TROUBLE IN CORINTH [1]

Old Testament Antecedents
of 1 Corinthians 15:54-:55

When the mortal body becomes immortal, Paul assures the Corinthians that

then the saying that is written will be fulfilled: NRSV **1 Corinthians 15:54b**
'Death has been swallowed up in victory.'
'Where, O death, is your victory?
        Where, O death, is your sting?'"   NRSV **1 Corinthians 15:55**

τότε γενήσεται ὁ λόγος ὁ γεγραμμένος, Κατεπόθη ὁ θάνατος εἰς νῖκος.
ποῦ σου, θάνατε, τὸ νῖκος; ποῦ σου, θάνατε, τὸ κέντρον;   **[GNT]**

The introductory phrase, τότε γενήσεται ὁ λόγος ὁ γεγραμμένος, is normal citation formula[2]

a so-called "citing phrase," *i.e.,* a coded indication to the reader that Paul is intending to quote

from the Hebrew Scriptures.[3] But the word for victory (νῖκος) does not appear in either context

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[1] With apologies to Meredith Willson's "The Music Man" ("Well, ya got trouble, my friend.
Right here, I say trouble right here in River City"). The text is available on kids.niehs.nih.gov/lyrics/trouble.htm
(visited October 1, 2008).

[2] Stanley, Christopher D.: Paul and the language of Scripture: Citation technique in the Pauline Epistles
and contemporary literature 215 (Cambridge 1992).

[3] Heil, John Paul: The Rhetorical Role of Scripture in 1 Corinthians 253, 5 Studies in Biblical Literature
(SBL 2005). "[T]he hypothesis that the letters of Paul are witnesses to the developmental history of the Septuagint
text .... can by no means be taken for granted, because recently even the basic assumption that Paul relied on a Greek
version when quoting from or alluding to the Scriptures has again been called into question." Wilk, Florian, "The
Letters of Paul as Witnesses to and for the Septuagint Text" ___, in Septuagint Research: Issues and Challenges in
the Study of the Greek Jewish Scriptures (SBL 2006) (Klaus, Wolfgang, and Wooden, R. Glenn (*eds.*)), citing the
contrasting views of Kautzsch, Emil F.: De Veteris Testamenti locis a Paulo Apostolo allegatis (Metzer & Witting
1869) and Lim, Timothy H.: Holy Scripture in the Qumran Commentaries and Pauline Letters (Oxford 1997).
    Thiselton Anthony C.: The First Epistle to the Corinthians 1298, NIGTC (Eerdmans 2000) attributes to John
Chrysostom (c. 347 - 407), the controversial bishop of Constantinople, an understanding that ὁ λόγος γενήσεται
means "the word shall be fulfilled" or "shall come into force." *Cf.* CD 7:10-11 (Damascus Document – 100 BCE)
("And all those who despise the commandments and statutes shall be rewarded with the retribution of the wicked
when God shall visit the Land, when the saying shall come to pass which is written among the words of the Prophet
Isaiah son of Amoz ....") in The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English (rev. Penguin ed. 2004) (Vermes, Geza, *tr.*)
134-35.

in the Hebrew Scriptures, and, in particular, it does not appear in either Isaiah 25:8 or Hosea 13:14 of the MT or the LXX from which most commentators think these verses were derived.[4]

First Corinthians 54b-55 is not a quotation and not a paraphrasation of a single scriptural quotation. Christopher D. Stanley observes[5]

> Combined citation. Though questions exist concerning Paul's treatment of the individual verses, there is no evidence to suggest that anyone had combined these two passages from Isaiah and Hosea into a single citation prior to Paul. As with his other combined citations ... Paul gives his reader no indication that vv. 54b-55 might represent anything other than a continuous quotation from a single biblical passage. * * *

Heil identifies verses 54 and 55 as embodying the Jewish exegetical device that came to be known as *gezera shava,* twice linking together two O.T. scriptural quotes for mutual interpretation by the words "death" and "victory," which the verses have in common.[6] Stanley continues at 215:

> The effect of this and other modification to vv. 54-5, as Koch points out,[7] is to produce a tightly knit, three-membered repetition "word of Scripture" structured around a threefold repetition of the word θάνατος [death], in which the first two lines are further united by the repetition of the key-word νῖκος [victory] and the last two by a thoroughgoing verbal parallelism.

In the case of neither verse 54b or 55 is the textual path from the respective Hebrew sources to 1 Corinthians' νῖκος straight-forward. How, then, did Paul arrive at his quotations of

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[4] Thiselton, *supra,* at 1299. Thiselton's note 199 on derivation cites Edwards, T.C.: First Epistle to the Corinthians 456 (Hodder & Stoughton, 2d ed. 1885); Hays, R.B.: 1 Corinthians 275 (John Knox 1997); Grosheide, F.W.: Commentary on First Epistle to the Corinthians 303 (Eerdmans 1971); Lang, Frederic J.: Die Briefe an die Korinther, 240, NTD (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1994); Fee, Gordon D.: The First Epistle to the Corinthians 803 (Eerdmans 1987); Collins, R.F.: First Corinthians 577-78 (Glazier 1999); Wolff, C.: Der este Brief des Paulus die Korinther 417, THKNT (Evanglische Verlagsanstalt 1996); Senft, Christoph., "La Première Èpitre de St. Paul aux Corinthiens," in Commentary du Nouvean Testament 213-14 (Labor et Fides) (2d rev. ed. 1990); Bruce, F.F.: 1 and 2 Corinthians 156; Conzelmann, H.: 1 Corinthians: A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians 292-93 (Hermenia) (Eng. tr. Fortress 1975); Héring, J.: First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians 181-82 (___tr., Epworth 1962); Barrett, C.K.: A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians 382-83 (Black 2d ed. 1971); Strobel, A.: Der erste Brief an die Korinther 261 (Theologischer Verlag 1989); Allo, E-B.: Premiere Épitre aux Corinthiens 434-35 (Gabalda 1956).

[5] Stanley, *supra,* at 209.

[6] Heil, *supra,*14, 247. Stanley at 214 characterizes Paul's use "a rather loose instance of *gezera shawa....*"

[7] Koch, D.-A.: Die Schrift als Zeuge des Evangeliums: untersuchungen zur Verwendungund zum Verstiandnis der Schrift bei Paulus, 69 Beitrèague zur historischen Theologie (Mohr 1986).

these two verses?

The first step in answering that question is to establish the Masoretic and Greek texts of the two verse sources. Both the underlying Greek and Hebrew texts involved here have themselves been the subject of debate.

I.　　The Epistolary Text in Greek

The search for the sources of Paul's text starts with establishing the text that Paul ended up. Printed below are the texts of 1 Corinthians 15:54-:55 as rendered by NA27/UBS4, and Westcott and Hort:

> ᴳᴺᵀ **1Co 15:54** ὅταν δὲ τὸ φθαρτὸν τοῦτο ἐνδύσηται **ἀφθαρσίαν καὶ τὸ θνητὸν τοῦτο ἐνδύσηται** ἀθανασίαν, τότε γενήσεται ὁ λόγος ὁ γεγραμμένος, Κατεπόθη ὁ θάνατος εἰς νῖκος.
> ᴳᴺᵀ **1Co 15:55** ποῦ σου, θάνατε, τὸ νῖκος; ποῦ σου, θάνατε, τὸ κέντρον;
>
> ᵂ&ᴴ **1Co 15:54** ὅταν δὲ τὸ θνητὸν τοῦτο ἐνδύσηται [τήν] ἀθανασίαν τότε γενήσεται ὁ λόγος ὁ γεγραμμένος Κατεπόθη ὁ θάνατος εἰς νῖκος
> ᵂ&ᴴ **1Co 15:55** ποῦ σου θάνατε τὸ νῖκος ποῦ σου θάνατε τὸ κέντρον

Both verses present issues of textual criticism.

Verse 54

There are a number of variants in Verse 54, most notably a longer reading and a shorter reading. Unusually, the NA27/UBS4 follows the longer reading. The shorter reading in verse 54a in Westcott & Hort, ὅταν δὲ τὸ θνητὸν τοῦτο ἐνδυσηται [τήν] ἀθανασίάν, *i.e.,* omitting the following ἀθανασιαν και τό θητὸν τοῦτο ἐνδύσηται, τόυ (and this mortal puts on immortality), unsurprisingly follows Codex Sinaiticus and is said to be supported principally by:

P46 (Papyrus Chester Beatty II papyrus)

(Kenyon 200-50; Kim 81-96; Wilkins, 200; Comfort 150-75),[8] proto-Alexandrian; text with lectoral

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[8] Philip Comfort in his book, Encountering the Manuscripts (2005), particularly at 131-39, evaluates the conflicting opinions on the dating of the Chester Beatty papyrus, based on differing analyses of the paleography, calligraphy, and papyrology, and also differing hypotheses about the stichometrical metadata, *i.e.,* notes indicating

markings, uncial, less developed nomina sacra,

Codex ℵ* Sinaiticus (350-70),

Codex C* Ephræmi Resciptus (V)
(palimpsest),

088 (V/VI), 0121a (X),   0243 (X), 1175 (X) (Patmos), 1739* (X) (Athos),
(uncial)

Old Latin (IX)

V ulgate (IV/V)

Coptic (Sahidic [III or IV], Bohairic [III or IX])

Gothic (IV), Byzantine text type

Ethiopic (VI)

Marcion (II)

Irenæus (gr, lat) (II)

and other witnesses.

The longer reading -- based on the other "consistently cited witnesses of the first order" for 1 Corinthians[9] -- is evaluated by the UBS4 (1983) editors at a "B" confidence level ("almost certain").[10] The editors attribute the residual textual discrepancies to accidental omissions in copying through scribal homoeoarcton (identical or similar word beginnings) or homoeoteleuton (identical or similar inflectional case-endings on words in proximity).[11]

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numbers of stichoi. He notes a range from 81 C.E. to the early third century C.E., and he ultimately ventures a range of 125-50, contemporaneous with P.Oxyrhynchus 3721, and certainly no later than 175 C.E. at 134, 137-38.

[9] Die vorliegende 27 Auflage des Novum Testamentum Graece 60* (1993).

[10] The previous UBS edition, UBS3 (1965) evaluates the longer reading at a "C" level ("a considerable degree of doubt"). It is not obvious that the revised apparatus in UBS4 for verse 54 of itself explains the change in evaluation.

[11] Metzger, Bruce M.: A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament 500-01 (2d ed. 1994 Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft). Additional "trifling" variations are noted in the apparatus to UBS 4 and NA27. Royse, James R., "Scribal Tendencies in the Transmission of the Text of the New Testament" 239 in The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research: Essays on the Status Quætionis (Wipf & Stock 2001) (Ehrman, Bart D., and Holmes, Michael W., *eds.*), canvasses the on-going controversy over the so-called "canons of criticism," including Griesbach's *lectio brevior potior* at 242-44. Subsequent critical studies have tended to focus on individual scribal profiles, *e.g.,* Silva, Moisés, "The Text of Galatians: Evidence from the Earliest Greek Manuscripts," in Scribes and Scriptures: New Testament Essays in Honor of J. Harold Greenlee (Eisenbrauns 1992) (Black, David A., *ed.*).

In evaluating the witnesses for the shorter reading, as cited in the apparatus, papyrus 46 (Chester Beatty II), Codices Sinaiticus and Ephræmi Resciptus, and uncials 088, 0243, and 1739 are themselves among those in the table of thirty-three "consistently and frequently cited witnesses" for First Corinthians in Nestle-Aland's NTG (1979) at 60*, but certainly the majority of witnesses favors the longer reading. Nevertheless, the early date of the Chester Beatty papyrus is particularly persuasive, since the very early proto-canonization of the Pauline letters (2 Peter 3:15-:16) implies that these letters would have been carefully copied early-on.[12] The presence of scribal billing (stichometrical) notes at the foot of papyrus 46 further supports the notion of carefully scribal copying.[13] Griesbach's first canon in favor of the shorter reading (*brevior lectio præferenda verbosiori*), alluded to earlier, carries little weight here, because of a ready alternative explanation for the shorter reading. Perhaps offsetting the weight usually afforded the Codex Sinaiticus, which is considered reliable – but not "eminently" so, is the reputation of its scribe for lapses due to rapid and careless transcription,[14] which is precisely the issue in verse 54a.

Papyrus 46, Codices B (Vaticanus) (IV) and D* (Claromontanus) (VI), and Tertullian's substituting νεῖκος (strife, dispute) for νῖκος (victory) was discarded well before Westcott & Hort as generally attributable to a scribal itacisticism (aurally misunderstood vowel in dictation).[15]

Thus, it appears to me to be reasonable, but far from conclusive, that Paul's original text is replicated in the longer reading in NA27/UBS4, but perhaps at the prior "C" level of confidence.

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[12] Comfort, Philip W., "Texts and Manuscripts of the New Testament," in The Origin of the Bible 185, 206-07 (Tyndale 1992) (Philip W. Comfort, *ed.*).

[13] Comfort, Philip W.: Encountering, *supra,* 136, 139.

[14] Comfort, Encountering, *supra,* 78.

[15] *See,* Aland & Aland: The Text of the New Testament 286 (Eerdmans 2d ed. 1989) (Rhodes, Erroll F., *tr.*), noting that νεῖκος is marked "*ex itac.* [ex itacismo (by itacism)] in NA26; Chapter 7 (The Causes of Errir on the Transmission of the Text of the New Testament) in Metzger, Bruce M., and Ehrman, Bart D.: The Text of the New Testament (Oxford 4th ed. 2005), particularly at 255; Chapter 4(2) (Readings Created in the Course of the Textual Transmission) in Tov, Emenuel: Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible (Augsburg-Fortress) (2d English ed. 2001).

Verse 55

The late Prof. Metzger in his Commentary at 503 summarizes two minor textual issues with respect verse 55 as these:

> Two sets of variant readings are involved, both connected with the fact that in Ho 13:14 the Septuagint differs from the Hebrew. The sequence νῖκος … κέντρόμ … is to be preferred to the reverse sequence, which arose from scribal assimilation to the text of the Septuagint. The reading ᾅδη … is also an assimilation to the text of the Septuagint; Paul never uses ᾅδης. The reading of P46 B νεῖκος ("strife, dispute") is an itacistic error, having arisen from the similarity of pronunciation of ει and I.

But, as will be seen, the overarching issue in verse 55 is how Paul dervied νῖκος (victory) from the Mesoretic דְּבָרֶיךָ (plagues, pestilence), rendered in the LXX as δίκη (judgment, verdict, penalty, lawsuit). There is no warrant within Muraoka's or Lust's lexicons,[16] BDB[17] or BDAG,[18] Hatch & Redpath's concordance,[19] or Kittel[20] for such a such an "unconventional" rendering of δίκη. Stanley quite plausibly attributes the transformation to Paul.[21]

Hebrew Antecedents

Here are the Greek texts again and the Masoretic texts, followed in each case by English-language translations:

> GNT **1Co 15:54** ὅταν δὲ τὸ φθαρτὸν τοῦτο ἐνδύσηται ἀφθαρσίαν καὶ τὸ θνητὸν τοῦτο ἐνδύσηται ἀθανασίαν, τότε γενήσεται ὁ λόγος ὁ γεγραμμένος, **Κατεπόθη ὁ θάνατος εἰς νῖκος.**

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[16] Muraoka, Takamitsu: A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint 129 (Peters 2002); Lust's Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint 155 (Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft) (rev. ed. 2002).

[17] The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon 184 (Hendrickson 2006 reprint from 1906 ed.).

[18] BDAG: A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature 250 (Chicago) (3d ed. 2000).

[19] Hatch & Redpath's A Concordance to the Septuagint 335 (Baker) (2d ed. 1998).

[20] 2 Theological Dictionary of the New Testament 181 (Eerdmans 1964) (Kittel, Gerhard, *ed.*) (Bromiley, Geoffrey W., *tr.*) (Dike is the daughter of Zeus and Themis, the pitilessly avenging "goddess of penal justice," *citing* Hes. Theog. 901; Op. 220-ff. and56 ff; Orph. 42).

[21] Stanley at 214.

^{GNT} **1Co 15:55** ποῦ σου, θάνατε, τὸ νῖκος; ποῦ σου, θάνατε, τὸ κέντρον;

^{NET} **1Co 15:54** Now when this perishable [body] puts on the imperishable, and this mortal puts on immortality, then the saying that is written will happen, "Death has been swallowed up in victory."

^{NET} **1Co 15:55** "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?"

<div dir="rtl">

^{BHS} Isaiah 25:8 בִּלַּ֤ע הַמָּ֙וֶת֙ לָנֶ֔צַח וּמָחָ֨ה אֲדֹנָ֧י יְהוִ֛ה דִּמְעָ֖ה

מֵעַ֣ל כָּל־פָּנִ֑ים וְחֶרְפַּ֣ת עַמּ֗וֹ יָסִיר֙ מֵעַ֣ל כָּל־הָאָ֔רֶץ כִּ֥י יְהוָ֖ה

דִּבֵּֽר׃ פ

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<div align="center">* * *</div>

^{TNK} **Isaiah 25:8** He will destroy death forever. My Lord GOD will wipe the tears away From all faces And will put an end to the reproach of His people Over all the earth -- For it is the LORD who has spoken.

^{LXT} **Isaiah 25:8** κατέπιεν ὁ θάνατος ἰσχύσας καὶ πάλιν ἀφεῖλεν ὁ θεὸς πᾶν δάκρυον ἀπὸ παντὸς προσώπου τὸ ὄνειδος τοῦ λαοῦ ἀφεῖλεν ἀπὸ πάσης τῆς γῆς τὸ γὰρ στόμα κυρίου ἐλάλησεν

^{NETS} **Isaiah 25:8** Death, having prevailed, swallowed them up,
   And God has again taken away every tear from every face;
  the disgrace of the people he has taken away from all the earth,
  for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

<div align="center">*   *   *</div>

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^{BHS} Hosea 13:14 מִיַּ֤ד שְׁאוֹל֙ אֶפְדֵּ֔ם מִמָּ֖וֶת אֶגְאָלֵ֑ם ²²אֱהִ֤י דְבָרֶ֙יךָ֙

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[22] Patterson, Gaylard H., "The Septuagint Text of Hosea Compared with the Massoretic Text" 190, 213 in 7 Hebraica, No. 3 (April, 1891) (UChiPress), reprinted by Gorgias Press (2008) and available on JSTOR, supposes the two occurrences of אֱהִי to be transpositions of איה.

מָוֶת אֱהִי קְטָבְךָ שְׁאוֹל נֹחַם יִסָּתֵר מֵעֵינָי׃

^{TNK} **Hosea 13:14** From Sheol itself I will save them, Redeem them from very Death.

 Where, O Death, are your plagues? Your pestilence where, O Sheol? Revenge shall be far from My thoughts.

^{LXT} **Hosea 13:14** ἐκ χειρὸς ᾅδου ῥύσομαι αὐτοὺς καὶ ἐκ θανάτου λυτρώσομαι αὐτούς ποῦ ἡ δίκη σου θάνατε ποῦ τὸ κέντρον σου ᾅδη παράκλησις κέκρυπται ἀπὸ ὀφθαλμῶν μου

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^{NETS} **Hosea 13:14** I shall rescue them from the hand of Hades and shall redeem them from Death.

O Death, where is your sentence? O Hades, where is your goad? Comfort is hidden from my eyes

` Verse 54 (*sourced to Isaiah 25:8*)

Stanley[23] and Heil[24] identify several difficult text-critical issues in Paul's rendition. For verse 54b they note five versions of Isaiah 25:8 possibly antecedent to Paul's quotation in

1Cor54b:

Paul:)
Θ Uncial Q:)- κατεπόθη ὁ θάνατος εἰς νῖκος
Origin[25]:   )

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[23] Stanley at 210.

[24] Heil, *supra,* 248-49.

[25] Subsequent to Stanley's paper, Darrell D. Hannah, published Origen's text (c. 235 C.E.) of verse 54, in The text of 1 Corinthians in the writings of Origen 181 (SBL 1997):

οταν το φθαρτον τουτο ενδυσηται αφθαρσιαν, και το θνητον [τουτο ενδυσηται τὴν]

LXX: ᴸˣᵀ **Isaiah 25:8** κατέπιεν ὁ θάνατος ἰσχύσας

MT: בִּלַּע הַמָּ֫וֶת לָנֶ֫צַח ᵂᵀᵀ **Isaiah 25:8**

Θ Syro Hex: κατέπιεν ὁ θάνατος εἰς νῖκος

 Aquila: κατεποντισει τὸν θάνατος εἰς νῖκος

Σ: καταποθῆναι ποιήσει τὸν θάνατον εἰς τέλος

εἰς νῖκος

Of these they observe (1) the marked divergence of the readings of 1 Corinthians 1:54 from the LXX and (2) the "verbatim" agreement between Theodotion's reading of Isaiah 25:8 in Θ Uncial Q and Paul's quotation in verse 54b. "The reason for the common shift away from the LXX", Stanley says, is that "all three revisers were attempting to correct what to them was a faulty rendering of the Hebrew" by the LXX translator."[26] The translation is faulty, he says, because "the LXX makes הַמָּ֫וֶת [death] the subject, in clear contradiction to the surrounding verses (cf. vv. 6a, 8b), and renders לָנֶ֫צַח [for ever] in the sense of the Aramaic נְצַח, 'surpass, overcome' (as also several times in the LXX) rather than the Hebrew idiom meaning 'forever'", citing Koch.[27] The LXX, Thiselton says, "interprets לָנֶ֫צַח as if were nearer to the cognate Aramaic verb *to overcome* than to the Hebrew idiom *forever.*"

Harrelson,[28] however, offers a slightly different analysis of לָנֶ֫צַח. "[T]he LXX reading of the term lānéṣaḥ shows a great deal of sophistication" in differentiating between what he calls the temporal and qualitative meanings of lānéṣaḥ, since ἰσχύσας, when translated

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αθανασαιν, τοτε γενησεται ο λογος ο γεγραμμενος· **καταποθη** ο θανατος **εις νικος**.

[26] Stanley, *supra,* 210. Würthwein, citing δίκη as an example, concludes that "the Hebrew text demanded more lexical and grammatical knowledge of the part of the early translators than they possessed" and quotes Ziegler as characterizing the LXX Isaiah as a "free" translation and Tov as considering the possibility that the number of LXX readings based upon sheer conjecture as being greater than has hitherto been suspected. Würthwein, Ernst: The Text of the Old Testament 68 (2d ed. 1995) (Rhodes, Erroll F., *tr.).*

[27] Koch, *supra,* 61-3.

[28] Harrelson, Walter, "Death and Victory in 1 Corinthians 15:51-57: The Transformation of a Prophetic Theme," 155 in Faith and History (Carroll, J.T., *et al., eds.*) (SBL 1990).

qualitatively, *cf.* Lam 5:20 (LXX) (εἰς νεῖκος = "entirely") and Job 36:7 (εἰς νεῖκος = "victoriously"), may be read completely or victoriously. **[chk Harrelson paraphrase]**

κατεπόθη versus κατέπιεν

Stanley[29] points out an additional problem in establishing Theodotion's form of the verb κατεπόθη. The uncial Q (in a marginal gloss), he says, attributes the passive κατεπόθη to the Θ, while the Syriac translation of the Hexapla seems to presuppose an active form of the Greek verb κατέπιεν in Θ, citing Koch at 62 n. 22. Since the Hebrew could support either witness, on this divergence there remains disagreement.[30] Stanley further notes the possibility that the Θ reading "could have arisen through assimilation to the text of 1 Cor. 15:54 cannot be ruled out."[31] He notes also that a passive form of the same verb (καταποθῆναι) is used by Symmachus.

Source Analysis

From the fact that Aquila also uses the "unusual translation" εἰς νῖκος for rendering לָנֶצַח (forever), Stanley[32] infers that there

> clearly [is] some sort of common tradition [that] lies behind each of the texts of The Three. Whether the marginal entry of Q has rightly preserved the wording of Theodotion is thus finally irrelevant.... The agreements between Paul and the other two versions are sufficient to show that Paul has most likely followed a pre-existing Greek text at this point, one that may have exercised at least a measure of influence over the subsequent translations of Aquila, Symmachus, and (possibly) Theodotion.

Koch agrees with Stanley -- relying on the dual facts both that "Aquila and both Theodotion

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[29] Stanley at 210-11.

[30] Stanley at 211, c*iting* Rahlfs, "Uber Theodotion–Lesarten in Neuen Testament under Aquilla–Lesarten bei Justin," 20 Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft 182-99 (1921) (for the Hexapla) versus Ziegler in **[the Gottingen volume on Isaiah,(62 ? Ziegler 2d ed. 1963) at ___]** (for the Q). *Cf.* Edwards, Thomas C.: A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians 456 (Hodder & Stoughton) (2d ed. 1885) ("That Paul had the rendering of LXX. in his mind is almost certainly proved by his using the word καταπίονις.").

[31] Stanley at 211 n.104 cites Kautzsch, *supra,* 104 n.1 (____), but cautions that Kautzsch was writing before more recent studies that would date many "Theodotionic" readings identified in chapter 2 of Stanley's book to the first century C.E. or before,   If indeed Paul had copied from Θ by Theodotion himself, the implications for the dating of Theodotion himself would be profound.

[32] Stanley at 211.

readings have 'in victory'" for the Hebrew 'forever,' and Symmachus as well as the Theodotion

uncial Q reading have the passive form of the verb [κατεπόθη], indicates a common tradition

behind these translations." Heil at 249 goes even further out on the limb to assert that "the

agreements between them and Paul point to Paul's dependence upon a pre-existing, non-LXX

text of Isa 25:8a", citing Stanley at 210-11 and Koch at 61-63.[33] *Compare* McLay, R. Timothy:

The Use of the Septuagint in New Testament Research 106 (Eerdmans 2003) (Θ *dubitante*).

Verse 55   *(sourced to Hosea 13:14)*

Hosea is one of the twelve books of the so-called Minor Prophets. Hosea is distinctive as

the only book of the Hebrew testament thought to have been written entirely in the dialect of the

Northern Kingdom, *i.e.,* Israel or Ephraim, which existed from the 930s to the 720s B.C.[34]   The Northern

Kingdom was the home of the greatest of Israel's prophets.[35]

For many generations scholars attributed the book's textual incoherencies ("does not

make sense") to an incomplete knowledge of the dialect,[36] and German scholars such as

Wellhausen dealt with them futilely by emendation.[37] More recently Daniel Freedman has

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[33] Heil at 249 quotes Koch from page 63: "Paulus hier weder frei variiert noch eigenständig ad hoc übersetzt. Vielmehr folgt er einer vorgegebenen, die LXX korrigierenden Vorlage, die auch auf die späteren Übersetzungen eingewirk hat."

[34] Adverting to this theory, Anderson and Freedman, comment that "the supposition that Hosea is written in a distinctive dialect of Hebrew has not been confirmed...." Anderson, Francis I., and Freedman, David Noel: Hosea, 24 Anchor Bible 67 (Doubleday 1980).

[35] Freedman, Daniel N.: "Problems of Textual Criticism in the Book of Hosea" 287, in The Critical Study of Sacred Texts, 2 Berkeley Religious Studies (Berkeley 1979) (O'Flaherty, Wendy, D., *ed.*).

[36] To the question "Was there a north Israelite dialect in ancient Israel?", Davila answers, only in the sense of a "dialect continuum" over the whole area of Syria-Palestine during the Iron Age. Davila, James R.: "Dialectology in Biblical Hebrew: A North Israelite Dialect? Synchronic and Diachronic Considerations," paper read at 1994 annual meeting of the SBL. He concludes that it is not "clear to me that Hosea's Hebrew has much more than a bit of a northern 'accent' to it."   http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/divinity/hebrew_dialectology_94.htm.

[37] "It is universally agreed that we have a very inadequate grasp of the Book of Hosea. ... Most scholars would agree that there is something wrong with it.... [In addition] it is generally agreed that the Septuagint ... is a deficient text for Hosea." David Noel Freedman, "Problems of Textual Criticism in the Book of Hosea," 55-56, 61, 72 (1977), *supra*. "The text of Hosea competes with Job for the distinction of containing more unintelligible passages than any other book of the Hebrew Bible. ... For the Hebrew original we have the Masoretic Text, and not much else. .... [A] good deal of the content of Hosea and its real meaning remain beyond reach." Anderson &

published a paper contending that the text of Hosea is "basically sound," it's just that "Hosea ... is a poet, or at least a quasi-poet, and he likes to obfuscate.... [W]e do not want to emend away a serious poetic device or conceit."[38] We must "understand the prophet in his context."[39]

Textually, what Paul has done to the Hosea verse is to substitute νῖκος (victory) for δίκη (penalty), which is the LXX's rendering of דְּבָרֶיךָ (plague, pestilence),[40] thus:

<div dir="rtl">

Hosea 13:14 WTT אֱהִי דְבָרֶיךָ מָוֶת אֱהִי קָטָבְךָ שְׁאוֹל

</div>

Where are your plagues, O death? Where is your destruction, O sheol?

LXT **Hosea 13:14** ποῦ ἡ δίκη σου θάνατε ποῦ τὸ κέντρον σου ᾅδη παράκλησις κέκρυπται ἀπὸ ὀφθαλμῶν μου

Where is your punishment, O death? Where is your sting, O hades?

GNT **1 Corinthians 15:55** ποῦ σου, θάνατε, τὸ νῖκος; ποῦ σου, θάνατε, τὸ κέντρον;

Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?

There is no obvious etymological path from דְּבָרֶיךָ to δίκη to νῖκος.

Moreover, Limburg points out what he calls a stunning facial irony in Paul's quoting from Hosea 13:[41]

Freedman, *supra,* at 66-67. "In no other prophetic book are there so many mangled pieces as in Hosea...." Anderson and Freedman quoting at 69, Robinson, Th.H., "Hosea" 1, in Robinson, Th. H. and Horst, F.: Die Zwölf kleinen Propheten: Hosea bis Micha, Handbuch zurn Alten Testament 1.14 (Mohr 1954).

[38] Freedman **[?]**, *supra,* 62. Anderson and Freedman, *supra*, at 70-72 (sophisticated artistry and structure) are generally in accord.

[39] Anderson & Freedman at *73.*

[40] Stanley notes at 212 & n110 that the LXX's translation of דֶּבֶר (plague, pestilence) by δίκη (judgment) is problematic, since דֶּבֶר is rendered by θάνατος in all of its thirty-three appearances in the LXX, thus suggesting that the possibility of a non-Masoretic *Vorlage* for the reading in 1 Corinthians 15:55 cannot be ruled out. Edwards, *supra,* at 457 asserts that _____ may be the plural of דָּבָר (word or lawsuit) or of דֶּבֶר (destruction), and the LXX appears to have adopted the former and Paul the latter.

[41] Limburg, James: Hosea–Micah, Interpretation commentary series 47 (John Knox 1988).

> The contrast between Hosea 13 and 1 Corinthians 15:54-55 is stunningly ironic: Hosea 13 ... collects four of the prophet's sayings delivered just before the death of nation in 722 B.C. ... All four of these sayings are permeated with the stench of death. Nevertheless, when Paul; writes about the hope for resurrection life ... he picks up a quotation from this chapter of Hosea.
>
> * * *
>
> What accounts for this total change from defeat to victor, from disaster to good news? The answer is what God has done through Christ. The problem of the sins of the people has been dealt with: Christ has died for their sins and has won the victory over sin's power.... Even death has been defeated. ... Then the trumpet shall sound [1 Cor. 15:5–]. At that sound says Paul, all will be raised and the final victory over death will be achieved.

Limburg's point with respect to Hosea, however, might be considered blunted by the immediately preceding verse's allusion to what Hayes[42] somewhat imprecisely calls "the salvation oracle of Isaiah 25:6-10a" in what Fr. Fitzmyer terms the Isaiah Apocalypse (24:1 - 27:13).[43] The earlier pericope after all "does envision God's ultimate destruction of the power of death, and ... [presents] a richly evocative portrayal of God's universal salvation for 'all people'...", swallowing up death.[44] But, as will be seen below, Paul has reworked the text of Hosea 13:14 so that it "creates a provocative declaration of challenge to the 'last enemy,' Death, ... [and] Death's victory will be snatched away...."[45] The reworking lays the foundation for his exalting in verse 57 that "God ... gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!"

III.   What Paul was About

As has been seen, we cannot get to Paul's reading from either the Masoretic text or even the LXX. Variants in the Greek text of verses 54 and 55 do not offer an explanation that is likely or comprehensive. One can speculate on additional variant Hebrew, LXX, and Pauline texts, but such variants are not well-documented.

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[42] Hayes, Richard B.: First Corinthians 275 (John Knox 1997).

[43] Fitzmyer, S.J., Joseph A.: First Corinthians: a New Translation with Introduction and Commentary 606, 32 Anchor Bible (Yale 2008).

[44] "The image of the Lord 'swallowing' death would be especially powerful, for death was viewed in Canaanite mythology and culture as a hungry enemy that swallows its victims." Study note to Isaiah 25:8 in NET Bible, cross-referencing verse 5:14a ("So Death will open up its throat, and open wide its mouth").

[45] Hayes, *supra,* at 276.

The epistolary context suggests the answer. Paul is using these textual antecedents from the Hebrew scriptures in his peroration on resurrectory transformation of the dead in Chapter 15 of his "first"[46] letter to the church he founded at Corinth.[47]

"The establishment of the Church of Corinth was the crowning work of Paul's second missionary journey, and one of the greatest achievements of his life."[48] Corinth was a major trade center and the capital of the Proconsular Province of Asia. It was Paul's largest church, but "its turbulence and party heat are unparalleled in the N.T. records."[49] His epistle was dispatched from Ephesus in the Spring of 56 C.E. to quell intra-congregational dissension[50] on several issues, including the Christian doctrine of resurrection of the body[51] "at the sound of the trumpet."[52]

The context of the epistle in my opinion will ultimately prove pivotal in eliciting the

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[46]   There are allusions to an earlier letter in 1 Cor. 5:9 ("I wrote you in my letter..."), and some commentators have suggested that parts of that letter were inserted into 2 Corinthians at vv. 6:14-7:1. *See* Thiselton, *supra*, at 31. In chapter 6 of The Origin of I Corinthians (Seabury 1965), John Coolidge Hurd, Jr., arguing from his
conclusion that 1 Corinthians contains Paul's answers to questions raised among the congregation by Paul's "first" letter, attempts to reconstruct that letter from 1 Corinthians. The hypothesis of a previous letter, he says at 51, quoting Lightfoot, "is as old as the first Latin commentator Ambrosiaster" and is the position of all modern commentators known to Hurd.

[47]   τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ τῇ οὔσῃ ἐν Κορίνθῳ, ἡγιασμένοις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, κλητοῖς ἁγίοις, σὺν πᾶσιν τοῖς ἐπικαλουμένοις τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ, αὐτῶν καὶ ἡμῶν· (GNT Πρπς Κορινθιους Ά 1.2).

[48]   Findlay, G.: "St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians," in 2 The Expositor's Greek Testament 729 (Eerdmans 1960) (W. Robertson Nicoll, *ed.*).

[49]   Findlay at 729.

[50]   "[T]he entire letter of 1 Corinthians is permeated with the vocabulary and *topoi* used in political rhetoric discuss and combat factionalism; thus dissension is at issue throughout all sixteen chapters of the letter." Mitchell, Margaret Mary: Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation: an Exegetical Investigation of the Language and Composition of 1 Corinthians 67 (Mohr 1991; Westminster-Knox 1992) (footnotes omitted). In footnote 8 she explains *topos* as "literally the 'region' from which arguments are drawn (Cic. Top. 2.8) .... used to urge civil concord." Of First Corinthians, Calvin writes: "I have no doubt that Paul intended it to reprimand the Corinthians in an indirect way..., so that they might recognize their own faults ...." Calvin, John: The First Epistle to the Corinthians(1546), Calvin's Commentaries 276 (Eerdmans 1960) (Fraser, J.W., *tr.*).

[51]   "[H]ow can some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead?" NET1 Corinthians 15:12.

[52]   1 Corinthians 15:51-:52; Findlay, *supra*, at 733, 735.

textual derivation of the "resonant climax"[53] of Paul's text. Barth has identified chapter 15 as the key for interpreting the entire epistle.[54] From that context we can derive the least difficult explanation of Paul's textual technique, *viz.,* that his transformation of the Hebrew antecedents was driven by a rhetorical imperative. Paul's attempt in chapter 15 to persuade the Corinthians to hold firm in their faith on the nature of the resurrection of the body after the final trumpet,[55] climaxes in verses 57-58a:

> NET **1 Corinthians 15:51** Listen, I will tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed–
>
> NET **1 Corinthians 15:52** in a moment, in the blinking of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.
>
> NET **1 Corinthians 15:53** For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality.
>
> NET **1 Corinthians 15:54** Now when this perishable [body] puts on the imperishable, and this mortal puts on immortality, then the saying that is written will happen, "Death has been swallowed up in victory."
>
> NET **1 Corinthians 15:55** "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?"
>
> NET **1 Corinthians 15:56** The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.
>
> NET **1 Corinthians 15:57** But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!
>
> NET **1 Corinthians 15:58** So then, dear brothers and sisters, be firm. Do not be moved! Always be outstanding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

In verses 54b and 55 Paul is rhetorically leading up to νῖκος in verse 57.   The appearance of εἰς νῖκος in Aquila and Theodotion (Q) tends to support Stanley's inference that there was a common tradition behind these Greek translations and revisions which Paul knew

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[53]   Hayes, Richard B.: First Corinthians 275 (John Knox 1997).

[54]   Barth, Karl: The Resurrection of the Dead 6-7 (Hodder & Stoughton 1933) (H.J. Stenning, *tr.*); Horsley, Richard A.: 1 Corinthians 214, in Abingdon New Testament Commentaries (Abingdon 1998) (Verse 59 "sets off the final exhortation, which concludes the whole set of arguments in the main body of the letter from 1:10 through 15:57.").

[55]   1 Corinthians 15:52.

and used.[56] Alternatively, or perhaps additionally, the LXX's faulty rendering of לָנֶצַח in Isaiah as *to overcome* (from the cognate Aramaic verb)[57] may itself have suggested to Paul the choice of νῖκος in verses 15:54b, -:55, and -:57.

The absence of any earlier surviving combination of Isaiah 25:8 and Hosea 13:14 suggests that Paul was "ingeniously link[ing]"[58] these two verses *ad hoc* for the rhetorical purpose of chapter 15. That he is not casually attempting to quote the LXX verses from memory is consistent with the absence of any indication that he is reciting other than "a continuous quotation from a single biblical passage."[59]   "[I]t seems clear", Stanley says

> that Paul has introduced the words τὸ νῖκος; into the text to create a closer verbal and rhetorical link with the excerpts from Isa 25:8 in v. 54, where the notion of "victory" plays an equally prominent role.

Paul "uses the words in an entirely different meaning, not only changing a key word but wrestling the saysing from their original context to serve his own purpose."[60]

Such a conscious rhetorical intent in Paul's reworking the underlying Hebrew texts is typical of the Pauline letters.   Rhetorical technique is apparent throughout Paul's writings. Indeed, Heil entitles his recent SBL book The Rhetorical Role of Scripture in 1 Corinthians. Stanley plausibly concludes that "the various combined citations that appear in Paul's epistles are the carefully cultivated fruit of a sophisticated literary artistry and not the unfortunate by-product of a rather careless citation technique."[61]

                                        William Malone

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[56] Stanley at 211.

[57] Thiselton at 1299.

[58] Harrelson, *supra,* at 157.

[59] Stanley at 209-10.

[60] Fitzmyer, *supra,* at 607.

[61] Stanley at 209-10.

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