheleth expresses a similar sentiment from the perspective of life under the sun (Eccl 8:15; 9:5–10; cf. Wis 2:1–9). The Corinthians likely also would have heard echoes of the Epicureans, who denied any prospect of afterlife, in these words.

In this text, one may thus see hints of a sixth foundation of resurrection belief that Paul has conveyed elsewhere: God’s justice necessitates resurrection for final judgment. Paul expresses this idea negatively here in terms of how it does not matter how one lives if there is no resurrection (and, indeed, resurrection deniers contributed to this moral outlook in Corinth, as noted previously). In other words, all of Paul’s extensive ethical instruction in this letter is as empty as his gospel proclamation and the Corinthians’ faith in the same if there is no resurrection to final judgment whereby God condemns wickedness and vindicates faithfulness by enabling the faithful way of life to continue forever in his presence.

But since there is a resurrection, Paul turns his argument around to instruction for the Corinthians. First, in v. 33, he reminds them, by quoting a proverbial statement originating from the Greek dramatist Menander no less, that bad company corrupts good character (or “bad companions corrupt good habits”).<sup>291</sup> If even a gentile who had no expectation of resurrection could see this truth, why could not some of the Corinthians who claimed to follow a resurrected

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<sup>290</sup> Similar expression appears in the words of those described as “beasts” in Isa 56:12.

<sup>291</sup> For the latter translation, see Oropeza, *1 Corinthians*, 212. On the high regard for Menander in Paul’s day, see Malherbe, “Beasts at Ephesus,” 73.

Lord? B. J. Oropeza notes another level to the context here, as Menander's quote denounces prostitution,

Corrupt influences may come from the outside, such as from their sexual liaisons (6:9–20), and also from insiders who live immorally but claim to be believers (5:9–11). It behooves congregation members, then, to be alert to bad influences and take the appropriate steps necessary to ensure sufficient fellowship with those who really know God, while at the same time remaining a positive influence to outsiders.<sup>292</sup>

This interpretation fits Paul's rhetoric throughout the letter about the importance of concord and union in and with Christ. The use of this quote in this sense also correlates with Paul's only other reference to resurrection outside of this chapter (6:14) in the context of condemning sexual liaisons and reminding the Corinthians that what they do with the body matters. In short, their lives should reflect an awareness of the prospect of resurrection to final judgment, as well as their declared union with Christ.

Second, he tells them to become sober-minded, as is proper, and stop sinning (v. 34). These two imperatives are two sides of the same instruction, one (an aorist) concerning the initiation of a state and the other (a present) concerning the initiation and continuation of the same. These behaviors are also the reversal of the drunkenness implied in the statement taken from Isa 22:13, which in that context God regarded as an especially egregious sin of Isaiah's contemporaries (Isa 22:14). For as it stands, just as with the revelers of Isa 22, the current state of living for those "some" who deny the resurrection shows no knowledge of God. This condemnation resonates not only with Paul's rebuke of those who claimed to have knowledge in 1 Cor 8:1–3, but also with what Jesus said of the Sadducees, who also deny the resurrection, that they know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God (Matt 22:29 // Mark 12:24; cf. Rom 4:17–25; John Chrysostom, *Hom. 1 Cor.* 40.4). What they should know about God is summarized well

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<sup>292</sup> Oropeza, *1 Corinthians*, 212.

in what I have described as the second foundation of resurrection belief in God's inexorable, faithful love, and which Paul has relied on—and will rely on—at multiple points in this text.

### **Summary of Foundations in Verses 29–34**

With the last verse, Paul shows again how a deficient understanding/knowledge of the second foundation of God's inexorable, faithful love leads to the problems he has been addressing in Corinth. If one understands how God's inexorable, faithful love leads to the conclusion of resurrection by his inexorable power and purpose in showing his faithful love to those who have died, then all else, including Paul's ethical instructions, follows. If one does not, then all else about the proclamation and instruction fails. This is why such knowledge of God is foundational to Paul's task of worldview formation and it is why he will return to it in the next section.

More extensively in this section, Paul has relied on the fourth foundation of union with the resurrected Christ as leading to resurrection. This foundation is most evident in his interrogation about baptism in v. 29 and in his instructions of vv. 33–34. Union with Christ also has implications for communion with his body and the importance of keeping that body free from corruption that undermines the work of communal and worldview formation.

Finally, one can see here a sixth foundation of resurrection belief in God's justice through final judgment. It appears most vividly at the end of v. 32, but it informs the rest of this segment, as well as the rest of this letter. The resurrection to final judgment is crucial to setting the world aright and it is how God confirms before everyone those who have been his proper image-bearers—by virtue of their allegiance and communion with the true image-bearer who is Christ—and those who have not been. Those who are vindicated at the resurrection to final judgment will receive everlasting life, while those who are condemned will face the same

oblivion in light of which they lived their lives. Otherwise, all is vanity and leads to the same end (cf. v. 18). Paul does not explore such ideas here as he did elsewhere, and which he most likely did in oral teaching, but their influence is still present as the logic behind his argument here.

#### Verses 35–41

With v. 35, Paul makes his cleanest break in his argument to begin a new section with the opening *ἀλλά*, which does not mark continuity like the *δέ* Paul has been using previously (hence my translation as “Nevertheless”). He also marks a distinct section of his argument with the fact that he gives voice to some interlocutors by posing questions: “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body can they come?” These questions drive the rest of vv. 36–49, as well as, indirectly, vv. 50–57.

Paul opens his answer by calling the questioner a “fool” (*ἄφρων*). This epithet is as cutting as Paul’s remark in v. 34 against one who might claim knowledge. What is more, as with v. 34, this epithet is more specifically appropriate for referring to one who takes no account of God, God’s will, and/or God’s action (cf. the use of the term in Pss 13:1; 52:2; 93:8; Jer 4:22; 17:11; Luke 11:40; 12:20; Eph 5:17; 1 Pet 2:15).<sup>293</sup> Appropriately, the first part of Paul’s argument in this section appeals to creation and God the Creator who makes it function by his creative power and purpose.

Paul is in line with several of his predecessors—scriptural or otherwise—in linking expectations of God’s salvific or royal action to God’s creative activity, particularly as a basis for

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<sup>293</sup> Earlier in the letter, Paul used *μωρία* for “foolishness” to refer to how the things of God appear to those who are ignorant (1:18, 21, 23; 2:14; cf. 3:19).

confidence.<sup>294</sup> He is also in line with them in linking expectations of God's coming kingdom to expectations of new or renewed creation (Isa 11; 35; 42:1–44:8; 65:17–66:24; Ezek 36–37; 47; Zech 14:6–9; 1 En. 91:16–17; 92:2–5; Sib. Or. 3.767–795; T.Dan 5:10–13; 4QPs<sup>f</sup>/4Q88 VII–IX). According to this worldview framework, the Creator remains sovereign over the continuing operation of creation. When one combines this assumption with the larger structure of covenantal theology, the expectation arises that if the Creator God is the covenantal God, then the promises of God will come to pass by the same power and fidelity that keeps the cosmos functional. And since the covenantal God is also the Creator God, the promises of covenant in some way have cosmic scope and significance, meaning that these covenantal promises are essential to solving the larger problems that the creation now faces.<sup>295</sup> In this worldview, the covenantal promises of divine presence and divine kingdom are interlocked with the promise of new creation. Paul demonstrates this logic in multiple ways, as resurrection is necessary to the fulfillment of covenantal promises of the kingdom and to the fulfillment of God's creative purposes in new creation. In other words, the framework Paul draws from in this portion of his argument depends on the second and fifth foundations that I have identified previously as God's inexorable, faithful love, and the promises of kingdom and new creation.

Paul initiates this connection in vv. 36–38 with the statement that what one sows is not made alive unless it dies. Readers throughout history have linked this first statement with Jesus's statement in John 12:24. While both texts use seed imagery for how God brings new life out of death (specifically Jesus's death in John), the resurrection connection is not explicit in Jesus's

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<sup>294</sup> Pss 65:5–13; 74:12–23; 89:5–18; 93; 97:1–6; 102:25–28; 104; 135:5–7; 136:5–9; 145:15–16; 146:5–7; 147:4–5, 8–11, 14–18; Isa 37:16–20; 40:12–31; 41:17–20; 44:24–28; 45:12–18; 48:7–13; 55:10–13; Jer 31:35–37; 32:17–19; 33:20–26; 51:15–19; Jdt 9:12; 13:18; 2 Macc 7:22–23, 27–29; Add Esth C: 13:9–11, 15; 14:12; 1 En. 2–5; 9:4–11; 41:3–9; 84:2–4; 2 En. 10:6; Sib. Or. 3.19–28, 704; 5.497–500; 8.359–377; 4 Ezra 7:30–44; 8:4–36; Apoc. Sedr. 3:8; 2 Bar 48:2–9; 54:13–15; Apoc. Abr. 7; T.Naph. 3:4; T.Mos. 12:4, 9; Jub 12:17–21; 3 Macc 2:2–3, 9; Hel. Syn. Pr. 4:2–4; 11:1; 12:11–12, 56–57; 15:1; 16:6–7; 1QH<sup>a</sup> IX; XIX, 3–14; XXV [top]. Cf. Tertullian, *Res.* 14.

<sup>295</sup> Cf. Wright, *New Testament*, 249–52.



saying, as his saying is focused on fruitfulness from death rather than the particular seed being “made alive” (cf. 1 Clem 24–26). Furthermore, Paul’s statement is part of a larger point that he articulates in vv. 37–38 about sowing, reaping, the body produced, and how the entirety is subject to God’s creative purpose.<sup>296</sup> The seed language is also how he introduces the “body” language in his answer, as well as the cosmic scope of this “body” language. Within this frame, he uses “body” language to microcosmically describe creation and new creation in vv. 42–49 (as well as the kingdom of God in v. 50); he uses “sowing” language to precede “raising” language in vv. 42–44; and he anticipates the later “clothing” language of transformation in vv. 53–54 through his reference to the “naked” grain before it is “made alive” in v. 37.

Most interpreters have understood the whole cosmological text of vv. 36–41 as presenting metaphors via analogies for the resurrection explicated in vv. 42–49, especially in that they equate sowing with burial.<sup>297</sup> The life cycle of seeds is taken to be an analogy stressing how the resurrection body differs radically from the present body; it is taken to be an analogy stressing continuity despite radical difference in appearance; or it is a way of simultaneously illustrating both continuity and discontinuity, depending on who is analyzing the analogy.<sup>298</sup> Harris succinctly expresses the ambiguity of the metaphor according to this analogical interpretation, “And while the seed analogy may highlight not so much the factor of identity as

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<sup>296</sup> For more on the comparison and contrast of these texts, see Kirk, “Seeds,” 115–16.

<sup>297</sup> Among many others, see Tertullian, *Res.* 52; Ambrosiaster, *Comm. 1 Cor.* 15:42–43; Aphrahat, *Dem.* 8.3; H. A. A. Kennedy, *St. Paul’s Conception of the Last Things*, 2nd ed. (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1904), 250–51; Schrage, *Korinther*, 281–93; Thiselton, *Corinthians*, 1260–69; James P. Ware, “Paul’s Understanding of the Resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15:36–54,” *JBL* 133 (2014): 822–23.

<sup>298</sup> Discontinuity: Marcus J. Borg, “The Truth of Easter,” in *The Meaning of Jesus: Two Visions* (New York: HarperCollins, 1999), 123; Vigdis Songe-Møller, “‘With What Kind of Body Will They Come?’ Metamorphosis and the Concept of Change: From Platonic Thinking to Paul’s Notion of the Resurrection of the Dead,” in *Metamorphoses: Resurrection, Body and Transformative Practices in Early Christianity*, ed. Turid Karlsen Seim and Jorunn Økland (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2009), 116. Continuity: Irenaeus, *Haer.* 5.12.3–5; Tertullian, *Res.* 52; 55–57; 59; Rufinus, *Symb.* 43; 45–46; John Chrysostom, *Hom. 1 Cor.* 41.3; Jerome, *Jo. Hier.* 36; Aphrahat, *Dem.* 8.2; Fee, *Corinthians*, 862–65; Kirk, “Seeds,” 130–31; Ronald J. Sider, “The Pauline Conception of the Resurrection Body in 1 Corinthians XV.35–54,” *NTS* 21 (1974–75): 431–32. Both: Bynum, *Resurrection*, 6; John Gillman, “Transformation in 1 Cor 15,50-53,” *ETL* 58 (1982): 326; Moffat, *Corinthians*, 261.

that of difference, it nevertheless suggests both continuity (v. 36) and discontinuity (vv. 37-38) between what is sown and what is raised—or, perhaps more aptly stated, it suggests *identity with a difference*.<sup>299</sup> Likewise, the differing kinds of flesh and the differing splendors of the earthly and heavenly bodies are seen as offering some kind of analogy for resurrection.

However, it is better to take this text and the contrasts of vv. 42–49 as operating within a common cosmological frame of reference relating the present creation to the new creation in which the resurrection will be as instrumental as the creation of humanity was to the present one. The act of “sowing” invoked in the latter text is thus not burial, but a reference to God’s original creation of humans.<sup>300</sup> The οὕτως καί construction at the beginning of v. 42 is more likely establishing, “an inferential correspondence between the teleological decrees of God and the taxonomic differentiation of the cosmos on the one side, and ἡ ἀνάστασις τῶν νεκρῶν on the other.”<sup>301</sup> That is, both operate by the same cosmological principles of teleology (“God gives it a body just as he has purposed”) and differentiation (“to each of the seeds a body of its own”) according to God’s creative will and power. By these principles, the seed contains within itself the *telos* of the plant that it will become, the body God has purposed for it (cf. Gen 1:11–12).<sup>302</sup> According to these same principles applied to faithful humans and resurrection, God not only has the power to raise the dead, but also has determined bodies for them according to the purpose for new creation. The next segment of vv. 42–49 thus defines God’s creative purposes by contrasts of the present body and the new body, the first Adam and the last Adam, and—by implication—

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<sup>299</sup> Harris, “Resurrection,” 155 (emphasis original).

<sup>300</sup> Jeffrey R. Asher, “Σπειρεται: Anthropogenic Metaphor in 1 Corinthians 15:42-44,” *JBL* 120 (2001): 102–11; Kirk, “Seeds,” 63, 124–31, 192–94, 205–6.

<sup>301</sup> Kirk, “Seeds,” 193. Cf. Jeffrey R. Asher, *Polarity and Change in 1 Corinthians 15: A Study of Metaphysics, Rhetoric, and Resurrection*, HUT 42 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), 106.

<sup>302</sup> Gregory the Great, *Mor. Job* 14.73; Albert the Great, *Res.* 1.Q1.S8; Aquinas, *Comm. 1 Cor.* §§973, 1015; Kirk, “Seeds,” 117–31.

the present creation and the new creation. The two segments combine to expand upon the Adam-Christ contrast of vv. 20–23 and the cosmic scale of hope adumbrated in vv. 24–28.

Thus, while there is obvious change between the seed and the fully grown plant, the seed reference in particular stresses continuity of identity and purpose in line with other articulations of the cycle and teleology of seed life.<sup>303</sup> But again, what ultimately establishes this correspondence of cosmological principles with the resurrection is the continuity of God’s creative will and power.<sup>304</sup> In the case of resurrection, God’s creative will and power takes the form of faithful love to created beings that the power of death cannot resist. To interpret the hope of the resurrection within this cosmological context is to see resurrection as essential to God’s redemption of creation, rather than God’s abandonment of it in favor of an entirely new one.

Paul’s purpose in the framing of this exposition through appeal to the second and fifth foundations thus supplies the answer to a question that naturally arises. If Paul wants to describe the nature of the resurrection body, why does he not focus straightaway on the resurrection body of Jesus? He starts at this point to establish the cosmological context of the resurrection body—the cosmos for the microcosmos—to make clear that God’s creative will and power exemplified in the principles of teleology and differentiation will make a resurrection body fit for the new creation, just as the present body embodies characteristics fit for the present creation.<sup>305</sup>

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<sup>303</sup> Kirk, “Seeds,” 84–109. Cf. Lucretius, *Nat.* 1.583–598; Diogenes Laertius, *Lives* 7.135–136, 148; Aristotle, *Part. an.* 1.1, 640b; 642a; *Phys.* 1.7; *Metaph.* 9.8, 1049b.

<sup>304</sup> For all the differences in philosophical perspectives, this is the essential point held in common in Lynn Rudder Baker, “Persons and the Metaphysics of Resurrection,” in *Personal Identity and Resurrection: How Do We Survive Our Death?*, ed. Georg Gasser (London; New York: Routledge, 2010), 174–75; Stephen T. Davis, “Resurrection, Personal Identity, and the Will of God,” in *Personal Identity and Resurrection: How Do We Survive Our Death?*, ed. Georg Gasser (London; New York: Routledge, 2010), 19–31; Joshua Mugg and James T. Turner, Jr., “Why a Bodily Resurrection? The Bodily Resurrection and the Mind/Body Relation,” *Journal of Analytic Theology* 5 (2017): 123–28, 131–33, 140; Christopher Woznicki, “‘Thus Saith the Lord’: Edwardsean Anti-Criterialism and the Physicalist Problem of Resurrection Identity,” *TheoLogica* 2 (2018): 115–35.

<sup>305</sup> Cf. Joel B. Green, “Eschatology and the Nature of Humans,” *Science and Christian Belief* 14 (2002): 33–50; Wright, “Mind, Spirit, Soul, and Body,” 467–73.

But before he arrives at that segment, he further articulates his point by appeal to the different kinds of flesh, which also embody the principles of teleology and differentiation. Each form of flesh attests to how the creature is equipped for the environment they inhabit. Likewise, his extension of “body” language to the various heavenly objects in v. 41, as well as his reference to heavenly and earthly bodies each having glory appropriate to them in v. 40, illustrate these principles that show how the Creator can make bodies fit for the new creation.<sup>306</sup>

In his listing of the kinds of flesh, Paul once again alludes to Ps 8, as the order of creatures here reflects the order in Ps 8:7–8. 8:3 resonates with v. 41, but it lacks the reference to the sun. On the other hand, the psalm’s ascription of glory (δόξα in the LXX) to the human being in 8:5, alongside the reference to God’s decree that humans should rule over all of creation (8:6), provides an important resource for Paul as he describes the glories of the diverse bodies of creation, culminating in the ascription of glory to the resurrection body (vv. 40–41, 43). These glories are most likely not in reference to luminosity (since such a description does not apply to earthly bodies), but to their proper dignity, which in turn derives from the proper function of these bodies according to God’s creative will.<sup>307</sup> As Ps 8:5–6—and the more distant echo of Ps 110:1—shows, the proper glory for humans is to function properly as God’s image-bearers and vicegerents, though on this side of the coming of Christ it is clear that both functions are Christomorphic in quality (Paul could hardly have stopped reading Ps 8 in Christocentric fashion only a few sentences later). The resurrection, according to v. 43, will restore this proper function for those who are united with Christ. Thus, we see again the interplay and interlocking of the foundations in Christomorphic resurrection belief.

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<sup>306</sup> Thiselton, *Corinthians*, 1268.

<sup>307</sup> Gardner, *1 Corinthians*, 709; Kirk, “Seeds,” 165; Wright, *Resurrection*, 345, 347.

### Summary of Foundations in Verses 35–41

Although Paul is not directly focused on resurrection in this text after v. 35, he uses this segment to prepare for the rest of his discourse on the subject by supplying the crucial cosmic context in which resurrection belief makes the sense that it does. Primarily, he accomplishes this preparatory goal by appeal to the second foundation of resurrection belief of the inexorable, faithful love of the God he describes chiefly as Creator. In God's exercise of his creative power and will, he has already established the principles of teleology and differentiation with which he will act consistently to enact the resurrection and new creation. Like many others, Paul links God as Creator with his hope-filled expectations of how God will yet act as Lord, Judge, and Savior. The God whose will, wisdom, and power created all is worthy of trust to be inexorable in bringing his salvific purposes to fruition, particularly in resurrection, as the expression of his faithful love to his creation. Paul himself expresses such an idea in later works in Rom 4:17; 8:9–11; 2 Cor 4:7–10; Eph 2:1–7. Augustine likewise said, Consider your own lifetime — let's say you are thirty or fifty years old or even more. In the grave there is at least the dust. But fifty years ago, what were you? Where were you? The bodies of all of us, speaker and listeners alike, will be dust within a few years. But a few years ago they were not even dust. Shall he who could make what once was not be unable to restore what already is?"<sup>308</sup> Paul, Augustine, and many others stressed the importance that the God who is the Creator is also the Redeemer, the Creator of new creation in fulfillment of his own promises.

This point leads to the fifth foundation of the promises of the kingdom and new creation, inextricably linked with the second foundation here. Resurrection to everlasting life requires a

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<sup>308</sup> Augustine, *Serm.* 361.12, in *1 Corinthians: Interpreted by Early Christian Commentators*, ed. and trans. Judith L. Kovacs (Grand Rapids; Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2005), 267. Cf. Irenaeus, *Haer.* 5.3.2.

new cosmic context and the Creator will provide it. This Creator has already shown himself capable of redeeming creation by virtue of his creative will, wisdom, and power. And he has shown that he is motivated to do so out of faithful love to his creation. From this faithful love combined with the creative will, wisdom, and power of God comes the correspondence of protology and eschatology, so that the latter is, in some cases (including here), a realization of the former. Like resurrection itself, new creation is not a complete redux, but in some ways brings to completion what presently exists, even as it includes what is so new as to be only barely communicable by pushing language to its limits (much like the descriptions of the resurrected Jesus in the Gospels). For now, the only way to establish a cosmic context for resurrection is to begin with what the Creator has already done and use it as a basis for picturing the eschatological completion. The promises of the kingdom of God and new creation within which the promise of resurrection makes sense thus maintain a logical continuity with the creative purpose of God. But obviously these eschatological expectations are not simply amplifications of the circumstances of the present time, so there must be discontinuity with the present in order for these promises to be fulfilled. On the anthropological level, resurrection is essential to ensuring that the recipients of the promise are also the recipients of the fulfillment, and it is essential to bringing humans into continuity with God's creative purpose.

#### Verses 42–49

Verses 42–49 present a more direct return to the subject of resurrection after Paul's preparation in vv. 36–41, as Paul signals with the opening of *οὕτως και ἡ ἀνάστασις τῶν νεκρῶν* ("Thus also is the resurrection of the dead"). As noted above, this opening establishes an inferential correspondence between God's creative decrees and the resurrection, which shows its

dependence on the argument immediately preceding vv. 36–41. Furthermore, this segment represents, in some ways, a reprise of Paul’s argument in vv. 20–28.

Wright has noted that this segment is rhetorically parallel to vv. 20–28 and I have found at least seven connections supporting this point.<sup>309</sup> First, both segments open with ideas utilizing agricultural imagery in relation to the resurrection (vv. 20, 23, 42b–44a). Second, both segments provide parallel Adam-Christ contrasts linking the former to the mortality of the present age and the latter to the resurrection life of the age to come (vv. 20–23, 45–49). Third, both segments make Jesus’s resurrection the basis of the believers’ resurrection (vv. 20–23, 48–49). Fourth, both segments feature the use of ζῳοποιέω—a verb typically linked to resurrection in the NT—in reference to Christ (vv. 22b, 45b), albeit that this segment uses the verb actively to make a more direct statement about Christ’s action. Fifth, Paul emphasizes proper sequential order in both segments, albeit the order of Christ and the believers on one hand, and the order of bodies and Adams on the other (vv. 23, 46). Sixth, Paul uses the “image” concept for the believer in parallel with the “rulership” concept he had utilized earlier in reference to Jesus as the true human (vv. 24–25, 28, 49; cf. Gen 1:26–27; Pss 8:6; 110:1). Seventh, the segments are built around parallel eschatological concepts of kingdom and new creation, both of which are cosmic in scope (vv. 24–28, 45–49). Ultimately, these two segments have such parallels because the same five worldview foundations underlie the presentation of resurrection belief in both segments.

### **The Resurrection Body**

Verse 42b begins a structure of antithetical pairs that guides the rest of the text through v. 50 and will reemerge in vv. 53–54. In vv. 42b–44a, the antithetical pairs consist of both verbs and

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<sup>309</sup> Wright, *Resurrection*, 312.

substantives, while the rest of the contrasts consist only of substantives. But what is interesting in the set of contrasts in vv. 42b–44a is that there is no clear noun to serve as the subject until v. 44a, where Paul references the “body.” Translators thus take this noun as the subject of the preceding and thus insert “it” as the subject of verbs throughout. Consistently with this reading, most early interpreters saw here a consistency of subject and thus emphasized the continuity of identity in the body, rather than thinking the subject shifts back and forth for no apparent reason, even if some saw Paul’s stress being on the change the selfsame body experienced.<sup>310</sup>

Three points justify this move by the translators. First, the preceding context clarifies that the teaching here is about bodies, both in vv. 40–41 and in the opening of this section in v. 35, where the raising of the dead and the concern about their bodies are juxtaposed.<sup>311</sup> Paul’s parallel questions here make clear that asking about how the dead are raised is of one piece with asking about their bodies. Andrew W. Pitts astutely observes:

So when Paul says in 15:42 οὕτως καὶ ἡ ἀνάστασις τῶν νεκρῶν he is recoding the paragraph level theme of the bodies of the dead, already introduced in 1 Cor 15:35. And in 15:42–44, each clause complex forms a grammatical parallel with a predicator (P) and a prepositional adjunct (A) through exact lexical repetitions in the predictor slots for which the verbs *do* encode the subject (S) in their morphology (i.e., the “it” is implied in the verbal form).<sup>312</sup>

As such, Paul has created an expectation in his audience that he will be discussing the resurrection body and its relation to the present body and v. 44 functions as the ultimate clarification that this subject is exactly what he is discussing in this segment.

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<sup>310</sup> Among many others, see Irenaeus, *Haer.* 5.6–7; Tertullian, *Res.* 49–53; 60–63; Athenagoras, *Res.* passim; Origen, *Princ.* 2.10–11; *Cels.* 5.19–24; Methodius of Olympus, *Res.* 2.18; 3.16; John Chrysostom, *Hom. 1 Cor.* 41–42; Jerome, *Jo Hier.* 23–31; Ambrosiaster, *Comm. 1 Cor.* 15:42–49; Theodoret, *Comm. 1 Cor.* 15:42–49; Albert the Great, *Res.* 4.Art.13–17; Aquinas, *Comm. 1 Cor.* §§980–998.

<sup>311</sup> The “sowing” language combined with “making alive” in v. 36 further anticipates the contrasts of vv. 42b–44a, albeit with inexact verbal parallels.

<sup>312</sup> Andrew W. Pitts, “Paul’s Concept of the Resurrection Body in 1 Corinthians 15:35–58,” in *Paul and Gnosis*, ed. Stanley E. Porter and David Yoon, PAST 9 (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 52 (emphasis original).



Second, if v. 44 makes clear that the subject of the verbs is the body, it also makes clear that the subject of each of the preceding antithetical pairs of clauses is one consistent subject. Even as Paul has recoded the theme of v. 35 in v. 42, so too has he made explicit the parallel concern with bodies in v. 44, so that the frame of this tightly structured section clearly shows that Paul addresses what happens to the dead who rise again, not to the dead who somehow live without bodies or to new subjects that replace the dead every time the resurrection verb is used.<sup>313</sup> The syntax rules out the idea that Paul refers to utterly distinct bodies, as Ware argues:

Within the conventions of ancient Greek syntax, consecutive verbs, apart from the introduction of a new subject, are understood to have the same subject as the verb preceding ... If a change of subject between consecutive verbs occurs, this must normally (for obvious reasons of clarity) be expressed ... Distinct subjects for the verbs in 15:42–44 would thus require a construction such as ὁ μὲν σπείρεται ... ἄλλο ἐγείρεται (“one [body] is sown ... another [body] is raised”). An exception to this rule occurs when the object of a previous verb, or a noun or pronoun within its clause, is taken up as the subject of the verb that follows (e.g., Mark 9:27; Luke 8:29; John 19:31). However, this syntactic feature is not present in the passage under consideration.<sup>314</sup>

More significantly, such a reading would require a subject change without a clear marker a total of seven times after the introduction of the subject in v. 42b. That is seven times in the space of twenty-four words, a schizoid syntax otherwise unprecedented in ancient Greek. By contrast, when Paul expressly addresses distinct subjects in vv. 45–47, he clearly marks different subjects with different substantives, rather than different verbs. And in the rhetorically parallel segment of vv. 20–28, Paul used a combination of distinct substantives and distinct verbs in vv. 21–22.

Third, to extend the previous point, Paul introduces these two descriptions of the body in v. 44 to serve as a transition to his Adam-Christ contrast in vv. 45–48 in order to set up his point

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<sup>313</sup> Cf. Pitts, “Paul’s Concept,” 53. Either of these alternatives would be necessary on the reading of those like Asher, *Polarity*, 98, who says, “Nowhere does Paul say in vv. 42–44a that the same body that is sown is the one that is raised, a relationship that would be necessary if he were emphasizing temporal succession in these verses.”

<sup>314</sup> Ware, “Paul’s Understanding,” 823.

in v. 49, which draws the entire segment together, that the dead who once wore the image of the earthly/dusty man will wear the image of the heavenly man in the resurrection. The consistent subjects here, encoded in the two first-person plural verbs, wear both images in a distinct sequence. The intervening contrasts of vv. 45–48 use different terminology to extend the same contrasts of vv. 42b–44, which indicates that the terminology in the first clause of v. 49 is parallel with the negative side of the antitheses, while the terminology in the second clause is parallel with the positive side of the antitheses. Through these interconnections, Paul shows his expectation of a consistent subject of the verbs, such that those who were previously sown in Adam’s image—the parallelism once again supporting the anthropogenic reading rather than the burial reading of the sowing imagery—will arise in Christ’s image.

The contrasts of vv. 42b–44a thus apply to bodies, but, as per earlier points, one should also note that they apply to the ages those bodies inhabit. Although the material of the bodies per se may not be the focus of these contrasts, this connection between the body and the age that body inhabits makes sense considering the body’s shared history with the rest of creation. It is worth considering some ways in which these contrasts are applicable in both respects.

The first term, *φθορά*, generally refers to destruction, ruin, corruption, decay, and so on. It is sometimes a synonym for mortality in that it relates to destructibility, corruptibility, and the decay that comes with mortality and death itself (e.g., Plato, *Phil.* 55a; *Resp.* 546a; Aristotle, *Phys.* 229b.13; Thucydides 2.47.3; Sophocles, *Ant.* 1224). It can also serve metonymically for what leads to death (i.e., corruption), hence its use in some moral contexts. Paul applies it to the flesh (subject as it is to the power of sin) and its way of life in Gal 6:8, and it generally refers to what is transitory or temporary (by virtue of being part of the old age) in Col 2:22. Outside of Paul, it appears in 2 Pet 2:12, 19 in reference to being bound to the perishability of the world, an

especially poignant statement in this context given the reference to the world's conflagration in 3:10. In 1 Cor 15 it serves well as a description for the mortality and destructibility of the body of the present age in subjection to the associated forces of sin, death, and decay. It describes what destroys and robs of life by virtue of creating alienation from the God who gives life.<sup>315</sup>

The second term in the contrast, ἀφθαρσία, is the negation of the first, as signified by the alpha privative, but I have translated it positively as “absolute vivification.” It generally refers to indestructibility, immunity to decay, incorruptibility (in both vital and moral senses), and it can function as a synonym for immortality/ἀθανασία, as in vv. 53–54 (cf. Aristotle, *Top.* 6 [145b.22–34]). Paul uses the term in Rom 2:7 for what the righteous seek, the result of which is that God gives them everlasting life. It is also part of a prepositional phrase that characterizes the proper love for Christ in Eph 6:24 and it is a benefit of the gospel in 2 Tim 1:10. Outside of the NT and patristic literature, it may be applied to God or the gods, or it may otherwise be an allusion to the divine (e.g., Philo, *Heir* 35; *Names* 210; *Moses* 2.194; *Eternity* 46–47; Plutarch, *Arist.* 6.3; Diogenes Laertius, *Lives* 10.76, 123; cf. Philo, *Creation* 153; *Sacrifices* 5). Patristic literature used this term as a reference to the character of divine life, which Jesus made accessible to humans through his union of God and human (e.g., Irenaeus, *Haer.* 3.18.7; 19.1; Athanasius, *Inc.* 8; 22; John of Damascus, *Orthodox Faith* 3.12).

The associated adjectives of φθαρτός and ἀφθαρτος appear together in contrasts in vv. 52–54; Rom 1:23 (contrasting God with creatures); 1 Cor 9:25 (contrasting temporary reward with God's reward); and 1 Pet 1:18, 23 (contrasting the things of the world with the things of God). The latter adjective also applies to God in 1 Tim 1:17, a parallel statement to the declaration that

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<sup>315</sup> Cf. Winfried Verburg, *Endzeit und Entschlafene: Syntaktisch-sigmatische, semantische und pragmatische Analyse von 1 Kor 15*, FB 78 (Würzburg: Echter, 1996), 184.

only God is immortal in 1 Tim 6:16. It also refers to a heavenly/divine inheritance in 1 Pet 1:4, as well as, arguably, a divine quality of gentleness exemplified in humans in 3:4.<sup>316</sup>

More broadly in the realm of associated terminology, Dag Øistein Endsjø observes:

As immortality was the continuous union of body and soul, to become immortal was literally a question of the flesh becoming incorruptible, to have one's body being given that same perfect physical nature as Zeus, Hera and Athena. Gods were, as we also have seen, repeatedly referred to as incorruptible, *aphthitos*. As the eternal bane of human nature, corruptibility is the process that forever breaks down the human body. Only through becoming incorruptible could the flesh ascertain that the body would forever remain together with the soul. The very flesh would be transformed so that it no longer could fall victim to the ravage of time and decay.<sup>317</sup>

There was thus extensive precedent in Paul's world for associating this quality with divinity and bodies with divine qualities. However, Paul does not assign this quality to God's own body, but to the body that God gives. He also does not look to the distant mythological past for this kind of body, but to the recent epoch-making past of the Christ-event and to the eschatological future.

In light of the uses elsewhere in connection with God and the eschatological context here, it seems best to translate ἀφθαρσία in a more positive sense than the negative sense that the alpha privative warrants. It refers not simply to the absence of death or mortality, but to the banishment of these qualities that is the result of receiving the fullness of everlasting life, the type of life untouchable by mortality. The absolute vivification of resurrection to everlasting life removes all symptoms of mortality and replaces them with characteristics of God's everlasting life.

Paul also uses the two terms of v. 42b to describe cosmic conditions (v. 50 [in parallelism with "kingdom of God"]; Rom 8:21; cf. 2 Pet 1:4). Bodies of the present age experience in themselves and in the world around them the characteristic principle of decay, while bodies of

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<sup>316</sup> Similar uses to the above are notable in Wis 12:1; 18:4; Philo, *Creation* 82; *Alleg. Interp.* 1.51, 78; *Sacrifices* 63, 95, 97, 101; *Unchangeable* 123, 142–143, 151; *Migration* 13, 18–19, 199; *Heir* 118; *Names* 195–196.

<sup>317</sup> Endsjø, *Greek Resurrection Beliefs*, 66.

the new age will experience decay's reversal in complete vivification.<sup>318</sup> Indeed, Paul says that humans must be transformed in order to participate in the new creation characterized by this complete vivification (*ἀφθαρσία*, vv. 53–54). Interestingly, Philo also applies *ἀφθαρσία* on a cosmic level to the present world (*Eternity*, esp. 32–38) and rejects the idea that there will be a new creation (*Eternity* 39–51; cf. Aristotle, *Cael.* 1.10 [279b], 12 [281b–282a]). Because Paul's worldview is in many ways starkly different from Philo, including in terms of his resurrection belief and overall eschatology, Paul assigns such a quality to the age to come, rather than the present age. As the body shares the characteristics of the present age, so too will it share the characteristics of the new creation.

The second antithesis of *ἀτιμία* and *δόξα* likewise derives from a contrast of the ages. The first term refers to dishonor, disgrace, disdain, humiliation, shame, or the deprivation of various marks of honor. This description befits humans under the domination of sin, living in denial of their proper function and glory as image-bearers of God. It is also a parallel with the term *ταπείνωσις*, which Paul uses only once in Phil 3:21, another text in which he references glory in the context of bodies and resurrection (cf. Rom 8:21).

The Philippians parallel is also important in how it exemplifies Paul's portrayal of believers as being transformed by being conformed to the image of Christ, sharing in his glory, and thus God's glory (v. 49; Rom 8:29; 2 Cor 3:18). Perhaps precisely because of the term's association with God, Paul never provides straightforward explanation of what he means by *δόξα* in his letters, even as he associates it with its typical conceptual constellation of radiance, splendor, honor, praise(worthiness), dignity, magnificence, and majesty. I have previously noted its connection to proper dignity and proper function, and it is crucial to note that "proper" here is

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<sup>318</sup> Harding, *Paul's Eschatological Anthropology*, 88–89; Kirk, "Seeds," 207–8; Thiselton, *Corinthians*, 1272.

defined by the will of God. Perhaps the best simple description of the more theologically driven sense of “glory,” when applied to creatures, is that it is that capacity in which creatures reflect God glory insofar as they fulfill God’s will for them. Such an understanding is especially applicable to humans in that their “glory” is attached to their capacity to bear the image of God in representing him, particularly by virtue of their union with Christ (Rom 3:23; 6:4; 8:17–30; 9:4, 23; 1 Cor 2:7; 11:7; 2 Cor 3:7–11, 18; 4:17; Eph 3:16; Col 3:4).<sup>319</sup> This is why, for example, Rom 8 so closely ties sonship and glorification, as Preston Sprinkle argues:

In fact, glorification is in some sense the future visible manifestation of the believers’ presently inward status as “sons of God”. Their corrupted state and the suffering that follows might call this status into question. Therefore, their glorification will be the outward manifestation of this status. When their status is both internally and externally confirmed, then God will have completed his goal of redemption: to spiritually and physically renew his ‘sons’ in order that He might enjoyed [sic.] unhindered fellowship with them.<sup>320</sup>

This quality associated with resurrection and image-bearing is thus crucial to the realization of God’s creative purposes for humanity, even though it also signifies a state in which believers go beyond the original creation, as the new creation surpasses—and not merely re-creates—the old/present creation.

This contrast of *ἀτιμία* and *δόξα* is not as obviously cosmological in scope as the previous one. But the metaleptic effect of Paul’s earlier use of Ps 8 in the preceding vv. 39–41 and the rhetorically parallel vv. 26–28 affects how one should read the reference to “glory” in v. 43, as I noted earlier. As “glory” in this context references the proper place and function of humans and other bodies in creation, the contrast of “humiliation” references the current dysfunctional

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<sup>319</sup> Cf. Preston Sprinkle, “The Afterlife in Romans: Understanding Paul’s Glory Motif in Light of the Apocalypse of Moses and 2 Baruch,” in *Lebendige Hoffnung – Ewiger Tod?! Jenseitsvorstellungen im Hellenismus, Judentum und Christentum*, ed. Michael Labahn and Manfred Lang, ABG 24 (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2007), 201–33.

<sup>320</sup> Sprinkle, “Afterlife in Romans,” 219.

condition of creation in which humans—and by extension, the rest of creation—have surrendered their proper glory.<sup>321</sup> Although the terms of the contrasts are not identical, the association of “glory” with resurrection and new creation in Rom 8:18, 21 shows how the human reception of “glory” is essential for both their redemption and redemption of the whole creation.

The third contrast of *ἀσθένεια* and *δύναμις* focuses on weakness versus power. As the former term can also refer to “illness” or “infirmity,” it summarizes well the state of the present body as susceptible to all kinds of weakness. The latter term in Paul is frequently a divine attribute (Rom 1:4, 16, 20; 9:17; 15:13, 19; 1 Cor 1:18, 24; 2:4–5; 5:4; 6:14; 2 Cor 4:7; 6:7; 12:9–12; 13:4; Gal 3:5; Eph 1:19–20; 3:7, 16, 20; Phil 3:10; Col 1:11, 29; 1 Thess 1:5; 2 Thess 1:11; 2 Tim 1:7–8). As the resurrected will share God’s life and glory, they will also share in God’s power that raises them and invigorates them forever. In all these ways, the negative sides of the contrasts imply alienation from God, whereas the positive sides of the contrasts imply union with God. In terms of what I have been analyzing here, Paul shows his interlocking of the second foundation of God’s inexorable, faithful love (here expressed in his communication of his qualities in resurrection life) and the fifth foundation of the promises of new creation.

To that point, this third contrast also has cosmological significance. The use of the latter term elsewhere in 1 Corinthians as a quality of the kingdom of God (4:20; 12:10, 28–29; 14:11) or as a reference to God’s resurrecting power (6:14; cf. 2 Cor 13:4; Eph 1:19–20; Phil 3:10). This point once again signifies how resurrection and the new creation are of one piece. Conversely, the former term serves adequately as a term summarizing the state of the present age from a slightly different angle than the other negative conditions, as well as a contrast to the kingdom.

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<sup>321</sup> Kirk, “Seeds,” 209; Thiselton, *Corinthians*, 1270–71, 1273.

### The *σῶμα πνευματικόν*

This leads to the final and most controversial contrast in v. 44 between the *σῶμα ψυχικόν* and the *σῶμα πνευματικόν*. But to address this controversy most adequately, this analysis must peek ahead to vv. 45–49, as v. 44 provides the terminology that will bridge the two sets of contrasts. This circuitous route will also show how the first foundation of Christ’s own resurrection and the fourth foundation of union with Christ illuminate the sense of both these terms, even as these foundations illuminated the earlier Adam-Christ contrast.

Paul implies the influence of the first foundation through the transition of v. 44b and the continuation of the theme in vv. 45–49. The terminology and parallels between vv. 42b–44a and vv. 44b–49 show that Paul’s description of the resurrection state in vv. 42b–44a derives from the resurrection body of Jesus like his description of the present state derives from the body of Adam. The different progenitors of Adam and Christ define what it means to be *ψυχικός* and *πνευματικός* respectively (vv. 44, 46), as well as *χοϊκός* and *ἐπουράνιος* respectively (vv. 48–49). While humans of the present age bear the life-receiving Adam’s image by virtue of their birth (v. 49a), believers will bear the image of the life-giving Christ by virtue of their resurrection (v. 49b), whereby they are made alive by Christ and become conformed to the image of Christ in his resurrection (cf. Rom 8:29–30; Phil 3:20–21). The statement in v. 45 that Christ is the life-giving Spirit clarifies that Christ is not only the pattern/prototype for resurrection life, but also its proximate cause who makes the resurrection body like his own.<sup>322</sup> In such a sense, he is the ultimate agent of the God who raises the dead.

As argued before, Paul makes his link between Jesus’s resurrection and Christian resurrection on the basis of his belief in the fourth foundation of union with Christ, which

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<sup>322</sup> Mehrdad Fatehi, *The Spirit’s Relation to the Risen Lord in Paul*, WUNT 2/128 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), 283; Harris, “Resurrection,” 158–59.



Christians have by virtue of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit.<sup>323</sup> The Spirit is the essential link of continuity between the present reality and the future hope, but the Spirit also guarantees the transformation of the resurrection body, as implied in the description of the *σῶμα πνευματικόν*.<sup>324</sup> Indeed, the only other reference to resurrection in 1 Corinthians (6:14) is linked to Paul's statement of how the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit (6:19), which conveys not only the strong interest the Spirit has in making the body what it is and will be, but also that the Spirit is the direct link of union between Christians and Christ.<sup>325</sup>

Paul articulates this union further in vv. 45–49 through his description of Jesus as life-giving Spirit, which is an expansion on his earlier point of contrasting Christ and Adam in vv. 20–23. While the Gen 2:7 text he uses here originally signaled the beginning of the story of humanity, its function in 1 Cor 15:45 and 47 is to serve as the first half of a contrast with the last progenitor, who begins the story of the new humanity and the new creation. Unlike the first life-receiving *ψυχή* Adam, this last Adam is life-giving (*ζωοποιῶν*, a term I have noted previously as connected to resurrection or resurrection imagery) and *πνεῦμα*. Since Paul refers to this spirit as “life-giving,” the “spirit” in question is likely the Spirit of God and Christ (cf. Rom 8:2, 9–11; 2 Cor 3:6; Gal 6:8). Furthermore, Dunn notes, “the Spirit of God is the obvious manifestation of the life-giving power of God. And although *zoopoieo* as such is not used of the Spirit in Jewish scriptures, an association between ‘(God’s) Spirit’ and ‘life’ was bound up with the word itself, since Hebrew *ruach*, like Greek *pneuma*, denotes also ‘breath,’ the breath of life.”<sup>326</sup> Such a link

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<sup>323</sup> It is notable that in several of the texts I cited to illustrate the theme of union with Christ in this letter, Paul also refers to the presence of the Spirit (3:16; 6:19; 12:3–4, 7–9, 11, 13).

<sup>324</sup> Harris, *Raised*, 148; Margaret E. Thrall, “Paul’s Understanding of Continuity between the Present Life and the Life of the Resurrection,” in *Resurrection in the New Testament: Festschrift J. Lambrecht*, ed. R. Bieringer, V. Koperski, and B. Lataire, BETL 165 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2002), 297–98.

<sup>325</sup> Schrage, *Korinther*, 306.

<sup>326</sup> Dunn, *Theology*, 261.

is evident from the Genesis text Paul uses here, as well as Job 33:4; Ps 104:29–30; and especially Ezek 37:9–10, a passage also connected with resurrection imagery.<sup>327</sup>

In this case, this intertwining of Christ and the Spirit to describe Christ as “life-giving Spirit” in contrast to the living being who was the first Adam is not an easily derivable typological conclusion, but is more likely based on Paul’s and the Corinthians’ experience of spiritual relationship with Christ as the life-giving Spirit, a type of relationship Christ initiated after his resurrection.<sup>328</sup> Mehrdad Fatehi notes that there is an ontological link between the Spirit and Christ so that Christ truly is present through the Spirit, but is not reducible to the Spirit:

This would mean that the Spirit, when viewed in its capacity as the Spirit of Christ, does not refer to the risen Lord as he is in himself, but as he communicates his power, his life, his will, his very presence, to his people. So even where Paul comes closest to speak of the Spirit in referring to Christ’s own resurrection life and power, he turns out to be speaking of his communicating that life and power to his people (Rom. 1:3–4; 1 Cor. 15:45; cf. 2 Cor. 13:3–4).<sup>329</sup>

Dunn similarly notes that from the perspective of revelation to humans, the Spirit has become identifiable by his relation to Christ:

The Spirit’s presence is indicated by the cry “Abba! Father!” in distinctive echo of Jesus’ prayer and indicative of a sharing in his sonship (Rom. 8.14–17). The Spirit’s inspiration is marked by the confession “Jesus is Lord” (1 Cor. 12.3). The work of the Spirit is to transform Christians into the divine likeness (2 Cor. 3.18), which is Christ (4.4). Hence also the Spirit is now known as “the Spirit of Christ” (Rom. 8.9), “the Spirit of [God’s] Son” (Gal. 4.6), “the Spirit of Jesus Christ” (Phil. 1.19) [cf. Acts 16:7; 1 Pet 1:11].<sup>330</sup>

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<sup>327</sup> A further layer to this last text is that it in turn alludes to Gen 2:7 to describe the resurrection action as an act of new creation.

<sup>328</sup> Dunn, *Theology*, 262; Fatehi, *Spirit’s Relation*, 282. Pace Lindemann, *Korintherbrief*, 360.

<sup>329</sup> Fatehi, *Spirit’s Relation*, 304–5. Cf. David Abernathy, “Christ as Life-giving Spirit in 1 Corinthians 15:45,” *IBS* 24 (2002): 5.

<sup>330</sup> Dunn, *Theology*, 263.

Paul's close identification of Christ and the Spirit in the same text as he describes Christ as the Last Adam thus presents Christ on both sides of the God-human relationship. He is on the human side by virtue of being the Last Adam, the new progenitor of humanity, and the prototype of the new creation. He is on the side of God by virtue of communicating divine qualities and life to those in union with him, being Lord, being worthy of worship with God, and being identified with the life-giving Spirit (or as the source of life, as in Rom 5:17; 8:1–11; 2 Cor 4:7–10).<sup>331</sup>

Furthermore, as Dunn summarizes, “in between he is God’s Son, whose sonship is shared with those who believe in him, the elder brother of a new family, firstborn from the dead. Yet he is also Son of God in power. And he is Lord, whose lordship both completes the intended dominion of Adam and exercises divine prerogatives.”<sup>332</sup> One sees a similar overlap here in his function as Last Adam. While Adam is the progenitor of humanity by virtue of being the first man, Christ is the new progenitor of humanity by virtue of his resurrection and communication of resurrection life to others. Hence, vv. 22 and 45 use the same verb to indicate that Christ’s own resurrection is the basis of the believers’ (cf. vv. 13–16, 20).

Each kind of progeny also receives a body apposite to the progenitor, meaning that believers will wear the image of the resurrected one when they receive bodies of a πνευματικός nature like the last Adam’s.<sup>333</sup> When they are raised as bodies belonging to the Spirit, the Spirit of Christ will animate their bodies by virtue of their spiritual generative union with Christ (cf. 1 Cor 6:12–20). Indeed, Paul’s use of the term πνευματικός as a modifier of the body signifies its nature as being somehow derived from the Spirit.

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<sup>331</sup> Dunn, *Theology*, 265.

<sup>332</sup> Dunn, *Theology*, 265.

<sup>333</sup> Wright observes that this description of the resurrection body that first appears in v. 44 is, “the most elegant way [Paul] can find of saying both that the new body is the *result* of the Spirit’s work (answering ‘how does it come to be?’) and that it is the appropriate *vessel for* the Spirit’s life (answering ‘what sort of thing is it?’)”. Wright, *Resurrection*, 354 (emphases original).

The most basic meaning of the *-τικός* suffix is to signify a relationship of “belonging to” or (per BDAG and *EDNT*) “pertaining to” the root.<sup>334</sup> The *-τικός* suffix is similar (cf. 1 Cor 3:1, 3), but this suffix generally indicates a relationship of material/composition, while the *-ικός* suffix generally indicates an ethical, functional, or dynamic relationship of characteristic.<sup>335</sup> Many scholars thus understand the term as referring to what governs or animates the *σῶμα*, which also fits with the contrasting adjective of *ψυχικόν*.<sup>336</sup> In summary, one can define the range of meaning for *πνευματικός* that is relevant to the NT as, “pertaining or belonging to wind, air, breath, or spirit/Spirit in character/nature, particularly by motivation or dynamic action, often ethically or functionally.”<sup>337</sup> As noted already, the context indicates more specifically that the body pertains to the Spirit. Conversely, *ψυχικός* could be defined as, “pertaining or belonging to the present and mortal animating life-force.”

Such an understanding fits with Paul’s other uses of these terms (cf. Rom 1:11; 7:14; 15:27; Gal 6:1; Eph 1:3; 5:19; Col 1:9; 3:16). It appears most frequently in this letter. In 2:13 Paul refers to both spiritual things and the spiritual means by which he sought to explain them, which rather clearly in context pertain to the Spirit (2:4–5, 10–13) and the close relationship to the same as the one who is the guide (cf. 14:37). Paul further characterizes the spiritual in 2:14 by noting that the person who is *ψυχικός* does not understand the things pertaining to the Spirit

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<sup>334</sup> BDAG, s.v. “πνευματικός”; Pierre Chantraine, *Études sur le Vocabulaire Grec* (Paris: Librairie Klincksieck, 1956), 170; Jacob Kremer, “πνευματικός, πνευματικῶς,” *EDNT* 3:122–23; James H. Moulton and Wilbert F. Howard, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, vol. 2: Accidence and Word-Formation (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1920), 359, 378.

<sup>335</sup> Ciampa and Rosner, *Corinthians*, 816–18; Thiselton, *Corinthians*, 1277–78; Witherington, *Jesus*, 198.

<sup>336</sup> Among many others, see Irenaeus, *Haer.* 5.8–9; Tertullian, *Marc.* 5.10; John Chrysostom, *Hom. 1 Cor.* 41.5; Augustine, *Civ.* 13.20; 22.21; Theodoret, *Comm. 1 Cor.* 15:44; Bailey, *Paul*, 461, 464–66; Brookins and Longenecker, *1 Corinthians 10–16*, 174; Fee, *Corinthians*, 869–70; Gardner, *1 Corinthians*, 711–12; Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 734–35; Gillman, “Transformation,” 328–29; Kirk, “Seeds,” 215–17; Thiselton, *Corinthians*, 1276–77; Ware, “Paul’s Understanding,” 832; Witherington, *Jesus*, 198; Wright, *Resurrection*, 351–52; Dieter Zeller, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther*, KEK 5 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2010), 512.

<sup>337</sup> Cf. LSJ, s.v. “πνευματικός.”

because they must be spiritually discerned (i.e., the person must have a capacity and insight granted by the Spirit). Paul extends this same point in 2:15, but with slightly different vocabulary.<sup>338</sup> After establishing these points, Paul turns the contrast into a charge against at least some in Corinth, because Paul cannot speak to them as “spiritual” people, since they are “fleshly” (σαρκινοί and σαρκικοί in 3:1 and 3, used here as synonyms for ψυχικός). Paul makes a similar contrast in 9:11 concerning the spiritual “seed” (the gospel and teachings belonging and pertaining to the Spirit) already sown and the expectation of reaping benefits pertaining to the flesh (σαρκικός). When Paul refers to the story of the wilderness wandering, he describes the Israelites as eating spiritual food (10:3), drinking spiritual drink (10:4), and receiving that drink from the spiritual rock (10:4) who was/is Christ. These things were of spiritual character because of their provision of spiritual sustenance and their transcendence of their visible forms. In the next section of his letter, Paul uses the adjective in a substantive fashion to refer to spiritual gifts, gifts from Spirit to the community characterized by the Spirit’s presence (12:1; 14:1).

Some scholars have claimed that this modifier defines the composition of the body as “of spirit.”<sup>339</sup> They defend their claim by pointing to Paul’s apparent concern with bodily composition in the immediate context (vv. 39, 47–50) and by observing that πνεῦμα was a material substance in Greek philosophy.<sup>340</sup> Thus, the σῶμα πνευματικόν is a body of ethereal substance like the stars and life-force. In fact, Engberg-Pedersen has stated that “only one answer

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<sup>338</sup> Andrew Clinton Johnson has suggested that the use of ψυχικός is parallel to Paul’s use of σὰρξ καὶ αἷμα in Gal 1:15–16, “In 1 Cor 2:12–15, a ψυχικός ἄνθρωπος is one who lives on a merely human level, one who has not yet been transformed into a πνευματικός ἄνθρωπος—that is, one to whom the Spirit’s ἀποκάλυψις has not yet come, enabling him or her to see reality in terms of the new creation rather than by the standards of ‘this age.’” Andrew Clinton Johnson, “On Removing a Trump Card: Flesh and Blood and the Reign of God,” *BBR* 13 (2003): 182.

<sup>339</sup> Troels Engberg-Pedersen, *Cosmology and Self in the Apostle Paul: The Material Spirit* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 26–37; Martin, *Corinthian Body*, 21–25, 104–36 (esp. 126–28). Cf. Alan G. Padgett, “The Body in Resurrection: Science and Scripture on the ‘Spiritual Body’ (1 Cor 15:35–58),” *WW* 22 (2002): 161–62; Jerry L. Sumney “Post-Mortem Existence and the Resurrection of the Body in Paul,” *HBT* 31 (2009): 13–21.

<sup>340</sup> On the latter point, see texts discussed in Troels Engberg-Pedersen, “The Material Spirit: Cosmology and Ethics in Paul,” *NTS* 55 (2009): 179–97; Frederick S. Tappenden, “Embodiment, Folk Dualism, and the Convergence of Cosmology and Anthropology in Paul’s Resurrection Ideals,” *BibInt* 23 (2015): 441–45, 447.

is possible” as to why Paul describes this body as “pneumatic”: “Paul is also presupposing the specifically *Stoic* idea that the heavenly bodies that are situated at the top of the hierarchical *scala naturae* are distinctly made up of *pneuma*, as we saw in the texts from Cicero.”<sup>341</sup> He likewise connects the transformation imagined here to the Stoic conflagration in which all that is not *πνεῦμα* is transformed into *πνεῦμα* by the fire.<sup>342</sup>

The lexical evidence and the contrasts within this segment suggest that the adjective describes the character of the body in terms of its animation, governing force, and even its fitness for the age to come. Otherwise, the earlier text might have had more focus on the differences in the bodies rather than applying the basic descriptor to diverse bodies and the later text might have contrasted dust with a heavenly substance. Furthermore, the immediate context of vv. 42–44a places the *σῶμα* contrast at the climax of a series of contrasts that are concerned with characteristics or modes of existence.<sup>343</sup> Lexically, the advocates of the bodily composition interpretation never properly address the concern about the suffix’s meaning, nor do they adequately address why Paul refers to the present body as *σῶμα ψυχικόν* if composition is his concern.<sup>344</sup> The definition Paul gives the term is a function of both contrast and content.<sup>345</sup>

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<sup>341</sup> Engberg-Pedersen, *Cosmology*, 28 (emphasis original).

<sup>342</sup> Engberg-Pedersen, *Cosmology*, 32–37.

<sup>343</sup> Thiselton, *Corinthians*, 1277. Wright, “Mind, Spirit, Soul, and Body,” 465 has argued that, if anything, the Spirit will make the body more solid, more substantial (cf. Wright, *Resurrection*, 477–78). Carnley attempts to catch Wright in a position of incoherency here as he claims that such statements imply an impact on material composition after all, “It is the role of the life-giving Spirit to ensure that the resurrected bodies of the dead are ultimately composed of material that is incorruptible in the sense of imperishable. Unfortunately, this puts paid to Wright’s thesis that ‘-ikos/-ikon’ words have an ethical and moral sense rather than an ontological one.” Carnley, *Retrospect*, 248. There are two problems with this critique. One, as is often the case in Carnley’s book-length critique of Wright, he paraphrases Wright by using slippery terms that Wright does not use, in this case, “ontological.” Two, Wright’s claim that the Spirit will have an impact on the composition of the body does not mean that he reads the term itself as referring to that composition by describing its substance, which is the position he argues against. The effect on composition is a secondary implication supported by the context.

<sup>344</sup> Kirk, “Seeds,” 215–16; Ware, “Resurrection of Jesus,” 489.

<sup>345</sup> For more critiques of this approach, particularly as represented by Engberg-Pedersen, see Ware, “Paul’s Understanding,” 809–35; Wright, *Paul*, 1396–406.

M. David Litwa attempts to vitiate this argument by suggesting that Paul could well have used *σῶμα ψυχικόν* as referring to composition:

In some way, the current physical body *is* made up of soul, if the soul is conceived of as the breath of life breathed into the earthly body in the creation account of Gen 2:7 (cited by Paul in 1 Cor 15:45). (The breath in Gen 2:7 does not appear to be an immaterial entity, but—like wind—something felt and physical.) Thus according to Genesis 2, humans in their current state are made up of two things: earth (thus Paul can call the first man ‘earthly’ ...) and breath (the soul breathed into the earth by God). Put together, the earthly body inspired by soul (or breath) makes up the *σῶμα ψυχικόν*.<sup>346</sup>

This argument is baffling equivocation if Litwa means to support the “composition” reading as it is typically articulated, which his pervious argumentation implies that he does. And if this is what he thinks “composition” means, all he has done is take the argument of the majority who link the terms to animation and say that they refer to composition. But then it would be difficult to determine what he thinks is so different about the “animation” or “governance” interpretation, unless he thinks that it distinguishes between animation and the substance animated, whereas his interpretation simply sees animation as another substance of composition. In such a case, he would need to make a clear semantic case for when the “composition” interpretation applies and how to distinguish it from an “animation” or “governance” interpretation.

One other possible avenue by which “composition” interpreters could present their case can also be closed off here: Paul’s description of Adam and descendants as *χοϊκός* (“belonging to dust,” or “of dust”) in vv. 47–49. The Genesis story does state that Adam was made from the dust, but with this particular suffixed term Paul is not stressing what Adam and his descendants are made out of, but what characterizes him (and them) by virtue of that origin (i.e., “belonging to dust” or being “of dust”). The role of this term in v. 48 shows that it is parallel to *σῶμα*

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<sup>346</sup> M. David Litwa, *We Are Transformed: Deification in Paul’s Soteriology*, BZNT 187 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012), 132.

ψυχικόν. In the same vein, the antitheses linked to Christ—ἐξ οὐρανοῦ in v. 47 and ἐπουράνιος in vv. 48–49—are not terms that convey his being composed of heavenly substance, but as having heavenly characteristics (defined by the parallel of σῶμα πνευματικόν) and being of heavenly origin. Once again, the definitions of the key terms are functions of both contrast and content.

Frederick S. Tappenden argues that the union of somatic and cosmological meaning of the descriptors here, which I have been arguing for throughout this section, would be better conveyed by interpreting the bodily terms as meaning bodies “informed by” the soul or spirit, which is to say that an ensouled body implies a body-soul coherence on earth, whereas an enspirited body implies a body-spirit coherence in heaven.<sup>347</sup> For the present, believers belong to neither of these poles and are located in between as having an “enspirited earthly body,” combining terms that Paul uses throughout this segment, but never all at once.<sup>348</sup> Tappenden asserts three reasons for why this is preferable to the sense of “animated by” or “governed by” (which he summarizes as “subjected to”). First, it removes the ontological distinction implied by the more typical interpretation and better retains the unity of anthropology and cosmology that he argues for throughout his article, as well as the sense that the body and its complement need each other. Second, based on parallels Tappenden makes with Plato’s notion of body-soul antipathy, this understanding makes sense of Paul’s opposition between the heavenly body and the soul on the one hand, and the earthly body and the spirit on the other, so that what defines harmony or hostility is the combination of cosmo-somatic locations. Third, the notion of the body being subjected to “spirit” implies a certain personification of the spirit that Tappenden insists is alien to the first-century context, as opposed to later Trinitarian Christianity.<sup>349</sup>

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<sup>347</sup> Tappenden, “Embodiment,” 449.

<sup>348</sup> Tappenden, “Embodiment,” 449.

<sup>349</sup> Tappenden, “Embodiment,” 449 n. 82.



The third point is what is most important for Tappenden's argument, as the first argument is hardly a strong point against analyses like mine and those I have cited. But it is curious that he has missed the obvious personhood of the *πνεῦμα* in the next verse, wherein the life-giving *πνεῦμα* is identified with Christ. More generally, as Fee has demonstrated at length, Paul and his audience conceived of the *πνεῦμα* as personal.<sup>350</sup> The second point relies on questionable assumptions about Paul's relationship with Platonism and is moot if his third point fails. Additionally, it is strange for Tappenden to argue for this Platonist-inspired reading of Paul as something the early church would not recognize. Even though many of the church fathers were, by any metric, more profoundly influenced by Plato and other Greco-Roman philosophers—or at the least more educated about their ideas—than Paul was, they missed the proposed parallel with Plato in this case. Could they not have interpreted the reference to *πνεῦμα* differently precisely because Paul and his students had some role in shaping how they interpreted his text?

Other scholars have insisted that *σῶμα πνευματικόν* is simply an oxymoronic expression that is futile to define.<sup>351</sup> Joseph Fitzmyer's basic supposition in this regard is that *πνεῦμα* is all that *σῶμα* is not.<sup>352</sup> Schmisek, Fitzmyer's student, similarly claims that Paul is deliberately ambiguous, "What Paul meant to convey by using the term is that resurrection itself is incomprehensible in human language."<sup>353</sup> There is certainly some truth to the idea that Paul is pushing the boundaries of language, even as he had a specific example in Jesus's resurrection body for what he was expressing.

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<sup>350</sup> Gordon D. Fee, *God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1994), 14–36, 827–45.

<sup>351</sup> Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians*, 596–97; Brian John Schmisek, "The Spiritual Body: Paul's Use of *Sōma Pneumatikon* in 1 Corinthians 15:44" (PhD diss., The Catholic University of America, 2002), 141–42, 187–88. Cf. Luke Timothy Johnson, "Life-Giving Spirit: The Ontological Implications of Resurrection," *SCJ* 15 (2012): 82; Quesnel, *Corinthiens*, 401.

<sup>352</sup> Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians*, 596.

<sup>353</sup> Schmisek, "Spiritual Body," 142.

However, this interpretation only works if Paul is making a statement on composition. But the assumption of this interpretation runs aground on what the “composition” interpretation adequately demonstrates: the texts from Paul’s era show no reason to think the Corinthians would have understood *πνεῦμα* as an immaterial substance, as opposed to the material substance of the body. It is also not clear why this phrase would be an oxymoron, but nothing else in the series of contrasts in vv. 42b–44a constitutes an oxymoron, including the other three descriptors on the positive side of the contrast. By this same reading, the contrast to this phrase (*σῶμα ψυχικόν*) would constitute an oxymoron, but the advocates never take that step, as it would ruin the sense of transcendence that supports the apparent need for an oxymoron here.

It is more likely that Paul chose such terminology for at least three reasons. First, he had used the adjective *πνευματικός* several times already in this letter and his use of it here would be climactic as a reference to resurrection. Second, he actually meant to convey something, rather than resort to deliberate ambiguity. Third, he understood this unique phrase as being pregnant with meaning in the context of this chapter and this letter.

The pregnant meaning of *σῶμα πνευματικόν* has at least three levels. One, it signifies the Spirit’s animation and governance of the resurrection body in the contrast to how *ψυχή* animates and governs the present body. Most scholars have noted this, but I think it is ultimately too restrictive an understanding in this context, not least because Paul’s other uses of the adjective confirm that the suffix has a more general sense of “belonging to.” In no other case does the *-ικός* suffix signify strictly “animated by,” including in the immediate context with reference to *χοϊκός*, and there is no reason for such restriction here. Rather, the uses may include “animation,” but only in the sense of what “governs” the people described, with the different *-ικός* adjectives serving as synecdoches for belonging to the present age (humans defined by *ψυχή*) or belonging

to the age to come (humans defined by *πνεῦμα*; cf. 1 Cor 3:16; 6:19). Two, that broader sense of the suffixed term is helpful for signifying union with Christ the life-giver, who communicates resurrection life with the Spirit (vv. 44b–45). This includes governance and animation, but means something broader, for which Paul found the *-ικος* suffix helpful for being concise while thought-provoking. Three, considering the many observations made about the cosmic context of resurrection belief in this chapter, and considering the combined somatic and cosmic resonances of the previous contrasts, one should similarly see here that the phrase signifies the suitability of the resurrection body for the new creation, which will still feature bodies, but of a different kind according to God’s purposes. It will be a body more appropriate for a world in which there is a closer union with God than is possible in the present world, as the new creation is where sin, death, and their effects on mortality have been completely removed, and where the body and everything it interacts with will know the everlasting life of God, which is part and parcel of the kingdom reality of God being “all in all” mentioned in the rhetorically parallel segment.

This interpretation of the key phrase and the foundational nature of the link between union with Christ in the Spirit and the resurrection receive further support from other Pauline texts. Paul’s argument in 1 Cor 6:12–20 on glorifying God in the body is dependent, *inter alia*, on the logical link between resurrection (v. 14), union with Christ (v. 15), and the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit (vv. 17, 19). The Spirit also has links to Jesus’s resurrection, the renewed life believers experience now, and the future resurrection (Rom 1:4; 7:6; 8:9–10, 23). Most clearly in Rom 8:11 and 2 Cor 5:1–5, Paul declares that the Spirit is the crucial link between faithful devotion to Jesus and the future resurrection. In short, the Spirit is the guarantor of God’s inexorable, faithful love in the eschatological action of resurrection, even as the Spirit is the one who forges the link of union.

### Adam-Christ Contrast Continued

At this point, it is necessary to return to vv. 45–49, but with a focus on the scriptural framework and how Paul uses it to articulate various worldview foundations of resurrection belief. In this segment Paul uses Gen 2:7 in v. 45 to provide contrast to Christ and the forthcoming resurrection, as well as to establish a spatial and temporal contrast that he continues to illustrate in vv. 46–49. Contrary to those who link Paul’s use of this text to Philo (*Creation* 134–142; *Alleg. Interp.* 1.31–42; 2.4–5),<sup>354</sup> Paul’s focus is eschatological, as shown in Paul’s contrast of “first” and “last” with the “last” being favorable, a contrast completely out of step with Philo.<sup>355</sup>

The presence of other allusions and echoes also reinforce the eschatological/new creation interpretation of what Paul is doing with his use of Scripture. The reference to image-bearing (or wearing) in v. 49 obviously resonates with Gen 1:26–27, but Gen 5:1–3 fits better into the logical structure of the passage. After all, v. 49 refers to wearing the image of Adam and of the last Adam, but not the image of God per se, which accords with how Gen 5:3 describes Seth.<sup>356</sup> Likewise, Paul’s emphasis is on wearing the image of the last Adam via the coming resurrection, as the believers have already worn the image of the first Adam via their birth. Benjamin Gladd similarly observes regarding v. 45 that, “Being created as a ‘living being’ and receiving the ‘breath of life’ (2:7) is functionally equivalent to being made in the image of God (1:27–28).”<sup>357</sup>

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<sup>354</sup> Engberg-Pedersen, *Cosmology*, 32–37; Gerhard Sellin, *Der Streit um die Auferstehung der Toten: Eine religionsgeschichtliche und exegetische Untersuchung von 1. Korinther 15*, FRLANT 138 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986), 90–135.

<sup>355</sup> Richard A. Horsley, “Pneumatikos vs. Psychikos: Distinctions of Spiritual Status among the Corinthians,” *HTR* 69 (1976): 271–80; Stephen Hultgren, “The Origin of Paul’s Doctrine of the Two Adams in 1 Corinthians 15.45–49,” *JSNT* 25 (2003): 344–57. Philo also does not use the crucial language of ψυχικός and πνευματικός to contrast the progeny of these respective Adams (vv. 44–45).

<sup>356</sup> Benjamin L. Gladd, “The Last Adam as the ‘Life-Giving Spirit’ Revisited: A Possible Old Testament Background of One of Paul’s Most Perplexing Phrases,” *WTJ* 71 (2009): 301–3, 306–8; Jason S. Maston, “Christ or Adam: The Ground for Understanding Humanity,” *JTI* 11 (2017): 290–91; Wolff, *Korinther*, 411–12.

<sup>357</sup> Gladd, “Last Adam,” 307.

Paul is thus continuing his contrast between Adam and Christ as one between the image-bearer of God who characterized the old age, fell, and brought death to the world (cf. vv. 21–22, 54–56) and the image-bearer of God who characterizes the new age, arose, and brought life to the world (cf. vv. 20–23, 45, 54–57).

A further implication of the image language used here is the restoration of rule after the model of Christ in accordance with both the fourth and fifth foundations of union with Christ and the new creation. In addition to being an implication of the descriptions of the resurrection body as being in “glory” and “power,” this conceptual connection is also suggested by the use of Pss 8 and 110 in the parallel segment. Although the direct use of these collocated texts is at some distance from vv. 42–49, the allusion is likely still reverberating metaleptically through this unit that parallels vv. 20–28. Thus, this segment features at least a conceptual allusion to Pss 8:5–6 and 110:1 via the use of “glory” and the evocation of the proper linkage of wearing the “image” and exercising “rule” entailed in Gen 1 and Ps 8. Resurrection fulfills these scriptures in the sense of enabling humans to fulfill their proper function by being image-bearers in union with the risen one who conquered death. But this fulfillment will only occur in the coming consummation of the new creation, even if Paul elsewhere describes a sense in which there is internal image renewal in the present before resurrection (2 Cor 3:18; Gal 3:27; Col 3:10).<sup>358</sup>

The Gen 2:7 quotation and the subsequent expansion in v. 45 may also reverberate another echo in the form of Ezek 37:9 or 14.<sup>359</sup> The Ezekiel text similarly evokes the description of the human’s creation in Gen 2:7 to portray the resurrection/reconstitution of Israel. Between the two verses, the MT and LXX use the Hebrew and Greek terms (רוּחַ and πνεῦμα, respectively)

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<sup>358</sup> Rom 8:29 further applies the conformation to the image to the entirety of Christian existence, past, present, and future.

<sup>359</sup> Oropeza, *1 Corinthians*, 217; Mariusz Rosik, “In Christ All Will Be Made Alive” (*1 Cor 15:12–58*): *The Role of Old Testament Quotations in the Pauline Argumentation for the Resurrection*, *European Studies in Theology, Philosophy and History of Religions* 6 (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2013), 194.

in all of their common senses of breath, wind, and spirit/Spirit. As in Gen 2:7, this gift from God is the final essential ingredient to make the non-living material—or, in the case of Ezekiel, the material of the thoroughly dead—into a living being. Paul’s description of Jesus as life-giving Spirit in v. 45 is reminiscent of this resurrection imagery, although the resurrection in this chapter is not metaphorical, as it is in the Ezekiel text. At the same time, resurrection functions as a synecdoche in both Ezekiel and 1 Corinthians for the cosmic-scale hopes portrayed therein.

In general, the contrasts of vv. 45–49 indicate that Paul is stating his eschatological hope in protological terms.<sup>360</sup> The thoroughgoing contrasts between Adam and Christ, the earthly human and the heavenly human, and the earthly progeny and the heavenly progeny all illustrate the significant discontinuity between the present humanity in the present state of creation with the eschatological humanity in the eschatological state of resurrection and new creation. Still, the undergirding logic—as signified by the citation of Ps 8 in the rhetorically parallel unit, the reference to a “last” Adam, and the language of image-bearing—is that the eschatological state, finally, fulfills God’s creative intention for the protological state. Paul expects that God will give humans bodies fit for the purposes of the new age and new creation, just as God has designated bodies to operate in particular spheres for particular purposes in the present one (vv. 39–42a).

Paul’s use of Gen 2:7 (especially) can thus most likely be classified as typological, as Paul describes Jesus in terms that correspond to, fulfill, and surpass God’s creative will for Adam. As Adam passed on the pattern of his image to his progeny, Jesus will pass on the pattern of his image to his progeny of faith via resurrection. Wright captures this logical flow well:

That is the point to which he is now building up, explaining that the unique, prototypical image-bearing body of Jesus is to be the model for the new bodies that Jesus’ people will

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<sup>360</sup> For more on this point, see Scott Brodeur, *The Holy Spirit's Agency in the Resurrection of the Dead: an Exegetico-Theological Study of 1 Corinthians 15:44b-49 and Romans 8:9-13*, TGST 14 (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 2004), 249–55; Schnabel, *Korinther*, 970–71; Wright, *Resurrection*, 341, 353–56.

have. But he intends to get there not just by saying that the creator will accomplish this through the Spirit, but by the route he had already proposed in verses 20-28: Jesus himself, the Messiah who is already ruling the world under the father, and will finally hand it over to the father once all enemies have been overthrown, is the one who himself gives the Spirit which brings people to that new bodily life in which they will share his own new image-bearingness.<sup>361</sup>

As Jesus is the antitype for Adam, he is the prototype of the resurrection and new creation.

The declaration of Jesus as the life-giving Spirit emerges as an effect of the gospel events Paul has proclaimed to the Corinthians. Paul often implicitly and explicitly describes his own experience of encounter with the risen Christ and the aftermath thereof as transformative and life-giving (1 Cor 15:8–10; 2 Cor 3:6, 18; 4:4–6; Gal 3:19–20; Phil 3:4b–11; cf. 2 Cor 5:17).<sup>362</sup> Hultgren states that Paul’s experience of Jesus led him to believe that, “As the image of God par excellence the risen Christ is both the representation of God in the likeness of human form (cf. Ezek. 1.26-28) and the representation of man in (and as) the image of God (cf. Gen. 1.26-27).”<sup>363</sup> This encounter with the risen Christ also gave Paul the template for describing the future resurrection of believers, although Paul must strain his descriptive ability here and in other texts, such as 2 Cor 4:13–5:10. In some cases, he must rely on scriptural language, but even that takes him only so far in describing what is beyond typical human experience. In any case, what the particular texts evoked help convey for Paul is his connection of protology to eschatology.

### **Summary of Foundations in Verses 42–49**

As noted above, the same five foundations operative in vv. 20–28 are operative here as well, albeit in different capacities and to different extents. First, Jesus’s own resurrection serves as the

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<sup>361</sup> Wright, *Resurrection*, 354. Cf. Schrage, *Korinther*, 313.

<sup>362</sup> Hultgren, “Origin,” 367–68.

<sup>363</sup> Hultgren, “Origin,” 369.

precedent and pattern—indeed, the paradigm—of resurrection. Paul articulates this point through his description of Christ as the Last Adam and—as v. 44b indicates—the one who literally embodies the qualities ascribed to resurrection life in vv. 42b–44a. It is by his resurrection that Jesus is established as the new progenitor of humanity, fulfilling the functions that Adam should have. But he is not simply Adam redux, and those conformed to his image do not simply represent a restoration of proper human function. In both respects, Adam and Adamic humanity are surpassed. Christ surpasses Adam by being the life-giver and not simply a life-receiver, by communicating everlasting resurrection life (rather than extended mortality), by virtue of being from God’s realm of heaven, and by being on both sides of the God-human relationship. Christ’s image-bearers surpass the mold of Adamic humanity by bearing the image of the one who surpasses Adam, receiving everlasting resurrection life, and being made more completely like God by God himself—rather than the usurping route Adam and Eve took—in the resurrection.

Second, although it is less explicit in this segment, God’s inexorable, faithful love remains crucial for the articulation of resurrection belief. The inexorability of God’s faithfulness to promises and to performing loving action is most vividly illustrated in the use of Scripture in v. 45, even as it is implied in the resurrection verbs of vv. 42–44. The reference to the creation of the first human as a type for the anti-type of Christ shows that—despite all of the intervening history of rebellions against God’s creative purpose and the sin and death wrought therein—no opposing force can thwart or resist God’s creative purpose in giving life and making humans to be image-bearers. To ensure continuity of God’s purpose, there must be discontinuity with the present state to correct the defiance, dysfunction, and destruction wrought by sin and death. But this discontinuity between the present age and the age to come is at the service of maintaining the continuity of God’s will. And even as Christ is referred to as the life-giver here, it is as the



agent and executor of the inexorably faithful and loving God that Jesus does what he does. He communicates resurrection life as the agent of God the Father who raises the dead, and he communicates qualities to make people more like God.

Third, resurrection—both of Jesus and those who belong to him—must happen for Scripture to be fulfilled, both in terms of the specific texts Paul relies on and in terms of the larger story that they summarize. The use of Gen 2:7 in a typological fashion to point further ahead to one who fulfills God's creative purpose, along with the resonances this text has with the rest of the Genesis story, the aforementioned psalms, and the use of the same text in Ezek 37, is especially effective for presenting the cosmic scope of resurrection hope. Here, the focus of the scriptural usage is more on the implicit eschatology of realizing creative purpose than on fulfilling explicit eschatological expectations, although the echo of Ezek 37 appeals to the latter as well. The use of Scripture here also indirectly indicates that in bearing the image of Christ, the believers will also participate in the rule that God designed for them in Christ.

Fourth, Paul presents the logic that the general resurrection is the outcome of the continued union with Christ. This foundation is operative here through the appeals to the Spirit, whether in the description of the body as “belonging to the Spirit” or in the description of Jesus as “life-giving Spirit.” This reference to the role of the Spirit is especially significant in light of how Paul has pointed—and will point in future texts—to the Spirit as the one who unites believers with Christ. It is the fact that the body belongs to the Spirit that makes it what it is in all other respects as well. Furthermore, Paul re-emphasizes his points in vv. 20–23 about the union of the progenitor with progeny and how this union shapes the progeny and their fate.

Fifth, the promises of the kingdom of God and the new creation are manifest here primarily in the form of the latter. The descriptors of the resurrection body apply not only to the

body, but also to the new creation. It is “in” these qualities of both itself and its environment that the body exists. In such a manner, just as “body” language can function as a synecdoche for the human, so too can the resurrection of that body serve as a synecdoche for larger eschatological expectations. More generally, Paul illustrates this foundation in how he describes eschatological reality in protological terms to illustrate how the former fulfills the latter. On the anthropological level, resurrection is essential to ensuring that the recipients of the promise are also the recipients of the fulfillment, regardless of the intervention of death, and it is essential to bringing humans into continuity with God’s creative purpose. On the cosmic level, resurrection is essential to the completion of God’s cosmic creative purpose, where both microcosm and macrocosm on the other side of sin are in complete harmony with God the Creator, Resurrector, and Giver of Life.

#### Verses 50–57

Dunn has argued that v. 50 serves as a kind of hinge between vv. 42–49 and 51–57. He compares it to Rom 3:20 and 5:20–21 in that all of these texts demonstrate Paul’s practice, “both of summing up an argument by using language different from the terms in which the argument has been developed hitherto, and of using sum-up verses as transitions to a different phase of his argument.”<sup>364</sup> As such, the references to “flesh and blood” and “the kingdom of God” may not be grammatical links per se to the preceding segment, but these phrases function as thematic links to the different sides of his contrasts.<sup>365</sup> At the same time, the final clause of this sentence maintains semantical links with vv. 42–49 through the use of *φθορά* and *ἀφθαρσία*, which constituted the first contrast in v. 42. It seems likely, as Brookins and Longenecker argue, that “‘Flesh and blood’ seems to be [sic.] synecdoche for the *σῶμα ψυχικόν* as a whole, the corruptible body of

<sup>364</sup> Dunn, “How Are the Dead Raised,” 13.

<sup>365</sup> Gillman, “Transformation,” 317–18, 328–29; Sider, “Pauline Conception,” 437.

the present life, inasmuch as *σὰρξ καὶ αἷμα* and *ἡ φθορά* are set in parallel.”<sup>366</sup> In both texts, the operative assumption is that bodies of the present age and the world around them are characterized by principle of decay, while bodies of the new age will undergo decay’s reversal in complete vivification, hence the need for the present bodies to be transformed (vv. 53–54).

These semantical and thematic links also create cohesion with the segment of vv. 42–49 in another way. Based on the opening questions of v. 35 and the first sentence of v. 42, the segment is directly concerned only with the resurrection of the dead. Paul does not expand this teaching to include both the dead and the living until the subsequent segment of vv. 50–57. The dead are raised (*ἐγείρω*) while the living are transformed (*ἀλλάσσω*). However, the fact that Paul also uses direct (*φθορά, ἀφθαρσία*) and thematically synonymous (*σὰρξ καὶ αἷμα, βασιλεία θεοῦ, θνητός, ἀθανασία*) connections in his language between how he is describing the fates of the dead and the living entails that the ultimate fates of both groups in terms of the qualities of their bodies are the same. Likewise, Paul illustrates the common transformation of the living and the dead through his use of the same language regarding both groups (vv. 53–54), which itself is based on the language of the segment of vv. 42–49 (and, more distantly, vv. 20–28). Another more implicit link is Paul’s use of the demonstrative *τοῦτο* in vv. 53–54. The only clear nominal antecedent for this *τοῦτο* is the body all the way back in the previous segment. Specifically, because this body is on the negative side of the contrast with the transformed outcome in all four contrasts of vv. 53–54, it is the parallel for the state of Adam-like humanity in vv. 45–49 and for the *σῶμα ψυχικόν* in vv. 42–44.<sup>367</sup> By extension, the state Paul describes as fully vivified and immortal is the parallel for the state of Christ-like humanity and for the *σῶμα πνευματικόν*.

<sup>366</sup> Brookins and Longenecker, *1 Corinthians 10–16*, 180.

<sup>367</sup> Sider, “Pauline Conception,” 437; Thiselton, *Corinthians*, 1297; Ware, “Paul’s Understanding,” 825.

But given these parallels and given that Paul evokes the fifth foundation of resurrection belief with his reference to the kingdom in v. 50, what does the controversial phrase *σὰρξ καὶ αἷμα* refer to here? Today, this “flesh and blood” phrase is often interpreted as denying that the body as such is what will be resurrected, and this same interpretation was often presented by the opponents of the patristic authors.<sup>368</sup> In their responses, the patristic authors proffered a few options for what the phrase could mean. Some understood it as a description of people who lacked the indwelling Holy Spirit (Irenaeus, *Haer.* 5.9.1; Methodius, *Res.* 2.17–18; Epiphanius, *Pan.* 66.87). Others thought it more specifically referred to disobedience and wickedness, being defined by the ways of the “flesh” (Tertullian, *Res.* 49–51; *Marc.* 5.10; John Chrysostom, *Hom. 1 Cor.* 42.2; Ambrosiaster, *Comm. 1 Cor.* 15:50; Gregory the Great, *Mor. Job* 14.72). A few claimed that the phrase referred to mortal nature (Severian of Gabala, *In Ps.* 96; Theodoret, *Comm. 1 Cor.* 15:50). Within these variations, some would make precise distinctions to argue for the compatibility of resurrection of the flesh and this statement. For example, Irenaeus suggested, in specific reference to the “flesh,” that in the resurrection of the flesh it is not the flesh that inherits; rather, it is inherited (*Haer.* 5.9.4). Similarly, Tertullian noted that Paul denied the kingdom of God, not the resurrection, to the flesh, for people are excluded from the kingdom by sin, not by substance, and the Spirit is still required for entry into the kingdom (*Res.* 50).<sup>369</sup>

In contemporary scholarship, the view that the phrase refers either to mortal nature or to mortal humanity in opposition to immortal divinity has become much more common.<sup>370</sup> Indeed, such an interpretation is well supported by the parallelism with *φθορά*, the larger structure of

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<sup>368</sup> Elaine H. Pagels, *Mystery of the Resurrection: A Gnostic Reading of 1 Corinthians 15*, *JBL* 93 (1974): 286; Jennifer R. Strawbridge, “How the Body of Lazarus Helps to Solve a Pauline Problem,” *NTS* 63 (2017): 589–91.

<sup>369</sup> Pannenberg, “Progress,” 85.

<sup>370</sup> Allo, *Corinthiens*, 431; Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians*, 603; John Gillman, “A Thematic Comparison: 1 Cor 15:50–57 and 2 Cor 5:1–5,” *JBL* 107 (1988): 443; Gillman, “Transformation,” 316–19; Schnabel, *Korinther*, 980–81; Zeller, *Korinther*, 519.

parallels outlined above, and consideration of how Paul and others used the phrase in the ancient world (Sir 14:18; 17:31; 1 En. 15:4; T.Abr. 13:7; Matt 16:17; Gal 1:16; Eph 6:12; Heb 2:14; m. Naz. 9.5; m. Soṭah 8.1; b. Sanh. 91a; b. Ber. 28b; cf. Lev 17:11; Philo, *Heir* 57). This interpretation is also able to account for why Paul refers to both flesh and blood, whereas the aforementioned interpretation in modern scholarship fixates on “flesh” and thus assumes that Paul is referring to compositional substance, leaving “blood” unaccounted for while never explaining why Paul did not simply refer to “flesh” if such were his point.

Still, one would do well not to entirely discount the impact of sin on the understanding of this phrase, as in the parallel statement of exclusion from the kingdom in 6:9–10. The patristic authors who noted that such a phrase signified an absence of the Spirit were on the right track, as without the Spirit’s presence, flesh and blood cannot hope to inherit the kingdom of God characterized by everlasting life. Furthermore, the phrase parallels qualities we have noted previously are not simply characteristics of mortality per se, but of mortality under the domination of sin. After all, their exemplar is Adam, not merely the prototypical mortal human, but the one who introduced sin into humanity.<sup>371</sup> The notion of sinfulness may not be primary in the phrase itself, but the note of its influence is nevertheless present in the context.<sup>372</sup>

But what one can more safely discount is the proposal of synthetic parallelism popularized by Joachim Jeremias and occasionally advocated by others.<sup>373</sup> Whereas most interpreters see v. 50 as a synonymous parallelism, this interpretation of synthetic parallelism

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<sup>371</sup> I owe this point to Gardner, *1 Corinthians*, 723.

<sup>372</sup> For more, see Gardner, *1 Corinthians*, 723–26. Gillman, “Transformation,” 319 observes that the emphasis on Adam as the one through whom sin entered the world is absent here and so he thinks Paul is simply referring to mortality as such. But one wonders if Paul needed to make this point emphatically for his audience to understand the connection. Given how he traces the relationship of sin and death in vv. 17 and 56 in such abbreviated form, he seems to think of it as something he can safely assume would be comprehensible to this familiar audience, as opposed to the Romans context (5:12–21) in which he perceived a need to spell it out further.

<sup>373</sup> Joachim Jeremias, “Flesh and Blood Cannot Inherit the Kingdom of God,” *NTS* 2 (1956): 151–59. Cf. Barrett, *Corinthians*, 379; Eriksson, *Traditions*, 273; Johnson, “Trump,” 185–88. For a more extensive review of scholarship on the type of parallelism, see Gillman, “Transformation,” 310–15.

holds that “flesh and blood” refers to the living, while “corruptibility” refers to the dead. This interpretation fails for two reasons. One, as noted above, φθορά does not refer to death or the dead as such, but to that which is susceptible to destruction, corruption, decay, and mortality. It is this quality, not a quality of being identical with death, that makes it incapable of receiving what lasts forever.<sup>374</sup> Two, it is exceedingly difficult to explain why the A members in this parallelism (“flesh and blood” and “corruptibility”) are supposedly in synthetic relationship, but the B members (“kingdom of God” and “absolute vivification”) are not.<sup>375</sup> Indeed, that the B members are synonymous is demonstrable from the larger parallel structure of this portion of Paul’s argument, as well as the use of ἀφθαρσία already in v. 42 to describe kingdom reality.

In any case, the continued set of contrasts here once again relies on the fifth foundation of resurrection belief of the cosmic eschatological promises. Paul uses one of the key phrases explicitly in v. 50 and he reuses one of the terms characterizing the new creation from v. 42, the latter of which will continue to be a key term for describing resurrected and transformed existence. It is a reality so different from the present creation that no mortal, alive or dead, can receive it without transformation to conform them to the cosmic reality. This body must be adapted to its new environment. The fifth foundation is thus a driving force in Paul’s argument here for the necessity of transformation as it also drove the argument in vv. 20–28 and 42–49.

### **The Fate of the Living**

But previously Paul was concerned chiefly with the dead, and here he now must take explicit account of those who will be alive at the time of the Parousia. As noted in the text-

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<sup>374</sup> Fee, *Corinthians*, 884.

<sup>375</sup> Andrew C. Perriman, “Paul and the Parousia: 1 Corinthians 15:50-57 and 2 Corinthians 5:1-5,” *NTS* 35 (1989): 514; Schrage, *Korinther*, 368–69; Witherington, *Jesus*, 199–200.

critical comment, Paul says in v. 51 that not all will sleep, but all will be changed. Paul conveys here that not all the faithful will die before the Parousia and that, contrary to what is now a common way of reading Paul, not all will need to die to experience transformation, but both the living and the dead will be transformed. Andrew Perriman in particular takes this common reading to the extreme. He thinks the parallelism of vv. 21–22 somehow requires that everyone must die in order to be made alive.<sup>376</sup> But this overreads the parallelism and raises further problems that I identified earlier. It is rather more likely that Paul makes a general statement here contrasting fates of death and resurrection and that this last segment represents an expansion and clarification on that general statement. It would still work as a statement that those in Christ will receive resurrection life, but the ones who are alive at the time simply do not need to die first. While Perriman is correct that vv. 30–32 undermine the idea that Paul is confidently declaring in vv. 51–52 that he expects to be alive at the time of the Parousia, it is overreading again to infer that Paul positively expected to die before the Parousia.<sup>377</sup> Furthermore, as in vv. 30–32 where resurrection functioned as a synecdoche to imply a reference also to vindication in final judgment, so in vv. 42–49 resurrection was a synecdoche for both sides of the event of being raised and being transformed. But when Paul must address the fate of the living at the Parousia, he must break the synecdoche apart to say that only the transformative aspect applies to the living, while the dead receive the transformative resurrection.

In any case, Paul describes this statement as a “mystery” or “secret.” In other words, it is something that was once previously unknown, but which God has made known in the fullness of time (Rom 11:25–27; 16:25–26; 1 Cor 2:7–10; Eph 1:9–10; 3:1–13; Col 1:25–27; 2:1–3; 4:1–4; 1 Tim 3:16). But what makes this declaration a mystery? The discourse in 1 Thess 4:13–18

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<sup>376</sup> Perriman, “Paul and the Parousia,” 513.

<sup>377</sup> Perriman, “Paul and the Parousia,” 513.

indicates that it was no mystery that not everyone would die prior to the Parousia. Nor is it simply the fact of the need for transformation to inherit the kingdom. If that was the mystery, Paul already spoiled it. More likely is Ben F. Meyer's argument that the mystery is the combination of the two: "*although those still living at the Parousia would not die, they too—like those raised from the dead—would at that same moment be transformed.*"<sup>378</sup>

Beyond this basic picture, Paul's comments in vv. 51–52 have engendered much controversy over two points, which I can only (relatively) briefly address here. The first point of controversy is whether Paul expected—both in personal thinking and public teaching—to be alive at the time of the Parousia. Both v. 52 and 1 Thess 4:15 are construed as evidence that Paul thought and taught such because in both cases Paul uses the first-person plural in reference to those alive at the time of the Parousia ("we" will be changed vs. "the dead" will be raised), rather than a third-person plural. I am only concerned here with v. 52, though much of what I say will also apply to the 1 Thessalonians text.<sup>379</sup> Those who make this argument consistently fail to demonstrate why Paul's statements imply him thinking that he *would* live to see the Parousia, as opposed to him thinking that he *could* live to see the Parousia. Since the former kind of statement would be stronger and more direct, it does not appear to be what Paul is saying, wherein the strongest evidence in its favor is simply his use of the first-person plural. But if he were to use the third-person plural, the implication would apparently be that he expected he would not live to see the Parousia. Instead, he found ways of articulating himself to express an expectation that the Parousia *could* precede his death, without either implying knowledge he did not have (per 1 Thess 5:1–11) or undermining the eschatological urgency of his message.<sup>380</sup>

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<sup>378</sup> Meyer, "Development," 378 (italics original).

<sup>379</sup> For fuller responses, see Meyer, "Development," 363–87; Witherington, *Jesus*, passim.

<sup>380</sup> Thiselton, *Corinthians*, 1294–95.



In fact, Paul's specific use of the first person indicates that he found adequate ways of expressing a genuine possibility about which he was uncertain. Elsewhere in 1 Corinthians, he declares his expectation that God will raise "us" (6:14). He reiterates the same point in his later letter to the Corinthians, what is supposed to be a "development" of his expectations regarding the Parousia, in saying that the one who raised Jesus will raise "us" also with Jesus (2 Cor 4:14).<sup>381</sup> Paul thus places "us" on both sides of the living-dead divide. In this light, it becomes clear that when Paul says, "the dead will be raised ... and we will be changed," he is making no statement about his degree of confidence about being alive at the time of the Parousia beyond it being a genuine possibility. After all, the statement of v. 51 implies that the dead will be changed as well. Likewise, v. 51 determines the content of "we." Paul has already indicated that at least some of the "we" will sleep, as some have already fallen asleep (vv. 6, 18), and Paul had reason to believe that he could too (vv. 30–32). But all of the people in the sphere of "we," whether they are asleep at the time or not, will be changed.

The second point of controversy related to the aforementioned debates about the nature of resurrection in Paul is the meaning of the verb for "change": ἀλλάσσω. It is sometimes suggested that this word could mean "exchange" in this context (as in Rom 1:23), so that the fates of both the dead and the living imply leaving one body behind and receiving an entirely new one. The parallel with the clothing language in vv. 53–54 could conceivably support this "exchange" interpretation as well, but in each case where ἐνδύω implies exchange of clothing, rather than simply focusing on what is put on, there is also a verb in the context that indicates the subject has taken something else off (Eph 4:22–24; Col 3:9–10). Otherwise, the concept is additive for putting something on.

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<sup>381</sup> Oropeza, *1 Corinthians*, 219.

As for ἀλλάσσω itself, it is notable that, although bodies are clearly in the background of this description, given the discourse since v. 35, the syntax simply states “we” will be changed. What could it mean that “we” are exchanged?<sup>382</sup> On the other hand, the statement that we will be changed, in the generally accessible sense of alteration or transformation (as opposed to a change of substance),<sup>383</sup> functions well enough as a general statement for Paul to give further detail to later.<sup>384</sup> This is indeed the function of this declaration of mystery, on which Paul expounds.

Perhaps the clearest indication that Paul is using a transformative sense of ἀλλάσσω and an additive sense of ἐνδύω is his use of the demonstrative pronoun τοῦτο in vv. 53–54. It is “this” body that must be clothed with the qualities of the resurrection body in order for it to be transformed. Multiple ancient authors described Paul as tactilely pointing to his own body when he says “this,” and such an account is certainly plausible in the context of a reader performing a public reading (Tertullian, *Res.* 51; Origen, *Princ.* 2.3.2; Rufinus, *Symb.* 45).<sup>385</sup> But in any case, Paul states that it is this present body that must be clothed. Furthermore, Paul’s use of Scripture below indicates that it is not the body that is swallowed up, as the metaphor of “exchange” might demand, but the death that dominates the present mortal body. This body is rescued, redeemed, and renewed, not replaced. Although Paul does not appeal directly to the example of Jesus here, what he says about resurrection fits with what the early Christian gospel proclamation said about the resurrected Jesus, specifically that he left an empty tomb behind because the same body that died was raised to eternal life, and that it was transformed.

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<sup>382</sup> I owe this point to Pitts, “Paul’s Concept,” 57.

<sup>383</sup> As argued in Troels Engberg-Pedersen, “Complete and Incomplete Transformation in Paul: A Philosophical Reading of Paul on Body and Spirit,” in *Metamorphoses: Resurrection, Body and Transformative Practices in Early Christianity*, ed. Turid Karlsen Seim and Jorunn Økland (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2009), 126–28.

<sup>384</sup> Ware, “Paul’s Understanding,” 830–31.

<sup>385</sup> Cf. Pitts, “Paul’s Concept,” 57; Robertson and Plummer, *Corinthians*, 377.

## Transformation and the Victory of God

One of the terms Paul uses for describing the transformation is ἀφθαρσία, one he has already used, while he also introduces another synonymous term for what the body must receive: ἀθανασία (“immortality”).<sup>386</sup> Peter Carnley thinks that the use of both terms arises from Plato’s influence on Paul. In his reasoning, this supports the idea that Paul expected a transformation of substance, so that the resurrection body would be composed of spirit, since Plato applies these terms and the associated adjectives to the soul/ψυχή.<sup>387</sup> Of course, this analysis has already noted several reasons why this construal of Paul’s argument is unconvincing. It is also notable that Paul never associates the ψυχή with immortality in any fashion, through use of the terms discussed here or otherwise, a peculiar fact about someone apparently influenced by Plato in this crucial aspect of his eschatology and anthropology. More generally, this reading overestimates the influence of Plato at the time (Plutarch, *Mor.* 328e; Suetonius, *Nero* 52; Origen, *Cels.* 6.1–2) and underestimates the importance of other contexts for this language, to which I now must turn.

The noun only appears elsewhere in the NT in 1 Tim 6:16 as an attribute of God alone. It is also nearly absent from Second Temple Jewish writing, except for Jos. *Asen.* 8:5 and 15:1–4, where the term is associated with benefits of worshiping God. Outside of Plato and other references to the soul and associated entities, the term was used in Greek literature for a quality of the gods (Isocrates, *Panath.* 260; Apollodorus 2.7 §160; 3.11 §137; Maximus, *Dial.* 40.1.g; 41.4.h). Much more frequently, the associated adjective ἀθάνατος was applied to the gods,

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<sup>386</sup> I have not yet found an appropriate positive translation of this term that does not assimilate it to my translation of ἀφθαρσία. Thus, I default to the standard negative translation of “immortality” or “deathlessness.”

<sup>387</sup> Carnley, *Reconstruction*, 269–88; Carnley, *Retrospect*, 245–51.

especially in the foundational works of Homer and Hesiod.<sup>388</sup> Indeed, Plato and other philosophers applied the associated terms to the soul to convey its divinity.<sup>389</sup>

In light of these uses, and in light of Paul's previous use of ἀφθαρσία, one should likewise see ἀθανασία as implying the communication of God's life. What the resurrection deniers might have thought was the reserve of God/the gods and heroes by special dispensation, based on the stories with which they were raised, and possibly of the soul, based on philosophical influence, Paul now insists is what God wills for them all as embodied beings. The life of God is available as God's gracious gift not only to his Son the Christ, but to all who are in Christ, both living and dead.<sup>390</sup> Thus, in these descriptions of the transformed body, one sees again the fourth worldview foundation at work. Those who are in union with Christ by the Holy Spirit are also in union with God and will receive the same life of God by virtue of that union. With God communicating his own qualities in this union, one can also see an indirect expression of the second foundation of God's inexorable, faithful love in this transformation. The transformation given to the living and the dead thus fulfills God's creative will of making humans in his image and likeness.

As Paul continues to argue in vv. 54–55, this transformation also fulfills Scripture. The two texts Paul quotes are Isa 25:8 and Hos 13:14.<sup>391</sup> The quotation of the former is as follows:

Paul and Θ: κατεπόθη ὁ θάνατος εἰς νίκος  
OG/LXX: κατέπιεν ὁ θάνατος ἰσχύσας

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<sup>388</sup> From pre-Platonic writers: Homer, *Il.* 1.520; 3.158, 298, 308; 5.130, 442, 882; 13.19, 525, 818; 15.73, 85, 96, 107; 21.2, 380, 476, 500; *Od.* 1.31, 67, 79, 201, 420; 8.343, 348, 352; 11.133, 602; 24.64, 371, 444, 447; Hesiod, *Theog.* 43, 118–120, 391, 394, 407, 415; Euripides, *Bacc.* 522–525; Sophocles, *Oed. tyr.* 903–905; Herodotus 2.44; 7.148. Herodotus says that the Egyptians were the first to teach that the human soul is immortal (2.123).

<sup>389</sup> Endsjø, "Immortal Bodies," 429: "To become immortal was the same as becoming divine.... When the various men and women became immortal, this meant that their bodies received the same incorruptible nature as that of the divine bodies." For some examples of those who became immortalized in a bodily fashion, see Endsjø, *Greek Resurrection Beliefs*, 64–99; Harriman, "Synthetic Proposal," 192–94.

<sup>390</sup> For more on the relationship of resurrection and immortality, see Harris, *Raised*, 209–36.

<sup>391</sup> The conflated use of texts from multiple locations here matches Paul's practice in Rom 9:25–26; 11:26–27; 2 Cor 6:16–18.

The same verbal idea appears here, as well as in A and Σ, even if the precise form differs, depending on whether the translation identifies death as the subject (as in Θ and OG) or the object (as in A and Σ). Either of these translations could reasonably reflect the Hebrew, although the passive translation is less precise and still shares with A and Σ the idea that God is the implied agent of the verb in continuation of the agency presented in Isa 25:7. In the OG, death has been swallowing people up, whereas the other versions state that God will swallow up death.

Where they diverge most significantly is in how they construe the prepositional phrase. In the MT the prepositional phrase is לְנִצְחָה, which can mean “in victory” (consistent especially with the typical sense of the root in Aramaic), “in perpetuity/forever” (consistent with its use in parallel with other such terms/phrases), or “to the end/completely” (consistent with the root’s association with extremity).<sup>392</sup> For all the differences between Paul/Θ and the OG, they broadly agree on the subject “prevailing” (OG) or acting “in victory.” It is simply that the text of the OG reverses the apparent victory of death in the subsequent text, while Paul and Θ portray a smoother flow of discourse. A agrees more precisely with how Paul/Θ translates the phrase. Σ, however, translates the phrase as εἰς τέλος. This translation best fits with the last sense, but it could also work as a loose translation of the second sense. In any case, in the MT and all other versions,<sup>393</sup> the sense is one of apparent finality (if death is the agent) or true finality (if God is the agent). With God as the agent, death has met its death.

In the context of Paul’s use of this plausible translation, the reference fits with the process of transformation described here in terms of clothing with absolute vivification and immortality,

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<sup>392</sup> Cf. Walter Harrelson, “Death and Victory in 1 Corinthians 15:51-57: The Transformation of a Prophetic Theme,” in *Faith and History: Essays in Honor of Paul W. Meyer*, ed. John T. Carroll, Charles H. Cosgrove, and E. Elizabeth Johnson (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990), 150, 154–55; Rosik, “*In Christ*”, 217.

<sup>393</sup> The Vulgate and Targum translate it as “forever.” The Peshitta translates it as “in victory.”

since what the body “puts on” also rids the body of any trace of death and mortality. As when something is swallowed up, these qualities of the body—rather than the body itself—are completely engulfed and, as a result, consumed in God’s victory over death (cf. v. 26).<sup>394</sup> This transformation, which is also essential to resurrection, is crucial to the fulfillment of the grand promises of this text, including God wiping away all tears and removing the reproach of his people (cf. Dan 9:16; 12:2). The aspect of faith that consists in waiting upon the Lord (Isa 25:9) will likewise find its ultimate realization in the fulfillment of this promise.

That day of transformation will also lead to what Theodoret describes as a victory song (*Comm. 1 Cor.* 15:54–55) in the fulfillment of Hos 13:14. Indeed, Paul links these two texts via their hook words of “death” and “victory.” When they are juxtaposed in this fashion, Hos 13:14 appears as a taunt of victory in response to what he presents in the previous verse. Hosea 13:14 also serves as a crucial transition from the declaration of victory over death that will come in this transformation to v. 56 via the reference to the “sting” of death.

But before I can explore v. 56, it is important to address the controversies of Paul’s use of this text, since a common impression is that Paul has modified the text rather significantly, including by 1) changing *δίχα* (translating *דבר*) into *νίκος*, 2) changing the second vocative from *ἄδῃ* in the LXX to *θάνατε* again, 3) changing the position of the second-person pronoun to the emphatic position, and 4) turning an invitation for death into a taunt of death.<sup>395</sup> The third point may well be Paul’s own grammatical alteration, as is not uncommon in his use of Scripture, as no other Greek version reflects this move. The second point does fit with Paul’s focus on death,

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<sup>394</sup> Gillman, “Thematic Comparison,” 445.

<sup>395</sup> Oropeza, *1 Corinthians*, 221–22; Rosik, “*In Christ*”, 256; Peter J. Tomson, ““Death, Where Is Thy Victory?” Paul’s Theology in the Twinkling of an Eye,” in *Resurrection in the New Testament: Festschrift J. Lambrecht*, ed. R. Bieringer, V. Koperski, and B. Lataire, BETL 165 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2002), 378–79.

as opposed to the LXX translating Sheol with its standard “Hades” equivalent. But while it is unusual, it is not unprecedented, as the LXX shows that both terms could conceivably be translated as “death” in 2 Sam 22:6. Furthermore, if the resurrection deniers were as I have proposed, Paul may have been intentional in preferring this translation to avoid the mythological associations of the term in the LXX (the term otherwise never appears in the Pauline corpus). The first and fourth points require more extensive exploration.

On the first point, the translation of this noun is quite controverted among the versions. Translators today tend to interpret this plural with a second-person masculine singular suffix as referring to “your plague(s),” as Σ attests in the singular. This interpretation of the root is not implausible, but it would be the only case of the plural in the OT, and this interpretation of the root was in any case typically presented with a form of *θάνατος* in the LXX (Exod 5:3; 9:3; Lev 26:25; Num 14:12; Deut 28:21; 2 Kgdms 24:13, 15; 3 Kgdms 8:37; 1 Chr 21:12, 14; 2 Chr 7:13; 20:9; Ps 77:50; Jer 14:12; 21:6–7, 9; 24:10; Jer 41:17; Ezek 5:12, 17; 6:11–12; 7:15; 12:16; 14:19, 21; 28:23; 33:27; 38:22; Amos 4:10; cf. Exod 9:15). In this context, “O Death, where is your death?” would appear to be redundant, but the Vulgate still uses “O Death, I will be your death.”<sup>396</sup> However, the same root could be the more common noun with a wider semantic field, often translated as “word(s)” (even with the vowel pointing, the plural + second-person masculine singular suffix is identical for both nouns; cf. Josh 1:18; Judg 13:12, 17; 1 Sam 15:24; 28:21; 2 Sam 7:28; 1 Kgs 8:26; 10:6; 2 Chr 9:5; Ps 119:57; Eccl 5:2; Jer 15:16; 28:6; Ezek 33:31–32; Dan 10:12). A reflects this broader sense of that root (*ρήματα*; cf. TgJ), whereas the

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<sup>396</sup> This translation highlights a further problem that I do not address here because it impinges less on the questions I focus on here. The Hebrew *והיה* could be an interrogative adverb or an imperfect copula, translated as a Greek future. For more on this question, see Lukasz Popko, “Why Paul Was Not Wrong in Quoting Hosea 13:14,” *BibAn* 9 (2019): 500.

OG and Θ use *δίκαη*, construing דבר as something like “case,” “charge,” “sentence,” or “verdict.”<sup>397</sup>

But a further complication appears in that the Peshitta, independently of Paul, has rendered this noun as “victory” in Syriac, probably in some sense influenced by the LXX.<sup>398</sup> The Syriac and Aramaic term in this context has a sense of “victory (in court)” and so is akin to “innocence,” “justice,” or “justification.”<sup>399</sup> Lukasz Popko thus concludes from this analogy,

Indeed, it looks as if Paul also was thinking in Aramaic, in which ‘justice’ and ‘victory’ are expressed by the same term. The use of ‘victory’ does indeed fit his ideas but it is not a free or abusive manipulation on his part. We cannot exclude that it was not Paul’s invention but a possible rendition of the words of the Hebrew prophet, influenced by some pre-existing Greek translation and Aramaic semantics.<sup>400</sup>

The “word” here thus attains a narrower sense of a “word” given at the end of a trial, specifically a word signaling victory in court. Such a sense also comports with Paul’s reference to “law” in v. 56 and the sense of “victory” in v. 57.

On the fourth point, given the ambiguity of whether the sentences in v. 14 constitute questions or declarations, the major reason why many scholars and translations regard these sentences as invitations of death is due to the final sentence of v. 14: “נחם will be hidden from my eyes.” The Hebrew noun is often translated as “compassion” or “repentance,” and so it is taken as a statement of judgment against Israel. However, the root can be translated in a completely different sense, as Walter Harrelson concludes in agreement with the JPS translation, “I am convinced that the hapax legomenon *nōham* in the verse is best rendered ‘settling of accounts’ or ‘restoring the balance,’ and that therefore ‘vengeance’ is the best way to render the

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<sup>397</sup> Popko, “Hosea 13:14,” 502–3.

<sup>398</sup> Popko, “Hosea 13:14,” 505.

<sup>399</sup> Popko, “Hosea 13:14,” 505.

<sup>400</sup> Popko, “Hosea 13:14,” 505.



term.”<sup>401</sup> The statement “vengeance will be hidden from my eyes,” would instead confirm that God denies the victory of death in this court setting, as well as the punishments it can inflict, rather than allowing them to continue. This statement fits as part of a pattern in Hosea, where God declares his love, reminds Israel of its sin, follows with a threat of destruction, but then resolves to be gracious and presents Israel with promises.<sup>402</sup> As Harrelson explains, “God does have to bring enemies against a faithless people, as Hosea clearly affirmed throughout chapters 4-13. But God, out of love and compassion, can and does turn against the bringers of death and destruction, calling a halt to the death-dealers, saying ‘Enough!’ to endless vengeance, displaying that quality that is synonymous with Israel’s God: mercy (see Exod 34:6-8).”<sup>403</sup> God’s word of salvation is the last word and death is denied its victory in the case.

The use of this text, in line with the possibilities of Hos 13:14 in its context, is thus indeed a victory song, albeit one sung at the outcome of a judgment more than one sung at the end of a battle. Death cannot and will not have the final victory, so says the Judge. Rather, God’s people will fulfill the sense of this victory when God raises them from the dead to everlasting life, removing any possibility of death’s victory. Here Paul is again relying on the sixth foundation of God’s justice in final judgment, for which the resurrection will be necessary. But unlike in many other texts, the parties in focus in this portrayal of final judgment are death on the one hand and God’s people, bearing God’s promises, on the other.

At this stage, the analysis now comes to v. 56, a most interesting condensation of Pauline theology linking the sting of death to sin and the power of sin to the law. Paul further explains this link in Rom 5:13–21 and 7:7–13 to an audience that was not directly familiar with his teaching, but here he states it in this highly abbreviated form (cf. Ambrosiaster, *Comm. 1 Cor.*

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<sup>401</sup> Harrelson, “Death and Victory,” 158. Also see Harrelson, “Death and Victory,” 151, 157.

<sup>402</sup> Harrelson, “Death and Victory,” 156.

<sup>403</sup> Harrelson, “Death and Victory,” 158.

15:56; John Chrysostom, *Hom. 1 Cor.* 42.4).<sup>404</sup> The first link in this chain is that sin is the “sting” (κέντρον) of death. Thiselton, representing the majority, understands this term as referring to the “**sting** or *bite* of a venomous animal or insect,” that is, the means of delivering the venom.<sup>405</sup> Oropeza prefers the meaning that most list secondarily of “the sharp point of a goad used as an instrument of torture (Herodotus, *His.* 3.130) or representing enslavement with a view to treating humans like beasts with goads and whips (Plato *Leg.* 777A). It may be precisely this type of enslavement that prompts Paul’s mention of sin not just with death via Adam but also in relation to the Law.”<sup>406</sup> Either way, sin is how death exerts its power over others. In the court setting established by the frame of Hos 13:14, one could further describe it as either the means by which death inflicts its punishments (i.e., the corruptibility that leads to death) or the basis upon which death claims rights to punish.

The second link in the chain is that the law is the power of sin. In other words, it is the conduit or catalyst by which sin exerts its power.<sup>407</sup> As Paul says in Rom 5:13, 20, sin preceded the law, but it is only reckoned where there is the law to highlight it, and thereby sin becomes multiplied when people become more familiar with it (cf. Rom 7:7–8, 13).<sup>408</sup> This chain of links between death, sin, and the law may also be an indirect reference to the Adam story again, as in the parallel text of Rom 7:7–11, which would fit with the fact that Paul has already made a few

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<sup>404</sup> For more on this link in Romans and how Jesus’s resurrection is related to it, see J. R. Daniel Kirk, *Unlocking Romans: Resurrection and the Justification of God* (Grand Rapids; Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2008), 99–106.

<sup>405</sup> Thiselton, *Corinthians*, 1300 (emphases original).

<sup>406</sup> Oropeza, *1 Corinthians*, 222.

<sup>407</sup> Chris Alex Vlachos, “Law, Sin, and Death: An Edenic Triad? An Examination with Reference to 1 Corinthians 15:56,” *JETS* 47 (2004): 284 (italics original).

<sup>408</sup> Harm W. Hollander and Joost Holleman (“The Relationship Between Death, Sin, and Law in 1 Cor. 15:56,” *NovT* 35 [1993]: 279–90) link Paul’s statement about the law to all laws and argue that he essentially shares the Cynics’ perspective on laws as ineffective at preventing wickedness. But as Vlachos notes, “It is not that the law is an *ineffective* means of *inhibiting* human wickedness; rather, the law is an *effective* means of *empowering* human wickedness.” Vlachos, “Law, Sin, and Death,” 287–88 (emphases original). Furthermore, such a view is difficult to reconcile with his positive use of the law in 9:8–9 and 14:21, his mixed reference (to the law and the law of Christ) in 9:20–21, and, of course, his statement on the fundamental goodness of the law in Rom 7:13.

abbreviated references to the Adam story and this audience would already be thoroughly familiar with his use of it (unlike the Romans).<sup>409</sup> But regardless, the point remains that the law is invoked in the court setting as something that death and sin seek to cite in their favor. Yet Christ vindicates those who are in him by fulfilling the law and destroying sin and death through his death and resurrection, in which those who are in him participate. Death being swallowed up in victory is thus a fitting description of the transformation of the living, the transformative resurrection of the dead, and the outcome of the final judgment.

With v. 57, Paul comes to the culmination of the victory language, which gives substance to his quoted taunts against death, because it is God who gives “us” the victory through the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus, in the combination of vv. 56–57 one sees a declaration that emerges from the combination of the first, second, fourth, and sixth worldview foundations. With the first foundation, the victory over sin and death came through Jesus Christ’s death and resurrection. With the second foundation, it is God who gives the victory, the victory he accomplished through Jesus, the executor of his inexorable, faithful love. Especially since he achieves and distributes this victory through resurrection to everlasting life, it is a demonstration of the inexorability of his purposes for the sake of his beloved. With the fourth foundation, this victory is only given to “us” through Jesus by virtue of our participatory union with him. This victory is thus a participatory victory, won by another, but which we are allowed to participate in.<sup>410</sup> With the sixth foundation, this victory consists, in part, of the vindication of God’s people bearing God’s promises over sin and death, as God declares in the act of transformation and resurrection to everlasting life.

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<sup>409</sup> Vlachos, “Law, Sin, and Death,” 292.

<sup>410</sup> Cf. K. R. Harriman, “Take Heart, We Have Overcome the World: Participatory Victory in the Theological-Ethical Framework of 1 John,” *EvQ* 88 (2016/2017): 305–19.

### **Summary of Foundations in Verses 50–57**

The foregoing analysis shows that all six of the identified worldview foundations play some role in this segment. First, although it is not mentioned here, as in vv. 42–49, Jesus is the prototype for the body that the transformed receive. But more directly in this segment, Jesus, by his death and resurrection that won the victory over sin and death, is the guarantor of the victory of others over sin and death in resurrection and transformation.

Second, the transformative resurrection, or here the transformation of the living, is the ultimate expression of God's inexorable, faithful love for his people. In the description of this transformed body, as with his previous description of the resurrection body, Paul shows that God communicates his own qualities in this action and so fulfills his creative will of making humans in his image and likeness. And in Paul's closing note, he emphasizes that it is God who gives the victory that transformation and resurrection signify.

Third, God's action of transformation and resurrection fulfills promises and patterns articulated in Scripture. Specifically, Paul refers to Isa 25:8 and Hos 13:14 here. Transformation and resurrection to everlasting life show the complete consumption of death in God's ultimate victory pronounced in Isaiah, expressed in individual bodies in this event at the Second Coming. These actions in this one event also bring to fruition the taunt God spoke towards death through Hosea, wherein the victory of resurrection denies the victory of death.

Fourth, transformation, resurrection, and the victory they signify are the results of the incorporative, identifying, and participatory union with Christ. The qualities of the transformed body are what they are because of the union with the Christ who has those same qualities. Likewise, the victory that transformation and resurrection signify comes from the fact that the victors are in union with the one through whom God gives the victory.

Fifth, from the opening of this segment Paul signals the importance of the promises of the kingdom of God and new creation for resurrection belief. He also uses one of the terms characterizing the same promised reality from the previous segment, which describes both the transformed body (primarily) and the transformed reality in which it participates (secondarily). With his statement that the flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom, nor the corruptible inherit absolute vivification, Paul identifies the reason for the necessity of transformation. The body would not be fit for the new cosmos otherwise. But as with the body putting on the requisite qualities in resurrection and transformation without being destroyed and replaced, so too the history of creation will be taken up and fulfilled in the kingdom/new creation, having qualities with which the transformed bodies are compatible.<sup>411</sup>

Sixth, as vv. 55–57 imply, resurrection is also tied to the drama of final judgment. Resurrection and transformation to everlasting life are the ultimate demonstration that God has vindicated his faithful, as well as his promises made to them, over and against forces that would seek to separate them, which receive their own judgment in turn. But Paul is less interested in portraying this scene, as opposed to Matthew or Revelation, than he is in stating the simple promise of victory in this final court, a promise from the Judge himself.

#### Verse 58

Paul follows his crescendo in v. 57 with a final exhortation delivered as a consequence of the whole preceding argument (hence the use of ὥστε for the only time this chapter),<sup>412</sup> which also

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<sup>411</sup> Cf. C. F. D. Moule, "Introduction," in *The Significance of the Message of the Resurrection for Faith in Jesus Christ*, ed. C. F. D. Moule, SBT 2/8 (London: SCM, 1968), 10; John Polkinghorne, *The God of Hope and the End of the World* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2002), 116.

<sup>412</sup> Brown, *Bodily Resurrection*, 227–28.

serves to underline all of Paul's preceding ethical instructions in this letter.<sup>413</sup> This ethical instruction relies on the assumption of continuity of the present life with the resurrection life, that there is a relationship between what faithful believers do now and the vindication of the same, as is consistent with the sixth foundation.<sup>414</sup>

This final exhortation also relies on the fourth foundation of union with Christ. An argument that began with an affirmation of Christ's resurrection now fittingly ends with exhortation emerging from union with Christ. For if Christ has been raised in victory over death, so will those in Christ be raised in victory over death. And if those in Christ will be raised, that means that what believers do "in Christ" in this life matters, as Paul assures his audience that "your labor is not fruitless in the Lord." Indeed, just as present creation "affords the raw material for eschatological transformation into the new creation," the fruit that present labor will bear will last on the other side of death (cf. 1 Cor 13:13).<sup>415</sup>

But each aspect of this closing exhortation requires further exploration. First, Paul provides dual synonymous imperatives to his audience to be steadfast (*ἑδραῖοι*) and immovable (*ἀμετακίνητοι*). The former term often referred either to something sitting or someone standing firm, or indeed to an object that was considered immovable. The latter term was rarely used before Paul, and it seems that he influenced most of its uses thereafter. But it too refers to that which is immovable, permanent, or fixed. In Christian literature, both terms would be used for referring to the qualities of perseverance and the unflappable firmness of one's faith.<sup>416</sup>

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<sup>413</sup> While Mitchell, *Paul*, 290–91 is in the minority in identifying v. 58 as the *peroratio* of the entire letter, I think she is correct at least in identifying this ethically summative function of v. 58, in addition to its function as the *peroratio* of the argument in ch. 15. For more structural analysis on how v. 58 functions within the climax of the letter (even if not the final argument), see Christian, "Paul," 312–17.

<sup>414</sup> Cf. Kirk, *Unlocking Romans*, 24–28.

<sup>415</sup> Polkinghorne, *God of Hope*, 116. In the words of Barrett, "Since it is done *in the Lord* it can no more perish than he." Barrett, *Corinthians*, 385 (italics original).

<sup>416</sup> H. H. Drake Williams III, "Encouragement to Persevere: An Exposition of 1 Corinthians 15:58," *ERT* 32 (2008): 75–76.

Second, Paul instructs his audience to be always abounding in the work of the Lord. What is “the work of the Lord”? According to John Chrysostom, it is the pure life (*Hom. 1 Cor.* 42.5) or, as is often assumed today, it is the work that comes with the Christian life in general. Perhaps most famously today, Wright has used this verse as a basis for his ethical exposition, wherein the promise of resurrection serves as the motivation for building for God’s kingdom now.<sup>417</sup> While the precise phrase does not appear in contexts of such general reference, this idea does comport with Eph 2:10 (referring to the works God has prepared for people to do) and with Col 3:17 (that any word or deed should be done in the name of the Lord Jesus; cf. Rom 14:8).

On the other hand, Peter Orr argues for a more restricted meaning, namely that the “work of the Lord” is “what believers do to advance the gospel among unbelievers and to establish believers in the gospel.”<sup>418</sup> After all, when Paul refers to his own work in this chapter, he refers not to his general Christian life, but specifically to his work in proclaiming the gospel (vv. 30–32). Such work of advancing the gospel and establishing believers fits the OT precedents of this phrase, where “work(s) of the Lord” most often refers to God’s own work either in creation (Pss 103:22; 104:24; 107:24; 138:8; 145:10; Prov 8:22; cf. Sir 16:26; 42:15–17; Sg Three 35), for his people (Exod 34:10; Pss 28:5; 33:4; 46:8–11; 92:4–5; 107; 111; Isa 5:12; Jer 51:10; cf. Sir 39:14, 16, 33; Pr Azar 4, 20), or in making his people (Isa 19:25; 45:11; 64:8). On the occasions where such a phrase applies to humans, it refers to humans doing works the Lord has commanded (1 Chr 26:30; Jer 48:10; cf. Bar 2:9; 1 Esd 5:58). But given the operation of the fourth foundation noted throughout this letter, Orr is likely on the mark when he says, “it is certainly possible that Paul’s use of the phrase indicates a conviction that as Christians work in this way, they are

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<sup>417</sup> N. T. Wright, *Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church* (New York: HarperOne, 2008), 189–289. Cf. Schrage, *Korinther*, 385.

<sup>418</sup> Peter Orr, “Abounding in the Work of the Lord (1 Cor 15:58): Everything We Do as Christians or Specific Gospel Work?” *Them* 38 (2013): 208.

actually participating in the work of the risen Lord.”<sup>419</sup> Likewise, as Orr observes, this is how Paul portrays his ministry in Rom 15:17–19.<sup>420</sup>

Paul J. Brown draws attention to another aspect of this phrase that could further support this participatory sense, “For Paul’s audience, and especially the deniers of the resurrection, the conclusion to 1 Cor 15 is a call *to be abounding in the activities that the heavenly man has done or does*. This call to moral obligation is predicated upon, and given weight by, the Greco-Roman notion of the imitation of exemplars in society.”<sup>421</sup> Indeed, exemplars were so widely appealed to throughout society that writers could collect lists of them for various purposes.<sup>422</sup> But it is crucial to remember that Jesus is not simply an exemplar, but, more importantly, he is the one in whom believers participate. As far as Paul is concerned, there is no meaningful sense of *imitatio Christi* without *participatio Christi*.

In support particularly of Orr, this imperative to be abounding in the work of the Lord is reminiscent of Paul’s instruction to be abounding for the edification of the Church in 14:12. The use of this phrase and similar ones also uphold this view. Paul refers to the Corinthians as “my work in the Lord” (9:1) and he describes himself and Timothy as doing the work of the Lord (16:10). In Rom 14:20 Paul says that Christian concord and the integrity of the kingdom are the work of God. He also describes Epaphroditus as risking his life for the work of Christ (Phil 2:29–30). Outside of Paul, the most similar phrases refer to the work of God in fostering faith in the one whom God has sent, namely Jesus (John 6:28–29; 9:3–4). Perhaps most significantly in this letter, Paul refers to himself and other proclaimers (such as Apollos) as co-workers of God (3:9)

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<sup>419</sup> Orr, “Abounding,” 209.

<sup>420</sup> Orr, “Abounding,” 209.

<sup>421</sup> Brown, *Bodily Resurrection*, 230 (emphasis original).

<sup>422</sup> Homer, *Il.* 5.381–415; Isocrates, *Phil.* 58–67; *Archid.* 40–48; *Antid.* 230–236; Marcus Aurelius, *Med.* 3.2.2–3.2; Plutarch, *Fort.* 1; Sir 44:1–50:24 1 Macc 2:50–64; 4 Macc 18:10–19; 4 Ezra 7:106–111; Philo, *Virtues* 198–227; *Heir* 260–262; CD II, 14–III, 19; 1 Clem. 9:2–12:8; 17:1–19:2.



in a context where Paul also indicates the continuation of human works into the new creation (3:8–15). In addition to a combination of the fourth and sixth foundations, one also sees here that Paul is not referring to works in general, but specifically to the work of building for the Church.

In the cases of both 1 Cor 3 and 15, it is fair to say that the implication is that the works of the Christian life are of a character that will last into the new creation by the will of God. but one must distinguish the implications of what Paul writes from the reference of what Paul writes. Concerning the latter, the evidence indicates that “the work of the Lord” refers not to everything the Christian qua Christian does, but it refers more specifically to God’s work of growing the Church (both in terms of expansion and maturation) and the human participation in the same. But this reference does not undermine the possibility of the further implication that the Christian’s way of life will resonate into the new creation, for it is the faithful life that God will vindicate and validate by enabling it to go on forever in his presence.

Third, the basis for these instructions is what Paul summarizes as “knowing that your labor is not fruitless in the Lord.” As in the previous clause, the sense of “labor” here (*κόπος*) refers to the two-sided work of growing the Church (1 Cor 3:8; 2 Cor 6:5; 10:15; 11:23, 27; 1 Thess 1:3; 2:9; 3:5; 2 Thess 3:8). This is also reminiscent of Paul’s statement in v. 10 that God’s grace towards him was not fruitless, using the same term there as he does here (*κενός*). It is also a reversal of the use of this term in v. 14, as Jesus’s resurrection shows that the faith is not insubstantial, but has substance which will bear fruit on the other side of death.

### **Summary of Worldview Foundations for Resurrection Belief**

My analysis has identified at least six worldview foundations for resurrection belief in 1 Cor 15. The first, most obvious, and most important in Paul’s argument is Jesus’s own resurrection. It is

the substance of the gospel that Paul proclaimed and that formed the Corinthians as a community of believers. The pattern of God's grace is drawn in the crucified, buried, resurrected, and appearing Christ. Every aspect of salvation depends on Jesus's resurrection, and without Christ's resurrection, the gospel is empty of all substance and all effect. If Christ has not been raised, he has not defeated death in himself, and so he cannot have defeated sin by his death either. But since Christ has been raised, his resurrection is not simply a basis for a generalized hope, but is in fact the basis for the specific hope of resurrection for those who are "in" him. Jesus's resurrection is the precedent and pattern for the resurrection of others. It is by his resurrection that Jesus is established as the new progenitor of humanity, fulfilling the functions that Adam should have. And as a consequence of his resurrection, Jesus has been exalted to the right hand of God and is in the present time implementing his resurrection power in establishing God's kingdom, over which he also is King. This means that his resurrection is the basis of hope not only for individual believers, but also for the world, the new creation and kingdom of God, that they will inhabit. His resurrection body is the prototype of both the resurrection bodies of believers in particular and the new creation in general. In this relationship, one could say that Jesus's resurrection is the new creation/kingdom writ small in anticipation, while the new creation/kingdom is Jesus's resurrection writ large in consummation. What will make these statements true is Christ's communication of his everlasting resurrection life—i.e., his victory over death—which he is capable of doing because he is on both sides of the God-human, Creator-creature relationship.

The second foundation one can see in this text is that God's inexorable, faithful love, love which inexorably keeps the word to those promised, is what leads to resurrection. He has already demonstrated this love in Jesus by resurrecting him in fulfillment of promises and patterns

established long ago. This is the same God who will yet resurrect those who are in Christ, and he has given them a foretaste of this resurrection life in the present through giving them a new life in Christ. Resurrection is a particularly vivid demonstration of God's inexorable, faithful love in that it is action of consistent fidelity to a particular, continuous recipient of action, despite the disruption of death, because it is God who is guarantor that the believer who exists now will be raised from the dead. If God has not raised Christ, then everything else about Christian faith—indeed, the quality of inexorable, faithful love itself—falls apart. But since God has revealed himself as the God who raises dead by virtue of raising Christ, and since he has revealed that resurrection is necessary to his cosmic purposes of establishing the kingdom/new creation, Christ's resurrection is a surety of God's action of general resurrection and new creation. Indeed, in resurrection and transformation, the fact God will make his people like the risen Jesus in the qualities—such as absolute vivification, immortality, glory, power, and belonging to the Spirit—that he gives to their resurrection bodies also involves him making his people better bearers of his image and likeness, since those qualities make his people like him. Resurrection thus shows the inexorability of God's creative purpose and embodies (literally) his victory over death.

The third foundation—that resurrection is the means by which God fulfills Scripture—also illustrates the inexorability of God's purpose as articulated in Scripture. In addition to fulfilling God's patterns of action, resurrection also fulfills both explicit biblical eschatology by virtue of fulfilling promises and implicit biblical eschatology by virtue of realizing creative purpose. Paul can of course see it as true that Jesus's crucifixion and resurrection, as well as the promised resurrection of believers, fulfill the whole story of Scripture. But at the same time, he also appeals to specific Scriptures to articulate certain points. Both emphases were consistent with the pre-Pauline/extra-Pauline gospel proclamations, and so it naturally serves Paul's

argument to return to Scripture at multiple junctures to show why resurrection must happen to bring the grand story of Scripture to its goal.

The fourth foundation—that resurrection is the theo/logical end of the Christians’ incorporative, identifying, and participatory union with Christ—is the most immediately accessible basis for resurrection belief. The others rely on a mix of appeals to the past and the future, but this one most pointedly unites those appeals to portray resurrection as the goal of the reality in which Christians presently live by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Christ’s resurrection provides the warrant for the description of Christians being “in Christ” (otherwise, there would be no “Christ” to be “in”), and the reality of being “in Christ” in turn warrants the expectation of sharing in Christ’s resurrection and reception of the kingdom. This participatory reality is also what provides substance to the consequentiality of the Adam-Christ contrast and to the act of baptism as truly signifying this union. The fact that it is the Spirit who forges this union is also consequential for the nature of the coming resurrection, as believers will, like Christ, have bodies that “belong to the Spirit.” These bodies, being the result of resurrection for the dead and transformation for the living, will perfectly demonstrate that believers are in this participatory union by showing that they participate in God’s victory in Christ over death.

The fifth foundation, that the resurrection is essential to the realization of the promises of the kingdom of God and the new creation, provides the larger eschatological context of resurrection belief. As such, while resurrection most directly refers to the act of raising the dead to bodily life, and resurrection to everlasting life refers to the reception of everlasting life by the raised dead, it can also function as a synecdoche for the grand eschatological picture. Resurrection of the dead and transformation of the living bring about the final defeat of sin and death, and these are in turn essential to the inheritance of God’s kingdom, where death can have

no place. Jesus's own resurrection was necessary to his kingdom work, as he implements God's victory through communicating his resurrection life, culminating at last in the ultimate defeat of death in the general resurrection, which leads to the state of God being all in all. In this state, God communicates some of his qualities to his people and his new creation, thus making it a proper abode for his everlasting kingdom and a proper fulfillment of his creative will (whereby we see the correspondence of protology and eschatology). In this reality, both microcosm and macrocosm on the other side of sin and death are in complete harmony with their Creator.

The sixth and final foundation of God's justice exercised in the final judgment is less prominent here than in many other texts. But where it does appear operative, it further supports the praxis aspects of the fourth foundation. Those who are in union with Christ are those who will be vindicated at this final judgment, as God enables their way of life to continue forever. Because that resurrection to final judgment is coming, how one lives in this life matters beyond the scope of this life. The final judgment is also the final triumph over the forces that would seek to separate God and God's people, as death is denied its victory in the case against the people. The Judge himself will step in, fulfill his promises, and validate their faithful lives.

CHAPTER 5  
THE CONCLUSIVE COURT: RESURRECTION BELIEF IN Q AL-QIYAMAH 75

Like Daniel and Paul, Muhammad’s message from the beginning was thoroughly eschatological.<sup>1</sup> Sebastian Günther summarizes succinctly, “The Qur’an says more, comparatively, about the end of the world, resurrection, final judgement, and a world-to-come than any other sacred scripture. No fewer than fifty-six suras from an early stage of Muhammad’s prophethood, and eleven suras revealed later in Medina, address eschatological issues in various ways.”<sup>2</sup> Nicolai Sinai likewise notes that many of the shortest and probably earliest surahs—citing the examples of Q 77–92; 95–96; 99–104; 107; 111—are “almost exclusively dominated by eschatological motifs ... Eschatology, then, can plausibly be held to constitute the first major subject of the Qur’anic proclamations, a sort of stem cell for the genesis of the Qur’an as a whole.”<sup>3</sup> Indeed, as noted below, much of the Qur’anic message is driven by awareness of the coming Day known by many names, the Day for resurrection and judgment.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> I recognize the historical disputes about authorship and origin of the Qur’an. But as with the previous two chapters, it suffices for my purposes to use the traditional attributions and my argument does not depend on whether Muhammad was the historical author or if the author simply related his work to Muhammad.

<sup>2</sup> Sebastian Günther, “Eschatology in the Qur’an,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Qur’anic Studies*, ed. Mustafa Shah and Muhammad Abdel Haleem (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), 473.

<sup>3</sup> Nicolai Sinai, “The Eschatological Kerygma of the Early Qur’an,” in *Apocalypticism and Eschatology in Late Antiquity: Encounters in the Abrahamic Religions, 6th-8th Century*, ed. Hagit Amirav, Emmanouela Grypeou, and Guy Strousma, *Late Antique History and Religion* 17 (Leuven: Peeters, 2017), 219. The chronological order of surahs is notoriously difficult to determine, beyond the broad categorization of “early Meccan,” “late Meccan,” and “Medinan.” See Nicolai Sinai, *The Qur’an: A Historical-Critical Introduction* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017), 111–37. For a recent development of Sinai’s own proposal on this topic, see Raymond K. Farrin, “A Revised Inner-Qur’anic Chronology Based on Mean Verse Lengths and the Medina I Counting System,” *Al-Abhath* 67 (2019): 1–29. On the general difficulties in establishing dates, see Neal Robinson, *Discovering the Qur’an: A Contemporary Approach to a Veiled Text* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 1996), 27–96.

<sup>4</sup> On the many names of the day, see Umar S. Al-Ashqar, *The Day of Resurrection: In the Light of the Qur’an and Sunnah*, 2nd ed., trans. Nasiruddin al-Khattab, Islamic Creed Series 6 (Riyadh: International Islamic

With this focus on the Day would come a focus on schematizing the eschaton, initially in surahs like Q Qaf 50 (traditionally identified as one of the later texts), then more fully in post-qur'anic tradition as Muslims sought to bring the descriptions of many texts together as pieces of a puzzle to the complete picture never conveyed through a singular surah.<sup>5</sup> One outcome of this focus on schematization is that most articulations of the theology of resurrection in the Qur'an spend less time articulating resurrection belief itself than the place of resurrection in the eschatological chronology in relation to other events.<sup>6</sup> Such a development has been further encouraged by highly concrete descriptions in the Qur'an and other early Muslim texts of the "afterworld," which in many ways corresponds to the present world, but "operates according to a distinct logic."<sup>7</sup>

Precisely because of the greater interest in eschatological schematization and the greater deference in Muslim qur'anic scholarship to the traditional *tafsirs* (commentaries) compared to, say, early Christian works in NT scholarship,<sup>8</sup> there has been much less controversy about Q Al-Qiyamah 75 than the other two case studies examined in this project. It is of interest to the more fundamental matters of resurrection belief—indeed, its very title is properly translated “the Resurrection”—but it is of less use to those seeking to compose a chronology of eschatology and a description of the afterworld. But this early Meccan text is of such interest to this study because

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Publishing House, 2005), 21–40; Sebastian Günther, “Tag und Tageszeiten im Qur’ān,” *Hallesche Beiträge zur Orientalwissenschaft* 25 (1988): 46–67. Günther, “Eschatology,” 476 also presents a summary.

<sup>5</sup> John Macdonald’s series of articles in vols. 4 and 5 of *Islamic Studies* demonstrate this interest quite extensively. Most relevant to the matter of resurrection in this tradition are John Macdonald, “The Day of Resurrection,” *Islamic Studies* 5 (1966): 129–97; Macdonald, “The Preliminaries to the Resurrection and Judgment,” *Islamic Studies* 4 (1965): 137–79. Also see Al-Ashqar, *Day of Resurrection*, passim; Nerina Rustomji, *The Garden and the Fire: Heaven and Hell in Islamic Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009).

<sup>6</sup> Jane I. Smith and Yvonne Y. Haddad, *The Islamic Understanding of Death and Resurrection* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), esp. 63–97.

<sup>7</sup> Rustomji, *Garden*, 21.

<sup>8</sup> Martin Accad, *Sacred Misinterpretation: Reaching across the Christian-Muslim Divide* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2019), 47–48; Jane Dammen McAuliffe, *Qur’anic Christians: An Analysis of Classical and Modern Exegesis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 29–31.

it precedes these developments and illustrates more extensively than any other qur'anic text the characteristics and foundations of resurrection belief in a context—similar to 1 Cor 15—of responding to denial of the eschatological resurrection. In response to this resurrection denial, Q Al-Qiyamah 75 presents a concentrated compilation of themes and foundations of resurrection belief manifested throughout the Qur'an. It is thus a fitting case study for my purposes.

### Translation of the Text

Q Al-Qiyamah 75 <sup>1</sup> No, <sup>9</sup> I swear by the Day of Resurrection, <sup>2</sup> and no, I swear by the self-accusing soul. <sup>3</sup> Does the human <sup>10</sup> think that we will not gather his bones? <sup>4</sup> Yes indeed, we are able to restore his fingertips. <sup>5</sup> Yet the human would rather reject openly what is before him. <sup>11</sup> <sup>6</sup> He asks, “When is the Day of Resurrection?” <sup>7</sup> But when eyesight is dazzled, <sup>8</sup> the moon is eclipsed, <sup>9</sup> and the sun and the moon are joined together, <sup>10</sup> the human will say that day, “Where is the escape?” <sup>11</sup> Nowhere! <sup>12</sup> There will be no refuge, <sup>12</sup> with your Lord on that day will be the stable place. <sup>13</sup> On that day the human will be informed of what he has sent forward and what he has left behind, <sup>14</sup> in fact, each human will be a witness against himself, <sup>15</sup> despite putting forward his excuses.

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<sup>9</sup> The particle here and in v. 2 can indicate negation (particularly if in response to something assumed negated or denied, as Ibn Kathir notes in *Tafsir Ibn Kathir* Q Al-Qiyamah 75:1) or an emphatic expression. Cf. Elsaid M. Badawi and Muhammad Abdel Haleem, *Arabic-English Dictionary of Qur'anic Usage*, HdO 85 (Leiden: Brill, 2008), s.v. “لا” [832–33]. For those who follow the emphatic interpretation, see *Tafsir al-Jalalayn* Q Al-Qiyamah 75:1; ‘Abdullah Yūsuf ‘Alī, *The Meaning of the Holy Qur’ān*, 9th ed. (Beltsville, MD: Amana, 1997); A. J. Droge, *The Qur’ān: A New Annotated Translation* (Sheffield; Bristol, CT: Equinox, 2013).

<sup>10</sup> The singular could refer to the generic human or a specific one. Some, such as Ibn Abbas in *Tafsir Ibn Abbas* Q Al-Qiyamah 75:3, propose that the denier persona here is none other than Adi ibn Rabi‘ah/Abu Jahl, Muhammad’s nemesis in Mecca (cf. *Asbab Al-Nuzul by Al-Wahidi* Q Al-Qiyamah 75:3; Sayyid Abul A‘lā Mawdūdī, *Towards Understanding the Qur’ān*, vol. 13: Sūrah 66–77, trans. and ed. Zafar Ishaw Ansari [Leicester: The Islamic Foundation, 2018], 174).

<sup>11</sup> Cf. *Tafsir Ibn Kathir* Q Al-Qiyamah 75:5; Mohammed Marmaduke Pickthall, ed. *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran: An Explanatory Translation* (New York: Mentor, 1953).

<sup>12</sup> I translate a particle of response used for emphatic negation, particularly in rebuke, idiomatically to maintain its sense as direct response to the question, rather than its typical translations of “certainly not” and related expressions. Cf. Badawi and Haleem, *Arabic-English Dictionary*, s.v. “لا” [817].



<sup>16</sup> Do not move your tongue with it to hasten it. <sup>13 17</sup> Indeed, upon us [rests] its collection and its recitation. <sup>18</sup> So when we read it, follow its recitation. <sup>19</sup> Then, indeed, upon us [rests] its explanation.

<sup>20</sup> Absolutely not! But you love this time-bound <sup>14</sup> life <sup>21</sup> and neglect the Hereafter. <sup>22</sup> Now that day [some] faces will be radiant <sup>15 23</sup> looking towards their Lord, <sup>24</sup> and that day [other] faces will look despondent, <sup>16 25</sup> knowing that a backbreaking devastation will be visited upon them. <sup>26</sup> No indeed! When it <sup>17</sup> reaches the gullet, <sup>18 27</sup> and it is said “Who is the wizard <sup>19</sup> [to save him]?” <sup>28</sup> and he knows that it is the time of parting, <sup>29</sup> then leg is intertwined with leg. <sup>20 30</sup> Towards your Lord that day will be the driving force. <sup>21</sup>

<sup>31</sup> And yet he neither affirmed the truth nor prayed <sup>32</sup> but kept denying the truth and turned away. <sup>33</sup> Then he went back to his folk swaggering. <sup>34</sup> Woe <sup>22</sup> to you, and yet more woe! <sup>35</sup> Again, woe to you, and yet more woe! <sup>36</sup> Does the human suppose that he will be left alone without purpose? <sup>37</sup> Was he not a drop of emitted semen? <sup>38</sup> Then he became a clinging clotted mass then he <sup>23</sup> formed him. <sup>39</sup> Then from it he made the two sexes, male and female; <sup>24 40</sup> is not that One able to bring back to life the dead?

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<sup>13</sup> Cf. Gabriel Said Reynolds, *The Qur’ān and the Bible: Text and Commentary*, Qur’ān trans. Ali Quli Qarai (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018).

<sup>14</sup> A reference to the present life by referring to *ajal*, the mortal span of time defined by reference to death. For more on this concept in Islam and its context, see Toshihiko Izutsu, *God and Man in the Koran*, Studies in the Humanities and Social Relations 5 (Salem, NH: Ayer, 1964), 124–30.

<sup>15</sup> Majid Fakhry, *An Interpretation of the Qur’an: English Translation of the Meanings, a Bilingual Edition* (New York: New York University Press, 2002).

<sup>16</sup> Pickthall, *Koran*.

<sup>17</sup> The soul.

<sup>18</sup> More literally, “collarbones.”

<sup>19</sup> Or perhaps “faith-healer,” one with access to supernormal powers, so as to emphasize that not even this one can bring this person back to life. Cf. Badawi and Haleem, *Arabic-English Dictionary*, s.v. “راقي” [378].

<sup>20</sup> Cf. A. J. Arberry, *The Koran Interpreted* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1980). The term translated as “leg,” could also mean “calamity” or “affliction.”

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Arberry, *Koran*.

<sup>22</sup> Could also be translated as “Nearer,” indicating that a trouble is coming nearer to the person receiving this pronouncement (as in *Tafsir al-Jalalayn* Q Al-Qiyamah 75:34–35).

<sup>23</sup> Allah.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Droge, *Qur’ān*; Reynolds, *Qur’ān*.

### The Resurrection of Q Al-Qiyamah 75 in Context

Unlike the Tanakh and NT, the only major canonical divisions in the Qur'an are the surahs, marked off from each other by the initial *Bismillah* invocation ("In the name of Allah, the Compassionate/Beneficent and Merciful"). But there are no separate books or larger sections. The divisions of the surahs into "early Meccan," "later Meccan," and "Medinan" are traditional ascriptions, not internal divisions. As such, the literary context for Q Al-Qiyamah 75 is simply the Qur'an as a whole.

In the Qur'an, the resurrection is tied with what is known as "the Day" (or the Hour, as in Q 6:31; 18:21; 19:75; 21:49; 22:1, 7; 25:11; 30:55). That the Day is coming, along with its dispensation of reward and punishment, is an absolute certainty (Q 3:8–9, 25, 195; 5:119; 10:28; 11:3, 103–108; 16:84, 92–93; 17:71; 21:101–105; 23:100; 24:23–25; 25:17, 24–27; 27:83; 50:41–45; 54:6–8; 56:50; 58:6, 18; 69:14–37; 78:39–40; 83:4–6; 85:2; 100:9–11; 101:4).<sup>25</sup> In fact, there are many calls in the Qur'an to "believe in Allah and the Last Day" (Q 2:62; 4:38–39, 162; 9:19, 29, 44–45; 33:21; 58:22; 60:6; 65:2; cf. 2:8, 177, 228; 4:136; 29:36; 33:21; 84:20). Such a forceful statement makes clear the foundational function of this Day as a fixed point of reference in the worldview the Qur'an forms.

The Day is described variously. As noted already, it was called the "Last Day" or simply referred to as "the Day." It was also called the "Day of Judgment" (Q 1:4; 37:20; 44:40–42; 56:56; 82; 83:11)<sup>26</sup> and the "Day of Assembly" (Q 42:7; 64:9), among others. But most

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<sup>25</sup> In a similar vein, Sinai, "Eschatological Kerygma," 240 observes how many early surahs present a bipartite structure contrasting the fates of the blessed and damned.

<sup>26</sup> Emran Iqbal El-Badawi, *The Qur'an and the Aramaic Gospel Traditions* (London; New York: Routledge, 2014), 189–90 notes the linkage of these references to *yawm al-dīn* and the Aramaic translations of Matthew 10:15; 11:22, 24; 12:26.

frequently, the Qur'an refers to *yawm al-qiyamah*, the "Day of Resurrection" (2:85, 113, 174, 212; 3:161, 180, 185, 194; 4:87, 109, 141, 159; 5:64; 6:12; 7:32, 167, 172; 10:60; 11:60, 98; 16:25, 27, 92, 124; 17:13–14, 58, 62; 18:105; 19:95; 20:100–102, 124; 21:47; 22:9, 17, 69; 23:16; 25:69; 28:61, 71; 29:13, 25; 30:56; 35:14; 39:15, 24, 31, 47, 60, 67; 41:40; 42:45; 45:17, 26; 46:5; 58:7; 60:3; 68:39; cf. 7:14; 37:144). As such, one can see already that the resurrection in the Qur'an is associated primarily with the final judgment of "the Day," since it is critical to its execution.

Another major theme of resurrection in the Qur'an, and the reason for the certainty with which it is regarded, is the fact that it is the demonstration of Allah's sovereignty over life as Creator. The coming Day is the vindication of Allah's revelation (Q 10:28–56; 11:7–11), since Allah is generally described as the one who gives life, causes death, and will bring to life again (Q 2:28; 7:25; 20:55; 22:66; 23:12–16; 30:40; 45:26; 50:43; 71:17–18; 80:21–22; cf. 3:27; 10:31, 56; 15:23; 23:80; 25:3; 30:19; 40:11; 53:44).<sup>27</sup> It is also generally described as a fulfillment of promises of new creation (Q 10:4; 21:104). Aspects of creation and revelation, especially the ministries of the prophets, are frequently described as signs of resurrection that Allah gives to demonstrate his power and will to raise the dead (Q 2:73, 87, 259; 3:190–191; 4:56; 6:35; 7:57–58; 18:9–26, 105; 25:40; 27:86; 29:23; 30:16; 34:9; 35:9; 36:33–40; 39:60–63; 42:29; 50:9–11).<sup>28</sup> The Qur'an makes frequent connections between Allah's act of creation and his act of resurrection, as the former clearly renders the latter plausible and demonstrates the sovereignty that makes the latter necessary (Q 10:4, 34; 14:19–20; 15:85; 16:19–21, 38–40; 17:49–52;

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<sup>27</sup> This same notion is reiterated to John the Baptist to assure him of his resurrection in Q Maryam 19:12–15 and to Jesus for the same reason in Q Maryam 19:33.

<sup>28</sup> For more on this point, see Al-Ashqar, *Day of Resurrection*, 86–111; Sayyid Mujtaba Musavi Lari, *Resurrection, Judgement, and the Hereafter*, vol. 3 of *Lessons on Islamic Doctrine*, trans. Hamid Algar (Qum, I.R. Iran: Foundation of Islamic Cultural Propagation in the World, 1992), 67–79.

18:45–49; 19:66–68; 21:104; 22:4–10; 23:12–16; 27:64–65; 29:19–22; 30:8, 11, 27, 50; 31:28; 32:4–14; 36:77–83; 39:60–62; 44:34–38; 46:33; 50:9–11, 15–22; 56:57–62; 80:18–22; 85:13; 95:4–8).<sup>29</sup> Indeed, the resurrection of the dead is sometimes described as “returning to Allah” (Q 2:28, 245, 281; 3:28, 109; 6:36, 61–62; 10:30, 46, 56; 11:4; 19:93–95; 23:115; 28:88; 30:11; 50:43; 62:8; 88:23–26; 96:8), because all life comes from Allah and to him all must return for the dispensation of justice and beneficence.

It is because of the connection of resurrection with judgment, and the need for all to stand before the only Living One for this judgment, that the denial of resurrection is considered to be a moral problem, more than a philosophical/logical one. Muhammad seems to have encountered resurrection denial frequently in the rejection of his message by the pagan Arabs (Q 6:29, 150; 7:45; 10:7; 11:7–8; 13:5, 25–26; 16:22, 38; 17:49, 51, 98; 18:35–36; 19:66–67; 23:33–37, 74, 82–83; 25:11; 27:67–75; 30:6–8; 32:10; 34:7–8; 37:15–17, 51–59; 44:34–36; 45:24–25; 50:2–5; 56:47–48; 64:7; 70:6; 74:43–46; 79:10–14; 82:9; 95:7). Of course, as Patricia Crone notes, these pagans are not like the Corinthian resurrection deniers in that they have grown up in an environment populated by others—Jews, Christians, and Zoroastrians—who have proclaimed messages of resurrection for generations, although some, like the Corinthian deniers, may have been recent converts to one of these groups.<sup>30</sup> These Arabs acknowledged the existence of Allah and that Allah was Creator, but they believed that Allah no longer attended to humans after creation.<sup>31</sup> For some, this outlook accompanied an inclination to hedonism, while for others this belief led to an uninhibited focus on prosperity in the present world.<sup>32</sup> To both perspectives, the

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<sup>29</sup> Cf. Aphraates, *Dem.* 8.

<sup>30</sup> Patricia Crone, “The Quranic *Mushrikūn* and the Resurrection (Part I),” *BSOAS* 75 (2012): 448–51; Crone, “The Qur’anic *Mushrikūn* and the Resurrection (Part II),” *BSOAS* 76 (2013): 3.

<sup>31</sup> Izutsu, *God and Man*, 124.

<sup>32</sup> Izutsu, *God and Man*, 91.

prospect of a future life could be a hindrance and a threat. In any case, Muhammad's audiences seem to have some familiarity with resurrection and associated eschatological concepts, but the lack of integration of eschatology into these worldviews meant, in the words of Toshihiko Izutsu, "there was no clearly defined and solidly established semantic field to belong in. Concepts of this sort, lacking support from any strong coherent system of concepts are weak and cannot in any way play a decisive role in the culture. This is the most fundamental difference between the pre-Islamic concepts of eschatology and the Koranic ones."<sup>33</sup>

As seen from the presence of these statements of denial in many of the same surahs already noted, the denials often fuel diatribes in which Muhammad appeals to the correlation of creation and resurrection, the signs of resurrection, and/or the general certainty of the coming Day as a response. While Muhammad's appeals to creation in particular can address philosophical/logical objections, his underlying assumption in each case is that the fundamental reason for denying the resurrection is denying the final judgment and the accountability people will face for how they have lived their lives. Denial is thus willful and his showing the emptiness of logical objections reveals that they are but a cover for the real problem.<sup>34</sup>

The proper disposition towards the coming Day is to live in *taqwā*, fear or wariness (Q 3:76, 102; 4:1; 6:72; 10:63; 12:57; 21:49; 23:87; 26:108, 126, 131–132, 150, 163, 179; 39:20, 61; 59:7, 18; 69:48; 77:41; 78:31; 91:8, 92:5, 17, 96:12).<sup>35</sup> Conscientiousness about one's life now is better than having a shameful life displayed with full transparency on that Day.<sup>36</sup> For this reason, despite the use of apocalyptic tropes in certain texts, Sinai describes Qur'anic eschatology as "moralistic rather than apocalyptic: the Qur'an exhibits no interest in speculating about the

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<sup>33</sup> Izutsu, *God and Man*, 94.

<sup>34</sup> Sinai, "Eschatological Kerygma," 227–28.

<sup>35</sup> Sinai, "Eschatological Kerygma," 228.

<sup>36</sup> Izutsu, *God and Man*, 234.

future course of history leading up until the end of the world or in reassuring a group of people who seem to be on the losing side of history that they are, in fact, on the winning side.”<sup>37</sup> The point is to present the moral urgency of repentance. Daud Rahbar explains that the emphasis on the fear motive is a consequence of the fact that Allah is, “*before anything else, a strict judge*. His justice is unrelaxing. He will forgive none but those who believe in Him and obey commandments. He will let men know on the Judgment Day what they have done.”<sup>38</sup>

As such, it is not most appropriate in this case to speak of Allah’s inexorable, faithful love as a foundation for resurrection belief. The Qur’an never describes Allah as Father, which is otherwise a critical biblical image for expressing God’s love. Indeed, the Qur’an does not assume a reciprocal relationship implied by the description of “love,” as Rahbar notes, “The Qur’ān never enjoins love for God. This is because God Himself loves only the strictly pious. To love God one must presuppose that God is reciprocating the sentiment. And to presuppose that is to presume that one is perfectly pious. Such presumption the Qur’ān never allows.... Side by side with such a conception of God’s unrelaxing justice, love for God would certainly be out of place.”<sup>39</sup> Nor is any kind of covenantal-historical framework an essential component of resurrection belief in the Qur’an. Allah makes promises of resurrection and will keep them, but not in the context of a specific covenantal history that supplies definition to a loving relationship.

More significant, then, are the qualities expressed in the final judgment; namely, Allah’s mercy and vengeance (e.g., Q 5:98; 6:12, 54; 7:167).<sup>40</sup> Izutsu observes that the fundamental

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<sup>37</sup> Sinai, “Eschatological Kerygma,” 236. On Syriac and biblical connections in this respect, see Thomas J. O’Shaughnessy, *Eschatological Themes in the Qur’ān* (Manila: Cardinal Bea Institute, 1986), esp. 108–16; Sinai, “Eschatological Kerygma,” 242–54, 257–66.

<sup>38</sup> Daud Rahbar, *God of Justice* (Leiden: Brill, 1960), 179 (italics original).

<sup>39</sup> Rahbar, *God of Justice*, 180. For more on this point, see Rahbar, *God of Justice*, 180–93. Multiple statements in the Qur’an explicitly state that God does not love sinners/unbelievers (Q 2:190, 276; 3:32, 57, 140; 4:36; 5:64, 87; 6:141; 7:31, 55; 8:58; 16:23; 22:38; 28:76–77; 31:18; 40:10; 42:40; 57:23).

<sup>40</sup> The emphasis on both of these aspects at once is the burden of Gabriel Said Reynolds, *Allah: God in the Qur’an* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2020), 91–199.

ethical relationship of God and humans encompasses pairs of inherent contrasts, beginning with the “God of infinite goodness, mercy, forgiveness and benevolence on one hand, and, on the other, God of wrath, and severe, strict and unrelenting justice. Correspondingly, there occurs, on the human side, the basic contrast between ‘thankfulness’ (*shukr*) on the one hand, and the ‘god-fearing’ attitude (*taqwà*), on the other.”<sup>41</sup> The *Bismillah* that separates every surah describes Allah as merciful and many other texts refer to him as such (e.g., Q 1:3; 6:155; 7:50, 55; 16:5–7, 66; 25:50–51; 26:6–8; 28:4, 73; 30:45, 49; 31:1–2). Conversely, from the first surah, the reader is made aware that there are those who earn Allah’s wrath (Q Al-Fatihah 1:7). Gabriel Said Reynolds notes, “On four occasions the Qur’ān speaks of God as ‘vengeful’ (*dhū intiqām*; Q 3:4; 5:95; 14:47; 39:37). The God of the Qur’ān is not slow to judge, but ‘quick to judge’ (*sari’ al-ḥisāb*; 16 times), and he is ‘severe in punishment’ (*shadīd al-‘iqāb*; 28 times). The Qur’ān speaks frequently of God’s wrath (*ghaḍab*).”<sup>42</sup> Reynolds thus observes of the relationship between these aspects, especially regarding the presently wicked,

The God of the Qur’ān is not merciful to wrongdoers, and He is not merciful to those who deny Him, or who deny His prophets. To such as these, the God of the Qur’ān is wrathful, even vengeful. The mercy of the Qur’ān’s God does not lie in loving or forgiving wrongdoers or unbelievers. Instead it lies principally in the signs that He gives them in nature, and through the ministry of the prophets.<sup>43</sup>

As Reynolds summarizes elsewhere, “In Islam, God is the threat, and God is also the salvation.”<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Izutsu, *God and Man*, 77.

<sup>42</sup> Gabriel Said Reynolds, “Divine Mercy in the Qur’ān,” in *Finding Beauty in the Other: Theological Reflections Across Religious Traditions*, ed. Peter Casarella and Mun’im Sirry (New York: Crossroad, 2018), 128.

<sup>43</sup> Reynolds, “Divine Mercy,” 127.

<sup>44</sup> Reynolds, *Allah*, 158.

Al-Ghazzāli, one of the most influential Muslim theologians, further confirms this portrayal of Allah in his statements on the articles of faith:

Munificence and kindness, beneficence and grace are His, since He is able to bring upon His creatures all manner of torture and to shower upon them all kinds of pain and affliction. Even if He should do this, it would be justice on His part, it would not be vile, it would not be tyrannous. He rewards His believing servants for their acts of obedience in the spirit of generosity and encouragement rather than according to their merit and desert. For He is under obligation to none and tyranny is inconceivable in Him. None possesses any claim against Him. His claim to obedience is obligatory and binding upon all creatures because He made it obligatory upon them through the words of His prophets and not by reason alone.<sup>45</sup>

One thus sees in this portrayal that Allah's act of creation sets him beyond obligation to his created beings, since the very act of creation is an act of mercy, but this act of creation also sets an obligation on the created. This obligation in turn establishes the need for auditing in judgment.<sup>46</sup> Likewise, Allah's sending of prophets is an act of mercy that enables humans to know the truth and thus have opportunity to repent and submit to Allah's will (lest they be left to their own devices and perish). At the same time, the sending of prophets establishes an obligation of obedience, the violation of which earns Allah's wrath at the final judgment.<sup>47</sup>

These combinations of Allah's mercy and vengeance, of creation and resurrection, of signs and denial, all exemplify the overarching framework of a world headed for judgment. At the denouement of this drama is Allah—the Creator, the Lord, and the Judge—who makes all things return to him for the rendering of a verdict. In this story, Allah is the central character, and the Day of Resurrection is the central event around which all of these other themes, as well as the

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<sup>45</sup> Al-Ghazzāli. *The Foundations of the Articles of Faith, Being a Translation with Notes of The Kitāb Qawā'id al-Aqā'id of Al-Ghazzāli's "Ihyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn"*, trans. Nabih Amin Faris (Lahore: Ashraf, 1974), 7–8.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Reynolds, "Divine Mercy," 131.

<sup>47</sup> Reynolds, "Divine Mercy," 135.



other elements of qur'anic worldview formation, revolve. Our case study of Q Al-Qiyamah 75 draws most of these themes together, as well as others repeated less often in the recurring arguments, appeals, and images of qur'anic discourse, thereby making it a properly representative text for resurrection belief in the Qur'an.

### **Resurrection in Q Al-Qiyamah 75**

#### Verses 1–15

The initial particle *la* precedes an oath. As noted above, it could be either negative or emphatic. The latter seems plausible in light of its connection with an oath. However, most exegetes support reading this particle in the negative sense, so that this surah is functionally like an excerpt from a dialogue in progress, where the “No” followed by an oath is a response to a pre-established denial of the resurrection, a denial which is clearly a target for this text.

The speaker is Allah, as throughout the Qur'an, and thus the significance of the oath-swearing is amplified. As seen in other qur'anic texts, the fact that the Day of Resurrection is coming is undeniable. It is among the most certain fixtures of the qur'anic symbolic universe. The fact that Allah swears by it is further confirmation of its certitude. This oath is thus also a declaration of Allah's irrevocable intention to bring the Day of Resurrection to pass, since, as the rest of the text makes clear, the content of the oath is that he will raise the dead for judgment.

The second thing Allah swears by—the self-accusing soul (*nasf al-lawwāmah*)—attests to the same reality. This self-accusing soul represents the second stage of human moral development in that the person's conscience is properly functioning and convicting the person of their sins and need for living repentantly, as opposed to the first stage of the uncontrollable spirit

inclined to evil (*nafs al-ammārah*; e.g., Q Yusuf 12:53) and the third stage of the spirit/soul at rest in the favor of Allah (*nafs al-muṭma'innah*; e.g., Q Al-Fajr 89:27–28).<sup>48</sup> As is particularly clear in light of v. 14, wherein the text states that each human will be a witness against himself/herself on the Day, the self-accusing soul is thus an advance sign of the Day of Resurrection, teaching humans right from wrong, and warning them what will befall if they do not repent. Because of this eschatological connection in v. 14, Ibn Abbas states that the self-accusing soul here refers to a quality of both the righteous and the sinful; all will blame themselves on the Day of Resurrection, but the self-accusing soul of the righteous will speak differently in having better statements to make.<sup>49</sup>

From this opening sentence, the reader can already see the first and most fundamental foundation of resurrection belief in the Qur'an: resurrection is necessary for the execution of Allah's final judgment. All life must return to Allah whence it came for judgment. As humans render their accounts to the Creator of how they have conducted themselves in the lives given to them by the Creator, they must be present as Allah created them, as embodied beings. The body must be reconstituted with precision to match the precision of judgment Allah administers.<sup>50</sup> It is as embodied creatures that humans will receive reward for subjecting their bodies to Allah's will in this life or punishment by subjecting their bodies to Allah's wrath in the final judgment.<sup>51</sup> The resurrection and the final judgment it precedes are essential aspects of declaring Allah's absolute

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<sup>48</sup> Malik Ghulām Farīd, ed., *The Holy Qur'an: Arabic Text and English Translation with Commentary* (Surrey: Islam International, 1988), 1285; Mawdūdī, *Towards Understanding the Qur'ān*, 161–62.

<sup>49</sup> *Tafsir Ibn Abbas* Q Al-Qiyamah 75:2. Cf. *Tafsir Ibn Kathir* Q Al-Qiyamah 75:2.

<sup>50</sup> Brent Neely and Peter Riddell, "Familiar Signs, Altered Concepts: Jesus, Messiah and Resurrection in Islam," in *Jesus and the Resurrection: Reflections of Christians from Islamic Contexts*, ed. David Emmanuel Singh (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2014), 43–44.

<sup>51</sup> For these points, and in contradistinction to Sufi Muslims who present a spiritualized vision of resurrection, see Muhammad Abdel Haleem, "Life and Beyond in the Qur'an," in *Beyond Death: Theological and Philosophical Reflections on Life after Death*, ed. Dan Cohn-Sherbok and Christopher Lewis (London: Macmillan, 1995), 72–73.

sovereignty in the most public fashion, as these are the events that consummate the subjection of all to Allah's will, regardless of how humans in the present time regard the possibility of a Day of Resurrection.

As noted above, the human to whom Allah is making this response could be a generic resurrection denier or it could be Abu Jahl, Muhammad's Meccan nemesis, who stands in for the same. Fundamentally, neither option changes the overall message of the surah or adds any extra detail to the nature of this resurrection denial (as with Paul and resurrection denial in Corinth, we know about it because of Muhammad, not because of independent information). Thus, this analysis will simply refer to this person as "the denier."

Allah poses a rhetorical question to the denier, asking if he actually thinks that Allah will not gather the bones of the dead. This image for resurrection was a popular one, presumably having its roots in the ever-popular resurrection text of Ezek 37, to which the Jews and Christians before Muhammad had often appealed. It was an especially popular image in cases where resurrection was described more in terms of reconstitution than transformation (as the former was considered a more important point to make against philosophical objections to the possibility of resurrection). Counter-rhetoric may also be another factor in the use of this image, as the Qur'an articulates resurrection denial in several places as the deniers mocking the idea that the Day will come after humans have become "dust and bones" (e.g., Q 37:53; 56:47; 79:10–12). The description of resurrection in this fashion thus means, "Well yes, Allah will gather our bones to resurrect us."

This particular text puts a finer point on that imagery by saying that Allah is able to restore the fingertips. The fingertips are so emphasized either because of their smallness (*Tafsir*

*al-Jalalayn*) or their delicateness (‘Abdullah Yūsuf ‘Alī).<sup>52</sup> In any case, the point remains that when Allah resurrects the dead the smallest detail will be accounted for. In such a statement, one sees the first hints of the second foundation that will become more apparent in the last segment of this surah. That second foundation is that resurrection is the inevitable performance of Allah’s inexorable power and will as Creator to return all things to himself for judgment. Such power gives this event its irrevocable guarantee, as it will be something of a reenactment of what Allah has already done before in creation.

But despite the apparent obviousness that the Creator can raise the dead to life for the final judgment, the denier is willful in rejecting what is before him. That is, primarily, he denies the Day that is coming in the future because, secondarily, he denies the testimony of his own senses to Allah’s creative power. This denial serves his basic desire to continue as he always has according to his own will. With this framing, the question the denier poses in v. 6 is not a genuine inquiry, but a mockery of Muhammad’s proclamation of resurrection. The answer to this question does not directly say “when” the Day will be—as the Qur’an in general never says—but instead declares that when the Day comes, it will be too late for the denier.

The description of the Day moves from effect to cause to response. The effect of what will happen on the Day is the eyesight will be “dazzled,” which is to say that, in the case of the denier, it will be amazed, humbled, and humiliated by the great things it will see, as the denier reneges on their earlier doubt, left only with the cry for escape in v. 10.<sup>53</sup> As in standard apocalyptic discourse, Muhammad also describes signs in the sun and moon, in this case with the moon being darkened/eclipsed, and the sun and moon somehow joining together.<sup>54</sup> As in scenes

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<sup>52</sup> *Tafsir al-Jalalayn* Q Al-Qiyamah 75:4; ‘Alī, *The Meaning of the Holy Qur’ān*, 1565.

<sup>53</sup> *Tafsir Ibn Kathir* Q Al-Qiyamah 75:7.

<sup>54</sup> Reynolds, *Qur’ān*, 872 also notes similarities with the Olivet Discourse. The last description, that the sun and moon will be “joined together” is difficult to understand with any precision, whether it is simply another

like Rev 6:15–17, the denier will then seek escape, but will find no escape. Indeed, like a shoreline for a tumultuous sea, the only “stable place” on that cataclysmic Day will be with the one called “Lord,” the very one the denier sought escape from. Ibn Kathir notes that this a way of describing the “return to Allah” declared throughout the Qur’an (as noted above), which is unavoidable for all creatures.<sup>55</sup> It is thus another appeal to the first foundation of the inevitability of the final judgment, and thus of the need for resurrection to participate in that event.

This appeal to the first foundation is further confirmed by the rest of the verses in this segment that describe that judgment. As noted already in connection to v. 2, each person will testify against himself/herself by the self-accusing soul that is active even now. The souls will participate in reminding people of what they have “sent forward” and “left behind.” Similar phrases appear in Q 23:100; 36:12; 82:5. Due to the context of judgment in describing these deeds, a common interpretation of these terms is that they refer to sins of commission and sins of omission, respectively.<sup>56</sup> Alternatively, this pair of terms could be referring to more general acts of commission and omission, but the former interpretation seems more likely with the interlocutor of the denier in mind. The message highlights the severity of consequences for sins and how people will witness against themselves, rather than a broader notion of what is involved in the balance of judgment, as might be the case if the interlocutor was not so hostile.

### **Summary of Foundations in Verses 1–15**

In line with the Qur’an’s regular call to believe in Allah and the Last Day, this text has thus far shown two worldview foundations of resurrection belief that belong inextricably together. First,

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description of an eclipse or something more cataclysmic is implied. For the purposes of this project, clarifying this ambiguity is unnecessary. For the various options, see Mawdūdī, *Towards Understanding the Qur’ān*, 164.

<sup>55</sup> *Tafsir Ibn Kathir* Q Al-Qiyamah 75:12.

<sup>56</sup> Farīd, *Holy Qur’an*, 1286; Mawdūdī, *Towards Understanding the Qur’ān*, 165.

resurrection is necessary for the final judgment, for it is when all will return to Allah. The coming of the Day of Resurrection is inevitable and certain, so that even Allah can swear by it. The self-accusing soul foreshadows its reality in the present time through its conviction of the person. Some, as the interlocutor here, seek to live in denial that the Day is coming, but their denial will accomplish nothing good for them, as they will be drawn ineluctably to Allah and face the consequences of their denial.

Second, in addition to resurrection being an essential matter of Allah's judgment, resurrection is also an essential matter of Allah's inexorable power and will as Creator. To deny the resurrection is both to deny the reality of future judgment and the power of Allah. To address the fundamental ethical basis of the denial, Muhammad appeals to the first foundation. To undermine any sense of a logical basis for the denial, Muhammad appeals to this second foundation. Hence, he reminds the denier of what Allah has done in creation and warns him of what he will yet do to creation on the Day, when there will be no more time left for acknowledging Allah in any way but resignation to punishment. Resurrection is by no means beyond the power of the Creator, and he has revealed his will to do it, ergo he will raise the dead.

#### Verses 16–19

This second segment, clearly distinct due to its abruptness and subject matter, presents an interjection wherein Allah addresses Muhammad, rather than the denier. Statements like this occur in two other early surahs: Q 20:114 and Q 87:6. This feature marks these surahs as among the early ones because it represents Muhammad's fear of losing the revelation he has received to

forgetfulness, and so he attempts to recite it as soon as he is able.<sup>57</sup> In the words of ‘Alī, Allah instead wants Muhammad

to allow the revelation conveyed to him to sink into his mind and heart and not to be impatient about it; Allah would certainly complete it according to His Plan, and see that it was collected and preserved for men, and not lost; that the inspired one was to follow it and recite it as the inspiration was conveyed to him; and that it carries its own explanation according to the faculties bestowed by Allah on man.<sup>58</sup>

The last claim, however, if meant to declare that the Qur’an contains its own explanation, is not at all implied by the text, as Sayyid Abul A‘lā Mawdūdī argues at length.<sup>59</sup> That the explanation is extra-qur’anic is foundational to the value of the Hadith and the *sunnah* alongside the Qur’an. Likewise, the value of the traditional *tafsirs* is in how they collect these portions of the Hadith and *sunnah*, as well as other pieces of tradition, and apply them to the qur’anic text. Still, the point remains that Allah made it his responsibility to collect, preserve, and explain the Qur’an.

This overall point also provides an analogy that makes this interjection resonate with this text on resurrection. Mehdi Azaiez notes that the surah describes Allah as engaging in two kinds of gathering action: one eschatological in the resurrection and one metatextual in the assembly of the Qur’an (the verbs in vv. 3 and 17 come from the same root *ḡm* ).<sup>60</sup> Indeed, Asma Hilali states that this text, “could be read as an evolution from fragmentation to collection: a. the day of resurrection (vs .1–15); b. the news that God is able to assemble the bodies as he is able to assemble the Qur’ān (vv. 16–19); c. back to the context of fragmentation of the bodies and the promise of their reconstruction following the ways God created them.”<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> *Tafsir al-Jalalayn* Q Al-Qiyamah 75:16; Mawdūdī, *Towards Understanding the Qur’ān*, 159, 166.

<sup>58</sup> Alī, *The Meaning of the Holy Qur’ān*, 1566.

<sup>59</sup> Mawdūdī, *Towards Understanding the Qur’ān*, 167–69.

<sup>60</sup> Mehdi Azaiez, “QS 42: Q 75,” in *The Qur’an Seminar Commentary: A Collaborative Study of 50 Qur’anic Passages*, ed. Mehdi Azaiez et al. (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2016), 400.

<sup>61</sup> Asma Hilali, “QS 42: Q 75,” in *The Qur’an Seminar Commentary: A Collaborative Study of 50 Qur’anic Passages*, ed. Mehdi Azaiez et al. (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2016), 402.

In this way, one can again see the linkage of the first and second foundations of resurrection belief conveyed elsewhere in the Qur'an as the call to believe in Allah and the Last Day. As there is analogy between Allah's action in creation and resurrection to final judgment, so too is there analogy between the act of revelation (in the whole process of making and explaining the Qur'an) and the content of revelation (in this case, in the assembly and resurrection of the dead). The one who can be trusted for his revelation can also be trusted to preserve his revelation and, in turn, can be trusted to do what he has revealed he will yet do.

#### Verses 20–30

With v. 20, the audience for this speech switches back to the denier, who is told he loves this time-bound/mortal life while neglecting the Hereafter (cf. Q 2:86; 3:176; 6:30, 32; 11:103; 16:41, 105–109; 17:72; 24:23; 30:7, 16; 42:20; 53:25; 60:13).<sup>62</sup> This description could fit both of the characterizations from Izutsu of pre-Islamic Arabs noted above (i.e., the hedonists and the prosperity-driven), as well as other mentalities still. Neglecting the Hereafter in the qur'anic worldview, as has already been made apparent, ultimately means neglecting the inevitable judgment on the Day of Resurrection. As noted in ch. 1, later Islamic tradition would develop the picture of the Hereafter particularly in reference to the intermediate time between death and resurrection, but here it simply functions as the contrast to the present world and life.

As befits the typical bipartite structure in qur'anic presentations of the coming Day, vv. 22–25 describe the contrasting fates of the righteous and the wicked. The description is founded on the state of the participants' faces, as is also the case in Q 3:106–107 and 80:38–42. As in the other texts, the description of the face of the righteous as radiant fits their overflowing joy. But

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<sup>62</sup> For more on the opposition of the present world and the Hereafter, see Izutsu, *God and Man*, 85–89.



this text also provides further elaboration for why their faces are radiant: they will see their Lord. In other texts describing the destruction of all things prior to the resurrection (Q 28:88; 55:26–27), Allah’s face is all that remains. In seeing his face, the righteous thus partake of his inextinguishable glory. Some Muslim interpreters (particularly the Mu‘tazilites) have insisted that this promise cannot refer to a literal vision of Allah, lest his transcendence be undermined.<sup>63</sup> The denial of such a vision to Moses in Q Al A’raf 7:143 would also seem to support that Allah cannot be seen. However, most Muslim interpreters have rejected this view for its curtailing of the transformational character of the eschatological state—whereby the righteous could receive even greater blessings than Moses—and for its general inconsistency with the Qur’an’s descriptions of Allah with the same fundamental principle that guides its other expressions: *taṣwīr* (representation or illustration), “which aims at explaining abstract ideas and bringing them nearer to our understanding. It is a consistent pattern that employs concrete imagery and personification.”<sup>64</sup> Ultimately obscuring the face of Allah, even in the eschaton, does not fit Allah’s pattern and trajectory of revelation. Muslim commentators have also made reference to several *aḥādīth* attributed to Muhammad, which support the belief that the vision of Allah will be the final reward for those who submit.<sup>65</sup>

The inverse fate for the wicked that day is represented by their faces looking despondent. For now they know, without a shadow of a doubt, that they have wasted the lives Allah gave them, and, “a backbreaking devastation will be visited upon them.” The text does not go on to describe exactly how this portrayal is fitting, but it simply seems to be an idiom for an especially

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<sup>63</sup> Muhammad Abdel Haleem, “Commentary on Selected Qur’ānic Texts,” in *Death, Resurrection, and Human Destiny*, ed. David Marshall and Lucinda Mosher (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2014), 151.

<sup>64</sup> Haleem, “Commentary,” 151.

<sup>65</sup> Mawdūdī, *Towards Understanding the Qur’ān*, 171–73.

severe (and in this case, final) calamity. It thus fits as a description for the fate awaiting the condemned after the final judgment.

The scene briefly shifts to the time of death in vv. 26–29. Each verse indicates this in different ways. First, the text refers to the “it” (i.e., the soul) that reaches the gullet or collarbones. A similar description of death appears in Q Al-Waqi’ah 56:83–87 in response to a denier of the final judgment, showing the denier’s inability to control the hour of his own death, when the life-breath will reach the gullet in preparation for the final expulsion. Second, there is an inquiry from those attending the dying person asking either “Who is the wizard/faith healer<sup>66</sup> that can save him?” or “Who will take him up/ascend with him?”<sup>67</sup> The majority of translations favor the former, in which case it has the sense of finality, rhetorically asking if any healer with access to supernormal powers can save this person now. In the case of the latter, it still fits the scene of death, as it can refer to an angel accompanying the soul to its abode. Third, it is described as the “time of parting,” the meaning of which is that the time has come for the soul to be parted from the body. Furthermore, in this implied communal context, it is the time for the dying individual to be parted from the living. Fourth, the text refers to the intertwining of legs, which most likely concerns the wrapping of the corpse for burial.<sup>68</sup> However, the term translated as “leg” (*sāq*) can also refer to “calamity,” so that it could mean calamity being joined with calamity, the calamity of death leading to the calamity of the Hereafter for this denier.<sup>69</sup> Although the reference to death makes the most sense as the primary referent in this context, it is possible that Muhammad used a term with such a divergent range of meaning precisely for

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<sup>66</sup> *Tafsir al-Tustari* Q Al-Qiyamah 75:27 also sees this phrase as interchangeable with “doctor”

<sup>67</sup> On this latter one, see particularly Droge, *Qur’ān*; Reynolds, *Qur’ān*.

<sup>68</sup> *Tafsir al-Tustari* Q Al-Qiyamah 75:29.

<sup>69</sup> *Tafsir Ibn Kathir* Q Al-Qiyamah 75:29. Cf. Mawdūdī, *Towards Understanding the Qur’ān*, 174.

purposes of communicating multiple points at once through such an ambiguous declaration. Such a two-level understanding would also fit with the reference to “that day”

This scene shift makes Alī think that the passage is referring to the “Lesser Judgment” immediately after death (*al-Qiyamah al-Sughra*).<sup>70</sup> But this seems to be an imposition of a later framework on a scene that otherwise concerns the Day of Resurrection (here referred to as “that day”). The fact that there is such an immediate transition from death rather fits the eschatological focus of Muhammad’s message, especially in the early days, and its attendant urgency. In the scenario articulated in the early days, the dead would not experience the gap of time between death and resurrection. And in any case, the intervening time would do nothing to change the fate of the person at the time of parting. This interpretation also fits with the closing verse of this segment with its description of the driving force being towards the Lord, meaning that the dead will be driven towards the Lord for judgment.<sup>71</sup> Indeed, this description of a driving force befits the notion of resurrection as “returning to Allah,” which I have already noted earlier in the analysis of this passage and of the Qur’an as a whole.

Thus, again, this segment depends primarily on the first foundation of resurrection belief. Resurrection is nowhere directly described in these verses, but it is implied by a number of features that relate this text to the final judgment. One, the contrast of this time-bound life with the Hereafter assumes another life that will be taken up in the Hereafter for the purpose of facing judgment. Two, the references to “that day” only make sense in light of the earlier segment declaring that this surah is about the Day of Resurrection, the day of final judgment. Three, the bifurcated fates described in terms of the states of faces, as well as the rewards and punishments, are part of the awaited final judgment. Four, the description of death followed by the reference to

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<sup>70</sup> Alī, *The Meaning of the Holy Qur’ān*, 1567.

<sup>71</sup> *Tafsir Ibn Abbas* Q Al-Qiyamah 75:30; *Tafsir Ibn Kathir* Q Al-Qiyamah 75:30.

being driven/returned to Allah fits how the Qur'an elsewhere describes resurrection, as well as the eschatological urgency of accepting the message of the Qur'an.

#### Verses 31–40

With the last segment, the text returns to condemning the denier, saying that he denied the truth and turned away, rather than affirming the truth (*ṣaddaqa*) and praying (*ṣalla*). Malik Ghulām Farīd notes this statement as a crucial summary, “*Ṣaddaqa* stands for right belief and *Ṣalla* for good conduct, the two basic principles of Islām. Prayer is the essence of *‘Ibādah* which is total submission and conforming one’s conduct to Divine laws. Thus the verse means that both the mind and the body of disbelievers rebelled against God.”<sup>72</sup> But what precisely was the truth this person denied? Given the context of the passage, the most obvious truth he denied was that Allah would resurrect the dead. But it is also the case that Muhammad has identified the denial of resurrection as having illicit bases, since resurrection itself often functions as a synecdoche for the final judgment. Likewise, the denial here could have broader dimensions than simply the denial of resurrection. Al-Jalalayn identified this truth as the Qur'an itself.<sup>73</sup> Ibn Abbas understood the denial as a denial of Allah’s oneness (*tawḥīd*).<sup>74</sup> This notion refers to Allah’s uniqueness as the only God and to his singularity, that all things come from him, and all things will return to him. Jane I. Smith further relates this notion to resurrection belief by observing, “because God is one it is incumbent upon human beings to live lives of integrity (integratedness), of moral and ethical uprightness, and it is on the basis of the degree to which one does that that judgment is rendered and final felicity or purgation accorded. It is no coincidence that those who

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<sup>72</sup> Farīd, *Holy Qur'an*, 1288. Cf. Q Al-Muddaththir 74:43–47.

<sup>73</sup> *Tafsir al-Jalalayn* Q Al-Qiyamah 75:31–32.

<sup>74</sup> *Tafsir Ibn Abbas* Q Al-Qiyamah 75:31–32.

have earned a place in the Garden are often referred to as ‘*ahl al-tawhīd*,’ the people who affirm God’s oneness.”<sup>75</sup>

It is likely that all these points are present in this statement. The denier lives in denial of the resurrection. But as one who opposes the proclamation of Muhammad, he also opposes the revelation of Allah in the Qur’an. Furthermore, as a representative of resurrection denial among Arabian polytheists, the denier also represents those who deny Allah’s *tawhīd*. All of these forms of denial are interrelated and all of them provide a foundation for the denier’s ignoring of the prospect of the coming judgment. He may be arrogant and swaggering in his denial, but his posturing will amount to nothing but woe upon woe for him and for those he deceives.

The rhetorical question that encapsulates the rebuke of this denier and further confirms the influence of the first foundation of resurrection belief here asks, “Does the human suppose that he will be left alone without purpose [*suda*]?” As Mawdūdī notes, “*Ibilun suda* is used in the Arabic idiom for a camel that wanders about, aimlessly, grazing at will, one whom there is nobody to keep an eye over. The Qur’an asks man whether he thinks that he will be left alone, irresponsible, and unquestioned by His Creator.”<sup>76</sup> There is no aimless wandering to human existence because there is a defined *telos*: the human must return to Allah in resurrection for final judgment.<sup>77</sup>

As further support for the inevitability of the Day of Resurrection, Muhammad returns to the second foundation of Allah’s inexorable power and will as Creator. In this case, this power is expressed not only in the formation of humans, but in the purpose-driven nature of that formation. Contrary to popular theology among Arab pagans, as noted above, Allah did not

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<sup>75</sup> Jane I. Smith, “Reflections on Aspects of Immortality in Islam,” *HThR* 70 (1977): 86.

<sup>76</sup> Mawdūdī, *Towards Understanding the Qur’an*, 175.

<sup>77</sup> Cf. *Tafsir Ibn Kathir* Q Al-Qiyamah 75:36.

simply create and leave humans to their own devices (one of the senses of *suda*). Rather, he formed humans for his purposes and their ultimate end is to return to him.

The manner in which Muhammad describes the formation of humans in vv. 37–39—with its sequence moving from forming humans from a drop of emitted semen to a clinging clotted mass (an embryo) to the division of the sexes—fits with descriptions used elsewhere in the Qur’an, which, as here, often describe Allah’s creative activity not as a one-time event, but as what Allah engages in each time a new person is conceived. Sometimes clear reference is made to the act of initial creation, as in Q Al-Kahf 18:37 and its reference to creating a person (one speaking in an illustrative dialogue) out of the dust then out of a drop of emitted semen. In such cases, there is an intentional blurring of the lines so that the initial creation and the recurring creation are part of the same continuum of action. Q Al-Hajj 22:5 offers further elaboration in tracing the formation from dust to a drop of emitted semen to a clinging clotted mass (as in Q Al-Qiyamah 75:38) to a lump of flesh. Q Al-Mu’minun 23:12–14 follows the same pattern, but adds further the formation of bones and skin, followed by the emergence from the womb. Q Fatir 35:11 moves from the creation from dust to the drop of emitted semen to the clinging clotted mass to the division of humans into male and female. Q Ghafir 40:67 moves from dust to the clinging clotted mass to coming forth from the womb. Some of the earliest surahs refer simply to either the drop of emitted semen (Q 76:2; 80:19) or the clinging clotted mass (Q Al-’Alaq 96:2).

None of these lists are complete in terms of the various parts of the formation process the Qur’an describes and the variation does not obviously serve different purposes in different contexts. Rather, the variation is simply a natural variation in service of a more consistent point that Allah has formed humans at every stage of development and this one who created humans in this fashion will also bring those who have died back to life. This is likewise the point at which

v. 40 arrives. The first foundation undergirded the opening of this surah with its references to the Day of Resurrection. The second foundation undergirds its ending by reiterating the connection made throughout the Qur'an between Allah's action in creation and his action in resurrection. The former action guarantees the inevitability of the latter, since Allah will not leave humanity to its own devices without purpose.

### **Summary of Worldview Foundations for Resurrection Belief**

For reasons I discuss in the next chapter of direct comparison, the theology of resurrection in the Qur'an, even as represented by its most extensive articulation in Q 75 Al-Qiyamah, is much more simplified compared to what we have seen from the case studies of the Tanakh and NT. I have identified only two interlocking worldview foundations to which the entire theology of resurrection is connected. Still, the fact that the foundations of resurrection belief reduce to these two illustrates how central they are in qur'anic worldview formation, as Muhammad conveyed by the frequent summary of his message as, "believe in Allah and the Last Day."

The first foundation relates to the central event of qur'anic eschatology: resurrection is necessary for the final judgment on the Last Day. On that Day, usually known as the Day of Resurrection (as here), humans will return to bodily life to account for how they lived as embodied beings before the One who mercifully gave them that life. Humans will also need to account for how they responded to the mercy Allah has given them in sending his prophets. People will testify against themselves on that day, and all will be laid bare, but Allah alone, in his mercy and vengeance, decides the verdict. Some will be radiant that day because they will receive the ultimate reward of seeing Allah. Others will be despondent because they know that

they will soon be broken once and for all. The possibilities of the Day of Resurrection should shape how people live now, instead of humans seeking their satisfaction in this time-bound life.

The second foundation relates to the central character of qur'anic eschatology: resurrection is the inevitable performance of Allah's inexorable power and will as Creator to return all things to himself for judgment. This action will involve gathering all the components of all people in reconstitution and, in turn, the gathering of all people to Allah. As Allah created humans in the first place, humans can trust that Allah is able to resurrect them, and that he will since he has stated his purpose to do so. The correspondence of creation and resurrection—which is pervasive throughout the Qur'an—stems from the fact that all life comes from Allah and to Allah all life must return.



## CHAPTER 6 COMPARATIVE SYNTHESIS

With the exegetical-theological analysis of each text completed, and with the worldview foundations for resurrection belief operative in each text identified, it is now necessary to provide a direct comparison of the worldview foundations and functions. First, I reiterate the foundations identified in each text. Second, I consider the significance of the identified commonalities in foundations. Third, I summarize the differences in foundations as a prelude to the more detailed comparative theological analysis. Fourth, beginning with the Jewish case study of Dan 12, I apply my Wrightian worldview model to analysis of functions while interweaving considerations of why it is similar to and different from the theology of resurrection presented in 1 Cor 15. Fifth, I perform the same procedure with the Islamic case study of Q Al-Qiyamah 75 and supplement with observations of the cascade effects that emerge from removing Jesus's resurrection from the center of gravity in worldview formation here. Sixth, I apply the same model to 1 Cor 15, by which I illustrate the differences made by Christomorphic resurrection belief, even where Christian resurrection belief otherwise resembles Jewish and Islamic resurrection belief.

### **Foundations of Resurrection Belief in the Texts**

My ordering of the foundations in terms of the numbers I assign to them is not a ranking of importance. They simply reflect the order in which I detected them in the text. But it is perhaps not coincidental that what I identify as the first foundation in each case is arguably the most

significant and fundamental in shaping resurrection belief. The ordering simply does not correlate apart from such potential instances.

In the case of Dan 12, I identified four worldview foundations for resurrection belief. The first is God's inexorable, faithful love, which is manifested in the total reversal of death that would otherwise interfere with the expression of God's love to his beloved. The second is God's justice in setting the world aright, particularly by the most public of manifestations in the final judgment that vindicates the faithful and condemns the wicked. The third is that God fulfills Scripture by acting faithfully to both promises made and patterns of action performed, which is manifested in the texts Daniel alludes to for framing the resurrection event. The fourth is that the redemption of humans by resurrection is crucial to fulfilling God's creative purpose and establishing God's kingdom, which is manifested in the imagery used for resurrection and exaltation. One could perhaps subdivide this foundation into one of expectations of fulfilling creation and one of expectations of the coming of the kingdom, but it is difficult to disentangle these foundations in this particular text given their presentation.

In 1 Cor 15, I identified six worldview foundations for resurrection belief. The first, most obvious, and most important is Jesus's own resurrection. The second is the same as the first foundation from Dan 12: God's inexorable, faithful love. The third is that resurrection is the means by which God fulfills Scripture, including by fulfilling patterns of action, explicit fulfillment of promises, and fulfillment of implicit eschatology by realizing creative purpose. The fourth is that resurrection is the theo/logical end of the Christians' incorporative, identifying, and participatory union with Christ, a union formed by the Holy Spirit. The fifth is that resurrection is essential to the realization of the promises of the kingdom of God and the new

creation, which provide the larger eschatological context of resurrection belief. The sixth is God's justice setting the world aright, particularly as exercised in the final judgment.

Finally, for Q Al-Qiyamah 75 I noted only two worldview foundations for resurrection belief. The first is that resurrection is necessary for the execution of Allah's justice in final judgment on the Last Day. The second is that resurrection is the inevitable performance of Allah's inexorable power as Creator. One could perhaps add a foundation related to expectations of new creation, given the correlation between the act of creation and the act of resurrection made in this surah and many others. But this is ultimately difficult to distinguish and separate from the second foundation in this text, especially since this surah and many others generally appeal to the act of creation as a logical warrant for the resurrection, rather than the latter bringing the former to some form of superior realization, as in the other texts. Furthermore, because of other differences with the foundations presented in Dan 12 and 1 Cor 15, particularly concerning the definition of Allah's relation with creation, it seems better to consider the second foundation as something of a merger between aspects of the first foundation of Dan 12/second foundation of 1 Cor 15 with the second foundation of Dan 12/sixth foundation of 1 Cor 15.

For my comparative purposes in the next two sections, I will refer to these foundations by their place in the following table (J1, C3, I2, and so on):

Foundation	Judaism (J)	Christianity (C)	Islam (I)
1	God's inexorable, faithful love (cf. C2 and I2)	Jesus's own resurrection	Allah's justice in final judgment (cf. J2 and C6)
2	God's justice in final judgment (cf. C6 and I1)	God's inexorable, faithful love (cf. J1 and I2)	Allah's inexorable power and will as Creator (cf. J1 and C2)
3	Fulfillment of Scripture (cf. C3)	Fulfillment of Scripture (cf. J3)	

4	New creation and God's kingdom (cf. C5)	Union with Christ by the Holy Spirit	
5		God's kingdom and new creation (cf. J4)	
6		God's justice in final judgment (cf. J2 and I1)	

With this framework in place, we can now consider the significance of identified commonalities between the foundations derived from these texts.

### **Common Foundations**

The most consistently operative foundation of resurrection belief is the execution of divine justice in final judgment, as represented by J2, C6, and I1. It is most pervasively present in the Qur'an, it is a key emphasis of the Daniel text, and while it is not especially prominent in 1 Cor 15, I have noted previously that it is prominent elsewhere in the NT. Although these bodies of texts lie outside of my scope, the importance of this aspect is further confirmed by the fact that it is also one of the most prevalent features of resurrection belief in Second Temple Jewish texts, rabbinic literature, early Christian works, and early Muslim tradition. In each case, the worldviews formed by these scriptures involve resurrection as a prerequisite to God setting the world aright and executing his justice in the most public fashion possible. In this way, the resurrection and final judgment being such public events also serves a revelatory function, so that resurrection is essential to the ultimate revelation of God's justice. This revelatory function is served better by a public judgment than by each person having a completely private judgment, so that all may see the justice of God and know the judgment at once with full transparency.

One can, of course, argue that similar assumptions about anthropology undergird this similarity between the scriptures, but since the focus of this analysis is on the theocentric components of resurrection belief, that discussion is ultimately beyond my scope here. What is more important to grasp for my purposes is that all these scriptures, and the worldviews they form, assume that since God created humans as bodily creatures, God will also judge and redeem them as bodily creatures. Therefore, resurrection is necessary. In these ways, resurrection has an essential function for providing a clear sense of narrative direction to history and for supplying a framework for praxis in the present in view of the future judgment.

The other consistent element through all of these scriptures—expressed in J1, C2, and I2—is the inexorable power and will of God to raise the dead. There are differences here, of course, in terms of what this inexorable power is an expression of, which I address below. But what is necessary to note for now is that one of the basic structural components of resurrection exemplified in all of these scriptures—as well as the worldviews they form—is that God’s power and will are ultimately inexorable, so that not even death, the ultimate force of apparent finality, can hinder the execution of that will. This is the consistent guarantor that the resurrection and the larger eschatological drama of which it is a part will happen. The God who first expressed his life-giving power in creation will express it again in new creation and resurrection. This component of resurrection belief establishes the narrative context for resurrection as an identifying action of the one who establishes and directs the narrative to its conclusion, designates resurrection as a key symbolic and revelatory action of the God of inexorable power and will, and serves as a basis for answering key worldview questions.

Since I have only identified two foundations of resurrection belief for the qur’anic text (a potential third one is difficult to distinguish), the remaining similarities to consider are those only

shared between the Tanakh and the NT. One of these continuities is the conviction that the eschatological resurrection must happen to fulfill Scripture, as expressed in J3 and C3. That is, both Dan 12 and 1 Cor 15 rely on preestablished promises and patterns of action to provide a worldview framework for expectations of resurrection. The same God who made these promises and acted in these ways will faithfully ensure that both promises and patterns come to fruition. To accomplish such ends, the eschatological resurrection will be necessary. This notion of the fulfillment of Scripture provides an explicit narrative context for resurrection action by appeal to foreshadowing and precedence, supplies symbols for describing the eschatological resurrection in order to make connections to Scripture, and undergird answers to worldview questions.

The other continuity is the larger eschatological context expressed in terms of the kingdom of God and new creation, as articulated in J4 and C5. This foundation implies that resurrection is part of a larger eschatological and cosmological vision in which resurrection makes sense. The description of the eschatological state in terms of God's kingdom stems from the belief that the decisive action of redemptive, eschatological kingship on the part of the Creator will finally set all things aright, including by resurrecting the faithful departed to partake of that kingdom that they would otherwise miss. As noted before, there is a tight canonical connection for both the Tanakh and the NT of God's action as Lord and Savior with God's action as Creator. A similar linkage undergirds the description of the eschatological state as new creation, wherein there is correspondence in imagery between God's initial creative action and his new creation action, but there is also amplification in the superiority of the new creative action. In this framework, the action of new creation must also involve God's life-giving power for humans again, which will be manifested this time in resurrection rather than origination. This foundation thus shows how resurrection functions in not only the resolution of the worldview

narrative, but also in the grand *inclusio* of that narrative. It also supplies the system of symbols, particularly cosmic ones, within which the resurrection makes sense as an event of new creation and consummation of God's kingdom.

### Summary of Remaining Differences

But for all of these similarities, it is notable that there is no equivalent of C1 or C4 in either pre-Christian or post-Christian scriptures. In the first case, there simply was no stated expectation that a Messiah/Christ would be resurrected, much less well ahead of everyone else. Even in non-canonical Second Temple Jewish texts, there was no explicit expectation for a Messiah's resurrection, much less for that resurrection to be central to the eschatological story.<sup>1</sup> There is thus also no basis for portraying resurrection as a consequence of union with this individual. There is hope for union with God implicitly expressed in Dan 12 in connection with Dan 7, but this is a consequence of resurrection, rather than resurrection being a realization of that union.

One could perhaps make arguments from suggestive ambiguity that the resurrection has some connection with the representative Son of Man in Dan 7 or with the servant in Isa 53 and the suggestive resurrection imagery there. Such links could then serve as the equivalents of C1 and C4. But the more immediate application of the servant imagery in this text is to pluralize it and the Son of Man is never explicitly described as being resurrected. Such hermeneutical connections would not clearly emerge until the time of Jesus and the early Christians, when they read these texts in Christomorphic fashion. The fact that they are not explicitly operative here is illustrative enough of the difference they make for worldview formation, as I illustrate below.

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<sup>1</sup> In the following texts, the Messiah is in some way associated with resurrection, but there is no stated expectation of the Messiah's resurrection: 4 Ezra 7:28–29, 32; 2 Bar. 30:1–2; T.Levi 18; T.Jud. 24; 25:1–4; T.Dan 5:10–11; T.Benj. 9:2; 11; 4Q521 2 II; 7+5 II, 6.

As for the second case, C1 and C4 were actively removed from considerations of resurrection belief. The Qur'an shows clear awareness of what Christians claimed about Jesus and it forms its own Christology in response.<sup>2</sup> The key texts and interrelations of Q 3:54–55, 4:157–158, 5:117, and 19:33 are ambiguous and the history of interpretation attests to significant variety.<sup>3</sup> Some scholars today argue that the Qur'an does at least imply that Jesus died by crucifixion, and thus the texts can also be read to imply his resurrection.<sup>4</sup> Other scholars agree with the vast majority of Islamic tradition, which has read these texts as denying the death of Jesus, so that his resurrection is still in the future as part of the general resurrection.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, the fate of Jesus was one of the major points of contention in the earliest recorded encounters of Christian and Muslim leaders (John of Damascus, *Fountain of Knowledge* 2.101; 'Ammar al-Basri, *Book of Questions and Answers* Q.32–39; Peter the Venerable, *A Summary of the Entire Heresy of the Saracens* 2).<sup>6</sup> In fact, Timothy the Patriarch used the key texts from the Qur'an to argue that it was either inconsistent with itself or with Muslim teaching on the subject.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Mahmoud Ayoub, *A Muslim View of Christianity: Essays on Dialogue by Mahmoud Ayoub*, ed. Irfan A. Omar (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2007), esp. 160–70; Waryono Abdul Ghafur, Zaenuddin Huddi Prasajo, and Mohammed Sahrin bin Haji Masri, "The Qur'anic Jesus: Isa al-Masih in the Qur'an," *Epistémé* 14 (2019): 349–73; Suleiman A. Mourad, "The Death of Jesus in Islam," in *Engaging the Passion: Perspectives on the Death of Jesus*, ed. Oliver Larry Yarbrough (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2015), 359–81; Neely and Riddell, "Familiar Signs," 43–64.

<sup>3</sup> Accad, *Sacred Misinterpretation*, 130–38; Ayoub, *Muslim View*, 160–66; McAuliffe, *Qur'anic Christians*, 129–59; Mourad, "Death of Jesus," 364–68; Gabriel Said Reynolds, "The Muslim Jesus: Dead or Alive?" *BSOAS* 72 (2009): 241–49. For a good summary of the issues, see Gordon D. Nickel, "Jesus," in *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to the Qur'an*, 2nd ed., ed. Andrew Rippin and Jawid Mojaddedi (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley & Sons, 2017), 290–91, 297.

<sup>4</sup> E.g., Ayoub, *Muslim View*, 166–70; Mourad, "Death of Jesus," 359–81; Reynolds, "Muslim Jesus," 237–58.

<sup>5</sup> E.g., Mark Beaumont, "Ascension without Resurrection? Muslim and Christian Debate on the Ending of Jesus' Life in the Early Islamic Period," in *Jesus and the Resurrection: Reflections of Christians from Islamic Contexts*, ed. David Emmanuel Singh (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2014), 130–32.

<sup>6</sup> Petrus Alfonsi, *Dialogue Against the Jews*, trans. Irven M. Resnick, FC: Mediaeval Continuation 8 (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University Press of America, 2006), 163; Alphonse Mingana, *The Apology of Timothy the Patriarch before the Caliph Mahdi*, Woodbroke Studies 2 (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2009); Mark N. Swanson, "Folly to the *hunaḥā*: The Crucifixion in Early Christian-Muslim Controversy," in *The Encounter of Eastern Christianity with Early Islam*, ed. Emmanouela Grypeou, Mark Swanson, and David Thomas (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 237–56.

<sup>7</sup> Mingana, *Apology of Timothy*, 40–46.



For my purposes and focus, it is unnecessary to adjudicate between these options here, because the basic impact of this change remains the same. If the Qur'an does in fact imply that Jesus has already been resurrected, the event still does not have a central role in Qur'anic eschatology or general worldview formation. As David Marshall astutely observes,

Even if this argument [for Jesus's implied crucifixion death] were accepted, however, it is clear that this sequence of genuine death followed by some kind of resurrection (scarcely expressed with great clarity) would still belong to the Qur'anic scheme of things; it would still be an instance of the specifically Qur'anic paradigm of rejection and vindication, rather than *the* central drama in God's saving activity for the whole of humanity. Hence, from a Christian standpoint, it would still be accurate to speak of the absence of the resurrection of Jesus from the Qur'an.<sup>8</sup>

His resurrection would simply be another sign of the eschatological resurrection, on par with the sign of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus in Q Al-Kahf 18:9–26.<sup>9</sup> If, per the vast majority of Muslim tradition, the Qur'an indicates that Jesus was not resurrected, then his resurrection is also obviously not of central importance, and it is simply consigned to the future as part of the general resurrection. In either case, C1 is removed as a central foundation for resurrection belief, and it is not replaced with any equivalent idea. Likewise, C4 would no longer serve a purpose in this new worldview setting and there is no C1 equivalent to reshape it around. As I aim to illustrate more thoroughly below, the cascade effect of the removal of Jesus's resurrection from the center of the worldview illustrates in its own negative fashion what a profound difference Christomorphic resurrection belief makes when opposed to non-Christomorphic resurrection belief.

Part of this effect, which will also be explored below, manifests in the differences with foundations that Judaism and Christianity share. These differences include the reformulation of

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<sup>8</sup> David Marshall, "The Resurrection of Jesus and the Qur'an," in *Resurrection Reconsidered*, ed. Gavin D'Costa (Oxford: Oneworld, 1996), 171–72 (emphasis original).

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Neely and Riddell, "Familiar Signs," 59–64.

the foundation represented in J1 and C2, the absence of the foundation of J3 and C3, and the absorption—at least in this surah—of J4 and C5 into I2. I2 removes the element of faithful love from its description of this defining action of Allah. It is an exercise of simple will through power, rather than an exercise of specifically love through power. It is a function of his sovereignty as Creator and not also a function of his indefatigable love for his creation.

The absence of an equivalent to J3 and C3 highlights another significant difference in the resurrection belief that also manifests in the reformulated foundation: there is no covenantal-historical framework in the qur'anic text like there is in the biblical text. In the Tanakh the covenant itself, which defines the relationship between God and God's people, is the manifestation of God's love, and the history of this covenantal relationship—of God's inexorable loving purpose for Israel, even after exile—provides the content of the Tanakh. In the NT the covenant comes to a focus in the person of Jesus Christ, the same person who embodies God's love and who establishes the promised new covenant by his death, resurrection, and exaltation, showing by these gospel events its inexorability. In both bodies of texts, and in the particular case studies reviewed here, the hope that God will raise the dead relies on the backstory of covenantal history as manifested in Scripture, which resurrection is crucial to fulfilling.

This is not to say that there is no notion of covenant in the Qur'an, as indeed much has been made in Muslim tradition of the “Verse of the Covenant” in Q Al-A'raf 7:172, and the language of covenant has broader application in the Qur'an as well.<sup>10</sup> But at least three crucial factors differentiate this notion of covenant from the covenant-historical framework that informs resurrection belief in J3 and C3. One, it does not manifest, either in Q Al-Qiyamah 75 or in other

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<sup>10</sup> Wadad al-Qadi, “The Primordial Covenant and Human History in the Qur'ān,” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 147 (2003): 332–38. More broadly, see Joseph E. B. Lumbard, “Covenant and Covenants in the Qur'an,” *JQS* 17.2 (2015): 1–23.

resurrection references, in a form of fulfilling Scripture or bringing a narrative history of promises and patterns of action to fruition. Two, where the qur'anic notion of covenant is present for the relationship of Allah to humanity, it remains at a generalized, abstract, and trans-historical level as involving all of the children of Adam and concerning only a dedication to monotheism, rather than involving a series of defining historical moments and movements. Three, insofar as this notion is linked with resurrection, as in the Verse of the Covenant but not in our case study text, it is yet another manifestation of the emphatic connection of resurrection with final judgment in the Qur'an. Much like a signature on a contract or an indicated agreement to the terms of service, the covenantal response to Allah that he is Lord is simply a testimony to be used on the Day of Resurrection, lest anyone should plead ignorance of Allah.

Finally, the absorption of J4 and C5 into I2 in this text is also noteworthy. While the afterworld descriptions in the Qur'an are the most concrete of the canons and the Qur'an does use language of kingdom and new creation, such is not clearly demonstrated in the case study text. But this is less of a significant difference between the case study and other texts than it is a function of how this language is used in the Qur'an in distinction from the other canons. The kingdom language conveys Allah's absolute sovereignty in the Qur'an, but it lacks the narrative grounding or more complex staging of eschatology, such as in inaugurating an eschatological state by an eschatological event well before the consummation. Similarly, the language of new creation conveys the creative power of Allah and undergirds the recurrent emphasis that all life returns to him, as opposed to the narrative framing of the biblical texts, particularly the Adam-Christ contrast that defines Christ in terms that correspond to, fulfill, and surpass Adam.

With these general similarities and differences established, the next three sections utilize the Wrightian worldview model to describe the roles of resurrection belief and the foundations of

the same in relation to the various worldview functions. I interweave with this framework further comparisons at this structural level of resurrection belief with my central term of 1 Cor 15 and its Christomorphic resurrection belief. By these means, I demonstrate more thoroughly than I have in these first two sections the thoroughgoing, worldview-shaping significance of the Christomorphic character of Christian resurrection belief represented in the NT, even where it otherwise shares similarities with resurrection presented in the Tanakh and Qur'an.

### **Resurrection in a Jewish Worldview Formed by Dan 12**

The first case to consider on its own terms and in comparison to 1 Cor 15 is the pre-Christian resurrection text. How does pre-Christian non-Christomorphic resurrection belief function in its worldview context? To answer this question, we must attend to the relation of resurrection to each of the worldview component functions in our model: narrative, symbols, praxis, and answers to our six basic worldview questions.

#### Narrative

At the explicit narrative level of Daniel, ch. 3 of this analysis has already noted some functions of resurrection. First, resurrection stands at the climax of the history of God's deliverance of his people. The exodus once had this climactic place in this covenantal history, being the constitutive act by which God identified Israel as "my people" and Israel identified God as "our God" (Dan 9:15; cf. esp. Exod 6:7; 19:4–6; 20:2), and Daniel initially expresses hope for God to act similarly in redeeming his people from the state of exile, subjugation, and dispersion in Dan 9:1–19. The rest of Dan 9–11 shows that there will yet be more trouble, more suffering, before the time of deliverance. But in the resurrection, God shows that his faithful love goes even

beyond the initial hope, as he will deliver his people from death itself to fulfill promises to those, including Daniel himself, who would die before seeing these revealed things come to pass. In Daniel's text, the faithful are under regular threat of death and God often saves them by preventing them from dying, but the climax features an amplification in God delivering even those who have already suffered death. While one could previously read many of God's promises as presumably being for whoever is alive at the time when God fulfills them, the resurrection shows the significance he invests—namely, by his love—in those who die before the time of fulfillment by giving them life to receive those promises.

Resurrection is also the confirmatory happy ending for the faithful, ensuring that their actions and perseverance are meaningful because of the meaning God has assigned them. It vindicates both the hopes of the faithful in the faithful love of God and the faithful themselves in the final judgment. The resurrection is the assurance that the faithful will be declared “in the right,” and resurrection to everlasting life in particular is a most direct “happily ever after,” as the faithful relationship with God that brought them to this ending is now confirmed to continue forever. In the two-sided reality of the final judgment, the resurrection publicly vindicates the faithful against the enemies who sought to eliminate them or otherwise tempt them to deviate from the will of God. For this latter group, resurrection entails their ultimate defeat in the declaration of being “in the wrong” and the subsequent fate characterized by shame and everlasting abhorrence.

Enveloping this story of the vindicated is the larger story of the coming of the kingdom of God the Creator. As illustrated throughout Daniel, especially in chs. 2 and 7, there is a stark opposition between the kingdoms of the world and the kingdom of God. The kingdoms of the world represent the world in rebellion against its Creator and proper King. The vision of ch. 2

represents them as an image/statue, a story that is not coincidentally followed by a story in which people are forced to worship an image in ch. 3. Both stories show the kingdoms of the earth worshipping creation rather than the Creator. In a different fashion, ch. 7 represents the kingdoms of the earth as unnatural abominations who are enemies of God's saints and who are rebels against the Creator. In contrast, it is the one like a son of man, one who bears the image and likeness of God, who receives the everlasting kingdom from God in representation of the saints. Chapter 12 shows that resurrection of God's image- and likeness-bearers is crucial to the establishment of the kingdom, the resolution of this conflict, and thus the restoration of creation to its proper relationship with its Creator. By these means, we see the intertwining of the kingdom of God and new creation as expressions of cosmic eschatological hope.

At the implicit narrative level of Daniel, in which Daniel relies on a larger narrative context than what the author makes explicit, the primary narrative function of resurrection concerns its accord with the scriptural tradition that Daniel and his audience have received. Whether or not there is a definite relationship between Ezek 37:1–14 and Dan 12:2–3, in the larger context of Dan 9–12 one can still see a similar storyline in which God restores his people to proper relationship with him by resurrection and establishment of an everlasting kingdom. Thus, resurrection serves as a resolution to the storyline conflict of exile, subjugation, and dispersion through its provision of return, reign, and reunion. In the connection to Gen 2–3, resurrection functions to restore humans to God's creative purpose in reversal of the breach in relationship that brought death. In a similar way, the connection to Isa 66 confirms the instrumentality of resurrection in God's work of new creation. Resurrection is crucial to the redemption of humans, which is in turn crucial to God's purposes for creation as a whole. The connection to Isa 26 establishes the resurrection language of this text with the precedent of

another and shows that this promise recalls that one, thereby showing that the same God is committed to this plan of action for the salvation of his people from death itself. Likewise, the connection to Isa 52–53 correlates what God promises for the **משבליים** with what God promises for the servant, and both texts also link this vindication with the reign of God. Through these many connections, one sees the God who raises the dead acting consistently with established promises and patterns of action to resolve long-standing conflicts in the worldview narrative.

### **Comparison to 1 Cor 15**

As noted above, there is, of course, much commonality on this narrative level with the Christomorphic resurrection belief we see exemplified in 1 Cor 15. This is a function of the fact that both texts rely on a common body of texts for their established narrative contexts. Even at the level of closest intertextual connections, both texts make links to Genesis and Isaiah, as well as, arguably, Ezekiel (Hosea is explicitly referenced in 1 Cor 15 and arguably forms part of the conceptual background of Dan 12). Daniel itself also serves as part of the narrative context of 1 Cor 15. Both texts especially reverberate with the expectation of a narrative climax in the coming of the kingdom of God and both show how resurrection is crucial to its realization.

However, the crucial difference is that there is no individual focal point to which that story comes in Dan 12. While there is an individual focal point in ch. 7 with the one like a son of man who represents the saints, the equivalent does not appear in ch. 12. In this text the focus is rather on the vindication and exaltation of the saints, which is also why the final judgment is more prominent here than in 1 Cor 15. The eschatological resurrection is a new, albeit not unanticipated, form of action by which God expresses the inexorability of his faithful love and his justice. It is not an action that conforms to a specific paradigm and precedent. The

consequences of judgment for a subset of the faithful resonate with the servant in the final Servant Song, but that is a prophetic rather than a past historical precedent. As such, there is also not an equivalent in the Daniel text of one resurrection being an inaugurating eschatological action that sets the rest of the eschatological drama in motion. The only stages in which fulfillment of the Scriptures may occur are the stages surrounding the final judgment and its consequences.

There is thus also no notion of an active and conforming union with God, except implicitly as a consequence of the resurrection and final judgment. But it is not present as frame for understanding the narrative present. Again, resurrection as leading to vindication for the faithful and condemnation for the wicked is what is central to Dan 12. This aspect of resurrection belief is present to some degree in 1 Cor 15, but in context the notion of resurrection as an outcome of union with the resurrected Christ is more prominent, and such is not present in Dan 12. There is not a similar additional story realized on an individual level through conformity by union with that story. The framing story is simply that of God and God's covenantal people, with a further backstory of God and God's creation. It is in orientation to this story that individuals are described, whereas 1 Cor 15 adds more narrative layers.

Where 1 Cor 15 also adds more layers is in terms of the God who is the central actor of the worldview narrative. Jesus is presented on both sides of the God-human relationship. And while the role of the Holy Spirit is more understated in this particular chapter, his role is also crucial here. There is, of course, some complexity in the Daniel text, given the description of the Son of Man in Dan 7 that resonates with descriptions otherwise reserved for God, but this theological complexity remains at a degree removed from direct application to resurrection. Michael the angel is referenced in Dan 12:1 as an executor of God's will and his presence



complexifies the description of divine agency, but that is distinct from complexifying the divine agent himself. Michael is also not described as having any involvement in resurrection, as his role is concerned rather with the deliverance of the living faithful, whose role in the eschaton is left implicit.

This difference further illustrates how thoroughly formative Christomorphic resurrection belief is. Even where it agrees with non-Christomorphic resurrection belief on the foundation of God's inexorable, faithful love, it differs in some crucial respects. First, the description of God is more explicitly complex, even as the foundation is most directly linked with God the Father. Second, this love of God has a specific embodiment in the person of Jesus Christ and a particular instantiation in his resurrection, which in turn informs how one is to understand this faithful love in a new light. Third, both of these points in turn give rise to another foundation of resurrection belief of union with Christ through the Holy Spirit.

### Symbols

As for the symbolic functions of resurrection belief demonstrated here, it is helpful to divide the analysis into two parts here. One, this analysis must consider how resurrection itself functions as a symbol. Two, this analysis must consider how other symbols function in relation to resurrection.

How does resurrection itself function as a symbol? Claudia Setzer notes, "Resurrection of the dead is a rhetorically powerful symbol because it trails in its wake a set of ideas about God's activity in the world, justice, reward and punishment. In Swidler's language, it is a pre-fabricated

set of linking beliefs.”<sup>11</sup> Among the beliefs linked to it are the expectation of God’s restoration of the covenant people, for which resurrection is a symbol in itself and a synecdoche of the larger reality of the same. In line with precedent—both biblical and otherwise—the association of resurrection with enthronement or kingdom also enables it to be an effective synecdoche for the promise of God’s kingdom. As noted at several points in ch. 3, it is also a vivid symbol—in the case of this text, by virtue of its being the literal demonstration of the same—of the larger reality of God’s inexorable, faithful love, which not even death can hinder. In itself and in its combination with the promise of everlasting life, it is a powerful symbol for life that conquers death, as it is life that God gives on the other side of death.

In the language that Daniel uses for resurrection itself, one can see further symbolic function. The reference to Daniel “standing” after he has gone to his rest of death signifies the invigoration, and indeed empowerment, that God gives to the dead so that they may stand. The earlier language for the “awakening” of the resurrected from the “sleep” of death fits with what had been common language in Israelite and Jewish tradition for referring to death as sleep. But now that this sleep is reversed, the symbolic force of this language now makes the sleep of death a temporary state—like sleep itself—before the power of the God who raises the dead.

What other symbols function in relation to resurrection and what do they show about its worldview function? Although Daniel does not explicitly mention the body in this text, for reasons already established from the linguistic implications and intertextual links, it is most likely that we should infer the involvement of the body in resurrection. The body, being essential to God’s creation of the human and being that in which the person acts in the world, must be present for the final judgment before the Creator. Death subjects the body to dissolution—as

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<sup>11</sup> Claudia Setzer, *Resurrection of the Body in Early Judaism and Early Christianity: Doctrine, Community, and Self-Definition* (Boston; Leiden: Brill, 2004), 48.

Ezek 37 memorably illustrates—but resurrection restores it for that final judgment. As a result of judgment, the body is either subject to redemption to everlasting life—in which case every trace of mortality is removed—or to shame and everlasting abhorrence. The force of the intertextual link may suggest that the latter fate is the result of being once again rendered a corpse or in some sense being subject to destruction, but it is difficult to be clear here. In any case, the scene of the final judgment shows that the great equalizer of death does not decide the ultimate fate of the body—i.e., by rendering all actions and pursuits of the living in vain, regardless of how they aimed to live—but it is the God who raises the dead that makes this decision.

We must also consider the cosmic symbols of earth (more specifically, the “earth of dust”) and heaven (the expanse and the stars) Daniel uses in relation to resurrection here. The resurrected arise out of the earth of dust, which is associated with death and dissolution. The subgroup that is the focus in v. 3 shine like the brightness of the expanse, namely the stars, of which both the heavenly light and the action of shining are associated with the group’s exaltation and reception of sovereignty after the resurrection. Apart from the exaltation that is associated with resurrection, it is worth wondering if there is more to the use of these symbols. The incorporation of both earth and heaven in this scene may provide an implicit link to the expectation of new creation. The heavenly imagery in particular, being connected as it is with the exalted righteous, may also be fitting for its association with the reception of divine life noted in v. 2.

### **Comparison to 1 Cor 15**

The pattern of resurrection functioning as synecdoche is consistent throughout all three texts and the worldviews they aim to form. But, in ways that I explore below, the forms of synecdoche are more multifarious in Christomorphic resurrection belief. This is due to the fact that the

understanding of the body as a microcosm has a uniquely marked reference point in the body of the risen Jesus. This body manifests the qualities of the new creation and is established as the prototype of the same revealed in the midst of the present age.

For this reason, as well as because Paul must respond to resurrection denial, body language and body symbolism is much more prominent in 1 Cor 15 than in Dan 12. For the argument and for the task of worldview formation, the body must be discussed here, placed in its cosmological context, and linked to the body of Christ. The last point was particularly important because of the body language used elsewhere in 1 Corinthians as language for the incorporative, identifying, and participatory union of believers with Christ. The ultimate consequence of that union is articulated in ch. 15.

### Praxis

Resurrection belief does not produce in Dan 12 any explicit instruction on praxis. Rather, its relationship to praxis is implicit in that it supports established traditional praxis in three ways. First, as noted at several points previously, the resurrection to everlasting life serves as the ultimate validation and vindication of the faithful way of life by enabling that life to continue forever. Daniel also gives special honor to those who teach this way of life and lead many others in observing it by narrating the promise of reward for them.

Second, as a result, the promise of resurrection encourages keeping the covenant that defines the people of God. The refusal to keep the covenant led to the state of exile and all of its subsequent problems (9:10–14). Keeping the covenant will not lead to the end of the trouble, as only God can do that, but it will identify those who keep it as the people of God; it will be the veritable blood on the doorframe (Exod 12:7–13). The reference to the book of the names of the

saved (12:1) conveys this same notion. The resurrection and final judgment will confirm by vindication those who have kept the covenant among the dead and the living.

Third, particularly in the context of resistance and times of great trouble, the promise of resurrection encourages preserving the wisdom of the covenant and of the insightful ones to whom God has provided revelation. This preservation involves both preserving the teaching and the content of the revelation (which Daniel particularly stresses through the language of “sealing” the revelations in 8:26; 12:4, 9). But what is most imperative for Daniel’s audience is the preservation embodied in faithful perseverance, as the teachers model (11:33–35; 12:10). This wisdom is the gift of God (2:20–23) and perseverance in it is necessary to honor the gift-giver who promises to validate it by raising the dead to everlasting life (as well as raising to everlasting condemnation those who opposed it).

### **Comparison to 1 Cor 15**

These functions of resurrection in relation to praxis will generally remain consistent throughout all three texts and the worldviews they seek to form. The major differences made by Christomorphic resurrection belief consist of the association of praxis with union with Christ and the particular attention given to the cruciform ministry of the gospel. In both cases, expectation of resurrection to everlasting life is connected with the specific story of Christ, which has already happened. Christ’s followers will receive this resurrection because they have been incorporated into that story through union with Christ by the gospel. They further demonstrate this incorporation through their participation in the cruciform ministry exemplified by the apostles, knowing that the cruciform ministry leads to resurrection by the will of God.

### Answers to Basic Worldview Questions

Finally, the analysis in this section must consider how resurrection contributes to answers to what I have designated as basic worldview questions. 1) Who are “we” (i.e., the ideal audience of Daniel)? “We” are the faithful heirs of the covenant and the promises of the covenantal God, those whose names are written in God’s book, who will be vindicated at the final judgment. If “we” are among the dead at the time when God fulfills the eschatological promises, “we” will be resurrected. Indeed, as God establishes with Daniel in 12:13, he will ensure that it is “we” who will rise, whatever other changes may come.

2) Where are “we”? “We” are located in both a place and a state. On the one hand, “we” are in God’s creation, the creation that God will make new when he establishes his kingdom through resurrection. On the other hand, “we” are in a state of waiting for the time of fulfillment. Some of “us” are asleep in the earth of dust.

3) What is wrong? The kingdoms of the earth, as well as the powers behind those kingdoms (10:13, 20–21), are in rebellion against God, the Creator and true King of the everlasting kingdom. These kingdoms have subjugated God’s people and served as purported obstacles to the realization of God’s promises, but more directly have served as obstacles to the faithful service to God’s will embodied in the covenantal way of life. Indeed, their power has caused many to depart from that covenant and join in the rebellion against God. These kingdoms have even sought to wield the power of death against the people of God, both to entice them into sin and in an attempt to prevent them from receiving God’s promises.

4) What is the solution? God will overcome this rebellion of the kingdoms and establish his everlasting kingdom throughout all of his creation. Nothing will ultimately obstruct the inexorable faithful love of God articulated in his promises and patterns of action. Not even death

will be an obstruction, as God will raise the dead for judgment—whether for vindication of faithfulness or condemnation for unfaithfulness—and remove any trace of mortality for those who have kept his words when he gives them everlasting life, his life. In other words, those who died before the time of fulfillment will still be present to receive the fulfillment of God’s promises because of God’s resurrecting action. By this resurrecting action, God will establish his everlasting kingdom over all of creation in everlasting victory over all forces that sought to rebel against the Creator.

5) What time is it? A more detailed answer to this question would require interacting with the various chronological notes of Dan 8–12, but such matters are beyond my scope. Here it suffices to say that “we” are in the time of waiting for the promises of resurrection, restoration, kingdom, and new creation to come to fruition. God’s promised salvific action, crucially including resurrection, defines the endpoint of the present time. For the dead, the present time is a time of sleep, but in the context of resurrection that sleep is temporary, and the time of awakening is coming.

6) How can we know these things? Given how crucial scriptural language and the foregoing scriptural tradition is for Daniel, it is clear that Scripture is a crucial epistemological source for divine promises and patterns of action that provide the context in which resurrection makes sense. Daniel also emphasizes the role of those who have insight, those to whom God has given revelation, including of the coming resurrection. Their teachings and their example in living out the wisdom given to them are sources of confidence that the resurrection is coming and that God will validate and vindicate those who listen to the Scriptures and live as these teachers live. Scriptural and visionary revelation (the latter of which, in this case at least, would also be deemed scriptural revelation) attest to who God is, what God does, and what God

promises he will yet do. It is the one of whom they testify that is the ultimate source of knowledge, as the text attests at multiple points, for this is the God who has promised and will do it because he is inexorably faithful. He himself is the guarantor of resurrection, as death cannot stop his promises nor undermine his self-revelation, because he is the God who raises the dead.

### **Comparison to 1 Cor 15**

It is in this dimension of worldview component functions that the influence of Christomorphic resurrection belief is perhaps the most apparent. The answers to all six of the basic worldview questions are reformulated in light of Christ and Christ's resurrection. I address this matter in more detail below, but for now I can briefly summarize. The answers to the "who" and "where" questions place Christ at the center of the answer, particularly since believers are "in Christ." The answers to the questions about problem and solution naturally revolve around Christ, as the problem receives a deeper diagnosis because of Christ and the solution is considered to have arrived in Christ, although the solution is not yet fully implemented and realized. Naturally, due to the conception of inaugurated eschatology inspired by Christ's resurrection in the past, the conception of time is also reformulated. And while 1 Cor 15 and the Christomorphic resurrection belief it represents can draw on multiple epistemological sources, they are all necessarily oriented towards Christ and him crucified and risen as the supreme revelation of God.

### **Resurrection in a Muslim Worldview Formed by Q Al-Qiyamah 75**

Now this analysis must consider the post-Christian resurrection text and what it conveys about non-Christomorphic resurrection belief. As noted above, this is a case in which the author was aware of Christomorphic resurrection belief and actively rejected it in some way or another,



although it is beyond my scope to consider whether this rejection is a complete denial of Jesus's resurrection or simply a denial of its central, eschatological importance (especially since that denial, whatever its nature, plays no direct role in this text). But what is of relevance here is the cascade effect created by the rejection of Christomorphic resurrection belief, which I show by following the same procedure of analysis of resurrection in worldview component functions.

### Narrative

The Qur'an is less prone to giving resurrection a narrative framework than the Tanakh or the NT. But that does not mean such a narrative framework is completely absent. Resurrection is the expected climax and resolution of the story of creation; the event at which all life will return to Allah as all life came from Allah. Resurrection is thus crucial to this narrative coming full circle. It is also crucial to the narrative context of each individual, since the resurrection will bring each individual to final judgment, where the entirety of their lives/stories will be noted and judged. But because people have lived their lives so differently, the resurrection will be a confirmatory happy ending for some—those who have lived their lives in submission to the will of Allah—and a revelatory bad ending for others—those who lived their lives as if they ended at death and thus lived unaccountably.

The correspondence of creation and resurrection also has an important role in the character dimension of this narrative. It shows the consistency of Allah's character, that the one who created will also resurrect. He was merciful in creation, he was merciful in sending the prophets, and he will show mercy again to the resurrected righteous. However, to those who wasted the lives he gave them and rejected his prophets, he will respond with vengeance, as he warned through the prophets.

### **Comparison to 1 Cor 15**

In this component function, we can see several aspects of a stripped-down resurrection theology that relate to rejecting Christomorphic resurrection belief. First, the major narrative connection forged is to the initial creation because the biblical type of covenantal-historical framework has been abandoned, along with its focal point in the individual of Jesus Christ. In rejecting Christomorphic resurrection belief, while also largely eschewing the arguments between Jews and Christians about Jesus, the eschatological resurrection has become separated from multiple narrative layers that it has in Christomorphic resurrection belief, which I discuss below. The narrative connection to creation is maintained because it provides a logical warrant for belief in both resurrection and final judgment. But the result is that the articulation of resurrection belief in the Qur'an often resembles an exercise in natural theology, as opposed to the scripturally mediated theologizing seen in the other two texts. The linkage between creation and resurrection is also more generalized than in Christomorphic resurrection belief, as there is no Last Adam at the center of the new creation story in the Qur'an.

Second, the drama of the final judgment is likewise both simplified and generalized, but it is also centralized to the near exclusion of any other drama involved in the eschaton. The other narrative layers attached to Jesus's resurrection in Christomorphic resurrection belief have been removed and resurrection thus becomes reduced to a necessary prelude to final judgment and that strictly focused on the lives of the judged. The role of the union with Christ as the way of fulfilling the covenantal way of life has been removed from consideration. The soul testifies, but there is no advocate, mediator, or savior for the person. Death and sin are not portrayed here as practically personified enemies to be overcome; the drama simply comes down to Allah,

humans, and Allah's decisions concerning the latter. In part, at least, this is because the resurrection of Christ, the one who has already conquered sin and death himself and will yet implement that victory more extensively, has been removed from the picture.

Third, the most controversial of simplifications connected with the rejection of Christomorphic resurrection belief is the simplification of the central actor. Allah is simply singular, not triune. There is no complex interplay of actions involved in resurrection and transformation; Allah simply does it all. Of course, this rejection of a Trinitarian theology of Allah is more likely to have been a cause than an effect in the relationship between these two beliefs—rejection of triune theology is a matter of explicit polemics in the Qur'an, as opposed to rejection of Christomorphic resurrection belief—but the effect of the overall relationship remains clear. Given the importance of Christomorphic resurrection belief to Christian triune theology, as shown in 1 Cor 15, the rejection or acceptance of one goes hand-in-hand with the other. As such, this factor, more than any other, necessitates that there can be no Christomorphic resurrection belief in the Qur'an (and thus in Islam) if there can be no triune theology.

Fourth, a concomitant consequence of this two-pronged rejection of triune theology and Christomorphic resurrection belief is that a primary basis is lost for the description of Allah as primarily characterized by love. In the absence of Christomorphic resurrection belief, Allah is characterized primarily by power, mercy, and vengeance, and his action in resurrection is an expression of the same, despite the intervening of death. After all, there is no specific embodiment of divine love, as with Jesus Christ in the NT, and so there is likewise no specific, central instance of death, resurrection, and exaltation as an expression of divine love to point to in this worldview. Nor is there a resurrection to link to a covenant-historical framework as a fulfillment of the same, and even the eschatological resurrection is not so described. The only

pattern that the action of eschatological resurrection follows is that of creation/origination, and since this also is not described as an act of love, neither is resurrection so framed.

### Symbols

Resurrection itself functions as a symbol in two ways. One, resurrection is a synecdoche for the eschaton, particularly for the event of final judgment that it necessarily precedes. Hence, the eschatological Day is often called the Day of Resurrection. Two, via its correspondence with Allah's action in creation, resurrection is also a synecdoche for the action of new creation.

The correspondence with creation is further buttressed through the usage of body language and body symbolism. Part of the reason for this explicit usage is to stress that the resurrection is bodily. Another factor is to make the connection with the formation of Adam. Finally, related to the second factor, the body language is also meant to underscore the plausibility that Allah the Creator of the body will also resurrect the dead.

In this particular text, resurrection is also related to the Qur'an, the primary symbol of Islam. The earthly Qur'an, after all, is the iconic symbol of Allah's holy, eternal truth embodied in the heavenly Qur'an. In vv. 16–19 there is an analogy of the revelation of the Qur'an and its collection with the resurrection of the dead. The resurrection is also a necessary condition for the final confirmation of that revelation before all of humanity.

### **Comparison to 1 Cor 15**

In line with what I have noted already, the synecdoche of this non-Christomorphic resurrection belief is less complex than what I will describe below. Indeed, consistently with the stripped-down tendency of this resurrection theology, resurrection is intimately tied with the final

judgment as a synecdoche of the latter's larger story, but there is not much else to this symbolic function. One could potentially argue that the symbolic function of synecdoche can ultimately be reduced to the relationship of these particular events, as even the correspondence of creation and resurrection (and thus the latter with new creation) is ultimately at the service of a belief that undergirds final judgment: all things come from Allah and to him all things must return.

Similarly, insofar as resurrection is associated with new creation, the symbolic function of references to Adam in such a context also remains at a generalized level. Adam's creation is an act compared to the formation of other humans and thus ultimately to their reformation in resurrection. However, there is no corresponding Adamic figure for the new creation, no Last Adam as in Christomorphic resurrection belief. There is thus no specific person that fulfills the function of a progenitor in the new creation. Every individual is an Adam unto themselves in that the Qur'an describes Allah's creative work done with all of them the same way.

The body language and body symbolism are retained in this text, particularly since Muhammad also encountered resurrection denial from his audience. However, the sense of transformation that characterizes Christomorphic resurrection belief is absent. The sense of resurrection is simply that of reconstituting the old body. There is no other body to use as the reference point for resurrection once Christ's resurrection is removed.

Furthermore, in place of the covenantal way of life and the union with Christ, the only other symbol connected with resurrection is the Qur'an itself. On this point, there is a roughly equivalent function of symbols related to resurrection as in the Jewish and Christian texts. Resurrection to everlasting life is still tied to a proper response to revelation. However, in the rejection of Christomorphic resurrection belief exemplified here, that resurrection is no longer an

outcome of a present union. There is analogy drawn between the symbol and the resurrection, but the symbol is not used for union with God in any fashion.

Finally, in contrast to Christomorphic resurrection belief, there is no participatory symbol related to resurrection in the qur'anic worldview. Because there is no particular past story involving resurrection in which to participate as one of the faithful, there is no ritual or practice signifying that participation. With the theology of resurrection largely simplified to the event's connection with the final judgment, there is simply no conceptual room made for a participatory symbol related to resurrection.

### Praxis

The fact that resurrection is so intimately tied with final judgment makes clear that the future resurrection has ethical implications. The resurrection will only further confirm that the righteous are people aligned with Allah's will, as they have shown already by works. In this particular text, the implication is that they are to signify that alignment by right belief and right action.

### Comparison to 1 Cor 15

Marshall summarizes well the difference between qur'anic and Christomorphic resurrection belief on this front:

Limiting ourselves here to an observation about ethical *motivation*, rather than about specific ethical *ideals*, we should note simply that God's activity in the crucified and risen Jesus (with whom the believer lives in union) shapes ethical motivation in the New Testament in a way which is obviously alien to the Qur'an.... faced with the question,

“What calls us to ethical renewal?”, the Qur’an points us above all to the judgement of the Last Day, and the New Testament to the risen Jesus.<sup>12</sup>

This summary comports well with what I have observed previously about the effects of removing the first and fourth Christian worldview foundations, the foundations most distinctly characteristic of Christomorphic resurrection belief. Since there is no paradigmatic resurrection of Jesus to refer to in this worldview, there is also no ethical paradigm of union with the risen Christ to appeal to in the praxis dimension of this worldview.

#### Answers to Basic Worldview Questions

Finally, this analysis must consider how resurrection contributes to answers to what I have designated as basic worldview questions. 1) Who are “we”? “We” are those who will receive resurrection to everlasting life and reward from Allah. “We” are the ones who will see the face of Allah as our ultimate reward. “We” are those who Allah created and who Allah will resurrect. Allah will maintain the continuity of identity by reconstituting humans in the resurrection.

2) Where are “we”? “We” are in Allah’s creation. Currently, “we” are in a time-bound life, where some are preparing for the Hereafter and others are not.

3) What is wrong? Many humans currently live in denial of Allah and the Last Day. They live in denial that Allah is the only God and thus engage in rebellious blasphemy. Allah responds to this with vengeance, climactically on the Day of Resurrection, but also in the present with plans wrought against the rebellious. They also live in denial of the Last Day by living promiscuously, apathetic to the consequences in the Hereafter, and to the fact that they will need to give an account to the One who gave them life.

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<sup>12</sup> Marshall, “Resurrection,” 179 (emphases original).

4) What is the solution? The solution is resurrection and final judgment in order that all people will know that there is no God but Allah and that Muhammad is his prophet, through whom he bequeathed the Qur'an. Allah will cause all life to return to him who gave life. He will bring all of creation to nothing to accomplish this, hence another reason for the resurrection. To those who live consistently with his will, Allah will give everlasting life and the ultimate reward of seeing his face.

5) What time is it? It is the time in which all are currently locked in a time-bound life. But the time is coming at the Hour unknown to us when all will be brought to nothing, and the dead will be raised for final judgment.

6) How can we know these things? Obviously, the revelation of the Qur'an, with its many references to resurrection, is the most crucial epistemological source for resurrection belief. But the rhetoric of the Qur'an also contains frequent appeals to another source. Allah has given signs in creation to let people know that the resurrection is coming, including the very action of creation itself. Because Allah has created all things and he has revealed his will to resurrect the dead, humans can know that it is inevitable that he will do so.

### **Comparison to 1 Cor 15**

For as different as these answers relating resurrection to basic worldview questions are in their details from what I observed in Dan 12, they differ from Christomorphic resurrection belief in many of the same ways. The answers to the "who" and "where" questions are simplified consistently with the simplification of theology, as there is only a singular Allah and not a triune God, including the resurrected Christ, to account for in these answers. The answers to the questions about problem and solution revolve around the final judgment more so than a



particular diagnosis of the problem beyond human evil, a particular event that has happened already, or a particular person. Naturally, due to the conception of inaugurated eschatology inspired by Christ's resurrection in the past, the rejection of Christomorphic resurrection belief also entails a rejection of inaugurated eschatology. The final, climactic prophet may have already arrived in Muhammad, but Muhammad's ministry is simply described in continuity—in terms of both conduct and message—with past prophets. He is not an eschatological actor like Christ in the NT, he has no eschatological event connected to him that inaugurated the eschatological time, and the stress on continuity is such that there is no sense of change in the conception of time related to resurrection brought about by his ministry. Finally, one can also see the effect of the removal of Christomorphic resurrection belief on an epistemological level, given the manner in which the Qur'an supplants the biblical texts in this worldview, and considering how resurrection belief is often expressed in the Qur'an in a way bordering on natural theology. But this is a point to which I must return in the next section, as I now must examine Christomorphic resurrection belief presented in its own terms in 1 Cor 15.

### **Christomorphic Resurrection Belief in a Christian Worldview Formed by 1 Cor 15**

To this point I have provided some indications of the effects of Christomorphic resurrection belief and the difference it makes compared to worldviews formed exclusively by each of the other texts. But to make this point more directly and to see the impact that Christomorphic resurrection belief has in worldview formation, it is essential to present a proper account of Christomorphic resurrection belief as it is articulated in 1 Cor 15 in relation to each of the worldview component functions.

## Narrative

Resurrection in 1 Cor 15 stands at an intersection of multiple worldview plotlines. First, it is the eucatastrophe of the gospel story, being the “sudden joyous turn” of deliverance following Jesus’s death and preceding his declaration as Lord sitting at the right hand of God the Father.<sup>13</sup> This event was the eschatological resurrection pulled into the midst of history, thereby becoming the new gravitational center of Christian eschatology.<sup>14</sup> And what gave it such significance was not only that the eschatological resurrection to everlasting life happened to one person in the middle of history, but that it happened to *this* person, *this* Jesus who bore the identity of the Son of Man, Son of God, Messiah, and so on. Sandnes and Henriksen astutely note, “Thus, the famous dictum that the gospels are passion stories with extended introductions (Martin Kähler) may be rephrased: *The gospels are stories serving to identify who the risen Jesus is.*”<sup>15</sup> Indeed, the resurrection was the climactic demonstration that God was all along involved in Jesus’s story as its Author. God’s raising of Jesus thus became an essential means of signaling the new way in which people had come to know God as “the God who raises the dead,” or more directly, “the God who raised Jesus from the dead.” Such statements condensed the larger gospel story all about who God is, who Jesus is, how they are related, why God sent Jesus, why Jesus died, and why God raised him from the dead. Likewise, in this chapter, Paul has presented this larger gospel story, as well as the stories of witnesses who attest to it, in condensed form of brief clauses and sentences of vv. 3–8.

Second, resurrection is the crucial turning point of the story of God and his people, being essential to the final redemption of those people. That story still assumes the scriptural

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<sup>13</sup> On this notion of “eucatastrophe” and the resurrection functioning as one, see J. R. R. Tolkien, “On Fairy-Stories,” in *The Monsters and the Critics*, ed. Christopher Tolkien (London: HarperCollins, 2006), 153–56.

<sup>14</sup> Sandnes and Henriksen, *Resurrection*, 259–67.

<sup>15</sup> Sandnes and Henriksen, *Resurrection*, 170 (emphasis original).

framework of what many now call the OT, but it additionally assumes now the narrative framework of the gospel. The completion of the story of God and his people comes through that gospel story, as it is what presents the ultimate bond of union between the two. The gospel story concerns the Incarnate One, the one who literally embodies the union of God and humanity, the one who brought that union to completion in his salvific death, resurrection, and exaltation. This story by which Christ brought salvation is recapitulated in those who are in union with Christ, which they signify when they are baptized into that story. By virtue of that union effected by the Spirit, those who are in Christ will have the same eucatastrophic ending as his story in their own transformative resurrection and exaltation in the image and likeness of Christ, receiving bodies belonging to the Spirit. God will do for those in Christ as he has done for Christ himself, and by this means he will bring to fulfillment all the grand promises that have shaped the expectations of his people about the future of their story. Only by participation in God's victory in Christ will they realize their personal victory over sin and death, their personal realization of the promises of victory in Isa 25 and Hos 13.

In this same vein, on a secondary level, this story of God and God's people includes multitudinous individual stories for which resurrection also functions as a crucial juncture at two different points. On the one hand, the participatory union of the present is the result of being given new life in an anticipatory fashion, which is made possible by Jesus's resurrection. Each of the witnesses Paul lists could be said to have this feature to their story, but Paul most explicitly indicates its presence in his own story, as he has received new life from his encounter with the risen Jesus. On the other hand, the future resurrection will provide the resolution to each individual's recapitulation of the gospel story. Each individual will thus be fully conformed to

the image of Christ by being conformed to his resurrection to everlasting life, receiving in full what has been promised to them in their union with Christ.

Third, Jesus's resurrection is the culmination of the story of Scripture to this point, but the consummation of the same awaits the general resurrection following the Parousia. Jesus's resurrection and the general resurrection tie many promises and patterns together, such as new creation, new covenant/communion with God, the imagery of firstfruits, the love of God that death cannot break, and the bringing of life out of death. More specifically and directly, beyond what I have already noted about Isa 25 and Hos 13, Paul points to texts about creation and kingdom.

Paul shows the grand story of humanity in Scripture coming full circle with the Adam-Christ contrast, but he also notes that the story cannot come to its completion until we have borne the image of Christ in resurrection as we have borne the image of Adam in submission to sin and death. Genesis 2:7 presents the picture of creation to which Christ has become the antitype, but the corresponding narrative cannot come to its completion until Gen 5:3 is also recast, and humans properly bear the image of Christ in resurrection. It is only appropriate that new creation resembles the original creation, but, as in the use of Gen 2:7 in Ezek 37, the new creation can now only come to be through dealing with death by resurrection. Likewise, the resurrected and exalted Christ may presently be the one who embodies the picture of the ideal human in Ps 8, but that picture will not be fully realized until death, the last enemy, is also subjected in the event of the general resurrection, so that other humans too may become the realized ideal of the psalm.

The larger reality to which the resurrection promise belongs is the promise of God's kingdom, the state in which God is all in all. This reality too is presently being realized in how Christ fulfills the role of the one known as "my Lord" in Ps 110 and as the "one like a son of

man” in Dan 7 (as Jesus also identified himself as being the one these texts spoke of). But they will not be fully realized until all hostile powers—sin and death the chief among them—are conquered and the people the Lord and Son of Man represents can rise to receive their inheritance of his kingdom.

These last types of reference to Scripture also highlight the fourth narrative in this intersection: resurrection is crucial to the resolution of the story of God and God’s creation.

Wright summarizes this narrative well:

1. The creator’s intention was to bring fruitful order to the world through his image-bearing human creatures.
2. Humans fail to reflect God’s image into the world, and the world in consequence fails to attain its fruitful order; the result, instead, is corruption and decay.
3. God intends to restore humankind to its proper place, resulting in the rescue and restoration of creation itself.<sup>16</sup>

With the resurrection, this intention will become realized, as it has already been realized in the prototype of Christ. Paul makes this narrative function of resurrection clear in this chapter through the correspondences of protology and eschatology, as well as the Adam-Christ contrast, with resurrection at the axis of the dynamic. Furthermore, as has been the consistent emphasis throughout this chapter, this story is also of one piece with the story of the coming of God’s kingdom. For God’s purpose is not the mere restoration of equilibrium—minus the presence of sin and death—with this protology-eschatology correspondence; rather, in making creation his eschatological kingdom, God will bring creation into greater harmony with himself than ever before. This harmonization will involve the communication of his own qualities in a fashion that has only been preceded by the prototype of the new creation: the resurrected Jesus. This same

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<sup>16</sup> Wright, *Paul*, 489.

resurrected Jesus is one whose arrival/Parousia will effectuate the promised climax of this story with the general resurrection and new creation.

Once again, resurrection belief is clearly eschatological in its various narrative functions. It belongs to the end of these overlaid stories in the sense that it brings the story to its completion, rather than its cessation. But it also brings those stories full circle, as the resolution it brings has a scope of relevance reaching all the way to the beginning. Indeed, as befits my operative definition of “eschatological,” the resurrection portrayed here—including both Jesus’s and the general resurrection—is crucial to the resolution of the grand worldview narrative. But this resolution is not merely at the end of the story, for the firstfruits of it have already happened in Jesus’s resurrection and that resurrection has become the gravitational center of all other hopes for the future. This occurrence of one part of the eschatological resurrection in the midst of history is an essential contributor to the peculiar character of NT eschatology with its dual foci on the “now” and the “not yet.”

In all of these ways, one can see how resurrection belief presented in 1 Cor 15 is Christomorphic. Every narrative dimension operates by reference to Christ and so the story of Christ forms the larger worldview narrative and the functions resurrection has in it. Its formative effect is especially profound when one considers that pre-Christian Paul had a worldview more akin to what is represented in Dan 12 in terms of pre-Christian non-Christomorphic resurrection belief. But now he cannot articulate resurrection belief and the many dimensions of the worldview narrative with which it is interwoven without reference to Christ’s specific resurrection. As such, that event was not simply another episode in this narrative; it was the event which changed the conception of the entire narrative.

## Symbols

As with the other texts, we must first consider how resurrection itself functions as a symbol.

First, it is a synecdoche in at least four ways. One, as vv. 42–57 show, resurrection can serve as a synecdoche for the combination of the act of returning to bodily life after death (its proper definition) and the act of transformation of the body in conformation to the body of Jesus. This is indicated by the differentiation of what is sown and what is raised in vv. 42–44 and by the fact that the synecdoche must be broken apart in vv. 50–57 to describe what happens to those who are alive at the time of the Parousia, as the living are only transformed while the dead experience transformative resurrection. Two, it is a synecdoche for the broader entirety of victory over sin and death achieved in Jesus and implemented for others who are in union with him.<sup>17</sup> Three, it is a synecdoche for the grand eschatological hope of cosmic scope that trails behind it, particularly with the Parousia of the risen Jesus. Resurrection is a crucial part of the hope of the kingdom of God and new creation, and it functions well to characterize God’s action in actualizing that cosmic hope. Four, it is a synecdoche of the union of Christ and Christians by reference to its goal. This function also relates to how resurrection is central to the distinction between Adam and Christ, as well as the creations for which they are synecdoches.

Second, the verb used for resurrection in this chapter has the sense of “awakening” and “arising,” which makes death the corresponding “sleep.” This signifies that the death of God’s faithful is a temporary state, by God’s grace, as opposed to the state of oblivion. And as the aforementioned studies of Cook and Ware show, this language serves well to convey the bodily nature of resurrection, as well as the continuity of identity that is necessary to it. However, just as

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<sup>17</sup> For more on this point, see Sandnes and Henriksen, *Resurrection*, 259–60.

God alone prevents the dead from being subject to oblivion, so God alone is the guarantor of this identity (the means is a subject of mystery).

Third, in addition to Paul encouraging the Corinthians to expect literal, bodily resurrection, he also uses his example to help them think of walking in the newness of life as a symbolic, anticipatory resurrection. For that is how Paul thought of himself, as one who was dead and deadly, but who was raised to life in his encounter with the risen Jesus. In the same way, those who are in union with the risen Jesus share in his life even now while they await the literal resurrection.

Fourth, resurrection to everlasting life can also serve as a synecdoche for the Judge's ultimate validation, vindication, and justification of people. These people identify themselves with the Christ who was crucified, who was then resurrected by God, confirming him as who he is and validating what he had done. In the same way, God will validate, vindicate, and justify those who are identified with him, who live faithfully as instructed throughout this book.

Beyond this dense symbolic force that resurrection carries in the worldview that Paul represents and seeks to form, it is also related to other worldview symbols in this text. The most noteworthy of these is the symbol of the body, itself a unifying symbol and a microcosm that bears the characteristics of the cosmos it inhabits. The resurrection body is one that will be conformed to the resurrected body of Jesus, itself the prototype for the new creation, bearing the characteristics of that cosmos, as Paul outlines in vv. 42–57. The resurrection gives everlasting significance to the body, as it is essential to God's creation of the human and as that in which the person acts in the world, thereby making it indispensable to Christian anthropology, over and against anthropologies that would seek to do away with the body. What ultimately makes it so



indispensable to the anthropological picture is the gospel event of Jesus's resurrection, which was bodily and set a paradigm and precedent for the resurrection of others to everlasting life.

Of course, the actual event of the resurrection is not described in 1 Cor 15 or elsewhere in the NT; only its results in the appearances of the risen Jesus (as well as the direct references to the empty tomb in the Gospels) are so described. As such, there has been great controversy in how to account for the resurrection as part of a full anthropological picture of what humans are and what they consist of. Even in recent history there have been accounts from dualists,<sup>18</sup> hylomorphists,<sup>19</sup> non-reductive physicalists,<sup>20</sup> constitutionists,<sup>21</sup> and anti-criterialist animalists/physicalists.<sup>22</sup> However exactly one resolves the matter of anthropological composition, Paul has made clear that there will be no kingdom of God, no new creation, without the microcosm that is the body. God will not abandon the body he has created simply to replace it with another, anymore than God will abandon the cosmos he has created simply to replace it with another. He has revealed that such is his will by raising Jesus, the Last Adam of the new creation, from the dead.

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<sup>18</sup> Davis, "Resurrection," 19–31; Brandon Rickabaugh, "Dismantling Bodily Resurrection Objections to Mind-Body Dualism," in *Christian Physicalism? Philosophical Theological Criticisms*, ed. R. Keith Loftin and Joshua R. Farris (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2018), 295–317.

<sup>19</sup> Mugg and Turner, "Why a Bodily Resurrection," 121–44; Josef Quitterer, "Hylomorphism and the Constitution View," in *Personal Identity and Resurrection: How Do We Survive Our Death?*, ed. Georg Gasser (London; New York: Routledge, 2010), 177–90.

<sup>20</sup> Green, "Resurrection and the Body," 85–100; Nancey Murphy, *A Philosophy of the Christian Religion* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2018), 210–51; Murphy, "The Resurrection Body and Personal Identity: Possibilities and Limits of Eschatological Knowledge," in *Resurrection: Theological and Scientific Assessments*, ed. Ted Peters, Robert John Russell, and Michael Welker (Grand Rapids; Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2002), 202–18.

<sup>21</sup> Baker, "Persons," 161–76; Corcoran, "Constitution," 191–205; Omar Fakhri, "Physicalism, Bodily Resurrection, and the Constitution Account," in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Theological Anthropology*, ed. Joshua R. Farris and Charles Taliaferro (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2015), 103–12.

<sup>22</sup> Jounghbin Lim, "In Defense of Physicalist Christology," *Sophia* 60 (2021): 193–208; Glenn Andrew Peoples, "The Mortal God: Materialism and Christology," in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Theological Anthropology*, ed. Joshua R. Farris and Charles Taliaferro (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2015), 331–43; Woznicki, "Thus Saith the Lord," 115–35. On the broader history of the debate, see Fernando Vidal, "Brains, Bodies, Selves, and Science: Anthropologies of Identity and the Resurrection of the Body," *Critical Inquiry* 28 (2002): 930–74

The resurrection is also crucial to the symbolism of new creation not only because of the qualities of the new creation revealed in the resurrection body, but also because of the connection of resurrection with Jesus's identity as the Last Adam. Because of the resurrection, Jesus is to the new creation what Adam was to the original creation, a new progenitor of humanity. But he also goes beyond Adam in being life-giving, which Paul describes using terminology ( $\zeta\omega\sigma\pi\omicron\iota\acute{\epsilon}\omega$ ) typically linked with resurrection in Pauline literature and the NT in general and which is only ever used actively with God, Christ, and the Spirit as the subject. By his resurrection he gives resurrection life to others who are in union with him.

Resurrection also gives substance to baptism, a crucial symbolic action in the worldview Paul seeks to form. Resurrection is the conclusion of the story to which the ritual of baptism refers, the completion of the drama it reenacts, as the subsequent walking in the newness of life arrives at its goal of eschatological life. Without resurrection, it ultimately points to nothing but a false promise. Of course, this major symbol is also a major aspect of Christian praxis and so observations on this point overlap with the next worldview component function.

### Praxis

Paul does not tie resurrection to any specific element of praxis. It is rather part of the webbing that links all matters of praxis together into a cohesive whole. Without it, as Paul illustrates in vv. 12–19, everything else about the Christian worldview he represents and seeks to form falls apart, for it claims to be formed around the God who raises the dead, his risen Son, and his life-giving Spirit. Because Christian praxis arises in a context of the resurrection of Jesus in the past and the resurrection of believers in the future, resurrection is not some theological add-on feature or merely a supporting belief for living in one way as opposed to another. Rather, Christian praxis

emerges from union with the risen Christ by the Holy Spirit and operates with the goal of sharing in that resurrection in the eschaton.

One of the ways in which resurrection belief has this holistic function in relation to praxis is in its connection to the divine confirmation of the praxis at the final judgment. Resurrection to everlasting life is linked here, as elsewhere (though not as pronouncedly as the other case study texts or other NT texts), to final judgment, and therefore it also inextricably linked to praxis. Final judgment is what will confirm, in the most public of fashions, that what one does in this life matters. More specifically, resurrection to everlasting life will enable those who are justified in that final judgment to continue the justified, sanctified, and glorified life forevermore. What one does in building up the body of Christ in the present, far from being fruitless, will bear fruit that never withers. This is so because the people who receive this verdict receive the verdict of Christ, whom God affirmed and confirmed against all attempts to deny him by putting him on the cross.

While the link with final judgment connects with praxis by showing its endpoint, resurrection also contextualizes praxis in its function as a synecdoche for union with Christ. Paul has appealed to the worldview foundation of incorporative, identifying, and participatory union with Christ throughout the letter in connection with his exhortations to the audience. While it is less tied to particular ethical instruction here than elsewhere in the letter, Paul still invokes it as a framework for the Christian life, as a basis for forming expectations and Christian character by appeal to this vision of union. As Paul has outlined throughout the letter, as well as in his prior instruction for the Corinthians, certain praxis fits this union with Christ, while other praxis does not. Only the former is compatible with the promise of resurrection to everlasting life promised to those who are “in Christ.”

Paul combines both the previous points in his implications that resurrection vindicates the cruciform ministry of the gospel that he and his fellow workers embodied. He, the other apostles, and those who worked more closely with Paul all subjected themselves to suffering, even to the point of courting fatality daily, to proclaim the gospel of the crucified and risen Lord. The cruciform ministry is worth all trouble the present age can throw its way if it leads to the same end as the crucified Lord in resurrection. If there is no resurrection, it is as worthwhile as any other pursuit, which is to say not at all. The ministry would be emptied of all its claimed substance, becoming a mere occupation of the limited time of ineluctably mortal life. On the other hand, if one is to expect the resurrection, that expectation provides a basis for being steadfast and immovable in faithfulness, persevering in perpetuity in the work the God who raises the dead has given his people to do.

#### Answers to Basic Worldview Questions

Finally, this analysis must consider how resurrection contributes to answers to what I have designated as basic worldview questions. 1) Who are “we”? “We” are those who are “in Christ.” This Christ, as the one who was crucified, resurrected to everlasting life, and exalted to the right hand of God the Father, defines “our” existence and expectations. As he was raised, “we” will be raised at his arrival. If “we” are alive at that time, “we” will still be transformed in order to receive the everlasting kingdom of God with everlasting life. “We,” as the bearers of the image and likeness of Christ, of the indwelling Holy Spirit, and of the promises of the Father, will be vindicated, validated, and justified in the day of resurrection.

2) Where are “we”? As stated above, “we” are “in Christ,” in living union with him while waiting for the day of resurrection. “We” are also in the present age of God’s good creation. The

creation still attests its Creator, but its testimony is diluted by the corruption of sin and death, the chief enemy powers. God will redeem this same creation by making it new, like Christ and like his embodied faithful ones made like him, when he consummates his eschatological kingdom through resurrection. Some of “us” have fallen asleep in Christ waiting for his arrival, meaning some of “us” are in a state of death that would mean our oblivion but for the contrary will of God.

3) What is wrong? The powers of sin and death, along with their subordinates, have corrupted God’s good creation and this corruption is most manifest in humans and their sinfulness. Sin and death that lead to alienation from God, which can ultimately lead to oblivion, have attained their power over the present age of creation through the conduit of Adam, the progenitor made to be God’s image-bearer. They have also exploited the power of the law—combined with the weakness of the flesh, as Paul states more directly in Rom 7—with the purpose of maintaining this alienation. In the alienation they create between the living God and his people, they would lead to annihilation. Without resurrection and without God addressing the fundamental problem of sin and death, that is precisely the state they would enter. The corruption and disorder these powers have wrought among humans has also produced corruption and disorder among creation as a whole.

4) What is the solution? The solution is not entirely consigned to the future but includes past and present components as well, since the eschatological action of Christ’s resurrection has produced an inaugurated eschatology. In terms of the past, God sent his Son to execute his will for salvation in the world by becoming incarnate, ministering, being crucified, resurrected, and exalted. This Son, Jesus Christ, has defeated sin and death in his own person and has become the prototype of the new creation in his resurrection body. He shares the victory of God in himself

with all those in union with him. In terms of the present, the Spirit initiates and sustains this union between Christ and his people, giving them access to the resurrection life even now, and assuring them of the reception of its fullness by his presence. God continues to expand access to this life in the present creation and it is this work that the ministry of the gospel participates in. Likewise, Christ, continuing his work as the executor of God's will in his heavenly ministry, is implementing his victory and reign until the day when it will be most fully realized in the general resurrection and new creation. In terms of the future, God will make the new creation as the resurrection of Jesus writ large, thereby destroying sin and death in the resurrection and transformation to everlasting life in connection with the final judgment. When death, the last enemy, has been stripped of all power, the implementation of God's victory in Jesus will be complete and God's kingdom will be fully realized, a state described in this text as God being all in all.

5) What time is it? It is the time between Jesus's resurrection and the general resurrection, meaning that the present also has a dimension of eschatology to it, being surrounded by eschatological events. It is the time when Jesus implements his victory and reign, but the kingdom reality has not yet been consummated. For those who are in Christ, now is a time of waiting, perseverance in faithfulness, and participation in the work of the Lord as "we" walk in the newness of life. The Parousia could bring this era to an end at any time, so "we" could be alive for transformation rather than receiving resurrection per se, but no one except God can know when that time is for certain.

6) How can we know these things? The precise answer to this question is probably the most controversial in scholarship and so I must offer a more extended treatment of it. For now, I can note that there are at least five components to this answer. First, as is consistent with the

conviction that the Creator will also act as Judge, Lord, and Savior, one epistemological source is observation of creation, since the Creator who made all of creation out of nothing, sustains it at all times, and guides it towards purpose is also capable of raising the dead. Paul particularly draws attention to the aspects of teleology and differentiation to demonstrate the possibility of bodily resurrection. These observations provide the cosmological context for understanding the resurrection body, including Jesus's resurrection body.

Second, in both generalities and particularities, Scripture is a crucial epistemological source for divine promises and patterns of action that provide the ground and context for resurrection belief. On the one hand, it supplies the narrative framework for understanding Jesus's resurrection as a fulfillment of Scripture. On the other hand, it also points forward to the general resurrection through promises that have not yet been fulfilled and through implications that the pattern of the risen Christ still must be implemented for his people in order for Scripture to be fulfilled.

Third, another critical source for the gospel proclamation in particular is the apostolic testimony of seeing the risen Jesus. As Paul shows, Christian faith as a whole cannot survive if the claims of apostolic testimony are false, and Jesus has not in fact been raised from the dead. There can be no living union with Christ by which one learns Christ if the proclamation of the gospel is false.

Fourth, beyond these sources, Paul builds on additional divine revelation concerning the Parousia of Christ, specifically the fact that all will undergo transformation at that time. Paul signifies that this information is revelation in his use of the word "mystery" in v. 52. The implication of this revelation is that at Christ's Parousia, both the living and the dead in Christ will be made like him, their bodies being conformed to his resurrection body.

Finally, even as Jesus Christ's resurrection is the first foundation of resurrection belief, so too Jesus Christ is the ultimate epistemological source for resurrection belief. Gerald O'Collins notes, "faith's firm answer to the question 'What can I know?' belongs to the *one* act in which it also answers those other two questions, 'What ought I to do?' and 'What may I hope for?', and gives its allegiance to the person of Christ."<sup>23</sup> If believers who are "in Christ" want to know what to expect for the future, they look to Jesus and what happened to him. If believers want to know about the resurrection body, they look to the risen Jesus and descriptions of him. If they want to know what basis they have for hope, they look to Jesus.

But it is at this point, specifically with the sources of apostolic testimony and Jesus Christ, that there is much controversy. The controversy concerns what role historical evidence has in this epistemological dimension of worldview formation. Barrett summarizes well a common view that the affirmation that God raised Jesus from the dead "is an affirmation about God which historical evidence as such cannot demonstrate (or, for that matter, disprove). Yet it is not unrelated to history, for the affirmation began to be made at a particular point in time, which can be dated by historical means, and it was motivated by occurrences which can be described in historical terms."<sup>24</sup> However, many eschew the historical discussion altogether as having nothing to do with the emergence of Christomorphic resurrection belief.<sup>25</sup> Many others defend both the historicity of the claims of Christian resurrection belief and the importance of that historicity in the emergence of specifically Christomorphic resurrection belief.<sup>26</sup> Given what I have noted

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<sup>23</sup> O'Collins, *Easter Faith*, 33.

<sup>24</sup> Barrett, *Corinthians*, 341. Cf. Sandnes and Henriksen, *Resurrection*, 165–66; Francis Watson, "Is the Historian Competent to Speak of the Resurrection of Jesus?: A Study in Hermeneutics," *KD* 55 (2009): 52–72.

<sup>25</sup> E.g., Alkier, *Reality*, passim; Barth, *Resurrection*, 130–45; Johnson, "Life-Giving Spirit," 82–88.

<sup>26</sup> E.g., William Lane Craig, *Assessing the New Testament Evidence for the Historicity of the Resurrection of Jesus* (Lewiston, NY: Mellen, 1989); Gary R. Habermas, *The Risen Jesus & Future Hope* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), 3–51; Licona, *Resurrection*, passim; Andrew Loke, *Investigating the Resurrection of*



above about the apostolic proclamation of the gospel, as well as the nature of the apostolic encounters, such evidence certainly appears to have been important for the earliest Christians as support for resurrection belief and the faith as a whole. However, affirmation based only on historical evidence is insufficient for the formation of Christian faith.<sup>27</sup> Two contrasting Jewish scholars well demonstrate this point, as Pinchas Lapide accepted Jesus's resurrection as a historical occurrence, yet never declared him as Lord, and Dan Cohn-Sherbok can find no sufficient historical evidence that would lead him to convert.<sup>28</sup>

O'Collins argues for the importance of historical knowledge for faith, since the latter cannot exist without some knowledge of the crucified and risen Jesus. But he also notes that there is more to the matter than that, since,

faith entails a loving commitment and a trusting hope which freely goes beyond the limited evidence and enters into a personal relationship with Christ. 'Mere' knowledge, even the most critically acquired knowledge, so long as it remains bereft of graced illumination, love and hope, can never result in such faith. Faith in Christ may be compared with any life-long commitments to family and friends. Mere historical research into their previous activities and achievements could never provide the grounds for such commitments. In fact, most people would, I think consider it insulting even to think of founding such loving commitments on the basis of background checks.<sup>29</sup>

Likewise, Paul is not calling upon his audience merely to think a certain way about historical events, but to strengthen a present relationship with the presently living Lord with whom they are

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*Jesus Christ: A New Transdisciplinary Approach* (London; New York: Routledge, 2020); Wright, *Resurrection*, passim.

<sup>27</sup> Gardner, *1 Corinthians*, 659: "This is not just a matter of affirming the historicity of the resurrection, but is a matter of understanding that salvation and the forgiveness of sins are achieved in and through the historical acts of Jesus as he lived, suffered, died, was buried, and was raised from the dead for his exaltation and our justification."

<sup>28</sup> Lapide, *Resurrection*, passim; Dan Cohn-Sherbok, "The Resurrection of Jesus: A Jewish View," in *Resurrection Reconsidered*, ed. Gavin D'Costa (Oxford: Oneworld, 1996), 184–200. For more Jewish views on Jesus's resurrection, see David Mishkin, *Jewish Scholarship on the Resurrection of Jesus* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2017).

<sup>29</sup> O'Collins, *Easter Faith*, 31. For more on the relationship, see O'Collins, *Easter Faith*, 30–39.

in present union. Historical knowledge gives this a relationship a narrative context, but a living relationship cannot be restricted to consideration of it. This is not least because the historical event in question was also an eschatological event—as the man to whom it happened was also God the Son embodied—and thus the event itself points people towards the future, being the pledge of what is to come. Indeed, as Paul ties both parts of the eschatological resurrection together, Wolfhart Pannenberg notes, “for its final verification, the Christian message of the resurrection of Jesus needs the event of an eschatological resurrection of the dead. . . . Hence, the Christian Easter message will be contested as long as the general resurrection of the dead and the coming again of Jesus are still future.”<sup>30</sup> And so this epistemology is rightly characterized as an epistemology of faith—driven by allegiance to the One who defines ultimate reality on the basis of trust established by past faithfulness—an epistemology of love—being deeply engaged in the present in the bond with this One who has shown and will yet show the inexorability of his faithful love—and an epistemology of hope—directed with eager expectation to the future consummation of what has been promised.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter, as the capstone to the previous three, has illustrated the thoroughgoing effects of Christomorphic resurrection belief on the worldview Paul seeks to form in 1 Cor 15 when compared to both pre-Christian and post-Christian non-Christomorphic resurrection belief. Every aspect of the worldview related to resurrection belief is affected in some way by the presence of Christomorphic resurrection belief. The effects appear in both worldview foundations and in worldview component functions.

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<sup>30</sup> Pannenberg, *Systematic*, 350–51.

In terms of worldview foundations, Christomorphic resurrection belief produces the most complex structure of foundations, including by producing two foundations that have no equivalents in non-Christomorphic resurrection belief: Jesus's own resurrection and the resurrection as the theo/logical end of the Christians' incorporative, identifying, and participatory union with Christ by the Holy Spirit. But the impact of Christomorphic resurrection belief extends even beyond these factors. Even where 1 Cor 15 shows operative foundations equivalent to what one can find in the non-Christomorphic texts, the effect of Christomorphic resurrection belief produces changes even in these foundations. The God who reveals himself as the God who raises the dead, whose inexorable, faithful love is exemplified in this action, is presented in a more complex fashion in 1 Cor 15 because of the Christomorphic resurrection belief. The final judgment remains an operative expectation in all texts, but its peculiar character in the Christian text extends from the presence of the risen Christ in it and from the presence of the factor of salvific union with Christ. The fulfillment of Scripture by the resurrection now operates on two levels consistently with the splitting of the eschatological resurrection: both Jesus's resurrection and the general resurrection fulfill Scripture. Finally, the cosmological-eschatological context of the resurrection—stated in terms of both the kingdom of God and new creation—now has an inaugurated dimension to it because of the eschatological event that has already happened in the resurrection of Jesus and because Jesus's resurrection body represents the firstfruits of the new creation just as it represents the firstfruits of the eschatological resurrection.

In terms of worldview functions, no component function is left unaffected by the presence of Christomorphic resurrection belief when compared to cases in which it is absent. The worldview narrative is reshaped around the story of Christ and the intersection of his resurrection with multiple other plotlines. The constellation of worldview symbols likewise takes on a new

shape, as resurrection itself has new symbolic functions and other symbols have new significance because of their connection to the resurrection of Christ. The vision of worldview praxis has a peculiar reference point to a resurrected individual and thus a peculiar stress on praxis emerging from union with that resurrected individual. Even where the basic conduct may be consistent with the other texts and the worldviews they represent, the theological-ethical framework is notably different because of this specific resurrection reference point. Finally, all the answers to the basic worldview questions are shaped by reference to the resurrected Christ, thereby further showing that Christomorphic resurrection belief does not consist of simply adding an extra aspect to resurrection belief, but rather consists of a thoroughly reshaped resurrection belief, even where it otherwise has similarity with non-Christomorphic resurrection belief.

## CONCLUSION

### Summary

At this point, it is necessary to summarize the procedure, arguments, and results of this analysis of resurrection belief. Chapter 1 engages with the comparative analyses—both multi-author edited volumes and single-author volumes—that are most like this project and thus set the context for it. Some NT scholars and other scriptural scholars have previously engaged in this work, but it has also drawn interest from scholars in a variety of fields, including religion, philosophy, theology, and literature (non-scriptural dimensions have also drawn the interest of psychologists, sociologists, archaeologists, and so on). I found these predecessor works wanting in general, and even in cases where some of the arguments held up under scrutiny, I identified four weaknesses that my own project would aim to address. First, all of these works suffered from an overly broad scope missing detailed engagement with select texts or any other realia that could be analyzed in this context, as well as the scholarship that addresses the same. My project addresses this weakness with a restricted scope focusing on case study texts from the canons of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, which allows for deeper engagement with the texts and with other readers of the texts. Second, these accounts try to explain resurrection belief in terms of external factors related to historical stimuli—particularly in terms of origins and influences—without attending to internal worldview dynamics, the plausibility structures that make resurrection sensible in the worldview context. My project addresses this deficiency by focusing on internal worldview dynamics and the factors of the worldview context that make resurrection

belief sensible. Third, the programmatic questions posed for these analyses tend to remain surface-level in addressing the “what” of resurrection belief, but not the “why” of it. My project addresses at least some of the “why” questions by appeal to internal worldview dynamics rather than proposed historical influences. Four, these works have an anthropocentric focus in articulating and explaining resurrection belief, leaving unaddressed the more fundamental and titular question: Why should God raise the dead? The primary interest of my study is to address that titular question, which aligns with the theocentric focus of these texts.

Chapter 2 presents my method for analyzing my case study texts: exegetical-theological comparison. The exegetical aspect involves detailed investigation and interpretation of texts in context on their own terms, along with engaging the deep reasonings attached to the exegetical histories of these texts (neither of which were carried out to a similar extent by previous comparative studies). The theological aspect has two characteristics in that 1) the chief concern of the textual investigation is what the texts indicate about divine action, speech, and identity, and 2) its focus is on the role of resurrection belief in a worldview context, since theology is a form of reflection on the symbolic universe or worldview. In my worldview analysis—given my definition of “worldview” as *a commitment that fundamentally orients and integrates persons and communities that provides them a framework in relation to reality, which can be expressed as a narrative, a system of symbols, actions, presuppositions, and (in attempts to synopsise these expressions) articulated sets of beliefs*—I examine worldview foundations in the texts and use my Wrightian model of worldview component functions—in terms of narrative, symbols, praxis, and answers to basic worldview questions—in the task of direct comparison. Finally, the comparative aspect is straightforward in that I analyze similarities and differences between similar types of belief in different worldview contexts. To produce thicker descriptions and thus

thicker comparisons, I articulate in this chapter the assumptions, purpose, and best practices of my comparative method. By this method, I demonstrate the two overarching points of my argument: 1) the functions of resurrection belief in the symbolic universes these scriptures help form are consequences of the particular worldview foundations the authors base resurrection belief upon; 2) Christian resurrection belief as presented in the NT (specifically by Paul) is of such a Christomorphic character that, even where its foundations and functions have elements in common with the Tanakh and Qur'an, every element is reformulated around the resurrection of Jesus.

Chapter 3 begins the application of this methodology to the text of Dan 12, specifically vv. 1–3 and 13. I open with a brief summary of its significance as a “canonical capstone” and its significance in the history of interpretation, particularly as related to resurrection. I then provide my own translation of the text. I then place the resurrection in that text in the context of Daniel to describe how it functions in relation to the rest of Daniel. I observe how the resurrection for final judgment brings to a conclusion the conflict that the saints face throughout the book, as they are vindicated while those who betrayed and oppressed them are condemned. I also noted how resurrection functions in relation to the parallel chs. 2 and 7 as the resurrection is connected to the hope of the everlasting kingdom of God and the fruition of God’s promises. In the text itself, I note that at least four worldview foundations of resurrection belief are operative. The first is God’s inexorable, faithful love, which is manifested in the total reversal of the obstacle of death—to the point of giving the righteous everlasting life—in order to fulfill promises to the beloved righteous. The second is God’s justice in setting the world aright, particularly by the most public of manifestations in the final judgment that vindicates the faithful and condemns the wicked. The third is that God fulfills Scripture by acting faithfully to both promises made and

patterns of action performed (wherein we see most vividly the character of this text as a canonical capstone). The fourth is that the redemption of humans by resurrection is crucial to fulfilling God's creative purpose and establishing God's kingdom.

Chapter 4 follows the same procedure, beginning with the brief summary of the significance of 1 Cor 15 in history for articulating a "Christological center of gravity" for Christomorphic resurrection belief, followed by my own translation of the text. Although this text is the only extensive exposition on resurrection in the letter, I note many textual strands that the chapter's exposition on resurrection draws together, including the eschatological frame for Paul's ethical instruction, the proclamation of the gospel by reference to its key events and unifying character, union with Christ, and the use of "body" language (since concrete resurrection is a bodily event). The "body" language is particularly important for how the *σῶμα* is both a microcosm of its world and a synecdoche representing the whole human by particular reference to corporeal, visible, tangible, relational (including ethical), and unifying characteristics; thus, it has both literal and symbolic significance in the exposition of resurrection belief. In the text itself, I note at least six worldview foundations for this text's Christomorphic resurrection belief are operative. The first, most obvious, and most important is Jesus's own resurrection. The second is God's inexorable, faithful love, now brought to clearest expression in the incarnate Son. The third is that resurrection is the means by which God fulfills Scripture, including by fulfilling patterns of action, explicit fulfillment of promises, and fulfillment of implicit eschatology by realizing creative purpose. The fourth is that resurrection is the theo/logical end of the Christians' incorporative, identifying, and participatory union with Christ, a union formed by the Holy Spirit and further symbolized by believers being the body of Christ. The fifth is that resurrection is essential to the realization of the promises of the kingdom of God



and the new creation. The sixth is God's justice setting the world aright, particularly as exercised in the final judgment.

Chapter 5 completes the exegetical aspect of the procedure with an analysis of Q Al-Qiyamah 75 and its presentation of resurrection as tied with the "conclusive court" of the final judgment. I begin with a brief summary of the significance of resurrection in qur'anic theology and the development of Muslim tradition, as well as my own translation of the text. Then, because the Qur'an is not divided in a way comparable to the Tanakh or NT, I return to a deeper examination of resurrection in the Qur'an as a whole, since it is the Qur'an as a whole, rather than any subdivision thereof, that supplies the textual context for this surah. Prominent themes that recur throughout the Qur'an related to resurrection include its association with the final judgment (particularly by reference to the Day), its demonstration of Allah's sovereignty over life, and its link to Allah's creative action. But for the particular case study text, I note that resurrection belief appears to reduce to two worldview foundations. The first is that resurrection is necessary for the execution of Allah's justice in the final judgment. The second is that resurrection is the inevitable performance of Allah's inexorable power as Creator.

Chapter 6 presents the direct comparison subsequent to the exegetical investigation of the case study texts in their respective contexts. I first compare the foundations that I have observed to be operative in the different texts. There are significant commonalities in that all scriptures rest on the assumption that divine justice will be expressed in resurrection for final judgment (which requires resurrection because of God's will to judge his bodily creatures as bodily creatures even after their death), as well as the assumption that the dead will rise because of the inexorable power and will of God to raise the dead. The Jewish and Christian texts also share commonalities of relying on preestablished promises and patterns of action to provide a

worldview framework for expectations of resurrection, as well as the presentation of the larger eschatological context of resurrection in terms of the kingdom of God and new creation. The significant differences emerge from the fact that the other two texts have no equivalent of the Christian foundations of Jesus's resurrection and union with Christ, and the presence of these foundations create differences even in the points of similarity. I then illustrate this point more thoroughly by examining resurrection in relation to the worldview component functions of narrative, symbols, praxis, and answers to basic worldview questions for the worldviews that each of these texts form. No component function is left unaffected by the presence of Christomorphic resurrection belief when compared to the two cases in which it is absent. The worldview narrative, the constellation of worldview symbols, the vision of worldview praxis, and the answers to basic worldview questions are all reshaped around the resurrected Christ because of Christomorphic resurrection belief.

In my general task of comparison, I have demonstrated how the functions of resurrection belief in the symbolic universes these scriptures help form are consequences of the particular worldview foundations the authors base resurrection belief upon. Both significant similarities and differences in resurrection belief arise from similarities and differences in worldview foundations. But I have also demonstrated, in my specific task of analyzing and illuminating resurrection belief in the NT as represented by Paul, that the most thoroughly influential differences emerge from specifically Christomorphic resurrection belief, its peculiar foundations, and the peculiar effect the resurrection of Jesus has on the foundations Christian resurrection belief otherwise shares with non-Christomorphic resurrection belief. Its thoroughgoing effects are made especially clear by the analysis of worldview component functions and how every function is reformulated by reference to Jesus's resurrection.

## Contributions

By its nature, this dissertation contributes both to my particular field of NT studies and to the broader field of comparative studies. First, while other studies have placed NT resurrection belief in its historical context (whether to stress its continuity with Second Temple Judaism, its differences, or its place in a developmental scheme), no other study has focused specifically on the impact of Christomorphic resurrection belief in worldview formation and in how we read the texts. Nor has any other study drawn such attention to the thoroughly Christomorphic character of Christian resurrection belief by means of juxtaposition with non-Christomorphic resurrection belief. This juxtaposing comparative analysis marks the distinct characteristics of Christomorphic resurrection belief even more vividly (like the juxtaposing of contrasting colors), as this analysis also provides in-depth presentations of resurrection belief wherein the Christomorphic element is missing. This dissertation thus serves as an example of comparative work that is more fruitful and more substantial than the now often maligned history of comparative religions.

Second, the theocentric focus of this study differentiates it from many predecessors in both NT studies and comparative studies. Too often in both fields, studies of resurrection belief do not tend to focus on resurrection belief as a statement of theology and thereby explore in depth what the contours of resurrection belief convey about the God who raises the dead. In NT studies, it is not that these studies ignore such theocentric considerations, but they are not the driving focus in the way they are for this study. While anthropology is by no means irrelevant to resurrection belief as articulated in these scriptures, resurrection belief remains primarily a statement of theology, being belief about the God who raises the dead. One has not properly

understood resurrection belief in these scriptures until one examines the belief from the theocentric perspective the authors have, since God is the one who promises and reveals himself by resurrection, God is the agent of resurrection action, and resurrection is crucial to fulfilling God's purposes. More specifically, this analysis contributes an analysis of 1 Cor 15 in its entirety that is both theologically oriented and theocentrically focused in how it describes the reasoning of resurrection belief down to its worldview foundations.

Third, while other studies have noted one or more of the beliefs that I have described as worldview foundations in relation to resurrection belief in the NT, no other study has made it a purpose to identify these foundations, as well as to explore how they function in a given text and how they function in a worldview in general. This dissertation thus presents a synthesis of previous insights on the reasoning of resurrection belief in an integrative framework of worldview analysis. As the worldview analysis is foundational to my model of theological analysis as well, this focus on worldview foundations and functions also presents new applications of these insights to the analysis of the theology of 1 Cor 15, 1 Corinthians in general, and—to a more limited extent—Paul's broader theological presentation. For general comparative studies, this dissertation also more broadly illuminates the plausibility structures that make resurrection belief sensible in the respective worldviews. By the same token, this study exemplifies the fruitfulness of examining scriptural texts as means of worldview formation.

Fourth, this dissertation contributes at the smaller scale of addressing controversies in the interpretation of 1 Cor 15. Some, such as the precise meaning of the baptism  $\upsilon\pi\epsilon\rho$  the dead among all the options presented, are beyond my scope. But other points of controversy are illuminated by attending to the reasoning of resurrection belief as based on certain worldview foundations. This illumination is most prominent in the different dimensions of the Adam-Christ

contrasts throughout the chapter, which build upon the combination of foundations of the peculiarly Christomorphic resurrection belief in ways that scholars have not accounted for. One area within these contrasts that is especially illuminated is the contrasts of the present body with the resurrection body in vv. 42–54 in the context of the cosmological exposition in vv. 36–41. Paul’s argument about the contrasts builds on assumptions he has either made implicitly or explicitly stated to this point, including that Jesus’s body is the prototype of the resurrection body and the new creation to which that body properly belongs (an intersection of the first and fifth foundations); that the resurrection to everlasting life is an expression of God’s inexorable, faithful love in communicating his own qualities and making humans more like him (the second foundation); that the resurrection is necessary to the fulfillment (typological and otherwise) of Scripture (the third foundation); and that the Adam-Christ contrast in resurrection is of one piece with Paul’s broader teachings on union with Christ (the fourth foundation), the vindication of believers in line with the vindication of Christ (the sixth foundation), and the way in which the new creation fulfills the old creation (the fifth foundation).

### **Implications**

As such, the implications of this study can be briefly outlined by moving from smaller to larger scale. First, the illumination of the reasoning of resurrection belief by appeal to the worldview foundations and by analysis of resurrection belief in the larger context of worldview component functions has implications for how to read 1 Cor 15 particularly. I have noted some examples of this already. Another would be in reading the consequences of resurrection denial in vv. 12–19. The analysis of foundations has implications for how we read this text as an expression of certain assumptions of Paul that are too often overlooked as being operative here (in favor of more

generalized notions such as I note in the chapter), such as the union with Christ and its role in Christomorphic resurrection belief. The reader that attends to these foundations and their role in the argument discovers even deeper continuity and coherence between the various parts of Paul's text.

Second, this dissertation has implications for reading Paul's other presentations of resurrection belief. After all, 1 Cor 15 is the most extensive exposition on resurrection, but by no means the only—or even only extensive—articulation of resurrection belief in Paul's works. How we understand Paul's reasoning in this text affects how we read other texts he wrote (e.g., Rom 6:1–13; 8; 2 Cor 4:13–5:10; Phil 3:7–21; 1 Thess 4:13–18). Particularly, one must consider how these foundations operate in other Pauline texts to inform Paul's arguments. Furthermore, in light of what I have noted of the thoroughgoing effects of Christomorphic resurrection belief on worldview component functions, one would need to posit a major worldview shift for Paul—not necessarily on par with the transformation brought by his encounter with the risen Christ, but still deeply impactful—in order to argue that another of his texts (2 Cor 4:13–5:10 is most often claimed to be a contrast) represents a major change in resurrection belief. Otherwise, it is safer to assume fundamental coherence between Paul's texts until demonstrated otherwise.

Third, this dissertation also has implications for the study of NT resurrection theology more generally. As I noted in my chapter on 1 Cor 15, several scholars contrast Paul with the Gospels on resurrection theology. But Paul himself asserts that the gospel he speaks is in harmony with other apostolic witnesses, including those whose stories are conveyed in the Gospel resurrection narratives. It is, of course, possible that Paul is wrong in his assertion, but such a claim would need to be demonstrated. Scholars should thus reevaluate how Paul's Christomorphic resurrection belief fits with other statements of Christomorphic resurrection

belief in the NT in light of what I have noted about worldview foundations and the roles of resurrection belief in relation to worldview component functions. As I noted in response to Jenks in ch. 1, Christomorphic resurrection belief cannot be taken as a simple add-on to Jewish resurrection belief. If the Gospels climax with Jesus's resurrection, the statements of resurrection belief earlier in the text cannot be read simply in the context of Second Temple Jewish belief without taking into account this unique resurrection. This climactic gospel event also gives expectations of resurrection in the Gospels Christomorphic qualities.

Fourth, an implication that also extends beyond NT studies is how this dissertation illuminates both commonalities in resurrection belief and distinct elements among the scriptures of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. There are certain common elements that appear to be necessary, but not sufficient, conditions of resurrection belief, as these conditions remain in place in all the scriptures, regardless of all other differences in the theological context of resurrection belief. At the same time, the distinct elements of resurrection belief convey crucial aspects that differentiate the eschatologies and overall worldviews presented in these scriptures. These elements also must be noted and given a more complex profile for a more complete picture of both resurrection belief in its different forms as well as the worldviews to which it contributes. Resurrection belief—although a common element between the Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Scriptures—is more illustrative of differences between these connected faith traditions than has been generally recognized.

### **For Further Study**

Finally, I want to make some recommendations for where one could build on this dissertation for further study. One, on the level of methodology, other subjects and other texts should be

explored using this two-pronged worldview analysis. That is, studies of other subjects should use worldview analysis in a way that focuses on both foundations that make the belief in question sensible in the worldview context and functions of that belief in the context of worldview components. Alternatively, other texts on this same subject of resurrection belief can be explored using this same methodology.

Two, also on the level of methodology, it would be worthwhile to explore resurrection belief, whether in the cited texts or otherwise, using a worldview model other than Wright's. I found the Wright worldview model to be the best fit for my kind of analysis, but others could be useful for other purposes related to studying resurrection. Most models of worldview components are topic-oriented or question-oriented. Others, like Hiebert's model, are better fit for cultural analysis. Of course, if someone can find a way to apply these models effectively to textual analysis, especially in the context of comparison, such a project could also prove fruitful.

Three, in addition to the need for a more comprehensive profile of resurrection belief in relation to worldview foundations and functions, one can also produce more complex worldview pictures in light of using different texts according to different kinds of canonical consciousness. I have analyzed Dan 12 from the perspective of one whose sense of canon includes the Tanakh, but not the NT. But this text is also considered part of Christian Scripture and Daniel is considered a prophet of Allah in Islam. One can explore how this text functions in the worldview context presented in these different cases. With a different canonical context, does the picture of worldview foundations change? If so, how?

Four, in light of the distinctive character I have noted of Christomorphic resurrection belief in Paul, one can explore how other texts in the NT convey Christomorphic resurrection belief. The observations of this study provide a comparative baseline for this type of project.



Such a project can also be undertaken to test Paul's claims of continuity with the larger apostolic tradition regarding resurrection belief. Because Paul is the earliest to write of Christomorphic resurrection belief, it is sometimes thought that he was the inventor of the link between Christ's resurrection and the Christian's resurrection. Paul is undeniably the clearest expositor of Christomorphic resurrection belief, but can we therefore conclude that he is the one made this link? If it can be found elsewhere in less explicit forms, as I am inclined to argue, where and how can one find it in the NT? How might the foundations of resurrection belief identified in this study (and potentially others) illuminate this matter? Such exploration of the possibilities of Christomorphic resurrection belief in the rest of the NT is work that I myself plan to pursue, if God so wills.

Five, related to the previous application of this research is another question: If Christomorphic resurrection belief was not invented by Paul, whence did it most likely emerge? In other words, one can examine the issues of the history of Christomorphic resurrection belief, as well as the relationship of Christomorphic resurrection belief to historical events. For example, the Gospel resurrection narratives do not explicitly present Christomorphic resurrection belief in the way that Paul does so as to draw a direct line from Christ's resurrection to the Christian's resurrection. But can we identify grounds for such a belief in the narratives and other earlier attestations of Christian resurrection belief? One could potentially identify many factors as leading to this belief on the historical plane, such as the events of the gospel complex of death-resurrection-exaltation, beliefs about Jesus's identity, reflection on the Scriptures that Jesus told his followers were fulfilled by the death-resurrection-exaltation complex, Jesus's teachings about union with his followers, and perhaps even the experience of encountering Jesus's resurrection body with its mix of familiar and peculiar qualities. Which of these factors,

or others, might have actually contributed to the emergence of this belief? When might such factors have coalesced into Christomorphic resurrection belief? These questions and others could occupy many volumes of exploration of Christomorphic resurrection belief.

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