

CHAPTER 6

GREEK PHILOSOPHY, JUDAISM, AND BIBLICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

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Jewish notions of anthropology in the Second Temple period resist systematization. They floated in a sea dominated by Greek philosophy and ideas about the human soul, death, and the afterlife that themselves are diverse and at times somewhat contradictory. Unshakable was the Jewish conviction of God's justice and ultimate settling of accounts in the judgment. While earlier Jewish writings emphasize divine justice being meted out in this life, those of the exilic and postexilic periods place a greater emphasis on individual rewards in the world to come based on one's conduct in this world.

The promise of reward at the eschaton generated speculations about heaven, hell, death, and the afterlife that we find attested in various Jewish apocryphal and pseudepigraphal writings, as well as in the writings of Philo and Josephus. Our limited sources, both Jewish and non-Jewish, preclude determining how and when such speculations about the fate of the dead arose within Israel. Clearly, however, the mixture of ideas found in Jewish literature of this period demonstrate that Greek philosophy made definite inroads on Jewish ideas about the human being, death, and the afterlife. We will look first at the most prominent Greek writers and philosophers before turning to the relevant Jewish writings and noticing their relation to Greek ideas. Finally, we will draw some conclusions in terms of the extent to which later Jewish writings were able to maintain a biblical anthropology.

Greek Views of Anthropology

Beginning with Homer, Greek literature provides a wealth of speculation regarding the nature of human beings, death, and the afterlife. The

earliest Greek conceptions of which we can be sure identify the human “soul” (*psychē*) with the breath which the dying person struggles to retain until at last the “ghost” is given up.¹ In the writings of Homer, one of the most revealing episodes about death occurs in the *Iliad* during a conversation between the sleeping Achilles and his dead friend Patroclus. His friend’s soul is described as “like his very self” in height, appearance, and voice (*Iliad* 23.66, 67).² Patroclus converses intelligently with Achilles and complains that, because his body has not yet been buried, he is unable to join the spirits who are at rest beyond the river Styx but must wander aimlessly through the house of Hades, the master of the underworld. However, it becomes evident that the soul of Patroclus is only a faint shadow of the man, because when Achilles, promising to bury him, reaches out to grasp his friend, the soul vanishes “like a vapour” and goes back beneath the earth “gibbering faintly” (*Iliad* 23.100, 101). Achilles learns that he will soon join his friend in death, but the impression is left also that the souls of the dead have no lasting substance or existence. They are only “shadows” (*skiai*)³ or “images” (*eidōla*) of the person. The startled Achilles exclaims “So it is true! Something of us does survive in Hades’ Halls, some spirit and image of a man, but without real existence” (*Iliad* 23.103, 104).⁴ Achilles can help his friend arrive in Hades, “but he will not find a full or enriching existence there, and he will certainly not return.”⁵

Homer’s *Odyssey* contains a similar episode. Odysseus, obliged to sail to the house of Hades, is asked by the dead seer Teiresias, “Why hast thou left the light of the sun and come hither to behold the dead and a region where there is no joy?” (*Odyssey* 11.93, 94).⁶ As Odysseus speaks one by one with dead souls (*psychē*) he asks his deceased mother about his wife. He is told that his wife worries for his safety but that his possessions are secure, and that his father is grief-stricken. When his mother tells him that it was her love for him that caused her death, Odysseus tries to embrace her. “Thrice I sprang towards her, and my heart bade me clasp her, and thrice she flitted from my arms like a shadow or a dream [*skiē eikelon ē kai*

¹ John Burnet, “Soul (Greek),” *ERE* 11: 737–742.

² Homer, *The Iliad*, trans. A. T. Murray, LCL, 2 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985).

³ The widespread use of “shades” rather than “shadows” to translate *skiai* gives the unfortunate impression of a more solid substance than the relevant texts seem to imply.

⁴ Homer, *The Iliad*, trans. E. V. Rieu; rev. by C. H. Rieu and Peter Jones (London: Penguin, 2003), 398. Gk.: . . . *psychē kai eidōlon, atar phrenes ouk eni pampān*.

⁵ N. T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2003), 40.

⁶ Homer, *The Odyssey*, trans. A. T. Murray, LCL, 2 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985).

oneirō eptat]” (*Odyssey* 11.206–208). Then he begins to wonder whether this was really his mother or just “some phantom” (*ti . . . eidōlon*, *Odyssey* 11.213). So he asks her why she moves away. His mother explains that all the dead are like this, that as soon as life leaves the body “the soul flits away as in a dream.”⁷ In other words, the dead have no substance, nothing to grasp or hold on to. Besides this, the dead have no real memory or intelligence until they taste the blood of the sacrifices made by Odysseus (11.146–148).⁸ When Odysseus calls Achilles “a great prince among the dead,” the reply by Achilles reinforces the point: “‘Say not a word,’ he answered, ‘in death’s favour; I would rather be a paid servant in a poor man’s house and be above ground than king of kings among the dead’” (11.485, 488–491).⁹

After this, Odysseus sees Minos, the son of Zeus, sitting in judgment with the ghosts gathered around him to learn what judgments (*dikai*) he would render them. Orion was given a great unbreakable bronze club with which to drive the ghosts of the wild beasts he had killed. Another dead soul, Tityus son of Gaia, was stretched out on the ground trying to fight off two vultures who were digging into his liver, but he could not. This was his punishment for raping Zeus’s mistress. He also saw Tantalus, up to his chin in water but unable to quench his thirst with it because every time he stooped to drink the water vanished, leaving nothing but dry ground. He saw Sisyphus engaged in his endless struggle to roll the heavy boulder to the top of the hill. Finally, fearing for his own safety, Odysseus leaves the house of Hades and returns to his ship for the homeward journey.

These stories impacted Greek and Roman musings about the dead and reverberated through subsequent centuries. Hesiod describes the house of Hades as a chill, dank place (*Works*, 155). Virgil, in his epic poem *Aeneas*, written in the late first century BC, also describes a visit to the underworld. Aeneas finds the land of the dead to be a place of personified troubles: Sickness, Grief, Care, Hunger, Need, and Pain, evil pleasure of the mind, Discord with “her snaky hair entwined with blood-wet ribbons” and many other monstrous creatures.¹⁰ As Aeneas grabs his sword, his friend reminds him that these ghosts are but “faint, bodiless lives, flitting under a hollow semblance of form,” shadows and nothing more (Virgil, *Aeneas* 6.290–294).

⁷ Gk.: *psychē d’ ēut’ oneiros apoptamenē*.

⁸ Sacrifice (*thuein*) to the gods on an altar caused the sweet savor to go up to them while sacrifice (*enagizein*) to the heroes on an *eschara* allowed the blood to soak into the earth (Burnet, “Soul,” 739).

⁹ Trans. Samuel Butler, <http://classclit.about.com/library/bl-etexts/homer/bl-homer-odyssey-11.htm> (accessed March 3, 2015).

¹⁰ Trans. A. S. Kline, <http://freeread.com.au/@RGLibrary/Virgil/Aeneid.html#Aeneid06> (accessed March 3, 2015).

They may even have “bodies” of a sort and bear scars from the wounds they received (e.g., 6.447, 448, 494–496),¹¹ but these vestiges of humanity serve only to mock their pitiful state. If heroes like Agamemnon, Achilles, Ajax, and others were miserable in Hades, “what hope was there for anyone else?”¹² Only the gods had immortality; only they had immortal bodies.¹³

Greek myths could envision a resurrection of a person’s existing body, but it was impossible to restore or recreate the body once it had been destroyed.¹⁴ When hapless Pelops was chopped up and made into a stew for the gods by his father, Tantalus, and Demeter ate his left shoulder, the gods could *reassemble* the body parts of the boy but none could re-create the missing limb. Instead, he was given “a gleaming ivory shoulder” (Pindar, *Olympionikai* 1.25–27).

Socrates, Plato, and those philosophers who followed them, present a vivid contrast to this gloomy portrait. Death was not to be feared, but something to look forward to.¹⁵ Socrates considered it at worst a “dreamless sleep” and at best a state of incomparable happiness, with people spending eternity in Hades doing what they had done on earth.¹⁶ Socrates himself hoped to engage the famous dead in debate (Plato, *Apologia* 40c–41c; idem, *Respublica* 2.363c–e; 6.498d).¹⁷ Pindar and Pythagoras had believed the soul was immortal, but Plato built his entire philosophical system around it. Death was to be welcomed as the moment of freedom for the soul finally able to slip the bonds of its earthly body prison.¹⁸ Corpses are nothing more

¹¹ Aeschylus has the ghost (*eidōlon*) of Clytemnestra display the fatal wounds to her heart (*Eumenides* 1.103). Jan N. Bremmer, “Soul: Greek and Hellenistic Concepts,” *ER*, 12:8542: “On vases, the souls of the dead are even regularly shown with their wounds, sometimes still bandaged.”

¹² Wright, *Resurrection*, 43 n. 67 (giving numerous references), here 44, 45.

¹³ Burnet, “Soul,” 740.

¹⁴ Dag Øistein Endsjø, “Immortal Bodies, before Christ: Bodily Continuity in Ancient Greece and 1 Corinthians,” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 30 (2008): 433, mentioning Pelops as an example. His evidence for immortal bodies is exaggerated. Only the gods or deified mortals (like the demigods of Hesiod, *Opera et dies*, 166–173) are immortal in pre-Christian Greek literature.

¹⁵ Plato even wished to excise *Iliad* 23 and *Odyssey* 11 from Homer’s works (*Respublica* 3.386, 387).

¹⁶ Helen F. North, “Death and Afterlife in Greek Tragedy and Plato,” in *The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy*, ed. A. H. Armstrong (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 50.

¹⁷ Others held out hope that marriage and sexual activity would continue (ibid., 46, citing R. Garland, *The Greek Way of Death* [Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985], 159; Gregory Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered: Thomas and John in Controversy* [Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1995], 54).

¹⁸ References given by Wright, *Resurrection*, 48 n. 89: Plato, *Phaedo* 80–85; idem, *Phaedrus* 250c (the oyster in its shell is like the soul trapped in the body); idem, *Cratylus* 400c (body/tomb, *sōma/sēma*), 403e–f.

than phantoms (*eidōla*). The real person is the soul, which is nonmaterial and immortal (*athanatos*), but, when combined with an earthly body, becomes a living being (*zōon*) and mortal (*thnēton*).¹⁹ If the soul attaches itself to the physical pleasures of the body rather than to the invisible world of the mind and philosophy, it will be weighed down by this, and when the body dies, the soul will never rise above the visible world (Plato, *Phaedo* 80–83). Underlying all of this is an ontology based on a theory of “unchanging, ideal ‘forms’ (*eidoi*) or ideas . . . in the intelligible world and their constantly changing counterparts in the visible world (‘images’ [*eikones*]).”²⁰ If the soul is immortal, it preexisted the body and will exist after it is dead; therefore, the “learning” of virtue is really just recollection and does not need to be taught (Plato, *Meno* 81a–e), as the Sophists had claimed. The pains and pleasures of this bodily existence are really illusory. The real business of life is to nurture the soul that survives the body.

Very different is Aristotle. He identified the body as “matter” and the soul as “form,” but it is only the combination of the two that is alive. The soul by itself is merely a potentiality. It has no independent existence, as we find in Plato.²¹ It animates the body to do certain things, including growth, movement or rest, and perception, but the soul is not the cause of individual personality. Who we are as individuals is the result of our unique combination of form and matter. Rationality is a capacity unique to human soul and has two aspects. The passive aspect receives sense impressions from the outside world, while the active aspect works on the level of abstractions. It is this latter aspect of reason (*nous*) that proves its nonmaterial nature. Human reason is able to generate thoughts that have no corresponding material object.²² This is the closest Aristotle could bring himself to conceive of something divine and immortal. But because this aspect of soul is pure thought, independent of matter, it is indivisible, impassible, and, of itself, has no personality. When the body dies, the passive aspect of reason perishes, while the active aspect remains as an impersonal actuality.²³

Somewhat similar to Aristotle, Epicurus conceived of the soul as consisting of particles held in place by the body until death, at which point

¹⁹ See Plato, *Laws* 12.959b; idem, *Phaedo* 80–82; idem, *Phaedrus* 245c–247c.

²⁰ Clinton Wahlen, “Wisdom, Greek,” *DOTWPW*, 844.

²¹ Aristotle, *De anima* 2.413a.3–5; Burnet, “Soul,” 741: “soul is inseparably bound up with body, and can have no life apart from it.”

²² Aristotle, *De anima* 3.430a.3–6, 14, 15.

²³ *Ibid.*, 3.430a.22–25. Cf. Joel B. Green, *Body, Soul, and Human Life: The Nature of Humanity in the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2008), 56: “Aristotle’s conception urges a unified view of the human person.”

these particles are scattered and no sentience is possible.²⁴ Although clearly dependent on the ideas of Democritus about atoms, Epicureans went further by explicitly denying the possibility that the particles of a person’s soul and body, while they might have come together by chance, could somehow be reassembled after death.²⁵ Stoics likewise believed in the dissolution of body and soul at death. And although their views of how that knowledge should affect life in the present differed substantially from the Epicureans, the idea taught by these rival philosophies, that personal existence ceases at death, became highly influential, as attested in numerous tombstones from the first century BC to the first century AD bearing the epitaph, common in both Greek and Latin and often in abbreviated form, “I was not, I was, I am not, I don’t care.” Other epigraphs convey similar sentiments: “When life ends, all things perish and turn to nothing!”; “We are and were nothing. Look, reader, how swiftly we mortals pass from nothing to nothing!”²⁶ By one estimate, “at most 10 percent of the funerary epigrams contain even a hint of a hope for an afterlife.”²⁷

Jewish Views of Anthropology

Many Jewish writings of the Second Temple period reflect continuity with the Hebrew Bible’s perspective on death and the afterlife while others reflect discontinuity. We will begin by examining how the Septuagint reflects Jewish thought on these topics before turning to other writings of the period, proceeding in roughly chronological order.

The Septuagint

To what extent the Septuagint²⁸ represents a shift toward Greek an-

²⁴ See Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, 10.63–69. Most of what is preserved of Epicurus’ writings is found here and in two other sources: (1) *Principal Doctrines* (mentioned in *ibid.*, 10.35), esp. relevant being no. 2 (“Death is nothing to us; for that which has been dissolved into its elements experiences no sensations, and that which has no sensations is nothing to us,” <http://www.epicurus.net/en/principal.html> (accessed January 30, 2013), and (2) *Vatican Sayings*.

²⁵ Wright, *Resurrection*, 34.

²⁶ Quoted by Peter G. Bolt, “Life, Death, and the Afterlife in the Greco-Roman World,” in *Life in the Face of Death: The Resurrection Message of the New Testament*, ed. Richard N. Longenecker (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 68.

²⁷ Hans-Joseph Klauck, *The Religious Context of Early Christianity: A Guide to Graeco-Roman Religions*, trans. Brian McNeal (Philadelphia: Fortress, 2003), 80.

²⁸ This ancient translation into Greek of the Hebrew Bible (late 3d to 2d c. BC with parabiblical portions later) appears rather uneven in terms of its translation method with some portions reflecting a considerably freer translation of the original than other portions. On the origin and history of the Septuagint, see Natalio Fernandez Marcos, *The Septuagint in Context: Introduction*

thropological concepts is disputed.²⁹ Key terms such as “soul,” *psychē* (usu. translating *nefesh*), and *hadēs* (translating *she’ol*) occur frequently (954 and 107 times, respectively).³⁰ But do these terms merely carry over the meaning of the Hebrew terms they translate, or are they already freighted with Greek nuances?

A careful linguistic study of *psychē* indicates that the Septuagint “has a tendency to consider the ‘soul’ in a more individualistic way than does the Hebrew text” but not of individual souls in the Platonic sense.³¹ It is those cases in which the semantic range of *nefesh* does not overlap with *psychē* that are most telling. For example, in Isaiah 43:4 the Hebrew text speaks of giving “princes for your *nefesh*” which the Septuagint translates as “princes for your head.” Significantly, in order to specify individuality the translator must resort to a word other than “soul” so that “what makes the person is not so much ‘soul’ as ‘head.’”³² It would appear that, because of the Greek understanding of the soul, the meaning of the Hebrew could not accurately be conveyed were it to be so translated. Further evidence that the idea of “soul” in the Septuagint is imbued more with Hebrew than Greek nuances is the fact that *psychē* is chosen to translate *nefesh* even when the latter means “corpse” (e.g., Lev 19:28; 21:1; Num 5:2), a meaning not at all encompassed by the Greek word.³³ When the Septuagint refers to the *soul* of a person it comprehends the whole being or life of the person and cannot be construed in terms of a bipartite (body-soul) or tripartite (body-soul-spirit) concept of human nature.³⁴

to the Greek Versions of the Bible (Boston: Brill, 2001), 50, 67, and passim; on the relatively freer translation style in the wisdom literature, see Wahlen, “Wisdom,” 843, 844.

²⁹ A. Aejmelaeus, “Von Sprache zur Theologie. Methodologische Überlegungen zur Theologie der Septuaginta,” in *The Septuagint and Messianism*, ed. M. A. Knibb (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2006), 21–48 here 46, suggests the possibility “dass z.B. das hebräische Wort נֶפֶשׁ allmählich dem griechischen ψυχή näher gekommen ist, nicht deswegen, weil die Septuaginta נֶפֶשׁ mit ψυχή übersetzt, sondern weil das dualistische Menschenbild auch unter Juden Terrain gewonnen hat. Sprachen sind nicht unveränderlich, sondern sie sind in ständiger Bewegung.” See also the cautious rejection of a body-soul dualism in favor of physicalism by Nancey C. Murphy, *Bodies and Souls, or Spirited Bodies?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 17, 22.

³⁰ The Greek text and frequencies are based on the *Septuaginta* (ed. Rahlfs) as grammatically tagged by the Kraft/Taylor/Wheeler Septuagint Morphology Database, v. 4.5 (2010), using Accordance, v. 9.5.7 (March 2012).

³¹ Daniel Lys, “The Israelite Soul according to the LXX,” *VT* 16 (1966): 188, 193.

³² *Ibid.*, 198.

³³ LSJ 2026, 2027. As Lys, “Israelite Soul,” 219 points out, *psychē* is also used of a corpse when *nefesh* does not occur in the MT. In all of these cases the *psychē* is seen from its potential to defile, not its (nonexistent) vitality.

³⁴ James A. Arieti, “The Vocabulary of Septuagint Amos,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 93 (1974):

Compared to the Hebrew Bible, which generally contains no more than hints of a future resurrection,³⁵ the Septuagint in places makes this hope much more explicit. For example, the Septuagintal Job affirms: “For if a person should die, having finished the days of his life, he will live; I would endure until I exist again” (14:14).³⁶ Even clearer is the addition in Job 42:17a: “Yet it is written of him [Job] that he will arise again with those whom the Lord resurrects.”³⁷ Psalm 1:4, 5 implies the possibility of resurrection for the righteous by denying it for the ungodly, who are “like the dust that the wind hurls from the face of the earth. Therefore the ungodly shall not resurrect in the judgment, nor sinners in the counsel of the righteous.”³⁸ The hope of the resurrection appears also in Isaiah 26:19: “The dead shall rise, and those in the tombs shall be raised. Then those in the earth shall rejoice, for the dew from You is healing to them, but the land of the ungodly shall perish.”³⁹ None of these passages suggests an existence separate from the body. Hope after death is anchored in a future bodily resurrection.

A similar picture emerges from a study of the use of *hadēs* in the Septuagint. It is not a place of final rewards but conforms to the Hebrew notion of *she’ol* in referring to the grave as a place of darkness and destruction, the absence of life rather than its shadowy continuation.⁴⁰ Not only in the Septuagint but also in other Jewish literature of the period, *hadēs* differs from the contemporary Greek concept in “the absence of a clearly defined division into two parts, and . . . the emphasis placed on its association with

345 reaches a similar conclusion: “The idea of an eternal soul, or of the soul as something completely distinct from the body, does not occur for ψυχή in the LXX.” Nevertheless, such passages as Ps 15:10 (EB 16:10) and Isa 10:18 could be read in a Platonic (i.e., dualistic) way.

³⁵ Daniel 12:2 is an obvious exception. Interestingly, the Septuagint rendering of verses 1, 2 seems to retain a corporate aspect also.

³⁶ Gk.: *ean gar apothanē anthrōpos, zēsetai suntelesas hēmeras tou biou autou; hypomenō heōs an palin genōmai*. Unless otherwise indicated, translations of Septuagintal texts into English are the author’s. Further, see Wahlen, “Wisdom,” 846; also Gillis Gerleman, *Studies in the Septuagint: I. Book of Job* (Lund: Gleerup, 1946), 60–63.

³⁷ Gk.: *gegraptai de auton palin anastēsesthai meth hōn ho kyrios anistēsīn*.

³⁸ Gk.: *. . . hōs ho chnous, hon ekriptei ho anemos apo prosōpou tēs gēs. dia touto ouk anastēsontai asebeis en krisei oude hamartōloi en boulē dikaiōn*. Similarly Psalm 40:9 [EB 41:8] has the wicked doubting the resurrection of the righteous: “He who sleeps will not rise up [*anastēnai*] again, will he?”

³⁹ Gk.: *anastēsontai hoi nekroi, kai egerthēsontai hoi en tois mnēmeiois, kai euphranthēsontai hoi en tē gē; hē gar drosos hē para sou iama autois estin, hē de gē tōn asebōn peseitai*.

⁴⁰ Cf. Richard Bauckham, “Hades, Hell,” *ABD* 3:14, referring to Second Temple literature more generally: “Even when Hades is portrayed as the fate for which the wicked are heading, in contrast to eternal life to which the righteous are destined, the traditional characteristics of the place of the dead—darkness and destruction—are often in mind (*Pss. Sol.* 14:9, 10; 15:10, 13; 16:2; *Jub.* 7:29; 22:22).”

death and the grave as abnormal facts following in the wake of sin.”⁴¹ Philosophical terms either do not occur at all in the Septuagint or are used in a more general, nontechnical sense.⁴² It is also evident that the earlier, biblical portions of the Septuagint conform more closely to the usage of the terms in the Hebrew Bible than some of the later, parabiblical portions.⁴³

1 *Enoch*

The book of 1 *Enoch* contains a number of scenes that seem to mix Jewish apocalyptic with Greek mythology.⁴⁴ In what is considered one of its earliest portions, the book of Enoch describes the origin and spread of wickedness in terms of heavenly angels mating with the daughters of human beings and giving birth to giants (6:1–7:1; 9:7, 8). These giants constitute an obscene mixture of the heavenly and the earthly.⁴⁵ In an apparent allusion to the story of Prometheus, they are also called “titans” (10:9). Their size and immoral origins render them uniquely able to spread wickedness, violence, and murder. Like God’s hearing the cry of Abel’s blood, the heavenly watchers hear the souls of the righteous crying for vengeance (9:3, 10), which leads to the destruction of the giants by Noah’s flood. Yet the evil spirits of the giants that came out of their bodies and women “sirens” (*seirēnas*) live on to torment human beings until they meet their end in the judgment (15:8–12; 19:1, 2).

The fallen angels are to be bound in darkness beneath the hills of the earth until the final judgment (10:4–6, 11, 12), when “they will be led away to the fiery abyss, and to the torture, and to the prison where they will be

⁴¹ Geerhardus Vos, “Hades,” *ISBE* (1929 ed.), 2:1314; cf. Joachim Jeremias, “ᾠδης,” *TDNT* 1:147, who sees three periods of development, with the New Testament straddling the middle stage: (1) the Old Testament picture of a shadowy existence in Sheol/Hades; (2) the wicked only rest in Hades while the righteous enjoy blessedness; (3) the division of rewards with the wicked being punished in Hades and the righteous enjoying the bliss of heaven.

⁴² Arieti, “Vocabulary,” 345, 346; Wahlen, “Wisdom,” 843, 844.

⁴³ The picture of death in *Tobit* is similar to the Hebrew concept of *she’ol* (see n. 89 below and cf. n. 88). We will examine *Wisdom of Solomon* and *4 Maccabees* separately in more detail.

⁴⁴ 1 *Enoch* is a composite of literary traditions stretching from the third century BC to the first century AD and has been divided by critical scholarship into five separate books written at different times. See George W. E. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1: A Commentary on the Book of 1 Enoch, Chapters 1–36; 81–108*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2001), 7, 8 (this is also the translation used for all quotations from these chapters of the book). Latest is the Book of Parables (chaps. 37–71), which is the only portion not attested at Qumran and dated by Nickelsburg to the first century BC but which John J. Collins, “Enoch, Books of,” *DNTB*, 316, dates to the early first century AD.

⁴⁵ They are called “bastards” (*mazēreoi*, cf. *mamzer* in Deut 23:2), “half-breeds” (*kibdēloi*), and “the sons of fornication” (10:9). Further, see Clinton Wahlen, *Jesus and the Impurity of Spirits in the Synoptic Gospels* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 31, 32.

confined forever” (10:13). Next Michael is seen executing eternal punishment on all the wicked in “the fiery abyss” (10:11–16). This is followed by a glimpse of the resurrected⁴⁶ righteous begetting thousands and living on earth in peace and abundance (10:16–19). Another scene depicts “a great and high mountain” in the west having chambers “that the spirits of the souls of the dead might be gathered into them” (22:1, 3).⁴⁷ According to one influential reconstruction, the original form of the text seems to reflect only a modest adjustment of the traditional Jewish view of Sheol: its location in a western mountain rather than underground and a postmortem judgment.⁴⁸ “The first author thought of the pits as collecting places for human souls without respect to their moral character or the circumstances of their lives. As in 102:7, and in many biblical descriptions of Sheol, the land of the dead is a place of darkness, even for the righteous.”⁴⁹

A secondary vision and interpretation seems to have been inserted in verses 5–13, making these separate compartments represent different fates: a bright fountain of water for the righteous (v. 9); “great torment, . . . scourges and tortures” for the wicked (v. 11); and simple confinement for those already punished in their lifetimes (v. 13). There is also the soul of Abel crying for vengeance against Cain (vv. 5–7). While, on the one hand, this is not so unlike characters in Greek mythology (cf. n. 11 above), Abel’s soul does nothing more than cry out.⁵⁰ Next is a glimpse of the paradise that surrounds the throne of God. Michael, the “leader” of the angels (24:6), explains that the tree of life will be food for the righteous so that “they will live a long life upon the earth, such as your fathers lived also in their days, and torments and plagues and suffering will not touch them” (25:6). Reference to the fragrances of the fruit being “in their bones” suggests that a bodily resurrection of the righteous is envisaged.⁵¹

Even the view of Hades as an intermediate place in *1 Enoch* 51:1 bears little resemblance to the Greek concept: “In those days, Sheol will return all

⁴⁶ Wright, *Resurrection*, 154 seems to understand it thus on the basis of 1:8; 5:7. In addition, the image of “the plant of righteousness” being caused to “appear” in verse 16 coheres with a biblical resurrection motif (e.g. Job 14:7–15; Isa 45:8; 61:11).

⁴⁷ Based on textual inconsistencies, some suggest a fairly complicated literary history for this chapter. See Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1, 302, 303.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 304; cf. George W. E. Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism and Early Christianity*, expanded edition (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), 168–171.

⁴⁹ Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1, 305.

⁵⁰ Cf. John the Revelator’s view of souls under the altar crying for vengeance and vindication (Rev 6:9, 10), on which see Félix H. Cortez, “Death and Hell in the New Testament,” in this volume.

⁵¹ This possibility is acknowledged by Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch*, 315.

the deposits which she had received and hell will give back all that which it owes.”⁵² A resurrection seems clearly implied, because the righteous and holy are singled out among the dead as those who will be “saved” (51:2).⁵³ More explicit still is the Epistle of Enoch: “the righteous shall arise from their sleep;”⁵⁴ “the souls of the pious who have died will come to life . . . and their spirits will not perish” (103:4). The soul and the spirit are used here interchangeably of the *person* (as soul and heart are in 98:7),⁵⁵ but whether a bodily resurrection is implied is less clear.⁵⁶ In any case, the triumphant assurance effectively answers the taunt of the wicked who asserted that, because there is no afterlife, the righteous gain nothing for their goodness (102:6–8),⁵⁷ whereas they have enjoyed this life and die in wealth and honor (103:6). Images of burning appear in *1 Enoch* to describe the punishment of the wicked, but (as in the Qumran texts)⁵⁸ they are frequently coupled with terms that indicate not just torment but complete destruction (e.g.,

⁵² So Loren T. Stuckenbruck, *1 Enoch 91–108* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2007), 508: “The concept of Sheol is traditional; all, no matter what kind of existence they have had, will descend to Sheol, and no one will be distinguished from the other through reward and punishment.” The translation of this portion of *1 Enoch* 37–71 is by E. Isaac, “1 (Ethiopic Apocalypse of) Enoch,” *OTP* 1:29–50; on its dating and the translation of other portions of the book, see n. 44.

⁵³ As Stanley E. Porter, “Resurrection, the Greeks and the New Testament,” in *Resurrection*, ed. Stanley E. Porter, Michael A. Hayes, and David Tombs (London: T & T Clark, 1999), 63, points out, the larger context seems to restrict resurrection to national Israel.

⁵⁴ Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1, 432, understands the rising from sleep as an awakening to wisdom but the eschatological context of the final judgment and the end of sin (92:5) favor reference to a last-day resurrection, as does the Ethiopic version in which the heathen “shall be cast into the judgment of fire, and shall perish in wrath and in grievous judgment forever” (92:9).

⁵⁵ The fluctuation/disagreement of terms for “spirit” and “soul” in the Gk. and Ethiopic texts prevent complete certainty regarding the author’s implied anthropology but, as Nickelsburg, *Resurrection*, 168, 169 n. 17 admits, this phenomenon probably reflects “an overlapping of the meanings” of the words at the time the Greek translation was made (i.e., they were sometimes used interchangeably).

⁵⁶ While no clear affirmation of a *bodily* resurrection appears, the usage of the Gk. terms in this portion of *1 Enoch* precludes facily identifying the author’s anthropology as Platonic and also neatly avoids the kind of debate Paul faced in defending the notion of a bodily resurrection (cf. 1 Cor 15:35–45), though, interestingly, the eschatological usage of *pneuma* in that passage is not unlike its use here.

⁵⁷ The Gk. and Ethiopic texts diverge in verses 9–11; in the former, the taunt continues as reconstructed by Nickelsburg, whereas in the latter the righteous rebut this taunt. The corrupt state of the Greek text makes it difficult to determine which version more accurately reflects the original text. See Stuckenbruck, *1 Enoch 91–108*, 505, 506, for a discussion.

⁵⁸ See 1QS II.6–8; IV.12–14; 1QM XIV.17; 1QHa XVI.20–22; CD-A II.5, 6; 4Q418 69 II.6, 8. For an overview of the discussion of anthropology and eschatology embedded in these texts, see Matthew Goff, “Recent Trends in the Study of Early Jewish Wisdom Literature: The Contribution of 4QInstruction and Other Qumran Texts,” *Currents in Biblical Research* 7/3 (2009): 383–386 and 388–392, respectively, as well as the discussion below.

1:9; 10:14–16, 21; 53:2, 5; 91:8).⁵⁹ Thus the wicked suffer the very fate that they had envisaged for the righteous, who, by contrast “will shine like the luminaries of heaven” (104:2; cf. Dan 12:3).

In summary, while *1 Enoch*, composed as it was over a considerable period of time by several different writers and editors, does not present a single, unified picture of human beings and their ultimate destiny, the mixture of Jewish and Greek images, when taken as a whole, generally anticipate a resurrection of the righteous to a peaceful, pleasant life and the resurrection or gathering of the wicked (100:4) to judgment and destruction.⁶⁰

Jubilees

A number of references to death and human destiny in *Jubilees* are comparable to early Jewish ideas.⁶¹ Death is conceived in terms of an “eternal sleep” (36:18) and future hope is described in terms of a purified Israel who “will dwell in confidence in all the land,” which “will not have any Satan or any evil (one). And the land will be purified from that time and forever” (50:5).⁶² Isaac is warned by Abraham against committing a “sin leading to death” in which case “your name and your memory will perish [Heb. *’bd*] from [the] wh[ole earth].”⁶³ Those who profane the Sabbath will be “cut off [fore]v[e]r.”⁶⁴

Having no hope means to descend into Sheol, face judgment, and not be remembered on the earth but to be destroyed as the Sodomites were

⁵⁹ So William V. Crockett, “The Metaphorical View,” in *Four Views on Hell*, ed. William V. Crockett (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1992), 52, 53. Not an exception, *1 Enoch* 102:7, 8 in referring to final punishment (*katastrophē*) pictures a deeper region in Sheol where the souls of the wicked “descend with pain into Hades,” but which eventuates in them becoming “as those who do not exist” (102:11, Gk.: *hōs ouk ontēs*).

⁶⁰ Similarly, Wright, *Resurrection*, 157; Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch*, 525.

⁶¹ See Edward William Fudge, *The Fire That Consumes: A Biblical and Historical Study of the Doctrine of Final Punishment*. 3d ed. (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2011), 107, 108. Regarding dating, seventeen fragmentary copies have been identified at Qumran (DSSSE 2:1339) and key portions of the book suggest it was written after the Maccabean revolt, ca. 160–150 BC. See R. H. Charles, *APOT*, 2:48, n. on v. 23; Nickelsburg, *Resurrection*, 65, 66.

⁶² Quotations are from the translation of O. S. Wintermute, “Jubilees,” *OTP*, 2:52–142). Corresponding references in the Qumran copies of *Jubilees* provide limited evidence of the Hebrew wording due to their fragmentary condition. When that wording is available, the English translation is based on the Hebrew copies found at Qumran (see n. 63 below).

⁶³ 4Q219 II.25, 27 = *Jubilees* 21:22. Unless otherwise indicated, reconstructions and translations of the text of the DSS are from Qumran Nonbiblical Manuscripts, 1999–2014, Martin G. Abegg, Jr., version 3.6 with English translations based upon *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New English Translation*, ed. Michael O. Wise, Martin G. Abegg, Jr., and Edward M. Cook (New York: HarperCollins, 2005), version 2.7 (Accordance 11.0.2, OakTree Software, 2014).

⁶⁴ 4Q218 1.3, 4 = *Jubilees* 2:27.

(22:22; cf. 7:29). Those who seek to harm others will be cut off, their descendants will perish, and on the day of wrath they will suffer punishment “by a burning and devouring flame” and “be erased from the Book of Human Instruction and enter not the Book of Life, but destruction.”⁶⁵ The passage goes on to say, though, that “their judgment will always be renewed with eternal reproach and execration and wrath and torment and indignation and plagues and sickness” (36:10). If eternal torment is meant here it would be the only mention of it in *Jubilees*, but wording earlier in the same verse points away from this interpretation toward a picture of total destruction: “with devouring burning fire just as he burned Sodom.” In addition, “the sinner is not found in ‘the book of life’ (i.e., listed among the living) but is ‘appointed to destruction.’”⁶⁶

There is only one reference in *Jubilees* that seems to support a dualistic view of human beings:

And then the Lord will heal his servants, and they will rise up and see great peace. And they will drive out their enemies, and the righteous ones will see and give praise, and rejoice forever and ever with joy; and they will see all of their judgments and all of their curses among their enemies. And their bones will rest in the earth, and their spirits will increase joy, and they will know that the LORD is an executor of judgment; but he will show mercy to hundreds and thousands, to all who love him. (23:30, 31)

According to Nickelsburg, there may be a contrast in verse 31 of “their bones resting in the earth with the joy experienced by their spirits, presumably in heaven.”⁶⁷ He admits, however, that the picture is not totally clear since the healing and rising up of the “servants” in verse 30 may refer to their resurrection.⁶⁸ Then again this triumphant picture may be no more than “poetic hyperbole, describing those who die with assurance that justice has been done. They are portrayed as joyous dead who lie in the earth contented with God’s certain vindication of the righteous.”⁶⁹ In short, nothing certain can be gathered from such an ambiguous reference, especially

⁶⁵ 4Q223–224 2 II.51–53 = *Jubilees* 36:10.

⁶⁶ Fudge, *The Fire That Consumes*, 109.

⁶⁷ Nickelsburg, *Resurrection*, 47.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 48.

⁶⁹ Wintermute, *OTP* 2:102 n. 23 (p); cf. Donald Gowan, *Eschatology in the Old Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986), 94: “*Jubilees* is probably closer to the OT than to later Judaism in affirming a vague kind of life after death in a way that might remind us of Pss. 49:15 and 73:24 (more than an explicit teaching on an immortal soul, which is not so common in Judaism).”

since other parts of *Jubilees* seem to present the nature and future of human beings more in line with earlier Jewish texts.

Qumran Literature

The corpus of materials found in the caves near Khirbet Qumran in the Dead Sea region, contain three main streams of written religious tradition within Judaism (biblical, apocryphal/pseudepigraphal, and sectarian).⁷⁰ While some have challenged the scholarly consensus linking this desert community to the Essene sect known from classical sources,⁷¹ it remains the most probable explanation.⁷²

Discussions of the anthropology of the Qumran sect have often focused on the antithesis found between “flesh” (*basar*) and “spirit” (*ruakh*) in *Rule of the Community* (1QS III.13–IV.26),⁷³ rather than on the use of “soul” (*nefesh*). Nevertheless, references to the soul are abundant and tend to conform to the wholistic view found in the HB.⁷⁴ Occasional mention of a “fleshly spirit” (*ruakh basar*) can in some contexts emphasize human weakness or mortality,⁷⁵ while in other places it refers to the spiritual ori-

⁷⁰ Jonathan Campbell, “The Qumran Sectarian Writings,” in *The Cambridge History of Judaism*, vol. 3: The Early Roman Period, ed. William Horbury, W. D. Davies, and John Sturdy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 798, 800, Table 24.1, conveniently listing the nonbiblical scrolls and indicating the documents that contain sectarian or “community terminology” with boldface type (802–805). Using paleographic and radiocarbon methods, the scrolls variously date from the late second century BC to the early first century AD. See Gregory L. Doudna, “Carbon-14 Dating,” *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. Lawrence H. Schiffman and James C. VanderKam, 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 120.

⁷¹ Yizhar Hirschfeld, *Qumran in Context: Reassessing the Archaeological Evidence* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2004).

⁷² Attempts to decouple the Qumran site from the DSS have been unpersuasive. See, e.g., Campbell, “Qumran,” 819; Jodi Magness, *The Archaeology of Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002), 98–100; H. Eshel, “Qumran Archaeology,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 125/3 (2005): 389–394. On the origins of the community, which came to an end ca. AD 68–72, see Florentino Garcia Martinez and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, *Qumranica Minora I: Qumran Origins and Apocalypticism* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 16–24.

⁷³ Regarding this much-discussed passage in 1QS, it is generally agreed that dualism functions on more than one level (within the human being and on a cosmic plane), on which see, e.g., John R. Levison, “The Two Spirits in Qumran Theology,” in *The Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, vol. 2: The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Qumran Community, ed. James H. Charlesworth (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2006), 185.

⁷⁴ Searching the non-biblical manuscripts using Accordance yields 356 occurrences of *nefesh*; on wholistic language for the soul, see, e.g., 1QS III.1; V.8, 10; VII.3, 9; X.19; XI.13; CD I.20; XI.16; XII.11; XVI. 7, 9.

⁷⁵ E.g., 1QH IV.25; V.19. Cf. H. -J. Fabry, “רִוּחַ רְשָׁעִים,” *TDOT* 13:397: “In humble self-abasement, the worshiper can call himself a ‘spirit of error’ (*rwh htwh*, 1QH 1:22), a ‘perverse spirit’ (*rwh nwh*, 1QH 3:21), or ‘spirit of wickedness’ (*rwh rs’h*, 1QS 10:18, 19). If we are not to relativize such

entation of a person toward good or evil, toward holiness or toward the flesh.⁷⁶ This latter sense evidences a shift in meaning compared with Old Testament usage, as does reference to “guilty flesh” (1QM XII.12), “evil flesh” (1QS XI.9), and similar expressions.⁷⁷

While several have suggested that some form of a realized eschatology was operative at Qumran,⁷⁸ we should not necessarily suppose that a monolithic uniformity of belief with regard to the afterlife prevailed among Jews there any more than for any other form of Judaism in the Second Temple period.⁷⁹ Several lines of evidence suggest that these desert dwellers believed in a resurrection from the dead at the conclusion of the final war that would give victory to the sons of light. This evidence includes the preservation of multiple copies of earlier texts affirming this belief (Daniel, *1 Enoch*, *Testament of Qahat*, and *Visions of Amram*), putative references to resurrection in both sectarian and non-sectarian documents, and even the characteristically careful, intact burial of corpses oriented to the north (and, for those on the slopes, to the east) in apparent anticipation of their vindication at the end of the days.⁸⁰ As one scholar now admits, “to judge from the broader range of Scrolls that were either brought to or copied at Qumran, some people there believed in a resurrection of the dead.”⁸¹

expressions of humility, we must see them in the context of such expressions as ‘spirit of humility’ (*rwḥ nwh*, 1QS 4:3), ‘broken spirit’ (*rwḥ nšbrh*, 1QS 8:3), ‘spirit of error’ (*rwḥ htw’h*, 1QH 1:22), and ‘errant spirit’ (*tw’y rwḥ*), but also ‘spirit of flesh’ (*rwḥ bsr*, 1QH 13:13; 17:25). This last expression does not anticipate the *sárx-pneúma* polarity of the NT, but signalizes the difference ‘between human insufficiency and divine omnipotence’” (citing F. Nötscher, “Geist und Geister in den Texten von Qumran,” in *Vom Alten zum Neuen Testament* [Bonn, 1962], 175).

⁷⁶ E.g., 4Q416 1 12; 4Q418 43+44+45 I.13; 81 2. Cf. Matthew J. Goff, *The Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom of 4QInstruction* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 175: “The pairing of the ‘foolish of heart’ and the ‘truly chosen ones’ in 4Q418 69 ii is compatible with the ‘fleshly spirit’ and the ‘spiritual people’ of 4Q417 1 i.”

⁷⁷ Cf. G. Gerleman, “בָּשָׂר *bāšār* flesh,” *TLOT* 1:285; cf. n. 75 above.

⁷⁸ E.g., Nickelsburg, *Resurrection*, 205, 206, but note also his later statement on p. 12 quoted at the end of this paragraph; cf. John J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 174.

⁷⁹ Cf. *Ibid.*, 55, 175: “there seems to have been considerable flexibility in the formulation of beliefs. Orthopraxy in the observance of the Law is emphasized more than orthodoxy of belief, although beliefs also played an integral part in the constitution of the community.”

⁸⁰ See Émile Puech, “Resurrection: The Bible and Qumran,” in *The Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, vol. 2, 261–279, who refers to 4Q245, 4Q385–388, 4Q415–418, 4Q504, 4Q521, 11Q13, and some suggestive references in 1QS, 1QH (which may be merely metaphorical), 1QM, and CD; idem, *La Croyance des Esséniens en la vie future: immortalité, résurrection, vie éternelle* (Paris: Gabalda, 1993). For another interpretation of the evidence, see John J. Collins, *Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 115–129.

⁸¹ Nickelsburg, *Resurrection*, 12; see also n. 58 above.

We can be even more certain about their views regarding a recompense for the righteous, who, as a result of God’s “visitation” in judgment, will have “eternal enjoyment with endless life,” while the wicked shall suffer “destruction by the fire of the dark regions” “without there being a remnant or a survivor among them” (1QS IV.7, 13, 14). Although our limited knowledge of the community’s history and beliefs, as well as the fragmentary state of many of its documents, make a complete picture of Qumran’s eschatology virtually impossible, consideration of all the evidence we have mentioned would seem to call into serious question the reliability of Josephus’ description of Essene beliefs relative to the afterlife (to which we will turn in due course).

2 *Maccabees*

The book of *2 Maccabees*, usually dated to the early first century BC,⁸² embraces the larger Jewish conviction of God’s justice and protection of his people and of his bringing vengeance on their enemies, but also of his use of pagan nations to punish his people when their sins require it. Written in a very different style from *1 Maccabees*,⁸³ it offers the hope that “any Jews who suffered or perished undeservedly in the time of punishment will be resurrected to receive their recompense.”⁸⁴ Hope of the resurrection is an important theme of chapter 7, which describes the martyrdom of a mother and her seven sons who undergo gruesome punishments as the price of their refusal to eat pork.

The dying words of the second son affirm the hope of the resurrection: “the King of the universe will raise us up to an everlasting renewal of life, because we have died for his laws” (7:9).⁸⁵ The third son is even more explicit. Sticking out his tongue and offering his hands and feet to be cut off like the first brother’s was, he replies, “I got these from Heaven, . . . and

⁸² Bruce M. Metzger and Roland E. Murphy, “2 Maccabees,” in *The New Oxford Annotated Apocrypha: The Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books of the Old Testament* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 228, date it between 104 and 63 BC (noting *2 Maccabees* 15:37 which affirms continued Jewish sovereignty over Jerusalem); Jonathan A. Goldstein, *II Maccabees. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 41A (New York: Doubleday, 1983), 83, dates it between 78/77 and 63 BC. Dating it substantially earlier (143/142 BC) is Daniel R. Schwartz, *2 Maccabees*, CEJL (New York: Gruyter, 2008), 14.

⁸³ *1 Maccabees* is a more complete historical account, whereas *2 Maccabees* is more colorful with miracle stories.

⁸⁴ Goldstein, *II Maccabees*, 12, 13, referring on 13 n. 18 to resurrection in 7:9, 11, 14, 23, 29, 36, 12:43–45, 14:46.

⁸⁵ Gk.: *ho de tou kosmou basileus apothanontas hēmas hyper tōn autou nomōn eis aiōnion anabiōsin zōēs hēmas anastēsei*. Unless otherwise indicated, all quotations from the Bible and the Apocrypha are from the NRSV.

from him I hope to get them back again” (v. 11). This hope, based on God as the Creator of all things, contrasts sharply with the dead souls in Homer who die maimed and can only hope in the netherworld for prosthetics to replace their limbs. In the context of the Maccabean story, Antiochus Epiphanes seeks to induce the other brothers to give in and eat the unclean food. Under Greek assumptions about the afterlife, the cutting off of limbs and cutting out of the tongue could be considered a powerful inducement to comply with the command. The fourth brother likewise expresses hope in the resurrection, but tells the king, “for you there will be no resurrection [*anastasis*] to life!” (v. 14). The word *anastasis* is used more than forty times in the New Testament to refer to resurrection from the dead. The fifth brother in the midst of similar torture, reminds the king of his mortality, that he will perish (*phthartos*),⁸⁶ and also that he and his descendants will be tortured by God’s mighty power (v. 17).

The mother’s final words to her seventh and remaining son return to the theme of God as the Creator, emphasizing creation *ex nihilo*, that God did not make the heaven and the earth “out of things that existed” (*ex ontōn*, v. 28). Very similar words are later used by Paul to describe Abraham’s faith in God’s power to raise the dead (Rom 4:17). The mother urges her son, “Accept death, so that in God’s mercy I may get you back again along with your brothers” (2 *Maccabees* 7:29). The remaining son, like the others, steadfastly refuses to disobey God, laying down “body and life” (*sōma kai psychēn*, v. 37) in hope of the resurrection: “My brothers, having borne pain for a short while, now have inherited eternal life under the terms of God’s covenant” (v. 36).⁸⁷ Since the immediate context centers on the hope of the resurrection, these words cannot be construed as a reference to the Greek dualistic concept of an immortal soul, which perhaps is why the NRSV in this passage translates *psychē* as “life” rather than “soul.”⁸⁸ A similar expression occurs in verse 23, “breath and life” (*to pneuma kai tēn zōēn*)—which the Creator will give back again. Several times in the Apocrypha the idea of going to the grave and back occurs. In these contexts *hadēs* seems to refer, not to an underworld in which the dead carry on a shadowy existence, but simply to the grave, the equivalent in Greek of Sheol.⁸⁹ The book of 3 *Maccabees* expands on this story of the mother and

⁸⁶ L&N, 23.125: “pertaining to that which is bound to disintegrate and die.”

⁸⁷ Translation in Goldstein, *II Maccabees*, 291, on which see also 316, 317 n. 36.

⁸⁸ Similarly, *psychē* has a broader meaning also in *Tobit* 1:11, 12; 13:6; *Sirach* 6:26; 7:29.

⁸⁹ LXX 1 Kings 2:35o; Esther 3:13g; *Tobit* 3:10; 13:2 (in the context of resurrection); also 4:10 and 14:10 (in which death is described respectively as “darkness” and being “destroyed”); 2 *Maccabees* 6:23. However, in 3 *Maccabees* 4:8; 5:42, 51; 6:31, *hadēs* is “deliverance,” not sleep.

her seven sons, using the term *hadēs* several times but again in the sense of death or the grave.⁹⁰ Later in *2 Maccabees* the hope of resurrection is used to justify prayer for the dead (12:44), providing further confirmation that a bodiless existence is not in view.

4 Maccabees

In contrast to *1–3 Maccabees* and the Jewish writings we have mentioned so far, *4 Maccabees*, dated somewhat later (ca. first century AD),⁹¹ is thoroughly dualistic in its outlook. By cultivating reason (*logismos*), the soul can be nurtured and the emotions and passions of the body kept under control.⁹² The dying testimonies of the Maccabean martyrs illustrate “that one can cheerfully give up one’s body; the true gift of God is the soul which cannot be taken away.”⁹³

Let us not fear him who thinks he is killing us, for great is the struggle of the soul and the danger of eternal torment lying before those who transgress the commandment of God. Therefore let us put on the full armor of self-control, which is divine reason. For if we so die, Abraham and Isaac and Jacob will welcome us, and all the fathers will praise us. (13:14–17)

This passage presents two alternative destinies: eternal torment as punishment for transgressing God’s law versus a welcome into bliss by the patriarchs as a reward for exercising self-control through divine reason. The author likens the resistance of the mother and her seven sons to an athletic competition with the prize being “immortality in endless life” (17:12). Because they endured, “they now stand before the divine throne and live the life of eternal blessedness” (17:17, 18; cf. 9:8; 17:5), having “received pure and immortal souls from God” (18:23). It was beneficial for them to hasten their death by being tormented now and “running the course toward immortality” (14:5). But for those who transgress the commandment of God, rather than a crown of life being laid up for them, their souls will have to endure “eternal” (13:15) and “unceasing torments [*akatalytous . . . basanous*]” (10:11). Antiochus Epiphanes was “punished on earth and *is being chastised*

⁹⁰ The one exception is probably the warning by the Greek king (5:42).

⁹¹ H. Anderson, “4 Maccabees,” *OTP*, 2:534.

⁹² David, by pouring out the water of Bethlehem, safeguarded his soul “by setting up reason in opposition to his desire” (*4 Maccabees* 3:16; see also 6:7; 10:19, 20).

⁹³ Wright, *Resurrection*, 142; One martyr declares, “if you have any means of torture, apply it to my body, for my soul you cannot touch even if you would” (*4 Maccabees* 10:4, omitted by A).

after his death” (18:5). There is no mention whatsoever of resurrection. The body can be safely cast away at death as long as one keeps his soul pure.

Wisdom of Solomon

Not so different from the perspective of *4 Maccabees* in terms of anthropology is *Wisdom of Solomon*, which likewise seems to reflect a dualistic contrast of soul and body: “for a perishable body [*phtharton . . . sōma*] makes the soul heavy, and this earthy tent weighs down the mind filled with cares” (9:15).⁹⁴ Apparently, the author even assumes the soul’s preexistence—which would make sense if the soul were inherently immortal: “As a child I was naturally gifted, and a good soul fell to my lot; or rather, being good, I entered an undefiled body” (8:19, 20).⁹⁵

At the same time, like many Jewish writings, *Wisdom of Solomon* stresses distinct destinies depending on whether a person chooses the path of wickedness or the path of righteousness. According to 2:1–3, the wicked, because they do not share this view, taunt the righteous with these sentiments:

. . . no one has been known to return from Hades.
 For we were born by mere chance,
 and hereafter we shall be as though we had never been,
 for the breath in our nostrils is smoke,
 and reason is a spark kindled by the beating of our hearts;
 when it is extinguished, the body will turn to ashes,
 and the spirit will dissolve like empty air.⁹⁶

Not content with their own pessimistic picture of life and death, the wicked decide to test how confident believers are of life after death by torturing them and killing them (2:17–20).

The problem, in the author’s view, is that the wicked are ignorant of creation. God, he says, made human beings “in the image of his own eternity” (2:23). Death is not to be feared, because “the souls of the righteous

⁹⁴ Author’s translation; Gk.: *phtharton gar sōma barynei psychēn, kai brithei to geōdes skēnos noun polyphrontida*. Depending on the historical situation within which *Wisdom of Solomon* was written, the book has generally been dated between 220 BC and AD 50. See David Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 43 (New York: Doubleday, 1979), 20–24 for a discussion. For our purposes, a more precise date is unnecessary, though an apparent critique of the *pax Romana* in 14:22 may favor a date in the latter part of this range.

⁹⁵ So also Winston, *Wisdom of Solomon*, 26. Translation in James L. Crenshaw, *Old Testament Wisdom: An Introduction*, 3d ed. (Louisville, KY: John Knox, 2010), 186.

⁹⁶ Translation in Lester L. Grabbe, *Wisdom of Solomon* (London: T & T Clark, 2004), 50.

are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them” (3:1). In fact, they only “seemed to have died” (v. 2). Death is not the end of them: “Now they are at peace. Their hope is for immortality, a deathless life to which they look forward.”⁹⁷ Creation is not bad in itself, but death has entered it. God did not create death; it entered the world as a result of the devil’s envy (2:24) and the ungodly bring it upon themselves by their words and deeds (1:12, 16). Righteousness, by contrast, is immortal (1:15)—thus the importance of wisdom in order to live a righteous life.

Putting all these pieces together does not lead to as disparate a picture as some may suggest. The author appears to believe that immortality is the natural state of human beings, but that sin changes everything. It has real power to kill not just the body but the soul also—which is why it is so important to choose the path of righteousness and life rather than death and destruction (1:12, 16). Even should the righteous die prematurely they “will be at rest” (4:7). Later it is affirmed that the one who follows the path of wisdom “shall have immortality” (8:13).

When will this be? When will the righteous be vindicated? As the subsequent verses make clear, it is “in the time of their visitation” which, in the larger context of the book, refers to God’s intervention on their behalf. At that time “they will shine forth, and will run like sparks through the stubble. They will govern [lit. “judge” *krinousin*] nations and rule over peoples, and the Lord will reign over them forever” (3:7, 8). The close similarity of these ideas to Daniel 7:22, 26, 27 and 12:1–3 as well as the reference to the wicked being confronted by the righteous, who will “stand with great confidence” to face their oppressors (*Wisdom of Solomon* 5:1), suggests that resurrection may be implied.⁹⁸ This possibility is strengthened later in the book when it is affirmed that God, who has power over life and death, leads “mortals down to the gates of Hades and back again” (16:13). Thus the original destiny of humankind, for immortality in a state of incorruption (2:23), is restored.⁹⁹

Philo

While sharing with *Wisdom of Solomon* a dualistic outlook, Philo carries forward the implications of this paradigm more consistently. For example, he provides us with one of the earliest examples of a thoroughly Platonic reading of the Genesis account of the creation of humans. He ac-

⁹⁷ Wright, *Resurrection*, 168, paraphrasing verses 3–5, noting also the frequent appearance on Jewish tombstones of “soul at peace” (n. 163).

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 171.

⁹⁹ So Goff, “Recent Trends,” 385, 386.

compleishes this by distinguishing the man formed from the dust in Genesis 2 from the human being of Genesis 1:

there is a vast difference between the man thus formed and the man that came into existence earlier after the image of God: for the man so formed is an object of sense-perception, partaking already of such or such quality, consisting of body [*sōmatos*] and soul [*psychēs*], man or woman, by nature mortal; while he that was after the (Divine) image was an idea or type or seal, an object of thought (only), incorporeal [*asōmatos*], neither male nor female, by nature incorruptible [i.e. “imperishable,” *aphthartos*].¹⁰⁰

The body here, as in *Wisdom of Solomon* 9:15, is perishable. Philo then goes further in affirming that the *idea* of what it means to be human is genderless and imperishable. The dust and the breath referred to in Genesis 2:7 seem to be ontologically independent of each other, the former associated with this earthly life and the latter with the divine: “For there are two things of which we consist, soul and body. The body, then, has been formed out of earth, but the soul is of the upper air [*aitheros*], a particle detached from the Deity.”¹⁰¹ The dead body, because it undergoes decay and decomposes back to dust, is corrupt and polluted, whereas the soul, being a spark of the divine, is untouched by these processes.¹⁰² The essence of human beings is this soul, which Philo describes as “that God-like creation with which we reason”¹⁰³—“endowed with mind” (*eis noeran*).¹⁰⁴

The soul itself is preexistent, comparable to the substance of angels, but becomes a human being by taking on a bodily form.¹⁰⁵ In fact, the air is teeming with incorporeal souls. It is “like a populous city, . . . full of imper-

¹⁰⁰ Philo, *On the Creation of the World* 134 in *Philo*, ed. and trans. F. H. Colson and G. H. Whitaker, LCL, 10 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979).

¹⁰¹ Philo, *Allegorical Interpretation* 3.161.

¹⁰² Cf. Jason von Ehrenkrook, “The Afterlife in Philo and Josephus,” in *Heaven, Hell, and the Afterlife: Eternity in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, ed. J. Harold Ellens (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2013), 103.

¹⁰³ Philo, *Worse* 84.

¹⁰⁴ Philo, *Allegorical Interpretation* 1.32 (author’s translation).

¹⁰⁵ Philo, *On Giants* 2.6, 2.8, and esp. 2.12: “Now some of the souls have descended into bodies, but others have never deigned to be brought into union with any of the parts of the earth. They are . . . [employed] as ministers and helpers, to have charge and care of mortal man” (trans. Colson and Whitaker). See also Lester L. Grabbe, “Eschatology in Philo and Josephus,” in *Judaism in Late Antiquity*, vol. 3; ed. Jacob Neusner, Alan J. Avery-Peck, Bruce Chilton (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 166, 167.

ishable and immortal citizens, souls equal in number to the stars.”¹⁰⁶ This suggestion is not so different from Plato, who referred to the existence of beings between god and humans.¹⁰⁷ According to Philo, some of these immortal souls desire a mortal life and become entangled with the body, but others are wiser, considering the body (*sōma*) “a prison and a tomb [*sēma*].”¹⁰⁸ When the body dies, the soul is freed¹⁰⁹ to “live according to its proper life, being released from the evil and dead body to which it is bound.”¹¹⁰

At death the soul returns to God (*On the Life of Abraham* 258), but exactly what that meant for Philo is less clear. He can be understood to teach, not the idea of heavenly bliss for individual souls but their reabsorption back into the Divinity to which they essentially belong.¹¹¹ More likely, however, he believed in an afterlife for individuals because he speaks of distinct, and possibly somewhat different, heavenly destinies for Abraham and Jacob, Isaac, and Moses (*On the Sacrifices of Abel and Cain* 5–8).¹¹² The wicked, on the other hand, are consigned to “the depths of Hades” (*On Dreams* 1.151). By this, Philo says he refers not to “that mythical place” believed by some but to be “the true Hades,” which “is the life of the bad, a life of damnation and blood-guiltiness, the victim of every curse” (*On the Preliminary Studies* 57). Elsewhere he describes the wicked as rejoicing “in a form of living, which is not worth the pains” (*Who is the Heir?* 45). In the end they “will be dragged to the farthest realm below, borne to Tartarus itself,” which is described as “profound darkness.”¹¹³ Based on his description of Hades as a metaphor of the worthless, wicked life, we should probably also understand his few references to Tartarus metaphorically—not as a literal place but as “the absence of immortality.”¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁶ Philo, *On Dreams* 1.137.

¹⁰⁷ Wahlen, *Jesus*, 52, citing as an example Plato, *Symposium*, 202d–203a.

¹⁰⁸ Philo, *On Dreams* 1.139, employing the popular *sōma/sēma* wordplay (see also nn. 18 and 105 above).

¹⁰⁹ See Philo, *Allegorical Interpretation* 1.105, 108; 2.77; cf. the references to Plato in n. 18 above.

¹¹⁰ Philo, *Allegorical Interpretation* 1.108; cf. idem, *On the Special Laws* 4.188.

¹¹¹ See Erwin R. Goodenough, “Philo on Immortality,” *Harvard Theological Review* 39/2 (1946): 101, deeming such a prospect “Philo’s dearest wish” (103).

¹¹² Philo “does not hesitate to represent the very Patriarchs, whose virtues would have led them into the experience most fully, as still preserving their individualities in the sense that in heaven, or before God, they serve eternally as intercessors for men” (ibid.). Whether Goodenough is correct in representing the patriarchs as all having the same destiny is not so clear from this passage. Cf. Ehrenkrook, “Afterlife,” 105, 106 (who seems to misunderstand Goodenough’s view).

¹¹³ Philo, *On Rewards and Punishments* 152 (author’s translation); Gk.: *hyposyrēsetai katōtatō pros auton tartaron kai bathu skotos enechtheis*.

¹¹⁴ Ehrenkrook, “Afterlife,” 105, citing Philo, *On Giants* 14, 15; similarly, Grabbe, “Eschatology,” 169.

Josephus

The writings of Josephus represent a similar, though less explicitly philosophical, attempt at making Judaism understandable within the Greco-Roman world. Of course, such an aim also makes it difficult to determine the extent to which he may have colored his representation of the views of the Jewish sects and even his own views regarding human nature and the afterlife in order, like Philo, to make them more appealing.

The clearest and most detailed statement of what Josephus seems to have believed relative to our topic¹¹⁵ is in his speech against suicide at Jotapata. In it he affirms that all “have mortal bodies, composed of perishable matter, but the soul lives for ever, immortal: it is a portion of the Deity housed in our bodies.”¹¹⁶ The souls of those who “depart this life in accordance with the law of nature [rather than by suicide] . . . are allotted the most holy place in heaven, whence, in the revolution of the ages, they return to find in chaste bodies a new habitation.”¹¹⁷ For those who would take their own life, on the other hand, “the darker regions of the nether world receive their souls.”¹¹⁸ In this brief statement Josephus expresses a belief in the immortality of the soul, with language reminiscent of what we have seen in Philo,¹¹⁹ and that a place in heaven awaits the righteous soul.

Josephus also has the Pharisees and the Essenes affirming the soul’s immortality.¹²⁰ Yet, as one scholar asks, “would it not be surprising that

¹¹⁵ Steve Mason, *Flavius Josephus on the Pharisees: A Compositional-Critical Study* (Leiden: Brill, 1991), 158–160, identifies four passages where Josephus’ own views on immortality are discernible: (1) his description of Essene beliefs (*Jewish War* 2.157, 158, where he seems to endorse their position); (2) his Jotapata speech against suicide (*Jewish War* 3.362–375); (3) his account of Glaphyra being visited by her deceased husband in a dream (*Jewish Antiquities* 17.349–354); (4) his argument that ideas of the afterlife and a final judgment are taught in the Mosaic law (*Against Apion* 2.217, 218). Joseph Sievers, “Josephus and the Afterlife,” in *Understanding Josephus: Seven Perspectives*, ed. S. Mason (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 23, 24, suggests using these four passages as a basis for determining to what extent other comments relative to the afterlife reflect Josephus’ own views, listing a total of twenty-nine passages (including the four enumerated above), but cf. Mason, *Flavius Josephus*, 161.

¹¹⁶ Josephus, *Jewish War* 3.372 in *Josephus*, trans. H. St. J. Thackeray, LCL, 9 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976).

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 3:374 (Josephus’ formulation as a rhetorical question is not reflected in the quotation).

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 3.375.

¹¹⁹ Cf. the discussion of Philo, *Allegorical Interpretation* 3.161.

¹²⁰ On the Pharisees: Josephus, *Jewish War* 2.163 (“Every soul, they maintain, is imperishable, but the soul of the good alone passes into another body, while the souls of the wicked suffer eternal punishment”); *idem*, *Jewish Antiquities* 18.14 (“They believe that souls have power to survive death and that there are rewards and punishments under the earth”). On the Essenes: *ibid.*, 18.18 (“They regard the soul as immortal”); *idem*, *Jewish War* 2.154 (“the soul is immortal and imperishable”). See Mason, *Flavius Josephus*, 159, for a convenient table displaying the language

upon the subject of conceptions of the life after death, a current of Jewish belief as conservative as Essenism should allow itself to be won over by the Greek influence it combated so vigorously elsewhere?”¹²¹ Examples of this conservatism and rejection of Hellenism include: Qumran’s use of Hebrew, rather than Aramaic or Greek, as the dominant language of the community, the avoidance of Greek loanwords otherwise common in postbiblical Hebrew and Jewish Aramaic, and, despite their rejection of the temple cult, dating documents according to the service of the high priests rather than the reigns of Roman emperors.¹²² It strains credulity even further to suppose that Josephus accurately represents the Essenes in describing their view of a blissful afterlife thus: “Sharing the belief of the sons of Greece, they maintain that for virtuous souls there is reserved an abode beyond the ocean, a place which is not oppressed by rain or snow or heat, but is refreshed by the ever gentle breath of the west wind coming in from the ocean; while they relegate base souls to a murky and tempestuous dungeon, big with never-ending punishments.”¹²³

More likely, Josephus has recast the beliefs of these Jewish sects in terms that would make sense to his audience, who were heavily influenced by Greek ideas of the afterlife. As we have seen, mention of a bodily resurrection would have suggested to his Roman readers something like reentry into a decomposing corpse of a body, rather than into a bright and shiny new one. Nevertheless, Josephus does describe the Pharisees’ belief in immortality for the virtuous as a reviving to life again¹²⁴ and the reception of “another body,” while “the souls of the wicked suffer eternal punishment.”¹²⁵ He also describes Hades as a place for both the righteous and the wicked.¹²⁶ Only the Sadducees are described as affirming that “the soul perishes along with the body” and as denying rewards and punishments after death.¹²⁷ While Josephus himself seems to agree more closely with the beliefs of the Pharisees in affirming an afterlife in bodily form,¹²⁸ he also clearly regards

common to Josephus’ statement of his own views and his respective descriptions of the views of the Pharisees and Essenes and showing the striking similarities.

¹²¹ Puech, “Resurrection,” 262.

¹²² Magness, *Archaeology of Qumran*, 204.

¹²³ Josephus, *Jewish War* 2.155.

¹²⁴ Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* 18.14; Gk.: *tou anabioun* (cf. use of the cognate noun *anabiōsin* in *2 Maccabees* 7:9 where resurrection is clearly in view).

¹²⁵ Josephus, *Jewish War* 2.163.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.* 2.165.

¹²⁷ Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* 18.16; *idem*, *Jewish War* 2.164, 165.

¹²⁸ So also Ehrenkrook, “Afterlife,” 113.

the beliefs of the Essenes positively, which perhaps explains his desire to conform their beliefs more closely to Roman expectations.¹²⁹ As we have seen, however, the evidence from the Dead Sea Scrolls would seem to point in quite a different direction.

Conclusion

In this rapid and brief survey, we have seen that Greek philosophical ideas regarding death and human nature became extremely influential within Israel during the Hellenistic period. Jewish writers clearly struggled with trying to make sense of their own heritage and beliefs in light of what many no doubt considered to be the more “progressive” and “sophisticated” ideas of Greek writers and philosophers. Although many Jewish writings nevertheless sought to retain the traditional views of the Old Testament, some modifications slowly but steadily begin to creep in.

The idea began germinating that some part of a person survives death, that the soul or spirit of a person is not lost forever. In some writings the soul is reunited with the body while in other Jewish writings, such as those of Philo, reacquiring a body with all its inherent limitations makes no rational sense. Adopting the common language of the Greco-Roman world, breathing the air of the larger Hellenistic culture, and facing the constant political pressures encouraged Jews not only to come to terms with their beliefs but also to try articulating them within the sophisticated Roman world of that time. In the process and in some cases, certain essential features of biblical anthropology disappeared or were merged with ideas foreign to the Hebrew Bible.

¹²⁹ Josephus, *Jewish War* 2.157, 158.