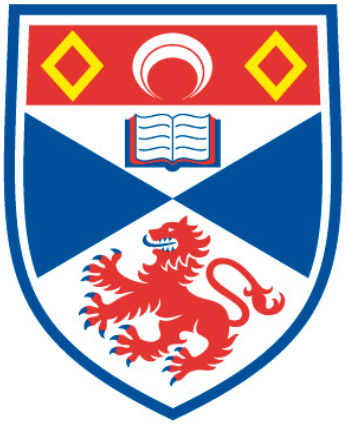
RESTORATION AND REPENTANCE: AN EXEGETICAL INVESTIGATION OF 2 CORINTHIANS 7 IN ITS LITERARY AND SCRIPTURAL CONTEXTS

Timothy L. Fox

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews



2016

RESTORATION AND REPENTANCE: AN EXEGETICAL INVESTIGATION OF 2 CORINTHIANS 7 IN ITS LITERARY AND SCRIPTURAL CONTEXTS

TIMOTHY L. FOX

THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF PHD AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS

10 MAY 2016

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ABSTRACT

This study demonstrates the logical coherence of 2 Corinthians 7:2–16 within the contexts of the canonical letter, the Old Testament, and Paul's Jewish contemporaries. Modern scholars have repeatedly pointed to this chapter as evidence for partitions in 2 Corinthians, arguing that Paul's appeal in 7:2–4 cannot fit with the resumed travel narrative in 7:5–16, since the latter appears to match so neatly with the narrative of 2:12–13. Even many of those scholars arguing for the epistle's integrity have stumbled at 2 Cor 7, often describing 7:5–16 as a kind of emotional afterthought, with little relation to 7:2–4. But we argue that 2 Cor 7:2–16 is best understood as part of the larger apology of chapters 2–6, especially with reference to the broader themes of the scriptural passages to which Paul appeals elsewhere in the letter in order to argue that God is at work through his ministry of the new covenant (e.g., Jer 31:31–34 + Ezek 36–37 in 2 Cor 3:6 and Isa 49:8 in 2 Cor 6:2). Understood within their larger contexts, these scriptural texts promise that Israel's restoration would be marked by God's unilaterally transforming his people's heart so as to make them truly repentant. Hence, Paul goes into such detail over his joy at the Corinthians' repentance because it is the tangible expression of the fact that they are truly his "recommendation letter," written by the Spirit (3:2–3). In other words, the Corinthians' repentance evidences Paul's legitimacy as an apostle of the promised new covenant, while also grounding his appeal for their contribution to his Jerusalem collection (chapters 8–9). Our study ends by showing that other Jewish authors made similar appeals to these scriptural texts in seeking to understand the restoration of Israel (especially as described in Deut 30), while also showing that these texts variously understood the relationship between the repentance of God's people and the transformation of their heart.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am very grateful to the many people who have encouraged and supported me in the writing of this thesis. In the final years of seminary, Russ Berg, Steve Potratz, and Steve Leonard, as well as Dr. Gerry Breshears, encouraged me to pursue a PhD and shared their great wisdom with me. The Potratzes and the Parable Foundation generously supported my studies with a monthly financial grant, while the Honyman Gillespie Trust kindly awarded me their scholarship through the entire PhD program. I am also very thankful for the constant love of our families—especially the Van Pelts, who joyfully encouraged my pursuing a PhD even though it meant whisking away their beloved daughter/sister (not to mention their grandsons/nephews!) to the Old World for a time.

I would also like to thank my examining committee. Prof. N. T. Wright and Dr. Simon Gathercole provided helpful criticism and clear guidance that have strengthened my argument.

New friends, with their families, have been a vital source of joy and guidance: my Roundel officemates Euichang Kim, Jen Gilbertson, Ernest Clark, Tommi Karjalainen, and Isaac Blois, as well as Matt Ketterling, Jay Thomas Hewitt, Tyler Wittman, and Raymond Morehouse.

I am profoundly thankful for the St Andrews Free Church of Scotland, where Rev. Paul Clarke and Hamish Sneddon faithfully exhorted me to run the race of faith with endurance. Their love for the Lord Jesus and their confidence in his Word was a constant blessing to our family.

Dr. Scott Hafemann has been a fantastic *Doktorvater*. He has spent innumerable hours combing through my writing, always (and happily!) available to help. He has deepened my love for Greek and even German. His unabashed concern for understanding *the text* before him—especially the *scriptural* text—has been a great encouragement and challenge to me during these last few years. He taught me Discourse Analysis (which, as he constantly and humbly acknowledged, he learned from others), the most valuable thing I have learned in my post-secondary education. Moreover, beyond what he has taught me academically, he—with Debara at his side—has modeled a life of faith working through sacrificial love. His conscious, constant subjection of his own gifts and pursuits to Christ and his Church has been a great inspiration.

Finally and most importantly, I thank my dear wife Marijke. She has wisely and skillfully made our home a place of joy and warmth, giving me two delightful boys along the way. There is no way I could have even come close to finishing (let alone starting) this thesis without her encouragement and sacrifice. I rise up and call her blessed.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Anchor Bible
AcBib	Academia Biblica
AnBib	Analecta Biblica
BBB	Bonner biblische Beiträge
BBR	*Bulletin for Biblical Research*
BDAG	Danker, Frederick W., Walter Bauer, William F. Arndt, and F. Wilbur Gingrich. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000 (Danker-Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich)
BDF	Blass, Friedrich, Albert Debrunner, and Robert W. Funk. *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961
BECNT	Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
BETL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium
BHT	Beiträge zur historischen Theologie
Bib	*Biblica*
BJS	Brown Judaic Studies
BNTC	Black's New Testament Commentaries
BSac	*Bibliotheca Sacra*
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
CBQ	*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*
CBQMS	Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
CJAS	Christianity and Judaism in Antiquity Series
CSCO	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium. Edited by Jean Baptiste Chabot et al. Paris, 1903
CTJ	*Calvin Theological Journal*
CurBR	*Currents in Biblical Research* (formerly *Currents in Research: Biblical Studies*)
DJD	Discoveries in the Judaean Desert
DSD	*Dead Sea Discoveries*
ECL	Early Christianity and Its Literature
EKK	Evangelisch-Katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
FB	Forschung zur Bibel

FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
GAP	Guides to Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha
HALOT	*The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Ludwig Koehler, Walter Baumgartner, and Johann J. Stamm. Translated and edited under the supervision of Mervyn E. J. Richardson. 4 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1994–1999
HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*
HUCA	*Hebrew Union College Annual*
HvTSt	*Hervormde teologiese studies*
ICC	International Critical Commentary
Int	*Interpretation*
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JCT	Jewish and Christian Texts
Joüon	Joüon, Paul. *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew.* Translated and revised by T. Muraoka. 2 vols. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1991
JRHealth	*Journal of Religion and Health*
JSHRZ	*Jüdische Schriften aus hellenistisch-römischer Zeit*
JSJSup	Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism
JSNT	*Journal for the Study of the New Testament*
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series
JSOT	*Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
JSPSup	Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha Supplement Series
JTS	*Journal of Theological Studies*
KEK	Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament (Meyer-Kommentar)
L&N	Louw, Johannes P., and Eugene A. Nida, eds. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains*. 2nd ed. New York: United Bible Societies, 1989
LNTS	The Library of New Testament Studies
LS	*Louvain Studies*
LSTS	The Library of Second Temple Studies
NACSBT	New American Commentary Studies in Bible and Theology
Neot	*Neotestamentica*

NETS	*A New English Translation of the Septuagint*. Edited by Albert Pietersma and Benjamin G. Wright. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007
NIBC	New International Biblical Commentary
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
NIVAC	NIV Application Commentary
NovT	*Novum Testamentum*
NovTSup	Supplements to Novum Testamentum
NTMon	New Testament Monographs
NTS	*New Testament Studies*
NTSI	New Testament and the Scriptures of Israel
OTL	Old Testament Library
OTS	Old Testament Studies
PAST	Pauline Studies
PKNT	Papyrologische Kommentare zum Neuen Testament
PNTC	Pillar New Testament Commentary
PTSDSSP	Princeton Theological Seminary Dead Sea Scrolls Project
ResQ	*Restoration Quarterly*
RevExp	*Review and Expositor*
RevQ	*Revue de Qumran*
RTR	*Reformed Theological Review*
SBLDS	SBL Dissertation Series
SBLEJL	SBL Early Judaism and Its Literature
SBLMS	SBL Monograph Series
SBLSP	SBL Seminar Papers
SBLSymS	SBL Symposium Series
SDSSRL	Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature
SEÅ	*Svensk exegetisk årsbok*
SHAW	Sitzungen der heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SP	Sacra Pagina
StPB	Studia Post-biblica
TANZ	Texte und Arbeiten zum neutestamentlichen Zeitalter
TBN	Themes in Biblical Narrative

TDNT	*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament.* Edited by Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. 10 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–1976
THKNT	Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament
TLG	Thesaurus Linguae Graecae® Digital Library. Ed. Maria C. Pantelia. University of California, Irvine. http://www.tlg.uci.edu (accessed Feb. 12, 2016)
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum
TynBul	*Tyndale Bulletin*
VT	*Vetus Testamentum*
VTSup	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WD	*Wort und Dienst*
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZAW	*Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*
ZTK	*Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

As 2 Cor 7:2–16 opens, Paul is continuing his plea for reconciliation with the wayward Corinthians. In 7:2a he calls them to accept him, having similarly exhorted them in 6:13 (cf. 6:1; 7:1). Between these two appeals, Paul calls the church to holiness and purity in light of its identity as God's eschatological temple and restored covenant people (6:14—7:1).[1] Paul claims to be neither wronging nor condemning them (7:2b–3), and reminds them not only that he speaks forthrightly to and boastfully about them, but also that he is filled with comfort and joy, even in the midst of his manifold suffering—the very suffering at the center of the conflict between Paul and the Corinthians (7:4).

But at 7:5 Paul resumes a narrative that he abruptly suspended at 2:12–13. There, he detailed his anxious search for Titus in Troas and his departure for Macedonia as part of his apology for changing his travel plans, which resulted in sending a "tearful letter" instead of personally visiting them (cf. 1:15—2:11; 7:8). Here, at 7:5, Paul has now arrived in Macedonia, at first only experiencing further anxiety and suffering, but soon comforted by finding Titus (7:6). Indeed, Paul is most comforted by Titus's report that the Corinthians have responded to his "tearful letter" with mournful zeal (7:7). Paul then explains how his own sorrow has turned to joy (7:8–9), since their grief has led to a repentance characterized by a diligent desire to repair the church's broken relationship

1. Of course many doubt that 6:14—7:1 is original to this context or even to Paul himself. For now we leave aside questions about the original integrity of 2 Corinthians; see below on methodology.

with its apostle (7:10–12). Paul is both comforted and joyful because his previous boast to Titus has proven true (7:13–14) in the face of the Corinthians' renewed obedience (7:15). Paul again points to his joy, rooting it in his comprehensive confidence in them (7:16). His anxiety over Titus's absence has turned to comfort over his presence; more significantly, his sorrow over the Corinthians' disobedience has turned to joy over their repentance.

The Puzzles of 2 Corinthians 7:2–16

But what does Paul's appeal in 7:2–4 have to do with the Macedonian narrative in 7:5–16, given that the latter appears to render the former superfluous? And having begun the narrative in chapter 2, why would Paul have waited so long to finish it? Does 7:5–16 fit rhetorically with the preceding "apology" (2:14—7:4) or the following financial request (chs. 8–9)? Or is it independent from the rest of Paul's argument? Long have interpreters hypothesized about the abrupt thematic shifts abutting this broken narrative, both at 2:13/14 and here at 7:4/5, not to mention another shift between chapters 7 and 8–9. Second Corinthians has proven to be fertile soil for partition theories about the Pauline Letters, with the shifts between 7:4/5 and 7:16/8:1 as prime pieces of evidence. But even those defending the original integrity of 2 Cor 1–7 (or of 2 Cor 1–9) struggle to explain how this chapter can be read coherently or how it fits into Paul's broader argument.

Furthermore, 2 Cor 7:2–16 is one of the few places where Paul explicitly speaks about repentance, and the only place he talks about it in some detail.[2] Paul's relatively sparse attention to repentance is striking in light of its more explicit prominence within the larger Second Temple milieu, including the rest of the New Testament.[3] Why does Paul speak of repentance *here*, in 2 Cor 7, and how does it fit into his larger apology?

Summary of Thesis

Enter the γάρ of 2 Cor 7:5, the star of this project. We shall suggest that the key to understanding the role of 7:5–16 within Paul's argument in 2 Corinthians is to take this conjunction as a *causal* link between 7:4 and 7:5. This γάρ does not only link these verses to one another; it also, and more significantly, links 7:5–16 to Paul's broader defense of his legitimacy as a "servant of the new covenant" (2 Cor 3:3–6). Specifically, in view of the meaning of 7:2–4 and its relationship to 7:5–16, we shall argue that, far from being a narrative afterthought or emotional outburst, 2 Cor 7:2–16 is a coherent argument rooted in Paul's conviction that scriptural promises about the new covenant are being fulfilled through his ministry. Thus, because 2 Cor 7:2–16 concerns and

2. Besides 2 Cor 12:21, Paul uses μετάνοια/μετανοέω elsewhere only in Rom 2:4–5 (cf. 2 Tim 2:25).

3. Amid the voluminous literature on repentance, see especially volumes 2–3 of Mark J. Boda, Daniel K. Falk, and Rodney A. Werline, eds., *Seeking the Favor of God*, SBL Early Judaism and Its Literature 22–23 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2007–2008), with volume 2 on the "development" of penitential prayer tradition during the Second Temple period and volume 3 on its "impact" beyond this period (on, e.g., the New Testament and early Christianity).

reinforces Paul's legitimacy as a minister of the new covenant, it is an integral part of his broader apology (2:14—7:1).

We shall demonstrate the logical, indeed *theo*logical, coherence of 2 Cor 7:2–16 in two steps. First, we show that 7:2–4 summarizes Paul's "new covenant" apology in the (canonical) epistle, with especially strong connections to the apostle's comparison between himself and Moses in 3:4–18. Second, we show that the γάρ introducing 7:5–16 can be taken seriously as a *causal* conjunction[4] since Paul is giving the *reason* he has abundant joy in the midst of suffering (7:4): the Corinthians' repentance demonstrates that his ministry really does mediate the promised "new covenant" restoration of God's people. For in his apology Paul has used prophetic texts that emphatically promise that God's restoration of his people will be marked by *transformed hearts* (cf. 2 Cor 3:6) that produce *repentance* (cf. 2 Cor 7:5–16). In short, we argue that 2 Cor 7:2–16 is best understood against the larger scriptural and eschatological backdrop of the canonical letter.[5] But before explaining the methodology and argument of this study, let us first briefly survey previous attempts to explain 2 Cor 7:2–16 within the argument of 2 Cor 1–9.

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4. The text of course has καί γάρ, but the καί is adverbial ("even") and the γάρ is conjunctive ("for").

5. By "eschatological," we refer to the scripturally rooted anticipation of God's ultimate intervention into human history in judgment, salvation, and renewal.

Previous Explanations of 2 Corinthians 7:2–16

Partition Theories

Modern interpretations of 2 Cor 7:2–16 are heavily influenced by the partition theories that began with Semler's suggestion that 2 Corinthians originally comprised three letters.[6] However, not until the early twentieth century did interpreters begin suggesting that 2:14—7:4 was a separate letter embedded between 1:1—2:13 + 7:5–16.[7] According to this theory, it is simply inexplicable that Paul would make such a dramatic jump away from his "travel narrative" at 2:13 and then return to it so much later at 7:5. Dieter Georgi even goes so far as to say that "the seams in 2 Cor. 2:13/14 and 7:4/5 are the best examples in the entire NT of one large fragment secondarily inserted into

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6. J. S. Semler, *Paraphrasis II: Epistulae ad Corinthios* (Halle: Hemmerde, 1776); he suggests that the original three letters were chs. 1–8, 9, and 10–13. This theory was influentially renewed by Adolf Hausrath, *Der Vier-Capitelbrief des Paulus an die Korinther* (Heidelberg: Bassermann, 1870), while Hans Windisch, *Der zweite Korintherbrief*, 9th ed., KEK 6 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1924), proposed that chs. 10–13 were the "tearful letter" sent before chs. 1–7.

7. See the groundbreaking work of Anton Halmel, *Der zweite Korintherbrief des Apostels Paulus*, Geschichte und literarkritische Untersuchungen (Halle: Niemeyer, 1904), along with Johannes Weiss, *Das Urchristentum* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1917), 271–72. Rudolf Bultmann, *Der zweite Brief an der Korinther* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1976), follows Weiss's theory that 2:14—7:4 + chs. 10–13 was the "tearful letter." See also Walter Schmithals, *Die Gnosis in Korinth: Eine Untersuchung zu den Korintherbriefen*, FRLANT 66 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1956), 22, 84–94; and Günther Bornkamm, *Die Vorgeschichte des sogenannten Zweiten Korintherbriefes*, SHAW (Heidelberg: Winter, 1961), who counter that that 2:14—7:4 and chs. 10–13 must have been two separate letters. See the extended treatment of these partition theories by Ivar Vegge, *2 Corinthians—A Letter about Reconciliation: A Psychagogical, Epistolographical, and Rhetorical Analysis*, WUNT 239 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 15–19, and also the detailed lists of their proponents in his notes 54 (those following Weiss-Bultmann) and 57 (those following Schmithals-Bornkamm).

another text."[8] This theory has been recently defended by Lawrence L. Welborn and now Paul B. Duff, who both point to the abrupt shifts in theme and content as evidence that an editor has clumsily inserted 2:14—7:4 into the middle of Paul's original travel narrative.[9]

Welborn argues that the close (but not exact) parallels between 2:13 and 7:5 suggest that they were originally adjacent; 7:5 is a "direct continuation" but not a "resumption" (565–66), in line with the common Greco-Roman practice of immediate repetition for emphasis. He argues that "a resumption after a long digression should have been handled differently" and gives a few typical examples of how ancient authors signaled resumption (566). Furthermore, he argues that 2:12–13 and 7:5–16 form a perfectly coherent narrative, so that he is unable to see why Paul would want to break it so dramatically (577). Finally, he argues that καὶ γάρ (7:5), in line with its common "confirmatory and causal" meaning, only makes sense in relation to 2:13, since there as well as in 7:5, Paul describes his anxiety over *Titus* (581–82). Paul *could not* be confirming his comfort/joy (7:4) and grounding it in the Corinthians' response (7:5–16). For according to Welborn, 2:14—7:4 concerns the "transcendent power [of] God"—*not* the Corinthians' behavior (582)! In other words, God's power and the Corinthians'

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8. Dieter Georgi, *The Opponents of Paul in Second Corinthians* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986), 335.

9. Lawrence L. Welborn, "Like Broken Pieces of a Ring: 2 Cor. 1.1—2.13; 7.5–16 and Ancient Theories of Literary Unity," *NTS* 42 (1996): 559–83; Paul B. Duff, *Moses in Corinth: The Apologetic Context of 2 Corinthians 3*, NovTSup 159 (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 32–92.

response are separate topics. As we shall show, however, by neglecting the backdrop of the Old Testament texts against which Paul understands his own "new covenant" ministry, Welborn fails to see how the Corinthians' repentant response *itself* expresses God's transcendent power, and thereby evidences Paul's apostolic legitimacy. Like many partition theorists, he assumes *textual* incoherence because he can find no *logical* coherence.

Duff has recently made a similar argument about the original independence of 2:14—7:4. He first suggests that the shared vocabulary between 7:4 and 7:5–16 is coincidental.[10] Like Welborn, he also points to supposed shifts in theme and tone at 2:13/14 and 7:4/5, suggesting that in 2:14—7:4 Paul is defensive and unconfident in the church, while in 1:1—2:13; 7:5–16, he is conciliatory and confident.[11] Yet unlike

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10. With regard to παράκλησις/παρακαλέω, Duff argues that its rarity and "relative unimportance" in 2:14—7:4 shows that its use in 7:4 says nothing about its connection to 7:5–16, where it is used frequently (34). But with regard to καύχησις/καυχάομαι and θλῖψις/θλίβω, he argues that their ubiquity throughout the letter *also* shows that 7:4 is not connected to 7:5–16 (34). In other words, he makes two *opposite* arguments (rarity vs. ubiquity) to arrive at the *same* conclusion (mere coincidence). Furthermore, Duff's starting point is the majority view that 6:14—7:1 cannot be original to the letter: "The likelihood of editorial activity at 6:14–7:1 increases the likelihood of other such redactional activity within the confines of the canonical letter" (25). Strikingly, though, Duff does not engage the many scholars who have forcefully argued against this consensus, e.g., G. K. Beale, "The Old Testament Background of Reconciliation in 2 Corinthians 5–7 and Its Bearing on the Literary Problem of 2 Corinthians 6.14—7.1," *NTS* 35 (1989): 550–81; R. Bieringer, "Pladöyer für Einheitlichkeit des 2. Korintherbriefes: Literarkritische und inhaltliche Argumente," in *Studies on 2 Corinthians*, ed. R. Bieringer and J. Lambrecht, BETL 112 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1994), 131–79; James M. Scott, "The Use of Scripture in 2 Corinthians 6.16c–18 and Paul's Restoration Theology," *JSNT* 56 (1994): 73–99; David I. Starling, *Not My People: Gentiles as Exiles in Pauline Hermeneutics*, BZNW 184 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2011), 61–106; and William J. Webb, *Returning Home: New Covenant and Second Exodus as the Context for 2 Corinthians 6.14—7.1*, JSNTSup 85 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993).

11. Duff, *Moses in Corinth*, 43.

Welborn, Duff overlooks the γάρ in 7:5, offering no suggestion regarding why it should link to 2:13, and why it *could not* link to 7:4. We find again a failure to examine closely the argument of 7:2–4 and its relationship to 7:5–16, especially in light of Paul's larger "new covenant" apologetic in which Paul points to the *Corinthians* as evidence that *God* is at work through him (3:2–3).

Rhetorical Theories

Ivar Vegge has vigorously defended the unity of 2 Corinthians by arguing that the complex world of Hellenistic rhetoric, epistolography, and psychagogy allows the entire canonical letter to be understood as a coherent attempt at reconciliation.[12] He devotes significant attention to 2 Cor 7:5–16, since many have pointed to its buoyant optimism as evidence that it cannot be reconciled with the more combative, apologetic sections of the canonical letter. Vegge counters that 2 Cor 7:5–16 can be understood as a form of Hellenistic "amplification," whereby an author gives "idealized" praise as an implicit exhortation for behavioral change.[13] He suggests that in 2 Cor 7:5–16 "Paul

12. Vegge, *2 Corinthians*, 37–51. "Psychagogy" is the ancient method whereby philosophers served as "moral guides and mentors for people's soul [*sic*]" (49). Along somewhat similar lines, see also the "papyrological commentary" of Peter Arzt-Grabner, *2. Korinther*, PKNT 4 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014), 146–47, who points to the papyri in suggesting that ancient letters can be unitary even as they frequently shift in form, tone, and content; he thinks that canonical 2 Corinthians fits well within this pattern.

13. Vegge, *2 Corinthians*, 53–70. He is careful to distinguish this practice from "flattery" or "exaggeration."

praises and amplifies the partial reconciliation which has occurred [cf. 2:5–11], so as to exhort to full reconciliation."[14]

While Vegge is right that 2 Cor 7:5–16 is ultimately about moving the Corinthians to full reconciliation—and is therefore still part of Paul's apology—he gives little attention to how Paul *explicitly* frames reconciliation in terms of his status as the divinely appointed apostle of the new covenant. In overlooking the deeply theocentric nature of 2 Cor 7:2–16, Vegge does not explain how the Corinthians' repentance and Paul's joy fit into the apostle's conviction that both Jeremiah's "new covenant" and Isaiah's "day of salvation" have arrived through his ministry.[15] By missing the actual

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14. Vegge, *2 Corinthians*, 71; see also pp. 95–140.

15. Cf. Jer 31:31 with 2 Cor 3:6; Isa 49:8 with 2 Cor 6:2. Matthew R. Malcolm, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reversal in 1 Corinthians: The Impact of Paul's Gospel on His Macro-rhetoric*, SNTSMS 155 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), makes a comparable critique of attempts to explain 1 Corinthians primarily in terms of Greco-Roman rhetoric. He acknowledges the value of studying Paul's "micro-rhetoric"—i.e., his use of "Greco-Roman and Jewish oratorical and literary devices" (6)—but forcefully argues that they are "subservient to the movement of Paul's gospel-driven macro-rhetoric" (2). In other words: "It is necessary to move beyond the practical assumption of a monolithic Greco-Roman rhetorical culture, in order to emphasize, within the complexity of Paul's identity and literary manner, the significant influence of his kerygma 'in accordance with the Scriptures.' Just as it would be naive to think that early Christianity, Judaism, and Hellenism are completely separable, it would also be naive to think that the interpretative and communicative motifs of Judaism—or of the Messianic sect to which Paul was converted—were effectively dissolved in the conventions of Greco-Roman oratory" (31). With reference to "consolation" in 2 Corinthians, see a similar perspective by James R. Harrison, "The Rhetoric of 'Consolation' in 2 Corinthians 1:3–11/7:4–13 in the Context of the Jewish and Graeco-Roman Consolatory Literature," in *Paul and Scripture*, ed. Stanley E. Porter, PAST 10 (Leiden: Brill, forthcoming), 25–26: "Paul is aware of the consolatory techniques of the 'gentle' philosopher, adopting the persona where appropriate, but ultimately his ability to reconcile and console the estranged Corinthians came from the One who wept before Lazarus' tomb" (page numbers from an electronic document provided by the author). Harrison rightly places 2 Cor 7 into scriptural-eschatological relief, but his concise exegetical sketches leave much to explore.

force of Paul's argument in 7:2–16, Vegge does not see its specific, concrete role within Paul's larger apologetic.

Psychological and Emotional Theories

Furthermore, many interpret 2 Cor 7:5–16 primarily as a window into Paul's psychological or emotional state, rather than as an integral part of his apology. Even many of those who argue for the unity of 2 Corinthians treat this section as a kind of afterthought, an affectionate conclusion to the broken travel narrative with little relation to Paul's larger apology. For example, Ralph Martin says that "Paul [is] dictating more under emotion than in logical terms," while Victor Furnish suggests that this passage is primarily about "the affection Paul feels for his congregation."[16] Similarly, some argue that the passage is primarily about Paul's pastoral relief over a resolved conflict.[17] While this passage certainly revolves around Paul's profound joy over the Corinthians' repentance, we will see that reading it largely as an expression of emotion fails to explain how it *primarily* functions to support Paul's broader "new covenant" apology.[18]

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16. Victor Paul Furnish, *II Corinthians*, AB 32A (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1984), 392; similarly, Ralph P. Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 2nd ed., WBC 40 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014), 384.

17. E.g., Paul Barnett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 364–65; George H. Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015), 363, 368.

18. Linda L. Belleville, "A Letter of Apologetic Self-Commendation: 2 Cor 1:8—7:16," *NovT* 31/2 (1989): 155–56, rightly notes that 2 Cor 7:2–16 is integral to Paul's larger apology, but fails to relate it specifically to Paul's appeals to Scripture throughout the letter. Similarly, Lawrence L. Welborn, "Paul and Pain: Paul's Emotional Therapy in 2 Corinthians 1.1—2.13; 7.5–16 in the Context of Ancient Psychagogic Literature," *NTS* 57/4 (2011): 547–70, argues that 2 Cor 7:5–16 ultimately functions to defend Paul's integrity but overlooks its scriptural backdrop. Also, see now the helpful study by

Scriptural-Eschatological Theories

There have been a small number of limited attempts to explain 2 Cor 7:2–16 primarily in terms of Paul's larger argument for his legitimacy as an apostle of the promised "new covenant." G. K. Beale notes that 2 Cor 7 largely expresses Paul's "confidence that since the readership has begun to participate in these promises [2 Cor 6:16–18], they will respond positively to his exhortation to continue to grow in such promises."[19] Beale thus rightly sets 2 Cor 7 against the backdrop of eschatological fulfillment, but his study does not see the *apologetic* function of placing the Corinthians' repentance into scriptural and eschatological relief. Similarly, in a conclusion to an article on 2 Cor 6:14—7:1, James M. Scott notes that in 2 Cor 7:2–4 Paul exhorts the

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Christopher D. Land, *The Integrity of 2 Corinthians and Paul's Aggravating Absence*, NTMon 36 (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2015), esp. pp. 141–74, who argues that 7:3–16 functions as a "meta-commentary" that "clarifies the context of situation that underlies 2 Corinthians," in that Paul is "[clarifying his] disposition towards the Corinthians" (159), lest they misunderstand his appeal begun at 6:1 (esp. the harsh warnings of 6:14—7:1). Land's conclusions complement and support many of our own, but he is too quick to bifurcate between the letter's "informative" (2:14—5:21) and "exhortative" (6:1—7:2) segments (241). For we will argue that the very thing he notes elsewhere in regards to *both* 1:12—2:13 *and* 2:14—5:21 is true of 7:2–16 as well, i.e., that it too is "designed to provide an alternative assessment of the Pauline mission which will instill pride in its efforts and inspire support for its leaders" (138). In short, even as Paul "informs" (e.g., 7:3–16), he also "exhorts" (7:2 as supported by 7:3–16); Land therefore does not sufficiently explain the logical link between 7:2 and 7:3. Finally, while we agree that 7:2–16 revolves around Paul's "disposition" toward the Corinthians (i.e., his emotional state), Land does not note the many ways that this "disposition" is ultimately in rooted in Paul's larger scriptural-theological argument, particularly in regards to his "new covenant" defense in 2 Cor 3. We realize, however, that Land's project of "linguistic analysis" is, with reference to detailed exegesis, primarily "exploratory" rather than focused, e.g., on Paul's use of Scripture (p. 281).

19. Beale, "Reconciliation," 574. He goes on: "The Corinthians' beginning signs of reconciliation with Paul (vv. 6–7) provide him with joyous comfort that they together with him really are God's latter day Israel who are fulfilling the restoration promises" (576).

Corinthians to remain "an ἐπιστολὴ Χριστοῦ written by the Spirit of the 'living God' (3:3; cf. 6:16b!)"; Paul is claiming that "their New Covenant life-style remains a reason for 'boasting' (7.4) for the apostle, *an apology for the legitimacy of Paul's apostolate*."[20] However, Scott does not apply this insight to 7:5–16, which further explains *why* (the γάρ of 7:5!) the Corinthians' "new covenant life-style" not only makes him rejoice, but ultimately proves his legitimacy.

In sum, there has not been an in-depth study of how the Corinthians' repentance fits into Paul's larger "new covenant" apologetic, a study illuminated *both* by the narrow relationship between 7:4/5 *and* the broad relationship between 2 Cor 7 and the treatment of repentance within the Old Testament (particularly the Prophets) and Second Temple literature.[21] *Partition theories* too quickly claim that 7:2–4 and 7:5–16 cannot be related, unnecessarily bifurcating between the letter's apologetic and conciliatory sections. *Rhetorical theories* often fail to place chapter 7 into Paul's larger theological argument, in which he explicitly defends himself in view of the fulfillment of Israel's Scriptures.

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20. Scott, "Use of Scripture," 96 (emphasis ours).

21. Similarly, Jonathan Kaplan, "Comfort, O Comfort, Corinth: Grief and Comfort in 2 Corinthians 7:5–13a," *HTR* 104/4 (2011): 433–45, argues *both* that 7:5–16 is an integral conclusion to the apology of 2:14—7:4 *and* that it is better understood against the backdrop of Israel's Scriptures than Greco-Roman philosophy or psychagogy (see esp. pp. 433–34). He argues that 7:5–16 is heavily influenced by Lam 1–2 (rebellion and punishment) *and* Isa 40–55 (restoration). While Lam 1–2 *may* influence Paul's understanding of "grief" conceptually, there are no clear allusions to it in 2 Cor. In our study of the scriptural background to 7:5–16, we shall limit ourselves to clear quotations and allusions in 2 Cor. Furthermore, like those authors who focus on the emotional and pastoral aspects of 2 Cor 7:5–16 (rather than on its scripturally shaped *apologetic* aspect), Kaplan never quite explains how 7:5–16 fits into Paul's larger argument.

Emotional-psychological theories likewise fail to place Paul's joy and the Corinthians' grief into this scriptural framework. Furthermore, even those few studies that prioritize Paul's appeal to the Scriptures as a key to understanding 7:2–16 have only begun to explain how Paul's use of "repentance" language fits into his larger apology in 2 Corinthians.[22]

Methodology

This project picks up where previous studies on the scriptural and eschatological backdrop to Paul's argument have left off.[23] In addition to those studies noted above,

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22. See David S. Morlan, *Conversion in Luke and Paul: An Exegetical and Theological Exploration*, LNTS 464 (London: T&T Clark, 2013), 141–91, who focuses on Rom 2:4–5 (with a brief note on 2 Cor 7:9–10 at pp. 159–60). His conclusion about Paul's understanding of repentance in Rom 2:4–5 parallels our own about 2 Cor 7, even as his study largely focuses on conversion proper, i.e., the *initial* move from unbelief to belief ("getting in"); of course 2 Cor 7 is about wayward *believers* ("staying in"). Furthermore, see the helpful study by Eckhard J. Schnabel, "Repentance in Paul's Letters," *NovT* 57/2 (2015): 159–86; he rightly argues that the concept (if not the specific vocabulary) of repentance is more important to Paul's letters than scholars typically acknowledge; see, e.g., E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977), 500–508. However, Schnabel's treatment of 2 Cor 7:9–10 is very limited (pp. 176–78). Similarly, see George Harper, "Repentance in Pauline Theology" (PhD thesis, McGill University, 1988), whose straightforward treatment of 2 Cor 7:9–10 leaves it unmoored from the broader argument of 2 Corinthians (pp. 144–50). More helpfully, see his summary of twentieth-century scholarship on Paul and repentance (pp. 6–31); the work of Morlan, *Conversion*, deals more with repentance as "conversion" but his treatment of the literature is more up-to-date (pp. 23–38).

23. At the 2013 Annual Meeting of the SBL, the "Second Corinthians" session focused specifically on 2 Cor 7:5–16. Many of those papers sketch ways that 2 Cor 7:5–16 is in fact shaped by Paul's broader theological and scriptural arguments in canonical 2 Corinthians. This project is an extensive attempt to apply and develop many of the same insights. See especially those papers by Troels Engberg-Pedersen, "The Node of Paraenetic Concepts in 2 Cor 7:5–16 in Relation to 5:20—7:4, 1:23—2:13 and 1:3–11"; Steven J. Kraftchick, "ΛΥΠΗ ΚΑΤΑ ΘΕΟΝ: Grief According to God as an Emotional Goal"; and Emmanuel Nathan, "Of Grief that Turns to Comfort: MT Echoes Resounding in the Background of 2 Cor 7:5–16?" (papers presented at the Annual Meeting of the SBL, Baltimore, MD, 25 November 2013). From the same session, see now the forthcoming article by Harrison, "Consolation."

particularly significant is the work of Mark Gignilliat, who examines the Isaianic backdrop to 2 Cor 5:14—6:10, while William J. Webb and now David I. Starling examine the scriptural-eschatological elements of 2 Cor 6:14—7:1.[24] We continue in a similar vein as we attempt to understand 2 Cor 7:2–16 in light of Paul's broader scriptural and eschatological self-understanding. As we study the influence of Scripture on 2 Cor 7:2–16, we deal only with OT passages with explicit citations or clear allusions in (canonical) 2 Corinthians, especially those in the immediately preceding context of 2 Cor 7:2–16 as well as those found in 2 Cor 3, to which (we will argue) Paul explicitly points his audience as he opens 2 Cor 7:2–16.[25] Furthermore, we will build

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24. Mark Gignilliat, *Paul and Isaiah's Servants: Paul's Theological Reading of Isaiah 40–66 in 2 Corinthians 5:14—6:10*, LNTS 330 (London: T&T Clark, 2007); Webb, *Returning Home*; and Starling, *Not My People*, 61–106.

25. The literature on biblical "intertextuality" is immense and will not be summarized here. Christopher D. Stanley, *Arguing with Scripture: The Rhetoric of Quotations in the Letters of Paul* (New York: T&T Clark, 2004), has argued that Paul's audiences largely could not have understood his scriptural allusions, and therefore that their original contexts are not important to the apostle's arguments. For similar positions (though more sympathetic to the position that wider scriptural context is important for understanding Paul's citations and allusions), see Steve Moyise, *Evoking Scripture: Seeing the Old Testament in the New* (London: T&T Clark, 2008), esp. pp. 46–47, and Christopher M. Tuckett, "Paul, Scripture and Ethics: Some Reflections," *NTS* 46/3 (2000): 403–24. For a taste of recent debates on this topic, see Stanley E. Porter and Christopher D. Stanley, eds., *As It Is Written: Studying Paul's Use of Scripture*, SBLSymS 50 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2008), especially the sections on methodology and Paul's audiences (pp. 15–185); see also Christopher D. Stanley, ed., *Paul and Scripture: Continuing the Conversation*, ECL 9 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012). On intertextual allusion, see the groundbreaking works of Michael A. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985); Dietrich-Alex Koch, *Die Schrift als Zeuge des Evangeliums: Untersuchungen zur Verwendung und zum Verständnis der Schrift bei Paulus*, BHT 69 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1986); and in particular Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989). Hays admits that the line between "allusion" and "echo" is hazy; nevertheless he roughly defines them in this way: "*Allusion* is used of obvious intertextual references, *echo* of subtler ones" (29). While there is a real danger of finding echoes where there really are none, J. Ross Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News: Isaiah and Paul 'In Concert' in the Letter to the Romans*, NovTSup 101 (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 10, notes that "in the case of Paul, intertextual echo nearly always functions in tandem with *more*

our argument on the basis of OT citations and allusions that nearly all scholars already recognize.[26] *Hence, we are not arguing for any new allusions or echoes in 2 Cor 7:2–16*.

However, we *will* argue that Paul's clear citations/allusions throughout the letter evoke their *broader scriptural contexts*, with both the citation/allusion and its scriptural context shedding considerable light on the apostle's interpretation of the Corinthians' repentance.[27] For as Hays says, "we will have great difficulty understanding Paul, the pious first-century Jew, unless we seek to situate his discourse appropriately within what Hollander calls the 'cave of resonant signification' that enveloped him: Scripture."[28] Our study will seek to follow these Scriptures as their broader themes

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obvious references to scripture, including *citations marked by introductory formulas and more explicit modes of allusion*. In fact, the most impressive examples of intertextual echo Hays adduces are almost without exception the reverberations of the wider context of a scriptural text that Paul cites explicitly" (emphasis ours).

26. The allusions listed in the margins of NA[28] are a good gauge of scholarly consensus (although Jer 31:33 was only added at 2 Cor 3:3 in this edition!). We will note where scholars disagree over the existence of an allusion.

27. On how Paul's citations and allusions must be read in their broader scriptural context, see the programmatic work of C. H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures: The Substructure of New Testament Theology* (London: Nisbet, 1952). For recent studies, see, e.g., Richard B. Hays, "'Who Has Believed Our Message?': Paul's Reading of Isaiah," in *The Conversion of the Imagination: Paul as Interpreter of Israel's Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 25–49; Florian Wilk, *Die Bedeutung des Jesajabuches für Paulus*, FRLANT 179 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998); and Wagner, *Heralds*. For applications of this approach to the same scriptural texts treated in this study, see, e.g., T. Ryan Jackson, *New Creation in Paul's Letters: A Study of the Historical and Social Setting of a Pauline Concept*, WUNT 272 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 17–19 (on Isaiah), and Moyer V. Hubbard, *New Creation in Paul's Letters and Thought*, SNTSMS 119 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 11–25 (on Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel).

28. Hays, *Echoes*, 21; also, N. T. Wright, *Paul and the Faithfulness of God* (London: SPCK, 2013), 176–77: "Even when it often seems obscure to a present-day reader, the context of a scriptural allusion or

"resonate" into 2 Cor 7, with our ears focused by clear verbal links back to where Paul gave the citations and allusions themselves. *When we turn to 2 Cor 7:2–16, then, we shall look for how select scriptural citations and allusions in the* broader letter *(especially chapters 3 and 6) help explain Paul's argument as it continues in* chapter 7*, where he now treats* "*themes and images*" *that derive from these earlier citations/ allusions (and their own contexts)*.[29] In other words, *after* demonstrating that 2 Cor 7:2–4 *explicitly* points to the covenantal comparison in 2 Cor 3, we argue that 2 Cor 7:5–16 becomes much clearer in light of Paul's *stated* belief in 2 Cor 3 (and elsewhere) that his ministry has brought to Corinth the "new covenant" restoration promised by Israel's Scriptures. We are *not* arguing that 2 Cor 7:2–16 contains subtle allusions/echoes or reinterpretations of specific scriptural texts, but rather that Paul there builds upon his

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echo is again and again very important. Whole passages, whole themes, can be called to mind with a single reference." See also Roy E. Ciampa, "Scriptural Language and Ideas," in *As It Is Written: Studying Paul's Use of Scripture*, ed. Stanley E. Porter and Christopher D. Stanley, SBLSymS 50 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2008), 41–57, who gives a method for locating scriptural "language and ideas," beyond citations, allusions, and echoes.

29. See Rodrigo J. Morales, *The Spirit and the Restoration of Israel: New Exodus and New Creation Motifs in Galatians*, WUNT 2/282 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 8, whose method is similar to mine, although I am building off clear citations/allusions earlier in the letter in order to see how they (in their contexts) resonate as "themes and images" (his phrase) in 2 Cor 7. Morales's study on Gal 3–6 deals largely with scriptural themes and consequent Second Temple "expectations," not with allusions or citations in Galatians. He limits his survey of scriptural themes by sticking to "multiply attested collocations of themes. In other words, each [OT and Second Temple text] considered . . . does not stand on its own, but rather gains significance for Paul's thought when it shares a number of themes with other texts and with Galatians. . . . Paul's argument often reflects certain patterns found in a number of the texts we consider" (9). Similarly, Ciampa, "Scriptural Language," 56, argues that Paul sometimes alludes "not to specific texts but to constellations of scriptural interpretations."

earlier, explicit references to Scripture by applying the broader themes contained within these prophetic texts to the repentant Corinthians.[30]

Moreover, not only does Paul make clear use of these OT texts in the broader argument of 2 Corinthians, but many Second Temple texts also, like Paul, try to explain how repentance would play out in the eschatological salvation of Israel.[31] Given the importance of these texts to Second Temple eschatological expectations, we are further justified in attempting to understand how *these* OT texts *and* themes inform Paul's own

30. Hence, there are two reasons that our study deflects the concerns of those, e.g., Stanley, *Arguing*, and, to a lesser extent, Moyise, *Evoking Scripture*, 125–41, who argue that Paul's allusions (if they exist) do not necessarily evoke or draw upon their broader scriptural contexts. First, we do not suggest that 7:5–16 contains a complex allusion/echo that clarifies Paul's argument; rather, we argue that the broad themes that *do* shape 7:5–16 derive from passages to which Paul has clearly referred in explaining and defending his ministry. Second, we argue that 2 Cor 7:2–4 explicitly points the Corinthians to the very sections of the letter where Paul uses these Scriptures to defend himself. Stanley and Moyise seem most concerned with those who build a supposed Pauline allusion on "intricate textual details"; so Moyise, "Does Paul Respect the Context of His Quotations?," in *Paul and Scripture: Continuing the Conversation*, ed. Christopher D. Stanley, ECL 9 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012), 102; cf. Stanley, *Arguing*, 46–54. By contrast we are building on the broad themes of the passages that Paul has referenced in defending himself, passages which he apparently expects the church to understand, at least at a basic thematic level. Even Stanley, *Arguing*, 113, admits that, because Paul spent a long time teaching the Corinthians in person, there were some stories and passages that he expected at least some of them to understand and explain. In response to Stanley et al., see Wright, *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*, 1449–56 ("We should assume, unless strong evidence to the contrary is provided, that Paul's *use* of Israel's scriptures was at least broadly consonant with what he believed about the *relation* of ancient Israel to the Messiah and his people. . . . Granted this principle, . . . I propose that Paul's understanding of Israel's scriptures should have as its basic framework the *covenant narrative of Israel*," p. 1453, emphasis his), as well as Gignilliat, *Paul*, 6–16 ("Paul's new eschatological situation, without doubt, alters the context of Paul's OT reading. However, it does not follow that Paul's new situation meant that Paul was no longer seeking to listen faithfully to the text," p. 16).

31. Again, Morales, *Spirit*, 8: "The Second Temple literature shows which of these texts still influenced eschatological expectations among Jews of the period, as well as which themes tended to appear together, and so provide a helpful body of literature to compare with Paul's use of OT imagery."

treatment of repentance, both in parallel *and* in contrast with his Jewish contemporaries' treatments of the same.[32]

Hence, we will not only interpret 7:2–16 within the context of 2 Cor 1–7; we will also place Paul alongside select Second Temple texts in order to compare how they interpreted their shared body of Scripture, particularly as it pertains to the broad themes of repentance, transformation, and restoration.[33] Our primary aim is to understand how Paul's interpretation of Scripture shaped his interpretation of the Corinthians' repentance; secondarily, we will look at select Second Temple Jewish treatments of the same texts/themes, for the sake of understanding how Paul fits into the broad spectrum of contemporary Jewish expectations for repentance and the restoration.

Also, we note that we will study the canonical letter as a whole, even as we are fully aware that many scholars would partition it at multiple places in chapters 1–7. Our goal in doing so is to see if the text can be explained *as it stands*. If we can plausibly

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32. See Francis Watson, *Paul and the Hermeneutics of Faith*, 2nd ed. (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016), 2–5, on this "three-way conversation" between Scripture, Paul, and Second Temple texts. Note his defense of reading the OT as a distinct text: "It is essential to retrace the way from the scriptural text to its Pauline and non-Pauline realizations, in a manner that allows the scriptural text a voice of its own within a three-way conversation" (3). At the same time, Watson rightly notes that interpreting communities have their own presuppositions that shape the way they interpret scriptural texts, which themselves can be fairly ambiguous, so that "one would expect a degree of interpretative diversity rather than almost universal conformity to a single 'pattern'" (12).

33. Of course, these texts do not understand these themes in exactly the same way. But for now, we broadly define them as follows, noting different understandings of them where relevant: *repentance* is the decision to turn away from acknowledged disobedience and to turn toward God and his covenant, a turning inextricably linked to obedience to the covenant's stipulations; *transformation* is the reorientation of a person's moral disposition from disobedience to obedience; and *(eschatological) restoration* is God's comprehensive act of judgment and renewal at the end of history.

and coherently explain the argument of 2 Cor 7 as a whole, this will support the conclusion that 2 Corinthians (or at least chapters 1–7) is a unitary letter, however strange it may sometimes read to us moderns.

In sum, this study focuses on the exegetical and scriptural contexts of 7:2–16. Our foundation is a close syntactical reading of the internal argument of 7:2–4 and then 7:5–16, undertaken with an eye for its role within the letter's larger apologetic argument, which itself depends on Paul's reading of Israel's Scriptures.

Outline of the Argument

In chapter two, "The 'New Covenant' Argument of 2 Corinthians 7:2–4," I argue that Paul's appeal is neither a repetition/resumption of 6:11–13 nor the "conclusion" to his apology. Rather, 7:2–4 is a *summary* of his apology thus far, with especially close ties to the old covenant/new covenant comparison of chapter 3. Paul appeals for the Corinthians to receive him (7:2) and then points to the *nature* of his ministry as one that does not result in "condemnation" (κατάκρισις, 7:3a; used elsewhere only in 3:9). To prove that this is the nature of Paul's ministry (γάρ), Paul does what he has been doing throughout his apology: pointing out how the Corinthians and Paul "die" and "live" together (7:3b), a phrase referring to their shared suffering (especially Paul's) and their shared, present experience of spiritual, even eschatological, life (especially the Corinthians'). It is because of this "new covenant" relationship that Paul is filled with

"much boldness" (πολλὴ παρρησία, 7:4; used elsewhere only in 3:12), as well as boasting, comfort, and joy. We show, then, that 2 Cor 7:2–4 is a freighted summary of the entire apology, especially Paul's *new-covenantal* defense of himself in 2 Cor 3.

Knowing then that 2 Cor 7:2–4 is fundamentally rooted in Paul's understanding of the "new covenant," our third chapter ("Paul's 'New Covenant' Ministry in Its Scriptural Context") turns to the Old Testament passages (and their broader contexts) to which Paul has pointed in his apology, with a careful eye for the themes and language that appear both in 2 Cor 3 and 2 Cor 7:5–16—that is, those dealing with transformation, repentance, and final vindication. Consequently, we examine Jer 30–33 (cf. Jer 31:31 with 2 Cor 3:6, "new covenant"); Ezek 36–37 (cf. Ezek 36:26 with 2 Cor 3:3, "fleshly hearts"); and Isa 40–55 (cf. Isa 49:8 with 2 Cor 6:2, "the day of salvation"). We show that these passages, in accordance with the promises of Deut 30:1–10 that God would circumcise the heart of his exiled people, variously but clearly promise a time when God will transform his people's hearts with the certain result that they will repent, enjoy a renewed covenant relationship with him, and, as a result, escape his wrath.

Chapter four, "The 'New Covenant' Argument of 2 Corinthians 7:5–16," argues that the γάρ of 7:5 can and even must be taken seriously as a causal conjunction, since Paul is giving the *reason* for his abundant joy in the midst of affliction (7:4). On the one hand, the argument of 7:5–16 revolves around Paul's joy over the Corinthians' repentance (7:7, 9, 13, 16). On the other hand, we show that 7:5–16 is ultimately about

what *generates* Paul's joy—namely, that the Corinthians have repented. Paul emphatically roots this repentance in God's own acting upon them; because Paul believes that this repentance is *from God*, he is convinced that the Corinthians will persevere unto final salvation from eschatological judgment. This, we suggest, is exactly what was promised by the prophetic promises detailed above. In other words, Paul's joy is ultimately about God's work through the "new covenant": transformed hearts resulting in repentance. In turn, this divinely wrought repentance testifies to Paul's legitimacy as a "servant of the new covenant" (3:6). Far from being an afterthought or emotional outburst, then, 2 Cor 7:5–16 is the *conclusion* to Paul's apology in chs. 1–7, for it tangibly demonstrates Paul's previous retort that the only "recommendation letter" he needs or has is the Corinthians' own transformed lives (2 Cor 3:1–3). And this is why the leitmotif of chapter 7 is Paul's joy.

After showing how Paul applies these prophetic promises to his own context in 7:5–16, our fifth chapter ("Restoration and Repentance in Select Second Temple Texts") illustrates how some of his Jewish contemporaries applied them to their own contexts. By way of comparison, we take three paradigmatic examples of the spectrum along which Second Temple texts interpret the relationship between the transformed heart, repentance, and eschatological restoration as they try to understand the promises of Deut 30:1–10. First, we argue that (First) Baruch most closely parallels Paul, in that it views Israel as totally incapable of repentance apart from God's unilateral decision to

give them new hearts, making explicit appeals especially to the promises of Jeremiah and Isaiah. Hence, Baruch believes that the exiles' repentance is evidence that God has fulfilled his promises to give them a new heart. Second, we argue that Jubilees is *similar* to Paul in its argument that God must transform Israel's heart in order for it experience the restoration and deliverance from final judgment (with explicit appeals to the promises of Ezekiel and Jeremiah), but *dissimilar* to Paul in that God does this only *in response* to their repentance and obedience; the people are not *so* corrupt that they cannot repent on their own. Finally, we argue that Second Baruch is largely *dissimilar* to Paul in that it understands *both* repentance *and* heart-transformation to be freely initiated and enacted by Israel; furthermore, it makes no explicit appeals to the prophetic promises detailed above. Though these texts variously construe the relationship between repentance and restoration, taken together they show that these scriptural texts and themes were important to many strands of Second Temple Judaism as they sought to understand how the promises of Deut 30:1–10 would come to fruition.

Our sixth and final chapter summarizes these findings and suggests ways in which they should inform further study of 2 Corinthians, as well as his other letters.

CHAPTER TWO: THE "NEW COVENANT" ARGUMENT OF 2 CORINTHIANS 7:2–4

In this chapter, we show how specific themes and terminology from 7:2–4 appear throughout 2 Corinthians, as part of our larger argument about the climactic role of 2 Cor 7:2–16 within Paul's apostolic self-defense. We seek to show how in 7:2–4 Paul *both* restates the essential points of the letter (especially his careful defense of his new covenant ministry in 2:14—3:18) *and* anticipates 7:5–16—a "theological interpretation" of the Corinthians' response to the "tearful letter" (2:4). Because 7:2–4 points to 2:14—3:18, with the latter's repeated use of scriptural promises about the "new covenant" restoration of Israel, and because 7:2–4 closely follows further citations of similar scriptural promises in 2 Cor 6, we are justified in showing how the broad themes of these scriptural passages illuminate the argument of 7:5–16.

Πρὸς κατάκρισιν οὐ λέγω **(7:3a)**[1]

When Paul states in 7:3a that he is "not speaking for the purpose of condemnation," he is not merely saying that he does not intend to fault the Corinthians.[2] Rather, Paul is again asserting the nature of his apostolic ministry, as he also does elsewhere in the immediately surrounding verses of 7:2–4.[3] For although it is unclear what lies behind the denials of 7:2b, what is clear is that Paul is there asserting the

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1. We will not examine verse 2 in depth, as the present goal is to understand specific verbal and thematic links to the rest of the letter, which are found especially in verses 3–4. The command in 7:2a (Χωρήσατε ἡμᾶς) is best understood to mean something like "receive us," not "widen [your hearts] to us" (cf. 6:13); rightly, Land, *Integrity*, 158 (who also, p. 159, notes a functional shift between 7:2 and 3, as we noted in n. 18 on p. 11). Paul is thus restating the letter's overall purpose: reconciliation with the Corinthians. On Paul's use of the "apostolic plural" ("receive *us*") to refer to *himself*, see Margaret E. Thrall, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 2 vols., ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994–2000), 1:105–7. It is not controversial that 2 Corinthians, however partitioned, basically concerns reconciliation between Paul and the church. Bultmann, *Zweite Brief*, 21, and Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 44, sharply disagree over the epistle's integrity but nevertheless agree that the letter (or letters) seeks to resolve the conflict between Paul and Corinth. See Vegge, *2 Corinthians*, 251–52, on the many kinds of appeals for reconciliation throughout the letter, e.g., 1:11, 14; 2:9, 16–17; 3:1–3; 5:11–12, 20; 6:1, 13; 7:1, 2; 8:7, 8, 11, 24; 9:1; 10:2, 7; 12:14; 13:5–7, etc. With regards to 7:2b, Paul defends his personal conduct by denying to have acted wrongly or underhandedly, which he does throughout the letter, although often in different terms: 1:17–18, 23; 2:17; 4:2; 6:6–8, 12; 8:20–21; 12:16–18, etc. However, we are presently concerned with more specific links between 7:2–4 and the rest of the letter, while readily acknowledging that 7:2, with its appeal for reconciliation and denial of personal wrongdoing, obviously fits in with the themes of the entire canonical letter. For more on the denials of 7:2b, see note 26 below.

2. Contra C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, BNTC (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1973), 203; Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 369; Harris, *2 Corinthians*, 518; and Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 1:482, etc., who see 7:3a merely as a reference to the denials of 7:2b. Bultmann, *Zweite Brief*, 179, is right when he says that 7:3a is not clearing up a misunderstanding, but then wrongly sees it as a "nur (überflüssige) Äußerung seiner Liebe."

3. Thomas Schmeller, *Der zweite Brief an die Korinther (2Kor 1,1–7,4)*, EKK 8/1 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2010), 385: "Die Klarstellung in V. 3a dient dazu, das positive Ziel der Selbstverteidigung in V. 2b–d herauszustellen. Sie ist keine Polemik, die die Distanz vergrößern würde, sondern sie ist eine Apologie, die der Nähe entspringt und dient."

integrity of his ministry as the reason for which the Corinthians should receive him:[4] it is a ministry through which no one (οὐδένα) is wronged, corrupted, or cheated.[5] Similarly, 7:3b also speaks of Paul's ministry, but in terms of having the Corinthians on his heart with the result of their dying and living together. Even more clearly, 7:4 is a series of statements about the nature of Paul's ministry to the Corinthians: it is marked by boldness, boasting, comfort, joy, and affliction. Hence, 7:3a rests within three verses that reiterate the nature (and consequently, legitimacy) of Paul's ministry. Within this context, then, his denial to be speaking for the purpose of condemnation is more about the purpose and character of Paul's ministry than it is about the Corinthians or their potentially hurt feelings.[6]

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4. Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 383: "This threefold denial . . . is an attempt to convince the Corinthians that there is no *reason* for them to be estranged from him" (emphasis ours; similarly, Harris, *2 Corinthians*, 516). Though Paul does not explicitly use a conjunction to explain the logical (i.e., causal) relationship between 7:2a and 7:2b, the careful reader/listener will supply it, as suggested by "Behaghel's Law": "The default expectation is that adjacent clauses are assumed to have some kind of relation to one another"; so Steven E. Runge, *Discourse Grammar of the Greek New Testament: A Practical Introduction for Teaching and Exegesis* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2010), 73. In the case of asyndeton here, Paul "did not feel the need to specify any kind of relationship between the clauses" (Runge, *Grammar*, 20), since (we suggest) the context makes it clear (but implicit). Thus it is unnecessary to speculate about Paul's excited psychological state to explain the asyndeta, with, e.g., Barnett, *2 Corinthians*, 360, 363; Harris, *2 Corinthians*, 517; and Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 384.

5. Perhaps then the denials should be understood as gnomic aorists. Elsewhere Paul similarly makes assertions about his ministry through denying their opposites; cf. 1:8, 17–18, 24; 2:4, 17; 3:1, 5; 4:2; 5:12, 16; 6:3, 12; 10:2, 3, and 13. James M. Scott, *2 Corinthians*, NIBC 8 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1998), 158, insightfully notes that "Moses defends himself against the charges of Korah and his followers by stating that he has harmed no one (Num. 16:15) [cf. 3:4–18]" and so intriguingly suggests that "Paul may be responding to his critics in Corinth in terms of the type, rather than thinking of a particular wrong."

6. Contra Daniel Patte, "A Structural Exegesis of 2 Corinthians 2:14—7:4 with Special Attention on 2:14—3:6 and 6:11—7:4," in *SBL Seminar Papers, 1987*, SBLSP 26 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), 39, who sees a shift in focus in Paul's argument from himself (2:14—3:6) to the Corinthians (6:11—7:4).

This is further evidenced by Paul's use of κατάκρισις elsewhere in 2 Corinthians. The related verb κατακρίνω occurs five times in Paul's writings, where it tends to have an eschatological undertone, referring to God's definitive judgment of sin.[7] The noun κατάκριμα occurs three times in the NT, all in Romans (Rom 5:16, 18; 8:1), focusing more on the punishment that results from a judicial sentence of condemnation than the sentence itself.[8] By contrast, κατάκρισις focuses on the judicial verdict itself and is used in the NT only in 2 Cor 3:9 and 7:3.[9] In 3:9 this word is central to Paul's contrast between the old and new covenants. Hence, Paul's reuse of κατάκρισις in 7:3 is likely significant as a reference back to his argument in chapter 3—although this connection has been overlooked by many commentators.[10] We now turn to 3:9 to demonstrate how

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7. See its use in Rom 2:1 (the final plight of those who judge others); 8:3 (God's condemnation of sin through the cross); 8:34 (the lack of condemnation because of Jesus's death and resurrection); and 1 Cor 11:32 (the world's coming condemnation). A possible non-eschatological exception is Rom 14:23 (ὁ δὲ διακρινόμενος ἐὰν φάγῃ κατακέκριται), although this too could be eschatologically oriented (a divine passive?), since someone who continues to sin against his conscience will in the end suffer divine condemnation for his lack of faith.

8. BDAG, 518.

9. BDAG, 519. A search on the Online TLG gives only nine non-Christian uses before the third century (AD), five of which come from the astrologer Vettius Valens. However, in light of its use to describe sentence/punishment in 2 Clem. 15:5 and Irenaeus, *Haer*. 5.26, the distinction between these two words should not be pushed too far. What matters for our purposes is that Paul uses this exceedingly rare word in both 2 Cor 3:9 and 7:3.

10. E.g., Barnett, *2 Corinthians*, 361; Barrett, *Second Corinthians*, 203; Bultmann, *Zweite Brief*, 179; Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 369; Harris, *2 Corinthians*, 518; Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 384–85; Frank J. Matera, *II Corinthians*, NTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003), 169; Schmeller, *Zweite Brief*, 385; Mark A. Seifrid, *The Second Letter to the Corinthians*, PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), 304; and Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 1:482.

Paul's previous use of this judicial motif indeed clarifies his succinct statements in 7:2–4.

The διακονία τῆς κατακρίσεως (3:9) in the Context of 3:4–18

In 2 Cor 3:4–11, Paul explains how his own new covenant διακονία surpasses Moses's old covenant διακονία through a series of *qal wahomer*-type comparisons.[11] As the fulfillment of Ezek 11:19–20 and 36:26–27, Paul's ministry, unlike Moses's, relays the immediate presence of the Spirit of God without destroying the people of God (3:3, 6, 17–18), since believers now have fleshly (i.e., transformed, non-stony) hearts (3:3).[12]

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11. *Qal wahomer* ("light to the heavy") is a rabbinic argument from the lesser to the greater found within the interpretative traditions of Hillel and Eliezer. See H. L. Strack and G. Stemberger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash*, trans. Markus Bockmuehl (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991), 21, 27; and on its use in 2 Cor 3, see Nina L. Collins, "Observations on the Jewish Background of 2 Corinthians 3:9, 3:7–8 and 3:11," in *Paul and the Corinthians: Studies on a Community in Conflict*, ed. Trevor J. Burke and J. Keith Elliott, NovTSup 109 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 75–92. The Greco-Roman rhetorical equivalent was called an *a fortiori* or *a minori ad maius* argument. For a comparison of Jewish and Greco-Roman logic, see David Daube, "Rabbinic Methods of Interpretation and Hellenistic Rhetoric," *HUCA* 22 (1949): 239–64.

12. The following discussion builds on the exegesis by Scott J. Hafemann, *Paul, Moses, and the History of Israel: The Letter/Spirit Contrast and the Argument from Scripture in 2 Corinthians 3*, WUNT 81 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1995), which builds on his *Suffering and the Spirit: An Exegetical Study of II Cor. 2:14—3:3 within the Context of the Corinthian Correspondence*, WUNT 2/19 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1986), passim. His basic point—Paul's careful, contextually faithful use of Exod 34 shows that 2 Cor 2:14—3:18 is an argument about respective ministries and dispensations of the old and new covenants, rather than about the law versus the gospel as alternate means of salvation, or about alternate hermeneutical principles—is broadly reflected, though with some variation, in the later analyses of Jeffrey W. Aernie, *Is Paul Also Among the Prophets?: An Examination of the Relationship between Paul and the Old Testament Prophetic Tradition in 2 Corinthians*, LNTS 467 (London: T&T Clark, 2012), 114–33; W. J. Dumbrell, "The Newness of the New Covenant: The Logic of the Argument in 2 Corinthians 3," *RTR* 61 (2002): 69; James D. G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 147–50; Harris, *2 Corinthians*, 280; Jason C. Meyer, *The End of the Law: Mosaic Covenant in Pauline Theology*, NACSBT 6 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2009), 62–114; Thomas R. Schreiner, *Paul: Apostle of God's Glory in Christ* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 134–35, 264–65; and Wright, *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*, 724, 980–84. For those who have challenged Hafemann's argument that for Paul the problem was with *Israel*, and not the law *per se*, see Paul B. Duff, "Glory in the Ministry of Death: Gentile Condemnation and Letters of Recommendation in 2 Cor 3:6–

In contrast, because of Israel's hardness of heart, Moses had to protect Israel from the glory of God by wearing a veil (3:13–14) lest the sinful people perish before their holy God. Moses's ministry was indeed glorious (3:7, 9, 11), but in the face of Israel's rebellious and unchanged heart, manifested paradigmatically through the golden calf incident of Exod 32, his ministry largely resulted in condemnation and death (3:6, 9).[13]

Paul's διακονία therefore mediates the presence of God in a way that Moses's did not, since in Paul's ministry the divine presence—unhindered by the veil of Moses—no longer destroys the people (3:3, 6, 8, 17–18). Having fulfilled the Sinai covenant, and thereby rendering it obsolete, the new covenant "remains" (3:11) and results in life (3:6), righteousness (3:9), and the transformation of God's people into the very image of

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18," *NovT* 46/4 (2004): 313–37, who argues that the problem is the law's condemnation of *Gentiles* (see below); this article is now part of his *Moses in Corinth*, 137–71. See also Stephan K. Davis, *The Antithesis of the Ages: Paul's Reconfiguration of Torah*, CBQMS 33 (Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 2002), 182–214, who locates the problem in a "cosmic" understanding of Torah; Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 210–13, who pins the problem more on the "host of laws that were attended by penalties" (213) than on the Israelites themselves; Jens Schröter, "Schriftauslegung und Hermeneutik in 2 Korinther 3: Ein Beitrag zur Frage der Schriftbenutzung des Paulus," *NovT* 40 (1998): 231–75, who reads 2 Cor 3:6 as the hermeneutical contrast that allows Paul to reinterpret Exod 34 radically; and Watson, *Hermeneutics*, 258–74, who, while agreeing that Paul reads Exod 34 in its original context (270), argues that the problem is the law's own deceptive suggestion that it is "definitive and unsurpassable," shrouded in a "veil of seeming permanence" (272); however, Watson admits that the ultimate problem may be Israel's hardness of heart (271). Hays, *Echoes*, 149–53, while distancing himself from the classic hermeneutical contrast, still argues that Paul is describing a "new covenant hermeneutic" built upon "moral transformation" (152) in contrast to a "letter" hermeneutic that scrupulously focuses on the text as an end in itself; similarly, Dierk Starnitzke, "Der Dienst des Paulus: Zur Interpretation von Ex 34 in 2 Kor 3," *WD* 25 (1999): 193–207.

13. Contra the argument of Duff, *Moses in Corinth*, 153–71, that Paul had in mind only the condemnation of lawless Gentiles; similarly, Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 210, downplays the relevance of the broader context of Exod 32–34, which shows that Israel was indeed hard-hearted, so that "the only possible verdict of the Law upon Israel as a people [was] death" (Hafemann, *Moses*, 203).

God by their directly and corporately encountering him through the Spirit (3:18).[14] Because the Spirit is thus at work through Paul's ministry, he can be confident and bold before God about his own sufficiency, even in the midst of suffering (3:12; cf. 3:4).[15] As a result of Paul's ministry, both he and the Corinthians (ἡμεῖς πάντες, 3:18) can now dwell in the unmediated presence of God without fear of death and in the freedom of the new covenant (3:17).

14. Of course, Paul's ministry still results in condemnation and death for some (2 Cor 2:15; 4:3–4; 13:2, 10), but its emphasis is righteousness and life. For a more detailed treatment of how Paul's ministry, in a reversal of Jeremiah's ministry—that is, that it emphasizes "building up" over "tearing down" (compare Jer 1:10 with 2 Cor 13:10), but while still including some "tearing down"—see Scott J. Hafemann, "Paul's 'Jeremiah' Ministry in Reverse and the Reality of the New Covenant," in *Paul's Message and Ministry in Covenant Perspective* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2015), 107–15.

15. Hafemann, *Moses*, 94, following Stanley Olson, "Epistolary Uses of Expressions of Self-Confidence," *JBL* 103/4 (1984): 585–97, shows that Paul's statements of confidence focus not on the *feeling* of his confidence, but on the *content* of his confidence, which is "that his suffering is the vehicle through which the Spirit is being poured out in his ministry."

In short, these contrasts are:

Old Covenant	New Covenant
stone	fleshly hearts (3:3)
letter	Spirit (3:6)
kills	gives life (3:6)
death	Spirit (3:7–8)
has glory	more surely[16] has glory (3:7–8)
condemnation	righteousness (3:9)
glory rendered inoperative[17]	glory remains (3:11)
veil; hardened minds	boldness (3:12–13); veil removed (3:14–16)

Paul can variously describe the Mosaic covenant in terms of death, killing, and condemnation, since in Scripture condemnation frequently entails a *death* sentence.[18]

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16. Taking μᾶλλον in terms of logical surety, not quantity. See BDAG, 614, along with Harris, *2 Corinthians*, 286.

17. We here follow the argument of Hafemann, *Moses*, 265–317, who argues that καταργέω means "to render inoperative" or "to bring something to an end in terms of its impact"—not "fade away," contra the influential reading of Windisch, *Der zweite Korintherbrief*, 113–20. Despite his broad agreement with Hafemann's reading of 2 Cor 3, Harris, *2 Corinthians*, 284–85, against Hafemann, *Moses*, 301–17, argues that καταργέω means "fade" rather than "render inoperative," as do Meyer, *End of the Law*, 90–93; and Watson, *Hermeneutics*, 270n42 (cf. Hays, *Echoes*, 131–40). However, Harris remains unconvincing in that he reads (Paul's) present *time* into the present *tense* of τὴν καταργουμένην (284n43), when the continuous aspect of the adjectival participle is more likely being emphasized, especially since it is the *indicative* mood that marks time relatively; on which, see Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 497–512. Also, Harris, 285, while admitting that Second Temple Jewish literature largely understood Moses's facial glory to be unfading, points to LAB 19:16 as evidence that Moses's face became glorious (again) at death, but fails to deal with Hafemann's original argument that LAB 19:16 refers back to 19:12, where Moses is promised that he will be glorified with his fathers (Hafemann, *Moses*, 289). Hafemann's analysis of καταργέω is echoed by Aernie, *Prophets?*, 123n37; William R. Baker, "Did the Glory of Moses' Face Fade?: A Reexamination of katargeō in 2 Corinthians 3:7–18," *BBR* 10/1 (2000): 3–15; Dumbrell, "Newness," 74–78; Matera, *II Corinthians*, 88; and Schreiner, *Paul*, 265.

18. See, for example, the connection between divine (and/or human) judgment and the sentence of death in Gen 2:17; 3:19; 6:12–13; 9:5–6; 20:7; 26:11; Exod 12:12; 19:12–13; 21:12, etc.; 32:27, 35; Lev 8:34–35; 10:1–3; 15:31; 16:2; 20; 24:17–23, etc.; Num 1:51; 15:32–36; 16:28–35, 41–50; 21:4–6; 26:65; 34:16–34, etc.; Deut 13:5, 9, 15; 17:5–7; 18:20; 19:11–13; 24:16; 28; 30:15–20; Josh 1:18; Judg 13:22–23; 1 Sam 2:6, 34; 12:19; 14:43–45; 26:16; 2 Sam 1:15; 6:7; 12:5–6, 10, 13–14; 24:10–17; 1 Kgs 2:37; 18:40; 2 Kgs 1:16; 9:30–37; 10:10–11, 24–27; 2 Kgs 21:10–15; Pss 34:21; 49:14; 55:15, etc.; Prov 11:19;

Moreover, the "motif of 'condemnation' supplies the *theological* counterpart to the effect of 'death' already described in v. 7b."[19] It is not just that many *died* as a result of Moses's ministry, but that God *condemned* them to death, and that the death taking place in the events of the narrative corresponds to a "spiritual" death in relationship to God.[20] So in 2 Cor 3:9 the counterpart to the Mosaic "ministry of κατάκρισις" is the Pauline "ministry of δικαιοσύνη." Righteousness—not condemnation—characterizes the new covenant.

Positively, then, Paul defends himself in 2:14—3:18 by pointing to the tangible evidence of his ministry, namely, that the Corinthians have received the Spirit through Paul's surpassingly glorious (but suffering-filled) ministry.[21] When defending himself, Paul thus points to the positive results of his ministry—life and righteousness, grounded

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16:14, etc.; Eccl 7:17; Isa 5:25; 9:7 (LXX); 22:14, 18; 53:7–12; Jer 11:21–23; 14:12 (LXX); 15:1–3; 16:1–13, etc.; Ezek 3:16–21 (cf. 18; 33:1–20); 5:5–17; 11:5–13; 24:15–24 (!), etc.; Dan 2:12–13; 3:6; 6:7; Hos 13:1; Amos 2:2; 4:10. See also Bar 4:1; 1 Esd 8:24; 1 Macc 1:50, 57, etc.; Sir 9:13; 14:17; 41:2–3; Tob 3:4; Wis 2:20; 12:20, etc.; 1 En. 98:10; 2 Bar. 83:18; Jub. 33:18; LAB 3:9; 44:10, etc; and 1QS II 4–17; IV 11–14, etc.; CD I 3–4; I 20—II 1; II 20—III 12; XIX 10–33, etc. Watson, *Hermeneutics*, 325–27, suggests that the book of Numbers describes "a death sentence pronounced upon an entire generation. . . . The episodes of death in the desert recounted in the Book of Numbers are further confirmation [for Paul] that 'the letter kills' [2 Cor 3:6]" (326–27).

19. Hafemann, *Moses*, 317 (emphasis ours).

20. To Paul, "death" is (of course) far more than what happens at the end of biological life; it can refer to the sinful state of alienation from and hostility to God: 1 Cor 1:18; 2 Cor 2:15–16; 4:3; 7:10; see also Rom 6:13; 7:10–13, 24; cf. 2 Thess 2:10; Col 2:13; Eph 2:1, 5; 4:18, etc.

21. Hafemann, *Moses*, 33: "As the parallel between 2 Cor. 2:17 and 4:1f. shows, the issue throughout 3:4–18 is still whether or not Paul's ministry of suffering can be integrated with his ministry of the Spirit" (see also pp. 94–97, 267, 400). For a similar explanation of suffering and Spirit within 3:2–3 as "empirical proof for the genuine nature of his ministry," see Hafemann's *Suffering and the Spirit*, 202–3 (quote from p. 203), which builds on the work of Stanley Olson, "Confidence Expressions in Paul: Epistolary Conventions and the Purpose of 2 Corinthians" (PhD diss., Yale University, 1976), 136.

in heart-transformation by the Spirit—in contrast to the negative results of Moses's ministry—death and condemnation, grounded in heart-hardness before the γράμμα.[22]

There is yet another link to 7:3: in the context of 2:14—3:18 Paul also describes the nature of his *speech* as a legitimate servant of the new covenant. For besides his central claim to speak with παρρησία (3:12),[23] Paul also gives two statements about his verbal fidelity. In 2:17, after denying that he is like those who seek to profit from the Corinthians, Paul defends himself by pointing to the nature of his speech: its sincere motivation (ἐξ εἰλικρινείας), divine source (ἐκ θεοῦ), and divine vindication (κατέναντι θεοῦ ἐν Χριστῷ).[24] Similarly, in 4:2, Paul denies corrupting God's word and asserts that his apostolic speech is transparently true (τῇ φανερώσει τῆς ἀληθείας). Hence, Paul's glorious ministry of the Spirit, as explained and defended in 3:4–18, is inextricably linked to the content and nature of his speech (2:17; 4:2), since it is through preaching Christ in the midst of suffering that Paul mediates the Spirit to the Corinthians.[25]

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22. In 3:7–12, verse 7 is a conditional statement which supports the rhetorical question in verse 8. In verses 9–11 there are then three ground statements (γὰρ . . . γὰρ . . . γὰρ . . .) which all lend further support to the thesis in 3:8 that ἡ διακονία τοῦ πνεύματος μᾶλλον ἔσται ἐν δόξῃ.

23. We will develop the theological significance of this term below, but its basic sense here is "boldness/frankness." See BDAG, 781–82.

24. Hafemann, *Suffering and the Spirit*, 174–76.

25. Hafemann, *Moses*, 124, points out that "the parallels between 2 Cor. 2:14–17 (cf. v. 17) and 3:5f. on the one hand, and 3:5f. and 4:1–3 on the other hand, demonstrate that the content of the new covenant is to be paralleled with the 'word of God' (ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ) in 2:17 and 4:2, which is the 'Gospel' (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον) in 4:3f"; here he follows Otfried Hofius, "Gesetz und Evangelium nach 2. Korinther 3," in "*Gesetz*" *als Thema biblischer Theologie*, WUNT 51 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1989), 78.

In sum, Paul defends himself in 3:3–18 by pointing out how he is *like* Moses in that both men mediate the glory of God and speak God's words, but also *unlike* Moses in that his ministry does not bring condemnation to the covenant people, since the new covenant is characterized by God's giving his people his Spirit so as to transform their hearts and enable them to experience his glory without perishing.

The Meaning of 7:3a in Light of 3:9

With the denials of 7:2b it is possible that Paul is responding to actual accusations of past wrongdoing.[26] However, as stated above,[27] Paul is not merely ensuring that the Corinthians do not feel offended or discouraged by these three denials, whatever their background. Moreover, though often assumed or inserted, in 7:3a Paul does not use a demonstrative pronoun to specify that he is referring to the immediately-preceding denials: "I do not say [this] in condemnation."[28] The statement of 7:3a stands

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26. As pointed out by Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 369, the double-usage of πλεονεκτέω in the denials of 12:17–18 suggests that the Corinthians accused Paul of taking advantage of them. On the other hand, note that some ancient epistolary theorists distinguished between the "accounting type" (αἰτολογικός) letter—which "does not answer charges or necessarily even anticipate hostility but gives explanations for some sort of behavior that is open to misunderstanding or might be subject to blame"—and the "apologetic type" (ἀπολογητικός) that does respond to actual charges; so Stanley K. Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986), 171. See the "accounting" type letter of Ps.-Demetrius, *Epistolary Types* 16, in contrast to his "apologetic" type 18 (cf. the similar "denying" [ἀπαρνητική] type of Ps-Libanius, *Epistolary Types* 61). Thus, the fact that Paul is making a denial may say nothing more than that he is clearing up a *potential* misunderstanding, and not necessarily that he is denying an *actual* accusation.

27. See note 2.

28. See Paul's use of τοῦτο to refer to a near and previous statement in 1 Cor 1:12; 9:8; cf. Rom 8:31; Gal 3:17; Col 2:4; 2 Thess 2:5; 1 Tim 5:7, etc. Those who insert a demonstrative pronoun into 7:3a include, e.g., Barrett, *Second Corinthians*, 203; Bultmann, *Zweite Brief*, 179; and Furnish, *II Corinthians*,

on its own. Furthermore, while the denial in 7:3a likely has the Corinthians in view, it lacks the second-person pronoun, even though commentators often insert it.[29] Hence it is likely more a statement about Paul and his ministry than about the Corinthians. Like the denials of 7:2b, then, 7:3a is primarily a statement about the legitimacy of Paul's ministry, since, in view of 3:9, an essential characteristic of its "new covenant" identity is the fact that its primary focus is not condemnation. If Paul is preempting the possibility of the Corinthians' taking offense over 7:2a, he is only doing so secondarily. Primarily, he is (again) vindicating himself by pointing out what his ministry is not, as he has been doing throughout the letter and especially in 3:4–18. As such, the statement of 7:3a is a ground statement for the imperative given in 7:2a, in addition to the similarly asyndetic ground statements of 7:2b:

> Receive us (7:2a)
>
> > Because I wronged no one . . . (7:2b) [and]
> > Because I am not speaking πρὸς κατάκρισιν (7:3a).

Moreover, in making the denial of 7:3a it is unlikely that Paul is responding to a charge that he is especially prone to condemnation, as perhaps suggested by the accusations of heavy-handedness in 10:1, 9–11.[30] In attempting to mirror-read 7:2–3 by

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29. E.g., Barnett, *2 Corinthians*, 358; Bultmann, *Zweite Brief*, 179; Harris, *2 Corinthians*, 516; and Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 384.

30. Paul repeatedly describes God's judgment/condemnation, even as a direct result of his ministry: Rom 1:16—2:16 (esp. 2:2, 3, 5, 12, 16); 3:6, 8; 11:33; 13:2; 14:10, 23; 1 Cor 4:4–5; 5:13; 11:27–34; Gal 5:21; 6:7–8; 1 Thess 2:16; 4:6; cf. 2 Thess 1:5–10; 2:11–12; 1 Tim 3:6; 5:11–12, 24; 2 Tim 4:1. Paul participates in God's judgment, either through Paul's own pronouncement of judgment (Rom 3:8; 1 Cor

jumping forward to chapter 10, interpreters are prone to miss the weight behind Paul's previous (and only) statement about κατάκρισις in 3:9, which itself occurs in the midst of a carefully reasoned and theologically freighted argument about his legitimacy as an apostle of the new covenant. In view of this explicit link between 3:9 and 7:3, especially in an oral-aural text, Paul's statement in 7:2–3 likely looks backward and not forward.

Interpreting 7:3a in light of 3:9 clarifies how the former statement can function as a reason for the Corinthians to "receive" Paul: because his ministry is one of non-condemnation—that is, one of righteousness (cf. 3:9) as witnessed by their own immediate experience of the Spirit (6:14–18; cf. 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19) and the "soft-hearted," righteous response they have now given to Paul's tearful letter, a response explained in 7:5–16![31] The statement of 7:3a is not, then, primarily a cautious qualification of 7:2a, meant to avoid giving offense to the Corinthians, but is rather a reason for the Corinthians to receive Paul, just as the earlier use of κατάκρισις in 3:9 served to highlight (and defend) Paul's glorious new covenant ministry.

4:18–21; 5:3–5, 12–13; 2 Cor 11:15; 13:1–4; Gal 1:8–9; 5:10, etc.), or through his being rejected, which will result in divine condemnation (Rom 3:8; 1 Cor 1:18; 2 Cor 2:15; 11:15; 13:5–6, etc.). At the same time, though, Paul views his new covenant ministry (and conduct) *primarily* in terms of righteousness and reconciliation, *not* condemnation (see note 14): Rom 1:5, 15–17; 5:6—6:23; 8:1–11 (esp. 8:1–4), 31–34; 14:3–4, 13; 1 Cor 2:15; 4:3–5; 5:3–5(!); 2 Cor 5:11—6:2; 12:19; 13:10; Gal 3:23—4:7; 1 Thess 5:9–10.

31. Note that Paul has just described the Corinthians *themselves* in terms of righteousness (6:14b) and will shortly appeal for the Corinthians' generosity by promising that God will "multiply the harvest of your righteousness" (9:10).

Moreover, in light of the fact that Paul's defense in 3:4–18 is sandwiched between two statements about the integrity of his speech (2:17; 4:2), and serves to support his boldness in speaking (see the οὖν introducing 3:12), it is striking that in 7:3 Paul again brings his speech and κατάκρισις together: πρὸς κατάκρισιν οὐ λέγω. This is something quite different than οὐ κατακρίνω, a statement which Paul could have easily made, but which lacks the distinctly verbal notion of λέγω. By joining the nature of his speech and ministry in 7:3a, Paul clarifies that he is still defending himself, albeit now succinctly.

It thus seems likely that in 7:3a Paul is only secondarily (if at all) anticipating an offense or responding to an accusation.[32] His primary aim is to recall the detailed theological apology in 3:4–18 as a reason for the Corinthians to follow the command of 7:2a. Paul directs the reader to 3:4–18 by restating *both* his use of a rare and theologically-weighted word *and* his link between his ministry and his speech. This connection to chapter 3 becomes even more likely in light of how Paul goes on in 7:3b to make additional verbal and thematic links to the same part of the letter.

Προείρηκα γὰρ ὅτι ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν ἐστε **(7:3b)**

After giving a series of denials in 7:2b–3a, all of which function as reasons the Corinthians should receive him (7:2a), Paul explains why it should be evident that his

32. Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 369: "Paul's stance here is apologetic, not polemical; he is on the defensive, but not on the attack."

relationship to the Corinthians is not one of condemnation. Thus far (7:2–3a) Paul has given two causal statements, but without the express use of causal subordinate conjunctions, since the logical relationship between these statements should be obvious to the hearers. However, by expressly including γάρ in 7:3b, Paul makes explicit that he is now giving the reason he does not speak for condemnation (7:3a). In other words, Paul says: "Receive me (7:2a) . . . because I am not speaking for condemnation (7:3a). For I have already told you the reason I am not speaking for condemnation: 'you are on our hearts' (7:3b)." Here too Paul points the Corinthians to the dense argument for his legitimacy in 2:14—3:18, this time specifically to 3:1–3: "You are . . . on our hearts" (3:2).

Many commentators, however, see 7:3b entirely or primarily as a reference to the statements about Paul's heart in 6:11–13.[33] They rightly note the multiple verbal and

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33. Barnett, *2 Corinthians*, 362; Bultmann, *Zweite Brief*, 179; Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 1:484; and Ben Witherington, *Conflict and Community in Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 408, see only a connection to 6:11. However, Barrett, *Second Corinthians*, 204; Harris, *2 Corinthians*, 518; and Schmeller, *Zweite Brief*, 385, admit that 7:3 could be referring to both 6:11 and 3:2; similarly, NA[28] suggests that 7:3 contains allusions first to 6:11 and then 3:2. Robert C. Tannehill, *Dying and Living with Christ: A Study in Pauline Theology*, BZNW 32 (Berlin: Töpelmann, 1967), 93–94, argues that it refers to 1:4–7. Some exceptions are Land, *Integrity*, 159n42; Patte, "Structural Exegesis," 27; Scott, *2 Corinthians*, 158; and Seifrid, *Second Corinthians*, 111, who argue that 7:3b primarily refers to 3:2–3. Furthermore, many scholars note the similarities between the passages and thereby argue that 7:2–4, as a kind of *inclusio*, *concludes* a major section of Paul's argument (or that it concludes an entire pre-existing letter), e.g., Barnett, *2 Corinthians*, 358–59, Bultmann, *Zweite Brief*, 178, Harris, *2 Corinthians*, 515–16, Matera, *II Corinthians*, 158–59, Schmeller, *Zweite Brief*, 23, and Scott, *2 Corinthians*, 159. In all fairness, these authors usually also acknowledge that 7:2–4 looks forward, somewhat, to 7:5–16, but often overlook the way that 7:5–16 functions to reinforce Paul's defense as the rejoicing-yet-suffering mediator of the new covenant. Those linking 7:2–4 primarily with what follows include Scott J. Hafemann, *2 Corinthians*, NIVAC 32 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 306–7; Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 389; and Seifrid, *Second Corinthians*, 302.

thematic links between 7:2–3 and 6:11–13. Just as in 7:2a, in 6:13b Paul exhorts the Corinthians to reconcile with him: "You also be widened," in the same way that Paul has widened his heart toward them. Furthermore, Paul's use of χωρέω ("contain, receive") in 7:2a appears to draw on his double use of στενοχωρέω ("constrain") in 6:12, where he explains how the Corinthians are causing the breakdown in their relationship with the apostle. Finally, both passages describe his "heart": in 6:11, Paul's heart "has been widened" (πεπλάτυνται), in readiness for the Corinthians to reconcile with him, while in 7:3b Paul tells the Corinthians that "you are on our heart." Therefore it is likely that Paul does refer to 6:11–13 in 7:2–3, but only as the *continuation* of the theme first introduced in 3:1–3.[34]

In 7:2–3 Paul does not refer merely to 6:11–13. Rather, he refers back to the letter as a whole, and especially to 2:14—3:18, by way of 6:11–13. This is first suggested by our previous analysis of κατακρίσις in 7:3a, which, given its extreme rarity, is almost certainly a reference to 3:9. Second, we should not assume that 7:3b ("For I said before that you are on our hearts") is merely a reference to 6:11 ("Our heart has

34. See William O. Walker, "2 Cor 6.14—7.1 and the Chiastic Structure of 6.11–13; 7.2–3," *NTS* 48/1 (2002): 142–44, who argues that 6:11–13; 7:2–3 forms a thematic chiasm. He rightly notes many parallels between these brief passages, but describes them primarily in terms of Paul's "affection" for the Corinthians; we suggest, by contrast, that 7:2–4[16] is far more an expression of Paul's new covenant theology than of his emotions. Furthermore, Walker fails to explain the function of 7:4 (which nearly all scholars understand to be closely related to 7:2–3). Finally, Walker argues that this chiasm suggests that 6:14—7:1 is therefore a later insertion; but could not the chiasm just as easily suggest that 6:14—7:1 is *central* to Paul's argument?

been widened"). For in 6:11–13 Paul does not actually say anything about the Corinthians' being in or on his heart.[35] Paul merely says that his "heart has been widened"—not that the Corinthians are in some sense located there.[36] Third, there are closer verbal links between 3:2 and 7:3 than between 3:2 and 6:11–13: ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν and ἐστε occur together only in those two places.[37] Therefore, we should understand 7:3b ("For I told you beforehand that you are on our heart") to refer primarily to 3:2 (and its broader context), even if it arrives there by way of the reference to his "heart" in 6:11, where Paul explains his posture of being ready to reconcile with

35. Rightly, Land, *Integrity*, 159.

36. Perhaps 6:11–13 is primarily directed at the *unrepentant* Corinthians (2:6), who have yet to move back toward Paul (note the somewhat distant vocative "Corinthians" in 6:11). Note that Paul says that he is *prepared* to receive them with a "wide-open" heart, not that they are already "there." This explains why Paul has just pointed to his sufferings in service of his self-commendation (6:4–10)—it is precisely because of his suffering that these unrepentant Corinthians continue to doubt him. On the other hand, 7:2–4 may be directed at the *repentant* Corinthians (esp. if we take 7:5–16 as its logical development), who are already "*on*" Paul's heart (7:3b). Could 6:14—7:1 therefore be a transitional passage, addressing *both* groups, i.e., those largely under the sway of ἀπίστοι (6:14), as well as those who can rightly lay claim to the eschatological promises of 6:16–18?

37. There is a textual variant at 3:2: ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν vs. ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ὑμῶν. For the convincing argument that the former is to be preferred because (1) it is the *lectio difficilior* and (2) the external evidence is overwhelming, see the extensive treatment by Hafemann, *Suffering and the Spirit*, 186–88, or, more recently (but succinctly), see Harris, *2 Corinthians*, 257, 262.

those for whom he has suffered so much (6:4–10).[38] We can now return to the specific links between 7:3b and the rest of the letter, especially 2:14—3:18.

Paul uses the expression ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν in 3:2 not to express a subjective, invisible, non-verifiable state of positive emotion, but rather to argue that "what is 'written on Paul's heart' is manifest for all to see, since the suffering in view is a direct result of his apostolic calling to be the founder of the Corinthian church."[39] Thus Paul's statement in 3:2 that the Corinthians are manifestly written upon his heart is directly tied to the larger argument about his suffering, begun in earnest at 2:14.[40] Similarly,

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38. As we will see below, Paul specifically explains this "on the heart" relationship as one that results in his apostolic suffering on their behalf: ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν ἐστε εἰς τὸ συναποθανεῖν καὶ συζῆν. Any attempt to explain the referent of "I said before that you are on our hearts" must also explain this *dependent* clause. See also ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν in 4:6; here Paul is not talking directly about or to the Corinthians (no ἐστε), but rather describing how God has shone light "in our hearts" to reveal the Gospel through his ministry. In 3:2 and 7:3 the Corinthians are ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν, while in 4:6 God's creative, spoken light is ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν. But in both cases the evidence for whatever is "on our heart" is Paul's glorious (and hence legitimizing) suffering (2:14—3:1; 4:7–10; cf. 6:4).

39. Hafemann, *Suffering and the Spirit*, 191–92. See his larger argument on pp. 184–94; similarly, Barnett, *2 Corinthians*, 164–65; and Schmeller, *Zweite Brief*, 177. Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 1:222–23n236: "There is no suggestion whatsoever that the 'letter' does not have a visibly demonstrable existence," although she limits the "visibility" to the Corinthians' "distinctive pattern of behaviour."

40. "The structure of Paul's argument in II Cor. 3:2 thus parallels the structure of his prior argument in 2:17, both of which are based upon Paul's understanding of his suffering as an apostle. . . . As such, his decision to support himself, his change in travel plans and his 'weighty letters', rather than being those aspects of his ministry in Corinth which call his apostleship into question, are in reality attestations of that very apostleship, since they are a direct result of Paul's incontrovertible parental relationship to the Corinthians" (Hafemann, *Suffering and the Spirit*, 192). Paul's suffering for the Corinthians also includes his writing of the "tearful letter" (2:4) and his anxiety over their response to it, which resulted in his abandoning of the "open door" of ministry in Troas (2:12–13). Paul will of course expand upon this theme in 7:5–16.

Paul's dismissal in 5:12 of those who boast ἐν προσώπῳ instead of boasting ἐν καρδίᾳ is not rooted in a preference for inward versus outward criteria. Rather, ἐν καρδίᾳ refers

> to the mode of Paul's ministry, i.e. to the fact that as an apostle he suffers (cf. 4:7ff.) because of his 'heart', which in the context refers to that behavior motivated and determined by the love of Christ controlling Paul (5:13f.). In contrast, ἐν προσώπῳ refers to that outward strength in which those false apostles boast whose ministry is not controlled and shaped by the cross = love of Christ.[41]

To be "on" Paul's heart, then, whether in 3:2 or 7:3, is not a description merely of an inward, emotional state of affection, but instead primarily describes Paul's manifest love for the Corinthians, a love seen in his willingness to suffer on the Corinthians' behalf. This willingness to suffer grounds Paul's legitimacy as their minister of the new covenant. It is precisely because the Corinthians are on Paul's heart—the evidence of which is his suffering—that he cannot and would not desire to condemn them. Instead, as the mediator of the new covenant, he works for their building up, even as it results in great suffering for himself.

Returning to the logical structure of 7:2–4, then, we find that in 7:3b Paul has again given evidence for the fact that Paul's new covenant ministry to the Corinthians is not one of condemnation, which is itself a statement meant to support the overarching command χωρήσατε ἡμᾶς (7:2a). The flow of Paul's argument runs like this:

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41. Hafemann, *Suffering and the Spirit*, 192.

Receive us (7:2a):

> Because I wronged no one (7:2b) [The nature of Paul's personal conduct]
> Because I am not speaking πρὸς κατάκρισιν (7:3a) [The nature of Paul's apostolic office]
>
> > This—my "new covenant" lack of condemnation—is because of (γάρ) what I told you beforehand: "You are on our hearts"! In other words, my great love for and patience with you, evidenced by my suffering for you, demonstrates that our relationship is not one of condemnation (7:3b).

It is increasingly clear, then, that 7:2–3 function as a succinct summary of Paul's apology. In 7:2a, Paul summarizes the purpose of the entire letter: the Corinthians' reconciliation with Paul (cf. 1:13–14; 5:12, 20; 6:11–13). In 7:2b, he summarizes his personal integrity (cf. 1:8, 12, 23—2:4, 17; 4:3). In 7:3a, he summarizes the surpassing glory and function of his ministry (cf. 3:4–18). In 7:3b, he summarizes his obvious love for the Corinthians, evidenced by his suffering on their behalf (cf. 1:3–7; 2:4, 12–13; 2:14—3:3; 4:7–15; 6:4–10). That Paul refers here to his suffering on the Corinthians' behalf can be seen by how he next qualifies the meaning of their being "on" his heart: it is with the result of dying and living together.

Εἰς τὸ συναποθανεῖν καὶ συζῆν **(7:3b)**

This phrase is best understood to express the consequence of Paul's love for the Corinthians, described in both 3:2 and 7:3 as their being ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν. Paul's use of similar life/death language elsewhere in 2 Corinthians, along with the result-oriented syntax of εἰς τό + infinitive, suggest that Paul here refers both to his deathly

suffering and to the life it brings for the Corinthians. Thus, here, as elsewhere in the letter, Paul defends his legitimacy.

Harris summarizes the three typical interpretations of this phrase:[42]

Death	*Life*
Past and present spiritual death with Christ to sin (cf. Rom 6:6, 8, 10–11; 2 Cor 5:14; Col 2:12–13)	Present spiritual life with Christ (cf. 2 Tim 2:11; 2 Cor 5:15)
Future physical death in Christ (Phil 1:23)	Future eternal life in Christ (1 Thess 4:17)
Future physical death	Present physical life

According to Harris, these can be summarized as the christological, the eschatological, and the anthropological views.[43] All three views rightly note various nuances in the phrase, especially in light of similar terminology elsewhere in 2 Corinthians. However, commentators have largely failed to notice that in 7:3 this phrase

42. Harris, *2 Corinthians*, 518.

43. Harris, *2 Corinthians*, 519. Gustav Stählin, "'Um mitzusterben und mitzuleben': Bemerkungen zu 2 Kor 7,3," in *Neues Testament und christliche Existenz: Festschrift für Herbert Braun*, ed. Hans Dieter Betz and Luise Schottroff (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1973), 503–22, represents the christological view; J. Lambrecht, "To Die Together and to Live Together: A Study of 2 Corinthians 7,3," in *Studies on 2 Corinthians*, ed. R. Bieringer and J. Lambrecht, BETL 112 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1994), 571–87, represents the eschatological view; while the anthropological view, most commonly held among interpreters, is represented by, e.g, Barrett, *Second Corinthians*, 204; Bultmann, *Zweite Brief*, 179; Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 370; Harris, *2 Corinthians*, 519; Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 385; Schmeller, *Zweite Brief*, 386; Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 1:483; and Christian Wolff, *Der zweite Brief des Paulus an die Korinther*, 2nd ed., THKNT 8 (Berlin: Evangelische Verlaganstalt, 2011), 153. Matera, *II Corinthians*, 169–70, combines all three views: Paul and the Corinthians are "bound by a bond of friendship [anthropological] that is ultimately rooted in the death of Jesus, which leads to life [christological]. Because of this Paul is ready if necessary to die with and for the Corinthians as a true friend, because he already lives together with them in the life of Christ, and he will continue to live with them at the resurrection of the dead [eschatological]." Barnett, *2 Corinthians*, 362, combines the christological and eschatological views, while rightly noting that "dying" also involves suffering (but he does not note the connection to 3:2). Hafemann, *2 Corinthians*, 308, sees these verses expressing the death and resurrection of Christ as played out in Paul's suffering on behalf of the Corinthians.

qualifies a statement that points back to 3:2 ("you are on our hearts"), where Paul points to his suffering as the evidence for their place on his heart. Hence, we contend that 7:3b is also a statement about the suffering of Paul and the benefits it brings the Corinthians, as the result (εἰς τό + infinitive)[44] of their being on the apostle's heart.[45] This is because cognates of both ἀποθνήσκω and ζάω, along with closely related ideas and terms, occur at key points throughout 2 Corinthians to describe the mutual death/life of Paul and the Corinthians. Even so, their usage throughout the letter emphasizes Paul's suffering and the Corinthians' life, since Paul is uniquely called as an apostle to suffer as the "mediatory agent" between Christ and the Corinthian church.[46]

For example, Paul opens the letter by describing how he shares death and life with the Corinthians. With regard to the former, in 1:8–10 Paul describes his θλῖψις in Asia as a "death sentence" (ἀπόκριμα τοῦ θανάτου), so severe that Paul despaired even of life (καὶ τοῦ ζῆν). However, God rescued him from θάνατος. It is clear, then, that Paul

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44. The combination of εἰς τό and the infinitive can express either purpose or result (BDF §402). For the support of a resultative reading, see below.

45. Tannehill, *Dying and Living with Christ*, 90–98, rightly understands 7:3b to be a statement primarily about mutual participation in present suffering and spiritual vitality, but links 7:3b only with 1:4–7, overlooking its many important connections to 3:2 and its context. Similarly, Patte, "Structural Exegesis," 49, understands 7:3b to refer to a "death" that *can include* (but does not equal) suffering, while "life" can *include* (but does not equal) "life-like situations," but rightly emphasizes that "believers should expect to have [a life/death] experience similar to that of ministers [Paul, etc.], itself an experience similar to that of Christ." However, Patte does not draw out the full significance of the direct link between 7:3 and 2:14—3:9.

46. See Kar Yong Lim, *"The Sufferings of Christ Are Abundant in Us": A Narrative Dynamics Investigation of Paul's Sufferings in 2 Corinthians*, LNTS 399 (London: T&T Clark, 2009), 122.

can use θάνατος as a metonym for suffering, which he interchanges with both θλῖψις and πάθημα.[47] Hence, when he says in 1:7 that the Corinthians are κοινωνοί . . . τῶν παθημάτων . . . καὶ τῆς παρακλήσεως,[48] he can later summarize this idea by saying that he and the Corinthians "die together" (συναποθανεῖν, 7:3b).[49] Similarly, if θλῖψις and πάθημα (along with related verbs) can stand under the metonymous umbrella of θάνατος, it is likely that παράκλησις and σωτηρία (1:6) fall under the obviously parallel metonym ζωή. For Paul describes the "God of all comfort" (1:3) as the one who raises τοὺς νεκρούς (1:9). Both Paul and the Corinthians experience the "life" of salvation and comfort (1:5–6), although differently, since Paul uniquely mediates "life" to the Corinthians. As a result, in the epistolary introduction Paul has already clarified that his frequent theme of "death"/"life" must be interpreted within the context of his *relationship* to the church.[50]

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47. Note that in 1:6 Paul uses θλίβω, πάθημα, and πάσχω to describe his suffering, all in contrast to the παράκλησις he receives from God and mediates to the Corinthians. Similarly, in 1 Cor 15:30–32 Paul links his suffering (constant danger) with his daily "death." See also Phil 3:10.

48. Taking the genitive articles as anaphoric, pointing back to Paul's affliction and comfort just mentioned in 1:6 (εἴτε δὲ θλιβόμεθα . . . εἴτε παρακαλούμεθα).

49. Elsewhere, Paul describes how he and his addressees mutually share in "death" (although of course not always in the same exact way): Rom 6:1–4; 7:4–6; 8:35–39; 14:7–9; 1 Cor 3:21–23; 15:21–22, 50–57; Phil 3:10 (cf. 3:15); 1 Thess 5:10. See also 2 Tim 2:11. Paul also says that he and the churches suffer together: Rom 5:3; 8:17–18, 35; 1 Cor 12:26; Gal 4:12–15; Phil 1:29–30; 3:10, 15; 4:14; 1 Thess 1:6–7; 2:13–16; 3:3–4. See also 2 Thess 1:4–7; 2 Tim 1:8 (cf. 1:12); 2:3 (cf. 2:9); 3:10–12; 4:5 (cf. 4:6).

50. The programmatic treatment of introductory thanksgivings in Paul is by Peter T. O'Brien, *Introductory Thanksgivings in the Letters of Paul*, NovTSup 49 (Leiden: Brill, 1977). See especially pages 233–58 for his treatment of 2 Cor 1:3–11.

Furthermore, in chapters 4–6 Paul makes similar points regarding the fact that his afflictions bring the Corinthians life—a life he shares with them. In 4:10 Paul declares that through his endurance in the midst of adversity he is always carrying about the νέκρωσιν τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐν τῷ σώματι,[51] with the result that the ἡ ζωὴ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ is manifested ἐν τῷ σώματι ἡμῶν.[52] By qualifying both νέκρωσις and ζωή with ἐν τῷ σώματι (ἡμῶν), Paul makes clear that he is referring to his physical suffering rather than to an existential or merely "spiritual" experience of "death." Moreover, Paul says that the overarching result of his suffering is the manifestation (φανερόω) of life through his bodily suffering (ἐν τῷ σώματι ἡμῶν, 4:10, cf. v. 11), described metaphorically in terms of a "clay pot" in 4:7a.[53] Paul also uses φανερόω in 2:14 to describe how God manifests knowledge of Christ through Paul's "triumphal procession" of suffering.[54] Similarly,

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51. Νέκρωσις describes the *process* of death, i.e., dying or putting-to-death. See BDAG, 668.

52. The three ἵνα clauses in 4:7, 10, 11 all relate (a) Paul's suffering to (b) the power/life of God/Christ. At first it is unclear whether these ἵνα clauses refer to purpose or result; however, the similar phrases in 4:12 ("death working in us, but life in you") are introduced with the clearly resultative ὥστε, suggesting that the preceding ἵνα clauses should be understood similarly.

53. Note that 4:7–10 forms one sentence, with 4:7b–10 containing a stream of subordinating conjunctions and adverbial participles, all of which modify Ἔχομεν δὲ τὸν θησαυρὸν τοῦτον ἐν ὀστρακίνοις σκεύεσιν (4:7a).

54. The significance of the metaphor of the triumphal procession in 2 Cor 2:14 is much debated. See Hafemann, *Suffering and the Spirit*, 12–39, who demonstrates that Paul uses θριαμβεύω to describe how God, in triumphal procession, *leads* Paul as a captive unto death (= suffering). See BDAG, 459, which supports the Paul-as-captive reading of 2 Cor 2:14 ("The rhetorical pattern of the ep. appears to favor this interpr."), and especially Barnett, *2 Corinthians*, 147–50; Matera, *II Corinthians*, 73; and Calvin J. Roetzel, "'As Dying, and Behold We Live': Death and Resurrection in Paul's Theology," *Int* 46/1 (1992): 10–12, who agree that Paul's captivity is unto *death* (suffering). See also Harris, *2 Corinthians*, 244–46; and Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 1:194–95, who agree that Paul is a suffering captive but argue that that taking it as "unto death" is stretching the metaphor too far. Schmeller, *Zweite Brief*, 154–59, sees an inherent tension in the metaphor between Paul-as-conquered and Paul-as-conqueror, but admits that its emphasis is

φανερόω is used in 3:3 to describe how the Corinthians, through Paul's suffering and their transformed lives, manifest that they are letters of Christ written by the Spirit of the living God (πνεύματι θεοῦ ζῶντος). Φανερόω, then, is often used by Paul to explain the results of his apostolic suffering, and in 4:10–11 he describes these results as the ἡ

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upon Paul's suffering, and so the metaphor primarily forces the reader to decide "ob sie bereit sind, eine so gewagte Verbindung mitzuvollziehen" (159). Daniel McGraw, "The Imperial Cult: A New Paradigm for Understanding 2 Cor 2:14," *ResQ* 52/3 (2010): 153–56, agrees that Paul is the suffering captive but argues that the metaphor is a critique of Roman imperial hubris. Cillers Breytenbach, "Paul's Proclamation and God's 'Thriambos': (Notes on 2 Corinthians 2:14–16b)," *Neot* 24/2 (1990): 268–69; and Jens Schröter, *Der versöhnte Versöhner: Paulus als unentbehrlicher Mittler im Heilsvorgang zwischen Gott und Gemeinde nach 2. Kor 2:14—7:4*, TANZ 10 (Tübingen/Basel: Francke, 1993), 13–23, argue that Paul is *not* a participant in the procession itself, but rather that he spreads knowledge of Christ while *God* celebrates his *prior* conquest over Paul on the road to Damascus. Paul B. Duff, "Metaphor, Motif, and Meaning: The Rhetorical Strategy behind the Image 'Led in Triumph' in 2 Corinthians 2:14," *CBQ* 53/1 (1991): 79–92, by arguing that 2:14 draws on the pre-imperial epiphany procession rather than on a military triumphal parade, sees Paul as a "captive of the 'love of Christ'" (87; cf. 2 Cor 5:14), not of the divine triumphator himself. J. Lambrecht, "The Defeated Paul, Aroma of Christ: An Exegetical Study of 2 Corinthians 2:14–16b," *LS* 20 (1995): 170–86, argues that the captive is not Paul, but the "god of this world" (4:4). Andreas Hock, "Christ is the Parade: A Comparative Study of the Triumphal Procession in 2 Cor 2,14 and Col 2,15," *Bib* 88/1 (2007): 110–19, argues that the "place" of the triumph is Christ himself, so that Paul, rather than being a captive, is "incorporated in" Christ, who is victor over darkness. James M. Scott, "Throne-Chariot Mysticism in Qumran and in Paul," in *Eschatology, Messianism, and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. Craig A. Evans and Peter W. Flint, SDSSRL 1 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 101–19, argues that the metaphor is an oblique reference to Paul's mystical *merkabah* experience of God's throne-chariot, meant to underscore his Moses-like legitimacy (see esp. pp. 106–19). George H. Guthrie, "Paul's Triumphal Procession Imagery (2 Cor 2.14–16a): Neglected Points of Background," *NTS* 61 (January, 2015): 79–91, argues that Paul is the "incense bearer" in the procession, but not a suffering captive. However, as Hafemann argued originally, the various interpretations which downplay the role of Paul's suffering in the metaphor fail to explain how Paul can logically move from describing his suffering in 2:12–13 to thanking God in 2:14, unless Paul is using the triumph metaphor as a way of describing his apostolic suffering (of which the experience described in 2:12–13 is one part), nor do they take into account the closely parallel 1 Cor 4:8–13, esp. v. 9 ("sentenced to death"), and the way in which the metaphors of 1 Cor 4:9 and 2 Cor 2:14 are unpacked in 2 Cor 4:7–12 (Hafemann, *Suffering and the Spirit*, 65–76). Hafemann's original point—that θριαμβεύω + accusative–as–direct-object always describes an action toward *captives*—has not been refuted; contra, e.g., Guthrie, "Imagery," 83, who, based on the examples he gives to counter Hafemann, appears to confuse the accusative *case* with the accusative–as–*direct-object* (i.e., one syntactical function among many others within the case); his counter-examples are really adverbial accusatives or accusatives of reference (Appian, *Bell. civ.* 2.15.101; Plutarch, *Reg. imp. apophth.* 82.22 [201E]; *Fab.* 23.2.1).

ζωὴ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, revealed and experienced through Paul's suffering (4:12). Paul and the Corinthians thus "live" together (7:3b).

The larger letter also explains how they "die" together (7:3b). In the letter's introduction, Paul explains that the Corinthians will experience comfort as they patiently endure the same sufferings as him: τῶν αὐτῶν παθημάτων ὧν καὶ ἡμεῖς πάσχομεν (1:6). Paul, for his part, shares in Christ's παθήματα (1:5).[55] In 1:7, Paul goes on to state that the ground (ὅτι) of his hope in the Corinthians is this very partnership (κοινωνοί ἐστε) in πάθημα and παράκλησις.[56] As mentioned above, throughout this introduction Paul uses πάθημα and θλῖψις under the metonymous heading of "death" (1:9). Hence, in light of Paul's repeated contrast of πάθημα with παράκλησις, we should understand their shared πάθημα in terms of a shared "death."[57]

Furthermore, in 2 Cor 5:14–15 Paul states that the result of Christ's death for "all" is that "all" died (οἱ πάντες ἀπέθανον). While the meaning of "death" here likely

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55. Tannehill, *Dying and Living with Christ*, 96, who emphasizes that Paul's sufferings are unique in quality and quantity, goes on to say that "the unity between Paul's sufferings and those of the Corinthians is not one of outward similarity. Rather, because they are all *Christ's* sufferings, they form one unified whole in which different individuals participate, each in his own way" (emphasis his).

56. On the syntactical function of the articles in this verse, see note 48.

57. On "the missiological significance of Paul's suffering," see Lim, *Sufferings*, 119–21: "In claiming that his sufferings effect life in the Corinthians, Paul is not substituting himself or his sufferings for Christ; for Paul is aware that it was Christ who suffered and died for humanity. . . . At the same time, there is also no suggestion in Paul's argument that the Corinthians will be spared from the hardships and persecutions in following Christ because of the sufferings of Paul (cf. 2 Cor. 1:6-7)" (120). Similarly, see C. M. Proudfoot, "Imitation or Realistic Participation?: A Study of Paul's Concept of Suffering with Christ," *Int* 17 (1963): 159–60, who emphasizes σῶμα Χριστοῦ as the key to understanding the relationship between the suffering of Christ and Paul/other believers.

parallels Paul's later statements about a "spiritual" death to sin (Rom 6:5–11),[58] here Paul explicates "death" in terms of the "life" of obedience to Christ it produces: "He died on behalf of all, with the purpose that those who living might no longer live for themselves, but rather for him who died and rose on their behalf" (5:15).[59] For Paul, "spiritual" death (i.e., dying to self = no longer living to self) results in obedience to Christ, in the form of tangible service to others.[60] Paul is the exemplar of this death-unto-life: Christ's death (= love; 5:14) has compelled the apostle to "die" (suffer) on behalf of others (the Corinthians!) as an act of obedient "living" for Christ (1 Cor 10:31—11:1; 2 Cor 4:5, etc.). Since "all" have died as a result of Christ's death, Paul also expects the Corinthians to "die" on behalf of others—that is, to "live" no longer for themselves, but for Christ. The Corinthians are to imitate Paul in suffering (who imitates Christ) through giving up their rights for the sake of others (cf. 1 Cor 11:1). Paul does not state it explicitly in 7:3b, but he is preparing for his exhortation in chapters 8–9 that this "death-life for Christ/others" should take the very tangible shape of giving their money toward the Jerusalem church![61] To summarize again: as Paul's

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58. On the difficulties of interpreting οἱ πάντες ἀπέθανον, see Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 1:409–11.

59. Lim, *Sufferings*, 57: "Paul . . . sees the life and death of Jesus characterized by a life of service and obedience (2 Cor. 8.9; cf. Rom. 15.3; Phil. 2.5-11). This paradoxical reality grounded in the story of Jesus and the gospel as a manifestation of weakness and power (cf. 13.3-4) becomes the paradigmatic framework in Paul's argument."

60. Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 328–29.

61. In 1 Cor 11:1 Paul explicitly points to his own example of serving others through suffering (cf. 1 Cor 9:12, 15; 10:33; 13:4–7), while in 2 Cor 8:1–5 he presents the Macedonians as a similar example of

argument approaches chapter 7, he has emphasized that he is specially called to suffer ("die") on behalf of his churches, but he also repeatedly clarifies that the Corinthians should expect to share in this "death" of suffering, particularly in terms of "no longer living for themselves" (5:15).[62]

But this is not all that Paul expects. He anticipates as well that he and the church will share in eschatological *life*. He already hinted at this in his opening description of his "comfort" in the midst of affliction ("death"; 1:9a), in that he expects God—"the one who raises the dead"—to rescue him in the future (1:9b–10). It is not surprising, then, that Paul expresses his (and the Corinthians') expectation of future life in chapters 4–6.[63] He says in 4:14 that he knows that God will raise him unto eschatological life with the Corinthians (Καὶ ἡμᾶς σὺν Ἰησοῦ ἐγερεῖ καὶ παραστήσει σὺν ὑμῖν). Similarly, in 4:16 Paul contrasts his suffering (the decaying of ὁ ἔξω ἄνθρωπος) with his present experience of spiritual vitality (the renewing of ὁ ἔσω), while in 5:4 he speaks of his longing for the eschatological renewal of τὸ θνητόν by ἡ ζωή,[64] in which the Corinthians will also share with him after final judgment (5:10; πάντας ἡμᾶς). In the "hardship catalogue" of 6:3–10

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serving others through suffering. Similarly, in 8:9 Paul points to Christ, who made the Corinthians "rich" through his "poverty" (i.e., his humble life and death), as the model for how they are to make the Jerusalem church "rich" through "impoverishing" themselves.

62. Lim, *Sufferings*, 122: "The self-emptying and self-sacrificial character of Jesus becomes operative in Paul's life and ministry. . . . [He] issues the invitation to the Corinthians to participate in the story of Jesus (4.13-15)."

63. On Paul's "resurrection theology" in 2 Cor 1–5, see Roetzel, "As Dying," 5–18.

64. Note that θνητός is used in 4:11 with σάρξ as a metonym for Paul's apostolic suffering.

Paul restates his present experience of both death and life (6:9: ὡς ἀποθνήσκοντες καὶ ἰδοὺ ζῶμεν). The reason the Corinthians (and Paul) should not associate with idols is because they are the temple of the *living* God (6:16: ἡμεῖς γὰρ ναὸς θεοῦ ἐσμεν ζῶντος). Though it occurs at the end of the canonical letter, it is striking that in in 13:4 Paul states that he, like the crucified-and-resurrected Jesus, experiences both present weakness—death[65]—and (future) life: καὶ γὰρ ἡμεῖς ἀσθενοῦμεν ἐν αὐτῷ, ἀλλὰ ζήσομεν σὺν αὐτῷ ἐκ δυνάμεως θεοῦ εἰς ὑμᾶς. To summarize: while Paul emphasizes the spiritual life he has brought to the Corinthians through his own suffering as an apostle of the crucified Christ as evidence of his legitimacy, it is clear that Paul also expects them to share together with him in the life of the resurrected Christ.[66]

In light of the letter's frequent theme of shared life/death, we therefore suggest that the εἰς τό + infinitive construction in 7:3b should be taken to describe the result, rather than the purpose, of their being on his heart.[67] Read in this way, Paul makes the same move in his argument at 7:3b that he made in 2:14—3:3, where Paul moved from stating that the Corinthians are "on his heart" (3:2) to declaring that the result of such affection is already manifest for all (i.e., his suffering and their reception of the Spirit;

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65. In 13:4a, Paul says that Jesus ἐσταυρώθη ἐξ ἀσθενείας.

66. Thus, the three common interpretations of 7:3b (see pp. 15–16) all rightly note different nuances regarding what it means to share "life" with the Corinthians, but do not properly emphasize that the mutual "death" is primarily one of suffering, which of course climaxes with physical death.

67. So Harris, *2 Corinthians*, 518.

3:3)![68] Throughout 2 Corinthians, Paul defends himself by stating, not what he *intends* to do, but what he has *already* done on their behalf. If "on our hearts" here expresses Paul's posture of love and patience toward the Corinthians, then εἰς τὸ συναποθανεῖν καὶ συζῆν gives the resulting evidence of this relationship in terms of Paul's tangible, present suffering and already inaugurated, eschatological life, which of course will be consummated in the future. This phrase, then, expresses the vindicatory result of Paul's carrying of the Corinthian "letters" on his heart: mutual death (suffering) and life (spiritual vitality).

Let us summarize our discussion of 7:3b: in both 2:14—3:3 and 7:3 Paul moves from stating that the Corinthians are "on his heart" to presenting the resulting evidence of such affection: their reception of the eschatological Spirit (3:3), which is mediated by the suffering of Paul (2:14–17), all of which is summarized in 7:3b as "dying and living together." Moreover, seeing in 7:3b a reference to the argument of 2:14—3:3 explains the sequence and syntax of εἰς τὸ συναποθανεῖν καὶ συζῆν. As in 7:3b, so too in 2:14—3:3, Paul *first* discusses his suffering ("death") and *then* discusses the Corinthians' resultant reception of the life-giving Spirit. Furthermore, the shift of infinitival tense in

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68. A similar move is made in reverse between 6:4–10 (Paul's suffering for the Corinthians) and 6:11–13 (Paul's "wide-hearted" posture of reconciliation with the Corinthians). In 6:4–10, though, it is only Paul who is experiencing life (6:9); he there seems to be defending himself against those who reject him on the basis of his deathly suffering. This suggests, as above, that the primary referent of 7:3b ("you are on our hearts to die and live together") is not 6:11–13 (where he does not address the Corinthians as the "living"), but rather 3:2 (where he *does* address the "living").

7:3b from aorist to present can be explained by the fact that Paul understands suffering/ death to be ultimately transitory and even irrelevant in relationship to the eschatological life of the Spirit in which he and the Corinthians already share.[69]

Πολλή μοι παρρησία πρὸς ὑμᾶς **(7:4a)**

Paul continues in 7:4 to use words and concepts that have already played a significant role in his apostolic defense.[70] Just as in 3:12, in 7:4a he again points out his πολλὴ παρρησία[71] toward the Corinthians. Within a Greco-Roman milieu, this term originated as a political term describing the kind of forthrightness of speech appropriate to freedmen, but later it often describes frankness of speech between friends.[72] The NT

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69. Cf. 2 Cor 4:16–18, where Paul relativizes his "seasonal" (πρόσκαιρος) suffering in light of the δόξα of the new age (note the link between the Spirit and δόξα in 3:8). Thus, the undefined aspect of the aorist συναποθανεῖν serves to *highlight* the continuous aspect of the present συζῆν. For similar emphases upon vitality/salvation over against present weakness/suffering, see 1:8–10; 4:7–14; 5:1–5; 6:4–10; 7:10–13; 12:9–10; 13:3–4.

70. Many have also noted the ways in which the vocabulary and themes of 7:4 anticipate 7:5–16 while also looking back to the letter thus far. See especially Schmeller, *Zweite Brief*, 383–84; and also the argument of Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 1:484 against the proposal that similarities between 7:4 and 7:5–16 betray the hand of a redactor, as argued by, e.g., Bultmann, *Zweite Brief*, 181. See Duff, *Moses in Corinth*, 32–46, for a recent case for the redactional theory.

71. The twofold use of πολλή μοι + noun seems to be describing possession (Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 1:484n2096), although the far more common usage of πολύς + dative is the dative of indirect object (e.g., 2 Tim 4:14; Heb 5:11; 2 John 12; etc.). Other examples of this use of πολύς + dative for the possessive dative include Josephus, *Ant.* 8:254; 16:394; 17:122; 18:317; 19:299; and T. Ab. 20:4. See BDF §189 on the "dative of possession" as a possible NT "semitism."

72. Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 385: "the freedom of speech one has when addressing those whom one trusts." See David E. Fredrickson, "Παρρησία in the Pauline Epistles," in *Friendship, Flattery, and Frankness of Speech: Studies on Friendship in the New Testament World*, ed. John T. Fitzgerald, NovTSup 82 (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 163–83; J. Paul Sampley, "Paul and Frank Speech," in *Paul in the Greco-Roman World: A Handbook*, ed. J. Paul Sampley (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity, 2003), 293–318; and Vegge, *2 Corinthians*, 254–60, 310–11.

largely uses this word to describe forthrightness in speech, while in 2 Cor 3:12, it specifically describes Paul's bold proclamation of the gospel that results from his confidence before God and others.[73]

Specifically, Paul is forthright in proclaiming the gospel because of his confidence that the Spirit is truly at work through his new covenant ministry (see the οὖν of 3:12, based on the argument of 3:4–11), and thus that God makes him sufficient and so approves of him.[74] In light of the contemporary Jewish belief that the righteous would have παρρησία before God at the final judgment,[75] Paul sees that the Spirit now makes it possible for him already to have this eschatological παρρησία before both God and men,[76] and thus he can speak and preach with forthright boldness to the Corinthians

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73. See Schmeller, *Zweite Brief*, 211–12; and Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 1:254. Hafemann, *Moses*, 340, here cites Mark 8:32; John 7:13, 26; 10:24; 11:14; 16:25, 29; 18:20; Acts 2:29; 4:13, 29, 31; 18:26; and points especially to Eph 6:19–20; Acts 9:28; 13:46; 14:3; 26:26; 28:31. For comparable uses, see also Prov 1:20; 10:10; Job 22:26; 27:10 (LXX) and Wis 5:1; Let. Aris. 125; Jos. Asen. 17:9; 23:10; 3 Bar. 9:8; 3 Macc 4:1; and 4 Macc 10:5.

74. See Aernie, *Prophets?*, 124, on how 2 Cor 3 roots the "bold nature of Paul's ministry" (3:12–18) in the "theological basis" of the new covenant (3:1–11). Olson, "Epistolary Uses," 587, shows how expressions of self-confidence occur in apologetic sections that usually precede a section of advice—cf. 7:4, 16 with chs. 8–9!

75. Cf. Wis 5:1; 4 Ezra 7:75–101, along with the detailed discussion of them by Hafemann, *Moses*, 341–43.

76. "This boldness supports his legitimacy as an apostle, since it points directly to God's approval of his life and message. For Paul's free and open behavior as an apostle (3:4, 12) derives not from his own 'sufficiency' (3:5–6a), but from his confidence that God has called him and is therefore at work through his suffering and ministry of the Spirit to reveal his own glory through the knowledge of Jesus Christ (3:6bc, 7–11; cf. 2 Cor. 2:14–3:3; 4:6–15)" (Hafemann, *Moses*, 347). See also Paul's use of παρρησία in Phil 1:20, where Paul describes his confidence, hope, and shamelessness in both life and death, and also his use of παρρησιάζομαι in 1 Thess 2:2 to describe his boldness in proclaiming the gospel to the Thessalonians in the midst of much suffering for the overall purpose of speaking to please, not men, but "God, who is testing our hearts" (1 Thess 2:4).

and others with genuine confidence that both he and they will pass through the final judgment in mutual boasting.[77]

Paul's use of παρρησία appears to be an intentional link back to 2 Cor 3:12.[78] Just as with κατάκρισις in 7:3a (cf. 3:9), he has taken a theologically freighted word from the extended comparison between the respective ministries of Moses and himself (3:4–18) and reused it for a second and final time in 7:2–4. In both places, Paul acts with or has πολλὴ παρρησία. Also, in both places, the fact that the Corinthians are on Paul's heart (3:2; 7:3b) drives his consequent boldness toward them, even in the midst of his Spirit-bringing ministry of suffering (2:14—3:11; cf. "dying and living" in 7:3b). In light of these structural and verbal similarities, the *explicit* inference of 3:12—the Spirit is at work through Paul's life-bringing "death," *therefore*, he speaks with παρρησία—is *implicit* in 7:3–4: the Spirit is at work through Paul's ministry of non-condemnation,

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77. Because Paul has seen the Spirit at work in the repentant majority of the Corinthians (2:6), Paul is genuinely confident in their final salvation (1:14, 21, 24; 4:3, 14; 5:5; 7:16, etc.), while at the same time he is genuinely unsure of the final salvation of those who remain in rebellion against him (see esp. 2:9, 11; 10:7–8; 11:3; 12:20–21; 13:5–7). Below we speak more about the nature and object of Paul's confidence.

78. As with "heart" in 6:11; 7:3b, there may be in 7:4a a secondary reference to 6:11, where Paul says that his "mouth has opened." However, the use of παρρησία suggests that 3:12 is the primary (if more distant) referent, though it is possible that in 6:11, as with the ἱκανός-motif in 3:5–6, Paul is referring to Moses's call in Exod 4:12, 15 LXX: ἐγὼ ἀνοίξω τὸ στόμα σου. God promises to do this in response to Moses's doubts about his ἱκανότης (4:10). In 2 Cor 2:16 Paul supports his own ἱκανότης by pointing to his divinely commissioned speech: ὡς ἐκ θεοῦ κατέναντι θεοῦ ἐν Χριστῷ λαλοῦμεν. Many have argued that Exod 4 lies behind Paul's discussion of his ἱκανότης—see, e.g., Carol Kern Stockhausen, *Moses' Veil and the Glory of the New Covenant*, AnBib 116 (Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1989), 83; and Hafemann, *Moses*, 92–110. As with "heart" in 6:11, this would reinforce our suggestion that 7:2–4 primarily refers to 2:14—3:18 *by way of* 6:11–13.

evidenced by the Corinthians' death-and-life-bringing place on his heart; [*therefore*], he has παρρησία toward them.[79]

Πολλή μοι καύχησις ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν **(7:4b)**

Paul then makes a parallel statement concerning his boasting about the Corinthians:[80] "I have great boasting about you." While Paul likely draws upon the importance of boasting within Greco-Roman epistolary and rhetorical traditions that aimed at the audience's moral improvement,[81] he adapts these Greco-Roman topoi about "boasting" with an eye toward Jewish understandings of the final judgment.[82] This can

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79. Harris, *2 Corinthians*, 519, notes that in 7:4ab "Paul now states two consequences of [his] love," but does not link this to the parallel structure of 3:12. Similarly, Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 393; J. Lambrecht, *Second Corinthians*, SP 8 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1999), 121 ("In 7:4 Paul explicates what this union concretely means for him"); and Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 1:484–85.

80. Paul repeatedly describes his boasting about the Corinthians in 7:13; 8:24; and 9:2–3, echoing his opening statement about mutual eschatological boasting in 1:14.

81. See, for example, J. Paul Sampley, "Paul and Boasting," in *Paul in the Greco-Roman World: A Handbook*, ed. Duane F. Watson (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity, 2003), 77–100, and the detailed application of this Greco-Roman background material to 2 Cor by Vegge, *2 Corinthians*, esp. 53–70, 169–76, 200–208.

82. See the summary of various Second Temple Jewish understandings of boasting and final vindication by Simon J. Gathercole, *Where is Boasting?: Early Jewish Soteriology and Paul's Response in Romans 1–5* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 37–111, 136–94. With regards to confidence and boasting, he summarizes the broad outline of Second Temple literature: "A confidence in God's mercy, then, which rested partly on the foundation of election but also on the obedience of the people to the Law, is widely attested. . . . In addition, there is a well-established theological train-of-thought in the literature: one who was obedient had a righteous status before God and was worthy of honor" (182). He focuses especially on Jdt 8:18–20; Tob 1:3; Wis 15:1–4; As. Mos. 9:4; 4 Ezra 8; Hist. Rech. 11:2; Jub. 21:2–3; 35:2–3; LAB 62:5; T. Ash. 5:4; T. Iss. 7:1–6; T. Jos. 1:3–4; 2:7; 10:1; T. Zeb. 1:2–5; and Sib. Or. 3. Both Jewish and Christian understandings of boasting are ultimately eschatological in nature: "[They] both relate very much to a confidence of future salvation" (256). As we will see in our chapter on select Second Temple texts, 2 Cor 7 shows Paul to be at odds with some contemporary Jewish views of the relationship between obedience and restoration.

be seen in the way in which Paul speaks of boasting near the epistle's opening, where he tells the Corinthians that his καύχησις derives from his simplicity and sincerity, which are themselves derived from God (1:12),[83] and that the Corinthians and he will be each other's καύχημα "on the day of the Lord Jesus" (1:14).[84] By beginning the letter this way, Paul has framed "boasting" in eschatological terms, showing that his later discussions of boasting about the Corinthians in chapters 7–9 transcend Hellenistic social norms and epistolary forms.[85]

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83. Similarly, in 2:17 Paul defends the integrity of his speech while also pointing to its ultimate origin in God (ἐκ θεοῦ); on which, see Hafemann, *Suffering and the Spirit*, 164–69; and Belleville, "Letter," 160–61. For other places where Paul describes boasting as grounded in and/or directed toward God, see Rom 5:2, 11; 15:17; 1 Cor 1:31; 15:31; 2 Cor 10:8, 13, 17; 12:1–9; Gal 6:14; Phil 1:26; 2:16; and 3:3.

84. First Thessalonians 2 again provides a helpful parallel (cf. παρρησία in 7:4 with παρρησιάζομαι in 1 Thess 2:2), since there the Thessalonians are Paul's (crown of) καύχησις . . . ἔμπροσθεν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ ἐν τῇ αὐτοῦ παρουσία (2:19). For similar eschatological treatments of boasting/confidence and related themes of shame/honor, see Rom 2:9–10; 1 Cor 4:5; 2 Cor 5:9–11; Phil 1:20; and 2 Tim 1:12.

85. Vegge, *2 Corinthians*, 374, argues that 2 Cor 1:12–14 is the "thesis statement" of the letter, but gives only slight nods to the way Paul relates boasting, final judgment, and the eschatological Spirit (see 252, 259–60). He focuses largely upon how Paul's expressions of confidence more or less follow a mix of Greco-Roman epistolary and psychagogic traditions. Building on the work of Olson, "Confidence Expressions," 88–89, he rightly notes that Paul's expressions of confidence in God (e.g., 2 Cor 1:7; 9:15) can also function as implicit requests from the addressees ("The addressee must give God room and let God work in line with Paul's expectation of God"; Vegge, 148), but fails to explain that Paul's eschatological, Spirit-centered understanding of redemptive history makes his confidence in the Corinthians both genuine and coherent.

Furthermore, Stowers, *Letter Writing*, 97, notes that Paul's letters are unusual in that non-Christian epistolary parenesis was almost always directed toward individuals. By contrast, "in New Testament exhortation, the individual is not an object of guidance and character-building apart from the community." John V. Muir, *Life and Letters in the Ancient Greek World* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009), 117–47, argues that NT epistles, with their use of "letter-signals" (such as an opening and nominal addressee), are much more similar to lengthy philosophical treatises than they are to the brief, occasional epistles explained by the Greco-Roman epistolary handbooks of, e.g., Ps.-Libanius and Ps.-Demetrius. Examples of this kind of epistle-like treatise include the philosophical-political letters of Plato (esp. *Ep.* 7), Isocrates, Demosthenes, Epicurus, Diogenes/Crates, and Seneca's *Epistulae morales*. Muir points out how these

Indeed, Paul's treatment of boasting in 1:12–14 underscores the fact that his relationship with the Corinthians is ultimately geared toward the eschaton, a theme which he develops through chapters 2–3 in his Spirit-rooted defense of his ministry to them. When Paul tells the Corinthians in 7:4 that he has "great boasting" about them, he is referring back to this eschatological treatment of boasting in 1:12–14, and its consequent development in chapters 2–6.[86] Thus, Paul's ability to boast about the Corinthians is yet another contrast between the new and old covenant ministries of Paul and Moses (3:4–6, 12–14), since, when confronted by the hard-heartedness of Israel, Moses could not boast about them to God, but instead had to plead that God not destroy

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"letters" often "[demand] hard thinking and detailed study and . . . [are] written for the committed" (138), "[are] addressed to communities of like-minded thinkers who are seeking further enlightenment and who may and should draw others into the circle" (144), and are "vehicles for imparting aspects of [philosophical] wisdom in accessible and persuasive form" (147). Paul's letters, while resembling many of these characteristics—thus showing themselves to be irreducible to a mishmash of simple epistolary forms—still remain *epistles* that address the actual problems of *churches* and so must be treated on their own unique terms. See Christopher Forbes, "Ancient Rhetoric and Ancient Letters: Models for Reading Paul, and Their Limits," in *Paul and Rhetoric*, ed. J. Paul Sampley and Peter Lampe (New York: T&T Clark, 2010), 149–60, who notes that Paul's letters are unique among Greco-Roman epistles for their communal address (150–56), while they are unique among philosophical treatises for their historical authenticity and distinctive content, i.e., "the immediate sense of real persons in relationship" (157). Hence, "Paul stretches the letter form almost to breaking point. He writes elaborate theological arguments, personal appeals, denunciations, and ethical parenesis, all designed to be delivered in speech to the assemblies of his converts" (159). At the same time, Forbes recognizes that Paul, "on a smaller scale," used Greco-Roman rhetoric for "culturally appropriate means of persuasion" (160).

86. John T. Fitzgerald, *Cracks in an Earthen Vessel: An Examination of the Catalogues of Hardship in the Corinthian Correspondence*, SBLDS 99 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 150, pointing to 1:12–14 as the "thesis" of the letter, says that "the purpose of 2 Cor 1–9 is . . . to effect a mutuality of pride between Paul and the Corinthians." Matera, *II Corinthians*, 170, notes this connection between 7:4 and 1:14. See the treatment of 1:12–14 of by Stefan Schapdick, *Eschatisches Heil mit eschatischer Anerkennung*, BBB 164 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011), 287–302, who also shows how these eschatological themes play out in 4:7—5:11 (pp. 302–437).

them (Exod 32:11–14, 30–34). By contrast, Paul's initial framing of boasting in 1:12–14 indicates that his current boasting to others (7:14; 8:24; 9:2–3) is ultimately an assured expectation of boasting about the Corinthians to God at the final judgment.

As with his boasting about himself, Paul's confident boasting about the Corinthians is not ultimately about them, but rather about what God has done in them by the Spirit. Thus, in chapter 3 Paul can move directly from explaining that the Corinthians are a letter of Christ written by the Spirit (3:1–3) to asserting his confidence toward God (3:4),[87] and from showing how the Spirit is the basis of Paul's legitimacy (3:4–11, esp. 3:8) to asserting his confident frankness (3:12). These moves from the Spirit to Paul's confidence can explain the logical relationship between 7:3 and 4 as being similarly inferential, since in 7:3 Paul has referred back to 3:2–3 ("you are on our hearts . . . written by the Spirit") and in 7:4 he *therefore* has boldness toward and boasting about the Corinthians. Hence, we suggest again that the logical link between 7:3 and 7:4 (the Spirit's work leading to Paul's παρρήσια and καύχησις) is similar to the inferential function of οὖν in 3:12 (the Spirit's work leading to Paul's παρρήσια) and of δέ in 3:4 (the Spirit's work leading to Paul's πεποίθησις, cf. the link between καύχησις and πείθω in 1:14–15).[88]

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87. Hafemann, *Moses*, 96–97, argues that in 1:21–22 and 3:3–4, Paul "moves from an emphasis on the Spirit as the corroboratory evidence for the validity of his ministry to a statement of assurance that his authority as an apostle is based on God's own authority as attested by the outpouring of the Spirit" (96), showing that the δέ of 3:4 functions as an inference which refers back to 3:1–3.

88. Belleville, "Letter," 162–63, shows that boasting (1:12, 14; 5:12; 7:4, 14), confidence (1:9, 15;

Just as Paul has been doing throughout 2 Corinthians thus far, in 7:2–4 he grounds his legitimacy and resulting confidence in the work of the Spirit. We can thus extend Olson's conclusion about 1:21–22 to 7:2–4, just as Hafemann extended it to 2:14—3:4: "The Spirit is the present guarantee of Paul's trustworthiness, the guarantee that he is established and certified by God, or perhaps, the proof that he is 'sealed' and 'anointed' and therefore that his confident assertions about himself are justified."[89] It is thus obvious that 7:2–4 remains part of Paul's "defense," which is oriented toward demonstrating his own God-given legitimacy,[90] more than it is about assuaging the Corinthians, especially since his next move is to point (yet again) to his experience of divine comfort and joy in the midst of suffering.

Πεπλήρωμαι τῇ παρακλήσει . . . ἐπὶ πάσῃ τῇ θλίψει ἡμῶν **(7:4c)**

Just as in the letter's introduction, in 7:4c Paul again describes how God has comforted him ἐπὶ πάσῃ τῇ θλίψει ἡμῶν (7:4d; cf. 1:4).[91] Others have detailed the

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3:4), boldness (3:12; 7:4), and self-commendation (3:1; 4:2; 5:12; 6:4) all play a similar role in Paul's apostolic self-defense.

89. Olson, "Confidence Expressions," 136, as cited by Hafemann, *Moses*, 97.

90. Referring to 7:4, Scott, *2 Corinthians*, 158, notes that the references in 7:3 to the new covenant realities of 3:2–3 and 6:14—7:1 "[remain] a reason for boasting (7:4) for the apostle, *an apology for the legitimacy of Paul's apostolate*" (emphasis ours).

91. Πεπλήρωμαι is in the perfect tense, with the emphasis not on the *completion* of the comfort (since Paul still experiences comfort in the midst of suffering), but rather on its ongoing *results*: his present abounding with joy (7:4d). Because of their similar structure and lack of coordinating conjunction, both πεπλήρωμαι τῇ παρακλήσει and ὑπερπερισσεύομαι τῇ χαρᾷ are modified by ἐπὶ πάσῃ τῇ θλίψει ἡμῶν, so Harris, *2 Corinthians*, 521. Similarly, in 1:4 Paul describes God as the one who "comforts us" ἐπὶ πάσῃ τῇ θλίψει ἡμῶν (cf. the divine passives in 7:4cd). As noted by Otfried Hofius, "'Der Gott allen Trostes': Παράκλησις und παρακαλεῖν in 2Kor 1,3–7," in *Paulusstudien*, WUNT 51 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck,

relationship between the letter's comfort-themed opening and the letter's subsequent argument about Paul's suffering,[92] along with many studies on the apostle's understanding of suffering/comfort against Greco-Roman and Jewish backgrounds.[93] In

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1989), 244–45, the one who comforts ἡμᾶς ἐπὶ πάσῃ τῇ θλίψει ἡμῶν (1:4) is also the blessed θεός πάσης παρακλήσεως (1:3).

92. See R. Bieringer, "The Comforted Comforter: The Meaning of παρακαλέω or παράκλησις Terminology in 2 Corinthians," *HvTSt* 67/1 (2011): 1–7; Carl Johan Bjerkelund, *Parakalô: Form, Funktion und Sinn der parakalô-Sätze in den paulinischen Briefen*, Bibliotheca theologica Norvegica 1 (Oslo/Bergen/Tromsö: Universitetsforlaget, 1967), 141–55; Floyd Vivian Filson, "The God of All Comfort," *Theology Today* 8/4 (1952): 498–501; Scott J. Hafemann, "The Comfort and Power of the Gospel: The Argument of 2 Corinthians 1–3," *RevExp* 86/3 (1989): 325–44; Hofius, "Gott allen Trostes," 244–54; and O'Brien, *Thanksgivings*, 233–58.

93. For studies of Paul against the backdrop of the Greco-Roman consolation tradition, see Paul A. Holloway, "Bona Cogitare: An Epicurean Consolation in Phil 4:8–9," *HTR* 91/1 (1998): 89–96; his *Consolation in Philippians: Philosophical Sources and Rhetorical Strategy*, SNTSMS 112 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 55–83, and the sources cited on 181–85; Abraham J. Malherbe, *Paul and the Popular Philosophers* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989), 49–66 (esp. 64–66); his *Paul and the Thessalonians: The Philosophic Tradition of Pastoral Care* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), 56–59, 81–88; and R. Scott Sullender, "Saint Paul's Approach to Grief: Clarifying the Ambiguity," *JRHealth* 20/1 (1981): 65–66. For special attention to 2 Corinthians, see Kaplan, "Comfort," 433–45; Harrison, "Consolation"; Welborn, "Paul and Pain," 547–70; and his "Paul's Appeal to the Emotions in 2 Corinthians 1.1–2.13; 7.5–16," *JSNT* 82 (2001): 31–60. Examples of the consolation of affliction by those experiencing affliction themselves include Aeschylus, *Prom.* 263–65; Epictetus, *Diatr.* 3.23.8; Seneca, *Helv*. 1.1–4; *Polyb*. 15.5; and Sophocles, *Trach.* 729–30 (following the examples listed by Vegge, *2 Corinthians*, 153n61). See also the recent study on Greco-Roman consolation by J. H. D. Scourfield, "Towards a Genre of Consolation," in *Greek and Roman Consolations: Eight Studies of a Tradition and Its Afterlife*, ed. Han Baltussen (Swansea: Classical Press of Wales, 2013), 1–36, and especially his cautions about how the consolatory genre is "abnormally fluid" and "hard to define" (1; cf. 7–10). Muir, *Life and Letters*, 7, points out that among the two thousand papyrus letters discovered in Egypt, only twelve or thirteen of them mention consolation of the the bereaved while "of those only six can be said to have had consolation or sympathy as their main purpose." This is especially odd since "in a society that had by modern standards a very high mortality rate we might expect to find a fair number" of such consolation letters. For studies of consolation within the OT and Second Temple literature, see R. Bieringer, "'Comfort, Comfort My People' (Isa 40,1): The Use of παρακαλέω in the Septuagint Version of Isaiah," in *Florilegium Lovaniense: Studies in Septuagint and Textual Criticism in Honour of Florentino García Martínez*, ed. H. Ausloos, B. Lemmelijn, and M. Vervenne (Leuven: Peeters, 2008), 57–70; Lars Hartman, "'Comfort of the Scriptures': An Early Jewish Interpretation of Noah's Salvation, 1 En 10:16—11:2," *SEÅ* 41–42 (1977): 87–96; C. G. Montefiore, *Ancient Jewish and Greek Encouragement and Consolation* (Bridgeport, CT: Hartmore House, 1971), 6–36; C. A. Muenchow, "Consolation: An Old Testament Perspective" (PhD diss., Yale University, 1983); John W. Olley, "'No Peace' in a Book of Consolation: A Framework for the Book of Isaiah?," *VT* 49 (1999): 351–70; Gwendolyn B. Sayler, "2

short, Paul begins his letter by describing how God comforts him in the midst of his own θλῖψις and παθήματα (1:4–5), so that his ministry of suffering becomes a vehicle for bringing comfort and salvation to the Corinthians in the midst of their own suffering (1:6–7).

In 2 Corinthians παρακαλέω and παράκλησις are often used in contexts concerning the reconciliation Paul seeks between God/himself and the Corinthians.[94] Παράκλησις plays a significant role in Paul's initial discussion in 1:23—2:11 of the "ἄδικος conflict" to which the "tearful letter" responded and which resurfaces in 7:5–16. Paul, playing on the varied semantic field of παράκλησις ("encourage, request, comfort"[95]), asks the Corinthians to "comfort" the repentant ἄδικος in the midst of his περισσός λύπη (2:7),[96] and then "exhorts" them to confirm their love for him (2:8).[97] Just

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Baruch: A Story of Grief and Consolation," in *SBL Seminar Papers, 1982*, SBLSP 21 (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1982), 485–500; Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer, *For the Comfort of Zion: The Geographical and Theological Location of Isaiah 40–55*, VTSup 139 (Leiden: Brill, 2011); and Rikki E. Watts, "Consolation or Confrontation?: Isaiah 40–55 and the Delay of the New Exodus," *TynBul* 41 (1990): 31–59.

94. Vegge, *2 Corinthians*, 367, briefly shows how παρακαλέω plays a central role in the appeals for reconciliation in 1:3–7; 2:5–11; 5:20; 6:1; 7:4, 5–16; 7:2–6, 17; 9:5; 10:1–2.

95. See BDAG, 766, for these three basic meanings. Bieringer, "Comforted Comforter," 2, suggests that a strict choice between the meanings "comfort" and "encourage" is not necessary, since "it is likely that the meaning of this Greek terminology cannot be partitioned in the same way as in English or other modern European languages," but also notes that "comfort/encourage" is especially prominent among Paul's writings in 2 Cor 1:3–7; 7:4, 5–16 (4).

96. Plutarch, *Virt. mor.* 452c, notes that admonition (νουθεσία) and blame (ψόγος) can cause μετάνοια, which is a kind of λύπη—cf. 2 Cor 7:9–10!

97. "Ancient consolation . . . regularly has an ethical dimension. The demands of right behaviour, in which the perceptions of others were inevitably involved, affected the bereaved person no less than others" (Scourfield, "Consolation," 5). Stowers, *Letter Writing*, 144, notes that epistolary handbooks

as Paul was "comforted" (by God) in the midst of his own suffering (1:4–5; 7:6–7, 13), he now "encourages" the Corinthians in the midst of their own suffering/λύπη (1:4–7; 2:2; 7:7–9, 12–13) to "comfort" the ἄδικος in the midst of his own λύπη[98]—a word which will play a critical role in our study of 7:5–16.

To summarize: central to Paul's understanding of his ministerial legitimacy is his joyful endurance of suffering and experience of divine comfort, which in turn leads him to comfort the Corinthians in the midst of their own suffering. Paul's boast before God is grounded in what the Spirit has done in the Corinthians through his affliction-filled ministry. Their proper, Spirit-led response to Paul's ministry fuels further confidence and boasting on his part. Hence, Paul makes a smooth transition from boldness toward/boasting about the Corinthians (7:4ab) to divine comfort because of the Corinthians (7:4c). His experience of divine comfort in every affliction is a result of the Corinthians' position on his heart (7:3b)—just as his boldness and boasting (7:4ab) are the natural result of his apostolic "on the heart" relationship with them. Paul has been comforted

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usually called for the use of "consolatory arguments" that consisted of "precepts against grief."

98. Some classic examples of the Greco-Roman topos of consoling pain/grief include the paradigmatic example of Homer, *Il.*, 24.507–51; and also Cicero, *Fam*. 4.6; 5.16; Pliny the Younger, *Ep.* 9.9; Plutarch, *Cons. Apoll.*; *Cons. ux.*; Seneca, *Ep.* 99; and the examples given by Dio Chrysostom, *Aegr.* 3 (Περὶ λύπης); Ps.-Demetrius, *Epistolary Types* 5; Ps.-Dionysius, *On Epideictic Speeches*, 277–83; Ps.-Libanius, *Epistolary Types* 21; 39; Ps.-Menander, *On Epideictic Speeches* II 413–14, 418–22; and Theon, *Progymnasta*, 3.117. Ps.-Libanius, *Epistolary Types* 19*,* notes that conciliation (θεραπυετική) and apology (ἀπολογητική) are overlapping letter-types for the assuaging of λύπη! See Scourfield, "Consolation," 26n71 on the debate about whether or not the Sophist Antiphon (fifth century BC) actually established a Corinthian "grief clinic" dedicated to the τέχνη ἀλυπίας ("art of removing grief").

not only because the Corinthians have begun responding repentantly to him (2:6; 7:6–13, 16), but also because their positive response undergirds his legitimacy and so relativizes whatever suffering he must experience on their behalf. Therefore, 7:4a–c fits into the overall apologetic thrust of 7:2–4, 7:2–16, and the letter as a whole.

Ὑπερπερισσεύομαι τῇ χαρᾷ ἐπὶ πάσῃ τῇ θλίψει ἡμῶν **(7:4d)**

In the final affirmation of 7:4d, we find the climax of 7:4, all of which describes the logical consequences of the Corinthians' death-and-life-bringing place on Paul's heart (7:3b): Paul is "being super-abounded with joy in every affliction."[99] He uses here an unusual verb found elsewhere only in Rom 5:20, where it describes how Christ brings about the lavish abundance of grace that goes far beyond the increase of ἁμαρτία/ παράπτωμα brought about by the law.[100] Elsewhere in 2 Corinthians Paul uses περρισέυω to describe eschatological, new covenant realities (3:9; cf. 4:15; 8:2; 9:8, 12),

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99. Taking ὑπερπερισσεύομαι as another divine passive. Cf. the passive uses of περισσεύω in Matt 13:12; 25:29; Luke 15:17.

100. It also occurs as an adverb (ὑπερπερισσῶς) in Mark 7:37 to describe the "super-abounding" amazement of those who witnessed Jesus's healing of a deaf man. Both LSJ and BDAG list only Rom 5:20 and 2 Cor 7:4 for ὑπερπερισσεύω and Mark 7:37 for ὑπερπερισσῶς. Though the noncompound form of the verb, περισσεύω, is common, there are no occurrences of either the compound form of the verb or its related adverb in the LXX, Philo, Josephus, or Greek OT Pseudepigrapha. The Online TLG database has no non-Christian uses of either word. A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research*, 4th ed. (Nashville: Broadman, 1923), 297, notes that κοινή Greek used such compound adverbs frequently, and that Paul "fairly revels in them." But it is striking that this word—though seemingly nondescript—appears only in the New Testament, where it is used to describe the bountiful ramifications of Christ's in-breaking eschatological reign. Its exclusive use by Mark and Paul suggests that this word may be no mere "example of Paul's own fondness for ὑπέρ-compounds" (Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 1:484), but rather, as Gerhard Delling, "Zum steigernden Gebrauch von Komposita mit ὑπερ bei Paulus," *NovT* 11 (1965): 145, points out, in 2 Cor Paul often uses ὑπερ compounds when describing "die überschwenglichen Herrlichkeit des Heils in Christus."

sometimes associating it with ὑπερβάλλω (3:10; 9:14).[101] Here Paul seems to combine these ideas in the verb itself in order to express the "super-abundance" of eschatological joy. In the midst of abundant suffering on behalf of the Corinthians (1:5), Paul's "eschatological joy" is, so to speak, "abundantly more abounding."

Paul's use of joy terminology (χαρά/χαίρω)—like many other words in 7:4 and 7:2–3 studied thus far—is significant for the way in which it thematically and rhetorically links 7:2–4 to the letter thus far and also to 7:5–16 and the financial requests of chapters 8–9.[102] In 1:24, Paul explains that the Corinthians' joy was his overarching purpose in delaying his visit, for, in Paul's words, "we are co-workers of your χαρά." That the Corinthians should themselves work with Paul for their own joy can be seen by similar, inclusive uses of συν- terminology in the surrounding context. In 1:11, the Corinthians are to co-help Paul in prayer (συνυπουργούντων καὶ ὑμῶν), while in 1:21 God strengthens Paul with the Corinthians (βεβαιῶν ἡμᾶς σὺν ὑμῖν). Furthermore,

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101. Referring to 9:12–13, Hafemann, *Moses*, 327, says, "As in 2 Cor. 3:10, here too the διακονία of the gospel, both in its acceptance by the Corinthians and in its embodiment in their own lives of service to the saints, is pictured in terms of its *function* as that which 'abounds' (περρισεύω) in its manifestation of the 'glory of God' (δοξάζω τὸν θεόν) because the grace of God which it reveals is 'surpassing' (ὑπερβάλλω) in its *character*" (emphasis his). He also points to Eph 2:7 (cf. 1:6, 12, 14; 2:4) for a similar constellation of words and themes.

102. Vegge, *2 Corinthians*, 366, expounding on Paul's closing command to rejoice in 13:11 (χαίρετε), notes that "11 out of 12 occurrences of χαίρω and χαρά in the letter-body of 2 Corinthians are in one way or another related to the issue of reconciliation between Paul and the Corinthians (6:10 being the only exception)." (However, we see even 6:10 as an implicit appeal to embrace and imitate the suffering apostle.) Thus, Paul's final command to rejoice is no mere nicety—he calls on the Corinthians to rejoice in and with him!

Paul explicitly ties his own joy to the Corinthians' (eventual) joy in 2:3 when he continues to explain why he wrote a "tearful letter" instead of returning in person. Therefore, if and when the Corinthians fully reconcile with Paul, they will rejoice with him as his joy-in-suffering motivates their own joyful embrace of him.

Currently, however, the Corinthians are not rejoicing, reflected in the fact that, despite the repentance of the majority of the church, 2 Corinthians says nothing about them actually exhibiting any joy. This is striking in light of Paul's stated aim that they experience precisely this joy. The Corinthians—at least the repentant ones—are on the right path, but it is not enough for them to wallow in λύπη, even if it produces repentance (7:10). Paul wants them to progress to joy.[103] The Corinthians—like Paul's joy in the midst of his θλίψις (7:4, 7, 9, 13, 16) and the Macedonians' joy in the midst of their θλίψις (8:2)—must demonstrate the reality of God's comforting, transformative work in their lives through rejoicing in the midst of λύπη/θλίψις/πάθημα (1:7). Paul thus points to himself and the Macedonians as joyful examples to be imitated in their

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103. Joy language is blatantly absent from 7:11 and 15, where Paul excitedly details the Corinthians' repentant response to his "tearful letter" (cf. also the list in 8:7). See the similar point made by R. Bieringer, "Love as That Which Binds Everything Together?: The Unity of 2 Corinthians Revisited in Light of Αγαπ- Terminology," in *Second Corinthians in the Perspective of Late Second Temple Judaism*, ed. R. Bieringer, Emmanuel Nathan, Didier Pollefeyt, and Peter J. Tomson, CRINT 14 (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 21. He notes that Paul never exactly says that the *Corinthians* love him, even though *he* loves them, while expecting them to love him *eventually*: "There seem to be good reasons to assume that Paul was convinced that as a result of the effects of the letter of tears, there was a change of mind and there was obedience and even longing for Paul on the side of the Corinthians, but not yet love."

overarching pursuit of joy. In 7:5–16, as well as in chapters 8–9, Paul will lay out the pathway to joy that such imitation will follow.

We thus arrive at the end of 7:4 and have seen that its four statements about Paul are the inference drawn from the Corinthians' position on his heart (7:3b).[104] Paul is making the same inferential move from ministry *essence* to ministry *existence* as he does elsewhere with the same or similar vocabulary: in 3:12, Paul's παρρήσια flows from (οὖν) the Spirit-centered nature of his new covenant ministry (3:4–11), while in 3:4 Paul's confidence (πεποίθησις) flows from (δέ) the Spirit's work on the Corinthians' hearts through his suffering (2:14—3:3). Similarly, Paul's boldness, boasting, comfort, and joy (7:4) are the inference of the new covenant, "Corinthians-on-the-heart" nature of his ministry to them (7:3b), which itself excludes the possibility of bringing old covenant condemnation (7:3a). Our logical outline of 7:2–4 is therefore now complete:

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104. Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 391–93, ties 7:4 to 7:5–16 because of their similar terminology, but fails to explain or posit a clear logical relationship between 7:3 and 7:4, other than that 7:4–16 continues "the emphasis [since 6:11] on the affection Paul feels for his congregation" (392). Our explanation of the implied inference in 7:4, with the explicit causal γάρ in 7:5, shows that 7:4 can and does belong with 7:2–3, although we shall argue that 7:2–16 forms one continuous argument. The observation that 7:4 shares much of the same vocabulary as 7:5–16 is commonplace; see, e.g., Barnett, *2 Corinthians*, 363; Bultmann, *Zweite Brief*, 56; Schmeller, *Zweite Brief*, 384, etc.

Receive us (7:2a):

Because I wronged no one (7:2b) [The nature of Paul's personal conduct]
And because I am not speaking πρὸς κατάκρισιν (7:3a) [The nature of Paul's apostolic office]

This—my "new covenant" lack of condemnation—is because of (γάρ) what I told you beforehand: "You are on our hearts"! (7:3b)

Therefore, because you are on our hearts, I have great boldness toward you (7:4a)
And I have great boasting about you (7:4b)
And I have been filled with comfort—(7:4c)
And most of all, I am super-abounding with joy!—in every affliction of ours (7:4d).

Conclusion

We have shown that 2 Cor 7:2–4 functions as a continuation of Paul's apostolic defense thus far in the epistle. Particularly, in 2 Cor 7:2–4 Paul is still explaining the nature of his "new covenant" ministry as set forth in 2:14—3:18. For in 7:2–4 he uses words and phrases found only in that passage: κατακρίσις (3:9; 7:3b), ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν + ἐστε (3:2; 7:3b), and παρρησία (3:12; 7:4a), as well as themes central to his broader apology: comfort, boasting, and death/life. Hence, in this brief passage Paul is not merely restating the content of 6:11–13, nor is he concluding his defense. Rather, he is continuing his "new covenant" apology, which includes 7:5–16, in which he will prepare the Corinthians to demonstrate the reality of their repentance by giving money toward his Jerusalem collection (and thereby recapture their joy). Before turning to a detailed exegesis of 7:5–16, though, we shall study the broader context of the key prophetic texts to which Paul has *already* pointed in his "new covenant" defense. We do

this in order to understand better how these Scriptures, *in terms of their basic thematic movements* (i.e., not in terms of specific scriptural allusions or echoes), help us understand the theological nature and apologetic function of 7:5–16.

CHAPTER THREE: PAUL'S "NEW COVENANT" MINISTRY IN ITS SCRIPTURAL CONTEXT

We have shown that in 2 Cor 7:2–4 Paul is continuing his preceding argument, especially in terms of his "new covenant" comparison in 2:14—3:18, but with reference to the themes and vocabulary of his broader apology. Having established this connection to the larger letter, we now turn to three scriptural texts that play a key role in how Paul describes and defends his ministry in 2 Corinthians. In studying these texts (and their broader literary contexts),[1] we aim to understand better how 2 Cor 7:5–16 fits with 7:2–4 as part of his broader "new covenant" apology. Hence, in looking at these scriptural texts in their contexts we will pay special attention to the key themes, not only of 2 Cor 7:2–4, but also of 7:5–16—such as grief, repentance, and salvation (7:9–10). Examining the role of such themes in these OT texts will help us understand the nuances and emphases of Paul's argument in 7:5–16. Furthermore, this study will prepare us for a later examination of the similarities and differences between Paul's own reading of Scripture and the readings of his peers.[2]

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1. See p. 13 on our methodology for studying Paul's use of Scripture.

2. Again, Watson, *Hermeneutics*, 3–4, defends interpreting the OT texts on their own terms in the attempt to understand Pauline (and other Second Temple Jewish) readings of them. We should not limit ourselves merely to interpreting *interpretations* of the texts: "It is wrong to imagine that the text itself is no more than a blank screen onto which readers project their various concerns: it is normally possible to show that the text itself is implicated in the readings it occasions. To interpret is always to interact with a text, and it is also to be *constrained* by the text. If so, it is essential to retrace the way from the scriptural text to its Pauline and non-Pauline realizations, in a manner that allows the scriptural text a voice of its own within a three-way conversation. . . . Readers are not wrong when they ascribe semantic potential to a text, and . . . in interpreting their interpretations, we must take seriously their claim to be realizing that

Jeremiah 30–33: The New Covenant Foundation of Repentance

We begin with Jeremiah, to whom Paul often compares himself in 2 Corinthians.[3] Specifically, we will examine Jer 30–33 (37–40 LXX),[4] a literary unit that is "united by the theme of renewed covenant."[5] For Paul alludes to this section of

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semantic potential" (emphasis his).

3. See Aernie, *Prophets?*, 158–84, who builds on the work of Hafemann, *Suffering and the Spirit*; Hafemann, *Moses*; and Karl Olav Sandnes, *Paul—One of the Prophets?: A Contribution to the Apostle's Self-Understanding*, WUNT 2/43 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1991), 131–45, to show that Paul compares himself to Jeremiah with regards to his calling (cf. Jer 1:5–9 with 2 Cor 2:16; Gal 1:15); his ministry (cf. Jer 31:31 with 2 Cor 3:6); his authority (cf. Jer 1:10; 24:6; 42:10 with 2 Cor 10:8; 13:10); and his boasting in the Lord (cf. Jer 9:22–23 with 2 Cor 10:17; 1 Cor 1:31; see Sandnes, *Paul*, 77–130, on Paul's prophet-like self-understanding in 1 Cor).

4. We realize that in describing the Old Greek (OG) translation tradition, using the term "Septuagint"/ "LXX" is problematic and anachronistic. Even so, we use it to refer to the OG as approximated in the critical texts of Joseph Ziegler's Septuaginta series. With reference to Jeremiah specifically, our chapter numbering follows the MT. In using the MT's numbering (and often citing from it), we make no statement about its priority over the LXX. Unless noted otherwise, our Hebrew quotations are closely translated in the LXX, as found in Joseph Ziegler, *Jeremias, Baruch, Threni, Epistula Jeremiae*, 4th ed., Septuaginta 15 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013). While Paul clearly read the LXX and often cites it in 2 Cor, our aim is to understand the themes and argument of Jer 30–33 as shared by *both* textual traditions; textual variants between them have little bearing on our argument but will be noted when relevant. In defense of this approach, see Gignilliat, *Paul*, 14–15, who, building on the work of Timothy Lim, Richard Bauckham, and D. Moody Smith, concludes that "though Paul's quotations often overlap with an LXX form, this does not preclude the strong probability of Paul's deep familiarity with the Hebrew text as well" (15).

5. Leslie C. Allen, *Jeremiah: A Commentary*, OTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2008), 364. William L. Holladay, *Jeremiah*, 2 vols., Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986–1989), 2:22–23, similarly argues that 30—33:13 forms an original (but multi-stage) unit as the thematic center of the larger "hopeful scroll" of chs. 26–36 (= 33–43 LXX). Most scholars believe that 33:14–26, missing in the LXX traditions, is a late addition to the proto-MT, and so for the sake of simplicity will not be treated here; however, see Christiane Karrer-Grube, "Von der Rezeption zur Redaktion: Eine intertextuelle Analyse von Jeremia 33,14–26," in *Sprachen, Bilder, Klänge: Dimensionen der Theologie im Alten Testament und in seinem Umfeld* (Munich: Ugarit-Verlag, 2009), 105–21, who shows how this passage fits into the broader message of Jeremiah and the Prophets. The provenance of Jeremiah is of course heavily debated; on which see Holladay, *Jeremiah*, 2:10–70; and Richard D. Weis, "The Textual Situation in the Book of Jeremiah," in *Sôfer Mahîr: Essays in Honour of Adrian Schenker Offered by the Editors of Biblia Hebraica Quinta*, ed. Richard D. Weis, Arie van der Kooij, and Yohahan A. P. Goldman, VTSup

Jeremiah by referring to himself as a servant of the "new covenant" (καινὴ διαθήκη, 3:6), a phrase found in the OT only in Jer 31:31.[6] We will highlight especially the themes of 2 Cor 7:2–16 and its larger context—such as repentance, grief, joy, comfort, and salvation—in order to understand Paul's interpretation of the Corinthians' repentance.

הִנֵּה יָמִים בָּאִים: Jeremiah's Promise of Restoration through Judgment

Jeremiah's oracle opens in 30:3 with a look toward the future: "Behold, the days are coming" (הִנֵּה יָמִים בָּאִים). Speaking through Jeremiah, YHWH repeatedly uses this phrase to announce coming times of both destruction *and* restoration. When used to describe coming restoration, it applies only to Israel (16:14; 23:5, 7; 30:3; 31:27, 31; 33:14), but when referring to a future time of destruction, it can apply to both Israel (7:32; 9:25; 19:6) *and* the surrounding nations (9:25; 48:12; 49:2; 51:47, 52).

The first two instances of the phrase, both in the unit 7:1—9:26, describe God's coming judgment. The section opens with YHWH's call for the people of Judah to "amend [their] ways" in order to escape judgment and remain in the land (7:3–7; cf.

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110 (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 269–93. In any case, there is no evidence that Paul did not read Jeremiah as a coherent whole, even if he knew of two editions of Jeremiah—the later of which, according to Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 3rd ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress, 2012), 288n12, preceded the complete OG translation so that "for several centuries, the two editions co-existed in ancient Israel."

6. In suggesting that Paul here specifically refers to Jer 31:31–34 and its broader context, we follow the arguments of Dumbrell, "Newness," 63–69; and Hafemann, *Moses*, 119–28, esp. 128n119; echoed by Aernie, *Prophets?*, 161–66; Meyer, *End of the Law*, 70–78; and Wright, *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*, 980–82; against those who argue that Jer 31 cannot lie behind 2 Cor 3, such as Koch, *Schrift als Zeuge*, 45–46, and Heikki Räisänen, *Paul and the Law*, WUNT 29 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1983), 240–45; on which, see Aernie, *Prophets?*, 163–64n179.

3:6—4:4).[7] However, he tells Jeremiah that the people will not listen or accept discipline (7:27–28), an extension of their *refusal* to repent in the past (שׁוּב/ἐπιστρέφω, 5:3).[8] Therefore, YHWH announces that "days are coming" (7:32) when he will bring war against Jerusalem so as to silence the voices of gladness and joy in Judah (/שָׂשׂוֹן שִׂמְחָה; εὐφραίνω/χαίρω, 7:32–34). God reiterates that the root cause of this destruction is their suicidal lack of repentance: "this people"—not "my" people—has turned aside (שׁוּב/ἀποστρέφω), but not repented (שׁוּב; ἐπιστρέφω, 8:4); clinging to deceit, they refuse to repent (שׁוּב/ἐπιστρέφω, 8:5); no one repents of his evil (נחם *niphal*/μετανοέω, 8:6).[9] Jeremiah then mourns such wickedness and its just punishment (8:18, 21, 23; 9:9, 16, 18). The people "refuse to know" the Lord (9:6; cf. 4:22; 5:4) and so abandon the only legitimate ground of boasting: knowing YHWH (9:23). Echoing 7:32, YHWH therefore announces in 9:25 that "the days are coming" when he will punish "all the circumcised in foreskin," a group that includes Judah alongside the surrounding nations. The reason (כִּי/ὅτι) for God's wrath upon both Judah *and* the nations is the same fundamental

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7. William L. Holladay, *The Root šûbh in the Old Testament* (Leiden: Brill, 1958), 146, argues that repentance is "the *Leitmotif* of Jeremiah's message." The call to "amend your ways and your deeds" (7:3) is also found in 18:11, where the people are called to "repent" (שׁוּבוּ נָא) from their "evil way."

8. Mark J. Boda, *A Severe Mercy: Sin and Its Remedy in the Old Testament*, Siphrut 1 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 227: "Because 'listening' is the first step of response to the prophetic message, it is favored in the penitential pattern, and those who do not listen are those who continue to do the evil at which the prophetic word is directed."

9. Boda, *Severe Mercy*, 229–30, on Jeremiah: "The root [שׁוּב] lies most often at the intersection of embracing and rejecting God, describing either the movement from sin to God or from God to sin."

"uncircumcision": all the "nations" are uncircumcised (LXX: "in flesh") while "all the house of Israel is uncircumcised in heart" (9:26; cf. 4:4; 6:10).[10]

The "days are coming" phrase recurs at 16:14–15, where YHWH announces a "second exodus" from the exile. This promise is startling because it follows YHWH's prohibition of consolation or grief over the people, whose joy and gladness God will silence. He will cast them into exile because of their idolatry and stubborn refusal to listen (16:10–13).[11] Indeed, even after promising redemption, God again underscores his grace by highlighting Israel's abundant sin (16:16–18; cf. 17:1). Jeremiah looks forward to a time when the nations will forsake their worthless idols in the knowledge of YHWH's name (16:19–21; cf. 3:17; 4:2).

At 19:6 YHWH announces "coming days" for Jerusalem's judgment. In the surrounding literary unit, God has called each person in Jerusalem to repent (שׁוּבוּ נָא; ἀποστραφήτω, 18:11) to avert the coming disaster (18:7–8). However, the people refuse to repent, preferring instead to follow their stubborn, evil hearts (18:12). They persecute

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10. Kyle B. Wells, *Grace and Agency in Paul and Second Temple Judaism: Interpreting the Transformation of the Heart*, NovTSup 157 (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 41–53, explains how Jeremiah presents Israel's need for a transformed heart: "As the book develops, it seems that Jeremiah eventually loses hope that Israel is capable of overcoming her moral impairment, even abandoning the heart-circumcision metaphor altogether: Israel needed more than heart-repair (4:4); she needed a heart-transplant (24:5–7). In the end, then, Israel's moral ineptitude was not to be resolved by human ingenuity. . . . The giving of a 'heart to know' transforms Israel so that she can participate in covenantal reciprocity" (51–52). Similarly, Boda, *Severe Mercy*, 245–46.

11. Allen, *Jeremiah*, 192, notes that the "therefore" of 16:14 "blatantly expresses divine logic that defies human possibility."

Jeremiah, who like Moses has previously asked that God would spare the sinful people (18:20; cf. Exod 32:11–13; Num 14:19, etc.), but now, unlike Moses, asks that God would destroy such an intractable nation (18:21–23). The opportunity for repentance has passed.[12] YHWH then promises that "the days are coming" when he will use Jerusalem's enemies to slaughter its inhabitants (19:6), again because of the people's "stiff-necked" refusal to listen to him (19:15). The people do not and *cannot* repent.[13]

The phrase then occurs twice in the next literary unit at 23:5, 7. In the face of the king's injustice (21:11–14) and the people's idolatry (22:8–9), God promises to gather the "remnant" of his flock from exile and give them caring shepherds (23:3–4). The "days are coming" when God will raise a just Davidic king to bring justice and salvation to Judah and Israel (23:5–6); therefore (לָכֵן/διὰ τοῦτο), "the days are [also] coming" when YHWH will return the exiles to their land through a second exodus (23:7–8; cf. 16:14–15). The literary unit ends with a restatement of this redemptive promise: God will bring them back to the land, where he will "build them up, and not tear them down; [he] will plant them, and not uproot them" (24:6), thus reversing Jeremiah's current ministry of destruction and uprooting (1:10; 12:15).[14] The basis of this redemption will

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12. Boda, *Severe Mercy*, 241, following Mark S. Smith, *The Laments of Jeremiah and Their Contexts: A Literary and Redactional Study of Jeremiah 11–20*, SBLMS 42 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990), 21.

13. So Holladay, *Jeremiah*, 1:214, 263; similarly, Boda, *Severe Mercy*, 237–38.

14. Walter Brueggemann, *To Build, To Plant: A Commentary on Jeremiah 26–52* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 39: While Jeremiah's primary theme is the destruction of Israel, Judah, and Jerusalem, "the countertheme of 'plant and build' . . . governs chs. 30–33." Paul claims that God has given him a

be God's unilateral *gift* of a heart that actually knows him in a restored covenantal relationship ("they will be my people and I will be their God"), expressed through a "whole-hearted" return to God (שׁוּב/ἐπιστρέφω, 24:7).[15] This would reverse Judah's previous pseudo-repentance, built on "deception" because it was not "with her whole heart" (3:10).[16]

In 24:6–7 Jeremiah looks forward to a fulfillment of the eschatological promises of Deut 30:1–10, a passage to which he and other prophets (especially Ezekiel) return again and again.[17] For in Deut 30:1–10 we hear that Israel's deathly exile will come to an end through the people's repentance, a repentance rooted in God's "circumcising" their heart. Moses predicts that in exile Israel will "turn to [its] heart" (וַהֲשֵׁבֹתָ אֶל־לְבָבֶךָ/

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reversed Jeremiah ministry (2 Cor 10:8; 13:10); see n. 14 on p. 29.

15. See the important study of the "covenant formula" by Rolf Rendtorff, *The Covenant Formula: An Exegetical and Theological Investigation*, trans. Margaret Kohl, OTS (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), 90: "In the prophetic books of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, the centre of gravity of declarations using the covenant formula then shifts to the still impending future of the final, untroubled relationship between God and Israel."

16. Mary E. Shields, *Circumscribing the Prostitute: The Rhetorics of Intertextuality, Metaphor, and Gender in Jeremiah 3.1—4.4*, JSOTSup (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 41: 3:3–4 makes it "clear that repentance is not what Israel has offered YHWH. Indeed they have refused to accept any accusations of wrongdoing."

17. See Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 25–40. Boda, *Severe Mercy*, 522: "Deuteronomy regularly defines covenant faithfulness as something that engages the inner affections as well as shapes the outer behavior. And it is Deut 30:6 that expresses the role of God to make this a reality through the divine circumcision of the heart of the people. . . . Isaiah speaks of a new day of grace that will prompt a response from the people, and Hosea speaks of a time when God will pursue his people (Hosea 2–3) and heal them (Hosea 14), but *Jeremiah and Ezekiel are the ones who develop this the most with their vision of transformation.* In their future expectation, God will forgive and transform his people from within through a new covenant with a new spirit and a new heart, on which the law will be written (Jer 24:6–7, 31:33–34, 32:37–44; Ezek 11:19, 36:26–27, 37:14, 39:26)" (emphasis ours).

καὶ δέξῃ εἰς τὴν καρδίαν σου, 30:1) in a repentant, whole-hearted "turn" to YHWH (וְשַׁבְתָּ עַד־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ/καὶ ἐπιστραφήσῃ ἐπὶ κύριον τὸν θεόν σου, 30:2, cf. Deut 4:29–30).[18] At that time YHWH will "render [their] restoration" (וְשָׁב יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֶת־שְׁבוּתְךָ)[19] and mercifully return them to the land (30:3). Verse 6 explains that a central element of this restoration will be YHWH's circumcising the people's heart *in order that* (infinitives: לְאַהֲבָה/ ἀγαπᾶν) they might love God with their heart and soul, and thereby live.[20] This whole-hearted repentance will manifest itself in obedience to YHWH's law (30:8), a point reiterated in verse 10 (cf. 30:16, 19–20; 32:46–47). Jeremiah now announces the coming fulfillment of *these* promises ("they will return to me with their whole heart," 24:7b). He describes the promised heart-circumcision in terms of God's "giving" a heart to know him in a restored covenant relationship (24:7a).

To summarize, Jeremiah has used הִנֵּה יָמִים בָּאִים to announce God's coming judgment and redemption. For both the nations and Israel, judgment has the same ultimate basis: uncircumcision (in flesh and/or heart), manifested by an idolatrous and

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18. On this "turn to the heart" idiom, see Rodney A. Werline, *Penitential Prayer in Second Temple Judaism: The Development of a Religious Institution*, SBLEJL 13 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998), 16, who argues that this denotation of "mental recognition or reflection" is closely related to repentance: "Since 'self examination' (שׁוב) leads to 'repentance' (שׁוב), [this] unusual figure of speech also serves as a play on the word שׁוב."

19. See below for more on this phrase; John M. Bracke, "Šûb šᵉbût: A Reappraisal," *ZAW* 97/2 (1985): 241: "The promises in Dtn 30,1–10, subsumed under the phrase *šûb šᵉbût* in Dtn 30,3, can be understood as the reversal of the curses threatened in Dtn 28. . . . Yahweh's assertion, *šûb šᵉbût*, includes the promise of a new heart (Dtn 30,6) and the ability to obey (*šm'*) Yahweh (Dtn 30,10)."

20. In describing God's future action upon Israel's heart MT uses מול ("circumcise") and LXX uses περικαθαρίζω ("cleanse").

unrepentant refusal to obey YHWH. In the case of Israel, God specifically vows to eradicate gladness and joy, leading Jeremiah to respond with profound sorrow. In spite of Israel's sin, though, God graciously promises that the "days are coming" when he will rescue an exiled remnant through a second exodus. At the center of this redemption—the fulfillment of Deut 30—is God's gift of a repentant heart that truly knows YHWH in a restored covenant relationship,[21] to be effected through the coming of a Davidic king. Having established this broad thematic outline of Jeremiah, we now turn to the "book of consolation" (chs. 30–33), in which God repeatedly announces "coming days" of redemption.[22]

Restoring Israel's Fortunes: Jeremiah 30:1—31:1

Having declared seventy years of exile (29:10), YHWH now promises that the "days are coming" when he will "render the restoration" (שַׁבְתִּי אֶת־שְׁבוּת) of "my people, Israel and Judah" (30:3), a technical term most often "associated with promises which indicate Yahweh's reversal of his judgment, and the restoration of a condition of well-

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21. Holladay, *Root*, 146, notes that Jeremiah uses שוב to entwine the ideas of "return from exile" and "return to Yahweh's covenant," since for Jeremiah returning "was the key to Israel's need before Yahweh, and so it gained a technical sense, 'repent'" (152).

22. Jer 30:3; 31:27, 31, 38; cf. MT's 33:14. In the LXX ordering, these are the phrase's final occurrences. Gary E. Yates, "Jeremiah's Message of Judgment and Hope for God's Unfaithful Wife," *BSac* 167 (2010): 159–63, shows how Jer 30–33 repeatedly refers to 2:1—4:4 in announcing that the broken covenant with the "unfaithful wife" will be restored by making her willing to repent (cf. the use of שׁוב in 2:30; 3:1, 6–14; 3:21—4:4).

being."[23] As such it is "the most evident thematic summary of Jeremiah 30–33."[24] Given that this phrase is found in Deut 30:3 MT, Jeremiah's "book of comfort" can be seen as an explanation of how God will fulfill the promises of Deut 30. Though Jacob now experiences a "time of distress" marked by terror and the lack of peace, he "will be saved" from it (30:4–7). After God rescues them from foreign enslavement, the people will serve "YHWH their God" and "David their king" (30:8–9), as in the covenantal/ Davidic restoration promised in 23:5 and 24:7. YHWH will save Jacob, who will "return" (שׁוב) and have "quiet and calm" after bearing YHWH's discipline (30:10–11).[25]

The people have an "incurable" wound (30:12, 15) that only YHWH can and will heal (30:17)—two "blatantly contradict[ory]" statements that "affirm that the one who is utterly beyond healing will be healed."[26] YHWH announces that the ultimate basis of this affliction is the people's great "guilt" and "sin" (30:15b). In light of 3:22, where YHWH's call for repentance (שׁוב/ἐπιστρέφω) is grounded in his promise to "heal" his people's "backsliding" (מְשׁוּבָה), their obstinate lack of repentance similarly lies behind their punishment, just as Moses had predicted (Deut 31:21; cf. Deut 29:17–18).[27]

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23. Bracke, "Šûb šᵉbût," 243; similarly, "שְׁבוּת, שְׁבִית," *HALOT* 4:1386; and Holladay, *Root*, 113.

24. Bracke, "Šûb šᵉbût," 236.

25. Missing in LXX, but see 46:27–28 (26:27–28 LXX).

26. Brueggemann, *To Build, To Plant*, 51.

27. Brueggemann, *To Build, To Plant*, 52: "Israel's desperate situation has a theological cause which produces a sociopolitical outcome."

YHWH promises to "render the restoration" of Jacob through compassionately rebuilding Jerusalem (30:18). Having previously silenced gladness in the land (7:32–34; 16:9; 25:10), YHWH will restore the sound of joy and celebration (30:19; שׂחק *piel*: "laugh"/παίζω: "make merry"). Though God has repeatedly promised to banish the sound of gladness from the people, this is the first time he promises that they will rejoice. Unlike the condemnation of a mirthless exile, the people will thus be able to rejoice when they live in a renewed covenant relationship with their God (30:22 MT; cf. 31:1).[28] In sum, God will reverse Israel's "incurable" backsliding and consequent sorrow by making them repentant and renewing the covenant (cf. Deut 30:2, 6, 10) so as to restore their joy.

Restoring Joy to the Repentant: Jeremiah 31:2–26

This section fuses the themes introduced in chapter 30: sorrow, joy, comfort, and repentance.[29] YHWH promises to "build" *again* Israel after having torn it down through Jeremiah's ministry (31:4a; cf. 1:10; 45:4). Israel will *again* dance joyfully while *again* enjoying great prosperity (31:4b–6). This manifold restoration grounds YHWH's call for

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28. Jack R. Lundbom, *Jeremiah 21–36*, AB 21B (New York: Doubleday, 2004), 409: "The covenant formula undergirds Yahweh's promise of future restoration, a function it also has in 31:1."

29. Bob Becking, *Between Fear and Freedom: Essays on the Interpretation of Jeremiah 30–31*, OTS 51 (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 275, notes the inextricable link between sin and sorrow in Jer 30–31: "The shift from 'living in the land' to 'living in exile' is provoked by sin and leads to sorrow. YHWH is confessed to be the *protagonist* of this transformation" (emphasis his). He also notes that the "new relationship" established by the new covenant grounds the reversal of both sorrow and exile.

jubilant singing over his salvation of Jacob, the remnant (31:7). Specifically, he will gather them so that they "return here" (שׁוב; 31:8), repentantly coming "with weeping" and "supplications" to YHWH, the covenantal father who leads his children home (31:9).[30] The following verses emphasize God's reversal of this sorrow. In 31:12–13, Jeremiah uses at least four words to describe the joy of this restoration: the people will come with jubilation (רנן/εὐφραίνω, 31:12a) and the young women will rejoice along with the young men and the elderly (שׂמח/χαίρω, 31:13a). God, by comforting "my people," will turn their mourning into gladness (שָׂשׂוֹן/χαρμονή) and their sorrow into joy (שׂמח/εὐφραίνω, 31:13b–14). The grief of exile has led to genuine repentance, which itself leads to the abundant joy of redemption.

YHWH consequently forbids Rachel from grieving for her children since they will return (שׁוב) to their land in the future (31:15–17). Through the continued use of שׁוב, Jeremiah plays on the semantic overlap between "return" and "repentance" (31:18–22). Ephraim mournfully looks back upon God's discipline and pleads for God to "return me" (שׁוב *hiphil*; ἐπιστρέφω) so that "I might return" (שׁוב *qal*/ἐπιστρέφω, 31:18).[31] This plea for full restoration to the covenant ("YHWH my God") is grounded in Ephraim's sincere repentance (כִּי/ὅτι): after apostatizing (שׁוב[32]), he was sorry (נחם

30. Lundbom, *Jeremiah 21–36*, 424–25, argues that the "weeping" suggests genuine repentance.

31. A cohortative following an imperative marks purpose or result; so Bruce K. Waltke and M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1989), 577.

32. LXX translates this as αἰχμαλωσία ("captivity"), which William McKane, *Jeremiah: Volume II*,

niphal/μετανοέω) and ashamed (31:19).[33] Therefore, God's resolution to receive Ephraim with compassion (31:20) transcends a mere physical return to the land: it is *ultimately* a repentant return to the covenant.[34] In verses 20–22, Jeremiah underscores the covenantal nature of this restoration by repeatedly using parental imagery in announcing YHWH's twofold call for Israel to "return" (שׁוּב/ἀποστρέφω, v. 21). The subsequent address to the "turning back" (שׁוֹבֵב) daughter in 31:22 reiterates that this "return" ultimately describes far more than physical return to the land, with שׁוֹבֵב also clarifying that "Ephraim" has not yet repented according to the idealization of verses 16–19 (cf. LXX: ἕως πότε ἀποστρέψεις).[35] By creating something "new" (חָדָשָׁה/καινός, v. 22), YHWH will bridge this gap between present reality and future promise with "an utter newness"[36]: repentant restoration to the covenant.[37] Verses 23–25 look forward to this restoration as a time

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ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996), 801, argues is probably an over-translation for what actually describes apostasy.

33. Robert P. Carroll, *The Book of Jeremiah: A Commentary*, OTL (London: SCM, 1986), 599, suggests that Ephraim "appeals to Yahweh to turn him back effectively." Similarly, Lundbom, *Jeremiah 21–36*, 443; and Yates, "Jeremiah's Message," 162.

34. Brueggemann, *To Build, To Plant*, 66: These verses describe "not just a changed venue for Israel (homeland rather than exile), but also a genuine transformation that alters the very character of Israel," which Brueggemann sees described by the "new heart" of Ezek 11:19; 18:31; 36:26, the "new covenant" of Jer 31:31, and the "new name" of Isa 62:2. Similarly, Hubbard, *New Creation*, 25. Christoph Levin, *Die Verheißung des neuen Bundes* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1985), 11–12, even argues that the promise of the new covenant is "das Mittel" of the Old Testament so that it "bildet . . . das Ziel, auf das die Entwicklung der alttestamentlichen Bundestheologie zustrebt."

35. Rightly, Boda, *Severe Mercy*, 248.

36. Brueggemann, *To Build, To Plant*, 65.

37. The meaning of 31:22b is notoriously obscure; however, many scholars believe it describes the moral transformation of Israel: Boda, *Severe Mercy*, 249: "God will give the people the new heart that

when God "renders the restoration" of Judah, who will be then praised for its holiness and righteousness.

Within Jer 30–33, 31:2–26 places the most emphasis on how God's redeemed people will move from sorrow to joy. Mourning their apostasy, the people will repentantly return to God as he receives them into a restored covenant characterized by abundant joy. This repentant sorrow, leading to joy, is something that God must *create* in the face of Israel's persistent faithlessness.

Restoring the Covenant: Jeremiah 31:27–40

Jeremiah 31:27–40 has an "air of conclusion and climax"[38] in relation to 30:1—31:26. YHWH again declares that "days are coming" (31:27) when he will restore Israel by "building" and "planting" instead of judging by "destroying" and "uprooting" (31:28). Specifically, the "days are coming" when God will make a "new covenant" (בְּרִית חֲדָשָׁה/διαθήκη καινή) with Israel and Judah (31:31), echoing his promise to "create" something "new" that would finally overcome backsliding Israel's inability to repent (31:21–22).[39] The covenant is "new" in that a hopelessly sinful people will not break it,

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makes possible this return [31:18b] to God." Allen, *Jeremiah*, 350, suggests: "Israel would be empowered to show initiative as covenant partner." Yates, "Jeremiah's Message," 162–63, argues that the "new" creation is Israel's transformation from "unfaithful prostitute to pure virgin." Similarly, Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 51.

38. Allen, *Jeremiah*, 353.

39. Allen, *Jeremiah*, 355, who also notes that the promise of restoration here rises "to eschatological heights. . . . The promise of a new exodus (16:14–15) is now matched by a new covenant." Likewise, Hans Walter Wolff, "Das Thema 'Umkehr' in der alttestamentlichen Prophetie," *ZTK* 48 (1951): 142: "Mit

as they did the Sinai covenant (31:32). Rather,[40] "after those days" YHWH will make a covenant through which he places his law in their midst (LXX: "in their mind") and writes it on their hearts, so that they can live in a covenant relationship with him: "I will be their God, and they will be my people" (31:33).[41] This return to the Sinai ideal, "which previous generations failed so miserably to achieve,"[42] will revolve around the true knowledge of YHWH by those in the covenant, a relationship grounded (כִּי/אֹתו) in God's forgiveness of their sins (31:34). The heart-circumcision promised to the exiles in Deut 30:6 will become a reality through this new covenant.[43]

To end the oracle, YHWH supports his commitment to Israel's restoration by pointing to his sovereign rule of the natural order (31:35–37). He announces again that "days are coming" when Jerusalem will be rebuilt (31:38). The surrounding valleys will become sacred, never again to be "destroyed" or "uprooted" (cf. 31:28), in sharp

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den Worten von dem neuen Bund, in der Gewißheit, daß Jahwe sich nicht von seinem Volk auf ewig abwendet, ist die Möglichkeit der endlichen Umkehr Israels begründet."

40. Taking the כִּי to mean "but," since it follows a negative clause (see "כי," *HALOT* 2:470).

41. Pointing to 7:22–23; 11:3b–5, Bracke, "Šûb šᵉbût," 238: "In the Book of Jeremiah, this formula expresses the relationship Yahweh desired with his people from the time of the exodus and the giving of the land."

42. Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 614.

43. Boda, *Severe Mercy*, 522; Hans Walter Wolff, "The Kerygma of the Deuteronomic Historical Work," in *The Vitality of Old Testament Traditions*, ed. Walter Brueggemann and Hans Walter Wolff (Atlanta: John Knox, 1982), 98.

contrast to the prior "days [that were] coming" when these valleys had become deathly wastelands (31:40; cf. 7:32; 19:6).

Thus, it is the "new covenant" that reverses Jeremiah's ministry of destruction. Instead of promising death, God now promises a restoration grounded in forgiveness and manifested by his people's knowing and obeying him from the heart.

Restoring the Land as Assurance of the "Everlasting Covenant": Jeremiah 32

God commands Jeremiah, imprisoned by the king of Jerusalem, to buy a field during the Babylonian siege (32:1–12) to signify that people would again buy property there after the exile (32:13–15). In response, Jeremiah prays to YHWH, recalling how he marvelously redeemed the people from Egypt and gave them the land of Canaan (32:20–23a). However, the people broke every one of his commandments and so merited the present Babylonian conquest (32:23b–24). By way of contrast, this perpetual disobedience highlights the graciousness of God's commitment to return his people to the land in the future (32:25). Even so, YHWH responds to Jeremiah by affirming the justice of Israel's current punishment (32:26–35). In particular, the people have refused to repent, "turning" their back instead of their face to God (פנה; ἐπιστρέφω) and so not accepting his earnest instruction (32:33–34). Once again Israel's punishment is grounded in a disobedience driven by a stubborn refusal to repent.

In the face of this unrepentant rebellion, YHWH promises his unilateral redemption of his people from exile (32:36–37) so they can enjoy a restored covenant relationship with him: "They will be my people, and I will be their God" (32:38). Recalling the new covenant promise of 31:33,[44] the basis of this covenant relationship will be God's gift of "one heart and one way"[45] that leads to a constant fear of God (32:39). He promises to make an "everlasting covenant" (בְּרִית עוֹלָם/διαθήκη αἰών)—the "new covenant" of 31:31[46]—in which he will not "turn aside" (שׁוב/ἀποστρέφω) from his people.[47] God will put the fear of him in their hearts so that they will not "turn away" (סור/ἀφίστημι) from him (32:40) as he faithfully restores them to the land—with *his* "whole heart and soul" (cf. Deut 30:6, 10/Jer 24:7)![48]

In sum, God promises to turn toward his people, doing "good" to them by unilaterally giving them a heart to fear him so that they will not "turn away" again (cf.

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44. So Allen, *Jeremiah*, 370, who also notes how this unit "again stresses God's role and so provides a similar answer to the problem of a spiritual bridge that kept breaking down at the human end."

45. LXX: "another heart and another way."

46. So Lundbom, *Jeremiah 21–36*, 519.

47. Holladay, *Root*, 119, notes that in Jeremiah God is often the subject of שׁוב (*qal*), but that this is the only place where God's "turning" toward the people does not depend upon the people's behavior. Preston M. Sprinkle, *Paul and Judaism Revisited: A Study of Divine and Human Agency in Salvation* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2013), 58: "God will *šûb* to Israel before Israel can *šûb* to God."

48. Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 52: "Here an expression reserved to communicate the pinnacle of human responsiveness now describes YHWH's initiative to achieve such responsiveness. Human agency is thereby grounded in divine agency." For an overview of the many connections between Jer 30–33 and Deuteronomy, see Ernest W. Nicholson, *Preaching to the Exiles: A Study of the Prose Tradition in the Book of Jeremiah* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1970), 81–86.

Deut 5:29).[49] Israel's sad history of punishment is rooted in the people's refusal to repent. But in the future YHWH will wholeheartedly make them into an "eternal covenant" people who persist in fearful obedience. It is this restored covenant relationship of repentance and obedience that undergirds the restoration signified by Jeremiah's purchase (32:42–44).

Restoring Rejoicing: Jeremiah 33:1–13

This final section again unites many themes from the preceding few chapters.[50] In an echo of 30:17, YHWH promises to bring wellness and healing to Israel and Judah (33:6), "rendering the restoration" of the people and rebuilding them to their former state (33:7; cf. 31:4, 28). He promises to cleanse them and forgive all their iniquities (33:8)[51] so that the nations will know Jerusalem for its joy, with the nations "fearing and trembling"[52] in the face of God's commitment to provide for his people (33:9). Though God had previously removed gladness and joy from Judah (cf. 7:34; 16:9; 25:10), he

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49. Henk Leene, *Newness in Old Testament Prophecy: An Intertextual Study*, OTS 64 (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 229, notes that in Jeremiah "God himself may have to provide for the inner change of Israel that makes external restoration possible," a *covenantal* change variously described as "a knowing heart (Jer. 24), or as asking for Yhwh with all the heart (Jer. 29), as *torah* written on the heart (Jer. 30–31), or as fear in the heart given by Yhwh himself (Jer. 32). *With the exception of the letter in Jer. 29, the promise is always accompanied by the covenant formula*" (emphasis ours).

50. So Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 634.

51. Cf. 31:34; whereas the MT here has "I will forgive all their iniquities" (וְסָלַחְתִּי לְכָל־עֲוֹנוֹתֵיהֶם), which corresponds to 31:34's אֶסְלַח לַעֲוֹנָם, the LXX instead has "I will not ever remember their sins" (*οὐ μὴ μνησθήσομαι ἁμαρτιῶν αὐτῶν*), which corresponds to 31:34's וּלְחַטָּאתָם לֹא אֶזְכָּר־עוֹד.

52. MT: וּפָחֲדוּ וְרָגְזוּ. LXX has φοβηθήσονται καὶ πικρανθήσονται ("they will fear and be embittered").

promises to restore their sounds (שָׂשׂוֹן/εὐφροσύνη, שִׂמְחָה/χαρμοσύνη) as the people praise God for his goodness in "rendering the restoration" of the land (33:11; cf. 31:4, 13).[53] In short, the people's past "sickness"—which chapters 30–33 repeatedly describe as an intractable refusal to repent—led to their grief, but at this restoration their cleansing and forgiveness by YHWH leads to their joyful worship of him.

Summary of Jeremiah 30–33

YHWH repeatedly uses the announcement, "behold, the days are coming," throughout Jeremiah to declare future periods of both judgment and restoration. The judgment will fall upon Israel *and* the surrounding nations since both are basically "uncircumcised" (9:25–26), with Israel's lack of "heart circumcision" driving its obstinate disobedience and persistent inability to repent (8:4–6). However, the "days are [also] coming" when YHWH will restore a remnant from exile and lead the nations to forsake their idols (16:19–21). This "rebuilding" will reverse Jeremiah's current ministry of destruction (24:6) in that God will fulfill the promises of Deut 30:1–10 by "giving" the people a heart that actually knows him and leads to a restored, "whole-hearted" covenant relationship marked by repentance (24:7).

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53. Allen, *Jeremiah*, 364: Jeremiah 30–33 is "united by the theme of renewed covenant, which is expressed in general terms of hope in chs. 30–31 and in specific expectations of joy in chs. 32–33," pointing to divine joy in 32:41 and human joy in 33:9–11.

In opening Jer 30–33 with "behold, the days are coming," Jeremiah indicates that the "book of consolation" must be understood against this backdrop of rebuilding after demolition. Chapter 30 explains that Israel's restoration to the land will happen alongside YHWH's healing of the people's "incurable" wound (30:12–17). As a result of this healing, God will compassionately restore joy to the people (30:18–19) as he brings them into a covenant with him (30:22 MT; 31:1). While 30:1—31:1 explains that God is the sole author of this restoration, 31:2–26 thus explains how Israel will respond to God's merciful rebuilding (31:4): they will abundantly rejoice (31:4–7) after God leads his mournful children back to the land (31:9) since YHWH will exchange their sorrow for gladness (31:16). The "return" is not merely geographic; most importantly, the people will one day "return" to YHWH in the repentance that characterizes the restored covenant relationship (31:16–20). God's call for a repentant "return" by his backsliding people therefore anticipates his "creation" of something "new" (31:21–22): a truly repentant covenant people.

It is this radical shift from recalcitrance to repentance that characterizes God's "new covenant" with the people in "the days [that] are coming" (31:31). Unlike the breakable Sinai covenant (31:32), this covenant will not be broken by the people because God will unilaterally place his law on their heart so that they will truly know him, the covenant lord whose forgiveness enables this covenant faithfulness (31:33–34).

Jeremiah 32 highlights further aspects of this restoration. In the midst of a siege, Jeremiah's land purchase prefigures Israel's restoration after its just condemnation for total, unrepentant disobedience (32:1–35, esp. 33). God's restoration of the covenant in the land overcomes this stubbornness in that he will give the people a new heart that leads to a fear of him (32:38–39), a fear that he must "put in their hearts" so that they will not leave the God who has first turned toward them (32:40; cf. Deut 30:6).

According to Jer 33:1–13 this "new covenant" implies the unilateral act of YHWH in "rendering the restoration" of Israel (33:7, 11) by healing its wounds (33:6), cleansing its guilt, and forgiving its sins (33:8), so that the repentant people will respond with joy, as the unrepentant people of the Sinai covenant could not (33:9, 11). In sum, Jeremiah promises that YHWH will cut a "new," unbreakable covenant with his people in which they will live in obedience to him. Israel's "second exodus" restoration will only come after God gives the people a heart capable of the repentance they have never known.

Ezekiel 36–37: Divine Transformation as the Root of Shame/Repentance

We now turn our attention to Ezek 36–37[54] since it too has played a pivotal role in Paul's self-understanding as an apostle and in his view of the church as set forth thus far in 2 Corinthians. There are two reasons for focusing on Ezek 36–37. First, recent scholars have recognized Paul's use of it in 2 Cor 3:3–6,[55] which, as argued in our last chapter, underlies Paul's self-defense in 2 Cor 7:2–4. There Paul employed Ezek 11:19; 36:26 LXX and 37:6, 14 to describe both the Corinthians' "fleshly hearts" (καρδία σάρκινος, 3:3)[56] and his role in bringing "the Spirit" who "makes alive" (τὸ πνεῦμα ζωοποιεῖ, 3:6)[57]—that is, Paul's life-giving ministry of the Spirit mediates Ezekiel's

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54. Though the Greek Papyrus 967 (AD 200) lacks Ezek 36:23b–38, we maintain the literary coherence of MT's Ezek 36, as argued by Daniel I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel*, 2 vols., NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997–1998), 2:337–43; Moshe Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21–37*, AB 22A (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 738–40; and Walter Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 2 vols., trans. Ronald E. Clements and James D. Martin, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979–1983), 2:245. Johan Lust, "Ezekiel 36–40 in the Oldest Greek Manuscript," *CBQ* 43/4 (1981): 517–33, argues that the MT version is very late. But see Eibert Tigchelaar, "Notes on the Ezekiel Scroll from Masada (MasEzek)," *RevQ* 22/86 (2005): 275, who critiques Lust's late dating based on a recently published, first-century-AD manuscript from Masada that closely follows the MT version of Ezek 36; similarly, Anja Klein, "Prophecy Continued: Reflections on Innerbiblical Exegesis in the Book of Ezekiel," *VT* 60/4 (2010): 579. We leave aside the related debate about the relative priority of varying texts of Ezekiel.

55. See, e.g., Hafemann, *Suffering and the Spirit*, 215; his *Moses*, 145–48; Hays, *Echoes*, 128–30; Meyer, *End of the Law*, 74–75; Stockhausen, *Veil*, 57; and Wolff, *Zweite Brief*, 60; contra Koch, *Schrift als Zeuge*, 45. See especially the extended discussion of Ezek 36–37, its literary unity, and its role within 2 Cor 3:3–6 by John W. Yates, *The Spirit and Creation in Paul*, WUNT 2/251 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 31–35, 106–24.

56. Cf. MT: לֵב בָּשָׂר. Citations from the LXX follow Joseph Ziegler, *Ezechiel*, 2nd ed., Septuaginta 16 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1977). In general the LXX of Ezekiel follows its *Vorlage* quite literally; differences from the MT are noted where relevant.

57. See Ezek 37:6, 14 LXX: δώσω πνεῦμά μου εἰς ὑμᾶς, καὶ ζήσεσθε (MT: 37:6 has וְנָתַתִּי בָכֶם רוּחַ while 37:14 has וְנָתַתִּי רוּחִי בָכֶם); cf. 36:27 ("And my Spirit I will put within you"); 37:5 (MT: "I am causing רוּחַ

promised "heart transplant." Second, in 6:16, in the immediate context of chapter 7, Paul conflates Lev 26:11 and Ezek 37:27: "I will dwell among them and walk among them, and I will be their God and they will be my people" (6:16).[58] Given this scriptural backdrop, we now examine the two restoration themes in Ezek 36–37 relevant to our study: (1) God's radical transformation of the human heart (cf. 2 Cor 3:3–6) and (2) the people's consequent shame-filled repentance (cf. 2 Cor 7:5–16). In doing so it will become clear that, together with Jeremiah, Ezekiel's promises of transformation and repentance provide a further and complementary conceptual backdrop that illuminates Paul's joyful interpretation of the Corinthians' repentance in 2 Cor 7.

The Source of Transformation: God's Life-Giving Spirit

As the oracle in the second half of Ezek 36 begins, YHWH proclaims his justice in exiling the perpetually sinful people, who continue profaning God's "holy name" in exile (36:16–21). Nevertheless, because of God's concern for his name's holiness—*not*, he says, for the disobedient people!—he promises to restore them in the future (לָכֵן/διὰ τοῦτο, 36:22–23).[59] Namely, he will gather them into the land and cleanse them from

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to enter into you and you will live"; LXX: "I am bringing into you a living πνεῦμα").

58. See, e.g., Beale, "Reconciliation," 570; Scott, "Use of Scripture," 78–82; and Webb, *Returning Home*, 33–40. For a more recent treatment of this passage, see Starling, *Not My People*, 61–106.

59. While the recognition formula ("They/You will know that I am YHWH") in this verse concerns Israel's *deliverance*, most other occurrences concern God's *punishment* of Israel or the nations; see Paul Joyce, *Divine Initiative and Human Response in Ezekiel*, JSOTSup 51 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989), 91.

"all uncleannesses" and "all idols" (36:24–25).[60] Furthermore, God will give them a "new heart" and place within them a "new spirit" (36:26a), a promise similar to Deuteronomy's promise that God would one day "circumcise" the heart of his sinful, exiled people (Deut 30:6).[61] The "new heart" is a "fleshly heart" that replaces their "stony heart" (36:26b), while the "new spirit" is explained as "my Spirit" (36:27a).[62] Ezekiel thus plays with the varied meanings of רוח, which can describe either the human "spirit/mind/self" or the divine "Spirit." Ezekiel's point is that the divine Spirit *recreates* the human spirit: "Yahweh is not simply the *source* of the new spirit; in 36:27 it is *Yahweh's* spirit (רוחי) that will animate and suffuse the people."[63] In other words, Ezekiel describes "the renewal of the moral will [= spirit] of the house of Israel by the outpouring of the dynamic power of Yahweh [= Spirit]."[64]

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60. Cf. Deut 30:4 for the same three verbs of "taking," "gathering," and "bringing." Block, *Ezekiel*, 2:354, convincingly argues that Ezek 36:25–28 builds on Deut 30:6–8, especially its promise of a divinely-circumcised heart that produces obedience, while Klein, "Prophecy Continued," 578–81, argues that Ezek 36:27–28 develops the "new covenant" of Jer 31:31–34: "Though there is no explicit reference to the term 'covenant' (ברית), it is quite clear that this passage is meant to reflect on the question of how the human being has to be constituted if they shall be able to maintain Yhwh's covenant standards" (579). Ezekiel "was convinced that not only a new use of the heart is required [Jer 31:33], but also a complete renewal of the human interior" (581).

61. Boda, *Severe Mercy*, 291–92, 292n73, notes the link between the heart-transformation language of Deut 30:6; Jer 32:39; and Ezek 36:26–27 (see also pp. 515, 522); similarly, Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 53–60. Note also that the "uncircumcised in heart" are forbidden from the eschatological temple (Ezek 44:7, 9; cf. Deut 30:6).

62. Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21–37*, 730: "Vs. 26a is explicated by vss. 26b–27a."

63. Jacqueline E. Lapsley, *Can These Bones Live?: The Problem of the Moral Self in the Book of Ezekiel*, BZAW 301 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2000), 166 (emphasis hers).

64. Joyce, *Divine Initiative*, 111, who also notes that Ezekiel uses "heart" to describe "inner reality as

By this gracious transformation effected by his unilateral gift of Spirit, God "makes" the people obey his statutes and judgments (36:27b).[65] In other words, God "promises as a gift the very thing that Israel had always been unable to muster for herself, namely obedient response to the will of Yahweh."[66] In this way a restored remnant will avoid the condemnation now falling on disobedient Israel.[67] God then promises that the people will again dwell in the land with "their [covenant] God" as "my [covenant] people" (36:28). This land/covenant promise clarifies that this unmerited "heart transplant" is the ultimate foundation for both Israel's *physical* restoration as already described in 36:24 (cf. 34:13–16, 25–29; 36:8–11) and its *covenantal* restoration as already described in 34:25 ("the covenant of peace").[68] This gift of heart and Spirit

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distinct from mere outward appearance" (109)—a prominent theme in 2 Cor (4:16; 5:12, 16; 11:18).

65. MT: . . . וְעָשִׂיתִי אֵת אֲשֶׁר־בְּחֻקַּי תֵּלֵכוּ; LXX underscores the telic logic: καὶ ποιήσω ἵνα ἐν τοῖς δικαιώμασίν μου πορεύησθε . . .

66. Joyce, *Divine Initiative*, 11. He later suggests that the continuity between Israel's responsibility and the redemptive gift of YHWH is "the radically theocentric basis of both" (127).

67. Michael A. Lyons, "Transformation of Law: Ezekiel's Use of the Holiness Code (Leviticus 17–26)," in *Transforming Visions: Transformations of Text, Tradition, and Theology in Ezekiel*, ed. William A. Tooman and Michael A. Lyons (Cambridge: James Clarke, 2010), 23–26, shows how "Ezekiel turns the conditional covenant blessings of Lev 26 into guaranteed covenant blessings in the future" (23): In Ezek 34:25–28 "he has omitted [the Holiness Code's] covenant punishments (Lev 26:14–39) because—as is clear in Ezek 11:20; 36:27; 37:24—the people will be enabled to obey, thus rendering threats superfluous" (25). We have suggested that similar "new covenant" logic underlies Paul's non-condemnatory stance toward the repentant Corinthians (2 Cor 7:3)—they are not under Moses's "ministry of condemnation" (2 Cor 3:9)!

68. Klein, "Prophecy Continued," 580, argues that the restoration promises of Ezek 36:23–32 describe this "covenant of peace," found also in 37:26, and that this "covenant of peace" is equivalent to the "new covenant" of Jer 31:31–34.

also undergirds YHWH's repeated promise to overcome "all your uncleannesses," here described as something from which to be "saved" (36:29; cf. "cleanse you from all your uncleannesses" in 36:25). Only God can save and cleanse Israel; he alone can make her capable of obedience within a restored covenant relationship.

Other Examples of Ezekiel's "New Heart/Spirit" Language

Ezekiel's other two uses of "new heart/spirit" language also emphasize that Israel needs God to transform the people so that they can both repent and obey. As many have noted, Ezekiel's first use of this "new heart/spirit" language in 11:17–20 is very similar to the promises of 36:24–28.[69] After vowing to be a "sanctuary" to the exiles "for a little while" (11:16),[70] YHWH promises that he will transform the people so that they will finally obey him as part of a renewed covenant relationship (11:17–20).[71] Like Ezek

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69. E.g., Frank Hossfeld, *Untersuchungen zu Komposition und Theologie des Ezechielbuches*, FB (Würzburg: Echter, 1977), 336, shows that 36:24–28 follows the structure of 11:17–21: a promise to gather the exiles, cleansing from abominations/idols (11:18: land cleansed; 36:25: people cleansed), the gift of heart and spirit, resulting obedience, and the covenant formula.

70. Or "I have been a little sanctuary to them." Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1:262, describes it as a "priestly variation" of the covenant formula: "This statement . . . cannot be understood without the counterpart of the covenant formulation אהיה להם לאלהים, which follows in v 20. It is a variation of that assertion, which is found nowhere else."

71. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1:263. Similarly, Thomas Renz, *The Rhetorical Function of the Book of Ezekiel*, VTSup 76 (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 112n135: "The purging of the land from idols (v. 18) presupposes a renewed desire and capacity to serve Yahweh." Contra Casey A. Strine, "The Role of Repentance in the Book of Ezekiel: A Second Chance for the Second Generation," *JTS* 63/2 (2012): 488–89, who takes these statements as temporally successive and so argues that, after God's general decision to reverse the exile, humans can choose to repent/obey and thereby secure their own place in the second exodus, which results in their transformation. Against Strine's reading of 11:21, the "waw of succession" is mainly limited to narrative; interpreters cannot assume its presence in a discourse like this (see Joüon §118).

36:26–28, this passage describes how God will transform the people's heart/spirit so that they obey within the context of a renewed covenant relationship.

Ezekiel's second use of "new heart/spirit" language in 18:31 emphasizes Israel's total *inability* to transform herself. Here God has explained that he justly grants life to the righteous and repentant (18:9, 21, 27–28) and death to the wicked and apostate (18:13, 24). The passage emphasizes that unrighteous Israel must therefore repent, as this is the only way a sinful person can "enliven his soul" and escape death (18:27–28; LXX: "guard his soul"). YHWH thus calls for the people to respond appropriately: "Repent and turn from all your transgressions[72] lest iniquity be your stumbling block"[73] (18:30). He then calls Israel to "make *for yourselves* a new heart and a new spirit" (18:31a; וַעֲשׂוּ לָכֶם/ποιήσατε ἑαυτοῖς) and stresses that this transformation is the sole path to (repentant) life by asking, "Why will you die, O house of Israel?" (18:31b).[74]

But is Israel *capable* of "making for itself" this new heart/spirit that brings repentance and therefore life?[75] Ezekiel's broader message argues against it: because

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72. MT: שׁוּבוּ וְהָשִׁיבוּ; LXX: ἐπιστράφητε καὶ ἀποστρέψατε. LXX also has "impieties" (ἀσέβεια) instead of "transgressions" (also in 18:31).

73. Moshe Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20*, AB 22 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 334: the "iniquitous stumbling block" is "impenitence."

74. The MT text of 18:32 also has "turn and live!" (וְהָשִׁיבוּ וְחְיוּ).

75. Cf. Lev 18:5; Deut 30:6. Boda, *Severe Mercy*, 279, notes the inextricable link between the "new heart/spirit" and repentance.

Israel's defiance is intractably melded into its very *nature*,[76] the people are *incapable* of repentance or obedience. *God* must give the new heart and spirit if the people will ever obey (11:19; 36:26). Therefore the command for repentance in 18:30 ironically serves to highlight the fact that Israel *cannot* repent, *cannot* cast away transgressions from itself, and, fundamentally, *cannot* make a new heart and spirit for itself.[77] Without God's dramatic intervention, Israel's deathly fate is sealed because it is totally unable, let alone willing, to repent and obey.[78]

Ezekiel 37 explains more fully how this obedience-creating transformation will happen. In light of Israel's total inability to transform itself, this chapter shows that

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76. Ezek 3:7, 26; 12:2; 20:8, 13, 16, 24, etc.

77. So Joyce, *Divine Initiative*, 35–60, who concludes: "Even where a call to repentance is found (e.g. 14.1-11; 18) it serves primarily as a rhetorical device, underlining the responsibility of Israel for the now inevitable disaster" (77). Similarly, Block, *Ezekiel*, 1:588; Lyons, "Transformation," 26–27; and Preston M. Sprinkle, "Law and Life: Leviticus 18.5 in the Literary Framework of Ezekiel," *JSOT* 31/3 (2007): 281–85. By contrast, Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20*, 341, suggests that God's promise to grant a new heart and spirit (11:19; 36:26) shows that 18:31 actually presumes the "human capacity" to cooperate in his work; similarly, Strine, 490; and Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1:386. Lapsley, *Bones*, 67–107, argues that this is a genuine tension marking a pessimistic shift in Ezekiel's message (and the entire OT tradition) about human capacity for moral change; however, she argues that the divine gift of chs. 11 and 36 ultimately bestows the obedience and repentance described in the more optimistic ch. 18. Boda, *Severe Mercy*, 286, takes a middle position by noting that 18:31 addresses the exiles: "These calls to repentance are not designed to avert the judgment on Jerusalem, which appears to be assured. Instead, they have the exilic community in view, calling those who emerge from the judgment to turn away from the patterns that brought judgment and turn to God in faithfulness. . . . However, this repentance was not a precondition of the restoration, even if the restoration community that is envisioned must be drawn from those who have escaped the destruction and is linked to those who respond to the prophetic message." Still, he agrees that Ezek 36:26–27 "stands in contrast to the call to repentance in Ezek 18:30b–32. . . . The restoration passages no longer trust the people to [make themselves a new heart and a new spirit] but rather envision a divine transformation that will create an internal orientation that will fulfill these external patterns" (291).

78. Renz, *Rhetorical Function*, 112; "Yahweh is not waiting for Israel's response, he is creating it" (113).

Israel's life-through-repentance (18:23, 28, 31–32) must come through a resurrection from the dead: God will send "breath/wind/spirit" to vivify the "dry bones" of slain, hopeless Israel (37:5–6, 9, 11). Speaking to his covenant people (see "my people" in 37:12, 13),[79] God promises to give them life by putting "my Spirit in you" (37:14a; בָּכֶם/εἰς ὑμᾶς).[80] This language is similar to 36:27–28,[81] where YHWH promises to put "my Spirit in your midst" (בְּקִרְבְּכֶם/ἐν ὑμῖν) and so restore the covenant relationship: "You will be my people and I will be your God." Through the vivid imagery of resurrection, Ezekiel again argues that Israel's restored covenant life rides upon God's prior unilateral transformation of the people by the Spirit.

The Result of Transformation: Repentance and Ashamed "Self-Loathing"

As a result of God's promised restoration and transformation, Ezekiel also shows how the people will be "capable of making accurate moral assessments"[82] which, given their abominable disobedience, will lead them to repentant shame. Hence, after describing a future restoration to the covenant and land (36:22–30; see above), YHWH promises that the people will "remember your evil ways, and your deeds that were not good, and you shall be loathsome in your sights for your iniquities and your

79. The LXX lacks "my people" in 37:12, but not in 37:13.

80. Block, *Ezekiel*, 2:382: "This announcement answers the questions concerning the identity of the Spirit that gives life to the bones in the vision."

81. Block, *Ezekiel*, 2:382; Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21–37*, 749.

82. Lapsley, *Bones*, 141.

abominations" (36:31)—that is, they will repent.[83] Moreover, by solemnly restating that he is *not* acting on account of Israel (36:32a; cf. 36:22) God shows that the "shame and self-reproach that the prophet enjoins here cannot be a condition of their restoration."[84] Their repentant self-loathing is the *result* of the transformation promised in 36:25–29: "This arrival at self-knowledge (represented by a sense of shame) is equivalent to the acquisition of a new moral self (made possible by divine action), which is now capable of seeing behavior as it really is, and consequently feeling ashamed."[85] Through her history Israel has been totally *shameless* (Ezek 16:15–43), but here God promises to produce shameful repentance as an essential element of the renewed covenant relationship, created by the transformation of the Spirit. This pairing of repentance, shame, and the Spirit is striking; indeed, in the OT, only Ezekiel pairs remembrance and shame/self-loathing.

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83. So Block, *Ezekiel*, 2:359, and Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1:417. Boda, *Severe Mercy*, 266: "Ezekiel's view of repentance and apostasy was multifaceted and was not restricted to the root שׁוב." He later argues that Ezekiel's language of shame and self-loathing captures this penitential motif (289–90). Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21–37*, 731: "Only after their spiritual recreation in their land will they be capable of remorse over their past evildoing. And when their obduracy will be removed, the memory of their past misconduct will remain, to arouse self-reproach." Here LXX has "for your lawlessnesses and abominations" (עַל עֲוֹנֹתֵיכֶם וְעַל תּוֹעֲבוֹתֵיכֶם vs. ἐν ταῖς ἀνομίαις ὑμῶν καὶ ἐπὶ τοῖς βδελύγμασιν ὑμῶν).

84. Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21–37*, 732. Lyons, "Transformation," 26–27, rightly notes that Ezekiel "never ties his descriptions of restoration to these appeals to repent. . . . Ezekiel [rejects] the possibility that the people might take the initiative to repent." He suggests that the language of shame and self-loathing describes a *response* to God's restoration and not *preconditions* for it, as in the similar-but-distinct language of Lev 26:40–42 ("humble," "confess," "make amends").

85. Lapsley, *Bones*, 130.

Ezekiel similarly pairs remembrance and self-loathing in 6:9 and 20:43. In Ezek 6, God promises to spare some of the Israelites scattered among the nations (6:8), where they will "remember" him and his brokenness "over their whoring heart that turned aside from me and over their eyes that whore after their idols," becoming "loathsome in their sight" for their evil deeds and all their abominations (6:9). God's exilic judgment will lead to sorrow over idolatry, although here there is no clear indication that this repentance derives from God's prior restoration and transformation, as in the context of 36:31.[86]

Ezekiel 20 uses the same restoration language after once again retelling Israel's history of persistent rebellion (20:5–29). Even the exiles are part of "a people incapable of acting [virtuously] in the world and especially in their relations with Yahweh" (20:30–31).[87] The people have constantly revealed their "stony heart" (11:19) through idolatrous rebellion, down to Ezekiel's day. However, God promises that, for the sake of maintaining the glory of his own name as Israel's God, they will never fully become like the idolatrous nations around them (20:32).

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86. Noted by Renz, *Rhetorical Function*, 163. However, Lapsley, *Bones*, 126–42, argues that, because Israel is essentially self-deluded, any true self-knowledge (= shame) derives from God's working "a definitive change in the people's situation" (142), which here is the exile, although she then acknowledges that Ezekiel expected full restoration only *after* the exile.

87. Lapsley, *Bones*, 107.

The next section explains how God will preserve the sanctity of his name by redeeming his people. Echoing exodus language,[88] YHWH swears to "reign over" and gather his scattered people[89] "with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm and wrath poured out" (20:33–34) so that rebels will be purged from the covenant community (20:37–38).[90] In this redeemed future "all the house of Israel" will serve their God, who will "accept them" and their worship (20:40, 41).[91] As we have seen in 6:9 and 36:31, here too the transformed people will repent: "You will remember your ways and all your deeds by which you polluted yourselves, and you will be loathsome in your sight for all the evils you have committed." But unlike 6:9, and in anticipation of 36:31, here

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88. Cf. the "mighty hand" in Exod 13:9; 32:11; the "outstretched arm" in Exod 6:6; and YHWH's kingly reign in Exod 15:18; 19:6. See also Deut 4:34; 5:15; etc. Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20*, 366, on 20:10, 32–34: "The Exodus was not something they sought but was imposed on them for YHWH's own purpose."

89. Paul appears to be quoting Ezek 20:34a (καὶ εἰσδέξομαι ὑμᾶς) in 2 Cor 6:17b: κἀγὼ εἰσδέξομαι ὑμᾶς. See Webb, *Returning Home*, 43–52.

90. The difficulty of 20:37 is compounded by LXX's "in number" (ἐν ἀριθμῷ) instead of "in the bond of the covenant" (בְּמָסֹרֶת הַבְּרִית); Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20*, 372–73, argues that this is due to dittography (cf. 20:38's וּבָרוֹתִי) and that the meaning of v. 37 is: "After sifting the people, God will impose his covenant obligation on those who survive the selection" (Similarly, Block, *Ezekiel*, 1:652).

91. On the two possible meanings of בְּ ("with" vs. "as"), see Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1:417; Block, *Ezekiel*, 1:657n221, argues for "as." Though the Hebrew verbs are different in 20:34 and 40, 41 (קבץ and רצה [2x]), their LXX translations are nearly identical (εἰσδέξομαι ὑμᾶς and προσδέχομαι, προσδέξομαι ὑμᾶς). It is therefore probable that Paul is also alluding to Ezek 20:40, 41 in 2 Cor 6:17b; so Beale, "Reconciliation," 571; and Webb, *Returning Home*, 46–47. Furthermore, Ezek 20:41 says that God will accept the people ἐν ὀσμῇ εὐωδίας. Paul uses both ὀσμή ("aroma") and εὐωδία ("fragrance") to refer to his ministry (2 Cor 2:14–16)—that is, as a cultic aroma, Paul's suffering reveals Christ's sacrifice. Therefore, by citing Ezek 20:41, Paul's call for life as a cleansed temple in 6:14—7:1 may in part be a call to follow in his footsteps—that is, to reject the ἀπίστοι so that the temple-church more fully manifests the knowledge of Christ. Cf. Phil 4:18, where Paul describes the Philippians' gift as ὀσμή εὐωδίας, θυσία δεκτός, εὐάρεστος τῷ θεῷ.

repentance is clearly described within the context of YHWH's ultimate redemption of the people through the restoration of the covenant, which leads to obedient worship.[92] Ezekiel 20:33–44 thus promises that God will overcome Israel's inherent defiance through unilaterally bringing them into the covenant. He moves them from exilic condemnation through repentant grief into acceptable worship and obedience. With Ezekiel's redemptive context of repentant "self-loathing" in view, we see in Ezek 36:22–32 that the restoration of Israel will happen through God's gift of a "new heart" and a "new Spirit," which leads to both shame-filled repentance and obedience.

Other Examples of Ezekiel's Repentance/Shame Language

Ezekiel variously uses the language of repentance and shame in other restoration promises as well. The first occurs after the "dry bones" vision of Ezek 37:1–14, as YHWH promises to "save them from their apostasies" (מְשֻׁבֹתֵיהֶם; 37:23b)—the opposite of repentance.[93] While in 36:29 God promises to "save you from all your uncleannesses," in 37:23 God must save the people from their proclivity to turn away

92. Rolf Rendtorff, "Ez 20 und 36,16ff im Rahmen der Komposition des Buches Ezechiel," in *Ezekiel and his Book*, ed. Johan Lust, BETL 74 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1986), 262–63, argues that 36:16–38 is clearly developing the themes of ch. 20, while the "covenant formula" (36:28) shows that it also develops the themes of 11:17–20.

93. LXX renders this as *ἀνομίαι*, "lawlessnesses." With the great majority of commentators we take מְשֻׁבֹתֵיהֶם to be a superior reading over MT's מוֹשְׁבֹתֵיהֶם ("their dwelling places"), in line with LXX and the overall coherence of the text. Block, *Ezekiel*, 2:407n79, argues that מְשׁוּבָה occurs under the influence of Jeremiah, where it frequently figures in his overall vocabulary of repentance/apostasy (cf. Jer 2:19; 3:6, 8, 11, 12, 22; 5:6; 8:5; 14:7).

from God.[94] But *like* 36:28b–29a, here God both promises to "cleanse" the people and gives the full covenant formula in attestation of this restoration. Therefore, in light of the "heart/Spirit" promises in 36:26–27, 37:23 suggests that Israel's salvation from apostasy, just like its salvation from uncleanness, derives from God's transformative work. Cleanness and repentant faithfulness are two facets of the same future redemption.

In the heavily covenantal conclusion to Ezek 37,[95] God promises to make a "covenant of peace"—an "everlasting covenant"—with the people (37:26).[96] The "everlasting covenant" occurs also in Ezek 16:60, where YHWH twice promises that the people will "remember their ways" and "be ashamed" over their past. Hence, yet again repentance is an essential part of God's restoration of his covenant with Israel.[97] Furthermore, this covenant relationship is enabled by God's ever-present sanctuary among them (מִקְדָּשׁ/τὰ ἅγια): "I will be their God and they will be my people" (37:26–

94. Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21–37*, 756, links God's twofold deliverance from backslidings and impurities as "a promise to cancel guilt and its baneful consequences." Block, *Ezekiel*, 2:414, notes that ישע (*hiphil*) usually describes rescue from external foes, but that, "like 36:29, the present usage envisions the people's sin as the enslaving power."

95. Block, *Ezekiel*, 2:395: "The twofold repetition of the covenant formula in vv. 23b and 27 highlights the center of gravity."

96. On the "covenant of peace," see note 68.

97. In Jer 32:40 the "everlasting covenant" involves the reversal of "turning away" (סוּר; another term for apostasy), while in Jer 50:4–5 it is sought by mournful pilgrims. Thus, in both Jeremiah and Ezekiel, covenant renewal, restoration, grief, and repentance are inextricably linked.

27).[98] In this way God's sanctuary will sanctify Israel (קדשׁ *piel*/ἁγιάζω) and so cause the nations to recognize YHWH (37:28). While in Ezek 36:22–23 the nations' recognition of YHWH is driven by God's sanctifying of *his name*, which was profaned by the disobedient people, here it is driven by God's sanctifying of *his people*, who are repentant, clean, and obedient. Within the "everlasting covenant," the "resurrected" people will receive a new heart and a new Spirit.

Finally, Israel's repentant shame/obedience plays a positive role in Ezekiel's vision of the eschatological temple. In 43:10–11 shame is simultaneously the *result* of "understanding the significance of the temple" and the *prerequisite* for "admittance into its precincts" and obedience to its laws.[99] The same shame, repentance, and obedience of God's restored people that defined the contours of the restored, "everlasting covenant" will therefore also characterize Ezekiel's new temple.

Summary of Ezekiel 36–37

In Ezekiel 36–37 God promises to restore his idolatrous, defiled, and scattered people. He ultimately aims to sanctify his name (36:23) through giving Israel a new, fleshly heart and a new spirit (36:26), vivified by his own Spirit (36:27a). Thus, Israel's

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98. We note again that, in addition to his citation of Ezek 20:34 (and possibly v. 41) in 2 Cor 6:17 (see nn. 89, 91), Paul also cites Ezek 37:27 in 2 Cor 6:16 as part of his explanation that Christians are "the temple of the living God"; see Webb, *Returning Home*, 33–40.

99. Lapsley, *Bones*, 179. LXX translates the shame language in terms of "growing weary" over their sin (κοπάσουσιν ἀπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν αὐτῶν, 43:10) and "receiving their punishment" for all they did (λήμψονται τὴν κόλασιν, 44:11).

perpetual rebellion will turn into obedience (36:27b; 37:24) as part of God's restoration of his covenant with "my people" (36:28; 37:23, 27). As a consequence, the people will repent and feel ashamed of their past evil deeds (36:31–32). Ezekiel's vision of the dry bones emphasizes that this repentant restoration will happen only when God sends his Spirit to vivify his hopeless, stony-hearted people (37:1–14). Israel's lifeless state (37:2) means that the people cannot make themselves "a new heart and a new spirit" (18:31), and therefore, cannot make themselves repent (18:30). Furthermore, Ezek 20 shows that Israel—prone to idolatry through its whole history—is incapable of repentant "self-loathing" (20:43; cf. 36:31) unless God creates a covenant community free from rebellious idolaters (20:37–38). Because the restored people will actually experience shame and self-loathing as the marks of true repentance, they will escape God's condemnation as wayward Israel never could. They will thus be able to enter the eschatological temple (43:10–11) and offer pleasing worship to YHWH (20:40–41) as the holy people of a holy God (36:22; 37:28).

Isaiah 40–55: Salvation and Repentance through the Servant

We have examined Jer 30–33 and Ezek 36–37 as backdrops for understanding 2 Cor 7:2–16. We now turn to Isa 40–55 since it too plays such a prominent role in 2

Corinthians, especially 6:1—7:16.[100] When referring to Isa 40–66 in 2 Corinthians,[101] Paul not only writes in light of Isaiah's broader context,[102] but furthermore, by building his dramatic appeal in 6:2 on Isaiah's "day of salvation" (Isa 49:8), he "is drawing his readers to the conclusion that the present era is the climax of God's salvific eschatological work and *inviting the reader into the larger redemptive drama of Isaiah 40–66*."[103] In other words, Paul reads Isaiah, with particular attention to chapters 40–55, as "a coherent *story*, not merely a grab bag of isolated oracles"[104] and calls the

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100. The literature on Paul's use of Isaiah is vast; see the brief overview of Hays, "Who Has Believed?," 25–49. On Romans, see Wagner, *Heralds*; and on Galatians see Matthew S. Harmon, *She Must and Shall Go Free: Paul's Isaianic Gospel in Galatians*, BZNW 168 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2010). But with regards to 2 Corinthians, Wilk, *Bedeutung*, 403, describes the epistle (esp. 3:4—7:16), in terms of the apostle's self-understanding, as "das eigentliche Zentrum der paulinischen Nutzung des Jesajabuches"; see also Wilk, "Isaiah in 1 and 2 Corinthians," in *Isaiah in the New Testament*, ed. Steve Moyise and Maarten J. J. Menken, NTSI (London: T&T Clark, 2005), 133–58, who limits his study to specific citations, allusions, and echoes. See the more broadly thematic study on 5:14—6:10 by Gignilliat, *Paul*. Along similar lines, but with a different conclusion on the identity of Isaiah's servant(s), see Beale, "Reconciliation," 550–81. On Isaiah in 6:14—7:1, see Webb, *Returning Home*, 40–43, 52–58; and, more recently, Starling, *Not My People*, 61–106.

101. Formal citations: 2 Cor 6:2 (Isa 49:8); 6:17 (Isa 52:11); 9:10 (Isa 55:10); probable allusions (per NA[28]): 5:17 (Isa 43:18); 6:18 (Isa 43:6); 7:6 (Isa 49:13). Wilk, "Isaiah," 147–55, argues for additional allusions in 2 Cor 4:6 (Isa 9:1[2]); 4:11 (Isa 53:12); and 5:17 (Isa 42:9; 48:3, 6–7).

102. The detailed study of Wilk, *Bedeutung*, 265, concludes, "Paulus führt Jesajazitate niemals ohne gleichzeitige Bezüge auf den jeweiligen Kontext an; in aller Regel spiegelt das paulinsche Umfeld diesen Kontext mehrfach wider."

103. Gignilliat, *Paul*, 60 (emphasis ours). Similarly, Starling, *Not My People*, 99, who agrees that Paul offers 6:2 as a "hermeneutical key," but argues that it primarily "unlocks" 6:1—7:16, against Gignilliat's argument that it primarily explains 5:14–21.

104. Hays, "Who Has Believed?," 48 (emphasis his); "Paul is not just randomly proof-texting in his allusions to Isaiah but . . . Isa 40–55 is fundamentally formative for his understanding of what God is doing in the world through the proclamation of the gospel: God is revealing his eschatological righteousness, ending the exile of his people, and bringing the Gentiles to see and understand" (38, 40). Wilk, "Isaiah," 133, notes that, beyond specific citations/allusions/echoes, "the language of Isaiah occurs frequently in Paul's writings, both in significant theological vocabulary and in particular phrases, and Isaianic motifs [conceptual connections without verbal links] probably constitute the background of

Corinthians to live in light of it, especially as it details how the servant—Jesus—overcomes the people's hardheartedness through his suffering and obedience in order to make them truly repentant and obedient.[105] However, because space does not permit an exhaustive study of Isa 40–55, we will focus on Isa 49:1—52:12, since Paul repeatedly draws from it in the near context of 2 Cor 7.[106] We will then examine Isaiah's explicit calls to repentance on either side of this passage (44:21–22; 45:22; 55:6–7) in order to understand how Isa 40–55 links the servant's mission to Isaiah's promises of restoration and calls for repentance.[107] We will thus illuminate Paul's joyful, comforted response to the Corinthians' grief and repentance in view of this backdrop of scriptural concepts and expectations.

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several Pauline concepts."

105. Wilk, "Isaiah," 158: "The Isaianic references in his first and second letters to the Corinthians form an interpretative network that centres on Isaiah's prophecy of Christ but is based on the prophecy of Paul's calling." See below for more on the relationship between Paul and the Isaianic servant.

106. I.e., 2 Cor 6:2 (Isa 49:8); 6:17 (Isa 52:11); 7:6 (Isa 49:13). For the sake of space we leave aside a close study of the "suffering servant" passage (Isa 52:13—53:12), although we find convincing the argument of Gignilliat, *Paul*, 90–106, that 2 Cor 5:14–21 heavily relies on it.

107. We do not examine in detail the many other repentance-related passages within the larger context of Isaiah (cf. 1:16, 27; 2:20; 6:10; 9:13; 19:22; 29:24; 30:15; 31:6; 38; 59:20; 63:15—64:12; 66:2, 5), but we note those that are especially helpful.

Isaiah 49:1—52:12: From Mournful Judgment to Joyful Salvation[108]

Isaiah 49:1–12 is the second of the so-called "Servant Songs,"[109] in which the "servant"[110] recounts his commission by YHWH, not only to "return Israel to him"

108. Again, LXX citations come from Joseph Ziegler, *Isaias*, 3rd ed., Septuaginta 14 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1983). We note significant differences between the OG and MT where relevant, but, as our study focuses more on Isaianic themes/motifs than on specific citations, we concentrate on what the MT and LXX traditions share in common.

109. Though there is some debate over its exact endpoint. For the other so-called Songs, see 42:1–4; 50:4–9; 52:13—53:12. Beginning in Isa 49 the individualized servant is somehow distinct from "corporate" Israel (see 49:6); Boda, *Severe Mercy*, 206: "The servant is identified as one within Israel who will minister to Israel and on Israel's behalf." John Goldingay and David Payne, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Isaiah 40–55*, 2 vols., ICC (London: T&T Clark, 2006), 1:19: Largely because of the shift from a corporate to an individual servant, "interpreters have long made a distinction between chapters 40–48 and 49–55"; furthermore, regarding the first "Servant Song" (42:1–4), they say: "We can already work out that this servant [i.e., Israel] is in no position to do any such thing. . . . Rebels since birth, they have never been inclined to trust in Yhwh rather than in images (48.1–11)" (1:52); similarly, they note how in 52:13—53:12 "the stress on the servant's submission to Yhwh makes clear this is no description of Jacob–Israel as it is" (1:55). Elsewhere, Goldingay, *The Message of Isaiah 40–55: A Literary-Theological Commentary* (London: T&T Clark, 2005), 339, notes that Isa 40–48 concludes by describing Israel as "the principal obstacle to the new exodus"; similarly, Watts, "Consolation or Confrontation?," 31–59. Brevard S. Childs, *Isaiah: A Commentary*, OTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 382, makes a similar point but cautions against sharply bifurcating between the "corporate" servant of 42:1–9 and the "individual" servant of Isa 49:1–6. On the importance of reading these "Songs" within the broader literary context of Isaiah, see Christopher R. Seitz, "'You Are My Servant, You Are the Israel in Whom I Will Be Glorified': The Servant Songs and the Effect of Literary Context in Isaiah," *CTJ* 39 (2004): 117–24.

110. The precise identity of the servant, whether within Isaiah's original context or Paul's theological framework, is of course hotly debated, but largely does not directly relate to this project. We note, however, that Paul clearly understands his own apostolic mission in terms of the mission of the Isaianic servant (Isa 49:8 quoted in 2 Cor 6:2); note also the allusion to Isa 49:1 in Gal 1:15, on which, see J. Ross Wagner, "Isaiah in Romans and Galatians," in *Isaiah in the New Testament*, ed. Steve Moyise and Maarten J. J. Menken, NTSI (London: T&T Clark, 2005), 130–32. Paul obviously understands his apostolate to further the vocation of Isaiah's promised servant—Jesus—in the present eschatological "day of salvation" (2 Cor 6:2), whether we understand Paul to conceive of himself as, in some sense, *the* servant (so, e.g., Beale, "Reconciliation," 562; cf. Wilk, "Isaiah," 155–58), or as merely one of the "servants of the servant [= Christ]" (cf. Isa 54:17; 56:6; so Gignilliat, *Paul*, 132–42).

(49:5),[111] but even to be a "light to the nations" so that "my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth" (49:6).[112] The servant will bring YHWH's salvation to all nations, not only to hard-hearted Israel.[113] He is able to do this because God "answers" him in a "time of favor" and "helps" him in a "day of salvation" (49:8a). Specifically, YHWH accomplishes this salvation by making the servant a "covenant to the people" (49:8b; LXX has a plural: ἔθνη)—that is, the servant is the means by which God and his people will live in relationship with one another.[114] God promises to use the servant in this way to gather his oppressed, lost people (49:9) and succor them because (כִּי),[115] as the one

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111. Goldingay, *Message*, 372, here takes שׁוב (*polel*; LXX: συνάγω) to mean what it does in 44:22, where YHWH calls Israel to *repent* (see below), i.e., what Isaiah's ministry was originally meant to prevent (6:10)! Thus the servant does not merely restore Israel to the land, but, more fundamentally, to covenant relationship with YHWH (49:8); similarly, Klaus Baltzer, *Deutero-Isaiah: A Commentary on Isaiah 40–55*, trans. Margaret Kohl, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001), 309. Cf. the similar use of שׁוב *hiphil*/ἐπιστρέφω in 49:6.

112. MT; LXX personifies "my salvation" as the servant himself: "τοῦ εἶναί σε εἰς σωτηρίαν unto the end of the earth." Εἰς σωτηρίαν also occurs in Isa 12:2 and 63:8; both describe what God "becomes" (γίνομαι) for his people in showing them ἔλεος.

113. Cf. 42:19–20, 25; 48:1–5. Goldingay and Payne, *Isaiah 40–55*, 2:116, note that chapter 48 "says little that is new but brings to a climax a stress on two contrasting certainties, God's purpose for Jacob–Israel and Jacob–Israel's obstinacy. The tension stands within chapter 48; its resolution will come only with chapter 49." Blaženka Scheuer, *The Return of YHWH: The Tension between Deliverance and Repentance in Isaiah 40–55*, BZAW 377 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2008), 58, points out that this hard-heartedness extends beyond Judah: "Nowhere in the corpus does [Isaiah], in any way, refer to any change of attitude in the generation of the exile." The servant's overcoming of Israel's hard-heartedness is a major theme in Isa 40–55; see Torsten Uhlig, *The Theme of Hardening in the Book of Isaiah*, FAT 2/39 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 144–248.

114. John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40–66*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 298.

115. LXX has ἀλλά, taking the כִּי as adversative (Joüon §172c). Aquila adjusts to the causal ὅτι.

who shows mercy to them (רחם/ἐλεέω), God leads them (49:10b).[116] The unit ends with a call for the heavens, earth, and mountain to rejoice and exult[117] because (כִּי/ὅτι) YHWH comforts his people and shows compassion to his humiliated ones (עָנִי/ταπεινός, 49:13).[118] By bringing comfort to God's humiliated people, the servant fulfills the double imperative of Isa 40:1: "Comfort, comfort my people!"[119]

Though God has vowed to redeem his people, they remain despondent (49:14). In response, God compares himself to a mother who naturally has compassion (רחם/ἐλεέω) on her children (49:15). He then promises to gather Zion's children as a vast multitude, a people so numerous they can hardly dwell together in one place (49:16–

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116. LXX here has "comforts" (παρακαλέω) instead of "leads" (נהג), perhaps as a reflection of the close relationship between נחם/παρακαλέω and רחם/ἐλεέω in 49:13 and the translator's larger tendency to emphasize παράκλησις (cf. Isa 40:1–2); so Bieringer, "Comfort, Comfort," 64–68.

117. Joy language: רנן/εὐφραίνω, גיל/ἀγαλλιάομαι, and רִנָּה/εὐφροσύνη.

118. This is the first occurrence of נחם since 40:1. As noted above, נחם/παρακαλέω and רחם/ἐλεέω are closely related in Isaiah, as seen by the way that LXX here purposefully exchanges the verbs (but not their objects); so Bieringer, "Comfort, Comfort," 64, who also notes that in Isaiah "the meaning of נחם comes close to strengthen, help, have mercy, save and rescue" (69), such that the translator faithfully interprets Isaiah in overlapping παρακαλέω and ἐλεέω. Paul uses this verse in 2 Cor 7:6 to describe his own comfort (ὁ παρακαλῶν τοὺς ταπεινοὺς παρεκάλεσεν ἡμᾶς ὁ θεός) in the context of explaining, as here, the basis of his joy (7:4). Note also that Paul starts 2 Cor by blessing God as the ὁ πατὴρ τῶν οἰκτιρμῶν καὶ θεὸς πάσης παρακλήσεως (2 Cor 1:3; cf. Phil 2:1). Οἰκτιρ* is unusual in the NT, but closely relates to the common ἐλε* (see L&N 88.76–81). LXX Isaiah uses οἰκτιρ* only in Isa 27:11; 30:18; 63:15—all describe God and closely parallel ἐλε*. Similarly, Exod 33:19 (cited in Rom 9:15) has ἐλεήσω and οἰκτίρω in parallel. Therefore it appears that Paul's link between God's mercy (οἰκτιρμός ↔ ἔλεος) and God's παράκλησις (2 Cor 1:3) most likely derives from Isaiah. No verse in the LXX uses both οἰκτιρ* and παρακαλ*. Barnett, *2 Corinthians*, 69–70, however, argues that the language (but not this exact formula) derives from synagogal liturgy.

119. So Goldingay and Payne, *Isaiah 40–55*, 2:178. In 40:2, LXX adds an extra imperative (παρακαλέσατε αὐτήν) and interprets their fulfilled "service" (צָבָא) as fulfilled "humiliation" (ταπείνωσις, cf. Isa 49:13; 2 Cor 7:6). On the way LXX emphasizes παράκλησις, see notes 116 and 118.

22).[120] By redeeming his scattered people, YHWH will remove Zion's shame (49:23). In this coming restoration God will "rescue" (ישׁע/ῥύομαι, 49:25) Zion's oppressed children by inflicting judgment upon their enemies such that "all flesh" will recognize him as "YHWH your savior" (מוֹשִׁיעַ/ὁ ῥυσάμενος, 49:26). In the past God justly punished Israel (40:2; 42:24), but in the future he will both deliver Israel and turn his wrath toward the people's foes.

Isaiah 50 elucidates this redemption and the relationship between the servant and God's people. God reminds the people that their own sin brought his judgment upon them (50:1), but that he alone is capable of redeeming and delivering them (פָּדוּת/ῥύομαι, נצל/ἐξαιρέω, 50:2). Here too YHWH will do this through the servant, who appears again in 50:4–9.[121] The servant, unlike deaf, defiant Israel, heeds YHWH's instruction and submits to his will (50:4–5).[122] Taking up God's promise to "help" him from 49:8 (עזר/βοηθέω), the servant declares that YHWH is his "helper" (עזר/βοηθός, 50:7a; cf. 50:9). Consequently (עַל־כֵּן/διὰ τοῦτο) the servant recognizes that, in spite of being "shamed" in

120. Beale, "Reconciliation," 577, suggests that Isa 49:19–20 LXX, in which the restored are described as "cramped" for space (στενοχωρέω, στενός), lies behind 2 Cor 6:11–13 (στενοχωρέω, 2x). He also suggests that the "sons and daughters" language of 2 Cor 6:18 comes from the restoration promises of Isa 49:22; 60:4.

121. Childs, *Isaiah*, 394: "Although the term *servant* is not used in vv. 4–9, the larger context, before and after, removes any possible doubt that the speaker is the servant" (italics his).

122. Isa 42:18–20; 48:8–9. Goldingay, *Message*, 399–400, notes that this "Servant Song," like that in 49:1–12, immediately follows a confrontational account of Israel's sinfulness. Similarly, Christopher R. Seitz, "The Book of Isaiah 40–66," in *The New Interpreter's Bible Volume 6* (Nashville: Abindgon, 2001), 437; Watts, "Consolation or Confrontation?," 53.

the past (כְּלִמָּה/αἰσχύνη, 50:6), he was not truly "shamed" (כלם perf./ἐντρέπω aor.) and that he will never be ashamed (בוש imperf./αἰσχύνω aor.;[123] 50:7). In other words, both the servant and, consequently, Zion escape shame through God's saving help (cf. 49:23; 50:8–9).[124] In response the people must "fear YHWH" and "heed the voice of his servant" by "trusting on" YHWH's name and "leaning upon" him, just as the servant has done (50:10).[125] In contrast, those opposed to God and his people—"lighting" and "walking by" their own fires, that is, not trusting upon God (cf. v. 10)[126]—will experience judgment in the form of "torment"/"sorrow" (מַעֲצֵבָה/λύπη, 50:11). In sum, this chapter explains how the compliant, obedient servant receives YHWH's help/salvation and confidently escapes shame. Consequently he shows God's people how to enjoy the same help/salvation: through fearing and trusting upon YHWH so that they escape his grievous judgment.

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123. LXX here has the emphatic οὐ μὴ + aorist subjunctive.

124. Of course 2 Cor revolves around Paul's resolve to escape shame (2 Cor 10:8) through mutual boasting in/from the Corinthians (2 Cor 7:4, 14; cf. 2 Cor 1:12; 5:12; 8:24; etc.).

125. In retrospect, Paul sees that his despair in Asia led him to "trust on . . . the God who is raising the dead" (πεποιθότες . . . ἐπὶ τῷ θεῷ, 2 Cor 1:9), i.e., the "rescuing one" (ῥύομαι, 3x in 1:10). This is the only place where Paul speaks of πεποιθότες ἐπὶ God; the two other uses of πείθω + ἐπί describe Paul's confidence in his readers (2 Cor 2:3; cf. 2 Thess 3:4). See Isa 8:13–14 LXX, where the translator explicitly makes a connection between "trusting on" (πείθω + ἐπί) and fearing God (φόβος). Isaiah LXX makes the connection between "trusting on" God and his salvation/rescue in 10:20; 12:2; 33:2; and 58:14. Alternatively, Isaiah connects "trusting on" something *besides* God (idols, foreign powers, etc.) and God's judgment in 10:20; 17:8; 20:5; 30:3, 12, 15 (where repentance is the recognition of misplaced trust); 31:1; 32:3; 42:17; and 59:4.

126. Seitz, "Isaiah 40–66," 438.

Isaiah 51 returns to the restoration themes of comfort and joy, keeping them in the context of God's coming salvation. God calls those who "seek righteousness" to remember how he blessed their father Abraham by making him fruitful (51:1–2); in the same way God comforts Zion and her desolate places (51:3a). As in 49:10, 13, here in 51:3b God's saving comfort leads to "joy and gladness."[127] YHWH then grounds these promises of comfort and joy in his imminent and unstoppable righteousness and salvation (51:4–8). Because YHWH will certainly work salvation through the servant, God's comforted people—those "in whose heart is my law"[128]—must not fear those who oppose them (51:7). For while they can expect God's "righteousness" and "salvation," their opponents will experience only his judgment (51:6, 8).

These motifs of comfort, joy, salvation, and judgment relate similarly through the rest of the chapter. The redeemed will "return" to Zion (שׁוב)[129] with such great joy that their sorrow and grief will "flee away" (51:11; = 35:10). The verse bursts with the language of both joy (רִנָּה/εὐφροσύνη + ἀγαλλίαμα, שִׂמְחָה/ἀγαλλίασις, שָׂשׂוֹן + שִׂמְחָה/εὐφροσύνη) and grief (יָגוֹן/ὀδύνη, אֲנָחָה/λύπη + στεναγμός). Immediately after this promise of joy, God emphatically announces that "I, I am the one who comforts you" (נחם/

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127. שָׂשׂוֹן וְשִׂמְחָה/εὐφροσύνην καὶ ἀγαλλίαμα

128. Goldingay, *Message*, 428, here suggests a connection with the "new covenant" of Jer 31:33 (cf. Isa 54:13); likewise, Seitz, "Isaiah 40–66," 448.

129. Goldingay, *Message*, 435, again pointing to the call for repentance in 44:22, notes that "returning" to Zion cannot be divorced from repentant "returning" to YHWH.

παρακαλέω, 51:12). Once again Isaiah roots the people's joy in God's salvific comfort (cf. 49:13; 51:3). God next restates his promise to rescue his people by judging their oppressors (51:13–16). The rest of the chapter expands on this promise to transfer his judgment from Zion to its enemies. The people have experienced YHWH's wrath such that they have no comforters or consolers (51:18–19)[130] and so are "afflicted" (עָנִי/ὁ ταπεινῶν, 51:21).[131] But God promises to take the "cup of wrath" from Zion's lips and place it into the hands of those who tormented it (51:22–23).[132] When God saves his afflicted people, he will comfort them by turning his wrath away from them and toward their enemies.

Isaiah 52:7–12 similarly depicts the interrelationship between salvation, joy, and comfort, while also closing with a call to separate from what is unclean. The prophet anticipates those who announce the news of "peace" and "salvation" through the rule of YHWH (52:7).[133] Zion's watchmen rejoice (רנן/εὐφραίνω) "at the return of YHWH to Zion," which the LXX interprets as, "when the Lord shows mercy (ἐλεέω) to Zion"

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130. In 51:18, LXX translates נהל (to guide, lead) as παρακαλέω, as in Isaiah's two other occurrences of נהל; see note 116. In 51:19 we find נוד/συλλυπέομαι (cf. the negative uses of λυπή in 50:11; 51:11) and נחם/παρακαλέω.

131. Cf. 49:12–13, where YHWH's comfort for his afflicted people is the basis for creation's joy (cf. 2 Cor 7:6).

132. In 51:23, LXX translates "tormenters" (יגה) with both ἀδικέω and ταπεινόω. See the use of the latter in 51:21.

133. LXX twice has εὐαγγελίζω. In Rom 10:15 Paul cites 52:7 to describe the proclamation of Christ's lordship.

(52:8). As noted above, the LXX rightly understands that Isaiah closely links "mercy" (ἐλεέω) and "comfort" (παρακαλέω, cf. Isa 49:10, 13); accordingly, the LXX interprets this "good news" of salvation as God's ἔλεος for his afflicted people. This fits with the following verse, which commands Jerusalem to rejoice (רנן/εὐφροσύνη) because of God's comfort/mercy (נחם/ἐλεέω), as seen in the "redemption"/"rescue" of Jerusalem (גאל/ῥύομαι, 52:9) that reveals his "salvation" (52:10).[134] In light of this comfort and salvation God's people must depart from their unclean place of exile (52:11–12).[135]

In sum, in Isa 49:1—52:12 the obedient servant receives YHWH's help and salvation so that he can provide them for God's scattered people. On top of this, the servant will bring YHWH's salvation to all the "nations." These redemptive acts are frequently described in terms of "comfort" and "mercy." Because God's people will thus be saved from his judgment, which is redirected at their oppressors, their affliction and grief will turn to comfort and joy.[136]

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134. See note 118 on how Paul begins 2 Cor by linking God's comfort, mercy, and rescue. In light of the presence of σωτηρία in 52:10, we note that Paul there also views his own παράκλησις as a conduit of the Corinthians' παράκλησις καί σωτηρία (2 Cor 1:6).

135. Paul slightly adapts 52:11 in 2 Cor 6:17.

136. Of course these motifs appear elsewhere in Isa 40–55: comfort: 40:1–2, 11; 41:27; salvation: 40:5; 41:10; 42:22; 43:1, 11–12; 45:8, 15–17, 20–22, 25; 46:4, 8, 12–13; 48:20; joy: 41:16; 42:11; 44:23; 48:20–21.

Isaiah 55:3–7: The Call to Repentance

Isaiah 40–55 ends with a climactic call for the people to repent in order to experience the salvation/comfort announced by the prophet through the servant. This call appropriately follows the final "servant song," since the song is rife with language about the people's sin.[137] By bearing their sin, the suffering servant is able to save a people whom Isa 40–48 characterizes as deaf, blind, and idolatrous.[138] The servant will

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137. פֶּשַׁע/ἀνομία: 53:5, 8, 12; עָוֹן/ἁμαρτία: 53:5, 6, 11; אָשָׁם/περὶ ἁμαρτίας: 53:10; חֵטְא/ἁμαρτία: 53:12. Goldingay, *Message*, 556, notes that repentance is only possible because the servant has produced moral transformation (53:5).

138. E.g., 42:18–20, 24; 45:20; 48:8. Oswalt, *Isaiah 40–66*, 434, notes how the grim confrontation of ch. 48 become the hopeful exhortation of ch. 55 in light of the servant's *accomplished* salvation in chs. 49–53; similarly, Gignilliat, *Paul*, 86; and Seitz, "Isaiah 40–66," 460, who sees this repentance as the activity of the faithful servants described in chs. 56–66. Elsewhere, Oswalt, *Isaiah 40–66*, 10, notes the climactic role of the fourth "servant song" in accomplishing this salvation as described in the covenant promises of 54:10; 55:3: "This is not potential salvation, but salvation assured, an assurance not found before ch. 53" (10); "[49:1—52:12] encourages the people to anticipate salvation, while [54:1—55:13] is a call to participate in it. 52:13–53:12 provides a clear hinge between these two sections" (15). Similarly, Seitz, "Isaiah 40–66," 460, calls 52:13—53:12 "the decisive boundary line in the larger discourse (chaps. 40–66), as the text moves from the achievement of the servant (40:1–52:11) to the work of the servants (54:1–66:24), which is an elaboration and ramification of that prior legacy"; he later explains how the "exaltation" of the servant, as described 52:13—53:12, "brings about what God had promised before Zion in chap. 40—brought to initial form in the commissioning of servant Israel in chap. 42, transferred to the profound mystery of the individual servant's vocation in chap. 49, and here brought to its final elevated purpose. . . . By this purpose Zion and the servants are comforted and cleansed of all iniquity and uncleanness, and the nations bear witness to this action in fulfillment of the promises uttered thus far in the discourse" (463). He repeatedly argues that the servant does not merely make salvation *possible* or *evident*, but rather *effective*: "Everywhere the text speaks of God's granting insight into the work of the servant, which points to God's authority over the 'prospering' of the 'power' or 'capacity' of what the servant has done, both for Israel and finally for the nations. . . . This prospering is to do with the accounting as right of many by virtue of the work of the one righteous servant. . . . The servant is bringing to completion the 'salvation plan of the LORD' and in that is his 'reward'" (467–68). Hans-Jürgen Hermisson, "Das vierte Gottesknechtlied im deuterojesajanischen Kontext," in *Der leidende Gottesknecht: Jesaja 53 und seine Wirkungsgeschichte*, ed. Bernd Janowski and Peter Stuhlmacher, FAT 14 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1996), 20, describes how Isaiah (esp. this fourth "Servant Song") complements and transcends Jeremiah's "new covenant" promise of moral transformation: this transformation is "nicht mehr nur eine zukünftige Wandlung des Menschen oder eine kommende Gestalt

deliver the people from their sin, which, as seen in Isaiah 54, has made them like a deserted and grieved wife (54:6), an afflicted people without comfort (54:11).

Subsequently, Isa 55:3–7 calls the people to respond to the suffering of the servant by repenting from the sins that required it.[139] Specifically, YHWH calls the people to "incline your ear," "come to me," "hear" and thus live (55:3a)—in contrast to their previous inability to hear or understand, an inability that God promises to reverse through the servant.[140] YHWH also promises to extend to them his "everlasting covenant" with David (55:3b) by similarly making them glorious among the nations (55:4–5).[141]

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oder ein noch ausstehendes Gotteshandeln an Israel. Sondern es ist das Leiden und das Todesgeschick eines gegenwärtigen Gottesbotten, an dem Israel zur Erkenntnis und zum Glauben kommen soll." Contra Scheuer, *Return of YHWH*, 59, 73–74, who, by overlooking the servant's role in overcoming Israel's hard-heartedness, tends to overplay the role of human response and freedom in Isa 40–55 (even while acknowledging their "unreliability . . . rebellion, and . . . inclination toward other gods"; p. 55).

139. Oswalt, *Isaiah 40–66*, 414, notes that both 49:1–13 and 52:13—55:13 begin with the servant accomplishing salvation (49:1–12; 52:13—53:12) and end with the people responding to it (49:13; 54:1—55:13): "Thus we have in 52:13–55:13 an amplification of the same theme that was introduced in [49:1–12]."

140. Cf. Deut 30:6 with Deut 29:18; 31:21. As Boda, *Severe Mercy*, 196, notes, God originally commissioned Isaiah to elicit this hard-hearted deafness (6:9–10); note the contrasting uses of שִׁמְעוּ שָׁמוֹעַ in 6:9 and 55:2, and also the new reality of a people who properly respond to and understand God's servant in 52:15; 53:4–6, 10–11, in sharp contrast to Israel's previous inability to understand or accept what God is doing (e.g., 42:18–25). Likewise, in 30:15 YHWH declares that Israel is *unwilling* to repent and so be saved. For a defense that שׁוּבָה in 30:15 means "repentance" (toward YHWH), see G. C. I. Wong, "Faith and Works in Isaiah XXX 15," *VT* 47/2 (1997): 236–46 (LXX has ἀποστρέφω, while Symmachus has μετάνοια). See also Watts, "Consolation or Confrontation?," 31–59, who argues that Isa 40–55 revolves around this reversal of Israel's misunderstanding of God's work.

141. Oswalt, *Isaiah 40–66*, 439, suggests that v. 5 primarily addresses the servant/Messiah, but secondarily the restored people of Israel who share in his glory. Similarly, Goldingay, *Message*, 466: "In ch. 55 David's people will come to share in Yhwh's covenant commitment to him." He also links Isaiah's promise that Zion's "children will be taught by YHWH" (54:13) with the transformation promised in Jer

The following verses reiterate that the people must repent to enjoy this covenant,[142] which mediates the comfort, salvation, and joy announced in Isa 49–52. Put positively, the people must "seek YHWH" and "call upon him" (55:6). In 55:7 Isaiah commands the wicked (רָשָׁע/ἀσεβής) to forsake his ways and the iniquitous man (אָוֶן/ἄνομος) his plans.[143] He is to "return" (שׁוּב/ἐπιστρέφω) to YHWH—that is, repent (Symmachus has μετανοέω). The wicked people must repent *in order that*[144] YHWH might have mercy (רחם/ἐλεέω), a concept which of course widely overlaps with salvation and comfort. God's mercy is the *purpose* of repentance,[145] but the next, parallel clause gives the *ground* for repentance:[146] God's abundant forgiveness, which results from the suffering servant's task described in 52:13—53:12.[147] God's people should therefore repent because they can expect God to forgive their sins through the servant.[148]

31:31–34 and Ezek 36:26–27 (538).

142. Oswalt, *Isaiah 40–66*, 10: Isa 40–55 "culminates in the great invitation to participate in a renewal of the covenant."

143. Goldingay, *Message*, 551, notes that the servant has already identified with the "wicked" in 53:9.

144. Purpose, expressed by the linked volitive verbs (jussive + jussive); see Joüon §168b. (LXX translates as an aorist imperative + καί + future indicative.)

145. Goldingay, *Message*, 551, notes that Isaiah roots this call to experience YHWH's mercy in "an already actual availability and nearness" (55:6)—i.e., this is no bare condition that simply grounds God's mercy in human decision.

146. כִּי/ὅτι. Goldingay, *Message*, 552–53: "God's forgiveness . . . is both the basis for turning and the response to turning."

147. So Oswalt, *Isaiah 40–66*, 444. Recognized by LXX in that it adds τὰς ἁμαρτίας ὑμῶν to "he will forgive" (55:7); ἁμαρτία last occurred—seven times!—in 53:5–12.

148. Rightly, Scheuer, *Return of YHWH*, 74: "YHWH does not forgive because a person returns, but

When God forgives them, they will escape his judgment against them, while also receiving the comfort, salvation, and joy worked through his servant. Isaiah 40 began by calling for comfort for God's afflicted people; therefore it is fitting that, as a result of how the servant has brought this comfort, Isaiah 55 ends with the people's abundant joy, now joined to a redeemed creation's joy.[149]

Other Calls to Repentance: Isaiah 44:21–22 and 45:22

We will briefly examine the two other calls to repentance in Isa 40–55. In the broader context of the first (44:21–22), YHWH confronts sinful Israel for actively opposing the one true God (43:22–24), even though he announces "a new thing" (43:18–19) and offers forgiveness (43:25). YHWH then denounces Israel for its idolatry, which expresses the people's fundamental ignorance, delusion, blindness, and hard-heartedness (44:18–20; cf. 42:18–25). Consequently YHWH calls them to repent. He first calls Jacob and Israel to "remember these things"—that is, to respond appropriately to YHWH the creator with exclusive worship and obedience (44:6–8; cf. 43:8–13).[150]

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a person is urged to come back to YHWH because YHWH forgives."

149. Joy language in 55:12: שִׂמְחָה/εὐφροσύνη, and for שָׁלוֹם LXX has χαρά. Joy language in 55:13: רִנָּה/χαρά (χαρ* is the root used for joy language through 2 Cor 7). Cf. 29:19 where the "poor" (עָנָו/πτωχός) experience "joy in YHWH" (שִׂמְחָה/εὐφροσύνη). Creation is frequently commanded to rejoice in Isaiah 40–55: 44:23 roots creation's joy in God's redemption of Jacob, while 49:13 roots it in God's comfort of his afflicted people. Only in Isa 55:12–13 do creation and the people rejoice *together*. Oswalt, *Isaiah 40–66*, 447, suggests that the כִּי of 55:12 is asseverative ("surely"), such that 55:12–13 functions as the conclusion to both 55:6–13 and the whole of chs. 40–55.

150. Oswalt, *Isaiah 40–66*, 187.

They should do this because (כִּי/ὅτι) they are his "servant" (2x), whom he formed and will not forget (44:21). He will not forget them because[151] he has "wiped away [their] transgressions"[152] and sins. In light of God's forgiveness the people are commanded to "repent unto me" (שׁוּבָה אֵלַי/ἐπιστράφητι πρός με). While the MT here reads "because (כִּי) I have redeemed you," the LXX has "and (καί) I will redeem you"—perhaps in light of 45:22 and/or 55:7, where repentance aims at future restoration.[153] In any case, the larger context of 44:21–22 suggests that Israel remains a hard-hearted and idolatrous servant, incapable of responding to YHWH repentantly. However, in chapter 49 Isaiah shifts his focus from a failed national Israel in the present toward a new "Israel" in the future (49:3)—that is, a truly obedient and responsive servant (50:4–5) who comes to "bring Jacob back" (49:5) by bearing away the people's sins (53:4–12), as the present passage anticipates (44:22).[154] Therefore, while YHWH here calls for repentance from an idolatrous, ignorant, and unresponsive Israel, he later calls for repentance (55:3–7) from a *transformed*—that is, responsive—people, whom the servant has "brought back" (49:5) by effecting YHWH's comfort and salvation (49:8, 10, 13), and thereby made

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151. LXX brings out the latently causal link between these clauses with ἰδοὺ γάρ.

152. Isaiah also uses מחה ("wipe, blot out") with פָּשַׁע in Isa 43:25, where God calls sinful Israel to "remember" his identity and creative/redemptive acts, as in 44:21. The only other Isaianic use of מחה is 25:8, where God promises to "wipe tears from all faces."

153. See below on 45:22. But Goldingay and Payne, *Isaiah 40–55*, 1:365: LXX "undermines Yhwh's point. The people are to turn *because* Yhwh has restored, not so that Yhwh may do so" (emphasis theirs).

154. Again, see note 138.

them capable of repentant trust in God's plans.[155] In other words, in both cases God calls Israel to repent, but in view of his promise to transform his people through the servant, the second call anticipates a *positive* response of actual repentance.

YHWH gives another call to repentance in 45:22, but one directed at "all the ends of the earth" instead of toward "Israel . . . my servant" (44:21). The MT's verb here differs from the earlier call to repentance: שׁוּבָה אֵלַי in 44:22 vs. פְּנוּ־אֵלַי in 45:22. This may be because Israel needs to *re*-turn to YHWH, while the nations need to make their initial turn to him.[156] Whatever the precise reason for the difference, the calls are closely related, as recognized by the LXX, which renders them almost identically: ἐπιστράφητι πρός με and ἐπιστράφητε πρός με. YHWH promises the "ends of the earth" that, upon turning to him, they will be saved (וְהִוָּשְׁעוּ/σωθήσεσθε). Thus YHWH extends his promise of salvation from Israel to other peoples (45:15, 17; cf. 46:4, 13), as he repeatedly declares that idols *cannot* save (45:20; 46:7). Israel *and* the nations *both* need to be saved from their idolatry by turning to YHWH.[157]

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155. Watts, "Consolation or Confrontation?," 59, argues that the confrontational nature of Isa 56–66 shows how the "second exodus" was actually postponed in light of Israel's ongoing "idolatrous blindness," so that "the prophet looks to the future when the as-yet-unknown but faithful servant will both deliver Jacob-Israel from its blindness and deafness and implement Yahweh's מִשְׁפָּט over the nations in accordance with the promises made to David."

156. So Scheuer, *Return of YHWH*, 74–75n185. Goldingay, *Message*, 296, argues that YHWH actually offers salvation *to* the nations, not merely that they will *witness* Israel's salvation. Similarly, Joseph Blenkinsopp, "Second Isaiah: Prophet of Universalism," *JSOT* 41 (1988): 87, argues that this verse pictures Gentiles undergoing a "radical re-orientation of . . . religious life," not merely acknowledging YHWH while continuing to worship other gods.

157. Oswalt, *Isaiah 40–66*, 223–24.

As shown above, YHWH saves *through* his servant. Because the servant *both* restores Israel *and* brings "salvation" to "the end of the earth" (49:6),[158] these two calls to repentance in 44:22 (Israel) and 45:22 (nations) show that (re)turning to YHWH is the way all people can enjoy the divine comfort-salvation worked by the servant. This is why the final call to repentance in 55:3–7—after YHWH announces the servant's vocation in chs. 49–53—is not directed at a specific geographic-ethnic group, whether Israel or the nations.[159] Rather, YHWH speaks broadly to "everyone who thirsts" (55:1) and promises the inclusion of "a nation that you do not know" (55:5),[160] in line with David's leadership "for the peoples" (55:4).[161] At this climactic point in Isaiah's prophecy YHWH thus addresses neither "Israel" nor "the end of the earth," but, rather, he gives open-ended commands to "the wicked" and "the unrighteous" (55:7).

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158. 45:22 and 49:6 are closely related, particularly in the LXX: both speak of salvation for the "ends of the earth" (כָּל־אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ/οἱ ἀπ᾽ ἐσχάτου τῆς γῆς, עַד־קְצֵה הָאָרֶץ/ἕως ἐσχάτου τῆς γῆς). Similarly, in 48:20; 52:10; 62:11 God's redemption/salvation of Jacob/Zion is announced "to the end of the earth" (עַד־קְצֵה הָאָרֶץ/ἕως ἐσχάτου τῆς γῆς, כָּל־אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ/πάντα τὰ ἄκρα τῆς γῆς, אֶל־קְצֵה הָאָרֶץ/ἕως ἐσχάτου τῆς γῆς).

159. See Hermisson, "Vierte Gottesknechtlied," 24, who argues that the fourth "Servant Song" climactically explains *how* the servant effects this *global* salvation. J. Alec Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction & Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 423, makes a similar point, but Childs, *Isaiah*, 356, sees this global, inclusive shift back at 45:22 ("Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth!"). Seitz, "Isaiah 40–66," 438, commenting on 50:11, notes that this "global" focus is not limited to *salvation*: "From chap. 48 onward, *adversaries* can no longer be neatly divided along Israel/the nations' lines" (emphasis ours)!

160. Baltzer, *Deutero-Isaiah*, 473: "It is no longer the distinction according to ethnic criteria that is the most important thing; the essential point is that the people 'hasten' in response to the call." Also, Motyer, *Isaiah*, 455.

161. Goldingay, *Message*, 550: "When the prophet makes God's covenant with David a model for God's commitment to Jacob-Israel . . . there is an implication that this is significant for the whole human race."

Idolatrous Israel and the idolatrous nations share a basic hard-heartedness (ch. 46) and hence both need to repent in order to partake of YHWH's salvation, mediated by the servant.[162]

Summary of Relevant Scriptural Themes

By examining the broader contexts of the passages Paul has used to describe and defend his ministry (Jer 31:31; Ezek 36:26; Isa 49:8, 13), we have found many themes and motifs that help us understand what motivates Paul's joy in 2 Cor 7:2–16. Before moving on to a detailed exegesis of 7:5–16, we here give a summary of the scriptural themes relevant to the canonical epistle as a whole and to 2 Cor 7 in particular.

Jeremiah focuses on Israel's need and even *refusal* to repent (Jer 3:6–14; 5:3; 8:4–6; 30:12–13). However, God promises to renew their hearts in accordance with the divinely initiated "heart-circumcision" of Deut 30:6. This transformation will lead them to repent (24:6–7) under a renewed covenant relationship with their divine father (31:16–22, 31–33; 32:38–41). The catena of scriptural citations in 2 Cor 6:16–18 draws on similar themes, especially its use of the "covenant formula" ("I will be their God and

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162. Blenkinsopp, "Second Isaiah," 95, argues that Isa 56–66 functions as a kind of commentary on Isa 40–55. On the way in which YHWH reassures foreign converts in 56:3, 6–8 (a "comment" on the calls to repentance in 45:22; 55:6–7?), he says: "Incorporation and membership are determined not on ethnic or national considerations but on a profession of faith and a level of moral performance compatible with it. . . . This policy is in function [*sic*] of eschatological faith, i.e., belief in the reality of a final decisive intervention of God. The ingathered Israel of the future is to include both ethnic Judeans (Jews) and recruits from the Gentile world." On how Isa 55:1–5 links Isa 40–55 to 56–66, see Peter Höffken, "Eine Bemerkung zu Jes 55,1–5: Zu buchinternen Bezügen des Abschnitts," *ZAW* 18 (2006): 239–49.

they shall be my people"; 2 Cor 6:16). Furthermore, Paul describes his ministry in contrast to Jeremiah's ministry of destruction—a reversal promised by Jeremiah himself within his "book of comfort" (Jer 31:28; cf. Jer 1:10; 2 Cor 10:8; 13:10)! By renewing his people's heart God will transform Israel's sorrow into joy (31:2–16)—a motif especially striking given that the Corinthians have yet to experience any joy, even though Paul has stated that his ministry ultimately aims for their joy (2 Cor 1:24; 2:3).

Ezekiel is more emphatic about Israel's total *inability* to transform its own heart (Ezek 18:31); hence we find the prophet focusing on how God, in *spite of* Israel's intractable rebellion, will *replace* the stony heart of his people with a soft, responsive one (11:19–20; 36:26). God will do this through the agency of the divine, life-giving Spirit (36:27; 37:14). As we saw above, Paul roots his legitimacy in the transformed "fleshly" hearts of the Corinthians, who have received "the Spirit who makes alive" (2 Cor 3:3, 6). Ezekiel explains how this transformation will lead the newly purified and obedient people to repentant "self-loathing" (20:43; 36:31), as God's people of an "everlasting covenant" (16:60–63; 36:28; 37:23, 27–28). Paul began his letter by acknowledging that he has caused grief to the Corinthians (2 Cor 2:1–5). He later describes the church as the "temple of the living God" (2 Cor 6:16a; cf. Ezek 40–48), a people to whom the "covenant formula" of Ezek 37:27 applies (2 Cor 6:16b), along with God's promise to "accept" his once-idolatrous people (Ezek 20:34; 2 Cor 6:17). Ezekiel's emphasis on grief/shame as the product of repentance (with his noticeable

silence on the *joy* of the redeemed!) parallels the situation described in 2 Cor 7, where the Corinthians are grieved and repentant, but not joyful. By contrast, Paul also fears that there will be some in the church who have *not* repented of their impurity and sin (2 Cor 12:21).

Finally, Isaiah announces that God will soon bring his people comfort and salvation (Isa 51:5–8; 52:7–10) through the work of the obedient "servant" (49:6, 8). Through this redemption, the people will see God's judgment turned away from them and toward their enemies (51:21–23). Isaiah highlights how Israel, his "servant" of old, has been nothing but unresponsive and disobedient (42:18–25; 44:18–20), in contrast to the coming, obedient "servant" described in chs. 49–53 (50:4–9). It is the deathly work of this later servant that will make God's people capable of properly responding to him (52:13—53:12). Hence Isaiah's call for repentance in 55:3–7 is directed at a transformed people who can expect salvation and, as in Jeremiah, joy (cf. Isa 55:12), in contrast to the call for repentance in 44:21–22, directed at a rebellious people who have experienced mournful destruction (48:18–22; 50:11), with more destruction yet to come for those who remain unrepentant (59:15–20; 66:15–24). Second Corinthians is rife with these Isaianic themes. Paul opens his letter by describing his ministry (and his own experience) in terms of comfort (1:3–7) and salvation (1:6, 10). Those who reject Paul are "perishing," while those who embrace him are "being saved" (2:15). Indeed, non-believers are "blind" to the light of God's glory (4:4, 6), in a similarly "veiled" situation

as that of hardhearted Israel (3:14–18; 4:3). On the other hand, those who receive Paul's message are experiencing Isaiah's very "day of salvation" (Isa 49:8 in 2 Cor 6:2) and so are now called to depart from what is unclean (Isa 52:11 in 2 Cor 6:17). God has inaugurated the "new creation" through the death and resurrection of Christ (5:17; cf. Isa 43:18; 65:17; 66:22), the obedient servant of God handed over for a sinful people (5:14–15, 19, 21). The theme of "comfort" returns in 2 Cor 7:2–16, with Paul likely alluding to Isa 49:13 at 2 Cor 7:6 in describing God as "the one who comforts the downcast."

We are now prepared to finish our exegesis of 2 Cor 7. For we have seen that Paul has already been defending his ministry by pointing to prophetic texts that announced a coming "day of salvation" when God would unilaterally act to transform the grief of his people, to make them repentant, and to save them from judgment (2 Cor 6:2). Let us now turn to 2 Cor 7:5–16 in order to understand the reason Paul goes to such lengths to explain *why* (γάρ, 7:5) he is rejoicing in the midst of tribulation (7:4), as part of his climactic call to be reconciled with him as a minster of the new covenant (7:2–3).

CHAPTER FOUR: THE "NEW COVENANT" ARGUMENT OF 2 CORINTHIANS 7:5–16

Welborn, arguing that 2 Cor 2:14—7:4 originally formed an independent apologetic "treatise," throws down the gauntlet when he says that "there is no exegetical art capable of discovering in the opening chapters of 2 Corinthians a train of thought which makes the insertion of 2.14–7.4 at this point in the canonical text understandable, or even bearable"; the "resemblance [between 7:4 and 7:5] is merely verbal; the discontinuity of thought remains."[1] Against Welborn, this chapter aims to show that 7:4 and 7:5 *can* and even *should* be read in logical cohesion. Furthermore, we will argue that in 7:5–16 Paul is not simply "resuming" the travelogue he left in 2:13,[2] but that Paul purposefully set forth his "new covenant" self-understanding in 2:14—7:4 in order to give the necessary salvation-historical framework against which the Corinthians must understand their grief and repentance, which Paul now interprets in 7:5–16.[3] This is a

1. Welborn, "Broken Pieces," 577, 577n74; on p. 560, he also cites Georgi, *Opponents*, 335: "The splits in 2:13/14 and 7:4/5 . . . are so basic, and the connections between 2:13 and 7:5 . . . are so obvious, that the burden of proof lies now with those who defend the unity of the present texts." Similarly, Windisch, *Der zweite Korintherbrief*, 224, while arguing that chs. 1–7 form a unitary (but heavily rearranged) letter, still states that it is "völlig unbegreiflich" that Paul would insert a new discussion right at the most thrilling point in the travel narrative (i.e., 2:13). The "interpolation" theory that 2:13—7:4 originally formed a distinct letter is a key element of both the "Weiss-Bultmann" and "Schmithals-Bornkamm" partition theories; on which, see Vegge, *2 Corinthians*, 15–18.

2. See, for example, Barrett, *Second Corinthians*, 97, 206; Alfred Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle of St Paul to the Corinthians*, ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1915), 217; and Windisch, *Der zweite Korintherbrief*, 224. David R. Hall, *The Unity of the Corinthian Correspondence*, JSNTSup 251 (London: T&T Clark, 2003), 122, compares Paul to a "dog being taken for a walk, who is distracted first by one scent and then by another"!

3. Again, see p. 16, where we explain that our study of 7:5–16 looks for the *broad themes* of the

continuation of his line of argument in 1 Corinthians, where "he was calling Gentiles to understand their identity anew in light of the gospel of Jesus Christ — a gospel message comprehensible only in relation to the larger narrative of God's dealing with Israel."[4] Thus, we shall argue that 7:4 is *not* "the final verse in Paul's long excursus on the new covenant ministry,"[5] since 7:5–16, by evoking central themes from the scriptural passages surveyed above, explains the tangible results of the prophets' eschatological promises, the inaugural realization of which Paul understands to be at the heart of his apostolic ministry.[6]

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scriptural passages to which Paul has referred earlier in his apology (which is itself summarized in 7:2–4); we do not build our case on specific allusions to or echoes of the Prophets.

4. Richard B. Hays, "The Conversion of the Imagination: Scripture and Eschatology in 1 Corinthians," in *The Conversion of the Imagination: Paul as Interpreter of Israel's Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 5. Similarly, J. B. Tucker, *Remain in Your Calling: Paul and the Continuation of Social Identities in 1 Corinthians* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2011), 200: "Paul seeks to 'emplot' the Corinthians into an eschatological narrative that forms their social identity"; and James W. Thompson, *Moral Formation According to Paul: The Context and Coherence of Pauline Ethics* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 43–62.

5. So Barnett, *2 Corinthians*, 362. However, on p. 364 he vaguely notes that 7:5—9:15 does "develop" Paul's defense. Many have already noted that Paul is not *merely* resuming his travelogue in 7:5, including, e.g., Barnett, *2 Corinthians*, 365; Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 393; and Harris, *2 Corinthians*, 14, 516. Rightly, Troels Engberg-Pedersen, "The Node of Paraenetic Concepts in 2 Cor 7:5–16 in Relation to 5:20—7:4, 1:23—2:13 and 1:3–11" (paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the SBL, Baltimore, MD, 25 November 2013), 6: "It seems to me that one is virtually forced to recognize that 7:5-16 hangs tightly together with what comes *immediately* before, at least as far back as 5:20. And then one should conclude that the so-called 'digression' in 2 Corinthians 1-7, that is, 2:14-7:4, is in fact an integral part of these chapters as a whole and has always been so" (emphasis his).

6. Fitzgerald, *Cracks*, 159–60, notes that 2:14—7:4 details the *basis* of Paul's confidence as expressed in 2 Cor 1–2; 7 (which themselves mix both praise and apology), while Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 391, insightfully argues that 7:5–16 is not so much about giving the Corinthians information about themselves—since they already know how they have responded to the "tearful letter"—as it is about giving *Paul's interpretation* of their response. Similarly, Matera, *II Corinthians*, 171: "Only when this defense [2:14—7:4] is complete does he return to the narration and recount his meeting with Titus and his reaction to the community's response [which Matera says is 'the very thing about which the Corinthians

Accounting for the γάρ of 7:5

To understand the role of 7:5 in Paul's argument we must explain its opening γάρ. Without actual textual evidence, some have claimed that γάρ is a later redactional insertion meant to smooth over the original connection between 2:13 and 7:5.[7] Since the existence of such a shadowy redaction cannot ultimately be proven,[8] theories that can explain the presence of γάρ are preferable.

One such theory is that of Welborn, who argues that the καὶ γάρ of 7:5 belongs to Paul's text, but was originally preceded by 2:13, since 2:14—7:4 does not begin or end with the proper Greco-Roman literary formulae that indicate such "digressions."[9] Furthermore, Welborn argues that καὶ γάρ must be understood as *confirming* the anxiety he described in 2:12–13, over against those who argue that καὶ γάρ is *explaining* the reason for Paul's comfort in affliction (7:4) upon finding Titus (7:5–7; Welborn,

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most wanted to hear']. By doing this, Paul implicitly draws a comparison between the exposition of his apostolic ministry and his narration of the events surrounding the conflict between him and community." However, none of these authors fully develops the eschatological context of 7:5–16, showing how it draws upon Paul's new covenant theology as rooted in the prophetic hope of Israel's Scriptures.

7. Bultmann, *Zweite Brief*, 56, 181.

8. So Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 393; and Harris, *2 Corinthians*, 13.

9. Welborn, "Broken Pieces," 566. Vegge, *2 Corinthians*, 197–98 rightly critiques Welborn for his "uncritical use of ancient stylistic 'correctness'" about digressions; it results in Welborn's "premature" declaration that Paul could not have written 2:14—7:4 in its current place. See also the critique of Hall, *The Unity of the Corinthian Correspondence*, 120–24, who cogently argues that we should not assume that "Paul would feel himself under any obligation to conform to the rules of the rhetorical theorists" (124).

pp. 578–79). He cites Greek apologetic texts and a few Pauline uses to show that καὶ γάρ may function to confirm emphatically a prior statement, and so should be translated here as "for even" or "and in fact" (580–82).

Welborn is on the right track when he argues that καὶ γάρ is "confirmatory and causal" (582). However, in doing so, it is important to recognize that Paul often pairs καὶ γάρ with ἀλλά to emphasize the second half of a contrast.[10] In the case of 7:5–6, Paul is emphasizing his *comfort* (ἀλλά) *in spite of* his afflictions (καὶ γάρ). Welborn thus argues that the καὶ γάρ is emphasizing Paul's anxiety (2:13), but fails to note that 7:5–6 is primarily about God's comfort in the midst of affliction (580). Furthermore, Welborn's failure to understand the role of 7:4 within the argument of 7:2–4[11] leads him to argue that there is no way that the account of Titus's return in 7:5–6 can give the confirmatory/causal grounds for Paul's appeal for the Corinthians to receive him in 7:2–4 (581).[12] But our examination of 7:2–4 in chapter one has shown how 7:4 supports the command of 7:2 to receive Paul. In turn, 7:5–6 is perfectly capable of supporting 7:4, since in these

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10. Similarly, καὶ γάρ + ἀλλά serves to emphasize the latter part of a contrast in Rom 15:3 ("καὶ γάρ Christ did not please himself, ἀλλά . . . reproaches . . . fell on me"); 1 Cor 8:5–6 ("καὶ γάρ if there are so-called gods . . . ἀλλά for us there is one God"); 1 Cor 11:9 ("καὶ γάρ man was not created for woman, ἀλλά woman for man"); 2 Cor 13:14 ("καὶ γάρ he was crucified in weakness . . . ἀλλά he lives; καὶ γάρ we are weak . . . ἀλλά we will live"); and Phil 2:27 ("καὶ γάρ he was sick . . . ἀλλά God healed him").

11. I.e.: (a) Receive me (7:2), because of (b) our "new covenant" relationship (7:3), which has led to (c) my confidence in you and my joy in suffering (7:4).

12. Land, *Integrity*, 161n46, rightly counters Welborn on this very point: "It remains unclear why there cannot be just such a relation between 7.5-16 as a whole and the statements in 7.3-4. Ostensibly, 7.5-16 both *confirms* that Paul has some positive feelings towards Corinth and discusses the *cause* of this recent improvement in his disposition" (emphasis his).

verses (and in 7:7–16) Paul gives the "confirmatory/causal" grounds for the confidence, boasting, comfort, and joy he just mentioned.[13] As a servant of the new covenant, Paul's legitimacy is inextricably bound up in the response of the Corinthians to his "tearful letter," since *they* are Paul's letter of commendation (3:2), even while their share in the "new covenant" is the very work of *God* (3:3). This is why he goes to such lengths in 7:5–16 to explain why and how he came to be filled by God with such comfort and joy: the Corinthians' repentance proves that God is truly at work in them through Paul.

When locating the ground of Paul's confidence in 2:14—7:4, it is therefore unnecessary to bifurcate between "the Corinthians' response" and "the transcendent power of God," as Welborn does when arguing that, on the one hand, 2:14—7:4 concerns God's power, while on the other, 7:5–16 concerns the Corinthians' response, so that the latter passage cannot logically relate to the former (582). For Paul's confidence is rooted in the "new covenant" work of the Spirit *in* the Corinthians (7:3), so that their positive response to his ministry (7:5–16) is proof for Paul that God's "transcendent power," displayed in the great redemptive restoration of his people as promised by the

13. Therefore the somber caution of Runge, *Grammar*, 165–66, applies to all versions of the theory that 7:5 cannot be linked to 7:4 because of the similarities between 2:13 and 7:5. Runge urges exegetical humility in approaching the "redundancy" of "resumptive repetition": "Regardless of origins, [the repetition] accomplishes a describable task in the discourse. . . . The point to be gleaned here is the mandate to exegete all of the text, regardless of its hypothesized origins. . . . Signs of redaction . . . may be better explained as indications of literary skill rather than editorial bungling, based on their broader usage in the world's languages, both ancient and modern. . . . All of the text requires our attention. Instead of merely claiming redactional activity, we must consider the exegetical implications associated with it."

prophets, is now at hand, thus providing the wellspring of Paul's confidence and joy (7:4).[14] In support of this reading, we now turn to the internal argument of 7:5–16 to locate its main points and emphases, showing how they draw upon the broad themes of these prophetic promises about God's eschatological restoration of his people.

The Eschatological Logic of 7:5–16

On its surface, the argument of 7:5–16 is simple: Paul explains how the Corinthians' grieved-but-repentant response to the "tearful letter" has made both him and Titus joyful. However, what appears to be a simple resumption of a broken travelogue has led many to make simplistic summaries of these verses that overlook or underemphasize the passage's internal argument and underlying scriptural foundation since they understand Paul's emotions as driven by personal sentiment rather than eschatology.[15]

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14. Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 392, argues that 7:4 "reads almost like the topic sentence" of 7:5–16. Wolff, *Zweite Brief*, 155, rightly notes that 7:5–16 provides "die Begründung für V. 4." Olson, "Epistolary Uses," 596, notes that expressions of self-confidence "frequently function as thematic statements for their context and may, therefore, help one to discern the point of an argument," lending weight to our theory that 7:4 functions as the logical thesis of 7:5–16.

15. E.g., Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 384: "Paul [is] dictating more under emotion than in logical terms." Harris, *2 Corinthians*, 523, describes this "glowing report about the Corinthian attitudes" primarily as a resumed travel narrative, the placement of which is "designed to prepare the Corinthians psychologically" for the collection requests in chs. 8–9. Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 392, is right to note that ch. 7 plays a coherent role within Paul's appeals for reconciliation since 5:20, and that it prepares for the requests of chs. 8–9, but in general fails to note that these verses primarily support Paul's "new covenant" apologetic; he instead sees a continued emphasis upon "the affection Paul feels for his congregation." Barnett, *2 Corinthians*, 364–65, rightly sees that the passage is primarily about Paul's joy and functions as a "pastoral foundation from which to address matters that the Corinthian church must rectify (chs. 8–13)," but does not show that the strength of this "pastoral foundation" derives from Paul's scriptural and theological understanding of the new covenant and himself as its servant; similarly, Guthrie, *2*

7:5–7: Paul's Joy Caused by Titus's Arrival—In Spite of Paul's Afflictions

In these verses Paul begins to explain the multifaceted cause of his confidence, boasting, comfort, and, especially, his joy (7:4).[16] The first reason for Paul's joy is the arrival of Titus in Macedonia (7:6). The immediate effect of Titus's arrival was comfort, which Paul experienced in spite of the fact that Paul encountered affliction when he

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Corinthians, 368. Welborn, "Paul and Pain," 556, notes that "there is nothing in the surviving [Greco-Roman] epistolary corpus that approaches Paul's preoccupation with the emotions in 2 Cor 1.1–2.13; 7.5–16," while also rightly arguing that 7:5–16 is essentially concerned with defending his integrity (562); however, he does not link this with his broader new covenant apologetic as rooted in the Old Testament; similarly, Belleville, "Letter," 155–56. Seifrid, *Second Corinthians*, 99, rightly notes the essential role of 7:5–16 in completing Paul's argument, but does not develop its OT, covenantal themes.

16. John Chrysostom, *Homilies on the Epistles of Paul to the Corinthians* 16.1 (*NPNF*[1] 12:356) notes that in 2 Cor 7 Paul "everywhere mentions the causes of his affection" in order to show that Paul is not merely flattering them, but has genuine reasons to be so joyful over them, contra the theory of Vegge, *2 Corinthians*, 213, that 7:5–16 functions merely as "rhetorical amplification" that does not represent the actual situation in Corinth. Peter Lampe, "Quintilian's Psychological Insights in His *Institutio Oratoria*," *in Paul and Rhetoric*, ed. J. Paul Sampley and Peter Lampe (New York: T&T Clark, 2010), 191, after explaining Quintilian's suggestion that a rhetorician must be genuinely convinced by the content and emotions of his argument (*Inst.* 6.2.26–29, 34–36; 10.7.14; 11.1.56 12.1.29–31), says, "It hardly needs to be demonstrated that Paul was totally convinced by the content of what he wrote in his letters and that he did not feign the feelings that he verbalized." With regards to the theory of Stanley Olson, "Pauline Expressions of Confidence in His Addressees," *CBQ* (1985): 282–95 (echoed by Vegge, *2 Corinthians*, passim), that Paul's confidence expressions are persuasive tools rather than sincere observations, Barnett, *2 Corinthians*, 120n14, says, "While there may be an element of truth in this suggestion, Paul is also seeking to reinforce and encourage the Corinthians to express the faith in appropriate ways, *based on the reality of Christian eschatology being 'already fulfilled' but 'not yet fully experienced"* (emphasis ours). This is similar to the argument of Malcolm, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reversal*, 230, that throughout 1 Corinthians Paul's "utilisation and adaptation of existing [Greco-Roman *and* Jewish] oratorical or literary resources" are ultimately "renegotiated with his *kerygma* of the Messiah who died and rose bodily," a kerygma that is "according to the Scriptures" (see also pp. 31, 49–50); in other words, in addition to sometimes using Greco-Roman rhetorical topoi to shape his "micro-rhetoric" (1–2), Paul's constant appeals to Scripture show that he "employs patterns of rhetorical formulation from his theological heritage (particularly the Old Testament and early Judaism) in order to give shape to a unified theological force in his letter [i.e., his 'macro-rhetoric']" (81). On whether or not Paul's letters can be split into different Greco-Roman epistolary forms, see also p. 57n85.

arrived in Macedonia (ἀλλά, 7:6), rather than finding the rest he anticipated (ἀλλά, 7:5b). The twofold contrast in these verses serves to emphasize Paul's unexpected comfort, which he immediately puts into theological context by alluding to Isa 49:13, naming the source of his comfort as "the one who comforts the downcast."[17] Paul then emphasizes the divine source of his comfort by including the appositional ὁ θεός.[18] As we have seen, comfort is a central theme of Isaiah's "day of salvation" (Isa 49:8), which Paul believes to be realized through his ministry (2 Cor 6:2) on the basis of Jesus's death as Isaiah's servant (2 Cor 5:11–21).[19] Paul claims that he is already sharing in this eschatological comfort, having stated that his ministry aims to help the Corinthians also to share in it (2 Cor 1:6–7; cf. Isa 51:3, 12; 52:9; 54:11).

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17. Given that the context concerns Paul's suffering, we take ταπεινός to mean "downcast" rather than "humble." See Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 1:488.

18. Matera, *II Corinthians*, 173: "The focus of this unit [7:5–6] is thoroughly theological in nature." Hafemann, *2 Corinthians*, 311: "Paul's joy in meeting Titus and hearing about the Corinthians is a joy ultimately brought about by Paul's theology." It is unclear why Paul includes ὁ θεός. Even without it, the reference to God as the comforter is obvious, especially in light of 1:3–7. Perhaps he is making his God-centered outlook more emphatic for what follows, and/or he is clarifying his allusion to Isa 49:13 (LXX): ἠλέησεν ὁ θεὸς [MT: יהוה] τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ τοὺς ταπεινοὺς τοῦ λαοῦ αὐτοῦ παρεκάλεσεν. It is uncontroversial that Paul is probably alluding to Isa 49:13 here, especially in light of his direct quotation of Isa 49:8 (LXX) in 6:2; see Bieringer, "Comforted Comforter," 5; Hofius, "Gott allen Trostes," 248n24; and esp. Wilk, *Bedeutung*, 297–99. This allusion "is not merely an edifying reflection on the gracious character of God expressed in this action; it also symbolizes God's action toward his people under the new covenant" (Barnett, *2 Corinthians*, 370). Another possibility, noted by Barnett, *2 Corinthians*, 369n18, is that this ἀλλά . . . ὁ θεός statement is meant to echo and contrast with a similar statement in 2:14 (where God leads Paul into suffering).

19. Again, see Gignilliat, *Paul*, 90–106.

In 7:7, Paul sheds further light upon the comfort he experienced at Titus's arrival. His comfort was *also* (ἀλλὰ καί) caused by Titus's own comfort in that Titus brought news of the Corinthians' changed posture toward Paul: their eager longing, mourning, and zeal for him, with the result (ὥστε) that Paul rejoiced greatly (μᾶλλον). For he saw in the Corinthians' response that, in accordance with the themes of passages such as Isa 54, the people were being delivered from their sin, which, to use Isaiah's terms, had made them like a deserted and grieved wife (Isa 54:6), an afflicted people without comfort (54:11; cf. Isa 49:13, allusion in 2 Cor 7:6). Furthermore, Paul's joy also appears to be rooted in how Ezekiel ties shame/mourning to the redemption of God's people (e.g., Ezek 36:31–32; cf. 20:43; 43:10–11). The Corinthians have received "as a gift that which [Israel] had never been able to muster for themselves, namely the ability to respond to and obey Yahweh's will."[20]

Paul's joy over the "soft-hearted" response of God's people thematically reflects other prophetic promises that the restoration would produce exuberance (rather than mourning) over God's people (Jer 31:7; Isa 54:1; cf. Isa 49:20–22). However, we read nothing about the Corinthians' own joy. This is a strange silence given that Isaiah and Jeremiah both emphasize that the restoration will be a time of joy, a joy not only *over* God's repentant people, but also *of* God's people (Jer 31:4, 12–13, 16; 33:11; Isa 51:11;

20. Joyce, *Divine Initiative*, 107–8.

55:12).[21] While Paul experiences the former, the Corinthians do not experience the latter, even though the apostle had already stated that his ministry ultimately aims for the Corinthians to share in his joy (2:3).[22] Paul is sincerely delighted over the Corinthians' response, but, given both his stated aim and the scriptural backdrop that undergirds his argument, we can see that the joyless Corinthians are not yet where both Paul and Scripture point them.[23]

To summarize the argument of 7:5–7: 7:5 describes Paul's affliction in Macedonia. It supports and highlights the divine comfort that came through Titus in 7:6. Verse 7 explains that this comfort was ultimately about the Corinthians' response, which led to Paul's great joy. Thus, the "main point" of 7:5–7 is that Paul rejoiced greatly.

7:8: Paul's Lack of Regret

With its three intertwined concessive clauses (εἰ καί: "even if . . . "), the syntax of 7:8 is opaque, but its sense is clear:[24] Paul is no longer regretting sending the "tearful letter," even if he was regretting it for a time (2:4; cf. 11:28).[25] Paul's anguish over the

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21. On "joy" in Isa 55:12, see note 149 on p. 119.

22. Barnett, *2 Corinthians*, 121, on 2:3: "He had expected them to be a source of 'joy' when present with them, which they would indeed be on the last day (cf. Phil 4:1). The eschatological reality of 'joy' was to be a present experience."

23. For a further explanation of the Corinthians' lack of joy, despite their repentance, and its implications for reading 2 Corinthians, see below, p. 157, and our conclusion, p. 231.

24. The complexity is compounded by the possible unoriginality of γάρ. We suspect that it is original, but the basic sense of the verse is not affected either way. See Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 387.

25. It is uncontroversial that the same "tearful letter" is described in both 2:4 and 7:8. See, e.g.,

Corinthians has given way to a lack of regret. This "former regret" should not be understood in *cognitive* terms—that is, after sending the letter he was *uncertain* about whether or not he did the right thing or *wished* he had not sent the letter.[26] Rather, Paul's "former regret" should be understood *emotionally* as *sadness* over having to send it, particularly in light of how the causal ὅτι at the beginning of 7:8 links his subsequent joy with his current lack of regret.[27] Just like a loving parent disciplining an errant child (1 Cor 4:14; 2 Cor 6:13; 12:14), Paul was *sad* (but not hesitant) in knowing that the Corinthians would experience λύπη upon receiving the letter.[28] However, upon seeing

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Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 394.

26. Against, e.g., Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 394, and Harris, *2 Corinthians*, 535n9.

27. Rightly, John Calvin, *The Second Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians and the Epistles to Timothy, Titus and Philemon*, ed. David W. Torrance and T. F. Torrance, trans. T. A. Smail (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1964), 98. L&N helpfully distinguishes between two overlapping meanings of μεταμέλομαι: (1) "to feel sad about" (under the semantic subdomain "Sorrow, Regret" at 25.270; with λύπη at 25.272) and (2) "to change one's mind about something" (under the heading "Change an Opinion Concerning Truth" at 31.59). If we read μεταμέλομαι in emotional terms, Paul's statement in 7:10 that repentance produces σωτηρίαν ἀμεταμέλητον becomes much clearer: in the end, κατὰ θεὸν λύπη leads to joy, which of course excludes μετάμελος (cf. 1:24; 2:3; and 6:10 in light of 6:2)! Commentators are often perplexed when trying to understand σωτηρία ἀμεταμέλητος in 7:10 apart from its "emotional" context, since it is "patently obvious that salvation brings no regrets" (Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 1:492n42). But note that both 1 Sam 15:29 ("the glory of Israel [= God] . . . will not regret") *and* 15:35 ("the Lord regretted that he had made Saul king") use נחם (*niphal*). As per Natalio Fernández Marcos and José Ramón Busto Saiz, *El texto antioqueno de la Biblia griega I: 1–2 Samuel*, Textos y estudios "Cardenal Cisneros" 50 (Madrid: Instituto de Filología, 1989), 45, the extant OG traditions unanimously resolve this tension by using μετανοέω for 15:29 (i.e., the cognitive meaning) and μεταμέλομαι for 15:35 (i.e., the emotional meaning). On the other hand, the two words do sometimes overlap, as shown by O. Michel, "μεταμέλομαι," *TDNT* 4:627; e.g., see Jer 4:28; 20:16, where both Greek words are used to render the same meaning of נחם (*niphal*).

28. For an excellent overview of the Greco-Roman background of λύπη, especially among the Stoic philosophers, and of how Paul by comparison is nearly unique in seeing λύπη as (potentially) positive, see Welborn, "Paul and Pain," 547–70. However, Welborn fails to account for the way that the Old Testament likely shapes Paul's positive view of λύπη.

what the λύπη produced (7:7), Paul *rejoiced* in that he no longer felt the sadness of regret.[29] The cessation of Paul's regret (the imperfect tense of μετεμελόμην) was a further cause (ὅτι) of the joy described in 7:7, while at the same time Paul reiterates that he *still* does not have this regret (the present tense of οὐ μεταμέλομαι and βλέπω), preparing for the statements about Paul's *current* joy in 7:9–10.

7:9: Paul's Restated Joy Caused by λύπη-Produced Repentance

Paul states in 7:9 that he is *currently* rejoicing (χαίρω), emphasized by the inclusion of νῦν. There is not a conjunction at the start of 7:9, but the context suggests that we read this verse as the inference of 7:8, and thus as a partial restatement of "I rejoiced greatly" in 7:7. Paul is saying, "I rejoiced at Titus's arrival" (7:7), "because his news did and does eliminate my regret over the letter" (7:8); "[Therefore], I am now rejoicing" (7:9). Verse 8 is both a logical and a temporal "hinge" around which Paul describes his past and present joy.[30] Thus, Paul's restatement of his joy in 7:9 is not redundant, but serves to *highlight* his ongoing joy, the cause of which he then explains through 7:12. This is consistent with his pattern thus far of first stating his joy and then explaining its roots.

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29. We point again to the prophetic calls to rejoice over God's redeemed people: Jer 31:7; Isa 54:1; cf. Isa 49:20–22. Note that sorrow characterized the ministries of both Jeremiah and Ezekiel: Jer 8:18—9:11; Ezek 2:8–10; 24:15–18.

30. See H. Van Dyke Parunak, "Transitional Techniques in the Bible," *JBL* 102 (1983): 525–48, on these kinds of transitions in biblical literature (although he works across larger passages than we do here).

In the remainder of 7:9, Paul grounds his joy, not in the Corinthians' λύπη itself, but rather in what it brought them: their repentance.[31] He says that the root of their repentance-bringing λύπη is God himself (κατὰ θεόν),[32] who was last mentioned in 7:6 as the comforter of the downcast. God's purpose (ἵνα) in bringing about this λύπη—that is, in also bringing about its corollary, repentance—is that the Corinthians would not be penalized (ἐν μηδενὶ ζημιωθῆτε) on account of Paul.[33]

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31. While μετάνοια/μετανοέω occur 51 times in the rest of the NT, Paul only rarely uses them (Rom 2:4–5; 2 Cor 7:9, 10; 12:21; cf. 2 Tim 2:25), with a possible image of repentance/conversion in 2 Cor 3:16; 1 Thess 1:9 ("turning to the Lord/God"; see Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 1:273). Scott, *2 Corinthians*, 167, notes that Paul always uses the terms "in the context of divine judgment, which results from an impenitent heart"; hence the translation "contrition" by Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 395, is inadequate. We find insufficient the explanation by Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 396, along with C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, 2 vols., ICC (London: T&T Clark, 1975–1979), 1:144–45n2, that Paul usually avoids the term μετάνοια because it places too much emphasis on human action, since the apostle constantly appeals for believers to change their behavior or to avoid certain actions (even if he does not overtly call them to μετάνοια). On the meaning of μετάνοια in Greco-Roman, Jewish Hellenistic, and New Testament literature, see Guy D. Nave, *The Role and Function of Repentance in Luke-Acts*, AcBib 4 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2002), 39–144, who is especially critical of the idea that Greco-Romans only used μετάνοια to describe a cognitive activity (i.e., a "change of mind"), and not one that is also emotional and/or ethical, as μετάνοια often describes in Christian literature (contra, e.g., Johannes Behm, "μετανοέω, μετάνοια," *TDNT* 4:980). More briefly, see Schnabel, "Repentance," 162–64, who notes that "particularly in Old Testament and Jewish traditions, repentance is a return to Yahweh that relates to one's entire existence, and it is an act that involves turning away from individual sins" (164). See also Morlan, *Conversion*, 54–69.

32. Taking κατά to mean "according to whose will, pleasure, or manner someth. occurs" (BDAG, 512; so Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 1:491; see 2 Cor 11:17; cf. Rom 8:27; 15:5; 1 Pet 5:2; Josephus, *Ant.* 4:143; Philo, *Fug*. 76, 79; *Post.* 69; *Sacr*. 106; 4 Macc 15:3; Mart. Ascen. Isa. 3:3 (Recension A). Paul goes on to describe ἡ τοῦ κόσμου λύπη but not ἡ κατὰ κόσμον λύπη (similarly, Philo often uses κατὰ θεόν but never uses κατὰ κόσμον). Windisch, *Der zweite Korintherbrief*, 231–32, suggests that the constructions may be proverbial; he points to 1 Cor 1:21–22; 2:12; Jas 4:4; 1 John 4:7; 5:4; Sir 4:21; and T. Gad 5:7 for partial parallels. Scott, *2 Corinthians*, 168, argues that "worldly" grief differs from "godly" grief in that the former "is not characterized by a genuine change of mind and heart and a corresponding change of behavior. Hence, the sinner incurs the full wrath of God in judgment."

33. See below on why ζημιόω should be understood judicially ("to be penalized"), and not merely as "to suffer a loss."

Furthermore, Paul repeatedly uses divine passives in this verse to highlight the divine origin of this grief and repentance. Three times he says that they "were grieved" (ἐλυπήθητε).[34] Alongside his repeated use of the term κατὰ θεόν, we see how Paul here emphasizes that God *caused* them to grieve and repent. Paul describes the situation such that he almost completely minimizes the agency of the Corinthians; even their response to Paul described in verse 11 is framed as something "produced" (κατεργάζομαι) by this "God-willed being-grieved." In this way, Paul interprets their λύπη *theologically*,[35] while also closely linking their repentance with their lack of eschatological penalty, a scripturally saturated theme we now explicate.

7:10–12: The Eschatological Context of the Corinthians' λύπη

In these verses Paul does not mention his joy, choosing instead to focus on putting the Corinthians' grief into eschatological context in order to explain *why* his joy is so abundant. In 7:10, he gives the reason (γάρ) that the Corinthians will not suffer a penalty because of this God-willed, repentance-producing λύπη: they are recipients of "salvation" rather than "death," since their grief is κατὰ θεόν rather than τοῦ κόσμου.

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34. Or perhaps the intransitive "became sad" (BDAG, 604). But our point is that Paul explicitly links this grief to the will of God through the use of κατὰ θεόν (7:9, 10, 11). Paul has just used the active voice of λυπέω in 7:8, with himself as the agent. By contrast, in 7:9–11 he stops using the verb this way. He clearly shifts to the agency of God (whether explicitly or implicitly), in terms of God's direct hand in the Corinthians' grief, repentance, (non-)penalty, salvation, and obedience.

35. Hence, even if Paul here adopts the Greco-Roman "conciliatory" letter form/style, as per Welborn, "Appeal," 35–37, then Paul is heavily modifying it in light of his Jewish-Christian eschatological convictions.

That "salvation" should be understood against the backdrop of final judgment/ redemption is evidenced by Paul's recent declaration that his ministry has ushered in the Isaianic "day of salvation" (6:2).[36] Similarly, in 2:15 Paul sees some already "being saved" (i.e., possessing "life"; 2:16) through his ministry. His reference to the Corinthians' σωτηρία in 1:6 could be present and/or future oriented, since Paul believes that the Corinthians are *already* experiencing this eschatological day of salvation. Even so, they look forward to its consummation at the "day of the Lord Jesus" (1:14),[37] when they will not mournfully regret (ἀμεταμέλητος, 7:10) having remained faithful to Paul and his gospel but will rather be boasting joyfully in their apostle.[38] "Death" in 7:10 should also be understood eschatologically. For Paul has explained that eschatological "death" is already being experienced by those who reject Paul (2 Cor 2:15–16; 4:3), just as those under the old covenant also experience "death," the corollary of

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36. So Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 1:492–93, against Welborn, "Paul and Pain," 547, 567, who interprets σωτηρία against a Greco-Roman psychogogic backdrop as "psychic health," which in light of Paul's theologically-freighted quotation of Isa 49:8 is quite dubious. Even if we concede the truth of Welborn's partition theory, the Corinthians have already received the letter containing 6:2 before receiving the letter containing 7:10.

37. See the extensive treatment of 1:12–14 by Schapdick, *Eschatisches Heil*, 287–302. Other eschatological uses of σώζω-language include Rom 1:16; 5:9, 10; 10:1; 11:11; 13:11; 1 Cor 1:18; 3:15; 5:5; 15:2; Phil 1:28; 2:12; 1 Thess 5:9; cf. 2 Thess 2:10; 2 Tim 2:10. See also the resurrection-tinged anticipation of future "rescue" from death in 1:9–10 (cf. the eschatological uses of ῥύομαι in Rom 7:24; 11:26; 1 Thess 1:10; Col 1:13; 2 Tim 4:18).

38. See p. 136, on the emotional-cognitive meaning of (ἀ)μεταμέλομαι. Barnett, *2 Corinthians*, 376n17, points out that ἀμεταμέλητος is "probably an example of litotes . . . whereby something of great value, namely 'salvation,' is stated negatively."

"condemnation" (2 Cor 3:7, 9). Similarly, in both 1 Cor 1:18 and 2 Thess 2:10 Paul sets present "perishing" (ἀπόλλυμι) over against "being saved" (σῴζω).[39]

By using "salvation" and "death" in 7:10 to describe the opposing results of two kinds of grief, Paul thus clarifies what he means in 7:9 by "penalty"—the *eschatological* penalty of "death."[40] This eschatological understanding of ζημιόω is reinforced by Paul's use of the same verb in 1 Cor 3:15 to describe God's eschatological judgment (and σωτηρία!) of those who build with "combustible" materials.[41] Thus, in 7:10 Paul explains why (γάρ) their God-willed grief will not leave them penalized before the divine judge: it has produced repentance, which leads to (εἰς) "salvation."[42]

Hence, we note that Isa 49:6 LXX describes the servant as one appointed εἰς σωτηρίαν (MT: לִֽהְיוֹת יְשׁוּעָתִי), the same phrase that Paul uses in 2 Cor 7:10 to describe the result of the Corinthians' grief and repentance. There is no corresponding εἰς + noun

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39. So Barnett, *2 Corinthians*, 377n21; Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 1:493; and James Denney, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, Expositor's Bible (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1894), 256: "If death is to be defined at all, it must be by contrast with salvation."

40. So Steven J. Kraftchick, "ΛΥΠΗ ΚΑΤΑ ΘΕΟΝ: Grief According to God as an Emotional Goal" (paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the SBL, Baltimore, MD, 25 November 2013), 21; Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 398; and Scott, *2 Corinthians*, 168.

41. For other eschatological uses of ζημία/ζημιόω, see Mark 8:36 (cf. Matt 16:26; Luke 9:25); Phil 3:7–8 (cf. 7:11). Its LXX usage is invariably judicial (Exod 21:22; Deut 22:19; Prov 17:26; 19:19; 21:11; 22:3; 26:12; Ezra 7:26; 1 Esd 8:24; 2 Macc 4:48; cf. the political nuance of 4 Kgdms 23:33; 1 Esd 1:34).

42. Paul's point that repentance leads to salvation (in some sense) must be interpreted in light of the fact that he also believes that Christ has *already* ushered in the "day of salvation" (2 Cor 6:2); Wright, *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*, 562: "The mature mixture of times is foundational to Paul's entire worldview." As we shall see in the next chapter, Paul's understanding of the relationship between the eschaton and repentance is sharply different than the views of some of his Jewish contemporaries.

construction in his parallel description of "the grief of the world": ἡ δὲ τοῦ κόσμου λύπη θάνατον κατεργάζεται. Given his recent quotation of Isa 49:8 (2 Cor 6:2) and allusion to Isa 49:13 (2 Cor 7:6), Paul may be alluding to Isa 49:6 in 2 Cor 7:10. If so, it is striking that 49:6 also describes the servant's mission in terms of "bringing back the preserved of Israel" (וּנְצוּרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְהָשִׁיב; καὶ τὴν διασποράν τοῦ Ισραηλ ἐπιστρέψαι), using the same verbs as found in Isaiah's calls for Israel to repent: 44:22 (שׁוּבָה אֵלַי; ἐπιστράφητι πρός με); 55:7 (in reference to "the wicked": וְיָשֹׁב אֶל־יְהוָה; καὶ ἐπιστραφήτω ἐπὶ κύριον, Symmachus here has μετανοησάτω). Isaiah 45:22, by contrast, is a call for "all the ends of the earth" (not Israel) to "turn to me and be saved" (פְּנוּ־אֵלַי וְהִוָּשְׁעוּ). While the MT distinguishes between פנה (the nations' "turning") and שׁוב (Israel's "turning"), the LXX translates both as ἐπιστρέφω. Paul thus appears to describe the link between repentance and σωτηρία in terms of Isa 49:6 and its broader Isaianic links that clarify—especially through the LXX's use of ἐπιστρέφω (= repentance)—how the apostle understands the servant's "turning," not merely as regathering the people, but ultimately as "repenting" the people—that is, bringing them to repentance.[43] Whether or not 2 Cor 7:10 contains an actual allusion to Isa 49:6, it is at least likely that its "turning" theme shapes Paul's joy over the community's repentance. Among the idolatrous Corinthians (2 Cor 6:16) he sees the repentance that Isaiah first demanded from both idolatrous Israel (44:22) and

43. Note the link between repentance and salvation-restoration in Isa 6:10; 19:22; 30:15; 38:16; 45:22; 59:20.

the idolatrous nations (45:22), but which the servant made possible through overcoming their hard-heartedness and forgiving their sin (55:6–7; cf. 52:13—53:12; 2 Cor 5:11–21).[44]

Paul's joy over this God-willed grief that produces repentance is therefore firmly rooted in the scriptural themes examined in our third chapter. For a frequent focus of those passages is that in the era of the prophets' ministry Israel did not (and could not) repent (Jer 3:6–14; 5:3; 8:4–6; 30:12–13; Ezek 18:31; Isa 42:18–25; 44:18–20). Even so, Israel experienced a kind of sorrow, but not the sorrow that would produce genuine repentance and thereby lead to salvation (cf. Ezek 2:10; 3:4–9; 7:27; 8:18). As a result, Israel fell under God's judgment (Isa 48:18–19; Ezek 16:42–43; 20:25–26, 33–38), sometimes described in terms of "death" (Ezek 18:31–32; 37:11–12) or even "sorrow" (λύπη in Isa 50:11 LXX). Nevertheless, in line with Deut 30:1–10 the prophets promised that in the future God would transform his people's heart and so cause them to repent (Jer 24:6–7; Ezek 11:19–20; 36:26–27; 37:14). God would cause his people to

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44. In Isa 59:20 God promises redemption to "those in Jacob" who "turn from transgression" (MT: לְשָׁבֵי פָשַׁע; similarly, Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotian; LXX has "[God] will turn away ungodliness from Jacob"; similarly, Targ.). Paul cites this passage (LXX) in Rom 11:27 to describe the coming salvation of Israel, adding a pluralized citation of Isa 27:9 ("this is my covenant with them, *when I forgive their sins*"; on Paul's likely connection here with Jer 31:31–34, see Wagner, *Heralds*, 290: "In both cases it is God himself who guarantees Israel's ability to keep faith."). Is it more than coincidental that in Romans Paul only speaks of God's χρηστότης ("kindness") in 2:4—where it should lead to μετάνοια—and in the near context of this citation at 11:21—where Paul contrasts the Roman believers' humble reception of God's mercy with Israel's hard-hearted disobedience? Writing to the Romans *from Corinth* (Rom 16:1, 23), Paul apparently understands Isa 59:20–21 (with its mention of both covenant and Spirit; cf. 2 Cor 3!) as a promise that Christ will bring to hard-hearted Israel the *repentance* (and forgiveness) already possessed by Gentile Christians!

grieve in a *new* way—that is, they would grieve over their sin in shame and repentance (Isa 54:6, 11; Jer 31:18–21; Ezek 36:29; 37:23). They will thus escape divine judgment—that is, "eschatological penalty" (2 Cor 7:9) or "death" (2 Cor 7:10)—which will fall upon their (and God's) enemies (Isa 49:25–26; 50:7–8, 11; 51:22–23; Jer 30:10–17). Or, to put it positively, God would bring *salvation* to his grieved, repentant people (Isa 49:25–26; 51:5–8; 52:7–10; Jer 30:10–15).[45]

In light of this scriptural backdrop of themes we can better understand Paul's language and argument here: because the Corinthians are experiencing the kind of grief that produces soft-hearted repentance, they will not suffer any "eschatological penalty" or "death" (7:9, 10)—that is, their repentance will lead to "salvation" (7:10). Alternatively, if theirs was a *worldly* grief (7:10), they would be in a similar situation to Israel under Moses's ministry of "condemnation" and "death" (3:7, 9): saddened by suffering and punishment with the circumstantial and personal losses these entail, but still fundamentally opposed to God and his appointed servants/messengers (Jer 5:3; 11:9–13; Ezek 2:10—3:11), and therefore under his judgment (Isa 50:10–11; λύπη in 50:11 LXX!).[46] For what characterizes the κόσμος in the Corinthian correspondence is its

45. Emmanuel Nathan, "Of Grief that Turns to Comfort: MT Echoes Resounding in the Background of 2 Cor 7:5–16?" (paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the SBL, Baltimore, MD, 25 November 2013), argues that in 2 Cor 7:10 Paul alludes to Jer 31:15 MT and its broader context about God grieving the nation into repentance/comfort and thereby salvation.

46. Scott, *2 Corinthians*, 168.

basic opposition to God and consequent judgment by him (1 Cor 1:20–21; 2:6–8, 12; 3:19; 11:32; 2 Cor 5:19). The Corinthians' repentance and renewed allegiance to Paul demonstrates that they are experiencing ἡ κατὰ θεὸν λύπη instead of ἡ τοῦ κόσμου λύπη.

Next, using the emphatic ἰδού in 7:11, Paul points the Corinthians to their own response as evidence (γάρ) of their claim to this eschatological salvation.[47] For Paul again highlights the agency of God behind their grief and repentant response, combining both a divine passive and κατὰ θεόν into one phrase: τὸ κατὰ θεὸν λυπηθῆναι. The God who "saves" is the same God who has caused their grief, a grief that has produced eagerness, on top of which Paul excitedly adds other positive responses such as indignation, fear, and longing.[48] As in 7:7, Paul rejoices in the mournful obedience of God's people, promised by the prophets (Jer 31:18–20; Ezek 36:27, 31–32). But again, as in 7:7, the Corinthians are *not* rejoicing, even though the prophets frequently predict the joy of the redeemed.[49] Even so, the ultimate result of the Corinthians' multifaceted response is that they have commended themselves as pure (ἁγνός) in the conflict that prompted the "tearful letter."[50] While ἁγνός can mean "innocent," it most often means

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47. So Harris, *2 Corinthians*, 541.

48. Paul's repeated use of ἀλλά is rhetorically ascensive (BDF §448.6): " . . . and not only this, but also . . . " See Vegge, *2 Corinthians*, 100–104, for a helpful analysis of all these words and how such "catalogues" were used in Greco-Roman literature for emphasis.

49. Jer 31:4, 12–13, 16; 33:11; Isa 51:11; 55:12; see p. 135.

50. That is, the Corinthians, though formerly guilty, have responded properly with repentance and so are now "pure" (see Harris, *2 Corinthians*, 543). The Corinthians have "commended themselves" (συνίστημι ἑαυτούς) in the *positive* sense that Paul also claims for himself (2 Cor 4:2; 6:4) and not in the

"pure," especially in a cultic or moral sense.[51] Given the theological and judicial context of these verses, ἁγνός likely has a cultic nuance here, especially in light of Paul's recent argument in 2 Cor 6:16–17 and 7:1 that, because believers are the "temple of the living God" who are not to touch anything unclean, they must cleanse themselves in holiness (cf. Ezek 36:25–29; 37:28).[52] The Corinthians' "purity" is a direct result of God's prior and ongoing work in their lives; this is why (γάρ, 7:11) Paul knows—and wants them to know—that their *being* grieved will lead to *being* saved through their *being* caused to repent (7:10).

In 7:12 Paul derives an inference (ἄρα) from the reality of this purity as it relates to the "tearful letter," which was last mentioned in 7:8. He did not ultimately write because of the recipient or the agent of the wrongdoing, but rather because (ἀλλ᾽ ἕνεκεν) he wanted to show their purity to them *before God*.[53] In 7:11 their eagerness (and

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negative sense (opposite word order: ἑαυτούς συνίστημι) that Paul denies for himself and attributes to others (2 Cor 3:1; 5:12; 10:12, 18). In light of 10:18, the one who "commends himself" in the former sense is ultimately being commended by "the Lord." On this phrase's varied word order, see Scott J. Hafemann, "'Self-Commendation' and Apostolic Legitimacy in 2 Corinthians: A Pauline Dialectic?," *NTS* 36/1 (1990): 66–88.

51. Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 403, sees both purity and legal blamelessness in view here. Ἁγνός and its cognates are certainly cultic in John 11:55; Acts 21:24, 26; and 24:18 (cf., among many LXX examples, Exod 19:10; Num 6:2–5; 11:8; Josh 3:5; 1 Sam 21:6; 1 Chr 15:14; 29:16; Isa 66:17; Jer 6:16; 1 Esd 7:10–11; 2 Macc 12:38; 4 Macc 5:37; Let. Aris. 139, 142; Ps.-Phoc. 228). Ἁγνός and καθαρός are closely related in Jas 4:8 and 1 Pet 1:22 (cf. LXX Num 8:7; 19:12; Ps 11:6; Prov 20:9; Isa 66:17; 2 Chr. 29:15). Ἁγνός is at least moral, while not explicitly cultic, in 2 Cor 11:2; Phil 4:8; 1 Tim 4:12; 5:2, 22; Titus 2:5; Jas 3:17; 1 Pet 3:2; and 1 John 3:3. In Phil 2:15; 3:6; 1 Thess 2:10; 3:13; and 5:23 Paul ties the cultic language of "blamelessness" (ἄμεμπτος) to ethical behavior.

52. We note again that Ezekiel's eschatological temple is only for the repentantly ashamed (Ezek 43:10–11).

53. We take "before God" to go with the revealing of the Corinthians' eagerness, with Barnett, *2*

everything else) has proven their *purity*, while in 7:12 Paul underscores the theological import of their response by showing that their eagerness is *before God*.[54] He interprets "purity" ultimately in terms of standing "before" the divine judge, who will bring them salvation instead of death.[55] Thus Paul effectively makes the same point in 7:10 and 12: the divine judge will acquit and rescue them, in line with the prophetic promises regarding God's "new covenant" people (e.g., Isa 49:25–26; 50:7–8; 51:22; Jer 30:10–17; 33:6–9). The repentant Corinthians are forgiven by their merciful God (cf. Isa 55:7; cf. their corresponding forgiveness by Paul in 2:7–10). Their purity-proving eagerness (7:11) is, on the one hand, the evidential basis (γάρ) of their eschatological salvation (7:10) while, on the other, it is also the motivation (ἄρα) behind Paul's letter: he wrote to prove to them their eschatological status before the divine judge (cf. 2:9).[56] In this way

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Corinthians, 380–81, who points to 4:2; 5:10, 11; and 8:21 for similar "revelation before God" ideas. Barnett also points out that their eagerness is equivalent to their "obedience in everything" in the parallel 2:9.

54. In 7:12 σπουδή stands alone as a metonym for all the responses named in 7:11, where σπουδή appears first.

55. Scott, *2 Corinthians*, 168–69. Barnett, *2 Corinthians*, 381: Ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ "is one of a number of phrases used in 2 Corinthians that calls for appropriate actions in the present in light of the great eschatological moment when all things will be revealed." The phrase ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ is often used to describe the judicial presence of the all-knowing God, whether on earth or in heaven (BDAG, 342); on which, see Hafemann, *Suffering and the Spirit*, 170–74. See also David A. Renwick, *Paul, the Temple, and the Presence of God*, BJS 224 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991), 62–74, who shows how Paul's "before God" motif is also cultic (and thus justifies our cultic-legal understanding of ἁγνός in 7:11). Besides Paul's uses of this phrase in 2 Cor 4:2 (cf. 8:21), see, e.g., Rom 3:20; 14:22; 1 Cor 1:29–30; Gal 1:20; as well as Luke 16:15; Acts 4:19; 7:46; 10:31; Heb 4:13; Rev 3:2; and 12:10. Note similar uses of ἔναντι (and related words such as ἐναντίον, κατέναντι, or κατενώπιον) in 2 Cor 2:17; 12:19; Col 1:22; Eph 1:4; Luke 1:6; and Acts 8:21.

56. It is not necessary to suppose, with Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 1:495, that the ἄρα cannot be truly inferential, i.e., that Paul is "retrospectively attributing to himself an intention which was not present at

the apostle continues to set his "tearful letter" against a scriptural-eschatological backdrop of themes, as he has done already in 7:6, 9–11, so that they will properly understand their relationship to Paul (and his letters) in the broader context of God's "new covenant" redemption.[57]

The rhetorical argument as expressed in the logical relationships within 7:9–12 can thus be summarized as follows. In 7:9, Paul states that his eventual lack of regret

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the time of writing, but which, in the light of the letter's effects, might appear to have been its real purpose." Paul really did write in confident expectation that (at least some of) the Corinthians would repent, since he had already seen the Spirit at work among them (3:2–3); so James M. Scott, *Adoption as Sons of God: An Exegetical Investigation into the Background of* ΥΙΟΘΕΣΙΑ *in the Pauline Corpus*, WUNT 2/48 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1992), 219: "The presence of the Spirit in the Corinthians is proof of the divine legitimacy of Paul's apostleship. . . . Paul needs the Corinthians as visible fruit of his Spirit-giving ministry." Similarly, Paul last visited Corinth in confidence that the Corinthian church would be his eschatological boast (1:15). Furthermore, when he later refused to come back (1:23), he still remained committed to their joy because (γάρ) they had stood (*perfect* tense—ongoing results!) in faith (1:24). Similarly, in 1 Cor 1:4–9 Paul expects the Corinthians to be divinely strengthened "to the end" (1:8) since they have received grace in Christ (1:4) in that they were totally enriched in him (1:5) as evidenced by the confirmation of Paul's testimony (1:6) and their full possession of the (Spiritual) gifts (1:7). The ultimate root of the Corinthians' perseverance unto and through final judgment is the faithfulness of God, who has effectively called the Corinthians into fellowship with Christ (1:9). In the same way Paul is confident in the Galatians' eventual repentance (Gal 5:7–10) because of their past transformation by the Spirit through faith (3:1–5; cf. 4:12–15), while his confidence that Philemon (Phlm 21) will welcome Onesimus is grounded in his relationship to Christ (8) and their mutual fellowship "in Christ" (6, 17, 20). Thus, John M. G. Barclay, "Grace and the Transformation of Agency in Christ," in *Redefining First-Century Jewish and Christian Identities: Essays in Honor of Ed Parish Sanders*, ed. Fabian E. Udoh, Susannah Heschel, Mark Chancey, and Gregory Tatum, CJAS 16 (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2008), 385, summarizing his survey of Paul's varied (but cohesive) interweaving of divine and human agency (1 Cor 15:10; Phil 2:12–14; Gal 2:19–21; Rom 15:15–19; 2 Cor 9:8–10): "If Paul is generally confident about God's verdict at [the final] judgment, it is because those who 'remain in the kindness of God' (Rom 11:22) can trust that God will complete the transformative work that he has begun (Phil 1:6)." On whether or not Paul's confidence statements were genuine or merely rhetorical topoi, see note 16, as well as p. 57n85.

57. See notes 4 and 6. Fitzgerald, *Cracks*, 159, points out that 1:15—2:13; 7:5–16 resemble a Greco-Roman *encomium*, in which "praise and apology are coordinated in service to each other" so that "the present letter of 2 Cor 1–9 represents Paul's attempt to capitalize on their positive response to his letter and Titus' mission by turning 'your zeal for us' (7:12) into the insight that 'we are your boast' (1:14)."

over the "tearful letter" (7:8) led to his rejoicing that God caused the Corinthians to repent in their grief, as the prophets promised about the "new covenant" restoration. Because God has so worked upon them, they will suffer no penalty. In 7:10–12, Paul further details the cause (γάρ in 7:10) of this joy by putting it into eschatological and scriptural context (and thus showing that the "penalty" should be understood eschatologically). He rejoices because the Corinthians' God-willed, grief-induced repentance necessarily leads to eschatological salvation, unlike the grief of the world, which leads to eschatological death (7:10). The evidence (γάρ, 7:11) of their claim to this salvation is their purity-proving response to him. Because of this multifaceted response (ἄρα in 7:12), the function of Paul's "tearful letter" can be rightly understood: it was meant to reveal their (pure) status before God, the divine judge (7:12), and thus to lead to salvation and not death (back to 7:10). In short:

> [Therefore,][58] I am rejoicing (7:9)
>
> > Because your God-willed grief produces repentance that leads to salvation (7:10),
> >
> > > Because this repentance proves your purity (7:11),
> >
> > Therefore I wrote to demonstrate your [salvific] status before God (7:12).

58. Again, the implied inference of 7:9 looks back to "I am not regretting" in 7:8, which is itself the ground of "I rejoiced greatly" in 7:7.

7:13a: Paul's Restated Joy, Now Refocused upon Titus

Here Paul again proclaims his joy, just as he did in 7:7 and 9. Looking back to his eschatological interpretation of the Corinthians' response in 7:10–12,[59] Paul says, "Therefore (διὰ τοῦτο), we have been comforted." In turn, Paul's comfort has caused (ἐπί) him to "abundantly, greatly rejoice" (περισσοτέρως μᾶλλον ἐχάρημεν).[60] In multiple ways, Paul's statement of joy in 7:13 looks back to his statement of joy in 7:7. First, he says that his comfort grounds his joy,[61] just as in 7:6–7, where Paul's (divinely-given) comfort results (ὥστε) in his joy. Second, Paul modifies χαίρω with an immediately-preceding μᾶλλον, as in 7:7. Third, Paul reuses the aorist tense for χαίρω.[62] Finally, Paul refocuses on Titus, whom he has not mentioned since 7:7. Just as with Paul, Titus's comfort (7:7) has led to Titus's own joy (7:13), which is itself yet another facet of Paul's reason (ἐπί) for rejoicing. Paul thus links his affirmation of joy in 7:13 to his affirmation

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59. Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 1:497: Διὰ τοῦτο "could refer to everything that has already been said about the Corinthians' response to the apostolic letter."

60. Barnett, *2 Corinthians*, 383, shows how 7:13 forms two sentences that center around Paul's joy.

61. So Bultmann, *Zweite Brief*, 63. Hafemann, *2 Corinthians*, 314, points out that 7:4–16 repeatedly grounds Paul's joy in his comfort (7:4, 6–7, 13); similarly, Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 392.

62. In 7:7, Paul uses the aorist infinitive χαρῆναι, but the mood seems to be dictated by ὥστε, which Paul almost always pairs with an infinitive (Rom 7:6; 15:19; 1 Cor 5:1; 13:8; 2 Cor 1:8; 2:7; 3:7; Phil 1:13; 1 Thess 1:7, 8) instead of an indicative (Gal 2:13). The aorist of course does not necessarily mean that Paul is thinking of a past action: Paul uses the aorist ἐχάρην in Phil 4:10 to describe his current state (ἤδη ποτέ). Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 564–65, points out that the aorist tense, especially with verbs of emotion, sometimes describes a very recent or present action for dramatic effect. The passive voice of χαίρω in 7:7 and 13 is lexically determined ("deponent"), i.e., all NT occurrences of the aorist χαίρω are passive in form.

of joy in 7:9: both are tied to the eschatological vindication of the Corinthians (7:10–12), with Paul's eschatological decoding of the Corinthians' repentance in 7:10–12 flowing *from* his affirmation of joy in 7:9 (as a ground) and *into* his affirmation of joy in 7:13 (as an inference). At the same time, the affirmation of joy in 7:13 is a development of the affirmation of joy in 7:7 in that Paul uses the elative περισσοτέρως to emphasize his joy's plentitude.[63] Having now depicted the scriptural backdrop and eschatological nature of the Corinthians' response and its consequences in the lives of Paul and Titus, the apostle returns to Titus as he further explains the cause of his own abundant joy.

7:13b–16: Paul's Joy Caused by Titus's Joy

While Titus's joy is the focus of these verses, *Paul's* joy remains their overarching theme in that Titus's joy and affection have reinforced Paul's own joy over the Corinthians.[64] The first reason (ὅτι) Paul gives for his joy over Titus's joy is that—in

63. Paul is likely echoing 7:4 (ὑπερπερισσεύομαι τῇ χαρᾷ).

64. So Wolff, *Zweite Brief*, 160: 7:14 "begründet die Freude des Paulus" (similarly, Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 1:497).

contrast to Paul's lack of rest (ἄνεσις) in Troas or Macedonia (2:13; 7:5)—Titus's soul *has now been* "refreshed" (ἀναπαύω)[65] by "all of you."[66]

Paul then gives a further reason that he (and Titus) are rejoicing (ὅτι, 7:14):[67] Paul's past boasting about the Corinthians (the perfect κεκαύχημαι, cf. 7:4) has proven true and so vindicated him, rather than proving false and so putting him to shame, so that Paul was and is acting out his anticipated eschatological boast in the Corinthians (1:14).[68] As we have seen, Paul's response to Titus's joy reflects what has been true

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65. Given the immediate context, "refreshed" may have an eschatological nuance (see the similar ἀνάψυξις used eschatologically in Acts 3:20). Elsewhere Paul uses "refreshing" to describe an encouraging, helpful relationship (1 Cor 16:18; Phlm 7, 20). However, the idea of "rest/refreshment," closely tied to Sabbath, is of course rife within texts describing God's blessing of the faithful (or curse upon the disobedient). E.g.: Deut 28:65; Isa 11:10; 14:3, 7; 57:20 LXX; Ezek 34:14–15; Mic 4:4 LXX; Hab 3:16 LXX; Matt 11:28–29; Acts 3:20; Rev 14:11, 13; T. Dan 5:12. (Note especially the connection between joy and rest in Isa 11:7; T. Dan 5:12.)

66. "All" should not be taken to mean "every recipient without exception" (as in the "rhetorical amplification" view of Vegge, *2 Corinthians*, 208–13; or in the view that Paul and/or Titus are exaggerating the situation, argued by Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 397; and Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 1:497–98). Rather "all" (cf. 7:15) refers to the entirety of the class in view—i.e., the repentant Corinthians (so Scott, *2 Corinthians*, 170, 172; Hafemann, *2 Corinthians*, 315) who have a legitimate claim to the promises of 6:14–18 (cf. 7:1). Paul goes on in 8:7 to say *both* "Just as you abound in all (ἐν παντί)—in faith and in word and in knowledge and in all eagerness and in our love for you—" *and* "So *also* you must abound in this grace" (taking the ἵνα as "periphrasis for the imperative" [BDAG, 477; cf. BDF §387]). Within a single verse we see that "everything" does not have to mean "*every* thing." So Paul can use πᾶς in 7:13 without referring to every single Corinthian. See BDF §275 ("πάντες ἄνθρωποι = 'everything to which the term man is applicable'") and Bo Reicke, πᾶς, *TDNT* 5:888 ("the context shows who are meant [by οἱ πάντες]"), 889 ("the extent and content [of πάντα is] decided by the context"). Therefore, the caution of Duane F. Watson, "The Three Species of Rhetoric and the Study of the Pauline Epistles," in *Paul and Rhetoric*, ed. J. Paul Sampley and Peter Lampe (New York: T&T Clark, 2010), 45, against simplistic generalizations about Paul's audience and his rhetorical method is relevant: "Some [in Paul's audiences] are loyal to him, some in opposition. Some have full and some have partial understanding of his gospel. These audience present a complex exigence with many facets. Paul's rhetorical situations are not as pure as those presumed in Greco-Roman handbooks . . . Paul has to answer many questions in one letter, and some of these questions have more applicability to one part of his audience than another."

67. Harris, *2 Corinthians*, 549; and Thrall, *II Corinthians*, 1:498.

68. Paul similarly ties his joy to an eschatological expectation of not-being-ashamed in Rom 5:1–5

throughout 2 Corinthians, namely, that Paul ties the truthfulness of his apostolic speech "before God" (cf. 2:17; 4:2) to his legitimacy as a servant of the new covenant (cf. 6:7, 8; and 11:10; 12:6; 13:8). Given that he claims to be the herald of Isaiah's "day of salvation" (2 Cor 6:2; cf. Isa 49:8), Paul is here *also* claiming something like the vindication and shamelessness of Isaiah's "servant" (Isa 50:7–9). Hence, confident that (at least many of) the Corinthians would be his boast at the last judgment (1:12–15), Paul had boasted to Titus about the Corinthians even before they received the "tearful letter."[69] Paul could be so bold—unlike Moses (3:12)!—since he was confident that the Spirit was already at work transforming the Corinthians, meaning that he could not ultimately become discouraged over them (4:1), even if he had regret over sending the "tearful letter" (7:8; cf. Paul's anxiety over his churches in 11:28). Their repentant response is evidence that his truthful speech is not "veiled" to them—that is, that they

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and Phil 1:18–20. The expectation of vindication and shamelessness may have a background in such Psalms as 24:3; 34:26–27; 118:80, 116, as well as Isa 45:17; 49:23; 50:7. On Phil 1:20: Gerald F. Hawthorne, *Philippians*, WBC 43 (Milton Keyes: Word, 1991), 42; and Schapdick, *Eschatisches Heil*, 157 ("Der Ausdruck [ἐν οὐδενὶ αἰσχυνθήσομαι] ist vor allem vor seinem atl. Hintergrund zu interpretieren."); on Rom 5:5: Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 304n49.

69. See notes 16 and 56. Pointing to 1:7, 15; 2:3; 3:3, 4, Scott, *2 Corinthians*, 172n3, argues that Paul's confidence in the Corinthians was genuine in that it was "general and forward-thrusting. For it seems that no matter how desperate the situation in Corinth becomes, Paul still refers to the church as 'the church of God,' 'saints,' 'beloved children,' and the like." Similarly, Barnett, *2 Corinthians*, 384–85; Hafemann, *2 Corinthians*, 314; and Matera, *II Corinthians*, 177: "Even in the midst of the crisis, Paul was confident of the work that God's Spirit had accomplished through him."

are those experiencing "life" and "salvation" rather than "death" (2:15–16; 4:3; cf. 1 Cor 1:18, 21), as he has just pointed out in 7:10–12.

In 7:15 Paul gives a further description (καί) of Titus's (and thus Paul's) joy and what has caused it. Titus's "bowels" are abounding toward the Corinthians; that is, he has abundant (περισσοτέρως) affection for them.[70] The reason Titus has such great affection—taking the adverbial participle ἀναμιμνῃσκομένου to be an implied causal—is that he is remembering the obedience of "all of you," the repentant Corinthians.[71] The "obedience" of the Corinthians is a consistent theme throughout the entire canonical letter: Paul originally wrote the "tearful letter" to test the Corinthians' obedience "in all things" (2:9), while he also looks forward to the "completion" of this obedience through finishing their offering (9:4) and especially when he comes to confront them in person, when he will punish any remaining disobedience (10:6; cf. 12:14, 20–21; 13:1–2, 5–7, 10). Thus Paul and Titus are overjoyed to see the firstfruits of the repentant obedience that Paul so confidently expects as a result of the Spirit's "new covenant" work among them (3:6), a work promised by Israel's prophets (Jer 32:38–40; Ezek 36:27).

Paul finishes 2 Cor 7:16 by detailing further what this obedience entailed (taking the ὡς as epexegetical: "in that"[72]): they received Titus with "fear and trembling" (φόβος

70. Contra the constrained σπλάγχνα of some of the Corinthians toward Paul (6:12). See the explanation and many Pauline uses of the σπλάγχνα metaphor in BDAG, 938.

71. For this limited understanding of "all," see note 66.

καί τρόμος) which likely describes a sense of fear before God in that Titus represents Paul, who himself represents Christ and God.[73] Indeed, the prophets promised that God's restored people would be characterized by a fearful obedience toward their covenant Lord (Isa 50:10; Jer 32:39–40; cf. 2 Cor 7:1). Paul also uses the phrase φόβος καί τρόμος in 1 Cor 2:3 to describe how he preached to the Corinthians, conscious of God's presence and power (cf. 1 Cor 1:18, 23–24, 29; 2:4–5), which fits with the way he describes his ministry in 2 Corinthians as one "before God" (2:10, 17; 3:4; 4:2; 12:19), resulting from his consequent fear of the Lord (5:11). Paul also uses the phrase in Phil 2:12 (cf. Eph 6:5). The phrase likely originates in Old Testament descriptions of "the human reaction to God's power in protecting his people . . . or the appropriate human attitude before the divine majesty."[74] In sum, Titus's affection is rooted in the Corinthians' proper response toward God in that they have obediently received him, and, by extension, Paul.

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72. Takamitsu Muraoka, "Use of hōs in the Greek Bible," *NovT* 7/1 (1964): 61.

73. Wolff, *Zweite Brief*, 161: "Die Gemeinde sah im Auftreten des Titus Gott selbst am Werk, sie erkannte ihn also als legitimen Vertreter des Paulus an." See Margaret M. Mitchell, "New Testament Envoys in the Context of Greco-Roman Diplomatic and Epistolary Conventions: The Example of Timothy and Titus," *JBL* 111/4 (1992): 641–62, esp. 647, 653, on the way that envoys in the Greco-Roman world and throughout the New Testament tangibly represent those who send them. Paul repeatedly points to his divine commission throughout 2 Cor; e.g., 1:21–22; 2:14–17; 3:5–6; 4:1, 6; 5:18–20; 6:1, 4; 10:7–8, 13; 12:12; 13:3, 10.

74. Harris, *2 Corinthians*, 552. See Exod 15:16; Deut 2:25; 11:25; Isa 19:16; Ps 2:11. Barnett, *2 Corinthians*, 385, argues that Paul uses this phrase in "contexts relating to eschatological salvation."

At the same time, and as we noted above, we do not read here or anywhere else in the letter that the Corinthians are *joyful*, even though the prophets repeatedly promised that God would transform the sorrow of his "new covenant" people into joy (Jer 31:4, 12–13, 16; 33:11; Isa 51:11; 55:12).[75] Indeed, Paul has already explained that the "tearful letter" ultimately aimed at their joy (2 Cor 2:2). In sharp contrast to this shortfall among the Corinthians, Paul will shortly extol the generosity of the Macedonians, who gave *joyfully* even though they did so in great affliction (2 Cor 8:2: χαρά). He then calls the Corinthians to follow their example by giving freely and *cheerfully* (9:7: ἱλαρός, i.e., μὴ ἐκ λύπης!).[76] Paul's ministry is genuinely vindicated by the repentance of the Corinthians, but, in light of these "joy" connections between chapters 2, 8, and 9, we suggest that Paul wants to see them experience more fully the eschatological restoration promised by the prophets. He wants their repentance to produce joy, which they will have when they—like Paul and the Macedonians—suffer on behalf of others through sacrificially meeting their needs. Therefore in 2 Cor 8–9 Paul sketches the shape that the Corinthians' "new covenant" repentance should take. In this sense we see that their experience of the "new covenant," even on this side of the resurrection, is both "already" and "not yet" (cf. 2 Cor 5:1–5). And thus Paul's responses

75. See pp. 66 and 135.

76. L&N links ἱλαρός to χαρά at 25.117, 123, under the semantic subdomain "Happy, Glad, Joyful."

to the recently repentant Corinthians in chapters 7 and 8–9 assume the former and expect the latter.

Even so, Paul remains profoundly joyful. In 7:16 he describes his joy for the fourth time in ten verses: he is rejoicing because (ὅτι) he is confident in everything (ἐν παντὶ θαρρῶ) with regards to the (repentant) Corinthians.[77] Here he links back to the joy of 7:13, which introduced Paul's detailed explanation of Titus's joyful response. And just as with the present indicative χαίρω of 7:9, which was the inference of his lack of regret (7:8), here too there is an implied "therefore" preceding the χαίρω of 7:16, since Paul's rejoicing is a direct consequence of everything he's said about Titus since 7:13b. In short, Paul says: "I rejoiced greatly (7:13a), because of Titus's response to your obedience (7:13b–15): therefore, to say it again, I am rejoicing (7:16a)." This is exactly the same way that Paul links his interlocking statements of joy in 7:7d and 9a: Paul is rejoicing because of the nature of the Corinthians' response to him, the consequence of which is Paul's restated and now reinterpreted joy. These four statements of joy all serve

77. Scott, *2 Corinthians*, 172, points out that Paul's confidence in the repentant majority does not entirely overshadow the remaining tensions with the minority of the congregation (contra, e.g., Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 398, arguing that the sunny 7:16 "could hardly have stood in the same letter with the worried polemic of chaps. 10–13"). Paul also uses θαρρέω with πάντοτε in 5:6 to describe his constant confidence as the logical inference (οὖν) of God's coming eschatological work, the current "down payment" of which is the Spirit (5:5). Similarly, in 7:5–16 the Corinthians' repentance/obedience is evidence of the Spirit's salvific work (7:9–12, 15; cf. 3:3–8), which drives Paul's joy and apostolic confidence in them (the implied inference behind 7:15). Negatively, in 10:2 Paul's confidence (θαρρέω) in punishing the disobedient Corinthians is *also* grounded (γάρ, 10:3–4) in God's powerful work, i.e., his powerful work of *destruction* (δυνατός τῷ θεῷ πρὸς καθαίρεσιν, 10:4; cf. 10:13, 17–18).

to explain why and how (γάρ, 7:5) it is that Paul came to be filled with so much joy in the midst of affliction (7:4).[78]

In short, the Corinthians' response vindicates Paul's ministry in line with the larger argument of the epistle. In this regard, Seitz insightfully notes that Isa 54–66 is "concerned with demonstrating God's vindication of the servant, as promised in 52:13–53:12" (cf. the call for repentance in 55:6–7!).[79] This corresponds closely to the way that Paul, as the uniquely authoritative "servant of the servant," ties his own vindication to the repentant, obedient response of the Corinthians (2 Cor 5:20—6:1)! Furthermore, their repentance is the means by which Isaiah's promise of comfort and joy comes to *the Corinthians* as well, which is central to the aim of Paul's letter and the vindication of his ministry. Otherwise, like those who do not trust on God in Isa 50:10, they too will experience God's judgment in the form of "torment"/"sorrow" (מַעֲצֵבָה/λύπη, 50:11). For as we have seen, in 2 Cor 7:9–11, Paul describes two kinds of λύπη: one leading to repentance (and salvation) and one leading to death, which, as shown earlier, Paul links to judgment and condemnation (e.g., 2 Cor 2:15–16; 3:7, 9).

78. Barnett, *2 Corinthians*, 387, notes the patterned centrality of joy in 7:4–16.

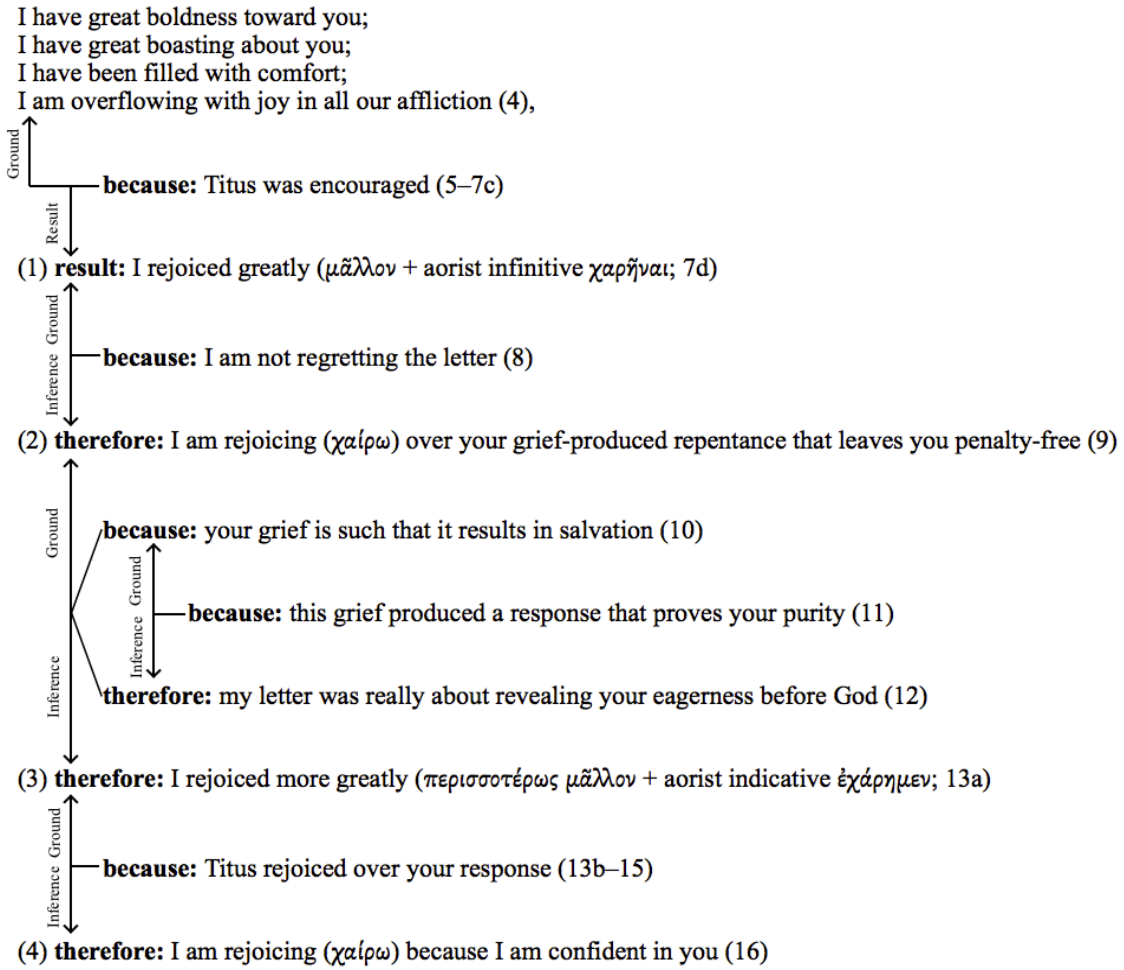
79. Seitz, "Isaiah 40–66," 471.

Summary of the Argument and Scriptural Context of 7:5–16

We now summarize the logic of this passage, working backward along its steps. The last two affirmations of joy (7:13a, 16) concern Titus's response (7:13b–15): Paul is rejoicing (7:13a) *because* of Titus's response (7:13b) and, as an *inference* of Titus's response, Paul is rejoicing with confidence (7:16). Together, Paul's twofold affirmation of his joy in 7:13–16 functions as the inference (διὰ τοῦτο, 13a) of his scriptural-eschatological interpretation of the Corinthians' response in 7:10–12, which as a whole grounds Paul's affirmation of joy in 7:9. Thus, 7:9 and 13–16 are parallel affirmations of Paul's joy arranged around the scriptural-eschatological themes in 7:10–12. Finally, the three statements about joy in 7:9a, 13a, and 16 all together (i.e., the argument of 7:9–16) serve as the inference of Paul's lack of regret in 7:8, which itself is the ground of Paul's affirmation of joy in 7:7—the main point of 7:5–7.[80] Therefore, the entirety of 7:5–16 functions as an interweaving, mutually illumining, fourfold affirmation of Paul's joy that together with its own internally overlapping causes gives the holistic cause (γάρ, 7:5) of the boldness, boasting, comfort, and, especially, the joy he affirmed in 7:4. Hence, the structural core of this passage is Paul's description of the Corinthians' grief and repentance according to the eschatological themes from the Scriptures that he has used

80. Wilk, *Bedeutung*, 297, notes this "ringförmige Struktur," but does not develop the central themes of vv. 9–12.

to defend himself elsewhere (7:10–12).[81] Visually, the interweaving relationship between ground and inference looks like this:



We have shown that Paul's argument in 7:5–16 explains the source of his joy by giving its interweaving, mutually-interpretative causes. He states his joy four times, with everything in the passage functioning either as the ground or the inference of his joy. Again, the structural and logical core of the argument about "why Paul rejoices" (7:4) is his interpretation of the Corinthians' grief in terms of eschatological motifs

81. See p. 139n32 for our interpretation of ἡ γὰρ κατὰ θεὸν λύπη and p. 145 for our interpretation of ἡ τοῦ κόσμου λύπη.

drawn from his reading of Israel's Scriptures (7:10–12). Against the backdrop of these prophetic expectations, Paul repeatedly weaves his joy (and their grief) into the fabric of the redemptive reality he sees in Corinth.

Paul has interpreted the Corinthians' response through the thematic lens of the prophetic texts that he has already used to defend himself throughout the letter. The prophets promised that *God* would cause his people to repent by *unilaterally* transforming them (e.g., Jer 32:38–41; Ezek 36:26–27). In the same way, by repeatedly using divine passives (ἐλυπήθητε, 7:9, 11, 12) alongside the phrase κατὰ θεόν ("according to God's will"; 7:9–11), Paul emphasizes how their grief, repentance, and salvation all derive from God, who has already ushered in the "day of salvation" (2 Cor 6:2; Isa 49:8) through the work of Christ (2 Cor 5:11–21) and the transformation of his people's hearts by the Spirit (2 Cor 3:3–6).[82] Furthermore, Paul describes the two kinds of λύπη in terms of the "repentance/salvation" and "death" they produce (7:10). Again, just as the prophets promised, Paul then argues that God will bring his promised salvation to his soft-hearted people, and condemnation to all those who oppose him (and by extension, his apostle Paul!). Hence, because the Corinthians' own repentance could

82. Wright, *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*, 727, after discussing Rom 8; 1 Cor 12; and 2 Cor 2:14—6:13: "At precisely those points where Paul most strongly highlights the special work of the spirit, he does so within a narrative framework which reinforces the second-temple Jewish monotheistic structure of thought. The spirit is the one through whom the new Exodus comes about, and with it the Deuteronomic fulfilment/renewal of the covenant, the keeping of the *Shema*, the loving of God from the heart and (not least) the establishment of the community as the true temple."

derive only from this promised transformation and redemption, Paul sees their repentance as evidence for his own legitimacy as a minister of the "new covenant." Second Corinthians 7:5–16 thus fits with the larger "new covenant" logic of 7:2–4. For Paul is giving the *reason* (γάρ, 7:5) that he rejoices so much in the midst of tribulation (7:4), a joy which derives from the "new covenant" nature of his relationship to the Corinthians (7:3). This, Paul says, is exactly why they should embrace him (7:2).

We turn now to a few select texts from the Second Temple period in order to understand Paul's own reading of these prophetic texts by relating it to those of his peers. We will see how and where he fits into the spectrum of Second Temple views on the relationship between Israel's repentance and its restoration. By comparing and contrasting Paul to these texts, we will not only see the broad importance of these themes and expectations to Second Temple literature, but we will also see why the Corinthians' repentance is for the apostle a profound source of joy, confidence, and legitimacy as their minister of the "new covenant."

CHAPTER FIVE: RESTORATION AND REPENTANCE IN SELECT SECOND TEMPLE TEXTS

Having shown how 2 Cor 7:2–16 interprets key prophetic promises about transformation, repentance, and eschatological restoration, we now examine select Second Temple texts that also engage with these themes.[1] We seek to understand how Paul and his contemporaries variously interpreted these themes as expressed in their common scriptural heritage.[2] Specifically, we have selected three texts to represent the broad spectrum along which Jewish authors variously understood the role of repentance in relation to heart-transformation and how both lead into the eschatological restoration,[3] a restoration these authors hoped for in line with the promises of Deut 30:1–10.[4] We begin with Baruch, which closely parallels Paul's reading of the prophets

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1. We refer to our introduction (p. 18n33), where we defined these terms so: *repentance* is the decision to *turn away* from acknowledged disobedience and to *turn toward* God and his covenant, a turning inextricably linked to obedience to the covenant's stipulations; *transformation* is the reorientation of a person's moral disposition from disobedience to obedience; and *(eschatological) restoration* is God's comprehensive act of judgment and renewal at the end of history. These definitions are intentionally broad, since, as we will show in this chapter, Second Temple Jewish texts variously understand their nature and interrelationship. Furthermore, while 2 Cor 7 revolves around Paul's joy over the Corinthians' repentance, we are not specifically examining the theme of "joy" in these texts, since they all agree, with Paul, that the eschaton will be a time of great joy for and over God's people. Thus, we focus on how they variously understand what *leads to* this joy, but not so much on the joy itself.

2. See here Wright, *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*, 759–60: "Clearly anyone who knew Deuteronomy 30, and who believed that the covenant had now been renewed, might be expected to claim heart-renewal, or perhaps heart-circumcision, as a sign of that. But the heart-renewal that Paul knew for himself, and saw in some unlikely characters in his congregations . . . moved the question of the heart and its condition from being one of a number of issues to *a position of prominence it had not had in second-temple Judaism*" (emphasis ours).

3. To provide additional examples of these paradigmatic perspectives, we note comparable Second Temple texts within excursuses and footnotes.

by rooting repentance (and hence obedience) in a prior act of divine transformation. We next study Jubilees, which reverses this framework by understanding God's transformation of the heart to be a *response* to repentance. Hence, it understands some to hold a *partial* moral competence that enables them to choose to repent and obey *apart from* a new heart; this new heart then infallibly *preserves* them in obedience to the covenant.[5] Finally we examine 2 Baruch, which reflects a similar repentance-then-transformation framework, but which is far more emphatic about the role of *humans* in effecting their own heart-transformation.

Baruch: God Transforms, Then Israel Repents

Baruch presents itself as a letter from Jeremiah's scribe in Babylon to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, calling them to acknowledge God's justice in punishing sinful Israel.[6] Furthermore, the letter repeatedly affirms that Israel's heart had remained intractably wicked until God unilaterally decided to transform it and so make the people

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4. See David Lincicum, *Paul and the Early Jewish Encounter with Deuteronomy* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), 61–192.

5. See Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 16, who defines three levels of "moral agency" (i.e., the ability for humans to bring about their own obedience to God): competence, partial competence, and incompetence.

6. Scholars widely note two main sections in Baruch: the penitential prose of 1:15—3:8 and the wisdom and exhortation poems of 3:9—5:9. While recognizing that many scholars have questioned the unity of Baruch, we here assume its thematic coherence, as argued by G. W. E. Nickelsburg, "The Bible Rewritten and Expanded," in *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period*, ed. Michael E. Stone (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 144–45, and Daniel Ryan, "Baruch," in *The T&T Clark Companion to the Septuagint*, ed. James K. Aitken (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015), 496. See also Ryan's treatment of the text's provenance (pp. 488–94); he loosely dates it between 165 BC and AD 70.

repentant and obedient, in accordance with Deut 30:1–10. The fact that Baruch and the exiles *are* repentant is evidence that God already has given (or is giving) this new heart, which is necessary for the Torah obedience that leads to life. In other words, the people are totally incapable of repenting and thereby giving God a reason to act on their behalf; he must first mercifully transform their hearts, and on that basis they will repent, obey the law, and be saved. The book ends by extolling God's mercy and by calling the people to wait confidently for his coming comfort and salvation.

Israel's "Evil Heart"

Baruch repeatedly points out that Israel deserved God's punishment for its characteristic hardheartedness. Adapting the penitential prayer of Daniel 9, Baruch says that "to the Lord, our God, belongs righteousness but to us [belongs] shame of faces today" (1:15; cf. 2:6; Dan 9:7),[7] a shame that extends to the people's kings, prophets, priests, and fathers (1:16; cf. 2:7), whom Jeremiah described as patently unrepentant (Jer 32:32). The people have disobeyed God, rejecting his voice and commandments (1:18). This disobedience extends even to the time of the exodus (1:19), a point clearly drawn from Jer 7:25 LXX, where the people's stubborn, evil hearts keep them from obeying God or heeding Jeremiah (Jer 7:26–27).[8]

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7. With an occasional minor adjustment, translations come from the NETS (Tony S. L. Michael, "Barouch"). The Greek text comes from Ziegler, *Jeremias*.

8. See also Ezek 20:8, 13, where this rebellion begins even before the exodus.

As a result, the people have justly received the covenant curses that Moses predicted for all the stubborn-hearted (1:20; cf. Deut 29:17–18; Jer 11:4–5, 8). In 1:21–22 Baruch echoes Jer 7:24–25 when he says that "we did not listen to the voice of the Lord our God according to all the words of the prophets whom he sent to us"; instead, "each of us went off in the intent of his evil heart [ἐν διανοίᾳ καρδίας αὐτοῦ τῆς πονηρᾶς] to work for other gods."[9] Baruch clearly grounds Israel's disobedience in their "evil heart," which in the context of Jeremiah prevents them from repenting (Jer 4:4; 7:27; 18:11–12; cf. Deut 30:6). Baruch's confession again notes this basic heart-level problem in that he acknowledges that they have failed to ask God "to turn each one away from the designs of their evil heart" (2:8).[10] This "evil heart" has led to the curses of exile, characterized by sorrow (λυπέω, 2:18) and the cessation of joy (2:23).[11]

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9. On Israel's καρδία πονηρά, see Jer 3:17; 16:12; 18:12 LXX; see the καρδία κακή in 7:24; 9:14. In the MT versions of these passages, the (הָרָע) לֵב is always tied to שְׁרִרוּת ("stubbornness"), a word lacking in the LXX. Compare Bar 1:22 (ἐν διανοίᾳ καρδίας αὐτοῦ τῆς πονηρᾶς) with Jer 7:25 LXX (ἐν τοῖς ἐνθυμήμασιν τῆς καρδίας αὐτῶν τῆς κακῆς/בְּמֹעֲצוֹת בִּשְׁרִרוּת לִבָּם הָרָע).

10. οὐκ ἐδεήθημεν τοῦ προσώπου κυρίου τοῦ ἀποστρέψαι ἕκαστον ἀπὸ τῶν νοημάτων τῆς καρδίας αὐτῶν τῆς πονηρᾶς. The subject of the infinitive ἀποστρέψαι—God or the people?—is unclear, but in either case Baruch recognizes that God is the ultimate agent behind this "turning" of the evil heart, since he must be asked for it.

11. In describing how disobedience destroyed the people's joy, Baruch clearly alludes to Jer 7:34. In Jer 31:4, 7, 13, God promises to restore their joy by re-establishing his covenant with the repentant people.

God Gives a New Heart

In spite of Israel's great sinfulness (2:19), God has still shown his people great compassion and kindness (2:27). In line with Deut 30:1–10,[12] Baruch points out how God promised to transform his sinful people while in exile—without waiting for them to turn to him. He knew that the people *could not possibly* "hear" (i.e., obey) God's voice[13] because (ὅτι) they are "stiff-necked" (σκληροτράχηλος, 2:30a).[14] Nevertheless, God promised that during the exile they would "return to their heart" (2:30b),[15] a phrase from Deut 30:1 that describes the future repentance of God's people.[16] Baruch is not saying that the people should or even could initiate their own repentance, since he has emphasized that their stubborn, evil hearts have prevented them from "hearing" God's voice,[17] a "hearing" which Deut 30:1–2 promises as a result of this "turning" to the

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12. Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 137, drawing on Watson, *Hermeneutics*, 432–34, and Odil Hannes Steck, *Das apokryphe Baruchbuch*, FRLANT 160 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993), 43: "All the main themes of Deuteronomy 30:1–10 are present and it is best to understand that passage as the primary influence, even though Baruch draws on other material."

13. οὐ μὴ ἀκούσωσίν μου. The double negative aorist subjunctive is the strongest Greek negation, denying "even the idea as being a possibility"; so Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 468.

14. So Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 136. See Deut 9:6, 13 LXX. Jer 4:4 LXX calls the people to "circumcise [their] stiff-heart!" (σκληροκαρδία), i.e., repent (Jer 4:1).

15. καὶ ἐπιστρέψουσιν ἐπὶ καρδίαν αὐτῶν.

16. וְהֲשֵׁבֹתָ אֶל־לְבָבֶךָ; LXX: καὶ δέξῃ εἰς τὴν καρδίαν σου. On this "return to the heart" idiom, see p. 77n18.

17. Similarly, in Isa 44:18–19, God has blinded Israel so that "nobody turns to his heart" (וְלֹא־יָשִׁיב אֶל־לִבּוֹ/καὶ οὐκ ἐλογίσατο τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτοῦ).

heart. Baruch goes on: the people will also "know that I am the Lord their God" (2:31a), a refrain from Ezekiel's restoration promises.[18]

This "turning" and knowledge are the *result* of God's "giving them a heart" and "hearing ears" (2:31b)[19]—and not vice versa, since Baruch has repeatedly described Israel in terms of an evil heart and ears that *cannot* hear.[20] God similarly promises the future gift of "[another/a new] heart" in Jer 24:7; 32[39]:39; Ezek 11:19; 36:26, with Jeremiah linking this gift to both knowing and fearing God (cf. Bar 2:31a; 3:7) and Ezekiel linking it to obedience (cf. Bar 2:31b, 33). By giving his people this knowing heart and "hearing ears," God thus gives what he *had not* given them in Deut 29:3 [4].[21] In other words, "utilising language from Ezekiel in combination with the motif of 'hearing ears' helps Baruch communicate exactly how God's salvific act in Deuteronomy 30:6 solves the deficiency posed in Deuteronomy 29:3. Thus while Moses provides the

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18. As argued by Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 136–37. See especially this phrase in Ezek 28:26; 34:30; 39:22, 28 LXX, all describing future restoration, and the similar phrase in in Ezek 16:60 (where God establishes an eternal covenant and the people repentantly "remember" their "ways"; see both these concepts in Bar 2:33, 35). Cf. Jer 24:7.

19. καὶ δώσω αὐτοῖς καρδίαν καὶ ὦτα ἀκούοντα.

20. So Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 139, who, in light of the "reflection" and "turning" language of Bar 2:32–33 (= 2:30, 31), argues that "we take verses 31b–36 as a detailed exposition of verses 30–31a, the latter functioning as a summary statement for the restoration." Similarly, Michael H. Floyd, "Penitential Prayer in the Second Temple Period from the Perspective of Baruch," in *The Development of Penitential Prayer in Second Temple Judaism*, ed. Mark J. Boda, Daniel K. Falk, and Rodney A. Werline, vol. 2 of *Seeking the Favor of God*, SBLEJL 22 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2007), 59, notes that 2:30–35 describes "the Lord's merciful gift of the possibility of repentance." By contrast, Werline, *Prayer*, 104, understands Bar 2:27–35 to describe God's *response* to the people's *self*-initiated repentance.

21. καὶ οὐκ ἔδωκεν . . . καρδίαν εἰδέναι . . . καὶ ὦτα ἀκούειν. Cf. Israel's deafness in Isa 42:18–20; Jer 5:21.

form of the restoration narrative, Ezekiel helps to interpret its content."[22] As part of this promised renewal, the people will "praise me in the land of their exile" and "remember my name" (2:32), "turning away (ἀποστρέφω) from their hard (σκληρός) back and their evil (πονηρός) deeds" (2:33).[23] Baruch then describes this restoration in terms of God's promise of an "eternal covenant, that I be God to them and they be a people to me" (2:35).[24] The text draws on Jeremiah, who also promises an eternal covenant in Jer 32:40.[25] Like Jeremiah, Baruch links this "eternal covenant" to the land (cf. Jer 32:37; Bar 2:34); the "covenant formula" (cf. Jer 32:38; Bar 2:35b); and the gift of "one" (or "another") heart that generates the fear of God (cf. Jer 32:39, 40; Bar 2:31; 3:7).

In sum, Baruch understands that in light of Israel's intractably stubborn heart, their only hope is God's unilateral choice to give them a new heart that produces repentance and obedience as part of a restored, everlasting covenant relationship.[26] As a paradigmatic expression of this perspective, Baruch interprets Deut 30:1–2 as a promise to restore the people in exile by *causing* them to "turn to their heart" (Bar 2:30), an interpretation clarified by his interweaving allusions to many prophetic promises

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22. Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 137.

23. Recall Baruch's confession of Israel's "evil heart" in 1:22; 2:8; Cf. the "stiff heart" in Jer 4:4.

24. Carey A. Moore, *Daniel, Esther and Jeremiah: The Additions*, AB 44 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1977), 290, links 2:35a to the "new covenant" language of Jer 31:33.

25. Cf. the "new covenant" of Jer 31:31–34 and the "eternal covenant" in Isa 55:3 (linked to repentance) and Ezek 37:26 (linked to the reversal of apostasy in 37:23).

26. Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 138: "Jeremiah's promised new and eternal covenant is now realised."

(particularly from Jeremiah) about God's unilateral commitment to transform the people's sinful heart so that they can and will repent.

Therefore, the repentance of the people is not what makes their restoration possible. Instead, Baruch sees their repentance as evidence that the promised restoration of Deut 30:1–10 is *already* happening (Bar 2:30–35): "Deuteronomy discloses both Israel's plight and the solution."[27] Baruch consequently ends Israel's *post*-transformation confession by twice telling God that "we will praise you" (αἰνέσομέν σε, 3:6, 7), in accordance with 2:31b, where God vows that giving the exiles "a heart and hearing ears" would entail their "praising me" in exile (αἰνέσουσίν με). In 3:7 Baruch notes that God has "given (ἔδωκας) the fear of you in our hearts" which leads them to "call on your name"—that is, what they are currently doing (cf. 3:5, where the people appeal to God's "name").[28] The promise of "giving fear on the heart" comes from Jer 32:39–40, where God vows to make an eternal covenant and give the people a new heart, placing fear

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27. Lincicum, *Paul*, 95. Steck, *Baruchbuch*, 101, sees 2:11—3:8 as the reversal of Israel's perpetual "Ungehorsamsein"; the prayer is an "Ausdruck der Wandlung Israels und Anfang der Wende; es ermöglicht wieder die direkte Hinwendung zu Gott"; it presupposes that God has *already* turned toward Israel in mercy by effecting their repentance (108). Similarly, Floyd, "Baruch," 58, argues that 3:1–8 "is predicated on a *recovered capacity* for repentance, whereas the admission of guilt in [2:6–10] is conversely predicated on the failure to repent" (emphasis ours). Barry D. Smith, "'Spirit of Holiness' as Eschatological Principle of Obedience," in *Christian Beginnings and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006), 81n19: "This [fear on the heart] implies that the first steps toward the realization of the everlasting covenant have already been taken before the actual restoration."

28. Steck, *Baruchbuch*, 108: "3:7 entsprechend 2:30b–33!" Similarly, Floyd, "Baruch," 70–71. By contrast, Moore, *Additions*, 293, does not see 3:1–8 as the logical outcome of God's promised future restoration (2:30–35), since he thinks the present confidence of 3:1–8 "reflects an innocent, almost self-righteous attitude" (!); so also Werline, *Prayer*, 104. This is unlikely in view of how 3:1–8 is framed as the explicit fulfillment of God's unilateral promises in 2:30–35.

upon it, so that they do not turn away again.[29] In that text God vows to restore the covenant *in spite of* their total lack of repentance (Jer 32:33) and without *any* reference to anything they have done to make this restoration possible. Finally, Baruch points out that they have "turned away from (ἀπεστρέψαμεν) [their] heart all the injustice of [their] fathers who sinned before you," which God promised in 2:33 as another element of a gifted heart: "They will turn away from (ἀποστρέψουσιν) their hard back and their wicked deeds, because they will remember the way of their fathers who sinned before the Lord."[30] Based on the present reality of their praise, fear, heart-transformation, appeal to the divine name, and repentance (3:1–8), Baruch reasons that God must be fulfilling his promises to renew and restore his covenant people (2:30–35).[31]

Baruch's next section, the "wisdom poem" (3:9—4:4), assumes this new moral ability that derives from a new heart.[32] In contrast to the penitential pessimism of the

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29. Bar 3:7: ἔδωκας τὸν φόβον σου ἐπὶ καρδίαν ἡμῶν τοῦ ἐπικαλεῖσθαι τὸ ὄνομά σου. Jer 32:40: καὶ τὸν φόβον μου δώσω εἰς τὴν καρδίαν αὐτῶν πρὸς τὸ μὴ ἀποστῆναι αὐτοὺς ἀπ᾽ ἐμοῦ.

30. The verses almost identically describe the fathers' sin: ὁ ὁδός πατέρων αὐτῶν τῶν ἁμαρτόντων ἔναντι κυρίου (2:23) vs. πᾶς ἀδικία πατέρων ἡμῶν τῶν ἡμαρτηκότων ἐναντίον σου (3:7).

31. So Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 138. However, Steck, *Baruchbuch*, 108, 113, is careful to note that, taken as a whole, the promises recalled in 2:30–35 are only partially realized in exile, i.e., God has caused them to repent, but they do not yet possess the land.

32. Steck, *Baruchbuch*, 110: The fulfillment of God's restoration promises (2:29–35) "ist nicht weniger als das Herzstück von Bar und . . . die tragende sachliche Basis für die gesamte Aussagenfolge dieser Schrift." He notes, pp. 119–20, that because God has now transformed Israel, Baruch shifts from beseeching God to beseeching the people—"deutlich neu einsetzt" (120); contra Moore, *Additions*, 304, who quickly dismisses the "wisdom poem" (3:9—4:4) as "quite incongruous with what precedes . . . and follows it."

opening prose section, the poem optimistically views Torah obedience (i.e., wisdom) as the path to life (3:9, 13, 14, etc.). Nevertheless, on their own, no one finds the law and the life it brings: "There is no one who is familiar with her way, nor one who thinks much about her path" (3:31; cf. 3:15–30). Here, "her" refers both to wisdom, since 3:30b–32 draws from Job 28:12–27, and to Torah, since in 3:29–30a Baruch has just alluded to Moses's description of the law in Deut 30:12–13: "Who has gone up into heaven and taken her and brought her down from the clouds?," etc. Even though law/ wisdom is inaccessible to humans, the mighty Creator knows it (3:32–34) and has given it to his people Israel (3:35–37). The once-wicked people, reconstituted according to the promises recalled in 2:30–35 and fulfilled in 3:1–8, can now find life through the law: "All who seize her are for life (εἰς ζωήν), but those who forsake her will die" (4:1; cf. Deut 30:6, 16, 19–20; 32:47). Because he assumes that God has already transformed the people, Baruch therefore exhorts the people to repent (ἐπιστρέφου), embrace the law, and experience the happiness it entails (4:2–4). In light of Baruch's own explicit pessimism, undergirded by the broader context of his references to Deut 30:1–10 and to various prophetic promises,[33] this ability to repent and live is impossible apart from Israel's divinely given "heart transplant." Baruch can only make these appeals to

33. E.g., Isa 44:18–19; Jer 7:24–28; 32:33, 37–41; Ezek 36:26.

embrace Torah repentantly because he believes the restoration is already happening, as evidenced by his (and the exiles') own repentance.[34]

Even so, the rest of Baruch again focuses on God's agency in salvation, giving little attention to what the people must do in response.[35] While 3:1–8 leads us to assume that Israel will repent before this final deliverance, in 4:5–27 Baruch is concerned to set *Israel's* sin over against *God's* salvation; he does *not* set Israel's sin over against Israel's renewed obedience. "Mother Jerusalem" focuses on how God will surely "deliver" her children in spite of their disobedience (ἐξελεῖται ὑμᾶς, 4:18, 21), just as in 2:14, where Baruch requests deliverance (ἐξελοῦ ἡμᾶς) for God's sake, in spite of Israel's sin.[36] Hence, after Baruch tells the exiles to "take courage" (4:5; cf. 4:21, 30), he returns to the penitential themes from the prose section by reminding them that their disobedience justly merited punishment (4:6–8), which turned the joy of motherly Jerusalem into sorrow (4:9–16).[37] Jerusalem hopes in the "everlasting God" to save her children (4:22a, cf. 4:24, 29) and is already experiencing joy from "the Holy One," a joy the people will soon share (4:22b–23; cf. 4:29, 36, 37; 5:1, 5, 9).[38] This salvation is also described in

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34. Steck, *Baruchbuch*, 113, argues that in 3:9—4:4, Torah obedience (now enabled by Israel's new heart) is the key to fulfilling the land promises in 2:34–35.

35. So Lincicum, *Paul*, 94–95.

36. The verb ἐξαιρέω is only used in these three places.

37. Cf. Isa 51:18–20. Joy language occurs in Bar 4:11, 12, with sorrow language in 4:8, 9, 11 (2x).

38. These verses are full of Isaianic motifs, e.g., "Holy One" (e.g. Isa 47:4; 54:5), "Everlasting God" (Isa 40:28), the restoration of joy (e.g., Isa 35:10; 52:11; 54:1; 55:12), and of course salvation (e.g., Isa

terms of "comfort" (4:30), "mercy" (4:22; 5:9), "righteousness" (5:2, 4), and "glory" (4:24; 5:1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 9). Over and over again, the poem asserts that God definitely *will* save Israel, without reference to the people's actual, prior obedience—even though the reader already knows that at some point Israel *will* obey because of its new heart (2:30–35).

In other words, we expect that Israel will respond to salvation's certainty in obedience. The certainty of this salvation does not exclude the need to call for a response from the people, a response which itself is only possible with the gift of a new heart (3:1–8).[39] Jerusalem twice calls her children to "cry out" to God for deliverance (4:21, 27). In 4:28, Jerusalem commands her children: "Just as your intention (διάνοια) became to go astray from God, multiply by ten when turning to seek him (δεκαπλασιάσατε ἐπιστραφέντες ζητῆσαι αὐτόν)." In Bar 1:22, the people "went off in the intent (διάνοια) of their evil heart," but God overcomes the "evil heart" in Bar 2:31; 3:7. While the command of 4:28 is obscure,[40] the comparison (ὥσπερ) with Israel's *past* disposition toward sin in 4:28a suggests that the command to repent and seek God is based on a *new* disposition toward repentance, as God promised to give exiled Israel in

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45:15–17; 49:6–8, 25; 51:5–8).

39. Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 144: "Salvation motivates obedience without resulting from it." This, we have argued, is how the calls to repentance function in Isa 40–55: while the people must (and will) repent, the emphasis is upon how God has *already* and *unilaterally* secured their salvation.

40. δεκαπλασιάζω is a neologism; Cf. the passive form of πολυπλασιάζω ("become numerous") in Deut 8:1; 11:8, describing what will happen in the land if Israel obeys.

2:33 (ἀποστρέψουσιν, but cf. ἐπιστρέψουσιν ἐπὶ καρδίαν αὐτῶν in 2:30).[41] In other words, these two clauses are *comparable* in that both deal with Israel's disposition, but *distinct* in that Israel is now disposed toward something new. Jerusalem tells her children, "Just as you were once disposed to *sin*, so now, [in line with the fact that God has newly disposed you to *repent*], repent!" This idea fits the context of Bar 4:5—5:9, which repeatedly points to how God will decisively act to restore Jerusalem's sinful children, whose obedience flows from their transformation by God (2:31). The people can "multiply" by repenting, which is made possible by their newly given disposition.[42]

Summary and Relevance to 2 Corinthians 7

We have seen that Baruch views the people's repentance/obedience as the product of their transformation by God. The opening prose section is thoroughly pessimistic about the people's "evil heart," so that Baruch's only hope is to recall God's unilateral promises to give them a new one, in spite of their sin (2:30–35). His confession in chapter 3 is worded so as to clarify that these promises are now being

41. Steck, *Baruchbuch*, 220, here makes this connection to the already-accomplished transformation of the people. Similarly, Jesús María Asurmendi, "Baruch: Causes, Effects and Remedies for a Disaster," in *History and Identity: How Israel's Later Authors Viewed Its Earlier History*, ed. Núria Calduch-Benages and Jan Liesen (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2006), 191, calls this verse "a call to perseverance following the initial conversion."

42. Rightly, Steck, *Baruchbuch*, 221; contra, e.g., Watson, *Hermeneutics*, 432, who sees in this section "the Isaianic vision [subjected] to the deuteronomic condition of the turn from past error"; in the face of Israel's sinfulness, Watson says, Isaiah's vision thereby "threatens to become a groundless fantasy."

fulfilled among the exiles (3:1–8). This is why the poetic half of the book (3:9—5:9) can *then* rejoice in Israel's possession of the law, since Israel both knows *and can keep it*.[43] The closing exhortation highlights the certainty that God will rescue his grieved people (4:18–27), which, again, he announces in spite of their sin, without any reference to any prior repentance or obedience on their part (4:6–16; cf. 2:14)—even though the first half of the text indicates that Israel *will* repent and obey. The single call for repentance assumes Israel's changed disposition (4:28). Knowing that God will surely transform and save her children, Jerusalem is exuberant (4:22–23, etc.). While we have seen above that Baruch uses Ezekiel and especially Jeremiah to explain how the promises of Deut 30 will be fulfilled (especially in Bar 1:15—3:8, 29–31), we see here that Baruch links all these promises with the restoration promises of Isaiah (especially in 4:5—5:9).

This is comparable to Paul's interpretation of the Corinthians' repentance in 2 Cor 7. For as we have shown, the reason Paul can remain so joyful in the midst of suffering is that he is convinced that repentance is a product of God's "new covenant"

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43. Steck, *Baruchbuch*, 120, argues that Baruch's call to obedience is "die konsequente und notwendige Folgeaussage" in light of the assumed transformation of Israel's heart. See also Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 145–46, who similarly argues that in Baruch "the divine gift of a new heart stands prior to and supportive of human action" (145), and then criticizes Watson, *Hermeneutics*, 426, for wrongly interpreting Baruch as a text that makes "'appropriate *human* action'" the "'turning-point between the old and new,'" and thereby opposes Paul's emphasis on "'definitive, unsurpassable *divine* saving action'" (emphasis Watson's). Wells argues that both Paul and Baruch place the divinely gifted heart prior to human action.

actions toward the community. At the structural and logical center of chapter 7 (7:9–12), where Paul describes the nature of the Corinthians' repentance, he repeatedly uses language that emphasizes how God has directly produced it. We see in 7:9 many divine passive verbs, the second of which says that they "*were* grieved" (ἐλυπήθητε) so that it *led to* repentance (εἰς μετάνοιαν, 7:9a). It is thus striking that Paul does *not* use a verb to say ". . . so that *you* repented" (μετενοήσατε), even though they obviously did. Paul nowhere depicts the Corinthians as the agent of repentance. Their μετάνοια is instead the *result* of something done *to* them. The next clause confirms that Paul is using a *divine* passive, rather than saying they "were grieved" by him or the letter. For when explaining why *this* grief led to repentance, he qualifies a third occurrence of ἐλυπήθητε in terms of God's will: "For you *were* grieved *according to* God" (ἐλυπήθητε γὰρ κατὰ θεόν, 7:9b).[44] Furthermore, because God has produced this repentance, Paul knows that God will keep the Corinthians from the penalty of divine judgment (. . . ἵνα ἐν μηδενὶ ζημιωθῆτε ἐξ ἡμῶν, 7:9c). He then grounds this lack of eschatological judgment in the fact that God has actively generated their repentance: God has *produced* the repentance, the *necessary result* of which is eschatological *salvation* (ἡ γὰρ κατὰ θεὸν λύπη μετάνοιαν εἰς σωτηρίαν ἀμεταμέλητον ἐργάζεται, 7:10a)! By contrast, the grief-of-the-

44. See p. 139n32, on taking κατά + acc. to describe God's will. See also the divine passives in 7:4: πεπλήρωμαι τῇ παρακλήσει (cf. 7:6, where God is clearly the agent behind Paul's comfort) and also ὑπερπερισσεύομαι τῇ χαρᾷ.

world "produces" death (ἡ τοῦ κόσμου λύπη θάνατον κατεργάζεται)—that is, divine judgment. This judgment parallels the "death" and "condemnation" experienced by Israel under the old covenant (cf. 3:7, 9; 7:3), in contrast to how the new covenant brings "life" through transformation by the Spirit (3:3, 6). Paul points the Corinthians to their zealous response as evidence of this transformation, reminding them *yet again* that it was "produced" by the grief that God willed for them (τὸ κατὰ θεὸν λυπηθῆναι . . . κατειργάσατο ὑμῖν σπουδήν . . . ; 7:11a). Using cultic language, he joyfully claims that they have "commended themselves to be pure" (συνεστήσατε ἑαυτοὺς ἁγνοὺς εἶναι, 7:11b; cf. 6:16—7:1!).[45]

In sum, Paul repeatedly alludes to prophetic texts that emphasize how God must transform his people if they are ever to repent and obey. Baruch appeals to many of the same promises, sharing Paul's assumption that repentance is a product of transformation, not its precursor (e.g., Jer 24:7; 32:38–39; Ezek 11:19; 36:26). Given the reality of repentance among God's people, both authors move from despair to delight, since for both Baruch and Paul repentance is evidence that the promised restoration is happening. However, a significant difference between them is that Paul believes the Isaianic "day of salvation" to have already arrived (2 Cor 6:2), whereas

45. Note again that "self-commendation" is being used positively, in the same word order as Paul uses for himself (συνίστημι + ἑαυτοῦ, see 4:2; 6:4) in contrast to the unctuous self-commendation he rejects (ἑαυτοῦ + συνίστημι, see 3:1; 5:12; 10:12, 18); see p. 146n50. For Paul, valid self-commendation ultimately flows from God's prior work and approval; cf. 4:2 with 4:1, 5; and 10:18 with 10:13, 17.

Baruch is confidently awaiting it (Bar 4:21—5:9). Furthermore, Paul believes that Israel is still hardhearted, in spite of its possession of the law (2 Cor 3:14–16), while Baruch believes Israel is now capable of finding life through it (Bar 4:1–4). Watson rightly points out that Baruch keeps Torah at the center of Israel's life, while Paul relativizes it in light of the "Christ-event."[46]

Excursus: Comparable Second Temple Texts

Some of the hymnic texts from Qumran also view repentance as the product of the transformation promised by the Prophets. 4Q504 (DibHam[a], i.e., Words of the Luminaries[a]) views obedience as the result of God's planting of his law in the heart (4Q504 1–2 II, 13–14a; cf. Jer 31:33). The author looks to a time when God will "heal us from madness, blindness, and confusion [of heart]" (14b) and will "deliver us from sinning against you" (16).[47] The hymnist recalls that God "showed favor" (חנן) to the exiles in order to "turn their heart to return to you, to hear your voice" (V, 12–13; להשיב אל לבבם לשוב עודך ולשמוע בקולכה). This gift of repentance is grounded (כיא) in God's pouring of his "holy spirit upon us" (15), which brings blessings and causes the hymnist to look for God in the midst of distress (16). Again, God has "shown favor" (חנן) to the hymnist by giving a (the?) holy spirit which leads to knowledge (f4, 5). The hymnist

46. See Watson, *Hermeneutics*, 428–29. Of course, *like* Baruch, Paul still exhorts his community in light of their transformation (2 Cor 8–9; but also 7:2!).

47. Translations are mine, based on the Hebrew text in Maurice Baillet, *Qumrân Grotte 4: III; (4Q482–4Q520)*, DJD 7 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1982).

therefore asks God to "circumcise the foreskin of our heart" (10; cf. Deut 30:6; Jer 4:4) and to "strengthen our heart" to obey (12–13).

Similarly, in 4Q434 (Barki Nafshi[a]) God delivers his suffering people by giving them transformed hearts. In his great mercy he "opened their eyes to see his paths and their ears to hear his teaching" (1 I, 3–4; compare Isa 35:5 with, e.g., Isa 6:10; Jer 5:21; 6:10; 25:4; Ezek 12:2).[48] This transformation is further described as God's circumcising "the foreskins of their hearts," paralleled by his delivering them "because of his kindness (חסד)" (4). In other words, the author understands salvation in terms of transforming the moral disposition of God's people. The related 4Q436 (Barki Nafshi[c]) repeatedly grounds obedience in God's prior transforming work. The hymnist says, "You strengthen upon the [crushed] heart to walk in your ways" (1, 4–5a), with very similar statements in lines 5b ("so that I do not forget your statutes") and 6 ("so that I pursue after your ways"). Line 10 states that God has put a "pure heart" (ותשם לב טהור) in the place of something "driven off from me"—probably a "heart of stone"—and has "driven off" the evil inclination (יצר רע).

While 1QH[a] does not explicitly state that repentance is a product of divine transformation, it similarly emphasizes God's agency in salvation and obedience, in line

48. Translations in this paragraph are mine, based on the Hebrew text in Moshe Weinfeld and David Seely, "Barkhi Nafshi," in *Qumran Cave 4: XX; Poetical and Liturgical Texts, Part 2*, DJD 29 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1999), 255–334.

with how it prioritizes God's predestination of humans.[49] The hymnist says that "you determine the way of the one you have chosen and . . . keep him from sinning against you" (IV, 33–34). God has "determined [his] heart" so as to make him obedient (XV, 16–17).[50] God alone has "created the righteous one" and "determined him for the period of approval, to keep your covenant" (VII, 27–28).[51] "Salvation" is primarily a matter of gaining special revelation: God "give[s] understanding on the heart of your servant" and so makes obedience possible (VI, 19–20).[52] God gives his holy spirit "so that [he] will

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49. See Jason Maston, *Divine and Human Agency in Second Temple Judaism and Paul: A Comparative Study*, WUNT 2/297 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 75–123. See also Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 133, who agrees that 1QH^{a} describes obedience as the product of divine transformation, but that in many of the Qumran texts (including 1QH^{a}), "the fact that the righteous were created [i.e., predestined] *as righteous and in distinction from the wicked* means that terms like 'conversion', 'salvation', and even 'grace' which hold certain connotations in the Christian tradition turn out to be less than helpful here" (emphasis ours). Similarly, see now John M. G. Barclay, *Paul and the Gift* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), 70–75, who offers six different, non-exclusive definitions of "grace"; relevant to our point here, note his distinctions between (1) grace-as-"priority" (i.e., grace takes place "always prior to the initiative of the recipient," p. 71), (2) grace-as-"efficacy" (i.e., grace "fully achieves what it was designed to do," p. 73; "the impact of the gift on the nature or agency of the recipient," p. 186), and (3) grace-as-"incongruity" (i.e., grace is given "without regard to the worth of the recipient," pp. 72–73). Hence, definitions 1–2 seem to exist in 1QH^{a}, but not definition 3, since God's gift is given to the *righteous*, i.e., those who are "suitable, worthy, or appropriate recipients" (p. 72), at least with reference to predestination itself. Note the caution of Barclay, *Gift,* 263, on the sense in which 1QH^{a} describes God's grace as "incongruous": "It is this predestinarian framework that bridges the gulf between divine goodness and valueless humanity. . . . God may be said to determine the lots of humanity according to his 'preference' (רצון), but this phenomenon is not attributed to his 'mercy' or 'kindness.' These latter terms are reserved for a secondary phenomenon, God's intervention in the lives of the sectarians."

50. Cf. XX, 36–38. Column/line numbering follow the reconstruction by Hartmut Stegemann, Eileen Schuller, and Carol Newsom, *Qumran Cave 1: III: 1QHodayot^{a}*, DJD 40 (Oxford: Clarendon, 2009), whose text undergirds our translation.

51. Cf. XV, 13, 22–23; XXI, 10.

52. Cf. VI, 36–37; X, 15, 20; XII, 28; XIII, 8, 11; XVIII, 6–9; XIX, 12–17.

not stumble" (XV, 9–10).[53] By contrast, his opponents seek God with "a double heart" (בלב ולב) and idolatrously act "with stubbornness of heart" (XII, 15, 16). Unlike them, God has "opened [the hymnist's] ears to wondrous mysteries"[54] in spite of his impurity, sin, and ignorance (IX, 23–25).[55] He gives the proper words to the hymnist's "uncircumcised lips" (X, 9), which when left alone in others lead to their destruction (X, 21). As the corollary to this emphasis on God's transforming work, the faithful are repeatedly described as those whose repentant searching made them proper recipients of this forgiveness and special revelation,[56] even as the hymns' strongly predestinarian outlook implies that God destined them to prepare themselves for salvation in this way.[57]

Jubilees: Israel Repents, Then God Transforms

The book of Jubilees (second century BC) retells many stories from Genesis and Exodus, presenting itself as a special revelation given to Moses on Sinai.[58] God gives

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53. Cf. XX, 15.

54. Cf. XIV, 7; XXII, 26, 31; XXIII, 5.

55. Cf. XI, 22; XII, 30–31; XVII, 13–15.

56. VI, 35; X, 10–11; XIII, 11; XIV, 9; XX, 25–26.

57. See Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 107–11, and especially 122–25: the Hymns "maintain the idea that while as part of humanity the righteous participate in humanity's sin, this does not mean that the righteous are to be identified with wicked humanity; rather the Sons of Righteousness are to understand themselves as the paradigmatic psalmist does, as those made 'for the Eternal Council' and whose lot is with 'the Sons of Heaven' (11:22–23), not 'in the Congregation of Vanity' (7:34)" (125).

58. On the text and provenance of Jubilees, see James C. VanderKam, "Recent Scholarship on the

this version of Torah to Moses as a witness to the Israelites' "descendants" (1:5) that God has not abandoned Israel, in spite of the nation's corruption and perpetual disobedience. For our purposes we will focus on three sections that look ahead to a time when some within Israel will repentantly return to the law. In *response*, God will transform the people through the gift of a new heart/spirit, which sustains them in obedience and precedes the gradual restoration of Israel.

Moses's Request for Israel's Transformation

The book opens with a "strikingly Deuteronomic prologue"[59] by emphasizing Israel's rebellious nature and their consequent need for transformation. God knows "their defiance and their stubbornness" (1:7),[60] even before they enter the land.[61] They will forsake God's commandments in imitation of other nations, even sacrificing their children to demons (1:9–11). They will also reject the witnesses sent by God and persecute those who "study the law diligently" (1:12). Even after God subsequently punishes them with destruction and exile, they will forget all of God's laws and celebrate the calendar improperly (1:14).

Book of Jubilees," *CurBR* 6/3 (2008): 406–16.

59. Lincicum, *Paul*, 87.

60. All translations from James C. VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees: A Critical Text*, 2 vols., CSCO (Leuven: Peeters, 1989). Hebrew citations of Qumran manuscripts from James C. VanderKam and J. T. Milik, *Qumran Cave 4, VIII: Parabiblical Texts, Part 1*, DJD 13 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994).

61. James C. VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees*, GAP (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2001), 26, notes that this introductory section shows Jubilees to be a "theological chronology."

But Jubilees says that "after this" the people "will turn to me from among the nations with all their minds, all their souls, and all their strength" (1:15a),[62] echoing Deut 4:29–30 (cf. Deut 10:12; 30:2, etc.). The text does not state that God has *enabled* them to do this by giving them a new heart—it simply states that, after God punishes his sinful people, some will seek him with their whole heart and soul. With respect to their own ability, the rebellious Israelites are nowhere described as *irreversibly* hardhearted or uncircumcised in heart.[63] Hence, the exiles, though very sinful, have remained capable of choosing between repentant seeking and stubborn rebellion, with almost everyone choosing the latter.[64] However, when some exiles choose to repent, God will respond by "gathering them" from exile (1:15b). God then twice states that they will seek him, a seeking to which he responds: "They will search for me *so that I may be found by them*, when they seek me with all their minds and with all their souls"—echoing Jer 29:13–14 (1:15c). Using the language of Deuteronomy and Jeremiah, the text repeatedly points out that the people will seek him and *then* he will restore them.

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62. "Mind" = "heart"; 4Q216 (4QJub[a]) II, 17 has ...ואחרי כן ישובו אלי מתוך הגוים בכל לבם.

63. Note that in 15:31 God has caused demons to rule over the Gentiles (cf. 22:18: "They have no mind to think"), but that his people are guarded from demonic influence—unless they first depart from his law (1:20; 7:27; 10:1; 12:5; 15:33; 19:28). Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 160, summarizes the picture of Israel in Jubilees: "She is an ambiguously competent moral agent. She has a 'contrary nature' and can be influenced by evil spirits and nations, all the while retaining the ability to obey God."

64. Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 154.

In Jub 1:16 God then describes this restoration with another allusion to Jeremiah: "And with all my heart and all my soul I shall plant them as a righteous plant" (cf. Jer 32:41).[65] Jeremiah 32:41 is the only place in the OT that God acts with his "whole heart and soul," but in its own context, Jer 32:36–41 describes YHWH's unilateral transformation of his sinful, unrepentant people (32:33) through re-establishing the covenant relationship, giving them a new heart, and placing the fear of himself upon it (32:38–40). He vows to "plant them in this land . . . with all my heart and all my soul" (32:41). Within the context of Jer 30–33, Israel does nothing to make this transformation/restoration possible. By contrast, although Jubilees uses this text, it explicitly and repeatedly has God *responding* to—not establishing—Israel's repentance.[66] Jubilees then goes on from this promise to further descriptions of the restoration: God promises to dwell among the people such that he will "become their God and they will become [his] true and righteous people" (1:17; cf. Lev 26:12).

In sum, God looks ahead to a time when some exiles will repent with *their* whole heart, allowing for God to restore them to the land with *his* whole heart and to re-establish the covenant relationship, as he intended it for Israel from creation (2:19). There is no indication that these repentant exiles were first given new hearts to enable

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65. Though VanderKam's text here has "transform them into," he suggests that the original was "plant them," in line with Jer 32:41. On the "righteous plant," see Jer 33:15 and cf. 1 En. 10:16; 93:5, 10.

66. So James M. Scott, *On Earth as in Heaven: The Restoration of Sacred Time and Sacred Space in the Book of Jubilees*, JSJSup 91 (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 122–24.

their repentance and obedience. In fact, the subsequent passage explicitly describes this heart-transformation as a *response* to Israel's wholehearted seeking after God.

For in tension with this emphasis on Israel's ability to repent, Moses first asks God to keep this future generation from sinning as just predicted: "Do not allow your people and your heritage to go along in the error of their minds . . . May your mercy, Lord, be lifted over your people, and create for them a just spirit" (1:19–20). Indeed, Moses admits that Israel's sin is driven by an erring mind (= heart), and so asks God to transform them through the merciful creation of a "just spirit" (1:20; cf. Ps 51:10). Similarly, he asks God to transform the people's mind and to give them a new spirit: "Create for them a pure mind and a holy spirit" (1:21). With its language of purifying the mind/heart and giving a new spirit to an idolatrously defiled people (1:9–10), Moses's request likely echoes the promises of Ezek 36:25–26.[67]

However, and surprisingly, God *refuses* Moses's request to transform Israel. Again, though God affirms the present and future stubbornness of Israel, they can only overcome this stubbornness through their own repentance: "They will not listen until they acknowledge their sin and the sins of their ancestors" (1:22). Once again, therefore, God looks forward to a time of wholehearted repentance—a repentance initiated by Israel: "After this they will return to me in a fully upright manner and with all (their)

67. Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 149.

minds and all (their) souls" (1:23a). It is only in *response* to this wholehearted repentance on Israel's part that God will fulfill the promises of Deut 30:1–10: "And I will cut away the foreskins of their minds . . . I will create for them a holy spirit, and I shall purify them in order that they may not turn away from that time and forever" (1:23b).[68] According to Jubilees, then, even though the exiles lack a "circumcised mind/heart," they remain capable of wholehearted, repentant seeking after God, since it is only *after* the exiles repent that God will circumcise their minds, create a holy spirit for them, and purify them,[69] thereby keeping his people from future sin and sustaining them

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68. See Lincicum, *Paul*, 88. Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 149, notes that in both Jub. 1:23–24 and Ezek 36:27–28, "God's action causes people to perform his statutes and keep his laws" and "this result is followed by variations of the covenant formula." Besides the spirit/purity/heart language of Ezek 36:25–29, see Deut 10:16 (Israel is to circumcise their heart; cf. Jer 4:4); 30:6 (God will circumcise their heart); and Lev 26:41; Jer 9:26 (Israel is "uncircumcised in heart"). As many have noted and as we have described in chapter three, Israel's "uncircumcised" heart is overcome by Jeremiah's "new covenant," a covenant under which God writes his law on the heart (31:33) and places the fear of him upon it (32:40).

69. So James L. Kugel, *A Walk through Jubilees: Studies in the Book of Jubilees and the World of Its Creation*, JSJSup 156 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 25; Sanders, *Paul*, 378 (see also his n33), 383; and Smith, "Spirit of Holiness," 77–78 ("This national spiritual renewal is conditional upon national repentance"). So too VanderKam, "Recent Scholarship," 425 (see also his *Jubilees*, 133), and Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 152; contra David Lambert, "Did Israel Believe That Redemption Awaited Its Repentance?: The Case of Jubilees 1," *CBQ* 68/4 (2006): 633, who argues that "*Jubilees* anticipates a dramatic, *divinely* initiated transformation of human nature . . . rather than *humanly* initiated repentance" (emphasis his), since Israel's repentance is foreordained and therefore divinely initiated (649–50). But Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 153, astutely notes that foreordination and divine initiative cannot simply be conflated. Rather, "we are still left with the question of whether humans are constituted with an agency sufficiently capable of performing an act to which God has freely determined to respond; or whether as a result of either anthropological corruption or creation, created efficacy is either partially or totally absent." Similarly, see again Barclay, *Gift*, 70–75, who distinguishes between grace-as-"priority" (i.e., grace takes place "always prior to the initiative of the recipient," p. 71; "grace given before demand," p. 165) and grace-as-"efficacy" (i.e., grace "fully achieves what it was designed to do. . . . [It is] the sole and sufficient cause of the human response," pp. 73–74). Whereas Jub. 1:22–23 seems to focus on "priority" (i.e., foreknowledge), Lambert conflates this with "efficacy," which we suggest the passage explicitly denies.

in a covenant relationship with him (1:24–25, 29).[70] In short, God will transform those who first turn to him in repentance.

Repentance After the Flood

Jubilees's retelling of the biblical flood narrative similarly describes how Israelites must repent if they are to experience God's forgiveness. In response to the union between angels and women, God floods the earth and binds the rebellious angels in the earth (5:3–5).[71] After the flood, God gives "a new and righteous nature for all his creatures so that they would not sin with their whole nature until eternity" (5:12).[72] The author then explains that God intends for people to live righteously and has ordained a certain "way" for each to follow; departing from this ordained path leads to judgment, as with the angels (5:13). In the case of Israel, their "path" mercifully takes their sinfulness into account.[73] For God gives them a yearly opportunity to repent through the Day of Atonement: "If they turn to him in the right way, he will forgive their

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70. For similar father/son covenantal language, see Deut 14:1; Jer 31:9 (cf. 2 Sam 7:14); Hos 1:10.

71. Cf. 1 En. 10, often cited as background material for Jubilees.

72. VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 35, tentatively suggests that this cryptic verse means that "after the flood creatures would be reconstituted so that they would no longer be able to 'sin with their whole nature'; that is, limits would be imposed on the evil they could do." Similarly, Kugel, *Walk through Jubilees*, 55, but he suggests that this renewed nature brings with it a higher standard such that "people would be disciplined with strict, inflexible punishments for their every misdeed—as they obviously had not been before the flood" (236). On Jewish parallels to this post-flood "new creation," see Klaus Berger, *Das Buch der Jubiläen*, JSHRZ 2 (Gütersloh: Mohn, 1981), 351.

73. See VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 122, who notes that especially heinous sins, such as marrying a Gentile, cannot be forgiven (cf. Jub. 15:34; 30:7–10, 15–16, 21–22). Kugel, *Walk through Jubilees*, 238, suggests that the Day of Atonement here only covers "errors" and not "intentional sins."

wickedness and will pardon all their sins. . . . He will have mercy on all who turn from all their errors once each year" (5:17).[74] The author assumes that Israel *can* and *must* repent and so receive God's forgiveness and mercy, unlike those before the flood who either were not offered forgiveness, or, in the case of Noah, did not need it (5:19–20). Hence, in Kugel's words, "God provided a unique escape clause for one people, His beloved Israel."[75] Thus, even though all humans have received a "new and righteous nature" (5:12), only Israel even has the *possibility* of escaping judgment. We therefore suspect, again with Kugel, that the "new nature" carries with it stricter standards, given the judgment-oriented context of 5:13–19.[76] If Israel repents at the proper time and in the proper way, God will respond with forgiveness. Jubilees assumes that this repentance (and therefore forgiveness) is possible for those who heed its teachings.[77]

The Future Renewal

Our final, representative passage from Jubilees again highlights the ability of some to repent properly and God's decision to respond by transforming them. After recounting Abraham's death, Jubilees explains the twofold reason for shortened human

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74. Kugel, *Walk through Jubilees*, 238, on the "right way": "They must [repent] sincerely and actively seek to abandon their previous sins. There is nothing automatic about the Day of Atonement."

75. Kugel, *Walk through Jubilees*, 237.

76. Kugel, *Walk through Jubilees*, 55. Admittedly, though, 5:12 is quite opaque.

77. Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 156: "This 'restoration' ceremony assumes a competency which can enact self-reform."

lifespan after the flood: the world is full of suffering and hardship (23:9a, 13) and all but Abraham had "wicked ways" (23:9b, 14).[78] Consequently, humanity has lost the knowledge and peace they possessed before the flood (23:11, 13); in short, "all are evil and there is no peace during the days of that evil generation" (23:15)—that is, humanity just before the eschaton. As a result, the human lifespan will be shortest during this "evil generation," a time period also described as "the great day of judgment" (23:11).[79] However, "during that generation, the children" will rebuke their sinful forebears for rejecting God's covenant in great wickedness (23:16).[80] Even in the midst of this evil nation, some Israelites therefore remain capable of properly responding to God's law, particularly in regards to the calendar promoted by Jubilees (23:19). Nevertheless, God will send Israel into exile. There will be great bloodshed (23:23) and the people will seek but not find salvation from their enemies (23:24). Beyond the shortened lifespans suffered by the post-flood generations, the people of this final generation—even children—will age rapidly and die young (23:25).

However, some will repentantly return to the law: "In those days the children [cf. 23:16] will begin to study the laws, to seek out the commands, and to return to the

78. See James L. Kugel, "The Jubilees Apocalypse," *DSD* 1/3 (1994): 322–37, on how this lifespan-shortening functions as a "punishment" for sinful humanity.

79. VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 57.

80. Cf. the pre-exilic persecution of those "who study the law diligently" in 1:12.

right way" (23:26) with the result that human lifespan will slowly approach its proper length of one thousand years—a gradual arrival of the eschaton.[81] Jubilees appears to be describing the "new creation" of Isa 65:17–25, since in 65:20 God promises an extended lifespan to Israel.[82] In this new era, the world will be marked by peace and joy (23:29). It is at *this* point that God acts: "Then the Lord will heal his servants" (23:30a). These repentant, healed servants will experience further peace and joy; they will also witness God's judgment upon their enemies (23:30b–31). Hence, as seen above in 1:15–25 and 5:12–19, the dawning of the new creation comes about because some Israelites will take the initiative in a repentant turn toward the Lord, to which he responds with transformation (here, "healing"), at the time of their final salvation.[83]

Summary and Relevance to 2 Corinthians 7

Jubilees consistently assumes that Jews—given that they know the laws found in Jubilees—are capable of repenting and so fulfilling the conditions necessary for God to transform and restore them.[84] Jubilees is similar to Baruch in that it reads Deut 30:1–10

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81. VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 58: "With v. 26 the great reversal in plunging ages and moral conditions begins." John C. Endres, *Biblical Interpretation in the Book of Jubilees*, CBQMS 18 (Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1987), 59, notes that "this renewed attention and adherence to Torah is the constitutive aspect of the covenant renewal." Berger, *Jubiläen*, 445: "Mit dem Suchen des Gesetzes beginnt die Heilszeit."

82. See Endres, *Jubilees*, 59–61, for more parallels to Isa 65–66.

83. So Scott, *On Earth as in Heaven*, 122–24, who sees this repentance-then-transformation dynamic in both 1:15–16 and 23:26–29; similarly, Gene L. Davenport, *The Eschatology of the Book of Jubilees*, StPB 20 (Leiden: Brill, 1971), 46.

84. John C. Endres, "Eschatological Impulses in Jubilees," in *Enoch and the Mosaic Torah: The*

both through the heart-transformation promises of Jeremiah (Jer 29:13–14; 32:37–41) and Ezekiel (Ezek 36:25–26) *and* through the restoration promises of Isaiah (Isa 65:17–25). Both texts are explaining how God is fulfilling his promise to circumcise the heart of his repentant people (Deut 30:6). However, unlike Baruch, Jubilees views *divinely* initiated transformation/restoration as the result of *humanly* initiated repentance. While both these texts believe that God must transform Israel in order for it to enjoy the new covenant and eschatological blessing, they differ over the *sequence* of this transformation. In other words, Baruch believes that repentance results *from* transformation, while Jubilees believes that repentance results *in* transformation, which then guarantees continued obedience and covenant blessings. Hence, Jubilees maintains a limited optimism about Israel's moral ability.[85]

Evidence of Jubillees, ed. Gabriele Boccaccini and Giovanni Ibba (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 336, summarizes the eschatology of Jubilees: "When [Jacob's descendants] study the laws (Torah), seek out God's commands, and return/repent, they will experience a type of life characterized by all the signs of the eschaton."

85. On how different Jewish texts could arrive at such varying interpretations of their shared scriptural tradition, see Watson, *Hermeneutics*, 12, 22–26. He points out that communities' own presuppositions shape their interpretations of scriptural texts, which themselves can be quite ambiguous: "The disagreement is therefore a matter of hermeneutics" (25). Along similar lines, Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 25–40, shows that Deut 30:1–10 can be read in "two plausible, internally consistent, yet conflicting" ways, i.e., (1) that Israel will initiate her return to YHWH or (2) that YHWH will initiate Israel's return to himself; "the differences between these two readings stem from the phenomena of textual gaps, gaps which any devoted reader will strive to fill" (39). In our study of the prophetic texts cited by Paul, we have noted multiple passages over which modern interpreters also disagree in trying to understand how the text relates repentance and transformation; e.g., God's call for the people to "make [themselves] a new heart and a new spirit" in Ezek 18:31 (cf. Jer 4:4; see p. 97n77) and whether or not Isaiah's servant effects the moral transformation of deaf-and-blind Israel (see p. 116n138). In light of these ambiguities in such central eschatological texts (e.g., Deut 30; Ezek 18 + 36), it is understandable that Second Temple Jews—with varying presuppositions—could arrive at varying interpretations.

By contrast, Paul understands repentance to be the *product* of transformation and even salvation. Even as he alludes to the same nexus of prophetic texts,[86] Paul believes that in Christ the eschatological restoration has already arrived, even if it remains to be fully consummated.[87] The Corinthians *already* have transformed hearts by the Spirit (2 Cor 3:3, 6b); they are *currently* living under Jeremiah's new covenant (2 Cor 3:6a); "new creation" has *already* arrived for anyone in Christ (5:17); it is "*now*" the promised "day of salvation" (6:2); God is *already* dwelling among his people (6:16). When we turn to 2 Cor 7, we see Paul reiterating that the Corinthians' repentance is a *result* of this eschatological reality. The Corinthians' grief is a *product* of God's salvific, transformative work in Christ and as such has *led to* their repentance—repentance which the prophets promised would result from God's unilateral work of salvation (7:9–11). Paul's confidence and joy are ultimately rooted in God's transformative work through Christ by the Spirit (3:4, 12; 4:1, 16). Hence it is only *after* Paul's "digression"

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86. On Jer 30–33, cf. Jub 1:16 (see Jer 32:41), 23 (see Jer 32:39), and 25 (see Jer 31:9, 20) with 2 Cor 3:6 (Jer 31:31); 6:18 (Jer 31:9). On Ezek 36:26–28, cf. Jub. 1:21, 23–25 with 2 Cor 3:3, 6; 6:18. On Isa 65–66, cf. Jub 23:28–31 (see Isa 65:20) with 2 Cor 5:17 ("new creation," cf. Isa 43:18–19; 65:17).

87. By contrast, the repentant remnant described by Jubilees (23:26) is still experiencing the covenant curses (1:24–27); they are therefore still awaiting eschatological renewal, when the curses will be reversed (1:16–17; 23:29) and the faithful will live peaceful lives of 1000 years (23:27–30). At best, the community behind Jubilees believes itself to be at the very beginning of the gradual restoration—so it is conceivable that, like Paul, Jubilees holds to a kind of inaugurated eschatology, albeit one only *slightly* inaugurated. But, as noted above, God does not "heal" his servants until this gradual restoration is complete (23:30). See also 50:5: "The jubilees will pass by until Israel is pure of every sexual evil, impurity, contamination, sin, and error. Then they will live confidently in the entire land. They will no longer have any satan or any evil person. The land will be pure from that time until eternity"; the language is very similar to the restoration promise of 23:29.

on the nature of his new-covenant, "day-of-salvation" ministry (2:14—7:1), which for Paul both brings about and is expressed in the Corinthians' repentance, that he returns to explain his response to their repentance. For by delaying his response to the events of 2:12–13 until 7:4–16, Paul wants to clarify that he can rejoice in the midst of suffering (7:4) *because* (γάρ, 7:5) the Corinthians' repentance is evidence that this "day of salvation" is already happening, and that his "new covenant" ministry is therefore legitimate. Paul does *not* think that a *self*-initiated "return" to him by the Corinthians somehow prepares the way for God to transform and restore them (*à la* Jubilees); instead, the apostle is confident that God has already transformed/restored his people through Paul's ministry (2:14—7:1) and that, therefore, their *divinely*-initiated repentance is the tangible evidence of his legitimacy. This fuels the joyful confidence in which he had rebuked the Corinthians and now expects vindication over against his opponents (2:3; 7:12, 14, 16). For over against Jubilees, in which transformation guarantees that those who have *already* repented will *continue* in obedience, for Paul transformation (as part of the present "day of salvation") guarantees not only continued obedience, but even establishes repentance in the first place.

Excursus: Comparable Second Temple Texts

Though complicated by their emphasis on predestination, both the Damascus Document (CD) and the Community Rule (1QS) nevertheless place human repentance

prior to the divine gift of salvation/transformation.[88] In language colored by the closing chapters of Deuteronomy, the opening section of CD describes Israel as unfaithful and deserving of God's wrath (I, 2–3), following the "stubbornness of their heart" (III, 11–12; cf. Deut 29:18).[89] However, God "saved a remnant for Israel and did not deliver them up to destruction" (I, 4–5). For this remnant, though blind, "recognized (בין) their iniquity" (I, 8–9)[90] and consequently God "recognized (בין) their works, because ["that"?; כי] they sought him with a whole heart (בלב שלם)" (I, 10; cf. III, 12–13).[91] Their whole-hearted, albeit "groping," search led God to raise for them the Teacher of Righteousness "in order to guide them in the path of his heart" (I, 11). It is this special knowledge that constitutes the "new covenant" (VI, 19; cf. III, 13; XV, 8–9). This knowledge enables the "repenters of Israel" (שבי ישראל; IV, 2; VI, 5) to have their sins forgiven (II, 5; III, 18), to avoid the "guilty inclination" (II, 16; יצר אשמה), and to obey Torah truly (VI, 14–21). They can thereby expect eschatological life (III, 14–17, 20;

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88. Note the caution of Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 105: "God's salvific gifts permeate the sectarian texts even while human agency is accented and qualifications are involved. Though in the non-liturgical material [such as 1QS and CD] it is clear that Israel must turn in obedience to receive God's gifts, God still answers that obedience through a salvific act which he is not obligated to perform. *Here grace takes the form of an undeserved response to repentance*" (emphasis ours).

89. Translations are mine, based on the Hebrew text in Joseph M. Baumgarten and Daniel R. Schwartz, "Damascus Document (CD)," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. James H. Charlesworth, PTSDSSP 2 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1995), 4–58.

90. In V, 16–17 the wicked are twice described as lacking "understanding" (בינה).

91. See XV, 9, 12, where the covenanters (re-)enter the covenant "with all the heart and all the soul" (בכל לב ובכל נפש).

XX, 27–33). God thus saves those who repentantly search for him by granting them the special knowledge essential to the "new covenant" and necessary for the life promised by Moses in Deut 30.[92] CD nowhere says that these "repenters of Israel" had to be transformed in order to repent; rather, they sought him with a "whole heart" (I, 10) before God brought them "salvation" through the Teacher of Righteousness (I, 11).

We see a similar repentance-then-transformation dynamic in 1QS. Outside the community, the "sons of darkness" walk in "stubbornness of heart" (I, 6, 14; II, 25; III, 3) and have no atonement for their sins (III, 4–5, 6–7, 11–12).[93] Within the community, the "sons of light" now possess the knowledge sufficient for perfect obedience (I, 5, 8–9, 13–18), knowledge resulting from God's compassion and favor (II, 1, 3; cf. XI, 11–13). As a result, they regularly confess their past sinfulness (I, 24–26); they are a community marked off by repentance (V, 1; cf. III, 3). Though the text is careful to point out that God has graciously favored them with the knowledge leading to repentance, it is *this* initial repentance that transforms those who join the community:[94]

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92. Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 92, who also argues that, even though the "circumcision of the heart" is not explicitly mentioned in CD, "its place in the narrative [of Deuteronomy 30] is substituted by the giving of divinely inspired scriptural interpretation. . . . The circumcision of the heart which Deuteronomy 30:6 describes takes place when one exegetes the scriptures according to the teacher's divinely inspirited [*sic*] hermeneutic" (90).

93. Translation is mine, based on the Hebrew text in Elisha Qimron and James H. Charlesworth, "Rule of the Community (1QS)," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. James H. Charlesworth, PTSDSSP 1 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1994), 1–51.

94. Russell C. D. Arnold, "Repentance and the Qumran Covenant Ceremony," in *The Development of Penitential Prayer in Second Temple Judaism*, ed. Mark J. Boda, Daniel K. Falk, and Rodney A. Werline, vol. 2 of *Seeking the Favor of God*, SBLEJL 22 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2007), 164–67,

"By a spirit of uprightness and humility his sin is atoned. And by humility of his soul before all God's statutes his flesh is cleansed for sprinkling in cleansing waters and for being made holy in waters of repentance" (III, 8–9).[95] The repentance of the individual, expressed in a rite of washing and in line with his "upright spirit," is the means by which he becomes pure and holy.

Column V makes similar points. By repentance the "sons of light" enter the "eternal covenant" (V, 5–6; cf. III, 12; IV, 22). In order to "establish a council of truth for Israel," the members are to "circumcise in the Community a foreskin of inclination and a hard neck" (למול ביחד עורלת יצר ועורף קשה; V, 5)—apparently an echo of Deut 10:16, where Moses calls Israel to "circumcise the foreskin of [its] heart (וּמַלְתֶּם אֵת עָרְלַת

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notes that in 1QS repentance is a "boundary issue marking clearly the boundary between those who were inside (the repentant) and those who were outside (the wicked)"; strikingly, the "covenant renewal ceremony" found in 1QS I–VI nowhere describes ongoing repentance or requests forgiveness for *current* sins: "No one who had not completed his repentance could be considered a member and participate in the rest of the ceremony. The fact that this language of repentance does not actually occur within the ceremony itself indicates that the repentance was to have taken place before one could participate in the ceremony"; the ceremony "marked the transformation of one's social identity made possible by one's repentance" (166). Arnold argues that "since the members were expected to maintain a life of perfection, the need for repentance was essentially obviated. The *yaḥad*'s penal codes show that an individual's sin revoked one's membership either permanently or temporarily and returned him to the status of either an outsider or a prospective initiate, thus maintaining a community of those who walked in perfection" (175).

95. In III, 7, "the spirit of holiness," which cleanses (טהר) from iniquity, appears to be the community's own (God-given) disposition toward obedience, not God's Holy Spirit. This fits better with the context, which clearly refers to the nature of the community (III, 6; "the spirit of the true counsel") and the entrant's own character: "the spirit of uprightness and of humility" (III, 8); by the "humility of his soul before all God's statutes his flesh is cleansed (טהר)." See Smith, "Spirit of Holiness," 85–89, who notes that "this principle of obedience is accessible only to those who enter the community" (88). Smith is right to note that this "principle of obedience" is a merciful gift from God (as well as the synonymous spirit of uprightness and humility!), but he downplays the frequent emphasis in 1QS on human initiative/ability in seeking and repentantly entering the community that possesses this "principle."

לְבַבְכֶם) and [not to] harden [its] neck any longer (וְעָרְפְכֶם לֹא תַקְשׁוּ)."[96] The "sons of light" change their hearts by "returning to the law of Moses . . . with all [their] heart and all [their] soul" (V, 8–9; cf. Deut 4:29; 30:2, 6).[97] Conversely, line 11 explains that the "men of sin" are not included in the covenant because (כיא) they have "neither searched nor examined his statutes in order to know the hidden things in which they err unto guilt, and even the revealed things they have practiced with a high hand." Unlike these "men of sin," the covenanters circumcise their own hearts by diligently seeking and practicing the hidden revelations about Torah; they have repented over their errors in the hidden things and now earnestly follow them. Hence, in both columns I–III and V, their self-initiated transformation is the basis of inclusion in the "eternal covenant," even as the intervening "Treatise on the Two Spirits" (III, 13—IV, 26) clarifies that the "sons of light" were predestined at creation for this repentant seeking and transformation (III, 25; IV, 16–17, 25–26) and that God will totally transform them at the eschatological "new creation" (IV, 20–22, 25; cf. XI 2–3, 11–15).[98]

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96. So Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 83, who also shows the link between יצר and לב. Cf. Deut 10:16 ("And circumcise the foreskin of your heart"; וּמַלְתֶּם אֵת עָרְלַת לְבַבְכֶם); Jer 4:4 ("Circumcise yourselves for YHWH and remove the foreskins of your heart"; הִמֹּלוּ לַיהוָה וְהָסִרוּ עָרְלוֹת לְבַבְכֶם); Ezek 18:31 ("Make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit!").

97. Sprinkle, *Paul and Judaism*, 75, notes how the author reads Deut 30:6 (God circumcises the heart) in light of Deut 10:16, "thus prioritizing human agency in moral transformation"; similarly, Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 84.

98. See Smith, "Spirit of Holiness," 84, on this "already but not yet" transformation.

This survey thus shows that, like Jubilees, and with reference to Deut 30:1–10, both CD and 1QS speak of earnest, whole-hearted repentance as the precursor to entering the new/eternal covenant, marked by knowledge of special revelation.[99] 1QS more clearly describes this in terms of transformation (circumcision of the inclination/ neck and cleansing of the spirit), although CD implies that the community members do not possess the "stubborn heart" of unfaithful Israel, having "circumcised" their hearts through proper exegesis.[100] While both texts note that the faithful are *predestined* to salvation, they seem more concerned with emphasizing that their covenant membership *depends upon* their initial search for special knowledge and their subsequent repentance and obedience.[101]

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99. See 4QMMT C10–17 for a similar interpretation of Israel's history through the lens of Deut 30 (esp. C14–16); on which, see Wright, *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*, 146–48.

100. See note 92.

101. Of course, in light of their belief in predestination, it is possible that the authors of 1QS and CD believe that God is the ultimate agent behind moral transformation and that the community is merely actualizing it; our point is that the texts themselves repeatedly use language describing how humans effect their own transformation, whatever the texts' underlying theology. In other words, believing that God is gracious, or even that he predestines to salvation, does not necessarily entail believing that God is the direct, primary, and/or causal agent behind either transformation or obedience. On different ways of relating grace, predestination, and obedience, see especially Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 126–33, and on Qumran in particular, his pp. 16–21, where he suggests that "one must be careful . . . not to confuse an author's predilection for speaking of God's agency in an unrestricted manner for a certain belief about the incompetence or dependence of moral agents. Even after taking into account God's foreordination of all things, in many cases . . . we are still left with question of whether humans are constituted with an agency sufficiently capable of performing an act to which God has determined to respond; or whether human efficacy is either partially or totally absent as a result of either anthropological corruption or creation" (19). See also Pss. Sol., which views repentance as the path toward God's merciful transformation/ restoration of the faithful (3:8, 9:5–7; 10:2; 17:32; 18:4–5). Similarly, in Jos. Asen. God answers Joseph's prayer for Asenath's transformation/renewal (8:9) in response to her repentance (15:7; cf. 16:14, 16; Riessler's numbering).

Second Baruch: Israel Transforms Itself

Second Baruch is a post-AD 70 apocalypse that describes the revelations received by Jeremiah's righteous scribe, revelations regarding Israel's future in the wake of the temple's destruction. It centers around a threefold cycle of "visions, interpretations, and public addresses," with a concluding epistle that "conveys, in epistolary form, the message(s) of the apocalypse proper."[102] For the sake of clarity, we focus especially on the three public addresses and the epistle, since they directly exhort the people to respond repentantly to Baruch's revelations.[103] We have seen that both (First) Baruch and Jubilees promise that God will transform Israel's heart (even as they diverge in their understanding of the *sequence and scope* of transformation). By contrast, 2 Baruch emphasizes that Israel must repentantly transform *its own* heart *in*

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102. Daniel M. Gurtner, *Second Baruch: A Critical Edition of the Syriac Text*, JCT 5 (London: T&T Clark, 2009), 21, 24. See Gurtner's discussion of the text and provenance of 2 Bar. (pp. 6–27), including his argument, with most scholars, that the epistle (chs. 78–87) is an original part of the literary whole, even though it later circulated separately from chs. 1–77 (pp. 24–27); see also Lutz Doering, "The Epistle of Baruch and Its Role in 2 Baruch," in *Fourth Ezra and Second Baruch: Reconstruction after the Fall*, ed. Matthias Henze and Gabriele Boccaccini, JSJSup 164 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 195–217. All translations below come from Gurtner.

103. Matthias Henze, "Torah and Eschatology in the Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch," in *The Significance of Sinai: Traditions about Sinai and Divine Revelation in Judaism and Christianity*, TBN 12 (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 212, similarly focuses on the speeches, since "the author of *2 Baruch* puts speeches into the mouth of the protagonist and uses them effectively as a means of articulating some of his most cherished theological thoughts." Mark F. Whitters, *The Epistle of Second Baruch: A Study in Form and Message*, JSPSup 42 (London: Sheffield Academic, 2003), 47, notes that every public address, and the epistle, are characterized by a focus on "preparing" the heart/soul.

and by repentance.[104] By thus transforming themselves, the people will obey the law and thereby see their sorrows reversed in the joyful world to come.[105]

First Public Address (2 Baruch 31–34)

The first public address in 2 Bar 31–34 follows a lamentation over the temple's destruction (10–12) and a discussion between Baruch and God about the suffering of the righteous (13–20). On the one hand, the righteous "leave from this habitation [without fear] because they have a store of (good) deeds laid up in treasuries" (14:12), but on the other hand, they have still suffered conquest and exile alongside the wicked (14:4–7, 14–15). In response, God promises Baruch that the righteous will rejoice in the glorious future age (14:20), even if "this world is to them a struggle and a labor with much trouble" (15:8). For his part, Baruch responds with a prayer in which he is ultimately hopeful for the righteous (21:11, 12), but asks God to hasten the eschaton (21:23–25). God assures him that he will soon punish the wicked and reward the righteous, having been patient with both groups (24:1–2). God then gives and explains a vision about the

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104. Unlike 1 Baruch and Jubilees, 2 Baruch has very few direct references to Scripture; see Matthias Henze, *Jewish Apocalypticism in Late First Century Israel: Reading Second Baruch in Context*, TSAJ 142 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 113–15, on how it less directly "writes in the biblical voice," i.e., through "language, images, and ideas at home in Scripture" (114). Even so, it is clear that Deuteronomy plays a prominent role in 2 Baruch; see Frederick James Murphy, *The Structure and Meaning of Second Baruch*, SBLDS 78 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985), 120–33.

105. Odil Hannes Steck, *Israel und das gewaltsame Geschick der Propheten*, WMANT (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1967), 182–83, argues that 2 Bar. 31:3; 32:1; 44:3, 7a, 14; 45:1; 46:5, 6a; 77:2, 6a, 16; 78:6, 83:8; and 84:6ff. all describe repentance; many of these are treated below.

Messiah's appearance, which will bring joy to the righteous after a period of intense suffering (26–30, esp. 30:1–2).

Against this backdrop, Baruch addresses the people, explaining how they can overcome the deathly effects of Adam's sin in order to enter the glorious world to come.[106] If they "prepare [their] hearts, to sow in them the fruits of the law, it will protect [them] in that time in which the Mighty One will shake the whole creation" (32:1). Throughout the OT the "prepared heart" (כון *hiphil* + לֵבָב) repeatedly describes a posture of obedience flowing from repentance.[107] So here too, Baruch calls the people to dispose their heart in such a way that it will be a fertile ground for bearing "fruits of the law"—that is, he calls them to obey—since those who obey Torah store up treasures of righteousness in heaven (cf. 24:1) and so secure a place in the coming age. Therefore,

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106. On how Adam's sin brought death to all, see 23:4–5; 48:42–43; 54:15–16, 19. However, Adam's sin does not destroy the individual's will; Henze, *Jewish Apocalypticism*, 215: "The individual is affected by the sin of Adam, to be sure, but, as the author of *2Bar* stresses repeatedly, not in any deterministic way. . . . [The author is] very clear that, while all people are affected by these realities of life, the individual is nonetheless left with a choice." Furthermore: "Humans remain free to choose between the light of the Torah and the darkness of Adam" (216).

107. Gurtner, *Second Baruch*, 69n376, makes this connection to the Hebrew Bible. In 1 Sam 7:3, Samuel's command to "prepare your heart" (וְהָכִינוּ לְבַבְכֶם) is one element of the apodosis flowing from a protasis describing repentance ("If you are returning to YHWH with all your heart . . . "). In Ps 78:8, 37, Israel's failure to "prepare its heart" is in parallel with its faithlessness. In 2 Chr 12:14; 20:33, "preparing the heart" (or not) leads to (dis)obedience. Cf. Job 11:13; Ezra 7:10. See Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 169: "'Heart-preparation' [is] that which capacitates one for obedience." He later argues that for 2 Baruch "Israel's problem is a heart-problem" (172). Whitters, *Epistle*, 97n95, connects this phrase to Deuteronomy's "great emphasis on the disposition of the heart in relation to the Law." He points to Deut 4:29 ("if you seek him with all your heart and all your soul"; cf. 30:10); 6:5 ("love YHWH your God with all your heart and all your soul"; cf. 10:12; 11:13; 26:16); and 10:16 ("circumcise the foreskin of your heart"). Second Baruch also shows its reliance on Deuteronomy with its clear allusions to Deut 30 in 2 Bar. 85:4–9, on which, see below. For other connections to Deuteronomy, see Murphy, *Structure*, 120–32.

Baruch not only argues that Torah obedience leads to eschatological life, but that Israel is capable of cultivating its heart so as to produce this obedience.

Second Public Address (2 Baruch 44–46)

The second address in 2 Bar 44–46 is a response to a messianic vision (and its interpretation) similar to Daniel's vision of the four kingdoms (2 Bar. 35–40; cf. Dan 7). In explaining the vision, God promises Baruch that at the final judgment he will consider neither the former obedience of apostates nor the former disobedience of the repentant (42:4–5). Because God will thus judge the apostate, Baruch calls Israel's leaders not to "withdraw from the way of the law" and to warn the people against the same (44:3). If they keep the law, they "will see the consolation of Zion" (44:7)—that is, the impending age of new creation (44:12) that God gives to all those who "acquired treasuries of wisdom for themselves," have "stores of understanding," "have not withdrawn from mercy," and have "preserved the truth of the law" (44:14).

Here Baruch emphasizes both the moral obligation and ability of Israel. While obedience is the way to remain under God's mercy, Baruch does not state that God must renew their hearts or produce their obedience. Rather, the scribe again exhorts the people to "prepare your hearts" so as to obey (46:5a);[108] similarly, they are to "prepare

108. See above on the same command in 32:1. Henze, *Jewish Apocalypticism*, 284: "*Second Baruch* never suggests that access to the world to come has been preordained, that it is the privilege of a select group, or that some groups are sure to be excluded because of their ideological beliefs or social makeup. To the contrary, *over and over again Baruch pleads with his audience to prepare themselves for the end*

[their] souls" so as to remain subject to their faithful leaders (46:5b). For if they dispose their hearts toward God and his law, they will enter into the blessed eschatological age described in chapter 44 (46:6). Second Baruch thus reiterates that Israel is capable of disposing its own heart toward obedience without any mention of either a divinely initiated repentance or a divinely initiated transformation. While God has mercifully given Israel the Torah, possessing it is all they need to obey and so enter the next age (48:22–24).[109]

Third Public Address (2 Baruch 77:1–17)

As the visions continue Baruch learns more from God about the coming eschatological renewal and judgment (48–52), when God will transform both the wicked and the righteous (51:1–6). He describes the righteous as those who "had understanding in their life and who have planted the root of wisdom in their heart" (51:3a). In the future God will respond by transforming the righteous who had properly prepared their heart in this way (51:3b). Once again, the faithful Jew—not God—is the agent acting upon the heart. Similarly, God will one day transform those who "have been saved by their works, and to whom the law has been a hope, and understanding an

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so as to secure their entry into the promised world" (emphasis ours).

109. Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 170: "The reformation of the heart is consistently attributed to human agents. . . . God neither prepares the heart, removes the error from the heart, nor changes the disposition of the heart. . . . The reordering of the heart, therefore, is committed to human agents and within their power to achieve."

expectation, and wisdom a trust" (51:7, see the promise of renewal in 51:8–13). Thus, in the present, faithful Jews can and do dispose their hearts toward Torah obedience/ wisdom as the basis of their renewal by God, which is entirely future. This future renewal is described at the climax of the "vision of the clouds" (53), which describes human (and Israel's) history as an alternating series of dark and light periods (55–74; final renewal in 72–74). Baruch consequently marvels at God's mercy and grace toward those who will enter eschatological life (75).[110]

Baruch then makes a final address, with the author presenting him as a second Moses who instructs the people after hearing from God and surveying the land on a mountain (here, Zion; 76:3–5, cf. Deut 32:48–52). He first summarizes the covenant curses that have rightly befallen them (77:2–5; cf. Deut 29:17–27; 31:29).[111] He then tells the people that if they "make [their] ways straight" (i.e., repent), Israel will be

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110. On "mercy" in 2 Baruch, see Daniel M. Gurtner, "On the Other Side of Disaster: Soteriology in 2 Baruch," in *This World and the World to Come: Soteriology in Early Judaism*, ed. Daniel M. Gurtner, LSTS 74 (London: T&T Clark, 2011), 126: "Though the righteous are dependent upon God's mercy, that mercy is bestowed upon them because of their adequate observation of the Law." Note that in 48:18–19 (another prayer of Baruch's) God is merciful to those who "are subject to you" and "draw near to you." In 54:4 (in another prayer) special revelation about the eschaton comes to "those who fear you" (cf. 38:1; in 81:4 this special revelation is described in terms of "the multitude of his grace" and "the greatness of his mercies," while in 85:8 God is "long-suffering" for giving these revelations through Baruch). So Baruch often says that God gives his mercy/grace to those who are properly (self-)disposed toward him, but with Torah as an initial gift and kindness (77:3; cf. 48:22–24). But see the unqualified affirmations of God's mercy in 13:12; 48:29; 55:2, where God judges the wicked for rejecting his kindness to them, and in 77:11; 84:11, where God shows mercy/grace toward his erring, forgetful people. Even as 2 Baruch says that God is kind to all (even the Gentiles) and that he mercifully overlooks his people's faults (84:11), it *emphasizes* that, in the end, God shows mercy to the *obedient*.

111. See Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 164–65, who suggests that 2 Baruch and 4QMMT are similarly linking Deut 29 and 31 as a prediction of the "end times" experienced by the texts' audiences.

restored (77:6), since God shows mercy and grace to all those who so conduct themselves (77:7).[112] When the people express fear about what will happen without Baruch to guide them (77:11–14), he points them to the law: "Though we depart, the law endures. If, then, you gaze upon the law, and are intent upon wisdom, (then) a lamp will not be wanting and a shepherd will not yield, and a fountain will not dry up" (77:15–16). In other words, Baruch assumes that the people are capable of repentantly orienting themselves toward the law so that they will not need his guidance in seeing the fulfillment of the promises of Deut 30; the law—and properly disposing oneself toward it—is all that someone needs to enter eschatological life.[113]

Baruch's Exhortation Summarized in His Epistle (2 Baruch 78–87)

In the epistle's introduction, Baruch states that he intends both to comfort and to grieve the "lost tribes" of Israel in regards to the evils of exile, reminding them that God has punished Israel less than it deserves (78:5). If in response to the letter they agree that their exile has been ultimately for their good, they will enter eternal life (78:6a). He then gives the overarching basis for entering the eschatological world: " . . . if, above all, you purge from your heart the idle error for which you were sent away from here"

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112. These two verses appear to draw on Deut 30:1–6; so Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 165; see also Murphy, *Structure*, 122–24. Henze, *Jewish Apocalypticism*, 204: "It is remarkable how much responsibility Baruch assigns the people of Jerusalem and their rightful conduct. At stake is nothing less than the return of the exiles and the restoration of Jerusalem."

113. Henze, *Jewish Apocalypticism*, 221.

(78:6b).[114] Just like those Jews in the land (addressed in the apocalypse proper), Jews dispersed outside the land (addressed in the epistle) are able and hence commanded, in repentance, to transform their own heart, since this is the explicit basis for receiving God's eschatological mercy: "For if you do these things, in this way he will continually remember you. . . . With much mercy he will assemble again those who were dispersed" (78:7). By properly orienting their hearts in accordance with Baruch's revelations, they receive comfort now and prepare themselves for future, merciful reward (82:1, 2).[115]

After explaining that God will certainly judge the wicked and bless the faithful, Baruch again calls the people to orient their hearts properly: "You, therefore, prepare your hearts for that which you believed before" (83:8)—that is, they should obey everything Baruch has commanded (84:6) in order to experience the life Moses offered Israel through the Torah (cf. 84:2–5 with Deut 30:19).[116] Even though the prophets no longer speak, Israel has Torah and Torah's God—everything she needs to enter eschatological life (85:3). The only question is whether or not Israel will choose to obey God's law: "If, then, we direct and dispose our hearts, we will receive everything that

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114. See Deut 29:18, which describes someone who "walks in the stubbornness of [his] heart" (בִּשְׁרִרוּת לִבּ), or in the LXX, ἐν τῇ ἀποπλανήσει τῆς καρδίας ("error of heart"). Besides this connection, Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 165, points also to Jer 4:4, where a command to "circumcise yourselves" is paralleled with "remove the foreskin of your heart."

115. See also 81:2, 4, where Baruch describes his comforting revelations in terms of God's grace and mercy.

116. See Murphy, *Structure*, 125.

we lost with much gain" (85:4).[117] Once again, the text stresses that the people can carry out this self-transformation because "[they] are still in the spirit of the power of [their] liberty" (85:7). Accordingly, inasmuch as God has shown his patience by calling Israel to obedience through Baruch's revelations (85:8), the people must still respond appropriately: "Let us prepare our soul that we may take and not be taken away" (85:9; cf. "prepare your souls" in 85:11). For in light of the coming judgment, even Israel will not always have the chance to repent (stated twice in 85:12).[118] So, to conclude, Baruch exhorts the people to repent by choosing freely to change (i.e., "prepare") their hearts through removing from themselves the "idle error" (78:6) that brings sin, exile, and final judgment, as sketched out in Deut 29–30. This free act of repentant self-transformation will make them obedient and therefore heirs to the new age.

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117. Whitters, *Epistle*, 163–64, argues that this section of the epistle describes how the Sinai covenant can be renewed. He suggests that since the epistle parallels claims by both Jesus and Qumran's "Teacher of Righteousness," that "the master's words ought to be heeded as a new formulation of the Mosaic covenant" (164)—is 2 Baruch thus announcing the arrival of the "new covenant"? Similarly, Murphy, *Structure*, 23, describes ch. 77 as a kind of covenant renewal. Henze, *Jewish Apocalypticism*, 223, describes this section as a call to "set things right and restore their hearts." He goes on: building on Deut 30:1–11, Baruch's exhortation "is the Deuteronomic scheme of sin, punishment, and restoration propelled to an eschatological extreme. The *Deuteronomic* promise that those who are obedient to the Torah will be richly rewarded with a prosperous life is here combined with the *apocalyptic* promise of a better life in the world to come" (223–24, emphasis his). He then notes many similarities between 2 Bar. and 4QMMT, which similarly appeals to Deut 30:1–3 in calling its audience to repentance and proper Torah obedience (pp. 224–27). Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 163–67, points to these and other parallels between Deut 30 and 2 Bar., concluding that 2 Bar. substitutes "the divine subject of heart-circumcision in Deuteronomy 30:6 for a human subject" (172; cf. Deut 10:16).

118. We thus see the inextricable connection between repenting and properly disposing one's heart. So Henze, *Jewish Apocalypticism*, 363, who sees 85:4–9 as a description of repentance.

Summary and Relevance to 2 Corinthians 7

Second Baruch is optimistic about the ability of Torah-possessing Jews to prepare themselves for God's imminent eschatological intervention. Baruch repeatedly exhorts the people to "transform" themselves through the repentance described in Deut 30:1–2. They are to: "prepare [their] hearts, to sow in them the fruits of the law" (32:1; cf. "prepare your hearts" in 46:5a; 83:8); "prepare [their] souls" (46:5a; 85:9, 11); "[plant] the root of wisdom in their heart" (51:3a); "make [their] ways straight" (77:6); "purge from [their] heart the idle error" (78:6b); and "direct and dispose [their] hearts" (85:4). Before the final judgment comes, they can freely choose to do this (85:7). By choosing to embrace Torah in obedience, the people will experience comfort in the present and especially in the eschatological future, the only time God himself transforms his people (51:1–6). Therefore, 2 Baruch sharply contrasts with both First Baruch and Jubilees in two ways: first, 2 Baruch views transformation primarily as a *human* act; and second, Baruch does not clearly distinguish between repentance and (self-)transformation.

In 2 Corinthians Paul denies that Israel (or anyone) can choose to transform themselves in order to obey Torah.[119] First, as we have reiterated above, Paul repeatedly

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119. On how different Jewish readers could arrive at different interpretations of their shared Scriptures, see n. 85.

speaks of God's radically unilateral and explicitly eschatological transformation of his people—in the present. The new covenant, characterized by the life-giving transformation through the Spirit, has already arrived (2 Cor 3:3, 6). The Spirit has transformed believers' hardhearted death into life (3:16–18). God has spoken glorious light into their blind darkness (4:4, 6). Paul is already experiencing eschatological renewal (4:16); any person in Christ is a "new creation" (5:17); Isaiah's "day of salvation" has decisively arrived (6:2) along with the eschatological temple and the renewal of the covenant (6:16–18). Unlike 2 Baruch, for Paul God has *already* acted upon his people to transform and save them—*in spite of* the fact that their former lives were marked by blindness, death, and idolatry. Second, Paul believes that Israel—*even though* it possesses Torah!—is marked by an overwhelming hardheartedness (3:14–15), not the freedom 2 Baruch so often assumes for those who possess Torah. Third, because Israel is hardhearted, Paul believes that the law can only bring them death and condemnation (3:6, 7, 9), whereas 2 Baruch unequivocally believes that Torah is Israel's certain path to the eschatological transformation of grief into comfort and joy.[120]

Hence, as we have seen, Paul's description of the Corinthians' repentance and resulting obedience is emphatically God-centered in regard to its cause: their λύπη is according to his will (κατὰ θεόν), and consequently has produced for them repentance

120. See Henze, *Jewish Apocalypticism*, 336–37.

that leads to eschatological salvation (7:9–10a), unlike ἡ τοῦ κόσμου λύπη, which, like Torah, brings death to the hard-hearted (7:10b). Paul's joy over the Corinthians' repentance is *not* rooted in their own free decision to transform their hearts (which could never happen), but rather in God's prior "new covenant" commitment to transform his people, which vindicates Paul's "new covenant" ministry both now and at the final judgment (7:4, 9b, 11b, 12–13, 16). While the apostle rejoices in and even expects the Corinthians' obedience (7:7, 11, 15), the root of Paul's joy and confidence—and therefore the focus of this text—is that *God* has created it through the Spirit's work under the new covenant.

Excursus: Comparable Second Temple Texts

Fourth Ezra places a similar emphasis on Israel's ability to change its own heart, even though it has a dimmer view of human ability than 2 Baruch.[121] In his initial pessimism, Ezra complains that Israel, along with all humans, have inherited an "evil heart" (*cor malignum*) from Adam, which God has not removed and so continues to

121. Many have noted the close thematic similarities between 2 Baruch and 4 Ezra; on their disputed connection in terms of provenance, see Matthias Henze, "4 Ezra and 2 Baruch: The Status Quaestionis," in *Fourth Ezra and Second Baruch: Reconstruction after the Fall*, ed. Matthias Henze and Gabriele Boccaccini, JSJSup 164 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 12–15. On their contrasting views of the "evilness" of the heart, Gabriele Boccaccini, "The Evilness of Human Nature in 1 Enoch, Jubilees, Paul, and 4 Ezra: A Second Temple Jewish Debate," in *Fourth Ezra and Second Baruch: Reconstruction after the Fall*, ed. Matthias Henze and Gabriele Boccaccini, JSJSup 164 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 76, notes that by claiming the universal reality of the evil heart, "*4 Ezra* does not follow *2 Baruch* in the systematic dismissal of the problem of evil, reducing it to a matter of personal choice . . . and to the cyclic recurrence of 'dark' and 'bright' ages in the history of humankind."

drive Israel's disobedience (3:20–22; cf. 7:118).[122] Later, Ezra complains that an "evil heart" (*cor malum*) has grown up in "almost all who have been created" (7:48). The angelic guide Uriel likewise acknowledges that humanity's heart will not be totally transformed until the eschaton, when God will remove all evil from the world: "The heart of the earth's inhabitants shall be changed and converted (*converto*) to a different spirit" (6:26; see 6:25–28; cf. Ezek 11:19; 36:26).[123]

Nevertheless, even in this age there are some who can successfully overcome their evil hearts through strenuous obedience to Torah. In 7:92, Uriel therefore promises that the righteous will experience a final reward because "they have striven with great effort to overcome the evil thought (*cogitamentum malum*) which was formed with them, that it might not lead them astray from life into death" (cf. the "root of evil" in 3:22; 8:53). This appears to describe the repentance of the righteous, for Ezra then acknowledges that God is "gracious to those who turn in repentance (*conversio*) to his Torah" (7:133).[124] So after Ezra's closing vision, he calls the people to such repentance:

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122. All translations are from Michael E. Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990).

123. Wells, *Grace and Agency*, 183–84, 187, suggests that Deut 30:1–10 stands behind the discussion of the "evil heart" in 4 Ezra.

124. See Jonathan Moo, "The Few Who Obtain Mercy: Soteriology in 4 Ezra," in *This World and the World to Come: Soteriology in Early Judaism*, ed. Daniel M. Gurtner, LSTS 74 (London: T&T Clark, 2011), 110, who pushes against the common notion that 4 Ezra demands absolute perfection. In contrast to the righteous (who *have* repented), the wicked are condemned for *not* availing themselves of the opportunity to repent (*reversio* in 7:82; *paenitentia* in 9:11), which would have led to life (presumably because the repentant are those who strive to overcome their "evil heart").

"If you, then, will rule over your minds and discipline your hearts, you shall be kept alive, and after death you shall obtain mercy" (14:34).[125] In other words, the people can and must overcome the "evil heart/thought"—even though it takes great effort.[126]

Hence, at first Ezra hopelessly bemoaned the way that the "evil heart" dominates humanity (3:20–22), but he comes to see that merely possessing an "evil heart" does not render someone incapable of obedience and therefore reward.[127] Furthermore, Uriel repeatedly rebukes Ezra for being too gloomy about himself: he must stop considering himself among the wicked; instead, he should look forward to the reward of the righteous, himself included (7:76–77; 8:47–48). We see, then, that Ezra's initial pessimism needed correction: while all humans *do* possess an "evil heart/thought," some can overcome it through earnest obedience to the law (cf. 7:17, 21; 9:31–37), even as God is presently involved in their salvation (9:22) and will totally transform their hearts at the eschaton (6:26).

Though very different from 2 Baruch in genre and content, Sirach similarly emphasizes that humans can freely (but not easily) choose obedience, and therefore life.[128] All humans have been created with the ability to choose good over evil (15:14–

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125. Moo, "The Few," 104: "It is ultimately up to the individual either to choose life or to be overcome by the evil inclination."

126. So Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 435, who argues that 14:34 is a command to overcome the "evil heart."

127. See Moo, "The Few," 111, and Barclay, *Gift*, 281–83.

128. I.e., prosperity; Sirach rejects the idea of immortality (cf. 17:30).

17); God has given them all the fear of himself (17:8; cf. too Ps. Sol. 9:4–5). Of course, all humans still sin against God's law (17:20), but he is merciful and forgiving toward the godly, who will be rewarded according to their obedience (16:11–14; cf. 18:14). To the repentant God will give a "return" (17:24; ἐπάνοδος, i.e., a "second chance"); furthermore, he will show them mercy and forgiveness (17:29). However, there is no language of heart transformation (as in either 2 Baruch or 4 Ezra). While the righteous remain dependent upon God for their obedience (23:1–6),[129] Sirach *emphasizes* that humans can freely choose to obey and so gain life.[130]

Summary and Relevance to Second Corinthians

We have seen that a wide variety of Second Temple authors were deeply concerned with Israel's "heart-problem" and how it had led the nation into the sorrows

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129. On the danger of assuming that a statement about God's ultimate agency automatically entails a belief in human moral inability, see note 101.

130. Philo appears to hold a similar view. See Ronald R. Cox, "Travelling the Royal Road: The Soteriology of Philo of Alexandria," in *This World and the World to Come: Soteriology in Early Judaism*, ed. Daniel M. Gurtner, LSTS 74 (London: T&T Clark, 2011), 167–80; on his use of Deuteronomy see Lincicum, *Paul*, 100–16, esp. his observation that Philo does not "merely spiritualize" the "exile-and-return" schema at the end of Deuteronomy (112). On the one hand, Philo is clear that God is the ultimate cause of all things, including obedience (e.g., *Abr.* 54; *Fug*. 139–141; *Mut.*. 155; *Sacr.* 8; *Spec.* 1:10–11); therefore Philo has a much stronger view of predestination than Sirach. On the other hand, Philo *emphasizes* the human capacity for virtue through self-circumcision of the heart (e.g., *QG* 3:46; *Spec.* 1:305–6; cf. *Migr.* 26), which brings about the soul's ascent to eternal life (*QG* 3:52; *Spec.* 1:303). Like self-circumcision, earnest repentance is elsewhere described as the doorway to virtue (e.g., *Virt.* 180–86; cf. *Fug.* 157–60; *Spec.* 1:239; *QG* 1:82–85). But some can become so enslaved to their passions that they can no longer repent (e.g., *Spec*. 1:58). See esp. *Leg.* 3:213–15, which, while describing how God graciously summons (καλέω) and receives repentance, clarifies that God only accepts the repentance of the good (χρηστός), or at least pursues some of those with a proper, if delayed, intention to repent (μέλλησις, cf. *Deus* 8). See also 4 Macc 2:7, 23; 3:17, where reason exercised in and by Torah is the means to "transformation," i.e., to overcoming passions and living virtuously.

of covenantal curse and exile. In Deut 30:1–10 Moses had foretold Israel's stubborn-hearted history to come, though promising that God would circumcise the heart of the exiled nation and closely tying this heart-transformation with its whole-hearted repentance. Given the importance of this passage (as well as Deuteronomy's other closing chapters) to many Second Temple Jews, it is not surprising that their texts show such an interest in the transformation of the heart and how it related to repentance, especially since many of the OT prophets had already clarified how such promises of divine heart-circumcision and Israel's repentance would come to fruition. We have seen how Second Temple texts variously (but frequently) construed the promises of Deut 30, Jer 30–33, Ezek 36–37, and Isa 40–66 and applied them to their own contemporary concerns. While these Second Temple texts are generally similar in that they tend to refer to this same nexus of scriptural promises in explaining how God would circumcise Israel's heart and so end its sorrows, they are generally distinct in that they show a varied range of interpretations about the precise relationship between this heart-transformation and the people's repentance.

Baruch argues that repentance is a *product* of God's transforming the exiles' profoundly stubborn heart, appealing to Deut 30:1–10 and the "eternal covenant" of Jer 32:37–40 (Bar 2:30–35; cf. 3:29–31), as well as Isaiah's promises of salvation and comfort (Bar 4:5—5:9). By contrast, Jubilees argues that God will transform Israel's heart only *after* they repent, though it refers to a similar set of scriptural promises (Deut

30:1–10; Jer 29:13–14; 32:37–40; Ezek 36:25–26; Isa 65:17–25; see esp. Jub. 1:15–29). Thus Jubilees believes that Israel retains some ability to turn to God, even as the people also need God to circumcise their heart to ensure continued obedience. Finally, 2 Baruch makes broad allusions to Deut 29–32 (cf. Deut 30:1–6 with 2 Bar. 77:6–7; 83:8), but is unique among the texts surveyed for not making explicit references to the prophetic promises of restoration and especially for emphasizing Israel's ability to transform *itself*, with the text giving only slight attention to God's (future) renewal of the people (2 Bar. 51:3). In sum, these texts share a common conviction—shaped by the closing chapters of Deuteronomy, especially 30:1–10—that Israel's fortunes cannot be finally restored until its heart is renewed and the nation repents, but they differ over the details of how this heart-renewal relates to repentance.

When we turn to 2 Cor 7 we see Paul applying his convictions about eschatological heart-transformation to the repentant Corinthians. Having crafted the beginning of the chapter (7:2–4) with clear references to his preceding "new covenant" apology, especially in 2 Cor 3:3–6 (cf. Jer 31:31–34; Ezek 36:26–27), Paul explains to the Corinthians that their repentance is the result of their *being* grieved according to God's will so that they will not suffer the eschatological penalty of death (7:9). God has used their grief to "produce" their repentance and so they can expect "salvation" instead of the "death" produced by worldly grief (7:10). Hence, they are "pure" (7:11), their true eschatological status before the divine judge thereby evidenced (7:12). In other words,

Paul emphasizes that the Corinthians' repentance is a *product* of their heart-transformation under the "new covenant." The fulfillment of these prophetic restoration promises is the basis for Paul's joy (7:4–5) and apostolic legitimacy (7:2). Paul is similar to the Second Temple texts surveyed above in that he is concerned with the eschatological transformation and repentance of God's people—even appealing to a very similar nexus of scriptural texts. However, he differs from *many* of these Second Temple texts in that he repeatedly emphasizes that repentance is the result (not the precursor or the cause) of transformation (cf. 2 Cor 4:4, 6), while he differs from *all* of them, of course, in that he believes that Jesus is the Messiah whose death and resurrection (2 Cor 5:15) have inaugurated Isaiah's promised "new creation" (Isa 65:17–25; 2 Cor 5:17) and "day of salvation" (Isa 49:8; 2 Cor 6:2). It is this inauguration of the "new covenant," accompanied by the Spirit (2 Cor 3:17–18), that undergirds Paul's overarching confidence that both he and the Corinthians will pass through the final eschatological judgment, "the day of our Lord Jesus" (1:14; cf. 1:21–22; 4:1, 13–14, 16; 5:1, 5, 6).[131]

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131. While Paul does not explicitly refer to Deut 29–32 in 2 Corinthians (but cf. 1 Cor 10:20, 22 with Deut 32:17, 21), he repeatedly cites it in Rom 9–11 while explaining Israel's ongoing hardheartedness and its future restoration. In reference to Rom 10:5–9 (as the "very centre" of Rom 9–11), Wright, *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*, 514–15, says, "What Paul has done, in parallel with other second-Temple retrievals of this great narrative such as we find in 4QMMT or Baruch, is to say: *now at last we see what it means to 'fulfil Torah' in the sense Deuteronomy 30 had in mind*. Professing that Jesus is lord, and believing that God raised him from the dead, together constitute the reality towards which Deuteronomy 30 was pointing" (emphasis his); similarly, see Lincicum, *Paul*, 142–67, on how Paul reads Deuteronomy as "the lens of Israel's history." After pointing to Deut 29:3 LXX in Rom 11:8 and the "circumcision of the heart" motif in Rom 2:28–29 (cf. Deut 30:6), Lincicum summarizes: "Paul . . . fuses Deuteronomy's

'circumcision of the heart' with other prophetic visions of the eschatological enablement of God's people (the Spirit and the law written on the heart), and interprets this to have come about now for the uncircumcised Gentiles as well as for Jews – a new state of affairs that was previously hidden but has now come about through the revelatory action of God in Christ" (153). Note that in Rom 2, Paul roots un-repentance in the hard heart (2:4–5) and that he describes heart-circumcision as "by the Spirit, not the letter" (περιτομὴ καρδίας ἐν πνεύματι οὐ γράμματι), which of course closely parallels his description of his "new covenant" ministry in 2 Cor 3:6 as one οὐ γράμματος ἀλλὰ πνεύματος.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

Overview

In this study we have sought to demonstrate the logical—and theological!—coherence of 2 Cor 7:2–16 within the contexts of the canonical letter, the Old Testament, and Paul's Jewish contemporaries. Modern scholars have repeatedly pointed to this chapter as evidence for partitions in 2 Corinthians, arguing that Paul's appeal in 7:2–4 cannot fit with the resumed travel narrative in 7:5–16, since the latter appears to match so neatly with the narrative of 2:12–13. Even many of those scholars arguing for the epistle's integrity have stumbled at 2 Cor 7, often describing 7:5–16 as a kind of emotional afterthought, with little relation to 7:2–4. But we have argued that 2 Cor 7 is best understood as a part of the larger apology of chapters 1–6, especially in terms of the Scriptures to which Paul appeals in arguing that God is at work through his ministry of the new covenant. In other words, Paul goes into such detail over his joy at the Corinthians' repentance because their obedient response to his "tearful letter" is the tangible expression of the fact that they are truly his "recommendation letter" (3:2).

In chapter two, we argued that 7:2–4 is not merely a last-ditch appeal or a rehash of 6:11–13. Rather, these verses summarize the main points of Paul's argument thus far. His command to "receive us" (7:2a) is the argument of 2 Corinthians in a nutshell. He then gives two (implicit) reasons the Corinthians should do this: (1) because he has wronged nobody through his ministry (7:2b), and especially (2) because his ministry is

not one of speaking for "condemnation" (7:3a). Paul's epistles use the word κατάκρισις only here and in 2 Cor 3:9, where it is used to describe Moses's glorious "ministry of condemnation" in contrast to Paul's *surpassingly* glorious "ministry of righteousness." For in the face of a largely hardhearted people, Moses's ministry largely led to condemnation, but Paul's ministry largely leads to righteousness in that it is characterized by the Spirit's creation of *soft*-hearted people. The double use of κατάκρισις in 2 Cor 3:9 and 7:3 strongly suggests that in the latter case Paul is referring back to this earlier part of his apology, especially in light of the word's absence everywhere else—in not only the undisputed letters of Paul, but even the entire New Testament. At 7:3b Paul gives further evidence (γάρ) that his ministry is not characterized by κατάκρισις —that is, that the Spirit is truly at work through him under the "new covenant." By telling them that they "are on our heart," he refers them back to his earnest assertion in 3:2 that *they* are his "letter of recommendation," written "on our heart." In other words, their transformation (and Paul's suffering-filled ministry that birthed and nurtures it) can be seen by all—including themselves! These are the only two places in the letter where ἐστε and ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν occur together, once again strengthening our argument that 2 Cor 3 lies behind 2 Cor 7:2–4. Furthermore, at 7:3b he uses the language of "dying and living together" to summarize how he has thus far depicted the tangible result of his ministry to them: that they share in suffering ("death," especially Paul's) and, more importantly, spiritual vitality ("life," especially the

Corinthians'; cf. 3:6!). Here Paul is describing his ministry in a similar way as he did in 4:12: "death is working in us, but life in you." Paul continues to defend himself by pointing to what should be obvious to the Corinthians: that the Spirit has come to them through *his* ministry, even as it has come in the "clay jar" of his miserable suffering (cf. 4:7). In 7:4 Paul then explains how he responds to the fact that God is truly at work through him among the Corinthians. He first states that he has "great boldness" (πολλή μοι παρρησία) toward the Corinthians, echoing two words found in 3:12 (πολλῇ παρρησίᾳ), where Paul explains that the work of the Spirit through his ministry leads him, unlike Moses, to employ "great boldness" toward his respective community. Yet again, Paul appears to be making clear connections back to 2 Cor 3. He goes on in 7:4 to explain the other implications of the "new covenant" nature of his ministry for his own conduct and demeanor: he has great boasting about the Corinthians, he has been filled with comfort (by God), and, most emphatically, he has been "super-abounded" with joy (by God) in all his affliction. We showed how all of these themes play a prominent role in Paul's larger apology. In sum, 2 Cor 7:2–4 is a brief summary of Paul's defense, a summary centered on the nature of the "new covenant" as expressed in the transformation of the heart by the Spirit.

In chapter three we turned to the broader context of the key Old Testament citations and allusions that Paul uses in his apology, looking for the themes we unearthed in 7:2–4, while also looking for how these texts relate them to central themes

in 7:5–16: repentance, sorrow, and final vindication. In order to understand why Paul describes his ministry in terms of the "new covenant" (2 Cor 3:6; Jer 31:31), we first examined Jeremiah 30–33. There we saw a central theme of Jeremiah as a whole, namely, Israel's refusal—and even inability—to repent (5:3, etc.). In Jer 30–33, God promises to institute a "new covenant" (31:31–34) whereby he will "give" the grieving people a repentant heart as part of a joyful restoration of the covenant relationship (24:7; 31:12–22)—the fulfillment of Deut 30:1–10. In so doing, God will make an "everlasting covenant" with the people, in which he will place the fear of himself on their renewed hearts so as to sustain them in covenantal faithfulness (32:38–41). Next, we studied Ezek 36–37, since in 2 Cor 3:3 Paul describes his ministry in terms of the "fleshly heart" from Ezek 36:26, and in 3:6 of "the Spirit [who] makes alive" from Ezek 36:27; 37:14. We saw that Ezekiel emphasizes Israel's total inability to transform its idolatrous heart (Ezek 18:31) and therefore its need for God to intervene radically by replacing its defiled "heart of stone" with a clean, *new* "heart of flesh" (36:26), a heart that will ensure the people's continued obedience (36:27). In this way God's people will finally repent in "self-loathing" as they previously never could or would (20:43; 36:31). They will consequently live as God's people under his "everlasting covenant," a people now free from divine condemnation (37:26). Finally, we studied Isa 40–55 as the backdrop to Paul's citation of Isa 49:8 in 2 Cor 6:2, where the apostle declares that his ministry has ushered in the Isaianic "day of salvation" for the Corinthians, a declaration

that anticipates the allusion to Isa 49:13 in 2 Cor 7:6, where Paul speaks of "the one who is comforting the downcast." Similar to both Jeremiah and Ezekiel, Isaiah emphasizes that hard-hearted Israel—YHWH's "servant"—is incapable of responding to God in obedience (42:18–25; 44:18–20). But in chapter 49 Isaiah points to *another* "servant" who will "bring back" the people with comfort and salvation from God (49:5, 8, 10, 13). God will thus turn his people from sorrow to joy as he brings them deliverance instead of judgment (51:3–8). We argued that 52:13—53:12 explains *how* the "servant" will restore the people: he will deliver them from the sin that has made them so powerless. Hence, the call to repentance in Isa 55:3–7 is directed at a transformed people who can expect salvation through the servant and are capable of obedience, in contrast to Israel's previous situation of judgment and an inability to repent.

When compared, each of these passages underscores that God would soon act unilaterally to transform his people and thereby finally make them repentant. We suggested that Paul points to the Corinthians' repentance in 2 Cor 7 precisely because it demonstrates that his ministry is the means by which God is fulfilling these promises to give his redeemed people a new, fleshly, and *repentant* heart.

With this Old Testament backdrop in view, we returned in chapter four to 2 Cor 7 for a close reading of the argument of 7:5–16. We first argued that the γάρ in 7:5 should be taken as a causal conjunction explaining *why* Paul can rejoice so much in the

midst of affliction (7:4). We noted that 7:5–16 interweaves four statements about Paul's joy, strengthening our contention that Paul's argument there provides the basis for Paul's closing statement in 7:4 regarding his "superabundant" joy. Furthermore, we examined the *source* of Paul's joy in these verses, arguing that the logical heart of the passage is 7:9–12, a passage overflowing with themes from the prophetic passages that we surveyed earlier. In these verses Paul explains that his joy is ultimately about the *way* in which the Corinthians were grieved—by God—and what this grief *produced*—repentance unto salvation. Through repeated use of divine passive verbs and the phrase κατὰ θεόν ("according to God['s will]"), Paul emphasizes the agency of God in the Corinthians' repentance. God's *purpose* behind this grief is that the Corinthians would not suffer eschatological judgment on account of Paul (ἵνα ἐν μηδενὶ ζημιωθῆτε ἐξ ἡμῶν, 7:9). Paul elucidates the eschatological tenor of this ἡ κατὰ θεὸν λύπη by then explaining that it produces repentance that leads to *salvation*, in contrast to ἡ τοῦ κόσμου λύπη, which only produces *death*—that is, in the end, final condemnation (7:10).[1] Paul then explains why (γάρ) this "grief according to God" is known to have such a salvific quality: it has produced a repentant and humble response, such that the Corinthians have proven themselves to be "pure" (ἁγνός, 7:11). In 7:12 Paul then puts their grief and repentance into deeper theological relief by reminding them that his "tearful letter" was

1. See p. 139n32 for our interpretation of ἡ γὰρ κατὰ θεὸν λύπη and p. 145 for our interpretation of ἡ τοῦ κόσμου λύπη.

ultimately about revealing their status of acquittal before the divine judge (7:12), as seen in the fact that they have properly responded to their divinely appointed minister of the new covenant—with the notable exception of their failure to rejoice, a strange absence given the abundance of joy language in the prophetic promises. Paul then explains that his boast about the Corinthians has proven true (7:14), a statement intelligible (and sincere!) in that in the rest of the letter Paul's boast/confidence is always rooted in God's own activity (1:12; 5:11–12; cf. 3:5), which here has been expressed in the Corinthians' *divinely* produced grief, repentance, and salvation. In the end, it is because *God* has produced their repentance (through the agency of the Spirit under the new covenant) that Paul can be both joyful and confident in the Corinthians (7:16). As such, Paul's *joy* is rooted in the fulfillment of the prophetic promises to which he has been referring in the larger letter: the transformation of the heart leading to repentance. Therefore, in joyfully explaining the divine root of the Corinthians' repentance, Paul has continued to defend his own legitimacy as an apostle of the "new covenant."

Finally, in chapter 5 we examined three texts roughly contemporary with 2 Corinthians as paradigmatic examples of various ways in which restoration and repentance were understood in the Second Temple period, even as they are generally similar in their focus on the fulfillment of Deut 30, where God promises that his exiled people will repent and that he will "circumcise" their hearts. We argued that Baruch is

quite similar to Paul in that it believes repentance to be the *product* of God's unilateral transformation of Israel's perennially wicked heart. As such, Baruch points to the exiles' repentance as evidence that the restoration has already begun, calling the people both to obey the Torah (now possible with the gift of a new heart) and to expect impending salvation from and judgment for their enemies. Next, we argued that Jubilees agrees that God must transform Israel's heart, but argues that he will *not* do so until Israel *first* repents. The people's wayward heart has incapacitated them, but not to the extent that they cannot decide to return to God and his law. God will thus transform the people's heart and bring eschatological restoration *in response* to their repentance. Finally, we argued that 2 Baruch is largely dissimilar to 2 Corinthians in that it portrays the people as capable of both repentance and self-transformation. At points 2 Baruch appears to conflate repentance and heart-transformation, while God is not portrayed as an active agent in this process until the final judgment and eschatological restoration. Hence, we have shown how, in broad terms, Paul's own interpretation of the Prophets' discourse on transformation, repentance, and restoration fits along this spectrum. Namely, Paul believes (with Baruch) that repentance is the result of God's unilateral transformation of the heart, not (against Jubilees) that God transforms the heart in response to Israel's repentance, or (against 2 Baruch) that Israel can transform its own heart. We can thus see that Paul, like his Jewish contemporaries, linked the prophetic promises of Israel's new heart with an expectation of its repentance. This strengthens our argument that in 2

Cor 7 Paul builds on the prophetic allusions of 2 Cor 3 and 6 in a way comparable to how some (but not all) of his peers connected repentance and transformation in light of their respective readings of Scripture.

Implications

Implications for Reading Second Corinthians

We have contended that 2 Cor 7:2–16 is a coherent argument, with reference both to itself *and* to the preceding six chapters of 2 Corinthians. On the one hand, if the γάρ of 7:5 really does introduce the *ground* for Paul's joy in the midst of suffering (7:4), a ground fleshed out in the remainder of chapter 7, then it weakens one of the most common arguments for partitions within canonical 2 Corinthians—that 7:5 fits better with 2:13. On the other hand, we have shown that Paul's argument in 7:2–16 gains significant theological and logical coherence by reading it in view of the vocabulary, argument, and scriptural backdrop of 2:14—7:1, including the oft-debated 6:14—7:1. Hence, we should not refer to 2:14—7:1 as a "digression" in his argument, as if it has little to do with his "travel narrative." Instead, we should understand that in 2:14—7:1 Paul is giving the proper theological and scriptural context within which the Corinthians must understand their repentance—namely, that it is the eschatological work of God *through Paul.* Therefore, we should understand Paul's emotional characterization of

both the aim and effects of the "tearful letter" as a *continuation* of his apology for his legitimacy as a minister of the new covenant.

Furthermore, we suggest that the preceding argument helps explain *why* Paul next appeals for the Corinthians to participate in his collection for Jerusalem: he is calling for the Corinthians to "bear fruit worthy of repentance," so to speak.[2] Paul has shown them that their repentance is from God, and now points them to ὁ χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ which has been given among the Macedonians (8:1). He calls them to "abound" ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ χάριτι (8:7), just as they already "abound in everything," including "all" σπουδή—a word Paul uses in 7:12 to represent the Corinthians' entire repentant response as described in 7:11, though it is a response that *does not* include a joy comparable to that of the Macedonians or Paul. In other words, we can understand chapters 8–9 as a call for the repentant Corinthians to *continue* to manifest that they are God's transformed covenant people through sacrificing for the needs of others, in imitation of the Macedonians and Paul (8:1–2; cf. 1 Cor 4:16–17; 11:1). They will thus *continue* to demonstrate the legitimacy of Paul's boast in how God is at work among them (8:24—9:4)—that is, that God has made πᾶσα χάρις "abound" for them (9:8; see 9:9–15). Hence, we hope to see further research into how Paul's scriptural-eschatological reading

2. So John the Baptist in Matt 3:8. Cf. Paul's reported words in Acts 26:20: "I was declaring that they should repent and turn to God, *practicing works worthy of repentance*."

of the Corinthians' repentance in chapter 7 helps us understand why and how he asks the Corinthians to participate in the collections at chapters 8–9.

Our study of 2 Cor 7 can also help us to understand the closing appeals and warnings of 2 Cor 10–13. First, we note that in these chapters Paul twice describes his God-given authority for "your building up and not for your destruction" (10:8; 13:10; cf. 12:19), in fulfillment of God's "new covenant" promise to reverse Jeremiah's (primary) ministry of destruction, rather than building up (Jer 31:28; cf. Jer 1:10)—a reversal, we have argued, marked by the transformation of the people's heart so as to make them repentant. In 10:8 and 13:10 Paul is thus simply using different eschatological imagery to restate that his "ministry of righteousness," unlike Moses's "ministry of death," is not characterized by κατάκρισις (3:9; 7:3). However, Paul knows that at least some will "die" as a direct result of his ministry (e.g., 2:15–16), that is, that they will experience "destruction" rather than "building up." We see this as well in 12:19–21, the only other place in 2 Corinthians besides chapter 7 where Paul uses μετάνοια/μετανοέω. There Paul states, with reference to the Corinthians, that the ultimate aim of "all things" in his ministry is their "building up" (12:19). However, in order to show them *why* (γάρ) this "building up" is the "proper" nature of his ministry toward them, he underscores how much he fears and wants to avoid its "improper" opposite—that is, condemnation (12:20–21), although he only describes this potential consequence

in negative, roundabout terms.[3] For our purposes, it is striking to note that in 12:21 Paul then describes some of those who may suffer this destruction as those who have "not repented" (μὴ μετανοησάντων). In other words, Paul's proper and primary ministry is to be one marked *largely* by repentance, in fulfillment of the promise in Jer 31:28 that God would one day "build up" rather than "destroy," a promise situated within the larger matrix of promises that revolve around God's unilateral transformation of the heart (Jer 31:33; 32:39–40; cf. Ezek 36:26–27, etc.). To suffer the "grief of the world" is to experience this eschatological "death" (7:10b); hence, we suggest that even in 2 Cor 10–13 Paul writes to provoke "grief according to God," since it alone produces "repentance" (7:10a). More research into the rhetorical purpose of chapters 12–13 in relationship to chapter 7 may therefore help explain how chapters 10–13, rather than being the remnant of a previous letter, fits into the broader argument of the canonical epistle.

Second, our study of 2 Cor 7 suggests that the command in 13:11 to "rejoice" (χαίρετε) should be taken seriously as more than a token epistolary closing. For as we have seen *nowhere* in the letter does Paul describe the Corinthians as actually rejoicing, *even though* he says in 2:3 that he wrote the "tearful letter" because he was convinced

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3. E.g., 13:2: "I will not spare [them]"; 13:5: ". . . unless you are unqualified"; 13:10: ". . . so that when I come I may not have to be severe in using the authority that the Lord has given me for building up and not for destruction."

that *his own* joy would and should translate into *their* joy. Indeed, in spite of how the discussion of the "tearful letter" in 2 Cor 7 revolves around *Paul's* joy, it is conspicuously silent about the *Corinthians'* joy (see 7:7, 11). We note again, then, that Paul wants the Corinthians to be like the Macedonians. For immediately after describing the Corinthians' repentance, he points out in chapter 8 that the Macedonians, in the midst of θλῖψις (which is closely related to λύπη in 2:4–5), have an "abundance of joy" (χαρά) and, as a result, are embracing Paul and his collection with generosity (8:2, 5).[4] While Paul is genuinely enthusiastic about the Corinthians' repentance in 2 Cor 7, his use of "joy" language elsewhere hints that not everything is resolved with them, as seen especially in chapters 10–13. The closing command to "rejoice," then, may be a succinct way of exhorting the Corinthians, again, to "bear fruit worthy of repentance." More research on how Paul's use (or not) of "joy" language will help us understand the canonical letter as a unitary whole, albeit one written to a church whose reconciliation with Paul is "already but not yet."[5]

Finally, with regard to the historical situation behind the protracted conflict at Corinth, we suspect that Paul wrote both 1 Corinthians and then, in the wake of the arrival of Paul's opponents, the "tearful letter" to correct the Corinthians' "premature

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4. Note too that in 9:7 Paul exhorts the Corinthians to be *cheerful* givers (ἱλαρός); L&N links this word to χαρά at 25.117, 123, under the semantic subdomain "Happy, Glad, Joyful."

5. We point again to a similar argument about "love" in 2 Corinthians by Bieringer, "Love," 11–24, i.e., that Paul loves the Corinthians but not vice versa.

triumphalism"—a phrase coined by Matthew Malcolm in a recent SBL session on eschatology in 1 Corinthians.[6] In 1 Corinthians, we see the Corinthians behaving as if they had already arrived in the eschatological age of the Spirit (1 Cor 4, 12–14). Paul's newly arrived opponents apparently took advantage of this tendency in turning them against their suffering apostle (2 Cor 1:15—2:4; 12:11–12). The subsequent "tearful letter" rebuked this deepened "premature triumphalism," leading many of the Corinthians to repent (2:5–11; 7:8–9). But in 2 Cor 2:14—7:16 Paul shows the now-repentant Corinthians what they *should* be "triumphalist" about, namely, his ministry as vindicated by their own transformed lives under the "new covenant" of the Spirit. In other words, Paul wrote the "tearful letter" to administer a dose of eschatological "not yet," but in 2 Cor 7:2–16, as in 2:14—7:1, he gives them some eschatological "already,"[7] before turning in chapters 10–13 to deal with those still-triumphalist, unrepentant Corinthians who have yet to heed his past warnings.

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6. Matthew R. Malcolm, "Premature Triumphalism in Corinth" (paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the SBL, Atlanta, GA, 23 November 2015). This is a modified form of Thiselton's and Fee's "over-realized eschatology" theses; see Anthony C. Thiselton, "Realized Eschatology at Corinth," *NTS* 24 (1978): 510–26; Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, Rev. ed., NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), 11–16. By contrast, Hays, "Conversion," 1–24, argues for the opposite problem, i.e., that the Corinthians had an *under*-realized eschatology as informed by the Scriptures. Malcolm prefers "premature triumphalism" to "over-realized eschatology" because it "expresses more clearly that the phenomenon under discussion is chiefly *behavioural* rather than doctrinal. It is, secondly, largely *unwitting* rather than conscious. . . . [and thirdly,] the phenomenon is particularly a *Pauline* evaluation rather than a coherent Corinthian position" (27, emphasis his).

7. In this narrow sense, Hays, "Conversion," is right, i.e., Paul seeks to persuade the Corinthians that their repentance is an *eschatological* reality.

Implications for Reading Paul's Other Letters

In accord with its contribution to understanding the "eschatology" at play in Corinth, we suggest that 2 Cor 7 may help us to gain a fuller picture of Paul's various eschatological contrasts elsewhere. For Paul's distinction in 2 Cor 7:9–10 between "the grief according to God" (ἡ γὰρ κατὰ θεὸν λύπη) and "the grief of the world" (ἡ δὲ τοῦ κόσμου λύπη) is fundamentally about God's eschatological work, whether for salvation or judgment. In 2 Cor 7, Paul focuses particularly on the emotional experience of these two kinds of λύπη, distinguishing especially between their origin/cause (God or the world) and outcome/effect (repentance-salvation or death). Elsewhere, Paul makes similar contrasts in terms of wisdom (1 Cor 1:20–21; cf. 2:6–7, 13), flesh/Spirit (Gal 5:16–17; 6:8; Phil 3:3), life/death (Rom 6:21–23), and "new creation" (Gal 6:14–15; 2 Cor 5:17). Furthermore, Paul contrasts the "kingdom of God" with both the "world" (cf. 1 Cor 5:9–13 with 6:9–11) and the "flesh" (cf. Gal 5:16, 21–22). Particularly relevant to 2 Cor 7 is 1 Cor 5, where Paul directs the church to expel an unrepentant man by delivering him over to Satan. Though this will lead to the "ruin of the flesh," its ultimate aim is to save "[his] spirit" in the day of the Lord (5:4–5). In other words, this man is to be transferred to the "leavened" realm of Satan and the world, outside of the "unleavened" church (cf. 5:7, 9–10; note the comparable language about the "kingdom of God" in 6:9; cf. Eph 2:12; 5:5; Col 1:13; 2:20). To apply our contrast from 2 Cor 7

(also dealing with discipline), then, to 1 Cor 5, Paul hopes that excommunication will lead the man to "the grief according to God" that produces repentance and thereby *salvation*. Paul hopes that the man will eventually find himself in the sphere of the Spirit/New Creation/new covenant, wherein God works through Christ to rescue the ungodly from condemnation. The λύπη-contrast of 2 Cor 7:10 suggests that these other contrasts are not mere theological abstractions, but should be understood from the perspective of actual emotional experience. More research is therefore necessary on how Paul's eschatological contrasts are also *emotional* and *experiential* contrasts: the apostle is concerned about *both* "redemption accomplished" in history *and* "redemption applied" in the lives of believers.[8]

Second, our study speaks to the common theme of Paul's joy (or sorrow) over his churches. We have argued that Paul is not merely expressing relief over a resolved pastoral conflict, but that he is ultimately rejoicing in the work of the Spirit through his ministry, especially as seen in the transformation of believers' behavior. Indeed, we see this same kind and ground of joy throughout Paul's letters. For example, Paul closes Romans by stating that the church's obedience is the basis for his joy (οὖν, 16:19; cf. Rom 15:32 with 1:12); in Rom 15:18 Paul has explained that it is *Christ* who has "produced" (κατεργάζομαι, cf. 2 Cor 7:10–11!) this "obedience of the Gentiles" through

8. See here Richard B. Gaffin, *By Faith, Not by Sight: Paul and the Order of Salvation*, 2nd ed. (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2013).

his ministry *by the power of the Spirit* (15:19). We see a similar dynamic in Phil 1:3–6, where Paul *joyfully* thanks *God* (1:3–4) because the Philippians have partnered faithfully with Paul in the gospel (1:5) and because *God* will sustain them in obedience unto the eschaton (1:6). In this regard, note that in 1:7 Paul says the Philippians are "on my heart" through his imprisonment. In light of Phil 1:3–6, this is not merely a statement about affection, but, as we have argued regarding 2 Cor 3:2 and 7:3, Paul is describing their relationship in terms of a suffering apostle who leads them to the heart-transforming work of God. Paul's joy is ultimately rooted in God's transforming work upon his people at the "end of the ages" (1 Cor 10:11; see also Phil 2:2, 16–17; 4:10 and the similar "joy over transformation/obedience" language in Col 2:5; 1 Thess 1:4–6; 2:19–20; 3:7–9; Phlm 7). Though it is patently obvious that Paul rejoices in the work of God among his churches, we hope that our study will aid other research in gaining greater precision about *how* Paul's joy derives both from his eschatological reading of Scripture and from his consequent legitimacy as an apostle.

It is likewise our hope that this study can better illuminate the way Paul understands repentance in his letters. While it is true that Paul rarely uses the exact vocabulary of μετάνοια, our study has shown that Paul truly *does* value (and even rejoice in) repentance, especially when placed into its proper context as the *product* (not

the precursor) of God's transformation of the heart by the Spirit.[9] Conversely, in Rom 2:4–5 "unrepentance" (ἀμετανόητος) is really a problem of the "hardened heart," even as God shows "kindness" to such rebels. So too, when Paul uses the comparable language of "turning to God," he does so in a context that emphasizes divine agency: that the Thessalonians' turn from idols to God (1 Thess 1:9) is ultimately a result of the gospel coming "in power and in the Holy Spirit" (1:5; cf. 2 Cor 3:16, 17–18). Even when Paul talks about "turning back again" to slavery in Gal 4:9 (presupposing an original turn *from* it; cf. 1:6), he does so convinced that the Galatians are ultimately known *by* God, as evidenced in their receiving and possessing the Spirit (4:6; cf. 3:1–6). For Paul, repentance, like faith and obedience, is a product of the salvific, transforming work of God through Christ and the Spirit.

Finally, we hesitate to speculate about why Paul does not explicitly speak about repentance more often, but we offer a couple of ideas in anticipation of further research. First, 2 Corinthians is the only letter behind which is a conflict with Paul *that has seen some resolution*. In his other letters, Paul either does not appear to be responding to a conflict with himself (e.g., Philippians, 1 Thessalonians), or when he does, has not seen a clear (even if partial) resolution of the conflict (e.g., 1 Corinthians, Galatians, Philemon). Hence, it is not surprising that Paul would speak about "repentance" in 2

9. Similarly, in 2 Tim 2:25, God may "*give*" μετάνοια to Timothy's opponents.

Corinthians, since the church has begun reconciling with Paul after receiving a rebuke from him. Second, in light of our survey of how Second Temple texts variously related repentance and restoration, it may well be (as many have suggested) that Paul's opponents capitalized on how closely some biblical texts relate repentance-language to Torah obedience and escaping its covenant curses (e.g., Lev 26, esp. vv. 40–42; Deut 30, esp. vv. 1, 10). Perhaps this is why Paul does not directly command the Galatians to "repent!," even though, implicitly, this is what he does throughout the letter. In any case, far more research is needed here.

What is more fundamental for Paul than the act of repentance itself—whether in 2 Corinthians, Galatians, or elsewhere—is the graciously unilateral work of God through Christ in transforming the hearts of his people through the Spirit. Paul rejoices and boasts in the Corinthians' repentance precisely because it can only be the work of God under the "new covenant"—the very covenant, Paul reminds the Corinthians, God has made him sufficient to minister.

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