

The preceding remarks hold good for all matters in which Paul presents himself as passing on the traditional faith of the Church. Paul's witness, however, is especially important in regard to the Resurrection of Christ, for the appearance to him of the risen Christ was the occasion of his conversion to Christianity, and the Resurrection itself occupies a central place in his theology of Redemption (1 Cor 15.14, 17-18; Rom 4.24-25). Paul's encounter with the risen Lord is recounted four times in the NT (Acts 9.19; 22.3-16; 26.9-18; Gal 1.11-17) with only minor variations. He is far from considering this a mystical vision, but puts it on a par with the appearances of the risen Savior to the Apostles (1 Cor 15.1-9), and he even makes it the basis for his claim (disputed by those who opposed his teaching on the Law and other matters) to be an Apostle along with the others (1 Cor 9.1).

Paul did have visions; but he was careful to distinguish them from the truths on which he based his message. In 2 Cor 12.1-6 one is left far from satisfied regarding the manner of Paul's vision. In fact, Paul said he did not know how it happened, and he could not explain just what did happen. Regarding Christ's Resurrection, however, there is no difficulty: "I delivered to you first of all, what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, and after that to the Eleven. Then he was seen by more than five hundred . . . and last of all he was seen also by me" (1 Cor 15.3-8).

Of special importance is the teaching set forth in 1 Corinthians ch. 15. In this passage Paul begins by reminding his readers of the firmness of their belief in the Resurrection of Christ and the reason for that firmness: that it rested upon the testimony of a series of witnesses, among whom Paul himself is numbered. In 15.3 Paul uses technical terms for the transmission of tradition: "I have delivered [παρέδωκα] to you . . . what I also received [παρέλαβον]. . . ." Hence, at the time of the composition of this Epistle, St. Paul not only taught the Resurrection of Christ as an assured fact, but also he treated it as something that the Corinthians had held for some time as a basic element of their faith; vain would be his preaching and vain their faith if Christ had not risen—a suggestion he raised only to reject emphatically. For Paul introduced Christ's Resurrection as an incontestable datum upon which to base a conclusion, namely, the resurrection of the individual Christians, the real object of his teaching in this passage. Paul's remarks concerning the nature of the resurrection of the individual Christians reveal much concerning his understanding of the nature of Christ's Resurrection. The simile of the seed and the plant (1 Cor 15.35-44) indicates the numerical continuity as well as the surpassing glory of the resurrected body. When he speaks of a "spiritual body" (15.44), this must be understood in terms of the Semitic thought pattern and idiom, in which "spirit" does not suggest immateriality, but power, glory, immortality, and other divine attributes.

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[D. GEELS]

2. THEOLOGY OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION

The meaning of the Resurrection has never been so fully understood as during apostolic times. The Resurrection was the source and the object of faith; the theology of the time was a theology of the paschal mystery. It is not the purpose of the present section to follow the evolution of the early ideas and to determine what is peculiar to each author of the NT but, in keeping with the demands of theology, to endeavor by a proper arrangement of the Scripture texts to grasp the very mystery of the Resurrection. The elements of synthesis furnished by Scripture are grouped under two main heads.

RISEN CHRIST, UNIVERSAL SAVIOR

Some texts concern Christ constituted universal savior by the Resurrection (objective Redemption). They show in the Resurrection the fulfillment of eschatological *salvation and determine the relations between the Resurrection and the death of Christ, between the Resurrection and the *Incarnation.

Resurrection and the Final Coming of the Kingdom. Jesus had announced the *kingdom of God, that is, the final advent of the dominion of God. He had taken the title of *Son of Man, which, in the evocation of Daniel ch. 7 and the connections that Jesus established between this title and "the Day," appears to be an eschatological title: it characterizes Jesus as the perfecter of the world (Mt 10.23; 19.28; 25.31; 26.64; Mk 8.38; 13.26; Lk 11.29-32; 12.8-9, 40; 17.24, 26-30; 18.8; 21.36). It is certain that, according to the Synoptic tradition, the coming of the kingdom is connected with "the coming" of Jesus [see K. H. Schelkle, *Die Passion Jesu in der Verkündigung des NT* (Heidelberg 1949) 199]. It would take place when the Son of Man "would come" with power [R. Schnackenburg, *God's Rule and Kingdom*, tr. J. Murray (New York 1963) 177]. Between the kingdom and the Son of Man in His coming there exists a real identity, so much so that the two terms, kingdom and Son of Man, can be interchanged (cf. Mk 8.39 and Mt 16.28; Lk 18.29 and

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Mt 19.28; Mt 25.34 and 41). The power and the glory whose sudden appearance in the world constitutes the eschatological coming of God are proper to Jesus in His "coming." This final coming of the kingdom, which is also that of the Son of Man, is already contained in germ in the miracles (Lk 10.18, 23-24; 11.20), and it is certain that Jesus spoke of it as being very near (Mt 10.23; Mk 8.38-39; 13.30; Lk 12.54-56; 22.16-18).

In saying "But first he [the Son of Man] must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation" (Lk 17.25), He links the final coming (v.24) with His death, not as to something merely presupposed but by an internal bond (see Mk 10.37-38; Lk 19.12, 15). The announcement of the death and the Resurrection of the Son of Man (Mk 8.31; 9.9-12, 30; 10.32-34) pertains to the preaching of the eschatological kingdom: it means that it is through death and then in a Resurrection that Jesus will enter into the glory of the kingdom (Lk 24.26, 46). Jesus thus fulfills the prophecy of Daniel ch. 7 on the heavenly coming of the Son of Man through that of the Suffering Servant.

The account of the Last Supper (see Lk 22.14-20) is the summit and point of crystallization of the Synoptic thought on the kingdom: here this appears imminent (v.16-18, 29-30), like a meal, but one that will be a pasch and a completed pasch (v.16), a repast in the joy of a new world (Mk 14.25). In this narrative, kingdom and Eucharist are placed in the same perspective and thus receive mutual clarification one from the other. In the light of the Eucharist, which is image and mysterious realization of the kingdom, one discovers that the nourishment of the eschatological banquet is none other than Christ in His oblation for the multitude. Here, then, again the kingdom is linked with the Person of Jesus and His death pertains to the mystery of this kingdom.

Before His Passion, Jesus said: ". . . hereafter you shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right of the Power and coming upon the clouds of heaven" (Mt 26.64). The reference to Daniel ch. 7 is evident, where the advent of the Son of Man means the advent of an eternal empire. The Son of Man "comes" henceforth through death, into the glory (Lk 24.26) and the omnipotence (Mt 28.18) that in the eyes of the early Church are synonyms for the coming of the kingdom (cf. Mk 10.37 and Mt 20.21; Mk 8.38 and 8.39; 1 Thes 2.12).

Unique Coming. Scripture does not say explicitly that the kingdom has come in the Resurrection. But it is certain that the coming was considered very near, linked with death and identical with the coming of Jesus in glory and power. It is also certain that primitive thought knew only one coming of the kingdom, in the one and final "coming" of Christ. The later transformation of "the coming" into a "return" and the notion of successive *Parousias is not in keeping with early thought and beclouds it. Theology has the right to conclude that the coming of the kingdom in which is the eschatological fullness of salvation is identical with the mystery of the Resurrection.

For St. John, more explicitly than for the Synoptics, the Hour of Christ is at the same time that of His Passion and that of His final consummation (12.31-32; cf. 5.25 and 17.1-3).

It is significant that after the Resurrection the Apostles no longer announced the kingdom to come, but

the risen Christ. The Resurrection is considered as the advent of salvation; it forms the principal object (Acts 2.22-36; 4.8-12), indeed the only object (4.33), of the message of salvation. It is no longer the preparation for eschatological events (Acts 17.31; 1 Thes 1.10), but the termination of history (Acts 13.32-33), the final accomplishment (13.34) of every promise of salvation (13.32; 26.6, 22-23) from that made to Abraham (3.25-26) to that made to David (2.31). The coming of the Son of Man is henceforth a reality (7.55-56). Jesus has become the Messiah-Lord (2.36), elevated to the throne of David (2.30-31), at the right hand of God (2.33-34). All salvation is in Him (4.11-12).

Kyrios and Pleroma. The characteristic title of the risen Christ is that of *Kyrios* (Lord). It was given to Christ with the same meaning it had when applied to God (Phil 2.9; Jn 20.28) in the fullness of His sovereignty. It is the Resurrection that has established Jesus in this Lordship (Acts 2.24-36; Mt 28.18; Rom 10.9; Phil 2.9-11). In view of the realism the Semites attached to the name, the granting of the sovereign Name means that the Resurrection was not merely a vivification but rather a divinization, the total assumption of the man Jesus in God and in His attributes (see St. Ambrose, *De excessu fratris sui Satyri* 2.91, CSEL 73:299; ST 3a, 55.2). Such an affirmation contains an unfathomable mystery that justifies the most surprising assertions of the NT on the risen Christ's manner of being and acting.

It seems also that St. Paul was thinking of the Resurrection and not of the Incarnation in the beginning when he said that "it has pleased God the Father to make dwell in him the fullness" (Col 1.19), to make it dwell there "bodily" (Col 2.9), that is, it seems, in the body of the risen Christ [see L. Cerfaux, *Christ in the Theology of St. Paul*, tr. G. Webb and A. Walker (New York 1959) 427]. The term fullness (*πλήρωμα*, *pleroma*), borrowed here from popularized Stoicism [see J. Dupont, *Gnosis* (Bruges 1949) 453-476], designates the whole plenitude of being and of creative and saving power that is in God and, through God, in the world [see *Theodori episcopi mopsuesteni in ep. b. Pauli commentarii*, ed. H. B. Swete (Cambridge 1880 1:275-276)]. This divine and cosmic totality God was pleased to concentrate in Christ in raising Him from the dead [see P. Benoit, "Corps, tête et plêrôme dans les ép. de la captivité," *RevBibl* 63 (1956) 31-44]. In this plenitude, Christ has become the summit and term of creation, but also the root where all begins (1 Cor 8.6; Col 1.16). For all men the end and salvation consist in participating in this plenitude (Col 2.9; Eph 1.23; 4.10, 13, 15).

This Lordship and plenitude make the Resurrection the eschatological event. It has already been seen that the power and the glory of the Lordship (Rom 1.4; 2 Thes 2.14) are eschatological attributes (1 Thes 2.12; 2 Thes 2.14). The divinization by the granting of the Name and the universal acclamation of the Resurrected (Phil 2.9-11) express the Parousia triumph of Christ. The text of Is 45.23 used in Phil 2.10 to describe the paschal exaltation describes in Rom 14.11 the last judgment. The submission of the cosmic powers obtained in the glorification of Christ (Eph 1.20-21) is, according to 1 Cor 15.24-25, the effect of the final triumph. Thus it is established that the Resurrection

