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A table of contents for *Journal of Biblical Literature* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_jbl-01.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_jbl-01.php)

## THE PLACE OF APOCALYPTICAL CONCEPTIONS IN THE THOUGHT OF PAUL

FRANK C. PORTER  
YALE UNIVERSITY

**T**HE place of apocalyptic elements in the religion of a Jew or a Christian of the first century is not a merely historical problem, if by history we mean the study of sources and relationships. It is in every case a question also of interpretation, a psychological or a philosophical question, or perhaps one would better say a question of the personal quality and reaction. In the case of Paul the question is complicated, not only by peculiarities of his mind, but by the striking and distinctive quality in his religious experience. The resurrection of Christ was to Paul a fact of his own observation, and it was an eschatological event, and the first such event, as is clear in I Cor. 15 20-28. We have therefore to do in the case of Paul with one who regards last things as having already begun; and we shall see that there is involved in that fact a deep-going change in the signification of the apocalyptic ideas themselves. It is one thing to expect a supernatural intervention of God in the immediate future, the incoming of the heavenly world and its powers, bringing this present world to an end and bringing in the world to come, and quite another thing to believe that an event recently passed was the hoped for coming of God into the world, the overthrow of the powers of evil and the inauguration of the time of redemption and blessedness. Apocalyptic conceptions may no doubt be said to have an important place in the thought of a man who holds

this remarkable opinion, but the nature of apocalyptic hopes will be so transformed by such a conception of their fulfilment that the word can only be used with caution. To Paul, on account of the life, death and resurrection of Christ, all things had become new, including his fundamental conceptions of the other world itself, and of the nature of the dualism which in one sense or another is at the foundation of the apocalyptic view of the world. The new age had dawned and its powers were present and were experienced; Paul found himself a new being in a new world; and yet all things outwardly remained as they were. The other world must therefore be within and not beyond. A spiritualizing of the apocalyptic hope would be necessarily involved in the conviction that the new age was in a real sense present; and it would seem that nothing could be clearer than that in Paul apocalyptic conceptions have been in principle, whether more or less consciously, spiritualized. The new man that Paul feels himself to be is the man in whom spirit dominates over flesh, the man in whom love has overcome selfishness, who no longer lives to himself. Yet Paul is one who can look forward as well as backward for the coming of the Lord, and outward as well as inward. Though things are still outwardly as they were before Christ rose, while inwardly all things are new, yet they are not always to be outwardly the same. Paul does not question the primitive Christian expectation of the coming of Christ, although it is his past coming that is the supreme crisis in world history. The apocalyptic, therefore, comes into Paul's thought both as a means of interpreting the life and death and resurrection of Christ, and his present power as indwelling spirit to transform men's lives, and also as a hope for the speedy consummation of that redemption which is already a matter of experience. The central question that is before us therefore is that of the actual effect upon Paul's inherited ideas about the Day of the Lord and the World to Come, of Christ himself as a historical fact and as the present power of a new ethical life.

Whatever may be true about the eschatological ideas of Paul it is certainly true that he illustrates the fact that apocalyptic and spiritual conceptions can stand side by side

in one mind, apocalyptic and prophetic, we may perhaps say, and that the question is not between the one and the other but is a problem of the degree and manner of the relationship between the two. There is no doubt a strong tendency in common human minds to move from the prophetic to the apocalyptic, from the inner to the outer, from the spiritual to the miraculous; but the opposite movement is no less possible, and is to be expected in the case of greater men. We have a right to assume that men of great intellectual and moral nature and of creative influence in the spiritual history of man are in touch with realities in their thinking, rather than with myths and imaginations. Certainly in the case of Paul we are dealing with a very great man, with one also who had a very great experience which he could only speak of as a dying and living again. It is not unhistorical in the case of such a man to look for and expect to find transformations of outward things and of current opinions through which they become expressive of absolute values and universal human experiences.

Just now the tendency seems to be to emphasize the apocalyptic element in Paul and to regard every spiritualizing interpretation as an unhistorical modernizing of his modes of thought. This tendency has extreme expression in Schweitzer's *Paul and His Interpreters*.<sup>1</sup> In this "critical history" of the interpretation of Paul, Schweitzer finds the true view suggested only by Lüdemann (1872), and in Kabisch's *Die Eschatologie des Paulus* (1893), both of whom emphasize the objective, physical nature of redemption, and especially Kabisch the purely eschatological foundation and structure of Paul's thought. Schweitzer insists that Paul made no use whatever of Hellenistic ideas and that Jewish apocalyptic is the sole source and character of his Christianity. He labors especially to prove that the mysticism of Paul has nothing to do with Greek mysticism. The fundamental strain in it he insists was not ethical but physical. Although neither his mysticism nor his sacramentalism are Jewish, yet they have no touch of the Greek in them, and are to be understood as founded upon eschatology. Paul is one whose thought

<sup>1</sup> *Geschichte der paulinischen Forschung*, 1911. In English, 1912.

moves in the apocalyptic system created by the books of Daniel and Enoch. Schweitzer makes much use of the word *naturhaft*, and favors the translation of it by the word "physical", by which he means that body and soul are redeemed together, and that the whole world, the material universe, is to be transformed by a great catastrophic event. The clue to the understanding of Paul, he thinks, is to be found in the peculiar conditions of the brief intermediary period between the death of Jesus and the parousia, during which the natural and supernatural are both present in an unadjusted relationship to each other. The questions which he says we must answer in order to understand Paul are those that concern the scheme and order of the events of the end. They are such as the following: Are there two resurrections or one? one judgment or two? who rise at the parousia? does judgment take place then? who are judged, and by what standards, and in what do reward and punishment consist? what happens to those who are not destined to the Messianic kingdom? the fate of believers who fall by unworthy conduct,—can they lose their final blessedness, or are they only excluded from the Messianic kingdom? does Paul recognize a general resurrection, and if so when? when does the judgment take place at which the elect judge angels? Now it is not to be denied that Paul expresses opinions on some matters of this sort, although the fact that he leaves so many questions to be asked may itself indicate that he is not much concerned with the answers. But surely one who thinks that questions like these lead us to the heart of Paulinism lays himself open to the answer given most effectively by Reitzenstein, that he leaves not only Hellenism but Personality out of Paul, explaining him as a mechanical mixture of certain definite elements. It should, on the contrary, be the aim of the historian to grasp the personality of such a man as Paul and to understand him from himself, as well as from the environing world.<sup>2</sup> The one-sidedness of Schweitzer's interpretation is generally recognized. In fact the failure of any adequate appreciation of Paul casts suspicion back upon

<sup>2</sup> See Reitzenstein, *Religionsgeschichte und Eschatologie*, ZNTW, 1912, pp. 1—28.

Schweitzer's more influential effort to interpret the mind of Christ in exclusively apocalyptic terms. But there are others who feel justified in saying that Paul's outlook is at bottom that of Jewish apocalyptic.<sup>3</sup> Can this rightly be said, or in what measure is there truth in such a position?

If Jewish apocalyptical conceptions lie at the foundation of Paul's Christian thought we should expect evidence of it in his use of literature. As a matter of fact his use of the Old Testament shows no interest in the more apocalyptical types of prophecy. He interprets the Old Testament in a Christian sense, but does not seem concerned to find in it predictions of this or that detail of the life of Christ and the beginnings of Christianity, as do the writers of Matthew or Acts. He agrees with all Christians that Christ died for our sins and was buried and has been raised on the third day "according to the scriptures". But his chief concern is to read the Old Testament as a whole in such a way that it shall be seen to mean not Judaism and the Law but Christ and Christianity. The most important and difficult thing that Paul had to do in his Christianizing of the Old Testament was to justify his freedom from the law and the setting aside of Israel's peculiarity and prerogative. The bearing of his use of scripture on the question before us justifies our dwelling on the matter somewhat and noting his preferences. Paul's usual way of citing Scripture is with the use of the word *γράφαι*. It is hard to be exact in enumerating the occurrences of this form of citation; but he uses it about thirty-six times, nine for citations from the Pentateuch, sixteen from the Prophets, and ten from the Psalms and Job, leaving I Cor. 2 : for the present out of account. Of the thirty-five, eleven are from Isaiah and nine from the Psalms. Adding to these, other formulas of citation and also passages evidently quoted, though without any formula, we find thirty-four from the Pentateuch, thirty-three from the Prophets and twenty-nine from the Hagiographa. Of the thirty-three, twenty-two are from Isaiah, and of the twenty-nine, twenty-four are from the Psalms. Besides actual

<sup>3</sup> See for a recent example Morgan's *The Religion and Theology of Paul*, 1917, page 6.

citations there are of course other uses of Old Testament language. No list of such reminiscences or allusions can in the nature of the case be complete. For our present purpose we may take the phrases which Westcott and Hort print in uncial text in their edition, together with a few obvious additions. Including with these the citations proper, I find seventy-one references to the Pentateuch; five to the Former and ninety-eight to the Latter Prophets; and seventy-one to the Hagiographa. Of the ninety-eight, sixty-six are to Isaiah; and of the seventy-one forty-four are to the Psalms. Three-fourths of the whole number are from the Pentateuch, Isaiah and the Psalms.

It is surely not simply an accident that Paul makes so little use of the more distinctively apocalyptic parts of the Old Testament. In the quotations proper there are none at all from Daniel. From Ezekiel there is only one, and that somewhat uncertain and of no significance. It is evident that Ezekiel did not interest Paul. From Zechariah there is one (8 16); but of the apocalyptic elements of this book Paul seems to have made no use. There is one citation from Joel (Rom. 10 13), again not eschatological. Among the allusions there is one to Daniel in that most apocalyptic of all sections of Paul's letters, the prediction of Antichrist in II Thes. 2 3-12 (compare 2 4 with Dan. 11 36 f.). Even those who are not doubtful of the authenticity of this book commonly agree that this apocalyptic fragment is as little "Pauline" and as evidently borrowed as any passage in his letters. It is certainly an extraordinary fact that the Book of Daniel, which has so important a place in the Gospels and Revelation, has practically no value to Paul in his search through the Old Testament for Christ. That he does not use it or reflect upon it seems to bear upon the obscure question of his knowledge of the title "Son of Man", and the special conceptions of the Messiahship and the parousia which belong to that title. Considering the frequency of Paul's references to the parousia and the closeness of the connection of this expectation in the Gospels with Daniel 7 13 and the name "Son of Man", the absence of the title in Paul's letters and his complete indifference to the Book of Daniel are surely significant. We are left then with this

result, that the apocalyptic literature which was certainly within Paul's reach and had the undoubted character of canonicity he did not care for; and that he was practically content, so far as literary helps were concerned, to argue for the truth of Christianity against Judaism from the Pentateuch, and to find Christian faith and experience expressed in the language of Isaiah and the Psalms.

We have now to consider the one passage in which Paul quotes with the words "as it is written" a saying which is not found in the Old Testament, namely I Cor. 2 9. According to Origen the saying was found in the Secrets of Elijah the Prophet, a non-extant Jewish apocalypse. For our present purpose it is enough to make two observations on this apparent exception to the rule that Paul shows no interest in apocalyptic literature. In the first place his introduction of the quotation with the words *καθὼς γέγραπται*, with which he uniformly quotes the Old Testament, makes one suspect that he intended here to quote Isaiah 64 4 LXX. But in the second place a study of the course of thought in I Cor. 1—3 will make it, I think, quite certain that Paul is not speaking here of things eschatological, but of the Gospel itself, that wisdom of God which has been hidden but is now revealed to those who have received the spirit of God. The "things which eye saw not, and ear heard not, and which entered not into the heart of man, whatsoever things God prepared for them that love him", were to Paul not things that are still future, but the things promised of old which Christians have now received. These are things that God freely gives, but which can be known only by the spiritual; and my own conviction is clear that Paul does not intend by the wisdom which he speaks "among the perfect" to indicate an esoteric gnosis, whether about eschatological or other mysteries, additional to and distinct from Jesus Christ and him crucified, who is to us "wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption".

If Paul knew any uncanonical apocalypse it would be the Book of Enoch. His attitude toward Daniel makes us realize that he may have known Enoch very well and yet have cared nothing for it and made no use of it. Charles, in the Intro-



duction to his *Book of Enoch* (2 ed. § 19), says, "The influence of I Enoch on the New Testament has been greater than that of all the other apocryphal and pseudepigraphic books taken together". Then, after including the direct quotation of Enoch in Jude 14-15, the allusions to the fall of the angels in Jude and II Peter, and the probable connection of I Peter 3 19-20 with Enoch 10, without distinction, in a long list of unconvincing parallels in the Catholic Epistles and Revelation, he turns to Paul, who "as we know, borrowed both phraseology and ideas from many quarters", and says, "We shall find that he was well acquainted with and used I Enoch". The evidence follows, twenty-one passages quoted without comment or discrimination. They consist largely of such phrases as the following: Angels of powers and angels of principalities; He who is blessed forever; In His name they are saved; This present evil world; According to His good pleasure; Children of light, *etc.* It is of course evident that expressions like these give no proof whatever of literary use. They are often of a biblical character, or are so slight as to carry no weight. Indeed one suspects that the verbal likeness is often due to Charles' translation rather than to the original author. Only two of the parallels have any real interest, Enoch 62 15-16 has a real likeness to Paul's comparison of the resurrection body with a clothing from heaven in II Cor. 5 2-4, and to his conception of the spiritual body in I Cor. 15; and the light that appears on the face of the holy and righteous in Enoch 38 4, may well be compared with the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ of II Cor. 4 6. The likeness in thought is important, but Paul's language does not suggest literary relationship. Just now Dr. Rendel Harris (*Expository Times*, June 1922, p. 423) argues that Paul makes a direct reference to Enoch 38 4 in II Cor. 3 18, which he would read in accordance with Tertullian's apparent quotation from Marcion's New Testament, "as if from the Lord of Spirits", instead of (R. V.) "even as from the Lord the Spirit". This is an interesting suggestion, but it is by no means so certain as Dr. Harris thinks. This great verse in Paul is shaped by the account of Moses in Ex. 34 29-35 with which Paul has been

dealing from verse 7 on, and needs no further explanation. The reading of the Greek manuscripts (*πνεύματος*, never *πνευμάτων*), in spite of a certain difficulty, follows not unnaturally from the sentence "The Lord is the Spirit" in verse 17; and the substitution of the Enoch phrase "Lord of Spirits" in Marcion's text is not difficult to account for without the assumption of its originality.

Very much, of course, is to be learned about current views of the world in Paul's time, and so about his own views, from the apocalypse of Enoch, and still more from the later apocalypses of Ezra and Baruch. These to be sure date a generation after Paul's death, but they are not so remote as Enoch is from the ideas and spirit of Rabbinical Judaism, and could have arisen, one would think, within the circles of such rabbis as afterwards joined the final Messianic revolution under Hadrian. But the differences in every direction which Christ made in Paul's thought prevent our inferring from these books what Paul's answers would have been even to such questions as Schweitzer asks; still less can they teach us the actual significance of apocalyptic hopes in Paul's religion. If we can trace two movements in the New Testament, one towards a greater elaboration of apocalyptic expectations, from Q to Mark, from Mark to Matthew, from Matthew to Revelation, and the other away from the apocalyptic toward the spiritual apprehension of the other world and man's relation to it, we must certainly say that Paul stands near the beginning of the second of these movements, of which the issue is in the Gospel of John. Paul appears to be moving away from the apocalyptic interpretation of Christianity. Assenting to what primitive Christians held as to the speedy coming of the Lord, he was yet not deeply concerned with its external features. He was greatly interested in the heavenly world and in the future age, but when we ask in what sort of another and future world his life was centered it appears at once how fundamentally different his interests were from those of apocalyptic religion.

It would be interesting in this connection to compare the spirituality of Paul with that most spiritual of the apocalypses,

the Parables of Enoch. The word spirit is central in this writer's religion. God is the Lord of Spirits who has filled the world with spirits. The spirit world is not to be seen by men and can be known only by revelation through one who has been translated into it. Religion consists in faith in the reality of the hidden dwelling places of the righteous, in the Lord of Spirits, in the Divine Wisdom which also dwells there, having found no dwelling place on earth, and in the Son of Man and his future coming as judge. One who has faith in this unseen world will renounce the present evil world and all its works and ways. When this other world takes the place of the present, the righteous will be changed in nature into accordance with that world and will be clothed with garments of glory, garments of life from the Lord of Spirits, which shall not grow old. They will enjoy familiar companionship with that Son of Man, in a world in which there is nothing corruptible and from which all evil shall have passed away.

Paul also knows two worlds and knows that it is the religious task of man to have his real home in the heavenly world. He also has seen in vision this heavenly realm and the heavenly man who dwells there and who is to be judge of the world. But Paul knows who this heavenly pre-existent man is. He is the exalted Jesus, but still Jesus himself, who had just lived and died in Palestine. It is in the light of his personality that Paul interprets the heavenly world. It is on this account that he never characterizes it as the apocalypses invariably do in language suggested by the actual vault of heaven, the sun and the stars. When in the third chapter of Colossians he admonishes Christians to seek the things that are above where Christ is, to set their minds on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth, he says two things about it: that the Christian's life is there already, "for ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God"; and that to seek it, to set one's mind upon it, means to put away earthly passions and unloving tempers and to put on the new man, that is the heart of compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, long-suffering, and above all love. This then is the nature of the other world in Paul's otherworldliness. It is above and

can be seen in vision, but it is within and must be gained by moral effort; and whether above or within its name and nature is Christ. Paul makes no use even of his own apocalyptic vision (2 Cor. 12 1-5) in what he says of the world above. Why should he depend on the visions of others?

It may be worth while to notice a remark by Franz Boll in his *Aus der Offenbarung Johannis* (1914). He finds that where the influence of the Old Testament fails to account for the imagery of the apocalypses, parallels can often be found in the Hellenistic literature of prediction. These analogies are numerous in the Book of Revelation, and at many points illuminating; and there are also many parallels between the Synoptic apocalypses and these texts of Hellenistic astrology; but Boll remarks (p. 135, n. 1) that he does not find in the apocalyptic passages in Paul any allusions to the Hellenistic texts which he has compared.

The dualism of Paul is made fundamentally different from that of the apocalypses by the fact of Christ. The doctrine of the two worlds, this world and the world to come, is often thought to be one of the distinctively apocalyptic conceptions of Paul, but its place in his scheme of thought is very different from that which it occupies in the apocalypse of Ezra. Paul can still speak of this world and of its rulers and even its god. The present world is the place or time of the power of evil. The Christian is not to be conformed to it. But he has already been delivered out of it. He is experiencing its end. Paul scarcely ever speaks of the world to come (see only Eph. 1 21 where its use is rhetorical). In fact the age to come has already dawned for the Christian. Its powers are already experienced, and its glories possessed. Already "all things are yours . . . whether things present or things to come". The dualism which is the key to Paul's thought is not expressed in the words of Ezra, "The Most High has made not one world, but two" (4 Ezra 7 50), but rather in the contrast between flesh and spirit, flesh being essentially Paul's word for human nature apart from the Spirit of God, which is the Spirit of Christ, or simply Christ (Rom. 8 1-11). The word spirit has indeed its eschatological connections; but it is unnecessary to

argue here the evident and recognized fact that one of the greatest achievements of Paul was his thoroughgoing re-interpretation of the conception of spirit into accordance with the actual character of the historical Jesus (I Cor. 12—14). Spirit remains of course to Paul the Divine Power operative in human life. But because he subjects it to the ideals and character, the mind, the love, of Christ, the supernatural becomes spiritual without losing its supernaturalness. Here as everywhere else when Paul thinks of the other world and of its forces and operations he thinks of Christ; and it is the difference which this makes that it is most essential to understand if one would know what has become of the apocalyptic elements of his inheritance in the mind of the Christian Paul. Only to this we must always add that Paul does not look away in order to see Christ, but within. The amazing fact of the Christ-likeness of the Christian is inseparably bound up with the transcendent fact of the God-likeness of Christ. And the Christ-likeness of the Christian is a fact which fills Paul with wonder and humility, but of which he is never for a moment in doubt. It is therefore possible for us, if we would know what Paul means by the other world, and therefore what the essence of his apocalyptic conception is, to look not only with him at Christ, but to look at him, and at Christ in and through him.

There are of course those who strenuously object to the idea that the actual historical fact of Jesus and the reality of his personal qualities and characteristics are the source of Paul's conceptions of religion. It is often argued, as conspicuously by Wrede, that the Christ of Paul's Christianity had nothing to do with the historical Jesus but was a purely mythological figure of Paul's inheritance, the heavenly being who came to earth on man's behalf, died on the cross for man's sin and his redemption, was exalted to the throne of God as Lord, and is soon to come as judge. To this view, as to so many opinions that are expressed about Paul, one feels like answering neither yes nor no. One should rather deny the alternative and reverse the emphasis. It would require space that I cannot here take to give the evidence that convinces

me that Paul knew well, even before his vision, just what manner of man Jesus was; and that the vision was his sudden conviction that this wholly un-messianic teacher, this lowly and crucified one, was the heavenly Messiah of his faith. It was just because in Jesus God had exalted humility and self-sacrificing love to lordship, and revealed them as the secret of the Divine, the foundation and the goal of all things, that Paul experienced so complete a revolution in all his ideals and ideas. The newness of all things was, we may believe, first of all a newness in his ideals and in his character. His letters are full of expressions of his sense that he had already become, though he was still always becoming, like Christ in his moral nature; and about the qualities of that nature he is never uncertain or obscure. They are not in the least different from the qualities which in the Gospels we recognize as those of the historical person Jesus Christ. Paul knows these qualities as one who himself possesses them, or rather is possessed by them, not as one who learns about them from others. Paul himself, whom we know far better than we know his teachings, is the convincing truth that the Jesus whom he knew was the Jesus of history.

The real question, therefore, which we need to ask about the eschatology of Paul is, What results naturally follow and actually followed from these two great facts which are united in his great experience, the fact of Christ and the fact of Paul's own new nature in conformity with Christ?

We notice at once that the very fact that Paul's religion is embodied in his personality distinguishes him from all the writers of apocalypses and puts him rather in the class of the great prophets, whose greatest message was themselves. Paul does not write under the name of some ancient man of God. His letters have more of himself in them than any other biblical writings, even the prophecies of Jeremiah. There is always an element of unreality even in the greatest of the apocalypses. Their assumed authorship involves a separation of the things they write from the actuality of their knowledge and experience. They are students of ancient oracles and are subject to tradition. We feel in them an incapacity to distinguish between outward

forms and inner meanings, between symbols and realities. In all these things Paul is the opposite of an apocalyptic spirit.

Paul's experience was his own. The unseen world is therefore not in the same sense mysterious and external as it is when looked at by an outsider. When one has in some real sense seen God for himself his wonder and reverence are not less, but yet the God whom he knows has become in some sense his own inner and true self, and is not a God remote in space, whom one can see only in trance, or distant in time, for whose coming one has to hope and wait.

Much can be said for the value of the apocalypse, for its advance toward a cosmic and universal range and scope, and for its effectiveness in holding men's faith to the unseen reality and future coming of the rule of God in times of stress and strain; nevertheless it remains true that rational soundness and ethical strength are lacking in the apocalypses in comparison with the older prophecy. Paul's account of the newly revealed wisdom of God in I Cor. 1—3 is altogether in the direction of a return to inwardness and reality. Spiritual things are spiritually judged, and must therefore be known by every man for himself, quite in accordance with Jeremiah's ideal (31 31-34). The man who thus sees and judges is free and needs no outward authority. In this description of the nature of the new knowledge the nature of the things known is given. They consist of such things as can be known only in this way; and Paul is surely unmistakable in his indications as to what these things are. They are things that create humility over against all pride of opinion, and they are things that issue in the unity of mutual love, in contrast to everything that produces jealousy and strife. The height and depth of knowledge which Paul prays that Christians may apprehend is nothing but that love of Christ which passeth knowledge. Moral motives and values are dominant in the eschatology of Paul.

The coming of the Lord was always the center of the Old Testament and Jewish hope for the future. For early Christianity and for Paul the coming of the Lord was the coming of Christ. Paul takes this expectation for granted as a primary and unquestionable part of the new religion; but its place in

his religion is different from its place in Matthew or in Revelation. Paul knows three comings of Christ. The first is the historical coming; and Paul sees more clearly than popular Jewish Christianity did that this has and keeps the place of first importance. It is by the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ that redemption has been wrought out and accomplished. The cross is to Paul the dividing point between the old and the new. When Christ was raised by God from death and became life-giving spirit and was given the supreme title of Lord, a new creation was brought into being which can be compared only to God's calling of light out of darkness in the beginning, or to his making the first man a living soul. The gospel thus revealed and imparted is the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. The spiritual nature of the second man, the heavenly, is the beginning and source of a new and in the end all-inclusive humanity. This means that the coming of God, which was the hope of Paul's favorite Old Testament books, Isaiah and the Psalms, is in the most real sense a historical fact of the immediate past. With the resurrection of Christ the age to come has already begun. There is surely reason enough in this alone to account for the fact that Paul has little interest in the apocalypses, which have to do only with the future manifestation of a God who is now hidden or withdrawn. The difference involved in this conception of Paul is much more than a difference in time between a future and a past event. It involves a fundamental difference in kind. Externality and sensible images must essentially give place to inner experience in the thought of one to whom the fundamental intervening or God in human history took place in Christ and in his death and exaltation.

To understand the way in which Paul conceives this coming we must turn to what follows directly from it, to Paul's addition of a second coming of the Lord to his past historical coming, namely his present coming as spirit. The present experience of Christ as indwelling, and as the Divine Power that re-creates human nature, is the most characteristic and original element in his Christian thinking. The phrase "in Christ" seems to



have been his own creation, and expresses his sense that Christ has become in some most real though mysterious sense the Divine element in which he lives, his own new nature, truly himself, though also not himself, the reality of the immanent God, whose presence means now the power of righteousness, and hereafter the power of eternal life. J. Weiss (*Das Urchristentum*, p. 408) says, "If the mystic experience is the anticipation of future blessedness as present, then mysticism is in a certain way the annulling or overcoming of eschatology. In the degree in which the eschatological hope still rules in the religion of Paul, in that degree his religion is not mystical. This however is the case in so high a degree that the range of mysticism in him is thereby very considerably limited". My own inclination would be to put emphasis on the contrary inference, and say that the importance of eschatology in the religion of Paul must be very considerably limited by the vivid reality with which Paul conceives his own life and that of every Christian to be already a life of oneness with Christ. The word spirit was of indispensable value to Paul in his effort to express this part of his Christian experience and to keep in relation with one another factors in it which were difficult to hold together. The spirit is both supernatural and inward; it expresses our experience of the Divine as both above us and within. Of course the present experience of Christ as Divine Spirit did not exclude from Paul's view the expectation of his personal coming and the desire for a personal 'being with the Lord'. On the other hand, Paul speaks of the spirit as the ground of our hope (Rom. 5 5), as the pledge, the first fruits, the promise, the seal, of that which is still to come (Gal. 3 14; Rom. 8 23; II Cor. 1 22 5 5; Eph. 1 13, 14 4 30). The resurrection of Christ, which as we have seen was to Paul the first properly eschatological event, is thought of by him as something already experienced in the case of every Christian. "Ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God". "If then ye were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above". And this being raised together with Christ means that the Christian walks in newness of life.<sup>4</sup> In this language of Paul concerning the dying

<sup>4</sup> See Rom. 6 1-11.

and rising of men with Christ there is the most striking evidence of the ease and naturalness with which the eschatological is converted in his mind into present inward and ethical experiences. One feels that this characteristic is due less to a natural mysticism in Paul than to the strength and consistency with which he carried through his picture of the actual character of the actual Jesus, and subjected all things to the test of that character. It is because it was Jesus who died and rose that his dying and rising become not only facts of the past, and not only among past facts the greatest in human history, but also inner experiences, the death of fleshly passions and of all selfishness and every divisive feeling and the beginning of a new and until then impossible kind of life.

In this quality of Paul's Christian thinking we see a further reason why apocalypses would lose their appeal to him. The spirit of the greatest of the apocalypses is a spirit of exclusiveness and of fear and hatred toward the world. They express the self-assertion of the Jewish, or as in the Book of Revelation of the Christian, church, over against a dominant world power that threatens its destruction. Their strength is in their appeal to the martyr spirit of fidelity amid persecution, in view of the certain intervention of God for the destruction of the wicked and the elevation of the faithful to power and blessedness. But to Paul the love of God, as evident and effective in Christ, puts an end to distinction, and works in and through men toward the creation of oneness and peace. The hope of the writer of Daniel is for the destruction of Antiochus Epiphanes and of the Greek empire, and the rule in its place of the people of the saints of the Most High. The hope of John, the prophet, was for the fall of the Roman empire; and for this the writers of the apocalypses of Ezra and Baruch looked forward, as did the earlier Psalms of Solomon, and the Assumption of Moses. Paul also has his eye on the Roman empire, but his apostolic calling, and his passionate desire and confident expectation, are not its destruction, but its conversion; and this difference is due to Jesus, that is to the fact that the Messiah is now known to be a man long-

suffering and forgiving toward sinners, drawing and uniting all men through the power of his humility and love.

What now is distinctive in Paul's view of the still future coming of that Christ whose first coming brought redemption and created a new world, and whose present inward coming is the power of new life in men, transforming them progressively into its own likeness? The parousia, or manifestation, or coming of the Lord is appealed to by Paul frequently as a motive to Christian living, and is desired by him as meaning a closer fellowship of the disciple with his master. We should expect to find that Paul's hope for the coming of Christ is consistent with his understanding of the significance of his death and resurrection as the turning point in history, and with his conviction that Christ already lives in him. And in reality the future coming does seem in Paul's thought to bring only fullness and completion to that which has been already given and is already possessed. Christ is to Paul always a person toward whom his love is intense and his loyalty and devotion unbounded. But he is at the same time a divine principle and a human ideal. Because this principle and ideal is Love, only a person can be its expression or embodiment, a person who loves and is loved. It is not only the distinctive characteristic of the Christian religion that it is embodied in an actual person, but its nature is such that it could not be contained in any other vessel than that of personality; or, we may say, Christ was such a person that the religious movement started by him must because of its nature continue to be bound up with him. To one who, like Paul, thus conceives of religion, the coming of Christ could no longer mean the coming of a certain nation to political dominance, nor the coming of Enoch's Son of Man as the divine agent for judgment. It could mean essentially nothing but the completion of the coming of the Divine Love, and that in its only conceivable embodiment in personalities.

In two passages Paul discusses the coming of the Lord in some detail. 1 Thes. 4 13—5 11 aims to allay the fear that Christians who die before Christ's coming would have no part in it. Paul's answer is that the dead and living will fare alike, and that 'being ever with the Lord' is equally the goal for all.

In I Cor. 15 the objection of the Greek mind to the idea of resurrection is discussed at length and a middle path is sought between the Jewish conception of resurrection and the Greek conception of the immortality of the soul, its separation from the body being its escape from a prison or tomb. Paul's thought is determined here of course in part by his Hebrew heritage but also and fundamentally by that which forms the ground and the contents of his hope, the destined oneness of the Christian with Christ. Death will not separate us from him, but rather his coming will mean our translation, out of death, or, if we live, out of our flesh and blood nature, into the spiritual nature of Christ. We shall bear his image as we have borne the image of Adam. Personal fellowship with Christ, and to this end likeness in nature to Christ, constitute the real meaning of the coming of the Lord to Paul. It is impossible to read his letters and still suppose that the physical descent of Christ, the shouting and sound of the trumpet of God, the bodily rapture of Christians into the spaces between earth and heaven, are original with Paul or of any essential importance to him. To be forever with the Lord is his hope, and he will not tolerate any conceptions which seem to him to put in danger the certainty and full reality of this personal life with Christ. Death before his coming must not stand in its way; and the nature of life after death cannot be different from *his* life after death. To Paul the Greek immortality of the soul did not seem fully personal nor fitted to introduce the man himself into the presence of the heavenly Lord. Unless we also rise, and rise just as he did, to the same sort of heavenly existence, how can we hope for that association with him which is our heart's desire? "None of us liveth to himself, and none dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; or whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's." "Our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, according to the working whereby he is able even to subject all things unto himself." In such sentences we have both the contents

and the spirit of Paul's eschatology. To be with Christ and to be wholly one with him is then the thing essential and all-inclusive.<sup>5</sup>

If we look for further details which do not suggest the mere acceptance of current tradition but seem to be matters of Paul's own interest and reflection, we note especially the following. In the first place Paul looks forward to the redemption of the body as that which is still future, for those whom the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has already freed from the law of sin and of death, and who are even "not in the flesh, but in the spirit", because the spirit of God, that is the spirit of Christ, or Christ himself, dwells in them. We "who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for our adoption, the redemption of our body". This is that "revealing of the sons of God" for which the whole creation waits, since it will bring to creation itself deliverance from the bondage of corruption. This magnificent picture of a transformation of the physical world into its destined fitness for spiritual life (Rom. 8 18-25) is surely the creation of Paul's own genius. It implies in striking form his conviction that the greater redemption, that of the human mind from the dominion of sin, is a thing of past fact and present experience. The inward is essentially achieved; the outward remains for the future.

Another striking prophetic outlook of Paul concerns the completion of his own task as apostle to the Gentiles, the subjection of humanity in its completeness to Christ, and the inclusion in the end of his own brethren to whom sonship and the promises originally belonged (Rom. 9-11).

In I Cor. 15 20-28, we have an apocalyptic picture which depends in part on tradition but is shaped by Paul's mind, and reaches at the end a high and difficult point on which we could have wished that he had cast further light. Paul everywhere understands that Divine Love, which is the mind of Christ, is the creator of unity. He assails more vehemently

<sup>5</sup> The writer has discussed more fully Paul's conception of life after death in a chapter of *Religion and the Future Life*, edited by E. H. Sneath, The Revell Co. 1922.

than any other fault in his Christian churches every tendency toward strife, ill will, envy, rivalry, and self-assertion. Christianity means the end of all those distinctions which religion itself had magnified in the past. "There is no distinction" (Rom. 3 22). "There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female; for ye all are one man in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3 28). "Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman: but Christ is all, and in all." This last passage (Col. 3 11) belongs in the description of what Paul would have Christians see and become when they set their minds on the things that are above. When Paul looks forward to Christ's completion of his conquest of evil he sees a fulfillment of that supreme forecast of prophecy "The Lord shall be King over all the earth: in that day shall the Lord be one and his name one" (Zech. 14 9). The oneness which is the goal of Paul's hope is not only created by the Divine Love, but is certainly in its nature the oneness of love. When therefore Paul says, "when all things have been subjected unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subjected to him that did subject all things unto him, that God may be all in all", he cannot mean a return of the movements of history and nature into the God from whom they went forth of such a nature that an abstract and empty unity alone is left. God is the fulness of life and his oneness can be only inclusive of all that love is and effects. At this high point of Paul's passion and thought we are certainly to see nothing inconsistent with, or different from, that other height, perhaps the greatest that he attained, where he exclaims, "I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8 38 f.).

The eschatology of Paul is of such a nature, so vital, so alive with the force of his personality, so "carried alive into the heart by passion", that it is impossible to approach toward an understanding of it except by the use of his own words. Paul was of course a man of his time, and we can learn from

him much in regard to the thoughts of his time as to heavenly things and beings, and future divine events. We need also the light of all contemporary literature, including the apocalyptic, in order to understand his language and the forms of his thought. But Paul was a great personality and had a great experience; and the new feelings and thoughts which this experience called forth in him are more significant than the forms in which they struggled for expression. It is possible that a development can be traced in his letters from more outward to more spiritual forms of hope; but the underlying principles of his religion of hope remain the same, and what is more certain and more important than a development of his ideas is the fact that always and everywhere the bearing and natural tendency and effect of his thought and feeling are toward the spiritual. The Christian both is and is to be like Christ. And that which we hope for we already possess, and so know, even though only in part, yet with the certainty of actual experience. But this Christ-likeness now and hereafter is both a gift from God, a divine creation, and also equally a moral ideal and achievement. Paul charges his disciples to become that which in reality they are, to walk by the spirit by which they live, and urges them to strive for the goal to which they are destined; speaking of himself also, even at the end of his life, as still seeking to lay hold of that for which also he was laid hold of by Christ Jesus (Phil. 3 8-14). There is scarcely any analogy in the literature of apocalyptic to the way in which Paul undertakes as man's own purpose and responsibility all that for which he also hopes from the purpose and manifest coming and act of God.