CHAPTER TWELVE

THE STRUCTURE OF PAULINE ESCHATOLOGY

(II COR 5:1–10)

Since the days of O. Pfleiderer1 II Cor 5:1–10 has been commonly regarded as showing a hellenization of Paul’s eschatology, or in today’s language, a transition from a futurist to a realized (or inaugurated) eschatology.2 Paul’s earliest view (I Thess 4:13ff.) followed the ancient Jewish idea of physical resurrection at the last day; in I Cor 15 this is qualified by distinguishing between the σῶμα ψυχικόν and the σῶμα πνευματικόν; II Cor 5 completes the process, viewing the transition in Greek fashion as occurring at death rather than at the parousia. Although some located ‘the two diverse strains in Paul’s conception of resurrection’ in (a hellenized) Judaism (Davies), the end result is the same: In contrast to I Cor 15 ‘resurrection’ in II Cor 5 takes place at death.3 Other writers, following Pfleiderer, contended that Paul, for a shorter or longer period, held both Jewish and Greek concepts ‘without any thought of their essential

3 W. D. Davies, St. Paul and Rabbinic Judaism, London 1955, 319; cf. Charles (note 2), 453. Hettlingerm (note 2), 192, takes the unusual view that II Cor 5 represented only a temporary aberration caused by recent afflications (II Cor 1:8–9); in Philippians (4:6) Paul returns to his parousia hope. Cf. Harris (note 24).
inconsistency.\textsuperscript{4} Even scholars normally opposed to a Greek dualism in Pauline anthropology tend toward it when interpreting II Cor 5:8. Thus, J. A. T. Robinson is content to equate ‘absent from the body’ with the ‘naked’ interim state.\textsuperscript{5} Also, O. Cullmann, who has emphasized the temporal character of redemption focused upon the parousia, refers this verse to Paul’s confidence concerning the intermediate state of the Christian dead.\textsuperscript{6}

II Cor 5 has considerable bearing both upon the nature of Pauline anthropology and eschatology and upon the more specific question of the intermediate state. The commentators’ exegetical differences arise for the most part in the presuppositions underlying the apostle’s thought. Those (e.g. C. H. Dodd) who see a transition from Paul’s earlier eschatology have a certain presumption to overcome. In view of Paul’s parousia eschatology throughout his writings\textsuperscript{7} ‘ist es wahrscheinlich, daß er dennoch in einigen Stellen seiner Briefe, in welchen er doch auch immer an seiner Aeonen-Eschatologie festhält, plötzlich das Geschehen unmittelbar nach dem Tode in griechischem Sinne als definitiv entscheidend verkündigen würde?’\textsuperscript{8}

\textbf{The Believer’s Corporate Existence in Christ}

In II Cor 4:10f. the couplet,

\begin{quote}
Always carrying the dying of Jesus in the body
In order that the life of Jesus \( \varepsilon \nu \tau \omega \varepsilon \omicron \mu \omicron \alpha \mu \tau i \ \eta \mu \omicron \omega \ \phi \alpha \nu e r o \omega \theta \eta \).\footnote{O. Pfleiderer, \textit{Paulinism}, 2 vols., London 1891, I, 264; cf. Lowe (note 2), 142: ‘[Paul] left the whole wonderful muddle unarranged and alive.’ This view, however, for which ‘from the whole range of the history of thought no analogy could be produced,’ has been unsatisfactory to most. Cf. Schweitzer (note 1), 77.}

For we the living are ever given over to death for Jesus’ sake
In order that also the life of Jesus \( \phi \alpha \nu e r o \omega \theta \eta \varepsilon \nu \tau \eta \ \theta \nu \nu \tau \iota \ \sigma \tau \omega \kappa i \ \eta \mu \omicron \omega \nabla \).\footnote{J. A. T. Robinson, \textit{The Body}, London 1952, 17, 29, 77.}
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