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Article

Morality, Not Mortality: The Inception of Death in the Book of Romans

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In the book of Romans, Paul has often been understood to describe the inception of human mortality and the corruption of creation through the "original sin" of Adam and Eve, but this is difficult to square with the scientific insight that death is intrinsic to the evolutionary process. Certain works on theology and evolution posit that the inception of "death" in Romans refers to some construal of "spiritual death" rather than mortality or "physical death," but this has normally been stated briefly, with little exegetical analysis. This article outlines an exegetical case for a reading of "death" in Romans as a matter of moral corruption rather than mortal corruption, based on parallels between Paul's words and Hellenistic Jewish texts roughly contemporary with Paul, particularly the writings of Philo and Josephus. Ultimately, my analysis suggests that Christians can find coherence, rather than conflict, between Romans and evolutionary science.

In discussions at the intersection of evolutionary science and theology, one key topic has been the extent to which scripture can be squared with the current scientific consensus about evolution. Arguably, the biblical text that is most problematic to fit with evolution is the book of Romans, where Paul has often been understood to describe the inception of human mortality, the corruption of creation, and the infection of humanity with sinfulness and guilt through the "original sin" of Adam.[1] If humans came to exist on Earth through an evolutionary process in which innumerable generations of organisms lived and died, and to which death is, in fact, intrinsic,[2] then in what meaningful way can mortal corruption have its inception with Adam?

To cite a key verse of interest, Romans 5:12 says, "Just as sin came into the world through one person, and death through sin, so death spread to all people." The context clearly indicates that the "one person" is Adam (cf. Rom. 5:12–14).[3] This and other pertinent elements of Romans not only articulate the "plight" that concerns Paul throughout much of the text, but are also integral to Paul's framing of Christ as the "solution" to this plight.[4] Thus, the significance of "death" is not a peripheral interpretative issue, but rather a key consideration in any effort to understand Paul's articulation of the gospel of Jesus in this letter.

Some have addressed the apparent theme of the inception of death in Romans by reasoning that since Paul spoke as a first-century Jew, in a context in which evolutionary science could not begin to be understood, and in which it would have been normal to think that Adam and Eve caused human mortality, he can be forgiven for failing to provide an accurate picture of human origins.[5] Others have suggested that "death" in certain passages of Romans should be understood as "spiritual death" rather than "physical death"—separation from God, or some other form of relational or moral

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corruption, rather than mortality.[6] In this case, Paul is not mistaken about the inception of mortality; it is simply not a subject on which he comments at all.

I am generally sympathetic to the view that Romans describes "spiritual death" entering the world through Adam, but have found that it is normally stated briefly by authors who specialize in some field other than New Testament scholarship, and the argument is usually constructed in a manner that is unsatisfying from the perspective of a New Testament scholar. For instance, proponents of this view typically seem to assume a priori that Genesis and Romans both use "death" in reference to Adam with the same basic meaning, without grounding this claim in Paul's first-century Jewish context, and without any thorough treatment of "death" in Romans more broadly.

In this article, I aim to provide argument toward a full exegetical treatment of "death" in Romans that does meet the standards of New Testament scholarship and accomplishes roughly the same ends as the "spiritual death" view mentioned above. Specifically, I argue (1) that Paul should not be understood in Romans to describe the inception of human mortality, but rather the inception of "death" as a state of moral corruption resulting from sinful behavior, and (2) that this reading is at home in Paul's first-century Hellenistic Jewish milieu.

The Rebellion of the Passions and the Death of the Soul in Platonic Writings

It is commonly accepted that Paul's writings are heavily shaped by Jewish sacred texts, especially the writings of the Torah. Less obvious outside the world of Pauline scholarship is the extent to which Paul's writings also betray the influence of non-Jewish, Greco-Roman traditions, such as Greek philosophy. It turns out that Paul's world was thoroughly characterized by the interaction and blending of cultures—Greek, Roman, Egyptian, Jewish, and so on—so evidence of the influence of Greek thought in Paul's writings is precisely what we should expect.[7]

For my purposes, the influence of one particular strand of Greek philosophical tradition is especially interesting: Platonic accounts of the tyrannical rule of immoral passions. In several of his writings, Plato describes fierce conflict between different elements of the soul. In the *Phaedrus*, Socrates—as a character in Plato's dialogue—likens the human soul to a chariot pulled by two winged horses: one of noble breeding, the other wild (*Phaedr.* 246). When the charioteer and the horses see an object of love, the wild horse charges toward it, fighting against the charioteer and the obedient horse, and ultimately drags them along against their will. However, through the discipline associated with philosophy, the unruly horse can ultimately learn to behave due to repeated restraint (*Phaedr.* 254).

In the *Republic*, Plato has Socrates speak again of this sort of conflict within a tripartite soul, this time using the image of a human, a lion, and a many-headed beast, which are joined together and dwell inside a person (*Resp.* 588C–D). He identifies the "inner person" as the rational part of the soul. This image would seem to correspond to the charioteer in the imagery of the *Phaedrus*. He identifies the lion as the "spirited" part, and this image corresponds to the nobly bred horse. Finally, he identifies the many-headed beast as the desiring part, and this image corresponds to the wild, unruly horse (*Resp.* 441E–442A). The best-born and best-educated people possess temperance and "self-mastery," meaning that the desiring part of their soul is submitted to the rational part (*Resp.* 430E–431A), so that their rational will and their passions are in harmony, and they are less likely to commit immoral acts (*Resp.* 442E–443A; cf. *Resp.* 571B). However, in people of lesser discipline, desires run rampant (*Resp.* 431C). In the worst cases, the desiring part of the soul of a person enslaves the other parts (*Resp.* 444B) and rules over the person as a tyrant (*Resp.* 573C), compelling them to act contrary to the desire of their rational mind (*Resp.* 577C–E). In these dialogues and elsewhere, Plato describes this state of affairs in terms of the tyrannical rule of the passions, or the enslavement or imprisonment of the soul within the "mortal body."[8]

Philosophers of subsequent centuries work with Plato's material on the rebellion of immoral desires against the soul. It appears in the writings of Aristotle, Plutarch, Galen, and Albinus, to name a few.[9] It is not a peripheral detail in the Platonic tradition, but rather a concept that was of significant interest to Platonically informed thinkers long after the time of Plato.

Interestingly, Philo of Alexandria uses the language of "death" in his appropriation of the Platonic tradition of the rebellion of immoral desires. Philo, a first-century Jewish interpreter of scripture, roughly contemporary with Paul, was heavily influenced by Platonic and Stoic thought. His writings exemplify a sophisticated, Hellenistic Jewish interpretation of the books of Moses through the lens of Greek philosophical discourse. At many points in his writings, Philo describes sinful passions and immoral desires in ways that resemble the material I have discussed in Plato's own compositions. In several texts, Philo alludes specifically to the image of the charioteer with the winged horses that so many Platonic authors draw from the *Phaedrus*.[10] In other passages, he talks about bodily pleasures and immoral desires as "rebellious and treacherous," dominating, enslaving, imprisoning, or waging war against the rational mind.[11]

Another motif in Philo's writings is especially important for my purposes: He often uses the language of death to describe the dominion of passions or desires over the soul or mind.[12] In *Allegorical Interpretation*, Philo describes how the soul, as it dwells in the body, may become entangled with bodily pleasures; this entanglement has a corrupting influence on the soul and prevents virtuous living. He describes this state of entanglement and corruption as "death" (*Alleg. Interp.* 2.77–78). In *On Agriculture*, Philo also incorporates death into the Platonic image of a chariot pulled by two horses (*Agriculture* 67–77). In his variation on this metaphor, the horses, when they are not kept in check, drag the chariot in such a way that the charioteer is injured and dies, and the horses are free to go where they please, until they, too, fall into peril and die. In the same way, a lack of moral discipline leads to the death of the mind, which results in a person living a life of vice, which, in turn, leads to their destruction. Frequently, and in various ways, Philo uses language associated with death to describe the condition of the soul when it is inadequately trained for virtuous behavior, as it becomes unable to act uprightly.

Philo's writings are in many ways unique among surviving Hellenistic Jewish texts, but scholars of Philo commonly recognize that he presents elements of earlier Jewish exegetical tradition alongside his own innovative thoughts;[13] thus his use of "death" to describe the subjection of the soul to the passions cannot be easily dismissed as an eccentricity of his particular thought. Although we do not currently have access to many additional examples of the language of "death" used in connection with this element of moral discourse, Josephus does provide a piece of supporting evidence that such language was known outside of Philo's particular circle. Josephus was a Jewish author from the late first century, who wrote his literary works in Rome after growing up in Judea. In his *Jewish War*, Josephus says that "while souls are bound in a mortal body, they are partakers of [the body's] evils, and to speak most truly, they are dead" (*J.W.* 7.344). Josephus speaks here of the death of the soul in a manner similar to Philo, but from a different region, which suggests that such language may well have been known sufficiently broadly for Paul to have been familiar with it, too.[14]

The Meaning of "Death" in Romans 6:1–8:13

Emma Wasserman argues convincingly that various elements of Romans 6–8 fit within the context of Platonic discourse along the lines I have been describing.[15] Paul summarizes his view of the transformation that he and the Romans have undergone in Christ:

> When we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which arose through the Law, were being brought about in our members, with the result that we bore fruit for death, but now, we have been released from the Law, since we died to that which held us captive … (Rom. 7:5–6)

This brief summary encapsulates a set of ideas that occur frequently throughout Romans 6–8, which bear a striking similarity to some of the Platonic motifs I discussed earlier, including the notion of being enslaved to sinful passions (Rom. 6:6–7, 16–20, 22; 7:14, 25; 8:2), the body or "members" as the place where sin impacts a person (Rom. 6:6, 13, 19; 7:5, 23), and the notion that a kind of death sets a person free from slavery to sin (Rom. 6:7, 9–11; 7:2–3). In Romans 6:1–8:13 more broadly, Paul uses a number of other images, words, and phrases that cohere with the Platonic imagery of the rebellion of the passions: sin violently dominates those who routinely commit sins (Rom. 6:12, 14; 7:23), and even wages war against them (Rom. 7:23); and sin rules in the "mortal body" (Rom. 6:12; 8:11).[16] Like Philo, Paul also speaks many times of sin bringing about death (Rom. 6:16, 21, 23; 7:9–12; 8:6, 10, 12).

Perhaps most strikingly, Paul talks about a struggle between the will of the mind and the sinful impulses of the body:

> I delight in God's Law according to the inner person, but I see another law in my members, waging war against the law of my mind, making me captive to the law of sin, which is in my members. Wretched person that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? (Rom. 7:22–24)

Although Paul's notion here, that the Law exacerbates the problem of sin, does not resemble anything in Philo, Plato, or any other writer in the Platonic tradition that is known to me, he nonetheless narrates striving with sin in a way that closely resembles Platonic discourse about the soul and bodily desires. Immoral impulses, which are associated with the body, wage war against, dominate, shackle, and kill the mind, thereby causing behavior that is at odds with the desire of the mind. Further, Paul's use of the phrase "inner person" to describe the mind closely resembles Plato's account of the rational part of the soul in the *Republic*.[17] As in Philo, Paul uses the language of "death" to describe the condition of the "inner person" being bound to sinful desires.

I do not suggest that Paul believes everything that Plato or Philo believes about the soul or the body. The motifs I have outlined are fluid across various authors of the Platonic tradition,[18] and to whatever extent Paul appropriates them, he makes them his own. My claim is that Paul could plausibly have used the language of "death" to refer to a state of moral corruption associated with sinful impulses, and that a number of elements in Romans support this reading.

The Inception of Death in Romans 5:12–21

Of course, the key passage for anyone considering the inception of mortality in Romans is 5:12–21, where Paul sets Adam in parallel to Christ. In particular, he says, "Just as sin entered the world through one person, and death entered through sin, so death spread to all, because all sinned" (Rom. 5:12). This is the *locus classicus* for discourse about "original sin," "Fall," and the like. Paul mentions death a number of times in the passage, and clearly links the "death" of many people to the initial transgression of God's command by Adam (Rom. 5:14, 15, 17, 18, 19), but nothing in the passage necessitates interpreting the inception of "death" through Adam as the inception of mortality, or any other construal of what we might call "physical death," nor does Paul specify the mechanism by which death or sin was mediated to other humans because of Adam. This passage immediately precedes the portion of Romans that I discussed earlier (Rom. 6:1–8:13),[19] where there is good reason to find the influence of Platonic moral discourse lying behind Paul's comments, including the use of the language of "death" to refer to a state of moral corruption and subjection to sinful passions, as we find in Philo. So, it makes more sense to read the inception of sin and death through Adam in terms of the inception of sin and its accompanying *moral corruption*, rather than the inception of sin and its accompanying *mortality*.

The idea that Paul might describe the inception of something akin to Philo's "death of the soul" through the trespass of Adam is supported by the fact that Philo reads Adam and Eve's transgression in this way (see *Allegorical Interpretation* 1.105–8). Philo, commenting on the penalty of death that God prescribes for eating the forbidden fruit, notices that Adam and Eve do not physically die upon violating God's command, and explains that there are two kinds of death: the separation of the soul from the body, which is natural to creation; and the death of the soul, which is "the destruction of virtue and the ascension of vice" (*Alleg. Interp.* 1.105) and which is inflicted as a punishment (*Alleg. Interp.* 1.107). The soul in such a condition is dead to the life of virtue, and lives according to the life of vice (*Alleg. Interp.* 1.107).[20] If Paul is influenced by a Hellenistic Jewish tradition of appropriating Platonic moral discourse in order to frame an understanding of obedience to God's instruction—and I have argued there is good reason to think this is so—then it is perfectly likely that he understood the inception of sin and death through Adam in such terms.

Alternative Interpretations of Death in Romans

Scholars of Romans typically interpret the language of death according to one of two paradigms. According to the first paradigm, death refers primarily to human mortality or "physical death," which is a divine penalty for human sin. In *The Evolution of Adam*, Peter Enns rightly argues that Paul is an ancient Jewish author, and like many other ancient

Jewish authors, he interprets Adam in accordance with his particular theological concerns.[21] Enns argues that Paul came to recognize that Christ died and rose in order to set all humans free from sin and death. This perception led Paul to conclude that humans are under the universal power of sin and death, hence the need for Christ to set them free. Enns notes that several Jewish texts from around the time of Paul attribute human mortality to Adam, as a penalty for sin (for example, 4 Ezra 7.48, 118–19; 2 Bar. 23.4; Apocalypse of Moses 13–14), and he argues that Paul drew upon the figure of Adam to convey the universality of human sinfulness and mortality because it was a readily available category in his context.[22] A number of commentators likewise understand "death" in Romans primarily as a penalty for sin, often with reference to the same Jewish texts that Enns discusses, which attribute both sin and mortality to Adam.[23]

Although several Jewish writings from around the time of Paul do indeed attribute human mortality to Adam, this is not a unanimous view within Paul's cultural milieu. Some Jewish writings portray Adam as a morally neutral or even positive figure, without reference to a "Fall" (for example, Wisd. of Sol. 10.1–2; Sir. 49.16; Philo, *Creation* 142–50),[24] and others, such as Philo (see above), treat human mortality as though it is natural, without any clear sense that humans became mortal through a primordial lapse (for example, Sir. 7.1–13; Wisd. of Sol. 15.8–9). In some cases, death is associated with Adam, not because of a primordial sin of Adam and Eve, but because humanity shares Adam's body of dust; this means that death and decay are inevitable (for example, Sir. 33.10; *Thanksgiving Hymns* 18.4–9; cf. Gen. 2:7; 3:19).[25] To my knowledge, proponents of the reading of Romans that identifies "death" with human mortality, which is a punishment for human sin, have not provided a detailed case for why their interpretation of the inception of death through Adam fits the text *better* than other alternatives, for which parallels can also be found in Paul's cultural context. The interpretation I have proposed, of death as moral corruption, draws on many specific thematic and linguistic parallels with the Hellenistic tradition of moral discourse (see above), so it is well supported by the details of the text of Romans.

The second major interpretative paradigm interprets death and sin as "cosmic powers," that is, forces that oppose the redemptive work of God, based on Paul's personification of sin and death as tyrants that rule over the world (for example, Rom. 5:14, 17, 21), enslave humans (for example, Rom. 6:14, 20), and seize an opportunity to deceive and kill people through the Mosaic Law (Rom. 7:8, 11). Often, scholars conceptualize such "powers" as personal entities, and may even capitalize Death and Sin as proper names for particular beings, similar to rebellious angels or demons. For instance, Beverly Roberts Gaventa calls Sin a "*cosmic terrorist*," who exercises a destructive reign over the world with another anti-God power, Death, as an accomplice.[26] Through Jesus Christ, God wages battle against the rebellious powers of Sin and Death, which gained a foothold in God's creation through the disobedience of Adam.

Much like interpretations of "death" in Romans that center on mortality as a penalty for sin, interpretations that appeal to "cosmic powers" do have parallels in the Jewish milieu of Paul. For instance, the *Community Rule*, one of the texts discovered among the Dead Sea Scrolls, refers to spirits of light and darkness. The spirit of light enables humans to act with righteousness, whereas the spirit of darkness promotes immoral human behavior (*Community Rule* 3–4). However, Paul's personification of death and sin as tyrants does not necessarily imply that he is thinking in terms of cosmic powers, along the lines of the spirit of darkness in the *Community Rule.* No element of the text of Romans requires "death" or "sin" to refer to entities that are external to human beings, and everything Paul says about death and sin is readily explainable as personification without appeal to Jewish notions of cosmic powers. Further, Jewish writings that refer to anti-God powers normally make clear that they are doing so. The *Community Rule* clearly identifies light and darkness as two "angels" and "spirits," as do other key texts that address such beings (for example, 1 Enoch 1–36; cf. Testament of Abraham 16–20), whereas Paul does not make any such clear designation.

My analysis of Romans based on Hellenistic moral discourse, accounts for the tyrannical language Paul uses in reference to death and sin, since this language is typical of material about struggle between a person's rational will and bodily passions in the writings of Plato, Philo, and others (see above). There is little reason to appeal to cosmic powers once one recog-

nizes the striking parallels between Romans 5–8 and these philosophical texts in the Platonic tradition.[27]

The Absence of Glory in Romans 1:23

Thus far, my analysis has focused on Romans 5:12–8:13, where the language of death is especially concentrated. However, for my argument to hold water, there are three additional passages that should be addressed, which some scholars have understood to refer to the introduction of mortal corruption to the world through Adam (i.e., Rom. 1:23; 3:23; 8:20–23). In the first instance, Paul says of past humanity that, "They exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of the image of a corruptible human, and birds, and four-footed creatures, and reptiles" (Rom. 1:23). Commentators on Romans often find a literary echo of the "Fall" of Adam and Eve in this passage, and commonly cite two brief, seminal articles by Morna D. Hooker.[28] The core of Hooker's argument is as follows. First, Paul lists several categories of animals in addition to "a mortal human," and Genesis follows the creation of humanity with a similar list: "They will rule the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and the cattle and all the earth, and all the reptiles that creep on the earth" (Gen. 1:26).[29] Second, the words "image" and "likeness" in Romans 1:23 also occur in the creation of humanity in Genesis: "Let us make humanity in our image, according to our likeness" (Rom. 1:26). Third, a number of ancient Jewish literary traditions associate Adam with glory, and in some cases, Adam's loss of glory with a loss of immortality and the privilege of dominion over creation. Hooker and those who follow her take the disregard of the glory of the immortal God in Romans to evoke traditions of Adam's loss of immortal glory in Eden, based on the other aforementioned parallels between Romans 1:23 and the account of creation in Genesis.

Hooker's argument for the presence of traditions about an Edenic "Fall" in the background of Paul's statement about the loss of glory in Romans 1:23 is unconvincing due to another, clearer set of parallels between this passage and several Old Testament writings. Although some ancient Jewish writings do associate Adam and Eve with a loss of immortal glory (for example, 4 Ezra 7.122; 2 Bar. 15.8; Apocalypse of Moses 20–21),[30] the absence of glory also occurs in many other contexts, including material related to the Exodus.[31] The relevance of "glory" to the Exodus is noteworthy because striking parallels can be found between Paul's comments about the exchange of glory in Romans 1:23 and passages of the Old Testament that evoke the Exodus. One key example occurs in Psalm 106, which includes language that closely resembles Paul's statement that, "They exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of the image of [various created things]." The Psalm reads, "They made a calf at Horeb, and worshipped a cast image. *They exchanged the glory of God for the image of an ox that eats grass*. They forgot God, their Savior, who had done great things in Egypt" (Ps. 106:19–21; cf. Exod. 32). Here, "glory" has to do with proper devotion to God as Savior, and the exchange of glory has to do with turning from God to an idol. This passage matches both the language and the concept of people turning away from God in Romans, much more closely than any known text associated with the "Fall" of Eden.[32]

The combination of the words "image" and "likeness" can also be found in a passage of the Pentateuch related to the Exodus. In Deuteronomy, Moses cautions the people of Israel against idolatry by recounting the incident at Sinai: "Guard your souls carefully—for you saw no *likeness* on the day that the Lord spoke to you at Horeb, on the mountain, from the midst of the fire—so that you may not transgress and make for yourselves a carved *likeness*—any *image*," followed by a list of categories of images that closely resembles Paul's list in Romans (4:15–18; cf. Rom. 4:25–27). This passage does not explicitly evoke the creation of humanity; it does resemble the relevant material of Romans, at least as closely as does any known passage related to Eden, and it coheres with the context of Sinai pertinent to the Psalm that I just discussed.[33] Hooker does acknowledge the linguistic resemblance that Paul's words bear to these passages from Deuteronomy and the Psalms, but she goes on to say that the core organizing idea with which Paul is working is the Fall of primordial humanity.[34]

However, once the parallels to Psalm 106 and Deuteronomy are acknowledged, there remains no substantial element in Romans 1:23 that ought to point an interpreter to the Fall of humanity in Eden. This passage of Romans certainly does contain a contrast between God as Creator, who deserves worship, and created beings, who do not (Rom. 1:25;

cf. Rom. 1:20). So, it is fair to say that the passage evokes creation, but the parallels between Romans and the Exodus tradition strongly imply that the exchange of glory that Paul addresses has to do with an exchange of proper devotion to the Creator God for erroneous devotion to idols. There is no good reason to find Adam or the origin of human mortality in this passage.

The Absence of Glory in Romans 3:23

Paul alludes to the absence of glory again when he says, "Everyone has sinned and lacks the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). A number of interpreters find here an additional allusion to a loss of immortal glory due to the primordial "Fall" of Adam and Eve. For instance, Ben C. Blackwell argues that this passage evokes a loss of "ontological glory," that is, incorruption and abundant life, which Adam exchanged for corruption and mortality, according to certain Jewish writings.[35] Considering the discourse of Romans broadly, this latter statement about glory (Rom. 3:23) appears to refer back to Paul's account of the exchange of God's glory for idols (Rom. 1:23), and there is no apparent reason why our interpretation of humanity's *lack* of glory should not follow from our interpretation of the *exchange* of glory earlier in Romans.

Commentators who find an Adamic Fall in the exchange of God's glory for idols (Rom. 1:23) typically also find an Adamic Fall behind this assertion of humanity's lack of glory (Rom. 3:23), and commentators who understand the exchange of glory earlier in the text as a Sinai-like fracturing of proper devotion to the Creator also typically understand humanity's lack of glory as reflective of a fractured relationship with God, without reference to mortality due to Adam and Eve's "Fall."[36] Since, as I have argued, there is no compelling reason to find a reference to the origin of human mortality through Adam in Paul's earlier comment about the exchange of glory for idols (Rom. 1:23), there is also no compelling reason to find such themes behind Paul's subsequent assertion that humanity lacks the glory of God (Rom. 3:23). This passage refers to universal moral corruption due to humanity's estrangement from God, which necessitates that everyone be justified by faith (Rom. 3:24–28). Paul does not evoke the inception of human mortality here.

The Subjection of Creation to Decay in Romans 8:20–23

Finally, a brief word is in order regarding the subjection of creation in Romans 8:20–23. Paul refers to creation being "subjected to futility" (Rom. 8:20) in the hope that it would be set free from slavery to "corruption" (Rom. 8:21), and Pauline scholars often take these comments as an evocation of the "Fall" of Eden and the inception of mortality and corruptibility in the creation. For instance, James D. G. Dunn interprets this passage as one of many allusions to Adam as the source of creation's and humanity's plight throughout the first half of Romans (1:18–25; 3:23; 5:12–19; 7:7–11; 8:19–22). He notes that God's judgment on Adam in Genesis involves a curse on the ground (Gen. 3:17–18), and interprets the subjection of creation to futility and corruption in Romans as evocative of this Adamic curse on creation. He further notes the parallel between the "futility" of creation in this passage and an earlier description of humans becoming "futile" in their thinking (Rom. 1:21), which Paul also associates with the corruption of humanity through the trespass of Adam (Rom. 1:18–25).[37] Under the assumption that the Fall of Eden lies behind much of the argument of Romans, this reading makes good sense, but if one does not assume that such a theme pervades Romans, there is little reason to find an evocation of Eden behind creation's subjection to futility. I have already argued against finding literary echoes of Adam behind passages in Romans about humanity's lack of glory (Rom. 1:23; 3:23); my argument weakens the basis for Dunn's view that the Fall of Adam lies behind Romans 1–8 broadly. As in those passages, Paul's comments on creation's subjection to futility (Rom. 8:20–22) are better understood in terms of moral corruption rather than mortal corruption.

The word Paul uses for "futility" (*mataiotēs*, Rom. 8:20) consistently refers to moral corruption in the New Testament and other early Christian texts; a cognate of the same word appears in a passage I discussed above, where Paul says that those humans who refused to honor God became futile in their minds (Rom. 1:21) and ultimately fell into moral disarray (Rom. 1:24–32).[38] The word for "corruption" (*phthora*, Rom. 8:21) can refer to the deterioration of organic matter (that is, decay), but it can also refer to moral depravity and/or the destructive results of immoral acts. It occurs with this sense a number of

times in the New Testament and in other Jewish and Christian writings from around the time of Paul.[39] An especially relevant parallel is 2 Peter 2:18–19, where false prophets are said to be "slaves of corruption," where "corruption" is clearly moral rather than biological, and where the word "futility" also occurs in reference to moral inadequacy.

Further, as Laurie J. Braaten points out, Paul refers in Romans 8:22 to the groaning and suffering of creation, and this sort of characterization of the creation readily evokes a number of passages in the prophetic books of the Old Testament, where the earth or a particular land is said to mourn (Isa. 24:1–20; 33:7–9; Jer. 4:23–28; 12:1–4, 7–13; 23:9–12; Hosea 4:1–3; Joel 1:5–20; Amos 1:2).[40] In none of these passages does the earth mourn over mortality, physical decay, or anything of this sort. Rather, each passage has to do with sinful human behavior, which has implications of one sort or another for the condition of the earth itself.

Genesis does not describe the Adamic curse on the ground with any language similar to "futility" or "corruption," and Paul's earlier use of "futility" in Romans (1:21) has to do with foolish, morally corrupt thinking that results from humanity turning away from proper devotion to God (cf. Rom. 1:23). Therefore, good reason exists to understand Paul's words on the subjection of creation to futility (Rom. 8:20–22) in moral terms. Humans engage in consistent patterns of "futile" and "corrupt" behavior, which imposes various kinds of problems on the earth. Thus Paul speaks of the earth groaning for deliverance, together with the children of God. Paul goes on to encourage the Roman church about the inability of persecution and violence to separate them from the love of God (Rom. 8:35–39; cf. Rom. 1:29; 5:3–5). Therefore, one might imagine that violent acts are a key form of moral "corruption" that Paul describes, causing the earth to mourn together with God's children.

Scholars such as Dunn, who interpret the subjection of creation to futility and corruption (Rom. 8:20–22) as creation's bondage to physical decay due to the Adamic curse on the ground, typically also understand "the redemption of our bodies" (Rom. 8:23), to which Paul looks forward, as an eschatological reversal of the corruption of mortality that humans have inherited from Adam.[41] However, the redemption of bodies in this passage is also consistent with my Hellenistic moral reading of the inception of "death" in Romans. Authors such as Plato and Philo typically associate the tyrannical rule of immoral passions with the soul's dwelling in the body, since bodily desires are often the source of internal conflict between a person's rational will and their passions (for example, Plato, *Phaedo* 67D, 81E; Philo, *That God Is Unchangeable* 111; Josephus, *Jewish Wars* 7.344–47). Paul likewise associates sinfulness with the body, as is most clear when he refers to sin working through the body's "members" to produce the fruit of moral death (Rom. 7:5, 23; cf. Rom. 6:6, 12, 19; 7:18, 25). Thus, the redemption of bodies in Romans can be readily understood together with other aspects of Paul's moral discourse: God will transform and vivify the bodies of the children of God; this transformation will enable them to live freely, without the encumbrance of fleshly impulses. The corruption of human mortality need not enter our analysis here.

The Relevance of Death through Adam in 1 Corinthians

I have argued that in Romans, Paul describes the inception of "death" through Adam as a matter of moral corruption rather than mortality. One might object that Paul, in 1 Corinthians, contrasts Adam and Christ in a manner similar to Romans, and states that "everyone dies in Adam," in a context in which physical, bodily death is clearly Paul's salient concern (1 Cor. 15:21–22; cf. 1 Cor. 15:12–20, 35–56). So, this parallel passage undermines my interpretation of the inception of "death" through Adam as a moral metaphor rather than mortality in Romans.

Along similar lines, Denis O. Lamoureux acknowledges the ambiguity of the language of "death" in Romans 5:12–21, especially given several passages in Romans that deal with what he calls "spiritual death" rather than the cessation of bodily life (Rom. 6:13; 7:9–13; 8:6). Yet he argues that the "death" that enters the world through Adam in Romans has to do with physical death, based on the parallel in 1 Corinthians.[42]

The parallel between Paul's references to the inception of death through Adam in Romans and 1 Corinthians is certainly an important consideration in the interpretation of either passage, but the similarity between these two Pauline passages does not

necessarily imply that Paul is talking about death in the same sort of way in both letters. Pauline scholars have long recognized that his writings often show substantial variation on a given topic,[43] and they typically attribute this to the occasional nature of his letters. In other words, Paul's letters do not constitute systematic theological treatises. He writes to particular communities to address particular circumstances, and as a result, his body of letters attests rhetorical flexibility, including flexibility in how he brings a given biblical figure to bear on his discussions.[44] For this reason, consistency between Paul's parallel passages on Adam would have to be demonstrated rather than assumed.

Considering the etiology of death in Romans and 1 Corinthians in particular, it is relevant that certain scholars have noticed a difference in how Paul portrays the corruption of creation in these letters. Edward Adams argues that Paul, in 1 Corinthians, stresses contrast between the church and its social and cultural environment in order to encourage stronger social and ideological boundaries in the Corinthian church. As a result, Paul emphasizes sharp discontinuity between "the present world" and "the world to come," and identifies the Corinthians with "the world to come," whereas he associates those outside the Corinthian church with "the present world," which, Paul emphasizes, is intrinsically corrupt and problematic. By contrast, Adams argues that Paul, in Romans, seeks to encourage the Roman community in the midst of tension with their social environment, and thus emphasizes God's faithfulness to creation, which has become corrupt and requires redemption, yet remains fundamentally good.[45] In other words, in Romans, Paul portrays the world as God's good creation into which corruption has entered, whereas in 1 Corinthians, Paul portrays the world as inherently tainted and in need of replacement by an imperishable, new creation.

J. Christiaan Beker likewise notes that Paul, in Romans, portrays sin and death as "alien" to creation, whereas in 1 Corinthians, creation has "an inherently temporal, transient, and finite character," for which reason Paul treats death more as a natural part of life in the present age.[46]

Paul's particular comments on the relationship of Adam to human death are consistent with the differences that Adams and Beker highlight between these two letters. In Romans, Paul describes sin and death "entering in" to the world as a result of Adam's disobedience (Rom. 5:12), whereas in 1 Corinthians, Paul simply attributes the problem of death to Adam (1 Cor. 15:21–22), who has a perishable body made of dust that all other humans share (1 Cor. 15:45–49), without a clear indication that death entered into a deathless, uncorrupted creation because of a primordial sin. Virtually all English translations render 1 Corinthians 15:21 to say that death "came" through Adam, which may give the impression that death entered the world, where it was previously absent. This verse, however, contains no explicit verb in the original Greek, and it could just as easily be understood to mean that human mortality is due to humanity's solidarity with the corruptible body of Adam.

Jason Maston has likewise recently proffered a detailed, exegetical argument in favor of reading 1 Corinthians 15 in such a way that humanity's major problem in this passage is that everyone possesses a "dusty" body like that of Adam, and is thus wasting away, unless God makes them alive by the Spirit.[47] One may decide that Maston's reading is wrong, but his analysis highlights that 1 Corinthians can potentially be understood to show that resurrection through Christ solves the problem of humanity's inherent mortality.

In addition to considerations about how Paul constructs creation's corruption in Romans and 1 Corinthians broadly, the passages of each letter in which Paul discusses Adam also evidence different rhetorical concerns. In 1 Corinthians, Paul brings up death and resurrection in the context of a dispute in the Corinthian community over whether God resurrects those believers in Christ who have died (1 Cor. 15:12–19). In this context, it makes good sense that Paul would discuss human mortality, as he is addressing concerns about physical death and the fate of those who have died. However, the text of Romans does not evidence any clear concern about the fate of those who have died. Rather, Paul brings up death through Adam in the context of reassurance about the certainty of future glory for the Roman community (Rom. 5:1–21). Paul emphasizes the super-abundance of God's grace through Christ, which is more than sufficient to address the problem of sin and death through Adam (see esp. Rom. 5:15, 17, 20–21). The triumph of God's grace over sin in this

passage does not furnish a reason to insist that Paul brings up "death" in reference to human mortality. If death is a state of moral corruption associated with sin, this would be perfectly consistent with the overall thrust of Paul's rhetoric. Further, just after this section related to Adam (Rom. 5:12–21), Paul goes on to clarify that grace through Christ does not imply that sinful living is acceptable (Rom. 6:1, 15); this explanation further highlights the moral focus of his discourse in this part of the letter (cf. Rom. 6:1–8:13).

In sum, in 1 Corinthians, it is clear that Paul is concerned with "death" as human mortality when he mentions Adam, but it is not at all clear that "death" is an interloper in God's creation. In Romans, it is clear that "death" is an interloper in God's creation, but it is not at all clear that "death" has anything to do with human mortality, and as I have argued, we *do* have good exegetical reason to understand "death" in Romans as a metaphor for a morally corrupt life. For these reasons, detailed analysis of 1 Corinthians would be relevant to an overall study of Paul's understanding of human mortality, and whether mortality is inherent or alien to God's creation, but this analysis would have to be distinct from my present analysis of "death" in Romans. Paul's discussions of death in these two letters are decidedly different, and occur in quite different contexts, so we do not have grounds to assume that Paul intends to communicate the same fundamental things about "death" in each letter.

Why Not Morality *and* Mortality?

Some exegetes have argued that Paul has in mind both moral death and mortal death when he addresses the inception of death through Adam in Romans. For instance, Thomas Barosse argues that Paul has in mind a comprehensive, "total death" when he discusses death and sin entering the world through Adam's trespass.[48] One could accept my argument that Paul, in Romans, describes the inception of moral corruption through Adam, and yet maintain that Paul *also* intends to convey that human mortality has its origin through Adam. I cannot prove that Paul did not think that humans became mortal through the trespass of Adam and Eve, and some ancient Jewish thinkers certainly did understand human mortality in this way (4 Ezra 7.118–19; 2 Bar. 23.4; Apocalypse of Moses 14.2–3), but nothing in Paul's letters *must* indicate that human mortality has intruded into God's creation. And once the Hellenistic moral background of much of Paul's language of "death" in Romans is recognized, there remains no reference to death in Romans that *ought* to be understood, first and foremost, to indicate that human mortality is a result of human sin.[49] It is indeed possible that Paul held a belief that both moral corruption and mortality entered humanity through Adam, but he never makes a clear, salient statement about mortality as a penalty for sin in Romans. For this reason, modern Christians do not need to consider Paul's discussion of death in Romans to be an obsolete, ancient misconception that must be discarded in light of evolutionary science.

Conclusion

Based on the reading I have sketched out here, I conclude that insufficient evidence exists to insist that Paul's letter to the Romans describes the inception of human mortality. Indeed, if we read Romans with sensitivity to the Hellenized context of Paul's ministry and to the resonance of certain elements of his writing within that context, we have good reason to understand the inception of death and sin in Romans through the lens of the Platonic tradition. Paul appears to use the language of "death" to describe the subjection of a person to immoral passions, in a manner similar to other Hellenistic Jewish authors, particularly Philo and Josephus. On the matter of the inception of death in connection with Adam, twenty-first-century Christians do not need to resort to explaining away Paul's understanding as a historically conditioned assumption that modern science renders untenable. In short, the inception of "death" in Romans is a matter of *morality*, not *mortality.*

I have specifically sought to replace prior arguments for a "spiritual death" reading of Romans with an argument that better stands up to critical scrutiny from Pauline scholars. I have not sought to give an account of how Christians might understand the inception of moral corruption through Adam in light of insights about human development from other fields of study,[50] nor have I sought to thoroughly analyze 1 Corinthians 15, which deserves exegetical treatment in its own right. The present article is merely one step toward a thorough reflection on the significance of the Christian Gospel in light of the insights of evolutionary science. My reading of Romans prompts further thinking about the origins

of human plight, and Christ as the solution to human plight, vis-à-vis a scientifically informed account of the human story. ✧

Notes

[1]For a brief but detailed treatment of original sin in the Christian tradition, including the writings of Paul, see John E. Toews, *The Story of Original Sin* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2013).

[2]As John R. Wood succinctly puts it, "Nothing in ecology makes sense apart from the operations of physical death" in "An Ecological Perspective on the Role of Death in Creation," *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith* 68, no. 2 (2016): 78.

[3]All English translations are my own.

[4]The language of "solution" and "plight" was popularized in Pauline studies by E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1977), 442–47.

[5]For example, Denis O. Lamoureux, *Evolutionary Creation: A Christian Approach to Evolution* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2008), 306–31; Peter Enns, *The Evolution of Adam: What the Bible Does and Doesn't Say about Human Origins* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos, 2012), 120–24.

[6]See, for example, Deborah B. Haarsma and Loren D. Haarsma, *Origins: Christian Perspectives on Creation, Evolution, and Intelligent Design*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Faith Alive, 2011), 210–12, 226; Denis R. Alexander, *Creation or Evolution: Do We Have to Choose*? (Oxford, UK: Monarch, 2008), 245, 253, 260–67; Daniel M. Harrell, *Nature's Witness: How Evolution Can Inspire Faith* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2008), 111–26; Daniel C. Harlow, "After Adam: Reading Genesis in an Age of Evolutionary Science," *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith* 62, no. 3 (2010): 190; George L. Murphy, *Models of Atonement: Speaking about Salvation in a Scientific World* (Minneapolis, MN: Lutheran University Press, 2013), 69–70; R. J. (Sam) Berry, "Natural Evil: Genesis, Romans, and Modern Science," *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith* 68, no. 2 (2016): 92, 97.

[7]In recent decades, Pauline scholars have produced numerous volumes exploring the influence of Greco-Roman culture and thought on Paul. See esp., Troels Engberg-Pedersen, ed., *Paul in His Hellenistic Context* (Edinburgh, Scotland: T&T Clark, 2000).

[8]See Plato, *Phaedo* 81E; 83D; ___, *Republic* 572E, 573D, 575A; ___, *Timaeus* 43A; 44A–B.

[9]See especially Aristotle, *On the Soul* 411B5–30, 413B13–34, 432A21–B17; Plutarch, *On Moral Virtue* 445B–452D, 498D–E; ___, *Platonic Questions* 9; ___, *On Exile* 17; ___, *On the Cessation of Oracles* 10; Galen, *On the Doctrines of Hippocrates and Plato* 3.3.5–16, 4.2.1–6, 5.8.18–19, 6.1.16–27; Albinus, *Handbook of Platonism* 17.4, 23.1, 24.1, 29.1. See further, Stobaeus, *Ecologues* 2.88.8–90.6; Posidonius, *Fragments* 142–49, 160–63; Aetius, *Placita Philosophorum* 4.4.1; Arius Didymus, *Epitome of Stoic Ethics* 10B; Alcinous, *Handbook of Platonism* 23–24; Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* 3.67; Pseudo-Aristotle, *Virtues and Vices* 1.3–4, 2.4–5, 3.4–5, 4.5, 5.1, 6.7–10.

[10]Philo, *On the Special Laws* 4.79, 92; ___, *Allegorical Interpretation* 2.99–104; ___, *That the Worse Attacks the Better* 141. Material in ___, *Migration* 18 also clearly evokes Plato's tripartite soul.

[11]For example, Philo, *Decalogue* 142, 145, 149–50; ___, *Allegorical Interpretation* 2.72; 3.42; ___, *Drunkenness* 101; ___, *Dreams* 1.147; ___, *Questions and Answers on Genesis* 1.47.

[12]See Philo, *Allegorical Interpretation* 2.82; 3.52; ___, *Posterity* 73–74; ___, *Worse* 70; ___, *Planting* 37; ___, *Flight* 55; ___, *On the Special Laws* 1.345; ___, *Questions and Answers on Genesis* 2.45. For detailed analysis of Philo's metaphor of the death of the soul, see D. Zeller, "The Life and Death of the Soul in Philo of Alexandria: The Use and Origin of a Metaphor," *Studia Philonica Annual* 7 (1995): 19–55.

[13]See especially Thomas H. Tobin, *The Creation of Man: Philo and the History of Interpretation* (Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1983).

[14]Although there is no definitive evidence that Josephus must have been directly dependent on the writings of Philo rather than shared tradition, Louis H. Feldman notes that most scholars who have taken up the question have concluded that Josephus was directly influenced by Philo's writings to some extent (see *Josephus and Modern Scholarship (1937–1980)* [Berlin: De Gruyter, 1984], 413). However, familiarity with some of Philo's writings does not imply comprehensive knowledge of his whole body of work, and the strongest cases for Josephus's direct dependence on writings of Philo pertain to Philo's *Hypothetica* and *On the Creation of the World*, neither of which includes the language of the "death of the soul." See further, Gregory E. Sterling, "Universalizing the Particular: Natural Law in Second Temple Jewish Ethics," *Studia Philonica Annual* 15 (2003): 63–80; Sterling, "'A Man of the Highest Repute': Did Josephus Know the Writings of Philo?," *Studia Philonica Annual* 25 (2013): 101–13.

Wisdom of Solomon, another Alexandrian Jewish text from around the time of Paul, may express the notion of the death of the soul or "spiritual death" (cf. Wisd. of Sol. 1.11; 10.3–4), though this is less clear. See Karina Martin Hogan, "The Exegetical Background of the 'Ambiguity of Death' in the Wisdom of Solomon," *Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods* 30, no. 1 (1999): 1–24.

[15]Emma Wasserman, *The Death of the Soul in Romans 7: Sin, Death, and the Law in Light of Hellenistic Moral Psychology* (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2008). I do not accept every aspect of Wasserman's argument, but I do find her argument for Hellenistic moral psychology as the context for much of Romans 6–8 to be compelling.

[16]For "mortal body" in Platonic discourse about the rebellious passions, see Plato, *Timaeus* 44A–B, 69C–E; Philo, *Providence* 2.22; ___, *Joseph* 71; ___, *Special Laws* 4.188; ___, *Virtues* 9; Josephus, *Jewish War* 7.344; and Plutarch, *On the Cessation of Oracles* 10; ___, *On Exile* 17; ___, *On Eating Flesh* 1.7.

[17]Wasserman, *The Death of the Soul*, 77. See Plato, *Republic*, 588C–591B.

[18]For an example of the fluidity and complexity of moral psychological traditions, see Christopher Gill, "Did Galen Understand Platonic and Stoic Thinking on Emotions?," in *The Emotions in Hellenistic Philosophy,* ed. Juha Sihvola and Troels Engberg-Pedersen (Boston, MA: Kluwer, 1998), 113–48. Gill describes Galen's attempts to adjudicate between the earlier understandings of Posidonius and Chrysippus, and Gill suggests that Galen likely misunderstands or misrepresents certain aspects of the moral psychological treatments of each of these authors.

Interestingly, Philo's writings evidence various configurations of the composition of the human person insofar as

moral psychology is concerned, sometimes drawing from Platonism, sometimes Stoicism, sometimes the Peripatetic tradition, as it suits his interpretative aims. See Wayne A. Meeks, *The Moral World of the First Christians* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1986), 82.

Even Plato's own writings evidence multiple nuanced construals of moral psychological conflict. In the *Phaedo*, the key conflict is between the rational soul and the irrational bodily passions, but in the *Republic*, conflict occurs between parts of the soul itself. See R. Hackforth, *Plato's Phaedo* (New York: Liberal Arts Press, 1952), 11.

[19]Exegetes of Romans often treat chapters 5–8 as a thematic unit. See, for example, Richard N. Longenecker, *The Epistle to the Romans: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2016), 187.

[20]Compare this to Rom. 6:11: "Consider yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus."

[21]Enns, *Evolution of Adam*, 99–117.

[22]Ibid., 133–34.

[23]For example, John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 2 vols. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1968), 1:290; C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, Scotland: T&T Clark, 1975–1979), 1:389; James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 1–8* (Dallas, TX: Word, 1988), 272–73.

[24]See John R. Levison, *Portraits of Adam in Early Judaism: From Sirach to 2 Baruch* (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1988), 145–59.

[25]On the *Thanksgiving Hymns*, see Jason Maston, "Anthropological Crisis and Solution in the *Hodayot* and 1 Corinthians 15," *New Testament Studies* 62, no. 4 (2016): 534–41.

[26]Beverly Roberts Gaventa, *Our Mother Saint Paul* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2007), 131–32. Emphasis original. A number of commentators likewise interpret "death" and "sin" in Romans as cosmic powers: for example, Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1980), 150; cf. 142; Robert Jewett, *Romans: A Commentary* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2007), 374.

[27]Cf. Wasserman, *The Death of the Soul*, 81–89.

[28]Morna D. Hooker, "Adam in Romans I," *New Testament Studies* 6 (1960): 297–306; ___, "A Further Note on Romans I," *New Testament Studies* 13 (1967): 181–3. Commentators who cite Hooker include, for example, Dunn, *Romans 1–8*, 60–61; N. T. Wright, "Romans," in vol. 10 of *The New Interpreter's Bible* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2001), 432–33.

[29]On this point, Hooker, in "Adam in Romans 1" (p. 300), follows Niels Hyldahl, "A Reminiscence of the Old Testament at Romans i. 23," *New Testament Studies* 2, no. 4 (1956): 285–88.

[30]For further examples and discussion, see Robin Scroggs, *The Last Adam: A Study in Pauline Anthropology* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1966); Crispin H. T. Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory of Adam: Liturgical Anthropology in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Leiden, NL: Brill, 2002).

[31]Instances of the absence of glory due to idolatry in connection with the Exodus include Ps. 106:20 and Jer. 2:11. Additional passages about the loss of glory due to disobedience toward God in general include Hosea 4:1–18 and Hab. 2:5–19. Instances of glory in connection with the Exodus in general include Exod. 16:7, 10; 24:16–17; 29:43; 33:18, 19, 22; 34:5; Lev. 9; Num. 12:8; 14:10; Deut. 5:24; Sir. 17.13; Bar. 5.6, 7, 9; and 2 Cor. 3:13. In a number of other instances, the presence of God, expressed as "glory," has to do with God's particular relationship with Israel as the recipients of revealed glory (Num. 14:21–22; 1 Kings 8:11; Ps. 71:19; Isa. 6:1, 3; Ezek. 43:2, 4, 5; 44:4; Hab. 2:14; 2 Macc. 2.8; Sir. 44.3; 49.12; Rev. 15:8; and Josephus, *Antiquities* 8.106). These passages do not exactly have to do with the Exodus, but they do speak of "glory" in a way that is congenial to the significance of "glory" in the Exodus. In some cases, "glory" is evident in the Septuagintal (Greek) versions of the passage, but not the Hebrew.

[32]Alec J. Lucas argues extensively for the influence of Psalm 106 in the early chapters of Romans (*Evocations of the Calf? Romans 1:18–2:11 and the Substructure of Psalm 106 (105)*, BZNW vol. 201 [Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015]).

[33]Lucas asserts that the account of creation in Gen. 1:26–27 parallels the list of animals in Rom. 1:23 more closely than does the list of idols in Deut. 4:16–18, but I do not see how this is so. All of these lists differ slightly from one another, yet are generally close.

[34]Hooker, "Adam in Romans 1," 297; cf. Hyldahl, "Reminiscence of the Old Testament," 286–88; Wright, "Romans," 432–33.

[35]Ben C. Blackwell, "Immortal Glory and the Problem of Death in Romans 3.23," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 32, no. 3 (2010): 285–308. Blackwell's argument regarding Rom. 3:23 is based on the same pool of Jewish writings that scholars appeal to regarding the loss of immortal glory in Rom. 1:23 (see above).

[36]For example, Dunn (*Romans 1–8*, 167–68) and Wright ("Romans," 470) find Adam behind both passages, whereas Jewett (*Romans: A Commentary*, 280) and Joseph A. Fitzmyer (*Romans: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Bible 33 [New York: Doubleday, 1992], 283–84) challenge this position.

[37]James D. G. Dunn, *Christology in the Making: A New Testament Inquiry into the Origins of the Doctrine of the Incarnation* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1980), 100–5; ___, *Romans 1–8*, 469–72. See also, Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996), 519; Jewett, *Romans: A Commentary*, 513.

[38]*Mataiotēs* ("futility") refers to moral corruption in the New Testament in Eph. 4:17 and 2 Pet. 2:18. It occurs with roughly the same sense in two other early Christian texts, normally included among the "Apostolic Fathers" collection: Barnabas 4.10 and the Polycarp 7.2. The cognate adjective, *mataios*, often refers to idols, or the outcome of idol worship (for example, Acts 14:15; 1 Pet. 1:18 in the New Testament and Lev. 17:7; 1 Kings 16:2, 13, 26; 2 Kings 17:15; 2 Chron. 11:15; Isa. 2:20; 30:15; 44:9; 45:19; Jer. 2:5; 8:19; 10:3, 15; 28:18; Ezek. 8:10; 11:2; Hosea 5:11; Amos 2:4 in the Septuagint). In the Septuagint, *mataios* can also refer to sinful living in general, as in 3 Macc. 6.11; Pss. 5:10; 11:3; 23:4; 61:10; Prov. 12:11; 21:6; Isa. 59:6; Jon. 2:6; and Zeph. 3:13.

[39]*Phthora* ("corruption") refers to moral, rather than physical, corruption in the New Testament in 2 Pet. 1:4; 2:12, 19. Paul uses the word to refer to physical corruption in 1 Cor. 15:42, 50; Col. 2:22. In Gal. 6:8, immoral practices result in *phthora*, so the word may refer to moral corruption here, as well. The word has the sense of moral corruption in the Septuagint version of Ps. 102:4; Mic. 2:10, in other Jewish writings from around the time of Paul (1 Enoch 106.17; Psalms of Solomon 4.6; Demetrius 2.9), and in 2 Clement 6.4, which is another early Christian writing. In the Septuagint, *phthora* has the sense of physical corruption in Dan. 3:92; 10:8.

[40]Laurie J. Braaten, "The Groaning Creation: The Biblical Background for Romans 8:22," *Biblical Research* 50 (2005): 19–39.

[41]For example, Dunn, *Romans 1–8*, 474–75; cf. Jewett, *Romans: A Commentary*, 519.

[42]Lamoureux, *Evolutionary Creation*, 315–17.

[43]See, for example, J. Christiaan Beker, "Recasting Pauline Theology: The Coherence-Contingency Scheme as Interpretive Model," in *Pauline Theology*, vol. 1, ed. Jouette Bassler (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1991), 15–24.

[44]For example, in Gal. 3:9–10 (cf. 4:25–5:1), Paul uses the biblical figure of Abraham to establish discontinuity between old and new covenants, in that those who rely on works of the law are cursed, whereas those who believe like Abraham are blessed, whereas in Rom. 4:10–12, Abraham establishes continuity between faithful Jews, who follow Abraham's example of faith, and faithful Gentiles, who are uncircumcised and yet have faith, as Abraham also did. See J. Christiaan Beker, *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1980), 97–102. Hendrikus Boers likewise highlights differences in Abraham's significance between Galatians and Romans in "The Significance of Abraham for the Christian Faith," in *Theology out of the Ghetto: A New Testament Exegetical Study Concerning Religious Exclusiveness* (Leiden, NL: Brill, 1971), 74–104.

[45]Edward Adams, *Constructing the World: A Study in Paul's Cosmological Language* (Edinburgh, Scotland: T&T Clark, 2000), 242–43.

[46]J. Christiaan Beker, "The Relationship between Sin and Death in Romans," in *The Conversation Continues: Studies in Paul and John in Honor of J. Louis Martyn*, ed. Robert T. Fortna and Beverly R. Gaventa (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1990), 59. Beker does note that 1 Cor. 15:21–22 seems to allude to Adam causing death (which Beker understands as mortality), but does not find this to be a significant emphasis.

[47]Maston, "Anthropological Crisis," 533–48.

[48]Thomas Barosse, "Death and Sin in Saint Paul's Epistle to the Romans," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 15, no. 4 (1953): 438–59.

[49]I do not have space to treat every reference to death in Romans in this article, but my dissertation will address the language of death in Romans much more comprehensively.

[50]For a basic account of possible evolutionary views of the inception of moral corruption, see Robin Collins, "Evolution and Original Sin," in *Perspectives on an Evolving Creation*, ed. Keith B. Miller (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), 469–501. See also N. T. Wright, "Do We Need a Historical Adam?," in *Surprised by Scripture: Engaging Contemporary Issues* (New York: HarperOne, 2014), 26–40.

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