Resurrection and Immortality : Two Motifs Navigating Confluent Theological Streams in the Old Testament (Dan 12, 1-4)

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Two Motifs Navigating Confluent Theological Streams in the Old Testament (Dan 12,1–4)

"O we can wait no longer,
We too take ship, O soul,
Joyous we too launch out on trackless seas,
Fearless for unknown shores on waves of ecstasy to sail,
Amid the wafting winds
(Thou pressing me to thee, I thee to me, O soul),
Caroling free, singing our song of God."

When Walt Whitman wrote these lines in his *Passage to India*[1], he lived in an era in which the Christian doctrines of the resurrection of the dead (I Cor 15,12 ff.) and the immortality of the soul (I Cor 15,53–54) were well-established. In the Old Testament, however, the mood is a bit more somber. Not until relatively late in the faith-history of the Israelite people did a firm hope of a future afterlife take firm root.[2] How did this occur? What theological role was played by prophetic motifs which expressed a strong faith in an eschatological hope for the nation of Israel – motifs which were somehow preserved and even reworked by prophetic circles long after the decimating effects of the Exile? And did not others, particularly those Israelites who had become recognized as early as Jeremiah's time as "wise men" (Jer 18.18), also have something to say about the unavoidable problem of death and the possibilities of some sort of "life" beyond it?

The Problem Stated

What is the nature of the relationship between prophetic hopes for an afterlife via "resurrection" and sapiential traditions about man's

[1] Line 8. Cited in the Oxford Dictionary of Quotations (London [2]1955), 567.

[2] U. Kellermann, Überwindung des Todesgeschicks in der alttestamentlichen Frömmigkeit vor und neben dem Auferstehungsglauben, ZThK 73 (1976), 261–62, points out that both tought-worlds surrounding Israel – Near Eastern as well as that of later Hellenism – began formulating mythopoeic solutions to the problem of death early in the beginning of their faith-histories, but Israel "am Ende der Glaubens-geschichte."

ultimate reception into the eternal presence of God in the Old Testament?

Thesis

The OT doctrines of resurrection and immortality are like ships traveling in the same basic direction, though on confluent theological streams. Nascent whispers of a hope in the resurrection of the dead were carried along the stream of prophecy, primarily motivated by eschatological questions about the ultimate sovereignty of Yahweh over the universe. Resurrection was the answer formulated to this problem.

The belief in the immortality of the soul, however, was also an Israelite belief,[3] transmitted through the teachings of "the wise", and primarily motivated by the question of individual suffering, even of righteous Israelites. The hope of an eventual ultimate transcendence of death was the answer formulated to this problem.[4]

[3] "Immortality," as defined here, is not to be confused with later Hellenistic belief in an immortality of the soul which is *independent* of Yahweh's Being as the Giver and Source of all life, as R. Martin-Achard is quick to point out (From Death to Life. ET of De la Mort à la Résurrection d'après l'ancien Testament, Paris 1956 (London 1960), 17). However, to say that "the OT rejects the belief in the immortality of the soul" (Ibid., 17), seems more of a polemical reaction to some of the extreme positions of the adherents of the religionsgeschichtliche Schule than an accurate analysis of OT teaching on the matter. The ancient Hebrews were not nihilists, nor were their Near Eastern neighbors. "Immortality," as defined here, is the term which will be used to connote *their* conception of this embryonic, shadowy existence, which was later developed (under admittedly Hellenistic influence) into a fully indigenous doctrine. At no time, therefore, is it to be conceived in the OT as independent of Yahweh's control.

It should be noted here that even in the Wisdom of Solomon an argument for immortality is more likely developed from indigenous beliefs that "righteousness is immortal" (1.15) rather than Platonic notions of the immortal *nature* of the soul, but this is presently disputed. Cf. R. Taylor, The Eschatological Meaning of Life and Death in the Book of Wisdom, EThL 42 (1966), 72–137; C. Larcher, Études sur le Livre la Sagesse (Paris: Études Bibliques, 1969). For a view attempting to locate a doctrine of bodily resurrection in the book, cf. P. Beauchamp, Le Salut corporel des Justes et la Conclusion du Livre de la Sagesse, Bib. 45 (1965), 491–526.

[4] The present study is not the first to suggest that Wisdom had an influence on other streams of tradition. Cf. J. Fichtner, Jesaja unter den Weisen, ThLZ 74 (1949), 75–80; S. Terrien, Amos and Wisdom in Israel's Prophetic Heritage, ed. by B. W. Anderson and W. Harrelson (New York, 1962), 108–115; R. Murphy, A Consideration of the Classification "Wisdom Psalms", VTS 9 (1963), 156–67. See esp. G. Sheppard, Wisdom as a Hermeneutical Construct, BZAW 151 (1980).

Apocalyptic is a composite literary genre in which these two streams, among others, converge into a hybrid genre which is altogether new, yet distinctively recognizable on its own terms. The many theological beliefs navigating these streams during the historical crises which gave rise to Jewish apocalyptic might therefore be expected to have been suddenly placed alongside each other in rather novel positions, as each navigated its characteristic course in familiar, yet strange and exciting waters. Dan 12,1–4 represents the delicate convergence of two of these motif-bearing streams before the powerful waters of Hellenism threatened to submerge Israelite hopes about the afterlife under an alien doctrine of the immortality of the individual soul.[5]

Delimitations and Assumptions

(1) Attention will be given in this study to those major OT passages from both streams of tradition which contribute to a solution of the stated problem, but the primary focus will be on Dan 12,1–4.

(2) From the title of this study, it should not be concluded that these two streams are thought to be the only two worthy of study. The cult was, during its existence, a predominant carrier of theological tradition in Israel. However, though early tested by the introduction of mythopoeic rituals governing mourning rites,[6] the offering of sacrifices to the

[5] I. Willi-Plein, Das Geheimnis der Apokalyptik, VT 27 (1977), 62–63, asks whether apocalyptic is to be approached as a literary phenomenon, a phenomenon to be treated in the broad sphere of the history of ideas, or as a theological phenomenon. To these categories might be added the attempts of P. Hanson (The Dawn of Apocalyptic, Philadelphia 1975) and W. R. Millar (Isaiah 24–27 and the Origin of Apocalyptic. Missoula 1975) to discover, following O. Plöger's lead (Theocracy and Eschatology, Richmond 1968, trans. from 1959 German ed.), a firm sociological matrix for the rise of apocalyptic. Though all of these questions need to be asked, they cannot all be asked here. Therefore, this study will arbitrarily focus on a deliberately scaled-down definition of Apocalyptic, following the lead of K. Koch (Was ist Formgeschichte? Neukirchen-Vluyn 1964) and J. G. Gammie (The Classification, Stages of Growth, and Changing Intentions in the Book of Daniel, JBL 95 (1976), 192 f.), that is concerned primarily with its *literary* characteristics. (Koch: "Rahmengattung"; Gammie: "composite literary genre comparable to wisdom literature and prophetic literature"). This limitation is undertaken, however, with the firm knowledge that literary characteristics alone can never provide the entire picture of so complex a phenomenon as Apocalyptic.

[6] Cf. Lev 19,28; 21,5; Dt 14,1.

dead,[7] and necromantic cultic practices,[8] the cult seems to have served more of a preservative than a generative function in Israel's theological development. Consequently, this study will have little to say about the cult, other than to state that cultic usage of certain psalms and liturgies, and the annual observance of the New Year festival must have helped greatly in keeping Israelite hopes of an afterlife alive.[9]

(3) Foreign influences might also be portrayed as yet other confluent streams conributing to Israel's theological development, but it is probably more accurate to portray early Near Eastern sources (Sumerian, Akkadian, Egyptian, Hittite, Canaanite) as primeval clouds raining on Israel's theological headwaters, and later foreign influence (Babylonian, Persian, Hellenistic) as storm clouds thundering and pelting Israel's theological streams at various critical bends in the flow of its historical development.[10] At any rate, a full investigation of this process, admittedly vital to a complete understanding of the genesis and development of the OT doctrine of a future life, will not be attempted here.[11]

(4) To say that apocalyptic is a composite literary genre in which two theological streams converge is not to generalize that this phenomenon is therefore the same with regard to *every* theological motif highlighted in apocalyptic literature, nor is it an attempt to limit this confluence

[7] Cf. Dt 26,14; Jer 16,7; Ps 106,28. Further, Sir 30,18; Tob 4,17.

[8] Lev 19,31; 20,6.27; Dt 18,10ff.; I Sam 28; 2 Kg 23,24; Is 8,19f.; 57,9.

[9] H. Frankfort long ago cautioned against the uncritical acceptance of views which attached undue importance, in his view, to the myth of the dying and rising god and the New Year festival which allegedly annually actualized this myth, so strongly proposed by S. H. Hooke, A. R. Johnson, S. Mowinckel, A. Bentzen, I. Engnell, and others. Against this tendency he firmly held that to *compare* was not to *establish;* that every Israelite cultic practice had to be considered within its own cultural and religious context first (The Problem of Similarity in Ancient Near Eastern Religion: The Frazer Lectures, Oxford 1951).

[10] For extensive bibliographies, cf. F. Nötscher, Altorientalischer und alttestamentlicher Auferstehungsglauben, Würzburg 1926 (Reprinted with a supplement containing expanded, annotated bibliographies by J. Scharbert, Darmstadt 1970); Martin-Achard, op. cit. (n. 3), 186–205.

[11] H. D. Betz's criticism (Zum Problem des religionsgeschichtlichen Verständnisses der Apokalyptik, ZThK 63 (1966), 393) of H. H. Rowley's somewhat monolithic view of this complex interrelationship (The Relevance of Apocalyptic, London 1955, 37–39) is well taken: «Falsch wird diese an sich richtige Feststellung dadurch, dass Rowley sie als methodisches Prinzip verwendet.» H. Birkeland, The Belief in the Resurrection of the Dead in the OT, StTh 3 (1950), 62–63, sees any view that either places the origin and development of the doctrine totally *within* Israel or totally *outside* Israel as extreme.

only to Israelite teaching on the future life. It is simply an attempt to find a balanced interpretation of the recognizedly apocalyptic text of Dan 12,1–4.

(5) Nor is this metaphor of confluent streams intended to reopen, in the present study, the debate about the "origins of apocalyptic." R.E. Clements' position seems close:

> Only in the course of its development did apocalyptic adopt more and more features from wisdom. In essence apocalyptic is a late and distinctive, but nonetheless legitimate, form of prophecy.[12]

Since the section of Daniel to be scrutinized here is widely considered "late," at least in its final form, the metaphor of confluent streams seems solid-enough-yet-fluid-enough to provide a workable framework for thought, without leading one off into a tangential fiery lake wherein undue attention is incessantly given to *gradations* of influence.

(6) The dating of Daniel is a thorny problem. The present concensus is that parts of the book, especially the stories, are very old, but that the material in chapters 10, 1–12, 13 probably ought to be treated as the author/redactor's response, employing a variety of sources and subgenres, to the Epiphanian crisis. Doubtless some will disagree with this dating, but the present study is not the best forum for this debate.[13]

[12] Prophecy and Tradition (Atlanta 1975), 11. This approximates the basic presupposition of this study, yet with the realization that the debate is far from closed. E.g., note the recent exaggerated position of J.Z. Smith, Wisdom and Apocalyptic, in Map is Not Territory: Studies in the Histories of Religions, SJLA 23 (Leiden 1978), 86: "Apocalypticism is Wisdom lacking a royal court and patron and therefore it surfaces during the period of late antiquity not as a response to religious persecution but as an expression of the trauma of the cessation of native kingship. Apocalypticism is a learned rather than a popular religious phenomenon." (This is because both scribal knowledge and apocalyptic have "Listenwissenschaft" in common.) On the whole, however, P. von der Osten-Sacken's objections (Die Apokalyptik in ihrem Verhältnis zu Prophetie und Weisheit, TEH 157, 1969), to G. von Rad's original thesis (Old Testament Theology, trans. by D.M.G. Stalker, 2 vols. (New York 1965), vol. 2, 301–307), still await convincing refutation.

[13] For a full discussion of the issues involved, cf. J.A. Montgomery, ICC (Edinburgh 1927); J. Goettsberger, Das Buch Daniel (Bonn 1928); R.H. Charles, Daniel (Oxford 1929); E.J. Young, The Prophecy of Daniel (Grand Rapids 1949); F.W. Heaton, The Book of Daniel (Torch Bible Commentaries, London 1956); O. Plöger, Das Buch Daniel, KAT 18, 1965); N. Porteous, Daniel, OTL (Philadelphia 1965); F. Dexinger, Das Buch

(7) Finally, this paper will assume, with von Rad and others,[14] that there are serious limitations to the historico-critical method generally, and that there is a transcendent dimension to biblical history which historico-critical methods alone are simply unable to decipher. The philosophical presuppositions undergirding this predominantly historico-critical study do not automatically reject this transcendent dimension – particularly with regard to the resurrection of the dead.

Method

The methodology employed here might be described as "multichronic," which might further be defined as a fusion of two current biblical theological methodologies: (1) the "diachronic" method, whereby one is to understand the description of longitudinal sections of the OT with special attention to the chronological sequence of the various traditions (in contrast to the cross-sectional approach with its thematic arrangement),[15] and (2) the "multiplex" method, which seeks to preserve the tension between the inner unity of the biblical witness and the variegated traditions and theologies contained withing the various books.[16]

The thesis of this study, piloted as it is by the limitations, assumptions, and methodology stated above, is an attempt, by means of the

Daniel und seine Probleme (Stuttgart 1969); G. Gaide, Le Livre de Daniel (Tours 1969); L. F. Hartman and A. A. DiLella, The Book of Daniel, Anchor Bible (Garden City, N.Y. 1978).

[14] OTT, vol. 2, 418: "For Israel, history consisted only of Jahweh's self-revelation by word and action. And on this point conflict with the modern view of history was sooner or later inevitable, for the latter finds it perfectly possible to construct a picture of history without God." K. A. Kitchen, Ancient Orient and the Old Testament (Downers Grove, Ill. ^{5}1978), takes a harsher view of historico-critical presuppositions.

[15] Cf. J. Harvey, The New Diachronic Biblical Theology of the OT (1960–1970), Biblical Theology Bulletin 1 (1971), 5–29.

[16] Cf. G. Hasel, Old Testament Theology: Basic Issues in the Current Debate (Grand Rapids ^{2}1975), 117–118: "It would seem that the only adequate way to come to grips with the multiplex nature (of scripture) ... is to opt for a multiplex approach" which "will lead to a recognition of similarity and dissimilarity, old and new, continuity and discontinuity, etc., without in the least distorting the original historical witness and literal sense nor falling short in the larger kerygmatic intention and context to which the OT itself testifies."

metaphor of confluent streams, to get at the problem of defining as precisely as possible the nature of the relationship between the motifs of resurrection and immortality in the Old Testament.

The Problem of Death

To define with empirical precision exactly what death means in the OT is a difficult task.[17] It seems that at an early stage[18] OT individuals simply accepted death as a reality of human existence (Gen 27,2; 48,21; 50,24; II Sam 19,38). To die "old and full of years" (Gen 25,8; 35,29; Job 42,17; I Chr 23,1; 29,29) was natural, almost peaceful; but to die a premature death (Is 38,10ff.), or to perish away from one's ancestral homeland in a foreign country, was tragic (Jer 20,6; 22,11f.; 42,16f.; Ez 12,13; 17,16; Am 7,17).

Contemporaneous with these notions (or perhaps later in Israel's theological development), death was portrayed as something to be feared (Gen 20,8; 26,7; 32,12; I Kg 19,3) for a variety of reasons: because it caused despair (Gen 37,35; 42,38; 44,31; I Sam 15,32; II Sam 19,1), because it caused one to mourn (II Sam 1,19–27; 3,33f.; Jer 22,18), and because it destroyed humanity's relationship with God (Is 38,10f.; Ps 6,6; 30,10; 88,11; 115,17).

Though residual mythological elements can be traced within Israel's literary efforts to define the origins of evil and death (e.g., Gen 2,3, 6,1–4), Yahwistic faith was careful to redefine the problem in moral terms, introducing particularly the dynamics of human sin and guilt, anthropological dynamics which are generally absent in the myths of Israel's neighbors. In one area, however, Israel's beliefs were basically identical to those of her neighbors – their common acceptance of a netherworld: the shadowy existence of the dead in Sheol and the Grave.

[17] Cf. Martin-Achard, op. cit. (n. 3), 16: "A mysterious phenomenon, death creates complex and contradictory reactions, and it is an error to try and integrate these at all costs." Also, von Rad, OTT, vol. 1, 387: "Careful investigation of death as the laments and thanksgivings understand it has had the unexpected result of showing that Israel held a very highly comprehensive and complex concept of it not at all easy to define."

[18] In line with the multichronic methodology outlined above, the attempt here will focus on the growth and development of beliefs about death from a longitudinal viewpoint, though Martin-Achard's criticism (op. cit., 18) of A. Lods' overreliance upon this method (La Croyance à la Vie Future dans l'Antiquité Israélite, 1906) is well taken.

The solutions each proposed to this problem, however, were vastly different. While Israel's neighbors were busily indulging in mythopoeic rituals, involving analogies from nature like the living-dying-living vegetation cycle and various necromantic attempts to establish links with the netherworld, priestly Israel would have nothing to do with this.[19] Israel's strong faith in Yahweh as Giver and Sustainer of all life led in a different direction, often coming to its most vivid verbal expression at times of great individual and national crisis.

Proposed Solutions

I. The Prophetic Eschatological Hope

Hos 6,1–3; 13,14. At first glance the prophet Hosea appears to be placing in the mouths of penitent Ephraimites a genuine confession of guilt wherein their faith in God leads them to assert that the Lord will once again restore them to their proper relationship to him. Their cultic language, however, probably betrays an attempt to palliate Yahweh's wrath as one would appease any other deity, because in the next verses Yahweh's prophet proclaims his frustration over their syncretistic mentality, even ridiculing their vegetation-cycle imagery.[20] In 13,14, though, Hosea does boldly ask the question which was to be addressed by the prophetic eschatological hope found in Ezekiel and Deutero-Isaiah.

Ez 37,1–14. The national despair confronting Ezekiel[21] seemed terminal: "Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are clean cut

[19] Cf. n. 6, 7, and 8 above.

[20] Long ago put forward by W. Baudissin, Adonis and Esmun (Leipzig 1911). Cited most recently with approval by J. C. de Moor, Rapi'uma – Rephaim, ZAW 88 (1976), 323. J. Wijngaards, Death and Resurrection in Covenantal Context: Hos 6.2, VT 17 (1967), 226–39, has challenged this interpretation, but more recently M. L. Barré, New Light on the Interpretation of Hos. 6.2, VT 28 (1978), 129–41, has presented new evidence that, in addition to the fertility-cult imagery already noted, a fixed formulaic pairing of the two verbs *qûm* and *ḥājāh* has now been discovered in other OT, Aramaic, and Akkadian texts – references referring fundamentally to healing of the sick, not resurrection or covenant renewal (as Wijngaards had argued).

[21] On the various hypotheses regarding alleged later additions to the original vision as well as possible dates, cf. W. Zimmerli's introduction in Ezekiel, Hermeneia, vol. 1 (Philadelphia 1979).

off" (37,11). The people of Israel even complained that Yahweh was being unjust (33,17), and that the unbearable weight of their sins was crushing the life out of them, forcing them to cry out "How then can we live?" (33,10). To this challenge Ezekiel receives and delivers one of the most fantastic visions in the Bible, that of an entire nation's defiled skeletal remains becoming, solely by the *rûᵃḥ* of Yahweh, alive again. Yet this "resurrection" is not for their sake, but "for the sake of my holy name" (36,22). The primary intent of this "resurrection" is to demonstrate to the universe that Yahweh is Lord (36,23 ff.). Whereas Wisdom is the predominant vehicle for the theodical, and later, the retributional questions,[22] Ezekiel's main concern is to vindicate God's holy name via an almost incredible demonstration of his power.

Is 53,10b ff. The Servant of Yahweh, like the people of whom he is an integral part, has experienced premature death, a (possible) debilitating disease (an intrusion of Death's power),[23] and even the disgrace of having been laid in the grave of the wicked (53,3b.7.8.9). Now, however, Yahweh gives him a posterity, prolongs his days, and allots him a portion with the great, making it crystal clear that the operant force in the Servant's ability to bring Yahweh's righteousness to others is "knowledge." Some would argue that in this last Servant-song the streams of prophecy and wisdom are already beginning to approach something akin to "convergence." Certainly there are several sapiential elements here: a prosperous, healthy life, "eternal" life through one's posterity, and "eternal" life through the remembrance of one's good name.[24] Even though there is no explicit reference here either to (1) the eschatological hope, as portrayed elsewhere in the prophetic corpus

[22] Job 14; Eccl 9, 1–6; Sir 41, 1–13. G. Hasel seems to be hesitant about the provenance of retributional and theodical motifs. In a recent article, Resurrection in the Theology of OT Apocalyptic, ZAW 92 (1980), 283, he appears unable to explain why they appear in the "apocalyptic eschatology of the Isaiah Apocalypse and the Book of Daniel." Sapiential sources are not even considered.

[23] Cf. Chr. Barth, Die Errettung vom Tode in den individuellen Klage- und Dankliedern des alten Testaments (Basel 1947), esp. ch. 5 wherein the essence of death is defined not simply as the end of temporal life, but also as the loss of free movement, the loss of living community, and the loss of natural nourishment due to sickness, misfortune, or calamity.

[24] U. Kellermann, op. cit. (n. 2) 266 ff., points out that these motifs were, in all likelihood, first developed by *Wisdom* as preliminary solutions to the problem of death (cf. II Sam 14,7 – *wise* woman of Tekoa: Prov 10,7). This is in basic agreement with Martin-Achard, op. cit. (n. 3), 109, n. 21.

(e.g., the phrase "on that day,") or (2) the "resurrection" of God's Servant, Martin-Achard is nevertheless probably correct when he points out that the *stress* here is on the glorious reward God's Servant will receive for his vicarious atoning work.[25]

Is 26,19. Within the Isaiah 24–27 "booklet" the prophetic eschatological hope is strongly voiced. Whereas Ezekiel proclaimed this hope for the restoration of Israel in order that Yahweh's name might be vindicated, this text posits a deliberate contrast between the wicked dead (26,14) and "thy dead" (26,19).[26] Logic demands that if one is to speak of the raising of the righteous dead in 26,19 as an Ezekiel-type metaphor for national restoration, then the wicked dead in 26,14 must be only metaphorically dead (cf. Ez 37,11). But if one agrees that the wicked dead in 26,14 are, in fact, the dead shades who inhabit Sheol (established via the parallel with *r^{e}phā'îm*), then must not the righteous dead in 26,19 have been promised a physical resurrection?

Also, the growing emphasis of the universal reign of Yahweh is becoming much more explicit. Though there are elements of retribution here,[27] the emphasis is squarely placed on Yahweh's kingship and glory.[28] Later in the apocalyptic text of Dan 12,1–4 these retributional motifs come to their fullest form in the Hebrew Bible, though in the Greek Bible the Wisdom of Solomon speaks directly to the questions of (1) the ultimate destinies of the righteous and the wicked, and (2) the theological reasons for both (3,1–13).[29]

[25] Op. cit., p.109, n.21. His lexicographical analysis of *jaśkîl,* however, hardly does justice to its strong linkage with *ḥokmāh, bînāh,* and *dâat* (cf. below on Dan 1,4; 1,17; 8,25; 9,13.22.25; 11,33.35,12,3.10). It is pure conjecture to translate *jaśkîl* "he will be exalted." Cf. BDB, 968.

[26] N.B. "on that day" 24,21; 25,9; 26,1; 27,1.2.12.13. Though MT reads *mētêkā,* only one recension of LXX (Lucianic) reads "σου" (though Origen places "σου" under an asterisk; i.e., supplied from the Hebrew). Cf. G. Hasel, Resurrection in the Theology of OT Apocalyptic, for a full discussion of textual, grammatical, and lexicographical details essential for interpreting both Is 26,19 and Dan 12,1–4.

[27] Cf. 24,1–13.17–22; 25,2.5.10–12; 26,5.6.11.14.21; 27,1.4.10.11. On the "city of chaos," mentioned under different guises in 24,10.12; 25,2.12; 26,5; 27,10 cf. R. Hanhart, Die jahwefeindliche Stadt, Festschrift für W. Zimmerli, hg. von H. Donner, et al. (Göttingen 1977), 152–63, and G. Fohrer, Der Aufbau der Apokalypse des Jesajabuchs (Is 24–27), CBQ 25 (1963), 40ff.

[28] 24,14ff.; 24,21–23 (nascent cosmic universalism); 25,1–5; 25,8 ("he will swallow up death for ever"); 25,9–12; 26,1–5.13.15; 27,1.

[29] Cf. W. Eichrodt, Theology of the Old Testament, OTL (Philadelphia 1967), vol. 2, 510: "It is not primarily the idea of retribution which leads to the postulate of the

II. Wisdom Teaching

Whereas traditionally "prophetic" circles (defined here as those bands of Israelites who were ultimately responsible for preserving, gathering, and reshaping earlier, classically prophetic eschatological pronouncements into a living, flowing stream of theological tradition in post-exilic Israel) tended to deal with the problem of death by proclaiming the irrevocable sovereignty of God, the vindication of his holy name, and the eventual coming of a "day"[30] in which the faithful remnant of Israel would be "raised from the dust," Wisdom-circles dealt with the problem of death differently. Like the prophets, the wise men believed in a netherworld, yet often voiced their bewilderment as to why Yahweh had deliberately separated himself from Humanity in such an ultimate, complete way (Job 14,20ff.). Job even tentatively raises the possibility which is abhorrent to the prophetic belief in a single, sovereign God – that Sheol might be a place where one can hide from God, a place where perhaps even Yahweh dare not intrude (14,13).

Taken to its logical conclusion, this kind of thinking leads to a dualistic theology. Eliphaz therefore condemns Job's speculations by raising what he feels to be Job's real stumbling block: the problem of retribution (15,20ff.). To Eliphaz, as to Israelite Wisdom generally,[31] Job's admittedly agonized speech is "unprofitable talk" (15,3). (Job later comes to realize that "Sheol is naked before God," 26,6). Consequently, if Yahweh's power extends even to Sheol, is not the power to kill or make alive, to disestablish or reestablish any sort of relationship to this One God *solely* in Yahweh's hands? "Can Death be conquered

resurrection of the dead. At least in the Isaiah Apocalypse hope of a revelation of God's glory plays an incomparably more important part." On retribution motifs generally, cf. A. A. DiLella, Conservative and Progressive Theology, CBQ 28 (1966), 139–54, who sees "pseudo-Solomon's" theology of an afterlife with rewards and punishments for the godly and the ungodly (Wisd 3,1–13) as his answer to the problem of retribution.

[30] Cf. S. J. DeVries, Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow: Time and History in the Old Testament (Grand Rapids 1975), for an inductive study centering predominantly on the paramount significance of the term *jôm* in the OT. Cf. also the review by R. P. Gordon in EvQ 48 (1976), 174–76.

[31] G. von Rad, Wisdom in Israel, ET (Nashville 1972), temperately points out that Wisdom is to a certain extent limited by man's mortality (Prov 16,1). In his intensely personal confrontation with Death, Job finds himself running out of answers which are "acceptable." Cf. the review article of W. Zimmerli, Die Weisheit Israels: zu einem Buch von Gerhard von Rad, EvTh 31 (1971), 682.

for *me?"* is Job's question. Wisdom teachers wrestling with this question were not unconcerned about the fate of the nation; they were simply more concerned with the miserable plight of its suffering people (Job 14,14).

Ps 90,13–17. Were it not for these five verses at the end of this old wisdom teaching, this psalm would stand only as a gloomy lament on the brevity of man's short life-span, lived out under the consuming wrath of God, and destined to end in quiet resignation to an inevitable death. The sudden change of tone in verse 13 has led some to interpret verses 13–17 as an appended folk-lament-song.[32] Whatever its history of formation, the psalm's final form represents, even if only in embryo, an attempt to answer Job's question: Resignation before death is *not* the final answer; there has to be more to "life."

Ps 22.29f. In Ps 22 one finds another individual lament similar to Job 14. It begins with the well-known cry "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Yet here a remarkable solution is proposed to man's death-problem which goes farther than the wish expressed in Psa 90,13 ff. After gruesomely describing his sufferings, the psalmist urges Yahweh to stay near him (22,19–21), and in the sweeping crescendo of praise at the end he declares:

> Yea, to him shall all the proud of the earth bow down;
> Before him shall bow down all who go down to the dust,
> and he who cannot keep himself alive (22,29).

To Job's question the psalmist replies not only that the relationship between God and Humanity can be reestablished, but also that the dead will *praise him,* an activity to be performed even by those who are yet unborn (22,30–31). This is not resurrection in the prophetic sense, but it is the deliberate expression of the hope of a transcendence of death, designed to meet the needs of the afflicted who seek his face (22,26).

Ps 49,15 and Ps 73,23–28. These wisdom-psalms at the very outset contrast two groups: the righteous poor and the wicked rich, and may be reflecting the kind of sociological polarization envisioned by Plöger, Hanson, and Millar.[33] Here the problem of death is directly launched

[32] Cf. the bibliographical references to H. J. Kraus, G. von Rad, C. Westermann, and H.-P. Müller in U. Kellermann, op. cit., 265, n. 46.

[33] Cf. n. 5 above.

into the broad, powerful mainstream of sapiential teaching on the theodical problem of retribution. In Job 14 this problem is formulated in the shape of a cry for rehabilitation; in Eccl 9 the pessimist[34] seems driven to argue that the entire question is meaningless, "since one fate comes to all, to the righteous and the wicked" (9,2); Sirach advises his students not to worry about death in his characteristically fatalistic approach (41,1–4).

Here, however, in contrast to Qoheleth's conception of death as the great *leveller,* death is portrayed as the great *divider.*[35] In Psa 49 Yahweh graciously does for the righteous man what the wicked man is unable to do for himself: "Ransom my soul" (49,15) and "receive me" (49,15; 73,24 – "to glory").

Job 19,25–27. Though the text is corrupt and the date most uncertain,[36] a similar idea is expressed here of a hope for a Redeemer like the great redeemer of Pss 49 and 73, who is able to make it possible for suffering, dying humanity to be brought back into a dynamic relationship with the living God.[37]

The Apocalyptic Text of Dan 12,1–4

The Apocalyptist who wrote this passage brought together elements from both prophetic and sapiential circles to fashion an explicit statement about the resurrection of the dead and the immortality of those righteous souls who held firm to their religious faith in the face of a persecution which demanded their very lives.

[34] Most scholars favor regarding Qoheleth as a sceptic, a thesis put forward as early as K. Galling, Kohelet-Studien, ZAW 50 (1932), 276–99. The source of his scepticism is presently under debate. Cf. R. Braun, Koheleth und die frühhellenistische Popularphilosophie, BZAW 130 (1973) for a view favoring Hellenistic backgrounds, and M. Dahood, The Phoenecian Background of Qoheleth, Bib. 47 (1966), 264–72 for alleged Canaanite-Phoenecian influences.

[35] Kellermann, op. cit., 275: "Der Tod begegnet hier jedoch nicht wie in der Skepsis Kohelets als der *Gleichmacher,* sondern als der grosse *Scheider.*"

[36] Cf. M. Pope, Job, Anchor Bible (Garden City, N.Y. 1965), xxxii-xl for opinions ranging from ca. 2100 B.C.E. down to the Persian period.

[37] In H.C. Brichto's schema, Kin, Cult, Land, and Afterlife, HUCA 44 (1973), 21, the *gō'ēl* "was not merely a close-kinsman obligated to blood-vengeance or privileged to redeem property. The *gō'ēl* is he who redeems the dead from the danger to his afterlife by continuing his line." Cf. also my "Haggo'el: The Cultural Gyroscope of Ancient Hebrew Society", RestQ 23,1 (1980) 27–35.

The prophetic stream provided an eschatological framework within which to frame his message of hope.[38] The Apocalyptist also found in prophecy the strong belief in the absolute sovereignty of God, challenged so arrogantly by the heathen king (11,36–39), and reaffirmed this sovereignty in a manner characteristic of later Apocalyptic by means of the dispatching of Michael, the great prince who arises and stands over God's people.[39] Most importantly for this study, however, the Apocalyptist here eloquently voices a now-matured, dynamic faith in the resurrection of God's righteous elect from the dead, employing many of the same motifs which have heretofore been traced to this prophetic stream of tradition. Though the *extent*[40] of this resurrection is strongly debated, its theological provenance seems certain.

Wisdom contributed much of the passage's remaining theological contents. The book (of life) is a very old motif (Ex 32,32–33) which

[38] N. B. the references to time via "at that time" or "in those days," etc.: 10,1.2.14: 11,7.14.27.29.35.40; 12,1 (*ēt* used four times); 12.4 (again *ēt*), 7, 9, 11, 13. S. J. De Vries, Observations on Quantitative and Qualitative Time in Wisdom and Apocalyptic, in Israelite Wisdom, ed. by J. G. Gammie (Missoula 1978), 273–74, n. 12, sees in the later sections of Daniel a sharpened particularism and dualism, cosmic speculation, and the radical periodization of time – all elements betraying the Apocalyptist's reinterpretation of prophetic eschatology.

[39] G. Nickelsburg states: "The occurrence of the term *'āmad* and the parallel texts just discussed suggest that Michael's defense of Israel is not only military, but also judicial" Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism (Cambridge 1972), 14. Some texts portraying an angel of Yahweh as "defense attorney" (or "prosecutor"): Jub 17,15–18,12; 48,9–19; Test Lev 5,6 f.; Test Dan 6,1–5; I Enoch 89,70–77; 90,17; 11Q Melchizedek.

[40] Discussion centers on the interpretation of *rabbîm*. Does it mean "many" or "all"? The first interpretation, "many," has led to the extreme position that only the most righteous martyrs would be raised. Cf. R. H. Charles, Daniel (Oxford 1929), 140; S. Mowinckel, He That Cometh (N. Y. 1956), 273; N. Porteous, Daniel, OTL (Philadelphia 1965), 20,170. A second interpretation, "all," has led to the extreme position that both pious and impious alike were to be raised. Cf. J. Meinhold, Das Composition des Buches Daniel (Greifswald 1884), 336; F. König, Zarathustras Jenseitsvorstellungen und das alte Testament (Wien 1964), 241. A median view, viz. that of a general resurrection limited to all Israelites, has been adopted by A. B. Davidson, The Theology of the OT (New York ^{2}1907), 528; A. von Gall, βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ. Eine religionsgeschichtliche Studie zur vorkirchlichen Eschatologie (Heidelberg: Religionswissen Bibliothek, 1926), 307; J. Goettsberger, Das Buch Daniel (Bonn 1928), 237; N. H. Snaith, The Distinctive Ideas of the OT (London), 89, n. 2; F. Dexinger, Das Buch Daniel und seine Probleme (Stuttgart 1969), 69; O. Plöger, Das Buch Daniel, 171; G. Stemberger, Das Problem der Auferstehung im AT, Kairos 14 (1972), 274.

could have come from either a prophetic eschatological recasting (Is 4,3; Jer 22,30; Ez 13,9) or from the anguished cry of *a* man suffering the fear of the pit, seeking a redeemer, seeking retribution on his enemies, and asking that their names be blotted "out of the book of the living" (Ps 69,15.18.22–27.29).[41] Even stronger retributional promises are delivered by the Apocalyptist in Dan 12,2 as he not only posits a restoration of the righteous dead to life (as in Pss 49 and 73), but also describes the *"eternal"* fate of the wicked after *their* resurrection (unlike Pss 49 and 73). A much-discussed theme in wisdom-circles (Wisd 3,1–13; 4,16–20), the Apocalyptist of Daniel, later by recasting this discussion in a prophetic eschatological framework, opened the door for later predictions about eternal punishment for the wicked.[42]

Perhaps the most obvious sign of the Apocalyptist's employment of wisdom motifs is in his explicit identification of "the wise"[43] who "shall shine like the brightness of the firmament" (12,3). Scattered throughout the book of Daniel this root (*śkl*) is employed ten times. In every instance except one[44] it is a term used either to describe Daniel himself or his faithful colleagues. In the opening story the hero is glowingly described, along with his fellow exiles, as "wise in all wisdom" (1,4), and as those to whom God had given "knowledge, understanding etc." (1,17). In the hero's prayer of supplication, he laments that even after all the calamities suffered by his people they still seem unwilling "to understand" *ba'ᵃmittêkā* (9,13). While praying, Gabriel is sent to him in order "to understand" *bînāh* (9,22). Gabriel commands Daniel (9,25), "to know and understand" what the end is going to be like; a dramatic glimpse is being revealed to him because he is one who is greatly loved (9,23).

[41] Kellermann, op. cit., 263, stoutly maintains that the problem of human existence/suffering, specifically the description of the *individual's* lostness, is *wisdom's* task. Nickelsburg, op. cit. (n. 39), 15, 16, notes the remarkable parallels between Dan 12,1 and 4Q Dib. Ham., which he designates a "Qumran prayer manuscript almost contemporary with the writing of Daniel." For the text of this manuscript, cf. M. Baillet, Un recueil liturgique de Qumran, Grotte 4: "Les Paroles des Luminaires," RB 68 (1961), 195–250.

[42] IV Macc 9,8.32; 10,11.15; 12,19; 13,15; 18,5.22; Mt 18,8.9; Mk 9,48; Lk 12,4.5.

[43] Cf. n. 25 above.

[44] Dan 8,25, in reference to the "king of bold countenance" (8,23), states: "by his cunning he shall make deceit prosper under his hand...

Then, in the final section of the book wherein the great tribulation and redemption is appallingly described, it is the Danielic "wise of the people" (11,33) who are told how to guide their parishes through the "time of trouble, such as never has been since there was a nation" (12,1). Like the suffering Servant before them, who through knowledge made many to be accounted righteous (Is 53,11), and was thereby promised that he too would become "wise" (52,13), the Danielic "wise" are also told that even though many of them were destined to suffer and die cruel deaths (11,35), this was not the end. They were going to live "for ever and ever" (12,3). The wicked would never understand what "life" was all about, but "the wise will understand" (12,10). In verse 4 of chapter 12 the Apocalyptist then returns to his prophetic eschatological framework, concluding this hybrid passage by stating that even though this knowledge (now made privy to "the wise") was destined to increase, the outcome had already been predetermined. Therefore, Daniel is to "shut up the words, seal the book," and watch breathlessly. Yahweh's eschatological promises were about to be fulfilled.

Conclusion

Criticism of the foregoing analysis will probably center on the following two issues:

(1) Definition of "apocalyptic": Recent interpretations of this problematic term have made the search for an adequate definition subject to the peculiarly Western tendency to catalogue and fragment. Sometimes it is helpful to distinguish between apocalyptic theology, apocalypticism, and the genre apocalypse.[45] Sometimes it is not. Could it be that arguments over definitions sometimes represent a stagnation of thought rather than fruitful advance? This paper is an attempt to move beyond the "tangential fiery lake" of endless defining and redefining by proposing a thesis which seeks to elucidate some of the contributing factors in a composite apocalyptic theology. This is why the methodology adopted here has not been an exegetical analysis of an isolated biblical passage, but rather a multichronic sweep of several passages from both

[45] Cf. P. Hanson, Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible (Supplement), s.v., "Apocalypse, genre," and "Apocalypticism." Cf. also the extensive work of J. J. Collins, ed., in Semeia 14 (1979).

prophetic and sapiential traditions. Does there or does there not appear to be a convergence of these theological traditions in Dan 12,1–4? If not, then how is one to explain the obvious prophetic and sapiential elements that are there? Many have proposed helpful, even indispensable exegetical analyses of this and other "apocalyptic" passages.[46] Does that mean that a fresh methodological approach is therefore inadmissible?

(2) "Immortality": Bruce Vawter's comment, in a thoroughgoing critique of M. Dahood's philological approach to the verb *ḥājāh,* is summarily true:

> The truth that the mythology had sought to convey was eventually assimilated by Judaism and Christianity, but within a view of man that was alien to the myth and had preserved truths that were even more basic. This synthesis could never have occurred, it seems to me, had Israel at any very early age and on any very broad scale simply taken the myth over at face value. We are faced here by a phenomenon of historical religion which is far more eloquent than the philological possibilities of any number of isolated texts.[47]

Vawter's point is well taken, but does this "view of man that was alien to the myth" mean that Israel's conception of the *Netherworld* was ontologically different from that of his neighbors? It seems here that the English word "immortality" might yet be a salvageable concept, if properly defined. It describes a state of being wherein the souls of departed Israelites are transformed to a state of "non-deadness" – the emphasis not being on their "aliveness" (as it was among the myths of Israel's neighbors), but squarely on their "non-deadness." Can the hope of their eventual reception into the glory of God (Ps 73,24) therefore be relegated to the realm of poetic metaphor, or was this sapiential hope more substantive than that?[48] If this hope be only a poetic metaphor in the Psalms, then is the admittedly poetic allusion to the *maśkîlîm* as those who "shine like the brightness of the firmament" in Dan 12,3 also

[46] Cf. Hasel, Resurrection in the Theology of OT Apocalyptic; L. R. Bailey, Biblical Perspectives on Death (Philadelphia 1979): L. J. Greenspoon, The Origin of the Idea of Resurrection, in Traditions in Transformation, ed. by B. Halpern and J. D. Levenson (Winona Lake, Indiana 1981), 247–321.

[47] B. Vawter, Intimations of Immortality and the OT, JBL 91 (1972), 171. See also my Short Note on Mitchell Dahood's Exegetical Methodology, Hebrew Studies 22 (1981), 35–38.

[48] Cf. J. J. Collins, The Root of Immortality: Death in the Context of Jewish Wisdom, HTR 71 (1978), 177–92.

devoid of ontological reality – even when the Apocalyptist of Daniel appears to be consciously juxtaposing it with the doctrine of the resurrection?

Since the English word "immortality" has such Hellenistic overtones, perhaps it has become impossible to employ it to describe this Israelite belief in a state of "non-deadness." Perhaps a more appropriate term would be "deathlessness," or "continualness."

At any rate, the thesis put forward here is simply a benign attempt to get at a balanced, unprejudiced interpretation of a very difficult OT text. Doubtless it will not be the last.

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