

The Judas Kiss: Why the Eternal State Must Include the Physical

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ABSTRACT

The last supper has been the subject of sermons, movies, and murals. This has been identified by Christians as the time at which Judas decided to betray Jesus. While the specific discourse from Jesus of Judas is brief, it is proffered that there was great significance in the choice of words of impending judgment as used by Jesus in reference to the act Judas was about to commit.

It is suggested that in Mark 14:21 Jesus utilized a prophetic formula when pronouncing impending judgment upon Judas. The basis for this is to be found in the use of both “woe” and “betray” as found in the passage. It is further suggested that because Jesus made the statement that “it would have been better if he had not been born”, it is possible to discern that the death of Judas could not have been the event to which Jesus was referring. Rather, the existence of the person continues postmortem, and in that the eternal state must include a physical existence, and that existence must have some qualitative difference between men.

This case is further developed by way of examining how the person in first century Palestine would have understood certain key words as found within the text, as well as attempting to discern the differences between three concepts of post-death existence that were known to exist at that same time in history. Additionally, if one holds to the concept that life continues after death, it shall be necessary to examine what is meant by “restore” in relation to eschatology as found in Acts 3:21 to determine if the use of “restore” as found here is a defeater to the proposed understanding. Thus, unless a defeater is identified, then the conclusion would follow that what man chooses to do with Jesus in this life will determine the qualitative difference to be found in the next.

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WHERE TO BEGIN

While celebrating Passover with his disciples just before the crucifixion, Jesus foretold of his imminent death. Moreover, he spoke of his being betrayed by one of the twelve. Does Mark 14:21, if stated by Jesus, express the necessity of a physical eternal state? This paper shall seek to defend the thesis that because Jesus used the words “woe,” “betrays,” and “better for him if he had not been born,” Jesus had to have been referencing an eternal state existing physically, and then with a qualitative difference. Additionally, because Judas had in fact been born, and because that event happened in time and space, it is suggested that it would be impossible for a condition to obtain whereby Judas had not been born. Therefore, it shall be argued that something of great significance would follow the actions of Judas which led to Christ being taken, tried, and ultimately executed. Recognizing that all of the disciples died, it is suggested that the death of Judas could not have been the point of Jesus’ comments, nor would the presumed guilty feelings satisfy the proclamation made by Christ of Judas.

The passage of particular interest is Mark 14:21 where Jesus said, “The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born.”¹ It is from this verse this study begins.

¹ *Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture references are from the New International Version, 1984.*

THE WORDS

THE PROPHETIC FORMULA

If one considers Jesus to be the Son of God, indeed deity himself, then what is to be made of the pronouncement made around the supper table? Is there some way of understanding the passage and its having been uttered by God in understanding the severity and whether or not there was to be a future condition generated by the actions of one man at that time in history? It is proffered that the pronouncement made by Jesus in the upper room may be considered as having the same overarching construct as the prophetic formula of the Old Testament.

The Bible is authoritative because it is divinely authorized; in its own terms, “all Scripture is God-breathed” (2 Tm 3:16). According to this passage the whole OT (or any element of it) is divinely inspired. Extension of the same claim to the NT is not expressly stated, though it is more than merely implied. The NT contains indications that its content was to be viewed, and was in fact viewed, as no less authoritative than the OT... Under the heading of Scripture, 1 Timothy 5:18 cites Luke 10:7 alongside Deuteronomy 25:4 (cf. 1 Cor 9:9). The Book of Revelation, moreover, claims divine origin (1:1–3) and employs the term “prophecy” in the OT meaning (22:9, 10, 18). The apostles did not distinguish their spoken and written teaching but expressly declared their inspired proclamation to be the Word of God (1 Cor 4:1; 2 Cor 5:20; 1 Thes 2:13).²

If as Elwell and Beitzel state the content of the New Testament was to be believed as authoritative, and then in the same vein as proclamations issued during the time of the Old Testament, and if Jesus was God in the flesh, then the words of Jesus would have been considered as authoritative, binding, and as possessing certainty of fulfillment. Henry, in pointing to Vos, notes

The prophets affirm and imply everywhere a real communication from Jehovah to themselves. The most frequently used prophetic formulas are *amar Yahweh*, *dibber Yahweh* and *ne'um Yahweh*; these phrases—particularly the last (passive participle) form: “That which has been oracles”—imply that God’s speaking always preceded the prophetic

² Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 298.

delivery of his Word. Vos points out that Yahweh spoke directly and verbally in contrast to pagan deities (cf. Isa. 41:22–26, 43:9; Jer. 10:5; Hab. 2:18).³

Stipulating that God’s speaking always preceded the prophetic delivery of His Word, then there would be implication for the study at hand. In the case under investigation it is suggested that Henry’s point is validated in that Jesus, as the Word, as the second person of the Trinity, did indeed speak first. The difference to be found in this instance is that God in the form of a man spoke directly to men without the use of an intermediary.

For evangelical orthodoxy, if God’s revelational disclosure to chosen prophets and apostles is to be considered meaningful and true, it must be given not merely in isolated concepts capable of diverse meanings but in sentences or propositions. A proposition—that is, a subject, predicate, and connecting verb (or “copula”)—constitutes the minimal logical unit of intelligible communication. The OT prophetic formula “thus saith the Lord” characteristically introduced propositionally disclosed truth. Jesus Christ employed the distinctive formula “But I say unto you” to introduce logically formed sentences which he represented as the veritable word or doctrine of God.⁴

An example of the formula may be found in Zechariah 12:10, and more specifically in the chapter as a whole. Here if one moves to verse 1 it is found that God speaks through the prophet, but the prophet cannot speak until after God. Second, the passage is prophetic as it relates to the person and act of Jesus’ crucifixion. Third, when one considers that Jesus not only performed miracles, but also forgave sins while claiming to be the Son of God, then the prophetic formula is fulfilled with Christ accomplishing both the role of God and that of the prophet.

WOE AND BETRAY

Recognizing that the words of Christ were spoken in advance of an act to be performed by Judas, namely the betrayal, what is one to do with the term, “woe” as found in the passage?

Swanson offers the following definition:

³ Carl F. H. Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, vol. 3, (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1999), 409.

⁴ Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 298.

4026 οὐαί (*ouai*), ἦ (*hē*): n. fem. [BAGD, GD, Thayer mostly as interjection]; ≡ DBLHEBR 208, 2098; Str 3759—LN 22.9 horror, how dreadful!; (most versions) Woe; Alas! (REB, NEB, NJB); as a noun in BAGD/GD 1Co 9:16; Rev 9:12^(2x); 11:14a; (as an interjection in BAGD) Mt 23:13ff *passim*; Mk 13:17; 14:21; Lk 6:24–26; 11:42–52 *passim*; 22:22; Jude 11; Rev 8:13; 18:10, 16, 19.⁵

Louw and Nida offer perhaps greater insight into how the term would have been understood, pointing out that the hearer of the term would have understood it to convey the idea of disaster, intense distress, or great and terrible pain and suffering, and also go on to note that in many languages there was not to be found a noun with which to convey the concept of disaster.⁶ More shall be said on this shortly, but it is here suggested that if great pain and suffering was the understood meaning, then neither guilt nor death by suicide would have been sufficient to satisfy the meaning behind the use of woe by Christ. The Hebrew corollary is found to convey the same meaning of distress,⁷ thus from the written text and the cultural viewpoint, there appears to be no reason to believe there to have been a difference in what was said and what was meant. Martin points out that it was Judas who took the initiative for betraying Jesus, and it was this betrayal of innocent blood for which Judas would have to give an account.⁸ To betray innocent blood was one issue, but it must be remembered that Judas was a witness to not only the miracles performed by Jesus during his ministry, but also to the private times of teaching and learning. There can be no doubt that Judas knew he was turning his back not on a mere man, but on God, and for that there must be significant consequences.

⁵ James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek New Testament* (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).

⁶ Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 242.

⁷ James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Hebrew (Old Testament)* (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).

⁸ John A. Martin, "Luke." in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2, (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 258–259.

APOKATASTASIS, APOTHEOSIS, AND RESURRECTION

If one is to contend that Jesus could not have meant anything short of Judas experiencing a physical eternal state, and then that state being qualitatively different than what would be experienced by at least some others, then it is necessary to examine a limited number of views associated with what happens to an individual after death. First it shall be necessary to understand what is meant by the term resurrection, then *apotheosis*, and finally *apokatastasis*.

With the use of resurrection it becomes apparent that the authors of the New Testament, and Paul in particular, believed that for Christ, what was buried is exactly what came up out of the grave. Considering Mark 16:6 one sees that Jesus was raised from the dead, with the explicit statement that the person that had been placed in the tomb is the same person who was no longer present in the tomb, but was once again alive. Such is consistent with Peter's message at Pentecost.

Peter began his testimony with the announcement of the historical facts of the resurrection of Jesus and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and represents these facts as the divine seal of his Messiahship, according to the prophets of old, who bear witness to him that through his name every one that believes shall receive remission of sins.⁹

Moreover, it was not Peter alone who believed that the very same body that had been crucified was in fact the one and same body that was raised from the dead.

This brings us to the basis of the truth of Jesus' resurrection. My position is that this truth does not rest on historical analysis, for history yields only an approximation, not certainty. The New Testament does give us evidences of Jesus' resurrection, among which are the empty tomb and the appearance of Jesus to his disciples after his death. Yet these are not proofs that can compel reason, because they leave too many unanswered questions. They are evidences, however, that ratify faith. The empty tomb is a sign of the reality of Jesus' resurrection, but divine revelation alone is the cause of our acceptance of belief in this resurrection. The women at the tomb of Jesus believed not because they saw a tomb that was empty but because an angel appeared to them and announced Jesus' resurrection (Mt 28:1–7; Mk 16:5–6). Similarly Paul believed not because he was persuaded by the

⁹ Philip Schaff and David Schley Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, vol. 1, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910), 522–523.

testimonies of eyewitnesses but because he was personally visited by the risen Christ and heard the voice of Christ with his inner ears (Acts 9, 22).¹⁰

Thus, the easier part of this conversation is found in understanding what was meant by the use of the term ‘resurrection’ as found in orthodox Christianity. Here it is suggested that the difficulty with the resurrection may rest, at least in part, in the competing concept found in the first century culture whereby one may be believed to have experienced *apotheosis*, the concept of which is expressed clearly by Suetonius of Julius Caesar.

He died in the fifty-sixth year of his age, and was ranked amongst the Gods, not only by a formal decree, but in the belief of the vulgar. For during the first games which Augustus, his heir, consecrated to his memory, a comet blazed for seven days together, rising always about eleven o’clock; and it was supposed to be the soul of Caesar, now received into heaven: for which reason, likewise, he is represented on his statue with a star on his brow. The senate-house in which he was slain, was ordered to be shut up, and a decree made that the ides of March should be called parricidal, and the senate should never more assemble on that day.¹¹

Based on this text it is clear that, at least when evaluating the concept as presented in this example, the idea of *apotheosis* was that life continued, but not in the same physical manner as known here on earth. Additionally, the purported existence of Julius Caesar as based on this account, was one where the soul was received into heaven, indicating a belief that he had become as one of the gods, meaning he had become deity. Augustin notes,

And what was the end of the kings themselves? Of Romulus, a flattering legend tells us that he was assumed into heaven. But certain Roman historians relate that he was torn in pieces by the senate for his ferocity, and that a man, Julius Proculus, was suborned to give out that Romulus had appeared to him, and through him commanded the Roman people to worship him as a god; and that in this way the people, who were beginning to resent the action of the senate, were quieted and pacified. For an eclipse of the sun had also happened; and this was attributed to the divine power of Romulus by the ignorant multitude, who did not know that it was brought about by the fixed laws of the sun’s

¹⁰ Donald G. Bloesch, *The Last Things: Resurrection, Judgment, Glory* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 117–118.

¹¹ C. Suetonius Tranquillus, *Suetonius: The Lives of the Twelve Caesars; An English Translation, Augmented with the Biographies of Contemporary Statesmen, Orators, Poets, and Other Associates*, ed. Alexander Thomson (Medford, MA: Gebbie & Co., 1889).

course: though this grief of the sun might rather have been considered proof that Romulus had been slain, and that the crime was indicated by this deprivation of the sun's light; as, in truth, was the case when the Lord was crucified through the cruelty and impiety of the Jews. For it is sufficiently demonstrated that this latter obscuration of the sun did not occur by the natural laws of the heavenly bodies, because it was then the Jewish Passover, which is held only at full moon, whereas natural eclipses of the sun happen only at the last quarter of the moon.¹²

Based on the report from Augustine it becomes readily evident that the *apotheosis* event as reported of Romulus was not to be considered the same type of afterlife as evidenced by Jesus, namely the resurrection. Such deification is to be found written of Augustus. "After his death in AD 14 Augustus, like most of his successors, was elevated to deity (*apotheosis*). Senators had to express their belief in this exaltation, and the emperor cult was added to that of other state gods. Living emperors came closer and closer to divinity, though never actually becoming gods."¹³ Again, there is speak of life after death, but this life was first of a spiritual nature, and second, there was but a single reported encounter with the deceased in the case of Romulus, whereas with Christianity the resurrection brought about not only individual reports of having seen Jesus, but also group encounters. One additional point that need be made here is that it was not the resurrection that conferred deity status upon Jesus, nor does the future promise of resurrection to the follower of Jesus promise elevation to a status of deity for the believer.

Finally, there is an important difference between the claims that Apollonius was deified and that Jesus was Deity. Apollonius's deification is known as apotheosis, the process by which a human becomes God. Christ's incarnation was a process by which God became human. Further, the concept of "God" differed. Christ was God in the theistic sense. The claim for Apollonius would make him God only in a polytheistic sense.¹⁴

¹² Augustine of Hippo, "The City of God." In *St. Augustin's City of God and Christian Doctrine*, ed. Philip Schaff, trans. Marcus Dods, vol. 2, A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, First Series (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1887), 51.

¹³ Dankward Vollmer, "Roman Empire." In *The Encyclopedia of Christianity* (Grand Rapids, Mich.; Leiden, Netherlands: Wm. B. Eerdmans: Brill, 2005), 725.

¹⁴ Norman L. Geisler, *Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics*, Baker Reference Library (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999), 45.

Pace Bovon, Luke's use of an *apotheosis* motif in the ascension of Christ in Acts 1 is not a call for the *apotheosis* of Jesus, rather the common term as found in the culture was used by Luke to express a unique event as it happened to a unique singular individual, namely the Son of God as he returned to the right hand of the Father.¹⁵

With the resurrection having been shown to be a physical event whereby the same body that went into the ground is what is raised, and then having examined the concept of *apotheosis*, or deification of the deceased, and finding that theory to be lacking, the more difficult term has been saved for last. Indeed, a significant challenge to the thesis of this paper may be found in the use of *apokatastasis* as found in Acts 3:21. Some have held that the use of this single word necessitates the ultimate universal salvation of all humanity and, therefore, the nonexistence of Hell.

Turning first to Origen, it has been stated that *apokatastasis* must be understood as the mechanism whereby God will finally resolve the issue of sin.

The APOKATASTASIS or final restoration of all rational beings to holiness and happiness. This seems to be the most satisfactory speculative solution of the problem of sin, and secures perfect harmony in the creation, but does violence to freedom with its power to perpetuate resistance, and ignores the hardening nature of sin and the ever increasing difficulty of repentance. If conversion and salvation are an ultimate necessity, they lose their moral character, and moral aim.

Origen was the first Christian Universalist. He taught a final restoration, but with modesty as a speculation rather than a dogma, in his youthful work *De Principiis* (written before 231)... In his later writings there are only faint traces of it; he seems at least to have modified it, and exempted Satan from final repentance and salvation, but this defeats the end of the theory. He also obscured it by his other theory of the necessary mutability of free will, and the constant succession of fall and redemption.

Universal salvation (including Satan) was clearly taught by Gregory of Nyssa, a profound thinker of the school of Origen (d. 395), and, from an exegetical standpoint, by the eminent

¹⁵ François Bovon, "Ascension of Christ." In *The Encyclopedia of Christianity* (Grand Rapids, MI; Leiden, Netherlands: Wm. B. Eerdmans; Brill, 1999–2003), 130.

Antiochian divines Diodorus of Tarsus (d. 394) and Theodore of Mopsuestia (d. 429), and many Nestorian bishops. In the West also at the time of Augustin (d. 430) there were, as he says, “multitudes who did not believe in eternal punishment.” But the view of Origen was rejected by Epiphanius, Jerome, and Augustin, and at last condemned as one of the Origenistic errors under the Emperor Justinian (543).¹⁶

Contra Schaff, both Hall and Kannengiesser hold that while charges were levied against both Diodorus of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia, those allegations were never proven, and no evidence remains from the writings of either of these Patristics that would substantiate such a claim.¹⁷ Notwithstanding, the challenge in proper exegesis of Acts 3:21 and thus the determination of what exactly is meant by *apokatastasis* is critical.

Ἀποκατάστασις *restoration* occurs in the NT only in Acts 3:21: “Then the Lord may grant you a time of recovery and send you the Messiah he has already appointed, that is, Jesus. He must be received into heaven until the time of universal *restoration* comes, of which God spoke by his holy prophets” (NEB; mg. adds “from the beginning of the world”). In accord with the Jewish principle that end time = primeval time, the Messiah is expected to bring about the eschatological return of things to their original state, the universal renewal of the world which reestablishes the original integrity of creation. The Christ of the *parousia* will bring about the promised restoration of the cosmic universe. The *apokatastasis* speculation of Origen is concerned not only with the return of the universe to the harmony of a comprehensive order of being but also with the notion of a cosmic reconciliation of the universe as the anthropological destiny of mankind (so F. Schleiermacher); it has only indirect support in Acts 3:21.¹⁸

Thus, *apokatastasis* is about a restoration. Here the writer would offer a second source for understanding the term, and especially how it was employed in the era of 1 BC through AD 1.

The term *apokatastasis* is referred by Eusebius to the Stoic’s cosmological conception of the cyclical return of the universe to its original condition at the end of every great

¹⁶ Philip Schaff and David Schley Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, vol. 2, (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1910), 611–612.

¹⁷ For more information see Hall, Christopher A. *Reading Scripture with the Church Fathers*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 1998, and Kannengiesser, Charles. *Handbook of Patristic Exegesis: The Bible in Ancient Christianity*. Edited by D. Jeffrey Bingham. Lieden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2004. Hall provides information from what appears to be a more practical reading, whereas Kannengiesser provides both greater range and depth in covering the Patristics through Gregory the Great.

¹⁸ Horst Robert Balz and Gerhard Schneider, *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1990–), 130.

year...”¹⁹ “Political meaning: restoration of someone after exile, reconstitution of someone into his or her original condition.”²⁰ “The medical meaning of *apokatastasis* is mainly that of “healing,” “restoration to health,” or “replacement of a limb to its original position...” Indeed, since illness is against nature, restoration to health can be said to be the restoration into a state that is according to nature...”²¹

It is seen that the concept of *apokatastasis* was used in reference to cosmological, political, and medical propositions. What appears to be missing in the Origen *et al* argumentation is the recognition for universal salvation as based on the use of this one word, and then its use was only once in the New Testament, is the concept of restoration. In considering the medical context alone for a moment, what cannot be missed is the key that with *apokatastasis* one is returned to a condition that was previously held. This presents a significant challenge to the concept of universal salvation for at least one critical reason.

If one is to consider *apokatastasis* as pointing to the return to a state that was once held, then one must look at the beginning and the ending of Scripture in an effort to identify what that state could possibly be. In 1 Cor 15 Paul is addressing the Church and states in verses 42-58 the transformation of the body from perishable to that of imperishable. Two points must be made. First, Paul is speaking to the Church – the saved – and not to the population as a whole. To apply the teaching of 1 Cor 15 to the entirety of the human race is not justified. Second, Paul points out that the perishable will be made imperishable. It is believed that it may be argued rather strongly from this one passage that Paul believed Adam to have had a perishable body, but no distinction was made with respect to that body as it existed prior to the fall, or after. Moreover, Paul points

¹⁹ Ilaria L. E. Ramelli, *The Christian Doctrine of Apokatastasis: A Critical Assessment from the New Testament to Eriugena* (Boston: Brill, 2013), 4. It is important to note that for Ramelli, *apokatastasis* is generally in reference to a person, whereas *apodosis* is generally used when referencing an object. Thus, he draws a distinction between how the term is to be understood in relation to creation in general and man in particular.

²⁰ Ramelli, *The Christian Doctrine of Apokatastasis*, 6.

²¹ Ramelli, *The Christian Doctrine of Apokatastasis*, 5.

to the body as being made of dust in verse 47, a condition common to all humanity even today. This leads to a significant assessment, namely that it is not possible for *apokatastasis* to imply that humanity will return to a state that was enjoyed by Adam prior to the fall, for Adam did not possess an incorruptible or imperishable body. If one is to accept the concept that Adam had an imperishable body, and then sinned, resulting in his imperishable body becoming perishable, then such a condition would still exist in the eternal states, namely the idea that believers would have imperishable bodies, but only conditionally. The challenge brought here is simply that if one is to take Paul's teaching as being truthful, and if as Christians we are to receive both incorruptible and imperishable bodies, then that would appear to imply that at some point we are to receive bodies that are no longer capable of sin. To go further and delineate whether this inability to sin is a condition of construct or one of choice is beyond the scope of this paper, but what is obvious is that Adam was capable of choosing sin, and he chose the same.

NEOS AND KAINOS

If *apokatastasis* as used in Acts 3:21 means that Jesus will restore, then the question might well develop into asking about what is meant with the coming of the new heaven and new earth that purportedly come with the eternal state. In the Greek one finds two key words that convey the concept of what is meant by "new." The first, *neos*, is in reference to time.

3742 νέος (*neos*), α (*a*), ον (*on*): adj.; ≡ Str 3501; TDNT 4.896—1. LN 67.115 new, pertaining to a recent time (Mk 2:22); 2. LN 58.71 new, pertaining to what is recent or new as a state or class, implying superiority (1Co 5:7; Col 3:10; Heb 12:24); 3. LN 67.116 young (Lk 15:12, 13; 1Ti 5:1, 2, 11); 4. LN 6.198 οἶνος νέος (*oinos neos*), new wine (Mt 9:17; Mk 2:22; Lk 5:37, 38).²²

Thus, if one is referencing Matthew 9:17 and Jesus' comments about new wine, the term is *neos* and functions as an adjective, while the term for new as employed in relation to the new

²² James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek (New Testament)* (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).

wineskin is *kainos*: *καίνος*, ἢ, ὄν *new; of new quality; unused; unknown, unheard of*; *τι* *καινότερον* *the latest thing*.²³ Likewise, when examining the comments by John in Revelation 21 about a new heaven and new earth, the writer employed the use of the noun form, *kainos*. Unlike *neos* which refers to new in relation to time, *kainos* carries the idea of new in quality. Noting Newman's definition, if *kainos* is new in quality, and if one may rightly take *kainos* a step further and suggest that the term is indicative of a condition or state which previously was unknown, then further difficulty arises for Origen *et al* in appealing to *apokatastasis* as the basis in which universal salvation is to be found. Indeed, if the state of being to come has as of yet not been known, then the call that man will return to a pre-fallen state simply does not follow, as man would be entering a previously known condition.

²³ Barclay M. Newman Jr., *A Concise Greek-English Dictionary of the New Testament*. (Stuttgart, Germany: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft; United Bible Societies, 1993), 90.

PHYSICAL, SPIRITUAL, PAUL, AND ESCHATOLOGY

A question that might be raised is how the physical body might exist in a spiritual realm. While the question is undoubtedly interesting, it may rightly be considered a red herring. If the account of Enoch as found in Genesis 5:21-24 is to be considered credible, then one finds that there is no report of Enoch dying prior to his being taken to a spiritual realm. Recognizing that some might choose to dismiss the first eleven chapters of Genesis and thus reject the event as evidence, what is one to do with 2 Kings 2 where Elijah is taken, presumably to the same place as Enoch, in a chariot drawn by horses? If the physical can come from the spiritual, then it seems to be a *non sequitur* to argue that the physical cannot exist in the spiritual.

While in a conference three scholars were asked to speak on exactly how “Greek” Paul’s eschatology was thought to be, a topic which bears directly on the subject at hand. In addressing the resurrection, N.T. Wright made the following observations.

First, like eschatology itself, resurrection has moved from the periphery to the centre...Second, for Paul the event of ‘resurrection’ has split into two. It is no longer a single event for all God’s people at the end...Third, it involves neither a resuscitation of identical bodies, as in 2 Maccabees, nor a kind of angelic body, as in 2 Baruch, but a transformed physicality...Fourth, the Messiah himself has been raised. This is new. No writings prior to Paul envisaged the Messiah dying. Nor, therefore, do they imagine him being raised...Fifth, Paul uses the future resurrection with an ethical argument...Sixth, though resurrection was already a metaphor in Ezek 37, in Paul it acquires new metaphorical use...Seventh, Paul describes what one colleague has called ‘collaborative eschatology’. For Paul, the present work of the church is already part of the new world, and hence is ‘not in vain’.²⁴

Thus, in arguing that the resurrection has been split into two events, and then by further establishing a line of demarcation whereby the resurrection as framed by Paul is an event

²⁴ N.T. Wright, "How Greek Was Paul's Eschatology?" *New Testament Studies*, 61, (January 2015): 250-251, accessed April 4, 2015, http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0028688514000368 doi: 10.1017/s0028688514000368.

for the people of God, it would not appear to follow that there would be a universal salvation to be found in the teaching of Paul. Contra Wright, George Van Kooten proffers the concept that Paul's eschatology is not focused on God returning to Zion, rather it is about man returning to God, claiming Paul to have used a Stoic construct whereby everything is in the process of returning to God.²⁵ Of particular interest in Van Kooten's proposition is his further assessment of Pauline eschatology where he states,

First, Paul's anthropology harbours the Platonic notion of the 'inner man' (2 Cor 4.16 and Rom 7.22) and the related notions of individual judgment and heavenly immortality immediately after death (2 Cor 5:1-10). This is in marked contrast with Stoicism, where – at least according to Chrysippus – human beings do not survive death, only the Sages surviving until the next conflagration.... Paul's view that not just human beings but the entirety of the cosmos will be liberated, on the other hand, is decidedly 'un-Platonic'... the term 'new creation' in his writings refers to an inner process which takes place in the 'inner man' and mind, while the resurrectional body will differ from current physical bodies and will be spiritual.²⁶

Thus, Van Kooten would appear to be denying the physical eternal state, but his assessment is seemingly based on an attempt to compare Pauline eschatology to the philosophy of both the Stoics and Plato as the vehicle by which to arrive at that conclusion, and then focusing on the concept of universal reconciliation. Contra Van Kooten, Wischmeyer points to 1 Thess, 1 Cor, 2 Cor, Phil 1, and Rom 8 and notes that in none of these passages does Paul quote any Greek philosophical texts, rather Paul quotes

²⁵ George Van Kooten, "How Greek Was Paul's Eschatology?," *New Testament Studies* 61, (2015, January 1): 241-242 accessed April 4, 2015, http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0028688514000368 doi: 10.1017/s0028688514000368.

²⁶ George Van Kooten, "How Greek Was Paul's Eschatology?" *New Testament Studies* 61, (January 2015): 243, accessed April 4, 2015, http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0028688514000368 doi: 10.1017/s0028688514000368.

Scripture.²⁷ The question at hand would appear to still be in understanding how both man and the universe can be reconciled to God without doing damage to Scripture.

Shawn Bawulski, assistant professor of theology at LCC International University in Klaipeda, Lithuania, offers a concept for reconciliationism which he believes satisfies the meaning found in the use of *apokatastasis* while at the same time remaining compatible with the passages in Scripture which point to the existence of Hell. He states,

Put succinctly, reconciliationism is the view that all sinning ceases in the eternal state, and in some sense the reprobate participates in the cosmic reconciliation of all things to God: they are reconciled, not salvifically but in and through punishment. They do not experience the divine presence of blessing, but instead experience punishment, loss, shame, humiliation, pain, suffering, subjection, and lucidity of their wrongdoing and of God's holiness and justice. They are defeated rebels, no longer able to continue in rebellion. They acquiescently accept their judgment and in so doing glorify God, under and through punishment praising him for his justice and ability brought by the lucidity of God's right and their wrong.²⁸

Bawulski goes on to suggest four key points in relation to Hell and the unsaved. He notes first that hell involves distributive retributive punishment; second, it is the destruction of the sinner, not meaning annihilation, but an existence of loss and ruin; third, it is a place of banishment where one is excluded from the Kingdom of God, and fourth, Hell is populated with those who do not receive the eternal blessing.²⁹ Based on this, Bawulski draws the conclusion that Hell must be a physical place involving physical beings, the duration of which must be eternity.

²⁷ Oda Wischmeyer, "How Greek Was Paul's Eschatology?," *New Testament Studies* 61, (2015, January 1): 245, accessed April 4, 2015, http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0028688514000368 doi: 10.1017/s0028688514000368.

²⁸ Shawn Bawulski, "Reconciliationism, A Better View Of Hell: Reconciliationism And Eternal Punishment," *The Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 56, no. 1 (March 2013): 124.

²⁹ Shawn Bawulski, "Reconciliationism, A Better View Of Hell," 125.

Recognizing that some have turned to 1 Cor 15:28 as a passage to demonstrate their reasoning for universal salvation, Bawulski addresses the point, and in doing so cites scholars such as Fee and Keener. In taking up the point at hand he notes of this passage, “In this passage, saying that God will be “all in all” or “all things in all” is not to assert a metaphysical position or to affirm any sort of pantheism but rather is to speak of God’s relationship to creation, his unmitigated sovereign rule over the entire cosmos, without challenge and without opposition.”³⁰

Based on the above, if reconciliation is defined such that it means that God will rule uncontested, then there seems to be no issue with the concept of Hell existing or the separation of people such that some spend eternity with God and some are excluded from the Kingdom. What has been presumed by Origen *et al* would appear to be the idea that if reconciliation is to happen, it must happen to everyone and all things in the exact same manner. A challenge to such a claim has been that if Hell truly exists, then there would remain an eternal dualism of good and evil.

Bawulski asks the very pointed question that if there is to be a second death, how can one experience remorse and shame, and how can one suffer destruction without being annihilated? In response he concludes,

The reconciliationist seeks to give an explanation as to why hell is as she portrays it rather than something else. Presumably there are a variety of ways that God could execute punishment that would be compatible with his justice, why the reconciliationist picture? The answer lies in the realization that there is much more to the Eschaton than punishment; we might even say that punishment is at best ancillary to other objectives in the grand *teleos* of God. God has many other purposes in the Eschaton (and even now in creation) and these other considerations exert influence on hell. To name a few: God will completely defeat evil; there will be a cosmic renewal and reconciliation; he will restore his unmediated rule in the universe; he will more fully display his nature to the cosmos everlastingly and

³⁰ Shawn Bawulski, "Reconciliationism, A Better View Of Hell," 128.

everything will glorify him everlastingly; every knee shall bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord; even after the fall humanity retains the dignity of being created in the image of God and this extends even to the reprobate; and his desire to avoid any human existence amounting to total loss.³¹

It is here worth taking a moment to note that it is dubious at best to believe that Scripture would point to the Platonic dualism that understood there to be a dualism between matter and spirit, with the former being evil and the latter superior or good. In considering the opening chapters of Genesis one reads that man was created in the image of God. Of particular significance is the point that God spoke the rest of the universe into existence, but we are told that he formed man from the dust of the ground. Obviously, if God could speak the universe into existence, he could have simply spoken man into existence, but instead he acted differently toward man in his physical origin. It is here argued that the physical was important not only at the beginning, but also with respect to the miracles performed by Jesus.

In considering the thesis of this paper it shall be prudent to briefly examine in an overarching manner the miracles performed by Christ. Here it is argued that the miracles as recorded always involved the physical. With respect to this paper, a miracle shall be defined as a highly improbable event with no known naturalistic causes, which is charged with religious significance in relationship with YHWH, the execution of which is for the benefit of His people. It is suggested here that unlike the Platonic views, the physical not only was important in the beginning, but continues to have importance in the here and now. Moreover, if the spiritual was all that was of significance, then how is one to understand the importance found in the raising of Lazarus or the widow's son, or in the healing of the blind? Based on the definition proffered, the physicality of miracles may

³¹ Shawn Bawulski, "Reconciliationism: A Better View Of Hell," 137.

well have been for the benefit of the others present more so than for the actual recipient, but the recipient arguably did receive benefit. It is dubious at best to try to make the case that the physical is somehow lesser, and that in the eternal state the physical gives way to a spiritual existence alone.

CONCLUSION

This paper has sought to defend the thesis that because Jesus used the words “woe,” “betrays,” and “better for him if he had not been born,” Jesus had to have been referencing an eternal state existing physically, and then with a qualitative difference. Interestingly, and what must be admitted herein, is that this research has suffered from what might well be considered “scope creep,” meaning that the research has led the writer down an unanticipated path. Where the original belief was that the focus must rest on Mark 14:21 and the words found therein, it has been discovered that while that verse is still indeed important and drives the primary impetus for this work, much work happened outside this passage which is believed to support the conceptualized thesis.

It was suggested that Mark 14:21 employed the prophetic formula. In recognizing the formula as God speaking first, and then the prophet speaking, one can see the formula obtain in this case. Because Jesus was both fully God and fully man, one may rightly conclude that Jesus as God spoke first, meaning the pronouncement was decided, and was then vocalized by the man Jesus. Such a conclusion does not strain against earlier examples where the prophetic formula is evidenced.

With respect to the use of the words “woe” and “betrays,” much fruit was gleaned. Both in the Greek and the Hebrew, the concept behind the word woe was one of disaster, intense distress, and great and terrible pain and suffering. It was further offered that many languages lacked a noun that would convey the concept of disaster. When one considers that Jesus followed up the pronouncement with the statement that it would have been better for the betrayer to have never been born, the application of woe falls tragically short if one concludes that this was in reference to the grief and sorrow which

is recorded of Judas following the betrayal. Beyond this it must be pointed out that the mere death, even by suicide, fails to satisfy the concept behind the words used. First, Judas had been born, so that event could not be undone. Second, life has a one hundred percent mortality rate, so none escape, which is to say that physical death could not have been the intended scope of the pronouncement. In the passage at hand what cannot be missed is that Jesus is speaking of an individual who has knowingly and willfully turned his back on the God of the universe. It is this willful act, the wanton rejection of God, to which Jesus is speaking.

This paper then examined the differences found between resurrection, *apotheosis*, and *apokatastasis*. With resurrection one finds that what went down is the same that comes up, meaning there is still importance for the physical body after this life. While the concept of *apotheosis* was commonly found in the Roman Empire, and because Palestine was under the rule of Rome, the authors of the New Testament would have been familiar with the concept. Those who penned the New Testament did not consider Jesus to have been divinized following death, nor is there indication to be found in Scripture to suggest they believed that man would be divinized in the eternal state. Thus, *apotheosis* fails to account for the final disposition of man.

A significant challenge has been with the use of *apokatastasis* as found in Acts 3:21 and the idea of restoration. The challenge brought by Origen *et al* has been that all of mankind is to be reconciled to God, thus many have inferred this to be a clear pointer to the idea of universal salvation. A key line of reasoning has been that if all is to be restored, then all must be returned to a state which existed prior to the fall. Two arguments were presented against such a view. The first is that if man is to receive an

incorruptible body in the eternal state, then to suggest that this is a return to a pre-fall state is to do damage to Scripture, for this would suggest that Adam had a body that was incapable of sinning. A second, stronger argument is to be found in how the New Testament authors used the word “new” in Scripture. A clear distinction was shown between new as it relates to time and new as it relates in quality. With the evaluation of what was written relating to the Eschaton, it appears the writers preferred the use of the Greek word *kainos*, or new in quality and a reference to something never before seen.

Finally, the concept of reconciliationism as offered by Bawulski was examined. The concept presented here is that it is possible to be reconciled to God, but that not all reconciliation needs to be defined in the same manner. Based on this concept it was shown that the existence of Hell does not serve as an indictment against the goodness of God, nor does it impugn his status of being wholly good. Indeed, no evidence has been found to suggest that the exclusion of some from the Kingdom of God equates to the non-existence of those excluded. Similarly, to experience remorse and regret necessitates the existence and function of cognitive faculties and, presumably, the physical if one is to include pain, suffering and destruction.

What cannot be missed in the account as found in Mark is that Judas followed Jesus for at least three years. He was a witness to the miracles performed by Jesus, he was part of the inner group who received special time with the God of the universe, and then he rejected God wholesale. The pain and suffering proclaimed by Christ could not have been understood as anything short of a physical eternal state where the consequences of Judas’ choices and actions would play out for eternity future. Any interpretation short of this does damage to the Gospel of Christ.

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