

# Introduction

In Rom 5:12–21 and 1 Cor 15:21–22, 45–49, Adam represents an antithetical figure of the eschatological times inaugurated in Christ’s resurrection. Historical-critical studies have looked into the background of the Pauline Adam motif and found that Paul and very likely the Christian communities in Rome and Corinth were acquainted with earlier traditions and interpretations of the story of the creation and fall of humanity (Genesis 3).<sup>1</sup> Thus, Joachim Jeremias suggested that behind the Adam motif in Paul was an Easter myth of the primordial man.<sup>2</sup> Others believed that Gnosticism influenced Paul’s distinction between the heavenly and earthly man. Still others suggest that Philonic interpretations of the creation account reached the Christian community in Corinth via Apollos. Gregory E. Sterling compares the Corinthians’ position on the resurrection of the body (1 Cor 15:44–49) with Philo’s exegesis of the story of the creation in Gen 1:26–27 and 2:7 and concludes that “Philo’s concept of the immortality of the soul and corresponding devaluation of the body makes the Corinthians’ denial of a future

1. Peter C. Bouteneff (*Beginnings: Ancient Christian Readings of the Biblical Creation Narratives* [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008]) presents a summary on the figure of Adam from Genesis 1–3 to the Fathers of the Church. Other studies of the Adam motif in Paul include J. P. Versteeg, *Is Adam a “Teaching Model” in the New Testament? An Examination of One of the Central Points in the Views of H. M. Kuitert and Others*, trans. Richard B. Gaffin (Nutley, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1977); A. J. M. Wedderburn, “Adam in Paul’s Letters to the Romans,” *StudBib* 3 (1978): 413–30, on Rom 1:18–23 and 7:7–12; Nicholas Thomas Wright, “Adam in Pauline Christology,” in *SBL Seminar Papers*, vol. 22 (Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1983), 359–89; C. Marvin Pate, *Adam Christology as Exegetical & Theological Substructure of 2 Corinthians 4:7–5:21* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1991); Seyoon Kim, *The Origin of Paul’s Gospel* (WUNT 2/4; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1984), 162–92; James D. G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 281–92; idem, *Christology in the Making: A New Testament Inquiry into the Origins of the Doctrine of the Incarnation* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989); Sang-Won (Aaron) Son, *Corporate Elements in Pauline Anthropology: A Study of Selected Terms, Idioms and Concepts in the Light of Paul’s Usage and Background* (AnBib 148; Rome Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2001), 55–59; and Aldo Martin, *La tipologia adamica nella lettera agli Efesini* (AnBib 159; Rome: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2005).

2. J. Jeremias argues that Paul was familiar with Jewish traditions that traced the Adam motif to an Easter redeemer myth that identified “the first man as an ideal man, together with the doctrine of the restitution by the Messiah of the glory which he lost at the fall”; and “by the doctrine of the pre-existent Messiah, **בְּרֵאשִׁית**, which resulted from a fusion of Messianic expectation with the doctrine of the first man as redeemer,” “**Ἀδὰμ, κτλ.**,” *TDNT* 1:141–43.

bodily resurrection fully explicable.”<sup>3</sup> However, he explains that Philo was not the source of the Corinthians’ position but simply “our major witness to them,” and it may actually have been Apollos who brought these traditions to the synagogue in Corinth.<sup>4</sup>

These studies, however, have neglected the literary function of the figure of Adam, as well as the ethical implications Paul conveyed in 1 Cor 15:21–22, 45–49 and Rom 5:12–21. In order to grasp the meaning and function of Adam, it is necessary to pay attention to the literary context in which Paul introduces the contrast between Adam and Christ. This contrast is found within a broader comparison between the “old” and “new” creation,<sup>5</sup> and between “this age”

3. Gregory E. Sterling, “Wisdom among the Perfect’: Creation Traditions in Alexandrian Judaism and Corinthian Christianity,” *NovT* 37 (1995): 366–67. See also Gregory E. Sterling, “The Place of Philo of Alexandria in the Study of Christian Origins,” in *Philo und das Neue Testament: Wechselseitige Wahrnehmungen*, ed. Roland Deines and Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr (WUNT 172; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 21–52.

4. Sterling, “Wisdom among the Perfect,” 382. Citing Acts 18:24–19:1 he argues, “It is at least a distinct possibility that Apollo brought Greek-speaking Jewish sapiential traditions about the creation of humanity to Corinth which the Corinthians found appealing” (p. 383). See also W. D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism: Some Rabbinic Elements in Pauline Theology* (2nd ed.; New York and Evanston: Harper & Row, 1955), 51; Robin Scroggs, *The Last Adam: A Study in Pauline Anthropology* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966). Richard A. Horsley suggests that “the Hellenistic Jewish theology represented by Philo may be actually a source, mediated through the eloquent scriptural interpreter Apollos, who taught in the Corinthian community after Paul” (“How Can Some of You Say That There Is No Resurrection of the Dead? Spiritual Elitism in Corinth,” *NovT* 20 [1978]: 203–31, here 207; cf. 229). See further John Gillman, “Transformation into the Future Life: A Study of 1 Cor 15:50–53, Its Context and Related Passages” (Ph.D. diss., Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium, 1980). Birger A. Pearson used the extrapolation of the second-century *Epistle of Barnabas* and the *Teachings of Silvanus* to point out the connections between these Alexandrian Christian traditions and 1 Corinthians 1–4 (“Cracking a Conundrum: Christian Origins in Egypt,” *ST* 57 [2003]: 61–75). Specifically, “*Silvanus* retains . . . a good deal of the ‘speculative wisdom’ already encountered by Paul in first-century Corinth, presumably mediated by the Alexandrian Jewish teacher Apollos, [who] may very well have been a pupil of Philo” (p. 70). See also Birger A. Pearson, *The Pneumatikos-Psychikos Terminology in 1 Corinthians: A Study in the Theology of the Corinthian Opponents of Paul and Its relation to Gnosticism* (SBLDS 12; Missoula, Mont.: Society of Biblical Literature, 1973), 18. For the discussion of the use of Philo’s works in the study of Paul, see Berndt Schaller, “Adam und Christus bei Paulus: Oder, Über Brauch und Fehlbrauch von Philo in der neutestamentlichen Forschung,” in Deines and Niebuhr, *Philo und das Neue Testament*, 143–53.

5. See Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism*, 37–41. Robin Scroggs (*Last Adam*, 59–74) analyzes Paul’s understanding of the last Adam within the schema of the new–old creation. See also Christina Hoegen-Rohls, “Κρίσις and καινή Κρίσις in Paul’s Letters,” in *Paul, Luke and the Graeco-Roman World: Essays in Honour of Alexander J. M. Wedderburn* ed. Alf Christophersen et al. (JSNTSup 217; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 102–22. In her analysis of “Creation” and “New Creation” in 2 Cor 5:17, Hoegen-Rohls identifies eschatological motifs in the description of the pangs of creation (p. 114). In the

(αἰῶνος τούτου) or “this world” (κόσμου τούτου) and “the age to come.” This contrast usually had for Paul intrinsic ethical and social implications. Thus, the believer who belongs to the new aeon also is “in Christ,” the heavenly man; the believer must be clothed with Christ and consequently is incorruptible. Therefore, those who belong to Christ must break with the old creation dominated by sin and represent in their lives the mystery of the new Adam if they want to participate in the age or world to come. Thus, being either in the old Adam or in the last Adam, Christ (ἐν Χριστῷ), or being either people of dust or people of heaven (cf. 1 Cor 15:48–50) implied a way of life according to the one they would follow and imitate.

Additionally, Paul sets the future resurrection of the believers in tension with their ethical commitment to the present. Thus, Paul emphatically argues, “If the dead are not raised, ‘Let us drink and eat, for tomorrow we die.’ Do not be deceived: ‘Bad company ruins good morals.’ Come to your right mind, and sin no more” (1 Cor 15:32–34). Paul concludes 1 Corinthians 15 with an exhortation, “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain” (15:58). Although this element is less evident in Rom 5:12–21, its immediate context may reflect Paul’s ethical concerns. The justification brought by Christ’s expiatory death (5:1–11) requires believers to sin no more. Paul develops this implication through the explanation of baptism and its consequences in terms of dying, being buried with Christ, and walking in the newness of life (Rom 6:1–4). Paul also links Christ’s death and resurrection to that of the believers as dying to sin and as living to God (6:10–11). In the subsequent verses, Paul exhorts, “let not sin reign in your mortal bodies” and asks, “What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace?”

context of Rom 4:17, she also identifies the ethical consequences of the new creation; that is, Christians now recenter their lives from the once “self-centeredness toward an existence devoted to the Crucified and Risen One” (p. 118). In her analysis of the concepts “creation/new creation” in Paul, there is a correlation between the eschatological language and the ethical consequences of the new creation. See also Moyer V. Hubbard, *New Creation in Paul’s Letters and Thought* (SNTSMS 119; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002). Hubbard analyzes the “new creation” motif in Paul, particularly in 2 Cor 5:12 and Gal 6:15 against the Jewish background, specifically of *Jubilees* and *Joseph and Aseneth*. He concludes that the “new creation” motif in Paul represents the newness of life of the individual brought by the Spirit, as well as the *demarcation* and *empowerment* of a new society (p. 233). Similarly, Bruce D. Chilton indicates that resurrection involves a new creative act by God that begins not simply at death. “Rather, a progressive transformation joins the realm of ethics together with the realm of metaphysics. Morally and existentially, the hope of the resurrection involves a fresh, fulfilled humanity” (Chilton and Jacob Neusner, *Classical Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism: Comparing Theologies* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004), 231.

By no means!” (6:12-15). Then he concludes, “the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (6:23).

In sum, Paul uses the Adam Christology to explain the event of the resurrection as the new creation and the last aeon already inaugurated by Christ, which for the believer still lies in the future. With the Adam typology Paul challenges the believer to participate in the present in the resurrection of Christ through a new lifestyle, that of Christ. Although to rise with Christ is a future event, it can be anticipated in the present through ethical behavior.

In this dissertation, I analyze the Adamic traditions that may have come into contact with Paul or his communities in Corinth and Rome, as found in Rom 5:12-21 and 1 Cor 15:21-22, 45-49, and identify possible ethical and social implications that Paul may have applied to the Adam typology in these texts.