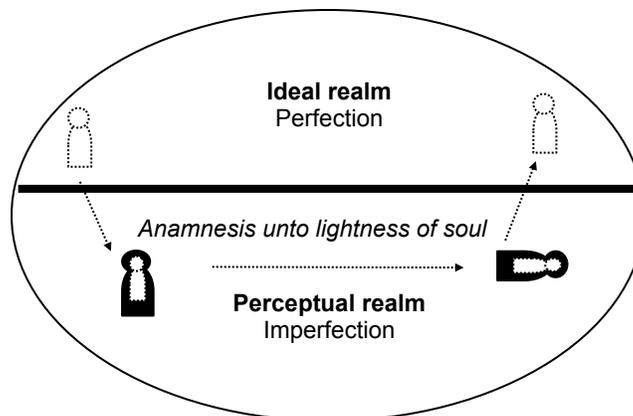


I. GREEK WORLDVIEW: HUMAN NATURE

- A. Socrates – human nature is composed of a body and an immortal soul (pre-, present, and post-existence of the soul - Socrates).
- B. Socrates said that souls fell from heaven because they were attracted to matter. Human beings are too concerned with the material realm. The root of our problems lies in the fact that our souls are trapped in filthy, imperfect material bodies.
- C. Philosophy=preparation for death (Socrates). Thinking and meditating (*anamnesis*) on the eternal forms – Goodness, Truth, Beauty – helps to free us from the evils associated with the body. Need to get our mind away from the physical. If we get our minds off of the physical enough in this life, our soul will become light enough to float back to the ideal realm at death, when body and soul are separated. If our souls haven't become light enough, then a reincarnation will occur and the soul will once again get trapped in the body. If you keep your minds on this world, your soul can't escape.

Diagram 3: Philosophy as Preparation for Death



- D. Plato – order discovered through reasoning; good education the key to ensuring order and helping us discover our function
- E. The human body is inherently bad, evil, temporal, imperfect, a source of imperfection. The soul is thought to be *trapped* in the body, and this leads to disorder.
- F. Death is the separation of the body from the soul. Therefore, death is a friend, freeing us from the encumbrances of imperfection. We must prepare for death through philosophy so that we won't have to be trapped again. (Socrates)
- G. Platonic thought– general distrust and contempt of the body
- H. Negative feelings toward the body and things having to do with the body. For some, this worldview provides a greenhouse for self-righteousness in context to the harsh treatment of the body; for others, a greenhouse for immorality springing from the divorce of spirituality from the bodily existence. I can be “spiritual” regardless of what I do with my body.

***For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.* (ESV 2Cor. 5:10)**

II. BIBLICAL/HEBRAIC WORLDVIEW: HUMAN NATURE

- A. According to Scripture, human beings are constituted of an “inner man” (soul, mind, emotions; spirit) and “outer man” (our bodies). This pattern is similar to that of the tabernacle (outer court/tent) and (Holy Place—the bread of presence, the lamp-stand, the altar of incense; Holy of Holies—the ark, Shekinah glory of the Spirit).

***that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man* (NKJV Eph. 3:16)**

***¹³ I think it is right to refresh your memory as long as I live in the tent of this body, ¹⁴ because I know that I will soon put it aside, as our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me.* (NIV 2 Pet. 1:13-14)**

- B. Spirituality does not exclude materiality, and “spiritual” does not equal “immaterial” (though often the activity of the Spirit is invisible, though not always intangible.)

***²⁸ Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise. ²⁹ At that time the son born in the ordinary way persecuted the son born by the power of the Spirit.* (NIV Gal. 4:28-29)**

- C. Human bodies as part of the creation are good, and were originally in a state of perfection.

***God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.* (NIV Gn. 1:31)**

- D. Enjoyment of life in context to bodily existence and interaction with the created environment.

***Then God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food”* (NIV Gen. 1:29)**

- E. Death a punishment and consequence for disobedience and an enemy to be thwarted by God

***¹⁵ The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. ¹⁶ And the Lord God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; ¹⁷ but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (rebellious exercise of will—disobedience), for when you eat (violate the command) of it you will surely die” (death of the body the consequence and punishment of the violation).* (NIV Gn. 2:15–17)**

***²¹ The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them. ²² And the LORD God said, “The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.” ²³ So the LORD God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken.* (NIV Gen. 3:21-23)**

***For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death.* (NIV 1 Cor. 15:25–26)**

- F. Grief, sadness, and mourning when loved ones die

¹Sarah lived to be a hundred and twenty-seven years old. ²She died at Kiriath Arba (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan, and Abraham went to mourn for Sarah and to weep over her (NIV Gen. 23:1-2)

G. Implications for the Gospel

1. *Greek Worldview/Christo-Platonism*: Salvation= Death, unto the immortal soul's "release" into the "ideal" or "intelligible realm." Death is the means of accessing the solution, therefore death is a friend. Absence from the corrupt, physical realm. Immortal soul living in the "ideal realm."
2. *Christo-Platonism*: Salvation= When I die, my soul "flying away" and escaping to my final destiny in an abstract, ethereal, intangible place called "heaven," to float on a cloud with a harp forever.
3. *Biblical Worldview*: Salvation=resurrection of the flesh at the Second Coming, up from the grave in power and immortality (!), as the commencement of the restoration of the entire creation.

Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have. (NIV Lk. 24:39)

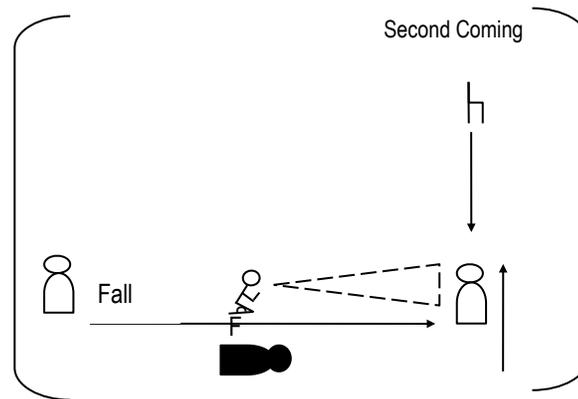
²⁰ But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹ For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. ²² For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. ²³ But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him. (NIV 1 Cor. 15:20-23)

...the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body. (NIV Php. 3:20b-21)

¹⁸ I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. ¹⁹ The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. (in the resurrection at the Second Coming). ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. ²² We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. ²³ Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴ For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently. (NIV Rom. 8:18-25)

But your dead will live; their bodies will rise. You who dwell in the dust, wake up and shout for joy. Your dew is like the dew of the morning; the earth will give birth to her dead. (NIV Is. 26:19)

Diagram 4: Biblical Hope of Resurrection



H. Tim Warner

“The idea of a heavenly destiny was common in the first century among pagans schooled in Greek philosophy. It entered Christianity gradually, after the deaths of the Apostles, through the incorporation of elements of Gnosticism. The Gnostics taught that matter was evil, and the creation was a mistake, made by a lesser god who sought to imprison mankind in physical bodies, and demand their worship. Christian Gnosticism held that Jesus came from the supreme God to free mankind from this evil physical realm, in which he had been trapped by the lesser god whom the Jews worshipped. Jesus’ mission was to show mankind the way to a higher heavenly reality (not atone for sins). Salvation was attained through levels of ‘gnosis’ (the Greek word for ‘knowledge’). Through the attainment of supernatural knowledge of various mysteries, converts were supposed to advance through stages (helped along the way by certain spirit guides) until one reached the ‘pleroma,’ the Gnostics’ version of ‘heaven.’ Since the material world was evil, Gnostics denied the resurrection of the body as well. Being freed from the bonds of earth and the material cosmos, so they could soar into the heavens, was the hope of the Gnostics.”¹

I. Irenaeus and Tertullian

1. *Irenaeus* – “For as it is God truly who raises up man, so also does man truly rise from the dead, and not allegorically, as I have shown repeatedly. And as he rises actually, so also shall he be actually disciplined beforehand for incorruption, and shall go forwards and flourish in the times of the kingdom, in order that he may be capable of receiving the glory of the Father. Then, when all things are made new, he shall truly dwell in the city of God. For it is said, “He that sitteth on the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And the Lord says, Write all this; for these words are faithful and true. And He said to me, They are done.” And this is the truth of the matter.”²
2. *Tertullian* – “These are ‘the doctrines’ of men and ‘of demons’ produced for itching ears of the spirit of this world’s wisdom ... Indeed heresies are themselves instigated by philosophy. From this source came the Aeons, and I know not what infinite forms, and the trinity of

¹ Tim Warner, “Origins of the Heavenly Destiny Concept: Greek Mysticism and Gnosticism,” The Pristine Faith Restoration Society <<http://www.pfrs.org/pd/06.html>> (accessed December 2008).

² Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, Bk. V. ch. XXXV.

man in the system of Valentinus, who was of Plato's school. From the same source came Marcion's better god, with all his tranquility; he came of the Stoics. Then, again, the opinion that the soul dies is held by the Epicureans; while the denial of the restoration of the body is taken from the aggregate school of all the philosophers; also, when matter is made equal to God, then you have the teaching of Zeno; and when any doctrine is alleged touching a god of fire, then Heraclitus comes in. The same subject-matter is discussed over and over again by the heretics and the philosophers; the same arguments are involved ... Unhappy Aristotle! who invented for these men dialectics, the art of building up and pulling down; an art so evasive in its propositions, so far-fetched in its conjectures, so harsh, in its arguments, so productive of contentions—embarrassing even to itself, retracting everything, and really treating of nothing! ... What indeed has Athens to do with Jerusalem? What concord is there between the Academy and the Church? What between heretics and Christians? Our instruction comes from 'the porch of Solomon,' who had himself taught that 'the Lord should be sought in simplicity of heart.' Away with all attempts to produce a mottled Christianity of Stoic, Platonic, and dialectic composition! We want no curious disputation after possessing Christ Jesus, no inquisition after enjoying the gospel! With our faith, we desire no further belief. For this is our palmary faith, that there is nothing which we ought to believe besides."³

³ Tertullian, *Prescription Against Heretics*, ch. VII.