“THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH:"

THE DEATH OF THE SOUL IN GREEK, SECOND TEMPLE JEWISH, AND EARLY CHRISTIAN AUTHORS

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by

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Abstract

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Paul writes, “. . . the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom 6:23). As a skilled rhetorician, Paul would not set as opposites physical death and eternal life, since they are not opposites. Hence, he must have meant some kind of death other than physical death. Where else in first century literature is a different kind of death found? Philo of Alexandria has a well developed theory of death of the soul, defined as that state where a person exists in an ontological state of separation from that which identifies a person as essentially human, namely a life of virtue, producing an intimacy with God. But where did this idea come from?

Chapter 1 is an Introduction which locates Philo’s development of the death of the soul in the work of Heraclitus. This chapter also outlines a division of each subsequent chapter into at least four parts, first isolating the anthropology of each thinker; second, focusing on the meaning of the fullness of life; and subsequently, of its opposite, which is death of the soul. The final focus concentrates on whether such a state of death is irrevocable.
Chapter 2 examines a number of the fragments of Heraclitus. While he does not specifically use the phrase “the death of the soul,” our main inquiry is whether someone who read his fragments could understand them as suggesting such an idea. Further, it is asked if one could understand the fragments as additionally permitting a reversal of such death. The conclusion is that such a reading is possible.

Chapter 3 focuses on the works of Philo of Alexandria, and establishes both how he uses the phrase “death of the soul” and what it means. Does Philo use “death” metaphorically or ontologically? Is the very humanity of a person affected whose soul has died? The evidence indicates that Philo believed that an irrational person became something less than human. Additionally, it was discovered that for Philo, a person who departed from the life of virtue to the extent that he or she had become less than human was not irrevocably condemned to that state, but could recover true human life through repentance.

Chapter 4 concentrates on Paul’s Epistle to the Romans and how each occurrence of the word “death” or its equivalents could be understood. While Paul does not use the phrase “death of the soul,” it was discovered that the notion of “spiritual death” fits many expressions of death in that letter. This notion is shown to be parallel to that of Philo, despite the difference in expression. It is also proposed that Rom 7:14-25 can be understood as the recognition of a moral crisis and a cry for help, the first stage of repentance.

Chapter 5 examines the work of Clement of Alexandria, and shows that he included the expression “the death of the soul” in his work, and what it meant. It was discovered that his usage is coherent with Philo’s usage, and that he interprets Rom 6:23
as expressing the death of the soul, and not physical death. It was also proposed that
Clement visualized death of the soul as something that can be overcome by repentance.

Chapter 6 demonstrates that Origen also included the “death of the soul” in his
theological discussions. Indeed, it appears in a good number of cases, and is used in the
same manner as Clement and Philo. Further, we find that Origen augmented a theory of
repentance by which one could overcome the state of death resulting from vice. In
addition to methods of achieving forgiveness based on New Testament texts, he included
the expression of repentance to a presbyter, and reception of absolution from him.

Chapter 7 summarizes what has been discovered and expresses the long trajectory
of the idea from its incipient use in Heraclitus’ aphorisms to its development in Origen.
I dedicate this work to my wife, Joan.
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CHAPTER 1:

INTRODUCTION

There are two springboards for this dissertation. One is Paul’s statement in Rom 6:23: “. . . the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Some of the more prominent exegetes suggest that the “death” that is being referred to is either unspecified, (assuming physical death), or the physical death that accrued to humankind as the result of Adam’s sin.\(^1\) The other springboard is the work of Philo of Alexandria, who used the term “death” in at least two ways, one involving physical death, and the other meaning the “death of the soul.”\(^2\)

This phrase, “death of the soul,” is one that is surprising in a thinker who was deeply indebted to the Platonic tradition that existed in Alexandria in the form that we call “Middle Platonism.” Plato held to the absolute immortality of the soul,\(^3\) even when such a soul was immersed in evil.\(^4\)


\(^2\) Philo, *Leg.* 1.105-7; *Fug.* 113; *Mut.* 96; *Post.* 73.

\(^3\) Plato, *Timaeus* 69c.

\(^4\) Plato, *Republic*, 610a-611a.
Three questions arise: First, while Paul uses the word “death” in a spectrum of uses, can he be read such that his uses of the word “death” might also mean not only either physical death or metaphorical death, but also the “death of the soul?” Second, did Philo come up with the idea of the “death of the soul” completely by himself, or could this concept be found in the works of some predecessor? Third, does this idea appear in the works of the early fathers of the church, such as Clement of Alexandria and Origen?

It is my hope that the answers to these three questions will be shown to be in the affirmative: that Paul’s letter to the Romans provides evidence that Paul sometimes used the word “death” to imply “spiritual death;” that Philo could have read Heraclitus’ work in such a way that would have promoted the concept of the death of the soul; and finally, that this concept can be found in the work of Clement and Origen. Thus, I shall provide five chapters that will examine the works of Heraclitus, Philo, Paul, Clement, and Origen relative to this idea.

The underlying concept that permits such a study is that ancient writers visualized the existence of a moral struggle in which each person finds herself or himself. There is a conflict between lofty ethical standards and the forces of bodily desires and pleasures that must be resolved by each person. If a person chooses to live his or her life in accordance with such high ethical standards, he or she achieves the summit of what it means to be human. However, if one fails in this struggle and follows the path of pleasure and physical desires, then there is an unhappy consequence, sometimes characterized by Heraclitus, Philo, Clement and Origen as “death of the soul,” and by Paul as “death” being the opposite of “life in the spirit.”
The expression “death of the soul” has been recognized by at least two people in recent years. First, Dieter Zeller identified and analyzed the concept as it exists in Philo’s work in an article in the *Studia Philonica Annual* of 1995. In this article, he dealt with the death of the soul a metaphor. He identifies the moral struggle as the conflict between rationality or rule of the mind and the forces of irrationality, or rule of the senses. He proceeds to identify the various places where Philo deals with this concept and demonstrates completely that Philo did, indeed, understand the death of the soul as the product of a life of wickedness. Zeller then asks about the origin of such a notion, and focuses on several fragments of Heraclitus, 47 M (62 DK), 66 M (36 DK) and 76 M (96 DK). In Frag. 47 M, Zeller points out that in the Pythagorean-Platonic tradition, attested also by Numenius and Sextus Empiricus, the second part is rendered autonomous... (but Philo says) souls are said to die by assuming a body; they lose their spiritual quality which is set free again by bodily death. Philo is the first known exponent of this interpretation.

Zeller continues to describe the probable presence of Fragments 66 M and 76 M in Philo’s work.

Zeller then moves to identify the Platonic images of the soul being entombed in the body arising out of *Cratylus* 400C and in *Phaedo* 77C-81A, 91D. Further, he

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7 “Immortals are mortals, mortals are immortals; for (the former) live the death of the latter, and (would) die their life”
8 “For souls it is death to become water, for water it is death to become earth; but out of earth water comes-to-be, and out of water, soul.”
9 “Corpses are more fit to be cast out than dung.”
acknowledges the Platonic source of Philo’s idea of the happy life in accordance with virtue as being “true life.”\textsuperscript{12}

Zeller concludes his analysis by reviewing the “living and dead in popular philosophy,” and concludes that the idea of death as a lack of education, or lack of virtue existed in Greek and Jewish tradition, as well as in the Jewish and Christian traditions regarding conversion.

As a conclusion, Zeller suggests that Philo is the first person who uses the metaphor of death of the soul “in a systematic correlation of mind, soul and body,”\textsuperscript{13} using it in a moral sense as influenced by popular philosophy. He also suggests that this use is “rather original,”\textsuperscript{14} but rooted in traditional Jewish piety.

While Zeller does an excellent job of identifying the central Philonic elements of this idea, he typifies Philo’s use as metaphoric. Aristotle speaks of metaphor in his \textit{Rhetoric}, as a kind of “carrying” of one meaning to another. “A word in its prevailing and native meaning and metaphor are alone useful in the \textit{lexis} of prose.”\textsuperscript{15} “Metaphor” is defined by David Aune as “a trope in which a word, group of words, or a sentence is used to stand for something different from the literal reference but is linked to it by some perceived similarity.”\textsuperscript{16} Galen Rowe discusses metaphor as a subdivision of a “trope,” (a manner of speaking) and defines it as a “word or phrase literally denoting one kind of

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{12} \textit{Ibid.} 48.
\item \textsuperscript{13} \textit{Ibid.} 55.
\item \textsuperscript{14} \textit{Ibid.}
\end{itemize}
object or idea but used in place of another in such a way that it suggests a likeness or an analogy between them.”

This word is also analyzed carefully in a complete section in *the New Rhetoric* by Ch. Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca. These authors visualize “metaphor” as an argumentative technique, and as a development of the rhetorical technique of “allegory.” The essence of all the above analyses is that at there is a pre-existing meaning of a word which is then carried (phoros) over to elucidate a different referent. The examples given include expressions such as a “heart of stone,” or quoting Aristotle, “as old age is to life, so is evening to day.” A central component each analysis is that “metaphor” is seen as a rhetorical technique.

There is a central problem with Zeller’s use of the word “metaphor” as it applies to the “death of the soul.” If the phrase is a metaphor, then Philo would be saying only that lack of virtue is somehow similar (but not exactly) death. Nothing really happens to a person when she or he chooses a life of vice. They are still fully human, although there is something that is similar to death about them. It implies no ontological vector to a life dominated by wickedness. This is one of the places where I will suggest that Philo, Paul, Clement and Origen had a different idea than understanding the death of the soul as a mere metaphor. Sin, however it is defined, has ontological consequences for an individual, and I shall demonstrate that this ontological vector means that a person choosing vice, by eschewing his or her rationality, loses the very characteristic of a

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19  Ibid. 87.
human being, and is better characterized as a non-logical animal. The refusal to act in accordance with reason reduces a person ontologically.

Another scholar who dealt with the death of the soul is Emma Wasserman, who completed a dissertation in 2006 entitled “The Death of the Soul in Romans 7: Sin, Death, and the Law in Light of Hellenistic Moral Psychology.” She argues that Rom 7:7-25 is a depiction of the death of the soul, and that her project focuses on “historicizing Paul’s use of a specific model of moral psychology and on historicizing his use of metaphor and personification. . . .” She proceeds to establish the existence of a Hellenistic moral philosophy that understood a critical element of knowing what one ought to do, but somehow being unable to do it. She distinguishes between akrasia (weakness of will) and akolasia (moral degeneracy), and that the latter is the characteristic both of Paul’s plight described in Rom 7 and Philo’s understanding of the death of the soul. But she continues to suggest that “the death of the soul conveys not actual death or destruction of any part of the soul, but the total domination and enslavement of the good part.” In other words, she agrees with Zeller that the death of the soul is merely metaphorical. She then continues to place Paul’s writing of Rom 7 within a moral discourse characteristic of the Hellenistic world. She carefully and adequately analyzes the characteristics of the relationship of reason, emotion and self

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21 Ibid. 11.

22 Ibid. 13.

23 Ibid. 14.

24 Ibid. 15.
control as postulated in this moral discourse, but does so completely within the
framework of metaphor. She quotes from Dieter Zeller’s article often and acknowledges
her debt to him.

Finally, since she focuses on Rom 7, Wasserman does not deal with Heraclitus as
a potential source for Philo’s notion of the death of the soul, she has no need to trace the
development of the idea of the death of the soul through any of the fathers of the church.

My goal is to utilize both Zeller’s and Wasserman’s work, but within a slightly
different framework. I propose to focus on Heraclitus as a potential source for Philo’s
thought on the death of the soul, describe Philo’s position, how this idea can clarify much
of Paul’s use of the word “death,” and then show how this concept is transmitted into the
early theology of the church as expressed by Clement of Alexandria and Origen. Further,
I hope to show that while a person might die spiritually, its permanence was not
necessarily ascribed. Metanoia, while incipient in Heraclitus, is developed in Philo, Paul,
Clement and Origen as the response to the death that accrues to a person as the result of a
life dominated by the passions. In other words, while some people may choose to live
such a life dominated by the emotions, and while they may in some real sense die, there
is still hope that is offered through repentance.

In order to demonstrate the above, I shall deal with works by Heraclitus, Philo,
Paul, Clement and Origen, and shall impose a heuristic methodology on the texts. I shall
deal with each writer by describing their anthropology, to understand the relationship
between body, soul or spirit. Then, I shall ask what “life” meant for each author, in order
to understand what a fully-developed human being looked like. Third, I shall then attempt
to discover what death of the soul meant for them, in light of the prior two inquiries.
Finally, I ask whether each author included a means whereby an individual who had somehow died (not physically) could be resuscitated or resurrected through repentance.

There are two words that will be used prominently in the following discussion, “life” and “death.” In order to set the stage for what is coming, the following lexical analysis of these two words is provided. It is generally recognized that these two words constitute opposites. Our sources are Liddell and Scott *A Greek-English Lexicon*, Bauer, Danker Arndt and Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, Louw-Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains*; Kittel’s *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, and *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*. The first analysis is “life,” the second, “death.”

1. Lexical Analysis of ζήν and related words implying “life.”

**LSJ**: ζωή: There are two main subdivisions relative to this word: I, that characteristic of animals and plants, and II, “live in the fullest sense.” The first reference under this category is to Xenophon’s *Memorabilia*, 3.3.11, where Socrates refers to a kind of learning that “teaches us how to live” (δι’ ὅν γε ζην ἐπιστάμεθα), clearly referring to a kind of life different than the mere physical. This section continues by referring to life in a “religious or mystical sense,” referring to Rom 7:9.

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25 *LSJ*, ζωή, 758; θάνατος, 784.
26 *BAGD*, ζώο, 336; θάνατος, 350.
29 *EDNT*, ζωό, 2.105-109; θάνατος 2.129-33.
BADG: ζωή The first entry refers to life in the physical sense, or the opposite of θάνατος. The second entry refers to “transcendent life,” being either that of God, or that of the believer. There is specific reference to Philo’s Post. 69, where we find τὸν ἀλόγως βιούντα τῆς θεοῦ ζωῆς ἀπεσχοινίσθαι τὸ μὲν οὖν κατὰ θεὸν ζῆν (“he that lives an irrational life is cut off from the life of God”). There is a multiplicity of entries, such as Rom 8:2, 6 and 10, locating (true) life in the Spirit.

Louw-Nida, Section 23.88 deals with a variety of meanings of ζῶω, ζωή and related terms, pointing out the variety of figurative uses of the words. While “eternal life” is discussed as a qualitatively different kind of life, there is no discussion of qualitatively different ways that “life” can be understood during a person’s time on this earth.

TDNT. Bultmann, ζῶω, etc. Referring to the Hellenistic usage, the author points out that “the actual fulfillment of life is not a natural process,” referring to the Stoic theory that true life is that κατὰ φύσιν ζῆν is κατὰ ἀρετὴ ζῆν. Moving to the realm of Hellenistic Judaism, Bultmann points out that “the idea that true life is attained when life corresponds to a transcendent norm.” He writes further regarding the general NT view that “. . . men who are bound to natural life can be called dead in spite of their natural vitality,” referring to Matt 8:22 and par., and Eph 2:1-5, which will be referred to in our later discussion in the chapter on Clement, where he refers to the same text in Strom. 2.10.47.3-4 and in the chapter on Origen, where he refers to the same text in his Commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians. Bultmann also refers to the Philo quote in

30 Rudolph Bultmann, ζῶω, etc., TDNT 2.832-875.
31 Ibid., 837.
32 Ibid., 858.
Post. 69, referred to in BADG above. As to the use of υἱός in Paul, Bultmann recognizes that πνεῦμα is a gift from God and is received as life in the presence of the preached word. Finally, ςώμα “refers to the fact that we have life only in relation to the divine act of salvation accomplished in Christ.” Thus, the word implies a transcendent state extant in a believer, whose opposite will be seen as “death.”

EDNT, Schottroff: ςώμα occurs in Romans 23 times. “Life” characterizes salvation; for Paul, “life” and “death” are terms to express central soteriological categories…(and) for the concept of “life,” physical death plays only an incidental role.” For Paul, metaphorical uses of life and death stand in the “foreground for soteriological matters.” The author points out that the boundary between metaphorical and non-metaphorical uses is not strict. He does not define “metaphorical” uses. The author exemplifies “life” by comparing it to “death,” which achieves dominion through the power of sin, and refers to the wages it pays (Rom 6:22f). He points out that “anyone who lives in Christ can fulfill the law,” thus providing a standard against which one can evaluate whether or not a person has “life.”

2. Lexical Analysis of θάνατος.

LSJ: There is no mention of anything like “death of the soul.” Only physical death, though “deuterōs thanatos” is referred to in Apoc. 2:11, “no one will be harmed by the

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33 Ibid., 863.
34 Ibid., 867.
35 Ibid., 868.
36 EDNT, 2.106.
37 Ibid.
38 Ibid., 2.107.
second death.” Also Rev 20:6. Also Rev. 20:14, second death in lake of fire; also in 21:18, same.

**BAGD:** The first meaning given to the word θάνατος is the “termination of physical life.” There are two subdivisions of this meaning, natural death and death as a penalty. Within this second category, mention is made of death as being personified. Reference is made to Hosea 13:14 (ἐκ θανάτου λυτρώσομαι αὐτούς ποῦ ἥ δίκη σου θάνατε ποῦ τὸ κέντρον σου), to which Paul alluded in 1 Cor 15:55.

There is another category of θάνατος, where it is “viewed transcendentally in contrast to a living relationship with God.” Reference is made to Philo, as an extension of meaning. Further, this is typified as being “of spiritual death, to which one is subject unless one lives out of the power of God’s grace.” It is the opposite of ζωή. There is a reference to Isaiah 9:1 (LXX): οἱ κατοικοῦντες ἐν χώρᾳ καὶ σκιᾷ θανάτου φῶς λάμψει ἐφ’ ὑμᾶς, “Those who live in the region and in the shadow of death, a light shines upon you.” This was quoted by both Matthew and Luke as being an prefiguring of the mission of Jesus, namely, to go to those who had not heard the good news. While these texts are anachronistic regarding those of Paul, we will see that Paul alludes to something like this. BDAG also includes one other category of θάνατος, where “eternal death” is meant.

While this kind of death is attached to Ro 1:32; 6:16, 21, 23; and 7:5 I shall argue that these verses may be more effectively interpreted in terms of the prior category, “spiritual death.”

**Louw-Nida:** Sec. 23.99 deals with θάνατος and related words. The authors point out that in John 6:50 (this is the bread that comes down from heaven so that one may eat of it and not die) the word “die” must be understood in a spiritual sense rather than in a strictly
literal sense. While they do not deal with “death” in a “spiritual sense” in the Pauline examples, they recognize that there is a “spiritual” sense that can be identified.

**TDNT:** Rudolph Bultmann, θανατός 3. 7-21.

ἀποθνῄσκειν, τέθνηκα, τελευτᾶν are first and foremost used to describe the process of dying; (pres. “to be dying,” aor. “to die,” perf. “to be dead), and θανατός (once τελευτή Matt 2:15, regarding Herod.) Bultmann describes physical death as being that which all humans fear; however, he also describes it as the “consequence and punishment for sin.”39 which Paul described as a “cosmic power.”40 While Bultmann says that “. . . Paul. . . has in view only men who are responsible for their sin and therefore for their death.” He does not ask whether there is a kind of death that is not physical. The only form of life after death that is recognized by Bultmann is that resulting from the resurrection of the dead.

Bultmann also considers ἀθανασία (ἀθανατός), and describes the fact that while the idea of “immortality” appeared in Greek literature from Plato on, its applicability to human beings was debated. He called Plato’s theory a characteristic dogma of his school.41 He says that “naturally ἀθανασία is common in Philo.”42

**EDNT:** W. Bieder 2. 129-133.

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Let us commence the investigation with a discussion of the work of Heraclitus.
CHAPTER 2:
HERACLITUS

In the prior chapter, I offered the reasons for including Heraclitus in the tracing of the trajectory of the idea of the "death of the soul." As I suggested, if Philo was a Middle-Platonist, and Plato insisted at least on the survivability of the soul and rejected its death, how could Philo, his follower, reject that premise? I contend that Philo’s grasp of Heraclitus, along with the possibility of a reading that would have been similar to the reading I am proposing, constitutes the root of Philo’s distinct metaphysics of the soul.

I shall propose a somewhat different reading of the fragments of Heraclitus from those who view Heraclitus solely as a cosmologist. While there is no question that he

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43 There is a great deal of variety in the spelling of this name. I shall use the Americanized "Heraclitus," though if it appears as “Heracleitos” or “Heraclitos" within a quoted text, I shall use the quoted author’s spelling. The pronunciation of this name also has variety, but the Greek clearly marks an accent on the second syllable (Ἡρακλέιτος). The Random House Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language provide “Her-a-clite-us” as its entry. The Merriam Webster dictionary offers the same, with the pronunciation of a long "I" on the penultimate syllable.

44 St. Jerome, De viris illustribus, 11.7.

attempted to come to grips with the nature of the world, he was understood by some in the ancient world who read him as one whose writings were applicable to the understanding of the human person. I shall follow this kind of reading, using the four-step process suggested in the prior chapter. First, I shall describe Heraclitus’ anthropology, attempting to discover how he visualized the composition of the human being. This will involve two aspects: first, what the Λόγος is likely to have meant, and second, how an essential aspect of the human person involves an interior moral discourse. This incorporates the ψυχή as its vehicle and locus, where the question is whether or not to act in a certain manner. Following the anthropological issue, I shall ask what Heraclitus regarded as the deepest form of life available to humans. Then, I shall analyze fragments that lead us to the consequences of a person’s failure to act in accordance with the teachings expressed as the Λόγος. This failure leads to the death of the soul. And finally, we shall ask whether Heraclitus had any concept of a spiritual resurrection that might follow the death of one’s soul. This discussion is a propaedeutic to Philo’s thought, and will set the stage for a discussion of Paul’s perspective as discovered in Romans. Further, we will see the roots both Clement’s and Origen’s perspective on spiritual death. Thus, we will have the following subdivisions of the chapter: 2.1, Heraclitus’ Anthropology, 2.2, “Life” in Heraclitus, 2.3, Death of the Soul in Heraclitus, and 2.4, Restoration of Life after Death.
2.1 Heraclitus’ Anthropology

2.1.1 Difficulties in Interpretation.

The approximate date of the flourishing of Heraclitus is in the 69th Olympiad (504-501). There is little information about his life, except that he lived in Ephesus. There is some possibility that he relinquished the hereditary title of “king” to his younger brother. He refers to Hesiod, Pythagoras, Xenophanes and Hecateus as older or as contemporaries. (16 M, 40 DK).

As an introduction to understanding anything about Heraclitus, there are four elements about Heraclitus’ writings that offer interpretive problems: first, he has historically been described as “obscure.” John Burnet, in his Early Greek Philosophy, writes that “The style of Heracleitos is proverbially obscure, and got him the nickname of ‘the Dark’ in antiquity.” He points out that the epithet ὅ σκοτευνός is of late date and refers to the quotation of Timon of Philious given by Diogenes Laertius in the prior footnote. Second, Heraclitus’ style was highly aphoristic. Authors like Eusebius were not hesitant about quoting extended sections of texts of Greek authors, and Frag. 1 M (1 DK) is by far the longest text we have. Burnet points out that at the time Heraclitus

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46 Kahn, The Art and Thought of Heraclitus, 1.
47 Diogenes Laertius, 96, quoting Timon, “In their midst uprose shrill, cuckoo-like, a mob-reviler, riddling Heraclitus.” (τοῖς δ’ ἐν κοινωνίᾳ, σχιλῶλοι δὸρος Ἡράκλειτος, ὁινυκτὴς ἀνόρουσα). “Mob-reviler” clearly refers to Heraclitus’ lack of approbation for the “common person,” and “riddler” refers to his oracular aphoristic style.
wrote, there was no such thing as a “clear scientific prose style.”\textsuperscript{50} Hence, he could only find metaphorical language to express his new thoughts. Further, Heidegger himself commented on the fragmentary character of Heraclitus’ work; “In my opinion, the distress of the whole Heraclitus interpretation is to be seen in the fact that what we call fragments are not fragments, but citations from a text in which they do not belong. It is a matter of citations out of different passages.”\textsuperscript{51} This is reinforced by A. Dinan in his dissertation on Clement of Alexandria’s use of quotations from Heraclitus, when he discusses the consonance or dissonance of Clement’s argument and Heraclitus’ fragments. “. . . (T)he content of the original edition of Heraclitus’s text remains a matter of speculation.”\textsuperscript{52} Third, he may have used the “oracular” form of expression as a model.\textsuperscript{53} It is clear that he considered himself to be somehow above ordinary mortals.\textsuperscript{54} Further, if we refer to Frag. 14 M (93 DK) we have Heraclitus affirming that, “The Lord whose is the oracle in Delphi neither speaks out nor conceals, but gives sign (ὁ ἀναξ, οὐ τὸ μαντείον ἐστι τὸ ἐν Δελφοῖς, οὔτε λέγει οὔτε κρύπτει ἀλλὰ σημαίνει). This is characteristic of Heraclitus’ fragments. He does not “argue,” does not offer syllogisms or other extended argumentation, but rather provides pithy, thought-provoking statements, whose truth or falsehood can be determined only by careful reflection on the content and

\textsuperscript{50} \textit{Ibid.} 132.

\textsuperscript{51} Martin Heidegger and Eugen Fink, \textit{Heraclitus Seminar} (trans. C. H. Seibert; Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1979), 150.

\textsuperscript{52} A. Dinan, \textit{Fragments in Context: Clement of Alexandria’s use of Quotations from Heraclitus} (Washington: Catholic University of America, 2004), 8.


\textsuperscript{54} \textit{Ibid.} 131; see Frag. 14 M (93 DK) and 6 M (101 DK) extolling the aphoristic character of Delphic Apollo and the Sibyl, along with Frags. 16 M (40 DK), 43 M (57 DK) and 30 M (42 DK) where Heraclitus denigrates the extant heroes of the Greek literary pantheon; further, he has no love for the “common person,” as expressed by 101 M (104 DK).
context. This is the characteristic of solving a “riddle,” which is one of the types of Delphic Oracles.\textsuperscript{55} Charles Kahn comments on his style by imagining the structure of his work on the analogy of “the great choral odes, with their fluid but carefully articulated movement from image to aphorism…”\textsuperscript{56} He continues to maintain that Heraclitus “makes use of the proverbial style of the Sages, just as he invokes the enigmatic tones of the Delphic oracle.”\textsuperscript{57} Indeed, his authoritative tone and willingness not to suffer those whom he thought foolish\textsuperscript{58} gives the reader the same impression that one has when reading the prophets of the Old Testament. The prophet spoke with the guidance of the divine; his authority was not his own.\textsuperscript{59} I propose that we interpret Heraclitus in the same manner as we interpret prophets and solve riddles.

This, however, produces a fourth element of interpretation. How does one interpret an “oracle?” We refer back to Diogenes Laertius’ quotation, where Heraclitus is termed an \textit{αἰνικτῆς}, a “riddler.” Indeed, oracles at places like Delphi were famous for the riddle-like character of their pronouncements. Perhaps best known is that request by Croesus of the Delphic Oracle as to whether he should go to war with Persia; the oracle

\textsuperscript{55} Joseph Fontenrose, \textit{The Delphic Oracle} (Berkeley: University. of California Press, 1978), 79.
\textsuperscript{56} Kahn, \textit{Art and Thought of Heraclitus}, 7.
\textsuperscript{57} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{58} Note the contrast in 1 M between \ldots\αἰτει \αξιωνετοι γίγνονται \ανθρώποι (“men are forever foolish”) but \textit{ἐγὼ διηγεύμαι κατὰ φυσιν διαίρεσιν ἐκαστόν} (“I explain each thing in full, making distinctions according to its nature”) (my trans). This is one among many that expresses his disdain for the “common person.”
\textsuperscript{59} Examples include the oracles of Balaam in Numbers 23 and 24; the LXX includes the non-Masoretic insertion in Num. 23:7 that the spirit of God came upon Balaam whereupon he uttered his “parable.” We can include Isaiah 13 along with many other prophetic, oracular statements in the OT whose source is not the individual prophet, but God.
advised that if he did, “a mighty empire will be destroyed.”

Or we can recall the famous oracular pronouncement in Book 7 of the History where the Pythia pronounces that “Safe shall the wooden walls continue for thee and thy children,” and “Holy Salamis, thou shalt destroy the offspring of women…” The proper interpretation had to do with the meaning of “wooden walls--” the ships of the Greeks-- and “Salamis,” the location of the decisive battle, where the offspring of women were the Persians. The “right answer” meant finding the meaning that made sense, where the oracle became clear to the understanding. Edward Hussey comments on this issue, in writing: “Like a riddle or an oracle, [Heraclitus] practiced a deliberate half-concealment of his meanings, goading the reader to participate in a game of hide and seek.”

He continues to point out that Aristotle (Metaph. 4.7, 1012a24-26) comments on the paradoxical character of Heraclitus’ thought: “The doctrine of Heraclitus, which says that everything is and is not, seems to make all things true…”

The nature of things must be concealed, so the function of thought is to bring nature to an unconcealed state, or \( \alpha\-\lambda\-\nu\-\theta\-\alpha \). That state is determined by some sort of clarity, some sort of proper-fitting of all the parts. Heraclitus knew this and expressed it in several fragments, notably Frag. 9 M (54 DK), \( \alpha\-\mu\-\mu\-\nu\-\iota \, \alpha\-\phi\-\alpha\-\nu\-\iota\-\nu\-\iota \, \phi\-\alpha\-\nu\-\epsilon\-\rho\-\iota\-\zeta \, \kappa\-\rho\-\iota\-\tau\-\tau\-\nu\-\omega \),

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60 Herodotus, History, 1.53 προλέγουσαι Κροίσω, ἡν στρατεύται ἐπὶ Πέρσας, μεγάλην ἀρχήν μιν καταλύσειν.

61 History 7.141.


63 Guthrie also makes reference to Aristotle Rhetoric 1407 b 11, p. 407, where he criticizes Heraclitus for his obscurity.

64 Heidegger-Fink, Heraclitus Seminar, 147.
“hidden harmony is better than the exposed” (My trans.). I would also point out that κρείττων has the additional meaning of “stronger, mightier.” This might imply a double-entendre, implying the added “power” of an intellect to plumb the depths of that which is concealed.

Additionally, we have Frag. 8 M (123 DK), φύσις κρύπτεσθαι φαίλει (“nature likes to be hidden”) (My trans.). We will treat this fragment below, when we discuss the moral discourse of Heraclitus, especially with the parallel between the cosmos and the individual. This, however, affirms that finding the hidden structure of reality becomes the solving of a riddle. Heraclitus implicitly claims to have solved the riddle and asks for people to listen to him, to the λόγος as explicated by him. Λόγος, at the time of Heraclitus, did not have the immense overlay of meaning that evolved in the Hellenistic world; but it can be seen in the fragments that it has the connotation of reason or reasonableness.65 “It (λόγος) is consistent too with the riddle and oracle analogies: when once the solution to a good riddle is found, there is no doubt left that it is the solution, because everything fits, everything makes sense, though in an unexpected way.66

Finally, Dilcher proposes that “The ultimate criterion for the value and success of any interpretation can only be the degree to which it manages to make good sense of as much text as possible without imposing unnatural strain and simplifying solutions on it.”67

This, then, will be the hermeneutic I shall employ, attempting to apply meanings to a text in such a manner that they fit the overall context, make better sense and provides

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65 Long, Cambridge Companion, 93.
66 Ibid
more clarity compared to other interpretations. Is this “speculative?” Absolutely. But listen to Heidegger on this point:

The 2,500 years that separate us from Heraclitus are a perilous affair. With our explication of Heraclitus’ fragments, it requires the most intense self-criticism in order to see something here. On the other hand, it also requires a venture. One must risk something, because otherwise one has nothing in hand. So there is no objection to a speculative interpretation. We must therefore presuppose that we can only have a presentiment of Heraclitus, when we ourselves think. Yes, it is a question whether we still can measure up to this task.\(^\text{68}\) (My emphasis).

### 2.1.2 Description of a Human Being

We move now to see how Heraclitus describes a human being. He attempts to describe his overall philosophical intent in what virtually all experts in the Heraclitus fragments consider as genuine, Fragment 1 M, (1 DK).

> τοῦ δὲ λόγου τοῦδ’ ἐόντος ἄρι αἱ ἄνθρωποι καὶ πρόσθεν ἢ ἀκούσαι καὶ ἀκούσαντες τὸ πρῶτον γινομένων γὰρ πάντων κατὰ τὸν λόγον τοῦδ’ ἀπειροστὶν εἰκασία, πειρώμενοι καὶ ἐπέων καὶ ἐργάων τοιούτων, ἐκοιμῶν ἐγὼ διηγεύμαι κατὰ φύσιν διαίρεσιν ἐκαστὸν καὶ φραζῶν ὅκως ἔχει. τοὺς δὲ ἄλλους ἄνθρωπος λαυθανεῖ ὁκόσα ἐγερθέντες ποιοῦσιν, ὁκωσπερ ὁκόσα εὐδοντες ἐπλαυθανονται.\(^\text{69}\)

We must ask what Heraclitus means by λόγος. Guthrie gives an extended treatment of this term,\(^\text{70}\) demonstrating its complexity and especially showing the difficulty of understanding a sixth-century (as opposed to a later) understanding. There is

\(^{68}\) Heidegger and Funk, *Heraclitus Seminar*, 36.

\(^{69}\) Marcovich translates: “Of this Truth, real as it is, men always prove to be uncomprehending, both before they have heard it and when they have heard it. For, although all things come to pass in accordance with this Truth, men behave as if ignorant (or un-experienced) each time they undertake (or experience) either speech or deeds. Whereas I, for my part, explain such words and things taking apart each of them according to its real constitution and then showing how it is; as for the rest of men, they remain unaware of what they do after they wake up just as they forget what they do while asleep.”

\(^{70}\) Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy*, 1.419.
a wide variety of translations, ranging from “Truth” (Marcovich\(^{71}\)), “Lehre Sinn” (Diels\(^{72}\)), “Discourse” (Burnet\(^{73}\)) and “Account” (Kahn\(^{74}\)). H. Kleinknecht has addressed the specifically Heraclitean usage of λόγος:

First, we have in view the use of λόγος for word, speech, utterance, revelation, not in the sense of something proclaimed and heard, but rather in that of something displayed, clarified, recognized and understood; λόγος as the rational power of calculation in virtue of which man can see himself and his place in the cosmos; λόγος as the indication of an existing and significant content which is assumed to be intelligible; λόγος as the content itself in terms of its meaning and law, its basis and structure.\(^{75}\)

However, from the perspective of the totality of the fragments, and especially this fragment, it is clear that Heraclitus means that the λόγος must make a difference in the lives of people. He is not merely providing “information;” he intends that people operate on a level different than that symbolized by “sleep.” “Philosophical knowledge . . . is thus for Heraclitus the means to evoke the words and works of men. Both speech and action follow from it.”\(^{76}\)

Further, Heraclitus is dealing with the totality of human experience (ἐπεών καὶ ἔργων τοιούτων)\(^{77}\) insofar as this experience is active in the world. While some have

\(^{71}\) Marcovich, *Heraclitus*, 6.

\(^{72}\) Diels, *Vorsokratiker* 150.

\(^{73}\) Burnet, *History of Greek Philosophy*, 133.

\(^{74}\) Kahn, *Art and Thought of Heraclitus*, 97.

\(^{75}\) H. Kleinknecht, “Λέγω, λόγος, etc., TDNT, 4.80.

\(^{76}\) Ibid, 81.

\(^{77}\) R. Dilcher: *Studies in Heraclitus*, 16, “ἐπεών καὶ ἔργα …expresses two representative and complementary sides of a single phenomenon—the totality of human action in whatever form.”
interpreted his work as an expression of an early cosmology, Kahn specifically points out that, “We come closer to a correct reading …with a Hellenistic critic named Diodotus, who declared that the book was not about the nature of things (peri physeōs) after all but about man’s life in society (peri politeias), and that the physical doctrines serve only as illustration.”

What, then, is to be discovered in the λόγος? There are two elements to be discovered: first, there is a radical dynamism in the world; but despite this, there is an underlying unity. Second, as we will see later, the discovery of this unity is wisdom, the goal of the narrative.

Let us first focus on dynamism, which is expressed in the famous 40 M (12 DK) where Heraclitus models experience upon a river, whose waters are ever different.

Heraclitus 40 M (12 DK)

| a. | Ποταμοῖς τοῖσιν αὐτοσὶν ἐμβαίνουσιν |
| b. | ἕτερα καὶ ἕτερα ὑδάτα ἐπιρρέε |
| c. | καὶ ψυχαὶ δὲ ἀπὸ τῶν ὑγρῶν ἀναθηματοῦνται |

Marcovich: a. Upon those who are stepping into the same rivers
b. different and again different waters flow.
(c. (Marcovich excludes.))

Diels a. Denen, die in dieselben Flüsse hineinsteigen,
b. strömen andere und wieder andere Wasserfluten zu.
c. Aber auch Seelen dünst aus dem Feuchten hervor (?)

Burnet: a. You cannot step twice into the same rivers;

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78 G. S. Kirk, Heraclitus. The Cosmic Fragments. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 30. The fragments he deals with are “those describing the world as a whole rather than men in particular.”

79 C. H. Kahn, The Art and Thought of Heraclitus, 21. The Diodotus quote is in Diogenes Laertius, Lives, 2, 9, 15 (Hicks, LCL).

80 It is clear that textual issues exist in this fragment, especially since the first sentence is not acknowledged by Wheelwright as being authentic, and Marcovich and Burnet do not accept the second. In this case, I focus on the first sentence. I shall re-introduce Frag. 40 when I discuss ἕρξη.
b. for fresh waters are ever flowing in upon you.
c. (Burnet excludes.)

Wheelwright: a. (Wheelwright excludes).
  b. (Wheelwright excludes).
  c. Souls are vaporized from what is moist.

Plutarch makes reference to this quotation when he is speaking about being in *The E at Delphi*, 392 B:

> Everything of a mortal nature is at some stage between coming into existence and passing away…(the mind) is unable to apprehend a single thing that is abiding or really existent (οὐδενὸς λαβέσθαι μένοντος οὐδ’ ὄντος ὄντως δυνάμενος).

> “It is impossible to step twice in the same river” are the words of Heracleitus, nor is it possible to lay hold twice of any mortal substance in a permanent state (οὐδ’ θυμητής οὐσίας δις ὁψασθαι κατά ἐξίν); by the suddenness and swiftness of the change in it there “comes dispersion and at another time, a gathering together.”

From Plutarch’s vantage point more than five hundred years later, the act of intellectual conception required a static essence of some sort; but he recognized the reality of the Heraclitean perception of the absolute dynamism of reality. Indeed, it will be possible to interpret θυμητής οὐσίας as human beings, not merely the “stuff of the world.”

Further, we see a universal “exchange” in 54 M (90 DK):

> πῦρος τε ἀνταμοιβὴ τὰ πάντα καὶ πῦρ ἀπάντων ὀκωσπέρ χρυσοῦ χρήματα καὶ χρηματοῦ χρυσός.

Marcovich: All things are an equal exchange for fire and fire for all things, as goods are for gold and gold for goods.

This is an example of the universal dynamism within the world; but it applies to humans as well, simply as part of the real world.

A sense of the famous unity of opposites is demonstrated by 27 M, (51 DK):

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Marcovich: (Men) do not understand how what is being brought apart comes together with itself: there is a ‘back-stretched connection’ like that of the bow or of the lyre.

Wheelwright: People do not understand how that which is at variance with itself agrees with itself. There is a harmony in the bending back, as in the case of the bow and the lyre.

Here we have the affirmation that people do not understand how that which is “at variance with itself agrees with itself.” I suggest that οὐκ ὁμολογεῖ may well mean “how that which has tension within itself be resolved.” The example of bow and lyre does not imply any kind of “disagreement,” but that tension is essential to the working of both. And the middle/passive of ὁμολογέω expresses “to be agreed upon, allowed or granted by common consent” (LSJ). Hence, there is a “resolution” of that which appears to be “different from itself” or has tension within itself. This expresses precisely that state of a person involved in a moral discourse with himself or herself. There is an apparent conflict within an individual, where opposite outcomes are a possibility, which creates a tension within the individual.

The existence of “opposites” might be better understood as “tension.” Frag. 25 M (10 DK):

συλλαύτες ὅλα καὶ σύχ ὅλα, συμφερόμενον διαφερόμενον, συναίδου διάιδου, καὶ ἐκ πάντων ἐν καὶ ἐξ ἐνος πάντα.

Marcovich: Connexions: things whole and things not whole, something which is being brought together and something which is being brought apart, something which is in tune and something which is out of tune; and out of this unity all things are made.

Kahn: Graspings (syllapsies): wholes and not wholes, convergent, divergent, consonant dissonant, from all things one and from one thing all.
There are textual problems with the first word. Diels, Burnet and Wheelwright read συνάψιες, but Marcovich and Kahn read συλλαψιες. However, either word works equally well, as the issue is an underlying unity of opposites. These “opposites,” expressed as being connected, fit the state of a person’s consciousness when engaged in a moral discourse. They could be described as “states of soul” of someone engaged in an internal argument about how to act; in this sense, the underlying unity of the human being is apparent, and it is both out of this unity that the conflict is experienced, and out of the conflict, a higher state of human-being results.

This is reinforced in Frag. 26 M (50DK):

Οὐκ ἐμοῦ ἀλλὰ τοῦ λόγου ἀκούσαντας ὀμολογεῖν σοφὸν ἐστιν ἐν πάντα εἶναι.

Marcovich: If you have heard [and understood] not me, but the Logos, It is wise to agree that all things are one.

Here Heraclitus insists that his hearers pay attention to his teaching, not to his person, and that wisdom involves seeing the conflicts in the natural world as existing within an overall unity. This would include applying the same insight to human beings (ὁμολογεῖν σοφὸν ἐστιν ἐν πάντα εἶναι.)82 This interior unity (which might also be seen as ultimately a “harmony”) may be that which is expressed in Frag. 9 M (54 DK) (above, p.13) as that which, being hidden, is more powerful than that which is apparent.

Thus, I propose that Heraclitus is describing that tension that exists within the world, but which is also applicable to a person when she or he engages in moral self-examination. What is the standard to which they must judge their actions? I propose that

82 Virtually all the commentators translate πάντα as neuter plural.
it is the λόγος. It is an appeal to rationality, as opposed to the unreflective mores of conventional society. This standard is not apparent to the “many.” In fact, (Frag. 1 M, 1 DK) “the many” go through their moral life as though they were sleeping; and “the many,” who learned from traditional sources, learned from men who deserved to be whipped (30 M, 42 DK). They take the crowd as their teacher (104 M, 101 DK) and have no real understanding.

Heraclitus is a powerful cultural critic, as the last two fragments indicate. He has little use for “the many,” even apart from his condemnation of his fellow-Ephesians because of the expulsion of Hermodorus (Frag. 105 M, 121 DK). He reacts to the moral dilemma regarding the treatment of the dead posed by Sophocles in Antigone, and the shameful treatment of Hector’s body by Achilles (Il. 22.395) with his Frag. 76 M (24 DK), ἁπέκεισαι κορίνων ἐκβλητότερον, (“it is more proper to discard corpses than dung”). He characterized the traditional religious activities in Frag. 86 M (5 DK) by rejecting both sacrifice and prayer. Further, Frag. 87 M (14 DK) specifically labels the initiations into the mysteries, known to exist at the time of Heraclitus, as being “ unholy” (ἀνέρος). Frag.50 M (15 DK) is somewhat puzzling, insofar as Heraclitus described the processions to Dionysus, celebrating the phallus, “most shameful.” Yet, he affirmed that Dionysus and Hades are one.

As a cultural critic, it is necessary to provide an alternative. We can interpret Heraclitus’ alternative by focusing on the perspective of that internal dynamism that

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83 See description of an effective Greek Sacrifice and prayer in Il. 1.446-488.

84 Marcovich provides a smaller fragment than Diels, affirming that part of it was inserted by Clement; I suggest it is immaterial, insofar as both agree that the last sentence (τα γαρ νομιζέμενα κατ’ ανθρώπους μυστήρια ανερωστι μυσώνται) is common to both.
exists not only in the physical world, but exists also in the world of the individual human being. That dynamism may be understood best if it is seen within the framework of a continuing interior dialogue of a person with him/herself. This does not require a metaphysical assertion of “separate parts” of the human person; it takes a simple reflection on how a unitary individual confronts daily problems. Who has not experienced a mental process that can be expressed as a dialogue? “On the one hand, if I do A, this is the result; but on the other hand, if I do B, this is the result. Of these alternatives, which shall I choose?” Heraclitus understands this sort of dialogue and expresses it as the presence of tension and creative dynamism within the individual. If there is no dialogue, then there is no internal discussion, no movement as a human being. The location of this dialogue or expression of moral discourse occurs within the ψυχή and it is to this idea that we must now turn our attention.

It is important to realize the danger of anachronism in this discussion, especially since the word ψυχή is so often translated as “soul.” We must bracket 2,500 years of intellectual accretions that have grown up around this word and focus solely on what Heraclitus might have meant.

A. Diehl wrote that the Homeric concept of ψυχή was highly limited, and related etymologically to ψωκό, “to blow (to cool),” and is descriptive of the life-force which comes to expression as breath. In battle, the ψυχή leaves a person at the moment of death, either by the mouth or through the wound. After death, it had a shadowy existence, the self having been eaten by dogs and birds. ψυχή has nothing to do with intellectual or spiritual aspects of a person.
However, in the seventh century BCE onward, the interest in retribution required some sort of personal continuity after death, especially as it related to the idea of transmigration of souls in Pythagorean thought. The Orphic writings included the concept of the σῶμα as the σῆμα or tomb of the ψυχή. “In the period around and after 500 B.C. ψυχή is then commonly used as an omnibus term for human thought, will and emotion and also for the essential core of man which can be separated from his body and which does not share in the body’s dissolution.”

Wilcox traces the earliest uses of the term ψυχή as an “animative force in humans;” he further demonstrates that the ψυχή is something physical, pointing to 66 M (36 DK):

ψυχήσιν θάνατος ὕδωρ γενέσθαι
ὕδατι δὲ θάνατος γῆν γενέσθαι
ἐκ γῆς δὲ ὕδωρ γίνεται,
ἐξ ὕδατος δὲ ψυχή.

Marcovich: For souls it is death to become water, For water it is death to become earth; But out of earth water comes to-be, And out of water, soul.

I shall deal with this fragment below in detail; at present I would like to point out that the fragment may not merely imply the physical character of the ψυχή. There is a possibility that there is at least a metaphoric content in the fragment. Marcovich points out that the Stoics “…have correctly understood Heraclitus’ soul as πῦρ or

87 While it may be true that Stoics concluded that the soul was “πῦρ,” the existing fragments of Heraclitus hardly support this conclusion. Wheelwright (p. 62) attributes the “fiery” character of soul from “vaporization,” i.e., such vaporization requires heat which requires fire…I suspect this is pushing the fragments too far.
We recall above that in dealing with Frag. 40 M (12 DK) we had a sentence that was included in Diels’ edition saying:

καὶ ψυχαὶ ἀπὸ τῶν υγρῶν ἀναθηματίων

Wheelwright: Souls are vaporized from what is moist.

But “fire” may be metaphorical; and while ἀναθηματίως is normally translated “vaporization,” Wilcox points out that the etymology of the word might imply “something that is ‘up from θυμός’,’ or perhaps something above θυμός. I shall deal with “moisture” later, in discussing the moral criteria imposed by the Logos. If we think about what “vaporization” meant to the ancient world, it may be that it was understood that water, if heated, disappears and becomes invisible. Perhaps Heraclitus had the insight that souls are not really physical, but have some sort of invisible character, and that the “ἀνα” prefix implied some sort of superiority to θυμός. This, in turn, would imply the possibility that ψυχή may have the role of controlling θυμός. Thus, we had:

Frag. 40 M (12DK): καὶ ψυχαὶ ἀπὸ τῶν υγρῶν ἀναθηματίων

My Trans.: And souls are made invisible (and) are superior to θυμός.

I read this as a kind of localization of the ψυχή within the human being, i.e., somewhere “above” the appetitive or irascible faculty. Additionally, it is further described as being “without limit” and having “such depth.” (67 M):

88 Marcovich, Heraclitus, 361.

89 I recognize that commentators differ in the handling of this fragment. Marcovich does not include it with his 40 M, but Diels does include it in his 12 DK, with a question mark after the German translation. Wheelwright includes it as his sole entry in his Frag. 44, and Kahn under his CXIIIB quotes the entire quotation from Cleanthes as quoted by Arius Didymus. Further, the quotation of Arius Didymus attributes the ability to know to the ψυχή. Whether this is Arius’ comment or a quotation from Heraclitus is unknown.

Marcovich: By setting off you would never find out the ends of the soul,
Though you should travel along every path,
So deep a measure does it have.

My trans: By setting off you would never find the limits of the soul
Traveling over all the roads,
It has such a profound principle (to tell).

My rationale for “profound” is the metaphorical uses to which the word can be understood, as when Xerxes sees the “depth (i.e., the profundity) of the disaster” (κοκών ὥρουν βάθος) (Pers. 465); or the “depth (i.e., vastness) of wealth” (πλουτοῦν βάθος) (Aj. 130). The character of the λόγος as being profound gives us an insight into the vehicle for the story. The story (λόγος) that the soul is capable of relating is understood by Heraclitus as being limitless. As a consequence, the ψυχή is clearly not something physical; for everything physical would have a boundary. And the “roads” perhaps remind us of Frag. 33 M (60 DK), ὁδὸς ἄνω κάτω μία καὶ ὑπό τη, (“The road up and (the road) down is one and the same”). It is possible that Heraclitus is referring to an “internal” road, the connection between a “higher” ψυχή and a “lower” θόμος. This would give a framework for a moral discourse internal to the human person. It does not

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91 While there is potential anachronism, Philo uses βάθος and βάθος in metaphorical manners in Ebr. 112, where he characterizes σοφία as deep, i.e., profound; in Post. 130: referring to a “profundity of knowledge” (ἄρχη τοῦ βάθους ἐλευθερία τῆς ἐπιστήμης) and Som. 2.271, referring to “knowledge deep by nature” (βαθείας τῆν φύσιν ἐπιστήμης.)

92 Gábor Betegh, “On the Physical Aspect of Heraclitus’ Psychology,” Phronesis, 52 (2007): 3-32 treats the ψυχή as something physical, and not spiritual, based on 36 DK (66 M), “For souls it is death to become water, etc.” Betegh claims that ψυχή is a “mass term, much like water and earth, and not as a singular count noun standing for a class of things, souls” 9. Nevertheless, the author does not comment on 67 M. I would contend that the limitlessness of the soul is equally valid for maintaining a non-physical characteristic. Further, other “physical” characteristics, such as “wetness” or “dryness” can be seen as metaphorical expressions and not necessarily physical. See below.
require a metaphysical “duality” of the ψυχή, but a merely a recognition that there is a vehicle for the resolution of moral conflict that exists within every person, i.e., the soul.

Another interesting fragment is 13 M (107 DK):

κακοὶ μάρτυρες ἀνθρώποισιν ὀφθαλμοὶ καὶ ὠτα βαρβάρους ψυχάς ἔχοντον.93

Marcovich: Evil witnesses are eyes and ears for men, if they have souls that do not understand their language.”

The critical issue is what having βαρβάρους ψυχάς actually means. On the one hand, Nussbaum contends that there was no pejorative content to “barbarian” until after the Persian War.94 However, Burnet points out (quoting Zeller) that Frag. 23 M (114 DK) about the expulsion of Hermodorus could not have occurred prior to the downfall of Persia (479 BCE +/-). Hence, even using Nussbaum’s criterion, Heraclitus could have used the word in a dismissive sense. We need to pause a bit and do some philology regarding this word. I propose to use Sophocles as expressing a meaning contemporary with Heraclitus. We will look at “barbarian” as it appears in Ajax and Electra.

In Aj. 1225, Teucer enters the stage, followed immediately by Agamemnon. The latter upbraids Teucer for his attempts to bury Ajax, and he does so by calling him a child of a captive (ἀγαμαλωτα), and further degrades him by accusing Ajax of being presumptuous as a slave, and merely brawny, but not prudent (φρονοῦντος); he then contends, “…when you speak, your words convey no sense; I understand not a barbarian

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93 Marcovich (Heraclitus, 45) comments on the syntax of this fragment, saying that “ἐχόντων is only conditional (if they have)…, not causal (as Pascal; Kranz; alternatively have it): the limitative force of ἔχοντων is confirmed both by the context of Sextus Empiricus and Stobaeus (who had “ἀφρόνων ἀνθρώπων ψυχάς βαρβάρους ἔχοντων.”

tongue”. I suggest this is a continuance of Agamamnon’s degradation of Teucer and not a mere expression of the inability to communicate. Indeed, Teucer continues to participate in the discussion for many, many more lines. In Agamemnon’s tirade, he first condemns Teucer as a “slave, of a barbarian mother born” (1289). Then he continues, “Hast thou forgotten that thine own sire’s sire was Phrygian Pelops, a barbarian?” Within the context, this is not merely an emotionally neutral “non-speaker of Greek.”

In Electra, (95) we hear Electra speaking of the land where she finds herself at home, and not in a barbarous land, and not the guest of bloody Ares (βάρβαρον αἰαν φαίνως Ἀρης οὐκ ἔξενιαν). While it is not a violently negative statement, it compares Electra’s home favorably to Troy, the site of all the bloodshed.

Hans Windisch has pointed out that from the original meaning of “stammering, stuttering, uttering unintelligible sounds,” came the development of the understanding of non-Greeks being “poor in culture, or even uncultured, whom the Greeks hold at arm’s length. . . .”

One can conclude from the previous comments that the word βάρβαρος implies a character that is inferior to that of a Greek. Hence, a person with a “barbarian soul” is one whose culture, whose ability to understand the Greek world, is dramatically inferior. Indeed, this very inability is what makes the “eyes and ears” unreliable. What one sees and hears must be interpreted, and it is interpreted by the ψυχή. Indeed, while Nussbaum

95 Sophocles, Ajax, (trans F. Storr, LCL).

96 Hans Windisch, “βάρβαρος.” TDNT, 1.547.
has a different interpretation of βάρβαρος she still holds that ψυχή (is) the “connecting
and knowing faculty. . . ”.  

In Frag. 115 M (DK 67) we have:

Ψυχής ἐστι λόγος ἐκαντόν αὐξών.

Marcovich Soul has a (numerical) ratio which increases itself.

The translation of λόγος is important. Marcovich justifies his translation by
suggesting a Pythagorean vector as a “proportion;” but a “ratio” cannot increase itself. I
suggest this is a poor translation. Minar, however, offers the following: “The Logos of
the soul increases itself.” This, however, defines a word by using that word itself. But
Dilcher suggests: “Self-increasing is what reflection could well be called.” These two
varying translations indicate that the activity of the ψυχή can be isolated, that it is
“reflection,” and that it is dynamic. Nussbaum agrees and writes that “. . . development
(of the ψυχή) is possible by saying that there are no limits to man’s power to develop his
understanding. . . Because his ψυχή has the power of λόγος, there are no limits to its
development; this capacity increases itself…”

I shall permit Charles Kahn to summarize Heraclitus’ perception of what ψυχή
means:

We have seen that the psyche . . . is identified as the cognitive or rational element
in human beings. . . Socrates. . . might have gotten (this concept) directly from
Heraclitus. . . in his (Heraclitus’) view, the psyche is primarily a principle of
rational cognition. . . Heraclitus denies that anyone can reach the limits of the

97 Nussbaum, “Ψυχή in Heraclitus” I, 14.
100 Nussbaum, “Ψυχή in Heraclitus” 15.
psyché, no matter how far they travel. . . the psyche for Heraclitus plays the role of a ‘first principle,’ a Milesian archē. . . A logos so profound and limitless can scarcely be distinct from the universal logos, according to which all things come to pass.101

2.1.3 Moral Discourse in Heraclitus

Having developed a sense of the function of the ψυχή I should like to suggest that it is not only the locus of “understanding,” but is also the place where the moral discourse is held. I should like to examine three Heraclitean fragments and see what we can learn what Heraclitus has to say about this internal discourse.

Frag. 3 M (17 DK) οὐ γὰρ φρονέσαι τοιαύτα πολλοί, ὅκοσοι ἐγκυρεύσιν, οὐδὲ μαθόντες γινώσκουσιν, ἑωυτοῖς δὲ δοκεύσι.

Marcovich: The majority of men do not notice (or apprehend) the things they meet with. Nor do they know (or comprehend) them when they have learned about them (or when they are taught), but they seem to themselves (or imagine) to do so.”

Diels: (Denn) es verstehen solches viele nicht, soviele auch darauf stoßen, noch erkennen sie es, wenn sie es lernen; aber sie bilden es sich ein.

Burnet: The many have not as many thoughts as the things they meet with; nor, if they do remark them, do they understand them, though they believe they do.

Wheelwright: Most people do not take heed of the things they encounter, nor do they grasp them even when they have learned about them, although they suppose they do.

Kahn: Most men do not think things in the way they encounter them, nor do they recognize what they experience, but believe their own opinions.

My Trans.: The many are not able to formulate a theory about experience, insofar as they have such experience, nor studying do they understand, but have their own opinions.

101 Kahn, Art and Thought of Heraclitus, 12k7-130.
Burnet notes: “this is directed against the common Greek proverb (Od. 18.136; Archil. Fr. 70) that men’s wisdom extends just as far as their experience. It does not extend so far, says Herakleitos.”

Here we see a distinction between φρονέω and γνωσκω; the latter is much more clearly related to “understanding,” but the former contains an element of preparation for action. Verstehen and erkennen have no vector of “preparation for action.” We shall examine three additional fragments where Heraclitus uses the word φρονέω, and we shall first attempt to then discover how the major translators deal with the word, and then undertake some evaluation of their translations.

Frag. 113 DK

\[ \xiυνόν \ εστι \ πασι \ το \ φρονεσιν. \]

Diels: Gemeinsam ist allen das Denken.”

Burnet: Wisdom is common to all things…(continues with expanded fragment)

Wheelwright: Thinking is common to all.

Kahn: Thinking (to phronein) is shared by all.

Continuing with the idea of commonality of thinking, let us examine the following fragment:

Frag. 23 M (b), (2 DK)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{a. } & \text{διο } \text{δει} \ \text{επεσθαι} \ \text{των}\langle\xiυνων⟩, \\
\text{b. } & \text{του } \text{λόγου} \ \text{δε} \ \text{εόντος} \ \text{ξυμο} \\
\text{c. } & \text{ξωσυιν} \ \text{οι} \ \text{πολλοι} \ \text{ως} \ \text{ιδιαν} \ \text{εχουντες} \ \text{φρονησιν}. \\
\end{align*}
\]

102 Burnet, Early Greek Philosophy, 134.

103 Marcovich does not include this in his Fr. 23 M, but suggests that 113 DK was a “late (probably Stoic) imitation of Heraclitus.” He acknowledges that its source is Stobaeus (Heraclitus, 96).

104 There is a philological issue as to whether the first sentence is Heraclitean, or whether Sextus had added it as a gloss. I suggest that it is immaterial, as it is the last sentence that is of greatest interest.
Marcovich:  
  a. Therefore, one ought to follow what is common.  
  b. But although the Logos is common  
  c. the many live as if they had a religious wisdom of their own.  

Diels:  
  b. Aber obschon der Sinn gemeinsam ist,  
  c. Leben die Vielen, als hätten sie eine eigene Einsicht.  

Burnet:  
  b. Though the wisdom is common,  
  c. yet the many live as though they had a wisdom of their own.  

Wheelwright:  
  b. … although the Logos is common to all,  
  c. most men live as if each of them had a private intelligence of his own.  

Kahn:  
  b. Although the account is shared,  
  c. most men live as though their thinking were a private possession.  

We can see two separate perspectives on this fragment, one being common to 

Diels, Kahn and Wheelwright, who visualize φρονεῖν as some sort of intellection, and 

the other common to Marcovich and Burnet, who emphasize the behavioral character of 

φρονεῖν. Burnet reads Logos as “wisdom,” which is probably more than is justified; but 

the reading of Marcovich, specifying wisdom as “religious” is perhaps more than the text 

permits. But by connecting Frag. 2 DK with Frag. 114 in his expression of 23 M, 

Marcovich attempts to read into Fr. 2 DK that which is not necessarily related to it. This, 

however, is the risk that one takes when one combines fragments.  

Heraclitus appears to be critical of those who permit a disconnect between Logos 

and activity based on an individual’s ignoring the “logos.” I propose that the word 

φρονεῖν means something other than mere intellection, and that such words 

Rather than engage in a complete analysis of φρον-rooted words in ancient Greek literature, I 
suggest that a careful reading of Il. 5.441, Il. 6.79, Il. 4.361, Il. 18.426 will verify that the φρον-rooted 
words found there all have an action-orientation, rather than an orientation that implies knowledge 
unrelated to action. G. Bertram, “φρόνημα, etc.” (TDNT), 9. 221 points out that these words in Homer can 
mean “to think,” or as expressive of internal states. Bertram acknowledges that in some Homeric instances,
imply an action-oriented vector, and that they do not necessarily mean mere intellection or knowing.¹⁰⁶

Now, we can return to the discussion of Fragments 3 M, 23 M and 113 DK. Given the behavioral vector found in the φρον- rooted words, I offer the following translations:

Frag. 3 M  οὐ γὰρ φρονέουσι τοιαύτα πολλοί, ὅκοσοι ἐγκυρεύσιν, οὐδὲ μαθόντες γνώσκουσιν, ἐωτοῦσι δὲ δοκεοῦσι.

My Trans: The many are not able to formulate a plan of action about experience, insofar as they have such experience, nor studying do they understand, but have their own opinions.

Here we see a distinction between φρονέω and γνωσκω; the latter is much more clearly related to “understanding,” but the former contains an element of preparation for action. Verstehen and erkennen are much closer to γνωσκω.

Marcovich makes the distinction between “noticing” or “apprehending” something (closer to erkennen) and “comprehending,” which is closer to verstehen. But there is no behavioral vector in either word. Burnet refers to “thoughts” and “understanding,” making this fragment a criticism of understanding the world. Kahn follows the same path.

My suggestion involves two items: First, ἐγκυρέω means meeting or lighting upon, that which comes upon one, not necessarily as “data.” The issue is, “what do we do in light of those things that come upon us?” Second, how do we react? Heraclitus is not suggesting that most men don’t “think” things or merely “understand” things, but

¹⁰⁶ Since I have not examined each and every occurrence of the φρον- rooted words, I cannot stipulate that there is never a case where such a word implies pure intellection without any action-plan or behavioral vector. But I would suggest that the main vector of these roots as used by Heraclitus says something about intended behavior.
they don’t incorporate their experience within an action-oriented or moral framework. This suggests that people act out of something that is non-rational, non-reflective; people act out of emotion, not out of a moral system or teaching. This has a deeper import than mere “intellection.”

Frag.113 DK  ξυνὼν ἐστι πᾶσι τὸ φρονεῖν.

My Trans: It is common for everyone to think about what he or she will do.

Frag. 23 M (b)  διὸ δὲὶ ἐπεσθαί τῷ <ξυνῷ> τοῦ λόγου δὲ ἐόντος ξυνοῦ ξωουσίν οἱ πόλλοι ως ἰδίαν ἔχουσι τοὺς φρόνησιν.

Focusing on the last phrase, we have two basic translations, one by Marcovich and Burnet, translating φρόνησιν as “wisdom,” and one by Diels, Wheelwright and Kahn translating φρόνησιν as “knowledge.” (p. 26 above). While I’m not willing to go so far as to call φρόνησιν “wisdom,” I propose that it be translated as follows:

My Trans: Therefore, one ought to follow what is common. Although the rationality is shared, most live as though each has his own plan of action.

This translation focuses on the action-orientation of thought, as opposed to mere intellection. As such, it necessarily has a moral vector; and the locus of this moral vector must be the ψυχή.

This completes Section 2.1, and we can summarize as follows:

Heraclitus perceived the entire world as being dynamic, and this applies to the human soul as well. The soul (ψυχή) is the principle of cognition, whose object is the λόγος. Within the person, there is a dynamic that relates to morality. The λόγος ought to be the basis of moral action, but while thinking (and planning) are common to all, many ignore the λόγος and are satisfied with moral action that is directed by private opinions.
2.2 Life in Heraclitus

As to the content of a moral discourse in Heraclitus, I would propose that this moral discourse occurs primarily within the ἀγαθή and constitutes that interior process wherein one’s acts are either qualified by the λόγος or are the result of a non-reflective, unconsciously conditioned cultural framework. If the former, then we have action appropriate to a human being; if the latter, then we have an act whose moral quality is condemned by Heraclitus. To establish the character of a moral discourse, we shall examine eight fragments.

Let us return to a fragment discussed earlier in this paper (p. 14.)

Frag. 8 M (123 DK), φύσις κρύπτεσθαι φιλεῖ.

Marcovich: The real constitution of each thing is accustomed to hide itself.

Diels: Die Natur (das Wesen) liebt es sich zu verbergen.

Burnet, Wheelwright, Kahn: Nature loves to hide.

As we see, most commentators think this expresses the difficulty of knowing “nature” as we usually describe it, the world of the earth and its products, the animals and birds that live in the forest and the cultivated agricultural fields.

In evaluating how φύσις is to be translated, Helmut Köster describes the etymology as being rooted in ἐφύω, πέφυκα, φύσωμαι (forms of φύω). It was first used to refer to plants and then transferred to animals and men. Köster points out that the tragedians used the word to refer to expressing the “inner nature” or the “manner” of a person or thing. Hence, I propose that Diels’, Burnet’s, Wheelwright’s and Kahn’s translations offer more danger of anachronism than Marcovich’s; further, Marcovich’s translations offer more danger of anachronism than Marcovich’s; further, Marcovich’s
translation captures the passive character of κρύπτω. However, Marcovich does
universalize the fragment by applying it to “each thing.” None of the commentators
capture Köster’s idea of the “inner nature” of a person or thing. I would like to adopt
this idea; hence, I would propose that we translate it as “What a person (or thing) really
is likes to hide itself.”

We know that Heraclitus searched into himself:

(Frag 15 M, 101DK): ἐδιζησάμην ἐμεωστόν,

Marcovich: I asked myself.
Diels: Ich durchforschte mich selbst.
Burnet: I have sought to know myself.
Wheelwright I have searched myself.
Kahn: I went in search of myself.

Kahn comments that “We are surprisingly close here to the modern or Christian
idea that a person may be alienated from his own (true) self.”⁶¹⁸ Διζηματι means “to seek
after.” Note that Diels makes a stronger statement, “I have thoroughly researched my
(own) self.”

My Trans: “I have sought after myself.”

The combination of these two fragments indicates a sense of the Heraclitean
psychology, the existence of an interior nature that must be sought after. This is one
condition of a “moral discourse:” the recognition that we must come to know ourselves,
that there are psychological and personal considerations that we must be conscious of in
contemplating any action. One cannot avoid recognizing the similarity to the inscription

⁶¹⁸ Kahn, Art and Thought of Heraclitus, 116.
γνώθι σεαυτόν on the Temple of Apollo in Delphi, described by Pausanias in his
*Description of Greece*, and also attributed to Thales of Miletus as one of his constant
sayings.

The next fragment to analyze is

Frag. 68 M (118 DK): αὐθ ὑποχή σοφωτάτη καὶ ἀρίστη

Marcovich: The dry soul is the wisest and the best.

Diels: Trockner Glast: weiseste und beste Seele oder vielmehr Trockene Seele weiseste und beste.

Burnet: (indicating 74-76 B) The dry soul is wisest and best.

Wheelwright: A dry soul is wisest and best.

Kahn: A gleam of light is the dry soul, wisest and best.

Kahn has an extensive commentary. He points to Marcovich’s identifying the
fragment in Musonius Rufus (Fr.18), as well as in Stobaeus (3, 5, 8): Marcovich quotes
Philo as having the αὐθ ἡς ἡης version, though the version of Philo is given directly
below in a footnote, “οὐ ᾿γη ἡης.” The LCL version of Philo’s *De Providentia* (2.67)
acknowledges the textual problem, but insists on that given as being demanded “by the
sense, and is supported by the Armenian” (Philo, *Prov. 2.67, LCL,*). Plutarch also has

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111 Note: Diels’ text is αὐθ ἡς ἡης ὑποχή σοφωτάτη καὶ ἀρίστη. But he also notes the second
textual option above as vielmehr.

112 Burnett includes a discussion of the history of the text and accepts αὐθ as preferable.

113 Marcovich, *Heraclitus* 372.
αὐγὴς ξηδῆ in *De Esu Carnium* 995 E. 114 Clement has αὐγή δὲ ψυχὴ ξηδή; 115 later commentators have less valuable examples, since they had to be subject to the historical development up to their time.

Kahn writes, “…just as moisture weakens the soul so that it may perish into water,116 so dryness strengthens and improves it to the point where it may be purified as light (not fire). ...(he points out that for Homer (*Il.* 16.188, *Il.* 1.88 and *Od.* 11.498, perceiving the *augai* of the sun meant “to be alive...”) “The radiance of the sunlit sky thus stands traditionally for life; it is the innovation of Heraclitus to identify this physically.

Also, Marcovich adds an important comment:

άριστη seems to be equally meaningful; it might hint at the chivalrous and sober best (ἄριστοι) of Frag. 95 M, who choose one thing in place of all others, the everlasting glory. The reverse are the many, (οἱ πολλοί) glutted like cattle and probably with moist souls.117

I understand Marcovich, Burnet and the Wheelwright translation, but accept that of Kahn. This translation fits the overall moral perspective of Heraclitus, and even elevates those of the other three major commentators. We will discuss “moist souls” more fully in the section on the Death of the Soul.

Following this fragment, we should also examine

Frag. 71 M (110 DK) ἀνθρώπως γίνεσθαι ἁκόσα θέλουσιν οὐκ ἀμεινον

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114 Plutarch, *De Esu*; the LCL text reads αὐὴ δὲ ψυχὴ ξηδή but there is a footnote that stipulates “W.C. H. after Hatzidakis: αὐγὴ ξηδῆ.” An additional footnote refers to 118 DK. Additionally, we find that Plutarch in *Obsolescence of Oracles* 432F quotes Heraclitus, saying “At the same time we might assert, not without reason, that a dryness engendered with the heat stabilizes the spirit of prophecy and renders it ethereal and pure; for this is the ‘dry soul,’ (αὐτὴ γὰρ ξηδὴ ψυχὴ) as Heraclitus has it.

115 Clement, *Paed.* 2.29.3.

116 Frag. 66 M, 36 DK.

Marcovich: It is not better for men to get all they want.

There is little difference among the commentators on translation, so there is little need to view the alternatives. Marcovich points out that this fragment ought to be considered in relation to Frag. 70 M (85 DK). And Guthrie points out that, “Since bodily pleasures lead to a moistening, that is a weakening, of the soul, we can understand why Heraclitus could say ‘it is not better for men to get all they want’.”

The suggestion is that if there is a negative tendency inherent in the “desires” of people, i.e., to acquire possessions, to enjoy passions, etc. expressed as responding to \( \vartheta \mu \omicron \omicron \varsigma \), then these desires do not produce a better person. It presumes a rather negative orientation of Heraclitus towards the (common) man or woman, insofar as “what they want” is limited to those things that are not truly beneficial.

Related to the above, we should also explore Frag. 90 M (78 DK) \( \eta \theta \varsigma \gamma \rho \alpha ρ \alpha ν ρ ω ρ \alpha \iota \omicron \nu \epsilon \nu \varsigma \varepsilon \iota \gamma \iota \nu \omega \mu \omicron \varsigma \varsigma \varsigma , \theta \varepsilon \iota \iota \iota \omicron \nu \delta \varepsilon \varepsilon \iota \iota \iota . \)

Marcovich: Human nature has no insight, but divine nature has.

Diels: Denn menschliches Wesen hat keine Einsichten, wohl aber göttliches.

Burnet: The way of man has no wisdom, but that of the gods has.

Wheelwright: Human nature has no real understanding; only the divine nature has it.

Kahn: Human nature (\( \epsilon \theta \varsigma \varsigma \)) has no set purpose (\( gn\omicron\maiai \)) but the divine has.

All the commentators have essentially the same translations: \( \eta \theta \varsigma \varsigma \) is generally translated as “nature” or “essence” (Wesen); but I suggest that there is a broader meaning.

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118 Marcovich, *Heraclitus*, 390. He offers, of course, no rationale for this, as though the two fragments might ever have been written sequentially. DK, and Kahn do not attempt to relate them; but Burnet and Wheelwright have them adjacent.

that involves culture, with less of a metaphysical overlay. LSJ indicates that with relation to human beings, it means “disposition,” “character” or “custom.”

Secondly, it is important to understand what γνώμη means. It would seem that the definition given in LSJ as “maxim” of a wise person or “sententia,” might fit the context better than “intelligence” or “understanding,” as the idea of a “maxim” implies an appropriate course of action. R. Bultmann treats of the word-spectrum arising out of γιγνωσκω, γνωστες, . . . γνώμη, . . . γνωστός and describes the early vector of the word’s expressing a “knowledge of what really is.” However, he expands his discussion to include the knowledge of what should be done, which would include the idea of making a decision. “Hence, γιγνωσκειν etc. can mean ‘to decide.’ Kahn writes,

...gnōmē ...must be understood ...as what a person ‘has in mind’ either as a belief concerning the facts or as an aim for action. The word has overtones of public deliberations...The term also applies to the memorable sayings or advice, the ‘gnomic’ aphorism of the Wise Men.

Hence, I would propose as a translation,

The customary standards of humans have nothing to recommend them (as standards) for action, but those of the divine have.

We might note that Plato attributes ἃθος to the gods in Laws 901a; additionally, in Theatetus 176, a-b, Plato characterizes proper activity on the part of human beings to be ὀμοίωσις θεῶ κατὰ τὸ δυνατὸν (“likeness to God, as much as possible”) and then proceeds to describe the characteristics of such “likeness” as being connected, becoming

120 Sophocles, Philoctetes 894, using the non-lengthened ἃθος.
121 R. Bultmann, γιγνωσκω, etc. TDNT, 1.689-719.
122 Ibid., 691. He refers back to this discussion when he treats γνώμη specifically, 717.
123 Kahn, Art and Thought of Heraclitus, 173.
sensitive to justice and holiness. This process of “becoming like the gods” will become important in our later discussions of proper moral action.

This fragment is parallel to those fragments we initially examined that deprecate the ability of the “normal” human being to have an appropriate standard of behavior. And with the castigation of Homer, who pictured the gods as both petulant and immoral, Heraclitus indicates a higher standard for “the divine.”

While the “standard of behavior” is not yet clear, Heraclitus does describe some aspects of behavior that must be avoided. We read in

Frag. 102 M (43 DK): ὅβρις χρή σβεννύσα μᾶλλον ἢ πυρκατήν.

Marcovich: Wanton violence is to be quenched even more than a conflagration.

Diels: Überhebung soll man löschen mehr noch als Feuersbrunst.

LSJ describes ὅβρις as an act of violent outrage. Guthrie, however, seems to indicate that for Heraclitus, it was marked by “a failure by the lower orders to keep their proper station.” Kahn, however, sees a distinctly Heraclitean thought:

As an enemy attack on the city wall threatens all the inhabitants of the city, so a house of fire threatens the whole neighborhood with destruction. And just as the defense of the civic law is seen to be as vital as the defense of the wall, so here the suppression of hubris—the suppression of that violence which disregards the law and endangers the community—is seen as more urgent than the quenching of a fire raging out of control.

Kahn sees hybris as having a broader application than that expressed by Guthrie, which makes sense to me. Committing outrageous, violent acts had to be seen by Heraclitus as socially destructive, regardless of who committed them.

Finally, we must examine Frag. 114 M (46 DK):

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124 Guthrie, History of Greek Philosophy, I.410.

125 Kahn, Art and Thought of Heraclitus, 241.
Marcovich: Conceit (or vague opinion) is a falling sickness (epilepsy.)
Diels: Eigendünkel nannte er fallende Sucht und das Gesicht trügesrich
Wheelwright: Bigotry is the sacred disease.
Kahn: He said that conceit (οἰησις) was a sacred disease [i.e., epilepsy] and of seeing as being deceived.

Marcovich and Kahn believe this to be spurious; and Burnet does not include it.

The Cassell’s German English Dictionary translates “Eigendünkel” as “Self-importance,” “bumptiousness.” This seems to fit a framework of dangers to the soul much better than “bigotry” (not included in LSJ) and consistent with the LSJ definition of οἰησις as self-conceit. The last phrase about “seeing” (considered by most to be spurious) is consistent with Frag. 13 M above, dealing with the poor character of the witnesses of eyes and ears of one who has a barbarian soul. Whether or not Heraclitus actually wrote the fragment (or the last part), Philo seems to allude to it in Spec. 1.10, where he is justifying the rite of circumcision, contending that it is a symbol of self-knowledge, and the rejection of that burdensome sickness of the soul, self-conceit (τὴν βαρείαν νόσον, οἰησιν, ψυχής.)

We have determined from the foregoing seven fragments that there exists within Heraclitean thought some sort of moral discourse, that there is a conversation within oneself that determines how one acts. One can act out of pure convention or one can act out of a moral standard, that of the Logos. Let us now move on to the next phase of this

\[126\] While Diels includes this fragment, Kirk believes it to be spurious; Bywater does not include it at all; and the translation by Wheelwright includes the second clause in brackets, i.e., indicating inauthenticity. Thus, the translations that are offered do not include the last clause.
discussion to see what happens to those individuals who refuse to act within conformity to the *Logos*. I shall demonstrate that this is where Heraclitus expresses the consequence as death of the soul.

2.3 Death of the Soul in Heraclitus

In this section we shall review five separate fragments affording an insight into what can be understood as the death of the soul.

Frag. 70 M (85 DK):

a. Θυμώι μάχεσθαι χαλλεπόν
b. ὁ[π] γὰρ ἄν θέλημα, ψυχής ωνείται.

Marcovich: a. It is hard to fight with the heart’s desire;
b. For whatever it wishes it buys at the price of the soul.

b. Denn was es auch will erkaufte es um die Seele.127

Burnet: a. It is hard to fight with desire.
b. Whatever it wishes to get, it purchases at the cost of soul.

Wheelwright: a. It is hard to fight against impulsive desire;
b. whatever it wants it will buy at the cost of soul.

Kahn: a. It is hard to fight against passion (*thymos*);
b. for whatever it wants it buys at the expense of the soul (*psyche*).

Marcovich comments that

I think Burnet’s interpretation of the fragment is the most likely (“The gratification of desire implies the exchange of dry soul-fire for moisture”). The fulfillment of the heart’s desire (e.g., to wine), the pleasure or passion, imply (sic) transgression of the allotted measure of the change *soul-fire>*blood-water, i.e., debilitation of both mind and body. If θυμός means a life-danger for the soul, the most likely is [sic] that it implies moisture or wetness.128

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127 Diels uses “heart” as seat of desire.

And Wheelwright comments as follows:

…the present Fragments affirm that the upward way toward light, dryness and intellectual awareness is preferable to the downward way toward moisture and drunken muddle…In the perspective of here and now, with a choice of paths before me, it is pertinent to judge one path better than the other; in fact, a failure to do so is even self-delusory, because a self that tries to avoid choosing makes a choice in that very avoidance, in letting its action be determined by dark impulses instead of by lighted reason…129

Kahn argues that θυμός does not mean “desire” in general, but anger:

The tendency of anger to lead to acts of hybris or wanton violence explains how it works its will ‘at the expense of psyché, by damage to the agent’s own vital interests and to the life of others in an outburst of destructive rage. But Heraclitus’ thought should probably also be spelled out in psycho-physical terms: we must prevent the fire and wrath of hybris from consuming our own life-breath. Yielding to irrational anger may thus be seen as a kind of suicide by self-conflagration. This would imply that there is another ‘death’ for the psyche, distinct from but comparable to the dissolution into water: an excess of unthinking ardor that wastes the psyche in vain, instead of risking it deliberately in a noble cause. 130

I think it is important to examine θυμός at this time. Büchsel points out that θυμός “originally denotes a violent movement of air, water, the ground, animals or men.” 131

From the sense of “to well up,” to boil up,” there seems to have developed that of “to smoke,” and then “to cause to go up in smoke,” “to sacrifice.” The basic meaning of θυμός is thus similar to that of πνεῦμα namely, “that which is moved and which moves” or “vital force.” In Homer θυμός is the vital force of animals and men, “. . . (it) takes on the sense of a. desire, impulse, inclination, b. spirit, c. anger, d. sensibility, e. disposition or mind, f. thought, consideration.” 132 Büchsel points out that from Plato on, it means

130 Kahn, Heraclitus, 243.
132 Büchsel, TDNT 3.167.
spirit, anger, rage, agitation, and that Philo uses it as a part of the ψυχή. A general term that expresses all of the above would be “passion,” which includes meanings a. through e. and offers an “action-orientation” to meaning f. Hence, we have:

My Translation: It is difficult to fight against the “passion;” for that which it wants, it pays the price of the soul.

All of the definitions of θυμός provide a sense of passion or non-reflective desire to attain some goal. Hence, Heraclitus stipulates that reliance upon θυμός necessarily has the consequence of somehow giving up the ψυχή. While it is most likely anachronistic to utilize this level of philosophical distinction characteristic of Plato at the time of Heraclitus, it certainly appears that θυμός is an element within a person that operates in opposition to the ψυχή; and if it is permitted to dominate, one can expect dire results.

We have seen that the “dry soul is the wisest and best,” which implies the existence of its opposite, namely a moist soul. Let us examine how Heraclitus treats this unusual concept.

Frag. 69 M 117 DK

a. ἄνηρ ὅκοταυ μεθυσθηί
b. ἄγεται ὑπὸ παιδός ἀνήβου σφαλλόμενος
c. σὺ κ ἐπαιῶν ὅκη βαίνει,
d. ψυχήν τὴν ψυχήν ἔχων

Marcovich: a. A man when he is drunk
b. stumbles and is led (home) by an unfledged (beardless) boy,
c. not knowing whither he goes,
d. for his soul is wet.

Diels: a. Hat sich ein Mann betrunken,
b. so wird er von einem unerwachsenen Knaben geführt,
c. taumelnd, ohne zu merken, wohin er geht;
d. denn feucht ist seine Seele.

My Trans: a. (The) man, when he is drunk
b. is led by a beardless lad,
c. stumbling, not aware of where he walks,
d. having a wet soul.

This is a relatively common opposition of an ἀνήρ with an ἀνὴβος, (beardless) boy, emphasizing the disgraceful condition being described. A wet soul is hence a symbol a life lived in a state of unconsciousness, like a drunken person, and one not spent in pursuit of reason. The “wet” soul is that which is opposite to the “wisest and best” soul, namely, one that is “dry.” (Fr. 68 M)

Let us now return to Frag. 66 M (36 DK) (p. 29 above).

Marcovich: a. For souls it is death to become water,
b. For water it is death to become earth;
c. But out of earth water comes to-be,
d. And out of water, soul.

This was widely known in the ancient world, having been quoted by Philo (Aet. 111), Plutarch (The E at Delphi, 392 C-E), and Aristides Quintilianus (de Musica 2.17).

In general, the fragment was interpreted as having a cosmological significance, describing a unity of opposites as in Philo’s quotation.

This is also true of contemporary commentators. Marcovich writes:

The use of the word θάνατος here is puzzling too ... I suppose it is due to Heraclitus’ additional intention to stress, once more, the coincidence between death and life, the latter being implied by γίνεται, ‘comes to be’; δὲ then would imply ‘nevertheless’); ‘what is death for a thing, it happens to be, at the same time, its source of life: death and birth coincide.’ Heraclitus was especially interested in the unity of this pair of opposites.134

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133 Ibid., 382.
134 Marcovich, Heraclitus, 363.
Additionally, Kirk points out that the ‘death of the soul’ coincides with the death of the individual man:

…on the ‘death’ of the individual his constituents are not totally destroyed, but the ψυχή becomes either fire or water (according to its condition at the moment of death) and the body, as worthless now as dung (Fr 96 DK) decays and turns into moisture and earth; ... the soul can only be said to die (when the individual dies) if it turns to water; if it remains fiery it remains ‘alive.’  

It is with great trepidation that I propose that there are alternative readings, namely, that a person who permits the domination of his or her life by anything but the Λόγος, such as becoming drunk, or acting in accordance with the cultural standards one sees within a non-reflective society, that person dies in some manner; he or she does not die physically, but acquires a wet soul, which produces the kind of death that one bears while still walking around the agora. With moisture being the opposite to “dryness,” the best kind of soul, we have the boundaries of the dialectic established.

Further, Kahn writes regarding 69 M, “These images (i.e., drunkard with a wet soul) serve not merely as an ornament of style but as the symbolic expression for a rigorous correlation between physical and moral-intellectual states of the psyche.” As we proceed downwards, we have in elemental terms the physical death of psyche into water (66 M, 36DK) in psychological terms the visual quenching of man in darkness followed the quenching of his consciousness in sleep; (48 M, 26DK), in psychophysical terms the moistening of the soul in drunkenness (69 M, 117DK below) and perhaps in

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136 J. R. Royse, “Heraclitus B 118 in Philo of Alexandria,” *S PhA*; (1997): 211-216, traces the history of scholarship on “αἰνη ξηρη” vs. ὑγ ξηρη, pointing out ultimately that in QG 2.12, Philo says, “But if the merciful God turns aside the flood of vices and makes the soul dry, He will proceed to quicken and animate the body with a purer soul, whose guide is wisdom.” 216
sensual pleasure generally (77 DK)(ψυχήσι...τέρψιν ή θανατον ύγρησι γενέσθαι) ("for souls, to become wet is pleasure or death"), which would correspond to the cattle-death of men who seek satiety and procreation (95 M, 29 DK). Even further: “…wisdom and excellence simply are dry conditions of the psyche” (his emphasis). Marcovich points out convincingly that αὔξως is the opposite of ὕγρως, which is most important in Fr. 69 M (126 DK). But this remains accurate in Kahn’s translation. Marcovich adds: “(this fragment) might just stress the necessity of keeping the soul dry (sober, in the first place, according to the Ethics of the Enlightener)." Penultimately, in this section, we turn to Frag. 97 M (25 DK):

a. Μόροι γὰρ μέζονες
b. Μέζονας μοῖρας λαγχάνουσι.

Marcovich: a. Greater deaths
b. gain greater portions (lots).

Diels: a. (Denn) größeres Todesgeschick
b. erlost größeres Lohn

Burnet, Wheelwright and Kahn have essentially the same translations.

Marcovich refers to Aeschylus’ Libation Bearers 911 where Orestes is talking to Clytemnestra and says, καὶ τὸν ὑπὸ ταῖνων Μοῖρ’ ἐπόροσεν μόρον (“Therefore, Fate has

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137 Marcovich Heraclitus, 360, argues against the authenticity of this fragment, contending that it comes from a Pythagorean source, and is a re-statement of his 66 M.

138 Kahn, Art and Thought of Heraclitus, 248.

139 Ibid. 249.

140 Marcovich, Heraclitus, 377.

141 Ibid., 378.

142 (μόρος : μοῖρα).
One of the issues is the word-play between μόρος and μοίρα.

Marcovich writes, “... the mean dooms of the many (say of the wealthy bourgeoisie of Ephesus) after a greedy life, ... filled only with earthly pleasures (cf Frag. 95, κεκόρηντα and Frag. 99) ζῶειν ἐθέλοντι means complete perdition and death already during the life (cf fr 99 μόρος γενέσθαι) (Emphasis in text). Hence, we see in Marcovich’s interpretation a recognition that spiritual death can occur during the life of an individual.

It is interesting that μοίρα, which generally means appointed fate, also means “that which is due the person, esteem and respect.” I conclude, therefore, that the living death of those dedicated to an outrageous life is precisely what they deserve, or that which is due them.

143 Marcovich, Heraclitus, 514.
144 LSJ, μοιρα, 1141, IV. 2.
We should now view Frag. 39 M (48 DK):

Τῶι . . τόξωι ἄνομα βίος, ἔργον δὲ θάνατος.

Marcovich: The name of the bow is life, but its work is death.

Diels: Des Bogens (βτός) Name also ist Leben (βτός), sein Werk aber Tod.

Burnet: The bow (βτός) is called life (βιος) but its work is death.

Wheelwright and Kahn have very similar translations.

Most commentators view this as an expression of the *coincidentia oppositorum*, but I suggest two things about the fragment:

Kahn points out that this is an example of a *grippos* or “riddle.” 145 There are two ancient Greek words for “bow,” (i.e., the weapon), τόξων and βιος. The difference between the latter and βιος, “life,” is simply the accent. This would be consistent with an “oracular” style that we spoke of at the beginning of this chapter. As such, it most likely has a meaning that is not apparent as a mere “word-play” between βτός and βιος. 146 We recall that the “bow” was the symbol of Apollo, who rained death upon the Greeks’ camp in *Il.* 1.52. But the arrows were a response to Calchas’ prayer because he had been sent away outrageously (κόκως) by Agamemnon (*Il.* 1.23). Recall the concern that Heraclitus had for “outrageous” behavior in Frag. 102 M, and while ὀβρης is not used in *Il.* 1.23, the character of the outrageous behavior is highlighted by the fierce punishment wrought by Apollo. I suggest that the βιος that Heraclitus refers to in this fragment might be the unexamined life, one that is characterized by Agamemnon’s passionate grasp of power.

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145 Kahn, *Art and Thought in Heraclitus*, 201-02.

146 Marcovich, *Heraclitus*, 192 points out that the pun was “already common enough in Heraclitus’ time.”
This is the kind of life (βιος) that leads to death. While his outrageous behavior did not produce his own death, it brought about a great deal of death to others.

In summary, Heraclitus had determined that the best kind of soul was a “dry” soul; then we found that passion is satisfied at the expense of the soul. This was exemplified by the drunken person who was scandalously directed by a beardless boy, and who had a “wet” soul. But for souls, it is death to become water. This suggests that outrageous behavior is productive of death of the soul.

2.4 The Restoration of Life after Death

Having determined that Heraclitus can be read where there is a suggestion of the death of the soul, we must now ask whether there are any options available to the one whose soul is dead. My belief is that we can find fragments that support a kind of return to life from the state of being dead.

Frag. 42 M (126 DK) offers another aspect of the dynamism within the world, where there is a dynamism between opposites, one becoming the other.

a. Τὰ ψυχρὰ θέρεται, θερμὸν ψύχεται,
b. ψυχρόν οἰκοεῖται, καρφαλέον νετίζεται.

Marcovich: a. What is cold warms, what is warm cools;
b. Moist thing becomes dry, dry (parched) thing becomes wet..

Kahn notes, “The word for ‘cools off’, psychetai, suggests an application to human souls (psychai). This presentation of the cold and the hot as if they were living beings reflects Heraclitus’ view of the underlying identity between the psyche and the physical elements.”

147 Kahn, *Art and Thought of Heraclitus*, 165.
While the task of incorporating an analysis of the Empedocles fragments would take us too far afield, it is interesting to note that Empedocles Frag. 111 (DK) includes a parallel to 42 M:

\[
θήσεις δ’ ἐξ ὀμβροῦ κελαινοῦ καϊριον ἀυχμόν ἀνθρώποις, θήσεις δὲ καὶ ἐξ ἀυχμοῦ ἑρείου ἰδὲ ἐξ ἀνθρώπου πεντάμα δενδρεότρεπτα, τὰ τ’ αἰθερι ναισκοῦται, ἀδεις δ’ ἐς Ἁίδος καταφθιμένου μένος ἀνδρός.
\]

After black rain you will bring dry weather in season for men, and too after summer dryness you will bring tree-nourishing showers (which live in air), and you will lead from Hades the life-forces of a dead man.\(^{148}\)

The most interesting element of this parallel is the last phrase, where a destroyed person is led out of Hades. This implies that there is some sort of reversibility that is being attributed to “death.”

We recall also Frag. 68, where the best soul is “dry.” The dialectic that exists where death occurs to the soul that has become moistened. But as there is a universal reversibility, (moist things become dry), a soul that has died from that moisture might dry-out. This describes an internal struggle, one that at times fails utterly; but it also suggests that life (i.e., dryness) can again come to that which is dead (i.e., moist).

Let us now examine Frag. 41 M (88 DK):

a. Ταῦτά τ’ ἐνι
b. Ζῶν καὶ τεθνηκός
c. Καὶ τὸ ἔγρηγορός καὶ τὸ καθεῦδον
 d. Καὶ νέον καὶ γηραιόν
e. Τάδε γὰρ μεταπεσόντα ἑκείνα ἐστι
f. Κάκείνα ... μεταπεσόντα ταῦτα

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\(^{148}\) M. R. Wright, *Empedocles: The Extant Fragments* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), 261. Wright notes that this fragment refers to Empedocles’ wonder-working ability as a physician, capable of actually modifying climatic conditions.
Marcovich:  a. As [one] and the same thing there exists in us
  b. Living and dead,
  c. And the waking and the sleeping,
  d. And young and old:
  e. For these things having changed round are those,
  f. And those things having changed round are these ones.

Diels:  a. Und es ist immer ein und dasselbe was in uns wohnt:
  b. Lebendes und Totes
  c. Und waches und Schlfendes und
  d. Junges und Altes.
  e. Denn dieses is umschlagend jenes
  f. Und. jenes zurck umschlagend dieses.

Note that Diels includes παλιν before μεταπεσόντα.

Burnet:  b.. The quick and the dead,
  c. The waking and the sleeping,
  d. The young and the old, are the same;
  e. The former are changed and become the latter, and
  f. The latter in turn are changed into the former.

Wheelwright: a. It is one and the same thing to be
  b. living or dead,
  c. awake or asleep,
  d. young or old.
  e. The former aspect in each case becomes the latter,
  f. and the latter again the former, by sudden unexpected reversal.

Kahn: a, The same…:
  b. living and dead,
  c. and the waking and the sleeping,
  d. and young and old.
  e. For these transposed are those,
  f. and those transposed again are these.149

Plutarch refers to this Fragment when he writes

…For what wonder if the separable be separated, if the soluble be dissolved, if the combustible be consumed, and the corruptible be corrupted? For at what time is death not existent in our very selves? As Heracleitus says, (DK 88) ‘Living and

149 Kahn, Art and Thought of Heraclitus, 70. It should be noted that Kahn questions τʼ ἐνι which “must be wrong and should be bracketed.” He also includes παλιν before μεταπεσόντα.
dead are potentially the same thing, and so too waking and sleeping, and young
and old; for the latter revert to the former and the former in turn to the latter’
(Cons. Appol., 106 E).

I believe that the key to the translation of this fragment is the distinction of
the meanings of ἐκεῖνος and τὰ ὑπάλληλα. When these two are used together, the former refers
to that which is “more remote in time, place or thought.”

My trans.  a. That which is within (us) is
b. living and dead,
c. and awake and asleep,
d. and young and old;
e. for the former (τῶν) is being changed into the latter (ἐκεῖνος),
f. and the latter (κακεῖνος) (is) being changed into the former (τὰ ὑπάλληλα).

Read this way, the living, awake and young are changed into dead, asleep and old;
but there is also a reversal, with the dead, asleep and old being changed into the former,
i.e., living, awake and young. This indicates a reversibility in nature, and is critical for
our understanding of the possibility of some recovery from “death,” whatever that might
mean.

Let us return to a prior discussion of Frag. 42 M:

a. Τὰ ψυχρὰ θέρεται, θερμὸν ψύχεται,
b. ψυγὸν οὐκαίεται, καρφαλέον νοτίζεται.

Marcovich:  a. Cold things become warm, warm thing becomes cold;
b. moist thing becomes dry, dry (parched) thing becomes wet.

If we recognize that “moisture” is what brings death to the soul, then we also see that “the
moist dries out,” or that there is some reversibility in spiritual death.

I would propose, however, that the idea of a death of the soul, along with its
ability to return to life, will explicate this fragment. For if a person adopts a life of vice
or behaves outrageously, then his soul would perish; but if at a later time, he or she somehow reverts to a recognition of the Logos, then there would be a reversibility of that prior death. Wheelwright, in discussing Logos, Wisdom and Intelligence, writes that such words suggest a metaphor. . . “intended to suggest the mysterious organizing power that pervades the universe as a whole, manifesting unlimited possibilities of comeback after defeat and of new creation after destruction and death.”

Let us now turn to a famous fragment dealing with death and immortality, Frag. 47 M (62 DK):

a. ἀθάνατοι θνητοί, θνητοὶ ἀθάνατοι
b. ζωντες τὸν ἐκείνων θάνατον,
c. τὸν δὲ ἐκείνων βίον τεθνεώτες

Marcovich: a. Immortals are mortal, mortals are immortals,
b. For (the former) live the death of the latter,
c. And (would ) die their life.

Diels: a. Unsterbliche: Sterbliche, Sterbliche: Unsterbliche,
b. denn das Leben dieser ist der Tod jener
c. und das Leben jener der Tod dieser.

Burnet: a. Mortals are immortals and immortals are mortals,
b. the one living the other’s death
c. and dying the other’s life.

Wheelwright: a. Immortals become mortals, mortals become immortals;
b. they live in each other’s death
c. and die in each other’s life.

Kahn: a. Immortals <are> mortal, mortals immortal,
b. living the others’ death,
c. dead in the others’ life.

Philo refers to this fragment when he writes:

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Wheelwright, Heraclitus, 72.
...the death of the body is the life of the soul, since the soul lives an incorporeal life of its own. In regard to this, Heracleitus, like a thief taking law and opinions from Moses, says: ‘we live their death and we die their life,’ intimating that the life of the body is the death of the soul. And what is called ‘death’ is the most glorious life of the first soul (QG. 4.152).

Here we have ancient support for the concept of the death of the soul being the result of some sort of human activity, i.e., “the life of the body.” While the Stoic/Orphic concept of the body as the sepulcher of the soul is not far off (See also Leg. 1.108) within the current framework, such “life of the body” could also refer to those activities that would be non-responsive to the Λόγος as a body of moral instruction. We shall deal with these Philonic comments in the chapter on Philo.

While some commentators (Marcovich,152 Kirk153) see this as an expression of the “unity of opposites,” Kahn proposes a “strong” reading that springs from the recognition that the ἀθανάτοι are universally recognized as the gods, and the θνητοὶ as humans. That the gods could die was considered “blasphemous,”154 but that mortals could become gods is supported both by epigraphic evidence and by the story of Heracles acceptance among the Olympians. Kahn also points out that there may be a connection with “the Euripedian verses in the Gorgias (492E) as evidence for the view that ‘perhaps we are truly dead’,” in connection with the σῶμα-σήμα relationship.155

152 Marcovich, Heraclitus, 241.
153 Kirk, Heraclitus: The Cosmic Fragments 95, 121, modifies his position on p. 145, where this fragment places itself “outside the class of simple assertions of the unity of opposites…”
154 Kahn, Art and Thought of Heraclitus, 219, who refers to Aristotle’s comment in Rhetoric 2.23 1399b5. “…It was a saying of Xenocrates that to assert that the gods had birth is as impious as to say that they die.” (Tr. W. R. Roberts, in Basic Works of Aristotle (ed. R. McKeon; New York: Random House, 1941), 1425.
155 Kahn, Art and Thought of Heraclitus, 220.
The issue among commentators is that they have not considered the possibility of reading the fragment through the lens of the “death of the soul.” This reading would have the interpretation: “that which is perhaps considered deathless, the ψυχή may itself die through acts generally considered outrageous, and that which is dead, namely the vicious ψυχή may itself come to life. Living the spiritual death of the depraved, such individuals can die to that life of depravity.” This would involve a conversion, a return to rationality on the part of an individual. It would also present an optional reading to a fragment often considered opaque.

Let us see if we can develop additional support for this sort of reading by referring to Frag. 48 M (26 DK):

Marcovich: Man
a. in the night
b. kindles a light for himself,
c. though his vision is extinguished;
    a. (namely) while sleeping;
    b. he touches the dead,
    c. Though awake,
    b. he touches the sleeper.

Diels: Der Mensch rührt (zündet sich) in der Nacht ein Licht an, wann sein Augenlicht erloschen. Lebend rührt er an dem Toten im Schlaf; im Wachen rührt er an den Schlfenden
Burnet: Man is kindled and put out like a light in the night-time.  

Wheelwright: As in the nighttime a man kindles for himself (ἄπτεται) a light, so when a living man lies down in death with his vision extinguished he attaches himself (ἄπτεται) to the state of death; even as one who has been awake lies down with his vision extinguished and attaches himself to the state of sleep.

Kahn: A man strikes (haptetai) a light for himself in the night, when his sight is quenched. Living, he touches (haptetai) the dead in his sleep; waking, he touches (haptetai) the sleeper.

Cleve: When a man dies and his eyes are extinguished, he (i.e., his fleeing soul) unites in happiness with light (i.e., with its recovered luster that it had in its pre-existence); living man asleep resembles the dead, for he, too, has his eyes closed (literally: because also his visual power has been [temporarily] extinguished); man awake resembles a man asleep (even though he has his eyes open because in both the awake and the sleeping the psyche is still moist and dark and has forgotten its descent).

The first issue to deal with in this fragment has to do with the actual text attributed to Heraclitus. Marcovich quotes Clement of Alexandria in Strom. 4. 22.141.1-2, which reads:

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' Ηρακλείτου λαβείν, ἀνθρώπος ἐν εὐφρόνη φάσις, ἀπτεται ἐκείνῳ ὀποθανὼν, ἀποσβεσθεῖς ὄψεις, ζῶν δὲ ἀπτεται τεθνεώτος εὐδοκιον, ἀποσβεσθεὶς ὄψεις: εὐρήγορος ἀπτεται εὐδοκιον
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Marcovich brackets the underlined words, which if included would read

(Heraclitus holds): A person touches night in himself, when dead and his light quenched; and alive, when he sleeps he touches the dead; and awake, when he shuts his eyes, he touches the sleeper.

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156 Burnet, following Bywater, does not accept the last sentence in the fragment. Wheelwright contends that this is “overly cautious editing” (p. 146).


158 Eng. Trans in ANF, 2.435. There is a translational note that says, “As it stands in the text the passage is unintelligible, and has been variously amended successfully.”
By not translating ἀποθανόν, the entire meaning is radically changed.

Marcovich’s reason for not including the word is that

Fruchtel, in the edition of Stromateis [Berlin, 1950, 531] cannot be taken seriously. Hölcher’s suggestion (Festgabe Reinhardt, 78): [ἐαυτῷ ἀποθανόν,] ‘indem er sich selber stirbt, d.h. den Sinnen abstirbt,’ is not likely (and his references to ep. Rom. 6,2; ep. Gal. 2,19 was not happy, because ἀποθνῄσκειν means there ‘renounce’, LSJ, s.v. III).159

The result is that Marcovich contends that this is another “unity of opposites” fragment. Wheelwright, however, contends that this “offers one of the most mysterious statements, and I suspect one of the most important…”160 He includes the ἐαυτῷ ἀποθανόν in his expression of the fragment, and then comments extensively about the duality of meaning of the word ἀπτώ, “touch,” and “kindle.” However, Wheelwright focuses on the normal meaning of death, where a person whose sight is extinguished, both attaches himself to being a dead man, and “bursts into flame.” He suggests that this implies some sort of survival after death.161 At least we have one person who accepted the text found in the Stromateis.

This fragment yields itself to a totally different form of reading, namely through the lens that the soul dies through a life dominated by outrageous behavior. Cleve’s translation has a few problems distinct from the others:

a. It presumes a soul that flees; this is more than we have read into ψυχή up to now.

b. Assumes pre-existence of the soul. Same comment as above.

159 Marcovich, Heraclitus, 244.
160 Wheelwright, Heraclitus, 76.
161 Ibid. 75.
c. ἄπτω has no given meaning of “resemble” in *LSJ*.

But the foregoing objections do not affect the important insights that Cleve affords in that it also includes the idea that Heraclitus is indeed referring to some sort of death of the soul. Using the text of Wheelwright and the insights of Cleve, I would propose a different translation:

**My Trans:** A man in the night (whose soul) has died (can) kindle a light for himself, the vision (of his soul) having been extinguished; a living man joins the dead while sleeping, his (physical) vision being extinguished; awake, (i.e., physically) he joins the sleeping, (i.e., those who have no psychic vision).

This interpretation indicates that a human being has the possibility of becoming “enlightened,” i.e., can be responsive to the *Logos* even though he happens to be blind, or even (spiritually) dead. This affords a place for the disputed [ἀποθανόν]. This becomes a morally optimistic statement, implying that a spiritually dead person can somehow recover the light of reason. Heraclitus joins this with the metaphor that as a person is blind to the world while sleeping; he repeats that a person can be physically awake, but yet blind to the *Logos*. This is consistent with his general disparagement of “the many.”

The benefit is that ἄπτω makes sense, with the word-play consistent. It does not presume an anachronism as to the separate existence of the soul, either prior to birth or after death.

Let us see how we can deal with another related fragment, 49 M (21 DK)

- a. Θάνατος ἔστιν ὁκόσα ἐγερθέντες ὁρέομεν,
  b. ὁκόσα δὲ εὐδοντες ὑπνος.

Marcovich: a. What we see when awake is death,
     b. And what we see when asleep is life (reality).

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162 *LSJ, ἄπτω*, 231
Diels: a. Tod ist alles, was wir erwacht schauen,  
b. was aber in Schlummer Schlaf. (Dämmerung), <was aber in Tode, Leben>.

Burnet: a. All the things we see when awake are death,  
b. even as the things we see in slumber are sleep.

Wheelwright: a. Whatever we see when awake is death;  
b. when asleep, dreams.

Kahn: a. Death is all the things we see awake;  
b. all we see asleep is sleep.

One issue is the last word: Marcovich reads ὑπάρχειν, “a waking vision, opposite to ἐναρχεῖν, reality.” (LSJ). Diels reads ὑπνοεῖ and is joined in this by Burnet, Kahn and Wheelwright. Kahn has commented on the opacity of this fragment, (reading ὑπνοεῖ) pointing out that there is no symmetry in the “riddle.” Marcovich has indeed provided the symmetry, but does it make sense? I suggest that it does if and only if we read it through the lens of the possibility of spiritual death while being physically alive. “Sleep” becomes a metaphor for unconsciousness while being physically awake; we saw this metaphor in Frag. 48 M previously.

I should like to point out that LSJ includes in the definition of εὐδοκέω a sense of being “at rest,” or “inactive.” The “inactivity” implies the refusal to exercise one’s critical intellectual capacity as well as one’s physical abilities. I shall assume this meaning.

Hence, my translation is, reading ὑπάρχειν:

a.What we see when conscious is the (spiritual) death (around us; i.e., Frag. 1)  
b. What we see when intellectually inactive is the reality (of human experience).
This is a fairly pessimistic outlook and is parallel to Frag. 1; the normal state of affairs is to walk around “unconscious” and in that state, we see everyone else, just like ourselves. That is the “reality.”

We now turn to Frag. 74 M (27 D)

a. ἀνθρώπους μένει ἀποθανόντας
b. ἀσσα σὺκ ἐλπονται οὐδε δοκέουσιν

Marcovich: When men die there awaits them what they neither expect nor even imagine.

Diels: Der Menschen wartet, wenn sie gestorben, was sie nicht hoffen noch wähnen.

Burnet, Wheelwright and Kahn offer essentially the same translations. This was quoted by Clement of Alexandria, within a context of hope for the afterlife. The ANF translation is “there awaits man after death what they neither hope nor think.” He has already quoted Socrates in the Phaedo “good souls depart hence with good hope.” Marcovich suggests that “it implies the survival of soul after death. (so e.g. Zeller 892, Guthrie 477). Marcovich sides with the suggestion that given survival after death there is a threat of punishment.

I would propose an alternative translation:

My Trans: When a person is dead there await consequences that they (the walking dead) have not formed an opinion about.
Marcovich comments that fragment likely implies something about the soul’s survival after physical death. But there may be a possibility that the aphorism does not have to presuppose life after physical death; it may refer to the living death of a “walking corpse.” Clement perhaps alluded to this when he wrote: (Protr. I. 12) “thou shalt be what thou dost not hope, and canst not conjecture.” The context of this fragment is the discussion of moral excellence, not necessarily physical death. Hence, it may refer to the death that the soul experiences when it becomes wet, or it may even be read as offering a hope that if a person has a wet soul and is therefore a walking corpse, there may be a ray of hope that some form of renewal of life could occur.

Finally, we return to Frag. 67 M (45 DK):

a. Ψυχῆς πείρατα ἵνα σῶς ἀν ἐξεύροιο,
b. Πᾶσαν ἐπιγενόμενον ὀδὸν
c. Οὔτω βαθῶν λόγον ἔχει.

My translation was (p. 31):

a. By setting off you would never find the limits of the soul
b. Traveling over all the roads,
c. It has such a profound principle (to tell).

First, the image is one of a journey; but it may be a metaphorical journey. I would like to propose that it is more than a metaphor; it describes the reality of the interior journey of a person’s soul as it engages the reality of a world that has clear and distinct shortcomings. Heraclitus has condemned the status-quo of his social environment and has condemned the religious framework of that society. He has announced to his hearers that they ought to listen to the Logos, and if they fail, there are dire consequences. The character of these consequences is precisely what we have

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166 Marcovich, Heraclitus, 401.
examined: a kind of death not clearly spelled out, but clearly different from physical
death. Heraclitus does not describe what the exact character of the journey. We do know
that the journey may involve failure, but also that such failure can be rectified. There is a
two-fold road, “the road up and the road down,” (Frag. 33 M, 60 DK) and there is a
reversibility between life and death. This reversibility is explained if we read it through
the lens that the death Heraclitus is referring to is death of the soul; and that there is a
kind of resurrection to those who have somehow died, but then re-engage the Logos.

2.5 Summary
Let us now summarize where we have come.

I first discussed the reality that interpretation of aphoristic, prophetic texts
involved solving a riddle; that the hermeneutic was to propose a “lens” through which the
texts are read. If the result is one that elucidates elements of the text previously opaque,
then I claim that it is a preferable reading to prior readings which did not use the “lens”
proposed.

However, prior to focusing on the texts that dealt with death, it was necessary to
build on other fragments, involving a discussion of how Heraclitus viewed the ψυχή, and
whether the Λόγος might be best understood as a standard in which a moral discourse
within the individual human person might take place. We discovered that certain words,
rooted in φρον- did not mean “knowledge” or “intellection,” but were words that implied
an understanding oriented towards action subject to moral judgment. Finally, we
analyzed what the consequences were of refusing either to engage in a moral discourse or
to select a standard other than the Λόγος. That result was “death of the soul.” However,
it was also discovered that this does not presume a permanent state, but one where some sort of revivification is available. Hence, Heraclitus does not propose a totally negative position, but one where a reversibility is available.

We shall now move on to discuss the contribution of Philo of Alexandria as one thinker who parted from his mentor, Plato, in many areas insofar as he relied on Scripture as much as on traditional Hellenistic texts; but in one important area that we shall explore, he insisted on the idea that a soul could die.
CHAPTER 3:

PHILO OF ALEXANDRIA

We now approach the work of Philo of Alexandria, who developed a well-thought-out conception of the death of the soul. This concept evolved out of a deep sense of morality that was rooted in the exegesis of Jewish Scripture in the form of the LXX.

The approach that I shall take in elucidating this concept in Philo will be as follows:

First, I shall investigate the issue of Philo’s knowledge of Heraclitus, insofar as our reading in the last chapter concluded that a refusal by someone to follow the dictates of the Logos would produce a real kind of death within oneself. We ask if there is any evidence that Philo read Heraclitus or had knowledge of his thought.

Second, I shall sketch Philonic anthropology, including his conception of the soul. This anthropology is rooted in Platonic and Stoic cosmology but strongly influenced by the creation stories in Genesis.

Third, I shall discuss Philonic morality, with its powerful adoption of a Greek sense of virtue as the goal of one’s life; but as with Philo’s cosmology, his idea of virtue arose both out of his Hellenistic background as well as out of the Jewish Scriptures. I shall focus on his concept of “true life” as the goal of a virtuous person.

Fourth, I shall focus on the consequences that Philo visualizes as the result of a person’s choice of a life modeled on the opposite of virtue, often described as vice. We
will see the consequences of such a life. Others have already focused on this phrase as a consequence of leading a life of vice, but they generally visualize the phrase “death of the soul” as a metaphor,\textsuperscript{167} or as a description of the state of a person’s soul after that person permits passion, instead of reason, to dominate his or her actions.\textsuperscript{168} Instead, I shall demonstrate from Philo’s writings that he did not always see this phrase as a mere metaphor, but that the “death of the soul” for a human being involved an ontological change in the person insofar as he or she effectively changed his or her nature, thus reducing him or her in the hierarchy of being to an ontological state lower than properly human, i.e., to that of the beasts. There are some cases where Philo’s verbiage is metaphorical, but it is important to see that his intent is not limited to metaphorical language.

Fifth and finally, I shall discuss the fact that Philo sees a dynamic within persons such that a movement from a state of death to that of life is possible, i.e., repentance, as a change from an old state of being to a new one, is possible through instruction and God’s grace.

Hence, this chapter will have the following subdivisions: 3.1, Philo’s Knowledge of Heraclitus, 3.2, Philo’s Anthropology, 3.3, Philo’s Conception of True Life, 3.4, Philo’s Conception of Death of the Soul, 3.5, Philo’s Conception of Repentance and Recovery of Life, and 3.6, Conclusion.

\textsuperscript{167} Zeller, “The Life and Death of the Soul,” 20. However, Zeller then adds that “the life of the soul is ‘true’ life, and those who have died with regard to their soul are ‘truly’ dead.”

\textsuperscript{168} Wasserman, “The Death of the Soul in Romans 7,” 110-112.
3.1 Philo’s Knowledge of Heraclitus

Let us begin with a discussion of Philo’s knowledge of Heraclitus’ work. Philo clearly knew the works of Heraclitus; there are five references in Philo’s works to this early Ephesian thinker:

In *Leg.* 1.107-8 we have a critical section where there is an explicit citation of Heraclitus dealing with the death of the soul. Philo continues by affirming the statement of Heraclitus (believed by Philo to have been borrowed from Moses) that “we live their death, and are dead to their life” (ζωμεν τον έκεινων θανατου, τεθνηκαμεν δε τον έκεινων βιου).\(^{169}\) We shall deal with the interpretation of this phrase later in the chapter; at present, it is important to know only that Philo knew of the passage and quoted it favorably.

Additionally, in *Leg.* 3.7, we have a specific citation regarding a person having a sexually transmitted disease (γονορρυης) who is full of darkness, with no divine illumination. He is one who derives the source of everything from the world alone, “associating himself with the opinion of Heracleitus, in his advocacy of such tenets as ‘fullness and want’ (κόρον και χρησμοσύνην)\(^{170}\) that the ‘universe (is) one’ (ἐν τὸ πᾶν)\(^{171}\) And ‘all things interchange’ (πάντα ἀμοιβῇ εἰσάγων).”\(^{172}\)

In *Her.* 214 we have another citation, this time to the relation of the whole to its parts in opposition. While Philo claims that Moses included the same thought, he does

\(^{169}\) Frag. 47 M (62 DK).

\(^{170}\) Frag. 44 M (111 DK) mentions κόρος, but uses a synonym, λιμός for χρησμοσύνη.

\(^{171}\) Frag. 25 M (10 DK) ἐκ πάντων ἐν καὶ ἐξ ἐνὸς πάντα.

\(^{172}\) Frag. 41 M (88 DK), ... τάδε γὰρ μεταπεσόντα ἐκεῖνα ἐστὶ κάκεινα μεταπεσόντα ταὐτα.
refer to the Heraclitean doctrine of the opposition of parts as some sort of rule (ἐκ τοῦ αὐτοῦ τὰ ἐναντία τιμημάτων λόγων ἔχοντα ἀποτελεῖσθαι...). The unity of opposites has been seen as central to Heraclitus’ theory of the soul.\textsuperscript{173}

In \textit{Aet.} 111, Philo cites Heraclitus favorably, “Well, too, spoke Heraclitus when he says (εὐκαὶ ὁ Ἡράκλειτος ἐν οἷς φησὶ) ‘it is death for souls to become water, death for water to become earth (ψυχὴς θάνατος ὕδωρ γενέσθαι, ὕδατι θάνατος γῆν γενέσθαι’).’\textsuperscript{174} We have seen above that this is an important part of Heraclitus’ perspective on the person in his/her moral struggle.

We find in \textit{QG} 3.5 that Philo cites Heraclitus while he undertook an exegesis of Gen. 15:10 (“He (Abraham) brought him (God) all these (heifer, goat, ram, birds) and cut them in two, laying each half over against the other; but he did not cut the birds in two”). Philo asked the meaning of division and separation in opposition. He concluded that divisions exist within an explanation of nature\textsuperscript{175} as well as within the human soul (rational vs. senses,)\textsuperscript{176} and that the world is also divided into mountains and plains, sweet and salt water;\textsuperscript{177} further, we have winter and summer,\textsuperscript{178} spring and fall. He continues to say, “And setting out from this fact, Heracleitus wrote books \textit{On Nature}, getting his opinions on opposition from our theologian and adding a great number of

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\textsuperscript{173} Edward Hussey, “Heraclitus,” 93.
\textsuperscript{174} Frag. 66 M (36 DK) ψυχής ἔτωρ γενέσθαι, ὕδατι ἰ ἰ θάνατος γῆν γενέσθαι.
\textsuperscript{175} Frag. 1 M (1 DK).
\textsuperscript{176} Frag. 13 M (107 DK).
\textsuperscript{177} Frag. 35 M (61 DK).
\textsuperscript{178} Frag. 77 M (67 DK).
\end{flushright}
laborious arguments to them.” Clearly, Philo was making the same allegation of a borrowing from Moses as he did in *Heres* 214 above.

There are numerous allusions to Heraclitus, especially regarding Frag. 8 M (123 DK), φύσις κρύπτεσθαι φιλεῖ.179 And we find two additional allusions to Frag. 33 M (60 DK), ὁδὸς ἄνω κάτω μία καὶ ὑπνή.180 The formula, of universal unity (ἐν τὰ πᾶντα) is likely an allusion to Frag. 25 M (10 DK).181 Finally, there is a comment about ἁνεκρὸν καὶ κοπρίων, ὡς ἐφή τις, ἐκβλητότερον (a corpore being more worthy to be cast out than dung, as someone said), which is undoubtedly an allusion to Frag 74 M (24 DK).182 Plus, we have an allusion to Frag. 6 M (101a DK), insisting on the superiority of eyes over ears.183

The importance of the above five examples and nine allusions184 is that Philo was well acquainted with Heraclitus. The issue of how Heraclitus’ writings were transmitted is rather murky, to say the least. Jaap Mansfeld has proposed that there existed a cento of quotations from Heraclitus, Empedocles and others that circulated among various Middle-Platonists around the time of Philo.185 He builds on the work of Walter Burkert’s paper “Plotin, Plutarch und die platonisierende Interpretation von Heraklit und Empedokles,” wherein “precisely similar concatenations are found in Middle Platonist


181 *Spec.* 1.208.

182 *Fug.* 61.

183 *Spec.* 4.60.


and Neoplatonist authors,“186 where there is a diversity of quotations have been interwoven into a cento, or a document composed of a variety of quotations from different authors. Mansfeld suggests the date to be prior to Philo, and that Philo did in fact have access to it and use it.187 As we progress in the analysis of Philo’s works, we will periodically turn our attention to this cento.

Regardless of how Philo came by his Heraclitean texts, either by having a text at hand or through the cento, by suggesting that Heraclitus “borrowed” from Moses, Philo gave Heraclitus authority, though he did, indeed, have some reservations about the cosmology that he found in the Ephesian.188 I want to make my purpose clear in this section. First, Philo had Heraclitus’ writings in some form, and held him generally in high esteem. Second, I have shown above that one can read Heraclitus within the framework of moral discourse. The description of the “most beautiful cosmos” as a pile of sweepings189 makes a moral statement and introduces death into the discourse.190 Third, within this moral discourse, if one opens oneself to the idea that Heraclitus himself suggested that moral failure was tantamount to some sort of non-physical death, then we have an early source for Philo’s rejection of the Platonic position that all souls survive physical death and are distinct from the body.

186 Mansfeld, Cento, 135.
188 In Leg. 3.7, Philo suggests that Heraclitean doctrine introduces insolence and poverty, that the world is one, and other doctrines. The context is not favorable.
189 Frag. 107 M (DK124)
190 M. Heidegger and E. Fink, Heraclitus Seminar, 64. “The κάλλιστος κόσμος can be characterized as a confused heap not only in reference to the ἐν and πῦρ but also in reference to the other ἐν, which first comes to view with the dimension of death.”
There is a danger, however, that in reading an ancient, fragmentary text, one can “read too much into it.” Instead of exegeting a text, teasing out what is inherently there, there is a danger of eisegesis, inserting within the text the preconceived desires of the interpreter. This is the danger of allegorical interpretation, not only by ancient authors, but even by modern scholars.

3.2 Philo’s Anthropology.

3.2.1 General Anthropology

Prior to describing how Philo visualizes the makeup of a human person, it is important to see where he places humans in the entire cosmos. We read the following from De agricultura (Agr. 139), where Philo is describing the ways various persons divide up the world.

Τῶν ὄντων τὰ μὲν ἐστὶ σώματα, τὰ δ’ ἀσώματα· καὶ τὰ μὲν ἰδρυμα, τὰ δὲ ψυχῆν ἔχουσαν· καὶ τὰ μὲν λογικά, τὰ δ’ ἄλογα· καὶ τὰ μὲν θυμικά, τὰ δὲ θεία· καὶ τῶν θυμικῶν τὸ μὲν ἀρρεν, τὸ δὲ θηλυ, τὰ ἀνθρώπου τμῆματα.

…of existences, some are corporeal, some incorporeal; some are lifeless, some others have life; some are rational, others are irrational, some are mortal, others

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192 The best example I came across is within the Heraclitus Seminar, p. 106, where Eugen Fink interprets 90 DK (54 M) regarding the mutual exchange of fire for τὰ πάντα, equating that of the exchange of gold for needful things. Fink remarks, “May we comprehend the relatedness of ἐν and πάντα so bluntly? Clearly not. The comparison becomes clearer, if we do not take gold only as a specific coinage…but if we rather notice the glimmer of gold which is a symbol of the sunny. Then the sunny, illuminated gold behaves to the goods like ἐν to τὰ πάντα…” This is an allegorical interpretation worthy of Philo. And it suffers from the same weakness of any allegorical interpretation, the lack of independent validation of the allegorical relationship.
are divine; and of mortal beings, some are male, some are female; distinctions which apply to humanity.\textsuperscript{193}

Now in Agr., Philo is describing “divisions” that occur in various sciences, and as proposed by Sophists. However, I suggest that this indicates, for Philo, a hierarchy of “being.”

Further, in Anim. Philo engages in a discussion with his nephew, Alexander, who is desirous of demonstrating that in a large number of cases, animals exhibit characteristics that can be interpreted as though they participated in reason. The work is in dialogue form, with the greatest majority of the text being placed in Alexander’s mouth. However, Philo ultimately rejects Alexander’s position, calling it “sacrilege,” and the “height of injustice.” (Anim. 100)\textsuperscript{194}

\textsuperscript{193} Unless otherwise indicated, English translations and Greek texts are from LCL, (trans. Colson and Whitaker; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1929-1981).

\textsuperscript{194} A. Terrian, Philonis Alexandrini De Animalibus (Chico CA: Scholars Press, 1981), 35.
Abraham Terian provided a proposed exemplification of Philo’s cosmology:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{δυνα} \\
(\text{existences}) \\
\text{σωματα} \quad \text{ασωματα} \\
(\text{corporeals}) \quad (\text{incorporeals}) \\
\Psi ΥΧΗΝ \ ΕΞΟΝΤΑ \\
\text{ANIMATE} \quad \text{Δψυχα} \\
(\text{inanimates}) \\
\Lambda ΟΓΙΚΑ \quad \Lambda ΛΟΓΑ \\
(RATIONALS) \quad (\text{irrationals}) \\
\text{θνητα} \quad \text{θεια} \\
(\text{mortals}) \quad \text{vine existences}) \\
\text{αρρεν} \quad \text{θηλυ}^{195} \\
(\text{male}) \quad \text{female})^{195}
\end{array}
\]

Terian comments that this “constitutes the metaphysical pyramid of his understanding of the universe…”^{196}

Further, we read in Opif. 65 that:

…of the forms of life, the least elaborately wrought has been allotted to the race of fish; that worked out in greatest detail and best in all respects to mankind; that which lies between these two to creatures that tread the earth and travel in the air. For the principle of life in these is endowed with perceptions keener than that in fishes, but less keen than that in men.^{197}

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195 Ibid.
196 Ibid.
197 Arthur O. Lovejoy, The Great Chain of Being (New York: Harper and Row, 1936), 58-59, attributes the concept of a hierarchy of being primarily to Aristotle, with the concept being only a “vague
Plato\textsuperscript{198} makes scant reference to this kind of “superiority” and “inferiority” in his work; but he describes the compulsion of a prisoner in the Myth of the Cave to look towards the light; and “when he is approaching nearer to being and his eye is turned towards more real existence (\(\nu\nu \; \delta\varepsilon \; \mu\alpha\lambda\lambda\nu \; \tau\iota \; \varepsilon\gamma\gamma\nu\tau\epsilon\rho\omega \; \tau\iota\nu \; \delta\nu\tau\varsigma \; \kappa\iota \; \pi\rho\omicron\; \mu\alpha\lambda\lambda\nu \; \delta\nu\tau\alpha \tau\rho\alpha\omicron\mu\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron \; \omicron\rho\omicron\beta\omicron\omicron\tau\epsilon\omicron\omicron \; \beta\lambda\′\omicron\omicron\alpha\omicron\iota\)) he has a clearer vision.”\textsuperscript{199} The key phrase “more real existence,” clearly suggests hierarchy. He further describes the different metaphysical states of the world by writing, “…the instrument of knowledge can only by the movement of the whole soul be turned from the world of becoming into that of being…” (518c).

Additionally, in the \textit{Timaeus} Plato describes the result of those who “were cowards or led unrighteous lives may be supposed to have changed into the nature of women in the second generation” (90e). While the “second generation” refers to how a soul, after death, will return to earth, the important feature is that there is a hierarchy of being, and women rank lower on that hierarchy than men. This is reinforced in \textit{Tim.} 42c.

\textsuperscript{198} I shall not engage in a detailed discussion of how Philo knew Plato; but David Runia, \textit{Philo of Alexandria and the Timaeus of Plato} (Kampen: VU Boekhandel, 1983) has amply demonstrated that Philo was acquainted with the original text of the \textit{Timaeus}, 428; and two other scholarly sources, John Dillon and Gretchen Reydams-Schils both are of the opinion that Philo did not rely primarily on a handbook of philosophy, such as we find by Alcinous, but that Philo had some of Plato’s texts at hand. John Dillon, \textit{The Middle Platonists}, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), 140; and Gretchen Reydams-Schils, \textit{Demiurge and Providence}, (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 1999), 139. Supporting their position is a section in \textit{Aet.} 25-26, where Philo quotes virtually verbatim a section from Timaeus, 32c-33b, consisting of 124 words, and in \textit{Aet.} 38 quoting \textit{Tim.} 33c, consisting of a 42 word quote, both of which are virtually identical to our current text of Plato. I accept Colson’s argument in the Introduction to \textit{Aet.} that it is indeed a work of Philo.

\textsuperscript{199} \textit{Republic} 7.515d.
where additionally, “…if, when in that state of being, he did not desist from evil, he
would continually be changed into some brute…”

Further, Philo may well have arrived at his idea of a metaphysical hierarchy by
(perhaps) having read Aristotle, *De generatione animalium* where he writes:

Of things which are, some are eternal and divine, others admit alike of being and
not-being, and the beautiful and the divine acts always in virtue of its own nature,
as a cause which produces that which is *better* in the things which admit of it;
while that which is not eternal admits of being (and not-being), and of acquiring a
share both in the better and in the worse; also, the soul is better than body, and a
thing which has soul in it is better than one which has not, in virtue of that soul,
and living than non-living.

There is a parallel passage in *De Anima*, where Aristotle points out that powers,
such as sensation or intellection, exist in a succession. “The cases of figure and soul are
exactly parallel; for the particulars subsumed under the common name in both cases—
figures and living beings—constitute a series, each successive term of which potentially
contains its predecessor…” Philo includes the ideas of Plato and Aristotle regarding
the hierarchy of being in *Deus* 37-47 where he describes the fact that plants have
sensation but not locomotion; animals have locomotion but not intellection; and human
beings have all three, and are hence in a superior position cosmologically than either
plants or animals.

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200 Additional Platonic references to the soul of an unrighteous person’s being re-incarnated as a beast are *Phaedrus* 250e where a person refuses the call to “rise out of this world,” and “like a brutish beast (τετραπόδος)…rushes on to enjoy and beget…”; also *Phaedo* 82; *Republic* 10. 617-621.


202 Aristotle, *De. an.* 2. 3 414b 29-415a 13.
Essentially, Philo’s hierarchy looks like the following:

Pure Being (τὸ ὄν)

Intermediate Divinities (δημιουργός, Λόγος)

Rational Animals (ἄνθρωποι)

Irrational Animals (ἀλογικά)

Plants (φύτα)

Inanimates (ψυχοί)

For Philo, the specific difference between irrational animals and rational animals is the presence of mind (νοῦς) in humans. We read in *Heres* 231, τὸν καθ’ ἐκαστὸν ἕμων νοῦν, ὅς ἀπὸ κυρίως καὶ πρός ἀλήθειαν ἀνθρωπός ἐστι, (“...the mind in each of us, which in the true and full sense is the ‘man’...”). Of course, this is characteristic of Platonic thought, as indicated in *Laws* 12. 961d, where the Athenian identifies the mind as the “salvation of all.”

David Runia has convincingly shown that Philo has transformed the Platonic transmigration of souls into a hierarchy of being, with humans who properly utilize their minds to contemplate the heavenly realities as being superior to animals whose necks are so formed that they view primarily the things of the earth. Further, in *Gig.* 31, this hierarchical ordering is applied to individual humans who choose to live a life devoted to

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203 Terian, *De animalibus*, 36. See also *Opif.* 62-68 expressing a hierarchy of animate beings.

204 Runia, *Philo of Alexandria and the Timaeus of Plato*, 305.
their passions and refuse to focus on the things of heaven; these individual become like quadrupeds.\textsuperscript{205}

This becomes important, since for Philo, the hierarchy is metaphysical,\textsuperscript{206} and individual human beings have the opportunity of motion up or down the scale of being. For instance, a righteous person, when she or he dies, moves up the scale from being “mortal, rational, animate” to the state of an “immortal.” Further, when an unrighteous person refuses the live by the dictates of reason, s/he moves down the scale of being to that of an ΑΛΟΓΑ.

3.2.2 The Soul, Visualized from Philo’s Greek Roots

First, Philo relies on his Platonic roots in contending that there are two parts of the soul in a person, that which is rational and immortal\textsuperscript{207} (or incorruptible)\textsuperscript{208} on the one hand, and that which is mortal\textsuperscript{209} or corruptible,\textsuperscript{210} namely the irrational part. Here we will have a problem, insofar as there is no expression of contingency in these texts, but Philo appears to follow the anthropology of Plato in ascribing immortality to the soul.\textsuperscript{211} We will see later than Philo ascribed immortality only contingently to a human soul,

\begin{footnotes}
\item[205] John Dillon, \textit{The Middle Platonists}, 137, wrote that “grades of being” was a characteristic of “a regular Middle-Platonic scheme.”.
\item[206] Runia, \textit{Philo and Timaeus}, 305. The metaphysical character of the hierarchy is fully demonstrated in \textit{De animalibus}, where “Alexander” proposes that animals have “rationality,” which is denied by Philo.
\item[207] Philo, \textit{Prob.} 46; \textit{Cong.} 97; \textit{Spec.} 1.81, Plato, \textit{Tim.} 42.
\item[208] Philo, \textit{Immut.} 46.
\item[209] Philo, \textit{Fug.} 69, τὸ θεητὸν ἡμῶν τῇ ψυχῆς.
\item[210] Philo, \textit{Leg.} 1.32.
\item[211] Plato, \textit{Tim.} 69C.
\end{footnotes}
depending upon the character of a person’s life. This may be another case where Philo’s limitation as a systematic philosopher is apparent.

Philo sees the soul as being entombed in the body, following Plato in *Phaedrus* 250d and *Gorgias* 403a, as he describes it in *Leg.* 1.108;²¹² *Somm.* 139; and *Spec.* 4.188. Additionally, Philo views the entombment of the soul in the body as creating a condition where there exists a warfare between the interests of the soul and those of the body (*Leg.* 3.69-71). In this passage, he calls the body “evil” and “wicked” (πονηρὸν καὶ δυσμενὲς κρίνει τὸ σῶμα). This position creates the framework for the basic moral conflict that Philo sees within a human being, to which we referred above. We have seen that Philo strongly affirmed the goodness of the human body, but he also used an image of a magnet which attracts a series of interconnected rings, the magnetic force of which declines with each ring. So is the race of humankind, whose moral strength has declined through time from the first human (*Opif.* 141). Thus, over time, the moral conflict rages within human beings, whose strength and ability to resist has degenerated over the ages.

In *De Abrahamo*, Philo elucidates the character of the moral struggle that exists within the soul of a person. “For it is impossible for the single soul to have for its tenant two hostile natures, vice and virtue (δῶς τὰς ἔχθρας φύσεις, κακίαι καὶ ἀρετῆς), and therefore when they meet factions and wars are set on foot incapable of truce and reconciliation” (*Abr.* 105). This parallels Plato’s image in *Rep.* 440c where he proposes that when a person’s “desires violently prevail over reason (βιαζωνταί τινα παρα τῶν λογισμῶν ἐπιθυμίων) he reviles himself, and is angry at the violence within him, and that

²¹² I shall show later that this approving quotation in *Leg.* from Heraclitus is, in fact, a non-sequitur in Philo’s discussion of the “death of the soul.” It simply does not follow.
in his struggle—which is like the struggle of factions in a State (ὡσπερ δυῶν στασιαζόντων σύμμαχον)—his spirit is on the side of reason” (Rep. 4.440 b 1-5). This establishes for Philo the existence of a moral struggle within a person, where there is warfare within the parts of his soul. We shall proceed to discuss exactly how Philo visualized the various parts of the soul.

His anthropology is neither purely Stoic nor purely (Middle) Platonic. On the one hand, he affirms the Platonic tri-partite structure of the soul itself. This Platonic tri-partition is found in Rep. 4.443d-444d, where the “Inner” person is referred to as being that which harmonizes the other two parts of himself and is at peace with himself. Additionally, we find in the Phaedrus the famous myth of the charioteer who must drive two horses of differing temperaments (Phaed. 246b-249d); and in Tim. 69c-71a, the “divine” part of which God was creator, and the “mortal” parts, one of which was located in the thorax, the other between the midriff and navel.

Philo follows this perspective, as in Leg. 1.70 we read the following:

We must observe, then, that our soul is threefold (τριμερής) and has one part that is the seat of reason (λογικόν) another that is the seat of high spirit (θυμικόν) and another that is the seat of desire (ἐπιθυμικόν). And we discover that the head is the place and abode of the reasonable part, the breast of the passionate part (θυμικόν), the abdomen of the lustful part (ἐπιθυμικόν); and that to each of the parts a virtue proper to it has been attached; prudence to the reasonable part (τῷ μὲν λογικῷ φρονήσιν), for it belongs to reason (λογισμόν) to have knowledge of the things we ought to do and of the things we ought not; courage (ἀνδρείαν) to the passionate part (τῷ δὲ θυμικῷ), and self-mastery to the lustful part (τῷ δὲ ἐπιθυμητικῷ σωφροσύνην). For it is by self-mastery that we heal and cure our desires.

One of Philo’s favorite images is rooted in the Phaedrus myth, where the soul is likened to a driver of a chariot drawn by two horses, one of which is responsive to commands and the other wild and untamed. He likens the soul often to such a driver, cautioning his
readers of the disaster that is sure to result to the entire chariot if the driver is unable to
control his horses.\textsuperscript{213}

In addition to this Platonic\textsuperscript{214} perspective on the soul’s parts, Philo also includes
the Stoic\textsuperscript{215} seven- or eight-fold division, consisting of the “rational part,” (\(\lambda\gamma\mu\kappa\zeta\)) and
seven others, constituting the irrational part: the five senses plus voice and reproduction.

(\(\omega\rho\alpha\varsigma\iota\zeta, \ \dot{\alpha}k\omicron\varsigma\dot{\eta}, \ \gamma\epsilon\upsilon\varsigma\iota\zeta, \ \delta\sigma\phi\rho\rho\varsigma\iota\zeta, \ \dot{\omega}f\eta, \ \phi\omicron\nu\nu\varsigma\epsilon\zeta, \ \gamma\omicron\nu\nu\mu\omicron\zeta\)). We read:

Our mind is indivisible in its nature. For the irrational part of the soul received a
six-fold division from its Maker who thus formed seven parts, sight, hearing,
taste, smell, touch, voice and reproductive faculty. But the rational part which was
named mind, He left undivided. In this he followed the analogy of the heaven
taken as a whole. For we are told that there the outermost sphere of the fixed stars
is kept un-severed, while the inner sphere by a six-fold division produces the
seven circles of what we call the wandering stars. In fact I regard the soul as
being in man what the heaven is in the universe. So the two reasoning and
intellectual natures, one in man and the other in all, prove to be integral and
undivided…(\textit{Her.} 232-233).\textsuperscript{216}

In each of these sections of Philo’s writings, the rational part, or mind, has as its
function to cause the other parts to exist in a subordinate manner.\textsuperscript{217} The “other parts”

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\textsuperscript{213} The chariot image occurs (but not necessarily with two mis-matched horses) in \textit{Leg.} 1.70-73; 3.193, 3.223; \textit{Sac.} 49; \textit{Det.} 141; and \textit{Agr.} 75-77.
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\textsuperscript{214} Anita Méasson, \textit{Du Cheval de Zeus à l’Arche d’Alliance}, (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1986), 142-176) points out that while Philo utilized the tri-partition of the soul as found in Plato’s \textit{Rep.} 4.440b-441a, he also utilized the image of the driver of the chariot controlling two horses, one easy to control, the other unruly, and the need to exercise control over the unruly steed, per the image in the \textit{Phaedrus}.
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\textsuperscript{216} See also, \textit{Her.}111; \textit{Opif.} 117;\textit{Pot.} 168; and \textit{QG} 1.75; in \textit{Abr.} 28-30 the eight are reduced to seven, excluding generation.
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\textsuperscript{217} Méasson, \textit{Du char}, also points out that Aristotle, in the \textit{Politics} 7.15, 1334b, 17-19, bifurcates the soul into the irrational and the rational (\(\alpha\lambda\omicron\nu\nu\ \kappa\omicr\tau\ \tau\omicron\ \lambda\omicron\nu\nu\)).
\end{flushright}
correspond to the Platonic “irrational soul,” “mortal soul,” or the “sensitive soul” appearing in *Tim.* 61.c, 65a, 69c, d, e and 72d.\(^{218}\)

Additionally, we must recall that this Stoic vision of the soul includes visualizing the individual as a fragment or particle of the World Soul. Diogenes Laertius attributes to Chrysippus, as well as to Apollodorus and Posidonius the concept that the world is a living being. He also writes that “…it is endowed with soul, as is clear from our several souls being each a fragment of it” (D. L., 7.143). We find a parallel in Philo, where he describes the human soul as a “fragment of the Divinity” (ἀπόσπασμα θειόν). We read the following in *Det.* 90:

How, then, was it likely that the mind of man being so small, contained in such small bulks as a brain or a heart, should have room for all the vastness of sky and universe, had it not been an inseparable portion of that divine and blessed soul (εἰ μὴ τῆς θείας καὶ εὐδαιμονος ψυχῆς ἐκείνης ἀπόσπασμα ἦν οὐ διαίρετον)? For no part of that which is divine cuts itself off and becomes separate, but does but extend itself. The mind, then, having obtained a share of the perfection which is in the whole, when it conceives of the universe, reaches out as widely as the bounds of the whole, and undergoes no severance; for its force is expansive.\(^{219}\)

A very important aspect of Philo’s thought is that it is the mind\(^{220}\) that causes a person to be precisely a human being. We read in *Opif.* 66 and *Her.* 55 that the mind to

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\(^{218}\) Méasson, *Du char*, 162, suggests that Philo was influenced by Ariston of Chios, who (according to Porphyry) divided the soul into two parts, the ἀληθητικόν and the νοῦς. Dillon (*Middle Platonists*, 174) comments that in *Q.G.* 2.59, Philo makes an Aristotelian division of the soul into θρεπτικόν, ἀληθητικόν and λογικόν. Dillon points out that while this might appear to be “chaotic eclecticism,” but “when the crunch comes, the spirit (thymos) and the passions (epithymia) are to be linked together in opposition to Reason.” This is the essential requirement for a moral discourse, the result of which leads to the character of one’s behavior.

\(^{219}\) See also, Leg. 3.161; Her. 34 and 183; Mut. 223; Somn. 134; Opif. 146. Reydams-Schils suggests that Philo made an “inspired use of the essentially Stoic parallel between the World Soul and the human soul,” *Demiurge*, 157.

\(^{220}\) Reydams-Schils, *Demiurge*: “…what Philo relates to a divine soul on the level of the universe is the human mind rather than the soul strictly speaking, and this is in line with the *Timaeus*,” 157.
the soul is as the pupil of the eye to the eye as a whole. This he may have borrowed from Aristotle, in *De Anima* 2. 1. 412b20, where we read:

Suppose that the eye were an animal—sight would have been its soul, for sight is the substance or essence of the eye which corresponds to the formula, the eye being merely the matter of seeing; when seeing is removed the eye is no longer an eye, except in name.

Thus, we have seen that Philo perceives the soul from the joint perspective of Plato and the Stoics, and even includes Aristotle. Both Platonic and Stoic thoughts involve the potential for internal conflicts within the person; for Plato, the conflict is between the rational and the irrational part of the soul; domination by the irrational soul results in a passing into an inferior ontological state, which will be discussed below, as one form of death of the soul in Philo. For the Stoics, the internal conflict occurs where the various sense experiences dominate a person’s action and resist the control of the mind as ἡγεμονικόν. Cicero described the Stoic theory of the soul within a framework of creating harmony with nature. He writes:

That which is in itself in accordance with nature…and which therefore is deserving of choice,…*axia* as the Stoics call it…this they pronounce to be ‘valuable’; and on the other hand that which is contrary of the former they term ‘valueless.’ The initial principle being thus established that things in accordance with nature are ‘things to be taken’ for their own sake, and their opposites similarly ‘things to be rejected,’ the first ‘appropriate act,’ (for so I render the Greek *kathēkon*) is to preserve oneself in one’s natural constitution…then, such choice becomes a fixed habit; and finally, choice fully rationalized and in harmony with nature. . . . It is at this final stage that the Good properly so called first emerges and comes to be understood in its true nature” (*De finibus* 3. 17-21).

This, of course, is totally in accord with *Tim. 47d*, where Plato describes virtue as a state of internal harmony among the three parts of the soul.

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221 LCL, trans. H. Rackham.
It should be pointed out that Philo was influenced by a combination of
philosophical and faith perspectives, though these were not segregated, but were different
ways of expressing a unitary vision of truth. “From his perspective he was a devoted
follower of Moses. Yet Philo’s Moses was not a Hebrew Moses; he was a Middle
Platonist. It is from this perspective that . . . we can speak of Philo as a representative of
Middle Platonism” (emphasis in original).222 Others have even refused to label him a
“philosopher,” but characterize him as a “Platonizing expositor of Scripture, showing a
marked preference for using Middle Platonist doctrines in his exegesis.”223 There seems
to be a consensus among contemporary Philonists, however, that Philo used the
contemporary philosophical tools available to him to demonstrate the intellectual
respectability of the philosophy of Moses. “His guiding principle was that Moses was a
great philosopher (in fact . . . a great Middle Platonist), that all parts of his work are
replete with philosophic content and are coherent and consistent with each other.”224
Nevertheless, he sometimes indicated a lack of concern for the principles that other
philosophers considered important. For example, as we saw above, he vacillated between
a “three-part Platonic” soul and a “seven or eight part Stoic” soul.225 Regardless of what
title is assigned to Philo, his sense of a coherence between the great Greek thinkers of his

Dillon, The Middle Platonists (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996) sees Eudorus and Philo as
constituting “evidence of a type of Platonism, heavily influenced by Pythagorean transcendentalism and
number mysticism, which, rather than the Stoicizing materialism of Antiochus, is the true foundation of
Middle Platonism.” 183.


224 Dillon, Middle Platonists, 143.

225 John Dillon, review of Reggiani and Radice, Filone di Alessandria: La Filosofia Mosaica, Studia
Philonica 2, (1990), 179, points out that whether the soul has two or eight parts is insignificant, as long as
the antithesis between the rational and irrational parts is maintained. “This attitude sets him at a slight angle
to the universe of Greek philosophy…but it does not mean that he is only ‘using philosophy’, or that he is
not himself a systematic philosopher.”
history and the content of the Scriptures laid the intellectual groundwork for centuries of Alexandrian thought by his intellectual successors who would interpret Scripture through the lens of Greek culture.

Philo considered Ethics as one of the three main branches of philosophic knowledge, along with Logic and Physics, but not necessarily in the same order as his Stoic predecessors, i.e., Physics-Ethics-Logic.\textsuperscript{226} We find that in \textit{Leg.} 1.57 and \textit{Spec.} 1.336 the pattern Logic-Ethics-Physics, but in \textit{Agr.} 14 we find Physics-Ethics-Logic. However, in the next paragraph, Philo states that Logic is the strongest protection to the other two.

\textsuperscript{226} Diogenes Laertius, \textit{Lives of Eminent Philosophers} (LCL) 7.39: “Philosophic doctrine, say the Stoics, falls into three parts: one physical, another ethical, and the third logical.”
3.2.3 The Soul Understood from Scripture.

While Philo was a well-educated Hellenist, he was primarily a scriptural exegete, and we expect his anthropology to be powerfully influenced by the LXX. Let us now analyze how Philo visualizes the soul of a human being, but based on his reading of Scripture. First, in Opif., Philo describes the creation of the first human,\textsuperscript{227} and shows his body to have been created in a faultless manner, having been enlivened by the in-breathing of God (Opif. 134). Additionally, his body was the most perfect ever created (Opif. 136.)\textsuperscript{228} And not only was the first man most perfect, but he was created with the possibility of immortality (Opif. 135). However, when the first woman was created, problems arose. When they first saw each other, love was immediately engendered along with a desire to generate similar beings (Opif. 152). However, this desire begat likewise bodily pleasure (σωμάτων ἠδονῆς ἐγένετο), that pleasure which is the beginning of wrongs and violation of law, the pleasure for the sake of which men bring on themselves the life of mortality and wretchedness (ὅτι ἦν ἱπαλλάθησαν τοῦ θυμοῦ καὶ κακοδαίμονα βίου) in lieu of that of immortality and bliss (Opif. 152).\textsuperscript{229}

\textsuperscript{227} I refer here to the creation Philo described in Gen 2:7, not that of 1:26-7, which for Philo was the creation of the invisible Idea of humans (Opif. 69-71). See also T. Tobin, The Creation of Man (CBAMS; Washington: Catholic Biblical Association, 1983), 20.

\textsuperscript{228} David Runia, Philo of Alexandria: On the Creation of the Cosmos (Leiden: Brill, 2001) comments about Philo’s positive attitude towards the body that, “. . . it is striking the light of Philo’s frequent inclination to a Platonizing devaluation of the corporeal,” 332.

\textsuperscript{229} David Winston, “Philo and the Rabbis on Sex and the Body,” Poetics Today 14, (1998): 41-62, quotes this text and affirms that the source of future problems related to the body are rooted in the perfectly natural passion that existed to provide for generation of future descendants. It is this passion that could be the source of moral problems.
Hence, pleasure is at the root of mortality. Here, Philo does not specify the kind of mortality that pleasure can bring about. But connecting mortality and wickedness might give us a suggestion as to where Philo will take us.

As to the character of the soul, we see that in two separate places, in *Opif.* 134-35 and in *Leg.* 1.33-43, Philo discusses Gen. 2:7, where God formed the human person out of the clay of the earth and breathed into his face the “breath of life.” This is an extremely important verse for Philo’s anthropology, as he explains: “... ‘Breathed-into’ (ἐνεφύσης)...is equivalent to ‘inspired’ or ‘be-souled’ (sic) the soul-less” (ἐνέπνευσεν ἦ ἐψύχωσε τὰ ἄψυχα) (*Leg.* 1.36).\(^{230}\) He continues to examine what “breathed into” means, and concludes that “that which inbreaths is God, that which receives is the mind (τὸ μὲν οὖν ἐμπνέον ἐστὶν ὁ θεός, τὸ δὲ δεχόμενον ὁ νοῦς) (*Leg.* 1.37).

Finally, Philo explains this process completely:

The breathing ‘into the face’ is to be understood both physically and ethically (φυσικῶς καὶ ἡθικῶς): physically, because it is in the face that He set the senses; for this part of the body is beyond other parts of the soul endowed with soul (ἐψυχωσαί): and ethically, on this wise. As the face is the dominant element of the body, so also is the mind the dominant element of the soul (ψυχής ἡγεμονικὸν ἐστὶν ὁ νοῦς): into this only does God breathe, whereas He does not see fit to do so with the other parts, whether senses or organs of utterance and of reproduction; for these are secondary in capacity. By what then were these subordinate parts inspired? By the mind, evidently. For the mind imparts to the portion of the soul that is devoid of reason a share of that which it has received from God, so that the mind was be-souled by God, but the unreasoning part by the mind. For the mind is, so to speak, God of the unreasoning part (*Leg.* 1.39-40).

Zeller has described two “proportions” in this description of the soul. The Mind is the “soul of the soul,” so that as

a) mind:soul = soul:body and

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\(^{230}\) See also, Tobin, *Creation of Man,* 109.
b) God: mind = mind:soul.\textsuperscript{231}

Thus, for Philo, alluding to this description, the mind is precisely the essence of a human being; lose the “mind” and there is a loss of the essence of the person.\textsuperscript{232}

Another aspect of Philo’s anthropology that we should address is the role of \(\text{πνεῦμα}\) and the person. First, we recall that \(\text{πνεῦμα}\) is closely related to breath (\(\text{πνοή}\)), and that God “in-breathed into Adam’s face the breath of life, and he became a living soul” (\(\text{ἐνεφώσεν εἰς τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ πνοήν ζωῆς καὶ ἐγένετο ὁ ἄνθρωπος εἰς ψυχήν ζῶσαν}\)). Secondly, given this close relationship, Philo sees the \(\text{πνεῦμα}\) as being rooted in God, and ultimately the source of its immortality. In \textit{Aet.} 111, Philo quotes the Heraclitus Fragment 66 M (36DK) where it is “. . . ‘death for souls to become water, death for water to become earth,’ for conceiving that soul is breath\textsuperscript{233} he indicates that . . . “by death he does not mean complete annihilation but transmutation into another element.” He writes elsewhere in \textit{Opif.} 135 that man is immortal as to his intellect, but participates in God through His spirit. We find this same concept in \textit{Leg.} 1.37, where, referring to Gen. 2:7, “that which is inbreathed is spirit or breath (sic) (\(\text{τὸ δὲ ἐμπνεόμενον τὸ πνεῦμα}\)).” It is this divine breath that animates a person.


\textsuperscript{232} In \textit{Her.} 231, Philo describes the creation in Gen 1:27 as being “after the image (of God),” (\(\text{κοτ’ ἐξ θεοῦ}.\), “And thus the mind in each of us, which in the true and full sense is the ‘man,’ is an expression. . . of the maker.” In \textit{Her.} 236, He contends that the mind has a resemblance to God, the creator and father of the universe (\(\text{τὴν πρὸς τὸν ποιητὴν καὶ πατέρα τῶν ὄλων ἐμφάνειαν}\)).

\textsuperscript{233} Lucia Saudelli, “La hodos anô kai katô d’Héraclite (Fragment 22B 60 DK/33M) dans le \textit{De Aeternitate Mundi} de Philon d’Alexandrie,” \textit{Studia Philonica} 19 (2007): 43 points out that Philo effectively interprets the \textit{pneuma} of Gen 1:2 as the air which flows up from the land (\textit{Gig.} 22), although Philo continues to explain that the \(\text{πνεῦμα}\) is the “pure knowledge in which every wise person shares” (\textit{Gig.} 23).
Saudelli suggests that Philo did, in fact, have access to texts other than those quoted by Diogenes Laertius (*Lives of Philosophers*, 9.1-17), insofar as in the texts quoted by Diogenes, there was no psychological vector that would relate the overall cosmological elements to the analysis of a person. Thus, we have another indication that Philo probably had Heraclitean texts in front of him, rather than handbooks.

While it may be more a cosmological than anthropological statement, Philo recognizes that evil is within the world, and that each person must deal with this reality. But evil cannot be grounded in God, and for this reason, assigns other “powers” to assist in the creation of human beings. In *Fug.* 68, he quotes Gen. 1:26, “Let us make man after our image,” pointing out the plurality of the speakers. He refers to the Father of Everything holding a discussion with His powers, “whom He allowed to fashion the mortal portion of our soul by imitating the skill shown by Him when He was forming that in us which is rational, since He deemed it right that by the Sovereign should be wrought the sovereign faculty in the soul, the subject part being wrought by subjects.”

Thus, “God deemed it necessary to assign the creation of evil things to other makers, reserving that of good things to Himself alone” (*Fug.* 70). We shall return the problem of evil later in this chapter, after we discuss the prior question of virtue, which was strongly affected by his reading of Scripture, as well as the Middle Platonic influences that underlay that reading. But it is important that his anthropology recognize both the struggle each person has with evil and its source as being other than God.

We shall now examine exactly what Philo understood as “virtue.”

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3.3 The Life of Virtue as True Life

3.3.1 Virtue in This Life

The word ἀρετή (virtue) appears in Philo’s work a total of nine hundred fifty-five times.235 It is a constantly repeated state that is highly valued and which constitutes the criterion for appropriate action on the part of a human being. Philo generally follows Greek predecessors in his approach to virtue. Plato, for instance, writes of the four cardinal virtues in his Republic, 4. 429a-431a as “wisdom” (σοφία), “courage” (ἀνδρεία), “temperance” (σωφροσύνη) and “justice” (δικαιοσύνη). It should be noted that such virtues were culturally conditioned, i.e., “courage” was that manly characteristic of willingness to participate in military activities, and was the opposite of “cowardice” (Rep. 429b). Other forms of “courage,” such as that exhibited by a mother in order to save the life of a child, were hardly considered by either Plato or Philo. These virtues generally were seen to reside in males active within the city. Philo writes in Opif. 73,

Among existences, there are some which partake neither of virtue nor of vice… others again are of a mixed nature, like man, who is liable to contraries, of wisdom and folly, of self-mastery and licentiousness, of courage and cowardice, of justice and injustice, and (in a word) of good and evil, fair and foul, to virtue and vice.

Philo repeats the same virtues as Plato did, though in a slightly different order. His last phrase is instructive, as “good and evil…fair (καλός) and foul (σκέρος)” are aspects that involve a community judgment. Nevertheless, Philo would certainly not suggest that virtuous activity was determined solely by the standards set by male elites in the community; in fact, Philo discusses virtue within the framework of exegeting Gen

2:8-9, where God planted a garden, in which were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Philo continues,

He (Moses) here gives a sketch of the trees of virtue which he (God) plants in the soul. And these are the particular virtues, and the energies in accordance with them, and the good and successful actions, and the things which by the philosophers are called fitting (τὰ λεγόμενα παρὰ τοῖς φιλόσοφοῖς καθήκοντα) (Leg. 1.56).

This last word hints at a Stoic understanding of moral action, as it may be “ shorthand” for τέλεια καθήκοντα or perfectly righteous actions.236 This would be the sort of action characteristic of a wise person in Stoic thought. But Philo sees the root of “appropriate action” in the allegory of the “Tree of Life” and the four rivers that surround the Garden of Eden.

First, we read in Leg. 1.59 that

Now the tree of life is virtue in the most comprehensive sense (ἡ γενικώτατη ἀρετή) which some term goodness. From it the particular virtues derive their existence. That is why it is also set in the midst of the garden…we, as we have said, maintain that virtue in its most general aspect is called the tree of life.

Hence, Philo specifically relates “virtue” and “life.” He reinforces this connection in Leg. 3.52, when he writes, concerning God’s call to Adam after he had sinned, “Where are you?”

What is said is equivalent to ‘Where hast thou arrived, O soul?’ In the place of how great goods, what evils hast thou chosen for thyself? When God had invited thee to participate in virtue, art thou going after wickedness, and when He had provided for thy enjoyment the tree of life, that is of wisdom, whereby thou shouldst have power to live, didst thou gorge thyself with ignorance and corruption, preferring misery, the soul’s death, to happiness and real life? (emphasis added).

This “life,” however, is rooted in God’s active inbreathing of the Spirit, as described in Gen. 2:7. Philo explains that the “inbreathing” (ἐνεφύσησεν) was a divine

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breath which enlivened the physical person and made that invisible part of the composite capable of immortality (κατὰ γοὰν τὴν ἄρατον ἀθανατίζηται) (Opif. 135). It should also be noted that the soul was not necessarily immortal, (note the subjunctive) but could become so through the practice of virtue (See also Leg. 1.35-37).

In the Tim. 43a-b, Plato describes the consequence of souls being connected with material bodies as similar to having been thrust into flowing rivers and being tossed and turned in all directions. Philo discusses the four rivers that watered the Garden of Eden and relates these rivers to the four cardinal virtues found in Rep. 4. 434d-444d. In Leg. 1.64-65, we read that Philo is discussing the four virtues, which are represented by the four rivers that issue forth from Eden:

Generic virtue takes its start from Eden, the wisdom of God, which is full of joy, and brightness, and exultation, glorying and priding itself only upon God its Father; but the specific virtues, four in number, are derived from generic virtue, which like a river waters the perfect achievements of each of them with an abundant flow of noble doings. Let us look too at the particular words used. ‘A river’ (it says) ‘issues forth from Eden, to water the garden.’ ‘River’ is generic virtue, goodness. This issues forth out of Eden, the wisdom of God, and this is the Reason of God (ὁ θεὸς λόγος); for after that has generic virtue been made. And generic virtue waters the garden, that is, it waters the particular virtues. ‘Heads (ἀρχαίς)’ he takes not in the sense of locality but sovereignty. For each of the virtues is in very deed a sovereign and a queen (ἡγεμονία καὶ βασιλεία). ‘Is separated’ (ἀφορίζεται) is the equivalent to ‘has boundaries to define it.’ Prudence (φρόνησις) concerned with things to be done, sets boundaries round them; courage (ἀνδρεία) round things to be endured; self-mastery (σωφροσύνη) round things to be chosen; justice (δικαιοσύνη) round things to be awarded.

Daniel Jastram has recognized this passage as one that explains an important hierarchy in Philo’s thought, wherein the technical vocabulary of γένος (genus), εἴδος (species), and ἰδια (form) are related to individual examples of specific concrete acts as
examples of virtues.\textsuperscript{237} The most abstract level of reality (in the above case, generic virtue) corresponds to the Platonic world of forms; the individual virtues, rooted in general virtue, are less abstract and hence species of general virtue. Individual acts of morality are concrete examples of the more abstract species. Philo deals with the same subject in \textit{Mut. 77-79}, wherein Sarai’s name is changed to Sarah as an example of specific virtue being related to the more abstract form of imperishable virtue. Hence, genus and species are related to the Platonic forms. Jastram also points out that the hierarchy of general virtue (genus) is related to the Ten Commandments in \textit{Spec. 4.132-4}, where the individual commandments are seen as species, with acts in accordance with the commandments as specific individual examples of both genus and species.\textsuperscript{238} This insight forms a bridge between the abstract, imperishable forms and individual acts of human beings.

Note that Philo specifies that the “wisdom of God” is identical to the of λόγος of God (αὕτη ἐκπορεύεται ἐκ τῆς Ἑδέμ, τῆς τοῦ θεοῦ σοφίας; ἥ δε ἐστὶν ὁ θεοῦ λόγος). Now this (ὁ θεοῦ λόγος ) will have a dual meaning for Philo; on the one hand, it is the paradigm for the soul, that on which the soul is made an image; but, on the other hand, the commandments, as species of generic virtue, handed to Moses, constitute the paradigm for moral action. Philo refers to the “Royal Road” as being the pattern established by God in Scripture to define the proper character of behavior.\textsuperscript{239} He describes the behavior of Moses, who believed no one should turn to the “right or to the

\textsuperscript{238} \textit{Ibid.}, 331.
\textsuperscript{239} \textit{Post.} 100-102.
left,” (Deut 17:11) but to move through life on the middle road (τὴν δὲ μέσην ὁδὸν παρέχεσθαι) (Post. 101). He defines this road to be philosophy, but not that which the Sophists promulgate, but rather that which was pursued by the ancients in the study of what is good. He then explains this, saying, “This royal road then, which we have just said to be true and genuine philosophy, is called in the Law the utterance and word of God (τὴν βασιλικὴν γοών ταύτην ὁδὸν, ἡν ἀληθὴ καὶ γνήσιον ἔφαμεν εἶναι φιλοσοφίαν, ὁ νόμος καλεῖ θεοῦ ρήμα καὶ λόγον (Post. 102). This provides for Philo a standard against which actions can be evaluated. The standard is not merely that which is acceptable within a society, but is rooted in the Holy Word that is made available to Jews each Seventh Day (Mos. 2.216) in their “houses of prayer throughout the cities, (which) are … but schools of prudence and courage, and temperance, and justice, and also of piety, and holiness, and every virtue, by which duties to God and men are discerned and rightly performed.”

It should be noted that Philo includes two other virtues in addition to the typical four, “piety” (ἐυσεβεία) and “holiness” (.OnClickListenerτης). The latter virtue was introduced along with the standard four cardinal virtues in Protagoras 349b, where Socrates asks, “Are wisdom and temperance and courage and justice and holiness five names of the same thing?” The remainder of the dialogue then focuses on courage rather than on holiness. Further, Josephus includes “Piety towards God” (διὰ τὴν πρὸς τὸν θεόν εὐσεβείαν) in addition to the other cardinal virtues when he is describing David in the Antiquitates (8.196). Additionally, Feldman\textsuperscript{240} amply demonstrates that in the Josephan description of

\textsuperscript{240} L. Feldman, “Josephus’ Portrait of David,” Hebrew Union College Annual, 60 (1989) 1, 129-174. It should be noted that on page 156, Feldman quotes Protagoras 349b as including “Piety” with the other virtues, whereas, in fact, Plato refers to ὀσιότης; LSI, however, includes “piety” as a translation of this word.
David and Solomon, “piety” was often attributed to them in addition to (or in some cases, in substitution of one or more) Cardinal Virtues. Thus, the inclusion of “piety” as at least equal to the other virtues is not unknown in Hellenistic Jewish writings. In the *Letter of Aristeas* we find that the author explains the specific ritual requirements surrounding unclean animals are really designed to bring people to righteousness; for “by calling them impure, he (Moses) has thereby indicated that it is the solemn binding duty of those for whom the legislation has been established to practice righteousness.”

3.3.2 The Product of Virtue: Immortality

But what is of more interest in Philo is the fact that “piety” is seen as the root of the other virtues, and the source of immortality. We read in *Opif.* 154, “…and by the tree of life he signifies reverence toward God (θεοσέβειαν) the greatest of the virtues, by means of which the soul attains immortality.”

This is reinforced in *Opif.* 156 where Philo contends that God saw that fallen human beings were naturally inclined towards wickedness, and “making light of holiness and piety, out of which comes the winning of immortal life (εὐσεβείας δὲ καὶ ὁσιότητος ὀλιγωρούσαν, ἥν ἀθάνατος ζωὴ περιγίνεται).” In *Abr.* 60, Philo terms piety “the highest and greatest virtue;” and in *Mos.* 1.189, we find that piety “will be represented by the well which supplies piety in perennial streams and noble actions unceasingly.

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241 *Letter of Aristeas*, 147-8, *(OTP)* 2.22.

But, most importantly, piety is affirmed as that which produces immortality. We read in *QG* 1.10 that “... the best and wisest authorities have considered that by the tree of life is indicated the best of all the virtues of man, piety, by which alone the mind attains to immortality.” Additionally, we read in *Opif.* 154, “...the tree of life ...signifies piety towards God, the greatest of the virtues, through which the soul becomes immortal...” Further, we read in *Mos.* 2.107-8 that Philo insists that sacrifices offered in the Temple have their efficacy based upon the internal state of the offerer. The sacrifice does not forgive the sins of the worshipper who is unjust, but has a destructive effect. However, if the offeror has a pure heart and is just (δυσιος και δικαιος), the sacrifice stands firm. Further, “the thank-offering of such a soul receives immortality, and is inscribed in the records of God, sharing the eternal life of the sun and moon and the whole universe” (*Mos.*2.108).

Hence, the soul, for Philo, is only conditionally immortal. It is only through the practice of virtue that God grants to the soul its true life, namely, immortality.

Participation in Wisdom is the condition for true life, (*Leg.* 3.52, 72; *Det.* 49; *QG* 1.51) which continues after physical death. Additionally, this life is “inbreathed” by God, a gift of God, and is, in fact, His Spirit, which is seen as the “essence of the soul.”

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243 Similarly, *Spe.* 4.97, 4.135 (with δυσιος) (as “queen of all the virtues”), *Praem.* 53, (as “queen of the dance”).

Moses says, ‘And he breathed into his face the breath of life, and man became a living soul,’ showing again by this expression that it is the breath which is the essence of the life of the soul, that is, the breath which is the essence of the soul (of the soul) (ἐνεφώσης ἐπὶ τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ πνεύμα ζωῆς, καὶ ἐγένετο ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐπὶ ψυχὴν ζωῆς), showing again by this expression that it is the breath which is the essence of the life of the soul (Det. 80).

This is reinforced in Plant. 37, where Philo allegorized the plants in the Garden of Eden as virtues of the soul planted by God. He writes:

And these can be no growths of earthly soil, but must be those of the reasonable soul, namely its path according to virtue in life and immortality at its end, and its path according to evil ending in the shunning of these and in death. We must conceive therefore that the bountiful God plants in the soul as it were a garden of virtues and of the modes of conduct corresponding to each of them, a garden that brings the soul to perfect happiness.

Thus, insofar as “the shunning of virtues” as the result of traveling the “road leading to vice” cannot practically mean death as ending of physical life or the separation of soul and body, it must refer to the lack of essential life and death of the soul. This means also the impossibility of immortality, insofar as this is the reward granted by God to virtuous people. Philo writes in Det. 141, “…it is a law of nature that the body perishes if the soul quit it, and the soul if reason quit it, and reason if it be deprived of virtue.”

Thus, if the passions dominate the decision-making ability of a person, overwhelming reason, such a person becomes irrational. The consequence of irrationality is that the soul itself, as a specifically human soul, is destroyed (“the soul (perishes) if reason quit it”); thus, specific humanity is somehow lost. This does not imply that the person ceases to exist, or that the physical life-force is totally lost; but the soul becomes characteristic of an animal lower than humans on the ontological scale; and as such, the particular quality as human is lost.
We will see later in Paul that the presence of God’s Spirit is precisely that which confers life; and that like Philo, such life is both a gift and the result of an act on the part of the individual, namely, faith.

It becomes important to ask a question at this time, namely, whether Philo, in speaking of “life” and “immortality,” is using metaphoric language or whether he sees these concepts as expressing some sort of ontological reality. I want to suggest that for Philo, real immortality, i.e., the continuation of the soul in some manner after physical death is intended. This would be consistent with the Platonic as well as the Stoic visions that souls (even material souls, for Stoics) continue at least for a period of time. Further, there is no indication either in the Platonic version or Stoic writings that immortality was to be considered a metaphor for something else, such as leading a good life. Thus, I would argue that Philo intends “immortality” to mean the actual continuation of the soul in existence after it is separated from the body, especially if the body is visualized as a “tomb” (See Leg. 1.108 and Spec. 4.188). In confirmation of this, Philo writes in Opif. 135, that God breathed “divine breath” (πνεῦμα θείον) into Man, and that with respect to “the part that is invisible, (it) may be rendered immortal” (ἀναληθεύτης). Notice that the soul is not automatically “immortal,” but was capable of “being made immortal.” This immortality is granted by God to those who live the life of virtue. This is confirmed in the previously quoted section of Mos. 2.108 (p. 94) where the pure-hearted offerer of a thank-offering in the Temple is given eternal life, “is inscribed in the records of God, sharing the eternal life of the sun and moon and the whole universe” (Mos. 2.108).

245 Wolfson, Philo, 1.396.
This is not metaphorical, but is clearly intended to indicate an everlasting existence. And in *Spec.* 1.303, he likens the gift of God through virtues to “nectar,” the drink stipulated by Homer that the gods drink, the source of their immortality. (See also *Det.* 49, 70).  

3.4 Death of the Soul

Having established that immortality of a human is conditional only, and is granted to people by God as the consequence of their living a virtuous life, it is now necessary to ask what happens to those individuals who choose NOT to live a virtuous life. My conclusion will be that the souls of those who choose a vicious life instead of a virtuous one experience the death of their own souls. I shall demonstrate that this results not in a mere “metaphoric” death, but rather an ontological one, where such persons cease to be “human” in the way that God created them, but rather drop down on the hierarchical scale of being to the level of beasts. Just as “immortality” is not a mere metaphor, but implies something ontologically, so those whose souls are said to die, do so in more than in a merely metaphorical manner. They effectively commit spiritual suicide, not metaphorically, but in an ontological manner. Just as immortality is not a metaphor, so its opposite, death of the soul, is not a metaphor.

Let us now follow the texts and attempt to understand precisely what Philo means by “death of the soul.”

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246 It should be noted that in *Wis* 3:1-3 we have a confident statement about the souls of the righteous as being in the hand of God, and their being at peace. D. Winston has dated this work to approximately 30 BCE, and has indicated the provenance to be Alexandria. D. Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon*, (Anchor Bible, New York: Doubleday, 1979), 3.
One of the heuristical origins Philo’s idea of the “death of the soul” is found in
Genesis 2:17, which reads as follows in the Masoretic Text:

וְמֵֽיהֶם-הָרְשָׁעַת מַעְלַט לָא-אֱכָלָה מַטְנַת-בֵּיהוֹם: ֶאֶל לָא-

In the LXX, we have the following:

2:17 ἀπὸ δὲ τοῦ ξύλου τοῦ γινώσκειν καλὸν καὶ σοηρὸν οὐ φάγεσθε ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ
δὴ γὰρ ημέρα φάγητε ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ θανάτῳ ἀποθανεῖσθε.

(…but of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, you shall not eat; for in the
day that you eat of it, you shall surely die)\(^{247}\) (NRSV).

Note the translation in the LXX of the last two words of the Masoretic text:

θανάτῳ ἀποθανεῖσθε. This presented a problem for Philo. The Hebrew used an infinitive
absolute as an intensifier, and is usually translated into English as “you shall surely die.”
(NAS, NAB, KJV, NIV) This phrase is translated in Targum Neofiti 2:17 as “…on the
day that you shall eat you shall surely die.”\(^{248}\) Thomas Lambdin describes the use of the
Infinitive Absolute as follows:

(The Infinitive Absolute) is placed before or after a finite verbal form to
emphasize the verbal idea in some way. The English translation of this
construction will vary from context to context, often requiring the use of adverbs
such as “surely, certainly, indeed or the like”…\(^{249}\)

Westermann, in his commentary, points out that the meaning of the Hebrew is not
clear; there is a variety of interpretations, none of which are accepted by the author. It is
generally understood that when Adam and Eve ate of the forbidden tree, they did not die

\(^{247}\) Robert Alter, Genesis (New York: Norton, 1996) solves the problem of interpreting the infinitive
absolute as an intensifier by writing “for on the day you eat of it you are doomed to die” for


Also, E. Kautsch, Ed., Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar (Oxford: Clarendon, 1910), § 113 n, refers specifically
to Gen. 2:17, and translates the intensifier as “surely.”
on that day. Westermann writes that “God’s acts and words are open to misinterpretation and the serpent makes use of this.” However, Philo did not dismiss the inconsistency. We read in _Leg. 1. 105-7_ that:

And further he (God) says ‘In the day in which ye eat thereof ye shall die the death (ἡ ἀν ἡμέρα φάγητε ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ, θανάτῳ ἀπόθανείςθε).’ And yet, after they have eaten, not merely do they not die, but they beget children and become authors of life to others. What, then, is to be said to this? That death is of two kinds, one that of the man in general, the other that of the soul in particular. The death of the man is the separation of the soul from the body, but the death of the soul is the decay of virtue and the bringing in of wickedness. It is for this reason that God says not only “die” but “die the death,” indicating not the death common to us all, but that special death properly so called, which is that of the soul (καὶ ἔξοχην θάνατον, οὐ ἔστι ψυχὴς) becoming entombed in passions and wickedness of all kinds. And this death is practically the antithesis of the death which awaits us all. The latter is a separation of combatants that had been pitted against one another, body and soul, to wit. The former, on the other hand, is a meeting of the two in conflict. And in this conflict the worse, the body, overcomes, and the better, the soul, is overcome. But observe that whenever Moses speaks of ‘dying the death,’ he means the penalty-death not that which takes place in the course of nature (ὁπον δ’ ἂν λέγῃ θανάτῳ ἀποθανεῖν, παρατήρει οτι θάνατον τὸν ἐπὶ τιμωρίᾳ παραλαμβάνει, οὐ τὸν φύσει γινόμενον). That one is in the course of nature in which the soul is parted from the body; but the penalty-death takes place when the soul dies to the life of virtue, and is alive only to that of wickedness.

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250 It should be pointed out that there are other interpretations of 2:17, some of which are based on Ps. 90:4, “A thousand years in your [God’s] sight are like yesterday.” This is reflected in 2 Pet. 3:8 and _Letter of Barnabas_, 15:4. _Genesis Rabbah_, 8:2 and 19:8 contains the same idea. Further, _Jubilees_ 4:29-30 affirms that since Adam lived 930 years, he died “on the day.” However, Philo did not participate in this interpretation.


252 It is interesting that Josephus avoids the entire problem by ignoring the phrase “on that day you shall surely die.” He merely indicates that if they touched it, “it would prove their destruction” (_Ant. 1.40)_.

253 It should also be noted that in _Leg. 3.106_, Philo points out that God does not punish transgressions immediately, but gives sinners time to repent (ἄλλα δίδοι Χρήσων εἰς μετάνοιαν).

254 It should be noted that in the very next section, _Leg. 1.108_, Philo appears to attempt to reinforce his argument by quoting Heraclitus’ Frag. 47 M (62 DK), ζωμεν τον ζεκινων θανατων, τεθηκαμεν δε τον ζεκινων βιων, (“We live their death and have died their life”), further explicating this with the affirmation that a true life is not to be buried in the tomb of the body (σομα-σήμα), but that after physical death, the soul lives its true life. Mansfeld points out that the phrase “to die the life and live the death” is a Heraclitean oxymoron, and does not exist in _Georg._ 492e-f (“Cento,” 132).
This implies that when a person chooses the opposite of “true life,” which is the product of a life dedicated to wisdom, then the opposite state of a person’s soul must necessarily result, i.e., a life open only to wickedness, or that which brings about a certain kind of death, namely a “penalty-death,” or a death that the soul experiences while the body continues to live. Philo reinforces this idea in *QG* 1.16, where he writes:

> What is the meaning of the words, ‘You shall die by death?’ The death of worthy men is the beginning of another life; for life is twofold, one is with a corruptible body; the other without the body, (and) incorruptible. So that *the evil man dies by death even when he breathes, before he is buried, as though he preserved for himself no spark at all of the true life, and this is excellence in character*. The decent and worthy man, however, does not die by death, but after living long, passes away to eternity, that is, he is borne to eternal life (emphasis added.).

We see the same interpretive crux in *Fug.* 53, where Philo is discussing the cities of refuge, and the fact that if a person smite another and the latter dies, then he shall “die by death.” language of Exodus where the infinitive absolute is included as an intensifier:

\[
\text{νεκρός ἀληθῶς ζώντος ζήτης} 21:12
\]

This is translated in the LXX as follows: ἐὰν δὲ πατάξῃ τίς τινα καὶ ἀμφάνην θανάτω θανατοῦσθο. We see the same sort of translation relative to sensitivity (or lack thereof) to the infinitive absolute as we saw in Gen 2:17, i.e., “‘He who strikes a man so that he dies shall surely be put to death.’”

Insofar as Moses “never puts in a superfluous word” (*Fug.* 54), Philo consulted a wise woman, whose name was σκέψις, who taught him that people could be “dead while living.” She taught him that only those persons could be considered “living” were those who took refuge in God and had become his suppliants. (*Fug.* 56). We must ask,

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255 Jaap Mansfeld, “Cento,” 142., explains that *Skepsis* does not note “skepticism,” but “philosophical inquiry,” giving a host of references. “She is Philo’s method personified, referring to Mme. Starobinski’s ‘exégèse biblique fondée sur la réflexion’.”
“Is this just a metaphor?” I suggest that Philo is really defining what “life” really means when he says that immortality is ascribed to those who took refuge in God (Fug. 56). As immortality is an anticipated reality, so is its opposite, those who are “dead while living.”

Philo continues to describe her teaching in Fug. 58:

Another oracle by which she (i.e., σκέψις) verified her statement was this: ‘Behold, I have set before thy face life and death, good and evil.’ (Deut 30: 5) Accordingly, thou wisest of teachers, goodness and virtue is life, evil and wickedness is death. And again, elsewhere: ‘This is thy life, and thy length of days, to love the Lord thy God.’ (Deut 30: 20.) This is a most noble definition of deathless life, to be possessed by a love of God and a friendship for God with which flesh and body have no concern (ἀσάρκω καὶ ἀσωμάτω κατεσχήσθαι).

The above translation is Colson and Whitaker’s, which emphasizes the conflict between love of God and fleshliness, but the Greek seems to emphasize the other side of the same coin, namely, the love of God as being non-fleshly and non-bodily. This is related to immortality, and hence ought not to be seen as metaphorical, but as ontological.

Philo continues his elaboration of the meaning of life and death by referring to Nadab and Abihu who “die in order that they may live, receiving an incorruptible life in exchange for mortal existence” (Fug. 59).²⁵⁶ It is unlikely that Philo intended a metaphor when he referred to “incorruptible” (ἀφθορτος) life.

Philo then points out (Fug. 60) that Cain was not killed by God after his homicide because there was a different sort of penalty, namely, a living-death. He quotes Homer in Fug. 61, “She is no mortal, but a deathless evil” (ἡ δὲ τοῦ οὐ θνητή, ἀλλ’ ἀθάνατον κακόν ἔστιν) (Od. 12.118) which Mansfeld sees as an identification of the soul with Odysssus, on its journey home.²⁵⁷ In the next section, he quotes Heraclitus 76 M,
when he insists that in its relation to God, it is a lifeless corpse, no more valuable than dung. Thus, insofar as wickedness must remain within humankind, Cain was naturally preserved alive, though he did, in fact, “die by death” during his continued life. This might be construed as a metaphor, but if a “living death” was a life of wickedness, then the logical consequence would be a life characterized by irrationality, and hence that of a beast.

Additionally, Philo quotes Plato’s *Theatetus* 176, where Plato both emphasizes the permanence of evil and offers the criterion for action to be making oneself like God (φυγὴ δὲ ὁμοίωσις θεῷ κατὰ τὸ δυνατόν ὁμοίωσις δὲ δίκαιον καὶ ὑσίον μετὰ φρονήσεως γενέσθαι). Mansfeld sees this as additional evidence of a Middle Platonic cento, ranging from Heraclitus to Plotinus. I focus on these sections of *Fug.* 54-61 because it produces a slightly different perspective on “penalty death.”

This is a second case where the interpretation of what appears to be a troublesome text is interpreted in such a manner that a different kind of “death” is demanded in order that the text not appear lacking in meaning. This text also emphasizes the opposite of “living death,” in that it also emphasizes that people who live lives coherent with the practice of virtue have a kind of deathless life which falls to their lot (ἐπιλαχόντας). Such continued life is not automatic, but is granted upon death (by God).

We now move to *Leg.* 2.77 another interpretation, namely one that which results from Philo’s allegorization of Egypt as the symbol of the glorification of the body and

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258 It should be pointed out that this Platonic phrase became an important τέλος for the ancient world. Dillon points out that the Alexandrian, Eudorus, substituted this phrase for the older (Antiochian) phrase that the goal of life is to live according to nature. We will see that this τέλος will become important in Christian thought in the two centuries after Philo.

259 Mansfeld, “Cento,” 144.
bodily pleasures, which Philo sees as being precisely the opposite to the life of wisdom and virtue.²⁶⁰

For this reason, too, when the part of us that corresponds to the turbulent mob of a city, pines for the dwellings in Egypt, that is, in the corporeal mass, it encounters pleasures which bring death, not the death which severs soul from body, but the death which ruins the soul by vice. For we read, ‘And the Lord sent among the people the deadly serpents, and they bit the people, and much people of the children of Israel died’ (Num. 21:6). For verily nothing so surely brings death upon a soul as immoderate indulgence in pleasure (ὀντως γὰρ οὐδὲν οὐτως θάνατον ἐπάγει ψυχῇ, ὡς ἀμετρία τῶν ἡδονῶν).²⁶¹

Sarah J. K. Pearce has written of Egypt as the place that Philo symbolized as the Land of the Body, and the allegorization of the migration of the Israelites out of Egypt as “the moral or spiritual progress of the soul in relation to the corporeal.”²⁶² She elaborates on this in writing,

For him (Philo), Egypt, the symbol of the body, the passions, the senses, the goods of the body and the external things, is a place which Moses the map-maker marks out ultimately as the place which is left behind. Even when the journey is to Egypt, the land of the body, we know from Moses that this is not and cannot be the end of the journey for Israel.²⁶³

The above quotation from Leg. 2.77 focuses on one of Philo’s main philosophical positions, that excess or unregulated pleasure is that which robs a person of his or her very humanity. This is reinforced in Leg. 3.107, where Philo comments on Genesis 3:14, God’s cursing the Serpent that had deceived Eve and Adam. Philo writes,

²⁶⁰ Note also Mig. 18 and Post. 155.

²⁶¹ Note that here Philo uses the criterion of “immoderate pleasure” (ἀμετρία τῶν ἡδονῶν) as opposed to pleasure itself. This seems to indicate an Aristotelian perspective on virtue which defines virtue as a “mean” between two extremes. Dillon had pointed out that in the Alexandria of Eudorus, the conflict between Platonism and Peripateticism had developed into “factional strife,” though we must not ignore the possibility of “an inconsistency of attitude quite personal to Philo.” (Middle Platonists, 125)


²⁶³ Ibid.
And the Lord God said to the serpent, ‘Cursed art thou from among all cattle and from among all the beasts of the earth.’ Just as joy, being a good condition of soul, deserves prayer, so pleasure, the passion *par excellence*, deserves cursing; it shifts the standards of the soul and renders it a love of passion instead of a lover of virtue: ‘Accursed,’ says Moses in the Curses, ‘is he who removes his neighbor’s landmarks’ (Deut 27:17). For God set as a landmark and law for the soul virtue, the tree of life. This is removed by the man who has fixed as landmark in its stead wickedness, the tree of death.264

It is clear that the substitution of pleasure as the object of passions (instead of the legitimate goal of the passions, “joy,”) is comparable to the theft characteristic of a person who re-locates a boundary-marker separating fields. But the theft of misdirected passion produces the opposite of the benefit of the “tree of life,” namely, the “tree of death.” While there is no biblical representative of this tree, it is clear that the very name implies the opposite of “life.”

We see this same idea reinforced in *Post.* 73-74:

What issue awaits him who does not live according to the will of God, save death of the soul? And to this is given the name Methuselah, which means (as we saw) ‘a dispatch of death.’ Wherefore he is son of Mahuiael (Gen 4:18), of the man who relinquished his own life, to whom dying is sent, yea soul-death, (ψυχής θάνατος,) which is the change of soul under the impetus of irrational passion (ἡ κατὰ πάθος ἀλογόν ἐστιν αὐτῆς μεταβολή). When the soul has conceived this passion, it brings forth with sore travail-pangs, incurable sickness and debilities, and by the contortion brought on by these it is bowed down and brought low; for each one of them lays on it an intolerable burden, so that it is unable even to look up. To all this the name ‘Lamech’ has been given, which means ‘humiliation,’ that Lamech may prove himself son of Methuselah (Gen. 4:18) with entire fitness, a low and cringing passion being offspring of the soul’s death, a sore debility child of irrational impulse.

There is another allegorical interpretation made regarding Num 16:47 (17:12-13 LXX), which finalizes the pericope about Korah, Dathan and Abiram, who had rebelled and had been swallowed up by a cleft in the ground and had been taken to Sheol; afterwards, Moses instructed Aaron to take his censer and go into the midst of the

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264 Note here that all pleasure is condemned, not only “immoderate” pleasure.
people, where he stood “between the living and the dead.” Philo allegorizes this by first identifying Aaron with the “sacred word” (ἱερὸν λόγον) and then pointing out that this stands between and walls-off “the holy ones, who truly live” (τοῖς ὀσίους, οἱ ζῶσιν ἀψευδῶς) and the “unholy, who are truly dead” (οἱ ἁνοσίων τεθνήκασι πρὸς ἀλήθειαν) (Her. 201). It is unlikely that Philo is speaking here metaphorically.

Philo alludes to the person overcome by passion and lack of self-control as being unable to follow along the straight course of the highway, but prone to “fall into pits and clefts until they (the passions) have utterly destroyed it (φάραγξι δὲ καὶ βαράθροις ἐμπίπτειν ἄχρι τοῦ καὶ διαφθείραι παντελῶς αὐτὴν ἀναγκάζει)” (Agr. 101). This is reminiscent of Heraclitus’ Frag. 69 M (117 DK) which reads, “(The) man, when he is drunk is led by a beardless lad, stumbling, not aware of where he walks, having a wet soul.” This was one of the fragments that was suggested as indicative of Heraclitus’ concept of the death of the soul.

Philo may also be alluding to Frag. 69 M when he comments on drunkenness in Plant. 146-7, where he insists that a wise person would not drink to excess unless there were very significant reasons for doing so, such as the safety of the country, the honor of parents or safety of children. (He does not explain why such conditions would justify “entering a drinking contest” (εἰς πολυοινίας ἀγώνα ἐλθεῖν) or the consequences thereof.) He continues to describe the consequences of drinking unmixed wine as that which produces madness (μανία) or the departure of rationality, and that one would more properly accept the kind of death of separation of the soul and body rather than that death which is constituted by the loss of rationality (Agr. 157). While we recognize that this is
likely to be a temporary loss of spiritual life, it is worthwhile noting that it is nonetheless reprehensible for Philo.

There is another allusion to a soul that is wet being subject to death in *Conf. 70*, where Philo is again referring to Egyptians as those who “love the body” (φιλοσώματον), who are “under the water,” or under the stream of passions, and in such a state, cast away stability and adopt the confusion of vice (τὸ δὲ ταραχῶδες ἐπαναιρούμενον κακίας). Philo refers to Exod 14:27-8, where after Moses had again stretched his hand over the sea, the Egyptians fled from “under the water” and were thrown by God into the sea. There is a dual allusion here, one to the Egyptians as symbols of the bodily excesses and the other to the Heraclitus fragment suggesting that the wet soul implies death.

We referred above to Philo’s comments in *Aet. 111*, where he quoted Heraclitus by name. At that point, (p. 74) we were interested primarily in demonstrating that Philo knew Heraclitus. But now, we should analyze what Philo says in *Aet. 109-112* regarding Frag. 66 M (36 DK), “It is death for souls to become water, death for water to become earth.” Note that he does not quote the entire fragment, but only the first two sense-lines. Here he points out that the word “death” does not mean complete annihilation “but transmutation into another element (ἀλλὰ τὴν εῖς ἑτερον στοιχεῖον μεταβολῆν)” (p. 93). This comment may hold the key to understanding a dispute regarding the meaning of the “death of the soul” between two prominent interpreters of Philo, David Winston and Harry Wolfson.

First, I should like to present the position of Wolfson as he laid it out in his highly influential work. We have seen that immortality is conditional upon a person’s living a

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virtuous life, and that it is God who then bestows immortality on such a person. But what happens to the soul of the person who rejects a life of virtue? Wolfson quotes a section in Post. where Philo is evaluating a life with impious people:

…in my judgment . . . preferable to life with impious men would be death with pious men (τῆς μετὰ ἄσεβῶν ζωῆς ὁ μετὰ εὐσεβῶν αἱρετότερος ἀν ἐι θάνατος); for awaiting those who die in this way there will be undying life (ἡ ἀθάνατος, . . . ζωῆ), but awaiting those who live in that way there will be eternal death (ὁ ἀίδιος θάνατος) (Post. 39).

Thus, Philo seems to ascribe “eternal death” to those who live an impious life. This clearly contradicts the Platonic position found in Rep. 610A-611A, where the exact issue is raised, and Plato responds that even the souls of the wicked are immortal. Hence, it appears that Philo simply disagreed with Plato on this item. Wolfson contends that Philo accepted Aristotle’s statement that “whatever is generated must be destructible,” (εἶ γενητὸν δὴ, φθορτὸν ἀνάγκη) (De Caelo, 1,12,282b, 4). Further, “the soul, by virtue of its having been created, must by its own nature be mortal, and that, if the soul of the righteous is immortal at all, it is so only by the providence of God as a reward for righteous conduct.” Wolfson continues:

The new element that (Philo) has introduced into the Platonic doctrine of the immortality of the soul is the possibility of its destruction in the case of the wicked, a possibility which logically follows from his belief that its immortality in the case of the righteous is due only to an act of divine providence.

On the other hand, this position was claimed by David Winston to be “clearly untenable,” citing Philo’s position that “just as nothing comes into being from the non-

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266 Wolfson, Philo, 1. 410.
267 Ibid.
268 Ibid.
existent and nothing is destroyed into non-existence” in Aet. 5. Winston contends that the soul is not composed of a combination of materials, as the Stoics held, so that it could be reduced to its original components. He points out that Chrysippus held that souls of the wicked were destroyed not long after their death.\textsuperscript{270} But for Philo, the soul is “an incorporeal image or copy of the immaterial Logos,”\textsuperscript{271} so that there are no components into which it could be dissolved.

However, in Aet. 5, we find Philo discussing primarily whether the world itself can be destroyed into non-existence, as opposed to a single soul. He quotes from an unknown source,

\begin{quote}
\textit{εκ τε γὰρ οὐδὰμ ἐόντος ἀμὴχαίνων ἐστὶ γενέσθαι [τ]}
\textit{καὶ τ’ ἐδὼ ἔξαπολέσθαι ἀνήψεσυν καὶ ἀπυστων,}
\end{quote}

Nothing from what is not can come to be, Nor was it ever heard or brought to pass, That what exists should perish utterly.\textsuperscript{272}

which affirms a principle that “nothing comes from nothing.” But Philo focuses not on the first phrase, but continues to quote a phrase possibly from the \textit{Chrysippus} of Euripides,

\begin{quote}
\textit{θυρήκαι ὅ οὐδὲν τῶν γενομένων,}
\textit{διακρινόμενον ὅ ἄλλο πρὸς ἄλλο}
\textit{μορφήν ἐτεραν ἀπέδειξεν.}
\end{quote}

Naught that is born can die; Hither and thither its parts disperse And take another form.

\textsuperscript{270} DL, \textit{Lives}, 7.157, who contends that Chrysippus “says that only the souls of the wise” continue to exist until the conflagration.

\textsuperscript{271} Winston, \textit{Logos}, 40.

\textsuperscript{272} Attributed tentatively to Empedocles by Colson, ed. LCL.
Philo continues, “nothing in fact is so foolish as to raise the question whether the world is destroyed into non-existence” (οὐδέν γε οὐτὼς ἐστὶν εὕηθες ὡς τὸ ἀπορεῖν, εἴ ὁ κόσμος εἰς τὸ μὴ δὲν φθείρεται) (Aet. 6). The issue is whether it is transformed (μεταβολή). This transformation brings us back to the Heraclitean notion of constant transformation and internal dynamism present within the world.\textsuperscript{273} The difficulty may be solved if we recall that Philo visualized a transformation of the soul of a wicked person into that characteristic of a beast. Such a transformation or ontological reduction in the hierarchy of being would deprive the wicked person of immortality. There is no ancient thinker who would claim immortality for a beast lower than a human and, hence, a person who so caused his or her own degradation through behavior would effectively lose the character of being in the image of the Logos.

Winston quotes Post. 73, which he translates as “soul-death, which is the change of soul under the impetuous of irrational passion. . .”\textsuperscript{274} However, Philo’s phrase, ψυχής θάνατος, ἢ κατὰ πάθος ἀλογών ἐστιν αὐτῆς μεταβολή perhaps suggests the exchange of soul on the part of the person described, from that which is human to that which is less than human.

The other two quotations that Winston makes are to Det. 149 which alleges that the soul that is incapable of any reconciliation with virtue is cast out forever. While a later section of this chapter deals with the possibility of reconciliation and return to virtue, in the case where one refuses to be so reconciled, there is no return of the soul to the state of humanity.

\textsuperscript{273} Frag. 27 M (51 DK); 42 M (126 DK).

\textsuperscript{274} Winston, \textit{Logos}, 40.
In *1 Enoch* 22 it is possible to find an expression of pain and retribution that is allocated to those who are sinners and criminals, against whom there was no judgment executed during their lifetime. Further, such pain and retribution is administered in a place. The fate of such sinners and perfect criminals is that “they shall be together with (other) criminals who are like them, (whose) souls will not be killed on the day of judgment but will not rise from there.” This indicates two separate ideas: 1) that there is some sort of killing that will occur on the day of judgment; and 2) that the author of *1 En.* anticipated some sort of resurrection from the place of the dead. While these two ideas do not seem to appear in Philo, he does make a comment in *Cher.* 2 that the person who is “cast forth” (*ἐξεβολεῖ*) by God is subject to eternal banishment. He continues, “. . . he who is weighed down and enslaved by that fierce and incurable malady, the horrors of the future must needs be undying and eternal: he is thrust forth to the place of the impious (*σκορακισθέντα ἐἰς ἀσβῶν χῶρον*) there to endure misery continuous and unrelieved.”

Philo continues to explain what being “cast forth” means by using Hagar as an example. She is the symbol of secular learning, which never achieves the sublimity of philosophy, and she, with her son Ishmael (the symbol of the sophist) are never able to “return,” i.e., become present to wisdom. Thus, the “place of the impious” does not imply some sort of retribution or suffering, but it does suggest that the most valuable product of the mind, wisdom, is forever excluded. This would fit the paradigm of suffering the loss

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277 *Cher.* 10.
of humanity, which indicates a degradation of the soul from that which is human to that which is a beast.

If Winston denies that the human soul by being degraded to the level of a beast is effectively the subject of suicide, he would have to contend that a wicked person whose soul survived death would either live some sort of reduced or marginalized “eternal life,”\(^\text{278}\) or would somehow incur some sort of suffering, due to the justice of God. But Philo does not discuss either of these, so the only conclusion is that Wolfson is correct in maintaining that a) Philo anticipated a real death of the soul of the wicked person during his or her life, since that soul did not achieve God’s gift of immortality through the person’s actions, and b) at death, the dissolution of soul with the body.

The rule of the passions is related to the life of the senses, or that life wherein the rational part of the soul is no longer in control. Thus, the power of sensation produces a large number of acts that are expressions of vice. “Sensation” is a function of the “irrational soul,” or that portion of the soul that deals with bodily functions such as sight, hearing, taste, etc. All of these are essential for the proper operation of a human person, but in accordance with Stoic thought, the senses must always be subordinate to the mind or reason. As the soul is the vehicle for life in the body, so the mind or reason is the principle of life for the soul. We read in \textit{QG} 2.11, “…as the mind is in the soul, so the

\(^{278}\) Philo uses the word ἀδησία only three times, once metaphorically (\textit{Post.} 31), and twice in the mouths of people giving speeches (\textit{Mos.} 1.195; \textit{Legat.} 235). And he uses the word “Tartarus” four times: 1) in \textit{Praem.} 152, but he is using it metaphorically of a naturally born Jew who apostasizes being “dragged right down and carried into Tartarus;” but this is witnessed by others and serves as an example, so it cannot be anything except a metaphoric expression of the death of the soul. 2) and 3) in \textit{Legat.} 49 and 103, both of which uses are reflective of a rhetorical identity with “a place of darkness.” 4) \textit{QE} 2.40, where those who are unable to fly upward intellectually are drawn downwards to the “depths of Tartarus.” I suggest this is a metaphorical expression, without any expectation that it is an ontological place of suffering.
soul is in the body.”

This idea is expanded in *QG* 2.12, where Philo describes the life of the senses, writing:

…if we practice the drunkenness and fine cooking, and chasing after women (θηλομοινία), and in altogether lewd and loose behavior, we shall be corpse-bearers (nekroforwntes) in our body; but if the merciful God turns aside the flood of vices and renders the soul dry, He will proceed to quicken and animate the body with a purer soul, whose guide (κυβερνητης) is wisdom.

There are two items of interest here: First, the sensual practices produce corpse-bearers (i.e., dead souls in the body). This is fully consistent with the previously stated idea that focusing on sensual activities brings death to the soul. Second, we find Philo seeing God’s mercy as producing a dry soul in us. Then there is hope for a life of wisdom. This is one example of μετανοια, which will appear in the last portion of this chapter. We note that God is the cause of making the soul “dry,” just as God is the source of immortality in the soul of a truly wise person.

Philo appears as a cultural critic in a very interesting discussion regarding the change of the name of Joseph in *Mut.* 88-96. Gen. 41:45 records this change of name to Ψονθομφαιηχ and Philo points out that Joseph (whose name means “addition (πρόσθεμα), was responsible for προσθήκη or those additions to the normal needs that a person has. He gives the examples of such additions to include gold, silver, chattels, revenues, care by servants, heirlooms, etc. (*Mut.*89), or all those things that are characteristic of elite society, much of which Philo himself must have enjoyed. He then interprets the Greek

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279 Noted above in Sec. 3.2.2, as pointed out by D. Zeller.

280 Recall Heraclitus 68 M (118 DK) where the “dry soul is the best.” But, inconsistently, we have *QG* 2.23, where aridity of soul is seen as a negative: “…just as the wood of trees, when it is altogether dried out, is immediately consumed by fire, so also the soul, when it is not mixed with wisdom, justice and piety and also with the other fine virtues which alone are able to gladden the mind, dries up and becomes arid like a plant that is barren and sterile…” Perhaps this is the sort of philosophical inconsistency that suggests to scholars like David T. Runia to disavow Philo as a “philosopher.”
Ψονθομφανηχ as meaning the “mouth which judges in answer (ἐν ἀποκρίσει στόμα κρίνον). Given this interpretation, Philo continues to suggest that every fool (ἀφρων) believes that a person who enjoys the benefits of immense wealth must necessarily be able to reason to proper conclusions as well; this same fool sees wisdom as subordinate to chance, instead of the opposite (Mut. 91).

He then returns to the brother of Joseph, Benjamin, having been named by his mother, Rachel, “son of sorrow” (Ὑιὸς ὀδύνης). As to why his mother so named him, Philo explains that

Those who are swept along by the current of empty opinion (οἳ ἐν ταῖς κενῶσις φερόμενοι δόξαις) are thought to be happy, but are in reality most unhappy (ὑπολαμβάνοντα μὲν εὐδαιμονέιν, πρὸς ἀλήθειαν δὲ κακοδαιμονίασθαι), for many are the counterblasts, envy, jealousies, continuous quarrelling, rancorous enmities unreconciled till death, feuds handed down successively to children’s children, an inheritance which cannot be possessed (Mut. 94-5).

These, Philo will maintain, are the real products of vainglory or “empty opinion” (κενοδοξία). But even more important, Philo continues to indicate that Moses was compelled to indicate that Rachel died in childbirth, since this childbirth was that of κενοδοξία. Her difficult delivery of Benjamin is allegorized by identifying the phrase δόξης αἰσθητῆς καὶ κενῆς (empty opinions (rooted in) sensation) is characterized as that which brings about the “death of the soul” (ἐπειδὴ τῷ ὄντι ψυχῆς ἐστι θάνατος δόξης αἰσθητῆς καὶ κενῆς).

“Empty opinion” as being rooted in sense experience, and not in the λόγος, produces a kind of death. We will see this idea develop in Origen, where error (empty opinion) is productive of death. Indeed, the entire thrust of second- and third-century emphasis on “orthodoxy” might be traced to this kind of thinking, that intellectual error can be productive of a real kind of death. Indeed, this same attitude was seen in
Heraclitus Fragment 1 M, where he castigates those people who are uncomprehending of λόγος as being in a state other than consciousness. This is one thread that begins in Heraclitus, is reflected in Philo, to some extent in Paul, and subsequently in Clement and Origen.281

Recall that in Philo’s anthropology, the mind (νοῦς) is that faculty that should direct the entire human being (ἡγεμονικόν); but the world of the senses, especially as to sexual pleasure, is that which can seduce the mind and cause it to become ineffective in the direction of the person in the life of virtue.

Now the references to the “flesh” and “body” are symbols for Philo; while they do indeed include the enjoyment of physical (meaning) sexual pleasure, they also include those activities that focus on the acquisition of power, wealth, domination and honor. We read in \textit{Opif.} 79, where Philo describes the original blessed state of affairs of the first man, Adam, when God had given him unbounded sources of well being and the opportunity to live without labor or effort. He continues, ”And this will be so if irrational pleasures do not get control of the soul, making their assaults upon it through greediness and lust, nor the desires for glory or wealth or power arrogate to themselves the control of the life. . . .”

And, in \textit{Leg.} 2.70, we read about Adam and Eve, while they were in the Garden of Eden, and after they had tasted of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil,

(s)o long then as they are naked, the mind without self-exertion, (ὁ μὲν νοῦς τοῦ νοείν) the perceptive sense without perceiving, (ἡ δὲ άισθησίς τοῦ αίσθάνεσθαι) they have nothing shameful; but when they have begun to apprehend, they fall into shameful and wanton conduct, for they will be found often showing silliness and folly rather than healthy knowledge, not only in times of loathsome surfeit and depression and mad fooling, but also in the rest of their life. For when bodily

\footnote{281 The consequences of thread will be developed in the conclusion of this chapter.}
sense is in command, the mind is in a state of slavery heeding none of its proper objects (ὁ νοῦς ἡμᾶς διότι μηδεὶς προαμένων νοητῶν); but when the mind is in the ascendant, but bodily sense is seen to have nothing to do and to be powerless to lay hold of any object of sense-perception.

In *Sacr.* 22, Philo provides an allegory of the vicious life, couched within the framework of a female courtesan, who is decked out in a wide variety of types of vice, much broader than mere sensory enjoyment. These include: “villany (πανουργία) recklessness (προπέτεια), faithlessness (ἀπιστία), flattery (κολακεία), imposture (φενακισμός), deceit (ἀπάτη), falsehood (ψευδολογία), perjury (ψευδορκία), impiety (ἀσέβεια), injustice (ἀδίκια), profligacy (ἀκολασία). . . .” Further on in §32 of this same work, Philo includes an expansive list of vices, all of which are typified as the direct result of being a “pleasure-lover” (φιλιήδονος); in *Dec.* 165-67, we find a *Haustafel* of actions that are recognized as being appropriate modes of activity to honor parents. The “anti-*Haustafel*” that we see in *Sacr.* 32 is an extensive list of inappropriate characteristics of a person who is a φιλιήδονος, amounting to about one hundred fifty-six offensive characteristics, ranging from πανουργος (crafty, cunning) to ἀτακτος, ἀησεβὴς, ἀνίερος (unruly, impious, unholy) and εὔπιστευτος (easily persuaded.) Hence, for Philo, the “pleasure-lover” launches himself or herself on a life that produces all the negative characteristics that a Greek can think of. This typifies the results expected for the φιλιήδονος, but does not specifically speak of the state of that person’s soul.

Having established that, for Philo, a life of vice produces death to the human soul, and recognizing that a vicious person appears externally like any other person, I should now like to demonstrate from a series of texts that Philo did, indeed, have the concept that a life of vice had the effect of depriving a person of what was the primary characteristic of a human being, thus reducing him or her in the hierarchy of being to the
level of a beast (θνητον). I should like to recall Heraclitus’ Frag. 8 M (123 DK), φυσις κρυπτεσθα αφιλετι, and my proposed translation, “What a person (or thing) really is likes to hide itself.” This would be apropos for this discussion, since the reality of the state of a person’s soul is not obvious.  

We read in Leg. 2.99 that Philo adopts the Platonic image found in the Phaedrus of the charioteer and writes that passions themselves are like a hard-to-control horse. The implication is the same as Plato’s, where if the driver does not control the impetuous and unruly horse, the chariot is bound to crash and (by implication) kill the driver.

But more illumining is the text of Somn. 2.65-66, where Philo is exegeting Gen. 37:33, the story Joseph’s brothers told to Jacob, that Joseph had been devoured by a wild animal. The context is Philo’s discussion of those individuals who are arrogant in the extreme, totally immersed in selfishness and “slaves of vain opinion” (κενης δοξης εισι οδυλοι) i.e., the opposite of those who follow the life of virtue. He resumes the example of Joseph, who was given the name “Addition,” and characterizes him as the enemy of simplicity and companion of vanity (τον ατυφιας μεν εχθρον, τυφων δε εταιρον).

Philo avers that such people grow on trees like wild sprouts among good shoots, and that people who are “practicers of sound sense” (οι φρονησεως ασκεται) in identifying such individuals, cry out as Joseph’s brothers did, saying, “A wicked beast has seized and devoured him,” (Gen. 37:33) i.e., Joseph. Philo uses this cry to discuss the consequences of the arrogance and pride of those individuals who do not follow the dictates of Wisdom:

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282 Given the danger of a slight anachronism, this idea gets expressed in Matt 7:16-20, (“you will know them by their fruits”).
And indeed this life of confused mankind, so full of complications, of vain inventions, which has covetousness and knavery for its cunning architects, what is it but a ferocious beast which feasts on all who come near to it? And therefore such as these will be the subject of mourning, as though they were dead, even while they still live, since the life that they obtain is meet to be lamented and bewailed; for Jacob, we are told, mourned for Joseph while he was still alive (Somn. 2.66).

Now this section does not identify the person as a “beast,” but uses the phrase metaphorically, with pride itself being the “beast.” This same idea is reflected in Jos. 36 where we read that vainglory awaits in ambush for men like a wild beast (ἡ λοχῶσα κενοδοξία).283

But in Abr. 32-33, Philo first describes Noah as a “just man,” in the highest sense, pointing out that in such a person, the mind is dominant over the unruly other six aspects of the soul, thereby avoiding a life of wickedness and leading to a life of virtue and justice. He pointed out that Noah’s virtues were described, without physical genealogy. "For these," says he, "are the generations of Noah; Noah was a just man, perfect in his generation, and one who pleased God." [Genesis vi. 9.]

Philo continues:

But we must not fail to note that in this passage he gives the name of man not according to the common form of speech, to the mortal animal endowed with reason, but to the man who is man pre-eminently, who verifies the name of having expelled from the soul the untamed and frantic passions and the truly beast-like vices. Here is a proof. After ‘man’ he adds ‘just,’ implying by the combination that the unjust is no man, or more properly speaking a beast in human form, and that the follower after righteousness alone is a man (my emphasis).

283 In The Tabula of Cebes, (trans. John T. Fitzgerald and L. Michael White, Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1983) we have a parallel view to Philo’s, where Ignorance and Deceit are termed “beasts,” along with “Grief, Lamentation, Avarice, Incontinence and every other Vice.” XXIII, 1-2; further, those persons who engage in profligacy and incontinence are termed those who “are feasting in the manner of cattle.” The date of the Tabula is not certain; Fitzgerald proposes Early Empire, or Augustus to Domitian.
Here we see specific evidence of the ontological effect of a life dedicated to passions and acts not worthy of one created in the image of God. The person who has the physical appearance of a human being is in truth “no man” but a “beast in human form.”

And in Dec. 86-90, Philo is dealing with oaths made to God and pointing out the evil of one who takes a false oath, or who asks God to validate a falsehood. If another person were to be aware of such an impiety, that person would flee from the taker of a false oath “as from a savage and maddened beast” (ἀποπηθήσεται καθάπερ ἄπο θηρός ἀγριαίνοντος καὶ λελυττηκότος). While there is an element of metaphor here, the identification of bestiality with an unjust person is important.

Additionally, we have Philo discussing the punishment Moses describes for sorcerers and poisoners in Exod 22:18,NRSV; 22:17 Mas.: ἔνα αὐτὴν (literally “You shall not let a sorceress live”). This was translated by the LXX as φαρμακοῦ οὐ περιποιήσετε (literally “You shall not preserve (the life of) poisoners”). Philo describes the agonies of a person who has been secretly poisoned as a means of assassination, pointing out that the loss of rationality is one of the consequences. He continues in Spec. 3.99:

However the bodily troubles of the sufferers from these machinations are often less grievous than those which affect their souls. Fits of delirium and insanity and intolerable frenzy swoop down upon them, (ἐκστάσεις γὰρ καὶ παραφροσύναι καὶ ᾠδόρητοι μανώι κατασκήπτουσι) and thereby the mind, the greatest gift which God has assigned to human kind, is subjected to every sort of affliction, and when it despairs of salvation it takes its departure and makes its home elsewhere, leaving in the body the baser kind of soul, the irrational (τὸ ἄλογον), which the beasts also share. For everyone who is left forsaken by reason, the better part of the soul, has been transformed into the nature of a beast (τοῦ κρείττους μέρους ψυχῆς μεταβέβληκεν εἰς θήρευν φύσιν), even though the outward characteristics of his body still retain their human form (my emphasis).

284 See also Mal 3:5 and BAGD, φάρμακος, 854.
Now the basic Philonic moral theory is that a life of wickedness occurs when the passions overwhelm the rational character of a person; and that instead of the mind being the director of the soul, the passions replace the mind. Hence, rationality is lost. Whether this occurs through drugs or through the permitting of the mind to be overwhelmed by sense experience or vainglory (κενοδοξία), rationality is lost and wickedness occurs. Simultaneously, the human unwittingly becomes a beast, since we have seen above that the presence of mind (νοῦς) is precisely that which constitutes our human nature (Heres. 231).

There are two texts I should like to discuss, both in QG. In the first text, (1.50) Philo is discussing the curse that God issued to the earth in Gen. 3:17 and the toil that will be required of men to cultivate it. Philo allegorizes the cultivation, writing:

When the cultivator is virtuous and worthy, the body also bears its fruits, namely health, keenness of sense, power and beauty. But when he is cruel the opposite is brought to pass, for his body is cursed, receiving as its cultivator a mind undisciplined and imprudent (ἄπαιδευτόν καὶ ἄφρονα). And its fruit consists of nothing useful but only of thistles and thorns, sorrow and fear and other ills, while thoughts strike the mind and shoot arrows at it. And the ‘grass’ is symbolically food, for he changes from a rational being to an irrational creature, overlooking the divine foods; these are those which are granted by philosophy through principles (λόγων) and voluntary laws (ἐκουσίων νόμων) (my emphasis).

Then, in QG 2.82, Philo is discussing Gen 10:8-9, dealing with Cush and Nimrod, the hunter. This latter is described by Philo as having a “sparse nature” and being similar to the giants “and Titans.” As such, he was “zealous for earthly… things,” and an enemy of heaven. Philo identifies the Giants as being opposed to God, and the hunter as one who is like an Ethiopian because of the darkness characterized by that place (people?). “Hunting is as far removed as possible from the rational nature. But he who is among beasts seeks to equal the bestial habits of animals through evil passions.”
Thus, we have four separate sections of text where there is a suggestion of an ontological change that occurs within a person as the result of a life dedicated to evil. However, Philo is not always totally consistent. We will see that there are other places where he describes “death of the soul” more as a metaphor than as an ontological shift within a human being.

We see another perspective on the same issue in Praem. 70, where the penalty that justly accrued to Cain because of his fratricide was that he should live in a constant state of dying:

Since then the deed was without precedent, the punishment devised had to be also without precedent. What is this punishment? That he should live forever in a state of dying (ζην ἀποθησκοίτα ζεί) and, so to speak, suffer a death which is deathless and unending. For there are two kinds of death, one consists in being dead, (τὸ μὲν κατὰ τὸ θεναναι) which is something either good or indifferent (ὅπερ ἀγαθὸν ἔστιν ἦ αἰθαφορον), the other consists in dying that is entirely bad, (ὅ δὲ κακὸν πάντως) more painful because more durable.

I had previously pointed out that a life of wickedness constituted an act of suicide (p. 97 above.) However, Philo in Det. 47 re-states the act of suicide as characteristic of Cain.

. . . ‘Cain rose up against Abel his brother and slew him’ (Gen.4:8) suggests, so far as superficial appearance goes, that Abel has been done away with, but when examined more carefully, that Cain has been done away with by himself. It must be read in this way, ‘Cain rose up and slew himself,’ and not someone else (ὦσθ’ οὗτως ἀναγνωστέον ἀνέστη Καίν καὶ ἀπέκτεινεν ἑαυτόν’, ἀλλ’ οὐχ ἐτερον). And this is just what we should expect to befall him. For the soul that has extirpated from itself the principle of the love of virtue and the love of God has died to the life of virtue.

Philo continues to explain this form of death by suggesting that it implies a never-ending sense of sorrow and fear, with neither the possibility of any pleasure nor the ability of desiring something pleasant. In this case, there is no ontological vector of being reduced to the state of a lower animal; indeed, it characterizes life as being bereft
of all things that we value as “human,” without suggesting the actual deprivation of human characteristics.

In this case, there is indeed a metaphorical application of the word “death.” It means the loss of those elements of life that are valued by everyone, the enjoyment of good things, pleasant experiences and a state of overall happiness. This is what is given up by the fratricide, but seen as a symbol of the embodiment of evil as the result of the first sin of our parents.

Philo also comments on the fratricide in *QG* 1.70, where he first points out that God hears the cries of a good man even though he is physically dead. He then continues to point out the character of death that exists in the wicked person, symbolized by Cain.

What is the meaning of the words, ‘The voice of thy brother calls to me from the earth’ (Genesis 4:10)? This is most exemplary, for the Deity hears the deserving even though they are dead, knowing that they live an incorporeal life. But from the prayers of the evil men He turns away His face, even though they enjoy the prime of life, considering that they are dead to true life and bear their body with them like a tomb that they may bury their unhappy soul in it.

Here we don’t see any ontological vector, but we do see the contrast of persons who live a wicked life with “true life” or that which is appropriate for a human being. It also emphasizes the eternal life that is awarded to the good person. Additionally, we see the allusion to the σώμα-σήμα relationship, as expressed by Philo’s interpretation of Heraclitus’ fragment 47 M (ἀθάνατοι θνητοί), which also appeared in Plato’s *Gorgias* 493a and *Cratylus* 400 b.

In discussing *QG* 1.70-76, Jaap Mansfeld points out that there are more allusions to prior philosophers than to scripture. “The oxymoron of the living dead, a dominating theme in Philo, is explicitly said by him to be of philosophical provenance.”

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points out that \( QG \) 1.71 contains the reference that the elements of the universe will curse him. This theme is not common, but does appear in the Empedocles fragment 107 (115), where a person who swore a false-oath is pursued by the all the elements of the world, air, sea, earth and sun.\(^{286}\) Jaap Mansfeld contends in his article that “Philo’s cento at \( QG \) 1.70-1 would not only include echoes of Plato and Heraclitus, but also of Empedocles.”\(^{287}\) He continues to suggest that, “The most plausible assumption is that Heraclitus and Empedocles were added to the Platonic cento … by an Alexandrian who must for us remain anonymous, but who, ultimately, is the source of Plutarch, Clement, Plotinus and Hierocles (and Philo).”\(^{288}\)

There is another treatment of the death of the soul by Philo in his non-allegorical work, \textit{Special Laws}. In 1.345, he first points out the value of knowledge of God as that which is productive of life, but affirming that those who do not believe (\( \text{oqeoi} \)) as being spiritually dead.

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\ldots\text{we, the scholars and disciples of the prophet Moses, will not forgo our quest of the Existent, holding that the knowledge of Him is the consummation of happiness. It is also age-long life. The law tells us that all who ‘cleave to God live,’ (Deut 4:4) and herein it lays down the vital doctrine fraught with much wisdom. For in very truth the godless are dead in soul (\( \text{\delta\nu\tau\omicron\varsigma\ \gamma\dot{a}\rho\ \text{o\i\ \mu\epsilon\nu\ \text{\alphath\omicron}\ \tau\omicron\varsigma\ \psi\omicron\chi\omicron\varsigma\ \tau\omicron\theta\omicron\nu\varsigma\omicron\nu\ }), \) but those who have taken service in the ranks of the God Who only IS are alive, and that life can never die.}
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This quotation is significant, insofar as it does not ascribe “life” to the practical pursuit of virtue, but rather emphasizes knowledge of God as that which produces life. It should be pointed out, however, that Deut 4:1-4 compares what happened to those Israelites who


\(^{287}\) Mansfeld, \textit{Cento}, 135.

\(^{288}\) \textit{Ibid.} 136.
followed Baal Peor, compared to those who followed YHWH. The latter are “alive today” (ὡς δὲ οἱ προσκείμενοι κυρίῳ τῷ θεῷ ἵμων ζήτετε πάντες ἐν τῇ σήμερον LXX). It is clear that the section of the LXX did not refer to “spiritual” life, but was very concrete in reference to not having been killed. Philo, however, interprets “life” in his own way, and applies it not to “being devoted to the Lord,” which certainly applies to following the statutes and ordinances of YHWH, but also to knowledge. It certainly could be argued that Philo demands practical consequences in one’s moral life as the result of such knowledge, but I point out this section as perhaps a parallel to the emphasis on “faith” that we will see in Paul.

3.5 From Death to Life

There is one final area of Philonic thought that we must examine. While the life of virtue clearly produces immortality, and the life of vice produces death, Philo recognizes that there are some (perhaps all of us?) who are somehow intermediate between the two extremes. There are some who, while perhaps dead, are capable of some sort of resuscitation to a life of virtue. Philo is not of the opinion that most people pursue virtue. He writes in *Mut.* 213

For the life of virtue, which is life in its truest form, is shared by few, and these few are not found among the vulgar herd (οὐχὶ τῶν ἀγελάιων), none of whom has part or lot in true life, but are only those to whom it is granted to escape the aims which engross humanity and to live to God alone.

Philo here expresses a concept of the “two ways,” one in pursuit of the goals of the herd, the pursuit of all sorts of pleasure and self-gratification, and the other in becoming like God. But he does, in a number of texts, indicate that it is possible to turn from the path of wickedness to that of wisdom, and he uses three terms to describe such a change of life:
a) the verb μεταβάλλω or the noun μεταβολή; b) the verb μετανοώ or the noun μετάνοια; and c) the verb ἐπιστρέφω.

David Winston points out that the idea of repentance was “virtually non-existent or at best only marginal in the Greek world.” He points out that this was not even a virtue for Aristotle, and that the Stoics had no use for this idea.

There is an alternate position taken by Gregory E. Sterling in a recent contribution to the Festschrift for Carl A. Holladay. First, Sterling recognizes the classification of kinds of conversion as stipulated by L. A. Rambo, namely: tradition transition (from one religious tradition to another); institutional transition (one community to another in the same tradition); affiliation, (an alignment with little or no commitment); intensification (a revitalized commitment to a tradition with which the individual had a previous affiliation); and apostasy or defection. For the purposes of this discussion, I shall limit my comments to tradition transition, i.e., for a Gentile to become Jewish, and intensification, i.e., for a Jew, who turns from a life of wickedness, to one that pursues wisdom.

289 J. Behm, “μετανοώ/ μετάνοια” TDNT 4.989-1008; both words imply for Philo a “full change in being and conduct,” 993.

290 Jon Bailey, “Metanoia in the Writings of Philo Judaeus,” SBL Seminar Papers, (1990), 135-141) points out that by the time of Philo, “μετάνοια” referred to religious repentance, as opposed to “regret” or “change of mind,” 136.


294 Sterling, “Turning to God,” 72.
Second, Sterling points to two Hellenistic texts that did, in fact, deal with the issue of conversion, *Joseph and Aseneth* and *The Tabula of Cebes*. The first is a novelistic Jewish text that arose out of the anomaly of Gen 41:45, 50 where Joseph married the daughter of an Egyptian priest and had two sons by her. Most likely because the apparent problem of exogamy by Joseph, an unknown author wrote the story sometime between the second century BCE to the second century CE. The solution to the conundrum is that Aseneth converts from her pagan religion to Judaism and, hence, can validly marry Joseph. This is an example of tradition transition.

The second Hellenistic text is *The Tabula of Cebes*, whose provenance is stipulated tentatively by its editors as sometime between Augustus and Domitian. In this text, the author describes a visit to the Temple of Chronos, where a mysterious tabula portrays a scene which is interpreted by an old man. On the tabula, two ways are described: the easy one which leads to vice and the difficult one, which leads to virtue. Various figures in the tabula are personified vices and virtues, one of which is Repentance (Μετάνοια), who “releases (a person) from his ills and introduces to him another Opinion [and Desire], who leads him to true Education. . .” This would seem to be an example of intensification in the categories of Rambo.

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298  Pseudo-Cebes, *Tabula*, 10.4, 11.1
There is a strong tradition of repentance in the prophetic literature, such that Philo could not ignore it. The effect of repentance is that “the old reprehensible life is blotted out and disappears…” (Abr. 19) Additionally, in Somn. 91, discusses the impossibility of any sin being hidden from an all-seeing God, even those sins that were merely contemplated (and presumably intended). Philo contends that if the person “repents of the evil opinions which it formerly held in reliance upon an ill-judging judgment (μετανοεῖν ἐφ’ οίς πρότερον ἄγνώμοιν γνώμην χρωμένη κακῶς ἔδόξαςε),” that person will have gained cleansing. “So is it with the soul if it embraces repentance, younger brother of complete guiltlessness.” It is important to notice the source of sins Philo is discussing, i.e., “foolish opinion,” or “stupid judgments.” This seems to have its roots in Heraclitus, as we discussed above in Frag. 1 M, where the refusal to pay attention to λόγος is severely criticized.

Two of Rambo’s categories of conversion fit the Philonic texts on changes of life: a) tradition transition where a Gentiles becomes Jews, who thereafter must then be held “to be our dearest friends and closest kinsmen” (Virt. 179), or b) intensification, where a Jew who has simply chosen not to follow the dictates of Moses somehow awakens and changes his or her life to one of pursuit of wisdom (Virt. 183).

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299 Winston, “Hidden Tensions,” 5. This can be supported by Würthwein, “μετανοεῖν/μετάνοια” TDNT, 4.980-986.
300 Ibid.
301 We also find a similar idea in Abr.26, “. . . repentance holds the second place to perfection, just as a change from sickness to health is second to a body free from disease.”
302 We will see later in this dissertation that Origen will include false-opinions as productive of spiritual death.
We shall deal with tradition transition first, which is described in *Virt.* 175-182. Here Philo includes a sub-section entitled in the LCL edition, Περὶ μετανοίας.\(^{303}\) He begins by affirming that the highest blessings are good health without disease, a successful voyage without danger, and an excellent memory. The second class of goods include recovery from sickness and survival of a dangerous storm on a voyage. This connects to repentance, since only God (or a divine man) does no evil, and the ability to correct errors made is characteristic of a wise person (*Virt.* 177). The errors he refers to, however, are those errors of worshipping idols, not God Himself. This seems to target the penitents as Gentiles.\(^{304}\) Further, since the Mosaic Law was the source of the virtues, one outside the law could be seen only as a person who had no (real) virtue. Hence, Philo could write that the transition from a sinner to an observant Jew meant

> …passing from ignorance to knowledge of things which it is disgraceful not to know, from senselessness to good sense, from incontinence to continence, from injustice to justice, from timidity to boldness. For it is excellent and profitable to desert without a backward glance to the ranks of virtue and abandon vice that malignant mistress (*Virt.* 180).

Once this transition has occurred, Philo writes that participation in all other virtues must flow, just as a shadow cast by the sun follows the body. He points out that the proselytes (ἐπιλυται) come to exercise all the virtues Philo holds dear, just as the “rebels from the holy laws” (τοὺς τῶν ἱερῶν νόμων ἀποστάντας) are seen to engage in all the vices Philo abhors. This latter class might be either Gentiles or apostates.

\(^{303}\) Jon Bailey, “Metanoia,” discusses in detail the issue of whether this was originally part of *Virt.*, in a different section, or whether it was an independent work of part of another work. Regardless of where it fits in Philo’s work, there is no suggestion that it is other than Philonic, so we shall continue to refer to it as part of *Virt.* Sterling also provides an analysis of the manuscript tradition and location within Philo’s work.

\(^{304}\) Rengsdorf, “ἀμαρτωλὸς” *TDNT*, 1.326, “The Gentile was a ἀμαρτωλὸς in virtue of his not being a Jew, and his failure to regulate his conduct according to the Torah.”
QG 4.45 is instructive in this area; Philo discusses Gen 19:17 where the emissaries of God instruct Lot to, “save your own soul, (σῶ τιν σεαυτοῦ ψυχῆν),” and do not look back or stay in the area. Philo explains this as exemplifying the instructional process, insisting that people are capable of being taught. “Henceforth, then, do thou move by thyself, having been taught in what manner thou must be saved” (4.45). Philo then describes the parallel process whereby a physician heals the patient, and he urges his readers to leave licentiousness, foolishness and atheism behind (the marks of wickedness, perhaps a reference to Gentiles), and to embrace continence and holiness, the characteristics of the just person. It is interesting that we saw above that true life was that which valued wisdom, and this was found in imitating God. The characteristics of the persons described by Philo above, filled with all sorts of vice and then changing their lives to Jewish virtue, implies that Gentiles for Philo are in some sense spiritually dead. We will see this concept arise in Paul, Clement and Origen.

Philo, in De Praemiis, comments on Enoch, who was a symbol of hope, as he was given the reward of being translated to heaven. He likened the success of Enoch to an athlete who wins a contest (Praem. 11), but then extends the image to a “second contest,” in which “repentance is the champion” (ἐν ὧν μετάνοια ἀγωνίζεται). This repentance is described as leaving the base and choosing the excellent, which produces a new home and a new life. This appears to apply to Gentiles, not necessarily to Jews, who already have a home. Abraham was the prime example of this change of heart, who “first passed over from vanity to truth, came to his consummation by virtue gained through instruction 

Sterling, “Turning to God,” 86, describes the background of the use of Enoch by Philo, including the reference to Enoch in Sirach only in the Greek text as an “example of repentance.” Hence, Philo “is taking up an existing exegetical tradition and developing it.”
(διδακτική χρησάμενος ἀρετή πρὸς τελείωσιν), and he received for his reward belief in God” (Praem. 27).

Let us now turn to the other form of conversion, intensification, where a person within the Jewish tradition has chosen not to live by a rule other than what Philo would consider wisdom. That he focuses on Jews who need repentance is clear from Virt. 183, where the admonitions to repentance (μετάνοια) in which “we are taught to refit our life from its present misfit into a better and changed condition (διδασκόμεθα μεθαρμόζεσθαι τὸν βίον ἐξ ἀναμιστίας εἰς τὴν ἄμεινω μεταβολήν) (emphasis mine). He alludes to Deut 30:11-14, where the source of the better condition is close at hand, in our mouth, heart and hands.

Knowing that sin leads to death, Philo points to a process whereby one may overcome that death of the soul and be forgiven by God. He refers to the Day of Atonement, which is observed “not only by the zealous for piety and holiness, but also by those who never act religiously in the rest of their life” (Spec. 1.186). This day is described not only as a festival, but also as a “time of purification and escape from sins.” God grants such a boon, as He gives to “repentance the same honor as to innocence from sin” (Spec. 1.187). He then refers to the scapegoat, who bore on its back the transgressions of the Jews, who have “now been purified by conversion to the better life” (οἳ μεταβολαῖς ταῖς πρὸς τὸ βέλτιον ἐκκαθάρθησαν) and through their new obedience have washed away their old disobedience to the law” (Spec. 1.188).

He distinguishes between minor offenses (of which everyone is guilty) and major offenses, which bring death. 306 He expresses this distinction in Mut. 235, (stimulated by

306 We will see this in both Origen and Clement, stimulated by NT texts, Eph 2:1, 1 John 5:15-16.
the differences in offerings provided by Lev. 5:1-13, for unintentional sins) where he points out that small offenses do not require great purifications, nor do great crimes permit small purifications, but there should be proportionality.

In *De specialibus legibus* 1.235, Philo deals with the more serious sins as described in Lev. 5:20, which are not merely unintentional faults, but which include evil intention, such as speaking falsely about a partnership, or refusing to return a deposit, or making a false oath. A person committing such sins can receive forgiveness only when he or she has restored whatever was taken, plus a penalty of one-fifth of the value of the misappropriation, and then returning to the temple in repentance to make the appropriate offerings, “taking with him as his soul-felt conviction which has saved him from a fatal disaster, allayed a deadly disease (θανατωτόσσῳ νόσῳ) and brought him around to complete health” (*Spec.* 1.237). It should be noted that for Philo the penitent is given forgiveness on the condition that he or she, “verifies repentance not by promises, but by actions (ἐπαληθεύουσαν τὴν μετάνοιαν οὐχ ὑποσχέσει ἄλλη ἔργοις)” (*Spec.* 1.236). The key here is that forgiveness is available, given repentance, to major sins.

Now there are those, Philo believes, who have “passed over” from living a life dominated by the body to a state where virtue is valued and pursued. He writes in *Leg.* 3.94:

Moses also...awards special praise among the sacrificers of the Passover to those who sacrificed the first time (i.e., in the first month), because when they had separated themselves from the passions of Egypt by crossing the Red Sea they kept to that crossing and no more hankered after them, but to those who sacrificed the second time (i.e., in the second month) he assigns the second place, for after turning they retraced the wrong steps they had taken and as though they had forgotten their duties, they set out again to perform them, while the earlier sacrificers held on without turning. So Manasseh, who comes ‘out of forgetfulness,’ corresponds to those who offer the second Passover, the fruit-bearing Ephraim to those who offer the earlier one.
Recall that Egypt, for Philo, represents the passions, and the attraction of Egypt is precisely the antithesis of the life of wisdom. Thus, there is some vehicle whereby one who was at one time consumed by those elements hostile to wisdom and virtue can, in fact, be changed. Philo does not believe it is easy, but acknowledges that it can occur. He writes of Joseph, who had found success in the land of Egypt, the symbolical locus of bodily pleasures, was nevertheless declared by his father “to live” (Ἰωσήφ ὁ υἱὸς μου ζήν, [Gen. 45.28]). Philo uses Joseph as an example of one who was able to distinguish the valuable from the valueless “vain opinions” (Mig. 21), as well as the puffery and arrogance of those who rely on bakers and cooks and wine-pourers, symbols of the life dedicated to the body. Such individuals were characterized as true “Hebrews,” because they passed-over from a life of debauchery to a life of wisdom, “who were accustomed to rise up and leave the objects of the outward senses, and to go over to those of the intellect…” (Mig. 20).

Finally, there is an open question raised in Quod Deterius Potiori Insidiari Soleat, where Philo deals with the character of Cain, after he has slain his brother. He contends that Cain rejects repentance (τῷ δὲ μὴ δεχομένῳ μετάνοιαν). God says to him that he is accursed from the earth, the earthly part of us, which is the source of all misfortunes. This produces an incurable death to the soul, apparently because Philo believed him to have “rejected repentance” (μὴ δεχομένῳ μετάνοιαν) (Det. 96). This would appear to be

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307 Sarah J. K. Pearce, Land of the Body, 126, comments regarding this section that “moments of longing for return to Egypt represent the irrational movement in the soul which draws us back to the body and its passions.

308 Another interesting sidelight in Det. 96 is that Philo introduced the idea that intention itself is culpable; this would afford a good basis for Matt 5:28, “But I say to you, everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”
logical and imply the reduction of the ontological level of the soul from being human, that is, rational, to the level of a beast. For if repentance is rejected, if the dedication to the indicators of wickedness persist through one’s life, then, when the person dies, there is nothing human left to survive. We will see that this question will recur, especially in the time of Origen.

Winston summarizes the expression of repentance as follows: “A sure sign of sincere repentance is that it is marked by bitterness, weeping, sighing, and groaning” (QE 1.15). He further remarks that Philo described his description of repentance in Fug. 159 as a “restricted and slow and tarrying thing.”309 We will see in a later chapter a similar description of repentance offered by Origen, both in terms of the weeping and groaning, as well as by the characterization of its being a slow process. Winston concludes his short section on repentance by suggesting that “Philo was probably aware of a Neopythagorean preoccupation with self-examination that was taken up by the Roman Stoa and this may have made it easier for him to incorporate the Jewish emphasis on repentance into his own writings in the manner he did.”310

3.6 Summary

In summary, we have seen the following:

First, we examined Philo’s anthropology, describing the hierarchical character of how he visualized the place of a human being. Second, we discussed his perception of the soul, pointing out a combination of Stoic and Middle-Platonic views. Third, following

310 Ibid. 7.
this section, we examined his view of virtue, seeing that the life of virtue is that which contributes true life to an individual. Then we saw that immortality was a consequence of a life of virtue, which is granted by God to one who lives by exercising rational control of his or her passions. In the next section, we turned to the opposite sort of life, namely, that of the person who rejected virtue, for whatever reason. This we saw produced a different state of being, namely that state where a person only appeared to be alive, but where he or she was, in fact, dead. The consequence of this is that a person became something other than fully human, declining within the hierarchy of being to a lower level, to that of a beast. We also saw that there was an element of metaphor in this consequence; but as a minimum condition, we believe Philo held that a life of vice is destructive of what is specifically human in a person. Finally, we saw that it was possible to gain life through repentance and instruction and to “pass-over” the boundary separating those who were not alive to those who followed virtue and lived fully.

Thus, we have located several important characteristics of one of the important thinkers of Hellenistic Judaism. It is our intention now to move into a discussion of the way another Hellenistic Jewish mystic dealt with similar issues; and while we cannot establish that Paul of Tarsus ever read Philo’s work, we shall see that there is a parallel in the occasional letters of this person who pursued a kind of life that imitated God and who shared the same perceptions of virtue that Philo so ably demonstrated.

We will also see, in Paul’s ideas about death, that one class of people who were considered dead are those who had not heard (nor had the opportunity to accept) the gospel Paul preached. This is parallel to the kind of death that Philo and Heraclitus referred to as being attached to ignorance. Thus, as Gentiles had to be considered by
Philo to have been “sinners,” and therefore without life, so we will see a similar attitude in Paul’s writings, that those who had not accepted Jesus Christ as their savior were dead. We will find the same attitude evolving both in the works of Clement of Alexandria and Origen, regarding the spiritual state of heretics, as well as those who refuse to live within the moral constraints either of the Law or the Gospel. Let us now move on to an analysis of Paul, in the center of this dissertation.
CHAPTER 4:

PAUL

We saw in the last chapter that there is disagreement as to whether Philo could be termed a “philosopher.” He clearly had an extensive Greek education, which included exposure to the great thinkers of antiquity. We saw that he had access to some of the original texts of Plato, and that he held Heraclitus in high regard. John Dillon included Philo in his treatment of the Middle Platonists, and while not specifically labeling him a “philosopher,” he indicated that “all parts of his work are replete with philosophic content.”

As we move from the discussion of the death of the soul found in Heraclitus (unquestionably a “philosopher,”) through Philo, (who used philosophic concepts to elucidate Scripture) to the writing of Paul, we confront what might be seen as a discontinuity. If we look at the list of thinkers in A. A. Long and D. N. Sedley’s *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, we don’t find Paul. Further, while Philo defines philosophy as “the practice and study of wisdom, and wisdom is the knowledge of things divine and human and their causes,” Paul specifically contended to the Corinthians that he was

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311 Dillon, *The Middle Platonists*, 143.
313 Philo, *Cong. 79*. Dillon points out that this is the Stoic definition of philosophy as found in Cicero *Off. 2.5* and Seneca *Ep. 89.4*, *Middle Platonists*, 141.
sent by Christ to proclaim the Gospel, not in σοφίας λόγου, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of meaning. This reference, used in a derogatory sense\(^{314}\) and reinforced by his οὐκ ἐν πειθοῖς σοφιάς [λόγοις] (“not in persuasive words of wisdom”) in 1 Cor 2:4, clearly distinguishes Paul from what the Corinthians may have expected from a philosopher. His goal was not to philosophize, not to rely on “human wisdom” (σοφίας ἀνθρώπων) but to rely on the power of God (1 Cor 2:5).

Nevertheless, Paul’s thought is coherent within the cultural framework of the Hellenized Judaism of the time. Jerome Murphy-O’Connor makes the case for a Hellenistic education of Paul, which would have included training in rhetoric.\(^{315}\) “It was in the context of the school of rhetoric that Paul was exposed to the various strands of Greek philosophy, which formed part of the intellectual equipment of every educated person.”\(^{316}\)

The contrast between Paul’s disclaimer of philosophy and the content of his letters which portrays a well-educated Hellenistic Jew is expressed by Troels Engberg-Pedersen:

The basic problem …is that of not allowing for what one might call Paul’s philosophical impulse. It is true that Paul wrote occasional pieces. It is also true that he was not a philosopher. Indeed, he would never have accepted that kind of designation…first among which was his sense of his practical, missionary task—and also that of being in some sort of basic opposition to the whole world…to which belonged the philosophers with their concern for ‘wisdom’. But it is false to deny him a ‘thinker’s’ impulse toward developing a coherent picture of the world in which he now found himself.\(^{317}\)


Abraham Malherbe is in agreement with this view, contending that Paul was “thoroughly familiar with the teaching methods of operation and style of argumentation of the philosophers of the period,” even though technically he could not be called a philosopher.\(^\text{318}\) He continues to state that the philosophers with whom Paul may be compared were not those who specialized in creating and expositing a metaphysical structure of the world, but those whose goal was to reform the lives of those whom they encountered, whether people in the agora or in the richest salons. Paul’s activities were pastoral in character, which was characteristic of “the philosophic pastoral methods current in his day.”\(^\text{319}\) Malherbe develops this point and systematically compares aspects of Pauline thought to that of Dio Chrysostom, Seneca, the Cynics and others.

Thus, we approach Paul not as a philosopher \textit{per se}, but as a well-educated Hellenistic Jew who had received a personal calling in the same manner as that of the prophet Jeremiah (Gal 1:15-16, Jer 1:5) to go to the Gentiles, but whose work reflects a profound cultural immersion in Jewish-Hellenistic ideas. Malherbe formulates this perspective best as follows:

…philosophic traditions do not constitute a ‘background’ against which Paul is to be viewed. Paul is rather to be seen as working within a milieu in which issues that engaged him and his converts were already widely discussed.\(^\text{320}\)

Thus, while I have been unable to find any evidence that Paul read or had direct contact with Philo, the two thinkers inhabited the same environment of urban, Hellenistic Judaism, both had a grounding in Scripture, and both were deeply concerned with the


\(^\text{319}\) Ibid.

behavioral change from a life dominated by what both thinkers construed as typical Greek values to a life dominated by values of their “gospels.” For Philo, this meant a life of virtue (defined above in the Philo chapter) and for Paul, this meant a life summarized by Rom 12:2, by being transformed by discerning the will of God, producing a life that is good and just. Note that for both thinkers, the appropriate life-style was that of virtue, despite the fact that the exact character of “virtue” was slightly different for each thinker.

Coherent with the pattern described in the Introduction, I shall focus on four areas of investigation: Paul’s anthropology, (4.1) his determination of what “life” means, (4.2) how the death of the soul results from a rejection of that form of “life,” (4.3) and finally whether there are any options expressed by Paul that are available to those who exist in a kind of living death (4.4). Finally, I shall summarize (4.5).

4.1 Paul’s Anthropology.

It is necessary to describe how Paul visualized the human person, and to discover how he saw certain elements of the person characterized. We recall that Plato had a dualistic perspective of a person, being composed of body and soul. We also saw that the soul (ψυχή) was tri-partite, including the νοῦς, the θυμός and the ἐπιθυμία; we understood that the Stoics had included the dualism of soul and body, but had included a larger enumeration of the parts of the soul, including the five senses, voice and reproductive ability. Philo used both the tri-partite description and the seven- or eight-part enumeration.

We also saw that the internal struggle that had been seen by Heraclitus between the mind and the passions was strongly reflected in Philo and was a standard topos within
Greek thought. We must ask how Paul’s anthropological perspective fit in with what we have seen previously. Thus, we shall examine how Paul interpreted the human makeup by examining his use of soul (ψυχή) in 4.1.1; flesh and body (σάρξ, σῶμα) in 4.1.2; spirit (πνεῦμα) in 4.1.3; and sin (ἁμαρτία) in 4.1.4.

4.1.1 ΨΥΧΗ in Paul’s Anthropology

Whenever we see the word ψυχή in Paul, we must exercise caution in its use. Indeed, there is no phrase θάνατος ψυχῆς in the Pauline letters. Our task will be to determine in what sense we can interpret some of Paul’s statements about death in terms of the “death of the soul.” But first, it is necessary to spend some time discussing how Paul visualized a person, especially how he used the term ψυχή. What is immediately noticeable is that Paul in some cases identifies ψυχή with the physical aspect of human beings, as distinct from the spiritual aspects. In fact, ψυχή and πνεῦμα have different meanings.321 We find the contrast in 1 Cor 15:44-46, where we see a distinction between a “physical body (σῶμα ψυχικόν)” and a “spiritual body (σῶμα πνευματικόν).322 Now these phrases exist within an apocalyptic section of the letter, and Paul’s goal is to attempt to explain what the world will look like at the final triumph of Christ.

We see spirit, soul and body used together in 1 Thess 5:23:

May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely (ἄγιασαι ὑμᾶς ὅλοτελείς); and may your spirit and soul and body (καὶ ὅλοκληρον ὑμῶν τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ ἡ ψυχή καὶ τὸ σῶμα) be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

322 Even more interesting is that this distinction also appears in Jas 3:15 and Jude 1:19.
The distinction between “soul,” “spirit,” and “body” that appears here has no anthropological or ontological import, but the entire phrase merely indicates the whole person. Earl J. Richard, in his commentary on *1 Thessalonians*, uses a grammatical argument first in pointing out that ὀλοκλήρων is an adjective, possibly modifying the three anthropological terms, or suggesting that they be “kept whole,” but that either way, the next ὀλοκληρων ἴμων really refers to “your whole being.” Hence, the phrase τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ really refer to the same aspect of the person.

This does not exclude the word σῶμα as having multiple meanings, including that which represents “self,” and that will be dealt with below. Paul may use “spirit” and “soul” (NRSV: “mind”) in such a manner that there is no significant distinction between them, as in Phil 1:27, where he writes,

Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, (ὅτι στήκετε ἐν ἑνὶ πνεύματί) striving side by side with one mind (μιᾷ ψυχῇ συναθλοῦντες) for the faith of the gospel.

A. McCaig wrote on this topic in 1931, concluding that

The more the passages are examined, the more clearly it will appear that it is the same entity, the higher nature of man that is described by both terms (i.e., soul and spirit); and when there is any seeming difference it simply is that the one entity is considered under different aspects. In several Pauline passages, ψυχὴ refers to “life,” as in Rom 11:3, where Paul quotes 1 Kg 19:10, "Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have demolished your altars; I alone am left, and they are seeking my life (ζητοῦσιν τὴν ψυχὴν μου). This

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translates the Hebrew קֶבֶר בְּשָׁם יִשָׁרֵאֵל. Generally, the word קֶבֶר בְּשָׁם יִשָׁרֵאֵל is translated by the Greek ψυχή, referring to that which makes an individual a living person (Gen 2:7). We also see the same use of ψυχή in Rom 16:4. In 2 Cor 12:15, we find a comparable overall use, with no specific reference to “soul;” and in Phil 2:30, we find a similar use.

Where Paul differs mostly in the use of ψυχή from Philo is when he uses the term to imply “physicality.” We find in 1 Cor 2:14 that ψυχικὸς refers to “unspiritual” people, as not receiving God’s spirit. And in 1 Cor 15:44-46, we have ψυχικὸς specifically contrasted to spirit (πνεῦμα) in each verse.

This does not mean that the Philonic idea of the death of the soul is not to be found in Paul, but it simply means that we must examine an additional aspect of his anthropology and discover whether there is a way that Paul can be read such that there is a parallel to the use we found in Philo.

As a means to this end, we now analyze how Paul visualized the physicality of the human being. After that, we shall ask the next question about his view of spirituality and spirit.

4.1.2 σάρξ and σῶμα in Paul’s Anthropology.

As with other central concepts, there is a spectrum of uses of σάρξ in Paul. As Paul usually does, there is a meaning that simply expresses “physical” or when he uses “κατὰ σάρκας,” he may mean merely “in a physical sense.” 326 Similarly, with the word σῶμα, he may often imply merely the physical body with no valuational overtone. 327

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On the other hand, σαρξ is sometimes used in a negative fashion, as the locus of sin, but where it is a “state of being,” not something material. Here are three important examples, a) Rom 7:4-6, b) Rom 8:3-4 and c) Gal 5:16-17.

a). Rom 7:4-6. In the same way, brothers (and sisters), you have died to the law through the body of Christ, (ὑμεῖς ἐθανατώθητε τῷ νόμῳ διὰ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ) so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead in order that we may bear fruit for God (τῷ ἐκ νεκρῶν ἐγερθέντι, ἵνα καρποφορήσωμεν τῷ θεῷ). For when we were in the flesh, (ὅτε γὰρ ἦμεν ἐν τῇ σαρκί) our sinful passions, awakened by the law, worked in our members to bear fruit for death (τὰ παθήματα τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν τὰ διὰ τοῦ νόμου ἐνεργεῖτο ἐν τοῖς μέλεσιν ἡμῶν, εἰς τὸ καρποφορῆσαι τῷ θανάτῳ). But now we are released from the law, (νῦνὶ δὲ κατηργήθημεν ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου) dead to what held us captive, so that we may serve in the newness of the spirit (ἐν καινότητι πνεύματος) and not under the obsolete letter.

There is a variety of ways of understanding these verses. First, it should be noted that Paul is using this as an illustration of the laws regarding marriage for a woman whose husband has died, i.e., that after his death, she cannot be considered an adulterer if she marries another man. However, this illustration leads to the first discussion of what “being in the flesh” means. I believe Fitzmyer has the clearest insight when he relates ἐν τῇ σαρκί to that state prior to baptism. For this baptism is, for Paul, that act wherein one dies to the Jewish Law. And while the phrase “you have died to the law (ὑμεῖς ἐθανατώθητε τῷ νόμῳ)” parallels the situation where the husband has died, hence freeing the wife to re-marry, we should note the transformation that Paul understands by the next phrase, where a metamorphosis has occurred, namely, being freed from sinful passions


329 Fitzmyer, Romans, 458.
found in the flesh. We will later deal with the extent to which the law led to sin, but for the present, notice that the sinful passions reside in the flesh, the \( \sigma \alpha \rho \xi \). It should be pointed out that Philo also saw sinfulness as residing in the \( \sigma \alpha \rho \xi \), as he indicates in *Leg.* 2.49-50, where \( \sigma \alpha \rho \xi \) is the source of passions, and *Gig.* 28-29, where he contrasts the spirit of God which infused Moses, with \( \sigma \alpha \rho \xi \), characterized as the chief cause of ignorance, quoting Moses who insists that spirit cannot abide in \( \sigma \alpha \rho \xi \).\textsuperscript{330} Further, we are released from that which held us captive, i.e., the “old law.”

The “old law” was related to “flesh,” and this must be explained. I propose that there is a combination of human limitations that Paul saw in the Mosaic Law. First, following Dunn,\textsuperscript{331} the “Law” included that set of identity markers that segregated the Jews from the rest of the world. The “Works of the Law” were the practices that identified a Jew, such as circumcision, food laws and festal celebrations. In such practices, Jews not only created a sense of self-identity as a people (and especially as the “people of God,”) but practically segregated the “people” from the Nations/Gentiles. The first and foremost “work” or practice required by the Law was circumcision, which clearly had its “fleshly” component. The second was that set of food ordinances that practically precluded commensality between Jews and Gentiles. And the majority of the prohibitions were meats or “fleshly” edibles. Festal celebrations were those where eating and drinking were prominent (except for Yom Kippur, which involved abstinence from

\textsuperscript{330} Additionally, Philo makes parallel statements in *Deus* 140-41.

food.) In both cases, there was a “fleshly” component. This will be important to keep in mind as we analyze the next example.

b). Romans 8:3-4. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh (ἐν ὑποζήνει διὰ τῆς σαρκός) could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, (ἐν ὡμοίωματι σαρκός ἁμαρτίας) and to deal with sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, (περὶ ἁμαρτίας κατέκρινεν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ) ⁴ so that the righteous decree of the law (‘ίνα τὸ δικαίωμα τοῦ νόμου) might be fulfilled in us, who live not according to the flesh but according to the spirit (μὴ κατὰ σάρκα περιπατοῦσιν ἄλλα κατὰ πνεῦμα.)

As an entrance to the discussion, we need to ask again what τὸ δικαίωμα might mean in this context. First, it is quite common in the LXX, generally as a translation of מִשְׁמֶר or (rarely) פִּלַּפ. It is usually translated as “ordinance,” but sometimes it means justice (Exod 21:9, 1 Kgs 3:28, 1 Kgs 8:59 etc.) or may mean “cause” as a legal “cause of action.” (1 Kgs 8:45, 1 Chr 6:35, Jer 11:20).³³²

Paul himself used δικαίωμα with several meanings in 1) Rom 1:32 (decree, statute), 2) 2:29 (requirements) and 3) 5:16 (justification). It is also found in 4) Gen. 26:4-5, which Paul would undoubtedly have read:

Genesis 26: ⁴ I will make your offspring as numerous as the stars of heaven, and will give to your offspring all these lands; and all the nations of the earth shall gain blessing for themselves through your offspring, because Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws (τὰς ἑντολὰς μου καὶ τὰ δικαιώματα μου καὶ τὰ νόμιμα μου).

Notice that Abraham was said to have obeyed all the ordinances, commands, requirements and laws of God. The δικαίωμα that Paul refers to is hence not the Mosaic law, but rather that “law” that Abraham had been given through the Spirit. Abraham, as role-model for all Christians, acted righteously 430 years prior to the giving of the Mosaic law, and prior to his own circumcision.

³³² There are many more parallel referents to the plural, δικαιώματα.
Paul sees the source of the Mosaic law as being somehow “fleshly” or “weakened by the flesh” and opposed to the Spirit (Rom 8:3-4). It was not a direct product of the Spirit, but was “ordained through the angels by a mediator” (διατάχθης δι’ ἀγγέλων ἐν χειρὶ μεσίτου)(Gal 3:19). Thus, there was a non-Spirit (i.e., “fleshly) element in the ordination of the law.

Overlaying the above discussion about the fleshly character of the law is the next segment of the spectrum of uses, where “flesh” means bodily enjoyments as a source of sinful activities (Rom 7:5, 18, 25, 8:3, 5, 8, 9, 13). These activities are specifically opposed to the Spirit (Rom 8:4, 1 Cor 3:2, Gal 5:16, 17, 19-21, 24, 6:8). Hence, we have two vectors, one defining the “activities of the flesh” as being rooted in passion and self-gratification, and the other vector being that which exists outside the life in the Spirit for any reason, historical or existential.

c). In Gal 5:13-24 is a section of the letter that exhorts Paul’s readers/hearers to avoid corruption by the flesh, using σάρξ in contradistinction to πνεῦμα. After having asserted that the Galatians were called to freedom, and that the whole Law is expressed in loving one’s neighbor as oneself, he cautions against biting and consuming one another, (Gal 5:15) clearly referring to the kind of activity characteristic of beasts, or that activity that we saw in Heraclitus and Philo as expressive of a less-than-human state of being.333

We then find Paul discussing the root of such behavior:

**Gal 5:16-17** Live by the Spirit, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh (ἐπιθυμίαν σαρκός οὐ μὴ τελέσητε). 17 For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh (ἡ γὰρ σὰρξ ἐπιθυμεῖ κατὰ τοῦ πνεῦματος, τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα κατὰ τῆς σαρκὸς), for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want.

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Betz calls Gal 5:17 “one of the fundamental anthropological doctrines of Paul,” and he also indicates that it “assumes common knowledge.”

Paul continues in the same chapter to provide a list of the “works of the flesh,” (τὰ ἐργα τῆς σαρκός) which provides a parallel (albeit relatively minuscule) to Philo’s list of vices in Sac. 32. Philo affirmed that his list resulted from being a votary of pleasure (φιληδονος). While the exact names of vices quoted by Paul and Philo are different, there is the same expression of morally reprehensible activities. Philo expresses a similar disorientation to σαρξ in The Giants, 29-35, where he calls σαρξ the chief cause of ignorance” (Gig. 29) and he continues, that divine spirit cannot abide in fleshly creatures. Hence, this important anthropological insight is not unique to Paul, but as with Philo, Paul saw σαρξ and πνεῦμα as polar opposites.

Jewett summarizes the use of σαρξ in Romans as being the sinful desire to gain righteousness by works; such a life leads to death because in depending upon his own flesh to gain righteousness, man comes into conflict with the righteousness revealed in the new aeon.

As with σαρξ we have a spectrum of uses of the word σῶμα. On the one hand, Paul may use the word in a non-metaphorical manner or it can be seen as the locus of sin (Rom. 8:10,13; 1 Cor 6:13, 2 Cor 5:10). In this sense, there is a strong parallel between σῶμα and σαρξ. There is, however, an important third meaning of σῶμα when it refers to the Body of Christ, which is identical to the church itself. Thus, we read in

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334 Betz, Galatians, 279.
335 Ibid. 279.
337 Rom 4:19, 8:11, 8:23, 12:1; 1 Cor 5:3, 6:16, 7:4, 7:34, 9:27, 13:3, 15:44,; 2 Cor 5:8, 10:10; Gal 6:17; 1 Thess 5:23.
Rom 7:4, “In the same way, my brothers [and sisters], you have died to the law through the body of Christ (ὡστε ἀδελφοί μου, καὶ ὑμεῖς ἐθανατώθητε τῷ νόμῳ διὰ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ) which expresses the Pauline vision that by baptism into the Church, the Body of Christ, one is no longer subject to the Mosaic law. By becoming part of the Body of Christ, we are “put to death” to the law. The national and ethnic marks of identity are submerged into the larger unity that is brought about by the church. For within the church, there is no more “distinction” (Gal 3:28). The expression of unity that is focused on in 1 Cor 12 presupposes a strong sense of solidarity in the “Body of Christ” (1 Cor 12:26). It is no mere metaphor; it is an expression of a reality that underlies the concept of “dying to the Law,” but not losing a sense of order and social structure within the community. We shall treat this idea more fully later in the study. Let us now turn to the other aspect of Pauline anthropology and deal with his understanding of πνεῦμα.

4.1.3 πνεῦμα in Paul’s Anthropology.

As with other commonly used words, πνεῦμα in the Pauline Corpus appears within a spectrum of meanings. Without understanding Paul’s insights regarding “Spirit” it is impossible to understand his concept of θάνατος.

To achieve this goal, I shall a). first begin with an analysis of how this word appears in the LXX. This will include Gen 1:2; Isa 44:3-4; Isa 11:1, Ezek 36:26-7, Ezek 37, Ps 50:12, and Ps 138.7. Thereafter, b). there will be an analysis of how Paul himself used the word, including an extended analysis of Rom 8:1-12. Some of the foregoing will be repeated in a later section, but the emphasis there will be totally different.
a). I should like to begin by seeing how this word was used in the LXX, as this undoubtedly served as a formative influence on the Apostle.

When Paul read Gen 1:2, he had to read that the “a wind/breath of God swept over the waters (πνεῦμα θεοῦ ἐπεφέρετο ἐπάνω τοῦ ωδατος). At issue is how one translates πνεῦμα θεοῦ, which itself is a translation of ~yhiêl{a/ x:Wrå. It should be noted that the word πνεῦμα is here anarthous; as a consequence, “the Spirit of God” is somewhat tendentious. Westermann does not come down firmly as to whether “mighty wind” or “Spirit of God” is the better translation of πνεῦμα θεοῦ. But he seems convinced that the Hebrew word נַחַל can best be rendered by “hover”, “flutter” or “flap.” Sarna focuses on the expression of dynamism flowing from God’s activity. If this is an acceptable reading, then “Spirit” is probably the best translation of נַחַל, and πνεῦμα. Further, Philo describes the πνεῦμα θεοῦ as “most life-giving (ζωτικῶτατον)” since God is the cause of life. Hence, it is likely that Paul would have understood πνεῦμα as ultimately rooted in God.

There are two Isaian references that are illustrative. For the first, the Lord is speaking to his servant, Jacob, and He says in 44:3-4,

I will pour my spirit upon your descendants, and my blessing on your offspring (ἐπιθήσω τὸ πνεῦμά μου ἐπὶ τὸ σπέρμα σου καὶ τὰς εὐλογίας μου ἐπὶ τὰ τέκνα σου) They shall spring up like a green tamarisk, like willows by flowing streams (καὶ ἀνατελοῦσιν ὡςει χόρτος ἀνὰ μέσον ώδατος καὶ ὡς ἱτέα ἐπὶ παραρρέουν ὑδῶρ.

The life-giving character of the Spirit is clearly delineated: the images are of lush growth and vitality with verdant richness as the product of bountiful water. This reinforces the concept of πνεῦμα as life-giving.

The second is as follows, Isaiah 11:1-2:

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots (καὶ ἔξελεύσεται ράβδος ἐκ τῆς ρίζης Ἰησοῦ καὶ ἄνθος ἐκ τῆς ρίζης ἀναβησταὶ). The spirit of the God shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord (καὶ ἀναπαύσεται ἐπ’ αὐτὸν πνεῦμα τοῦ θεοῦ πνεῦμα σοφίας καὶ συνέσεως, πνεῦμα βουλῆς καὶ ἱσχύς πνεῦμα γνώσεως καὶ εὐσεβείας).

This “Christmas” verse is another expression of growth and development, similar to that which we saw above. Here we again have an express determination that the “Spirit” is that “of God”; further, the character of this Spirit is elaborated as being that which (brings) Wisdom (σοφία) and Understanding (σοφία); it is practical in dealing with contemporary problems (βουλή, ἰσχύς), but it also includes the vehicle to knowledge (γνώση) and the proper relation to God, expressed as “fear of the Lord,” but implying piety (εὐσεβεία). Thus, the Spirit is powerful and active within the individual on whom the Spirit is brought to rest (ἀναπαύομαι). The Greek is less expressive of the role of the Spirit than the Hebrew; while Greek ἀναπαύω does indeed mean in the middle voice to “to rest upon,” the

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341 BADG, ἀναπαύομαι 536.4.
more powerful Hebrew root הָעַלָּה כִּלְלִּים implies a “settling upon;” and where the Spirit is referred to, “settling upon” considerably influences the persons upon whom it “settles.”

There are two Ezekiel passages that should be mentioned: Ezek 36:26-27 where the Lord assures his people through the prophet that He will save them from their exile and give them a new heart. “I will put my spirit within you (τὸ πνεῦμα μου δώσω ἐν ὑμῖν), and make you follow my statutes and be careful to observe my ordinances.” First, it is God who is speaking, who will give a “new spirit” to His people; but more importantly this new Spirit is God’s, and its presence within His people will cause them to follow His judgments and observe and “do” them. The presence of such Spirit is existentially felt in action.

We also refer to Ezek 37:1-14, where the Prophet was led out into the dusty plain by the spirit of the Lord (ברוחו ו BroadcastReceiver . We should also note the presence of the Spirit in Ezekiel 37. First, it is defined as belonging to the Lord (Ezek 37:1) and was an active agent in the prophet’s experience. In v. 5 we have the affirmation that the giving of the Spirit brings life (הָאָמַת נְפֶשׁ חַיִּים וְרָאָת וּרְאוּת נְפֶשׁ חַיִּים). Further, essentially the same phrase is repeated in the next verse. Of course, we have the valley of the vast multitude of dry-bones being vivified by the Spirit. Most interesting, however, is that the Spirit is vivifying that which is dead. God is bringing life to those already in their graves. And the life-giving character of God’s inbreathing is repeated a third time in v. 14 (וְרָאָת נְפֶשׁ חַיִּים וְרָאָת נְפֶשׁ חַיִּים).

342 Num 11:25 describes the Spirit of God settling upon the seventy elders, where we find רוחו ו recibir . the LXX has δύναμιν as well.
I shall propose later that this idea powerfully influenced Paul’s vision of baptism, as well as being a root out of which Pauline repentance after baptism and sin might spring.

I should finally like to point out two important references to Spirit from the Psalms:

Ps. 50:12 καρδιάν καθαράν κτίσον ἐν ἐμοί ὁ θεός καὶ πνεῦμα εὐθές ἐγκαίνισον ἐν τοῖς ἐγκαίνισον μου μὴ ἀπορρίψῃς με ἀπὸ τοῦ προσώπου σου καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἀγιόν σου μὴ ἀντανάκλῃς ἀπ’ ἐμοῦ.

Ps. 51:10 (NRSV) Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. 11 Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me.

This psalm is important because here the “Spirit” is described as being “holy,” which by the Hellenistic age, clearly relates to some aspect of God’s being. The plea is for continued intimacy with God, but also intimates that this “new” and “righteous” spirit somehow dwells within the individual. This will be an important in understanding Paul’s concept of Spirit. Philo used πνεῦμα ζωῆς as the expression of God’s presence in the human spirit, as a “portion of an ethereal nature” (Leg. 3.160). This sharing became important for Paul.

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343 Note that this psalm has different enumeration in the different Biblical editions: NRSV= 51:10-11; NAB = 51:12-13; LXX = 50:12-13; MT = 51:12-13.

344 Jewett, *Anthropological Terms*, points out that in the Corinthian correspondence, Paul was careful to distinguish the divine Spirit from that appropriated as “mine” by the Gnostics in Corinth. But in Romans, the “apportioned spirit is referred to as ‘mine’,” 452.
Psalm 138:7 Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence? (NRSV)

This verse stipulates the universality of the Spirit and the inability to be anywhere in the world where the Spirit is not present. The Spirit does not dwell exclusively in the Holy of Holies; nor does the Spirit dwell above the earth in Heaven; it is present universally and accessible to all. In the OT, one of the many meaning of Spirit is God’s power.345

This universal presence of the Spirit most likely influenced Paul’s understanding of Spirit.

b). Now, let us look at Paul’s own use of the word πνεῦμα. The range of the spectrum begins with a purely metaphorical use, such as when he speaks of the “spirit of holiness” (Rom. 1:4), of the “spirit of slavery” and of the “spirit of adoption” (πνεῦμα υἱοθεσίας) (Rom 8:15); and a “spirit of gentleness” (πνεῦμα πραΰστητος) (1 Cor 4:21, Gal 6:1). He also speaks of being “absent in the body but present in spirit,” (ἀπόν τῷ σώματι παρών δὲ τῷ πνεῦματι (1 Cor 5:3) which in view of the contrast with physical presence must be seen as metaphorical.

The next segment of the spectrum involves identifying πνεῦμα as a substitute for the word “person,” or a characterization of a person. We find this in Rom 1:9, referring to God, whom Paul “serves with my spirit” (ὁ λατρεύω ἐν τῷ πνεῦματί μου); he could

just as easily said “whom I serve.” We also see πνεῦμα as that which describes the character of a person, as in Rom 11:8 where he quotes Isaiah 29:10, speaking of a “sluggish spirit” (πνεῦμα κατανοηζεῖος); in 1 Cor 5:4 we have a case where a person is to be handed over to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, so that “his spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord” (ἵνα τὸ πνεῦμα σωθῆν ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τοῦ κυρίου). This merely refers to the person. There are similar uses in 1 Cor 7:34; and in 1 Cor 14:14-16, he distinguishes “mind” from “spirit,” when he speaks of praying in tongues. In 2 Cor 7:1, he uses body and spirit (σάρκα καὶ πνεῦματος) as a means of expressing the whole person; this is true also of its use in Phil. 4:23. We have already discussed the tri-partition in 1 Thess 5:23, which clearly means the entire person. In these cases, we can understand that Paul is referring to an “interior” aspect of a human being, or a part of that which makes a person to be human.

There is another “adjacent” aspect of the spectrum, where Paul says something about πνεῦμα by discussing its opposite. In Rom 8:1-12, there is a protracted argument as to the relationship between πνεῦμα and σάρξ.

There is a catena of ideas that mutually illuminate each other in Rom 8 regarding what Paul believes the spirit is. We shall examine the relevant texts and draw our conclusions about his anthropology. We shall focus on πνεῦμα, although the meaning of other central concepts (ἀμαρτία, σάρξ, etc) are required to understand πνεῦμα.

Rom 8:1-2 There is therefore now no condemnation (κατάκριμα) for those who are in Christ Jesus. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life (νόμος τοῦ πνεῦματος τῆς ζωῆς) in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.

In order to discuss the “spirit of life,” it is important to understand that these verses draw a conclusion from 7:7-25, the “speech-in-character” that will be discussed
below. I shall focus here on “spirit,” and upon the “law of sin and of death” only to explicate “spirit.”

We note that κατάκριμα is a substitute for the word θάνατος, so that being “in” Christ Jesus is precisely the means of avoiding death. Paul expands this statement by referring to the “law of the Spirit of life,” which frees one from the “law of sin and of death.” It is clear that Paul is attempting to distinguish two sorts of “law.” We know he referred to the “law of Christ” in Gal 6:2, the fulfillment of which is to “bear one another’s burdens” (cf also Rom 13:8-10). He is distinguishing this sort of (unwritten, experienced) standard from that which is written, i.e., the Mosaic law. But we focus on νόμος τοῦ πνεύματος τῆς ζωῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ and suggest that the νόμος is exactly opposite to his perception of the Mosaic law. It is necessary to examine whether each genitive is subjective or objective. If we read the first (τοῦ πνεύματος τῆς ζωῆς) as a subjective genitive, we have the focus on “law” itself, namely the character of that “law.” This would bring us to understand that the law itself brings about the “spirit of life.” However, if we read both genitives as objective, then we have the focus on the “Spirit of Life,” which happens to be “in” Christ Jesus. The “Spirit” has the characteristic of “life” or that which is the opposite of Death. The “Spirit of life” perhaps means the same as “Spirit (which gives) life” or that which is the root of real “life.” We recall Gen 2:7, where God breathed into the face of Adam, and he became a “living being.”

346 In addition, Rom 5:16 and 5:18 used this word to express the kind of death that Adam experienced after the fall.

347 I deal below with how the law of Moses can be “sin” and lead to death.

348 As a translational note, Käsemann, Romans, 214, translates this as “the law of life given with the Spirit...”
Rom 8:3-4. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and to deal with sin, he condemned sin in the flesh so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

V. 3 builds on the distinction between a “law of spirit of life” and “Mosaic law” by contrasting the action of God as a response to the ineffectiveness of the Mosaic law, with the continuation in v. 4 that completes the contrast and affirms that there is a distinction between living “in the flesh” and “living in the Spirit.”

The “law of the spirit,” however, only occurred historically with the revelation of Jesus Christ. This was the event that brought into history the larger, underlying law that was “the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus” which in fact freed all believers from the “law of sin and death.” The idea of “Spirit” as a “divine being” was then in the process of development, but it is unquestionable that within chapter 8, we have a reference to the Spirit of God, which is immediately followed by using the same word as being the Spirit of Christ (Rom 8:9).

There is also a spectrum of uses of πνεῦμα as it relates to God. First, we have Rom. 5:5, “God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us (ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ θεοῦ ἐκκέχυται ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν διὰ πνεύματος ἄγιον τοῦ δοθέντος ἡμῖν). We also have parallel references to the “Holy Spirit” referred to in Rom 15:16, where the offering that consists of the Gentiles is “sanctified in the Holy Spirit,” (ἡγιασμένη ἐν πνεύματι ἅγιον). And in Rom 15:30, we see the Spirit as slightly separate from God, “through the love of the spirit” (διὰ τῆς ἀγάπης τοῦ πνεύματος) but clearly closely related to God, as Paul requests that his hearers join with him in prayers.
for him to God (συναγωνίσασθαι μοι ἐν ταῖς προσευχαῖς ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ πρὸς τὸν θεόν) that his collection might be accepted by the Jerusalem church.

This idea of the Spirit being separate from God is expressed in Rom 8:26-28, 1 Cor 2:9-11 and 1 Thess 1:6 and 4:8. I suggest that this use is parallel to and perhaps based upon the visualization of Wisdom in both Proverbs 8:22-31 and Wisdom of Solomon 7:21-23. While the specific theology had to wait until Nicea to become entrenched in history, Paul certainly saw the Spirit as having elements of the divine, without positing a multiplicity of gods. “(Spirit) is for Paul a way of expressing the dynamic influence of God’s presence to justified Christians, the manifestation of his love for them, and the powerful source of their new life in Christ. It is the vivifying power of the risen Christ himself.”

That the Spirit was present among believers is clear from Rom 8:23, 9:1 and 14:7, as well as the detailed discussion of how the Spirit is to be understood in 1 Cor 12. Being “Spirit filled” is a mark not only of the Christian, but is the mark of the revelation of the new life revealed by Jesus Christ. (Rom 7:6, 8:2, 10, 13, 1 Cor 15:45). More importantly, however, this “new life” also gives rise to the perception of the subsuming of the old, written law by the new law, written on hearts (2 Cor 3:3).

Rom 8.9-10. But you (ὑμεῖς) are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you (ὑμῖν). 10 But if Christ is in you (ἐν ὑμῖν), though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness (τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα ζωῆ ἐν δικαίωσιν).

It should be noted that here Paul uses the plural of “you.” We see the same plural used in Rom 5:5, where he indicates that God’s love has been poured into us (ἡμῖν); also, we see the same in 1 Cor 3:16, where Paul says that God’s Spirit dwells “in you” (ἐν

349 Fitzmyer, Romans, 480.
Thus, there is an ecclesiastical vector to that locus of the Spirit. It is not only present in individuals, but it also dwells in the church, which may have been a typical component of early catechesis.\footnote{Jewett, Romans, 489.}

This part of Paul’s anthropological perspective is not far from that of Philo’s writing in \textit{Det}. 80, regarding Gen 2:7, that spirit is the essence of life (\textit{πνεῦμα ἐστὶν ἡ ψυχὴς οὐσία}).\footnote{See also \textit{Det}. 81-84, where Philo specifically designates \textit{πνεῦμα} as flowing from a divine fountain, and constituting the essence of a person.} Further, Philo expresses the conflict between \textit{πνεῦμα} and \textit{σάρξ} in \textit{Gig}. 19-29, indicating that such conflict was understood in the Hellenistic world.

There is one final comment that must be noted. Robert Jewett proposes that Paul’s various discussions of \textit{πνεῦμα} “presuppose a cultural situation in which ecstatic phenomena were primary constituents of religion.”\footnote{Jewett, Romans, 73.} He contends that glossolalia was characteristic of most Christian congregations,\footnote{D. Moody Smith, “Glossolalia and Other Spiritual Gifts in a New Testament Perspective,” \textit{Interpretation}, 28.3 (1974):312.} and that most commentaries tend to ignore this aspect of the early Christian experience, relying on the distrust of mainstream theology against “mysticism, enthusiasm and various forms of charismatic experience.”\footnote{\textit{Ibid}.74.} He points out that G. Theissen and some other authors acknowledge this characteristic of life in the early churches. Jewett believes that “there is every reason to conclude that this charismatic enthusiasm was characteristic not only of the Pauline

\footnote{Jewett, Romans, 489.}

\footnote{See also \textit{Det}. 81-84, where Philo specifically designates \textit{πνεῦμα} as flowing from a divine fountain, and constituting the essence of a person.}

\footnote{Jewett, Romans, 73.}


\footnote{\textit{Ibid}.74.}
churches but of Roman Christianity as a whole, and that he will include that presupposition in the balance of his commentary.

In conclusion, Paul’s anthropology was dominated by a conflict between πνεῦμα and σῶμα, with the former being rooted in God, shared by human beings, and which was given as a gift through Jesus Christ. And unlike Philo, the root of a person’s being was not rationality, or sharing in the divine λόγος, but was the presence of love through the Spirit, the gift of God through Christ (1 Cor 12-13). However, we cannot leave the anthropological picture without discussing the role of sin within Paul’s thought.

4.1.4 ἁμαρτία in Paul’s Anthropology.

We must first overview the use of this word in the LXX, focusing on the words it translates. It is used to translate ἁμαρτία derivatives 230 times, words with ἁμαρτία roots 70 times, with ἁμαρτέω rooted words 21 times, ἁμαρτάω rooted words 7 times, and ἁμαρτάω rooted words twice. Within the first usage, we have a variety of meanings, and we shall deal with them first by discussing sin as personified, as expressive of a historical degradation of society, as found in Leviticus and Numbers briefly, as it affected Pauline anthropology, and finally how ἁμαρτέωλόγος is used by Paul.

Its first appearance in the Bible is in Genesis 4:7, where sin is personified and “lurks at the door.” We see a generalization of sin in Prov 13:6, 14:34, Jer 17:1 and Hos 4:7-8.

355 Ibid.

356 G. Quell, ἁμαρτάνω etc. in TDNT, 1.268.
Commentators have characterized a number of Pauline references to ἁμαρτία as “personification.” Examples include Rom 3:9, “all, both Jews and Greeks, are under the power of sin” (Ἰουδαίοις τε καὶ Ἑλλήνας πάντας ὑφ’ ἁμαρτίαν εἰναι); Rom 5:21, “sin exercised dominion” (ἐβασίλευσεν ἡ ἁμαρτία); Rom 6:12, “Do not let sin exercise dominion” (Μὴ οὖν βασιλεύετω ἡ ἁμαρτία); Rom 7:11, “for sin deceived me” (ἡ γὰρ ἁμαρτία ... ἐξηπάτησέν με); and numerous other examples. The idea of a “personification” implies a literary technique that Paul used to describe a state of affairs. I should like to concentrate on the state of affairs that Paul probably had in mind when he referred to ἁμαρτία. Robert Jewett agrees with Walter Grundmann where he says, “(f)or Paul sin does not consist only in the individual act. Sin is for him a state which embraces all humanity.” For Jewett, sin consists primarily in the participation in the traditional intense competition for honor within the Greco-Roman world, where honor was seen as the ultimate value; and in accordance with this value, it became common for those early Christians in the house- and tenement-churches of Rome to mutually damn each other.

Further, following the introduction of sin into the world by Adam, many ancient thinkers believed that there was a progressive deterioration of the human race as described in the Old Testament. Paul himself quotes Eccl 7:20 in Rom 3:10, affirming the universality of unrighteousness. And he quotes Ps 14:2-3 (LXX 13:2-3) (“The Lord looks down from heaven. . . all. . . are perverse”) in Rom 3:11, and Ps 5:9 (LXX 5:10)

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357 Dunn, Romans, 1.148. Cranfield, Romans 1.191. Fitzmyer, Romans, 331; Murphy-O’Connor A Critical Life, does not use the word “personification,” but describes “Sin” (with “Capital ’S’”) as a “power,” 336.

358 Rom 6:6, 12, 13, 17, 18, 20, 22, 7:9, 13, 14, 17, 20, 23, 25, 8:3, Gal 3:22.


360 Jewett, Romans, 389, 483.
(“No sincerity in their mouths,” etc.) in Rom 3:13. In Rom 3:10-18, Paul quotes a catena of OT verses that affirm the unrighteousness of both Jews and Greeks.\textsuperscript{361} This appears to parallel a Hellenistic and Ancient Near Eastern perspective of the progressive degradation of the human race from a prior, mythical state of well-being.\textsuperscript{362}

Hollander and Holleman\textsuperscript{363} have pointed out the well-developed Hellenistic concept of cultural degeneration from a prior, mythic golden age. Posidonius may have been a proponent of such a position.\textsuperscript{364} Strabo reflects a degeneration of the quality of Jewish life in his positive description of the primeval leader, Moses, who received the Law from God, as did many other Greek heroes. However, subsequent to Moses, “superstitious people were appointed to the priesthood, and then tyrannical people” ($Geogr.$ 16.2.37). He describes the history of Jewish leadership as having “no bad beginning, turned out for the worse” ($Geogr.$ 16.2.39).

Seneca describes the deterioration of the human race in his letter to Lucilius\textsuperscript{365} where he describes the golden age where Posidonius held that government was in the hands of the wise, and that “Their forethought provided that their subjects should lack nothing; their bravery warded off dangers; their kindness enriched and adorned their

\begin{footnotes}
\item[361] Rom 3:10 quotes Eccl 7:20; Rom 3:11 alludes to Ps 14:2-3; Rom 3:12 alludes to Exod 32:8; Rom 3:13 quotes Ps 5:9; Rom 3:13 quotes Ps 140:3; Rom 3:15 alludes to Prov 1:11-16; Rom 3:16-17 alludes to and quotes Isa 59:7-8; and Rom 3:18 quotes Ps 36:1. All of the OT quotations affirm dramatic separation of humankind from God.

\item[362] Note that Hesiod, $Works and Days$, 110 describes the creation of a “Golden Race,” which is subsequently followed by a Silver, Bronze, Iron and then the race of existing men, [sic], each of which was inferior to its predecessor.


\item[365] Seneca, $Epistle to Lucilius$ 90.5-6, (Gummere, LCL).
\end{footnotes}
subjects. . .” But avarice crept in and by violating property rights, reduced the world to poverty and need. We see here a strong sense of historical deterioration of the moral quality of the human race. This was shared by the Cynics, one of whom, Anacharsis, wrote the following:

The earth was long ago the common possession of the gods and of men. In time, however, men transgressed by dedicating to the gods as their private precincts what was the common possession of all. In return for these, the gods bestowed upon men fitting gifts: strife, desire for pleasure and meanness of spirit.  

Thus, Paul’s “personification” of sin as a “power” actually represents a “state of affairs” within the human race, a common experience. W. D. Davies describes this sin as “…not simply an absence of the good but an active force toward evil.” Robert Jewett writes that sin is used here in an “almost hypostatizing fashion. . .” This means that Paul saw this state of affairs as both common to all humans and a real presence in the world.

I suggest that we understand this personified power, “Sin,” as a state of separation from God, as practical indifference to the God who revealed his righteousness in Jesus Christ (Rom 1:18-25). The revelation that God sent his Son for the remission of sin is the critical and central historical event in the world for Paul; any prior revelation was not evil but was simply radically incomplete (Phil 3:7-9). Because of its historical shortcomings, the revelation of the Mosaic Law was necessarily sinful in the sense that it was indifferent to the revelation of Jesus Christ. Rom 14:23 is a critical quotation to verify

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368 Jewett, Romans, 258.
this position: “...for whatever does not proceed from faith is sin” (πᾶν δὲ ὁ ὁ̔ψ οὐκ ἐκ πίστεως ἁμαρτία ἐστίν). And clearly, the “faith” he refers to is faith in Christ.\footnote{369}

In the interest of completeness, the word “sin” (ἁμαρτία) is used in the LXX as equivalent of “sin offering.”\footnote{370} However, in Lev and Num one often finds περὶ ἁμαρτίας\footnote{371} or τὰ περὶ τῆς ἁμαρτίας.\footnote{372} This usage is not productive for our purposes, and will not be pursued.

It is a characterization of all humans that they sin, so sin becomes an element in the very makeup of a human person. In the Greco-Roman and Jewish worlds sin meant a “failure to meet a standard,” or to “miss the mark” or to “transgress.”\footnote{373} It is used in the OT as the equivalent of a transgression against a commandment by an individual.\footnote{374} Specific types of action are designated\footnote{375} and even if a particular act is not specified, improper action is reflected.\footnote{376}

Recognizing that individual acts are included in the concept of sin, we ask how Paul’s anthropology handled the plural ἁμαρτίαι, along with παράπτωμα and παράβασις, sometimes used as synonyms for ἁμαρτία and sometimes not. In Rom 4:7, (“Blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered,”) Paul quotes Ps. 32:1-2,
where individual acts are clearly implied which, being the product of the moral conflict within an individual, may be the product of the personified power Sin. Further, we notice in 1 Cor 15:17 ἐὰν δὲ Χριστὸς οὐκ ἐγήγερται, ματαιὰ ἡ πίστις ὧμων, ἐτι ἐστὲ ἐν ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις ὧμων, where “sins” is given in the plural. Within the context of this verse, Paul is arguing about the centrality of the resurrection; not to accept Christ’s resurrection is to deny the Pauline gospel and to become, in fact, no better than pagans or unbelieving Jews. As a rejection of God’s revelation of the message of Christ, they are outsiders, sinners. This introduces a slightly different nuance, with “sins” being not merely individual acts, but as a characterization of what sort of person one happens to be: insider (Christ believer) or outsider (one who does not believe.) This is parallel to the Jewish bifurcation of humanity into Jew and Gentile.

Given the fact that sin (or sins) are characteristic of all humans, we note that Paul uses παράπτωμα and παράβασις generally translated as “transgression” or “deviation” (from the right path) reflecting the reality that despite the receipt of the Spirit by the believer, it is still possible to “miss the mark.” Jewett suggests that both of these words may be substituted for “sins,” without doing damage to the intent of the texts.\(^{377}\)

If we examine Rom 5:15-19, we can see how “transgression” and “sins” are clearly identified. But in 5:20-1, we have:

\(^{20}\) The law came in, so that trespasses multiplied (πλεονάσῃ τὸ παράπτωμα); but where sin increased (οὐ δὲ ἐπλεόνασεν ἡ ἁμαρτία) grace abounded all the more.  
\(^{21}\) So that just as sin exercised dominion in death, (καὶ ὃσπερ ἐβασίλευσεν ἡ ἁμαρτία ἐν τῷ θανάτῳ), so grace might exercise dominion through justification leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

\(^{377}\) Jewett, Romans, 342-3. The context was the reference to Isa 53:6 and 12 which uses ἁμαρτία and παραπτώματα in Rom 4:25, where Paul uses the latter word as equivalent to the former.
Here we see παράπτωμα is clearly used as a parallel to ἁμαρτία, which would be understood in the same manner as “Sin” with a “capital S.” This is also true of Rom 11:11-12, where Paul is referring to the Jews who did not accept his gospel. Here it is likely that παράπτωμα means either an indifference to the revelation of God about Jesus Christ or acts that are evil as a result of such indifference.

Finally, in Gal 6:1, (“If anyone is detected in a transgression, (παράπτωμα ) you who have received the Spirit should restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness”), παράπτωμα undoubtedly means an individual transgression; further, it is likely that the person detected is a member of the community, having been baptized.

The word παράβασις generally refers to individual acts of transgressions, as can be seen by the contexts of Rom 2:23, 25, 27, 5:14, Gal 2:18 and 3:19. There is no case that I have found where the word could be a substitute for personified Sin, or that endemic, socially expressed indifference to or lack of knowledge of the revelation of God about Christ.

Thus, in summary: “Sin” is a pervasive indifference to or lack of knowledge of the revelation of Jesus Christ as the one who has reconciled humanity to God. Thus, those who adhere to the Mosaic Law, either through rejecting the gospel or in never having heard the gospel, exist in a state of “Sin.” The Mosaic Law itself, while not evil or bad because it falls outside the revelation of God in Christ, is therefore sinful. The tenets of the law are valuable, but insofar as they fall short of including faith in Jesus Christ, they are not rooted in the Spirit.

There is one more related term that ought to be reviewed: ἁμαρτωλός. Its normal translation is “sinner” (noun) or “sinful” (adjective.) The term is used to designate
“outsiders” or those who do not conform to the cultic norms (BADG, 379) including both those Israelites who fail to keep purity or moral norms and non-Israelites as a whole.

The word appears six times in the Pauline Corpus: it occurs twice in Gal 2, once in v. 15 when he refers to “Gentile sinners,” (which corresponds to the non-Israelite use) and once in v. 17, where the issue becomes whether, as Gentiles believing in Jesus Christ, they be seen by Jews as outside the covenant. There Paul asks rhetorically whether Christ then becomes a “servant of sin,” i.e., one outside the revelation of God’s righteousness. Of course, Paul sees this as impossible.

In Romans, ἁμαρτωλός is used four times:

5:19, affirming that Adam’s sin, by having separated himself and his progeny (i.e., every descendant) from God, all are “sinners,” or those subject to that state of being.

3:7, where Paul countered charges that he, Paul, by preaching the revelation of Christ, was being called by his fellow-Jews a “sinner.”

7:13, where the adjectival form is used, where “sin” would be seen as being “sinful” through the Commandment.

5:8 where he says, “God proves his love for us, in that while we were still sinners, (οὐ γὰρ ἐγνώκει τὰ ἁμαρτήματα τῶν ἡμῶν) Christ died for us.” The recognition that Christians were at one time, “sinners,” does not necessarily imply that they were wicked and that they contravened the law, but it was necessarily the case that they had not yet received and accepted the revelation of God in Christ. Prior to one’s baptism, everyone is/was a “sinner.”

We can summarize the final aspect of Paul’s anthropology by indicating that sin is a necessary characteristic of the human race, beginning with Adam. Paul saw “Sin” as a
personified entity that dominated all humans through history until Jesus Christ. This Sin was a condition for the individual acts of sinfulness and transgressions and as the characteristic of the moral struggle well documented in Hellenistic writings, though individual responsibility is not denied.

We now move on to the next major section of this chapter, asking the question, “What is ‘life’ for Paul”?

4.2 Life in Paul.

Our second major question of this chapter is “What does Paul mean by ‘life’?” We will discover that Paul’s sense of “life” is not significantly different from that which Philo developed, except that Paul introduced the belief in Jesus Christ as Lord into the overall equation. Let us look at one text that deals with how a person “lives.”

Hab. 2:4 is quoted both in Rom 1:17 and Gal. 3:11:

Rom 1:17 For in it (i.e., the gospel of Jesus Christ) the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written, "The one who is righteous will live by faith" (δὲ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται).

Gal 3:11 Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law; for "The one who is righteous will live by faith" (ὁ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται).

The texts read as follows in the OT:

BGT Habakkuk 2:4 ἔκαν ὑποστέλλεται οὐκ εὐδοκεῖ ἡ ψυχή μου ἐν αὐτῷ ὁ δὲ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως μου ζήσεται. (literally, “my (i.e., God’s) righteous one shall live from faith/faithfulness”).

Participation in Wisdom is the condition for true life, (Leg. 3.52, 3.72, Det. 49, QG 1.51), see above, p. 91.
NRSV Habakkuk 2:4 Look at the proud! Their spirit is not right in them, but the righteous live by their faith. (sic)...literally: “the righteous (one) lives by his faith.

We also see Heb 10:38 which also quotes Hab 2:4: ὁ δὲ δίκαιος μου ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται, “my righteous one shall live by faith.” Here the quotation is exactly the LXX version.

Regardless of the original (i.e., whether it is by “his faithfulness/fidelity” with “his” being either God or the believer him/herself) or by “my” fidelity (i.e., God’s), Paul wrote it as he did to express the key idea that “life” is a product of “faith.” This means that he would not accept the translation of πίστις as “faithfulness,” but he used it as a “theological formula.”379 Most translations use the word “by” to express the Greek ἐκ.380 However, Smyth provides the following grammatical analysis of the word ἐκ: “out, out of, from, from within” (as contrasted with ἀπό).381 Additionally, in describing other elements of the word, when ἐκ refers to the origin of the object, it is “immediate;” or it may refer to the instrument or the means by which the object is achieved. Thus, “faith” in Rom 1:17 is specifically that out of which, or as an instrument by which, one achieves “life.” Now it is clear that this is not mere “physical” life, for the persons for whom Paul is writing are already physically alive. There is something substantially more involved, namely, a qualitative character of life that is distinct and superior to mere physical existence. This must be the “transcendental life” referred to above in the lexical analysis found in BAGD (p. 9).

379 Jewett, Romans, 145.
380 NRSV and NAB, NIV, ASV, NKJ: “by faith.” NJB: “through faith.”
We read in Rom 5:18 that as all were condemned in Adam’s sin, the act of righteousness of one person brought all humans to “the acquittal [that brings] life” (ἐἰς δικαίωσιν ζωής). In Rom 5:16, Paul used the term δικαίωμα within a forensic framework; he contrasted “condemnation” with its opposite, i.e., “acquittal.” Here, he continued with the same sort of analysis; but instead of using δικαίωμα, he used δικαίωσις indicating a different state of being, opposite to that of condemnation, (which I consider equivalent to death.) Hence, δικαίωσις is a special form of life, namely, that where a renewed intimacy is established with God.

In the completion of this segment of the argument (Rom 5:21), Paul elaborates on the issue of “dominance,” with “death” having dominion or ruling from the time of Adam, but its opposite being provided by the act of Jesus Christ. Here, however, he refers not merely to “life,” but to ζωή ἐιώνιος, “eternal life.” Paul used the same term in Rom 2:5, where he attaches it as a gift of God to those who “by patiently doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality.” The “glory” he refers to may be that characteristic of God, or he may be using it coupled with honor as that which would be recognized as valuable to the Romans.  

Fitzmyer points out that this idea of eternal life as the result of a good life is rooted in Jewish tradition expressed in Dan 12:2, 2 Macc 7:9, 4 Macc 15:3 and appears in 1QS 4:7.

This gift is repeated in Rom 6:23 as the opposite of the “wages of Sin,” which is death,  and in Gal 6:8 (“If you sow to your own flesh, you will reap corruption from the

382 Jewett, Romans, 205.
383 Fitzmyer, Romans, 302.
384 To be discussed below.
flesh; but if you sow to the Spirit, you will reap eternal life from the Spirit”). However, in this last verse, the source of the eternal life is the Spirit. The intent of the discussion is to distinguish the consequences of certain kinds of acts; those responding to the flesh produce death; those originating in the Spirit produce eternal life. Practically, this life comes to one in baptism, where one dies and is buried with Christ, but then is raised with him in the “newness of life” (ἐν καινότητι ζωῆς) (Rom 6:4). And when we speak of being raised (ηγερθη), we recall that in Rom 4:17 God is described as who “gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist” (ζωοποιοῦντος τούς νεκροὺς καὶ καλοῦντος τὰ μὴ ὄντα ὡς ὄντα). Within the framework of baptism, God is precisely the one who gives life and calls the non-existent into existence, a clear application to the baptismal act. Hence, God/Spirit, as the source of all life, is the source of this particular form of life (cf also Rom 6:13b, 1 Cor 15:22 and 45).

The role of the Spirit is to provide life, in contrast to flesh (discussed above). The reception of the Spirit is seen in contradistinction to the law in Gal 3:11 and 21. It is the Spirit that “gives life” or “makes alive” (ζωοποιέω) in a way that is more than merely physical, and is what I suggest lies at the very root of Pauline theology. Life is given by the Spirit, which is received in baptism, and which, in turn, is the logical result of the individual act of belief in Jesus Christ.

4.3 The Death of the Soul in Paul.

Paul uses words having the root ὀλο- and its equivalents (like ἀπολλαμβάνω or ὀλέθρεψω) a large number of times in his letters. The central thesis of this study is that

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385 A total of more than 87 uses exist in the Pauline Corpus; of these, 42 appear in Romans alone.
Paul uses θάνατος and its derivatives and synonyms in a spectrum of uses: some uses refer to the cessation of physical life; some are metaphorical, and some refer to a death of the soul similar to the meaning as we found in Philo. Michel refers to Paul’s use of “death” as “multi-layered,” including biological or natural death (Rom 5:12), and the result of the eschatological-forensic act of the judging God (Rom 6:16).

Despite Michel’s insight, there is a large quantity of scholarship on “sin and death,” which, for the most part, does not recognize a spectrum of uses; most use the word θάνατος in a univocal way, referring to the cessation of physical life. In my judgment, this produces interpretations that in some cases make little sense. I shall propose that in twenty five cases, reading θάνατος (and other Greek words alluding to death) as θάνατος ψυχής will provide a superior interpretation. The definition of “superior” is that the reading provides a coherent and intelligible text and does not force statements that vary significantly with one’s experience. Just as in our discussion of Heraclitus we did not find any specific references to “death of the soul,” but rather postulated that in some cases assigning the meaning of “death of the soul” to the word “death” illuminated the text and improved the reading significantly. Paul does not use the phrase “death of the soul” in his writings; further, he does not view “soul (ψυχή)” in

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386 O. Michel, Der Brief an die Römer (Göttingen: Brandenhoect & Rubrecht, 1955), 135, n. 4. References to the Pauline corpus given above are his references.

387 As an example, I shall use Rom 6:23 as a test case. I ask whether the commentator simply presumes that death means physical death or recognizes another kind of death. Byrne (Romans), 207, makes no comment about the character of the death that ensues, but in comments on 6:21, inserted “[eternal]” before “death.” Cranfield (Romans), 330, makes no comment, but criticizes Heidland (TDNT 5, 592) who suggested something other than physical death. Dunn, (Romans), 349, relates death to the forfeiture of eternal life. Fitzmyer, (Romans), 452 no comment on death. Jewett, (Romans), no comment on death. Johnson, (Reading Romans), 112, no comment on death. Käsemann, (Commentary on Romans), no comment on death. Moo, (Epistle to the Romans), no comment on death. Sanday, (Romans), no comment on death. Witherington, (Paul’s Letter to the Romans), speaks of two kinds of death, physical and spiritual. He is the only commentator of the above who refers to spiritual death in this verse.
the same way as Philo or Heraclitus. However, we shall apply the same heuristic method as we did in the Heraclitus texts: if we substitute “spiritual death” in a number of cases where Paul uses “death,” the meaning of the text is illuminated and makes more sense. I propose that “spiritual death” is equivalent in meaning to Philo’s “death of the soul,” since for Paul the πνεῦμα (spirit) is the source of life and the connection with God. We shall analyze seven major sections of Romans and propose that the meaning is clarified by this substitution. I shall deal with Rom 1:32, (4.3.1); 2:12, (4.3.2); 5:12-21, (4.3.3); 6:1-11, (4.3.4); 6:12-23 (4.3.5); 7:1-13 (4.3.6); and 8:1-13 (4.3.7).

4.3.1 Rom 1:32

The word θάνατος appears first in Rom 1:32. The context of 1:24-32 describes the consequences of the refusal to acknowledge God as creator and source of being, with the result that such persons were delivered to “all manner of wrongdoing” (πάση ἀδικίᾳ) (1:29), examples of which are enumerated; and finally,

Rom 1:32 They know God's decree, that those who practice such things deserve to die (οἵτινες τὸ δίκαιον τοῦ θεοῦ ἐπιγνώντες ὅτι οἱ τὰ τοιαῦτα πράσσοντες ἂξιοὶ θανάτου εἰσίν) or “those who do such things deserve to die.” (Fitzmyer)

It is interesting, however, that the French translation («déclarant dignes de mort ceux qui commettent de telles choses») and the German translation (“die solches Tuenden würdig (des) Todes sind”) are closer to the literal Greek, i.e., “those practicing such things are worthy of death” insofar as both refer to the word “worthy.” But the vices listed include

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Fitzmyer, Romans, 289. The same essential translation is provided by Cranfield Romans, 1.105; Dunn, Romans, 1.53; Jewett, Romans, 163. The NAB follows the same pattern.
only one for which the penalty is death, i.e., φόνος, murder. The other evil acts range from being envious to being foolish or heartless or θεοςτυρής, hated of the gods or a God-hater. The issue is not whether there are some acts for which the death-penalty is appropriate, as one is reminded perhaps of Exod 32:28 where three thousand were slain by the Levites after the episode of the Golden Calf; indeed, Philo alludes to this in Mos. 2.171, using the phrase τούς μυρίων ἄξια θεόνατων εἰργασμένους. Hence, for Philo, the punishment of death was “deserved;” however, the offense was a dramatic case of idolatry, masterfully narrated just as Moses came down from the mountaintop, the first “word” of which prohibited exactly the actions of the people.

While the phrase “deserve to die” appears harsh at first glance, commentators seem to recognize some kind of problem here. Fitzmyer points out that “…it is difficult to establish that pagan consciences would recognize death as such a penalty for all these vices.” Dunn is forced to revert to a hidden reference to Adam’s “…primeval sentence of death (Gen. 2:16 [sic]).” He does not explain how all the items on such a list of vices are, in fact, “worthy of death.” And Cranfield focuses in his notes on the issue of those applauding vice are more guilty than those committing the acts themselves; he does, however, point out the difficulty that θάνατος refers to “…this ultimate penalty of sin in God’s creation and not to death as a penalty for particular wrong-doings according

389 Cranfield, Romans, 131; Jewett, Romans, 191.
390 Indeed, there are many examples of death being decreed for those who are considered sinners in the OT, even those who disagreed with the authority of Moses, as in Num 16:1-50. But being a gossip or ignorant was not punishable by death.
391 Fitzmyer, Romans, ibid.
392 Dunn, Romans, 1.69.
393 In his Notes on 1:32, Dunn, Romans, 69, departs from his original translation on p. 53, and translates the Greek literally.
to an actual code of law. . . .” He continues to point out that of the vices listed, many of them could not conceivably carry the death-penalty. David M. Coffey refers to this problem, saying

How could the past Gentiles have been expected to know that the penalty for sin was death? This is a question that exegetes have never been able to answer convincingly.

We conclude from the foregoing that there is some interpretive problem in Rom. 1:32, and prior to any exegesis, we must give careful attention to the sense in which the word ἄξιος might indicate that a gossip or an ignorant person is “worthy” of the death penalty.

Let us see how ἄξιος is used in other biblical contexts:

a) **Rom 8:18** I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us (Λογίζομαι γὰρ ὅτι σὺν ἄξιοι παθήματα τοῦ νῦν καιροῦ πρὸς τὴν μέλλουσαν δόξαν).

Note that this NRSV reading follows that translation in *BDAG* for ἄξιος that would accommodate this reading, i.e., that the word implies something that is “corresponding (value).” This use would imply a state of coherence between two terms.

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395 Philo, *Hypothetica*, 7.1-2, refers to the penalty for sexual excesses, acts of impiety and words against parents as being subject to the death penalty. Josephus, *Contra Apionem*, 275 approvingly indicates that the death penalty is prescribed for those who are guilty of incest or pederasty, who lie with their wives during menstruation, or have sex with beasts. But neither Josephus nor Philo suggest the death penalty for being a gossip or a braggart.


397 *BGAD*, ἄξιος #778.
b) **1 Cor 16:4** In discussing the potential transportation of the collection from Corinth to Jerusalem, Paul says, “If it seems advisable that I should go also, they will accompany me (εἰ δὲ ἂξιον ἃ τοῦ καμὲ πορεύεσθαι, σὺν ἐμοὶ πορεύσωνται).” Here, the word means “proper,” “fitting,” “consistent with proper judgment.” There is no sense of moral judgment as to right or wrong, merely a prudential judgment that one makes every day.

c) **2 Macc 6:27.** We read of Eleazar, an old and wise man, refusing the command by the henchmen of Antiochus Epiphanes to eat swine-flesh, despite the fact that such refusal was bound to bring about his death. He responded, “by bravely giving up my life now, I will show myself worthy of my old age” (ἀνδρείως μὲν νῦν διαλλάξας τὸν βίον τοῦ μὲν γῆρως ἂξιος φανήσωμαι). Here we find death to be an immediate result of his decision. “Worthy” appears similar to “deserving,” but, in fact, it implies a necessary connection, that is, if wisdom is the product of old age, then an old man necessarily chooses adherence to be required at any price, even death. For him, physical death is a necessary consequence of both wisdom and a command contrary to that wisdom.

d) **Wis 1:16,** offers a text where we find that the author discussing “death” and points out that God does not desire death; indeed, “But the ungodly by their words and deeds summoned death”(ἀσεβείς δὲ ταῖς χερσίν καὶ τοῖς λόγοις προσεκαλέσαντο αὐτῶν (i.e., θάνατος); considering him a friend, they pined away and made a covenant with him,

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because they are fit to belong to his company” (ὅτι ἄξιοί εἰσιν τῆς ἐκείνου μερίδος εἶναι). Here, also, death is seen in a sense of “fittingness” or “appropriateness.”

Let us apply these particular analyses of ἄξιος to Rom 1:32. άξιος θανάτου could then mean that the list of vices are consistent with “death (of the soul)” and not that the individual who commits the acts deserves by such actions to die physically. Clearly, then, the question arises as to whether we could apply Philo’s concept of “death of the soul” to this example. My belief is that this solves the problems that the exegetes have stumbled over. First, following Philo, a life of vice is itself productive of the death of the soul; second, it solves the problem that there is no code of law that prescribes “death” for all the vices indicated. And, finally, it neatly wraps up Paul’s argument regarding the “wrath” of God mentioned in v. 18. “Wrath” in the OT involves an expression of separation from God. It is the opposite of intimacy, and in many cases, resulted in physical death (Num. 16:22ff, 25:4; Jos. 22:18-20, Wis. 16:5, 18:20; Jer 21:12; Ez. 5:13).

Thus, Paul sets up a sense of some sort of “death” in v. 18 when he refers to God’s wrath. But it is not necessarily physical death that Paul is really talking about. If we presume that he is speaking about spiritual death, then the entire pericope comes together. Gentiles were/are not killed physically when they substitute idols for God or suffer the consequences of idolatry, which includes the list of vices. But that they are spiritually dead fits well the beginning of Paul’s expression of his Gospel.

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399 It should be noted that the kind of death referred to in Wis 1:16 is most likely spiritual death, not physical death; it is attributable to the ungodly. It would make more sense to infer spiritual death rather than physical death as being “appropriate.”

400 Jewett, Romans, 191, comments that the Roman hearers of Paul’s letter would certainly accept that the fact that the perpetrators of the list of vices “deserve” to die, “even though not all of the evils were actually adjudicable in the courts and some of them were being routinely committed by the leaders and opinion makers of the era.”
Being “worthy of death” (ἀξιός θανάτου) cannot refer to physical death, since there is no law that prescribes death for envy, being a whisperer, a slanderer, a bully, braggart, or haughty person. But if “worthy” means “consistent with, or as a consequence of” these acts, then Paul means that those persons who live an essentially evil existence are somehow “dead.” If this is merely a metaphorical use, it is weak; but if it means spiritual death, it is an expression of a tautology. And it cannot mean that such persons “die eventually,” because all of us are subject to eventual death, not only those who practice the twenty-one evils enumerated by Paul. Thus, I propose that this is one text that where “death” means “spiritual death.”

4.3.2 Rom. 2:12.

All who have sinned apart from the law ("Οσοὶ γὰρ ἁνόμως ἡμαρτον, ἁνόμως) will also perish (ἀπολογοῦνται) apart from the law, and all who have sinned under the law (ὁσοὶ ἐν νόμῳ ἡμαρτον) will be judged by the law (διὰ νόμου κριθήσονται).

Fitzmyer comments that

(T)he context deals with Gentiles who lived without the benefit of the Mosaic legislation, so “law” in these verses refers to the Mosaic law. If they sin without knowledge of its prescriptions, they will perish without respect to it; their evil and sinfulness brings its own condemnation, even though it is not the condemnation derived from the law. What human beings do will be the criterion by which they will be judged. In this view, Paul goes against current Jewish convictions. 401

Cranfield ignores the idea of “perishing apart from the law.” He stresses the second half of the verse, with the first part a “foil.” 402 Dunn is even briefer; his sole comment: “In

401 Fitzmyer, Romans, 305-6.
402 Cranfield, Romans, 1.153.
this way the concept of the law is first introduced to the discussion, to become a dominant element in the rest of the chapter.” 403

The question that would occur for Roman Christians who were Gentiles is, how would any of them connect “perishing” (death) with sin? This is especially problematic since capital offenses are not mentioned, the consequence of which might have been death.

In Rom 14:15, ἀπόλλυμι appears, but does not necessarily mean physical death; ἀπόλλυμι may be used metaphorically, as one “ruins” a stew by too much salt. However, the application of the idea of spiritual death is a possibility, insofar as the context would imply a lack of love on the part of the brother who is unconcerned about the impact that his actions have on the spiritual health of the other. Thus, a tentative application of “spiritual death” may be suggested.

That ἀπόλλυμι implies death probably needs little support, as LSJ reports its meaning as “destroy utterly, kill, slay.” The essential point, however, is that, somehow, sinning, even apart from the law produces death. It would make no sense at all to interpret ἀπόλλυμι as meaning physical death, as it would not fit any experiential testing. Hence, it must imply either a metaphorical use or spiritual death. But if it is metaphorical, its power would come only from some sort of death or destruction that is parallel to physical death. So, in either case, a kind of death is implied. That sin produces a real, spiritual form of death has been established by Philo; hence, this short

403 Dunn, Romans, 1.195.
phrase makes sense only if Paul is referring to spiritual death that is the direct product of sin.

Further, it is necessary to see the literary parallelism that is at work in Rom 2:12:

12a: All who have sinned apart from the law
12b: will also perish (ἀπολοίνται) apart from the law
12c: (and) all who have sinned under the law
12d: will be judged (κρίνονται) by the law.

Verses 12a and 12c are parallel, so κρίνω is parallel to ἀπολλεῖμι. Hence, we must interpret κρίνω as “condemn,” and in order to keep the parallelism, it must mean “condemn to death.” Thus, sin produces death for both those not under the law as well as for those under the law. But, again, mere “sin” is not sufficient to produce physical death or execution; so the only meaning that fits both parts of Rom. 2:12 is spiritual death. In this sense, Paul is simply expressing an idea that his virtual contemporary, Philo, had made in Alexandria.

4.3.3 Rom 5:12-21.

This is the first major section where the lens of interpreting θάνατος as “spiritual death” will be tested. The preceding section, Rom 5:1-11, uses the words ἀποθνῄσκω and θάνατος in ways that do not require any interpretation; the section deals with the physical death of Jesus Christ. However, immediately thereafter, we have an argument relative to death being rooted in the sin of Adam. It is this section that deserves attention. However,
prior to beginning a detailed discussion, I should like to outline what I see as the argument Paul makes in 5:12-21.

A. Adam is the source of sin, and hence, death.

B. Death (of some sort) reigned in the world because of Adam’s trespass.

C. As death resulted from God’s judgment, so righteousness leading to eternal life resulted from Christ’s act.

Rom 5:12 Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, (ὡσπερ δι’ ἕνος ἀνθρώπου ἡ ἁμαρτία εἰς τὸν κόσμον) and death came through sin, (διὰ τῆς ἁμαρτίας ὁ θάνατος) and so death spread to all because all have sinned (οὕτως εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους ὁ θάνατος διήλθην, ἐφ’ ὦ πάντες ἁμαρτοῦν).

This passage indicates a Pauline reflection on Gen 2:17-3:24, where Adam and Eve disobeyed God’s command. Philo had puzzled about “θανάτω ἀποθανεῖσθε” of 2:17 (see p. 107) and had concluded that the death being referred to was the death of the soul, separation from God and a life of vice. Paul first identifies the source of sin, ”one man,” and the resulting source of death. The twin concepts of “sin” and “death” appear together, with the latter being caused by the former. The “one man” through whom sin entered the world is obviously Adam. It was his and Eve’s act which led to separation from God, or spiritual death, not only physical death, caused by sin entering the world.405 This explanation does a better job of explaining how that act affected all people. Launching into the interpretive crux of the meaning of “ἐφ’ ὦ” would take us far from our task; but I would like to suggest that it expresses a result406 of the collective separation of society’s

405 O. Hofius, “The Adam-Christ Antithesis and the Law,” in Paul and the Mosaic Law, (ed. J. D. G. Dunn; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 182. Commenting on Rom 5:12, Hofius writes, “this (death) does not mean physical death or creaturely mortality…The death that comes into the world through Adam’s sin is the eschatological death of separation from God. The antithesis of death in 5:12-21 is not physical life but ζωή αἰώνιος.”

406 Byrne, Romans, 177, “Modern interpreters for the most part explain the phrase in a causal sense. . . though with some misgiving.” Crandall, Romans, “. . . as a result of the corrupt nature inherited from
value system from one that is rooted in fidelity to God. The majority of commentators focus on the meaning of “εἰς ὑ̂ ὑ’” as “because.” This does not radically modify the state of affairs that Paul is describing. Both interpretations express the concept that all people live within a world that is dominated by Sin, i.e., the social structure is based on a value system unrelated to that which would be consistent with God’s commandments. This does not deny the individual responsibility for personal acts of transgression, but focuses on the overall human tendency towards both sin and (moral, spiritual) death.407

**Romans 5:14** Yet death exercised dominion (ἐξασώλυμεν ὁ Θεόν) from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam, who is a type of the one who was to come.

The use of “death” in 5:14 is personified; it is seen as a kind of being that has the ability to exercise some sort of cosmic power.408 To suggest that it is only physical death that is referred to makes no sense, primarily because death is related to transgressions, albeit other than that of Adam. If we propose “spiritual death” is a superior interpretation, then we aren’t faced with the implication that “death” no longer had dominion at the time of Moses. Death continued to have dominion over those whose sins were not the violation of a clear and distinct command of God (i.e., “do not eat…”). This implies that since death is the product of transgressions other than that characterized by Adam’s sin, such transgressions are the root cause of death. These would include the transgressions even of Gentiles, outlined in Rom 1:18-32, and for the same reasons as outlined above,

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such transgressions separate people from God. As such, since such separation is
“spiritual death, even during physical life, we see the superiority of reading θάνατος as spiritual death.

Rom 5:15 But the free gift (τὸ χάρισμα) is not like the trespass (τὸ παράπτωμα). For if the many died (οἱ πολλοὶ ἀπέθανον) through the one man's trespass, much more surely have the grace of God (ἡ χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ) and the free gift in the grace (ἡ δωρεὰ ἐν χάριτι) of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded (ἐπέρισσευσεν) for the many.

Here it could be argued that the use of “death” implies physical death, since before Adam’s transgression, he might not have expected to die. But if we read the entire verse in context, Paul argues using an enthymeme based on the “lesser to the greater” that if Adam (“one man”) caused death (separation from God) for the many, so Jesus Christ’s (one man’s) gracious gift abounded much more for the many (ἡ δωρεὰ ἐν χάριτι τῇ τοῦ ἐνός ἁνθρώπου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ εἰς τοὺς πολλοὺς ἐπέρισσευσεν).

Paul refers to this as a “gracious gift” (ἡ δωρεὰ ἐν χάριτι); Let us see what this means for Paul by focusing on the meaning of χάρις. As with many other words, he uses χάρις in a variety of ways, ranging from a mere greeting, or as an expression of thanks; but as a free-gift, it is offered to sinners who don’t deserve it and exists in opposition to the Mosaic law. Dunn suggests that χάρις-rooted words imply God’s generous love being expressed in terms of Paul’s message or the ministries of the church.

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409 Rom 1:7, 1 Thess 5:28.
410 Rom 6:17, 7:25; 1 Cor 15:57; 2 Cor 8:16
411 Rom 3:24, 4:16, 5:15, 17.
412 Rom 3:21-24, 5:10 (with the death of God’s son presumed as χάρις).
From this, I conclude that \( \chi\acute{a}r\tau\varsigma \) is essentially spiritual,\(^{414}\) and that beginning with Paul, the Christian understanding of this word is primarily spiritual. But here the gift is contrasted with death. If the contrast is to hold, then it is likely that the kind of death being referred to is itself spiritual death, and not physical death. For sin caused the immediate separation of Adam (and his progeny) from God even more clearly than his eventual physical death.

**Rom 5:16** … For the judgment (\( \tau\circ \mu\nu\nu \gamma\acute{a}\rho \kappa\rho\acute{\iota}m\alpha \)) following one trespass brought condemnation (\( \kappa\acute{a}\acute{t}\acute{a}k\acute{r}\acute{r}\acute{i}m\alpha \)), but the free gift (\( \chi\acute{a}\rho\acute{r}\varsigmam\alpha \)) following many trespasses brings justification (\( \delta\acute{i}k\acute{a}i\acute{\omega}m\alpha \)).

Here, “condemnation” needs to be unpacked; I propose that Paul is referring to Genesis 3:24, where the couple was driven from Eden lest they eat of the Tree of Life. This implied radical separation from God or spiritual death, as well as physical death. This spiritual death is expressed by \( \kappa\acute{a}\acute{t}\acute{a}k\acute{r}\acute{r}\acute{i}m\alpha \), the result of God’s judgment. Dunn points out that Paul used \( \delta\acute{i}k\acute{a}i\acute{\omega}m\alpha \) here as the opposite to \( \kappa\acute{a}\acute{t}\acute{a}k\acute{r}\acute{r}\acute{i}m\alpha \), which he translated as “justification.” This implies the opposite of condemnation, namely the re-establi shment of intimacy. Hence, I propose that we read “condemnation” as “spiritual death” and “justification” as its opposite.

**Rom 5:17-19** If, because of the one man’s trespass, death exercised dominion through that one, (\( \acute{o} \theta\acute{a}n\acute{a}t\acute{a}t\circ \acute{o} \varepsilon\acute{b}a\acute{s}\acute{i}\acute{\ell}\acute{e}u\acute{s}\acute{a}n \d\acute{i}\acute{a} \tau\circ\iota \acute{\epsilon}n\acute{o}s \)) much more surely will those who receive the abundance of grace (\( \acute{o}i \ \tau\acute{h}n \ \pi\acute{e}r\acute{i}\acute{s}\acute{e}i\acute{a}n \ \tau\h\acute{h}z \ \chi\acute{a}r\i\acute{t}\acute{o}t\circ\acute{s} \)) and the free gift of righteousness (\( \tau\h\acute{h}z \ \d\acute{o}\acute{r}\acute{e}a\acute{\acute{v}}\acute{z} \ \tau\h\acute{h}z \ \d\acute{i}k\acute{a}i\acute{o}\acute{s}\acute{u}n\acute{\eta}c \)) exercise dominion in life (\( \acute{e}v \ \z\acute{\omega}c \ \beta\acute{a}\acute{s}\acute{i}\acute{l}e\acute{\acute{u}}s\acute{o}u\acute{s}\acute{a}n \)) through the one man, Jesus Christ.\(^{18}\) Therefore just as one man's trespass led to condemnation (\( \kappa\acute{a}\acute{t}\acute{a}k\acute{r}\acute{r}\acute{i}m\alpha \)) for all, so one man's act of righteousness (\( \acute{d}\acute{\i} \acute{e} \acute{n} \acute{o} s \ \d\acute{i}k\acute{a}i\acute{o}\acute{w}\acute{m}\acute{a}t\acute{o}t\circ\acute{s} \)) leads to justification and life for all (\( \acute{e}i\acute{z} \ \p\acute{a}\acute{n}\acute{t}\acute{a}z \ \acute{a}n\acute{v}\acute{t}\acute{r}\acute{\acute{o}}p\acute{\acute{o}}t\acute{\acute{u}}s \ \acute{e}i\acute{z} \ \d\acute{i}k\acute{a}i\acute{w}\acute{m}\acute{a}s \ \z\acute{\omega}\acute{h}\acute{z} \)).\(^{19}\) For just as by the one man's disobedience (\( \pi\acute{a}\acute{r}\acute{a}k\acute{o}\acute{h}\acute{z} \)) the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience (\( \acute{u}\acute{p}\acute{a}\acute{k}\acute{o}\acute{h}\acute{z} \)) the many will be made righteous (\( \d\acute{i}k\acute{a}i\acute{\omega} \ \k\acute{a}\acute{t}a\acute{s}\acute{t}\acute{a}\acute{\theta}\acute{\acute{h}}\acute{\acute{r}}\acute{s}\acute{o}u\acute{t}c\acute{a}l \)).

\(^{414}\)See Rom 1:11.
5:17 through 5:19 offer similar and reinforcing arguments: death can “exercise
dominion” (5:17) and be reversed only through “grace” and the “free gift of
righteousness.” But both grace and the gift of righteousness are not physical, but are
spiritual. Similarly, assuming “condemnation” (5:18) means “death,” we have its
opposite “justification,” implying “life,” which is the opposite of spiritual death. Finally,
we see that the many were “made sinners,” which implies “being dead,” through the act
of one person; but through the act of one (other) person, we were made “just,” that is, our
intimacy with God was re-established. We will see more on the connection between
“sin” and “death” below; but they can be connected only if we can interpret “death” in a
spiritual manner.

Rom 5:20-21 But law came in, (παρελθεν) with the result that the trespass
multiplied (πλεόνάσθη τὸ παράπτωμα); but where sin increased, grace abounded all
the more (ὑπερεπρώσθεν ἢ χάριν), so that, just as sin exercised dominion in
death, so grace might also exercise dominion through justification leading to
eternal life (διὰ δικαιοσύνης εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον) through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Here we have the vital contrast between death brought about by sin and eternal
life being brought about through grace. This grace has been actualized in Christ’s death
on the cross, as God’s favor to humanity. With sin being connected to spiritual death, the
superabundance of Christ’s saving act through obedience brings about the re-
establishment of intimacy with God, which brings believers to eternal life, i.e., the best
kind of life.

It should be pointed out that Fitzmyer, Dunn, Cranfield and Jewett do not
distinguish in their comments on 5:12-21 between “physical death” and “spiritual death.”
They presume that physical death is meant. In so doing, they have multiple “mis-
matches” in ideas: a) no evidence from Gen. 2 that physical death was the direct
punishment for Adam’s sin. b) no explanation of why death should cease to have dominion at the time of Moses; c) no parallelism between “physical death” and “grace.” (5:21). Fitzmyer attempts to deal with the issue by postulating that “eternal death” is meant in 5:15, following Augustine’s interpretation of a “second death” in De peccatorum meritis et remissione 1.11.13. However, Paul does not propose a different sort of death, i.e., one that follows physical death.

If “sin” is determined to be “lack of intimacy with God,” then the death that was meted out to Adam and all his progeny was spiritual, as well as being physical. The key to interpreting this section of the letter is to see the contraries that Paul creates: death vs. life with God (5:12); death vs. grace (5:15); condemnation (=death) vs. justification (5:16); reign of death vs. reign of grace and reign of life (5:17); being made sinners (=dead) vs. being made just (=life); and the contrast between the death that sin brings and the life that grace brings (5:20-21). If we apply the idea of “physical death” to each of these, the opposition fails; but by applying the idea of “spiritual death,” the oppositions become clear and convincing.

This does not deny that physical death is the result of Adam’s act of disobedience; for the “dust to dust” expression of Gen 3:19 is clearly a reference to physical death. However, my suggestion is that if we read the text through the lens that death can be read as “spiritual death” in addition to “physical death,” then Paul’s message is deepened and intensified, applying to how we live our lives as well as how our life will end.

4.3.4 Rom 6:1-11

Prior to an analysis of this important section, we should focus on two items:
a) I want to remind the reader of the discussion of ἀμαρτία in Section 4.1.4, that “sin” is a pervasive indifference to or lack of knowledge of the revelation of Jesus Christ as the one who has reconciled humanity to God (p. 171).

b) The second element is that “death” is the description of the state of a person who is dominated by sin, which necessarily produces “death of the soul.” However, as we previously described, “sinners” are not only those who lead wicked lives, but refer to those who are not aware of or reject the kerygma of Christ. This is that class of people Paul referred to in Rom 5:8. As a consequence, everyone is “dead” spiritually prior to the proclamation and acceptance by faith in Jesus Christ, as well as those who hear the proclamation and choose to reject it. Using these insights, we can analyze and perhaps develop a different reading of Rom 6:1-11.

Let us examine the structure and content of Rom 6:1-11:

A. Those who are baptized participate in Christ’s death.

B. The baptized also rise with Christ into the newness of life.

C. Further, as Christ died to sin, so we die to sin

Rom 6:1-2 What then are we to say? Should we continue in sin in order that grace may abound? ² By no means! How can we who died to sin go on living in it (οἵτινες ἀπεθάνωμεν τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ, πῶς ἐτι ζήσαμεν ἐν αὐτῇ)?

First, we must understand Paul’s use of ἀποθνῄσκω here as metaphorical; but it is the same sort of metaphor that Philo used in Det. 49: ὁ δὲ φαῦλος ζῶν τὸν ἐν κακίᾳ τέθνηκε τὸν εἰδαίμονα (“The worthless man, while alive to the life of wickedness, is dead to the life happy”). We recognize this as similar to the Heraclitean fragment 47M. The metaphorical structure is significant, however, insofar as it indicates a commitment to a different kind of life, and, as such, implies an existential, real modification of
behavior. To “die to sin” is to change one’s life radically in two ways: a) by adopting a new “law” that governs behavior;\(^{415}\) and b) by rejecting (dying-to) any law other than that which proclaims Christ as Lord. So while the statement “dying to sin” is metaphorical, the reality that results from the conscious act of the baptized is anything but symbolic.

Second, based on the foregoing, 6:1-2 inquires whether the continuation of a societal and personal indifference to the proclamation of Jesus Christ might produce even more grace; and given the standard denial, Paul asks his hearers how, having already made the determination to accept the kerygma, meaning they have separated themselves from the indifference and lack of knowledge of the Gospel, how is it now possible to return to the prior state? “Death to Sin” means death to indifference, and once baptized, one cannot return to the old life.\(^{416}\)

**Romans 6:3-5** Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus (όσοι ἐβαπτίσθημεν εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν) were baptized into his death (εἰς τὸν θάνατον αὐτοῦ ἐβαπτίσθημεν)?\(^4\) Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, (εἰς τὸν θάνατον) so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life (οὔτως καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐν καλύτερῃ ζωῇ περιπατήσωμεν).\(^5\) For if we have been united with him in a death like his, (εἰ γὰρ σύμφυτοι γεγόναμεν τῷ ὁμοίωματι τοῦ θανάτου αὐτοῦ) we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his (ἀλλὰ καὶ τῆς ἀναστάσεως ἐσώμεθα).

In 6:3-5, Paul reminds his hearers of what they already know. There is a density of language here that suggests two allusions:

a) In the act of initiation into the church, the person being baptized into Christ Jesus is invited to identify himself/herself mystically with the crucified Christ. Paul himself

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\(^{415}\) More on this when we discuss Rom 8.

\(^{416}\) The notion of forgiveness of sins after baptism does not get developed for 150-200 years; the last section of this chapter will develop some Pauline roots for this idea.
contends that he himself has been “crucified with Christ” (Gal 2:19). This involves a conscious decision to separate oneself, to “die” to that way of life that does not take into account the kerygma of Jesus Christ.

b) We must ask, who is the “we” that Paul refers to? It could either be the loose aggregation of himself and his hearers in Rome; or it could have a corporate vector, namely, those included in the church itself. I propose the latter, for the following reasons:

i) The interpretation of ὁσι ἐβαπτίσθημεν, “as many of us having been baptized,” clearly refers to those who have been initiated into the church, not merely his hearers. The statement applies to all who have been baptized.

ii) The first-person plural utilized in vv. 4-5 follows the statement ἀγνοεῖτε, which introduces a teaching moment. Jewett suggests that Paul had a relatively complete knowledge of the topic, though the audience does not fully comprehend the issues Paul brings up. Nevertheless, the rhetoric implies a teaching moment, where the 1st person plural implies a characteristic of the church as a whole, not merely Paul and his hearers.

iii) In 6:5, I propose that the church is that which is “united” (συμμορφωμέν). Most translations add “to him” or “with him” to imply a knitting together of each individual with the glorified Lord. However, there is no need to insert the words “with him;” the church is knitted together in the likeness or the similitude of his death. The church will be further knitted together in its resurrection. Notice, there is no ἀντός related to

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417 Note that Gal 5:24 suggests a “co-crucifixion,” but this implies a radical rejection of dependency on passions and desires as opposed to an identity with Christ.

418 1 Cor 12:13-27; Rom 12:4-5; Byrne, Romans, 190; J. Murphy-O’Connor, Paul, A Critical Life, 286-290.

419 Jewett, Romans, 396.
This reinforces the meaning of being baptized “into Christ” as meaning “into the Church.” This is important insofar as the church becomes the vehicle in virtue of which people can die to sin and avoid the death that comes from sin.

iv) The difficulty of the language is that all of us having been baptized have “died to death;” they have separated themselves from their prior state of sin, which was death itself, either as having separated themselves from a social system extant prior to the kerygma (Gal 5:24), or reflecting the symbolism of having submerged oneself in water, symbolically dying, and due to the personal identification with Christ, that as Christ was raised from the dead by God, so we are given the newness of a different kind of life, one in which we walk in newness of “life,” i.e., that state of being infused by the Holy Spirit. Hence, each individual experiences the new life, but such experience exists through the vehicle of the church.

My conclusion is that in Rom 6:3-5 we have both a reference to the experience of each baptized individual and a reference to the corporate body of Christ, the church.

Romans 6:6-7 We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin (τοῦτο γινώσκοντες ὅτι ὁ παλαιὸς ἡμῶν ἀνθρώπος συνεσταυρώθη, ἵνα καταργήθῃ τὸ σῶμα τῆς ἀμαρτίας, τοῦ μηκέτι δουλεύειν ἡμᾶς τῇ ἀμαρτίᾳ). 7 For whoever has died is freed from sin (ὁ γὰρ ἀποθανὼν δευκαίωται ἀπὸ τῆς ἀμαρτίας).

Verse 6 continues the reference to death, but death to indifference to the gospel, which may be what the “body of sin” means; the “old person” clearly refers to that prior mode of life before faith, with the co-crucifixion or act of faith leading to baptism, rendering void the state of sin. The seriousness of the commitment to the gospel and the law of Christ is expressed by the phrase “no longer to be a slave to sin.” In other places, (1 Cor 15:34, Rom 7:24, Gal 6:1) we know that Paul recognized that potential
backsliding or reversion to acts inconsistent with Christ’s Law were inevitable. But at
this point in the argument, this is hardly relevant.420

Verse 7 is often translated as essentially as “For the dead person has been
absolved from Sin.”421 Dunn suggests that we must refer to proverbial wisdom.422 Some
suggest an interpolation because of its “non-Pauline” character,423 some refer to Talmudic
sayings424 but both Cranfield425 and Fitzmyer (quoting Kearns)426 and Jewett 427 interpret
the word ἐπαθανόν as referring to the person who has died with Christ and that in this, he
or she is justified from sin. This, however, is inconsistent with the idea that justification
occurred because of Christ’s death; (Rom. 3:24, 5:9) it is as though the act of identifying
oneself with Christ’s death was productive of re-establishing intimacy with God.

There is an alternate interpretation, which is much simpler; it requires an alternate
meaning of δικαίων, namely, “adjudicated, judged.”428 The translation then would be,
“The person (spiritually) dead is judged to be under Sin.” This is precisely a definition of
“Sin” within the framework of viewing “death” as something non-physical, but
existential, powerful, real and personified. There is then no need to suggest any

420 To be dealt with in Section 4.4.
421 Thus NRSV, NAB, NJB, NKJ, NIB, TOB (Traduction Oecumèneique de la Bible), EIN
Einheitsübersetzung) VUL; Surprisingly, the New Living Bible has what I consider essentially the correct
translation, “For when we died with Christ we were set free from the power of sin.”
422 Dunn, Romans, 1.321.
423 Fitzmyer, Romans, 436, referring to A. Pallis, To the Romans, (Liverpool: Liverpool Booksellers,
1920), 86. Fitzmyer does not consider v. 7 an interpolation.
424 Ibid. 437.
425 Cranfield, Romans, 1.311.
426 Fitzmyer, Romans, 437.
427 Jewett, Romans, 405.
interpolation, reference to proverbial wisdom or as an active “work” on the part of a believer.

**Rom 6:8-10** But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him (εἰ δὲ ἀπεθάνωμεν σὺν Χριστῷ, πιστεύσαμεν ὅτι καὶ συζήσαμεν αὐτῷ). 9 We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him (θάνατος αὐτοῦ οὐκέτι κυριεύει). 10 The death he died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God (ὅ γάρ ἀπέθανεν, τῇ ἀμαρτίᾳ ἀπέθανεν ἑφάπαξ· ὅ δὲ ζῇ, ζῇ τῷ θεῷ).

Our death with Christ is a reference to our baptism, for the participation in Christ’s death occurs when we die with Him in entering the baptismal water. By that action, we die to a life of sin, being reintroduced to an intimacy with God. While “death to sin” is itself metaphorical, it is highly expressive and implies a turning away from a life that is not centered on God to one that lives out a life of virtue. As death no longer has dominion over Christ, so it will no longer rule over us.

The use of ἀποθνῄσκω in 8a, 9a and 9b is literal, i.e., there is a real death that occurs when each member of the church dies to a life of sin. For just as we saw “Sin” personified but a real force in the world, so here “Death” is personified. And in 10a, Paul may be saying that the church died to the life ruled by cosmic Sin, expressed as utilizing the dative of respect.

The traditional interpretation of these verses focuses on the physical death of Christ and the consequences of this. Christ died with respect to that time period governed by the incomplete law, which was the occasion of sin and which bought about the (spiritual) death of people. By so dying, (once and for all) Christ brought about that new aeon in which true life is made available, namely, that “life with respect to God.”

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Rom 6:11 So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus (οὕτως καὶ ὑμεῖς λογίζεσθε ἑαυτούς [εἶναι] νεκροὺς μὲν τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ ζῶντας δὲ τῷ θεῷ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.

The final verse summarizes the state of an individual after after baptism. I suggest that a better translation than NRSV is: “Thus, you reckon that your yourselves (having been baptized) are dead to sin, but living with relation to God in Christ Jesus.” Dunn recognizes the power of the idea of being dead to sin when he writes, the “death is not an actual death, nor a mere playing with words, but living in relation to the power of sin as to all intents and purposes, dead.” Dunn further refers to 2 Cor 4:10, where Paul writes that he is always carrying the death of Jesus in his body, “so that the life of Jesus may be visible in our body” (ἵνα καὶ ἡ ζωὴ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐν τῷ σώματι ἡμῶν φανερωθῇ). Here σῶμα likely refers to the visibility of Christ expressed in acts of love.

We conclude that Baptism is a central, life-creating event. Dying to “death” can mean that the baptized in the Church have separated themselves from Sin, i.e., from that which is indifferent or ignores the kerygma. In this sense, it is dying to spiritual death, or that state of affairs that everyone is in prior to baptism. But most importantly, those who have been baptized are able to live in relation to God, the opposite of their prior state of being “dead.”

4.3.5 Rom 6:12-23

It is necessary to comment on five verses in this section focusing on the idea that “death” referred to is not necessarily physical death but is spiritual death, and that,

430 Against: R. Scroggs, “Romans VI.7 Ο ΓΑΡ ΑΠΟΘΑΝΩΝ ΔΕΔΙΚΑΙΩΤΑΙ ΑΠΟ ΤΗΣ ΑΜΑΡΤΙΑΣ” NTS, 10 (1963-64): 104-08.
431 Dunn, Romans, 324.
further, reading “physical death” as the sole and exclusive translation of θαν-rooted words makes little if any sense. I shall comment on Rom 6:12, 13, 16, 21 and 23.

**Rom 6:12** Therefore, do not let sin exercise dominion in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions (Μὴ οὖν βασιλεύετω ἡ ἁμαρτία ἐν τῷ θνητῷ ὑμῶν σώματι εἰς τὸ ὑπακούειν ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις αὐτοῦ).

It is important to recognize that ἐν τῷ θνητῷ ὑμῶν σώματι does not necessarily refer to the physical body, but refers to the entire human being in this world. The person is subject to death (i.e., “mortal”) to the extent that the person exists within a framework of indifference to the kerygma of Jesus Christ. For such indifference leads to that set of trespasses and evil acts resulting from “desire,” (ἐπιθυμία) which refers back to 1:29-31; this idea is parallel to Gal 5:16 and 1 Thess 4:5. Such “obedience” to the desirous, lustful or covetousness tendencies is the logical consequence of living in indifference to the kerygma, or under “Sin.” We have seen that ἐπιθυμία is precisely that which brings about death of the soul for Philo. We will see that such “obedience” (ὑπακοὴ= ὑπακούειν) to the passions leads to death, but the character of that “death” must be spiritual and not necessarily physical.

**Rom 6:13** No longer present your members to sin as instruments of wickedness ( ödeλα ἀδικίας) but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life (ἀσελ ἐκ νεκρῶν ζῶντας), and present your members to God as instruments of righteousness (τὰ μέλη ὑμῶν ὄπλα δικαιοσύνης τῷ θεῷ).

Here we focus on the character of the addressees, as those who ἐκ νεκρῶν ζῶντας which characterizes precisely those who underwent baptism. They were previously dead, (necessarily “spiritually,” not physically) and were brought to life through their

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432 As well as variants of ἀπόλλυμι.

433 Dunn, *Romans* 1.336. Further, the “body” referred to here is distinct from the “body of Christ,” which refers to the church.
conversion expressed and finalized in baptism. Once again, the character of their “death” from which they were given life by God can only be a spiritual state. And against the argument that this is a mere metaphor, I suggest that for Paul, it was much more than a metaphor; it was an expression of the reality that he saw, an existential change from permitting oneself to be a “weapon of injustice” to being that same weapon, but in the service of justice, which is rooted in God. Jewett notes that τὰ μέλη may well refer to limbs and organs in virtue of which people carry out the tasks of life. There are two vectors to the use of this word: one having a military vector, in virtue of which Rome dominated the world through the use of force; and the other having a sexual vector. In both of these cases, there is a powerful moral content, consistent with the idea of the moral struggle existing within each person.

**Rom 6:16** 16 Do you not know that if you present yourselves (παραστάνετε ἑαυτούς) to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, (ἡ ὑπακοῆ ἡτοι ἁμαρτίας εἰς θάνατον) or of obedience, which leads to righteousness (ἡ ὑπακοῆ εἰς δικαιοσύνην)?

We will not focus on the central idea of this verse, namely, that one chooses the source of one’s obedience, but shall focus on the alternatives, *either* choosing sin, which produces death or obedience (to God), which produces the right-relationship with God. We cannot ignore the image of Adam whose disobedience produced physical death; but we must ask whether there is an additional layer of meaning that Paul may have intended. Now it is clear that someone who chooses to ignore the kerygma of Jesus Christ and who permits a slavery to ἐπιθυμία does not, by that very fact, physically die. Those who were unresponsive to the gospel that caused such agony in Paul’s soul (Rom 9:3) continued to

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434 Simply presupposed by Fitzmyer, Romans, 448 and discussed as an anomaly by Dunn, Romans, 1.342.
live; so the meaning of θανατος is necessarily either metaphorical or it means a real, spiritual death. But a metaphorical use would deplete the power of the alternative; hence, it must be a real, spiritual death that occurs when one chooses obedience to ἀμαρτία.

This is totally consistent with the Philonic vision, that a life of wickedness leads to death of the soul. We will see in 6:21 and 6:23 that Paul has the same dichotomous position, that sin leads to (a kind of) death parallel to the death of the soul in Philo.

Rom 6:21 So what advantage did you then get from the things of which you now are ashamed (οἶς νῦν ἐπαισχύνεσθε)? The end of those things is death (τὸ γὰρ τέλος ἕκεῖνων θανατος).

In this verse, we must first ask what the character of those actions is that produce “shame.” We can see a parallel in Phil 3:19, where Paul is commenting on the enemies of the cross of Christ. He says, “their end is destruction (τὸ τέλος ἀπώλεια); their god is the belly; and their glory is in their shame (ἡ δόξα ἐν τῇ αἰσχύνῃ αὑτῶν); their minds are set on earthly things” (οἳ τὰ ἐπίγεια φρονοῦντες). It is clear that there is a relationship here between “destruction” (ἀπώλεια), which we consider to be equivalent to “death,” and desires of the belly, i.e., sexual desires or possibly gluttony. It is in these that they “glory,” and the product is shame. This statement suggests those acts first expressed in Rom 1:29-31, but which also parallel the causes of spiritual death in Philo’s work. We saw above that the choice of a vicious life, characterized by a focus on physical pleasures, was productive of the death of the soul. So here we see in both Phil and Rom the stipulation that such acts bring about death/destruction. Again, it is clear that there are many people who live their lives according to this pattern of vice; indeed, it is endemic to all those who have not accepted the kerygma of Christ. Thus, the character of “death” must be spiritual, not physical.
**Rom 6:23** For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (τὰ γὰρ ὀψώνια τῆς ἁμαρτίας θάνατος, τὸ δὲ χάρισμα τοῦ θεοῦ ζωῆ αἰώνιος ἐν Χριστῷ Ιησοῦ τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν).

I shall not focus on the word ὀψώνια except to point out that it relates to that compensation, generally in money, with which to buy foodstuffs and the necessities of life.\(^{435}\) While it is primarily a military term,\(^{436}\) the important element is that ὀψώνια is a benefit expected to follow a service. Here, the direct product of sin is death. Just as wages follow a soldier’s (or an apostle’s)\(^{437}\) service, so death inevitably follows sin. And this may be caused by either “trespasses” after one’s baptism or “Sin” as a cultural force experienced prior to baptism outside the kerygma of Jesus Christ. This is perhaps the clearest example in Pauline literature that the word θάνατος must be understood as “spiritual death,” and not only physical death. While the latter is a product of Adam’s sin (as we saw in Rom 5:12), the added perspective of “spiritual death” provides a deeper understanding of the consequence of sin. For everyone knows people who sin, regardless of how it is defined; but their sin does not produce physical death, except in the case of a person whose devotion to vice so overwhelms his/her physical system that they die a “natural” death. But this is not what is at issue. What is at issue is that Paul speaks of death as the product of sin in the very same way that Philo spoke of the life of wickedness as necessarily producing a real kind of death, albeit not physical.

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\(^{435}\) Probably the best treatment of this issue is C. C. Caragounis, “ΟΨΩΝΙΟΝ: A Reconstruction of Its Meaning.” *NovT* 16.1 (1974): 35-57. There the translation of “wages” is disputed, and “shoppings” or “provisions” is suggested as more appropriate. Without arguing, there is still the sense of some-sort of life-support being provided as the result of a service, with the necessity of the former following the latter.


\(^{437}\) 2 Cor 11:8.
Further, the verse contrasts the death that occurs via a life of sinfulness with its opposite, the χάρισμα of God, eternal life through our Lord, Jesus Christ. We have already discussed χάρισμα as being primarily a spiritual gift, and the expression of that gift is life everlasting. Hence, we have two polar opposites: death and life everlasting. This gives expression to Paul’s radical eschatology, that in baptism, we are raised with Christ, and that when the end times appear, as described in 1 Thess 4:17, we will meet the Lord in the air and will be with him always (πάντοτε σὺν κυρίω ἐσόμεθα).

Why can’t 6:23 be interpreted differently, such as suggesting that Adam’s sin was the cause of physical death for all of us? First, we have already established that the kind of death that Adam suffered “on the day” that he and Eve transgressed God’s commandment was not physical death, but rather separation from God. Spiritual death is the kind of death that fits best in the interpretation of Rom 6:12, 13, 16, and 21. To suggest that in 6:23 Paul is referring to a different kind of death would appear strange. And while the gift of eternal life could be considered physical, at the time of the return of Christ in the clouds, that form of life itself would be spiritual. For Paul refers to a “spiritual body” in 1 Cor 15:44-5 as the description of how the body will exist at the eschaton. While Paul does not expatiate on the meaning of a “spiritual body,” it is clearly related to that which is life-giving, namely, the Spirit. Hence, eternal life in a “spiritual body” is eternal life dominated by the spirit. Thus, the opposite of “spirit” is not “body,” but is rather “death,” and not “physical death,” but “spiritual death.”

Hence, we have the same dichotomy that we previously discussed: θανατος must mean either a metaphorical or a real, but spiritual, death. Again, the power of the statement is minimized by seeing it as merely metaphorical. And it is clear that the
opposite, eternal life, is not metaphorical. Hence, insofar as the contrast is being made between a form of “death” and a form of “life,” it is obvious that spiritual death is intended by Paul; the product of “Sin,” that which necessarily follows when the kerygma is either unheard or ignored, is a death of the spirit, (parallel to Philo’s death of the soul) that is real and not metaphorical; it is precisely that which is the opposite of eternal life in (ἐν) Jesus Christ our Lord. Dunn recognizes Paul is not referring to physical death in this verse, but he relates it to the forfeiture of eternal life. Dunn makes no distinction, and, in fact, criticizes Heidland for attempting to make a distinction between both death as end-of-life as an eschatological penalty and “the deadly shadow which it casts before itself over life” as being overly subtle.

In this section, we have multiple references to the idea that a life devoted to those elements outside the patterns of behavior demanded by the kerygma necessarily leads to death. We see that Paul characterizes his hearers as having been brought from “death” to “life,” (v. 13) which can only mean from a state of spiritual death prior to baptism. Then we see the affirmation that “sin” leads to “death.” This parallels Philo exactly. Then we see the affirmation that the end of “shameful” things is death, which must be spiritual in character; and finally the natural consequent (ὁψωνία) of sin is death, but its opposite (mentioned in 22) is eternal life. With this contrast, only spiritual death can be intended by the word θανάτος in these verses.

Jewett summarizes this last section as follows:

The final clausula reiterates the theme of sheer grace, because life eternal is defined as being in “Christ Jesus our Lord.” To be in Christ is to reside in the

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438 Dunn, Romans 1.349.

439 Cranfield, Romans, 1.330, n. 1.
realm where grace rules. .. where the ordinary rules of honor and accomplishment, of wages and recompense, are no longer in effect. The church resides in this realm in the present, which accounts for its revolutionary social structure...This social embodiment is perceived to be a proleptic expression of “life eternal….”

4.3.6 Rom. 7:1-13

We shall focus on nine verses, Rom 7: 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 13. These verses are critical to our understanding of Paul’s use of “death.” But before analysis, let us visualize the structure of 7:1-13. There are three sections:

a) 7:1-3 This section is described below, and points to the jurisdiction of the law being limited by death.

b) 7:4-6. This section draws out the consequences of 7:1-3, arguing that having died to sin with Christ, we are also freed from the law.

c) 7:7-13. This section is the first part of a “speech in character,” where the relation between sin and the law is analyzed.

a) In Rom 7:1-3 Paul describes the case of a married woman who is bound to a husband as long as the husband lives; but after he dies, she is not considered an adulteress if she marries another. He begins by pointing out that he is referring to those who know the law (7:1) and that “the law is binding on a person only during that person's lifetime” (ὁ νόμος κυριεύει τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐφ’ ὃσον χρόνον ζῇ). The issue has to do with the extent to which a person is under the law of Moses. We must keep in mind, during this discussion, that Paul, from the very earliest indications we have, rejected the authority of

440 Jewett, Romans, 426.

441 While there is risk of anachronism, we find in b. Šabb. 151b that “once a man dies he is free from all obligations.”

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the Mosaic law. We know from Gal 2:3 that the Mosaic law was ignored regarding the required\textsuperscript{442} circumcision of Gentiles as a rite of initiation. Further, we know that the food laws designed to promulgate endogamy among Jews were abrogated by Paul in Antioch,\textsuperscript{443} and became a significant issue in the letters to Corinth\textsuperscript{444} and Rome.\textsuperscript{445} Further, he chastised the Galatians for their observance of (cultic) days and months.\textsuperscript{446} Thus, three markers of the Jewish way of life, circumcision, food laws and holiday celebrations were claimed as being unnecessary by Paul. But not only were such markers unnecessary, having been freed from the obligations by belief in Christ,\textsuperscript{447} but if anyone accepted circumcision, they were required to fulfill the entire law.\textsuperscript{448}

One of the most important indicators regarding Paul’s attitude towards the law is examining what Paul contrasts to the law; by visualizing the “opposite,” we can have some perception of the subject of the analysis. One of the most interesting contrasts is Gal 5:18, “But if you are led by the spirit (εἰς... πνεύμα τις ἁγιός), you are not subject to the law (οὐκ ἐστε ὑπὸ νόμου). Then, he continues uninterruptedly by listing the “works of the flesh” in 5:19-21. Hence, while he does not explicitly stipulate this, the contrast is not with the Mosaic law, but with another “principle” that permits expansive license.

\textsuperscript{442} Gen 17:11-14 makes circumcision of all males an absolute condition of the covenant between God and Abraham and his progeny.

\textsuperscript{443} Gal 2:11-16.

\textsuperscript{444} 1 Cor 8:7-13.

\textsuperscript{445} Rom 14:20-23.

\textsuperscript{446} Gal 4:10. For Frank Matera, \textit{Galatians}, (Sacra Pagina; Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1992), 152, this was a return to Jewish practices; for Mark D. Nanos, \textit{The Irony of Galatians}, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002), 267, the return was to pagan cultic festivals.

\textsuperscript{447} Gal 3:24-26.

\textsuperscript{448} Gal 5:3.
This kind of contrast also occurs in Rom 8:2, “For the law of the Spirit of life (νόμος τοῦ πνεύματος τῆς ζωῆς) in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death (ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου τῆς ἁμαρτίας καὶ τοῦ θανάτου).” In this case, “law” does not mean the Mosaic law, but rather a mode of acting that is dominated by the passions, and not subject to the Spirit.⁴⁴⁹ In this sense, the “law of sin and death” is that way of life that permits the series of vices listed in Gal 5:19-21 and Rom 1:24-32. It is not a “code” of law, but rather that which is only analogous to a law, a root of a kind of offensive behavior.

As we discuss the section of Romans that deals with sin and the law, I suggest that we recognize that Paul may not have been as precise in his use of language as we would have liked. We must ask what Paul is likely to have meant when he uses the word νόμος in each case, using the same criterion as we do when dealing with θάνατος. Which use illuminates the text better, “Mosaic law” or “principle of behavioral organization?” In order to understand how Paul can affirm that the law (referring to the Mosaic law) is not sin, and is “good and holy and just,” we must understand that there is another principle of behavioral organization that is named νόμος by Paul.

b) In Rom 7:4-6, Paul outlines the consequences of his example of a woman whose husband has died, and who is freed from the marriage bond.

Rom 7:4 In the same way, my friends, you have died to the law through the body of Christ (ἐθανατώθητε τῷ νόμῳ διὰ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ), so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead in order that we may bear fruit for God (ἵνα καρποφορήσωμεν τῷ θεῷ).

While I don’t want to spend inordinate time on the linguistic character of vv. 1-6,

⁴⁴⁹ Fitzmyer, Romans, 483.
I would point out that it appears that this entire section is a “sequential analogy” with each verse building on the preceding verse. However, there is a shift in the meaning of “death” beginning in v. 4.

First, we have “you have been put to death to the law,” which is more literal than the NRSV translation above. We previously saw in Rom 6:2 that we have the image of dying to sin; clearly, this is metaphorical, but it expresses the existential reality of effecting a separation from Sin as a power. We also recall 6:7, where δὲ γὰρ ἀποθανὼν δεδικαίωται ἀπὸ τῆς ἁμορτίας was seen as an existential statement, not a legal pronouncement, with the word δεδικαίωται reflecting the “being made righteous” as the consequence of such death to sin. And finally, we see the identification of the “law” and “Sin” where we defined “Sin” as either ignorance or indifference to the kerygma of the presence of the Spirit in the church, with such ignorance or indifference producing a profound separation from God. Here we must ask what “law” means. Having died to the law can also mean dying to that principle of behavioral organization referred to in Gal 5:20-24, i.e., the source of many vices. As reinforcement, we see that Paul himself has “died to the law,” (Gal 2:19) and that he was crucified with Christ (Χριστῷ συνεστάφυρωμεν). This is language parallel to that which we saw in Rom 6:3, where at baptism one is baptized into Christ’s death, meaning a death to sin. As the baptismal event (identifying with Christ on the cross) frees the initiate from sin so it frees him or her from the law that permits sinful behavior. The aorist passive of θανάτῳ calls to mind the image of being crucified with Christ, dying to Sin in baptism. This metaphoric

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451 Dunn, *Romans*, 361, referring to a “divine passive,” where God has taken action.
use, however, reflects a reality of incorporation into Christ/the church. For the phrase διὰ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ, gives us a sense of the vehicle in virtue of which such death to sin occurred. Some commentators decry the “ecclesiastical” reference as being “out of place.” However, the critical event of “dying to sin, or to a law that is lawless” is baptism and entrance into the body of Christ. Hence, the “ecclesiastical” referent is automatic as soon as one acknowledges the identity between certain uses of “Christ” and “the church.”

The “belonging to another” is merely a continuation of the imagery of marriage, and while the grammar demands belonging to a male, the function of such belonging is to “bear fruit (with relation) to God.” This is precisely the role of the church in the world; the way of “bearing fruit” is by walking in the law of Christ, bearing each others’ burdens (Gal 6:2). As I mentioned before, were the “bearing fruit” a personal, mystical event that each individual experienced, then there would hardly be a need for the church; there would be a myriad of individual relationships with God, independent and unrelated. But Paul insisted on building a community and it is this community that bears fruit.

Hence, being “put to death” to sin and to the law (of lawlessness) are identical; it is an existential change of orientation, which comes with baptism. We have, hence, a continuation of the imagery of Rom 6, except that now the law is that which is superceded.

It is not possible to give a complete explanation of Paul’s attitude towards the Mosaic law because this itself is subject to enormous disagreement and a huge body of

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452 Contra, Dunn, Romans, 362; Fitzmyer Romans, 458 quotes Tertullian as taking this interpretation, but believes that it is not necessary; Jewett, Romans, 434; Agree, Byrne, Romans, 214.

453 Dunn, Romans 1.362, Fitzmyer, Romans. 458 (though he acknowledges that Tertullian’s interpretation as well as several modern commentators); Cranfield, Romans,1.336.
And we shall proceed with our analysis and will include comments on this issue as we proceed.

Rom 7:5 While we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions (τὰ παθήματα τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν), aroused by the law (τὰ διὰ τοῦ νόμου) were at work in our members to bear fruit for death (ἐνηργεῖτο ἐν τοῖς μέλεσιν ἡμῶν, εἰς τὸ καρποφορῆσαι τῷ θανάτῳ).

Please note that I have already commented on this verse above; there is hardly any reason to say more, except to focus on the parallel with Philo’s set of criteria that bring death to the soul. εἰς τὸ καρποφορῆσαι τῷ θανάτῳ gives the practical result of the state of affairs prior to baptism, prior to the receipt of the Spirit, and being in a state of “Sin,” outside the kerygma. Such a state brings about individual sinful acts, all of which bring death; not (as we have constantly repeated) physical death, but clearly spiritual death. Thus, we have another reading that is superior to the normal interpretation that does not ask the question “what kind of death is Paul speaking about.”

Rom 7:6 But now we are discharged from the law (κατηγορήθημεν ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου), dead to that which held us captive (ἀποθανόντες ἐν ὧ κατειχόμεθα), so that we are slaves not under the old written code (οὐ παλαιότητι γράμματος) but in the new life of the Spirit (ἐν καινότητι πνεύματος).

Paul continues his imagery of a metaphorical death, based on the previous imagery: “we” are released from the law in the same sense that a woman is released from obligations when her husband dies; we are “dead” to that which kept us in thrall. Here there is metaphorical use, and no reference to “death of the soul.” However, the character of our servitude has changed, so that we are no longer subject to the “oldness of

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454 The bibliography in Paul and the Mosaic Law for the years 1980-94 includes more than 160 articles and books on this issue.

455 Page 149.
what is written.” There are two places where the contrast between the “spirit” and the “letter” occur in the Pauline corpus besides this one: 2 Cor 3:6 and Rom. 2:29.

The context of 2 Cor 3:2-6 is that it occurs in a discussion about letters of recommendation. Paul represents that the letter of recommendation was written on “our hearts” (ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν) and that this letter is written not with ink, but with God’s Spirit; and not on stone tablets, but on hearts. His competence to so write on hearts comes from God,

2 Cor 3:6 …who has made us competent to be ministers of a new covenant (ὅς καὶ ἐκάνωσεν ἡμᾶς διακόνους καὶ νήσις διαθήκης), not of letter but of Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life (τὸ γὰρ γράμμα ἀποκτέννει, τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα ζωοποιεῖ).

First, we have the reference to Jer. 31:31, referring to the “new covenant,” which Paul also quoted in the words of institution in 1 Cor 11:25. In this quotation, the word γράμμα must refer to Torah or law, which, because of its being (the occasion of) “Sin,” is that which brings about transgressions and evil acts. In this sense, then, the “letter” kills, i.e., brings about spiritual death. So here, the “letter” vs “Spirit” dichotomy refers to a condition where spiritual death is alluded to. Now, let us review the second text.

Rom 2:29 Rather, a person is a Jew who is one inwardly (ὁ ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ Ιουδαίος), and real circumcision is a matter of the heart (περιτομῆ καρδίας)-- it is spiritual and not literal (ἐν πνεύματι οὐ γράμματι). Such a person receives praise not from others but from God.

Here the distinction is more than referring to the Torah; within the context of the preceding verses the intention has to do with a kind of mindless reliance upon a cultic procedure, as opposed to that which is motivated by the Spirit.

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456 J. Lambrecht, Second Corinthians (Sacra Pagina, Vol. 8; Collegeville, Minn: Liturgical Press, 1999), 43.
B. Schneider has demonstrated that the likeliest referent to πνεῦμα is Spirit in the sense that later was defined within Trinitarian theology.\footnote{B. Schneider, “The Meaning of Paul’s Antithesis, ‘The Letter and The Spirit,’” CBQ 15 (1953): 207.} In this case, it is the Spirit which arrives at baptism that gives life; and such life is corporate in character. The opposite of this is that which is rejected, the “letter,” or the Torah as radically incomplete. Thus, the antithesis of “letter” and “spirit” will be parallel to that between “death” and “life.” Here we are not speaking of metaphor but of a real state of being. The “letter” brings about the “death of the soul.” In Rom 7:6, the “letter” is modified by “oldness,” clearly referring to that which has been superceded, the “Old Covenant.”

c) 7:7 is seen by all the commentators I have used as the beginning of another section in the letter, though there is a variety of division points defining the pericope about the status of the Mosaic law.\footnote{Byrne, Romans, 216, 7:7-13; Cranfield, Romans, 330, 7:1-25; Dunn, Romans, 374, 7:7-25; Fitzmyer, Romans, 462, 7:7-13; Jewett, Romans, 440, 7:7-12; Käsemann, Romans, 191, 7:7-13; Moo, Romans, 423, 7:7-25; Sanday, Romans, 176, 7:7-25; Ben Witherington, III, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 179, 7:7-13;}. I shall follow Byrne, Fitzmyer, Käesemann and Witherington in treating 7:7-13 as a logical subdivision. One of the main issues involves the abrupt introduction of the first person singular in 7:7, continuing on through 7:25. At question is who the “I” is who is speaking. Without a complete rehearsal of what the options are, (Adam, Israel, Paul in his pre-Christian days, etc.), I shall follow the analysis of Thomas Tobin who sees this as a “speech in character” or prosopopoeia,\footnote{Jewett agrees with this characterization, Romans, 440, as does Stanley Stowers, A Rereading of Romans, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 264. Aune disagrees, Westminster Dictionary, 383.} and identifies the “I” with “the Gentile majority of the Roman Christian community” in Rome.\footnote{Thomas H. Tobin, S.J., Paul’s Rhetoric in its Contexts, (Peabody, MA.: Hendrickson, 2004), 237.} I shall adopt this position, which Tobin arrived at after a careful analysis of the

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alternatives. I shall deal with 7:7-13 in this section and shall reserve 7:14-25 to the next major subdivision of this chapter.

Rom 7:7 What then should we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet, if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin (ἀμαρτίαν οὐκ ἐγνών ἐι μὴ διὰ νόμου). I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, "You shall not covet" (τήν τε γὰρ ἐπιθυμίαν οὐκ ἴδειν ἐἰ μὴ ὁ νόμος ἔλεγεν οὐκ ἐπιθυμήσεις).

Paul’s emphatic negative response to his own question demands comment. If “Sin” represents that which is not responsive to the kerygma of Jesus Christ, then the Mosaic Law is not itself “Sin,” is not itself a separation from God, but is constructed independently of the kerygma and hence an occasion of sin. Those acts that follow the particularity of Mosaic Law (circumcision, kashrut, festivals) tend to make community with Gentiles impossible. Thus, while the Law is not sin, it is that venue within which sinful acts occur. Paul’s argument is, in fact, contrary to experience. To discover ἐπιθυμία as the result of having heard or read a document is absurd. F. Büchsel has pointed out that the word ἐπιθυμία and ἐπιθυμεῖν were common words in the Greek world. However, in the Hellenistic-Jewish world, it has a negative connotation, having been prohibited by God.461

The control of ἐπιθυμία was a well-known Stoic idea and could hardly have been discovered only in its prohibition.462 Every child, as he or she matures, recognizes that his or her desires are always limited by those around one. That Paul had never experienced any desire, whether licit (hunger, thirst) or illicit (improper sexuality,
monetary, social) until he read/heard the last command of the decalogue (οὐκ ἔπιθυμησε) pushes credibility over the edge. What could he possibly mean then?

Tobin points out that it was a commonplace in Hellenistic Jewish thought that the “function of the law is to provide the knowledge of sin, the knowledge of what is right and wrong.”\textsuperscript{463} The word ἔπιθυμα, taken in its broadest perspective, includes the desire for honor, wealth, food, sex and a multitude of others. While the Stoic thinkers insisted on the control of ἔπιθυμα, (as we saw in Philo), the expression of such control was seen to lie in Torah.\textsuperscript{464} Hence, though Paul (as well as every other human being) had experienced ἔπιθυμα in his or her life, the real understanding of its dangers\textsuperscript{465} and required limitations within a functioning community came about because of the Mosaic law. Paul understands that the source of law is not God directly, but only indirectly (Gal 3:19), and that it is weakened by its fleshly character (Rom 8:3). Hence, insofar as it has these imperfections, it is the condition of sinful actions, trespasses or mis-steps.

Thus, the law, while not being sin itself, is the occasion of sin; this is not the fault of the law, insofar as it was given prior to the beginning of the new age, introduced by Christ’s cross. Hence, the Mosaic law (including the Decalogue) is a sub-set of the law of Christ, bearing one another’s burdens (Gal 6:2) and loving one another as fulfillment of the whole law (Gal 5:14). Here is a guide to conduct, and hence a higher form of the Mosaic dispensation, as it originates in the Spirit. (Gal 5:16). The defining feature of the law of Christ is the “law of love,” which will include all those things in the Mosaic law

\textsuperscript{463} Tobin, \textit{Rhetoric of Romans}, 239.

\textsuperscript{464} Cf. 4 Macc 2:6. While this specific work might have been written after Paul’s life cf. 4 Maccabees, (trans. H. Anderson, \textit{OTP}, 2:533) I suggest this is an expression of Hellenistic Jewish thought in Paul’s time.

\textsuperscript{465} Philo, \textit{Decal.} 142, 150 indicates that ἔπιθυμα is the root of all other sins.
that are consistent with that law, but which will exclude those elements of the law that serve merely as particularizing elements that would tend to separate Christian Jews from Christian Gentiles, in the same local church, such as circumcision, kashrut and Jewish festal holy days.\footnote{Gal 5:6, 6:15, circumcision unimportant;} Recall that what is important to Paul is not circumcision or non-circumcision (seen as symbols), but a “new creation,” i.e., the kerygma of Jesus Christ. Further, unity within the church is vitally important for Paul,\footnote{Rom 14:19; 1 Cor 10:23; Phil 2:1-2.} and to have different parts of the church following different food laws and calendars would introduce divisiveness.

\textbf{Rom 7:8} But sin, seizing an opportunity in the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness (ἄφορμήν δὲ λαβόνας ἡ ἁμαρτία διὰ τῆς ἐντολῆς κατειργάσατο ἐν ἐμοὶ πᾶσαν ἐπιθυμίαν). Apart from the law sin lies dead (χωρίς γὰρ νόμου ἁμαρτία νεκρά).

There are two aspects of this verse that must be commented upon. First, we continue with the \textit{prosopopoieia}, with the Gentile Christian as the speaker. The personified Sin “seizing the opportunity” would refer to this person’s initial exposure to the Mosaic law, as it is highly likely that the initial Christian Gentiles in Rome first came upon their knowledge of Christ through Jewish synagogues and Jewish Christians. The phrase \(διὰ τῆς ἐντολῆς\) implies that the commandment was not the originator of sin, but that the commandment was a necessary but not sufficient condition to an act of freedom that involved transgression. It is simply a statement of fact. Indeed, this personified Sin was the tempter, the agent that was productive of transgression.\footnote{Dunn comments on the word \(ἐντολή\) as being essentially identical to \(νόμος\).}
The second aspect of the verse is χωρίς γάρ νόμου ἀμαρτία νεκρά. It should be noted that both “law” and “sin” are anarthrous, implying a more generalized idea than specific examples. This statement is simply reflective of the function of the law to specify precisely what is acceptable behavior and what is not. Here is where the personal aspect of sin appears. There must be some sort of consciousness of what the law stipulates as acceptable or not on the part of the individual when she or he makes a moral decision. If there is no consciousness of some sort of standard, there can be no transgression. Yet we saw in Rom 1:20 the expectation that Paul had of people to have some understanding of God’s expectations through natural means. Hence, there are no excuses, despite the technicality of χωρίς γάρ νόμου ἀμαρτία νεκρά.

Rom 7:9 I was once alive apart from the law (ἐγώ δὲ ζων χωρίς νόμου ποτέ), but when the commandment came, sin revived (ἐλθούσης δὲ τῆς ἐντολῆς ή ἀμαρτία ἀνέζησεν).

This certainly fits a Gentile Christian, as he or she lived part of his or her life apart from the Mosaic law or law of Christ.469 Further, this interpretation fits the concept that the law (i.e., the “commandment”) came and sin “sprang to life.” 470 BADG (408) notes that the ἀνά here loses its force. This is consistent with the recognition that knowledge of the law (which I presume meant the Gentile Christian’s catechesis) brought that person to the level where personal transgressions could be understood as precisely that. An act of pursuit of honor at the expense of another person could hardly be held to be a transgression of the law of Christ (“bear one another’s burdens”) until that

469  Jewett contends that the specific use of ἐγώ here points to Paul’s expression of his own experience. But I suggest that since this is a “speech in character,” the “I” could just as easily mean the person whom Paul is emulating in this passage.

470  Käsemann 197 confirms this translation; he uses “awakens.”
“commandment” became known. After baptism, such an action, even though it might have been part and parcel of the Roman world, would be understood as sinful.

Rom 7:10 And I died (ἐγὼ δὲ ἀπέθανον), and the very commandment that promised life (εὐρέθη μοι ἡ ἐντολὴ ἡ εἰς ζωὴν,) proved to be death to me (αὕτη εἰς θανάτον).

This continues the sentence begun in 7:9 and produces one of the most important indicators of Paul’s use of ἀποθνῄσκω, namely, “I died.” This use cannot be physical nor should it be merely metaphorical, for then it would lose its power. Rather, the moral or spiritual meaning of death must be understood, which would be the result of committing a transgression after either baptism or after catechesis. While Dunn adopts an Adamic interpretation of this speech in character, he recognizes that (at least) there is a dual meaning of “death” here, “both as an expulsion from the presence of God…and its inevitable end in physical and moral corruption to death.”  

However, the non-physical meaning is not developed by Dunn. This is one more example of some sort of recognition of a Pauline sense of death of the soul, without focusing on the idea and expressing its meaning within a clear example. Byrne, Cranfield and Fitzmyer continue to imply physical death. Moo, who had rejected the Adamic interpretation of ἐγὼ in 7:7-13, nevertheless provides this explanation:

… ‘I died’ will describe that situation according to which the law, by turning ‘sin’ into ‘transgression,’ confirms, personalizes and radicalizes the spiritual death in which all find themselves since Adam. Israel, in this sense, ‘died’ when the law was given it.

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471 Dunn, Romans, 1.383, my emphasis.
472 Byrne, Romans, 222; Cranfield, Romans, 1.352; Fitzmyer, Romans, 468.
473 Moo, Romans, 438.
Käsemann interprets this death as that of a sinner, “which intimates both physical and eternal death.” He does not perceive a spiritual death in the same sense that Adam experienced as being alienated from God. Jewett, however, while interpreting the entire passage as a Pauline reflection on his own youthful experience, does say regarding this verse that “it is . . . likely that Paul has in mind the death that always results from sin, as stated in Rom 5:12, 15, 17, 21, and climaxing in 6:23, “the wages of sin is death.” This indeed provides support that the meaning of, “I died” in this verse can best be understood as spiritual or moral death.

Rom 7:11 For sin, seizing an opportunity in the commandment (ἀφορμήν λαβοῦσα δὲ τῆς ἐντολῆς), deceived me (ἐξηπάτησέν με) and through it killed me (δὲ αὐτῆς ἀπέκτειλεν).

We see here a repetition of the image of v. 8 above, with personified sin “seizing an opportunity through the commandment.” The commandment itself is not the cause, but personified sin, which, in turn, caused death. Here Paul reverts to the ideas he had expressed in Chapters 5 and 6 regarding sin and death. Tobin suggests that this verse expresses the difficulty of a Gentile who adopts the Mosaic ethical commandments, since they are both “appealing and difficult;” there is a risk of falling short of the high moral values contained in Hellenistic Judaism.

The fact that Paul used the word ἔξηπατάω has led many exegetes to interpret this as a re-telling of Gen 3:13; but the central issue is not who is being deceived, but the

474 Käsemann, Romans, 197.
475 Jewett, Romans, 452.
476 Tobin, Rhetoric of Romans, 240.
477 Dunn, Romans, 384; Käsemann, Romans, 196; Witherington, Romans, 184.
fact that there is a basic dishonesty in sin; this comes about when the moral discourse within an individual chooses to ignore the standard of behavior demanded by the “commandment,” and instead chooses an actual evil that he or she calls good. This is in fact death-producing, not in a physical sense, but in a moral or spiritual sense. Käsemann comes close to this understanding when he writes that “sin creates an illusion. People die in and of the illusion about themselves and God…”478 Regrettably, Tobin understands this well, but he does not see the “death” that sin brings except metaphorically.479 I would argue that Paul intends the word “death” to be more than merely metaphorical; while Paul is not interested in ontology, I would suggest that the result of the deception in 7:11, a very real kind of death is implied, not a mere metaphor.480

Rom 7:12. So (ἐσετε) the law is holy (ἁγιος), and the commandment (ἡ ἐντολή) is holy and just and good (ἁγιά καὶ δικαία καὶ ἄγαθη).

We must also ask two more questions: first, what does the word ἐσετε imply here? Paul generally uses this word to express a conclusion that arises out of a previous statement.481 Paul clearly understands that his argument in 7:7-11, that the law is not sinful itself has been sustained. He affirms the law to be valuable. Second, we must ask which “law” Paul is referring to. I propose that either the Mosaic law or the law of Christ (or the law of the spirit of life) can be referred to. The central issue is that the cause of sin is not the moral standard, but the individual decision of a person.

478 Käsemann, Romans, 198.
479 Tobin, Rhetoric of Romans, 240.
480 Witherington, Romans, 191, has interpreted the “I” in 7:7-13 to be Adam; but he nevertheless identified the fact that the kind of death Adam experienced as the result of his sin was “spiritual.”
481 Of the 37 times this word is used in the Pauline Corpus, it is appropriately translated as “therefore” as the conclusion of an argument 32 times. The outliers are 1 Cor 5:1 (“since”), 1 Cor 10:12 (“so”), 1 Cor 13:2 (“so that”) 2 Cor 1:8 (“for”), and 2 Cor 3:7, “so that”.
Did what is good, then, bring death to me? By no means! It was sin, working death in me through what is good in order that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure.

Having denied that a “good” (i.e., the Mosaic law or the law of Christ, i.e., Gal 6:2) could be the author of death, Paul makes a distinction of the difference between a “condition” and a “cause.” If ἀλλὰ ἡ ἁμαρτία, ἵνα φανῇ ἁμαρτία, διὰ τοῦ ἁγαθοῦ μοι κατεργαζόμενη θάνατον . . . is translated: “But Sin, insofar as it showed itself to be sin, through something good, brought about death in me;” then we have the expression of a self-conscious Gentile who experienced either law, and being aware of the criteria, nevertheless committed some sort of sin. But if we focus on that which surrounds the interior clause, we have ἀλλὰ ἡ ἁμαρτία. . . . μοι κατεργαζόμενη θάνατον, “but sin . . . produced death in me.” Clearly this cannot be physical death, nor is it merely metaphorical; hence, I conclude that the best reading of “death” is “spiritual death.” This is a direct parallel to Philo’s understanding of the consequence of sin in a person: Sin produces death of the soul (Post. 73-74, Fug. 53-55, etc.)

We see that the reading of “spiritual death” or “death of the soul” is a superior reading in verses 7:5-12. All of these, taken together, give a good indication that Paul’s speech in character was put in the mouth of a person in Rome who had experienced both the Mosaic law and the gospel of Jesus Christ. The death that sin brings about is not physical, but is spiritual. This is parallel to Philo’s understanding, perhaps in the sense that two great minds arrive at the same idea virtually simultaneously (i.e., Newton and
Leibnitz on the Calculus) or perhaps the idea itself was circulating within the religious community of early Judaism.

4.3.7 **Rom 8:1-13**

This portion of Romans is seen as a distinct section by some commentators on Romans,\(^482\) while others see 8:1-11 as a unit,\(^483\) with two seeing 8:1-17 as a unit.\(^484\) For our purposes, I shall deal with 8:1-13 as a unit, insofar as my goal is to elaborate Paul’s views on death of the soul specifically, as opposed to other frameworks which relate 8:14-17 as a description of the relation of believers to God, but not having to do with the death of the soul.\(^485\) I shall analyze five sub-sections, 8:1-2, 8:3-6, 8:7-8, 8:9-11 and 8:12-13. This section deals primarily with the cosmic struggle between the flesh and the Spirit. This is expressive of such moral struggles as we found in both Heraclitus and Philo. Paul argues that the fulfillment of the law exists through the Spirit, and that Christ enables believers to fulfill it, for by belonging to Christ, one receives the Spirit. The section ends with a comparison of life in the flesh, which produces death, as opposed to life in the Spirit, which produces life.

**Rom 8:1-2** There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus (οὐδεν ἄρα νῦν κατάκριμα τοὺς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ).\(^2\) For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus (ὁ γὰρ νόμος τοῦ πνεύματος τῆς ζωῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ) has set you free from the law of sin and of death (ιλευθερωσέν σε ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου τῆς ἁμαρτίας καὶ τοῦ θανάτου).

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\(^{482}\) Byrne, *Romans*, 234; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 479; Moo, *Romans*, 470.


\(^{484}\) Jewett, Romans, 478; Witherington, *Romans*, 207.

\(^{485}\) Jewett, *Romans*, 479;
Dealing first with 8:1, I previously indicated that κατάκριμα is shorthand for “death;” but it does not necessarily imply physical death but rather death of the soul. (Rom 5:12, 16). This interpretation is reinforced in this verse in two ways:

a) the νῦν in ἔρχεται νῦν refers to what Fitzmyer and Dunn both call the “eschatological now.” This “now” is the time when “…the aeon of sin, death, and law has come to an end.” This can only be true if “death” is not physical death, but is death of the soul. For the common experience is that followers of Christ actually do physically die (1 Thess. 4:15-16). Thus, the kind of death that is required is not physical, but is spiritual.

b) The second reinforcement has to do with those who are excluded from death, namely those ἐν Χριστω Ἱησοῦ. We have already pointed out that this can be interpreted most easily as having been baptized and being part of the Church. Thus, we have a logical statement, “If one is freed from death, one must be a member of the church.” Baptism, in bringing the Spirit, necessarily brings freedom from spiritual death, which freedom is true life.

Now, dealing with Rom 8:2, there are four questions that should be answered:

a). How is the word νόμος used here? Are there two νόμοι involved?

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486 Fitzmyer, Romans, 481; Dunn Romans,1.415.
487 Ibid.
488 Jewett, Romans, 480, indicates that ἐν Χριστω Ἱησοῦ “needs to be taken in a local . . . sense, referring to the ecclesiastical realm created and ruled by Christ.”
489 It is easy to see that there also exists the logical relationship that “IF one is NOT a member of the church, then one is NOT freed from death.” (I. M. Čopi, Introduction to Logic, New York: MacMillan, 1978, p. 296 (“Modus Tollens”). This became a dogma of the Christian religion, namely “Outside the church there is no salvation.”
b). To what extent can a νόμος τοῦ πνεύματος τῆς ζωῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ be considered a law? Does a law not have to be written or at least sufficiently concrete that it can be appealed to?

c). What does ἐλευθερία mean in this context?

d). Freedom from which law is intended?

a). A means for untangling the variety of ways Paul speaks of νόμος is to ask whether the word demands what is normally seen as a “code of law.” This implies a written, explicit code, the violation of which brings some sort of social censure. And while Torah includes much more than a list of regulations, it does provide such a codified list. Included in Torah is the command given to Abraham in Gen. 17:10-11 to circumcise his sons; it also includes commands regarding foods (Lev. 11), commands regarding festivals (Ex. 23:17, etc.) and commands regarding cultic sacrifice (Ex. 23-35 and Lev. 3-23). Paul rejected these elements of the Law as to whether they were required for salvation. But Torah also included the Decalogue in Ex. 20:1-17 and Dt. 5:6-21, one verse of which we noted that he quoted (Rom. 7:7). While Paul insists in 2 Cor 3:7 that the “ministry of death, chiseled in letters on stone tablets” (ἡ διακονία τοῦ θανάτου ἐν γράμμαις ἐντευκμόλινη λίθοις) was set aside, he was so contending that its glory was set aside in comparison to the glory in which the Spirit comes.

We have seen that Paul does not necessarily use the word νόμος in a consistent way; he refers to the “law of Christ” in Gal 6:2 without implying a written document; and he uses it in Rom 7:23 regarding “another law” at work in his members. Hence, we can’t be sure what the word means unless it is seen in context. It does not always mean the
Mosaic law. However, in some cases, Paul has contrasted “life in the Spirit” as opposed to that which is written (Rom 2:29, 7:6, 2 Cor 3:6).

b). To what extent are we talking of a “code of law?” Some commentators have suggested that the sort of “law” that Paul is referring to in Rom 8:2 is a “binding authority” or “power”\(^\text{490}\) or “new norm.”\(^\text{491}\) It is also described as “the dynamic ‘principle’ of the new life…”\(^\text{492}\) Finally, it is described as the “ruling function in the sphere of Christ.”\(^\text{493}\) In all cases, the “law of the Spirit of life” is seen as being the wellspring of moral action. As Paul can condemn certain actions in all persons (Rom. 1:29-30), he provides us with a firm expression in Gal. 5:18-25 of the behavioral consequences of rule by the “Spirit of life” vs. a state of death resulting from living in the flesh. Further, actions deemed proper are itemized in Phil 4:8-9, 1 Thess. 4:1-12. and 1 Cor 2:4-16, which ends with an expression of the means of discerning the proper action on the part of a member of the community. Paul asks, quoting Isaiah 40:13, "For who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" His answer is, “But we have the mind of Christ” (ἡμεῖς δὲ νοῦν χριστοῦ ἔχομεν).

Hence, we don’t have a “law” in the sense of a codified document that univocally permits and precludes moral action; rather, the “law” of the “Spirit” is that which indwells in both individuals and the community that prescribes the overall character of actions that are demanded. The best example (quoted before) is in Gal. 6:2, Ἀλλήλων τὰ βάρη βαστάζετε καὶ οὕτως ἀναπληρώσετε τὸν νόμον τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

\(^{490}\) Moo, Romans, 474.

\(^{491}\) Byrne, Romans, 235.

\(^{492}\) Fitzmyer, Romans, 482-3.

\(^{493}\) Küsemann, Romans, 215-6.
Hence, the “law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus” can be seen as a successor to the Mosaic law; it is not a “written” code, but has the impact of producing conformity of behavior with an over-arching “law” of love, given by the Spirit, broader in extension than the Mosaic law, but determinative of what aspects of the Mosaic law were relevant to the Christian community. Recall that in Gal 5:14 the law was said to be summed up (πεπλήρωται) under the dictum to “love your neighbor as yourself.”

c). The next question is, “What does ελευθερία mean in this context?”

It is clear that Paul taught that members of the church were not under the law (6:14, 7:6), since he saw the law as that which inadvertently was the cause of sinful acts (7:5). Hence, he terms the law “the law of sin and of death,” not because it was not good, but because of the unanticipated consequences of the written law. The freedom that is gained involves freedom from those “works of the law,” such as circumcision, kashrut and festal holidays, which become unnecessary under the new covenant based on faith in Jesus Christ. For the dictates of the law of love (Gal 6:2, Rom 13:8) fulfills the intent of the Mosaic law.

d). Thus, the freedom that is granted is absolutely the freedom from the Mosaic law. But there is no “freedom” from the law of Christ, insofar as this is the successor to the Mosaic law that includes the essence of that law within itself, expressed as the law to

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494 Tobin in Rhetoric of Romans, 69-70, has described a significant shift between Paul’s attitude toward the Mosaic law in Galatians compared to that position taken in Romans. He points out that in Gal 5:14 and 6:2 Paul substitutes the word πληροω instead of the LXX words ποιεω or φυλασσω to express observing the law. Thus, believers are “carrying out what had been central to the Mosaic law. They are fulfilling the law, but they are not, as such, observing it.” In Romans, Paul re-interprets what he wrote in Galatians, softening it and contending that by fulfilling the intent, they do not have to “observe,” i.e., δολον τον νημον ποιησα (Gal 5:3).

495 Jewett, Romans, suggests that “the law was distorted and became an instrument of gaining honor for oneself and one’s group,” 481.
bear one another’s burdens (Gal 6:2), to love one’s neighbor as oneself (Gal 5:14), and having the mind of Christ. (1 Cor 2:4-16).

Here we finally arrive at what interests us in Rom 8:1. If we ask “what kind of ‘death’ the word κατάκριμα refers to?” I think it is pretty obvious. The world of sin has been consistently seen by Paul to be the vehicle of spiritual death, i.e., that which is NOT from the Spirit of life in Christ. Here Paul consciously contrasts the “law of the Spirit of life” in the Church with the law that produces spiritual death, even though such death is inadvertent and not originally intended by the framers of the Mosaic law.

Rom 8:3-6 For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, (ἡσθένει διὰ τῆς σαρκὸς) could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh (ἐν ὄμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἀμαρτίας) and to deal with sin, he condemned sin in the flesh (κατέκρινεν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ), so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us (ἵνα τὸ δικαίωμα τοῦ νόμου πληρωθῇ ἐν ἡμῖν) who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.  For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit.  To set the mind on the flesh is death (τὸ γὰρ φρόνημα τῆς σαρκὸς θανάτου) but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace (τὸ δὲ φρόνημα τοῦ πνεύματος ζωῆς καὶ εἰρήνης).

I shall limit my comments to two elements: a) the treatment of “sin” in these verses, and b) the consequence of “death” being the result of the “mindset of the flesh.”

a). Treatment of “sin.” First, we have what may have been a liturgical or traditional phrase regarding God’s having sent his Son; but the purpose of such sending was “to be a sin-offering to condemn sin in the flesh.” There are two important insights in the description of Jesus’ death as a “sin-offering;” First, πέρι ἁμαρτίας is the LXX translation of the Hebrew מִנְהָנָן, or “Guilt Offering” in Is. 53:10, which most likely influenced early
Christianity. 496 Far more commonly, the LXX uses it to translate ἁμαρτία, meaning “Sin Offering.” Hence, those acquainted with the Torah would recognize περὶ ἁμαρτίας as being a kind of sacrificial offering for sin or guilt. 497 Fitzmyer has pointed out that there is a long tradition of allusion to Gen. 22 and Abraham’s offering his son. 498 The Greek describing the instruction of God to Abraham is that Isaac be offered as a ὀλοκάρπωσις and not περὶ ἁμαρτίας. And this word traditionally translates the Hebrew פֶּרֶשׁ, or “whole burnt offering.” As the interpretation of Gen. 22 progressed through time, the Aqedah became identified with an atoning action on the part of Isaac. 499 Hence, Paul may well have been influenced by both Gen. 22 and Is. 53:10.

b). περὶ ἁμαρτίας as an “atonement sacrifice,” functions to “condemn sin in the flesh to death.” This recalls the baptismal formula, where the Christian “dies to sin.” It is the atoning sacrifice of Christ that brings about the possibility through baptism to dying to sin. Clearly, the ἐν τῷ σώματί becomes a clarification of the meaning of ἁμαρτία, whose locus is further defined in the next verse.

In 8:3, the powerlessness of the same (Mosaic) law is referred to, as it has already been determined to be “weakened” because of its fleshliness or its source other than in the Holy Spirit (Gal 3:19). But in 8:4, the “just requirement” of the law (of the spirit) is fulfilled in us, who do not walk in the way of the flesh, but who walk in the way of the (Holy) Spirit. A shift in meaning is the only way that the entire passage makes any sense.

496 Käsemann, Romans, 216; Dunn, Romans, 1.422.
497 Byrne, Romans, 243; Tobin Paul’s Rhetoric, 282.
498 Fitzmyer, 485 and 531 on 8:32.
Following the above, 8:5-6 fits perfectly: with φρόνημα being translated as “mind-set.”

The focus on the flesh produces precisely what Paul has outlined in Gal. 5:17-21, and these parallel the kinds of actions that Philo would indicate lead to the death of the soul (Leg. 2.77). The opposite, the mind-set of focusing on the Spirit produces (real) life and peace. Here we have another parallel to Gal 5:22-25. The σάρξ vs. πνεῦμα contrast is precisely the θάνατος vs. ζωή contrast; with both being understood as spiritual states, not physical states.

**Rom 8:7-8** For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh (διότι τὸ φρόνημα τῆς σαρκὸς ἐχθρά εἰς θεόν) is hostile to God; it does not submit to God’s law-- indeed it cannot, 8 and those who are in the flesh cannot please God (οἱ δὲ ἐν σαρκὶ ὑπέρ θεῷ ἀφέσαν οὐ δύνανται).

We saw above in dealing with how Paul used the concept σάρξ that there was a profound vector of identification of “flesh” with “desire,” ἐπιθυμία, which was for Philo the root of all acts of injustice (Dec. 173, Spec. 1.83). Paul identified living in the flesh with “sinful passions” as a vehicle that brought about spiritual death. Here Paul is consistent with Philo in seeing that a person inflamed with desire in the broadest sense is incapable of following God’s law. In this case, “God’s law” could refer either to the Mosaic law or the law of Christ. In either case, the orientation towards the flesh is productive of the death of the soul, and therefore cannot please God.

**Rom 8:9-11** But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you (εἰπέρ πνεῦμα θεοῦ οἰκεῖ ἐν υμῖν). Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ (πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ) does not belong to him (οὐτος οὐκ ἔστιν αὐτοῦ). But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, (τὸ μὲν

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500 Byrne, Romans, 244. Recall the discussion on the moral vector implied in the φρον-rooted words in the chapter on Heraclitus.


502 Tobin, Paul’s Rhetoric, 223, identifies τὰ παθήματα τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν of 7:5 with ἐπιθυμία in 6:12.
The contrast between spirit and flesh is significant, especially since Paul affirms to his Roman hearers that the spirit dwells in them. Jewett has pointed out the Jewish roots of the Spirit’s indwelling, referring to Exod 29:45-6, as well as the Shekinah’s presence within the community. But what is most important for our study is verse 10, where Paul refers to the body’s being dead because of sin. Dunn proposes that σώμα refers not to an individual body, but “the embodiment which characterizes all human existence in this age.” This state is one of deadness, “which results from the coming alive of sin and the resultant death of humankind.” Dunn does not explain this, but the only reasonable kind of death is spiritual or moral death. Verse 11 provides reinforcement, since the kind of life that is to be provided by God, (τοῦ ἐγείραντος τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐκ νεκρῶν), is eternal life, that given to the mortal bodies of those who are in Christ. Here we have a contrast between moral or spiritual death on the one hand, and its opposite, eternal life on the other.

Rom 8:12-13. So then, brothers and sisters, we are debtors (δόχειλέτει ἐσμέν) not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh (οὐ τῇ σαρκί τοῦ κατὰ σάρκα ζήν) -- for if you live according to the flesh, you will die (κατὰ σάρκα ζήσετε, μέλλετε ἀποθνῄσκειν); but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live (εἰ δὲ πνεῦμα τὰς πράξεις τοῦ σώματος θανατοῦτε, ζήσεσθε).
We have two mentions of “death” in 8:13, but both are dependent upon the prior comments about living “in the flesh.” There is no new information being provided here; it is a continuation of the parenesis that we saw in 8:6. The ways of the flesh are different from the ways of the Spirit; and as Paul addresses his hearers, if you live “according to the flesh,” then “you are going to die.” What kind of death? Once again, it cannot mean physical death because many people are alive although they live “according to the flesh.” It can’t mean metaphorical death because then it would lose its power. Hence, “you are going to die (spiritually)” is the only remaining option.

This is immediately reinforced by the remainder of the verse; “putting to death” the practices of the body (here identical with “flesh”) is identical to being dead to “Sin” in 6:11. In Chapter 6, the focus was liturgical, an analysis of what happens to one who is baptized. In 8:13, we find the practical encouragement of those who have been baptized to continue walking in the way of the Spirit, where life is found.

Like Philo, Paul insists that a life devoted to the activities outlined in Gal. 5:19-21 and Rom. 1:29-31 is one that leads to death; not physical, not metaphorical, but a real death.

By reading 8:1-13 through the lens that whenever one reads “death” or “condemnation” they may mean “spiritual death,” the text is opened up:

a) Paul denies condemnation/death to those in the Church (8:1) and recognizing the two kinds of law, one of which is that of death, the other of life (8:2).

506 Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 492.
b) Paul distinguishes the mindsets oriented towards the flesh (and death) vs. those oriented towards spirit (and life) (8:6).

c) Paul re-affirms both of the above in 8:12-13.

All of the above reinforce the idea that Paul saw those acts rooted in the flesh, i.e., in the world outside the kerygma, as productive of death; but by reading “death of the soul” as opposed to physical death, the power of the insight is unmistakable.

We saw in the chapter on Philo that for him, a person who lived a life dominated by pleasure effectively became a beast, and that he or she dropped down a notch on the ontological scale. Paul seems not to have developed this sort of perspective, except possibly in one comment he made in 1 Cor 15:32a, where he wrote, “If with merely human hopes I fought with wild animals at Ephesus, what would I have gained by it (εἰ κατὰ ἀνθρώπων ἑθηριομάχησα ἐν Ἐφέσῳ, τί μοι τὸ ὄφελος?”. Who or what were these beasts? Abraham Malherbe has asked this question, and he concludes that these “beasts” may have been Paul’s opponents in Ephesus.\(^{507}\) While Malherbe looks upon such a characterization as a metaphor common in Hellenistic diatribes, there is just a chance that Paul viewed it as possibly more than a metaphor. Regrettably, there is no way to prove what he meant literally; but the parallel of a person who is dead to the life of the spirit would certainly fit the phrase. If Paul had Christian adversaries in Ephesus,\(^{508}\) he may have attributed to them a “living death” and hence a life characteristic of beasts.


\(^{508}\) It is interesting to note that in the account of Paul’s return from Corinth to Jerusalem in Acts, Luke does not have Paul stop for a time in Ephesus, but has the elders meet him in Miletus (Acts 20:16); this might be a hint that all was not well in Ephesus, not only among the pagan population (Acts 19:23-40) but possibly among the Christians there. I also recognize that we cannot look to Acts as a historical document in the contemporary meaning of the term, but we can get hints that there may have been tension between Paul and the church leaders.
4.4 From Death of the Soul to Life.

In a 1935 article in the *JBL*, Mary E. Andrews wrote that repentance was the central to Jewish thought and ethics. She was astonished that Paul “so neglected this cardinal idea.” She felt that the reason for Paul’s neglect required further study.\(^{509}\) Further, Oscar D. Watkins, in his *History of Penance*, includes only the issue of the man living in an incestuous relationship in 1 Cor 5:3-5 and (possibly) 2 Cor 2:5-11.\(^{510}\) It is clear that Paul had a sense of repentance, as he urged his hearers in Rom 2:4 that God’s kindness was intended to lead them to repentance. And in 2 Cor 7:9-10 we see him Praising those who had insulted him in Corinth because of their repentance. So Paul clearly understood the Jewish concept of μετανοια.

I would like to propose that the speech in character in Rom 7:14-25 is, in fact, Paul’s expression of how a baptized person who has sinned (and hence has died) can be resurrected (like Jesus) to new life.

I shall analyze this section in four sub-sections, Rom 7:14, 7:15-17, 7:18-21 and 7:22-25.

The structure of this section is a continuation of the “speech-in-character” that began in 7:7. While most exegetes treat of 7:7-25 as a unit, I have segregated the last eleven verses because it appears that the anguished reflection culminates in a cry for assistance, which I suggest is, in fact, metanoia. The result of the recognition of apparent helplessness in the struggle against the passions produces an anguished plea for help from Jesus Christ.

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Rom 7:14  For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am of the flesh, sold into slavery under sin (ἐγὼ δὲ σάρκινός εἰμι πεπραμένος ὑπὸ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν).

First, how is Paul using “law?” I propose that here the reference must be to the “law of Christ” from Gal 6:2 or the “law of the Spirit of life” from Rom 8:2. His emphasis on “Spirit” would imply a law (or principle) other than the Mosaic law, weakened by the flesh, and hence being the law of sin and death.511

Second, I propose that we are still in the “speech in character” that describes 7:7-13. The “I” who is being referred to is the same Gentile Christian of the Roman church identified by Tobin,512 the main addressee in the letter (Rom 1:5-6). This is the person who, prior to his baptism, was enslaved by sin. But he is also the person who, even after baptism, recognized the continuing power of sin in his or her life. While baptism inaugurated a new life and a new creation (2 Cor 5:17, Gal 6:15), the reality of moral shortcomings to the law of Christ were and are a common experience.

Third, I propose that this entire section is an example of the kind of moral discourse that was commonly written about in the Hellenistic world (Leg. 2.94-98, 3.118-125).

Rom 7:15-17  I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate (οὐ γὰρ ὁ θέλω τούτο πράσσω, ἀλλὰ ὁ μισῶ τούτο ποιῶ). 16 Now if I do what I do not want, (εἰ δὲ οὐ θέλω τοῦτο ποιῶ) I agree that the law is good. 17 But in fact it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me (νῦν δὲ οὐκέτι ἐγώ κατεργάζομαι αυτὸ ἀλλὰ ἡ οἰκούσα ἐν ἐμοὶ ἁμαρτία).

Verse 15 reminds one of the verse in Medea, where she reflects on the foul deed she is about to commit, and says

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511 Dunn, Romans, 1.387.
512 P. 198 above.
Now, now, I learn what horrors I intend; 
But passion overmasters sober thought; 
And this is the cause of direst ills to men.” 513

Jewett points out that this passage was frequently cited in the ancient world and among commentators regarding the expression of the moral struggle between reason and passion. 514 This would fit the attitude of a Gentile who found himself or herself within a social environment that was dominated by typical behavior model of pursuit of honor over all other values, where domination by force was considered standard, and slaves and women existed in culturally imposed submission to males. Paul’s gospel of equality of Greeks and Jews, slave and free, and men and women (Gal 3:28, 1 Cor 12:13) provided a new standard of behavior, which also provided conditions where one who had adopted the standard intellectually and indeed in his or her heart, could also easily violate these new vaunted standards and, hence, commit sin. The old, pre-Pauline standards could be likened to ἐπιθυμία or passionate attachment to the old, Roman standards and thus become the source of sin. While the old standards could easily be “hated” by the converted Christian, it could be easily seen as the source of transgressions.

Verse 16 points out the conflict between “doing what I hate” and the presence of Christ’s law; it is by focusing on the conflict that law is recognized as being good (a synonym for “beautiful”). 515

Finally, the speaker in verse 17 explains the conflict, focusing on “that which I do not want,” since “it” (αὐτὸ) in the NRSV translation refers back to the neuter τοῦτο in v.

513 Euripides, Medea, 1078-80. Seneca, Medea, 936, includes a parallel expression, where Medea says, “Mind, you vacillate too much. . . . Passion’s fierce swell controls me, but cannot decide which way to toss me.”

514 Jewett, Romans, 462-3.

515 Dunn, Romans, 390.
16. namely, that the personified power of sin has its effect within him or her; and considering that sin is productive of death, he must recognize the presence of this death within himself or herself.

Rom 7:18-21 For I know that nothing good dwells within me (οὐκ οἶκεῖ ἐν ἐμοί, ἄγαθόν), that is, in my flesh (τοῦ ἐστὶν ἐν τῇ σαρκί μου). I can will what is right, but I cannot do it (τὸ γὰρ θέλειν παράκειται μοι, τὸ δὲ κατεργάζεσθαι τὸ καλὸν οὖ). 19 For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do (οὐ γὰρ ὁ θέλω ποιῶ ἄγαθὸν, ἀλλὰ δὲ οὐ θέλω κακὸν τοῦτο πράσσω). 20 Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me (εἰ δὲ οὐ θέλω ἐκεῖ) τούτῳ ποιῶ, οἰκεῖ ἐκεῖ κατεργάζομαι αὐτὸ ἄλλα ἢ οἰκοῦσα ἐν ἐμοὶ ἀμαρτία). 21 So I find it to be a law that when I want to do what is good, evil lies close at hand (εὑρίσκω ἀρα τὸν νόμον, τῷ θέλοντι ἐμοὶ ποιεῖν τὸ καλὸν, ὅτι ἐμοὶ τὸ κακὸν παράκειται).

Here we find a classic expression of the internal moral conflict. The law of Christ is understood and evident; but the flesh, representing the entirety of desires opposite to the Spirit, prevents the accomplishment of what is good. Hence, transgressions occur presumably on a regular basis. Hence, the Gentile Christian finds himself or herself having been converted to the law of Christ, baptized and included in the Body of Christ, but nevertheless recognizes that sin is impossible to avoid.

Rom 7:22-25. For I delight in the law of God (συνηδόμαι γὰρ τῷ νόμῳ τοῦ θεοῦ) in my inmost self (κατὰ τὸν ἐσόμαι άνθρωπον), 23 but I see in my members another law (ἐτερὸν νόμον) at war with the law of my mind (ἀντιστρατευόμενον τῷ νόμῳ τοῦ νοοῦ μου), making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members (αὐτὸν ἀμαρτησίας τῷ δύναι ἐν τοῖς μέλεσίν μου). 24 Wretched man that I am (Τάλαίπωρος ἐγὼ ἀνθρώπος)! Who will rescue me from this body of death (τίς με ῥύσθαι ἐκ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ θανάτου τούτου)? 25 Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord (χάρις δέ τῷ θεῷ διὰ Ίησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν)! So then, with my mind I am a slave to the law of God, but with my flesh I am a slave to the law of sin.

Jewett points out the social vector inherent in the word συνηδόμαι, which was “used by classical writers to convey rejoicing together with others.” He translates the
first phrase of v. 25, “I share pleasure in the law of God.” This would fit the context of the speech in character, where the Gentile Christian recognizes the communal character of the Body of Christ, into which he has been baptized.

The next verse again reinforces the character of the internal conflict raging in the speaker-in-character. The state of war between the law in his members and the law of his mind is precisely the conflict that the Stoics recognized between the mind as ἱγκμονικός and the other dangerous part, the ἐπιθυμία. The continuation of the image of war and taking captive alludes to the custom of Rome that prisoners in a war have no right to life and are either killed immediately after a battle or killed after the Triumph in Rome. Hence, there is an unmistakable hint of death as being the consequence of having been taken captive by sin.

Verse 24 has two parts, the first being the agonized cry of the one taken captive. Dunn points out that the closest parallel use of this phrase (Ταλαιπωρεῖν ἐγὼ ἄνθρωπος) is Epictetus *Diss.* 1.3.5, where the bifurcation of the human self is expressed as being drawn in two directions, namely, the tendencies of the body (related to brutes) and the demands of the intellect (related to the gods.) This is precisely the character of the war that the speaker-in-character is describing. The choice of the beastly side is productive of despair or an expression of the most miserable of people. That the community should have compassion on such people is indicated by Paul’s instruction in Gal 6:1 to restore “with a spirit of gentleness” those who have transgressed.

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516 Jewett, *Romans*, 469.
517 Dunn, *Romans*, 1.396.
But the second part of the verse, “Who will rescue me from this body of death” (τίς με ῥύωται ἐκ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ θανάτου τούτου?) implies a person who is dead, but still speaking. Jewett points out that the Greek phrase ἐκ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ θανάτου τούτου may be translated either “from this body of death” or “from the body of this death.” Both are grammatically correct. Moo proposes the latter translation, expressing a “the status of the person under sentence of spiritual death…”\(^\text{518}\) Paul would undoubtedly have read Ezek 37:1-14 (“Dry Bones”),\(^\text{519}\) where the Spirit vivifies the bones of the dead. This would be a pattern for such vivification. Hence, we find another area where the interpretation of the word “death” as “spiritual death” is superior.

The first part of verse 25 provides precisely the answer to the question. The spiritually dead person calls upon the Lord Jesus Christ, seeking life. And the expectation is positive. This is the heart of Paul’s gospel. Jewett writes,

The extraordinary redemption Paul and the other early believers had experienced requires the full Christological formulation, “through Jesus Christ our Lord.” It is only “through” (διά) the agency of Christ’s redemptive activity that they had been released from the hopeless misery of sin.\(^\text{520}\)

If we ask what kind of delivery ῥύωμαι means in v. 24, it would appear that for a Gentile Christian to be sensitive to his or her failings in living up to the moral demands of the law of Christ or the law of God, the delivery might well be expressed as repentance. It is clear that the cry expressing the fact that the speaker-in-character considers himself or herself as the most miserable of people, enshrouded in death, that sorrow exists and a

\(^{518}\) Moo, *Romans*, 466; Dunn, *Romans*, 1.397 translates the same way, suggesting that the death referred to is that “brought about by the machinations of sin.” Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 476 concurs that “Spiritual death is the only outcome of the sinful condition.”

\(^{519}\) Above, p. 149.

\(^{520}\) Jewett, *Romans*, 473.
cry for resurrection is made. If the speaker is already a Christian, then the deliverer is
Jesus Christ (v. 25a), who will forgive him or her. It may be the earliest expression of a
rite that later evolved into the Sacrament of Penance. We will see this idea develop in
both Clement of Alexandria and in Origen, and it will ultimately become one of the seven
Sacraments in the Catholic tradition. And even in the non-Catholic tradition, it will serve
as a signpost for the renewal that occurs within a person who cries out for help from
Jesus Christ, and who is willing to amend her or his ways.

I would like to follow Jewett regarding 7:25b, who holds that it is most likely an
interpolation, and ought to exist between v. 23 and 24. I suggest that it adds no new
information to my argument, and I shall not comment on it.

4.5 Summary

We first focused on Pauline anthropology, describing how Paul visualized a
person, noting that the traditional Hellenistic bifurcation of body and soul was not present
in Paul’s letters. But the moral struggle that was outlined in prior chapters, namely
between the soul as ἡγεμόνικός and the passionate desires, επιθυμία is transferred in
Paul to that between the πνεῦμα and the σάρξ. The world of Sin is that resulting from the
Adamic fall, where all people existed in a state of separation from God. Further, the
Mosaic law was insufficient to provide a means of re-establishing intimacy between God
and people. It was Jesus’ death and resurrection that re-established intimacy, and those
who believe in Jesus Christ as God’s presence in the world are restored to that intimacy.
Those who join in Jesus’ death and resurrection through baptism, who die to the world of
personified Sin, are those who are given life.
The opposite of this life is the world of death; but this is not physical death, but spiritual death, which is equivalent to the death of the soul. We found that this interpretation of θάνατος produced a superior reading of the text as follows:

1. Rom 1:32 Some are worthy of, i.e., consistent with, spiritual death.
2. Rom 2:12 Those who have sinned under the law are judged by the law.
3. Rom 5:12 Spiritual death came through sin.
5. Rom 5:15 Many died through one man’s trespass.
7. Rom 5:17-19 Spiritual death exercised dominion, but grace exercised dominion over life.
8. Rom 5:20-21 Sin exercised dominion, but grace produced eternal life.
9. Rom 6:1-2 We died to sin—which is a metaphor for conversion.
10. Rom 6:3-4 We died to death, to walk in newness of life—a metaphor expressing an important event in our lives.
11. Rom 6:5 A spiritually dead person is judged under sin.
12. Rom 6:8-10 Death to sin occurs through the church—an important metaphor.
13. Rom 6:11 We are dead to sin, alive to Christ—a metaphor expressing reality.
14. Rom 6:12 Sin, produces death, through the passions.
15. Rom 6:13 Recognize that we have been brought from (spiritual) death to life.
16. Rom 6:16 Sin leads to death, not physical, but spiritual.
17. Rom 6:21 End of things we are ashamed of is (spiritual) death.
Rom 6:23 Wages of sin is (spiritual) death.

Rom 7:4 We have died to the law—metaphor for baptism, i.e., life.

Rom 7:5 Sinful passions bore fruit to (spiritual) death.

Rom 7:6 Being dead to law, (metaphor) we now have new life of Spirit (reality).

Rom 7:7 Law produced knowledge of what is sinful.

Rom 7:8 Apart from the law, sin is dead—a metaphor.

Rom 7:9 Once alive apart from law, then the commandment came with sin, a metaphoric use but expressive of a reality.

Rom 7:10 I died: commandment proved to be (productive of spiritual) death.

Rom 7:11 Sin deceived me and through it, killed me (spiritually).

Rom 7:12 Commandment is holy, just, good—not the cause of spiritual death.

Rom 7:13 Sin, worked (spiritual) death in me.

Rom 8:1-2 Spirit of life sets one free from law of sin and of (spiritual) death.

Rom 8:3-6 To set the mind on the flesh is (spiritual) death.

Rom 8:7-8 Those in the flesh are hostile to God, i.e., spiritually dead.

Rom 8:9-11 Christ is in you; though the body is dead, Spirit is life—metaphor, but expressive of reality.

Rom 8:12-13 If you live according to the flesh, you will (spiritually) die.

Of these thirty-three expressions, eight are primarily metaphorical, but are supportive of the balance of twenty-five examples where death, understood as moral or spiritual death, provides a clearer and more expressive interpretation of the texts.
Concluding the chapter, we also saw that if a baptized person happened to commit some transgression and incur a state of some sort of death, there was a solution for that person in Jesus Christ. Hence, dying spiritually is not always productive of eternal death; and while Paul does not specifically discuss this, we will see that it became an issue in the early church in later centuries. Nevertheless, Rom 7:14-25 produces a pattern that the later church adopted, perhaps without having given Paul credit for it. We will see in later chapters that the wages of sin is recognized as spiritual death; and that this concept was well known among the early church fathers, and they caused the development of the antidote to such death in repentance and a cry to the Lord.
CHAPTER 5:
CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA ON DEATH OF THE SOUL

I shall utilize basically the same pattern of analysis that I used in the prior
chapters, except that I shall include a separate introduction regarding the intellectual
world of post-Philonic Alexandria, in order to frame the world in which both Clement
and Origen found themselves. Thus, we will have Sections 5.1, Introduction, 5.2,
Clement’s Anthropology, 5.3 Clement’s Vision of “Life,” 5.4, Clement’s Vision of
“Death of the Soul,” 5.5, Repentance in Clement, and 5.6, Summary and conclusions.

5.1 Introduction: Post-Philonic Alexandria

There is no direct evidence of the original founding of Christianity in Alexandrian
Egypt. However, consistent with the long history of intellectual activity in the city of
Alexandria, the Alexandrian church seems to have been a hotbed of theological
speculation between the time of its founding, traditionally by Mark the Evangelist, and
the rise to prominence of Clement as head of the Alexandrian school of instruction. In
order to set the stage for a discussion of Clement, let us examine a few pieces of evidence

523 *Ibid.*, 6.6.1
that shed light on the development of Alexandrian Christianity. It has been pointed out that “The obscurity that veils the early history of the Church in Egypt constitutes a conspicuous challenge to the historian of primitive Christianity.” Nevertheless, it appears prudent to set the work of Clement in a brief excursus on the intellectual issues swirling in that city.

Birger Pearson points out that since there was a vibrant Jewish community in Alexandria in the mid-first century, it would be reasonable to assume that Christian missionaries from Palestine would first begin their work within that Jewish community. And while the case of Apollos is hardly firm evidence of the existence of Christianity in Alexandria at that time, Paul does mention his name as one to whom the Corinthians might have “belonged” (1 Cor 1:12). He later identifies him as a servant through whom the Corinthians came to believe (1 Cor 3:4-6). In 1 Cor 16:12, Paul calls him “brother;” and in Titus 3:13, the author exhorts his hearers to “make every effort to send Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way, and see that they lack nothing.”

Further, Acts identifies Apollos as a native of Alexandria, powerful in Scripture, (δύνατὸς ἄν ἐν ταῖς γραφαῖς) and one whom Priscilla and Aquila instructed regarding baptism. “On his arrival (in Ephesus), he greatly helped those who through grace had become believers, for he powerfully refuted the Jews in public, showing by the Scriptures that the Messiah is Jesus” (Acts 18:24-28). Finally, in Acts 19:1, Apollos was located in Corinth, where Paul recognized him as being well-known (1 Cor 1:12, 3:4, 16:12). Thus, while there is no evidence that Apollos had become a Christian in Alexandria, the fact

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that he was “powerful in Scripture,” and his obviously Greek name makes it possible at least that he was a Greek Jew from Alexandria who converted to Christianity; and since Luke does not comment on the source of his conversion, there is some likelihood that it preceded his visit to Corinth.\footnote{525}

As a second potential source, one has the evidence of the \textit{Epistle of Barnabas}, written after 70 CE because of the reference to the destruction of the Temple (16.3-4) and most likely prior to the Bar Kochba revolt, since the same reference indicates the possibility of the Temple’s being rebuilt.\footnote{526} The provenance of this epistle is likely to have been Alexandria, based on the sort of allegorization undertaken by the author.

There are two sections of \textit{Barn.} that particularly connect it with Philo:

\textbf{a).} In 6:12, the author relates “. . . Scripture speaks about us when he says to his Son, ‘Let us make humans according to our image and likeness. . . .’ He made a second human form in the final days.” The distinction between the first creation and a second creation is Philonic, with the first being the intelligible species of humans (\textit{Opif.} 69-71) and the second being the actual composite of body and soul (\textit{Opif.} 134-35). Further, though the conversation with the Son could be easily related to John 1:1-14, Philo does refer to the \textit{Λόγος} as being God’s “first-born son” (\textit{πρωτόγονον υἱόν}) (\textit{Agr.} 51).

\textbf{b).} Further, in 6:17, the author quotes the Lord as authorizing a move into the “land of milk and honey and ruling over it.” He then comments on a child being nourished on milk and honey and ruling over it.” He then comments on a child being nourished on

\footnote{525} Pearson (\textit{Roots}), 136, points out a variant reading in Codex Bezae of Acts 18:25, which asserts that Apollos “had been instructed in the word in his home country.” See also Bruce Metzger, \textit{A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament} (2\textsuperscript{nd} ed.; Stuttgart: United Bible Societies, 1994), 413. Pearson also refers to the \textit{Clementine Homilies} as containing potential insight about early Alexandrian Christianity; but due to the radical uncertainty about the dating of the material, I shall not rely on either the \textit{Recognitions} or \textit{Homilies}.

\footnote{526} Bart Ehrman, \textit{Introduction to the Epistle of Barnabas} (The Apostolic Fathers, LCL, 2 vols.), 2.7. He points out that others have argued for dates as early as 98 CE.
milk, and allegorizes this as faith. But since the human race does not now have the ability to rule over animals and fish, he further extends the allegory to indicate that such authority will come when “we have ourselves been perfected so as to become heirs of the Lord’s covenant” (ὅταν καὶ αὐτοὶ τελειωθῶμεν κληρονόμοι τῆς διαθήκης κυρίου γενέσθαι) (6:19). We have seen that for Philo, the goal of one’s life is to become perfect in the avoidance of rule by passions (Leg. 2.91). These examples are reminiscent of Philo, although other provenances have been suggested.  

While there is an affirmation of the Hebrew Scriptures as being from God, Barnabas contends that the Jews have lost the right to those Scriptures, and they have become the property of the Christian successors (4.7). This attitude would fit the Alexandrian world around the beginning of the Second Century, when conflict between Jews and non-Jewish Alexandrians came to a head. Between 115-117 CE, the Jewish Alexandrian community was essentially extinguished.  Hence, we have the historical irony of an appropriation of the Hebrew Scriptures, while at the same time engaging in an institutional teaching of contempt for the Jews themselves. Pearson comments that while the history of the earliest Christian church in Alexandria is murky at best, it is likely that the first

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527 Pearson points out that the Egyptian provenance is not proven (Roots, 166), but later says, “Probably we should locate the Epistle of Barnabas” at Alexandria . . . .” (Roots 181).

528 Emil Schürer, The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (rev and ed.: G. Vermes, F. Millar, and M. Black 3. vols.; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1973), 1:529-534. The relations between the Greeks and the Jews in Alexandria were tumultuous in the first and early second centuries; the pogroms of 38 CE (upon which Philo led a delegation to Gaius) and that of approx. 66 CE, described by Josephus in War 2.487-498 were preludes to that of 115. See also: John J. Collins, Between Athens and Jerusalem: Jewish Identity in the Hellenistic Diaspora (2nd ed.; Livonia, Mi: Dove Booksellers, 2000), 141-142.

converts were Jews, and that it was “probably not until the early second century that Christians emerged as a group, or groups, distinct from the Jewish community.”

I should like to make some limited comments on the process by which texts and ideas were transmitted in the ancient world. While Alexandria was home to the Museum, Philo does not mention this establishment. What might have been the vehicle for the transmission of his ideas? Ellen Birnbaum has described the various audiences for which Philo most likely wrote, and recognizing the sophistication of his allegorical method, she proposes that at least one of his audiences was sophisticated in both philosophy and Scripture. How did they achieve such sophistication? Philo mentions “schools” (διδακτολογία) in five treatises and describes the content of instruction in such schools as being virtue of all kinds. In Spec. he numbers them as “thousands.” However, the content of his allegorical analysis probably precludes their transmission in neighborhood locations, open to any and all Jews. More likely, Gregory Sterling proposes that Philo taught in some sort of teaching facility, perhaps his own home. This would permit a small number of individuals, who were advanced in knowledge of philosophy and Scripture, to interact with Philo. That such teaching conditions exist is described by Philo in Somn. 2.127, where he put the following words in the mouth of an Egyptian criticizing Jewish Sabbath activities. Suppose, he asks, that on the Sabbath an enemy were at the gates, or a dam had burst, or a natural disaster was occurring. Would you stay at home

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530 Pearson, Roots, 145.

531 Ellen Birnbaum, The Place of Judaism in Philo’s Thought (SPM 2; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 18.

532 Mos. 2.216, Decal. 40, Spec. 2.62, Praem. 66 and Gai. 312.

quietly, or “will you sit in your conventicles (ἐν τοῖς συναγωγίοις) and assemble your regular company and read in security your holy books, (ὡσαναλὼς τὰς ἱερὰς βιβλίους ἀναγινώσκοντες) expounding any obscure point and in leisurely comfort discussing at length your ancestral philosophy?” This at least gives us a picture of what happens in a synagogue.  

H. Gregory Snyder, however, has proposed an alternative, which is that Philo did not engage in significant teaching of others directly, especially not in public, but rather used his texts, composed in isolation from the hubbub of the agora, as the means to instruct others.  

He supports this position by quoting Migr. 35, where Philo describes the ecstatic state in which he found himself “a thousand times,” where he experienced divine possession. The conditions for such states of the soul, Snyder contends, is privacy and quiet. He reinforces this by describing what the person of worth most likes to do, i.e., to retire indoors away from the public (Abr.22). Snyder acknowledged that if a teacher encountered anyone who had been “initiated,” (μυηθέες) one ought to cling to that person and learn from him or her. But Snyder contends that as Philo clung to Moses and Jeremiah (Cher. 49), he had to do so solely through texts.  

I prefer the alternative proposed by Sterling, insofar as we know that Philo’s texts did survive in Alexandria for at least a century and a half after his death. But thought is transmitted through people’s activity in engaging in conversation, arguing, attempting to

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534 We find a parallel description of the study of Scripture by the Therapeutai in Contempl. 75-77.  
536 H. Gregory Snyder, Teachers and Texts, 132.
solve problems and as enlightenment of daily life. This can occur only through some sort of institutionalized system where people teach and are taught, perhaps modeled after the famous Alexandrian Museum.

Birger Pearson wrote two articles that I should like to incorporate that might illumine the issue. He proposes that *Barnabas* was a product of the Alexandrian church, and that its content was anti-Gnostic. Further, he quotes L. W. Barnard’s assertion that its author was a “converted Rabbi who brought into Christianity the exegetical and homiletical traditions of the Alexandrian synagogue.” Pearson suggests that *Barnabas* is a “school product,” (without a demonstration); but if it is, it suggests that there was an on-going systematic scholarly environment.

The second article by Pearson further attempts to illuminate the Christian origins in Alexandria. He proposes that *Barnabas* is perhaps the earliest extant example of Alexandrian Christianity. He points out that there are several elements in *Barnabas* that

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537 Robert M. Grant, “Theological Education at Alexandria” in *Roots*, 180, proposes that the community described by Philo as the Therapeutae provided a school setting for theological discussion, and they may have been “ready for Alexandrian Christianity.”


541 Additionally, see Birger Pearson, “Friedländer Revisited: Alexandrian Judaism and Gnostic Origins,” *Studia Philonica*, 2 (1973):23-38. This is an article written in 1973, revisiting the position of Moriz Friedländer in his *Der vorchristliche jüdische Gnosticismus*, who contended that Gnosticism is a pre-Christian phenomenon “which originated in antimonian circles in the Jewish community of Alexandria. Pearson reviews the book and points out that Philo himself was possibly arguing against the forces that themselves led to Gnosticism, namely the extreme allegorists who refused to observe the letter of the law (*Migr. 91*). He points out that Eusebius recorded the introduction of the teaching of “knowledge so called” (**προφανῆς γνώσεως**) (*Eusebius, Praep. ev. 3.32.7.7*) after the last of the apostles died. Pearson describes Friedländer’s position that the Gnostics of Eusebius may well have been the progenitors of the Gnostics described by Irenaeus (p. 25).

reflect Philonic thought.\textsuperscript{543} He further points out that there were varieties of Alexandrian Judaism, re-iterates that \textit{Barnabas} is a “school product,”\textsuperscript{544} and that Philo was a towering figure in the amalgam of Judaism and proto-Christianity; and that, as a result, his writings were preserved. Perhaps the most interesting element is that Pearson sees an anti-Gnostic thread in \textit{Barnabas}, which suggests that there existed some elements of Gnostic thought within the Christian community\textsuperscript{545} in the early second century.\textsuperscript{546} The pair of tractates, \textit{Eugnostos the Blessed} and \textit{The Sophia of Jesus Christ} appear to have been of Alexandrian origin and dated “soon after the advent of Chrisianity in Egypt—the latter half of the first century CE.”\textsuperscript{547} Roelof van den Broek suggests that the character of the description of stages of the development of the Pleroma in Valentinus’ work may well have been influenced by this (combined) work, as opposed to the Prologue of the Gospel of John.\textsuperscript{548} Further, he suggests that these tractates may have extended their influence all the way to Origen; and that “it must be assumed that both were making use of earlier Alexandrian speculations on the nature of God, which most probably had been developed in a Jewish and Platonist milieu.”\textsuperscript{549} \footnotesize

\textsuperscript{543} \textit{Ibid.} 67. Additionally, Barnabas includes elements coherent with emerging Rabbinism, such as the ritual of the Day of Atonement (\textit{Barn.} 7:1-11) and the red heifer ritual (8.1-2), etc.

\textsuperscript{544} \textit{Ibid.}, 69.

\textsuperscript{545} Robert A. Kraft, \textit{Barnabas and the Didache}, The Apostolic Fathers 3 (New York: Thomas Nelson, 1965), 22-23, points out that there is a kind of “Ethical Gnosticism” in Barnabas, similar to the sort found in Clement, but significantly different from that which developed in the second century.

\textsuperscript{546} Pearson, “Cracking a Conundrum,” 68.


\textsuperscript{548} Roelof van den Broek, “Jewish and Platonic Speculations in Early Alexandrian Theology: Eugnostos, Philo, Valentinus and Origen,” in \textit{Roots}, 201.

\textsuperscript{549} \textit{Ibid.} 203.
Both Valentinus and Basilides are reported to have had Alexandrian roots. The former’s students claimed an apostolic sanction going back to St. Paul. Further, the *Gospel of Truth*, sometimes (but not necessarily) attributed to Valentinus contains a reference to God’s having planted trees in Paradise (Gen. 2:8). He interprets this act in the same way that Philo does in *Q.G.* I.6, where the trees represent the Wisdom that is God’s (*Gospel of Truth* 36:35-37.15). Thus, we can conclude that Philo may well have, in fact, influenced this later exegete.

Basilides was likely to have been an instructor to Valentinus, having taught in Alexandria around 135 CE. He is reported to have been a student of Glaucias, who was described as a “hermēneus of Peter.” Further, he incorporated both philosophical ability and a hermeneutic orientation towards Scripture, having a “firm commitment to Stoicism for certain important doctrines which are used to interpret the meaning of biblical language.” This would be consistent with the intellectual tradition of Philo, transmitted through several generations to both Basilides and Valentinus, both of whom would provide the setting for Clement as a scholar.

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555 Layton, “Significance,” 139.
Hence, we see the enormously complex theological speculation that existed in that city in the early second century. It goes without saying that one is only to read some of the Nag Hammadi Library to realize the highly speculative character of the environment in which Clement grew up. Perhaps the most important element is that Basilides may have been the “first expositor of New Testament books that one knows really anything about,”556 who brought a Stoic perspective to bear on his interpretation. Basilides and Valentinus are tradents within the Alexandrian intellectual life, both of whom brought a philosophical framework to bear on the interpretation of Christian Scripture.557 Now, we turn to Clement himself.

The most evident proposition about Clement is that he was extraordinarily well-educated. His works are brimming with quotations from what he considers “Scripture” (the canon was still in a state of flux) as well as from a broad section of classical authors. Eric Osborn points out that Clement cited “Scripture 5,121 times and 348 different classical authors, including Plato (600 times), Philo (300 times) and Homer (240 times).”558 Within the boiling cauldron of theological speculation in which he found himself, Clement relied on his Alexandrian tradition as a preparatio evangelica.

Runia located Clement as a successor to Pantaenus, whom Eusebius identifies as the head of the “catechetical school” in Alexandria (History, 5.10.1).559 Pearson suggests that Pantaenus took over responsibility as head of that school from a Gnostic

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556 Layton, “Significance,” 144.
557 David Runia, Philo in Early Christian Literature (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), quotes Layton’s position that Basilides “was the first Christian philosopher, and … he should not be ‘mislabeled’ a Gnostic,” 124.
559 David Runia, Philo in Early Christian Literature, 134.
predecessor,\textsuperscript{560} and confirms the intensity of intellectual conflict. “We …see that (the author of \textit{The Testimony of Truth} was part of a bitter struggle going on among rival Christian groups, both Gnostic and non-Gnostic, each vying for some sort of spiritual and (no doubt) sociopolitical power.”\textsuperscript{561}

Clement refers to Philo five times in \textit{Strom.},\textsuperscript{562} but Annewies van den Hoek and David Runia have established beyond doubt that Clement relied greatly on Philo’s work.\textsuperscript{563} Runia reports the conclusion of the editor of the critical edition of \textit{Strom.}, Otto Stālin, that Philo was aluded to more than three hundred times in Clement’s \textit{Strom}.\textsuperscript{564} As we proceed in this study, Clement’s allusions to Philo and his references to areas of similar interpretation will be noted. Philo and Clement shared a profound understanding of the ability of Greek philosophy to aid in the exegesis of Scripture, and both elements are necessary to understand where Clement’s ideas are rooted.

\section*{5.2 Clement’s Anthropology}

Clement’s understanding of the composition of a human being is couched within a Platonism influenced by Stoic thought. He visualizes the human person as a composite of a material body and an immaterial or spiritual facility having a seven-fold distinction, the

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\item \textsuperscript{560} Birger A. Pearson, \textit{Gnosticism, Judaism and Egyptian Christianity} (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), 210.
\item \textsuperscript{561} \textit{Ibid.} 210-211.
\item \textsuperscript{562} \textit{Strom.} 1.5.31.1.1, \textit{Strom} 1.15.74.3, \textit{Strom} 1.21.141.3, \textit{Strom} 1.23.153.2.6 and \textit{Strom} 2.19.100.3.5.
\item \textsuperscript{563} Annewies van den Hoek, \textit{Clement of Alexandria and His Use of Philo in the Stromateis} (Vigiliae Christianae Supplements 3; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1988).
\item \textsuperscript{564} Runia, \textit{Philo in Early Christian Literature}, 138.
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five senses, speech, and the power of reproduction (*Strom.* 2.11.50.4). Consistent with the Stoics and Philo, Clement also sees the human person as engaged in a struggle, where the passions must be struggled against, lest they dominate the actions of the person. He sees a "tetrachord" of passions, consisting of pleasure, pain, fear and lust against which it is necessary to struggle with much discipline (ἡδονήν, λύπην, φόβον, ἐπιθυμίαν, πολλῆς δεῖ τῆς ἄσκήσεως καὶ μάχης) (*Strom.* 2.20.108.1). He follows Plato in pointing out that pleasure makes souls waxen, since "each pleasure and pain nails to the body the soul of the man that does not sever and crucify himself from the passions" (ἐκόστη ἡδονή τε καὶ λύπη προσπασσαλοί τῷ σώματι τήν ψυχής τοῦ γε μὴ ἀφορίζοντος καὶ ἀποσταυρούντος ἐαυτὸν τῶν παθῶν) (*Strom.* 2.20.108.2-3).565 The current state of humanity is one where sickness abounds, where the human race stands in need of a cure.

Sick, we truly stand in need of the Savior; (σωτήρος μὲν οἱ νοσοῦντες δεόμεθα) having wandered, of one to guide us; blind, someone to lead us to the light; thirsty, “of the fountain of life of which whosoever partakes shall no longer thirst;” (John 4:13-14) dead, we need life (οἱ νεκροὶ δὲ τῆς ζωῆς ἐνδεείς); sheep, we need a shepherd, we who are children need a tutor (*Protr.* 1.9.83.3-5).

He sees the passions as being a disease of the soul, needing a physician to cure it. But even more importantly for this study, he not only suggests that souls are “sick,” but are, in fact, “dead.”

… many of the passions are cured by punishment (Θεραπευέται δὲ πολλὰ τῶν παθῶν τιμωρίας), and by the inculcation of the sterner precepts, as also by instruction in certain principles. The reproof is, as it were, the surgery of the passions of the soul; and the passions are, as it were, an abscess of the truth, which must be cut open by an incision of the lancet of reproof. . . Reproach is like the application of medicines, dissolving the callosities of the passions, and purging the impurities of the lewdness of the life; and in addition on reducing the excrescences of pride, restoring the patient to the healthy and true state of

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565 See also, Plato, *Tim.* 86a-c.
humanity (εἰς τὸν ὑγίη καὶ ἀληθίνον ἀνασκευάζων τὸν ἀνθρωπον) (Paed. 1.8.64-4-65.1).

There are two points to note in this quotation: first, the passions are treated as diseases which must be cured; but the second is that the patient is restored from some “untrue” or “imperfect” state to a healthy and true humanity. The implication is that passions introduce a different state than “true humanity.” In Protrepticus, Clement refers to “God’s charm” (τῆς ἐπιθετῆς τοῦ θεοῦ) as being the proper medicine to be delivered from the passions, the “diseases of the soul” (ψυχῆς νόσου) (Prot. 11, 15, 2-3).

In order to establish a contrast between sickness and health, death and life, it is necessary to identify those steps that Clement believes one must undertake in order to achieve life. Not too surprising, we find that life in the deepest sense is achieved through achieving a likeness (ομοίωσις) to God. (Prot. 10.98.4; Paid. 1.3.9.1).

Such an idea was postulated by Plato in Theatetus 176b, where we find Socrates and Theodorus discussing “evil.” We read:

Evils, Theodorus, can never pass away; for there must always remain something which is antagonistic to good. Having no place among the gods in heaven, of necessity they hover around the mortal nature, and this earthly sphere. Wherefore we ought to fly away from earth to heaven as quickly as we can; and to fly away is to become like God, as far as this is possible (φυγῇ δὲ ὁμοίωσις θεῷ κατὰ τὸ δυνατόν) and to become like him is to become holy, just and wise (ὁμοίωσις δὲ δίκαιον καὶ ὀσιὸν μετὰ φρονήσεως γενέσθαι)\textsuperscript{566}

The emphasis on ὁμοίωσις θεῶ as an ethical standard was clear in Philo’s work, (Fug. 63). This emphasis may have resulted from Philo’s contact with the work of Eudorus.\textsuperscript{567} The appearance of this telos in Clement suggests the continuity of some sort


\textsuperscript{567} Dillon, The Middle Platonists, 122, points out that Eudorus saw “imitation of God” as the telos of ethical life, against Antiochus’ “life according to nature.” Dillon quotes Eudorus as saying, “Socrates and
of school tradition in Alexandria, which influenced the Christian Platonism of Clement. 568

Clement did not agree with Marcion or those Gnostics who believed that the created world was itself evil (Strom. 4.7.45.5). Indeed, he affirms that creation itself was “very good” by quoting Gen. 1:31 (Strom. 2.12, 53.2; also Strom. 5.6.39.3, not a direct quote but alluding to the goodness of all that was created). We can conclude, therefore, that human beings, as created, were seen by Clement as being essentially good, but subject to evil.

5.3 Clement’s Conception of “Life”

If we ask of Clement what constituted “life,” we are able to see a concatenation of expressions: First, we note that in Paed 1.10.95 Clement quotes Ezekiel 18:4-9, which proclaims that the person who sins shall die, and that the righteous person, using thirteen examples, some of which are negative (i.e., “who does not eat on the mountains”) and some of which are positive (“gives bread to the hungry”) shall surely live. Clement continues, “these words contain a description of the conduct of Christians,” (ταῦτα ὑπότυπωσιν Χριστιανῶν περιέχει πολιτείας), and behavior in accordance with such Scripture will produce everlasting life” (Paed. 1.10.95.2). Second, in the Strom. (2.10.46.5-47.1) Clement uses Lev 18:1-5 as the standard for life, where the criterion for life is following the commandments God has given. These are consistent with Clement’s

Plato agree with Pythagoras that the telos is assimilation to God (homoiośis theōi). Plato defined this more clearly by adding: ‘according as is possible (kata to dynaton)’, and it is only possible by wisdom (phronēsis), that is to say, as a result of Virtue.” Dillon continues to assert that this is a most important passage.

568 Dillon, The Middle Platonists, 396.
recognition of the canonicity of what we call the Old Testament, which had been challenged by Marcion. However, in the last quotation, Clement continues to reinforce the validity of the Law as a tool for discipline, merging it with Eph 2:5, referring to “when we were dead in our sins” (Strom. 2.10.47.3-4).

It is the Λόγος that brings life to the soul. In Paed., Clement discusses the baptism of Jesus. He proposes that at that time the Spirit descended upon Christ, he was made perfect by such baptism. “The same also takes place in our case, whose exemplar Christ became. Being baptized, we are illuminated; illuminated, we become sons; being made sons, we are made perfect; being made perfect, we are made immortal” (βαπτιζόμενοι φωτιζόμεθα, φωτιζόμενοι νίκοποιούμεθα, νίκοποιούμενοι τελειούμεθα, τελειούμενοι ἀπαθανατιζόμεθα) (Paed. 1.6.26.1). Thus, “immortality” is granted by God and is not absolutely characteristic of a soul. This is consistent with Philo’s position that eternal life is a gift of God, not a guaranteed characteristic of the soul (Opif. 154).

It is also interesting that in Book 5 of the Strom., Clement refers to the source of life in Paradise:

Now Moses, describing allegorically the divine prudence, called the tree of life planted in Paradise; which Paradise may be the world in which all things proceeding from creation grow. It is also the Word blossomed and bore fruit, being ‘made flesh’, and gave life to those ‘who tasted of His graciousness;’ since it was not without the wood of the tree that He came to our knowledge. For our life was hung on it, in order that we might believe. And Solomon again says, ‘She is a tree of immortality to those who take hold of her’ (Strom. 5.11.72.2-4).

The quote of Solomon was the last line of Prov 3:13-18. This is parallel to what Philo wrote in Leg. 1.43, where he described the source of Wisdom in the world as being allegorically related to the Tree of Life planted in Paradise. Hence, Wisdom for both Clement and Philo has its origin in some aspect of the divine.
Clement continues in *Strom.* 5.11.72.5.1-5 to quote Deut 30:15-18:

Here, then, I have today set before you life and prosperity, death and doom. 16 If you obey the commandments of the LORD, your God, which I enjoin on you today, loving him, and walking in his ways, and keeping his commandments, statutes and decrees, you will live and grow numerous, and the LORD, your God, will bless you in the land you are entering to occupy. 17 If, however, you turn away your hearts and will not listen, but are led astray and adore and serve other gods, 18 I tell you now that you will certainly perish (ἀναγγέλλω σοι σήμερον ὅτι ἀπώλειψις ἀπολείσθη). 569

While the probable original context of the quote was physical life in the land, not spiritual life, Clement felt free to interpret this as the life that comes from belief in Jesus Christ.

Again in the *Paed.*, 1.7, Clement discusses the fact that the Word, Christ, bestows perfect gifts and makes his hearers perfect. He continues:

. . . release from evils is the beginning of salvation. We then alone, who first have touched the confines of life, are already perfect; and we already live who are separated from death. Salvation accordingly, is the following of Christ; “For that which is in Him is life” (quoting John 1:4). “Verily, verily I say unto you, He that hears my words and believes in Him that sent me, has eternal life and comes not into condemnation but has passed from death to life” (quoting John 5.24).

The *Paidagogos* is Christ himself, the Word made flesh. “The Word, then, who leads our children to salvation is appropriately called *Paidagogos*” (Παιδαγωγός σῶν εἰκότως ὁ λόγος ὁ τούς παιδάς ἡμᾶς εἰς σωτηρίαν ἄγων) (*Paed.* 1.7.53. 3). And the way we follow the Word is by assimilating our souls to Him. We had previously seen that the task of a person pursuing virtue was to become like God. But in *Paed.* 1.2, 5.1, that with whom with all our strength we are to be assimilated is the Λόγος, who became flesh for us (παντὶ σθένει πειρατέον ἐξομοιώσων τὴν ψυχήν). For Clement, assimilation to God is

569 For the last phrase, Heb. יְנֵוחַ יְנֵוחַ יְנֵוחַ יְנֵוחַ יְנֵוחַ. infinitive absolute intensifier.
the central aspect of his ethical system. Further, as we saw above that for Philo, assimilation to God as expressed in Theatetus was the proper activity of a human being (Fug. 63). The means of such assimilation, however, becomes expressed more in scriptural terms than in philosophical argument.

With an allusion to Eph. 3:9 and I Cor 15:53, Clement identifies those who will be saved as those who have stripped-off the old man and put on the immortality of Christ (Paed. 1.6.32.4). This is consistent with our prior discussion of the cure of the soul; the soul must be cured of its ills, resulting from passions. The Instructor, The Logos, “cures the unnatural passions of the soul by means of exhortations” (Εστιν οὖν ὁ παιδαγωγὸς ἤμων λόγος διὰ παρανόεσσων θεραπευτικὸς τῶν παρὰ φύσιν τῆς ψυχῆς παθῶν). Clement quotes Democritus, who said “the physician’s art heals the diseases of the body; wisdom frees the soul from passion” (Ἱατρικὴ μὲν γὰρ ἱσώματος νόσους ἀκέται, σοφίη δὲ ψυχὴν παθῶν ἀφαιρεῖται) (Paed. 1.2.6.1).

How, specifically, does Clement see Wisdom (or the Λόγος) as bringing salvation? Here Clement relies on his Stoic background, contending that one becomes assimilated to the Word through discipline and self-control.

First, the needs of the good man must be determined. He writes, “…the good man, standing at the boundary between an immortal and a mortal nature, has few needs” (ὁ γὰρ σπουδαῖος ὁλιγοδής, ἀθανάτου καὶ θνητῆς φύσεως μεθόριος) (Strom. 2.18.81.2).

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570 Osborn, Clement of Alexandria, 95.
Interestingly, this matches almost word-for-word with what Philo says in *Virt. 9.*\(^571\) Such an attitude is displayed by the Cynics near the time of Philo.\(^572\)

But, regardless of needs, Clement looks upon a combination of discipline and instruction as that which is required to achieve οὕτως σε θεό.\(^571\)

The first element deals with discipline. In *Paed. 1.9.82.1* Clement quotes Pr. 23:13-14:

μὴ ἀπόσχη ηὕπιον παιδεύειν ὅτι ἐὰν πατάξῃς αὐτὸν ῥάβδῳ οὐ μὴ ἀποθάνῃ σὺ μὲν γὰρ πατάξεις αὐτὸν ῥάβδῳ τὴν δὲ ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἐκ θανάτου ρύσῃ.

Do not place discipline far from your son, since if you discipline him he will not die; for if you beat him with a rod, his soul will be saved from death (my trans).

It should be noted that in the Hebrew of this proverb there is reference to the son’s being saved from Sheol. The concept of “spiritual death” was foreign to the author of Proverbs, but Clement may have used this as a proof-text for the avoidance of that sort of death. Clement continues, saying “For reproof and rebuke, as also the original term implies, are the stripes of the soul, chastising sins, preventing death, and leading to self-control those carried away to licentiousness” (εἰς δὲ τὴν σωφροσύνην ἁγοῦσαι τοὺς εἰς ἀκολογίαν ὑποφερομένους) (*Paed. 1.9.82.2-3*). Being led to self-control is at least the first step towards discipline, and is opposed to the state of licentiousness. This follows the Philonic and Platonic\(^573\) pattern established above.

This is reinforced in *Stromateis*, 2.19.97.1.

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\(^571\) A. van den Hoek also notes this similarity, *Clement of Alexandria and His Use of Philo*, 74.

\(^572\) Abraham Malherbe, *The Cynic Epistles* (Atlanta: Scholars’ Press, 1977), “Crates to the Wealthy,” 59, “To his Students,” 67. It should be noted that Malherbe dates these works from around the Augustan age, p. 2.

\(^573\) Plato, *Theaeus*, 176b. We have seen this before. Plato’s language is slightly different, (φυγῇ δὲ ὁμοίωσις θεῷ κατὰ τὸ δυνατόν) but it is essentially the same; Plato continues to describe ὁμοίωσις as the pursuit of justice. A. van den Hoek, *Clement’s Use of Philo*, 74 ff., recognizes Clement’s debt to Philo in this matter.
He is the Gnostic, who is after the image and likeness of God, (ὁ καὶ ἑικόνα καὶ ὁμοίωσιν [τοῦ θεοῦ]) who imitates God as far as possible, (καθ’ ὁσον οἶνον τε) deficient in none of the things which contribute to the likeness as far as compatible, practicing self-restraint and endurance, living righteously, reigning over the passions, bestowing of what he has as far as possible, and doing good both by works and by deeds.

The second element deals with instruction. We have already seen that the Paidagogos was Christ, the Λόγος. But how could He provide instruction except through the Church? Hence, the instruction as to what was sinful and what brought one to life was critical for Clement. The first element of instruction was the exposition of the Law, for the Law gave us an appropriate pattern of behavior.

Clement discusses those who object to the law; but, he says, God is responsible for the law. Those who reject the law, reject discipline and rationality. “. . . the law given to us enjoins us to shun what are in reality bad things—adultery, uncleanness, pederasty, ignorance, wickedness, soul-disease, (νόσον ψυχῆς) death (not that which severs the soul from the body, but that which severs the soul from truth) (οὐ τὸν διαλύοντα ψυχήν ἀπὸ σώματος, ἀλλὰ τὸν διαλύοντα ψυχήν ἀπὸ ἀληθείας) (Strom. 2.7.34.2). Here we see the consequences of soul-disease that is untreated, namely, death of the soul. We also see an identification of the kinds of acts that Clement considers examples of evil. Further, we see that Clement expresses the same idea that Philo did in Leg. 3.36, where Philo is chastising the person who sets up graven images, and allegorizes this as a person who holds false opinions, “refusing to submit to healing treatment of your soul’s sore malady, ignorance (ἀτεχνος δὲ ἀνευρίσκει νόσου χαλεπῆς ψυχῆς ἀμαθίαν οὐκ ἐθέλουσα θεραπεύσθαι). Further, in Leg. 3.45, we read that the actions of wise men are supported by reason and truth. And finally, in Leg.3:52, Philo allegorizes God’s query to Adam, “Where are you?” (Gen 3:9), suggesting this question
applies to all who choose evil, who choose “ignorance and corruption, preferring misery, the soul’s death, to happiness of real life (παρασχόντος εἰς ἀπόλαυσιν ἀμαθίας καὶ φθορᾶς ἐνεφορήθης, κακοδαιμονίαν τὸν ψυχῆς θᾶνατον εὐδαιμονίας τῆς ἀληθινῆς ζωῆς προκρίνασα). Ignorance for Heraclitus, Philo and Clement leads to unhappy consequences. 574

A key characteristic of Clement’s thought (as it was in Philo’s thought) is the Stoic idea that “rationality is the determinant of human life, and that it marks men [sic] off sharply from all other animals.” 575 That which differentiates the human from other animal souls is the presence of λόγος: “the growth and maturity of rationality are conceived as totally modifying the psychic parts and functions which, in themselves, are common to animals and men.” 576 Further, the λόγος of the human soul “is not one faculty, among others, but the mode of the whole soul’s operation.” 577 Nevertheless, Plato distinguished parts or aspects of the soul consisting of the rational part (λογιστικός) and the other parts “with which it loves, hungers, thirsts, and feels the flutter and titillation of other desires, the irrational and appetitive” (ἐπιθυμητικόν) (Rep. 4.439d). It is the conflict between these parts of the soul that produce the moral dilemma.

I shall deal later in this chapter with the variety of meanings for Clement of λόγος, and how central that idea is to his thought. However, at present it is important to discover the paradigm that Clement has for human behavior. He follows Plato and the

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574 Clement quotes Heraclitus’ Frag. 1M in Strom. 5.14.111.7, which was quoted above on p. 15.
576 Ibid.
577 Ibid. 51. Emphasis in original.
Stoics in affirming the primacy of “virtue” in behavior. We find a description of what this means in *Paed.* 1.13.101.2, where he writes,

Virtue itself is a state of the soul rendered harmonious by reason in respect to the whole life (ἡ ἁρετὴ αὐτὴ διάθεσις ἐστὶ ψυχῆς σύμφωνας τῷ λόγῳ περὶ ὅλου τὸν βίου). Nay, to crown all philosophy itself is pronounced to be the cultivation of right reason (λόγου ὀρθοτητος); so that, necessarily, whatever is done through error of reason is transgression, and is rightly called sin. . . .

The idea of the soul’s being rendered harmonious by reason is both Stoic (Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations* 4.29, 34-35) and Philonic (*Fug.* 112, *Mos.* 2.140; *Spec.* 3.137; *Virt.* 1.183; *Q.G.* 1.13). But for Clement, “rationality” is enhanced by Scripture, as this provides the necessary instruction for the rational person. Indeed, as with Philo, piety (εὐσέβεια) is the source of all virtues.

It is then clear also that all the other virtues delineated in Moses supplied the Greeks with the rudiments of the whole department of morals, I mean valor, and temperance, and wisdom, and justice, and endurance and patience and decorum and self-restraint; and in addition to these, piety. But it is clear to everyone that piety which teaches to worship, and honor, is the highest and oldest cause (ἄλλῳ ἡμιν εὐσέβεια ποιντὶ ποὺ δῆλη τὸ ἀνωτάτω καὶ πρεσβύτατω αἵ τινοι σέβεται καὶ τιμᾶν [καὶ] διδάσκουσα); and the law itself exhibits justice, and teaches wisdom, by abstinence from sensible images, and by inviting the Maker and Father of the Universe. And from this sentiment, as from a fountain, all intelligence increases (*Strom.* 2.17.78.1-4).

This is parallel to Philo’s stipulation of εὐσέβεια as the “vitue par excellence in which the other virtues are subsumed.”*578* Clement continues in *Strom.* 2. 18.78-96 to describe the other virtues that spring from εὐσέβεια as “from a fountain,” including “manliness,” (ἀνδρεία), “temperance” (σωφροσύνης), “patience” (ὑπομονή), “magnanimity” (μεγαλοψυχία), and “caution.” (εὐλαβεία) (all in *Strom.* 2.18.19.5). He

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*578* Long and Sedley, *The Hellenistic Philosophers* comment on Stoic virtue: “Homologia, the term translated ‘consistency’, was ideally suited to capture the essence of Stoic virtue, since its linguistic form (homo-logia) is interpretable as “harmony of (or with) reason.” 383.

*579* Sterling, “The Queen of Virtues,” 109, also above, p. 93.
continues to point out that these virtues are inter-related, in that, “...in treating of these virtues, we shall inquire into them all;” for he that has one virtue gnostically, by reason of their accompanying each other, has them all,” (ὅτι ὁ μίαν ἀρετήν γνωστικοῦς πάσας ἔχει διὰ τὴν ἀνταχολουθίαν) (Strom. 2.18.80.3-4). Further, as we saw previously, Philo labeled ἐυσέβεια as the “queen of virtues” (ἡ ἡγεμονίας τῶν ἀρετῶν) in Spec. 4.135, in the context of describing other virtues (prudence, temperance, justice) as being rooted in ἐυσέβεια.580

Considering ἐυσέβεια as related to “holiness” (συνότης) is a tradition that goes back to Plato, for whom ἐυσέβεια was a central issue in Euthyphro.581 But for Clement, the expression of ἐυσέβεια was the exposure to Scripture, where the model for Christian behavior was contained. In Strom. 2.19, Clement proposes that the true Gnostic is an imitator of God, practicing self-restraint and endurance, “living righteously, reigning over the passions,...and doing good both by work and by deed” (2.19.97.1-2). And while he recognizes that this is consistent with Plato and the Stoics, he localizes the standard of behavior as being given in the Mosaic Law, ("Walk after the Lord your God and keep my commandments,” Deut 13:4, quoted in Strom. 19.100.4) He continues to describe “walking after” the Lord as ἐξομοίωσις and quotes Luke 6:36: “Be merciful and pitiful, as your heavenly Father is pitiful” (ἐλεημονεῖς καὶ ὁμοίωται· ὥς ὁ πατήρ ὑμῶν ὁ οὐρανοῦ ὁμοίωτα· ἔστιν (Strom. 2.19.101.1-2; NRSV: “Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful,” (Γίνεσθε ὁμοίωται· καθὼς [καὶ] ὁ πατήρ ὑμῶν ὁμοίωτα· ἔστιν). In his description of the true “Gnostic,” Clement liberally mixes the common expressions of

580 Philo also refers to ἐυσέβεια as the chief virtue, along with φιλανθρωπία in Virt. 95.

581 Sterling, “The Queen of Virtues,” 113. “Philo used the two terms as virtual synonyms to refer to the human response to and perception of God.”
virtue found among Greek literature and Scripture (including the Epistle of Barnabas, (Strom. 2.20.116.4, among many others).

Finally, the goal of this section is to determine how Clement defines life. Not surprisingly, we find that Clement defines life in terms of belief. In fact, we see that the opposites of life and death are frequently inter-related.

Clement identifies the Gnostic with the one who, through losing his or her life, shall save it

... either giving it up by exposing it to danger for the Lord’s sake, as He did for us, or losing it from fellowship with its habitual life. For if you would loose, and withdraw, and separate (for this is what the cross means) your soul from the delight and pleasure that is in this life, (ἐν τῷ τῷ ζῆν τερψεῖσθε τε καὶ ἕδονα) you will possess it, found and resting in the looked for hope. And this would be the exercise of death, (εἰ ἵν τὸν τοῦτο μελετήσον ... if we would be content with those desires which are measured according to nature alone ... by going to excess, or going against nature. ... in which the possibility of sinning arises (Strom. 2.20.108.4-109.2).

It is important here to notice the (not-surprising) allusion to Rom 6:6, where Paul identifies being crucified with Christ as dying to the old self, with its immersion in sin. Clement adds to the Pauline concept by adding a Philonic element, identifying “delight and pleasure that is in this life” (Det. 9) as that which ought to be avoided.

Hence, we can conclude that for Clement, life is following not only the scriptural precepts laid down for our adoption, but includes a Philonic element. True life involves imitation of the Λόγος, belief in Jesus Christ, and a way of life that is disciplined and recognizes Jesus Christ as Paidagogos. We should also recall that Philo stressed ὀμοίωσις, but directed towards God, as suggested by Plato, not the person of Jesus Christ (Fug. 63). In the Paed. (1.2.5.1-6.2) he describes the sinlessness of the Instructor (ὁ Λόγος), who is devoid of passion. “Our task is to attempt with all our strength to
assimilate our souls to Him” (τούτῳ παντὶ σθενεῖ πειράτεον ἐξομοιοῦν τὴν ψυχήν)

(Paed. 1.2.4.1).

5.4 Clement’s Vision of “Death of the Soul”

The quotation from Ezek 18 referred to above in the LXX (and Clement’s quote) begins ἡ ψυχὴ ἀμαρτάνουσα αὐτὴ ἀποθανεῖται. This introduces the concept of “sin” as the source of “death.” The LXX quotation does not specify physical death or any other form of death; it is likely that the original Hebrew text intended primarily to refer to the Lord as “Lord of Life,” and that any person who sins (ἁμαρτάνει) is acting in an offensive way towards this Lord of Life. In his commentary on Ezekiel, Zimmerli points out that this text exhibits “the close verbal connection …with the formulations of the priestly law” in Lev 4:2, 5:1 and Num 15:27. Hence, it is unlikely that any form of “spiritual death” was implied in the original text.

But for Clement, the phrase is subject to his own interpretation. In Chapter 23 of Book 2 of Strom. Clement discusses marriage and self-restraint. He comments on the woman taken in adultery as being properly stoned to death.

And the law is not at variance with the Gospel, but agrees with it. How should it be otherwise, one Lord being the author of both? She who has committed fornication lives in sin and is dead to the commandments; (ζῇ μὲν τῇ ἀμαρτίᾳ, ἀπέθανεν δὲ τοῖς ἐντολοῖς) but she who has repented, being as it were born again by the change in her life, has a regeneration of life; the old harlot is dead, and she who has been regenerated by repentance having come back again to life (Strom. 2.23.147.2-3).  


583 I shall refer to this again in the section on Repentance.
Life and death are not here being referred to as the connection of soul with body or their separation, but refer (at least) metaphorically to a particular kind of life and death. It is clear also that life can be re-generated from some sort of death; this verifies that the kind of life and death being referred to is at least metaphorical, but may be even more, i.e., there is a chance that Clement visualizes “death” as “death of the soul” in the same manner that Philo did. Let us explore this possibility by referring to additional texts.

We find in Book 4 of Strom. that Clement relates life and death to belief.

“…Now, to disbelieve truth brings death, as to believe, life; and again, to believe the lie and to disbelieve the truth drags down to destruction” (ἀўτίκα τό μὲν ἀπίστειν τῇ ἄληθείᾳ θάνατον θέρει ὡς τό πιστεύειν ζωήν, ἐμπαλιν δὲ τό πιστεύειν τῷ ἰσεύδει, ἀπίστειν δὲ τῇ ἄληθείᾳ εἰς ἀπώλειαν ὑποσύρει) (Strom. 4.3.8.4). Of course, ἀπώλεια would be understood as equivalent to “death.” Hence, life and death are determined by the character of one’s belief structure. It is clear from this that death of the soul is intended, not physical death. This demands a high level of consciousness, not only of major actions that produce spiritual death, but a sensitivity even to minor items, which bring about a sickness of soul. We must attempt to sin as little as possible, even “involuntary sins.” Clement adopts Philo’s interpretation of Num 6:9, regarding a Nazirite who happens to have someone die close to him and thereby, inadvertently, incurs ritual impurity. Such a person is immediately to shave his head. Philo (Agr. 176) interprets the words “suddenly” and “immediately” to portray involuntary sin, not previously anticipated. Clement continues, using an allegorization, “counseling the locks of ignorance which shade the reason to be shorn clean off (τάς ἐπισκιαζόσας τῶ
λογισμῶ τῆς ἁγνοίας κόμας ἀποψηφάσθαι), that reason…being left bare of the dense stuff of vice, may speed its way to repentance” (Paed. 1.2.5.1-2). The involuntary act he calls “sudden,” the sin he calls “irrational.” Thus, the Λογος, the Paidagogos, is given charge of us, in order to prevent sin, which is ignorance (Paid. 1.2.5.2).

In Strom. 9.3, Clement discusses marriage and sexuality. He quotes the Gospel of the Egyptians (acknowledging it as “heretical”), in which Jesus condemned the world of the female. Clement, however, allegorized this and related it to sexual desire. “‘Female’ refers to desire, and its works are birth and decay” (θηλείας μὲν τῆς ἐπιθυμίας, ἔργα δὲ γένεσιν καὶ φθοράς). He continues,

But the Lord did not speak falsely. In reality he brought to nothing the works of desire – the love of money, or winning, or glory, craziness over women, a passion for boys, gluttony, profligacy and the like. The birth of these means decay in the soul, if we become "dead in sins" (Strom. 3.9.63.3).585

Clement continues this discussion: birth and decay will continue until the dissolution of the world, at which time everything will be properly ordered. It is with relation to the final consummation that Clement quotes “Salome” as asking how long humans will continue to die; he responds by first distinguishing two aspects of people, that which appears (the physical) and that which is of the soul. The latter serves, but the former does not. Here he adds, “sin is called the death of the soul” (θάνατος ψυχῆς ἡ ἁμαρτία λέγεται) (3.9.64.1). The answer, says the Lord, is “as long as women give birth,” which means “as long as desire continues to operate.” He then continues to quote Rom 5:12-14, that through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, since all


585 The quotation is from Eph 2:5, to be discussed below; trans. John Ferguson.
sinned, so death reigned from Adam to Moses. Hence, Clement relates the death of the soul to that death which came to all people through Adam. This connection may be seen as a validation of the interpretation of these verses in the prior chapter.

Regarding Clement’s statement that “Female’ refers to desire, (ἐπιθυμία) and its works are birth and decay,” it is important that ἐπιθυμία is not considered here in a purely sexual manner, but is a source, almost as a fountain, of the listed evils. This is parallel to ἐυσέβεια as being the fountain from which the other virtues spring. Since he is speaking of procreation in this chapter, he relates birth and death to the birth of evil, which produces death of the soul, using Eph 2:1-5 as his point of reference. This is a section of the NT where the author specifically refers to the state of the Ephesians as having been “dead through trespasses and sins” (2:1). Clement then refers to everyone, who had followed “the passions of our flesh (ἐν ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις τῆς σαρκὸς ήμῶν)” (2.3); but “even when we were dead in trespasses, we were made alive in Christ” (ὅταν ἦμας νεκροὺς τοῖς παραπτώμασιν συνεζωοποίησεν τῷ Χριστῷ) (2:5). This passage follows the Pauline perspective of death’s being a consequence of sin.

The identification of desire as being female is part of a Hellenistic Jewish tradition, which can be identified in the Letter of Aristeas, where the author asks how one can live in harmony with a wife. The answer is to understand that the female genus “is bold, . . . audacious for what it desires” (θρασύ ἐστιν . . . καὶ δραστικὸν ἐφ’ ὃ βουλεύεσθαι πράγμα) and easily changing its mind through weak reasoning powers.586 This negative orientation towards women is continued in Philo, who identified the female with the aesthetic sense and the male with mind (Opif. 165, Leg. 3.222) and who considered

586 Letter of Aristeas, 259, OTP, 2.29.
physical desires to be “effeminate” (θηλυκόριας) (Cher. 50, 82; Post. 165; Gig. 4). It is important to note, however, that Philo does not identify ἐπιθυμία itself with women; it is clear that desire is part and parcel of the entire human race, and this desire is what must be kept under control in order to achieve virtue. Some feminist scholars have identified the cultural bias towards males in Philo’s writing,⁵⁸⁷ which bias is continued in Clement’s work.

Having discussed sins relating to sexuality, Clement distinguishes “sin” from a “mistake.” He quotes various scriptural passages (Rom 4:7,8; 1 Pet. 2:24, and Ps 32:1-2) in Strom. 2.15.64.3, and from these draws the important distinction between an event that was unfortunate and contrary to calculation, (i.e., a “mistake”) and a “crime,” (ἀδικία). This latter is an evil performed that is conscious and voluntary. He also points out the difference between a sin that of itself brings a kind of death and one that is not so serious, quoting the “larger Epistle of John,” (1 John 5:16-17):

If you see your brother or sister committing what is not a mortal sin, (ἀμαρτάνοντα ἀμαρτίαν μὴ πρὸς θάνατον) you will ask, and God will give life to such a one—to those whose sin is not mortal. There is sin that is mortal (ἐστιν ἀμαρτία πρὸς θάνατον); I do not say that you should pray about that. All wrongdoing is sin, but there is sin that is not mortal (πᾶσα ἀδικία ἀμαρτία ἐστίν, καὶ ἐστιν ἀμαρτία οὐ πρὸς θάνατον).

Thus, Clement relies upon Scripture for the distinction between a sin that brings death and one that does not. He further quotes Psalm 1:6, “The Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked shall perish” (γνωσκει κύριος ὁ δῶν δικαιῶν, καὶ ὁδὸς ἀσεβῶν ἀπολεῖται) (Strom. 2.15.69.1-2). While this is different from saying that the wicked themselves shall perish, the psalm itself creates the existential difference

between the “righteous” person and the “sinner.” In the effort to express the radical difference between approved and rejected moral behavior, a way of life is shown to perish, and is coherent with the idea of a spiritual death.

Consistent with the framework of Ps. 1, Clement refers in Strom. 4 to an extended discussion of sin and death, using Rom 7:12 and 6:23 as a springboard:

Wherefore the law is productive of the emotion of fear. “So that the law is holy,” and in truth spiritual (Rom 7:12) according to the apostle. We must, then, as is fit, in investigating the nature of the body and the essence of the soul, apprehend the end of each, and not regard death as an evil. “For when ye were the servants of sin,” says the apostle, “you were free from righteousness. What fruit had you then in those things in which ye are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now, being made free from sin, and become servants to God, you have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death: but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Rom 6:21-23) The assertion, then, may be hazarded, that it has been shown that death is the fellowship of the soul in a state of sin with the body; and life the separation from sin (θανατος μεν ειναι ή εν σωματι κουνωνια της ψυχης αμαρτητικης οους, ζωη δε υ χωρισμος της αμαρτιας) (Strom 4.3.11.1-12.1).

Here we have Clement using the word “death” in different contexts; he first mentions “death” (i.e., physical death) as being regarded as other than evil. This is consistent with the Platonic perspective found in Phaedo 87C, where the supposition that death is the worst evil is amply demonstrated as incorrect. However, within this context, Clement continues to quote Paul in identifying “death” as being the product of “sin.” As I previously maintained, this is the Pauline concept of “death of the soul.” And this is reinforced with what I suggested was the “gold-standard” of St. Paul’s position, “The wages of sin is death” (Rom. 6:23). Additionally, we find the reinforcement that defines
life as separation from sin, in the same way that Paul speaks of “dying to sin” (Rom 6:11).

Clement treats the source of sin and evil in a person’s life in an inconsistent manner, sometimes suggesting that the source of sin is ignorance, and sometimes attributing sin to the failure of the person in the interior moral struggle between the Reason and Passion. First, regarding sin as a product of ignorance (as mentioned above), this is consistent with Heraclitus’ Frag. 1 M, where the Logos is described as being ignored by human beings, which he quotes in Strom. 5.14.111.7. And secondly, regarding sin as a moral failure, we find in Strom. 4.4, Clement discusses martyrdom, but couches it in a battle-like description, where a person battles with his or her lusts; and if such a person dies, it is no different than if he or she died from disease (Strom. 4.4.15.3).

But Clement allegorizes the struggle by quoting Matt 19:29, (“Whoever leaves . . . father and mother in my name will attain eternal life”), and suggests that this implies leaving a life of passion, and thereby attaining virtue (Strom. 4.4.15.4). Here he quotes Heraclitus’ statement that “Gods and men honor those slain in battle” (Frag. 96M), continuing the allegory.

Long and Sedley, commenting on Stoic Ethics, write: “Rationality…and the good coincide in God, and can coincide in man if he perfects his reason.” This follows the Platonic dictum that no person can choose evil voluntarily (Prot. 345.d, 358c, Hipp. Min. 373c-376c), but can choose only the good; this means that if a person commits an evil act...
act, he errs, and this is a product of his ignorance. We have already quoted the section from *Paid.* (1.2.5.1) where Clement alleges ignorance as the cause of sin. But he amplifies this position in *Strom.* 2 when he discusses the law, meaning the writings of the Old Testament. Recall that Marcion had attempted to exclude the Old Testament from the evolving canon, and that Clement rejected this attempt. He writes,

> How can the law be not good, which trains, which is given as the instructor to Christ (ὁ παιδάωγος εἰς Χριστοῦ δόθεις), that being corrected by fear, in the way of discipline, in order to the attainment of perfection which is by Christ...The commandment works repentance; inasmuch as it deters from what ought not to be done, and enjoins good deeds. By ignorance he means in my opinion death (θάνατον, σίμαι, τὴν ἀγνοίαν λέγει) (2.7.35.1-4).

Consistent with this idea of ignorance, Clement relates “sleep” and “death,” with the former being a metaphor for the withdrawal of intelligence, which is then the cause of spiritual death. In *Strom.* 4.22.141.1 he quotes Heraclitus’ Frag. 48 M, previously quoted above as one of the Ephesian’s recognition of spiritual death, “Man in the night kindles a light for himself. . . .” Additionally, slightly later in the same chapter, concerning the survival of the good person’s soul after death, Clement again quotes Heraclitus’ Frag. 74M, “When men die, there awaits them what they neither expect nor even imagine,” which was quoted above in the section describing Heraclitus’ approach to spiritual death.

There is a third Heraclitean fragment that may be pointed out here, where Clement is arguing against Marcion in *Strom.* 3, 21,1, where he quotes the fragment described above in the Heraclitus section, Frag. 49 M, “What we see when awake is death, and what we see when asleep is life.”

Hence, not only does Clement rely on both Philonic and

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590 Marcovich, *Heraclitus,* 248, altered the last word in the Greek of this fragment, from ὑπνος to ὑπαρ in consideration of the probable corruption of the text.
Pauline perspectives regarding the death of the soul, he also incorporates three of the six fragments that were used above in our section on Heraclitus.

This will remind us of the position that I took in the Pauline chapter, where Paul viewed those who were unacquainted with the kerygma of Jesus Christ as being “dead.” It was not as much that they rejected the gospel, but they were simply unacquainted with it. This appears to be the identical perspective; ignorance, lack of knowledge, without any culpability at all, brought upon some sort of death. Of course, this death can only be a spiritual death, a death of the soul, insofar as the referent has to be to a human being, and there are living human beings who do not believe in Christ.

On the other hand, we see that Clement understands the essential moral battle is between the rational faculty of a person (λογικόν) and the power of the passions, typified by ἐπιθυμία. He quotes the famous line of Medea that “…I learn what horrors I intend; but passion overmasters sober thought (θυμὸς δὲ κρείσσων τῶν ἐμῶν βουλευμάτων); and this is cause of direst ills to men” (Medea 1078-80, LCL, Quoted in Strom. 2.15.63.3). Hence, it is not mere ignorance that causes sin, but sin is the result of the overpowering of the rational faculty by the passions.

Note that for Clement, the soul must be cured of its ills, resulting from passions. The Instructor (The Logos), “cures the unnatural passions of the soul by means of exhortations” (Ἐστιν οὖν ὁ παιδαγωγὸς ἡμῶν λόγος διὰ παραγόμενων θερα-πευτικῶς τῶν παρὰ φύσιν τῆς ψυχῆς παθῶν) (Paed. 1.2.5.6).

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591 I recognize that Medea uses θυμός in lieu of ἐπιθυμία but I suggest that the essential distinction for Euripides was the non-rational character of her act.
We noted above that Clement had a broad characterization of passions and infirmities of the soul, as did Philo; hence, wealth of such infirmities is productive of a kind of death that can only be spiritual; and the loss of such infirmities is salvific. This is certainly parallel to Paul’s being “dead to sin,” (Rom. 6:11) which brings us to another Clementine perspective, that knowledge is, in fact, a “rational death” which tends to separate the soul from evil. We find him saying this in Strom. 7, where he writes:

Just as death is the separation of the soul from the body, so is knowledge as it were the rational death, (οὗτως ἡ γνώσις οἷον [ὁ] λογικὸς θανάτος) urging the spirit away, (ἀπὸ τῶν παθῶν ἀπαγωγῶν καὶ χωρίζων τὴν ψυχήν) and separating it from the passions, and leading it on to the life of well-doing, that it may then say with confidence to God, ‘I live as you wish’ (Strom. 7.12.71.3).

And again, in Quis div.

If then it is the soul which, first and especially, is that which is to live, and if virtue springing up around it saves, and vice kills (περὶ ταύτην ἀρετὴν μὲν φυσικὴν σώζει, κακία δὲ θανάτοι); then it is clearly manifest that by being poor in those things, by riches of which one destroys it, it is saved, and by being rich in those things, riches of which ruin it, it is killed (ὦν δὲ τὸ πλοῦτον διαφθείρῃ σώζεται, καὶ πλουτοῦσα τούτων ὃν ἐπιτρέπει πλοῦτος θανάτου (Quis. Dives 19.2.6-7)) (Quis. Dives 15.6-16.1).

And further in the same work, where Clement lays out the theology of how wealth and worldly goods are to be used, he says,

Οὗτως οὖν ὁ κύριος καὶ τῆν τῶν ἐκτὸς χρείαν εἰσάγει, κελεύων ἁπαθέσθαι οὐ τὰ βιωτικά, ἀλλὰ τὰ τούτων κακῶς χρωμένα· ταῦτα δὲ ἂν τὰ τῆς ψυχῆς ἀρροστήματα καὶ πάθη· τὸν πλοῦτον πλοῦτος παρὼν μὲν ἀπασὶ θανατηφόρος, ἀπολόμενος δὲ σωτήριος (Quis. Dives 15.6-16.1).

…So, then, the Lord introduces the use of eternal things, bidding us put away not the means of subsistence, but what uses them badly. And these are the infirmities and passions of the soul. The presence of wealth in these is deadly to all, the loss of it salutary.

Thus, he (along with Philo and Paul) uses “death” in a metaphorical manner, as well as in both a literal and spiritual sense. We find another dual use of “death” in chapter
25 of *Quis Dives*, where Clement discusses the fact that the most serious persecution of a rich person comes from within his own soul. He writes:

... most painful is internal persecution, which proceeds from each person’s own soul being vexed by impious lusts and diverse pleasures (ἐξ αὐτῆς ἐκκαστεῖ τῆς ψυχῆς προσεμπόμενος λυμαίνομενης ὑπὸ ἐπιθυμών ἀθεῶν καὶ ἡδονῶν ποικίλων) and base hopes and destructive dreams; when always grasping at more and maddened by brutish loves (ὑπὸ ἀγρίων ἐρωτῶν) and inflamed by passions which beset it like goads and stings, it is covered with blood (to drive it on) to insane pursuits and to despair of life, and to contempt of God.

More grievous and painful is this persecution, which arises from within, which is ever with a man, and which the persecuted cannot escape; for he carries the enemy about everywhere in himself. Thus also, burning which attacks from without works trial, but that from within produces death (σοῦ καὶ πύρωσις η μὲν ἐξωθεν προσπίπτουσα δοκιμασίαν κατεργάζεται, ἡ δὲ ἐνδοθεν θανάτου διαπρασσεται). War also made on one is easily put an end to, but that which is in the soul continues until death (*Quis div.* 25.4.1-7).

There is one more element, however, that must be dealt with. In the chapter on Philo of Alexandria, I pointed out that the consequence of spiritual death was not a mere metaphor, but that a person who was spiritually dead was somehow less than human. In other words, if “rationality” is the ultimate characteristic of a human being, and if a person chose to permit his or her passions to overwhelm the direction of the rational part of him/herself, then he or she was somehow reduced in the hierarchy of beings. Such a person became more like a beast than like a human. We find this same idea well developed in Clement’s thought. We see it in the long quotation just cited, where inappropriate loves are characterized as “brutal, coarse, or savage.” We find other cases where the product of spiritual death reduces a person to the level of an animal. We read in *Strom.* 4.3.12.5-6 that

As slaves the Scripture views those “under sin” and “sold to sin,” the lovers of pleasure and of the body; and beasts rather than men, “those who have become like to cattle, horses, neighing after their neighbors’ wives.” (*Jer 5:8*). . . “The licentious is the lustful ass (ὡς ὄβριστης ὁ ἀκόλαστος), the covetous is the
savage wolf (λύκος ἄγριος ὁ πλεονεκτικὸς) and the deceiver is a serpent” (ὅτι ὁ ἀπατεών).

We find a similar sentiment expressed in Paed. 1.13: “Since then, the first man sinned and disobeyed God, it is said ‘And man became like to the beasts;’ and being rightly regarded as irrational, he is likened to the beasts” (κτήνεσιν) (Paed. 1.13.101.2).

Clement is likely referring to Ps. 49:12-20 (LXX 48:13-21), where the foolhardy person is compared to a beast, and is characterized as being “ignorant” (ἀνοίτος) (48:21) and like an animal. He continues to liken an adulterer to a horse who neighs regardless of who is sitting on it (Sirach, 33:6), and then continues by saying “…he who transgresses against reason is no longer rational but an irrational animal” (οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν λογικὸς ἐτι ὁ παρὰ λόγον ἁμαρτάνων, θηρίον δὲ δὴ ἄλογον) (Paed. 1.13.102.1).

5.5 Repentance in Clement

It is finally important to realize that for Clement, repentance is available, which will cause a kind of resurrection of the dead soul. In Strom. 2.15, we find the affirmation that God forgives sin in the same section referred to above where sins “that bring death” are distinguished from “sins that do not lead to death,” (Strom. 2.15.66.4). He first refers to the Old Testament texts such as Ps. 32:1-2 where we find the makarism of those whose sins are forgiven and overlooked (μακάριοι ὁς ἠφέθησαν αἱ ἁμαρτίαι καὶ ὁς ἐπεκαλύφθησαν αἱ ἁμαρτίαι) (Ps. 32:2, LXX 31:1); he refers to 1 Pet 4:8, where “love hides the multitude of sins” (ὅτι ἀγάπη καλύπτει πλῆθος ἁμαρτιῶν).
Repentance is that which produces life in one who perhaps lost it through sin.\footnote{Recall the quotation from Strom. 2.23.174. 2-3 on p. 255.}

He notes that, “For it is indeed noble not to sin; but it is good also for the sinner to repent; just as it is best to be always in good health, but well to recover from disease” (Paed. 1.9.82.1). This is parallel to Philo’s dictum in Abr. 26 that repentance is second only to perfection, and where he also compares repentance to convalescence.

He emphasizes this in Quis Dives 39, where he writes

> For to everyone who has turned to God in truth, and with his whole heart, the doors are open and the thrice-glad father receives His truly repentant son. And true repentance is to be no longer bound in the same sins for which he accused himself with death (ἡ δ’ ἀληθινὴ μετάνοια τὸ μηκὲ ποὺς αὐτοὺς ἐνοχὸν εἶναι, ἀλλὰ ἀφθην εκρίζωσαι τῆς ψυχῆς εφ’ ὃς εαυτοῦ κατέγνω θάνατον ἀμαρτήμασιν), but to eradicate them completely from the soul (Quis div. 39.2).

He quotes Ezek 18:23, “Do I indeed derive any pleasure from the death of the wicked? says the Lord GOD. Do I not rather rejoice when he turns from his evil way that he may live” (μὴ θηλῆσαι θελῆσω τὸν θάνατον τοῦ ἄνόμου λέγει κύριος ώς τὸ ἀποστρέψαι αὐτὸν ἐκ τῆς ὀδοῦ τῆς ποημάτως καὶ ζὴν αὐτὸν)? Clement backs this up with Isaiah 1:18, “Though your sins be as scarlet wool, I will make them white as snow; though they be blacker than darkness, I will wash and make them like white wool” (Quis div. 39.4-5). He also affirms that it is incumbent upon people to forgive others of their sins on a daily basis, as called for in Matt 6:10 (Quis div. 39.6). He does not offer any “sacramental” aspect to gaining forgiveness, but rather emphasizes a repentance and change of behavior. “But it needs great carefulness, just as bodies that have suffered by protracted disease need regimen and special attention” (Quis div. 40.4-5). He urges thieves no longer to steal; adulterers, no longer burn; fornicators become in the future chaste (ὁ πορνεύσας λοιπὸν ἀγνευέτω) (Quis div. 40.5). He continues to challenge those...
who robbed, swore falsely, perjured themselves, and acted in accordance with the host of sinful practices so well known to the Greek world, to act in the opposite way.

Recognizing the difficulty of a true *metanoia*, he writes, “but by God’s power and human intercession, and the help of brethren, and sincere repentance, and constant care, they (the sins) are corrected” ( ἀλλὰ μετὰ θεοῦ δυνάμεως καὶ ἀνθρωπείας ἱκεσίας καὶ ἀδελφῶν βοήθειας καὶ εἰλικρινοῦς μετανοίας καὶ συνεχοῦς μελέτης κατορθοῦται) (*Quis div.* 40.6.3-4).

Clement ends *Quis div.* with a mythical story about John the Evangelist, who having been freed from exile in Patmos, returned to Ephesus and spied a young man of great beauty and apparent piety. He committed the young man to a presbyter for formation and baptism, with the intent that the young man become bishop. In time, however, the young man having attained maturity, was released from the guidance of the presbyter, who had relied upon the seal of baptism to assure Christian behavior. But, alas, the young man strayed from the right path, and “like a hard-mouthed and powerful horse” rushed down to the depths. (Note the *Phaedrus* allusion.) He found others like him, and became the head of a robber-gang, “the fiercest, the bloodiest, the cruelest” (βιαστάτατος, μισιφονώτατος, χαλεπώστατος) (*Quis div.* 42.7.4).

Time passed, and John returned to Ephesus and asked the presbyter for the child he had designated as a future bishop. The old presbyter, “groaning deeply, and bursting into tears, said ‘He is dead.’ ‘How and what kind of death?’ ‘He is dead’ he said,’ to God’ ” ( ἐκεῖνος ἔφη, τεθνήκε, πῶς καὶ τίνα θάνατον; θεῷ τεθνήκενς εἶπεν) (*Quis div.* 42.9.5-6). The presbyter described the wicked life, and John responded by rending his garments and striking his head with his hand in great lamentation. The apostle then
sought out the lair of the robber. When the chief of the gang spotted the old apostle coming, he initially fled; but John said:

Why, my son, do you flee from me, your father, unarmed, old? Son, pity me. Fear not; you still have hope of life (μὴ φοβοῦ ἐχεῖς ἐπὶ ζωῆς ἐλπίδας). I will give account to Christ for you. If need be, I will willingly endure your death, as the Lord did death for us (ἀν δέ, τὸν σών θανατὸν ἐκὼν ὑπομένω, ὡς ὁ κύριος τὸν ὑπέρ ἡμῶν). For you I will surrender my life. Stand, believe; Christ has sent me” (Quis div. 42.13.1-14.1).

As one would expect, the young robber baron dissolved into tears of repentance, being “baptized a second time with tears” (Quis div. 42.14.3), and begged forgiveness, which was assured to him by the apostle. Then, after a regimen of prayer, fasting and subordinating his passions to the rule of his mind, the young man was restored to the church, “presenting in him a great example of true repentance and a great token of regeneration, a trophy of the resurrection for which we hope (διδοὺς μέγα παράδειγμα μετανοίας ἀληθινῆς καὶ μέγα γνώρισμα παλιγγενεσίας, τρόπαιον ἀναστάσεως βλεπομένης) (Quis div. 42.15.6-98).

Clement concludes Quis div. with a paranetic passage, urging belief in the forgiveness available to one who has sinned, assuring eternal life. And he affirms that the one who continues to “sin perpetually in pleasures…and turns away from the Savior…let him no more blame either God, or riches, or his having fallen, but his own soul, which voluntarily perishes” (Quis Dives 42.18-19).

5.6 Summary

In the introductory pages on Clement, we saw that he was an extraordinarily well educated person, totally immersed in Greek culture as well as fully at home in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. He was influenced by Philo’s work and shows
continuity with Philo’s approach in many instances. As with Philo, he relied on Plato with some Stoicizing influences.

In Section 5.1 we reviewed the murky history of Alexandrian thought after Philo, and leading up to Clement. During this time, we speculated that the *Epistle of Barnabas* was an Alexandrian product. Further, we suggested that schools of some kind existed, through which ideas were transmitted from generation to generation. Finally, we recognized that Gnostic thought developed (probably) in the late first and early second centuries, and that the intellectual environment in Alexandria was vibrant.

In Section 5.2, we saw that Clement followed the general Hellenistic anthropology that included the soul as having multiple parts, of which the reason was the ruler. But such rule did not occur without a moral struggle, typified by the passions attempting to hold sway over the rational part. Thus, there is a moral sickness that everyone experiences and all have need for therapy. Fortunately, such therapy is available through the Λόγος, and the cure is represented by achieving likeness (οἰκονομία) to God.

In Section 5.3, we discovered what “life” meant for Clement. We saw a continuation of his anthropology, in that imitation or achieving likeness to the Λόγος produces true life. His sources consisted of a combination of Greek thought, especially Plato and the Stoics, but with possible influence of Philo. Discipline became a hallmark of achieving true life, and this included the practice of self-restraint, living righteously in accordance with Scripture, and ruling the passions.

In Section 5.4, we focused on death of the soul and found that Clement fully adopted the concept in a manner totally consistent with Philo, in that both ignorance and lack of control of ἐπιθυμία will bring about a state of death to the soul. Clement quotes
Rom 6:21-23 as expressing the fact that sin is productive of death, but not necessarily physical death, but rather that death which is the separation from God. This validates my own treatment of death above.

In Section 5.5, we found that while a person might be subject to spiritual death if he or she did not control his or her passions, there was hope for such a sinner. Repentance is available, and through repentance, life becomes once more available. Such repentance is characterized by remorse expressed through tears, and after a regimen of prayer and fasting. As death is a separation from God and, hence, from His church, repentance involves restoration to both. While we saw in both Philo and Paul that repentance was available, Clement sees the expression of restoration as an ecclesiastical function, even though it is not yet formalized.

We now move on to discuss the death of the soul in Origen’s work.
CHAPTER 6: ORIGEN ON THE DEATH OF THE SOUL

We continue to trace the trajectory of the idea of spiritual death as it is expressed in Origen. Despite the fact that he was condemned as a heretic, Origen had an enormous impact on the theology of the church. Henri Crouzel writes, “…posterity has been seriously unjust to the memory of one of the men to whom Christian thought is most indebted.”\(^{593}\) This positive attitude is reinforced by Robert J. Daley, S.J., who opines that “no other patristic figure exercised so much influence and fascination over the great minds that came after him.”\(^{594}\) Hans Urs von Balthasar writes that he was “as towering a figure as Aquinas and Augustine,” and points to the statement by Erasmus that one page of Origen was equivalent to ten of Augustine.\(^{595}\)

The major writing of Origen occurred between approximately 215, when Origen was about thirty, and 254-5 when he died at about seventy years old.\(^{596}\) At that time, the various theologies of the trinity and human anthropology had not been settled upon by the church. Indeed, the time was one that was rife with speculative activity both within the church and without; the period of the late second century and early third was one where


Ammonius Saccas taught in Alexandria with both Plotinus and Origen being his students. The Gnostic groups were active in Alexandria until the fourth century. While careful attention to Scripture was well established by Clement in the late second century, Origen focused on a detailed analysis of lexical comparison of scriptural manuscripts, out of which his own interpretations arose. Indebted to fellow Alexandrians Clement and Philo, he adopted the allegorical method of exegesis. His attention to nuances in scriptural texts and his vast productivity resulted in Crouzel’s writing “…it must not be forgotten that he is …, with Jerome, the greatest critical exegete and the greatest literal exegete of Christian antiquity.”

We find in the *Philocalia* an interesting passage that gives one insight into Origen’s approach to Scripture:

…the saint is a sort of spiritual herbalist, (οἴσων ὁ πνευματικὸς έστυν ὁ ἀγών) who culls from the sacred Scriptures every jot and every common letter, discovers the value of what is written and its use, and finds that there is nothing in the Scriptures superfluous… that they who will give heed to their reading may beware of passing over a single letter without examination and inquiry (μηδέν παραπέμπεσθαι ἀνεξέταστον καὶ ἀνεξέρευνητον γράμμα). Further, in the same work, we find that sufficient attention to distinctions between the variety of equivocal words and their meanings will save a person from “detestable interpretation.”

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597 Crouzel, *Origen* 11.
600 Origen, *Philocalia* 10.2.8-11, 28.
It is likely that his condemnation as a heretic resulted in the loss of the greatest portion of his life-work. However, the anathemas against Origen (or “Origenists”) did not occur until 553 at the Fifth Ecumenical Council, about two hundred years after Origen’s death. It is clear that Origen had no intention of promoting ideas that were at variance with the accepted dogma of the time. H. U. von Balthasar points to Origen’s comments in *Homily on Joshua* 7.6:

> O Church! If I who seem to be your right hand, bearing the name of priest and preaching the word of God, should ever offend against your canon and your Rule of Faith, thus giving scandal: Let then the Universal Church in unanimous accord cut off me, her right hand, and cast me away from her.  

He was recognized as a remarkable theologian by Eusebius, who sang his praises in book six of his *History of the Church*. As we saw above, Origen powerfully influenced Gregory Thaumaturgus and Basil the Great, whose service in compiling the *Philocalia* benefited generations of early medieval theologians. Runia writes that Origen “becomes, together with Clement, a watershed in the absorption of Philonic ideas in the Christian tradition.”

We shall examine Origen’s contribution to our topic by imposing the same format as in prior chapters, by describing Origen’s anthropology in 6.1, Origen’s concept of life in 6.2, Origen’s understanding of the death of the soul in 6.3, Origen’s understanding of repentance in 6.4 and a summary of the above in 6.5.

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602. Von Balthasar, *Origen*, xii. It is critical to understand that dogma was in the process of being developed, and had not reached a relatively fixed state.


6.1 Origen’s Anthropology

*De principiis* is a work where we can glean a considerable amount of information on how Origen visualized the composition of the human person. While some have commented on the disjointed character of this work, Brian Daley has seen it as a coherent and organized whole. He writes,

> Throughout this survey of the contents of Origen’s *De Principiis*, my purpose has been to show both its inner cohesion and its overall plan: that, namely, of constructing an articulated body of Christian teaching, based on Scripture and the principles laid out in the apostolic kerygma, which can serve in turn as the hermeneutical grounding for a more thoroughgoing spiritual reading of Scripture.  

Daley points out that this may also have been the motivation of Origen’s intellectual predecessor, Clement of Alexandria, in the *Stromateis*. However, Origen’s approach was different from that of Clement:

> However much his plans may have been influenced by Clement’s intellectual program (as outlined in *Stromateis*), Origen’s theological method was clearly different: more explicitly based on the text of Scripture, more self-consciously rooted in ecclesiastical doctrine, less concerned with the details and forms of Hellenistic literature, philosophy, and culture.  

Origen begins to describe the human person when he describes the “first creation” described in John 1:1-4, as well as in Col 1:16-18. But this creation was that of rational natures, incorporeal and spiritual. This follows the Philonic interpretation of Gen 1:26

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in *Opif.* 69, where God creates first the “archetypal seal” or the idea of Man. However, Origen expands the character of the first creation to include rational beings such as the stars and planets, angels, souls of humans, and souls of those angels who actually fall in the period prior to the creation of the physical world. Crouzel affirms that this concept of the pre-existence of all rational creatures is for Origen, following the consistent line of his theology when he is not relying directly on Scripture, a hypothesis but a favored hypothesis, which constantly governs his thought even when he does not mention it specifically.

Origen uses three terms as components of the human person, “spirit” (πνεῦμα, *spiritus*), “soul” (ψυχή, *anima*) and “body” (σώμα, *corpus*). The “soul” contains both a higher and a lower element, the higher of which is the ἀγαθὸν κόσμον, which is translated into Latin by *principale cordis, mens,* or *anima,* or sometimes by the biblical term καρδία or *cor.* While these may appear to be Stoic terms, Origen understands them in a different manner. The Spirit is God’s gift to us and is a participation in God’s own life, rooted in the Hebrew *ruach.* However, it is subject in human beings to a state of torpor and indifference, where it might fall away from following the paths of God.

As a gift of God, it is

not strictly speaking a part of the human personality, for it takes no responsibility for a man’s sins; nevertheless these reduce it to a state of torpor, preventing it

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609 Origen, *Princ.* 1.5.5.

610 Crouzel, *Origen,* 206-07.

611 The description of Origen’s anthropology is derived primarily from Crouzel, *Origen,* 87-98.

612 Origen, *Princ.* 1.4. 1.
from acting on the soul. It is the pedagogue of the soul, or rather of the intellect, training the latter in the practice of the virtues, for it is in the spirit that the moral consciousness is found; and training it also in the knowledge of God and in prayer. Distinguished from the Holy Spirit, it is nonetheless a kind of created participation in the latter and the latter’s seat when He is present in a man.  

As distinct from the spirit, the soul looks to the Spirit for its sense of direction.

Crouzel writes that

The soul is the *pneuma*’s best pupil: the spirit represents the active aspect of grace, as a divine gift, while the intellect is the passive and receptive aspect, the one that receives and accepts this gift. It is the organ of the moral and virtuous life, of contemplation and prayer, all under the guidance of the spirit. It bears the divine senses, spiritual sight, hearing, touch, smell and taste.

For Origen, the soul of all rational creatures is not completely immaterial; there is some sort of body, even an “ethereal body,” that is connected with each soul. Three times Origen insists that only the Trinity is absolutely incorporeal (*Princ.* 1.6.6, 2.2.2 and 4.3.15). This is consistent with Paul’s affirmation that there exists, after the resurrection, a “spiritual body,” (σῶμα πνευματικόν) which is somehow different from a physical body. Origen insists on free will in all rational creatures, and this becomes the condition for the fall of Lucifer and the demonic angels as well as human beings. The free will is located within the soul, which, in turn, looks to the spirit for guidance and direction. The soul has a lower part as well, which is a combination of Plato’s θυμός and ἐπιθυμία. Origen, along with the other thinkers we have discussed, sees the essential moral struggle as being between the ἡγεμονικόν and the lower elements. In fact, it is the ἡγεμονικόν that is subject to the illumination and enlightenment of the light of God, i.e.,

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615 1 Cor 15:44.
616 Origen, *Princ.* 1.5.1-5.
the Word. Generally, “flesh” is seen to be the source of evil and the seat of the lower elements; it is also called φρόνημα τῆς σαρκός after Rom 8:6, and is often translated as sensus carnis or sensus carnalis. The flesh is that which attracts the soul towards the body, or that which would later be called “concupiscence.” The body, hence, is always referred to in perjorative terms. But he sees this struggle as being augmented by demonic spirits, who have as their function the leading of human beings into reliance on their lower elements. When the soul yields to the carnal forces, it engages in sin.

Crouzel points out that the tri-partite division of the human person is more moral and ascetic than ontological, although it is that as well. The soul is the scene of the continuing battle between the spirit, (with its attraction to God), and the flesh, (with its attraction to bodily pleasures). Given free will, the battle can go either way. A person can either choose the way of the spirit, and find life, or choose the life of the flesh, with its attendant loss of the gift of The Spirit. At death, the body (albeit ephemeral) is sent to Gehenna, where it is tormented by its condition of being separated from God. Later, will see that the loss of the spirit through sin is not irrevocable. Origen provides for a re-conversion, in some cases even after physical death.

The net result is that Origen sees a hierarchical world generally similar to his Greek and Christian forebears, structured in accordance with the ontological principle that God is at the top and all reality is ordered in a descending manner as follows:

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618 Crouzel, Origen, 92.
God

Then beneath we have  Image of God=Logos

Then beneath we have  Angels and Demons

Then beneath we have  Humans

And finally, we have  Animals

The first three levels are Spirits; but only God and the Logos are purely spiritual; angels, demons and humans have ethereal bodies, which were created prior to either the fall of the demons or of humans. Humans were created “after the image,” which means that the human soul participates in the Logos in virtue of its intellect. The dynamic of history is constituted by the fall of the demons, who, by their act of free will, became separated from God, and who become agents in the world attempting to seduce humans by focusing on the material and physical world. But when the Logos became flesh, He offered humanity His Wisdom, Truth, Life and Light, and invited us to become fully rational, by imitating the Logos, Christ, which is the meaning of sainthood.

\(^{619}\) In *Princ. 1.2.2*, Origen identifies Sophia with Logos. Philo makes the same identification in *Leg. 1.65*. This was pointed out in van den Hoek, “Philo and Origen,” 108. She assigned grades A through D to express reliability of the dependency, and awarded this connection a “C” grade.

\(^{620}\) Crouzel, *Origen*, 92-98.
6.2 Origen’s Concept of “Life”

There are two aspects of the concept of “life” that should be distinguished. First, we will examine a number of places where Origen treats “life” based upon the Scriptures. Second, we will see how this fits in with the cultural trajectory in which Origen finds himself, namely, assimilation to God, or ὀμοίωσις θεῶ.

6.2.1 Life in Scripture.

The scriptural sources are vast, but I should like to focus first on Origen’s Commentary on the Gospel of John. The most fruitful place to begin is his comments on John 1:4, ἐν ἀυτῷ ζωὴ ἦν, καὶ ἡ ζωὴ ἦν τὸ φῶς τῶν ἀνθρώπων. His first comment arises from the prior verses in the Gospel, “The Word was with God” and “The Word was God.” He then suggests that “perhaps we shall be able to say that he alone who participates (μετεχοντα) in this Word, insofar as he is such, is “rational” (λογικός).” He then continues by saying that “the saint alone is rational” (μόνος ὁ ἁγιος λογικός).

He continues in the next paragraph to refer to John 11:25 (I am the life) and draws the conclusion that “no one outside the faith in Christ is alive, [but] that all who are not living for God are dead. Their life is a life of sin and, for this reason,. . . a life of death.” But Origen has not concluded his reflection on John 1:4. He introduces a concatenation of Mark 12:26-27 and Exod 3:6 where Jesus reminds the Sadducee questioners that God, (who is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) is the God of the

621 Origen, Comm. Jo. 2.16.114.7.

622 Origen, Comm. Jo. 2.16.115.6.
living, not of the dead. Origen’s conclusion is that God is “not God of sinners, but of saints.” He concludes from this that “one would not find it recorded anywhere that God is the God of any of the impious. If, therefore, he is God of the saints and is said to be God of the living, the saints are living and the living are saints.”

Origen continues, referring to 1 Tim 6:16 (“God alone has immortality”), discussing the character of immortality and concludes that “no rational being whatever possesses blessedness by nature as an inseparable attribute.” It should be noted that Philo expressed the same thought where he indicated that immortality is a gift of God to the virtuous soul and not something that accrues necessarily to each and every soul.

Origen continues to focus on the relationship in the Gospel of John between the concepts of “life” and that of “light.” He suggests that we must look closely at these concepts and ask whether Christ is the “life” for himself or for others, and if “for others,” then for which others.

If indeed ‘life’ and ‘light of men’ are the same…and the light of men is the light of some, and not of all spiritual beings, but is the light ‘of men’ insofar as the light ‘of men’ is specified, he would be also the life of those men of whom he is also the light. And, insofar as he is life, the Savior would be said to be life not for himself, but for those others of whom he is also the light.

Hence, we see that “life” is the product of having Christ as one’s “light.” But Origen continues to pursue the connection between “light” and “life” by referring to a

623 Origen, Comm. Jo. 2.17.118.5-6.
624 Origen, Comm. Jo. 2.18.124, 5-6.
625 See above, p. 84.
626 Origen, Comm. Jo. 2.18.128.5-12.
variant reading\textsuperscript{627} where he found \(\epsilon\nu\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\omega\ \zeta\omicron\omicron\eta\ \epsilon\sigma\tau\iota\), instead of \(\epsilon\nu\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\omega\ \zeta\omicron\omicron\eta\ \eta\nu\), but he points out that this is a credible reading. He proceeds to contrast “light” as “life” with “being in darkness” as not being alive.\textsuperscript{628} Then he immediately relates being a “son of light” to “one whose works shine before men,” referring to Matt 5:16. This connects the image of “life” with the moral commandments that we find in the beatitudes; this means that the image of “life” is expressed in behavioral and moral characteristics. One is “alive” when one’s moral system is consistent with the teachings found in the Gospels. Origen discusses the opposite of “light” as being “darkness,” and we will analyze his position on this matter in a later section of this chapter.

Origen relates “life” to a particular kind of life, namely “eternal life.” In his discussion of the Samaritan woman at the well in John 4, he focuses on that kind of life that Jesus brings through the “living water.” In the thirteenth book of his \textit{Commentary on John}, he explores what Christ meant by “living water.” He first relates it to the augmentation of investigative abilities. Putting words in Christ’s mouth, Origin writes

\begin{quote}
...he who has received of my water will receive so great a benefit that a fountain capable of discovering everything that is investigated will gush forth within him. The waters will leap upward: his understanding will spring up and fly as swiftly as possible in accordance with this briskly flowing water, the springing and leaping itself carrying him to that higher life which is eternal.\textsuperscript{629}
\end{quote}

Origen again relates that “life” to moral characteristics, by relating it again to the Beatitudes, insisting that the promise of blessedness to the one who hungers and thirsts

\textsuperscript{627} Heine points out that “What was made in him \textit{is} life” is a variant reading; Nestle-Aland 27 attributes this variant to \(\text{\`A},\ D\) and several other texts. That Origen was aware of the variant readings is an expression of his care in reading sacred texts, p. 129.

\textsuperscript{628} Origen, \textit{Comm. Jo.} 2.18.132.4.

\textsuperscript{629} Origen, \textit{Comm. Jo.} 13. 3.16.6-12.
for righteousness is that person who is filled by the water that brings one to eternal life.\textsuperscript{630}

The net result of ingesting this “living water” is that one becomes virtually angelic, one is raised above the status of the world of senses and achieves a higher level of existence.

Comparing the living water with that drawn from Jacob’s well, he writes,

She could now, apart from Jacob’s water, contemplate the truth in a manner that is angelic and beyond man. For the angels have no need of Jacob’s fountain that they may drink. Each angel has in himself a fountain of water leaping into eternal life, which has come into existence and been revealed by the Word himself and by Wisdom herself.\textsuperscript{631}

There is another section in Origen’s \textit{Commentary on John} where he refers to John 6:48, “I am the bread of life.” He is brought to this verse in his discussion of the various titles of Jesus, one of which is the “true vine.”\textsuperscript{632} He points out that we find in Ps. 103:15 (LXX) that wine gladdens the heart. He allegorizes this statement by pointing out that:

…if the heart is the intellectual part, and what cheers it is the most delectable reason, which completely rids it of human concerns and causes it to experience ecstasy and to be intoxicated with an intoxication which is not irrational (μεθόην ὑπὸ ἀλόγιστον), but divine…it is reasonable that he who brings the wine which cheers the heart of man is the “true vine.”\textsuperscript{633}

This is highly reminiscent of Philo’s μεθόη ην ἔπεμψεν μέθην, or “sober intoxication.”\textsuperscript{634} Immediately after this statement about the vine, he refers to the “bread of life.” He describes the fact that while bread sustains and nourishes the heart of people, it is the wine that cheers people. “. . . so the ethical teachings, since they preserve life for


\textsuperscript{631} Origen, \textit{Comm. Jo} 13.7. 41.4-10.

\textsuperscript{632} John 15:1.


\textsuperscript{634} Philo, \textit{Opif.} 1.71, \textit{Fug}. 166. See also Hans Lewy, \textit{Sobria ebrietas; untersuchungen zur geschichte der antiken mystik} (Giessen: A. Topelman, 1929).
the one who learns and carries them out, are the bread of life…” 635 Thus, Origen again moves from a mystical interpretation of the Gospel of John to the practical, daily moral requirements of following the precepts of all the gospels.

Origen also comments on John 11:25, “I am the resurrection and the life.” In the discussion of the titles of Jesus in book 1 of his Commentary on John, he points out that in addition to being termed “light of men,” “true light,” and “light of the world,” he is also titled “the resurrection.” He continues to explain that “he effects the putting away of all that is dead and implants the life which is properly called life, since those who have genuinely received him are risen from the dead.” 636 This will prove to be important later, when we discuss not only Origen’s concept of the “death of the soul,” but his attitude towards those who have somehow “died” in a non-physical way.

The illumination that is caused by “the light of men” does, in fact, constitute the rationality of a person. In a discussion of “the Word,” Origen rationalizes that title of Jesus Christ because “he removes everything irrational from us and makes us truly rational beings who do all things for the glory of God.” 637 He continues to expand this concept by referring to “participating in Him” (μετέχεις αὐτοῦ) insofar as He is the Word 638 as that which produces rationality in a divine manner by removing all that is irrational and dead. We will see this idea of “participation” expanded more fully when we discuss “becoming like” or “imitating” God in the next sub-chapter.

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635 Origen, Comm. Jo. 1. 30. 208. 3.
636 Origen, Comm. Jo. 1.27.181.2-5.
637 Origen, Comm. Jo. 1.37.267.6-10.
638 Origen, Comm. Jo. 1.37.268.1.
As a final textual note, we find that when Origen is commenting on John 4:24 ("God is spirit...), he relates God to “light” and “devouring fire,” both of which are understood spiritually. He then points out that we are made alive by the spirit, referring to Gen 2:7 and 2 Cor 3:6, but distinguishes what is usually meant by bodily life from “true life” (τὴν ἀληθινὴν ζωὴν), brought about by the Spirit. He contends that it is clear that this is “more divine,” and quotes 2 Cor 3:6 (“the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life”). However, he interprets Paul’s use of “death” not in a bodily sense, but “in the sense of the separation of the soul from God” (κατὰ τῶν χωρισμῶν τῆς ψυχῆς ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ). We shall refer again to this understanding of “life” and “death” below.

It is interesting to note that Origen included the OT patriarchs and the “saints who preceded Jesus’ bodily sojourn” as being numbered “among the living.” They could be so numbered because the Word of God was even then teaching them. This idea extends the boundary of the Church to include these people proleptically, insofar as the only salvation is through faith in Christ (τῶν εἰπόντων, Ἔγω εἰμί ἡ ζωή, ἐρωσμέν μηδένα τῶν ἐξω τῆς πίστεως Χριστοῦ ζήν). Origen explains this by saying “they lived because they shared in him who said, ‘I am the life’”(Διὸ τούτῳ δε ἔξων, ἐπεί μετείχον τοῦ εἰπόντος, Ἔγω εἰμί ἡ ζωής). Notice that they “shared” in Him, because they were heirs of God’s great promises and, (at least for some), they may have perceived God and heard him.

640 Origen, Comm. Jo. 13.23.140.11.
642 Origen, Comm. Jo. 2.16.115.1-3.
6.2.2 Life as Likeness to God

Crouzel wrote an article of great importance in discussing the various meanings in early Christian thought regarding “following” Christ, “imitating” Christ and God, and being “like” God. He traced the development of these ideas from Pythagoras to Augustine, and I shall utilize this work as an overall guide to the analysis of Origen’s ideas about being “like” unto God and imitating him as an expression of the meaning of true “life.”

As I have mentioned in the chapters on Philo and Clement, the source of this idea, while appearing in Pythagoras, is developed in the *Theatetus* 176a-b, and adopted by Eudorus as a Middle-Platonic telos. I will not re-describe this telos, except to recall that “becoming like God, as much as possible” (ὁμοίωσις θεώ κατὰ τὸ δυνατὸν) is then described as ὁμοίωσις δὲ δίκαιον καὶ ὁσιὸν μετὰ φρονήσεως γενέσθαι. Thus, becoming “like to God” is directly connected to the practice of justice and holiness. The underlying assumption is, of course, that God is the font and source of all virtues. For Plato, the goal of the human soul is to contemplate the divine realities and to arrive at a concept of the Good. Crouzel reminds us that the principal activity of the human soul is to contemplate those eternal realities, and this confers upon the thinker “par mimètis l’immortalité.” He continues to say that such contemplation is inseparable from the imitation on the part of the person contemplating, which leads to a veritable

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645 See above, p. 244.

646 Plato, *Republic*, 517c.

647 Crouzel, *L’Imitation*, 8. Crouzel also includes a note on his source, i.e., *Tim*. 90bc.
assimilation. The ὁμοιόστις θεῷ is a standard Middle-Platonic telos, from Eudorus and Philo, through the Christian Platonism of Clement, and is present in Origen as an expression of the tradition to which he is heir.

If we now turn to Origen’s approach, we can see immediately that he was aware of the Platonic groundwork on this matter. Origen asks what the “highest good” is and answers his own question by writing:

The highest good, then, after the attainment of which the whole of rational nature is seeking, which is also called the end of all blessings, which is defined by many philosophers as follows: The highest good they say is to become as like to God as possible (summum bonum sit, prout possible est, similem fieri deo).

Note that Origen refers to “many philosophers” as being the source of this quotation. Crouzel has shown that this idea of “being like God” was included in the philosophies of middle- and late-Stoicism and is found in Seneca, Cicero, Cornutus and Musonius Rufus, among others. Now Origen denied that the source of his acceptance of the Platonic dictum was any philosophical system, but that it had its root in Holy Scripture, where he quotes Moses’ use of the term “image and likeness” in Gen. 1:26-7. However, Origen makes a distinction between “image” and “likeness,” such that “image” is granted to humans as a mark of dignity as the result of their creation, but

… the expression, “in the image (imago) of God created He him” without any mention of the word “likeness” (similitudo) conveys no other meaning than this, that man received the dignity of God’s image at his first creation (quod imagines quidem dignitatem in prima conditione percepit); but that the perfection of his

\[\text{648} \quad \text{Ibid., 8.}\]
\[\text{649} \quad \text{Dillon, Middle Platonists, 299; also Alcinous, The Handbook of Platonism (trans. John Dillon; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 28.1, plus Dillon’s comments on this paragraph, 171.}\]
\[\text{650} \quad \text{Origen, Princ. 3. 6. 1. 7-10.}\]
\[\text{651} \quad \text{Crouzel, L’imitation, 9-12.}\]
\[\text{652} \quad \text{Origen, Princ. 3.6.1.14-17.}\]
likeness has been reserved for the consummation—namely, that he might acquire it for himself by the exercise of his own diligence in the imitation of God, the possibility of attaining to perfection being granted him at the beginning through the dignity of the divine image, and the perfect realization of the divine likeness being reached at the end by the fulfillment of the (necessary) works.\textsuperscript{653}

Origen was sensitive to one element that is involved with being “like” God or Jesus, as we can see in \textit{Contra Celsum} where he discusses gifts to God, comparing them to the statues and other gifts offered by pagans, but distinguishes the gifts wrought through the Word of God from those other gifts.

And the statues and gifts which are fit offerings to God are the work of no common mechanics, but are wrought and fashioned in us by the Word of God, to wit, the virtues in which we imitate, “the First-born of all creation” who has set us an example of justice, of temperance, of courage, of wisdom, of piety and of the other virtues.\textsuperscript{654}

Note that Origen indicates that the four cardinal virtues (plus piety) are to be found in the life of Jesus Christ, who becomes an example for us in the pursuit of “likeness to God.”

The imitation of Christ is one step in the process of becoming “like” unto Christ and hence to God. There is a sense in which Origen sees the imitation of Christ as the first step of the process of becoming “like unto God.” He engages in a discussion of John 11, where Jesus raises Lazarus from the grave. He points out that Jesus first commands that the stone be removed from the grave of Lazarus (11:39); however, instead of removing the stone immediately, Martha interposes an objection, that there will be a stench. This appears to Origen to be opposite to being responsive to the Word; if there is a command of the Word, then a person ought to comply immediately, without delay. Origen concludes that, “It is good, then, that nothing intervene between Jesus’ command and the

\textsuperscript{653} Origen, \textit{Princ.} 3.6.1.20-25.

\textsuperscript{654} Origen, \textit{Cels.} 8.17 11-17.
action enjoined by his bidding. And I, at least, think that it is fitting for such a person to say that he has become an imitator of Christ” (καὶ οἶμοι γε ὄρμοσειν τῷ τοιούτῳ τὸ εἴπειν ὅτι μιμήτης γέγονεν Χριστοῦ). Origen continues to point out that the Logos responded to God’s command immediately, without delay, “For as God spoke to this one (i.e., the Logos) and they were made, he commanded and they were created,” referring to Ps. 32:8-9 LXX. “So Christ spoke to the believer and the latter performed it; the Son of God commanded and the believer fulfilled the command, having set nothing above the command.”

Crouzel points out that most of the elements that Origen sees as being worthy of imitation in Christ deal with his human character: he becomes weak for us; he accepts publicans and sinners; he is humble of heart; he obeys his human parents;

Son humilité et son obeissance, meme à ses parents humains, sont soulignés. De sa vie terérestre sont données en exemple sa priére, sa chastètè et diverses vertus, sa victoire sur la tentation, notamment celle de l’idolâtrie, sa charité de Bon Samaritain, sa longanimitè. . .

Crouzel gives many more examples.

Thus, we see that “likeness to God,” in Origen, is quite parallel to the underlying idea Plato proposed in the Theatetus 176b where it is the practice of virtue on the part of the person. One is, as it were, granted the right to become “like” God as the result of being born, the first gift God gives one; but the actual attainment is a function of the perfect completion of the “works,” which Origen understands as living the virtuous life.

655 Origen, Comm. Jo. 28.3.18-19.
656 Ibid. 28.3.19.1-4.
There is another passage in *De oratione* that provides a parallel example of the attainment of the “likeness” to God. Origen comments on the Bread of Life discourse in the Gospel of John. He refers to John 6:26 (“Truly, truly I say to you, you seek me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves.”) and he allegorizes the act of “eating the loaves” as being both blessed by Jesus and filled by the loaves, which permits the recipient to comprehend the Son of God more accurately and provides for a hastening to Him. He then expands his analysis to include 6:28-29 (“Those who heard this inquired about it and said, ‘What must we do to be doing the works of God?’ Jesus answered them, ‘This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.’”) This further defines the “(necessary) works” of which Origen spoke without providing a definition in the section from *Princ.* 3.6.1 quoted two pages above. He explicates the meaning of “(necessary) works” by writing:

> Those who believe in the Word do “the works of God,” which are “food that endures to eternal life.” And He says, “My Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” The true bread is He who nourishes the true man, made in the image of God; and the one who has been nourished by it will come to be in the likeness of Him who created him. And what is more nourishing to the soul than the Word, or what is more honorable than the Wisdom of God to the mind that holds it? What more rightly corresponds to a rational nature than truth?

Here Origen uses a food metaphor as referring to that which provides spiritual nourishment to everyone, namely, the Word of God. Clearly, this refers to the *Logos*, Jesus Christ. Origen continues to quote John 6:53-57, where Jesus affirms that one

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659 See also Col 3:9-10 for “image.”

achieves eternal life through eating his flesh and drinking his blood. While Origen does
not provide a specific ecclesiastical referent to the Eucharist in this section, it is difficult
not to hear a reference to the liturgical reception of communion. He says, “And when He
is distributed, there is fulfilled the verse, ‘We have beheld His glory’. ”

Another section will help us understand how Origen sees the process of
developing the “image” of God into the true life which consists in a state of being “in the
likeness of God.” Let us refer to the Comm. Jo., where he comments on John 8:44, where
Jesus makes the accusation that those who insist that they are children of Abraham are, in
fact, children of the devil. Origen’s cosmology places the devil as a real element in the
world that is part of the moral struggle, “caused by the opposition and enmity of those
who fell from a better condition without at all looking back, and who are called the devil
and his angels.” These contend with the human race and incite human beings to evil.
Indeed, sin has its root, or paternity, in the devil, “and since the desires in every son of
the devil have been born from the desires that are in the devil, it is clear that the desires of
that person are thoughts of matter and corruption, which one might properly say are
hostile to God” (σαφές ὃτι αἱ ἐκείνου ἐπιθυμίαι φρόνημα ὑλῆς εἰσίν καὶ φθορὰς, ὃς
κυρίως ἔχθρας εἴποι τις ἀν εἶναι πρὸς θεόν). Origen continues to describe the activity
of the devil in that “he does not desire money, but he desires to make people lovers of
money and passionately desirous of material things” (ἐπιθυμεῖ δὲ φιλαργύρους ποιῆσαι
καὶ προσπαθεῖς τοῖς υλικοῖς πράγμασιν).

661 Origen, On Prayer, 27.4, Greer 139.
662 Origen, Princ. 1.6.3.117-119; also 2.1.1-5.
663 Origen, Comm. Jo. 20.22.176.7-9.
664 Ibid. 20.22. 180.4.
Given the role of the devil in the world, Origen then returns to the human being and points out that it is possible for us to forget our divine image, given to us at birth, and “to subordinate ourselves to that which is molded from dust.” But once we recover the recognition that we are made in the divine image, “we should completely incline to Him in whose image we have come into existence; (thus) we will also be according to the likeness of God, having abandoned every passionate desire for matter and bodies. . .” (ἐσομεθα και καθ’ ὁμοίωσιν θεοῦ, πᾶσαν τὴν πρὸς ύλην και σώματα προσπάθειαν . . ἀπολείψαντες). 665

We see the identification of being καθ’ ὁμοίωσιν θεοῦ in Origen as having abandoned passion for matter and for bodies. This is consistent with the Stoic orientation towards the elimination of passion as being at the root of virtue. Origen would undoubtedly affirm that his position is derived from Scripture. 666 In discussing the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt, he identifies Egypt with the rule of the passions (Hom. Gen. 16.2). This is the same identification that we saw in our section on Philo, where Egypt as a symbol for the life of the passions occurs in multiple places. 667 It is likely that both influences existed hand-in-hand.

Finally, there is one example from Origen’s Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew, where he discusses Matt 18:4 (“Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven”) and asks us to consider whether the little child whom Jesus set in the midst of his disciples might be the Holy Spirit, who having humbled

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665 Ibid. 20.22. 183 5-6.
666 Wis 11:17; Gal 5:17.
667 Leg. 2.96, Mig. 18, Post. 155, quoted above on p. 102. See also, van den Hoek, “Philo and Origen,” 106.
Himself, was set “in the midst of the principle of reason of the disciples” (ἐν μέσῳ τῷ ἡγεμονικῷ τῶν μαθητῶν). Recall that the ἡγεμονικόν is that part of the soul that is responsive to the Holy Spirit and which directs the lower parts of the soul. Origen invites us to see the that Jesus desires us to be “turned away from everything else” and to be turned towards the “examples suggested by the Holy Spirit, so that we may so [sic] become as the little children, who are themselves turned and likened to the Holy Spirit.”

Thus, the goal of life for Origen is to be as alike to God as possible, being infused with the virtues that we see in Christ, and moved towards a sense of unity with God that is played out in our moral life. To be like God is to live most fully.

6.3 The Death of the Soul in Origen

We shall examine a good number of texts of Origen rooted in his exegesis of the Old Testament and the New Testament. Origen’s vast scholarship focused on both the OT and the NT, having affirmed that the OT and the NT are both divinely inspired (θείων γραφῶν, τῆς τε λεγομένης παλαιᾶς διαθήκης καὶ τῆς καινομένης καθοίκης) (Cels. 4.1.1.4-5). As a consequence, we can expect to find references to Scripture as roots of Origen’s ideas about the death of the soul.

However, we should not forget that Origen was a product of the Alexandrian culture, and was familiar with Philo’s works. David Runia points out that it is likely that

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Origen transported his library of Philonic works with him to Caesarea in 233. While Philo is rarely referred to by name in Origen’s works, Runia has isolated thirteen different places in Origen’s work where Philo may well have been aluded to, by referring to “predecessors” and having a text that can be isolated in Philo’s work. It should be noted that Origen never mentions Clement’s name. Hence, we shall examine Origen’s ideas about the death of the soul as being rooted in Scripture and in his predecessors in the Alexandrian tradition.

First, let us review Origen’s comments on Psalm 88:49 (LXX): “Who can live and never see death? Who can escape the power of Sheol” (τίς ἔστιν ἄνθρωπος ὃς ζήσεται καὶ οὐκ ὑψεῖται τάνατον ῥύσεται τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτὸν ἐκ χειρὸς ᾧδου).

Origen writes, after quoting the psalm,

The increase of virtue and knowledge occurs from the gradual diminution of all evil and ignorance. Evil and ignorance are death of the reasoning soul, and life is virtue and knowledge (Κακία δὲ καὶ ἀγνώστα θάνατος ψυχῆς λογικῆς· ζωὴ δὲ ἀρετὴ καὶ γνῶσις).

Philo, as we saw above, identified the death of the soul as the product of living a life of evil and being dominated by the passions. To this extent, Origen follows the same

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670 Runia, *Philo in Early Christian Literature*, 160-61 has isolated three places in Cels. where Philo is named.
671 Ibid. 161-2. See also van den Hoek, “Philo and Origen” previously quoted for an expanded summary of references.
672 Ibid. 161.
path as Philo except that he adds “ignorance” as being productive of death, which Clement had included in his own definition of “death of the soul.”

Origen’s analysis of part of Psalm 22:4 (LXX) connects death of the soul with sin.

“Though I pass through the midst of the shadow of death, I shall not fear evil.” In speaking of the ‘shadow of death’ the physical and the common death (τὸν φυσικὸν τε καὶ κοινὸν θανάτον) is distinguished from the ‘death of the soul.’ Inssofar as it is said the soul (immersed in) sinning dies, (ἡ ψυχὴ ἡ ἁμαρτάνοσα ἀποθανεῖν) so the one believing in the Son of God does not die eternally, having passed from death to life.

Here we see two different nuances:

a) The first is similar to both Philo’s and Clement’s understanding of death of the soul, where the soul “immersed in sinning dies.” This requires little added comment, except that he insisted that the Old Testament prophets were inspired by the Holy Spirit, and that it was the Spirit that clarified their minds and freed their bodies from the lust of the flesh, “destroying that enmity against God which the carnal passions serve to excite.”

We will see that this criterion is the same as for Christian saints.

b) The second nuance is the reference to “having passed from death to life.” This seems to be an allusion to Rom 6:3-4; and while Origen does not mention baptism, it is clear that the practical consequence of belief in the Son of God is what will result in baptism. Hence, we have a reference to what we discussed in the chapter on Paul.

Let us now examine a comment that Origen made in his discussion of another psalm. He dealt with Ps 7:13-14, (LXX), which reads:

\[\text{\footnotesize 674} \]
Clement, *Strom.* 2.7.35.1-4. This was quoted above on pages 262 and 270.

\[\text{\footnotesize 675} \]

\[\text{\footnotesize 676} \]
Origen, *Cels.* 7.4.1-10.
If you do not repent, he (God) will whet his sword; he has bent and strung his bow; he has prepared his deadly weapons, making his arrows fiery shafts.

It is likely that the original writer, who composed the Psalm had a similar picture of God as Homer did when he described Apollo in the *Iliad* 1.45-50, a god angry at the injustice before him, who then let fly his murderous arrows.

Origen, however, interpreted the passage that describes the phrase ἡτοίμασεν σκεύη θανάτου (“prepared the weapons of death”) as “unclean reason,” (ἀκάθαρτα λογικά) or souls bearing death; as weapons/instruments of life (σκεύη ζωῆς), souls bear life. The play on the word σκεύος becomes important, for it may mean either “instrument” or “weapon,” depending on the context. He continues to indicate that Paul was named “chosen instrument” in Acts (Παῦλον σκεύος ἐκλογῆς ὄνομασεν ὁ Κύριος). Thus, Paul would be considered the instrument of life, as described by the words of the Lord in Acts 9:15 (πορεύου, ὅτι σκεύος ἐκλογῆς ἔστιν μοι) in contrast to the “instrument or weapon” of death typified by unclean reason.

The phrase ἀκάθαρτα λογικά is not common, existing only here in the Greek remnants of Origen’s work. But in *Expositio Proverbia*

> Πρὸς μόνην τὴν σοφίαν ἀδυνατοῦσιν οἱ δαίμονες, λογισμοὺς ἐμβάλλειν εἰς τὴν κορδίαν τοῦ σοφισμένου μὴ συγχωροῦμεν· ὥς γὰρ νος τῆς σοφίας αὐτοποιημένος θεωρημασίαν, ἀνεπιδεχτὸς γίνεται λογισμοῖς ἀκαθάρτοις. —Νῦνς καθαρῶς ἐγγίζει σοφία, ἐπειδὴ τὸ εὐ γνωσκεί· ὥς ὄ δὲ ἀκαθάρτως μακρωθήσεται ἀπ’ αὐτῆς.  

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678 Origen, *Exp. Priv.* 17, 169, 4-10.
demons have an inability regarding wisdom alone, the arguments proposed not being included in the heart of wise-being. For the intellect of the wise person contends with their understanding, not permitting the holding of an unclean argument. The clean reason draws close to wisdom, since it understands the good; but the unclean (reason) is far from it.

Origen continues by contending that “stumbling of the natural reason is an unclean reckoning or false knowledge,” which provides us with his perspective that an “unclean reason” is one which harbors falsehood, and is distinguished from one that engages truth (or, better, Truth). The suggestion is that one who deviates from truth is one who, having an unclean reason, courts death. Error is, hence, death bearing. We will see this reappear below.

Another aspect of Origen’s finding the “death of the soul” in OT writings appears elsewhere in the *Exposition of Proverbs*, where he points out that impiety is a sin against God. And while this is not a monumental comment, he continues by saying, “it follows that those who hate wisdom love death, since wisdom is life” (£κ η σοφία ζωή). In this statement, we see that death is that which occurs upon committing “impiety.” Hence, we have another connection between wisdom as “life” and “impiety” as that which produces its opposite, i.e., death. But what, exactly, does Origen mean by “impiety?” That it is a sin has been known since *Euthyrphro*, and we recall that for Philo impiety was the sin that was at the root of all other sins. But Origen contrasts it to “Wisdom,” not “piety.” This causes us to note that wisdom might be defined in terms of

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679 Ibid. 11.
680 Ibid. 17.185.10.
681 Ibid. 17.185. 13-15.
682 Above, p. 79.
dogma. We will see below that such a connection is, in fact, made. Thus, the sources of
the “death of the soul” are expanding from what most theologians have included in their
lists of sins to include doctrinal deviance. In the numerous adjectives that Philo included
in his extensive list of character-qualities resulting from a dedication to pleasure in *Sacr.*
32, only two (ἀμαθὴς and ἀναισθητος) of over a hundred might parallel Origen’s
inclusion of doctrinal deviance as being sinful.

As a final comment, we must examine Origen’s *Hom. Num.* 9.5. Here Origen
discusses Num 17:3 (LXX) where Aaron stood between the living and the dead, having
provided incense and stopped the plague.683 He writes, “Some, however, of those who
have interpreted this passage before us, I recall that they have said that the dead are
understood to be dead in their sins through the excess of their wickedness, while the alive
are those who remain in the works of life.”

Runia has pointed out that this is very close to the exegesis that Philo makes in
*Her.* 201 and *Somn.* 2.234-5, where in both cases the separation is emphasized of those
who live to virtue and find life from those who live to wickness and find only death.
Hence, we see another example where Origen’s concept of the death of the soul might be
rooted in a Philonic passage.684

Having examined the foregoing texts, let us now move to Origen’s comments on
the “death of the soul” based on NT texts.

683 See above, p. 104 for the Philonic interpretation of this text in Num.
684 Noted by van den Hoek, "Philo and Origen,” 106.
First, let us see what Origen says in his *Commentary on John*, where he is discussing John 4:24 (God is Spirit), and explains that while we are all made-alive in the Spirit, we usually refer to “ordinary life;” but there is a “true life” (τὴν ἀληθινὴν ζωὴν) which is that provided by the Spirit. Origen continues, “for ‘the letter kills’ (τὸ γράμμα ἀποκτένει) (2 Cor 3:6) and creates death, not that (death) according to the separation of the soul from the body, but that according to the separation of the soul from God. . . (οὐ τὸν κατὰ τὸν χωρισμὸν τῆς ψυχῆς ἀπὸ τοῦ σώματος, ἀλλὰ τὸν κατὰ τὸν χωρισμὸν τῆς ψυχῆς ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ).” This may well be a definition for the death of the soul, for we see the continuation of the identical idea that we saw in Philo, Paul and Clement: “life” is defined as that state of intimacy with God, and death as that state of alienation from God. Origen is firmly within the trajectory of the idea through time.

Elsewhere in his *Commentary on John*, Origen discusses John 8:21 (“Again he said to them, ‘I am going away, and you will search for me, but you will die in your sin. Where I am going, you cannot come’”)). He points out that only some of those who heard Jesus’ words would believe in Him, but that “not many” remain in His word, and “not many” truly become His disciples (οὐδὲ οἱ πολλοὶ ἀληθῶς αὐτοῦ μαθηταὶ γίνονται). Origen continues to qualify those who “die in their sins” to include only those who are unable to follow Him, not because of inherent natural defects, but because of their unwillingness to do so. Hence, death occurs to these only because of a personal decision,

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686 We saw this before in our section on “Life”.
or an exercise of free will. Origen introduces in this discussion a phrase from Ezekiel 18:4, (“Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins that shall die”), with 1 John 5:17, (“All wrongdoing is sin, but there is sin that is not mortal” (πᾶσα ἄσκει ἁμαρτία ἐστίν, καὶ ἐστὶν ἁμαρτία ὅπερ πρὸς θάνατον). We will discuss in the final section of this chapter the distinction between sins that bring death to a person and those which do not bring death, found in 1 John 5:17. Origen continues to summarize by saying:

In addition, you will compare Ezekiel’s statement, ‘The soul that sins, the same shall die,’ with the statement, ‘you will die in your sin,’ for sin is the death of the soul. I do not think, however, that this is true of every sin, but of the sin that John says is to death.

This provides a bifurcation, where sins are categorized as those that lead to death (without a specific definition) and those which do not. It will be necessary to attempt to distinguish precisely what those acts are that produce death to the soul.

It will be instructive to analyze another section of Origen’s writings where he deals with the death of the soul. Let us examine part of the Dialogue with Heraclides. Beginning in 24.25, Origen introduces the following comment by Bishop Demetrius: “Our brother Origen is teaching that the soul is immortal.” Origen responds first by indicating that the soul is both mortal and immortal, and then by distinguishing the three kinds of death, relying not as much on the positions of the Greeks as that which is

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690 Recall that Clement also quoted Ezek 18:4 in his discussion of death of the soul, Sect. 5.2.


provided according to Holy Scripture.\textsuperscript{693} First, he points out the kind of death where one dies to sin, as Paul indicated in Rom. 6:10. This is a valuable and important kind of death.

He knows of a second kind of death where one dies to God (Οἴδα καὶ ἄλλον θάνατον καθεὶν ἀποθνῄσκει τις τῶ Θεῶ). About this death it is said: The soul that sins shall die (Ezek 18:4) περὶ σοὶ εἰρηταί: Ἦχη ἡ ἀμαρτόνουσα αὐτὴ ἀποθανεῖται.\textsuperscript{694}

This kind of death is that which is produced by alienation from God. He writes:

There is another death, in regard to which we are not immortal; but it is possible for us, through vigilance, not to die this death. And perhaps what is mortal in the soul is not mortal forever. For to the extent that it allows itself to commit such a sin that it becomes a soul that sins which itself will die (cf. Ezek 18:4), the soul is mortal for a real death. But if it becomes confirmed in blessedness so that it is inaccessible to death, in possessing eternal life it is no longer mortal but has become, according to this meaning too, immortal.\textsuperscript{695}

Note here that he identifies a kind of sin that leads to death, namely, that which produces alienation from God. To this extent, a soul is not immortal, and that a real death can ensue. This is parallel to the kind of death of the soul that we have seen in Philo, Paul and Clement. However, he also indicates that if a soul becomes confirmed in blessedness, then it will not die. We shall discuss this element below when we ask how Origen dealt with those whose soul has died through sin.

As our last example of “death of the soul” in Origen, we turn to his Commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians.\textsuperscript{696} We focus on Eph 2:1-5:

\textsuperscript{693} Origen, \textit{Dialogue}, 25.6.

\textsuperscript{694} \textit{Ibid.} 25.12.

\textsuperscript{695} \textit{Ibid.} 26.17-27.4.

You were dead through the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once lived, following the course of this world, following the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work among those who are disobedient. 3 All of us once lived among them in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of flesh and senses, and we were by nature children of wrath, like everyone else. 4 But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us 5 even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ.

Origen comments by explicating the text itself primarily by repeating the essence of these five verses, identifying being “sons of disobedience” with the life of doing the will of the flesh;697 but he adds another layer to the actions of the “sons of disobedience” by claiming that those who disobey the divine doctrines when they are proclaimed are “sons of disobedience.” (ὁ καταγγελλομένων θείων δογμάτων ἀπειθοῦν. . . υἱὸς ἀπειθείας).698 This expands the focus of proper behavior to include the morality of obeying the Church. Instead of limiting sins of the flesh to what is normally included in ἐπιθυμία, he includes dissention from the proclamation of the Church. He continues to re-affirm that “clearly, sins are said to be the death of the soul” (σαφῶς δὲ θανάτος τῆς ψυχῆς εἶναι λέγεται τὰ ἁμαρτήματα) re-quoting Eph 2:1.

He continues, however, by making a distinction between “sins” and “trespasses,” primarily in terms of seriousness. “Trespasses” are “beginnings,” “as if they were not yet falls but proceed to our falling.”699 We will see this distinction arise again when we discuss Origen’s attitude towards those who have been baptized and then subsequently commit sins. But we must read him as including disagreement with doctrine as one of the elements wherein one either dies or begins to die spiritually.

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697 Origen, Fr. Eph., 9, 149, 152.
698 Ibid., 9.195.
699 Ibid. 9. 164.
Let us summarize what we have seen above. First, Origen is clearly within the tradition that we have been tracing, most clearly following Philo and Clement in that a life of vice brings some sort of real (not merely metaphorical) death to the soul. Second, we have seen that the normal list of sins enumerated by Philo, Paul and Clement have been expanded to include obedience to the teachings of the Church. Hence, intellectual submission to the dogmas of the Church become a marker of “life,” with dissention or disobedience being another source of death. Third, Origen had as his source for describing the “death of the soul” many more texts both in the OT and NT than prior writers. He found the idea well established in both Testaments.

6.4 Origen and Penance

Let us now focus on the subsequent state of a person previously baptized who has died spiritually, according to Origen. We recall above that Origen distinguished between “sins” and “trespasses,” in that the latter brought weakness to the soul, but the former brought death. Weakness of the soul could be visualized within a medical metaphor, often used by Origen. Weakness could be seen as a spiritual illness, but which if not treated, and if multiplied, could bring about death. He indicates in the Homilies on Joshua that

We do not maintain that one should be cut off for a light error (ut pro levi culpa aliquis abscidatur); but if for a trespass (delicto) one is exhorted and upbraided once, and again, and even a third time, and there is no sign of improvement, then we use the method of the physician…excommunication. (descandi).

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701 Origen, In Josue Homilia 7.6 (PG 12, 862).
This methodology of imposing the discipline of excommunication is ancient, found in 1QS 8.21, as well as in 1 Cor 5:5 and Matt 18:15-17. Indeed, in the OT, the worst punishment was being “cut off” from Israel (Lev 17:10, 18:29, 19:8, etc.).

Thus, if “trespasses” multiply and increasingly infect the soul, then death can be brought about, which might require amputation from the body of Christ. However, Origen seems to hold out hope for the salvation of all, even the devil.\footnote{Origen, Princ. 3.6.5.140. Crouzel points out that while, in this section, “Death” (that which is destroyed by Christ as the last enemy, 1 Cor 15:26) is not specifically identified with the devil (Origen 262) “…there can be no question of the substance of Death unless Death is a specific creature which can be none other than the Devil…” This would be consistent with Origen’s concept that punishment is educational, not vindictive; and that perhaps (only “perhaps”) the hostility that the devil feels towards God might be overcome at the end of the world. Crouzel notes a tentative, not dogmatic, tendency in Origen on this matter (Origen, 265).} Hence, we find that the “resurrection” of the person who is spiritually dead is a distinct possibility for Origen, through penance.

Let us note briefly that, at the time of Origen, there was much discussion in the Church about both the power and the discipline of the clergy and hierarchy regarding the forgiveness of sins. The bishop of Rome, Callistus (217-223 CE +/-), was castigated by Tertullian for having stipulated that he could forgive adultery.\footnote{Tertullian, De Pudicitia. 1.6. 25-28, PL 2. 982, “I hear that there has been an Edict promulgated, by the Pontifex Maximus, if you please, that is, the Bishop of Bishops, which said ‘I remit the trespasses of adultery and fornication through completing penance’. My trans.} Hippolytus, the first “anti-pope” and unmitigated foe of Callistus, castigated him for appropriating to himself the right to forgive “sins of pleasure” (πρὸς τας ἡδονὰς ςμαρτίας).\footnote{Hippolytus, Refutatio omnium haeresium 9.12.20-23 in M. Marcovich, ed. Patristische Texte und Studien 25 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1986). My trans.} Hippolytus continued to allege that any Christian who desired to sin could simply join the “School of Callistus,” and the sin would not be accounted to him. Further, he insisted that Callistus...
would permit a bishop, if he committed a “sin unto death,” to be tolerated and not deposed.\textsuperscript{705}

These events occurred within the context of a highly “rigorist” period in the Church, typified by Tertullian’s insistence that grave sins could not be forgiven and were “irremissible,” quoting (almost) 1 John 5:16.\textsuperscript{706} But he recognized that bishops had the power to forgive at least minor sins that were not “unto-death.”\textsuperscript{707} O. Watkins brought attention to the \textit{Canones Hippolyti}, which included a prayer used at the consecration of a bishop that ran: “Grant to him, O Lord, the episcopate and a clement spirit and power to remit sins.”\textsuperscript{708} Watkins continues to point out that in the same \textit{Canones} an artisan who created an idol was to be excommunicated “until he do penance (poenitentiam agat).”\textsuperscript{709} Thus, there were indeed some sins that a bishop could forgive; at issue was the kind of sins that could be remitted, especially those \textit{πρὸς τὸν θάνατον}. It is important to see that at the time when Origen was writing, the issue of a spiritual resurrection from the death caused by sin was hotly contested.

Let us first deal with an instructive section of Origen’s \textit{Commentary on John}, where he is commenting on the raising of Lazarus by Jesus in 11:43-44:. . . (Jesus) cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go.” Origen comments on this by applying the command of Jesus to

\textsuperscript{705} \textit{Ibid.} 9.12.21.6-22.

\textsuperscript{706} Tertullian, \textit{De Pudicitia}, 1.18.80-84.

\textsuperscript{707} \textit{Ibid}.


\textsuperscript{709} \textit{Ibid.} 131.
those “Lazaruses” who had become Christians, but who subsequently became “sick and
died.” These were metaphorically placed in a tomb, but they were later “made alive” by
Jesus’ prayer summoning them from the tomb of spiritual death. Those who come forth
are, like Lazarus, still bound with cloths so that he can neither see nor walk without the
help of Jesus. Origen continues:

Consider the one who has fallen away from Christ and returned to the Gentiles’
life (ἐπὶ τὸν εθνικὸν παλινδρομήσαντα βίον) after he has received knowledge of
the truth and been enlightened, and tasted the heavenly gift, and become a
partaker of the Holy Spirit, and tasted the good word of God and the powers of
the age to come, to be in Hades with the shades, and the dead, and to be in the
land of the dead or the tombs.710

The definition of “Gentiles’ life” is important. First, it can’t have any meaning
other than that life of a non-Christian, as opposed to a non-Jew, because the entire
Church was basically converted pagans. Second, there was an identification within
ancient Judaism between “Gentiles” and “sinners.” We see it in Gal 2:15, where Paul
contrasts himself and Peter from ἐθνῶν ἁμαρτωλοί. But, without digressing greatly, Jews
(and Christians) distinguished themselves from pagans who did not have the Mosaic law,
and who were seen as engaged in sexual excesses, violence and rapacity. Thus, to live
the life of a “Gentile” is to live a life of sin and separation from God. Finally, the very
term that Origen uses to describe the “return to Gentiles’ life” (παλινδρομέω) implies a
backsliding, a return to a prior, less-perfect state.

Having established that a person who was baptized has sinned and is in the “land
of the dead,” Origen continues by offering hope:

Whenever, therefore, on behalf of such a person, Jesus comes to his tomb and,
standing outside it, prays and is heard (εὐχηταὶ καὶ ἐπακουσθῇ) he asks that there
be a power in his voice and words and cries out with a loud voice, and summons

710 Origen, Comm. Jo. 28.7.56.1.
him who was his friend to the things outside the life of the Gentiles (ἐπὶ τὰ ἐξω τοῦ τῶν ἔθνων βίου) and their tomb and cave.\footnote{711}  

This is language that focuses on the spiritual death of a person who, like Lazarus, is dead in his own personal tomb, but who is still loved by Jesus (i.e., the church) who summons him or her from a life characteristic of the Gentiles to a life of intimacy with God. Origen continues to describe the person who has come forth at Jesus’ bidding, by describing him or her as being alive\footnote{712} “because he has repented and has heard Jesus’ voice (διὰ μὲν τὴν μετάνοιαν καὶ τὸ ἀκηκοέναι τῆς Ἰησοῦ φωνῆς ζῶν).”  

Thus, the language that Origen uses is clearly that which expresses the possibility of a “re-conversion” after one has sinned. And the sins are not merely minor faults (παράπτωμα), but must be those which lead to death, i.e., murder, adultery, fornication and apostasy.

Let us now investigate the various ways that Origen contends that sins may be remitted. He does, in fact, list seven different ways in a passage in \textit{Homilies on Leviticus} 2.4. There he writes that baptism is the first way, which remits all sins committed prior to this event. He then acknowledges the second way, which is the passion of a martyr.\footnote{713} The third way is to make charitable distributions of money, following the dictate of Luke 11:41, which promises “cleanliness” (manda) in return for alms. The fourth way is to forgive the sins of brothers who have sinned against one, for this will produce

\footnotetext[711]{Origen, \textit{Comm. Jo.} 28.7.56.5.}  
\footnotetext[712]{\textit{Ibid.} 28.7.57.3-4.}  
\footnotetext[713]{Jean Danielou, \textit{Origene} (Paris: La Table Ronde, 1948), 81, indicates that this second way of securing remission implies the undergoing of martyrdom itself. However, in the \textit{Exhortation to Martyrdom}, Origen describes the activities of martyrs, who have been beheaded for Jesus, who serve at the heavenly altar “not in vain,” and “minister to those praying (to them) for the remission of sins” (διακονοῦσα τοῖς εὐχομένοις ἀφεσιν ἀμαρτημάτων) (\textit{Mart.} 30.12-14). Hence, Origen includes the intercessory function of martyrs as an additional means of securing the remission of sins.}
forgiveness from the Father (Matt 11:41). Fifth, one’s sins are forgiven if one brings another from his or her sinful ways, which saves one’s soul from death and covers (*operit*) a multitude of sins (Jas. 5:20). The sixth way is to exercise charity, as called for in 1 Pet 4:8, for *caritas operit multitudinem peccatorum*. The final way is most interesting. Origen characterizes it as “hard and laborious,” (*dura et laboriosa*), where a person secures forgiveness through washing him/herself in tears day and night. Then, “without being embarrassed” (*cum non erubescit*), he or she discloses his/her sins to a priest of the Lord (*sacerdoti Domini*) and requests medicine, saying, “I will confess my unjust (actions) to the Lord, and you will remit the impieties of my heart” (Ps. 31:5 LXX).

All of the seven ways of securing forgiveness are rooted in Scripture, except that the seventh includes a priest, not referred to directly by Origen’s Scriptural allusions. However, in another section of the *Homilies on Leviticus*, he points out that in accordance with the will of Christ, who gave the priesthood to the Church (*qui sacerdotium ecclesiae dedit*) these priests receive the sins of the people; and imitating the Master, they give remission of sins (*et ipsi imitantes mageistrum remissionem peccatorum tribuant.*) It should be pointed out, as Ernest Latko does, that “by the expression priest he doubtless means the bishop…” He roots this position in Origen’s *Homilies on Numbers*, where he

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714 This is apparently a sort of duplication of the third way, except that Origen uses as a standard the selection of NT texts; Luke 11:41 uses ἔλεημοσύνη and 1 Pet 4:8 uses ἀγάπη.


716 Origen, *Hom. Lev. 5.3.*
says that “it is the prerogative of the bishop that he (the penitent) should receive remission of his sins.”\textsuperscript{717}

We should now turn to the discussion of the kinds of sins that are subject to remission. As we might expect, the lesser sins (transgressions) are amenable to penitence with little problem. In his \textit{Homilies on Leviticus}, we find that Origen discusses “houses not made with hands” that await us in heaven, and that those of us here below may still continue to build houses for ourselves here. He continues to describe the consequences if one of the houses here below should happen to fail (i.e., if one of us should lapse), there is always the chance to recover (\textit{semper est recuperandi facultas}) provided the character of the fault is not a \textit{culpa mortalis} or \textit{crimene mortali}, which means that it is not blasphemy of faith, which is surrounded by a wall of church and apostolic doctrine; if, indeed, the fault should be an error in speech or way-of-life (\textit{in sermonis, vel in morum vitio}), this sort of fault can always be repaired. However, for graver sins, penance is granted only once (\textit{in gravioribus enim criminibus semel tantum poenitentiae conceditur locus}).\textsuperscript{718}

Latko points out that, in any event, penance (especially for serious sins) involved public penance. He says, “A study of his texts will reveal, we are convinced, that he demands public penance for all capital sins, whether public or secret.”\textsuperscript{719} He points to the quotation referred to above from Hom. \textit{Lev.} as the seventh mode, i.e., when the penitent permits tears to flow. Further, we see in \textit{Homilies on Psalms} that in discussing Ps. 37, he


\textsuperscript{718} Origen, \textit{Hom. Lev.} 15.2. 60-61.

\textsuperscript{719} Latko, \textit{Origen’s Concept of Penance}, 96.
avers that the friends and neighbors of the penitent will desert him, “and stand away from him because he turns to *exomologesis* and sorrow for his sin.”\(^720\)

That sins are forgiven is clear from an additional section from *Hom. Lev.* 2.4.

Origen continues, after forgiveness is received by the penitent:

> In (this) what the Apostle says is fulfilled: “Is any man sick among you? Let him bring in the priests of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick man: and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him” (Jas. 5:14-15).\(^721\)

There is one final text that we should discuss, a notorious text from *De oratione*, 28.10. We had mentioned above that Tertullian and Hippolytus had castigated Callistus for his claim to forgive “sins unto death.” Origen seems to have taken a similar position. He writes:

> I do not know how some (πυες) arrogate to themselves powers that exceed the priestly dignity (τὴν ἱερατικὴν ἀξίαν); perhaps they do not thoroughly understand priestly knowledge. These people boast they are able to pardon even idolatry and to forgive adultery and fornication, supposing that through their prayers for those who have dared these things (διὰ τῆς εὐχῆς αὐτῶν περὶ τῶν τούτων ταύτα τετολμηκότων), even mortal sin is loosed (λυομένης καὶ τῆς πρὸς θάνατον ἁμαρτίας). For they do not read that “there is a sin which is mortal. I do not say that one is to pray for that.” (1 John 5:15)\(^722\)

If we examine the foregoing, we are drawn to the following conclusions: First, he is speaking of a group (not of a single person), since he refers to “some” (πυες). Latko has speculated that the reference was not only to Callistus, but also to Urbanus and Pontianus, (Callistus’ successors) “and quite probably against some neighboring members of the

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\(^720\) *Ibid.* 99, where Latko quotes *Hom. Ps.* 37, 2.1, (PG 12, 1380-81); *Hom. Ps.* 37.2.1, (SC 411).


hierarchy.” As has been pointed out, Latko stipulated that penance was primarily a function of the bishop; hence, his focusing on the “hierarchy.”

Second, the overall tenor of the statement appears to be directed at those persons who remit sins regardless of the interior disposition of the penitent. We have seen that Origen demands a personal re-conversion involving tears and other external marks of grief in order to receive remission of sins. It may well be that Origen is focusing on those priests who do not require the exterior manifestation of grief about one’s sins.

Third, Origen is focusing on sins- unto-death (idolatry, adultery and fornication), the latter two of which are designated by Origen as sins- unto-death in Hom. Lev. 11.2. Here Origen is not contending that such sins are not remissible, but only that certain persons appear to have claimed the ability to remit them without repentance on the part of the penitent.

Latko insists that, “there are innumerable passages found throughout many of Origen’s works which show unmistakably that all sins can be forgiven. . . .” Indeed, we find in the same De oratione the statement that

……we know that fugitives from God’s orders who have been swallowed up by death, which at first prevails over them, have been saved through repentance from so great an evil, since they did not despair of being able to be saved even though they had been made captive in the belly of death.

\begin{footnotes}

723 Latko, Origen’s Concept of Penance, 144.

724 In the same Hom. Lev, 11.2.108-110, he does affirm that “If there is someone who, having incurred sins of this kind, admonished now by the Word of God, let him flee to the aid of repentance (Quod et si aliquis sit, qui forte praeventus est in hujuscemodi peccatis, admonitus nunc verbo Dei ad auxilium confugiat paenitentiae).”

725 Latko, Origen’s Concept of Penance, 145.

\end{footnotes}
Thus, we see that Origen sees capital sins as being subject to remission by penance, provided that there exists an expression of grief from the penitent as well as the declaration of the sins to a priest (or bishop).

It should be pointed out that in the case of sins unto death, there may have been required some public expression of penance, such as being temporarily excluded from the sacraments or some other exclusion from the communal life of the Church. This is pointed to in Origen’s *Homily on Jeremiah* 12, where he is initially discussing the bringing-together of the righteous in heaven and the scattering of sinners; the “scattering” is seen as a discipline, designed to provide a benefit. “It is necessary that you a sinner, attended by God, taste something more bitter so that once disciplined you may be saved.” The rationale for the discipline is then provided: “If he is shown mercy, he will repeat the same crimes. If he is not shown mercy, he will die.”

The consequence of the forgoing is that while Clement admitted that there was the possibility of a resurrection from the dead of those Christians who had died through sin after having been baptized, through the process of being instructed by the Word, Origen provides an institutional solution to the problem. It is not merely necessary to repent, but it is also necessary to declare both minor infractions and major, death-causing sins to a priest or bishop. Following such declaration and expression of sorrow at having sinned, a resurrection could be achieved, albeit only once in one’s lifetime for capital sins. But at least the person who has died spiritually has the hope that he or she can be resurrected with Christ through the institutional structure of penance.

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While Origen stipulated that “…God…alone has authority to forgive (sins,)
he insisted on the mediation of a priest, which set the stage for a critical element in the
communal life, wherein one could achieve the assurance that having died to God after
baptism, one could be resurrected through the Church.

6.5 Summary

We first focused on Origen’s anthropology, and discovered that he followed the
Stoic tri-partition of a person into spirit, soul and body; but he understood the person as
one who has the opportunity of participating in God’s life. He also recognized that each
person confronts the reality of a moral struggle, where the flesh experiences the tendency
to be dominated by pleasure, but the soul strives after a life of grace, whose source is
God. Each person is endowed with free will, and is subject to punishment for having
chosen a sinful life instead of one of Christian virtue.

We then moved to the examination of Origen’s concept of life, and found that he
was influenced by two vectors of thought, that of Scripture and that of Greek culture. He
identified true life as being the product of belief in Jesus Christ, relating the light that was
referred to in the prologue of the Gospel of John to the life that occurred through
Christian belief. This belief transformed itself into becoming like God. In this he was
totally coherent with the telos of Middle Platonism, which had adopted the Platonic
dictum from Theatetus 176b and appeared in Eudorus, Philo and Clement before Origen.
In pursuing the likeness to God, one necessarily imitates the cardinal virtues of justice,

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729 Origen, Or. 28.8.13-15.
temperance, courage and wisdom, as well as piety. Ultimately, the process of becoming like to God includes the elimination of passion as being the root of virtue. This, of course, is reflective of the Stoicism characteristic of Alexandrian thought.

We then discovered that the death of the soul is the product of sin, coherent with Philo and Clement. Origen found a source for this idea both in Scripture and in Philo and Clement, though he most likely referred to Philo only once as a “predecessor.” He analyzed Pss 22:4 and 7:13-4. Additionally, he found evidence in the NT, focusing on “being in . . . sins” in John 8:21 and Eph 2:1-5 and “sins unto death” in 1 John 5:17. We found a relatively extensive discussion in *Dialogue with Heraclides*, referring to Rom 6:10. It was discovered that Origen is within the tradition of understanding death of the soul as being rooted in sinfulness and as previously discussed in Philo, Paul and Clement.

One final element that was hinted at in Clement but developed by Origen was that of repentance as being made available to one who had died spiritually through sin. We found that given serious sin, one could be returned to life through a series of positive acts, but also through the acts of a bishop, providing true repentance was demonstrated. Thus, the final point of this entire discussion on the death of the soul is that a method was developed where life could be restored. This is the final contribution of Origen to what had been adumbrated in Philo, Paul and Clement. The death of the soul as a result of serious sin was acknowledged by all three, but Origen outlined the ecclesiastical procedure to have such sins forgiven.
CHAPTER 7:
CONCLUSIONS

We began our journey through history with Heraclitus, “the obscure.” His aphoristic style demanded a heuristic that attempted to solve the riddle-like character of what remains of his work. To do so, we recognized that a good number of his fragments could be read as expressing a moral vector, in addition to the cosmic vector proposed by many scholars. Given this consideration, we understood the Λόγος to provide the moral standard in view of which behavior could be judged. We then asked if his use of the word “death” could, in some cases, be interpreted as “death of the soul,” and answered the query affirmatively. We even postulated that since there were very few unchangeable states in the world as visualized by Heraclitus, even death of the soul could possibly be reversed.

We then moved to discuss the work of Philo of Alexandria, and discovered that his notion of the death of the soul was not merely metaphorical, as Zeller and Wasserman had proposed. Instead, for Philo a person who lived a life divorced from the control of reason was one who became reduced on the ontological hierarchy of being. Since reason is what distinguishes human beings from irrational animals, the rejection of reason constituted a degradation on the scale of being to that of an animal. However, we also saw that repentance was a possibility as a means of avoiding the permanent state of spiritual death.
When we read Paul, we subjected the *Epistle to the Romans* to the heuristic used in reading Heraclitus, asking whether the context within which Paul used the word “death” was one where physical death, metaphorical death or spiritual death best illuminated his use. We found twenty-five cases where “spiritual death” (meaning “death of the soul”) offered a superior reading than physical or metaphorical death. We also interpreted Rom 7:14-25 as providing an early expression within the church of repentance as a cry for help. Hence, for Paul, we found not only superior readings for the word “death,” but also that such a state need not be absolutely permanent.

In moving to Clement of Alexandria, we discovered that the death of the soul was amply expressed in his work. We found that there were Philonic influences that were perceptible, but we also saw that he interpreted Rom 6:23 in the same way that we had laid out, in terms of spiritual, not physical, death. We also saw that Clement realized that spiritual death, or life dominated by the passions and desires, need not be a permanent state, but that one could appeal to the Lord, revise his or her way of living, and achieve salvation.

Finally, we dealt with Origen’s work, and found ample evidence that he recognized the death of the soul in a manner similar to Clement. However, we also saw the development of the concept that death of the soul was the result of incorrectly held beliefs. It became clear that he was part of the Alexandrian tradition regarding the death of the soul that originated with Philo and continued through Clement. We found in Origen, however, a relatively well-developed concept of repentance, and the possibility of arising out of a state of spiritual death not only through a set of scripturally based actions, but through appeal to a presbyter, expressing repentance through groans and
tears, and receiving absolution as a result. This idea subsequently evolved within the Catholic Church as the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Thus, the reality of the death of the soul became a traditional expression as the result of a life of vice, or separation from God. Its reality was affirmed not merely as a metaphor, but one expressing a concrete state of being, and that lower on the hierarchical scale of being than a rational animal.

Perhaps the most important discovery was not that Philo and Paul understood a vicious life as productive of a real form of death, but that such death was not seen as being irrevocable. Hence, there is never a time when hope must be lost; spiritual death is a real state of being for our ancient thinkers, but most importantly, it can be overcome.
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