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I Corinthians 15, 44-45

The First Man, Adam and the Last Adam

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Abstract

The article focuses on the core of the Pauline discourse on the resurrection, which I have identified to be around verses 44-45 of chapter 15 of I Corinthians. I have analyzed the key terms of verse 44, and then deeper scrutinized verse 45, where the historical Adam and the metahistorical Adam reflect a paradigm of the Christian life that does not end with the biblical text. The Eastern tradition inherits the Pauline doctrine and catalyzes it at the primary level of the functionality of the neptic experience. I have proposed some representative texts of the Neptic fathers to illustrate their viewpoint in relation to the Pauline biblical message.

Keywords:

Adam, First Adam, Last Adam, Soma, living soul, spirit

I. Preliminaries

Chapter 15 of I Corinthians holds the most dense and concentrated expression of Paul's belief about the Resurrection. In chapter 15 alone the term ἐγείρω has 15 occurrences, and ἀνάστασις - 4.

The Apostle Paul uses a very generous rhetorical apparatus to make clear the relationship between man's bodily existence and his heavenly one. From analogy to metaphor and from dialogue to excursus, the Apostle

does not hesitate to use notions familiar to the Jewish world, as well as notions from the Hellenic ideational universe to clarify the fundamental problem of Christian eschatology.

The challenge of this chapter on Pauline eschatology remains, however, the extent in which this language describes exclusively eschatological realities or also defines landmarks of Pauline Christology and what the rebound of Pauline discourse is in the space of Eastern spirituality.

II. Σῶμα ψυχικόν - The Natural Body

Starting with verse 44 of chapter 15, the parallelism construed by the Apostle Paul in the direction of the two types of existence, bodily, biological, and heavenly or spiritual, focuses around two key terms: *ψυχικός* and *πνευματικός*. These terms are worth considering from several perspectives. Firstly, it should be noted that Pauline anthropological terminology is very precise, despite the pluralism of meanings of the terms used. The term *ψυχικός*, is translated into Romanian as “physical”, “bodily”, or “natural”. With a more literal translation, its closest meaning is “soulful”, the etymon being *ψυχή* - soul. In the context of its use in vs. 44, the adjective undoubtedly refers to man’s physical, natural existence during his earthly life.¹

Ψυχικός - A Pauline Anthropological Category

The Apostle Paul used the term *ψυχικός* in his epistles also with another meaning, attributing it to a certain fallen condition of man. He expresses by the phrase *ψυχικός ἄνθρωπος* synonymously, the fleshly, carnal man of Rom 7, 14 *ἐγὼ δὲ σάρκινός εἰμι* - but I am fleshly, or cf. I Cor 3, 1, in connection to which there is mainly the impossibility of receiving, of understanding the spiritual message of the Apostle (I Cor 2, 14). He lives

¹ “At the level of physical impulse/direction”, records the Danker Lexicon. The same term is also used to render the tension between the “natural man” and the “spiritual man” in a transcendent dimension in I Cor 2, 14. For details, see William F. ARNDT, Frederick W. DANKER & Walter BAUER, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (BDAG), (3rd ed.). University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2000, p. 82.

within the limits of the fallen human nature and although he longs for God, he cannot overcome sin by himself².

Although the context in which the Apostle Paul addresses this epistle to the Corinthians cannot be ignored, nor can we equal all occurrences of this term. We can however admit that St. Paul has a broader understanding of the notion of “soul”.

In verse 44 the Apostle merges two radically distinct notions with the precise purpose of delineating the nature of man’s eschatological existence. The natural and the spiritual body are the two realities under debate. What is the natural body? Perhaps a first meaning is physical, carnal, mortal body. By contrast, the spiritual body is the form or image of the former in its heavenly existence. A spiritualized, thinned form of the matter of the natural body. Each belongs to another Aeon, another life.

The material existence of the natural body emerges from the fact that the Apostle repeats in verse 44, the statement of vs 40, where he enunciates the existence of these two body types by the formula σώματα ἐπουράνια, καὶ σώματα ἐπίγεια (heavenly bodies and earthly bodies). The earthly body is the natural body in vs 44, and the heavenly body is the spiritual body in the same verse.

The Romanian counterpart - *sufletesc* (En. *of the soul*) is legitimately ambiguous because of the well-known word family of the term “soul” to which it is related. Being an exclusively spiritual reality in the Romanian language, the term “sufletesc” (En. *of the soul*) can hardly be associated with the materiality of the body that Paul speaks of in the expression *trup sufletesc* (En. *natural body*). Nevertheless, one must accept the elasticity of the Pauline language and allow a certain nuance that St. Paul has in mind, especially in the direction of expressing the decadent value of the soulful man cf. I Cor 2, 14. In Greek the term ψυχή means not only soul but also life, earthly existence, breath, etc. The limitations of a translation are clearly seen when the English equivalent is not of equivalent value. The importance of the term is much greater, because the Apostle Paul could have used instead the term φυσικός, which means “natural”, “carnal” or according to nature, but he does not do so, as he has in mind the direction in which he is leading his discourse in vs. 45³.

² Arhimandritul SOFRONIE, *Nevoința cunoașterii lui Dumnezeu*, translated from Russian by Ierom. Rafail (Noica), Editura Reîntregirea, Alba-Iulia, 2006, p. 329.

³ Simon J. KISTEMAKER & William HENDRIKSEN, *Exposition of the First Epistle to the Corinthians*. Accompanying biblical text is author’s translation in New Testament

III. Σῶμα πνευματικός - The Spiritual Body

To express the heavenly nature of the bodies after the resurrection, the Apostle Paul uses the term *πνευματικός* which translates as “spiritual”. In Pauline language, the term has been given several meanings, it is therefore a term that bears several meanings, including this one in I Cor 15, 44. The same term is used by the Apostle on other occasions to describe the high measure of certain Christians, a phrase that would later show increased occurrence both in patristic literature and in common, popular language, where the spiritual man is synonymous with the improved man, who manifests a deep communion with God⁴. The spiritual man has the *mind of* Christ and can judge all things (and the spiritual man judges all things - I Cor 2, 15)⁵.

To make the meaning of this word even clearer, Paul complains in I Cor 3, 1 of the Corinthians’ lack of spiritual measure, calling them infants, incapable of understanding the depth of his message. Spiritual is also antonym for *σαρκικός*/bodily (Rom 7, 14) and in opposition to the fleshly (I Cor 9, 11). The spiritual man of I Cor 14, 37 is the man of this century, the man who partakes of God’s gifts. An exception is in Gal 6, 1, where the “spiritual” are rather Christians who have fully assumed the demands of the new life they have come to.

IV. Σῶμα πνευματικός - From Earthly, to Heavenly Existence

The previous examples indicate that in the text of I Cor 15, 44, the term spiritual has a special meaning. It is the only place where Paul speaks of “spiritual bodies” and not “spiritual people” and it is the only place where this term explicitly expresses the condition of existence after death. This

Commentary, (NTC) Vol 18, Baker Book House. Grand Rapids 1953-2001, p. 574.

⁴ For a broader approach of the Pauline concept, see Ovidiu Mihai NEACȘU, *Elemente de antropologie niptică la Sfântul Apostol Pavel*, Editura Doxologia, Iași, 2022, pp. 123-132.

⁵ Friedrich BÜCHSEL, “The Concept of Judgment in the Greek World”, in: Gerhard KITTEL, G. FRIEDRICH, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (abrv. TDNT),(electronic ed.) Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI, 1964, Vol.3, p. 944.

specificity of Pauline anthropological language allows the polysemanticity of the term πνευματικός to be accepted. It is obvious that in this case Paul has in mind exclusively the idea of the existence of the body of those who have died but who will inherit, will rise, will resurrect (ἐγείρω), with spiritual bodies.

One possible explanation for the Apostle Paul's discourse on the spiritual body may have stemmed from the Corinthians' misunderstanding that believers will receive this spiritual body consistently and unconditionally as soon as they die and not as a consequence of the Lord's resurrection⁶. The Apostle's choice of the expressions σῶμα ψυχικόν and σῶμα πνευματικόν can also be explained by the Apostle's preparation to introduce the notion of ψυχὴν ζῶσαν (I Cor. 15, 45), which also appears in Gen 2, 7⁷. In this way σῶμα ψυχικόν is in antithesis to σῶμα πνευματικόν, but in perfect accord with the idea of Adam as the prototype and antitype of Christ, an idea that will be introduced in verse 45.

The two portraits on which Paul builds his narrative are very well defined. On the one hand is the earthly, expressed by terms and expressions like ἐν ἀσθενείᾳ (I Cor 15, 43) ψυχὴν ζῶσαν (I Cor 15, 45) ἐκ γῆς χοϊκός (I Cor 15, 47) and on the other is the heavenly, described by the terms ἐν δυνάμει (I Cor 15, 43), πνεῦμα ζωοποιούν (I Cor 15, 45), ἐξ οὐρανοῦ (I Cor 15, 47). All these mentioned parallels are developments, analogies, landmarks that can waive the Corinthians' ignorance about how the dead will rise. He also openly tells them that some (of them) "have the ignorance of God, to your shame I speak" (I Cor 15, 34). Of all these expressions, σῶμα πνευματικόν remains in my opinion the strongest syntagm of the spiritual, spiritualized, transfigured character of matter, which does not cease to exist.

However, by "spiritual" Paul does not mean merely a future existence, detached from the behavior or conduct of man during life. This is precisely why the body becomes spiritual, because it perfects in the eschaton a certain type of practiced existence, initiated during its earthly life. Only in this

⁶ Eduard SCHWEIZER, "Πνεῦμα, πνευματικός" in: *TDNT*, Vol. 6, p. 420

⁷ Gordon D. FEE, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, coll. *The New International Commentary on the New Testament (NICNT)*, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, 1987, p. 785.

sense can we understand that body and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God cf vs. 50, but only he who has allowed himself to be filled with a spiritual way of life (I Cor 3, 1). Man's imprinting by the experience of spiritual existence makes a direct reference to the inaugurated eschatology of which the Apostle John 17, 3 speaks about *This is eternal life, to know Thee....*

The Material Value of Σῶμα

Apostle Paul, in order to give intense persuasive force to this fragment about the resurrection, uses the term σῶμα, which means body. By definition, "body" implies matter and intersection with the material dimension. Therefore, the expression "natural body", σῶμα ψυχικόν (I Cor 15, 44) is not a random expression, and as stated above, he chose it in order to introduce the idea of force in vs. 45. As J. Fitzmyer notes, Paul could have opted for the phrase "fleshly body" σῶμα σάρκινον if he wanted to emphasize the dualistic value of the body⁸.

The body in Pauline language can be both of death-σώματος τοῦ θανάτου (Rom 7, 24) and of *sin*-σῶμα τῆς ἁμαρτίας (Rom 6, 6) as an expression of bondage to the law of sin, but also of the Spirit, by becoming spiritual. There is thus a neutrality to this term, which can take on a positive or negative trait depending on the context.

When Paul has the common sense in mind, he accompanies the use of the term with other parts of speech that further detail or describe the pursued idea. Thus, in Rom 6, 12 the Apostle calls the body with a specific feature of the biological existence, namely death, θνητός (mortal). But also in Rom 12, 1, where he says "offer your bodies as a living sacrifice...", σῶμα has a general value. It does not explicitly indicate a component, a member or a function of the body, but the whole man.

V. Ἔστιν – The Verb of Faith

⁸ Joseph A. FITZMYER, S.J., *First Corinthians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Yale University Press, New Haven, London, 2008, p. 596.

The unique value of the phrase σῶμα πνευματικόν (I Cor 15, 44) lies in the Apostle's unequivocal statement that the spiritual bodies exist. The verb to be - ἔστιν (I Cor 15, 44) enunciates the truth of the unassailable existence of spiritual bodies. The Byzantine text differs from the critical text on the one hand by doubling σῶμα: Ἔστιν σῶμα ψυχικόν, καὶ ἔστιν σῶμα (I Cor 15, 44)⁹. On the other hand, the structure of verse 44 differs between the two versions because the critical text also contains the conjunction "εἰ". Reading it is conducive to the Apostle's argumentative discourse. The conditional conjunction places the statement in vs 44 under the rule of apriorist logic. Since (if) there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. The existence of the former implies the implicit existence of the latter. The Byzantine text only reproduces the assertive allure of the Pauline message, radically eliminating the architecture of logical reasoning. Since verse 44 is flanked by other sayings with conditional value, Οἷος ...τοιούτοι. (I Cor 15, 48), I am inclined to believe that the emphasis given by the presence of the conjunction εἰ to the whole paragraph is one that faithfully renders the Apostle's message.

Paul's need to statute the existence of spiritual bodies is most likely determined by the Corinthians' disbelief in the Pauline view of death and the concrete content of the new kind of existence. The sequence of comparisons and analogies from the Corinthians' proximate environment of life was an introductory stage to the Pauline argument. The discourse has a crescendo. It starts from common elements that can be understood typologically, see the idea of the sown grain, and stops at the ultimate comparison, Adam-Christ, which he will introduce in the next verse. For the bodies of the various forms of existence, animals, plants and humans, there is a presumed consensus. No one could deny the existence of more than one kind of body, but Paul's argument was meant to make the Corinthians accept a much more complex philosophical value, that of the resurrection of Christ, and by extension, of man in Christ.

The metaphor of the seed's death, as such must be buried in order to rise again, is also very suggestive. It also refers to the idea of returning to

⁹ Archibald ROBERTSON & Alfred PLUMMER, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians.*, C. Scribner's Sons, New York, 1911, p. 373.

the dust in Acts 3:19, except that unlike the human body, it is first sown, then dies, whereas the human body dies, only then is it buried in the ground. The order of the steps to the resurrection is also influenced by the nature of the body (Not all flesh is alike I Cor 15, 39)¹⁰.

VI. Adam the First and Adam the Last

The Apostle Paul's line of argument, which began in vs. 3, "that Christ died for our sins", reaches the stage of a comparison between man and Christ. He arches back through time from Adam, the first man to be built, to Christ, whom he also calls Adam, but with the addition that he is "the last". This is not the first place Paul uses the name Adam to reiterate man or human nature, but it is the only time he refers to Christ as "the last Adam".

While the first Adam points to the historical Adam, the first creation of God to His image, the last Adam is a typological naming of Christ¹¹. The difference between the two "characters" is emphasized by the adjective ἔσχατος which expresses not only the numerical order but also the new-building quality - καινὴ κτίσις (II Cor 5, 17) of the Last¹². But even those who resemble the last Adam become his brethren and leave those of the pre-existent world to anchor themselves in the reality of the future ones¹³.

The relationship between the first Adam and the last Adam is expressed in the same terms in Rom 5, 12-15, where Paul speaks of Adam's sin that

¹⁰ S. J. KISTEMAKER, *Exposition of the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, p 573.

¹¹ "Adam, transgressing the commandment and falling from the former glory, was subjected to the spirit of the world, and the wave of darkness came over his soul, until the Lord came, the last Adam". Sfântul MACARIE EGIPTEANUL, *Omilii*, p. 225.

¹² Roy B. ZUCK, *A Biblical Theology of the New Testament*, Moody Press, Chicago, 1994, p. 292

¹³ "Christians, therefore, belong to another world; they are sons of the heavenly Adam, a new creature, sons of the Holy Spirit, luminous brothers of Christ, like their Father, the spiritual and luminous Adam; (belong) to that city, that nation, that power. They are not of this world, but of another world. Because (Christ) Himself said: They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. (Jn 17, 16). Sfântul MACARIE EGIPTEANUL, "Omilii duhovnicești" in: Sfântul MACARIE EGIPTEANUL, *Scrieri*, coll. *Părinți și Scriitori Bisericești*, vol. 34, Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, București, 1922, p 175.

brought death and the grace that has become available to those who believe in Jesus Christ. Adam is called “the image of Him who is to be” - τύπος τοῦ μέλλοντος (Rom 5, 14)¹⁴. “Him who is to be” appears in I Cor 15, 45 as ὁ ἔσχατος, which can be understood as “the last” in relation to the “first” Adam - ὁ πρῶτος.

The phrase “Adam the first” refers to the text of Acts 2, 7, a reference also indicated by the specific introductory formula οὕτως καὶ γέγραπται - vs.45¹⁵.

Adam the first was made a living creature (ψυχὴν ζῶσαν) and sinned, bringing with him the punishment for all humanity. But with Christ, the last Adam, a new era begins, an era of the redemption of the first Adam’s sin and the raising of the human being to a new dignity given by the union in Christ “...he abides in me and I in him” (Jn 6, 56). Therefore, the last Adam is not only a repairer of the first Adam’s error and does not restore the human nature to the state before the fall into sin, but by His Incarnation He unites the human nature with God and by His Ascension into Heaven He brings the human nature to the right hand of the Father¹⁶.

There is a deeper relationship between Adam the first and Adam the last, than typological intersections. They are linked not only by the idea of resurrection but also by that of death. Adam the first received death as the punishment of the flesh for sin. Adam the last received death to kill sin as a result of righteousness¹⁷. By this process of going from less to more, from illustration to model, Paul follows a hermeneutical rule specific to the New Testament authors, and he himself appeals to it in Heb 9, 13-14: “For

¹⁴ Although the Romanian synodal translation of the Bible goes for the formula “to come”, the verb “μέλλω” has the sense of a future verb that emphasizes the imminence of something. Much more accurate is the use of the verb “to be” in Romanian, as the same version translates the occurrence from Acts 11, 28. “there would be a severe famine over all the world.”

¹⁵ Quoting from the Old Testament is a reflex that Paul “borrows” from Jesus (Lk 4, 4; 4, 8; 19, 46) who quotes Scripture as an argument; J. A. FITZMYER, S.J., *First Corinthians*, p. 597.

¹⁶ Dumitru STĂNILOAE, *Teologia Dogmatică Ortodoxă*, Vol. II, Editura Institutului biblic și de misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, București, 2003, p. 190.

¹⁷ Maxim MĂRTURISITORUL “Răspunsuri către Talasie”, in: *Filocalia*, Vol. III, Translated from Greek, with notes by Pr. Prof. Dr. Dumitru Stăniloae, Humanitas, București, 2009, p. 298.

if the blood of goats and bulls, with the sprinkling of the ashes of a heifer, sanctifies those who have been defiled so that their flesh is purified, how much more shall the blood of Christ...”¹⁸.

To emphasize the fundamental soteriological role of the last Adam, the Apostle Paul gives a unique attribute to the last Adam πνεῦμα ζωοποιοῦν (I Cor 15, 45). It does not cancel the idea of the body, since pneumatization was not perfect, but it obviously introduces the spiritual feature of the Risen Christ who is “more” spirit than body, i.e. whose corporeality is dominated by spiritualized existence.

a. Adam, the Living Being

In verse 45, there is an extremely interesting philological construction of the Apostle. In order to release a certain central idea about the comparison of the two Adams, that of the superiority of the last Adam, Paul uses a play on words. Ψυχὴν ζῶσαν and πνεῦμα ζωοποιοῦν are the two powerful anthropological concepts in the Pauline terminology.

The specific function of the human soul, i.e. of Adam the first, is the power to be a worker, to subordinate the soul to the body¹⁹. The act of living is due to God’s “breath of life”, i.e. the endowment of man with the power to be alive. God’s breath on Adam was not towards the soul, but towards the “living soul”, i.e. towards spiritual life, a sign that Adam’s existence had a spiritual stamp, not a mere living one similar to other living creatures. He had dominion over all and great power of discernment²⁰.

The statement in vs 45. is a poetic restatement of that in vs 22 “for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ” (I Cor 15, 22). He alludes to the spiritual physiology of man, speaking simultaneously

¹⁸ S. J. KISTEMAKER, *Exposition of the First Epistle to the Corinthians.*, p 575.

¹⁹ Sfântul IOAN GURĂ DE AUR, “Omiliile la Facere”, in: Sfântul IOAN GURĂ DE AUR, *Scrieri. Partea întâia*, coll. *Părinți și Scriitori Bisericești*, Vol 21, Translation, notes and indicators, Pr. D. Fecioru, Editura Institutului biblic și de misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, București, 1987, p. 145.

²⁰ CALIST and IGNATIE XANTHOPOL, “Metodă și regulă foarte amănunțită, care are mărturiile sfinților și poate fi întrebuințată cu ajutorul lui Dumnezeu, de către cei ce-și aleg să viețuiască în liniste și în singurătate sau despre purtarea, petrecerea și viețuirea lor și despre toate bunătățile ce le pricinuieste liniștirea celor ce se străduiesc cu ea, cu dreaptă judecată”, in: *Filocalia* Vol. VIII, p. 210.

of natural functions and of functions acquired through kinship with God. Indeed, just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so the Son also gives life to whomever he wishes (Jn 5, 21). The first Adam lives (ζάω), whereas the last Adam not only lives but gives life (ζωοποιέω). The translation of ζωοποιέω must take special account of the other places in the New Testament where the role of “life-giver” indisputably belongs to God (Jn 6, 63; Rom 4, 17; 8, 11; II Cor 3, 6; I Tim 6, 13).

b. Adam, The Life-giving Spirit

With regard to the last Adam, the text poses certain challenges in understanding the Pauline idea. In the case of the formula εἰς πνεῦμα, the preposition εἰς copies the Hebrew preposition ל[le]. In Hebrew it has a spatial meaning, indicating the direction towards something, here, concretely becoming from something into (into) something else. For example, in Gen 2, 24 we have the formula לָבָדָם which has been translated into Greek as εἰς σάρκα (μίαν), one flesh. The Greek uses the preposition εἰς to express the meaning of [le] in [lenephes]. For the text in Gen 2, 24, the synodal translation better captures the idea of the two becoming one *flesh*.

We find the same morphological structure in the text of I Cor 15, 45, where both in Greek and in Latin, in order to translate the expression, the preposition εἰς/in has been introduced. Accordingly, a more accurate translation is “As it is written: The first man was made, Adam the living soul; the last Adam the life-giving spirit”. The translation that leaves out the preposition εἰς retains an entirely different nuance of the text, namely that of becoming. The verb γίνομαι exactly reproduces the idea of becoming.

Although, as previously indicated, in Gen 2, 24 the synodal translation captures the idea of the two becoming one and dispenses with the prepositions in the accusative “in” or “with”, in the case of I Cor 15, 45 it opts for the formula “with a living soul” and “with a life-giving spirit”²¹.

²¹ The 1914 Bible proposes the preposition “in”. The Ananias version opts in the first part of the verse for the preposition “in” - living soul, and in the second part use the preposition “with” - life-giving spirit. The lack of alignment with regard to a unitary solution also betrays the difficulty that the translations faced in rendering the Pauline idea.

Romanian translations have been forced by the presence of the preposition *cu* to use a similar structure in Romanian. The copulative verb “to do” and the predicative noun “duh” (spirit) offer the possibility of translation into Romanian without the preposition in the accusative “in” or “with”. We can simply translate: “The last Adam became a spirit...”.

Why is it so important to drop the preposition preceding the word “spirit”? Because its use induces the idea that the last Adam is given an extra, albeit superior, trait, that the new Adam is given something different from the first Adam. After all, the last Adam is something else entirely. That is why even the Apostle Paul’s play on words makes sense and clarity only if we understand that there is an ontological difference between the first Adam and the last Adam. The first is a living being, the second gives life, is the source of life. Therefore, the last Adam is the maker of the first. There is also a relationship of determination and causality between the two. The former owes its existence to the latter.

This clarification is necessary if the text of I Corinthians is read under a histological lens. If the focus is only on the eschatological dimension, then the two levels of analysis, of biological, physical existence and of heavenly existence, are the only ones that matter and any allusion to the Christological dimension becomes anachronistic.

The dialectic of Pauline Christology in I Cor 15, 45 is fully present in biblical exegesis, where Gordon Fee complains of the exaggerated interest of biblical scholars in the histological element of verse 45 while its intrigue is found in the question Paul asks in vs. 35: “How are the dead raised?”. With what kind of body do they come”²².

Indeed, chapter 15 focuses on the problem of the resurrection of the dead, the resurrection with the body, the problems that interfered with the pneumaticism of the Corinthians, but these small accolades that Paul makes are also opportunities to point out dogmatically issues related to the reality of the Incarnation of Christ but also related to the pneumatic character of His existence after the resurrection. Verse 47 makes a Midrashic impression on Paul’s discourse, but the Byzantine text confirms the Christological charge

²² G. D. FEE, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians...*, p. 788.

of verse 45. Verse 47 reveals unequivocally who the last Adam, or second man, is - ὁ δεύτερος ἄνθρωπος ὁ κύριος ἐξ οὐρανοῦ²³.

VII. “Adam the second” in the Life of the Neptic Fathers

One of the central challenges of the relationship between the first Adam and the last Adam is also to project this anthropological transgression into the space of actualizing this event on a personal level. The Christian constantly looks to the icon of Adam the first as a starting point and to that of Adam the last as an end. The second Adam of I Cor 15, 45 can be understood as the peak of spiritual experience. Having become spirit rather than flesh, the last Adam is “the new creation” (Gal 6, 15).

The work of the Spirit Paul speaks about in the formula “πνεῦμα ζωοποιοῦν” implicitly refers to a new way of existence, according to the Spirit, “so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit” (Rom 8, 4 NRS) not after the flesh, “for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live” (Rom 8, 13). Although the text of I Cor chapter 15 speaks explicitly of Christ and the way of being in the eschaton, it also bears a wider reading.

We will find this type of reading of the text present in the literature of the Neptic Fathers. The Philokalia records several interpretations that evaluate the concept of the “last Adam” in anthropological terms.

Designing the eschaton broken from the experience of God during earthly life is synonymous with abandoning the Johannine message of knowing God (Jn 17, 3). This phenomenon is totally alien to the Eastern tradition which, even by forcing the logic of the biblical text, tries to extract the sap from it necessary for an immediate actualization.

²³ Paraphrasing the Pauline text from I Corinthians, Cyril of Alexandria does not speak of Christ as “the second man” cf I Cor 15, 45, but of “Christ, the second Adam”. Sfântul CHIRIL AL ALEXANDRIEI, *Închinarea și slujirea în duh și în adevăr*, Translation, Introduction and notes by Pr. Prof. Dr. Dumitru Stăniloae, coll. *Părinți și Scriitori Bisericești*, vol. 38, Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, București, 1991, p. 582

Resemblance to the new Adam is synonymous with the union with Christ, with the renunciation of the old man, of the old Adam, i.e. of the passions, cf. Col 3, 9: “Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have stripped off the old self with its practices”. The Patriarch Calistus resorts to naming Christ, i.e. the model of the perfect man, as the new Adam.

The new Adam is the new man of whom St. Paul speaks, which can only be reached by giving up the old Adam, that is, by returning to the state of grace specific to baptism. That state is a trait of the reborn man - “and have clothed yourselves with the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator” (Col 3, 10)²⁴.

In the context of the subject of the imitation of Christ, the Patriarch Calistus places the obedience of the Son to the Father, as the healing and renewing response of the second Adam to the disobedience of the first Adam, as the principle of the source of unchastity and renewal. Imitation of Christ, therefore, as an opportunity for knowledge through seeking (direct experience) makes it possible to identify the source of evil in disobedience (like Adam the first) and the source of good in humility (like Adam the second).

Calistus’s observation has the unquestionable quality of bringing the pedagogical problem down from the Adam the first-Adam the second relationship to the level of ascetic praxis. The two archetypal models are like some cardinal points which are useful to the spiritual man in his orientation towards Christ. The identity between Christ and the Second Adam or “new Adam” reveals a highly personal understanding of union with God. These notes of the Fathers basically coagulate the entire Pauline Christological discourse and order it in the form of fundamental rules of (monastic) life for the journey of divinity²⁵.

The recognition of Christ in the last Adam makes it possible to understand the Pauline discourse on the resurrection in the hermeneutical key of the way to Christ-likeness and in the development of an inaugurated

²⁴ CALIST and IGNATIE XANTHOPOL, “Metodă și regulă...” in: *Filocalia*, Vol. VIII, p. 19

²⁵ “The New Adam” and “the new man” are two concepts of Pauline inspiration that find a deep echo in the work of the Neptic fathers. Elder Joseph the Hesychast writes to a disciple: “When the new Adam begins to take form in you, (Gal 4, 19) then I myself will write to you about the signs of the formation of the new man” (καινός ἄνθρωπος Ef. 4, 24), if I’m still alive!”; Gheron IOSIF, *Mărturii din viața monahală*, translated by Pr. Prof. Dr. Constantin Coman, Editura Bizantină, București, 2003, p. 150

eschatology, where Christ, the second Adam, does not belong to the eschaton, but also to created time, i.e. to the space of encounter between man and God as the premise of eschatological coexistence.

VIII. Conclusions

The dense anthropological language that the Apostle Paul uses in verses 44-45 reflects the extremely valuable doctrinal load of the fragment from the Epistle to the Corinthians.

The debate on the levels of reading of this fragment revealed the importance of the phrase “the last Adam” both for Pauline eschatology and for Christological anthropology.

Paul achieves a double goal: to develop the idea of bodily resurrection and at the same time to speak of Christ as “the last Adam”, a formula that “hides” a much more complex treasury of concepts with which the Pauline epistles have already familiarized us: “the new man”, “new creation”, “spiritual man”, etc. He weaves the Old Testament concept of “living being” with the New Testament one embodied by Christ, of “life-giving spirit”.

From an exegetical point of view, I tried to emphasize the importance of a simple translation into Romanian, which takes into account the text of Gen 2, 24, and the translational custom where we have a similar morphological structure. There, the preposition “εἰς” is just a copy from the Hebrew language.

Fundamentally anchored in the direct experience of God, the Neptic Fathers understand the Pauline phrase in its present dimension, where Christ, “the last Adam” is the image of the Father, and Christians, as Makarius the Egyptian says, are sons of the Spirit, brothers of Christ, Adam the bright and spiritual one. “The last Adam”, “The second Adam”, “The new Adam” are as many Christological names that equally belong to the literature of the Fathers. Neptic literature retains the imperative of similarity and functional reporting to the two Adams between whom the history of salvation unfolds.

Book Reviews

Matthias HARTMANN and Vasile STANCIU (eds.), *Das Leben als Geschenk Gottes. Christliche Verantwortung im Angesicht des Todes*, *Seria Biblioteca teologică germano-română*, Schiller Verlag, Bonn-Sibiu, 2018, 216 pp.

The Faculty of Orthodox Theology of the Babeş-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca hosted the 4th Theological Consultation, with the theme: *Life as a gift of God. Christian responsibility in the perspective of death*, in a bilingual edition: German and Romanian, as evidenced by the volume with the above title. It is a collaboration in the field of social assistance between the Diaconia of Neuendettelsau - Germany and the philanthropic activity of the Romanian Orthodox Church.

As the editors of this volume mention, the purpose of the Theological Consultation from Cluj-Napoca was to

“develop fundamental reflections and ethical support, which would center this fundamental character of the gift of life in a social and economic environment that it is oriented, above all, towards the profit and utility of all things and even of life itself. Knowing that all the participating Churches and Diaconia face these challenges, the participating theologians sought, starting from the interpretation of Holy Scripture and on the basis of their own theological tradition, the norms for a responsible approach and way of acting, in the perspective of the horizon of the border of death. Thus, it was concluded that it is the duty of Christians in this world to provide assistance and protect life at this time as well” (p. 12).

Thus, beyond the theological dialogue existing between the Romanian Orthodox Church and the Evangelical Church in Germany, starting from

1979, another kind of dialogue is taking place between these Churches, namely, in the field of social assistance or Christian philanthropy.

The IV theological Consultation from Cluj was preceded by three others, starting from 2008, when the series of these Consultations began. Therefore, the first Theological Consultation between representatives of the two Churches took place in Neuendettelsau (Germany), with the theme: *“Any ministration starts from the altar”*. *Social activity of the Protestant Church in Germany and in the Romanian Orthodox Church*.

Second Consultation theological with the theme: *Holy Spirit - our sanctification* was held at the Brâncoveanu Monastery from Sâmbăta de Sus (Romania), 2011.

The third Consultation theological took place in 2013 in Neuendettelsau and was focused on theme: *Understanding man as the image of God*.

The Diaconia Institute in Neuendettelsau is one of the most representative settlements of Philanthropy in Germany, comprising over 200 social settlements with over 7800 employees. 40 schools are under the jurisdiction of the Neuendettelsau Diaconia and services for elderly in as many settlements in Germany and Poland. The Diaconia in Neuendettelsau has several clinics in the Ansbach, Neuendettelsau, Nuremberg, and Schwabach, offering care services for over 2000 people. Over 1000 children attend kindergartens and after school in the Nuremberg metropolitan area.

The the present work renders the Greetings of the hosts and guests, after which the conferences held by theologians of the two Churches are integrated.

Thus, Rev. Prof. Dr. Christian Strecker presented theme : *Treasure in Clay Pots. About the dialectic of death and life in the theology of the Holy Apostle Paul*.

Rev. Prof. Dr. Ioan Chirilă delivered the conference: *Heroes , Martyrs and Confessors: The Liturgy Prayer Dedicated to Them- Argument for the Universality and Koinonicity of the Divine Liturgy*.

Rev. Dr. Peter Munzert presented conference: *When Life is Unbearable and Death Impossible. Spiritual assistance in a Limit Situation*.

Rev. Prof. Dr. Stefan Iloaie concentrated on: *Euthanasia – “The Lost Death” - Between the Freedom to Die and the Compulsion to Live*.

Rev. Prof. Dr. Friederich Heckmann presented the issue of Christian ethics in the conference entitled: *Christian Ethics and the Responsibility of the Churches Towards the Process of Death in a Secular and Postmodern Society*.

Finally, Prof. Dr. Sebastian Moldovan treated the theme: “*Wilful Death*”. *The Significance of a Christian Ideal for the Contemporary Problem of Voluntary Termination of Life*.

The editors included a relevant annex, presenting the recommendations which the Conference of Orthodox Bishops and in Germany, together with the Lutheran Church in Germany (EKD), gave to the members of the two Churches, in the context of the topic addressed by the present work, and put under the the generic: “*So that you do not grieve...*”. In this document there are several guidelines, which the leaders of the two Churches have made for church ministers and their believers. Some of these should be mentioned: accompanying the sick and their relatives to death, praying for the sick facing death, burial forms, death in exceptional situations, etc.

All these theological contributions highlighted the fundamental coordinates of the understanding of life from a Christian point of view, in order to capture the way in which death is understood within the horizon of the gift of life. The book is worth reading, because it brings many clarifications for the contemporary man, faced with lighter or heavier suffering, and finally with the reality of death.

The merit of the present work is also that it has highlighted the fact that, in addition to inter-Christian theological dialogue, which is very important for the closeness between Christians of the same faith, practical cooperation is also of great importance, i.e. in terms of serving one’s fellow man, according to the Model of Jesus Christ, Who came into the world to serve and save the world.

Rev. Prof. Dr. Ioan TULCAN