

BACK TO BASICS: POSSIBLE INTERTEXTUAL LINKS BETWEEN 2 CORINTHIANS 4:1–5:10 AND GENESIS 1–3

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This study seeks to expound possible intertextual links in 2 Corinthians in relation to the MT. As a basic hypothesis this study argues for thematic and linguistic connections that the apostle Paul seems to borrow specifically from the first chapters of Genesis in order to build the scriptural foundations of his ministry. The verification will be done by comparing the vocabulary used in both sections. Literary structures from both passages will also be analyzed as well as possible shared themes and topics of the chapters. The section will be studied in a verse-by-verse way, taking as main texts of comparison the Greek text of the NT, the LXX and the Hebrew MT.

Key Words: intertextuality, 2 Cor 4:1–5:10, Gen 1–3, ministry, biblical theology, LXX

1. Introduction

According to Jorge Luis Borges, a text is not an isolated phenomenon but rather, a concordance of unnumbered textual interrelations.¹ These textual interrelations allude to intertextuality which is not only a methodology but also a theoretical term generating a multiplicity of methodologies. Intertextuality implies a relationship between texts.² A text is, then, a polyphonic voice where quotations, allusions, and echoes of other texts interrelate re-

- ¹ Jorge Luis Borges, *Labyrinths: Selected Stories and Other Writings* (London: Penguin, 1970), 248–49, quoted by Robert P. Carroll, “Intertextuality and the Book of Jeremiah: Animadversions on Text and Theory,” in *The New Literary Criticism and the Hebrew Bible* (ed. David J. A. Clines and J. Cheryl Exum; Valley Forge: Trinity, 1994), 55. S. Teófilo Correa gives a brief analysis of the methodological premises of intertextuality and intra-biblical exegesis as approximations directed toward the study of the texts and their connecting features. See S. Teófilo Correa, “Intertextualidad y exégesis intra-bíblica ¿Dos caras de la misma moneda? Breve análisis de las presuposiciones metodológicas,” *DavarLogos* 5 (2006): 1–13.
- ² Donald C. Polaski, “Reflections on a Mosaic Covenant: The Eternal Covenant (Isaiah 24:5) and Intertextuality,” *JSTOT* 77 (1998): 55.

sulting in a particular composition.³ This phenomenon can be observed between books of the first Testament⁴ as well as between the first and second Testaments.⁵ Texts from one Testament reflect terminology, images, and subject matter⁶ from another book which are then adapted to a new situation.⁷ Conscious and unconscious relations between the texts can also be drawn, as the canonical authors used concepts, images, and literature common to their socio-cultural surrounding for the composition of their writings.⁸

This study seeks to explore the possible existence of intertextual links between 2 Cor 4:1–5:10 and other texts from the Hebrew Bible. The apostle Paul seems to borrow certain linguistic connections, specifically, from the section of Gen 1–3 in order to build the scriptural foundations of his ministry.⁹ In order to test this hypothesis a comparative study of the terminology

³ Juliana Classens, "Biblical Theology as Dialogue: Continuing the Conversation on Mikhail Bakhtin and Biblical Theology," *JBL* 122 (2003): 141.

⁴ D. Penchasky, "Staying the Night: Intertextuality in Genesis and Judges," in *Reading between Texts, Intertextuality and the Hebrew Bible* (ed. D. N. Fewell; Literary Currents in Biblical Interpretation; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1992), 77–88.

⁵ "At every point early Christians attempted to understand their Scriptures in the new light of the ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. They used the Old Testament to prove their Christian theology and to solve Christian problems. The Old Testament provided the substructure of the New Testament theology. The Old Testament also provided the language and imagery for much of New Testament thought, although this is not always obvious to a casual reader. Therefore, New Testament concepts must be understood from Old Testament passages. Virtually every New Testament subject must be approached through the contribution of the Old Testament. As Augustine observed, 'The New Testament is in the Old Testament concealed; the Old Testament is in the New Testament revealed.'" Klyne Snodgrass, "The Use of the Old Testament in the New," in *The Right Doctrine from the Wrong Texts? Essays on the Use of the Old Testament in the New* (ed. G. K. Beale; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994), 29, 30. In general, the background of the Old Testament can be noted in the New Testament. See George E. Ladd, *Crítica del Nuevo Testamento* (trans. Moisés Chávez; El Paso: Mundo Hispano, 1990), 75.

⁶ Marcus Barth, "The Old Testament in Hebrews: An Essay in Biblical Hermeneutics," in *Current Issues on New Testament Interpretation* (ed. William Classen and Graydon F. Snyder; New York: Harper & Row, 1962), 54, 64.

⁷ Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., *The Uses of the Old Testament in the New* (Chicago: Moody, 1985).

⁸ Patricia Tull, "Rhetorical Criticism and Intertextuality," in *To Each Its Own Meaning* (ed. Steven L. McKenzie and Stephen R. Haynes; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1999), 176–77.

⁹ In his study on the continuity and discontinuity between the Old and New Testaments, Charles Cousar suggests that this phenomenon is indeed plausible. Cf. Charles B. Cousar, "Continuity and Discontinuity: Reflection on Romans 5–8," in *Pauline Theology. Volume III: Romans* (ed. David M. Hay and E. Elizabeth Johnson; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), 197.

used in both sections will be undertaken as well as a close analysis of the literary structures, themes and topics of both passages.¹⁰ The relevant verses will be analysed sequentially, taking as main texts of reference the Greek text of the NT, the LXX, and the Hebrew MT. The English passage in question will be presented in a table, with possible signs of intertextuality highlighted. The Greek text, first from the NT and then the LXX, will also be included, followed by a presentation of the MT. In each case, the intertextual links between the passages will be demonstrated on a more theoretical level.

2. 2 Corinthians 4:1–5:10: A General Introduction

A reading of this section, more than any other, shows a literary analogy with Gen 1–3 and some other sections of the OT. The literary motifs of Genesis are used in 2 Cor 4:1–5:10 to develop the theme of the section. For example, “the image of God” (4:4) is present in Gen 1:27 while the phrase “who commanded the light to shine out of the darkness” (4:6) seems to be a direct reference to Gen 1:3–5. Furthermore, the expression “clothed and not naked” (5:3) is an allusion to Gen 2:25 and 3:7. According to most authors 2 Cor 4:1–5:10 is the section of the letter in which Paul defines his ministry and the gospel he preaches.¹¹ The section forms part of the long apologetic speech that starts in 2:14 and ends in 7:4.¹² Methodologically, an intertextual analysis focusing on this section (within its bigger context) seems feasible.

- ¹⁰ J. V. Nicolás’ statement that a text like Gen 3 should not be interpreted only through the literary method or through the history of religion may justify an intertextual study of it, in this case, in comparison with 2 Corinthians 4 and 5. See J. V. Nicolás, “Génesis 3 como relato de apropiación,” *EstBib* 53 (1995): 183.
- ¹¹ Some of these include the ministry of the new covenant (4:1–6) and the interaction between ministry and mortality (4:7–5:10). Cf. Victor Paul Furnish, *II Corinthians* (AB 32A; New York: Doubleday, 1984), 201, 252. Others include the nature of the apostolate, the *kerygma* and ministry (4:1–6), Paul’s ministry, his glory and fragility (4:7–18), as well as the heavenly dwelling (5:1–10). See Ralph P. Martin, *2 Corinthians* (WBC 40; Waco: Word, 1986), 74, 81, 95.
- ¹² Paul Barnett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 210. Chapters 1–7 are considered as an independent body, as a letter of gratitude for the good news brought by Titus. Even though the assertion deserves a separate discussion, at least, the possibility of carefully considering the section within a larger one, as a literary section, helps to justify the demarcation of this research. See Linda L. Beleville, “A Letter of Apologetic Self-Commendation: 2 Corinthians 1:8–7:16,” *NovT* 31 (1989): 150.

3. Comparative Study

According to 2 Cor 4:1, the author of the epistle is sure that his ministry originates within God's mercy. Seeing that his apostleship and his message have been questioned, Paul presents arguments in order to justify his apostolic work as well as the content of his preaching.¹³ It is hard to imagine him about to lose heart, but this is the image the phrase οὐκ ἐγκακοῦμεν "we do not lose heart" indicates¹⁴ as difficulties seem to increase instead of decreasing.¹⁵ In this verse there is no apparent linguistic intertextual connection with earlier texts. It is, however, the introduction to his heartfelt and logical defense.

NIV	NT	OT	LXX	MT
4:2 ...we have renounced <i>secret</i> and <i>shameful</i> ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God...	τὰ κρυπτὰ τῆς αἰσχύνης ἐν πανουργίᾳ	Gen 3:8 Ps 44:16 Gen 3:1	καὶ ἐκρύβησαν ἡ αἰσχύνη ἣν φρονημώτατος	וַיִּתְחַבֵּא וַיִּבְשֹׁת וַיִּהְיֶה שֵׁשׁ עָרוֹם

Table 1: *Conflicting ministry styles*

The declaration of 2 Cor 4:2, "...we have renounced the secret and shameful ways, not walking in craftiness, nor do we distort the word of God" alludes to the serpent's attitude in Eden. In the LXX the serpent is described as ἦν φρονημώτατος "[being] crafty" (Gen 3:1) in the sense of "having knowledge of things, be intelligent."¹⁶ It does not read that he acted ἐν πανουργίᾳ "with craftiness," which would imply a negative intention in relation to the knowledge. However, a parallelism can be noted between the two terms

¹³ Wes Avram, "2 Corinthians 4:1–18," *Int* 55 (2001): 71, sustains that Paul defends not just the authority of his ministry but also his work style. He defends his simple style against the demand of an eloquence he does not possess. The apostle refuses to promote himself.

¹⁴ "Consequently, Paul and his men did not οὐκ ἐγκακοῦμεν 'lose heart.' In spite of accusations and difficulties, they continued performing their ministry without cowardice or discouragement. A firm conviction of the nature of their mission kept them going." Homer A. Kent, "The Glory of Christian Ministry: An Analysis of 2 Corinthians 2:14–4:18," *Grace Theological Journal* 2 (1981): 181.

¹⁵ This tension between suffering and life is typical of Paul's writings, especially in 7:14–25. For the apostle the Christian life is a constant experience of weakness, suffering, and death, the same as life. See David S. Dockery, "Romans 7:14–25: Pauline Tension in the Christian Life," *Grace Theological Journal* 2 (1981): 255.

¹⁶ עָרוֹם "crafty" and γυμνός "naked" do not have an automatic negative connotation. See Esteban Voth, *Génesis* (Comentario Bíblico Hispanoamericano; Miami: Editorial Caribe, 1992), 82–83. The context of Gen 3 determines the negative aspects of these terms.

throughout 2 Cor 11:3, ὁ ὄφις ἐξηπάτησεν Εὐάν ἐν τῇ πανουργίᾳ αὐτοῦ “as Eve was deceived by the serpent’s cunning.” This semantic connection allows a linguistic link between 2 Corinthians and Genesis. The Hebrew term *ḥayyā* “crafty” refers to the serpent and is used in a similar way as “sensible, intelligent,” with a negative connotation in Job 5:12 and 15:5 where it is translated as “crafty.” Moreover, “hide,” “hide from the heavenly presence” is a common feature of characters that in OT and also in NT texts are in direct opposition to God.¹⁷ “Shameful” has a visual and conceptual relation with “the hidden.” The literal translation of the phrase τὰ κρυπτὰ τῆς αἰσχύνης is “the hidden from shame.” In the LXX τῆς αἰσχύνης is a translation for Baal (1 Kgs 18:19, 25) and marks the shame and the confusion sensed before the presence of God once the relationship with him is altered (Ezra 9:7; Ps 43:16; Jer 3:25; Ezek 7:18; Dan 9:7–8). Hosea links the idea of shame to standing away: “when they came to Baal Peor, they consecrated themselves to that shameful idol” (Hos 9:10). When the thief is discovered, ὡς αἰσχύνῃ κλέπτου, he feels “disgrace” (Jer 2:26). These images of separation, shame, and concealment reflect the attitude Adam and Eve had after accepting the serpent’s suggestions (Gen 3:8–10) and Paul uses them in v. 1 to contrast his ministry with those who question his mission.

It seems that Paul compares, indirectly, his adversaries with the serpent’s attitude and mode of operation in Eden. With craftiness they deceive and adulterate the word of God. Paul, however, partly refrains from what could bring him into a shameful situation in front of the Corinthians. It seems that Paul’s methodology differs substantially from that of his opponents.

NIV	NT	OT	LXX	MT
4:3 ... And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing.	ἔστιν κεκαλυμμένον	Gen 3:8, 10	καὶ ἐκρύβησαν καὶ ἐκρύβην	כִּבְּרִית כִּבְּרִית

Table 2: *Paul does not hide his Gospel*

As in verse 2, Paul clarifies that he does not conceal himself or his message as did Adam and Eve when they hid among plants. On the contrary, he is convinced that his opponents, τῶν ὑπερλίαν ἀποστόλων “the super apos-

¹⁷ Niclós argues that “such appropriation is (done) *hidden*, with *deception*, *craftiness*, or *surreptitiously*, in absence of the legitimate owner, making fall on other, the burden of the action fulfillment, getting rid of the *personal obstacle*.” Niclós, “Génesis 3 como relato de apropiación,” 183. As Niclós maintains the story of Gen 3 forms the background against which the Davidic monarchy is questioned; likewise, the description of the attitude of the characters that officiate the appropriation in the story of Genesis can suitably represent the opponents of Paul.

tles" (2 Cor 11:5; 12:11), are the ones that μετασηματίζονται ὡς διάκονοι δικαιοσύνης "masquerade as servants of righteousness" (2 Cor 11:15) to oppose him. This same attitude can be noted in the Genesis account when Adam and Eve "covered" themselves with fig leaves and hid in order to evade the scrutinizing presence of God (Gen 3:7, 8, 10).¹⁸ If the gospel is hidden it is because it is not accepted and not because it is not preached. The apostle never refused to preach the gospel whenever he had the opportunity. Although there is no direct linguistic connection between the texts, the attitude of the man and the woman in Eden is used to highlight the fact that the gospel is hidden just "for those who are perishing." These images and motives of concealment found in Genesis can be inferred in verse 3.

NIV	NT	OT	LXX	MT
4:4 ... god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.	ὁ θεὸς τοῦ αἰῶνος... τὸν φωτισμὸν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τῆς δόξης τοῦ Χριστοῦ... εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ	Gen 1:3-5 Ps 19:2 Gen 1:26, 27	γενηθήτω φῶς καὶ ἐγένετο φῶς οἱ οὐρανοὶ διηγούνται δόξαν θεοῦ κατ' εἰκόνα θεοῦ	וְהָיָה אֱלֹהֵי הַיָּמִים וְהָיָה אֱלֹהֵי הַיָּמִים וְהָיָה אֱלֹהֵי הַיָּמִים וְהָיָה אֱלֹהֵי הַיָּמִים

Table 3: The image of God will be preached

Revelation 12:9 refers to Satan as ὁ ὄφις ὁ ἀρχαῖος, ὁ καλούμενος Διάβολος καὶ ὁ Σατανᾶς, ὁ πλανῶν τὴν οἰκουμένην ὅλην "that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world," while 2 Cor 4:4 calls that power "the god of this age." This furtive character prevents "the light of the gospel" from reaching the disbeliever. On the other hand, according to the text, "the light of the gospel" comes from "the light of Christ" who is "the image of God."¹⁹ It seems that "light" and "image of God" are expressions taken from Gen 1:3-5 and 1:26, 27.²⁰ The textual relation between "the glory of Christ" and the creation narrated in Genesis can be observed in Ps 19:2 which says: "The heavens declare the glory of God." The glory of God has been embossed on the firmament since creation and because of this, a possible lexical link can be made between the "glory of Christ" and the creation, which, in this case, is ascribed to Christ himself. In short, "the god of this age" tries to inhibit Paul's mission, namely, the

¹⁸ According to Joel 1:8, 13, πῶ "sackcloth" cannot represent just a small cloth, but definitely a sackcloth or robe that could cover the body.

¹⁹ Jerome Murphy O'Connor, *The Theology of the Second Letter to the Corinthians* (New Testament Theology; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 43.

²⁰ "Image of God" can be a possible allusion to the creation of man in Gen 1:26. Cf. Colin G. Kruse, *II Corintios: introdução e comentário* (trans. Oswaldo Ramos; Serie Cultura Bíblica; São Paulo: Edições Vida Nova, 1994), 111.

spreading of the knowledge of God throughout the creation of God (Col 1:6).

NIV	NT	OT	LXX	MT
4:5 For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as <i>Lord</i> , and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake.	Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν κύριον	Gen 1:8, 15, 16, 18, 22; 3:1, 8, 9, 13, 14, 21, 23	κύριος ὁ θεός	יהוה אלֵהִים
4:6 For God, who said, "Let <i>light</i> shine out of <i>darkness</i> ," made his <i>light</i> shine in our hearts to give us the <i>light</i> of the knowledge of the glory of God in the <i>face</i> of Christ.	ὁ θεὸς ὁ εἰπὼν· ἐκ σκοτῶν φῶς λάμψει, ὃς ἔλαμψεν ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν πρὸς φωτισμὸν τῆς γνώσεως τῆς δόξης τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν προσώπῳ [Ἰησοῦ] Χριστοῦ	Gen 1:3–5 from the earth, Gen 2:6; Adam, 2:7; Lord, 3:8; face, 3:19	καὶ ἐκάλεσεν ὁ θεὸς τὸ φῶς ἡμέραν καὶ τὸ σκοτὸς ἐκάλεσεν νύκτα	וַיִּקְרָא יְהוָה לְאֵלֵהֶם לְאֹרֶךְ יוֹם וְלַחֹשֶׁךְ לַיְלָה מִפְנֵי יְהוה אֱלֹהִים

Table 4: Christ is the Lord of the Creation

In v. 5, Jesus Christ is mentioned as Lord. According to parallel linguistic expressions, it could be assumed that Jesus Christ himself is considered Lord and God of creation. Adam and Eve's disobedience finds its climax in their avoidance of the προσώπου κυρίου τοῦ θεοῦ "face of the LORD God," or the presence of the Lord. Paul continues stating that, God "said let the light shine out of the darkness," which is a clear reference to Gen 1:3–5.²¹ In like manner, the apostle works so that the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ, his glory, shines "to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God."²²

²¹ Philip E. Hughes, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 132–33.

²² This appears to be a reference to the "glory of YHWH" of the Old Testament. *Ibid.*, 156–57.

NIV	NT	OT	LXX	MT
4:7 But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us ...	Ἔχομεν δὲ τὸν θησαυρὸν τοῦτον ἐν ὄστρακίνοις σκεύεσιν	Gen 2:7	καὶ ἔπλασεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν ἄνθρωπον χοῦν ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς	וַיַּעַר יְהוָה אֶל־הָאָדָם עָפָר מִן־הָאָרֶץ
		Gen 3:14	καὶ γῆν φάγη πάσας	וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־הָאָדָם כִּי־אָכַלְתָּ מִן־הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר־אָמַרְתִּי לְךָ לֹא־תֹאכַל
		Gen 3:19	ὅτι γῆ εἶ καὶ εἰς γῆν ἀπελεύσει	וְאָכַלְתָּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ וְהָאָרֶץ יִשְׂרָף־ךָ
		Job 10:9	μνήσθητι ὅτι πληθὸν με ἔπλασας εἰς δὲ γῆν με πάλιν ἀποστρέφεις	זָכַרְתִּי כִּי־רַב־מֵאֲדָמָה יָצַרְתָּנִי עֲשֵׂיתָנִי עֵפֶר

Table 5: The fragility of the messenger and the richness of the message

There is no literal correspondence between ὄστρακίνοις σκεύεσιν “jars of clay” and χοῦν ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς “dust of the earth” in reference to the earthly origin of humanity according to the story of Genesis. Nevertheless, the analogy of thought, including the breath of Gen 2:7, is present.²³ The OT literature contains numerous references to humanity’s origin in the dust of the earth, which appear to be allusions to Gen 1–3, such as, “Remember that you molded me like clay, will you now turn me to dust again?” (Job 10:9). Another example can be found in Isa 29:16: “Can the pot say of the potter, ‘he knows nothing?’ or “Woe to him who quarrels with his maker, to him who is but a potsherd among the potsherds on the ground. Does the clay say to the potter ‘What are you making?’ Does your work say, ‘He has no hands?’” (Isa 45:9).²⁴ To Paul, the treasure is the gospel and the “jars of clay” the bearer of the glad tidings.²⁵ The apostle uses this metaphor to assert the fragility of the messenger and the richness of the message he preaches.²⁶ He asserts that the relationship between message and messenger

²³ Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 253.

²⁴ Similar concepts are also expressed in Job 34:15; 38:14; Isa 43:1, 7; 44:2, 9, 10, 21, 24; 49:5; Jer 10:16; 18:6 and Lam 4:2.

²⁵ Scrolls were hidden in jars of clay as visible in the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls. See Kent, “The Glory of Christian Ministry: An Analysis of 2 Corinthians 2:14–4:18,” 184.

²⁶ This argument is part of Paul’s answer to the super apostles. Due to Hellenistic influence people in Paul’s world were used to a religion of intense emotions and spectacular displays of high voltage and a feel good attitude. Paul refuses to separate the cross from the resurrection. For him, the sufferings are not a sign of weakness. The apostle was accused of promoting a high voltage religion. Paul reverses the logic of the super

is essential, unavoidable, but not equal.²⁷ One is the treasure and the other is the jar of clay that contains it. Paul may be described by the Corinthians as an unrefined apostle without great eloquence (2 Cor 4:9; 11:6; 13:3), but he will never have the arrogant pretensions of the super apostles (1 Cor 2:1; 2 Cor 11:5; 12:11). Paul, as the jar of clay, is about to break but in Christ and by the power of Christ he remains dignified (2 Cor 13:4).²⁸ In a similar way, Paul dedicates his life to the service of God like an earthen vessel used for ritual purposes in the Israelite sanctuary. He is aware of the fact that these earthen vessels were broken when defiled but he is confident that his service is clean and useful to God.²⁹

NIV	NT	OT	LXX	MT
4:8–12 ...pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our <i>body</i> the <i>death</i> of Jesus, so that the <i>life</i> of Jesus may also be revealed in our <i>body</i> . For we who are <i>alive</i> are always being given over to <i>death</i> for Jesus' sake, so that his <i>life</i> may be revealed in our <i>mortal body</i> . So then, <i>death</i> is at work in us, but <i>life</i> is at work in you.	πάντοτε τὴν νέκρωσιν τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐν τῷ σώματι	Gen 2:17	θανάτῳ ἀποθανεῖσθε	מות תמות
	περιφέροντες, ἵνα καὶ ἡ ζωὴ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐν τῷ σώματι ἡμῶν φανερωθῇ.	Gen 3:3	ἵνα μὴ ἀποθάνητε	ותמתו
		Gen 3:4	οὐ θανάτῳ ἀποθανεῖσθε	ותמתו מות-א'

Table 6: From death to life

apostles. He does not talk about the lack of theological vitality and the lack of planning; he has plenty of it. He is not a triumphalist. The power is from God and it resides inside that jar of clay, that is, he himself. His weaknesses and sufferings are not a sign of spiritual anemia but of fortitude and divine approval. See Ronald J. Allen, "Second Corinthians 4:7–18," *Int* 52 (1998): 286–89.

²⁷ Linda McKinnish Bridges, "2 Corinthians 4:7–15," *RevExp* 86 (1989): 393.

²⁸ Avram, "2 Corinthians 4:1–18," 71–72.

²⁹ See Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 253, and Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16* (AB 3; New York: Doubleday, 1991), 675–78.

In this section, the apostle repeats that the state of "jars of clay" is uncertain. Breaking is always a latent possibility. But what happens with the jars of clay is not different to what happened to Jesus. Paul mentions τὴν νέκρωσιν τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, the "mortification of Jesus," particularly the death process, not death itself, ὁ θάνατος "the death" (2 Cor 4:12).³⁰ This forms a link to the declaration of mortification in Gen 2:17: "For when you eat from it you will surely die," you will start dying, or the power of death will invade you. But if the death of Jesus manifests itself in the σῶμα "body," the promise is that ἡ ζωὴ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ "the life of Jesus" (2 Cor 4:11) will also manifest itself in the mortal bodies. The image of the jar of clay is now put aside and the image of the body is used to emphasize the conflict humans are subject to. In Gen 1-3 God created a body full of life, but the serpent transformed the body into the bearer of death. Now, by contrast, because of the victory of Christ on the cross, bodies that carry death can be transformed into bodies that carry life, and not any life, but the life of Jesus. The mortification of Jesus that the believer experiences is not the kind of death which leads to total destruction but rather, the wear produced by the hard work of preaching the gospel. Paul reverses the order of the process narrated in Genesis regarding life and death. If earlier the movement was from life to death, now it is from death toward life.

³⁰ Kent, "The Glory of Christian Ministry: An Analysis of 2 Corinthians 2:14-4:18," 185-86.

NIV	NT	OT	LXX	MT
4:13–15 It is written: “I believed; therefore I have spoken.” With that same <i>spirit of faith</i> we also believe and therefore speak, because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and <i>present us</i> with you in his presence. All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God.	πνεῦμα καὶ παραστήσει	Gen 1:2	καὶ πνεῦμα	וְרוּחַ אֱלֹהִים מְרַחֵם
	σὺν ὑμῖν	Gen 3:24	καὶ ἐξέβαλεν	וַיִּגְרֶשׁ

Table 7: Without fear in the presence of God himself

The spirit of creation that Paul contains within him will accompany him and will continue giving Paul the power to preach the gospel. The creator of the OT is the re-creator of the NT.³¹ For that reason, the apostle quotes Ps 116:10 to attest his decision of continuing the work that has been commended to him, despite the adversities he has to face. Paul hopes to be παραστήσει “presented” before God, in contrast to Adam and Eve (Gen 3:24) who did not wish to appear before God, but hid instead, and were then expelled from the presence of God.

NIV	NT	OT	LXX	MT
4:16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.	Διὸ οὐκ ἐγκακοῦμεν, ἀλλ’ εἰ καὶ ὁ ἔξω ἡμῶν ἄνθρωπος διαφθείρεται, ἀλλ’ ὁ ἔσω ἡμῶν ἀνακαινοῦται ἡμέρα καὶ ἡμέρα.	Gen 1:26, 27	καὶ ἐποίησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν ἄνθρωπον κατ’ εἰκόνα θεοῦ ἐποίησεν αὐτόν ἄρσεν καὶ θήλυς ἐποίησεν αὐτούς	וַיַּבְרֵא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאָדָם בְּצַלְמוֹ אֱלֹהִים בְּרָא אֹתוֹ זָכָר וּמְקַבָּל אֶת־אֵת אֱלֹהִים

Table 8: The outwardly is washed away and the inwardly is renewed

³¹ Declarations of faith of the OT and the NT are linked by mentioning the Spirit. Cf. Hughes, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 147.

Again οὐκ ἐγκακοῦμεν “we do not lose heart” appears as in verse 1, because Paul has reason to remain confident despite the reality that he seems to be breaking like a jar of clay or that he is aging and wasting away little by little like every mortal body. If God could remedy the tragedy in Gen 1–3, he also has the power to renew the “inward man” although the “outward man” is being worn out.³² Colossians 3:10 achieves a connection with Gen 1:26, 27, “and we put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator (Col 3:10), making reference to ἀνακαινούμενον “which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator” (Col 3:10). In fact, ὁ ἔσω “inwardly” represents a person full of life from the Spirit which is an analogy taken from the human being created by God, the fullness of life, the same God of Gen 1 and 2.³³ On the other hand, ὁ ἔξω ἡμῶν ἄνθρωπος “though outwardly” personifies man after the entrance of sin described in Gen 3, who wears out because of the fatigue caused by his interaction with an aggressive and hostile environment. All the scenery of Gen 1–3 helps Paul express the struggle that preaching the gospel, remaining on the side of the truth and living honestly before God, the church, and society implies.

³² The eschatological age to come, “inward man-outward man,” is a formula typical of the Jews based on the fact that the first Adam lost the glory of God. The disgrace of this age is like the one of the outward man. Now, in Christ the lost glory is restored, Christ is the new Adam, the last Adam, the inward man, full of glory. See Scott Hafemann, “Paul’s Use of the Old Testament in 2 Corinthians,” *Int* 52 (1998): 251. Even the “inward man” is considered as eschatological reaching the promise of resurrection. Cf. John B. Polhill, “Reconciliation at Corinth: 2 Corinthians 4–7,” *RevExp* 86 (1989): 347.

³³ The expression “inwardly” surpasses the Greek dichotomy of body and soul. The understanding of humanity, adopted by Paul, stresses the body over the soul. That is why he emphasizes a bodily resurrection in the *Parousia*. See Polhill, “Reconciliation at Corinth: 2 Corinthians 4–7,” 347–49.

NIV	NT	OT	LXX	MT
4:17–18 For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.	τὸ γὰρ παραυτίκα ἔλαφρον τῆς θλίψεως ἡμῶν καθ' ὑπερβολὴν εἰς ὑπερβολὴν αἰώνιον βάρος δόξης κατεργάζεται ἡμῖν, μὴ σκοπούντων ἡμῶν τὰ βλεπόμενα ἀλλὰ τὰ μὴ βλεπόμενα· τὰ γὰρ βλεπόμενα πρόσκαιρα, τὰ δὲ μὴ βλεπόμενα αἰώνια.	Gen 3:18 Gen 3:8, 10 Gen 3:23 Gen 3:24 Gen 3:19	ἀκάνθας καὶ τριβόλους ἀνατελεῖ καὶ ἐκρύβησαν ὁ τε Ἀδάμ καὶ ἡ γυνὴ αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ προσώπου κυρίου τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἐξάπεστεilen αὐτόν καὶ ἐξέβαλεν τὸν Ἀδάμ ὅτι γῆ εἶ καὶ εἰς γῆν ἀπελεύσει	וַיִּקַּח וַיִּתֵּן וַיִּתֵּן וַיִּתֵּן וַיִּתֵּן וַיִּתֵּן וַיִּתֵּן

Table 9: The impermanence of the visible and the eternity of the invisible

The difficulties Adam and Eve would have to face after their disobedience in fact were their “thorns and thistles” (Gen 3:18). Adam fixed his eyes on τὰ βλεπόμενα “what is seen,” which would be the cause of humanity’s problems. Soon God too would become part of the realities μὴ βλεπόμενα “that are unseen.” Adam hides and starts the process of coexisting with “what is seen” (Gen 3:8, 10). Then God expels Adam and Eve from the garden and God himself becomes part of “what is unseen” (Gen 3:23–24). However, invisible things became αἰώνια “eternal” and valid. The rest, namely, creation, would become part of the visible, that gradually and inevitably would wear out, that is, πρόσκαιρα “temporary,” until the death of the human creature, “for dust you are and to dust you will return” (Gen 3:19).

In Psalms, this image of what is unseen, invisible or absent, is repeated. God seems to be hidden in times of affliction: “Why, O LORD, do you stand far off? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble [θλίψις]?” (Ps 10:1 [MT], 9:22 LXX). As in the after Eden world, God became invisible to Adam and Eve: “Why do you hide your face, and forget our affliction, and oppression?” (Ps 43:25). The burden of pain and worries Adam received, “thorns and thistles” (Gen 3:16–20), seemed excessive but in reality became a defense against sin: “You brought us into prison and laid burdens [θλίψεις] on our back” (Ps 66:11). Paul uses this contrast between the seen and unseen to describe the temporary nature of the visible existence marked by sin, as opposed to the eternal permanence of the unseen.

NIV	NT	OT	LXX	MT
5:1 Now we know that if the <i>earthly tent</i> we live in is destroyed, we have a <i>building</i> from God, an <i>eternal house</i> in heaven, not built by <i>human hands</i> .	Οἶδαμεν γὰρ ὅτι ἐὰν ἡ ἐπίγειος ἡμῶν οἰκία τοῦ σκήνους καταλυθῆ, οἰκοδομῆν ἐκ θεοῦ ἔχομεν, οἰκίαν ἀχειροποίητον αἰώνιον ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς.	Gen 2:7 Gen 3:19	ἀκάνθας καὶ τριβόλους ἀνατελεῖ ὅτι γῆ εἶ και εἰς γῆν ἀπελεύσῃ	וַיֵּצֵא יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶת-הָאָדָם מֵעֵדֶן מִדְּבַר מִדְּבָר כִּי-עָפָר אֲתָה וְעָפָר תֵּשֹׁב

Table 10: The message will remain

Paul reinforces his message by using metaphors, such as dust, earth and tent, to contrast the power of God with human frailty. The power of the gospel definitely resides within unattractive fragile containers. Paul does not consider himself a super apostle. Although proponents of popular religion would expect him to display intense emotions, and be vigorously eloquent, he is unconcerned in pleasing them. Paul knows he is a mortal instrument in the hand of God³⁴ and that is, the glory of the gospel. He understands that he is a mortal preacher, given that he himself is part of all human beings on which there rests the sentence, “dust you are and to dust you will return” (Gen 3:19). Nevertheless, he preaches a valuable and eternal message.

Genesis 1 and 2 do not actually state that God created the first human being with his hands although Ps 119:73 expresses this thought: “Your hands made me and you formed me;” as well as, “It is he who made us and we are his” (Ps 100:3). Paul mentions the “earthly dwelling,” or “tabernacle,” referring to the fragile and mortal preachers of the gospel. Although the earthly dwelling or tent breaks and returns to dust, God has “a building, an eternal house in heaven not built by human hands.” Although all the earthly, visible, or temporary, disappears or decomposes, God has set aside a dwelling in heaven not made by human hands. This is an allusion to the resurrection of the body, the total being, as understood by a rabbi like Paul. The messenger can disappear but the message will remain. There is a promise of eternal life for the messenger even though he momentarily has to return to dust from which he came.

³⁴ Allan C. Thompson, “2 Corinthians 4:6–9,” *RevExp* 94 (1997): 456–57, argues that Genesis mentions that humanity was created from the dust of earth and this is what keeps things in place. It is an ironic reminder to those who raise pastors to the category of semi-gods or for ministers that have exaggerated egos.

NIV	NT	OT	LXX	MT
5:2 Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling...	καὶ γὰρ ἐν τούτῳ στενάζομεν τὸ οἰκητήριον ἡμῶν τὸ ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ἐπενδύσασθαι ἐπιποθοῦντες	Gen 2:25	καὶ ἦσαν οἱ δύο γυμνοὶ ὁ τε Ἀδάμ καὶ ἡ γυνὴ αὐτοῦ καὶ οὐκ ἵσχύοντο	אָדָם וְחַוְּוָה לֵבָשׁוֹת לְבָשׁוּ

Table 11: The end of pain

The “groaning” is a typical image Paul uses to describe the yearning for the final redemption of the body, the “earthly dwelling” (Rom 8:23), when once and for all the “heavenly dwelling” will be attained. Because of sin humanity suffers the pain and burdens that God put on humanity (Gen 3:14–24) and longs as soon as possible to be clothed with eternity and leave at last the uncertainty of mortality. The intertextual connection is expressed in contrasting the tragedy of groaning, which is a product of the tragedy first produced in Eden, with the benefits of being “clothed with our heavenly dwelling.”³⁵

NIV	NT	OT	LXX	MT
5:3 ...because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked.	εἴ γε καὶ ἐκδυσάμενοι οὐ γυμνοὶ εὐρεθησόμεθα	Gen 2:25 Gen 3:21	καὶ ἦσαν οἱ δύο γυμνοὶ καὶ ἐνέδυσεν αὐτούς	אָדָם וְחַוְּוָה לֵבָשׁוֹת לֵבָשׁוֹת

Table 12: Better clothed than naked

In the beginning, Adam and Eve were “naked” and they did not feel ashamed (Gen 2:25). After following the suggestions of the serpent, Adam felt he was naked. His sin gave him the consciousness of nakedness.³⁶ Because of this realization he was afraid and, together with Eve, they clothed themselves with leaves to hide from the presence of God. They disguised themselves, thus distorting the image that both had of God (Gen 3:7, 10, 11).³⁷ By using the imagery of the Eden nakedness, and understanding the tragedy it implied, Paul exhorts the Corinthians to be “found dressed, and not naked,” that is, without fear in the presence of God on the day of judgment. This is a subject he mentions here but which will reappear in the conclusion of this section later in v. 10. In the same way that God made gar-

³⁵ By employing the participle “clothed” Paul anticipates the contrast between “clothed” and “naked” that will be the subject of the next verse.

³⁶ Paul sees it from the point of view of the OT. Adam is naked after sin according to Joseph Osei-Bonsu, “Does 2 Cor 5:1–10 Teach the Reception of the Resurrection Body at the Moment of Death?,” *JSNT* 28 (1986): 92.

³⁷ Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15* (WBC 1; Waco: Word, 1990), 84.

ments for Adam and Eve so that they would not be sent from the garden naked and unprotected, Paul hopes to be dressed and not found naked (Gen 3:21).

Paul implies that the gospel that he preaches will help avoid the situation of condemnation experienced by Adam and Eve. The gospel covers us with divine justice and there is no possibility of any accusation or feeling naked in the presence of God.³⁸ This is the guarantee and security we have, which enables us to calmly face the prospect of standing in God's presence. The voice of God on the day of judgment will not be threatening, as it was to Adam and Eve, for those who have accepted Paul's gospel.

NIV	NT	OT	LXX	MT
5:4 For while we are in <i>this tent</i> , we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be <i>unclothed</i> but to be <i>clothed</i> with our <i>heavenly dwelling</i> , so that what is <i>mortal</i> may be swallowed up by <i>life</i> .	καὶ γὰρ οἱ ὄντες ἐν τῷ σκίνητι στενάζομεν βαρούμενοι, ἐφ' ᾧ οὐ θέλομεν ἐκδύσασθαι ἀλλ' ἐπενδύσασθαι, ἵνα καταποθῆ τὸ θνητὸν ὑπὸ τῆς ζωῆς.	Gen 2:17 Gen 3:19 Gen 2:7	θανάτῳ ἀποθανεῖσθε ὅτι γῆ εἶ και εἰς γῆν ἀπελεύση καὶ ἐγένετο ὁ ἄνθρωπος εἰς ψυχὴν ζώσαν	מות תמות פִּרְעָר אֶתָּה וְאֶל־פִּרְעָר תִּשׁוּב וְיְהִי הָאָדָם לְנֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה

Table 13: So that the mortal will be clothed by the life

The concepts of 2 Cor 5:2-3 repeat themselves. "Groan" and "undressed" once again form images of the "mortal" and temporary while "dressed" and the joy of obtaining the "heavenly dwelling" are related to "life" and the eternal. Paul does not wish the sad experience of the nakedness that Adam and Eve went through to be repeated. Neither does he want the mortal to dominate in our human experience. The intertextuality is given here by the invocation of images of nakedness and mortality taken from Gen 1-3.

³⁸ "Naked" does not refer to the immortal state of the soul. It refers to a common vocabulary of the OT, especially in Gen 3. Besides, Paul, being Hebrew, cannot conceive life without a body. He does not seem to be referring to a non physical life after death. See Karel Hanhart, "Paul's Hope in the Face of Death," *JBL* 88 (1969): 447-50.

NIV	NT	OT	LXX	MT
5:5 Now it is God who has made us for this very purpose and has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.	ὁ δὲ κατεργασάμενος ἡμᾶς εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο θεός, ὁ δούς ἡμῖν τὸν ἄρραβῶνα τοῦ πνεύματος.	Gen 2:7 Gen 1:2	καὶ ἔπλασεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν ἄνθρωπον χούν ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς καὶ... καὶ πνεῦμα θεοῦ ἐπεφέρετο	וַיֵּצֵר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶת-הָאָדָם אֶת-הָאָדָם חָיָה מִן-הָאָדָם וַיִּתֵּן אֵלָיו מִן-רוּחַ יְהוָה וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת-הָאָדָם כְּחַיָּה מִן-הָאָדָם

Table 14: Crossing from mortality to eternity by the Spirit

The Spirit was actively involved in the creation. As the Spirit organized the creation and gave life to all human beings (Gen 1:2; 2:7), likewise he will give power to the bearer of the message and will give eternal life to the one who waits and preaches. As in Genesis, the Spirit is present and in this case functions as τὸν ἄρραβῶνα “the warranty” for the change from mortality to eternity.

NIV	NT	OT	LXX	MT
5:6–9 ...Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. We live by faith, not by sight. We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it...	ὅτι ἐνδημοῦντες ἐν τῷ σώματι ἐκδημοῦμεν ἀπὸ τοῦ κυρίου... ἀρροῦμεν δὲ καὶ εὐδοκοῦμεν μᾶλλον ἐκδημησῆσαι ἐκ τοῦ σώματος καὶ ἐνδημησῆσαι πρὸς τὸν κύριον. διὸ καὶ φιλοτιμούμεθα, εἴτε ἐνδημοῦντες εἴτε ἐκδημοῦντες, εὐάρεστοι αὐτῷ εἶναι.	Gen 3:8 Gen 3:10 Gen 3:23 Gen 3:24	καὶ ἐκρύβησαν ὁ τε Ἀδάμ καὶ ἡ γυνὴ αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ προσώπου κυρίου τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἐκρύβην καὶ ἐξαπέστειλεν αὐτὸν κύριος ὁ θεὸς ἐκ τοῦ παραδείσου καὶ ἐξέβαλεν τὸν Ἀδάμ	וַיִּתְּנָהּ אֱלֹהִים מִפְּגַי הַיָּהוָה וַיִּתְּנָהּ אֱלֹהִים מִפְּגַי הַיָּהוָה וַיִּתְּנָהּ אֱלֹהִים מִפְּגַי הַיָּהוָה וַיִּתְּנָהּ אֱלֹהִים מִפְּגַי הַיָּהוָה וַיִּתְּנָהּ אֱלֹהִים מִפְּגַי הַיָּהוָה

Table 15: In the body but absent from the LORD

Adam and Eve remained “absent” from the LORD because they had hidden from the heavenly presence (Gen 3:7, 8, 10) and consequently were expelled from God’s presence (Gen 3:23, 24). As a result the human race lost the possibility of experiencing the visible presence of God. In the last visible encounter with God, Adam and Eve heard God’s declaration of judgment as well as the consequences that they would have to face because they had accepted the serpent’s suggestions (Gen 3:14–24). The only positive memory

was the future promise of redemption (Gen 3:15).³⁹ Now, by the gospel the apostle preaches the believer can move from the situation of faith, “not by sight,” to one of actual presence before God, when “the mortal will put on immortality,” when “the earthly dwelling” will be clothed with the “heavenly dwelling,” when “the unseen” will become the eternally visible, and when the “absent” will become the eternally “present.” This is, however, not yet the current situation but rather functions as an eschatological kind of reference. The story reveals the melancholy of the “mortification” of the present time in this “tabernacle,” with references to a menacing subjective situation. Paul yearns for the promised “heavenly dwelling,” “a building, a house not built by human hands,” an eternal property that will be made effective at the time of the eternal return to the presence of God.

NIV	NT	OT	LXX	MT
5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.	τοὺς γὰρ πάντας ἡμᾶς φανερωθῆναι δεῖ ἔμπροσθεν τοῦ βήματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἵνα κομίσῃται ἕκαστος τὰ διὰ τοῦ σώματος πρὸς ἃ ἔπραξεν, εἴτε ἀγαθὸν εἴτε φαῦλον.	Gen 2:7 Gen 3:6	καὶ ἔπλασεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν ἄνθρωπον χοῦν ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς καὶ... καὶ εἶδεν ἡ γυνὴ ὅτι καλὸν τὸ ξύλον εἰς βρωσιν	וְהָיָה מִתְּדַבֵּר וְהָיָה וְהָיָה כִּי תִשָּׂא הָאָדָמָה לֶמְצֶלֶת עֵץ הַיָּדָע וְאָכְלָהּ

Table 16: *Appear before the court of Christ*

Paul’s declaration makes reference to a judgment. Genesis 3, due to the circumstances presented in the text, also invokes a scene of judgment.⁴⁰ God arrives in the garden and looks for Adam and Eve. He calls them and they do not appear. They hide from his presence. An implicit relation between hearing and judgment is established.⁴¹ They prefer not to hear because previously they have not heard the word of God but have chosen to obey a

³⁹ From Irenaeus onwards, the promise is usually referred to as “proto-gospel.” See Derek Kidner, *Genesis: An Introduction and Commentary* (TOTC 1; Leicester: InterVarsity, 1976), 70, and Voth, *Genesis*, 92.

⁴⁰ Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1–17* (NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 203, suggests that Gen 3 should be understood as a trial scene. Likewise, Claus Westermann, *Genesis: A Practical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 24–28, suggests that Gen 3:8–24 describes a scene denoting a legal process of universal character that follows these steps: identification of the guilty, exposition of accusations, defense, and sentence.

⁴¹ Kenneth T. Aitken, “עָמַשׁ,” *NIDOTTE* 4:177–79.

different voice.⁴² Adam and Eve know they have disobeyed God and now face an unexpected, unwanted situation. There is undoubtedly a close relation between hearing and judgment. Since the voice of God is not heard, a judgment for Adam and Eve is pronounced. Generally in Scripture, if the voice or commandments of God are not heard, judgment follows, as in the case of Pharaoh who did not hear or obey the celestial order to let the Israelites go out of Egypt (Exod 6:6; 7:4). Later Israel too would encounter hardship and judgment as a result of not hearing the commandments of God (Neh 9:29). So, who is heard or obeyed is what causes judgment. Adam and Eve heard the serpent, and obeyed it. This act provoked a judgment and a sentence. They were expelled from the garden and the presence of God. Paul preaches the gospel that must be heard and obeyed.⁴³ There is no other gospel. If anything else was presented as such it would fall into the category of false wisdom as proposed by the serpent (2 Cor 4:2). While there may still be some doubts, according to Paul, everything will finally be clarified in Christ's court. Verse 10 is, undoubtedly, an eschatological declaration.⁴⁴ In this passage, the apostle raises Christ to the category of Judge, a known image from Dan 7:10–14 and 26 and John 5:22–27. The good and bad done in the body will be judged by Christ. Paul's preaching and that of his adversaries will finally be judged in heaven's court. Then it will be known who was sent by God (i.e., what jar of clay), and which gospel (i.e., what treasure) was the message from heaven.

4. Bringing It All Together

In summary then, section 4:1–5:10 describes Paul's defense of his ministry before the Corinthians against other un-named individuals who consider themselves super apostles. The links to Gen 1–3 are easily recognizable and generally appear as comparisons. Paul does not develop a typological parallelism so the type-antitype synopsis is not perceived. The apostle does not

⁴² שָׁמַע "hear" also means "obey," and it is precisely this disobedience to the divine word or the commandments of God that provokes the heavenly trial. See Luis Alonso Schökel, *Diccionario Bíblico Hebreo-Español* (Madrid: Trotta, 1994), 776.

⁴³ L. Monsengwo Pasinya maintains that the command of the creation of all things (according to the story of Gen 1) by God's words is in direct relation with the intention of the text to generate trust in the promises of God. Commandments and promises are part of the same synopsis. See L. Monsengwo Pasinya, "Le cadre littéraire de Genèse 1," *Bib 57* (1976) : 239–40. Even though the couple was expelled from Eden, the hope of the posterior promises of the Word remains. Paul faces the opposition to his ministry and gospel, but the promise of God of holding him will be fulfilled as well as the initial order of preaching the gospel.

⁴⁴ Joseph Plevnik, "The Destination of the Apostle and of the Faithful: Second Corinthians 4:13b–14 and First Thessalonians 4:14," *CBQ* 62 (2000): 93.

work at the level of an allegory either, so he is not obliged to transform all elements from Genesis into prototypes for his exposition. The use he does make of Genesis does not enter into the category of a simile. In other words, Paul does not say: that is like this. Though at times the verbal images used are explicit and direct, in general, the correspondence is mostly implicit, indirect and metaphorical. Paul discusses the issues involved in a figurative rather than literal way because of the situation that Paul finds himself in with regard to the Corinthians and the other super apostles.

For example, Paul figuratively includes himself as part of the light; his accusers are part of the shadows. He proceeds openly as Christ did during the creation; the super apostles proceed in a covert way as did the serpent in Eden. Paul says he is like the clay of a potter, fragile and breakable; as movable as a tent and prone to erosion; an earthly dwelling, contingent and temporary, nevertheless, he obtains the power to develop his ministry in God. The super apostles are fed from out of their own knowledge and vainglory, as the insurrectionist main character of Eden. Note some indirect links that can be found in the text in the following Table 17:

The Corinthians	Adam and Eve
The super apostles	The serpent
Jars of clay	Human being created from the dust of the ground
The death and life of Jesus, the contingency of the preachers of the gospel	Death appears in Gen 3
The outwardly human being	Adam after his disobedience
The inwardly human being	Adam before his disobedience
The things that we have seen	The presence of God before disobedience
The things that are not seen	The absence of God after disobedience

Table 17: Indirect links

Table 18 shows direct links:

Christ's image	God's image in humanity
The light of the gospel	The light of the first day of creation
Incredulity and the lack of knowledge	Darkness
Jesus	YHWH
Concepts related to death and life	The creation of life and the entrance of death due to disobedience
Spirit of faith	Spirit
Naked	Adam and Eve's nakedness and feeling not ashamed
This tent, earthly tent, this body	Humanity created in God's image and under the consequences of sin
Heavenly dwelling; house in heaven, not built by human hands	Adam and Eve before disobedience
Naked as without eternity	Adam and Eve after their disobedience

Clothed or re-clothed	Adam and Eve clothed by God after their disobedience
Absent	Adam and Eve separated from God's presence
Present	Adam and Eve in the presence of God
The judgment seat of Christ	Judgment scene in Eden after disobedience

Table 18: Direct links

Paul seems to have included a specific way of presenting verbal images and reverses Genesis motives. In Genesis, the movement is toward tragedy and in 2 Corinthians it is toward hope. The contrast can be noted in Table 19:

From lie	To truth
From darkness	To the light of the gospel
From a jar of clay soon to be broken	To a recipient with a treasure inside
From death	To life
From losing heart	To complete renovation
From the outer man	To the inner man
From the unseen things	To the visible things
From the earthly tabernacle, dwelling or mortal body	To a building, a heavenly dwelling, house in heaven not built by human hands
From perpetual pain	To the life plenty of joy and peace
From a state of nakedness	To a state where one is clothed by the power of God
From being absent from the LORD	To living in the presence of the LORD
From believing by sight	To believing by faith
From accusation	To complete absolution
From sin	To justice

Table 19: From tragedy to hope

Some significant contrasts can be observed in Paul's statements including the ones indicated in Table 20:

God	↔	Serpent
Light	↔	Darkness
Hear	↔	Not Hear
Obedience	↔	Disobedience
Peace	↔	Tragedy
Life	↔	Death
Clothed	↔	Naked
Interior	↔	Exterior
Eternal	↔	Limited
Seen	↔	Unseen
Heavenly	↔	Earthly
Visible	↔	Hidden
Glorious	↔	Shameful

Table 20: Paul's contrasts in 2 Cor 4:1-5:10

5. Conclusions

The terminology or verbal expression of 2 Cor 4:1–5:10 is often similar to Genesis. The images, motives and scenery are repeated; making Paul's scriptural story an illustrative story, referential, as an echo of the story of Genesis. Paul goes beyond the verbal images, the scenery of Eden and the situation of Gen 1–3 to use this as a formal tool of content in order to thematically develop the defense of his ministry and the vindication of his gospel. While the situations are similar or often parallel, the contextual framework of the two sections differ. The story of Genesis is comparable to the reality the apostle and the Corinthians find themselves in. There is no precise historical correspondence but there is a similarity of situations that Paul takes advantage of to build his argument. In fact, the linguistic correspondence with Genesis is used to give scriptural authority to his presentation. Genesis 1–3 is not directly quoted as in Ps 116:10 but it is present throughout almost all the presentation. On this literary thematic and theological level the phenomenon of intertextuality between 2 Cor 4:1–5:10, Gen 1–3 and other passages of the MT is present.