

# IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL (PLATŌN) AND BODILY RESURRECTION (PAUL) — ANY RAPPROCHEMENT?

Chrys C. Caragounis

[mail@chrys-caragounis.com](mailto:mail@chrys-caragounis.com)

## ABSTRACT

It is a usual assumption among New Testament scholars that in his discussion of the resurrection of the dead, Paul holds to the Jewish view of the resurrection of the body, not to the Hellenic (Platonic) view of the immortality of the soul. As this question impinges on the question of anthropology, it is further stated that according to the Hellenic view man *has* a body — which, moreover is conceived as a tomb of the soul (Orphics) — whereas according to the Jewish view man is a body.

A careful investigation of the Hellenic and OT-Jewish evidence shows that it is a methodological miss to confuse views in Homēros and the Orphics with later views in Sokrates and Platōn. Moreover there never was a “Jewish view” of the resurrection. There were five/six views. The resurrection of the body was a minority view.

The Pauline texts show that Paul speaks of the resurrection of the dead but never of the resurrection of the body as well as that man *has* a body. It is thus intriguing to compare Paul’s view of resurrection with Platōn’s view of the immortality of the soul and see how far apart they are from one another.

KEY WORDS: First Corinthians, Resurrection (of the body), Immortality of the soul.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Ernest Best prefaces his discussion of 1 Th 5:23 in his commentary with the remark that “To the Greek for whom the body was the tomb or prison of the immortal soul its ultimate fate was unimportant”<sup>1</sup>. This brief generalizing quotation raises many questions, but perhaps the bottom line is that the Hellēn believed in the everlastingness of the soul but the mortality of the body, and that this view was in conflict with the Jewish view, according to which, the body was an integral part of the personality, and as such could not be dispensed with at death. Or, to put it in a more classic way, in R. Bultmann’s words:

That *soma* belongs inseparably, constitutively, to human existence is most clearly evident from the fact that Paul cannot conceive even of a future human existence after death ...as an existence without *soma*<sup>2</sup>.



And further down:

*Soma* is not something that outwardly clings to a man's real *self* (to his soul, for instance), but belongs to its very essence, so that we can say man does not *have a soma*; he *is soma*<sup>3</sup>.

Bultmann understands man as *soma* in his own peculiar existentialist fashion<sup>4</sup>, but this line is not in focus in this study, and will, therefore, not be pursued any further. It is pertinent to the present issue, however, that Bultmann thinks of the tripartite description of man in 1 Th 5:23 as spirit, soul and body, as a “naive anthropological view”, since it places *soma* in contrast with soul or spirit. This would tend to contradict Bultmann's statement about Paul's view, above. In spite of this, Bultmann goes on to say “[Paul] holds fast to the traditional Jewish-Christian teaching of the resurrection of the dead”<sup>5</sup>. This is meant to underline the indissoluble union between soul and body, and this is, moreover, said to be the traditional OT-Jewish-Christian view, which stands in sharp contrast to the Hellenic view, according to which man has a body, which he loses at death.

Bultmann's distinction between what is thought to be the biblically based Jewish-Christian view and the Hellenic view is widely accepted today<sup>6</sup>. In fact, Cooper — a staunch anti-Platōnist — goes on to say:

---

\* The transcription of Hellenic names is made directly from the Hellenic rather than via the imprecise Latin.

<sup>1</sup> E. Best, *A Commentary on the First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians*, London: A & C Black, 1986, 243.

<sup>2</sup> R. Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, 2 Vols. London: SCM 1952, Vol. 1, p. 192. Thee.

<sup>3</sup> Bultmann, *Theology*, Vol. 1, p. 194. The same expression is used by D. Myers, *The Human Puzzle*, 88, cited by J. W. Cooper, *Body, Soul and Life Everlasting*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans-Leicester: Apollos, 2000, p. 32. I read Cooper's book after the completion of this article, so I could only make a minimal use of it, but its argumentation has left me unconvinced. See my review of it in *EQ* LXXV, 4 (2003), 373-75.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. e.g. Bultmann, *Theology*, Vol. 1, 195 f.: “*Man is called soma in respect to his being able to make himself the object of his own action or to experience himself as the subject to whom something happens. He can be called soma, that is, as having a relationship to himself* — as being able in a certain sense to distinguish himself from himself. Or more exactly, he is so called as that self from whom he, as subject, distinguished himself, the self with whom he can deal as the object of his own conduct, and also the self whom he can perceive as subject to an occurrence that springs from a will other than his own. It is as such a self that man is called *soma*”.

<sup>5</sup> Bultmann, *Theology*, Vol. 1, p. 346. On this statement, see H. C. C. Cavallin's critical remarks in his *Life after Death. Paul's Argument for the Resurrection of the Dead in 1 Cor 15. Part 1: An Inquiry into the Jewish Background* (CB: 7), Lund 1974 (CB 7:1), Lund: Gleerups 1974, p. 15.

<sup>6</sup> A few specimens may suffice: G. E. Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, Rev. ed. D. A. Hagner, Eerdmans: Grand Rapids 1993, p. 499 ff.; esp. 506 ff.; J. D. G. Dunn, *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament*, Westminster Press, Philadelphia 1977, p. 290 (diversified view). See also such specific studies on the resurrection as M. J. Harris, *Raised Immortal: The Relation Between Resurrection*

The scholarly community has become highly suspicious—almost paranoid—of the presence of Platōnic dualism in the traditional interpretation of Scripture. Nowadays most biblical scholars strive to outdo one another in emphasizing that Hebrew anthropology, like the Hebrew mind and Hebrew worldview in general, is decidedly anti-dualistic and enthusiastically holistic or monistic<sup>7</sup>.

The distinction comes out clearly in O. Cullmann, who thinks that the biblical anthropology of Paul was a barrier to the acceptance of Platōn's doctrine of the immortality of the soul<sup>8</sup>. But already Bultmann's formulation actualizes three questions: (a) What is meant by "the Jewish view"? (b) Did Paul really hold to what is understood to be "the Jewish view"? and (c) Is there any rapprochement between Paul and Platōn (as a representative of the Hellenic view)? It is these three questions that I would like to address in this *unpretentious* study.

To begin with, the NT texts that Bultmann cites as proving that the NT — and hence the Pauline — view, is that man can be spoken of as body, are not unproblematically interpreted<sup>9</sup>. For example, it may be asked: How can σῶμα in such a text as 1 Cor 7:4, which is concerned with the wife's and husband's not having the right in their conjugal relations to withhold their σῶμα from one another, be interpreted of the self or personality? And how can the burning of someone's σῶμα in 1 Cor 13:3 be interpreted of that person's self, unless it is supposed that Paul is of the opinion that that burning would imply the end of that person's existence?<sup>10</sup> These problems multiply when we inquire into the three questions, above.

I begin with a brief presentation of the Hellenic, in particular Platōnic view of the immortality of the soul.

---

as M. J. Harris, *Raised Immortal: The Relation Between Resurrection and Immortality in the New Testament Teaching*, Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, 1983; M. Dale, *The Corinthian Body*, Yale Un. Press 1995; J. A. T. Robinson, *The Body. A Study in Pauline Theology*, R. H. Gundry, *Soma in Biblical Theology with Emphasis on Pauline Anthropology*, (NSTS: MS 29) CUP, Cambridge 1976; J. Schmid, "Anthropologie, Biblische A" *Lexicon für Theologie und Kirche*, ed. J. Höfer - K. Rahner, 2nd ed. Freiburg 1975, I, 611; W. D. Stacey, *The Pauline View of Man*, London 1956, p. 190. See also the authors mentioned by Cooper, *Body and Soul*, *passim*.

<sup>7</sup> Cooper, *Body and Soul*, 34.

<sup>8</sup> O. Cullmann, "La foi à la résurrection et l'espérance de la résurrection dans le NT", *ETHRel* 18 (1943), 3-8; *id.*, *Immortality of the Soul or Resurrection of the Dead?* London: Epworth 1962.

<sup>9</sup> E.g. 1 Cor 7:4; 13:3; 9:27; Phil 1:20; Rm 6:12f.; 12:1 (see Bultmann, *Theology*, I, 196).

<sup>10</sup> On the text-critical problem on καυθήσομαι-καυχήσομαι see Caragounis, "'To Boast' or 'To Be Burned'? The Crux of 1 Cor 13:3", *SEÅ* 60 (1995), 11-27. This study has been reworked and enlarged in my *The Development of Greek and the New Testament. Morphology, Syntax, Phonology, and Textual Transmission* (WUNT 167), Tübingen: Mohr 2004, 547-64. See also J. K. Elliott, "In Favour of καυχήσομαι at 1 Cor 13:3", *ZNW* 62 (1971) 297-98 and R. F. Collins, *First Corinthians* (*Sacr. Pag.*), Collegeville, Minn., 1999, 476-77.

## 2. THE HELLENIC, ESP. PLATŌNIC VIEW OF THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL

### A. HELLENIC VIEWS OF IMMORTALITY BEFORE SŌKRATĒS AND PLATŌN

The earliest Hellenic view of the afterlife meets us in Homēros. In particular, the Eleventh Book of the *Odysseia* is devoted to Odysseus' journey to Hades to consult the prophet Teiresias about what the future holds for him. There he also meets with the souls of dead friends, relatives, and other famous persons. Odysseus, having performed the necessary rite of blood sacrifice, the souls throng around him to drink of the blood, for only then can they speak. The souls of the dead are described as νεκύων ἀμεινηὰ κάρηνα "powerless / lifeless heads of the dead" (*Odysseia*, XI, 49), and though they have consciousness and memories of their life on earth<sup>11</sup>, they lead a mirthless existence in a perpetual ζόφος ἡερόεις<sup>12</sup> "gloomy darkness". They can be seen and recognized, but when Odysseus tries to throw his arms around his mother, he finds that his arms have embraced mere air; the souls have no substance. Of more importance for the present discussion is Odysseus' meeting with the greatest of the Achaian heroes, Achilles. Odysseus' eulogium of Achilles' princely position in the Netherworld, elicits the reply:

Do not speak comfortingly to me, illustrious Odysseus. I would rather live on earth and serve another man without inheritance, who owns but little substance, than rule over all the dead that have perished<sup>13</sup>.

This pessimistic view of life after death underwent considerable changes during the classical period. The influences came from various quarters. For example, Pythagoras and his followers considered the soul to be a small fragment of the Universal Soul and believed in transmigration with the concomitant that the soul was immortal<sup>14</sup>. Essentially, the same position was held by the Orphics, who, also, considered the body as the prison and tomb of the soul<sup>15</sup>. In similar manner

---

<sup>11</sup> Cf. e.g. how Aias' grudge against Odysseus leaves him untouched by this unexpected visit, and he passes by in majestic silence (*Odysseia* XI, 543-67).

<sup>12</sup> E.g. Homēros, *Odysseia*, XI, 57, 155,

<sup>13</sup> Homēros, *Odysseia*, XI, 488-91:

Μὴ δὴ μοι θάνατον γε παραύδα, φαιδιμ' Ὀδυσσεῦ,  
βουλόμεν κ' ἐπάρουρος ἐὼν θητεύεμεν ἄλλω,  
ἀνδρὶ παρ' ἀκλήρω ᾧ μὴ βίσιος πολὺς εἶη,  
ἢ πᾶσιν νεκέεσσι καταφθινομένοισιν ἀνάσσειν.

<sup>14</sup> Diogenes Laertios, *Pythagoras*, 5, 14, 28, 30f. See also W. K. C. Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy*, 6 Vols, Vol. 1, *The Earliest Presocratics and the Pythagorians*, pp. 201f., 306-19.

<sup>15</sup> See e.g. Platōn, *Kratylos*, 400 c.

Empedoklēs seems to have believed in the transmigration<sup>16</sup>, immortality and final apotheosis of the soul<sup>17</sup>. The attraction of the Mystery cults lay in the fact that they promised their initiates a better existence after death than the one Homēros had portrayed<sup>18</sup>. The initiates were styled as “blessed”<sup>19</sup>. The idea of the immortality of the soul is connected with the notion that the soul is divine, a notion that first appears explicitly in Pindaros:

The body of all men follows the overwhelmingly powerful death, but an eternal image remains alive, for it alone comes from the gods<sup>20</sup>.

## B. SŌKRATĒS

It is notoriously difficult to disentangle the views of Sōkratēs from those of Platōn, seeing that the former is known to us (mainly) through the writings of the latter. Sōkratēs’ views are thought to come through more purely in the *Apologia* and the *First Alkibiadēs*, and these are supported by certain passages in Xenophōn’s *Apomnēmoneumata*. Distilling Sōkratēs’ teaching, we may say with Guthrie that

These religious views are amply attested for Socrates, and they create a presumption that he believed the soul to persist after death in a manner more satisfying than the shadow and witless existence of the Homeric dead<sup>21</sup>.

---

<sup>16</sup> See his recounting of his several earlier lives on account of sin in Diogenes Laertios, *Empedoklēs*, 77. See also Guthrie, *History of Greek Philosophy*: Vol. II, *The Presocratic Tradition from Parmenides to Democritus*, on *Empedoklēs*, pp. 122-265, p. 253

<sup>17</sup> I.e. in the sense of νοῦς, for that alone is divine and immortal in man, cf. Guthrie, *History of Greek Philosophy*, II, 246. Toward the end of his life he regarded himself as divine, Diogenes Laertios, *Empedoklēs*, 62: ἐγὼ δ’ ἔμμιν θεὸς ἄμβροτος οὐκέτι θνητὸς, πωλεῦμαι μετὰ πᾶσιν τετιμημένος (I am going about among you no longer as mortal, but as an immortal god, honored by all), a notion supported by one of the versions of his death, according to which, to prove his divinity to his followers, he threw himself into Aitna.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Guthrie, *History of Greek Philosophy*, I, 476: “The mysteries, whether Eleusinian or other, taught of life after death, not the colourless shadow-existence of the Homeric *psyche*, but one in which full individuality was retained and rewards and punishments were possible”.

<sup>19</sup> See e.g. *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, 480 ff: ὄλβιος, ὅς τὰδ’ ὄπωπεν ἐπιχθονίων ἀνθρώπων· ὅς δ’ ἀτελής ἱερῶν ὅς τ’ ἄμμορος, οὐποθ’ ὁμοίων αἴσαν ἔχει φθίμενος περ’ ὑπὸ ζόφῳ ἱερόεντι (“Happy is he of earthly men, who has seen these things; but he who is uninitiated in these rites and has not had part in them, will not have the like fate when he wastes away in gloomy darkness”), and Sophoklēs, *Frags* 753: ὡς τρίς ὄλβιοι κείνοι βροτῶν, οἱ ταῦτα δερχθέντες τέλη μὸλωσ’ ἐς Ἄιδου· τοῖσδε γὰρ μόνοις ἐκεῖ ζῆν ἔστι, τοῖς δ’ ἄλλοισι πάντ’ ἐκεῖ κακά (“Thrice happy are those of the mortals, who having experienced the rites, go to the Underworld; only for these is there life there, for the others everything there is evil”), and see Caragounis, *The Ephesian Mysterion*, 18, esp. note 8.

<sup>20</sup> Pindaros, *Frags*. 131: καὶ σῶμα μὲν πάντων ἔπεται θανάτῳ περισθενεῖ, ζῶν δ’ ἔτι λείπεται αἰῶνος εἶδολον· τὸ γὰρ ἔστι μόνον ἐκ θεῶν.

<sup>21</sup> Guthrie, *Socrates* (= part of *History of Greek Philosophy*, Vol. III), Cambridge: CUP 1971, 156.



The *Apologia* contains, indeed, many a saying clothed in language that bespeaks hope, expectation, indeed belief in a better lot after death, all of which is perhaps summarized in that Book's final sentence:

But it is time to depart; for me to my death, but for you to life; however, which of us are going to a better lot is unknown to all except to God<sup>22</sup>.

With this, Hellenic thought had made a 180 degrees turn from the position of Homēros. From being regarded as unworthy of the name life, life after death came to be looked upon as something even better than life on the earth.

In the *Phaidon* this conviction is put forth with much greater confidence. However, there we are especially faced with the problem of Platōn's going beyond his master and systematizing his views. Nevertheless Guthrie is probably right when he says:

If Socrates had not felt confident of personal immortality, it would have been impossible for Plato to have written an account of his last conversation and death, however imaginative in its details, of which the whole purpose was to instill such confidence<sup>23</sup>.

For Sōkratēs then the real self was the soul, while the body was the necessary instrument in which the self lived its life and by which it performed its actions.

The idea that the Hellenic view of the immortality of the soul had as its corollary the reduction of the body to a prison or tomb, taken generally, is too simplistic and one-sided. Indeed, no other ancient people showed as great a care for the wellbeing of the body and tried to highlight its beauty as the Hellēnes. We may here recall the great ideal in Hellenic *paideia* of a well-tended soul in a well-trained and athletic body, an ideal that is inculcated by Platōn as well<sup>24</sup>. It should also be pointed out that for many Hellēnes (both before and after Platōn) the shadowy existence in Hades could not compare with the tangible pleasures experienced in the body on this earth. Ploutarchos, for example, relates that when the orator Isokratēs was asked how he fared, he replied: "Like a man who has become over ninety years old and who regards death as the greatest of evils"<sup>25</sup>. Nor is the

---

<sup>22</sup> Platōn, *Apologia*, 42: ἀλλὰ γὰρ ἥδη ὥρα ἀπιέναι, ἐμοὶ μὲν ἀποθανομένῳ, ὑμῖν δὲ βιωσομένοις· ὁπότεροι δὲ ἡμῶν ἔρχονται ἐπὶ ἀμεινον πρᾶγμα, ἀδηλον παντὶ πλὴν ἢ τῷ θεῷ. As Taylor (in Guthrie, *Socrates*, 160) puts it, "It requires a singularly dull and tasteless reader not to see that his [Sōkratēs'] own sympathies are with the hope of a blessed immortality".

<sup>23</sup> Guthrie, *Socrates*, 161.

<sup>24</sup> E.g. in his *Politeia*.

<sup>25</sup> Ploutarchos, *Moralia*, 350 d: ὡς ἄνθρωπος ὑπὲρ ἐνενήκοντα ἔτη γεγούως καὶ μέγιστον ἡγούμενος τῶν κακῶν τὸν θάνατον.



artistic emphasis — particularly prominent in sculpture — placed on the beauty of the body, consonant with its supposed disparagement. Finally, we may also remind ourselves that Sōkratēs himself never ceased to attend to his body. To the end of his days he used to visit the *palaistra* regularly to keep his body in trim. Indeed, because the body was the only means by which the soul could express its life, exert its influence and be in contact with the world around, it could hardly be described unqualifiedly as a prison and a tomb of the soul<sup>26</sup>. But that same body, if unbridled and insubordinate to the higher rationality of the soul, could act recalcitrantly and defeat the soul's purposes, an idea that finds an analogous echo in Paul's own words (1 Cor 9:27): ἀλλὰ ὑποπιάζω μου τὸ σῶμα καὶ δουλαγωγῶ, μή πως ἄλλοις κηρύξας αὐτὸς ἀδόκιμος γένομαι.

### C. PLATŌN

In order to place Platōn's doctrine of the soul in perspective, a few words about the Platōnic God and the Platōnic Ideas are in order. At the top of the Platōnic system is the Idea of the Good (ἡ ἰδέα τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ)<sup>27</sup>, or simply the Good (τὸ ἀγαθόν)<sup>28</sup>. This is the Platōnic God, who is 'beyond substance' (ἐπέκεινα τῆς οὐσίας)<sup>29</sup>. The Idea of the Good is the cause of all knowledge and truth, which, however, are not the same as the Good itself. Below the Good are the Ideas or Forms. The Ideas constitute the basis of conceptualization, but they are not merely concepts; they are also metaphysical, transcendental, self-existing substances, and hence eternal<sup>30</sup>. The Mind's conceptions correspond to these Ideas, and the reason why we are capable of conceiving them is that our soul saw the eternal prototypes or originals of these conceptions before our birth<sup>31</sup>. True knowledge, therefore, cannot be attained by the senses studying the changeable and corruptible objects of the physical world, but only by the Mind of the soul contemplating the true object of knowledge, that which is unchangeable<sup>32</sup> and eternal<sup>33</sup>. Thus, beyond all good and beautiful things,

<sup>26</sup> The relation of soul to body was not thought of in terms of the tortoise and its shell. It was the means by which the inner life of the self was externalized and there was a mutual influence of the one on the other. Hellenic medicine, which showed the intricate relation between soul and body, was quite advanced in New Testament times (see C. Caragounis, "The *Weltanschauung* of the New Testament Authors", forthcoming in *Festschrift for J.W. Voelz*).

<sup>27</sup> Platōn, *Politeia*, 508 e.

<sup>28</sup> Platōn, *Politeia*, 507 b.

<sup>29</sup> Platōn, *Politeia*, 509 b: οὐκ οὐσίας ὄντος τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ, ἀλλ' ἔτι ἐπέκεινα τῆς οὐσίας.

<sup>30</sup> Platōn, *Parmenides*, 133 c; *Politeia*, 596 c; *Timaios*, 50 d.

<sup>31</sup> E.g. Platōn, *Phaidon*, 72 e-76 c; *Phaidros*, 249 c

<sup>32</sup> Cf. the Jewish-Christian view of God as unchangeable, e.g. Ps 45:6; 102:25-27; Mal 3:6; Heb 1:8-12; 13:8.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. the Johannine thought in 17:3 (cf. Wisdom 15:3); see also 1 Jn 5:20.







there is that which is good and beautiful in itself, and this can be apprehended only by the νοῦς. There is thus a difference between the conceptual (*noumenal*) world and the world of senses. Platōn gives as examples the Idea of the Good, the Idea of the Beautiful, the Idea of the Just, etc. Here Platōn is searching for these Ideas in their absolute purity. The Idea of pure Beauty and pure Love (ἔρως) of pure Beauty occupies two of his greatest dialogues, the *Symposion* and the *Phaidros*. When pure Beauty manifests itself in the world of senses, it sets in motion an inclination of the soul, which is called ἔρως. This is the philosophic *eros*, which yearns for true Beauty, true Goodness, true Justice, etc.<sup>34</sup> Here Beauty, Goodness, Justice, etc. are eternal and unchangeable, and whatever is beautiful, good, and just in the world of senses, is such only because it participates (μέθεξις) in the eternal Ideas, but even then it is merely a pale reflection of the corresponding eternal Idea<sup>35</sup>. These Ideas are the real beings (ὄντως ὄντα)<sup>36</sup>, being outside time and space, beyond 'becoming' (τὸ γίγνεσθαι) as well as beyond corruption.

It is against the above background that we must understand Platōn's clear distinction between soul and body. It is in comparison with the contemplation of the Idea of the Good (= God), to which the soul alone through its Mind is admitted, that the body and its concerns pale into insignificance. Platōn is no dualist in the later Gnostic sense of the word, nor does he disparage the body<sup>37</sup>. He is merely aware of its limitations and its subservience to the soul as the real self, the *Ego* of Man, that which is the true Man, the eternal.

In addition to the individual soul, Platōn postulated also a World Soul, constitutive of the universe<sup>38</sup>. The individual soul, the real personality in Man, is eternal and hence immortal. It is closer to the Ideas<sup>39</sup>, to the divine, while the body is akin to earthly and corruptible things.

The connection between this divine, eternal soul and the corruptible body is effected through certain parts or functions of the soul. In the *Politeia* Platōn divides the soul into three parts or functions: the 'reasoning faculty' (λογιστικόν)<sup>40</sup>, the 'spirit [i.e. the driving force] or passion' (θυμοειδές)<sup>41</sup>, and 'the seat

---

<sup>34</sup> Platōn, *Symposion*, 201d-212 c; *Phaidros*, 237 d; *Politeia*, 499 c.

<sup>35</sup> Platōn, *Symposion*, 211a-b.

<sup>36</sup> Platōn, *Laws*, 963 d.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Guthrie, *History of Greek Philosophy*, IV, 330: "Some of the finest parts of the dialogue give the impression not that he [Platōn] despised the body, but that, although the soul was the highest principle and must maintain the lead, soul and body could work in harmony together".

<sup>38</sup> See esp. *Timaios*, 34b-36d and Guthrie's comments in *History of Greek Philosophy*, V, 292-99.

<sup>39</sup> See also Guthrie, *History of Greek Philosophy*, IV, 360 f.

<sup>40</sup> Platōn, *Politeia*, 439 d.

<sup>41</sup> Platōn, *Politeia*, 440 e; Diogenes Laertios III, 67.



of desires and affections' (ἐπιθυμητικόν)<sup>42</sup>. Of these only the reasoning faculty, akin to Mind (νοῦς), is eternal<sup>43</sup>. The other two functions, that mediate the relation to the body, are mortal<sup>44</sup>. In a metaphor, the soul is compared to a chariot, whose charioteer is the νοῦς, while the other two functions correspond to the two horses, pulling the chariot<sup>45</sup>.

The problem of the immortality of the soul figures in several of Platōn's dialogues, i.a. *Apologia*, *Kriton*, *Gorgias* and *Phaidros*. But nowhere is it presented in a more reasoned way than in the *Phaidon*. Here Platōn attempts to formulate certain arguments for it.

1. One of these arguments is that 'becoming' (γίγνεσθαι) is the result of the cyclical interactions of opposites: that which is strong arises out of that which is weak, that which is big out of that which is small and *vice versa*. So, too, life leads to death, and consequently what is alive must have arisen from what has died<sup>46</sup>. The argument is strengthened by Platōn's theory of the reminiscences of the soul (*cf. Menon, passim*), which not having been learned experientially, imply the eternity of the soul<sup>47</sup>. Behind this lurks, to be sure, Platōn's acceptance of transmigration.

2. The second argument is based on the analogy between Idea and Soul on the one hand and thing and body on the other. There are two kinds of objects: the Ideas, which are unchangeable and eternal, and sensed things, which are subject to corruption. The soul is more akin to the Ideas than to the things, in fact, the freer the soul is from the body and the senses, the better it can contemplate the Ideas. Thus, the soul is akin to the eternal Ideas, while the body is akin to that which is corruptible<sup>48</sup>.

3. In his *Politeia* Platōn offers a third argument: the indestructibility of the soul. The idea here is that everything has its particular good and evil. The evil of something (e.g. the sickness of a body) is that which wears it down and finally destroys it. Now the soul's evils are such things as injustice, ignorance, and incontinence. However, although these things are injurious to the soul, one cannot say that they destroy it. The soul is indestructible. This proves that the soul is eternal<sup>49</sup>.

---

<sup>42</sup> Platōn, *Politeia*, 439 d; 475 b; *Timaios*, 70 d-e, and on all three *Politeia*, 550 b and 580 d. *Cf.* also Aristotelēs, *Nikomacheian Ethics* 1102 b 30.

<sup>43</sup> Platōn, *Timaios*, 30 a-b.

<sup>44</sup> Platōn, *Politeia*, 440 e-441 a. *Cf.* also 580 d-581 e, and *Timaios*, 70 e, and *Phaidros*, 246 b-c.

<sup>45</sup> Platōn, *Phaidros*, 246a-b.

<sup>46</sup> *Cf.* Jn 12:24; 1 Cor 15:35-38.

<sup>47</sup> Platōn, *Phaidon*, 70 c-77 d. *Cf.* also 100b-107b, regarded by J. Burnet as a third argument, *Plato's Phaedo*. Edited with Introduction and Notes, Oxford: Clarendon Press rp. 1967, 113.

<sup>48</sup> Platōn, *Phaidon*, 78 b-84 b.

<sup>49</sup> Platōn, *Politeia*, 608 d-611 e.



4. The fourth argument, found in the *Phaidros*, is based on the soul's self-movement (ἀεικίνητον or τὸ αὐτὸ κινουῦν)<sup>50</sup>. Platōn connects the idea of ἀεικίνητον with the idea of ἀγέννητον (uncreated) and ἀδιάφθορον (incorruptible). Since life ends in a thing that stops moving, the body, too, is mortal. The soul, however, is self-moving, giving movement to the body<sup>51</sup>, and as the originator of motion, it is ἀγέννητος and ἀφθαρτος, and hence immortal.

Perhaps the best way to concretize Platōn's view of the immortality of the soul is by presenting the final scene in the *Phaidon*. Sōkratēs has by now already discussed at length the nature of the soul and put forth his ideas regarding the immortality of the soul; he has spoken of the true heaven, the true light and the true earth<sup>52</sup>, and then proceeded to describe the new earth, where people are free from sickness and live very long lives<sup>53</sup>. And now, during the last moments of his life, Sōkratēs is giving his final instructions to his disciples, when one of them, Kriton, asks Sōkratēs how he wishes to be buried. In order not to spoil the piquancy of the original wording, I give the passage in Platōn's inimitable words:

Kriton: θάπτωμεν δέ σε τίνα τρόπον;  
 Sōkratēs: "Ὅπως ἂν, ἔφη, βούλησθε, *ἐάνπερ γε λάβετέ μοι καὶ μὴ ἐκφύγω ὑμᾶς*. Γελάσας δὲ ἅμα ἡσυχῇ καὶ πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἀποβλέψας εἶπεν· Οὐ πείθω, ὦ ἄνδρες, Κρίτωνα, ὡς ἐγὼ εἶμι οὗτος Σωκράτης, ὁ νυνὶ διαλεγόμενος καὶ διατάττων ἕκαστον τῶν λεγομένων, ἀλλ' οἴεται με ἐκεῖνον εἶναι ὃν ὄψεται ὀλίγον ὕστερον νεκρὸν, καὶ ἐρωτᾷ δὴ πῶς μὲ θάπτῃ. ἐπειδὴν πῖω τὸ φάρμακον, οὐκέτι ὑμῖν παραμενῶ, ἀλλ' οἰχήσομαι ἀπιὼν εἰς μακάρων δὴ τινὰς εὐδαιμονίας, ἀλλὰ θαρρεῖν τε χρὴ καὶ φάναι τοῦμὸν σῶμα θάπτειν, καὶ θάπτειν οὕτως ὅπως ἂν σοὶ φίλον ἦ καὶ μάλιστα ἡγήνομον εἶναι<sup>54</sup>.

<sup>50</sup> Platōn, *Phaidros*, 245 c-246a.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Guthrie, *History of Greek Philosophy*, IV, 357: "Soul is by definition what gives life to a body".

<sup>52</sup> Platōn, *Phaidon*, 109 e.

<sup>53</sup> Platōn, *Phaidon*, 110 b-112 d.

<sup>54</sup> Platōn, *Phaidon*, 115c-e: "Kriton: 'But how shall we bury you?' Sōkratēs: 'In whatever way you wish', he said, that is, *'if you really succeed in catching me and I do not flee from you'*. Then, he smiled quietly, and, turning to us, he said: 'My friends, I cannot convince Kriton that I am this Sōkratēs here, who presently speaks and orders all my words, *but he thinks that I will be the one whom he is going to see dead in a short while, and he asks how he ought to bury me*. ... as soon as I have drunk the poison, *I will no longer abide with you, but I will go off far away to certain happy regions of the blessed ones*, ... but you must be of good spirit and say *that you bury my body*, and bury it as it seems loving to you and especially as you consider it to be in accordance with custom" (my tr. and my Italics).



These words summarize Sōkratēs' convictions, or perhaps more correctly, how Platōn viewed the soul's continued existence after death. What Sōkratēs had expressed in the *Apologia* as an eventuality, yea more, as an inner conviction and earnest expectation, Platōn formulates as a rational argument. In the above quotation from the *Phaidon*, the poignancy of Platōn's words is concentrated on Kriton's misconception: "how shall we bury *you*?". This elicits from Sōkratēs the ironic remark: "In whatever, way you wish, that is, *if you really succeed in catching me and I do not flee from you*". The distinction between soul and body here is absolute. As soon as the poison, which Sōkratēs will ere long take, has had its effect, what will remain before the disciples will be not Sōkratēs, but merely his body. Sōkratēs himself (i.e. his soul, self, *Egō* or personality) will be far away, in the land of the Blessed Ones. The rest of Sōkratēs' speech is an explication of this remark to the effect that the soul is immortal (hence they must take care of it, since their future destiny depends on it), while the body is only temporary and mortal, and will give place to a new existence.

With this brief presentation of Platōn's teaching, I now turn to the Old Testament and the Jewish material.

### 3. THE JEWISH CONCEPT OF THE RESURRECTION

When it is claimed that Paul holds the Jewish view of anthropology — rather than Platōn's view — with its corollary, the resurrection of the body (rather than the immortality of the soul), it is thereby taken for granted that there was such a thing as *the Jewish view* of man or *the Jewish view* of the resurrection of the body. As a matter of fact the Jewish sources indicate polyphony.

#### A. THE OLD TESTAMENT DATA

To start with, the Hebrew Bible describes the creation of Man as taking place at two stages and distinguishes between the two constitutive parts of Man, i.e. the visible and the invisible parts. It is important to note that the visible part of Man, the body, is created first and then the principle of life is given to it (Gen 2:7). The body is created as "dust" or "earth" (עָפָר, LXX: χούς) — not merely *from* dust, cf. 3:19 — and it is lifeless until God breathes into Man's "nostrils" (בְּאַפָּיו, LXX: πρόσωπον, 'face') the breath of life (נְשַׁמַת הַיִּים, LXX: πνοήν ζωής). Man becomes now a living being (לְנֶפֶשׁ הַיָּה, LXX: εἰς ψυχὴν ζώσαν) (Gen 2:7). This is the first time in Genesis that נֶפֶשׁ (LXX: ψυχή) is used of Man, and it is used in distinction to his body (the עָפָר, LXX: χούς). The surprising thing, however, is that this expression has been used earlier of the fish, of all the sea animals and of the birds (1:20-21), as well as of the land animals and the crawling creatures (1:24). In fact, the entire creation is said to have within it this *living soul* (נֶפֶשׁ הַיָּה, LXX:

ψυχὴν ζώῃς) (1:30)<sup>55</sup>. It is, thus, obvious that the term **בְּשָׂרָא** and its LXX equivalent, εἰς ψυχὴν ζώσαν, are not used as strict anthropological terms. The Israelites were not concerned with analyzing philosophically the nature of Man. They were content to distinguish functionally between the visible and the invisible parts of Man<sup>56</sup>, relating the visible part to the earth and the invisible part to God, who had given it, and to whom it would return at death (Gen 2:7; 3:19; Jb 27:3; Ps 90:3; Ec 12:7 dependent on Gen 2:7; differently the pessimistic, questioning view of 3:21).

In his important investigation Hans Cavallin says:

It is a well-known fact that belief in the resurrection of the dead appears only on the fringe of the Hebrew Bible. Modern critics must join the denial of the Sadducees. ‘The resurrection of the dead cannot be derived from the Torah’ ... with one or possibly two exceptions in the latest part of the Palestinian canon [i.e.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. Platōn’s idea of ἡ τοῦ κόσμου ψυχή.

<sup>56</sup> It is instructive to note the great variety of terms, which basically have another meaning, but which are occasionally rendered with σῶμα in the LXX: 1. **בְּשָׂרָא** (266x) *flesh, skin, meat, body, living flesh, transient, frail, mankind*. In the LXX it is translated with σῶμα 21x; 2. **גֵּר** (3x) *back* (LXX: σῶμα 3x, e.g. 3 Ki 14:9: ἐμέ ἔρριψας ὀπίσω σώματός σου (: **גֵּר** **רִי** **אֶחָד**)); 3. **גֵּר** (10x) *back* (LXX: σῶμα 2x, e.g. Jb 20:25: διέλθοι δὲ διὰ σώματος αὐτοῦ βέλος); 4. **בְּשָׂרָא** (c. 14x) *body, corpse* (LXX: σῶμα 9x, e.g. Gen 47:18: οὐχ ὑπολείπεται ἡμῖν ... ἀλλ’ ἡ τὸ ἴδιον σῶμα; 1 Ki 31:12: ἔλαβον τὸ σῶμα Σαοὺλ καὶ τὸ σῶμα Ἰωνάθαν; Neh 9:26: ἐπὶ τὰ σώματα ἡμῶν ἐξουσιάσουσιν); 5. **גֵּר** (2x) *corpse* (LXX: σῶμα 2x, e.g. 1 Chr 10:12: ἔλαβον τὸ σῶμα Σαοὺλ καὶ τὸ σῶμα τῶν υἱῶν αὐτοῦ); 6. **בְּשָׂרָא**, Aram. Dan 7:11. The LXX translates 3x and 4x with σῶμα, e.g. Dan (LXX, Θ) 3:27: οὐχ ἤψατο (Θ· οὐκ ἐκυρίευσεν) τὸ πῦρ τοῦ σώματος αὐτῶν; 7. **לֵי** (245x) *faculty, power, wealth, competent, brave man, landowner, upper class, army* (LXX: σῶμα 1x; Gen 34:29: πάντα τὰ σώματα αὐτῶν ... ἠχμαλώτευσαν); 8. **בָּנִים** (c. 40x) *children, people* (i.e. children and old persons) *incapable of marching* (LXX: σῶμα 1x; Gen 47:12: ἐσιτομέτρει ... τὸν σῆτον κατὰ σῶμα); 9. **בְּשָׂרָא** (c. 30x) *human corpse, carcass* (of animals) (LXX: σῶμα 9x, e.g. 3 Ki 13:22: οὐ μὴ εἰσέλθῃ τὸ σῶμα σου εἰς τὸν τάφον); 10. **בְּשָׂרָא** (754x) *throat, neck, breath* (= a living being: c. 250x: *soul* (located in the blood), *people* (individual person), *personality* (c. 220x)); 11. **בְּשָׂרָא** every person (c. 220x), *life* (c. 280x), *soul* (as center of emotions), *dead soul* (deceased person). The LXX translates it with σῶμα 1x; Gen 36:6: ἔλαβε δὲ Ἡσαῦ ... πάντα τὰ σώματα τοῦ οἴκου αὐτοῦ; 12. **עוֹר** (88x) *skin* (of a person), *animal skin, leather* (LXX: σῶμα 1x; Jb 19:26: ναστήσει δέ μου τὸ σῶμα (v.l.)); 13. **בְּשָׂרָא** *corpse* (LXX: σῶμα 3x, e.g. 4 Ki 19:35: ἰδοὺ πάντες σώματα νεκρά); 14. **בְּשָׂרָא** (c. 13x) *body, flesh, flesh as food* (LXX: σῶμα 2x, e.g. Prov 5:11: ἡνίκα ἂν κατατριβῶσιν σάρκες σώματός σου); 15. **בְּשָׂרָא** *those who minister* (LXX: οἱ περὶ τὸ σῶμα 1x; 1 Chr 28:1: οἱ περὶ τὸ σῶμα τοῦ βασιλέως). (See Koehler-Baumgartner, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Testament*, 5 Vols. Brill, Leiden 1994-2000).

The above data shows that only such words were understood as equivalents to the Hellenic σῶμα as referred to the physical body, dead or alive, and that the LXX, as the contexts show, *does not indicate that the inner or invisible part of Man was confused with the visible body*. The word **בְּשָׂרָא**, which is the best-suited Heb. term for describing the principle of life, the living soul in Man, is translated only once with ‘body’ and that in the sense of *physical person* or *individual* not ‘body’ *per se*.



Dan 12:3 and Isa 26:19] ... The decisive moment, when a clear assertion of an eschatological resurrection of the individual from the dead appears, is the persecution of Antiochus IV Epiphanes<sup>57</sup>.

This estimate — shared by many — is perhaps a little less than generous. In spite of difficulties about authenticity and date, it appears that there are more than just two texts.

Owing to the Hebrew view of Man, according to which a person is alive as long as the breath of God remains in the physical body, it was difficult to conceive of existence when the two elements constituting Man were separated by death. This had as corollaries the great emphasis on this life, i.e. length of days and happiness<sup>58</sup>, and the aversion to death with all its negations, which characterized the Hebrew viewpoint. It is in the light of this that the great store placed by children, especially sons, is to be understood<sup>59</sup>. Continuation of life was somehow achieved by progeny. Yet there are certain texts that imply that at least some of the dead had not been annihilated<sup>60</sup>, but lived like shadows or spirits<sup>61</sup> in Sheol or the grave. There is hardly any difference between this OT view of existence after death and the corresponding early Hellenic view found in Homēros<sup>62</sup>.

But along with this gloomy view there are traces of a hope for a better afterlife. Thus, a hope is expressed in Ps 16 (15):9-10 that the “flesh” may share in the deliverance of the soul from the Sheol.<sup>63</sup> The critical question in Jb 14:14 “If a man dies, will he live again?” is answered by Job himself with “I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God ... with my own eyes — I and

<sup>57</sup> H. C. C. Cavallin, *Life After Death*, 23 f.

<sup>58</sup> E.g. Gen 15:15; 35:29.

<sup>59</sup> See Caragounis, *Art. בן (Ben), TDOTT*, Vol. 1, 671-77 and *Art. בת (Bath), TDOTT*, Vol. 1, 779-81.

<sup>60</sup> Ex 3:6 may be a case in point, see the Jewish-Christian interpretation of it in Mk 12:26-7 = Mt 22:32 = Lk 20:37-8. More instructive is 1 Sam 28:11-19, which speaks of a shadowy existence of the dead. See next note.

<sup>61</sup> מַשְׁרָפִים ‘shadows’, ‘spirits of the dead’ Jb 26:5 (LXX: γίγαντες); Ps 88:10 (LXX: νεκροῖς); Isa 26:14 (LXX: ἰατροί); Pr 21:16 (LXX: γιγάντων). See also 1 Sam 28:13 (NIV: ‘spirits’; MT: אַלְהִים; LXX: θεοῦς); Isa 26:14.

<sup>62</sup> See e.g. Homēros, *Odysseia*, XI, 49, where the dead are described as νεκῶν ἀμεινῆνὰ κάρηνα, “lifeless, powerless heads of the dead”, i.e. mere spirits or shadows. See also Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, I, 197 f.

<sup>63</sup> Ps 16:9-10:

... אֲדַבְשָׁרִי יִשְׁכֵּן לְבַטָּח:  
כִּי לֹא־תָעֹב נַפְשִׁי לְשָׂאוֹל לֹא־תֵתֵן חִסְדְּךָ לְרְאוֹת שְׁחָת:

LXX: ἔτι δὲ καὶ ἡ σὰρξ μου κατασκηνώσει ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι, ὅτι οὐκ ἐγκαταλείψεις τὴν ψυχὴν μου εἰς ἄδην οὐδὲ δώσεις τὸν ὄσιόν σου ἰδεῖν διαφθοράν may be understood of a hope for resurrection.

not another” (19:25-27)<sup>64</sup>. In spite of some difficulty in interpreting the details of Hos 6:2, the wording suggests that perhaps the idea of resurrection was not totally foreign to Israel in the eighth century. This finds an echo in later texts, as e.g. the apocalypse of Isa 25:7-8: “On this mountain he will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations; he will swallow death for ever” and 26:19: “Your dead will live; their bodies will rise”<sup>65</sup>. The clearest text, however, which also speaks of an eschatological resurrection, is Dan 12:2: “Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake (וְקִיְצוּ, LXX: ἀναστήσονται, Θ: ἐξεγερθήσονται); some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt”.

There are thus within the Hebrew Canon a number of texts that echo the idea of some sort of continuation of life after death. Nevertheless, even these texts do not specifically develop the doctrine of resurrection in detail nor do they answer the question of what is involved in this ‘reviving’ or ‘awakening’ or ‘rising’. It might also be that even Jb 19:26-27, for all its naturalistic description, only gives expression to the hope for a continued existence.

In the light of the above data the Sadducee position that the Torah did not contain the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead<sup>66</sup> becomes understandable, but hardly the only viable interpretation of the OT evidence.

## B. THE JEWISH POLYPHONY ON THE RESURRECTION

In view of the lack of a clearly defined belief in afterlife — especially in bodily resurrection — in the Hebrew Scriptures, it is no wonder that inter-testamental Judaism exhibits the polymorphy it does. In Jewish literature down to Josephus we can isolate five (six) positions.

1. *Only Righteous Israelites will rise.* Continuing the line struck by such OT texts as Ps 16:10-11; 17:15; 49:15; 73:24-27; Jb 14:13-15; 19:26-27; Isa 25:8;

<sup>64</sup> Job 19:25-27:

וְאֲנִי יָדַעְתִּי נֹאֲלִי הוּא וְאַחֲרוֹן עַל-עַפְפֹּר יָקוּם:  
וְאַחַר עוֹרִי נִקְבְּרוּזָאת וּמִבְּשָׂרִי אֲחֻזָּה אֱלֹהִים:  
אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי אֲחֻזָּה-לִי וְעֵינַי רָאוּ וְלֹא-יָזוּר כָּלֹו כְּלִיתִי בַחֲקִים:

The LXX has probably mistranslated the Hebrew, or, more probably follows another Vorlage: οἶδα γὰρ ὅτι ὁ ἀέναός ἐστιν ὁ ἐκλύειν με μέλλων ἐπὶ γῆς. ἀναστήσει τὸ δέρμα μου τὸ ἀνατλῶν ταῦτα· παρά γὰρ κυρίου ταῦτά μοι συνετελέσθη, ἃ ἐγὼ ἑμαυτῷ συνεπίσταμαι, ἃ ὁ ὀφθαλμός μου ἑώρακεν καὶ οὐν ἄλλος· πάντα δέ μοι συνετελέσται ἐν κόλπῳ.

<sup>65</sup> See H. C. C. Cavallin's discussion in *Life After Death*, 106 and p. 109 notes 22-24. See also Δ. Καϊμάκη, Ἡ ἀνάστασις τῶν νεκρῶν στὴν Παλαιᾶ Διαθήκη, Θεσσαλονίκη 2001, 82-103 and 217-21.

<sup>66</sup> Though Torah could certainly be applied to the entire OT, perhaps only the Pentateuch was in view here. Cf. *Mishnah: Sanhedrin* 10:1, where the Sadducees are alluded to without being named (הַאֲוִיִּר אֵין תְּחִיַת הַמֵּתִים). See also Strack-Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud and Midrasch*, Vol. 1, 885 f.

26:19, a number of post-OT writings express the belief that the wicked will not rise. In the earliest part of *1 Enoch* the abode of the dead is divided into four compartments<sup>67</sup>: three dark in which dwell the spirits of the wicked, and one light, in which dwell the righteous. Of the wicked it is said that they shall not “rise from thence” (μετεγερωσιν εντευθεν) (*1 En* 22:1-13).<sup>68</sup> In the *Similitudes* it is again said of the wicked “And they shall have no hope of rising from their beds, because they do not extol the name of the Lord of the Spirits” (*1 En* 46:6). In which sense these risings are to be conceived is not intimated. However, *1 En* 51:1-2 perhaps has a bodily resurrection in view — although no body rising is mentioned — when it says:

And in those days, Sheol will return all the deposits, which she has received, and hell will give back all that which it owes. And he shall choose the righteous and holy ones from among (the risen dead) for the day when they shall be selected and saved has arrived<sup>69</sup>.

In similar manner in *Pss Sol* 3:11-12 a resurrection to everlasting life is referred to “those who fear the Lord”. In 13:11 a contrast is made between the life of the righteous, which lasts for ever (ἡ γὰρ ζωὴ τῶν δικαίων εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα) and the damnation of the sinners, who will not be remembered any more. This contrast is reiterated in 14:9-10, according to which the inheritance of the wicked is ἄδης καὶ σκότος καὶ ἀπώλεια, while that of the Lord’s pious is ζωὴ ἐν εὐφροσύνῃ. This is confirmed by the contrast between the sinners and the righteous in ch. 15, esp. verse 13: οἱ δὲ φοβούμενοι τὸν Κύριον ἐλεθηθήσονται ἐν αὐτῇ ... καὶ ἁμαρτωλοὶ ἀπολούνται εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα χρόνον.

The position of the Pharisees, as presented by Josephos, is peculiar. While they seem to hold the incorruptibility of all souls, it is only the souls of the righteous that shall migrate into a new body; the souls of the wicked shall receive everlasting punishment<sup>70</sup>.

*II. All Israelites will rise.* Taking their cue from Dan 12:2 a number of intertestamental texts hold the view that all Israelites, good and bad, will rise. This view is found in three of the divisions of *1 Enoch*: the *Book of the Watchers* (1-36), the *Book of the Similitudes* (37-71) and the *Book of Visions* (83-90). It is not quite clear whether *2 Mac* 7:9-11 belongs here — as R.H. Charles placed it<sup>71</sup> — or whether

<sup>67</sup> Here we may compare the four compartments, or cavernous rivers of Platōn’s Underworld in the *Phaidon*, 112 e-114 c.

<sup>68</sup> See *Apocalypsis Henochi Graece*, ed. M. Black, Leiden 1970.

<sup>69</sup> Tr. E. Isaac, *1 (Ethiopic Apocalypse of) Enoch*, in J. H. Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2 Vols., London 1983-85, Vol. 1, 5-89.

<sup>70</sup> Josephos, *War* II, 163: ψυχὴ τε πᾶσαν μὲν ἀφθαρτον, μεταβαίνειν δὲ εἰς ἕτερον σῶμα τὴν τῶν ἀγαθῶν μόνην, τὰς δὲ τῶν φαύλων αἰδίω τιμωρία κολάζεσθαι. See also Josephos, *Antiquities* XVIII, 14.

<sup>71</sup> R. H. Charles, *Book of Enoch* (= *1 Enoch*) in *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*, 2 Vols., Oxford rp. 1969, Vol. 2, 163-281.



it holds only to a resurrection of martyrs, i.e. 1, above. *2 Bar* 50-51:6, on the other hand, quite clearly believes in a general resurrection of good and evil. The good

will be glorified by transformations, and the shape of their face will be changed into the light of their beauty so that they may acquire and receive the undying world which is promised to them ...

and the evil ones

[will be changed] into the startling visions and horrible shapes ... they will go away to be tormented (51:3-6)<sup>72</sup>.

*III. All mankind will rise.* In similar language and imagery to that used in *1 En* 51:1-2, but with definitely universal relevance (cf. “all nations”, 7:37), *IV Ezra* speaks of the judgment that will come upon all nations:

The earth will give up those asleep in it, the dust will [let go] those who repose in it, and the storehouses will give up the souls entrusted to them ... The pit of torment will appear, and evil [ones] will sleep no more. And opposite it will be the place of rest; ... the paradise of joy ... the world to come will bring joy to the few, but torment to the many (*IV Ez* 7:32-47)<sup>73</sup>.

Probably a distinction is made between the “earth” and the “dust” on the one hand, containing the righteous — as synonymous expressions in parallelism — and the storehouses (= *Sheol*, cf. *1 En* 22:2-4) on the other, which keep the souls of the wicked. For the chapter goes on to explain the different lots of the wicked and of the righteous respectively, while waiting in the storehouses for the Day of Judgment (7:75-101). What is of interest, however, is that even this text does not describe a resurrection of the physical body. It speaks only of the soul. Moreover, the passage speaks of the body as a “crumbling vessel” (7:88) and as corruptible (7:96, 98) as well as of immortality<sup>74</sup>. The *Test. XII Patr.*, *Test Benj.* 10: 6-8 following MS a<sup>75</sup>, also gives expression to a doctrine of the resurrection of all mankind, but again, no details of the state of the resurrected ones are given.

---

<sup>72</sup> Tr. A. F. J. Klijn, *2 (Syriac Apocalypse of) Baruch*, in J. H. Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, Vol. 1, 615-52.

<sup>73</sup> J. M. Myers, *1 & 2 Esdras. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB), Garden City: Doubleday & Company 1974.

<sup>74</sup> I.e. all of them ideas found in Platōn (see above) as well as in Paul, e.g. *2 Cor* 4:7, 16-18.

<sup>75</sup> The Hellenic MS c and the Hellenic recension b as well as the first Slavonic recension (S') contain a number of very obvious Christian interpolations, see Charles, in *AP*, II, 359, and the more recent edition by M. de Jonge, *Testamenta XII Patriarcharum*, Leiden 1964, containing the Hellenic text of Ms b (Cambridge MS Ff 1. 24).

IV. *A grossly literalistic view of resurrection.* The *Second Book of Macabbees* and the *Fourth Book of the Sibylline Oracles* offer us the most literalistic view of bodily resurrection and at the same time the most consequential understanding of resurrection. The problem of afterlife becomes especially acute by the thought of losing one's various members in martyrdom. How is such a person to enter the after-life? Having witnessed the death under torture of his first brother, the second of seven brothers dares the king by saying:

Σὺ μὲν, ἀλάστωρ, τοῦ παρόντος ἡμᾶς ζῆν ἀπολύεις, ὁ δὲ τοῦ κόσμου βασι-  
λεὺς ἀποθανόντας ἡμᾶς ὑπὲρ τῶν αὐτοῦ νόμων εἰς αἰώνιον ἀναβίωσιν ζωῆς  
ἡμᾶς ἀναστήσει (2 Mac 7:9).

Then, the third brother, on being ordered to stick out his tongue to be cut off, immediately complied with the request after making the point that

Ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ταῦτα κέκτημαι καὶ διὰ τοὺς αὐτοῦ νόμους ὑπερορῶ ταῦτα καὶ  
παρ' αὐτοῦ ταῦτα πάλιν ἐπίζω κομίσασθαι (2 Mac 7:11).

There is an expectation of resurrection here that involved the reconstitution of the physical body as it was, although the matter must not be pressed too much in view of the exigencies of the case. At the prospect of losing the bodily members one by one, it was not unnatural that a restoration of each member to the body would be contemplated.

In a similar fashion in *Sib Or IV*, 179-82 it is said that:

When everything is already dust and ashes, and God puts to sleep the unspeakable fire, even as he kindled it, God himself will again fashion the bones and ashes of men and he will raise up mortals again as they were before<sup>76</sup>.

V. *Denial of resurrection and belief in immortality.* The above four positions affirmed belief in some kind of resurrection, either for the righteous alone or for everyone. In a different line of development, the lack of a clear teaching in the OT on this issue together with impulses from Hellenic thought — which had been saturating Jewish thinking for some three centuries —, brought about a bifurcation of two more positions: the denial of the resurrection of the body and the belief in the immortality of the soul. These positions, though not logically exclusive of one another, are, to some extent, viewed as opposed to one another.

a. *Denial of the resurrection.* The Hellenistically influenced Sadducees, taking their point of departure from the Torah lack of an express reference to a resurrection

---

<sup>76</sup> Tr. J. J. Collins, *Sibylline Oracles*, in Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, Vol. 1, 317-486. See also H.C.O. Lanchester, *The Sibylline Oracles*, in R.H. Charles, *AP*, II, 368-406.



of the body, rejected the notion of resurrection altogether (Mk 12:18 = Mt 22:23 = Lk 20: 27; Acts 4:1-2; 23:8; 26:8). The NT statements about the Sadducees' denial of the resurrection are borne out by the *Mishnah*, which lumps them together with the atheistic Epikureans, e.g. *Sanh* 10:1: "And these are they who have no share in the world to come — he that says there is no resurrection of the dead laid down in the Law ...and an Epikurean"<sup>77</sup> and *b Sanh* 90b<sup>78</sup>. Josephos is even more categorical in saying that Σαδδουκαίους δὲ τὰς ψυχὰς ὁ λόγος συναφανίζει τοῖς σώμασι (*Antiquities* XVIII.1.4). On a number of occasions Sirach not merely stops short of mentioning the resurrection, but it appears that he has no place for it in his scheme of things. The sagacious or righteous man is said to live on through the memory of his good name (37:26; 39:9). Thus, many rich persons have become as though they had never existed (καὶ ἐγένοντο ὡς οὐ γεγονότες, 44:9), while of the merciful ones it is said that τὰ σώματα αὐτῶν ἐν εἰρήνῃ ἐτάφη, καὶ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτῶν ζῆ εἰς γενεάς (44:14), but nothing of resurrection<sup>79</sup>.

β. *Belief in the immortality of the soul.* With the passage of time and the effects of Hellenic influence on Jewish thought, this position becomes increasingly rife. In particular, in works that evince Hellenic influence statements about the resurrection of the body are scarce, if occurring at all, while the idea of immortality and especially the immortality of the soul, come into focus. For example, irrespective of Hellenic influence, in Essene thought the idea of bodily resurrection is so neglected that Hengel asks whether it is "still appropriate in their case"<sup>80</sup>. On the other hand, their tenet of the immortality of the soul is emphasized by Josephos, *Antiquities*, XVIII, 18: Ἐσσηνοῖς δὲ ἐπὶ μὲν Θεῷ καταλείπειν φιλεῖ τὰ πάντα ὁ λόγος, ἀθανατίζουσι δὲ τὰς ψυχὰς<sup>81</sup>. Similar but more specific is Josephos'

<sup>77</sup> *mSanhedrin* 10:1:

וְאֵלֶּיךָ שְׂאִין לָהֶם חֶלֶק לְעוֹלָם הַבָּא, הָאוֹמֵר אֵין תְּחִיַּת הַמֵּתִים מִן הַתּוֹרָה, ... וְאֵפִיקוּרוֹס  
*Mishnayoth* (ed. Ph. Blackman), 7 Vols., Gateshead: Judaica Press 1990.

<sup>78</sup> See *Sanhedrin* (tr. H. Freedman, *Sanhedrin*, in I. Epstein (ed.) *The Babylonian Talmud*. Seder *Nezikin*, London: The Soncino Press, Vol. III), p. 601-07.

<sup>79</sup> See also *Sirach* 30:17 and 46:19.

<sup>80</sup> HENGEL, *Judaism and Hellenism* I, 198.

<sup>81</sup> In the Dead Sea Scrolls there occur, according to Hengel (*Judaism and Hellenism*, I, 199), only two allusions to resurrection (see *The Dead Sea Scrolls* Vol. I, 1 Q1-4Q273, edited and translated by F. G. Martinez, Leiden: Brill 1997: *Col.* XIV (Sukenic *Col.* VI), 29 f., 34 and *Col.* XIX (Sukenic *Col.* XI), 10-14), but the idea of an after-life is well documented (see e.g. 1QH XX,15 (אור עולם) ("eternal light")); 1QS II,4 עולמים ("eternal peace"); III, 7 באור החיים ("light of life"); IV, 7-8 ("plentiful peace in a long life, fruitful offspring with all everlasting blessings, eternal enjoyment with endless life, and a crown of glory"); IV, 22-6 לברות עולמים ("eternal covenant"); IV, 23 כול בכבוד אדם ("to them shall belong all the glory of Adam"); 1QM XVII, 6 באור עולמים ("in everlasting light"); CD III, 20: לחיי נצח ("eternal life"); *ibid.*: אדם בכבוד אדם ("all the glory of Adam is for them")).

evaluation in his *War*, II, 154-57: φθαρτὰ μὲν εἶναι τὰ σώματα καὶ τὴν ὕλην οὐ μόνιμον αὐτῶν, τὰς δὲ ψυχὰς ἀθανάτους αἰεὶ διαμένειν. *Wisdom* 2:3 states that God created man incorruptible and as an image of his own eternity<sup>82</sup>. At *Wisdom* 6:18f. it is laid down that προσοχὴ νόμων βεβαίωσις ἀφθαρσίας. ἀφθαρσία δὲ ἐγγὺς εἶναι ποιεῖ Θεοῦ<sup>83</sup>. In fact *Wisdom* goes so far as to deprecate the body and its influence on the life of the soul: φθαρτὸν γὰρ σῶμα βαρύνει ψυχὴν, καὶ βρίθει τὸ γεῶδες σκῆνος νοῦν πολυφροντίδα (9:15). The Jewish propagandist tractate, *4 Maccabees*, combines Hellenic belief in the immortality of the soul with Jewish martyr piety, e.g.: ἀλλὰ πάντες ὡσπερ ἐπ' ἀθανασίας ὁδὸν τρέχοντες ἐπὶ τὸν διὰ τῶν βασάνων θάνατον ἔσπευδον ... ὡς ὑπὸ ψυχῆς ἀθανάτου τῆς εὐσεβείας πρὸς τὸν ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς συνεφώνησαν θάνατον (14:5f.)<sup>84</sup>. Josephos himself, who distinguishes between soul and body<sup>85</sup>, has the Zealot leader Eleazar address to his faint-hearted companions in the fortress of Masada an impassioned harangue on the immortality of the soul to prevail on them to submit to his scheme of suicide. Echoing the initial phrasing of the Platonic Sōkratēs' speech to Kriton and his friends in the *Phaedon*, Josephos has Eleazar give vent to a flight of philosophical oratory about the supreme value of the soul and its superiority over the body. The body is mortal while the soul is immortal and divine. This divine element, the soul, cannot be properly associated with its mortal prison, the body, which drags it down; hence death is that which sets the soul free to fly to its own pure abode<sup>86</sup>.

## C. CONCLUSIONS

The above evidence from the OT and Jewish materials leads to the following positions:

<sup>82</sup> *Wisdom* 2:23: ὁ Θεὸς ἔκτισεν τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἐπ' ἀφθαρσία καὶ εἰκόνα τῆς ἰδίας αἰδιότητος ἐποίησεν αὐτόν.

<sup>83</sup> See also *Wisdom* 3:1-4; 4:7; 5:15, and 8:19-20.

<sup>84</sup> See also *4 Mac* 16: εἰς ἀθανασίαν ἀνατίκτουσα.

<sup>85</sup> Josephos, *War* III, 362: τί τὰ φίλτατα διαστασίζομεν, σῶμα καὶ ψυχὴν...

<sup>86</sup> Cf. e.g. Josephos, *War* VII, 343-48: ὅτι συμφορὰ τὸ ζῆν ἐστὶν ἀνθρώποις, οὐχὶ θάνατος. οὗτος μὲν γὰρ ἐλευθερίαν διδοὺς ψυχᾶς εἰς τὸν οἰκείον καὶ καθαρὸν ἀφίησι τόπον ἀπαλλάσσεσθαι ... ἕως δὲ εἰσὶν ἐν σώματι θνητῷ δεδεμένοι καὶ τῶν τούτου κακῶν συναναπίμπλονται, τάληθέστατον εἰπεῖν, τεθνήκασι· κοινωνία γὰρ θεῖω πρὸς θνητὸν ἀπρετῆς ἐστὶ ... οὐ μὴν ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴν ἀπολυθεῖσα τοῦ καθέλκοντος αὐτὴν βάρους ἐπὶ γῆν καὶ προσκρεμαμένου χώρον ἀπολάβῃ τὸν οἰκείον, τότε δὴ μακαρίας ἰσχύος καὶ πανταχόθεν ἀκωλύτου μετέχει δυνάμεως, ἀόρατος μένουσα τοῖς ἀνθρώπινους ὄμμασιν ὡσπερ αὐτὸς ὁ Θεός· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἕως ἐστὶν ἐν σώματι θεωρεῖται· πρόσσεισι γὰρ ἀφανῶς καὶ μὴ βλεπομένη πάλιν ἀπαλλάττεται, μίαν μὲν αὐτῆ φύσιν ἔχουσα τὴν ἀφθαρτον, αἰτία δὲ σώματι γινομένη μεταβολῆς. ὅπου γὰρ ἂν ψυχὴ προσψαύσῃ, τοῦτο ζῆ καὶ τέθηλεν, ὅπου δ' ἂν ἀπαλλαγῇ, μαραινθὲν ἀποθνήσκει· τοσοῦτον αὐτῇ περίεστιν ἀθανασίας. The idea of the immortality of the soul is recurrent in Josephos, e.g. *Antiquities* XII, 282; XVII, 354; *War* I, 58; II, 151; VI, 46.



I. The Hebrew-Jewish perception of the nature of Man (anthropology) was that Man consisted of a physical part, the body, made from the dust of the ground, and of a non-physical part, the soul, given him by God. Death meant the separation of these two parts, when each of them was to return to its source<sup>87</sup>. Owing to the peculiarities of each, it was natural for the body to be thought of as destructible and the soul as indestructible.

II. There are some timid hopes or expectations in earlier writings that the soul survives death, while in later writings this idea assumes clearer contours.

III. In particular, in Jewish thought, the unresolved questions of the relation between body and soul give expression to a variety of interpretations. On the one hand there are the various positions on the idea of a resurrection (whether of the righteous Israelites, all Israelites, or all mankind) in order to stand judgment or receive reward, while on the other hand, attention is concentrated on the indestructibility of the soul. This last tenet had already a basis in genuinely Hebrew-Jewish ontology, but had received strong influences as well as a theoretical basis from the impact of Hellenic philosophy on Jewish thought. Only one of the above Jewish views of resurrection made express mention of the reconstitution of the body.

IV. The net result, however, is, that it is not possible to speak with Bultmann and other more recent scholars of a Hebrew-Jewish anthropology, according to which Man *is* abody, and to place it in contradistinction to the Hellenic anthropology, according to which Man *has* a body. Such a distinction is too naive and at odds with the Jewish evidence. As we have seen, there was progress and change and polyphony in Jewish thinking. For example, the Sadducees rejected while the Pharisees accepted the resurrection, though Paul the Pharisee obviously did not share the literalistic view of resurrection inculcated by 2 Mac 7:11 and *Sib Or* IV, 179-82. Jewish thinking about resurrection in the first century A.D. was saturated by Hellenic thought, and it is difficult to disentangle the one from the other.

#### 4. PAUL'S VIEW OF THE RESURRECTION

Our inquiry into Jewish anthropology showed that it is not possible to speak of the Jewish view of Man. The Jewish sources indicate that there were several competing views, among which also the view, that the body was mortal whereas the soul was immortal. Many Jews, under obvious Hellenic influence, not only made a clear distinction between soul and body, but, even came to regard the body as temporary, inferior to, and even a burden on the soul, *cf. Wisdom* 9:15: φθαρτὸν γὰρ σῶμα βαρύνει ψυχὴν, καὶ βρῖθει τὸ γεῶδες σκῆνος νοῦν πολιφροντίδα.

---

<sup>87</sup> *Cf. Eccl* 12:7; *Ps* 146:4.

Platōn had never used stronger words than these! While Josephos puts into the Massada hero Eleazar's mouth an exposé on the superiority of the soul over the body, that is simply a reflection of the Platōnic Sōkratēs' words.

In the face of such facts, the so-called “Jewish view of Man” or “Jewish-Christian view of Man” is rather to be regarded as a myth, while the claim, that Paul could not possibly have been influenced by e.g. Platōnic teaching is motivated dogmatically without due examination of the evidence<sup>88</sup>.

In what follows I intend to present Paul's various statements bearing on the question of the resurrection of the dead. On the basis of this evidence I shall try to suggest a plausible interpretation of Paul's understanding of the resurrection.

To begin with, Paul nowhere offers a systematic teaching on anthropology, and the term ψυχή is infrequent in his writings<sup>89</sup>. His view of the body-soul relation becomes, nevertheless, clear from the way in which he views the body and speaks of the self.

On several occasions Paul speaks of the body as mortal. Thus, sin is not to reign ἐν τῷ θνητῷ ὑμῶν σώματι (Rom 6:12); while the life of Jesus is to be manifested ἐν τῇ θνητῇ ὑμῶν σαρκί (2 Cor 4:11). At the same time there is something in Man that survives death. That ‘something’ is usually expressed by a word referring to the *self*, the *I*. The distinction comes out clearly in 2 Cor 5:1-4 (-10):

Οἶδαμεν γὰρ ὅτι ἐὰν ἡ ἐπίγειος ἡμῶν οἰκία τοῦ σκήνους καταλυθῇ, οἰκοδομήν ἐκ Θεοῦ ἔχομεν, οἰκίαν ἀχειροποίητον αἰώνιον ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς. καὶ γὰρ ἐν τούτῳ στενάζομεν τὸ οἰκητήριον ἡμῶν τὸ ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ἐπενδύσασθαι ἐπιποθοῦντες, εἰ γὰρ καὶ ἐνδυσάμενοι οὐ γυμνοὶ εὐρεθησόμεθα. καὶ γὰρ οἱ ὄντες ἐν τῷ σκηνίῳ στενάζομεν βαρούμενοι, ἐφ' ᾧ οὐ θέλομεν ἐκδύσασθαι ἀλλ' ἐπενδύσασθαι, ἵνα καταποθῇ τὸ θνητὸν ὑπὸ τῆς ζῶης<sup>90</sup>.

The emphasized words ἐπίγειος οἰκία τοῦ σκήνους, σκηνίῳ, and θνητὸν are descriptions of the earthly body. Here, firstly, the body is called a οἰκία and a σκηνός, i.e. descriptions which are hardly suitable for denoting the person, the

---

<sup>88</sup> Space does not allow inquiring into Hellenistic representations of Platōn's teaching. Nor is it claimed here that Paul, actually, had read Platōn. Platōn's teaching was, however, widely known. And the similarity of views — if similarity it is — is striking.

<sup>89</sup> It occurs only 13 times, with variable reference.

<sup>90</sup> This text has been at the center of discussion over the vexed question of the *interim* state — a problem that is not in focus in this study. This explains why commentators have not treated the text for its anthropological evidence, e.g. R. P. Martin, *2 Corinthians* (WBC), Waco, Texas 1986, 95-116. Platōnic connections are so eschewed that although Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 100, admits “a Hellenic ‘tinge’ to Paul's teaching in 5:2-4”, he thinks “we possibly press Paul too much to account for his view of man in dualistic terms” (101). Margaret Thrall, *Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (ICC), Edinburgh 1994, 1, 356-400, does not show the same fear of Platōnic teaching. In fact she inclines to the Hellenic understanding of the “material body as the dwelling-place of the soul” (p. 360-61).

self, the *Ego*. But they are excellent descriptions if referred to, shall we say, a shell or a container. Moreover, it is said that this house or tabernacle will be demolished, i.e. it will cease to exist. This demolition of the body, however, does not imply the destruction of the personality, the self or the *Ego*; that survives death. It is, moreover, said, that the earthly body will be replaced by a *οἰκοδομὴν ἐκ Θεοῦ, αὐκίαν ἀχειροποίητον*<sup>91</sup>, which is eternal and heavenly<sup>92</sup>. It is not without significance that the relation of the self to the body (whether earthly or heavenly) is described *pace* Bultmann by “we have” (ἔχομεν), not ‘we are’! There is, thus, a clear distinction between *we* or *us* on the one hand and *our body* that *we have* on the other! Moreover, the earthly body is something that “we take off” (ἐκδύσασθαι) and the new, heavenly body is something that “we put on” (ἐπενδύσασθαι). In other words, the verbs used here are exactly those verbs that would be used to describe the ordinary activity of changing clothes<sup>93</sup>. This is, again, hardly an appropriate description of personality. Similarly, the further details: εὐδοκοῦμεν μᾶλλον ἐκδημήσαι ἐκ τοῦ σώματος καὶ ἐνδημήσαι πρὸς τὸν Κύριον underscores the distinction between *we* or *us* and *our body*<sup>94</sup>. Finally, the same is true of κομίσηται ἕκαστος τὰ διὰ τοῦ σώματος πρὸς ἃ ἔπραξεν (vs. 10), where one receives reward or punishment for what one *has done* through *his body*. All these details amply show that for Paul the body is something that Man *has* rather than that Man *is*. But if Man *is not* his body, there must be something else that he *is*.

In 1 Cor 13:3 there is a distinction between the *I* in “I deliver up” and the *body* that I deliver up “to be burned”<sup>95</sup>. In other words, the body is the *object* of the action I perform. As for 1 Cor 7:4, surely the emotional or psychological element in the relation between husband and wife is not so much in view as is the physical

<sup>91</sup> Thrall, *Second Corinthians*, 1, 363-67, discusses nine different interpretations of *οἰκοδομὴν ἐκ Θεοῦ*. She chooses, rightly to my mind, the first one, that of “the individual resurrection body”.

<sup>92</sup> R. P. Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 97, says that Paul “speaks of putting (ἐπενδύσασθαι) the heavenly body *over* (ital. mine) the earthly tent (5:2)” (similarly p. 99, but differently on p. 102-03)! But surely 5:1 makes it clear that the earthly tent is demolished *before* the heavenly body is put on!

<sup>93</sup> This should not be misunderstood as implying that the body, according to Paul, is not more closely involved with the psychic or spiritual or mental life of the individual than the clothes one wears. Surely Paul would recognize the psychosomatic relationship. It is all too obvious that what happens to the body influences the psychic or mental life of the individual and *vice versa*. But here the question is whether the union of body with soul of necessity implies the equal sharing of both in the personality, the *Ego* or self of the individual. Paul would answer No! This explains why the body does not survive death.

<sup>94</sup> In spite of her not dwelling on the distinction between the *we* and *our body*, Thrall’s argumentation has the same tenor, *Second Corinthians*, 1, 390ff.

<sup>95</sup> A. C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000, 1042 f., follows the alternative reading, but, in spite of his reference to my study, his discussion shows unacquaintance with the conclusive evidence I have presented in it (see n. 9). This makes his argument obsolete.





element, the concrete body. Here, too, the distinction between the personalities of the partners (as decision-makers) and their own body, over which they have no power as well as the partner's body, over which they do have power, is clearly maintained<sup>96</sup>. Thus, in this text, too, the body is clearly distinguished from the *self* or the *I*.

Another way by which Paul refers to the personality of Man is the expression ὁ ἔσω ἄνθρωπος. Accordingly, in 2 Cor 4:16 the distinction between the *body* and the *self* is made by designating the former ὁ ἔξω ἄνθρωπος and the latter ὁ ἔσω ἄνθρωπος<sup>97</sup>. Consequently, while the physical body is “being worn out” (διαφθείρεται, cf. φθαρτόν, φθορά, said of the body), the inner man, the self, the person that has been created in God's image “is being renewed” (ἀνακαινούνται). In the same chapter (4:7) Paul compares the body to an “earthen vessel” containing a treasure: ἔχομεν δὲ τὸν θησαυρὸν τοῦτον ἐν ὀστρακίνοις σκεύεσιν.

In Rom 7:22 Paul writes:

συνῆδομαι γὰρ τῷ νόμῳ τοῦ Θεοῦ κατὰ τὸν ἔσω ἄνθρωπον, βλέπω δὲ ἕτερον νόμον ἐν τοῖς μέλεσίν μου ἀντιστρατευόμενον τῷ νόμῳ τοῦ νοός μου καὶ αἰχμαλωτίζοντά με ἐν τῷ νόμῳ τῆς ἁμαρτίας τῷ ὄντι ἐν τοῖς μέλεσίν μου.

In this sentence we have on the one hand the *I* (in “I delight”) and the ἔσω ἄνθρωπον, both of which refer to the *self*, and on the other hand μέλεσίν μου, which refers to the *body*<sup>98</sup>. Of course, Paul was aware that μέλεσίν μου could only have metonymic significance, and that sin did not reside in the physical members of the body as such. But in as much as sin is perpetrated through the physical members of the body, the various bodily members through metonymy came to be associated especially with various types of sin. Moreover, Paul speaks of two laws that are operative: the νόμος τοῦ νοός and the νόμος τῆς ἁμαρτίας ἐν τοῖς μέλεσίν μου. The contradistinction of νοός and [ἁμαρτίας ἐν τοῖς] μέλεσίν μου, in effect a distinction between the inner self and the external body, calls to mind the distinction Platōn draws between νοῦς and σῶμα. Just as the philosopher is to be guided by his νοῦς — the highest function of the Platōnic soul — in order not to give in to temptation and to the unruliness of the body's demands, so, too, the

---

<sup>96</sup> See my discussion of this text in Caragounis, “Fornication’ and ‘Concession? Interpreting 1 Cor 7, 1-7” in R. Bieringer, *The Corinthian Correspondence*, (BETL 125), Leuven 1996, 543-59.

<sup>97</sup> For implausible alternative interpretations and some of the objections that can be brought against them, see Thrall, *Second Corinthians*, I, 348-51, who sensibly subscribes to the ‘dualistic’ interpretation, argued for here.

<sup>98</sup> On interpretations of this passage, see C. E. B. Cranfield, *Romans*, (ICC), Edinburgh 1977, I, 366 and especially for ancient evidence J. Jeremias, *Art. ἄνθρωπος* etc. in *TDNT*, I, 364-67. Dunn denies any reference to a dualistic understanding of man both here and at 2 Cor 4:16 read in the light of 2 Cor 4:7-5:5 (*Romans*, I, 394). The latter of these — as shown above — cannot possibly leave any doubt as to Paul's dualism.



spiritual man, according to Paul, is to see to it that his  $\nu\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$  has full control over the body and its desires. Paul's position on this seems to be comparable to Platōn's. Perhaps a perusal of Platōn's distinctions in this area might be of some help in elucidating Paul's concepts.

1 Cor 15:12-19 is usually taken as an insistence on the part of Paul for the resurrection of the body<sup>99</sup>. Yet, in these verses Paul says nothing of any reconstitution of the body. If Paul argues — as it appears — against Hellenic detractors of resurrection, probably under Epicurean influence, with an eventual emphasis on the impossibility of life after death<sup>100</sup>, this would not necessarily involve as corollary the resurrection or reconstitution of the body.

Moreover, if 1 Cor 15:12-19 were actually a plea for the reconstitution of the physical body, it would stand in conflict with the many statements of Paul, discussed above, to the effect that the body is distinguished from the self? And it would certainly stand in conflict with what he says below. One might, of course, counter: Why, in that case, does Paul speak of resurrection instead of the immortality of the soul? The answer to this question might be along the following lines? (a) Paul as a one-time Pharisee had been reared to think in terms of resurrection. (b) In spite of the fact that Judaism at this time held many different views on the matter, the resurrection of the *body* was one of these views (*apud* 2 Mac 7:9-11 and *Sib Or* IV, 179-82). (c) It should not be forgotten that Homēros was still the main textbook in Hellenic *paideia*. Might not, then, an eventual teaching on the part of Paul, centered on the indestructibility and immortality of the soul, easily evoke associations with Homēros' description of the mirthless existence of the shadows in the underworld? And even if it were connected with Sōkratēs' and Platōn's more advanced, ethical teaching, it must not escape us that Hellenic philosophy, particularly such idealistic and abstract reasoning as meets us in Platōn's works, was often above the head of the ordinary Hellēn. (d) The ethereal Hellenic view of the immortality of the soul was less concrete as a promise of future life to be claimed by a new religious teaching that sought to win the masses than the naturalistic and more palpable teaching that held out a promise for resurrection? (e) Finally and most importantly, the resurrection of Jesus was the great paradigm<sup>101</sup>.

---

<sup>99</sup> 1 Cor 15 has engendered a voluminous discussion not only by way of monographs, but also in commentaries; e.g. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (NICNT), Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1987, devotes to it no less than 96 pages, while in Thiselton, *First Corinthians*, it receives 144 pages. My more limited interest, however, focuses on the anthropological issue.

<sup>100</sup> See the discussions by C. K. Barrett, *First Corinthians*, 347-50; G. D. Fee, *First Corinthians*, 740-45, and especially Thiselton, *First Corinthians*, 1272-78.

<sup>101</sup> However, this may not be misused. Jesus is paradigmatic in the fact of resurrection. But note, the new body he acquired was spiritual, since he had absolute freedom in appearing and vanishing. If he was recognized, that was imperative in his case, although he was recognized by his actions (Lk 24:30-31; Jn 21:7) not by his appearance!



For all these reasons, therefore, the approach of resurrection rather than that of the immortality of the soul would seem to be the best prospect to set forth before those who were expected to espouse the new religion.

The far more important thing, however, is *how* Paul regards the resurrection. 1 Cor 15:20-28 gives the *raison d'être* of the resurrection. Now although there is the inevitable Hebrew-Jewish connection of physical death with spiritual death — since the one is understood to be a consequence of the other — Paul has in mind primarily the spiritual death that was caused by Adam's sin. In Biblical theology death is in the first place a spiritual experience that cuts off the creature from its life-giving Creator<sup>102</sup>. The text is concerned to emphasize the analogous ways in which humanity are affected by Adam and by Christ, respectively<sup>103</sup>. The first brings death, while the second brings life. Since the Jew thought in concrete terms, and physical death was understood to presuppose spiritual death, could we not say that resurrection here seems to stand for the continuation of the life forfeited on account of sin?

This understanding seems to receive added support in the next section, 15:35-49. The opponent's double question "How do the dead arise, and with what body do they appear?"<sup>104</sup> makes it incumbent on Paul to explain how he understands the resurrection. Paul's answer is "what you sow, does not become alive, unless it first dies". It might be thought that this is to emphasize the temporal order, i.e. that death precedes resurrection. However, more than this, it indicates the clean break between the old and the new life<sup>105</sup>. This thought is reinforced by the next sentence, which takes us one step further: "when you sow, you do not sow the body that will be, but just a seed ... But God gives it a body in accordance with his will". Conceptually and etymologically ἀνάστασις (<ἀνίστημι) as well as the verb ἐγείρω imply that someone or something that is lying down or has fallen down (e.g. as a lifeless corpse) is raised up, or made to stand up; in other words, someone is made alive again. *Resurrection presupposes that the same person, the identical individual or entity that has fallen down (because of death) is made to stand up again in the form in which he had existed before.* Here, however, we find that Paul means something quite different. What falls to the ground is quite different from what will rise up. The physical body, that is, the "naked seed" (γυμνός κόκκος) is quite different from the "body that

---

<sup>102</sup> Cf. e.g. Rom 5:12-21; 6:1-3; Eph 2:1-5.

<sup>103</sup> Cf. C. C. Caragounis, "Romans 5.15-16 in the Context of 5.12-21: Contrast or Comparison?" *NTS* 31 (1985), 142-48.

<sup>104</sup> Thiselton, *First Corinthians*, 1261-62, follows Weiss, Lang and Fee, who take πῶς to mean "how is it possible?" From the Hellenic point of view, it makes perfect sense to understand πῶς as πῶς = "how?" Cf. also *BDAG*, s.v.

<sup>105</sup> Cf. Barrett, *First Corinthians*, 370: "Paul ... is using the figure... to bring out ... the fact of transformation through death and revivification" and Thiselton, *First Corinthians*, 1264, "[it] underlines the logical and contingent condition of *discontinuity* in order to allow for a *meaningful and conceivable continuity*".

will be” (τὸ σῶμα τὸ γενησόμενον), the heavenly spiritual body<sup>106</sup>. Thus, if the physical body had been regarded as an essential part of the human personality, it could not be *exchanged* for another, heavenly or spiritual body (σπεύρεται σῶμα ψυχικόν, ἐγείρεται σῶμα πνευματικόν, 1 Cor 15:44)<sup>107</sup>. The implications of such a view of resurrection as we find here make it impossible to see it as in any way related to the literalistic view of 2 Maccabees and the Sibylline Oracles, which was the most characteristic and most consequential Jewish view from the Hellenic standpoint, and according to which, every member of the body would be created afresh. For example, Paul, like the evangelists (Mt 22:30 = Mk 12:25 = Lk 20:35), has no place for genitals in the new spiritual body, and he declares explicitly that σὰρξ καὶ αἷμα βασιλείαν Θεοῦ κληρονομήσαι οὐ δύναται (15:50). It is simply the case that there is no resurrection for the physical body!

It is an indisputable fact that Paul nowhere argues for the resurrection of the body (ἀνάστασις τοῦ σώματος). He argues for the resurrection of the dead (ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν) but that is another matter, altogether. The ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν refers to the ‘rising’ of the human person, the self, the individual that died, not to his body. And when his imaginary interlocutor raises the objection “in what body do the dead come?” (ποῖω δὲ σώματι ἔρχονται;), Paul calls him “Fool!” (ἄφρων) and goes on to explain that the resurrection of the dead has nothing to do with the physical body that died. “It is raised a spiritual body” (ἐγείρεται σῶμα πνευματικόν), which will take the place of the physical body.

Now, if the earthly body, like the seed, must die and be dissolved before the new life appears, i.e. the new, heavenly, spiritual body ([σῶμα] ἐπουράνιον, σῶμα πνευματικόν) in distinction to the physical body (σῶμα ψυχικόν), then it can no longer be a question of the resurrection of the *earthly* body! And if it cannot be a question of the resurrection of the earthly body, it would seem that it cannot either

---

<sup>106</sup> Unfortunately, commentators in general, focusing on Paul’s supposedly Jewish view of the resurrection of the body, have failed to take account of the anthropological issue, and to appreciate the important fact that according to our text, the body of flesh that lived and died is not said to arise again, e.g. Barrett, Fee, and Thiselton *ad loc.*

<sup>107</sup> Thus, it is simply not correct to say with Fee, *First Corinthians*, 776, that “the point of continuity lay with the body; therefore there must be a resurrection of the body”. Not should the resurrection of Jesus be seen as a model. That was untypical and unique (e.g. it was imperative that he was recognized). Should it be taken paradigmatically, it would lead to all sorts of absurdities: e.g. the resurrected believers will be some short, others tall; some fair, others dark; some beautiful, others ugly, deformed, disfigured, maimed and the like. As Paul understands it, the resurrection body is something entirely different from the earthly body and cannot share in the latter’s appearance or characteristics. I recall once in Cambridge listening to a kind of light-hearted discussion of some NT scholars, who were wondering how those who had died at sea and been eaten by fish and become one with them, be reconstituted to full human beings, since it would be difficult to distinguish the human from the fish parts. According to Paul’s understanding of the resurrection, no such contingencies arise.



be a question of resurrection at all *in the proper sense of the word* — that is, that the same earthly body that died *is raised up again as it was* — nor can resurrection be predicated of the heavenly, spiritual body, in as much as it never died!

It appears, then, that for Paul the death of the physical body is the precondition for the rising of the spiritual body. This is the function of the “seed” as Paul uses it. The idea of resurrection is Paul’s concrete way of underlining *the continuation*, that is, that the same individual who died will be ‘raised’ to a new life, that is, continue to live, though under different conditions. Resurrection thus seems to be a Jewish concept that Paul utilizes to describe the *continuity of personality*, its continued existence after the grave — a conception that Platōn expressed through his tenet of the immortality of the soul.

Here Paul seems to have left behind him the Jewish view of resurrection, in the sense of *the reconstitution of the earthly body*. His expressions regarding resurrection are such that we may duly wonder whether there is anything to connect it with its classical understanding in part of Judaism. If, then, I may be so bold as to ask, Paul has so transformed the idea of resurrection as to deny all that is constitutive of the Jewish idea of the resurrection of the body, can he really still be said to adhere to the Jewish doctrine of the resurrection in opposition to the Hellenic view of the immortality of the soul = self? When is the line crossed, which definitely places Paul in the other camp? But if Paul has so transformed the concept of resurrection as to thereby designate the new, heavenly, spiritual existence of the believer following the loss of his earthly body, the question becomes, *how far away is he really from Sōkratēs’ and Platōn’s view of the immortality of the soul and the mortality of the body?* Paul agrees with Platōn that the earthly body is mortal, whereas Man, the real self, is immortal. Platōn calls the latter ψυχή. Paul does not explicitly use that term for it, though it may be assumed from his circumlocutions. The terminology is inconsequential<sup>108</sup>.

Does it not appear from all this that Paul has given up the so-called *Jewish doctrine* of the resurrection of the body; that he has spiritualized the concept of resurrection; that he uses it in order to underline the idea of continuity between

---

<sup>108</sup> The postulation by Paul of a “spiritual body”, taken literally, might perhaps raise the question: If the resurrected body is spiritual, not merely of heavenly ‘matter’ in contradistinction to earthly matter, wherein does the difference from Man’s real self, his *nefesh* or his spirit lie? And why does the glorified believer, i.e. the real Man, the Self who is now spiritual and heavenly and has entered the kingdom of God, need to be clothed by another spiritual element, a “spiritual body”? How literally should Paul’s language about this spiritual, heavenly body be taken? Thiselton’s discussion, “The Nature of the Resurrection Body (15:44)”, in his *First Corinthians*, 1276-81, has left me unconvinced; therefore, my questions remain.

the earthly life and the heavenly; and that in all this transformation his bottom line is the dissolution of the earthly body and the immortality of the soul (or of the individual)? If this is correct, is Paul's position really that different from Platōn's own position?

## 5. ERGEBNISSE

1. Many scholars use the Homēric view of Man and after-life when they contrast the Hellenic view of Man and his *post-mortem* existence with the so-called Jewish views of Man and resurrection, which they espouse. Without considering the context and the particular angle, they use the Orphic tenet of the body as the prison of the soul in an absolute and generalized way.

2. Moreover, they are oblivious of the fact that with the advent of philosophy (e.g. Sōkratēs, Platōn) there was a radical transformation in how Hellēnes looked on Man and life after death.

3. Platon taught the immortality of the soul and the mortality of the body, and held a view of after-life for the righteous that was superior to the earthly life.

4. The Old Testament material on the question of resurrection is too scant to give any adequate picture of how it was imagined.

5. There was no (unified) Jewish view of resurrection. Instead, there were some five-six competing views: (a) of the righteous (e.g. *1 Enoch*, *Pss Sol.*, the Pharisees); (b) of all Israel (e.g. *1 Enoch*, *2 Baruch*); (c) of all mankind (*IV Ezra*, *Test of XII Patr.*); (d) of the reconstitution of the human body (e.g. *2 Mac*, *Sib Or.*); (e) a denial of resurrection (e.g. the Sadducees); and (f) belief in the immortality of the soul, instead (Essenes, *Josephos*). We cannot, therefore, speak of "the Jewish view of Man" or of "the Jewish view of the resurrection of the body".

6. Paul agrees with Platōn that Man has an immortal self or soul and a mortal body.

7. Paul distinguishes clearly between the self, the *I*, or personality and one's body like Platōn did.

8. Paul argues for the resurrection of the dead, but not for the resurrection of the physical body. In fact this is nowhere propounded in the New Testament.

9. What will rise, according to Paul, will be a spiritual body.

10. Since Paul does not subscribe to the reconstitution of the physical body, held by some Jews, the question arises whether he speaks of resurrection proper at all. For him, the physical body is a "seed" which gives rise to the spiritual body of the believer. Since the physical body does not rise and the spiritual body never died, the life that will be can hardly be called the result of resurrection. Rather, the thread of continuation between the past and the future life is the immortal soul.

11. Why, then, does he use the term resurrection? Briefly, first, as a Pharisee, he was used to thinking in such terms. Second, the term resurrection made more palpable the idea of eternal life, rather than the term immortality (which he also uses!). And third, Jesus' resurrection provided the catalytic incentive.

12. Finally, to be sure Paul uses the term resurrection, but his whole discussion in 1 Cor 15 is an attempt to explain that he understands it very differently from



the so-called Jewish position. It appears that the idea of resurrection is spiritualized. Following death, Man lives on as a heavenly spiritual being (οἱ νεκροὶ ἐγεροῦνται ἀφθαρτοὶ ... τὸ φθαρτὸν τοῦτο ἐνδύσεται ἀφθαρσίαν καὶ τὸ θνητὸν τοῦτο ἐνδύσεται ἀθανασίαν, 15:52-54). Platōn would not have any problem with this.

RECIBIDO: marzo 2017; ACEPTADO: marzo 2017.

