

THE RELATION BETWEEN THE DESTINY OF HUMANKIND AND THAT OF CREATION ACCORDING TO ROMANS 8,18-23

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Abstract. The first part of this article focuses on the rationality of creation which is given in the supreme Reason that is the Logos, the Son of God. This truth seems to be clearly pointed out in the Epistle to the Colossians: “For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him” (1,16). In this common basis of all creation the Apostle Paul views the reason of the interdependency between the destiny of human beings and that of the environing nature. The Epistle to the Romans is the only one where Paul admirably develops this thought (8,18-23). In the analysis of this paragraph I have especially insisted on the idea that all creation is awaiting the redemption of our bodies. “Redemption” shares with “adoption” and many others terms in Paul the “already-not yet” tension that pervades his theology, for the redemption can be pictured both as past (Eph 1,7; Col 1,14; Rom 3,24; and 1Cor 1,30) and as future (Eph.1,14; 4,30). As Paul has hinted in Rom 8,10, it is not until the body has been transformed that redemption can be said to be completed; in this life, our bodies share in that “frustration” which characterizes this world as a whole. That means that our redemption is the redemption of all creation as well. We have to recognise here the universal, cosmological aspect of our salvation as an explicit Pauline feature of his Soteriology.

Keywords: Epistle to the Romans, Creation, Supreme Reason, Logos, interdependence, destiny, redemption, nature, adoption, responsibility.

1. Preliminaries: The Supreme Reason and the Creation’s Reason to Be

One of the major questions that have always troubled man has been whether there is a relation or interdependence between his own destiny and that of the creation, of the nature he lives in, or whether he has a responsibility in the process of the creation’s advance towards reaching its ultimate aim. However, the question may be expressed in a different manner: is there a connection of interdependence between man’s destiny and that of the creation? The answer to these questions is obviously positive and strongly supported and motivated by the Holy Scriptures.

The basis of the solidarity between man’s destiny and that of creation is found in the Creator Logos, and later within the embodied Word of God. God has placed a sense and a reason of being within every reality, and the reasons of all things are closely connected to the supreme Reason, the Word or Logos of the Father.

The author of the Fourth Gospel clearly states that the world was created through the divine Logos, who is none other than the Son of God, Jesus Christ: “through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been